



The Demon and the Damozel: Dynamics of Desire in the Works of Christina Rossetti and Dante Gabriel Rossetti

Suzanne M. Waldman

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Developing a perspective on Victorian culture as the breeding ground for early theories of the unconscious and the divided psyche, *The Demon and the Damozel: Dynamics of Desire in the Works of Christina Rossetti and Dante Gabriel Rossetti* offers a new reading of these eminent Victorian siblings' literature and visual arts.

Suzanne M. Waldman views well-known poems and artworks such as Christina Rossetti's *Goblin Market* and Dante Gabriel Rossetti's *The Blessed Damozel* and *Venus Verticordia* in new ways that expose their authors' savvy anticipation of concepts that would come to be known as narcissism, fetishism, and the symbolic and imaginary orders, among many others. Waldman makes a strong case for the particular psychoanalytic importance of the Rossettis by looking at how the two Rossetti siblings' own psyches were divided by conflicts between the period's religious scruples and its taste for gothic sensationalism.

The Demon and the Damozel is a close and contextualized reading of their writings and artwork that displays, for the first time, continuity between the medieval cosmologies these Pre-Raphaelites drew upon and the psychoanalytic theories they looked ahead to—and locates the intricate patterns of proto-psychoanalytic understanding in the rich tapestry of Pre-Raphaelite aestheticism.

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