

Thomas Lawrence: Regency Power and Brilliance

**A Conference at the National Portrait Gallery, London, and The Paul Mellon
Centre for Studies in British Art, 18-19 November 2010**

This conference accompanies the exhibition *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Power and Brilliance* at the National Portrait Gallery, London (20 October 2010-23 January 2011) which will be shown at the Yale Center for British Art, New Haven, 24 February- 5 June 2011). This will be the first exhibition in the United Kingdom since 1979 to examine Lawrence's work and the first substantial presentation of this artist in the United States. It will present Lawrence as the most important British portrait painter of his generation and will explore his development as one of the most celebrated and influential European artists of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. By his untimely death in 1830 Lawrence had achieved the greatest international reach and reputation of any British artist. Based on new research and fresh perspectives, this exhibition will introduce Lawrence to a new generation of museum visitors and students. It will also contextualise his work in the light of recent scholarship on the art, politics and culture of the period. The exhibition will include the artist's greatest paintings and drawings alongside lesser known works in order to provide a fresh understanding of Lawrence and his career. It will contrast his approach to sitters according to age and gender, juxtapose the power and impact of his public works with the intimacy and intensity of those portraits of his friends and family, trace his innovations as a draughtsman and painter, and place him within the broader contexts of the aesthetic debates, networks of patronage and international politics of his day.

Conference Programme

Thursday 18 November
National Portrait Gallery

14.00 Registration

14.30 Welcome by Sandy Nairne, Director, National Portrait Gallery

14.40 Session 1: Lawrence, Gender and Representation

Introduced and chaired by Lucy Peltz, Curator, Eighteenth Century Collections, National Portrait Gallery, and co-curator of the exhibition *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Brilliance and Power*

14.45 Sarah Monks, School of World Art Studies and Museology, University of East Anglia, *Slippery blisses: Lawrence's male portraiture and the structure of desire*

15.30 Marcia Pointon, Professor Emeritus of History of Art at the University of Manchester, *Lawrence's Teenagers*

16.15 Shearer West, Director of Research at the Arts and Humanities Research Council and Professor of Art History at the University of Birmingham, *A Royal Performance: Lawrence's portraits of the Siddons Family*

17.00 Viewing of the exhibition *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Brilliance and Power*

18.00 Guest lecture, Richard Holmes, biographer and author of the *Age of Wonder: How the Romantic Generation Discovered the Beauty and Terror of Science*

19.00 – 20.30

Wine reception in the Regency galleries and viewing of *Thomas Lawrence: Regency Brilliance and Power*

Friday 19 November
The Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art

09.15 Registration and coffee

09.50 Welcome by Brian Allen, Director of Studies, the Paul Mellon Centre

Session 2 Lawrence in practice: the studio and the print shop

09.55

Introduced and chaired by Kim Sloan, Curator of British Drawings and Watercolours before 1880, The British Museum

10.00 Jacob Simon, Chief Curator, National Portrait Gallery
Sir Thomas Lawrence and the process of portrait painting

10.45 Sally Doust, Independent Scholar
The Perfect Facsimile: Thomas Lawrence and his engravers

11.30 Cassandra Albinson, Associate Curator, Paintings and Sculpture, Yale Center for British Art, and co-curator of the exhibition, *Thomas Lawrence and the Group Portrait: In and Out of the Studio*

12.15 Lunch

13.45 Session 3: Lawrence's Contemporary influence and reputation

Introduced and chaired by Fintan Cullen, Professor of Art History, The University of Nottingham

13.50 Vicky Coltman, Senior Lecturer, History of Art, University of Edinburgh,
Lawrence vs. Raeburn: The 'knotty' business of portrait painting

14.35 Martin Myrone, Curator, 18th and 19th Century British Art, Tate Britain
"his Pupil still": Lawrence, Etty and Academic Unease

15.20 Tea

15.50 Session 4: Lawrence's posthumous reputation and historiography

Introduced and chaired by Peter Funnell, Curator, Nineteenth Century Portraits and Head of Research Programmes, National Portrait Gallery, and co-curator of the exhibition

15.55 Philippa Simpson, Assistant Curator, Tate Britain, *An Ornamental Figurehead: the problem of Lawrence as national hero*

16.40 Pat Hardy, Curator of Works on Paper, Fine Art, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool,
Thomas Lawrence: the shaping of his legacy

17.25 Roundtable discussion with Mark Hallett, Professor of History of Art, University of York and David Solkin, Dean and Deputy Director, Courtauld Institute of Art,

chaired by Ludmilla Jordanova, Professor of Modern History, Department of History,
King's College, London

18.15 – 19.30

Wine Reception