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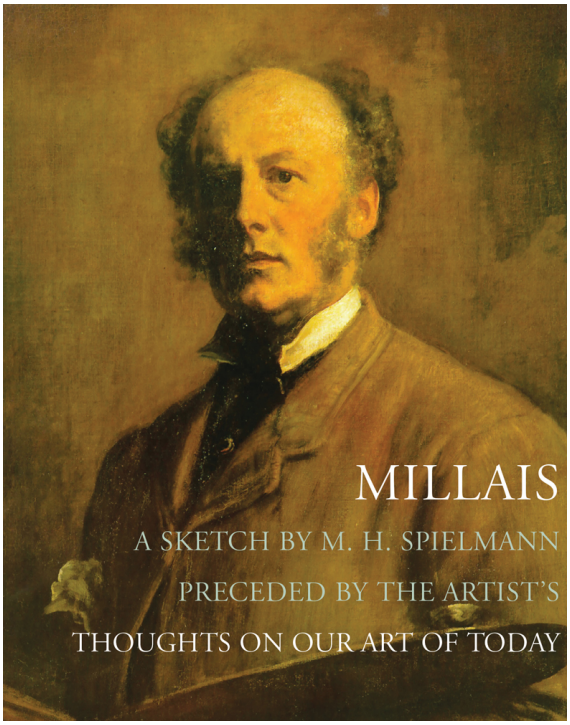

Millais

A Sketch by M. H. Spielmann, Preceded by the Artist's Thoughts on our Art of Today

John Everett Millais

Marion Harry Spielmann

Edited by Jason Rosenfeld

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- Millais's own account of his art, and an assessment by one of the most influential critics of the period

Reprinted for the first time since 1889, this is the first biography and considered appraisal of one of England's most prodigiously talented painters. Sir John Everett Millais, P. R. A. (1829-1896) was the most precociously talented artist England has ever produced. His astonishing facility gained him entry as the Royal Academy's youngest ever pupil. At just 19 he founded with six other painters the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which revolutionised the English art world with a visionary intensity of both subject matter and style. Millais was its most creative member; as Jason Rosenfeld says in the introduction to this volume, "the sheer quality and distinctness of each of Millais's paintings of the 1850s is unmatched by any Western artist of the period." Yet there is much more to Millais' career than Pre-Raphaelitism. Some of the most emotive narrative paintings of the Victorian era, its greatest portraits, and especially some of its most beautiful, if neglected, landscapes, came from his brush – as did some of its most notoriously successful paintings, like*Bubbles*, the "fancy picture" that was made into an advertisement for Pears' Soap. This volume includes not only Millais's only published work of art criticism, the pithy "Thoughts on Our Art of Today," but also the first extended biography and appraisal of his work by the important critic M. H. Spielmann. This hugely engaging "Sketch" gives both a warm and personal picture of the man and a level-headed evaluation of the qualities – and defects – of his work as they appeared to contemporaries. Neither essay has been in print for more than a century.

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