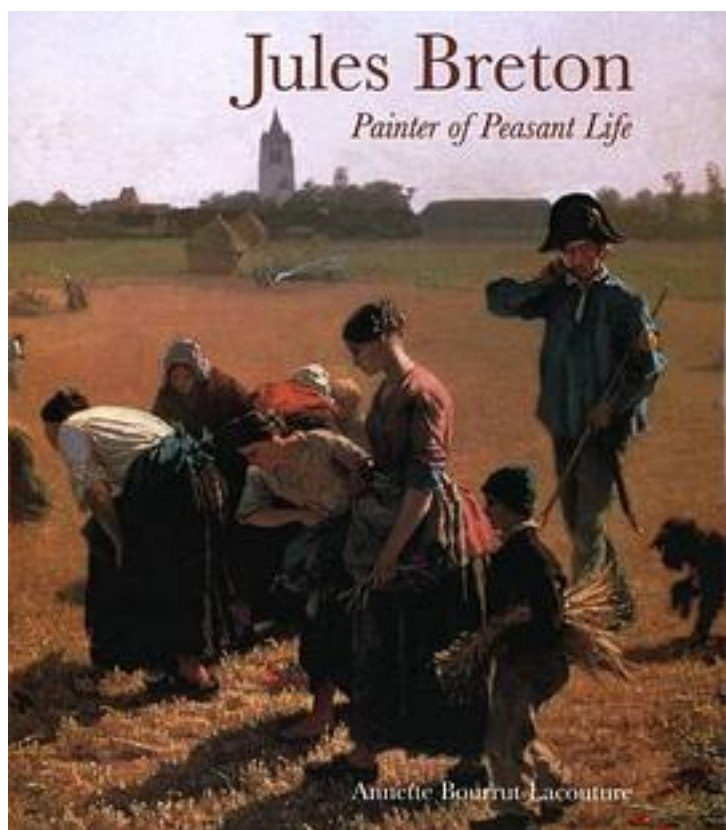


Jules Breton



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著者:Lacouture, Annette Bourrut

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Jules Breton (1827-1906), known as one of the first "peasant painters", created beautiful scenes of rural French life and was a highly popular figure among the Salon artists of his era. Taking his inspiration from his native Artois and from the landscapes of Brittany, where he stayed for long periods, he painted peasant women and men performing their daily activities, meticulously observing their world and making it a place of peace and harmony. During the second half of the 19th century, rewards and

official decorations were heaped upon him, and his paintings were purchased not only by the emperor but also by collectors in America, Britain and Ireland. However, Breton's work became eclipsed by the avant-garde movements of the 20th century, and he was eventually forgotten. This documented work is designed to pay Breton the tribute that he deserves. It traces the development of his career and the forces that influenced him from his childhood through his early training in Belgium and Paris to his years in Brittany. The volume presents and discusses a number of important paintings by Breton, some of which have been almost unknown until now, and it shows how they reflect the artist's social and humanitarian concerns as well as his painterly abilities.

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目录:

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