Paintings from books: art and literature in Britain, 1760-1900

Creators:
Altick, Richard Daniel, 1915-

Subjects (LCSH):
Art and literature -- Great Britain -- History
English literature -- Illustrations
English literature -- Appreciation
Popular culture -- Great Britain
Books and reading -- Great Britain
Painting, British

Issue Date:
1985

Metadata
Show full item record

Publisher:
The Ohio State University Press

Description:
(print) xxvi, 527 p. : ill. ; 29 cm

Contents:
Type:
Book

ISBN:
0814203809 (print)

Other Identifiers:
OCLC #12663815 (print)
LCCN 85021737 (print)

URI:
http://hdl.handle.net/1811/24679

Collections
Ohio State University Press Publications

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In effect, the artists' challenge was to translate *The Faerie Queene* into the visual medium to which it had such intimate affinity, and this in a period when the art of the Renaissance masters was the criterion by which the most ambitious painting was judged. It may well have been that, as a writer in the *Art Journal* observed in 1855, when Spenserianism in English art was finally declining, *The Faerie Queene* was “the most difficult poem in our classics that a painter can work from. It is more easy to paint from Shakespeare or Milton, or indeed any of our poets, than it is to work from