

Aestheticism: Sensations and Ideas
International Walter Pater Society Conference

Iuav University, Venice, 14-16 July 2022

Walter Pater is a key figure within the cultures of aestheticism and decadence, and his literary legacy reverberates throughout the twentieth century and beyond. His works engage with such diverse fields as art history, aesthetics and philosophy, religion and spirituality, sexuality and desire, education, and cultural heritage. In the twenty-first century, Pater remains one of the most studied authors of the English and international *fin de siècle*, and the ongoing Oxford University Press edition of his *Collected Works* opens up new perspectives on his writings.

This conference of the International Walter Pater Society takes its cue from the subtitle of Pater's novel *Marius the Epicurean* (1885), which refers to the protagonist's "sensations and ideas." Considering Pater and aestheticism from the perspective of "sensations" brings out the productive overlap between literature and contemporary discourses on aesthetics, perception, emotions, and psychology. The perspective of "ideas" emphasises processes of abstract thinking, their cultural legacies, and their mechanisms of dissemination. Considering "sensations and ideas" together shines a light on the ways in which the two modes potentially compete with and/or complement one another, producing new insights. The conference aims to foster new critical debate on the subject of "sensations and ideas," broadly conceived, with reference to Pater and aestheticism.

Possible topics include:

- Affect and emotion
- Religion, mythology, spirituality, and the occult
- The body and the senses as organs of knowledge
- Learning and pedagogy
- Philosophy and the history of ideas
- Aestheticism and impressionism
- Nature, environment, cultural heritage, renovation, and regeneration
- Paterian and aesthetic worlds and places: cities, travel, monuments, homes and houses, the flaneur/flâneuse
- Crises in knowledge
- Undisciplining Pater/aestheticism

Please send proposals of maximum 250 words for 20 minute-papers, along with a short bio-bibliographical note, to: paterinvenice@gmail.com

Deadline: 15 April 2022

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