

A STROLL THROUGH TATE BRITAIN



This two-hour talk is part of a series of twenty talks on the works of art displayed in Tate Britain, London, in June 2017.

Unless otherwise mentioned all works of art are at Tate Britain.

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- The talk is given to a small group of people and all the proceeds, after the cost of the hall is deducted, are given to charity.
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A STROLL THROUGH TATE BRITAIN

- The History of the Tate
- From Absolute Monarch to Civil War, 1540-1650
- **From Commonwealth to the Georgians, 1650-1730**
- The Georgians, 1730-1780
- Revolutionary Times, 1780-1810
- Regency to Victorian, 1810-1840
- William Blake
- J. M. W. Turner
- John Constable
- The Pre-Raphaelites, 1840-1860



West galleries are 1540, 1650, 1730, 1760, 1780, 1810, 1840, 1890, 1900, 1910

East galleries are 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

Turner Wing includes Turner, Constable, Blake and Pre-Raphaelite drawings

Agenda

1. A History of the Tate, discussing some of the works donated by Henry Tate and others.
2. From Absolute Monarch to Civil War, 1540-1650
3. From Commonwealth to the Start of the Georgian Period, 1650-1730
4. The Georgian Period, 1730-1780
5. Revolutionary Times, 1780-1810
6. Regency to Victorian, 1810-1840
7. William Blake (1757-1827) and his Influence
8. J. M. W. Turner (1775-1851)
9. John Constable (1776-1837)
10. The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, 1840-1860
11. The Aesthetic Movement, 1860-1880
12. The Late Victorians, 1880-1900

13. The Edwardians, 1900-1910
14. The Great War and its Aftermath, 1910-1930
15. The Interwar Years, 1930s
16. World War II and After, 1940-1960
17. Pop Art and Beyond, 1960-1980
18. Art in a Postmodern World, 1980-2000
19. The Turner Prize
20. Summary

FROM THE COMMONWEALTH TO THE GEORGIANS

- Dates
 - 1649-1660 Oliver Cromwell and the Commonwealth
 - 1660-1685 Charles II and the Restoration
 - 1685-1688 James II and the Glorious Revolution
 - 1688-1702 William III and Mary II
 - 1702-1714 Anne
 - 1714-1727 George I
- Themes
 - Destruction of Art
 - Women in Art
 - English Baroque
 - Windsor & Hampton Court Beauties





Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Portrait of Oliver Cromwell*, 1653-4, 76.2 x 62.9 cm, Birmingham Art Gallery

The Destruction of Art

- The Commonwealth period or Interregnum has been described as a '**cultural revolution designed to obliterate England's memory of who and what she had been**'. The Reformation is sometimes described as opening closed minds but it might better be described as removing our memory by obliterating our record of the past in order to destroy or fundamentally change our national identity.

The Commonwealth

- From 30 January 1649 until 29 May 1660 there was no monarch. The period was known as the Interregnum and can be divided into three periods:
 - 1649-53 Commonwealth of England under the Rump Parliament with no Privy Council or House of Lords
 - 1653-58 the Protectorate under Oliver Cromwell and the Parliament of Saints and Barebone's Parliament followed by a period of military rule
 - 1658-59 Second protectorate under his son Richard Cromwell
- There was not a lot of art produced during the Commonwealth period and a great

deal of the art that remained following the Reformation was destroyed with a renewed religious fervour.

- The Puritans advocated an austere lifestyle and restricted what they saw as the excesses of the previous regime. Most prominently, holidays such as Christmas and Easter were suppressed. Pastimes such as the theatre and gambling were also banned. However, some forms of art that were thought to be "virtuous", such as opera, were encouraged.

Peter Lely

- Lely's painting ability meant that he was appointed as official painter by Charles I. He made the transition from the Royalist court to the strict Commonwealth period of Oliver Cromwell. He was also painter for his son Richard Cromwell and made the transition again to become court painter to Charles II (b. 1630, reigned 1660-1685).
- Was the famous instruction to paint Oliver Cromwell 'warts and all' ('Remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything as you see me.') given to **Peter Lely** or to **Samuel Cooper** (1609-1672)? Cooper was a miniaturist but did paint Oliver Cromwell with large wart. It was recorded by Horace Walpole (1717-1797, art historian, creator of Strawberry Hill and son of the first Prime Minister Robert Walpole) *Anecdotes of Painting in England* (1763) as "**Mr Lely, I desirer you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me, and not flatter me at all; but remark all these roughnesses, pimples, warts, and everything as you see me; otherwise I will never pay a farthing for it.**" Walpole adds that it was reported by Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham who was told by one of Cromwell's officers, Captain Winde.
- After the **Restoration Lely was appointed as Charles II's Principal Painter in Ordinary in 1661**, paid £200 a year, the same as Van Dyck. Lely had a large workshop and his assistants often completed the work. There are therefore thousands of 'Lely' paintings in country houses that may have seen little of Lely's brush. The quality therefore varies enormously.

Notes

- Laura Lunger Knoppers, *Constructing Cromwell: Ceremony, Portrait, and Print 1645-1661*,
 'It was to Sir Peter Lely that the (now) well-known advice of Cromwell regarding his portraiture was allegedly given: "Mr. Lilly I desire you would use all your skill to paint my picture truly like me not Flatter me at all. But (pointing to his own face) remark all these ruffness, pimples warts everything as you see me. Otherwise I never will pay a farthing for it." The anecdote was first recorded by George Vertue early in the eighteenth century and is **thought by some to refer not to Lely, but to Cooper**, whose watercolor miniature evinces Cromwell's warts even more prominently. Although its authenticity

cannot be proved, the account of Cromwell urging that his portrait be "truly like me, " without flattery and even with "ruffness, pimples and warts," coheres with Cromwell's own professed piety and humility. In the event, the portraiture was never wholly "warts and all": while eschewing the gaudy trappings of power, **Lely elongates Cromwell's face, smooths over some of the roughnesses**, and adds the cultural **prestige of the cuirassier armour.**' (pronounced 'kweer-uh-seer', a cavalry soldier).



Mary Beale (1633-1699), *self-portrait*, c.1673-80, location unknown
 Mary Beale, *Charles Beale the Elder*, National Portrait Gallery

Women in Art

- This was a period when women had **new freedoms**, to act on the stage, run a business, publish plays and control household finances but women were **defined by their marital status**.
- During the Civil War many **women wrote tracts and broadsheets** and participated in the debate. Those few rights were fought over by women in the courts, for example, a woman's right to inherit her husband's business. We know that about **10% of business insured by Sun Fire were owned by women**. Women, for example, were integral to the food and drink trades but they were **not allowed to enter coffee houses as customers**.
- The situation was **different at Court** which was not typical of society at large. **Female beauty was prized** and this gave certain women an influence over Court affairs.
- **Pamphlets**, like early newspapers circulated information **about the Court** and the mistresses among the new middling class. **Charles II was furious** with the pamphlets but he became an expert at spin and enjoyed the title of '**the Merry**

Monarch. Charles became the longest serving seventeenth-century monarch.

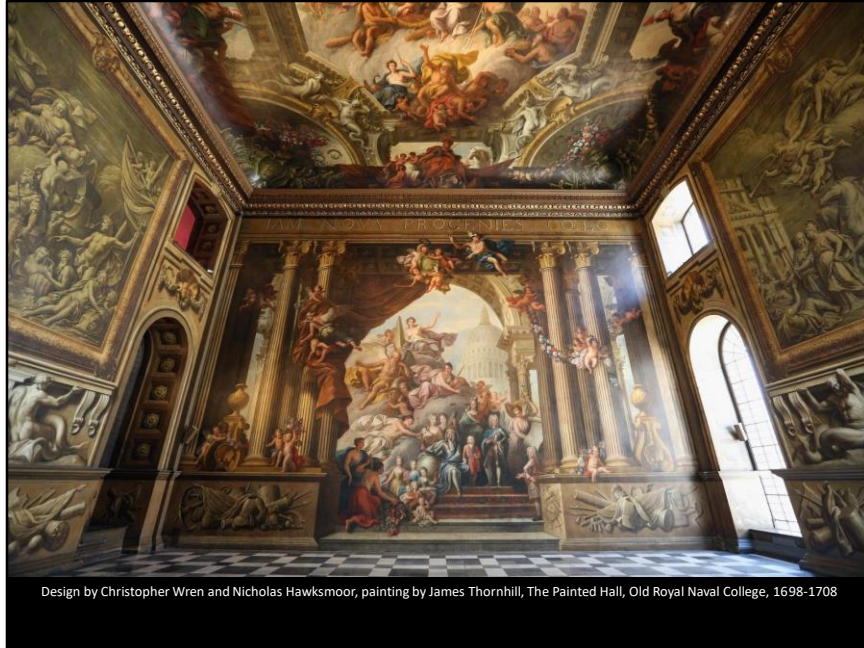
- By the end of the seventeenth century there were towns where over **half the population were single women**. This was because the **Civil War had decimated the men** and there were **more women in the towns** and more men in the countryside because of the types of employment available. The surfeit of women meant that **many did not marry and the term 'spinster' and 'old maid' started to be used** for the first time. The old maid became a stock character in ballads such as 'The Old Maid Mad for a Husband'. In this ballad she manipulates the men to achieve what she wants and in the end she gets a young lover, keeps her money and doesn't marry.
- The marriage of **William Cavendish**, Duke of Newcastle and **Margaret Lucas** (writer and scientist) was an exception and became a type of role model for emancipated women. It was a **marriage of equals carried out for love** and Margaret wrote a book (*A True Relation of my Birth, Breeding, and Life*, 1656) describing it which gave rise to debate and criticism of both Margaret and William for allowing his wife to write such a book. In 1666 she published *Observations upon Experimental Philosophy* and five other books on natural philosophy (science). She published twenty one books including over a dozen original works and her utopian romance, *The Blazing World* (1666) is one of the first examples of science fiction.
- **The first daily newspaper**, *The Daily Courant*, was published in 1702 by **Elizabeth Mallet**. It was a single page with advertisements on the back that contained foreign news and no editorial comment. The newspaper's offices were at Fleet Bridge, now Ludgate Circus, at the eastern end of Fleet Street.

Mary Beale

- Mary Beale (née Cradock), one of the **first professional female English painter** and one of the most important portrait painters of 17th century England.
- She became very popular after 1670 and took **inspiration from Peter Lely** (pronounced 'lay-lee'). She ran a successful business in Bury St Edmunds and was **assisted by her husband and son**.
- **Her father was an amateur painter** and she **knew Peter Lely** growing up. She married Charles Beale a cloth merchant from London and an amateur painter. She became semi-professional in the 1650s and 1660s working from home, first in Covent Garden and then Fleet Street.
- The family **moved to Hampshire** for five years for financial reasons as he husband lost his job as patent clerk and also because of the Great Plague. She returned and set up a **studio in Pall Mall**, with her husband mixing her paints and keeping her accounts. **She became successful and renewed her acquaintance with Peter Lely but her work became unfashionable after his death in 1680**. She died in 1699 in Pall Mall and is buried in St James's Piccadilly.

Notes

- Earlier female artists include:
 - Joan Carlile (c. 1606-79, née Palmer) was one of the first women to practise painting professionally.
 - 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.



Design by Christopher Wren and Nicholas Hawksmoor, painting by James Thornhill, The Painted Hall, Old Royal Naval College, 1698-1708

The English Baroque

- The Painted Hall is often described as the ‘finest dining hall in Europe’. Designed by Sir Christopher Wren and Nicholas Hawksmoor, it was originally intended as an eating space for the naval veterans who lived here at the Royal Hospital for Seamen. Its exuberant wall and ceiling decorations are by Sir James Thornhill and pay tribute to British maritime power.
- The Painted Hall sits within the King William Court. Wren submitted designs in 1698 and the roof and dome were in place five years later. When in 1708 James Thornhill began decorating the interior, he was instructed to include many references to the importance of the navy in Britain’s fortunes.
- His ‘great and laborious undertaking’ was completed after 19 years, by which time the Painted Hall was felt to be far too grand for its original purpose. Respectable visitors were allowed admittance, after paying a small fee, and the residents of the Royal Hospital – Greenwich Pensioners – acted as tour guides.
- Thornhill was paid only £3 per square yard (about one square metre) for the ceiling, and just £1 per square yard for the walls. However, he did receive a

knighthood in 1720 and his legacy is the finest painted architectural interior by an English artist.

- **Key facts**

- In 1806, 3 months after the Battle of Trafalgar the previous October, the body of Horatio Nelson was brought to lie in state in the Painted Hall.
- Between 1824 and 1936, it was known as the National Gallery of Naval Art, with over 300 naval-themed paintings on display.
- In 1939, it was used for dining (including breakfast) by the officers of the Royal Naval College.

Notes

- **James Thornhill**, who also painted the interior of the dome in St Paul's Cathedral, began his commission to decorate the Painted Hall in 1708. He was instructed to include as many references as possible to the importance of the navy in Britain's fortunes. He shows his remarkable skill in the use of trompe l'oeil painting throughout, and makes full use of perspective. He painted directly on to dry plaster, working on what must have been rather precarious scaffolding. For his 'great and laborious undertaking', Thornhill was paid just £3 per square yard (approximately one square metre) for the ceiling and £1 per square yard for the walls. The result, after 19 years of labour, is the finest painted architectural interior by an English artist, and Thornhill was knighted in 1720.
- **The vestibule.** If you look up into the cupola you will see a personification of the four winds, and lower down the monograms of the members of the royal family most involved with the building of the Royal Hospital for Seamen; William and Mary, Anne and George. Plaques show donations made by benefactors towards the cost of the buildings.
- **The lower hall.** In the main central oval, Thornhill concentrates on showing the triumph of Peace and Liberty over the forces of Tyranny. He creates a complex mix of contemporary and classical history, ancient Greek mythology, Christian allegory and traditional symbolism. Enthroned in heaven are King William and Queen Mary. Above, the sun god Apollo sheds his light, while Peace, with her doves and lambs, hands an olive branch to William. He in turn hands the red cap of liberty to the kneeling figure of Europe. Below William's foot, clutching a broken sword, is the defeated French ruler, Louis XIV. To the left, the Spirit of Architecture holds Wren's design for this building, while Time bears up the naked figure of Truth. At the bottom of the oval, the goddess Minerva/Athena and Hercules/Heracles hurl the Vices out of this vision of heaven. Signs of the zodiac and the four seasons are positioned around the edge of the oval, signifying the passing of time.
- **Signs and symbols.** There are ships at either end of the lower hall, with a captured Spanish galleon, full of booty, at the east, while to the west the Blenheim, a British man of war, has gun ports open ready for action. A recurring motif is one of astronomy and its importance to navigation. At the east end of the hall are famous

astronomers: Sir John Flamsteed (the first Astronomer Royal) and his assistant, Thomas Weston, Copernicus and Tycho Brahe, while at the west end figures from the ancient world, including Archimedes, represent navigation and geography.

- **The upper hall.** The upper hall is reached through the arch carrying Hawksmoor's beautifully designed Royal Arms and gilded signs of the Zodiac. Thornhill's paintings here reflect Britain's triumph as a maritime power. The central ceiling panel shows Victory saluting Queen Anne and her husband George of Denmark. The four corners of the world (Australasia had yet to be encountered by Europeans) look inwards.
- **The west wall.** Here Thornhill shows Britain's new royal family from Hanover in Germany. George I is surrounded by his children and grandchildren. The distinctive dome of Wren's St Paul's Cathedral looms large in the background. Thornhill himself appears in the bottom righthand corner with his paintbrushes and palette. Although the composition of this wall was certainly by Thornhill, it was probably painted by his highly skilled assistant Dietrich André.
- **South and north walls.** The south wall to your left shows William of Orange arriving in Torbay in 1688, to take the position of joint monarch with his wife Mary. On the north wall, we see George I arriving at Greenwich to claim the throne in 1714.
- **Nelson and the Painted Hall.** Three months after the battle of Trafalgar, 21 October 1805, Nelson's body was brought back to Greenwich and taken to the Painted Hall to lie in state. During three days in January, over 30,000 members of the public came to pay their respects to the great naval hero. On 8 January, his body was then taken by river to the Admiralty for the state funeral at St Paul's Cathedral. A plaque marks the spot where his body lay. The Nelson Room, to the left of the upper hall, contains a short exhibition about Nelson and his connection to Greenwich which includes a life-size replica of the statue on top of Nelson's column in Trafalgar Square.

References

Marketing literature and website, 'Painted Hall' Old Royal Naval College



Sir Peter Lely, *Barbara Villiers (1640-1709), Duchess of Cleveland as Minerva, Countess of Castlemaine*, c. 1665, 124.5 × 101.4 cm, Royal Collection, Hampton Court Palace

Sir Peter Lely, *Barbara Villiers (1640-1709), Duchess of Cleveland as Minerva, Countess of Castlemaine*, c. 1665, mezzotint

The Windsor Beauties (now at Hampton Court)

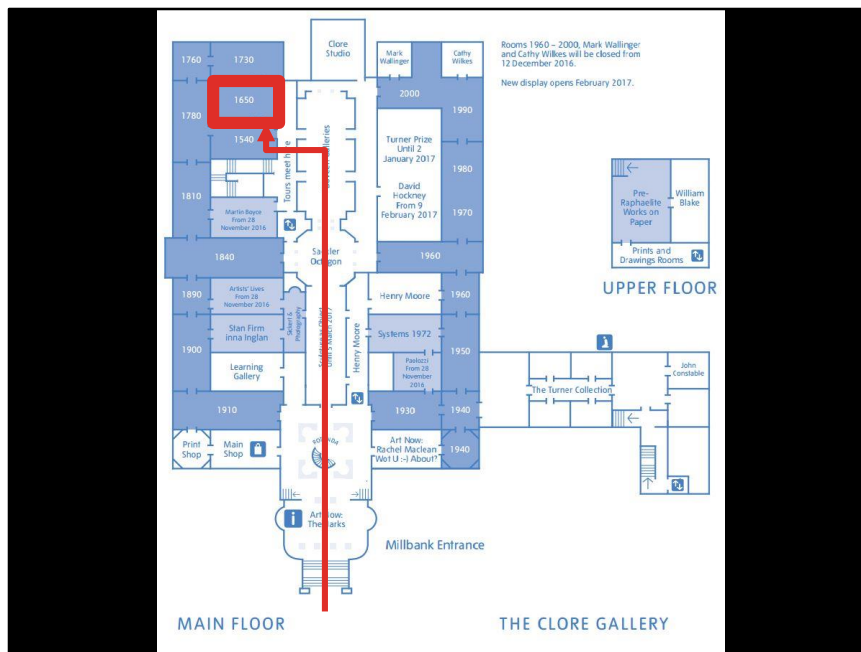
- At Hampton Court today the fourth painting down the corridor in which the Windsor Beauties are displayed is **Barbara Villiers**, 'The Curse of the Nation', the 'Number One Beauty', the 'Uncrowned Queen'.
- Barbara Villiers—**the most notorious mistress of Charles II** by whom she had five children all of whom were ennobled.
- Known as **Lady Castlemaine** and nicknamed the '**Uncrowned Queen**'. She had more influence than Catherine of Braganza the queen consort. She was appointed Lady of the bedchamber even though she and the queen were bitter enemies.
- **She was extravagant, had a foul temper and was promiscuous although many found her good company.** There are stories of her **kindness** such as she once rushed to help an injured child when some scaffolding fell down even though no other ladies of the court would help. The diarist **John Evelyn** described her as '**the**

curse of the nation'. She converted to Catholicism in 1663 perhaps to get closer to Charles but the view was the Church of England had lost nothing and the Church of Rome had gained nothing.

- I mentioned that **Lely introduced the reproduction of his portraits using mezzotints** and this is one example. Mezzotint was the first technique that could produce half-tones with stippling or cross-hatching. This was done using a metal tool called a rocker. The rocker had hundreds of small teeth that when rocked across the plate produced thousands of tiny pits that held ink after the plate was wiped. The process was invented by the German amateur artist Ludwig von Siegen (1609–c 1680) in 1642.

Notes

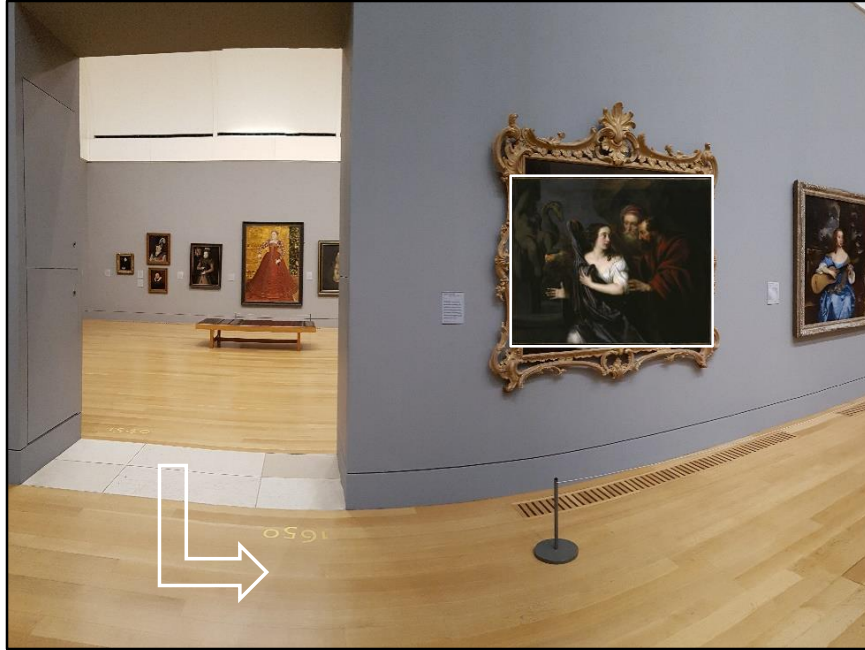
- Lely painted many portraits of her.
- She was born into the aristocratic Villiers family. Her father died fighting for the Royalists in the Civil War. He had spent so much on his regiment he left his family in straightened circumstances.
- Tall, voluptuous, with masses of brunette hair, slanting, heavy-lidded violet eyes, alabaster skin, and a sensuous, sulky mouth, Barbara Villiers was considered to be one of the most beautiful of the Royalist women, but her lack of fortune left her with reduced marriage prospects.
- In 1659 she married Roger Palmer but they separated in 1662 and it is believed he fathered none of her children. They remained married for the rest of his lifetime.
- She became Charles II's mistress in 1660. She was made baroness Nonsuch in 1670 as she was the owner of Nonsuch Palace despite the fact that she demolished the palace and sold the materials.
- While the **King had taken other mistresses**, the most notable being the actress **Nell Gwynne**, **Barbara took other lovers too**, including the acrobat Jacob Hall and her second cousin John Churchill.
- As the result of the **1673 Test Act**, which essentially banned Catholics from holding office, Barbara lost her position as Lady of the Bedchamber, and **the King cast her aside** completely from her position as a mistress, taking **Louise de K rouaille** as his newest "favourite" royal mistress. The King advised Barbara to live quietly and cause no scandal, in which case he "cared not whom she loved".
- She had **many descendants including Lady Diana Spencer**, the Mitford sisters, **Bertrand Russell**, **Sir Anthony Eden** (Prime Minister 1955-57) and Serena Armstrong-Jones.
- **Minerva was the Roman goddess of wisdom** and sponsor of arts, trade, and strategy. She is often shown on Roman coins wearing a helmet and a full length dress and holding a spear in her left hand with a shield at her feet.



1650

1. *Sir Peter Lely, 'Susanna and the Elders' c.1650–5
2. *Sir Peter Lely, 'Two Ladies of the Lake Family' c.1660
3. *Mary Beale, 'Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, Facing Left' c.1660
4. *Mary Beale, 'Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, in Profile' c.1660
5. Francis Barlow, 'Monkeys and Dogs Playing' 1661
6. NO IMAGE Samuel Cooper, Sir Thomas Smith, 1667
7. *NO IMAGE Gilbert Soest, Portrait of a Lady as a Shepherdess, c.1670
8. *Sir Godfrey Kneller, 'Elijah and the Angel' 1672
9. *Sir Peter Lely, 'Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare' c.1679
10. *John Michael Wright, 'Sir Neil O'Neill' 1680
11. *Mary Beale, 'Portrait of a Young Girl' c.1681
12. NO IMAGE King James II, c.1685–1688
13. *Benedetto Gennari, 'Elizabeth Panton, Later Lady Arundell of Wardour, as Saint Catherine' 1689
14. Edward Collier, 'Still Life with a Volume of Wither's 'Emblemes'' 1696
15. *Jan Siberechts, 'View of a House and its Estate in Belsize, Middlesex' 1696

16. Marmaduke Cradock, 'A Peacock and Other Birds in a Landscape' c.1700
17. Michael Dahl, 'Portrait of Mrs Haire' 1701
18. NO IMAGE Sir Godfrey Kneller, John Smith, Speaker of the House of Commons, c.1707–8
19. *Marcellus Laroon the Younger, 'A Musical Assembly' c.1720
20. Peter Monamy, 'Ships in Distress in a Storm' c.1720–30
21. Peter Tillemans, 'Foxhunting in Wooded Country' c.1720–30
22. NO IMAGE David Le Marchand, Sir Christopher Wren, c.1723
23. *Philip Mercier, 'The Schutz Family and their Friends on a Terrace' 1725
24. NO IMAGE John Closterman, Portrait of a Gentleman, c.1700



We come through into the second gallery of art works between 1650 and 1730. Turn left to go round the room in a clockwise direction. The selected works are shown outlined in white and they are described later.

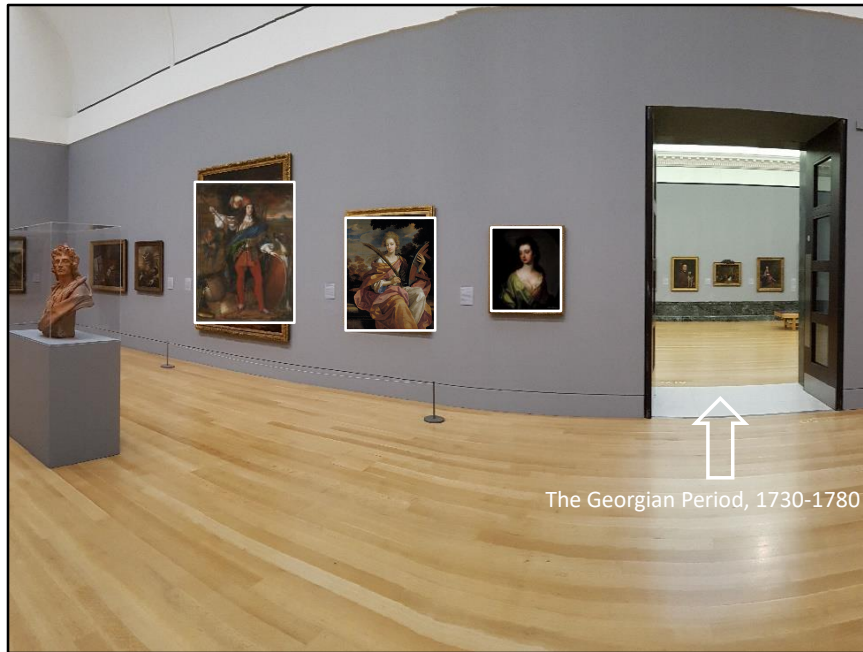
1. Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680), *Susanna and the Elders*, c.1650–5, 127 x 149.2 cm, Tate



1. Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Two Ladies of the Lake Family*, c. 1660, 127 x 181 cm
2. Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare*, c.1679, 123.4 x 100 cm
3. Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, in Profile*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm
4. Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, facing left*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm
5. Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Portrait of a Young Girl*, c.1681, 53.5 x 46 cm



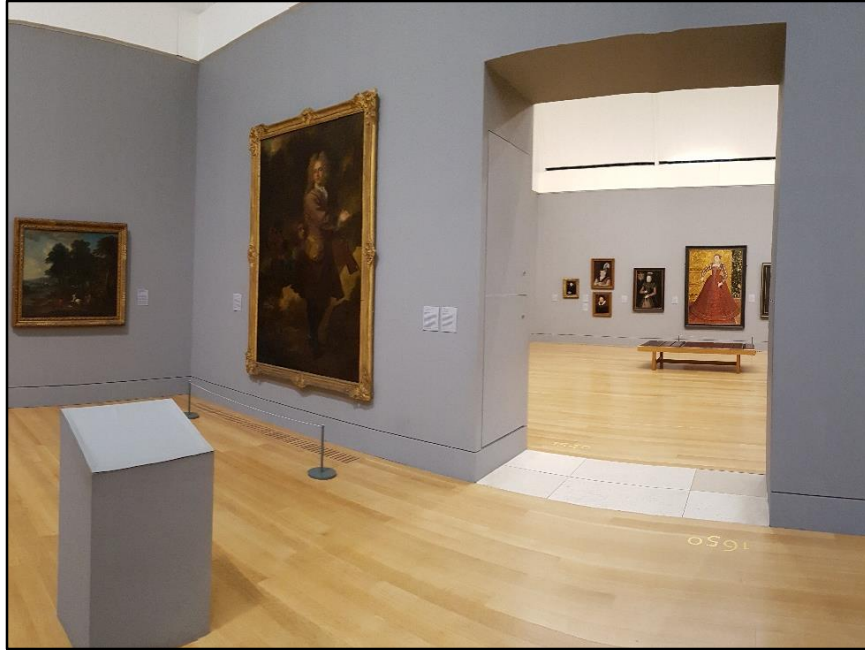
1. Gilbert Soest (c. 1600-1681), *Portrait of a Lady as a Shepherdess*, c.1670, 121.3 x 99.7 cm
 2. Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), *Elijah and the Angel*, 1672, 176.5 x 148.6 cm
 3. Jan Siberechts (1627-c. 1700), *View of a House and its Estate in Belsize, Middlesex*, 1696, 107.9 x 139.7 cm
- The painting to the right of the statue is Edward Collier, *Still Life with a Volume of Wither's 'Emblemes'*, 1696



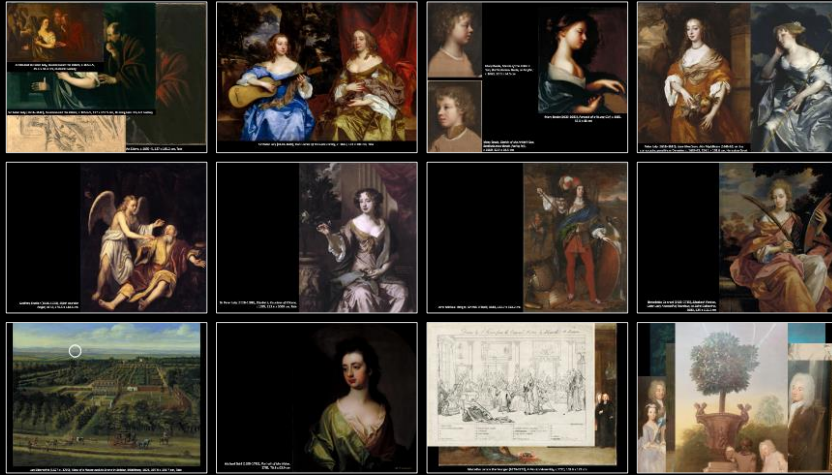
1. John Michael Wright (1617-1694), *Sir Neil O'Neill*, 1680, 232.7 x 163.2 cm, Tate
 2. Benedetto Gennari (1633-1715), *Elizabeth Panton, Later Lady Arundell of Wardour, as Saint Catherine*, 1689, 125 x 102.1 cm
- The painting to the left of the door is Michael Dahl (1659-1743, a Swedish portraitist who worked in England), *Portrait of Mrs Haire*, 1701



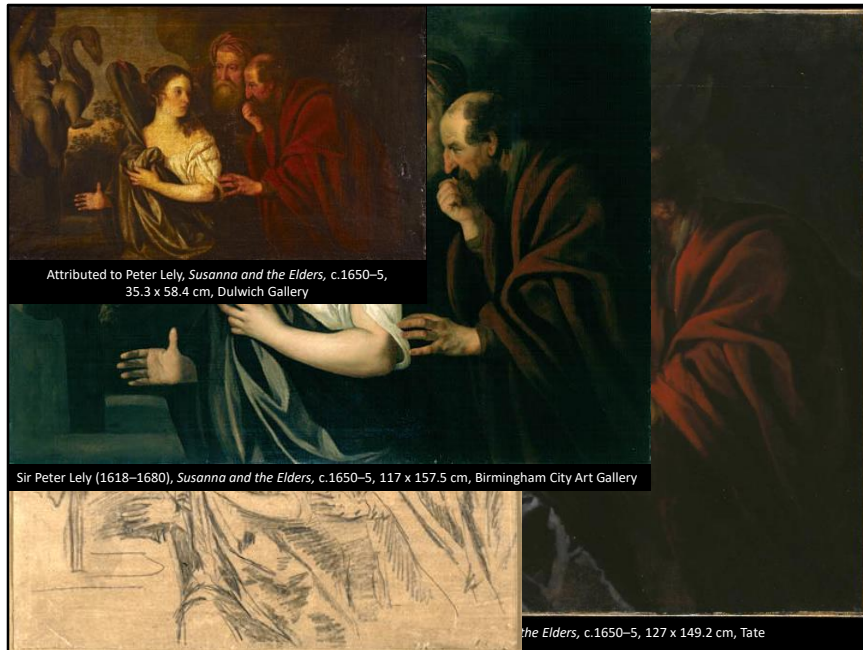
1. Philip Mercier (?1689-1760), *The Schutz Family and their Friends on a Terrace*, 1725, 102.2 x 125.7 cm, Tate
2. Marcellus Laroon the Younger (1679-1772), *A Musical Assembly*, c.1720, 101.6 x 127 cm



The painting on the left is Peter Tillemans, *Foxhunting in Wooded Country*, c.1720–30



Summary by Date



Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680), *Susanna and the Elders*, c.1650–5, 127 x 149.2 cm, Tate

Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680), *Susanna and the Elders*, c.1650–5, 103.5 x 150.5 cm, Burghley House

Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680), *Susanna and the Elders*, c.1650–5, drawing, Courtauld

Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680), *Susanna and the Elders*, c.1650–5, 117 x 157.5 cm, Birmingham City Art Gallery

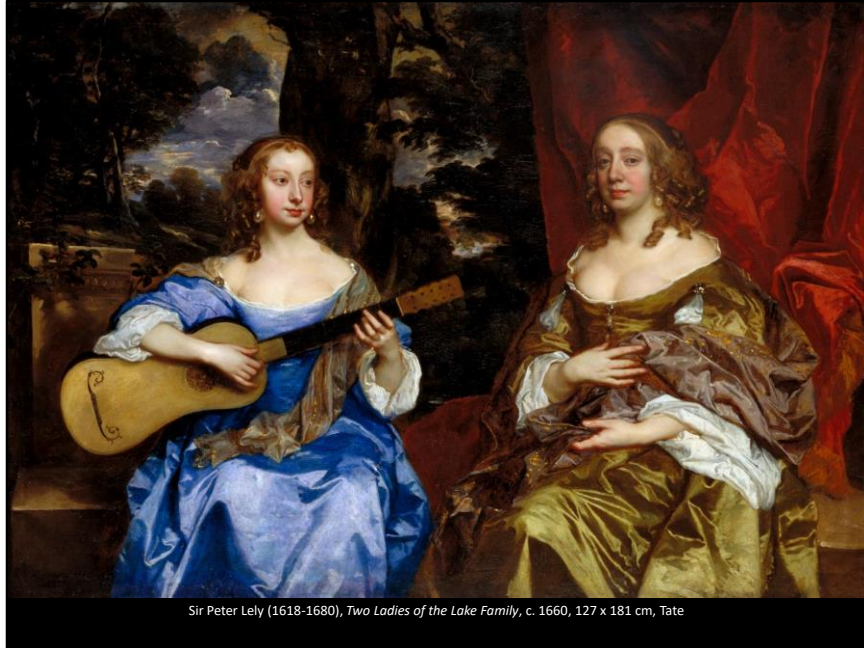
Attributed to Peter Lely, *Susanna and the Elders*, c.1650–5, 35.3 x 58.4 cm, Dulwich Gallery

- The story of Susanna and the Elders is a common subject for artists. Two Jewish elders plot to seduce Susanna, a young Jewish wife. When she visits her private garden to bathe they come out of hiding and threaten that, unless she has sex with them they will publicly accuse her of adultery for which the penalty is death. She rejects them, they accuse her and she is sentenced to death but the young Daniel cross-examines the elders and shows Susanna is innocent.
- The animal on the left is a camel with a weeping boy on its back.
- Lely painted this story a number of times. As a subject it allows the artist to paint a nude or semi-nude figure and in his version that is now in Burghley House Susanna's left breast is exposed. A drawing very close to the Tate composition and

attributed to Lely is in the Courtauld Gallery. Birmingham City Art Gallery has a version that is close in composition to the Tate work, although the latter has been extended at both the top and the bottom, apparently by Lely himself. A seventeenth-century copy is in Dulwich Picture Gallery.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lely-susanna-and-the-elders-t00452>



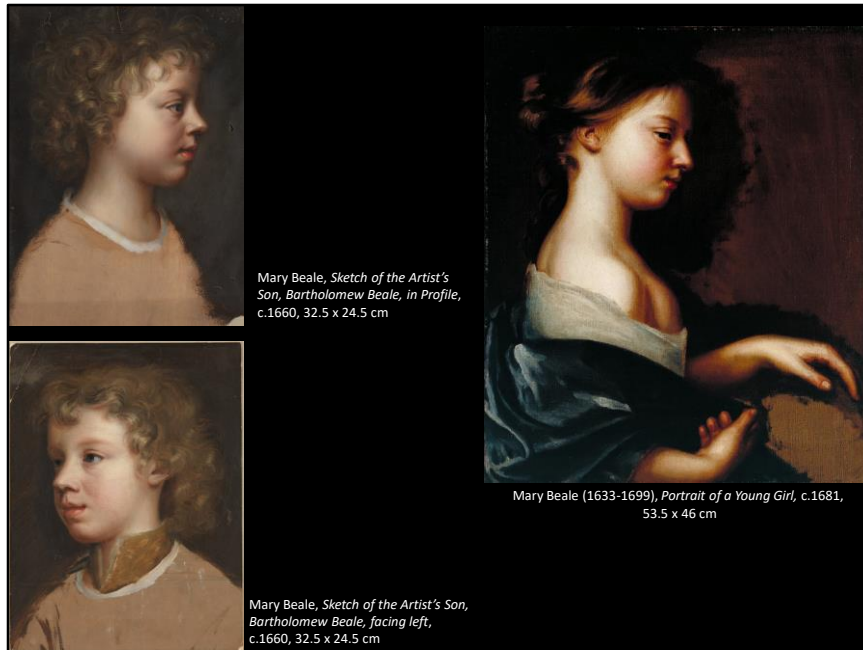
Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Two Ladies of the Lake Family*, c. 1660, 127 x 181 cm, Tate

- There are two ladies in a garden. The one on the right is slightly older and the one on the left is playing a guitar, an instrument that has just become fashionable at the English court. Lely has painted the guitar so accurately that we can identify that it was made in Paris in 1660 by the Voboam family. She is holding down a chord with her left hand, a feature of guitar playing, unlike the lute in which individual strings were plucked.
- The ladies cannot be firmly identified although it was described 87 years later as 'Lady Drax, and Mrs. Francklin playing on a guitar'. Essex Lake (b. 1638) was later to become Lady Drax.
- Portraits of women by Lely, like this one, tend to conform to the standards of ideal beauty which were current at court. In such paintings, the artist was more concerned with asserting a sense of glamour and sophistication than conveying individual personalities. It is in the seventeenth century tradition of 'friendship portraits' derived from the innovation of van Dyck.
- Sir Peter Lely (1618–1680) was a painter of Dutch origin, whose career was nearly all spent in England, where he became the dominant portrait painter to the court.

He was born Pieter van der Faes and he is thought to have adopted the family name 'Lely' from a heraldic lily painted on the gable of the house where his father was born. He arrived in London in 1641, the year that Anthony van Dyck died and he succeeded van Dyck as the most fashionable portrait painter in England. His talent ensured that his career was not interrupted by Charles's execution, and he served Oliver Cromwell, whom he painted "warts and all", and Richard Cromwell. After the English Restoration in 1660, Lely was appointed as Charles II's Principal Painter in Ordinary in 1661, with a stipend of £200 per year, as Van Dyck had enjoyed in the previous Stuart reign. Lely became a naturalised English subject in 1662. Among his most famous paintings are a series of 10 portraits of ladies from the Royal court, known as the 'Windsor Beauties', formerly at Windsor Castle but now at Hampton Court Palace; a similar series for Althorp; a series of 12 of the admirals and captains who fought in the Second Anglo-Dutch War, known as the 'Flagmen of Lowestoft', now mostly owned by the National Maritime Museum in Greenwich; and his *Susannah and the Elders* at Burghley House. His most famous non-portrait work is probably *Nymphs by a Fountain* in Dulwich Picture Gallery. Lely played a significant role in introducing the mezzotint to Britain, as he realized its possibilities for publicising his portraits.

References

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



Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, in Profile*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm, Tate

Mary Beale (1633-1699), *Sketch of the Artist's Son, Bartholomew Beale, facing left*, c.1660, 32.5 x 24.5 cm, Tate

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

- 'These intimate sketches show Mary Beale's elder son Bartholomew Beale (1656–1709) at around four years of age. In the 1670s Bartholomew worked as a studio assistant to his mother but by 1680 had abandoned painting to study medicine at Cambridge, later practising as a physician in Coventry. The technique of producing oil sketches on primed paper, rather than sketching in chalk on paper or in paint on canvas, is unusual and characteristic of Mary Beale's early work.' (Tate display caption)
- Mary Beale (née Cradock; 1633–1699) was one of the most successful professional female Baroque portrait painters of the late 17th century and she became the principal financial provider for her family. She married Charles Beale when she was 18 and her father died a few days later. At some time later the couple moved to Walton-on-Thames. When this sketch was made, the Beale family was living in Hind Court, off Fleet Street in London, where Mary Beale's husband, Charles, was

employed as Deputy Clerk of the Patents Office. At some time later he became her studio manager and mixed pigments and throughout their marriage they worked as equals. In 1654 their first son Bartholomew died and their second son, also called Bartholomew was born in 1655/6. Their third son Charles was born in 1660. In 1663 she wrote *Observations*, the first instruction book ever made available by a woman. She established a good reputation thanks to her contacts and charged £5 for a half-length portrait and £10 for a three-quarter length. In 1664 Charles's job became uncertain and the family moved to Hampshire where Mary wrote *Essay on Friendship* in which she proposes equality between men and women in friendship and marriage. On their return to London in 1670, following the plague and the Great Fire, they set up a studio in Pall mall and quickly attracted the gentry and the aristocracy and built a thriving business. Her income rose from £118 in 1671 to £429 by 1677. She was sympathetic, hard-working and puritan, giving 10% of her income to charity every year. Peter Lely supported her, showed her his techniques and with his help she built a lucrative trade in copying his portraits although she toned down the overtly sensuous and erotic elements of his work. By 1681 commissions were beginning to diminish but she was at the peak of her powers when she painted *Portrait of a Young Girl*. She died in 1699 and is buried in St James's Church, Piccadilly.

- Bartholomew trained in her study as a boy but went on to Clare College, Cambridge and became a physician in Coventry. Her younger son Charles became an artist and produced some of the finest drawings of the period.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/beale-sketch-of-the-artists-son-bartholomew-beale-in-profile-t13245>
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/beale-sketch-of-the-artists-son-bartholomew-beale-facing-left-t13246>
<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/beale-portrait-of-a-young-girl-t06612>
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mary_Beale
<http://www.npg.org.uk/collections/search/person/mp00310/mary-beale>
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Gilbert Soest (c. 1600-1681), *Portrait of a Lady as a Shepherdess*, c.1670, 121.3 x 99.7 cm

Peter Lely (1618–1680), *Jane Needham, Mrs Myddleton (1646-92) with a cornucopia, possibly as Demeter*, c. 1663-65, 124.1 x 101.6 cm, Hampton Court Palace

- The painting was bought by the National Portrait Gallery in 1880 as a portrait of Arabella Churchill but it was quickly reidentified as Jane Middleton (or Myddelton), mistress of both Charles II and his brother the Duke of York (later James II). However, it is not easy to see her features and it has now been suggested it is an early 'fancy picture' or genre painting.
- Gerard Soest (c. 1600–1681), also known as Gerald Soest, was a portrait painter who was active in England during the late 17th century. He is most famous for his portraits of William Shakespeare and Samuel Butler, but painted many members of the English gentry.
- Jane Needham, Mrs Myddleton, was described as 'silly and sentimental'. She thought of herself a great wit but was considered boring and tiresome, and was '...noted for carrying about her body a continued sour base smell, that is very offensive' (Samuel Pepys)

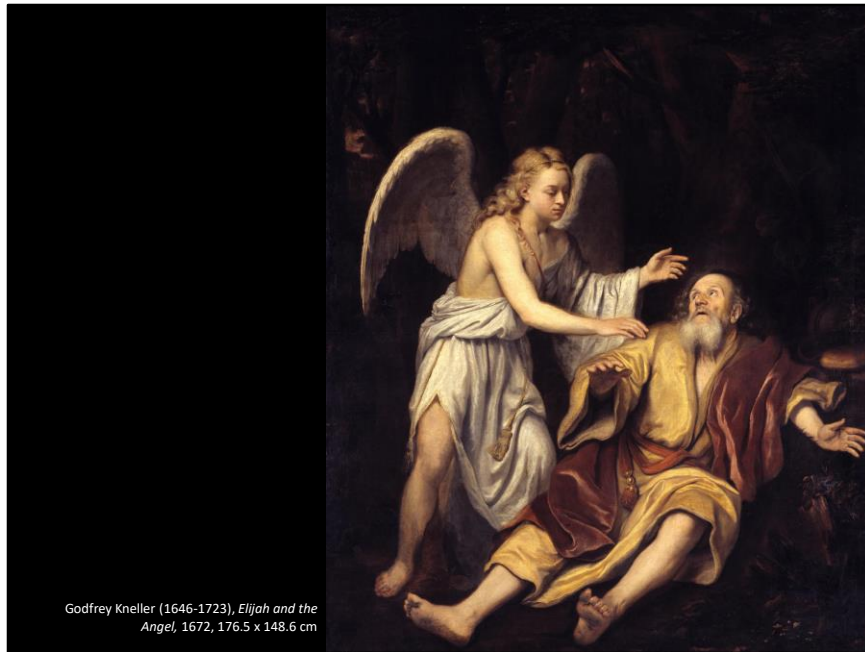
- A great beauty who was well known at court for her enormous pride and **general unwillingness to have a bath**.
- Jane Myddleton was described by the diarist John Evelyn as '**that famous and indeed incomparable beauty**', she was pursued by both King Charles II and the Duke of York, but **resisted becoming a royal mistress**, although she was the mistress of the Duke of Montagu and later the Earl of Rochester. Her beauty inspired the poets Edmund Waller and Saint-Evremond. Pepys also records that she was a skilful amateur painter.
- She was described as a '**silly and sentimental beauty**', whose '**ambition to pass for a wit, only established for her the reputation of being tiresome, which lasted much longer than her beauty**' (Anthony Hamilton). At Court her striking beauty was the only necessary qualification for advancement, where she had numerous admirers. When only eighteen years old she had been chosen by the Duke of York for inclusion in Sir Peter Lely's paintings of the Court beauties that hung in his apartments at Windsor. She never became the king's lover and failed to replace Louise de Kerouaille, the King's unpopular French mistress, with her daughter Jenny (1661 – 1740).
- However, not all the beauties were perfect. **Samuel Pepys** took the well-known beauty and wife of his friend Elizabeth Pearse to dinner and she told him that "the fine Mrs. Middleton is noted for **carrying about her body a continued sour base smell, that is very offensive**, especially if she be a little hot." and others said she "had not learned the meaning of wit or wisdom". Elizabeth Pearse was said to still look only 20 after she had had her nineteenth child and her relationship with Pepys made his wife jealous.

Notes

- **Jane Needham** was the daughter of Sir Robert Needham and in 1660 she **married Charles Myddelton** of Ruabon in Wales.
- She was born into a wealthy and aristocratic family and married Charles Myddelton, who was ten years her senior. Despite her marriage she had a number of lovers at court.
- The Count de Gramont claimed that Mrs Myddelton 'was fair, well made and delicate, in manner somewhat precise and affected, giving herself indolent, languishing airs, and extremely anxious to pass as a wit. She wearied by trying to explain sentiments which she did not understand, and she bored while trying to entertain.' It could be he was peeved as she did not agree to become his mistress.

References

<http://www.historicalportraits.com/Gallery.asp?Page=Item&ItemID=327&Desc=Jane-Needham-%7C-Henri-Gascar>



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

- 'Born in Germany, Kneller trained in Amsterdam and settled permanently in England in 1676 where he became the leading portrait painter of his day. This rare example of a narrative painting by Kneller is very Dutch in manner and subject. He valued it enough to bring it to Britain and display it at his house at Whitton, Middlesex. It depicts the Old Testament prophet Elijah who fled into the wilderness to escape the vengeance of Queen Jezebel. Hungry, he fell asleep and was woken by an angel who showed him bread and water sent by God to save him from starvation.' (Tate display caption)
- Queen Jezebel was a disciple of Baal and killed all the prophets except for Elijah who fled into the desert. God sent an angel to bring him food and drink before and after he fled. Later God told him to anoint two kings and a prophet who would drive out Baal-worship.
- **Sir Peter Lely died in 1680 and was replaced as court painter by Geoffrey Kneller, a very different painter who served seven British monarchs.**
- Kneller was the leading portrait painter in the late 17th and early 18th centuries and was court painter to monarchs from Charles II to George I.

- Kneller was born in Lubeck, **studied with Rembrandt in Amsterdam** and by 1676 was working in England as a fashionable portrait painter. He painted seven British monarchs (**Charles II, James II, William III, Mary II, Anne, George I and George II**), though his portraits of Charles II are no longer in the Royal Collection, and in 1715 was the first artist to be made a Baronet (the next was John Everett Millais in 1885). A set of portraits of naval heroes by Kneller was given by George IV to the Royal Naval Hospital in Greenwich in 1824.
- Godfrey Kneller was reputed to be very vain and there are many anecdotes. One involved Pope who had made a wager that there was no flattery so gross but that Kneller would swallow it but in this case Kneller got the better of him. Pope said, "Sir Godfrey, I believe if God Almighty had had your assistance, the world would have been formed more perfect." "Fore God, sir" replied Kneller "I believe so!" and laid his hand gently upon Pope's deformed shoulder.
- His major works include *The Chinese Convert* (1687; Royal Collection, London); a series of four portraits of Isaac Newton painted at various junctures of the latter's life; a series of ten reigning European monarchs, including King Louis XIV of France; over 40 "Kit-cat portraits" of members of the Kit-Cat Club; and **ten "beauties" of the court of William III**, to match a similar series of ten beauties of the court of Charles II painted by his predecessor as court painter, Sir Peter Lely. Kneller's ten beauties are known as the "Hampton Court Beauties".

Notes

- **Kneller was dashing and worldly**, he rapidly established an extremely successful business as a portrait painter. **His production was immense**, and his large team of assistants formed **virtually a factory**; the standard product was **mechanical and lifeless**, yet Kneller's **individual masterpieces** rank as **high as any** portraits produced in Europe in his time. This self-portrait of 1685 demonstrates his power as an artist before it was diluted by mass production.

References

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



Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Elizabeth, Countess of Kildare*, c.1679, 123.4 x 100 cm, Tate

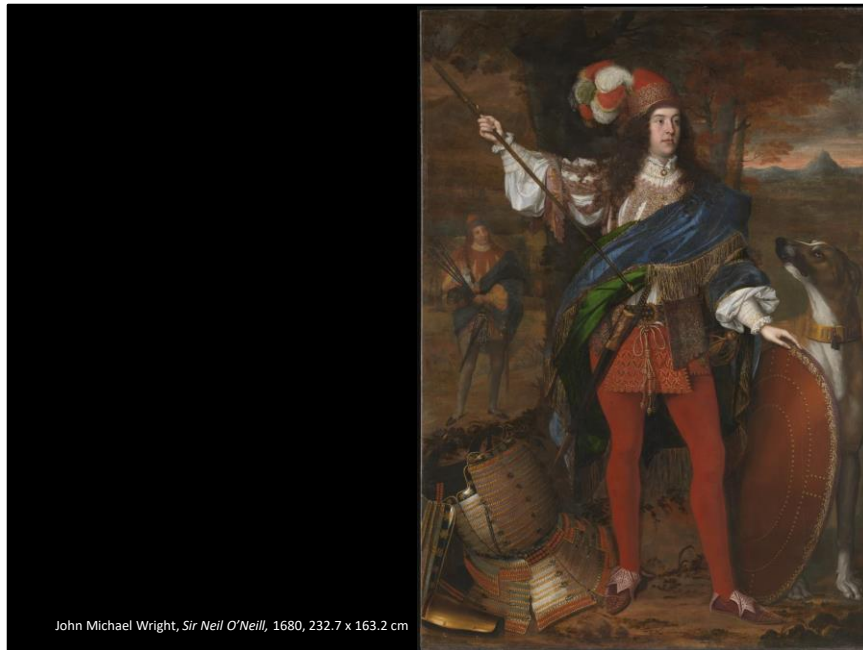
- Tate caption “Elizabeth Jones, eldest daughter of the 1st Earl of Ranelagh, was one of the great beauties of the Restoration court. The orange blossom that she holds, and the cupids on the pot to the left, may refer to her readiness to marry. However, in the late 1670s, when it is thought this painting was made, she was rumoured to be mistress to Charles II. She was not to marry the Earl of Kildare until 1684. Citrus fruits were a rare and expensive food, the plants cultivated by only the wealthiest households.”
- Orange blossom also alludes to eternal love as well as to youth and freshness. Her father Richard Jones is said to have spent more on laying out his gardens than any other Englishman. Whether or not he commissioned Lely to paint his daughter is not known, but such advertisements were not out of character for him. In 1687 he commissioned Willem Wissing to paint his two remaining unmarried daughters Frances and Katherine on a yet more extravagant scale in an elaborate garden.
- “At this date the sitter's father must have had to content himself with Elizabeth Jones's rumoured position as mistress to King Charles II. The Earl of Kildare married her June 12th 1684 at the Earl of Burlington's chapel in St Martin's in the

Fields. As co-heiress she brought with her an impressive dowry, and the Earl gained £10,000 by the match ... The Earl died at Caversham November 9th 1707; his wife lived well into the eighteenth century, dying aged 93 10th April 1758. She is buried in Westminster Abbey.”

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/lely-elizabeth-countess-of-kildare-t00070>

<http://www.historicalportraits.com/Gallery.asp?Page=Item&ItemID=266&Desc=Lady-Kildare-%7C-Sir-Peter-Lely,-Studio-of>



John Michael Wright (1617-1694), *Sir Neil O'Neill*, 1680, 232.7 x 163.2 cm, Tate

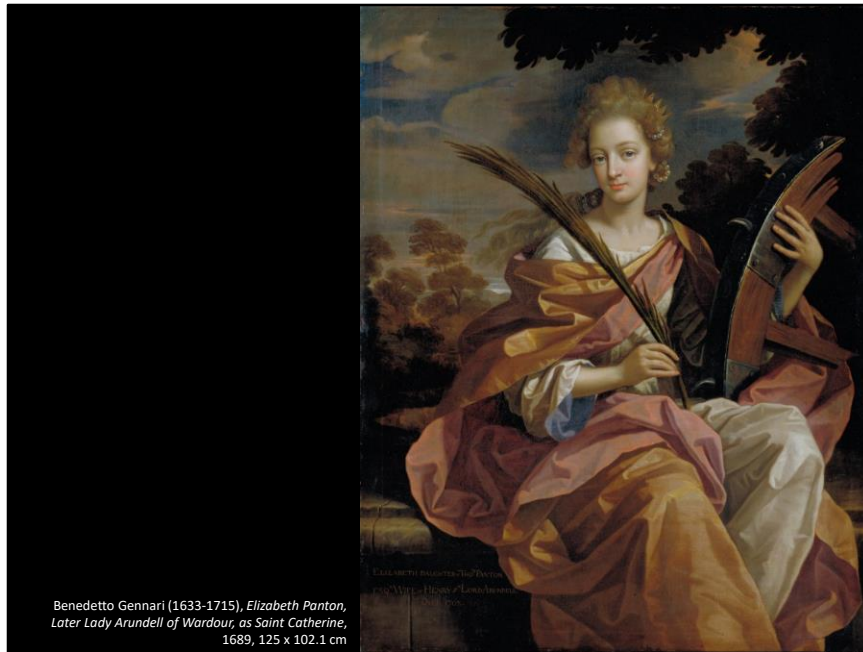
- 'Both the man shown here, Sir Neil O'Neill, and the artist, John Michael Wright, were Catholics. As a result of anti-Catholic legislation Wright was exiled from London to Dublin in 1679, where this work must have been painted. Sir Neil (?1658–1690) is shown in the richly ornamented costume of an Irish chieftain. Beside him is an Irish wolfhound, a valuable breed of dog whose export from Ireland was forbidden in 1652. At his feet is a rare suit of Japanese armour. This may be seen as a trophy representing victory over persecutors of Catholicism, among whom the Japanese were notorious at the time.' (Tate display caption)
- Sir Neill O'Neill (1657/8-1690) was an army officer and baronet. At the Battle of the Boyne he commanded 500 men who prevented 10,000 men from crossing a ford for an hour until he was shot in the thigh and later died from the wound.
- The dog's metal collar is inscribed 'Sr. Neill O Neall' [sic]. From 1652 onwards, it had been forbidden to export these valuable dogs.
- The Japanese armour is a puzzle as Japan had been closed to Westerners since the 1620s and the armour is from the period c. 1350-1530. O'Neill was a staunch Catholic and the Japanese were regarded as persecutors of Catholics so he may

have had access to the suit of armour and placed it on the floor to show his defeat of opponents to Catholicism. His left hand holds a large shield and his right hand is in the act of throwing a short spear. An attendant behind hold similar weapons.

- Wright was also a Catholic and was exiled to Ireland where he continued painting. He was written the title and date on the back of the portrait and described himself as 'Wright Lonsis Pictor Regius' (Wright, Londoner, painter to the King). In fact, although Wright had painted Charles II (reigned 1660-85) twice he was never the king's painter (who was Peter Lely) but only 'picture drawer in ordinary'.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/wright-sir-neil-oneill-t00132>
<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/30040>



Benedetto Gennari (1633-1715), *Elizabeth Panton, Later Lady Arundell of Wardour, as Saint Catherine*, 1689, 125 x 102.1 cm

- 'The Roman Catholic Elizabeth Panton is shown as St Catherine, who was martyred for refusing to give up her faith. She holds a martyr's palm and the spiked wheel on which, according to legend, the saint was killed. The artist, Benedetto Gennari, was born and trained in Italy, but settled in England in his early forties. He painted religious images for the Catholic queens of both Charles II and James II. After James was deposed in 1688, Gennari joined his court-in-exile near Paris. This was where he painted Elizabeth, who later married into a leading English Catholic family.' (Tate display caption)
- Elizabeth Panton (d. 1700) was the daughter of Colonel Joseph Panton, a member of Charles II's life-guards. He was successful at gambling and bought property in what is now Panton Street, just off the south-west of Leicester Square. Elizabeth fled England because of persecution in 1681 and joined the Stuart court in France. In 1689 Gennari followed the Stuart court in exile. Elizabeth returned to England in 1690 and married Henry, Fifth Lord Arundell of Wardour.
- Gennari's style is different from Lely's style as he was influenced by French and Italian artists. He uses Italianate colouring and stronger lighting.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/gennari-elizabeth-panton-later-lady-arundell-of-wardour-as-saint-catherine-t06897>



Jan Siberechts (1627-c. 1700), *View of a House and its Estate in Belsize, Middlesex*, 1696, 107.9 x 139.7 cm, Tate

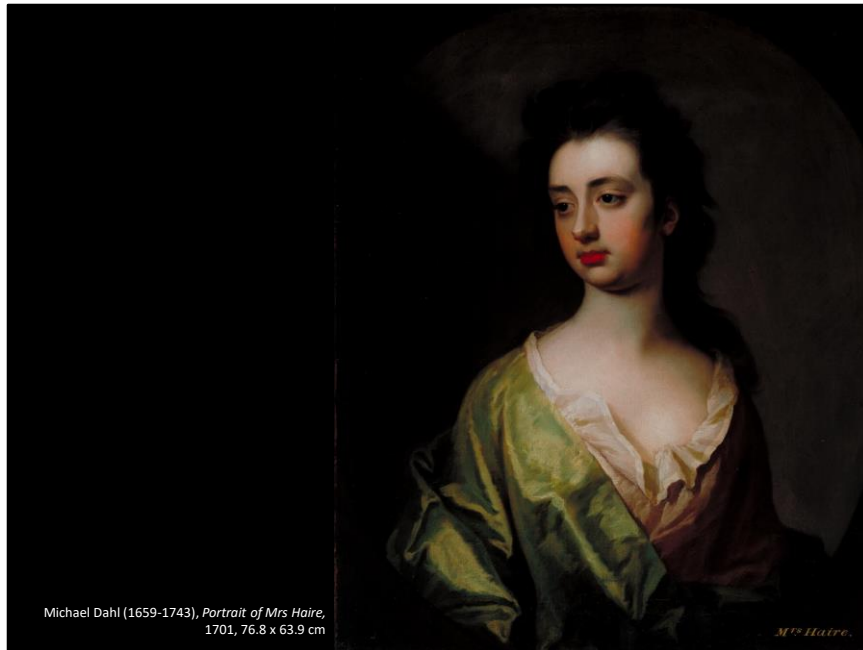
- Tate Catalogue entry, “This is one of two paintings by the Flemish-trained Siberechts in the Tate collection. The artist began specialising in pictures of country estates when he settled in Britain in the 1670s. The name of the estate's owner, and probable commissioner of the painting, is now lost. At one time thought to be The Grove in Highgate, the building has been identified by local historian Roy Allen as being in Belsize, Middlesex (what is now Belsize Park in northwest London). In 1696, when this picture was made, the whole of Belsize belonged to the Dean and Chapter of Westminster Abbey (the Abbey and other landmarks are visible on the horizon). The road in the foreground is what is **now Rosslyn Hill**. The coach is heading towards Hampstead. The country house and estate portrait, of which Siberechts was the most accomplished practitioner, was a fashionable genre in Britain by the late seventeenth century. The typical bird's-eye view allows a maximum amount of detail to be depicted, including possibly the best recorded vegetable and fruit garden of the period.”
- The main approach to the house seems to be via the stable yard, to the right, and

an informal turning circle may be discerned in the grass. The tall white posts surmounted by balls may have acted as supports for ropes on which to hang washing. This area would thus not only have been an entrance courtyard and stable yard, but also a drying-ground.

- In their London homes, following the accession of William III in 1688, his Dutch courtiers began to replace the smaller mullion windows with sash windows – as seen in the present painting – which introduced more light into the rooms. The fashion was soon taken up in houses throughout the country.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/siberechts-view-of-a-house-and-its-estate-in-belsize-middlesex-t06996>



Michael Dahl (1659-1743), *Portrait of Mrs Haire*, 1701, 76.8 x 63.9 cm

- 'An inscription on the back of this portrait identifies the woman as 'Mary Haire', but we don't know exactly who she was. The stark background of the portrait, with its prominent cast shadow, is typical of Dahl. He also often used bright, unexpected colour, such as the fresh pale emerald green; this may once have been even brighter. Dahl was a Swedish painter who trained in Stockholm but settled in London in 1689. He headed a large and successful studio, rivalling Godfrey Kneller's, and was a favourite at Queen Anne's court.' (Tate display caption)
- Dahl had a wide range of patrons including members of the nobility. Although he travelled to country houses to undertake commissions he preferred to complete commissions in his studio in Leicester Fields (now Leicester Square), London. Dahl competed with the then leading portraitist Sir Godfrey Kneller and here he uses a court style to paint a sitter of a modest family. His use of colour was one of his defining characteristics and here the unusual bright emerald green of her dress, which as faded, is subtly picked up in other areas of the painting to unify the composition. The stark lighting has been used to enhance the sweep of her elegant neck and the fall of her long dark hair.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/dahl-portrait-of-mrs-haire-t06499>



Marcellus Laroon the Younger (1679-1772), *A Musical Assembly*, c.1720, 101.6 x 127 cm

- 'This is Laroon's earliest-known oil painting. Trained as an artist by his father, also a painter, he specialised in social genre scenes, particularly the world of actors and painters around Covent Garden in London. The gentleman standing behind the table in semi-profile wearing a blue garter sash and star is Charles Mordaunt, 3rd Earl of Peterborough (1658–1735). The gathering may be at his house in Fulham. The woman at his side is possibly Anastasia Robinson, a distinguished singer then at the outset of her operatic career.' (Tate display caption)
- 'Marcellus Laroon the Younger (1679-1772) was an English painter, the son of a Franco-Dutch painter of the same name (d. 1702) who moved to England as a young man and was one of Kneller's assistants. The younger Laroon was a colourful character who in his long and strenuous life was a musician, singer, soldier, and man of pleasure; he drew and painted 'for diversions', to use the words of Vertue, and did not concentrate on art until he retired from the army in 1732.' (The Oxford Dictionary of Art and Artists)
- The cello propped against a stool in *A Musical Assembly* (1720) is a quotation from Watteau. (Laroon, himself a cellist, was certainly familiar with musical

instruments.) (Oxford Dictionary of National Biography)

- 'An elegant company with musicians in a drawing room, the notable figures consisting of Frederick, Prince of Wales, his consort, Princess Augusta and two of his sisters, Anne the Princess Royal and Princess Amelia; as well as other noble and literary figures of the 1720s; after Laroon the Younger's "A Musical Assembly" c. 1720, now in the Tate Etching' (British Museum)

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/laroon-a-musical-assembly-t13316>

<http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/16074?docPos=2>



Philip Mercier (?1689-1760), *The Schutz Family and their Friends on a Terrace*, 1725, 102.2 x 125.7 cm, Tate

- This is an enigmatic painting whose symbolism has not yet been fully decoded. The painting is in the style of the French artist Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) and this painting is the earliest example of a 'conversation piece' in British art.
- The simplest interpretation is that it is a wedding portrait with the richly dressed groom in the centre leading his bride dressed in pink from one family group to another. If the couple are Penelope and Augustus Schutz, who married in 1717 or 1727, then the gentleman with them could be General James Tyrell who was ward of the bride.
- The building in the background could be the Banqueting House in Whitehall representing the Stuart dynasty, in which case the orange tree could represent William III and the House of Orange and the white horse being led forward the House of Hanover, whose device was a white horse.
- There are thirteen figures who have never been identified with certainty. One undocumented source claims include 'Baron and Lady Schutz, Dr Tessier, Mrs Blunt, the daughter of Sir Timothy Tyrell, Mrs Bensoin, Colonel Schutz, and Count Betmere'.

- Another source identifies them the key figures as,
 - Augustus Schutz (c. 1693–1757), Keeper of the Privy Purse and Master of the Robes to George II;
 - his wife Penelope, *née* Madan, formerly ward of General James Tyrrell of Shotover, Lady in Waiting to Queen Caroline;
 - Dr George Lewis Tessier of Celle (naturalised 1705, d.1742), Physician in Ordinary to George II and his Household;
 - Colonel Johann Schutz (d.1773), younger brother of Augustus, Keeper of the Privy Purse and Master of the Robes to Frederick, Prince of Wales;
 - and either Count Hans Caspar von Bothmar (1656–1732), principal Advisor to George I, or his son, who was a close friend of the Schutzes
- However, other sources claim that Mrs Blunt predeceased her husband who died in 1693.
- The symbolism is puzzling. The figure at the far left has been reading but is being implored to stop reading and join the group on the right. This might indicate that reading is anti-social at a time when polite conversation was an important part of social interaction. The figure in the red military uniform has his hand on the groom's shoulder and seems to be pointing towards the horse, perhaps indicating that the bride is aligned with the House of Hanover. It is very unusual to see a card table outside and there is money on the table indicating gambling, a pursuit of the wealthy. The woman at the card table has her hand on a deck of cards and there is another deck at the table but no chair. There is also a purse on the table with coins spilling out. In the background two gentlemen are discussing the bas relief figures on a garden urn. The three figures at the right are playing a card game and the figure at the far right is showing us his hand but the cards that can be made out do not have any particular significance.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/mercier-the-schutz-family-and-their-friends-on-a-terrace-t03065>

