Painting in Britain
from Hogarth to Turner

Mark Hallett
Yale in London
Summer 2014
The course examines painting in Britain during a period of remarkable artistic and cultural change. It looks in particular at the relationship between painting and different forms of artistic display, performance and self-promotion in the Georgian period, and offers close readings of individual practitioners and their works. The course begins with the emergence of William Hogarth as a leading figure within the mid-eighteenth-century British art world and looks in detail at his pictorial series, his portraits and his conversation pieces. The course then moves on to investigate the emergence of a new ‘Age of Exhibitions’ during the 1760s and 1770s. This was a period dominated by the annual displays of contemporary painting held by the Society of Artists and the Royal Academy, and by the portraiture produced by Joshua Reynolds and Thomas Gainsborough, whose works in the genre are studied in depth. The course then investigates the rise of the one-man exhibition in the 1780s and 1790s, before turning to the work of David Wilkie, and exploring the reasons why the kind of genre painting in which he specialised become so celebrated in the first decades of the nineteenth century. Painting in Britain: from Hogarth to Turner ends by studying of the work, careers and exhibition histories of two of the most ambitious landscape painters of the early nineteenth century, J.M.W Turner and John Constable.

PRELIMINARY READING:

Jonathan Clarkson, Constable (Phaidon Press, 2010)

Mark Hallett, Hogarth (Phaidon Press, 2000) or Mark Hallett and Christine Riding, Hogarth (Tate Publishing, 2007)


David Solkin, Painting For Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England (Yale University Press, 1993)

David Solkin (ed.), Art on the Line: The Royal Academy Exhibitions at Somerset House (Yale University Press, 2001)

Barry Venning, Turner (Phaidon Press, 2003)

THE STRUCTURE OF THE COURSE

The taught component of the course will be structured around weekly seminars and field-trips, which will normally take place on Tuesday and Thursday. I have listed the reading that I would like you to do in advance of our meetings. Please try and do as much of this reading as possible, and come along to the seminars and visits with a list of the issues you would like to explore and the topics that you have found most interesting. It is also very important that you prepare for our classes by looking carefully at the images that we will be focusing on. That should help ensure plenty of good discussion!

The course requires you to write a series of two short essays, of around 1500 words each. They should be sent at the specified times to mhallett@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk and nabdulla@paul-mellon-centre.ac.uk. I have suggested titles for essays; should you want to write about a different aspect of any given topic, please consult me beforehand. I have listed the extra reading that I think will prove especially useful for you in writing your essays and in preparing for your exam however, I would urge you to read outside this list, exploiting the bibliography included in this booklet and pursuing as much independent research as you can.

The final assessment will be on the basis of a 2500 word essay on an agreed topic, to be handed in by 18.00 on Friday 18th July and an image exam to be taken in class on Thursday 17th July at 10.00.
COURSE DESCRIPTION

Week 1

Tuesday 10th June at 10.00:

Introduction: the art world of early eighteenth-century Britain and the visual ideals of politeness [at the PMC]

Reading for seminar:

Elizabeth Einberg and Rica Jones, Manners and Morals: Hogarth and British Painting 1700-1760. Please leaf through the early sections of this important exhibition catalogue.

For an in-depth, demanding and very important introduction to British art of this period, read the opening chapters of David Solkin, Painting for Money: The Visual Arts and the Public Sphere in Eighteenth-Century England.

For the conversation piece, read Mark Hallett, ‘Pictures of Urbanity: The Conversation Piece’, in Mark Hallett and Christine Riding, Hogarth, pp. 95-118 and 141-157

Possible essay topics relating to this seminar:

1. Painting and politeness
2. The character and appeal of the conversation piece
3. The working of narrative in Hogarth’s conversation pieces

Further reading:


Thursday 12th June at 10.00:

Seminar: Hogarth’s A Harlot’s Progress and A Rake’s Progress [at the British Museum and the Soane Museum]

Reading for seminar:

David Bindman, Hogarth, Chapters 3, 'Modern Moral Subjects: a Reading of the Two Progresses', pp55-72, and Chapter 4, 'The World of the Progresses', pp73-84

Ronald Paulson, *Hogarth’s Graphic Works*, catalogue entries on *A Harlot’s Progress* and *A Rake’s Progress*, pp. 75-98


Possible essay titles relating to this seminar:

1. *A Harlot’s Progress* and the representation of the prostitute

2. *A Rake’s Progress* and the representation of gender.

3. The *Progresses* and the representation of the city

Further Reading:

Mark Hallett, ‘Manly Satire: William Hogarth’s *A Rake’s Progress*’ in Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal (eds.), *The Other Hogarth: The Aesthetics of Difference*, pp142-161

Innes and Gustav Herden (eds) *Lichtenberg’s Commentaries on Hogarth’s Engravings*, pp3-82, 189-274

---

**Week 2**

**Monday 16th June at 14.00:**

**Seminar: Hogarth’s Marriage A-la-Mode [ at the National Gallery]**

Reading for seminar:


Potential essay titles relating to this seminar:

1. *Marriage A-la-Mode* and the imagery of emulation
2. *Marriage A-la-Mode* and class

3. *Marriage A-la-Mode* and sexuality

**Tuesday 17th June at 14.00:**

**Joshua Reynolds and the rise of exhibition culture [at the PMC]**

Reading for Seminar:

Mark Hallett, *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action*, (forthcoming), chapters 4, 5 and 6


Potential essay titles relating to this seminar:

1. Joshua Reynolds and the Society of Artists’ exhibitions 1760-1768
2. Joshua Reynolds and the imagery of celebrity
3. Joshua Reynolds and the role-playing portrait

Further Reading for the essay:


**Submit Essay 1 on Friday 20th June by 18.00**

**Week 3**

**Tuesday 24th June at 10.00:**

**Seminar: Reynolds and the Royal Academy [at the PMC]**

Mark Hallett, *Reynolds: Portraiture in Action*, chapters 7 and 8

David Mannings, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Complete Catalogue of Paintings* (see catalogue entries on the paintings exhibited by Reynolds 1769-1774, a list of which I shall have provided)

Suggested essay titles:

1. Reynolds as portraitist and President
2. Reynolds’s Royal Academy exhibition submission of 1770 or 1771
3. Reynolds and the female portrait at the RA exhibitions

Further reading:


Martin Postle, *Sir Joshua Reynolds: The Subject Pictures*, pp. 121-160


**Thursday 26th June at 10.00:**

**Seminar: Exhibiting alone: John Singleton Copley and the rise of the one-man-show**

[at Tate Britain and the National Portrait Gallery]

Reading for seminar:

Emily Ballew Neff, *John Singleton Copley in England*, particularly pp. 61-90, 140-154


Suggested essay titles:

1. John Singleton Copley’s *Death of Lord Chatham*
2. John Singleton Copley’s *Death of Major Peirson*
3. Two kinds of hero: Copley’s *Chatham* and *Peirson* compared
Submit Essay 2 on Friday 27th June by 18.00

**Week 4**

Tuesday 1st July – Thursday 3rd July

Field Trip to Blenheim, Stowe, Bath, and Stourhead

**Week 5**

Tuesday 8th July at 10.00:

Seminar: Turner (1790-1810) [at Tate Britain]

Reading for seminar:


Suggested essay titles:

1. Turner and the Royal Academy. 1790-1810
2. Turner and the representation of the British landscape, 1790-1810
3. Turner and Wilkie

Further reading:

David Solkin (ed.), *Turner and the Masters*, London, especially pages 99-167

Tate Gallery, *Turner*, 1974, especially pp. 33-75


James Hamilton, Turner, 1997, especially chapters 4 and 5, pp. 79-156
Thursday 10th July at 10.00:

Seminar: Constable, Landscape Painting and the Exhibition Room [at PMC]

Reading for seminar:
Anne Lyles (ed.) Constable: the Great Landscapes, especially pp. 30-39, and 74-161
Jonathan Clarkson: Constable, especially Chapter 5, pp. 95-132

Presentations at the Gallery:
1. Constable’s ‘Six-Footers’ and the imagery of the River Stour
2. The dynamics of composition in Constable’s ‘Six-Footers’
3. The role of the figure in Constable’s ‘Six-Footers’
4. Paths of viewing within Constable’s ‘Six-Footers’
5. Constable’s ‘Six-Footers’ as exhibition pictures

Further reading:
Michael Rosenthal, Constable: the Painter and his Landscape, Chapters 4 and 5, pp. 91-170
Leslie Parris and Ian Fleming-Williams, Constable (1991 Tate Britain exhibition catalogue), pp. 197-212, 283-297

Week 6

Tuesday 15th July at 10.00: Revision Session [at PMC]

Thursday 17th July at 10.00: Image examination [at PMC]

Friday 18th July: Assessed essay to be handed in by 6 pm.
SELECT BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. HISTORICAL INTRODUCTION


Roy Porter, English Society in the Eighteenth Century, The Pelican Social History of Britain, Harmondsworth 1982 and subsequently


Keith Thomas, Religion and the Decline of Magic, 1971


2. DICTIONARIES

David Bindman, (ed.), The Thames and Hudson Dictionary of British Art, London, 1985


Colonel M H Grant, Dictionary of British Landscape Painters from the Sixteenth Century to the Early Twentieth Century, Leigh-on-Sea, 1952


idem, The Society of Artists of Great Britain (1760-91) : The Free Society of Artists (1761-83), London, 1907

Rupert Gunnis, A Dictionary of British Sculptors, 1660-1851, London, 1953

John Ingamells, A Dictionary of British and Irish Travellers in Italy, 1701-1800, compiled from the Brinsley Ford Archive, New Haven & London 1997

Samuel Redgrave, A Dictionary of Artists of the British School, 2nd ed, 1878 & subsequently

3. CONTEMPORARY LITERATURE, THEORY, etc

Mark Akenside, *The Pleasure of Imagination*, London, 1744


James Barry, *An Inquiry into the Real and Imaginary Obstructions to the Acquisition of the Arts in England*, London, 1775


Roger de Piles, trans, *Art of Painting with the Lives and Characters...of the Most Eminent Painters*, London 1706


Samuel Johnson, *Collected Works*, especially *Rasselas*, 1759, many eds


Jonathan Richardson, *The Works of Mr. Jonathan Richardson, consisting of I. The Theory of Painting. II. Essay on the Art of Criticism, so far as it relates to Painting. III. The Science of a Connoisseur. All corrected and prepared for the Press by his Son Mr J. Richardson*, London, 1773
George Vertue, *MS Notebooks* (British Museum) published by the Walpole Society: XVIII, 1930; XX, 1932; XXII, 1934; XXIV, 1936; XXVI, 1938; XXIX, 1947; XXX, 1950


4. GENERAL WORKS


Christopher Hussey, *The Picturesque*, London, 1927


*idem*, *Literary Landscape: Turner and Constable*, New Haven, 1982


Mario Praz, *Conversation Pieces*, University Park PA, & London, 1971


Guilland Sutherland (ed.), *British Art 1740-1820: Essays in Honour of Robert R. Wark*, San Marino, Calif., 1992


Margaret Whinney, *Sculpture in Britain, 1530-1830*, Pelican History of Art, Harmondsworth, 1964


5. PORTRAITURE

Alex Kidson (ed.), *George Romney, 1734-1802*, Tate Gallery, London, 2002


6. LANDSCAPE PAINTING


*idem.*, *The Dark Side of the Landscape: The Rural Poor in English Painting, 1730-1840*, Cambridge, 1980


*idem.*, *Where the Sea Meets the Land: Artists on the Coast in Nineteenth-Century Britain*, Bristol, 2007


*idem.*, and Anne Lyles, *The Great Age of British Watercolours*, Royal Academy, London, 1993

7. HISTORY PAINTING


Alex Kidson (ed.), ‘*Those Delightful regions of Imagination*’: Essays on George Romney, studies in British Art 9, New Haven & London, 2002

Nancy L Pressly, *The Fuseli Circle in Rome*, Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, 1979


Gert Schiff, *Johann Heinrich Füssli*, 2 vols., Zurich & Munich 1973


8. CATALOGUES OF PERMANENT COLLECTIONS


Matthew Hagraves, *Great British Watercolours from the Paul Mellon Collection at the Yale Center for British Art*, New Haven & London 2007


9. MAJOR ARTISTS COVERED IN THE COURSE

**Hogarth**

Frederick Antal, *Hogarth and his Place in European Art*, London, 1962


Bernadette Fort and Angela Rosenthal (eds.), *The Other Hogarth: Aesthetics of Difference*, 2001


**Reynolds**


Frederick H Hilles, *The Literary Career of Sir Joshua Reynolds* Cambridge, 1936

*idem.*, (ed.) *Portraits by Sir Joshua Reynolds : Character Sketches of Oliver Goldsmith, Samuel Johnson and David Garrick, together with other Manuscripts of Reynolds recently discovered among the Private Papers of James Boswell...* London, 1952


See also Olivia Millar and Duncan Robinson, ‘Reynolds at the Royal Academy’, *The Burlington Magazine*, CXXVIII, no. 996. March 1986, pp. 228-232


Ellis Waterhouse, *Reynolds*, London, 1941


**Gainsborough**

Hugh Belsey, *Gainsborough’s Family*, Gainsborough’s House, Sudbury, 1988

See also the *Annual Reports* of the Gainsborough’s House Society, ed. Belsey, 1988 onwards


idem., Thomas Gainsborough, Tate Gallery, London, 1980


Jack Lindsay, Thomas Gainsborough: His Life and Art, London, 1987


idem (ed.) and Michael Myrone, Gainsborough, Tate Gallery, London, 2002

Susan Sloman, Gainsborough in Bath, New Haven & London, 2002

Ellis Waterhouse, Gainsborough, London, 1958

John Singleton Copley

James Thomas Flexner, John Singleton Copley, Boston, 1948


Jules Prown, John Singleton Copley, (2 vols), Cambridge, Mass, 1966

Carrie Rebora et al, John Singleton Copley in America, New York, 1995

David Wilkie


Allan Cunningham, The Life of Sir David Wilkie, (3 vols), London, 1843

Lindsay Errington, Tribute to Wilkie, Edinburgh, 1985


J M W Turner

20


*idem.*, *Turner in the British Museum : Drawings and Watercolours*, 1975

**Constable**


