

## Exercises about Pre-Raphaelitism and Aesthetism

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n.1

- 1) Aesthetic Movement began in the last decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> century in France with Théophile Gautier.
- 2) The movement reflected the precariousness of the artist and reacted against the materialism and the strict moral code of the middle class (bourgeoisie).
- 3) The motto of Aesthetism was “Art for Art's Sake”.
- 4) The Aesthete lived following the beauty in sensations and excess.

n.2

- 1) and
- 2) the
- 3) with
- 4) the
- 5) of
- 6) from
- 7) a
- 8) was
- 9) of
- 10) many

n.3

The **first phase of Pre-Raphaelitism** began at the end of the **1840s** with the young painters William Holman **Hunt** and John Everett **Millais**. It **criticised** the **academic** taste and all the classical doctrines, praising the simplicity of the Italian art of the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries. It was characterised by the qualities of **medieval Italian art** and a special attention to the **details**, **rejecting** the **Victorian** society and its art, researching **beauty** as it were a duty owed to society. The **second phase of Pre-Raphaelitism** knows his development under the guide of **Dante Gabriel Rossetti** and took place in the late **1850s**. It is called “Aesthetic Pre-Raphaelitism”. Its characteristics were a return on **handicraft** and on **simple decoration**, in **contrast** with industrial machinery and **Victorian** aesthetic eclecticism.

The successors of the Pre-Raphaelitism were **Aesthetes and Decadents**, which emphasised **medieval erotic themes**, combining **realism with symbolism**, with the result of a dreamy atmosphere.

### Internet lab

“Ophelia”, John Everett Millai

The source of the painting: suicide of Ophelia, “Hamlet” (Act IV, Scene VII)

The painter's aim: vulnerability of the woman (one of the most frequent themes of Pre-Raphaelitism); combine a subject of the English literature (detached from the neoclassic models) with the analytical study of the nature.

The model: Elizabeth Siddal, wife of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. She is represented in a pose that reminds the traditional portrayals of saints but also an erotic one.

The technique: use of bright colours, attention on details, painting *en plein air* of the nature, extremely precise

The background: nature around a river (Hogswill, Surrey)

Symbolism: floral species represent the dramatic condition of Ophelia, narrating her history

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n.1

- 1) The message of his works was subversive and demoralising → life is ugliness, art is beauty, so life should be as art.
- 2) The only way to stop time is dedicating yourself to art.
- 3) Life should be lived as the spirit of art inspires, living intense experiences.
- 4) The writer's task is to feel sensations and to transcribe them.
- 5) As a result, art does not have to refer to life, which is ugly, thus it does not have to be didactic.

n.2

In my own opinion, “dandy” is a person who is snob and thinks only to appear to the other people elegant and beautiful.

n.4

1. The origin of the name “dandy” was a Scottish word meaning “elegant”
2. The term “dandy” came to mean someone who dressed extravagantly and was vain about their appearance.
3. George Bryan Brummell was the first dandy of the history. He had beautiful manners and good fashion sense.
4. Dandysm developed in France and in Britain.
5. They both rebelled against the bourgeois model, but dandies were generally wealthier. Dandies followed perfection of beauty in every aspect of their person; bohemians do not followed perfection, but they choose to live a life searching extreme sensations.