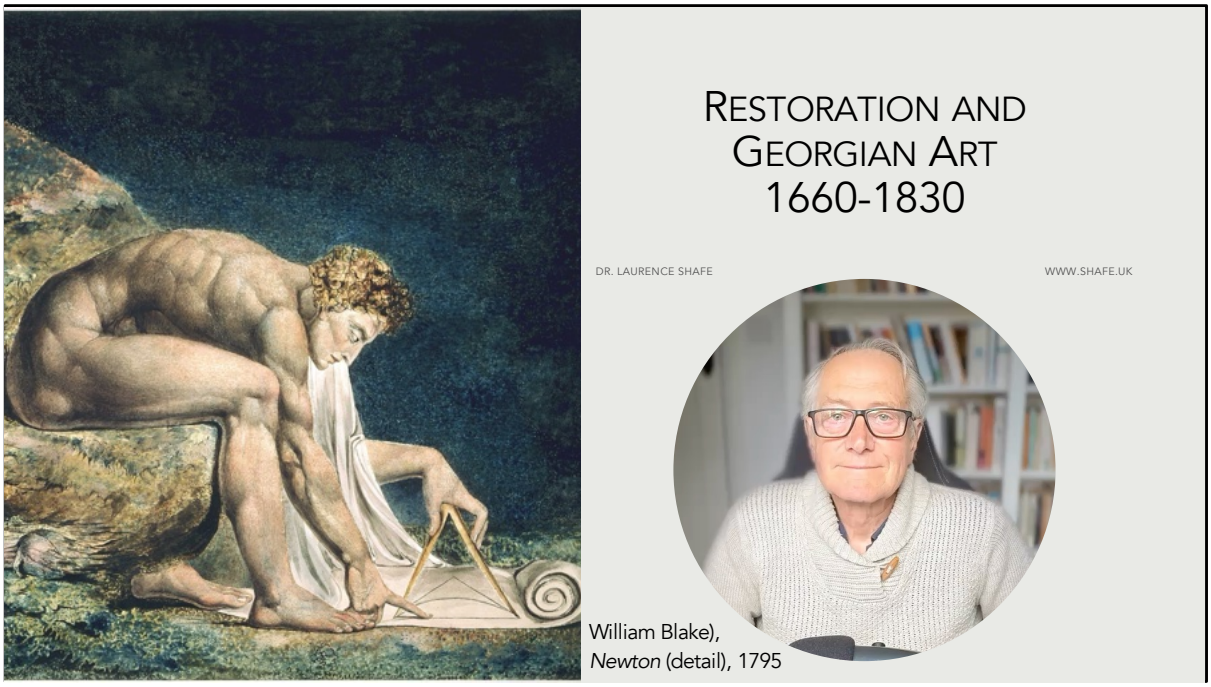
- Welcome. I continue to experiment with AI and my parallel project called The Automated Lecturer. This talk uses an ElevenLabs clone of my voice based on two hours of my talks. I think it is almost indistinguishable from my voice except there are no ums and uhs.



- This talk is on Restoration and Georgian art but let me first give a quick overview of background.
- Following the Black Death, that reached England in June 1348, there was a slow transition from feudalism, and the Italian Renaissance slowly began to influence British art.
- The 1400s marked the end of the Plantagenet dynasty with Richard III's death at Bosworth in 1485 and Henry VII, the first Tudor monarch, taking the throne. the Tudor era sparked a social revolution, elevating a new class of wealthy administrators and fuelling an obsession with portraiture. Crucially, the Reformation established the Church of England, leading to widespread destruction of religious art
- A fundamental struggle for power between Charles I and Parliament led to his execution on 30 January 1649 and the Commonwealth with the country ruled by Parliament, essentially by Oliver Cromwell.
- The Restoration brought Charles II to power and his brother James II's Catholicism and return to his belief in his divine right to rule led to the Glorious Revolution in which power resided in Parliament and the power of all future monarchs was severely limited.
- The 1600s introduced scientific and industrial shifts, led by Isaac Newton's foundational physics and the Royal Society's empirical methods. Finally, the late 1700s balanced Enlightenment reason against the emotionality of the Romantic movement, giving birth to the pragmatic, moderate English character. This work by William Blake can be seen to mark the beginning of Romanticism.

Notes

- **1400s**. Revolution on the battlefield. Richard III (2 October 1452 – 22 August 1485) was the last king to die in battle, at the age of 32, in the Battle of Bosworth Field. He was the last king of the House of York and the last of the Plantagenet dynasty. It was the beginning of the Italian Renaissance but the changes taking place in Italy filtered into English art and architecture very slowly and it took place through Italian and Northern European artists visiting and sometimes remaining to work in England.
- **1500s**. Social revolution. Although earlier kings, such as Henry I, promoted competent men from lowly backgrounds it was not until the Tudor period that a new class of lawyers and administrators from lowly backgrounds achieved powerful positions and became wealthy. The newly wealthy wanted art and this period saw the beginning of the English obsession with portraits. The biggest revolution of the Tudor period was the break with Roman Catholicism and the beginning of the unique form of religion that was to become the Church of England. This shift from Catholicism to Protestantism saw the wholesale and comprehensive destruction of religious art.
- **1600s**. Major political, social and philosophical changes took place between 1660 and 1800 starting with civil war and political revolution. This was followed by the scientific revolution, the British agricultural revolution and the industrial revolution. Thomas **Hobbes** (1588-1679) *Leviathan* (1651) describes man's natural state as short and brutish. An alternative view was that primitive man was a 'noble savage' (a term not actually used by Rousseau but implicit in his writing). Isaac **Newton** (1642–1727), English physicist, mathematician, alchemist, and philosopher was the most significant scientist of the period and some say of any period. His book *Philosophiæ Naturalis Principia Mathematica* ("*Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*"), first published in 1687, laid the foundations for classical mechanics. The **Royal Society**, founded in 1660, saw revolutionary advances in science. Its motto 'Nullius in verba' ('take nobody's word for it') encapsulates its rejection of authority and the importance of the scientific method.
- **1700s**. The eighteenth century was an **Age of Enlightenment** (also called the Age of Reason) and the belief that reason and logic could solve all problems. At the end of the eighteenth and into the middle of the nineteenth centuries the Romantic movement developed as a reaction against these beliefs and it stressed the importance of the human dimension, feelings and emotion. Painting reflected these ideas indirectly as artists worked almost exclusively on a commission basis and patrons demanded portraits. From 1730 to 1851 is described as the 'Golden Age' of English Painting with artists such as Hogarth, Gainsborough, Reynolds, Blake, Constable and Turner. Many early industrialists took an interest in science such as the members of the **Lunar Society** (1765-1813) which included **Josiah Wedgwood** (1730-1795), **Erasmus Darwin** (1731-1802), **Matthew Boulton** (1728-1809, partner of **James Watt**) and **Joseph Priestley** (1733-1804, joint discoverer of

oxygen). The Scottish philosopher **Adam Smith** (1723-1790) wrote *The Wealth of Nations* (1776). A period of increasing unrest with the **American Revolution** (1765-1783, Thomas Jefferson's *Declaration of Independence* was adopted by Congress on 4 July 1776), the **Dissenters** (including Puritans, Quakers, Levellers, Diggers), and the French Revolution (1789-99). '**Enthusiasm**' became a pejorative British term for any form of support for religious or political causes and it was an absolute social sin to remind others of the Civil War by engaging in enthusiasm. The English character was born as mixture of practicality, reason and humanity and the rejection of all forms of extremism.

- Scientific Revolution
    - 1543 Nicolaus Copernicus (1473-1543), *On the Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres*
    - 1620, Francis Bacon (1561-1626), *New Scientific Method*, developed the scientific method
    - 1628 William Harvey (1578-1657), *An Anatomical Exercise on the Motion of the Heart and Blood in Living Beings*
    - 1632 Galileo Galilei (1564-1642), *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*, 'father of science'
    - 1660 Royal Society founded
    - 1661 Robert Boyle (1627-1691), *The Sceptical Chymist*, Boyle's Law, the new science of electricity, vacuum pump
    - 1687 Isaac Newton (1642-1726/7), *Principia* (*Mathematical Principles of Natural Philosophy*), gravity, optics
    - 1689 John Locke (1632-1704), *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, empiricism
    - 1704 Newton, *Opticks*
    - Abraham Darby (1678-1717), production of iron using coke rather than charcoal, major step towards the Industrial Revolution

Anon, *Battle of the Spurs*, 1540s, Hampton Court Palace

Anon, *Battle of the Spurs*, 1540s, Hampton Court Palace

In the Tudor period history painting like this was not as a factual record but propaganda. This anonymous Tudor painting of the ***Battle of the Spurs*** (1513) shows how history painting served as royal propaganda. Henry VIII is placed at the centre of battle despite not being present, and the combat is depicted as medieval jousting although firearms had already transformed warfare. Commissioned when Henry was about fifty, the painting glorified his youthful martial prowess. Such works established a tradition of **idealised royal imagery** that would continue through the **Stuart period** and into the **Restoration era** that followed the upheavals of the Civil War.

- In the Tudor period history painting like this was not as a factual record but propaganda. The battle looks medieval with mounted knights, some with lances, fighting hand to hand. In fact, cannon and hand-held weapons had already been introduced and medieval warfare was changing quickly but the medieval idea of honourable combat between knights was still esteemed. Henry VIII is shown at the centre of the battle but he was not actually present at the battle. The battle of Bosworth Field on 22 August 1485 was the last battle when a king of England headed up his army.

Notes

- The Battle of the Spurs took place on 16 August 1513 took place at Guinegate (Enguinegatte) in France. It was a battle between the English, backed by Imperial troops, and the French and is called “the Battle of the Spurs” because the French

knights, taken by surprise and realising that they were outnumbered and outmanoeuvred, fled on horseback, their spurs glinting in the sunlight.

- According to one biographer, Henry VIII (1491-1547, reigned 1509-1547) actually missed the battle, if it can really be called that, because he was laying siege to the nearby town of Therouanne, a town which soon surrendered to the English and Imperial forces along with the town of Tournai. Other sources have Henry present but behind the front line, rather than in the middle of the action as he is portrayed in the painting.
- Henry VIII was 22 when the battle took place and had ruled for four years. He was about 50 when the painting was commissioned. His serious jousting accident took place in 1536 and his leg wound never healed. Following the accident he developed mood swings and became obese.

Anon, *Charles I, 1600-1649, Reigned 1625-1649 (The Execution of Charles I)*, c. 1649, 163.2 x 296.8 cm, National Gallery of Scotland

Anon, *Charles I, 1600-1649, Reigned 1625-1649 (The Execution of Charles I)*, c. 1649, 163.2 x 296.8 cm, National Gallery of Scotland

This shows the execution of Charles I in 1649 outside the Banqueting House marking the end of the early Stuart period and the beginning of the Commonwealth. This anonymous painting, based on eyewitness accounts, records the momentous event with inset scenes showing the trial, the scaffold procession and the gruesome aftermath, with parallels to Christ's crucifixion. The Interregnum brought puritanical restraint until Charles II's restoration in 1660 ushered in a new era of freedom and excess. Religious and political enthusiasm became socially unacceptable as the nation sought to avoid the conflicts that had led to civil war.

- The early Stuart period ended with the execution of Charles I outside the banqueting House. This was the beginning of the Commonwealth period sometimes called the Interregnum which came to an end with the reinstatement of a monarch, Charles II, in 1660.
- His new court ended a period of puritanism and introduced freedom and excess. The mood of the country had changed from confrontation to acceptance of variety in religion. It became socially unacceptable to be enthusiastic about any political or religious subject as everyone was aware that this could lead to war.

- This painting, probably based on eye-witness accounts and contemporary engravings, records the execution of Charles I on 30 January 1649 at Whitehall, after a long and bitter civil war. The inset pictures on the left show Charles as he appeared at his trial,

and below, Charles walking to the scaffold. Those on the right show the moments immediately after the execution: the axeman holds up Charles's severed head while spectators hurry to dip their handkerchiefs in royal blood. The central image, with the swooning woman, hints at a parallel with Christ's crucifixion.

Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Barbara Villiers, 1st Duchess of Cleveland as Minerva*, c. 1665, 124.5 × 101.4 cm, Royal Collection, Hampton Court Palace

Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Barbara Villiers, 1st Duchess of Cleveland as Minerva*, c. 1665, 124.5 × 101.4 cm, Royal Collection, Hampton Court Palace

Lely's portrait of Barbara Villiers as Minerva embodies the Restoration's celebration of beauty, power and sexual freedom at court. Sir Peter Lely was commissioned by Anne Hyde, Duchess of York, to paint the Windsor Beauties in the early 1660s — a series celebrating the most alluring women of Charles II's court. Barbara Villiers, the king's most famous mistress and mother of five of his ennobled children, was known as 'The Uncrowned Queen'. Her dark beauty defined the era's aesthetic. This was a period when women at court acquired real political influence through their physical allure, a theme explored in subsequent talks.

2. The Windsor and Hampton Court Beauties

- The Restoration is the name of the period from 1660, when Charles II became king until either the late 1680s or sometimes as late as 1714.
- It was a period of freedom in art and literature, magnificence, opulence and sexual freedom at court.
- This talk could be called ‘The Power of Beauty’ as it was a period when women at court acquired power through their physical beauty.
- The early to mid 1660s were when Sir **Peter Lely** (1618-1680) was commissioned by **Anne Hyde** (1637-1671, daughter of a commoner), Duchess of York and first wife of the future James II, to paint a series of portraits of court beauties later called the **Windsor Beauties.**
- Barbara Villiers (c. 1641-1709) had five children by Charles II who were all ennobled.

She was referred to as ‘The Uncrowned Queen’. Her extravagance, foul temper and promiscuity provoked diarist John Evelyn into describing her as the "curse of the nation", whereas Samuel Pepys often noted seeing her, admiringly. Barbara's 1st cousin Elizabeth Villiers (later 1st Countess of Orkney 1657–1733) was the only acknowledged mistress of King William III. Her masses of brunette hair, slanting, heavy-lidded violet eyes, alabaster skin, and a sensuous, sulky mouth defined the beauty of the English court.

Notes

- The original set of "Beauties" painted by Lely include, depending on the source:
    - **Barbara, Duchess of Cleveland (née Villiers; ca 1641-1709)**
    - Frances, Duchess of Richmond and Lennox (née Stuart; 1648-1702)
    - Elizabeth, Countess de Grammont (née Hamilton; 1641-1708)
    - Jane Myddleton (née Needham; 1646–92)
    - Margaret, Lady Denham (née Brooke; ca. 1647-67) (named Elizabeth in the cited printed sources [and in 18th century prints] but Margaret at the Royal Collection)
    - Frances, Lady Whitmore (née Brooke; d. 1690)
    - Mary, Countess of Falmouth and Dorset (née Bagot; 1645–79) (named Elizabeth in the cited printed sources [and in 18th century prints] but Mary at the Royal Collection)
    - Henrietta, Countess of Rochester (née Boyle; 1646-1687)
    - Anne, Countess of Sunderland (née Digby; ca. 1646-1715)
    - Elizabeth, Countess of Northumberland (née Wriothesley; 1646-1690)
    - Emilia Butler, Countess of Ossory (Melville omits this name, citing Ernest Law that the portrait previously identified by this name is actually Lady Falmouth.)
    - Madame Henrietta, Duchess of Orléans
- The portraits for the first 10 names are included at the Royal Collection website as "probably commissioned by Anne Hyde, Duchess of York."
- The Duchess of York does not figure in the above list often; but since she was largely responsible for the collection (and choosing the sitters), she is also included in the talk.

Godfrey Kneller, Mary Scrope (c1676-?), Royal Collection

Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), Mary Scrope (c1676-?), Royal Collection

Kneller's portrait of Mary Scrope represents the Hampton Court Beauties, commissioned by Queen Mary II in 1690-1 as a more formal counterpart to Lely's earlier Windsor Beauties. German-born Sir Godfrey Kneller became the dominant portraitist of the age, painting seven British monarchs from Charles II to George II, and was the first artist made a Baronet. Mary II's court was more restrained than her predecessor's, and her beauties appear demure and thoughtful rather than rakish. The portrait's symbolic details — flowing water suggesting fertility, a lizard evoking rejuvenation — reflect the rich iconographic language of the period.

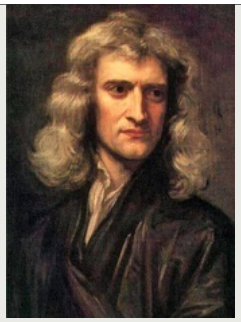
- William II and Mary II came to the throne jointly in 1688 and Mary, who died in 1694, commissioned a series of painting of court beauties from Sir **Godfrey Kneller** (1646-1723) that became known as the **Hampton Court Beauties**.
- William and Mary's court was more formal than Charles II and The Hampton Court Beauties had less power.
- Kneller was born in Lubeck, Germany and studied with Rembrandt in Amsterdam and by 1676 was working in England as a fashionable portrait painter.
- He painted seven British monarchs (Charles II, James II, William III, Mary II, Anne, George I and George II). In 1715 he was the first artist to be made a Baronet (the next was John Everett Millais in 1885). The baronetcy is the only British hereditary honour which is not a peerage, i.e. not a member of the nobility.
- He did not just paint the beauties of the court. He also painted a well known set of portraits of naval heroes that George IV gave to the Royal Naval Hospital in Greenwich

in 1824.

- In 1690-1 Mary II commissioned Kneller to paint a series, in Defoe's words, 'of the principal Ladies attending upon her Majesty, or who were frequently in her Retinue'. They originally hung in the 'Water Gallery' at Hampton Court, until it was destroyed in c. 1700, when they moved to their present location in the Eating Room below stairs, also at Hampton Court. According to Horace Walpole Mary II was advised by Lady Dorchester against the idea of having the most beautiful of her court painted: '**Madam, if the King were to ask for the portraits of all the wits in his court, would not the rest think he called them fools?**'
- Mary Scrope was said to be the most beautiful lady of the court, who married John Pitt in c. 1695. She is shown holding her hand under a jet of water from a carved fountain; she wears a yellow robe, over which is a grey mantle; to the left is a lizard. In the Renaissance a lizard could mean rejuvenation as it could grow back its tail. The lizard in Caravaggio's *Boy Bitten by a Lizard* could refer to the pain that derives from love. In Dutch painting springs of water or flowing water often represent fertility.
- Mary's women are demure and thoughtful, a long way from the rakish Restoration women.
- According to Samuel Johnson, Kneller, who was a Justice of the Peace, tried a servant for theft. When he found out that his master had intentionally laid the money in the servant's way to test his honesty he sent the master to prison.

Notes

- Isabella Bennet, Duchess of Grafton (1667–1713),
- Margaret Cecil, Countess of Ranelagh (1672–1727),
- Carey Fraser, Countess of Peterborough (c.1658–1709),
- Frances Whitmore, Lady Middleton (1666–1694),
- Mary Scrope, later Mrs Pitt (born 1676),
- Diana De Vere, Duchess of St Albans (1679–1742),
- Lady Mary Bentinck, Countess of Essex (died 1726),
- Mary Compton, Countess of Dorset (1669–1691)



Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), *Isaac Newton*, 1689, private collection

Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), *Portrait of Sir Isaac Newton*, 1702, 75.6 × 62.2 cm, National Portrait Gallery

Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), *Isaac Newton* (1642-1727, died aged 85)*,* 1689 (aged 47), private collection

Kneller's two portraits of Isaac Newton — the intense young scholar of 1689 and the established grandee of 1702 — frame the Scientific Revolution that transformed the Restoration era. Newton's famous apple insight of 1666, the year of the Great Fire and the year after the Great Plague, launched a revolution in understanding gravity and the cosmos. The founding of the Royal Society institutionalised scientific enquiry, with Newton as its President from 1703. Although scientific advances would not translate into technological innovation until the later eighteenth century, this period laid the intellectual foundations for the Industrial Revolution to come.

Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), *Portrait of Isaac Newton,* 1702 (aged 60, he was knighted in 1705), 75.6 × 62.2 cm, National Portrait Gallery

- <u>Seventeenth Century and the Scientific Revolution</u>
- The Restoration was also the time of Isaac Newton and the founding of the Royal Society. The famous apple incident, when Newton first developed the idea that the force that pulled the apple vertically downward from the tree was the same force that held the Moon in its orbit, took place in 1666. This was the year of the Great Fire of London and the year after the Great Plague (the last major outbreak of the bubonic plague in England).
- **Joseph Priestley** (1733-1804) discovered oxygen. **Henry Cavendish** (1731-1810) discovered hydrogen. He also calculated the mass and density of the earth. **William Herschel** (1738-1822) discovered Uranus. The Scottish engineer **Thomas Telford** (1757-

1834) built roads, canals and the Menai suspension bridge.
- It was not until later in the 1700s that the scientific advances translated in technological innovation used to improve the productivity of both agriculture and industry.

Notes
- Newton was made President of the Royal Society in 1703. He was knighted in 1705 by Queen Anne.
- Newton lost a fortune (£20,000) when the South Sea Company share price collapsed in 1720 (the South Sea Bubble).

James Thornhill (1675-1734), *James Thornhill*, National Portrait Gallery

James Thornhill (1675-1734), *James Thornhill*, National Portrait Gallery

Sir James Thornhill's unusual allegorical self-portrait shows Painting herself working on a portrait of the artist, making bold claims for his own superiority and for the international potential of British art. Thornhill was the first English-born artist to receive a knighthood, became court painter in 1718, and built a lucrative career as a decorative painter specialising in grand historical and mythological murals for noble and public buildings, including the Painted Hall at Greenwich. Unlike most contemporaries, he did not rely on portraiture. His son-in-law was William Hogarth, connecting two major chapters in British art history.

3. The English Baroque

- As an eminent painter Sir **James Thornhill** (1675-1734) was widely rewarded and recognized for his work during his lifetime, becoming court painter in 1718. He also received a knighthood in 1720 and was the first English-born artist to achieve this honour. Thornhill's career was very lucrative, and he was able to build a house on the Dorset estate once owned by previous generations of his family and eventually became MP for the local area. He painted *The Painted Hall*, Royal Navy College, Greenwich. William Hogarth married his daughter.
- This painting is an unusual rhetorical self-portrait. It shows a beautiful female figure - an **Allegory of Painting** - working on a portrait of the artist. By suggesting that he was made, or inspired, by this personification of Art, Thornhill was making claims both for his own superiority as an artist and for the international and academic potential of British art. Unlike many artists of the day, Thornhill did not make his living from

portraits. He was a decorative painter specialising in complex historical and mythological murals for noble and public buildings.

Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), *Sir Christopher Wren*, 1711, 124.5 x 100.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery

Sir Godfrey Kneller (1646–1723), *Sir Christopher Wren* (1632-1723, died aged 91), 1711, 124.5 x 100.3 cm, National Portrait Gallery

Kneller's portrait of Sir Christopher Wren captures one of the greatest polymaths of the age. Wren was not only the architect responsible for rebuilding 52 City churches after the Great Fire of 1666, including St Paul's Cathedral, but also a distinguished anatomist, astronomer, geometer and mathematician. A founder of the Royal Society and its president from 1680 to 1682, his scientific work was admired by Newton and Pascal alike. His architectural masterpieces — St Paul's, the Royal Naval College at Greenwich and the south front of Hampton Court Palace — defined the English Baroque and shaped London's skyline for centuries.

- The other great, long-lived figure of the period was **Sir Christopher Wren** , one of the most **highly acclaimed architects in history**. He was accorded responsibility for rebuilding 52 churches in the City of London after the Great Fire in 1666, including his masterpiece, St. Paul's Cathedral, on Ludgate Hill, completed in 1710. Some of his work is now attributed to others in his office, especially Nicholas Hawksmoor. Other notable buildings by Wren include the Royal Naval College, Greenwich, and the south front of Hampton Court Palace.
- Educated in Latin and Aristotelian physics at the University of Oxford, Wren was a notable anatomist, astronomer, geometer, and mathematician-physicist, as well as an architect. He was a founder of the Royal Society (president 1680–82), and his scientific work was highly regarded by Isaac Newton and Blaise Pascal (1623-1662, French mathematician, physicist, inventor).

- Both Newton and Wren were polymaths but the ‘last man who knew everything’ is possibly Thomas Young (1773-1829) who was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society on his 21st birthday, explained how the eye focuses, suggested three colour receptors in the ye, translated the Rosetta Stone, coined the term Indo-European to describe the family of languages spoken across Europe and Northern India, and contributed 63 articles to the *Encyclopedia Britannica.*

Christopher Wren, Hampton Court, 1689-1694, south façade

Christopher Wren, Hampton Court, 1689-1694, south façade

Hampton Court's south façade represents the English Baroque at its finest, built when William III and Mary II sought to rival Versailles after coming to the throne in 1689. Wren contrasted red brick with pale Portland stone, while Verrio painted grand Baroque frescoes and Tijou created flamboyant ironwork. The English Baroque, spanning the Great Fire of 1666 to the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, encompassed the work of Wren, Vanbrugh and Hawksmoor, culminating in Castle Howard and Blenheim Palace. The style was more restrained and classical than its Continental counterpart, and faded after 1724 as Palladian taste took hold.

3. The English Baroque

- The term 'English baroque' is often used to describe the architecture between the Great Fire of 1666 and the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713. It is associated with the work of **Sir Christopher Wren**, **William Talman** (Chatsworth, 1687), **Sir John Vanbrugh** (1664-1726) and **Nicholas Hawksmoor** (c.1661-1736, Mausoleum at Castle Howard, St. George's Church, Bloomsbury – the one shown in Hogarth's *Gin Lane*), the culmination of this period were Vanbrugh's **Castle Howard** (1699) and **Blenheim Palace** (1705). The English Baroque faded by 1724 and the style became associated with Toryism, the Continent and Popery.
- **The Baroque** is a style of painting, architecture and music that followed the Italian Renaissance. Some say the term 'baroque' is derived from the Portuguese word barroco, meaning a misshapen pearl. Baroque art used exaggerated motion and clear, easily interpreted detail to produce drama, tension, exuberance, and grandeur, a style

encouraged by the Catholic Church following the Council of Trent (1545-1563). English Baroque is more restrained and classical.

- Christopher Michael Wren (20 October 1632 – 25 February 1723) is one of the most highly acclaimed English architects in history. He was accorded responsibility for rebuilding 52 churches in the City of London after the Great Fire in 1666, including his masterpiece, St. Paul's Cathedral, on Ludgate Hill, completed in 1710. He was not only an architect but an anatomist, astronomer and mathematician-physicist. He was a founder of the Royal Society and president from 1680-82. His scientific work was highly regarded by Isaac Newton (1642-1726/7) and Blaise Pascal (1623-1662). His scientific works ranged from astronomy, optics, the problem of finding longitude at sea, cosmology, mechanics, microscopy, surveying, medicine and meteorology. He observed, measured, dissected, built models and employed, invented and improved a variety of instruments.

- Following the Restoration Hampton Court appeared old-fashioned and was rarely visited by Charles II or James II. In 1689, shortly after Louis XIV's court had moved permanently to Versailles, William III and Mary II embarked on a massive rebuilding project at Hampton Court. The plan was to demolish the old Tudor Palace except for the Great Hall and replace it with a Baroque palace. The country's leading architect, Christopher Wren, was asked to draw up plans and William Talman was appointed master of works. At the time all grand building design was influenced by Versailles but Wren contrasted the red brick with the pale Portland stone and added circular windows on the second floor.
- The King's staircase was decorated with frescos by Antonio Verrio and delicate ironwork by Jean Tijou. Other artists commissioned to decorate the rooms included Grinling Gibbons, **Sir James Thornhill** and Jacques Rousseau; furnishings were designed by Daniel Marot. After the death of Queen Mary, King William lost interest in the renovations, and work ceased. However, it was in Hampton Court Park in 1702 that he fell from his horse, later dying from his injuries at Kensington Palace. He was succeeded by his sister-in-law Queen Anne who continued the decoration and completion of the state apartments. On Queen Anne's death in 1714 the Stuart dynasty came to an end.
- Queen Anne's successor was George I (1660-1727, reigned 1714-1727); he and his son George II (1683-1760, reigned 1727-1760) were the last monarchs to reside at Hampton Court. Under George I six rooms were completed in 1717 to the design of John Vanbrugh. Under George II and his wife, Caroline of Ansbach, further refurbishment took place, with the architect William Kent employed to design new furnishings and decor including the Queen's Staircase, (1733) and the Cumberland Suite (1737) for the Duke of Cumberland. During Gorge I's reign the power of the monarch diminished further and Britain was run by the modern system of cabinet government led by Sir Robert Walpole, prime minster. The term prime minister

was first used disparagingly of Robert Walpole to highlight his hubris in claiming to be above the other ministers.

Antonio Verrio (c. 1636-1707), introduced Baroque mural painting to England and he served the crown over 30 years. He was described as a pretentious, vulgar and extravagant personality. He painted the fresco on the King's Staircase at Hampton Court. In the scheme for the staircase Verrio showed William III in triumphal mode, dominating a group of Roman emperors who represent the King's Catholic enemies, as well as a banquet of the Gods denoting the peace and plenty William had brought.

Jean Tijou was probably a Huguenot, a master blacksmith and possibly trained at Versailles. He arrived in England with William III and Mary II and began making ironwork for the gardens at their new residence, Hampton Court Palace. Tijou created a new style of flamboyant ironwork. His most notable work was the twelve panels of the screen, which now bears his name, and can be seen, where it was installed in 1701, at the river end of the Privy Garden. The screen was the first exhibit in the new Victoria & Albert Museum before being returned to Hampton Court. Sadly Tijou was never fully paid for his work and disappeared soon after 1710.

References

- Historic Royal Palaces website

William Hogarth, *Painter and His Pug*, 1745, Tate Britain

William Hogarth (1697-1764), *Painter and His Pug*, 1745, Tate Britain

Hogarth's self-portrait with his pug Trump introduces the tradition of social realism and graphic satire that defined Georgian Britain. His palette bears the 'Line of Beauty and Grace' underpinning his artistic theories, while the volumes of Shakespeare, Swift and Milton signal his commitment to drama, satire and epic poetry. Hogarth pioneered social commentary through art, and his successors — James Gillray, who invented John Bull and caricatured George III; Thomas Rowlandson, who favoured social over political satire; and George Cruikshank, who lampooned Napoleon before turning to book illustration for Dickens — made Georgian Britain gloriously, shockingly rude.

- The eighteenth century saw the introduction of social satire by Hogarth and later in the century caricature and political and social satire by many artists, of which Gillray, Rowlandson and Cruikshank are the most well known.
- Hogarth is in a painting making the dog ‘real’.
- Tate website: ‘Hogarth first began this self-portrait in the mid-1730s. X-rays have revealed that, at this stage, it showed the artist in a formal coat and wig. Later, however, he changed these to the more informal cap and clothes seen here. The oval canvas containing Hogarth’s self-portrait appears propped up on volumes of Shakespeare, Swift and Milton, authors who inspired Hogarth’s own commitment to drama, satire and epic poetry. Hovering above the surface of his palette is the ‘Line of Beauty and Grace’, which underpinned Hogarth’s own theories on art. Hogarth’s pug dog, Trump, whose features resemble his, serves as an emblem of the artist’s own

pugnacious character.'

- In the early 18th century, Georgian Britain was a nation openly, gloriously and often shockingly rude. This was found in the graphic art of Hogarth, Gillray, Rowlandson and George Cruikshank

- **James Gillray**, studied at the Royal Academy. Caricatured George II as 'Farmer George' and invented the character John Bull, rotund, unpretentious and honourable country gentleman as opposed to the thin, impoverished Frenchman and the debauched English aristocrat.
- **Thomas Rowlandson**, studied at the Royal Academy and in Paris, he almost bankrupted himself through gambling. Rowlandson was more interested in social satire rather than political.
- **George Cruikshank**, influenced by Hogarth and Gillray. He started during the Napoleonic Wars and satirized the exploits of 'Boney'. In 1820 he took a bribe not to caricature George IV "in any immoral situation" and devoted more time to social observation and book illustration, particularly the novels of Charles Dickens. He created mocking stereotypes of the Irish and later the Chinese.

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *Painting of John Gay's The Beggar's Opera, Act 5, c.* 1728, 56 × 72.5 cm, Tate

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *Painting of John Gay's The Beggar's Opera, Act 5, c*. 1728, 56 × 72.5 cm, Tate

Hogarth's painting of The Beggar's Opera captures the vibrant theatrical culture that flourished after the Restoration reopened the playhouses in 1660. John Gay's ballad opera of 1728 lampooned Italian opera and satirised corruption at every level of society through the story of highwayman Macheath and his tangled loves. Hogarth includes real audience members, blurring the line between stage and society. Beyond theatre, the period saw the rise of horse racing, assembly rooms, cricket, coffee houses and the first daily newspaper in 1702. Cruel sports like cockfighting persisted alongside the Grand Tour, reflecting a society of stark contrasts.

- **Leisure** – Theatres were built in most towns. *The Beggar's Opera* by John Gay is a ballad opera in three acts. It was satirical and a great success and has played ever since. In 1920 it played at Hammersmith for an astonishing 1,463 performances. It lampooned the Italian opera style and satirizes corruption at all levels of society. Bertolt Brecht and Kurt Weill's *The Threepenny Opera* uses a similar plot. Peachum, a thief catcher learns his daughter Polly has married a famous highwayman called Macheath and plots to kill him for his money. Macheath goes to a tavern and is captured and sent to Newgate prison. Newgate is run by Peachum's associate the corrupt jailer Lockit. Macheath had previously agreed to marry his daughter Lucy Lockit and when Polly arrives Macheath tells Lucy she is crazy and Lucy helps him escape. Peachum and Lockit find Macheath's hiding place and agree to split his fortune. Polly visits Lucy to reach an agreement but Lucy tries to poison her. Macheath finds that four more pregnant women each claim

him as their husband and he declares he is ready to be hanged. The narrator tells the audience that in a moral play he would be hanged but to keep them happy he will be reprieved and they all dance to celebrate his marriage to Polly.

- In the painting Macheath, stands chained, under sentence of death, between his two lovers, the jailer's daughter, Lucy Lockit, and, to the right, the lawyer's daughter, Polly Peachum. They in turn plead with their respective fathers for his life. At either side of the stage Hogarth has included members of the audience, notably at the far right the Duke of Bolton, real-life lover of the actress, Lavinia Fenton, who played the part of Polly Peachum.
- The opera was criticized and in the late eighteenth century John Hawkins wrote, 'Rapine and violence have been gradually increasing' solely because of a new generation of young men seeking to emulate Macheath.

- **<u>Leisure Activities</u>**
    - Other popular indoor leisure activities included **chess, drafts** and backgammon and outdoors some **tennis** and a rough form of football.
    - **Horse racing** became a professional sport and the Derby began in 1780.
    - Assembly rooms were built and were used for **card playing** and for balls.
    - The **modern form of cricket** started and the first cricket club was formed at Hambledon about 1750.
    - People **visited spas** for their health and by the end of the century the wealthy visited the **seaside**.
    - **Reading was popular** and the first novels were written. Books were expensive but circulation libraries started.
    - The **first daily newspaper** was printed in 1702 and *The Times* began in 1785.
    - People enjoyed **cruel sports** like bull baiting and cockfighting.
    - **Public executions** drew large crowds.
    - **Boxing without gloves** was attended by large crowds and in the late 1700s the circus became popular.
    - **Smoking** clay pipes was common as was tasking snuff.
    - Wealthy men would go on a '**grand tour**' of Europe for one or two years.

William Hogarth, *Strolling Actresses in a Barn*, 1738

William Hogarth, *Strolling Actresses in a Barn*, 1738

Hogarth's Strolling Actresses in a Barn shows actresses preparing for their final performance before the Licensing Act of 1737 disbanded their company. Pushed through by Robert Walpole to suppress political satire, the Act restricted serious drama to two patent theatres and gave the Lord Chamberlain censorship power that endured until 1968. This was an era of both savage satire and increasing censorship. Non-patent theatres responded by developing melodrama, ballad opera and burlesque. Meanwhile, Gainsborough and Reynolds were emerging as the century's greatest portraitists and would help found the Royal Academy in 1768, professionalising British art.

- **Art**
- **William Hogarth** (1697-1764) painted scenes showing the harsh side of 18th century life. This *Strolling Actresses in a Barn*, 1738. It is one of a series of prints published as 'Four Times of the Day' showing a group of actresses getting ready for their final performance before their company is disbanded as a result of the Licensing Act of 1737.
- In theatre the greatest actor of the 18th century was **David Garrick** (1717-1779).
- **Stage plays were prohibited in 1642** and did not return until the Restoration in 1660. When they were restored Charles II granted a **monopoly on 'serious' drama** to Theatre Royal, Drury Lane and Lincoln's Inn Fields. William III granted another license in 1695 which moved to the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden (now the Royal Opera House) in 1720. Other **patent theatres** opened in Bath, Liverpool and Bristol. The **Licensing Act of 1737** pushed through by Robert Walpole restricted the production of plays and

tightened censorship. The **Lord Chamberlain** had the power to approve any play before it was staged. It was modified by the Theatres Act of 1843 but not finally **repealed** until the Theatres Act of **1968**.

- This was a more serious period and a time of censorship but also a time of savage satire.

- The two great portrait artists of the 1700s were **Thomas Gainsborough** (1727-1788) and **Sir Joshua Reynolds** (1723-1792). They both helped found the Royal Academy in 1768.

Stage Censorship

- The Licensing Act of 1737 was to have a huge impact on the development of theatre in Britain. It restricted the production of plays to the two patent theatres and tightened up the censorship of drama, stating that the Lord Chamberlain with his Examiners of Plays must vet any script before a performance was allowed.
- The act was put in place by Prime Minister **Robert Walpole** who was concerned that political satire on the stage was **undermining him** and the authority of the government. A production of *The Golden Rump* enabled Walpole to push the case for banning obscene drama from the public arena. The play scandalously suggested that the Queen administered enemas to the King. Henry Fielding, author of a number of successful satires, and others were suspicious that this play had been engineered by Walpole himself.
- Over the next 100 years the restrictions of the Licensing Act contributed to the popularity of certain styles of theatre. Non-patent theatres produced melodrama, ballad opera and burlesque which incorporated music between short scenes and thus were not classed as plays. The act was responsible for dividing British theatrical performance into what became known as legitimate and illegitimate theatre.
- The huge growth in demand for theatrical entertainment in the early 19th century made the dominance of the patent theatres unworkable. In 1843 the Patent Act was dropped, enabling other theatres to present drama. However, the Lord Chamberlain's censorship of plays remained in place until 1968. One of the last play to be censored was Edward Bond's production of *Saved* in 1965.
- Before 1968 the Lord Chamberlain's blue pencil marks were struck through lines in literally hundreds of plays including classical works such as *Lysistrata* by Aristophanes, George Bernard Shaw's *Mrs Warren's Profession* and Ibsen's *Hedda Gabler*. In the 1930s club theatres in London managed to avoid censorship by admitting 'members' and presented new and controversial works, including many plays by foreign writers.

William Hogarth (1697-1764),
Beer Street, 1751

William Hogarth (1697-1764),
Gin Lane, 1751

William Hogarth (1697-1764), *Beer Street* and *Gin Lane*, 1751

Hogarth's companion prints Beer Street and Gin Lane are masterpieces of social commentary, created to support the Gin Act of 1751. During the Gin Craze, Londoners consumed an average of two pints of gin per week by the 1730s, and earlier attempts at regulation had provoked riots. Hogarth contrasts the healthy, industrious inhabitants of Beer Street, nourished by native English ale, with the wretched figures of Gin Lane destroyed by their addiction to the foreign spirit. Daniel Defoe similarly lamented that while Britain was the most industrious nation, its poor squandered their earnings on drink rather than providing for their families.

- Depict the evils of gin and support for the Gin Act (1751), which prohibited distillers from selling to unlicensed merchants and so designed to eliminate small gin shops. The Gin Craze describes the massive consumption of gin, an average of two pints per week per Londoner by the 1730s. Previous Gin Acts of 1729 and 1736 had led to riots in London in 1743.
- Hogarth shows the inhabitants of Beer Street as happy and healthy, nourished by the native English ale, and those who live in Gin Lane as destroyed by their addiction to the foreign spirit of gin. Gin Lane shows scenes of infanticide, starvation, madness, decay and suicide, while Beer Street depicts industry, health, friendship and thriving commerce.
- Daniel Defoe (c. 1660-1731) in *Giving Alms to Charity*, wrote that we are the most "diligent nation in the world. Vast trade, rich manufactures, mighty … wealth, universal correspondence, and happy … success have been constant companions of England, and

given us the title of an industrious people.“ Although he did go on to say, ‘But there is a general taint of slothfulness upon our poor’. His concern is that the poor spend their money on drink and then go into debt to spend even more on drink. They do not, like the Dutch men, give it to their families, plan for the future and live within their means.

Joshua Reynolds, *The Ladies Waldegrave*, 1780, 143 x 168.3 cm, Scottish National Gallery

Reynolds's elegant group portrait The Ladies Waldegrave marks the culmination of a movement to professionalise British art through the founding of the Royal Academy in 1768. Reynolds was the driving force among thirty-six founding members, including Gainsborough, two women artists — Angelica Kauffman and Mary Moser — and several sets of relatives. Reynolds was particularly skilled at choosing poses that revealed character while creating strong compositions. Here the three Waldegrave sisters, commissioned by their great-uncle Horace Walpole, are shown collaboratively working on needlework. The painting may have served to advertise their beauty to prospective suitors, and all three married within a few years.

- The Royal Academy was founded in 1768 by **Joshua Reynolds**, John Baker, George Barret, Francesco Bartolozzi, Giovanni Battista Cipriani, Augustino Carlini, Charles Catton, Mason Chamberlin, **William Chambers**, Francis Cotes, George Dance, Nathaniel Dance, **Thomas Gainsborough**, John Gwynn, **Francis Hayman**, Nathaniel Hone the Elder, **Angelica Kauffman**, Jeremiah Meyer, **George Michael Moser**, Francis Milner Newton, **Mary Moser**, Edward Penny, John Inigo Richards, **Thomas Sandby**, **Paul Sandby**, Dominic Serres, Peter Toms, William Tyler, Samuel Wale, **Benjamin West**, **Richard Wilson**, Joseph Wilton, Richard Yeo, Francesco Zuccarelli. William Hoare and **Johann Zoffany** were added to this list later by the King and are known as nominated members. Among the founder members were two women, a father and daughter, and two sets of brothers.

- National Galleries of Scotland: ‘Reynolds was particularly skilled at choosing poses and actions which suggested a sitter's character and which also created a strong composition. Here, three sisters, the daughters of the 2nd Earl Waldegrave, are shown collaboratively working on a piece of needlework. The joint activity links the girls together. On the left, the eldest, Lady Charlotte, holds a skein of silk, which the middle sister, Lady Elizabeth, winds onto a card. On the right, the youngest, Lady Anna, works a tambour frame, using a hook to make lace on a taut net.’
- The three girls were unmarried at the time of the painting, which was commissioned by their great uncle, **Horace Walpole** for his house **Strawberry Hill**. It may have been the families aim to advertise their beauty and so find suitors when it went on public display at the Royal Academy. All three were married within a few years.

Johann Zoffany,
The Sharp Family, 1779-81,
National Portrait Gallery

Johann Zoffany (1733-1810), *The Sharp Family*, 1779-81, National Portrait Gallery

Zoffany's masterpiece The Sharp Family is a supreme example of the conversation piece, a genre of informal group portraiture that flourished in Britain from the 1720s. The remarkable Sharp family gave fortnightly concerts from their sailing barge on the Thames at Fulham, and Zoffany painted each member individually over a year. The family included a surgeon to the King, a clergyman, an engineer and the anti-slavery campaigner Granville Sharp. Distinguished from formal portraits by their depiction of groups engaged in genteel activities, often outdoors, conversation pieces were also practised by Hogarth, Devis, Stubbs and Reynolds, and became a distinctively British contribution to European art.

7. The Conversation Piece

- An informal group portrait, especially in 18th century Britain starting in 1720. Zoffany was master of the genre.
- They are distinguished by their portrayal of the group apparently engaged in genteel conversation or some activity, very often outdoors. Typically the group will be members of a family, but friends may be included, and some groups are of friends, members of a society or hunt, or some other grouping. The name derives from the Italian *sacra conversazione*, an informal painting of the Virgin and Child with saints. Later the phrase acquired a different meaning, it described objects interesting enough to spark conversation about them.

- The Sharp family were living for a while on the Thames in a barge and would play music to entertain guests. Zoffany painted each person individually over a period of one year.

- The remarkable Sharp family gave fortnightly concerts as an orchestra from the 1750s onwards. This conversation piece, one of Zoffany's masterpieces, commemorates the concerts they gave on board their sailing barge Apollo at Fulham. The work was commissioned from Zoffany by **William Sharp** (1729-1810), **surgeon to George III** (although no documentary evidence confirms this). Sharp is seen standing at the tiller, hat raised, wearing the Windsor uniform with its distinctive red collar; his instruments are the French horns which rest on the piano.
- Sharp is seen standing at the tiller, hat raised, wearing the Windsor uniform with its distinctive red collar; his instruments are the French horns which rest on the piano. Of his three brothers, Dr John Sharp is on the right and has laid his cello aside for the moment; Granville Sharp, the famous philanthropist and slavery abolitionist, holds his favoured flageolets in one hand, his clarinet being nearby on the piano; while James Sharp, an engineer, holds the serpent. The three Sharp sisters complete the orchestra: Elizabeth at the piano, Judith with music in hand and, above to the right, Frances with a theorbo or perhaps an angelica.

<u>Who's who?</u>

- Top, holding his hat, William Sharp, surgeon (1729-1810), the King's surgeon and the most important family member
- Below, left, Mrs Catherine Sharp, nee Lodge, wife of James Sharp
- Below, centre, Mrs Catherine Sharp (died 1814), nee Barwick, wife of William Sharp
- Below, right, Ann Jemima Sharp (died 1816), daughter of John & Mary Sharp
- Baby holding a kitten, Mary Sharp, (1778-1810) daughter of William & Catherine Sharp
- Top right holding a type of guitar called an angelica, Judith Sharp, (1733-1809)
- Far left, Dick Spikeman, boatman's "lad", shown over the side of the boat
- Next to him, head and shoulders of William Lee, boatman, also over the side to show they were not members of the family
- Holding the serpent, James Sharp, engineer, inventor & iron-monger (1731-1783)
- Young girl, Catherine Sharp (died 1843), daughter of James & Catherine Sharp
- Leaning forward **Granville Sharp**, (1735-1813), the most important figure in today's terms, a well-known anti-slave trade campaigner
- At the piano, Mrs Elizabeth Prowse, (1733-1810), nee Sharp, of Wicken Park, Northamptonshire
- Holding music, Frances Sharp, (1738-1799)
- Sitting, wearing the black coat and white wig with puffy sidepieces of a clergyman, John Sharp, (1723-1792), archdeacon of Northumberland, the eldest brother
- Behing John, Mrs Mary Sharp, (nee Dering), wife of John Sharp
- At their feet, "Poma", Zoffany's dog, a German Spitz

- Other artists who painted conversation pieces:

- Arthur Devis
- William Hogarth
- Johann Zoffany (1733-1810)
- Samuel Scott (c. 1702-1772)
- George Stubbs
- Joshua Reynolds

References

- National Portrait Gallery website

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), *Giovanna Baccelli*, exhibited 1782, Tate Britain

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), *Giovanna Baccelli*, exhibited 1782, Tate Britain

Gainsborough's lively portrait of the Italian dancer Giovanna Baccelli illustrates the revolution in eighteenth-century portraiture led by Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Lawrence. Gainsborough's mature style — small, quick, light brushstrokes capturing movement and charm — is perfectly suited to this principal ballerina of the King's Theatre, who was also the celebrated mistress of the Duke of Dorset. The painting reveals a world where theatre, aristocracy and art were intimately connected, and where portraiture could capture personality as much as likeness. Gainsborough himself trained his daughters as professional artists, a revolutionary notion for the age, in case they should miss getting husbands.

Allan Ramsay (1713-1784), Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), George Romney (1734-1802), and Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830) revolutionized portraiture, introducing a new authority and sensibility.

- See *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman*, an exhibition in Cincinnati, the ‘demirep’ was a less-than-respectable woman who rejected the accepted notions of femininity, made their own money, gambled, left their husbands and wore French fashions. This painting makes it clear they also managed their image like any modern pop star.
- See portrait description of *Penelope Pitt, Viscountess Ligonier*, hedonism, eroticism and a public scandal - she left her husband for an Italian playwright and Gainsborough

exhibited this at the height of the scandal.

- *Portrait of the Artist's Daughters*. While it was fashionable for young women to learn drawing and watercolour as hobbies, Gainsborough trained his **daughters** to be **professional artists**, in case they should "miss getting husbands". This notion was revolutionary for the 18th century.

- Tate website:
- 'The Italian dancer **Giovanna** Francesca Antonio Giuseppe Zanerini was born in Venice and took her mother's name, **Baccelli, as her stage name**. She was a **principal ballerina** in London at the King's Theatre, Haymarket, where she first appeared in 1774. She reached the peak of her acclaimed career during the **1780-1 season** when she appeared with Gaetan Vestris and his son Auguste in several important ballets devised by Noverre. As one reviewer (quoted in Whitley, p.188) noted, she appears in this portrait in the costume, make-up and pose from a ballet she danced that season, *Les Amans Surpris*: 'the artist was not only obliged to vivify and embellish; but, if he would be thought to copy the original, to lay on his colouring thickly. In this he has succeeded, for the face of this admirable dancer is evidently paint-painted'. Baccelli also danced with great success in Venice in 1783-4, and at the Paris Opéra as late as 1788. Gainsborough was well-acquainted with many theatre people, including Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the famous dramatist and part-owner of the King's Theatre.
- Baccelli was equally known as the last and most enduring **mistress** of **John Frederick Sackville, 3rd Duke of Dorset** (1745-99). When Baccelli's portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1782, **Gainsborough's portrait of the Duke** (collection Lord Sackville) **was withdrawn**, presumably for reasons of decorum. The Duke patronised Gainsborough's great rival Joshua Reynolds, who painted Baccelli in 1783 (collection Lord Sackville). The Duke, a handsome, extravagant man with a string of famous mistresses, had set up **Baccelli in a suite of rooms at Knole** by October 1779. Baccelli accompanied him to Paris in 1783 when he was appointed Ambassador to France. They entertained lavishly, patronising the Paris Opéra, and were admitted to the friendship of Queen Marie-Antoinette. Horace Walpole records that when the Duke was awarded the Order of the Garter in 1788, Baccelli danced at the Opéra wearing the blue Garter ribbon around her head. As the events of the French Revolution unfolded, the pair returned to Knole, where Baccelli remained until their amicable parting in 1789. She left a son behind. She subsequently developed close friendships with Henry Herbert, 10th Earl of Pembroke, and Mr James Carey, with whom she remained until her death in 1801.
- This lively portrait, which was at Knole until 1890, is an excellent example of Gainsborough's mature style, which is distinguished by small, quick, light brushstrokes. Most striking is the artist's successful rendering of movement. Baccelli was by accounts more charming than beautiful, and Gainsborough's portrait captures this aspect of her character perfectly. A contemporary newspaper

critic said the portrait was 'as the Original, light airy and elegant' (quoted in Einberg, p.14). A receipt from Gainsborough is still preserved at Knole: 'Recd. of His Grace the Duke of Dorset one hundred guineas in full for the two 3/4 Portraits of his Grace, one full length of Madlle Baccelli, two Landskips and one sketch of *Begger Boy and Girl* 63105. June 15 1784/ Tho. Gainsborough'.

- A small finished oil sketch for this painting is at Russborough. It has no tambourine in the lower left corner and there are other slight compositional variations. Baccelli was also painted by Ozias Humphrey (exhibited 1780, untraced), John Graham (exhibited 1784, untraced), and Gainsborough Dupont (c.1795, Royal Collection); a nude sculpture by Locatelli is at Knole.

James Gillray, 'The Times, Anno 1783', 1785

James Gillray, 'The Times, Anno 1783', 1785

Gillray's satirical print of 1785 shows Britain lamenting the loss of her American colonies while European rivals gloat — a vivid reminder that art and politics were inseparable throughout this period. The eighteenth century was shaped by almost continuous warfare: the War of the Spanish Succession, the Seven Years' War, the American War of Independence and finally the French Revolution. The Act of Union with Scotland in 1707 created Great Britain, the Jacobite risings of 1715 and 1745 threatened the Hanoverian succession, and the South Sea Bubble of 1720 shook the financial system. Through it all, Britain's empire and sea power grew steadily.

- Late eighteenth century satirical print showing Britain regretting the loss of her American colonies, while France gloats and Spain blames the French for the failure to retake the Rock. Holland looks on impassively (J. Gillray)
- Dutch 'De Donder take you Monsieur, I think I have paid the Piper'
- Spanish 'See Gibraltar! See Don Langarce! Laughing Stock of Europe.'
- French, 'Ah, Ah, me Lord Angla, volez vous une pince de Snuff for de Diable will not give you back de Amerique.'
- English, ''Tis lost! Irrecoverably lost!'
- America, 'Poor John Bull,! Ha! Ha! Ha.'

- **<u>Eighteenth Century Wars and Political Events</u>**
    - War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714), the first 'world war', In 1701, England, Portugal and the Netherlands sided with the Holy Roman Empire against Spain and France to prevent the unification of France and Spain

following the death of Charles II.

- Treaty of Union, 1707, created Great Britain from Scotland and England.
- Jacobite risings, 1715 and in 1745 Bonnie Prince Charlie (1720-1788, the Young Pretender Charles III) was defeated at the Battle of Culloden.
- South Sea Bubble, 1720s.
- Seven Years' War (1756-63), also sometimes called the first 'world war'. Generally, France, Austria, Saxony, Sweden, and Russia were aligned on one side against Prussia, Hanover, and Great Britain on the other. The war arose out of the Austrian Habsburgs trying to win back Silesia, which had been taken by Frederick II the Great of Prussia during the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–48). But the Seven Years' War also involved overseas colonial struggles between Great Britain and France, particularly the struggle for control of North America and India.
- American War of Independence (1775-84) was a civil war and a war which was only won because the French helped the Americans. Following the conflict 100,000 loyalists fled abroad.
- French Revolution (1789) and the French Revolutionary Wars (1792-1802), the Peace of Amiens (1802) and the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815).
- The British Empire grew to include India, Australia and Canada.
- Britain's sea power grew.

Joseph Wright of Derby, *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump*, 1768, National Gallery

Joseph Wright of Derby (1734-1797), *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump*, 1768, National Gallery

Wright of Derby's *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* makes him the first professional painter to represent the world of the Scientific and Industrial Revolutions. Using dramatic chiaroscuro reminiscent of earlier religious paintings, Wright shows a travelling demonstrator proving that air is necessary for life, while a family reacts with fascination, fear and compassion. Wright was a member of the Lunar Society, whose members — including Erasmus Darwin, Priestley, Watt and Wedgwood — met monthly during the full moon to discuss the latest scientific discoveries. The painting captures the moment when science became a new source of wonder, replacing the miracles of religion. It was at the height of the Age of Enlightenment.

9. The Industrial and Agricultural Revolutions in Art

- Joseph Wright of Derby was the first professional painter to represent the industrial revolution. Many of his paintings, such as this one, used chiaroscuro (literally, 'light-dark') for dramatic effect. He was born in Derby and after deciding to become a painter he went to London in 1751 and studied under Thomas Hudson, who was also the master of Joshua Reynolds.
- He was a member of the Lunar Society, an organisation that sought to introduce the ideas of the Enlightenment.
- The Lunar Society was a loose association of friends in the Midlands that met for over fifty years. They met regularly in Birmingham once a month during full moon (accounting for the name) as it made travelling in the evening easier when there were

no street lights. Famous members included Erasmus Darwin (Charles Darwin's grandfather), Joseph Priestley, James Watt and Josiah Wedgwood. The members carried out scientific experiments and met to discuss the latest findings.

- In this painting we see an experiment showing that air is necessary for life. The demonstrator with long flowing hair would tour the country giving demonstrations of the latest technology. In this case he is demonstrating an air pump which has removed most of the air from the bell jar causing the cockatoo to collapse. His hand is poised on the vale that will admit air bring the bird back to life.
- The painting shows the various reactions of one family to the demonstration. One man, perhaps her father, is consoling two girls, one of whom is weeping. One the table are Magdeburg hemispheres, invented by the mayor of Magdeburg in 1656. A large pair when excavated of air could not be pulled apart by two teams of horses. A four inch pair would require 180 pounds of force and so could not be pulled apart by any member of the audience.
- The painting makes you think of earlier religious paintings, including Christ in the manager glowing. This represents the new miracle of science.
- Wright was asthmatic and so this type of experiment would have a personal resonance with him as a better scientific understanding of breathing could help him.

- Other artists include Philip de Loutherbourg, George Stubbs (1724-1806) and Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851).

William Blake (1757-1827), *Newton*, 1795, colour print with pen & ink and watercolour, Tate Britain

William Blake (1757-1827), *Newton*, 1795, colour print with pen & ink and watercolour, Tate Britain

Blake's Newton represents the early Romantic rejection of Enlightenment rationalism. The great scientist is shown blind to the colourful creative world behind him, fixated on the rigid geometry of his compass, illustrating Blake's belief that reductive scientific thought impoverished the human spirit. Newton was one of Blake's 'infernal trinity' alongside Bacon and Locke. This Romantic movement offered a passionate alternative to the ordered, rational world of the Enlightenment. Blake's friend and influence Henry Fuseli, the Swiss-born Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy, shared this fascination with imagination, dreams and the sublime — themes that would dominate the next generation of British art.

8. The Early Romantic Age of English Painting

- An alternative to the ordered, rational world of the Enlightenment
- Blake's *Newton* (1795) demonstrates his opposition to scientific materialism: Newton fixes his eye on a compass (recalling Proverbs 8:27, 'When he prepared the heavens, I *was* there: when he set a compass upon the face of the depth', an important passage for Milton) to write upon a scroll that seems to be connected to his own head.
- Blake was critical of reductive scientific thought. In this picture, the straight lines and sharp angles of Newton's profile suggest that he cannot see beyond the rules of his compass. Behind him, the colourful, textured rock may be seen to represent the creative world, to which he is blind. Blake wrote 'Art is the Tree of Life. Science is the Tree of Death.' Newton was one of Blake's 'infernal trinity' along with the philosophers

Francis Bacon and John Locke.

The Sublime

Henry Fuseli (1741-1825). Swiss painter and writer, Professor of Painting at the Royal Academy. He had a strong influence on William Blake. He married his model Sophia Rawlins but was pursued by the early feminist Mary Wollstonecraft until his wife banned her completely. Fuseli wrote, 'I hate clever women, they are only troublesome.'

References

Tate website

Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare*, 1781, 101.6 cm × 127 cm, Detroit Institute of Arts

Henry Fuseli, *The Nightmare*, 1781, 101.6 cm × 127 cm, Detroit Institute of Arts

Fuseli's The Nightmare of 1781 reveals the darker, more disturbing side of Romanticism — a world of unrestraint, violence, passion and the supernatural. The painting simultaneously portrays a dreaming woman and the content of her nightmare: an incubus sits on her chest while a wild-eyed horse emerges from the darkness. Contemporary critics were scandalised by the overt sexuality, and later scholars have seen the work as anticipating Freudian ideas about the unconscious. The painting's influence extended to Mary Shelley's Frankenstein, connecting this Romantic fascination with dreams and terror to the Gothic literary tradition that would flourish in the nineteenth century.

8. The Early Romantic Age of English Painting

- Romanticism had a darker side associated with a lack of restraint, violence, passion, ghosts and satanic practices.

- ***The Nightmare*** was painted in 1781 by Anglo-Swiss artist Henry Fuseli (1741–1825). Fuseli met Blake in about 1782 and remained good friends with him until they fell out in 1810. *The Nightmare* was exhibited in 1782 at the Royal Academy and 'exited … an uncommon degree of interest' and it has remained his best known work ever since. The engraved version sold widely and the painting was parodied in political satire. Due to its fame, Fuseli painted at least three other versions of the painting.
- Interpretations of *The Nightmare* have varied widely. The canvas seems to portray simultaneously a dreaming woman and the content of her nightmare. The incubus and the horse's head refer to contemporary belief and folklore about nightmares, but have

been ascribed more specific meanings by some theorists. Contemporary critics were taken aback by the overt sexuality of the painting, which has since been interpreted by some scholars as anticipating Freudian ideas about the unconscious.

- The figure sitting on her and looking out at us is an incubus, which is a male demon that according to legend lies on sleeping women in order to engage in sexual activity. Its female counterpart is a succubus. Her position was believed to encourage nightmares and the horse or mare reinforces this interpretation. The etymology of nightmare does not relate to horses but to Scandinavian mythology and spirits sent to suffocate sleepers and the early meaning of nightmare included the experience of having a heavy weight on the chest while asleep and a feeling of dread.
- Fuseli held important positions at the Royal Academy and was influential in his lifetime as a painter, art historian and writer on art theory. He was an ordained minister and he painted other scenes involving sleep but his other paintings had biblical, mythological or literary references.
- The original painting sold for twenty guineas but the engraving earned more than £500. The engraving included a short poem by Erasmus Darwin called 'Night-Mare'.
- Many contemporary critics found the work scandalous because of its sexual associations. It has been suggested that the painting is autobiographical and represents Fuseli's supressed lust for Anna Landholdt, a young woman fell passionately in love with in 1779.
- *The Nightmare* may have influenced Mary Shelley as the scene in *Frankenstein, or, The Modern Prometheus* (1818) when the monster murders Frankenstein's wife describes her thrown across abed with her head hanging down and her pale distorted features half covered by hair. She would have known the painting as her parents Mary Wollstonecraft and William Godwin were friends of Fuseli.

Paul Sandby Munn 1773–1845, *Bedlam Furnace, Madeley Dale, Shropshire,* 1803, watercolour on paper, 32.5 x 54.8 cm, Tate

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Munn's watercolour of Bedlam Furnace in Shropshire captures the visual drama of early industrial Britain. With its ready supply of coal and iron ore, Shropshire was at the heart of the nation's accelerating industrial economy. The painting attempts an industrial version of the Picturesque aesthetic that had previously shaped images of rural life. By the end of this period, Newcomen's steam engine of 1712, improved by Watt in 1769, had transformed mining and spinning. Arkwright's cotton mill opened in 1771 and Cartwright invented the steam-powered loom in 1785. Iron production surged, fuelling the growing wealth of the middling classes and reshaping the British landscape.

- **Technology and the Industrial Revolution**
- By the end of our period we have the industrial revolution, scientific advances, iron and steel production, factories, steam engines and soon steam locomotives.
- With its ready supply of coal and iron ore, **Shropshire was at the heart** of the acceleration of Britain's industrial economy from the middle of the eighteenth century. Here, Munn shows a scene of local industry with great attention to detail, both of the buildings and of atmospheric effects. The picture could be said to be an attempt at a kind of industrial version of the Picturesque – the ideal of variety and irregularity which had influenced images of rural life in previous decades.
- Technology – steam power developed by **Thomas Newcomen** in 1712 transformed mining and spinning and fuelled the growing wealth of the 'middling classes'. **James Watt** made steam engines more efficient in 1769. In 1771 **Richard Arkwright** opened a

cotton-spinning mill and in 1785 **Edmund Cartwright** invented a steam powered loom. Iron production increased and new ways of making iron were introduced.

Notes

- **Paul Sandby Munn** (1773–1845), water-colour painter, born at Thornton Row, Greenwich, on 8 Feb. 1773, was son of James Munn, carriage decorator and landscape painter, and Charlotte Mills, his wife. His father was an occasional exhibitor at the Old Society of Painters in Water-colours and at the Society of Artists from 1764 to 1774. Munn was named after his **godfather, Paul Sandby**, who gave him his first instructions in water-colour painting. He first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1798, sending some views in the Isle of Wight, and was subsequently a frequent contributor of topographical drawings to that and other exhibitions. He was elected an associate exhibitor of the Old Society of Painters in Water-colours in 1806, and was for some years a contributor to their exhibitions. He was an intimate friend of John Sell Cotman, and they made several sketching tours together at home and abroad. He drew some of the views in Britton's 'Beauties of England and Wales.' Munn's drawings are delicately and carefully executed, usually in pale and thin colours, resembling the tinted drawings of the early school of water-colour painting. There are examples in the South Kensington Museum and the print room, British Museum. Munn painted little after 1832, when he devoted himself chiefly to music. He married Cecilia, daughter of Captain Timothy Essex, but died without issue at Margate on 17 Feb. 1845.

T. Allom painter, R. Sands, engraver, *Worsley Hall*, 1833

T. Allom painter, R. Sands, engraver, *Worsley Hall*, 1833

This engraving of Worsley Hall with the bustling Bridgewater Canal illustrates the transport revolution that powered industrial growth. The first canal, built in 1759, was so successful that a network soon followed, complementing the turnpike roads already improving travel across the country. Eighteenth-century society was transforming: the Act of Union created Great Britain in 1707, population nearly doubled, and London grew to a million. A tiny elite lived in houses designed by Robert Adam with gardens by Capability Brown and furniture by Chippendale, while half the population barely survived. Religious life diversified through Methodism, Quakerism and Unitarianism, and reformers began campaigning against slavery and cruel sports.

- **The Industrial Revolution was built on iron, powered by steam and moved by turnpikes and then canals.**
- **Transport** was greatly improved by turnpikes being built although travellers had to pay tolls to use them. In 1759 the first canal was built (the Bridgewater canal) and it was so successful many more were built helping the growth of industry. Travel was dangerous because of highwaymen and smuggling was common as import duties on rum and tobacco were very high.
- This engraving shows Worsley Brick Hall in a scenic setting. In the foreground, the Bridgewater Canal is bustling with activity, with vessels and cargoes passing by. The Brick Hall was built by the Duke of Bridgewater between 1760 and 1770. It was later demolished in 1840 and was replaced with another residence which became known as Worsley New Hall.

- **<u>Eighteenth Century Society</u>**
    - **Empire** – England and Scotland were united (**Act of Union**, 1707) , creating 'Great Britain'. It was described by Simon Schama as 'one of the most astonishing transformations in European history'. A great overseas empire was founded; America was lost but India and Canada were gained
    - **Society** – land was the main wealth, rich landowners (the gentry) came below the nobility. Merchants and professionals, the middling classes, became richer but half the population lived at bare survival level. For many **gin was their only comfort**. At the end of the 1700s the **Clapham Sect** called for an **end to slavery and cruel sports**. Streets in towns started to be cleaned and sometimes lit.
    - **Population** – at the beginning of the 1700s England and Wales was about 5.5 million people and by the end it was over 9 million. London grew to 1 million but most towns were small, Liverpool was one of the largest with 77,000 people.
    - **Houses** – a tiny minority lived in luxury with gardens landscaped by **Lancelot 'Capability' Brown** (1715-1783) and architecture by **Robert Adam** (1728-1792). Fine furniture was made by **Thomas Chippendale** (1718-1779), **George Hepplewhite** (?-1786) and **Thomas Sheraton** (1751-1806).
    - **Food** – poor people ate mainly **bread and potatoes** and tea drinking became common.
    - **Clothes** – men wore **knee-length breeches**, waistcoats and frock coats. Men and women **wore wigs** and men wore three-cornered hats and buckled shoes.
    - **Schools** – boys from well off families and sometimes girls went to grammar schools, dissenters children went to dissenting academies and in the late 1700s charity schools ('Blue Coat Schools') were founded.
    - **Medicine** – knowledge of the body greatly improved during the 1700s and modern surgery was invented by **John Hunter** (1728-1793). The **main killer was smallpox** and in 1721 Lady Mary Wortley Montague introduced inoculation from Turkey and in 1796 **Edward Jenner** (1749-1823) introduced the much safer vaccination with cowpox. There were many quacks as people were desperate for a cure. The wealthy believed **spa water** could cure all kinds of illness.
    - **Religion** – the early 1700s were noted for a **lack of religious enthusiasm. Dissenters** included Puritans, Methodists, Quakers, Unitarians, Levellers and Diggers.
        - **Puritans** believed the Church of England should be purged of any Roman Catholicism. The term Puritan was rarely used to describe people after 1700.
        - In 1739 evangelical preachers such as **John Wesley** (1703-1791)

created the **Methodists**. Methodism is a religion of Christian perfection, a priesthood of all believers, the primacy of scripture and missionary and charity work through hospitals, universities, orphanages, soup kitchens and schools.

- **Quakers** refused to participate in war, wore plain dress, refused to swear oaths, opposed slavery, and were teetotal. They were 'natural capitalists' and founded banks and financial institutions, including Barclays, Lloyds, and Friends Provident; manufacturing companies, including shoe retailer C. & J. Clark and the big three British confectionary makers Cadbury, Rowntree and Fry's; and their philanthropic efforts included the abolition of slavery, prison reform, and social justice projects.
- Towards the end of the eighteenth century **Unitarianism** spread across the country particularly among wealthy and educated families, such as the Wedgwoods and the Darwins.
- The **Levellers** were a political movement during the English Civil War that emphasised popular sovereignty, extended suffrage, common land ownership, equality before the law, and religious tolerance.
- The **Diggers** were the forerunners of modern anarchism and they believed in the common ownership of land and promoted the formation of small, farming communities in which everyone was equal.

J. M. W. Turner (1775–1851), *Leeds,* 1816, watercolour, 29.2 x 43.2 cm, Yale Center for British Art

J. M. W. Turner (1775–1851), *Leeds,* 1816, watercolour, 29.2 x 43.2 cm, Yale Center for British Art

Turner's watercolour of Leeds in 1816 is one of the rare early depictions of an industrial city and brings our narrative full circle — from Tudor propaganda painting to the celebration of modernity. Drawn from Beeston Hill, it shows tentermen drying cloth, masons, milk carriers and a millworker, with John Marshall's flax mill at the composition's centre. Turner drew on the panoramic prospect tradition and John Dyer's patriotic poem The Fleece to create a richly allusive image of a nation united through labour. The watercolour celebrates the economic resilience of Leeds, and by extension Britain, in the aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars.

9. The Industrial and Agricultural Revolutions in Art

- This is one of the few pictures of an industrial city in the early nineteenth century. It is sketched on Beeston Hill about one and a half miles south of the river Aire. The M621 now runs between Beeston and the city centre. Turner drew three sketches for the painting which were probably done on the sport in September 1816. It was probably intended for Thomas Whitakker's *History of Yorkshire* series. On the left two 'tentermen' are hanging out newly woven cloth to dry on this bright, sunny, windy morning. Further down the hill two figures are picking mushrooms and on the right two masons are lifting a stone slab on to the wall. Coming up the hill is a cloth worker carrying a large roll of cloth, a man and a woman are carrying shopping while two men are seated on donkeys that are slowly carrying milk churns up the hill. The wall directs the eye out of the picture but it is brought back by the road cutting across the centre

and leading to a large mill in the centre of the city.

- “Of all the British landscape artists of the Romantic period, Turner was the most fascinated by modernity, and many of his images chronicle technological advances. While touring Yorkshire in 1816 to gather material for Thomas Dunham Whitaker’s “The History of Yorkshire”, Turner visited Leeds, the hub of the nation’s wool and flax industries, and made meticulous graphite sketches of the city, which he elaborated into this watercolour on his return to London. Turner’s remarkable drawing celebrates the economic success and resilience of Leeds—and by extension, that of Britain—in the immediate aftermath of the wars with Napoleon. As Stephen Daniels has noted in his penetrating analysis of the watercolour, to which this entry is indebted, Turner’s image is a complex and richly allusive portrayal of a rapidly developing industrial city, an amalgam of sources rather than a straightforward topographical record (Daniels, 1986, 1993). The watercolour, which depicts the city from Beeston Hill, about a mile and half south of the city, draws on the conventions of the prospect or panorama, a well-established genre for representing urban development and prosperity. Daniels has suggested convincingly that Turner used two eighteenth-century sources, Samuel Buck’s 1720 engraved prospect of Leeds and an allegorical poem by John Dyer, “The Fleece”, which details the processes of wool manufacture and offers a vision of Britain united through labour. With similar patriotic intention, though perhaps not without ambivalence, Turner mapped the smoky industrial landscape of Leeds, placing John Marshall’s flax mill at the centre of his composition and carefully differentiating its figures’ occupations—tentermen hanging cloth to dry, masons, milk carriers, and a millworker carrying a roll of cloth. It is likely that Turner intended “Leeds” to be engraved for Whitaker's publication, but it was not included, perhaps because its industrial subject matter was considered unsuitable for this somewhat conservative publication. The watercolour was published in 1823, translated, appropriately, into the modern medium of lithography. ”

Notes

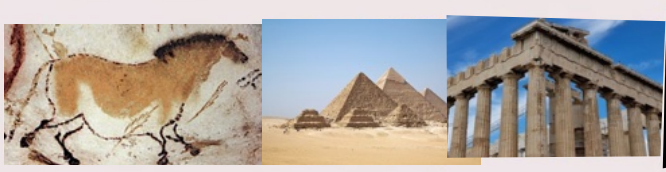
- A ‘tenter’ is a wooden frame on which cloth is stretched after being milled, so it may set or dry evenly without shrinking. The cloth is hooked on to ‘tenter-hooks’ , which are nails, hooks or spikes around the tenter frame. ‘Tenter-hooks’ is also something that causes pain or painful suspense. (Oxford English Dictionary)

References

- Yale Center for British Art website, Gillian Forrester, 2007

- This overview has traced British art from the Restoration of Charles II in 1660 to the dawn of the Industrial Revolution.
- After the upheaval of the Civil War, the restored Stuart court celebrated beauty and power through the portraits of Lely and Kneller.
- The Scientific Revolution and English Baroque architecture of Wren and Thornhill transformed the cultural landscape.
- Hogarth introduced biting social satire, while Reynolds and Gainsborough elevated portraiture and helped found the Royal Academy.
- Blake and Fuseli heralded Romanticism, challenging Enlightenment rationalism.
- Finally, Wright of Derby and Turner captured the dramatic emergence of industrial Britain, as steam, iron and canals reshaped the nation.

- I hope you enjoyed this talk and will come back soon.



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