

ART FORUM

Friday August 8 2008

Nicola Goc



The story of Medea, the archetypal evil mother, has inspired artists and writers for centuries. In the 19th century Medea transcended her monstrous maternal persona in the works of English artists Anthony Frederick Sandys, Evelyn de Morgan and John William Waterhouse. This paper will look at how Pre-Raphaelite artists – influenced by the epic narrative poem “The Life and Death of Jason” by fellow artist and poet William Morris – turned away from the portrayal of Medea as the infanticidal mother and merged the sorceress and the woman, subduing the “wild-cat fierceness” of her nature to create an alluring, mystical Medea.

Dr Nicola Goc teaches Journalism, Media and Communications in the School of English, Journalism and European Languages at the University of Tasmania. Her fascination with Medea stems from her PhD thesis, where she examined the media’s portrayal of women accused of killing their children both in the nineteenth century and in recent times.

Evelyn De Morgan *Medea* 1889 oil on canvas,
Williamson Art Gallery.

12.30 pm Dechaineux Lecture Theatre
Tasmanian School of Art-Hobart, University of Tasmania