

with such Renaissance masters as Signorelli, Giorgione, and Michelangelo—were to provide unfailing sources of inspiration. These interests contributed to his mastery—unsurpassed for his time—of the theme of the male nude. Marées' frescoes in the Zoological Institute of Naples (1873) were his first monumental works—an impulse he continued in his celebrated triptychs.

Marées, who never married, maintained a lifelong pair bond with the art theorist Konrad Fiedler (1841–1895). His deepest attachment, however, was to the sculptor Adolph von Hildebrand, ten years his junior, who helped him with the Naples frescoes. For several months the two artists lived in virtual isolation in the monastery of San Francesco near Florence, where Hildebrand posed for a major Marées canvas *Three Youths among Orange Trees* (1875–80). Later, to the painter's sorrow, relations lapsed.

Marées' work is characterized by a rich coloristic chiaroscuro that creates a mysterious bond between his figures and their landscape setting. The prevailing mood is one of Arcadian nostalgia, suffused with classical and medieval reminiscences—the former recalling such contemporaries as the French painters Puvis de Chavannes and Odilon Redon, and the latter the English Pre-Raphaelites. Several canvases show a man who, while embracing a woman, looks wistfully at a third figure, a man—as if pondering the choice between female and male love. Marées' last major work is an enigmatic version of *The Rape of Ganymede* (1885).

Marées had no immediate followers and was little appreciated until the twentieth century. Even today his works defy assimilation into any of the standard sequences of the history of art; they belong to a category of their own, accessible only to a select few

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## MARLOWE, CHRISTOPHER (1564–1593)

English playwright and poet. Born two months before Shakespeare, Marlowe was the son of an established and respectable shoemaker in Canterbury, where he attended the King's School, later going on to take both his B.A. and M.A. degrees at Corpus Christi College, Cambridge. One month before he was to appear for his commencement in 1587, amid rumors of his conversion to Catholicism and flight to France, the university received a letter from the Queen's Privy Council excusing his absence and assuring them of his loyal service to Elizabeth. This letter has created a great deal of speculation about the dashing and iconoclastic young man's activities, suggesting that he was probably working as a government spy.

The final six years of his short life were spent in London where "Kit" Marlowe was usually involved in something scandalous or illegal, resulting in several scrapes with the law and at least one prison confinement. During these years, he produced his slender but highly important and influential canon: *Dido Queen of Carthage* (1586), *Tamburlaine I and II* (1597), *The Jew of Malta* (1589), *The Massacre at Paris* (1590), *Edward II* (1591), *Doctor Faustus* (1592), and the unfinished narrative poem *Hero and Leander*. The first genuine poet to write for the English theatre was killed, perhaps assassinated, under highly suspicious circumstances by a knife wound to the head in a private dining room in an inn in Deptford on May 30, 1593.

Twelve days before his death, Marlowe had been arrested on charges of atheism, stemming in part from his reputation and from accusations made against him by fellow playwright Thomas Kyd, who had been charged earlier; Kyd's claim was based on documents seized during a search of the rooms both men used for writing. This sort of sensation followed Marlowe throughout his life and, seemingly, was fostered by the poet himself.

After his death, claims about him became more personal and explicit. In the proceedings of his inquest, government informer Richard Baines claimed that Marlowe had said that "all they that love not Tobacco & Boies were fooles," and in 1598, Francis Meres wrote that he "was stabbed to death by a bawdy seruing man, a riual of his in his lewde loue." However characteristic of what we do know of Marlowe's life, these posthumous comments do little to establish his homosexuality.

However, Marlowe's work does demonstrate an understanding and compassion for mythological and historical homosexuality. His *Hero and Leander* deals directly with Jupiter's passionate infatuation for Ganymede, a story which is also mentioned in *Dido*, and his masterwork, *Edward II*, based on fact, can be considered the first gay play in English.

An effeminate child, Edward was given as a companion the orphaned son of a Gascon knight at age 14 by his royal father, who hoped that the handsome and virile 16-year-old Piers Gaveston would exert a positive and masculine influence on his son. However, Edward fell passionately in love, and the king banished Gaveston in 1307. Marlowe's play begins shortly after this point with Edward (who had become king upon his father's death) immediately recalling his love to court, much to the anger of his barons, who demand Gaveston's permanent banishment. Edward, more the lover than the ruler, will accept nothing of this and even shares his throne with Gaveston, who is eventually seized and beheaded. Enraged in his grief, Edward involves himself in a bloody civil war, eventually taking another lover, young Spenser, who also is killed by the barons. Edward himself is seized, forced to abdicate, and, in 1327, is murdered by having a heated poker inserted into his anus, "intended as just retribution for his sins." In this one play, Marlowe surpasses the achievements of many explicitly gay writers in his sensitive and complex portrayal of a doomed

and passionate relationship between two men caught up in a repressive and homophobic society.

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## MARRIAGE

It has long been observed that many married men and women have sexual desires for members of their own sex. In the case of those who are primarily homosexual in orientation (Kinsey Incidence nos. 4 to 6), the question which follows is why they marry. Marriage may be camouflage, a response to societal or familial pressure, and the relationship unconsummated; marriages of convenience between gay men and lesbians are not unknown. Marriage may also occur because the person does not understand or is unable to accept his or her sexual makeup; some of the latter group turn to marriage with the unrealistic hope of changing themselves. The desire for children is a motive for some, as is a desire for the public commitment and legal rights only available, at present, to heterosexual couples. Some simply happen to fall in love with a member of the opposite sex and try to make the best of it, and some, while preferring sexual partners of the same sex, or the anonymity and promiscuity readily available in the gay male world, prefer a marital partner of the opposite gender. A successful union of this kind is possible if honesty and tolerance are found on both sides, or if the bisexual partner is able to keep any extramarital activities from the other partner. Some report that a person aware and accepting of the homosexual component within him- or herself makes a better partner in a heterosexual relationship.