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Noted art scholar presents special talk in Columbia

Dr. Margaretta S. Frederick, nationally known scholar of Pre-Raphaelite art, is coming to the Columbia Museum of Art to give a gallery talk about the outstanding collection of drawings from the National Museums and Galleries of Wales that comprise the exhibition *Victorian Visions*. This exhibition, on view from February 11 to April 10, 2005, is an excellent introduction to the wonderful eccentricities unique to this period and place in the history of art. Dr. Frederick's gallery talk, called "This Religion of Art, this Worship of Beauty: Art in the Victorian Age," will demystify the many influences of the Victorian era and emphasize the common thread - the quest for beauty - that runs throughout the art of the period. It is the reverence for the beautiful - what Victorian critic F. W. H. Myers referred to as "this religion of art, this worship of beauty," that unites British art of this period.

The Victorian Age was a time of re-awakening and experimentation resulting in an artistic output that can only be described as eclectic. This was an era of rapid expansion in industry, wealth and literacy - very much like the technologically enhanced world that we live in today. The influences on the visual arts

were numerous and exciting. An obsession with history from the Greco-Roman period to the Middle Ages was fueled by many publications and archeological findings from which artists could draw inspiration. The influx of previously unknown styles and cultures brought to England through a vastly expanding British empire provided a wealth of visual sources.

The artworks in *Victorian Visions* include stellar examples highlighting the key influences of the period, and the exhibition calls attention to the drawing medium, allowing the viewer an opportunity to look at the working methods and creative processes that were stimulated by the opportunities of the age.

Margaretta Frederick, a native of Wilmington, Delaware, received her Ph.D. in British 19th-century art from Bryn Mawr College in 1996. She is the past curator of the Samuel and Mary R. Bancroft Collection of Pre-Raphaelite Art at the Delaware Art Museum and is responsible for organizing a two-year international tour and accompanying catalogue of that collection that begins in March of 2005. Dr. Frederick has published and lectured widely on the Pre-Raphaelites and 19th century British art patronage.