

REVIEWS

The Grosvenor Gallery. Yale British Art Center, Denver Museum of Art, Laing Art Gallery, March-November 1996.

The Grosvenor Gallery Exhibitions: Change and Continuity in the Victorian Art World by Christopher Newall. Cambridge: Cambridge U P, 1995. x, 185 pp. ISBN: 0-521-46493-5, \$79.95.

The Grosvenor Gallery: A Palace of Art in Victorian England edited by Susan P. Casteras and Colleen Denny. Exhibition catalogue. New Haven: Yale U P, 1995. xii, 209 pp. ISBN 0-300-06752-6, \$50.00.

While scholars of French art have analyzed French art institutions since the late 1960s, scholars of British art have only just begun such scrutiny, despite a generation of Michel Foucault's theories of how institutions "think." Victorianists have begun to critique idealized artistic creativity and examine instead the production and consumption of art. *Towards a Modern British Art World*, ed. Brian Allen (1995) is the most comprehensive study, preceded by pioneering studies by David Robertson (1978), Elizabeth Holt (1982, 1988), and Frances Haskell (1981), and, more recently, studies of the eighteenth-century art world by Iain Pears (1988) and Louise Lippincott (1983). Other studies by Marcia Pointon (1994), Paula Gillett (1990), Paul Greenhalgh (1988), and Giles Waterfield and Timothy Clifford (1991) represent the growing scholarship in this area.

Christopher Newall's study of the Grosvenor Gallery refreshingly re-examines the myth about the Grosvenor as trend-setting and avant-garde. Newall makes the case, hinted at in his subtitle, that the Grosvenor, like most institutions, both conserves tradition and encourages change, what Stella Tillyard (1988) demonstrated was also the case with the "shocking" Post-Impressionist exhibitions organized by Roger Fry which encountered mixed reception in the press and among the public, including considerable praise and appreciation. Indeed, one of the functions of institutions is to mediate change. Newall presents a picture of Sir Coutts and Lady Blanche Lindsay, the owners of the Grosvenor, as conservative in their tastes (e.g., the rather old-fashioned architecture they employed for the Gallery, 12-15), driven as much by social demands as by aesthetic impulses, and as carried away by roles and functions they found themselves in as by their own will and intentions. Not intending to challenge the Royal Academy, the Grosvenor was nonetheless seen as challenging that institution, though several Academicians, including two RA Presidents (Millais and Leighton), exhibited at the Grosvenor. Newall's book contains two very helpful lists of artists who exhibited at the Grosvenor: (1) artists listed alphabetically and (2) exhibited works indexed by year.

Newall tests many of the clichés about the Grosvenor and refines our understanding of its historical contributions. For example, it has always been the