



An Indolent and Blundering Art?: The Etching Revival and the Redefinition of Etching in England 1838-1892

Emma Chambers

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English etching changed radically during the 19th century. The new style of work gave etching a distinctive appearance which was allied to theories of the sketch and of working direct from nature and reliant on swift execution. The freedom and directness of the etching process became a key plank in a sustained effort to raise the status of etching in Britain spearheaded by artists such as Francis Seymour Haden and James McNeill Whistler and members of the Etching Club. This volume opens with a description of the use of language and art criticism to redefine etching as art rather than craft and the use of art institutions and the art market in this process, in the first half of the 19th century. Focused on Britain, the book offers an investigation of the market for etchings in the Victorian period. It is arranged around a number of topics including developing styles and the language used to describe the work, etching clubs, the market, hierarchies of medium and genre, shifting boundaries between the amateur and professional artist and the prestige of different types of artistic practice such as etching from nature and book illustration.

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