

= Edward Burne Jones =

Sir Edward Coley Burne Jones , 1st Baronet ARA (28 August 1833 ? 17 June 1898) was a British artist and designer closely associated with the later phase of the Pre Raphaelite movement , who worked closely with William Morris on a wide range of decorative arts as a founding partner in Morris , Marshall , Faulkner & Co . Burne Jones was closely involved in the rejuvenation of the tradition of stained glass art in Britain ; his stained glass works include the windows of St. Philip 's Cathedral , Birmingham , St Martin in the Bull Ring , Birmingham , Holy Trinity Church , Sloane Square , Chelsea , St Martin 's Church in Brompton , Cumbria (the church designed by Philip Webb) , St Michael 's Church , Brighton , All Saints , Jesus Lane , Cambridge , Christ Church , Oxford and in St. Anne 's Church , Brown Edge , Staffordshire Moorlands . Burne Jones 's early paintings show the heavy inspiration of Dante Gabriel Rossetti , but by the 1860s Burne Jones was discovering his own artistic " voice " . In 1877 , he was persuaded to show eight oil paintings at the Grosvenor Gallery (a new rival to the Royal Academy) . These included The Beguiling of Merlin . The timing was right , and he was taken up as a herald and star of the new Aesthetic Movement .

In addition to painting and stained glass , Burne Jones worked in a variety of crafts ; including designing ceramic tiles , jewellery , tapestries , mosaics and book illustration , most famously designing woodcuts for the Kelmscott Press 's Chaucer in 1896 .

= = Early life = =

Edward Coley Burne Jones (the hyphen came later) was born in Birmingham , the son of a Welshman , Edward Richard Jones , a frame maker at Bennetts Hill , where a blue plaque commemorates the painter 's childhood . His mother Elizabeth Coley Jones died within six days of his birth , and he was raised by his grieving father and the family housekeeper , Ann Sampson , an obsessively affectionate but humourless and unintellectual local girl . He attended Birmingham 's King Edward VI grammar school from 1844 and the Birmingham School of Art from 1848 to 1852 , before studying theology at Exeter College , Oxford . At Oxford he became a friend of William Morris as a consequence of a mutual interest in poetry . The two Exeter undergraduates , together with a small group of Jones ' friends from Birmingham known as the Birmingham Set , speedily formed a very close and intimate society , which they called " The Brotherhood " . The members of the Brotherhood read John Ruskin and Tennyson , visited churches , and worshipped the Middle Ages . At this time Burne Jones discovered Thomas Malory 's Le Morte d 'Arthur which was to be so influential in his life . At that time neither Burne Jones nor Morris knew Rossetti personally , but both were much influenced by his works , and met him by recruiting him as a contributor to their Oxford and Cambridge Magazine which Morris founded in 1856 to promote their ideas .

Burne Jones had intended to become a church minister , but under Rossetti 's influence both he and Morris decided to become artists , and Burne Jones left college before taking a degree to pursue a career in art . In February 1857 , Rossetti wrote to William Bell Scott

Two young men , projectors of the Oxford and Cambridge Magazine , have recently come up to town from Oxford , and are now very intimate friends of mine . Their names are Morris and Jones . They have turned artists instead of taking up any other career to which the university generally leads , and both are men of real genius . Jones 's designs are marvels of finish and imaginative detail , unequalled by anything unless perhaps Albert Dürer 's finest works .

= = Marriage and family = =

In 1856 Burne Jones became engaged to Georgiana " Georgie " MacDonald (1840 ? 1920) , one of the MacDonald sisters . She was training to be a painter , and was the sister of Burne Jones 's old school friend . The couple married in 1860 , after which she made her own work in woodcuts and became a close friend of George Eliot . (Another MacDonald sister married the artist Sir Edward Poynter , a further sister married the ironmaster Alfred Baldwin and was the mother of

the Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin , and yet another sister was the mother of Rudyard Kipling . Kipling and Baldwin were thus Burne @-@ Jones 's nephews by marriage) .

Georgiana bore a son , Philip , in 1861 . A second son , born in the winter of 1864 while Georgiana was gravely ill with scarlet fever , died soon after birth . The family soon moved to 41 Kensington Square , and their daughter Margaret was born there in 1866 .

In 1867 Burne @-@ Jones and his family settled at the Grange , an 18th @-@ century house set in a large garden in North End Road , Fulham , London . For much of the 1870s Burne @-@ Jones did not exhibit , following a spate of bitterly hostile attacks in the press , and a passionate affair (described as the " emotional climax of his life ") with his Greek model Maria Zambaco , which ended with her trying to commit suicide by throwing herself in Regent 's Canal . During these difficult years Georgiana developed a close friendship with Morris , whose wife Jane had fallen in love with Rossetti . Morris and Georgie may have been in love , but if he asked her to leave her husband , she refused . In the end , the Burne @-@ Joneses remained together , as did the Morrises , but Morris and Georgiana were close for the rest of their lives .

In 1880 the Burne @-@ Joneses bought Prospect House in Rottingdean , near Brighton in Sussex , as their holiday home , and soon after the next door Aubrey Cottage to create North End House , reflecting the fact that their Fulham home was in North End Road . (Years later , in 1923 , Sir Roderick Jones , head of Reuters , and his wife , playwright and novelist Enid Bagnold , were to add the adjacent Gothic House to the property , which became the inspiration and setting for her play *The Chalk Garden*) .

His troubled son Philip , who became a successful portrait painter , died in 1926 . His adored daughter Margaret (died 1953) married John William Mackail (1850 ? 1945) , the friend and biographer of Morris , and Professor of Poetry at Oxford from 1911 ? 1916 . Their children were the novelists Angela Thirkell and Denis Mackail . In an edition of the boys ' magazine , *Chums* (No. 227 , Vol . V , 13 January 1897) , an article on Burne @-@ Jones stated that " his pet grandson used to be punished by being sent to stand in a corner with his face to the wall . One day on being sent there he was delighted to find the wall prettily decorated with fairies , flowers , birds , and bunnies . His indulgent grandfather had utilised his talent to alleviate the tedium of his favourite 's period of penance . "

= = Artistic career = =

= = = Early years : Rossetti and Morris = = =

Burne @-@ Jones once admitted that after leaving Oxford he " found himself at five @-@ and @-@ twenty what he ought to have been at fifteen " . He had had no regular training as a draughtsman , and lacked the confidence of science . But his extraordinary faculty of invention as a designer was already ripening ; his mind , rich in knowledge of classical story and medieval romance , teemed with pictorial subjects , and he set himself to complete his set of skills by resolute labour , witnessed by innumerable drawings . The works of this first period are all more or less tinged by the influence of Rossetti ; but they are already differentiated from the elder master 's style by their more facile though less intensely felt elaboration of imaginative detail . Many are pen @-@ and @-@ ink drawings on vellum , exquisitely finished , of which his *Waxen Image* (1856) is one of the earliest and best examples . Although the subject , medium and manner derive from Rossetti 's inspiration , it is not the hand of a pupil merely , but of a potential master . This was recognized by Rossetti himself , who before long avowed that he had nothing more to teach him .

Burne @-@ Jones 's first sketch in oils dates from this same year , 1856 , and during 1857 he made for Bradfield College the first of what was to be an immense series of cartoons for stained glass . In 1858 he decorated a cabinet with the *Prioress 's Tale* from Geoffrey Chaucer 's *Canterbury Tales* , his first direct illustration of the work of a poet whom he especially loved and who inspired him with endless subjects . Thus early , therefore , we see the artist busy in all the various fields in which he was to labour .

In the autumn of 1857 Burne @-@ Jones joined Morris , Valentine Prinsep , J. R. Spencer Stanhope and others in Rossetti 's ill @-@ fated scheme to decorate the walls of the Oxford Union . None of the painters had mastered the technique of fresco , and their pictures had begun to peel from the walls before they were completed . In 1859 Burne @-@ Jones made his first journey to Italy . He saw Florence , Pisa , Siena , Venice and other places , and appears to have found the gentle and romantic Sienese more attractive than any other school . Rossetti 's influence still persisted , and is visible , more strongly perhaps than ever before , in the two watercolours of 1860 , Sidonia von Bork and Clara von Bork . Both paintings illustrate the 1849 gothic novel Sidonia the Sorceress by Lady Wilde , a translation of Sidonia Von Bork : Die Klosterhexe (1847) by Johann Wilhelm Meinhold .

= = = Decorative arts : Morris & Co . = = =

In 1861 , William Morris founded the decorative arts firm of Morris , Marshall , Faulkner & Co. with Rossetti , Burne @-@ Jones , Ford Madox Brown and Philip Webb as partners , together with Charles Faulkner and Peter Paul Marshall , the former of whom was a member of the Oxford Brotherhood , and the latter a friend of Brown and Rossetti . The prospectus set forth that the firm would undertake carving , stained glass , metal @-@ work , paper @-@ hangings , chintzes (printed fabrics) , and carpets . The decoration of churches was from the first an important part of the business . The work shown by the firm at the 1862 International Exhibition attracted much notice , and within a few years it was flourishing . Two significant secular commissions helped establish the firm 's reputation in the late 1860s : a royal project at St. James 's Palace and the " green dining room " at the South Kensington Museum (now the Victoria and Albert) of 1867 which featured stained glass windows and panel figures by Burne @-@ Jones .

In 1871 Morris & Co. were responsible for the windows at All Saints , designed by Burne @-@ Jones for Alfred Baldwin , his wife 's brother @-@ in @-@ law . The firm was reorganized as Morris & Co. in 1875 , and Burne @-@ Jones continued to contribute designs for stained glass , and later tapestries until the end of his career . Stained glass windows in the Christ Church cathedral and other buildings in Oxford are by William Morris & Co. with designs by Burne @-@ Jones Stanmore Hall was the last major decorating commission executed by Morris & Co. before Morris 's death in 1896 . It was also the most extensive commission undertaken by the firm , and included a series of tapestries based on the story of the Holy Grail for the dining room , with figures by Burne @-@ Jones .

In 1891 Jones was elected a member of the Art Workers Guild .

= = = Illustration work = = =

Although known primarily as a painter , Burne @-@ Jones was also an illustrator , helping the Pre @-@ Raphaelite aesthetic to enter mainstream awareness . In addition , he designed books for the Kelmscott Press between 1892 and 1898 . His illustrations appeared in the following books , among others :

The Fairy Family by Archibald Maclaren (1857)

The Earthly Paradise by William Morris (not completed)

The Works of Geoffrey Chaucer by Geoffrey Chaucer (1896)

Bible Gallery by Dalziel (1881)

= = = Painting = = =

In 1864 Burne @-@ Jones was elected an associate of the Society of Painters in Water @-@ Colours (also known as the Old Water @-@ Colour Society) , and exhibited , among other works , The Merciful Knight , the first picture which fully revealed his ripened personality as an artist . The next six years saw a series of fine watercolours at the same gallery . In 1866 Mrs Cassavetti commissioned Burne @-@ Jones to paint her daughter , Maria Zambaco , in Cupid finding Psyche ,

an introduction which led to their tragic affair . In 1870 , Burne -@-@ Jones resigned his membership following a controversy over his painting Phyllis and Demophoön . The features of Maria Zambaco were clearly recognizable in the barely draped Phyllis (as they are in several of Burne -@-@ Jones 's finest works) , and the undraped nakedness of Demophoön coupled with the suggestion of female sexual assertiveness offended Victorian sensibilities . Burne -@-@ Jones was asked to make a slight alteration , but instead " withdrew not only the picture from the walls , but himself from the Society . "

During the next seven years , 1870 ? 1877 , only two works of the painter 's were exhibited . These were two water -@-@ colours , shown at the Dudley Gallery in 1873 , one of them being the beautiful Love among the Ruins , destroyed twenty years later by a cleaner who supposed it to be an oil painting , but afterwards reproduced in oils by the painter . This silent period was , however , one of unremitting production . Hitherto Burne -@-@ Jones had worked almost entirely in water -@-@ colours . He now began a number of large pictures in oils , working at them in turn , and having always several on hand . The first Briar Rose series , Laus Veneris , the Golden Stairs , the Pygmalion series , and The Mirror of Venus are among the works planned and completed , or carried far towards completion , during these years . These years also mark the beginnings of Burne -@-@ Jones 's partnership with the fine -@-@ art photographer Frederick Hollyer , whose reproductions of paintings and ? especially ? drawings would expose a wider audience to Burne -@-@ Jones 's works in the coming decades .

At last , in May 1877 , the day of recognition came , with the opening of the first exhibition of the Grosvenor Gallery , when the Days of Creation , The Beguiling of Merlin , and the Mirror of Venus were all shown . Burne -@-@ Jones followed up the signal success of these pictures with Laus Veneris , the Chant d 'Amour , Pan and Psyche , and other works , exhibited in 1878 . Most of these pictures are painted in brilliant colours . A change is noticeable the next year , 1879 , in the Annunciation and in the four pictures making up the second series of Pygmalion and the Image ; the former of these , one of the simplest and most perfect of the artist 's works , is subdued and sober ; in the latter a scheme of soft and delicate tints was attempted , not with entire success . A similar temperance of colours marks The Golden Stairs , first exhibited in 1880 . The almost sombre Wheel of Fortune was shown in 1883 , followed in 1884 by King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid , in which Burne -@-@ Jones once more indulged his love of gorgeous colour , refined by the period of self -@-@ restraint . He next turned to two important sets of pictures , The Briar Rose and The Story of Perseus , though these were not completed for some years .

Burne -@-@ Jones was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1885 , and the following year he exhibited (for the only time) at the Academy , showing The Depths of the Sea , a painting of a mermaid carrying down with her a youth whom she has unconsciously drowned in the impetuosity of her love . This picture adds to the habitual haunting charm a tragic irony of conception and a felicity of execution which give it a place apart among Burne -@-@ Jones 's works . He formally resigned his Associateship in 1893 . One of the Perseus series was exhibited in 1887 , two more in 1888 , with The Brazen Tower , inspired by the same legend . In 1890 the second series of The Legend of Briar Rose were exhibited by themselves , and won the widest admiration . The huge watercolor , The Star of Bethlehem , painted for the corporation of Birmingham , was exhibited in 1891 . A long illness for some time checked the painter 's activity , which , when resumed , was much occupied with decorative schemes . An exhibition of his work was held at the New Gallery in the winter of 1892 -@-@ 1893 . To this period belong several of his comparatively few portraits . In 1894 Burne -@-@ Jones was made a baronet . Ill -@-@ health again interrupted the progress of his works , chief among which was the vast Arthur in Avalon . In the winter following his death a second exhibition of his works was held at the New Gallery , and an exhibition of his drawings (including some of the charmingly humorous sketches made for children) at the Burlington Fine Arts Club .

= = = Design for the theatre = = =

In 1894 , theatrical manager and actor Henry Irving commissioned Burne -@-@ Jones to design sets and costumes for the Lyceum Theatre production of King Arthur by J. Comyns Carr , who was

Burne @-@ Jones 's patron and the director of the New Gallery as well as a playwright . The play starred Irving as King Arthur and Ellen Terry as Guinevere , and toured America following its London run . Burne @-@ Jones accepted the commission with some enthusiasm , but was disappointed with much of the final result . He wrote confidentially to his friend Helen Mary Gaskell (known as May) , " The armour is good ? they have taken pains with it ... Perceval looked the one romantic thing in it ... I hate the stage , don 't tell ? but I do . "

= = = Aesthetics = = =

Burne @-@ Jones 's paintings were one strand in the evolving tapestry of Aestheticism from the 1860s through the 1880s , which considered that art should be valued as an object of beauty engendering a sensual response , rather than for the story or moral implicit in the subject matter . In many ways this was antithetical to the ideals of Ruskin and the early Pre @-@ Raphaelites .

Burne @-@ Jones 's aim in art is best given in some of his own words , written to a friend :

I mean by a picture a beautiful , romantic dream of something that never was , never will be - in a light better than any light that ever shone - in a land no one can define or remember , only desire - and the forms divinely beautiful - and then I wake up , with the waking of Brynhild .

No artist was ever more true to his aim . Ideals resolutely pursued are apt to provoke the resentment of the world , and Burne @-@ Jones encountered , endured and conquered an extraordinary amount of angry criticism . Insofar as this was directed against the lack of realism in his pictures , it was beside the point . The earth , the sky , the rocks , the trees , the men and women of Burne @-@ Jones are not those of this world ; but they are themselves a world , consistent with itself , and having therefore its own reality . Charged with the beauty and with the strangeness of dreams , it has nothing of a dream 's incoherence . Yet it is a dreamer always whose nature penetrates these works , a nature out of sympathy with struggle and strenuous action . Burne @-@ Jones 's men and women are dreamers too . It was this which , more than anything else , estranged him from the age into which he was born . But he had an inbred " revolt from fact " which would have estranged him from the actualities of any age . That criticism seems to be more justified which has found in him a lack of such victorious energy and mastery over his materials as would have enabled him to carry out his conceptions in their original intensity . Yet Burne @-@ Jones was singularly strenuous in production . His industry was inexhaustible , and needed to be , if it was to keep pace with the constant pressure of his ideas . Whatever faults his paintings may have , they have always the fundamental virtue of design ; they are always pictures . His designs were informed with a mind of romantic temper , apt in the discovery of beautiful subjects , and impassioned with a delight in pure and variegated colour .

= = Honours = =

In 1881 Burne @-@ Jones received an honorary degree from Oxford , and was made an Honorary Fellow in 1882 . In 1885 he became the President of the Birmingham Society of Artists . At about that time he began hyphenating his name , merely ? as he wrote later ? to avoid " annihilation " in the mass of Joneses . In November 1893 , he was approached to see if he would accept a Baronetcy on the recommendation of the outgoing Prime Minister William Ewart Gladstone , the following February he legally changed his name to Burne @-@ Jones . He was formally created a baronet of Rottingdean , in the county of Sussex , and of the Grange , in the parish of Fulham , in the county of London in the baronetage of the United Kingdom on 3 May 1894 , but remained unhappy about accepting the honour , which disgusted his socialist friend Morris and was scorned by his equally socialist wife Georgiana . Only his son Philip , who mixed with the set of the Prince of Wales and would inherit the title , truly wanted it .

Morris died in 1896 , and the health of the devastated Burne @-@ Jones declined substantially . In 1898 he suffered an attack of influenza , and had apparently recovered when he was again taken suddenly ill , and died on 17 June 1898 . Six days later , at the intervention of the Prince of Wales , a memorial service was held at Westminster Abbey . It was the first time an artist had been so

honoured . Burne Jones was buried in the churchyard at St Margaret 's Church , Rottingdean , a place he knew through summer family holidays .

= = Influence = =

Burne Jones exerted a considerable influence on French painting . He was also highly influential among French symbolist painters , from 1889 . His work inspired poetry by Swinburne ? Swinburne 's 1866 Poems & Ballads is dedicated to Burne Jones .

Three of Burne Jones 's studio assistants , John Melhuish Strudwick , T. M. Rooke and Charles Fairfax Murray , went on to successful painting careers . Murray later became an important collector and respected art dealer . Between 1903 and 1907 he sold a great many works by Burne Jones and the Pre Raphaelites to the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery , at far below their market worth . Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery now has the largest collection of works by Burne Jones in the world , including the massive watercolour Star of Bethlehem , commissioned for the Gallery in 1897 . The paintings are believed by some to have influenced the young J. R. R. Tolkien , then growing up in Birmingham .

Burne Jones was also a very strong influence on the Birmingham Group of artists , from the 1890s onwards .

= = Neglect and rediscovery = =

On 16 June 1933 , Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin , a nephew of Burne Jones , officially opened the centenary exhibition featuring Burne Jones 's drawings and paintings at the Tate Gallery in London . In his opening speech at the exhibition , Mr Baldwin expressed what the art of Burne Jones stood for :

In my view , what he did for us common people was to open , as never had been opened before , magic casements of a land of faery in which he lived throughout his life ... It is in that inner world we can cherish in peace , beauty which he has left us and in which there is peace at least for ourselves . The few of us who knew him and loved him well , always keep him in our hearts , but his work will go on long after we have passed away . It may give its message in one generation to a few or in other to many more , but there it will be for ever for those who seek in their generation , for beauty and for those who can recognise and reverence a great man , and a great artist .

But , in fact , long before 1933 , Burne Jones was hopelessly out of fashion in the art world , much of which soon preferred the major trends in Modern art , and the exhibit marking the 100th anniversary of his birth was a sad affair , poorly attended . It was not until the mid 1970s that his work began to be re assessed and once again acclaimed . A major exhibit in 1989 at the Barbican Art Gallery , London (in book form as : John Christian , The Last Romantics , 1989) , traced Burne Jones 's influence on the next generation of artists , and another at Tate Britain in 1997 explored the links between British Aestheticism and Symbolism .

A second lavish centenary exhibit ? this time marking the 100th anniversary of Burne Jones 's death ? was held at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York in 1998 , before traveling to the Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and the Musée d 'Orsay , Paris .

Fiona MacCarthy , in a review of Burne Jones 's legacy , notes that he was " a painter who , while quintessentially Victorian , leads us forward to the psychological and sexual introspection of the early twentieth century " .

= = Gallery = =

= = = Stained and painted glass = = =

= = = Drawings = = =

= = = Paintings = = =

Early works

Pygmalion (first series)

Pygmalion and the Image (second series)

The Grosvenor Gallery years

The Legend of Briar Rose (second series)

Later works

= = = Decorative arts = = =

= = = Theatre = = =

= = = Photographs = = =