

**"A JOY FOR EVER" (AND ITS PRICE IN  
THE MARKET) BEING THE SUBSTANCE  
(WITH ADDITIONS) OF TWO  
LECTURES ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY  
OF ART, DELIVERED AT MANCHESTER,  
JULY 10TH AND 13TH, 1857**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649155064

"A joy for ever" (and its price in the market) being the substance (with additions) of two lectures on the political economy of art, delivered at Manchester, July 10th and 13th, 1857 by John Ruskin

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Cover @ 2017

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**JOHN RUSKIN**

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"A JOY FOR EVER"  
*(AND ITS PRICE IN THE MARKET)*

BEING  
THE SUBSTANCE (WITH ADDITIONS)

OF  
TWO LECTURES  
ON THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF ART  
*Delivered at Manchester, July 1860 and 1861, 1862.*

BY  
JOHN RUSKIN, LL.D.  
HONORARY STUDENT OF CHRIST CHURCH, AND HONORARY FELLOW  
OF CORPUS CHRISTI COLLEGE, OXFORD

"A thing of beauty is a joy for ever."—KEATS.

*WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY CHARLES ELIOT NORTON*

BRANTWOOD EDITION

NEW YORK:  
MAYNARD, MERRILL, & CO., PUBLISHERS,  
43, 45 & 47 EAST TENTH ST.

1894.

UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
AT THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN  
LIBRARY

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

MR. GEORGE ALLEN *begs to announce that Ruskin's Works*  
*will hereafter be published in America by* MESSRS. CHARLES  
E. MERRILL & CO. (MAYNARD, MERRILL & CO., *successors*),  
*of New York, who will issue the only authorized editions.*

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MAYNARD MERRILL

## INTRODUCTION.

THIS book, first published in 1857, under the title of *The Political Economy of Art*, marks the parting of the ways in Mr. Ruskin's life,—his turning from the pleasant, open fields of nature and of art into the rugged path of political economy. He was induced to return from time to time to the old lines of study, but henceforth he was mainly to pursue another course. This change in the prevailing direction of his thoughts and labours had little in it to surprise the careful reader of his earlier works, for they all had given evidence that his artistic sympathies and appreciations were largely determined by his moral sentiment, and that the gifts of his genius were controlled by the temperament of a preacher

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and a prophet. His rare powers of perception, and his poetic faculty, reinforced by the spirit of youth, had asserted themselves in his early work, but, with the growth of reflection in his mature years, they were to submit themselves more and more to the mastery of his temperament. Its natural authority, as an inheritance of blood, had been greatly confirmed by his peculiar education, and by the character of the thought and social conditions of England during his youth.

The circumstances of his life, fortunate in many external respects, were far from favourable to the free and happy development of his natural disposition; his moral sense was cultivated at the expense of his imagination, with the result that ethical principle in him, instead of becoming more and more at one with the imagination, a necessity of its normal growth, was separated more and more from it as a product of the understanding. His poetic and artistic instincts were not so



much nourished as checked by the exactions of his overtrained moral sensibilities.

It thus came to pass that his very love and study of the arts as products of the highest faculties of man, involving ethical principles as a necessity, became from a primal interest altogether secondary to a direct consideration of the relation of the arts to human welfare. The meaning and uses of painting as a fine art especially suggested grave questions. Having largely lost its function as a means of expression of general sentiment, and, with this, its aim to give a poetic interpretation of life and nature; having become mainly an art of luxury and display, practised by most of its followers for the sake of a livelihood to be gained by supplying the demand for a fashionable mode of decoration of private apartments, the problem of its essential worth, and of its significance in a well-ordered community, naturally forced itself upon the attention of a moralist. The special occasion for the treatment of the subject was offered

by the Manchester Exhibition in 1857. Here was displayed in an incomparable collection the astonishing wealth of England in pictures old and new. Keats's much-abused verse about beauty was inscribed in letters of gold on the cornice of the Exhibition building, and suggested to Mr. Ruskin the title of this volume, the main contents of which consist of two lectures delivered at Manchester while the Exhibition was still open.

The lectures were written at Cowley, near Oxford. I was making a brief stay in Oxford at the time, and seeing Mr. Ruskin daily. He read a great part of the lectures to me, and the readings led to long discussions, of which I now remember only, to use his own phrase, "an inconceivable humility" on his part in listening to my objections to his views, and an invincible "obstinacy" (his own word again,—see pp. 181, 182) in maintaining his opinions. In the main I was desirous to hold him to the work of the imagination, and he was set on subordinating

it to what he esteemed of more direct and practical importance.

One of the noblest passages of heartfelt eloquence in this little book is the description of Verona on pp. 85-8. In a letter written to me at Venice, a month before our meeting at Oxford, he had said: "Mind you leave yourself time enough for Verona. People always give too little time to Verona; it is my dearest place in Italy. If you are vindictive and want to take vengeance on me for despising Rome, write me a letter of abuse of Verona. But be sure to do it before you have seen it,—you can't afterwards. You have seen it I believe, but give it time and quiet walks now."

Another passage in the same letter illustrates the note on p. 188, in which Mr. Ruskin speaks of his three years' "close and incessant labour" on the architecture of Venice, "two long winters being wholly spent in the drawing of details on the spot." "I went through so much hard, dry, mechanical toil there,"