

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.

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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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- The Aesthetic Movement, 1860-1880
- Late Victorians, 1880-1900
- The Edwardians, 1890-1910
- The Great War and After, 1910-1930
- The Interwar Years, 1930s
- World War II and After, 1940-1960
- Pop Art & Beyond, 1960-1980
- Postmodern Art, 1980-2000
- The Turner Prize
- **Summary**



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

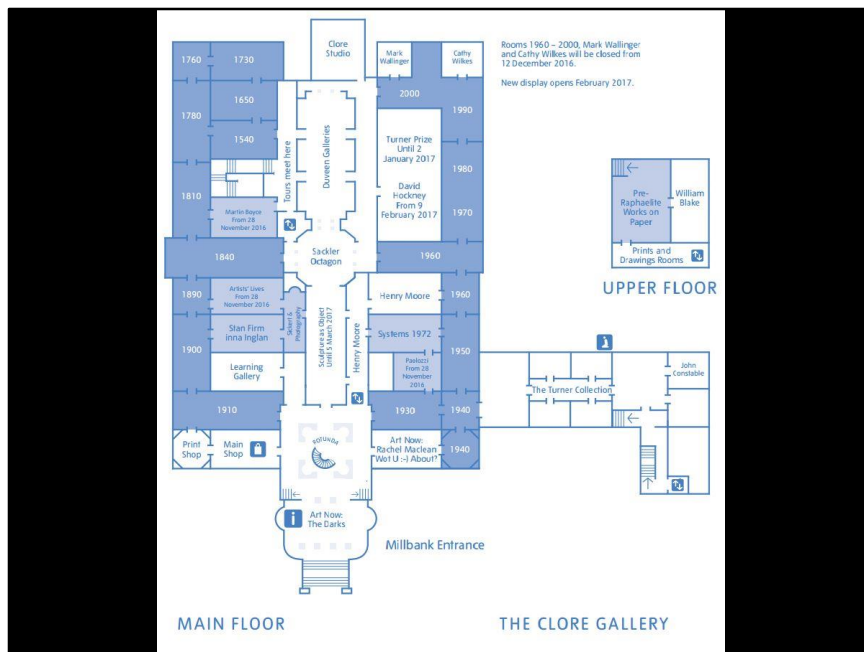
East galleries are 1930, 1940, 1950, 1960, 1970, 1980, 1990, 2000

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

Agenda

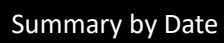
1. A History of the Tate, discussing some of the works donated by Henry Tate and others.
2. From Absolute Monarch to Civil War, 1540-1650
3. From Commonwealth to the Start of the Georgian Period, 1650-1730
4. The Georgian Period, 1730-1780
5. Revolutionary Times, 1780-1810
6. Regency to Victorian, 1810-1840
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



We have covered an enormous amount of art. There are about 20 rooms at Tate Britain and so I have selected two to four works from each room. I have selected the most well known artists or works in each room and the aim is to remind you of our tour and of individual artists.

1. Henry Tate





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

Hans Holbein the Younger (1497/8–1543), *Portrait of Sir Thomas Guildford*, 1527, oil and tempera on oak panel, 81.4 × 66 cm, Royal Collection

Inscribed at a later date: Anno. D: MCCCCCXVII. / Etatis. Suae. .xl ix: (Year 1527 / His Age 49)

- 'This is the earliest picture in the Tate collection. The artist's name is inscribed on the back, and the inscriptions on the front indicate that the work was painted 'in the year of our Lord 1545', and that the sitter was aged 26. Bettes is first recorded carrying out decorative work for Henry VIII's court in 1531–3, and he may have worked in the studio of Hans Holbein the Younger, the most famous Tudor painter. Originally this portrait was larger, and would have had a blue background similar to the colour often used by Holbein. Due to long exposure to light, the pigment (smalt) has changed to brown.' (Tate display caption)
- He is thought to have worked under Holbein for stylistic and technical reasons. For example, Holbein used a pink priming and Bettes is the only British artist known to have used the same technique. However, he differs from Holbein as he paints fur more loosely and the beard is flatter.

- The painting is oil on oak panel and was cut down at the sides and the bottom before it was acquired by the National Gallery. The cut piece was fixed to the back and says “faict par Johan Bettes Anglois” ('done by John Bettes, Englishman’)."
- This is by John Bettes the Elder and this is his most famous work. His son John Bettes the Younger was a pupil of Nicholas Hilliard and was a portrait painter during the reigns of Elizabeth I and James I. The Elder lived in Westminster and worked for Henry VIII at Whitehall Palace in 1531. Catherine Parr employed him to produce miniatures of Henry VIII and herself as a New Year present for Prince Edward.

Notes

- **Sir Henry Guildford** (1489–1532) was one of Henry VIII’s **closest friends**. On the King’s accession in 1509 he was appointed Esquire of the Body - a personal attendant on the King - and **Master of Revels**, responsible for organising the lavish entertainments at court. His parties included morris dancers, moving stages and a series of elaborate costumes for the young King. Guildford’s influence at court was cut short in the 1519 purge of the so-called ‘minions’, an attempt by older statesmen to limit the influence of hot-headed young men on the 28-year-old monarch. Guildford soon returned to court, however, and developed a distinguished career as Comptroller of the Royal Household. In his continuing support for Katherine of Aragon he made a dangerous enemy of the King’s mistress, Anne Boleyn, and it is a mark of his friendship with Henry that he remained in post until his death in 1532. This is one of Holbein’s most **impressive surviving portraits**
- **Smalt** is a pigment made from cobalt oxide mixed with molten glass. The glass is poured into cold water to shatter it and it is then ground to a coarse powder. If the powder is too fine the colour is lost. The blue fades over time particularly if the concentration of potassium is low. One alternative is ultramarine, a much brighter blue that does not fade but it is much more expensive.

References

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

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/bettes-a-man-in-a-black-cap-n01496>



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

- ‘**Endymion Porter** was a **favourite courtier of Charles I**, for whom he bought works of art. He is shown here as a **hunter** with his kill, a possible reference to the ongoing Civil War. His patronage of the arts is indicated by the **statue of Apollo** and the **classical frieze** he is leaning on. Dobson painted this portrait at the **exiled court of Charles in Oxford**. The pose is **taken from** a portrait of the **Roman Emperor Vespasian by Titian**, which was then in Charles I’s collection. Porter was later forced into exile in France.’ (Tate display caption)
- Porter is shown outside with a **German sporting rifle** or, more accurately, a musket, and his left arm rests on a **bas relief representing the arts**. **Painting holds a palette and brushes** and supports a canvas on which is painted and **image of Minerva**, goddess of the arts. **Sculpture** sits in the **middle** and has **carved the figure of Minerva** that painting has copied while to the **right is Poetry with a quill pen**. To the left of Porter is an **attendant holding a hare** being sniffed by a dog while behind him is a statue of Apollo, god of the Arts.
- **Porter** was from a **minor gentry family** but **visited Spain** with the **Earl of Nottingham** and developed important contacts at the Spanish court. On his return he entered the **service of George Villiers**, the future 1st Duke of Buckingham. He

accompanied Villiers and Prince Charles, later Charles I, on their journey to **Spain** in **1623**. There he was able to **act as an intermediary** between the prince and the Spanish court, and to demonstrate his knowledge of works of art. When Charles became king Porter became a member of the royal household.

- **William Dobson** (1611-1646) was a portraitist and one of the **first notable English painters**, praised by his contemporary John Aubrey as "**the most excellent painter that England has yet bred**". He was born in London, the son of a lawyer and was apprentice to William Peake. Little is known of his career but when Anthony van Dyck died in 1641 **Dobson may have become serjeant painter to the king** and groom of the privy chamber according to one unverified source. He moved to Oxford with the Royalists but when the town fell he returned to London and, now without patronage, he was **briefly imprisoned for debt and died in poverty at the age of thirty-six**. About **60 of his works survive**, mostly half-length portraits from 1642 or later. In the view of **Waldemar Januszczak** he was '**the first British born genius, the first truly dazzling English painter.**'

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/dobson-endymion-porter-n01249>



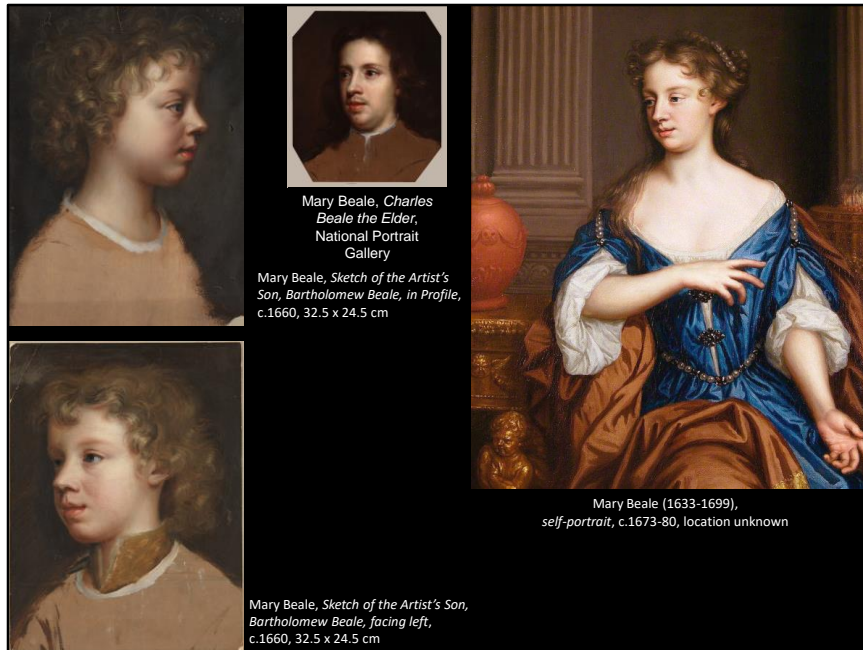
Sir Peter Lely (1618-1680), *Two Ladies of the Lake Family*, c. 1660, 127 x 181 cm, Tate

- 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.
- From the **women's hairstyles**, and from Lely's handling of the paint, this portrait can be **dated to around 1660**. In the tradition of seventeenth-century **double portraits**, it is likely that the two ladies were either **related or close friends**. The tradition of 'friendship portraits' derived from the innovation of van Dyck.

- It was acquired, with assistance from the Art Fund, for £1,1750 in 1955. Previously it had been acquired in 1931 by Sir John Hugh Smyth, Bt, of Ashton Court, Bristol. It was probably first owned by 1st Duke of Chandos and sold to Cock in 1747.
- **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. On arriving in England, he painted narrative pictures showing figures in a landscape, often on biblical and classical subjects, of the kind for which there was a considerable market in the Netherlands. However, he found that the market in England was for portraits.
- His talent ensured that his career was not interrupted by Charles's execution, and **he served Oliver Cromwell**, whom he painted, as I said, "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

- Mary Beale is an important professional woman artist. Roy Strong, the historian and former director of the National Portrait Gallery wrote, '**Among women artists, she is very important. There is nobody else like her. It's right to try to get the balance in history correct between women and men artists.**'
- '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 Allbrook Farmhouse near Eastleigh, 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***. We know from her **husband's notebooks** that she undertook several paintings for the purpose of 'study and improvement' and this may be one of them. It appears she was trying **new painting techniques** in conjunction with her husband who we know from an earlier journal was investigated pigments, canvas priming and drying times. The aim seems to have been to improve results while reducing the cost. Mary's models, apart from herself and her husband, were her son Charles, **Kate Trioche** (a studio assistant), Alice Woodforde (her godchild) and Katy Sandys, who were painted in a variety of informal poses. It is not possible to match this study with a particular reference in the 1681 notebook, although it is close to the description of Kate Trioche's portrait painted on 17 May particularly as it seems to have been **'painted up at once'** in other words in a single session rather than an average of four. This **rapid production** was one they were trying to master as it could result in **muddy colours** as has happened here to some extent. On the other hand, its **spontaneity and freshness** make it one of her most attractive works. 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

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Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), *Elijah and the Angel*, 1672, 176.5 x 148.6 cm
 Godfrey Kneller (1646-1723), *Margaret Cecil, Countess of Ranelagh* (1672-1728) , c. 1690-91, 232.9 x 143.6 cm, Royal Collection, King's Private Dining Room, Hampton Court Palace

- **'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. Later God told him to anoint two kings and a prophet who would drive out Baal-worship.
- **Godfrey Kneller replaced Peter Lely as court painter when he died in 1680. Kneller was a very different painter who served seven British monarchs (Charles**

II, James II, William III, Mary II, Anne, George I and George II). Kneller was the leading portrait painter in the late 17th and early 18th centuries. He was born in Lubeck, **studied with Rembrandt in Amsterdam** and by 1676 was working in England as a fashionable portrait painter. 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.

- **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. He was reputed to be **very vain and there are many anecdotes**. One involved Alexander 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**".
- William and Mary's court was still grand and baroque but **depraved conduct was out of fashion**. Many of the rakes and mistresses of the 1660s and 70s such as the Earl of Rochester (John Wilmot) and Nell Gwyn were dead. The most notorious mistress, Barbara Villiers was still scheming and sexually inexhaustible into her 60s. She did not die until 1709 when Anne (1665-1714) was Queen. The Hampton Court Beauties tended to be **teenage society women** who were **preyed upon** by seducers at court **rather than mature women carefully planning their infidelities**.
- This is **Margaret Cecil, Countess of Ranelagh** (1672-1728) aged 18 or 19, one of the Hampton Court Beauties. They are hung in the Palace starting on the left of the door in from the Orangery. In 1690 Mary II commissioned Kneller to paint a series, in Defoe's words, 'of the principal Ladies attending upon her Majesty, or who were frequently in her Retinue'. They originally hung in the 'Water Gallery' at Hampton Court, until it was destroyed in c. 1700, when they moved to their present location

in the Eating Room below stairs, also at Hampton Court. According to Horace Walpole **Mary II was advised by Lady Dorchester against the idea** of having the most beautiful of her court painted: '**Madam, if the King were to ask for the portraits of all the wits in his court, would not the rest think he called them fools?**'

- Kneller represented inner beauty and virtue by the use of symbols such as a dolphin for love, a rose for beauty, a lizard for death and a distant ship for hope. His women stand **upright, refined and aristocratic rather than lazily draped**. **Kneller's women are sensitive rather than sensual**. The late 17th century artist was expected to deliver more than just likeness; the artists had to represent beauty itself.
- **Margaret Cecil** was the daughter of the 3rd Earl of Salisbury and evidently so beautiful that Henry Fielding described the **heroine of 'Tom Jones'**, Sophia Western, **as resembling this portrait**. She is here shown **pointing with her right hand to a richly carved vase of flowers** and holding the train of her dress with her left; she wears a white silk robe.
- She appears demure but she became the standard for Restoration **unpredictability and female daring**. She **married John, Lord Stawell who died** within a year and in 1696 at the age of 24 **she married the Irish peer Richard Jones, 1st Earl of Ranelagh** (1641-1712). According to gossip that circulated:
 - *My Lord Ranelagh coming back from the pay office sooner than his lady expected him, he went straight up to her chamber, the door of which, for want of precaution in her or her woman was unlocked, and that his lordship, **drawing back the curtains of the bed found my Lord Coningsby in bed with his wife**; at which sight he said nothing, but withdrew very civilly and went downstairs about his business.*
- The sequel **even stranger**. Ranelagh could easily have got a divorce on this evidence alone and sued his rival for heavy damages; but **he took his wife back**. Ranelagh was well known in his time for enjoying life and had three daughters by his first wife. According to Wikipedia he was bisexual but the evidence is unclear. In April 1698, **his daughter Frances by his first wife** (who was the same age as Margaret, her stepmother) **married the same Thomas Coningsby against Ranelagh's wishes** so he transferred her marriage settlement of £3,250 to his youngest daughter, Catherine. Ranelagh and Coningsby remained closely associated in politics and business but Ranelagh cut him out of his will. However, he relented with his daughter and in his will he bequeathed Frances a fourth of his estate.

References

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



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

- 'Hogarth is known for his **satirical views of contemporary subjects**. He **visited France in 1748** and while **sketching the fortifications at Calais** was **suspected of spying** and arrested, as shown far left. The English had ruled over Calais for 150 years but lost it back to the French in 1558.
- Much of this influential image ridicules Catholicism.
- The '**Old England**' of the title alludes to an idea of an England when **kings protected their people** against unjust masters and **all lived in harmony** and prosperity; again, in contrast to France.' (Tate display caption)
- *The Gate of Calais* or *O, the Roast Beef of Old England* is a 1748 painting by William Hogarth, reproduced as a print from an engraving the next year. Hogarth had a **very low opinion of the French** and the painting was produced after his return from his second visit to France, where he had been **arrested as a spy** while sketching in Calais.
- The scene depicts a **side of beef being transported** from the harbour to an English tavern in the port, while a group of **undernourished, ragged French soldiers** and a **fat French friar** look on hungrily. The friar's fatness demonstrates gluttony and the

corruption of the Catholic Church. Hogarth contrasts France implicitly with an England where all eat roast beef and not *soupe maigre* (watery soup). The fisherwomen wearing crucifixes on the left seem to pray to the cheap flat fish in front of them whose unpleasantly **human features resemble the friars**. In the background, through the gate, 'superstitious' locals are kneeling before the Cross, beneath a tavern sign of a **dove, symbol of the Holy Ghost**, in Hogarth's mockery of the Eucharist. In the right foreground, a **starving Jacobite** sits with his pathetic meal of an **onion and a piece of bread**, his overturned cup beside him. The **Jacobites** were **Scotsmen** who fled to France after the **unsuccessful Scottish rebellion of 1745**. To the left of the gate, framed by vegetables, **sits Hogarth himself**. As he sketches the drawbridge, the **arresting officer's hand clasps his shoulder**.

- The title is taken from a **popular tune** of the day. '**The Roast Beef of Old England**' is an English **patriotic ballad**. It was written by Henry Fielding for his play *The Grub-Street Opera*, which was first performed in **1731**. The lyrics were added to over the next twenty years. The song **increased in popularity** when given a new setting by the composer Richard Leveridge, and it became customary for **theatre audiences to sing it before, after**, and occasionally during, any new play. It is used by both the **Royal Navy** and the **US Marine Corp**.

References

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



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

- 'The **foundation of the Royal Academy** of Arts in 1768 gave **British artists a new professional status** and the means to distinguish themselves from their artisan colleagues. Reynolds was the Academy's first president. He developed the '**Grand Manner**' style which aimed to **elevate portraiture** to the **level of high art**. In this portrait, the aristocratic Montgomery sisters pay homage to the Greek god of marriage. Their poses are taken directly from the work of admired old master painters, which lend them a certain dignity but also laid Reynolds open to charges of plagiarism.' (Tate display caption)
- Barbara, Elizabeth and Anne, the daughters of Sir William Montgomery of Macbie Hall, Peeblesshire, nicknamed the Irish Graces because they had grown up in Ireland. Elizabeth was engaged to the politician Luke Gardiner, who commissioned this picture.
- The women are, **left to right, Barbara (preparing for marriage), Elizabeth (engaged) and Ann (married)**. Daughters of a rich landowner with an **estate in Ireland** and who **lived in Scotland**. The painting was **commissioned by the fiancé of Elizabeth**. The hierarchy of art was developed by the French, first history

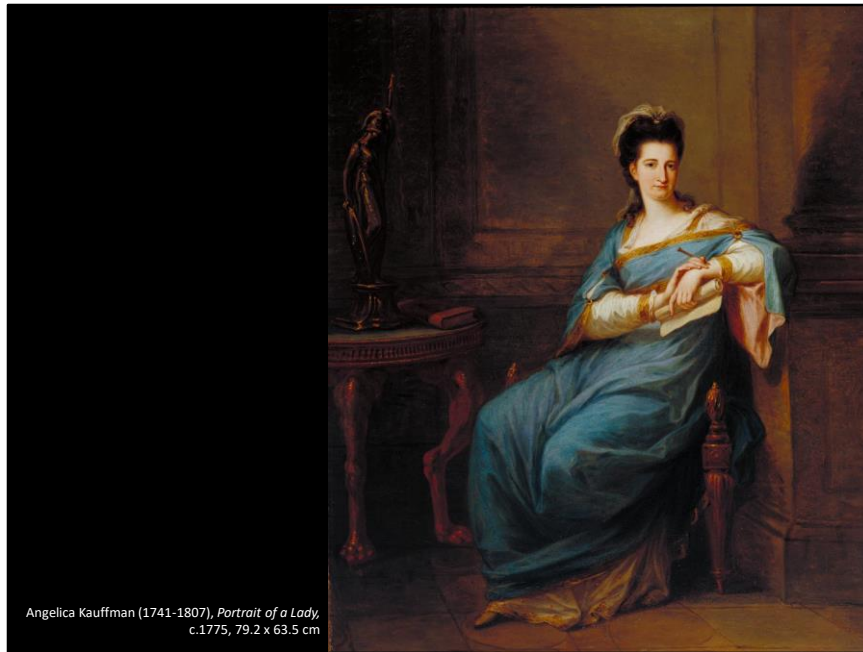
painting, portraits, genre, landscapes and still life. Here Reynolds has added the germ to upgrade the status of the painting. **Hyman was the Greek god of love, passion and marriage** and their garden rituals celebrate fecundity as they prepare to become the mothers of the next generation of the aristocracy. However, it is all an **upper class game** with the purpose of celebrating the culture, status and discrimination of the patron and his choice of a perfect wife.

- **‘Joshua Reynolds was the leading English portraitist of the 18th century.** Through study of ancient and Italian Renaissance art, and of the work of Rembrandt, Rubens and Van Dyck, he brought great variety and dignity to British portraiture. Reynolds was **born at Plympton in Devon**, the son of a headmaster and fellow of Balliol College, Oxford: a more educated background than that of most painters. He was **apprenticed** in 1740 to the fashionable London **portraitist Thomas Hudson**, who also trained Wright of Derby. He spent 1749-52 abroad, mainly in **Italy**, and set up practice in London shortly after his return. He soon established himself as the leading portrait painter, though he was **never popular with George III**. He was a **key figure in the intellectual life of London**, and a **friend of Dr Johnson**. When the Royal Academy was founded in 1768, Reynolds was elected its first President. Although believing that **history painting was the noblest work** of the painter, he had little opportunity to practise it, and his greatest works are his portraits. His paintings are not perfectly preserved due to faulty technique. The **carmine reds have faded, leaving flesh-tones paler than intended**, and the bitumen used in the blacks has tended to crack.’ (National Gallery)
- The **Hierarchy of genres** was formulated in Italy in the 16th century and held sway until the 19th century. It was the French Academy that fully formalised the hierarchy. An influential formulation of 1667 by André Félibien, a historiographer, architect and theoretician of French classicism became the classic statement of the theory for the 18th century. Reynolds agreed with Félibien regarding the hierarchy but thought that an artist of genius, such as Titian, could elevate any subject however mean by investing it with grandeur and importance. The hierarchy was:
 - History painting, particularly allegorical paintings of religious, mythological, historical or literary subjects with a moral or intellectual message, sometimes called the *grand genre*, as opposed to the *petit genre* or genre painting.
 - Portrait painting, were elevated by the use of mythological elements to create what Reynolds called the Grand Manner.
 - Genre painting, of everyday subjects, were admired for their skill but never regarded as high art.
 - Landscape, often had mythological elements, such as classical ruins added to increase their value.
 - Animal painting.

- Still life was regarded as charming and a suitable subject for amateur women artists. Some professional artists such as Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin produced still life paintings that were highly regarded but he began to include figures from about 1730.

References

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

- **Angelica Kauffman is today virtually unheard of** but at the time she was one of the **most sought after portraitists in London**. Here she shows a woman who has not been identified but who has the symbols of her learning around her. There is a **statue of Minerva**, Greek goddess of wisdom, on the table, a book and writing materials in her hand, **implying she is a writer**. **She was so famous** that when she **died in Rome** in 1807 her **funeral, like that of Raphael before her**, had two of her **pictures carried in procession**.
- She was a **child prodigy** who was trained by her **artist father** and was producing **portraits by the age of 12**. She **travelled across Europe** with him acting as his assistant before arriving in England. She was a **friend of Joshua Reynolds** and was one of the artists that signed a petition to the king to found the Royal Academy. In its first catalogue she appears with **RA after her name with Mary Moser**, but it was another 167 years before another woman, Laura Knight was made an Academician.
- She was an active member of the **Blue Stockings Society** an influential group of **highly educated and wealthy women (and men)** who held regular meetings. It is possible that this woman was a member of the group, for example, the historian

Catharine Macaulay. Invited men included Joshua Reynolds, David Garrick, Horace Walpole, Samuel Johnson and Edmund Burke.

- ‘The unknown woman in this portrait is seated in classical robes by a statue of Minerva, the goddess of wisdom. The book upon the table and the writing materials in her hand suggest that she is a writer. Angelica Kauffmann’s interest in classical portraiture and history painting was nurtured during her time in Italy during the 1760s. Kauffmann, who was **Swiss by birth, settled in England in 1766, remaining there until 1781**, when she departed once more for Italy. In England Kauffmann specialised in **decorative history painting** and small scale portraits of female subjects, such as the one shown here.’ (Tate display caption)

Notes

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

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



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

- Tate website: 'The Italian dancer **Giovanna** Francesca Antonio Giuseppe Zanerini (1753-1801) was born in Venice and took her **mother's name, Baccelli, as her stage name**. She was a **principal ballerina** in London at the **King's Theatre, Haymarket**, where she first appeared in 1774. She reached the peak of her acclaimed career during the **1780-1 season** when she appeared with Gaetan Vestris and his son Auguste in several important ballets devised by Noverre. As one reviewer (quoted in Whitley, p.188) noted, she appears in this portrait in the costume, make-up and pose from a ballet she danced that season, *Les Amans Surpris*: 'the artist was not only obliged to vivify and embellish; but, if he would be thought to copy the original, to lay on his colouring thickly. In this he has succeeded, for the face of this admirable dancer is evidently paint-painted'. Baccelli also **danced** with great success in **Venice** in 1783-4, and at the **Paris Opéra** as late as 1788. Gainsborough was well-acquainted with many theatre people, including Richard Brinsley Sheridan, the famous dramatist and part-owner of the King's Theatre.
- Baccelli was equally known as the last and most enduring **mistress of John**

Frederick Sackville, 3rd Duke of Dorset (1745-99). When Baccelli's portrait was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1782, **Gainsborough's portrait of the Duke** (collection Lord Sackville) **was withdrawn**, presumably for reasons of **decorum**. The **Duke patronised** Gainsborough's great rival **Joshua Reynolds**, who painted Baccelli in 1783 (collection Lord Sackville). The Duke, a handsome, extravagant man with a string of famous mistresses, had set up **Baccelli in a suite of rooms at Knole** by October 1779. Baccelli accompanied him to Paris in 1783 when he was appointed Ambassador to France. They entertained lavishly, patronising the Paris Opéra, and were admitted to the friendship of **Queen Marie-Antoinette**. Horace Walpole records that when the Duke was awarded the Order of the Garter in 1788, **Baccelli danced** at the Opéra **wearing the blue Garter ribbon** around her head. As the events of the French Revolution unfolded, the pair returned to Knole, where Baccelli remained until their **amicable parting in 1789**. She left a son behind. She **subsequently** developed close friendships with Henry Herbert, 10th **Earl of Pembroke**, and Mr James Carey, with whom she remained until her death in 1801.

- This lively portrait, which **was at Knole** until 1890, is an excellent example of **Gainsborough's mature style**, which is distinguished by **small, quick, light brushstrokes**. Most striking is the artist's successful rendering of movement. Baccelli was by accounts more charming than beautiful, and Gainsborough's portrait captures this aspect of her character perfectly. A contemporary newspaper critic said the portrait was 'as the Original, light airy and elegant' (quoted in Einberg, p.14). A receipt from Gainsborough is still preserved at Knole: 'Recd. of His Grace the Duke of Dorset one hundred guineas in full for the two 3/4 Portraits of his Grace, one full length of Madlle Baccelli, two Landskips and one sketch of *Begger Boy and Girl* 63105. June 15 1784/ Tho. Gainsborough'.
- A small finished oil sketch for this painting is at Russborough. It has no tambourine in the lower left corner and there are other slight compositional variations. Baccelli was also painted by Ozias Humphrey (exhibited 1780, untraced), John Graham (exhibited 1784, untraced), and Gainsborough Dupont (c.1795, Royal Collection); there is a **nude sculpture of Baccelli by Locatelli at the bottom of the stairs at Knole**.

Notes

- See *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman*, an exhibition in Cincinnati, the 'demirep' was a less-than-respectable woman who rejected the accepted notions of femininity, made their own money, gambled, left their husbands and wore French fashions. This painting makes it clear they also managed their image like any modern pop star.

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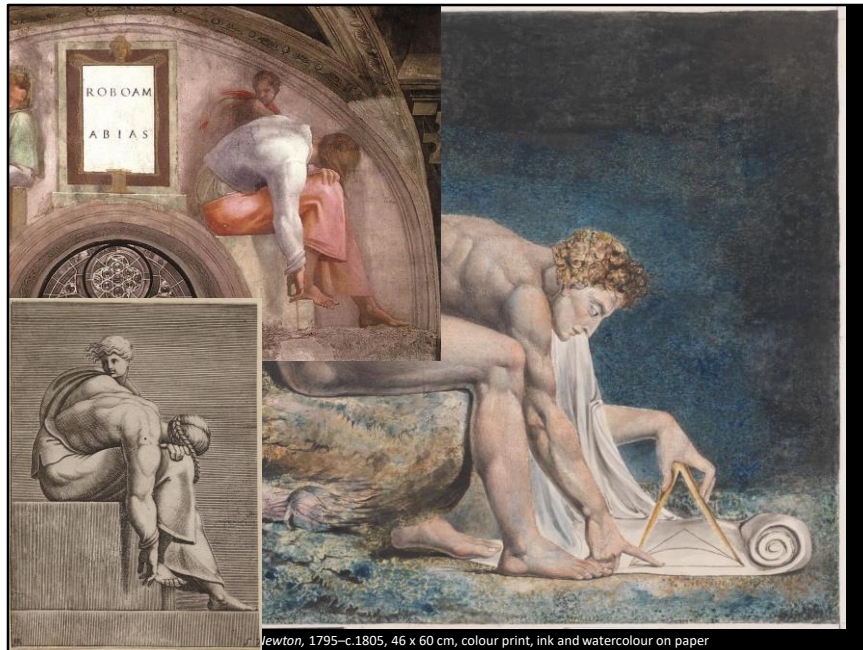


George Stubbs (1724–1806), *Haymakers*, 1785, 89.5 x 135.3 cm

- Tate website, 'This is **one of a pair with *Reapers***. They were the only works Stubbs exhibited in 1786, and his first exhibited pictures since 1782. He had painted earlier versions of the subjects, in oil on panel, in 1783 (National Trust, Bearsted Collection, Upton House). For his **second versions**, Stubbs improved the compositions, **reorganising the groupings** and **increasing the number** of figures from four in *Haymakers* and five in *Reapers* to **seven** in each of the 1785 paintings. He reordered the landscape elements, thereby **altering the lighting** and overall mood of the scenes. The pictures were most likely based on preliminary drawings made from nature, which he then rearranged to suit the design. **Numerous studies and drawings** of the subjects were included in the artist's posthumous sale, although they are **now lost**.
- Both the 1785 paintings were exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1786, then shown at the second exhibition of the Society for Promoting Painting and Design, Liverpool, in 1787. Stubbs announced his intention to **engrave** the pictures in 1788-9, publishing the engravings in 1791. He later adapted the subjects to three oval versions painted in enamel: *Haymaking*, 1794 (Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight), *Haymakers*, 1795 (Lady Lever Art Gallery) and *Reapers*, 1795 (Yale Center

for British Art, New Haven, Connecticut).

- **Picturesque rural subjects were popular during this period**, and had been depicted by **Gainsborough, Wheatley and Morland** and some of the many illustrators of Thomson's Seasons. Stubbs's *Haymakers* is similar to an oval scene on the same theme painted in watercolour by Thomas Hearne, *A Landscape and Figures* from Thomson's *Seasons* of 1783 (Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester). This suggests that the two artists may have studied the same scene, or that Stubbs borrowed from Hearne the images of the girl pausing in front of the haycart with her hayrake upright, the woman raking in hay, and the man on top of the cart. Hearne's picture was exhibited at the Society of Artists in 1783, but Stubbs chose not to exhibit his early versions of *Haymakers* and *Reapers* that year, possibly to avoid the inevitable comparisons. **The pictures' unsentimental yet sympathetic observation of work in the countryside**, with little or no narrative content, is reminiscent of Stubbs's earlier depictions of groups of grooms and stable-lads rubbing down horses. The location of the scenes has not been identified. It is possibly in the south midlands, although such scenes could have been witnessed in fields on the outskirts of London, within a few miles of Stubbs's house at Somerset Street, London.
- **George Stubbs**, one of Europe's **most important painters of animal subjects**, was **virtually self-taught** as a zoologist, botanist, painter, and engraver. Born in Liverpool, the son of a leatherworker, he embarked on a career as a portraitist and became lecturer on human and animal anatomy at York County Hospital. In 1754, he visited Italy 'to convince himself that nature was and is always superior to art whether Greek or Roman'. As much a **scientist as an artist**, in 1756 he **rented a farmhouse** in Lincolnshire, and **spent 18 months dissecting horses**, assisted by his **common-law wife**, Mary Spencer. He moved to London in about 1759 and in 1766 after **working in the morning and evening for six years** on the 18 plates he published *The Anatomy of the Horse*, illustrated from his own dissections and a **hugely influential volume** among naturalists and artists alike. Aristocratic patrons recognised that his paintings of horses were more accurate than his rivals and his career was secure. He also experimented with Josiah Wedgwood in painting with enamels on ceramic plaques but these were less successful. During his lifetime, Stubbs was famous for his paintings of domestic and exotic animals and was characterized as a **sporting painter** and so **denied membership to the Royal Academy**. Few of his paintings survive **undamaged** because Stubbs painted with **thin and diluted oils**.



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

- Tate display caption, “As an example of rational thought, Newton was an important figure for Lavater. Arguing for the veracity of physiognomy, Lavater stated that greatness was ‘visible in every well drawn outline’ of the scientist’s head. Reiterating a pervasive racial stereotype, he asked ‘Could the mind of Newton have invented the theory of light, residing in the head of a Negro’. Blake, however, was critical of reductive scientific thought. In this picture, the straight lines and sharp angles of Newton’s profile suggest that he cannot see beyond the rules of his compass. Behind him, the colourful, textured rock may be seen to represent the creative world, to which he is blind.”
- The figure of Newton is related to Michelangelo's Abias, one of the Ancestors of Christ in the lunettes of the Sistine Chapel.
- Tate, “The design was also developed from plate 10 of the second issue of *There is no Natural Religion* of c.1788, which shows an old man kneeling on the ground and drawing with a pair of compasses to illustrate the text ‘Application. He who sees the Infinite in all things sees God. He who sees the Ratio only sees himself’.”
- Blake was critical of the idea that science could solve all our human problems. He

may be suggesting that Newton, by focusing on the sharp angles and geometry of the compass is missing the beauty of the world around him.

- **Newton**, personification of man limited by reason. The eighteenth-century poet, Alexander Pope, wrote a satirical epitaph for Newton: 'Nature and Nature's laws lay hid in night, God said Let Newton be! And all was light.' This shows just how much the eighteenth century revered the great philosopher. Newton had successfully explained the workings of the physical universe. To Blake, however, this was not enough: Newton had omitted God, as well as all those significant emotional and spiritual elements which cannot be quantified, from his theories. Blake boasted that he had 'fourfold vision' while Newton with his 'single vision' was as good as asleep. To Blake, Newton, Bacon and Locke with their emphasis on reason were nothing more than 'the three great teachers of atheism, or Satan's Doctrine'. In this print from 1795 Newton is portrayed drawing with a pair of compasses. Compasses were a traditional symbol of God, 'architect of the universe', but notice how the picture progresses from exuberance and colour on the left, to sterility and blackness on the right. In Blake's view Newton brings not light, but night.
- It has been suggested the figure is based on Michelangelo's Abias in the Sistine Chapel. Blake was an engraver looking at engravings as he had never seen the original. He accentuates the lie and the muscles. It has been observed that Blake's figures seem to be "all muscle, as if they had no fatty tissue anywhere, and one layer of skin too few ... is Blake, or is he not, interested in muscles? He is not interested enough to get them right". Blake is more interested in muscles as pattern, passion and tension. It is like an early form of expressionism where the anatomical accuracy gives way to emotional power and exaggeration.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/blake-newton-n05058>



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

- What can we see? An idyllic scene of a summer's day in **rural Suffolk**. In the foreground **two boys are untying two barges** from the tow horse to pole them under **Flatford bridge to the left**, just out of the picture. We see a wonderful Constable sky with scudding cumulus clouds against a pale blue sky.
- However, **this idyllic scene is misleading as 1816**, the year it was painted, was known as the '**Year Without a Summer**'. The previous year, the Indonesian volcano **Mount Tambora** exploded in the largest eruption in recorded history. Forty-one cubic kilometres of ash was sent into the upper atmosphere, blocking the sun and cooling the planet. In England, this resulted in a cold summer, heavy rains, **bright yellow skies** and the failure of the harvest. Families travelled across the UK begging for food and **famine was common** in the north and southwest Ireland. In addition, the war with France had finished the year before and many thousands of wounded soldiers returned home looking for work.
- In 1815, when the **Napoleonic War ended**, the **Corn Laws** were introduced that fixed the price of corn and therefore bread. This **favoured farmers and millers like the Constables** as it meant their prices were fixed and could not be undercut by

cheap foreign imports. The result **was famine, dissent and riots** which led to the **Peterloo Massacre** in Manchester in **1819** when 15 were killed and 400-700 injured, a suspension of habeas corpus, restrictions on the press, new Poor Laws, the workhouse, the Swing Riots of the 1830s and the Tolpuddle Martyrs of 1833-34.

- Constable has other things on his mind. In **1809**, he had **fallen in love with his childhood friend Maria Bicknell** but in 1816 their engagement was **opposed by her grandfather** who considered the Constable's **social inferiors**. The same year his **father died** and he inherited **a sixth of the estate**. He could then support a wife and children and they **married in October** at St Martin-in-the-Fields and although her **grandfather claimed to have disinherited** her when he died he left all of his grandchildren, including her, £4,000. Their **honeymoon** was a tour of the south coast including Weymouth and Brighton and it was during his honeymoon that he developed a new technique of using brighter colours and freer brushwork. The summers of 1816 and 1817 were the **last time** he lived in **East Bergholt** for an extended period and the last time he painted the Suffolk countryside direct from nature.
- This painting is not intended to be about the social conditions of the rural poor and such paintings were unusual. Constable had a different aim. He had enjoyed an idyllic boyhood that he wanted to capture and he wrote that for him **'painting is but another word for feeling'**. These childhood scenes, in his own words, **'made me a painter, and I am grateful'; 'the sound of water escaping from mill dams etc., willows, old rotten planks, slimy posts, and brickwork, I love such things.'** Although he eventually became a Royal Academician he was not commercially successful and sold only twenty paintings in England in his lifetime. However, he won a **gold medal in Paris for *The Hay Wain* in 1824**, had a **profound influence on the French Romantic painters** and sold twenty paintings there in just a few years. In March 1828, when **Maria's father died, he left her £20,000 and Maria died in November** of the same year aged 41 of consumption (tuberculosis). She had always been fragile and the strain of having seven children (and one miscarriage) was too much for her. Constable was devastated.

Notes

- This is Constable's largest exhibition canvas to be painted mainly outdoors, the first of his 'six-footers' and the first in his *Stour* series which later included *The Hay Wain*.
- The barges are called lighters and were used to move goods and passengers from moored ships. They were moved and steered using long oars called 'sweeps'.
- Constable used a sheet of glass on his easel on which he painted the lines of the scene he could see through the glass. This was then transferred to a piece of paper placed on the glass and drawn over. The paper was then squared up and the

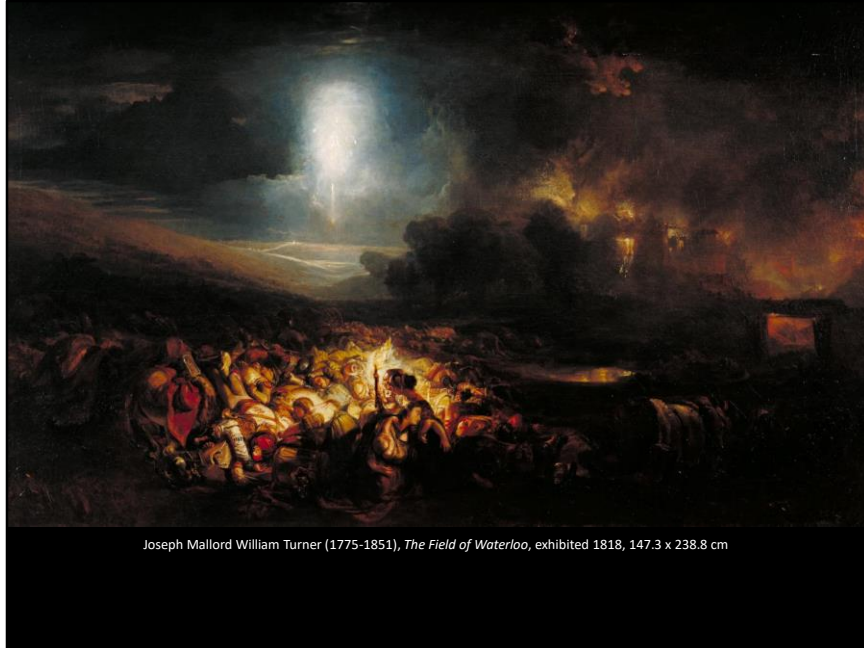
drawing transferred to the canvas.

- Constable's mother Ann died on 9 March 1815, aged 67. Constable's father Golding died on 14 May 1816, aged 77, and divided his estate into six equal shares. Constable's younger brother Abram ran the farm generating an annual income of £200 for each sibling. Mary Bicknell's father was the Prince Regent's lawyer and the Constables were 'trade'.
- **Peterloo Massacre**, 16 Aug 1819, cavalry charged 60,000-80,000 people 15 killed, 400-700 injured, which resulted in the *Manchester Guardian* and the **Six Acts** (which made any meeting for radical reform treasonable, speeded up court cases, radical newspapers were gagged, weapons could be seized and unauthorised military training was made illegal).
- **Pauperism**, during the 1820s Poor Law expenditure decreased, rural crime increased by 30%, mostly food thefts, and 1828, 1829 and 1830 were poor harvests. Many Victorians struggled to understand and explain poverty. Was it a result of personal misfortune, was it caused by social conditions beyond an individual's control, or was it the direct result of a person's character, their laziness and having too many children? Were the poor, therefore, 'deserving' or 'undeserving'? Who was responsible for those who became so poor that they could not maintain themselves
- **Swing Riots**, 1830, agricultural workers did not disguise themselves but descended on farms in their hundreds demanding higher wages. 2,000 farm labourers were arrested and imprisoned and 19 were hung. Reform was needed but the Duke of Wellington, the Prime Minister thought the British system was ideal. His Tory government fell and Earl Grey's Whig government came into power. Grey's bill was rejected, the Whigs were re-elected, it was again opposed by the House of Lords leading to riots across the country and Dorset, Somerset and Leicestershire became ungovernable. Grey requested King William IV to create 100 new Whig peers, he refused and Grey resigned. William called on the Duke of Wellington but even he admitted the country was ungovernable and he resigned. The Great Reform Act was passed.
- **Tolpuddle Martyrs**, in the early 1830s a group of six men formed a friendly society (which was now legal following the repeal of the Combination Act in 1824-5). They refused to work for less than 10s a week when the local rate was 7s a week and were prosecuted under an obscure law of 1797 prohibiting people from swearing oaths to each other. They were transported to Australia and became popular heroes, 800,000 signatures were collected and they were released in 1836 (James Hammett was released in 1837 as he had a previous conviction for theft). Four of the six returned to England and later emigrated to London, Ontario where they are buried.

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[river-n01273](#)



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

- This shows Joseph Mallord William Turner's vision of the **horrors of the battlefield** following the Battle of Waterloo. England had been at war with France, on and off, for over twenty years when the Battle of Waterloo took place and it ended the war. But the cost was enormous, it is estimated that on this single day **42,000-53,000 men were killed and wounded** and 15,000 horses. In the background on the right, we can see the **Château of Hougoumont burning**. This building was regarded by both the Duke of Wellington and Napoleon Bonaparte as the key to the battle and so Wellington threw resources at it to hold it and Napoleon sent his best troops to capture it. In the foreground French soldiers' bodies lie on the ground while their womenfolk search among them for signs of life and the whole scene is eerily lit by the flare in the background and the torches in the foreground.
- **Turner is our greatest British artist** and he was recognised as such in his lifetime both in Britain and abroad. He was a **shrewd businessman and became very wealthy**. He was not a revolutionary but many of his paintings comment on the flaws of society. This painting, for example, is one of the first to display the horrors of war rather than heroic deeds. When Turner exhibited the painting, he quoted

from Lord Byron's anti-war poem 'Childe Harold's Pilgrimage'. One line reads, '**Rider and horse—friend, foe, in one red burial blent!**' In other words, the dead belong to no nation.

- As a result, when it was exhibited the painting was controversial and the **press divided**. Some papers thought it showed a **drunken hubbub** and made fun of what they described as kitchen wenches looking with torches for a lost lodger, others thought it was an '**abortive attempt**'. On the other hand, some thought there was **grandeur** and that it was an **honest portrayal** of anxious wives and sons searching for slaughtered victims.
- Many saw the victory at Waterloo as **vindicating traditional British social values and the class system** over meritocracy and the ideals of the French revolution. Turner, however, does not show us a glorious victory, only death and horror, which he represents using the dramatic lighting of a flare which were used during the night after the battle to discourage looting. It is the night of the battle and women and children are searching for their loved ones. In reality looting was a major problem and within hours many corpses had been stripped of valuables, weapons and clothing, and even their teeth. The blood-soaked artefacts were later sold as memorabilia to the tourists who flocked to the scene.
- After the war, many **ex-soldiers returned home wounded and jobless** having lost limbs and eyes. There was no social care system and only the antiquated Elizabethan Poor Laws so many resorted to begging. I will discuss the further consequences of this in the next painting.

Notes

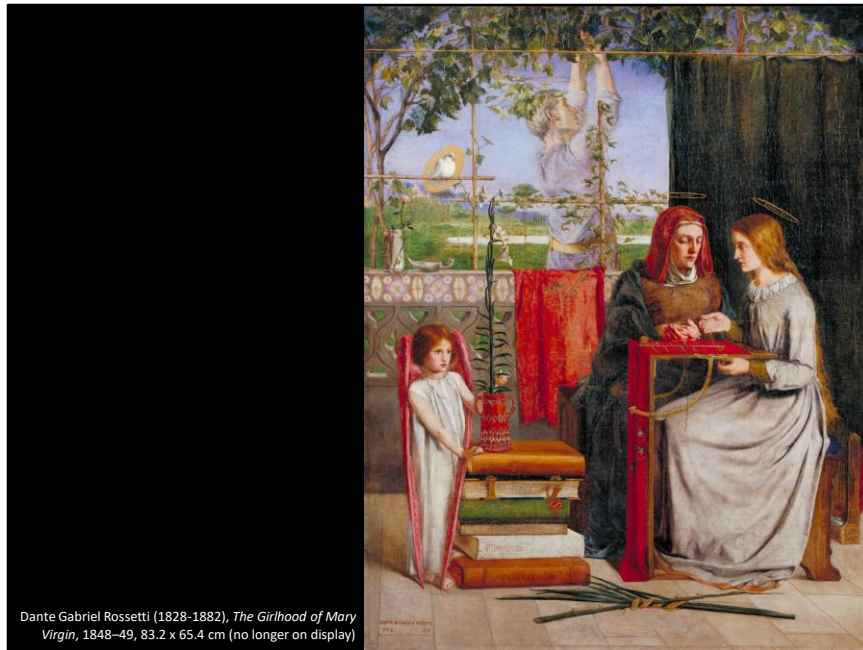
- Joseph Mallord William Turner was born in 1775, a year before John Constable. He was the son of a barber and wig maker and was born in Maiden Lane, Covent garden. He was a child prodigy and sold drawings placed in his father's shop window. Around 1786, aged 11, he was sent to Margate where he produced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

- Turner travelled to the continent two years after the Battle of Waterloo and spent a day on the site of the battle sketching.

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

- ‘The Virgin Mary is shown here as a young girl, working on an embroidery guided by her mother, Anne. Her father, Joachim, is shown pruning a vine. The picture is full of symbolic details. The **palm branch** and **thorn** on the floor allude to **Christ’s Passion**, the **lilies** to the **Virgin’s purity**, and the **books** to the virtues of **hope, faith and charity**. The **dove** represents the **Holy Spirit**. This was **Rossetti’s first completed oil painting** and the **first picture to be exhibited with the initials ‘PRB’**, for Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, inscribed on it.’ (Tate display caption)
- Painted in Hunt’s studio, begun 20 August 1848.
- **Not exhibited at the Royal Academy as he was worried about being rejected.**
- Symbolism is so complex he wrote two sonnets to explain it. It includes objects such as the dove, the lamp, the rose, the flower, the vine and colours such as **gold for charity, blue for faith, green for hope and white for temperance**.
- There is no evidence Rossetti had any religious beliefs, **he was a Victorian agnostic**. His **deepest belief was that women enshrine the meaning of existence**. His mother and sister, Christina were High Anglicans.

- He wrote in 1852 to F. G. Stephens, *‘that picture of mine was a symbol of female excellence. The Virgin being taken as its highest type.’*
- Millais *Carpenter’s Shop* followed on from Rossetti’s *Girlhood*.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti

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

character of his work. Here the names of the virtues appear on the **book spines (Fortitudo (strength), Temperentia (restraint), Prudentia (prudence), Spes (hope), Fides (faith), and Caritas (charity), the cardinal virtues)**; the gilt haloes are inscribed S. Ioachimus, S. Anna, S. Maria S.V.); a scroll binding the palms and briars bears the legend “Tot dolores tot gaudia” (‘So many sorrows, so many joys’); and the portable organ near the hassock is carved with the initial M and has the inscription “O sis, Laus Deo” (‘Oh, praise be to God’).’

References

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



John Everett Millais (1829-1896), *Christ in the House of His Parents*, 1850, Tate Britain
 John Rogers Herbert (1810-1890), *Our Saviour Subject to His Parents at Nazareth*, 1847, Guildhall Art Gallery

Christ in the House of His Parents

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

hospital where dirty drunkards, in a high state of varicose veins, are received. Their very toes have walked out of Saint Giles's.

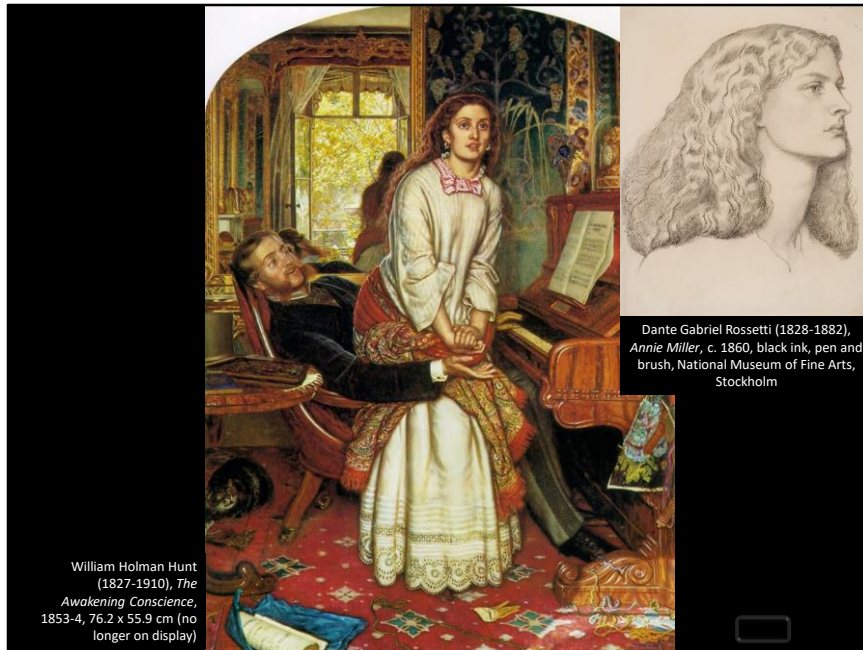
- **Saint Giles** was an area that was well known for its crime and had 'the worst living conditions in all of London's history'. *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine* wrote that the painting contained '**Rickety children, emaciation and deformity**' and '**we can hardly imagine anything more ugly, graceless, and unpleasant**'. Dickens also described Christ as '**hideous, wry-necked, blubbery**' and the whole painting with its '**ugliness of feature, limb, or attitude**' expressing '**what is mean, odious, repulsive, and revolting**'. In the painting, Christ has red hair, which was traditionally associated with Judas Iscariot and red hair regarded as both 'ugly' and a 'sign of degeneration'. Mary's eyes are almost closed and ringed in black and her brow is heavily lined, which combined with the twist of her neck, gives her a distorted appearance and Joseph's arms are veined and muscular, his nails are dirty, his left knee is damaged and his toenails are broken.
- In the *Art Journal* Ralph Wornum wrote: '**the most beautiful soul must have the most beautiful body**' indicating that the moral worth of a character, in this case the Holy Family, must be signified by a beautiful body. *The Times* critic wrote that the picture 'is, to speak plainly, revolting' and there was 'no conceivable omission of misery, of dirt, and even disease, all finished with the same loathsome minuteness'. *The Athenaeum* also wrote that 'we recoil with loathing and disgust' at the 'pictorial blasphemy'. What is morally shocking to the reviewer is the minute detail, which suggests we are looking at something that is forbidden and so it must be seen only in some generalised or modified form.
- The room is **unnaturally bright** and evenly lit and the source of the light is on the left. In Millais's preparatory sketches, there is a **window on the left**, which is cut off in the final painting and is the notional source of the light. The figures have the **idiosyncratic features** associated with particular people and we know that they were modelled by Millais's family and friends. Millais went to a carpenter's shop in Oxford Street to sketch its interior in order to represent a carpenter's tools and method of working accurately. The tools are those of a nineteenth-century carpenter and the clothes are a mixture of Middle Eastern, conventional religious symbolism, such as Mary's blue dress and St. John's animal fur, with nineteenth-century additions, such as Christ's smock. Clearly, Millais was not trying to reproduce a historically accurate carpenter's shop but an accurately observed contemporary carpenter's shop with figures that were modelled on friends and family. The critics pointed out that the painting is full of anachronisms such as the mixture of costumes from different periods and the Victorian carpenter's tools. However, the art historian Michaela Giebelhausen believes that Millais carefully constructed these anachronisms in order to create an ahistorical setting. In the eighteenth century, she points out that such an ahistorical setting was associated with religious devotion as it prevented a painting from being seen as a genre

painting set in a particular time and period.

- Christ's small stature compared with the height of the table also suggests that Millais was representing an accident resulting from **childish enthusiasm** rather than a stage-managed event. This is also suggested by the assistant at the left ignoring the interruption to his work, Joseph's perfunctory examination and the look of 'I told you not to meddle' on St. John's face. Mary is holding her head back for a kiss suggesting she is the injured party and St. Anne offers practical assistance rather than comfort. Through the open entrance, a group of sheep stare over a fence inquisitively suggesting there could have just been a noisy scene. Millais linked the highest spiritual subject, the Holy Family, with the lowest rung of society, the urban poor, and turned a spiritual prefiguration into an everyday accident.
- By associating themselves with artists that pre-dated the formation of Protestantism the Pre-Raphaelites linked themselves with Puseyism, the Oxford Movement, and the widely resisted move towards Catholicism. This was reinforced by their unconventional approach to religious symbolism. The painting was therefore seen to be subversive and an attempt to undermine Protestant beliefs. This aspect of the Pre-Raphaelite movement is spelled out in Max Nordau's *Degeneration*.
- It is clear from the critical reaction that this painting was **revolutionary** and was seen as an extreme attack on the conventions used to represent religious subjects. Fourteen years later, in Paris, Manet caused a similar reaction by undermining bourgeois notions of respectability with *Olympia* (1863, exhibited 1865).
- The critical response changed over the years and **by 1898** the painting was '**passionately admired, and even loved**'. By the end of the century, the painting was no longer regarded as ugly and 'blasphemous'. This might be because Millais had become accepted as a member of elite society but the painting had also lost its ability to shock as the changes it brought about in the way we see the world had become established.
- John Rogers Herbert (1810-1890), *Our Saviour Subject to His Parents at Nazareth*, anticipated Millais's *Christ in the House of His Parents*. It was praised but the prestigious *Art Journal* (1847) criticized it in a way that was a foretaste of the more extreme criticism Millais was to receive three years later:
 - "The style of the work is a deduction from early Italian Art modified by more advanced experiences. It is a work of much merit; but most defective where we should most look for excellence; the character of the Saviour — in youth — has been utterly mistaken; there is in it nothing of that high feeling and perfect grace — grace of heart as well as mind — inseparable from our ideas of the character: the expression is, indeed, rather repulsive than inviting ; it gives us no glimpse of the mighty hereafter of the Divinity who had taken our nature upon him."

References

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



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

Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-1882), *Annie Miller*, c. 1860, black ink, pen and brush, National Museum of Fine Arts, Stockholm

- Key point: a controversial painting about an important social problem from a different angle
- 'Hunt's modern life painting represents a wealthy man visiting his mistress in an apartment which he has provided for her. The tune that he idly plays on the piano has reminded her of her earlier life and she rises from his lap towards the bright outside world (made visible to the viewer in the mirror). The claustrophobic space is filled with intricate clues, such as the bird trying to escape from a cat and the female figure enclosed in a glass dome, which echoes the shape of the painting.' (Tate display caption)

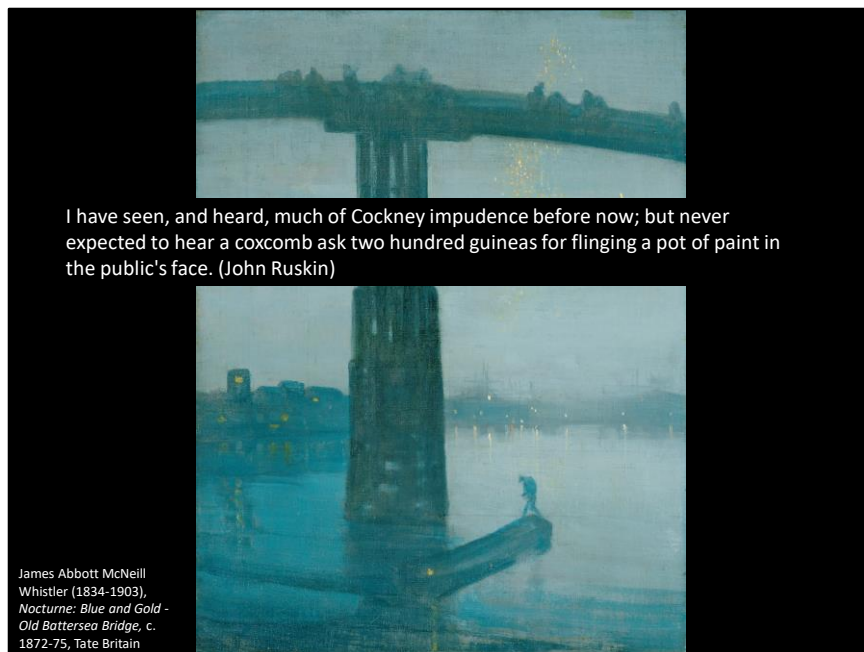
The Awakening Conscience

- The inspiration for this painting was **Proverbs**: 'As he that taketh away a garment in cold weather, so is he that singeth songs to an heavy heart'.

- Some critics misinterpreted this painting, one thought it was a **brother and sister** playing the piano but the real meaning was quickly determined. It is a gentleman with his mistress (she does not wear a wedding ring) in the room he has rented for their meetings. Hunt hired a room at Woodbine Villa, 7 Alpha Place, **St John's Wood** to provide an authentic interior.
- As they play the piano and sing Thomas Moore's *Oft in the Stilly Night* together she has a sudden spiritual revelation. She gazes into the **garden** reflected in the mirror representing **God's work on earth** and **redemption** is possible signified by the **ray of sunlight** in front of her.
- The painting is full of symbolic elements that are intended to be read.
 - The **cat** toying with the broken winged bird symbolizes her plight,
 - The man's **discarded glove** warns that the likely fate of a cast off mistress is prostitution.
 - The **tangled skein** of yarn signifies the complex situation in which she is trapped.
- Ruskin wrote to *The Times* on 25 May 1854, 'the very hem of the **poor girl's dress**, at which the painter has laboured so closely, thread by thread, has story in it, if we think how soon its pure whiteness may be soiled with dust and rain, her outcast feet failing in the street'.
- The model is **Annie Miller** (1835-1925), a barmaid Hunt met when she was **15**. He **fell in love** with her and wanted to **marry her** but only if she **educated herself** when her was away in the **Middle East**. When he was away and contrary to his instructions she **sat for Dante Gabriel Rossetti** and this caused a **rift** between them on Hunt's return. She became involved with 7th **Viscount Ranelagh** (pronounced ran-er-lah) and Hunt broke off their engagement. She was going to sue for **breach of promise** but Ranelagh's cousin Captain Thomas Thomson **fell in love** with her. And they married in 1863. Years later Hunt met her on Richmond Hill 'a buxom matron with a carriage full of children'. She **died aged 90** in **Shoreham-by-Sea**. It is not known whether she became 'gay' (i.e. a prostitute) but one art historian (Jan Marsh) believes it is likely she remained 'pure'.

References

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



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

- Whistler arrived in Paris in 1855, aged 21, and moved to London in 1859 which he adopted as his home.
- In 1866 Whistler decided to travel to **Valparaiso, Chile to fight the Spanish**. Scholars have puzzle over his motivation. Whistler stated he was asked by some South Americans as a 'West Point' man and he was very **proud of his military training** but, unlike his brother, **he had never fought**. He may have thought this the opportunity to display his military prowess as a swashbuckling Southern gentleman (even though he was born in New England). Whatever the reason Whistler's painted **his first three night paintings** while he was there. He later, thanks to the suggestion of his patron Frederick Leyland he re-titled them 'nocturnes'.
- On his return him contributed *Symphony in White, No. 3* but **critics** in England and France were **not sympathetic** and between 1868 and 1870 he showed only **a single painting** at the Royal Academy and **none in France**. He experimented with **classical nudes** in drapes but criticized himself for his **lack of formal training in the life class**. He had lost his sense of artistic direction. He was short of money,

despised the English and began a major family crisis by arguing with his brother-in-law and pushing him through a plate glass window. In 1869 his half-brother George died.

- In **1871** he painted his ailing mother, **Arrangement on Grey and Black, No. 1** (colloquially called **Whistler's Mother**) and this to have been a **turning point**. At the same time he was rejecting Realism for Aestheticism and he chose to go out on the Thames at night with Walter Greaves (1846-1930) and paint his Nocturnes. Greaves was a neighbour who was a boat builder and waterman and his father had been the boatman for J. M. W. Turner.
- Whistler painted several more **nocturnes** over the next ten years, many of the **River Thames** and of Cremorne Gardens, a pleasure park famous for its frequent fireworks displays, which presented a novel challenge to paint. In his maritime nocturnes, Whistler used paint he had thinned with copal, turpentine and linseed oil, creating what **he called a 'sauce'**, which he applied in thin, transparent layers, wiping it away until he was satisfied. To this ground he applied lightly flicked colour to suggest ships, lights, and shore line. Some of the Thames paintings also show compositional and thematic similarities with the **Japanese prints of Hiroshige**.
- Whistler was short and slim with a curling moustache and he often wore a monocle and dressed like a dandy. He was self-confident, arrogant and selfish and enjoyed shocking his friends. He had a biting wit and on one occasion, young Oscar Wilde (1854-1900) attended one of Whistler's dinners, and hearing his host make some brilliant remark, apparently said, "I wish I'd said that", to which Whistler riposted, "You will, Oscar, you will!" In fact, Wilde did repeat in public many witticisms created by Whistler.

The Whistler v. Ruskin Trial

- This painting gave rise to one of the **central artistic controversy of the Victorian period**, known as the **Whistler v. Ruskin trial**. The trial tells us a lot about how the Victorians regarded art and the nature of the changes Whistler helped bring about.
- This painting and the next were exhibited in the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, the year it opened. John Ruskin reviewed Whistler's work in his publication *Fors Clavigera* on July 2, 1877. Ruskin praised Burne-Jones, while he attacked Whistler:
For Mr. Whistler's own sake, no less than for the protection of the purchaser, Sir Coutts Lindsay [founder of the Grosvenor Gallery] ought not to have admitted works into the gallery in which the ill-educated conceit of the artist so nearly approached the aspect of wilful imposture. I have seen, and heard, much of Cockney impudence before now; but never expected to hear a coxcomb ask two hundred guineas for flinging a pot of paint in the public's face.
- Critics by convention **did not criticize** paintings as they knew the artist had to make a living. If they did not like a painting they ignored it or made a critical

comment alongside some positive points.

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

When asked '**Are those figures** on the top of the bridge intended for people?' Whistler replied 'They are **just what you like**.'

When the judge asked **if it was a barge** beneath the bridge,

Whistler replied 'Yes, **I am very much flattered** at your seeing that. The picture is simply a representation of moonlight. My whole scheme was only to bring about a **certain harmony of colour**.'

- Whistler stressed the colour rather than a harmony of form and the form is suppressed by the overall similarity in tone and hue; with the exception of the gold dots the painting is a wash of blue, in places a thin wash that allows the canvas to show. Whistler mixed large quantities of the predominant tone that he called his 'sauce', and although he started on an easel, he often had to throw the canvas on the floor to stop the sauce running off. The sky and water were rendered by 'great sweeps of the brush of exactly the right tone.'



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

- **This was his first major success.**
 - Sargent's **first major success at the Royal Academy came in 1887**, with the enthusiastic response to ***Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose***, a large piece, **painted on site**, of two young girls lighting lanterns in an Farnham House, Broadway in the Cotswolds. Sargent had moved to the Cotswolds to escape the **scandal of the *Portrait of Madame X* (1884)**. The painting received a mixed reception as some reviewers regarded it as '**Frenchified**' but it was immediately purchased by the Tate Gallery's Chantrey Bequest. They are lighting Chinese lanterns as day turns to night. The children Dolly (left, aged 11) and Polly (right, aged 7), the daughters of the illustrator Frederick Barnard, a friend of Sergeants.
- **He painted it outdoors *alla prima*.**
 - **Every day from 6:35pm to 7pm from August to early November 1885 and again in August/September and late October 1886**, he painted in the very few minutes **when the light was perfect**, giving the picture an **overall purple tint** of evening. He made many preliminary sketches and he would often scrape the paint off the canvas after a day's painting. The flowers in

the garden died as summer turned to autumn, and they were replaced with **artificial flowers**. Sargent resumed painting the following summer at the Millet new home nearby in Broadway, and finally **finished** the painting by the end of **October 1886**. In the course of working, Sargent cut down the rectangular canvas, removing approximately 2 feet (61 cm) from the left side, to leave an approximately square shape. Sargent himself described it as a 'fearfully difficult subject ... Paints are not bright enough & then the effect only lasts ten minutes.' The seemingly effortless solution is the result of Sargent being willing to scrape off and redo his efforts again and again. This painting possibly takes *alla prima* (wet-on-wet, Italian for 'first attempt') painting to an extreme level that has rarely even been attempted before or since. Cross-sectional analysis of the paint shows that he even painted wet-on-wet for the final touches on the faces, something few other artists would ever attempt.

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

Notes

John Singer Sargent

- John Singer Sargent was an American artist who was considered the '**leading portrait painter of his generation**' specialising in Edwardian aristocracy. He was prolific and painted about 900 oil paintings and 2,000 watercolours.
- He was **trained in Paris** before moving to London. His early submission *Portrait of Madame X* caused a scandal rather than the positive publicity he was expecting.
- He was a master of **drawing with the brush** and his portraits were painted in the grand manner but his landscapes were influenced by Impressionism.
- His father was an eye surgeon but when Sargent's older sister died aged two his **mother** (Mary née Singer) **had a breakdown** and they **travelled through Europe**

for the rest of their lives. Sargent was born in Florence in 1856. He had no official schooling but grew up speaking **fluent French, Italian and German** and accomplished in art, music and literature.

- He began his art studies with Carolus-Duran a French portrait painter with bold techniques and modern teaching methods. He taught painting *alla prima* working directly on the canvas with a loaded brush derived from Diego Velázquez. In 1874 he gained entry to the École des Beaux-Arts at his first attempt and won a silver prize.

Chantrey Bequest

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



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

- **This is Waterhouse's best known work.** He painted **three different versions** of *The Lady of Shalott*, in 1888, 1894 (tied up in the threads of her loom), and 1916 (wearing a red dress in front of a round window and her unbroken loom). Another of Waterhouse's favourite subjects was Ophelia; the most famous of his paintings of Ophelia depicts her just before her death, putting flowers in her hair as she sits on a tree branch leaning over a lake. Like *The Lady of Shalott* and other Waterhouse paintings, it deals with a woman dying in or near water. He also may have been inspired by paintings of Ophelia by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Everett Millais.
- *The Lady of Shalott* (1832) was a poem by the Poet Laureate Alfred Tennyson (1809-1892). According to this poem "the Lady of Shalott was forbidden to look directly at reality or the outside world; instead she was **doomed to view the world through a mirror**, and weave what she saw into tapestry. Her despair was heightened when she saw loving couples entwined in the far distance, and she spent her days and nights aching for a return to normalcy. One day the Lady **saw Sir Lancelot passing** on his way in the reflection of the mirror, and **dared to look**

out at Camelot, bringing about a **curse**. The lady escaped by boat during an autumn storm, inscribing 'The Lady of Shalott' on the prow. As she sailed towards Camelot and **certain death**, she sang a lament. Her frozen body was found shortly afterwards by the knights and ladies of Camelot, one of whom is Lancelot, who prayed to God to have mercy on her soul."

- Waterhouse was born the year after the Pre-Raphaelites were founded but he is known for working in the **Pre-Raphaelite style**. He worked several decades after the breakup of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, which had **seen its heyday** in the mid-nineteenth century, leading him to have gained the title of "**the modern Pre-Raphaelite**". His artworks were known for their depictions of women from both ancient Greek mythology and Arthurian legend.
- Born in Rome to English parents who were both painters, he later moved to London, where he enrolled in the Royal Academy of Art. He soon began exhibiting at their annual summer exhibitions, focusing on the creation of large canvas works depicting scenes from the daily life and mythology of **ancient Greece**. Later on in his career he came to embrace the Pre-Raphaelite style of painting despite the fact that it had gone **out of fashion** in the British art scene several decades before.
- Waterhouse painted **three different versions** of *The Lady of Shalott*, in 1888, 1894 (tied up in the threads of her loom), and 1916 (wearing a red dress in front of a round window and her unbroken loom). Another of Waterhouse's favourite subjects was Ophelia; the most famous of his paintings of Ophelia depicts her just before her death, putting flowers in her hair as she sits on a tree branch leaning over a lake. Like *The Lady of Shalott* and other Waterhouse paintings, it deals with a woman dying in or near water. He also may have been inspired by paintings of Ophelia by Dante Gabriel Rossetti and John Everett Millais.

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Stanhope Alexander Forbes (1857-1947), *The Health of the Bride*, 1889, 152 x 200 cm

- Forbes finished *The Health of the Bride* in 1889 when he was living and painting in Newlyn, Cornwall. The £600 proceeds from its sale enabled him to get married the same year. It was sold to Henry Tate who gave it to the nation in 1897 when the Tate Gallery was founded.
- Forbes depicts **generations of the same family seated around a table at the wedding breakfast.**
- A **sailor raises a toast** to the bride who **stares pensively** into her bouquet, her eyes not meeting the gazes of her admiring onlookers.
- The *Health of the Bride* received an **enthusiastic response** at the Royal Academy exhibition in 1889 (the Tate website says 1899). The critic of the *Art Journal* remarked in 1893 that the '**solemn awkwardness** of the young couple themselves, the **knowledgeable indifference** of the old, and the **innocent unconcern** of the very young - all these are managed with **frankness and skill**' (quoted in Cook, p.168).
- Forbes was praised for his choice of subject, its painterly qualities and his handling of light from two sources. Note that the source on the right is not visible, what looks like a window is the reflection from the glass front of a cabinet.

Notes

- The party is shown toasting the bride with her sail brother. The sailor is a sergeant.
- The picture was painted from the **artist's friends** at his studio in Newlyn, not from professional models, and the setting is the local inn.
- Lord Lever considered buying Stanhope Forbes's *Health of the Bride*. He described how the painting was 'ready' for the purpose of advertising: "Scarcely wants a touch ... I should have put a box of Sunlight Soap in the hands of the best man, who is standing up with a glass in his hand drinking health and prosperity to the newly-married couple. The glass would have been replaced by the soap, with the toast, 'Happy is the Bride that Sunlight Soap Shines Upon.' " However, the painting was already promised to Henry Tate, the sugar magnate who left his collection to what was renamed the Tate Gallery.
- Tate:
 - On 16 July 1889 Stanhope Alexander Forbes wrote to Sir Henry Tate (1819-1899) 'I myself will be rather occupied down here - no less a matter than my own wedding. It was inevitable after painting this picture' (quoted in Cook and Hardie, p.84). Forbes was writing from **Newlyn where he had been staying since 1884**.
 - The small Cornish fishing village attracted a number of artists in the late nineteenth century including **Thomas Cooper Gotch** (1854-1931), **Frank Bramley** (1857-1915) and Walter Langley (1852-1922). Opposed to the insularity of British painting, these artists were **encouraged to paint en plein air**, taking much of their inspiration from the work of French naturalist painters such as **Jules Bastien-Lepage** (1848-1884) and Jules Breton (1827-1906), and often choosing 'working life' subjects.
 - Forbes recalled that the idea for the painting came to him when 'Standing in one of these inn parlours I had first thought of a painting of an anglers' meeting - you will notice one or two cases of fish on the wall - but it occurred to me that a wedding party could be much more picturesquely grouped, even though one had to paint them in the smarter, more conventional Sunday clothes' (quoted in Fox, p.28).
 - The *Health of the Bride* reflects many of the aims of the Newlyn artists at the time. Forbes has chosen to use **non-professional models** and a **recognisable site**, the local inn in Newlyn. In addition, he includes evidence of the local fishing industry, for example the **stuffed fish**, **print** of a painting of a ship and the **masts of ships** seen through the window. This painting can be included amongst a number of works by Forbes, including *Off the Fishing Grounds* (1886) and *Old Newlyn* (1884), which reveal an **unchanging view of life** in Newlyn at a time when rural activities and traditional ways of life were gradually disappearing. **Forbes had a**

monopoly on such subjects in the eyes of the Victorian public, his paintings being characterised by their subdued palette and **square brushwork**.

- The painting was **bought for the large sum of £600 by Sir Henry Tate** in 1889 and was to become part of the collection which he gave to the nation at the foundation of the Tate Gallery. The **profits** from the sale of the painting **enabled Forbes to propose to the artist Elizabeth Armstrong** (1859-1912) who had moved to Newlyn in 1885. Their marriage took place in St Peter's Church in Newlyn a few months after *The Health of the Bride* was completed.



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

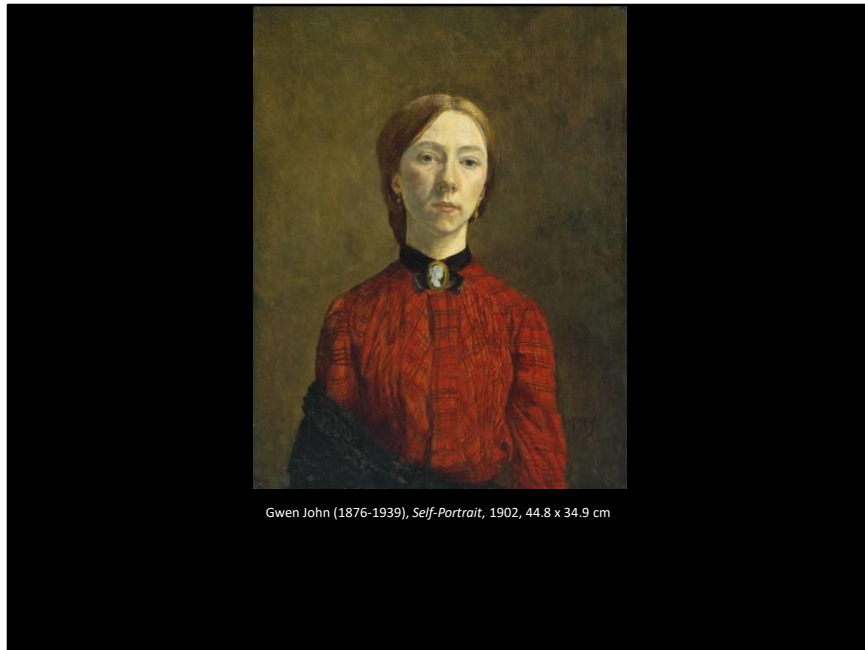
- 'In the 1880s popular music halls sprang up in London and Paris and impressionist artists such as Edgar Degas and Walter Sickert began to paint the audiences and acts. Minnie Cunningham was a successful performer whom Sickert admired. He first exhibited this picture with the subtitle '**I'm an old hand at love, though I'm young in years**', a quotation from one of her songs. Sickert gives us the point of view of an audience member and catches the strange effect of theatrical lighting.' (Tate display caption)
- "Minnie Cunningham' was born in Birmingham and became a 'serio-comic' singer and dancer in the music halls. Her career began around 1888, during which year she performed at a number of London music halls, including the Oxford, the Parthenon and Collins', being described as a 'youthful singer and dancer'. Owing to confusion with an American actress of the same name born in 1855 there has formerly been a belief that she was, when Sickert painted her, a middle-aged performer, adding an extra layer of irony and salaciousness to the songs she sang about herself in the character of an innocent schoolgirl. But, in fact, Cunningham was a young woman in her early twenties when Sickert met her in 1892, and was

described by the poet Arthur Symons in a letter to a friend as **‘very pretty, very nice, very young’**.

- Reviews were mixed. *The Birmingham Gazette* described *Minnie Cunningham* as **‘thoroughly enjoyable** and artistic ... **the picture of the Exhibition’**, and *Black and White* agreed it was **‘quite excellent’**. Several of the **negative reviews** drew attention to what they believed was the **rigid quality** of the figure. **‘How inhuman and caricature-like is the result’**, *Life* complained, **‘a pretty little girl is turned into a wooden doll’**,
- Music halls evolved from light entertainment in salon bars in the 1830s and became established as separate music hall theatres in the 1850s. Unlike a conventional theatre the audience was seated at tables and could eat, drink and smoke.
- **Walter Sickert** was a very **influential and prolific artist** but a painter’s painter. That is, he influenced many twentieth century artists even after his reputation was less well-known to the general public. He was a **colourful and charming** character who was recognised as an important artist in his lifetime. He courted many eminent personalities and was a **skilled raconteur**. In old age he cultivated his eccentric habits frequently appearing in the newspaper having changed his appearance or his name or for some controversial painting stunt.
- He was born in **Munich to a Danish father and an Anglo-Irish mother**. In 1868 the family moved to England and London remained his home although he spent time in Italy and France. He spoke fluent English, German and French and had good Italian.
- His father was a painter and illustrator but discouraged him from painting and when he was 18 he **took up acting** under the stage name **‘Mr. Nemo’**. In 1881 however, he signed for the Slade School. In 1882 he abandoned the stage to join **Whistler’s studio**.
- He denounced Whistler anti-literary theory of drawing and saw all great paintings as telling a story. He also disliked Whistler’s titles as he felt the title set the scene in which the painting could be interpreted. Regarding the **aesthetic**, he said, **‘for me it’s the rudest word I know’**.
- Sickert chose to allegorise painting as **‘a robust and racy wench’**. Dismissing Whistler’s *Symphony in White, No.3* as a **‘bad picture ... badly composed, badly drawn, badly painted’** and appealing only to English sentiment, he insisted that: **‘painting is a rough-tongued, hard-faced mistress, and her severe rule will brook no dallying of that sort’**.
- A major retrospective of his work was held at Tate Britain in 2008.

References

<http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/sickert-minnie-cunningham-at-the-old-bedford-t02039>



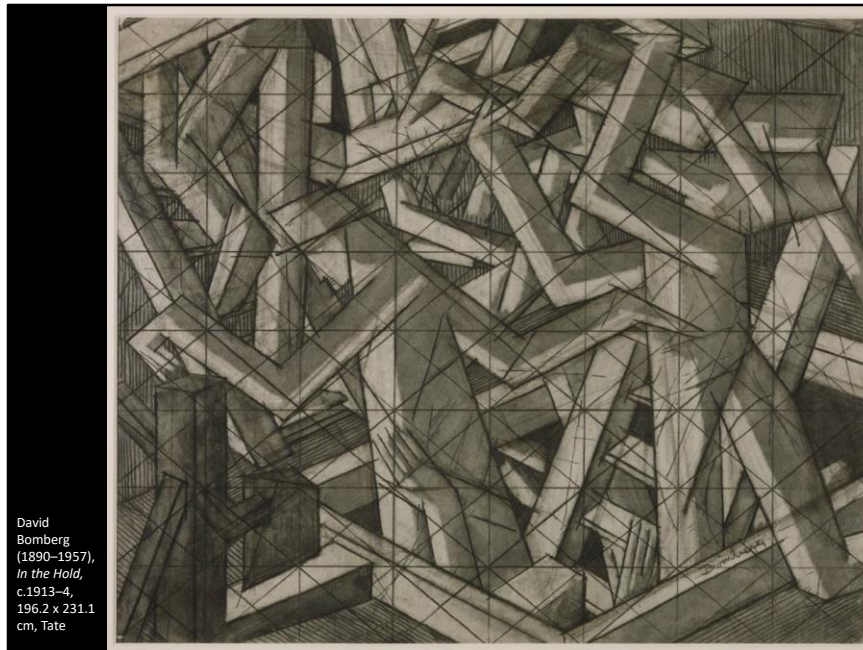
Gwen John (1876-1939), *Self-Portrait*, 1902, 44.8 x 34.9 cm

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

- **Gwen John** (1876-1939) was a Welsh artist who worked in France most of her life. She trained at the Slade School of Art from 1895 to 1898 where her younger brother, Augustus John, had already begun his studies. They lived together on fruit and nuts and even as students her brother's personal glamour made him a celebrity. Gwen was quieter and her reputation has steadily grown since her death. She **neglected her health** throughout her life and in **1900-01** she lived as a **squatter** in a derelict building.
- She and was taught in the traditional manner, which involved copying Old Master paintings. This training shows in the naturalism and carefully controlled colour range of this picture. As a woman in a career still largely dominated by men, including her successful brother Augustus, Gwen had to struggle for recognition. The self-scrutinizing intensity of this image, and the isolation of the figure, registers some sense of this struggle.
- She settled in **Paris in 1904**, working as a **model, becoming Rodin's mistress** and immersing herself in the artistic world of the metropolis. She lived in **France** for the **rest of her life**, exhibiting on both sides of the Channel.
- From **1910 to 1924** nearly all her work was purchased by her **patron John Quinn** an American art collector and this freed her from having to work as a model, mostly for women artists. The majority of her work is portraits, mainly of female sitters and her oeuvre is small, consisting of only 158 oil paintings.
- She drew **thousands of drawings** and thought a painting should be finished in **one or two sittings** and '**For that one must paint a lot of canvases probably and waste them**'. Her meticulous preparation shows the **influence** of James McNeill **Whistler** who she **trained under** in Paris at the Académie Carmen.
- Like many women artists she tried drawing her own body in the mirror but she complained in a letter to her brother about how difficult it was. **Even the Slade imposed restrictions** of women drawing from female models and so **friends would draw each other** but **kept silent** about the practice as 'the **respectability** of these middle-class women students would have been jeopardized if they had acknowledged at the time that they had worked from studies of their own bodies rather than those of anonymous working-class models'.
- When she lived in Paris she had to work as a model to survive. She posed nude for Auguste Rodin and for **other artists, mostly women**. In her dairies she wrote of many occasions when, working as a model, she felt **harassed or abused** by both men and women artists. For example, one of her clients, a woman artist, was kissing a man all afternoon and then told her not to tell anyone if she wanted to keep her job as a model, treating her as a child and discussing her as if she was not there. As a model she would be kept waiting for hours, shouted at, ignored, given no breaks, and propositioned by male artists. She developed fierce attachments to both men and women that worried some people and she later became Rodin's lover.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/john-self-portrait-n05366>



David Bomberg (1890–1957), *In the Hold*, c.1913–4, 196.2 x 231.1 cm, Tate
 David Bomberg (1890–1957), Study for 'In the Hold', c.1914, charcoal on paper, 54.8 x 65.4 cm, Tate

- **C.R.W. Nevinson, David Bomberg, Dora Carrington, Mark Gertler, Paul Nash and Stanley Spencer** - six of the **most important and distinctive British artists of the twentieth century** - had all been students together at the Slade School of Art in London. They formed part of what their **drawing teacher, Henry Tonks**, described as the **school's last 'crisis of brilliance'**. For young British artists working in the years immediately before the Great War it was an exciting and demanding time as various Modernist movements fought for precedence: Primitivism, Futurism, Cubism, Vorticism and Expressionism.
- Although it appears completely abstract *In the Hold* closely follows the outlines of a drawing that is in the Tate.
- *In the Hold* is based on a scene of dockers working in the hold of a ship. A ladder, seen in the lower right of the picture, connects the hold with the deck above. In the centre left one of the dockers can be seen, wearing a hat. Bomberg has left visible the squaring-up grid, used to enlarge accurately the preliminary drawing. He

has then used this geometrical framework to dissolve the subject of the picture into dynamic angular facets. Bomberg was aware of the militancy of the dockworkers which was much publicised at the time.

- Bomberg was searching for a visual language to express his view of the modern urban environment. He wrote: **‘the new life should find its expression in a new art, which has been stimulated by new perceptions. I want to translate the life of a great city, its motion, its machinery, into an art that shall not be photographic, but expressive’.**

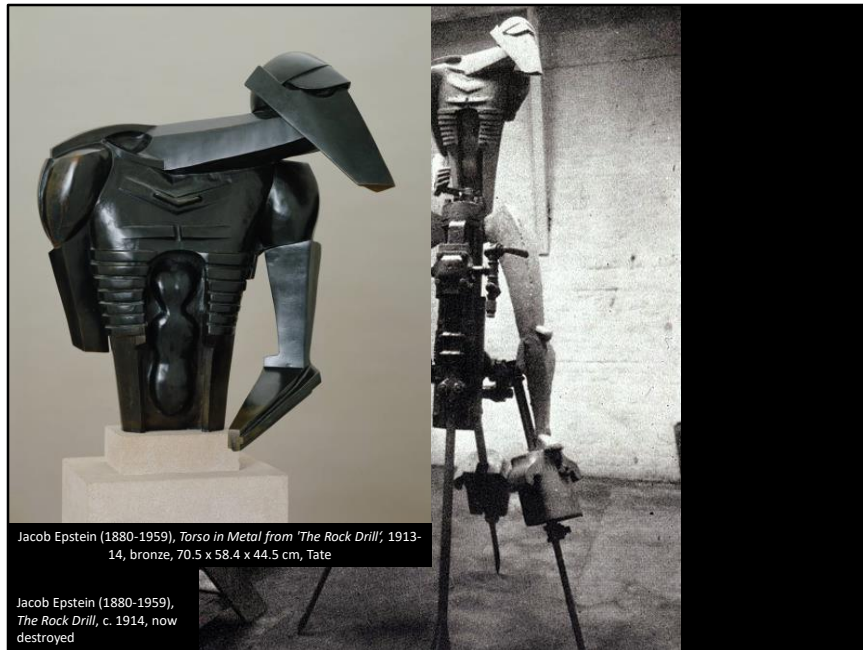
Notes

- **David Bomberg** (1890–1957) was an English painter who was **born in Birmingham** as the seventh of eleven children. He had **Polish-Jewish parents** who moved to Whitechapel when he was a child. Between 1908 and 1910 he **studied under Sickert** and was deeply **influenced by Roger Fry’s 1910 exhibition *Manet and the Post-Impressionists***. He was one of the **‘Whitechapel Boys’**, a term applied much later to a loose group of Anglo-Jewish writers and artists including Mark Gertler. He was **helped by John Singer Sargent** and the **Jewish Education Aid Society** to get into the **Slade**. Bomberg was one of the **most audacious** of the exceptional generation of artists who studied at the Slade School of Art under Henry Tonks. So audacious that he was **expelled from the Slade** after one year because of his radical style despite the fact that he was a brilliant draughtsman.
- He went to France and Italy **with Jacob Epstein and met Modigliani, Derain and Picasso**. On his return he had an acrimonious relationship with the Omega Workshop and worked with Wyndham Lewis and Vorticism. He joined the **London Group in 1914** which had been formed in 1913 from the Camden Town Group and the Fitzroy Street Group. The London Group still exists today. Bomberg combined **Cubism and Futurism** although in the 1920s he changed back to a more figurative style. Between **1945 and 1953 he was a teacher** at Borough Polytechnic and taught Frank Auerbach and Leon Kossof.
- Bomberg painted a series of complex geometric compositions combining the influences of Cubism and Futurism in the years immediately preceding World War I; typically using a limited number of striking colours, turning humans into simple, angular shapes, and sometimes overlaying the whole painting a strong grid-work colouring scheme. He was **expelled from the Slade School of Art in 1913**, with agreement between the senior teachers Tonks, Frederick Brown and Philip Wilson Steer, because of the audacity of his breach from the conventional approach of that time.
- Whether because his **faith in the machine age had been shattered** by his experiences as a private soldier in the trenches or because of **the pervasive retrogressive attitude towards modernism** (the so-called ‘return to order’) in Britain Bomberg **moved to a more figurative style in the 1920s** and his work became increasingly dominated by **portraits and landscapes drawn from nature**.

Gradually developing a more expressionist technique **he travelled widely** through the Middle East and Europe.

References

- Tate website <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/bomberg-in-the-hold-t00913>



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

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

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

appropriate subject matter for public artworks. He also made paintings and drawings, and often exhibited his work.

- The figure is sharp-edged, its limbs square in profile, and its head is a long beak-like armoured visage. The torso has what looks like armoured ribs, and in the abdomen area is an indentation containing an **embryonic form**. The extraordinary thing about this mechanised abstracted human figure is that it sat on top of a **real miner's rock drill**, with the name of its American manufacturer emblazoned on its side. The whole assembled sculpture was **over three metres tall**, giving it an amazing brooding and threatening physical presence. Of course, with the enormous drill jutting out from the figure's loins, it has an **extraordinary phallic power** about it. Writing about the piece in his autobiography Epstein said: "**I made and mounted a machine-like robot, visored, menacing, and carrying within itself its progeny, protectively ensconced.**" (Tate)
- Jacob Epstein (1880-1959) was born and studied as an art student in New York. From the sale of one of his early works he moved to Paris in 1902 to study. He moved to London in 1905 and married the following year. He became a British citizen in 1911 and joined the 'Jewish Legion' but following a breakdown he was discharged in 1918 without having left England. He was well known on the art scene and rejected pretty, decorative art in favour of rough-hewn realism. His often overt sexuality was controversial and in 1908 18 nude sculptures for the British Medical Association building on the Strand (now Zimbabwe House) outraged Edwardian society as well as artists who were shocked by the rejection of the European tradition of Greco-Roman sculptural forms in favour of classical Indian postures and hand gestures.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/context-comment/blogs/story-jacob-epsteins-rock-drill>



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

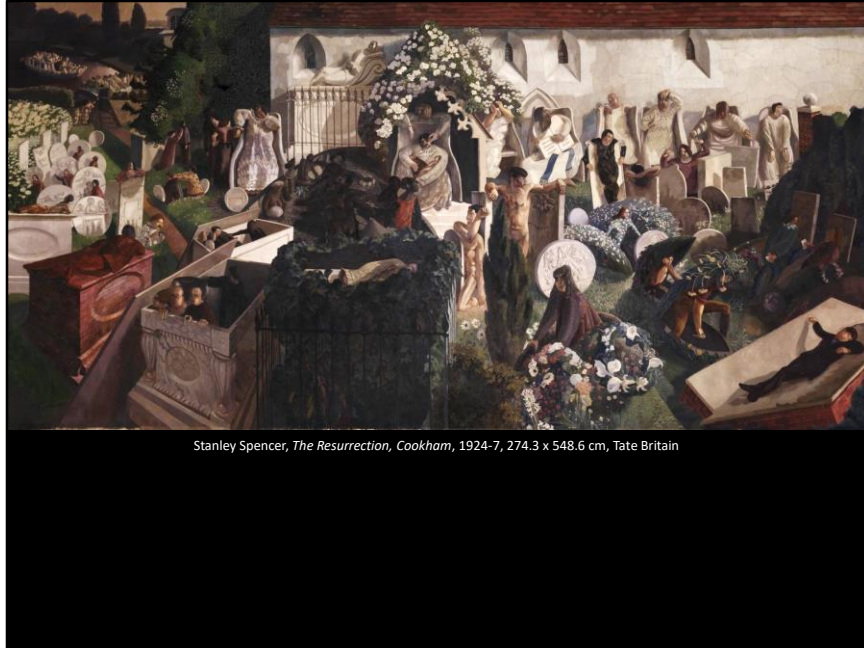
- **Mark Gertler** (1891–1939), born Marks Gertler, was a British painter of figure subjects, portraits and still-life. His early life and his **relationship with Dora Carrington** were the inspiration for Gilbert Cannan's novel *Mendel*. The characters of Loerke in D. H. Lawrence's *Women in Love* and Gombauld in Aldous Huxley's *Crome Yellow* were based on him.
- He came from a **poor Jewish-Polish** family that settled in London. He could **draw from a young age** and enrolled at Regents Street Polytechnic but had to leave because of his family's poverty. He started work at a stained glass company, which he hated, but the following year he came **third in an national art competition** and was awarded a **scholarship from the Jewish Education Aid Society** and enrolled at the **Slade School of Art**.
- At the Slade he met **Dora Carrington** who he pursued for years without success. Carrington spent most of her life living with the homosexual author Lytton Strachey, with whom she was **deeply in love**. Carrington's unconventional relationship with Strachey, of whom Gertler was extremely jealous, and her eventual marriage to Ralph Partridge, destroyed her equally complex relationship with Gertler. He had been so distraught when he learned of Carrington's marriage

that he tried to purchase a revolver, and **threatened to commit suicide**.

- Gertler became acquainted with the Bloomsbury Group through his patron **Lady Ottoline Morrell**. She **introduced him to Walter Sickert**, the nominal **leader of the Camden Town Group**. Gertler became successful as a painter of **society portraits**, but his **temperamental manner** and devotion to advancing his work according to his **own vision** led to increasing personal frustration and the **alienation of potential sitters** and buyers. As a result, he struggled frequently with **poverty**.
- In 1914 the polymath art collector **Edward Marsh became Gertler's patron**. The relationship between the two men proved a difficult one, as Gertler felt that the system of patronage and the circle in which he moved were in direct conflict with his sense of self. In 1916, as World War I dragged on, Gertler ended the relationship due to his **pacifism and conscientious objection** (Marsh was secretary to Winston Churchill and patron to some of the war poets). **Gertler's major painting, *Merry-Go-Round***, was created in the midst of the war years and was described by Lawrence as "**the best modern picture I have seen**" (Letters, 9 October 1916).
- In 1920, Gertler **suffered from tuberculosis** which **killed his friend D.H. Lawrence**. He married in 1930 but they were both ill and he felt constrained. He became a part-time art teacher and **in 1939** he had **financial difficulties**, his **wife had recently left him**, an **exhibition was badly received**, his **mother had died** in 1932, the same year **Carrington committed suicide** and he was filled with **fear over the imminent war** and he **gassed himself in his London studio**. *The Times* described his death as a serious loss to British art and rated him one of the **top half-dozen artists under fifty working in England**.

Notes

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



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

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

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

Father standing behind. Along the wall of the church is a **row of prophets** including **Moses**, with a **dark beard**, holding the tablets of the **Ten**

Commandments. The rest of the churchyard is filled with people resurrecting from their tombs. The **group of black people** emerging from sun-baked soil implies that Spencer's conception embraces the whole of humanity. Spencer made it clear that his Resurrection was a **joyous event** and that the resurrected are already in Heaven: '... in the main they resurrect to such a state of joy that they are content ... to remain where they are.' Even '**the punishment of the Bad**', said Spencer, '**was to be no more than that their coming out of the graves was not so easy** as in the case of the Good'.

- Spencer himself appears near the centre, naked, leaning against a grave stone; his fiancée Hilda lies sleeping in a bed of ivy. At the top left, risen souls are transported to Heaven in the pleasure steamers that then ploughed the Thames.
- Following the Great War it was a time of crisis and self-doubt. All the old certainties of what it means to be British had disappeared. Stanley's younger brother Sidney had been killed on the front but Spencer and his family did not hear any news until he returned to Cookham three months after the event. He found the whole village had changed and he started to paint the old Cookham he remembered as a boy but transformed in a series of Biblical stories. The local brewery hosts the Last Supper and Jesus carries the cross past Spencer's home. The biggest event took place in the village churchyard. He painted *Resurrection* which depicts the moment at the end of days when everyone awakes and travels to Paradise. Everyone is reborn into Stanley's childhood village of Cookham.
- Spencer described the painting as a scene of great happiness. Spencer shows himself in the centre and on the book-like grave on the right and Hilda Carline three times, coming over the stile on the left, pushing a sunflower joyfully against her face and lying on the grave in the centre, Hilda was the love of his life and although Spencer was later seduced by the charms of Patricia Preece he continued to visit and write to her for the rest of his life. Spencer was led on by Patricia but she was a lesbian so he must have been very naïve or seeking the impossible. He divorced Hilda and three days later married Patricia. After the wedding Patricia left for the 'honeymoon' with her partner and Spencer stayed behind with Hilda.
- Spencer stayed in Cookham until 1920 when he **moved to Bourne End**, just over a mile away, to stay with the trade union lawyer Henry Slessor and his wife. He worked on a series of paintings for them before **moving to Steep in Hampshire** where he worked on murals for the village hall. In 1923 he **stayed in Poole**, Dorset, with Henry Lamb (1883-1960, British painter and founder of the Camden Town Group) and worked on another mural scheme. This work convinced the **Behrend's** to commission Spencer to design murals for a chapel at **Burghclere** in memory of Mary Behrend's brother, Lieutenant Henry Willoughby Sandham.
- In **1925**, Spencer **married Hilda Carline**, then a student at the Slade and daughter,

Shirin, was born in November of that year and a second daughter, Unity, in 1930. In October 1923, Spencer started **renting Henry Lamb's studio in Hampstead** where he **began work** on ***The Resurrection, Cookham***.

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/spencer-the-resurrection-cookham-n04239/text-illustrated-companion>



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

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

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

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/nicholson-1935-white-relief-t00049>



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

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

with the hole is larger than the other and they are turned to face each other. They are therefore not strictly in 'echelon' and when the work was first shown it was called *Two Forms (Tulip Wood)*.

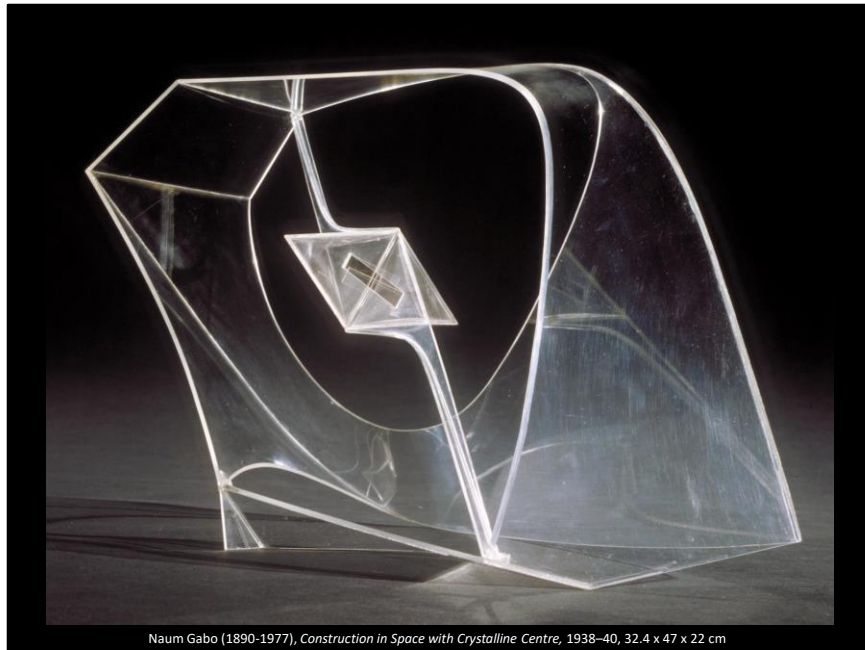
- ***Two Forms in Echelon*** was one of two Hepworths included in *Abstract and Concrete Art* at **Peggy Guggenheim's gallery in 1939**. The threat of war saw the closure of the gallery in June and the relocation of Hepworth and Nicholson to **St Ives**, where they stayed with the writer and painter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

Notes

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

References

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



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

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

Bio:Gabo

- **Sir Naum Gabo** (formerly Neyemiya Borisovich **Pevzner**, 1890?-1977) was born in **south-west Russia** to the owner of a foundry. His **Jewish parents** may have changed his year of birth later to avoid military service. He was a **rebellious youth** and was expelled from two schools. As a teenager he developed a strong commitment to **radical politics** and it was the times of the failed **1905 revolution**. His interest in **art** was **influenced** by his elder brother **Antoine Pevsner**. His

parents wanted him to become a doctor but at Munich University he switched to studying philosophy, civil engineering and art history under Heinrich Wölfflin.

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

thinking about **moving** across the Atlantic, to escape a war which was first imminent and then actual, but he **ultimately stayed in England** until November **1946**. He spent the years of the Second World War in the relatively **peaceful surroundings** of Carbis Bay, Cornwall, in close proximity to Nicholson, Hepworth, the critic Adrian Stokes.

- After the war he **travelled to America** but was **not as successful** as he had hoped but on his **return to England in 1954** he received a commission for an **outdoor sculpture** for a department store in **Rotterdam**. When this was unveiled in 1957 his **fame soared** and during the **last twenty years of his life** he received **prizes and honours** from around the world culminating in the **KBE in 1971**.

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

Photograph of Eileen Agar on a balcony in France 1937 by Joseph Bard 1882-1975

- 'The blindfolded *Angel of Anarchy* is loosely based on an earlier painted plaster head. Agar stated that with this new work she wanted to create something **'totally different, more astonishing, powerful ... more malign'**. It suggests the foreboding and uncertainty that she felt about the future in the late 1930s. Believing that **women are the true surrealists**, Agar wrote: **'the importance of the unconscious in all forms of Literature and Art establishes the dominance of a feminine type of imagination over the classical and more masculine order.'** (Tate display caption)
- **Eileen Forrester Agar** (1899-1991) was a British painter and photographer associated with the Surrealist movement. She was born in **Buenos Aires** to a wealthy **Scottish father** and **American mother**, Agar moved with her family to **London in 1911**. She showed an early aptitude for art and attended the **Slade from 1925 to 26** and then **studied in Paris**. She was a woman of striking beauty and was always surrounded by admirers. She met the Surrealists **André Breton** and **Paul Éluard** with whom she had a friendly relationship. She was a member of the

London Group from 1934 onwards and became a **Royal Academy Associate** in **1990**.

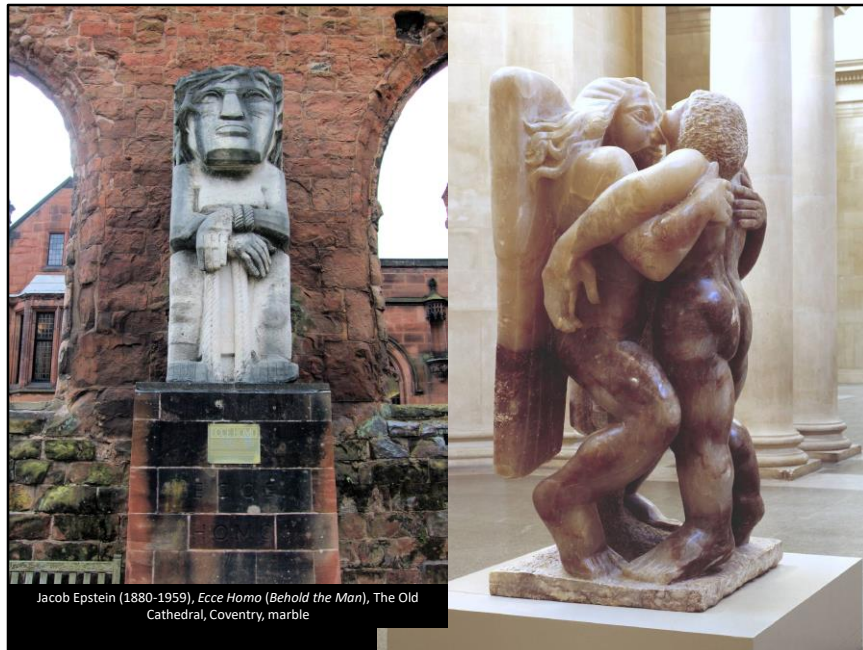
- In the **mid-1930s** Agar and Joseph Bard (1882-1975), a Hungarian writer, began renting a house for the summer at **Swanage in Dorset**. Here she **met Paul Nash** and the two began an **intense relationship**. In 1935 Nash introduced Agar to the concept of the **found object**. Together, they collaborated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

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

Jacob Epstein (1880-1959), *Ecce Homo (Behold the Man)*, The Old Cathedral, Coventry, Subiaco marble

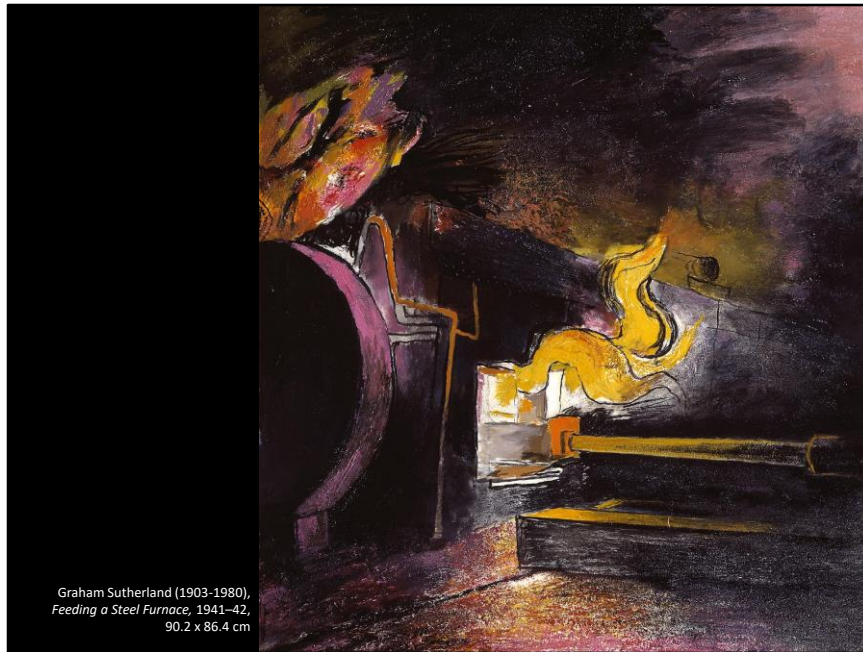
- 'The Old Testament tells how **Jacob tricked his father, Isaac**, into giving him the birthright belonging to Esau, his elder brother. Later, at a crisis in his life, Jacob wrestles through the night with an **unknown assailant**, who restrains him by 'touching on the sinew of his thigh'. Here, **the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

massive bulk of the original block which brings a strength to the two figures. It has been carved using two distinct types of tool that produce the smooth and rough surfaces. There is a natural fault line in the stone from Jacob's left wrist down through to the palm of his hand and across his little finger. It was cleaned in 2000 to restore the soapy translucency and soft matt sheen as opposed to the pre-restoration polished gloss.

- The angel seems to have squeezed the life out of Jacob who has his eyes closed and his head thrown back. This must be in the morning when Jacob collapses as he realises he has spent the night wrestling with God.
- Before he began Epstein **painted a watercolour, *Jacob Wrestling***, which was included in his 1932 exhibition. **Epstein had read and reread Genesis many times** and the story of Jacob has personal significance partly because he has the same name and partly because his art was a continual struggle from which he never gave up.
- Ecce homo ('behold the man') are the Latin words used by Pontius Pilate in John 19:5, when he presents a scourged Christ, bound and crowned with thorns, to a hostile crowd shortly before his Crucifixion. It received a hostile reception although one critic said, 'There was much sentimentality and clap-trap to be cleared away from the idea of religious art...'. It never sold and in 1969 found a site in the ruins of Coventry Cathedral.
- The material is gypsum alabaster (hydrated calcium sulphate) found in the Midlands and the material was part of a major industry in Nottingham in the 14th and 15th centuries when it was used to carve small statues and altarpieces. It is so soft it can be scratched with a fingernail and it is soluble in water and so cannot be used for outdoor work. The purest form is snow white but oxides of iron produce brown clouding and veining. It can be heated in water to remove the translucency and create a material that looks like marble. It can be heated and powdered to create Plaster of Paris. The other type of alabaster is calcite, calcium carbonate, a slightly harder material that fizzes when treated with hydrochloric acid. Marble is a form of calcite.

References

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

- 'Sutherland's **third six-month contract** with the **War Artists Advisory Committee** began on 1 August 1941, at which time he was completing the last of his paintings of bomb damage in London. He continued to be assigned to Supply and Home Security subjects but, with the Blitz over (7 September 1940 –11 May 1941, 8 months, 5 days), was directed towards **industrial production** for his next works; it was noted that he '**already had specific factories in mind**'. Having returned to Kent from a **few days holiday** in Pembrokeshire on 15 September, it was suggested that he might go to **Cardiff to paint steel works for arms production**. He went to the **Guest, Keen and Baldwin Steel Works** near Cardiff later that month and on 29 October the WAAC noted that he was '**now back [from Wales and] ... had secured much promising material**'. (Tate)
- Graham Sutherland (1903-1980) was **born in Streatham, the son of a lawyer**. He trained as an **engineer** and then went to **Goldsmith's College**. He specialised in engraving and was influenced by **Samuel Palmer**. He **did not paint until his 30s** when the **print market collapsed** due to the **Great Depression**. He produced mostly landscapes **influenced by Paul Nash**. He exhibited at the **1936**

International Surrealist Exhibition and **taught** at various colleges and continued with design work. He visited and was inspired by the landscape of **Pembrokeshire**. During **WWII** he became a **war artist** and painted **tin mining** in **Cornwall** and **bomb damage in London**. He had **converted to Catholicism** in 1926 the year before his **marriage** and in the early 1950s was asked to **design a tapestry** for the new **Coventry Cathedral**. After the war he painted landscapes and he continued to paint portraits of which the most famous is of Somerset Maugham and the most notorious of Winston Churchill.

References

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

Matthias Grünewald (c. 1470-1528), *The Mocking of Christ*, 1503-1505, oil on wood, 109 x 74.3 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich

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

Matthias Grünewald (c. 1470-1528), *The Mocking of Christ*, 1503-1505, oil on wood, 109 x 74.3 cm, Alte Pinakothek, Munich

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

Bio:Bacon

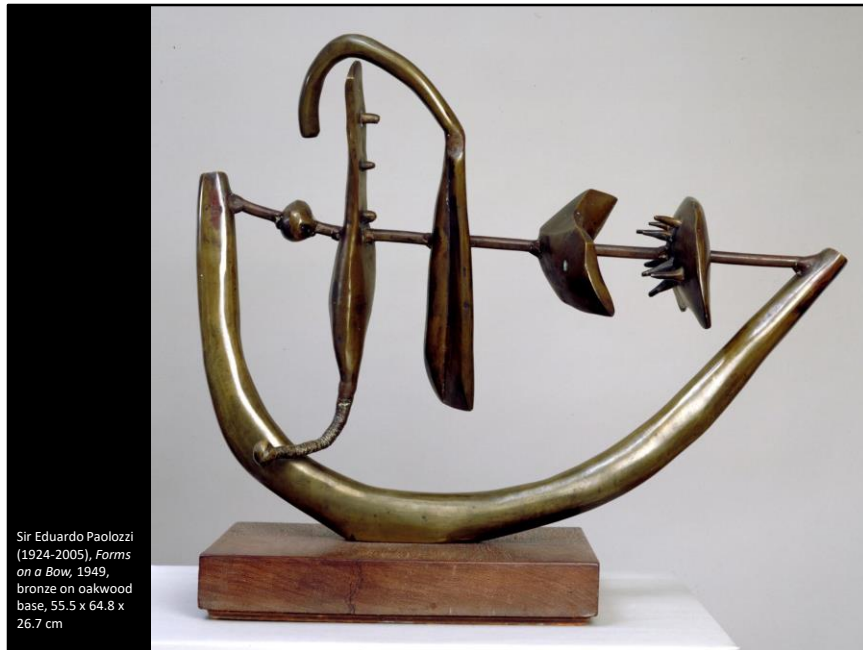
- Francis Bacon (1909–1992) was an Irish-born British figurative painter known for his bold, grotesque, emotionally charged and raw imagery. His painterly abstracted figures are typically isolated in glass or steel geometrical cages, set against flat, nondescript backgrounds. Bacon **took up painting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

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

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

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- <https://www.guggenheim.org/artwork/293>



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

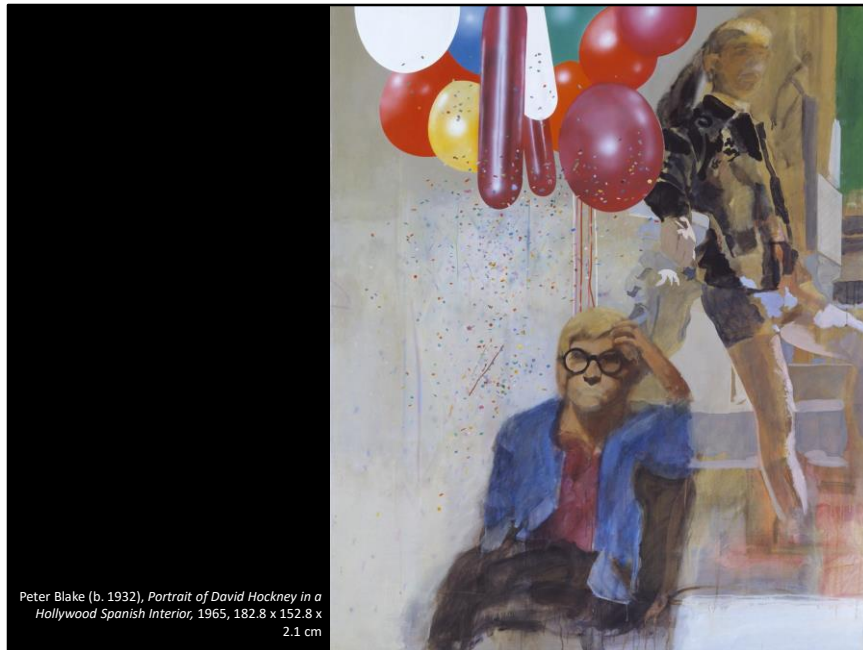
- It was the **beginning of the Cold War** when **nuclear annihilation** raised the spectre of mankind returning to the **Stone Age and the bow and arrow**, one of the **first weapons** made to **kill** more effectively at a **distance** which led eventually to the development of the atomic bomb.
- 'Paolozzi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

Bio:Paolozzi

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

References

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

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

Los Angeles. Blake had first travelled to Los Angeles in 1963.

Bio:Blake

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

Bio:Hockney

David Hockney (b. 1937)

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

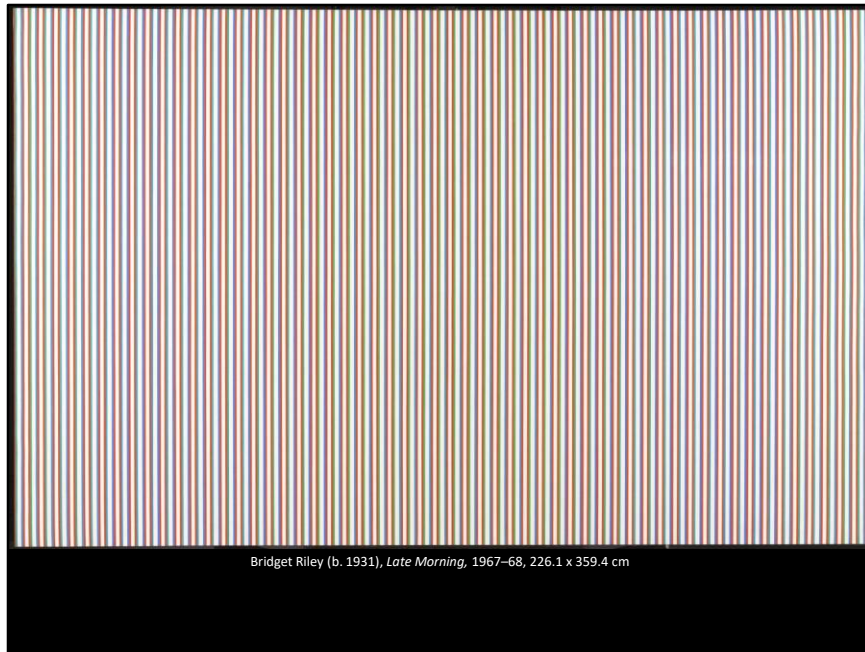
oils to acrylic using smooth, flat and brilliant colours.

- He made prints, took photographs and **stage design work for Glyndebourne, La Scala and the Metropolitan Opera House** in New York.
- From 1968 he painted portraits of friends just under life size. David Hockney, *Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy*, 1970–71, Tate
- In the early 1980s he produced a series of photo collages which he called 'joiners'. First using Polaroid and then 35mm. An early work was a portrait of his mother. As he took photographs from different angles the resulting work is related to Cubism. His aim was to discuss the way human vision works.
- In 1976 he created a portfolio of 20 etchings based on themes in a poem by Wallace Stephens. In 1985 he designed the cover page for *Vogue*.
- In 1985 he used a computer program that enabled him to sketch directly on the screen.
- In the 1990s he returned to Yorkshire every three months to see his mother. Who died in 1999. From 1997 he started to capture the local surroundings, some from memory. By 2005 he was painting *en plein air*. He created large paintings from multiple smaller canvases, 9 or 15 placed together.
- In June 2007, Hockney's largest painting, *Bigger Trees Near Water*, which measures 15 feet by 40 feet, was hung in the Royal Academy's largest gallery in its annual Summer Exhibition. It uses 50 canvases painted over five winter months.
- In October 2006, the National Portrait Gallery in London organized one of the largest ever displays of Hockney's portraiture work, including 150 paintings, drawings, prints, sketchbooks, and photocollages from over five decades.
- Since 2009 he has painted hundreds of portraits of friends using iPad and iPhone *Brushes*.
- In 2011 he visited Yosemite to paint on his iPad.
- From 21 January 2012 to 9 April 2012, the Royal Academy presented *A Bigger Picture*, which included more than 150 works, many of which take entire walls in the gallery's brightly lit rooms. The exhibition was dedicated to landscapes, especially trees and tree tunnels. The exhibition attracted more than half a million visitors, making it one of the Academy's most successful shows ever.
- Notes from a talk by Ray Warburton:
 - *Tea Painting in an Illusionistic Style*, 1961, Hockney painted the series three years before Warhol's Brillo box (first exhibited 1964), but Hockney regarded the style as 'too barren'.
 - Walt Whitman was gay and to hide it he used code which Hockney also uses although Hockney never hides his gayness. For example, substituting initial letters for their place in the alphabet, Cliff Richards becomes 318.
 - Hockney decided to become versatile after seeing Picasso in 1960.
 - He was always a figurative artist which troubled him.
 - *California Art Collectors*, 1964 shows Hockney poking fun at the

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

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

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

Bio:Riley

- **Bridget Louise Riley** (born 24 April 1931 in **Norwood**, London) is an English painter who is one of the **foremost exponents of Op art**. She spent her early years in

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

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

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

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

- 'Jones's provocative *Chair* is one of three 'furniture' works (alongside *Handstand* and *Table*) that show women wearing fetish clothing portrayed as objects. They caused controversy when they were first exhibited and have lost none of their power to provoke anger. Jones produced them at the time the Women's Liberation Movement became prominent and women artists critiqued the 'male gaze' (as in work by Margaret Harrison on display nearby). Jones said in 2014 'The sculptures are trapped in their time but hopefully people are robust enough to see them as playful, and regard them as another way you can look at humanity.'" (Tate display caption)
- The **breakthrough, and the controversy came in 1969** when he produced three female figures, each slightly larger than life size, called '**Hatstand**', '**Table**' and '**Chair**'. They were cast in fibreglass in editions of 6 by Gems Wax Models Ltd of Notting Hill, London, a firm of commercial sculptors who made (and make) **shop window mannequins** and sculptures for waxworks. Stylistically the figures are similar to those in Jones's paintings of c.1967–8. The ICA exhibition of his work **resulted in stink bombs, smoke bombs** being thrown and when '*Chair*' was shown at the Tate in 1986 **paint was poured over it**. In 1970, he received a phone call

from Stanley Kubrick who was making *A Clockwork Orange* and he wanted Jones to design the furniture. Jones refused so Kubrick simply copied Jones's work.

- Jones wrote, "The **erotic impulse** transcends cerebral barriers and demands a **direct emotional response**. Confronted with an abstract statement people readily defer to an expert; but confronted with an erotic statement **everyone is an expert**. It seems to me a **democratic idea** that **art should be accessible to everyone** on some level, and eroticism in one such level. Jones considers that the three sculptures 'Hatstand', 'Table' and 'Chair' are the most radical statements that he has made." Jones, in interviews, claims to be mystified at what all the fuss is about. This implies he has no intention to objectify women or suggest they should really be used as chairs. He says: "**Women are not the object, they are the subject. Sculpture is the object.**" He has created sculptural objects to comment on women's place in society. He has also said, '**I am a feminist**' and '**They are not so much about representing woman but the experience of woman**'. In the context of his other work it is an ironic comment on the way women are treated in our society.
- This was produced at the same time as **second wave feminism**. First wave was female suffrage and second wave a radical call for fundamental social and cultural change so that women would be treated as **equal to men in all circumstances**. This work has always been controversial. At one level it is clearly presenting a **women as a sex object**. However, the **objectification is so blatant** that **Jones could be criticising a society** that treats women in this way.
- "Did second-wave feminists shoot the messenger? Or did he mangle the message? The debate is still open." (Zoe Williams, *The Guardian*)
- Jones wrote, "In a way the feminist critique is a total red herring. It's not what the work is about."
- In 1979, the art historian Lisa Tickner wrote, "The exploitation of already exploitative material cannot be seen as politically neutral."
- More recently, Jones has said, "I think of myself a feminist" and argued that his early work was "commenting on exactly the same situation that was the source of the feminist movement."

Bio:Jones

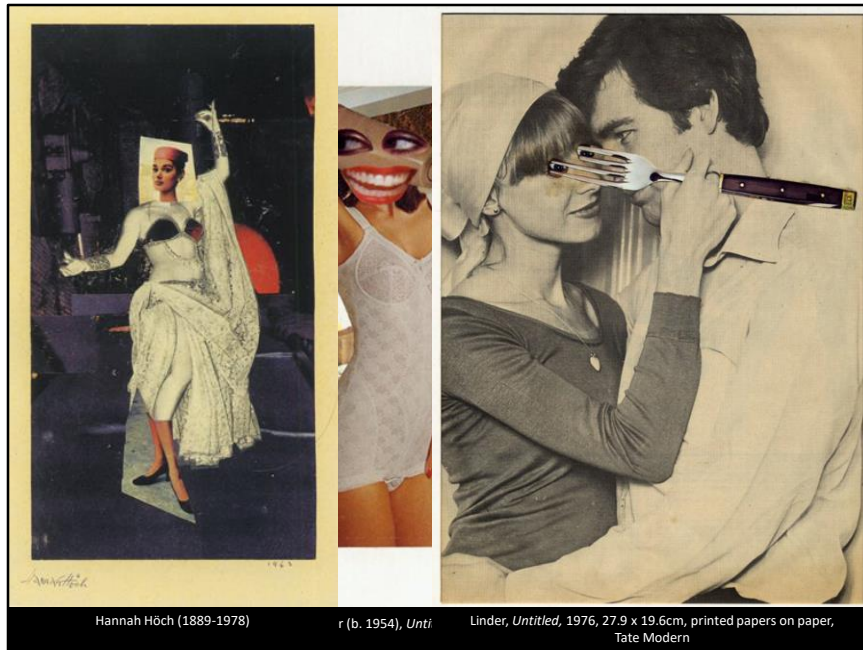
- **Allen Jones** (b. 1937) was born in Southampton and was one of the **original pop artists**. He is now a **Senior Academician**. In an interview in 2014 he said "Abstract Expressionism had swept everything away. You couldn't go back to representing the figure through some moribund visual language".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

His independence resulted in him being **expelled after one year**. He was excited by the ideas of Futurism, the speed and the movement. In 1964-65 he lived in New York and returned a fully-fledged Pop Artist.

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

References

- <http://www.tate.org.uk/art/artworks/jones-chair-t03244>



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

Linder, *Untitled*, 1976, 27.9 x 19.6cm, printed papers on paper, Tate Modern. This is one of a group of *Untitled* photomontages Linder created in 1976-8 from women's fashion magazines.

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

A portable transistor radio appears to be coming out of the double bed.

Bio:Linder

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

References

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



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

- 'Wearing's photographs explore how public and private identities of ordinary people are self-fashioned and documented. In her portraits and self-portraits she blurs the line between reality and fiction. For her series *Album 2003*, Wearing reconstructed **old family snapshots using silicone masks** fabricated with the help of experts from **Madame Tussauds**. By putting a version of someone else's face on hers she is metaphorically '**seizing**' **their identity**. Here Wearing wears a dress her sister wore in the 1980s. The only bits of Wearing that can be seen are her eyes and teeth.' (Tate online caption)
- In 2003-2006, Gillian Wearing recreated **photographs of her relatives** that were found in her family album. She created masks out of silicone of **her mother, her father, her sister, her uncle**, and a mask of herself with help from experts that were trained at Madam Tussauds in London. They start the mask in clay from a two-dimensional image into a three-dimensional object. In an article for *The Guardian* she explains that the **process takes four months per mask**, and how at first 'some people tried to direct me to use prosthetics, but I was adamant it had to be a mask, something that transforms me entirely, something that was not

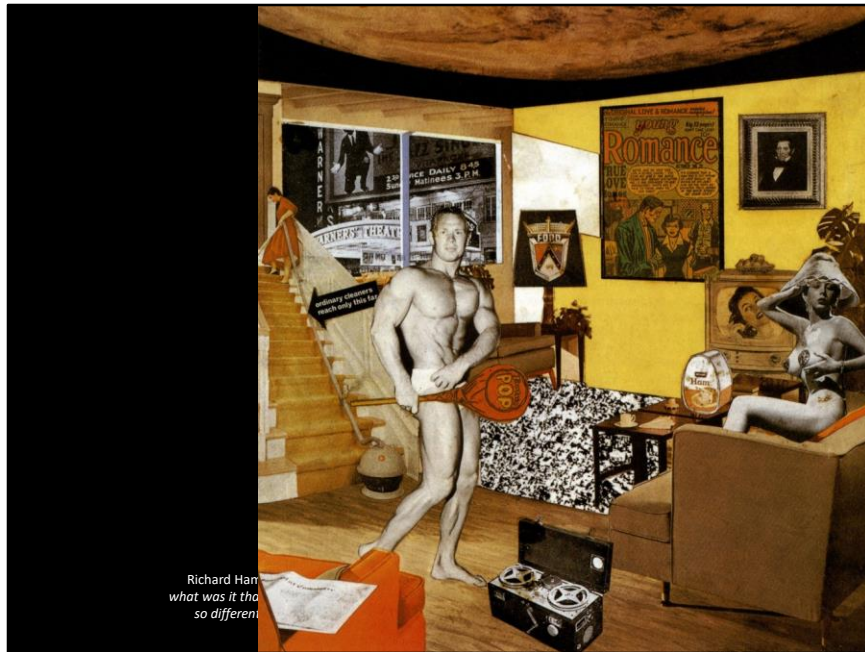
grotesque but real, like a trompe l'oeil.' These **expensive silicone masks deteriorate** easily after use, turning the photo shoot into a **performative act** where the action is unrepeatable. This process becomes paradoxical because of the difficulties that are encountered while recreating these casual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

Bio:Wearing

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

References

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



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

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

- As its title indicates, this print is an upgraded version of an earlier image, already itself a remake. In 1992 Hamilton created an edition of colour facsimiles of the 1956 collage, printed by laserjet, altering the title to reflect on a retrospective view of the past. *Just what was it that made yesterday's homes so different, so appealing?* Having already scanned the 1956 collage, Hamilton then produced the facsimile *Just what was it that made yesterday's homes so different, so appealing?* in an edition of twenty-five plus three artist's proofs of which Tate's copy is the third.
- **Richard Hamilton** was a member of the Independent Group (IG) at the Institute of Contemporary Art (ICA). He thought there should be no split between high and low art and called for the democratisation of taste. Hamilton defined Pop Art with *Just what is it that makes today's homes so different, so appealing?* a collage 10.25 in

(260 mm) × 9.75 in (248 mm), that is now in the collection of the Kunsthalle Tübingen, Germany. It was the first work of pop art to achieve iconic status. Another take on genre painting. John McHale has said his father created this piece but Hamilton has said 'absurd'.

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

Notes

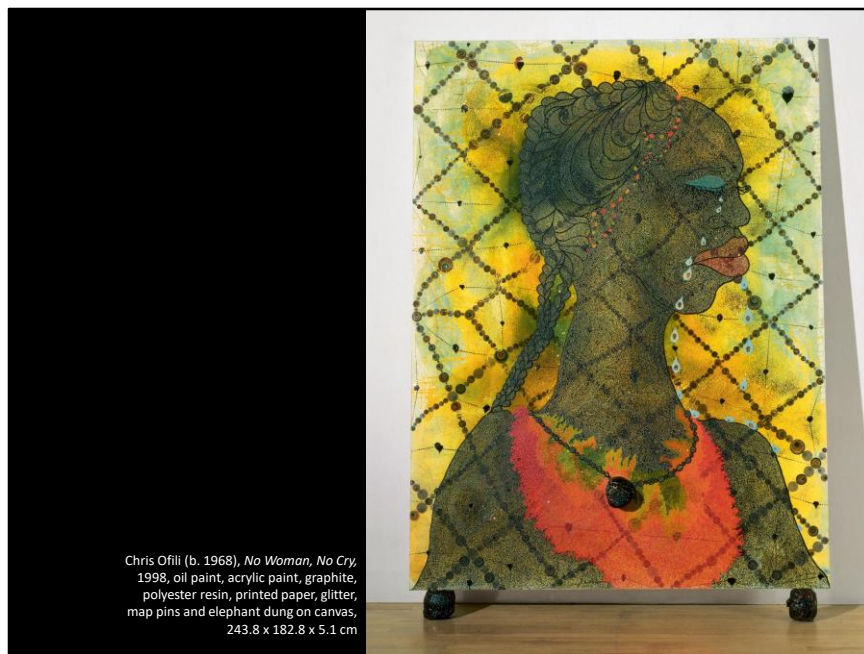
- Hamilton was born in London. He was educated at the Royal Academy Schools from 1938 to 1940, then studied engineering draughtsmanship at a Government Training Centre in 1940, then worked as a 'jig and tool' designer. He returned in 1946 to the Royal Academy Schools, from which he was expelled for 'not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

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- This low resolution image of *Just What Is It that Makes Today's Homes So Different, So Appealing?* is used as it is necessary for an understanding of the lecture to be able to see the artwork. It is believed that this is fair use and does not infringe

copyright.

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



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

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

References

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

ART HISTORY REVEALED

- Exhibitions

1. Mantegna and Bellini, National Gallery 1 October 2018 – 27 January 2019
2. Burne-Jones, Tate Britain, 24 October 2018 – 24 February 2019
3. All Too Human: Bacon, Freud and a century of painting life, Tate Britain, 28 Feb – 27 Aug 2018
4. Aftermath Art in the Wake of World War One, Tate Britain, 5 June – 16 September 2018
5. Lorenzo Lotto Portraits, 5 November 2018 – 10 February 2019
6. Picasso 1932 - Love, Fame, Tragedy, Tate Modern, March 8 to September 9, 2018
7. Gainsborough's Family Album, National Portrait Gallery, 22 November 2018 - 3 February 2019
8. Klimt/Schiele, Drawings from the Albertina Museum, Royal Academy, Nov 2018 – Feb 2019
9. The Great Spectacle: 250 Years of the Summer Exhibition, Royal Academy, June 2018-Aug 2018

- Ideas

1. Etruscan Art
2. How the Art of Photography Developed
3. Painting in the Ancient World
4. A Brief History of English Gothic Cathedrals
5. The Painting Wars: Michelangelo versus Leonardo



One practical problem is that 2019 exhibitions are not announced until later in the year and the content (and the book) is not available until after it has opened. I will therefore aim for half and half with the future exhibitions about the artist or period in general rather than the exhibition.

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Rodin and the art of ancient Greece, British Museum, 26 April – 29 July 2018

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The Painting Wars: Michelangelo versus Leonardo

London Galleries

Wallace

British Museum

Hayward

National Gallery

National Portrait Gallery

White Cube

Serpentine

Tate Britain

Tate Modern

Royal Academy

Estorics

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1. Mantegna and Bellini
2. Burne-Jones
3. Bacon, Freud and a century of painting life
4. Etruscan Art
5. British Art in the Aftermath of World War One
6. Alfred Sisley
7. Lorenzo Lotto
8. Picasso 1932 - Love, Fame, Tragedy
9. How the Art of Photography Developed
10. The Art of Velasquez
11. Gainsborough's Family Album
12. Social Realism and Victorian Charity
13. Painting in the Ancient World
14. Klimt and Schiele
15. Exhibiting British Art
16. A Brief History of English Gothic Cathedrals
17. Propaganda in Tudor Art
18. The Painting Wars: Michelangelo versus Leonardo
19. How the Royal Collection was Mis-sold
20. Vermeer and his World



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