

THE PAUL MELLON LECTURES 2013
Painters and players from Hogarth to Olivier

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Mondays, 14 January–11 February 2013, 6.30–7.30 pm
Sainsbury Wing Theatre, The National Gallery, London

The theme of this lecture series is the relationship between British art and the theatre from the eighteenth century to the twentieth. William Hogarth (1697–1764) said of his famous ‘progresses’, ‘My picture was my stage and men and women my actors’, a phrase that has become a cliché in the history of British art. What is less familiar is the fact that Hogarth was reasserting age-old ideas about the interaction between the visual arts and the drama that had recently been re-examined in academic discussions in France. It was of particular significance in the making of ‘histories’, when a shared language of gesture and expression was deployed and when particular rules were held to apply. Actors such as David Garrick (1717–79) were explicit about finding inspiration in painting and sculpture, and the habit was maintained by such later giants of the theatre as Henry Irving (1838–1905) and Laurence Olivier (1907–89). The high point of Hogarth’s career coincided with the emergence of the actor and theatrical impresario David Garrick, who became one of his closest friends. The last years of Hogarth’s life saw the appearance of an inspired successor as a painter of theatrical compositions, a protégé of Garrick, Johan Zoffany (1733–1810), who went on to leave an unparalleled record of the contemporary stage. He also exploited to a peculiar degree what Diderot identified as ‘le paradoxe sur le comédien’.

Lecture Programme

- 14 January: ‘An unjointed caterpillar’: *Richard III* on Stage, Screen and Canvas
- 21 January: Making History: ‘history painting’ and the theatre
- 28 January: ‘Stiffen the sinews, summon up the blood’: shared concepts of expression and gesture
- 4 February: Performing Artists: actors, artists, and the paradox of performance
- 11 February: ‘All the original music’: adapting and immortalising

Tickets are available now at £6 (£4 concessions):

Online via the National Gallery at <http://www.nationalgallery.org.uk/paul-mellon-lectures-2013>

By post with cheques made payable to the National Gallery and sent to Advance Tickets Sales, The National Gallery, Trafalgar Square, London WC2N 5DN.

In person from the Advance Tickets and Audio Guide desks, Level 2, Sainsbury Wing.

On the day any remaining tickets will be on sale half an hour before the start of each event. Payment by cash or cheque only.
For information only, please telephone The National Gallery on 020 7747 2888.