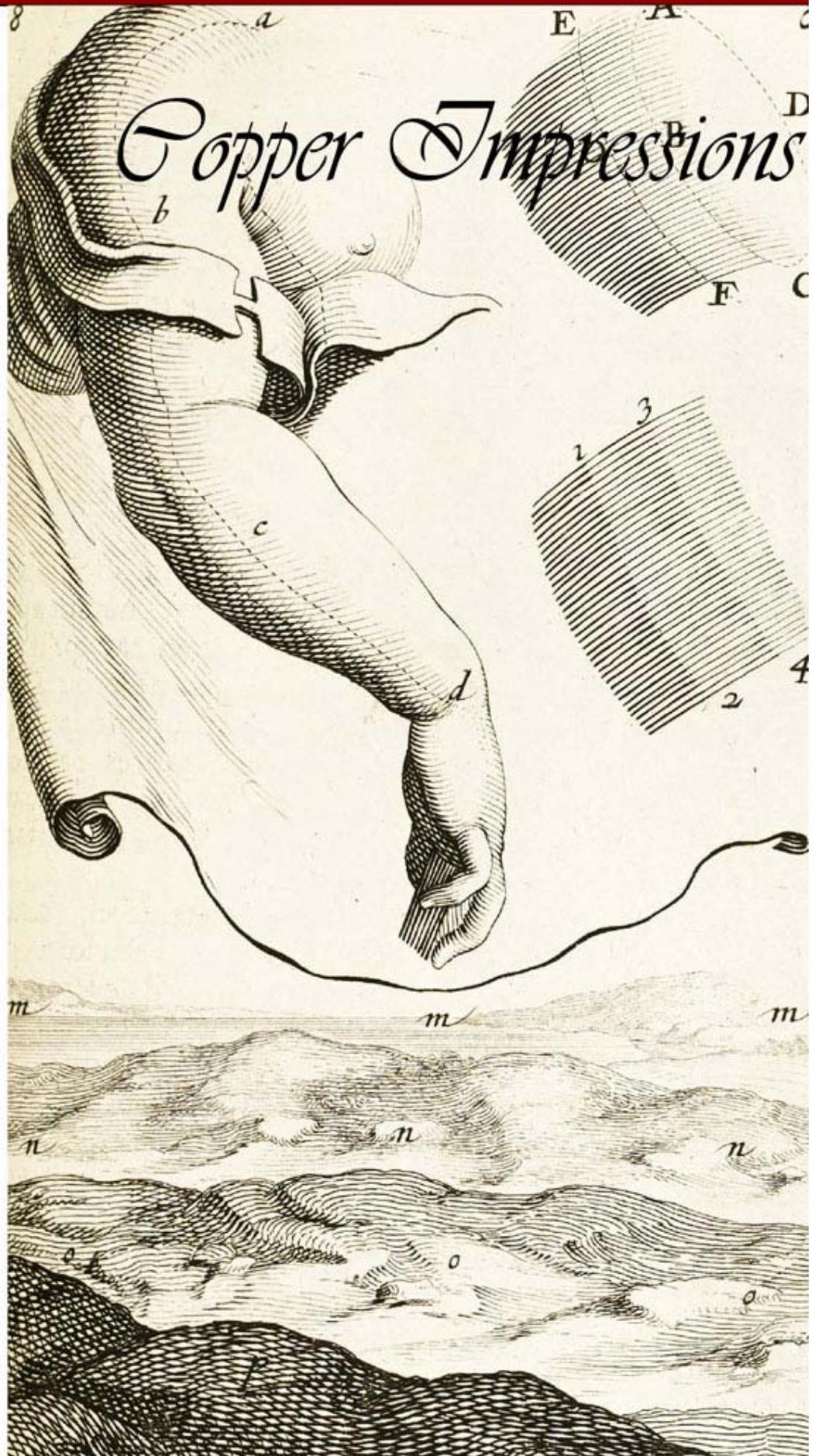


Christ Church Upper Library



PRINTMAKERS AND PUBLISHING IN THE 18TH CENTURY



The exhibition curated by Nicholas Stogdon and Cristina Neagu will be open from 16 April until 29 May 2015.

PRINTMAKERS AND PUBLISHERS IN THE 18TH CENTURY.

This small display will give an idea of what might have been printed on Michael Phillips's splendid working replica of a wooden intaglio rolling press, at present here in the Library and so very like the one in Abraham Bosse's *Traicté des Manieres de Graver en Taille Douce....& d'en Construire la Presse...* (Dean Aldrich's copy is in a case nearby); constructions of its type were still current in the 18th-century (though it must be admitted that this particular press is too small to have accommodated the large plates by Sharp and Simon, published by Macklin and Boydell). The prints and accompanying ephemera (trade cards, flyers and proposals for subscription), serve, too, to stress the all-important role of these and other publishers in commissioning and disseminating prints of every sort. William Hogarth was an artist who jealously published his own works; Boydell and Macklin were entrepreneurs. A fourth display case gives a glimpse of those who inhabited the milieu in which painters, printmakers and publishers plied their wares.

Hogarth published almost all his own plates (and much regretted not keeping control of those for his *Harlot's Progress*); his widow continued to issue them after he died, and when she died the plates, like so many others, were acquired by John Boydell. Hogarth advertised constantly and also took up the ploy of offering subscriptions, first used in England in the 17th-century to raise capital in advance for the production of expensive illustrated books. A subscriber naturally got a better deal, while taking the risk that the product might never actually appear; in the case of series of prints, some of them massive undertakings, the enterprise itself might never be completed. Conversely subscribers might renege, or die. With success this market grew and grew and publishers such as Alderman John Boydell and Thomas Macklin took on greater and greater risks, commissioning paintings, for huge sums, to be engraved and published in lavish forms and formats, and almost everybody came unstuck after the outset of the French Revolutionary wars, when the immense export trade, bigger than the domestic market, more or less vanished.

While engravers did publish their own productions, it was often, when the images were not of their own invention, in tandem with painters. But they just as often sold the plates to publishers, for ready money, and this of course suited the publishers as the market had already been tested. Hogarth was more unusual in another sense; ever ready to engage head-on with pre-existing fashionable nostrums, to defend and propose the work of home-grown arts and the validity of a national school to be based on the sure foundation of History Painting (that is, work with a high didactic, moralising purpose), he was one of a number of artists to engage in the propaganda wars, on one side or another, in the 18th-century (Jonathan Richardson Sr, Sir Joshua Reynolds and James Barry are others). Hogarth's *The Analysis of Beauty* appeared in 1752, but was shortly after followed by a blast of eight accomplished etchings by Paul Sandby, satirising Hogarth's pretensions as a theorist, as History Painter, and for his opposition to the idea of the kind of academy, found abroad in different guises, which might give painters and other artists a corporate forum for their art, while none presently existed in the 1750s, when it was 'each to his own'. In the event, the founding of the Royal Academy might be seen as a lesson in 'being careful what you wish for', while the aspirations of History painting were fulfilled more by the print market than by the pictures themselves.

As this display was conceived but a few days ago, Nicholas Stogdon has tried to write as much text as would make sense of what is in the display cases, with a little help from the ODNB when he ran out of time!

NGS. 16.IV.2015.

HOGARTH CASE.

William Hogarth (1697 – 1764): *O how refin'd how elegant we're grown!....* [Masquerades and Operas]. Etching and engraving, 1724, on two plates. Paulson 1989, 44, third state of five.

This is the first of Hogarth's forays into the turf wars fought over 'Taste'; home-grown or foreign? On the right is the imposing (and closed) gate of the Earl of Burlington's re-modelled house in Piccadilly, labelled 'Accademy of Arts', with statues of William Kent, Burlington's protégé, flanked by Raphael and Michelangelo, being admired by three gentlemen. On the left a gullible crowd of masqueraders in 'foreign' costumes is led by a fool and a devil into the Opera House in the Haymarket, under a banner advertising an Italian opera. Hogarth gives prominence to a wheelbarrow in the foreground, laden with so much 'Waste-paper for Shops' in the form of volumes by some of the great men of English literature: Congreve, Dryden, Otway, Shakespeare, Addison and Ben Johnson.

Anon.: *Taste*. Etching, 1732. Paulson 1965/70, 277 (Hogarth); Paulson 1989, p. 35, 15 (rejected); BM Satires 1873.

The allusion here is to the consequences attendant on the goings-on in the print of 'Masquerades and Operas'. The text underneath begins '*P^{pe} a Plasterer white washing & Bespattering any Body that comes in his way...*' In *The Daily Journal* of January 3, 1732, a classified advertisement announced that 'In a few days will be Published, A PRINT representing an EPISTLE on TASTE. Written by Mr. P-PE. Which may serve for its Frontispiece. To be had at the Print-shops and Booksellers. Price 1s.' In fact it seems to have come out in the next couple of days, while also on January 4 *The London Evening Post* that 'This Day is Published, OF TASTE. An Epistle to the Right Hon. Richard, Earl of Burlington. By Mr. POPE.' Battle was further engaged in literary circles, for in *The Daily Journal* on January 20, we read that 'This Day is Published, Price 1s. *With a Curious Frontispiece*, A MISCELLANY on TASTE. By MR. POPE, &c. Containing, 1. His Epistle (on Taste in Architecture, &c.) to the Earl of Burlington, with a Compleat Key, and Notes Variorum, after the Manner of his own Dunciad. And to the Admiration of all Mr. Pope's Admirers, he is in this very Performance detected of writing False English, False Philosophy, bad Verse, numerous Incongruities, and downright Nonsense.'

Paul Sandby (1725-1809): *The B^{xx}utifyer. A Touch upon The Times Plate I...M' Hogarth. In Justice to the Engraver of this Plate: Declares to the Publick, He took the hint of the Bütifyer, from a print of M' Pope White washing Lord Burlingtons Gate, at the same time Bespatring the rest of the Nobility*. Etching, published September 1762.

Taste obviously derives from Hogarth and was associated with him; it was the basis for *The B^{xx}utifyer*, one of Sandby's savage attacks on his fellow artist and which itself takes off both from *Taste* and from *The Times, Plate I*, which Hogarth published on September 7, 1762. It thus links the lampoon of Hogarth's aesthetic judgment with satire on his politics, cramming the plate with allusions on both counts. Hogarth is whitewashing a gigantic boot, i.e. the Earl of Bute, Hogarth's suppositious patron and George III's minister and former tutor (St James's Palace is to the right), under a curving lamppost mimicking 'The Precise Line', the 'Line of Beauty', commended as essential in *The Analysis of Beauty*.

William Hogarth: *The Analysis of Beauty*. Written with a view of fixing the fluctuating Ideas of Taste. London: Printed by J. Reeves for the Author, and Sold by him at his House in Leicester-Fields. MDCCLIII.

This is Hogarth's aesthetic manifesto, a major salvo in his 'War with the Connoisseurs' and based on a belief in observation rather than classical or classicising precepts. The 'Line of Beauty', an S-shaped curve, seen on the title-page and captioned 'Variety', is its leitmotif and this, together with the very idea that a man like Hogarth could even

think of producing such a tome, opened him to myriad spoofs and satires, such as Sandby's. Indeed, the irony is that it was the 'Connoisseurs' who were thought by contemporaries to be deeply pretentious.

There are two large prints by the author in this copy, illustrating many of his points. They could be bought separately from the book, and if they appear at all in early copies such as this, they were always incorporated at the binder's discretion; in this case they are folded in at the back.

William Hogarth: *Beer Street.*; and *Gin Lane*. Etching and engraving, published 1 [recte 19] February, 1751, by William Hogarth. Paulson 1989, 185-186, both second state of four, both with the additional stamped 6^d after the engraved *Price 1*.^s

The imminent appearance of this pair was announced in *The General Advertiser*, 13 February, 1751, and on the following Friday, the 19th, in *The London Evening Post*, Hogarth advertised that '*This Day are publish'd, Price 1s. each, Two large Prints, design'd and etch'd by Mr. Hogarth, call'd BEER-STREET and GIN-LANE. A Number will be printed in a better Manner for the Curious, at 1s. 6d. each. This Day were also publish'd, Four Prints on the Subject of Cruelty, Price and Size the same. N. B. As the Subjects of those Prints are calculated to reform some reigning Vices peculiar to the lower Class of People, in hopes to render them of more extensive Use, the Author has publish'd them in the cheapest Manner possible. To be had at the Golden Head in Leicester-Fields; where may be had all his other Works bound.*'

These beautiful impressions are amongst those 'printed in a better Manner for the Curious'. Although Hogarth has used the anglicised version of the French 'Curieux', he would presumably not have meant to cast aspersions on his potential customers by having the word carry the more loaded connotation current across the Channel, where the 'amateur', or art lover, was distinguished from the 'curieux', more of a 'mere' collector, while the 'connoisseur' could be sniffed at by dint of a zealous interest in attributions and thus commercial considerations. That said, the word 'Connoisseur' was usually avoided; it was most often used disparagingly in 18th-century England, to denote pretension.

William Hogarth: *Character [.] The Bench. Of the different meaning of the Words Character, Caracatura and Outrè in Painting and Drawing*. Etching and engraving, on two plates, first published 4 September, 1758, by William Hogarth. Paulson 1989, 205, third state of six.

SHARP/MACKLIN CASE.

William Sharp (1749 - 1824), after Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723 – 1792): [The Holy Family.] Etching with some engraving, 1789-91. This is an unfinished impression with the inscription in scratched letters '* Etch'd by W^m Sharp *** / *** Publish.^d by T Macklin London Dec^r 26.. 1791.'**

William Sharp, after Sir Joshua Reynolds: [The Holy Family.] Etching and engraving, 1789-91. In this impression the image has been completed in engraving, but there is a light double or single border, removed before the title was added (first in open then in closed letters). With the inscription in lightly etched letters 'Sir Joshua Reynolds, Pinx.^t * William Sharp, Sculp.^t / London. Publish'd Aug.st 12.th 1792. by Tho.^s Macklin, Poets Gallery, Fleet Street.'**

On 25 March, 1789, the publisher Thomas Macklin, whose Poet's Gallery was at 39 Fleet St., issued a proposal (shown here) for Sharp's engraving after the painting, now in Tate Britain, by the President of the Royal Academy, Reynolds, for which Macklin had given the artist the enormous sum of 500 guineas (£525). Macklin's down payment to Reynolds, £30, was made in September 1788, and he had paid in full on 30 April, 1789.

Two 'publication' dates appear on the print; the first, 26 December, 1791, i.e. 18 months from the date on the proposal, can be found on the first, unfinished proof here. A second date, 12 August, 1792, more than six months later, is on the second impression; this is still before the title was added. In reality it seems that lettered impressions were not on sale until the end of that year, for in *The Morning Herald* of Saturday, December 29, Macklin's classified advertisement announced '...The following New Prints are now published, and may be had at the Gallery. 1st. THE HOLY FAMILY, engraved by Mr. W. Sharp, from that celebrated Picture, painted by the late and much lamented Sir Joshua Reynolds, price 1l. 11s. 6d....'

The smaller version of the painting, included in Macklin's *Bible* (see below) was also engraved by Sharp.

Proposals by Thomas Macklin, Of Poets Gallery, No. 39, Fleet Street, For Publishing by Subscription A Print of the Holy Family, From a Picture painted by Sir Joshua Reynolds, In the Collection of Mr. Macklin. London: March 25, 1789. Letterpress.
Lent by Rob Dixon.

As can be seen, the price to subscribers was 'One Guinea the Print, and Two Guineas the Proofs, Half the Money to be paid at the Time of Subscribing, and the Remainder on the Delivery of the Print, which will be in 18 Months from this Date.' We may imagine that the proposal had met with some success in recouping the publisher's investment, in the painting and also in Sharp's services, but Macklin also started to advertise it in the press at the same time as he paid Reynolds, and numerous times in the following month, May 1789. At the bottom of the sheet is a space for the Gallery's receipt; Lord Sheffield, whose archive this copy came from, evidently never subscribed.

Trade card of William Sharp: *Sharp Engraver, N.,^o 9 Bartholomew Lane, Royal Exchange, London. Engraving, by William Sharp, probably circa 1772-75, but before 1782.*

This seems to be Sharp's earliest extant engraving, made to advertise his independence after he has completed his apprenticeship with Barak Longmate and attended the Royal Academy schools. Sharp's father was a gunsmith and Longmate was to teach him his specialities of applied and heraldic engraving so that he could join his parent's business; he had other ideas, setting up in Bartholomew Lane as a writing and jobbing engraver until he could establish a reputation. He moved to Charles St. in 1782.

The annoyance of having apprentices: Autograph letter, signed, from William Sharp, Charles Street, Feb.^y 11. 1798, to Mr W H Pepys / Cutler / Poultry / or at S^t Mildreds Court, 2 pp.

Sharp complains to Pepys about his son, apprenticed to Sharp, whom he took on 'in account of Old Friendship...I recd One Hundred Pounds declaring at the same time If He earned it He should have even that returned, I was also at the expence of a piece of Furniture for Him that He should be accommodated at a different part of my House that your Son should not be affected with the conversation & Ways of young Men I had in my House at that time.... His time will shortly expire & the seven years be completed, during which time I have more than discharged my duty to Him and have neglected my own Interest, having a right for my pupils at least 50^{Gs} pr Annum which sum would be due fee to me from any other person but yourself, I have not made debtor, on account I before observ'd of Old Friendship which I never forget; When I spoke to you at [William] Blake's respecting Edward I told you, your protection must continued to Him for a year or two, and that He might have every assistance and advice I could render Him in order that He may be well established in Life, I also told you his conduct in my House was decent and Honest, but of no use to me in point of advantage in my Business....' Sharp, like Blake, was a radical in politics, and a friend of Thomas Paine and Horne Tooke; unlike Blake, he didn't lose his faith in the teachings of Swedenborg, and continued to believe in the 'prophetess' Joanna Southcott.

Trade card of Thomas Macklin, Poets Gallery: Macklin, Poets Gallery, Fleet Street N.^o 39. Etching, by Joseph Skelton (1781/2 - 1850), after Thomas Stothard (1755 - 1834), later 1790s. (The artist's and engraver's names have been cut off this impression.)

Thomas Macklin (circa 1752/3-1800) was at the 39 Fleet Street address, by 1780, when he is listed as a printseller as well as a carver and gilder - most printshops offered framing and other services. In January 1787, a month after Boydell's 'Gallery of Shakspeare' proposal, Macklin issued his own, for *A Series of Prints Illustrative of the Most Celebrated British Poets*, and renamed his shop 'Poets Gallery'. In the event, fewer than half of the commissioned paintings were completed (they included another at 500 guineas from Reynolds) and only twenty-four of the prints after them. In 1789 he announced his other great project, the *Bible*, which commenced publication in 1792, and like Boydell's 'Shakespeare' had text volumes with reduced versions of the parallel publication of folio sized plates, as in 'The Holy Family' engraved by Sharp. Both schemes were seriously compromised by the collapse of trade during the wars of the 1790s, and by the death of an investor; Macklin spent £30,000 on the Bible project alone, and was forced to sell the paintings of both series, by lottery, in 1797.

SIMON/BOYDELL CASE.

Jean Pierre Simon (before 1750 - circa 1810), after Henry Fuseli (Johann Heinrich Füssli) (1741 – 1825): [SHAKSPEARE. *Tempest*. ACT I. SCENE II.] Etching and stipple, finished 1797. Weinglass 117, variant I, unfinished proof (etched state) (two other impressions known, both in the Folger Shakespeare Library).

Jean Pierre Simon, after Henry Fuseli: SHAKSPEARE. *Tempest*. ACT I. SCENE II. Etching and stipple engraving with added burin work, published 29 September, 1797, by J. & J. Boydell.

Impressions of the unfinished etched state, and of the completed state with added stipple engraving, and engraved letters, first published by J. and J. Boydell at the Shakspeare Gallery, Sept.^r 29. 1797, and in *A Collection of Prints from Pictures painted for the purpose of illustrating the dramatic works of Shakspeare by the Artists of Great Britain*, 100 plates (96 illustrations, 2 vignettes, 2 portraits), London: J. and J. Boydell, 1803.

Boydell's *Shakspeare*.

The letterpress Proposal-cum-subscription form, made out to Dr Matthews, stamped and sealed on receipt of his £2.2.0 down payment. 4pp., 2^o. 1786.

With the stamped and sealed receipts for Dr Matthews' copies of the 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 5th, 7th and 10th numbers (with the Large plates). 1791 - 96.

London, December 1, 1786. / Shakspeare. / Mr. Alderman Boydell, Josiah Boydell, And George Nicol, Propose To Publish By Subscription A Most Magnificent and Accurate Edition of the Plays Of Shakspeare, In Eight Volumes Of the largest Quarto Size, on the finest Royal Atlas Paper, to be fabricated for that Purpose by Mr. Whatman The Letter-Press will be executed by Mr. Hughs, with a Set of New Types cast by Mr. Caslon The Text to be regulated, and the Literary Part of the Undertaking conducted, By George Steevens, Esq.

To Accompany This Work Messieurs Boydell Intend To Publish By Subscription A Series Of Large And Capital Prints After Pictures to be immediately painted by the following Artists, from the most striking Scenes in the same Authour:

The Pictures will be of Various Sizes, chiefly as large as Life: As soon as they have all been engraved, they will be hung up in a Gallery built on Purpose, and called the Gallery of Shakspeare.

This is the first issue of the prospectus, for which the original 3 pp. manuscript is in the Barton Collection, Boston Public Library (Barton cat. 1098). Another is dated May 1, 1789. The volume containing *The Signatures of the Subscribers to the Shakespeare*, 79 vellum leaves, 4to, is in the same collection. It is a fascinating roll-call of the period; on the opening leaf are the signatures of the King, Queen and the Prince of Wales. Among myriad others are the collector Richard Bull; Charles James Fox; Warren Hastings; Mark Masterman Sykes, another famous collector; Alexander Hendras Sutherland, whose massive extra-illustrated Clarendon and Burnet volumes are in the Ashmolean Museum; Uvedale Price; Anthony Molteno, printseller; Anne Seymour Damer, heiress of Horace Walpole, and sculptress, three of whose 'basso-relievos' were exhibited at the Shakspeare Gallery in 1791; and Robert Burton, Richmond, Virginia (the first American subscriber was the Charleston Library Society).

Dr Matthews is John Matthews (baptised 1755 - 1826), physician and poet (see ODNB). Fellow of the Royal College of Physicians 1783; from April 1781 to his resignation in 1783 Matthews was the physician to St George's Hospital, London, when he retired from medicine and returned to Herefordshire where he bought an estate at Clehonger and built Belmont House; he was mayor of Hereford in 1793, a senior alderman and magistrate for twenty years. He was

also colonel of the first regiment of Hereford militia, chairman of quarter sessions, and Member of Parliament for the county from 31 March 1803 to 1806. His poetical works were published anonymously; the best-known of them is *Eloisa en dishabille: being a new version of that lady's celebrated epistle to Abelard, done into familiar English metre by a loungeur* (1780), a parody of Pope's 'Eloisa to Abelard'. His signature appears on page 8 of Boydell's subscription book – 'John Matthews M. P. / Belmont House near Hereford'.

[John Boydell, Josiah Boydell and George Nicol,] *A Catalogue of the The Pictures, &c. In the Shakspeare Gallery, Pall-Mall.* London: Printed for the Proprietors, and Sold at the Place of Exhibition. M.DCC.XCI.

This is one of the editions of the catalogues issued during the life of the project. Pages 75 - 76 give the text that inspired Fuseli's painting; the print was not finished until much later.

John Boydell (1720 - 1804) was the Maecenas of the print-publishing world. He had earlier been an engraver himself, but in 1751 set up in the print business, teaching himself French because he realised that the volume of sales possible in international trading was the best road to financial success. He commissioned and bought up as many plates as he could, and as can be seen below he was a consummate networker, becoming in due course an Alderman and, indeed, Lord Mayor of London in 1790-91.

Boydell's upward trajectory has been well described by Tim Clayton in his excellent book *The English Print 1688-1802*, and in the ODNB, from which the following is extracted: 'Boydell joined the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce in 1760 and immediately undertook publication of the paintings that won its major prizes. He had commissioned a young landscape specialist, William Woollett, to engrave a Claude in 1760. Now he commissioned Woollett to engrave two paintings by Richard Wilson and two by the brothers Smith of Chichester; he also commissioned François Ravenet to engrave the prizewinning history painting. This venture proved highly profitable. Woollett's *Niobe*, in particular, drew great critical accolades and sold very well abroad, helping Boydell to pay for his imports in kind rather than in cash. Boydell then launched a major initiative billed as *A Collection of Prints, Engraved from the most Capital Paintings in England*. The original proposal was for seven numbers at a guinea per number. A subscription for 251 copies was headed by the king, the princess dowager, and the earl of Bute. Boydell himself engraved several prints for the collection, but he was wise enough to realize that he himself would never be more than a pedestrian engraver. His claim for this enterprise was that it would give talented young English engravers an opportunity to try their hand at engraving history pictures, and, although he gave some of the most important engravings to experienced expatriates such as François Ravenet, this major enterprise did help to establish several promising artists. The prints also sold very well abroad: even among subscribers almost a third were foreigners. Boydell presented the first complete volume to the king in 1769.'

'As Boydell's *Collection* took shape he moved to a larger house at 90 Cheapside. A second volume was completed in 1772. Into this some English paintings by William Hogarth, Benjamin West, and Nathaniel Dance were introduced. A third volume, compiled in 1773, consisted entirely of republished prints from celebrated plates that Boydell had acquired secondhand. He added two more volumes before 1786. The *Collection* was the backbone of Boydell's empire, but he substantiated his position as the publisher of the finest works of art in Britain with two further projects. In 1775 he announced plans to engrave the Walpole collection at Houghton Hall, Norfolk, before it was sold to Catherine the Great of Russia and to publish the duke of Devonshire's book of designs by Claude. In addition he published a number of fine mezzotints of paintings by Rembrandt.'

'When it came to publishing contemporary paintings Boydell was only one of several notable figures, but he was nevertheless responsible for the publication of some of the most impressive paintings of the period. He was the publisher of Joseph Wright of Derby's *Orrery* (1768), *Air Pump* (1769), *Blacksmith's Shop* (1771), and *Iron Forge* (1773), which are among the finest mezzotints ever engraved. He published Reynolds's celebrated history painting *Ugolino* (1774) and several paintings by the court favourites Dance, Johann Zoffany, and West. He cemented his place in royal favour with huge mezzotints of the king's paintings *Regulus's Return to Carthage* (1771) and *Hannibal Swearing Enmity to the Romans* (1773), by West. Boydell owned only a third share with Woollett and Ryland in West's *Death of Wolfe* (1775), but this proved to be an enormously successful plate, and after the untimely deaths of

Ryland [who was hanged at Tyburn for forgery] and Woollett he acquired the whole copyright. Now Boydell began to work on a munificent scale. In 1779 he bought from West *Alfred the Great Dividing his Loaf with the Pilgrim* and presented it to the Stationers' Company, turning his generosity to account through an engraving of it by Sharp. In 1784 Boydell paid Copley £800 for *The Death of Major Peirson*. He acquired Hogarth's plates in 1786. Boydell's shop, with its grand second-floor showroom (10 ft × 70 ft) lit from above, with pictures displayed on hinged screens, became a tourist attraction....'

'At a dinner at Josiah Boydell's house [the Alderman's nephew and by this time his partner] in November 1786 Boydell eagerly embraced a proposal that he might publish a series of prints illustrating the works of Shakespeare. The project rapidly took shape, and proposals dated 1 December 1786 were published in the press...[here exhibited]. To house the Shakespeare paintings a new gallery was built in Pall Mall. Reynolds was given an advance of £500 to secure his first contribution, but the Boydells immediately fell out with Gainsborough, who wanted equal pay, and soon after with Wright of Derby, whose *Romeo and Juliet* they then rejected. The fact was that they could not, or would not, afford to pay the best artists enough to secure their services. The problem was even more acute with engravers. To engrave large prints in line took a very long time, and the best engravers already had their hands full with work of their own. Josiah Boydell, who had the management of the project, chose to have most of the prints engraved in stipple—chiefly, perhaps, for the sake of speed—and many were given to inexperienced young artists, who nevertheless had to be paid 300 guineas a plate. The gallery opened in May 1789 with thirty-four paintings by eighteen artists on show: 20,000 people visited, 6600 catalogues were sold, and 100 names were added to the subscription. The last figure might have been disappointing but, with Boydell's more ambitious projects, success or failure rested on sales abroad. At home his triumph was complete. He was chosen as lord mayor for 1790–91 and his niece Mary [who was married to George Nicol] acted as his mayoress.'

'When the first 'Shakspeare' prints (Boydell used the contracted form of the name) came out in 1792 they were not well received. The grandiloquent claims that had been made for the project as a forum for British history painting now rebounded on the publishers. The painters blamed the engravers. West told Farington that 'He had looked over the Shakespere Prints and was sorry to see them of such inferior quality'. He complained of a 'general defficiency in respect of drawing' and 'did not wonder many subscribers had declined to continue their subscriptions' (Farington, *Diary*, 2331). Others were more critical of the paintings, few of which showed much flair. The engraver William Byrne blamed the publishers, telling Farington that: J. Boydell had ruined publications by his manner of managing the Shakespeare work, which had been sacrificed to a narrow economy; That the subscriptions to it had fallen off near two thirds. Alderman Boydell is excused, the blame is imputed to J[osiah] Boydell.'

'About 1794 he presented the corporation of London with twenty-four paintings, most of which had been commissioned for publication and had been hanging in 90 Cheapside. But perhaps even he was feeling the strain of his business difficulties. The problems with Shakespeare were dwarfed by the disastrous effect on the European trade in luxury goods of the French invasions of the Netherlands and the Rhineland. By 1797 it was clear that the Boydells were in trouble. By November 1803 they were in debt to the tune of £41,000 and had to stop payments. Their bank had loaned £12,000 with the houses in Pall Mall and Cheapside as security, but there were worries about bankruptcy. They had applied to parliament for leave to conduct a lottery to raise money by disposing of the Shakspeare Gallery and its contents. Josiah Boydell hoped the lottery would raise £80,000 (and it did raise £78,000), but before it could be drawn the great alderman was dead.'

GLIMPSES OF THE 18th CENTURY ART WORLD.

A printmaker, painter and auctioneer:

William Pether (1731 – 1821): *The Friendly M^r In^o Greenwood died 1792. Mezzotint, circa 1792.*

John Greenwood (1727 - 1792) was from Boston, New England. He practised as a painter and spent time in Surinam, with a clientele among the merchants there. He moved to Amsterdam in 1758, learnt the technique of mezzotint, and became a print dealer and picture merchant, often in concert with Pieter Fouquet in Amsterdam, and Captain William Baillie in London. In July 1763 he set off on a trip to Paris and London, and settled in the latter in 1764 for the remainder of his life. He continued to make prints, to import and deal in paintings, and he became an important auctioneer, taking over Ford's auction rooms in the Haymarket by 1776 and then building his own rooms in Whitcomb Street in 1783.

Trade card/announcement of John Greenwood's auction house: *Greenwood & C.^o Auction Room, Whitcomb Street, Leicester Square. Private Views of Italian & Parisian Elegancies. On Thursday. February 11.th & following day. NB The Rooms will be illuminated every evening untill the day of Sale, commencing at Seven o'Clock.*

A dealer:

Paul Sandby (1725 - 1809): *The Vertù Scavenger & Duper ... (A portrait of the art dealer 'Dr' Robert Bragge). Etching, 1757. BM Satires 3647.*

The gentleman dealer and 'connoisseur' Robert Bragge (d. 1777) is here savaged by Paul Sandby with an animus perhaps more severe than that which he had and was to continue to mete out to Hogarth. The etched text starts 'I tell my Dupes I deal for ten P^r Cent or twenty at most and never desire more. Yet I get two Thousand P^r Cent on my Trumpery....' Lower text says that 'a Man who sells things for what they are not, is a Cheat. and may be prossecuted as such, whether such Sale is in Private or by printed Catalogue with his Name to it.' This alludes to the pictures they'd imported that Bragge and others would legitimately offer for sale at auction (even if the pictures themselves were often anything but legitimate), but also to the use of more devious subterfuges: for instance, in *The General Advertiser* of 13 February, 1749, an advertisement stated that 'MR. BRAGGE intending to retire from Business, his Collection of PICTURES will be SOLD by AUCTION, by Mr. PRESTAGE', a reason which of course was completely untrue - he continued to promote sales for many years. Bragge was drawn by Ghezzi, suitably garbed and wearing a sword, when in Rome in 1741 (an etching after the drawing was included by Arthur Pond amongst his *Caricatures*), and there is a Darly etching of him as *Monsr. Le Virtu*, published in 1771. Bragge seems to have generated an unusual amount of ill-will; he had a reputation for greed but it was evidently his pretension that was particularly galling. Although there was some justification to his claims to gentility, it was on this status, and thus on that as an *amateur*, in the English and French senses, that he based claims to a superior connoisseurship. To many he was neither one thing nor the other; not a practising artist, like Richardson, or Arthur Pond, of Hogarth, or Sandby himself (Pond and Sandby both dealt, and collected, the former at the highest levels, with one of the greatest collections of Rembrandt etchings ever formed); nor simply a gentleman collector. He was a dealer when dealers *per se* were deeply mistrusted, and one with superior airs. That said, many of his catalogues were a considerable improvement on those of his London contemporaries, and he seems to have had in his own collection some decent pictures.

A printmaker and publisher:

Thomas Major (1720 - 1799): Portrait of the artist. Etching and engraving, 1759.

A printmaker and dealer, Major was a pupil of Gravelot; he accompanied Jacques-Philippe Le Bas to Paris in 1745, as his assistant, and published some prints while there. He appears in the artist-dealer Arthur Pond's accounts in December 1748, and in July 1749 he sold Pond prints by Le Bas for £6.8.6, presumably acting as Le Bas's agent in London. It was he, presumably on account of his contacts in Paris, who 'brought over' from Paris a great collection of Rembrandt etchings after 1749, also subsequently acquired by Pond. Major was an accomplished architectural and landscape engraver, a successful exponent of the French manner who exploited the appetite for views of the classical world. Amongst his publications were the *Ruins of Palmyra*, *Ruins of Baalbec* and *Ruins of Paestum* (fine copies of which are in Christ Church library), as well as many prints after 17th-century paintings and those of contemporaries such as Gainsborough. The inscription on this print, 'T. Major Sculpt Reg. Cap. 1759', refers to his position as Chief Engraver of his Majesty's Signets and Seals, to which he was appointed in 1756 (he was dismissed in 1760 but reinstated in 1768). He was also engraver to the Stamp Office where there were some important collectors, such as John Barnard. His daughter's son was the famous 19th-century collector Thomas Wilson, to whom we owe the information that 'There is a scarce portrait of him when young, engraved by himself, from a French drawing.' The plate is very much in the best French manner and quite unlike any other contemporary English artist's portrait. In 1770 he also had the distinction, perhaps a bittersweet one, of becoming the first Associate Engraver of the Royal Academy; engravers were not admitted as full Academicians until 1853.

A collector:

Thomas Worlidge (1700 - 1766): Sir Edward Astley in the pose of Jan Six, after Rembrandt. Etching, 1762.

Sir Edward Astley (1729 - 1802) succeeded to a baronetcy in 1760. In 1751 he had married Rhoda (c.1726 - 1757), daughter of Francis Blake Delaval of Seaton Delaval Hall, in Northumberland, the great baroque house by Sir John Vanbrugh; Rhoda had since 1747 been taught drawing by the *virtuoso* Arthur Pond, at one guinea a session, and her younger brother George was apprenticed to him for a record £300. Pond painted £300 worth of portraits for her father, more for her mother, and it was no doubt because of her marriage to Astley that Pond came to sell him most of his personal print collection, apparently in 1756, for £1,700 (according to Horace Walpole), to which Astley added a further £300 worth. This collection contained Rembrandt etchings of almost unimaginable variety and richness. Astley's own patronage of the graphic arts was centred on the rather more prosaic figure of Thomas Worlidge, who fancied himself as 'the English Rembrandt', so this portrait, copied from Rembrandt's famous plate of Jan Six, 1647, and substituting Astley's head for that of Rembrandt's own sometime patron, has several resonances. The sale by Astley of Pond's prints may have had as much to do with Rhoda's death and Astley's remarriage in February 1759 as with Pond's death in 1758. The Rembrandt of Six was bought by John Barnard, much of whose own astonishing collection had already been bought from or through Pond in his capacity as a dealer, and is now in a private collection in New York.

Another, more modest, collector:

James Gillray (1756 - 1815): A Corner, near the Bank; _ or _ An Example for Fathers. Etching with hand-colouring, published 26 September, 1797, by Hannah Humphrey. BM Satires 9083.

The commentary on Gillray's plates, published by Thomas M'Lean in 1830, perhaps defers to the sensitivities of the living in its notes on the gentleman-subject of this plate, 'the decrepit Old P, a notorious debaucher, too well known in the city for his depravity. He was a clerk at the Bank of England, and made himself infamous by constantly associating with the frail ones of Elbow-lane. The resemblance of this hoary sinner was too striking, not to be recognised by all the frequenters of Lloyds, the Bank, and Exchange.' If his identity has long been lost sight of, we can infer from some nice associations, and some suggestive if circumstantial evidence, that he was one Isaac Pilleau. Note the pamphlet in his pocket; it is entitled 'Modest Prints'.

The will of John Barnard, perhaps the most revered of all English collectors of prints and drawings, was proven shortly after his death in 1784. He had intended his collection for a friend notorious for his sexual profligacy, none other than John Wilkes; but, discovering that Mrs Barnard had long enjoyed the radical's attentions, he changed his mind. The fascinating cast of legatees, among them his nephew the second Viscount Palmerston, Capt. William Baillie, Dominic Serres the painter and John Greenwood the painter and auctioneer, includes 'my friend Mr Isaac Pilleau now a Clerk in the Bank of England', to whom he leaves the colossal sum of 'one thousand Pounds. And in case of his death before me I give the said Sum to his wife for her Life and after her death to her Children by Mr Pilleau equally among them.' In a codicil he left £200 to Pilleau's sister Susannah. Whatever the origin of the friendship and the motive for the benefaction, Pilleau could now have afforded more than 'modest prints'. What he did spend it on can be assessed in the 'Catalogue of the Very Select Collection of Prints and Drawings, the Property of the late Isaac Pilleau, Esq, formerly of the Bank of England', sold at auction by Mr. Evans in 1828. Lot 109 comprised two prints, and 'John Barnard, (the celebrated Collector,) *drawn in coloured chalks, by N. Hone, 1755, &c.*', probably the only likeness of Barnard and now in the Morgan Library and Museum, New York.

Provincial artists:

William Doughty (1757 - 1781/2), after T. Barow (Thomas Barrow?): *Tho. Beckwith de Ebor: Pictor. 1772. A:º Æt. Suae 41. Etching and drypoint, 1772. Private plate.*

Thomas Beckwith (1731 - 1786) was a painter, antiquary and genealogist, resident in York (where there had been an interesting group of cognoscenti in the 17th-century). This impression belonged to the voracious collector Joseph Gulston, who contrived to run out of money because of his inability to stop buying prints and books. His prints regularly appear on the market to this day, and there are thousands of them in the British Museum, the Sutherland Collection at the Ashmolean, and the Gough Collection in Bodley. He has noted on the verso that the sheet was 'Given me by Beckwith himself at York Sept^r 1766 private plate' - hence there was no need to engrave the protective line 'Published as the Act directs...', which, subsequent to the passage of 'Hogarth's Act' in 1735 gave interested parties (publisher and engraver) some security from plagiarism. Beckwith's main preoccupation was with genealogy and heraldry; his extensive manuscripts are in the Bodleian Library. He also concocted 'New Invented Coloured Crayon Pencils... of elegant shades, put in fine Cedar, to use as a Black Lead pencil...which were prepared and sold' by George Riley in London, to Beckwith's patent.

William Doughty was an interesting young man, only 14 when he etched this plate. He was recommended to Sir Joshua Reynolds and lived at his house in Leicester Fields for three years (1775-1778) and afterwards made some mezzotints after Reynolds, who was particularly impressed by the one of Samuel Johnson. Reynolds advised that Doughty stick to mezzotint as a vocation, but he still had a yearning to establish himself as a painter, and set off for Bengal with his wife. Their ship was captured and they were taken to Lisbon, where Doughty died.

It is not clear whether the 'T. Barow' who drew Beckwith from the life, is the painter Thomas Barrow or another artist.

Art at Christ Church:

Thomas Rowlandson (1757-1827), after John Nixon (1760-1818): *M.^{rs} Showwell. The Woman who shews General Guise collection of Pictures at Oxford. Etching with hand-colouring, published 26 Feb., 1807, by Rowlandson.*

General John Guise (1682/3 - 1765) bequeathed his collection of paintings and drawings to his old college, Christ Church, where they were placed in a suite of rooms under the Library. 'He was known to the celebrated antiquary George Vertue (1684-1756) as a lover of painting and a connoisseur who specialized in old Italian masters and contemporary copies. About 1720 he became a patron of Jacob Christofel Le Blon, a painter who had devised a process for manufacturing colour mezzotints. Guise was chairman of the company set up to exploit the invention, the Picture Office, but the concern was bankrupt by 1723, losing Guise, by his own estimate, between £600 and £700.

[See the recent Ashmolean catalogue by Michael Phillips, *William Blake Apprentice and Master*, cat. no. 138, for Le Blon's invention, the keystone of colour printing.] In the 1730s he was giving private viewings of his collection to London society, and during the 1740s he became an adviser on artistic matters to Frederick, prince of Wales. He apparently acquired this love of painting from General Wade, with whom he served on the Vigo expedition in 1719, and later the duke of Cumberland. Most of the best paintings were collected advantageously during several long visits to the continent, certainly to Paris and probably also to Florence and Rome. Well over a hundred were obtained during the last five years of his life, and these became the subject of a lawsuit brought by the college against Guise's executor Mr Barrow, who interpreted the bequest to mean only those paintings collected up to the date of the will (1760) and not the later ones. The college's action for recovery was successful, and all 257 paintings were reunited in 1767. As a peace offering, two were returned to the family, including a portrait of Guise by Gavin Hamilton, painted at Rome about 1753. Between 1770 and 1773 the college employed the German restorer Richard Bonus to restore the collection, during which time it suffered severe maltreatment which led to further neglect. Not all the collection was spoilt, however. According to the cataloguer, James Byam Shaw, there remain two fine Tintoretto's, a Veronese, four works by Annibale Carracci, and three Van Dycks, as well as examples of Lotto, Giralomo de Treviso, and others.' (Jonathan Spain, ODNB.)

The Royal Academy:

Pietro Antonio Martini (1739 – 1797), the figures after Johann Heinrich Ramberg (1763 – 1840): *Portraits of their Majesty's & the Royal Family Viewing the Exhibition of the Royal Academy 1789*. 'The Portraits Designed by P Ramberg * P Martini sculp^t.' Etching and engraving, published 6 March, 1789, by Antonio Poggi, London.**

This is a very rare scratched-letter proof with the title as above. When the title was engraved in capital letters, the date was changed to 1788 (the publication date remained the same). Martini engraved four plates of Salons: those in the Louvre of 1785 and 1787; and in the Royal Academy in 1787 and 1788 (or 1789) for which Ramberg supplied the figures (a drawing for those in the first is in the British Museum, while there are progressive studies for the second in the Royal Collection and in The Courtauld Institute Gallery. Of the plate of the 1787 Royal Academy there are unfinished proofs as well as finished versions with open and closed engraved letters. And, interestingly, the *Exposition au Salon du Louvre en 1787*, at least, was jointly published by Claude Bornet in Paris and Poggi in London.

Ramberg was born in Hanover where his father was war secretary to the Elector, King George III. 'In 1781 he came to England and was introduced to George III, for whom he made many humorous sketches and caricatures. He is said to have been a pupil of Sir Joshua Reynolds and Francesco Bartolozzi, and in November 1781 he entered the Royal Academy Schools, where he studied with Benjamin West under the special protection of George III. In 1784 he gained a silver medal for drawing from the life. He began to exhibit at the Royal Academy in 1782, when he sent five drawings, two of which—*The Embarkment* and *Good News*—were engraved. Between 1784 and 1788 he exhibited further historical and genre subjects. Ramberg made three drawings of the exhibition of 1784 (BM) including *Sir Joshua Reynolds showing the prince the paintings in the exhibition*; this, together with *The exhibition of the Royal Academy, 1787* and *Portraits of their majesties and the royal family viewing the exhibition of the Royal Academy, 1788*, was engraved in line by P. A. Martini.' (R. E. Graves, rev. Annette Peach, ODNB.)

Continental academies of high seriousness and distinction had existed for a long time but in England there were only loose associations of artists, more clubs and drawing schools than established institutions under high patronage. The Academy of Painting, or St Luke, was founded in 1711, but came and went. An academy in St Martin's Lane, set up by Chéron and Vanderbank, existed from 1720 to 1724, to be succeeded by one in Thornhill's house, which in turn became the St Martin's Lane academy run by his son-in-law, Hogarth. From William Shipley's drawing school, 1750, came the momentum which led to the founding of the Society for the Encouragement of Arts, Manufactures, and Commerce, or Society of Arts for short, in 1754. The first place to exhibit paintings publicly, rather than in artists' houses, was the Foundling Hospital. The first public displays of the group founded to promote exhibitions, which was to become The Society of Artists of Great Britain in the following year, was held in April 1760 and attracted 1000 visitors a day; the Society was incorporated under Royal Charter in 1765. The membership of the Society of

Artists was a mixture of those who cherished independence, for ideological or other reasons, and those who hankered after an institution which was established in every sense. After further machination among competing factions, much of it political, an instrument of foundation of the Royal Academy was signed by George III on 10 December, 1768. Sooner of later economic self-interest of course divided the artists who remained faithful to the earlier association, and many of those who initially resisted the lure of the Academy eventually drifted its way.

In 1780 the Royal Academy moved into the purpose-built rooms depicted here, in the rebuilt Somerset House, where it remained until 1837. These rooms are now part of The Courtauld Gallery.

As noted above, engravers were not admitted as full Academicians, unless, like Paul Sandby, for instance, they were primarily painters; Bartolozzi's admission, as a painter, was due to the favour of the Court faction centred on Richard Dalton, William Chambers and Lord Bute. Engraving, especially, was regarded as a craft, and it is not for nothing that the *peintre-graveur* was invariably an etcher, since that technique is not difficult to learn. However, in 1770 six Associate Engravers were admitted; Major was the first, and the mezzotint engraver Valentine Green the sixth, in 1774.

Nonetheless, the opportunity for artists to exhibit their work in a new, exciting and very popular public forum, and the prestige attached to the institution, cannot have done anything but stimulate further interest, and expenditure, in an absorbed public. Plates of a very large format, restricted only by the size of paper available, could be used in the medium of engraving; these had the gravitas and presence suited to the translation of History paintings, and could be printed in a very large number of impressions. This was not the case with etching, or indeed with mezzotint, which was the preferred medium for reproducing portraits, though mezzotint plates were constantly tickled up to extend their useful economic life, which was very considerable, there being an insatiable demand for likenesses of beauties and heroes. The demand for prints, particularly for export, was what prompted print publishers to commission and buy subject paintings for immense sums, in immense projects, when the market for this type of painting was not as buoyant as the notional prestige attaching to them.

Thomas Worlidge (1700 - 1766): The interior of the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford, on the occasion of the Installation of the Earl of Westmorland as Chancellor of the University, 1759. Etching and drypoint, published 28 March, 1761, by Worlidge.

With the original copper plate.

Worlidge advertised his ambitious plate in advance of the ceremony itself, in Oxford, London and Bath (where he lived). One such advertisement announced that he was in Oxford and had nearly finished 'a Drawing of the Inside of the Theatre: wherein is to be present the Company in their proper Order, Habits and Degrees, as they will appear at the Installation...' Subscriptions would be taken, at one guinea, 'at Mr. Arnold's in High-Street, Oxford, where the drawing may be seen', in London and at his house in Bath. Rather more remarkable is the fact that people could have their own portraits included, at a cost of two guineas, even, it seems, if they had been nowhere near Oxford; several of these drawings are extant.

A preparatory drawing for the whole design also survives, in San Francisco (Achenbach Foundation For Graphic Arts); in pen and ink and grey wash, it is exactly the same size as the plate (428 x 604 mm.) and is indented on the recto for transfer. But as it is in the same direction as printed (i.e. in reverse of the work on the plate) it is presumably an intermediary sheet — Worlidge may have transferred the drawing on to a thin or oiled paper, transparent enough to allow him to reverse the image by indenting it on to the plate from the verso. It could be the sheet exhibited in Oxford. Much if it is in outline only, suggesting that the artist worked up the rest on the plate itself.

Worlidge is the well-dressed, portly figure, standing at front, fourth from the left, looking to the right.

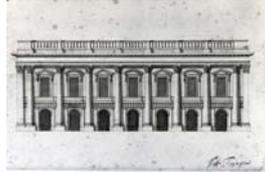
The print must be the first group-portrait to be conceived and executed as a print, *per se*, rather than as a rendition of a work in another medium. It is certainly the most famous Oxford plate, not the least because it is common, having been much reprinted! This, however, is a fine 18th-century impression, which belonged to the Princes of Liechtenstein and latterly to James Byam-Shaw, who wrote the authoritative catalogue of the drawings in the Christ Church Picture Gallery.

To complement the copper plate rolling press and the printing workshops scheduled in the Upper Library for Trinity 2015, the new exhibition (opening on Thursday, 16 April 2015) focuses on engraving and printmaking during the 18th century.

During this period (before the dawn of photography and colour printing presses), engravings, made from copper plates, were among the few ways allowing the transfer of images to the printed page. The beginning of the 1800s was the last great age for line engraving, with many superb works of art being produced by now almost forgotten engravers. Sales of prints were very much in fashion and so were books illustrated with plates after artists such as J.M.W. Turner and engraved by highly skilled master craftsmen. There were topographical and 'picturesque' publications such as Finden's *Ports and Harbours of Great Britain*, annuals containing prints of all types of subjects, volumes reproducing famous paintings, portraits such as those found in Lodge's *Portraits of the Illustrious Personages of Great Britain* etc.

The exhibition in the Upper Library presents works by some of the most famous engravers of the 18th century. On show are prints (by masters such as Hogarth) in various states (finished, working proofs and printed proposals), a selection of preparatory drawings, a copperplate, and bits of ephemera, to show how publishers went about their marketing.

The exhibition will open with Michael Phillips' talk about 18th century engraving, followed by a workshop on printing from relief-etched copper plates made from William Blake's illuminated books. For this we have a working replica of a wooden copper plate press such as that used by Hogarth, Gillray, and many others before the advent of the cast iron rolling press in 1820s. The design is based upon the diagrams for constructing a rolling press in the third edition of Abraham Bosse, *De La Maniere de Graver a l'Eau Forte et au Burin, et de la Gravure en Maniere noire. Avec la facon de construire les Presses modernes, & d'imprimer en Taille-douce* (Paris, 1745).



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Printing workshops by Michael Phillips.
Cover and poster by Cristina Neagu.

Copper Impressions - Printmakers & Publishing in the 18th Century
will be open from 16 April to 29 May 2015.

Visiting hours

Monday - Friday:

9.30 am - 1.00 pm; 2.00 pm - 4.30 pm

(provided there is a member of staff available in the Upper Library).