Patrick Bade | Introduction to the Ancien Regime 1715-1789

- [Judy] Good evening everybody, or good afternoon or good morning, depending on where you are. Welcome, and Patrick, over to you.

- Thank you, Judy. Welcome, everybody. And I'm very pleased that I can start off today with a bit of good news. We all need good news at the moment. And that is that after I talked about the Berlin Singer Edith Bach on Wednesday, there's been a flurry of internet activity and through a whole chain of French and German collectors, we have now tracked down another recording of this very lovely singer. We thought there was only one that had survived the Nazi period, and the collector tells me that he's prepared to copy it and give me copies for Edith Bach's family. Judy's, they have actually already put up a recording of Edith Bach, the one that they have on YouTube, and Judy is going to send you the link to that later. And the other thing which might brighten up things a little bit is that we have finally arrived in the 18th century, which is not quite so bloody and gloomy as the 17th century.

Visual slides are displayed throughout the lecture.

And tonight, I'm going to introduce you to the period that is usually referred to as the Ancien Regime, that just means the Old Regime. And that is a term that was invented after the French Revolution, looking back in nostalgia as this period in the 18th century is one of luxury elegance, charm, and all those sorts of things, of course, if you had to be a part of the aristocracy to enjoy all of that. So, the period runs from 17th, the death of Louis the 14th in 1715 to the outbreak of the French Revolution. I've got two images here that encapsulates that. On the left is a detail, very famous, much discussed detail of a painting by Antoine Watteau, which I will talk about on Wednesday in more detail. But it shows a portrait of Louis the 14th being packed away. And most people have interpreted this as a sign that Watteau, like a lot of people, was very glad to see the back of Louis the 14th of his endless wars, of his absurd egotism, his restless quest to make France great.

But that really just meant glorification of his own ego all over our side or these big inscriptions, the state is me. So, when he died in 1715, there was a period, you could say of relaxation in France. On the right-hand side is a very poignant little drawing made on the spot in 1793 by Jacque David of Mary Antoinette. In the last moments of her life, she's on a tumbrel on her way to her execution by Guillotine. You can see it, they've chopped off her hair and they forced her to wear a revolutionary frigging cap. So, we're looking at the period in between, as I said, this is a period of luxury and elegance and refinement, at least that is the reputation of this period. It's a period where there is a great emphasis on creature comforts, and in particular, tea, coffee, hot chocolate, and sugar. So, it'd be interesting to know, I mean, 'cause nowadays there are lots of people with health issues who don't touch any of those things.

But my guess is that the great majority of the people listening in tonight will have partaken of one of those things today. And of course, it's absolutely normal and part of our normal lives.

Well, this is a period where it does become part of the fabric of the lives of at least rich people, these were still very much luxury products. Opera lovers will know the scene in Mozart's Cosi fan tutte where the made Despina steals a teaspoon full of the hot chocolate of her mistresses, 'cause it was not the sort of thing, of course, that people below stairs wouldn't be able to partake off. So, tea, chocolate, coffee play a very, very important role in the 18th century culturally, economically, even politically. And of course, there is a very dark side to it because it involves the slave trade and colonialism, and the building up of empires as well to bring these exotic products to Europe. What we see on the screen too, exquisite pastel drawings by the Swiss artist Jean-Etienne Liotard who I'm going to be talking about later in the series of maids serving hot chocolate. I would like to have played you a little Aria at this point by Johann Sebastian Bach, rather surprising when thinks of Bach as being, you know, so profound and rather austere composer.

But in 1717 he wrote a secular cantata, and that is the coffee cantata, you'll be able to listen to it or see it even on YouTube 'cause it's really a kind of mini-comic opera. And it satirises the craze for coffee, that sweat Germany, German-speaking countries in the late-17th, early-18th century is often said to have really been triggered by the siege of Vienna in 1683 when the Turks fled in disarray and they left behind big sacks of coffee beans, of course, Vienna is a very coffee-addicted city. And I may be prejudiced, but I still think the best coffee in the world is in Austria and Germany, they really understand the coffee there. So, in this little Aria, you can see that the hero heroin says she prefers the taste of coffee to the taste of kisses. And so, here are some images, breakfast by Pietra Long, this is breakfast Italian style. They're either drinking coffee or hot chocolate in bed. Looks very delightful indeed.

Here's a breakfast English style with a bit more prim, and of course, they're drinking tea rather than coffee or hot chocolate. And this is a Zofinie, a so-called conversation piece, and you see the tea urn. And this really brings me to my next point is how important the partaking of hot beverages is for the decorative arts. And the Ancien Regime is a great, great, maybe the greatest period of European decorative arts. And we are going to have, later in this series, Ian Cox is going to come back, he's going to talk about fashion and elegance in interior design in 18th-century England. And my very, very dear friend from New York, Robin Miller, who knows everything there is to know about French furniture, is going to give you a talk about French royal furniture. So, it's a period where enormous amounts of money are spent on decorative art. So, there's no shame if you've got money, boy, do you ever show it in the 18th century?

I mean, look at this woman's dress. I mean, that is just an extraordinary work of art in itself. It must have taken an enormous amount of labour to put together a dress like this. And you see silver urn, the porcelain tea set. Porcelain, this is the heroic age of European porcelain, porcelain discovered in China a thousand years or more ago, only known the secret of hard-based porcelain only known in China and Japan until in 1710, a very nefarious alchemist while trying to discover how to transform base metal into gold, accidentally discovered how to make hard-paste porcelain at Meissen. His name was Boettger. And so, some people have said, "Whoa, well, you know, he didn't find gold. He found white gold." Because porcelain was

so precious, so highly valued in the 18th century. These are actually not true porcelain, these are soft-based porcelain, these Sevres pieces, but also extremely precious.

Porcelain factories were prestige projects for monarchs in Europe. Louis the 15th actually personally held auctions of Sevres porcelain to raise the prices and support the factory. The coffee, well, you can see the estimate on the screen for the tea set on the left-hand side. This is quite an old catalogue, probably 20 years old, 35 to $45,000. But in real terms, porcelain was fabulously expensive at the time in the 18th century. On the right-hand side, you have what's called tom blurs, I can well identify with that. That is a cup that you can see, there's a very, very deep aperture in saucer to put the cup in. And that is for somebody who's been over-indulged the night before and their hand is trembling. So, this enables 'em to hold their coffee cup without spilling the coffee. And all sorts of specialised furniture, when you see these very exquisite small pieces of furniture with porcelain tops, that is, obviously, if you've got hot drinks, you don't want to put them on a wooden surface, you need a porcelain surface and silver on the.

You've got the most famous silversmith of all in the 18th century with the American Paul Revere, of course, he's not famous for his, particularly, for his silver fine know, it is. He's famous for his role in the American War of Independence and warning that the British are coming. And on the right-hand side, you have a very fine coffee pot by a Hugo silver maker from the early 18th century. And of course, you take your tea, your coffee, your hot chocolate, incredibly seriously. So, this is all the kit that you need for a luxurious cup of tea in the 18th century. This is Madame de Pompadour. She will crop up a few times in the coming series of lectures. She was the most important mistress of Louis 15th over many years. She became the , I think it's the most wonderful job description, that meant that, you know, after her initial horizontal involvement with Louis the 15th, she graciously handed over the horizontal bits of the work to younger women. And she was the official mistress without having to do any of the nitty gritty.

And she was immensely important. Today, I think we've called it, what is it? It's the term is influencer, isn't it? She was an influencer. She really set the tone of the taste of the 18th century. And it's interesting that it was, you know, as a woman, and actually as a commoner, she was the daughter of a butcher, and her maiden name was Madame Lenormand d'Etiolles, Ms. Fish. She was only ennobled to enable her to appear at a court. So, again, a dress that is an absolutely extraordinarily elaborate Rococo work of art. Now, this is a period, at least, the first part of this period, I would say 1715 up to the 1760s. This is the period of Rococo. Rococo is a very feminine style. And of course, it was men who had all the rights, women really didn't have many rights and didn't really even start to get them till the second half of the 19th century. But this is a period with a very strong feminine influence. And even male fashion is very feminised, fashionable male clothing had very sweet colours, floral embroidery.

And look at the body shape of the fashionable body shape for a man in the early to mid-18th century is narrow sloping shoulders, repair shaped childbearing, hips, and curvy, it's really a feminine body shape, and the cutting of the clothes emphasises the femininity of the body shape. And fashionable men of the say 1740s and '50s in fashionable portraits often look

actually, so they're pregnant. I think this piece of furniture looks like it's pregnant as well. It's a double-Bombay commode. So, this is for me is a very feminine shape of furniture in the Rococo, which is all made up of curves that the only straight line in this piece of furniture is a line against the wall. Everything else is curving. The Bombay is swelling, curving shape. I always used to say to my students, you know, think of this piece of furniture as pregnant and how far gone is this particular commode? Is it four months? Is it six months? And so, this is a piece, I think, Robin, will almost certainly be talking about this piece in her talk on French wall furniture. 'Cause, this was made for Louis the 15th and it was delivered to him in 1745, and it stayed in his bedroom until 1774.

So, I think if a piece of furniture could talk, this commode would have a tail or two to tell. And this is 1745 in that decade, just a year or so earlier, it was very popular French novel by Crebillon Fils' called "Le Sopha." And that's an illustration to it on the right-hand side. And it is actually the story of a man, a faithless lover, and he's cursed and transformed into a sofa. And he cannot resume human form until a man and a woman make love to one another on the sofa without one betraying the other. So, it's a very long novel. I have tried to wade through it, it's a little bit tedious. So, a piece of furniture like this, my God, it's an extraordinary elaborate work of art. And this is called in the Wallace Collection, the Gaudreau commode. Gaudreau is the ebeniste. He's not actually probably the man who designed the piece of furniture.

Today, you know, we would attribute, you know, Phillip Stark or something like that, we'd attribute a decorative object to the person who designed it. Well, we don't know for sure who designed this. There are various different possibilities. Gaudreau is the ebeniste, he's the man who makes the surface of the wood, who applies the marketery surface. But the whole thing is really a team effort, so you've got the designers, you have the carpenter, the menuisier, you have the ebeniste, who makes the surface of the wood, and you have the sizzler. And in fact, I don't know why they don't call this the Caffieri commode because really the spectacular element in this piece of furniture are the guilds bronze mounts, which are absolutely amazing. I mean, those of you in London, when you can get back to Wallace Collection, go and have a look at this piece, and you'll see how all those mounts they're textured so that they're stickling, the striation, there are smooth bits. And that is so that they would shimmer and glow by candlelight.

And so, a piece of furniture, like, this is a team effort, and each craftsman makes an important contribution. It was a man called Caffieri who made the bronze mounts with this. And if you get down on your knees on the right side of it, you'll see at the bottom stamped into one of the mounts, it says Fi ba Caffieri, made by Caffieri. So, to other incredibly lavish, spectacular, just immense sums of money, can you imagine? This is a solid silver soup tureen, and it's absolutely enormous designed by Meissonnier, and made for the Duke of Kingston. And you know, it's an extraordinary piece of sculpture. And this clock designed for the Duke Dole by Crescent. I had questions when talking about Dutch art about the meaning of skulls in 17th-century painting. And in 17th-century painting, you have all the time, you have this vanitas symbolism, momentum or is skulls, clocks, guttering candles, all this sort of thing.

It's always to remind you that time is passing, death will come. So, here is a clock which actually is telling you the opposite. 'Cause, you can see that father time is defeated, at the bottom of the clock, you can see him with his side, when you have a little figure representing love and pleasure. So, it's really the symbolism of this clock is the triumph of love, youth, and pleasure over time. Pleasure, it's such a theme in the Ancien Regime. It is maybe the most self-indulgent period, well, that the ballet pop Ancien Regime, two periods of notorious self-indulgence. And you could say, now, you've got to choose a type of building to represent the era. Now if you said middle ages, you're going to say cathedral. If you say 19th century, it's likely to be a railway station, maybe 20th century, late 20th century, a shopping mall for the Ancien Regime, I would say the characteristic building has to be the pleasure pavilion. And every palace had to have its little pleasure pavilions in the gardens and the English great country houses had them as well. For me, this is the most exquisite of all.

This is the Amalienburg, it's a little hunting lodge, a lodge for hunting, relaxation, it's in the grounds of Nymphenburg outside of Munich. At the top, you can see a little kind of circular viewers gallery where if it was too much effort to watch the sport of shooting animals, you could just sit there at the top quite safely and watch comfortably from a distance. And when that was too exhausting, you could go downstairs in this little alcove where you can take a rest or have a little bit of nooky. I'm sure all sorts of naughty things went on in these pavilions. This room, oh, I wish, I wish I could take you there to see it, and maybe we will. Judy and I have done trips to Munich. No image can do justice to the exquisite loveliness of this room with this wonderful, playful imagery of birds flying across the ceiling, a little putty, and so on. It's a silver room in Nymphenburg, one of the most exquisite rooms in the world. And of course, you've got dogs for hunting, and even the dogs have to have very luxurious accommodation with fake blue and white porcelain kennels. And if you want to snack, you can prepare your own supper or lunch in this very beautiful kitchen, lavishly decorated with delph tiles.

So, this is another pleasure pavilion, it's a Chinese tea pavilion, Sanssouci, that means without cares. So, because you have your big palace, you have your town palace, which is your winter palace, you have your summer palace in outside of the city, and when that becomes oppressive, you have your little trio and all your pleasure pavilions. So, this is Frederick the Great's escape from his escape in Sanssouci, without cares. And another spectacularly lavish, amazing pleasure palace. This is in Dresden, this is the Zwinger. Again, I think one of the great, great buildings of the 18th century. And this idea of escaping from the cares of the world, this is the notorious ammo, the little village that was created in the 1780s. In the park of Versailles, when Marie-Antoinette got bored with the oppressive formality of the Palace of Versailles, she could dress up as a milkmaid. And she had a couple of these, there's one at Rambuye where there is a little dairy where she could actually literally dress up as a milkmaid and churn butter. This is maybe the most out outrageously frivolous of them all, this is, again, at Nymphenburg, this is called the Magdalenenklause. And it always makes me smile because I love Munich, I live there, and I've had some of the best times in my life in Munich.

But Munich is so perfect. I mean, everything in Germany is perfect, you know, and all the

buildings are immaculate. So, I remember being in Munich, living there and then going down to Italy and thinking, sighing with pleasure at the site of a crumbling building. So, this is a deliberately crumbling building in Munich, it's a deliberately ruined-looking building, and it's actually a chapel inside. And so, of course, the period, not only is still a Christian period and Catholic parts of Europe, you've got to go to mass every Sunday and probably more often. But you want to make this more palatable, more amusing. We're having a nice little chapel like this. Pleasure, great theme of the period, pleasures in England. I won't say they're democratic, they're a bit more democratic than they are. Although, we have a monarchy, we didn't really have a very influential or significant court in the 18th century, like other European countries. And the greatest pleasure gardens in London were democratic in the sense that anybody could go to them, you paid to go to them at Ranelagh, and this is Vauxhall.

And of course, the English developed the so-called English Garden for pleasure and relaxation. This is one of the most famous of all at Stourhead. And so, if you in the aristocracy in France and in Catholic Europe, actually, I think life might have been really quite boring. For your pleasure reading, I'd like to recommend to you, "Le Lys dans la Vallee," and of course, there are various film versions of that novel, which gives you a sense of the unbelievable futility, and actually, boredom of the life of the French aristocracy. What could you do? You could hunt, you could gamble, and play card games, and you could fornicate, and that was it. The English aristocracy is a little bit different, it was more flexible. And it was possible, I mean, for English aristocrats to sometimes take part in business, and they helped pioneer the Industrial Revolution, and so on. You have lots of furniture in the 18th century, again, that specialised furniture for all kinds of games, chess, draughts, gambling, and so on. Gaming furniture, hunting referred to already. And a little luxury products, vinaigrette, and snuff boxes, and so on. These were great prestige objects, we like having a sort of diamond and crusted blackberry or something like that today that you could whip out and impress the people with.

So, when I got to the 18th century, when I was teaching courses at Christie's, I used to introduce it by taking my students to the National Gallery. And I would walk them into the 17th-century Italian room where we were surrounded by gory martyrdoms, severed heads, violent rapes, and dark pictures. I mean, they're dark in mood, and their lit is actually dark 'cause they're very strong light and shadow. And then, we would walk from that room into the 18th-century French room, and you immediately get a tremendous change of mood. And I say to the students, look around you, what strikes you? What's different in this room? The first thing I think that really struck people was a change in colour from the intense colours and the dark shadows, you move into the 18th century and you get bathroom colours, you get pastel kind of sweetie colours, and there's a big change in mood. Very often in that room, of course, the hang changes, there are no religious paintings at all. There are mythological paintings that they're usually treated in a rather lighthearted way. So, again, the mood is lighthearted, pleasurable.

And the key subject matter, I suppose, and I'll be talking about this on Wednesday, is the fete galante, it's Watteau who invents the fete galante where you have young people engaged in flirting with one another in a park landscape. That room in the National Gallery, it's quite a small

room and it's circular, which seems appropriate as well. And actually, the biggest painting in the room is of Madame de Pompadour, by Drouais, she completely dominates that room. And in a way, it's very appropriate that she did as that she was such an influential person for the period. I've already talked a little bit about her and she will come up again. And so, it's certainly no century before the 18th century was so dominated by powerful women. It's extraordinary that Madame de Pompadour was up there with Maria Theresa in Austria, you see on the left, and Catherine the Great, who you see on the right, as women who really dominated the political scene in Europe. One of my little jokes when giving this lecture or talking about this period, at Christie's, as I always used to say that I want everybody, who's heard of Madame de Pompadour? Everybody's heard of Madame de Pompadour. Now, tell me, what is the name of Louis the 15th's wife, his legal wife, of course, nobody ever knew that.

She was a Polish princess called Marie Leczinska. And she did give birth to 10 children to Louis the 15th, but mainly she sat in a corner doing her needlework and everybody scarcely gave her a glance, and they were rushing past her to go and pay their compliments, and give their gifts to Madame de Pompadour. And even the Empress of Austria, the Habsburg Empress, she wrote to Madame de Pompadour as my dear sister. Well, you know all about Catherine the Great, because I think most of you will have heard Judy talking about her. Certainly, one of the most remarkable women in European history. On the right-hand side is a self-portrait of an artist called Rosalba Carriera. So, there are certainly more women artists in the 18th century than there have been in previous European centuries. Not really till you get the second-half of the 19th and 20th century that women are sufficiently emancipated to become artists in large numbers. But Rosalba Carriera, I don't think she's actually that great an artist, but she is the first woman artist who introduced a major innovation in Western art. And that was the use of pastels, pastels had existed before just for sketching or preliminary work, but she's the one who developed it as an independent technique. She created the fashion for pastel portraits. She travelled around Europe. She was faded wherever she went.

Another artist took up the technique. I think as far as this period is concerned, it has several advantages, the technique of pastel, one is, it's very, very quick. You can make a pastel portrait of somebody in one go in an hour or so. And I think for decadent European aristocrats with the short attention span, that was certainly a plus point. But also cause with the pastel, its pigment is blended with chalk. So, inevitably, the colours are going to be pastel colours, they're going to be sweet, delicate colours. And as I said, that is very much the taste of this period. This is an artist I want to talk to you more about later in the series, an amazing Swiss artist called Jean-Etienne Liotard. And he went off to Constantinople, and he spent a couple of years there, and he went native. He dressed as a Turk, and he grew a bushy beard, which, of course, no refined person in Europe in the 18th century had a bushy beard. So, he came back from Constantinople, this Swiss man pretending to be a Turk. I don't know if anybody was really taken in by that. But he travelled around Europe with his bushy beard and dressed as a Turk. And he had a big box of clothes he'd bought back from the Ottoman Empire.

And so, it was very exciting, terribly thrilling for Lady Coventry, Countess of Coventry, see on the

right-hand side, I had my portrait done by a Turk. And she's dressed up as though she is a concubine in an Islamic aria. Another painting by, this is actually an oil painting by Liotard of a man called Ponsonby but dressed up as a Turk. So, this is middle of the 18th century. This is the period of the Enlightenment, and I know this is something that Judy talks about a lot, I'm sure she's talked to you about the Enlightenment, where it is the first time in Western culture where people try to look at the world in a rational way, where they try to use the 20 word, at the moment, follow the science. I mean, it does seem at the moment that the ideas of enlightenment are being thrown wholesale out of the window, that everybody wants to believe weird conspiracy theories, and nobody's prepared to look at the facts. This was what the Enlightenment's about, was looking at the facts, not allowing your beliefs and your behaviour to be dictated by superstition or religion.

And so, it's in the 18th century with the Enlightenment that really for the first time, people could look at other cultural and religious traditions with interest, curiosity, and sympathy. And Mozart is a wonderful example of this. And I'd say the great enlightenment opera, for me, is die "Entfuhrung aus dem Serail," the "Abduction from the Seraglio." This is a print on the left-hand side, you can see Mozart in the middle attending a performance of this opera. And the hero of the opera, in the end, the most enlightened person, most moral person turns out to be Bassa Selim, who's a Muslim. And it would've been unthinkable, a generation earlier to have a Muslim depicted as the honourable person. And of course, Jews benefited from this as well. And Mozart himself was an extraordinary example of the Enlightenment, had many Jewish friends and colleagues, most important of which, of course, no, Lorenzo Da Ponte. Lorenzo Da Ponte, you see in the middle, who is the librettist of Mozart three greatest operatic masterpieces, "Marriage of Figaro," "Don Giovanni," and "Così Fan Tutte."

Role of women, again, in Paris in particular, you've got the phenomenon in the mid to late-18th century of the salon, all of which were run by women. And it was another way in which women could actually exercise considerable cultural influence, writers, intellectuals, philosophers would gather at these salons. And it's amazing how many images there are in the 18th century of women reading. And it's a bit different from those Dutch ones I showed you before where they're always reading or writing letters, and you assume that they're love letters. See? And this woman, I think she might be reading a newspaper, actually, that's another new phenomenon of the 18th century. She's not reading a love letter. And it's very clear that there is serious content. So, you get lots of these images in the 18th century of women reading serious stuff. I love this print on the right-hand side of a woman. She's obviously reading a very engrossing novel, and this young man is trying to make love to her, but she's actually much more interested in the page-turner that she has in her right hand. And this little painting, it's on the right-hand side, it's in the museum, Nissim de Camondo. I find it's a tiny little picture, it's so exquisite. And 'cause we don't know what she's reading, she's weeping.

So, is she reading? 'Cause, it could be a letter of rejection from a lover or maybe she's just reading a very sad story, and she's crying over it. We've got rather more seriously intellectual women here. This is Liotard on the right-hand side and Montesquieu on the left-hand side. And

this form, I don't know whether you can read the, yes, you can, it says "Of Newton." And so, she's really showing off that she's a serious bluestocking intellectual. She's got this great big thick volume of Newton, I'm not sure I could understand Newton. The thing I'd like also to point out in these two pictures is that both women are smiling at you. And when you're going into that 18th-century room in the National Gallery, you suddenly realise that everybody is smiling at you, that this is the 18th-century smile. Kenneth Clark called it the Smile of Reason. I tend to call it the Smirk of Reason because it's a slightly sort of uppity superior smile. Sometimes when you go to an 18th-century Paris palace and you walk down a corridor portrait, and you feel mildly irritated with all these smirking squats, you think, yeah, no, maybe, they did have it coming in 1789.

On the right-hand side, another painting in that room, the National Gallery, it's a self-portrait of Elisabeth Vigee-Lebrun, I think she was probably the most successful woman artist. Initially, she hitched her career to Marie-Antoinette, which meant that she had to get out pretty quickly at the time of the French Revolution, and she travelled around Europe. She wrote a wonderful book of memoirs, which I recommend if you can get hold of it, I think it's quite difficult to get hold of. She was a very sharp observer. She's very funny about the Russians when she got to Russia, she's absolutely hilarious about the British. You know, she takes a very French view of these very peculiar people that she found herself amongst after the French Revolution. On the left, her nearest rival and contemporary, Adelaide Labille-Guiard. And I'm going to move on quickly. Children, that's another thing. It's often said the 18th century discovered childhood, that's not strictly true. We've seen how Dutch artists already in the 17th century painted children behaving like children. But in the 18th century, I mean, there was a real cult of childhood. And you see children depicted with pets and with dolls. And this is Liotard on the left, Paramours on the right. And it's the first period where you have illustrated books specifically written for children.

This is the history of "Little Goody Two-Shoes, which is often said to be the first English children's book. I find some of these 18th-century paintings of children pretty nauseating. They are so chocolate boxy. They're so unbelievably self-consciously cute and adorable, you want to slap them. And sometimes, you think, ooh, no, actually, there's something creepy about some of the paintings of the children, these two, for instance, which, actually, slightly refer to the loss of virginity of these little girls with the broken pots, Guiard on the left, and Gainsborough on the right. And this brings me to sex. And there is an awful lot of it in the 18th century. A lot of very, very erotic paintings by Fragonard, for instance. And a lot of erotic literature, and so many of the greatest classics of European erotica like Fanny Hill, "Memoirs of a Woman of Pleasure," the "Memoirs of Casanova," the "Le Lys dans la Vallee," which I've already mentioned. There's a huge amount of erotic literature and paintings like these. This reminds me of when I, oh, many years ago when I was at Christie's, and my boss was Deborah Lambert.

Some of you, you'll know her because she was a regular Antiques Roadshow. A woman of immense, immense knowledge of furniture and decorative arts. And somebody brought to Christie's for sale a condom, at the 18th century, it was the first century to use condoms and they were rather clumsy things, they were made out of pigs' bladders. I don't think there was

such a thing as a Kosher condom in the 18th century. And they were often decorated 'cause they were reusable. Presumably, you had to wash them out and hang them up on the washing line. And this one had survived from the 18th century. And Christie's, I can't remember which department sold it actually, but they couldn't date it. And they thought, well, if there's one person who might be able to date it, it would be Deborah Lambert. And so, they sent her a photograph of it, and the illustration on it was very similar to the one you see on the screen, but it was a priest having sex with a nun. So, with this picture, we can date it to, I suppose, 1780s by the costume. But of course, the priests and a nuns costume don't change decade by decade, so that wasn't any help. But Deborah, brilliantly, she succeeded in dating the condom because she was able to date the chair legs of the chair in which the nun was sitting as she was being bonked. So, sex, French style on the right-hand side, English style on the left.

This is Hogarth. Hogarth very kind of carryon movie in his attitude towards sex. I think the English have always thought that sex was something embarrassing and ludicrous. So, it's interesting stylistically, of course, these two pictures are really quite like one another. You really do see national attitudes coming to the fore. And lots of these images that today would be called sexual harassment of young men trying to touch or grab the breasts of women. This is a very, very common theme in the Ancien Regime. Boucher. I think I might leave these because we're going to run out of time and there are lots of things I want to talk about. I will talk about Boucher on Wednesday. He's not really one of my favourite artists, but he's certainly a very characteristic artist of the Ancien Regime in all his theatrical artifice. And theatre. I mean, I think the point I was going to make about this actually is that landscape on the left looks like a stage set for an operator. And it's a period in which theatre is very important. It's the first period where we know the names of star performers, it's a heroic age of performance.

So, this is David Garrick, and a lot of his fame was carefully cultivated through paintings and through prints like this mezzotint. This is Reynolds. Two more images of David Garrick, Hogarth on the left. And Zoffany, on the right. And this is Mrs. Siddons, most famous British actress of the 18th century painted by Gainsborough on the left, and by Reynolds on the right. The greatest star performers of the Ancien Regime were castrator, and they were, of course, castrated men. It was quite dangerous, I think, in the Mediterranean world for any little boy to sing and demonstrate a beautiful voice in a musicality before the age of puberty. 'Cause, otherwise, nasty uncles and older brothers would take them aside and they'd chop off their testicles, one of these things on the left-hand side. And you hope that they would make the family fortune by having a great career as a castrator, the most famous of all was Farinelli, who you see on the right-hand side, who actually became immensely powerful because he was court singer in Spain. And King Philip the 5th of Spain suffered from what they called melancholia, I think today you'd say he was bipolar.

And he had a crisis every night at sundown, and the only way he could get through it was for Farinelli to come and sing the same six songs to him every night as the sun went down. And through this, Farinelli, actually, gained influence over the king and became the most powerful man in Spain. Cruel caricatures of castrati because the different hormonal messages were

being sent to the body as the child was developing. They had a very distinctive appearance, they became very tall and they were rather sort of pear-shaped. So, these are two images of handles favourite castrato and Sinonimi. And theatres. This was the great age of theatre design. Sadly, sadly, sadly, very few survived because these theatres were candled in. So, most of them burnt down sooner or later. But interestingly, I think the two most spectacular and exquisite theatres that survived from the 18th century are both in Germany.

This is the Court Theatre in Borough on the left and the Cuvillies Theatre in Munich. And I will be talking about those next week. And of course, the churches of South Germany, and I'll be talking about that, have this wonderful operatic quality to them. Northern Europeans are sometimes very shocked when they go into a church like this, they say, "Oh, my God, it's not a church, it's an opera house." Let's move on. And yes, religion. I need to talk a bit about religion. Nominally, Europe is still officially Christian everywhere, but there's a mood abroad or against organised religion. The Jesuits, the shock army, shock troops of the Counter-Reformation were on the retreat. This is the Jesuits being thrown out of Spain, there were thrown out of several countries. Religion could still play a very baleful role. These are the Gordon Riots in England in 1780. And Lord Gordon, he was a kind of, you could say he was a kind of Donald Trump of his time, he was a rabble-rouser, he was a populist. He worked up a mob against religious tolerance against foreigners, against Catholics, and against Jews. And they went on the rampage. Those of you, I know there are lots of people listening who live in North London, and you are probably very grateful in present times of the arch at Kenwood.

Well, you nearly lost it because Lord Gordon's mob that he whipped up, they strained up to Hamstead. But their intention was to lynch Lord Mansfield, who was the Lord, Chief Justice, who had introduced legislation that was more tolerant to other religions, including Catholicism. So, they wanted to lynch him and they wanted to burn down his Kenwood house. Luckily, there was a very smart in-keeper at the Spaniards Inn, which you all know, just nearby. And the mob got as far as the Inn, and they stopped for refreshments. And he gave them as much beer and wine as they wanted, and they got so drunk that they actually never got to Kenwood house. So, it's a period of scepticism towards religion. It's the first period where you have people trying to develop codes of morality that are not dictated by religion. This is, again, part of the Enlightenment. Also, the theme of the badly behaved clergy is very, very popular in the 18th century. The renegade priest is the hero of many novels, most famously the "Histoire du chevalier des Grieux et de Manon Lescaut," which came out in 1730.

There are lots of images in the painting of monks, and priests, and nuns behaving badly, and lots of examples in the literature of the time. Yes, the Enlightenment. This is Voltaire. Of course, in many ways, a great humanist, oddly mysteriously in a way antisemitic. I don't quite understand it. Judy could probably talk to you a lot more about that. Diderot and Rousseau, these are the philosophers of the Enlightenment, and of course, their great achievement was the first encyclopaedia, the Encyclopedie. And this was actually a banned book in France, Catholic church did not want people knowing the facts, they did not want people to follow the science. I'm going to move on. This is Lavoisier, the great French chemist, the greatest French

scientist of the 18th century, who was beheaded in the French Revolution. This is a portrait by David. And I was incredibly moved when I first went to the Museum of Musee des Arts, what is it? It's a technology museum. Musee des Arts, whatever it is, in Paris. They actually have preserved the laboratory of Lavoisier, with all equipment, including the stuff you see in the painting by Musee des Arts et Metiers. Industrial Revolution beginning in Britain. This is Arkwright with his famous spinning journey, you've got the beginning of the factory system.

This is the world's first big factory, Arkwright's Mill. And I want to finish with, yes, what about the Jews in the 18th century? And Jews have been in Europe since the fall of the Roman Empire, they've mainly, sometimes they've been driven out of countries as they were driven out of Britain in the 13th century, allowed back in the 17th century, but in most of Europe, they were completely marginalised, they were isolated, they were in ghettos, and they could not really participate in the mainstream of European culture. Now, the century starts off very well in 1900, as far as Britain is concerned, with the building of the synagogue at Belmonte, which amazingly still survives in tax of Portuguese Synagogue. And it's a wonderful, heartwarming story because Quaker Workman offered their services for free for the building of this building in a sense of solidarity with the Jews. It's one of those rare really positive stories about interfaith solidarity. Oops, what have I done? There's something crazy, right? Yes. This is the inside of Bevis Marks, two other aspects of the fate of Jews in the 18th century.

Still, in continental Europe, most Jews were in ghettos, the only way out was to become a court Jew, as this man did, Joseph Oppenheimer, court Jews who are entrusted with the finances of kings and dukes. Duke of Ottenberg put his finances into the hand of this man, Iud Suss Oppenheimer. When the Duke died, he lost his protection, and all his enemies quite literally moved in for the kill, and all sorts of trumped-up charges were laid against him, and he was publicly executed. This become a very famous story because Lion Feuchtwanger wrote his book "Jud Suss" in the 1920s, and it was filmed twice, once in Britain, in a version that's sympathetic as the novel was to "Jud Suss". And in the Nazi film, "Jud Suss," which is one of the most notorious, well, if not the most notorious anti-Semitic film ever made.

But on the positive, I want to end with a positive example. This is Moses Mendelssohn who's one of the key figures of the Enlightenment. One of the first people to really benefit from the Enlightenment, a philosopher, which is the grandfather of the composer, Felix Mendelssohn. But he was a universally admired figure, and he inspired Lessings' play at Nathan the Wise, which is one of the first examples in Western literature. It's really a plea for religious tolerance, and it's one of the first examples of a Jew as a hero, and a Jew being representative in a positive light. So, this is where I come to a rather breathless finish, and I'm going to come out of the share and see if, ooh, looks like there are lots of questions. Right. Hi, Wendy.

- [Wendy] Hi, Patrick. Sorry, I battled to get in today.

- All Right, good.

- But thank you. That was fantastic. Thank you very much.

Q&A and Comments:

- Thank you, Wendy. Yes, yes. I'm glad you picked up somebody saying Louis the 14th pack away very current. Yes, yes, I was intending you to pick that one up. A sketch of Marie-Antoinette is full of emo. No, really, I'd like to have a long discussion you with about that because it's a shocking little drawing, that drawing of Marie-Antoinette. David was not sympathetic towards her, I think there's an element of cruelty in that drawing. But you also, of course, see, I mean, this woman, who's been, you know, her back is stiff, her head is raised. She's not going to let the mob see that she is afraid. "At worse time of us using countries other than Russia, is a tea urn the same as that samovar?" I'm not really sure. I would give the rating for the most prominent silversmith to the second Paul de Lamerie. Yes, I wasn't talking about skill, I was just talking about fame. And of course, Paul Revere is not famous, well, he's a good silversmith, he's not in the league with Paul de Lamerie, that's for sure.

I was just talking about his fame. "Wallace Collection, tell a story about the Louie 15th commode in its collection when he was running a high fever and hallucinating, the flickering candlelight played on the ormolu mounts, made him have visions." You know, I believe that. I really do. I've often said when looking at that piece, I would not want to spend the night alone with that piece of furniture. It's such a monster, you feel it might eat you.

Q: "Can you comment on the survival of so many art and decorative pieces from the Ancien Regime?"

A: There's a scene in another film, it's not on your list, but it's a great movie. And there's a wonderful scene in it, the moment where the revolution is most unleashed, and you see the mob bake inner palace, and they're chopping up that kind of furniture and using it as firewood. Can I explain it? Well, and, of course, it was very highly valued in other countries, enormous amounts of it was sold to the Brits and then moved on to America.

So, a lot of the best French decorative arts surviving from the 18th century is now either in British country houses, British museums, or above all in American museums. "How did all these little policies escape?"

Yeah, "Music is the birthplace of Nazism." That's certainly true. It prided itself to be Hauptstadt der Bewegung that's what Munich called itself, that means the Capital of the Movement. I mean, Judy and I, we did actually a very successful trip to Munich, but we debated it a long time before we decided to do it 'cause we really weren't sure whether it was the right thing for the Jewish group. 'Cause, the fact that Munich is such, in many ways, a town of pleasure, it's wonderful museums, wonderful buildings, it's an agreeable town. But of course, it has this really terrible, terrible dark history. Luckily, we had a very understanding group. And I think it was a successful tour that we did.

"How did the German French English aristocracy?" Well, the English aristocracy, they're actually quite different from the European, they spent much more time in the countryside, and they spent most of their time running around the countryside killing things. "What do they do with the rest of the time?"

The rest of the time? God, it must have been terrible for them. "You showed a painting by Charles d'Agar my favourite painter after Watteau." Charles d'Agar, let me tell you, is my number one favourite French 18th-century painter, even more than Watteau, I adore Charles d'Agar. "You never feel that he fits easily into this." I'm going to think about that, and I'm going to do a lecture on, actually, a joint lecture on Charles d'Agar and Liotard. And I will discuss that in that. Snuff boxes, those I think were all French ones, they're from the Wallace Collection. I'm not sure what that refers to. "Soft pastels are pure pigment with a binder, not chalk." Right, thank you. "Did you know that the containers called vinaigrette, why?" I think vinaigrette are for sniffing. They're not, I think, there to, you know, disguise horrible smells. "I would like to know more about the fashion for Turkish influence on clothing came about.

The wealthy or socially prominent seem very keen on this fashion in the 18th century Europe and even America." Yes, I mean, I think it's partly that, I mean, after 1683, the Turks were never again a very serious threat to Western Europe. And so, they could actually, in a way, afford to look at the Turks. Ooh, here's an interesting message: "Kosher condoms are okay as long as they don't go into the mouth." I bet, is that in the town wood? I'd like to know. "How much was the condoms?" I can't tell you. I don't know, I can't remember what, it's amazing what has been sold at Christie's. You know that Christie's even sold Napoleon's penis, this is getting very rude, in a bottle. It didn't go for a lot of money. "Theatre, Piranesi, a Genius." Agree with that. Piranesi is truly amazing and wonderful. "What is the type the memoirs written?" Ah, I really, really recommend that book. She's such an intelligent woman. I don't know whether it's just called memoirs, but if you look for Elisabeth Vigee, V-I-G double E -Lebrun, you'll easily find it in French. I think there is an English translation, but it's quite difficult to get hold of. Yes.

Somebody was helping with Alsace Musee when I got stuck. Let me see, "Three estates of the Ancien Regime most of the paintings and stories of the privileged, what's the common man that made up most of the population? What were the conditions like?" Bad. They were the only people that paid taxes. But I mean, that's a whole other lecture. "Common on Daniel Delander." Judy's very good on that, I'm going to leave her to talk about that. "Bombay chest with a detailed black marble." The chest I showed at the beginning, the Gaudreau one, that's a actual marble on the top of it. "Great film with as with all." Yeah, he's just amazing. Nasty man, apparently, but a wonderful, wonderful actor. Erik Cantu, I'm very interested. Yeah, that will be for later on. In Munich, you know, those buildings were, well, certainly, by the late 1950s, the buildings I showed in Munich were viewable.

Yes, they were. Because the Glyptothek was against Hitler's express orders, it was dismantled, and that's why it survived 'cause the building itself was destroyed. And it was reassembled after

the war, but it would certainly have been reassembled before the late 1950s. The name of the woman who painted at the time of Marie-Antoinette, Elisabeth Vigee-Lebrun, this is the period of the Marquis. I should have mentioned that on my list of naughty books from the 18th century. "Pigs vows were routinely put into orthodox as well as other people. Kosher only refers to when it's eaten." Thank you very much for sorting that one out. "Vinaigrette contain material cotton soaked in strong smelling liquids." Yes, that's right. You're covering up the smells of contemporary life. "Is it Farinelli?" Yes, there was that play that was a huge success about Farinelli, and King Philip the 5th of Spain. So, that seems to be all the questions. Thank you very much, everybody. And I'll see you again on Wednesday.

- Thank you, Patrick, for another fabulous lecture. Thanks a million.

- Thanks, Wendy.

- Enjoy the rest of the evening. Good night, everybody.

- Yeah, you too.

- Thank you, Judy. Night, night.

- Bye-bye.

- Bye.