

(2024 July 19) Whistler's Peacock Room and a Destroyed Friendship - Ault (Smithsonian)

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/smithsonian-institution/how-golden-peacocks-on-a-dining-room-wall-destroyed-a-longstanding-friendship-in-victorian-society-180984735/>

The row between Whistler and Ruskin related in this Smithsonian article by Alicia Ault was a bit of art gossip well-known in the Euro-American arts world at the turn of the 19th-20th C. It was a particular favorite of Ezra Pound, since Ruskin and Whistler both rated very high in his ranking of artists and thinkers of the generation preceding his own.

Attached below from my website are two related pieces from my *Pound Laundry*. The first, Art should be independent (starting on p.73, for those of you who have the book), is specifically about Whistler and Ruskin.

The second, Past and Present Unto This Last (p.62), refers to the tradition of aesthetic social criticism Ruskin was directly involved in (Whistler also, but more indirectly) and Pound to some extent adopted as a young man. Besides Ruskin (specifically referenced in the 3rd section), that tradition included Thomas Carlyle (section 2) and William Morris (section 4). Carlyle was the author of the influential book on social theory, Past and Present; one of Ruskin's influential books was Unto This Last.

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