

Arts and Crafts Movement

Fine art is that in which the hand, the head, and the heart of man go together. (John Ruskin)

Introduction

- The Arts and Crafts movement flourished in England (Britain) during the last decades of the 19th Century as a reaction against the social, moral, and artistic confusion of the Industrial Revolution.
- A design movement flourished between 1860 to 1910 and continued its influence until the 1930's.
- It began in Britain and quickly spread to Europe and America.

- The Arts and Crafts movement was a reaction to not only the damaging effects of industrialization but also the relatively low status of the decorative arts.
- Arts and Crafts reformed the design and manufacture of everything from buildings to jewellery.

Pre-Raphaelites

- A small group of young painters formed a secret society in reaction against what they felt was the frivolous art of the day.
- **They called** themselves the '**Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood**' (PRB), a name that alluded to their preference for late medieval and early Renaissance art that came 'before Raphael'.

- **Pre-Raphaelite** Brotherhood, group of young British painters who banded together in 1848 in reaction against what they conceived to be the unimaginative and artificial historical painting of the Royal Academy and who purportedly sought to express a new moral seriousness and sincerity in their works.

- They **were inspired by** Italian art of the 14th and 15th centuries, and their adoption of the name **Pre-Raphaelite** expressed their admiration for what they saw as the direct and uncomplicated depiction of nature typical of Italian painting **before the** High Renaissance and, particularly, **before the** time of Raphael.

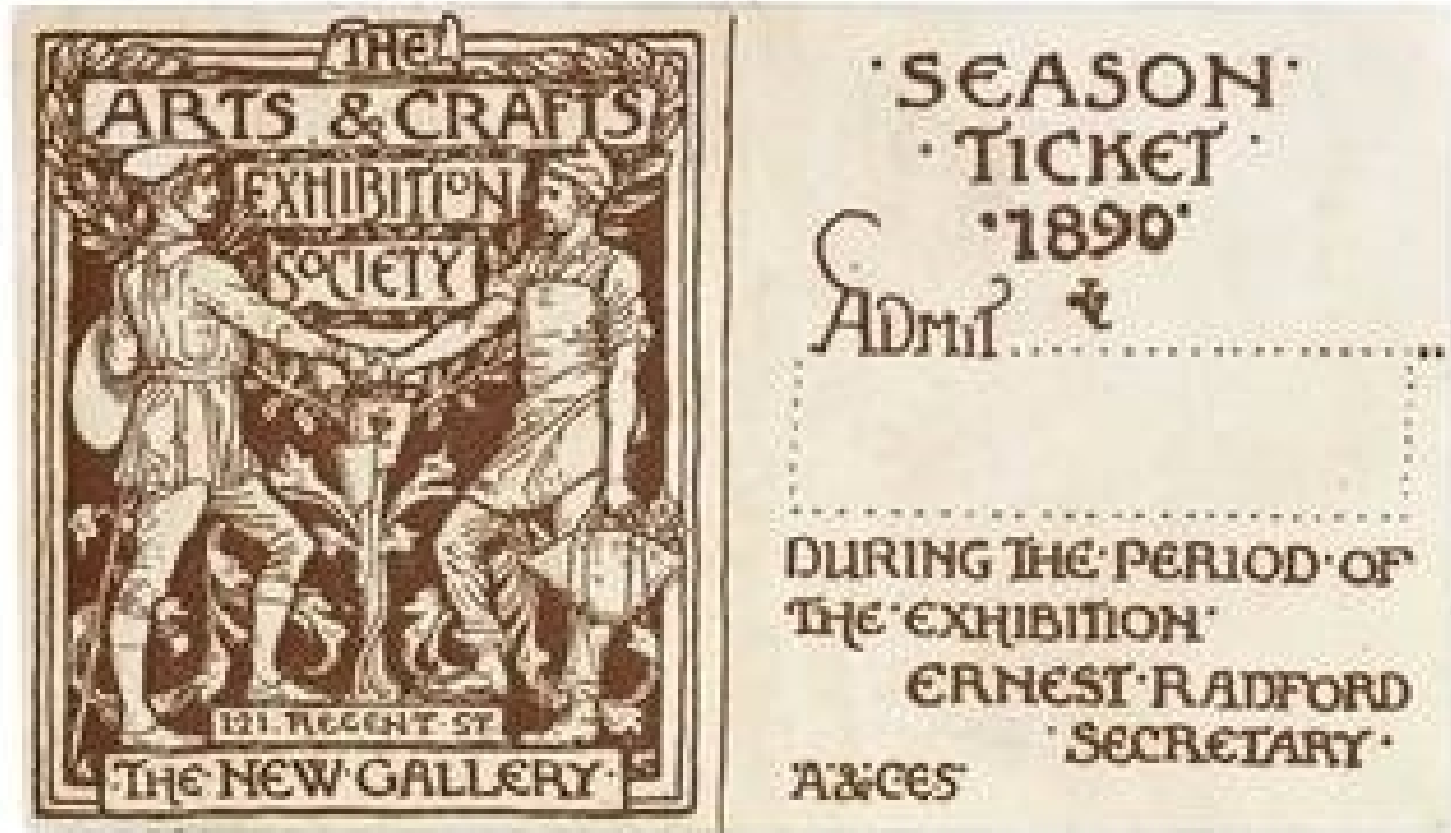
- The **Pre-Raphaelites** were a group of artists in the Victorian era. They **believed** art should be as similar to the real world as possible. **Think** of it like this. If you painted a park, the park you've painted should show the park as you see it.

- The **Pre-Raphaelite** Brotherhood began in 1848 with just three young men as its founder members. Rossetti, Holman Hunt, and Millais **rebelled against** the standard teachings of the Royal Academy. They wanted to return to clean lines and took **pre-renaissance** art as their example.
- "Beauty without the beloved is like a sword through the heart," Dante Gabriel Rossetti wrote.

- [James Collinson](#) (painter)
- [William Holman Hunt](#) (painter)
- [John Everett Millais](#) (painter)
- [Dante Gabriel Rossetti](#) (painter, poet)
- [William Michael Rossetti](#) (critic)
- [Frederic George Stephens](#) (critic)
- [Thomas Woolner](#) (sculptor, poet)

Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society

- The movement took its name from the Arts and Crafts exhibition society, set up in 1888.
- The **Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society** was formed in London in 1887 to promote the exhibition of decorative arts alongside fine arts.
- The illustrator and designer [Walter Crane](#) served as the founding president of the society for its first three years.
- [William Morris](#) succeeded Crane as president in 1891.



Detail from a ticket for the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society, 1890, by Walter Crane.

- The two most **influential figures** were the theorist and critic John Ruskin and the designer, writer and activist William Morris.
- Ruskin examined the relationship between art, society and labor.
- Morris put Ruskin's philosophies into practice, placing great value on work, the joy of craftsmanship and the natural beauty of materials.

Inspired by the writings (philosophy) of John Ruskin

- **John Ruskin** (8 February 1819 – 20 January 1900) was the leading English art critic of the Victorian era, as well as an art patron, draughtsman, water colourist, prominent social thinker and philanthropist.

- Art is not a study of positive reality, it is the seeking for ideal truth.
- Nothing can be beautiful which is not true.
- Quality is never an accident; it is always the result of intelligent effort.
- Never has interest in art been so high, and never has quality been so low.

JOHN RUSKIN

Ruskin rejected the mercantile economy and pointed toward the union of art and labor in service to society, as exemplified in the design and construction of the medieval Gothic cathedral.

John Ruskin's initial support of the Pre-Raphaelites gave the group the credibility they needed to be accepted as serious artists. Ruskin admired the group's commitment to nature and the belief that art should communicate truth. (Things went south however after Ruskin's wife left him for one of the Pre-Raphaelites).



Portrait of John Ruskin by John Everett Millais 1853

William Morris

- If John Ruskin was the Grandfather of The Arts and Crafts Movement then William Morris is the Father of the Arts and Crafts Movement.
- William Morris (24 March 1834 – 3 October 1896) was a British textile designer, poet, novelist, translator, and socialist activist associated with the British [Arts and Crafts Movement](#). He was a major contributor to the revival of traditional British [textile arts](#) and methods of production. His literary contributions helped to establish the modern fantasy genre, while he played a significant role proliferating the early socialist movement in Britian.

Morris called for a fitness of purpose, truth to the nature of materials and method of productions, and individual expression by both designer and worker.

- He rejected to opulence on the Victorian era and urged a return to medieval traditions of design, craftsmanship, and community.
- Morris developed the view that art should be both beautiful and functional.



(1834-1896)

- **In 1861, Morris established the art-decorating firm.** Growing rapidly, **the firm established London showrooms and began to assemble teams of craftsmen**, including furniture makers, weavers and dyers, stained glass fabricators, and tile makers.
- **Morris proved to be a brilliant 2-D pattern designer. He created over 500 pattern designs** for wallpapers, textile, carpets, and tapestries.
- **Medieval arts and botanical forms were his main inspirations.**



William Morris
Rose fabric design
1883



William Morris and Private Press



William Morris, trademark for the Kelmscott Press, 1892

- **In 1890, Morris set up the Kelmscott Press using an old handpress in a rented cottage near Kelmscott Manor in Hammersmith, which Morris had purchased as a country home. From 1891 – 1899, Kelmscott Press, printed over eighteen thousand volumes of books.**
- **Morris had long been interested in books. His library included medieval manuscripts and incunabula volumes.**
- **Earlier, Morris had made a number of his own manuscript books, writing the text in beautifully controlled scripts and embellishing them with delicate borders and initials with flowing forms and soft, clear colors.**



William Morris, trademark
for the Kelmscott Press,
1892

Architecture of Arts and Crafts Movement



Arts and Crafts also had a significant impact on architecture.

William Morris and Philip Webb, Red House (side), Bexleyheath, England, 1860, photo: [Steve Cadman](#) (CC-BY-SA 2.0)

Red House

- It was the first home built according to the principles of fine artistry and utility that became the hallmark of the design firm Morris founded with Webb in 1861, as well as the emerging Arts and Crafts movement.
- Morris and Webb designed the house in a simplified Tudor Gothic style. The features of this style include historicizing elements such as steep roofs, prominent chimneys, cross gables, and exposed-beam ceilings, all present in Red House.

A medieval ideal

- The use of exposed red brick for the exterior both gave the house its name and reveals the innate beauty of the construction materials. Morris and Webb valued the specific beauty of natural materials, which they saw as far superior to and healthier than industrially produced material.

Famous Arts and Crafts artists and artisans include men as varied as

- **Gustav Stickley**
- Louis Sullivan
- Charles Rennie Mackintosh
- Louis Comfort Tiffany
- Frank Lloyd Wright. Gay
- and bisexual figures such as
- C. R. Ashbee and Edward Carpenter were also associated with the movement.

Arthur MacKmurdo

- English architect, designer, and a pioneer of the English Arts and Crafts movement.
- Known best for his plans for the Savoy Hotel, he also built about 12 private houses, including 25 Cadogan Gardens.
- He founded the Century Guild of artists (1882), based upon the teachings of William Morris, to produce better furniture and decorative accessories than were then available commercially.



(1851-1942)



Book cover of Arthur
Mackmaurdo, *Wren's City Churches*



Charles Voysey

- He was an English architect and furniture and textile designer.
- Voysey's early work was as a designer of wallpapers, fabrics and furnishings in a simple Arts and Crafts style, but he is renowned as the architect of a number of notable country houses



(1857-1941)

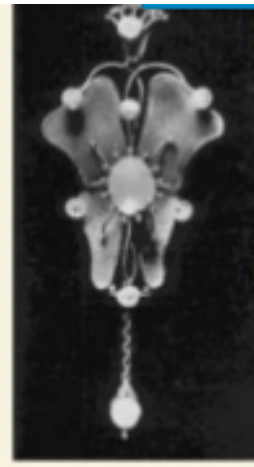


Charles Ashbee

- He was an English *designer and entrepreneur* who was a *prime mover* of the *Arts and Crafts movement* that took its *craft ethic* from the works of *John Ruskin* and its *co-operative structure* from the *socialism* of *William Morris*.



(1863-1942)



Walter Crane

- English painter, designer, and illustrator; best known for his illustrations of children's books in a deliberately archaic style.
- His paintings and book illustrations were influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites and by Japanese



(1845-1915)



Neptune's horses

Children's book illustration

