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# English Painting



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*Учебное пособие 'The English Painting' представляет собой введение в курсы живописи и страноведения Великобритании для студентов факультетов иностранных языков, отделений романо-германских языков университетов. Представленное пособие может найти применение у широкого круга читателей, изучающих английский язык, английскую историю и культуру.*

*В пособии рассказывается о становлении английской живописи в XVII веке и ее дальнейшем развитии. Долгое время самостоятельной живописной традиции в Англии не существовало. Перед читателем проходит ряд разнообразнейших явлений английского искусства. На ранних стадиях развития живописи в культуре страны уделялось огромное внимание портрету. Возник особый национальный жанр – conversation pieces. Художники начали постепенно отказываться от гладкой поверхности холста, исследовали богатейшие возможности живописного мазка. С течением десятилетий формировался жанр английского пейзажа, в XVII веке считавшийся совершенно неинтересным, недостойным внимания художника. Первые английские живописцы были еще скованы традициями придворного искусства. Но появился Уильям Хогарт, совершивший подлинную революцию в национальной живописи. А за ним последовала плеяда всемирно известных гениев: это, прежде всего, Джошуа Рейнольдс и Томас Гейнсборо, их ученики, последователи, соперники. Рейнольдс создавал портреты, в которых свет и цвет предвосхищали открытия французских импрессионистов, а Гейнсборо, несмотря ни на что, развивал пейзажную традицию. Благодаря этому чуть позже смогли появиться Джон Констебл и Джозеф Уильям Тёрнер. История английской живописи XVII–XIX веков – это увлекательная повесть о том, как изобразительное искусство в Англии обрело независимость и самодостаточность, уходило от диктата и вкуса заказчиков. Классицизм сменялся романтизмом, норма и долг – свободой и чувством, а портрет – пейзажем. А старая, добрая Англия становилась страной, давшей миру плеяду неповторимых живописцев.*

*Предлагая информацию о живописи Великобритании, данное пособие способствует формированию коммуникативной компетенции и культурной грамотности изучающих английский язык.*

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## INTRODUCTION



**English art** is the body of visual arts made in England. Art of the United Kingdom covers the period from 1707 to today. Although medieval English painting, mostly religious, had a strong national tradition and was at times influential on the rest of Europe, it was in decline from the 15th century. The Protestant Reformation, which was especially destructive of art in England, not only brought the tradition to an abrupt stop but resulted in the destruction of almost all wall-paintings. Only illuminated manuscripts now survive in good numbers.

The book will offer you a survey of English painting from the Middle Ages to the present; in examining the paintings of the various periods, we will also be studying the history of these epochs, though that will not be the main focus. We will study the work of the Elizabethan miniaturists, the portrait artists of the 17th century, the paintings of William Blake, the engravings of Hogarth, the classical portrait painters Gainsborough and Reynolds, the romantic landscape artist, Constable, and the forerunner of Impressionism, Turner, the pre-Raphaelite school, and the main painters and sculptors of the 20th century.

The artists' work will be discussed in its historical and social context.



## ***Topical Vocabulary***

### **Painters and their craft:**

<b>a fashionable artist</b>	<i>a popular at a particular time person who professes and practices an imaginative art</i>
<b>self-taught artist</b>	<i>a person who professes and practices an imaginative art learned by oneself</i>
<b>mature artist</b>	<i>a person who practices an imaginative art having completed natural growth and development</i>
<b>a portrait/landscape painter</b>	<i>a person who practices or specializes in portraiture/landscape painting</i>
<b>to paint from nature/ memory</b>	<i>to practice the art of painting from natural scenery/ storing image/fantasy</i>
<b>to paint mythological/ historical subjects</b>	<i>to practice the art of painting subjects relating to mythology or myths relating to, or having the character of history</i>
<b>to specialize in portraiture/ still life</b>	<i>to concentrate one's efforts in making of portraits pictures consisting predominantly of inanimate objects</i>
<b>to portray people/ emotions with moving sincerity/ with restraint</b>	<i>to make a picture of persons states of feelings with the touching quality or state of being sincere a control over feelings</i>
<b>to depict a person/</b>	<i>to paint a human</i>

**a scene of common life/**

*a situation of living community*

**the mood of...**

*attitude of...*

**to render/interpret the personality of...**

*to reproduce or represent distinctive characteristics of smth. by artistic means*

**to reveal the person's nature**

*to open up to view traits of person*

**to capture the sitter's vitality/transient expression**

*to represent the peculiarity distinguishing the living of a person who sits for a portrait*

**to develop one's own style of painting**

*to create or produce one's own distinctive manner of expression of the art*

**to conform to the taste of the period**

*to be identical to preference of a portion of time*

**to break with the tradition**

*to disturb customs*

**to be in advance of one's time**

*to be ahead of one's period*

**to expose the dark sides of life**

*to make known the dark sides life*

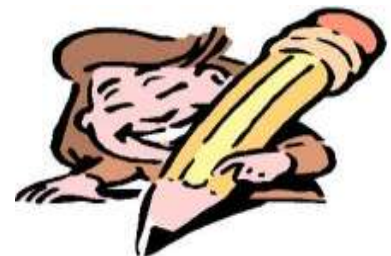
**to become famous overnight**

*to come to be outstanding very quickly or suddenly*

**to die forgotten and penniless**

*to pass from life without receiving attention and destitute of money*

**Painting. Genres:**



**an oil painting**

*the art or process of painting with oil paints*

**a canvas**

*the window in which the picture is created or edited. It is the on-screen counterpart of the cloth canvas used by an artist*

<b>a water-color</b>	<i>a painting produced with watercolors</i>
<b>pastel picture</b>	<i>the art or process of drawing with pastels</i>
<b>a sketch/ study</b>	<i>hasty or undetailed drawing or painting often made as a preliminary study</i>
<b>a family group/</b>	<i>a portrait which represents a family/</i>
<b>ceremonial/</b>	<i>a formal portrait performed on a special occasion/</i>
<b>intimate portrait</b>	<i>a portrait focusing on a one person</i>
<b>a self- portrait</b>	<i>a representation of an artist, drawn, painted by the artist</i>
<b>a shoulder-length/</b>	<i>a portrait which represent a person up to the shoulders/</i>
<b>half-length/</b>	<i>a waist high portrait</i>
<b>knee-length/</b>	<i>a portrait which represents a person up to the knees/</i>
<b>full-length portrait</b>	<i>a whole length portrait</i>
<b>life-size portrait</b>	<i>a portrait representing the full height of the human figure</i>
<b>a landscape</b>	<i>depicts scenery such as mountains, valleys, trees, rivers, and forests. Sky is almost always included in the view, and weather usually is an element of the composition</i>
<b>a seascape</b>	<i>a painting which depicts the sea</i>
<b>a genre/ historical painting</b>	<i>the painting of scenes with narrative content from classical history, Christian history, and mythology, as well as depicting the historical events of the near past</i>
<b>a battle piece</b>	<i>a work of art depicting battles</i>

**a masterpiece**

*an outstanding work of art*

**a flower piece**

*a picture of flowers*

**a still life**

*a work of art depicting inanimate subject matter, typically commonplace objects which may be either natural (food, plants and natural substances like rocks) or man-made (drinking glasses, cigarettes, pipes, hotdogs and so on) in an artificial setting*



### **Composition and drawing:**

**in the foreground/**

*the part of an image nearest to the observer*

**background**

*part of a scene that forms a setting for the main figures or events*

**in the top/**

*the highest part of the painting*

**bottom/**

*the lowest part*

**left-hand corner**

*situated on the left*

**to arrange symmetrically/**

*showing symmetry, i.e. : correspondence in size, shape, and relative position of parts on opposite sides about a center*

**asymmetrically/**

*lacking symmetry*

**in a pyramid/**

*built on a broad supporting base and narrowing gradually to an apex*

**in a vertical format**

*perpendicular to the plane of the horizon*

**to divide the picture space diagonally**

*denoting a straight line joining opposite corners of a figure*

**to define the nearer figures**

*to outline more clearly/ more sharply*

<b>to emphasize contours purposely</b>	<i>give special importance or prominence to an outline deliberately</i>
<b>to be scarcely discernible</b>	<i>almost not detected with the eyes</i>
<b>to convey a sense of space</b>	<i>to impart the feeling of the dimensions of height, depth, and width</i>
<b>to place the figures against the landscape background</b>	<i>to put an artistic representation of a human or animal form before the background of natural inland scenery</i>
<b>to merge into a single entity</b>	<i>to become combined into separate or self-contained existence</i>
<b>to blend with the landscape</b>	<i>to combine into an integrated whole or to produce a harmonious effect with natural inland scenery</i>
<b>to indicate the sitter's profession</b>	<i>to demonstrate a principal calling, vocation, or employment of a person who sits for a portrait</i>
<b>to be represented standing.../</b>	<i>to be portrayed in an upright position</i>
<b>sitting.../</b>	<i>in a single occasion of continuous sitting</i>
<b>talking.../</b>	<i>in a process of speech</i>
<b>to be posed/</b>	<i>to be placed</i>
<b>silhouetted against an open sky/</b>	<i>standing out against an open sky/</i>
<b>a classic pillar/the snow</b>	<i>a tall vertical structure used as a support for a building or as an ornament/ a usually white crystalline substance that condenses from a fluid phase as snow does</i>
<b>to accentuate smth</b>	<i>to make more noticeable or prominent</i>



## Colouring. Light and Shade Effects:



**subtle colouring**

*not easy to notice or understand colouring unless you pay careful attention*

**gaudy coloring**

*too bright and look cheap colouring - used to show disapproval*

**to combine form and colour into harmonious unity**

*to make the structure and colour of the picture look good and work well together*

**brilliant colour scheme**

*the successful combination of colours that someone chooses for painting*

**low-keyed colour scheme**

*not intended to attract a lot of attention combination of colours that someone chooses for painting*

**the colour scheme where ...predominate**

*the combination of colours that someone chooses for painting where smth has the most importance or is most easily noticed*

**muted in colour**

*soft and gentle, not bright in colour*

**the colours may be:**

**cool**

*a cool colour is one, such as blue or green, that makes you think of cool things*

**restful**

*peaceful and quiet colour, making you feel relaxed*

**hot**

*hot colours make you feel excited*

**agitated**

*colour that make you nervous or upset that you are unable to keep still or think calmly*

**soft**

*soft colours or lights are pleasant and relaxing because they are not too bright*

<b>delicate</b>	<i>colour that is delicate is pleasant and not strong</i>
<b>oppressive</b>	<i>powerful colours making you unhappy, worried, or uncomfortable</i>
<b>dull</b>	<i>not bright or shiny</i>
<b>harsh</b>	<i>unpleasantly bright</i>
<b>the delicacy of tones may be lost in a reproduction</b>	<i>the stylish and skillful chosen types of a particular colour may stop having their qualities in the picture</i>

**Impression. Judgement:**



<b>the picture may be:</b>	<i>stirring deeply in a way that evokes a strong emotional response</i>
<b>moving</b>	<i>expressing the writer's emotions in an imaginative and beautiful way</i>
<b>lyrical</b>	<i>marked by the imaginative or emotional appeal of what is heroic, adventurous, remote, mysterious, or idealized</i>
<b>romantic</b>	<i>composed firsthand, unique or eccentric</i>
<b>original</b>	<i>having or expressing the qualities of poetry (as though aesthetic or emotional impact) \ approving very beautiful or expressing emotion</i>
<b>poetic in tone and atmosphere</b>	<i>marked by flawless craftsmanship or by beautiful, ingenious, delicate, or elaborate execution</i>
<b>an exquisite piece of painting</b>	<i>better or greater than any other</i>
<b>an unsurpassed master piece</b>	

**distinguished by a marvelous sense of colour and composition**

*marked by eminence, distinction, or excellence of colour and the artistic arrangement of the parts of a picture*

**dull**

*low in saturation and low in lightness*

**crude**

*marked by the primitive, gross, or elemental or by uncultivated simplicity or vulgarity*

**chaotic**

*in the state of disorder and confusion*

**a colourless daub of paint**

*lacking color and applying coloring material crudely*

**obscure**

*shrouded in or hidden by darkness*

**unintelligible**

*impossible to understand*

**gaudy**

*marked by extravagance or sometimes tasteless showiness*

**depressing**

*making you feel unhappy and doesn't bring you positive emotions*

**disappointing**

*defiant or provocative*

**cheap**

*of poor quality*

**vulgar**

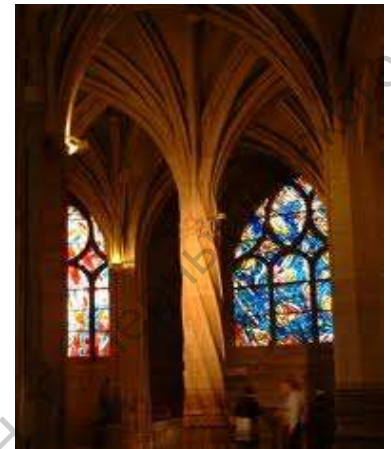
*lacking in cultivation, perception, or taste; morally crude, undeveloped, or unregenerate*



## *The English Painting*

It is usual to regard English painting as beginning with the Tudor period, the 16<sup>th</sup> century, and for this there are several reasons.

Yet, the fact remains that painting was practiced in England for many hundreds of years before the first Tudor came to the throne. Already the Bayeux Tapestry of 1080, probably produced in England and closely related to Anglo-Saxon models, shows its narrative character and the keen eye for detail, which Hogarth was later to employ. The Tapestry tells the story of the Norman Conquest, the preparations made for the invasion of England, the building of ships, the embarkation and disembarkation, scenes depicting the subjugation of the country, the accurate delineation of armour. The Tapestry is of great interest to specialists in history and art. It may be looked upon as a picture of society as well as an account of the conquest.



The English style of Gothic painting is known for a delicacy of line and a graceful elongation of the figure in which line plays an expressive part, in this style significance is concentrated on outline rather than the plastic or dimensional substance of the figure (13-14cc). The remarkable series of Psalters of the 13-14<sup>th</sup> centuries introduce scenes of agricultural work, sports and pastimes, fascinating pictures of ploughing, sowing, reaping, wrestlers, players on musical instruments, bear-baiting, and animals fancifully portrayed in human dress or occupation. That may be considered the source of the English aptitude for genre.

Medieval painting was not national in the modern sense, and often enough there is no telling whether it was the work of a native or foreign artist even when produced in England. The Wilton Diptych, showing Richard II presented to the Virgin and Child by two Patron Saints. The subject is English, the conception – French. The National Gallery (see the picture) Catalogue ascribes it to “French School”, but it might have been an English painter trained in the French style.



The 15<sup>th</sup> century was one of medieval decline. English painting came to a halt at a time when painting in Italy was invested with the full splendour of the Renaissance.



Portraiture existed in the Middle Ages, especially in the form of royal iconography (i.e. the portrait of Richard II in Westminster Abbey). (see the picture)

Yet the 16<sup>th</sup> century was the age of Humanism which had created a new interest in the individual personality that the medieval icon did not satisfy. In England when the monasteries, the local centres of culture, were dissolved, religious painting, as it had been practiced in the Middle Ages, disappeared. The break was so complete that painting before and after seem entirely different things, in subject, style and medium. The habit grew up of using foreign painters instead of the old, international interchange of artists and craftsmen.



It does not mean that English patrons were connoisseurs of art and delighted in beauty. They wanted an accurate likeness and the ability to do the details of their dress and accessories. The portrait of Henry VIII by Hans Holbein the Younger records all

the desired facts though it adds the stamp of character which only a great artist could give. (see the picture)

The German master came to England at the age of 29. Hans Holbein the Younger had a broad artistic culture, he made portraits, religious compositions, mural paintings and knew the arts of design. He spent some thirteen years in England in all. During the last years in England he was official court painter to Henry VIII. From Henry VIII he received a fixed stipend for working on state paintings, including the portraits of foreign ladies whom the much-wedded king



thought of marrying. Among these were Christine of Denmark and Anne of Cleves. Other jobs were the many portraits of the king himself, his son Edward VI (see the picture), the other wives and members of the court. The court figures were treated in terms of their splendid costumes rather than in their possible dignity. The artist is the non-interpreting camera eye and his approach to the sitter is uncritical. In the Portrait of Sir

Thomas More he is somewhat more personal in quality; here the psychological factor is greater than with many other court figures. The portraits made by Hans Holbein the Younger show that at that time the artistic influences that had come from Italy had changed from the High Renaissance style to the artificial, formal, precise and strained manner of the courts. The human figure is treated as a linear two-dimensional object, part of a carefully arranged flat design rather than a rounded form. This style was called Mannerism. Hans Holbein's influence on English painting was exerted through the individual portrait and the influence was considerable.



Peter Paul Rubens was the most exciting and influential artist of the 17<sup>th</sup> century Baroque painting, and the most popular as well. During his diplomatic journeys, Rubens visited Madrid and London where he

decorated the great ceiling of the Banqueting Hall in Whitehall Palace for King Charles I.

Another great Flemish painter Van Dyck came to England when he was at the height of his ability. His name remains a symbol for noble aristocratism and not only in portraiture. Courtly grace and ease, the expressive pose of hands, a certain aloof dignity, decorative splendour, the portrait group remained characteristic of English portraiture for more than a century.



Working in England off and on for eleven years, he married an English lady, was knighted and became Sir Anthony Van Dyck. Van Dyck painted many portraits of Charles I, the queen, numerous courtiers. The works of Van Dyck of the English period are important not only as genuine pieces of art but as historical documents. The sitters were the most outstanding men of the pre-revolutionary England who during the years of the revolution found the selves on the opposite sides of the events. Van Dyck landscape sketches preserved in the British Museum, give the feeling of English country in a way to be found only in Constable's time.

Van Dyck was the source of inspiration to English portraiture, both in groups and single portraits. His portraits are a classic example of the grace, refinement of detail and colour. But Van Dyck introduced another new quality in painting. The eyes of the model. In many pictures of old masters you can see personages looking at you but not actually seeing you. The eyes of Van Dyck's personages look at you and see you.

In portraiture Van Dyck had an heir in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Thomas Gainsborough.

### **Suggested Vocabulary**

- ◆ the Tudor period; Tudor-pertaining to the Welsh family of Tudor, the time when it held the English throne (1485-1603), or the style of architecture



(Late Perpendicular) that prevailed then;

- ◆ tapestry – an ornamental textile used for the covering of walls and furniture, and for curtains, made by passing coloured threads among fixed warp threads;
- ◆ narrative character;
- ◆ to employ smth.;
- ◆ a picture of society;
- ◆ Gothic painting; Gothic – a style in architecture with high-pointed arches, clustered columns, etc.;
- ◆ a delicacy of outline;
- ◆ a scene of;
- ◆ to be portrayed (in human dress and occupation);
- ◆ genre;
- ◆ medieval painting;
- ◆ a diptych – a pair of pictures as folding tablets;
- ◆ a subject;
- ◆ the Renaissance – the revival of arts and letters, the transition from the Middle Ages to the modern world;
- ◆ portraiture;
- ◆ iconography – representation of portraits;
- ◆ to create a new interest in;
- ◆ religious painting;
- ◆ a connoisseur of art – a well-informed judge in the arts;
- ◆ an accurate likeness;
- ◆ to record smth.;
- ◆ to add the stamp of character;
- ◆ mural paintings; mural painting – a painting executed, esp. in distemper colours, upon the wall of a building;





- ◆ a sitter;
- ◆ to be treated as a linear two-dimensional object;
- ◆ mannerism – a late 16<sup>th</sup> century art style characterized by distortion, esp. of the human figure, bright harsh colours, etc.;
- ◆ baroque – a bold, vigorous, exuberant style in architecture, decoration, and art generally, that arose with the Counter\*Reformation and prevailed in Louis XIV's time, degenerating into tasteless extravagance in ornament;
- ◆ to be at the height of one's ability;
- ◆ a portrait group;
- ◆ landscape sketches;
- ◆ to give the feeling of;
- ◆ a source of inspiration;
- ◆ refinement;



### Comprehension Questions



1. When was painting first practiced in England?
2. What are the characteristic features of the Bayeux Tapestry? What techniques did Hogarth employ in his narrative pictures?
3. What scenes does the Bayeux Tapestry depict?
4. Why is the Tapestry of special interest to experts in history and art?
5. What is the English style of Gothic painting characterized by?
6. What are the 13-14<sup>th</sup> century Psalters remarkable for?
7. Why do you think these Psalters are considered the source of the English aptitude for genre painting?
8. Why was medieval painting not national in the modern sense?
9. When did English painting come to a halt?
10. In what form did portraiture exist in the Middle Ages?
11. What is the age of Humanism characterized by?
12. What habit grew up in the 16<sup>th</sup> century?

13. What did the English patrons require of their court painters?
14. When did Hans Holbein the Younger come to England?
15. In what genres did he work? How are the court figures treated in his portraits?  
Why was his approach to his sitters uncritical? What do the portraits produced by Hans Holbein show?
16. How was the human figure treated?
17. In what way was Hans Holbein's influence on English painting exerted?
18. Why is the name of the great Flemish painter Van Dyck associated with English painting? Was his influence on English portraiture considerable? What features are characteristic of Van Dyck's portraits?
19. Why are the works of Van Dyck of the English period important as historical documents?
20. What new quality did Van Dyck introduce in painting?



## *A Brief Outline of English Art*

**English art** is the body of visual arts made in England. Art of the United Kingdom covers the period from 1707 to today. Following historical surveys such as *Creative Art In England* by William Johnstone (1936 and 1950), Nikolaus Pevsner attempted a definition in his 1956 book *The Englishness of English Art*, as did Sir Roy Strong in his 2000 book *The Spirit of Britain: A narrative history of the arts*, and Peter Ackroyd in his 2002 book *The Origins of the English Imagination*.



Although medieval English painting, mostly religious, had a strong national tradition and was at times influential on the rest of Europe, it was in decline from the 15th century. The Protestant Reformation, which was especially destructive of art in England, not only brought the tradition to an abrupt stop but resulted in the destruction of almost all wall-paintings. Only illuminated manuscripts now survive in good numbers.

### *Earliest art*

The oldest art in England can be dated to the Neolithic period, including the large ritual landscapes such as Stonehenge from c. 2600 BC. From around 2150 BC, the Beaker people learned how to make bronze, and use both tin and gold. They became skilled in metal refining and works of art placed in graves or sacrificial pits have survived. In the Iron Age, a new art style arrived



as Celtic culture spread across the British isles. Though metalwork, especially gold ornaments, was still important, stone and most likely wood was also used. This style continued into the Roman period, beginning in the 1st century BC, and would

find a renaissance in the Medieval period. The arrival of the Romans brought the Classical style of which many monuments have survived, especially funerary monuments, statues and busts. They also brought glasswork and mosaics. In the 4th century, a new element was introduced as the first Christian art was made in Britain. Several mosaics with Christian symbols and pictures have been preserved. The style of Romano-British art follows that of the continent, there are some local specialties, influenced by Celtic art; the Staffordshire Moorlands Pan is one example.

### *Medieval*

After Roman rule, the Anglo-Saxons brought Germanic traditions, seen in the metalwork of Sutton Hoo. Anglo-Saxon sculpture was outstanding for its time, at least in the small works in ivory or bone that are almost all that have survived. Especially in Northumbria, the Insular art style shared across the British Isles produced much of the finest work being produced in Europe until the Viking raids and invasions largely suppressed the movement; the Book of Lindisfarne is one example



certainly produced in Northumbria. The carved stone high crosses, such as the Ruthwell Cross, were a distinctive Insular form, probably related to the Pictish stones of Scotland. Anglo-Saxon art developed a very sophisticated variety of contemporary Continental styles, seen especially in metalwork and illuminated manuscripts such as the Benedictional of St. Æthelwold. Effectively none of the large scale paintings and sculptures that we know existed have survived. By the first half of the 11th century, English art was being lavishly patronized by the wealthy Anglo-Saxon elite, who valued above all works in precious metals, but the Norman Conquest in 1066 brought a sudden halt to this art boom, and instead works were melted down or removed to Normandy. After a pause of some decades,

manuscript painting in England soon became again the equal of any in Europe, in Romanesque works like the Winchester Bible and the St Albans Psalter, and then early Gothic ones like the Tickhill Psalter. English illumination fell away in the final phase of the Gothic period as elite patrons began instead to commission works from Paris or Flanders. Some of the extremely rare survivals of English medieval panel paintings, like the Westminster Retable and Wilton Diptych (the artist's nationality here is uncertain) are of the highest quality. Another art form introduced through the church was stained glass, which was also adopted for secular uses. There was a considerable industry producing Nottingham alabaster reliefs for mid-market altarpieces and small statues, which were exported across Northern Europe.

### ***Sixteenth and Seventeenth centuries***

The artists of the Tudor court in the Renaissance and their successors until the early 18th century were mostly imported talents, often from Flanders. These included Hans Holbein the Younger, Van Dyck, Rubens, Orazio Gentileschi and his daughter Artemesia, Sir Peter Lely and Sir Godfrey Kneller. An exception must be made for the portrait miniature, where a strong English tradition began with the Elizabethan Nicholas Hilliard, who had learnt from Continental artists, and continued with Isaac Oliver and many other artists. By the following century a number of significant English painters of full-size portraits began to emerge, and towards the end of the century the other great English specialism, of landscape painting, also began to be practiced by natives. Both were heavily influenced by Anthony Van Dyck in particular, although he does not seem to have trained any English painters himself, he was a powerful influence in promoting the baroque style. One of the most important native painters of this period was William Dobson. During the 17th century the English nobility also became important collectors of European art, led by King Charles I and Thomas Howard, 21st Earl of

Arundel in the first half of the century. By the end of the century the Grand Tour had become established for wealthy young Englishmen.

### *18th and 19th centuries*

In the 18th century, English painting finally developed a distinct style and tradition again, still concentrating on portraits and landscapes, but also attempting, without much success, to find an approach to history painting, regarded as the highest of the hierarchy of genres. Sir James Thornhill's paintings were executed in the Baroque style of the European Continent and William Hogarth reflected the new English middle-class temperament — English in habits, disposition, and temperament, as well as by birth. His satirical works, full of black humour, point out to contemporary society the deformities, weaknesses and vices of London life.

Portraits were, as elsewhere in Europe, much the most easiest and most profitable way for an artist to make a living, and the English tradition continued to draw of the relaxed elegance of the portrait style developed in England by Van Dyck, although there was little actual transmission from his work via his workshop. Leading portraitists were Thomas Gainsborough; Sir Joshua Reynolds, founder of the Royal Academy of Arts; George Romney; and Sir Thomas Lawrence. Joseph Wright of Derby was well known for his candlelight pictures, George Stubbs for his animal paintings. By the end of the century, the English swagger portrait was much admired abroad, and had largely ceased to look for inspiration abroad.

The early 19th century also saw the emergence of the Norwich school of painters. Influenced by Dutch landscape painting and the landscape of Norfolk, the Norwich School were the first provincial art-movement outside of London. Short-lived due to sparse patronage and internal faction prominent members include 'founding father' John Crome, John Sell Cotman notable for his water-colours in particular and the promising but short-lived maritime painter Joseph Stannard.

Paul Sandby was called the father of English watercolour painting. Other notable 18th and 19th-century landscape painters include Richard Wilson (born in Wales); George Morland; John Robert Cozens; Thomas Girtin; John Constable; J. M. W. Turner; and John Linnell.



The Pre-Raphaelite movement, established in the 1840s, dominated English art in the second half of the 19th century. Its members — William Holman Hunt; Dante Gabriel Rossetti; John Everett Millais and others — concentrated on religious, literary, and genre works executed in a colorful and minutely detailed almost photographic style.

### *Themes*

Its earliest known developed form, one that continues to the present-day, is arguably the decorative surface pattern work exemplified by the Lindisfarne Gospels and the exterior carving of Anglo-Saxon churches and monuments. Ackroyd argues that the concern for a light and delicate outline, for surface pattern for its own sake, and for patterns and borders that threaten to overwhelm the portrayal of figures, have all been long-standing characteristics of a continuous English art. Other elements Ackroyd sees as inherited from the early Celtic church are a concern to portray the essence of animals, a tendency to understatement, and a concern for repeating structures that extends from Celtic knot work to church organ music to Staffordshire ceramic-ware to stained glass windows and to the wallpapers of William Morris. Strong agrees with Ackroyd on all these points.

English anti-intellectualism has led them to easily mingle fiction with observed facts, in order to invent 'traditions', but this has often given fresh life to traditions that would otherwise have gone stale. Pevsner noted, in the context of a consummate arts professionalism, a detachment and self-effacement among artists

that often led them to belittle the act of creation, and to be willing to give away their ideas to be re-used by other artists.

### ***Royal Collection***

Relatively few pieces survive from before the 16th century, partly because of fires such as that which destroyed Whitehall Palace in 1698. Charles I of England built up a great royal collection of art. This was mostly sold by the English Commonwealth, but Charles II was able to recover much of it, by judicious pressure on English purchasers, although many of the finest works had been sold abroad and were lost. There were later major additions by George III, Queen Victoria and others, so that today the Royal Collection is one of the largest in the world, despite many gifts to museums. Much of it is on display in Windsor Castle, Buckingham Palace, Hampton Court Palace and other sites. The Queen's Gallery attached to Buckingham Palace and the Queen's Gallery, Edinburgh host temporary exhibitions from the collection.

### ***Landscapes***

In the popular imagination English landscape painting from the 18th century onwards typifies English art, inspired largely from the love of the pastoral and mirroring as it does the development of larger country houses set in a pastoral rural landscape. It was developed initially by Dutch and Flemish artists, from the late 17th century onwards.

As the population of England grew during the industrial revolution, a concern for privacy and smaller gardens becomes more notable in English art. There was also a new found appreciation of the open landscapes of romantic wilderness, and a concern for the







ancient folk arts. William Morris is particularly associated with this latter trend, as were the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. Another important influence, from about 1890 until 1926, was the growing knowledge about the visual art of Japan.

Being a coastal and sea-faring island nation, English art has often portrayed the coast and the sea. Being a nation of four distinct seasons, and changeable weather, weather effects have often been portrayed in English art. Weather and light effects on the English landscape have been a pre-eminent aspect of modern British landscape photography.



## *English School of Painting*

The **English school of painting** is an expression for English (or British) painters who produced characteristically English paintings.

Generally, the term "school" is used to designate a special collection of traditions and processes, a particular method, a peculiar style in design, and an equally peculiar taste in coloring - all contributing to the representation of a national ideal existing in the minds of native artists at the same time. However, the term cannot be used in this way to characterize English art, because there is an absence of any national tradition that strikes one most forcibly in studying English painting. Each English painter seems to stand by himself - isolated from his brother artists. For the sake of brevity, all these separate manifestations are grouped together under the name of "English school of painting". Therefore, the term, primarily used in late 18th- and early 19th-century artists' biographies, may be called a construction.

Many scholars say there was no English school of painting before the 18th century, as the most important painters who worked in England came from abroad and English art lovers only liked paintings of foreign old masters. Others say English painting was influenced by native Celts whose work was repressed by the Church's invasion of the Island. During the 17th and 18th centuries the wealthy British nobility visited foreign countries where they acquired a large acquaintance with European, chiefly Italian, art and its many schools. (*See also Grand Tour.*) As Sir James Thornhill's paintings were executed in the Baroque style of the European Continent, William Hogarth may be called the first genuine English artist - English in habits, disposition, and temperament, as well as by birth. His satirical works, full of black humor, are originally English, pointing out to contemporary society the deformities, weaknesses and vices of London life.

Some other experts are of the opinion that, in the 17th century, the Flemish painter Sir Anthony van Dyck, who came to London in 1632, may be called the founder of an English school of painting, as many English portraitists were his artistic heirs. However, Van Dyck was born in Antwerp. Many other important

artists from abroad, such as Hans Holbein the Younger, Sir Peter Lely or Sir Godfrey Kneller, settled for long periods in Britain, where they had a great influence on native painting.

In the 18th and early 19th century, a number of outstanding British artists produced portraits among them were Thomas Gainsborough; Sir Joshua Reynolds, founder of the Royal Academy of Arts; George Romney; Sir Henry Raeburn; and Sir Thomas Lawrence. Joseph Wright of Derby was well known for his minute candlelight pictures, George Stubbs for his animal paintings.

The early nineteenth century also saw the emergence of the Norwich School of painters. Influenced by Dutch landscape painting and the landscape of Norfolk, the Norwich School were the first provincial art-movement outside of London. Short-lived due to sparse patronage and internal faction prominent members include 'founding father' John Crome, John Sell Cotman notable for his watercolours in particular and the promising but short-lived maritime painter Joseph Stannard.

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### ***Do you know that...?***

Van Dyck was the father of the English Portrait School and set before it an aristocratic ideal.

But William Hogarth was a truly English painter, a curious observer of men and manners. For rather more than a century England was to see a brilliant succession of geniuses: Reynolds, Gainsborough, Constable and Turner. No country had so strongly marked a love of the portrait.

If portrait painting is one of the glories of English art, landscape is another. In both directions it rose to supreme heights.

The third characteristic of the English school is the moral strain coming from the old Puritan tradition.

In the 18<sup>th</sup> century English genre painting and English literature developed nearly the same themes, leaning toward the pamphlet or towards caricature.

The current of sentimental anecdotal paintings was not as artificial as it was in France; the sincerity of these paintings comes from the depths of the national temperament.

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## *The National Gallery*



The **National Gallery** in London was founded in 1824 and houses a rich collection of over 2,300 paintings dating from the mid-13th century to 1900 in its home on Trafalgar Square. The gallery is an exempt charity, and a non-departmental public body of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Its collection belongs to the public of the United Kingdom and entry to the main collection (though not some special exhibitions) is free of charge.

Unlike comparable art museums such as the Louvre in Paris or the Museo del Prado in Madrid, the National Gallery was not formed by nationalizing an existing royal or princely art collection. It came into being when the British government bought 38 paintings from the heirs of the insurance broker and patron of the arts John Julius Angerstein in 1824. After that initial purchase the Gallery was shaped mainly by its early directors, notably Sir Charles Lock Eastlake, and by private donations, which comprise two thirds of the collection. The resulting collection is small in size, compared with many European national galleries, but encyclopedic in scope; most major developments in Western painting "from Giotto



to Cézanne" are represented with important works. It used to be claimed that this was one of the few national galleries that had all its works on permanent exhibition, but this is no longer the case.

The present building, the third to house the National Gallery, was designed by William Wilkins from 1832–8. Only the façade onto Trafalgar Square remains essentially unchanged from this time, as the building has been expanded piecemeal throughout its history. The building often came under fire for its perceived aesthetic

deficiencies and lack of space; the latter problem led to the establishment of the Tate Gallery for British art in 1897. The Sainsbury Wing, an extension to the west by Robert Venturi and Denise Scott Brown, is a notable example of Postmodernist architecture in Britain. The current Director of the National Gallery is Nicholas Penny.

The National Gallery opened to the public on 10 May 1824, housed in Angerstein's former townhouse on No. 100 Pall Mall. Angerstein's paintings were joined in 1826 by those from Beaumont's collection, and in 1828 by the Reverend William Holwell Carr's bequest of 34 paintings. Initially the Keeper of Paintings, William Segquier, bore the burden of managing the Gallery, but in July 1824 some of this responsibility fell to the newly formed board of trustees.

The National Gallery at Pall Mall was frequently overcrowded and hot and its diminutive size in comparison with the Louvre in Paris was the cause of national embarrassment. But Agar Ellis, now a trustee of the Gallery, appraised the site for being "in the very gangway of London"; this was seen as necessary for the Gallery to fulfill its social purpose. Subsidence in No. 100 caused the Gallery to move briefly to No. 105 Pall Mall, which the novelist Anthony Trollope described as a "dingy, dull, narrow house, ill-adapted for the exhibition of the treasures it held". This in turn had to be demolished for the opening of a road to Carlton House Terrace.

In 1832 construction began on a new building by William Wilkins on the site of the King's Mews in Charring Cross, in an area that had been transformed over the 1820s into Trafalgar Square. The location was a significant one, between the wealthy West End and poorer areas to the east. The argument that the collection could be accessed by people of all social classes outstripped other concerns, such as the pollution of central London or the failings of Wilkins's building, when the prospect of a move to South Kensington was mooted in the 1850s. According to the Parliamentary Commission of 1857, "The *existence* of the pictures is not the end purpose of the collection, but the means only to give the people an ennobling enjoyment".

15th- and 16th-century Italian paintings were at the core of the National Gallery and for the first 30 years of its existence the Trustees' independent acquisitions were mainly limited to works by High Renaissance masters. Their conservative tastes resulted in several missed opportunities and the management of the Gallery later fell into complete disarray, with no acquisitions being made between 1847 and 1850. A critical House of Commons Report in 1851 called for the appointment of a director, whose authority would surpass that of the trustees. Many thought the position would go to the German art historian Gustav Friedrich Waagen, whom the Gallery had consulted on previous occasions about the lighting and display of the collections. However, the man preferred for the job by Queen Victoria, Prince Albert and the Prime Minister, Lord Russell, was the Keeper of Paintings at the Gallery, Sir Charles Lock Eastlake, who played an essential role in the foundation of the Arundel Society and knew most of London's leading art experts.



The new director's taste was for the Northern and Early Italian Renaissance masters or "primitives", who had been neglected by the Gallery's acquisitions policy but were slowly gaining recognition from connoisseurs. Eastlake made annual tours to the continent and to Italy in particular, seeking out appropriate paintings to buy for the Gallery. In all, he bought 148 pictures abroad and 46 in Britain, among the former such seminal works as Paolo Uccello's *Battle of San Romano*. Eastlake also amassed a private art collection during this period, consisting of paintings that he knew did not interest the trustees. His ultimate aim, however, was for them to enter the National Gallery; this was duly arranged upon his death by his friend and successor as director, William Boxall, and his widow Lady Eastlake.

The Gallery's lack of space remained acute in this period. In 1845 a large bequest of British paintings was made by Robert Vernon; there was insufficient room in the Wilkins building so these were displayed first in Vernon's townhouse,

50 Pall Mall, and then at Marlborough House. The Gallery was even less well equipped for its next major bequest: over 1,000 works by J. M. W. Turner, which he had left to the nation on his death in 1851. These were displayed off-site in South Kensington, where they were joined by the Vernon collection. This set a precedent for the display of British art on a different site, which eventually resulted in the creation of the National Gallery of British Art (the Tate Gallery) in 1897. Works by artists born after 1790 were moved to the new gallery on Millbank, which allowed Hogarth, Turner and Constable to remain in Trafalgar Square. The stipulation in Turner's will that two of his paintings be displayed alongside works by Claude is still honored in Room 15 of the Gallery, but his bequest has never been adequately displayed in its entirety; today the works are divided between Trafalgar Square and the Clore Gallery, a small purpose-built extension to the Tate completed in 1985.

The third director, Sir Frederick William Burton, laid the foundations of the collection of 18th-century art and made several outstanding purchases from English private collections. The purchase in 1885 of two paintings from Blenheim Palace, Raphael's *Ansidei Madonna* and Van Dyck's *Charles I on Horseback*, with a record-setting grant of £87,500 from the Treasury, brought the Gallery's "golden age of collecting" to an end, as its annual purchase grant was suspended for several years thereafter. When the Gallery purchased Holbein's *Ambassadors* from Earl of Radnor in 1890, it did so with the aid of private individuals for the first time in its history.

### ***The Tate Britain***



**Tate Britain** is an art gallery situated on Millbank in London, and part of the Tate gallery network in Britain, with Tate Modern, Tate Liverpool and Tate St Ives. It is the oldest gallery in the network, opening in 1897. It houses a substantial collection of the works of J.M.W. Turner.



It is housed in the Tate's original premises on Millbank on the site of Millbank Prison. The front part of the building was designed by Sidney R. J. Smith with a classical portico and dome behind. Construction, undertaken by Higgs and Hill, commenced in 1893. The gallery opened on 21 July 1897 as the **National Gallery of British Art**, but became commonly known as the **Tate Gallery**, after its founder Sir Henry Tate. There have been several extensions over the years. The central sculpture gallery was designed by John Russell Pope.



Crises during its existence include flood damage to work from the River Thames and bomb damage during World War II, though most of the collection was in safe storage elsewhere, and a large Stanley Spencer painting, deemed too big to move, had a protective brick wall built in front of it.

The gallery housed and displayed both British and Modern collections, but was renamed "Tate Britain" in March 2000, before the launch of Tate Modern, since which time it has been dedicated to the display of historical and contemporary British art only.

Tate Britain includes the **Clore Gallery** of 1987, designed by James Stirling, which houses work by J.M.W. Turner. (see the picture)



The main display spaces show the permanent collection of historic British art, as well as contemporary work. It has rooms dedicated to works by one artist, such as: Tracey Emin, John Latham, Douglas Gordon, Sam Taylor-Wood, Marcus Gheeraerts II, though these, like the rest of the collection, are subject to rotation.



The gallery also organizes career retrospectives of British artists and temporary major exhibitions of British Art. Every three years the gallery stages a Triennial exhibition in which a guest curator

provides an overview of contemporary British Art. The 2003 Tate Triennial was called *Days Like These*. *Art Now* is a small changing show of a contemporary artist's work in a dedicated room.

Tate Britain hosts the annual and usually controversial Turner Prize exhibition, featuring four artists under the age of fifty, selected by a jury chaired by the director of Tate Britain. This is spread out over the year with the four nominees announced in May, the show of their work opened in October and the prize itself given in December. Each stage of the prize generates media coverage, and there have also been a number of demonstrations against the prize, notably since 2000 an annual picket by Stuckist artists.

Tate Britain has attempted to reach out to a different and younger audience with *Late at Tate Britain* on the first Friday of every month, with half-price admission to exhibitions, live music and performance art. Other public involvement has included the display of visitors', as opposed to curators', interpretation of certain artworks.

### ***Permanent collection***

Tate Britain is the national gallery of British art from 1500 to the present day. As such, it is the most comprehensive collection of its kind in the world (only the Yale Center for British Art can claim similar expansiveness, but with less depth). More recent artists include David Hockney, Peter Blake and Francis Bacon. Works in the permanent Tate collection, which may be on display at Tate Britain include:

- *The Painter and his Pug* by William Hogarth
- *Newton* by William Blake
- *Horse Attacked by a Lion* by George Stubbs
- *Giovanna Baccelli* by Thomas Gainsborough
- *Sketch for Hadleigh Castle* by John Constable
- *The Great Day of His Wrath* by John Martin

- *The Lady of Shalott* by John William Waterhouse
- *Ophelia* by John Everett Millais
- *The Death of Chatterton* by Henry Wallis
- *Beata Beatrix* by Dante Gabriel Rossetti
- *The Golden Bough* by J. M. W. Turner
- *The Merry-Go-Round* by Mark Gertler
- *The Resurrection, Cookham* by Stanley Spencer
- *Norham Castle, Sunrise* by J.M.W. Turner
- *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion* by Francis Bacon
- *Three Ladies Adorning a Term of Hymen* by Joshua Reynolds
- *The Cholmondeley Ladies* by Unknown 17th Century Artist
- *The Mud Bath* by David Bomberg
- *Recumbent Figure* by Henry Moore
- *Nocturne: Blue and Gold - Old Battersea Bridge* by James McNeill Whistler

The Tate collection is supported by BP. Recently, Tate Britain has unveiled a £45 million (\$70.16 million) gallery makeover scheme designed by London-based practice Caruso St John Architects.



# **WILLIAM HOGARTH**

**(1697-1764)**



William Hogarth was born in the heart of London, son of a young schoolteacher from the north of England who came to the city to make his fortune, wrote textbooks, found himself correcting for printers, and married his landlord's daughter. This was a needy household where Latin and Greek were taught-if not spoken-and words were the centre of consciousness. That it was also a family of Presbyterian roots, tells something about Hogarth's unquestioning equation of art and morality, about his concern with reward and punishment.

Richard Hogarth taught, wrote, and to make ends meet opened a Latin-sneaking coffee house. When William was ten the coffee house failed and the family found itself living within the Rules of in the Fleet Prison, his father imprisoned for debt and his mother eking out a livelihood selling patent medicines. For five years the Hogarths were imprisoned - the years of William's adolescence that would have seen him either on his way to a university or an apprenticeship. When the family emerged his father was a broken man, and William was scarred. He never mentioned this period, but he repeatedly introduced prisons, debtors, and jailers, literally and metaphorically, into his paintings.

At seventeen, a late age for apprenticing, he went to live with Ellis Gamble, a silver engraver, to learn his humble craft. He wrote a great deal in later years about this time, emphasizing how it kept him from pursuing high art. Whether due to dissatisfaction or to the death of his father, he did not complete his apprenticeship, but instead set up on his own as an engraver.

He engraved "monsters of Heraldry" and small shopcards, but he devoted every spare minute to book illustration, topical prints, and study at the newly founded Vanderbank Academy of Art. After four years, raising from silver to copper engraving, he achieved some notice around London with a small satire "The Taste of the Town". Thereafter a steady stream of small satiric prints issued from his shop on the latest folly or scandal, culminating in his first major work, a series of twelve large plates based on Samuel Butler's "Hudibras".

The earliest surviving paintings that are certainly by Hogarth are "The Beggar's Opera" and "Falstaff Examining his Recruits" sketched directly from the stage. "The Beggar's Opera", indeed, retains the stage as a visible audience. Hogarth made at least five paintings on the subject, progressing within little more than a year from a clumsy student of oils to a polished painter whose natural expression is through paint.

As he was painting this theme and variations, the House of Commons undertook an investigation of the evils of the Fleet Prison, which drew him back to the grim prison of his youth to paint another "Beggar's Opera". This time the spectators are the Committee, witnessing the confrontation of the warden and his wretched prisoners. As he was in the midst of the Fleet Committee painting he suddenly eloped with Thornhill's daughter Jane. The thought of a struggling engraver for a son-in-law apparently caused a temporary break with the angry father, but this was healed by the discreet exhibition of some of Hogarth's most recent paintings, and Thornhill seems to have helped his son-in-law establish himself as a fashionable portraitist.

Dozens of "conversation pieces" - relatively small and cheap group portraits-demonstrated the fertility of Hogarth's brush in the early 1730s. Yet he still felt constricted: they were only portraits, they represented too much work for too little money, and work that was not suited to the genius of the engraver of "Hudibras".



An oil sketch, which he displayed in his studio, showed a pretty harlot's levée in her shabby Drury Lane quarters. The idea proved so fetching that he made a story about how she got there and what happened to her afterwards. Six paintings, which some contemporary portraits included, trace the history of a young person from the country who arrives in London, is lured by an old bawd with promises of affluence into keeping, and thence descends into prostitution, prison, disease and death.

The momentous step, however, was the launching of a subscription for engravings of the "Harlots Progress" .paintings. Following the practice of other painters who! had allowed their major work to be engraved and sold by subscription, he added one novelty: he dispensed with a printseller, managed the subscription himself, and kept all the profits; he also found soon enough that only he could adequately engrave his own paintings. The success of the venture was beyond his most sanguine expectations: nearly 2,000 sets were subscribed for at a guinea each, and their fame reached from the highest to the lowest.

His first response-as painter-was to pursue the patronage earned by this fame up to the royal family itself. But a backlack from the "Harlot" itself cut off the royal commission he had been promised. (Imagine the Queen painted by the author of the "Harlot".) His second response was to paint another series-of eight this time-concerning the life of a young merchant's son who uses his inheritance to set himself as a rake and squander his money, morals, freedom, Sanity, and life. Other paintings followed by engravings, or "modern moral subjects" as he called them ("comic history paintings" as his friend Henry Fielding was to call them) followed "The Rake's Progress" in rapid succession: "A Midnight Modern Conversation", "The Distressed Poet", "The Four Times of the Day", and "Strolling Actresses in a Barn".

In the midst of all this activity, however, he was diverted by another challenge. When he arrived on the scene foreign artists had dominated English portraiture since Van Dyck. Hogarth had inherited the English painters' hostility to foreign artists who took all the good commissions from native artists. Now in 1734

Jacopo Amiconi, the Venetian history painter, was about to secure a commission to decorate the new wing of St. Bartholomew Hospital - only a stone's throw from Hogarth's birthplace. He went to the treasurer and offered to paint gratis an Englishman's version of sublime history. He produced the two huge panels that appear this day along the stairway illustrating Charity with the "Good Samaritan" and "The Pool of Bethesda". He also pursued other experiments at sublime history during the 1730s.

The second challenge from abroad in the late 1730s was J. B. Van Loo, who arrived from Paris and quickly monopolized the portrait market, driving some English artists into bankruptcy. Hogarth responded by beginning to paint portraits himself, and as usual focusing his efforts on a major show on piece-a life-size, full-length portrait of his friend Thomas Coram, founder of the Foundling Hospital. He donated his finished portrait and in the 1740s he organized his artist friends to donate more paintings establishing in the Foundling Hospital the first public museum of English art.

The decade of the 30s also saw Hogarth urging and passing an act to protect engravers from the pirates and his founding an academy in St. Martin's Lane which was to train almost all English artists over the next thirty years.

In the early 1740s while still painting portraits, he began to plan a new "comic history" cycle, this time of high life "Marriage à la Mode" was to have French engravers, for which he made his first trip to Paris. The outbreak of war with France delayed these plans. The year 1745, when he published "Marriage à la Mode", also saw his self-portrait with his dog Trump, which he engraved, as frontispiece to the bound volumes of his engravings he was now selling; and an auction of his paintings-for-engraving, without the interference of picture dealers.

He does not seem happy about the prices he received for his series-little more than the price for a single painting. At any rate he suddenly abandoned painting for histories and turned to drawings and a cruder, simpler style of engraving, addressing himself to a lower and larger audience. "Industry and idleness", "Beer Street" and "Gin Lane", and "The Four Stages of Cruelty" were aimed at the men

who had authority for the poor, but the plates undoubtedly reached the poor themselves, who (though they could not afford to buy) saw them in shop windows, in coffee houses, etc.

Up to this point Hogarth was a designer and print-maker of unsurpassed intellectual subtlety, whose work can be appreciated only in the company of Swift, Pope and Fielding. He had carried this "readable" structure of meaning as far as "Marriage a la Mode". He now radically reduced the complexity, and replaced the readable with an expressive structure in which meaning emerges from shapes, and emblems either submerged or blown up into a powerful image.

The simplification of structure is first evident in the monumental portrait of Garrick as Richard III, and the great portraits of the 1740s - "Dr. Hoadly, Bishop of Winchester", "Graham Children" – anticipate the monumentality of the histories he painted for the Foundling Hospital and Lincoln's Inn, "Moses Brought to Pharaoh's Daughter" and "Paul before Felix". The new development was also accompanied by an attempt to paint another series - this time a "Happy Marriage"- that did not get beyond a series of oil sketches.

At the same time that he was carrying out these experiments in form and its relation to expression and meaning, he was also generalizing, weaving theories, and about 1751 he began to put his thoughts down on paper. The result was the art treatise in English, "The Analysis of Beauty", published in 1753.

At just this moment the younger generation, with some of Hogarth's friends, was trying to found a real state academy of art. The "Analysis" basically antiacademic was greeted with attacks in verse and caricature. He was deeply shocked and offended.

In the middle of all this fuss, in early 1754, he began to advertise his last ambitious series, four paintings of an election. The engravings were not all published until 1758.

In the interim Hogarth fulfilled his one ecclesiastical commission - the three panels for St. Mary Redcliffe, Bristol; became Sergeant Painter to the King, in succession to his brother-in-law, John Thornhill, and returned in a limited way to



portrait painting ("Hogarth's Servants", c. 1750-1755; "David Garrick and his Wife", 1757; "1st Earl of Charlemont", c. 1759).

The last half of the decade, however, was a time of falling productivity, and letters of the time show Hogarth, just turned sixty, a tired and ageing man. In 1757 he announced that he was through with comic histories and modern moral subjects. The last comic history was painted for his friend Earl of Charlemont – “The Lady’s Last Stake” (1758-1759), a composition of two people in comic-sentimental tension. Seeing the picture, Sir Richard Grosvenor, one of the richest young men in England, asked Hogarth-to paint him one too. At that time Hogarth was outraged by the high price **etched** at auction by a Correggio "Sigismonda". With Grosvenor's **offer** at hand, he decided to make his own version, asking as much as the "Correggio" brought. The result was-the first of a long line of suffering females that passed for history painting in England. But Grosvenor had no use for a picture of a woman weeping over her lover's **heart** and extricated himself from the bargain. Hogarth made an attempt **it** vindication by having the picture engraved and sold by subscription.

The last four years are years of illness, and uneasy withdrawal that broke off for one last burst of energy. What **brought** him back were (he said) the need of money and the **bitter** attacks by his countrymen on the new king, George III, his first minister, and the desire for an end to the Seven Years War. In summer 1762 Hogarth responded with an emblematic print "The Times, Plate I", the only exclusively party polemic in Hogarth's work. The attack on him was immediate. An unfinished "Times Plate II" suggests that he had become as disillusioned with the Earl of Bute's ministry as with the Pittites. His last print, issued six months before his death was a "Tailpiece, or the Bathos" to finish off his volume of prints.

*Lawrence Gowing. Hogarth.*

With a biographical essay by

Ronald Paulson. The Tate

Gallery, 1971-1972.



## **MARRIAGE A LA MODE. 1743-1745**

*National Gallery, London*

The opening scene is made easy to 'read' by its many clues. The Earl of Squanderfield, old and gouty, points to the record of ancient ancestry in the pictured family tree as a bargaining counter in the transaction that brings him banknotes and gold. Through the window one sees the product of his own reckless expenditure, a pretentious building left unfinished through want of funds. The alderman, shrewd in the ways of commerce, gives careful scrutiny to the marriage contract. The nobleman's son lounges by a mirror in narcissistic complacency. The alderman's daughter sits sulkily apart, listening to the compliments of the lawyer, 'Silvertongue'.

There follows the famous scene of weariness and disillusion, shortly after marriage. The action explains itself. The interior setting, beautifully painted, seems likely to have been derived from one of the mansions in Arlington Street. Statesmen and members of the nobility lived there and Hogarth may have drawn on his memory of №5, the town house of Sir Robert Walpole, where he died in 1745.

That the estrangement between the young Earl of Squanderfield (who by now has inherited the title) and his Countess is practically complete, is the burden of the two following scenes, the "Visit to the Quack Doctor" and "The Countess's Morning Levee". The Earl taking his own dissipated way has, it can only be concluded, acquired from or transmitted to the young girl with him some form of venereal disease that the quack doctor has professed to cure. He is the Doctor Misaubin who made an earlier appearance in "A Harlot's Progress" also known as Monsieur Pillule who receives them in his house in St. Martin's Lane, amid a miscellany of the objects respected by the superstitious and credulous as possessing some magical value.



Meanwhile the Countess has her own diversions in the morning gathering in her boudoir while a French hairdresser puts her hair in curling-papers. Music is provided by foreign musicians of the kind Hogarth heartily disliked. A woman visitor leans forward in affected adoration. It

must be the Earl himself with his hair in curlers who directs a sour morning look towards the Countess as she discusses the costume to the night's masked ball with the ever-attentive Silvertongue, indolently and even insolently at ease on the couch beside her.

Details are as always significant. The collection of trumpery ornaments she has bought at an auction includes the horned statuette of Actaeon, which in the circumstances takes on an extra meaning. A copy of Correggio's Jupiter and Io adds its voluptuousness to the framed pictures among which the portrait of Silvertongue figures. She has been reading the latest French novel, just out, "Le Sopha". This frivolous fairy tale about an Oriental courtier who incurred the punishment of being turned into a sofa and, as such, told what he saw and heard, gains suggestiveness from lying on the couch where the amorous lawyer reclines.

The last two scenes, of murder and suicide, brings the tensions of the series to their climax. In the "Killing of the Earl" there is an instantaneous impression of things happening in a moment of time. The Earl has surprised the Countess and her lover in the house of assignation they have gone to after the masked ball. Held in suspense are the few minutes in which the Earl, mortally wounded by Silvertongue's panic thrust, staggers, his falling sword hanging for a second in space: his murderer escapes through the window in his shirt, the Countess wrings her hands in horror, the landlord and the watch burst in through the door.

The death scene of the Countess who takes poison after learning that her lover has been tried for murder and hanged, is in her father's house to which she had

returned. The alderman lives in an old-fashioned residence in the City near the Thames. The casement opens on the old London Bridge, surviving (until 1757) in all its tottering antiquity. His taste in pictures is for the Dutch and Flemish schools.

There is nothing more left to do for the doctor who is seen departing. The apothecary scolds the idiot servant who has brought the fatal bottle of laudanum, now lying empty on the floor. The old nurse holds up the frail, rickety child to its dead mother in vain. With his business-like prudence and no sign of emotion her father takes the ring from her finger for safe keeping. On no stage play could the final curtain be drawn with more effect.

William Gaunt. *The World*  
of William Hogarth. L.



### **DAVID GARRICK AS RICHARD III. 1745.**

*Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool*



One of Hogarth's most ambitious portraits is the portrait of David Garrick as Richard III, the role that made Garrick famous in 1741 and reportedly introduced his new style of acting in London. This was a myth Hogarth helped to propagate by his painting, which was finished in the fall of 1745;

shortly thereafter he gave it his seal of approval by engraving and publishing it.

To see exactly what Garrick's acting was, one must consider the historical situation of the theatre. Acting, like history painting, goes through cycles: Betterton acted with restraint, using few gestures and never raising his arms above his waist, relying heavily (in the smaller theatre of the time with its apron stage) on facial expression. With the operatic effects of the more grandiose theatre of the 1720s, and with opera as a competitor, the Wilks-Cibber-Booth school overacted

and either spoke in cadence or ranted, modulating from the declamatory monotone to the vocal claptrap.

The counteraction began with Charles Macklin, almost an exact contemporary of Hogarth's (Garrick was twenty years, almost a generation, younger) a roistering actor who made his way through the 1720s and '30s trying to develop a new style that was in some way a return to Betterton. The first great triumph of Macklin's reaction against the old bombastic style was his Shylock in February 1741. Then just eight months later, as if to match the fruits of victory, an unknown young actor, Garrick, made his indelible impression upon London as Richard III. Acquaintance, perhaps, insight, or more likely the public's reception, enabled Hogarth to grasp that with this performance Garrick did for the stage precisely what he was doing for painting and Fielding for fiction-replacing heroic posing with relatively naturalistic acting. The effect, indeed, paralleled that of the realism practised by Fielding and Hogarth: natural and restrained, sometimes common and undignified.

Accounts of Garrick's acting indicate that facial expression accomplished as much for him as body movement or voice. After he took over the management of Drury Lane in 1745 he cleared the spectators off the stage and replaced the stage chandeliers with footlights, which focused the light on the actor's face and expression. If Hogarth tended to make his painting look like a play, Garrick made his play look like a painting. The instant he entered the stage he transformed himself into Richard. Clearly he also illustrated the matter of "character", and in the engrossing that followed from the painting. Hogarth had the work finished by Charles Grignon except for the face, which he did by himself.

He was different from Hogarth, perhaps a useful complement, in that he very quickly achieved a social position never approached by the artist; he possessed an ability to rise and pass in the society of Lord Burlington, the Marquis of Harington, and others-not only because the eighteenth century was receptive to dramatic talent but also because Garrick (his profession notwithstanding) was himself a gentleman, his father a captain in the army, with entree to the best military society

and his mother from a clerical family of Litchfield, with connections in the best ecclesiastical society. To some extent this set Garrick apart from Macklin and Hogarth, but it never seems to have caused friction between the actor and the painter, who remained friends-with occasional bouts of suspicion on Hogarth's part-until the end.

The picture may be an entrée into a new attempt of sublime history painting: here without sacrificing the salability of a portrait, Hogarth can show what he is capable of in a new, simplified history. Although he presumably shows the scene as Garrick staged it with the properties he used, he takes his composition from Le Brun's "Tent of Darius", well known as an engraving and perhaps seen by Hogarth in the original on his trip to Paris. The colours and textures, also show signs of the trip to France. But perhaps the most important evidence of this trip is the remarkable subordination of detail to broad design. Hogarth shows Richard waking terrified from his dream of retribution, staring at the ghost, invisible between him and the viewer. There is only a slight suggestion of the old choice pattern in the cross on one side of him and his armour on the other: objects are held to a minimum. Everything that would have been important in the earlier paintings is subordinated to form and colour and texture. The static, stylized, almost hieratic pose of Richard-surely an attitude uncharacteristic of Garrick-reveals almost nothing about the actor's style but does prefigure the kind of sublime history Hogarth was beginning to paint. It is also important to notice that while there were some "lines of beauty" in "Marriage a la Mode", Garrick's whole posture is a serpentine line, emphasized by the long sweep of his robes and the curtain of his tent.

Hogarth presumably made this painting and then simply waited for a buyer; certainly he did not make it for Garrick, and it would seem a remarkable coincidence had it been commissioned first at that time. There is no record of an auction, or of any other disposal. Nevertheless, it was sold-perhaps at least partly through its subject matter-to a Mr. Duncombe of Duncombe Hall, Yorkshire, for

£200, which, as Hogarth himself noted with pride, "was more than any portrait painter was ever known to receive for a portrait".

*Ronald Paulson. Hogarth: His Life, Art and Times. New Haven, 1974.*



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## NOTES

1. **Presbyterian** - Puritan; Presbyterians formed the moderate wing of the Puritans in the English bourgeois revolution of the 17th century
2. **Fleet prison** - grim prison for debtors; demolished in 1842. Immortalized through the novels of Charles Dickens.
3. **Vanderbank Academy of Art** - the art school run by the painter John Vanderbank (1694-1739) who regarded "history" painting (i.e. based on mythological or biblical subjects) the highest form of art
4. **"Hudibras" (1663-1678)** - satiric poem by Samuel Butler (1612-1680); the most outstanding literary work of the Restoration propagating antipuritan tendencies
5. **"The Beggar's Opera"** - comic opera by John Gay (1685-1732) first staged by Christopher Rich in 1728. "Falstaff" was staged in 1727 in Drury Lane theatre.
6. **Thornhill, James (1675 / 76-1734)** - first native English artist working in the field of monumental painting. He was especially famous for the scenes from the life of St. Paul's painted in the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral (1717) and for the compositions of the Painted Hall of what is now the Royal Naval College, Greenwich (1727).

7. **Fielding, Henry (1707-1754)** - English most outstanding novelist, the most typical representative of the realistic tendencies of the English Enlightenment. "The History of Tom Jones, a Foundling" (1749) is his masterpiece.

8. **Van Dyck, Anthony (1599-1641)** - celebrated portrait painter, a native of



Flanders; he settled in England in 1632 and became a source of inspiration to English portraiture

9. **St. Bartholomew Hospital** - the oldest and one of the wealthiest benevolent institutions in London founded in the 12th century and refounded by Henry VIII in the 16th century. The present large edifice was erected by

James Gibbs in 1730-1733.

10. **Van Loo, Jean Baptiste (1684-1745)** - portrait painter of Flemish descent who originally worked and rose to fame in France. In 1737 he moved to London and had an immediate success.

11. **Foundling Hospital** - institution founded by Captain Coram in 1739 for "deserted children"

12. **pirates** - no law protecting the rights of the artists from plagiarism existed in England until Hogarth's Act of 1735

13. **Swift, Jonathan (1667-1745)** - English satirist, most famous for "A Tale of a Tub" (1704) and "Gulliver's Travels" (1726)

14. **Pope, Alexander (1688-1744)** - most outstanding English poet of the early 18<sup>th</sup> century

15. **Garrick, David (1717-1779)** - eminent English actor and theatre manager, he also tried his hand both at dramatic criticism and authorship

16. **Lincoln's Inn** - a group of 16th-19th century buildings on the border of the City of London. Lincoln's Inn was one of the four great Inns of Court-



incorporations **for** the study of law. It occupies a site once belonged to the mansion of the **Earl** of Lincoln...

17. **Correggio (1489-1534)** - Italian painter mostly of mythological and religious subjects. Sigismonda is a heroine of a novel by Giovanni Boccaccio (1313-1375), **the** outstanding man of letters of the Early Italian Renaissance. Hogarth shows Sigismonda moaning over the urn with the heart of her beloved Guiscardo.
18. **George III** - King of Britain from 1760 to 1811 (Hanoverian dynasty) His **First** Minister was William Pitt the Elder (1708-1778), who was responsible for foreign affairs in 1756-1761 and was the most active adherent of colonial policy. His resignation in 1761 marked the rise of Lord Bute to the post of the First Minister. In 1763 the **Peace** of Paris put an end to the Seven Years War.
- 19.- **Seven Years War (1756-1763)** - war between Austria, France, Russia, Spain, **Saxony**, Sweden on one side and Prussia, Great Britain, Hannover and Portugal on **the other**.- One of the issues was Great Britain taking the leadership from France in the colonial and trading policy.
20. **Waipole, Robert (1676-1745)** - statesman, Prime Minister from 1721 to 1742, leader of the Whigs
21. **Actaeon** - a hunter who, according to Greek mythology, saw Diana bathing. The enraged goddess changed him into a stag and he was devoured by his hounds.
22. **Io** - daughter of Inachus, a river god. Because Jupiter loved Io she was changed into a heifer by Hera.
23. **Betterton, Thomas (1635-1710)** - leading English actor of the second half of the 17th century, playwright and pedagogue
24. **Wilks, Robert (1665-1732)** - English actor, one of the managers of Drury Lane; played many Shakespearian parts as well as contemporary; **Cibber Colley (1671-1757)** - English actor; dramatist, poet and manager; played

many roles, a number of Shakespearian parts among them; **Booth, Barton (1681-1733)** - English dramatist, actor and poet

25. **Macklin, Charles (1697-1797)** - eminent English actor of the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century

26. **Drury Lane** - celebrated theatre in 18th century London

27. **Grignon, Charles (1716-1810)** - English draughtsman and engraver. "Garrick as Richard III" is among his best known works.

28. **Burlington, Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of (1694-1753)** - celebrated English dilettante architect and patron of the arts, including poetry and music. Promoter of the Palladian Classicism., He was generally regarded as an arbiter of taste, thereby provoking the enmity of William Hogarth, who attacked him in satirical prints.

29. **Le Brun, Charles (1619-1690)** - French painter and decorator. From 1663 director of the reorganized Academic Contributed to the magnificence of the Grand Manner of Louis XIV and influenced the laying of the basis of academism. The proclaimed magnanimity of Alexander the Great, conqueror of the Persian King Darius, was a "historic" subject popular with the Academies of Art.



30. **lines, of beauty** - according to Hogarth's theory of art displayed in the "Analysis of Beauty" (1753) —the serpentine "line of beauty and grace" was a key to pictorial beauty.

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# **JOSHUA REYNOLDS**

**(1723-1792)**



Joshua Reynolds is, historically, the most important figure in British painting. He was born on July 7, 1723, at Plympton St. Maurice in Devon, where his father was headmaster of the Grammar School and a former Fellow of Balliol: this is worth mentioning because it shows that Reynolds was born and brought up in an educated family at a time when most English painters were hardly more than ill-educated tradesmen, Reynolds himself became the close friend of Dr Johnson, Goldsmith, Burke, and Garrick, and - it is probably true he did more to raise the status of the artist in England through his learning and personal example than by his actual quality as an artist. He was apprenticed to Hudson in 1740, in London, but in 1743 he left his master and returned to Devonshire, from 1743-1749 he was in practice on his own in London and Devonshire, before leaving for Italy in 1749. As early as 1746 he painted the "Eliot Family Group" based on a famous Van Dyck at Wilton House and this already shows the fundamental basis of his art - the deliberate use of allusion to the Old Masters or Antique sculpture as a classical allusion might have been used by an 18-century speaker or writer. This appeal to the educated eye, above and beyond the needs of mere likeness, is the essence of his own style and the reason for the rise in public esteem for the visual arts which is so marked a feature of his age.

In 1749 he had the chance to go to Italy with Commodore (later Admiral Viscount) Keppel, who was also to become one of his best friends. Up to this time the main influences on his style had been Hogarth, Ramsay, and to a moderate extent only, Hudson; he now spent two years (1750-1752) in Rome, where he

made a really prolonged study of the Antique, of Raphael and, above, all, of Michelangelo. Here he learned the intellectual basis of Italian art, and this was something that scarcely any other British, painter, with the possible exception of Ramsay, had done up to then, even in Rome itself. In fact, Reynolds's own practice as a portrait painter was more profoundly influenced by the few weeks he spent in Venice on his way home in 1752.

He never ceased to exhort his students to master the principles of Grand Style, and in fact he regarded Venetian art, and portrait painting, as of less importance. In 1753 he set up in London, met Dr Johnson, and *began* rapidly to make a name. He sought consciously to marry the Grand Style with the needs of face-painting (and earning a living), and he succeeded so well that he was soon employing assistants, although the Kneller school was not converted ('Shakespeare in poetry, and Kneller in painting, damme!' as one of them observed). Only Ramsay and Cotes were rivals of any significance, but in 1768, when the Royal Academy was founded, it was obvious that Reynolds was the only possible choice for the President. He was knighted in 1769 and made Doctor of Civil Law at Oxford (an honour that would have been unthinkable for a painter only a generation earlier) and Mayor of his native Plympton in 1772. The works of the years following 1768 show him at his most classical and most learned, determined to use the Academy as an instrument to forge a British School of History painters to stand beside those of Rome or Bologna. To this end he composed and delivered at intervals the fifteen "Discourses" which are the most lucid and sensible exposition of the Academic position that, by well-directed labour, it is possible to learn the Rules of Art and to use the inventions and ideas of one's predecessors to create a new style of one's own. During these years Reynolds exhibited regularly at the Academy exhibitions and usually showed a skilful blend of large portraits treated in a historical manner, history pictures proper, and some curious combinations of the two, such as "Dr Beattie (The Triumph of Truth)"



(Aberdeen University) or "Three Ladies Adorning the Term of Hymen" (London, National Gallery), both in the Royal Academy of 1774. This idea had been exploited by him as early as 1760-1761 in his "Garrick between Tragedy and Comedy", a thoroughly 'learned' picture which he exhibited in 1762 at the Society of Artists, the Academy's precursor. He won the victory in general terms, although many ladies still preferred to be painted in a fashionable gown by Gainsborough to the 'nightgowns' which Sir Joshua insisted on, as less subject to the vagaries of fashion and more nearly classical in type. In 1781 he made a journey to Flanders and Holland and was profoundly influenced by the force and freedom of Rubens's handling, and from then until his sight failed in 1789 his works are less consciously classical and painted with greater warmth and feeling. The overwhelming majority of his vast output consists of portraits, which include almost every man and woman of note in the second half of the 18th century. Unlike Gainsborough, he employed many pupils and assistants and his work also differs from Gainsborough's in being frequently badly preserved on account of his bad technical procedures. The faces of his sitters are often deathly pale because the carmine has faded out completely. There is a fine double portrait of Burke and Rockingham in Cambridge (Fitzwilliam Museum), which is unfinished and shows his methods. Most of his sitter-books still exist and thus nearly all his works are documented: practically every major museum in Britain and America contains one or more, and others are as afield as Leningrad and Sao Paulo, Dresden and Adelaide, Budapest and Ottawa.

Peter and Linda Murray. The Penguin Dictionary of Art and Artists. Penguin Books, 1978.





**THREE LADIES ADORNING THE TERM OF HYMEN. 1774**

*National Galley, London*



The painting shows three daughters of the Scottish jurist and member of "Parliament Sir Williams Montgomery about to drape a garland of flowers on a bust of Hymen, the Greek God of marriage that stands on a tapered column known architecturally as a "term".

The girls were famous both as beauties and as amateur actresses and the fiancé of one of them, Luke Gardiner, had written to Sir Joshua in courtly prose: "This letter will be delivered to you by Miss Montgomery, who intends to sit to you with her two sisters, to compose a picture, of which I am to have the honour of being possessor. I wish to have their portraits together in full length, representing some emblematic or historical subject; the idea of which, and the attitudes, which will best suit their forms, cannot be so well imagined, as by one who has so eminently distinguished himself by his genius and poetic intention."

To Reynolds this was a golden opportunity: three beautiful, famous and highborn models ready to pose for a picture conforming exactly to his concept of the grand manner. The theme he selected, had its origin in the Greece of ancient times, when women wanting children offered sacrifices to Priapus, the erotic god of fertility. Later ages discard Priapus in favour of Hymen, the god of lawful wedlock. Many of masters had used variations of the theme, among them Nicolas Poussin, who painted a riot of tightly clad nymphs ; dancing a wild bacchanal before the god, and later Paul Rubens who made his true worshippers as voluptuously nude as only he could.

Reynolds, of course, had no such indecorous plan; he was dealing with the respectable daughters of a Scottish Member of Parliament. After examining the precedents like a lawyer tracing a land title, he finally posed the girls in a balanced pattern that was a composite of many earlier pictures and in accordance with his own principles. There is even a bit of symbolism decipherable only by the girls' families or intimate friends. Since two of them were married by the time they posed for Reynolds, he painted them actually draping the garland on Hymen, the still unmarried sister is shown gathering flowers to win the god's favour.

There is something wonderful about this picture and also something ridiculous. All its details including an incongruous Oriental rug on which; one of the girls is kneeling, confirm Sir Joshua's great skill with the brush. Yet he was trying to do the impossible: to paint a picture of a classical theme in the grand manner and still conform to the convention of his own time. Though the girls represent the Three Graces, whom Greek and Renaissance artists customarily portrayed with no clothes, at "all, they are wearing voluminous pseudo classical robes that reveal only blunted outlines of their bodies. They are posed in a tableau with no suggestion of movement and although their faces have some of the "ideal" beauty of Greek- statues, they are utterly serious and proper, with none of the gay sensuality that earlier painters gave to the devotees of Hymen.

Nevertheless, the picture was a great success in its time, and Reynolds himself was very much pleased with it. To Luke Gardiner he wrote: "The subject affords sufficient employment to the figures and gives an opportunity of introducing a variety of graceful historical attitudes."

Jonathan Norton Leonard. The  
World of Gainsborough. Time-  
Life International, 1978.



## ***MRS SIDDONS AS THE TRAGIC MUSE. 1789***

*Dulwich College Picture Gallery*

For anyone coming to the painting with a fresh eye the first impression must surely be one of dignity and solemnity. It is an impression created not only by the pose and bearing of the central figure herself, and her costume, but also by the attitude of her two shadowy attendants, by the arrangement of the figures, and by the colour. The colour must appear as one of the most remarkable features of the



painting. To the casual glance the picture seems monochromatic. The dominant tone is a rich golden brown, interrupted only by the creamy areas of the face and arms and by the deep velvety shadows of the background. On closer examination a much greater variety in the colour is apparent, but the first impression remains valid for the painting as a unit. The central figure sits on a thronelike chair. She does not look at the spectator but appears in deep contemplation; her expression is one of melancholy musing. Her gestures (aptly reinforce the meditative air of the headland also contribute to the regal quality of

the whole figure. A great pendent cluster of pearls adorns the front of her dress.

In the heavy, sweeping draperies that envelop the figure there are no frivolous elements of feminine costume to conflict with the initial effect of solemn grandeur.

In the background, dimly seen on either side of the throne, are two attendant figures. One, with lowered head and melancholy expression, holds a bloody



dagger; the other, his features consorted into an expression of horror, grasps a cup. Surely these figures speak of violent events. Their presence adds a sinister impression to a picture already heavily charged with grave qualities.

At the time the portrait was painted, Sarah Siddons already had a solid decade of acting experience behind her. She was born in 1755, the daughter of Roger Kemble, manager of an itinerant company of actors. Most of her early acting experience was with her father's company touring through English provincial centres. Her reputation rose so quickly that in 1775, when she was only twenty, she was engaged by Garrick to perform at Drury Lane. But this early London adventure proved premature; she was unsuccessful and retired again to the provincial circuits, acting principally at Bath. She threw her full energies into building her repertory and perfecting her acting technique, with the result that her return to London as a tragic actress in the autumn of 1782 was one of the great sensations of theatre history. Almost overnight she found herself the unquestioned first lady of the British stage, a position she retained for thirty years. The leading intellectuals and statesmen of the day were among her most fervent admirers and were in constant attendance at her performance.

Among the intelligentsia who flocked to see the great actress and returned again and again was Sir Joshua Reynolds, the august president of the Royal Academy. He was at the time the most respected painter in England, and he also enjoyed a wide reputation as a theorist on art.

Reynolds moved with ease among the great men of his day. Mrs. Siddons remarks in her memoirs: "... At his house were assembled all the good, the wise, the talented, the rank and fashion of the age."

The painting is in fact a brilliantly successful synthesis of images and ideas from a wide variety of sources.

The basic notion of representing Mrs. Siddons in the guise of the Tragic Muse may well have been suggested to Reynolds by a poem honouring the actress and published early in 1783. The verses themselves are not distinguished, but the title and the poet's initial image of Mrs. Siddons enthroned as Melpomene, the muse of

tragedy, may have lodged in Reynolds's memory and given the initial direction to his thinking about the portrait.

It has been recognized that in the basic organization of the picture Reynolds had Michelangelo's prophets and sibyls of the Sistine ceiling in mind Mrs. Siddons's pose recalls that of Isaiah, and of the two attendant figures the one on the left is very closely modeled on the similarly placed companion of the prophet Jeremiah.

If the arrangement of the figures in the portrait of Mrs. Siddons suggests Michelangelo, other aspects of the painting, particularly the colour, the heavy shadow effects, and the actual application of the paint, are totally unlike the work of Michelangelo and suggest instead the paintings of Rembrandt.

But the amazing thing is that the finished product is in no sense a pastiche. The disparate elements have all been transformed through Reynolds own visual imagination and have emerged as a unit in which the relationship of all the parts to one another seems not only correct but inevitable. This in itself is an achievement commanding our admiration.

In "The Tragic Muse" Reynolds achieved an air of grandeur and dignity which he and his contemporaries regarded as a prime objective of art and which no other portrait of the day embodied so successfully.

Robert Wark. Ten British Pictures. 1740-1840.



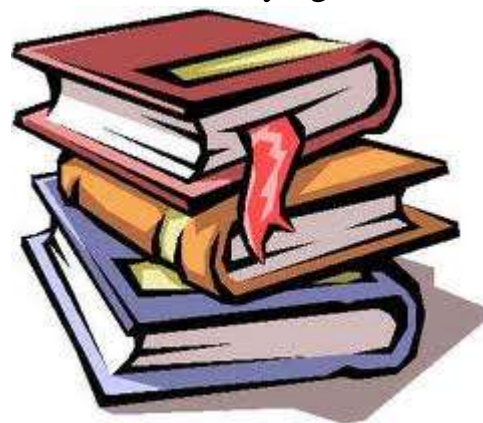
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## NOTES

1. **Fellow of Balliol** - member of the board of governors at one of the most famous colleges of Oxford University, founded in 1263 by John **de Balliol**
2. **Dr. Johnson, Samuel (1709-1784)** - celebrated

English essayist, poet, critic, lexicographer. Through his talent for conversation he greatly influenced the literary and artistic world of 18th century England. "A Dictionary of the English Language" (1755) was his masterpiece.

3. **Goldsmith, Oliver (1728-1774)** - English poet, playwright, novelist and man of letters. Most famous for his novel "The Vicar of Wakefield" (1766) and his poem "The Deserted Village" (1770).
4. **Burke, Edmund (1729-1797)** - English statesman and political writer. His "Philosophical Inquiry into the Origin of our Ideas on the Sublime and Beautiful" (1757) influenced the Romantic outlook of England and Germany.
5. **Hudson, Thomas (1701-1779)** - English fashionable portrait painter in 1735-1755. Reynolds was one of his pupils.
6. **Wilton House, Wiltshire** - the seat of the Earls of Pembroke since 1541
7. **Ramsay, Allan (1713-1784)** - portrait painter, born in Edinburgh. He studied in Rome and when in 1739 he settled in London he brought a cosmopolitan air to British portraiture. Ramsay was one of the most influential portrait painters, a Scottish counterpart to Reynolds.
8. **Kneller, Godfrey (1649-1723)** - portrait painter born at Lubeck, in England since 1674/5. His success was enormous. Kneller established a workshop-studio in London with a large team of specialized assistants, many of them foreign, organized for the mass production of fashionable portraits. Though he was partly responsible for the first Drawings Academies in London, the influence of his mass produced work was stultifying. It needed a Hogarth and a Reynolds to break through the conventions he popularized.
9. **Cotes, Francis (1726—1770)** - by 1760s the most fashionable portrait painter in London. Had he lived, he would have been a serious rival to Reynolds and Gainsborough.



10. **"Discourses" - "Discourses on Art"** - delivered by Reynolds at the Royal Academy from 1769 to 1790
11. **Society of Artists** — it staged successful annual exhibitions and was incorporated by the Royal Charter in 1765, thus being the immediate precursor of the Royal Academy inaugurated in 1768
12. **Marquis of Rockingham, Charles Watson-Wentworth** (1730-1782) - politician, head of the Whig Ministry in 1765 and again in 1782; was closely associated with Edmund Burke who, in 1765, "made an idol of Lord Rockingham" (J. R. Green. The Short History of the English People)
13. **Poussin, Nicolas** (1594-1665) — outstanding representative of French classicism
14. **tableau** (Fr.) — a picture
15. **Bath** - town in Somersetshire, noted for its mineral springs; a notable cultural centre in the 18th century
16. **Sistine ceiling** — Michelangelo's frescoes painted in 1508-1521 in the Vatican on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel (named after the Pope Sixtus IV)



# **THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH**

**(1727-1788)**



Gainsborough was born in the small market town of Sudbury in Suffolk on May 14, 1727. His forbears had long been connected with one of the staple industries of East Anglia, the manufacture of woolen goods, and Gainsborough's father was a prosperous cloth merchant.

There were nine children, five sons and four daughters, of whom Gainsborough was the youngest. Gainsborough went to Sudbury Grammar School, of which his uncle was then the master; We are told that the youngster often prevailed upon his father to give him a note to his uncle letting him off school so that he could go sketching in the countryside. At the age of thirteen he persuaded his parents to let him go up to London to study. This would have been in 1740 or 1741. He remained an art student for four or five years.

Hubert Gravelot, a French draughtsman living in London, who had revolutionized the art of book illustration and was chiefly responsible for introducing and disseminating the rococo style flowering in silversmithing, furniture making and ceramics, took on Gainsborough as a pupil.

Gainsborough's very early work must to a large extent have been associated with decorative arts. However, when he established his own studio in about 1745, at the age of eighteen, he seems to have left the world of Gravelot firmly behind him, for his first efforts were small landscapes. He studied hard in the best school of the day, the London Salerooms (there was no such thing as a National Gallery), where landscapes by the Dutch seventeenth-century artists were just beginning to appear. From them he learned the elements of pictorial composition. He supplied drawings for the young engraver and print-publisher John Boydell, and seems to

have been obliged to do hack work for the art trade to supplement his income. But he was in no danger of starving. On July 1746 he married Margaret Burr, a beautiful girl, who was, as their daughter said later, a natural daughter of Henry, Duke of Beaufort, who settled £200 a year upon her", a not insubstantial annual income for the period.

Doubtless, Gainsborough made visits to his native Suffolk in the summer months. Innumerable landscape sketches bear witness, that "Nature was his teacher and the woods of Suffolk his academy". On October 1748 his father died, and he decided to return to Sudbury. His elder daughter Mary was born there that year.

One of the first pictures he painted in Suffolk is among his masterpieces—the double portrait of Mr and Mrs Andrews (c. 1748-1749, National Gallery, London). Here was an opportunity to Gainsborough to display his powers as a landscape painter, and it is no accident that, for the first time in this type of picture, the sitters have been withdrawn to one side of the canvas and the landscape, the broad acres of a well-tended estate, given equal prominence.

Soon after the birth of his younger daughter Margaret Gainsborough moved to Ipswich, a larger town which was not only a good deal more thriving commercially but a social and cultural centre of some consequence in East Anglia. Here he lived and worked, and brought up his young children, for seven years.

Overmantels and overdoors were positions in which it was customary to Jiang landscapes, and Gainsborough's most important commission of this description came from the Duke of Bedford, a cultivated patron of arts. There were other such commissions, but on the whole he found little outlet for his landscapes. For the most part he depended on local portraiture for his living.

Sociable, convivial and warm hearted, Gainsborough was clearly much liked as a person. Many houses were always open to him, and their owners thought it an honour to entertain him. He was a member of the Ipswich Musical Club. But, in spite of his popularity and local prominence, work was not always easy to come by—demand was limited in most provincial centres and he was often in financial

difficulties. Hence Gainsborough's decision to try his fortune in Bath, a smart West Country spa rather than to risk in London.

The move took place in the autumn of 1759. Business came in so fast that he was soon able to raise his prices. His painting changed as radically as his means. For nothing in the Ipswich style prefigures the grandeur, originality of pose and sheer beauty of brushwork of the full-length he painted in 1760 of Ann Ford (Cincinnati Art Museum, USA). It was as though Gainsborough's imagination had suddenly found the impetus it needed amongst the press and gaiety of Bath society.

In the summer months, after he had finished his pictures for the annual exhibition of the Society of Artists in London, Gainsborough was accustomed to spend much of his time out of doors, sketching and working on his landscapes. Uvedale (later the writer on "The Picturesque") who was in his 'teens in the 1760s, said that he then "made frequent excursions with him into the country", from which the painter used to bring home roots, stones, and mosses, from which he formed, and then studied foregrounds in miniature. He now had an opportunity of seeing outstanding collections of old masters. Rubens and Van Dyck were the principal influences on his Bath style as it matured in the mid-1760s.

Gainsborough's landscape paintings gained a new amplitude in these years—a new breadth of chiaroscuro and a new richness of handling—and his position among his contemporaries was fully recognized, as it had not been earlier, he even refused to accept topographical commissions, which were the kind of landscape most in request, indeed the almost indispensable staple of an eighteenth-century landscape painter. Portraiture was his staple, and it remained a necessary one, for most of the landscapes Gainsborough sold were acquired by patrons who had become good friends, while a high proportion of his output remained on his hands.

In 1768 Gainsborough was appointed one of the Directors of the Society of Artists, but begged leave to resign. The offer had come too late; he had already received a letter from Reynolds asking him to become a member of a new body which was soon to eclipse the Society of Artists, the Royal Academy.

For the first Academy exhibition, in summer 1769, Gainsborough painted one of his masterpieces, the full-length of the young and newly married Lady Molineux (Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool). With its aristocratic Van Dyck pose, its exquisite softness of modeling and quite exceptional bravura handling of the satin dress, it must have created a sensation. But Gainsborough was never happy with what he called the "impudent style" necessitated by the competitiveness of public exhibitions. The natural concern that his pictures should be seen as they were meant to be seen was the cause of a row with the Academy in 1773: "I don't send to the Exhibition this year; they hang my likenesses too high to be seen...." He kept away for four years.

In 1774 Gainsborough left Bath for London. He was already well known to "the great world" and by Christmas, 1775 he was writing to his sister that "my present situation with regard to encouragement is all that heart can wish...". In 1777 he received the first of many commissions from the Royal Family—and returned triumphantly to the Academy: his portrait of Mrs. Graham in Van Dyck dress is the most glamorous of his creations (National Gallery of Scotland, Edinburgh), while "The Watering Place" (National Gallery, London) was acclaimed as "by far the finest Landscape ever painted in England and equal to the great Masters". From his time onwards his position as one of the leading British painters of the day was assured. He was able to buy works of art and owned three portraits by Van Dyck and a Rubens, which he copied. Of the fifty-odd pictures he acquired, over half were landscapes, and some undoubtedly related directly to new departures in his own style.

By 1777 Gainsborough possessed his own coach—his family went off to Suffolk in it, accompanied on horseback by their servant, David. However to avoid embarrassments caused by his wife's surveillance of the pursestrings, he kept the prices of his landscapes, which he increased towards the end of the 1770's, a close secret from Mrs Gainsborough.

There were other more worrying problems in these years. Both his daughters were infatuated with Fisher, a man reputed to have "no more intellect than his



hautboy". When Mary eventually became engaged to him he reluctantly gave his consent to the match. It proved a disaster, and the couple soon separated. Margaret never married. After the death of their parents the two sisters lived together in London.

In 1778 Gainsborough sent eleven portraits to the Academy. In fact he portrayed almost as wide a range of English society as Reynolds; it is the literary figures that are missing. His marriage portrait of the young Halletts (National Gallery, London) was painted in what was recognized at the time as "une nouvelle stile", the figures inseparable from the landscape in which they move, ribbons and bows and sketchiness of handling echoing the feathery foliage.

Portraits of the royal family were shown, though not without ruffled exchanges, at the Academy of 1783. The final rupture with the Academy came the following year when the Hanging Committee refused to break the rules solely in Gainsborough's favour and comply with his request to hang the portrait of "The Three Eldest Princesses" below the line established for full lengths. Gainsborough fitted out rooms at his house for the display of his paintings and never showed in the Academy again.

From 1777, the year of "The Watering Place", contemporary writers on Gainsborough were unanimous that "as a landscape painter, he is one of the first living". But Gainsborough had become increasingly aware that he lacked the range and profoundly characteristic of Reynolds: "Damn him, how various he is." In the last decade of his life he sought to deepen his expressive powers and to extend the subject matter and appeal.

It was cottage scenes, with groups of children, that became his most characteristic subjects, but from 1781 onwards, Gainsborough developed a type of painting in which the rustic figures from his landscapes took on the scale of life. These "fancy" pictures of figures in sentimental attitude were wholly in tune with the times and reflected a nostalgia, shared by Goldsmith and other contemporaries for the old ways of country life that were disappearing under the pressures of agricultural improvements and the exodus of the newly built factories of industrial

Britain. Characteristically, the fancy pictures were painted from living models, like "The Cottage Girl with Dog and Pitcher" (Collection Sir Alfred Beit, Britain), or the celebrated "Girl with Pigs" (Castle Howard, Britain).

Contemporaries witnessed that "if ... he found a character that he liked, ... he ordered him to his house; and from the fields he brought into his painting-room, stumps of trees, weeds and animals of various kinds; and designed them not from memory, but immediately from the object."

One of the first jobs Gainsborough did in London was to paint on glass an over-life-size Comic Muse, one of a number of such paintings lit from behind by candles, for the decoration of the concert room in Hanover Square. Now, in the 1780s, Gainsborough invented and completed a series of scenery, which were lighted by lamps and made as transparencies, to be seen in the peep-show box. This apparatus was designed partly for the amusement of his friends.

Surprisingly, in view of his reputation as a wit, contemporary memoir writers hardly mention Gainsborough's life in London. About six years before his death he made a tour through West England, accompanied by his nephew and studio assistant, Gainsborough Dupont. He was a welcome guest of Sir George Beaumont, later the friend of Constable. Music remained his principal form of relaxation.

In April 1788 Gainsborough made his first mention of a disease of which he had been conscious for some time past, and that was soon to prove fatal. Only a few days before the end he wrote a note to Reynolds asking him to come to his house and look at his pictures. "The Woodman" (1787, later destroyed by fire), was among those canvases brought to his bedside for Reynolds to see.

On 2 August 1788 Gainsborough died at the age of sixty-one. On his own request he was buried in Kew Churchyard next to the grave of his old Suffolk friend, Joshua Kirby.

Later this year Reynolds devoted his annual "Discourse" to the students of the Academy, to an analysis of Gainsborough's painting. This was a remarkable tribute in itself, for it was the first time he had ever illustrated his ideas by reference to a

particular artist. "I confess," he pronounced, "that ... if ever this nation should produce genius sufficient to acquire to us the honourable distinction of an English School, the name of Gainsborough will be transmitted to posterity, in the history of the Art, among the very first of that rising name."

John Hayes. Thomas Gainsborough,  
The Tate Gallery, 1980.



### **MRS R. B. SHERIDAN. 1783**

*National Gallery of Art, Washington*



The subject of this portrait was one of the most fascinating women in eighteenth-century England. Born in a provincial town, Miss Elisabeth Linley at the age of nineteen captivated the musical world of London with her singing. "The whole town," wrote a contemporary, "seems distracted about her. Every other diversion is forsaken. Miss Linley alone engrosses all eyes, ears, hearts... and to her voice was added the most beautiful person, expressive of the soul within." The same year fashionable London was rocked with the news that Miss Linley had eloped to France with Richard Sheridan, the famous statesman and dramatist.

In the portrait note the apparently careless free, flowing brush strokes, particularly in the dress and background. Gainsborough is known to have painted on occasion with brushes mounted on handles almost six feet long, in order to be the same distance from his model and his canvas and this may account for the rough, sketchy technique. The fact that Gainsborough also often painted by candlelight may be a further explanation of the shimmering, wispy effect. Reynolds, commenting on this feature of Gainsborough's art wrote: "This chaos,

this uncouth and shapeless appearance, by a kind of magic, at a certain distance consumes form, and all the parts seem to drop into their proper places; so that we can hardly refuse acknowledging the full effect of diligence, under the appearance of chance."

\* \* \*

Gainsborough's portrait of Mrs. Sheridan is set in an imaginary landscape which reminds us that it was the age of English landscape gardening, when great estates were artificially contoured and picturesque groves of trees planted in an effort to "improve" on nature. The trees are lightly windswept and the lady herself is naturally, and charmingly, windswept too, the breeze bringing a fresh flush to her pale complexion—it is easy to see how freely Gainsborough wielded his brush, with light, impressionistic strokes building up thin, translucent layers of paint. The effect is pastoral, poetic and uniquely English.

100 Masterpieces in Colour. Introduction by Christopher Wood. The Hamlyn Publishing Group Ltd. L., N. Y., Sidney, Toronto, 1974.

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### **MR. AND MRS. ANDREWS, c. 1748-1749**

*National Gallery, London*



Mrs Andrews is seated stiffly on an elegant garden seat; but what she holds on her lap we are left to imagine, for in that area Gainsborough has left the portrait unfinished. Her husband stands beside her, leaning with his elbow on the back of her seat, and with one leg crossed casually in front of the other. Under his arm he carries a gun.

Gainsborough has painted Mr and Mrs Andrews on their farm Auberries near Sudbury, and perhaps uniquely-in his oeuvre he has painted an identifiable view. The site may still be located, and the ground still falls away behind the oak tree, just as Gainsborough has painted it. Planting now obscures the view of Lavenham church tower to the left, and the tower and spire of St. Peter's Church in the centre is equally obscured. Nevertheless the view is "real"; but it is only upon closer scrutiny that the extent of its reality becomes apparent, and the full significance of the picture can be appreciated.

The enthusiasm for gardening which had been established in England in the late years of the seventeenth century assumed the proportions of a passion by the early years of the eighteenth; and it was but a short step for this passion for gardening to become the mania for Agriculture that was one of the phenomena of a century when the King (George III) contributed to the Agricultural literature and was commonly referred to as Farmer George. From about 1720 publications of Agriculture abounded.

It is against this background that Gainsborough's portrait of Mr and Mrs Andrews should be viewed. In a *Spectator* essay of 1712, Joseph Addison had written: "... fields of corn make a pleasant prospect, and if the walks were a little taken care of... a man might make a pretty landscape of his own possessions." Mr Andrews has indeed made "a pretty landscape of his own possessions" and no wonder that he should invite Gainsborough to paint them as background to his portrait. He is a farmer who farms land enclosed "with hedges in straight lines according to some Plan" and his sheep graze contentedly in a field unlike those which range the Common "poor batter'd and poison'd with the Rot". The gates to his fields are correctly made and painted; and his cattle to the left, far from being a "starv'd, scabby, and Rascally race" are sheltered by newly-built sheds. His corn, shown in rows or drills is well harvested, and the sheaves are neatly stacked in a model fashion. He carries a gun, for by the eighteenth century Game Laws, only a person qualified by estate or social standing might shoot game. Only one element

of the portrait seems fanciful, and this is the exquisite seat on which Mrs Andrews is seated.

Earlier than Gainsborough's portrait, garden seats had been depicted in many English Conversation Pieces; but they were generally of a sturdy nature, clearly wooden, and requiring little or no specialist skills on the part of "the estate carpenters who probably made them. The Andrews's seat, however, is something entirely different. It must almost certainly be of wood, for cast iron furniture only came into vogue some twenty years later, and yet would it be really possible for any joiner however talented, to create in wood the graceful rococo swirls which support so ably the fragile Mrs Andrews? Gravelot at the time of Gainsborough's apprenticeship to him was employed in designing the decorative surrounds for the portraits, and Gainsborough probably assisted him- The interlaced legs of the seat and the scallop shell that forms the centrepiece of the back find their parallel in Gravelot's design.

Homan Patterson. Reynolds and  
Gainsborough. Publication  
Department National Gallery. L., 1976.



### **FAIR FACES OF ENGLAND**

Gainsborough's portraits are a gallery of an extraordinary group of people. He captured on his canvases not only the look but the very spirit of Britain's: aristocrats, soldiers, squires, statesmen, and assorted folk of leisure and means. They lived with style in both city and countryside. They relished the theatre, politics and gossip. They were supreme optimists, the leading citizens of the most vigorous nation in the world. And, if they were also a bit smug, at least they tolerated among themselves a delightful assortment of eccentricities. With his portraits, Gainsborough immortalized the fascinating face of 18th century England.

S. N. Leonard. The World of Gainsborough.



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## NOTES

1. **Boydell, John (1719-1804)** — English engraver, print publisher and Lord Major of London
2. **a Rubens** — a picture by Rubens
3. **Sir George Beaumont** — connoisseur, patron of art and landscape painter
4. **Sheridan, Richard Brinsley Butter (1751-1816)** — Irish dramatist and politician, the author of "The School for Scandal"
5. *oeuvre* (Fr.) — work
6. **Spectator** - journal edited by Joseph Addison (1672-1719), essayist, poet, dramatist and statesman. As a writer he produced a tragedy "Cato" and brought to perfection along with Richard Steele, the art of periodical essay.
7. **English Conversation Pieces** —group portraits popular in England in the 18th century



# **JOHN CONSTABLE**

**(1776-1837)**



John Constable was born at East Bergholt, Suffolk on June 11, 1776. The countryside around his birthplace is pastoral and gently undulating, marked chiefly by the low hills flanking Dedham Vale, along which meanders the River Stour. The artist's father, Golding Constable, owned mills on the banks of the river, made navigable by locks in the 18th century. This landscape setting of his early years had a far-reaching effect on Constable's art. His choice came to be limited to a small group of places in which his affections were deeply engaged, all sharing the pastoral quality of the scenes of his childhood, in which men pursued the traditional labours he had seen on the banks of the Stour River and in the nearby fields.

A youthful friendship with an artisan who was an amateur painter aroused Constable's own ambitions; but up to his 20th year his work was painfully lacking in ability, and it was intended that he should follow his father's calling. Eventually, with the encouragement of the connoisseur Sir George Beaumont, of Joseph Farington, R.A., and of his mother, he went to London in 1799 to begin his formal artistic training in the schools of the Royal Academy. At this time the model for landscape painting in England was still the classical ideal landscape of the 17th century. Works by Claude Lorrain, Nicolas Poussin, and Gaspard Poussin were in every large collection, and the contemporary artist was expected to conform to the principles of formal composition, lighting, and detailed finish which marked their pictures and even to imitate, their tonality, distorted, thought his might be by a century or more of discoloured varnish. Constable realized that



within such limitations he could not paint the English countryside as he saw it, and in his search for more suitable methods he created his own art.

In 1802 he began the practice of sketching in oils in the open air, the form of study which he continued throughout his life. His nature sketches are dazzlingly fresh and brilliant and give direct contact with the mind of the artist, but to him they were the exercises and the raw material out of which he could create more ambitious and logically constructed landscapes. Constable's



originality was soon recognized, even by men who might be expected to be hostile to it, and he received help and encouragement not only from Farington, but also from Benjamin West, the President of the Royal Academy.

During his formative period, from 1800 to 1810, Constable attempted to follow the usual practice of making sketching expeditions to countryside of recognized romantic beauty. In 1801 he went to the Peak District and in 1806 to the Lake District. Unlike his contemporaries, he found that mountains did not exhilarate but depressed him, and he made no further sketching tours. A casual visit to a new scene could not replace for him the long process of getting to know a landscape intimately, and accordingly he went year after year from his London home to East Bergholt and Dedham or visited close friends in the southern counties. During this time, to justify his choice of a career to relatives and friends, he painted two altarpieces for local churches, but they are only feeble imitations of Benjamin West. He made strenuous efforts to succeed as a portrait painter, the chief means of earning a living then available to an English artist. Until late in his life he continued to paint portraits, but this was always an irksome task, unless his affections were strongly engaged. When he painted a member of his family or; a close friend he was capable of a sympathetic likeness, as in a portrait of his fiancée, Maria Bicknell (Tate Gallery, London). Though his early attempts at portraiture led him to copy Reynolds and Hoppner, this technical exercise was of

permanent value to him, resulting in an immediately increased facility in his landscapes. By 1810 he was producing oil sketches of the countryside of East Bergholt and Dedham in which he achieved natural colour, and rich atmospheric quality, free from the shackles of past formalism; fine examples are "Barges on the Stour" and "Flatford Lock and Mill" (Victoria and Albert Museum, London).

The years 1810 to 1815 were years of intense concentration on his painting, and also years of personal difficulty. He had fallen in love with Maria Bicknell, but her parents were opposed to her marrying a not notably successful artist. Accordingly Constable became something of a recluse, making studies in his country retreat with even greater assiduity. There are in the Victoria and Albert Museum two small pocket books\_ which he filled in 1813 and 1814 with hundreds of free, but minutely .observed, studies of the fields near his birthplace. These sketchbooks, which have all the fascination of an intimate diary, were often drawn on for the paintings he made in later years; in them he is—seen to-return to the same scene day after day, drawing it under varying lights and seeking for a viewpoint in which his subject formed a naturally balanced composition. The sketchbook of 1814 contains, for example, the pencil study for the composition of "Boatbuilding near Flatford Mill", an oil painting now in the Victoria and Albert Museum, painted in 1815 entirely in the open air.

Pursuing his courtship with the same obstinate determination that marked his pursuit of success in painting, Constable eventually married Maria Bicknell in 1816. The 12 happy years of this marriage were also mature and productive years for Constable as an artist. Also, he began to gain some recognition. He sold his first painting to a stranger in 1814 and was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in- 1819. Having become through his marriage and the death of his parents financially independent, he felt confident enough to embark upon a series of large canvases, the subjects of which were taken from the banks of the River Stour and which he exhibited in successive years at the Royal Academy. The first of these was "Flatford Mill on the Stour" (1817, Tate Gallery), followed by "The Hay Wain" (1821, National Gallery, London), 'View on the Stour near Dedham"

(1822, San Marino, California, Huntington Art Gallery), and "The Leaping Horse" (1825, London, Royal Academy).

In 1811 Constable had formed a close friendship with John Fisher, a clergyman living in Dorsetshire and later in the cathedral town of Salisbury. This friendship was not only a great encouragement to the artist, because of Fisher's understanding of his work, but widened his choice of themes. On his many visits to Fisher's home Constable made a number of sketches, and these he used when Fisher's uncle, the Bishop of Salisbury, commissioned him to paint "Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds" (1823, London, Victoria and Albert Museum), a subject he used several times. His range of subjects was further extended in 1819, when he moved his wife and family to the summer months to Hampstead, a village on a hill on the northern outskirts of London, then surrounded by open country. This move became an annual custom until, eventually, he took a house in Hampstead. Here he began a long series of sky studies, based on the conviction that only one aspect of the sky was consistent with a particular kind of illumination of the objects on the ground. Many of these studies showing the foliage of bushes and trees in motion and lit by gleams from a cloud-torn sky are in the Victoria and Albert Museum and are among his most dramatic sketches. On the backs of these and other cloud studies he usually recorded the date, the time of day, and the weather conditions prevailing at the time they were painted.

At Hampstead also Constable was later to find a new type of subject hitherto unused by any landscape painter, the combination of suburban buildings with rural surroundings, as exemplified in "A Romantic House" (1832, London, National Gallery).

The paintings exhibited yearly at the Royal Academy were based on such sky studies and on many oil and pencil studies of the main scene and of subordinate details. Sometimes Constable worked out his -composition in a full-scale, design full-scale designs were naturally carried to a lesser stage of completion than the final version and accordingly preserve to modern eyes more of the immediate impact of the artist's creative genius. Well-known examples are those made for "The Hay

Wain" (1821) and "The Leaping Horse" (1825, London, Victoria and Albert Museum).

With the exhibition of "The Hay Wain" at the Royal Academy in 1821 Constable's work became known to French artists, notably Gericault. Soon afterwards two dealers, Schroth and Arrowsmith, began showing his works in Paris. Recognition outside his own country reached its climax in 1824, when "The Hay Wain" and "A View on the Stour near Dedham" were exhibited in the Salon and excited great admiration and heated critical discussion. "The Hay Wain" was awarded a gold medal, and Constable's influence over the younger French artists, in particular Delacroix, dated from this event.

In 1824 Mrs Constable's increasingly poor health caused Constable to take her to Brighton, a fashionable seaside resort on the South coast. He found the landscape of the surrounding country unsympathetic, but he set to work on oil studies and drawings of the beach and shipping, many of which are remarkable for the atmospheric lucidity of their rendering. At this time his style of painting was changing from the serenity of the middle years of his career. He became more and more concerned with what he called "the chiaroscuro of Nature", a term covering the broken lights and accents caused by the reflection of sunlight on wet leaves and the alternation of lights and darks in the sky and the shadowed landscape. He used the palette knife increasingly and worked over and elaborated his surface incessantly to give met effect of texture in water, trees, fields, and sky. To Constable's contemporaries his painting looked unfinished, and the glazed highlights with which he enhanced them became known as "Constable's Snow".

That Constable was now established as a landscape painter is shown by the number of repetitions he was called upon to make from his more popular compositions. Among the subjects he repeated most often, though always with some variation in the lighting and mood, were "Dedham Mill" (1820) and "Hampstead Heath" (first version 1828), both in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

In 1829 his wife died, and election in that year to full membership in the Royal Academy he regarded as belated and without significance. In 1830 he began

to issue a series of mezzotint engravings under the title "English Landscape Scenery". This publication was to some extent planned in emulation of Turner's "Liber Studiorum" and was designed to illustrate Constable's range in landscapes, chosen especially with a view to recording the "chiaroscuro of Nature". Under Constable's exacting supervision the engraver, David Lucas, was remarkably successful in carrying over the essence of his sketches into black and white.

From this time onward Constable was subject to fits of depression. He had been left with a family of seven young children and forced himself to extra exertions on their behalf. Another sorrow was the death of John Fisher in 1832. Constable had paid his last visit to Salisbury in 1829, but he made the town the subject of one more large canvas, "Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows" (1831, collection of Lord Ashton of Hyde). The stormy mood of this painting reflects the agitation of Constable's spirit at the time. In 1834 he formed a new friendship, with a namesake, George Constable, who lived in Arundel, and there Constable's interest was aroused in the wooded downlands of Sussex. He made many water-colour and pencil sketches of this more hilly and broken scenery, but the only elaborate composition he constructed from his sketches was "Arundel Mill and Castle" (Toledo, Ohio, Museum of Art). He was working on the picture the day he died in 1837, but it was considered sufficiently finished to be exhibited posthumously at the Royal Academy exhibition of that year. The painting exemplifies a tendency at that time to over-elaboration of detail, also seen in "Valley Farm" (1835, London, Tate Gallery).



Encyclopaedia of World Art. McGraw-Hill  
Book Company, Inc. New York, Toronto, London.  
Vol III, 1960. Article by Graham Reynolds...



## THE HAY WAIN. 1821

*National Gallery, London*



From 1809 onwards almost every painting he made is recognizably "a Constable". Constable had already shown, in some pieces he painted in 1802, that he was more relaxed in the scenery of his homeland, and therefore more capable to experiment with this material. So it comes as no surprise to find that his new expansion of knowledge first manifest itself in small sketches of the fields within walking distance of his home at East Bergholt. The sketches are marked by the confidence and fluidity of their treatment. From 1809 he painted an increasing number of these open-air sketches of small size.

The intensive work of preparation which Constable had undertaken was now sufficient to yield results; he now wanted to set to work on paintings which clamoured to be noticed. To this end he intended to paint on a relatively large scale. The size he chose for the affirmation of his power was in the main "a six-foot canvas".

To construct these important works he adopted a fairly rigorous routine. He started his preparations in the autumn for the exhibition which would open in the following May. Frequently these preparations included making a full-scale sketch (as in the case of "The Hay Wain"); in any case they involved full recourse to the vocabulary of the small-size oil sketches.

The insight for which his long series of brilliant sketches was only a prelude, reembodyed, most deliberately, in a series of six large scenes of the River Stour; these he exhibited between 1819 and 1825. The subjects were all places within a three-mile radius, in a short walking distance from East Bergholt, and all include an event from the canal life as well as a particularization of the weather which gives each scene its predominant tone.

"The Hay Wain", which has become through its position in the National Gallery and the countless reproductions the most popular embodiment of Constable's art, occupies a central place as the third in order of production of this series of six large Stour scenes.

In this picture he turned to the most familiar sketching-ground of all the part in front of Flatford Mill, his father's first home, where his elder sister and brother were born. To these associations were attached in Constable's memory the story of Willy Lot's house, the cottage-farmhouse which is prominent in the picture. The farmer, Willy Lot, was alive in Constable's own time, and in the eighty years of his life spent only four days away from his home. This classic example of Suffolk obstinacy was precisely the behaviour to appeal to Constable's sense of continuity and tradition, and added an associative value to the house.

The scene is closed in at the left by the buildings and spreading out, over the meadows on the right. The title Constable gave the painting for the exhibitions was simply: "Landscape; Noon"; it is interesting that though he specifies neither the place nor the season he is precise about the time of the day, which accounts for the vertical light illuminating the structure of the trees. The growth and colour of the trees, and the hay in the wain, show that the picture represents an early summer day; there are high, fair-weather clouds, and the scanty drift of smoke from the farmhouse chimney indicates only a light breeze. The animation of the scene, no less than its title, is provided by the cart crossing the ford.

Constable had already made a number of oil sketches and drawings from the viewpoint he has chosen here, and possibly for this reason the full oil sketch in the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, is less worked out in detail than any other example of these large studies. Here, beyond the mere masses of the composition, he is mainly concerned to work out the balance of tones, the overall light and shade of the picture. It is so clearly experimental that it is impossible even to conceive of its being exhibited in the generation in which it was painted.

Constable did not make many changes in the composition when he repeated it for the finished work. At the same time he brought all forms into clearer focus and

made them more definite, especially the cottage, to which he added a chimney, and the meadows, trees and ridge in the middle. "The Hay Wain" more than any other of Constable's paintings has come to represent his art in its maturity, and its pre-eminent appeal began soon after its completion. When it was seen at the Royal Academy exhibition in 1821 it was greatly admired by Gericault and by some French critics. Partly as a result of Gericault's enthusiasm it was borrowed for the Paris Salon of 1824 and led to the influential intervention by Constable in the progress of French landscape painting. From this work Delacroix learned a lesson in the management of dramatic contrast, and it was bought from the Salon for a French collection. Its history as part of the landscape of almost every English mind begins with its purchase for the National Gallery in 1886.

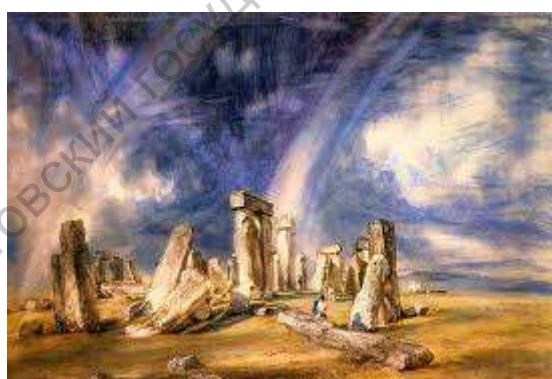
**Graham Reynolds.**

Constable the Natural  
Painter. New York-  
Toronto-London, 1965.

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**STONEHENGE. 1835**

*Victoria and Albert Museum, London*



Probably the best known and surely the most powerful artistic rendering of England's foremost pre-Roman monument, Stonehenge, is Constable's water-colour of 1835. This markedly dramatic portrayal of the prehistoric ruin shows the painter in an overtly romantic vein-evident above all in the overpowering, cataclysmic sky, the most singular aspect of his interpretation. Here Constable strives for utmost expressive intensity rather than maximum meteorological truth. No other representation features so awesomely turbulent a setting albeit once graced by the



delicate, ephemeral presence of a double rainbow. And only Constable's version does ample justice to that sense of "the Sublime" which his and the preceding generation found in Stonehenge.

Constable's richly worked water-colour is based on an on-the-spot pencil study made 15 years earlier. The chief differences are first the introduction of an overpowering skycaps, which infuses an entirely new mood, and second the extension of space on all sides. This broadened scope better conveys a sense of the lonely expansiveness of the seemingly endless Salisbury plain surrounding Stonehenge. This extraordinary sky possesses a degree of dynamism unprecedented in the artist's oeuvre. The presence of the rainbows, implying a departing storm, does not really lessen the sky's still very ominous, even catastrophic appearance; indeed, to twentieth century eyes the vast, mushrooming thundercloud looming over the low horizon brings to mind a veritable nuclear explosion.

Finally, one curious feature is the unexpected running hare in the lower left corner, which intriguingly anticipates the similarly unexpected hare running before the onrushing train in Turner's "Rain, Steam and Speed" of 1844. This modest addition may not be pure whimsy, for it injects a note of temporal contrast: that is, compared to the almost timeless permanence of the megaliths, the fleet hare seems as transient as the shadow of the seated man or as ephemeral as the momentary glow of the rainbow.

What about the presence of the moon? Most probably, Constable introduced this crescent moon simply to enhance further the evocative mood of the scene. Incidentally, this is one of the very rare instances in his art where both solar light sources appear in one scene. - Constable himself makes a brief but revealing reference to this version of Stonehenge in a letter: "I contemplated adding a view of Stonehenge to my book-but only a poetical one. Its literal representation as a "stone quarry" has been often enough done." He is here differentiating his own expressive approach from the purely descriptive, topographical one characterizing the majority of Stonehenge views. But he may also be alluding to the fact his

version was a distant view rather than the more usual close-up one. His removed, panoramic viewpoint greatly accentuates the appearance and mood of stark isolation and lonely endless expanse. The ruin appears all the more stranded and eerie due to the vast sea of featureless plains incorporated in the scene, bringing to mind Keats lines, "a dismal cirque of Druid stones, upon a forlorn moor".

Louis Hawes.

Constable's Stonehenge.

Victoria and Albert

Museum, London.



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## NOTES

1. Farington, Joseph (1747-1821) — topographical draftsman; he is known primarily for his "Diary" which is one of the important sources for the history of English art and the Royal Academy in the last years, of the 18th and the early 19th century. R.A. — Royal Academician.
2. West, Benjamin (1738-1820) — American-born artist, who set up in London in 1763; his "Death of Wolfe" (1771) marked a turning-point in the painting of modern history-pieces in England
3. Peak District — a picturesque countryside in north Derbyshire, an area of high rocky crags rising from rugged moorlands of heather and peat, cut by lushly pastures and wooded dales
4. Lake District — an area of great scenic attraction in the north-west of England. There are 16 major lakes there (Windermere, Derwentwater, etc.) with 4 mountains hovering above them. It was made popular by the poems of Wordsworth, Coleridge and Southey.
5. Gericault, Theodore (1791-1824) — French painter, one of the main exponents of French Romanticism

6. Delacroix, Eugene (1798-1863) - major painter in the Romantic movement in France
7. "Liber Studiorum" — the title was suggested by "Liber Veritatis", a book of drawings by Claude Lorraine, which he had done to authenticate his paintings
8. Stonehenge — prehistoric monument on Salisbury Plain, consisting of an outer and inner circle of stones, some 200 feet tall and weighing over 40 tons apiece. It is believed to have served as a sanctuary and a kind of observatory.



9. the Sublime - the term came into general use in the 18th century to denote new aesthetic concept. Edmund Burke in his "Philosophical Enquiry into the Origin of our Ideas of the Sublime and the Beautiful" (1757) regarded the Sublime as evoking astonishment and awe.

10. Keats, John (1795-1821) - English poet
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# **JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER**

**(1775-1851)**



Turner was a short, stocky man with rather striking features, who, without advantage of education or birth, became through genius, determination, and boundless energy the greatest artist England had ever known. He was born in London on April 23, 1775, the son of a barber. The family lived in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, a fashionable quarter for hairdressers and wigmakers. The

future painter must have spent much of his time among the warehouses and docks of the busiest harbour of his time. Sights of England's naval power and merchant marine, glimpses of the ships that dominated the seas of the earth, made an indelible impression on Turner's mind. But his earliest pictures had nothing to do with the sea. It was said that Turner's talent first became evident in his boyhood when he began drawing cocks and hens with a piece of chalk as he walked to his school. The earliest drawing preserved, however, is a copy of an engraving of Oxford, done when he was twelve. At fourteen his work had reached sufficient volume for the barber to hang up his son's drawings in his shop for sale.

We know little about Turner's education as an artist. At the age of fourteen, he studied with Thomas Malton, an able teacher. There were also the evenings spent several years later with Dr Thomas Monro, a well known collector.

From 1789-1793 Turner had attended the Royal Academy Schools, where he drew the antique and also from life. But copying the works of others and sketching from nature were the main methods by which Turner taught himself. When he was only eighteen, his wayfaring began, his constant search for picturesque subjects for his water-colours and drawings. He travelled widely in England and Wales,

sketching mountains, ruins; famous buildings, etc., a type of work immensely popular. Throughout his life topographical painting was to provide a major source of income. In 1790 he had a water-colour exhibited at the Academy and was praised by the critics.

There exists a description of Turner at about this time: he was "not like young people in general, he was singular and very silent, seemed exclusively devoted to the drawings, would not go into society, did not like "plays"... and had for music "no talent". With his baggage tied up in a handkerchief on the end of a stick, he would walk twenty-five miles a day in search of subject matter for his drawings. Back to London he turned his pencil sketches into water-colours.

The water-colours sent in 1791 to the annual exhibition at the Royal Academy, show that he had attained an absolute mastery of light and shade, of perspective, of architectural detail. In the same exhibition he showed his first oil-painting "Fishermen at Sea". Two years later Turner told a fellow artist that he had more commissions than he could execute and got more money than he could spend. But the atmosphere in his home must have driven him to distraction. His mother was subject to appalling tantrums, which became so violent that she finally had to be sent to an asylum. However, his father became a close companion, and the two lived together until the elder Turner's death in his eighty-fifth year.

Even if Turner's home life was far from happy, his artistic career was flourishing. His works exhibited at the Royal Academy were admired, and he was beginning to be generally known as the most promising of the younger artists. In 1799 he was elected Associate of the Royal Academy.

It must have been about this time that Turner's liaison with a widowed singer and actress, Sarah Danby began. They never married. It is possible that Turner's parents' unhappiness made him unwilling to consider matrimony, but he was far from being a misogynist. Sarah Danby had several children. Turner was not, however, greatly interested in his human progeny. His real children were his paintings. In 1802 he was elected to full membership of the Academy.

The spark of genius, however, still lay dormant. It blazed up when, in spring of 1799, Turner saw two paintings by Claude Lorrain. These had just been bought by the influential collector William Beckford and were on display in his house. The next year he painted his first historical picture "The Fifth Plague of Egypt" (1800, Indianapolis Museum of Art). Historical painting was then regarded as the highest branch of art, and the critics approved the altered direction of Turner's work. Beckford bought his picture for 150 guineas.

In the three years between 1799 and 1802 Turner's style continued to change. But as his genius began to shine, there appeared critics who began to cavil. One of them wrote: "Turner strives for singularity and the sublime but has not strength to perform what he undertakes..."

In 1802, as soon as the Peace of Amiens was signed, temporarily ending the war between England and France, Turner departed for the Continent, principally to study Poussin and the Old Masters in the Louvre.

For a time he immured himself in his studio, partly to continue his studio partly to continue his interrupted work and partly to assimilate what he had learned abroad. But he also began to show that interest in the affairs of the Royal Academy which was to remain with him throughout his life.

When in 1803 Turner became a member of the Council governing the Royal Academy he at once found himself in a power struggle between two academic factions, the "Court Party" and the "Democrats". Perhaps for this reason, Turner in 1804 decided to establish his own gallery. He extended the first floor of his house at 64 Harley Street, creating a room which would accommodate about twenty or thirty large canvases, as paintings were then hung. This caused a mistaken rumour that he was no longer going to exhibit at the Academy. On the contrary, during the fifty-eight years of his activity as a painter, he failed to show at the Academy only four times. To Turner the Academy was the mother of all the best British painters.

In 1807 Turner was elected Professor of Perspective at the Academy by a vote of twenty-seven to one, an indication of the esteem in which he was held. No salary was attached to the office, but he was paid a fee for each lecture he gave.

Turner retained the title, which he greatly valued, until December 1837, when, at the age of sixty-two, he announced his intended retirement. According to the official minutes it was noted with regret.

Turner's relations with the other academicians are puzzling. He was certainly admired, but from the time of the exhibition of 1803, he was unceasingly criticized. He had now departed too far, they thought, from their standards of the imitation of nature. John Hoppner summarized their opinions when he said that "so much was left to be imagined that it was like looking into a coal fire, or upon an Old Wall, where from many varying and underlined forms the fancy was to be employed in conceiving things".

Turner's progress was met with what now seems astonishing hostility. His most persistent enemy was Sir George Beaumont, a well-to-do baronet who was among the first benefactors of the British National Gallery and who was considered by the world of fashion an outstanding landscapist. Perhaps what roused the academicians more than Turner's artistic vices was the large prices he obtained for his works and the number of young artists who admired and attempted to imitate him. But it is also true that Turner's critics could not understand his search for the sublime in nature, his continuing endeavour to reach new limits in the painting of landscape.

If Turner was hurt by this criticism, he hid his wounds. Throughout his life he attempted to conceal his natural melancholy and bitterness with gaiety. Clara Wheeler, the daughter of his friend, records: "Of all the light-hearted, "merry creatures I ever knew Turner was the most so; and the laughter and fun that abounded when he was an inmate of our cottage was inconceivable."

It was W. F. Wells, a teacher of drawing and the president of the Water-colour Society, who proposed that Turner should draw in pen with sepia washes a series of pictures illustrating various types of landscape composition and should then have these mezzotinted under his own super-vision, the whole to be called the "Liber Studiorum". The drawings were not made to verify, his pictures since no one at that time was forging them. Instead, the prints were to show the range and

variety of his genius, to disseminate his work and help to ensure his reputation with posterity. The first number of this tremendous undertaking, a project never finished but which was intended to comprise a hundred plates, was shown in Turner's gallery in June 1807.

The same spring Benjamin West visited the gallery and was disgusted at what he found there: "Views on the Thames, crude blotches, nothing could be more vicious". Turner was well aware of his colleagues disapproval. The pictures he showed that summer at the Academy were perhaps intended to appease such criticism. "The Blacksmith's Shop" in particular marked his search for the sublime, and was also a challenge to such popular genre painters as David Wilkie. Turner frequently reverted to an earlier way of feeling, as if he needed relief from his passionate search for the limits of painting.

From his own work in water-colour Turner had learned that washes over white paper convey a luminosity wanting in traditional oil-painting. More and more he rejected the brown and black tones he had originally employed. Unlike previous landscapists, he worked on a light ground and painted in a higher key than had ever been used. He and his followers came to be known as "The White Painters", an innocent enough classification, but at the time applied venomously.

During this period Turner moved with his father to his house in Twickenham. A friend of the artist described the simplicity of their life: "Everything was of the most modest pretensions, two-pronged forks, and knives with large round ends for taking up the food, the table-cloth barely covered the table, the earthenware was in strict keeping."

They were a close corporation, the two Turners. The father prepared his son's canvases and applied the final varnishes. "Old Dad", as he called him, also looked after the gallery in Queen Ann Street. Yet in spite of all their economies, the lack of sales made the Turners uneasy. To improve the situation Turner had found a way in devoting much of his time to topographical work for the engravers. He recognized that engravings after his drawings and water-colours did not lend



themselves to attack. His critics, confronted with the print in black and white, could not complain, as they so frequently did, of his colouring.

But even though printmaking produced a sizable income for Turner it doubtless provided less than he made from the sale of his water-colours. A few passionate collectors must have been responsible for much of his wealth. These water-colours, however, were not what Turner valued most. His "Children", as he called them, were his oils, and he was acutely sensitive to the harsh criticism his canvases received at the Academy.

It was such an attack that brought John Ruskin at the age of seventeen to Turner's defence.

Turner first visited Venice in 1819 during his initial trip to Italy. The trip was a turning-point in his life. At the age of forty-four he found the light he had always sought, the dazzling orange sunlight of the Mediterranean, its warmth, a foil to the blue of the sky and the azure of the tranquil sea. This brilliance was a counterpart to the greyish light of England. He mastered both types of illumination, but in his later paintings he preferred the glow of the Southern sun. In Italy he sketched Rome the Compagna, Vesuvius, Bay of Naples, and above all Venice, making on this first journey some 1,500 drawings in black and white. These drawings were his memoranda, later serving as the basis for his canvases. He made other trips to Italy-major ones in 1828, 1835 and 1840-continually supplementing his sketches. But the light and colour of Italy he carried only in his mind's eye.

Ruskin too loved Italy, and Turner's work was his guide, but otherwise critic and painter had very little in common. There was a gap of forty-four years in their age. To Turner it was disconcerting to be compared, in the inimitable prose of "Modern Painters" to the Great Angel of the Apocalypse... It took him a long time to recover from a eulogy as this. Turner was sixty-nine at this time, and becoming more and more a recluse. His father had been dead fifteen years, and Turner depended on such housekeeping help as he could get from Hannah Danby, Sarah's aging niece.

There is no doubt that the painter had been, in earlier years, more at ease with his admirers. The degree to which this self-sufficient, secretive human being, absorbed in his profession, was capable of lasting friendship can be seen in his attachment to Walter Fawkes, a Yorkshire Member of Parliament, and to Lord Egremont of Petworth.

From Fawkes, a patron as early as 1803, Turner acquired a taste for radical politics. He was easily persuaded that Englishmen were on the brink of a frightful precipice. Events seemed to bear out Fawkes forebodings. By 1806 Napoleon was in control of Europe and was threatening England with invasion. It is not surprising that Turner's paintings at this time, especially "Hannibal and his Army Crossing the Alps" (1812, Tate Gallery), expressed symbolically his own sense of crisis.

Walter Fawkes died in 1825, leaving a void in Turner's life. He had spent many happy months at Farnley Hall, Fawkes's house in Yorkshire, painting the house, the gardens, the countryside. Luckily, there was a second hospitable house where Turner felt much at home as at Farnley. Lord Egremont had bought Turner's pictures for many years, and they covered the walls of Petworth, his great country mansion at West Sussex. Turner first visited Petworth in 1809. He was always welcome there.

At Petworth the atmosphere was the opposite of the earnest radicalism which prevailed at Farnley. Egremont was a survival from the eighteenth century, with, an income of over a hundred thousand pounds a year. His contemporaries were convinced that he had forty-three children, who were all said to have lived at Petworth with their respective mothers. Life must have been chaotic but gay, and many of Turner's paintings of interiors and exteriors of the great mansion and its grounds seem inspired by a joyous ebullience rare in his work.

The artist's visits to Petworth ended in 1837 with the death of Lord Egremont. A year before, Turner's dear friend W. F. Wells had also died. Turner became a lonely old man and it was thus that Ruskin knew him.

It was fortunate for Turner that some years before he made acquaintance with a Margate landlady, Sophia Carolina Booth and her husband. When Booth died in 1833 his widow was in her early thirties.

In 1846 Turner who towards the end of his life became still more secretive, still more withdrawn, took a house in Chelsea; to which he brought Sophia Booth, placing it in her name. Here he was undisturbed by visitors, for he went to extraordinary length to conceal his address. He wished to drop quite literally out of sight, although he did reappear occasionally at the Academy. In Chelsea he was known to the street urchins as Puggy Booth, and to the tradesmen as Admiral Booth, for he pretended to be a retired naval officer.

As he grew feebler, Mrs Booth, as assiduous nurse, made him as comfortable as his infirmities permitted, even putting a pencil into his hand so that he could draw to the very end. Just before his death the sky cleared, and a ray of sunshine fell upon him. It was as though some lifelong heliotropism impelled him with his last breath to seek the radiance of the sun. The date was December 19, 1851.

John Walker. J. M. W.

Turner. N. Y., 1976.



**THE FIGHTING Téméraire TUGGED TO HER  
LAST BERTH TO BE BROKEN UP. 1839**

*National Gallery, London*

"Here is genius... a work of great effect and feeling, worthy of Turner when he was Turner." So wrote an early Victorian critic of the artist's marine masterpiece "The Fighting Téméraire Tugged to her Last Berth to Be Broken up". This pictorial elegy to an illustrious but obsolescent Man O'War has proved to be Turner's most continuously admired late work ever since its debut at the Royal Academy in May 1839. Turner himself considered it his special favourite during his last years, even

referring to it as "my darling" and emphatically refusing repeated generous offers of purchase.

The early Victorian London press lavished enthusiastic praise on the "Téméraire", as did the public. One reason for this was that to most eyes the work appeared much more carefully finished than was usually the case with Turner at this time. The central reason, however, was its theme, consecrating as it did the renowned ninety-eight-gun battleship that had played a crucial role in Nelson's victory off Cape Trafalgar thirty-four years earlier. As one reviewer put it, "next to the "Victory", Nelson's flagship, we have the "Fighting Téméraire"." The painting revived in many English hearts the stirring memory of their country's proudest naval triumph, a memory all the more stirring for being tinged with a nostalgic awareness of a suddenly bygone glorious era; for the heroic, three-decker "First Rate" of Georgian times was now becoming a thing of the past - the wooden walls of old England" soon to be replaced by the steam-assisted, iron-clad ship. It was consistent with this that one particular element in the picture drew frequent comment - the magnificent sunset. Even more than the beauty and skill with which this motif was rendered, its thematic appropriateness was stressed—the sun was setting on the career of the "Téméraire".

Best exemplifying the latter was the lively description by the young Thackeray, writing under the pseudonym "Michael Angelo Fitmarshy Esq". After speaking of the "noble river-piece" as not only the best picture in the exhibition, he characterized its subject and mood. "The old "Téméraire" is dragged to her last home by a little, spiteful, diabolical steamer. A mighty red sun, amidst a host of flaring clouds, sinks to rest.... The little demon of a steamer is belching out a volume of foul, lurid red hot malignant smoke, paddling furiously, and lashing up the water round about it; while behind it (a cold grey moon looking down on it), slow, sad, and majestic, follows the brave old ship, with death, as it were written on her... Turner makes you see and think of a great deal more than the objects before you..." "

The subject is one that Turner actually witnessed. Turner happened to return from Margate on the same packet steamer on the very day that the "Téméraire" was towed up the Thames from Sheerness to the Beatson ship-breaking yard at Rotherhithe (September 6, 1838). In the midst of "a great blazing sunset" the old ship appeared, drawn by two tugs. The painting, therefore, had its inception in a first-hand experience, however expressively enhanced this became under the painter's transforming brush.

In Turner's richly suggestive rendering of the subject, the still lofty but powerless ship and the small but aggressive steam-tug are maximally contrasting motifs. The former is much less distinct, seeming enveloped in a mysterious veil of mist and exhibiting a ghostly pallor, which tends to lift it out of the prosaic immediate world. Compared to the brazenly vivid tug with its flag flying high, performing its task with almost eager dispatch, the now gunless and flagless "Téméraire" presents a special appearance, a veritable Coleridgean ghost-ship. In particular, the somewhat oversize, web-like prow, which the actual "Téméraire" apparently did not have, has an apparitional quality, like some skeletal hulk built of giant dry bones. This phantasmal look is reinforced by the ship's riding high in the water, as though no longer subject to earthly gravity; for while this effect could partly be attributed to the removal of the heavy ornament, stores and crew, Turner was certainly not averse to heightening the proportion of a three-decker, on occasion. Contrasting more quietly with the "great ship than does the hustling tug is the distant square-rigger, outward bound under full sail, which completes the compact triangle of ships. Perhaps this small but suggestive image is meant as a faint nostalgic echo of the "Téméraire" in the former state of full sailing glory."

Louis Hawes. Turner's  
"Fighting Temeraire".  
The Art Quarterly. Vol.  
XXXV, No. 1, 1972.

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If we look at this painting unemotionally, we can see that Turner wished to focus our attention on the tug. Turner has given the proud little steamer lines of grace and beauty, as she glides through the still sea like a black swan, towing the dim hulk of the warship. The calm of sunset evokes in the spectator a mood of tranquil melancholy, but it also suggests the end of one day and the beginning of another. Did Turner look on the tug as a symbol of the New World towing behind it the Old? Is it too fanciful to look on this seascape as a harbinger of a new but not unwelcome era?

John Walker. J. M. W. Turner. N. Y., 1976.





## THE BURNING OF THE HOUSES OF PARLIAMENT.

1835



Early in the evening of October 16, 1834, the Houses of Parliament caught fire. The conflagration attracted such immense crowds that the army had to be called out to help the police keep control and, according to a correspondent of *The Gentleman's Magazine*", when at half past nine the roof of the House of Lords fell in, "so struck were the bystanders with the grandeur of the sight at this moment that they involuntarily (and from no bad feeling) clapped their hands as

though they had been present at the closing scene of some dramatic spectacle."

Several artists witnessed the scene among them Constable who made a rough sketch from Westminster bridge. Turner filled nine pages of a sketch book with water-colour sketches of the fire made from the South bank of the Thames (British Museum). This is one of the infrequent occasions that Turner made use of water-colour to record his impressions direct from nature rather than making pencil sketches and colouring them later; the particular circumstances ruled out any other medium. The nine sketches were made with such haste that the wet water-colour stained the blank pages opposite.

In 1835 Turner exhibited two paintings of the fire; at the British Institution (New Philadelphia Museum of Art in February, and the other, the one now in the Cleveland Museum, at the Royal Academy in May.

We have a detailed account by a contemporary painter of Turner's work on the first version of the picture on the varnishing day before the opening of the

exhibition at the British Institution. The picture when it was sent in was "a mere dab of several colours and without form, and void like chaos before creation". Turner worked incessantly for several hours, to the fascinated amusement of his fellow artists. He worked almost entirely with his palette knife, and at one point he was observed "rolling and spreading a lump of half-transparent stuff, the size of a finger in length and thickness, over the picture". Unfortunately, nobody had the nerve to ask him what it was. When he was finished Turner closed up his paint box and left, without looking again at his picture, or speaking a word to anybody! Another of Turner's contemporaries also mentioned Turner's performance in a letter: "I am told it was good fun to see the great man whacking away with about fifty stupid apes standing around him, and I understand he was cursedly annoyed—the fools kept peeping into his colour box and examining all his brushes and colours."

Whereas the view in the Cleveland picture is from downriver and shows the fire at considerable distance, that in the Philadelphia picture is from directly across the Thames, and flames fill the left half of the picture. The size of the Westminster bridge, which reflects the light of the fire, is grossly exaggerated, adding to the compositional drama. The crowds in the foreground correspond to those described in the accounts of the fire, but the figures on the right seem to be looking not at the fire but out at us and resemble the densely packed mobs in several other late works of the painter. They seem to embody human insignificance before the uncontrollable destructive force of the fire. Some art critics propose that Turner's two paintings may have had symbolic meaning, the burning of the centre of government reflecting the malaise and conflict consuming the country as a result of agitation for the Reform Bill." However, there is no real evidence to substantiate this interpretation, and as the disaster was so obviously suited to Turner's abilities and inclinations, it is certainly not necessary to postulate a symbolic message to explain his painting it.

The destruction of the Houses of Parliament also had vast significance for the evolution "of English painting in general, as most of the major new developments



of the 1840s were connected with the program of decorating the new building designed by Sir Charles Barry.

Romantic Art in Britain. Painting and Drawings. **1760-1860.**

Catalogue: Frederick

Cummings, Allen Staley.

Catalogue No. **120** (by Allen

Staley). Philadelphia Museum of Art, **1968.**



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## NOTES

- 1. an earlier Way of feeling** - that of the Old Masters
- 2. Ruskin, John (1819-1900)** - eminent English art-critic, social-theorist and writer
- 3. "Modern Painters"** - many-volumed work written by John Ruskin in **1843-1860**, which contained analysis of J. Turner's art and style
- 4. Lord Egremont** = famous patron of art whose country house at Retworth, - Sussex, - was remarkable for its magnificent collection of pictures and its wood carvings
- 5. Man O'War** or **man-of-war** - (old use) armed ship
- 6. Georgian times** - the period of reign of the four English monarchs, from George I (**1714**) to George IV (**1830**)
- 7. wooden walls of old England** - a well-worn phrase in Turner's time for English ships
- 8. Thackeray, William Makepeace (1811-1863)** - famous English-satirist, the author "of "Vanity Fair"
- 9. Coleridge's ghost-ship** - the ship in Samuel Taylor Coleridge's poem "The

Rime of the Ancient Mariner" (1798)



**10. British Institution** - an institution for the Promotion of the Fine Arts in the United Kingdom formed in **1805**

**11. Reform Bill** - reform aiming at the improvement of the parliamentary system in the early 19th century

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Саратовский государственный университет имени Н. Г. Чернышевского

# **THOMAS LAWRENCE**

**(1769-1830)**



Thomas Lawrence was born at Bristol on April 13, 1769. By 1779 he had achieved something like a renown as a prodigy who could with equal ease take pencil profiles or recite from memory passages of Milton. The few drawings of the early period that survive are in pencil. They are clearly good likenesses but are remarkable only as being the productions of a boy. In 1779 the family moved to Oxford. Here Thomas took the likenesses of more than fifty of "the most eminent personages?" exhibited drawings after Bartolozzi, which were much admired. Here also his fame was spread by the publication of an engraving of his portrait by William Hoare. By the end of 1780 the Lawrences settled in Bath. He now began to take likenesses in pastel as well as in pencil.

Bath was important to Lawrence as a place of introduction to visiting members of London Society and more so as an ambiance which compensated for his lack of schooling. At Bath bookshops and print-shops were of a high order, and private collections in and around the city were an epitome of fashionable taste. To these he had easy access. He soon began to draw subject pieces in the Italian manner. For a copy in crayons after the version of Raphael's "Transfiguration" he received in 1795 the silver gilt palette of the Society of Arts in London. His first recorded painting (1795) was a "Christ Bearing the Cross", eight feet high.

In 1789 Lawrence exhibited his first full-length portrait "Lady Cremorne", a work of astonishing competence and a brilliant approximation to the easy dignity of the late Reynolds. Lady Cremorne, presumably on the strength of this portrait,

persuaded Queen Charlotte to sit to Lawrence on St. David's Day, in honour of the patron saint of Wales. In the eighteenth century this date coincided with Queen Charlotte's birthday.

In a broader context, it develops out of Gainsborough's cottage subjects of the later 1780's such as "The Cottage Door", and Horace Walpole, commenting on the version of "The Happy Cottagers" exhibited in 1790, wrote that it was "as good as Gainsborough", but with more harmony and better finished". Morland afforded the public a more intimate and detailed depiction of what was only glimpsed from further away in the Gainsborough. In Morland's "The Happy Cottagers" this closer look at the peasantry may well have reassured a middle class purchaser of the picture or print after it. Everyone looks well fed and happy, both the adult women are busy with domestic chores. The "moral" of the picture, if there is one, is very close to the ostensible morals of Morland's genre subjects of the late 1780's, that industry results in the happiness of all society.

Richard Dorment. British Painting in the Philadelphia Museum of Art. From the Seventeenth through the Nineteenth Century.

Philadelphia Museum of Art, 1980.



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## NOTES

1. **Spencer, Edmund (15527-1599)** - English poet, the major work of his life is "The Fairie Queen".
2. **Arcadia** - a mountainous and sparsely populated country in the middle of the Peloponesus, much celebrated by poets of antiquity. Arcadia was adopted by the poets as symbol of quiet rustic life. The inhabitants of Arcadia led an undisturbed and ideal life of rustic pleasures and habits.
3. **Walpole, Horace (1717-1797)** - English man of letters and art critic

## **EDWIN HENRY LANDSEER**

**(1802-1873)**



Edwin Henry Landseer sprang from a family of artists, and occupied an almost unique position in the art world from his babyhood. He was the youngest son of John Landseer, the engraver, and was born in London, 7 March 1802. His father taught him to draw in company with his two brothers, Hampstead Heath was his first studio. He also visited the Tower at an early age to sketch and to etch—for he began, too, to etch, when quite a boy—the animals preserved in those menageries. He actually began to exhibit at the Royal Academy before he was admitted as a student to their schools, sending his first work when only twelve years old, and figuring as an honorary exhibitor. His brothers were pupils of Haydon, but Edwin does not seem to have received anything beyond advice from that painter, who recommended him to dissect animals, which advice the young man acted upon. He entered the Academy as a student at the age of fourteen and became a great favourite with Fuseli, who, on coming into the school, would say, "Where is my little dog boy?"

In 1817 he sent "Mount St. Bernard Dogs" to the Water-colour Society, and to the Academy, "The Heads of a Pointer Bitch and Puppy". In 1822, the directors of the British Institution awarded him a premium for "The Larder Invaded", exhibited there; and in 1824 he contributed to the same gallery his celebrated work "The Cat's Paw", a monkey making use of a cat's paw, having first seized the unfortunate animal in his strong grip, to take the roasting chestnuts off the fire.

This is the first of his paintings in which a well-known moral is happily combined with humour. He was elected an associate of the Royal Academy in 1826, when only four-and-twenty, which is the earliest prescribed age, and had even at that time a great reputation. He became a full member five years later. In 1835 he sent to the Academy "The Drover's Departure". This picture contains a host of incidents arising from the departure of the herds from the Highlands to the south. "The Old Shepherd's Chief Mourner" is perhaps the most pathetic picture Landseer ever painted; and said fry Ruskin to be "one of the most perfect poems or pictures". If we want to see Landseer in a comic vein we have only to turn to "A Jack in Office". It was exhibited at the Academy in 1833.

The painter visited the Highlands when quite a young man, and ever after found in them many attractive subjects for his pencil - revisiting them again and again for the purposes both of sport and painting, though, as the artist ever came first, the gun was often laid aside for the sketch-book.



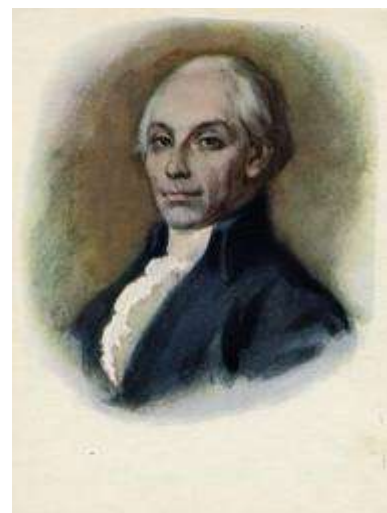
## *The Radishev State Art Museum in Saratov*



The Radishev State Art Museum in Saratov, one of the country's oldest museums and the first open-door art exhibition in provincial Russia, was founded in 1877, when a famous landscape painter Aleksei Bogoliubov (1824-1896), a grandchild of Alexander Radishev, an outstanding 18th-century Russian enlightener and writer, presented his large collection to the town of Saratov.

The erection of the museum building, designed by a Petersburg architect I. Schtrom, was sponsored by the municipality of the town. The stone-laying ceremony took place on May 1, 1883, and the Radishchev Art Museum was opened to the public on June 29, 1885. Long before the opening ceremony, the very creation of the museum had given a new to the artistic life in Saratov.

In 1888 the Society of Fine Arts Admirers was organized with a studio, where Viktor Borisov-Musatov, Pavel Kuznetsov, Petr Utkin and Alexander Matveev, would-be well-known artists of the "Saratov school", acquired their first professional skills. All



these masters were indisputably influenced by the collection of the Radishchev museum. In 1897 the Bogoliubov School of Drawing was opened. The collection of the museum started from over 500 objects once belonging to Bogoliubov.







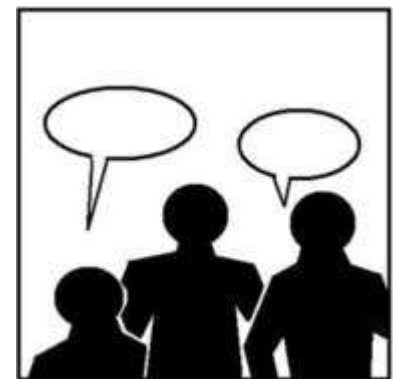
*Using the following guides as an outline, get ready to give a talk on the Saratov Radishchev Art Gallery*

- + Who found the gallery? When was it founded?
- + By whom was the gallery building designed?
- + When was the gallery opened?
- + What collections does the gallery house?  
Are there gallery collections unique?



- + How many items do the primary collections include?
- + Does the gallery include works of art from ancient, medieval and modern times?
- + Does the gallery house an outstanding collection of the old masters?
- + Does it have a great variety of Italian, Dutch and Flemish masters?
- + Is there a valuable display of French/British paintings?
- + Does it have an excellent choice of outstanding collection of the old masters?

- + What well-known Russian artists are represented in the collection of the notional Russian art?
- + What pictures does the modern collection include?
- + How are the collections arranged? Is the arrangement chronological?



- + Is each gallery room given to a particular epoch/movement in painting/theme?  
Are any rooms given to particular artists?
- + What objects furnishings/pieces of furniture (pottery, china) are used to set the pictures in a particular historical context?
- + Does the gallery hold any permanent/special/retrospective exhibitions?
- + Does the gallery acquire any new works of art?



### ***Exercises:***

***Act as a voluntary guide of the Saratov Radishchev Art Gallery.***

***Conduct a group of visitors around the collections of the gallery.***

***Give a ten-minute talk in front of the selected painting. Use as guides one of the sample descriptions of pictures.***

***Write a composition inspired by any of the pictures in the gallery or by the experience of visiting the gallery.***



И.Е. Репин был одним из самых выдающихся портретистов своей эпохи, и в музейной коллекции он представлен превосходными портретами.

Во всеоружии зрелого мастерства выступает Репин в портрете своей дочери Наденьки. Образ, окрашенный нежной поэтичностью, согретый особой теплотой отцовского чувства, кажется созданным в один прием, тотчас же за моментом пробуждения. «Девочка как-то заснула в кресле, склонив головку, и он так увлекся неожиданно прекрасным зрелищем, что тут пристроился ее писать. Потом уж ей пришлось изрядно попозировать, да и в трудной позе», - рассказывал И. Грабарь о создании этого портрета.

Девочка, одетая в летнее платье с белыми кружевами, лежит, прислонившись к подушке. Карие глаза уже открыты, но тельце, отяжелевшее от сна, еще охвачено сладкой истомой. Поза ее очень естественна: устойчивость покоя граничит в ней с нарождающимся движением. Диагональное расположение фигурки, фрагментарность композиции, легкий артистизм исполнения скрадывают впечатление долгой работы над образом. Репин сумел сохранить в нем живое ощущение мгновения.

Замечательно цветовое решение портрета. Гладкое, сплавленное письмо передает упругую круглоту детской щеки, нежную смуглость кожи, подчеркнутую голубовато-белой подушкой. Быстрые касания кисти намечают кольца шелковистых каштановых кудрей. Очень уверенно и в богатых оттенках разбеленно-розового, переходящего в серое и коричневатое, написаны полотняное платье и фон. Ни одного контраста, ни одного резко звучащего тона. Красочные переходы, мягкие и последовательные, легкие, идущий по форме, будто оглаживающий фигурный мазок, - выражение искреннего любования и бережности.

<http://www.radmuseumart.ru>



## Guides for Discussing a Picture



1. What's the picture called? What's the artist's name? To what school of painting (movement in painting) does the artist belong?
2. What genre of painting does the picture belong to? Is it a landscape/, a seascape/, a portrait/, a still life/, a self-portrait of/, a conversation piece/, a flower piece/, a family piece/, a battle piece/, an animal painting/?
3. Is the picture painted in oils or in water-colours? Is it an oil painting or a water-colour painting?
4. Who (what) is depicted in the picture? Whom (what) does the picture depict? Is the sitter (model, subject) depicted sitting/, standing/, walking/, etc.? Does the picture depict a street scene/, a city scene/, a country scene/, a hunting scene/, a historical scene/, a biblical scene/, a battle scene/, a sleeping child/, a man sitting at the window/, etc. / a scene from everyday life/, village life/, court life/, modern street life/, etc. Is the sitter, (model, subject) represented standing/, walking/, in a landscape (background)?
5. What is the composition of the picture? How are the various elements of the picture arranged? Is the composition of the picture conventional/, striking/, unusual? What does the arrangement of (the figures) suggest? What is there in the foreground, in the left/right foreground, in the centre/middle of the picture, in the right/left background, in the distance? Is the sitter, (model, subject) placed in/against a landscape background/ a dark background?
6. What's the colour scheme of the picture? What colours does the painter use (light, dark, bright, pale, vivid, brilliant, intense, luminous, fresh, harsh, soft, subdued, delicate, warm, and cool)? Does the painter employ cool colours- bluish greens, blues and violets-for the shadows, and warm colours, that is those where yellows predominate-for the fully lit areas? Does he use colour effectively? Does he have a wonderful sense of colour? Is he a superb (fine,

- good, poor) colourist? What colours predominate (prevail) in the picture?
7. What's the general effect (the effect produced by a picture as a whole)? Does the artist have a wonderful sense of colour/, line/, form/, composition/, balance?
  8. What gives the picture a sense (impression) of space/, movement/, poetry/, grandeur/, etc.?
  9. How does the artist render the play of light/, light and shade effects/, the effects of sunlight/ etc.?
  10. What idea does the picture convey? Does the painter convey/render effectively the atmosphere of.../, the inner life of.../, the beauty of...?  
What mood does the picture suggest? What feelings are communicated to the viewer through the picture? What impression does it leave the viewer with?



***Exercise:***

***Describe a landscape/, a portrait/, a seascape/, a conversation piece/, using the guides given above.***



## Sample Descriptions Of Pictures

### *John Constable: 'Flatford Mill on the River Stour'*



It was left for Constable to give landscape its final dispatch. For the first time the vivid of nature invaded the domain of landscape painting. 'Flatford Mill on the River Stour', painted in 1817, shows that even then he developed a style that was conspicuous for its intimate naturalism. He had brought painting out of doors. The scene is typically English. In the near foreground a horse with a boy on its back is being attached to the towing rope of a barge floating idly on the stream. In the distance is a lock and the building of the mill. To the right of the picture stretches a level expanse of pasture, interspersed with trees. The time is early summer when the foliage is heaviest and the grass has not lost the freshness of spring. Green shadows dapple the sunlit sward, and over all is a soft and tranquil sky.

*J.M.W. Turner: 'The Fighting Temeraire'*



Here the great ship of the old world of sail is being towed to its end by the strong squat little stream-tug. The emotional importance of the farewell moment is brought out by the tremendous burst of sunset. The sun is going down and the moon taking over; the death of one age is the birth of another.

The oppositions inside the moment of change are expressed in a large number of ways, by contrast of cool and warm colours, the pallid moon and the pearly-white ship against the orange red of the sun going down between the closing lines of the two shores.

The forward-thrown reflections and the sun-rays over the waters converge on the artist, the spectator, implicating him.

Here Turner sums up the span of time, with all its deep changes. The doom of the old ship is given a further significance for him by the fact that the timbers are to be broken up and made the source of private profit.



**Exercises:**

***Give a talk on your favourite English artist.***

***Base your talk on the information given in this section and any additional appropriate information.***



## Painting

### *Exemplary Vocabulary Story*

- *Here are students` vocabulary stories i.e. some facts from biography of the most outstanding English painters and the descriptions of their masterpieces with the use of topical vocabulary on the topic 'Painting'. There are some mistakes (grammar, lexical, spelling, etc.) in each story. Find out mistakes and correct them.*



One day Jane went to an art museum. She was eager to know more about **painting**. There she met a guide who told her everything: how to run a gallery, **to exhibit a picture or a statue, to be awarded the first prize and to become famous overnight**.

At the museum there were a lot of different **canvases: oil paintings, water-colour and pastel pictures, even sketches and studies**. The museum possessed **a great variety of portraits: family group, ceremonial, intimate portrait, self-portraits, shoulder-, half-, knee- and full-length portraits**. And, of course, there were **landscapes, seascapes, genre and historical paintings, still life paintings, battle and flower pieces**. And Jane regarded many of them as **unsurpassed masterpieces**.

The guide was telling Jane about the authors of these **exquisite pieces of painting**. Some of them were **fashionable** ones, others were **self-taught** but all of them were doubtless **mature artists**. Most were **portrait or landscape painters**, some **specialized in portraiture or still life**, some **painted mythological or historical subjects**. Jane also got to know that an artist may **paint from nature, memory or imagination**.

At the museum Jane observed the paintings where people and their emotions **were portrayed either with moving sincerity or with restraint**. There were pictures



depicting persons and their mood or scenes of common life. Many painters interpreted the personality of their sitters revealing their nature, capturing the sitters' vitality and transient expression. And there were a few who even exposed the dark sides of life.

Jane also noticed that all the painters tried to develop their own style of painting, though some of them conformed to the taste of the period, others broke with the tradition trying to be in advance of their time. The guide told Jane that not all of these great masters became famous overnight – many died forgotten and penniless.

There were few paintings that seemed to Jane dull, crude, chaotic colourless daubs of paint. Her guide agreed that she found them obscure and unintelligible, gaudy, depressing, disappointing, cheap and vulgar. And she supposed that it was so because of gaudy and agitated colouring or low-keyed, dull, oppressive, harsh colour scheme that the artists used.

Most of all Jane enjoyed the picture where there was a little boy playing with a dog depicted in the foreground. It was arranged asymmetrically, in a horizontal format. She divided the picture space diagonally, with the two playing figures in the left-hand corner placed against the landscape background. The nearer figures were defined more sharply with their contours emphasized purposely. They blended with the landscape merging into a single entity. The forest in the background was scarcely discernible that conveyed a sense of space. The fact, that the boy was silhouetted against an open sky and a lawn and represented playing with his dog, indicates his social status.

While painting the picture the author combined form and colour into harmonious unity using the brilliant colour scheme where hot, soft and delicate tones predominate. Though, as the guide said, the delicacy of tones may be lost

**in reproductions. Jane found the picture moving, lyrical, romantic, original, and poetic in tone and atmosphere, distinguished by a marvelous sense of colour and composition.**

### *Additional Material with Topical Vocabulary*

#### *Thomas Gainsborough*

Thomas Gainsborough (christened 14 May 1727 – 2 August 1788) was a prominent British **portrait** and **landscape painter**.

He was born in Sudbury, Suffolk, in 1727. At the age of thirteen he **evinced a marked inclination for drawing** and in 1740 his father sent him to London to study art. Therefore Gainsborough was called a **self-taught artist** as he received his education in England, not in Italy. He stayed in London for eight years, working under Gravelot, **a mature artist who specialized in portraiture**, not in **still life**; he also became familiar with the Flemish tradition of painting, which **conformed to the taste of that time**.

In 1750 Gainsborough moved to Ipswich where his professional career began in earnest. He executed a great many **small-sized portraits** as well as **landscapes** which he depicted mostly **from nature**, not **memory** or **imagination**. Gainsborough did not **become famous overnight**: in 1759 he moved to Bath where he became a **fashionable** artist, portraying the aristocracy, wealthy merchants, artists and men of letters **with moving sincerity, revealing the person's nature and capturing the sitter's vitality**. He preferred **full-length, life-size** portraits to **shoulder-, half- or knee-length** ones. Gainsborough combined **portrait and landscape painting into harmonious unity**, as the latter was not popular at that time. He preferred them to **mythological** or **historical subjects**,

**seascapes**. He did not specialize in **genre** or **historical paintings**, **battle pieces** or **flower pieces**.

Gainsborough neither had nor desired pupils, but his art — ideologically and technically was entirely different from that of his rival Reynolds — but had considerable influence on the artists of the English school who followed him. He **developed his own style of painting** and **broke with the tradition** not only in painting original English countryside. His works are painted in **clear and transparent tone**, the artist used **colour scheme where green, blue and brown predominate**. Gainsborough is also known as the grandfather of impressionism as he was **in advance of his time** and was the first who started using **broken-brush strove**.

His output includes about eight hundred portraits and more than two hundred landscapes.

Thomas Gainsborough did not belong to those painters who despite their **masterpieces died forgotten and penniless**. Practically all his paintings are **unsurpassed masterpieces, touching, poetic, lyrical** and romantic.

### *“Robert Andrews and Mary, his Wife”*

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“Robert Andrews and Mary, his Wife” is an **oil painting** by a **prominent British artist** Thomas Gainsborough. The couple was married in 1748, not long before Gainsborough painted their **ceremonial family portrait** where he **silhouetted the sitters against** traditional English **background** - and that of Auberries, their farm near Sudbury. The church **in the background** is St Peter's, Sudbury, and the tower to the left is that of Lavenham church. This portrait is **an exquisite piece of painting** and **an unsurpassed masterpiece**.

**The picture is painted from nature, not from memory or imagination.** Though we should not imagine that they sat together under a tree while Gainsborough set up his easel among the sheaves of corn; their costumes were most likely painted from dressed-up artist's mannequins, which might account for their doll-like appearance, and **the landscape** would have been studied separately.

This is a **family group, full-length** but not **life-sized portrait** that **blends** with the **landscape background into harmonious unity.** Robert Andrews **is presented standing** while Mary, his wife, **is depicted sitting** in an open-air rustic bench – the setting is typical of Gainsborough's early works, painted in his native Suffolk after his return from London. The picture **is arranged asymmetrically**, in a **horizontal format**, not in a **vertical** one. We may **divide the picture space diagonally**: in the **left-hand corner** we can see a lady and a gentleman with a dog and the English landscape is **discernible** in the **right-hand corner** and **in the back ground** of the **canvas** that makes the **painting romantic, lyrical in tone and atmosphere** and **original.**

**The nearer figures**, these are of Robert Andrews and Mary, his wife, and a dog are **defined more sharply**; **the contours are emphasized purposely in the foreground.** While the corn field **in the background** is **scarcely discernible.** The author **conveys** skillfully **the sense of space.** **The figures are placed against the landscape background** very reasonably: the man in a green jacket harmonizes with the vegetation and the woman in a blue dress is emphasized by the blue sky. The dressing of the figures **indicates** that **the sitters** belong to the high society.

The particular discovery of Gainsborough was the creation of a form of art in which **the sitters and the background merge into a single entity.** The landscape is not kept in the background, but in most cases **man blends with nature** through the atmospheric harmony of mood; the artist emphasized that the natural background for his characters neither was, nor ought to be, the drawing-room or a

reconstruction of historical events, but the changeable and harmonious manifestations of nature, as revealed both in the fleeting moment and in the slowly evolving seasons.

Gainsborough shows the pleasure of resting on a rustic bench in the cool shade of an oak tree, while all around the ripe harvest throbs in a hot atmosphere enveloped by a golden light. He **combined form and colour into harmonious unity** using a brilliant **colour scheme where green and blue predominate**. The picture is rather **muted in colour**. The colours are **cool and restful, soft and delicate**. It is **moving and lyrical** as the colours are not **dull, oppressive or harsh**, though **the delicacy of tones may be lost in reproductions**.

I find the picture **touching**, as it brilliantly **depicts** the English landscape, **original and poetic in tone and atmosphere**. That **exquisite piece of painting is distinguished by a marvelous sense of colour and composition**.

### *“Mrs. Sarrah Siddons”*

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"Mrs. Sarah Siddons" by Gainsborough has the distinction of being not only **an unsurpassed masterpiece**, but a unique interpretation of a unique personality. It is not only one of the artist's finest portraits, but also one of the best of the many likenesses of the great tragic actress, who **posed** to most of the **fashionable and mature** artists of her day. It was painted in 1783—1785, when the queen of the tragic drama was in her twenty-ninth year and at the zenith of her fame.

The **canvas** is an **oil painting**. It is a **ceremonial, half-length portrait** arranged **symmetrically, in a pyramid and vertical formats**. Therefore, we can not **divide the picture space diagonally**.

**In the foreground** we may see a lady who is **represented sitting** dressed in

beautiful clothing with a pompous bonnet. And she **is posed against the drapery in the background** unlike many Gainsborough's typical works where he **places the figures against the landscape background**. As it is a **female portrait**, the sitter's **contours are emphasized purposely**, while the drapery is **scarcely discernible**, especially in **reproductions**. The painter brilliantly **conveys a sense of space** and **the sitter and the background merge into a single entity**. The sitter's social status **is accentuated** by her dressing that **indicates her profession**.

The portrait is **painted from nature** and the sitter is **depicted with moving sincerity**. Gainsborough skillfully **reveals the actress's nature** and **captures her vitality and transient expression**.

In a masterly fashion Gainsborough uses not **gaudy** or **muted in colour** but saturated **colouring combining form and colour into harmonious unity**. We may enjoy **the brilliant colour scheme where red and yellow predominate**. **The colours** are not **cool and restful** but **hot and agitated** though we may not say that they make the painting **dull, oppressive or harsh**. That portrait **conformed to the taste of the period**, and Gainsborough **broke with the tradition**. He was **in advance of his time**.

I find the picture **moving, lyrical and romantic** especially as it portrays an actress. It is an **original, exquisite piece of painting distinguished by a marvelous sense of colour and composition**. One can hardly characterize that masterpiece as a **colourless daub of paint, cheap and vulgar**.

An enthusiastic admirer who saw it in the Manchester exhibition of 1857 wrote as follows: "The great tragic actress, who interpreted the passions with such energy and such feeling, and who felt them so strongly herself, is better portrayed in this simple half-length pose in her day dress, than in allegorical portraits as the Tragic Muse or in character parts. This portrait is so original, so individual, as a poetic

expression of character, as a deliberate selection of pose, as bold colour and free handling, it is like the work of no other painter.”

### *Sir Joshua Reynolds*

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Sir Joshua Reynolds (16 July 1723 – 23 February 1792) was a **fashionable, mature** English **painter** specializing in portraiture.

He was born in Plympton, Devon. As one of eleven children, and the son of the village school-master, Reynolds was restricted to a formal education provided by his father. Showing an early interest in art, Reynolds was apprenticed in 1740 to the **fashionable portrait painter** Thomas Hudson. He spent over two years in Italy, where he studied **to paint from nature** and **to conform to the taste of the period**. In his works Reynolds used traditional Italian background where **the sitter is posed against an open sky, a classic pillar or snow**. And the **colour scheme** he used also didn't **break with the tradition: dark-red, brown and yellow tones were prevailing**.

It is said that in his long life he painted as many as three thousand portraits. **He neither died forgotten and penniless nor became famous overnight**. Reynolds was one of the founders and first President of the Royal Academy. George III appreciated his merits and knighted him in 1769.

### *Lady Elizabeth Delmé and Her Children*

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“Lady Elizabeth Delmé and Her Children” is **an oil painting** by Joshua Reynolds. Lady Delme was the wife of a Member of Parliament and belonged to the privileged class of the landed nobility.

It is a **family group intimate full-length** but not **life-sized portrait**. The painting is arranged **symmetrically, in a pyramid and vertical formats**; therefore we can't **divide the picture space diagonally**.

**The nearer figures**, that are of lady Delmé, her children and the dog, are **defined more sharply** and their **contours are emphasized purposely**. **The sitters are placed against the landscape background** that is **scarcely discernible**. The canvas **conveys a sense of space**. The figures and the landscape **merge into a single entity**. Reynolds took care that the gestures, facial expressions, and poses of his **sitters indicate** their age, character, and social status. So, in this portrait, Lady Delme is dignified and gracious, secure in the knowledge of her beauty and wealth. Her son John, aged five, as if sensing the responsibilities of manhood, gazes sternly toward the distant horizon. Her other son, Emelias Henry, in unmasculine skirts as befits his three years, is coy and winsome. The fourth member of the group, the unkempt Skye terrier, is the embodiment of loyal affection. Lady Delmé is **represented sitting** while her children are represented **standing**.

**The simplicity of the pyramidal design** and the **low-keyed colour scheme** are the features of Reynolds symbols of dignity and good taste. He **combined form and colour into harmonious unity** and **portrayed people and their emotions with restraint**. The colours he used are not **dull, oppressive or harsh**; though **the delicacy of tones may be lost in a reproduction**.

**The picture is lyrical, romantic and poetic in tone and atmosphere** as it depicts a family resting among the trees. It is **an exquisite piece of painting** and **an unsurpassed masterpiece**, distinguished by a **marvelous sense of colour** and **composition**.



## *John Constable*

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John Constable (11 June 1776 – 31 March 1837) was an English Romantic painter. Born in Suffolk, he is known principally for his **landscape paintings** of Dedham Vale, the area surrounding his home—now known as "Constable Country". "I should paint my own places best", he wrote to his friend John Fisher in 1821, "Painting is but another word for feeling".

Although his paintings are now among the most popular and valuable in British art, **he was never financially successful**; he was **penniless** and did not become a member of the establishment until he was elected to the Royal Academy at the age of 52. So Constable did not **become famous overnight**. He sold more paintings in France than in his native England.

John Constable was born in East Bergholt, a village on the River Stour in Suffolk. He didn't **specialize in portraiture** but was **a landscape painter**. The artist **broke with the tradition** being **in advance of his time**. As an innovator Constable enjoyed depicting his own English countryside. He also **introduced green into painting and started using broken-brush stroke wider**, therefore Constable is thought to be the father of impressionism.

### *The Cornfield*

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"The Cornfield" is **an oil-on-canvas painting** by the English artist John Constable. Constable referred to the painting as "The Drinking Boy" and it is thought to show a lane leading from East Bergholt towards Dedham, Essex.

As we know, John Constable firstly **made a sketch from nature** and then, in his studio, finished **the picture from memory or imagination**. The artist **skillfully**

**depicted a scene of common life, capturing the mood of the clear summer day.**

The picture is arranged **asymmetrically, in a vertical format. In the foreground** we can see a boy drinking from the spring in the left-hand bottom corner and a **shepherding dog. These figures are defined more sharply with their contours emphasized purposely.** The road through the forest **in the foreground** leads to a **cornfield in the background.** And the hills behind it are **scarcely discernible** that helps to **convey a sense of space.** The figures in the picture **blend with the landscape background into a single entity.**

Constable **combined form and colour into harmonious unity** using **the brilliant colour scheme** where **green and yellow predominate.** The colours are **hot and soft,** though **the delicacy of tones may be lost in a reproduction.**

I find **the picture moving, lyrical, and poetic in tone and atmosphere.** That **exquisite piece of painting,** distinguished by a **marvelous sense of colour and composition** may be observed in the National Gallery in London.



## *William Hogarth*

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William Hogarth (10 November 1697 – 26 October 1764) was an English painter, printmaker, pictorial satirist, social critic and editorial cartoonist who is regarded as a father of western sequential art.

William Hogarth was born at Bartholomew Close in London to Richard Hogarth, a poor Latin school teacher and textbook writer, and Anne Gibbons. In his youth he **was apprenticed to the engraver** Ellis Gamble in Leicester Fields, where he learned to engrave trade cards and similar products. Young Hogarth also took a lively interest in the street life of the metropolis and the London fairs, and amused himself by sketching the characters he saw.

His work ranged from realistic portraiture to comic strip-like series of pictures called "modern moral subjects". So he **developed his own style of painting** and tried **to break with the tradition**. Much of his work poked fun at contemporary politics and customs; illustrations in such style are often referred to as "Hogarthian". Hogarth **portrayed people and their emotions with moving sincerity**. He **depicted scenes of common life and revealed the person's nature exposing the dark sides of life**.

### *The Gate of Calais or O, the Roast Beef of Old England*

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The Gate of Calais or O, the Roast Beef of Old England is **an oil painting** by William Hogarth. Hogarth produced the painting directly after his return from 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 friar

look on hungrily. Hogarth painted himself in the left corner with a "soldier's hand upon my shoulder."

The canvas is a **genre painting**. It is **painted from nature and partially from memory**, partially **from imagination**. It is **arranged asymmetrically** and **in a vertical format** but we can hardly say that it is **in a pyramid format** or **the picture space is divide diagonally**.

**In the foreground** we can see different people as: soldiers, a man carrying a beef and some others, who **are defined more sharply with their contours emphasized purposely**. They are **placed against** the Gate background and the rest of the town which is **scarcely discernible**. All these **convey a sense of space**. **The figures in the foreground merge into a single entity with the background**.

By clothes and manners of the figures we can indicate their profession. Most figures **are represented standing and talking** while a man in the right-hand corner **is represented sitting**. The artist skillfully **captured** the figures' **transient expressions exposing the dark sides of life**.

Hogarth **combined form and colour into harmonious unity** using **the colour scheme** where **hot and agitated tones predominate**, such as dark-red and brown.

The picture is neither **lyrical, romantic, poetic in tone and atmosphere**, nor **dull, chaotic, obscure and unintelligible**. I think that some people may call it **gaudy, depressing** or even **cheap and vulgar**. But, from my point of view, it is an **unsurpassed masterpiece**.

## *William Turner*

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William Turner (23 April 1775–19 December 1851) was an English Romantic **landscape painter, watercolourist and printmaker**. Although renowned for his **oil paintings**, Turner is also one of the greatest masters of British **watercolour landscape painting**. He is commonly known as "the painter of light" and his work regarded as a Romantic preface to Impressionism.

Turner was born in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, London, England. He entered the Royal Academy of Art schools in 1789, when he was only 14 years old, and was accepted into the academy a year later. Sir Joshua Reynolds, the president of the Royal Academy, chaired the panel that admitted him. At first Turner showed a **keen interest** in architecture but was advised to continue painting by the architect Thomas Hardwick (junior). A **watercolour** by Turner was **accepted** for the Summer Exhibition of 1790 after only one year's study. He **exhibited** his first **oil painting** in 1796, *Fishermen at Sea*, and thereafter exhibited at the academy nearly every year for the rest of his life.

Therefore Turner didn't **become famous overnight** but he became prosperous very early. He **developed his own style of painting** and **became a fashionable and mature artist specializing in landscape and seascape paintings**. Critics consider Turner to be the best English painter.

Speaking about the destiny of his masterpieces, we know that as he never married he loved his works as children and never sold them. According to Turner's will all his pictures and **seascapes** were inherited by the British nation and nowadays most of them are in the Tate Gallery.

### *The Fighting Téméraire tugged to her last Berth to be broken up*

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“The Fighting Téméraire tugged to her last Berth to be broken up” is **an oil canvas** that made Turner famous. It depicts one of the last second-rate ships of the line which played a distinguished role in the Battle of Trafalgar in 1805 being towed towards its final berth in East London in 1838 to be broken up for scrap. When Turner came to paint this picture he was at the height of his career, having exhibited at the Royal Academy, London, for 40 years. He was renowned for his highly atmospheric paintings in which he explored the subjects of the weather, the sea and the effects of light. He spent much of his life near the River Thames estuary and did many paintings of ships and waterside scenes, both **in watercolour and in oils**.

The seascape **is arranged asymmetrically, in a horizontal format**. We can **divide the picture space diagonally** with the two ships in the **left-hand bottom corner** and in the **right-hand upper corner** we can observe a wonderfully depicted sunset that has a symbolical meaning of the end of an epoch in British Naval history. There is one more figure – a rising moon **in the background** which is **scarcely discernible**. It is the symbol of the commencement of the new, industrial era.

Only the **contours** of the towboat are **emphasized purposely**. As for the Fighting Téméraire it **blends with** the landscape background **merging into a single entity**. Thereby the artist wanted to emphasize that the ship had already become a part of past.

Turner **combined form and colour into harmonious unity** using the **brilliant colour scheme** where **hot, restful and delicate tones predominate**. Though **the delicacy of tones may be lost in a reproduction**.

I find **the picture moving, lyrical, romantic, original, poetic in tone and atmosphere**. That is an **exquisite piece of painting** distinguished by a **marvelous**

**sense of colour and composition.** It hangs in the National Gallery, London.

## *Russian Painters*

### *Arkhip Kuindzhi*

Arkhip Ivanovich Kuindzhi (January 27, 1842 – July 24, 1910) is a prominent Ukrainian and Russian **landscape painter**.

He was born in Mariupol (present-day Ukraine), but he spent his youth in the city of Taganrog. He grew up in a poor family, and his father was a Greek shoemaker. Arkhip was six years old when he lost his parents, so that he was forced to make his living, working at the church building site, grazing domestic animals, and working at the corn merchant's shop. Initially **self-taught** as an artist, he twice failed the St Petersburg Academy's entrance examination, despite coaching by the **mature marine painter** Ivan Aivazovsky.

In 1868, however, he was accepted as an external student. He persevered against conservative prejudice and poverty throughout his early career, supplementing his income by retouching photographs. In his early **landscape paintings** he often sought to **capture** seasonal **moods with moving sincerity**, as in *Autumn Mud* (1872; St Petersburg, Rus. Mus.). In 1872 the artist left the academy and worked as a freelancer. The painting *Na ostrove Valaam (On the Valaam Island)* was the first **artwork**, which Pavel Tretyakov acquired for his art gallery.

In 1873, Kuindzhi exhibited his painting *The Snow*, which received the bronze medal at the International Art Exhibition in London in 1874. In the middle of 1870s he created a number of paintings in which the **landscape motif** was designed for concrete social associations in the spirit of Peredvizhniki (*Forgotten village*, 1874; *Chumatski path*, 1875; both - in Tretyakov gallery). Therefore, step

by step Kuindzhi was **developing his own style of painting** and though he didn't become famous overnight he was turned into a fashionable and **mature artist**, specialized in landscapes and seascapes.

Spectacular **masterpieces**, such as the *Birch Grove* (1879; Moscow, Tret'yakov Gal.), greatly moved contemporary viewers as the artist **broke with the tradition being in advance of his time**.

Through years of experimentation, Kuindzhi developed a highly original technique, which he applied to an increasingly typical, at times almost visionary, treatment of subjects such as snow-covered mountains and moonlight (e.g. *Elbnis: Moonlit Night*, 1890-95; Moscow, Tret'yakov Gal.). He painted **romantic landscapes** and sought to render the highest expressiveness in illuminating states of nature. He used intensive **colour scheme** and unusual perspectives to achieve a decorative vibration within the painting. Due to imperfections in the paints he used, many of his **exquisite pieces of painting distinguished by a marvellous sense of colour and composition** soon darkened.

An outstanding teacher, he directed the St Petersburg Academy's department of landscape painting from 1894 to 1897. His influence led to the rise of a school of landscape painters working in a similarly **lyrical, original** manner, which included former pupils such as Arkady Rylov and Nicholas Roerich.

### ***“A Birch Grove” (1879)***

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Kuindzhi developed a new vision in his painting, *Birch Grove* (1879). It is both realistic and conventionalized; it looks as a condensed essence of reality. The treatment of the landscape in this painting doesn't **conform to the taste of the period**. The image of a sublime and perfect nature suggests the artist's desire to reach a full-blooded evocation of life, an approach that would be echoed in the



dream-like fantasies of the artists of the next generation.

The **canvas is an oil painting**. It is **arranged symmetrically, in a horizontal format**, so we can't **divide the picture space diagonally**. The **picture is painted from nature**, but with the help of **memory and imagination**.

**In the foreground** one can see several birch trees in the shadow that are defined more sharply, with their **contours emphasized purposely**. The nearer birch trees are **silhouetted against the landscape background** that is the rest birch grove which is **scarcely discernible**. The figures **merge into a single entity** and therefore **convey a sense of space**.

The artist skillfully **combined form and colour into harmonious unity** using **brilliant colour scheme where green, blue and yellow predominate**. These **cool, restful soft and delicate** tones serve to **reveal** the beauty and the mystery, the harmony and the warmth of Russian nature. There is no even a sign of a dull Russian existence. The contrast of tones creates the feeling of brilliance. The picture seems to be flooded with light that makes the viewer squint. Though, unluckily, **the delicacy of tones may be lost in reproductions**.

Kuindzhi's Birch Grove is a **moving, lyrical, romantic, original piece of painting**. It is **an unsurpassed masterpiece poetic in tone and atmosphere** and **distinguished by a marvelous sense of colour and composition**.

Kuindzhi created an autonomous poetic world, confined within a realm of fanciful beauty and separated by invisible borders from ordinary life. This tendency was quite typical of Russian art and literature at the beginning of the twentieth century- the creation of an imaginary world full of symbolic undertones, riddles and revelations, the **conveying of a sense of starry cosmic space** were among the major characteristics of Russian art in that period.

### ***“Rainbow” (1900-1905)***

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An **oil landscape** “Rainbow” is another **unsurpassed masterpiece** of a prominent **landscape painter** Arkhip Kuindzhi.

The **canvas** is **arranged symmetrically, in a horizontal format**. In this **exquisite piece of painting** the artist **captures the nature's transient condition** that is a huge rainbow above the field of grass, **placed against** thunderclouds. But there is a ray of light and it allows the sun to produce that exquisite, enchanting rainbow which illuminates the field below. And the artist skillfully **depicts the scene**.

**The nearer figures in the foreground**, that are the road, the grass and the flowers, **are defined more sharply** with their **contours emphasized purposely**. While the hills **in the background** are **scarcely discernible** that **conveys a sense of space**. The rainbow in the sky **blends with the landscape merging into a single entity**.

Kuindzhi uses **brilliant colour scheme** where **green, yellow and blue colours predominate**. He **combines form and colour into harmonious unity** and his colours are **cool and restful, soft and delicate** which allows him to achieve lighting effects and to make the viewer think of unbelievable reality of the scene that can hardly be observed in real life. Though, **the delicacy of tones may be lost in reproductions**.

The picture is **moving, lyrical, romantic, original, and poetic in tone and atmosphere**. That **unsurpassed masterpiece distinguished by a marvelous sense of colour and composition** may be observed in Taganrog Museum of Art.



## The Creative Work of Linda White: Topical Story



I would like to describe the creative work of Linda White. She was born in England, London, 1829, the daughter of a poor farmer. She can be described as a **self-taught artist**. But I can say that she also is a **fashionable and mature artist** according to her works. Judging by her pictures she is a **portrait painter** but not a **landscape** one, though she tried herself in this direction. She **Painted from nature** basically, but it is known that sometimes she **Painted from memory and imagination**. She never **Painted mythological and historical subjects** as well as she wasn't **specialized in drawing of still life**.



Since she was a portrait painter she **portrayed people, their emotions with moving sincerity** and sometimes **with restraint**. She could express the mood of

**the sitter** in her work, **to render** and **interpret the personality of the sitter**; thereby she **revealed the person's nature** and **captured the sitter's vitality** or his/her **transient expression**. Also as we can see nowadays some of her pictures **depict a scene of common life**.



When Linda left school, she began **to develop her own style of painting** at once. She had **to conform to the taste of her period** but she didn't want to be a stereotype and as a result her works **broke with the tradition** and **were in advance of her time**. Thanks to her persistence and that she **was in advance of her time** she **became famous overnight**. And from my point of view she could not **die forgotten and penniless**.

She didn't **expose the dark sides of life** as the other painters did, because she thought that her paintings should express only beauty of human nature or only the bright sides of their life.

The portraits painted by her are of different kinds. These are: **shoulder-length, half-length, knee-length** and **full-length portraits**, she seldom **executed life-size portraits**. She was fond of **painting family group, ceremonial** and **intimate portraits**.

She preferred basically **an oil painting** with making **sketches** on the **canvas**. But among her collection there are a lot of **water-colour** or **pastel portraits** that are considered **the masterpieces**.



By the way some of her **sketches** and **studies** that she didn't complete have come down to us and they have an important painting value. Also it is known that Linda White tried herself in **landscape** and **seascape painting**, in **genre** and **historical painting** but she didn't become interested in it.

And now I would like to give some information about her famous portrait where she **depicted** her sister. **In the foreground** of the portrait we can see a young girl with the distinctive and very nice appearance. There is a window **in the**

**background** of this portrait. The portrait of her sister **is arranged in a pyramid format**, in contrast with the other Linda's works that she **arranged symmetrically, asymmetrically or in a vertical format**. In the top of the window which is behind the girl we can see the smallest part of the summer yard and there are trees in the bottom of this yard which **are scarcely discernible**. As we can see the figure of the girl isn't **placed against the landscape background**, though she is placed against the window with the particular part of the landscape.



Also I can say that colour of the girl's dress **blends with the part of the landscape** in the window and with the surroundings of the room that she is in. The painter **divided the portrait space diagonally** and **emphasized contours purposely**.



She didn't **define the nearer figures** more or less **sharply** to keep naturalness. She clearly **conveyed a sense of space** in that portrait. Perfectly picked up colors **merge into a single entity** creating a magnificent **colour scheme**. The author didn't **indicate the sitter's profession**. The girl is **represented not standing but sitting** on a chair, she isn't talking with anybody. From my point of view the author **accentuated** her sister's **youth** and her pure soul using **soft and delicate colors**. As I think that portrait is **poetic in tone and atmosphere** and is **distinguished by a marvelous scene and composition**. That work can be supposed as an **unsurpassed masterpiece** among the rest of the author's works. That portrait is not similar to many other portraits written by Linda White, where the **colour scheme is brilliant or low-keyed**, and where the author **combined form and colour into harmonious unity**. She tried not to use **colour scheme where gaudy or muted colours predominate**, colours in her paintings are **cool and restful**, sometimes **hot and agitated**, never **dull, oppressive or harsh**. There are **subtle and delicate**



**colouring** in Linda`s portraits and landscapes. In her works **sitters** are often **posed** or simply **silhouetted against an open sky** or a **classic pillar** or even **against the snow**. I think it does a picture or a portrait natural and cheerful, filled with bright colour scheme which is perfectly combined with the sitter. And it is very pity that **the delicacy of tones may be lost in a reproduction**.



As well as in works of all artists there are the distinctive features corresponding to her own style in Linda`s works. All her pictures and portraits are **moving, lyrical, romantic** and **original**. They contain **an exquisite piece of painting** and a lot of positive emotions. But other people may say that her works are **dull**, or are simply **colourless daubs of paint** or even that they are **cheap and unintelligible**. But I think if somebody thinks so he or she understands nothing in art.

I like going to museums and to admire her pictures. And when I am there I can collect feedback of people who say that some pictures exhibited in this museum are **crude, chaotic** or **obscure**, and the other people say that the pictures they have seen have **gaudy coloring**, and that some pictures have caused depressing and disappointing impressions, and that the pictures are even **vulgar**. But my impressions are always positive.

In conclusion I want to say that Linda`s life proceeded in a creative rhythm, she constantly improved and **developed her own style**, creating one masterpiece after another. And before her death the last picture she had painted was her **self-portrait** which reflected the skill of the real **mature artist** who had left the valuable heritage for mankind.



### **Helpful Hints**

#### **How to analyze the work of art?**

**Part 1:**

**Step 1: GENERAL EFFECT**

description of what is seen

natural/spontaneous; contrived/artificial

period/trend represented

the artist

title of the work: appropriate/inappropriate

**Step 2: CONTENTS OF THE WORK**

place; time; setting

age, physical appearance of subject

accessories; dress; environment

indicators of mood, personality, emotion

accentuation

**Step 3: COMPOSITION and COLOURING**

background

posture of subject/s: bold/rigid; posed/formal; natural/informal

details: eyes, hands, head, body

predominate tints; are colors blended

brush strokes: obvious; imperceptible

**Step 4: INTERPRETATION/EVALUATION**

degree of artistic skill

artist's purpose

feelings, ideas, emotions evoked

would you like to own this work?

***Part 2:***

**Useful words and phrases for the analysis of the**



## **work of art**

### ***Information on artist and year of origin***

- ... (image) is a painting by ... (artist), painted in ... (year).
- ... (image), painted in ... (year), is a work by ... (artist)
- ... (artist) painted ... (image) in ... (year).
- ... (image) is a famous painting by ... (artist).

### ***Describing the scene***

- The picture was taken in ... (place).
- The picture shows a scene from ...
- It's an image of ... (place, person, scene).
- The picture describes ... (scene).
- The picture shows ... (place, person, scene) from a distance.
- ... (place, person, scene) is shown from ... (a bird's eye view/...).
- You look at ... (place, person, scene) from ... (above/behind/...).

### ***What can you see***

- In the picture you can see ...
- ... (position: on the left/right/...) there is / are ...
- ... (position: on the left/right/...) you can see ...
- ... is ... (position: on the left/right/...)

### ***Impression***

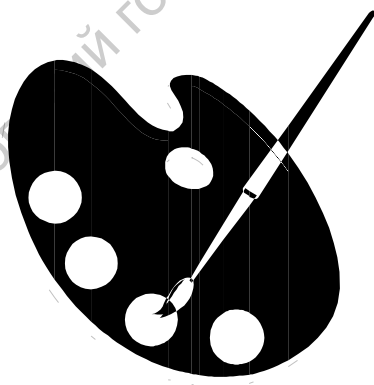
- ... gives the impression of depth (глубина)
- ... (person) seems to look at the viewer.
- His / Her eyes seem to follow the viewer.
- The figures look as if they exist in three dimensions.
- The viewer has the impression that the people in the picture are alive.



- The viewer's attention is focused on ...
- To the alert (настороженный) eye it will become apparent (очевидный)...
- The viewer finds it difficult to withdraw (отводить) his eyes from ...
- The painting is vivid / happy / expressive.
- The picture makes the viewer feel ... (sad/happy)
- The picture inspires the viewer to think about ...

### ***Intention***

- The artist mainly uses ... (colours/forms/...)
- Important elements are highlighted.
- The artist / painter uses ... to express ...
- He / She (probably) wants to criticize / express / show ...
- It is obvious that the artist wants to criticize / express / show ...
- What the artist / painter wants to criticize / express / show is ...
- What the artist / painter wants to point out is ...
- I think / believe / am sure that ...
- It seems / appears to me that ...
- The problem illustrated here is ...
- ... symbolises ...
- ... is typical of ...



### ***Part 3:***

### **Some more recommendations!**

#### ***I. Identification***

- ▶ **Title:** the title of the painting is ..... = The painting is entitled .....
- ▶ **Type of painting:** It is a portrait / a mural / a landscape / a life scene / a still life (nature morte)
- ▶ **Artist:** It was painted by ..... in ..... (date). He was born in

..... & he died in .....

★ nationality: he was .....

★ the painter's style : He was/is a Pop Art / street-art / hyperrealist and so on  
..... artist .

▶ Museum: It is exhibited at ..... in ..... (city). = We can see it at ...../ in  
.....

## **II. Analysis**

▶ Topic = subject: the painting represents .....

▶ Setting /Place: The scene takes place in .....

★ hypotheses from visual clues : the scene **must /may / might** take place in  
..... because .....

Time / weather / season: It **must /may / might** be .....because of .....

## **III. Description**

▶ Spatial illusions

★ In the foreground, we can see / notice / there is / there are .....

★ In the middle, we can see / notice / there is / there are .....

★ In the background, we can see /notice / there is / there are .....

★ On the left / on the right .....

★ At the top / at the bottom .....

▶ Interpretation / hypotheses from visual clues:

★ describe what is happening : he/she/they is / are + V-ing

★ imagine what is happening : He/she/they **must /may /might be** + V-ing

★ imagine what has happened : He/she/they **must /may /might have** + past  
participle

★ imagine what is going to happen : He/she/they **may /might** + V

## **IV. Conclusion/opinion**

▶ **As a conclusion / to conclude** , the artist message is ..... = the artist wants to show / to denounce.....

▶ Personally, I like / don't like this painting /it makes me feel sad / moved..... because .....

▶ I think /in my opinion /according to me /as for me this painting is interesting because it symbolizes.....

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## *Practice and Comprehension*

### **ART AND PAINTING**

**Paintings. Genres of painting.** Picture, drawing, cartoon, engraving, mosaic, print, fresco, landscape, seascape (marine), still life, battle piece, flower piece, genre painting, mural painting, portrait painting.

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**Task 1. Use these words to complete the sentences below:**

*watercolours    portrait    landscapes    still life    oils*

1. Probably the most famous \_\_\_\_\_ in the world is the Mona Lisa in the Louvre.
2. Van Gogh was famous for his \_\_\_\_\_ of the countryside around Arles in the south of France.
3. Many \_\_\_\_\_ paintings contain a bowl of fruit and a bottle.
4. If you use \_\_\_\_\_ it is easier to correct a mistake than if you use \_\_\_\_\_.

**Task 2. Tell what genres of painting would choose the following as their objects:**

1. The face of a boy.
2. Apples, oranges, tumblers, a jug.
3. A roasted turkey on a dish.

4. A group of bathers on the beach.
5. A lake and a hill covered with woods.
6. A busy street.
7. Three hunters in the field telling each other stories.
8. High seas.
9. Five dogs.
10. Two girls reading a letter.

**Task 3. Use these words to complete the sentences below:**

*exhibition critics gallery collectors paintings artist*

My sister's an (1) \_\_\_\_\_. Her (2) \_\_\_\_\_ are quite unusual but people seem to like them. Until recently she just exhibited her work in local bars and restaurants but last week a (3) \_\_\_\_\_ contacted her to say they wanted to put on an (4) \_\_\_\_\_ of her work. The art (5) \_\_\_\_\_ from all the national newspapers will be there, so she's hoping she might get some publicity. There'll probably be quite a few private (6) \_\_\_\_\_ there too, so she might make some money for a change!

*drawing, illustration, study, painting, picture*

1. The new encyclopedia is full of colour \_\_\_\_\_ and photographs.
2. The exhibition includes a series of \_\_\_\_\_ by Picasso for his painting Guernica.
3. Gauguin is famous for his \_\_\_\_\_ of native women on the Pacific island of Tahiti.
4. It's supposed to be a \_\_\_\_\_ of me, but I don't think it looks much like me at all.
5. Degas did a series of \_\_\_\_\_ in pastel of dancers at the ballet school in Paris.

**Task 4. Study the synonyms and fill in the gaps in the sentences below:**

*draw, trace, scribble, doodle, sketch*

1. Oh no! One of the kids \_\_\_\_\_ all over the wall.
2. I always \_\_\_\_\_ on my notepad when I'm talking on the phone.
3. My brother used to \_\_\_\_\_ funny pictures of everybody during the lesson.
4. The painter \_\_\_\_\_ the view from his hotel window.
5. The children \_\_\_\_\_ the map of France and then wrote in the names of places they had visited.

**Task 5. Match the words with their definitions:**

1.	fine art	a)	a rapid drawing or painting, often a study for subsequent elaboration
2.	colour scheme	b)	a piece of rough cloth on which a painting is done, usually in oils
3.	sitter	c)	a frame, usually in the form of an upright tripod, used for supporting or displaying an artist's canvas, blackboard, etc
4.	watercolour	d)	a planned combination of colours
5.	easel	e)	a painting, drawing, photograph, etc., depicting natural scenery
6.	composition	f)	an implicit meaning or moral, as in a work of art
7.	message	g)	art produced chiefly for its aesthetic value, as opposed to applied art
8.	canvas	h)	the harmonious arrangement of the parts of a work of art in relation to each other and to the whole
9.	sketch	i)	paint which is mixed with water
10.	landscape	j)	a person who is posing for his or her portrait to be painted, carved, etc

**Task 6. Read the following text and find the correct answer for each question:**

Printmaking is the generic term for a number of processes, of which woodcut and engraving are two **prime** examples. Prints are made by pressing a sheet of paper (or other material) against an image-bearing surface to which ink has been applied. When the paper is removed, the image adheres to it, but in reverse. The woodcut had been used in China from the fifth century A.D. for applying **patterns** to textiles. The process was not introduced into Europe until the fourteenth century, first for textile decoration and then for printing on paper. Woodcuts are created by a relief process; first, the artist takes a block of wood, which has been sawed parallel to the **grain**, covers it with a white ground, and then draws the image in ink. The background is carved away, leaving the design area slightly raised. The woodblock is inked, and the ink adheres to the raised image. It is then transferred to damp paper either by hand or with a printing press. Engraving, which grew out of the goldsmith's art, originated in Germany and northern Italy in the middle of the fifteenth century. It is an intaglio process (from Italian intagliare, "to carve"). The image is **incised** into a highly polished metal plate, usually copper, with a cutting instrument, or **burin**. The artist inks the plate and wipes it clean so that some ink remains in the incised **grooves**. An impression is made on damp paper in a printing press, with sufficient pressure being applied so that the paper picks up the ink. Both woodcut and engraving have **distinctive** characteristics. Engraving lends itself to subtle modeling and shading through the use of fine lines. Hatching and cross-hatching determine the degree of light and shade in a print. Woodcuts tend to be more linear, with sharper contrasts between light and dark. Printmaking is well suited to the production of multiple images. A set of multiples is called an edition. Both methods can **yield** several hundred good-quality prints before the original block or plate begins to show signs of wear. Mass production of prints in the sixteenth century made images available, at a lower cost, to a much broader public than before.

**1) What does the passage mainly discuss?**

- a) The origins of textile decoration
- b) The characteristics of good-quality prints
- c) Two types of printmaking
- d) Types of paper used in printmaking

**2) The word "prime" in line 2 is closest in meaning to**

- a) principal
- b) complex
- c) general
- d) recent

**3) The author's purposes is to describe**

- a) the woodcuts found in China in the fifth century
- b) the use of woodcuts in the textile industry
- c) the process involved in creating a woodcut
- d) the introduction of woodcuts to Europe

**4) The word "incised" in line 11 is closest in meaning to**

- a) burned
- b) cut
- c) framed
- d) baked

**5) Which of the following terms is defined in the passage?**

- a) "patterns"(line 4)
- b) "grain"(line 7)
- c) "burin"(line 12)
- d) "grooves"(line 13)

**6) The word "distinctive" in line 14 is closest in meaning to**

- a) unique
- b) accurate
- c) irregular
- d) similar

**7) According to the passage, all of the following are true about engraving EXCEPT that it**

- a) developed from the art of the goldsmiths
- b) requires that the paper be cut with a burin
- c) originated in the fifteenth century
- d) involves carving into a metal plate

**8) The word "yield" in line 18 is closest in meaning to**

- a) imitate
- b) produce
- c) revise
- d) contrast

**9) According to the passage, what do woodcut and engraving have in common?**

- a) Their designs are slightly raised.
- b) They achieve contrast through hatching and cross-hatching.
- c) They were first used in Europe.
- d) They allow multiple copies to be produced from one original.

**10) According to the author, what made it possible for members of the general public to own prints in the sixteenth century?**

- a) Prints could be made at low cost.
- b) The quality of paper and ink had improved.



- c) Many people became involved in the printmaking industry.
- d) Decreased demand for prints kept prices affordable.

**Task 7. Change the underlined words by its synonyms:**

1) This painting shows a more open background, which gives a pleasing feeling of depth. The contrast between the subject's creamy skin and the soft, uncluttered background gives a feeling of lightness and delicacy.

2) Hopper uses the red dress in the far corner and the yellow hair of the girl in the foreground to move your eyes around the painting.

3) Vermeer is known for his depiction of interiors, and his works are characterized by their careful composition and brilliant use of light. Note that the altered painting at the right doesn't use the picture space effectively, and is in the wrong perspective.

4) This painting is the original by Degas. Notice how the horse and rider create a center of interest, as well as pulling the two sides together to create a more balanced composition.

**Task 8. Explain the meaning of the phrase “*Art is long, life is short*”.**

**Task 9. Write a dialogue between a promising student Frank Swain who wants to foist his landscape among a prominent group of painters and the Head of the Art Gallery using topical vocabulary.**

**Task 10. Write a formal letter to the Head of the Atlantic Art School Judson Livingston asking him to admit you to the courses as you want to take up art.**

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