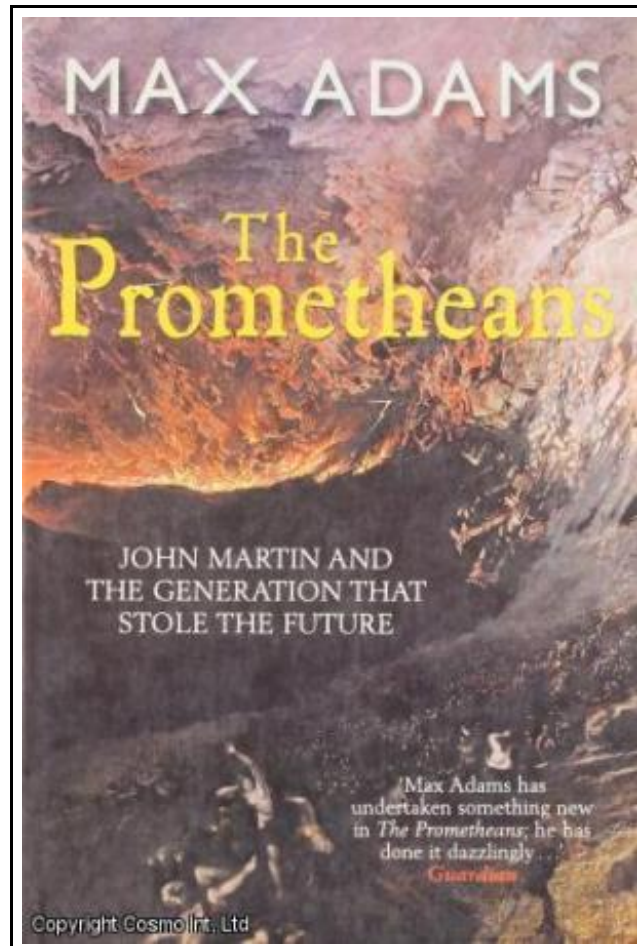


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Reviews

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THE PROMETHEANS: JOHN MARTIN AND THE GENERATION THAT STOLE THE FUTURE

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Quercus, UK, 2010. Softcover. Book Condition: New. First Edition. 336 Pages. Book Description: The richly varied lives of the Martin brothers reflected the many upheavals of Britain in the age of Industrial Revolution. Low-born and largely unschooled, they were part of a new generation of artists, scientists and inventors who witnessed the creation of the modern world. William, the eldest, was a cussedly eccentric inventor who couldn't look at a piece of machinery without thinking about how to improve it; Richard, a courageous soldier, fought in the Peninsular War and at Waterloo; Jonathan, a hellfire preacher tormented by madness and touched with a visionary genius reminiscent of William Blake, almost burned down York Minster in 1829; while John, the youngest Martin, single-handedly invented, mastered and exhausted an entire genre of painting, the apocalyptic sublime, while playing host to the foremost writers, scientists and thinkers of his day. : In *The Prometheans* Max Adams interweaves the fascinating story of these maverick siblings with a magisterial and multi-faceted account of the industrial, political and artistic ferment of early 19th-century Britain. His narrative centres on a generation of inventors, artists and radical intellectuals (including the chemist Humphry Davy, the engineer George Stephenson, the social reformer Robert Owen and the poet Shelley) who were seeking to liberate humanity from the tyranny of material discomfort and political oppression. For Adams, the shared inspiration that binds this generation together is the cult of Prometheus, the titan of ancient Greek mythology who stole fire from Zeus to give to mortal man, and who became a potent symbol of political and personal liberation from the mid-18th century onwards. : Whether writing about Davy's invention of the miner's safety lamp, the scandalous private life of the Prince Regent, the death of Shelley or J.M.W. Turner's use of colour, Adams's...

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