Public access description

Edward Gordon Craig (1872-1966) was born in Stevenage, Hertfordshire. He was the illegitimate son of Edwin Gordon and the actress Ellen Alice Terry. During his career, he worked first as an Actor, but then as a Theatre Director, Designer and Wood Engraver. He is often viewed as a pioneer of modern stage craft whose influence has shaped theatre techniques and performance today.

While still working as an actor, Craig met artist and designer James Pryde on a train. This was his introduction to print-making. Pryde's brother-in-law William Nicholson subsequently taught Craig the technique of wood-engraving.

While Pryde and Nicholson found fame as poster makers under the name the 'Beggarstaff Brothers', Craig - who enjoyed the challenge of wood-engraving - created works of art for pleasure as well as commercial gain. He exhibited and sold prints throughout his life to generate income, but more importantly he used them as a means of exploring and disseminating his revolutionary ideas about the theatre.

Using the controlled practices of wood-cutting, wood-engraving and etching, as well as freer techniques such as watercolour, Craig investigated the core elements of dramatic art: movement, light, space and the performers.

Descriptive line


Physical description

Design for a stage scene for 'The Hour Glass' by W. B. Yeats

Museum number

E.143-1922

Object history note

Produced at the Abbey Theatre, Dublin.
Note by E Gordon Craig, Esq: "Scene composed from the screens presented to W B Yeats and Lady Gregory by E G C and used in this play Jan. 12. 1911 and in other plays"

URL

http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O186123/design-for-stage-scene-the-drawing-edward-gordon-craig/