



All the Mighty World: The Photographs of Roger Fenton, 1852–1860 (Metropolitan Museum of Art Series)

Gordon Baldwin, Malcolm Daniel, Sarah Greenough

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Roger Fenton (1819–1869) was England’s most celebrated and influential photographer during the 1850s, the “golden age” of this radically new medium. Fenton’s majestic pictures of cathedrals, country houses, and varied countryside were without peer in England—as were his views of the royal castles and Houses of Parliament that embodied Britain’s power. But Fenton’s choice of subjects ranged more widely still: he was among the first to photograph the Kremlin and other landmarks of Moscow and Kiev; he was commissioned in 1855 to document the Crimean War, producing early war photographs; and he created theatrical Orientalist costume pictures and a startling series of lush still lifes.

Fenton had first studied law and painting, but soon after he took up the camera he was making photographs that were technically superb and highly original in their handling of composition, perspective, atmosphere, and light. Always he strove to demonstrate that photography could equal the art of painting and even surpass it. He was the force behind the founding of the Photographic Society (later the Royal Photographic Society), which worked to advance the profession and encouraged the exhibition of members’ works throughout Britain. In a career of a single decade, Fenton did much to transform photography into a medium of powerful expression and visual delight.

This exquisitely produced book—the first comprehensive publication on Fenton in almost twenty years—presents eighty-five of the artist’s finest photographs and discusses every aspect of his work and his remarkable career.



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