



*An Art Historian\* speaks*

## *Nineteenth Century Masterfile™* AN INVALUABLE RESOURCE FOR ART HISTORIANS

I have found *19th Century Masterfile* invaluable for monographic studies, pointing me instantly to scores of relevant articles, exhibition reviews, and firsthand interviews. These were general interest periodicals—often journals I would never have thought to consult or had never even heard of. For example, I found a treasure trove of information in the parliamentary papers that allowed me to reconstruct debate over a public mural project that was otherwise totally undocumented.

It has been enormously helpful to have access to daily news coverage in the *New York Times* and *New York Daily Tribune*, which provides very different types of information from that in the weeklies and monthlies. For example, newspaper coverage allowed me to chart the reception in America of the British painter G.F. Watts. The newspapers also helped me gauge the American reputation of Whistler's Parisian art academy in order to account for the large number of American art students there.

The vast majority of periodicals covered by *19th Century Masterfile* are not specifically art journals, so they are not in the full-text art periodical databases that most museum libraries favor—if they address primary source material at all. The meat of 19th-century art history is to be found in general interest periodicals, not only because specialized art periodicals were still a relative rarity at that time, but also because 21st-century art historians place emphasis on the historical and social context in which art was produced. Art history (especially that of the 19th century) is far more about context than connoisseurship these days.

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*“19th Century Masterfile is unquestionably a key resource for any art library and is of vital importance for conducting primary research.”*