

have recently been reminded by the attention given to nineteenth-century photography that the merely "popular" can also be relevant and frequently highly revealing of the real nature of a people and their desires. Jerold Savory's Vanity Fair Gallery is another such reminder -- one which is, in addition, a pleasure to behold.

Edwin C. Epps

George P. Landow. William Holman Hunt and Typological Symbolism. Yale University Press. 1979. 192 pp. and 88 Plates. \$25.00.

In his most recent full-length study George P. Landow explores the complex character of WHH's artistic mission. The book opens with a disquisition on nineteenth-century Biblical exegetics and its early role in the formation of Hunt's thought. Landow then focuses on the curious and somewhat baffling nature of the painter's drive whose search for the esoteric meanings hidden in scriptural texts tended to combine with an equally strong desire for broad popular appeal. Hunt's single-minded seriousness and his resolve -- never abandoned -- to plumb the limits of painting are beyond doubt; what abides our question is the esthetic success of this pictorial quest.

Much of the misunderstanding Hunt's art has encountered, both in his own time and today, may be attributed to the above-mentioned duality of purpose which, on the face of it, appears to be contradictory rather than complementary. Certainly, this earthbound/heaven-bound artist presents us with a paradox; at all events, with the constant hazard of imaginative motives canceling one another out. Yet, as Landow convincingly argues, there was a direct precedent for this creative tension in Early Netherlandish painting, the works of Hogarth, and in Ruskin's Modern Painters, Volume II -- in passages which Hunt had taken to heart quite early and which attempt in a strikingly similar manner to interfuse stark realism with recondite symbolism.

The most viable mode by which the blatant and the esoteric can be made to merge is the typological mode. Landow's first chapter fully and cogently specifies the operation of that merger, showing the prophetic character of the resultant works, whether by Hunt or by other painters; i.e. their pointing to the fulfilment of a prefigured type without sacrifice of the icon's particularity (tantamount, in many cases, to severe historicity, factual "thisness"). In this connexion, Landow draws a careful -- and very necessary -- distinction between typological and allegorical art: whereas in typology signifier and signified are maintained at equal strength, allegory tends to "cast