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The Beauty of Life: William Morris and the Art of Design

William Morris

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"Beauty, which is what is meant by art. . . is no mere accident to human life, which people can take or leave as they choose, but a positive necessity of life." ?William Morris

William Morris, the leader of the British Arts and Crafts movement, was a man of tremendous energies, his accomplishments astonishing in their range and depth. He became successively a poet, embroiderer, pattern designer, calligrapher, dyer, weaver, translator, architectural preservationist, socialist, and book publisher and printer. As the head of the internationally successful Morris & Company, he devoted himself to the decorative arts.

Drawing upon The Huntington's superb holdings of the largest collection of Morris material in North America, this book examines the life and work of the designer and of Morris & Company. It contains detailed studies of Morris's stained glass, interior decoration designs, and book publishing ventures, as well as an essay on his successor at Morris & Company, J. H. Dearle. The book also explores the design legacy of Morris and the firm in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries on both sides of the Atlantic. Diane Waggoner, curator of the exhibition at The Huntington, is a specialist in nineteenth-century art and has written about the photography of Lewis Carroll. The contributors include Pat Kirkham, Professor of Design History at the Bard Graduate Center for Studies in the Decorative Arts, Design, and Culture; Gillian Naylor, professor emerita at the Royal College of Art and an expert on the Arts and Crafts movement; and Edward R. Bosley, director of the Gamble House in Pasadena, California. 128 illustrations

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