

# MASTERS OF BRITISH PAINTING

## FROM HOLBEIN TO HOCKNEY



## ***Topic: Masters of British Painting: from Holbein to Hockney***

Speaker: Professor Donald Stone

Date: 5 December 2011 (Monday)

Time: 16:00 - 17:00

Venue: Staff Lounge, 9/F Amenities Building, CityU

### ***Abstract***

In his talk, Professor Donald Stone will be discussing the greatest paintings created in England from the late 14th century to the present.

For many years, the British were known for their art collecting, not for their encouragement of native-born artists. The earliest painters working in England came from other countries (for examples, Holbein, Rubens, Van Dyck). Not until the 18th century did England have a native-born artist of genius: William Hogarth (1697-1764). The English love paintings that tell stories; they also encouraged portrait-painters. Landscape painters had a hard time making a living, so William Turner, perhaps the greatest of British painters, composed landscapes with historical subjects (scenes from Homer's *Odyssey*, for example). British painters are not as well known as artists from France and Italy, but such masters as Thomas Gainsborough, John Constable, William Blake, Francis Bacon, and Lucian Freud (the grandson of Sigmund Freud) are among the greatest figures of Western painting. Beautiful slides will accompany the talk.

### ***About the Speaker***

Donald Stone, Professor Emeritus of The Graduate Center of the City University of New York, is currently Senior Professor in the English Department of the University of Peking. He is the author of many books and articles on literature and painting, including *Novelists in a Changing World* and *The Romantic Impulse in Victorian Fiction* (both published by Harvard University Press).

# Contents

Hans Holbein (1497 – 1543)	3
Anthony van Dyck (1599 – 1641)	4
Marcus Gheeraerts (1561 or 1562 – 1636)	5
William Hogarth (1697 – 1764)	6
Joshua Reynolds (1723 – 1792)	7
George Stubbs (1724 – 1806)	8
Thomas Gainsborough (1727 – 1788)	9
Paul Sandby (1731 – 1809)	10
Joseph Wright of Derby (1734 – 1797)	11
Francis Towne (1739 or 1740 – 1816)	12
Henry Fuseli (1741 – 1825)	13
William Blake (1757 – 1827)	14
John Constable (1776 – 1837)	15
John Sell Cotman (1782 – 1842)	16
William Turner (1789 – 1862)	17
Richard Parkes Bonington (1802 – 1828)	18
Francis Bacon (1909 – 1992)	19
Lucian Freud (1922 – 2011)	20
David Hockney (1937 – )	21
Library Learning Resources	23
References	24
Acknowledgement	24

## HANS HOLBEIN (1497 – 1543)

**Place of Birth:** Augsburg, Bavaria

**Background:** Hans Holbein the Younger was a German artist and printmaker who worked in a Northern Renaissance style. He is best known as one of the greatest portraitists of the 16th century

**Significances:** Holbein traveled to England in 1526 and later became court painter to King Henry VIII. His portraits of the royal family and nobles are a vivid record of a brilliant court in the momentous years when Henry was asserting his supremacy over the English church. Holbein's portraits were renowned in their time for their likeness, and it is through Holbein's eyes that many famous figures of his day are now seen. He embedded layers of symbolism, allusion, and paradox in his art, to the lasting fascination of scholars.

**Major Work:** *King Charles I* (1536)



Hans Holbein's *Portrait of Henry VIII* (1536)

## ANTHONY VAN DYCK (1599 – 1641)

**Place of Birth:** Antwerp, Belgium

**Background:** Sir Anthony van Dyck was a Flemish Baroque artist who became the leading court painter in England

**Significances:** van Dyck is most famous for his portraits of King Charles I of England and Scotland and his family and court, painted with a relaxed elegance that was to be the dominant influence on English portrait-painting for the next 150 years. He also painted biblical and mythological subjects, displayed outstanding facility as a draftsman, and was an important innovator in watercolour and etching.

**Major Work:** *King Charles I* (1636)



Anthony van Dyck's *King Charles I* (1636)

## MARCUS GHEERAERTS (1561 OR 1562 – 1636)

**Place of Birth:** The Netherlands

**Background:** Marcus Gheeraerts the Younger was a Dutch artist of the Tudor court of England

**Significances:** Gheeraerts was brought to England as a child by his father Marcus Gheeraerts the Elder, also a painter. He became a fashionable portraitist in the last decade of the reign of Queen Elizabeth I, introducing a new aesthetic in English court painting that captured the essence of a sitter through close observation. He became a favorite portraitist of King James I's Queen Anne of Denmark, but fell out of fashion in the later 1610s.

**Major Work:** Queen Elizabeth I, *the Ditchley Portrait* (1592)



Marcus Gheeraerts'  
*Queen Elizabeth I, the Ditchley Portrait* (1592)

## WILLIAM HOGARTH (1697 – 1764)

**Place of Birth:** London, England

**Background:** William Hogarth was an English painter, printmaker, pictorial satirist, social critic and editorial cartoonist who has been credited with pioneering western sequential art

**Significances:** Hogarth's works ranged from realistic portraiture to comic strip-like series of pictures called "modern moral subjects". Knowledge of his work is so pervasive that satirical political illustrations in this style are often referred to as "Hogarthian".

**Major Work:** six pictures of *Marriage à-la-mode* (1743-45)



William Hogarth's *Hogarth Painting the Comic Muse* (1757)

## JOSHUA REYNOLDS (1723 – 1792)

**Place of Birth:** Devon, England

**Background:** Sir Joshua Reynolds was an influential 18th-century English painter, collector and writer

**Significances:** As the foremost portrait painter in England in the 18th century, Reynolds transformed early Georgian portraiture by greatly enlarging its range, his poses, frequently based on the Old Masters or antique sculpture, were intended to invoke classical values and to enhance the dignity of his sitters. His rich color, strong lighting and free handling of paint had great influence. His *Discourses on Art*, delivered to the students and members of the Academy between 1769 and 1790, are the most eloquent and widely respected body of art criticism by any English writer.

**Major Work:** *Robert Clive and his family with an Indian maid* (1765)



Joshua Reynolds'  
*Robert Clive and his family with an Indian maid* (1765)

## GEORGE STUBBS (1724 – 1806)

**Place of Birth:** Liverpool, England

**Background:** George Stubbs was an English painter, best known for his paintings of horses

**Significances:** Stubbs produced a wide range of individual and group portraits of horses, sometimes accompanied by hounds. He often painted horses with their grooms, whom he always painted as individuals. Stubbs also painted more exotic animals including lions, tigers, giraffes, monkeys, and rhinoceroses, which he was able to observe in private menageries. He also painted historical pictures, but these are much less well regarded.

**Major Work:** *Whistlejacket* (1762)



George Stubbs' *Whistlejacket* (1762)

## THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH (1727 – 1788)

**Place of Birth:** Suffolk, England

**Background:** Thomas Gainsborough was an English portrait and landscape painter

**Significances:** Gainsborough was noted for the speed with which he applied his paint, and he worked more from his observations of nature and of human nature than from any application of formal academic rules. The likeness of landscapes is shown in the way he merged the figures of the portraits with the scenes behind them. His later work was characterized by a light palette and easy, economical strokes. In conjunction with Sir Joshua Reynolds, he was the dominant British portraitist of the second half of the 18th century.

**Major Work:** *Mr. and Mrs. Robert Andrews* (1748)



Thomas Gainsborough's *Mr. and Mrs. Robert Andrews* (1748)

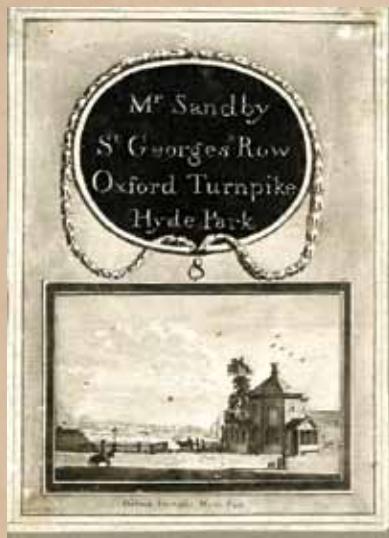
## PAUL SANDBY (1731 – 1809)

**Place of Birth:** Nottingham, England

**Background:** Paul Sandby was an English map-maker turned landscape painter in watercolors

**Significances:** Sandby is widely accredited as being the artist who introduced the ‘picturesque’ to English landscape art and he was also one of the earliest exponents of original etching in England. His first etchings date from the time when he was working as the chief draughtsman of the Ordnance Survey of Scotland (1747-1752). Upon his return to London in the spring of 1752, Sandby severed his ties with the Board of Ordnance and began to establish himself as a professional artist. Paul Sandby’s original etchings represent some of his finest work in the first decade after his return to London.

**Major Work:** *View from the Gardens of Somerset House* (around 1755-65)



Trade card of Paul Sandby (undated)

## JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY (1734 – 1797)

**Place of Birth:** Derby, England

**Background:** Joseph Wright, styled Wright of Derby, was an English landscape and portrait painter

**Significances:** Wright was notable for his use of Chiaroscuro effect, which emphasizes the contrast of light and dark, and for his paintings of candlelit subjects. His paintings of the birth of science out of alchemy, often based on meetings of the Lunar Society, a group of influential scientists and industrialists living in the English Midlands, are a significant record of the struggle of science against religious values in the period known as the Age of Enlightenment. Wright has been acclaimed as the first professional painter to express the spirit of the Industrial Revolution.

**Major Works:** *Three Gentlemen observing the 'Gladiator'* (1765), *A Philosopher Lecturing on the Orrery* (1766), *An Experiment on a Bird in the Air Pump* (1768), and *Old Man and Death* (1774).



Joseph Wright's  
*A philosopher Lecturing on the Orrery* (1766)

## FRANCIS TOWNE (1739 OR 1740 – 1816)

**Place of Birth:** Middlesex, England

**Background:** Francis Towne was a British watercolor landscape painter

**Significances:** Towne created a powerful and idiosyncratic style but, as a Devon-based painter, he had little influence on the London artistic mainstream and was largely forgotten until rediscovered in the 1930s. At that period his spare, geometric work was hailed as revolutionary for its time. The clarity of his watercolor style was especially suited to depictions of Roman architecture. He made many watercolors out of doors, carefully noting time and light conditions, and these became the basis for studio repetitions.

**Major Work:** *The Tarpeian Rock*  
(1780)



Francis Towne's *The Tarpeian Rock* (1780)

## HENRY FUSELI (1741 – 1825)

**Place of Birth:** Zürich, Switzerland

**Background:** Henry Fuseli (German: Johann Heinrich Füssli) was a Swiss-born painter, draughtsman, and writer on art, active mainly in England, where he was one of the outstanding figures of the Romantic

**Significances:** Fuseli's works are highly imaginative which show how far ahead he was in his time in exploring the murky areas of the psyche where sex and fear meet. His fascination with the horrifying and fantastic also comes out in many of his literary subjects, which formed a major part of his output. Fuseli was a much respected and influential figure in his lifetime, but his work was generally neglected for about a century after his death until the Expressionists and Surrealists saw in him a kindred spirit.

**Major Work:** *The Nightmare*  
(1781)



Henry Fuseli's *The Nightmare* (1781)

## WILLIAM BLAKE (1757 – 1827)

**Place of Birth:** London, England

**Background:** William Blake was an English poet, painter, and printmaker

**Significances:** Largely unrecognized during his lifetime, Blake is now considered a seminal figure in the history of both the poetry and visual arts of the Romantic Age in the 18th century. Blake is highly respected for his expressiveness and creativity and for the philosophical and mystical undercurrents within his works. He expressed his mystical views through paintings, engravings, and poetry. The concept of his work was driven by religious visions. *Songs of Innocence* and *Songs of Experience*, his most popular poem collection, were engraved onto hand-painted copperplates which were pieced together and known as “Illuminated Books”. The plates helped to decipher the meanings behind his poems. Blake was the first person to combine writing, drawing, and painting in such a fashion.

**Major Work:** *Song of Innocence and of Experience* (1789)



William Blake's *Newton* (1795)

## JOHN CONSTABLE (1776 – 1837)

**Place of Birth:** Suffolk, England

**Background:** John Constable was an English Romantic painter

**Significances:** Constable devoted much of his life to painting the local landscape of Dedham Vale, the area surrounding his home. He has great affection towards his homeland as he once wrote to his friend “I should paint my own places best, painting is but another word for feeling”. Between 1833 and 1836, Constable lectured on landscape painting at the Royal Institution, the Hampstead Literary and Scientific Society, and the Worcester Athenaeum.

**Major Work:** *The Hay-Wain* (1820-1)  
(it was one of three of his works shown at Paris Salon in 1824 and earned him a gold medal from Charles X)



John Constable's *Dedham Vale* (1802)

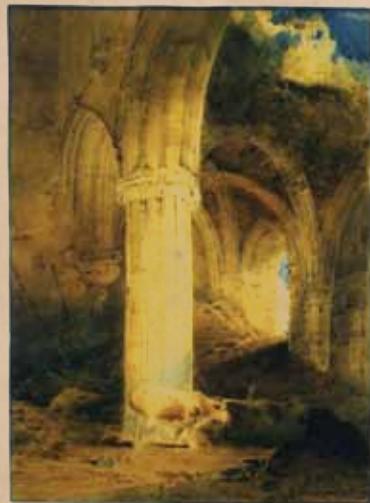
## JOHN SELL COTMAN (1782 – 1842)

**Place of Birth:** Norwich, England

**Background:** John Sell Cotman was an English marine and landscape painter, etcher, illustrator and author, and one of the leading lights of the Norwich school of artists

**Significances:** Although famed primarily as a great watercolorist, Cotman was one of the most productive original etchers of his generation. He spent over fourteen years at the height of his artistic creativity engaged principally in the production of etchings and soft ground etchings. Concentrating mainly on aspects of ancient or ruined architecture, Cotman etchings share the unique character of his carefully observed pencil sketches and architectural drawings, depending essentially on line alone, rather than areas of light and shade.

**Major Work:** *The Mouth of the Yare* (1803)



John Sell Cotman's *Ruins of Rievaulx Abbey, Yorkshire* (1803)

## WILLIAM TURNER (1789 – 1862)

**Place of Birth:** Oxfordshire, England

**Background:** William Turner was an English painter who specialized in watercolor landscape

**Significances:** Many of Turner's paintings depicted the countryside around Oxford. One of his best known pictures is a view of the city of Oxford from Hinksey Hill.

**Major Work:** *Oxford from Hinksey Hill* (1840)



William Turner's *Oxford from Hinksey Hill* (1840)

## RICHARD PARKES BONINGTON (1802 – 1828)

**Place of Birth:** Nottingham, England

**Background:** Richard Parkes Bonington was an English Romantic landscape painter

**Significances:** Bonington spent the greater part of his life in France and touring the suburbs of Paris and the surrounding countryside. He was solely a water-colorist up until 1824, and then began to paint in oil. His subjects were chiefly landscapes, views in cities, and historical genre pictures.

**Major Work:** *French Coast with Fisherman* (1825)



Richard Parkes Bonington's  
*Verona, Piazza dell'Erbe* (1826 - 1827)

## FRANCIS BACON (1909 – 1992)

**Place of Birth:** Dublin, Ireland

**Background:** Francis Bacon was a British expressionist artist and figurative painter

**Significances:** Bacon was known for his bold, austere, graphic and emotionally raw imagery. His painterly but abstract figures typically appear isolated in glass or steel geometrical cages set against flat, nondescript backgrounds.

**Major Work:** *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion – Triptych* (1944)



Francis Bacon's *Three Studies for Figures at the Base of a Crucifixion – Triptych* (1944)

## LUCIAN FREUD (1922 – 2011)

**Place of Birth:** Berlin, Germany

**Background:** Lucian Michael Freud was a British painter

**Significances:** Freud was chiefly known for his thickly impasted portrait and figure paintings. He was widely considered the pre-eminent British artist of his time. His works are noted for their psychological penetration, and for their own discomfiting examination of the relationship between artist and model.

**Major Work:** a series of portraits of performance artist Leigh Bowery between 1990 and 1994



Lucian Freud's  
*Portrait of Queen Elizabeth II* (2001)

## DAVID HOCKNEY (1937 – )

**Place of Birth:** The Netherlands

**Background:** David Hockney is an English painter, draughtsman, printmaker, stage designer and photographer

**Significances:** Many of Hockney's works are marked by an obsession with swimming pools, natural landscapes and Sir Cliff Richard. He is an important contributor to the Pop Art Movement of the 1960s and he is considered as one of the most influential British artists of the 20th century.

**Major Work:** *We Two Boys Together Clinging* (1961) (named after a poem from the poetry collection of American poet Walt Whitman's *Leaves of Grass*).



David Hockney's *We Two Boys Together Clinging* (1961)

# LIBRARY LEARNING RESOURCES

## Books

1	A century of British painters / Richard and Samuel Redgrave.	ND466 .R4 1981	Circulation Collection
2	An introduction to English painting / John Rothenstein.	ND461 .R68 2001	Circulation Collection
3	Nineteenth century British painting / by Luke Herrmann.	ND467 .H47 2000	Circulation Collection
4	Painting in Britain, 1530 to 1790 / Ellis Waterhouse.	ND464 .W37 1994	Circulation Collection
5	Pre-Raphaelites / Heather Birchall ; Norbert Wolf (ed.).	ND467.5.P7 B57 2010	Circulation Collection
6	The light of nature : landscape drawings and watercolours by van Dyck and his contemporaries / Martin Royalton-Kisch.	NC266.D9 A4 1999	Circulation Collection
7	David Hockney / Marco Livingstone.	N6797.H57 L58 1996	Circulation Collection
8	Francis Bacon in Dublin / [published on the occasion of the exhibition Francis Bacon in Dublin, Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin 1 June - 31 August 2000] ; with contributions by Grey Gowrie... [et al.].	ND461 .F73 2000	Circulation Collection
9	Hans Holbein, 1497/98-1543 / Stephanie Buck.	ND588.H7 B83 1999	Circulation Oversize
10	Bonington / Malcolm Cormack.	ND497.B63 C67 1989	Circulation Collection
11	The early paintings and drawings of John Constable / Graham Reynolds.	N6797.C63 A4 1996	Reference Collection
12	Views of Windsor : watercolours by Thomas and Paul Sandby : from the collection of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II / Jane Roberts	ND1942.S26 A4 1995	Circulation Collection
13	William Blake : the painter at work / edited by Joyce H. Townsend ; consultant editor, Robin Hamlyn.	N6797.B57 W54 2003	Circulation Collection
14	Wright of Derby / Judy Egerton.	ND497.W8 A4 1990	Circulation Collection
15	庚斯博羅 = Gainsborough / [責任編輯劉叢星, 王興吉, 張亞力].	ND160 .X5 v.82	Circulation Collection
16	雷諾茲 = Reynolds / [責任編輯劉叢星, 王興吉, 張亞力].	ND160 .X5 v.93	Circulation Collection
17	英國美術史話 / 李建群著.	N6761 .L53 2000	Circulation Collection
18	拉飛爾前派 / 劉振源著.	ND467.5.P7 L58 1996	Circulation Collection

## **Electronic Resources**

- |    |  |  |
|----|--|--|
| 1  | A History of British Water Colour Painting: With a Biographical List of Painters [electronic resource] / by Herbert Minton Cundall.              | online access from World eBook Library       |
| 2  | British painters: with eighty examples of their work engraved on wood [electronic resource].   | online access from World eBook Library       |
| 3  | The Oxford companion to Western art [electronic resource] / edited by Hugh Brigstocke.   | online access from Oxford reference online   |
| 4  | The development of British landscape painting in water-colours [electronic resource] / by Alexander Joseph Finberg; Charles Holme; E. A. Taylor. | online access from World eBook Library       |
| 5  | The English pre-raphaelite painters, their associates and successors [electronic resource] / by Percy Bate.                                      | online access from World eBook Library       |
| 6  | 英国美术史话 [electronic resource] / 李建群著.   | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 7  | 十九世纪英国水彩画 [electronic resource] / 周淑英编.  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 8  | 西方绘画大师 荷加斯 [electronic resource] / 周晶编.  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 9  | 西洋美术家画廊 49 布莱克 = Blake [electronic resource].  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |
| 10 | 西洋美术家画廊 82 库斯博罗 = Gainsborough [electronic resource].  | online access from SuperStar Digital Library |

## **Electronic Database**

- |   |                                   |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| 1 | ARTstor                           |
| 2 | The Bridgeman Art Library archive |
| 3 | 世界美術資料庫                           |

## REFERENCES

### \* Book

Waterhouse, E. (1994). Painting in Britain 1530 to 1790. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.

### \* Online Resources

Tate Collection Online. <http://www.tate.org.uk/collection/>

Wikipedia. <http://www.wikipedia.org/>

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In addition to express our gratitude to Professor Stone's kind support in our Outside Classroom Learning activities, the Library wishes to acknowledge and thank Professor Stone's generous donation to our Library on Western arts and culture in 2002 and 2004. These books provide excellent reference for our students, faculty and staff on their research on these subjects. Our warmest gratitude also goes to Professor Zhang Longxi for his great assistance to the Library all these years.



香港城市大學  
City University  
of Hong Kong

RUN RUN SHAW LIBRARY