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The Pre-Raphaelites and the Mythic Image: Iconographies of Women

Alicia Craig Faxon

In this essay, I consider the role of figures of classical mythology in the paintings of Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882) and Edward Burne-Jones (1833–1896) for whom myth acted as a metaphor for their lives and loves. In contradistinction to Victorian classicists, such as Frederic Leighton and Edward Poynter, Rossetti's and Burne-Jones's goddesses were not merely Venuses or Pandoras re-imagined; instead they spoke in a disguised language of real women in their lives. The new science of archaeology brought to light artistic examples and mythic presences of classical antiquity that Pre-Raphaelite artists, especially Rossetti and Burne-Jones, appropriated to represent the present in a metaphorical dialogue of concealed reference, symbols, and tensions.

Keywords: Pre-Raphaelite; Classical Myth; Image; Rossetti, Dante Gabriel (1828–1882); Burne-Jones, Edward (1833–1896); Morris, Jane Burden (1839–1914); Morris, William (1834–1896)

While it has been argued that the original Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood employed unconventional representations of religious subject matter in their paintings, there has been no critical evaluation of the second Pre-Raphaelite group around Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828–1882), Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833–1896), and William Morris (1834–1896) and their unorthodox application of classical mythology to their own lives.¹ In their works, the second Pre-Raphaelites combined Greek mythology and art with contemporary concerns of the artists to create new views of both past and present as interpreted through archaeology, literature, and newly available Greek art, which had previously been known mainly by Roman copies of original Greek art. In an era of a rapidly changing environment of industrialization, mass production, and transportation, artists looked to the perceived stability of myths, classical literature, and art recently discovered by archaeological excavations for traditional standards in a time of transition and flux.

Unlike academic artists such as Frederic Leighton (1830–1896) and George Frederick Watts (1817–1904) who used classical figures for their works, Rossetti and Burne-Jones often appropriated myths of classical antiquity to reveal the relationships of their lives and loves. Rossetti's painted series of goddesses (*Pandora*, *Proserpine*, *Astarte Syriaca*, *Mnemosyne*) show qualities of his lover Jane Morris (1839–1914) in classical guise and Burne-Jones's *Troy Town* series (1870–1898, various sizes and locations) comments on the destructive power of love embodied in his affair with Maria

Zambaco (1843–1914). These icons, especially in Rossetti’s overpowering images, became connected with Victorian fears of powerful women, especially shown in the agitation for independence and women’s suffrage. Rossetti’s atypical use of mythology threatened such stereotypes as the helpless damsel and the Victorian trope of the rescue scenario, although Burne-Jones’s *Perseus Series* (1877–1885, Southampton City Art Gallery) employed the myth of rescue, using William Morris’s “The Doom of King Acrisius” in *The Earthly Paradise* (1868–1870) and images from Greek vases in London’s British Museum. Medusa, the terrifying Gorgon, who turned men to stone by her gaze, embodied the threat of the empowered woman in this painting cycle.

For the Pre-Raphaelite painters, classical myth represented a *modus operandi* to express aspects of their own lives, loves, and dilemmas. A myth could be used as an encoded message revealing the artist’s emotions, fears, hopes, and triumphs. Mythology, the language of the past, was a device to describe the present, not as a quaint fable but as a living, breathing reality. The interest in mythology and classical art was inspired by a series of archaeological discoveries that unearthed hitherto unknown art and architecture. The study of Greek art was fostered by the Society of Dilettanti founded in 1734. The qualification for membership was having been to Italy and having seen the ruins of antiquity there. As a group, they financed expeditions to Greece to discover and publish Greek art and architecture such as the expedition of James Stewart (1713–1788) and Nicholas Revett (1720–1804) who published *Antiquities of Athens* in four volumes between 1762 and 1816.

Another impetus to the interest in classical art and mythology was the discovery of the cities of Herculaneum in 1738 and Pompeii in 1748, both buried under the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE. Sir William Hamilton (1730–1803) was Ambassador and Envoy Extraordinary to the Court of Naples (1764–1800) where these cities were found and joined enthusiastically in the hunt for Greek vases and sculptures. He amassed one of the largest collections of Greek vases in private hands and published his first vase collection, magnificently illustrated in five volumes, between 1766 and 1785, compiled by Pierre-François Hugues d’Hancarville (1719–1805), a connoisseur and amateur art dealer. In 1772, he sold the collection to Parliament for £8,400 and it became available in the British Museum for artists to cull early representations of Greek mythology.

The most important excavations in Greece were carried out under Thomas Bruce, seventh Earl of Elgin (1766–1841). In 1799, Lord Elgin was appointed the British ambassador to Constantinople, a post he held until 1803. Greece at this time was under Turkish rule. He came to Athens in 1800 and saw the wreck of the Parthenon (447–438 BCE)—its roof blown off in 1687 by the Venetians in the war with Turkey. Many of the sculptures, which had been on its pediments, were now disintegrating on the ground. Lord Elgin sent for artists to make drawings of the art and architecture and to make casts of the friezes and metopes (the rectangular architectural element that fills the space between two three-sectioned triglyphs in a frieze) of the Parthenon and remaining sculpture. However, in 1801 he got a firman or permit to excavate and remove the marble sculptures from the Acropolis as the Turkish rulers of Greece did not value its art. Under his appointed crew, buried sculptures were unearthed, but metopes and pieces of the friezes were also removed from remaining pediments. With

the assistance of the British navy, these works were carried to England where they were purchased by the British Museum in 1816. In no time, the Elgin Marbles became a dictionary of art and myths for nineteenth-century artists.

Other important excavations followed. In 1811–1812, Charles Robert Cockrell (1788–1863) excavated the temple of Aphaia at Aegina and the temple of Apollo Epicurius at Bassae, the frieze of which was sent to the British Museum; he published his findings in 1860. Charles Newton (1816–1894) excavated the mausoleum at Halicarnassus (352 BCE) in 1856 and the sanctuary of Cnidus in 1859 from which the Demeter of Cnidus went to the British Museum. Interest in these new discoveries led artists George Frederick Watts, Valentine Prinsep (1838–1904), and John Roddam Spencer Stanhope (1829–1908) to Budrum to record the recovery of the mausoleum at Halicarnassus in the fall of 1856. Two other excavations brought famous sculptures to the Louvre in Paris: the *Venus de Milo*, found on the island of Melos in 1820, and the *Winged Victory*, discovered in 1861 on the island of Samothrace.

One of the most famous explorers of this period was Heinrich Schliemann (1822–1890), a German businessman and banker who retired at forty-six to search for Homer's Troy at Hissarlik in Turkey in 1868. His first excavations at Troy took place from October 1871 to June 1873, and he returned in 1878, 1879, 1882, and 1890. He recorded his findings in *Troy and its Remains*, first published in English in 1875, and his Trojan treasure was exhibited in 1876–1877 at the South Kensington Museum in London. In 1874–1876, he excavated at Mycenae and published the record of his find in *Mycenae* in 1876. He also dug at Orchomenos in 1880–1881 and Tiryns in 1884–1886. Schliemann published and lectured about his discoveries in England, which were also recorded in the *Illustrated London News* in its regular "Archaeology of the Month" column (1842–1914). The *Illustrated London News* carried news of Schliemann's Trojan and Mycenaean excavations in 1876–1878 in addition to his lecture to the Society of Antiquaries on March 31, 1877. Schliemann's archaeological discoveries were thus made available to English readers, and the mythic past became very much part of the present.

Another archaeological find of interest to artists was the excavation of thousands of small Tanagra figures in 1870 at a site in Boeotia, twenty-five miles north of Athens. These could be seen in the British Museum and also in English collections like that of Alexander Constantine Ionides (1810–1890), a friend and collector of Pre-Raphaelite artworks.

Besides examples of classical art and myths in museums and private collections, works were disseminated in prints, photographs, and casts. Casts of ancient sculpture were made in both Italy and England. The Royal Academy schools had a large collection of casts that students such as Rossetti copied, and collectors and artists had casts of famous classical art and mythic characters. Both Watts and Leighton had plaster casts of the Elgin Marbles frieze in their studios, and Leighton used the frieze as a background for his self-portrait for the Uffizi Gallery, Florence, 1880. Rossetti owned a plaster cast bust of the *Venus de Milo* as well as one of *Venus antique*.²

In the 1860s and 1870s, the Elgin Marbles and other Greek sculpture galleries at the British Museum were among the museum's star attractions for visitors, including artists. Peak attendance of 15,626 was recorded at the museum in 1879, known from

the record of tickets issued.³ Burne-Jones drew from these sculptures throughout his career. Watts and Leighton were also frequent visitors.

Literary accounts of Greek mythology provided another important influence. Among these were Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, written ca. 1000–800 BCE; Hesiod's *Theogony* of 730–700 BCE; the Homeric *Hymns* from the eighth to the fourth century BCE; Pindar's *Odes* from the end of the sixth century BCE; and a number of Latin translations and accounts, such as Ovid's (43 BCE–17 CE) *Heroides* and *Metamorphoses*, both used by Burne-Jones for his mythological paintings. Alexander Pope's (1688–1744) translation of the *Iliad* (1717–1720) was used by Rossetti in February 1840, to make twenty-seven illustrations for his sister, Maria Francesca.⁴

A number of dictionaries of classical myth and art were also available to Pre-Raphaelite artists. Rossetti owned a copy of John Lemprière's (ca. 1765–1824) *Classical Dictionary*,⁵ first published in 1788, as well as Smith's *Dictionary of Greek and Roman Antiquities* (1842)⁶ with woodcuts of classical art and myth, and four volumes of Hamilton's catalogs of his vase collections.⁷ Another literary source for classical mythology for the Pre-Raphaelites was John Ruskin's (1818–1900) 1869 *Queen of the Air*,⁸ which discussed the meaning of Greek myths. Ruskin promoted the careers of both Rossetti and Burne-Jones, buying their works and introducing them to other patrons. Another possible significant literary influence may have been Walter Pater (1839–1894), who gave two lectures on “The Myth of Demeter and Persephone” at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute in 1875 that were published in the *Fortnightly Review*,⁹ at a time when Rossetti was drawing his representations of Proserpine or Persephone, the Greek name.

The most important source for Pre-Raphaelite artists was William Morris, poet, designer, socialist, and Rossetti's good friend, whose *The Earthly Paradise*, published between 1868 and 1870, translated and retold classical myths. For a projected illustrated edition of Morris's work, Burne-Jones made over one hundred drawings of this work and used these for his paintings of *Cupid and Psyche*, *Pygmalion and the Image* [the sculpture of Galatea], *Perseus Series*.

Beginning in the 1870s, Rossetti's paintings resolved themselves into a series of iconic images bearing the names *Pandora*, *Proserpine*, *Astarte Syriaca* (or *Venus Syriaca*), and *Mnemosyne*. These were accompanied by inscriptions or poems commenting on the meanings of the portrayals. No narrative or situation was shown, but rather a concept was presented in visual and verbal media. There is also a duality in the representation: the goddesses in these paintings were both mythical characters and portraits of his lover, Jane Morris, the wife of his friend William Morris. Morris and Rossetti had met Jane in Oxford in 1857 when Rossetti was engaged to Elizabeth Siddall (1829–1862) whom he married in 1860. It was not until after the death of his wife that Rossetti began to use Jane Morris as his model and later as his last great love. It is the progress of this passion that is reflected in the late series of his goddess images. Furthermore, the image contains the artist's projection of his relationship onto her. In Rossetti's representations, he embodies his own desires in the goddess, inspired by hope from *Pandora*, reunion with *Proserpine*, adoration in *Astarte Syriaca*, and the memory of love in *Mnemosyne*. In the 1879 version of *Pandora* (Fogg Art Museum, Harvard University), the goddess holds a

box with Hope (*Spes* in Latin) inscribed upon it, both exemplifying the myth and the hope of her love. In all versions of *Proserpine* (1874–1877), the goddess is shown in a dark cavern, waiting for her release to the upper world of light and joy, an obvious commentary on Rossetti's characterization of Jane Morris's marriage and his anticipation of time with her. In *Astarte Syriaca* (1877, Manchester City Art Gallery, England), the over-life-size goddess is flanked by two adoring spirits and is crowned by a star suggesting a worship of love by the artist, while in *Mnemosyne* (1881, Delaware Art Museum), the goddess holds the lamp of memory in her right hand with a pansy, the symbol of remembrance, below it, the artist's memory of love translated into art.

Rossetti's use of classical mythology was also a subversion of the text in that he recreated the myth for his own purposes and transformed it into a commentary on his own life. For Rossetti the myth is a pretext in which to cast the theme of his thoughts and desires. Each painting had a verbal text. In this way, the artist's "voice" as well as his hand were included, the separate disciplines of the pictorial and literary fusing to create a total work and also exert artistic control over the viewer's reaction to the conceptual whole. By combining language with image, Rossetti created both physical and mental elements in the painting, a melding of visual and intellectual apprehension of the work.

In Rossetti's images of goddesses, the layers of interpretation include the image of the goddess, her nature, the duality of the representation of both goddess and lover, and the artist's interpretation of the goddess, often expressed in an accompanying poem. In *Pandora*, *Astarte Syriaca*, *Proserpine*, and *Mnemosyne*, Rossetti projects his own desires and experiences onto the image of the goddess, creating yet another subtext—his own relationship with the woman he has embodied as a goddess. In these images, an ideological tension between the real and the imaginary sustains an earlier feature of Pre-Raphaelite painting: a real model, often a friend or relative, posing for a religious, literary, or historical person, and now a mythological figure.

The series of images of goddesses maps the progression of Rossetti's and Jane Morris's relationship. Rossetti's main mythological text appears to be Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*. In Lemprière, Pandora is presented as the first mortal woman who ever lived, according to Hesiod,¹⁰ and is Rossetti's first goddess image in a series of paintings made between 1869 and 1879. In an 1879 version, Pandora holds a box inscribed "Ultima Manet Spes" or "Hope remains at last," which may express Rossetti's hopes. The name Pandora in Greek means "giving all" which may refer to Rossetti's relationship with her as well as a more general meaning.

Rossetti began his representations of *Pandora* in 1869 and did a series, including an example in colored chalk with Jane Morris as his model. According to the myth, Pandora was made of clay by Vulcan as commanded by Zeus, who gave her a casket as a gift to the man who would marry her. Epithmetheus, the brother of Prometheus, married Pandora, and when he opened the box, all the ills it contained were let loose to plague the world. Only Hope remained at the bottom of the casket. In the 1879 version, the casket with its "Ultima Manet Spes" inscription may be an allusion to Jane Morris giving the artist hope, or to his creative powers and his love.

The next major image is a series of paintings of Jane Morris as *Proserpine*, begun in 1877, who in Greek and Roman mythology was the consort of Hades or Pluto, the dark ruler of the underworld, imprisoned by her husband and finding release only occasionally. This goddess (in Greek, Persephone) was abducted by Pluto to be his wife in the underworld. Because she had eaten the seeds of a pomegranate, a symbol of fertility, she was forced to remain with her husband part of the year and allowed to spend the rest of the year with her mother. Rossetti described to his patron Frederick Leyland: “Proserpine looks yearningly towards the momentary light which strikes into her shadowy palace; and the clinging ivy which strays over the wall (in the picture) further suggests the feeling of Memory.”¹¹ Besides the mythological sources, Rossetti may have been inspired by Swinburne’s *Hymn to Proserpina* and *The Garden of Proserpina*, both published in 1866, and by a poem by Aubrey de Vere (1788–1846) with the haunting refrain: “Must I languish here forever / In the empire of Despair?”¹²

The artist worked on eight different versions of this theme between 1871 and 1877. The 1877 version of the painting (private collection, London) includes a scroll in the upper right corner by Rossetti. The scroll contains a sonnet written in Italian, unlike other poems for Rossetti’s paintings. This may be an allusion to Proserpine’s home at Enna in Sicily. Another unique aspect of the poem is that it is the only one in which the depicted subject speaks, rather than being the poet’s commentary on the image. Perhaps the surrogate figure of Proserpine caught in a difficult marriage was so close to the situation of Jane Morris that Rossetti made her the speaking protagonist of the painting.

From October 1875 to June 1876, Rossetti left London to stay at Aldwick Lodge near Bognor Regis, Sussex. Here Jane Morris visited him alone, from early November through March, returning to London only to spend Christmas with her family. While at Aldwick Lodge, Rossetti worked on a three-quarter-length painting of *Astarte Syriaca* or *Venus Astarte*, 1877 (Manchester City Art Gallery), an ancient evocation of Aphrodite or Venus, the classical goddess of love. She embodies one of the earliest love goddesses, “Venus Queen / Ere Aphrodite was,” in Rossetti’s accompanying poem, and would seem to refer to Jane Morris’s role in Rossetti’s life.

The head is taken from a pastel of Jane Morris, *Study for the Head of Astarte Syriaca*, 1875 (Figure 1). The frontal pose of the figure and the positioning of the arms would seem to connect *Astarte Syriaca* with Sandro Botticelli’s (1444/5–1510) *The Birth of Venus* (ca. 1480, Uffizi Gallery, Florence), which Rossetti would have known through photographs from his one-time assistant Charles Fairfax Murray (1849–1919) and also from a chromolithograph of 1870 made by the Arundel Society.

The last goddess Rossetti personified through Jane Morris was Mnemosyne or the goddess of memory and mother of the muses, in *Mnemosyne* or *The Lamp of Memory*, 1881 (Figure 2). A literary text which could be incorporated in this painting is Keats’ poem *Hyperion*, published in 1818, in which Apollo as the persona of the poet meets Mnemosyne, and the encounter makes the poet immortal. By painting Jane Morris as Mnemosyne, Rossetti both deified his love and made a claim for immortality through his art.¹³

In the painting, the goddess holds the lamp of memory in her right hand and on the left is a winged chalice, next to a pansy, the symbol of remembrance, and a branch



Figure 1 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, “Study of Head for the Picture *Astarte Syriaca*,” 1875. Pastel on paper, 54.5 × 45.2 cm. London, Victoria and Albert Museum. Image: V & A Images, London/Art Resource, New York.

of yew, denoting sorrow. The pansy has a more personal meaning as a bearer of a message. The diary of William Scawen Blunt (1840–1922) (Jane’s lover after Rossetti’s death) reveals that Jane would leave a pansy in Blunt’s room as a sign of her desire to make love,¹⁴ probably with the same meaning for Rossetti. Rossetti’s goddesses were a transformation of myth into personal experience and a dialogue between past and present.

The other major Pre-Raphaelite artist whose paintings were iconographic representations of his own life was Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones (1833–1898). Born in Birmingham, he matriculated at Exeter College, Oxford, in 1852 where he met his lifelong friend William Morris (1834–1896). Both had planned to enter religious life, but in 1855, they decided to become artists, partly influenced by seeing Rossetti’s



Figure 2 Dante Gabriel Rossetti, *Mnemosyne*, 1881. Oil on canvas, 126.4 × 62.2 cm. Wilmington, Delaware Art Museum, Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft Memorial, 1935.

illustration to William Allingham's (1824–1889) poem “The Maids of Elfenmere” in Allingham's *The Music Master*.¹⁵ In 1856, Burne-Jones met Rossetti and was invited to come to Rossetti's studio, the beginning of a long friendship of mutual inspiration.

After Burne-Jones's marriage to Georgiana MacDonald (1840–1920) in 1860, the couple moved to 62 Great Russell Street opposite the British Museum whose collections of Greek vases and sculpture were sources for his paintings of mythology. The greatest impetus for Burne-Jones's mythological works was William Morris's proposal to him in 1865 to do drawings for a folio edition of *The Earthly Paradise*, a cycle of twenty-four myths: twelve classical and twelve medieval.¹⁶ Burne-Jones created seventy sketches for “Cupid and Psyche,” twenty for “The Hill of Venus,” and twelve

for “Pygmalion and the Image”—themes that were to continue in his works throughout his career. Another important source for Burne-Jones’s mythological paintings were his four trips to Italy in 1859, 1862, 1871, and 1873, where he viewed classical myths in Renaissance art.

In 1866, Burne-Jones became acquainted with the Greek colony in London. At this time, he met Maria Zambaco (1843–1914), who had married the Parisian doctor Demetrius Zambaco in 1861, had two children in 1864 and 1865, and left him in 1866 to return to her mother Euphrosyne Cassavetti, a member of the Greek colony in London. Burne-Jones fell in love with Zambaco, and she became his main model for his mythological paintings that told both of his infatuation and its disastrous consequences. The affair ended in 1871, but Zambaco’s face and figure continued to haunt Burne-Jones’s art for some time. Three of the works which most reveal Burne-Jones’s relationship with her are the *Pygmalion Series* (1868–1878), *Phyllis and Demophoön* (1870), and the *Perseus* cycle of 1875–1888.

An early version of the *Pygmalion Series* was commissioned in 1868 by Zambaco’s mother as a series of four scenes. A drawing of the nude figure of Zambaco, *The Godhead Fires*, shows her in the pose of Galatea in the third painting of the series, a work related to a drawing of Galatea’s head with Zambaco’s features (1870, Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery; Figure 3). Burne-Jones returned to the same theme in larger versions of the four paintings for the *Pygmalion Series* (Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery), from 1875–1878. In both series, Galatea has the auburn hair and delicate figure of Maria Zambaco. The original story tells of the sculptor who falls in love with his own creation, from the prologue of Morris’s poem “Pygmalion and the Image” in *The Earthly Paradise*, which Burne-Jones’s drawings illustrated. The paintings allude to Maria Zambaco’s career as a sculptor herself embodied in the work of sculpture.

The aftermath of his affair is told in Burne-Jones’s *Phyllis and Demophoön*, 1870 (Figure 4). The subject comes from Ovid’s *Heroides*, later told in Geoffrey Chaucer’s (ca. 1340–1400) *The Legende of Good Women*. Phyllis, the daughter of the king of Thrace, falls in love with Demophoön, a member of the king’s court. He leaves, promising to return but does not keep his promise. Phyllis kills herself and is turned into an almond tree by the gods. When Demophoön finally returns, he sadly holds the tree that then comes to life to embrace him. In the painting the features and auburn hair of Maria Zambaco identify her, but, unlike the myth, the nude figure of Demophoön appears to be fleeing her embrace. The painting was exhibited at the Old Water-Colour Society in 1870 where the full frontal nudity of the male was rejected. Asked by the president to make an alteration, Burne-Jones removed the painting and himself from the society. In the painting, Demophoön seems to be escaping Phyllis’s embraces and looks terrified, a much closer parallel to the events in Burne-Jones’s and Zambaco’s relationship than the myth which inspired the painting. The painting was disturbing to Victorian eyes as it cast the female in an aggressive role and the male in a fearful and retreating one.

In 1871, Arthur Balfour (1848–1930) commissioned Burne-Jones to do a series of paintings to decorate his drawing room. Again, Burne-Jones went to William Morris for his source in “The Doom of King Acrisius” from *The Earthly Paradise*. This was a retelling of the Perseus legend. King Acrisius, hearing that his grandson would kill



Figure 3 Edward Coley Burne-Jones, *Galatea*, n.d. Pencil on paper, 22.2 × 17 cm. London, Maas Gallery. Image: Bridgeman Art Library.

him, sent his daughter and her son Perseus out to sea to perish. They were rescued by Diktys, brother of King Polydektes, who fell in love with Danäe and wanted to marry her, but was opposed by her now full-grown son. To get rid of Perseus, the king asked for the head of the Gorgon Medusa as a birthday present. With the help of the goddess Minerva, Perseus cut off the head of Medusa, rescued Andromeda on the way home, and fulfilled the prophecy by unwittingly killing his grandfather Acrisius.

Burne-Jones's artistic sources started with visits to the British Museum to study the Perseus legend and particularly the ways Medusa had been portrayed on Greek vases. He also returned to twenty-eight drawings he had produced between 1864 and 1868 for William Morris's "The Doom of King Acrisius." Between 1877 and 1885, he painted ten full-scale cartoons, *The Perseus Series* (Southampton City Art Gallery), and later four oil paintings of some of the episodes, *The Perseus Series*, 1885–1888 (Stuttgart, Staatsgalerie). In two of these paintings, Maria Zambaco is obviously the model for the nude figure of Andromeda. In *The Rock of Doom*, Andromeda, chained

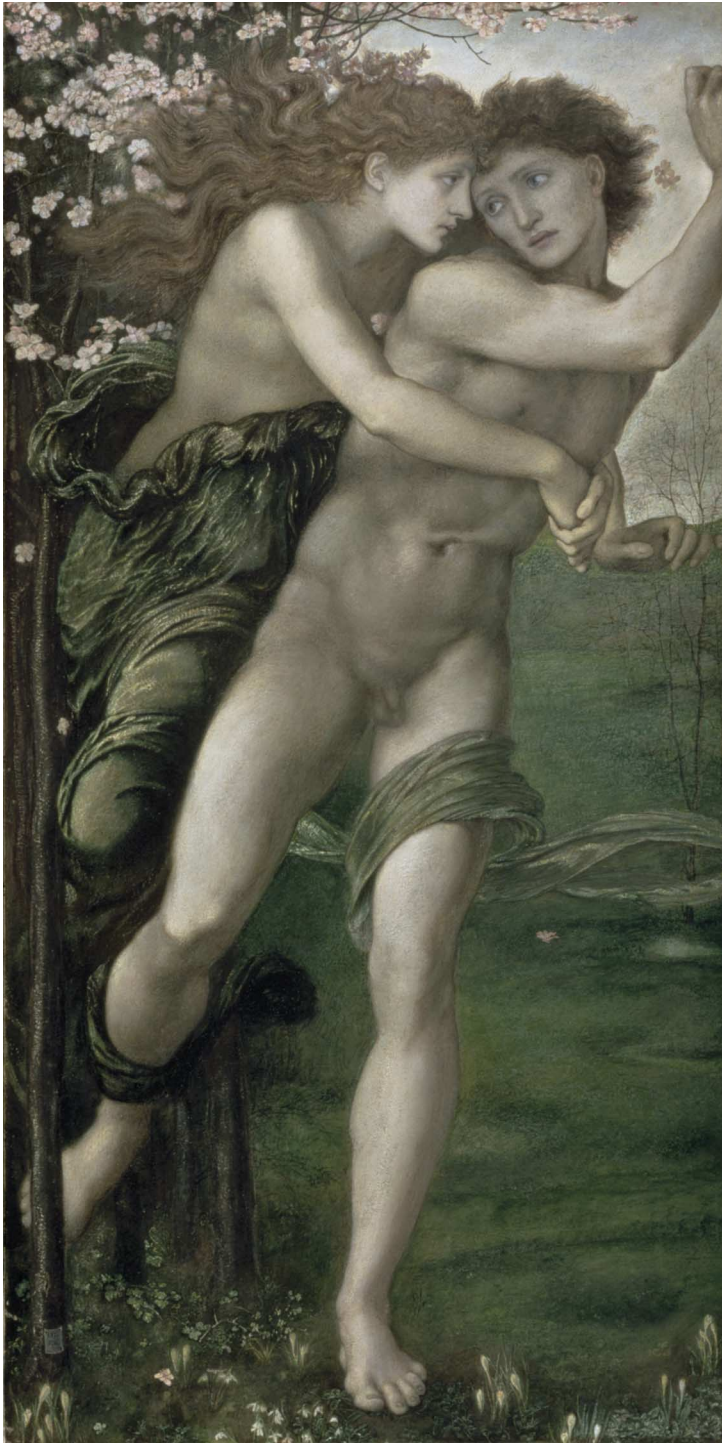


Figure 4 Edward Coley Burne-Jones, *Phyllis and Demophoön*, 1870. Watercolor, gouache, and gum on paper, 91.5 × 45.8 cm. Birmingham Museums and Art Gallery. Image: Bridgeman Art Library.

to a phallic rock, watches the approach of Perseus on the left, wearing winged sandals and armor designed by Burne-Jones. In *The Doom Fulfilled*, Perseus on the right battles a many-coiled sea serpent, perhaps a symbol of lust and danger. Both of these episodes are reproduced very closely in the corresponding oils at Stuttgart.

Burne-Jones did not complete the series in oil, but *The Rock of Doom* and *The Doom Fulfilled* appear to relate to his experiences with Maria Zambaco, both the attraction and his fight against a phallic monster to show the affair's consequences. Burne-Jones went back to his wife and family, but his love for Zambaco continued to haunt his dreams and his art, a myth both ancient and present.

For the Pre-Raphaelite artists, myth allowed them to escape an increasingly industrialized and urbanized society. Archaeological excavations brought to museums extraordinary representations of Greek art, which inspired their use of mythology and the past. For Rossetti and Burne-Jones, mythic images allowed them to portray a coded version of their own lives and loves through classical subjects.

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- 9 *Fortnightly Review* 25 (n.s.,19), Part I, no. 109 (January 1876): 82–95 and Part II, no. 110 (February 1876): 260–76.
- 10 *Lemprière's Classical Dictionary*, 479–80.
- 11 Francis L. Fennell, Jr., ed. *The Rossetti-Leyland Letters* (Athens: Ohio University Press), 44.
- 12 Aubrey de Vere, *The Search after Proserpine* (Oxford: John Henry Parker, 1843), 24.
- 13 Rossetti wanted to marry Jane, but when she visited him at Aldwick Lodge, she realized the extent of his chloral addiction, a drug given to him to help his insomnia. She later told Wilfred Scawen Blunt, “When I found he was ruining himself with chloral and that I could do nothing to prevent it I let off going to him—on account of the children.” Peter Faulkner, *Wilfred Scawen Blunt and the Morrises* (London: William Morris Society, 1981), 30.
- 14 Peter Faulkner, ed., *Jane Morris to Wilfrid Scawen Blunt: The Letters of Jane Morris to Wilfrid Scawen Blunt Together with Extracts from Blunt's Diaries* (Exeter: University of Exeter, 1986), 89.
- 15 (London: George Routledge, 1855).
- 16 (London: F.S. Ellis, 1868–1870).