

## Biography Edward Burne-Jones

- 1833** Edward Burne-Jones is born on the 28<sup>th</sup> of August in Birmingham. His mother dies a few days after his birth. The only child of a framer and gilder, Edward grows up in modest circumstances.
- 1853** Begins to study Theology at Oxford and meets William Morris. Together they explore Oxford and read Pope, Dryden, Shelley and, above all, Tennyson.
- 1854** The writings of the critic and social reformer John Ruskin arouse Burne-Jones's interest in Pre-Raphaelite art.
- 1855** Burne-Jones and Morris discover Sir Thomas Malory's *Le Morte d'Arthur*, a 15<sup>th</sup>-century adaptation of the Arthurian legend. During a trip to Northern France (Amiens, Beauvais, Paris, Chartres, Rouen, Caen and Bayeux) the friends decide to give up their theological studies and become artists.
- 1856** Move to London. Burne-Jones becomes a disciple of the Pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti.
- 1859** First of several journeys to Italy.
- 1860** Marries Georgiana, the sister of his friend George Macdonald.
- 1861** Birth of his son Philip. Together with Burne-Jones, Rossetti, Webb and others Morris founds the decorative arts firm Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co. which produces furniture, wall decorations and stained glass windows.
- 1864** Myles Birket Foster commissions Burne-Jones with a series of paintings on the legend of Saint George, the artist's first major narrative cycle. William Morris begins *The Earthly Paradise*, a series of narrative poems, for which Burne-Jones produces numerous illustrations.
- 1866** Birth of his daughter Margaret. Burne-Jones and Morris design the Green Dining Room of the newly opened South Kensington Museum in London (today's Victoria and Albert Museum). Burne-Jones meets the sculptress Maria Zambaco who sits for him and embarks on a tempestuous affair that is to go on for several years.
- 1867** Burne-Jones and his family move to The Grange, North End Lane, Fulham, London, which serves as his home and studio until his death.
- 1868** Depression and illness.
- 1870** *Phyllis and Demophon* is exhibited at the Old Watercolour Society. Its depiction of male nudity causes a scandal. Burne-Jones withdraws from public life and exhibiting until 1877. End of the affair with Maria Zambaco. Start of »the seven blissfullest years of work«.
- 1875** Burne-Jones works in parallel on three cycles *Cupid and Psyche*, *Pygmalion* and *Perseus*.
- 1877** Eight works by the artist are shown in the newly opened Grosvenor Gallery, a fashionable venue that quickly establishes itself as a serious rival to the Royal Academy.
- 1878** Travels to Paris. Burne-Jones's *The Beguiling of Merlin* is shown at the Exposition Universelle.
- 1880** Friendship with Oscar Wilde.
- 1884** Henry James and John Singer Sargent visit Burne-Jones's studio.
- 1885** Elected Associate of the Royal Academy of Arts.

- 1889** *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* is shown at the Exposition Universelle in Paris. Burne-Jones is awarded the cross of the Légion d'honneur. Death of the artist's father.
- 1891** Morris founds the Kelmscott Press. The friends collaborate on the design of sumptuous book editions.
- 1894** Burne-Jones is created a baronet.
- 1895** The artist designs costumes and stage sets for Comyns Carr's production of *King Arthur* at the Lyceum Theatre.
- 1896** William Morris dies on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of October. On hearing of his friend's death Burne-Jones laments, »I am quite alone now, quite, quite!«
- 1898** Edward Burne-Jones dies during the night of the 16<sup>th</sup> of June. Memorial service held at Westminster Abbey. Retrospective exhibition at the New Gallery.

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