

The New Criterion

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The Critic's Notebook

by The Editors

This week: On seventeenth-century London, Greek epigrams, Albert Pinkham Ryder & more.

Art:

“A Wild Note of Longing: Albert Pinkham Ryder and a Century of American Art,” at the New Bedford Whaling Museum (through October 31): For our December 2020 issue, I wrote about the profound aesthetic solitude of Albert Pinkham Ryder, the visionary, Romantic, and proto-modernist American painter, on the occasion of a book from Rizzoli that was intended to coincide with an exhibition at the New Bedford Whaling Museum, but that ultimately predated it by a year due to the coronavirus lockdown. Now, finally, the exhibition, “A Wild Note of Longing: Albert Pinkham Ryder and a Century of American Art,” has opened in New Bedford, showing us that even loners can benefit from good company now and again. With more Ryders than have been seen in one place in three decades, along with works from some of the countless painters that have been inspired by his example (from moderns like Marsden Hartley and Charles Burchfield to contemporary painters such as Lois Dodd, Bill Jensen, and Peter Shear), the exhibition is an exceedingly rare opportunity to contemplate this “isolato of the brush” and his far-ranging influence. A must-see for all those who can make the trip to coastal southern Massachusetts. —AS

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