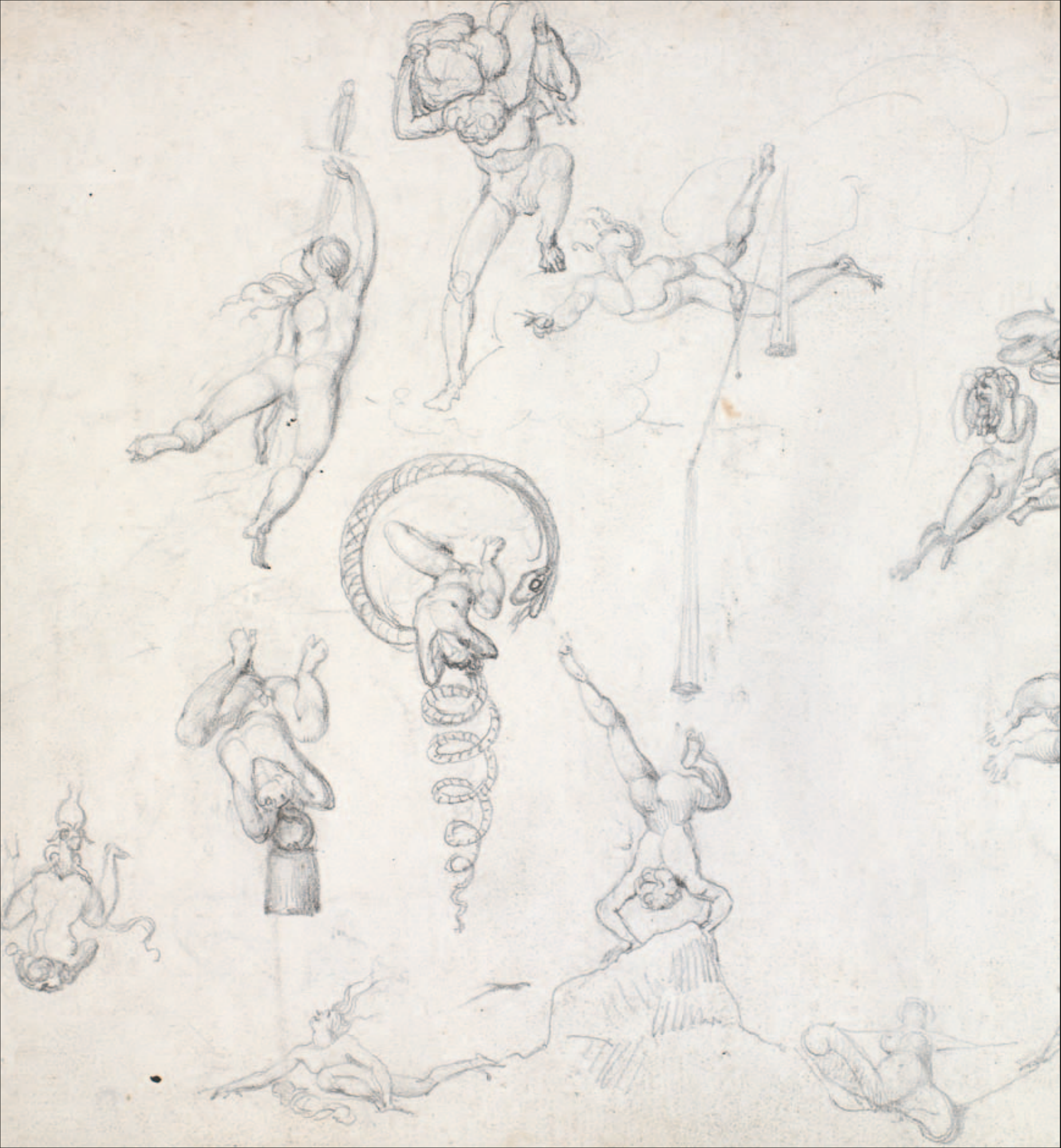


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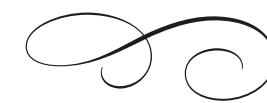
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*The gallery is open by appointment, Monday to Friday
The entrance is in Old Burlington Street*

Lowell Libson
lowell@lowell-libson.com

Deborah Greenhalgh
deborah@lowell-libson.com

Jonny Yarker
jonny@lowell-libson.com

In 2013 our exhibition schedule is:

MASTER DRAWINGS, NEW YORK
January 26 – February 2

TEFAF, MAASTRICHT
March 15 – 24

MASTER DRAWINGS LONDON
June 28 – July 5

FRIEZE MASTERS, LONDON
October 17 – 20

Cover: a sheet of 18th-century Italian
paste paper (collection: Lowell Libson)

Frontispiece: detail from
Joseph Mallord William Turner RA 1775–1851
Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta
see pages 88–93

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OUR CATALOGUE INCLUDES A NUMBER OF EXTRAORDINARY PICTURES, WHICH MARK THE progression of landscape painting in Britain from the early eighteenth century. The earlier topographical tradition is represented by important works by Tillemans and Rysbrack, progressing through to the Romantic movement with watercolours and drawings by Daniell, Towne, Rowlandson, Constable and Cox. The highlight of our nineteenth century landscapes must be Turner's remarkable large *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch*, widely considered to be one of the masterpieces of the earlier part of his *oeuvre*.

Landscape painting is paralleled by important series of figure subjects encompassing works by Blake, Dayes, Doyle, Flaxman, Mortimer, Tenniel, Stubbs and West. Blake is represented by two significant recent discoveries: the double-sided pencil drawing contains not only Blake's earliest known treatment of the story of Job but a sheet of highly resolved motifs which he directly employed in his illustrated book, *America: A Prophecy*. The small watercolour of *Parental Affection* is, remarkably, a perfectly preserved exposition of his early style. The group of three impressive neo-classical subjects exhibited by Edward Dayes at the Royal Academy demonstrates a landscape painter responding both to a change in collecting tastes whilst developing his career and we shall soon be publishing a full catalogue devoted to them. Our rare painting by John Tenniel marks the high watermark of Britain's industrial and economic might at the time of the 'Great Exhibition' of 1851. It is an important demonstration of the internationalism of the event as well as of British art of the period.

Portraiture is viewed through a number of pastels made as far apart as Rome (Read) and Edinburgh (Skirving) which demonstrate the subtlety and versatility of the medium. The oil study for the portrait of Andrew Jackson by Thomas Sully who was to succeed Gilbert Stuart as North America's leading portrait painter depicts the ambitious General at the onset of his political career which ultimately saw him elected as the 7th President in 1828.

This year's catalogue has been greatly enhanced by the work of Jonny Yarker who has recently joined us. We welcome him and look forward to many years of mutually fruitful enterprise and mirth. As usual, Deborah Greenhalgh through her intuitive foresight and superhuman efficiency has kept the show on the road and Laurence Allan has ensured that all our pictures are presented at their best. Our catalogue has individual contributions from Briony Llewellyn, Anne Lyles and Eric Shanes and I am very grateful to them as I am to all our friends who support us in many varied ways.

LOWELL LIBSON

The Great Fire of London seen from Blackfriars

Oil on canvas
34¼ × 49 inches · 870 × 1245 mm

The Great Fire of London in September 1666 was one of the greatest disasters in the city's history. The City, with its wooden houses crowded together in narrow streets, was a natural fire risk, and predictions that London would burn down became a shocking reality. The fire began in a bakery in Pudding Lane, an area near the Thames teeming with warehouses and shops full of flammable materials, such as timber, oil, coal, pitch and turpentine. Inevitably the fire spread rapidly from this area into the City. Our painting depicts the impact of the fire on those who were caught in it and creates a very dramatic impression of what the fire was like. Closer inspection reveals a scene of chaos and panic with people running out of the gates. It shows Cripplegate in the north of the City, with St Giles without Cripplegate to its left, in flames (on the site of the present day Barbican). The painting probably represents the fire on the night of Tuesday 4 September, when four-fifths of the City was burning at once, including St



Jan Griffier the elder (after)
The Great Fire of London, 1666
Oil on canvas · 29¼ × 45¼ inches · 743 × 1150 mm
Museum of London

Paul's Cathedral. Old St Paul's can be seen to the right of the canvas, the medieval church with its thick stone walls, was considered a place of safety, but the building was covered in wooden scaffolding as it was in the midst of being restored by the then little known architect, Christopher Wren and caught fire. Our painting seems to depict a specific moment on the Tuesday night when the lead on St Paul's caught fire and, as the diarist John Evelyn described: 'the stones of Paul's flew like grenades, the melting lead running down the streets in a stream and the very pavements glowing with the fiery redness, so as no horse, nor man, was able to tread on them.'

In Hollar's engraving, the white area shows the extent of the ruins – 436 acres in total (373 acres within the City walls and 63 outside). This was about one-third of the total size of London at the time.

Although the loss of life was minimal, some accounts record only sixteen perished, the magnitude of the property loss was shocking – some four hundred and thirty acres, about eighty per cent of the City proper, was destroyed, including over thirteen thousand houses, eighty-nine churches,



Wenceslaus Hollar *The City and Liberties of London after the dreadful conflagration in the year 1666*
Engraving · 13 × 8¾ inches · 330 × 222 mm
Museum of London

and fifty-two Guild Halls. Thousands were homeless and financially ruined. The Great Fire, and the subsequent fire of 1676, which destroyed over six hundred houses south of the Thames, changed the appearance of London forever. The one constructive outcome of the Great Fire was that the plague, which had devastated the population of London since 1665, diminished greatly, due to the mass death of the plague-carrying rats in the blaze.

The fire was widely reported in eyewitness accounts, newspapers, letters and diaries. Samuel Pepys recorded climbing the steeple of Barking Church from which he viewed the destroyed City: 'the saddest sight of desolation that I ever saw.' There was an official enquiry into the causes of the fire, petitions to the King and Lord Mayor to rebuild, new legislation and building Acts. Naturally, the fire became a dramatic and extremely popular subject for painters and engravers. A group of works relatively closely related to the present picture have been traditionally ascribed to Jan Griffier the elder, or being derived from Griffier's work. This identification appears to be largely based on the existence of an early nineteenth century lithograph after a painting (now unknown) of a similar subject which was at the time attributed to Griffier. Jan Griffier the elder (c.1652–1718) born in Amsterdam, who is recorded as being in London soon after the Great Fire of 1666. The present work appears to have been painted in the early years of the eighteenth century and it demonstrates the enduring appeal and interest in the subject matter. In its drama, multiple scenes of human interest and scale, this picture is one of the most remarkable depictions of the fire to appear on the market.



PIETER TILLEMANS 1684–1734

Chatsworth House and Park

Oil on canvas
26 × 68 inches · 660 × 1730 mm
Signed p.Tillemans. F., lower right
Painted c.1725

COLLECTIONS

Lord George Augustus Cavendish (d.1794), Holker Hall, Lancashire, where recorded in the Drawing Room in a list of 1776 (“The sizes of pictures at Holker that are in any way fit for hanging up”); George Augustus Henry Cavendish, 1st Earl of Burlington (1754–1834), nephew of the above, by descent; William, 2nd Earl of Burlington and 7th Duke of Devonshire (1808–1891), grandson of the above, by descent; Lord Richard Cavendish (1871–1946), at Holker Hall, grandson of the above, by descent; And by descent, 2012

LITERATURE

J. Harris, *The Artist and the Country House*, London, 1979, p.233, no. 251; R. Raines, ‘Peter Tillemans, Life and Work, with a list of representative paintings’, in *The Walpole Society*, XLVII, 1978–1980, p.48, no.25. ‘[A]t length gaining acquaintance amongst the people of fashion & persons of Quality he painted many views of Noblemens houses Country seats. horses as big as the life. huntings raceings.’¹

The surviving work of the Flemish artist Peter Tillemans testifies to George Vertue’s observation, both in terms of the popularity of his work amongst ‘people of fashion’ and ‘persons of Quality’ and versatility as a painter of country houses, battle scenes in the manner of il Borghese, equestrian portraits and sporting subjects: both racing

and hunting. But it is precisely Tillemans’s clientele and subject-matter which has conversely resulted in his subsequent critical neglect.² Yet Tillemans was an exceptionally fine painter, with a highly sensitive appreciation of the British landscape, filling his paintings with exquisitely observed details. Tillemans also produced fine portraits and some of the most original sporting paintings of the first half of the century. In this remarkable view of Chatsworth Tillemans combines the house and park with a frieze of horses from the Devonshire stud, in a format that would be echoed by George Stubbs a generation later.

Vertue tells us that Tillemans came to Britain, from Antwerp with his brother-in-law, the still-life painter, Peter Casteels in 1708, having been ‘engag’d’ by Willim Turner, ‘a picture dealer’, who was in fact a major auctioneer of the period. Tillemans soon established himself as a successful master, taking on his first apprentice in July 1719. The current painting is difficult to date precisely, but seems to have been completed in the mid-1720s, some-time before the death of William Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Devonshire (1672–1729) and Tillemans’s own retirement to the country in 1733, as the catalogue of his collection announces, ‘on Account of his ill State of health.’³ Tillemans, in common with other painters whose livelihoods were dependant on ‘people of fashion & persons of Quality’, would have been largely itinerant during the summer months, when parliament was in recess. It seems likely, therefore, that Tillemans visited Chatsworth to prepare this view. There appear to be four recorded paintings of Chatsworth by Tillemans, as John Harris noted in 1979: ‘none of which

come up to the quality of the Holker example.’⁴ This prompts the question of why the primary version ended up not at Chatsworth – where there is an indifferent studio replica – but with a cadet branch of the family?

The painting is first recorded at Holker Hall in 1776, in the collection of Lord George Augustus Cavendish, the second son of William Cavendish, 3rd Duke of Devonshire. Cavendish had inherited Holker from his cousin, Sir William Lowther, whose mother Lady Elizabeth Cavendish was the second daughter of William Cavendish, 2nd Duke of Devonshire. The painting was therefore probably commissioned by Lady Elizabeth Cavendish or her husband, Sir Thomas Lowther possibly at the time of their marriage in 1725. Whilst the interconnectedness of aristocratic patronage, particularly of the grander Whigs, at this date rarely needs elucidating, there is good reason to believe that the commission emanated directly from the Lowthers. One of Tillemans’s longest standing patrons was James Stanley, 10th Earl of Derby and Tillemans is recorded visiting Derby’s seat, Knowsley Hall in Lancashire in the autumn of 1725 and spring of 1727, when he completed three magnificent views of Knowsley, including a remarkable painting of the earl’s racecourse.⁵ Sir Thomas Lowther, who was a friend of Derby’s – and MP for Lancaster – purchased paintings for Knowsley on the elderly Derby’s behalf at auctions in London.⁶ It therefore seems reasonable to assume that Lowther commissioned this portrait of his wife’s ancestral home to hang at Holker from Tillemans, who he may well have met at Knowsley in the summers following his marriage.

The picture itself depicts Chatsworth from the southeast, looking over the bridge





at the estate village of Edensor towards the house. Visible are William Talman's south façade and Thomas Archer's west façade which had been completed for William Cavendish, 1st Duke of Devonshire in about 1707. Prominent on the escarpment above the house, piercing the sky-line is the Elizabethan lodge – known as the Strand – which survives to this day. Also visible are the first duke's formal gardens, which had been completed by his son in the first decades of the eighteenth century. Visible are the Great Parterre on the south front, with the canal at its end, created at considerable expense by levelling ground in front of the house: as Daniel Defoe noted, following a visit in 1722, the Duke: 'removed and perfectly carried away a great mountain that stood in the way and interrupted the prospect.'⁷ The 1st Duke's formal gardens can be seen in the birds-eye view engraved by Kip and Kynff in their *Britannia Illustrata* of 1700. A series of walks and fountains articulate the geometric planting which was typical of grand gardens of the late seventeenth century. Two years after Defoe's visit, the antiquarian William Stukeley gave a neat description of how the Baroque gardens abounded: 'with green-houses, summer-houses, walks, wildernesses, oranges, with

all the furniture of statues, urns greens etc. with canals, basons, and waterworks of various forms and contrivances, sea-horses, drakes, dolphins, and other fountains.'⁸ In Tillemans's view all these are in evidence. Jets from three of the 1st Duke's fountains can be seen, on the far left, close to the house, is the jet from the Greenhouse Pond, in the centre and to the right, two of the fountains visible in Kip and Kynff's view, probably the so-called 'Boreas' and 'New Garden' fountains. The plethora of sculpture which lined the formal walks of the Great Parterre are carefully delineated and visible on the south front is Caius Gabriel Cibber's great 'Triton and Sea Horses' fountain which was erected in 1691. The small building visible on the south front is the 1st Duke's Temple of Flora, built to house a statue by Cibber. Along with these formal elements, Tillemans depicts the complex of wildernesses and arbours extending up the slopes to the east of the house, which would be largely removed in the following decades by the 3rd Duke, before the gardens and park were completely remodelled by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the 1760s. To the north of the house are visible the second duke's kitchen gardens and domestic offices, and in the middle-ground the mill at Edensor,

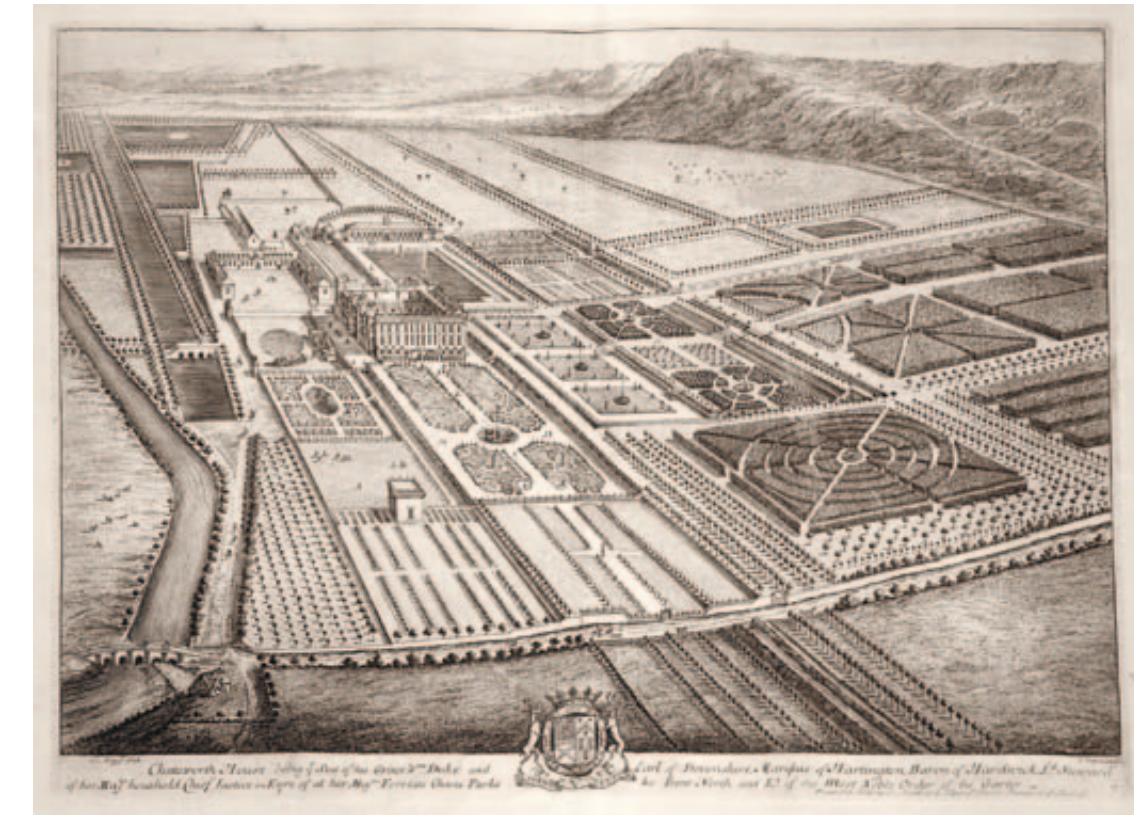
Pieter Tillemans
View of Knowsley from Riding Hill
 Oil on canvas © The Right Hon. Earl of Derby

John Michael Rysbrack (1694–1770)
Pieter Tillemans
 Terracotta · 27½ × 18½ × 8¾ inches · 669 × 470 × 222 mm
 Incised: *Mel Rysbrack f. 1727*
 Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection,
 Partial gift of Cyril Humphris

suggesting both Tillemans's awareness of the genre of prospect painting – where every aspect of the estate is depicted – and the fledgling theories of the picturesque. But it is the extensive area of semi-ornamental pasture in the foreground which attracts the viewer's attention, populated as it is by some seventeen horses, arranged across the front of the picture plane in a frieze-like format. The 2nd duke was famous as a breeder and owner of race horses who, by the mid-1720s, had had considerable success on the turf. It seems likely that the horses represent the cream of the Chatsworth stud. The three most prominent foals in the foreground have been identified as the offspring of one of the greatest thoroughbreds of all time, *Flying Childers*. *Childers* (the prefix 'Flying' was a sobriquet added later as his

racing performances grew into legend), was foaled in 1715 and sold as a yearling to the 2nd Duke. After an exceptionally long career, during which he was never beaten, he retired to stud at Chatsworth. The most influential mare at Chatsworth in the mid-1720s was *Old Ebony*. *Old Ebony* was black, a rare colour in high class stock, and it seems highly likely she is the mare shown to the left of the group. Given the presence of such a distinguished collection of horses, it is highly likely that the principal mounted figure on the far right of the composition is the 2nd Duke himself. On his death in 1729, Lord Hervey noted: 'Devonshire was a man who had no uncommon portion of understanding; and his chief skill lay in painting, medals, and horses, he was more able as a virtuoso than a statesman, and a much better jockey than he was a politician.'⁹ In Tillemans's painting we have a neat combination of his devotion to the turf and arts.

Because of their subject matter – country houses and race courses – Tillemans's works have long been considered within the imported tradition of 'prospect painting' and the work of artists such as Jan Siberechts and Thomas Wyck. But he deserves to be considered as not only one of the pioneers of landscape painting in Britain, but one of the first artists with a specifically British sensibility. Whilst the frieze of horses is undoubtedly the most arresting feature of the painting, one that anticipates – and perhaps even influenced – Stubbs's numerous arrangements of mares and foals made in the following decades, recent cleaning has revealed the subtlety of Tillemans's handling of the landscape. Tillemans's inclusion of the rugged Derbyshire moorland – shown in the ridge of hills to the north of the house – suggests an awareness of the picturesque qualities of the British landscape forty years before Joseph Wright



of Derby would immortalise the area. It is important to underline how innovative and early this composition actually is. Whilst the topographical minutiae is relieved by a number of incidental observations, such as the horses drinking at Edensor mill and the horses being fed by a groom in the middle-distance, and the Italianate light which suffuses the whole painting. As such, this view of Chatsworth, with the subtle integration of house, park and landscape combined with the impressive frieze of thoroughbreds, must be regarded as one of Tillemans's most successful essays.

- NOTES
1. G. Vertue, III, p.14.
 2. The only substantial work on Tillemans is R. Raines, 'Peter Tillemans, Life and Work, with a list of representative paintings', in *The Walpole Society*, XLVII, 1978–1980, p.21–59.
 3. Catalogue published in R. Raines, 'Peter Tillemans, Life and Work, with a list of representative paintings', in *The Walpole Society*, XLVII, 1978–1980, p.57–59.
 4. J. Harris, *The Artist and the Country House*, London, 1979, p.233, no. 251. A version was in the sale of *A catalogue of those valuable collections of the Hon. Sir Thomas Sebright, Bart. and of Thomas Sclater Bacon Esq.*...London, 1737, lot. 29, Tillemans, *A View of Chatsworth*. This is possibly the reduced studio version which ended up at Locko Park in the 19th century and was sold Bonham's, 5 December 2012, lot.83.
 5. F. Russell, 'The Derby Collection (1721–1735)', *The Walpole Society*, vol.53, 1987, p.160.
 6. F. Russell, 'The Derby Collection (1721–1735)', *The Walpole Society*, vol.53, 1987, p.160.
 7. Quoted in J. Barnatt and T. Williamson, *Chatsworth: A Landscape History*, Macclesfield, 2005, p.72.
 8. W. Stukeley, *Intinerarium Curiosum*, London, 1776, I, p.55–6.
 9. Lord Hervey, ed. R. Sedgwick, *Some Materials Towards Memoirs of the Reign of King George II*, London, 1931, I, p.24.

Johannes Kip after Leonard Knyff (1650–1721)
Chatsworth House, 1707
 Engraving, from *Britannia Illustrata*
 Private Collection / The Stapleton Collection

PIETER ANDREAS RYSBRACK c.1684–1748

Prospect of Tottenham Park, Wiltshire

Oil on canvas
76 × 91¼ inches · 1930 × 2345 mm
Painted c.1743

COLLECTIONS

Commissioned by Charles, Viscount Bruce, later 4th Earl of Elgin and 3rd Earl of Ailesbury (1682–1747); thence by descent; Trustees of the Savernake Estate, 2012

LITERATURE

John Harris, 'Serendipity and the Architect Earl', *Country Life*, 28 May 1987, p.133, fig.1; Mark Laird, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden, English Pleasure Grounds: 1720–1800*, Philadelphia, 1999

EXHIBITED

London, Sotheby's, *The Artist and the Country House from the Fifteenth Century to the Present Day*, December 1995, no.34

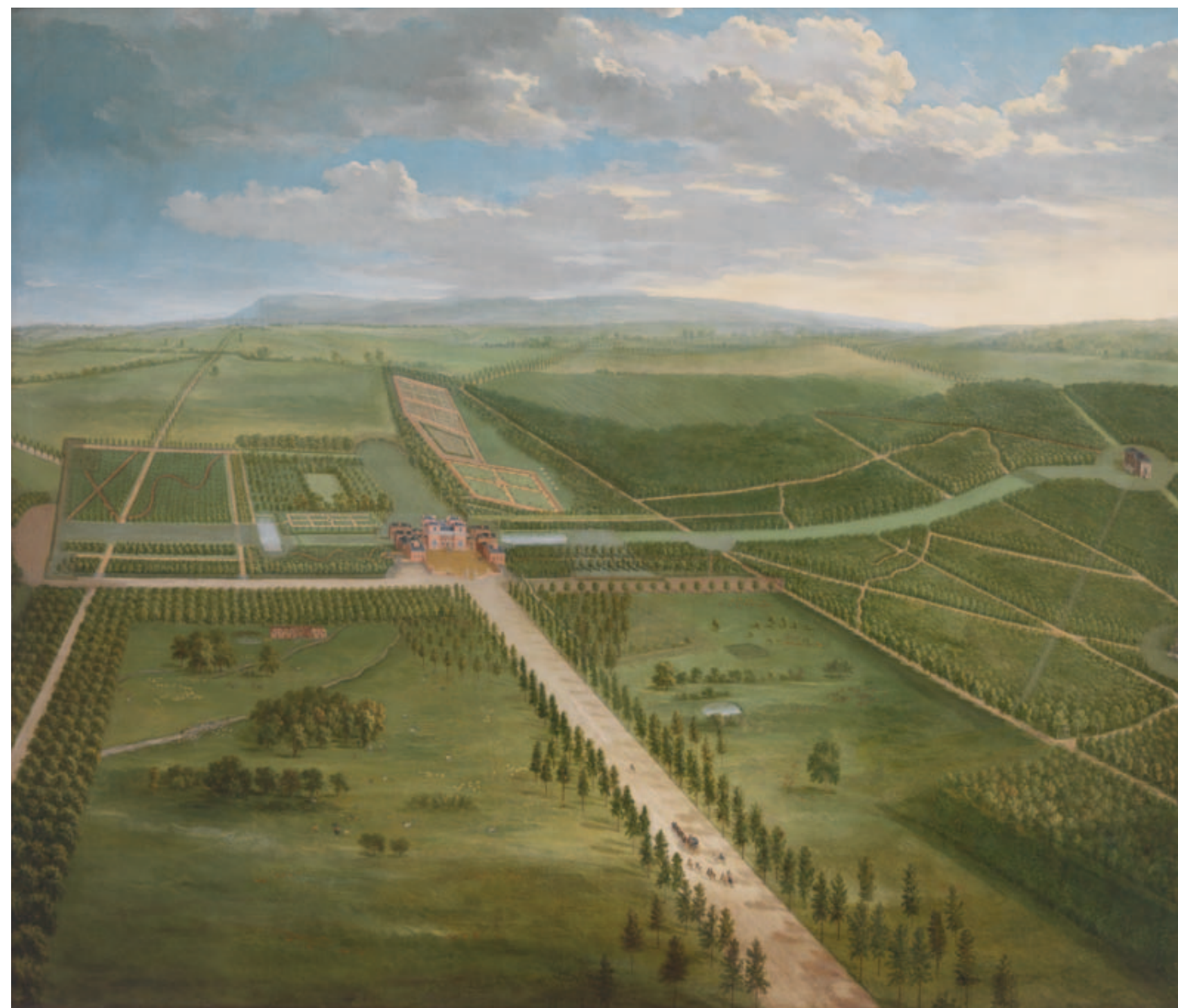
'Peter excelled in Landskip painting ... he succeeded to great perfection, so that his works were valued much & paid for by Noblemen & Gentlemen at as high rate as any contemporary painter.'¹

So wrote the antiquarian and engraver George Vertue, on recording the death of Pieter Andreas Rysbrack in 1748. Of Flemish extraction, born in Paris, Rysbrack was one of the most talented painters of estate views of the first half of the eighteenth century, injecting the genre with a Rococo informality and elegance. This spectacular view of Tottenham Park is one of Rysbrack's finest mature depictions of a country seat, showing not only the Palladian house, but the gardens, park and estate, set at the heart of the Severnake Forest. It was this quality, of integrating the house, estate and garden for which Rysbrack is most noted, as John Harris wrote in 1979: 'Rysbrack's innovation in England was to concentrate upon and magnify segments of the garden, and in each to display the activities of gardeners as well as polite society.'² Commissioned by Charles, Viscount Bruce, later 4th Earl of Elgin and 3rd Earl of Ailesbury, Rysbrack's view commemorated the completion of work on the house and grounds, begun by Richard, 3rd Earl of Burlington in about 1721, which concluded with the banqueting house seen on the far right of the picture in about 1743. As both one of Rysbrack's most ambitious bird's-eye views and a depiction of one of the great Palladian houses before it was remodelled in the nineteenth century, this painting is of considerable historical as well as art historical significance.

In about 1729 Rysbrack began a series of eight paintings depicting the gardens of Lord

Burlington's villa at Chiswick. It is likely he was introduced to Burlington through his brother, the sculptor, John Michael Rysbrack, who executed a number of commissions for Burlington and his circle including busts and chimneypieces for Chiswick. The views of Chiswick commemorate the completion of Burlington and Kent's 'picturesque' gardens. Unlike the present painting of Tottenham, the views of Chiswick are not 'bird's-eye', but conventional landscapes, filled with animals and other details, betraying Rysbrack's initial practice as a painter of, to quote Vertue, 'fruit & flowers herbage birds and *dead game*.' Rysbrack made two sets of the Chiswick views, the first to hang in Burlington's London town house and the second for Burlington's sister, Lady Elizabeth Bedingfeld. Burlington's younger sister, Juliana was married in 1720 to Charles, Viscount Bruce and it was this connection which undoubtedly prompted Burlington's involvement in the remodelling of the Elizabethan Tottenham and ultimately Rysbrack in depicting the house.

Tottenham was the first major house that Burlington designed, and was a hugely important early essay in the development of neo-Palladianism in Britain. Conceived shortly after Burlington's influential second trip to Italy with William Kent in 1719, the house is a careful synthesis of Palladian and Jonesian motifs. The design went through several stages, as attested to by the large number of drawings – the earliest in Burlington's own hand – which survive. Initially Bruce's modest hunting lodge was to be turned into a palace with an elevation eighty-eight feet wide, this was rejected in favour of a more compact plan. It was not the scale, but the architectural style which





would prove of such great influence. The elevation of the garden portico was lifted from Jones's Queen's House, Greenwich; not visible in the present painting, its appearance is known from another, smaller view by Rysbrack.³ At this date, the courtyard entrance was flanked by two blocks visible in Rysbrack's view, housing kitchens and offices, with astylar elevations, based upon Palladio's Villa Valmarana at Vigardolo, the design for which Burlington had acquired in 1721.⁴ The body of the house was based upon John Webb's Amesbury house, comprising four towers, which were pierced on the entrance front with Venetian windows; clearly visible in Rysbrack's painting. This may well be the first instance of their use in Britain, pre-dating Colen Campbell's designs for Houghton made in 1723. The mouldings, entablatures and windows visible in Rysbrack's view, demonstrate that Burlington decided to deploy the Ionic order. This iteration of the house was not to survive for long, as in 1738 Burlington was called upon to enlarge the house. He added wings to each angle, thus making the house a smaller version of Holkham Hall in Norfolk. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, Burlington's house was encased in a large neo-classical mansion, designed by Thomas Cundy and the house visible in Rysbrack's view was destroyed.

But the house is by no means the focus of Rysbrack's painting. In the manner of earlier bird's-eye views – like those by Leonard Kynff – Rysbrack plants the house firmly in the surrounding estate and landscape. Thanks to Bruce's mother, Lady Elizabeth Seymour, he inherited the hereditary wardenship of Severnake Forest, then amounting to some 40,000 acres. Although Rysbrack shows the entrance front of the house, approached by the main drive from the northwest, the bulk of the forest lies behind the viewer. Rysbrack instead depicts Stock Common to the southeast, Wolfhall

Farm to the southwest and the 'improvements' Bruce made to the landscape. Mark Laird has argued that Rysbrack's painting specifically depicts the impact of Burlington.⁵ Visible to the southwest are two significant garden buildings designed by Burlington; the octagonal Deer House to the northwest of the house, completed in 1743 and the Banqueting House, to the southwest. Particularly telling features include: the pool to the southwest front of the house, with apsidal ends, reminiscent of the pool at Chiswick and from Rysbrack's view of the Jonesian southeast front, we know that the exedra lawn was flanked by urns and pedestals, similar to Chiswick. These are clearly visible in the present picture, along with a number of benches and covered seats similar to those which populated the gardens at Chiswick; beyond the exedra lawn, the landscape extends into the parkland. Rysbrack shows that the woods are cut through by axial and diagonal rides, more telling are the serpentine paths winding through the trees,



Pieter Andreas Rysbrack
A view of Tottenham Park, Wiltshire
 Oil on canvas · 33½ × 45½ inches · 851 × 1156 mm
 Savernake Estate



Pieter Andreas Rysbrack
The Gardens at Chiswick House from the West
 Oil on panel
 Chiswick House, London
 © English Heritage Photo Library

Lord Burlington with Henry Flitcroft
Design for the entrance front of Tottenham Park, Wiltshire
 Inscribed and dated 1721 · pen and wash
 8½ × 8¾ inches · 215 × 225 mm
 Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement

which are surely evidence of Burlington and Kent's picturesque landscapes. Rysbrack shows the park filled with rivulets, bosquets and wilderness, in contrast to the long canals and parterres which had dominated garden design in the previous generation. The significance of such features should not be underestimated, as these features would be swept away by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown in the 1760s.

As at Chiswick some formal planting is in evidence, in the form of a parterre to the northeast of the house. But the informality of this new manner of landscaping is emphasised by Rysbrack's inclusion of the extensive kitchen gardens stretching to the southeast of the house whilst the parkland in the foreground is populated by flocks of sheep and deer. In a touch, which perhaps shows Rysbrack's training in France as it recalls the great views of French houses made by Pierre-Denis Martin, an important visitor in an impressive coach and mounted postilions is approaching the house along the main drive.

As a monument to a great Palladian house and garden this painting is of enormous importance to architectural and garden historians, more than that, as an outstanding example of the country-house



prospect, with its combination of topography and incidental detail, it represents a pivotal moment in the transformation of British landscape painting in the middle of the eighteenth century.

NOTES

1. G. Vertue, III, p.142.
2. J. Harris, *The Artist and the Country House; a history of country house and garden view painting in Britain 1540–1870*, London, 1979, p.158.
3. J. Harris, *The Palladian Revival; Lord Burlington, his Villa and Garden at Chiswick*, exh. cat. Montréal (Centre Canadien d'Architecture), 1994, cat. no. 14, p.87.
4. J. Harris, *The Palladian Revival; Lord Burlington, his Villa and Garden at Chiswick*, exh. cat. Montréal (Centre Canadien d'Architecture), 1994, cat. no's 13–15, p.86–8.
5. M. Laird, *The Flowering of the Landscape Garden; English Pleasure Grounds 1720–1800*, Philadelphia, 1999, p.272–4.

A bandit taking up his post

Oil on canvas
16¼ × 12 inches · 412 × 304 mm
Painted mid-1770s.

COLLECTIONS
Pulteney Hotel, Bath;
Private collection, Denmark;
Christian B Peper, acquired in 1985, to 2012.

LITERATURE
G. Benthall, *John Hamilton Mortimer ARA: Drawing and Engraved Works, with a Revised Account of his Life*, ms. completed 1950s (deposited Victoria and Albert Museum Library), p.129;
Benedict Nicolson, *John Hamilton Mortimer ARA 1740–1779: Paintings, Drawings and Prints*, exh. cat., 1968, p.36

ENGRAVED
By T. Palser, published 8th December 1778,
as *Banditti taking his post*.
[An impression of this engraving
accompanies the painting]

John Hamilton Mortimer was known in his own lifetime as the ‘English Salvator’ and consciously modeled his own life and works on the seventeenth century Italian painter, Salvator Rosa. This exquisite, little-known painting, eloquently demonstrates Mortimer’s debt to Rosa, the pose of the soldier being based on one of Rosa’s engravings, whilst the whole conception of ambiguous warriors in a landscape owes something to the genre of the *banditti* which was invented by Rosa. In its precision and delicacy of handling, as well as in its elegant composition, this small work demonstrates Mortimer’s attainment as a painter at the height of his career.

Salvator Rosa had a remarkable impact upon British painters during the eighteenth century, in terms of both his life and work. Biographers routinely cast Rosa as an outlaw, who had fought in the rebellion led by the Neapolitan fisherman Masaniello against Spanish rule in 1647. William Gilpin writing in 1768 observed: ‘we are told, he spent the early part of his life in a troop of banditti; and that the rocky and desolate scenes, in which he was accustomed to take refuge, furnished him with those romantic ideas in landskip, of which he is exceedingly fond ... His Robbers, as his detached figures are commonly called [the *Figurine* series], are supposed also to have been taken from life.’¹ Such stories of Rosa’s life as a *banditti* fuelled the admiration for his prints and paintings, which, as Gilpin articulated, were seen as the embodiment of contemporary conceptions of the sublime.

For British painters it was the *Figurine* – a series of etchings of soldiers and genre figures, published from 1656 and republished and copied throughout the



T. Palser, after John Hamilton Mortimer
Banditti taking his post, 1778
Etching · 11¼ × 7⅞ inches · 299 × 198 mm



eighteenth century – were extremely well known to British collectors. His association with *banditti* was entirely fabricated, but it was a construct which had great appeal to Mortimer and his contemporaries. The critic Allan Cunningham noted on seeing Mortimer's self-portrait, now known only from an etching, that he: 'was fond of the wild, the savage, and the wonderful; and it was his pleasure ... to imagine himself a chief of banditti.'² The present painting is compositionally close to one of Rosa's etchings and was itself made into a plate by Mortimer and published in December 1778 as part of series of fifteen prints dedicated to Sir Joshua Reynolds. The print is labeled 'Banditti taking his post' and gives a title for the present work, which is known in another slightly smaller signed version now in the Detroit Institute of Arts as well as a copy by

William Woodworth, which is at Liverpool University. A closely related pen and ink drawing by Mortimer formerly in the collection of Christopher Lennox-Boyd appears to have served as a template for Mortimer's etching.³ It seems likely, given its superior quality, that the present painting was the first version and the Detroit canvas the second.

The appeal of *banditti* as a subject-matter is attested to by the volume of paintings, drawings and etchings of this sort exhibited by Mortimer during the 1770s. Far more numerous than his named history paintings, the non-descript compositions fuelled the imagination of early Romantic audiences; whilst the very real fear of encountering outlaws whilst travelling in Italy, and even Britain, inflected them with a sense of sublimity. The lack of narrative which contributed to the appeal of such pictures

during the eighteenth century did not continue into the following generation.

The remains of an early nineteenth century label on the reverse of the present picture identifies the subject as 'Leonidas defending the pass of Thermopylae, By Mortimer'.

This suggests Mortimer's anti-heroic outlaws were being recast as the ultimate Greek hero, Leonidas who commanded the Greek army at the battle of Thermopylae.

NOTES

1. W. Gilpin, *Essay Upon Prints*, London, p.83.
2. M. Myrone, *Bodybuilding: Reforming Masculinities in British Art 1750–1810*, New Haven and London, 2005, p.129.
3. J. Sunderland, 'John Hamilton Mortimer. His Life and Works,' *The Fifty-Second Volume of the Walpole Society*, 1986, p.189, nos. 140.9, 140.9 a. b. c



Robert Blyth (1750–1784)
Self-portrait, 1782
Etching · 15¼ × 12½ inches · 387 × 307 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum



Salvator Rosa (1615–1673) *Figurine*, c.1656–7
after John Hamilton Mortimer
Etching with drypoint · 5½ × 3¾ inches · 141 × 91 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum

The woman clothed with the sun fleeth from the persecution of the dragon

And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet ... And there appeared another wonder in heaven; and behold a great red dragon ... and the dragon stood before the woman which was ready to be delivered, for to devour her child as soon as it was born. And she brought forth a man child, who was to rule all nations with a rod of iron: and her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne. And the woman fled into the wilderness ... And when the dragon saw that he was cast unto the earth, he persecuted the woman which brought forth the man child. And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she is nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent:

The Bible, Book of Revelations, XII.

Oil with pen and ink on canvas
15½ × 11¼ inches · 395 × 286 mm
Painted c.1798

This previously unrecorded mixed-media study on canvas is closely related to one of Benjamin West's most important commissions, *The Woman clothed with the sun fleeth from the persecution of the dragon*, one of four pictures commissioned in 1797 by William Beckford for a planned but never-realized 'Revelation Chamber' at Fonthill Abbey. The chamber was intended, according to James Wyatt, the architect of Fonthill, to have walls 5 feet thick in which there are to be recesses to admit coffins. Beckford's coffin is to be placed opposite the door. The room is not to be entered by strangers, to be viewed through wire gratings. The floor is to be of jasper ... West is to paint all the pictures for this room, and is now limited to £1,000 a year while He is proceeding with the pictures (Joseph Farington, *Diary*, 8 December 1798).

West worked on the four subjects: *St John Called to Write the Revelation*, *A Mighty Angel Standeth upon the Land and upon the Sea*, *The*



John Buckler, after James Wyatt
South West View of Fonthill Abbey, Wiltshire, the Seat of William Beckford Esq., 1823
Lithograph · 11 × 15 inches · 279 × 377mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum.

Woman clothed with the sun fleeth from the persecution of the dragon and *The Beast Riseth Out of the Sea* and the commission was well-enough advanced for West to exhibit large studies or *modellos* for all four at the Royal Academy in 1798.

Beckford, ever capricious, soon changed his mind, and in September 1799 Farington noted 'West not to paint the pictures for the Revelation Chamber, only to finish what he has begun' (*op. cit.* 15th September 1799). Beckford originally agreed to pay West £3,000 for the four pictures and made an advance of £1,000. It appears that at this time West agreed with Beckford's agent, Nicholas Williams, to complete work on the large studies at the rate of 300 guineas for two and 400 guineas for the other two. Although West maintained to Farington in January 1800 that the commission was still in progress there is no further mention of the pictures for the Revelation Chamber, even from the ever inquisitive Farington and the entire concept for this room appears to have been abandoned. Beckford took possession of the four large studies and they remained at Fonthill until its contents were dispersed in 1822 and 1823.

The present study is a particularly beautiful example of one of West's more fully realized studies and displays the artist's characteristically fluid pen-work combined with a careful handling of paint. It is unusual in being executed directly onto a lightly primed canvas rather than West's usual method of initially working on paper which would then be faced onto a canvas support. There are a number of related workings and studies pertaining to this particular image. A sheet of black chalk drawings in the Morgan Library (1970.11.127) contains five small



studies of a winged woman holding a child (Ruth S Kraemer, *Drawings by Benjamin West and his son Raphael Lamar West*, 1975, pp.37-38, no.60, the recto of the sheet is reproduced as pl.39). The treatment of the winged figure in the *modello* shown at the Royal Academy was substantially different to that seen here and shows the woman at the point where 'her child was caught up unto God, and to his throne'. The treatment of the figure shown in our picture is similar to that found in West's treatment of 'A Mighty Angel Standeth upon the Land and upon the Sea' and is especially close to a highly finished drawing for that composition in the collection of the Toledo Museum of Art.

The Book of Revelation has always exercised a strong grip on the imagination of artists from the age of Durer onwards and of West's contemporaries; William Blake was especially inspired by this particular subject.

Benjamin West PRA *The Woman Clothed with the Sun fleeth from the Persecution of the Dragon*
Oil on paper laid on panel
58¹¹/₁₆ × 27⁷/₁₆ inches · 1490 × 690 mm
© Princeton University Art Museum

Benjamin West PRA
Studies for the Windows of Fonthill Abbey
Pencil · 9¹/₈ × 7⁷/₁₆ inches · 233 × 185 mm
Morgan Library and Museum, New York 970.11.127



Lycurgus entering Athens
Theseus's approach to Athens



Pencil, pen and grey ink and watercolour heightened with touches of white and gum arabic
Each 22³/₈ × 31¹/₈ inches · 568 × 792 mm
Signed and dated *E Dayes 1797* (the first lower left, the second lower right) and the first further inscribed '[Palamon & A]rcite or the Knight's Tale [from] Dryden' (lower edge) In their original frames

COLLECTIONS
Mrs Madelyn Elmes;
Private collection, UK

EXHIBITED
London, Royal Academy, 1798,
nos.501 and 517

The discovery of a sketchbook completed by Edward Dayes, and containing over 100 studies for subject pictures, has refocused interest onto this aspect of his career. From the mid-1790s Dayes, who is best known as a landscape painter, began to produce a series of history paintings for exhibition at the Royal Academy. In 1798 Dayes exhibited four works, including this impressive pair of watercolours, depicting scenes from Dryden's fable *Palamon and Arcite: Lycurgus Entering Athens* and *Theseus's Approach to Athens*. As Dayes's most ambitious and fully realised historical drawings, they represent an eloquent essay in the aspirations of a watercolourist competing for recognition at the Royal Academy at the end of the eighteenth century as well as being extraordinarily powerful works of English neo-classicism.

In 1798 Dayes wrote nine *Essays on Painting*, which were printed in the *Philosophical Magazine*. Little more than conventional digests of seventeenth-century French Classicist art theory, written in emulation of Reynolds's *Discourses*, Dayes's essays were an essential part of his campaign to be recognised as a history painter, published at the moment he was preparing the present works for exhibition. Viewed in tandem with Dayes's British Museum sketchbook they give a remarkably complete portrait of his commitment to becoming a history painter as well as giving the intellectual and practical context for these works.¹ Reynolds had articulated his own notion of a history painter in the *Discourses*, requiring his students to be both conversant with the great literature of the past and the great art. We can gather some idea of Dayes's efforts in the former, by the survival



Edward Dayes *Study for Lycurgus entering Athens*, 1797
Pencil © The Trustees of the British Museum [Dayes sketchbook]



Edward Dayes *Study for Theseus entering Athens*, 1797
Pencil © The Trustees of the British Museum [Dayes sketchbook]

of an inventory of his library preserved in the National Art Library.² Made in 1800, it lists some 365 volumes, ranging from bound collections of engravings to pocket editions of the works of fashionable writers such as Gray, Thomson, Shakespeare, Milton and Dryden. In his own *Essay on Composition, or disposition*, Dayes asked 'how is it possible that an artist with little reading can accomplish a work like an historical picture?'³

Under 'Pocket Volumes' is listed 'Dryden's *Fables*', a copy of the poet John Dryden's 1700 collection of translations of classical and medieval poetry from which Dayes made a number of designs. For the present pictures he chose the story of Palamon and Arcite, a translation of Geoffrey Chaucer's 'Knight's Tale' from *The Canterbury Tales*, which itself was taken from Boccaccio's *Teseida*. In Dryden's account of Lycurgus entering Athens, he described the 'King of Thrace' as:

*Big-bon'd, and large of limbs, with sinews strong,
Broad shoulder'd, and his arms were round and long
Four milk-white bulls (the Thracian use of old)
Were yok'd to draw his car burnish'd gold.
Upright he stood, and bore aloft his shield*

The passage continues describing the 'bear-skin on his back', his diadem of diamonds and rubies, 'greyhounds, snowy fair' and his train of knights 'in pomp and proud array.' In his fifth essay on *Invention*, Dayes articulated a working method which neatly described his own: 'When we have determined on a subject, we must with all due expedition make a sketch of the principal persons concerned in the event ... as much of the fire and spirit of the actions, as well as the grandeur of the whole depends on the first impression.'⁴ In the sketchbook, is a confident and fluent study showing Lycurgus precisely as described by Dryden, indeed Dayes has retained the minutiae of the poem depicting the scene with remarkable literalism. A further sketch shows the idea for the pictures pendant, the subject of which was *Theseus Approaching Athens*. Taken from the opening passage of Dryden's poem,

it depicts the moment Theseus, returning from battle, is stopped by a 'quire of mourning dames', composed of wretched queens whose husbands have all fallen at the hands of Creon, now king of Thebes. The slaughtered kings are lying unburied and dishonoured according to Creon's command. The queens appeal for help to Theseus who, although returning from a long battle, is deeply moved and resolves:

*That by the faith which knights to
knighthood bore,
And whate'er else to chivalry belongs,
He would not cease, till he revenged their wrongs;
That Greece should see performed what
he declared,
And cruel Creon find his just reward.*

The pictures form a striking pair utterly different in tone and style of execution to any of Daye's other surviving watercolours, both being chromatically restrained displaying Dayes's enduring respect for the classicism of Poussin. The frieze-like *Lycurgus* particularly recalls Poussin's work, such as the *Triumph of David* (Dulwich Picture Gallery), which Dayes could have seen in the house of the Royal Academician Francis Bourgeois, whilst the pair of oxen pulling *Lycurgus's* chariot, is indebted to Sébastien Bourdon's *The Return of the Ark*, a picture which had belonged to Reynolds and which he had commended in his *Discourses*. The combination of recondite literary source with erudite quotation from earlier painters was precisely the formula for history painting which had been promulgated by the Academy.

Dayes's new departure into history painting did generate some press comment. In the *Monthly Mirror*, Dayes's historical

compositions were considered together, the anonymous critic who commended his 'considerable labour' and described them as 'very respectable' for a landscape painter. But his technique was attacked, particularly the handling of light and 'a certain *hatching*, that looks like the work of the *graver*, tends to enfeeble the expression' adding that this was a 'custom which has the authority of Westall to recommend it'.⁵ The mention of Richard Westall's technique suggests Dayes was emulating a successful watercolourist who exhibited historical works to great critical acclaim during the 1790s, whilst the graphic quality of the *Lycurgus* and *Theseus* highlights the possibility that Dayes was looking to the commercial potential of the publishing market. Dryden's *Fables Ancient and Modern* were perennially popular and it seems likely that Dayes, who worked extensively for the topographical print market, would have been hopeful of having his works engraved by a book publisher. In the end Dayes's attempts to become a history painter were unsuccessful and these remarkable watercolours remain the most substantial historical watercolours he produced.

NOTES

1. The sketchbook is first recorded in the collection of Lisson James Dayes, it was sold at Sotheby's London, 5 April, 1973, lot.28 and again at Christie's London, 30 March, 1993, lot.29. It was acquired by the British Museum in 1993.
2. London, National Art Library, *MSL/198/190*. It was reproduced in ed. ed. R. W. Lightbown, E. Dayes, *The Works of the late Edward Dayes*, London, 1971, Appendix (unpaginated).
3. E. Dayes, 1805, p.239.
4. E. Dayes, 1805, p.237.
5. *The Monthly Mirror*, 1798, p.28–9.



EDWARD DAYES 1763–1804

The Triumph of Beauty

... Beauty's living image, like the Morn
That wakes in Zephyr's arms the blushing May,
Moves onward; or as Venus, when she stood
Effulgent on the pearly car, and smild
Fresh from the deep, and conscious of her form,
To see the tritons tune their vocal shells,
And each cerulean sister of the flood
With loud acclaim attend her o'er the waves
To see the Idalian bower ...¹

Oil on canvas
50 × 36 inches · 1270 × 915 mm
Painted 1800

EXHIBITED
London, Royal Academy, 1800, no.93

What was happening in British history painting in around 1800? In recent discussions of the emergence of a British School of history painting following the foundation of the Royal Academy in 1768, this is a question which is rarely posed and one which is not easily answered. Examination of surviving Royal Academy exhibition catalogues reveals a profusion of artists' names and titles, few of which remain immediately recognizable, whilst endeavours to explain the impact of exhibition culture on painting – such as the 2001 Courtauld show *Art on the Line* – have tended to focus on the first and second generation of Royal Academician, rather than young or aspiring artists in the early nineteenth century. This makes the recent discovery and identification of the work under discussion of exceptional importance in making sense of currents in English painting around 1800. Executed by Edward Dayes and exhibited in the Great Room at Somerset House in the summer of 1800, it is a remarkable essay in the



Edward Dayes
Study for the Triumph of Beauty, 1800
Pencil and watercolour
© Trustees of the British Museum [Dayes sketchbook]

aspirations of historical painting and the Reynoldsian 'grand manner' from a painter more generally known for his topographical watercolours. It stands simultaneously as a compelling document of Dayes's attempts to use the apparatus of history painting to advance his career and perfect example of the Academy aesthetic in the decade after the death of Reynolds.

Edward Dayes was one of the most highly regarded topographical draughtsman of the second half of the eighteenth century but it was known that towards the end of his career – which was cut tragically short by his suicide in 1804 – he exhibited a number of historical works at the Royal Academy. The appearance of a sketchbook containing over 100 studies for historical compositions raised the possibility that a number of previously unattributed subject-pictures may in fact be by Dayes. Amongst the designs is a small wash study for the *Origins of Beauty*.²

Born in 1763, he was apprenticed to the mezzotinter and miniaturist William Pether and entered the Royal Academy Schools on 6 October 1780. He made his début at the academy in 1786, showing in the next few years a mixture of portraits, miniatures, topographical watercolours, and figure subjects; in all Dayes showed sixty-four works at the Royal Academy. Dayes rapidly established himself as a successful draughtsman for the print trade, undertaking commissions at every level. Eleven plates after his works were engraved for the *Copper Plate Magazine* between 1794 and 1797, and he contributed more than forty scenes for John Aiken's *Description of the Country from Thirty to Forty Miles Round Manchester* published in 1795. In 1789 Thomas Girtin was apprenticed to Dayes and whilst he is





always seen as representing the antithesis of Girtin and Turner's Romantic approach to watercolour, their earliest works are in fact indistinguishable from Dayes's. What is more, Dayes's *Instructions for Drawing and Colouring Landscapes* (1805) suggests he was an innovative thinker on professional practice and on the teaching of watercolour techniques, including sketching in colours from nature.

From 1798 Dayes spent an increasing amount of his time painting scenes from the Bible and from the works of Dryden and Milton. His diary for 1798 gives a detailed account of his work on four watercolours, including the striking image of *The Fall of the Angels* (exh. RA, 1798; Tate collection). The following year he began the present canvas in oils, a move that was a logical progression for Dayes, ambitious for a career as a serious history painter. For the subject matter Dayes turned to the work of the mid-eighteenth century poet, Mark Akenside. In the 1800 exhibition catalogue published by the Academy, Dayes included seven lines from Akenside's 1744 didactic poem, *The Pleasures of the Imagination* to inform the subject of the *Origins of Beauty*. Dayes's composition was both a literal transcription of Akenside's account of a standing 'Venus' in her 'pearly car', surrounded by 'Tritons' and 'cerulean sister[s] of the flood', and a distillation of the poet's Platonic concept of beauty itself.

The extent of Dayes's ambition was underlined in his theoretical 'Essays on painting', published in the *Philosophical Magazine* for 1801–2, which outlined the ideal method for preparing an historical composition. Dayes commended the young painter to begin with a rough sketch, which he was to 'prune or add till the whole comes into perfect ordonnance,' adding finally 'complete the whole by slightly tinting it.'³ A 'tinted' drawing of the composition survives in the British Museum sketchbook revealing Dayes's debt to the *Medici*

Venus in the conception of the figure. But Dayes's composition had more immediate precedents than the antique. In 1772 James Barry had shown his *Venus Rising from the Sea* (Dublin City Gallery) at the Academy. The study in the British Museum sketchbook, which included Cupid seated in the clouds, bow in hand, to the right of Venus. This detail recalled Barry's composition, where Cupid is seen standing behind Venus on a bank of cloud. Recent analysis has shown that it was an element which Dayes included in his initial execution of the design, along with putti seated in the clouds to the left of Venus, but decided to paint them out before completing the picture.

The choice of subject was remarkably in tune with other pictures in the 1800 exhibition. Benjamin West showed *Venus at her Birth Attired by the Graces* (private collection). West's Venus is posed very similarly to Dayes's, with one hand raised to her head and the face shown in profile, although the palette and execution are completely different.⁴ Dayes follows his own suggestions as articulated in his essays, that handling and colour should reflect the subject matter of the painting. Thus the figure of Venus is finely modelled, 'clean and fair' in a blond palette, whilst the tritons are 'dusky or muddy' by contrast painted in a reddish-brown tone.

The painting was well placed in the Great Room, but in the end it received relatively little critical notice, its proximity to a canvas by the Academy's President of a similar subject and format cannot have helped. It was not a propitious moment for Dayes to embark upon a career as a history painter. The apparent opportunities offered by entrepreneurial publishers, such as John Boydell and Charles Macklin, had ended in financial disaster by 1800; a situation compounded by the end of the European market for luxury goods brought about by



Benjamin West PRA (1738–1820)
Venus at her birth attired by the Three Graces, 1799
Oil on canvas laid on panel · 19½ × 14 inches · 495 × 356 mm
Private collection, USA



James Barry (1741–1806)
Venus rising from the Sea
Oil on canvas · 104 × 68 inches · 2647 × 1722 mm
Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane

the Napoleonic wars. Another consequence of which, was that London was flooded with fine old master paintings dislodged from the Continent – the exhibition of the Italian paintings from the Orléans collection in Pall Mall had opened in December 1798 – serving to depress the market for contemporary works. Dayes's composition exemplified the type of paintings which were being produced for the Royal Academy in around 1800.

NOTES

1. M. Akenside (1721–1770) *The Pleasures of Imagination*, 1744 (1772 edition, rev. 1805), Book 1, p.27 ll. 329–335.
2. London, British Museum, Edward Dayes Sketchbook: 201 * a.20, no. 1993 5. 8.1–130; no.91.
3. E. Dayes, *The Works of Edward Dayes*, London, 1805, p.237.
4. H. Von Erffa and A. Stalley, *The Paintings of Benjamin West*, New Haven and London, 1986, cat. no. 157.

THOMAS ROWLANDSON 1756–1827

A lecture on extravagance

Pencil, pen and ink and watercolour
5⁷/₈ × 8³/₁₆ inches · 149 × 208 mm
Signed
Drawn c.1790

COLLECTIONS

Louis Deglatigny, d.1936, (Lugt 1768a), 1938;
Angus Malcolm CMG, 1961;
L. S. Lowry RA;
A. E. Bodie, 1986;
Private collection, UK

EXHIBITED

Manchester, Manchester City Art Gallery,
*A Pre-Raphaelite Passion; the Private Collection
of L.S. Lowry*, 1977, no.16;
London, Lowell Libson Ltd, *Beauty and the
Beast: a loan exhibition of Rowlandson's works
from British private collections*, 2007, no.10

Rowlandson's work of the 1790s combines a fluency of draughtsmanship with a felicitous acuity of observation. Rowlandson's humour, especially in the drawings made in the earlier part of his career, is entirely based on an appreciation and understanding of human nature and its foibles and rarely has an overriding purpose other than to amuse, unlike the work of his exact contemporary, James Gillray. The sentiments expressed in this drawing are beautifully achieved by Rowlandson through his incisive pen work: short staccato strokes for the husband and longer more sinuous lines for the wife. The subject hardly needs explanation.

This drawing belonged to the distinguished French collector, Louis Deglatigny (1854–1936), a native of Rouen who was a generous benefactor to the city's museums. Deglatigny formed a significant Rowlandson collection as well as major collections of old master paintings and drawings, nineteenth and early twentieth century works and a distinguished numismatic collection. Most of Deglatigny's collections were dispersed in a series of five sales held in Paris between 1937 and 1938, whilst his Rowlandson drawings, watercolours and books were sold at Sotheby's in May 1938. The drawing was later owned by Laurence Stephen Lowry RA (1887–1976) whose main activity as a collector was in the field of Pre-Raphaelite art, however, the poignancy and humour of the present work must have appealed to him. Certainly, the subject may have been familiar to him since Lowry's mother regarded herself as socially superior to her husband, and his failure to earn enough money to keep her as she felt she deserved was a constant theme during his early years.



JOHN FLAXMAN RA 1755–1826

The Braschi Venus

Sepia wash over pencil
29¼ × 20⅞ inches · 743 × 511 mm
Drawn in 1811

ENGRAVED
By C. Childs and published in: J. Flaxman,
Lectures on Flaxman, London, 1829, pl.22.



Engraving by C. Childs, after John Flaxman
Published in: J. Flaxman, *Lectures on Flaxman*, London,
1829, pl.22.

This wash drawing of the *Braschi Venus* was made as an illustration for one of the lectures Flaxman delivered in 1811 at the Royal Academy in his capacity as Professor of Sculpture. Used to illustrate the work of the 4th Century BC Greek sculptor, Praxiteles, who ‘excelled in the highest grace of youth and ideal beauty’, it would have acted as a visual aid to those attending the lecture.¹ A lithotint produced by George Scharf in 1830 of Richard Westmacoott delivering a lecture as Professor of Sculpture, shows him declaiming in the Great Room at Somerset House, surrounded by casts from the collection of the Royal Academy. Flaxman followed the method preferred by the contemporary professors of architecture, Sir John Soane and painting, Henry Fuseli in preparing drawings. The drawings Soane used to illustrate his lectures survive in the collection of Sir John’s Soane’s Museum, whilst Fuseli’s published lectures, show he relied upon the copies of old master paintings which hung in the Great Room as dressing during the winter season, including the Raphael tapestry cartoons visible on the walls in Scharf’s 1830 view.

Writing about the first of Flaxman’s lectures, delivered at the Royal Academy on 18 February 1811, the diarist Henry Robinson, noted: ‘he spoke like an artist who loved and honoured his art ... he had all the unpretending simplicity of a truly great man. His unimposing figure received consequence from the animation of his countenance; and his voice, though feeble, was so judiciously managed and so clear, and his enunciation was so distinct, that he was audible to a large number of people.’² The texts of the lectures were gathered

together after his death and published in 1829, from which we gain an idea of the context in which this drawing was used. After reciting literary evidence from Pausanias and Pliny for the appearance of famous classical sculptures, Flaxman addresses a number of the most notable, such as the ‘sublime’ *Apollo Belvedere* and *Niobe* group in Florence, both of which he had extensively studied whilst in Italy in 1787–94. Of the so-called *Knidian Venus* of Praxiteles he observes:

*His Venus of Cnidos, which is said to be more perfect than any other, is known from the descriptions of Lucian and Cedrenus ... The drawing introduced in this Lecture was from a statue said to have been found in a vineyard, about thirty years since, in Rome, and was the property of Duke of Braschi, nephew of Pius VI. Sketches from it were made at that time.*³

The sculpture, now in the Glyptothek, Munich, had been excavated in 1776 at Roma Vecchia by the great Scottish painter and *cavatore*, Gavin Hamilton.⁴ It would therefore have been comparatively fresh from the ground when Flaxman was in Rome and it seems likely that he prepared drawings whilst it was in the collection of Luigi Braschi Onesti, Duke of Nemi and nephew of Pope Pius VI, who was then in the midst of constructing the monumental Palazzo Braschi on the Piazza Navona to house his collection. Despite several of Flaxman’s Italian sketchbooks and journals surviving, in which he lists the varied Roman patrician collections he visited, no study for the *Venus* is recorded.⁵ Flaxman’s observation in his lecture that ‘sketches’ of the *Braschi Venus* ‘were made at that time’ confirms that the present drawing was executed from studies completed in Italy.



Flaxman's lectures represent an eloquent survey of the diverse sculpture which was of interest to early nineteenth century artists and had influenced his own work in particular. From his sustained description of the sculpture on the façade of Wells cathedral in the first lecture to discussion of the early *quattrocento* reliefs he had drawn with William Young Ottley in Italy, to the contemporary celebrity of Antonio Canova. His greatest reverence was for the great works of antiquity, not only the newly popular and recently arrived Parthenon marbles, but the heavily restored, Hellenistic works beloved of eighteenth century Grand Tourists. Indeed, he concluded the ninth lecture by reminding his audience that the study of ancient sculpture had the practical advantage of 'guarding against error and false systems', and that if artists wished to attain excellence 'we cannot proceed by a more certain course than that by which it has been attained before.' This drawing is important evidence of Flaxman, at the end of his career, reaffirming the importance of

a syllabus of sculpture he first absorbed at the Royal Academy schools from 1769.

From 1800 Flaxman had been actively involved in augmenting the collections of the Royal Academy, particularly with the purchase of casts of 'the most sublime models of Greek sculpture'.⁶ Flaxman himself presented the Academy with a cast of the Capitoline Venus in 1808 and was instrumental in ensuring a change in the law which enabled casts for the Academy to be imported free from custom charges. As a result, in 1816, Canova dispatched, amongst others, a cast of the: 'Venere di Prassitele', thus ensuring Flaxman's lecture drawing could be substituted by future Professors of Sculpture for a cast. This drawing was engraved by C. Childs and published as an illustration to Flaxman's lectures. Whilst not one of Flaxman's great designs, as a document of his aspirations and activities as a teacher it is unique and a remarkable testament to the academic principles of early nineteenth century British art.

NOTES

1. J. Flaxman, *Lectures on Flaxman*, London, 1829, p.279.
2. H. C. Robinson, *Diary, Reminiscences, and Correspondence*, London, 1869, vol.1, p.322.
3. J. Flaxman, *Lectures on Flaxman*, London, 1829, p.280.
4. I. Bignamini and C. Hornsby, *Digging and Dealing in Eighteenth Century Rome*, New Haven and London, 2010, vol.1.
5. There is no mention of the collection at Palazzo Braschi in the recent publication of Flaxman's surviving Italian sketchbooks and journals, suggesting that the volume which relates to the preparation for the present drawing is missing. See ed. H. Brigstocke, 'John Flaxman and William Young Ottley in Italy', *Walpole Society*, 2010, vol.72.
6. For a discussion of this aspect of Flaxman's life see R. Windsor Liscombe, 'The Diffusion of Knowledge and Taste: John Flaxman and the improvement of the study facilities at the Royal Academy', *The Walpole Society*, 1987, vol.53, p.226–238.



George Johann Scharf (1788–1860)
Westmacott lecturing at Somerset House in 1830
 Chalk style lithotint · 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ × 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ inches · 200 × 316 mm
 © Royal Academy of Arts, London

JOHN FLAXMAN RA 1755–1826

Amphion and Zethus delivering their mother Antiope from the fury of Dirce and Lycus

Pencil, pen and grey ink, grey wash
 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ × 11 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches · 161 × 292 mm
 Signed, inscribed and dated: *Flaxman, Roma*
 1789 (lower left)

COLLECTIONS
 Private collection, New York, to 2012

John Flaxman and his wife arrived in Rome in December 1787, by which point he was already well read in the classics and an established artist, having worked extensively as a designer for Josiah Wedgwood since 1775. In Rome, settled in the Stalla di Mignanelli, close to the Piazza di Spagna, Flaxman filled a number of sketchbooks with careful studies of antique and modern sculpture of all kinds, from the unusual *quattrocento* reliefs of Giacomo della Quercia to the familiar masterpieces of the Vatican, such as the *Apollo Belvedere*.¹ These studies formed the 'materials of genius', to quote Reynolds, providing a language of form for Flaxman's own works. Thus we see motifs from the

sketchbooks reconstituted and transformed into original compositions, particularly the group of major sculptures he executed in Rome – most notably the *Fury of Athamas* begun in 1790 for Frederick Hervey, 4th Earl of Bristol and Bishop of Derry – as well as his cycles of illustrations of the works of Homer and Dante. It was after all during his years in Italy that Flaxman fully developed the precision of his neo-classical vision. This previously unpublished drawing, perfectly demonstrates in its conception Flaxman's intelligent reuse of antique sources, whilst in execution, it is a superlative example of the clarity of line and strength of form which characterises his Italian work.

Signed and dated 'Roma 1789', this sheet was completed early in Flaxman's Roman sojourn. Clearly a design for a bas-relief, it relates to a project mentioned in Flaxman's surviving correspondence. By 1789 Flaxman is recorded as having begun a number of sculptures, including a relief of the *Borghese Vase* for Edward Knight and a large relief

of *Hercules delivering Alcestis from Orcus*. Flaxman was particularly keen to execute a work in Italy that, as he explained to his friend, George Romney: 'might establish my reputation as a sculptor.'² His opportunity came with a commission from the Earl of Bristol who, 'one morning', Flaxman told Romney, 'called to see what I have done here, and ordered me to carve in marble for him, a bas relief I have modelled, between eight and nine feet, and near five feet high; representing *Amphion and Zethus delivering their mother Antiope from the fury of Dirce and Lycus*.'³ The terracotta is now lost, but the subject matter accords in all but one detail with the present drawing. The most famous aspect of the story, was that Antiope was to be tied to a bull by Dirce at the point of her rescue and it is the bull which dominates the great Hellenistic group, the *Farnese Bull*, which Flaxman saw in Naples in 1788. However, Flaxman continued to Romney that: 'it is my own composition, taken from a different point of time, but the



William Young Ottley, after John Flaxman *Orestes and Iphigenia with Pylades*
drawing of a sarcophagus relief from the Accoramboni Palace, Rome, c.1787 (detail)
 © The Trustees of the British Museum



Tommaso Piroli, after John Flaxman
Achilles contending with the Rivers
 Engraving, published 1805

same story as the group of the Toro Farnese, which you well know.' Flaxman's admission that his composition is 'taken from a different point of time' from the famed *Farnese* sculpture explains the absence of a bull in the present sheet, which depicts Antiope being released by her sons, the founders of Thrace, Amphion and Zethus, whilst her captor Dirce clings to her garments. Whilst the letter talks about a 'model', Flaxman would undoubtedly have produced a number of preparatory drawings before beginning a work in clay, of which this finished sheet can now be identified as the only survivor.

Flaxman refused the commission, negotiating instead to complete the outstanding full-size sculptural group, the *Fury of Athamos* which remains at the Earl of Bristol's Suffolk house, Ickworth. Despite the change of subject-matter, the present drawing proves that there was a remarkable continuity of design between the original model and final group. The central figure of Amphion is shown with his legs apart, left arm raised and head in profile, a pose which reappears in numerous iterations throughout Flaxman's work, most prominently in the figure of *Athamos* himself. This seems to be a motif with a classical origin. A series of drawings of a sarcophagus in the Palazzo Accoramboni by William Young Ottley, now in the British Museum, which were themselves tracings of drawings made by Flaxman for a 'Mr Devaere' in October 1787, contain an identical figure. The relief of *Orestes and Iphigenia with Pylades* on the sarcophagus contains the warrior posed in precisely the same way. This would therefore make the present drawing Flaxman's first recorded use of this distinctive pose in his own work, a particularly significant fact considering its later manifestations, most strikingly in his illustration of *Achilles contending with the Rivers* from his Iliad designs of 1793. David Irwin has noted that Flaxman's 'sketches, especially those after sarcophagi panels, usually accentuate the



John Flaxman *The Fury of Athamos*, 1790
Marble
Ickworth, Suffolk © National Trust Collections

linearity inherent in the style of the original marbles', thus a subsidiary figure in a late antique relief becomes one of the strongest in Flaxman's vocabulary of male poses.

The other obvious quotation in the present drawing is the figure of Antiope herself, which Flaxman borrows directly from the figure of *Niobe* from the group sculpture which was installed in the Uffizi in 1781. Flaxman was particularly fascinated by the sculpture, in his Italian sketchbook he noted that: 'beautiful nature was chosen by the artist and copied with so much spirit, judgment and truth of anatomy and outline, with a delicacy of execution, that when seen in proper light the naked parts seem capable of motion, the draperies are of fine cloths, light, beautifully disposed to contrast the limbs and shew them, as well as to add dignity to the figures.'⁴ A series of studies of *Niobe* herself survive in Flaxman's sketchbook preserved in the Yale Center for British Art. In the present drawing, Flaxman has altered the pose of the figure and removed



John Flaxman
Niobe, study from Yale sketchbook, folio 69r
Yale Center for British Art, New Haven

Niobe's daughter, but in the sculptural treatment of the face, the origin of the figure is unmistakable. Flaxman's source is particularly apposite, as *Niobe* was the wife of Amphion, one of Antiope sons.

This newly discovered sheet is an important addition to Flaxman's Roman work, restoring a subject-matter only previously known from the Romney letter. It also offers an exciting insight into the creative genealogy of the *Fury of Athamos*, Flaxman's outstanding achievement of his Italian stay and one of the most important monuments of British neo-classicism.

NOTES

1. See H. Brigstocke, 'John Flaxman and William Young Ottley in Italy', *The Walpole Society*, vol. LXXII, 2010.
2. J. Romney, *Memoirs of the Life and Works of George Romney*, London, 1830, p.208.
3. J. Romney, *Memoirs of the Life and Works of George Romney*, London, 1830, p.208.
4. D. Irwin, *John Flaxman 1755-1826, Sculptor, Illustrator, Designer*, London, 1979, p.43.





WILLIAM BLAKE 1757–1827

The meeting of a family in heaven

Verso: *Sisyphus rolling the stone up a hill*
Pen and watercolour over pencil
5⁵/₈ × 3³/₈ inches · 143 × 92 mm
Executed in the early 1790s

COLLECTIONS

Charles Augustus Tulk, acquired from the artist, possibly in 1816;
Louisa Susanna Ley (née Tulk), daughter of the above (1819–1848);
James Peard Ley (1807–1885), husband of the above;
James Verchild Ley, son of the above;
James Richard Ley, by direct descent, 2010;
And by descent, 2012

LITERATURE

Robert N. Essick, 'Blake in the Marketplace, 2011', *Blake, an Illustrated Quarterly*, vol. XLV, no. 4, Spring 2012, p. 109
'William Blake, the Poet & Painter, with his wife, were rescued from destitution by Mr. C. A. Tulk' (G. E. Bentley, *Blake Records*, Oxford, 1969, p. 34–8)

This newly discovered and perfectly preserved watercolour is one of two sheets of drawings by William Blake which descended unrecorded and unseen in an album assembled by the daughter of Blake's friend Charles Augustus Tulk. Their discovery solves a fascinating mystery raised originally by a letter from Nancy Flaxman of July 1816 referring to a dispute between Blake and 'our Friend', always assumed to be Tulk, concerning 'the little drawings' which Blake had let Tulk have. The drawing itself which, because of its life in the album is startlingly fresh, belongs to a small group of watercolours, in what might be called a relaxed neo-classical style, devoted to scenes of divine guidance and family relationships. Other examples include *An Old Man offering Two Children to Heaven* [otherwise titled: *Tiriel and his children*] (Fogg Art Museum; Butlin no. 88 recto, (pl. 97), *An Old Man and Woman in Contemplative Adoration amid Trees* (private collection; Butlin no. 88, pl. 92, more or less the same size as our example) and *Age Teaching Youth* (Tate: Butlin no. 91, pl. 178 in colour). Similar works exist executed in pen and wash. The condition, subject-matter and remarkable provenance make this a truly momentous addition to Blake's corpus.

Dating from the 1790s, the sheet was made at the same time as three drawings in pen and wash illustrating Robert Blair's *The Grave*. His main group of illustrations to this popular example of 'Graveyard Poetry' were the now well-known series of watercolours and their related engravings of 1805–7 but the subject had clearly interested him earlier. It is therefore possible that this watercolour too is an illustration to *The Grave*, illustrating the subject of *The Meeting of a Family in Heaven*, although, unlike the pen and

wash examples, this composition is totally different from that in the later series. But it is more likely that the present work – and other drawings of the same period – illustrate the works of the Swedish mystic and philosopher Emanuel Swedenborg; as is noted below, Blake was strongly attracted by his writings in the 1780s as was the original owner, Charles Tulk.

One of the most prominent themes in Swedenborg's writing is marriage. Swedenborg himself remained a bachelor all his life, but he wrote voluminously on the subject, most notably his *Conjugal Love* of 1768. Of central importance was the question of whether marriage ends with death. Swedenborg believed that the quality of the relationship between husband and wife resumes in the spiritual world in whatever state it was at their death. Thus, a couple in true married-love remain together in that state in heaven for eternity; however a couple lacking in that love by one or both partners will, however, separate after death and each will be given a compatible new partner if they wish. Swedenborg saw creation as a series of pairings, descending from the divine love and wisdom that define God and are the basis of creation.

The watercolour study possibly shows the meeting of a family in heaven, following precisely Swedenborg's contention that the condition of temporal love is replicated in heaven. The father, in a long blue cloak is standing in front of a Gothic structure embracing his daughter in white, whilst his wife is embracing their son. The mother and son, echoing the action of the father and daughter, seem to suggest Swedenborg's interest in natural symmetry and pairing, whilst the subject-matter of a reunion in





William Blake
Tiriel and his Children
 Watercolour, black ink and graphite on cream laid paper;
 4 1/16 x 3 7/8 inches · 122 x 98 mm
 Harvard Art Museums/Fogg Museum, Alpheus Hyatt
 Purchasing Fund, 1967.45



William Blake
Age Teaching Youth, c.1785–90
 Pen and ink and watercolour
 4 1/4 x 3 1/2 inches · 108 x 80 mm
 © Tate, 2012, Bequeathed by Miss Alice G.E. Carthew 1940

heaven accords precisely with the sentiments expressed by Swedenborg in *Conjugal Love*. We know from Charles August Tulk's daughter, Caroline that Blake executed a further illustration to the writings of Swedenborg which he later gave to Tulk. In her recollections she observed that Blake: 'became much impressed with the Spiritual Truths in Swedenborg's Writings. He made drawings from the Memorable Relations, one of them a female Angel instructing a number of children in the spiritual world.' The *Memorable Relations* – which Blake would parody in *The Marriage of Heaven and Hell* (1793) – was not published separately but as sections describing experiences in the spiritual world, usually at the ends of chapters in *Conjugal Love*. This drawing has not been located, but it seems likely to have been produced by Blake at the beginning of his career, in the 1790s, when he was in sympathy with the works of Swedenborg.

The pencil drawing of the reverse appears to be later in style. It may appear initially surprising to find Blake using a finished watercolour as if it was a piece of scrap paper but his economy in the use and preservation of drawings was notorious. The study probably dates from the time of his great illuminated books of the mid-1790s. The juxtaposition of a muscular figure with a round or globular form foreshadows such designs as that on plate 15 of *The First Book of Urizen*, 1794, and the frontispiece and plate 8 of *The Song of Los* completed in 1795. However, its subject, of a man struggling beneath an almost immovable object looks forward to plate 9 of *Urizen*, in which the round lump of stone is replaced by solid rock – '.... shaggy wild inclos'd / In an orb, his fountain of thought' – the figure referred to being Blake's character, Los. Here, however, the drawing would seem to be a simple illustration to the Homeric legend of Sisyphus, the son of Aeolus, lord of the winds and king and founder of Corinth,

whose legendary evasions were punished by his having to roll a stone boulder up a hill until, his strength failing, it rolled back down, leaving him to begin the process all over again.

This brings us to the provenance of the present drawings. Charles Augustus Tulk (1786–1847), who owned most of Leicester Square and its environs, was born in Richmond, Surrey, the son of John Augustus Tulk, a founder member in 1783 of the Theosophical Society for the propagation of the writings of Emanuel Swedenborg. Blake had bought a number of Swedenborg's writings in about 1788 and on 13 April 1789 he attended a meeting to inaugurate the New Jerusalem Church in Swedenborg's name, though he was never to become a member. Tulk and Blake probably met through their mutual friend, the sculptor John Flaxman, who was heavily involved with the movement. In 1819 Tulk and Flaxman were both associated with the foundation of *The Society for Printing and Publishing the Writings of the Hon. Emanuel Swedenborg*. In 1819 both were present when Swedenborg's skull was examined – Flaxman observing that 'the skull was worthy of [having a cast made] for its mere beauty' – and that Flaxman designed a cameo of Swedenborg for Tulk. In 1815 Flaxman wrote to his wife about the Tulk's new baby – he subsequently drew Tulk's wife and children in 1816 – and Caroline Tulk observed that the 'origin of the friendship between the Tulk family & the Flaxmans & the poet Coleridge.' Through Flaxman then, Tulk not only became a friend and supporter of Blake, Caroline Tulk going so far as to claim he rescued the Blakes 'from destitution' during this period, but one of the most sensitive promoters and advocates of Blake's work.

In July 1816, Nancy Flaxman wrote to her husband reporting an altercation between Blake and Tulk: 'I have had some discourse with our Friend about Blakes book & the



William Blake
The Good and Evil Angels Struggling for Possession of a Child, c.1793–4
 Pen and watercolour · 11 3/8 x 17 3/8 inches · 295 x 442 mm
 Inscribed on reverse: £5-5
 Trustees of Cecil Higgins Art Gallery, Bedford



John Flaxman (1755–1826)
Mrs Charles Tulk and her sons Augustus and Edward
 Pen and grey ink and grey wash
 6 1/4 x 4 3/8 inches; 157 x 116 mm
 Inscribed and dated: *Mrs C. Tulk, Augustus & Edward*. 1816
 © The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

little drawings? It is true he did not give him anything for he thought It would be wrong so to do after what pass'd between them, for as I understand B-was very violent [,] Indeed beyond all credence only that he has served you his best friend the same trick [some] time back as you must well remember? but he bought a drawing of him, I have nothing to say in this affair [,] It is too ticklish, only I know what has happened both to yourself & me, & other people are not oblig'd to put up with Bs odd humours? but let that pass[.]' (*Records*, p.241–42).

Long known to scholars, the reference to 'little drawings' has been assumed to refer to works now lost. Tulk was known to have acquired a copy of the *Songs of Innocence and of Experience* and individual plates from *All Religions are One* and *There is no Natural Religion*, together with a copy of *Poetical Sketches* and following Blake's death he also bought the watercolour version of *The Good and Evil Angels struggling for Possession of a Child* (Cecil Higgins Museum, Bedford; Butlin no. 257, ill. pl.197 in colour). The notoriously dyspeptic Blake seems to have let Tulk have several 'little' sheets without fully articulating his financial expectations. The use of the diminutive term suggests that they may have been scraps from Blake's studio perhaps acquired, in the case of the present watercolour, for its Swedenborgian subject-matter.

The row regarding the drawings seems not to have prejudiced Tulk against Blake. As has already been mentioned in 1818 Tulk lent his friend, the poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge his copy of Blake's *Songs*, Coleridge returned it with a long analytical appraisal (Bentley, *Records*, pp.336–8). Tulk also took Coleridge to see Blake's late version of *The Last Judgement* and was among the first to publish extracts from Blake's writings after his death. Of greater importance, is the fact that Tulk is thought to have authored the anonymous article 'The inventions of William Blake,

painter and poet' in the *London University Magazine* (vol 11 [March 1830]). The article offers one of the most deeply informed early explications of Blake's work. Perhaps the strongest suggestion of Tulk's authorship is the footnote at the end of the article which relates the following: 'Blake and Coleridge, when in company, seemed like congenial beings of another sphere, breathing for a while on our earth; which may easily be perceived from the similarity of thought pervading their works,' an observation which could only have been made by a mutual friend, such as Tulk.

Tulk died in 1847; of his twelve children five sons and two daughters, one of who, Louisa Susanna, would seem to have compiled the scrapbook from which these Blake drawings have been extracted, survived him. In 1986 Quaritch offered a double-sided drawing showing the *Head of a Woman in Classic Style* and *Head and Bust of a Woman* as having been given by John Flaxman to Mrs Ley for her album (Butlin no.871). Mrs Ley was born Louisa Susanna Tulk and as a young girl assembled an album of drawings, prints, poems and ephemera from 1831. She seems to have had access to her father's collection pasting in a number of old master drawings, sheets by Flaxman and the two studies by Blake which had been the cause of the dispute in 1816.

These two drawings are of immense importance to Blake scholarship, offering a powerful memorial to his friendship with Charles Tulk and relations with Coleridge. The association of these sheets with the 'Little drawings' mentioned in Mrs Flaxman's letter, also confirms them as unusually well-documented examples of his work, whilst the subject-matter of the present watercolour adds new weight to Blake's reading of the work of Swedenborg. But most importantly, it is the preservation and strength of design which makes this watercolour one of the most remarkable additions to Blake's oeuvre.



WILLIAM BLAKE 1757–1827

Studies for 'America: A Prophecy' and an early treatment of 'Job'

A newly discovered double-sided sheet of drawings
 Recto: *Job and his family*
 Verso: *Studies for 'America: A Prophecy' and other drawings*
 Pencil
 8 1/16 × 9 1/16 inches · 204 × 246mm
 Drawn c.1793

COLLECTIONS
 Charles Augustus Tulk, acquired from the artist, possibly in 1816;
 Louisa Susanna Ley (née Tulk), daughter of the above (1819–1848);
 James Peard Ley (1807–1885), husband of the above;
 James Verchild Ley, son of the above;
 James Richard Ley, by direct descent, 2010;
 And by descent, 2012

LITERATURE
 Robert N. Essick, 'Blake in the Marketplace, 2011', *Blake, an (for this work) Illustrated Quarterly*, vol. XLV, no.4, Spring 2012, p.109

This newly discovered double-sided drawing is one of two works by William Blake which descended unrecorded and unseen in an album with descendants of Blake's friend Charles Augustus Tulk. The drawings on each side of this sheet are particularly interesting for the light they throw on Blake's working methods.

The figures on what is now taken as the *recto* appear to have been done all at one time, despite the fact that the two figures of a girl holding up a child on the right, seen in profile, are taken from a cancelled plate designed by Blake for his book *America* in 1793. This plate, usually known as *The Dream of Thiralatha*, exists in two colour-printed copies (Butlin no.268 8 and 267, pl.364, col. pl.339); Essick, *Separate Plates*, pp.38–40, col. pls.4–5). The only difference is that the legs of the smaller child are shown together in the drawing but wide apart in the *Thiralatha* print, as seems also to be the case in the smaller version of the same pair of children,

now seen from behind, on the right of our drawing.

While using an existing motif taken from an earlier work Blake seems to have developed, with no break in style or weight of pencil, a complete composition in which the two seated figures closely resemble the figures of Job and his wife in the first and last designs of the series of twenty-one illustrations to the Book of Job, begun in about 1805 for Blake's patron Thomas Butts and repeated and engraved at the instigation of John Linnell from 1821 onwards (for the complex history of the development of these various series see Butlin, pp.409–35, nos.550–9, all ill.). In the last illustration of the series Job and his wife appear standing, playing musical instruments, he a harp and she another plucked instrument; this is in contrast to the first illustration in which they are seated, their musical instruments hanging unplayed on the tree behind them. In both cases they are flanked by their children,



William Blake *Illustrations of The Book of Job*, plate 22
 Engraving, published by John Linnell, 1826
 8 3/8 × 6 3/8 inches · 218 × 169 mm
 © The Trustees of the British Museum

William Blake *A Dream of Thiralatha*, 1793
 Colour relief etching · 4 3/8 × 6 3/4 inches · 118 × 171 mm
 © The Trustees of the British Museum





William Blake *Sketch for a title-page, probably the first idea for 'America' c.1793*
Watercolour over pencil
Inscribed: "THE AMERICAN WAR [?]"
and also with a note on the composition
w15 x 10 3/4 inches · 381 x 263 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum

William Blake
America: A Prophecy, 1793,
plates 3–7
relief and white-line etchings
printed in a dark greenish
grey ink
© The Trustees of the
British Museum



also playing instruments in the last illustration whereas they are shown praying in the first. The progression is from unenlightened, conventional prayer to an enlightened state of grace.

In our drawing Job and his wife are seated but play their instruments. The accompanying figures, though seemingly again members of their family, are completely different from those in the later series. On the left stands a naked classically inspired young man holding a spade, on the right the two pairs of children each holding a smaller child aloft. Above them hover two flying figures apparently attacking the figures below with rays of negative force from their outstretched hands; the action, but not the form of the attacking figures, is that of Satan smiting Job with sore boils in the sixth illustration of the various series. The drawing seems to combine elements from the complete Job story and can therefore perhaps be seen as an epitome of the Book of Job drawn before Blake had worked out the details of his later series.

Episodes from the story of Job had already been included in Blake's two series of illustrations to the Bible, the tempera paintings of 1799–1800 and the watercolours

of 1800 onwards: there is a tempera painting of *Job and his Daughters* (National Gallery of Art, Washington; Butlin no.394, col. pl.500) and a watercolour of *Job confessing his Presumption to God who answers from the Whirlwind*, c.1803–5 (National Gallery of Scotland; Butlin no.463, col.pl.538). It is however possible that Blake envisaged a more general treatment of the Job story as in our drawing. In addition, as Blake often envisaged the works in his biblical series in pairs or larger groups, it is possible that the pencil drawing was intended as a counterpoint to the watercolour *By the Waters of Babylon* of 1806 (Butlin no.446, col.pl.541) in which a family of exiled Jews sit below a harp and other instruments hanging from a tree.

On the reverse of this sheet there are a number of drawings of figures used in Blake's *America* of 1793 and others of his illuminated books which appear to derive from his close study of engravings by Adamo Ghisi (after the drawing by Giorgio Ghisi) of Michelangelo's Sistine ceiling. The falling figure embroiled in the coils of a snake appears below the text of pl.7 of *America*, while the crouching figure, hands up over his head on the right, appears on

the left. To the left of the snake-entwined figure appears a similar figure, though with his legs in a different position, holding a heavy weight; this figure reappears, again with the legs altered, in the lower right-hand corner of the 'Preludium' of *Europe*, 1794. Above, a group of three figures, one with a sword, one with a pair of scales and one bearing another figure on his back, appear at the top of the same plate of *America*. In the same grouping with only slight differences in the gaps between the figures. Below and to the left appears a variant of the figure carrying scales. The group of fleeing figures in the bottom right-hand corner reappears in the bottom left-hand corner of plate 5 of *America*, at the beginning of the main text headed 'A Prophecy'. Other figures reappear elsewhere but in a more modified form; one of the group of three figures in the upper right-hand corner is repeated somewhat larger below that group.

These studies of figures are close to those on another sheet of drawings by Blake formerly in the collection of Charles Ryskamp and recently acquired by Robert N. Essick and republished with a detailed analysis in the same article as that mentioning the two Tulk drawings (Essick, *Marketplace*,

pp.111–2, fig.1; Butlin no.226 *recto*, pl.259). This includes one of the fleeing figures, though on its own, from plate 5 of *America* together with the ascending figure rising shown having cast off its chains in the top left-hand corner of the same plate.

Further figures can be related to plates in *Urizen*, 1794, while, as in the case of our drawing, others are less closely related to specific figures in the books. It is perhaps significant that the two sheets of paper are of much the same size (that in the Essick collection measures 205 x 267mm., 8 x 10 1/2 inches), though the Essick drawing seems to have been worked on several occasions, whereas most if not all of the figures our sheet seem to have been done during one operation.

As Essick points out these designs are in reverse direction to that on the printed pages on which they reappear. This means that they are in the same direction as that in which they would have been drawn for etching on the metal plate. This is a characteristic of sketches for Blake's relief etchings, unlike his later white-line etchings for which the drawings are usually in the same direction as in the final versions, having had to be reversed for the engravings. Essick goes on

to suggest that even the drawings directly related to the figures in the illuminated books 'may not have been executed with a particular image in *America* (or in the other illuminated book) in mind. Rather, all were executed as first thoughts on paper and as a way of assembling a pictorial vocabulary of anatomical and gestural forms for future use ...' However, the repetition of the close grouping of the three figures at the top of plate 7 of *America* suggests that at least these drawings were done with conscious reference to the final book.

Death of the Doe

Mezzotint, printed in black ink alone
 Plate: 15½ × 19¾ inches · 395 × 491 mm
 Image: 14½ × 19¼ inches · 369 × 490 mm
 Engraved and published by Stubbs,
 16 October 1804

Unconserved original condition with some minor worming and slight browning to sheet. Trimmed to the platemark on three sides; trimmed approximately 8mm into the subject on the right-hand side.

LITERATURE

Frank Silzer, *The Story of British Sporting Prints*, 2nd edit., 1929 p.273;
 C. F. G. R. Schwerdt, *Hunting, Hawking, Shooting*, vol.III, 1928–37, p.166;
 Basil Taylor, *The Prints of George Stubbs*, 1969, no.19;
 Dudley Snelgrove, *British Sporting and Animal prints 1658–1874*, 1981, no.3;
 Judy Egerton, *George Stubbs*, 1984, no.190;
 Christopher Lennox-Boyd, Rob Dixon and Tim Clayton, *George Stubbs: The Complete Engraved Works*, 1989, p.289, catalogue no.145 i/ii

An exceptionally early and previously unrecorded impression with the mezzotint on the face of the gamekeeper printing clearly and without any evidence of wear. The details of the foliage at the lower right; the light and shade throughout the image and the contrast on the two animals indicates an especially early printing, possibly the earliest

George Stubbs *Freeman, the Earl of Clarendon's gamekeeper, with a dying doe and hound*
 Oil on canvas · 40 × 50 inches · 1016 × 1270 mm
 Signed and dated *Geo Stubbs pinxit 1800*
 Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection

George Stubbs *Death of the Doe*, 1804
 Mezzotint printed in colour · 14½ × 17¾ inches · 368 × 448 mm
 ©Trustees of the British Museum

identifiable impression. The impressions in the British Museum; Yale Center for British Art; Hornby collection, Liverpool and formerly in the Lennox-Boyd collection are all printed in colour with varying degrees of sophistication. The superb and unparalleled definition found in the present work suggests that not only is it the earliest known impression but possibly a proof pulled before a decision was made to publish this image in colour.

This state has George Stubbs's original lettering dated 1804 and is prior to the common title ascribed to this work which it acquired in its re-engraved state in 1817. In the present state the mezzotint should probably be correctly titled *A Park Scene at The Grove, near Watford, the seat of the Earl of Clarendon*, the title under which George Stubbs exhibited his painting of the this subject at the Royal Academy in 1801. The slight smile which appears to be worn by the gamekeeper in later impressions and referred to by Judy Egerton is much less pronounced in this early printing in which the fresh mezzotint allows the full lips of Mr Freeman to be seen properly, thus drawing some of her suggestions into question. This impression also lends considerable weight to the conclusion of the three authors of the leading catalogue on George Stubbs's prints that this mezzotint is the work



of George Stubbs himself, as the handling of the mezzotint forming the foreground rocks is entirely consistent with the handling of the foreground rocks in Stubbs's only other known mezzotint, *A Tyger*. (Lennox-Boyd, Dixon & Clayton 77) it is quite different from the handling of similar foreground objects in George Townley Stubbs's last two mezzotints dating from 1778 (Lennox-Boyd, Dixon & Clayton 81 and 82). Similarly, comparison of the handling of the two animals in this mezzotint shows a softness which corresponds with George Stubbs's handling of the dog in his own mixed method plate of *Labourers* (Lennox-Boyd, Dixon & Clayton 86), but which is quite at odds with the rather more harsh and contrasted handling of the same animal in Laurie and Earlom's engravings of the subject (Lennox-Boyd, Dixon & Clayton 87) or, indeed, with the handling of the animals in any of the mezzotints by other engravers after George Stubbs's works. It appears that Lennox-Boyd, Dixon & Clayton's conclusion to assign the engraving of the mezzotint to Stubbs himself on the ground that all other prints published by Stubbs were also engraved by him and there is no firm evidence that this is an exception should be endorsed due to the handling so apparent in this early impression of the mezzotint.



FRANCIS TOWNE 1739–1816

On the banks of Derwent Water at dusk looking towards Keswick and Skiddaw

Watercolour and pen and brown ink on paper on the original mount
3¾ × 6 inches · 95 × 153 mm
Signed and dated lower left: *F Towne/1786*, also inscribed verso: *No 30 At Keswick looking towards Skiddaw*

COLLECTIONS

James White (?), d.1825;
John White Abbott, d.1851;
And by descent;
Spink & Son, Ltd, London, 1980;
Davis & Long Co., New York, 1980;
Mimi and Stanford Feld, New York, acquired from the above 1980, to 2012

LITERATURE

Adrian Bury, *Francis Towne: Lone star of watercolour*, 1962, p.151 (as *Keswick, Looking Towards Skiddaw*);
To be included in Richard Stephens's *catalogue raisonné* of the works of Francis Towne as catalogue no.503

EXHIBITED

Probably, London, Henry Tresham's gallery, 20 Lower Brook Street, *A series of the most picturesque scenes in the neighbourhood of Rome, Naples and other parts of Italy, Switzerland, etc., together with a select number of views of the Lakes in Cumberland, West Moreland and North Wales. The whole drawn on the spot by Francis Towne, Landscape painter*, February 1805, no.57, (*Going from Lowdore looking towards Skiddaw*);
Exeter, Art Gallery and Museum, *Three Exeter Artists of the Eighteenth Century: Francis Hayman, RA, Francis Towne, John White Abbott*, 1951, no.86;
London, Spink & Son, Ltd, London, *English Watercolour Drawings*, 1980, no.9;
New York, Davis & Long Company, *English Watercolors*, 1980, no.58;
Pennsylvania State University, Museum of Art, and Aspen Center for the Visual Arts, Colorado, 1981, no.46, repr.

This study belongs to a remarkable series of small watercolours which resulted from a tour of the Lake District made by Towne in August 1786 in the company of his two closest friends; John Merivale, and James White who appears to have been the original owner of this work.

These small watercolours, possibly originally numbering at least 30 (of which seven are now recorded), are carefully executed, richly coloured sophisticated compositions and are especially notable for their monumentality of conception in spite of their very small size. Richard Stephens suggests that 'as they are so highly considered as compositions, they are all fully coloured, and there are no loose ends. Perhaps it is simply that Towne drew these small views only after having made larger sketches on the spot, so that he would have already gone through the process of working out what would make the most effective view of a particular scene, and was left only with the additional problem of rendering it on these tiny sheets of paper'.

Timothy Wilcox in writing of the two works from this series in the collection of the Yale Center for British Art is worth quoting at length:

They ... embody Towne's ability as a creative artist to evoke space. Not only are the drawing exquisitely coloured in the most intense yet subtly graded blue wash, Towne has taken particular care to refine his pen line to the diminutive scale of the sheet. Finally, his confidence in his achievement was such that he not only mounted the pages himself but also included them in the 1805 exhibition at Lower Brook Street. Nothing could betray more clearly the ambiguity of Towne's self-image than to offer these tiny drawings to view by a public which had recently marveled at Turner's Alpine watercolours with an area nearly fifty times as great

Timothy Wilcox, *Francis Towne*, 1997, p.122



Francis Towne
The Grange at the head of Keswick Lake
Watercolour and pen and brown ink over pencil
3¾ × 6½ inches · 95 × 156 mm
Inscribed and dated: *F Towne 1786*; verso: *No 29*
The Grange at the Head of Keswick Lake / F Towne 1786
Yale Center for British Art, New Haven



Francis Towne
Borrowdale
Watercolour and pen and brown ink over pencil
3¾ × 6½ inches · 95 × 156 mm
Inscribed: *Borrowdale*
The Samuel Courtauld Trust, Courtauld Gallery, London
The Dorothy Scharf Bequest, D.2007.DS.40

THOMAS ROWLANDSON 1756–1827

Hengar House, St Tudy, near Bodmin, Cornwall

Watercolour and pen and ink over pencil
8 × 10¾ inches · 203 × 273 mm
Inscribed verso: *Hengar House the seat
of Matthw. Mitchell [sic] Esqr., Cornwall*
Drawn c.1795

COLLECTIONS

Frank T Sabin, London, 1949;
Private collection, Dorset, 1977
Anthony Reed, London, 1978;
Davis & Long Co., New York, 1978;
Mimi and Sanford Feld, New York, acquired
from the above 1978, to 2012

LITERATURE

Bernard Falk, *Thomas Rowlandson: His Life
and Art*, 1949, pp.119–121, repr. facing p.28;
John Hayes, *Rowlandson Watercolours and
Drawings*, 1972, repr. p.19, fig.6;
John Hayes, *The Art of Thomas Rowlandson*,
1990, exh. cat., pp.140–41, cat. no. 56, repr.
p.141

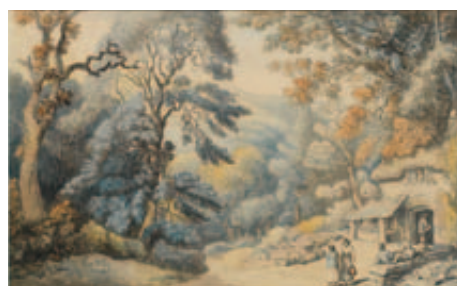
EXHIBITED

Anthony Reed, London, and Davis & Long
Company, New York, 1978, *English Sketches
and Studies*, no.30, repr.;
Emily Lowe Gallery, Hofstra University,
Hempstead, New York, 1980, *British
Watercolours and Drawings 1750–1910*, no.70,
repr. on cover;
Museum of Art, Pennsylvania State
University, University Park, and Aspen
Center for the Visual Arts, Colorado;
*Selections from the Collection of Mimi and
Sanford Feld*, 1981, no.43, repr.;
Davis & Langdale Co., New York, 1985,
British Drawings 1760–1925: A Loan Exhibition,
no. 14, repr.;
New York, The Frick Collection, Pittsburgh,
The Frick Art Museum and Baltimore,
Museum of Art, 1990, *The Art of Thomas
Rowlandson*, no.56, repr.

This beautiful and well-known example of
Rowlandson's landscape work underlines
his strong interest in landscape, inspired in
large measure by Gainsborough's draw-
ings. In this drawing Rowlandson under-
lined the simple pleasures of a bucolic life
tending, as was usual with him, to place
himself in an idealized self-portrait as the
contented countryman setting off for a
day's sport.

In *The Art of Thomas Rowlandson*
(*op.cit.*, p.140), Hayes noted that:

*In 1812 Rowlandson published a series
of fourteen Cornish views, of which one,
described as a farm house at Hengar, corre-
sponds closely with the house depicted in this
drawing. The size of the property, however,
indicates that it is more than a farm, and
the evidence of Rowlandson's drawing of the
front of Hengar House (Sir Richard Onslow
sale, Sotheby's, 15 July 1959, lot 79, bt by Frank
T Sabin), which shows similar gabbling over
the front door, suggests that the present view
is of the back and one of the sides of Hengar
House. The building, with its gables, stone*



Thomas Rowlandson
A farm on the Hengar Estate, Cornwall
Pen and grey and grey-black inks and watercolour
8¾ × 14¼ inches · 225 × 362 mm · Private collection
(exhibited: Lowell Libson Ltd, *Beauty and the Beast: a loan exhibition of Rowlandson's works from British private collections*, 2007, no.38)

porches, and stone mullioned windows, is typical
of an early seventeenth-century Cornish manor
house. The buildings are framed by the pictur-
esque branches of an old oak tree.

Hengar House, six miles north of Bodmin,
Cornwall, was the country estate of
Matthew Michell (1751–1817), one of
Rowlandson's closest friends and most
considerable patrons. It was while staying
at Hengar House that Rowlandson made
many of his Cornish landscapes. Michell,
a banker, was a Justice of the Peace and
Deputy Lieutenant of Cornwall; he also
owned Grove House, near Enfield, north of
London, and a residence off the Strand in
London. Rowlandson was a welcome visitor
at all three of Michell's homes. Hengar
House was destroyed by fire in 1904.



Thomas Rowlandson
Mr Michell's Picture Gallery, Grove House, Enfield 1817
Pen and ink and watercolour · Inscribed: *Rowlandson and
Mr. Michells Picture Gallery Grove House Enfield 1817*
5¾ × 9¾ inches · 149 × 240 mm
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection
Accession Number B1975.4.911



WILLIAM DANIELL RA 1769–1837

Ruins of the Naurattan, Sasaram, Bihar

Watercolour

Inscribed on the original backing sheet in pencil: *Ruins of the Noruttun – Sasseram – Bahar*, also inscribed verso in ink: *N. 39 The Noruttun – Sasseram –*
19 × 24 inches · 483 × 607 mm
Drawn in 1790

COLLECTIONS

Spink & Son Ltd, London, 1974;
Private collection, USA, acquired from the above, to 2012

EXHIBITED

London, Spink & Son Ltd, *Artist Adventurers in Eighteenth Century India: Thomas and William Daniell*, November 1974, no.59.

In 1784 Thomas Daniell received permission from the East India Company to travel to India in the company of his nephew, William. They left England on 7 April 1785 and arrived in Calcutta via Canton early in 1786, setting off in September of that year on the first of a series of pioneering tours: from Calcutta to Srinagar which was to last three years followed by a circular tour from Mysore to Madras (1792–3), and culminating in a visit to Bombay and its temple sites in 1793. It is possible to accurately chart their progress from William's journal as well as the carefully notated drawings that both artists made. Mildred Archer writes in her Introduction to *Artist Adventurers in Eighteenth Century India: Thomas and William Daniell* (op. cit.) 'Scarcely a day passed without sketches being made or worked up into full watercolours. Many of these are inscribed with titles and dates – those in ink being by Thomas and most of those in pencil by William. Together they form a vast pictorial record of the Daniells' itinerary.'

After their first tour the Daniells, again based in Calcutta, sold one hundred and fifty oil paintings by public lottery and the proceeds enabled them to make a tour of Mysore. A second lottery was drawn in Madras in February 1793 comprising sixty-eight oil paintings and eight drawings, which funded their final tour of western India.

The Daniells returned to London in September 1794, settling at 37 Holland Street, Fitzroy Square and began translating their studies into exhibition oil paintings which were exhibited at the Royal Academy and the British Institution. Thomas was elected an associate of the Royal Academy in 1796 and in 1799 made a full Academician as well as also becoming a Fellow of the Royal Society, the Asiatic Society, and the Society of Antiquaries. William followed as an Associate in 1807 and as a full Academician in 1822.

The Daniells most important project after their return from India was their best-known work *Oriental Scenery* (issued in six series between 1796 and 1808); 144 hand-coloured aquatint views of Indian scenery. These represent Mughal and Dravidian monuments, cityscapes and sublime views of mountains and waterfalls and formed the most extensive work of its kind, finding subscribers throughout Britain as well as in Calcutta and Madras. The large scale, number of plates, and use of colour printing were greatly admired and emulated. Following its success a smaller quarto version of *Oriental Scenery* in 1812–16 was issued, as well as *A Picturesque Voyage by Way of China* (1810) and *The Oriental Annual* (1834–9).

There has always been some confusion as to the exact roles uncle and nephew took

in the production of their Indian subjects.

Thomas was undoubtedly the prime painter in oils and William, a highly accomplished aquatinter, appears to have been largely responsible for the large and highly sophisticated watercolours which display both fine draughtsmanship and a particularly subtle laying-in of the colour washes as can be seen in the present finely preserved example. From 1795 to 1838 William exhibited one hundred and sixty eight pictures at the Royal Academy and sixty-four at the British Institution—including views of India, Scotland, and England. He was a prolific printmaker and his most famous independent work was his *Voyage round Great Britain* (4 vols., 1814–25), which made extensive use of sepia wash.

This watercolour depicting a palace pavilion under a banyan tree resulted from a visit made in February 1790. Thomas Daniell executed an oil of the subject (Yale Center for British Art, New Haven) when he was back in England. Dated 1811, it was exhibited at the Royal Academy that year (no.78 *Ruins of the Nouruttun, part of the palace at Sassaram, in the district of Bahar, East Indies*).



Thomas Daniell
Ruins of the Naurattan, Sasaram, Bihar
Oil on canvas · 38½ × 53¾ inches · 979 × 1362 mm
Signed and dated 1811
Yale Center for British Art, New Haven





Painting with Crayons: the appeal of pastels in the eighteenth century



Arthur Pond (1701–1758)
Rhoda Astley (née Delaval), c.1750
Oil on canvas · 30.2 × 27 inches · 768 × 686mm
National Portrait Gallery, London

*Let candid justice our attention lead
To the soft crayon of the graceful Read
Nor, Gardner, shall the Muse, in haste forget
Thy Taste and Ease, tho' with fond regret
She pays, while here the crayon's power she notes
A sign of homage to the shades of Cotes*

William Hayley, *An essay on painting: in two epistles to Mr. Romney*, London, 1781, lines 247–252.

Painting with crayons, as working in pastel was known throughout the eighteenth century, was a highly respected, as well as fashionable practice. Writing in 1781, the poet William Hayley, after listing a number of celebrated artists, commemorated the leading pastellists of the day pointing to: the 'graceful' work of Katherine Read (1723–78), the 'Taste and Ease' of Daniel Gardner (c.1750–1805), before finally paying 'homage to the shades of' Francis Cotes (1726–1770). This year's catalogue includes a group of works in pastel by these three artists, along with examples by the rare Scottish portraitist, Archibald Skirving (1749–1819) and mezzotinter, John Raphael Smith (1752–1812), giving the opportunity to survey the appeal of pastels during the century.

Many material and practical factors contributed to the popularity of pastels during the eighteenth century: the distinctive light and brilliant surface, the strength of colours, the simplicity of tools required to make them, the relative speed with which they could be completed as well as their essentially domestic scale and informal character. These inherent strengths, were amplified by a burgeoning market for portraiture at all levels in Britain during the century and the advancement of certain technologies, which made pastel a highly popular medium

in which to work. This was particularly marked in the development of the manufacture of crayons themselves, but also ancillary industries such as glass production. Due to their fragile surface, pastels had to be glazed and the development of low-cost plate glass manufacture enabled this to happen on an unprecedented scale. But ultimately it was a medium of convenience. As George Vertue noted, pastels were 'much easier in the execution than Oil colours', because they were quicker to execute and required no drying time.¹ These qualities allowed pastel painters greater flexibility than practitioners in oil, enabling them to be itinerant and set up in fashionable spa towns, such as Bath or even work in a sitter's house.²

Artists and patrons appreciated the distinctive optical properties of painting in pastel: the exquisite luminosity, bright unchanging colours and unmistakable bloom, or *fleur*, that enlivens the complexion of the sitter. For artists, pastels also offered an efficient use of time. The painter Arthur Pond, working in London in the 1730s, could complete between 30 and 40 pastels a year, compared with the 20 oil portraits.³ Vertue noted the success of pastel painters 'that had been to Italy to study', specifically Pond and Cotes's master, George Knapton, registering the decorative quality of their works: 'looking pleasant ... covered with a glass large Gold Frames was much commended. for novelty.'⁴ As Pond's account books testify, from 1734 to 1737 his annual income from pastels rose gradually from £65 to £158, although rising costs for materials – particularly the carved and gilded frames and plate glass – kept his profits below £50.⁵ Cotes wrote a treatise on his art which was published posthumously in the *European*

Magazine, in which he observed: ‘Crayon pictures, when finely painted, are superlatively beautiful, and decorative in a very high degree in apartments that are not too large; for having their surface dry, they partake in appearance of the effect of Fresco, and by candle light are luminous and beautiful beyond all other pictures.’⁶ The decorative appeal of Cotes’s work is perfectly demonstrated in the fine portraits of *Lord and Lady Southwell*, still in their original gilded architectonic, Kentian frames.

Cotes’s comments also underline the regard in which the medium was held. In 1772 his most celebrated pupil, John Russell, published his detailed *Elements of Painting with Crayons*, in which he asked: ‘in what high estimation are the Pictures of *Rosalba* held? How happy do Connoisseurs think themselves when they possess any of her Works! If the *Crayon* Pictures left by Mr. Cotes are not held in equal estimation, posterity will not do justice to his merit.’⁷ *Rosalba* was the Venetian pastellist Rosalba Carriera who was greatly in vogue amongst British collectors. Even Horace Walpole, who was a patron and friend of Carriera could observe the quality of Cotes’s female portraits: ‘which, if they do not yield to *Rosalba*’s in softness, excel her’s in vivacity

and invention.’⁸ Pond had a successful side-line copying the works of Carriera and her reputation in Britain ensured pastel was viewed as a largely Italian medium.⁹ This makes the work of Katherine Read of particular interest, as she was trained by two of the great French pastellists of the eighteenth century, Maurice-Quentin de la Tour and Gabriel-Louis Blanchet, successively in Paris and Rome and was frequently called the ‘English *Rosalba*’.¹⁰

The remarkably fine portrait of *Thomas Brudenell-Bruce, Lord Bruce*, one of only a handful of pictures Read completed in Rome in 1751, testifies to her Continental training. Bruce’s features are finished with a careful precision, whilst the costume and hair are executed with breadth and freedom. In 1771 a critic noted of Read: ‘her penciling is free and easy, and her colouring has a great deal of truth’, features which mark out this exceptionally sensitive portrait and heightened by its exemplary condition.¹¹ The technical processes of the medium were adumbrated in Russell’s treatise, which was in effect a handbook to the art of pastel painting. He revised and enlarged it in 1777, and it remained popular throughout the nineteenth century. Russell’s *Elements of Painting with Crayons* gives a

remarkable explication of the working methods of British pastellists, more specifically the work of Cotes, about whom, he opined: ‘with respect to *Crayon Painting*, the present age has produced an uncommon instance of excellence in one of our own Countrymen.’¹² He recommended a strong blue paper, the thicker the better and mounted on linen. He advised students to paint seated, ‘with the box of crayons in his lap’, adding ‘let the windows of the room where he paints be darkened, at least to the height of six feet.’¹³ The smudging or *sfumato* effect he described as ‘sweetening with the finger’, although this was to be used only as a base, the final marks were to be applied with a sharpened pastel to add precision and clarity to his sitter’s features. Russell made his own crayons, mixing the colours with spirits of wine on a grindstone, then rolling them quickly ‘into pastils in the left hand with the ball of the right, first forming them cylindrically and then tapering them at each end’, to give him a pastel which could apply large areas of colour and precise detail.

For Russell, pastels were all that were required to create the full-range of visual effects to rival oil painting. But other practitioners, most notably Daniel Gardner, who developed a method of combining oil,

gouache, and pastel on paper, which he laid on canvas, leaving the finished picture unvarnished but glazed. This technique, where shadow is replaced by tone, ensured a lasting freshness and vivacity, as in the wonderful, newly identified portrait of *Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire as Circe*. In this manner, Gardner achieved a decorative approximation of Reynolds’s ‘grand style’, portraying small whole lengths in landscape and fashionable sitters in classical guise. Like Reynolds, Gardner appreciated the power of publication, having his most prominent sitters engraved. The *Duchess of Devonshire* was engraved by Thomas Watson in 1778 and given the title *Circe* and several lines from Milton’s masque *Comus*, but the sitter must have been widely known, as she was identified by Henry Bromley in his *A Catalogue of engraved British Portraits from Egbert the Great to the present time*, published in 1793. The same combination of pastel with gouache is visible in the small portrait of the pioneering botanist William Curtis by John Raphael Smith, which must surely have been drawn in preparation for a print? Smith was one of the great mezzotinters of the second half of the century and the use of gouache was the most expeditious manner of capturing the appearance of oil in a drawn portrait,

the same qualities mezzotints were designed to replicate.

It is always assumed that the taste for pastels began to wane at the end of the eighteenth century and the Edinburgh based artist, Archibald Skirving is frequently cited as the last great British exponent of the medium. Indeed, his own biographers have tended to point out that he stopped working in the medium in around 1803.¹⁴ This assumption can now be challenged by the discovery of the fine portrait of *Emilia Anne Pringle* which is signed and dated 1815. What is more remarkable than the date – which effectively extends Skirving’s career by a decade – is the style. Far from being retardataire, or old fashioned in approach, Skirving’s austere composition and reduced tonality is entirely in step with European neo-classicism. Recent scholarly interest has meant, ‘candid justice’, to quote Hayley, is finally being done to the works of major pastellists such as Cotes and Gardner, whilst more can be done to resuscitate the reputations of rarer practitioners such as Read and Skirving.¹⁵ Whilst collectors have long appreciated their importance as, to quote Cotes again: ‘Crayon pictures, when finely painted, are superlatively beautiful, and decorative in a very high degree in apartments that are not too large.’



Francis Cotes (1726–1770)
Lord and Lady Southwell
Pastel · Each 23 × 18 inches · 585 × 457 mm
Executed c.1750



Katherine Read (1723–1779)
Thomas, 2nd Baron Bruce
Pastel · 18¾ × 14½ inches · 467 × 369 mm
Executed in Rome, c.1751



Daniel Gardner (c.1750–1805)
Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire as 'Circe'
Pastel and gouache · 12 × 10 inches · 350 × 254 mm
Executed c.1778



John Raphael Smith (1752–1812)
Portrait of William Curtis
Pastel and gouache · 8¾ × 10¾ inches · 220 × 270 mm
Executed c.1787



Archibald Skirving (1749–1819) *Portrait of Lady Pringle, née Emilia Anne Macleod*
Pastel · signed with initials and dated AS/1815
21¾ × 16 inches · 553 × 407 mm

NOTES

1. ‘The Notebooks of George Vertue’, *The Walpole Society*, vol.22, 1933–34, p.109.
2. For pastellists in Bath during the eighteenth century see for example William Hoare and the early work of Thomas Lawrence in S. Sloman, *Pickpocketing the Rich*, exh. cat. Bath (Holburne Museum of Art), 2002, p.37–43 and 82–90.
3. L. Lippincott, *Selling Art in Georgian London; the Rise of Arthur Pond*, New Haven and London, 1983, p.76–81.
4. ‘The Notebooks of George Vertue’, *The Walpole Society*, vol.22, 1933–34, p.109.
5. L. Lippincott, *Selling Art in Georgian London; the Rise of Arthur Pond*, New Haven and London, 1983, p.79.
6. F. Cotes, ‘Notes on Crayon Painting’, *European Magazine*, February 1797, p.84–5.
7. J. Russell, *Elements of Painting with Crayons*, London, 1772, p.ii.
8. Ed. Rev. J. Dallaway, H. Walpole, *Anecdotes of Painting*, London, 1828, vol.IV, p.III. Walpole works by both Cotes and Rosalba.
9. L. Lippincott, *Selling Art in Georgian London; the Rise of Arthur Pond*, New Haven and London, 1983, p.62.
10. V. Manners, ‘Catherine Read: the ‘English Rosalba’’, *The Connoisseur*, vol. 88, 1931, p.376–86.
11. W. Baker, *Remarks on the English Language ...*, London, 1770, p.xxviii.
12. J. Russell, *Elements of Painting with Crayons*, London, 1772, p.ii.
13. J. Russell, *Elements of Painting with Crayons*, London, 1772, p.21.
14. S. Lloyd, *Raeburn’s Rival: Archibald Skirving 1749–1819*, exh. cat., Edinburgh (Scottish National Portrait Gallery), p.30–33.
15. For outstanding recent work on pastel painting see S. Lloyd and K. Sloan, *The Intimate Portrait; Drawings, Miniatures and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence*, exh. cat. Edinburgh (National Galleries of Scotland), 2009 and K. Baetjer and M. Shelley, *Pastel Portraits: Images of 18th Century Europe*, exh. cat. New York (Metropolitan Museum of Art), 2011.

KATHERINE READ 1723–1779

Thomas, 2nd Baron Bruce, later 1st Earl of Ailesbury (1729–1814)

Pastel
18¾ × 14½ inches · 467 × 369 mm
Inscribed on a label verso: *Thomas 1st Earl of Ailesbury / 1730. 1814 / married Feby [sic] 17 = 1761 to Susanna / daughter of Henry Hoare Esq / of Stourhead = Wilts*
Executed in Rome, c.1751
In the original Italian frame

COLLECTIONS
By family descent to 2012

LITERATURE
Margery Morgan, 'British Connoisseurs in Rome,' *British Art Journal*, Spring/Summer 2006, VII, no.1, pp.40–44, repr. p.41, fig.4.

Katherine Read *Connoisseurs in Rome*, c.1750
Oil on canvas · 37¼ × 53 inches · 946 × 1346 mm
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection



Pastel portraiture was particularly associated with Italian travel: its portability made it a desirable tourist purchase and for the first half of the century British visitors flocked to Venice to sit to Rosalba Carriera. In Britain Carriera was so highly celebrated and widely imitated, that the painter Arthur Pond maintained a lucrative business copying her most famous compositions. Katherine Read was frequently identified as 'the British Rosalba' and although little known today, she was celebrated as one of the finest pastellists of the mid-eighteenth century. Of Jacobite extraction, Read trained in Paris under the great Maurice Quentin de La Tour and Italy with Louis-Gabriel Blanchet and it was whilst in Rome in 1751–3 that she undertook this exceptionally fine portrait of the young traveller, Thomas Bruce, later 1st Earl of Ailesbury.

Bruce succeeded his uncle as 2nd Baron Bruce in 1747, inheriting Tottenham Park in Wiltshire. In 1751 he travelled to Rome with his tutor the Rev. Thomas Lipyeatt, where he is recorded living in the Casa Guarnieri. Bruce became a member of the circle of the great Irish patron, James Caulfield, 1st Earl of Charlemont. Both Bruce and Lipyeatt subscribed to Charlemont's plan for an academy for British artists in Rome and Bruce appears in Reynolds's caricatures of the circle: his *Parody of the School of Athens* and *Four Learned Milordi* (both National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin) where he appears as an 'eloquent beanpole'. Bruce was also a member of Charlemont's musical and masquing society, which planned a 'Grand Coup d'Éclat' for the Roman Carnival. Charlemont designed a triumphal car celebrating the 'Triumph of British Liberty' which was to be pulled by four horses abreast and carrying nineteen figures in symbolic dress, Charlemont was to play Minerva and Bruce the role of Liberty. The authorities banned the display, on the grounds that four horses abreast were dangerous in the narrow Roman streets. It is instructive that Bruce was involved in Charlemont's attempts to establish a British academy in Rome, subscribing to the fund which was to provide pensions to young painters. Whilst the scheme eventually came to nothing, principally because of the clashing personalities involved, it does point to Bruce's own interest in encouraging the arts, particularly the efforts of British painters.

In a letter to Katherine Read's brother, Alexander, dated 17 June 1752 the Rome-based dealer, the Abbé Peter Grant noted that: 'She has done the Earl of Kilmorey's picture in crayons and Lord Bruce's



greatly to his satisfaction.’ (M. Morgan, ‘British Connoisseurs in Rome,’ *British Art Journal*, Spring/Summer 2006, VII, no.1, p.41.) This, as Margery Morgan has recently established, must refer to the present portrait. It was therefore completed early in Read’s career, as she wrote to her brother the same year: ‘I have staid one year in Rome for Improvement, I must certainly stay in it another for Name, and then you’ll see I’ll top it with the best of them.’ Technically Read’s pastel is extremely finely executed. Bruce’s features, such as his eyes, nose and lips have been finished with a sharpened pastel and the pictures remarkably fine condition, means they have lost none of their intensity.

The present portrait is an important clue in confirming Read’s authorship of one of the most famous group-portraits of British travellers in Rome, the so-called *Connoisseurs in Rome*, now in the Yale Center for British Art. Various ascribed to Reynolds, Nathaniel Dance, Thomas Patch and James Russell over the years, the portrait has recently been identified as Read’s work on the evidence of a reference in Read’s correspondence. The publication of this portrait surely confirms the attribution, as Bruce’s features, similarly treated, appear on the seated figure on the far right of the composition. Read was commissioned to complete the group portrait for a ‘Mr Turner’ and evidently capitalised on the commission by executing separate portraits of at least two of the sitters (Bruce and Thomas Steavens), she also undertook work for Lord Charlemont.

On his return from Italy, Bruce married Susanna Hoare, daughter of the creator of the gardens at Stourhead, Henry Hoare

in 1761. He was appointed Lord of the Bedchamber to King George III, and acted as governor to the Prince of Wales and Prince Frederick, which led to him being created 1st Earl of Ailesbury (of the second creation) in 1776, he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Wiltshire in 1780, and a Knight of the order of the Thistle in 1786. Read returned to Britain in 1753, where she attained celebrity with a series of portraits of members of the French Royal family and subsequently the Hanoverian, including Queen Charlotte in 1761. Grant wrote that ‘all the fine ladies have made it as much the fashion to sit to Miss Read, as to take air in the park’, and her posthumous reputation rests on the elegant depictions of aristocratic women and children. But as an early example of her work, this portrait of Bruce, is an extremely important document of Grand Tour patronage. It also stands as a remarkable testament to Read’s skill as a pastellist and demands her admission to the pantheon of great continental practitioners in the medium.



Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–1792)
Caricature of Thomas Brudenell, Baron Bruce, the Hon John Ward, Joseph Leeson, later 2nd Earl of Milltown, and Joseph Henry of Shafford, 1751
 Oil on canvas
 24¾ × 19¼ inches · 630 × 490 mm
 © National Gallery of Ireland

FRANCIS COTES RA 1726–1770

Lord and Lady Southwell

Pastel · Each 23 × 18 inches · 585 × 457 mm
 Drawn c.1750
 In their original carved gilt frames

COLLECTIONS
 Private collection, New York, 2012

‘With respect to *Crayon Painting*, the present age has produced an uncommon instance of excellence in one of our own Countrymen. I mean the late Mr. *Francis Cotes* ... it seems to be universally allowed by all good judges, that as a *Crayon Painter*, this celebrated Artist excelled most of his Contemporaries.’

J. R. *Elements of Painting with Crayons*, London, 1777, p.ii.

Francis Cotes, one of the most celebrated portraitists of the mid-century, a founder member of the Royal Academy and widely patronised by London society, was enjoying a reputation equal to that of Reynolds at the time of his premature death in 1770. As his pupil James Russell observed, it was ‘universally allowed’ that as a ‘Crayon Painter’, Cotes ‘excelled most of his Contemporaries’, who included Rosalba Carriera, Jean Étienne Liotard and Jean Baptiste Perronneau. This fine pair of pictures – executed in about 1750 and still in their original Kent style frames – demonstrates Cotes’s ability to package a faithful likeness of his sitters within the flattering conventions of contemporary portraiture.

Born in London in 1726, Cotes was of Irish extraction (his father had been mayor of Galway in 1716). He spent his working life in Britain and was apprenticed to the successful portraitist and print-seller George Knapton in 1747. His earliest works appear similar in style and execution to those of

Knapton, and another of Knapton’s pupils, Arthur Pond. Cotes’s earliest pastels date from the 1740s, when he seems to have relied upon his Irish connections for patronage. The present portraits of Thomas George Southwell, 1st Viscount Southwell of Castle Mattress (1721–1780) and his wife, Margaret, daughter of Arthur Cecil Hamilton are characteristic of his earliest works which are highly regarded for their sharpness and clarity of form and bold colours. Southwell was an Irish politician who had entered the Irish House of Commons for Enniscorthy in 1747 and would remain there until he moved to the Lords in 1766. They are depicted in fashionable costume of about 1750, Lord Southwell in a red coat and embroidered waistcoat and Lady Southwell in the stylised, loosely classical garb which would become the convention for portraitists in the following decades. Lady Southwell in particular recalls the costume Cotes used in his portraits of the Gunning sisters, daughters of John Gunning of Castelcoote, completed in about 1751 (E. Mead Johnson, *Francis Cotes: Complete Edition with a Critical Essay and a Catalogue*, Oxford, 1976, cat. no’s 15–19, p.52–3.)

In his *Elements of Painting with Crayons*, published in 1777, John Russell outlined the method of executing pastel portraits he learnt from Cotes. We therefore have a remarkable explication of Cotes’s working practice. In line with contemporary painting, the ‘attitude’ of the sitter was essential, ‘if a young Lady, express more vivacity than in the majestic beauty of a middle-aged Woman’ Cotes has accordingly portrayed Lady Southwell, with her head slightly tilted to the right in animation. After explaining the rudiments of preparing the paper, which

was generally blue in colour and stuck down on canvas, Russell discusses the method of taking the likeness: beginning with a sketch, before laying in the features. This having been completed, the painter uses a: ‘*Crayon* of pure Carmine’ to ‘carefully draw the Nostril and Edge of the Nose, next the shadow, then, with the faintest Carmine Teint, lay in the highest light upon the Nose and Forehead, which must be executed broad.’ Once this ‘dead-colouring’ was finished, the painter was instructed to ‘sweeten the whole together, by rubbing it over with his finger.’ Then the background was added, applied only very thinly closest to the head, to aid the illusion of volume, and finally the finishing ‘teints’: ‘vermillion’ on the forehead; the cheeks ‘a few touches of the orange-coloured *Crayon*’ and for the eyes ‘the most difficult feature to execute’, he advised using a sharpened pastel and the ‘finger as little as possible’. All these characteristic touches can be seen in the Southwell portraits, down to the strokes of orange on Lord Southwell’s left cheek.

Russell was keen to stress the importance of costume, observing that ‘Linen, Lace, Fur, &c. should be touched spiritedly with the *Crayon*, fingering very little.’ In the Southwell portraits, Cotes uses the full range of textures in the costumes: from the careful delineation of Lord Southwell’s gold lace frogging to the fur on Lady Southwell’s dress. In their fine Kent frames, contrasting palette and high level of execution, this pair of portraits exemplifies Cotes’s own observation that: ‘*Crayon* pictures, when finely painted, are superlatively beautiful, and decorative in a very high degree’ (F. Cotes, ‘*Crayon Painting*’, *The European Magazine*, February 1797, p.84.)



DANIEL GARDNER c.1750–1805

Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire (1757–1806) as ‘Circe’

*The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape
And downward fell into a groveling swine*
Milton’s *Mask*, l.51.

Pastel and gouache
12 × 10 inches · 350 × 254 mm
Executed c.1778

COLLECTIONS

Mrs Walter Hayes Burns, New York;
Viscount Harcourt, by descent;
Dowager Viscountess Harcourt, by descent;
Alexander Baring, 6th Lord Ashburton, by
descent, 1992;
Private collection.

LITERATURE

G. C. Williamson, *Daniel Gardner*, 1921;
pp.100, 143–44, reproduced opposite p.100, for
the engraving p.143;
N. Jeffares, *Dictionary of Pastellists before 1800*,
London, 2006, p.195.

EXHIBITED

London, Royal Amateur Society, 1 Hamilton
Place, *Rowlandson and Gardner*, March 1910;
London, Kenwood, The Iveagh Bequest,
Daniel Gardner 1750–1805, 1972, no.43, repr.

ENGRAVED

By Thomas Watson, published Nov. 1778.
[An impression of the mezzotint
accompanies this pastel.]

This fine pastel by Daniel Gardner depicts a beautiful woman in the costume of Circe, the sorceress, from Milton’s masque of 1634, *Comus*. The picture was engraved and published by Thomas Watson in November 1778 where it was entitled *Circe* and printed with three lines from Milton’s poem. Long admired as one of Gardner’s most atmospheric and direct portraits, the sitter has traditionally been identified, from a nineteenth century inscription on the reverse, as ‘Miss Elliot’, but a reference in Henry Bromley’s 1793 *Catalogue of Engraved British Portraits*, confirms that it may in fact be a portrait of the celebrated political hostess, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire (1757–1806).

Born in about 1750 at Kendal, Gardner was at some time before 1762 taught by George Romney. This relationship was renewed in 1767 when Gardner moved to London, where he studied at the Royal Academy Schools from 1770 and was awarded a silver medal in 1771. Around 1773 he entered Joshua Reynolds’s studio and during his brief time there developed an approach to portraiture that he was to use for the rest of his career. Gardner developed a portrait practice that was based on small-scale works usually executed in pastel, his style tended towards a nervous and agitated style. In the mid-1770s he gave more substance to his work by using a mixture of oil, gouache and pastel, and for larger works he used oils. The mid-eighteenth century saw an explosion of portraits of both actresses and aristocratic women depicted in theatrical rôles. The sitter of the present portrait is shown holding a cup and wand, the traditional attributes of Circe. Thomas Jefferys’ *A Collection of the Dresses of Different Nations, Antient and*

Modern (1757–72) included a plate depicting Circe, similarly holding a goblet aloft in her right hand and a long wand in her left (plate. 240).

For most of the twentieth century, this portrait was called ‘Miss Elliot’. Gardner did complete a portrait of the daughter of Sir Gilbert Elliot, Eleanor, but only once she had married in 1776 and given birth to her first child (N. Jeffares, *Dictionary of Pastellists before 1800*, London, 2006, p.192.) During the eighteenth century the title ‘Miss’ was generally applied to actresses and at least two Miss Elliot’s were on the stage during the century. Ann Elliot (1743–69) who was a leading lady during the 1760s, but reached greater notoriety as the mistress of Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, the younger brother of George III. Ann Elliot was painted by the miniaturist Richard Cosway in 1769 in the character of Minerva and a mezzotint was published by H. Bryer in 1777, but Ann Elliot died in 1769 and so she is unlikely to be Circe (S. Lloyd, *Richard and Maria Cosway: Regency Artists of Taste and Fashion*, exh. cat. Edinburgh (Scottish National Portrait Gallery), 1995, cat. no. 17.) The second was Grace Dalrymple, who married the physician John Eliot in 1771. Mrs Elliot, as she called herself, was the subject of a celebrated divorce in 1776, after which she became the mistress of George Cholmondeley, 4th Earl of Cholmondeley. Although not technically an actor, like Emma Hamilton, she occupied the socially ambiguous position of celebrated beauty, artistic muse and mistress, becoming the subject of two portraits by Gainsborough (Metropolitan Museum of Art and Frick Collection). But as ‘Elliot’ was her married name and she does not resemble Circe it seems unlikely.



The identification of the sitter as Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire comes from Henry Bromley's: *A Catalogue of engraved British Portraits from Egbert the Great to the present time*, published in 1793. In which he states that a portrait by 'D. Gardner' of the Duchess of Devonshire was published as a mezzotint by Thomas Watson (H. Bromley, *A Catalogue of engraved British Portraits from Egbert the Great to the present time ...*, London, 1793, p.420-1.) Watson and Gardner collaborated on a number of plates, but none of their other recorded prints could be a portrait of Georgiana. What is more, the Georgiana had already sat to Gardner. In 1775 he completed a remarkable group portrait of *Elizabeth Lamb, Viscountess Melbourne, Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire and Anne Seymour Damer*, as the three witches from Macbeth. Lady Mary Coke, in her journal, noted that: 'the Duchess of Devonshire, Lady Melburn, and Mrs Damer all being drawn in one picture in the Characters of the three Witches in Macbeth ... They have chosen that Scene where they

compose their Cauldron, but instead of 'finger of Birth-strangled babe, etc' their Cauldron is composed of roses and carnations and I daresay they think their charmes more irresistible than all the magick of the Witches' (G. Perry, J. Roach and S. West, *The First Actresses: Nell Gwyn to Sarah Siddons*, exh. cat. London (National Portrait Gallery), 2011, p.123.) The extraordinarily theatrical and atmospheric portrait is a highly personal tribute to the friendship and shared interests of the three women, as well as being daughters and wives of prominent Whig politicians; from 1782 they would all be involved with the amateur theatricals staged at Richmond House.

Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire would become one of the most celebrated and scandalized political hostesses of the second half of the eighteenth century, but in 1778 she was still at the beginning of her career as a leader of metropolitan taste. In being depicted as *Circe*, she was continuing the allusion to magic and female charm, conjured in Gardner's earlier group portrait,

whilst the quotation from *Comus* recalls the world of the aristocratic masque, which the so-called 'Devonshire House set' would revive. Indeed, Georgiana would be painted by Maria Cosway in 1783 as *Cynthia* from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, shown flying towards the viewer, in a composition which, in its directness, recalls Gardner's *Circe*. Given its personal character, Gardner could not monetize his first portrait of Georgiana, but in this portrait he was able to benefit from engravings, commissioning Thomas Watson to publish a mezzotint in 1778.

In the next decade *Circe* became a popular guise for portraits of society sitters. In 1781 Reynolds completed a portrait of *Mary Nesbitt as Circe* (Smith College Museum of Art, Northampton). Shortly afterwards, Romney executed at least two depictions of Emma Hamilton in the character of *Circe* (head and shoulders at the Tate and full-length at Waddesdon Manor) suggesting yet another instance of the Duchess of Devonshire leading fashion.



Thomas Watson (after Daniel Gardner) *Circe*
Mezzotint, Published 1 November 1778
The description under the engraving reads:
*The daughter of the Sun, whose charmed cup
Whoever tasted, lost his upright shape
And downward fell into a grovelling swine*



Daniel Gardner *The Three Witches from Macbeth*
(*Elizabeth Lamb, Viscountess Melbourne; Georgiana, Duchess of Devonshire; Anne Seymour Damer*), 1775
Gouache and chalk · 37 × 31¼ inches · 940 × 790 mm
© National Portrait Gallery, London



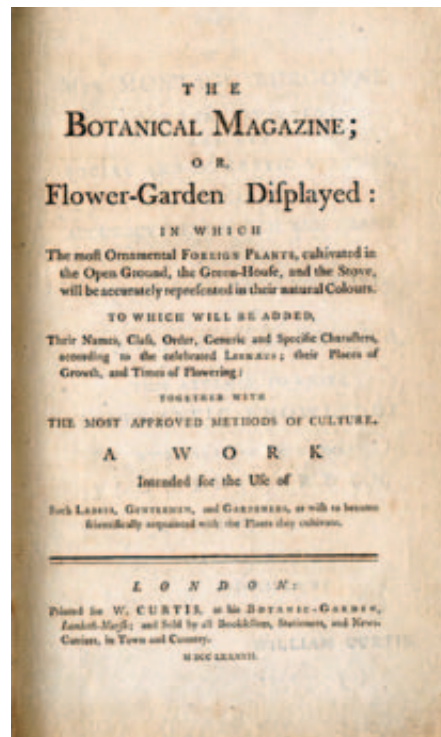
Maria Cosway (1759–1838) *Georgiana as Cynthia*
from Spenser's *Faerie Queene*, 1781–2
Oil on canvas
© Devonshire Collection, Chatsworth,
by permission of the Chatsworth Settlement Trustees

JOHN RAPHAEL SMITH 1752–1812

William Curtis (1746–1799), entomologist and botanist



Pastel and gouache
8⅝ × 10⅝ inches · 220 × 270 mm
In the original frame
Executed c.1787



This intimate portrait, depicts the celebrated eighteenth-century botanist, William Curtis at work. Curtis had trained as an apothecary, but his interest in entomology led to his writing *Instructions for Collecting and Preserving Insects, particularly Moths and Butterflies* by the age of just 25. He became Praefectus Horti – head gardner – at the Chelsea Physic garden in 1771, a position he held for six years, and then established botanic gardens of his own in Lambeth in 1779 and at Brompton in west London in 1789. Curtis is best remembered not for the six volumes of *Flora Londinensis* (1777–1798) – which catalogued the flowers growing in London – but his *Botanical Magazine*. Published from 1787, it included hand-coloured plates by the noted natural history illustrator James Sowerby and proved to be the greater commercial success and continues to be published to this day by the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew. Indeed it seems likely that Smith has depicted Curtis with his hand resting on a copy of his *Botanical*



Magazine, the first letters of the title, ‘bot’, being clearly legible. John Raphael Smith was born in Derby in 1752, where he received his early training from his father, Thomas Smith of Derby (fl.1745–1767) who practices as an itinerant landscape painter. Given the precariousness of painting as a trade, particularly in rural centres, John Raphael was apprenticed instead to a draper. Smith continued in this trade in London, where he also began producing miniatures and chalk portraits to supplement his income. In 1769 he began making engraving and mezzotints, and his work was soon much in demand. Smith reproduced a number of works of Reynolds, some of which are considered masterpieces of mezzotint engraving. His success resulted in the appointment of ‘Mezzotinto Engraver’ to the Prince of Wales and in total he produced some 399 plates. In addition to print making, he also operated as a print dealer and publisher, but he gave all this up in 1802 to concentrate on

his portrait work in chalks and crayons. He travelled to the north and midland counties of England, to towns such as Doncaster, Newark, Sheffield and York, and produced a number of portraits of the rising commercial classes of the Industrial Revolution, keen to display their new-found wealth. Smith settled in Doncaster, where he died in 1812. The portrait of *Curtis*, probably made in around 1787, is exceptionally finely drawn, using a combination of gouache and pastel, a technique pioneered by Daniel Gardner. The use of the gouache gives an intensity of chiaroscuro to the composition, whilst the features, costume and books are picked out in sharpened pastel, giving an penetrating precision to the portrait.

ARCHIBALD SKIRVING 1749–1819

Lady Pringle, née Emilia Anne Macleod

Pastel
21¾ × 16 inches · 553 × 407 mm
Indistinctly signed with initials and dated AS/1815, centre right, also inscribed *Sir John Pringle Bart* (on an old label attached to the frame)
In the original walnut and gilt frame probably made by Chalmers & Son, Edinburgh.



Archibald Skirving *Self-portrait*, 1790
Pastel, 28 × 21¾ inches · 710 × 4550 mm
Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh

In contrast to the elegant formula adopted by Francis Cotes in portraying his fashionable sitters, the Scottish artist Archibald Skirving is noted for his ‘unflinching realism’. (S. Lloyd and K. Sloan, *The Intimate Portrait; Drawings, Miniatures and Pastels from Ramsay to Lawrence*, exh. cat., Edinburgh and London (National Galleries of Scotland and British Museum), p.77.) Based in Edinburgh for the majority of his career, Skirving’s highly finished and technically virtuosic pastel portraits have begun to receive international attention, since the 1999 monographic show at the National Portrait Gallery of Scotland which presented him as ‘Raeburn’s Rival’. In their intensity, quality and beauty Skirving’s work deserves to be considered in the wider context of European neo-classicism. This newly discovered portrait of Lady Pringle, which is signed and dated 1815, offers a remarkable insight into his working practice at the end of his career (extending the dates of his known work by a decade) and the end of the great pastel portrait tradition.

Archibald Skirving began his career as a junior clerk in the Edinburgh customs office. He is likely to have spent a period at the Trustees’ Academy in Edinburgh, where Charles Pavillon was master from 1768 to 1772. In 1777 Skirving moved to London where he had various letters of introduction, including one to John Hamilton Mortimer. He is recorded exhibiting work at the Royal Academy in 1778, where he is described as a miniature painter lodging ‘at Mrs Milward’s, Little Brook Street, Hanover Square.’ But Skirving was unsuccessful in London, returning instead to Scotland. In 1786 he left for Italy, where in Rome he completed his splendid portrait of the dealer and painter

Gavin Hamilton and a self-portrait (both Scottish National Portrait Gallery). His most fruitful period came following his return from Rome in 1795 – and a period of incarceration in Brest for being a spy – when he produced a series of portrait studies of notable Scottish sitters, including the great poet Robert Burns (Scottish National Portrait Gallery).

Skirving was the subject of a biographical essay by Thomas Carlyle, who described his manner of living at the end of his life: ‘for perhaps the last 20 or 15 years of his life, he lived in some Flat or Lodging all his own ... in complete Hermitage; an indignant but uncomplaining King.’ This portrait of Skirving as an introspective and isolated observer neatly mirrors the uncompromising portrayal of his sitters. The writer Henry Mackenzie, who described the artist on one of his visits to Edinburgh, suggests something of the singularity of his working method: ‘being the most elaborate and minute of artists made his patients (as they might be called) who were sitting for him sometimes give him fifty or sixty sittings. His portraits were facsimilies, even of the blemishes of the faces which he painted; he never spared a freckle or a smallpox mark.’ (Ed. H. W. Thompson, H. Mackenzie, *The Anecdotes and Egotisms of Henry Mackenzie 1745–1831: now first published*, London, 1927, p.212.) A portrait dated 1803 of an elderly woman has long been seen as Skirving’s last great work (on loan to the Scottish National Portrait Gallery), although it was known from his framers accounts that he continued to practice into the early nineteenth century, a fact confirmed by the present portrait which is signed and dated 1815.

This date, and the inscription ‘Sir John Pringle Bart’ on the reverse, suggest that the sitter was Emilia Anne MacLeod (1786–1830), first wife of Sir John Pringle, 5th Bt of Stitchell, whom he married in 1809. Born on 17 October 1786, she was the 2nd

daughter of the 23rd Chief of the MacLeod clan. She died in 1830 having borne eight children. There is also a connection with another Skirving sitter, Mrs John Pringle, née Mary Drummond, who was married to John Pringle of Stitchell. Skirving depicts *Lady Pringle* looking slightly to her right, against a dark background with characteristic intensity. The apparent simplicity of her pale complexion – framed by fashionable auburn ringlets – costume and pose, belies the complex mass of pastel marks Skirving used to achieve these effects. The precision of these features testifies to the remarkable condition of the present portrait, which is preserved in its original walnut frame, probably manufactured by the firm of William Chambers & Son of 118 High Street, Edinburgh, from whom Skirving acquired frames between 1814 and 1818. As Stephen Lloyd has observed, Skirving was extremely careful in his choice of frames, ‘not only for the typical and handsome carved and gilded profile, but also for the more simple veneered frame made out of woods such as oak, mahogany, walnut and yew. Some of these had a gilded inner slip to help differentiate the picture and the frame.’ (S. Lloyd, *Raeburn’s Rival: Archibald Skirving 1749–1819*, exh. cat., Edinburgh, (Scottish National Portrait Gallery), 1999, p.30.) As the last known example of his work, this stunning portrait, confirms Skirving as not only a great pastellist of the eighteenth century, but in full sympathy with the austere European neo-classicism of the early nineteenth century.



ADAM BUCK 1759–1833

The nine youngest children of Richard Bagot, Bishop of Bath and Wells

Watercolour on card
16¾ × 19½ inches · 425 × 495 mm
Signed and dated; Adam Buck 1825
In the original frame

COLLECTIONS

Richard Bagot, the sitters' father;
By family descent at Chichley Hall to John
Greville Bagot Chester, 2011

This remarkable portrait group is one of the masterpieces of Buck's career, displaying a refined neo-classicism which places him amongst European practitioners such as Christian Købke and François-Xavier Fabre. Born and trained in Dublin, Buck practiced first as a miniaturist before moving to London in 1795 where he worked for a fashionable clientele, which included George IV and the Duke of York. His elegant and spare portrait drawings were in great demand and he was a prolific exhibitor at the Royal Academy between 1795 and 1833. As well as portraiture, Buck also produced a large number of fashion plates, decorative compositions of loosely allegorical subject-matter, such as Faith, Hope and Charity. His subsequent reputation has largely rested on the proliferation of these prints and their use as designs in fan and on transfer-printed porcelain. But Buck was a committed and intelligent interpreter of ancient Greek forms, something apparent in the strength of design in his portrait of the *Bagot children*.

The seriousness with which he engaged with the antique led Anthony Pasquin to observe: 'he appears to study the antique more rigorously than any of our emerging artists and by that means he will imbibe a chastity of thinking, which may eventually lead him to the personification of apparent

beauty.' (A. Pasquin, *An Authentic history of the professors of painting, sculpture, and architecture who have practiced in Ireland ... to which are added, Memoirs of the royal academicians*, 1796, p.41) In London he not only studied and collected the newly fashionable Greek vases, in 1811 he published a prospectus for a book on vase painting: *Proposals for publishing by subscription 100 engravings from paintings on Greek vases which have never been published, drawn and etched by Adam Buck from private collections now in England*. The publication was intended as a continuation of Sir William Hamilton's *Collection of Engravings from Ancient Vases* (1791–7). Buck painted a fine self-portrait with his family in 1813, which is now in the Yale Center for British Art, including nine of the Greek vases he planned to engrave. Long thought to depict the collector and pioneering designer Thomas Hope and his family, Ian Jenkins established the identities of the sitters in 1988 re-establishing Buck as one of the pioneers of neo-Greek taste in the first quarter of the nineteenth-century. (I. Jenkin, 'Adam Buck and the Vogue for Greek Vases', *The Burlington Magazine*, vol.130, no.1023, June, 1988, p.448–457)

Richard Bagot (1782–1854) was successively Bishop of Oxford and Bath and Wells. In 1806 he married Lady Harriet Villiers, daughter of George Bussey, fourth Earl of Jersey and had eight sons and four daughters. Buck's previously unrecorded portrait of the nine eldest children is signed and dated 1825. The three eldest daughters are shown standing, dressed *à la grecque* in white muslin dresses wearing fashionable ringlets, the three eldest boys in matching costume and the three youngest, not yet breached, in dresses. There are obvious compositional

similarities with the Yale self-portrait; Buck uses an identical geometric floor to render the frieze of figures realistically in space. Behind the children, three antique reliefs vases – similar in tone to the Greek vases – adding both a sense of antiquarian grandeur and decorative contrast to the restrained figures. Buck's continuing interest in the power of Attic decoration is seen in the poses of the children themselves, which recall the emphatic outlines of Greek vase decoration. With its economy of form and reduced palette – all the colour seen in the Yale self-portrait has been reduced to monochrome – this is Buck's most sustained and ambitious essay in neo-Greek classicism.



Adam Buck *The Artist and his family*
Watercolour and pencil with gum and scraping out on board · 17½ × 16½ inches · 445 × 419 mm
Signed and dated 1813
Yale Center for British Art, New Haven,
Paul Mellon Collection



THOMAS SULLY 1783–1872

Major General Andrew Jackson

Oil on paper
7⁷/₈ × 6¹/₈ inches · 194 × 155 mm
Painted in 1819

COLLECTIONS

Jane Darley (née Sully), daughter of the artist, 1877;
William Henry Westray Darley, husband of the above;
Francis Thomas Sully Darley, son of the above, 1914;
Thomas Nash, a gift from the above, 1926;
Lyman Rhoades, nephew of the above, 1960;
John H Rhoades, son of the above;
Barbara Rhoades, Chapel Hill, NC, daughter of the above, 2012

This work in oil on paper is a portrait study from life for Thomas Sully's important portrait of Andrew Jackson and his horse painted for the Association of American Artists in 1819 (collection: Clermont State Historic Site, Germantown, New York).

During the War of 1812, Jackson was appointed a Major General by President James Madison and sent to New Orleans to prepare the city's defenses against an impending British attack. His army of 5,000 volunteers from Tennessee and Kentucky defeated an invading British force of 7,500 men and forced the British to withdraw from the region. Regarded by his troops as a strict but well-respected officer, Jackson acquired the nickname of 'Old Hickory', as he was said to be as tough as old hickory wood when on the battlefield. The political future of the new 'Hero of New Orleans' was secured by this decisive victory and Jackson received national recognition for his actions.

Following his success at the Battle of New Orleans in 1815, Jackson embarked



Thomas Sully *Andrew Jackson*
Oil on canvas
30 × 25 inches · 762 × 635 mm
Signed with initials and dated 1819
Clermont State Historic Site, New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation

a triumphant tour of the major cities on America's East Coast. Jackson arrived in Philadelphia on 15 February 1819 and Sully recorded that he began his oil study of the General (the present work) on the 17th February, completing it on the 24th. He subsequently painted the larger composition (collection Clermont State Historic Site) between 26 March and 15 April 1819.

The large portrait was included in the exhibition *Mr Sully, Portrait Painter*, held at the National Portrait Gallery, Washington, DC in 1983 (cat. no. 29). In his catalogue description Monroe Fabian recorded the history of the commission:

It was painted to be engraved and sold as part of a business venture inaugurated by a group calling themselves the Association of American Artists. Sully had invested his money as well as his talent in the endeavour, and in his journal under the date February 17, 1819, he notes, 'Subscribed by part of a picture of Genl. Jackson, to the Publishing Society of Artists, 4 shares of stock'.

On completing the portrait it was sent to the publisher Samuel Kennedy, and James Barton Longacre was chosen as the engraver. The New York newspaper *American* reported on 14 April 1819:

We understand that Mr SULLY has finished his Historical Picture of General JACKSON, which he, at the request of the Association of American Artists, sat for. From what we can learn, it is a chef d'oeuvre of Mr Sully's talents, and we are much pleased to know that it will be exhibited in the Association Room, for a few days previous to Mr Longacre's taking it in hands to engrave a Print from.

This spirited effort of so young an Institution must gratify every lover of the Arts, and from





James Barton Longacre, after Thomas Sully
Andrew Jackson
Hand-coloured stipple engraving
14 3/4 x 11 3/4 inches · 374 x 300 mm
Published November 1820
National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution

this instance of their exertions we shall indeed be much disappointed if the Print of General Jackson, which they propose to publish, will not be truly a specimen of the high state of the Art of Painting and engraving in this country.

That painting is recorded in Edward Biddle and Mantle Fielding, *The Life and Works of Thomas Sully*, 1921, no.878, described as: ‘three-quarter length, in uniform, face front, right hand on hilt of sword, left hand on holster holding reins of a horse. Portrait painted for the Association of American Artists, begun March 26th, 1819, finished April 15th 1819. Size 25” x 30”’. The painting was engraved by James Barton Longacre, published November 1820. It is owned by the New York State Office of Parks, Recreation, and Historic Preservation and is in the collection of the Clermont State Historic Site in Germantown, New York. Clermont, overlooking the Hudson River, was the home of the Livingston family. Edward Livingston was a close friend of Jackson’s and Secretary of State during Jackson’s presidency.

Another oil sketch on paper of General Andrew Jackson and his horse is documented in the Frick Art Reference Library. Their records note that it too descended in the Nash/Rhoades family, following the death of Francis Thomas Sully Darley, grandson of the artist, in 1914. The record also notes that “two different sketches and one finished oil of the same subject are all in different collections.”

The present work remained in the artist’s family by descent until 1914, when on the death of Francis Thomas Sully Darley, grandson of the artist; it was left to Thomas Nash of New York.

In 1824 Sully painted another study portrait from life of Andrew Jackson (present location unknown). Twenty years later President Jackson’s ill health prompted Sully to copy the 1824 study portrait, and it was completed in 1845, shortly before Jackson’s death. This portrait is now in the National Gallery of Art, Washington DC. Sully used this replica as a model to paint a full-length portrait as the battle hero (Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC). There is also a portrait head of Jackson in the US Senate painted in the 1850s, after Jackson’s death, which came from Sully’s grandson Garrett C. Neagle, although it has been suggested this portrait was copied by another hand from the engraving.

Born in 1783 in Horncastle, Lincolnshire, Thomas Sully was the fourth child of Matthew and Sarah Chester, who were both actors. In 1792, when Thomas was aged nine, the Sullys emigrated to America and settled in Charleston, South Carolina. His first artistic instruction came from his brother-in-law Jean Belzons, a miniature painter, drawing teacher and theatrical scene designer, as well as his older brother Lawrence, also a miniature painter working in Richmond, Virginia. In 1801 Sully began his independent career in Norfolk, Virginia. In 1805 he married his sister-in-law, Sally (née Annis) after the death of his brother Lawrence in 1804, and they moved to New York City. Two years later he moved to Hartford, Connecticut, then Boston, Massachusetts, but in 1808 settled permanently in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. Here he established his home and studio at a time when Philadelphia was still the leading centre for art and publishing. The following year Sully travelled to London to study under Benjamin West. However, it was Sir Thomas Lawrence, the leading portraitist of the day,



left to right:

Thomas Sully *Andrew Jackson*, 1845
Oil on canvas · 20 3/8 x 17 1/4 inches · 518 x 438 mm
National Gallery of Art, Washington DC
(Andrew W Mellon Collection)

Thomas Sully *Sketch for portrait of Andrew Jackson*
Oil on paper · 9 7/8 x 6 1/4 inches · 250 x 160 mm
Formerly the collection of Mrs Elizabeth Rhoades Reynolds, Sharon, Connecticut
photo: Frick Art Reference Library, New York
(no: Sully, Thomas 121-3d)

Thomas Sully *Andrew Jackson*, 1845
Oil on canvas · 98 3/8 x 61 1/8 inches · 2466 x 1557 mm
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC
(Gift of William Wilson Corcoran)



who proved far more influential. Much of the elegance and flowing lines of Lawrence’s portraiture was taken up by Sully who suitably adapted the style for more reserved American tastes.

On his return to Philadelphia in 1810, Sully was increasingly successful, painting some thirty to forty portraits a year. After the death of Charles Willson Peale in 1827, he was regarded as the undisputed foremost portraitist of the city for the next four and a half decades (he lived to age eighty-nine). Five US presidents – Washington (posthumously), Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, and Jackson are among the more than 2,000 portraits he painted. Other sitters of note included Lafayette, Benjamin Rush and Washington Irving.

In 1837 the Society of Sons of St George in Philadelphia, a benevolent association providing support to indigent English emigrants and their families, commissioned Sully to paint a

full-length coronation portrait of the young Queen Victoria, who had ascended to the throne a few months before. The portrait was to hang in the Society’s meeting room. Sully had already made plans to travel to England on a study trip with his twenty-one year old daughter Blanche. He kept an informative journal which gives a fascinating insight into life in early Victorian London, the artistic and social milieu and royal protocol. The striking and stylish portrait of the young queen glancing over her shoulder took great liberties with conventional state portraiture, but was quickly regarded as a masterpiece.

Sully died in Philadelphia in 1872. Of his nine children, six survived infancy and all were either amateur or professional artists. One of his stepdaughters, Mary Chester Sully married the portrait painter, John Neagle.

JOSEPH MALLORD WILLIAM TURNER RA 1775–1851

Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta

Watercolour and gouache with gum arabic and scratching out, the sheet extended along the lower edge

Watermark: 'WHATMAN' (fragmentary)
Signed: 'J M W Turner RA' (lower left) in pencil

27¼ × 41 inches · 69.2 × 104.1 cm
Painted c.1815

COLLECTIONS

A Fort Roch subject was commissioned in 1806 or 1807 by Edward Lascelles (1764–1814) of Harewood House, Yorkshire, for 60 gns, but never received by him; Walter Fawkes, Farnley Hall, Yorkshire, before 1819; Revd Ayscough Fawkes; Fawkes sale, Christie's, London, 27 June 1890, lot 58 (1000 gns. to Agnew's on behalf of Sir Donald Currie); Sir Donald Currie; Sir John Currie; Mrs E.G. Fergusson, by descent from the above, to 1984; Private collection, USA; and by descent to 1999; Spink-Leger Pictures; Private collection, 2012

LITERATURE

F.H. Fawkes, *Catalogue of oil-paintings and water colour drawings and sketches in water colour in the possession of F.H. Fawkes of Farnley Hall*, manuscript catalogue, 1850 (collection: Victoria and Albert Museum Library); L. Calder and Co., *The Farnley Hall Collection of Turner Drawings in the possession of F.H. Fawkes Esq.*, 1864, repr pl.4; *Athenaeum*, 1879, p.637; Walter Armstrong, *Turner*, London, 1902, p.240; A.J. Finberg, *Turner's Watercolours at Farnley Hall*, London, n.d. [1912], p.22, no.24, repr in colour, plate V;

A.P. Oppé, *The Water-Colours of Turner, Cox & De Wint*, London, 1925, no.3, repr. In colour pl.11;

John Russell and Andrew Wilton, *Turner in Switzerland*, 1976, pp.65, 135;

Andrew Wilton, *The Life and Work of J.M.W. Turner*, Fribourg and London, 1979, pp.102–3, no.369, repr pl.104;

David Hill, *Turner in the Alps: The Journey Through France and Switzerland in 1802*, London, 1992, pp.74–76, repr in colour; Julian Agnew, et. al., *Agnew's 1982-1992*, 1992, p.159, repr pl.144;

David Blaney Brown, *Turner in the Alps*, exhibition catalogue, 1998–9, p.122;

Lowell Libson (ed.) and Timothy Wilcox, *Feeling Through the Eye: The 'New' Landscape in Britain 1800-1830*, exhibition catalogue, 2000, pp.86–7, repr in colour;

David Hill, Joseph Mallord William Turner: *Le Mont-Blanc et la Vall'e d'Aosta*, exhibition catalogue, 2000, pp.46, 77, 282, no.46, repr in colour, p.187;

James Hamilton et. al., *Turner e L'Italia*, exhibition catalogue, 2008, p.161, repr.

EXHIBITED

London, Grosvenor Place, Fawkes collection, 1819, no.33;

Leeds, Music Hall, *Exhibition of Watercolours from the Walter Fawkes Collection*, 1839, no.75, as 'Battle of Fort Rock';

London, Agnew's, *Thirty-Eighth Annual Exhibition of Selected high-class Water-Colour Drawings*, 1904, no.215, as 'Val d'Aosta';

London, Royal Academy, *Winter Exhibition*, 1906, no.208, lent by Sir Donald Currie;

London, Agnew's, *Exhibition of Water Colour Drawings*, 1924, no.3;

London, Agnew's, *Centenary Loan Exhibition of Water-Colour Drawings by J.M.W. Turner RA*, 1951, no.21, lent by Mrs E.G. Fergusson;

Zurich, Kunsthhaus, *Turner und die Schweiz*, 1976–7, no.22;

York City Art Gallery, *Turner in Yorkshire*, 1980, no.93;

Toronto Art Gallery, *Turner and the Romantic Landscape*, 1995;

London, Spink-Leger, *Feeling Through the Eye: The 'New' Landscape in Britain 1800–1830*, 2000, no. 73;

Aosta, Museo Archeologico Regionale, *Joseph Mallord William Turner: Le Mont-Blanc et la Vall'e d'Aosta*, 2000, no.46;

London, Royal Academy, *Turner: The Great Watercolours*, 2000–1, no.21;

Essen, Museum Folkwang, and Zurich, Kunsthhaus, *William Turner: Licht und Fabre*, 2001–2, no.47;

Ferrara, Palazzo dei Diamanti and Edinburgh, National Gallery of Scotland, *Turner and Italy*, 2008–9, no.27

This famous watercolour, one of Turner's largest works in this medium, encapsulates his Romantic notion on a spectacular scale. Turner's vision of man's small place in his world was fully formed in the early years of the 1800s following his pivotal 1802 visit to Italy and the present extraordinary statement not only demonstrates Turner's interest and understanding of this as well as his unique technical ability to translate his vision into pictorial form. Throughout his career Turner was to exploit new ways of expressing this theme, evolving his treatment of the central thesis in his work in tandem with his stylistic and technical development as a painter in both oil and watercolour. This particular virtuoso performance marks Turner's stature as the very greatest of European masters and although his vision would find different forms of expression in the forty odd years following his first visit to Switzerland, this particular statement of it – *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* – would be rarely equalled and, perhaps, never surpassed. LL





Turner and Peace at Fort Roch

Eric Shanes



[Fig.1] Joseph Mallord William Turner *Fortified Pass, Val d'Aosta*, 1802
Watercolour, chalk and gum arabic · 12½ × 18½ inches · 319 × 474 mm
The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

This magnificent watercolour was possibly the last of nine drawings of comparable size that Turner made during the thirteen or so years after he had toured French Savoy, Switzerland and Piedmont during the summer of 1802. He may have based it upon a sketch in watercolour on grey paper that is now in the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge (fig.1), but which had originally formed part of the now disbound *St Gotthard and Mont Blanc* sketchbook (Turner Bequest, Tate Britain LXXV). However, the landscape depicted differs slightly from the one represented in the Fitzwilliam sketch, being of the panorama as viewed from slightly to the south. In all probability Turner drew partly upon the Fitzwilliam drawing for his topographical data, and partly upon memory and imagination. In *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* we look north-westwards up the valley of the river Doire,

not far from the village of Leverogne. This forms part of the Val d'Aosta, which is now in Italy. Today a modern road and tunnels cut through the valley.

For many years this work was thought to date from 1804 but stylistically that is impossible, for only around 1814 did Turner begin to invest flora such as the bush on the left with such a sense of graceful flowering and a clear definition of internal forms. Although the present writer has dated this work to 1814, he is now of the opinion that it was made in 1815, or even slightly later. The reason to think this is as follows.

In 1815 Turner exhibited four oil paintings and four watercolours in the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy. One of the oils was *Dido building Carthage; or the Rise of the Carthaginian Empire* (fig.2). This hung as a centrepiece on the south wall of the principal Royal Academy display



[Fig.2] Joseph Mallord William Turner *Dido building Carthage; or the rise of the Carthaginian Empire*
Exhibited RA 1815 (158)
Oil on canvas · 61¼ × 91¼ inches · 155.5 × 232 cm
© The National Gallery, London



[Fig.3] Joseph Mallord William Turner *The Battle of Fort Rock, 1796, Val d'Aoste [sic], Piedmont*, 1815
Watercolour · 27¾ × 40 inches · 69.6 × 101.5 mm
© Tate, 2012 (Turner Bequest LXXX 6)



[Fig.4] Joseph Mallord William Turner *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta*, c.1815
Watercolour and gouache with gum arabic and scratching out · Signed · 27¼ × 41 inches · 69.2 × 104.1 cm
Lowell Libson Ltd

space, the Great Room on the top floor of Somerset House. Seeing the work on show there appears to have inspired Turner to begin a companion work. The resulting painting, *The decline of the Carthaginian Empire*, would be exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1817.

All four of the watercolours were displayed in the Inner Room, an adjunct to the Great Room. In 1811 Turner had been responsible for having this space created out of the apartment that had formerly been occupied by the Royal Academy Secretary. Entrance to the Inner Room was gained from either the landing at the top of the Royal Academy staircase, or through a doorway at the north-west corner of the Great Room. Upon entering the Inner room via either of these doors, the visitor would have seen two of Turner's large alpine watercolours flanking the doorway that connected that space with the Great Room. To the left of the doorway hung *Lake of Lucerne, from the landing place at Fluelen, looking towards Bauen and Tell's chapel, Switzerland* of 1808–09 (Private collection). In the corresponding position to the right of the doorway hung *The Battle of Fort Rock, Val d'Aoste, Piedmont, 1796* of 1815 (fig.1). The latter work depicts virtually the same view as the one represented in *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta*, as comparison of the images (figs. 3 & 4) will demonstrate. In all probability the idea of making a companion work to *The Battle of Fort Rock, Val d'Aoste, Piedmont, 1796* came to Turner when he viewed his two alpine watercolours hanging on the walls of the Royal Academy in 1815. This led him to elaborate *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* shortly afterwards.

Clearly *The Battle of Fort Rock, Val d'Aoste, Piedmont, 1796* and *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* are thematically connected, for one shows the effects of war, the other almost exactly the same landscape in peacetime. In accordance with the notion of decorum that had been an important feature of the aesthetics of European painting since the Renaissance – whereby everything in an image should accord with its underlying meaning – Turner complemented the battle scene with a stormy sky, while in *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* he made the elements placid because humanity is at peace. He had been creating such matchings in a great many landscapes and seascapes for years by the time he executed the present works. Yet if Turner had painted *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* before May 1815, when the Royal Academy show opened, then he would surely have exhibited it alongside *The Battle of Fort Rock, Val d'Aoste, Piedmont, 1796*, rather than the thematically unrelated lake scene. It is this factor that points to *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* as having been elaborated at some point after May 1815, either later that year or during 1816.

The battle scene depicts an imaginary event, for there was no known military clash over Fort Roch during the French invasion of Piedmont in 1796. Turner simply invented the encounter, although he may have learned of lesser skirmishes in the vicinity from a local when he was there in 1802. But if he created fiction, that is of no consequence, for as an adherent of the Theory of Poetic Painting that had been widely promulgated within the Royal Academy during the years in which he

had received his art education there – not least of all by Sir Joshua Reynolds – Turner felt duty-bound to raise landscape painting to the cultural level of History Painting by imaginative means. It was therefore quite acceptable to make up an event in order to animate a landscape. After all, if Shakespeare could affect something similar in his history plays, then lesser mortals were legitimised to do so as well. In that context it also made sense for Turner to extend the impact of *The Battle of Fort Rock, Val d'Aoste, Piedmont, 1796* by creating a companion work, in the form of *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta*. Turner was by no means the earliest painter to link war and peace either, for in 1794 William Hodges RA (1744–97) had exhibited two contrasting depictions of a single landscape that were entitled *The Effects of Peace* and *The Consequences of War*. Turner may well have seen these works when they were shown in Daniel Orme's room at 14 Old Bond Street.

A large 'Fort Rock' watercolour had been commissioned in 1806 or the following year by the collector Edward Lascelles junior (1764–1814) of Harewood House, Yorkshire. Lascelles had agreed to pay 60 guineas for such a drawing, a sum that today would be worth about £25,000. However, he never took possession of the work, probably because he had still not received it by 1808 when he all but gave up collecting watercolours. The artist was always under immense pressure to fulfil all his commissions, which is why it frequently took him years to complete them (and sometimes he never got around to supplying them at all). When Turner would finally create a view of Fort Roch, it would be the battle scene he exhibited in 1815. Presumably he offered it first to

his great friend and patron, Walter Fawkes (1769–1825), of Farnley Hall, Yorkshire, but if that was the case, then the latter declined to purchase it, which is why it has remained in the Turner Bequest. When the artist went on to elaborate *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta*, Fawkes soon acquired it quite happily. It may simply have been the case that he did not want an image of death and destruction hanging on his walls.

Turner was one of the great masters of pictorial composition in European painting, as *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* vividly demonstrates. Its structure is underpinned by the near-vertical diagonal lines that run up the outer edge of the nearby parapet and the sides of the valleys beyond it on the left, and up the edge of the vertiginous rockface on the right. These subtle buttresses frame a number of shallower 'V'-shapes formed by the sides of the Doire valley, and collectively they lead the eye into the far distance. At a faraway turn in the road on our side of the valley a man leads a packmule carrying a rider, and this tiny group is the most distant aspect of a humanity that makes even clearer the incredible immensity and grandeur of the alps. We are almost overwhelmed by their scale and complexity.

Technically *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* is breathtaking, particularly in its depiction of the distant mountain range. Here Turner severely restricted his palette so that the dark tones are scarcely darker than the light ones. As well as imparting distance, this extreme tonal restriction makes the mountains look enormously ethereal in the afternoon light. Scarcely less dazzling is the way that Turner drew the trees in the centre-foreground, first scratching through



[Fig.5] Joseph Mallord William Turner
A Ravine in the Pass of St Gotthard, 1802
Gouache, graphite and watercolour · 12½ × 18¾ inches · 318 × 475 mm
St Gotthard and Mont Blanc Sketchbook
© Tate, 2012 Turner Bequest LXXV 35



[Fig.6] Joseph Mallord William Turner
The Schöllenen Gorge from the Devil's Bridge, Pass of St Gotthard, 1802
Pencil, watercolour and gouache on paper
18½ × 12¾ inches · 470 × 314 mm © Tate, 2012

the underlying green pigment and then overpainting those scratches to give us the multitudinous individual firs. And his understanding of form is apparent throughout the drawing too, whether it be of the geological structures in the distance and on the right, of the flow of water at the centre, or of the bushes towards the lower-left. In this flora may be seen Turner's sense of ideal form, expressed by means of gently sinuous lines and a firm spatiality to the branches and foliage that renders visible a sense of inner growth, rather than simply the outer guise. Turner had long aspired to realise the notion of Ideal Beauty as propounded by Reynolds in his *Discourses*, and by 1815 he was succeeding in achieving that aim in all his depictions of natural forms, as *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta* triumphantly attests.

Within the Turnerian universe only man was imperfect, but in this particular drawing his human forms are not disturbingly defective and certainly they enjoy huge character.

The girls peer carefully over the parapet, as well they might, given the depths into which they might fall if they lean out too far and overbalance. And by drawing our attention to the huge drop, perhaps Turner was also hinting at the danger inherent to any state of peace, namely of returning to a state of conflict, of the kind that had already found expression in *The Battle of Fort Rock*. In June 1815 the Napoleonic Wars had finally come to an end after 22 years, and yet twice within that time the world had seen war turn to peace and then back again to war, in 1802–03 and in 1814–15. By means of his girls looking down into the abyss, Turner might have been subtly warning of that unhappy double switch in *Mont Blanc from Fort Roch, Val d'Aosta*.



[Fig.7] Joseph Mallord William Turner
Mer de Glace, in the Valley of Chamouni, Switzerland, c.1814
Watercolour, graphite, gum, scraping out and stopping out
27¾ × 41 inches · 705 × 1041 mm
Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection
Accession Number B1977.14.4650

JOHN SELL COTMAN 1782–1842

Cley Church, Norfolk

Pencil and brown wash

6¾ × 10½ inches · 170 × 267 mm

Signed and dated, lower right: 1818–J.S.

Cotman also inscribed verso: *Cley church, Norfolk*

COLLECTIONS

Private collection, France;

Anthony Reed, London, 1978;

Davis & Long Co., New York, 1978;

Private collection, acquired from the above 1978, to 1984;

Davis & Langdale Co., New York, 1984;

Private collection, acquired from the above 1984, to 2012

EXHIBITED

Anthony Reed, London, and Davis & Long Company, New York, 1978, *English Sketches and Studies*, no.47, repr.;

Davis & Langdale Co, New York, 1984, *British Drawings*, no.53 (not in catalogue)

ENGRAVED

by W. Peeble, 1818, published by Longman in *Excursions in the County of Norfolk*, by T.K. Cromwell, 1819, vol.11

Cotman was commissioned by Longman, the publishers, to produce nearly one hundred drawings to illustrate a guide book to Norfolk. Longman wished to publish a series of books to be entitled *Excursions through England*. Each guide was to provide information on the local seats of the nobility and gentry, as their owners were potential subscribers. The first volume of *Excursions in the County of Norfolk* was published in 1818, and volume two in 1819. Cotman made his original drawings for the engravings in pencil and sepia wash. These drawings, as evident in the present example of Cley church, convey his skilful use of the medium; the subtlety of which was inevitably lost in the engravings.

St Margaret's Church at Cley on the north Norfolk coast is virtually unchanged today. The largest church in the Glaven valley, in medieval times the magnificent building looked down over the harbour. During the thirteenth century Cley was England's fourth most important port and shipped great quantities of wool to the Low Countries and the magnificent church reflected the town's wealth. However by the 17th century, the village was permanently cut off from the North Sea when the land in front of it was reclaimed and an embankment was built.



DAVID COX 1783–1859

A Rainbow over the Thames at Oxford

Watercolour and pencil heightened
with gouache
7¼ × 10 inches · 185 × 255 mm
Painted in the 1820s

This remarkably atmospheric watercolour study of a rainbow over the Thames, with Oxford in the background, was painted in the 1820s. Solly, Cox's biographer, recorded that Cox was in the habit of "sometimes, when impressed with a rapid passage of lights, movement of clouds, or other effect, of turning round with his back to the scene, and making a rapid memorandum with chalk and colours, of the effect as it existed in his mind, as he said that the impression was more fresh, powerful, and vivid thus than if he had continued to gaze on the scene, which would have become weakened by looking" (Nathaniel Neal Solly, *Memoir of the life of David Cox*, 1873, p.313). Certainly, one feels that such a moment must have inspired this powerfully observed, conceived and executed watercolour. The dark Prussian blue washes, contrasted with the brightly lit foreground and rainbow reflected in the Thames are given a greater depth, by Cox's careful use of scratching-out, particularly to capture the light on the water, and the gulls wheeling overhead. The smartly dressed figure of the angler in the foreground adds human interest to this study of water and weather. Cox's most impressive landscapes are generally considered his large exhibition watercolours, but in its intimacy and intensity this is a perfectly resolved, miniature masterpiece.



JOHN CONSTABLE RA 1776–1837

Sketch for 'The Leaping Horse'

Oil on unlined canvas
8 $\frac{3}{8}$ × 10 $\frac{5}{8}$ inches
Painted c.1824-5

COLLECTIONS
F.L.Wilder;
and by descent, 2012

LITERATURE
Leslie Parris, *The Tate Gallery Constable Collection*, 1981, under cat. 46

EXHIBITED
London, Tate Gallery, *Constable, The Art of Nature*, 1971, not in catalogue (and before removal of additions by a later hand).

John Constable
Study for 'The Leaping Horse', 1825
Pencil and pen and grey ink with grey wash
8 × 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches · 203 × 302 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum

John Constable
Study for 'The Leaping Horse', 1825
Pencil and pen and grey ink with grey wash
8 × 11 $\frac{1}{4}$ inches; 203 × 302 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum



This small, rapidly executed oil sketch, which relates to one of the most famous of Constable's 'six-foot' exhibition canvases, *The Leaping Horse* in the Royal Academy, is an exciting new addition to the Constable literature. It charts the stage in the evolution of the design between two preliminary drawings in the British Museum and the full-scale compositional sketch in oils in the Victoria and Albert Museum.

By 1802 Constable had formed a resolution to devote himself to a more naturalistic form of landscape painting, that is to say one based more closely on direct observation than on the imitation of previous artists' work. The landscape in and around East Bergholt on the Suffolk-Essex border was at the heart of his mission. For the new 'truth to nature' which he aimed to capture could in his view only be found in scenes with which he felt a deep personal attachment: 'the sound of water escaping from Mill dams ... Willows, Old rotten Banks, slimy posts, & brickwork. I love such things ...', he wrote to his close friend John Fisher in 1821. 'So long as I do paint I shall never cease to

paint such Places ... Painting is but another word for feeling. I associate my "careless boyhood" to all that lies on the banks of the Stour. They made me a painter (& I am gratefull).' (ed. R.B.Beckett, *John Constable's Correspondence VI: The Fishers*, 1968, p.77–8).

Although based in London for his artistic training, Constable continued to regard his parents' house in East Bergholt as home, returning there every summer to paint the familiar scenery. His practice was to make small pencil drawings or rapidly painted oil sketches of the local landscape in the open air – and by about 1810 he had started to develop a particularly expressive and colourful sketching style when working in oils. He would then use these sketches as inspiration for more elaborate pictures he would work up in his London ready for exhibition.

At first this method seemed to work quite well. However by 1814, the critics were beginning to complain that Constable's exhibited pictures were 'deficient in finishing', meaning lacking in detail or displaying an insufficiently smooth finish. To remedy this perceived weakness, for the next three



or four years Constable then attempted the more radical practice of painting small to medium sized pictures substantially in the open air in Suffolk, of which the best known examples are *Boat Building*, 1815 (Victoria and Albert Museum) and the rather larger *Flatford Mill*, 1817 (Tate Britain).

However, the most significant change in Constable's working practice came in 1816 when he finally married Maria Bicknell following a protracted courtship of seven years, and settled more permanently in London. He formulated a plan to paint his Suffolk scenes on a much larger scale, about six feet wide, both to attract more attention on the crowded Academy walls but also deliberately to rival – and to be judged alongside – the achievements of the Old Masters such as Rubens, Titian or Claude. Given, however, he was now distanced from his native scenes, he needed to work out a way of recreating them synthetically in the studio. He had the option of turning to existing material, much as he had done at the beginning of his career. Before embarking on the canvas that would become the exhibition picture, Constable decided to paint a compositional sketch in oils on the equivalent scale – that is, also six-feet wide – to work out his ideas in advance. The full-scale *Sketch for the Leaping Horse* is a striking example of one of these large sketches.

By the time Constable came to paint the *Leaping Horse* late in 1824 and in the early months of 1825, he had already produced five other large paintings featuring views on the River Stour, *The White Horse*, 1819 (Frick Collection, New York), *Stratford Mill*, 1820 (National Gallery, London), *The Hay Wain* 1821 (National Gallery, London), *View on the Stour* 1822 (Huntington Art Gallery, San Marino) and *The Lock* 1824 (private collection). *The Leaping Horse* is the last in the sequence and also the most powerful. Indeed, it forms what has been described

as the 'pictorial and emotional climax' of the whole series. (G. Reynolds, *Constable: the Natural Painter*, 1965, p.77w)

Usually when coming up with an idea for a large River Stour subject, Constable would turn to an existing sketch, however small, which would provide basis for the bigger picture. With the *Leaping Horse*, however, this does not seem to have been the case. Constable's earliest preliminary thoughts for the work can be found in two fairly elaborate, if spontaneously executed, drawings in pen, ink and wash. The drawings, together with the newly-discovered oil sketch, show how he gradually developed the dramatic pictorial idea of a leaping horse on the banks of the River Stour.

The *Leaping Horse* is set on part of the tow path which runs along the river Stour upstream from Flatford, close to a position known as the Float Jump. The jump was a wooden barrier built across the path at a height of three feet, to prevent cattle from straying. Suffolk barge horses were specially trained to leap over these jumps. In the first of the preparatory drawings, Constable shows the barge horse, with rider, in a stationary position in front of the jump. The rider leans backwards towards the barge which the horse has been towing, perhaps about to dismount and untie the tow rope. In the second drawing, the horse has now become more animated but as yet carries no rider. It is only in the small, newly-discovered compositional oil sketch that Constable first gave the horse a rider to urge it forward over the jump, an idea he then carried over into both the full-scale sketch and the exhibition picture.

The small sketch is a remarkably confident piece of painting, combining work with both brush and palette knife, and was clearly executed at speed. Indeed following x-radiography, Sarah Cove has discovered that Constable painted it directly over an earlier portrait without even adding an



John Constable *The Leaping Horse*, 1825
Oil on canvas · 1420 × 1873 mm
Royal Academy of Arts, London, gift of Mrs Dawkins, 1889
© Royal Academy of Arts



John Constable *The Leaping Horse (full-scale study)*
Oil on canvas · 1294 1880 mm
© Victoria & Albert Museum, bequeathed by Henry Vaughan 986–1900



John Constable
Study of three posts on the banks of the River Stour
Pencil · 3½ × 4¾ inches;
89 × 121 mm
From a sketchbook, 1813
© Victoria and Albert Museum,

intermediary priming layer. The rider's right sleeve is indicative of the remarkable economy of Constable's sketching style, achieved in a single bravura stroke of the brush.

The newly discovered sketch charts another interesting intermediary stage in the development of the *Leaping Horse* composition. Although in both of the preliminary drawings Constable has clearly indicated the float jump itself and the way its timber framework sits above a sluice in the south bank of the Stour, he has left the rest of the foreground composition more or less blank. On the left he shows a broad mound of grassy river bank, with just a few touches of scratching out through the grey wash to indicate reeds or grasses. In the oil sketch, by contrast, Constable has inserted three timber posts in this position to add pictorial interest, a detail he took directly from a tiny pencil study made in a sketchbook he had used in 1813. The same posts appear in the full – scale sketch but are modified in the final picture.

The newly discovered oil sketch helps elaborate just how Constable operated when developing a large composition like the *Leaping Horse* from a variety of preliminary sketches. For details which appear in nearly all the preparatory studies might sometimes find their way into the final picture only to be suppressed at the very last moment. For example, Constable included the prow of a second barge on the far left of the composition in his very first drawing, and though it was dropped in the second drawing, it then reappeared in both the small and the full – scale compositional sketches in oil. The second barge was then carried over by Constable into the exhibition picture itself, only to be subsequently painted out, as an X-radiograph has revealed.

On the other hand, Constable might include other details only at an intermediary stage. For instance, a little barge with sail

makes its first appearance in the present picture, on the far right of the composition – or at least makes its first true appearance here as there is a faint indication of something resembling a boat in the same position in the two preliminary drawings, albeit without a sail. The sail on the barge in the small oil sketch is clearly introduced for its colouristic interest. There is no indication that this same barge was introduced by Constable into the *full-scale sketch*. Yet X-radiographs, and other technical analysis of the Royal Academy picture, reveal that a similar barge was apparently once introduced into the final picture but subsequently painted out. When working on his six-foot landscapes, then, not only did Constable take ideas from a sketch at any stage in the composition's evolution, he also constantly, almost obsessively, changed his mind over any number of a picture's details, as the numerous pentimenti found in the *full-scale sketch* and 'finished' painting, reveal.

Shortly after sending *The Leaping Horse* to the Academy in April 1825, Constable described it to John Fisher in highly emotive terms, referring to it as 'a lovely subject, of the canal kind, lively – & soothing – calm and exhilarating, fresh – & blowing'. However in the same letter he also confessed to Fisher that the picture 'should have been on my easel a few weeks longer.' When it failed to find a buyer at the exhibition, Constable took it back to his studio and decided to make further changes to it to render it, in his own words, more 'saleable' (ed. R.B. Beckett, *John Constable's Correspondence II, Early Friends and Maria Bicknell (Mrs Constable)*, Ipswich, 1962, p.397).

It was at this stage that Constable removed the willow tree from its position immediately to the right of the horse – where it had appeared in all the preliminary studies – repositioning it to the animal's left. This served to allow the movement of horse and rider to lead the eye more insistently

to the right where the tower of Dedham church closes the composition – albeit anachronistically so, as in reality the church is located behind the viewer at this particular stretch of the river. However, this and other changes Constable made to the composition at this time, including mismatching passages of paint applied with the palette knife, would actually have served to made the picture less saleable as Sarah Cove points out ('The Painting Techniques of Constable's "Six-Footers"', in A.Lyles ed, *Constable: the Great Landscapes*, exh. cat., London, Tate Gallery, 2006, p.56 and 64). These further changes probably made the picture unexhibitable as well, as it was the only painting in the River Stour series that Constable failed to send on for subsequent exhibition at the British Institution. Moreover, although he often sent his large pictures to venues outside London in the latter years of his life, whether to Birmingham, Worcester, Dublin or Lille, *The Leaping Horse* was never amongst these candidates.

Today, however, *The Leaping Horse* is regarded as one of Constable's greatest paintings. Kenneth Clark drew attention to the element of heroic drama provided by the inclusion of the leaping horse with rider. He suggested that Constable must instinctively have known that this image, seen from a low viewpoint on the timber framework on the tow path forming a bridge over the sluice, would call to mind historical precedents such as the long line of equestrian monuments with heroic mounted commanders viewed on high architectural bases. (*Looking at Pictures*, 1960, New York, p.120) It was in this small compositional sketch in oils that Constable first imagined the idea, an idea Clark called a 'stroke of genius'.

JOHN CONSTABLE RA 1776–1837

Coal brigs and fishing vessels on the beach at Brighton

Pencil
5¼ × 7 inches · 135 × 177 mm
Drawn in 1824

COLLECTIONS

The Constable family;
Sir Bruce Ingram OBE, MC, FSA (L.1405a),
by 1937;
Ingram sale, Sotheby's, London, 17 March
1965, pt.v, lot 771;
Dr William Katz, purchased at the above
sale;
and by descent, 2012

LITERATURE

C. King, 'Marine Drawings in the Bruce
Ingram Collection – Part 1: British and Dutch
Art', *The Connoisseur Magazine*, April 1937,
p.76, no. IX;
Graham Reynolds, *The Later Paintings and
Drawings of John Constable*, 1984, no. 24.49,
pl. 520

EXHIBITED

Probably, London, P. & D. Colnaghi,
*Masters of Maritime Art, A Loan Exhibition
of Drawings from the Collection of Captain
Bruce S. Ingram OBE, FSA*, 1936

The present drawing is one of a series of Brighton views by Constable dating from the summer and autumn of 1824. In May of that year Constable took his wife and children to the popular Sussex coastal resort, having been advised that the air there would be good for their health. Finding lodgings in Western Place on the outskirts of town, Constable stayed for six days before returning to London. He travelled again to Brighton for a week in June, before settling in there for a period of three months, between July and October. Although he was not enamoured of the town itself, describing it in a letter to his friend John Fisher as 'receptable [*sic*] of the fashion and off-scouring of London,' (R B Beckett (ed.) *John Constable's Correspondence*, vol.v, 1968, p.171) he found other aspects of the surrounding landscape agreeable. Indeed during his stay he executed 'a considerable number of oil sketches and drawings, concentrating on the life of the beach, the shipping and the atmospheric effects over the sea (Reynolds, *op. cit.*, p.154). Leslie Parris and Ian Fleming-Williams have suggested that Constable

was particularly fond of drawing shipping vessels, especially colliers, as the shipping and retailing of coal was significant part of the Constable family business.

Constable's series of studies of shipping made in 1824 also include carefully modulated drawings executed in pencil, grey washes and chalks and it is evident that this concerted drawing campaign had an end in itself. In a letter of 17th December 1824 to John Fisher, Constable mentioned that he had been engaged by the Parisian picture dealer, John Arrowsmith, 'to make twelve drawings (to be engraved here, and published in Paris) ... complete compositions – all of boats, or beach scenes' (R. B. Beckett (ed), *John Constable's Correspondence*, vol.vi, 1968, p.184).

Reynolds noted that the measurements of this sheet suggest that this drawing was made on a page of sketch-book of made up of 1821 Whatman paper which was used in 1823 and again in 1824.



John Constable *Coal Brigs on Brighton Beach*, 1824
Pencil, pen and ink and wash on paper
6¾ × 10 inches · 175 × 255 cm
Trustees of Cecil Higgins Art Gallery, Bedford (p.119)



DAVID ROBERTS RA 1796–1864

Church of the Annunciation, Nazareth

Watercolour and gouache over pencil
heightened with gum Arabic
9½ × 13¾ inches · 241 × 349 mm
Signed and dated: *David Roberts. 1839*
Inscribed above this: *Chapel of the
Annunciation / Nazareth* also inscribed and
dated lower left: *Nazareth April 20th 1839*

COLLECTIONS

Probably Roberts's Studio Sale, Christie's
13–15 May 1865, lot 860 as *Nazareth:
interior of the Chapel of the Annunciation*
(bt Colnaghi);
Henry Sanford Bicknell;
Bicknell sale, Christie's, 7–9 April 1881, lot 127
as *Church of the Annunciation, Nazareth*
(bt Vokins);
Private collection, 1979;
Private collection, UK, 1983 to 2012

LITERATURE

J. Ballantine, *The Life of David Roberts RA*,
1866, p.133;
Possibly, *Art Journal*, 1872, 'Visits to Private
Collections. The Collection of Henry
Bicknell, Esq. Cavendish House, Clapham
Common', p.90

EXHIBITED

Probably London, Roberts's Studio
Exhibition, spring 1865, no.154;
London, Spink & Son Ltd, *English
Watercolour Drawings*, 1980, no.147;
London, Leger Galleries, *English
Watercolours*, 1983, no.28;
London, Barbican Art Gallery, *David Roberts*,
1987, no.169

ENGRAVED

Subject lithographed by Louis Haghe in
Holy Land, 1842, Vol.1, [pl.32] with above title;
1855, Vol.1, pl.32 as *Church of the Annunciation,
Nazareth*

In 1838 Roberts was elected an Associate
Academician of the Royal Academy and in
August 1838 he fulfilled his ambition 'from
earliest boyhood, to visit the remote East'
(Roberts, record book, 1.108). On 20 April
1839 David Roberts, who had arrived in
Nazareth the previous day, made 'two
coloured drawings of the interior of the
chapel, one of the Grotto or Chapel of the
Annunciation and also two views of the
town' (David Roberts, manuscript journal,
Syria, 1839, vol.II, National Library of
Scotland). The present, exquisitely rendered
watercolour was based on one of these
'coloured drawings' of the interior of the
Church of the Annunciation.

In May 1839 Roberts returned to England
with some 272 sketches, a panorama of
Cairo, and three full sketchbooks, enough
material to 'serve me for the rest of my life'
(Roberts, eastern journal, 28 Jan 1839).

Over the next decade Roberts made
'a series of intire new drawings' for the
247 large coloured lithographs executed
by Louis Haghe for *The Holy Land, Syria,
Idumea, Arabia, Egypt & Nubia* (1842–9).
No publication before this had presented
so comprehensive a series of views of the
monuments, landscape, and people of the
Near East. Roberts painted more oils and
watercolours of the East than of any other
region he visited, exhibiting thirty-one oils at
the Royal Academy alone. He also produced
highly finished watercolours such as the
present work.

Unlike the lithograph, Robert's water-
colour captures the atmosphere of the
eighteenth century Franciscan church of the
Annunciation, the richly decorated columns
contrasting with the crepuscular grotto of
the Virgin, illuminated only by sanctuary

lamps and the whole scene peopled with
devout pilgrims. The present watercolour
differs in a number of respects from the
lithograph – the drawing for which was in
the Ellesmere collection and exhibited at the
Manchester Art Treasures Exhibition in 1857
(766) but its present location is unknown
– Roberts has added the group of pilgrims
on the right and given the procession more
dramatic effect by reducing it in number and
having it mount the altar steps. The breadth
and virtuosity of Roberts's handling of water-
colour imbues the whole scene with greater
grandeur than Haghe's lithographic reproduc-
tion. The nineteenth century fascination with
the exotic, combined with the deep interest in
the archaeological evidence of the events of
the New Testament made Roberts's views of
the Holy Land not only enduringly popular
but hugely influential.

*We are grateful to Briony Llewelyn for her assist-
ance with this catalogue entry.*



Louis Haghe, after David Roberts
Chapel of the Annunciation, Nazareth
Published in *Holy Land*, 1842, Vol.1, pl.32
Tinted lithograph with hand-colouring
Sheet size: 24 × 16¾ inches · 610 × 425 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum



JOHN FREDERICK LEWIS RA 1804–1876

Study of three bedouins

Watercolour over pencil heightened with black chalk and gouache
14 × 18³/₈ inches · 356 × 473 mm
Inscribed lower left: [Le]wis *Wady Shiekh* 236
Drawn c.1842

COLLECTIONS
probably 'The Remaining Works of ...
John F. Lewis RA, ...', Christie's 5 May 1877,
lot 326, as 'Bedouins: Wady Shiekh, Desert
of Mount Sinai', sold for £29.8s to 'Ellis'.

John Frederick Lewis was the first British artist to make an extended sojourn in Egypt, living in Cairo for almost a decade. Here, according to William Makepeace Thackeray, who visited him there in 1844, he lived the life of a well-to-do Egyptian, a suave urban 'bey', who wore 'a very handsome grave costume of dark blue, consisting of an embroidered jacket and gaiters, and a pair of trousers, which would make a set of dresses for an English family' (M. Titmarsh, *Notes of a Journey from Cornhill to Grand Cairo*, 1846, reprint Heathfield, 1991, p.145). This life of a 'languid lotus-eater' was an escape from the confines of Victorian convention, but even this was too restricted and his 'great pleasure of pleasures was life in the desert, – under the tents, with still *more* nothing to do than in Cairo; now smoking, now cantering on Arabs, and no crowd to jostle you; solemn contemplation of the stars at night, as the camels were picketed, and the fires and the pipes were lighted' (*Ibid.* 146). Here, in the Sinai desert, he could take on

the role of the Bedouin 'sheik', living with the local tribes. Despite the apparent languor highlighted by Thackeray, he was not idle, and numerous sketches of the Bedouin with their camels attest to a serious investigation of their ethnicity. He seldom portrays the same man more than once and renders the facial characteristics, the head-dresses and the garments of each with singular clarity and sensitivity. This precise observation of a wide variety of physiognomies and costume suggests an easy familiarity between Lewis and the Bedouin, and an acceptance of the one by the other. In these sketches Lewis neither romanticises nor patronises his subjects, but depicts them as he finds them: complex individuals, not hostile, but unsmiling and reserved. This particular sketch is a fine and characteristic example of this group: three Bedouin men sit or crouch on the ground, squinting into the glare of the mid-day sun, subtly but adroitly realised with white highlights and darker shadows. Each one is a portrait of a specific but unidentified individual. The inscription, 'Wady Shiekh [Sheikh]', locates it in a part of the large wadi that runs east-west across Sinai, not far from the Monastery of St Catherine.

Few of the sketches are dated, but these provide evidence of Lewis's visits to Suez and Sinai in March and April probably of 1842 and/or 1843, and then again in 1844 and 1847. Further unrecorded visits are also possible, but it seems unlikely that he accompanied the British aristocrat, Frederick Stewart, Viscount Castlereagh (later 4th Marquess of Londonderry), on his trip in May 1842, shortly after the latter had commissioned him to 'paint a picture for me of ourselves, & party'. Instead, Lewis used sketches made on other occasions to create

the extraordinarily complex watercolour depicting Castlereagh and his entourage in an encounter with Sheikh Hussein, chief of the tribe inhabiting that part of Sinai. Never known to have been acquired by Castlereagh, this watercolour was exhibited no less than fourteen years later as *A Frank Encampment in the Desert of Mt. Sinai, 1842* (Society of Painters in Water Colours, 1856, no.134; now Yale Center for British Art, B1977.14.143). The individuals that Lewis had portrayed in the sketch discussed here and in similar examples, notably *Bedouin, Mount Sinai* (Christie's, 18 June 1998, lot 65) or *Study of Three Arabs* (The Hickman Bacon Collection), are of the same type as the Arab figures in the group accompanying their leader in the exhibited picture. The dignity and poise of the tall upstanding sheikh is in marked contrast to the haughty lethargy of the supine viscount, an indication of where Lewis's own sympathies lay. His empathy with desert life had already been demonstrated in a series of meticulously detailed watercolours, successfully presented for exhibition and sale at the 'Old' Water-Colour Society, but the extent to which Lewis had identified with the inhabitants of Sinai when he lived among them is perhaps best seen in *An Arab of the Desert of Sinai* (oil on panel, 1858, Royal Academy, no.114; now Shafik Gabr Collection, Cairo) in which he portrays an idealised and younger version of himself in the guise of a Bedouin sheikh. In seeking to recreate, within his Walton-on-Thames studio, the cross-cultural transformation that he had experienced in Cairo and the Sinai, Lewis drew inspiration from the direct observation that he had articulated with such skill and intensity in his sketches.

Briony Llewellyn

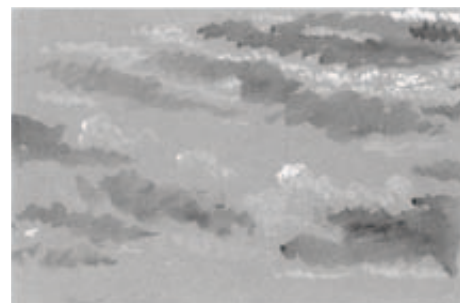


WILLIAM TURNER OF OXFORD 1789–1862

Before sunrise

Pencil and watercolour heightened with pastel and gouache
10³/₄ × 16³/₄ inches · 273 × 425 mm
Indistinctly dated *March 17 1847* ... (lower left), also inscribed and dated verso: *Before sunrise / March 17 1847*

William Turner of Oxford's landscapes such as the present study have a visionary and almost numinous quality, which in their bold tonality and handling are strikingly modern. The present sheet clearly depicts a mountainous setting, rather than the flat, agricultural landscape of his native Oxfordshire, which suggests it was probably made in Scotland on one of his frequent drawing trips to the West coast or the Isles. In its technique it is similar to other meteorological studies he was producing in the mid-1840s, using a series of watercolour washes on tinted paper, with touches of gouache. Turner was fascinated by natural phenomena, and his observations in watercolour of the *Aurora Borealis* and *Donati's Comet* bear testimony to this fact. This curiosity inevitably led to an interest in depicting landscapes at night, as well as at dusk and dawn as evidenced by his watercolour of *Stratus Clouds, Evening*, dated '5 o' clock p.m. October.30th.1848' (formerly Bauer collection), and the cloud study in the British Museum, in watercolour and yellow gouache on blue paper, inscribed 'Wind South'.



William Turner of Oxford *Cloud study*
Watercolour and yellow gouache on blue paper
Inscribed: "Wind South"
7¹/₄ × 10³/₈ inches · 184 × 270 mm
© The Trustees of the British Museum 1999,1127.1



William Turner of Oxford *A view from Binsey Ferry near Oxford looking towards Port Meadow and Godstow*
Watercolour over pencil heightened with bodycolour and scratching out · 18 × 27 inches · 455 × 685 mm
Signed recto and signed and inscribed verso: No. 3/W. Turner
Painted in 1842
The Art Institute of Chicago (formerly with Lowell Libson Ltd)



SIR EDWIN LANDSEER RA 1802–1873

Blackcock

Ink wash heightened with blue and red
chalks on laid paper
9 × 11 inches · 228 × 280 mm
Signed in monogram lower right and
inscribed:
Como, 17th Oct / 1848

COLLECTIONS

William, 7th Viscount Strathallan (d. 1886),
presumably a gift from the artist;
and by family descent



Sir Edwin Landseer *Ptarmigan in a Landscape*
Oil on panel · 19½ × 25¾ inches · 49.5 × 65.4 cm
Painted in 1833
Philadelphia Museum of Art, (1986–26–280)
The Henry p.McIlhenny Collection in memory of Frances
p.McIlhenny, 1986



Sir Edwin Landseer *A random shot*
Oil on canvas · 48 × 72 inches · 122 × 183 cm
Painted c.1848
Bury Art Gallery and Museum

Quite apart from Landseer's continuing reputation as a painter of animals and sporting subjects, his extraordinary skill as a draughtsman both in oil as well as with the pen has become increasingly celebrated. His drawings were eagerly sought-after – usually as gifts – by his contemporaries and he can now be seen to be one of the most skilful and inspired of draughtsmen of the earlier part of the nineteenth century. The intuitive facility, inventiveness as well as the emotional qualities of the best of his drawings ranks Landseer alongside Delacroix and Hugo.

Here he has magnificently improvised with ink handled with a brush to create a rapid and atmospheric work, which maintains the spontaneity of a sketch but has the successful finish of a painting. The monochromatic palette and muted composition deliver a beautiful rendering which manages to be both unsentimental and emotionally charged. In writing of Landseer's paintings of dead game birds, Richard Ormond notes that they are 'intensely physical and charged with emotion' (Richard Ormond, *The Monarch of the Glen: Landseer in the Highlands*, 2005, p.56).

Amongst the earliest of Landseer's renditions of blackgame is in his *Scene in the Highlands* (Private Collection on loan to The National Galleries of Scotland) of 1825–28. This large and formal group portrait of the Duke of Gordon with his sister, The Duchess of Bedford, and his nephew, Lord Alexander Russell, is adorned with dead game in the foreground; amongst the trophies of the hunt is a brace of dead blackcock. Looking at this wonderful depiction of a dead Blackcock, one is instantly reminded of Landseer's *Grouse* (Private Collection, UK) and *Ptarmigan* (Philadelphia Museum of

Art), both of 1833. In those complex images, Landseer contrasts a shot bird with a living mate, thus sentimentalising and humanising their fate. He wants one to imagine the bird's experience. However, in the current drawing Landseer draws the viewer into the perspective of the sportsman. The stark use of wash brilliantly conjures a cold snowy mountain, and the restrained patches of coloured heightening add the drama: a subtle addition of blue chalk in the feathers breathes life into the bird, and the spots of bright red not only identify the markings of this prized gamebird, but also highlight its fate.

However, a poignant and relevant comparison should be drawn with *A Random Shot* (Bury Art Gallery and Museum). Whilst this large picture is painted in oils, and its subject is a shot deer, the stark white setting of a cold snowy hilltop is instantly reminiscent, as are the small but glaring touches of red blood; and importantly, it was painted in 1848. Ormond argues that this mountaintop setting references a sacrificial altar, as well as raising the subject to universal significance. It may well be that this composition was derived from his spontaneous sketch of the Blackcock.

The enigmatic inscription 'Como' has so far eluded explanation. The drawing was obviously made in Scotland where Landseer is recorded as being in October 1848 and Richard Ormond has suggested that 'Como' may refer to a hunting lodge or estate known familiarly by that name.



SIR JOHN TENNIEL 1820–1914

An allegory of the Great Industrial Meeting of all Nations

Peace and good-will to all men
O Thou! By whose almighty nod the scale
Of Empire rises, or alternate falls,
Send forth the saving virtues round the land,
In bright patrol: white peace and social Love;
... Rough Industry: Activity untired,
With copious life inform'd, and all awake:
While in the radiant front, superior shines
That first paternal virtue, Public Zeal;
Who throws o'er all an equal wide survey,
And ever musing on the commonweal,
Still labours glorious with some great design

James Thomson, *Spring*

Oil on canvas
lightly marked and annotated for transfer
at the edges
22½ × 42 inches · 570 × 107 mm
Signed with monogram and dated 1851
In the original frame

COLLECTIONS

Private collection, UK, to 2011

LITERATURE

Art Annual, 1851, review of the Royal
Academy, Summer Exhibition

EXHIBITED

London, Royal Academy, Summer
Exhibition, 1851, no. 383, *Sketch for a large
picture in progress, representing allegorically the
great Industrial Meeting of all Nations, A.D. 1851*
(with the verse above)

Tenniel has much of the largeness and symbolic
mystery of the imagination which belong to
the great leaders of classic art: in the shadowy
masses and sweeping lines of his great composi-
tions, there are tendencies which might have won
his adoption into the school of Tintoret; and his
scorn for whatever seems to him dishonest or
contemptible in religion, would have translated
itself into awe in the presence of its vital power.

John Ruskin, *The Art of England*, 1887

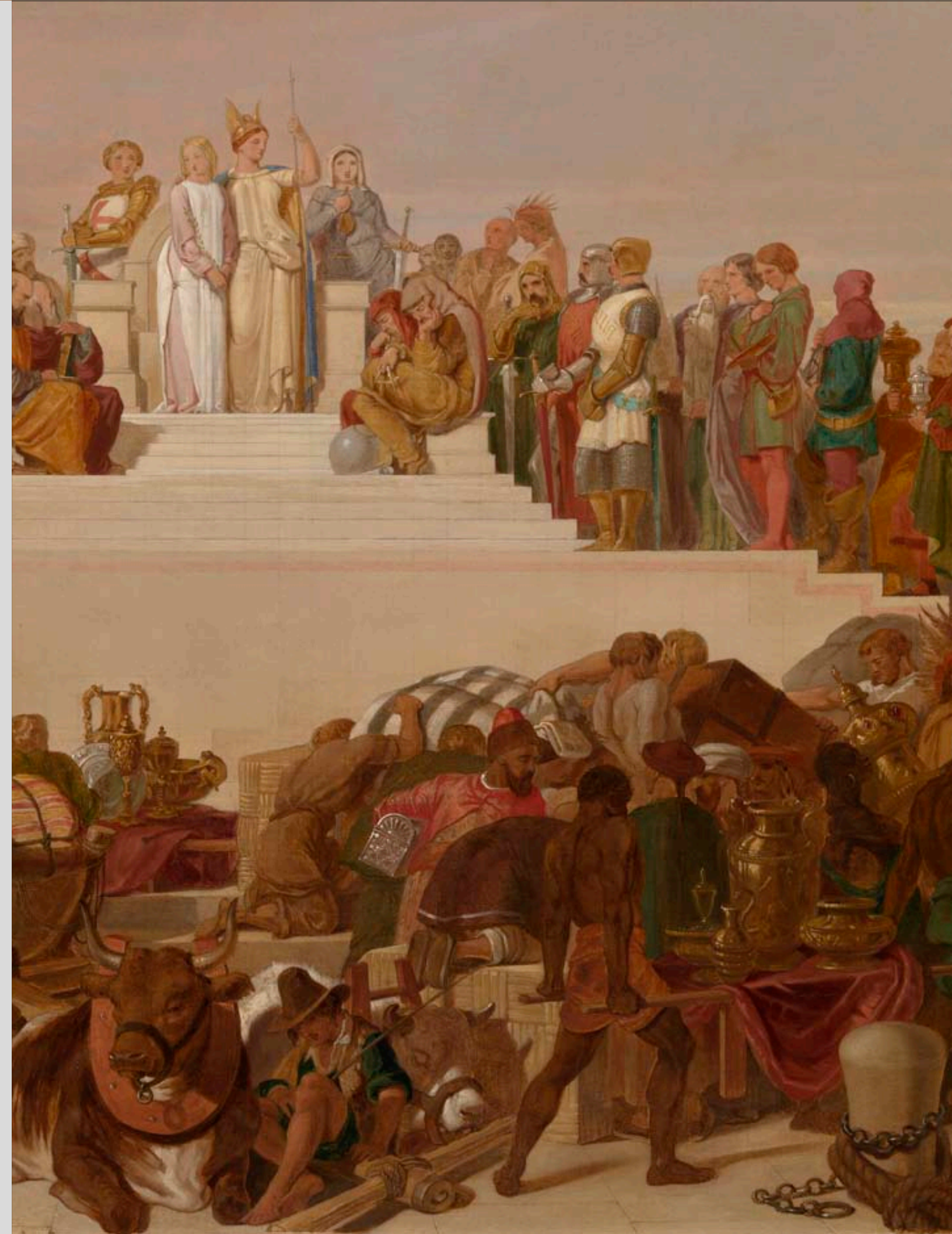
The Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry
of all Nations of 1851 was arguably the
defining moment of the Victorian era and
marked the apogee of British power. The
'Great Exhibition' intended as a showcase for
Britain's industrial prowess attracted some
six million visitors and paved the way, on the
back of its success, for the establishment of
the Victoria and Albert Museum, the Natural
History Museum and the Science Museum.

This remarkable painting is a sketch or
modello for a work of considerable size
(probably a mural), which never seems to
have been executed, in spite of the claim
made when it was exhibited at the 1851
Royal Academy that it was a 'sketch for a large
picture in progress'. Such an ambitious project
was not new for the thirty-year-old Tenniel,
son of a dancing master, who had early been
encouraged to become an artist by John
Martin, a family friend. Tenniel studied for a
period at the Royal Academy Schools before
leaving due to his "utter disgust of there
being no teaching" and was largely self-
taught, spending much time at the British
Museum studying the Elgin Marbles and in
the Print Room where he became a protégé
of Sir Frederick Madden, the learned keeper
of the Department of Manuscripts.



John Tenniel (after), Title page for the *Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue of the Great Exhibition*, 1851





Tenniel had early displayed a Scott-like nostalgia for the chivalric values and Puginian appreciation of Christian values and in 1845 submitted a sixteen-foot high design to the Commission on Fine Arts (commonly called the *Fine Arts Commission*) in the competition for the frescoes in the new House of Lords at Pugin's Palace of Westminster. Peter von Cornelius, the leading German painter of frescoes gave advice to the Commissioners, many of whom favoured commissioning German painters to fulfil the decorations. Cornelius opined, "it was a difficult thing to impress upon the mind of a nation at large a general love of art unless you were to use as an instrument painting upon a large scale". Tenniel's late entry consisted of a watercolour sketch and an unfinished cartoon of *The Spirit of Justice*. The composition is now only known from the lithograph after the watercolour which had been purchased by Lewis Pocock, the founder of the Art-Union of London, for 100 Guineas (reproduced in Cosmo Monkhouse, *Sir John Tenniel R1*, 1901). Tenniel appears



to have been strongly attracted by the work of the Dresden artist Moritz Retzsch (1779-1857) whose prints also influenced three other of the 1845 competitors, Richard Dadd, Daniel Maclise and Ford Madox Brown.

The Commissioners and especially its Chairman, Prince Albert, had a pronounced taste for the works of contemporary German painters and awarded Tenniel a premium of £200, although some controversy surrounded the award as his submissions had been made too late and Daniel Maclise's design for the same subject was ultimately selected. Contemporary critics were much taken with Tenniel's design, one reviewer noting that "he exhibits extraordinary talent for design and ... although but an outline, the parts are made out with astonishing boldness" (*The Builder*, no 3, 1845, p.316). Roger Simpson (Roger Simpson, *Sir John Tenniel: Aspects of his work*, 1994) has argued that Tenniel's success in the 1845 competition was due to the fact that his was the only entry that implied a



John Tenniel
The Spirit of Justice
reproduced in Cosmo
Monkhouse, *Sir John Tenniel R1*,
1901

Moritz Retzsch
*Illustration from Gallery to
Shakespeare's Dramatic
Works in Outlines*, 1849.
Engraving · approximately
6.5 × 8.5 inches.



Paul Delaroche *The Hémicycle*, 1837-47
Details of the mural at the École des Beaux Arts, Paris

faith in the precise dictates of radical politics, a sentiment that would have echoed the Prince Consort's own sympathies.

Tenniel was then commissioned by the Commissioners to paint for £400 a smaller work representing John Dryden's "Alexander's Feast; or the Power of Music, An ode in honour of St. Cecilia's Day" (usually referred to as *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*) for the Upper Waiting Hall where the scheme was intended to be illustrative of the great poets. On receiving the commission Tenniel immediately travelled to Munich, in the company of his fellow painter, Edward Corbould, to study fresco painting in the acknowledged centre of the art at that time. Little is known of his stay in Germany but he undoubtedly studied the work and techniques of Peter von Cornelius (1784-1867), director of the Munich Academy of Fine Arts, and his disciple Wilhelm von Kaulbach (1805-74). Cornelius had been one of the members of the Nazarene group in Rome and this influence is clearly seen in the work under discussion: *An Allegory of the Great Industrial Meeting of all Nations*.

Having returned from Munich, Tenniel set about starting *A Song for St. Cecilia's Day*,

executed thinly with very fluid washes; this was finished and placed in the Upper Waiting Hall by 1850. Many of the frescoes deteriorated rapidly and were causing concern by the early 1860s and the *Parliamentary Papers* for 1895 record that Professor A. H. Church who had been called in to report on them, decided that Tenniel's 'St. Cecilia' was the only one worth preserving. Today it is the only Tenniel's work that survives in the Upper Waiting Hall.

It may well be that Tenniel was hoping for further patronage from the Commissioners and his 1851 Royal Academy exhibit was possibly intended as an inducement for a commission based on the great event of the period. Decisions for the decoration of the Houses of Parliament were still being made well into the 1850s with Edwin Landseer, Charles West Cope, John Rogers Herbert, Edward Matthew Ward as well as Daniel Maclise being awarded commissions.

An Allegory of the Great Industrial Meeting of all Nations undoubtedly owes much to Tenniel's time in Germany in its bold graphic style, its historicism and in the purity of its colouring. The present work has been unknown until its recent emergence



and its importance in Tenniel's *oeuvre* as well as in the context of mid-nineteenth century art and of the Great Exhibition has gone un-noted.

Tenniel certainly did have an important and prominent connection with the Great Exhibition; one that is directly linked to the present work under discussion. Tenniel was responsible for designing the title page of the *Official Descriptive and Illustrated Catalogue of the Great Exhibition (1851)* with a composition that was closely derived from his Raphaellesque *The Spirit of Justice* and which

is also directly related to the present oil. By 1851 Tenniel had already proved himself as an illustrator and graphic draughtsman of note, taking over from Richard Doyle at *Punch*, and he evidently, on the basis of the title page commission, enjoyed the good opinion of Prince Albert. Roger Simpson (*op. cit.*) in a discussion of Tenniel's title page design has noted its importance as a transition between the Westminster commissions and the main body of his career at *Punch* as the most influential political and social cartoonist of the second half of the

nineteenth century, and his enduring fame at the illustrator of *Alice in Wonderland*.

The *Allegory of the Great Industrial Meeting of all Nations* expands on the design of the title page and given the fact that the Great Exhibition opened on 1 May 1851 at about the same time that the Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy opened the two images must have been conceived in tandem.

Tenniel's title page is both a celebration of hierarchy, history and the applied arts as well as the emancipation of labour, which

is represented by the heroic but relaxed figures lounging in the foreground of the monumental design. The composition of the painting, either directly or indirectly, owes much to Raphael's *School of Athens*, as well as to Moritz Retzsch's engraved illustrations to Shakespeare, which was published in 1849. A more immediate prototype may well be Delaroche's great eighty-eight foot long *Hémicycle*, a Raphaellesque tableau influenced by *The School of Athens* in the award theatre of the *École des Beaux Arts*, Paris. In what was intended, in its finished form, as a monumental work, Tenniel celebrated Britain's and at that moment London's place at the centre of the world. In it he combined Classical, Medieval, Renaissance and contemporary figures representing the nations as well as the crafts, trades and arts of the world – the dome of St Paul's Cathedral and a representation of The

Pool of London packed with the vessels of the world form the pendentives of the composition. The reviewer in the *Art Annual* described it thus:

This is a pyramidal composition, the apex of which is occupied by Britannia and Peace – on each side of whom, and arranged on the steps, are allegorical impersonations of all nations; while at the base of the composition appear the multifarious productions of human industry, under charge of representatives of various nationalities. An examination of the figures shows great command of resource, and an inexhaustible fund of invention – the variety and poetical qualification of the personae are beyond all praise.

The nations of England, Scotland and Wales are represented by the mail-clad figure wearing the cross of St George at the summit, the energetic men in plaid and a

tam o shanter working in the foreground and the 'Bardic' figure clad in pink and green carrying a harp. Africa, the Near East, the Mediterranean and the Americas are also represented by emblematic figures as are a multiplicity of crafts, arts and industries. It is interesting to note that George Gilbert Scott adopted this device some ten years later in his design for the Albert Memorial where the *Frieze of Parnassus* (carved by Henry Hugh Armstead and John Birnie Philip) echoes Tenniel's treatment.

Another somewhat smaller oil sketch of this painting measuring 11 x 20¼ inches was exhibited by The Fine Art Society, London, in 1974 as part of the Handley-Read Collection. The small size and very sketchy nature of the Handley-Read study would preclude it being an exhibited work and it would certainly not have warranted the detailed review in the *Art Annual*.



John Tenniel *Leonardo da Vinci*:
Design for a mosaic for the 'Kensington
Valhalla' · Oil on canvas
108 x 41 inches · 2743 x 1040 mm
Painted 1862–1871
© Victoria & Albert Museum (33–1870)



John Tenniel *Song for St
Cecilia's Day 1687*
Fresco · 1850
© Palace of Westminster
Collection, WOA 2886



CHARLES ALTAMONT DOYLE 1832–1893

The Spirits of the Prisoners

Pencil, pen and brown ink, blue wash
14 × 10 1/8 inches · 354 × 257 mm
Indistinctly inscribed (recto) and further
inscribed verso: *No 4 What probably no one
ever saw swirl over the Sunnyside gable and
disappear round the corner. The constellation
under which this appearance was it observed,
was the Great Bear.*
Painted c.1885

COLLECTIONS

Christian B. Peper, acquired in 1974;
and by descent to 2012

The civil-servant and illustrator, Charles Altamont Doyle was described by his son, Arthur Conan Doyle, the creator of Sherlock Holmes, as: ‘a tall man, long-bearded, and elegant; he had a charm of manner and courtesy of bearing which I have seldom seen equaled. His wit was quick and playful.’ (M. Baker, *The Doyle Diary, The Last Great Conan Doyle Mystery*, 1978, p.xvi.) Doyle’s wit and whimsical sense of humour, belied the struggles he had with his mental health, from 1885 he was committed in Sunnyside House, the Montrose Royal Lunatic Asylum, a gabled wing of which forms the backdrop of the present drawing. As one of a number of studies Doyle made whilst incarcerated at Sunnyside, it is a testament to both his astonishing abilities as an illustrator and unbalanced state of mind.

Doyle came from a family of caricaturists and illustrators, his father was the Irish cartoonist John ‘H.B.’ Doyle, his elder brother Richard was a prominent illustrator for *Punch*, and another brother Henry, was also an artist and director of the National Gallery of Ireland. In his late teens Charles moved to Edinburgh and took employment as an architectural draughtsman at the Office of Works, where his most notable achievement was designing the fountain at Holyrood Palace. He held this position for some thirty years, during which time he exhibited several watercolours and pen and ink studies at the Royal Scottish Academy, as well as producing illustrations for the London Society in the 1860s. The onset of epilepsy, exacerbated by alcoholism, meant that in 1885, Doyle was admitted to Sunnyside House. He there began to fill a series of sketchbooks with drawings of fairies, caricatures and notes. He inscribed the

frontispiece with the legend: ‘keep steadily in view that this book is ascribed wholly to the produce of a MADMAN, whereabouts would you say was the deficiency of intellect? Or depraved taste if in the whole book you can find a single Evidence of either, mark and record it against me.’ (M. Baker, *ibid*, 1978, p.xxx.) Doyle’s artistic work was a means of demonstrating to himself and others that he was sane. He maintained that he was wrongfully confined but, despite this, he made several affectionate sketches of staff, patients and of the asylum itself of which this is perhaps the most fully realised. Doyle also contributed drawings, articles and poems to the asylum magazine, *The Sunnyside Chronicle*. In 1888, three years after his admission to the Montrose Asylum, he was commissioned by his son, Arthur Conan Doyle, to illustrate *A Study in Scarlet*, the first full-length Sherlock Holmes novel. Arthur felt his father was ‘a great and original artist ... the greatest, in my opinion, of the family’. However, critics, armed with the knowledge that Doyle ended his days in an asylum, have inspected his work for signs of mental pathology. Yet, as has been rightly pointed out, the subject of his paintings, particularly fairies and oversized wildlife, were common in Victorian paintings of the period and not necessarily evidence of insanity.

Towards the end of the published Doyle sketchbook is a full-page depiction of fanciful characters – a combination of animals, impish figures and humans – swirling over the neo-gothic gables of Sunnyside House. The nocturnal scene, finely executed in pen and ink with blue wash, formed the preliminary study for the present drawing. The sheet is inscribed:



Charles Altamont Doyle
Watercolour from the *Sunnyside* sketchbook, 1889
Repr. M Baker, *The Doyle Diary*, 1978, p.75

What probably no one ever saw swirl over the Sunnyside gable and disappear round the corner. The constellation under which this appearance was it observed, was the Great Bear.

It depicts the full cast of figures which populate Doyle's sketchbook, fairies, imps and winged animals, cascade over the rooftop and down the side of the asylum. In the sky above the constellation of the Great Bear, or Ursa Major, is visible and the clouds form a bearded man who watches the fantastic stream of figures. This figure is identifiable from the multitude of studies in Doyle's sketchbook, as a self-portrait. Indeed, a watercolour in the Victoria & Albert Museum, *Meditation – Self-portrait*, completed whilst he was at Sunnyside, shows the artist in a pensive mood, whilst

sinister and ethereal creations writhe around him. The presence of such an image in Doyle's sketchbook should perhaps be read less as evidence of his own fragile mental health, than a wry appreciation of his fellow patients and their foibles. Despite constant pleas to his wife and family to be discharged, Doyle remained at Sunnyside, before being moved to the Crichton Institute in Dumfries where he died of epilepsy in 1893. In 1924 his eldest son, Arthur Conan Doyle, held an exhibition of his father's work and began the revival of interest in his later images. The present sheet is one of the finest and most fully developed of Doyle's Sunnyside drawings and is a remarkable testament to both his breadth of imagination and skill as a draughtsman.



Charles Altamont Doyle *Meditation, Self-portrait*
Watercolour, from a sketchbook
© Victoria & Albert Museum



SIR WILLIAM BLAKE RICHMOND 1842–1921

Sir William Blake Richmond's memorial to his father, George Richmond RA

Plaster relief
12³/₈ × 16 inches · 314 × 406 mm
Executed 1896

COLLECTIONS
The artist's family, and by descent to 2011

The artist George Richmond (1809–1896), friend of Blake, Linnell and Palmer, died in March 1896 aged eighty-six, leaving ten children and forty grandchildren. He was buried at Highgate Cemetery and a memorial tablet designed by his son William Blake Richmond, was placed in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral. The National Portrait Gallery, owns another plaster of this model, a gift from the artist's great grandson, Peter Richmond in 1986. The present example has descended in the Richmond family.

William Blake Richmond was destined to



George Richmond RA, photograph from A.M.W. Stirling, *The Richmond Papers*, London, 1926, illus. opposite p.402.

become an artist: the son of a distinguished painter, the grandson of the architect, Charles Heathcote Tatham, and with a middle name chosen by Samuel Palmer. He was brought up in an artistic milieu and Ruskin was, for a time, to act as his tutor. He was also taught by Edward Calvert and Samuel Palmer regardless of a certain animosity which had existed between them after Palmer's eldest son and William escaped their respective homes which they considered repressive and ran away together.

In 1858 Richmond entered the Royal Academy Schools where he won two silver medals and started exhibiting portraits at the RA and the British Institution. In 1866 moved to Rome after the premature death of his wife. He spent three years in Rome and under the influence of the landscape painter Giovanni Costa, and Frederic Leighton he moved away from Pre-Raphaelitism to a form of classicism tempered, initially, by the mysticism of the Ancients and later by the aestheticism of Albert Moore, a fellow pupil at the Royal Academy Schools. A stream of impressive subject pictures followed in the 1860s before returning to portraiture as a principal activity in the 1870s. His portrait of the Princess of Wales was disliked by the Royal family and appears to have resulted in an unsuccessful attempt to join the RA and his subsequent decision to desist in exhibiting there. The newly formed Grosvenor Gallery provided a more sympathetic venue and the following years until his election to the Academy in 1888, saw him exhibit a succession of important mythological paintings being there.

Richmond's success rested largely upon his portraiture. As Simon Reynolds has pointed out: He first depicted pampered

Victorian children, then glamorous, languid, and sensuous hostesses—the goddesses of society—such as Lady Mary Carr-Glyn, the Countess Grosvenor and Viscountess Hood. Richmond also excelled as the portraitist to the 'Souls' for whom he could also paint Byronic male likenesses such as the portraits of George, thirteenth Earl of Pembroke and Charles, fifth Lord Lyttelton as well as eminent statesmen, ecclesiastics, scientists, and artists including Gladstone, Prince von Bismarck, William Morris, William Holman Hunt, Robert Louis Stevenson and Robert Browning.

Richmond's charm and erudition helped him achieve academic rewards: he held the Slade professorship at Oxford (1879–83) when Ruskin fell ill, and he was later awarded the honorary degrees of DCL at Oxford in 1896 and LL.D at Cambridge. He became a full Royal Academician in 1895 and was created KCB in 1897.

The crowning achievement which distinguishes William Blake Richmond from the other polymaths of the Victorian Olympian tradition is his monumental decorative scheme in mosaic executed in St Paul's Cathedral in a mixture between Byzantine and aesthetic styles. By 1899 much of it was completed, but he suddenly found himself exposed to a vicious attack in the newspapers criticizing the style and workmanship of the new mosaics. In an attempt to reassert his threatened position in the art world Richmond mounted a vast one-man exhibition at the New Gallery in 1901, but popular taste, rejecting Victorian academia, had moved on to post-impressionism.





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