

Patrick Bade - Neoclassical Painting, Part 1

- Patrick, I'm going to hand it over to you. Thank you very much and I'm looking forward to today's presentation. And Judy, as always, thank you.

- Yes, thank you, Wendy and Judy, and I hope you enjoyed my colleagues, Robin and Ian, talking about decorative arts. I missed Ian unfortunately, 'cause I was travelling back to London, but I loved Robin's talk on French furniture. Good, yes, good.

- Thank you, Patrick, thanks for organising. They were really, really great.

Slides are displayed throughout the presentation.

- Yeah, so these two pictures were painted 16 years apart. "The Swing" of Fragonard is 1768 and the "Oath of the Horatii" of Jacques-Louis David is 1784. But you think what has happened? What has happened to the world? These two pictures seem to belong to completely different worlds. It makes us aware that something, that big, big changes are afoot, and in fact, the late 18th century is one of those great turning points in Western history and culture. All sorts of revolutions going on simultaneously and successively. So perhaps the first is the Enlightenment and the Enlightenment was a rejection of religious dogma, an attempt to understand the world in a more rational kind of way. Of course, it's something that's enormously important in Jewish history. Something I think I've talked about and I know Trudy has talked about a lot.

This is the moment when Jews have the possibility to enter centre stage and integrate into Western culture and play a very important role which they're going to in the following century. And I've got the image there of Moses Mendelssohn and this famous dramatic poem "Nathan der Weise." As I said, this is the time when you're no longer so obsessed and dominated by religious dogma that you can look at other peoples and other cultures. The Enlightenment leads to, triggers other revolutions. The an agrarian revolution with rational principles applied to agriculture and crop rotations and things like this so that more food can be produced by the land and that enables a population explosion in the late 18th and early 19th century. And there's a scientific revolution and that leads of course, to the Industrial Revolution, and then you've got the politic revolutions. You've got the American Revolution in 1776 which may have seemed distant at the time but of course, had important consequences later, and above all, we've got the French Revolution breaking out in 1789.

So these very profound cultural changes inevitably show up in the art of the time and so you've got, of course, from one generation to the next, you normally have a pendulum swing. But the changes that come about from the 1760s are much more extreme, much more normal than, much more extreme than the usual pendulum swing, and I want to start off with a series of comparisons. At this point music is going very much in tandem with the visual arts. So on the left we have Handel in a very Baroque depiction by Roubiliac and he dies in 1759. On the right we have Gluck who introduces his so-called reform operas in the 1760s, in the years immediately

after Handel died. So I'm going to try a tricky thing now, bear with me. Now let me see, how did I do this before? I'm not sure I can. I think I'm going to have to.

- [Wendy] No, you don't have to do anything. If you just go alt and tab, just scroll between your screens 'cause I think you have the music on another screen. If you hit your alt button.

- Sorry, I can't hear you very well.

- [Wendy] If you hit Alt button and your Tab button on your computer, it will take to the screen behind where your music is.

- Let me see, so yes, I'll do this and so I want to play you a piece of Handel. This is from the opera that introduced him to London, "Rinaldo." And the piece I'm going to play you, it starts off with a tune. But by the time you get to the excerpt I'm going to play you, the tune is completely lost because it's so encrusted with elaborate twiddles and ornaments and trills and so on that the melody is lost and so is the text. It's impossible really to tell what she is singing about. So here is Marilyn Horne singing this piece very spectacularly. It's an incredible piece of vocal virtuosity. And now I'm going to move on to the first of the reform operas by Gluck. This is from "Orphee" which was first presented in 1761. So in fact, I still haven't mastered the act of making the images go with the music.

But I want for the Handel with all that incredible flurried ornament to the vocal line, it makes a very nice equivalent for me with this in tablature from a German Baroque church which is just sort of erupted into the wildest virtuosic ornament. Now Gluck felt that this had got completely out of hand and in his reform operas, he wants to go back to the original purpose of opera which was music drama with music enhanced, serving the text, enhancing the text. So in the second piece I played you, you have a very simple vocal line. No flourish stuff at all and you'll notice that there is one note per syllable. And that makes it very easy to hear and to understand the text. And so the image I wanted to go with that was this Wedgewood vase which you can see is a very simple Classical shape. Now moving on to painting.

The same year, 1760, sorry, 1762 is "Orphee." 1761 is the painting you see on the right-hand side by an artist called Anton Raphael Mengs. He was a German working in Rome and he was under the influence of a writer called Winckelmann that I'll be talking about a little bit later, and he was commissioned to paint a ceiling painting of Parnassus, showing figures from Greek mythology. So from the image I show you on the screen, you'd have no idea that this is actually on a ceiling. He makes no concessions to Baroque theatricality and illusionism. So the painting on the left is actually exactly contemporary with it or a year or so earlier. It's a ceiling in the Royal Palace of Madrid by Tiepolo. So this is the sort of last gasp of the Baroque style. Wildly over the top. Again, it's an equivalent of Handel's music. Very virtuosic, very, very elaborate. And then we move back to our original comparison and the differences here are so profound.

- [Wendy] Sorry, Patrick, may I interrupt you just for one little second? Can you go back to the

slide view again? So we can see all your little slides on the slide and they're not very clear.

- Oh, sorry, yes, right.

- [Wendy] Sorry to interrupt you.

- Let me see, that's right, the slideshow. From current slide, right.

- [Wendy] Thank you. Sorry for interrupting you.

- No, that's fine, so anyway, I think with these two images, you feel everything has changed. The role of the artist has changed. Fragonard is you could say he's a lackey serving the slightly depraved vicious tastes of the aristocracy. We've got this very frivolous subject of a young man looking up the skirts of this girl as she's on the swing. Somebody asked me what's the shoe mean in the air? I think it's just insouciance. The whole thing is frivolous, outrageously self-indulgent really. Whereas on the right hand side, you look at this picture even. I will on Sunday, I will explain the story of this picture, but even without knowing that story, we know that this is a very serious subject. The whole tone of the picture has this very elevated, serious, grave, moral tone to it. And so the artist is no longer just the servant of the aristocracy and the wealthy. The artist is saying something that he regards as being of universal human importance. Painting on the left-hand side got those lovely bathroom Rococo pastel colours. You have flickering light. It has a lovely delicious painterly equality to it. It's very, very complex, the composition, and the spacial arrangement is also very complex.

There is a kind of unity through complexity. There's this organic unity of one part flowing into another. Everything is different, on the right-hand side, we have bright, clear colours, we have very clearly defined contours. We have a smooth paint surface rather than a painterly one. Composition is extremely clear and extremely simple. So the whole thing is frieze-like with all the figures laid out in a plane that's parallel to the picture plane. Space again, is very, very readable. It looks like it's taking place on a giant chess board and if you want to do a ground plan or a map of the space in the picture, you can. Look at the difference in the treatment of the drapery which is sort of fluffy and Rococo on the left hand side. I always used to say to my students, I know there are some ex-students listening in so they've heard me say this before. When you get to New Classicism, you have to get out the ironing board because the material is smooth and it clings to the body underneath it and it defines the body underneath it. Whereas in the late Baroque and Rococo, the material seems to have a kind of life of its own. And we can follow through in sculpture.

The Bernini representing the Baroque style, full of drama, full of movement. He picks the high point of the drama as David is killing Goliath and is full of movement, and it looks like the statue's going to leap off its pedestal. Canova on the left. We have this very smooth surface. Again, look at the difference in the treatment of the drapery and it's very calm. And this is "Theseus and the Minotaur." He's killed a minotaur, so this is a moment of repose after the

drama. We can follow through to architecture. On the right-hand side is part of the Zwinger in Dresden which is one of the ultimate Baroque buildings by Pöppelmann. The interesting thing is that both these buildings use a Classical vocabulary of columns and tablatures and so on. But the building on, the Dresden Zwinger, again, it's like that piece of music I played you by Handel. It's just erupting into ornament in every direction, fantastic complexity, and it's a kind of unity through complexity. One of the things I didn't mention about the David, but you see here. This building is the Barrière de la Villette. It was part of the customs wall of Paris, built in the 1780s. It's exactly contemporary with the David that I showed you and it's got that same clarity and separation of parts rather than one part flowing into another, and it has this noble simplicity. Calm grandeur, a phrase I'm going to use many times in this lecture, first coined by Winckelmann. And here again with furniture.

I know Robin did a fantastic job in taking you through the different styles of French furniture, but we've got two pieces of royal furniture here. This commode that was installed in Louis XV's bedroom in 1745. Only straight line is the line against the wall. Everything undulating, everything curving. Lots of asymmetrical elements. A very feminine piece of furniture. Robin talked about how these Bombay furnitures look pregnant and I always used to like to say to my students "Well, how many months, how far gone is this particular commode?" This one's a very pregnant one indeed. And again, this fantastic complexity and elaboration. The desk, it's a boudreaux, that's the drop-front desk on the right hand side by Riesener was made for Mary Antoinette. So I think if you said to somebody which piece of furniture was made for a queen and which was made for a king, they would be unlikely to get it the right way round. The piece for Marie Antoinette is rather severe with its straight lines and the ornament. Although you've got this pictorial marquetry, it's rather more architectural than the boudreaux piece for Louis XV. Now my students, when they had to write their essays on Neoclassicism, they would very often say well, Neoclassicism results from the discovery of Herculaneum and Pompeii.

Herculaneum 1738, Pompeii in 1748. And I would always say to them well, are you sure you got it the right way round? I mean this is really a chicken and egg situation. The 18th century is a heroic age of archaeology. But people were digging, they were searching because they were seeking out the Classical world. It was a second Renaissance, a second rebirth of Classical culture. So you have all these great publications about Classical art and the ancient world. Scholarly things like "Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire" by, his name will come to me in a minute. Stuart and Revett, "Antiquities of Athens." So William Hamilton's book on his Greek vases that I'll come to later. These great archaeological campaigns and publications came out of a desire to revive the Classical world. In fact, the discovery of Pompeii and Herculaneum was probably more important for the decorative arts than it was for the fine arts. I mean, right through to the 19th century, there are plenty of interiors, fashionable interiors, probably I imagine Ian would've talked about that, inspired by Pompeii and Herculaneum.

Painting far less so mainly because the murals that were found in Pompeii and on Herculaneum on the whole were rather disappointing. And of course, you have to remember that Pompeii was really the Bogner Regis or the Miami of the ancient world. I mean, if there's some dreadful

disaster through global warming or whatever and everything gets buried, and the only two cities that survive of modern civilization and are excavated are Miami and Bogner Regis, people are going to have a very odd view probably of our civilization. So examples of artists directly being influenced by the murals in Pompeii and Herculaneum are infrequent. This is again Anton Raphael Mengs and it's usually thought that this figure of Perseus is more or less taken from a mural in Herculaneum of Hercules that you see on the right-hand side. Another example is this painting by Vien who's the teacher of Jacques-Louis David. So I'm going to talk about him on Sunday. "The Cupid Seller," and that certainly the subject and I suppose to some extent the composition are based on a print after a mural of a cupid seller that was discovered in Herculaneum. This is very far from the high-minded Neoclassicism of his pupil, David.

This is still very ancien regime in its frivolity and silliness and its naughtiness actually 'cause that little cupid that's being held up by the wings to be sold like a puppy is making a very rude gesture. I do not suggest that you ever try making this gesture in Italy 'cause you'll get into trouble if you do. Now a very important factor in these stylistic changes is the way that artists were trained in the 18th century. Previously, most artists were trained by apprenticeship. So you went into the studio of an older artist and you learned the craft of painting. You learned by mixing paints, by preparing canvases or panels, maybe painting some of the details in the background. That changes in the course of the 18th century. By the later part of the century, most artists are being trained in academies and this changes everything. You move away from an emphasis on the craft of painting towards theory, theoretical things, and there's a much greater emphasis on the academic training of drawing based on study of anatomy and life drawing.

This is a Zoffany, top left, of anatomy class at the Royal Academy in London which was founded in 1768 and painting on the right-hand side of the famous Dr. Hunter demonstrating to a group of artists human anatomy. Now I'd like to introduce you to a young man called "Smugglerius" and he was hanged in 1776 reputedly for smuggling. And his body was dangling there and obviously somebody went, "Oh, great body, pity to waste it." So they cut him down and they skinned him and they propped him up in the pose of the "Dying Gaul" which is one of the most famous statues surviving from antiquity, and they made a cast of it, and this was used right up to the 19th century by artists training at the Royal Academy for the study of anatomy. He had perfect musculature. Over here is the ancient statue, the "Dying Gaul." So you can see that they put him into this very Classical pose and here is a drawing showing all the different muscles of this young man. Another very big factor in the revival of interest in the Classical world was the Grand Tour. Now the Grand Tour, it starts already actually in the late 17th century but it's really at its height in the early to mid-18th century.

If you had wealth and you had pretensions to being fashionable, you went on the Grand Tour and as I mentioned recently, you probably did very naughty things in Venice. But when you got to Rome, you looked at all the great Classical masterpieces and you probably hired Batoni like this gentleman on the left to paint you in front of some of the famous Classical sculptures so that you could show off when you got home. Dr. Johnson said that any man who'd not been on the

Grand Tour always felt a sense of social inferiority. This I showed you before to show you how this Classical world pervades the imagination of artists from the mid to late 18th century. This is Reynolds portrait of Commodore Keppel posed like the famous "Apollo Belvedere" which was considered in the 18th century to be most perfect work of art of all time. We have two more paintings here, Reynolds on the left, Batoni on the right. Rather unlikely figures placed opposed like the "Apollo Belvedere," this Scottish gentleman who's tartan is draped around him as though it's a toga. And Omai, the Tahitian who I told you about who was brought to England, and again, Reynolds gives him this toga-like native getup.

And so this is by an American artist, Benjamin West. And he is, I wouldn't say he's a good artist. I think he's a rather second rate, even third rate artist, but he's important historically for three reasons. Firstly, he's very first American-born artist to have an international reputation. Secondly, he goes to Rome in the 1760s. 'Cause he's very exotic coming from the New World, he was introduced to a cardinal who expressed disappointment that he wasn't wearing feathers 'cause he thought that everybody in America wore feathers. He then becomes, as we shall see, a disciple of Winckelmann and a pioneer of Neoclassical painting. But he's probably most important as the inventor of an entirely new genre of painting which is the modern history painting. It's you take a current event, in this case, the death of General Wolfe in the taking of Quebec in the Seven Year's War, and you paint it on a monumental scale and everything made heroic, idealised. Again, very Classical, you've got this very Classical pose of the dying general and you have the Native American who does have feathers but actually looks like a Greek athlete.

So the people are quite literally measuring against the Classical world. This is a French painting of the mid-18th century which shows young girls comparing their proportions and their anatomy to a Greek statue. And here we get to the man himself. This is Johann Joachim Winckelmann and he was a Saxon, so he came from East Germany. And long before he went to Italy and long before he'd ever seen an original Greek work of art, he came to the conclusion that Greek art was the greatest. And he wrote a book in Dresden before we went to Italy called . Which means "Thoughts on the Imitation of Greek Art." So in fact, his knowledge of Greek art was entirely based on writings, not on anything visual. And even when he got to Rome, of course, there was very little real Greek art to see in Rome. All were were Roman copies of Greek statues like the "Apollo Belvedere." I think part of his fascination with Greek art was homoeroticism. Classical art glorifies the male nude rather than the female nude and he was homosexual.

Came to a very sad end actually. Ended his life when he was murdered by a rent boy that he'd picked up. But so he was a great polemicist and there was a huge discussion that went on when he got to Rome, which was better, Roman art or Greek art? And he was for the Greek art. He was convinced that Greeks were the most moral people, the most beautiful people because they ran around in the nude and had perfect bodies and so on and so on. The painting on the right-hand side was actually a rather malicious, practical joke carried out on Winckelmann by his first great follower, Anton Raphael Mengs. So Mengs claimed to have discovered a real Greek painting and he thought now how am I going to get past Winckelmann's critical sense? So he

chose the subject of Jupiter and Ganymede, so a very blatantly homosexual, homoerotic subject of the seduction of the beautiful boy, Ganymede, by Jupiter, knowing that this would appeal to Winckelmann. Winckelmann took one look at you and said, "Oh, it's divine. It's the most perfect, it's most beautiful work of art. It's more beautiful than Raphael. It's more beautiful than Michelangelo." And then of course, Mengs said, "Ha ha ha, well, actually I painted it." This is, you could claim, the first Neoclassical painting. I won't say it's a great painting 'cause I think it's actually a rather feeble, third-rate painting. And this brings me to a point which I find interesting which is that art that is cutting edge, and avant-garde isn't necessarily the better for it. I think most of us today would think that Fragonard, and Tiepolo, and Shada, and Gainsborough were much, much better artists than any of these early Neoclassical artists.

But they were old-fashioned, they were passe. This was the new thing. So Winckelmann gathers a whole circle of artists around him in Rome who are producing these early Neoclassical paintings. They have many stylistic common denominators. You have the shallow space, you have the frieze-like arrangement of the figures. You have a very smooth surface. You have all the things I described in the David actually, in the contours and the ironed drapery that falls in a very sculptural way and defines the body underneath. This is a French artist called Taillasson. Now although Neoclassical painting is born in Rome, in fact, all the main figures are not Italian. They come from elsewhere. They come from Northern Europe. They come from Germany. They come from Scandinavia. They come from Scotland, and of course, as I said, America. This is again Benjamin West. This is in the Tate Gallery in London. It's a picture that I've talked about many, many times with students. It's called "Cleombrotus," it's a ancient Greek story. It dates from 1768 and again, you have all the features I've described.

The clarity of space, the clarity of composition, the frieze-like arrangements, the figures. I won't keep repeating, all the same things. Now this is 1768 and it's interesting to think that it's actually painted in the same year as the Fragonard that you see on the left-hand side. Now I would be surprised if anybody prefers the Benjamin West, but you never know somebody. Somebody might email me at the end and say how wonderful they think the Benjamin West is and they really can't stand the Fragonard, but I think that would be a minority view. I think most people would think that Fragonard was a much better painting. Now the linearity of Neoclassical painting was much encouraged by a very famous story told by the Roman author, Pliny, of the "Maid of Corinth." This story is supposed to explain the origin of the visual arts. It was a young girl in Corinth and her lover was a soldier, and he was going to go away to a war and she wasn't sure if he'd come back again, and she wanted a record of his appearance. And the way she did this was to outline his shadow on the wall. So linearity, this is also something that's very much encouraged by the fashion which was a new fashion in the mid-18th century for Greek vases. And the first great collection put together and probably the greatest collection ever was of Sir William Hamilton.

And I've shown you this picture already of Sir William Hamilton with this famous, with one of his vases in front of him and he has a folio. This is an illustration from the folio of Greek vases which became a major source book for a Neoclassical painting. Incidentally of course, Greek

vases, wherever you dig in the Mediterranean, you find fragments of these vases. I've got one here that was given to me as a child by a very eccentric Italian woman that my sister and I used to stay with when we were children. And a local builder was constructing a house and came across masses of these fragments of Greek vases and he didn't want to have to stop his building, so he just gave the fragments to our friend. This on the line engraving you see here in the bottom part of the image is by an English sculptor and printmaker called Flaxman. I think these days he's more highly rated really for his two-dimensional images rather than his three-dimensional sculptures. And you can see that his imagery is very, very much based again, on Greek vases with this torsion of the figures with the head in profile and the torso facing towards you that you find typically on Greek vases.

So he brought out a series of books illustrating Homer and other ancient authors in the 1790s and again, these became very important source books for Neoclassical painting. Now here is Sir Joshua, again, Sir Joshua Reynolds, and this is a painting of 1769 and it's Colonel Townsend, I think it is. It's two friends, "Acland and Townsend" anyway, and it's a big picture. It's recently acquired by the National Gallery. It's an odd picture. I don't think it really comes off. It's an example of something we've been hearing a lot about recently which is having your cake and eating it. Seems to be a British thing. He's having his cake and he's eating it because he wants it to be linear like the figures on a Greek vase, but he also wants it to be painterly. So you can't really tell from this image on a computer screen. If you go and see it in the National Gallery, you'll see it's quite thickly and richly painted. It is not impossible to be both painterly and linear. We saw that with Shada a week ago. But I wouldn't say that the attempt here is particularly successful. Two English portraits, the Gainsborough that you've seen before of "Mr And Mrs Andrews" which is the epitome of the Rococo style.

Everything curling, curving, the pose, and the this wonderful crinkly Rococo material. You don't need to iron anything in the Rococo period. Quite the opposite, you'd probably jump up and down on it before you put it on to make it look even more crinkly. This is Joseph Wright of Derby on the right-hand side. It's "Sir Brooke Boothby" that dates from 1781 and it's a very interesting document of changing times. First of all, you could, Joseph Wright of Derby is one of those artists where many different cultural cross-currents meet. You could take this image as an early image of Romanticism 'cause that's another revolution. Romanticism is a revolution in sensibility and feeling and it involves a changed attitude to nature. So in the Gainsborough and the man, Mr Andrews, and his wife, they're very proud of their land and they sit there on this nice Rococo bench very primly. I think they might be shocked at this image of a well-dressed gentleman who's actually thrown himself onto the ground rather like Werther in "The Sorrows of Young Werther" by Goethe.

It's a very, very famous scene where he throws himself on the ground and he embraces the earth and goes into a kind of ecstasy at this oneness with nature. Well, this gentleman is not prepared to go quite that far, but I don't know whether you can see it at the bottom. He's clutching a volume of Rousseau. But so this is a sign of earlier romantic sensibility, but the style I would say is more Neoclassical. And that shows itself in the pose, the way it's splayed out

parallel to the picture surface, and it shows itself in the smoothness of the paint and it shows itself in the linearity. Now this attitude to material, here again, we've got the pendulum swing from Rococo. This is a detail of "Madame de Pompadour." Everything, as I said, the material has a life of its own in late Baroque and Rococo art. Everything very complex, and frothy, and frilly, and here we've got a detail of a David where you've got the iron material, smooth and defining. You have no idea what what Madame de Pompadour's body is like underneath all that froth, but we can see the bodies very clearly underneath the material in the painting by David on the right-hand side. This is a rather naughty image I suppose.

This is Boilly, an artist of the 1790s and he's certainly enjoying the body that is visible underneath this rather clingy, Neoclassical dress of the young lady billiard player. Reynolds again, as usual, trying to have his cake and eat it. In his discourses, he said to young artists, "Well, in the highest realms of art, you really shouldn't be able to tell what material is used for the drapery in the dress. It should just be abstract, rather sculptural drapery." And he does attempt this in paintings like the one on the left-hand side, where these sort of rather nightgown efforts. But on the right-hand side, I think we find Reynolds more attractive when he goes against what he's preaching. And this is "Nelly O'Brien" in the Wallace Collection and actually one of the most attractive features of this painting is how the black lace, the quilted material and so on are wonderfully depicted. I think I'll skip that. Now I've in a way exaggerated the rapidity of the change from Baroque and Rococo to Neoclassical.

Robin made the point that this is actually a gradual process that takes about a quarter of a century. You could even say there's a half century between the first glimmers of Classicism and the last expressions of Rococo tastes. You can find it even beyond 1800 in some cases, and there's a long early phase of Neoclassical painting that I like to call soft core Classicism. Don't look for that term in the textbooks. You won't find it. It's definitely my own version of the subject, but it is a European-wide style. So you've got three paintings here, that all are in this rather soft version of the early Neoclassical style. A Spaniard, a Swiss, and a Brit. It's Goya on the left-hand side which might surprise you 'cause it's not like his later more famous work. It's an Angelica Kauffman in the middle and it's Reynolds on the right-hand side. Now here is an Angelica Kauffman who was Swiss.

She was very famous. She was very, very successful. It'll be a toss up to say who is the most famous and successful woman artist of the second half of the 18th century? Angelica Kauffman or Vigée-Lebrun that I talked about to you last time. Angelica Kauffman's self-portrait, and she was apparently an accomplished musician and she had to choose between a career as a musician or as a painter. So you've got music represented on the left, painting on the right, and you can see that she's saying goodbye to music and she's going to take on painting. Her paintings, again, I think she's, I would say a rather second-rate artist. She produces a kind of compromise art that is vaguely Classical, but it still has a lot of the softness and the sweetness of the Rococo style. This is a historical subject. It's actually a mediaeval subject. It's the queen, which Edward was it? Claudia would know, who was wounded with a poisoned arrow in the Hundred Years' War and she sucks the poison out of his wound.

And again, this is a rather soft edged, sweet version of the Classical style. This is a Greek subject. This is Penelope waiting for the return of Ulysses. Ah, now we move on to somebody who was not willing to compromise, not soft, not attempting to please in the way that an Angelica Kauffman was. This is the Irish artist, James Barry and this is a self-portrait which is in the Victoria and Albert Museum. And you stand in front of this picture and you want to take a step backwards 'cause he brings himself very close to your face. And that is quite a challenging and complex facial expression. And I'm now coming back to this idea of the change in role for the artist. There must be I think about 20 years difference between these two self-portraits. "Maurice Quentin de la Tour" who's showing himself as polite, well dressed, a courtier, agreeable smile, lovely velvet jacket, lace trimmings, and a powdered wig. A very agreeable gentlemanly character, but it's around this time that you have a profound change in the notion of what an artist is. Some of you may remember a wonderful exhibition at the Royal Academy called "Rebels and Martyrs" about 10 years ago which concentrated on this changing image of the artist.

So instead of the 3/4 view, you get these frontal views. This is Swiss artist, Henry Fuseli, and it's in your face. It's a really challenging and rather disturbing image. Here again Fuseli, and the idea of an artist being tormented, being somebody who's an outsider, being somebody with a very complicated state of mind. Now these are two drawings which actually are in my flat in Paris that I've bought over the last year or so that date from this period. And for me, part of the attraction of these drawings is that they so document this change in image. There's no reason to believe that either of these two people were actually artists, but the gentleman on the left, he must date from the 1770s and he's totally ancien regime. He's got the smirk, the smile. He's got the powdered hair. You look at him and you think mm. I think you had it coming in 1792. He's the kind of person that would go to the guillotine.

Whereas the young man on the right, notice he's wearing his own hair naturally and it's rather tousled, and he's got a very quizzical expression. Not necessarily such an agreeable social expression on his face. So that's a drawing I would think of a around 1790. You see a big change in image between the two drawings. These drawings, incidentally Robin will know where I bought them. Wonderful gallery in the Passage in Paris called Amicorum where you can find the most amazing 18th, 19th, and 20th century drawings for really ridiculously low prices. If anybody wants the contact details, I'll give them. These are paintings, oh, no. On the right-hand side is "Birth of Venus" by James Barry and on the left-hand side is the same subject by Boucher. Again, very late Baroque, very Rococo. All these curving lines, all the frothiness. I can't say I like either picture very much. In fact, I don't know which one I dislike more. But they are certainly very, they're disagreeable in very, very different ways.

So James Barry was the archetypal difficult tormented artist. He's actually, when you think of how badly artists very often behave, I know quite a few of them, it's amazing to think that James Barry is the only artist in the 250-year history of the Royal Academy who's ever been expelled from that institution for bad behaviour. He just couldn't get on with anybody. But he took himself

incredibly seriously. He wanted to be considered a genius with a capital G. He wanted to be England's Michelangelo, that's a fatal ambition, and his Sistine Chapel was a series of murals, actually all on canvas attached to the wall, that you can see in the Royal Society of Arts near Fleet Street. And it's a grand, is called "The Progress of Human Culture." So very, very pretentious, very, very high minded, and he actually published a booklet to explain the meaning of the painting. That's a bad sign. When an artist has to explain a picture in detail, it means that the art is not doing its work properly. So these are details of these murals in the Society of Arts and he also became involved, there was a desire at this time, I think prompted partly by Reynolds, to establish a national school of history painting.

So they knew by the middle of the century Brits could be very good portraitists and they could be quite good landscapers, but still history painting was something that alluded us. And a businessman in the city called Alderman Boydell came up with a wonderful idea, very British idea actually, to promote English history painting and make money at the same time. So he commissioned these large scale, he thought British history painting. We need subjects from Shakespeare. He's our greatest genius. So he commissioned all the leading artists in London in the 1780s to paint big pictures of Shakespearean themes and this is James Barry depiction of the final scene of of King Lear. And this is in the middle here, you've got Fuseli.

Dream, and on the right-hand side is a caricature by Gillray which refers to all these paintings. You can see quotes from both the two paintings on the left in the print. Gillray, being very critical of it, critical of the commercial aspect, seeing it as a kind of prostitution to see Shakespeare sacrificed. And so I hope I haven't shown you too many third-rate pictures. This particular talk was really to talk about the cultural changes of the time and I promise you there'll be some much more inspiring paintings on Sunday when we get to Jacques-Louis David. This is his self-portrait on the left and the key work of his career, "The Oath of the Horatii" on the right-hand side. And I am going to come out of my share, right, and let's have a look at the questions. I see there are some questions.

- [Wendy] Can you remember to read them out before you answer them, Patrick?

Q&A and Comments:

- Yes, "The Swing" painted by Fragonard and I believe hanging in, no, the one I showed you is the one in the Wallace Collection. He did several versions of the subject. Right, let me see.

I'm glad you liked, somebody's saying they liked the music being introduced. I'm going to have to work on the technology there. Sorry about my clumsiness with all of that.

Yes, "Swing" is in the Wallace Collection. Looking at the David, we also remember Soviet art and how restricted the palette was and how it depicted idealised human characters. Yes, not just Soviet though, but also I would say fascist art. I mean, I'll discuss this next time. I think there are uncomfortable premonitions of totalitarian art shall we say. So that will cover Soviet and Italian

fascist and Nazi art.

Oh, Robin, "The Swing" was rejected by Madame du Barry as dated when it was installed. That's not the same, is that the same? I'll have to discuss that with Robin. I'm not sure it's the same "Swing." To students, well, Robin was actually one of my favourite students of all time, right back in the 1980s. That was at Christie's Education that I used to have students.

Gibbon, thank you, I don't know. I'm having a bad day for, Gibbon wrote "The Decline and Fall," thank you.

Oh, lots of people saying that. I must say you are the most amazing audience. If I'm ever stuck, I can always ask you and you always come up with the answers.

Would love to hear more about what is standard for first-rate? That a very pertinent question and of course, it's very, very subjective. It's not scientific at all. We have the "Death of General Wolfe" in the, there are two versions. There's one in the National, somebody's saying there's one in the Ontario Museum, but there's also one in the National Portrait Gallery.

Q: Atara, was the importance of the discovery of Pompeii was that it was an opportunity to view Classical paintings, Greek, Roman, differently?

A: Yes, I mean, there were some other places where they had seen Roman murals. I mean the Golden House of Nero, for example. But yes, there were certainly far more extensive murals surviving in Pompeii than anywhere else.

Q: Who painted the painting of Winckelmann?

A: I think it's an Angelica Kauffman actually. Somebody else bringing me up quite correctly on my very unscientific criteria about third rate. But I don't know. I don't want to tie myself too much up in knots about all of that.

Q: Would you call Joseph Wedgwood in England Neoclassical?

A: Yes, I would, he's a prime example of Neoclassical decorative arts.

It seems that all representations of nude bodies in paintings and sculptures are without body hair. Yes, it's very, very rare before the 19th century. There are examples actually, some in the Baroque period. But it's unusual, body hair, and what is an absolute no-no of course, is female pubic hair until you get to the end of the 19th century, You've got to get to Gauguin and Klimt before anybody dares to acknowledge that women also have pubic hair. John Flaxman deserves greater recognition. I so agree with you. Also for his major sculpture, and you mentioned, well, "Saint Michael Overcoming Satan" and so on, the English Canova, I feel very strongly about Flaxman that he's wonderful as a relief sculptor. I think he's much, much less

good in something like the "Saint Michael Overcoming Satan" where I don't think his sculptures really work in the round, but the relief sculptures can be really exquisite and very touching.

The gallery link, it's Amicorum. Ron knows it 'cause I've already put him in touch with the gallery. It's A-M-I-C-O-R, Amicorum, U-M. It's in the Passage Jouffroy in Paris. They have a website and I must say I've been spending a fortune there. Although really the prices are amazingly low and they have wonderful things, and they're very trustworthy people as well. Royal Society of Arts is John Adams Street. That's right, just south of the Strand. The address of Amicorum, it's Passage Jouffroy which is J-O-U-F-F-R-O-Y, Passage Jouffroy. It's quite close to the Gare du Nord. It's walking distance from my flat which is really fatal. Gibbons, thank you.

Can you explain the characteristics of both Classical art and Neoclassical art? Oh my, god, that's a big one. And well, Neoclassical is the period that I'm talking about which is late 18th, early 19th century looking back to Classicism. But I would suggest that you read, it's Panofsky's book "Renaissance and Renascences" which is about how European art has been a whole history of Classical phases, anti-Classical phases, and then return to Classicism. So I mean, that is a book that I think that's my best recommendation for you if you're really interested in that.

Have I seen the Benjamin West in Charleston? No, I haven't, I'd love to go to Charleston. I've never been there. And somebody else saying second class. I'm sorry, yes, it's a very snobby thing to deride paintings as second class, but hey.

Did the idea of history painting continue in the same way until as late as, no, it didn't actually. You see, the paintings of Delaroche would not have been recognised by Reynolds or any 18th century connoisseur as history painting as they understood it. History painting takes on a whole different new meaning in the 19th century. Delaroche's paintings are paintings of historical stories or incidents and he tries to, almost like say a documentary, he tries to give you the period with the correct clothing, correct setting, and so on. It's really historical genre painting, what Delaroche does. So whereas history painting in the 18th century is ideal, it's in a way timeless with nude figures or draped figures. Linda Rubin, comment on Benjamin West. I think I probably commented too much about him by being so rude about him. I saw an exhibition of early American artists in New York a few years ago from the 18th century. They were not so good. Well, it's not surprising. I mean, there are wonderful, I think John Singleton Copley, who I could have talked about who's just a bit younger than West, is a wonderful artist. Really, really good, I wouldn't call him second rate and there are lots of wonderful American artists once you get into the 19th century.

Somebody agrees with me about Flaxman's relief sculptures. Yeah, I mean, they are timeless. He says it reminds him of Eric Gill. Flaxman went to Italy. He was actually, I took it out of the lecture this morning 'cause I thought there was too much in it, but Flaxman was one of the first people to appreciate Giotto. He went to the Arena Chapel and was very influenced also by mediaeval sculpture and early Renaissance sculpture. And there are things by Flaxman that you

would swear were done in the period of Eric Gill that looked very art deco.

Q: Did the church have a problem with anatomic dissection for artistic purposes?

A: I'm not sure which church you're talking about, which Christian sect, but usually it was only people who'd been executed for a particularly, it was part of the punishment that the person would be not only sentenced to death, but they would be told that their body would be used for anatomical dissection. So it was certainly not something that was, there was a lot of discomfort really.

Oh, calm, yes, I meant to repeat it. Thank you, Robin, calm. The phrase in German, it's and is calm grandeur and is noble simplicity. So that is in a way the key thing that Neoclassicism, this phrase of Winckelmann. Noble simplicity and calm grandeur.

And am I getting to the end? Right, I think that's it. I think that I've got through everything. Thank you, everybody, thank you very much and thank you for all your help. And as I said, you're totally free to dismiss any arbitrary value judgments that I make, but I will continue to make them.

- [Wendy] Thank you so much, Patrick. Looking forward to your talk on Sunday and we'll see everybody tomorrow. So thank you, goodnight or good afternoon to everybody, see you soon.

- Bye bye.