



- Fifty years ago the art historian **Linda Nochlin** published an essay called '**Why Are There No Great Women Artists?**' [1]. Her argument was that potential artists cannot be separated from their social situation and society's everyday assumptions. The very **concept of the artist genius is or was exclusively male**, for example the stories we told about children who were art prodigies and who could draw at an early age were all male, such as **Turner, Millais and Picasso**.
- She points out that highlighting exceptions such as Angelica Kauffman and Artemisia Gentileschi only reinforces the negative implications of the question she raises because they draw attention to how unusual these cases were. Bear that in mind when we look at Angelica Kauffman's life. She was an exceptional case because she made it through all the social assumptions that prevented women from succeeding or even trying. She was an eighteenth century artistic genius, one of the founders of the Royal Academy and became the leading society artist and personality. In fact, one London newspaper reported that "**The world is Angelicamad**", that is how famous she was. So how did this come about...

CHRONOLOGY

Based on Baumgärtel, Bettina: *Angelica Kauffman – Chronology*,
in: Angelika Kauffmann Research Project – online,
<https://www.angelika-kauffmann.de/en/chronology/> [accessed
11/11/2021]

- 30/10/1741 born Maria Anna Angelika Catharina Kauffmann in Chur, Switzerland to Johann Joseph Kauffmann and Cleophea Lutz
- 1742 family moves to Morbegno (a small Swiss town near Lake Como)
- **1745 (aged 4), she shows artistic talent**, father gives her drawing lessons and her mother music lessons, reading and writing
- **1750 (aged 9), draws her first portrait**
- 1752 her half-brother by her father's first marriage comes to live with the family, the family move to Como in Lombardy
- 1753 (aged 12), ***Self-portrait as a Singer with Sheet Music***
- 1754-57 first trip to Italy, in Milan she paints a Duchess, Archbishop and a diplomat, copies Old Masters
- 1757 (15/16) her **mother dies when she is 15** and she decides to pursue painting not singing. She went with her father to Schwarzenberg, Austria where her father worked for the local bishop and they both painted frescos in the local Holy Trinity church.
- 1758-60 (17-19) she receives many portrait commissions and **becomes the main breadwinner**
- 1758-62 second trip to Italy - Naples, Rome, Milan, Parma, Modena, Bologna copying Old Masters
- 1762 (21) honorary member Academy of Bologna, visits

Florence, copies Old Masters, elected member Florence's Academy (founded 1563), meets British visitors on the Grand tour. Many portraits, meets Benjamin West, first etchings such as *Susanna and the Elders*

- 1763-64 (22-23) **first visit to Rome** inspires her first large-scale history painting ***Bacchus and Ariadne***, makes illicit studies of male nudes. Travels to Naples, copies Old Masters in Gallery di Capodimonte, portraits of English and Scottish visitors including ***Portrait of David Garrick***. Returns to Rome ***Portrait of Johann Joachim Winckelmann*** secures her professional breakthrough. Courted by English artist Nathaniel Dance.
- 1765 (aged 24), **elected member of Accademia di San Luca** (Rome, founded 1577), paints ***Hope - La Peranza*** as reception piece. Portrait of David Garrick exhibited at Free Society of Artists (founded 1762) makes her well known even before she arrives in London. In July she travels to Venice and then to London with Lady Bridget Wentworth Murray wife of the British ambassador, Jospeh Smith. Stops in Paris and admire Rubens.
- 1766 (aged 25) **opens a large studio in London** first in Suffolk Street, Charing Cross, then Golden Square, Soho. Visits Joshua Reynolds in his studio, and each paints the other's portrait and they become lifelong friends. Her good network of female patrons leads to a **commission from the Queen Mother** for a portrait of her daughter ***Augusta Friederike Luise with Prince Charles George Augustus*** (Royal Collection) and from the Queen Charlotte for her ***Portrait with Prince George IV as the Genius of the Arts*** (Royal Collection)
- 1767 (aged 26), her father comes to London. In November she secretly weds '**Count**' **Frederick de Horn an impostor** in February 1768 the marriage is declared invalid.
- 1768 Exhibits at the Free Society of Artists, paints three

innovative history paintings including ***Penelope Taking Down the Bow of Ulysses*** (Saltram House). On 10th December named a **founding member of the Royal Academy** with Mary Moser, the only female Academicians for the next 200 years and about 30 others. She had many important patrons including the Queen Caroline and King Ferdinand of Naples, the Austrian Governor, the Grand Duke and Grand Duchess of Russia, and Prince Poniatowsky of Poland. Her liaisons included an engagement to Nathaniel Dance in Italy, an apparent wedding proposal from Reynolds, and a flirtation with printmaker William Ryland.

- 1769 shows ground-breaking history paintings at the opening exhibition at the Royal Academy: ***Hector Taking Leave of Andromache; Venus Showing Aeneas and Achates the Way to Carthage*** and ***Achilles Discovered by Ulysses amongst the Daughters of Lycomedes***. At the instigation of Lady Theresa Parker, the whole series is acquired for Saltram House.
- 1770 history paintings of scenes from ancient and medieval British history ***Vortigern, King of Britain, Enamoured with Rowena at the Battle of Hengist, the Saxon General*** (Saltram House), ***Eleanora Sucking the Venom out of the Wound of her Husband, King Edward I***. Her love of literature inspires her to create ***Inibaca Discovering Herself to Trenmor from James Macpherson's Ossian***, and ***Poor Maria***, one of her most widely known motifs, from Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey*. Starts working with William Wynne Ryland and numerous other engravers.
- 1771, six-month trip to Ireland where she paints the Irish gentry.
- 1772 produces etchings with her future brother-in-law Giuseppe Carlo Zucchi.
- 1773 selected to decorate St Pauls cathedral, with Reynolds, Dance, Barry and Cipriani.

- 1775 she objects to ***The Conjuror*** by Nathaniel Hone.
- 1776 her oil paintings are reproduced as '**mechanical paintings**'.
- 1777 ***Portrait of Henrietta Laura Pulteney***, c. 1777, The Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney St, Bath. Children in 17th century were treated as young adults. This changed in the 18th century partly thanks to books written by John Locke in 1698 and Rousseau in 1766.
- 1778 the price of her paintings rises.
- 1780 she completes **four ceiling paintings** *Invention, Composition, Design and Colouring*, for Somerset House, home of the Royal Academy. Ryland exhibits 1456 engravings after her paintings and her fame in England reaches a peak and she leaves.
- **1781 Leaves London** after 15 years. It is estimated she made around £14,000 during her 15 years in England, an enormous sum at the time. She agreed a marriage contract (prenup) and married the Venetian painter Antonio Zucchi, a friend of her father. Leaves London for Flanders, Innsbruck, Verona and Padua. In October she is introduced to Tsar Paul I of Russia and his wife (*Leonardo da Vinci Dying in the Arms of Francis I*, 1782) and works for leading noble families.
- 1781-96 her husband publishes a catalogue of her work, ***Memorandum of Painting***, which she continues to maintain after his death.
- 1782 her father dies and her paternal aunt. She is made an honorary member of the Venice Academy. Moves with her husband to a **palazzo in Rome** formerly occupied by Mengs and opens one of the city's most prestigious studios. In the summer and again in the summer of 1784 she visits the Queen of Naples and paints ***The Royal Family of Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina of Naples and their Children***.

- 1784 receives a commission for two history paintings from Emperor Joseph II of Austria ***Hermann Crowned by Thetis***; ***Aeneas Mourns Pallas, the Son of Evander, Killed by Turnus***,
- 1785 she gives the princess of Naples drawing lessons but declines becoming court artist. Multi-figure history paintings ***Servius Tullius and Achilles Discovered by Ulysses amongst the Daughters of Lycomedes*** (1789) for Catherine the Great; ***Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi [Reception] and Julia, Wife of Pompey, Fainting*** (Weimar, Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar) for Maria Carolina; ***Pliny the Younger and his Mother at the Eruption of Vesuvius*** and ***Virgil on his Deathbed*** for George Bowles.
- 1785 buys a villa near the papal residence to spend the summers with friends. Supports and encourages young artists who copy her work. The first in depth biography is published.
- 1786-88 **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe** comes to Rome. Kauffman becomes a close friend and paints his portrait. Her lively salon is attended by many famous guests.
- 1788 Duchess of Weimar visits her in Rome with many famous artists from her circle including **Johann Friedrich Herder** whose portrait she paints the following year.
- 1789 Her ***Self-Portrait*** for the Duke of Tuscany is hung next to that of Michelangelo. Receives commissions for Shakespeare Gallery and Bergamo's Chapel Colleoni.
- 1791 receives her first and only **commission from Pope Pius VI** to paint an altarpiece. She also completes her major ***Self-portrait at the Crossroads between the Arts of Music and Painting***, the portrait of 'Attitudes' artist Emma Hamilton, ***Lady Hamilton as Comic Muse***, and the large ***portrait of Princess Catherine Petrovna Baryatinskaya***, née Princess of Holstein-Beck, with her family.

- 1792 she **meets Elisabeth Vigée Le Brun** in exile during the French Revolution. Kauffman's salon is considered a "**temple of female fame**". In England her fame lived on and she continued to sell engravings of her work **thanks to William Ryland**.
- 1795, 26 December **her husband dies** and her cousin comes to provide support.
- 1798 French troops occupy Rome. Her studio avoids looting but her finances suffer from devaluation.
- c. 1801 her last **Self-Portrait**.
- 1802 health trip to Lake Como stopping in many cities. She gives **Coronation of the Virgin** as an altarpiece to a church.
- 1803 meets and befriends Ida Brun. **Draws up a new will, burns letters and promissory notes** and makes provision for a foundation for the poor.
- 1805 last visit and commission from Crown prince Ludwig I Bavaria.
- 1806 summer trip to Albano for her rheumatism. Completes her last religious history painting **Birth of St John the Baptist**.
- **5/11/1807 she dies after a short illness in Rome**. A magnificent funeral with her major paintings carried behind the coffin and a huge crowd attends. **Her good friend the sculptor Antonia Canova** organised the funeral said to be the greatest since the death of Raphael.
- 1809 her **portrait bust is installed next to Raphael in the Pantheon, Rome**.
- Biographies published in 1810-11, 1892-93, 1924.
- 1982 Catalogue Raisonné started.
- 1990 Angelica Jauffmann Research Project founded.
- Exhibitions in 1941, 1968, 1972, 1985 (permanent), 1987 (museum), 1992, 1994 (festival), 1998-9 (retrospective), 2007

(museum), 2010 (museum), 2019, 2020 (Düsseldorf).

WORKS MENTIONED IN THE BOOK 'MISS ANGEL'

1773 Telemachus at the Court of Sparta

Queen Eleanor on the Point of Death

Death of Alcestis

1764 Bacchus Discovering Ariadne, Deserted by theus, on Naxos
(first subject picture, influence of Batoni?)

1764 Portrait of John Byng of Wrotham Park, Kent (painted in
Naples)

1765 Chryseis Returning to Her Father Chryses

1765 Coriolanus Begged by His Mother Veturia and His Wife
Volumnia to Renounce War against His People.

Penelope at the Loom

1765 Portrait of a Gentleman (Mr Garrick)

1766 Portrait of Anne Conway Damer (her only painting that year
although Portrait of Lady [Hester] Stanhope might be 1766)

1770 Vortigern and Rowena (or 1772?)

1771 Elfrida and Edgar

1768 Hector and Andromache,

1768 Penelope Taking Down the Bow of Ulysses

1768 Venus Showing Aeneas and Achates the Way to Troy

1769 Achilles Discovered by Ulysses amongst the Attendants of
Deidamia.

1772 Andromache and Hecuba Weeping Over the Ashes of Hector

1772 Achilles Discovered by Ulysses

1770 Cleopatra Adorning the Grave of Mark Anthony

1770 Hector Accusing Paris of Effeminacy,

Venus Showing Aeneas and Achates

1776? Poor Maria
1773 Trenmore and Imbaca
1767 Lady Elizabeth Berkeley as Hebe
1770 Selina Fitzherbert as Hebe,
1773 Morning Amusement or The Embroideress (very popular)
1773 Telemachus at the Court of Sparta
1782 Miranda and Ferdinand
1782-83 Alexander Ceding to Appelles His Beloved Campaspe
1784 Hermann and Thusnelda
1784 Palls Killed by Turnus
1787 Portrait of Mmme de Krüdener
1788-89 Two Gentlemen of Verona (the moment when Valentine, Proteus, Sylvia and Julia meet in the wood)
1792 Self-Portrait Hesitating between Painting and Music
Dr. Samuel Tissot (doctor to kings, painted in naples)
Emma Hamilton
Cornelia Knight (woman intellectual)
1787? Portrait of Goethe
Orpheus Leading Eurydice out of Hades
1797 Portrait of a Lady of Quality (last exhibit at the RA)
1799 Religion (haunted by poverty)
1800? David and Nathan
1800? Jesus and the Samaritan Woman
5 November 807 she died of consumption

NOTES

- She avoided **avoided personal publicity, complained about biographies and burnt nearly all her papers** before she died.
- When she married Zucchi they signed a pre-nup.

- "In Britain, association with the court brought no such dangers. For Angelica Kauffman, her arrival in London in 1766 – **six years after George III came to the throne** and within two years of the founding of the Royal Academy - was perfectly timed. That she was born in Switzerland, spoke fluent German and was, indeed, **considered German** (since 'in eighteenth-century terms the word "deutsch" referred as much to language as to geography and culture'), **were positive advantages** to an artist seeking royal patrons among members of the House of Hanover.
- The King's sister, Augusta, Duchess of Brunswick, was the first of the family to have her portrait painted by Kauffman. It **received high praise** in the newspapers, verses were written in its honour, and the visit by the Princess of Wales to Kauffman's studio to see the picture was later followed by an introduction to Queen Charlotte. **The Queen** had already proved herself a **keen patroness of female artists by supporting Mary Moser** and Catherine Read, and also by lobbying for the admission of Kauffman and Moser as founding members of the Royal Academy. Kauffman's portrait of the Queen, *Her Majesty Queen Charlotte Raising the Genius of the Fine Arts*, painted in 1772, pays tribute to this patronage. Kauffman's ability to attract female patrons continued when she left England to live in Italy.
- **In 1783** in Naples, she was pounced upon by **Maria Carolina, Queen of the Two Sicilies**, a fearsome woman who already owned a large collection of Kauffman's prints and tried vainly to persuade her to accept the position of **court painter**. The group portrait Kauffman painted of the Queen, her husband, Ferdinand IV, and six of their seventeen children (no fewer than eight died in their infancy of smallpox) is ludicrously flattering, and tells viewers all they need to know about being a successful portraitist. The King, who in reality was short and scrawny, with a huge bulbous nose, pig's eyes and a 'forest of coffee-coloured

hair, which he never powders', is portrayed by Kauffman as tall and ineffably elegant, while his dumpy wife is the epitome of relaxed grace. The three dogs in the picture are probably the only figures to be faithfully represented. But the price she was paid for this travesty was gratifyingly large.

- Kauffman also **painted a 'monumental and many-figured' history painting for Catherine the Great**, who already owned a number of her works and whose exalted patronage ensured that other Russian clients commissioned her, including her son Paul. Catherine made no bones about her **preference for the work and character of Kauffman over that of her principal rival, Vigée Le Brun**, declaring that Kauffman **'unites elegance with nobility in all her figures'** and that they all **'possess ideal beauty'**. Vigée Le Brun, she complained, had made her granddaughters look like 'two pugs basking in the sun'.
- Kauffman and Vigée Le Brun **achieved celebrity status** in their lifetimes, and it was their ability to attract patronage that played a great part in their success. Vigée Le Brun's title of 'Painter to Marie Antoinette', though lethal in France following the Revolution, preceded her arrival in cities throughout Europe and Russia, bringing wealthy and aristocratic clients to her door. Kauffman's patrons were not so widely spread, but they were numerous and faithful, particularly the two great collectors whose patronage enabled her to continue with her history painting, George Bowles and John Parker.
- The two artists, though very different in character and style of painting, shared one overriding feature: their **private lives took second place to their working lives**. The same applies to the great majority of women who achieved success as professional artists during the eighteenth century." (Caroline Chapman, *Eighteenth-Century Women Artists*, Unicorn Publishing Group)
- Rumours of affairs with Reynolds. Swedish count scandal de

Horn, fooled her into marriage, an imposter, a valet who had brought his master's clothes. Said he was persuaded by Swedish crown so she must marry immediately. A major scandal, she was so humiliated she moved to Italy and did not marry until after he had died.

REFERENCES

Wendy Wassyng Roworth (ed.), *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992)

Caroline Chapman, *Eighteenth-Century Women Artists: Their Trials, Tribulations and Triumphs* (2017)

Miss Angel: The Art and World of Angelica Kauffman, Eighteenth-Century Icon (London: Pimlico, 2005)

English Female Artists, 1876, p. 302

<https://www.angelika-kauffmann.de> (Angelica Kauffman Research Project, preparing a Catalogue Raisonee)

https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/migrated_assets/docs/learning/digital/InFocus_AngelikaKauffmann.pdf (her life story)

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/mary-moser-and-angelica-kauffman>

<https://www.apollo-magazine.com/angelica-kauffman-history-painting/>

<https://artherstory.net/angelica-kauffman-and-mary-moser/>

http://hoocher.com/Angelika_Kauffmann/Angelica_Kauffmann.htm

[1] <https://www.artnews.com/art-news/retrospective/why-have-there-been-no-great-women-artists-4201/>

COPYRIGHT

- The talks are free and are given to a small group of people who are asked to make a voluntary contribution to charity. After the talk a recording may be uploaded to YouTube for free public

access.

- The notes are based on information found on public websites including Wikipedia, Tate, National Gallery, Oxford Dictionary of National Biography, Khan Academy and the Art Story.
- If a talk uses information from specific books, websites or articles these are referenced either at the beginning of each talk or in the 'References' section of the relevant page. The talks that are based on an exhibition use the booklets and book associated with the exhibition.
- Where possible images and information are taken from Wikipedia under an Attribution-Share Alike Creative Commons License.
- If I have forgotten to reference any work then please let me know and I will add a reference or delete the information.



"WHY ARE THERE NO GREAT WOMEN ARTISTS?"

FEMINIST APPROACHES TO ART HISTORY

Some of these arguments are taken from the article 'The Feminist Critique of Art History' by Thalia Gouma-Peterson and Patricia Mathews.

- One of the earliest works to address this question was written by **Linda Nochlin** in 1971 and called '**Why Are There No Great Women Artists?**'. Her argument was that art cannot be separated from our social situation and institutions. The very **concept of the artist genius is exclusively male** and we tell stories of child prodigies who can draw at an early age and get into art college in the early teens, such as **Turner, Millais and Picasso**. But did girls at an early age see themselves in that role and could adults imagine them in that role. Nochlin asks a related question '**Why are they no great aristocratic artists?**' with the possible exception of Toulouse-Lautrec whose deformity made him a special case and possibly Nathaniel Bacon, the son of a baronet. Because they are in a category that no one expects to become an artist.
- Nochlin and other art historians (see Women Artists 1550-1950) researched women artists through history that had been overlooked

or ignored or belittled, and there are many.

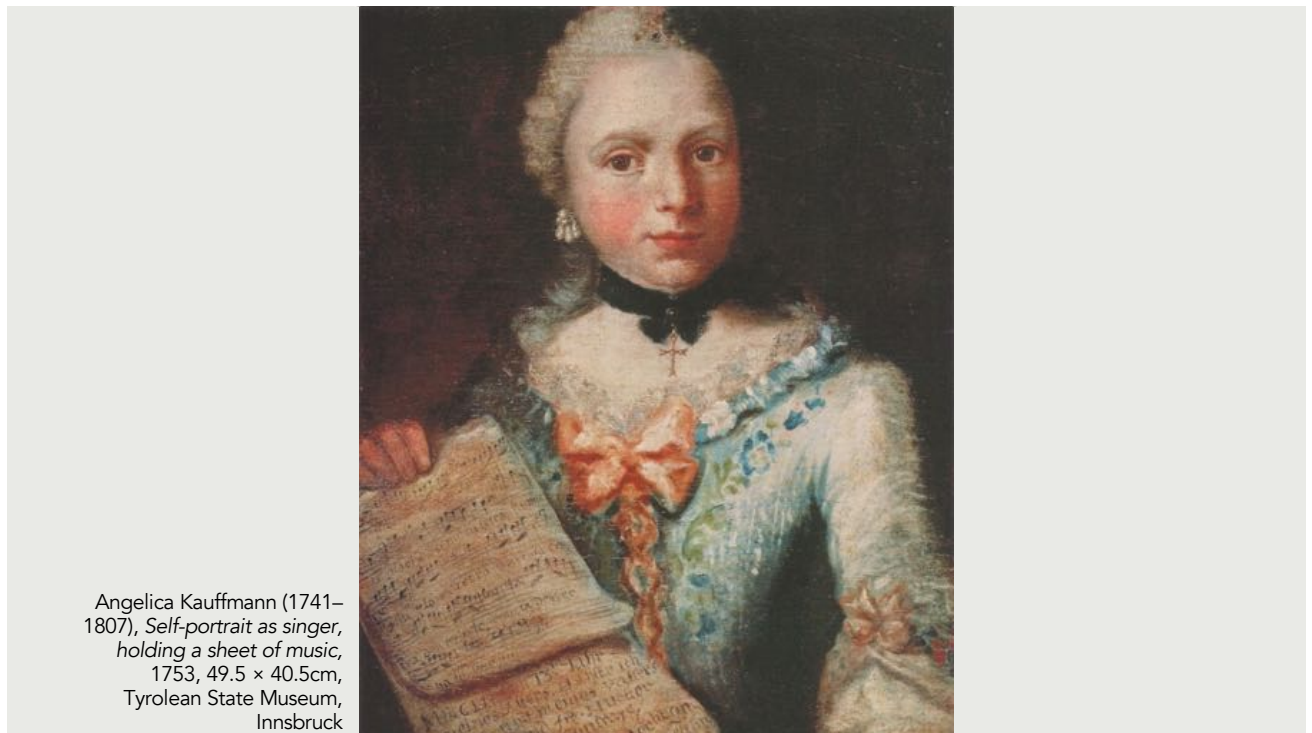
- **Rozsika Parker and Griselda Pollock**, in ***Old Mistresses: Women, Art and Ideology***, took fundamentally new directions from earlier surveys by **rejecting evaluative criticism** altogether. They turned to an **analysis of women's historical and ideological position** in relation to art, art production, and artistic ideology as a means **to question the assumptions** that underlie the traditional historical framework. They touched upon another of Nochlin's point **'to what extent our very consciousness of how things are in the world has been conditioned — too often falsified — by the way the most important questions are posed.'** Pollock and Parker emphasized that 'the way the history of art has been studied and evaluated is not the exercise of neutral "objective" scholarship but an **ideological practice**.' They recognized that **'women's relation to artistic and social structures has been different to that of male artists'**. In other words there are no great women artists because we live in a society that does not accept that greatness can be associated with women and art.
- **Germaine Greer** in ***The Obstacle Race*** argued that we **'cannot make great artists out of egos that have been damaged, with wills that are defective, with libidos that have been driven out of reach and energy diverted into neurotic channels'**.
- **Anna Lea Merritt** (1844-1930), American painter who lived and worked in England for most of her life. Her most famous work is *Love Locked Out* (1877). In 1900, Merritt wrote that she felt she had not faced much if any discrimination because of her gender,

but noted the social pressures which could inhibit a female artist's career, concluding,

"The chief obstacle to a woman's success is that she can never have a wife. Just reflect what a wife does for an artist: Darns the stockings; keeps his house; writes his letters; visits for his benefit; wards off intruders; is personally suggestive of beautiful pictures; always an encouraging and partial critic. It is exceedingly difficult to be an artist without this time-saving help. A husband would be quite useless."

- There were some important women artists working in England in the nineteenth century and many others working in France and America. Practically, it was very difficult for women artists to attend training as all the courses were for men. Some women artists were trained by their fathers and others were wealthy enough to pay for a private tutor. Even when trained it was not possible for a women to attend a life drawing class and so it was difficult to become proficient in history painting. These are just tow typical reviews of the work of women artists in the nineteenth century.
- Reviews of exhibitions of the Society of Female Artists:
- *The Illustrated London News*, 6 Jun 1857: **'Strength of will and power of creation belonging rather to the other sex, we do not of course look for the more daring efforts in an exhibition of female artists: but observation, taste, or the art of selection, and various other qualities adapted to the arts, are to be found in this Oxford-Street display.'**
- *The Art Journal*, 1 May 1858: **'...that which we see at the Egyptian Hall is the result of assiduous self-tuition, for we have no school for the instruction of ladies in painting from**

the living model. Labouring under such disadvantages as the female student does, we are not disappointed to see here so many drawings of flowers, fruit, and still-life objects – we are only surprised into exultation to see so much excellence in the higher departments of art.'



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Self-portrait as singer, holding a sheet of music*, 1753, 49.5 × 40.5cm, Tyrolean State Museum, Innsbruck

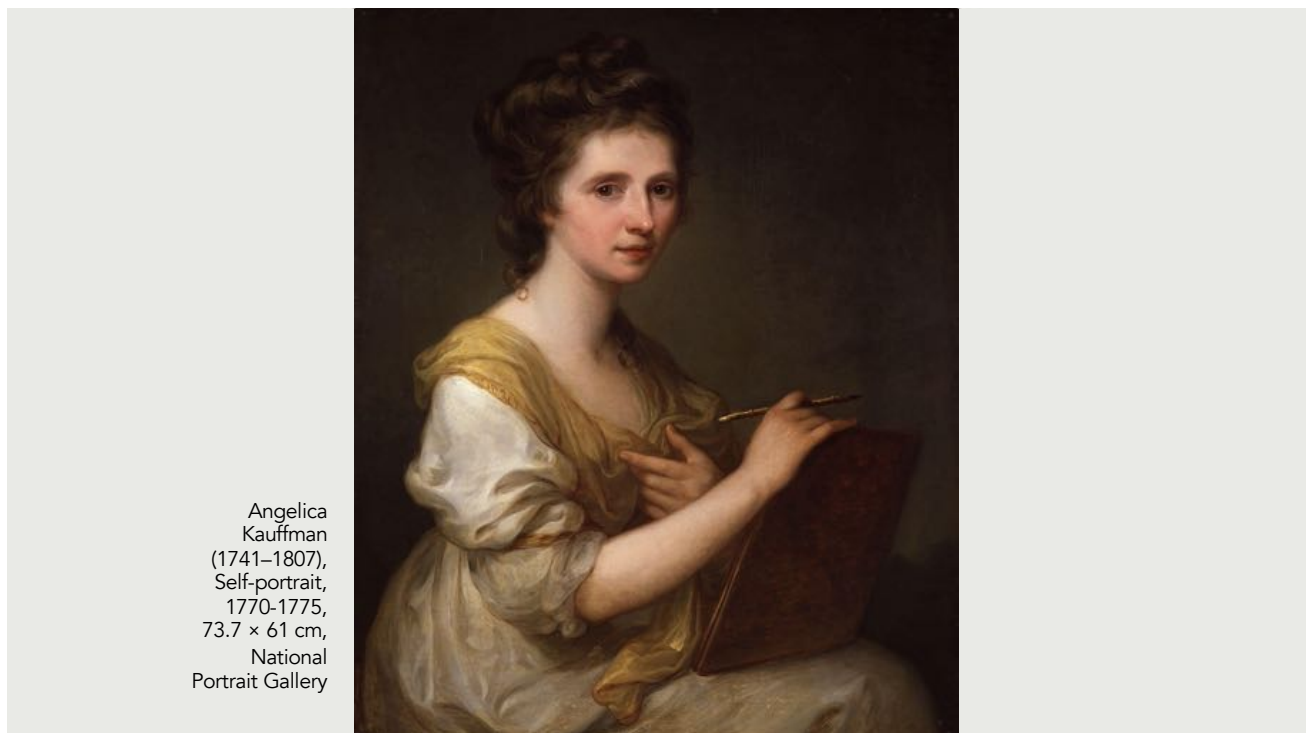
Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Self-portrait as singer, holding a sheet of music*, 1753, 49.5 × 40.5cm, Tyrolean State Museum, Innsbruck

- Let's start at the beginning. This is her **earliest self-portrait and was painted when she was twelve** and is her first pairing of her **two loves—painting and music**.
- She was born in Chur, allegedly the oldest town in Switzerland where German and Italian are spoken. Her father was poor but a skilled painter who trained Angelica as his assistant.
- This is a quote from someone at the time who knew her, "**At the age of ten she spoke English and French as familiarly as if they were her native language [and] could read Spanish with equal ease ... she was quite mistress of the Italian, and of German which was her native tongue. She has an agreeable person, a sweet and open countenance, of a very modest, engaging deportment, and was no small proficient in music.**" (Dr John Morgan, 1774).
- Her **mother died** when she was 15 and she **moved with her father**

to Milan and later Florence where she became a member of the **Accademia di Disegno** (Academy of Drawing, the oldest in the world, founded by Cosimo I de' Medici in 1563) when she was 20. The following year they **moved to Rome** where she encountered **wealthy Englishmen on the Grand Tour** of Europe and as she spoke English she acquired many patrons and painted many portraits. This was one way that **her fame spread back to England** even before she visited.

NOTES

- Chur is about 25km south of Lichtenstein and Austria and 50km north of Italy.



Angelica Kauffman (1741–1807), *Self-portrait*, 1770-1775, 73.7 × 61 cm, National Portrait Gallery

- Back to this, her most well-known self-portrait from the early 1770s when she was **about 30**. She had arrived in London a few years before and by the 1770s a **fever swept through London** like an epidemic. Nearly everyone was effected but no one wanted to be cured. The sufferers were called '**Angelicamad**' and the cause was the wonder caused by this continental artist. **She became one of the most successful women artists in history.**
- (CLICK) She looks **cool, calm and confident** and is wearing the conventional **loosely draped clothing** that was expected in a portrait of this period and she holds the **tools of her trade**, a brush and a sketchbook. By the age of 13 she was **painting bishops and nobles**. She was also a hard-working and **prolific painter** and produced about 800 oil paintings and numerous drawings. These were mostly **history paintings and portraits** which included a large number of self-portraits. These are now in the many countries that celebrated her genius.

- During the **15 years she spent in London she earned about £14,000**, a vast fortune, a gentleman it was said could live well on £500 [1] a year with servants and a carriage.

INTRODUCTION

- Angelica Kaufman (1741-1807) was born in Chur in Graubünden, Switzerland. Her father Johann Joseph Kauffmann was relatively poor but a skilled painter who trained his precocious daughter who was a child prodigy. She acquired several languages from her mother Cleophea Lutz, read avidly and was a talented musician. By the age of 12 she was painting bishops and nobles.
- She painted this self-portrait when she was about 30 and shortly after the Royal Academy had been founded.
- Before coming to Britain she was a very popular portrait painter in Rome as **she spoke Italian, English, French and German**. One person wrote, '**She may be styled beautiful and in singing may vie with our best virtuosi.**'
- She was persuaded to come to London and the rank of Lady Wentworth opened society to her, and she was well received everywhere, the royal family especially showing her great favour. Her firmest friend, however, was Sir Joshua Reynolds who called her 'Miss Angelica' or 'Miss Angel'.
- She was extremely productive and everything she produced was grabbed immediately. One engraver did nothing else but produce engravings of the latest Kauffman work. He described the whole world as '**Angelicamad**'.

REFERENCES

See

https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/migrated_assets/docs/learning/digital/InFocus_AngelicaKauffmann.pdf (her life story)

[1] <https://hlq.pennpress.org/media/34098/hlq->

[774_p373_hume.pdf](#)

THEMES COVERED TODAY

- ❖ The Life of Angelica Kauffman
- ❖ The Difficulties Faced by Women Artists
- ❖ Hierarchy of Painting
- ❖ History Painting
- ❖ Portraiture in the Eighteenth Century

- I talk about her life in roughly chronological sequence and the difficulties faced by women artists. I will cover the hierarchy of painting and the particular difficulties for a women at that time to produce history paintings and portraits.

WOMEN PAINTERS BEFORE 1800

Wikipedia lists 76 women artists in the 18th century.

The Dictionary of Women Artists lists 600 women artists born before 1945:

- Sibylla von Bondorf (c.1440 to c.1525),
- **Susannah Hornebolt** (1503-1554), taught by Flemish father, first known woman artist in England
- **Levina Teerlinc** (née Bening, Flemish, 1510s-1576), father taught her, miniaturist to Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I
- Plautilla Nelli (Italian, 1524–1588)
- Catharina van Hemessen (1528-1588)
- Sofonisba Anguissola (Italian, 1535-1625)
- Lavinia Fontana (Italian, 1552-1614)
- Barbara Longhi (Italian, 1552–1638)

- Artemisia Gentileschi (Italian, 1593-1653)
- **Joan Carlile** (née Palmer, English, 1606-79), self-taught, first British-born woman professional portrait painter
- Clara Peeters (Flemish, 1607-1621), still-life
- Judith Leyster (Dutch, 1609-1660)
- **Mary Beale** (née Cradock, English, 1633-1699), father was an amateur painter and may have taught her
- Elisabetta Sirani (1638-1665)
- **Susan Penelope Rosse** (née Gibson, English, 1652-1700), learnt from father, portrait miniatures
- Luisa Roldán (Spanish, 1652–1706)
- **Anne Killigrew** (English, 1660-1685), "A Grace for beauty, and a Muse for wit.", died smallpox aged 25
- Rachel Ruysch (Dutch, 1664-1750)
- Rosalba Carriera (1673-1757)
- **Catherine Read** (1723-1778), Scottish portrait painter of ladies and children of the aristocracy
- **Angelica Kauffman** (1741-1807), worked in England for 15 years
- **Mary Moser** (English, 1744-1819), taught by father George Moser
- Adélaïde Labille-Guiard (1749-1803)
- Élizabeth Vigée Le Brun (1755-1842)
- Marie-Denise Villers (1774-1821)

BRITISH WOMEN PAINTERS BEFORE 1800

Levina Teerlinc (1510/20-1576), daughter off Simon Bening, a renowned illuminator, was a Flemish Renaissance miniaturist who served as a painter to the English court of Henry VIII, Edward VI, Mary I and Elizabeth I. In Henry VIII's court she was paid £40 a year, more than Hans Holbein had been paid. It is likely that she

helped introduce the portrait miniature to England.

- Joan Carlile (c. 1606-79, née Palmer) was one of the first women to practise painting professionally.
- Mary Beale (1633-1699)
- Susan Penelope Rosse (1652-1700), an English miniaturist who painted for the court of Charles II.
- Anne Killigrew (1660-1685), a poet and portrait painter at the court of James II
- Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807)
- Mary Moser (1744-1819)

ROYAL ACADEMY WOMEN PAINTERS

- Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), founder member 1768
- Mary Moser (1744-1819), founder member 1768
- Laura Herford (1831-1870), admitted to the School by mistake in 1860, by 1870 another 34 women had been admitted
- 1878 petition submitted to RA signed by 35 women asking for study from the figure (semi draped)
- 1893 after many petitions women were allowed to study the partially draped model, which by then was common across the country
- Annie Swynnerton (1844-1933), in 1922 she was elected an Associate Academician
- Laura Knight (1877-1970), in 1927 she was elected an Associate and in 1936 an Academician
- In 1967 women Academician (four) were allowed to join the annual dinner

IMPORTANT WORKS BY ANGELICA KAUFFMANN

- 1753 aged 12, *Self-portrait as a Singer with Sheet Music*
- 1763-64 *Bacchus and Ariadne*
- 1764 *Portrait of David Garrick*
- 1764 *Portrait of Johann Joachim Winckelmann*
- 1765, aged 24, *Hope - La Peranza*
- 1766 *Augusta Friederike Luise with Prince Charles George Augustus* (Royal Collection)
- 1766 *Portrait with Prince George IV as the Genius of the Arts* (Royal Collection)
- 1768 *Penelope Taking Down the Bow of Ulysses* (Saltram House)
- 1769 *Hector Taking Leave of Andromache*
- 1769 *Venus Showing Aeneas and Achates the Way to Carthage*
- 1769 *Achilles Discovered by Ulysses amongst the Daughters of Lycomedes*
- 1770 *Vortigern, King of Britain, Enamoured with Rowena at the Battle of Hengist, the Saxon General* (Saltram House),
- 1770 *Eleanora Sucking the Venom out of the Wound of her Husband, King Edward I*
- 1770 *Inibaca Discovering Herself to Trenmor from James Macpherson's Ossian*
- 1770 *Poor Maria*
- 1777 *Portrait of Henrietta Laura Pulteney*, c. 1777, The Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney St, Bath.
- 1780 *Invention, Composition, Design and Colouring*, Somerset House
- 1782 *Leonardo da Vinci Dying in the Arms of Francis I*
- 1782 *The Royal Family of Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina of Naples and their Children.*
- 1784 *Hermann Crowned by Thusnelda*
- 1784 *Aeneas Mourns Pallas, the Son of Evander, Killed by Turnus,*
- 1789 *Servius Tullius and Achilles Discovered by Ulysses amongst the Daughters of Lycomedes*
- 1789 *Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi [Reception] and Julia, Wife Of Pompey, Fainting* (Weimar, Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar)
- 1789 *Pliny the Younger and his Mother at the Eruption of Vesuvius*
- 1789 *Virgil on his Deathbed*
- 1786-88 Johann Wolfgang von Goethe
- 1789 Johann Friedrich Herder
- 1789 *Self-Portrait* next to that of Michelangelo
- 1791 *Self-portrait at the Crossroads between the Arts of Music and Painting*
- 1791 *Lady Hamilton as Comic Muse*
- 1791 *Portrait of Princess Catherine Petrovna Baryatinskay*
- 1800-1 her last *Self-Portrait*.
- 1802 *Coronation of the Virgin*
- 1806 her last religious history painting *Birth of St John the Baptist*.

- 1753 aged 12, ***Self-portrait as a Singer with Sheet Music***
- 1763-64 ***Bacchus and Ariadne***
- 1764 ***Portrait of David Garrick***
- 1764 ***Portrait of Johann Joachim Winckelmann***
- 1765, aged 24, ***Hope - La Peranza***
- 1766 ***Augusta Friederike Luise with Prince Charles George Augustus*** (Royal Collection)
- 1766 ***Portrait with Prince George IV as the Genius of the Arts*** (Royal Collection)
- 1768 ***Penelope Taking Down the Bow of Ulysses*** (Saltram House)
- 1769 ***Hector Taking Leave of Andromache***
- 1769 ***Venus Showing Aeneas and Achates the Way to Carthage***
- 1769 ***Achilles Discovered by Ulysses amongst the Daughters of Lycomedes***
- 1770 ***Vortigern, King of Britain, Enamoured with Rowena at the Battle of Hengist, the Saxon General*** (Saltram House),
- 1770 ***Eleanora Sucking the Venom out of the Wound of her Husband, King Edward I***

- 1770 ***Inibaca Discovering Herself to Trenmor from James Macpherson's Ossian***
- 1770 ***Poor Maria***
- 1777 ***Portrait of Henrietta Laura Pulteney***, c. 1777, The Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney St, Bath.
- 1780 ***Invention, Composition, Design and Colouring***, Somerset House
- 1782 ***Leonardo da Vinci Dying in the Arms of Francis I***
- 1782 ***The Royal Family of Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina of Naples and their Children.***
- 1784 ***Hermann Crowned by Thusnelda***
- 1784 ***Aeneas Mourns Pallas, the Son of Evander, Killed by Turnus,***
- 1789 ***Servius Tullius and Achilles Discovered by Ulysses amongst the Daughters of Lycomedes***
- 1789 ***Cornelia, Mother of the Gracchi [Reception] and Julia, Wife Of Pompey, Fainting*** (Weimar, Kunstsammlungen zu Weimar)
- 1789 ***Pliny the Younger and his Mother at the Eruption of Vesuvius***
- 1789 ***Virgil on his Deathbed***
- 1786-88 **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe**
- 1789 **Johann Friedrich Herder**
- 1789 ***Self-Portrait*** next to that of Michelangelo
- 1791 ***Self-portrait at the Crossroads between the Arts of Music and Painting***
- 1791 ***Lady Hamilton as Comic Muse***
- 1791 ***Portrait of Princess Catherine Petrovna Baryatinskay***
- 1800-1 her last ***Self-Portrait.***

- 1802 ***Coronation of the Virgin***
- 1806 her last religious history painting ***Birth of St John the Baptist***.

Angelica Kauffman
(1741-1807) Self-
portrait of the Artist
hesitating between
the Arts of Music and
Painting, 1794, 180
× 249, Nostell Priory,
West Yorkshire



Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Self-portrait of the Artist hesitating between the Arts of Music and Painting*, 1794, 180 × 249, Nostell Priory, West Yorkshire (a National Trust property near Wakefield)
Another version, dated 1792, is in the Pushkin Museum, Moscow.

- It should be clear that Kauffman was a **child prodigy** but you may be surprised that at first she was regarded as a music prodigy because of her fine singing voice. However, by the age of twelve she was also known as an outstanding painter with bishops and nobles sitting for her.
- **Eventually she had to choose between the two arts.** Later in her life, when she was 53, she portrayed the choice in this striking self-portrait. She is **holding Music's hand** as if sorry to leave but **Painting is pointing urgently** and it looks as if she is about to turn and follow. It is said that when she was young a Catholic priest told her singing would be easy for her but painting would require long and arduous training but he persuaded her to take up painting by telling her that opera was a dangerous place filled with "seedy people".

- She was extremely intelligent and was quickly **fluent in English, Italian, German and French**. It was said she spoke these languages as fluently as a native speaker. She travelled all round Europe with her father and everywhere she went she was **feted by high society for her talents and charm**. There was something about her that charmed everyone she met from artists to royalty. The German philosopher Johann Gottfried Herder (1744-1803), whose portrait she painted in 1791, described her as '**A heavenly creature ... perhaps the most cultivated woman in the whole of Europe.**'
- This painting is typical of her **late style—strong but harmonious colours, a soft-brush multi-layered style** typical of Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792) and Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788) although late Gainsborough is a more bravura style of rapid brushstrokes particularly for the drapery.
- She came to the **UK in 1766** and two years later was one of the two women founders of the **Royal Academy**...

NOTES

- Angelica Kauffman Royal Academician, Foundation Member, Elected RA: 10 December 1768, Born: 30 October 1741, Died: 5 November 1807.
- Maria Anna Angelika Kauffmann, born 278 years ago—she became famous across Europe as a Neoclassical painter. She specialised in history paintings, portraits, landscapes and decorations. Her father, artist Joseph Johann Kauffmann, trained his daughter. She worked as his assistant as the family moved through Switzerland, Austria and Italy. She had a successful career in London and Rome. She was, along with Mary Moser, one of two female painters among the founding members of the Royal Academy in London in 1768.
- "In a career that took in London, Dublin, Florence, Rome and

Naples, Paris, Warsaw and St. Petersburg, Weimar and Vienna, she was known as the "**Female Raphael of the Arts.**" Her oeuvre includes some 800 oil paintings on canvas or copper, 13 frescos, 400 drawings, a small number of early pastels, and 41 etchings. Although a number of these are in private hands, many can be seen at the rotating exhibits of Austria's Angelika Kauffmann Museum (established 2007), as well as at numerous other museums throughout the world."¹

REFERENCES

1. <https://artherstory.net/angelica-kauffman-and-mary-moser/>



Johann Zoffany (1733-1810), *The Portraits of the Academicians of the Royal Academy, 1771-72*, Royal Collection



Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Self-portrait, 1770-1775*, National Portrait Gallery



George Romney (1734-1802), *Mary Moser, 1770-71*, National Portrait Gallery

Johann Zoffany (1733-1810), *The Portraits of the Academicians of the Royal Academy, 1771-72*, Royal Collection

George Romney (1734-1802), *Mary Moser, 1770-71*, National Portrait Gallery

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Self-portrait, 1770-1775*, National Portrait gallery. One of 25 self-portraits as a mentally alert creative artist with pencil, paintbrush or harp. She gazes out forthrightly.

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Johann_Zoffany

- Before embarking on her life's work I need to set the scene by talking about the **difficulties faced by women artist**, the then established hierarchy of painting and the particular problems faced by a woman artist by history painting.
- This is a famous painting by the artist Johann Zoffany and shows the Academicians of the Royal Academy. It was painted in 1771, three years after the Academy was founded and it shows all the members of the Academy but the **two female founders are portraits on the wall**. (CLICK) One is **Mary Moser** (1744-1819), one of the most celebrated artists of 18th-century Britain, and the other is the even

more famous (CLICK) **Angelica Kauffman** (1741-1807).

- **Why aren't they in the room?**
- This is a life drawing class with a naked man. There was not actually a rule banning them but it would have been unthinkable, highly improper and indecent for them to attend.
- **Why was it important to attend?**
- The **main activity of the Royal Academy School was to teach life drawing** as this was regarded as the most difficult skill to acquire. Students started by drawing casts of classical figures and it was only when these drawings were regarded as proficient that they were allowed to attend the life drawing class. Most life drawing was of men as it was regarded as important to represent men accurately in the highest form of art, namely history painting, of which more later.
- **What is odd about this life drawing class?**
- **Only one member has any drawing implements** and that is bottom left, a self-portrait of Johann Zoffany holding his palette. The other members are all discussing the pose demonstrating that art is not just a mechanical skill but one that **engages the intellect and a good understanding of classical literature**. They could be discussing a classical pose as part of a history painting. It is not going too far to say that the **Royal Academy was created in order to further the art of history painting in England**. Thanks to Angelica Kauffman and Benjamin West (the second president) it did become popular for a brief period before portraits, landscapes, houses, horses and dogs took over again.

HISTORY OF WOMEN AT THE RA

- The RA excluded women until 1860 even though two of the founding members were women.

- In 1860 Laura Herford's (1831-1870) was accepted for the RA School based on a painting using her initial 'L. Herford'. This was at the suggestion of the President Sir Charles Eastlake. Thirteen other women were accepted over the next few years. Women were only allowed to draw from casts and the draped model. Women were excluded from the life class although there was some provision made in 1893. In 1863 the Council decided its constitution did not allow women painters (in the Instrument of Foundation, Academicians ... shall all of them be ... **Men of fair moral Characters**'). In 1903 women were allowed to study living nudes in separate classes.
- **Slade took women** from its founding in **1871**.
- The Society of Female Artists was founded in 1856, it became the Society of Lady Artists in 1872 and the Society of Women Artists in 1899.
- 1870s and 80s women petitioned RA in vain to attend life classes.
- There were private art schools 1880s and 90s like French atelier
- Rich women attended classes in Paris, Munich, Dusseldorf and Antwerp
- Lady Butler was nominated three times to the RA 1879-81 and turned down.
- Annie Laura Swynnerton and Laura Knight (1877-1970, née Johnson, attended Nottingham School of Art 1890-4, aged 13) were made ARA in the 1920s and Laura Knight a RA in 1936.

NOTE

- Kauffman on left, Mary Moser (1744-1819) on right.
- Moser's father George Moser putting on the noose.
- Richard Cosway (1742-1821, RA 1770), Moser's lover bottom-right with cane (the canvas was extended to include him).

Cosway was separated from his wife Maria. Maria ('Mariah') Cosway (1760-1838, born Hadfield) was a gifted artist who gave up her career on the command of her husband. He did possibly to protect her reputation and in time she started to paint again. She was an Italian-English artist who had an affair with Thomas Jefferson, American Founding Father, principal author of the Declaration of Independence 1776 and third President of the US. They corresponded for the rest of their lives. She was a devout catholic all her life. It was thought to be a marriage of convenience as he was 20 years her senior and a libertine. Cosway was once a more famous artist than Gainsborough and his portraits were the rage in Regency London. He became Principal Painter to the Prince of Wales.

- In October 1793, Mary Moser married Hugh Lloyd and retired from painting, only exhibiting as an amateur. Shortly after the marriage, in 1793, Cosway and Mary Moser had an open affair that lasted 6 months during which they travelled around Europe. Mary Moser was 50 and his ex-wife Maria 33 yet he described her as 'more sexually responsive' in bed.
- Angelica Kauffman was Swiss born Austrian who was taught by her father. She acquired several languages and was a skilled musician. It is not known how she learnt to paint the male nude as her speciality was history painting. Her first marriage was a disaster but in 1781 he died (she had been separated) and she married Antonio Zucchi a Venetian artist and retired to Rome where she met Johann Wolfgang von Goethe. Zucchi died in 1795 and she continued to contribute to the RA her last exhibit was 1797 and she died in 1807. She was honoured at her funeral in the same way Raphael had been honoured.
- There was a tradition of representing absent but venerated members of a body through *imago clipeata* (literally 'portraits on a round shield' from the practice in the Roman world of

showing ancestors and famous people on round shields in people's homes).



Titian (1488/90-1576), *Bacchus and Ariadne*, 1520-23, 176.5 × 191 cm, National Gallery



Bacchus discovers Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus, on Naxos, 1764, 166 × 125cm, Kulturamt der Landeshauptstadt Bregenz

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Bacchus discovers Ariadne, abandoned by Theseus, on Naxos*, 1764, 166 × 125cm, Kulturamt der Landeshauptstadt Bregenz

Titian (c. 1488/90-1576), *Bacchus and Ariadne*, 1520-23, 176.5 × 191 cm, National Gallery

- Kauffman painted portraits and **history paintings** and this is her **first full-size history painting**. I just explained that **women never entered a life drawing class** which was essential training for painting realistic bodies. So how did she acquire the necessary skills. We don't know but I will give you some evidence on the next slide.
- First the subject, the painting shows the young Bacchus discovering Ariadne on the island of Naxos, after she was abandoned by the Greek hero Theseus. The theme has been painted by many artists including Le Nain in c. 1635 and (CLICK) perhaps the most famous is **Titian's Bacchus and Ariadne**.
- **But what exactly was a history painting and why were they regarded as so important?**
- A history painting was **not just a painting of a historic subject**, the

most important aspect was that it was **noble and elevated the spirit** by reminding us of the **best and the worst of the human condition** and how heroes of the past had dealt with adversity and pain.

- **The artist was expected to know** all the classical and biblical texts and use their imagination to select the critical **turning point** of the narrative and then show us through gesture and expression how the protagonists dealt with the tragedy.
- Here, Ariadne has just been abandoned by the love of her life and she is **mourning her loss** when a handsome young man, Bacchus, expresses his love for her. Her expression must incorporate mourning for her loss with a glimmer of interest in the approaching figure. **Kauffman has gone for mostly sadness in her face and Titian has gone for startled.**
- (CLICK) **Why were history paintings important**—because they reminded us of the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune and the most noble way in which the heroes of the past had dealt with the most serious episodes of life. **History paintings shows the best of us.** Today we do not know the stories so they just **look like odd people in funny clothes.**
- It was felt by men at the time that history painting required a **deep knowledge of classical history** and the ability to use reason and imagination to communicate the noble spirit of the story and this was not possible for a woman.
- **As women were in general not given a classical education** and as it was thought **they were driven by their emotions** rather than reason it was felt they were incapable of painting a history painting. In addition, they could not attend life drawing classes which were essential training.
- **So how did Kauffman do it?** She was regarded as a **one-off, the exception that proved the rule.** Of course, the word 'prove'

is meant in the old sense of 'test' and we now know Kauffman tested the rule and found it wrong. **Properly educated and trained a woman could paint a history painting as well as a man.**

NOTES

- The slings and arrows of outrageous fortune is from Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the 'to be or not to be' speech, Act III, Scene I.
- The Athenian **Theseus** came to Crete and killed the Minotaur with the help of **Ariadne** who advised him to leave a trail of string. They flee to Naxos and Theseus abandons the sleeping Ariadne. Some accounts involve Bacchus (Greek: Dionysus, son of Zeus) finding her and taking her for his bride. Theseus sailed back to Athens and forgot to put up the white sails instead of the black ones, so his father Aegeus, the king, believing he was dead, committed suicide, throwing himself off a cliff of Sounion and into the sea, thus causing this body of water to be named the Aegean Sea. Theseus became the founding father of Athens.



Nude study after Fragonard



Standing Male, 1763



Back, c. 1764

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Nude study after Fragonard*

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Standing Male*, 1763

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Back*, c. 1764

- **So how did Kaufman find models for her history painting?** We don't know. At the time the assumption was that they were based on statues or women models.
- These drawings give us a clue. These few drawings by Angelica Kauffman have been found showing that at least early on in her career when she was 22-23 years old she did draw from the male nude. As her father was an artist he may have arranged it and attended.
- But this was not known at the time, so one critic wrote that all her figures were '**girls in disguise**'. A poet (Peter Pinder) wrote '**Her dames, so Grecian, give me such delight!/But, were she married to such gentle males/As figure in her painted tales,/I fear she'd find a stupid wedding-night**'.
- A journalist wrote '**[Women's] situation in life, and compulsive delicacy, prevents them from studying nudities, and comparing**

these studies with muscular motion, though without such aid, they cannot do more than this lady has effected, which is, to design pretty faces and graceful attitudes, without any authority from nature to warrant the transaction.'

- There was a rumour that, in London, she had **hired an employee of the Royal Academy** (Charles Cranmer) to pose privately. Years later the eighty-year-old former model admitted that he had modelled for her but had **never exposed more than his arms, shoulders and legs** and that Angelica's father had always been in attendance. So we are left to wonder, as she was, despite the quotes, considered a fine history painter. I can only assume that with her father's help she did have the right training and access to models.
- I have said that history painting was important but I need to clarify that it was the most important type of painting by far. There was a hierarchy of types of painting that we will look at next...



History Painting



Portrait



Genre or Subject Painting



Landscape



Animal Painting



Still-Life

Annibale Carracci (1560-1609), *The Choice of Hercules*, 1596, 165 × 239 cm, National Museum of Capodimonte

Joshua Reynolds, *Lady Talbot*, 1782, 234.3 × 146 cm, Tate Britain. Lady Charlotte Talbot (née Hill, 1754–1804), the third daughter of Wills Hill, 1st Marquess of Downshire and his wife Margaret Fitzgerald, who had married John Chetwynd Talbot, the 3rd Lord Talbot of Hensol (subsequently Earl Talbot and Viscount Ingestre; 1750–1793) in 1776

Nathaniel Bacon (1585–1627), *Cookmaid with Still Life of Vegetables and Fruit*, c.1620–5, 151 × 247.5 cm, Tate Britain. Only nine of his paintings survive. Son of Sir Nicholas Bacon, 1st Baronet who was half-brother of Sir Francis Bacon who developed the scientific method. Ancestor of the modern figurative painter Francis Bacon (1909-1992)

Thomas Gainsborough (1727-1788), *Sunset: Carthorses Drinking at a Stream*, c.1760, 143.5 × 153.7 cm

George Stubbs (1724-1806), *Whistlejacket*, c. 1762, 296.1 × 248 cm, National Gallery. Marquess of Rockingham's racehorse, acquired 1997 for £11m. It challenged the hierarchy of painting.

Balthasar van der Ast (1593/1594–1657), *Flowers in a Vase with Shells*

and Insects, c. 1630, 47 × 36.8 cm, National Gallery

- **History painting** was at the top of the hierarchy of painting, sometimes called the hierarchy of genres, that is types of painting.
- **The hierarchies of painting** was established in 16th century Italy, that is during the Renaissance, and it was refined by the French Academy. It held sway for some 300 hundred years and was formalised, reinforced and promoted by all the art academies across Europe.
- (CLICK) At the top of the hierarchy was **history painting**. This is an example that you might recognise. It is called *The choice of Hercules* by **Annibale Carracci** and I have just shown you a similar choice. **Do you recognise the arrangement of figures?** Yes, it is Kauffman's choice between Music and Painting. She would have known the painting well as it is in the Capodimonte in Naples. Hercules choice was seen as a clear example of a history painting. He must choose between the easy path of pleasure and the hard path of virtue. A history painting required a **detailed knowledge of anatomy** which was thought to be impossible for a woman artist to learn. History painting also required a detailed knowledge of classical literature as the artist had to capture the exact moment and the feelings captured in the faces to express the noble thoughts that would elevate the painting beyond a mere mechanical painting of models.
- (CLICK) Next down the hierarchy was **portrait painting**. This is by the first President of the Royal Academy. **Who was it by?** Yes, **Joshua Reynolds**. Reynolds tried to elevate portraits to a type of history painting by giving his portraits a classical setting.
- (CLICK) The third type was called **genre or subject painting**. It had to contain one or more people but it was not a portrait. The

people were there to set the scene or tell a story but it might be humorous not elevating and noble. It was painted, unusually by a nobleman, **Nathaniel Bacon** (1585–1627), and is the first subject painting in the history of English art and it is in Tate Britain.

- (CLICK) The final three categories were rarely painted during the Renaissance. There was **landscape painting** which might contain humans but only as part of the landscape. Such human additions are called staffage, merely human or animal accessories. **Who knows this painting?** It is by **Thomas Gainsborough** another contemporary of Angelica Kauffman.
- (CLICK) Fifth down the hierarchy was **animal painting**. Animals were admired for their beauty or they could represent human emotions. **Who knows this painting?** It is **Whistlejacket** by **George Stubbs**. The audacious plain background said to be the idea of the owner the Marquess of Rockingham created a stir and challenged the hierarchy of painting and the lowly place of animal painting.
- (CLICK) Finally, the lowest of the low was **still-life** which included flower painting. Still-life could be elevating as there was a type of still-life called **memento mori**, literally '**remember you have to die**'. Such painting might contain a skull or perhaps a wilting flower. This is a Dutch flower painting from the previous century by **Balthasar van der Ast**. Note the insects, more about why flower painting became popular next week.
- All artists and connoisseurs at this time would have **instantly categorised** each type of painting within the **strict hierarchy**. The hierarchy reflected a **Platonic belief in idealism over realism**. Copying something from nature realistically was regarded as a basic skill that anyone could acquire with training. The lowest category, **still life**, was regarded as a '**mechanical**

copying of a particular appearance' whereas **history painting rendered visible the universal essence** of things and their most noble and uplifting spirit.

NOTES

- The hierarchy arose from **philosophical debates** about the relative importance of painting with respect to poetry, sculpture and architecture as intellectual activities. **Leon Battista Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci, and Giorgio Vasari** were all concerned and debated the question. During the Renaissance landscape, genre scenes and still lifes hardly existed as established genres, and so the debate was with respect to history including biblical subjects compared to portraits.
- The new genres of landscape, genre painting, animal painting and still-life developed during the 17th century, with the virtual cessation of religious painting in Protestant countries, and the expansion of picture buying by the prosperous middle class. **The hierarchy was extended in 1667 by André Félibien, a historiographer, architect and theoretician of French classicism** and this became the classic statement of the theory for the 18th century as shown here.
- **Whistlejacket**—One of the most important British paintings of the eighteenth century, Whistlejacket is probably the most well-known portrait of a horse. It is also widely acknowledged to be George Stubb's masterpiece. The Arabian chestnut stallion had won a famous victory at York in 1759, but by 1762 had been retired from racing. He belonged to the **2nd Marquess of Rockingham**, who commissioned Stubbs to paint a commemorative life-size portrait of his prize horse on a **scale that was more appropriate for a group portrait or historical painting**.
- **Lady Talbot**—this is a full-length, life-size portrait of a

contemporary female aristocrat which was originally exhibited as '**Portrait of a Lady**' but which we now know was Lady Talbot. It was commissioned by her husband the **1st Earl Talbot** as a companion to **his portrait painted by Pompeo Batoni** when he on the **Grand Tour**. The statue in the background is **Minerva the goddess of wisdom and strength** and it gives the painting a **classical dimension**. Lord Talbot had a classical sculpture known as the **Ludovisi Mars** (in the national Museum, Rome) representing martial values. Typically, the man wears **contemporary dress** while, as here, his wife wears a more **playful historicising fancy dress**.



Annibale Carracci (1560–1609) *An Allegory of Truth and Time*, 1584, 130 × 169.6cm, Royal Collection

Diego Velázquez (1599–1660), *Portrait of Innocent X*, c. 1650, 141 × 119cm, Doria Pamphilj Gallery, Rome

Adriaen van Ostade (1610–1685), *The Fishwife in her Market-stall*, 17th century, 29 × 26.5cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Budapest

Karl von Eckenbrecher (1842-1921), *View of Laerdalsoren, on the Sognefjord*, 1901, Norway

Frans Snyders (1579–1657), *Dogs fighting in a wooded clearing*, 173.4 × 241.9cm, private collection, Spain.

Heinrich Uhl (1882-1915), *Still life with Jewellery Box, Opera Glasses, Gloves, and Bouquet of Flowers*, 50 × 60cm,

- The hierarchies of painting were established in Italy in the 16th-century and refined by the French Academy. They are:
 - History painting
 - Portrait painting
 - Genre or Subject painting

- Landscapes and cityscapes
 - Animal painting
 - Still life
- All artists and connoisseurs at this time would have instantly categorised each type of painting within the strict hierarchy. The hierarchy reflected a Platonic belief in idealism over realism. The lowest category, still life, was regarded as a 'mechanical copying of a particular appearance' whereas history painting rendered visible the universal essence of things and their most noble and uplifting spirit.
 - A history painting required a detailed knowledge of anatomy which was impossible for a woman artist to learn as they were barred from life drawing classes as we shall see in the next painting.
 - History painting also required a detailed knowledge of classical literature as the artist had to capture the exact moment and the feelings captured in the faces to express the noble thoughts that would elevate the painting beyond a mere mechanical painting of models.

Published by
William Ryland in
1780



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *The Tender Eleanora Sucking the Venom out of the Wound which Edward I, her Royal Consort, Received from a Poisoned Dagger from an Assassin in Palestine*, c. 1780, 86.4 × 106.7 cm, The Huntington Art Museum

- Let me tell you about history painting like this one. There was a hierarchy of types of painting which was **mostly a French invention** but the hierarchy was **followed in England** and **reinforced by the Royal Academy**. The most prestigious was history painting and the lowest was still-life, such as flower painting. History painting showed an event from the Bible, mythology or history that illustrated some noble virtue. **In France the government and every town hall bought history paintings** creating a large market for the highest genre. In England there was **almost no market** so that created a problem for artists—the highest form of painting made no money.
- **So how did Kauffman earn a fortune from history painting? It wasn't were technical skills at painting but her business skills—she reinvented the market.**
- The only other painters in England who were successful in history

painter **were foreign**. **Benjamin West** (1738-1820) and **John Singleton Copley** (1738-1815) both from America reinvented the genre by painting **modern day** heroic scenes rather than classical history paintings. The Swiss painter **Henry Fuseli** (1741-1825) created **supernatural** renditions of historical subjects and the Irishman **James Barry** (1795-1865) created **sweeping panoramas** of historic and biblical subjects. Of all of them **Angelica Kauffman was the closest to the European ideal** of the history painting and it was her and Benjamin West that made history painting, at least for a short time, fashionable.

- But how did Kauffman **make money** from history painting? There were **two markets she exploited** more than any other artist of this period, (CLICK) **first engravings, they individually cost less and they were smaller**. She worked with **William Wynne Ryland** who has been described as the person most responsible for spreading Kauffman's fame as one of the most **prolific engravers** and publishers of history paintings. **He was extraordinarily successful**. In 1783 he had shares worth £7,000, a royal pension of £200 annually, stock worth £10,000 and a business income of £2,000 a year.
- The other novel aspect of this is that **Kauffman and Benjamin West were the first** members of the Royal Academy to **exhibit paintings from British history** (1771), even though "the Society of Artists had offered premiums since 1760 for paintings of British History". Angelica Kauffman painted ***The Tender Eleanora Sucking the Venom out of the Wound which Edward I, her Royal Consort, Received from a Poisoned Dagger from an Assassin in Palestine*** (1776) which was engraved by Ryland. As we have seen from Ryland's income the engravings sold very well, in fact **her engravings were bought "more than any other painter of standing in the eighteenth century"**.^[1] They were serious subjects that could be afforded by the up and coming

middle-class merchants and professionals of the period.

NOTES

- In June 1272 in the Crusader-held city of Acre Edward I (1239, r.1272-1307) and Eleanor of Castille (1241, m.1254-1290) were sleeping when a trusted spy asked to see him. The spy was a Muslim who had converted to Christianity. He entered the room and stabbed Edward in the hip. Edward knocked him unconscious and stabbed him to death. The dagger the assassin used was covered in poison and according to one, now discredited account Eleanor sucked the poison out of the wound. Eleanor was well-educated, a patron of the arts and a successful businesswoman. On her death Edward ordered a stone cross to be erected at each stopping-place on the journey to London. There were 12 crosses ending at Charing Cross. This cross was at the end of Whitehall and was demolished in 1647. In 1865 a new Eleanor cross was erected outside Charing Cross railway station several hundred yards from the original site.

REFERENCES

1. Ed. Wendy Wassing Roworth, *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England*, (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), p. 178



Angelica Kauffman (artist),
Thomas Soare (gilding), Derby
Porcelain Factory
(manufacturer)

Angelica Kauffman (artist), Thomas Soare (gilding), Derby Porcelain Factory (manufacturer)

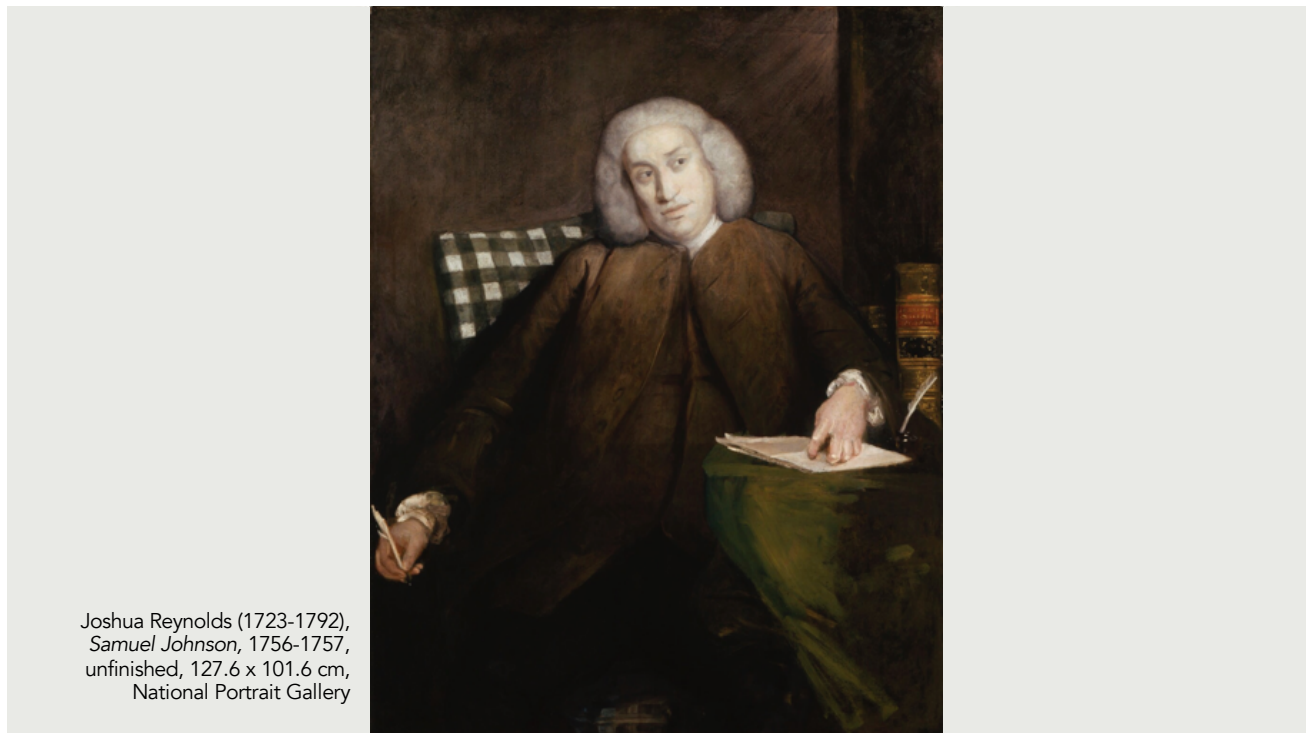
- The second **source of her income** and fame was **decorative designs for household objects**. To understand how she became so famous you need to appreciate that an enormous range of household goods were **covered in works by Kauffman** from **watch cases to plates** and from **snuff boxes to vases**. **Everyone wanted** household objects like this with a **serious Kauffman classical design** to show their **knowledge and sophistication**. Kauffman lived in London for fifteen years and throughout this time her reputation and fame grew.
- This vase shows the story of the lovers Celadon and Amelia from a Romantic English nature poem, **"The Seasons," by James Thomson**. The lovers were caught in a summer storm and the power of the storm was so overwhelming for the delicate Amelia that she died in the arms of Celadon. Kauffman painted a number of versions of the story and in this one she shows the lovers writing on a rock before the storm arrives.

NOTES

- This vase and cover is soft-paste porcelain painted with enamels and gilded. It is decorated with **acanthus leaves** in relief and coloured blue and with an **oval medallion on either side** of the body. One medallion has a **landscape** and the other a figure subject based on a classical scene **by Kauffman of Celadon and Amelia**.
- A Romantic English nature poem, "**The Seasons**," by **James Thomson** in the section 'Summer' tells of the young lovers Celadon and Amelia, a perfect couple who were caught in a summer storm. **Amelia** was overcome by the powerful force of the tempest and **died** in the arms of her horrified and distraught lover.
- Kauffman painted a number of versions of story and the two lovers. This scene is not specifically described in the poem but represents their happy, carefree life together before the storm.

NOTES

<https://www.eighteenthcenturypoetry.org/works/o3549-w0020.shtml>



Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792),
Samuel Johnson, 1756-1757,
unfinished, 127.6 x 101.6 cm,
National Portrait Gallery

Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), *Samuel Johnson*, 1756-1757, unfinished, 127.6 x 101.6 cm, National Portrait Gallery

- This is **by Joshua Reynolds** 12 years before the Royal Academy was founded. It is a **portrait of Samuel Johnson** just after he completed his famous *Dictionary of the English Language* in 1755. The painting was **never finished** and remained in Reynolds studio until 1798 when it was given to his biographer James Boswell.
- The reason I am showing you this is that **Johnson said about women painting men's portraits, "Staring in men's faces is very indelicate in a female"**. It was probably disconcerting for Dr. Johnson to be the object of a sustained female gaze, with its implications of analysis and evaluation.
- This prejudice was a **problem for any woman artist** and so **many painted women and children**. Women, it was commonly and casually said, **understood how to flatter their female subjects**. **Kauffman overcame this prejudice** and painted men as well: English gentlemen and aristocrats, J. J. Winckelmann, and Joshua Reynolds, among many others. She was both the gazing subject and

the object of many gazes.

- There was an even greater prejudice regarding women and history painting. The art historian Wendy Roworth wrote, **“What distinguishes Kauffman from most artists active in England during the eighteenth century, and from virtually all women artists before the twentieth, was her ambition to achieve standing as a history painter”**.^[1]

REFERENCES

1. Ed. Wendy Wassyng Roworth, *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England*, (London: Reaktion Books, 1992), p. 21
2. Patricia Crown, 'Eighteenth Century Visual Culture and Current British Art History: A Review Essay', *Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 28, no. 1 (1994), pp. 137-40



Thomas Gainsborough (1727–1788), *Thomas Gainsborough*, c. 1759. 76.2 × 63.5 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Portrait of Winckelmann*, 1764, 97 × 71 cm, Kunsthaus, Zürich

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Portrait of Winckelmann*, 1764, 97 × 71 cm, Kunsthaus, Zürich

Thomas Gainsborough (1727–1788), *Thomas Gainsborough*, c. 1759. 76.2 × 63.5 cm, National Portrait Gallery, London

- **Let us return to the chronology of Kauffman's life.**
- This was painted in **1764 two years before she came to England.** It is ***Portrait of Winckelmann*** and was produced in Rome. **Has anyone heard of Johann Winckelmann?** He was very famous at the time as an archaeologist and art historian. In fact, he is **considered the first art historian.**
- We see Winckelmann reading from a book, which is resting on a bas-relief showing *The Three Graces*. The year this was painted he published his influential *History of Ancient Art*. He described this portrait as his best.
- (CLICK) I am showing Kauffman's work alongside Gainsborough self-portrait as they were painted at about the same time. Notice the **loose paintwork Gainsborough uses for the cuff and the cravat.** His **early Ipswich period (1746-1760)** was **more formal, thorough**

and meticulous, like that of Reynolds and Kauffman. His **middle Bath period** (1760-1774) became **more lively and delicate**. His **late London period** (1774-1788) is marked by his **extraordinarily delicate and suggestive handling of paint** which enabled him to catch a likeness.

- Portraiture was the most popular genre or type of painting in eighteenth-century English society. One French observer (André Roquet, *The Present State of the Arts in England*, 1755) **"Portraiture is the kind of painting the most encouraged, and consequently the most followed in England; it is the polite custom, even for men, to present one another with their pictures ... A portrait painter in England makes his fortune in a very extraordinary manner. As soon as he has obtained a certain degree of reputation, he hires a house fit for a person of distinction; then he assumes an air of importance and superiority over the rest of his profession, depending less on his personal abilities to support this superiority than on the credit of some powerful friend, or some woman of quality, whose protection he has purchased, and which he sometimes courts, not much to his honour."** I don't think this applies to either artist here but it does show the importance attached to portrait painting in English society.

NOTES

- "Johann Joachim Winckelmann (Stendal 1717 - Trieste 1768) is considered the founder of German art, science and archaeology. In 1763 he became prefect of the Vatican's collection of antiquities and scriptor of the Vatican Library. In 1755 he published **"Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Works in Painting and Sculpture"**, in 1764 the **"History of Ancient Art"**, which contributed significantly to the enthusiasm for antiquity of that time. The opened book is resting on an antique relief with

The Three Graces, which refers to Winckelmann's 1759 publication "**On Grace in Works of Art**". Winckelmann himself described the portrait as his best.



Frans Hals (1582/3-1666), *Isaac Massa*, 1626, Art Gallery of Ontario



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Portrait of David Garrick*, 1764, 84 × 69 cm, Burghley House

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Portrait of David Garrick*, 1764, 84 × 69 cm, Burghley House

Frans Hals (1582/3-1666), *Isaac Massa*, 1626, 79.7 × 65.1 cm, Art Gallery of Ontario

- While painting Englishmen in Italy Kauffman met **Lady Wentworth**, the **wife of the British ambassador to Venice Joseph Smith**, and she **invited Kauffman to London** (in 1765-6). Lady Wentworth **opened high society to her** and she was **well received by everyone including the royal family**. One of her **earliest portraits** in London was of **David Garrick** (1717-1779), the well-known actor, playwright and theatre manager. **Kauffman's business acumen** is shown in the way she arranged for her portrait of such a well-known figure to be **publicly exhibited** at the Free Society of Artists the previous year to demonstrate her talent.
- (CLICK) The pose is from a portrait by Frans Hals of his friend Isaac Massa. Garrick grips the chair almost defensively, perhaps he is worried about falling for her charms, he wrote and published afterwards;

- *While thus you paint with Ease and Grace,*
 - *And Spirit all your own;*
 - *Take, if you please, my Mind and Face,*
 - *But let my Heart alone.*
- Kauffman was described by everyone as gentle and considerate but she could charm the pants off anyone she met and had a laser-like ability to make money from her art.

NOTES

- Lady Bridget Wentworth Murray

REFERENCES

- <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/ra-magazine-jenny-uglow-angelica-kauffman-ra>



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1767, 127 × 101.6cm, Saltram, Devon

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1767, 127 × 101.6cm, Saltram, Devon

- Of all the **famous figures she met** in London her **firmer friend** became **Sir Joshua Reynolds** who **called her 'Miss Angel'** and it was his contacts that **placed her firmly inside the London art world** which resulted within three years of her becoming one of only two women artists founders of the Royal Academy.
- In this portrait she presents Reynolds as a **man of style and culture**. He wears a **Van Dyck costume** which was **fashionable** during the reign of George III and he sits beside a table strewn with papers and **philosophical books**, behind which is a **bust of Michelangelo**, an artist revered by Reynolds. The books are by his friends and include **Samuels Johnson's *Idler* essays**, **Oliver Goldsmith's *The Traveller***, and **Edmund Burke's *A Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of Our Ideas of the Sublime and Beautiful***. This painting was one of her **early critical successes** in England.
- It was acquired by Reynolds friend **John Parker**, later Lord Boringdon, who inherited **Saltram Park** in Devon (just outside

Plymouth). He later acquired many more works by Kauffman which is why one of the **largest collections of her work** is now found at that National Trust property.

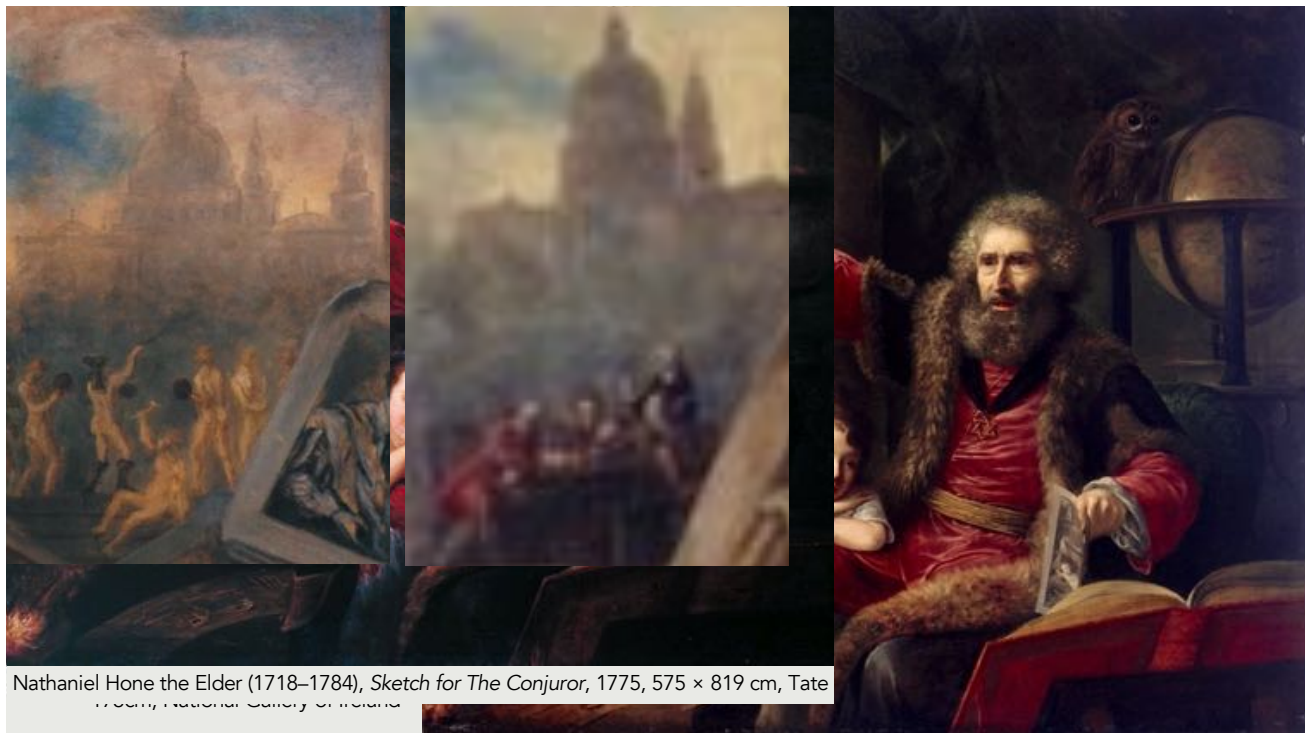
- **Marriage.** But there is one **important and potentially disastrous personal episode** to mention at this point. In 1767 she met someone who called themselves **Count Frederick de Horn** who was staying at Claridge's. She was bowled over by the Count and they **quickly married** only for Kaufman to find out that she had been **fooled by an impostor** and fraud. The so-called 'Count' was actually a **servant in disguise** who had tricked her into marriage in order to **stay in the country**. The **marriage was actually illegal as he was already married** and as soon as her father had paid him off **he fled the country**. **Surprisingly** the **scandal did no harm to her** relationship with her patrons including the royal family and it **left her in an ambiguous position as neither spinster nor virgin nor widow or wife** a status that **kept potential suitors at bay for another fourteen years** when at forty **she married Antonio Zucchi** a painter and old friend of her father.

NOTES

- "Kauffman encountered challenges of her own; in 1767, she was tricked into marriage by a bigamous fake count, a scandal that could easily have scuppered her career."¹

REFERENCES

1. <https://www.apollo-magazine.com/angelica-kauffman-history-painting/>



Nathaniel Hone the Elder (1718–1784), *The Conjuror*, 1775, 145 × 173cm, National Gallery of Ireland, full title *The Pictorial Conjuror, Displaying the Whole Art of Optical Deception*

Nathaniel Hone the Elder (1718–1784), *Sketch for The Conjuror*, 1775, 575 × 819 cm, Tate

- Just to jump ahead eight years. **Kaufman's relationship with Joshua Reynolds set tongues wagging** and their relationship was lampooned in this painting by Nathaniel Hone (pronounced 'hone' as in sharpening a blade). It created one of the greatest art scandals of the British eighteenth century.
- Hone had a successful career as a fashionable portrait painter and subject painter. This painting whose full title is *The Pictorial Conjuror, Displaying the Whole Art of Optical Deception* caused an outcry when it was submitted for exhibition at the Royal Academy, London, in 1775.
- The reason given was that it **included a nude caricature of Angelica Kauffman. This was subsequently painted over, but the**

original figure can still be seen in a sketch in Tate Britain (CLICK). I have an enlargement of the area he changed.

- The true cause of offence, however, was that the picture was seen as an attack on Kauffman's friend Joshua Reynolds, President of the Royal Academy. **His practice of borrowing poses from Old Master paintings to ennoble his portraits was seen by Hone as plagiarism.**
- **The model used for the figure of the conjuror was often employed by Reynolds.** With his long cane the conjuror summons up an abundance of Old Master prints, while in his hand is a print of Raphael's 'Diadem Madonna'. The subject, 'Truth is revealed to Man', is a pointed reference to Reynolds's artistic practice.
- In the sketch in the background is a group of cavorting nudes holding paintbrushes and palettes. **The conjuror is intended to be Reynolds and the young girl leaning on his knee is Kauffman.** However, what incensed her was the **naked woman in the background wearing black stockings.** This was a reference to a **project by Kauffman and Reynolds to decorate St Paul's cathedral.**
- After a brief showing at the Academy, it was requested that the painting be removed. **Hone was furious, and promptly withdrew from the Royal Academy.** Without delay he organised an independent display of his work, **the first one-man show ever held in the British Isles.**" (National Gallery of Ireland: Essential Guide, 2008)

NOTES

- **Hone later signed an affidavit swearing he never introduced a figure reflecting on Angelica Kauffman.** It has been suggested instead that it is an all out attack on Reynolds open and recommended practice of borrowing from the Old Masters. The

open books title is "ADVANTAGE/EOUSCOPIES/FROM VARIOUS/MAS..." and his wand points towards an open fire. All the Old Master prints are being cast into the flames by a demon at the top. **The prints relate to paintings exhibited by Reynolds over the previous two years**, Michelangelo's *Aminadab*, the basis for Reynolds's *Count Ugolino and his Children*, displayed in 1773; an etching after Carlo Maratta's *Infant Christ*, used for his *Infant Jupiter*, exhibited in 1774; Francesco Romanelli's *The Slumbering Silenus*, the model for Reynolds's portrait of the *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen* displayed the previous year. The previous December **Reynolds asserted** during his famous *Discourses on Art* "**no man need be ashamed of copying the ancients**".

- Hone was born in Ireland, moved to England as a young man, married the daughter of the Duke of Argyll and was a founder member of the Royal Academy in 1768.
- The conjuror was modelled by a model that Reynolds frequently used.
- The six pointed double-triangle star was associated in the eighteenth century with magic and only later did it become the Star of David.

REFERENCES

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/article/mary-moser-and-angelica-kauffman> (see letter from Kaufmann)

<https://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/hone-sketch-for-the-conjuror-t00938>

<https://chronicle250.com/1775>



Francesco Romanelli (1610-62), *Slumbering Silenus Tied up with Tendrils*, 1632-33

Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen*, 1774, Tate

- Here is one example. "They [the prints] include, just below the group of naked figures, an engraving after the ***Slumbering Silenus Tied up with Tendrils*** by Francesco Romanelli (1610-62), which Reynolds had used as a source for his group portrait, *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen* (Tate N00079) of 1774." (Tate)

ELEVATED PORTRAITS TO HISTORY PAINTING

- The term 'history painting' was introduced by the French Royal Academy in the seventeenth century. It was seen as the most important type (or 'genre'), of painting above portraiture, the depiction of scenes from daily life (called genre painting), landscape and still life painting. (See the glossary page for genres to find out more).
- The style considered appropriate to use for history painting was classical and idealised – known as the '**grand style**' – and the result

was known overall as High Art.

- **Grand manner** is an English term used widely from the eighteenth century to describe what was considered to be the highest style of art in academic theory – a style based on an idealised, classical approach
- The term grand manner was given currency by Sir Joshua Reynolds and extensively discussed in his ***Discourses on Art*** – fifteen lectures delivered to students at Royal Academy between 1769 and 1790. Reynolds argued that painters **should not slavishly copy nature but seek a generalised and ideal form**. This 'gives what is called the grand style to invention, to composition, to expression, and even to colouring and drapery' (Fourth Discourse). In practice it meant drawing on the style of ancient Greek and Roman (classical) art and the Italian Renaissance masters such as Raphael.
- **Grand manner was strictly used for history painting, but Reynolds adapted it very successfully to portraiture, inventing the high-art portrait.**

NOTES

- The women are, left to right, **Barbara** (preparing for marriage), **Elizabeth** (engaged) and **Ann** (married). Daughters of a rich landowner with an estate in Ireland and who lived in Scotland. The painting was commissioned by the fiancé of Elizabeth.



Domenichino (1581–1641),
The Cumaean Sibyl, c.
1617, 123 × 94 cm, Galleria
Borghese, Rome



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–
1807), *Cumaeen Sibyl* (after
Domenichino), c. 1763, 97.7 ×
74.9 cm, National Museum of
Women in the Arts,
Washington D.C.

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Cumaeen Sibyl* (after Domenichino), c. 1763, 97.7 × 74.9 cm, National Museum of Women in the Arts, Washington D.C.

Zampieri Domenico called Domenichino (1581–1641), *The Cumaean Sibyl*, c. 1617, 123 × 94 cm, Galleria Borghese, Rome

- This is an **early copy by Kauffman of a work by Domenichino** now in the Gallery Borghese. The Cumaean Sibyl or prophetess was the most famous sibyl in ancient Rome as she is alleged to have lived in a Greek colony near Naples. She was painted by Raphael and on the Sistine Chapel by Michelangelo. In the Middle Ages she was considered to have prophesied the birth of Christ. The figure is depicted with a viola da gamba and a music book, because traditionally in antiquity sibyls sang their prophecies to the accompaniment of musical instruments.

REFERENCES

<https://galleriaborghese.beniculturali.it/en/opere/sibyl-2/>

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807),
Penelope at Her Loom, 1764, 169 ×
118cm, Brighton and Hove
Museums and Art Galleries



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Penelope at Her Loom*, 1764, 169 × 118cm, Brighton and Hove Museums and Art Galleries

- This is *Penelope at Her Loom*. Kauffman did paint men but she also circumvented restrictions on women studying the male nude by **producing female-centred compositions**, often on subjects from ancient literary sources such as the *Odyssey* that had seldom (if ever) been painted before, as with *Penelope at Her Loom* (1764).
- **Penelope was the mythical wife of Odysseus who had left to fight the Trojan War.** She waited patiently for **twenty years for him to return** and after several years most assumed he was dead and suitors appeared who wanted to marry her. To keep the suitors at bay she claimed she could not marry until she had completed weaving a shroud for the future funeral of **his father Laertes**. Each night she would carefully unravel the work she had done the that day so she never finished the shroud and so could never marry.
- **She is waiting sadly and you can see tears in her eyes.** **Odysseus's dog Argos is also sad.** He was young when Odysseus left and when he finally returns the dog is weak and old but

recognises him immediately despite Odysseus wearing a disguise.

- **The bow also belongs to Odysseus** and it is so powerful that only he can bend it to string it. He return in disguise to test Penelope's faithfulness and then to prove his identity he strings the bow. He then uses the bow to slay Penelope's suitors.

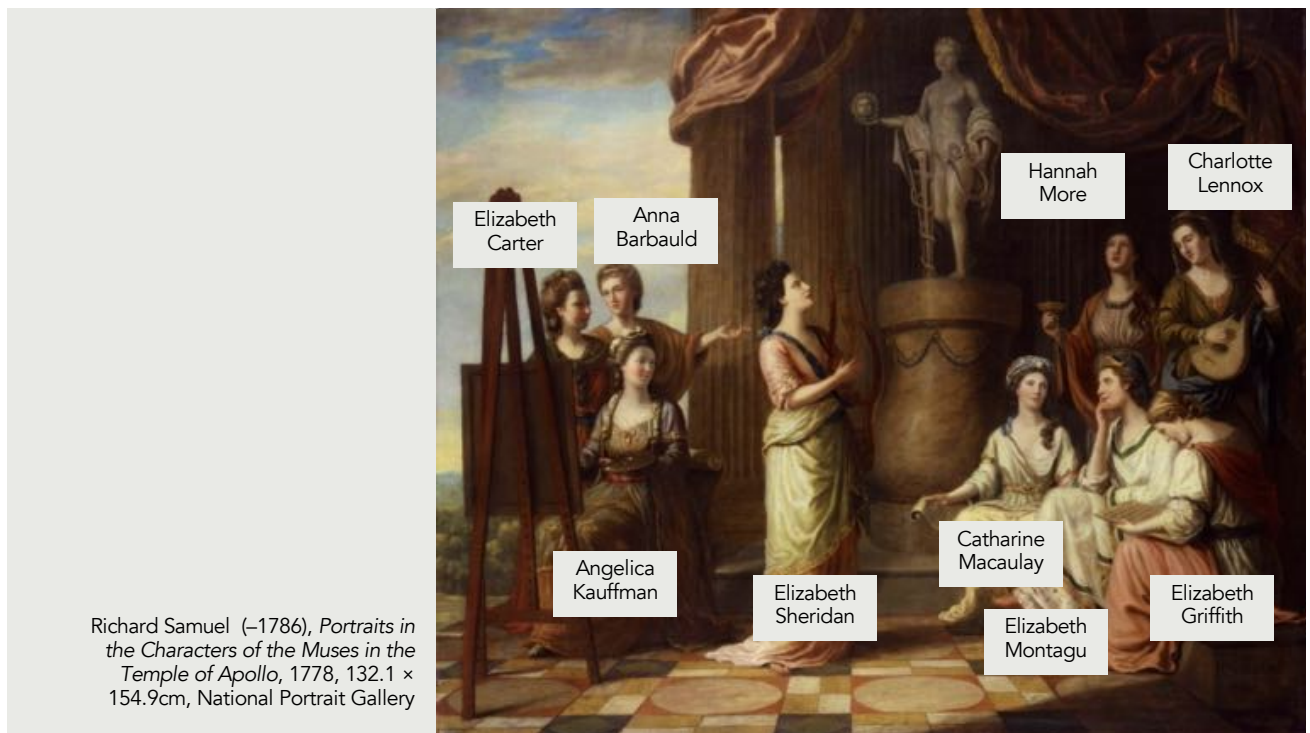


Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Hector taking leave of Andromache*, 1768, 157.5 × 201cm,
Saltram, Devon

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Hector taking leave of Andromache*, 1768, 157.5 × 201cm, Saltram, Devon

- Kauffman painted **history paintings with men**. This is **one of the four** history paintings she submitted to the just founded Royal Academy.
- Let me first explain what is going on and then the significance of the painting.
- It is called ***Hector taking leave of Andromache*** (pronounced 'an-dro-muh-kee'). Andromache was the wife of Hector and became famous for her fidelity and virtue and she came to **represent the suffering of women**. In Greek myth the Greeks waged war on Troy after Paris, a Prince of Troy, absconded with Helen, the wife of the king of Sparta. Hector was also a Prince of Troy and happily married to Andromache with children. He was **their greatest warrior** and had killed many Greek warriors. Here he is saying goodbye to Andromache and his children, we know for the last time as **he will be killed by the greatest Greek warrior Achilles. Achilles was later killed by Paris who shot him in the ankle with an arrow.**

Achilles was invulnerable except for his ankle as his mother held him by the ankle when she dipped him in the River Styx as a baby. Thus we have the term 'Achilles heel', the one weak point.



Richard Samuel (–1786), *Portraits in the Characters of the Muses in the Temple of Apollo*, 1778, 132.1 × 154.9cm, National Portrait Gallery

Left to right, standing: Elizabeth Carter, Anna Barbauld, Elizabeth Sheridan (née Linley), Hannah More and Charlotte Lennox.

Left to right, seated: **Angelica Kauffman**, Catharine Macaulay, Elizabeth Montagu and Elizabeth Griffith

- I have said how difficult a career was for women but I don't want to give the impression that **all women were excluded from intellectual careers**. There were the **blue-stockings**. These were a group of women who in the mid-18th century held conversations to which they invited men.
- Interestingly the term 'blue stockings' comes not from the stockings worn by the women but from those of **one of the men** they invited. He was the **botanist Benjamin Stillingfleet** and he declined to come as he did not own the appropriate clothing. He was told to come in his everyday worsted blue stockings which he did. The name Bluestocking or actually **Bas Bleu** (pronounced 'ba-bler')

became the nickname for the group.

- (CLICK) There were actually rival groups and this one was led by **Elizabeth Montague on the right**. She is surrounded by worthies or what Horace Walpole called 'petticoateries'.
- On the left are the classicist **Elizabeth Carter** and the poet **Anna Barbauld** standing behind our **Angelica Kauffman**. In the centre is **Elizabeth Sheridan** the singer and sitting on the right the historian **Catharine Macaulay** and **Elizabeth Griffith** the dramatist, fiction writer and actress. Behind them are the playwright and anti-slavery campaigner **Hannah More** and **Charlotte Lennox**, the Scottish novelist, playwright and poet

NOTES

- In Hellenistic literature there were nine muses:
 - Calliope (epic poetry)
 - Clio (history)
 - Euterpe (flutes and music)
 - Thalia (comedy and pastoral poetry)
 - Melpomene (tragedy)
 - Terpsichore (dance)
 - Erato (love poetry and lyric poetry)
 - Polyhymnia (hymns and sacred poetry)
 - Urania (astronomy)
- **Elizabeth Montagu** (1718-1800) was a British social reformer, patron of the arts, salonnière, literary critic and writer, who helped to organize and lead the Blue Stockings Society. Her parents were both from **wealthy families with strong ties to the British peerage** and learned life.
- "**Nine contemporary creative women** are depicted dressed in fashionable classical-style robes beneath a monumental statue of

the god, and presented as members of a modern pantheon of arts and letters. This network of writers, scholars, artists and performers, are unusual as all of them – except for **Elizabeth Montagu**, literary critic and Blue-stocking hostess – earned a living from their work. The singer **Elizabeth Ann Sheridan is in the centre, holding a lyre**. The artist **Angelica Kauffmann sits at an easel painting** a work we cannot see, her palette in hand. Other women include the **historian Catharine Macaulay, the playwright and anti-slavery campaigner Hannah More** and the **classicist Elizabeth Carter**. "¹

- On the far right is **Elizabeth Griffith** dramatist, fiction writer and actress and standing behind Kauffman is **Anna Barbauld**, the poet. And finally, standing at the far right at the back is **Charlotte Lennox**, the Scottish novelist, playwright and poet. These are the feminists of their time and Kauffmann was right in the centre of the 'Bluestocking' movement.

REFERENCES

1. https://www.npg.org.uk/assets/migrated_assets/docs/learning/digital/InFocus_AngelicaKauffmann.pdf

Pierre Antoine Martini
after Johann Heinrich
Ramberg, *The Exhibition
of the Royal Academy
1787*, 1787, hand-
coloured etching, 37.8 x
53.2 cm, British Museum



Pierre Antoine Martini after Johann Heinrich Ramberg, *The Exhibition of the Royal Academy 1787*, 1787, hand-coloured etching, 37.8 x 53.2 cm, British Museum

- I also wanted to say something about **the intense competition amongst men** which made it even harder for women to enter the fray.
- This is the **Summer Exhibition of the Royal Academy** where paintings were shown **frame touching frame from dado rail to cornice**. The Summer Exhibition was held in the great room at Somerset House which has recently been restored. The nobility gathered in a room whose walls were covered with paintings. In the centre of the room is the Prince of Wales (1762-1830, patron of the arts, the future George IV) standing next to Joshua Reynolds with his ear trumpet.
- **Paintings could be hung up high**, which was called being **skied** or put in the best position just above eye level with the bottom of the picture **eight foot from the ground**, known as '**on the line**'. Note that the people in this engraving are smaller than they should be.

- **Most of the paintings at this time were portraits** as this was what most patrons wanted, a picture of themselves looking or grand or sometimes of their wives and occasionally of their favourite child. Large, imposing portraits were known as '**swagger portraits**'.
- There was a **hanging committee** and Academicians fought over who should appear 'on the line'. Academicians were guaranteed a place on the wall for a limited number of paintings and members of the public, including women, could submit works. It is in fact the world's oldest open submission exhibition and it has happened every year since 1769.
- Kaufman **did not exhibit in 1787** when this engraving was made. She and her father had **returned to Italy in 1780 after 15 years in England** but this did not stop her sending three history paintings that were exhibited the year before and two the following year. Perhaps she sent none because she was rebuilding her studio that year although we know she painted other pictures.

NOTES

- The pictures are numbered and can be identified from the R.A. Catalogue, the two largest and most conspicuous are, on the left, '26', '**The assassination of David Riccio**' [sometimes Rizzio] by John Opie (1761-1807, a Cornish historical and portrait painter), R.A. elect, and, on the right, '154', '**Walworth killing Wat Tyler**', by James Northcote (1746-1831, English painter and student of Joshua Reynolds), also R.A. elect, the latter resembling a caricature of the grand manner.
 - David Rizzio was Mary Queen of Scots secretary and he was stabbed 56 times by her husband Lord Darnley and his accomplices as he was jealous of their friendship. Mary was seven months pregnant with the future James VI and

Darnley suspected Rizzio.

- William Walworth was Lord Mayor of London and killed Wat Tyler in Smithfield in 1381.
- These paintings were thought to have saved the exhibition from mediocrity. Regarding history painting one critic wrote "**There is something very laudable in a private individual encouraging, in so munificent a manner, young English artists in historical painting; as it has been a perpetual opprobrium thrown upon us by foreigners, and not without foundation, that no paintings please in this country but copies of our own countenances.**"[1].
- From 1780 The Royal Academy occupied the North or Strand block of Somerset House, in rooms designed by Sir William Chambers until 1837 when it moved to the new National Gallery building in Trafalgar Square. Inscribed over the entrance to the Great Room, in which the annual Royal Academy summer exhibition was held, was the inscription **ΟΥΔΕΙΣ ΑΜΟΥΣΟΣ ΕΙΣΙΤΩ** ("Let no stranger to the Muses enter" in Ancient Greek) and shown here at the bottom of the print.

SUMMER EXHIBITION

- The number of pictures increased each year from 547 in 1781 to 1,165 in 1821 so they had to be hung frame to frame. The position was determined by the Hanging Committee and the position of a painting was critical to it being seen. If it was too high, known as being 'skied' it could not be appreciated and the ideal position was 'on the line' with the bottom edge eight foot from the floor. This position was occupied by 'swagger' portraits and history paintings. Small pieces and pieces by lesser known artists were skied and we shall see later that Constable created his 'six footers' to be large enough to be placed on the line. Although Thomas Gainsborough was a founding member he

broke with the Academy in 1784 when his portraits of the royal family were skied.

NOTES

[1] *The Gazetteer and New Daily Advertiser*, 1 May 1787

<https://chronicle250.com/1787>

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/the-exhibition-of-the-royal-academy-1787-1>

https://www.britishmuseum.org/collection/object/P_1871-1209-591

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Dr. John Morgan*, 1764, 144.1 × 108.3cm, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institute



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Dr. John Morgan*, 1764, 144.1 × 108.3cm, National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institute

- One of Kauffman's **fellow students in Florence** was the **American Benjamin West**, who later became **President of the Royal Academy**. Unlike the British, Americans **visited Italy for serious professional reasons**. Another American who sat for Kauffman in 1764 was **Dr. John Morgan** (1735-1789) who was there to continue his medical training. When he returned to America the following year he played a key role in establishing America's **first medical school** and during the **Revolutionary War** (1775-1783, also called the American Revolution) he was director-general of the Hospital of the Army.
- Kauffman's produced some **800 oil paintings on canvas or copper, 13 frescos, 400 drawings, a small number of early pastels, and 41 etchings**. She worked extremely hard and on this occasion asked for medical advice from Dr Morgan. He wrote about many years later "She had been labouring for some time under an

indisposition for which she was pleased to take my advice. The seat of her disorder was in her stomach and proceeded from indigestion. I believe it arose from her sedentary life and close application to painting." So we know the hard work was effecting her health and she remained of a delicate disposition but continued to work hard.

ANTICISM



Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), *The Artist Moved to Despair by the Grandeur of Antique Fragments*, 1778-1779, Kunsthhaus, Zurich



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

Henry Fuseli (1741-1825), *The Artist Moved to Despair by the Grandeur of Antique Fragments* (1778-1779), red chalk on sepia wash. On display at Kunsthhaus, Zurich

John Constable (1776-1837), *The Haywain*, 1821, 130.2 × 185.4cm, National Gallery

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

Let me take another detour into art historical terms—NeoClassical versus Romantic.

- **Neoclassicism** developed as a reaction against the Rococo and developed **about 1750**. It was inspired by the classical period of ancient Greece and Rome. Neoclassical literally means 'new, of the highest rank'. It was motivated by objectivity, reason and the intellect. It embodies the ideals of the eighteenth-century Age of Enlightenment (1685-1815) sometimes called **the Age of Reason which emphasised reason over superstition and science over blind faith**. It is typified by order, calm, harmony, balance,

idealisation, and rationality.

- **Romanticism** developed between **1780 and 1830** but was influential long after that. It developed as a reaction against the neoclassical and stresses human creativity, nature and emotions and feelings. It values emotion and the imagination and is influenced by **the medieval and the oriental**.
- **So which is which here?** The one on the left shows feeling but the predominate image is of a classical statue or part of what was a gigantic classical statue, so it is NeoClassical. The one on the right is a clear case of Romanticism. It is *The Haywain* by John Constable. In fact, **John Constable specifically named Angelica Kauffman as the reason the English School would not be able to make progress until her influence had diminished.**
- I have given you very clear cut cases here but it is often not so clear. There is a lot of crossover, for example, Henry Fuseli, 1781, *The Nightmare*, was a classical artist whose themes often anticipated the Romantic.
- (One author who explored the differences was Jane Austen in *Sense and Sensibility* (1811) written as NeoClassicism was giving way to Romanticism. Sense is the rational, prudent NeoClassicism of Elinor Dashwood and sensibility the emotional, feeling Romantic sympathy of Marianne Dashwood. The novel keeps these two conflicting approaches in balance favouring neither one nor the other.)
- **Neoclassical artists followed the strict hierarchy of painting and so valued the history painting as the highest form of art. Romanticism was a revolutionary art form that rejected existing categories and valued the expression of feelings and nature.**
- Sir Joshua Reynolds, Benjamin West and Angelica Kauffman were NeoClassical artists. William Blake, J.M.W. Turner and John

Constable were Romantic artists. Later phases of Romanticism were the Pre-Raphaelites and the Symbolists.

Rinaldo and Armida,
1771, 130.8 × 153 cm,
Yale Center for British
Art, Paul Mellon
Collection



Rinaldo and Armida, 1771, 130.8 × 153 cm, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

- **Armida is a Saracen sorceress who lulls the crusader Rinaldo into a deep sleep** intending to kill him but before she strikes the hero she falls in love and transports him in her flying chariot to her magical palace on the island of Fortuna. Here Rinaldo forgets the war and happily lives with the enchantress until his friends come to rescue him. Here we see him on the island happily playing with Armida.
- In 1771 the composer Antonio Salieri (1750-1825) premiered an operetta in Vienna called *Armida* about the story of Armida and Rinaldo.
- Also this year, Kauffman took a six month trip to Ireland where she painted the Irish gentry. She also exhibited two history paintings of English history—***Vortigern, King of Britain, Enamoured with Rowena at the Battle of Hengist, the Saxon General, Eleanora Sucking the Venom out of the Wound of her Husband, King Edward I*** both now hung on the stairs at Saltram House. The Society

of Artists had been offering a prize since 1760 for paintings of British history and ironically it was the Swiss Angelica Kauffman and the American Benjamin West who first exhibited such subjects.

Woman in Turkish Dress, c.
1771-74, 62.2 × 49.5cm, Saint
Louis Art Museum



Angelica Kauffman, ~*Woman in Turkish Dress*, c. 1771-74, 62.2 × 49.5cm, Saint Louis Art Museum

THE OTHER

- We don't know the **woman in the Turkish dress** but foreign attire was popular during the 18th century as it was regarded as **exotic**. Kauffman painted several works showing clothing worn in the Ottoman Empire. The clothing was simply appropriated that is there was **no need for accuracy** it was worn to invoke an exotic, foreign feel and perhaps to convey the idea of colonial ownership over all non-European cultures.
- We believe it may have been painted as an advertisement to encourage the women in London to have their portrait painted in this exotic style.
- This type of **appropriation** was described in a groundbreaking book by **Edward Said called *Orientalism* in 1978**. He argues that the West constructed an 'Orient' in history. Literature, art, music and popular culture that represented the Orient as the Other. The representation had little to do with the actual history and culture of

the Orient but fulfilled various needs in the West such as to create an exciting, sexual, exotic world.

- As this represents the Orient it could be seen as an early Romantic work but I would see it as a neoClassical artists painting a portrait of a woman wearing the latest fashion.

Morning Amusement, 1773, 74 × 63 cm,
The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art,
Moscow



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Morning Amusement*, 1773, 74 × 63 cm, The Pushkin State Museum of Fine Art, Moscow

- This is **another example of exotic dress with a full-length figure doing embroidery**. Kauffman painted a number of women in Eastern clothes intended as an imitation of the garments worn in a Turkish harem. It is believed that this created an intimate exclusively female setting appropriate to a room in which a lady might receive female visitors, a relaxed intimacy that could perhaps be more easily achieved in the studio of a woman artist.
- **Lady Mary Wortley Montagu** travelled with her husband to Turkey in 1716 and recorded the minutiae of the world she found. She was curious and open-minded and on one occasion she described a Turkish bath for women only. There were **200 women completely naked** who were all charming with none of the "disdainful smiles or satirical whispers" that would be found in British society if a woman, namely herself, appeared who was not dressed in exactly the correct fashion of the day. She found herself admiring their skin and their bodies and reflected "that if it was the fashion to go naked, the face would hardly be observed".

REFERENCES

- https://www.swansea.ac.uk/visualanthropology/projects/004_Montagu/cornucopia.htm



Lady Georgiana Spencer, Henrietta Spencer and George Viscount Althorp, c. 1766, 113.6 x 144.8 cm, private collection



Portrait of Lady Georgiana, Lady Henrietta Frances and George John Spencer, Viscount Althorp, 1774, Althorp

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Portrait of Lady Georgiana, Lady Henrietta Frances and George John Spencer, Viscount Althorp, 1774, Althorp*

A portrait of the three children of the first Earl Spencer:

Lady Georgiana Spencer (later Duchess of Devonshire) (7 June 1757 – 30 March 1806);

Lady Henrietta Spencer (later Countess of Bessborough) (16 June 1761 – 11 November 1821);

and Viscount Althorp (later 2nd Earl Spencer) (1 September 1758 – 10 November 1834).

Notes: In this image, Lady Henrietta was previously misidentified as Elizabeth Cavendish, Duchess of Devonshire (Lady Elizabeth Foster), and the painting misattributed to Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830)

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Lady Georgiana Spencer, Henrietta Spencer and George Viscount Althorp, c. 1766, 113.6 x 144.8 cm, private collection*

- Kauffman also produced a **limited number of group portraits**.

Three were begun on her trip to **Ireland in 1771** and finished in her London studio. She fuses in one picture the form of public representation she used for portraits of men with the more intimate and private manner she used for female portraits. This is a good example, by showing John, Lord Althorp, in a contemplative mood she creates a sympathetic exchange between him and his sisters. The cross-legged pose had by this date become the archetypical one for portraits of country gentlemen ([1], p. 106).

- (CLICK) Kauffman had painting this group of the same children eight years previously.

REFERENCES

1. Wendy Wassyng Roworth (ed.), *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England* (London: Reaktion Books, 1992)

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



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

- This is a well known portrait but **we don't know the name of the woman**. When it entered the Tate collection in 1967 it was thought to be a self-portrait but subsequent research showed it was painted in Britain (1766-81) and is **not Kauffman** so the current title was assumed.
- **We assume she is a blue stocking** as she wears classical robes and sits by a statue of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom. The book upon the table and the writing materials in her hand suggest that she is a writer. Eighteenth-century female intellectuals such as the historian **Catherine Macaulay** (1731–1791) and the writer **Elizabeth Montagu** (1718–1800) have been suggested but the accessories were widely used in portraits.

REFERENCES

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

Henrietta Laura Pulteney (1766–1808), c. 1777, 74.3 × 61.8cm, The Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney Street, Bath



Henrietta Laura Pulteney (1766–1808), c. 1777, 74.3 × 61.8cm, The Holburne Museum, Great Pulteney Street, Bath

- **Henrietta Laura Johnstone** was the only child of **William Johnstone** (1729-1805), later **Sir William Pulteney**, 5th Baronet. The family was **extremely wealthy** and when she was 16 her **mother, Frances Pulteney, died and she inherited her mother's estates**. She was educated in a convent in Paris until she was 17. Her father procured a peerage for her and she became Baroness of Bath and later Countess of Bath.
- This is a portrait of her when she was eleven.

*Zeuxis Selecting Models
for His Painting of Helen of
Troy, c. 1778, Annmary
Brown Memorial Library,
Brown University, Rhode
Island*

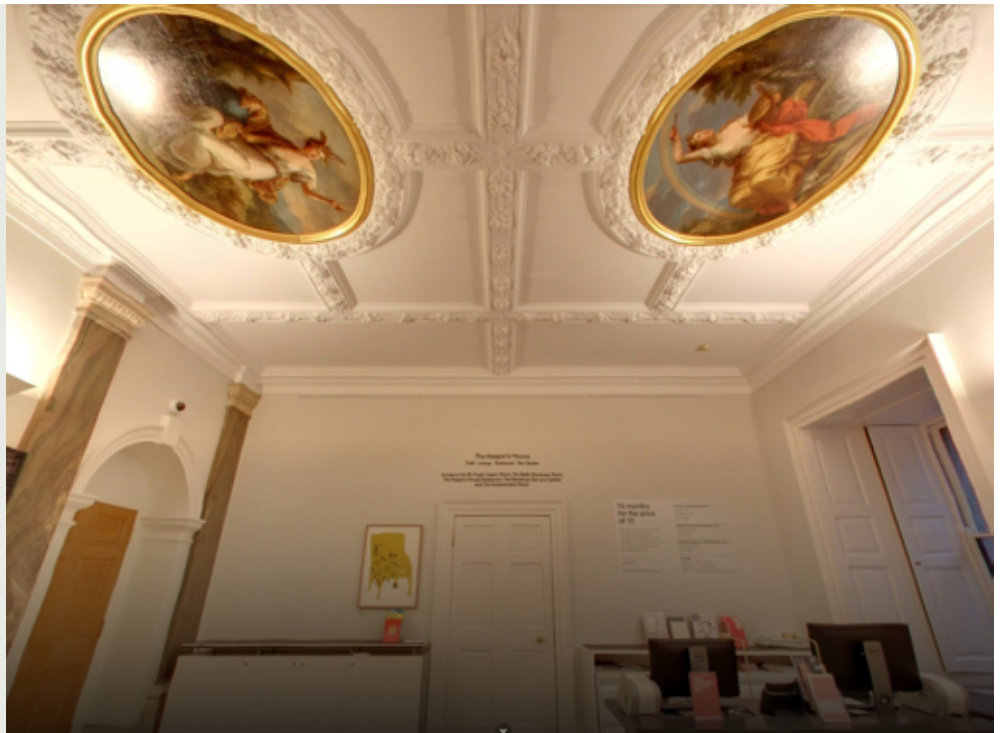


Zeuxis Selecting Models for His Painting of Helen of Troy, c. 1778, Annmary Brown Memorial Library, Brown University, Rhode Island

- The story from ancient Greece was that the artist Zeuxis (5th century BC) was asked to paint Helen of Troy, the most beautiful woman in the world. Zeuxis chose the five most beautiful women of Croton and then selected the most beautiful part from each women. This deconstruction of beauty into components is both demeaning to the women and women in general but it also draws attention to the Platonic ideal of beauty which was believed to be an ideal that stood outside the world of mere reality and so could only be reached imperfectly in this world.

- No paintings by Zeuxis survive but written records claim he was renowned for his realism. He is also believed to have introduced still life into painting. One story is that when he unveiled a painting of grapes the birds flew down to peck them. Another story is that he entered a competition with a rival Parrhasius. When Parrhasius asked Zeuxis to pull back the curtain to reveal his painting he suddenly realised the curtain was painted.
- Zeuxis was commissioned by an old woman to paint Aphrodite but she insisted on modelling for the goddess. Zeuxis was so amused by the humorous way he painted her that he died laughing.

Foyer of the Royal
Academy at
Burlington House



- When you first enter the **foyer of the Royal Academy** at Burlington House and look up you will see a group of paintings by Benjamin West (*The Graces Unveiling Nature* and the four elements), the former President of the Royal Academy.
- If you then **turn right** you see these two paintings by Kauffman above the door at the far end. Turn left and you will see two more the other end. She was commissioned in 1778 to produce four paintings — ***Colour, Design, Invention and Composition, the 'Elements of Art'*** as described by Joshua Reynolds in his ***Discourses on Art*** (published 1788).



Angelica Kauffman RA (1741-1807), *Colour*, 1778-80, 126 x 148.5 cm

- This is the first of the paintings. At the moment it has been **replaced by tribute by Sarah Pickstone** to Angelica Kauffman called *The Rainbow* and this painting is outside the café.
- We see the **muse of Painting** represented as a young woman artist reaching above her head to **collect colour** from the rainbow. In her other hand she holds a palette with a single daub of white paint. She represents Painting or Colour, as one of the elements of art. A **chameleon** at her feet represents the diverse colours found in nature. Her hair and dress are loose leaving the figure partially unclothed.
- In this work and *Design* the figures are physically engaged in the **act of creation** whereas in *Composition* and *Invention* the figures are **engaged in reflection**.
- Some have suggested this is a **self-portrait** as well as classical muse but this is **unlikely** as we know she strongly protected her self-image and the semi-clad figure would have been inappropriate in this context.

- Painting is typically described as beautiful with wavy, thick hair holding a palette in one hand and a brush in the other. This description fits Kauffman's painting, but she unusually uses the rainbow and chameleon as symbols of colour; instead they were traditionally used in iconography representing Air.
- It has been suggested that each of the four paintings represents different stages in the artist's life starting with Colour as the "blooming young Virgin".

NOTES

- Linberg argues that these figures represent self-portraits as well as allegories, which is something Kauffman is known to have done in other works. She writes that Kauffman "makes use of a combination, impossible for the male artist, of self-portrait and Muse" (Linberg, p.27). Although Kauffman did portray strong, working women, as she herself wanted to be viewed, it is unlikely that she was creating explicit self-portraits. The figure in Colour is partially unclothed and it is unlikely Kauffman would have represented herself in this way, as she was fiercely protective of her reputation. Furthermore, in his 1781 guide to Somerset House, Baretti describes the four figures as being at different stages of life: Colour is a "blooming young Virgin"; Invention is "in the flower of her age"; and Composition is "somewhat more advanced in life than Invention" (Baretti, p.26).
- The paintings were commissioned for the Royal Academy's Council Room in the institution's first purpose-built home in Somerset House in a design by Sir William Chambers RA. They were part of a scheme with paintings by Benjamin West in the centre including *The Graces Unveiling Nature* (03/1127) and the four elements: *Earth* (03/1125), *Air* (03/1123), *Water* (03/1124) and *Fire* (03/1126). While Kauffman represents active female figures, West's are passive. Kauffman was paid £100 for her four

paintings and West £125 for his five. 12 portraits by Biagio Rebecca surrounded the scheme, but these are now lost. *Design and Composition* can be seen on the ceiling of the Council Room in Henry Singleton's painting *The Royal Academicians in General Assembly* from 1795 (03/1310).

- When the Royal Academy left Somerset House in 1837 to a shared building with the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square, the ceiling paintings were transferred. While documents in the Royal Academy's archive indicate the paintings were displayed in the Council Room in Trafalgar Square, as they had been at Somerset House (Council minutes XX, 1899, p.431 and GA minutes, 1899, pp.57-58), Hutchison writes that West's paintings were in the Council Room but Kauffman's were in the library (Hutchison, 1986, p.88). A drawing in the National Archives from 1832 of the design for the Council Room at Trafalgar Square shows space allocated for both the West and Kauffman paintings (WORKS 33/939). However, as the drawing dates from before the Royal Academy moved, it is unclear whether this scheme was used.
- The ceiling paintings were later transferred to the ceiling of the entrance hall for the Royal Academy at Burlington House in a design by T.G. Jackson. The proposal to hang them there was included in the General Assembly minutes on 20 July 1899, 32 years after the Royal Academy had moved to Burlington House. It was explained "since the removal of the academy to Burlington House [the paintings] had been lying unused in the basement, it became a question whether something might not be done to further improve the somewhat mean aspect of the Hall" (GA minutes, 1899, pp.57-58). " (Royal Academy notes on *Colour* from their website)

REFERENCES

- Joseph Baretti, *A Guide Through the Royal Academy*, London:

Royal Academy of Arts, 1781, p.26.

- Sidney Hutchison, *The History of the Royal Academy 1768-1986*, 1986 (2nd ed.), London: Robert Royce.
- Wendy Rasyng Roworth, *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England*, London: Reaktion Books, 1992, p.68.
- Anna Lena Lindberg, *Touching the rainbow*, pp. 23-31, published online: 23 Apr 2010
- <https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/colour>
- <https://drrichardstemp.com/2020/05/05/day-48-colour-and-design/>
- <https://artsandculture.google.com/story/step-inside-the-royal-academy/eAlyKnbfQeJKlw>



Belvedere Torso, Vatican Museums, 1st century BC or AD copy of an early 2nd century BC statue



Design, 1778-80, 126 x 148.5 cm, Royal Academy

Angelica Kauffman, *Design*, 1778-80, 126 x 148.5 cm, Royal Academy
Belvedere Torso, Vatican Museums, 1st century BC or AD copy of an early 2nd century BC statue

- In this painting, **Design is shown using the famous Belvedere Torso** (shown mirrored) as a model to indicate the embrace and adherence to classical values and practices.
- In *Design* and *Colour* the figures are physically engaged in the act of creation whereas in *Composition* and *Invention* the figures are engaged in reflection. In *Invention* the figure looks to the sky for inspiration and in *Composition* she is deep in thought with her head in her hands. When displayed in the ceiling, the paintings are paired, with one practical and one theoretical at each side of the room.
- Design can be seen to represent the Italian term **Disegno**, a term closer to drawing today. Disegno is described as a young man holding a mirror and a compass. A **compass** is found in Kauffman's *Composition* – the other practical element. It is interesting to note that, although tradition may have made some of the figures male,

Kauffman created all female figures.

- In Renaissance Italy there were **several debates about the visual arts called *paragone* ('comparisons')**. One of these was between the relative strengths of **painting and sculpture** and another between **painting and literature**. Within painting there was a debate between whether ***disegno* (design or drawing) or *colore* (or *colorito*, colour)** was the most important aspect of painting. *Disegno* was associated with Florentine painting and *colore* with Venetian painting, particularly Titian.

NOTES

- Her rolled up sleeves are reminiscent of the self-portrait by Artemisia Gentileschi.
- The Belvedere torso was found in Rome in the 1430s. On the front of the base is carved "Apollonios, son of Nestor, Athenian". It is now believed to be a 1st century BC copy of an early 2nd century BC original.

REFERENCES

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/design>

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/cast-of-belvedere-torso>



Invention, 1778-80, 126 × 148.5 cm, Royal Academy

- In *Invention* the figure looks to the **sky for inspiration** and in *Composition* she is deep in thought with her head in her hands. When displayed in the ceiling, the paintings are paired, with one practical and one theoretical at each side of the room.
- Kauffman represented **strong female bodies** inspired by examples from the Italian Renaissance. Linberg writes that Kauffman's women "**radiate both spiritual and physical vitality, in a way that, at least on the face of it, has a resemblance to, for example, Michelangelo's athletic sibyl in the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel, which Angelica Kauffman must have seen and studied, or to Artemisia Gentileschi's history painting**" (Linberg, p.26).
- Artists and viewers of art in the 18th century would have been well versed in reading iconography and Kauffman's works contain many symbols sourced from classical iconographic traditions. She would have seen dictionaries of iconography such as Cesare Ripa's *Iconologia*.
- Kauffman's *Invention* follows the aesthetic tradition described by

Ripa as a young woman, dressed in white, as *Invention* is pure. In *Iconologia* invention or science has wings on her head representing the elevating nature of invention.

REFERENCES

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/invention>

Composition, 1778-80, 126 × 148.5 cm, Royal Academy



Composition, 1778-80, 126 × 148.5 cm, Royal Academy

- *Composition* looks **deep in thought** and leans on the base of a column. On the column is a **chess board symbolising intellectual and strategic thinking**. The **compass** in her right hand **refers to the precision needed for accurate composition** and she sits on the border between nature and architecture. On the left are pencil and paper used to plan a composition.
- Kauffman was **paid £100 for all four paintings** which were originally in the Council Room at Somerset House.

REFERENCES

<https://www.royalacademy.org.uk/art-artists/work-of-art/composition>



Angelica Kauffmann (1741-1807), *Poor Maria*, 1781



Joseph Wright of Derby (1734–1797), *Maria and her Dog Silvio*, 1781, 160 × 115cm, Derby Museum and Art Gallery

Angelica Kauffmann (1741-1807), *Poor Maria*, 1781, from Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, oil on copper, 31.8 x 26.7 cm

Albrecht Dürer (1471-1528), *Melancholia I*, 1514, 24 × 18.5cm

Joseph Wright of Derby (1734–1797), *Maria and her Dog Silvio*, 1781, 160 × 115cm, Derby Museum and Art Gallery, illustrating Sterne's 'Sentimental Journey'. The model was Mrs Richard Bassano.

- This became a multi-media sensation at the time as "**In the elegant manufactories of London and Birmingham it was transferred to an incalculable variety of articles of all sorts and sizes from a Watch-case to a tea-waiter**" (J. Moser, *Memoir of the Late Angelica Kauffman*).
- The image also became a print produced by Ryland in 1779.
- It is one of the few times she painted a scene based on English literature. It depicts the heart-broken Maria originally from Laurence Sterne's *Tristram Shandy* (1759) and then her story was taken up again in *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, first published in 1768.

- (CLICK) The image echoes Dürer's *Melancholia* but there is another aspect that was important at the time. The hero Yorick while looking at her becomes conscious of the danger of **sinking so far into feeling as to lose one's reason**. This **kind of excess** would become **associated with sensibility** as the age of sense versus sensibility developed. The peril was **widely discussed in medical texts** of the period. The subject of **Maria was associated with artists inclined to depression** such as Romney and Wright of Derby and to a lesser extent Kauffman.
- (CLICK) Joseph Wright of Derby painted the same scene at the same time unleashing a flood of Marias. Between 1777 and 1819 twenty paintings of her were shown at the Royal Academy.
- There is a variant of the picture in a private collection in England.
- The work sold in 2007 at Christies for £78,000 with an estimate of £20,000-£30,000.

REFERENCES

W. Wassyng-Roworth, ed., *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England*, London, 1992, p.158.



Angelica Kauffmann (1741-1807), *Poor Maria*, 1781, from Laurence Sterne's *A Sentimental Journey through France and Italy*, oil on copper, 31.8 x 26.7 cm, sold at Christies 2007

Angelica Kauffmann (1741-1807), *Poor Maria*, 1781, Burghley House
 Print by William Wynne Ryland, After Angelica Kauffmann (1741-1807), *Maria*, 1779, etching, British Museum

- Here is a puzzle for which I have no answer. There is another version of *Maria* in Burghley House with *Maria* facing the other way and many minor differences. At first I thought Kauffman painted another version in reverse so the etching would be the same way round as the original. However, if you look at the etching from the British Museum collection produced by Wynne Ryland you will see it is closer to the left hand version and it faces the same way.
- More research is needed.

REFERENCES

W. Wassing-Roworth, ed., *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England*, London, 1992, p.158.



Mechanical painting, *Graces awakening Cupid*, by Francis Eginton, c.1778, 28.5cm diameter, after Angelica Kauffmann or the engraving of it in 1776 by Ryland, Science Museum

Calypso Calling Heaven and Earth to Witness Her Sincere Affection for Ulysses, 1778



Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Calypso Calling Heaven and Earth to Witness Her Sincere Affection for Ulysses*, 1778, sold at Christies in 2007 for £90,500

Mechanical painting, *Graces awakening Cupid*, by Francis Eginton, c.1778, 28.5cm diameter, aquatint on paper, after Angelica Kauffmann or the engraving of it in 1776 by Ryland, Science Museum

- As I have said, Kauffman was the most popular source of reproduced pictures. There is an **interesting technique** that was used to produce a copy of a painting that looked like a painting, called **mechanical painting**.
- The **nymph Calypso detained Ulysses (Greek: Odysseus)** for seven years as he was returning from the Trojan war. **Athena appealed to Zeus on Ulysses behalf and Zeus eventually ordered Calypso to release him which she reluctantly did.** In the painting she is **trying to reverse the decision by pleading** for him to stay because of her sincere affection for him. In some versions of the story **she kills herself after he leaves.** Ulysses eventually returns home to his wife Penelope and is recognised by his dog Argos.

- Mechanical painting was **invented in the 1770s by Matthew Bolton and Francis Eginton**. An copper aquatint plate was used to print onto paper. The paper print was then transferred onto canvas. This formed a tonal impression that was then coloured by hand using oil paint in an early form of painting-by-numbers. Aquatint is a type of etching that was introduced in Britain in 1772 and produces areas of tone rather than lines. The painting was first done by 'boys' and then finished by professional artists. The aim was to produce copies of an oil painting that looked identical but could be produced and sold cheaply in large volumes. **More mechanical paintings were produced of Kauffman's work than any other artist but few examples survive.**
- (CLICK) This is an example. A 10 × 8 inch copy of this painting sold for two guineas and a 50 × 40 inch version twelve guineas. Unfortunately, very few survive and they are in poor condition.

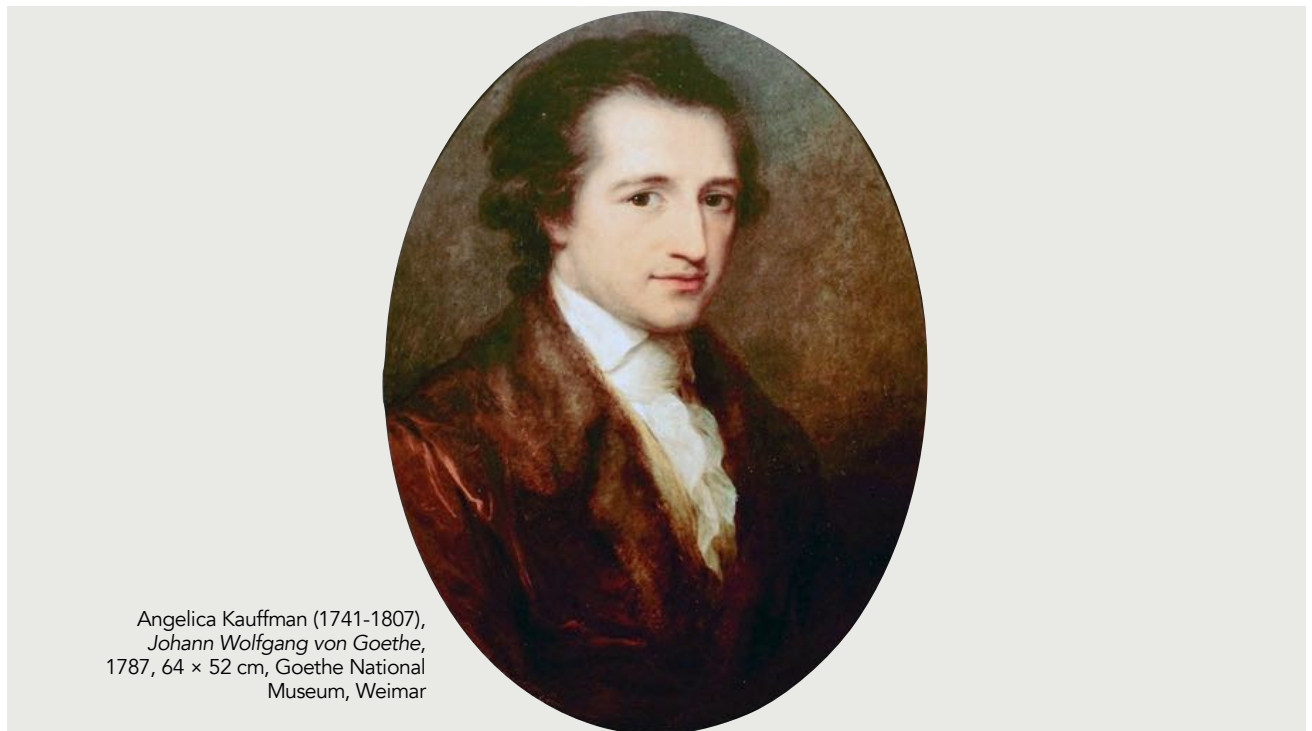
NOTES

- It has been suggested that this is one of the last paintings she produced before leaving England and Ulysses represents Kauffman who has just been released from a spell and is now able to return home.

REFERENCES

https://etheses.bham.ac.uk//id/eprint/1545/1/Fogarty_11_MPhil1.pdf (Master's thesis on mechanical painting)

W. Wassyng-Roworth, ed., *Angelica Kauffman: A Continental Artist in Georgian England*, London, 1992, pp. 160-161



Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Johann Wolfgang von Goethe*, 1787, 64 × 52 cm, Goethe national Museum, Weimar

- In **1781** she left **London** after 15 years.
- At this point her former husband, the **scoundrel de Horn** had died **so she felt free to marry**. She marries a **much older artist** who was a friend of her father, **Antonio Zucchi**. **She is a lot wealthier than him so they signed a marriage contract** (what we now call a prenup) making it clear that her assets are under her control and not his. They left London for Flanders, then Innsbruck, Verona and Padua.
- In October she was introduced to **Tsar Paul I of Russia and his wife** and Kauffman paints ***Leonardo da Vinci Dying in the Arms of Francis I***, 1782 and other works for leading noble families.
- Her husband published a catalogue of her work, ***Memorandum of Painting***, which she continued to maintain after his death. An early form of Catalogue Raisonné.
- She was a history painter and disappointed by the English preference for portraits and landscapes and she eventually returned

to the Continent.

- On the Continent she became a friend of **Johann Wolfgang von Goethe** (the famous German poet, playwright, novelist, scientist, statesman, theatre director, and critic) **who said she worked harder and accomplished more than any artist he knew.**
- She bought a villa near the papal summer residence outside Rome and is visited by her friends including Goethe.



Judgment of Paris, c. 1781, Museo de Arte de Ponce, Ponce, Puerto Rico

Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807), *Judgment of Paris*, c. 1781, 80 × 100.9 cm, Museo de Arte de Ponce, Ponce, Puerto Rico

See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Angelica_Kauffman

JUDGEMENT OF PARIS

- Eris, who was not invited to a party of the gods, got annoyed and threw a golden apple into the party inscribed 'for the fairest one'. An argument ensued and to avoid getting into the argument Zeus decided Paris, a Trojan mortal, should judge because he had just judged against his own prize bull in a competition against the gods. **The golden apple was awarded by Paris** to resolve a dispute between Hera, Athena and Aphrodite about which was the most fair, **Hera** (Roman Juno, wife of Zeus and **goddess of women and marriage**) tried to bribe Paris by making him **king of Europe and Asia**, **Athena** (Roman Minerva was the **goddess of wisdom, law, arts, warfare, etc.**) offered **wisdom and skill in war** and **Aphrodite** (Roman Venus, goddess of love) offered the **love of the world's most beautiful women Helen of Troy**, wife of Greek king Menelaus. Paris chose Aphrodite and his love of Helen **led to the Trojan Wars**. Troy was defeated by the ruse of the Trojan Horse

and **Aeneas**, a Trojan survivor, after **falling in love with Dido of Carthage** and then **deserting her, founded Rome**.

Ulysses on the Island of Circe
(1793), Angelica Kauffman.
Barrett Collection, University of
Texas at Dallas



Ulysses on the Island of Circe (1793), Angelica Kauffman. Barrett Collection, University of Texas at Dallas

- Ulysses (Greek: Odysseus) lands on an island and some of his sailors discover a palace where they are magically turned into pigs. One man escapes and warns Ulysses who is given a magic herb prevents him being turned into a pig. Instead the sorceress Circe falls in love with Ulysses and they make love for a year. Finally his crew shake him out of his trance and they all flee the island.
- Kauffman has turned Circe into a loving companion and Ulysses looks as if he has just fallen under her spell. Kauffman reinterpreted historical scenes and mythological tales from a female perspective and often finds a new and interesting angle from which to view the narrative. This echoes the words of Anne Elliot in Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, who points out that if women have generally been characterised negatively in literature, it is because "Men have had every advantage of us in telling their own story,". Kauffman turns the tables on this.

NOTES

"In *The Odyssey*, Odysseus and his crew land on Aeaea, and a team of scouts discover the palace of Circe, a witch goddess. Circe invites Odysseus's men inside for a drink and then magically turns them into pigs. One man escapes to tell Odysseus about their comrades' fate and Circe's trickery. Odysseus bravely hopes to rescue his men from Circe's enchantment; on the way to her house, Odysseus receives help from Hermes, who offers him a plan and equips him with moly, a magical herb that will protect him from Circe's witchcraft. The plan works: the moly counters Circe's magic, she swoons for Odysseus and transforms his crew from pigs back into men. Odysseus and Circe then make love. For a year. Finally, some of Odysseus's crew shake him from the madness of his long Circean interlude and compel him to resume the journey home to Ithaca." [1]

"What struck me most, however, was the way in which Kauffman's personal ambition goes hand in hand with a sense of female solidarity. She consistently foregrounds the achievements and the virtues of her own sex, as with Penelope weaving and Cleopatra grieving. In *Ulysses on the Island of Circe* (1793), she goes so far as to transform Homer's seductive sorceress into a helpful hostess. Kauffman's reinvention of history painting from a female perspective brings to mind Anne Elliot in Jane Austen's *Persuasion*, who points out that if women have generally been characterised negatively in literature, it is because men have had the advantage of telling their own story. Kauffman redresses the balance." [2]

REFERENCES

1. <https://www.ulyssesguide.com/15-circe>
2. <https://www.apollo-magazine.com/angelica-kauffman-history-painting/>

Angelica Kauffmann
(1741–1807), *Ariadne
Abandoned by Theseus*,
1774, 63.8 x 90.9 cm,
Museum of Fine Arts,
Houston



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Ariadne Abandoned by Theseus*,
1774, 63.8 x 90.9 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

This is Kauffman's interpretation of the point in the story of Theseus when he has just left in his ship and just before Bacchus arrives.

Portrait of Eleanor, Countess of Lauderdale, c. 1780, 76.2 x 63.5 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Portrait of Eleanor, Countess of Lauderdale*, c. 1780, 76.2 x 63.5 cm, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston

- The subject of this portrait—Eleanor, Countess of Lauderdale—was a wealthy only child who was known for her kindness and beauty. The commission may have been related to the sitter's marriage to James, the 8th Earl of Lauderdale, in 1782.

Portrait of Sarah Harrop (Mrs. Bates) as a Muse (1780–81), oil on canvas, 142 x 121 cm., by Angelica Kauffmann (30 October 1741 – 5 November 1807), Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Portrait of Sarah Harrop (Mrs. Bates) as a Muse*, 1780–81, 142 x 121 cm, Princeton University Art Museum, New Jersey

- "Angelica Kauffmann's portrait of the renowned singer Sarah Harrop (Mrs. Bates), arguably the artist's masterpiece in portraiture, is a rare representation of a self-made woman, the great Handelian performer Sarah Harrop (1755–1811), by one of the very few professional women artists of the period. Kauffmann, one of two female cofounders of Britain's Royal Academy, shows Harrop seated in the wilderness, a lyre at her side and a rolled sheet of music in her hand. The mountain, Mount Parnassos, is the home of the Muses, and the waterfall issues from the Hippocrene spring. The lyre most likely identifies Erato, the Muse of lyric poetry, and while the instrument is based on ancient types, the sheet music grounds the portrait in the eighteenth century, for it is recognizably an aria from George Frideric Handel's opera *Rodelinda*, Queen of the Lombards (1725).
- The picture, first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1781, dates from around the time of Harrop's marriage in 1780, a marriage to which

she brought a substantial personal fortune made through her talents as a performer. The music hints at a personal meaning. The aria "Dove sei, l'amato bene" is sung not by Rodelinda but by her husband, whose longing words must have been chosen specifically for their personal significance in what was almost certainly a marriage portrait. That Kauffmann the artist was also married at about this time, to a fellow artist of more pedestrian talents, Antonio Zucchi, only deepens its resonance." [1]

REFERENCES

1. <https://artmuseum.princeton.edu/collections/objects/59651>
[accessed 21/11/2021]



Portrait of Emma Hamilton, 1791, black and white chalk, on grey prepared paper, 36 × 42.4 cm, Met Museum

- This life-sized study relates to a full-length oil of 1791 (Private Collection) that portrays Emma, Lady Hamilton (1765-1815) as the Comic Muse. Emma's beauty took her from the daughter of a blacksmith to becoming the wife of Sir William Hamilton. Kauffman drew Emma when she was 26 and before she put on weight and lost her looks. This did not prevent her from having a scandalous affair with Admiral Horatio Nelson from 1798 when she was 33.

REFERENCES

<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/359453>

Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807),
Sketch for *Queen Maria Carolina of
Naples and Sicily and King Ferdinand I
with their children*, 1783, 72 × 100 cm,
Liechtenstein Museum, Vienna



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Sketch for Queen Maria Carolina of Naples and Sicily and King Ferdinand I with their children*, 1783, 72 × 100 cm, Liechtenstein Museum, Vienna. No high resolution images are available for the large painting at the Museo di Capodimonte of Naples

- **In 1782 her father died** and her paternal aunt. She is made an honorary member of the Venice Academy and moves with her husband to a grand palazzo in the centre of Rome formerly occupied by Mengs and opens one of the city's most prestigious studios.
- In 1783 in Naples, she was **pounced upon by Maria Carolina, Queen of the Two Sicilies, a fearsome woman** who already owned a large collection of Kauffman's prints and tried vainly to persuade her to accept the position of court painter.
- In the summer of 1784 she visited the Queen of Naples and painted ***The Royal Family of Ferdinand IV and Maria Carolina of Naples and their Children.***
- The group portrait Kauffman painted of the Queen, her husband, **Ferdinand IV**, and six of their seventeen children (no fewer than

eight died in their infancy of smallpox) is **ludicrously flattering**, and tells viewers all they need to know about **being a successful portraitist**.

- The King, who in reality was **short and scrawny, with a huge bulbous nose, pig's eyes and a 'forest of coffee-coloured hair, which he never powders'**, is portrayed by Kauffman as **tall and ineffably elegant**, while his **dumpy wife is the epitome of relaxed grace**. The three dogs in the picture are probably the only figures to be faithfully represented. But the price she was paid for this travesty was gratifyingly large.
- The bucolic ideal of a rural life and the ideas of the French philosopher Jean Jacques Rousseau both inform this composition, which reflects the corresponding shift of taste among patrons. These no longer desired to have themselves recorded for posterity in the context of their palaces and other imposing residences. They wished to be shown, rather, under God's open sky.
- The Queen tried to entice Kauffman to stay as her court painter but Kauffman wrote, "**I was received very graciously by the court, particularly by Her Majesty the Queen. I was offered pensions and every imaginable token of regard to persuade me to stay. But, thank the Lord, my circumstances permit me to preserve my freedom.**"

NOTES

- **Ferdinand I** (1751–1825), was the King of the Two Sicilies from 1816, after his restoration following victory in the Napoleonic Wars. Before that he had been, since 1759, **Ferdinand IV** of the Kingdom of Naples and **Ferdinand III** of the Kingdom of Sicily. He was also King of Gozo. He was deposed twice from the throne of Naples: once by the revolutionary Parthenopean Republic for six months in 1799 and again by Napoleon in 1805,

before being restored in 1816.



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Venus Induces Helen to Fall in Love with Paris*, 1790, 102 x 127.5 cm, Hermitage Museum, Saint Petersburg

- "The episode, taken from Homer's *Iliad*, shows the seduction of Helen, wife of the Spartan King Menelaus, by the Trojan prince Paris. His abduction of Helen, carrying her away to the city of Troy, sparked the ten-year Trojan War. In this drawing, Kauffmann uses the figure of Cupid to lead Paris almost reluctantly towards Helen, while the female figure of Venus cajoles Helen." (Royal Collection website)

Angelica Kauffman (1741–1807), *Self-Portrait with Bust of Minerva*, ca. 1784, 93 × 76.5 cm, Bündner Kunstmuseum, Chur



Angelica Kauffman (1741–1807), *Self-Portrait with Bust of Minerva*, ca. 1784, 93 × 76.5 cm, Bündner Kunstmuseum, Chur

- Kauffman painted many self-portraits and this was painted when she was 43. **She is wealthy and self-assured, one of the leading personalities of Europe.** She shows herself holding the tools of her trade but balanced by a **bust of Minerva, the the Roman goddess of wisdom and strategic warfare, justice, law, victory, and the sponsor of arts, trade, and strategy.** Minerva is not a patron of violence such as Mars, but of defensive war only. From the second century BC onward, the Romans equated her with the **Greek goddess Athena.**
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe wrote about Kauffman a couple of years after she had painted this self-portrait:
 - **"She is tired of commissions, but her old husband thinks it wonderful that so much money should roll in for what is often easy work. She would like to paint to please herself and have more leisure to study and take pains."**
- This painting now hangs in Chur, the town of her birth.



Angelica Kauffmann (1741–1807), *Self-Portrait*, c. 1800, 60 x 50 cm oval, private collection

- This is her final self-portrait. **Her reputation continued to grow** and at her death the entire Academy of St. Luke (founded 1577, Rome) followed her coffin carrying two of her best pictures as they had done for Raphael.
- **Angelica Kauffman made an enormous impression on art and society.** Her friend Goethe was a supporter but felt her ability was **diminished by the many cheap reproductions** and her over commercialisation.
- **The Victorians paid no attention to her work** and then the advent of **modern art made her mythological scenes appear dated and uninteresting.** Her portraits however, are in need of a reappraisal as the finest are the equal of the George Romney and even Joshua Reynolds.
- Scholarly interest in Kauffman has grown over the last twenty years helped by a monograph by Angela Rosenthal in 2006, and the

catalogue raisonné that is being prepared by Bettina Baumgärtel.

- An exhibition of her work was due to open at the Royal Academy in 2021 but it was cancelled. It would have been the first such exhibition in the UK since 1992 when she had an exhibition in the Brighton Museum and Art Gallery. The majority of Kauffman's works are located in country houses, such as **Saltram in Devon, a National Trust property that holds 11 of her pictures.**



- I wondered at the beginning if anyone had heard of Angelica Kauffman. I hope you now know a little more about one of the most famous artists of the late eighteenth century and can **understand why England became Angelicamad.**
- Thank you for listening.



A STROKE OF GENIUS

SEPTEMBER 28TH 2022- FEBRUARY 22ND 2023

1. Art at the Seaside

The Thames in Art

Angelica Kauffman

Gwen John

Augustus John

Can You Spot a Fake?

Vermeer's Complete Works (Part 1)

Vermeer's Complete Works (Part 2)

9. The World's Most Expensive Art

10. Charles Rennie Macintosh

11. Venice - City of Water

12. Edward Hopper

13. The 12 Greatest Art Forgers (Part 1)

14. The 12 Greatest Art Forgers (Part 2)

15. Mary Moser

16. Leonardo da Vinci

- Over the next two weeks we look at a brother and sister, Gwen and Augustus John. There are very few brother and sister artists where both became well-known figures and in this case with very different styles. Some people link their personalities to their styles but Augustus maintained that really they were very similar. We shall see...