

**LETTERS ON CONNOISSEURSHIP,
OR THE ANATOMY OF A PICTURE.
WITH SOME REMARKS ON
NATIONAL GALLERIES, AND THE
MISSION OF THE MODERN ARTIST**

Published @ 2017 Trieste Publishing Pty Ltd

ISBN 9780649631469

Letters on Connoisseurship, or the Anatomy of a Picture. With some Remarks on National Galleries, and the Mission of the Modern Artist by William Noy Wilkins

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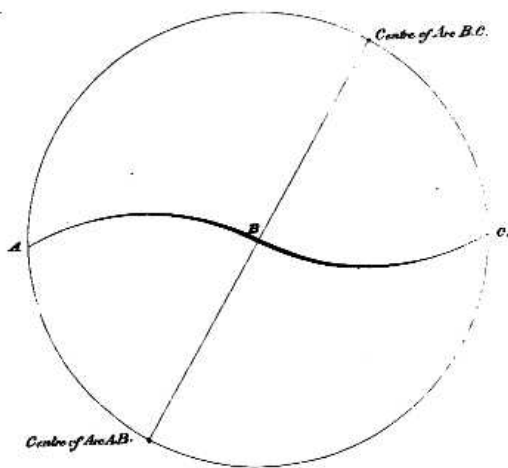
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WILLIAM NOY WILKINS

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Line of Beauty.

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ON
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BY

WILLIAM NOY WILKINS.

LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1857.

170. 6. 75.

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PREFACE.

DURING the summer of last year I was induced to undertake the following Letters on the properties and requirements of a high Work of Art, at the suggestion of an eminent mathematician and friend, for whose guidance only, they were originally intended. But as Art is now becoming a part of general education, and is still but imperfectly understood, notwithstanding all that has been said and written about it, and since its patronage has extended from the aristocracy to those of humbler resources, I have willingly listened to the encouraging advice of friends, and have given these Letters to the public.

I do this the more confidently, as I find it is very generally considered that Art-criticism is without definite principles; for while all do not hesitate to give

LETTERS
ON
CONNOISSEURSHIP.

picture to be able to trust to their own judgment in the selection of a painting, with perfect satisfaction to themselves and to others as to the result.

With this end in view I have divided my subject into three portions. The first relates to the spirit of a picture, those qualities which are absolutely essential to every high Work of Art; the second treats of the means by which this idea, or nature, is embodied; and the last enters into an account of the several substances used in the manipulation of the work, with a view to its durability under the effects of time or local agents.

I have likewise considered the several methods of lighting galleries and hanging works of art; and made some concluding remarks on National Galleries, the mission of the modern Artist, his social status in different countries, and some of the chief difficulties that beset the path of the painter in England.

What I have said of the artist is alone applicable to the mission of the poet, of whom Turner was a noble example, as distinguished from the host of professional drawing-masters and draughtsmen in oil and water-colour who form the increasing army of Art.

Very useful and excellent are many of these latter minds; chiefly copyists, of great readiness and mechanical execution, but devoid of invention, expres-