

The Art of the Pre-Raphaelites by Elizabeth Prettejohn. Princeton: Princeton UP, 2000. 304 pp. + 170 colour plates, 35 b/w illus. ISBN 0-691-07057-1. \$49.50.

The Pre-Raphaelite Landscape by Allen Staley. 2nd ed. New Haven: Yale UP for the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art, 2001. 288 pp. + 150 colour plates, 100 b/w illus. ISBN 0-300-08408-0. \$75.00.

The bibliography of Pre-Raphaelitism is now staggering, with some of the most commonly prescribed texts for college courses especially lamentable because they are so dated and biased. What is lacking is a book that blends general information with a more sophisticated overview of current issues. Elizabeth Prettejohn's study attempts to fill this formidable void, and, while successful on some levels, nonetheless has flaws.

According to her preface, Prettejohn's goal is to forgo a history of Pre-Raphaelitism and provide instead an assessment of the Pre-Raphaelite aesthetic, but her organization and chronology sometimes prove labyrinthine. The later sections on technique, landscape, and models stand alone more effectively, but the earlier ones generate various circuitous paths and obstacles for the reader, especially the novice in the field.

The prologue's focus on John Everett Millais's *Mariana* of 1850-51 seems an odd way to start, unless it is intended to offer palliative/corrective instruction on how to look at this "scene of strange psychological and even sexual intensity." Part One deals with "stories of Pre-Raphaelitism," sometimes told on too many planes, and, in Holman Hunt's case, implying that they are fabricated tales, beginning with the formation of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848. Significantly, there is inadequate justification (besides its alleged "greatness") of why Prettejohn continually utilizes the 1984 Tate catalogue and exhibition entitled *The Pre-Raphaelites* as a benchmark for her comments, thus tying this publication too much to that institution and decreasing the book's independent worth. More importantly, no warning or reason is given as to why she makes constant comparisons with French art, especially Impressionism, throughout the book, particularly in the beginning sections. Indeed, the Francocentric prejudice of late twentieth-century art historians is a serious concern, and it would be better to explain straightforwardly why this bias matters than to leave the ingénue perplexed. Is it because Pre-Raphaelitism displays certain "avant-garde" tendencies or practices (open-air painting, for example) that this telegraphic "dialogue" between French and British art matters, or for other reasons?

In Chapter 1, it is also curious that Prettejohn does not simply present at the outset the main reasons why Pre-Raphaelite paintings originally had such a