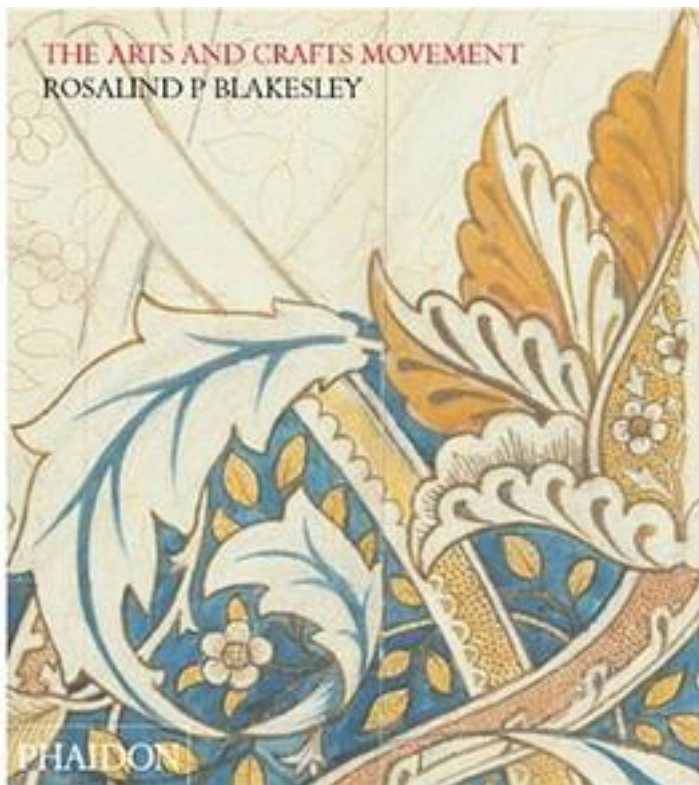


The Arts & Crafts Movement



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Dating from the 1850s to the First World War, the Arts and Crafts Movement was an international phenomenon of enormous scope and influence. It encompassed everything from architecture to town planning, metalwork and embroidery, in places as diverse as California and Budapest. Born of thinkers and practitioners in Victorian England its ideological currents reflect the era's most pressing social, political and artistic concerns. In this book Rosalind Blakesley explores the common ideas that give cohesion to a movement of otherwise bewildering breadth and stylistic heterogeneity.

At the origins of the movement was a reaction against industrialization, the long-standing division between traditional crafts and Fine Art and the over-elaborate ornamentation which disguised an object or building's true 'function'. Early British Arts and Crafts practitioners campaigned for a revival of old craft techniques, for the elevation of the applied arts and for 'honesty' in design, ideas that were picked up and developed across Europe and the United States, with national variants quickly emerging. Germany, for example, recognized the potential of industrial techniques and experimented with standardization in design; in Finland, then annexed to Russia, Arts and Crafts was allied to the search for self-expression and a national style in art. Examining both acknowledged Arts and Crafts centres and lesser-known communities, Rosalind Blakesley concludes her authoritative and accessible survey with an evaluation of the Movement's significance in the twenty-first century.

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