
- Welcome. This is one of over 200 talks on the history of Western Art. I have arranged the talks chronologically starting with cave art through to art produced in the last few years.

**Summary**
This opening slide introduces the presentation, a 60-minute guided tour of major works in Tate Britain. The talk is one of over 200 lectures on Western Art history, arranged chronologically from cave art to the present day. The notes and content have been produced with the assistance of AI systems and draw on public resources from institutions including the Tate, National Gallery, Louvre, and the Metropolitan Museum of Art. The presentation covers British art spanning from 1545 to the early 2000s.

John Bettes, *A Man in a Black Cap*, 1545

Chris Ofili, *No Woman, No Cry*, 1998

# 98-03 TATE BRITAIN IN 60 MINUTES

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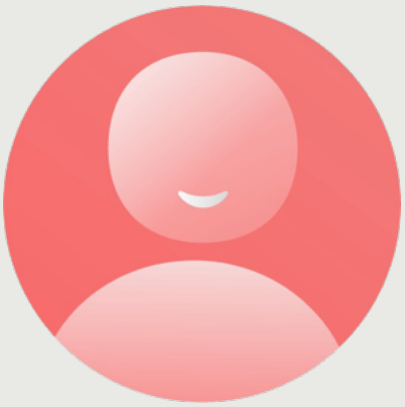

- This talk is a guide to nearly 500 years of British Art and a whistle-stop tour of Tate Britain. If you are visiting the gallery, download my notes, get a map in the Tate and go round chronologically starting in the Tudor room. Most of the works should be on display but they are sometimes out on loan. In order to cover over 40 works in under an hour I keep the description very brief. There is more detail in my notes and much more in subsequent talks.

**Summary**

This title slide sets the stage for a rapid tour of Tate Britain, covering nearly five centuries of British art from 1545 to the early 2000s. The accompanying notes provide a comprehensive reference guide to the Kings and Queens of England, from the Anglo-Saxon period through the Normans, Plantagenets, Tudors, Stuarts, Hanoverians and Windsors, offering historical context for the artworks that follow. Each monarch's key events and character are briefly noted.

**Notes**

The talk covers the full chronological span of Tate Britain:

- **Tudor–Stuart era** (slides 3–7): Bettes, Dobson, Lely, Beale, Kneller
- **Georgian era** (slides 8–12): Hogarth, Reynolds, Kauffman, Gainsborough, Stubbs
- **Romantic era** (slides 13–15): Blake, Constable, Turner
- **Victorian era** (slides 16–22): Rossetti, Millais, Hunt, Whistler, Sargent, Waterhouse, Sickert
- **Early Modern** (slides 23–33): Gwen John, Bomberg, Epstein, Gertler, Spencer, Nicholson, Hepworth, Gabo, Agar, Epstein (Jacob), Sutherland
- **Post-war to Contemporary** (slides 34–42): Bacon, Paolozzi, Blake, Riley, Jones, Linder, Wearing, Hamilton, Ofili

**Kings and Queens of England**

Anglo-Saxon kings ending in Canute, Harold I (Harefoot) illegitimate son of Canute, Harthacanute son of Canute died aged 24 toasting the bride, last Danish king to rule England.

- Edward the Confessor (1042-1066), religious, rebuilt Westminster Abbey, left Earl Godwin and his son Harold to rule.
- Harold II (1066), no royal bloodline, elected king but William, Duke of Normandy claimed Edward had promised him the throne.

**The Normans** (1066 - 1154)

- William I, the Conqueror 1066 – 1087, illegitimate son of Robert the Devil, Duke of Normandy, 1085 Doomsday Survey, died at Rouen after falling from his horse.
- William II, Rufus 1087 – 1100, cruel, not popular, never married, killed in New Forest by a 'stray' arrow.
- Henry I 1100 – 1135, Henry Beauclerc, well educated founded a zoo at Woodstock, gave England good laws, his daughter Matilda was made his heir.
- Stephen 1135 – 1154, Council offered Stephen the throne, grandson of William I, very weak king, barons, Scots and Welsh looted, civil war when Matilda invaded.
- Empress Matilda 1141, agreed Treaty of Westminster so that her son Henry Plantagenet would rule when Stephen died.

**Plantagenets** (1154 - 1399)

- Henry II 1154 – 1189, strong king, brilliant soldier, ruled most of France, created English jury system, raised new taxes, had Thomas Becket murdered 29 Dec 1170.
- Richard I the Lionheart 1189 – 1199, led his army by the age of 16, all but 6 months abroad, led Third Crusade, captured on way back, ransom nearly bankrupt country, died of an arrow wound, no children.
- John 1 1199 – 1216, John Lackland, short and fat, cruel, self-indulgent, selfish, avaricious, raised taxes, hated, Pope excommunicated him, signed Magna Carta on 15 June 1215, died from over eating.
- Henry III 1216 – 1272, became king aged 9, devoted to church, art and learning, a weak man, captured by Simon de Montfort and forced to set up 'Parlement', rebuilt Westminster Abbey in Gothic style.

- Edward I 1272 – 1307, Edward Longshanks, statesman, lawyer and soldier. Formed Model Parliament of Lords and Commons. Defeated the Welsh, 'Hammer of the Scots'. Created Eleanor crosses when his wife died.
- Edward II 1307 – 1327, weak and incompetent king, had many 'favourites' including Piers Gaveston. Beaten by the Scots, deposed by his wife and Mortimer

and held at Berkeley Castle and murdered.

- Edward III 1327 – 1377, reigned for 50 years, started Hundred Years War starting 1338, his son the Black Prince won great victories, the Black Death (1348-1350) killed half the population.
- Richard II 1377 – 1399, son of the Black Prince, extravagant, unjust, faithless. 1381 Peasants Revolt led by Wat Tyler. Death of his first wife Anne of Bohemia unbalanced him. Deposed by Henry of Lancaster and starved at Pontefract.

**The House of Lancaster** (1399 - 1461)

- Henry IV 1399 – 1413, son John of Gaunt (3rd son Edward III), spent his reign fighting plots, assassination attempts and rebellions, such as by the Percy family. Owen Glendower led a Welsh uprising. Died of leprosy aged 45.
- Henry V 1413 – 1422, pious, stern and skilful soldier, put down all rebellions. Beat the French at Agincourt, married Catherine of France but died of dysentery before he could become king of France.
- Henry VI 1422 - 1461, 1470 – 1471, a gentle and retiring man who became king aged just 10 months. The Hundred Years War ended with the loss of all France except Calais. He became mentally ill so Richard Duke of York became regent and civil war broke out, the start of the Wars of the Roses.

**The House of York** (1461 - 1485)

- Edward IV 1461 -1470, 1471 – 1483, not popular, morals poor, had mistresses, had his rebellious brother murdered. William Caxton established first printing press. Died suddenly.
- Edward V 1483 – 1483, eldest son of Edward IV, became king aged 13, reigned for 2 months and he and his brother were murdered in the Tower on the orders of Richard Duke of Gloucester.
- Richard III 1483 – 1485, declared the princes illegitimate and himself king. Killed all who opposed him, very unpopular. Killed by Henry Richmond ending the Wars of the Roses. His body was found in a Leicester car park.

**The Tudors** (1485 -1603)

- Henry VII 1485 – 1509, Henry Richmond, descendent of John of Gaunt, defeated Richard at Bosworth Field. Married Elizabeth of York uniting the two houses. Skilful politician but avaricious. Playing cards invented showing Elizabeth.
- Henry VIII 1509 – 1547, Catherine of Aragon (his brother's widow and mother of Mary) annulled, Anne Boleyn (mother Elizabeth) beheaded, declared head of Church, Jane Seymour (mother Edward) died, Anne of Cleves (annulled and survived the longest), Catherine Howard (beheaded), Catherine Parr (widowed).

- Edward VI 1547 – 1553, sickly (tuberculosis), king aged 9, Duke of Somerset was protector. Cranmer wrote the Book of Common Prayer.
- Jane Grey 1554, reigned for only 9 days, executed aged 17, the best educated woman in England.
- Queen Mary I (Bloody Mary) 1553 – 1558, devout Catholic, married Philip of Spain. Protestant bishops Latimer, Ridley and Cranmer burnt at the stake.
- Queen Elizabeth I 1558 – 1603, a remarkable woman, noted for her learning and wisdom, popular, chose advisors wisely. Drake, Raleigh, Hawkins, the Cecil's, Essex and other made England respected and feared. Mary Queen of Scots executed.

**The Stuarts** (1603 - 1649) (1660 - 1714)

- James I 1603 – 1625, son Mary Queen of Scots and Lord Darnley, first to rule England and Scotland, more a scholar than a soldier. 1605 Gunpowder Plot. Authorised Bible published causing Puritans to sail for America.
- Charles I 1625 – 1649, son of James and Anne of Denmark, believed he ruled by Divine Right which led to the English Civil War in 1642 and his execution on 30 Jan 1649.

**Commonwealth of England**, from 19 May 1649, led by Oliver Cromwell (1653-1658). Crushed the Irish and Scots, expelled the corrupt Parliament. Richard Cromwell (1658-9), not a soldier, resigned and exiled himself to France until 1680.

- Charles II 1660 – 1685, the Merry Monarch, a popular but weak king with an inept foreign policy. He had 13 mistresses including Nell Gwyn. Many illegitimate children but no heir. The Great Plague (1665) was followed by the Great Fire. The new St. Paul's cathedral was built by Sir Christopher Wren.
- James II 1685 – 1688, second son of Charles I, converted to Catholicism. Generally hated. Following the Monmouth uprising and the Bloody Assizes Parliament asked William of Orange to take the throne.
- William III 1688 - 1702 and Queen Mary II 1688 – 1694, landed unopposed in Torbay and marched to London, the 'Glorious Revolution'. James plotted to return but was defeated at the Battle of the Boyne in 1689.
- Queen Anne 1702 – 1714, 2nd daughter of James II. She had 17 pregnancies but only one child (William) survived but he died aged 11 of smallpox. Protestant aged 37 when she took the throne. Friend of Sarah Churchill, Duchess of Marlborough. The Duke of Marlborough beat the Spanish and the French which led to England having a major influence. The United Kingdom of England and Scotland was formed.

**<u>The House of Hanoverians</u>** (1714 -1901)

- King George I 1714 – 1727, son of Sophia, daughter of James I's only daughter. Elector of Hanover, arrived aged 54 speaking little English. Country governed by Sir Robert Walpole our first Prime Minister. The Jacobites attempted a failed rebellion in 1715. George I was implicated in the South Sea Bubble scandal of 1720.
- King George II 1727 – 1760, still relied on Walpole, last king to lead the army into battle. Jacobites (Bonny Prince Charlie) landed in Scotland but were routed at Culloden Moor by the Duke of Cumberland.
- King George III 1760 – 1820, a reign of elegance, Jane Austen, Byron, Shelley, Keats and Wordsworth and statesmen like Pitt and Fox and captains like Wellington and Nelson. The 1773 Boston Tea Party led to American independence on 4 July 1776. Suffered later from porphyria and became blind and insane. His son became regent in 1811.
- King George IV 1820 – 1830, a wit and buffoon, a lover of art and architecture whose private life was a mess. Married twice to Mrs Fitzherbert, a catholic, and Caroline of Brunswick. Their daughter Charlotte died in 1817.
- King William IV 1830 – 1837, the 'Sailor King'. Had 10 children with his mistress Mrs Jordan. Married Adelaide Saxe-Coburg. He hated pomp and ceremony and was loved for his lack of pretension. Abolished slavery. Reform Act passed.
- Queen Victoria 1837 – 1901, daughter Edward Duke of Kent, 4th son George III. Married Albert of Saxe-Coburg in 1840 and after his death in 1861 she retired until 1887. Longest reigning monarch. Had 9 children and 40 grand-children.

**<u>Saxe-Coburg-Gotha and The Windsors</u>** (1901 -1910) (1910 - Today)

- King Edward VII 1901 – 1910, much loved. He liked horse-racing, gambling and women. An age of elegance. Had 6 children. Married the beautiful Alexandra of Denmark had mistresses including Mrs Keppel and Lily Langtry.
- King George V 1910 – 1936, changed name to **Windsor**. Bluff, hearty man who did not expect to be king. King during WWI and the troubles in Ireland. Problems with his son the Prince of Wales and Mrs Simpson.
- King Edward VIII June 1936, very popular so when he renounced the throne to marry Mrs Simpson it could not be believed. He went to live abroad.
- King George VI 1936 – 1952, shy and nervous man with a stutter but he was sound and much loved. He and Queen Elizabeth set an example of courage and fortitude.
- Queen Elizabeth II 1952 - present day, served in the Army as a driver. She married her cousin Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh and had four children, Charles, Anne, Andrew and Edward.


John Bettes (active c. 1531-1570), *A Man in a Black Cap*, 1545, oil on oak panel, 47 x 41 cm

John Bettes (active c. 1531-1570), *A Man in a Black Cap,* 1545, oil on oak panel, 47 x 41 cm

**Summary**
John Bettes the Elder painted this portrait in 1545, making it the earliest work in the Tate collection. It depicts an unidentified 26-year-old man wearing a black cap, inscribed with the date on the front and the artist's name in French on the reverse. Bettes was probably trained in the studio of Hans Holbein the Younger, because of his use of pink priming on an oak panel. However, his technique differs from Holbein's in the looser handling of fur and flatter rendering of the beard. The small oil-on-oak panel represents the Tudor tradition of portraiture.

- John Bettes the Elder's 1545 portrait, the earliest in the Tate collection, depicts a 26-year-old sitter. The front is inscribed 'in the year of our Lord 1545', while the back reads "faict par Johan Bettes Anglois" ('done by John Bettes, Englishman'). Likely trained in Hans Holbein the Younger's studio—evidenced by matching pink priming—Bettes painted fur more loosely and beards flatter. This oil-on-oak panel was cut down at the sides and bottom; its original blue smalt background faded to brown due to light exposure. Smalt, a cobalt-glass pigment, is unstable unlike costly ultramarine. Bettes worked for Henry VIII from 1531 and received commissions from Catherine Parr.

**References**

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/John_Bettes_the_Elder
http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/bettes-a-man-in-a-black-cap-n01496

William Dobson (1611–1646), *Endymion Porter*, c.1642–5, 149.9 x 127 cm

William Dobson (1611–1646), *Endymion Porter,* c.1642–5, 149.9 x 127 cm

**Summary**
Moving on to the Stuart period this portrait of Endymion Porter by William Dobson was painted during the English Civil War around 1642-5. It shows Charles I's favourite courtier and art collector as a huntsman with his quarry. Porter leans against a classical frieze representing the arts, perhaps symbolising the threatened cultural life of the royalist court. Dobson was sometimes called the **English Van Dyck** and is one of the least well known of the great British art masters. He served as Serjeant Painter to Charles I and worked from his studio in Oxford, the royalist capital during the Civil War. He died in poverty in 1646, shortly after the fall of Oxford, aged only thirty-five. This is one of the finest English portraits of the seventeenth century.

- Endymion Porter, favourite courtier of Charles I and art collector, is depicted as a huntsman with his kill—perhaps alluding to the Civil War. He leans on a classical frieze of the arts (Painting with Minerva, Sculpture, Poetry) beside Apollo. William Dobson painted this in Oxford at the exiled royal court, borrowing the pose from Titian's Vespasian in the king's collection. Porter, of minor gentry, rose via Buckingham and the 1623 Spanish trip.
- Dobson (1611–46), England's first major painter, apprenticed under Peake; after Van Dyck's death, he worked for Royalists, dying impoverished in London.

**References**

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Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Two Ladies of the Lake Family*, c. 1660, 127 x 181 cm, Tate

Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Two Ladies of the Lake Family*, c. 1660, 127 x 181 cm, Tate

**Summary**
Sir Peter Lely(prononced “LEE-lee”), born Pieter van der Faes (pronounced “FAHSS”) in 1618, was a Dutch-born painter who became the most sought-after portraitist in Restoration England. Arriving in London in 1641 just as Van Dyck died, he effectively inherited the role of principal court painter and was appointed Principal Painter to Charles II. This double portrait of around 1660 shows two ladies of the Lake family seated in a garden, one playing a newly fashionable Parisian guitar by the Voboam family. Lely's sensuous brushwork and ability to capture aristocratic elegance defined the visual identity of the English court for a generation.

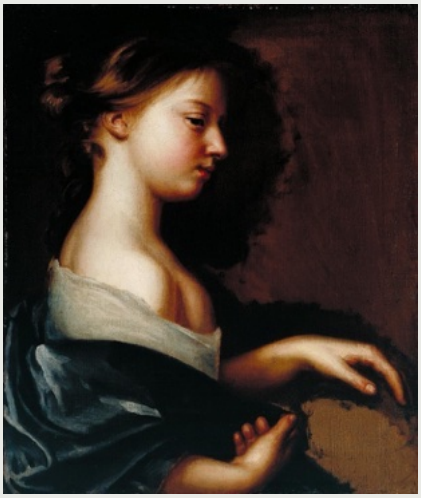
- Sir Peter Lely was born Pieter van der Faes in 1618, a painter of Dutch origin who spent almost his entire career in England. He arrived in London in 1641, the very year van Dyck died, and effectively stepped into his shoes as the most sought-after portrait painter at court. Appointed Principal Painter to Charles II after the Restoration, he defined the look of the English aristocracy for a generation.
- In this double portrait of around 1660, two ladies sit in a garden, one slightly older, the other playing a guitar — newly fashionable at court. Lely has painted it so precisely that we can identify it as made in Paris that same year by the Voboam family. She holds down a chord, distinguishing the guitar from the lute, where strings were individually plucked. An inscription added 87 years later names the sitters as Lady Drax and Mrs Francklin. Like much of Lely's work, the painting prioritises glamour and courtly elegance over individual personality — a polished ideal of beauty rather than a searching likeness.

**References**

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lely-two-ladies-of-the-lake-family-t00058

Mary Beale, *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, in Profile*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm

Mary Beale, *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, facing left*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm



Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Portrait of a Young Girl,* c.1681, 53.5 x 46 cm

Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, in Profile*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm, Tate
Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, facing left*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm, Tate
Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Portrait of a Young Girl,* c.1681, 53.5 x 46 cm, Tate

**Summary**

Mary Beale was one of the most remarkable artists of seventeenth-century England and a genuinely successful professional painter who became the principal financial provider for her family. Working from a studio in Pall Mall, she attracted the gentry and aristocracy, charging five pounds for a half-length portrait. Peter Lely supported and mentored her. This slide shows three of her works: two intimate pencil sketches of her son Bartholomew from around 1660, and a formal portrait of a young girl from 1681. Her husband Charles kept detailed notebooks recording her commissions, sitters and techniques, providing an invaluable record of artistic practice.

- Mary Beale was one of the most remarkable artists of seventeenth-century England — not merely as a woman working in a male-dominated profession, but as a genuinely successful professional who became the principal financial provider for her family. Working from a studio in Pall Mall, she attracted the gentry and aristocracy, charging £5 for a half-length portrait and earning nearly £430 a year by 1677. Peter Lely supported and mentored her. Roy Strong called her simply irreplaceable among women artists of the period.
- This intimate oil sketch on primed paper — an unusual technique characteristic of her early work — shows her elder son Bartholomew at around four years old. The freshness and spontaneity are striking; it was likely painted in a single session, part of a

deliberate programme of experiment in which Mary and her husband Charles investigated new techniques, pigments and methods to improve quality while cutting costs. Bartholomew would later assist in her studio before abandoning painting entirely to become a physician in Coventry — but here he is simply a small boy, caught with affecting warmth by his mother's quick and confident hand.

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Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), *Elijah and the Angel*, 1672, 176.5 x 148.6 cm

Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), *Elijah and the Angel,* 1672, 176.5 x 148.6 cm

**Summary**
Godfrey Kneller, born in Lubeck and trained under Rembrandt in Amsterdam, succeeded Peter Lely as England's leading portrait painter and served seven British monarchs from Charles II to George II. In 1715 he became the first artist to be made a baronet. His studio was virtually a factory, producing immense numbers of portraits, yet at his best he ranked among Europe's finest portraitists. Elijah and the Angel from 1672 is one of his rare biblical subjects, a large and ambitious canvas that demonstrates his command of the Grand Manner before he devoted himself almost entirely to portraiture.

- Godfrey Kneller stepped into Peter Lely's shoes when Lely died in 1680, and went on to serve no fewer than seven British monarchs — from Charles II to George II. Born in Lübeck, he trained in Amsterdam under Rembrandt before settling permanently in England, where he built an extraordinarily successful portrait practice. His output was immense, his studio virtually a factory, yet at his best he ranks among the finest portraitists in Europe. Vain, worldly and quick-witted, he once turned Alexander Pope's attempt to flatter him into a devastating riposte. In 1715 he became the first artist to be made a baronet.
- This painting of Margaret Cecil, Countess of Ranelagh, painted when she was eighteen or nineteen, is one of Kneller's celebrated Hampton Court Beauties — a series of ten court portraits commissioned by Mary II in 1690. Where Lely's Windsor Beauties had projected a languorous, frankly sensual glamour, Kneller's women stand upright and

refined, inner virtue suggested through symbol: here, a richly carved vase of flowers. His women are sensitive rather than sensual, and the court they inhabited was a more decorous one.

- Margaret Cecil was so renowned for her beauty that Henry Fielding modelled Sophia Western in Tom Jones on this very portrait. Her life, however, proved anything but demure. Her second husband, the Earl of Ranelagh, reportedly discovered a lover in her bed, withdrew without a word, and — more remarkably still — took her back. She became, in her way, a byword for the unpredictable daring of Restoration womanhood.

**References**


- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/kneller-elijah-and-the-angel-n06222

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *O the Roast Beef of Old England ('The Gate of Calais'),* 1748, 78.8 x 94.5 cm

William Hogarth (1697–1764), *O the Roast Beef of Old England ('The Gate of Calais'),* 1748, 78.8 x 94.5 cm

**Summary**

William Hogarth was the great satirist of English painting, fiercely patriotic and sharp-eyed in his social commentary. This painting arose from personal affront: visiting France in 1748, Hogarth was arrested while sketching the fortifications at Calais, suspected of spying. He returned to England furious and painted his revenge. The scene shows a vast side of English beef being carried through the Gate of Calais to an English tavern while ragged, half-starved French soldiers and a fat friar look on hungrily. The painting is a comic masterpiece of nationalist satire and culinary patriotism.

- William Hogarth was the great satirist of English painting — sharp-eyed, combative, and fiercely proud of his country. Born in London in 1697, he developed a wholly original art of moral narrative, skewering hypocrisy, corruption and social pretension with equal relish. No painter before him had so directly addressed the life of the streets, the tavern and the courthouse, and none did so with such wit.
- This painting arose from a personal affront. Visiting France in 1748, Hogarth was arrested while sketching the fortifications at Calais, suspected of spying. He returned to England furious, and painted his revenge. The scene shows a vast side of English beef being carried through the Gate of Calais to an English tavern, while ragged, half-starved French soldiers and a fat friar look on with naked longing. The contrast is the whole point: Protestant England, land of roast beef and plenty; Catholic France, land of watery soup and superstition. The friar's bulk signals the corruption of the Church, while devout locals kneel before a cross in the background, beneath a tavern sign mocking the Eucharist. In the right foreground, a broken Jacobite — one of the Scots who fled to France after the failed 1745 rebellion — sits with nothing but an onion and

a crust. And to the left of the gate, almost hidden among vegetables, Hogarth himself crouches, sketching, just as the arresting officer's hand descends on his shoulder — the painter inserting himself into his own act of revenge.

**References**

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hogarth-o-the-roast-beef-of-old-england-the-gate-of-calais-n01464

Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen,* 1773, 233.7 x 290.8 cm

Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen,* 1773, 233.7 x 290.8 cm

**Summary**
Joshua Reynolds was the dominant figure in British painting in the second half of the eighteenth century. When the Royal Academy was founded in 1768, he became its first President and in his celebrated Discourses set out a theory of painting centred on the Grand Manner. This ambitious group portrait of 1773 shows the three Montgomery sisters adorning a classical statue of Hymen, god of marriage. Reynolds borrows compositions from Poussin and Rubens to elevate portraiture to the status of history painting. The enormous canvas, measuring over two metres in each direction, demonstrates his aspiration for British art.

- Joshua Reynolds was the dominant figure in British painting for the second half of the eighteenth century — ambitious, intellectually formidable, and determined to raise the status of his art. Born in Devon in 1723, the son of a headmaster, he was better educated than most painters of his day, and after years studying in Italy he returned to London to establish himself as the leading portraitist of his generation. When the Royal Academy was founded in 1768, he became its first President, and in his celebrated Discourses set out a theory of painting centred on the Grand Manner — the idea that even portraiture could aspire to the dignity of history painting by drawing on the poses and compositions of the Old Masters.
- This vast and magnificent canvas is Grand Manner portraiture in full flight. The three Montgomery sisters — Barbara, Elizabeth and Anne, known as the Irish Graces — are shown adorning a term of Hymen, the Greek god of marriage, in what is ostensibly a garden ritual celebrating fecundity and the passing of generations. Their poses are

lifted directly from admired Renaissance sources, lending them a classical gravity that places the work firmly in the tradition of history painting. But the occasion is thoroughly social: the picture was commissioned by Elizabeth's fiancé, Luke Gardiner, as a celebration of his choice of bride, and the whole elaborate mythological apparatus is ultimately in service of aristocratic self-congratulation. Reynolds understood this perfectly — and delivered it with supreme elegance, even as his technical shortcuts ensured that the colours we see today are rather paler than he intended.

**Notes**

- The **Hierarchy of genres** was formulated in Italy in the 16th century and held sway until the 19th century. It was the French Academy that fully formalised the hierarchy. An influential formulation of 1667 by André Félibien, a historiographer, architect and theoretician of French classicism became the classic statement of the theory for the 18th century. Reynolds agreed with Félibien regarding the hierarchy but thought that an artist of genius, such as Titian, could elevate any subject however mean by investing it with grandeur and importance. The hierarchy was:
    - History painting, particularly allegorical paintings of religious, mythological, historical or literary subjects with a moral or intellectual message, sometimes called the *grand genre*, as opposed to the *petit genre* or genre painting.
    - Portrait painting, were elevated by the use of mythological elements to create what Reynolds called the Grand Manner.
    - Genre painting, of everyday subjects, were admired for their skill but never regarded as high art.
    - Landscape, often had mythological elements, such as classical ruins added to increase their value.
    - Animal painting.
    - Still life was regarded as charming and a suitable subject for amateur women artists. Some professional artists such as Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin produced still life paintings that were highly regarded but he began to include figures from about 1730.

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Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Portrait of a Lady*, c.1775, 79.2 x 63.5 cm

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Portrait of a Lady,* c.1775, 79.2 x 63.5 cm

**Summary**
Angelica Kauffman was one of the most celebrated artists in eighteenth-century Europe yet is barely known today. A Swiss-born child prodigy, she settled in England in 1766 and became a close friend of Joshua Reynolds. She was one of only two women among the founding signatories of the Royal Academy in 1768, alongside Mary Moser. It would be another 167 years before a third woman joined their number. When she died in Rome in 1807, her funeral procession carried two of her paintings, as Raphael's had before her. This quietly compelling portrait of an unidentified lady dates from around 1775.

- Angelica Kauffman was one of the most celebrated artists in Europe in the second half of the eighteenth century — yet today she is barely known. Born in Switzerland in 1741, she was a child prodigy trained by her father, producing portraits by the age of twelve and travelling across Europe as his assistant before settling in England in 1766. There she became a close friend of Joshua Reynolds and was among the founding signatories of the Royal Academy — one of only two women, alongside Mary Moser, to be made Academicians at its establishment in 1768. It would be another 167 years before a third woman joined their number. When she died in Rome in 1807, her funeral cortège carried two of her paintings in procession, as Raphael's had before her.
- This quietly compelling portrait shows an unidentified woman seated in classical robes beside a statue of Minerva, goddess of wisdom, with a book on the table and writing materials in her hand. The symbols announce her as a woman of learning, and it is tempting to see her as a member of the Bluestocking Society — that remarkable circle of educated women and men, which included Reynolds, Garrick, Horace Walpole and Samuel Johnson, and which counted the historian Catharine Macaulay among its number. Kauffman herself moved in exactly this world, and the painting feels like a

quiet manifesto: a celebration of female intelligence at a time when such a thing still needed defending.

**Notes**

- The name '**Blue Stocking**' was thought to have arisen because one speaker, **Benjamin Stillingfleet, was too poor to wear the proper formal dress of black silk stockings and attended wearing everyday blue worsted stockings**. The name was adopted to emphasize the **informal nature** of the meetings and the emphasis on **discussion rather than attire**.

**References**


- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/kauffman-portrait-of-a-lady-t00928

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

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), *Giovanna Baccelli*, exhibited 1782, 226.7 x 148.6 cm, purchased 1975

**Summary**

Thomas Gainsborough was the great natural genius of English painting, instinctive and impossible to confine. Where his rival Reynolds laboured to elevate art through theory, Gainsborough simply looked and painted with a fluency no contemporary could match. He excelled equally at portraiture and landscape. This full-length portrait of Giovanna Baccelli, exhibited in 1782, captures the Italian ballerina in a dancing pose with extraordinary vivacity. Baccelli was the mistress of the Duke of Dorset and a celebrated performer at the King's Theatre. Gainsborough's flickering brushstrokes bring her to life with characteristic lightness and movement.

- Thomas Gainsborough was the great natural genius of English painting — instinctive, quicksilver, and impossible to confine. Born in Suffolk in 1727, he was largely self-taught, and where his great rival Reynolds laboured to elevate British art through theory and Old Master precedent, Gainsborough simply looked and painted, with a fluency and lightness of touch that no contemporary could match. He excelled equally at portraiture and landscape, though he considered landscape his true love. By the 1780s, working from his studio in Bath and later London, he was producing portraits of extraordinary vivacity, their surfaces alive with small, rapid, flickering brushstrokes that seem to catch his sitters in a moment of movement rather than freeze them for posterity.
- His subject here was well chosen. Giovanna Baccelli was a Venetian ballerina who had taken London by storm, principal dancer at the King's Theatre in the Haymarket and at the height of her fame in the 1780-1 season. She was also the long-standing mistress of

the Duke of Dorset, who commissioned the portrait and kept her in considerable style at Knole. When it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1782, the Duke's own portrait was quietly withdrawn — presumably for reasons of decorum. Gainsborough shows her mid-dance, in costume and stage make-up from a specific ballet she had performed that season, and the result is irresistible: light, airy and alive, as a contemporary critic noted. She was said to be more charming than beautiful, and Gainsborough — who moved easily among theatre people and understood performance — caught that quality perfectly. The portrait remained at Knole until 1890, a memento of one of the more glamorous arrangements of the age.

**Notes**

- 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.

**References**

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/gainsborough-giovanna-baccelli-t02000

George Stubbs (1724–1806), *Haymakers*, 1785, 89.5 x 135.3 cm

George Stubbs (1724–1806), *Haymakers,* 1785, 89.5 x 135.3 cm

**Summary**
George Stubbs occupies a singular place in British art as part painter, part scientist. Born in Liverpool in 1724, he was largely self-taught and spent eighteen months dissecting horses in a rented farmhouse, producing The Anatomy of the Horse in 1766, a work of extraordinary precision. Aristocratic patrons recognised that his paintings of horses were more accurate than anyone else's. Haymakers from 1785 is a companion piece to Reapers, both painted in enamel on a Wedgwood ceramic panel. It shows an idealised rural scene of labourers gathering hay, combining scientific observation with pastoral beauty.

- George Stubbs occupies a singular place in the history of British art — part painter, part scientist, entirely original. Born in Liverpool in 1724, the son of a leatherworker, he was largely self-taught across an extraordinary range of disciplines: anatomy, botany, engraving and painting. His most celebrated undertaking was eighteen months spent in a rented Lincolnshire farmhouse dissecting horses, assisted by his common-law wife Mary Spencer, an enterprise that produced The Anatomy of the Horse in 1766 — a work of such precision that it transformed how artists and naturalists understood the animal. Aristocratic patrons quickly grasped that his paintings of horses were simply more accurate than anyone else's, and his career was assured. Yet for all his achievement, the Royal Academy dismissed him as a mere sporting painter and refused him full membership — a judgement that says more about academic snobbery than about Stubbs.
- Haymakers, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1786, shows a rather different side of his art. This is one of a pair with Reapers, and together they represent Stubbs's most sustained engagement with rural labour. The scene is calm and unhurried — seven

figures working in a summer field, the light soft, the mood one of quiet industry rather than picturesque sentiment. Stubbs had painted earlier versions of the subject in 1783, but here he reworked the composition with greater care, increasing the figures, reordering the landscape and adjusting the light. The result has the same unsentimental clarity he brought to his stable scenes — the workers observed with the same steady, respectful attention he gave his horses, their labour neither romanticised nor dismissed.

**Notes**

- **George Stubbs**, one of Europe's **most important painters of animal subjects**, was **virtually self-taught** as a zoologist, botanist, painter, and engraver. Born in Liverpool, the son of a leatherworker, he embarked on a career as a portraitist and became lecturer on human and animal anatomy at York County Hospital. In 1754, he visited Italy 'to convince himself that nature was and is always superior to art whether Greek or Roman'. As much a **scientist as an artist**, in 1756 he **rented a farmhouse** in Lincolnshire, and **spent 18 months dissecting horses**, assisted by his **common-law wife**, Mary Spencer. He moved to London in about 1759 and in 1766 after **working in the morning and evening for six years** on the 18 plates he published ***The Anatomy of the Horse***, illustrated from his own dissections and a **hugely influential volume** among naturalists and artists alike. Aristocratic patrons recognised that his paintings of horses were more accurate than his rivals and his career was secure. He also experimented with Josiah Wedgwood in painting with enamels on ceramic plaques but these were less successful. During his lifetime, Stubbs was famous for his paintings of domestic and exotic animals and was characterized as a **sporting painter** and so **denied membership to the Royal Academy**. Few of his paintings survive **undamaged** because Stubbs painted with **thin and diluted oils**.

William Blake, *Newton*, 1795–c.1805, 46 x 60 cm, colour print, ink and watercolour on paper

William Blake, *Newton,* 1795–c.1805, 46 x 60 cm, colour print, ink and watercolour on paper

**Summary**
William Blake was poet, engraver and visionary prophet, working in deliberate defiance of the rational, scientific world. He was deeply hostile to what he called single vision and reserved particular contempt for Newton, whom he regarded as a great teacher of atheism. In this famous colour print, Newton sits naked on a rock at the bottom of the sea, hunched over a mathematical diagram, blind to the organic beauty surrounding him. Blake used an innovative printing technique, applying thick pigment to a flat surface and pressing paper onto it to create the mottled, textured appearance that gives the image its extraordinary depth.

- William Blake occupies a position in British art quite unlike anyone else — poet, engraver, visionary and prophet, working in deliberate defiance of the rational, scientific world taking shape around him. Born in London in 1757, he trained as an engraver and spent his career producing illuminated books, colour prints and watercolours of fierce imaginative intensity. He was deeply hostile to what he called "single vision" — the reduction of human experience to what could be measured, quantified and proved — and he reserved particular contempt for Newton, Bacon and Locke, whom he regarded as the three great teachers of atheism. Where the eighteenth century saw Newton as a liberating genius — Pope famously wrote that God said "Let Newton be, and all was light" — Blake saw him as a man who had explained the machinery of the universe while remaining blind to everything that mattered.

- This print makes that argument with extraordinary force. Newton crouches naked on a rock, his magnificent body bent in total concentration over a geometrical diagram, his compasses measuring out the world with clinical precision. The pose derives from Michelangelo's Abias in the Sistine Chapel, but Blake transforms the source — the muscles are exaggerated, the figure taut with a kind of passionate narrowness, suggesting not power but constriction. Behind him, the rock blazes with colour and organic richness — the creative world in all its abundance — and Newton is entirely deaf to it. The compasses, traditionally a symbol of God as architect of the universe, here become an emblem of limitation. In Blake's vision, Newton brings not light but darkness — a man of supreme intellect who cannot see beyond the rules of his own instrument.

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John Constable (1776-1837), *Flatford Mill* (*Scene on a Navigable River*), 1816–17, 101.6 x 127 cm

John Constable (1776-1837), *Flatford Mill* (*Scene on a Navigable River*), 1816–17, 101.6 x 127 cm

**Summary**

John Constable was born in Suffolk in 1776, the son of a prosperous miller, and the Stour valley landscape shaped everything he painted. Where Reynolds looked to Italy for authority, Constable looked out of the window at clouds, water, and light on wet grass. He was slow to be recognised at home and sold only twenty paintings in England in his lifetime, yet when The Hay Wain was shown in Paris in 1824 it won a gold medal and transformed French landscape painting. This 1816 canvas shows Flatford Mill on the Stour, with two boys untying a barge beneath overhanging trees.

- John Constable was born in 1776 in East Bergholt, Suffolk, the son of a prosperous miller, and the landscape of the Stour valley shaped everything he painted. Where Reynolds had looked to Italy and the Old Masters for authority, Constable looked out of the window — at clouds, water, light on wet grass, the particular quality of an English sky. He was slow to be recognised at home, never commercially successful, and sold only twenty paintings in England across his lifetime. Yet when The Hay Wain was shown in Paris in 1824 it won a gold medal and transformed French landscape painting. His true admirers were abroad before they were at home.
- This painting of Flatford, made in 1816, shows two boys untying barges from their tow horse, preparing to pole them under the bridge just out of frame — a scene of unhurried rural life that Constable had known since childhood. He wrote that the willows, the rotten planks, the slimy posts and brickwork of the Stour had made him a painter, and the picture carries that personal charge. Yet the idyll conceals a harsher world. 1816 was the Year Without a Summer: Mount Tambora's eruption the previous

year had filled the upper atmosphere with ash, bringing cold, rain, failed harvests and famine. The Corn Laws, introduced when the Napoleonic Wars ended in 1815, fixed bread prices to benefit millers like the Constables while ordinary families went hungry — a tension that would eventually produce Peterloo, the Swing Riots and the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Constable's painting acknowledges none of this. He was also preoccupied with his own affairs: that October he finally married Maria Bicknell, after years of opposition from her family, and these last summers in Suffolk were his farewell to the landscape that had formed him.

**Notes**

- This is Constable's largest exhibition canvas to be painted mainly outdoors, the first of his 'six-footers' and the first in his *Stour* series which later included *The Hay Wain*.
- The barges are called lighters and were used to move goods and passengers from moored ships. They were moved and steered using long oars called 'sweeps'.
- Constable used a sheet of glass on his easel on which he painted the lines of the scene he could see through the glass. This was then transferred to a piece of paper placed on the glass and drawn over. The paper was then squared up and the drawing transferred to the canvas.
- Constable's mother Ann died on 9 March 1815, aged 67. Constable's father Golding died on 14 May 1816, aged 77, and divided his estate into six equal shares. Constable's younger brother Abram ran the farm generating an annual income of £200 for each sibling. Mary Bicknell's father was the Prince Regent's lawyer and the Constables were 'trade'.
- **Peterloo Massacre**, 16 Aug 1819, cavalry charged 60,000-80,000 people 15 killed, 400-700 injured, which resulted in the *Manchester Guardian* and the **Six Acts** (which made any meeting for radical reform treasonable, speeded up court cases, radical newspapers were gagged, weapons could be seized and unauthorised military training was made illegal).
- **Pauperism**, during the 1820s Poor Law expenditure decreased, rural crime increased by 30%, mostly food thefts, and 1828, 1829 and 1830 were poor harvests. Many Victorians struggled to understand and explain poverty. Was it a result of personal misfortune, was it caused by social conditions beyond an individual's control, or was it the direct result of a person's character, their laziness and having too many children? Were the poor, therefore, 'deserving' or 'undeserving'? Who was responsible for those who became so poor that they could not maintain themselves
- **Swing Riots**, 1830, agricultural workers did not disguise themselves but descended on farms in their hundreds demanding higher wages. 2,000 farm labourers were arrested and imprisoned and 19 were hung. Reform was needed but the Duke of Wellington, the Prime Minister thought the British system was ideal. His Tory government fell and Earl Grey's Whig government came into power. Grey's bill was

rejected, the Whigs were re-elected, it was again opposed by the House of Lords leading to riots across the country and Dorset, Somerset and Leicestershire became ungovernable. Grey requested King William IV to create 100 new Whig peers, he refused and Grey resigned. William called on the Duke of Wellington but even he admitted the country was ungovernable and he resigned. The Great Reform Act was passed.

- **Tolpuddle Martyrs**, in the early 1830s a group of six men formed a friendly society (which was now legal following the repeal of the Combination Act in 1824-5). They refused to work for less than 10s a week when the local rate was 7s a week and were prosecuted under an obscure law of 1797 prohibiting people from swearing oaths to each other. They were transported to Australia and became popular heroes, 800,000 signatures were collected and they were released in 1836 (James Hammett was released in 1837 as he had a previous conviction for theft). Four of the six returned to England and later emigrated to London, Ontario where they are buried.

**References**

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/constable-flatford-mill-scene-on-a-navigable-river-n01273

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), *The Field of Waterloo*, exhibited 1818, 147.3 x 238.8 cm

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775-1851), *The Field of Waterloo*, exhibited 1818, 147.3 x 238.8 cm

**Summary**
Joseph Mallord William Turner was the greatest British painter, a judgement his contemporaries largely shared. Born in London in 1775 to a Covent Garden barber, he entered the Royal Academy Schools as a teenager and never stopped working. He was a shrewd businessman, a difficult and solitary figure, and an artist of insatiable ambition. The Field of Waterloo, exhibited in 1818, depicts the aftermath of the famous battle not as a triumph but as a scene of universal suffering. Women search by torchlight among heaped bodies of soldiers from both sides, rejecting the patriotic celebration his audience expected.

- Joseph Mallord William Turner was the greatest British painter — a judgement his contemporaries largely shared, and one that has only grown more secure with time. Born in London in 1775, the son of a Covent Garden barber, he entered the Royal Academy Schools as a teenager and never stopped working, travelling, or pushing paint into territory no one had explored before. He was a shrewd businessman who became wealthy, a difficult and solitary figure in his private life, and an artist of insatiable ambition. His later paintings — light dissolved into colour, form half-lost in atmosphere — would not be fully understood for another century.
- But even in his more representational works, he was never simply recording what he saw. He was making an argument. This large canvas was exhibited in 1818, makes a devastating one. The Battle of Waterloo had ended twenty years of war with France at a cost of perhaps fifty thousand men killed and wounded in a single day, along with fifteen thousand horses. Turner shows none of the glory. It is night on the battlefield;

the Château of Hougoumont burns in the distance; French bodies lie in the foreground while women and children move among them with torches, searching for the living. The scene is lit with an eerie, hellish flare — used in reality to deter looters, who stripped the dead of weapons, valuables and even teeth within hours. When he exhibited the painting, Turner quoted Byron: rider and horse, friend and foe, buried together in one red mass. The press was divided — some mocked it as a drunken hubbub, others recognised its terrible honesty. Many wished to see Waterloo as a vindication of British values and the old order. Turner refused to oblige.

**Notes**

- Joseph Mallord William Turner was born in 1775, a year before John Constable. He was the son of a barber and wig maker and was born in Maiden Lane, Covent garden. He was a child prodigy and sold drawings placed in his father's shop window. Around 1786, aged 11, he was sent to Margate where he produced a series of drawings of the town and surrounding area. His first watercolour painting *A View of the Archbishop's Palace, Lambeth* was accepted for the Royal Academy summer exhibition of 1790 when Turner was 15. He entered the Royal Academy School aged 14 and was admitted to the life class in 1792, aged 17. He was elected Associate of the Royal Academy in 1799 and Academician in 1802 and was recognised as a prodigy who promised to be the outstanding painter of his generation. He travelled widely around the country and specialised in topographical landscapes and architecture. He also travelled around Europe and studied at the Louvre and in Italy. He grew more eccentric as he grew older and he few close friends except for his father. At the Royal Academy he could be bumptious, pushy or rude, at times trading insults with colleagues. He never married but had a relationship with an older widow, Sarah Danby and it is believed he fathered two daughters. He died of cholera in the house of his lover Sophia Caroline Booth in Cheyne Walk, Chelsea.
- Turner travelled to the continent two years after the Battle of Waterloo and spent a day on the site of the battle sketching.

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Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, 1848–49, 83.2 x 65.4 cm (no longer on display)

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), *The Girlhood of Mary Virgin*, 1848–49, 83.2 x 65.4 cm (no longer on display)

**Summary**
Dante Gabriel Rossetti was the driving force behind the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the group of young rebels who in 1848 set out to overthrow the tired conventions of academic painting. Born in London in 1828 to an Italian father, he grew up in a household saturated with literature and ideas. The Girlhood of Mary Virgin from 1848-49 was the first painting to carry the mysterious initials PRB. It shows the young Virgin being taught embroidery by St Anne while Joachim tends vines outside. Every object carries symbolic meaning, from the lily of purity to the books inscribed with virtues.

- Dante Gabriel Rossetti was one of the most original and restless figures in Victorian art — poet, painter and the driving force behind the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, the small group of young rebels who, in 1848, set out to overthrow what they saw as the tired conventions of academic painting. Born in London in 1828 to an Italian father and an English mother, he grew up in a household saturated with literature and ideas, and he never quite separated the two arts — his paintings read like poems, and his poems paint like pictures. Where his fellow Pre-Raphaelites Millais and Hunt brought a fierce naturalistic attention to surface and detail, Rossetti was drawn above all to symbol and spiritual intensity. Interestingly, though his mother and sister Christina were High Anglicans, Rossetti himself appears to have had no firm religious beliefs. He wrote that the Virgin represented for him the highest type of female excellence — his deepest conviction being that women enshrine the meaning of existence.
- This was his first completed oil painting, begun in Holman Hunt's studio on 20 August 1848, and the first work ever exhibited bearing the initials PRB. Too anxious about

rejection to submit it to the Royal Academy, he showed it elsewhere. The young Mary sits embroidering under her mother Anne's guidance, while Joachim prunes a vine outside. Every detail carries symbolic weight — the lilies for purity, the dove for the Holy Spirit, the palm and thorn for the Passion to come, the colours gold, blue and green for charity, faith and hope — a web of meaning so dense that Rossetti wrote two sonnets simply to explain it. It is a remarkable debut: earnest, intricate and utterly unlike anything else being painted in England at the time.

**Dante Gabriel Rossetti**

- The third key member of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood was Dante Gabriel Rossetti. This is his first oil painting and although Rossetti was not a believer the sonnet he wrote describes human events that are surrounded by the sacred and give it meaning. He grew up in a High Anglican household and this gave him a sense of order such beliefs provide.
- St. Anne, her mother, is assisting Mary embroider a lily which is held before by an angel. The embroidery also appears in his painting of the Annunciation. He chose embroidery as something more likely to be done at the time and as less commonplace. Mary and Anne are typically shown reading a book. In front of them is a pile of volumes symbolising spiritual virtue and the top one is Charity. In front of Mary the lily symbolizes purity. Near Mary's feet are the seven-leaved palm and the briar twig with seven thorns. They symbolise Mary's sorrows and Christ's Passion but they are not integral to the painting but placed by the artist. The vine, the lantern and the dove are typical symbols of the Annunciation with the dove representing the Holy Spirit ('Until the end be full, the Holy One abides without'). In the background **St Joachim** (Mary's father, **not mentioned in the Bible**, patron saint of fathers and grandfathers) is pruning a vine.
- Rossetti used an unusual technique. He first **primed the canvas with white** until it was as smooth as cardboard and then used **thinned oil paints** that he applied using watercolour brushes. The result is that every tint is transparent and it looks like a watercolour. He painted it when he was living with Holman Hunt and Hunt's insistence on being truthful to nature both in colour and in the treatment of details is apparent in the painting although it is less naturalistic and more stylized than Hunt's work.
- There were two sonnets inscribed on the frame.
- The painting was not exhibited at the Royal Academy in early April but at the **Free Exhibition** at Hyde Park Corner in March. The Free Exhibition was held by a short-lived organisation called Institution for the Free Exhibition of Modern Art (later the **National Institution for Fine Arts**) that provided alternative exhibition space to the Royal Academy to make it more **accessible to women** artists who suffered discrimination. The exhibition was 'free' in the sense that the artist was **free to exhibit** as long as he or she **paid**. Rossetti may chosen the Free Exhibition as he feared being rejected by the Royal Academy but as a consequence he managed to

steal a march on the other Pre-Raphaelites, to Hunt's annoyance.

- Rossetti Archive: 'Linguistic forms populate the canvas (and the integral frame). DGR often incorporated such verbal elements in his pictures—a device he borrowed from medieval styles—in order to increase the conceptual and abstract character of his work. Here the names of the virtues appear on the **book spines (Fortitudo (strength), Temperentia (restraint), Prudentia (prudence), Spes (hope), Fides (faith), and Caritas (charity), the cardinal virtues**); the gilt haloes are inscribed S. Ioachimus, S. Anna, S. Maria S.V.); a scroll binding the palms and briars bears the legend "Tot dolores tot gaudia" ('So many sorrows, so many joys'); and the portable organ near the hassock is carved with the initial M and has the inscription "O sis, Laus Deo" ('Oh, praise be to God').'

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http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/rossetti-the-girlhood-of-mary-virgin-n04872

John Everett Millais (1829-1896), *Christ in the House of His Parents*, 1850, Tate Britain

John Everett Millais (1829-1896), *Christ in the House of His Parents*, 1850, Tate Britain

**Summary**

John Everett Millais was the most naturally gifted Pre-Raphaelite, a child prodigy who entered the Royal Academy Schools at eleven. This radical painting of 1850 shows the Holy Family as working people in a real carpenter's shop. Joseph bends over his bench, young Christ has cut his hand on a nail prefiguring the Crucifixion, and Mary kneels to comfort him. Every detail was painted from life, including an actual carpenter's shop and real sheep. The critical reaction was ferocious. Charles Dickens attacked it savagely, calling the Christ child a hideous boy. Yet Ruskin defended it, and it became a landmark of British art.

- John Everett Millais was the most naturally gifted painter of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood — a child prodigy who entered the Royal Academy Schools at eleven, the youngest student ever admitted. Where Rossetti brought poetry and symbol, Millais brought an almost frightening technical virtuosity, and this painting of 1850 deploys it in the service of radical realism. The Holy Family are shown as working people in a carpenter's shop: Joseph bends over his bench, the young Christ has cut his hand on a nail, and Mary kneels to comfort him — the wound prefiguring the Crucifixion. Every detail was painted from life, including a real carpenter's shop and an actual sheep.
- The critical reaction was ferocious. Charles Dickens called it revolting and blasphemous, writing that the Christ child resembled a hideous, blubbering boy from a slum. The painting was seen as an attack on the dignity of the sacred. Yet the controversy only confirmed the Pre-Raphaelites as a force to be reckoned with. Millais went on to become the most celebrated painter of his generation, eventually elected President of the Royal Academy — and in 1885, the second artist after Kneller to be made a

baronet. The painting is now recognised as one of the defining works of Victorian art.

**Notes on *Christ in the House of His Parents***

- Millais, untitled, '*And one shall say unto him, What are those wounds in thine hands? Then he shall answer, Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends*' (Zechariah, 8:6). Described in the *Art Journal* as '*The improprieties are manifold … the coarset representation of humanity … even more revolting than the flayed Marsyas*.' The work of Overbeck is mentioned as precursor of '*some of the worst followers of the Giottteschi*'.
- The reaction to Millais's painting was unprecedented. The term 'ugly' was rarely used by critics to describe fine art yet this painting was described not only as ugly but as hideous, loathsome and disgusting. The most unfavourable was the satirical piece by Dickens in his *Household Words*. Dickens described Mary as '**horrible in her ugliness**' and clarified what he meant by ugly:

  > ***Wherever it is possible to express ugliness of feature, limb, or attitude, you have it expressed. Such men as the carpenters might be undressed in any hospital where dirty drunkards, in a high state of varicose veins, are received. Their very toes have walked out of Saint Giles's.***

- **Saint Giles** was an area that was well known for its crime and had 'the worst living conditions in all of London's history'. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* wrote that the painting contained '***Ricketty children, emaciation and deformity***' and '***we can hardly imagine anything more ugly, graceless, and unpleasant***'. Dickens also described Christ as '***hideous, wry-necked, blubbering***' and the whole painting with its '***ugliness of feature, limb, or attitude***' expressing '***what is mean, odious, repulsive, and revolting***'. In the painting, Christ has red hair, which was traditionally associated with Judas Iscariot and red hair regarded as both 'ugly' and a 'sign of degeneration'. Mary's eyes are almost closed and ringed in black and her brow is heavily lined, which combined with the twist of her neck, gives her a distorted appearance and Joseph's arms are veined and muscular, his nails are dirty, his left knee is damaged and his toenails are broken.
- In the *Art Journal* Ralph Wornum wrote: '***the most beautiful soul must have the most beautiful body***' indicating that the moral worth of a character, in this case the Holy Family, must be signified by a beautiful body. *The Times* critic wrote that the picture 'is, to speak plainly, revolting' and there was 'no conceivable omission of misery, of dirt, and even disease, all finished with the same loathsome minuteness'. *The Athenaeum* also wrote that 'we recoil with loathing and disgust' at the 'pictorial blasphemy'. What is morally shocking to the reviewer is the minute detail, which suggests we are looking at something that is forbidden and so it must be seen only in some generalised or modified form.
- The room is **unnaturally bright** and evenly lit and the source of the light is on the left. In Millais's preparatory sketches, there is a **window on the left**, which is cut

off in the final painting and is the notional source of the light. The figures have the **idiosyncratic features** associated with particular people and we know that they were modelled by Millais's family and friends. Millais went to a carpenter's shop in Oxford Street to sketch its interior in order to represent a carpenter's tools and method of working accurately. The tools are those of a nineteenth-century carpenter and the clothes are a mixture of Middle Eastern, conventional religious symbolism, such as Mary's blue dress and St. John's animal fur, with nineteenth-century additions, such as Christ's smock. Clearly, Millais was not trying to reproduce a historically accurate carpenter's shop but an accurately observed contemporary carpenter's shop with figures that were modelled on friends and family. The critics pointed out that the painting is full of anachronisms such as the mixture of costumes from different periods and the Victorian carpenter's tools. However, the art historian Michaela Giebelhausen believes that Millais carefully constructed these anachronisms in order to create an ahistorical setting. In the eighteenth century, she points out that such an ahistorical setting was associated with religious devotion as it prevented a painting from being seen as a genre painting set in a particular time and period.

- Christ's small stature compared with the height of the table also suggests that Millais was representing an accident resulting from **childish enthusiasm** rather than a stage-managed event. This is also suggested by the assistant at the left ignoring the interruption to his work, Joseph's perfunctory examination and the look of 'I told you not to meddle' on St. John's face. Mary is holding her head back for a kiss suggesting she is the injured party and St. Anne offers practical assistance rather than comfort. Through the open entrance, a group of sheep stare over a fence inquisitively suggesting there could have just been a noisy scene. Millais linked the highest spiritual subject, the Holy Family, with the lowest rung of society, the urban poor, and turned a spiritual prefiguration into an everyday accident.
- By associating themselves with artists that pre-dated the formation of Protestantism the Pre-Raphaelites linked themselves with Puseyism, the Oxford Movement, and the widely resisted move towards Catholicism. This was reinforced by their unconventional approach to religious symbolism. The painting was therefore seen to be subversive and an attempt to undermine Protestant beliefs. This aspect of the Pre-Raphaelite movement is spelled out in Max Nordau's *Degeneration*.
- It is clear from the critical reaction that this painting was **revolutionary** and was seen as an extreme attack on the conventions used to represent religious subjects. Fourteen years later, in Paris, Manet caused a similar reaction by undermining bourgeois notions of respectability with *Olympia* (1863, exhibited 1865).
- The critical response changed over the years and **by 1898** the painting was '***passionately admired, and even loved***'. By the end of the century, the painting was no longer regarded as ugly and 'blasphemous'. This might be because Millais

had become accepted as a member of elite society but the painting had also lost its ability to shock as the changes it brought about in the way we see the world had become established.

**References**

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Christ_in_the_House_of_His_Parents
And www.victorianweb.org/painting/Herbert/paintings/1.html

William Holman Hunt (1827-1910),
*The Awakening Conscience*, 1853-4,
76.2 x 55.9 cm (no longer on display)

William Holman Hunt (1827-1910), *The Awakening Conscience*, 1853-4, 76.2 x 55.9 cm

**Summary**

William Holman Hunt was the most morally earnest of the Pre-Raphaelites, the one who never wavered from the Brotherhood's founding principles. The Awakening Conscience of 1853-4 shows a kept woman rising suddenly from her lover's lap in a St John's Wood love nest, struck by a spiritual revelation. Every object in the room carries moral symbolism, from the cat toying with a trapped bird beneath the table to the tangled threads of discarded embroidery. Hunt insisted on painting every detail from life, renting a real room in a maison de convenance. The ornate gilt frame, designed by Hunt himself, incorporates marigolds and bells symbolising warning and sorrow.

- William Holman Hunt was the most morally earnest of the Pre-Raphaelites — the one who never wavered from the Brotherhood's founding principles of unflinching observation, symbolic intensity and serious purpose. Born in London in 1827, he was largely self-taught in his early years, and it was he, more than anyone, who gave the movement its quasi-religious sense of mission. Where Millais eventually drifted toward respectability and Rossetti into private obsession, Hunt maintained throughout his long career a fierce commitment to painting as moral instruction. He made multiple journeys to the Holy Land to paint biblical subjects with archaeological exactitude, and his best works crackle with a peculiar, almost uncomfortable intensity.
- The Awakening Conscience shows a kept woman in a moment of sudden moral clarity, rising from her lover's lap as a shaft of light from the window strikes her — the sunlit garden reflected in the mirror behind her suggesting the innocent life she has left behind. Every surface in the room is painted with microscopic precision, and every

detail carries symbolic weight. John Ruskin wrote admiringly that the picture communicated a distinctive and terrible lustre of modern life.
- The critical reaction was mixed — some found its subject sordid, others recognised its power. It remains one of the most searching images of female conscience and social entrapment in Victorian art, a companion piece in spirit to Millais's Carpenter's Shop and a definitive statement of what the Pre-Raphaelites, at their most serious, were trying to achieve.

**Notes on The Awakening Conscience**

- The inspiration for this painting was **Proverbs**: 'As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart'.
- Some critics misinterpreted this painting, one thought it was a **brother and sister** playing the piano but the real meaning was quickly determined. It is a gentleman with his mistress (she does not wear a wedding ring) in the room he has rented for their meetings. Hunt hired a room at Woodbine Villa, 7 Alpha Place, **St John's Wood** to provide an authentic interior.
- As they play the piano and sing Thomas Moore's *Oft in the Stilly Night* together she has a sudden spiritual revelation. She gazes into the **garden** reflected in the mirror representing **God's work on earth** and **redemption** is possible signified by the **ray of sunlight** in front of her.
- The painting is full of symbolic elements that are intended to be read.
    - The **cat** toying with the broken winged bird symbolizes her plight,
    - The man's **discarded glove** warns that the likely fate of a cast off mistress is prostitution.
    - The **tangled skein** of yarn signifies the complex situation in which she is trapped.
- Ruskin wrote to *The Times* on 25 May 1854, 'the very hem of the **poor girl's dress**, at which the painter has laboured so closely, thread by thread, has story in it, if we think how soon its pure whiteness may be soiled with dust and rain, her outcast feet failing in the street'.
- The model is **Annie Miller** (1835-1925), a barmaid Hunt met when she was **15**. He **fell in love** with her and wanted to **marry her** but only if she **educated herself** when her was away in the **Middle East**. When he was away and contrary to his instructions she **sat for Dante Gabriel Rossetti** and this caused a **rift** between them on Hunt's return. She became involved with 7th **Viscount Ranelagh** (pronounced ran-er-lah) and Hunt broke off their engagement. She was going to sue for **breach of promise** but Ranelagh's cousin Captain Thomas Thomson **fell in love** with her. And they married in 1863. Years later Hunt met her on Richmond Hill 'a buxom

matron with a carriage full of children'. She **died aged 90** in **Shoreham-by-Sea**. It is not known whether she became 'gay' (i.e. a prostitute) but one art historian (Jan Marsh) believes it is likely she remained 'pure'.

**References**


- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hunt-the-awakening-conscience-t02075

James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834-1903), *Nocturne: Blue and Gold - Old Battersea Bridge*, c. 1872-75, Tate Britain

James Abbott McNeill Whistler (1834-1903), *Nocturne: Blue and Gold - Old Battersea Bridge,* c. 1872-75

**Summary**
James Abbott McNeill Whistler was one of the most provocative figures in nineteenth-century art, an American by birth and cosmopolitan by temperament. He set himself against everything the Victorian art establishment valued: narrative, moral instruction, and literary content. A painting, he insisted, was first and foremost an arrangement of colour and tone. This nocturne of around 1872-75 shows Old Battersea Bridge as a shadowy silhouette rising through blue mist, with golden fireworks scattered across the sky. It was this painting that provoked Ruskin's infamous accusation of flinging a pot of paint in the public's face, leading to the celebrated libel trial of 1878.

- James Abbott McNeill Whistler was one of the most provocative and influential figures in nineteenth-century art — an American by birth, cosmopolitan by temperament, and a deliberate troublemaker by inclination. Born in Massachusetts in 1834, he spent most of his adult life in London and Paris, moving between avant-garde circles and absorbing the lessons of Japanese woodblock prints, Velázquez and the French realists. He was witty, combative and supremely self-assured, and he set himself against everything the Victorian art establishment valued — narrative, moral instruction, literary content. A painting, he insisted, was first and foremost an arrangement of colour and tone, and should be judged as such. He titled his works like musical compositions: nocturnes, arrangements, harmonies, symphonies.
- This nocturne distils that philosophy to its essence. Battersea Bridge looms as a dark vertical mass against a blue dusk, a distant firework bursting over the Thames in a scatter of gold. The image owes everything to Hiroshige — the flat, simplified forms,

the radical cropping, the mood of stillness — and almost nothing to conventional landscape painting. When John Ruskin saw it, he accused Whistler of flinging a pot of paint in the public's face. Whistler sued for libel and won — famously awarded a farthing in damages. The trial effectively bankrupted him but secured his reputation permanently, and this painting now stands as one of the defining statements of art for art's sake, pointing directly toward abstraction and the art of the twentieth century.

**Notes on The Whistler v. Ruskin Trial**

- Whistler arrived in Paris in 1855, aged 21, and moved to London in 1859 which he adopted as his home.
- In 1866 Whistler decided to travel to **Valparaiso, Chile to fight the Spanish.** Scholars have puzzle over his motivation. Whistler stated he was asked by some South Americans as a 'West Point' man and he was very **proud of his military training** but, unlike his brother, **he had never fought**. He may have thought this the opportunity to display his military prowess as a swashbuckling Southern gentleman (even though he was born in New England). Whatever the reason Whistler's painted **his first three night paintings** while he was there. He later, thanks to the suggestion of his patron Frederick Leyland he re-titled them 'nocturnes'.
- On his return him contributed *Symphony in White, No. 3* but **critics** in England and France were **not sympathetic** and between 1868 and 1870 he showed only **a single painting** at the Royal Academy and **none in France**. He experimented with **classical nudes** in drapes but criticized himself for his **lack of formal training in the life class**. He had lost his sense of artistic direction. He was short of money, despised the English and began a major family crisis by arguing with his brother-in-law and pushing him through a plate glass window. In 1869 his half-brother George died.
- In **1871** he painted his ailing mother, ***Arrangement on Grey and Black, No. 1*** (colloquially called ***Whistler's Mother***) and this to have been a **turning point**. At the same time he was rejecting Realism for Aestheticism and he chose to go out on the Thames at night with Walter Greaves (1846-1930) and paint his Nocturnes. Greaves was a neighbour who was a boat builder and waterman and his father had been the boatman for J. M. W. Turner.
- Whistler painted several more **nocturnes** over the next ten years, many of the **River Thames** and of Cremorne Gardens, a pleasure park famous for its frequent fireworks displays, which presented a novel challenge to paint. In his maritime nocturnes, Whistler used paint he had thinned with copal, turpentine and linseed oil, creating what **he called a 'sauce',** which he applied in thin, transparent layers, wiping it away until he was satisfied. To this ground he applied lightly flicked colour to suggest ships, lights, and shore line. Some of the Thames paintings also show compositional and thematic similarities with the **Japanese prints of Hiroshige**.

- Whistler was short and slim with a curling moustache and he often wore a monocle and dressed like a dandy. He was self-confident, arrogant and selfish and enjoyed shocking his friends. He had a biting wit and on one occasion, young Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) attended one of Whistler's dinners, and hearing his host make some brilliant remark, apparently said, "I wish I'd said that", to which Whistler riposted, "You will, Oscar, you will!" In fact, Wilde did repeat in public many witticisms created by Whistler.
- This painting gave rise to one of the **central artistic controversy of the Victorian period**, known as the **Whistler v. Ruskin trial**. The trial tells us a lot about how the Victorians regarded art and the nature of the changes Whistler helped bring about.
- This painting and the next were exhibited in the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, the year it opened. John Ruskin reviewed Whistler's work in his publication *Fors Clavigera* on July 2, 1877. Ruskin praised Burne-Jones, while he attacked Whistler:

  *For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay [founder of the Grosvenor Gallery] ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of **Cockney impudence** before now; but never expected **to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face**.*

- Critics by convention **did not criticize** paintings as they knew the artist had to make a living. If they did not like a painting they ignored it or made a critical comment alongside some positive points.
- Whistler, seeing the attack in the newspaper, replied to his friend George Boughton, "It is the most debased style of criticism I have had thrown at me yet." He then went to his solicitor and drew up a writ for libel which was served to Ruskin. Whistler hoped to recover **£1,000 plus the costs of the action**. The case came to trial the following year after delays caused by Ruskin's bouts of mental illness, while Whistler's financial condition continued to deteriorate. It was heard at the Queen's Bench of the High Court on November 25 and 26 of 1878.
- Although, we do not have a transcript of the Whistler v. Ruskin trial sufficient reports were published to enable it to be reconstructed.

  When asked '**Are those figures** on the top of the bridge intended for people?' Whistler replied 'They are **just what you like**.'
  When the judge asked **if it was a barge** beneath the bridge,
  Whistler replied 'Yes, **I am very much flattered** at your seeing that. The picture is simply a representation of moonlight. My whole scheme was only to bring about a **certain harmony of colour**.'

- Whistler stressed the colour rather than a harmony of form and the form is suppressed by the overall similarity in tone and hue; with the exception of the gold

dots the painting is a wash of blue, in places a thin wash that allows the canvas to show. Whistler mixed large quantities of the predominant tone that he called his ‘sauce’, and although he started on an easel, he often had to throw the canvas on the floor to stop the sauce running off. The sky and water were rendered by ‘great sweeps of the brush of exactly the right tone.’

John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose*, 1885-6

John Singer Sargent (1856-1925), *Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose*, 1885-6

**Summary**

John Singer Sargent was the most dazzling portrait painter of the late nineteenth century. Born in Florence in 1856 to American parents, he trained in Paris and developed brushwork of breathtaking speed and confidence. A scandal caused by his provocative portrait Madame X in 1884 drove him from Paris to London. Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose, painted in 1885-6 at Broadway in the Cotswolds, captures two young girls lighting paper lanterns in a garden at dusk. Sargent could only paint for a few minutes each evening when the light was exactly right, working obsessively over two summers to capture the magical twilight effect.

- John Singer Sargent was the most dazzling portrait painter of the late nineteenth century — a cosmopolitan virtuoso who seemed to have absorbed everything European art had to offer and made it effortless. Born in Florence in 1856 to American parents, he trained in Paris under Carolus-Duran, absorbed the lessons of Velázquez and Hals, befriended Monet, and developed a brushwork of breathtaking speed and confidence. A scandal caused by his provocative portrait Madame X in 1884 drove him from Paris to London, where he eventually became the most sought-after portraitist of the Edwardian age. Yet for all his facility with likeness and social glamour, his most personal works were the informal paintings he made among friends — and this is one of them.
- Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose was painted in the village of Broadway in Worcestershire, in the garden of the illustrator Francis Millet. Two young girls light Chinese paper lanterns

among the flowers at dusk, and Sargent worked on it during the few precious minutes each evening when the light was exactly right, returning day after day through two successive autumns to capture that particular quality of fading luminescence. The result is ravishing — the soft glow of the lanterns against the cooling air, the white dresses, the surrounding roses and lilies all held in a moment of extraordinary stillness. When it was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1887 it was an immediate sensation, purchased for the nation and marking Sargent's triumphant arrival in the British art world. It remains one of the most purely beautiful paintings in Tate Britain.

**Notes**

- **This was his first major success in Britain**.
    - Sargent's **first major success at the Royal Academy came in 1887**, with the enthusiastic response to ***Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose***, a large piece, **painted on site**, of two young girls lighting lanterns in an Farnham House, Broadway in the Cotswolds. Sargent had moved to the Cotswolds to escape the **scandal of the *Portrait of Madame* X** (1884). The painting received a mixed reception as some reviewers regarded it as '**Frenchified**' but it was immediately purchased by the Tate Gallery's Chantrey Bequest. They are lighting Chinese lanterns as day turns to night. The children Dolly (left, aged 11) and Polly (right, aged 7), the daughters of the illustrator Frederick Barnard, a friend of Sergeants.
- **He painted it outdoors *alla prima*.**
    - **Every day from 6:35pm to 7pm from August to early November 1885 and again in August/September and late October 1886**, he painted in the very few minutes **when the light was perfect**, giving the picture an **overall purple tint** of evening. He made many preliminary sketches and he would often scrape the paint off the canvas after a day's painting. The flowers in the garden died as summer turned to autumn, and they were replaced with **artificial flowers**. Sargent resumed painting the following summer at the Millet new home nearby in Broadway, and finally **finished** the painting by the end of **October 1886**. In the course of working, Sargent cut down the rectangular canvas, removing approximately 2 feet (61 cm) from the left side, to leave an approximately square shape. Sargent himself described it as a 'fearfully difficult subject … Paints are not bright enough & then the effect only lasts ten minutes.' The seemingly effortless solution is the result of Sargent being willing to scrape off and redo his efforts again and again. This painting possibly takes *alla prima* (wet-on-wet, Italian for 'first attempt') painting to an extreme level that has rarely even been attempted before or since. Cross-sectional analysis of the paint shows that he even painted wet-on-wet for the final touches on the faces, something few other artists would ever attempt.

- **Using Impressionistic brushwork**.
    - These three enlargements of areas of the painting show Sargent's skill drawing with the brush and invoking an effect with the minimal brushwork. A few rapid strokes of the brush create a lily or a rose of a glowing lantern. This ability suggests he worked rapidly but we know from the length of time he spent that he also worked very carefully.
- **There have been many interpretations**.
    - The painting can be read as a botanical allegory of flower-maidens, with subtle sexual overtones of lighting a lantern (slang in French for vagina), and the taper as a symbolic paintbrush (also used to hand-pollinate flowers) used to illuminate the paper of the lantern in the same way that a painter uses a paintbrush to create an image on a canvas. The larger flowers at the top bring the background forward and flatten the painting.
- **Title**.
    - The unusual title comes from a popular song 'Ye Shepherds Tell Me' (also called 'The Wreath').

**<u>John Singer Sargent</u>**

- John Singer Sargent was an American artist who was considered the '**leading portrait painter of his generation**' specialising in Edwardian aristocracy. He was prolific and painted about 900 oil paintings and 2,000 watercolours.
- He was **trained in Paris** before moving to London. His early submission *Portrait of Madame X* caused a scandal rather than the positive publicity he was expecting.
- He was a master of **drawing with the brush** and his portraits were painted in the grand manner but his landscapes were influenced by Impressionism.
- His father was an eye surgeon but when Sargent's older sister died aged two his **mother** (Mary née Singer) **had a breakdown** and they **travelled through Europe** for the rest of their lives. Sargent was born in Florence in 1856. He had no official schooling but grew up speaking **fluent French, Italian and German** and accomplished in art, music and literature.
- He began his art studies with Carolus-Duran a French portrait painter with bold techniques and modern teaching methods. He taught painting *alla prima* working directly on the canvas with a loaded brush derived from Diego Velázquez. In 1874 he gained entry to the École des Beaux-Arts at his first attempt and won a silver prize.

**<u>Chantrey Bequest</u>**

- On his death Sir Francis Legatt Chantrey (1781-1841) left £150,000 to the Royal Academy for the purchase of 'works of Fine Art ... executed in Great Britain'. The first purchase was made in 1877 following the death of Lady Chantrey. Although the Trustees of the RA still decide on the selection of the purchases, the exhibition and preservation of the collection has become the responsibility of the Tate

Gallery.

John William Waterhouse (1849-1917), *The Lady of Shalott*, 1888, Tate Britain

John William Waterhouse (1849-1917), *The Lady of Shalott*, 1888, Tate Britain

**Summary**
John William Waterhouse was the last and most lyrical heir to the Pre-Raphaelite tradition. Born in Rome in 1849 to artist parents, he grew up surrounded by classical antiquity. He built a career painting women from myth, legend and literature with a warmth and sensuous immediacy that set him apart from the cooler Pre-Raphaelites. The Lady of Shalott of 1888 illustrates Tennyson's poem about a woman cursed to view Camelot only through a mirror. She has broken the curse by looking directly at Lancelot and now drifts towards death in a tapestry-draped boat, her face a study in resigned tragedy.

- John William Waterhouse was the last and in some ways the most lyrical heir to the Pre-Raphaelite tradition — a painter who absorbed its love of literary subject matter, intense colour and female beauty without sharing its polemical edge. Born in Rome in 1849 to artist parents, he grew up surrounded by classical antiquity, and the ancient world never left his imagination. He settled in London, trained at the Royal Academy, and built a career painting women from myth, legend and literature with a warmth and sensuous immediacy that set him apart from the cooler, more cerebral Pre-Raphaelites who had preceded him. He was enormously popular in his lifetime, elected a full Academician in 1895, and remains among the most beloved of all Victorian painters — though serious critical attention was slow to follow popular affection.
- This painting takes its subject from Tennyson's poem of 1832, in which a mysterious lady lives under a curse in a tower on the island of Shalott, forbidden to look directly at the world outside and able to see it only through a mirror. When she catches sight of

Sir Lancelot and turns to look at him directly, the mirror cracks, the curse descends, and she sets herself adrift in a boat, dying before she reaches Camelot. Waterhouse shows her at that fatal moment of departure — seated in the boat among fallen reeds, her expression one of haunting composure as she loosens the chain that holds her. Three candles are mounted at the prow, two already extinguished; a crucifix lies at her feet. The tapestry she has woven trails into the water behind her. Everything speaks of a life quietly and irreversibly ending. It is a painting of great romantic melancholy, and its image of a solitary woman adrift between confinement and oblivion has never lost its power.

**Notes**

- **This is Warehouse's best known work**. He painted **three different versions** of *The Lady of Shalott*, in 1888, 1894 (tied up in the threads of her loom), and 1916 (wearing a red dress in front of a round window and her unbroken loom). Another of Waterhouse's favourite subjects was Ophelia; the most famous of his paintings of Ophelia depicts her just before her death, putting flowers in her hair as she sits on a tree branch leaning over a lake. Like *The Lady of Shalott* and other Waterhouse paintings, it deals with a woman dying in or near water. He also may have been inspired by paintings of Ophelia by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Everett Millais.
- *The Lady of Shalott* (1832) was a poem by the Poet Laureate Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892). According to this poem “the Lady of Shalott was forbidden to look directly at reality or the outside world; instead she was **doomed to view the world through a mirror**, and weave what she saw into tapestry. Her despair was heightened when she saw loving couples entwined in the far distance, and she spent her days and nights aching for a return to normalcy. One day the Lady **saw Sir Lancelot passing** on his way in the reflection of the mirror, and **dared to look out at Camelot**, bringing about **a curse**. The lady escaped by boat during an autumn storm, inscribing 'The Lady of Shalott' on the prow. As she sailed towards Camelot and **certain death**, she sang a lament. Her frozen body was found shortly afterwards by the knights and ladies of Camelot, one of whom is Lancelot, who prayed to God to have mercy on her soul.”
- Waterhouse was born he year after the Pre-Raphaelites were founded but he is known for working in the **Pre-Raphaelite style**. He worked several decades after the breakup of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which had **seen its heyday** in the mid-nineteenth century, leading him to have gained the title of "**the modern Pre-Raphaelite**". His artworks were known for their depictions of women from both ancient Greek mythology and Arthurian legend.
- Born in Rome to English parents who were both painters, he later moved to London, where he enrolled in the Royal Academy of Art. He soon began exhibiting at their annual summer exhibitions, focusing on the creation of large canvas works depicting scenes from the daily life and mythology of **ancient Greece**. Later on in

his career he came to embrace the Pre-Raphaelite style of painting despite the fact that it had gone **out of fashion** in the British art scene several decades before.

- Waterhouse painted **three different versions** of *The Lady of Shalott*, in 1888, 1894 (tied up in the threads of her loom), and 1916 (wearing a red dress in front of a round window and her unbroken loom). Another of Waterhouse's favourite subjects was Ophelia; the most famous of his paintings of Ophelia depicts her just before her death, putting flowers in her hair as she sits on a tree branch leaning over a lake. Like *The Lady of Shalott* and other Waterhouse paintings, it deals with a woman dying in or near water. He also may have been inspired by paintings of Ophelia by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Everett Millais.

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Walter Richard Sickert (1860-1942), *Minnie Cunningham at the Old Bedford*, 1892, 76.5 x 63.8 cm

Walter Richard Sickert (1860-1942), *Minnie Cunningham at the Old Bedford*, 1892, 76.5 x 63.8 cm

**Summary**
Walter Richard Sickert was the most important British painter of his generation, the crucial link between the French Impressionists and the tradition of gritty urban realism that would run through twentieth-century British art. Born in Munich in 1860, he trained under Whistler before falling under the spell of Degas in Paris. Minnie Cunningham at the Old Bedford of 1892 shows a music-hall singer performing at the famous Camden Town venue. Sickert paints from the stalls, the singer caught in the artificial glare of the footlights, the audience a dark mass beyond. It captures the fleeting, democratic spectacle of popular entertainment.

- Walter Richard Sickert was the most important British painter of his generation — the crucial link between the French Impressionists, whom he knew intimately, and the tradition of gritty urban realism that would run through twentieth-century British art from the Camden Town Group to Lucian Freud. Born in Munich in 1860 to a Danish-German father and an Anglo-Irish mother, he grew up in England, worked briefly as an actor, then trained under Whistler before travelling to Dieppe and Paris, where he fell under the spell of Degas. That encounter was decisive. From Degas he took the oblique angle of vision, the artificial light, the theatre and café as subjects, and the radical cropping of the frame — but where Degas remained fastidious, Sickert embraced the seedy, the worn and the unglamorous with something close to relish.
- Minnie Cunningham was a music hall singer at the Old Bedford Theatre in Camden, and Sickert shows her mid-performance — isolated on stage, the vast raked auditorium of shadowy faces receding behind her, the footlights casting their harsh upward glow. She

appears both exposed and diminished, a small figure in a large and indifferent space. There is no glamour here, only the peculiar loneliness of performance — the gulf between the performer and the crowd that watches. Sickert returned obsessively to the music hall throughout the 1890s, and these paintings stand as his finest achievement of the period, catching something true and slightly melancholy about popular entertainment and the lives lived within it.

**Notes**

- 'In the 1880s popular music halls sprang up in London and Paris and impressionist artists such as Edgar Degas and Walter Sickert began to paint the audiences and acts. Minnie Cunningham was a successful performer whom Sickert admired. He first exhibited this picture with the subtitle '**I'm an old hand at love, though I'm young in years**', a quotation from one of her songs. Sickert gives us the point of view of an audience member and catches the strange effect of theatrical lighting.' (Tate display caption)
- ''Minnie Cunningham' was born in Birmingham and became a 'serio-comic' singer and dancer in the music halls. Her career began around 1888, during which year she performed at a number of London music halls, including the Oxford, the Parthenon and Collins', being described as a 'youthful singer and dancer'. Owing to confusion with an American actress of the same name born in 1855 there has formerly been a belief that she was, when Sickert painted her, a middle-aged performer, adding an extra layer of irony and salaciousness to the songs she sang about herself in the character of an innocent schoolgirl. But, in fact, Cunningham was a young woman in her early twenties when Sickert met her in 1892, and was described by the poet Arthur Symons in a letter to a friend as '**very pretty, very nice, very young**'.'
- Reviews were mixed. *The Birmingham Gazette* described *Minnie Cunningham* as '**thoroughly enjoyable** and artistic … **the picture of the Exhibition**', and *Black and White* agreed it was '**quite excellent**'. Several of the **negative reviews** drew attention to what they believed was the **rigid quality** of the figure. '**How inhuman and caricature-like is the result**', *Life* complained, '**a pretty little girl is turned into a wooden doll**',
- Music halls evolved from light entertainment in salon bars in the 1830s and became established as separate music hall theatres in the 1850s. Unlike a conventional theatre the audience was seated at tables and could eat, drink and smoke.

- **Walter Sickert** was a very **influential and prolific artist** but a painter's painter. That is, he influenced many twentieth century artists even after his reputation was less well-known to the general public. He was a **colourful and charming** character who was recognised as an important artist in his lifetime. He courted many eminent personalities and was a **skilled raconteur**. In old age he cultivated his eccentric

habits frequently appearing in the newspaper having changed his appearance or his name or for some controversial painting stunt.

- He was born in **Munich to a Danish father and an Anglo-Irish mother**. In 1868 the family moved to England and London remained his home although he spent time in Italy and France. He spoke fluent English, German and French and had good Italian.
- His father was a painter and illustrator but discouraged him from painting and when he was 18 he **took up acting** under the stage name '**Mr. Nemo**'. In 1881 however, he signed for the Slade School. In 1882 he abandoned the stage to join **Whistler's studio**.
- He denounced Whistler anti-literary theory of drawing and saw all great paintings as telling a story. He also disliked Whistler's titles as he felt the title set the scene in which the painting could be interpreted. Regarding the **aesthetic**, he said, '**for me it's the rudest word I know**'.
- Sickert chose to allegorise painting as '**a robust and racy wench**'. Dismissing Whistler's *Symphony in White, No.3* as a '**bad picture ... badly composed, badly drawn, badly painted**' and appealing only to English sentiment, he insisted that: '**painting is a rough-tongued, hard-faced mistress, and her severe rule will brook no dallying of that sort**'.
- A major retrospective of his work was held at Tate Britain in 2008.

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Gwen John (1876-1939), *Self-Portrait*,
1902, 44.8 x 34.9 cm

Gwen John (1876-1939), *Self-Portrait*, 1902, 44.8 x 34.9 cm

**Summary**
Gwen John was one of the most quietly remarkable artists of the early twentieth century, a painter of such concentrated intensity that her small, still canvases seem to hold more inner life than larger works. Born in Wales in 1876, she studied at the Slade where she outshone her flamboyant brother Augustus. She spent much of her adult life in France, becoming the devoted companion of Rodin. This self-portrait of 1902, painted before she left for Paris, shows her in a red blouse against a muted background, her gaze direct and unflinching. Augustus himself declared that posterity would remember him only as Gwen John's brother.

- Gwen John was one of the most quietly remarkable artists of the early twentieth century — a painter of such concentrated intensity that her small, still canvases seem to hold more inner life than many far larger and more assertive works. Born in Wales in 1876, she studied at the Slade School of Art in London, where she was recognised as the most gifted student of her year, outshining even her flamboyant younger brother Augustus, who would go on to become the more famous of the two in their lifetimes. She spent much of her adult life in France, eventually settling in Paris, where she became the model and devoted companion of the sculptor Rodin — a relationship that consumed her emotionally for years. She later converted to Catholicism, found a measure of peace in her faith, and painted with increasing solitude and self-sufficiency until her death in 1939. Augustus himself reportedly said that in fifty years his sister would be the more celebrated, and time has proved him right.
- This early self-portrait, painted when she was twenty-six, already announces everything that would define her art — the economy of means, the psychological acuity, the

unflinching gaze. She looks directly at the viewer with an expression of calm, unsettling self-possession. The paint is quiet and controlled, the palette restrained, but the presence it conjures is absolute. There is no performance here, no appeal to sympathy — simply a young woman examining herself with the same clear, undeceived attention she would bring to every subject she painted. It is one of the most compelling self-portraits in British art.

**Notes**

- 'Gwen John trained at the Slade School of Art in London. As a woman in a career still largely dominated by men, including her successful brother Augustus, Gwen had to struggle for recognition. It has been suggested that the self-scrutinising intensity of this image, and the isolation of the figure, registers this, but the figure retains its privacy. In recent years, her reputation has grown and now eclipses that of Augustus.' (Tate display caption)
- Gwen John's work never exhibits any flashiness or contrived effects; it is always simple, plain yet deeply moving. This portrait was described by one critic [T. Martin Wood in *Studio*] as '**one of the greatest achievements in this exhibition because of its sincerity**' and in 1926 she was described as '**a sort of modern Vermeer**'. One reviewer [Nigel Gosling, 1968, *Observer Review*] '**The force of this almost obsessive reticence is astonishing … the extreme subtlety and reticence of the exquisite tonal arrangements … is a chief source of delight … Its power within awesomely restricted means is reminiscent of Morandi's.**'

- **Bio:John,Gwen**
- **Gwen John** (1876-1939) was a Welsh artist who worked in France most of her life. She trained at the Slade School of Art from 1895 to 1898 where her younger brother, Augustus John, had already begun his studies. They lived together on fruit and nuts and even as students her brother's personal glamour made him a celebrity. Gwen was quieter and her reputation has steadily grown since her death. She **neglected her health** throughout her life and in **1900-01** she lived as a **squatter** in a derelict building.
- She and was taught in the traditional manner, which involved copying Old Master paintings. This training shows in the naturalism and carefully controlled colour range of this picture. As a woman in a career still largely dominated by men, including her successful brother Augustus, Gwen had to struggle for recognition. The self-scrutinizing intensity of this image, and the isolation of the figure, registers some sense of this struggle.
- She settled in **Paris in 1904**, working as a **model**, **becoming Rodin's mistress** and immersing herself in the artistic world of the metropolis. She lived in **France** for the **rest of her life**, exhibiting on both sides of the Channel.
- From **1910 to 1924** nearly all her work was purchased by her **patron John Quinn** an American art collector and this freed her from having to work as a model,

mostly for women artists. The majority of her work is portraits, mainly of female sitters and her oeuvre is small, consisting of only 158 oil paintings.

- She drew **thousands of drawings** and thought a painting should be finished in **one or two sittings** and '**For that one must paint a lot of canvases probably and waste them**'. Her meticulous preparation shows the **influence** of James McNeill **Whistler** who she **trained under** in Paris at the Académie Carmen.
- Like many women artists she tried drawing her own body in the mirror but she complained in a letter to her brother about how difficult is was. **Even the Slade imposed restrictions** of women drawing from female models and so **friends would draw each other** but **kept silent** about the practice as 'the **respectability** of these middle-class women students would have been jeopardized if they had acknowledged at the time that they had worked from studies of their own bodies rather than those of anonymous working-class models'.
- When she lived in Paris she had to work as a model to survive. She posed nude for Auguste Rodin and for **other artists, mostly women**. In her dairies she wrote of many occasions when, working as a model, she felt **harassed or abused** by both men and women artists. For example, one of her clients, a woman artist, was kissing a man all afternoon and then told her not to tell anyone if she wanted to keep her job as a model, treating her as a child and discussing her as if she was not there. As a model she would be kept waiting for hours, shouted at, ignored, given no breaks, and propositioned by male artists. She developed fierce attachments to both men and women that worried some people and she later became Rodin's lover.

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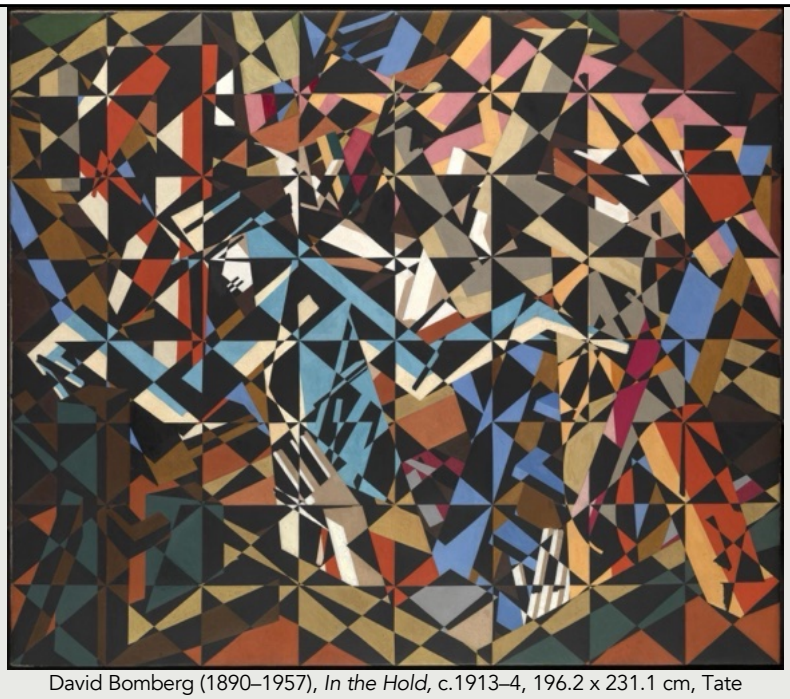

David Bomberg (1890–1957), *In the Hold,* c.1913–4, 196.2 x 231.1 cm, Tate

David Bomberg (1890–1957), *In the Hold,* c.1913–4, 196.2 x 231.1 cm, Tate

**Summary**
David Bomberg was one of the most startlingly original British painters of the twentieth century. Born in Birmingham in 1890 to a Polish-Jewish family in Whitechapel, he studied at the Slade alongside Nash and Spencer. He absorbed Cubism and Futurism in Paris and returned to produce works of astonishing radicalism before the age of twenty-five. In the Hold of around 1913-14 is his masterpiece, a monumental canvas depicting stevedores loading cargo in the hold of a ship, their bodies fractured into a dazzling geometric grid of red, blue and white. It represents one of the most radical paintings produced in Britain before the First World War.

- David Bomberg was one of the most startlingly original British painters of the twentieth century — a figure who arrived at the forefront of the avant-garde while still a student and then spent decades in obscurity before being recognised, too late, as a major artist. Born in Birmingham in 1890, the son of a Polish-Jewish leatherworker who settled in Whitechapel, he grew up in the teeming heart of the East End immigrant community and studied at the Slade, where he was a contemporary of Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer. He travelled to Paris, absorbed Cubism and Futurism with fierce intelligence, and returned to London to produce, before he was twenty-five, a handful of works of astonishing ambition and radicalism. He was associated with the Vorticists but never quite belonged — too independent, too uncompromising, and ultimately more interested in the human body than in the machine aesthetic. After the First World War, in which he served and suffered, his style shifted dramatically toward an expressive, paint-laden intensity that the art world of his day largely ignored.
- In the Hold was painted when Bomberg was barely twenty-three, and it remains one of

the most audacious paintings produced in Britain in the entire twentieth century. The subject — figures unloading cargo in the hold of a ship — is almost entirely dissolved into a grid of fractured geometric forms, the bodies broken into angular shards of colour that pulse and shift across the canvas. It hovers at the very edge of abstraction, the human figures just legible enough to generate a sense of physical effort and mass. Nothing else being painted in England at the time came remotely close to it. It announced a talent of European stature — and the tragedy of Bomberg's career is that neither his country nor his age quite knew what to do with it.

**Notes**

- **C.R.W. Nevinson, David Bomberg, Dora Carrington, Mark Gertler, Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer** - six of the **most important and distinctive British artists of the twentieth century** - had all been students together at the Slade School of Art in London. They formed part of what their **drawing teacher, Henry Tonks**, described as the **school's last 'crisis of brilliance'**. For young British artists working in the years immediately before the Great War it was an exciting and demanding time as various Modernist movements fought for precedence: Primitivism, Futurism, Cubism, Vorticism and Expressionism.
- Although it appears completely abstract *In the Hold* closely follows the outlines of a drawing that is in the Tate.
- *In the Hold* is based on a scene of dockers working in the hold of a ship. A ladder, seen in the lower right of the picture, connects the hold with the deck above. In the centre left one of the dockers can be seen, wearing a hat. Bomberg has left visible the squaring-up grid, used to enlarge accurately the preliminary drawing. He has then used this geometrical framework to dissolve the subject of the picture into dynamic angular facets. Bomberg was aware of the militancy of the dockworkers which was much publicised at the time.
- Bomberg was searching for a visual language to express his view of the modern urban environment. He wrote: '**the new life should find its expression in a new art, which has been stimulated by new perceptions. I want to translate the life of a great city, its motion, its machinery, into an art that shall not be photographic, but expressive**'.

- **David Bomberg** (1890–1957) was an English painter who was **born in Birmingham** as the seventh of eleven children. He had **Polish-Jewish parents** who moved to Whitechapel when he was a child. Between 1908 and 1910 he **studied under Sickert** and was deeply **influenced by Roger Fry's 1910 exhibition** *Manet and the Post-Impressionists*. He was one of the '**Whitechapel Boys**', a term applied much later to a loose group of Anglo-Jewish writers and artists including Mark Gertler. He was **helped by John Singer Sargent** and the **Jewish Education Aid Society** to get into the **Slade**. Bomberg was one of the **most audacious** of the exceptional

generation of artists who studied at the Slade School of Art under Henry Tonks. So audacious that he was **expelled from the Slade** after one year because of his radical style despite the fact that he was a brilliant draughtsman.

- He went to France and Italy **with Jacob Epstein and met Modigliani, Derain and Picasso**. On his return he had an acrimonious relationship with the Omega Workshop and worked with Wyndham Lewis and Vorticism. He joined the **London Group in 1914** which had been formed in 1913 from the Camden Town Group and the Fitzroy Street Group. The London Group still exists today. Bomberg combined **Cubism and Futurism** although in the 1920s he changed back to a more figurative style. Between **1945 and 1953 he was a teacher** at Borough Polytechnic and taught Frank Auerbach and Leon Kossof.
- Bomberg painted a series of complex geometric compositions combining the influences of Cubism and Futurism in the years immediately preceding World War I; typically using a limited number of striking colours, turning humans into simple, angular shapes, and sometimes overlaying the whole painting a strong grid-work colouring scheme. He was **expelled** from the **Slade** School of Art in 1913, with agreement between the senior teachers Tonks, Frederick Brown and Philip Wilson Steer, because of the audacity of his breach from the conventional approach of that time.
- Whether because his **faith in the machine age had been shattered** by his experiences as a private soldier in the trenches or because of **the pervasive retrogressive attitude towards modernism** (the so-called 'return to order') in Britain Bomberg **moved to a more figurative style in the 1920s** and his work became increasingly dominated by **portraits and landscapes drawn from nature**. Gradually developing a more expressionist technique **he travelled widely** through the Middle East and Europe.

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Jacob Epstein (1880-1959), *Torso in Metal from 'The Rock Drill'*, 1913-14, bronze, 70.5 x 58.4 x 44.5 cm, Tate

Jacob Epstein (1880-1959), *The Rock Drill*, c. 1914, now destroyed

**Summary**

Jacob Epstein's Rock Drill began as one of the most aggressive sculptures of the twentieth century: a robotic figure mounted on a real industrial drill, exhibited in 1915 during the Vorticist period. By its second showing in 1916, however, Epstein had dismantled it. He discarded the drill, cut the figure in half, and cast only the armless torso in bronze. The transformation seems to reflect the horror of the First World War, turning an expression of masculine machine-age power into something mutilated and vulnerable. The bronze torso in the Tate is one of the most iconic sculptures of British modernism.

**Notes**

- Between 1913 and 1915, Epstein was associated with the short-lived Vorticism movement and produced one of his best known sculptures *The Rock Drill*.
- This is a photograph of ***The Rock Drill*** **in its original form**. This work appeared at the **London Group exhibition** in 1915. By the time of its **second outing** in summer 1916, however, he had dismantled it. **He discarded the drill**, dismembered the figure and cut it in half, leaving a one-armed torso which was then cast, initially in gun metal and ultimately in bronze. Epstein, it seems, took an expression of masculine aggression and then emasculated it. Obvious conclusions may be drawn from the fact that he is doing this at the time of the Battle of the Somme and the Battle of Verdun.
- Epstein later said "**Here is the armed, sinister figure of today and tomorrow. No Humanity, only the terrible Frankenstein's monster we have made ourselves into**... later I lost my interest in machinery and discarded the drill. I cast only the upper part of the figure."
- Epstein often produced **controversial works** which challenged taboos on what was appropriate subject matter for public artworks. He also made paintings and drawings,

and often exhibited his work.

- The figure is sharp-edged, its limbs square in profile, and its head is a long beak-like armoured visage. The torso has what looks like armoured ribs, and in the abdomen area is an indentation containing an **embryonic form**. The extraordinary thing about this mechanised abstracted human figure is that it sat on top of a **real miner's rock drill**, with the name of its American manufacturer emblazoned on its side. The whole assembled sculpture was **over three metres tall**, giving it an amazing brooding and threatening physical presence. Of course, with the enormous drill jutting out from the figure's loins, it has an **extraordinary phallic power** about it. Writing about the piece in his autobiography Epstein said: "**I made and mounted a machine-like robot, visored, menacing, and carrying within itself its progeny, protectively ensconced**." (Tate)

- Jacob Epstein (1880-1959) was born and studied as an art student in New York. From the sale of one of his early works he moved to Paris in 1902 to study. He moved to London in 1905 and married the following year. He became a British citizen in 1911 and joined the 'Jewish Legion' but following a breakdown he was discharged in 1918 without having left England. He was well known on the art scene and rejected pretty, decorative art in favour of rough-hewn realism. His often overt sexuality was controversial and in 1908 18 nude sculptures for the British Medical Association building on the Strand (now Zimbabwe House) outraged Edwardian society as well as artists who were shocked by the rejection of the European tradition of Greco-Roman sculptural forms in favour of classical Indian postures and hand gestures.

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Mark Gertler (1891–1939), Merry-Go-Round, 1916, 142.2 x 189.2 cm

Mark Gertler (1891–1939), *Merry-Go-Round,* 1916, 142.2 x 189.2cm

**Summary**
Mark Gertler, a contemporary of Bomberg at the Slade and another product of the Whitechapel Jewish immigrant community, painted this visceral anti-war image at the height of the First World War in 1916. Soldiers and their women ride a fairground merry-go-round, their mouths open in expressions that hover horribly between ecstasy and screaming, locked in mechanical, helpless rotation. The image owes something to Vorticism but transcends it entirely, presenting not a celebration of the machine but a vision of human beings trapped within one. D.H. Lawrence called it a great and terrible picture. Gertler suffered from depression throughout his life and took his own life in 1939.

Mark Gertler was a contemporary of Bomberg at the Slade — another product of the Whitechapel Jewish immigrant community, equally gifted, equally intense. This painting, made at the height of the First World War, is one of the most visceral anti-war images in British art. Soldiers and their women ride a fairground merry-go-round, their mouths open in expressions that hover horribly between ecstasy and screaming, locked in mechanical, helpless rotation. The image owes something to Vorticism but transcends it entirely — this is not a celebration of the machine but a vision of human beings trapped within one. D.H. Lawrence called it a great and terrible picture.

**Notes**

- **Mark Gertler** (1891–1939), born Marks Gertler, was a British painter of figure subjects, portraits and still-life. His early life and his **relationship with Dora Carrington** were the inspiration for Gilbert Cannan's novel *Mendel*. The characters of Loerke in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* and Gombauld in Aldous Huxley's *Crome Yellow* were based

on him.

- He came from a **poor Jewish-Polish** family that settled in London. He could **draw from a young age** and enrolled at Regents Street Polytechnic but had to leave because of his family's poverty. He started work at a stained glass company, which he hated, but the following year he came **third in an national art competition** and was awarded a **scholarship from the Jewish Education Aid Society** and enrolled at the **Slade School of Art**.
- At the Slade he met **Dora Carrington** who he pursued for years without success. Carrington spent most of her life living with the homosexual author Lytton Strachey, with whom she was **deeply in love**. Carrington's unconventional relationship with Strachey, of whom Gertler was extremely jealous, and her eventual marriage to Ralph Partridge, destroyed her equally complex relationship with Gertler. He had been so distraught when he learned of Carrington's marriage that he tried to purchase a revolver, and **threatened to commit suicide**.
- Gertler became acquainted with the Bloomsbury Group through his patron **Lady Ottoline Morrell**. She **introduced him to Walter Sickert**, the nominal **leader of the Camden Town Group**. Gertler became successful as a painter of **society portraits**, but his **temperamental manner** and devotion to advancing his work according to his **own vision** led to increasing personal frustration and the **alienation of potential sitters** and buyers. As a result, he struggled frequently with **poverty**.
- In 1914 the polymath art collector **Edward Marsh became Gertler's patron**. The relationship between the two men proved a difficult one, as Gertler felt that the system of patronage and the circle in which he moved were in direct conflict with his sense of self. In 1916, as World War I dragged on, Gertler ended the relationship due to his **pacifism and conscientious objection** (Marsh was secretary to Winston Churchill and patron to some of the war poets). **Gertler's major painting, *Merry-Go-Round***, was created in the midst of the war years and was described by Lawrence as "**the best modern picture I have seen**" (Letters, 9 October 1916).
- In 1920, Gertler **suffered from tuberculosis** which **killed his friend D.H. Lawrence**. He married in 1930 but they were both ill and he felt constrained. He became a part-time art teacher and **in 1939** he had **financial difficulties**, his **wife had recently left him**, an **exhibition was badly received**, his **mother had died** in 1932, the same year **Carrington committed suicide** and he was filled with **fear over the imminent war** and he **gassed himself in his London studio**. *The Times* described his death as a serious loss to British art and rated him one of the **top half-dozen artists under fifty working in England**.

- A record price for his work is £542,500 for *The Violinist* (1912) in 2015.
- Dora Carrington shot herself in 1932 as Lytton Strachey had just died of stomach cancer and she saw no point in living.

Stanley Spencer, *The Resurrection, Cookham*, 1924-7, 274.3 x 548.6 cm, Tate Britain

Stanley Spencer (1891–1959), *The Resurrection, Cookham*, 1924-7, 274.3 x 548.6 cm

**Summary**
Stanley Spencer's The Resurrection, Cookham is perhaps his most famous painting and was hailed as the most important picture painted by any English artist in the twentieth century when first exhibited in 1927. Set in the churchyard of Cookham-on-Thames where Spencer grew up, it depicts the dead rising from their graves on the Day of Judgement, surrounded by familiar village figures. Spencer combined Pre-Raphaelite detail with modern freedom of form. The enormous canvas, nearly five and a half metres wide, was bought immediately for the national collections for one thousand pounds and created a sensation at the Goupil Gallery in London.

- *The Resurrection* is perhaps Spencer's most famous painting. The resurrection is one of the most challenging of all traditional Bible subjects but Spencer, by the power of his personal approach, has created a triumphant masterpiece. The picture **created a sensation** when shown in his one-man exhibition at the **Goupil Gallery** in London in 1927 and was **bought immediately** for the **national collections for £1,000**.
- The critic of ***The Times*** called it '... **the most important picture painted by any English artist in the present century** … What makes it so astonishing is the combination in it of careful detail with the modern freedom of form. It is as if a **Pre-Raphaelite had shaken hands with a Cubist**.' and even the Bloomsbury critic Roger Fry, who generally disapproved of narrative painting, wrote 'it is highly arresting and intriguing ... a very personal conception carried through with unfailing nerve and conviction.'
- Spencer believed that the divine rested in all creation. He saw his home town of Cookham as a paradise in which everything is invested with mystical significance. The local churchyard here becomes the setting for the resurrection of the dead. **Christ is**

**enthroned in the church porch**, **cradling three babies**, with **God the Father standing behind**. Along the wall of the church is a **row of prophets** including **Moses**, with a **dark beard**, holding the tablets of the **Ten Commandments**. The rest of the churchyard is filled with people resurrecting from their tombs. The **group of black people** emerging from sun-baked soil implies that Spencer's conception embraces the whole of humanity. Spencer made it clear that his Resurrection was a **joyous event** and that the resurrected are already in Heaven: '... in the main they resurrect to such a state of joy that they are content ... to remain where they are.' Even '**the punishment of the Bad**', said Spencer, '**was to be no more than that their coming out of the graves was not so easy** as in the case of the Good'.

- Spencer himself appears near the centre, naked, leaning against a grave stone; his fiancée Hilda lies sleeping in a bed of ivy. At the top left, risen souls are transported to Heaven in the pleasure steamers that then ploughed the Thames.

- Following the Great War it was a time of crisis and self-doubt. All the old certainties of what it means to be British had disappeared. Stanley's younger brother Sidney had been killed on the front but Spencer and his family did not hear any news until he returned to Cookham three months after the event. He found the whole village had changed and he started to paint the old Cookham he remembered as a boy but transformed in a series of Biblical stories. The local brewery hosts the Last Supper and Jesus carries the cross past Spencer's home. The biggest event took place in the village churchyard. He painted *Resurrection* which depicts the moment at the end of days when everyone awakes and travels to Paradise. Everyone is reborn into Stanley's childhood village of Cookham.
- Spencer described the painting as a scene of great happiness. Spencer shows himself in the centre and on the book-like grave on the right and Hilda Carline three times, coming over the stile on the left, pushing a sunflower joyfully against her face and lying on the grave in the centre, Hilda was the love of his life and although Spencer was later seduced by the charms of Patricia Preece he continued to visit and write to her for the rest of his life. Spencer was led on by Patricia but she was a lesbian so he must have been very naïve or seeking the impossible. He divorced Hilda and three days later married Patricia. After the wedding Patricia left for the 'honeymoon' with her partner and Spencer stayed behind with Hilda.
- Spencer stayed in Cookham until 1920 when he **moved to Bourne End**, just over a mile away, to stay with the trade union lawyer Henry Slesser and his wife. He worked on a series of paintings for them before **moving to Steep in Hampshire** where he worked on murals for the village hall. In 1923 he **stayed in Poole**, Dorset, with Henry Lamb (1883-1960, British painter and founder of the Camden Town Group) and worked on another mural scheme. This work convinced the **Behrend's** to commission Spencer to design murals for a chapel at **Burghclere** in memory of Mary Behrend's brother, Lieutenant Henry Willoughby Sandham.

- In **1925**, Spencer **married Hilda Carline**, then a student at the Slade and daughter, Shirin, was born in November of that year and a second daughter, Unity, in 1930. In October 1923, Spencer started **renting Henry Lamb's studio in Hampstead** where he **began work** on ***The Resurrection, Cookham***.

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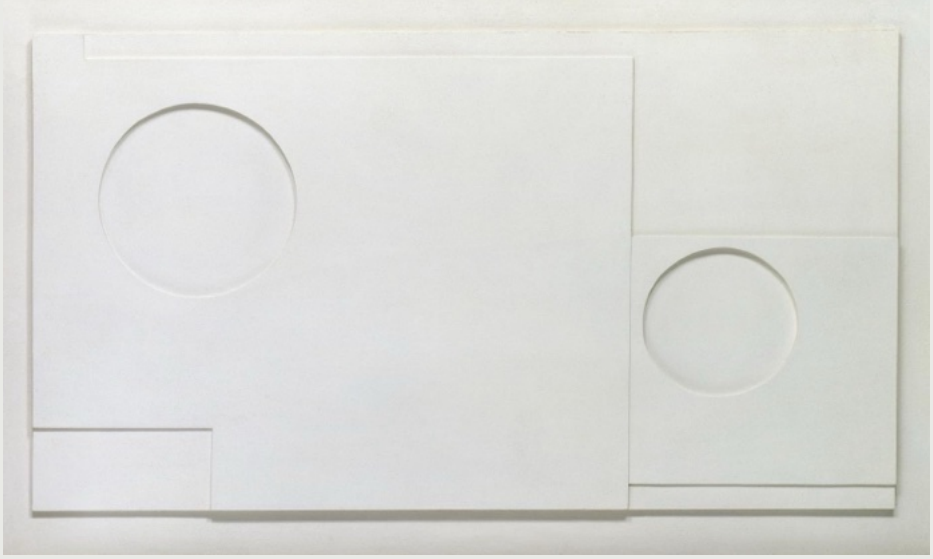

Ben Nicholson, *1935 (white relief),* 1935, 101.6 x 166.4 cm

Ben Nicholson (1894-1982), *1935 (white relief),* 1935, 101.6 x 166.4 cm

**Summary**
Ben Nicholson, along with his second wife Barbara Hepworth, was a leading figure in the international modern movement in Britain during the 1930s. Working alongside European artists like Mondrian and Gabo who had fled to London, they promoted an art that was abstract, integrated with architecture, and explicitly internationalist. This white relief of 1935 is among his most celebrated works, its composition of circles and rectangles carved into a painted board creating subtle plays of light and shadow. Nicholson described the work as representing the transition between measured and freehand drawing. Its quiet harmony offered an aesthetic model for possible social harmony.

- '**Ben Nicholson** was, with his **second wife Barbara Hepworth**, a **leading figure** in the **international modern movement in Britain**. With artists in continental Europe and North America such as Mondrian, Moholy-Nagy and Calder they worked together to achieve and promote an art that was **abstract**, synthesised with architecture and design. In defiance of the increasingly antagonistic nationalism engulfing Europe, position was explicitly internationalist and **utopian**. The **compositional quietude** of Nicholson's white reliefs provided an aesthetic model for a possible **social harmony**.' (Tate display caption)
- Nicholson wrote in a letter '**This relief contains one circle drawn by hand and one by compass and therefore represents the transition between the more freely drawn and more "mathematical" relief**'.
- Nicholson wrote that abstract art does not indicate a mathematical approach as squares and circles are nothing in themselves. They come alive through the poetic idea that inspires the artist. In this relief the circle that exposes the lower plane creates

space and '**The awareness of this is felt subconsciously and it is useless to approach it intellectually as this, so far from helping, only acts as a barrier**.'

- **In 1931** Nicholson met Barbara **Hepworth** and they lived in Hampstead and joined **Unit One** with **Paul Nash and Henry Moore**. In **1934** Barbara had **triplets** and Ben made his **first all white abstract works** on which his international reputation is based. His first wife **Winifred moved to Paris** with their three children and **he and Barbara visited** them between 1932 and 1936 and developed close friendly relationships with **Picasso, Braque, Miró, Arp, Calder, and Mondrian**. Nicholson was a vital link between Paris and London, and his advocacy of abstract art was crucial in establishing London as a centre of the international avant-garde in the 1930s. He and Hepworth married in 1938 and the following year they moved to St. Ives.
- He had a flair for ball games of all sorts and loved practical jokes. His dedication to his work was absolute and he had a great admiration for craftsmanship. He avoided formality and disliked personal publicity. He was critical of intellectual approaches to art that lacked intuitive feeling and poetry.

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Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975), *Forms in Echelon*, 1938, 108 x 60 x 71 cm

Dame Barbara Hepworth (1903-1975), *Forms in Echelon,* 1938, 108 x 60 x 71 cm, tulipwood on elm base, presented by the artist in 1964

**Summary**
Barbara Hepworth, together with her husband Ben Nicholson, was a key figure in the modern movement in Britain during the 1930s. Their circle became increasingly important as European artists such as Naum Gabo and Piet Mondrian fled to London. Forms in Echelon from 1938, carved in tulipwood on an elm base, reflects her interest in situating sculpture in the landscape. She believed all good sculpture was designed for the open air. In 1938-39 she became obsessed with producing large works despite lacking money, space or time. This piece bridges the gap between monumental works and more intimate garden sculptures.

- In 1938-39 Hepworth became **obsessed with the idea of producing large works although, paradoxically she had no money, space or time to produce such works**. *Forms in Echelon* falls between such monumental works and a more intimate work for a garden. She said, '**all good sculpture was, and still is, designed for the open air**'.
- 'Hepworth and her husband Ben Nicholson were key figures in the modern movement in Britain in the 1930s. Their circle became increasingly important as European artists such as Naum Gabo and Piet Mondrian fled to London. This work relates to her interest in situating **sculpture in the landscape**: an early image showed it superimposed onto a photograph of a garden. '**The sculpture has an upward growth but the curves of the two monoliths make a closed composition which, in the open, with light all round, they create a quietness, a pause in the progress of the eye**', Hepworth said.' (Tate display caption)
- The French word echelon means the rung of a ladder, a military formation in which

each parallel row projects out further than the previous row and a high-level of command or level of worthiness or reputation. The two forms are distinct, the one with the hole is larger than the other and they are turned to face each other. They are therefore not strictly in 'echelon' and when the work was first shown it was called *Two Forms (Tulip Wood).*

- ***Two Forms in Echelon*** was one of two Hepworths included in *Abstract and Concrete Art* at **Peggy Guggenheim's gallery in 1939**. The threat of war saw the closure of the gallery in June and the relocation of Hepworth and Nicholson to **St Ives**, where they stayed with the writer and painter Adrian Stokes (1902-1972) for the latter part of the year.

**Notes**

- **Adrian Stokes** (1902–1972) was a British writer and painter, known principally as an influential art critic and a published poet. Twenty three of his paintings are in the Tate.

**References**

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hepworth-forms-in-echelon-t00698

Naum Gabo (1890-1977), *Construction in Space with Crystalline Centre*, 1938–40, 32.4 x 47 x 22 cm

Naum Gabo (1890?-1977), *Construction in Space with Crystalline Centre,* 1938–40, 32.4 x 47 x 22 cm

**Summary**

Naum Gabo, born in south-west Russia, was one of the pioneers of Constructivism and kinetic sculpture. He lived and worked across Europe before settling in England in 1935, becoming part of the circle around Ben Nicholson and Barbara Hepworth. Construction in Space with Crystalline Centre of 1938-40 is among his finest works, juxtaposing organic, sweeping Perspex planes with a precise, crystalline centre. These elements embody contrasting energies held in counterpoise: flowing momentum and internal, cell-like division. Barbara Hepworth photographed this work against the Cornish sea at Carbis Bay during the Second World War, where Gabo was living at the time.

- 'This construction belongs to a small group of works of the **1930s** that are **among Gabo's finest**. It is based on the juxtaposition of **organic, sweeping planes** which demonstrate the properties of **transparency and flexibility in Perspex**, and a **precise, crystalline centre**. These elements embody **contrasting energies held in counterpoise**: flowing momentum and internal, **cell-like division**. A photograph of this work, taken by Barbara Hepworth during the Second World War, shows it against the background of the sea at Carbis Bay, Cornwall, where Gabo was living at the time.' (Tate display caption)

**Bio:Gabo**

- **Sir Naum Gabo** (*formerly* Neyemiya Borisovich **Pevzner**, 1890?–1977) was born in **south-west Russia** to the owner of a foundry. His **Jewish parents** may have changed his year of birth later to avoid military service. He was a **rebellious youth** and was expelled

from two schools. As a teenager he developed a strong commitment to **radical politics** and it was the times of the failed **1905 revolution**. His interest in **art** was **influenced** by his elder brother **Antoine Pevsner**. His parents wanted him to become a doctor but at Munich University he switched to studying philosophy, civil engineering and art history under Heinrich Wölfflin.

- Sir **Nikolaus Pevsner** (1902–1983) is not related. He was a German, later British scholar of the history of art, and especially that of architecture and best known for his 46-volume *The Buildings of England* (1951–74).
- At the outbreak of WWI, Neyemiya went to **Denmark** with his brother and started **making sculptures** consisting of flat, planar elements. These works combined ideas from **Cubism**, **Russian icon painting** and **modern engineering practice**. To distinguish himself from his artistic brother **he coined the name 'Gabo'**. The two brothers went to **Moscow in 1917** and **enthusiastically participated** in the exciting developments in modern art taking place. He produced *Kinetic Construction: Standing Wave* (1920, Tate collection) and declared art should be placed in the 'squares and streets' to **communicate to a mass audience**. He was influenced by avant-garde artists such as **Kazimir Malevich** and **Vladimir Tatlin** but **by 1922** was becoming **disillusioned** with the increasingly **authoritarian Soviet regime** and the **preference for realism**. He was able to **travel to Berlin** to organise the first Russian art exhibition and he **stayed there**. There he lived with Elisabeth Richter until her tragic death in childbirth in 1929.
- In the West, **Gabo became a leading representative of Constructivism**, an art aligned with social, political, and scientific **progress**, expressed by precise impersonal techniques, and **geometric forms** and materials suggesting **engineering structures**, machinery, or scientific labs. In 1928 Gabo wrote an article for *Bauhaus* magazine denouncing the growing assimilation and vulgarization of Constructivism by fashion and design. His first **one-man show was in Hanover in 1930**.
- After the **Nazis came to power in 1933**, Gabo decided that it was imperative for him to **leave Germany**, and he subsequently spent **three years in Paris**, in conditions of **profound poverty and depression**, during which time he produced **very little work**. His career and spirits revived when he **moved to London in the spring of 1936**. He soon met and **married Miriam Franklin**, *née* Israels (1907–1993), with whom he **lived very happily for the rest of his** life. Moreover, England was currently a **principal centre of the modern movement in art and design**. Gabo encountered other émigrés from Germany and also became good friends with the critic **Herbert Read**, abstract artists such as **Ben Nicholson** and **Barbara Hepworth**, and the architect Leslie Martin.
- Gabo's English constructions, such as *Spheric Theme* (1937–8, Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York) and ***Construction in Space: Crystalline Centre*** (1938, Tate collection), revealed a **new transparency and curvilinearity**. Both effects depended upon his discovery and aesthetic exploitation of the

recently marketed type of plastic known in Britain as **Perspex**, which was less brittle and so more easily malleable than its predecessors.

- **In 1938,** Gabo spent six months in the **United States**. Thereafter he was constantly thinking about **moving** across the Atlantic, to escape a war which was first imminent and then actual, but he **ultimately stayed in England** until November **1946**. He spent the years of the Second World War in the relatively **peaceful surroundings** of Carbis Bay, Cornwall, in close proximity to Nicholson, Hepworth, the critic Adrian Stokes.
- After the war he **travelled to America** but was **not as successful** as he had hoped but on his **return to England in 1954** he received a commission for an **outdoor sculpture** for a department store in **Rotterdam**. When this was unveiled in 1957 his **fame soared** and during the **last twenty years of his life** he received **prizes and honours** from around the world culminating in the **KBE in 1971**.

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Eileen Agar (1899-1991), *Angel of Anarchy,* 1936–40, plaster, fabric, shells, beads, diamante stones and other materials, 52 x 31.7 x 33.6 cm

Eileen Agar (1899-1991), *Angel of Anarchy,* 1936–40, plaster, fabric, shells, beads, diamante stones and other materials, 52 x 31.7 x 33.6 cm

**Summary**

Eileen Agar's Angel of Anarchy is a blindfolded plaster head covered in fabric, shells, beads, diamante stones and other materials, created between 1936 and 1940. It is loosely based on an earlier painted plaster head, but Agar wanted to create something more astonishing and powerful. The blindfolded figure suggests the foreboding and uncertainty she felt about the future in the late 1930s as Europe descended toward war. Agar believed that women were the true surrealists and that the importance of the unconscious in art established the dominance of a feminine type of imagination. She was one of the few British women associated with the international Surrealist movement.

- 'The blindfolded *Angel of Anarchy* is loosely based on an earlier painted plaster head. Agar stated that with this new work she wanted to create something '**totally different, more astonishing, powerful ... more malign**'. It suggests the foreboding and uncertainty that she felt about the future in the late 1930s. Believing that **women are the true surrealists**, Agar wrote: '**the importance of the unconscious in all forms of Literature and Art establishes the dominance of a feminine type of imagination over the classical and more masculine order**.'' (Tate display caption)

- **Eileen Forrester Agar** (1899–1991) was a British painter and photographer associated with the Surrealist movement. She was born in **Buenos Aires** to a wealthy **Scottish father** and **American mother**, Agar moved with her family to **London in 1911**. She showed an early aptitude for art and attended the **Slade from 1925 to 26** and then **studied in Paris**. She was a woman of striking beauty and was always surrounded by

admirers. She met the Surrealists **André Breton** and **Paul Éluard** with whom she had a friendly relationship. She was a member of the **London Group** from 1934 onwards and became a **Royal Academy Associate in 1990**.

- In the **mid-1930s** Agar and Joseph Bard (1882-1975), a Hungarian writer, began renting a house for the summer at **Swanage in Dorset**. Here she **met Paul Nash** and the two began an **intense relationship**. In 1935 Nash introduced Agar to the concept of the **found object**. Together, they collaborated on a number of works, such as *Seashore Monster at Swanage*. Nash recommended her work to Roland Penrose and Herbert Read, the organisers of the **1936 International Surrealist Exhibition** at the New Burlington Galleries, in London and to her surprise **she became the only British woman to have work, three paintings and five objects, included in that exhibition**. In 1937, Agar had a holiday with Picasso and Dora Maar with Paul Éluard, Roland Penrose and Lee Miller, who photographed her.
- She married Bard in 1940 and they had two children. The war interrupted her artistic activity and she continued to exhibit regularly after the war until her death in 1991.

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Jacob Epstein (1880-1959), *Jacob and the Angel*, 1940–41, 214 x 110 x 92 cm, 2500kg

Jacob Epstein (1880-1959), *Jacob and the Angel,* 1940–41, 214 x 110 x 92 cm, alabaster, 2500kg

**Summary**
Jacob Epstein's monumental alabaster sculpture Jacob and the Angel, carved in 1940-41, depicts the Old Testament story of Jacob wrestling through the night with an unknown assailant. In this interpretation, the angel supports Jacob, who has just collapsed. Jacob realises he has been fighting God, and in the morning the angel blesses him for not giving up. Weighing two and a half tonnes, the sculpture has been interpreted as an artist struggling with his materials, as well as the struggles of European Jews during the Second World War. It is displayed alongside Epstein's equally powerful Ecce Homo from Coventry Cathedral.

- 'The Old Testament tells how **Jacob tricked his father, Isaac**, into giving him the birthright belonging to Esau, his elder brother. Later, at a crisis in his life, Jacob wrestles through the night with an **unknown assailant**, who restrains him by 'touching on the sinew of his thigh'. Here, **the angel is supporting Jacob**, who has just collapsed. Jacob realises he has been **fighting God**. In the morning **the angel blesses him** for not giving up. This sculpture has been seen as **representing an artist struggling with his materials**, as well as the **struggles of European Jews** during the Second World War.' (Tate display caption)
- This is one of a **group of large carvings** of religious themes completed in the 1930s, starting with *Behold the Man* (1934-5, Coventry Cathedral). Critics found it shocking that this scene from Genesis was represented using such primitive forms. Epstein was clearly inspired by the energy found in primitive art but he has not incorporated any particular style.

- He carved the figures from a block of English alabaster and he has retained the massive bulk of the original block which brings a strength to the two figures. It has been carved using two distinct types of tool that produce the smooth and rough surfaces. There is a natural fault line in the stone from Jacob's left wrist down through to the palm of his hand and across his little finger. It was cleaned in 2000 to restore the soapy translucency and soft matt sheen as opposed to the pre-restoration polished gloss.
- The angel seems to have squeezed the life out of Jacob who has his eyes closed and his head thrown back. This must be in the morning when Jacob collapses as he realises he has spent the night wrestling with God.
- Before he began Epstein **painted a watercolour, *Jacob Wrestling***, which was included in his 1932 exhibition. **Epstein had read and reread Genesis many times** and the story of Jacob has personal significance partly because he has the same name and partly because his art was a continual struggle from which he never gave up.

- Ecce homo ('behold the man') are the Latin words used by Pontius Pilate in John 19:5, when he presents a scourged Christ, bound and crowned with thorns, to a hostile crowd shortly before his Crucifixion. It received a hostile reception although one critic said, 'There was much sentimentality and clap-trap to be cleared away from the idea of religious art…'. It never sold and in 1969 found a site in the ruins of Coventry Cathedral.

- The material is gypsum alabaster (hydrated calcium sulphate) found in the Midlands and the material was part of a major industry in Nottingham in the 14$^{th}$ and 15$^{th}$ centuries when it was used to carve small statues and altarpieces. It is so soft it can be scratched with a fingernail and it is soluble in water and so cannot be used for outdoor work. The purest form is snow white but oxides of iron produce brown clouding and veining. It can be heated in water to remove the translucency and create a material that looks like marble. It can be heated and powdered to create Plaster of Paris. The other type of alabaster is calcite, calcium carbonate, a slightly harder material that fizzes when treated with hydrochloric acid. Marble is a form of calcite.

**References**


- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/epstein-jacob-and-the-angel-t07139

Graham Sutherland (1903-1980), *Feeding a Steel Furnace*, 1941–42, 90.2 x 86.4 cm

Graham Sutherland (1903-1980), *Feeding a Steel Furnace,* 1941–42, 90.2 x 86.4 cm

**Summary**

Graham Sutherland painted Feeding a Steel Furnace in 1941-42 as an official War Artist, documenting industrial production for the war effort. During his third contract with the War Artists Advisory Committee, he was directed to Cardiff to paint steel works producing arms. The painting captures the intense heat and dramatic light of a steel furnace being fed, with workers silhouetted against the fiery glow. Sutherland had previously documented bomb damage in London during the Blitz and brought the same intensity of observation to the industrial subject. His ability to transform industrial scenes into powerful, almost apocalyptic imagery made him one of the most distinctive British war artists.

- 'Sutherland's **third six-month contract** with the **War Artists Advisory Committee** began on 1 August 1941, at which time he was completing the last of his paintings of bomb damage in London. He continued to be assigned to Supply and Home Security subjects but, with the Blitz over (7 September 1940 –11 May 1941, 8 months, 5 days), was directed towards **industrial production** for his next works; it was noted that he '**already had specific factories in mind**'. Having returned to Kent from a **few days holiday** in Pembrokeshire on 15 September, it was suggested that he might go to **Cardiff to paint steel works for arms production**. He went to the **Guest, Keen and Baldwin Steel Works** near Cardiff later that month and on 29 October the WAAC noted that he was '**now back [from Wales and] ... had secured much promising material**'. (Tate)

- Graham Sutherland (1903-1980) was **born in Streatham**, the **son of a lawyer**. He

trained as an **engineer** and then went to **Goldsmith's College**. He specialised in engraving and was influenced by **Samuel Palmer**. He **did not paint until his 30s** when the **print market collapsed** due to the **Great Depression**. He produced mostly landscapes **influenced by Paul Nash**. He exhibited at the **1936** ***International Surrealist Exhibition*** and **taught** at various colleges and continued with design work. He visited and was inspired by the landscape of **Pembrokeshire**. During **WWII** he became a **war artist** and painted **tin mining** in **Cornwall** and **bomb damage in London**. He had **converted to Catholicism** in 1926 the year before his **marriage** and in the early 1950s was asked to **design a tapestry** for the new **Coventry Cathedral**. After the war he painted landscapes and he continued to paint portraits of which the most famous is of Somerset Maugham and the most notorious of Winston Churchill.

**References**


- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/sutherland-feeding-a-steel-furnace-n05738

Francis Bacon (1909-1992), *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*, c.1944, 94 x 73.7 cm

Francis Bacon (1909-1992), *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*, c.1944, 94 x 73.7 cm

**Summary**
Francis Bacon's Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion, painted around 1944, is one of the most shocking images in British art. The triptych's title refers to figures sometimes depicted at the foot of the cross, though Bacon later related them to the Eumenides, the vengeful furies of Greek myth. The three distorted, screaming figures writhe against a flat orange background. The work was first exhibited in April 1945, coinciding with the release of the first photographs from the Nazi concentration camps. It announced Bacon's arrival as a major painter and established the tone of existential horror that would define his career.

- The title of this triptych refers to figures sometimes depicted at the foot of the cross in religious paintings. Bacon later related them to *The Eumenides*, vengeful furies of Greek myth. Typically, he drew on various sources, including photography. The war in Europe ended on 8 May 1945 and the work's exhibition in April 1945 coincided with the release of the first photographs and film footage of the Nazi concentration camps. Richard Dimbleby described Belsen in a radio broadcast on 19 April 1945 breaking down several times during the report. The BBC could not believe the scenes and refused to play the report until Dimbleby threatened to resign. Bacon was not a religious person but viewed the Crucifixion as a 'magnificent armature' from which to convey 'all types of feelings and emotions'. Bacon saw a connection between slaughterhouses and the Crucifixion and believed that animals in slaughterhouses suspect their fate. For some, Bacon's triptych reflected the pessimistic world ushered in by the Holocaust and the advent of nuclear weapons. (based on Tate display caption)

**Bio:Bacon**

- Francis Bacon (1909–1992) was an Irish-born British figurative painter known for his bold, grotesque, emotionally charged and raw imagery. His painterly abstracted figures are typically isolated in glass or steel geometrical cages, set against flat, nondescript backgrounds. Bacon **took up painting in his early 20s** but worked sporadically and uncertainly until his **mid-30s**. He drifted as a highly complex bon vivant, homosexual, gambler and interior decorator and designer of furniture, rugs and bathroom tiles. He later admitted that his artistic career was delayed because he spent too long looking for subject matter that could sustain his interest.
- His **breakthrough** came with the 1944 triptych *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion*, which in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, **sealed his reputation** as a uniquely **bleak chronicler** of the human condition. Remarking on the cultural significance of Three Studies, the art critic John Russell observed that "**there was painting in England before the Three Studies, and painting after them**, and no one...can confuse the two."
- Painted in oil and pastel on **fibre board** and **completed in two weeks**. It was painted in his ground floor flat in South Kensington which had previously been John Everett Millais's billiard room. The orange hue displays inconsistently across the canvasses, due in part to the low level of oil in the paint, which resulted in varying rates of absorption into the board. The pallid flesh tones of the figures were achieved by overlaying grey and white brushstrokes, while the figures' props were coloured using a variety of yellow, green, white, and purple tones.
- The figure on the left is most human-like and could be a mourner. The central figure has a mouth in is neck and is blindfolded like the figure in **Matthias Grünewald's *Mocking of Christ***. The figure on the right is on a patch of grass and may be screaming or yawning. Inspection under infra-red shows the panels were **heavily reworked** and the central figure was surrounded by flower-like objects and there was a distant figure. Marks around the edge of the canvas suggest the composition was **carefully calculated**.
- He started painting images based on the Crucifixion in 1933 but his early work was 'beautiful, but lifeless'. He regarded his **painting career as starting with this painting** and tried to **destroy all previous works** and he insisted no retrospective should include any paintings pre-dating 1944.
- When asked by critic Jean Clair why his Crucifixion scenes tended to comprise mainly "**slaughter, butchery, mutilated meat and flesh**", Bacon replied, "that's all the Crucifixion was, isn't it? ... Actually, you can't think of anything more barbaric than the Crucifixion, and that particular way of killing somebody."

- Bacon in person was highly engaging and **charismatic, articulate, well-read** and **unapologetically gay**. He was a **prolific artist**, but nonetheless spent many of the evenings of his middle age eating, drinking and gambling in London's Soho with

like-minded **friends such as Lucian Freud**.

- After his lover, **George Dyer's suicide** on 24 October 1971 he largely distanced himself from this circle, and while his social life was still active and his passion for gambling and drinking continued, he settled into a platonic and somewhat fatherly relationship with his eventual heir, John Edwards.
- Bacon was equally reviled and acclaimed during his lifetime. Art critic Robert Hughes described him as "the most implacable, lyric artist in late 20th-century England, perhaps in all the world" and along with Willem de Kooning as "**the most important painter of the disquieting human figure** in the 50's of the 20th century." Francis Bacon was the subject of two Tate retrospectives and a major showing in **1971 at the Grand Palais**. Since his death his reputation and market value have **grown steadily**, and his work is amongst the most acclaimed, expensive and sought-after. In the late 1990s a number of major works, previously assumed destroyed, including early 1950s popes and 1960s portraits, re-emerged to set record prices at auction.

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Sir Eduardo Paolozzi (1924-2005), *Forms on a Bow,* 1949, bronze on oakwood base, 55.5 x 64.8 x 26.7 cm

Sir Eduardo Paolozzi (1924-2005), *Forms on a Bow,* 1949, bronze on oakwood base, 55.5 x 64.8 x 26.7 cm

**Summary**
Eduardo Paolozzi lived in Paris between 1947 and 1950, where he was greatly influenced by the early surrealist sculptures of Alberto Giacometti. Forms on a Bow from 1949 explores Giacometti's use of open or transparent structures and forms that evoke memories of organic and mechanical objects. Sharp protrusions are strung between the two ends of a bow-like form. Created at the beginning of the Cold War, when nuclear annihilation raised the spectre of mankind returning to the Stone Age, the bow is one of humanity's first weapons made to kill more effectively at a distance, connecting ancient warfare to the development of the atomic bomb.

- It was the **beginning of the Cold War** when **nuclear annihilation** raised the spectre of mankind returning to the **Stone Age and the bow and arrow**, one of the **first weapons** made to **kill** more effectively at a **distance** which led eventually to the development of the atomic bomb.
- 'Paolozzi **lived in Paris** between **1947 and 1950**. He was **greatly influenced** in this period by the early surrealist sculptures of the Paris-based Swiss sculptor, **Alberto Giacometti**. Here Paolozzi has explored Giacometti's use of open or transparent structures, and of forms that evoke memories of organic and mechanical objects. The sharp protrusions of some of the elements strung between the two ends of the 'bow' suggest an interest in brutal instincts. Paolozzi made a preparatory sketch for the work, which is also in Tate's collection.' (Tate display caption)
- The **sadistic spearing of the flaccid forms** along the string of the bow suggest the work of the **Surrealists**. He returned from Paris in 1949 with his wife Freda and started

teaching part-time at the Central School of Arts and Crafts.

**Bio:Paolozzi**

- **Eduardo Paolozzi** (1924-2005) was a **Scottish sculptor** and artist and one of the **pioneers of pop art**. He started collecting **images from popular American publications and** pasting them into scrapbooks when he was **a child** and continued to do so as an adult. During 1946 and 1947, his last year at the **Slade School of Art**, he began using such images in a series of **collages** which, according to Paolozzi, were heavily **indebted to Pablo Picasso's** (1881-1973) **synthetic Cubism** of c.1912-18. In 1947, while still an undergraduate, the Mayor Gallery, London, held Paolozzi's first **one-man exhibition**. Its success allowed him to leave the Slade and **live in Paris**. It was there, possibly in his flat on the Ile St Louis, that *Dr Pepper*, was made.
- Paolozzi was born in Leith in **north Edinburgh** and was the eldest son of **Italian immigrants**. Paolozzi was **interned at the start of the** war but was released when his father, grandfather and uncle were drowned when a ship taking them to Canada was sunk by a German U-boat. He **studied in Edinburgh**, **St Martin's School** and the **Slade** (1944-47). After the war he worked in Paris (1947-49) and **knew Alberto Giacometti, Jean Arp, Constantin Brâncuși, Georges Braque and Fernand Léger**.
- Paolozzi's *I was a Rich Man's Plaything* (1947) is considered the first standard bearer of Pop Art and first to display the word "pop". Paolozzi showed the collage in 1952 as part of his ground-breaking *Bunk!* series presentation at the initial **Independent Group** meeting in London. Paolozzi **never shows his early 1946-48 work** otherwise he would be seen as the creator of Pop Art.

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Peter Blake (b. 1932), *Portrait of David Hockney in a Hollywood Spanish Interior,* 1965, 182.8 x 152.8 x 2.1 cm

Peter Blake (b. 1932), *Portrait of David Hockney in a Hollywood Spanish Interior,* 1965, 182.8 x 152.8 x 2.1 cm

**Summary**

Peter Blake's Portrait of David Hockney in a Hollywood Spanish Interior from 1965 is based on a photograph by Michael Cooper showing Hockney in front of another Cooper photograph. The setting suggests a Hollywood party, synonymous with glamour and artificiality. Blake adds party balloons and glitter, seemingly lightening the homoerotic overtones of the original image. At the time, both Blake and Hockney were leading figures in British Pop Art, though their approaches differed considerably. Blake was fascinated by popular culture, collecting and collaging everyday imagery. Cooper is best known for his photographs of the Rolling Stones and his collaboration with Blake on album artwork.

- ‘This is based on a photo by Michael Cooper (a prominent 1960s photographer), showing David Hockney standing in front of another Cooper photo called Spanish Interior. This is presumably the source of Blake’s title; the setting is maybe a Hollywood party, synonymous with glamour and artificiality. The figure in tight shorts gives Cooper’s original image homoerotic overtones, but Blake’s addition of party balloons and glitter seems to lighten the mood. Michael Cooper is best known for his photos of the Rolling Stones. He also collaborated with Blake on the cover for the Beatles’ album Sgt Pepper’s Lonely Hearts Club Band. ‘ (Tate display caption)
- When Blake painted this portrait of his long-time friend, artist David Hockney (born 1937), Hockney was already a famous figure. Blake’s painting of Hockney is based on a collage of different elements. The main image of Hockney, sporting his trademark blond hair and big spectacles, is painted from a photograph taken by prominent 1960s photographer Michael Cooper. Hockney is posed in front of another Cooper

photograph depicting a young man clad in short shorts, lingering in a stairway. The background provides the title 'Spanish Interior' but it is probably Los Angeles. Blake had first travelled to Los Angeles in 1963.

- **Peter Blake** (b. 1932) was born in Dartford, Kent and educated at Gravesend Technical College and the Royal College of Art. In the late 1950s he became known as one of the leading British Pop artists and exhibited alongside David Hockney and R. B. Kitaj. He often refers to the work of other artists in his work and is best known for designing the sleeve for Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band with his wife Jann Haworth, the American-born artist whom he married in 1963 and divorced in 1979. In 1969, Blake left London to live near Bath. His work changed direction to feature scenes based on English folklore and characters from Shakespeare. In the early 1970s, he made a set of watercolour paintings to illustrate Lewis Carroll's *Through the Looking-Glass*. In 1979 he returned to London and working with popular culture. Blake became a Royal Academician in 1981, and a CBE in 1983: in 2002 he was knighted as a Knight Bachelor at Buckingham Palace for his services to art. Retrospectives of Blake's work were held at the Tate in 1983 and Tate Liverpool in 2008. Blake was married to the American-born artist Jann Haworth from 1963 to 1979, and they had two daughters together, Liberty and Daisy. In 1980, Blake met fellow artist Chrissy Wilson, they married in 1987, and have a daughter, Rose. Blake has lived in Chiswick, London, since 1967.

**David Hockney** (b. 1937)

- Born in **Bradford**, went to Bradford Grammar School and Bradford College of Art. He was **born with synaesthesia** and sees colours in response to music. At the **Royal College of Art** he met R. B. Kitaj (pronounced ki-TIE).
- **1961 *Young Contemporaries* exhibition** announcing the arrival of **British Pop art**. His early work shows expressionist elements similar to some Francis Bacon. He exhibited alongside Peter Blake (born 1932), Patrick Caulfield and Allen Jones. He met Ossie Clarke and Andy Warhol.
- He featured in **Ken Russell's *Pop Goes the Weasel* with Pauline Boty** (pronounced 'boat-ee')
- Hockney had his **first one-man show** when he was **26 in 1963**, and by 1970 (or 1971) the Whitechapel Gallery in London had organized the first of several major retrospectives.
- He moved to **Los Angeles in 1964 to 1978**, **London 1968-73** and then **Paris 1973-75**. He produced 1967 paintings *A Bigger Splash* and *A Lawn Being Sprinkled*. **Los Angeles again in 1978** rented then bought the canyon house and extended it. He also bought a beach house in Malibu. He moved between New York, London and Paris before **settling in California in 1982**.
- He was openly gay and painted many celebratory works. It **1964 he met the model Peter Schlesinger** and was romantically involved. In **California** he switched from

**oils to acrylic** using smooth, flat and brilliant colours.

- He made prints, took photographs and **stage design work for Glyndebourne, La Scala and the Metropolitan Opera House** in New York.
- From 1968 he painted portraits of friends just under life size. David Hockney, *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy*, 1970–71, Tate
- In the early 1980s he produced a series of photo collages which he called 'joiners'. First using Polaroid and then 35mm. An early work was a portrait of his mother. As he took photographs from different angles the resulting work is related to Cubism. He aim was to discuss the way human vision works.
- In 1976 he created a portfolio of 20 etchings based on themes in a poem by Wallace Stephens. In 1985 he designed the cover page for *Vogue*.
- In 1985 he used a computer program that enabled him to sketch directly on the screen.
- In the 1990s he returned to Yorkshire every three months to see his mother. Who died in 1999. From 1997 he started to capture the local surroundings, some from memory. By 2005 he was painting *en plein air*. He created large paintings from multiple smaller canvases, 9 or 15 placed together.
- In June 2007, Hockney's largest painting, *Bigger Trees Near Water*, which measures 15 feet by 40 feet, was hung in the Royal Academy's largest gallery in its annual Summer Exhibition. It uses 50 canvases painted over five winter months.
- In October 2006, the National Portrait Gallery in London organized one of the largest ever displays of Hockney's portraiture work, including 150 paintings, drawings, prints, sketchbooks, and photocollages from over five decades.
- Since 2009 he has painted hundreds of portraits of friends using iPad and iPhone *Brushes*.
- In 2011 he visited Yosemite to paint on his iPad.
- From 21 January 2012 to 9 April 2012, the Royal Academy presented *A Bigger Picture*, which included more than 150 works, many of which take entire walls in the gallery's brightly lit rooms. The exhibition was dedicated to landscapes, especially trees and tree tunnels. The exhibition attracted more than half a million visitors, making it one of the Academy's most successful shows ever.

- Notes from a talk by Ray Warburton:
    - *Tea Painting in an Illusionistic Style*, 1961, Hockney painted the series three years before Warhol's Brillo box (first exhibited 1964), but Hockney regarded the style as 'too barren'.
    - Walt Whitman was gay and to hide it he used code which Hockney also uses although Hockney never hide his gayness. For example, substituting initial letters for their place in the alphabet, Cliff Richards becomes 318.
    - Hockney decided to become versatile after seeing Picasso in 1960.
    - He was always a figurative artist which troubled him.
    - *California Art Collectors*, 1964 shows Hockney poking fun at the

pretentiousness of American art collectors.

- *Picture of a Hollywood Swimming Pool*, 1964, in America he switched from oil to acrylic.
- *Beverly Hills Housewife*, 1966
- *Art Collectors (Fred and Marcia Weisman)*, 1968, the woman's expression mimics the head on the totem pole. They disliked the painting.
- *Christopher Isherwood and Don Bachardy*, 1968
- Peter Schlesinger was his lover but they split up.
- *Still Life on a Glass Table*, 1971, shows objects owned by Schlesinger. Many critics described it as 'his masterpiece'.
- Many pool paintings are empty of people and things suggesting an inner loneliness even though he was a very sociable person.
- *Bigger Trees near Warter*, 1971
- *My Mother*, 1982
- *Homage to Picasso*, 1973 and *Artist and Model*, 1973, were painted when Picasso died.
- *Pool and Steps*, 1971 is Ray's favourite as it is so deep, desolate and 'heart breaking'.
- Hockney was a friend of Kitaj (pronounced 'Kit-eye') and he gave Hockney the advice 'just be yourself'.

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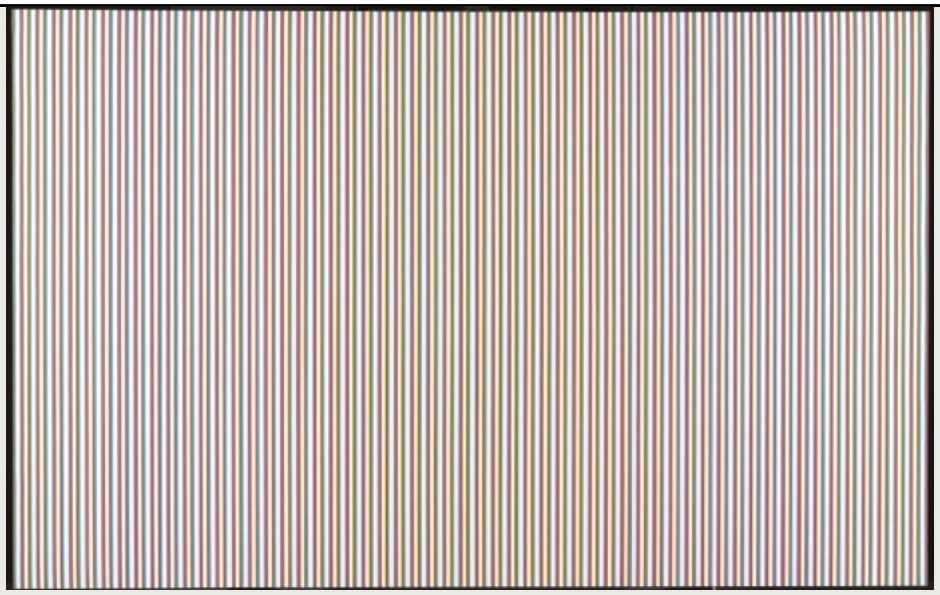
- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/blake-portrait-of-david-hockney-in-a-hollywood-spanish-interior-t07900



Bridget Riley (b. 1931), *Late Morning,* 1967–68, 226.1 x 359.4 cm

Bridget Riley (b. 1931), *Late Morning,* 1967–68, 226.1 x 359.4 cm

**Summary**
Bridget Riley is one of the leading figures of Op Art, a movement that explores the perceptual effects of pattern and colour. In 1967 she began using pure colour in her paintings, adopting a vertical stripe format as a neutral structure in which rhythmic chromatic variations bring the canvas alive. Late Morning of 1967-68 explores the subtle effects of warm and cold tones on white, creating an impression of pale yellow light radiating from the centre. Riley insists that the only way to enter her paintings is by looking, with no theoretical framework required. The large canvas, over three and a half metres wide, demonstrates her command of optical sensation.

- 'In 1967 Riley began to use pure colour in her paintings. She adopted a vertical stripe format to act as a neutral structure in which the rhythms of chromatic variation would bring the painting alive. Choosing careful sequences of colours, Riley explores the subtle effects of each upon the next. In *Late Morning* she was particularly interested in the effects of the warm and cold tones on white. This interaction creates an impression of pale yellow light radiating from the centre of the canvas.' (Tate display caption)
- She said, '**the only way anyone can enter my painting is by looking; there's no theory in them … The very habit-ridden public, and I'm not blaming them, want something that looks like a painting**.'
- **Figure painter**. As a student she was such a good figure painter that she won a place at Goldsmiths College, but she rejected '**the direct depiction of people, which I had loved and enjoyed … to find out about this new world**'.

- **Bridget Louise Riley** (born 24 April 1931 in **Norwood**, London) is an English painter

who is one of the **foremost exponents of Op art**. She spent her early years in Cornwall, and studied in London at **Goldsmiths College** and the **Royal College of Art**. She first drew critical attention with the black-and-white paintings she made from 1961, and her international breakthrough came four years later in *The Responsive Eye* at MoMA, New York, which celebrated the Op art movement.

- In 1966 Riley began her explorations of colour and form through stripes or bands across the canvas, and more recently shorter units cut by vertical, diagonal or curved lines. Her reputation was further enhanced at the **1968 Venice Biennale when she became the first woman – and the first contemporary British painter – to win the International Prize for painting**.
- Although Riley's work is consistently abstract, it is founded in natural experience. As she has written: '**The eye should feel caressed and soothed, experience frictions and ruptures, glide and drift**.'
- She currently lives and works in London, Cornwall and the Vaucluse in France.

**References**


- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/riley-late-morning-t01032

Allen Jones (b. 1937), *Chair,* 1969, 77.5 x 57.1 x 99.1 cm

Allen Jones (b. 1937), *Chair,* 1969, 77.5 x 57.1 x 99.1 cm, cast number 6

**Summary**

Allen Jones's Chair from 1969 is one of three provocative furniture sculptures, alongside Handstand and Table, that depict women in fetish clothing as functional objects. They caused intense controversy when first exhibited and remain deeply divisive. Jones produced them at the time the Women's Liberation Movement was becoming prominent and women artists were critiquing the male gaze. Jones described the sculptures in 2014 as trapped in their time, hoping people would see them as playful. The work raises enduring questions about objectification, the boundaries of art, and the relationship between desire, power and the human body in contemporary sculpture.

- 'Jones's provocative Chair is one of three 'furniture' works (alongside Handstand and Table) that show women wearing fetish clothing portrayed as objects. They caused controversy when they were first exhibited and have lost none of their power to provoke anger. Jones produced them at the time the Women's Liberation Movement became prominent and women artists critiqued the 'male gaze' (as in work by Margaret Harrison on display nearby). Jones said in 2014 ' The sculptures are trapped in their time but hopefully people are robust enough to see them as playful, and regard them as another way you can look at humanity.'' (Tate display caption)
- The **breakthrough, and the controversy came in 1969** when he produced three female figures, each slightly larger than life size, called **'Hatstand', 'Table' and 'Chair'**. They were cast in fibreglass in editions of 6 by Gems Wax Models Ltd of Notting Hill, London, a firm of commercial sculptors who made (and make) **shop window mannequins** and sculptures for waxworks. Stylistically the figures are similar to those in Jones's paintings of c.1967–8. The ICA exhibition of his work **resulted in stink bombs, smoke bombs**

being thrown and when 'Chair' was shown at the Tate in 1986 **paint was poured over it**. In 1970, he received a phone call from Stanley Kubrick who was making *A Clockwork Orange* and he wanted Jones to design the furniture. Jones refused so Kubrick simply copied Jones's work.

- Jones wrote, "The **erotic impulse** transcends cerebral barriers and demands a **direct emotional response**. Confronted with an abstract statement people readily defer to an expert; but confronted with an erotic statement **everyone is an expert**. It seems to me a **democratic idea** that **art should be accessible to everyone** on some level, and eroticism in one such level. Jones considers that the three sculptures 'Hatstand', 'Table' and 'Chair' are the most radical statements that he has made." Jones, in interviews, claims to be mystified at what all the fuss is about. This implies he has no intention to objectify women or suggest they should really be used as chairs. He says: "**Women are not the object, they are the subject. Sculpture is the object.**" He has created sculptural objects to comment on women's place in society. He has also said, '**I am a feminist**' and '**They are not so much about representing woman but the experience of woman**'. In the context of his other work it is an ironic comment on the way women are treated in our society.

- This was produced at the same time as **second wave feminism**. First wave was female suffrage and second wave a radical call for fundamental social and cultural change so that women would be treated as **equal to men in all circumstances**. This work has always been controversial. At one level it is clearly presenting a **women as a sex object**. However, the **objectification is so blatant** that **Jones could be criticising a society** that treats women in this way.
- "Did second-wave feminists shoot the messenger? Or did he mangle the message? The debate is still open." (Zoe Williams, *The Guardian*)
- Jones wrote, "In a way the feminist critique is a total red herring. It's not what the work is about."
- In 1979, the art historian Lisa Tickner wrote, "The exploitation of already exploitative material cannot be seen as politically neutral."
- More recently, Jones has said, "I think of myself a feminist" and argued that his early work was "commenting on exactly the same situation that was the source of the feminist movement."

- **Allen Jones** (b. 1937) was born in Southampton and was one of the **original pop artists**. He is now a **Senior Academician**. In an interview in 2014 he said "Abstract Expressionism had swept everything away. You couldn't go back to representing the figure through some moribund visual language". He never wanted to show the struggle in producing the work the way that Pollock and de Kooning did and he had to find a new way of representing the human figure.
- In 1959, he enrolled at the Royal Academy and with his colleagues Hockney, Kitaj

and Peter Phillips he set out to find a way to combine mass culture and high art. His independence resulted in him being **expelled after one year**. He was excited by the ideas of Futurism, the speed and the movement. In 1964-65 he lived in New York and returned a fully-fledged Pop Artist.

- "Allen Jones has been **demonised**. In 1969 he made a group of **three sculptures of scantily-clad female figures**. They were **slightly larger than life and** arranged in positions that enabled them (with the addition of a glass top or padded seat) to be **turned into a table, a chair and a hat stand**. These super-mannequins were highly modelled, wigged and leather-booted, and unavoidably realistic. When first exhibited in 1970 they **provoked outrage** among the feminist community. Jones's **1978** retrospective of graphic art at the ICA **caused a near riot** even though the sculptures weren't shown. In **1986**, when the chair went on display, it had **acid thrown over it** by an incensed extremist.
- The price of being controversial is usually increased fame, but for Jones it has resulted in his **work being ostracised** in this country. His **last museum show** here was a selection of prints at the Barbican in **1995**. Before that, the most recent survey of his work took place at the Serpentine Gallery in 1979, which means that **he hasn't had a proper retrospective** in Britain for 35 years. This is **scarcely believable**: Jones is a hugely popular and successful figure in Europe (particularly in Germany), and is featured in museums all over the world. He has worked extensively in America and China, and is widely celebrated for the part he played in the origins of Pop Art in the 1960s." (Andrew Lambirth, *The Spectator*, 1 Nov 2014)

**References**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Linder (b. 1954), *Untitled*, 1976, 13.6 x 21 cm

Linder (b. 1954), *Untitled*, 1976, 13.6 x 21 cm

**Summary**
Linder's Untitled photomontage from 1976 is one of a group created between 1976 and 1978 from women's fashion and men's magazines. She collages images of cropped women's bodies and household objects into domestic interiors to examine the stereotyped representation of women in consumer culture. Linder described working with two separate piles of magazines, wanting to mate the domestic kitchens with pornography to see what strange breed emerged. She was a prominent figure in the Manchester punk scene, co-founding the punk fanzine The Secret Public and performing as frontwoman of Ludus. Her feminist photomontages anticipated much later critiques of media representation.

- Linder collages pictures of cropped women's bodies and household objects into domestic interiors as a way to examine the stereotyped media representation of women in consumer culture. She said, '**I had two separate piles. One you might call women's magazines, fashion, romance, then a pile of men's mags: cars, DIY, pornography, which again was women, but another side. I wanted to mate the G-Plan kitchens with the pornography, see what strange breed came out**.' Linder was well-known on the Manchester punk scene, co-founding punk fanzine *The Secret Public* with Jon Savage (whose work is on display nearby).
- Linder produced a series of collages between 1976 and 1978 using images from women's fashion magazines. Linder has subverted the standard fashion magazine pose of the twisted body that emphasizes the hips and breasts by replacing her arm with a picture of an electric carpet sweeper aimed at a carpet on the ceiling. The cleaner becomes a surrogate head with large eyes and mouth. An Olympus camera replaces

the dressing table mirror and the eyes look flirtatiously towards it. A portable transistor radio appears to be coming out of the double bed.

**Bio:Linder**

- Born **Linda Mulvey** in Liverpool, Linder grew up in Manchester where she studied Graphic Design at the Polytechnic (1974-7). Living with Howard Devoto, one of the founding members of the Manchester punk band, Buzzcocks, Linder's activities of the mid 1970s are intimately bound up with the activities of Buzzcocks and the spirit of punk which itself drew on the anti-establishment politics of Dada. She began making montages with photographic material in December 1976. Displaced mouths and eyes are a particular feature of Linder's collages of this period, which often combined images of naked women from pornographic magazines with elements from domestic interiors and the world of fashion.
- Photomontage is an artform exploited by the Dada group. In Berlin, the Dada artists, George Grosz (1893-1959), John Heartfield (1891-1968) and **Hannah Höch** (1889-1978) created collages using printed images to attack Fascism and the insanity of warfare. **Höch, a lone female figure in the Berlin Dada group**, created images presenting women whole, in parts, nude, in hybrids with masks and other ethnographic sculptures, challenging media presentation of stereotypes

**References**


- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/linder-untitled-t12500

Gillian Wearing (b. 1963), *Self Portrait as My Sister Jane Wearing*, 2003, 130.7 x 105.2 cm

Gillian Wearing (b. 1963), *Self Portrait as My Sister Jane Wearing*, 2003, 130.7 x 105.2 cm

**Summary**
Gillian Wearing's Self Portrait as My Sister Jane Wearing from 2003 explores the boundaries between public and private identity. For her Album series, Wearing reconstructed old family snapshots using silicone masks fabricated with the help of experts from Madame Tussauds. By putting a version of her sister's face over her own, she metaphorically seizes another person's identity. Wearing wears the same dress her sister wore in the 1980s, and the only visible parts of the real Wearing are her eyes and teeth. The work explores how identities are self-fashioned and documented, blurring the line between reality and fiction in portraiture.

- 'Wearing's photographs explore how public and private identities of ordinary people are self-fashioned and documented. In her portraits and self-portraits she blurs the line between reality and fiction. For her series Album 2003, Wearing reconstructed **old family snapshots using silicone masks** fabricated with the help of experts from **Madame Tussauds**. By putting a version of someone else's face on hers she is metaphorically **'seizing' their identity**. Here Wearing wears a dress her sister wore in the 1980s. The only bits of Wearing that can be seen are her eyes and teeth.' (Tate online caption)
- In 2003-2006, Gillian Wearing recreated **photographs of her relatives** that were found in her family album. She created masks out of silicone of **her mother, her father, her sister, her uncle**, and a mask of herself with help from experts that were trained at Madam Tussauds in London. They start the mask in clay from a two-dimensional image into a three-dimensional object. In an article for *The Guardian* she explains that the **process takes four months per mask**, and how at first 'some people tried to direct me

to use prosthetics, but I was adamant it had to be a mask, something that transforms me entirely, something that was not grotesque but real, like a trompe l'oeil.' These **expensive silicone masks deteriorate** easily after use, turning the photo shoot into a **performative act** where the action is unrepeatable. This process becomes paradoxical because of the difficulties that are encountered while recreating these casual snapshots. This work references into the canonical work in the history of photography of **Cindy Sherman**, though Wearing has shifted the focus in to exploring her own persona and its underlying relationships as social construct. The works in Album then do not necessarily put the family members as the main focus; rather they capture Wearing's engagement with the family members.

- **Gillian Wearing** (b. 1963) was born in Birmingham and moved to Chelsea to study at the Chelsea College of Art. She is known for documenting everyday life through photography and video and for her concern with personal identity, both personal and private. She is an English conceptual artist, one of the Young British Artists, and winner of the Turner Prize, in 1997. In 2007 Wearing was elected a Royal Academician. She lives and works in London with her partner, the British artist, Michael Landy (b. 1963). He is best known for the performance piece installation *Break Down* (2001), in which he destroyed all his possessions. In 2008 he was elected an Academician.

**References**

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/wearing-self-portrait-as-my-sister-jane-wearing-p81099


Richard Hamilton (1922-2011), *Just what was it that makes today's homes so different?* 2004, digital print on paper, 26 x 25 cm

Richard Hamilton (1922-2011), *Just what was it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* 1956, 26 × 24.8 cm, collage
The original is Richard Hamilton (1922-2011), *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* 1956, 26 × 24.8 cm, collage, Kunsthalle Tübingen, Germany

**Summary**
Richard Hamilton is often regarded as the father of British Pop Art. His 2004 work is an updated version of his famous 1956 collage, one of the first works to be called Pop Art. The original assembled images from American magazines to create an ironic commentary on post-war consumer culture. Hamilton revisited and remade the image several times over nearly fifty years, each version reflecting on changes in technology, media and consumer society. The 2004 version uses digital techniques to update the imagery while maintaining the original's witty critique of domesticity, advertising and the aspirational lifestyle promoted by mass media.

- As its title indicates, this print is an upgraded version of an earlier image, already itself a remake. In 1992 Hamilton created an edition of colour facsimiles of the 1956 collage, printed by laserjet, altering the title to reflect on a retrospective view of the past. *Just what was it that made yesterday's homes so different, so appealing?* Having already scanned the 1956 collage, Hamilton then produced the facsimile *Just what was it that made yesterday's homes so different, so appealing?* in an edition of twenty-five plus three artist's proofs of which Tate's copy is the third.

- **Richard Hamilton** was a member of the Independent Group (IG) at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA). He thought there should be no split between high and low art and called for the democratisation of taste. Hamilton defined Pop Art with *Just what is*

*it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* a collage 10.25 in (260 mm) × 9.75 in (248 mm), that is now in the collection of the Kunsthalle Tübingen, Germany. It was the first work of pop art to achieve iconic status. Another take on genre painting. John McHale has said his father created this piece but Hamilton has said 'absurd'.

- The painting shows a basement living room stuffed with an amusing range of 'modern' features including:
    - A ceiling that shows a view of Earth from space,
    - Hoover's Constellation, a futuristic floating vacuum cleaner with the slogan "ordinary cleaners reach only this far",
    - a cinema showing 'The Jazz Singer'. It was the first film with synchronised dialogue and had been remade in 1952 but this is the original Warner Bros. film that used the Vitaphone sound-on-disk system.
    - a Ford Motor company logo on a lampshade,
    - 'Young Romance' magazine,
    - a portrait some say is John Ruskin,
    - A black and white television showing a woman on the phone,
    - A 'Swiss cheese plant' (Monstera deliciosa), a popular house plant,
    - A semi-naked man and woman. The man is a Charles Atlas type but is holding a large phallic lollipop labelled "Tootsie Pop". The woman has nipple pasties (covers) and wears what could be a lampshade. The modern Adam and Eve become narcissistic body models.
    - a tin of processed meat,
    - what appears to be an action painting,
    - a modern tape recorder,
    - There is a modern wood floor and G-Plan furniture.
- The collage incorporates many of the features and symbols seen in later Pop Art and Hamilton places the word 'Pop' in the centre of the picture as an ironic reference to a frequent criticism of such art, it is just popular, that is 'low' art, not real 'high' art.

**Notes**

- Hamilton was born in London. He was educated at the Royal Academy Schools from 1938 to 1940, then studied engineering draughtsmanship at a Government Training Centre in 1940, then worked as a 'jig and tool' designer. He returned in 1946 to the Royal Academy Schools, from which he was expelled for 'not profiting from the instruction being given in the painting school', then attended the Slade School of Art from 1948 to 1951.

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- This low resolution image of *Just What Is It that Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?* Is used as it is necessary for an understanding of the lecture to be

able to see the artwork. It is believed that this is fair use and does not infringe copyright.

http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hamilton-just-what-was-it-that-made-yesterdays-homes-so-different-so-appealing-upgrade-p20271

Chris Ofili (b. 1968), *No Woman, No Cry*, 1998, oil paint, acrylic paint, graphite, polyester resin, printed paper, glitter, map pins and elephant dung on canvas, 243.8 x 182.8 x 5.1 cm

Chris Ofili (b. 1968), *No Woman, No Cry,* 1998, oil paint, acrylic paint, graphite, polyester resin, printed paper, glitter, map pins and elephant dung on canvas, 243.8 x 182.8 x 5.1 cm

**Summary**
Chris Ofili's No Woman, No Cry from 1998 is a tribute to Stephen Lawrence, the London teenager murdered in a racially motivated attack in 1993. A public inquiry concluded that the Metropolitan Police was institutionally racist. In each of the tears shed by the woman in the painting is a collaged image of Stephen Lawrence's face, while his name is just discernible beneath the layers of paint. The work uses Ofili's characteristic techniques including elephant dung and glitter, combining African cultural references with deeply personal grief. The artist intended the painting to be both a specific memorial and a universal portrayal of melancholy.

- '*No Woman No Cry* is a tribute to the London teenager Stephen Lawrence who was murdered in a racially motivated attack in 1993. A public inquiry into the murder investigation concluded that the Metropolitan police force was institutionally racist. In each of the tears shed by the woman in the painting is a collaged image of Stephen Lawrence's face, while the words 'R.I.P. Stephen Lawrence' are just discernible beneath the layers of paint. As well as this specific reference, the artist intended the painting to be read as a universal portrayal of melancholy and grief.' (Tate online caption)

**References**

- http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/ofili-no-woman-no-cry-t07502

John Bettes, *A Man in a Black Cap*, 1545

Chris Ofili, *No Woman, No Cry*, 1998

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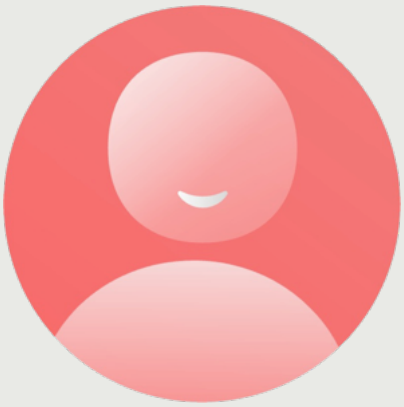

- That brings me to the end of this long talk on the history of British art over three hundred years from 1545 to around 2000. There is a lot more in my notes and my individual talks on the artists and art movements of the period which I hope you will enjoy.

**Summary**

This closing slide concludes the guided tour of Tate Britain, covering over three hundred years of British art from 1545 to the early 2000s. The presentation has traced the story from Tudor portraiture through the golden age of Reynolds and Gainsborough, the revolutionary Pre-Raphaelites, the innovations of Turner and Constable, the avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century, through to contemporary art by Ofili, Wearing and Hamilton. The speaker notes that there is much more to explore in individual talks on specific artists and art movements of the period.

- Goodbye for now and I hope you will come back soon.

# A Free Course on the History of Western Art

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