

there is some cause for worry when a figure such as Sir Charles Eastlake, painter, President of the Royal Academy, Keeper and then Director of the National Gallery, connoisseur, and man of affairs in Queen Victoria's reign does not appear, and neither does his wife, Elizabeth Rigby, Lady Eastlake. Both wrote prolifically on the arts in their letters and diaries, and her *Memoir of Sir Charles Eastlake* (1870), gives a broad view of Victorian art. David Robertson's important book, *Sir Charles Eastlake and the Victorian Art World* (1978), should not have been ignored.

Another serious omission that unbalances the book is any mention of "The Independents." Whistler is mentioned, but Sickert, Steer, and his friends at the New English Art Club, the realists of the Newlyn School, the London Impressionists, and "the Glasgow boys," appear to have no role except possibly as "degenerates," following the popular journalism of the day. France and its art are hardly mentioned, as if the English Channel were an impenetrable barrier. Codell has written interestingly elsewhere about this aspect of Victorian art: "Artists' Professional Societies: Production, Consumption, and Aesthetics," in *Towards a Modern Art World*, Brian Allen, ed. (1995), and she could have incorporated some of her findings in this book. Sickert, for example, was an inveterate commentator on the art scene and should have been included.

Finally, at the end, there is a section on "gifting," used in an anthropological sense, which, supposedly, improved the status of both artist and donor. Feelings of local loyalty or sheer generosity are not considered as reasons for "gifting." Nevertheless, none of the major repositories of Pre-Raphaelite and High Victorian art received any gifts directly from the artists or their patrons, with one or two exceptions. The leading English collections, the Tate, the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool, the City Art Gallery, Manchester, the City Museum and Art Gallery, Birmingham, and the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge all founded in the nineteenth century, and the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford (the last two the fortunate recipients of generous alumni) were all put together by later purchase, some directly from artists' sales, such as two of the Rossettis at Birmingham (1883), and others by local subscribers getting together to found and fund their museums. This could possibly be described as the tribal elders paying homage at the altar of their local god but not "gifting." Charles Fairfax Murray, dealer and connoisseur, was very generous to a number of museums but he was also active as a seller. J. R. Holliday, a Birmingham solicitor, and connoisseur of drawings and watercolors, was generous to other museums as well as to his own city.

Codell argues that Victorian lifewritings were "predicated in the presentation of a mutually reflecting mirror between public and artist" (p. 6), but this was clearly not always the case, particularly if we have a broader view of Victorian art. Even Sickert, the rebel, eventually looked back with nostalgia to Victorian images.

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Ysanne Holt. *British Artists and the Modernist Landscape*. Burlington, VT: Ashgate. 2003. Pp. xii, 200. \$99.95. ISBN 0-7546-0073-4.

The subject of landscape painting holds a venerable, if not preeminent, position in the history of British art. The sweeping country estates that arise as presences in Gainsborough's canvases seem inevitably to culminate in the naturalist intricacies of Constable and the historicized spectacles of Turner. While these later eighteenth and mid-nineteenth century works are extremely well known, British landscape paintings produced during the later

nineteenth and early twentieth centuries are far less familiar. Despite the diminished emphasis typically placed on the genre during the ascendancy of modernism, landscape represented a crucial site of cultural production where tensions played out between British national identity and the social pressures of modernity.

In her important new book, *British Artists and the Modernist Landscape*, Ysanne Holt undertakes to excavate this social, ideological, and aesthetic terrain. In so doing, she sheds valuable light on a historically significant, if relatively neglected, component of British art history. The study is organized into seven thematically oriented chapters preceded by an Introduction on "Landscape and Modernity." At the outset, Holt establishes the central themes of the text, particularly the ways in which nostalgia for an idealized rural past served as a means to express contemporary anxieties over the health, virility, and potential degeneracy of the British nation and its subjects. This interpretive approach enables Holt to trace "the deep-rooted tendency to define a connection between land, countryside and nation as somehow innately English [that] predominated throughout the Edwardian era and into the inter-war period" (p. 4), just as the visual language of modernism was deployed to "counter the fragmentation, the rootlessness, and the attenuated sense of self that characterized the experience of modernity" (p. 8). These leitmotifs recur throughout a diverse range of visual materials, from idealized depictions of traditional English rural laborers to exoticized images of gypsies, from the ostensibly nonrepressed Arcadian paganism of the *Rhythm* group to the hybrid appeal of the garden city.

Holt begins her analysis by examining the ways in which harmonious images of rustic peasant laborers by George Clausen, Edward Stott, and H. H. La Thangue served as counterpoints to contrasting, and potentially threatening, conceptions of an urban industrial proletariat. She then considers the ways in which Philip Wilson Steer—an artist who served as the subject of an earlier monograph by Holt (1992)—was able to synthesize impressionistic painterly styles with romanticized views of the English countryside to produce images that could be seen as nationalist and modernist at once. One of the most fascinating chapters of the study concerns Holt's discussion of Augustus John, particularly the ways in which John's Nietzschean-inspired, heroically masculinist images of gypsies reflected larger cultural preoccupations with primitivism, exoticism, colonialism, nostalgia, and gendered creativity. In his artworks, John often invested himself and his family members with gypsy identities, thereby cultivating a form of fashionable bohemianism that was central to his artistic self-construction. By engaging these themes, Holt's scholarship serves as an apt complement to Lisa Tickner's analysis of John in *Modern Life and Modern Subjects: British Art in the Early Twentieth Century* (2000). In the fourth chapter of her study, Holt similarly examines the Bergsonian-inflected pursuit of fleshly pleasures in the idealized Mediterranean landscapes of the *Rhythm* group, which included J. D. Fergusson, S. J. Peplow, and Anne Estelle Rice. She then turns to idealized representations of the Cornwall seaside in the images of Laura Knight and Henry Scott Tuke, focusing on the appeal that notions of health, purity, childhood, beauty, leisure, and affluence would have held for their contemporary Edwardian audience. In chapter six Holt considers Spencer Gore's images of Letchworth, a garden city that was illusively presented as a successful harmonization of urban modernity and the pastoral idyll. In the final chapter of the study, Holt examines how landscape became invested with religious, mystical, and spiritual associations on the eve of the First World War, thereby reinforcing familiar conceptions of archetypal English identity during a period of national crisis and upheaval.

An earlier version of the chapter on Spencer Gore was published in *The Geographies of Englishness: Landscape and the National Past, 1880–1940* (2002), a volume for which Holt, David Peters Corbett, and Fiona Russell served as co-editors. *British Artists and the Modernist Landscape* is very much an extension of the larger intellectual project undertaken in *The Geographies of Englishness*, as scholars critically reconsider the relationship between English national identity and its expression in the visual arts. Thus *British Artists and the Modernist Landscape* is a needed and solid book, but its arguments are not surprising. Holt's interpretive approach is informed by the writings of W. J. T. Mitchell, Raymond Williams, E. P. Thompson, Edward Said, Stephen Daniels, and Andrew Hemingway. While this theoretical base is instrumental for her exploration of the contextual embeddedness of British landscape painting in its social and cultural history, the study would have benefitted from a broader historical and theoretical engagement with related scholarly texts. These include Lynda Nead's discussion of the ways in which bourgeois conceptions of class and gender were presented in a high cultural context in Victorian images of the rural idyll in *Myths of Sexuality: Representations of Women in Victorian Britain* (1988); Kay Dian Kriz's analysis of nineteenth-century English landscape paintings as privileged sites for historical recollection and conceptions of moral purity that engaged the interests of their national public in *The Idea of the English Landscape Painter: Genius as Alibi in the Early Nineteenth-Century* (1997); and Susan Stewart's formulation of nostalgia as a site of subjective desire in *On Longing: Narratives of the Miniature, the Gigantic, the Souvenir, the Collection* (1984).

These comments aside, Holt's volume treats these artistic and cultural subjects in-depth and with sustained analytical rigor. As such, *British Artists and the Modernist Landscape* valuably extends our understanding of the relations between nationalism, modernism, and the landscape tradition within a crucial yet underexplored period of British art history.

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Len Holden. *Vauxhall Motors and the Luton Economy, 1900–2002*. (The Publications of the Bedfordshire Historical Record Society, Volume 82.) Rochester, N. Y.: The Boydell Press. 2003. Pp. xviii, 249. \$39.95. ISBN 0- 85155-068-1.

This book is a welcome addition to the rather sparse literature on the history of General Motors and in particular its British subsidiary Vauxhall Motors. The volume traces the history of vehicle production in Luton from the emergence of Vauxhall as a vehicle manufacturer prior to World War I to the ending of vehicle production in the city in 2002. It relies heavily on secondary literature and interviews with former Vauxhall workers and managers.

Like many of the British firms in the pre-World War I period, Vauxhall began producing short runs of relatively expensive vehicles. After World War I, management remained wedded to producing short runs of higher priced vehicles, even as British firms like Vauxhall struggled to meet the competition coming from U.S. firms employing mass production techniques. They did experiment with the new mass production techniques; however, the limited extent of their adoption left Vauxhall unable to compete in any of the market segments dominated by Ford, and later Austin and Morris. By 1925, the firm was virtually bankrupt and only the decision by GM to invest in the operation allowed it to survive.

GM was a relatively late entrant into the U.K. vehicle market. It began assembling knocked down kits shipped from the United States in the early 1920s. Shortly thereafter, it began a