

Tay" or "The Col de La Faucille" most especially to Ruskin's extraordinary account of his early upbringing. Masterful in style as well as substance, that account sorts out the assets and liabilities of the kind of parental care he experienced as a child, and then goes on to describe both the benefit and the damage wrought, irreversibly, by that domestic regimen. Should anyone still harbor doubt regarding Ruskin's power of self-analysis, this portion of the book, with its sharp clinical edge and its quality of utter detachment, ought to dispel such doubt once and for all. (Viewed under a different aspect, Ruskin's balance sheet might also be seen as yet another proof of his skill at precise patterning: in this instance pattern is produced by playing off opposites against each other with, as end result, a difficult yet strangely triumphant adjustment.)

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Fantastic Illustration and Design in Britain, 1850-1930. By Diana L. Johnson, with an essay by George P. Landow. Museum of Art, Rhode Island School of Design, 1979. 97 pp. of text, 231 illustrations. \$25 hardcover, \$12 paperback.

The first impetus to this exhibition dates back to 1972 when Diana Johnson, chief curator of the R. I. Museum of Art, mounted a small show from the museum's holdings of realistic and other illustrators. Shortly thereafter she and George Landow joined forces and began to explore American and British collections with a view to exhibiting a large body of designs; the chief emphasis being placed, now, on sheets whose themes were drawn from the realm of fantasy and faery. Through the generous aid of many institutions and with the help of federal grants, Mrs. Johnson and Mr. Landow finally managed to assemble an extraordinary number of works, dazzling in their variety and without exception of rare artistic merit. Though Jeremy Maas had over the years exhibited "fairy paintings" in his London gallery -- and may well be the inventor of the term -- there has never been an exhibit of works of this kind on a comparable scale, and its organizers are to be congratulated for their unremitting zeal and the success which crowned it in the end.

The exhibition to which this book forms the catalogue covers the entire gamut -- both in terms of the time span and in terms of the media employed -- with judicious thoroughness. In her introductory essay Diana Johnson characterizes and evaluates the artists actually represented, while paying close attention to important predecessors in this mode during the 18th and early 19th century (e.g. Fuseli, Mortimer, Rowlandson, Stothard). Mr. Landow's companion piece further