

*Anarchy & Beauty: William Morris and His Legacy, 1860-1960* by Fiona MacCarthy. New Haven: Yale UP, 2014. 184 pp. ISBN 978300209464. \$50.00.

*To Build a Shadowy Isle of Bliss: William Morris's Radicalism and the Embodiment of Dreams* edited by Michelle Weinroth and Paul Leduc Browne. Montreal: McGill-Queen's UP, 2015. xiii, 372 pp. + 22 colour plates. ISBN 9780773544604. \$39.95.

The editors of *To Build a Shadowy Isle of Bliss*, a recent collection from McGill-Queen's University Press, aim to "move Morris studies onto new terrain" with a reappraisal of "Morris's radicalism." Radicalism is the focus of most of the essays, but the success of the book – in that it does move Morris studies onto new terrain – comes about through its integration of the romances into the totality of Morris's career. Interest in Morris's late romances has been growing for years, but for the first time – to my knowledge – major scholars in the field cannot talk about Morris without discussing the prose romances – and not only *News from Nowhere*. There has been a tipping point in the field from early to late career and, importantly for editors Michelle Weinroth and Paul Leduc Browne, one that makes Morris make sense. Why should it matter that a great Victorian artist, as Morris undoubtedly was in multiple arts, make sense to scholars living more than 120 years after his death? Because many of us cannot read Morris without wanting to follow him down whatever road he's been on. No Victorian speaks more presciently of the vexed conditions of twenty-first-century life than Morris: the way the arts have been devalued, the environment imperiled, and labour utterly degraded and alienated. When I first began writing about Morris as a young assistant professor I was concerned about the tendency of Morris scholarship towards discipleship, even fannishness. No more. Another strength of this book – and Fiona MacCarthy's *Anarchy & Beauty* – is that it makes no attempt to segregate analysis from advocacy or scholarship from commitment to principles.

The Introduction by Michelle Weinroth frames Morris's legacy and the collection in several different ways, most notably Weinroth's recognition that the core of Morris's radicalism can be found in precisely what critics have found frustrating about his work: an escapism that reads to many as being inconsistent with a commitment to socialism. The collection's "double objective" is to "define Morris's unorthodox radicalism and, in so doing, to uncover the consistency and precocity of his innovative social thought." That is not a new aim in Morris studies, as a quick review of the collection's extensive bibliography will demonstrate; nonetheless, it is one that this book, with its varied approaches, is uniquely positioned to accomplish. Each author turns