Explanatory note for tutors about the teaching exemplars:

The teaching exemplars take the form of visual maps, with text organised around specific headings.

We have included both object-based and thematic exemplars. The object-based exemplar consists of a description of the work, background information and a set of questions or issues that could be explored with students, along with ideas for responses. These are not intended to be prescriptive answers but are there to provide ideas. There is also a list of wider themes to which you may wish to relate the work.

The thematic exemplar consists of a cluster of headings around one main theme. There is introductory text for each heading, as well as nominated works and questions to explore. There is also further reading suggested for each heading.

As well as the specific exemplars we have written, we would encourage tutors could also use the resource in other ways. These might include:

1. Asking students to search around a particular keyword and then discuss the results, e.g. entering a search of 'Virgin' or 'reading' to find images relating to that subject

2. Searching associated information, for example searching for all illustrations to Tennyson in order to locate the images and background information and compare the images.

3. Asking students to consider particular images as preparation for a relevant class, e.g. examining comparable images such as Millais' *Waiting* to Hughes' *The Long Engagement*.

4. Asking students to look up information on a particular work using the bibliographic references. The findings could be compared or inform group presentations or discussions.

Tutors can also make their own personalized area where they can bookmark certain images or pages for students to look at.

If you have used the site in other ways and wish to share these you can post your ideas on our 'Suggested Teaching Uses' area of the site, as well as looking at suggestions from other tutors.

Teaching Exemplar:

Edward Burne-Jones, *Pygmalion Fashioning the Image*, 1867, illustration for William Morris' 'Pygmalion and the Image' (1927P613), Pencil on tracing paper

Description:

This work is a tracing for a wood-engraving, originally intended as an illustration for William Morris' poem 'Pygmalion and the Image' in *The Earthly Paradise*.

The drawing shows Pygmalion in his studio at work on his statue, which is almost complete. He holds a mallet and a chisel and further tools are on the floor (another mallet and a brush for polishing). There are two statues in the background, one of a cloaked standing man and one of a seated woman holding a sphere or possibly a discus or mirror.

Background information:

The drawing was intended as an illustration to Morris' poem 'Pygmalion and the Image', published in the first volume of *The Earthly Paradise* (1868). As well as the drawings, Burne-Jones produced two series of paintings on the subject – the first in 1868-70 (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery: 1903P23; 1903P24; 1903P25; 1903P26) and the second in 1875-78 (Andrew Lloyd Webber collection), both in oil. The two sets each consist of four paintings and tell the story of Pygmalion, the Cypriot sculptor who created a statue of an ideal woman as no model of female perfection existed in real life. The statue was then so beautiful that he fell in love with it and asked Venus for it to come to life. Venus answered his prayers, granting the statue the gift of life, leaving Pygmalion and his statue united.

It was intended that each poem in *The Earthly Paradise* would be illustrated with wood engravings in the style of fifteenth-century book illustration and that the volume would be printed at the premises of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co. at Queen Square, Bloomsbury (Dunlap, p. 9). Georgiana Burne-Jones' *Memorials* recounts the optimism and excitement of Morris and Burne-Jones as they planned the project. However, the project was abandoned and the only completed set of illustrations for *The Earthly Paradise* was that for 'Cupid and Psyche' (in the BMAG collection), the first of *The Earthly Paradise* tales to be written, constituting seventy of the more than one hundred illustrations Burne-Jones made for *The Earthly Paradise*. In the end, only one illustration featured in the final publication: an engraving by Burne-Jones, of three young maidens printed on the title page. BMAG has twenty-two drawings for 'Pygmalion and the Image' in total, and there are three more at the William Morris Gallery, Walthamstow.

The story of Pygmalion originally appears in Book Ten of Ovid's *Metamorphoses* (AD1-AD8). Here, Pygmalion is a Cypriot sculptor who lives alone in celibacy after shunning society and, in particular, the women of Cyprus, whom he views as debauched. Believing no human model of perfection exists, Pygmalion sculpts his own perfect statue, in later versions named Galatea, which he then falls in love with. Frustrated that the statue remains inanimate, Pygmalion prays to Venus, who brings the work to life. The couple then have a child, Paphos.

Morris takes most of these details as the basis for his poem, the preamble to which is as follows:

> A man of Cyprus, a sculptor named Pygmalion, made an image of a woman, fairer than any that had been seen, and in the end came to love his own handiwork as though it had been alive; wherefore, praying to Venus for help, he obtained his end, for she made the image alive indeed, and a woman, and Pygmalion wedded her. (Boos, p. 608)

Questions about *Pygmalion Fashioning the Image*:

1. The following passage from Morris's 'Pygmalion and the Image' describes Pygmalion creating his sculpture:

> Unto the chisel must he set his hand,
> And slowly, still in troubled thought must pace,
> About a work begun, that there doth stand,
> And still returning to the self-same place,
> Unto the image now must set his face,
> And with a sigh his wonted toil begin,
> Half-loathed, half-loved, a little rest to win.
>
> The lessening marble that he worked upon,
> A woman's form now imaged doubtfully,
> And in such guise the work had he begun,
> Because when he the untouched block did see
> In wandering veins that form there seemed to be,
> Whereon he cried out in a careless mood,
> "O lady Venus, make this presage good!
>
> "And then this block of stone shall be thy maid,
> And, not without rich golden ornament,
> Shall bide within thy quivering myrtle-shade."
> So spoke he, but the goddess, well content,
> Unto his hand such godlike mastery sent,
> That like the first artificer he wrought,
> Who made the gift that woe to all men brought.
>
> And yet, but such as he was wont to do,
> At first indeed that work divine he deemed,
> And as the white chips from the chisel flew
> Of other matters languidly he dreamed,
> For easy to his hand that labour seemed,
> And he was stirred with many a troubling thought.
> And many a doubt perplexed him as he wrought.

How does Burne-Jones' drawing operate as an illustration to Morris' poem? Which aspects of the narrative does Burne-Jones choose to illustrate and which does he omit in order to condense Morris' verse into one image?

The drawing perhaps captures some of Pygmalion's initial hesitancy, suggested by Morris. It also shows the statue as nearly complete, the shape having mostly emerged from the block, as seen near the bottom of the statue. The marble chips on the floor show the work that has gone on, although they are not literally flying from the chisel, as Morris describes.

2. What can you say about how Pygmalion's studio space is depicted? How does this compare to the space in the preceding drawing (1927P612 hyperlink) and the following one (1927P614 hyperlink)?

The studio in *Pygmalion Fashioning the Image* appears to be on a lower ground floor, suggested by the steps leading to it and the high window, whilst Pygmalion sculpts on a raised platform. However, the area in which Pygmalion stands in the preceding scene appears to be on the ground floor whilst the room in which Pygmalion and his statue stand in the following scene is different again. The space is not, therefore, an entirely realistic one and instead Burne-Jones seems to exploit a variety of settings, angles and compositions in the drawings.

3. The tale of Pygmalion is a classical one, first being written about in Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and drawing on existing fragments of other classical stories. How do the architectural details and Pygmalion's appearance contribute to a classical setting? Or do they depart from it?

Pygmalion's clothing seems to be more medieval than classical but the sculptures in the background look Greco-Roman. Again, this is not an accessible 'picture' of a classical artist and instead appears to be more of an imagined scene. The mix of classicism and medievalism would also fit with the source text, *The Earthly Paradise*, which combined classical tales with medieval ones.

4. The scene of Pygmalion sculpting does not appear in Burne-Jones' series of paintings *Pygmalion and the Image*; *The Heart Desires* shows Pygmalion deep in thought, perhaps conceiving his sculptural ideal, whilst the following painting, *The Hands Refrains*, shows Pygmalion having finished his creation. Do you think, therefore, that the image of Pygmalion sculpting is not necessary to Burne-Jones' narrative? How has Burne-Jones instead alluded to Pygmalion's act of creation?

With only four scenes to tell the story of Pygmalion Burne-Jones had to choose which of his several drawings would be the basis of his painted series. No tools appear at all in the painted version of *The Heart Desires* (unlike in the drawing) but do appear in the painting of *The Hand Refrains* where tools and marble chips are added. The drawing seems to contain an allusion, therefore, to sculpting rather than a direct representation of it.

Wider relevant themes:

- Representations of the artist in art and literature
- Ideal female beauty
- Art versus nature
- Representations of sculpture and sculpting
- The popularity of classical mythology, in particular the *Metamorphoses*, during the nineteenth century
- Burne-Jones' collaboration with Morris
- Victorian illustration
- Women in classical mythology
- Classical sculpture

References and Further Reading:

Arscott, Caroline, 'Venus as Dominatrix', in Caroline Arscott and Katie Scott (eds), *Manifestations of Venus: Art and Sexuality*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2000, pp. 109-25

Boos, Florence (ed.), *The Earthly Paradise by William Morris*, vol. 1. New York; London: Routledge, 2002

Burne-Jones, Georgiana, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, Vol. 1, 1833-1867*. London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1906

Burne-Jones, Georgiana, *Memorials of Edward Burne-Jones, Vol. 2, 1868-1898*. London: Macmillan and Co. Ltd., 1906

Dunlap, Joseph R., *The Book That Never Was*. New York: Oriole Editions, 1971

Joshua, Essaka, *Pygmalion and Galatea: The History of a Narrative in English Literature*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001

Teaching Exemplar: Gender and Sexuality

Much literature on the Pre-Raphaelites has focused on the issue of gender and sexuality as their work contains images of mythological women, lovers and, as Pre-Raphaelitism developed into Aestheticism, androgynous-looking figures. There is also the issue of gendered production – the Brotherhood were a group of young male artists but several female associates of the original Brotherhood or the later Oxford grouping were themselves artists, writers or craftspeople.

Desire

The Pre-Raphaelites had a respectful attitude towards women, believing in chivalry. Such attitudes would be popularised by texts such as Ruskin's 'Of Queens' Gardens' (1864). However, the Pre-Raphaelites still saw women as objects of desire, labelling beautiful women as 'stunners'. This would be expressed most sensuously in Rossetti's work. Holman Hunt had depicted lovers in *The Awakening Conscience* and *The Hireling Shepherd* but would later focus on more religious subjects whilst Madox Brown favoured historical themes.

1. As important to the Pre-Raphaelites as desire was love. Despite the practical need, the Victorian ideal of marriage was as loving or, at the very least, companionate. Looking at the following images of love or lovers, how is love represented? Are the lovers real, historical, literary or allegorical? What messages might the work convey about love?

    Rossetti, *Two Lovers* (1904P233)
    Rossetti, *Two Lovers at a Window* (1904P361)
    Millais, *Lovers by a Rosebush* (1920P12)
    Arthur Hughes, *The Long Engagement* (1902P13)
    Burne-Jones, *Phyllis and Demophoon* (1916P37)
    Simeon Solomon, *Love* (1908P309)
    Simeon Solomon, *The Singing of Love* (1928P560)
    Millais, *Waiting* (1909P62)

2. What do the following portraits by Rossetti of Fanny Cornforth suggest about the various ways in which he saw her?

    Rossetti, *Woman with a Fan (Fanny Cornforth)* (1870, 1904P414)
    Rossetti, *Fanny Cornforth: Portrait* (1874, 1904P482)

3. Rossetti's personal model of ideal love was that of Dante and Beatrice, the subject of many of his works, including *Beata Beatrix* (1891P25), *The Meeting of Dante and Beatrice in Paradise* (1904P280) and *The Salutation of Beatrice* (1904P352). How does Rossetti represent the relationship between Dante and Beatrice in these works and what does his treatment suggest about the way in which he viewed their story?

4. Munro, *Paolo and Francesca* (1960P29): This subject, also treated by Rossetti (1855 watercolour, Tate collection), is taken from Dante's *Inferno*. Paolo is Francesca's brother-

in-law; their love is therefore illicit. Munro's sculpture shows the lovers together, the act of reading inspiring them to act on their own love. How does Munro's sculpture compare to Rossetti's watercolour? Does Dante actually describe the lovers reading? If so, what are they reading?

Further reading:

Kern, Stephen, *Eyes of Love: The Gaze in English and French Paintings and Novels 1840-1900*. London: Reaktion Books, 1996

Working women

Although producing relatively few works on modern-day themes, the Pre-Raphaelites were interested in issues of their day, as evidenced by some of their contributions to the *Oxford and Cambridge Magazine* (1856). They were also in contact with several working women themselves: Elizabeth Siddal was a milliner when the group first met her and then became an artist and poet; Jane Morris undertook embroidery for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co., as did May Morris ; Christina Rossetti was a poet; and Georgiana Burne-Jones undertook socialist work. Whilst some of these tasks (for example, embroidery) were acceptable female middle class pursuits, some, such as writing and political work, were more commonly undertaken by men.

The Pre-Raphaelites and their circle took an interest in the welfare of working-class women. Holman Hunt employed Annie Miller as a model after 'discovering' her working and living in a crowded London pub. He had her 'educated' in the hope that she would become his wife. His project failed, however, and the marriage did not happen. Similarly, Morris' wife Jane, was aso of a lower social standing than him, as was Madox Brown's wife, Emma. Madox Brown, anxious about his wife's working-class background, can be seen in his *Pretty Baa Lambs* (1956P9) to have elevated her to a country lady.

1. Madox Brown, *Work* (1927P349): To what extent is the issue of work gendered in this painting?

The painting includes a range of working types of the time. The navvies in the centre of the painting are the epitome of male health and strength, undertaking physically demanding work. The women in the painting include a gentleman's daughter on horseback who does not need to work, a young lady issuing religious tracts and therefore doing voluntary, socially beneficent work and a ragged young girl looking after her siblings.

2. The most pertinent topic concerning working women was prostitution, the subject of Rossetti's *Found* (1904P232). What do the composition and treatment of the subject suggest about Rossetti's view of the woman in this painting? Do you find it a sympathetic or condemnatory representation?

Further reading:

Callen, Anthea, 'Sexual Division of Labor in the Arts and Crafts Movement', *Woman's Art Journal*, vol. 5, no. 2, Autumn 1984-Winter 1985, pp. 1-6.

Ideal women

Many, if not all, of the Pre-Raphaelites had their own ideal of beauty. From the 1860s Rossetti produced many images of idealised female beauties, increasingly influenced by Venetian painting, whilst Burne-Jones represented an increasingly singular female type.

Rossetti's paintings and ideals were influenced by his real life loves, Lizzie Siddal, Fanny Cornforth and Jane Morris, and by his models, for example Alexa Wilding. Many of the portraits represent the sitter as distant, suggesting a degree of untouchability. Jane Morris was the subject of perhaps Rossetti's most abstracted and stylised images of ideal beauty, as for example the unattainable figure of *Proserpine* (1927P7). Burne-Jones too would experience desire for a beautiful woman when he had an affair with Maria Zambaco, of whom he produced several sketches (for example 1924P61).

The ultimate story of ideal beauty, and one that was very popular with Victorian artists and writers alike, was the classical myth of Pygmalion, the sculptor who fell in love with his own creation, made because no existing woman was perfect. Burne-Jones treated this theme in a set of four paintings *Pygmalion and the Image* (1903P23; 1903P24; 1903P25; 1903P26) and a set of drawings.

Another variant on the theme of ideal beauty was the worship of physical beauty over material wealth, finding its fullest expression in Burne-Jones' watercolour *King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid* (1947P18; the oil version is in the Tate collection).

1. Rossetti, *Proserpine* (1881-82, 1927P7): What features of the work contribute to the sense of this character as unattainable and distant?

The woman has a distant expression as she gazes out of the picture. Her body is turned away from the viewer and her arms are brought across her body. The smoking lamp in the foreground adds an air of exoticism to the image but also rests on a ledge which forms a barrier between the viewer and the figure.

2. Burne-Jones, *Pygmalion and the Image: The Soul Attains* (1875-78, 1903P26): In this final scene of the series, Pygmalion is united with his transformed statue which Venus has brought to life. What kind of relationship between the two figures does the painting set up?

Pygmalion kneels to greet his statue, suggesting an attitude of veneration and worship and reminiscent of the traditional marriage proposal position. He takes both her hands close to his mouth close. Hands were very important in Victorian non-verbal languages of love – a touch of a hand was enough to let a woman know a man was romantically interested in her and suitors traditionally asked a father for his daughter's 'hand in marriage'. A single rose is on the floor, left from Venus's visit in the preceding scene, *The Godhead Fires*, but also a symbol of love and beauty.

Further Reading:

Kern, Stephen, *Eyes of Love: The Gaze in English and French Paintings and Novels 1840-1900*. London: Reaktion Books, 1996

Virtuous women

With their tendency to idealise women, Pre-Raphaelite artists often turned to subjects of virtuous women. The idea of the redemptive woman was very popular at the time, especially after John Ruskin's lecture 'Of Queens' Gardens' was published. This called for women to harness their naturally redemptive characters for the good of humankind and to influence their more wayward male companions. Tennyson's 'The Princess' was another important text with which the Pre-Raphaelites would have been familiar. Rossetti treated the figure of Mary Magdalene in *Mary Magdalene at the Door of Simon the Pharisee* (1904P489); although she was a sinner Magdalene had long been seen as the archetypal redemptive woman. The intense expression of Rossetti's Mary has something of the same quality as the woman in Hunt's *Awakening Conscience* (Tate collection), also experiencing redemption. The Pre-Raphaelites also depicted female saints, such as Rossetti's *St Elizabeth of Hungary Kneeling with her Companions*.

1. Compare Hughes' *The Annunciation* (1872-73, 1892P1), Burne-Jones' oil painting *The Annunciation* (1857, 1900P94) and Burne-Jones's watercolour *The Annunciation* (1857-61, 1927P441). How is the Virgin represented in each painting and does the artist use traditional symbolism to signify the Annunciation?

In Hughes' painting, Mary looks meek, which is the traditional way in which she is represented. She has a defensive posture, as does Rossetti's Virgin in his *Ecce Ancilla Domini! (The Annunciation)* (1849-50, Tate collection). Her head is lowered and she looks humbled in front of Gabriel. The painting depicts lilies, which appear traditionally in Annunciation scenes as a symbol of Mary's purity and virginity, whilst the irises symbolise the communication of a message or idea, having an obvious relevance to the story of the Annunciation. Victorian audiences were well versed in both religious symbolism and the language of flowers so would have been able to easily read these symbols. Mary is holding a bobbin of thread and has been interrupted weaving. The Angel Gabriel hovers on the threshold of an outdoor and semi-covered space, relating to Mary's dual role as both earthly figure and mother of the son of God.

Further Reading:

Marsh, Jan, *Pre-Raphaelite Women*. London: Weidenfeld and Nicholson, 1987.

Hair

Hair is traditionally associated with sexual power. In the Victorian period it was also an indicator of sexual intimacy as women only wore their hair down in informal situations. Many of Rossetti's drawings of Fanny depict her with her hair down, testimony to his relationship with her, and Fanny was the model for his *Woman Combing her Hair* (1904P416). He had also been fascinated with Lizzie's hair, famously red, and he described its lurid glow when her body was exhumed in order for him to retrieve some of his poems that he had had buried with her. Rossetti's *Lady Lilith* (1904P343), the first wife of Adam, is shown combing her hair and holding a mirror.

1. What seems to be the role of the woman's hair in Rossetti's watercolour *Morning Music* (1867, 1931P60)? Is there a connection between hair and music? Or women, hair and music?

2. How many other works by Rossetti of women with their hair down or dressing their hair can you find? How do they compare to the works above?

Further Reading:

Gitter, Elisabeth G., 'The Power of Women's Hair in the Victorian Imagination', *PMLA*. 99: 5 (Oct., 1984), pp. 936-954.

Androgyny

Although concerned with conventional gender ideals such as female beauty and male heroism, the Pre-Raphaelites did, in many respects, depict unconventional figures in terms of their gender. Rossetti's women generally had thick necks and square jaws, features associated with masculinity, and Burne-Jones's male and female figures were often androgynous looking. This was certainly a feature of his work that was commented on when he started displaying at the Grosvenor Gallery from its opening in 1877. Some of Solomon's figures were also somewhat androgynous, as for example in *The Singing of Love* (1870, 1928P560).

1. *The Times* claimed that there was something 'unmanly' about this work (11 Feb., 1871, p. 4). What do you think being manly meant at this time and why might this work have been seen as unmanly?

Further Reading:

Busst, A. J. L., 'The Image of the Androgyne in the Nineteenth Century', *Romantic Mythologies*. Ed. Ian Fletcher. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1967, pp. 1-95.

Femmes fatales

Although several Pre-Raphaelite artists admired female virtue, they were also intrigued by the figure of the *femme fatale*. Shearer West has suggested that in their voluminous mass and their dominant sexual presence, Rossetti's women of the 1860s are an early example of the *femme fatale*. Rossetti's *The Question (The Sphinx)* (1904P239) represents a mythological femme fatale, whilst his *Lady Lilith* (1904P343) depicts the sexual first wife of Adam.

1. Frederick Sandys, *Morgan Le Fay* (1864, 1925P104) and Sandys, *Medea* (1868, 1925P105). Both of these oil paintings represent a sorceress. What visual signifiers does the painter include to indicate that the character is a *femme fatale*? What are the sources for both of the paintings?

Further Reading:

West, Shearer, *Fin de siècle: art and society in an age of uncertainty*. London: Bloomsbury, 1993

Masculinity

Much less has been written about masculinity in Pre-Raphaelite art than femininity but it is an equally pertinent, if less obvious, topic. In being drawn to images and scenarios of rescue, Pre-Raphaelite artists posited the man as rescuer. This is echoed by their preference for the medieval period when gender relations were governed by a chivalric code. Sir Galahad and Launcelot were therefore popular figures for Pre-Raphaelite artists, as in Rossetti's *Sir Galahad at the Ruined Chapel* (1892P4) and Solomon's *The Death of Sir Galahad while taking a Portion of the Holy Grail administered by Joseph of Arimathea* (1922P19) and Rossetti's *Launcelot at the Shrine of the Holy Grail: Study for the Figures of Guenevere and Launcelot* (1904P272).

Saint George was another popular hero and the subject of several works by Rossetti and Burne-Jones. However, an interest in stories of heroism and rescue did not necessarily mean that Pre-Raphaelite protagonists were always conventionally masculine. Burne-Jones's Prince for example in his *Briar Rose* series is more gentle and hesitant and than assertive and active.

1. Looking at the images of Sir Galahad and Launcelot above, how has the male protagonist been represented.

Further Reading:

Cheney, Liana de Girolami (ed.), *Pre-Raphaelitism and Medievailsm in the Arts*. Lewiston: E. Mellen Press, 1992