



GEORGE IV: ART & SPECTACLE

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- This talk is loosely based on an exhibition in the Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace in 2019 called 'George IV: Art & Spectacle'. I thought I would start with some fun so I have focused on the satirical prints followed by a more serious look the palaces associated with him and finally some of the art he collected.

NOTES

- **George IV: Art and Spectacle**, Queen's Gallery 15 Nov 2019 – 3 May 2020, £32.46
- 'First Gentleman of Europe' and Man of Fashion
 - Thomas Lawrence, *George IV*, 1821
 - Benjamin Robert Haydon, *The Duke of Wellington describing the field of Waterloo to his Majesty George IV*, 1840
 - Thomas Phillips, *The Allied Sovereigns at Petworth 24 June 1814*, 1817
 - Antonio Canova, *Mars and Venus*, 1815-19, marble
 - Angelo Bertini (engraver), Antonio Canova (sculptor), *Mars and Venus*, engraving
- Satirical Prints
 - Robert Seymour, *The Great Joss and His Playthings*
 - Thomas Rowlandson, *The Golden Apple, or the Modern Paris, 1785*, etching 28.2 x 39.6 cm
 - Attr. To George Townly Stubbs, *His Highness in Fitz*
 - James Gillray, *King George IV ('A voluptuary under the horrors of digestion')*, 1792
 - George Cruikshank, *Gent, No Gent, Regent!!*, 1816
 - George Cruikshank, *Inconveniences of a Crowded Drawing Room*
- Palaces
 - The Royal Pavilion at Brighton
 - Charles Wild, *St. James's Palace*, c. 1819

- Joseph Nash, *Buckingham Palace: The East Front from St. James's Park*, 1846
- Jeffry Wyattville, *Design for Rebuilding of Windsor Castle*, 1824
- Art Collector, art market, portraiture, Dutch Masters
 - Rembrandt van Rijn, *The Shipbuilder and His Wife*, 1633
 - Van Dyck, *Charles I (1600-49)*, 1635-6, 84.4 × 99.4 cm
 - Peter Paul Rubens, *Landscape with St George and the Dragon*, 1630-35
 - Edward Bird, *Village Choristers Rehearsing an Anthem for Sunday*, 1810
 - William Mulready, *The Wolf and the Lamb*, 18129-20, 60 × 51.1 cm
 - David Tenier the Younger, *Peasants Dancing Outside a Tavern*
 - Albert Cuypt, *An Evening Landscape with Figures and Sheep*
 - Gerrit Dou, *The Grocer's Shop*, 1672, 41.5 × 32 cm
 - Rembrandt van Rijn, *Agatha Bas*, 1641, 105.4 × 83.9 cm
 - Peter Paul Rubens, *Portrait of a Woman*,
 - Jan Steen, *A Woman at Her Toilet*, 166365.8 × 53 cm. 1625-30

Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830),
George IV (1762-1830), 1821, 295.4
x 205.4 cm, Royal Collection



Thomas Lawrence (1769-1830), *George IV* (1762-1830), 1821, 295.4 x 205.4 cm, Royal Collection

- This is George VI a year after he had become King.
- George was called the "**First Gentleman of Europe**" because of his style and manners and although he was bright and knowledgeable his **laziness and gluttony** meant he squandered his talents. Early on, the public used the nickname '**Prinny**', an affectionate abbreviation of Prince.
- He became **Prince Regent in 1811** when his father George III became incapable of governing. As Regent he saw the introduction of a **new style and interest in art and architecture** that we call the **Regency Period**. The fashion for wigs ended and he introduced darker clothes for men, it is said to try to hide his excessive size.
- He had a very mixed character. The Duke of Wellington described him as "**the worst man he ever fell in with his whole life, the most selfish, the most false, the most ill-natured, the most entirely without one redeeming quality**". Although he later wrote, George was "**a magnificent patron of the arts ... the most extraordinary compound of talent, wit, buffoonery, obstinacy, and good feeling**".
- On his death the Times wrote, "**never was an individual less regretted by his fellow-creatures than this deceased king. What eye has wept for him? ... If he ever had a friend – a devoted friend in any rank of life – we protest that the name of him or her never reached us.**"

NOTES

- **Sir Thomas Lawrence PRA FRS (13 April 1769 – 7 January 1830) was a leading English portrait painter and the fourth president of the Royal Academy in 1820.** Lawrence was a child prodigy. He was born in Bristol and began drawing in Devizes, where his father was an innkeeper. At the age of ten, having moved to Bath, he was supporting his family with his pastel portraits. At eighteen he went to London and soon established his reputation as a portrait painter, receiving his first royal commission, a portrait of Queen Charlotte, in 1790. He acquired the patronage of the **Prince Regent in 1810**. He stayed at

the top of his profession until his death, aged 60, in 1830.

BIO:GEORGE IV

- George IV (George Augustus Frederick; 12 August 1762 – 26 June 1830) was born at St James's Palace in 1762, the first child of the George III and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. He was a talented student, and quickly learned to speak French, German and Italian, in addition to his native English.
- When he became 18 (in 1780) he was given more freedom and unlike his down-to-earth, scandal-free father, he threw himself into a life of dissipation and wild extravagance involving heavy drinking and numerous mistresses and escapades. He was a witty conversationalist, drunk or sober, and showed good, but grossly expensive, taste in decorating his palace.
- When he was 21 (in 1783) he was awarded a combined income in today's money of over £13 million a year. But this was far too little for his excessive expenditure, his stables alone cost almost a third of his total income.
- This led to animosity with his father who demanded a more frugal life. They also disagreed on politics. The king was conservative but George favoured radical politicians such as Charles James Fox.
- When he was 21 he became infatuated with **Maria Fitzherbert**, who was six years older, twice widowed and a Roman Catholic. He was determined to marry her even though this would have barred him from becoming king. They went through a marriage ceremony but, by law, without the king's consent it was void. Fitzherbert believed the marriage was valid but she agreed to keep it secret.
- George descended into debt, his father refused to pay them and George was forced to move in with Fitzherbert. The prince's friends in government agreed to pay his £20 million debt (in today's money) and granted him an extra £7 million but had to declare he was not married in order to squash the rumours which would have caused a public outcry and no money.
- In 1788 the King's mental health deteriorated to such an extent that he could not open Parliament. Convention meant that Parliament could not proceed with any business and there was no mechanism for automatically appointing a regent. It took months for an invalid Regency Bill to be introduced but at that point the King recovered.
- The Prince's debt mounted again and the King refused to pay them unless George married **Princess Caroline of Brunswick**. **They were married in 1795 and the marriage was a disaster**. They permanently separated after the birth of **their only child, Princess Charlotte** and the Prince remained attached to Fitzherbert for the rest of his life despite periods of estrangement.
- George had many mistresses and is rumoured to have fathered several illegitimate children.
- By 1795 the Prince's debts amounted to an astonishing £65 million in today's equivalent. Refusing to clear his debts Parliament increased his grant by another £6,765,000 in today's terms and later a further £5,520,000 a year.

- In 1806 there were rumours that his wife Caroline had had an illegitimate child but an inquiry found no foundation to the rumour but access to her daughter Charlotte was restricted. In 1814 Caroline moved to Italy and is rumoured to have had an affair with her servant Bartolomeo Pergami. Caroline was devastated when Charlotte died in childbirth. She only heard from a passing courier as George refused to tell her. In 1820 when George became King he attempted to divorce her without her permission but she was so popular with the public that the bill was withdrawn. She was barred from his coronation and died three weeks later claiming to have been poisoned.
- In 1810 the King's mental health broke down again and a Regency Bill was passed and the Prince became Regent in 1811. George took little interest in government affairs and the convention that the prime minister was the person supported by the majority of the House was established. This was important period for Parliament as the Whigs were trying to enact Catholic emancipation which was opposed by the Tories. The Tory Prime Minister Spencer Perceval was assassinated in 1812. The Tories continued to vigorously prosecute the war with France and Napoleon was defeated in 1814 and again, following his return, at Waterloo in 1815.
- During this period George took an active interest in the arts and his association with the dandy Beau Brummell and the architect John Nash created the Regency style. Nash designed the houses around Regent's Park and Regent Street and the fantastical 'Indian Gothic' style of the Brighton Pavilion.
- When George III died in 1820 George IV became King aged 58. By this time he was obese and probably addicted to laudanum. He visited Ireland and Scotland but then spent most of his reign in seclusion at Windsor Castle. He occasionally interfered in politics, in 1824 he denounced Catholic emancipation but the bill was finally approved in 1829.
- George was grossly obese and suffered from gout, arteriosclerosis, dropsy and possibly porphyria. He often spent whole days in bed when his weight meant that he could hardly breathe. One senior aide wrote, "A more contemptible, cowardly, selfish, unfeeling dog does not exist ... There have been good and wise kings but not many of them ... and this I believe to be one of the worst." By 1828 he was almost completely blind and gout in his arm meant he could not sign documents. He was taking large quantities of laudanum and his dropsy forced him to sleep upright in a chair. He was still eating vast quantities of food and consumed "Three parts of a bottle of Mozelle, a Glass of Dry Champagne, two Glasses of Port [and] a Glass of Brandy" for breakfast." He died on the morning of 26 June 1830 of internal bleeding because of a ruptured blood vessel in his stomach.
- The throne passed to George III's third son William.

REFERENCES

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Thomas Rowlandson (1757-1827), *The Golden Apple, or the Modern Paris*, 1785, hand-coloured etching 25.6 × 35.4 cm, Royal Collection

- I will briefly retrace the life of George IV through a series of satirical prints.
- This one is a take on how **Zeus asked Paris of Troy to judge** the most beautiful of the three goddesses—Hera, Athena and Aphrodite—and award her a golden apple. In this case the Prince of Wales is giving the golden apple to Mary Isabella, **Duchess of Rutland** (1756-1831), rather than the Georgiana, **Duchess of Devonshire** (1757-1806) or Jane Gordon, **Duchess of Gordon** (1748-1812). None was George's mistress, but such prints drove rumours of illicit liaisons. Despite this, George seems to have been flattered rather than offended by the depiction.
- He (George Augustus Frederick; 12 August 1762 – 26 June 1830) was born at **St James's Palace** in 1762, **the first child of the George III** and Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz (pronounced 'stray-lits'). He was a talented student, and quickly learned to speak French, German and Italian, in addition to his native English.
- When he became 18 (in 1780) he was given more freedom and unlike his down-to-earth, scandal-free father, **he threw himself into a life of dissipation and wild extravagance** involving heavy drinking and numerous mistresses and escapades. He was a **witty conversationalist**, drunk or sober, and showed good, but grossly expensive, taste in decorating his palace.
- When he was 21 (in 1783) he was awarded a combined income in **today's money of over £13 million** (\$17.6 million) a year. But this was **far too little** for his excessive expenditure, his stables alone cost almost a third of his total income.
- This led to **animosity with his father** who demanded a more frugal life. They disagreed on most things including politics. The king was conservative but George favoured radical politicians such as Charles James Fox (1749-1806), arch rival of the Tory William Pitt the Younger (1759-1806).

NOTES

- George IV when Prince Regent commissioned a 'Gallery of Beauties' from Ann Mee; portraits of fashionable ladies, one list of whom is in the Royal Archives and another printed in the Ladies Monthly Museum XVI (January 1814). The series may have been conceived as a nineteenth-century version of the 'Windsor Beauties' painted by Sir Peter Lely for Anne Hyde, Duchess of York in 1662-5, and Sir Godfrey Kneller's 'Hampton Court Beauties' painted for Queen Mary around 1691.
- Charles James Fox spent nearly all his career in opposition, he was a noted anti-slavery campaigner, a supporter of the French Revolution, and an advocate of religious tolerance and individual liberty. He served as Foreign Secretary but was never Prime Minister.
- **Thomas Rowlandson and James Gillray** were the best known satirists of the period and their prints were often bawdy. His caricatures of the Duchess of Devonshire, William Pitt the Younger and Napoleon Bonaparte became famous. He had been drawing caricatures since before the age of ten and he covered the margins of his schoolbooks with drawings of his friends and school masters. Later he was a **student at the Royal Academy** and spent some time studying in Paris. **He inherited £7,000 from an aunt which he gambled away** and as poverty overtook him he turned to caricature as a way to earn a living. He also made a good living **drawing erotica** for his private clients.

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<https://www.metmuseum.org/art/collection/search/388769>

<https://www.facebook.com/female.artists.in.history/photos/anne-mee-née-foldstone-british-painter-1765-1851anne-mee-miniature-self-portrait-/1486041948347356/> about Ann Mee née Foldstone



Attr. George Townly Stubbs,
His Highness in Fitz, 1789,
 17.6 × 25.3 cm, British
 Museum

Attr. George Townly Stubbs, *His Highness in Fitz*, 1789, 17.6 × 25.3 cm, British Museum

- When he was 21 he became **infatuated with Maria Fitzherbert**. She was six years older than him, twice widowed and a Roman Catholic but he was determined to marry her even though this would have barred him from becoming king. They went through a **marriage ceremony** but, by law, without the king's consent it was void. Fitzherbert believed the marriage was valid but she agreed to keep it secret.
- This print shows **George and Mrs. Fitzherbert embracing on a bed**. She is underneath and her garter is inscribed '[M]al y pense', his shows the word 'soit'. This is the motto of the Order of the Garter, in full "Honi soit qui mal y pense" or loosely translated from Middle French "**shame on anyone who thinks evil of it**". But by plitting the motto his garter reads 'shame' and hers 'thinks evil'.
- If you look down the bottom the publisher is stated to be White of 4 Piccadilly but no such publisher is recorded, and it seems to be a subterfuge for Fores at 3 Piccadilly to be able, if needed, to deny responsibility for the print.
- **George soon descended into debt** and his father refused to bail him out. George was forced to move in with Fitzherbert. The prince's friends in government **agreed to pay his £21 million** (\$28 million, then £161,000) **debt** (in today's money) and granted him an **extra £8 million** (\$11 million, then £60,000) but he had to declare he was not married in order to squash the rumours which would have caused a public outcry and no money.

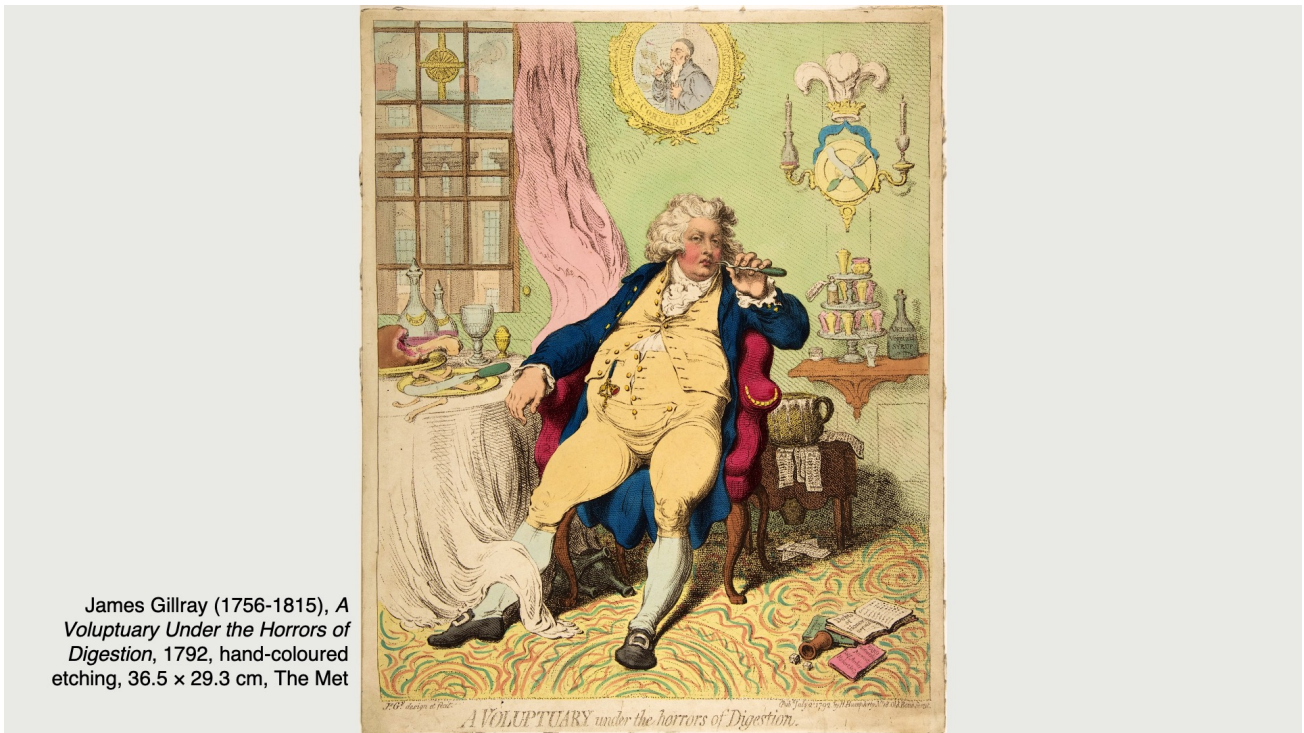
NOTES

- George Townly Stubbs (1756-1815) was the son of the famous horse painter George Stubbs (1724-1806).
- The apocryphal story associated with the Order of the Garter is that Edward III was dancing with his daughter-in-law (Joan of Kent) when he garter slipped round her ankle and those around her started laughing. The king put the garter on his own leg and said, in French, "Shame on anyone who thinks evil of it. Whoever is laughing at this today will later be proud to wear it." It is more likely that the shame was directed against anyone who opposed his designs on the French Crown as he had just won the battle of Crécy (1346).

- Behind them on the bed are the Prince's three white ostrich feathers (with the motto "Ich dien", "I serve") and a cross. His coat, with a conspicuous star, is on a chair by the bed.

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James Gillray (1756-1815), *A Voluptuary Under the Horrors of Digestion*, 1792, hand-coloured etching, 36.5 x 29.3 cm, The Met

- Gillray is illustrating George's uncontrolled self-indulgence. He is now 30 and sprawled in his chair after a lavish meal picking his teeth with a meat fork; his lack of gentility is underscored by the **over-flowing chamber pot at his elbow used to hold down all his unpaid bills**. His numerous illnesses are indicated by the remedies at the right – **pills and potions** to treat "stinking breath", "piles" (hemorrhoids), venereal disease and poor digestion.
- A portrait on the wall suggests a more effective remedy. It shows Luigi Carnarro, a Venetian nobleman whose life was saved by **going on a strict diet**. By including "Voluptuary" in the title, Gillray invoked contemporary worries that **traditional British masculine virtues were being weakened** by a culture obsessed with luxury and overindulgence.
- **In 1788**, four years before this caricature, **George III's mental health deteriorated to such an extent that he could not open Parliament**. Convention meant that **Parliament could not proceed** with any business and there was no mechanism for automatically appointing a regent. It took **months for a Regency Bill** to be introduced but at that point the King recovered.
- **The Prince's debt mounted again** and the **King refused to pay** them unless **George married Princess Caroline** of Brunswick. They were **married in 1795** and the **marriage was a disaster**. They permanently separated after the birth of their only child, Princess Charlotte and the Prince remained attached to Fitzherbert for the rest of his life despite periods of estrangement. George had many mistresses and is rumoured to have fathered several illegitimate children.
- **By 1795 the Prince's debts amounted to an astonishing £66 million in today's equivalent** (nearly \$90 million, then £650,000). Refusing to clear his debts Parliament increased his grant by another **£7 million** in today's terms (\$9 million, then £65,000) and later a **further £5.6 million a year** (\$7.6 million, then £60,000).

NOTES

- **James Gillray** (13 August 1756 – 1 June 1815) was a British caricaturist and printmaker famous for his etched political and social satires, mainly published between 1792 and 1810. Many of his works are held at the National Portrait Gallery in London. Gillray has been called "the father of the political cartoon", with his works satirizing George III, Napoleon, prime ministers and generals. Regarded as being one of the two most influential cartoonists, the other being William Hogarth
- George IV's nine mistresses included **Elizabeth Armistead** (1750-1842, later married Charles James Fox), Elizabeth Conyngham, **Marchioness Conyngham** (his last mistress from 1819), **Anna Maria Crouch** (singer and actress, only briefly his mistress), **Grace Elliott** (Scottish courtesan, writer and spy resident in Paris during the French Revolution, said to have born George's illegitimate daughter), **Maria Fitzherbert** (1756-1837, longtime companion, secretly and illegally married), Isabella Ingram-Seymour-Conway, **Marchioness of Hertford** (English landowner and courtier, a close friend and mistress from 1807 to 1819), Frances Villiers, **Countess of Jersey** (Lady of the Bedchamber, a scintillating society woman), **Mary Robinson** (1757-1800, English actress, poet, dramatist, novelist, and celebrity figure) and **Olga Zherebtsova** (1766-1849, Russian aristocrat and socialite, rumoured to have given birth to a son by George).

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George Cruikshank,
Gent, No Gent, Regent!!,
 1816, 25 x 34.8 cm,
 British Museum

George Cruikshank (1792-1878), *Gent, No Gent, Regent!!*, 1816, 25 x 34.8 cm, hand-coloured etchings, British Museum

- Twenty-two years later, in 1810, the King's mental health broke down again and the Prince became **Regent** in 1811. George took little interest in government affairs and the convention that the **prime minister** was the person supported by the majority of the House was established.
- In the picture we see the progression. On the left, George is a handsome young officer in the Light Dragoons. In the middle he has become a drunken sot sitting on Mrs Fitzherbert's lap surrounded by his cronies in a squalid tavern.
- Behind him is **Charles James Fox** (1749-1806, Whig and arch rival of William Pitt the Younger, Tory), **George Hanger** (1751-1824, 4th Baron Coleraine, gambler, rake and womaniser) sits on the right with **Richard Brinsley Sheridan** (1751-1816, Irish playwright and Whig MP) behind him. The prince has knocked over the table and cards and dice are falling to the floor. Under the table the **Duke of Norfolk** is vomiting into a tub.
- **On the right he sits grossly fat and supported on crutches**, his enormous gouty legs resting on a cushion. **Isabella, Marchioness of Hertford** (1759-1834, a close friend and mistress from 1807 to 1819) is offering him a **glass of punch**, while **Sir John McMahon** (1754-1817, MP and his private secretary) hands him a **glass of brandy**. The Regent's eyes are turned to the **lady's large breasts**. On his head is a Chinese head-dress with a green dragon above him **making fun of his interest in Chinese taste and the Brighton Pavilion**.

NOTES

- **George Cruikshank** (27 September 1792 – 1 February 1878) was a British caricaturist and book illustrator, praised as the "modern Hogarth" during his life. His book illustrations for his friend Charles Dickens, and many other authors, reached an international audience.
- This was important period for Parliament as the Whigs were trying to enact Catholic emancipation which was opposed by the Tories. The Tory Prime Minister Spencer Perceval was assassinated in 1812. The Tories continued to vigorously prosecute the war with

France and Napoleon was defeated in 1814 and again, following his return, at Waterloo in 1815.

- The Prince took an active interest in the arts and his association with the dandy Beau Brummell and the architect John Nash created the Regency style. Nash designed the houses around Regent's Park and Regent Street and the fantastical 'Indian Gothic' style of the Brighton Pavilion.
- A sequence of three designs placed side by side.
- [1] As a 'Gent' the Prince is a handsome and stalwart young officer in the uniform of the 10th Light Dragoons of which he was Colonel, afterwards converted to a hussar regiment (see No. 10629). He stands in a landscape, the cloudy sky behind him irradiated by a rising sun. Cf. No. 8800 by Gillray.
- [2] In the squalid room of a low tavern the Prince revels with Mrs. Fitzherbert and his boon companions. He sits on her lap, tipsily holding up a wine-glass; Fox, standing behind them, drunkenly empties a bottle over the glass. George Hanger sits on a chair, holding bottle and glass, his bludgeon and a watchman's broken lantern beside him. Sheridan stands behind. A table beside the Prince tilts so that cards and dice fall off. Below it grovels Norfolk, vomiting into a tub, beside which is a paper: 'Dean Swift's Maw Wallop' [filthy dish of food]. A wall-clock lit by a single candle shows that it is 4 or 5 a.m. On the wall are pasted: [1] a ballad, 'Black Joke'; [2] 'The Last Dying Speech for High Treason'; [3] 'Cock & Hen Club St Gilse's—Chairman George Whelp Deputy Charley Wag members Hanger—Sherry—Norfolk— Barrymore [see No. 7993, &c.]—Slender Billy—' He is fat and dishevelled, his loosened garter is inscribed 'Honi so[it]'
- [3] As Regent he sits enthroned under a canopy, grossly fat and supported on crutches (cf. No. 12714), his vast gouty legs resting on a cushion. Lady Hertford (see No. 11853, &c.), seated beside him (left), proffers a glass from a bowl of punch, while McMahon, tiny as usual, and standing on a stool, hands a glass of brandy from decanters (right) on a table, below which bottles are stacked. His 'Privy Purse', see No. 11874, hangs from his pocket. The Regent sits impassively, his eyes turned to the lady, who has huge breasts but is not otherwise caricatured. He wears uniform with the Garter ribbon and a great display of orders. On his head, resting on a pyramid of curls, is a Chinese head-dress, surmounted by a cone decorated with bells; his shoes are Chinese. A hint of whisker in [2] has developed into a furry border to his bulging cheeks. Above his head hangs one of the dragons of the Pavilion (see No. 12749), much burlesqued and with a tongue inscribed 'Taste'. (British Museum website)

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George Cruikshank, *Inconveniences of a Crowded Drawing Room*, May 6, 1818, 25.08 x 35.56 cm

- This shows a royal reception given by **Queen Caroline at the Queen's House** (now Buckingham Palace). Cruikshank makes fun of the guests **absurd fashions** and horrified, snooty expressions as awkward moments unfold. A contemporary complained "**The crowds are so great and so little decorum attended to, that people's clothes are literally torn to pieces.**"
- In the doorway an **obese man and woman collide** and she stands on his **gouty foot**. On the left an officer steps on a lady's train **slitting her gown**. On the right a hussar officer **drives his sabre** against a much-distressed lady. On the floor lie fans, a shoe-buckle, the bag from a wig, &c.

NOTES

- **George Cruikshank** (27 September 1792 – 1 February 1878) was a British caricaturist and book illustrator, praised as the "modern Hogarth" during his life. His book illustrations for his friend Charles Dickens, and many other authors, reached an international audience.

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John Lewis Marks (c. 1796-1855), *How to get Un-married, - Ay, there's the Rub!*, 1820, coloured etching, 26.1 x 39 cm, paper size, National Portrait Gallery

- **As I said, George married Princess Caroline of Brunswick in 1795 and the following year she gave birth to Princess Charlotte.** George and his wife separated, and the young princess grew up in the care of governesses, with very little attention from either of her parents.
- In 1806 there were rumours that George's wife **Caroline had had an illegitimate child** but an inquiry found no foundation to the rumour but **access to her daughter Charlotte was restricted.**
- In **1814 Caroline moved to Italy** and is rumoured to have had an **affair with her servant Bartolomeo Pergami.**
- Meanwhile **Princess Charlotte** became the "**people's princess**", loved by the nation. She married and they **moved to Claremont** living a happy and quiet life until she **died in childbirth aged just 21, mourned by the whole nation. Caroline was devastated.** She only heard from a passing messenger as George refused to tell her.
- In 1820, when **George became King** he attempted to divorce her without her permission but **she was so popular with the public** that the bill was withdrawn. **It provoked a flood of hostile caricatures such as this one.** Here the King and Queen are tied by the 'Matrimonial knot'. On the left stand Justice and **Henry Brougham** (pronounced 'broom'), the brilliant young **Whig lawyer** who represented her case. On the right **Lord Sidmouth**, the Home Secretary, tugs at **Lady Conyngham**, the King's last mistress from 1819, whose arms are round **Lord Castlereagh**, the Foreign Secretary.
- **Caroline, the Queen, was barred from George's coronation and she died three weeks later claiming to have been poisoned.** Lord Liverpool decided her **funeral procession** would avoid the city but the crowds were incensed and **chaos broke out.** The honour guard draw their sabres and shots were fired and **two people were killed.**

NOTES

- **John Lewis Marks** (c. 1796-1855) caricaturist who worked between 1814 and 1832, though his career went on much longer. He initially worked for Tegg and other publishers but later more usually published his works himself. Later in life he ran a public house.

TEXT

Brougham (pronounced 'broom'): Let slanderous lounges say what they will they are "Trifles light as air " for "She is every inch a Queen"

Justice: Your exemplary conduct is worthy imitation as during your husband's ill treatment every effort you exerted to reclaim him, which failing, the world must approve your seeking refuge in the wholesome and protecting laws of your country—I will be your guide.

Caroline: Nothing but death shall e'er divorce my dignities.

George: Heigho! How to get un-married; that's the question! There is but little trouble in tying the knot, but your quizzes of the cloth draw it so d—nd tight. Pull away Derry. Pull away Deary. Pull away Doctor.

Stewart: If we could entice that blind lady from her, we might do some good

Addington: A long pull and a Strong pull and a pull all together.

CHARACTERS

Henry Brougham, 1st Baron Brougham and Vaux (1778-1868), Lord Chancellor, Whig.

Caroline Amelia Elizabeth of Brunswick (1768-1821), Queen of George IV.

King George IV (1762-1830), Regent 1811-19; Reigned 1820-30.

Robert Stewart, 2nd Marquess of Londonderry (Lord Castlereagh) (1769-1822), Statesman. In 1820 Tory.

Isabella Anne Seymour-Conway (née Ingram), Marchioness of Hertford (1760-1834), Courtier and mistress of King George IV; second wife of 2nd Marquess of Hertford. Tory. Mistress from 1807 to 1819, when he turned his attentions to Elizabeth Conyngham, Marchioness Conyngham.

Henry Addington, 1st Viscount Sidmouth (1757-1844), Tory Prime Minister (1801-1804). Home Secretary (1812-1822)



Robert Seymour, *The Great Joss and His Playthings*, c. 1829, 25.2 x 35.3 cm, Royal Collection

Robert Seymour (1798-1836), *The Great Joss and His Playthings*, c. 1829, 25.2 x 35.3 cm, Royal Collection

- I finish this sequence of caricatures with one showing **George IV as an obese man in Chinese dress sitting on a large teapot**. He is smoking and holding his pet giraffe. The pip is shaped as a letter 'C' and in the smoke is written '**Oh 'tis love 'tis love 'tis love**'. A Chinese figure below gathers coins coming out of the spout of the teapot. Three other men construct **toys for the king** — **Buckingham House**, another building and a plank carrying Life Guards headed by the Duke of Wellington in a cockerel hat. Above the king a snake with the head of a Life Guard writhes and in the far right corner a man holds a document titled '**Plan of Intended Improvements at Windsor**', standing below a shelf filled with discarded models marked 'Lots of Churches', surmounted by a fishing rod and a mounted fish '**Caught at Virginia Water.**' Behind the king is a model of the **Royal Pavilion at Brighton**.
- At this time the King was spending too much time with his mistress **Lady Conyngham**. They stayed at **Virginia Water** where he spent the time fishing and **visiting his menagerie**. In 1827 the King was **given a Nubian giraffe** as a diplomatic gift from Egypt. The poor animal died in 1829 and George IV arranged for it to be stuffed. The giraffe was a common symbol used by satirists to condemn his extravagant and frivolous lifestyle..
- When George III died **in 1820 George IV became King aged 58**. By this time has was **obese** and probably **addicted to laudanum**. He visited Ireland and Scotland but then spent most of his reign **in seclusion at Windsor Castle**. He occasionally interfered in politics, for example, in 1824 he denounced Catholic emancipation but the bill was finally approved in 1829.
- George was grossly obese and suffered from gout, arteriosclerosis, dropsy and possibly porphyria. He often spent **whole days in bed** when **his weight meant that he could hardly breath**. One senior aide wrote, "**A more contemptible, cowardly, selfish, unfeeling dog does not exist ... There have been good and wise kings but not many of them ... and this I believe to be one of the worst.**" By 1828 he was almost completely blind and **gout in his arm meant he could not sign documents**. He was taking large quantities of laudanum and his dropsy forced him to sleep upright in a chair. He was **still**

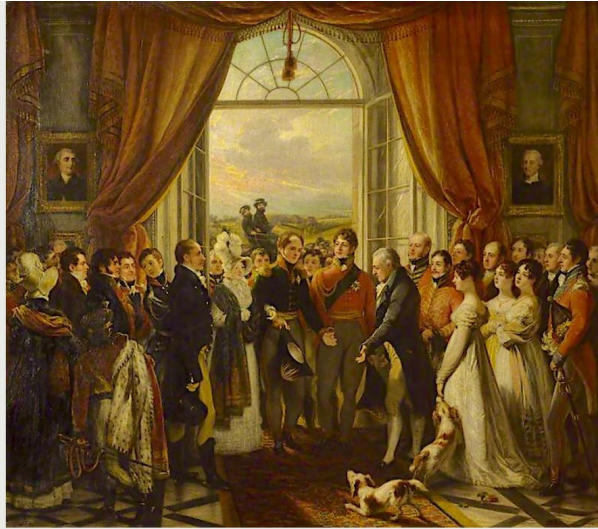
eating vast quantities of food and consumed "Three parts of a bottle of Mozelle, a Glass of Dry Champagne, two Glasses of Port [and] a Glass of Brandy" for breakfast." He **died on the morning of 26 June 1830** of internal bleeding because of a ruptured blood vessel in his stomach.

NOTES

- Robert Seymour (1798 – 20 April 1836) was a British illustrator known for his illustrations for *The Pickwick Papers* by Charles Dickens and for his caricatures. **He committed suicide** after arguing with Dickens over the illustrations for Pickwick.

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<https://www.rct.uk/collection/751279/the-great-joss-and-his-playthings>



Thomas Phillips (1770–1845), *The Allied Sovereigns at Petworth, 24 June 1814 (George, 1751–1837, 3rd Earl of Egremont, with His Children Looking on, is presented by George, Prince Regent, to Tsar Alexander I of Russia in the Marble Hall at Petworth with the King of Prussia, Frederick William III)*, 1817, 128 x 147 cm, National Trust, Petworth House

Thomas Phillips (1770–1845), *The Allied Sovereigns at Petworth, 24 June 1814 (George, 1751–1837, 3rd Earl of Egremont, with His Children Looking on, is presented by George, Prince Regent, to Tsar Alexander I of Russia in the Marble Hall at Petworth with the King of Prussia, Frederick William III)*, 1817, 128 x 147 cm, National Trust, Petworth House

- I thought I would balance all those caricatures with two official paintings that show him in an entirely different light. The artist **Thomas Phillips** emphasises the **decorum and international prestige of George IV**. He is shown at Petworth House presenting the 3rd Earl of Egremont to **Tsar Alexander I of Russia and the King of Prussia** Frederick William III. The paintings of Fox and Pitt on the wall are not at Petworth and were probably introduced for symbolic reasons.
- The Allied Sovereigns visited England in June 1814 to celebrate the **Peace of Paris**. The apparent bonhomie started to break down when the Tsar and his sister started to interfere in the marriage plans for Princess Charlotte and the Tsar was dismayed by the **Prince Regent's drunken behaviour**.

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Benjamin Robert Haydon, *The Duke of Wellington Describing the Field of Waterloo to his Majesty George IV*, 1840, 146 x 175 cm, The Royal Hospital Chelsea

Benjamin Robert Haydon (1786-1846), *The Duke of Wellington Describing the Field of Waterloo to his Majesty George IV*, 1840, 146 x 175 cm, The Royal Hospital Chelsea

- The history painter **Benjamin Haydon** painted this **twenty-five years after** the battle. **Arthur Wellesley, 1st Duke of Wellington** (1769-1852) is **showing George IV the scene of the Battle of Waterloo**. It is **unlikely this event ever took place** but it was painted to honour an important victory. Unfortunately for Haydon, "**The English had neither the state support that had enabled the creation of powerful militaristic imagery in France, but nor did they have an appetite for grand-manner propaganda that directly celebrated the glories of war. The English did not have the close relations between art and politics such as had long existed within France**". In 1846, overcome by debt and disappointed in an ungrateful public he committed suicide. He left a note saying "Stretch my no longer on this rough world". Even his suicide did not go to plan. He shot himself but the bullet failed to kill him so he cut his own throat.
- In fact, when news of the victory at Waterloo arrived by messenger in London he had to interrupt a party the Prince Regent was attending to give him the message. The hostess (Madame Boehm) complained about the interruption for years afterwards and the Prince sent her a golden eagle by way of apology. Over 40,000 soldiers died at Waterloo.

NOTES

- "**The fields, a few miles south of Brussels** at the village of Mont St Jean on Sunday 18th June 1815, resounded to the clamour of war as Napoleon's dreams of Empire were shattered by an Allied army of Anglo-Dutch, Hanoverian and Prussian troops commanded by the **Duke of Wellington**. Almost **220,000 men fought all day** and into the evening over an area about two square miles and **over 47,000 died**. Sir Walter Scott described them thus... 'Farewell, sad Field! whose blighted face Wears desolation's withering trace; Long shall my memory retain Thy shattered huts and trampled grain, With every mark of martial wrong...Has not such havoc bought a name Immortal in the rolls of fame? Yes – Agincourt may be forgot, And Cressy be an unknown spot, And Blenheim's name be new; But still in story and in song, For many an age remembered long, Shall live the towers of Hougomont And Field of Waterloo!'" (Art UK website)

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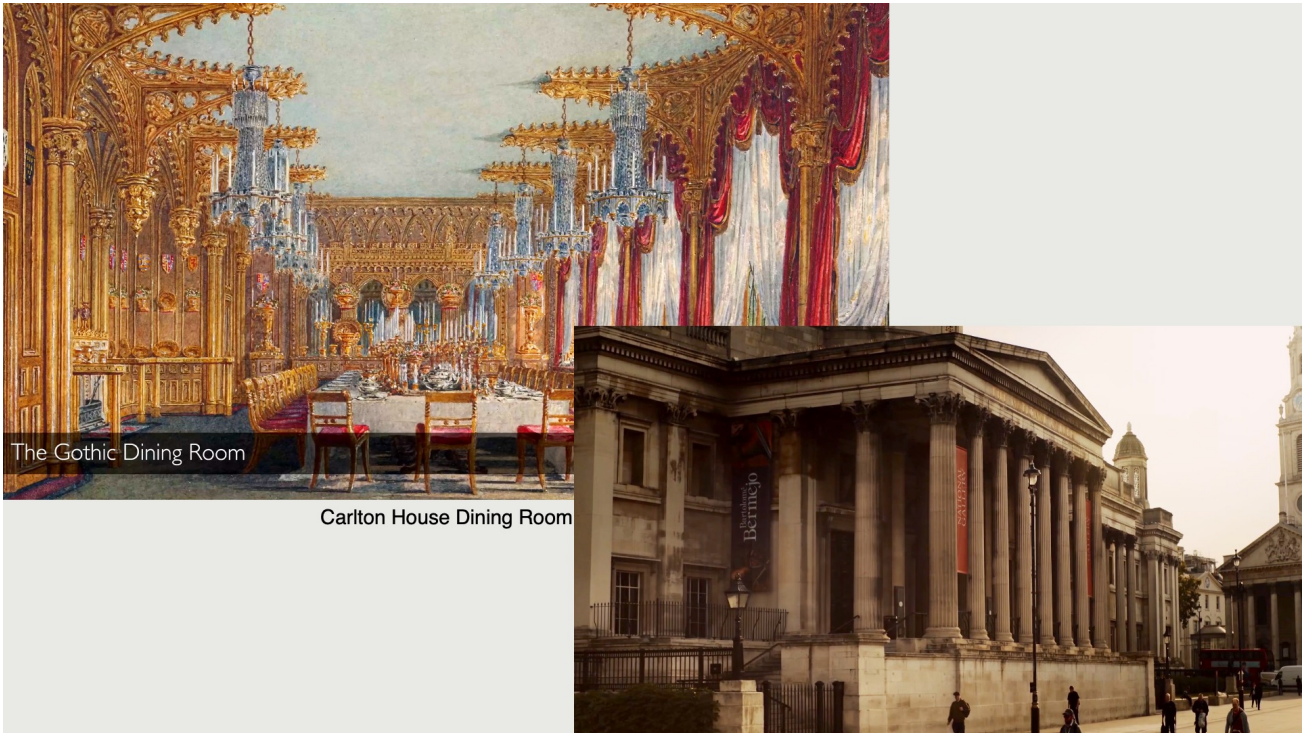
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GEORGE IV'S BUILDINGS

- Carlton House—the Prince had the house substantially rebuilt by the architect Henry Holland between 1783 and 1796. It was demolished in 1826.
- Brighton Pavilion—started in 1787 and extended by John Nash in 1815, sold to Brighton in 1850.
- Buckingham Palace—originally built in c. 1705, bought by George II for his wife in 1762, John Nash started to convert it in the 1820s.
- Windsor Castle—William the Conqueror built it in 1070-1086, Charles II rebuilt much of it and George III renovated it and George IV rebuilt parts of it starting in 1820.



The Gothic Dining Room

Carlton House Dining Room

- I will next briefly touch upon the four great buildings associated with George IV—Carlton House, Brighton Pavilion, Buckingham Palace and Windsor Castle.

CARLTON HOUSE

- George IV design is very different from the sparse Regency style we think of when we think of Jane Austen. His style was lavish and opulent with gold interiors.
- Carlton House was one of his first forays into architectural design. Carlton House stood on the Mall where Carlton Terrace now stands overlooking St. James Park. Its foundation were not sturdy as it was on sloping ground and by the 1820s it was decided it could not be salvaged and was demolished. It no longer survives although the portico is now the columned portico in the centre of the National Gallery.
- The extravagance of Carlton House led to enormous debts and when the creditors threatened to repossess the furniture and paintings George shut up the house and moved to Brighton.

REFERENCES

See the film Architecture and Spectacle at

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/themes/exhibitions/george-iv-art-spectacle/the-queens-gallery-buckingham-palace/architecture-splendour>



BRIGHTON PAVILION

- George IV bought a relatively modest house overlooking the sea but immediately started to extend it using the architect **Henry Holland**.
- He lived in the house with his mistress **Maria Fitzherbert** and Brighton became the centre of fashionable society. The waters at Brighton were thought to have restorative powers and there was the horse racing.
- (CLICK) He then employed **John Nash** to work with him to create the Brighton Pavilion. He bought these stables and turned them into an (CLICK) **oriental phantasy**, sometimes called 'Indian Gothic' but inspired by the architecture of India, China and even France.
- (CLICK) The Banqueting Room is the most spectacular, particularly the dragon that holds up the central chandelier.



The Royal Pavilion at Brighton

- George IV's successors William IV, and Victoria, also used the Pavilion but Victoria decided that Osborne House should be the royal seaside retreat, and the Pavilion was sold to the city of Brighton in 1850.
- In 2020, management and operation of the Royal Pavilion were transferred to a new charity along with its other museums in order to share staff and reduce costs. It is not clear how this and the impact of Covid will affect the future of the unique building.

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 139-151

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Buckingham House, after 1703, Royal Collection

Buckingham House, after 1703, Royal Collection

- In the Middle Ages this area was a **marsh fed by the River Tyburn** which still flows under the Palace. After the Norman Conquest it became owned by the **monks of Westminster Abbey** which you can see in the distance before Nicholas Hawksmoor added the two towers 1722 and 1745.
- In 1536 **Henry VII** took the lands from the Abbey but this part remained wasteland. **James I established a four-acre mulberry garden** to make silk, now the north-west corner of the Palace garden. One source in 1648 described it as an area frequented by **male prostitutes** (called "Sodomes and Spintries at the Mulbury-garden at S. James's"). So, it is possible Buckingham Palace was once a gay brothel.
- **A house was erected in 1624** which became known as **Goring House** and through a legal omission George III regained the freehold. The house burned down and was rebuilt. Then in 1703 the first Duke of Buckingham and Normanby built **Buckingham House**. It was sold by his illegitimate son to George III for £21,000 as a private retreat for his wife, Queen Charlotte and so was then known as the **Queen's House**. The structure was remodelled and from about 1791 it became known as **Buckingham Palace**.
- In 1820, George IV started to extend the property but in 1826 he decided to employ **John Nash to create a grand palace...**

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<https://www.rct.uk/visit/buckingham-palace/who-built-buckingham-palace/>



Joseph Nash (1809-78),
*Buckingham Palace: The East
 Front from St. James's Park*,
 1846, 27.6 × 40.3 cm,
 watercolour and bodycolour,
 Royal Collection

Joseph Nash (1809-78), *Buckingham Palace: The East Front from St. James's Park*, 1846, 27.6 × 40.3 cm, watercolour and bodycolour, Royal Collection

- **John Nash (1752-1835) and George IV conceived a grand plan** that united Regent's Park, Regent Street, St. James's Palace and Buckingham Palace in one grand metropolitan scheme. George IV transformed Buckingham House into a U-shaped Palace in the 1820s. He wanted to create a grand palace to rival Versailles. At the front was a large arch representing his victories over Napoleon.
- Inevitably the cost of transforming Buckingham House into a private residence for the king got completely out of control. **With costs approaching half a million Nash was sacked** and George never moved in. William IV finished the work but never moved in and in 1834 when the Palace of Westminster burned down it **almost became the new Houses of Parliament**. Eventually much of his vision for the house was executed, though later alterations have obscured the brilliance of some of Nash's work.
- It became the **new official residence when Queen Victoria** came to the throne in 1837. She found the Palace **too small and sold Brighton Pavilion for £35,000 to fund its extension**. The chimneys filled the rooms with smoke and the interior smelled as the ventilation was so poor. Prince Albert addressed all the design faults by 1840 but by 1847 Victoria still found it too small and **a new wing was built enclosing the central courtyard**. Widowed in 1861 Victoria retired to Windsor Castle, Balmoral Castle and Osborne House. In 1901 Edward VII redecorated it in the form it is today and in 1913 George V refaced the building in Portland stone.
- **George IV and John Nash also added Marble Arch**, originally sited, as you can see, in front of Buckingham Palace, in 1827 to commemorate Britain's victories in the Napoleonic Wars.

NOTES

- **Joseph Nash** studied with Augustus Pugin and was an English watercolour painter and

lithographer, specialising in historical buildings. His major work was the 4-volume *Mansions of England in the Olden Time*, published from 1839–49. He was not related to John Nash the architect.

- **John Nash** (18 January 1752 – 13 May 1835) was one of the **foremost British architects** of the Georgian and Regency eras, during which he was responsible for the design, in the neoclassical and picturesque styles, of many important areas of London. His designs were financed by the Prince Regent and by the era's **most successful property developer**, **James Burton**. Nash also collaborated extensively with Burton's son, **Decimus Burton**.
- **Wellington Arch** was designed for Hyde Park Corner by Decimus Burton in 1826-30 and moved to its current position in 1882-83. **The Queen Victoria Memorial** (sculpted by Sir Thomas Brock, conceived by Sir Aston Webb) was built from 2,300 tonnes of white Carrara marble between 1906 and 1924.

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<https://www.rct.uk/collection/919892/buckingham-palace-the-east-front-from-st-james-park>



Jeffry Wyatville
(1766-1840)
Windsor Castle
The South Front of the Upper Ward
before and after the proposed
remodelling, 1824
52 x 82.5 cm
pen and ink with wash
Royal Collection

Jeffry Wyatville (1766-1840), *Windsor Castle: The South Front of the Upper Ward before and after the proposed remodelling*, 1824, 52 x 82.5 cm, pen and ink with wash, Royal Collection

- In 1823 George IV's thoughts turned to **improving Windsor Castle**. He drew up plans and Parliament **voted £150,000 for the work**. By 1830 the **costs were over £800,000** but George continued and created the castle we now have.
- **Home to the monarchy since the 11th century**. Rather than being innovative he wanted to **restore the Gothic elements**. He raised the height of the central grand tower to create the skyline we see today. He created the Green Drawing Room and the Crimson Drawing Room for his art collection.
- (CLICK) That great skyline you see today.

NOTES

- The original castle was built in the 11th century after the Norman invasion of England by William the Conqueror. Since the time of Henry I (who reigned 1100–1135), it has been used by the reigning monarch and is the longest-occupied palace in Europe.

REFERENCES

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Jeffry_Wyatville



GEORGE IV'S ART COLLECTION

As Prince of Wales and, from 1820, king, he purchased paintings, metalwork, textiles, furniture, watercolours, books and ceramics in vast numbers, many of these works by the finest artists of the day. Bringing together Dutch and Flemish masterpieces, magnificent portraits by Sir Thomas Lawrence and Sir Joshua Reynolds, delicate French porcelain, intricate goldsmiths' work and elegant books and drawings.



Rembrandt van Rijn,
*The Shipbuilder and
 His Wife: Jan Rijcksen
 (1560/2-1637) and his
 Wife, Griet Jans, 1633,*
 113.8 x 169.8 cm,
 Royal Collection

Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), *The Shipbuilder and His Wife: Jan Rijcksen (1560/2-1637) and his Wife, Griet Jans, 1633*, 113.8 x 169.8 cm, Royal Collection

- Despite everything I have said about the dissolute George IV he **was** an avid art connoisseur and collector. This is one of the three Rembrandts collected by George IV, *The Shipbuilder and his Wife*, purchased for **5,000 guineas** in 1811, was perhaps his **most famous** single acquisition and the biggest purchase he made.
- It was painted in 1633 when Rembrandt was a **successful and fashionable portrait painter** and his art was at its most naturalistic. Natural light floods into the room catching a snapshot of the couple at the point of interruption. Two years previously he had moved from Leiden, where he was born, to Amsterdam. He set up a studio and quickly became a successful portrait painter. He stayed with his art dealer Hendrick van Uylenburgh, and in 1634, married Hendrick's cousin, Saskia.
- This work has been known as *The Shipbuilder and His Wife* and the couple were identified as Jan Rijcksen and his wife Griet in 1970. When it was painted in 1633 the **convention was to portray married couples as separate paintings** with the husband on the left (i.e. on the wife's right hand). Rembrandt has **combined the couple in one painting** allowing him to create a dynamic interaction. **The wife has burst into the room** to give an urgent message to her husband. Their expressions and the dynamism suggest that it represents some amusing aspect of their relationship. Perhaps, the wife was given to interrupting her husband when he was in the middle of some complex project.

NOTES

- An etching made in 1800 shows the picture has been cut down as there was more space above their heads.
- It was purchased on his behalf by Lord Yarmouth at Christie's in 1811 when he was still Regent.

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 7

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/405533/the-shipbuilder-and-his-wife-jan-rijcksen-15602-1637-and-his-wife-griet-jans>

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Shipbuilder_and_his_Wife



Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck*, 105.5 x 84 cm, Brussels



Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), *Agatha Bas (1611-1658)*, 1641, 105.4 x 83.9 cm

Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), *Agatha Bas (1611-1658)*, 1641, 105.4 x 83.9 cm

Rembrandt van Rijn (1606-1669), *Portrait of Nicolaes van Bambeeck*, 105.5 x 84 cm, Royal Museum of Art Brussels

- This portrait of Agatha Bas is **one of the most beautiful** portraits in the Royal Collection. The portraits were painted in 1641, three years after their marriage and they lived in the **same street as Rembrandt**. In 1635 Rembrandt and his wife Saskia had **moved into a new house** in the fashionable Nieuwe Doelenstraat. He should have been able to afford the mortgage but he spent as much as he earned and **the mortgage led to his later financial downfall**.
- (CLICK) Its companion depicting her husband (Nicolaes van Bambeeck, 1596-1661) is in Brussels.
- Rembrandt here introduced a new element, **an ebony frame that blurs the distinction between the painted space and the real world**. Rembrandt added to the illusion by having her hand hold the frame and her fan falling over the frame. Unfortunately an early reduction in the size of the canvas has reduced the illusion.
- **The technical mastery is extraordinary**. He used the end of his brush to incise fine hairs into the edge of her hairline. The lace is painted in two different ways, in some areas a thick white pigment is painted over a dark background and in others the white pigment is used as the background and the dark negative spaces are painted in dark paint.
- There are five paintings by Rembrandt in the Royal Collection, the earliest of which, *The Artist's Mother(?)*, was presented to Charles I before 1633, and was thus one of the first works by Rembrandt to reach England. This painting of Agatha Bas was bought for the Prince Regent by Lord Yarmouth probably between 1816 and 1819.

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 114

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/405352/agatha-bas-1611-1658>



Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), *Portrait of Susanna Lunden(?) (The Straw Hat, Le Chapeau de Paille)*, 1622-25, 79 x 54.6 cm, National Gallery, London



Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), *Portrait of a Woman*, c. 1625-30, 86.8 x 59.3 cm, Royal Collection

Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), *Portrait of a Woman*, c. 1625-30, 86.8 x 59.3 cm, Royal Collection

Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), *Portrait of Susanna Lunden(?) (The Straw Hat, Le Chapeau de Paille)*, 1622-25, 79 x 54.6 cm, National Gallery, London

- George IV bought this painting in 1818 believing it to be a portrait of Helena Fourment, Rubens second wife, but later research found she does not look like known portraits of her. Some believe it is a portrait of **her sister Elizabeth Fourment**.
- **Rubens married Helena Fourment in 1630 four years after his first wife Isabella Brant died.** She was the youngest child of Daniël I Fourment, a wealthy Antwerp silk and tapestry merchant and his first wife's niece as her brother Daniël II married Clara Brant, sister of Isabella Brant.
- (CLICK) On the left is a portrait of Susanna Lunden (1599-1643) the sister of his wife Helena Fourment. She had recently married Arnold Lunden. The painting, also known as *The Straw Hat* was also offered to George IV and is the **only work he is ever known to have refused on grounds of cost**.
- Both these portraits (*Portrait of a Woman* and *The Chapeau de Paille*) have an **informal and engaging charm** entirely consistent with their claim to be portraits of Rubens's own extended family.

REFERENCES

Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 114

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/400118/portrait-of-a-woman>



Peter Paul Rubens,
*Landscape with St
 George and the
 Dragon*, 1630-35,
 152.5 x 226.9 cm,
 Royal Collection

Peter Paul Rubens, *Landscape with St George and the Dragon*, 1630-35, 152.5 x 226.9 cm, Royal Collection

- From 1629 to 1630 **Peter Paul Rubens lived in England** and he painted this in "**honour of England**" when he returned to Antwerp. We know Rubens stayed with the artist **Balthazar Gerbier at York House**. Gerberir patron was the **Duke of Buckingham** who owned York House and when he died in 1628 his executors tried to throw Gerbier out as an alien but he forestalled them by becoming naturalised. So, when Rubens arrived a year later he was probably still living there. And this landscape could be loosely based on the view from his window over the south bank of the Thames.
- The church with the tower could be St. Mary Overy now called Southwark Cathedral. The building in front to its right could be the Banqueting House brought in from the north side of the Thames. The building in the distance on the river bank could be Lambeth Palace.
- Some say the Saint has the **features of Charles I** and the princess those of Queen Henrietta Maria.
- It was bought a few years later by the ambassador **Endymion Porter for Charles I**. It is thought it shows the **view of the Thames from York House** where Rubens lived and that St. George is a portrait of Charles I. **The original painting is shown by the rectangle** and the canvas was extended by eight further rectangles which may have been added by Rubens later.
- It was sold during the Commonwealth Sale and repurchased by George IV in 1814.

REFERENCES

Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 106

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/405356/landscape-with-st-george-and-the-dragon>



Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556), *Portrait of a Goldsmith in Three Positions*, c. 1530, 52 x 79 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

Anthony van Van Dyck (1599-1641), *Charles I (1600-49)*, 1635-6, 84.4 x 99.4 cm, Royal Collection, purchased 1822

Anthony van Van Dyck (1599-1641), *Charles I (1600-49)*, 1635-6, 84.4 x 99.4 cm, Royal Collection, purchased 1822

Lorenzo Lotto (c. 1480-1556), *Portrait of a Goldsmith in Three Positions*, c. 1530, 52 x 79 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna

- This triple portrait of Charles I is by **Anthony Van Dyck, chief assistant to Rubens**. It was painted as a guide for Lorenzo Bernini in 1637 as he was commissioned to produce a **portrait bust in marble** but did not wish to visit England. It was purchased in 1822 for George IV for **1,000 guineas**.
- The bust of Charles was presented to the king and Queen at Oatlands Palace in 1637. It was enthusiastically received by them and their court and universally admired '**not only for the exquisiteness of the worke but the likenese and nere resemblance it had to the King countenance**'. Bernini was rewarded in 1638 with a diamond ring valued at £800. It was sold at the end of the English Civil War but recovered for the Royal Collection on the Restoration, only to be **destroyed by a fire in Whitehall Palace in January 1698**.
- (CLICK) There are few triple portraits but Van Dyck might have been inspired by this work by **Lorenzo Lotto a hundred years before**. We know it was **sold to Charles I in 1627**. Lotto, in turn, is likely to have known Leonardo da Vinci's triple portrait of Cesare Borgia (1499/1500), now lost.

REFERENCES

Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 91-92

Edward Bird (1772-1819), *Village Choristers Rehearsing an Anthem for Sunday*, 1810, 63.1 x 92.8 cm, Royal Collection



Edward Bird (1772-1819), *Village Choristers Rehearsing an Anthem for Sunday*, 1810, 63.1 x 92.8 cm, Royal Collection

- It was reported that **George IV decided to make a collection of the works of British artists** and he paid **250 guineas** for this work in **1810** on the advice of Benjamin West (1738-1820, PRA 1792-1805). West was historical painter to the court (since 1772) and Surveyor of the King's Pictures (since 1791).
- It is painted in the **style of Dutch and Flemish paintings** or ordinary country folk like the work of **David Teniers the Younger** (1610-1690) who **George IV admired**.
- **The verger is rehearsing a choir** and musicians for the **Sunday service** to be held in the **church** we see through the window. It shows the **God-fearing decency of the English working men and women** which would comfort the viewers at a time when the country had been **at war for seventeen years** with a revolutionary, **atheist republic**.
- **Edward Bird** (1772 – 2 November 1819) was an English genre painter who spent most of his working life in **Bristol**, where the **Bristol School of artists formed around him**. He enjoyed a few years of popularity in London, where he **challenged** the dominance of **David Wilkie** in the genre painting field, before moving on to history painting, specialising in battle scenes.

REFERENCES

Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 107

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/405540/village-choristers-rehearsing-an-anthem-for-sunday>



David Tenier the Younger (1610-1690), *Peasants Dancing Outside a Tavern*, c. 1641, 135.7 x 205.4 cm, Royal Collection

David Tenier the Younger (1610-1690), *Peasants Dancing Outside a Tavern*, c. 1640, 135.7 x 205.4 cm, Royal Collection

- This is an unusually **large painting by David Tenier the Younger** and it is one of his earliest works. The idea comes from Pieter Bruegel the Elder and may have been transmitted through his son **Jan Breighel I who was Tenier's father-in-law**.
- It is a pub yard indicated by the **sign of a crescent moon and a beer pot**. A man is playing his **bagpipes** and three couples are dancing while the others drink, talk, make love and vomit. The humour of the painting comes from the **clumsy dancing and the cheerful coarseness** of the peasants. The focus of this **class-based humour** is centred on the horrified middle-class young lady who is being invited to dance by a laughing rustic.
- Purchased by George IV at Christie's in 1811 the year after the previous work by **Edward Bird**, the Bristol artist.

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 111

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/406363/peasants-dancing-outside-a-tavern>

William Mulready (1786-1863), *The Wolf and the Lamb*, c. 1819-20, 60 x 51.1 cm, 60 x 51.1, Royal Collection



Charles Le Brun (1619-1690), *Man's Head Related to a Wolf*, 1671, detail and reversed, Louvre

William Mulready (1786-1863), *The Wolf and the Lamb*, c. 1819-20, 60 x 51.1 cm, 60 x 51.1, Royal Collection

Charles Le Brun (1619-1690), *Man's Head Related to a Wolf*, 1671, detail and reversed, Louvre

- **On his way to school a boy and his little dog have been set upon by another boy** and a little girl is calling for help from her mother.
- (CLICK) At the time it was believed that a person's character could be told from their **facial features** and the 'mussel' of the bully suggests a **fierce animal, such as a wolf**. Viewers would have been aware of the **physiognomic drawings** of Charles Le Brun (1619-90) in the Louvre include a 'Wolf-Man',
- Purchased by George IV in 1820 for 200 guineas.
- William Mulready RA (1 April 1786 – 7 July 1863) was born in Ireland and his family moved to London when he was a child. He was accepted by the **Royal Academy School when he was fourteen**. He married Elizabeth Varley (1784–1864), a landscape painter from a family of well connected artists. All three of their children became artists. His relationship with his wife deteriorated and they separated and she accused him of **pederastic activities and adultery**. He started as a landscape painter before painting genre scenes mostly of rural life. He became a **Royal Academician in 1816** when he was 30. He illustrated children's books and was a popular painter in the Victorian period. He is known for **designing the postal stationary** that was introduced by the Royal Mail at the same time as the Penny Black in 1840 but within **two months it was replaced** as it was disliked by the public.

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 108

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/405539/the-wolf-and-the-lamb>



Albert Cuyp (1620-1691), *An Evening Landscape with Figures and Sheep*, c. 1655-59, 101.6 x 153.6 cm, Royal Collection

Albert Cuyp (1620-1691), *An Evening Landscape with Figures and Sheep*, c. 1655-59, 101.6 x 153.6 cm, Royal Collection

- This is one of **Cuyp's great landscapes** and is typical of his mature work. The low viewpoint, the setting sun and the receding clouds invoke a **dreamlike atmosphere**.
- Purchased by the Prince Regent in **1814 from Sir Thomas Baring**. It was part of the purchase of two generations of acquisitions made by the Baring family. The sale was negotiated by **Sir Charles Long** (later Baron Farnborough), **described as the 'spectacles'** through which the Prince Regent viewed art. After making the purchase of this large collection George decided to **rationalise** his collection by **selling the lesser works** and retaining the great works. He **sold 55 works** from his existing collection and 15 works from the Baring collection at Christie's. The works he sold were by the same artists as those he kept, Rubens, Teniers and Cuyp but just not as good. As a final act in the great trade-up **he swapped four painting for Ruben's *Landscape with St. George and the Dragon***, valued then at 3,000 guineas. The collection was hung in nine rooms at Carlton House and consisted of 138 works, 99 by Dutch artists and 20 Flemish, 59 from the Baring collection.

BIO:CUYPT

- Aelbert Cuyp (20 October 1620 – 15 November 1691) was one of the leading Dutch Golden Age painters, producing mainly landscapes. He was born in Dordrecht and died there. He was known as the Dutch Claude Lorraine and he inherited a considerable fortune. His family were all artists and his father a well known portrait painter who first taught him. He only painted from 1639 to 1660 (age 19 to 40) the year he married which is generally accepted as the reason he stopped painting. The year after his marriage he became deacon of the reformed church. He often uses sunlight streaming across the landscape to pick out details such as a blade of grass, a cow's horn or the top of a person's hat.

REFERENCES

Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 111

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/405827/an-evening-landscape-with-figures-and-sheep>



Gerrit Dou (1613-1675), *The Grocer's Shop*, 1672, 41.5 × 32 cm, Royal Collection

Gerrit Dou (1613-1675), *The Grocer's Shop*, 1672, 41.5 × 32 cm, Royal Collection

- **Gerrit Dou was a pupil of Rembrandt from 1628 to 1631.** He rarely travelled outside Leiden although he was invited to England by Charles II. He was **much sought after** in his day and his reputation lasted through the eighteenth century and into the nineteenth.
- ***The Grocer Shop* is a late work.** He has created the illusion of a niche with a stone arched roof and a stone ledge or shelf. There is a strong sense of narrative with the two interacting figures in the foreground and the three in the background. The figure in the background about to leave the shop looks out at us and is holding a coffee pot.
- The respectable shop signifies the **importance of trade** to the Dutch and shops like this replaced stalls and street traders. As well as general goods such as eggs, bread and meat products the store sells exotic imported good like the lemons in the blue and white oriental ceramic dish, the sponges hanging in the arch and the special confections in the jar.
- This was the peak and the end of the Dutch Golden Age when Dutch trade, science and art were at their height. In fact **1872, known in Holland as the Disaster Year**, as it was the start of the the Franco-Dutch War (1672-78) and later the War of the Spanish Succession (1701-1714) both led to economic decline.
- Purchased by the Prince Regent in 1817.

Bio: Dou

- **Gerrit Dou** (7 April 1613 – 9 February 1675), also known as Gerard Douw or Dow, was a Dutch Golden Age painter, whose small, highly polished paintings are typical of the **Leiden fijnschilders** ('fine art'). He specialised in genre scenes and is noted for his trompe-l'œil "niche" paintings and candlelit night-scenes with strong chiaroscuro. He was a **student of Rembrandt** who was born in Leiden and moved to Amsterdam in 1631.
- Dou was **born and died in Leiden** where his father made stained glass. When he was fourteen his father sent him to study under Rembrandt for three years. He developed his own much more detailed style, it is said he once spent **five days painting a hand**. He often presented subjects by lantern or candle light and he used optical devices to assist with the

composition. His paintings were small. He **started as a portrait painter** but subjects were not willing to sit for the length of time he required. Some 200 paintings are attributed to him and they are found in museums all over Europe. His pictures brought high prices and the **Swedish Ambassador paid him 500 guilders a year** simply for the right of first refusal of his latest work.

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 113

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/405542/the-grocers-shop>



Jan Steen (1626-1679), *A Woman at Her Toilet*, 1663, 65.8 × 53 cmc.
Royal Collection

Jan Steen (1626-1679), *A Woman at Her Toilet*, 1663, 65.8 × 53 cmc. Royal Collection

- This is one of **Jan Steen's finest works** and it exhibits a **wealth of symbols** that would have been readily understood at the time.
- The young woman is **putting on a stocking** while a lapdog lies on her unmade bed. There is a chamber pot nearby and her shoes are scattered on the floor. The woman look directly out at us and her gaze is alluring as **her intent is seduction**. The viewer however is kept out of her room by an imposing classical doorway. The doorway is a threshold that no sensible person would cross however strong the temptation.
- **The arch represents moral probity emphasised by the symbolism of the sunflower (constancy), the grapevines (domestic virtue) and the weeping cherub (chastised profane love)**. Once in the room, the viewer is confronted by a **host of vanitas objects**: a lute with a broken string, a skull intertwined with a vine, a candle with the flame extinguished, and a jewellery box with its lid wide open. These all signify the transient effects of **misdirected sensual pleasure**. Even the **act of pulling on a stocking** had a clear message which is found in the emblem book by Roemer Visscher, *Sinnepoppen* (1614): namely that impetuous behaviour such as pulling on a stocking too quickly could result in its being holed, just as **yielding to sensuality could lead to ruin**. Steen implies that to pass through the arch would be to risk the loss of virtue. There is, therefore, a sense in which **the interior amounts to pagan love and the exterior to spiritual love**.
- The artist's ingenuity does not end with the images, but extends to word play: the Dutch word for **stocking (kous) used as slang meant fornication** and the Dutch word for **chamber pot (piespot) used in conjunction with kous (i.e. pieskous) was in slang a pejorative word for women**. Similarly, to appreciate the significance of the artist's signature on the column it is necessary to realise that 'steen' in Dutch means 'stone'.
- On a technical basis, the quality of the painting is remarkable for the treatment of the light, particularly in the room itself, and in the meticulous depiction of the still-life objects (the bed, the floor, the ceiling, the chandelier) and the foreshortening of the door.

BIO:STEEN

- Jan Havickszoon Steen (c. 1626 – buried 3 February 1679) was a Dutch Golden Age painter, one of the **leading genre painters** of the 17th century. His works are known for their psychological insight, sense of humour and abundance of colour. He was born in Leiden and his Catholic family were brewers and ran a tavern.
- In 1648 he formed the Guild of St Luke in Leiden. Soon after he became an assistant to the landscape painter **Jan van Goyen** (1596–1656), and moved into his house in The Hague. In 1649 he married van Goyen's daughter with whom he would have eight children. Steen worked with his father-in-law until 1654, when he moved to Delft, where he **ran a brewery** for three years without much success. After the **explosion in Delft in 1654 the art market was depressed**. He lived just north of Leiden from 1656 to 1660 and in Haarlem from 1660 to 1670 but when his wife died he moved back to Leiden. In 1672 known as the **Year of Disaster the art market collapsed** and he opened a tavern.

NOTES

- This is a rare example of a painting showing seventeenth century stays, a stiffened undergarment worn by women beneath a jacket (as seen here) or bodice.
- Signed on left-hand column: JSteen (JS in monogram) and dated on right-hand column: 1663
- It was purchased by George IV in 1821 from Alexis Delahante.

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 115

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/404804/a-woman-at-her-toilet>



Angelo Bertini (engraver), Antonio Canova (sculptor), *Mars and Venus*, engraving, 59.9mm x w 46.8 cm, Rijksmuseum



Antonio Canova (1757-1822), *Mars and Venus*, 1815 marble, object: 208 x 165.5 cm, Royal Collect

Antonio Canova (1757-1822), *Mars and Venus*, 1815-19, marble, object: 208 x 137 x 65.5 cm, Royal Collection

Angelo Bertini (engraver), Antonio Canova (sculptor), *Mars and Venus*, engraving, 59.9mm x w 46.8 cm, Rijksmuseum

- **Venus stands partially draped gazing upwards at Mars**, who wears a Roman Centurion style helmet and holds a spear. This magnificent full length sculpture of the Roman Gods 'Mars and Venus' was carved from **a single marble block**. It was **commissioned by the Prince Regent for Carlton House in 1815 during Canova's visit to London to see the Elgin Marbles**. It represents an allegory of War and Peace after England's victory over Napoleon at the Battle of Waterloo in 1815. It is currently located at one of the ends of the **Marble Hall in Buckingham Palace**.
- (CLICK) **I will say goodbye to George IV with this rear view of *Mars and Venus*. I hope you have enjoyed this brief tour of his regency and reign. He was a flawed character but an avid art collector.**
- Thank you

NOTES

- **Antonio Canova** (1 November 1757 – 13 October 1822) was an Italian Neoclassical sculptor, famous for his marble sculptures. Often regarded as the greatest of the Neoclassical artists, his sculpture was inspired by the Baroque and the classical revival, and has been characterised as having avoided the melodramatics of the former, and the cold artificiality of the latter. He was born in the Veneto and moved to Rome in 1780. By 1800 he was the most celebrated artist in Europe. In 1815, he visited London, and met with Benjamin Haydon. It was after the advice of Canova that the Elgin marbles were acquired by the British Museum, with plaster copies sent to Florence.
- "This print is part of a series of unknown size with representations of sculptures by Antonio Canova by various print makers after drawings by Giovanni Tognolli. The statue of Canova is located in Buckingham Palace, London." (Rijksmuseum). "... intense to represent Peace and War; but it is not sufficiently chaste or severe for such a work; the expression is too

voluptuous" (The Gentleman's Magazine, 1822, Vol. XCII, p. 466

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Kate Heard, Kathryn Jones, *George IV: Art & Spectacle*, p. 22-23

<https://www.rct.uk/collection/2038/mars-and-venus>