



Smithsonian Associates

Whistler: Departing from Tradition in Making Art

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Wednesday, October 5, 2022 - 6:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. ET

James McNeill Whistler: Selected Online Resources

[Catalogue Raisonné](#)

Margaret F. MacDonald, Grischka Petri, *James McNeill Whistler: The paintings, a catalogue raisonné*, University of Glasgow, 2020, website at <http://whistlerpaintings.gla.ac.uk>.

The online catalogue includes some 550 oil paintings and over 1700 works on paper dating from ca 1850 to 1903. The evolution of each painting from sketch to final oil is described and illustrated, starting with basic information: the title, date, collection, medium, size, and signature. This is followed by accounts of the source of the title and date, identification of the subjects, sitters and sites shown in the paintings, and discussions of technique, medium and support, conservation and frames, and on the exhibition, publication and provenance of each work.

[Whistler at the Freer Gallery](#)

Excellent online feature about the Peacock Room as well as of Whistler's watercolors, with videos of lectures by various experts on the artist

[The Gentle Art of Making Enemies](#) – on Project Gutenberg

London, 1890. The book was in part a response to, in part a transcript of Whistler's famous libel suit against Ruskin. The book contains Whistler's letters to newspapers chronicling his many petty grievances against various acquaintances and friends, and it contains his famous 1885 lecture, "Ten O'Clock", explaining "the meaning and purpose of art"

The [10 O' Clock Lecture](#), delivered on February 20, 1885, and published later that year

Whistler in Proust: In *A la recherche*, Whistler appears by name more often than any other author except Baudelaire. He is mentioned more than Mozart, Dante, Watteau, Shakespeare; while among painters only Vermeer and Rembrandt merit more attention. And, of course, Elstir, Proust's fictional artist, to whom Whistler contributed both a near-anagram of his name and a number of personal and artistic traits.

Whistler and Vermeer

In the first place, there is the method... of helping out the composition by pictures skillfully placed on the walls in such a way as to develop the main lines of the composition. But apart from all this, something in the mental attitude of the two men is very much alike. One has a sense in the work of both of them that there were certain things they liked very much, and other things they did not like at all. There is always a sense of preferences, of sacrifices, of reticences... it is undeniable that both men are very distinguished; the one nervous, self-conscious, super-raffiné... the other calm, almost phlegmatic, quite unconscious, and without pose – refined through instinct rather than from surroundings – liking whatsoever things are pure from sort of intellectual sanity – yet both of them not the less wholly distinguished – quite apart from the ordinary.

Jan Vermeer of Delft, by Philip Leslie Hale, 1911, 173-4.

[Personal website](#)

Recent publications:

[Vermeer and the Art of Love](#) Lund Humphries, 2022.

