

Huntington Gallery Spotlight Tour Plan

Spotlight Stations:

- Large Library
- Dining Room (**fly by**)
- Introduction to Grand Manner Portrait – Mrs. Kirke
- Portrait Gallery
 - Blue Boy
 - Pinkie
 - Sarah Siddons
- Diana (**fly by**)
- Conversation – Domesticity – early 18th century British
- Constable /Turner

BACKGROUND INFORMATION :

HENRY EDWARDS HUNTINGTON

- Born 1850, Oneonta, N.Y.
- Made his fortune through railroad, utility and real estate development in Southern California
- 1892 came to California the first time when his uncle Collis hired him as first assistant to the president of the Southern Pacific Railroad Company. (Since the first president (Collis) was rarely in San Francisco, this meant Henry was effectively in charge)
- En route to his new job (in San Francisco), stayed at the San Marino Ranch (now The Huntington) as guest of owner, James DeBarth Shorb – Henry was immediately enchanted by the area
- Collis died in 1900: Henry inherited approximately 1/3 of his estate – 11 billion in 2006 dollars.
- Henry had hoped to succeed Collis as president of the railroads, but was opposed by other stockholders.
- The rejection caused him to turn his attention to Southern California where he already owned street railway companies. He was largely responsible for the development of the region during the first decade of the 20th century. He bought huge tracts of land and built trolley lines and utilities (electricity, water, gas) necessary to support future growth.
- Henry and his first wife, Mary Prentiss were divorced in 1906 (their 4 children were grown)
- He married Arabella (Collis' widow) in 1913
- Always a lover of books, Henry devoted his retirement to a passion for collecting books, art and botanical treasures (The Huntington is the result)
- Dies in 1927

ARABELLA DUVAL HUNTINGTON

- Born around the same time as Henry (1850), probably in Virginia
- Married Collis in 1884 (she was nearly 30 years younger than he)
- A previous marriage resulted in a son Archer, born in 1870, to whom she was devoted. Archer took the Huntington name after her marriage to Collis
- She and Henry were both devoted to Collis; upon his death, Henry helped her settle the estate; she was the primary beneficiary – received 2/3rd of the estate – 22 billion dollars in 2006 dollars
- An avid and astute art collector, she taught Henry about collecting art, and introduced him to Joseph Duveen, a prominent art dealer based in New York
- Dies in 1924

Sir Joseph Duveen

- The Duveen Brothers firm dealt in porcelain, furniture, tapestries, and silver, and was established in the late nineteenth century in England and America by Joseph Joel and Henry Duveen. They were the father and uncle respectively of Joseph Duveen
- Joseph Duveen was an instrumental influence on major American art collectors, including Andrew Mellon, Samuel H. Kress, Henry Clay Frick, and Henry Huntington, as well as Arabella (Yarrington) Huntington

THE FORMATION OF HENRY HUNTINGTON'S COLLECTION OF BRITISH PAINTINGS:

What made it possible for Henry Huntington to collect masterworks?

- The rise of the mega-collector in America at the turn of the twentieth century was founded on the economic expansion that followed the Civil War. The national wealth grew from about \$30 billion in 1870 to \$127 billion by 1890. By 1889, the wealth of Collis P. Huntington was estimated at \$30,000,000, which would be about \$450,000,000 in late twentieth-century dollars. Henry inherited one-third of Collis' estate, supplementing his own considerable wealth
- European art became available on the market due to the agricultural depression of the 1870s in Britain, which caused serious financial difficulties for the landed aristocracy
- The implementation of death taxes in 1882 with the Settled Lands Act also encouraged aristocratic families to pay death duties through the sale of art works
- The shift in the center of financial world from London to New York, which began in the late nineteenth century, furthered the enormous transfer of cultural wealth from Europe to the United States
- Newly developing art industry in New York
- Payne Aldrich Tariff Bill of 1909 repealed the existing tariff on works of art of 100 years old imported into the United States

Large Library

- Reflects a sumptuous collection of 18C French decorative arts
- Reflects rococo of Louis XV to neo-classicism of Louis XVI
- Wealthy American collectors were drawn to 18C France for association with fine design & craftsmanship and in its royal associations with French kings
- Downstairs sitting room of the house
- Influence of 18C. France to recreate lavish ambiance
- Large Library meant to mimic Versailles
- Wall sconces & chandeliers – copies of those at Versailles

Baroque vs Rococo: Two distinct styles of French decorative art reflected in Large Library

Baroque

- Baroque -17C as reflected in the carpets
- -swooping, large, dynamic sweeping curves
- -color- strong & dark, bold & vigorous, w/controlled symmetry

Rococo

- Rococo -18C, small scale as in the tapestries
- -warm, rosy color
- -softness of line & shape
- -sensually fluid, small “S” curving lines-many compounding curves
- -creates decorative effects/eye bounces all over the surface

French Furniture

- Very complex to make. Oak carcass with decorative veneer applied
- Gilt bronze mounts attached
- Only a few cabinet makers could make their own mounts – usually for the reason of royal patronage
- 18th C furniture fabrication not only involved cabinetmakers but a multi-guild process
- For the most intricate, expensive and highly fashionable pieces a marchand- mercier (merchant of goods) served as the general contractor designing and commissioning works from members of different guilds
- Veneers-complex patterns called marquetry & pictorial marquetry
- 18th C – age of gilt bronze mounts
- Gilt bronze mounts-cast in bronze then gilded: mercury hot fire method-gold powder suspended in mercury and applied to bronze cast then heated- mercury evaporates, leaving the gold

Louis XIV 1638-1715

Louis XV 1710-1774 (& Mme de Pompadour) – rococo and its height

Louis XVI 1754 – 1793

Writing desk (bureau plat) attributed to the Pagoda Master -1730

- The Pagoda Master was an as-yet unidentified cabinetmaker active in Paris in the 1730s
- Produced during the reign of Louis XV
- Rococo style – billowing shapes/undulating curves
- Decorative gilt bronze corner mounts and masks on the side rails in the style of Andre-Charles Boulle
- Bearded masks on the center recess similar to designs by Charles Cressent
- Oak and decorated with kingwood veneer
- Chinoiserie drawer pull

Oeben Mechanical Writing Desk, 1754 (Oeben-master ebeniste(cabinet maker)

- Oeben , German born, is well known for elaborate design & sophisticated technical systems that earned him his title of *ebiniste du roi*
- Known for pictorial marquetry designs and highly sophisticated metal ware
- Desk is oak and walnut carcass veneered with marquetry of kingwood, tulipwood, purplewood,bois satine, green-stained maple, ebony and holly stringing, maple counter veneer; panel of Japanese taka-maki-e lacquer; guilt bronze mounts, iron hardware

Savonnerie Carpets

- 2 in series of 93 weavings intended for Grand Galerie of Louvre Palace commissioned by Louis XIV in 1665- reflects baroque style of Louis XIV
- never used for Louvre-by 1689, Louis had moved Court to Versailles & impetus to decorate Louvre diminished
- Carpets have original foundation of wool, linen and bast (hemp/jute); with repairs and later inserts in wool, cotton and linen. Knots made in Turkish technique with about 120-132 stitches per square inch in the field and about 80 to 90 in the borders. The pile is about one-fourth length
- Carpets have been cut, cut down and patched. Originally contained symbols of the French king's medallion- interlocking "L's" and fleur de lys. They were removed due to French Revolution
- **carpets were highly prized-often given away as diplomatic gifts

Six panel Folding screen, 1719-1784, Alexandre-Francois Desportes

- Savonnerie Manufactory
- Knots are made with the Turkish technique 100 to 120 square knots per inch.
- The Huntington has all 6 screen panels which is unusual
- Frame of later date probably 19th century
- Wool and linen

The Noble Pastoral , 1757 – 1760 after cartoons by Boucher 1703-1770

- The Fountain of Love (*La Fontaine d'Amour*)
- The Flutist (*La Joueuse de Flute*)
- The Luncheon (*Le Dejeuner*)
- The Bird Catchers (*La Pipee aux Oiseaux*)
- The Fishermaid (*La Pecheuse*)
- Wool and silk , linen lining
- First major art purchase in 1909, came from the Kann collection. HEH paid \$577,000 (11.8 million in 2006 dollars). This price was more than the cost of the entire house and outbuildings which were valued at 9.8 million (2006 dollars)
- Wood molding had to be re-cut and over 1,000 feet of book shelving had to be eliminated to accommodate the tapestries
- Theme of outdoor parties, light hearted, amorous and playful light colors-eye jumps around
- Boucher virtually defined the elegant yet playful rococo
- Royal commission –on behalf of Louis XV- yellow border re-woven when King's symbols were removed during French Revolution
- Took 1 person -1 year to make 1 square yard (meter)

Technique

- low warp loom (a horizontal loom)
- made of wool and silk
- warp threads are the basic structure-stretched on 2 rollers
- under warp is cartoon (a full size painting/drawing of the design)
- weave through warp with woof threads
- at every color change, knot off & change thread
- weaver only sees the back side – was reversed in the final process
- labor intensive process
- colors fugitive – Beauvais experimented w/dyes

Gobelins Chairs & settees – mid 18C

- Room arranged with ten tapestry-covered French chairs and two settees
- Seat backs designed by Boucher depicting children and putti engaged in the arts and set into 19th century frames
- Seats designed by Oudry-associated with fables of La Fontaine
- All coverings executed at Gobelin Factory, possibly for Madame de Pompadour, mistress of Louis XV
- Wool & silk used

- Made on high warp loom (vertical)-have more threads per square inch-more time consuming & expensive
- Neoclassical chair frames of carved and gilded beech are of a later period than seat cushions and backs

Dining Room (fly by)

- Dining room table, dating from 1760 , was purchased in 1960
- Chandelier is English crystal. Acquired in 1959. Dates from 1785. Candlelit
- Dining room chairs purchased by HEH in 1910 and are dated 1740. Fronts carved, backs plain
- Wiring system was new in residential use. When one master switch was thrown – every light in the house would go on

Introduction to Grand Manner Portrait

In the mid eighteenth century, British artists developed a distinctive type of portraiture known today as the Grand Manner. Rather than portraying the sitter in a private, domestic manner as in conversation piece portraits, the Grand Manner style invests the sitter with elevated status. Based on court portraits painted in Britain by Sir Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641), Grand Manner portraits presented wealthy and famous sitters as timeless icons of dignity. Through pose, setting, or dress, complex and overlapping references to the past created rich associations with history and literature. Women are typically draped in generalized gowns derived from antique sculpture. The association with classical art imbues the sitter with timeless symbolic significance. Men are often presented as educated cultural figures, in the study or shaping of the world through their actions or intellect. Sometimes they are shown in Van Dyck dress – a silk doublet with lace collar, matching knee breeches – to evoke the elegance and refinement associated with seventeenth century court of Charles I.

Grand Manner portraits were often first displayed in the annual exhibition of the Royal Academy, hung high above eye level to further elevate the status of the sitter. They were also displayed in the formal rooms of great houses, where they illustrate dynastic connections and served as emblems of family glory.

Sir Anthony Van Dyck

Van Dyck's paintings of Charles I and his court transformed English portraiture. Born to a prominent Flemish, silk and linen merchant, Van Dyck became a pupil of Hendrik van Balen and registered with the Antwerp Guild of St. Luke in 1609. By 1618 he was registered as a master, having spent two years as chief assistant to Peter Paul Rubens, whose style greatly influenced his own. Following an initial visit to England in 1620-21, Van Dyck embarked on a six-year journey through Italy and France, during which he worked in Genoa, Rome, Venice, and Palermo. He settled in London in April 1632, and within three months was knighted and made Principal Painter to Charles I. He married

one of the ladies in waiting to Queen Henrietta Maria and apart from brief trips to The Continent, spent the remainder of his career in London. Van Dyck invested his royal and aristocratic subjects with an aura of effortless glamour and elegance, and as a courtier-artist in the tradition of Titian, he achieved a status of unprecedented among painters in England

Ann Killigrew Kirke, Sir Anthony Van Dyck c 1637

- Eldest of seven daughters among twelve children of Sir Robert(1579-1633) and Lady Mary (Woodhouse) Killigrew
- Married George Kirke January 4, 1627 – Charles I attended their wedding. George and she had two children – Charles and George
- Appointed Dresser to the Queen Henrietta Maria in 1637. (the most coveted and contested places for a woman at court)
- The full-length portrait is painted on the occasion of her appointment as Dresser.
- Drowned July 6, 1641 when the royal barge capsized near London Bridge
- Pointed index finger, Anne directs our attention to a leaping dog, a butterfly, and a flowering rose. Symbols of fidelity, willingness to serve, and pains endured for pleasure.

Thomas Gainsborough

Portraiture provided Gainsborough's livelihood, but landscapes were his passion. After leaving rural Suffolk for London in 1740, he assimilated French rococo style while training under the engraver Hubert Francois Gravelot. He absorbed a different tradition, earning money by copying and repairing Dutch landscapes, after marrying and establishing his own studio in 1746. In pursuit of patronage, Gainsborough relocated to his native Sudbury in 1748, to the seaport of Ipswich in 1752, and to the resort town of Bath in 1759. Concurrently, his small scale, realistic portraits evolved into sophisticated confections on the scale of life, rivaling the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds. Gainsborough became a founding member of the Royal Academy in 1768 and re-settled in London six years later. In the early 1780s he painted his first "fancy pictures" (subject pictures drawn from the artist's imagination or "fancy"). Stubborn and independent, he exhibited only privately after quarreling with the Academy over the hanging of an important painting in 1784. He died of cancer four years later.

Jonathan Buttall: Blue Boy, Thomas Gainsborough, 1770

- Painted when Jonathan was in his early teens- shortly after he assumed control of the family business following his father's death
- First exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1770
- Gainsborough's first attempt at full length Van Dyck dress – knee breeches and a slashed doublet with a lace collar
- For Gainsborough it was a way to show that he could match the elegance of the earlier court portraitist

- Purchased October 7, 1921 for \$728,000 (approximately \$10,920,000 in 1990 dollars)
- Highest price ever paid for a painting at that time

Sir Thomas Lawrence

Lawrence began his career as a child prodigy whose drawings provided much-needed income following his father's bankruptcy in 1779. When the family moved to the fashionable resort town in Bath in 1780, Lawrence gained the renown for the portraits he executed in pastel. Seven years later, at the age of eighteen, he established his studio in London and announced his presence with seven portrait heads exhibited at the Royal Academy. His glamorous yet dignified full-length portrait of Queen Charlotte, exhibited in 1790, signaled his ascendancy as the leading painter of his generation. George III appointed him Painter-in-Ordinary on the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1792 and two years later he was elected an Academician. His dashing portrait style generated an overwhelming flow of commissions, which Lawrence accepted without always completing. Passionate and emotional, he was embroiled in constant romantic intrigues but never married. The Prince Regent became his most important patron following their meeting in 1814, when he commissioned Lawrence to execute a series of twenty-four portraits of allied leaders assembled for peace negotiations in Vienna, an assignment that detained the artist on the Continent for eighteen months. On his return to England in 1820, he was elected President of the Royal Academy. His avid pursuit of Old Master drawings resulted in one of the finest private collections ever assembled as well as chronic financial problems. Though offered to the nation, the collection was dispersed upon his death.

Sarah Goodin Barrett Moulton: Pinkie, Sir Thomas Lawrence, 1794

- Judith Barrett commissioned the painting of her granddaughter to ease the pain of the child's absence – she was sent to England for schooling
- Painting depicts "Pinkie" in an easy, careless attitude
- Lawrence's use of a low horizon heightens the monumentality of this portrait of a young girl who died shortly after the painting was completed
- Purchased by Joseph Duveen for 74,000 guineas, highest price ever paid at auction - \$377,000.00 (approximately \$5,700,000.00 in 1990 dollars) Sold to HEH for Duveen's cost in 1927. Last painting HEH purchased before his death

Sir Joshua Reynolds

Through his advocacy of "Grand Manner" style and the supremacy of history painting, Reynolds transformed the conventions of portraiture and elevated the status of the artist in Georgian England, after studying with Thomas Hudson in London between 1740 and 1743, Reynolds completed his training with a 1750-52 trip to Italy, which exposed him to the works of the Old Masters. Throughout his career, he consciously borrowed poses and compositions from prestigious historical models as part of a campaign to elevate the tone of portraiture. Unsuccessful in his attempts to gain royal patronage on his return to London, Reynolds nevertheless established a thriving portrait practice and rose to prominence within aristocratic and intellectual circles. Social as well as professional distinction made him the inevitable choice as the first President of the Royal Academy on its founding in 1768. Reynolds gave yearly *Discourses* to the students of the Academy in which he emphasized the importance of

studying Old Masters. His collected lectures remain one of the most important texts of eighteenth-century art theory in Britain.

Sarah (Kemble) Siddons as the Tragic Muse, Sir Anthony Reynolds 1783-1784

- Siddons appears as an austere icon of Tragedy
- Reynolds dressed Siddons the way the audiences were accustomed to seeing her on stage
- Two figures behind her allude to Aristotle's statement that tragedy lies in the emotional catharsis it engenders through the experience of fear and pity
- To the right, clutching a dagger, is the figure of Terror, whose grimacing face was modeled on Reynolds's own features studied in a mirror
- To the left is the figure of Pity, who holds a poisoned chalice
- Reynolds's muted color scheme enhances the drama, while the spotlight on the star allows the supporting players to fade into the shadows

Diana the Huntress, Jean- Antoine Houdon, 1782 (fly by)

- Six feet tall , weighs 747 pounds
- Houdon's first life-size bronze sculpture
- Commissioned by wealthy banker Jean Girardot de Marginy whose name is inscribed on the base, for the garden of his Paris mansion
- Classical tradition of Diana the Huntress who is both chastely nude and in hot pursuit of her quarry . Attributes are the crescent moon in her hair and the arrow.

Conversation – Domesticity – early 18th century British

- Conversation pieces – paintings show figures engaged in social gatherings.
- Poses and gestures often relate to those found in contemporary etiquette books, suggesting the importance of politeness and civility in mind – eighteenth century culture.
- Paintings are often well below life-size and pay close attention to detail
- Shared social activities –such as tea drinking- help unify the figures as a cohesive group. The family's engagement in the social ritual of tea drinking provides a demonstration of their gentility.

1. *The Gascoigne Family*, Francis Hayman 1740

- Portrait has traditionally been identified as representing a family of the name Gascoigne, but specific identities of the individuals are unknown.
- Tea set in the portrait was the most expensive object in most middle-class households- the fine china and elegant utensils boasts of good taste and worldly substance of the sitters.

- Like most tea ware used in England during the 1740s, the blue and white porcelain bowls and saucers are Chinese export ware- the brown stoneware teapot is more unusual featuring an oblong, hexagonal shape and an elaborate interlacing, serpentine handle.
2. Harp, Sebastien Erard, British ca 1800
 - Wood and gilt gesso with ormolu feet.
 3. Harpsichord, Jacob Kirkman ,1773
 4. Gaming Table

Constable, British, 1776-1837

In the early eighteenth century, British artists such as John Constable and J.M. Turner revolutionized the art of landscape painting through careful observation of nature, place, weather and time of day. For the early part of his career, Constable largely focused his interest on Suffolk, an agricultural area of eastern England where he spent his boyhood. The appeal of Constable's paintings arises from their startling personal quality expressed through brushwork of extraordinary dynamism.

Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds, John Constable, 1823-26

Constable, who had a difficult time with perspective and loathed repetitive detail, dreaded painting Salisbury Cathedral. He complained to a friend that it was "the most difficult subject in landscape I ever had on my easel." Despite this strain, critics at the 1823 Royal Academy Exhibition praised the painting's "freshness" and "truth of tones," and judged it "one of the best specimens that we have seen of the peculiarities of Mr. Constable's style."

- Second of many views of Salisbury Cathedral
- Commissioned by Dr. John Fisher, Bishop of Salisbury, who gave it to his daughter as a wedding present
- Canvas re-worked to depict a less stormy sky
- Bishop appears in the left foreground, pointing out the cathedral spire to his wife
- Female figure with parasol, probably the Bishop's daughter- advances toward him

View on the Stour near Dedham, 1822

- Painting depicts the Stour River in Constable's native Suffolk.
- Winding its way past Flatford Bridge, the river turns toward the town of Dedham, whose church rises in the distance
- Left side of canvas blocked with a group of trees to direct viewer's gaze to the distant meadow on the right
- Diagonal devices – a tilting spar, a discarded rake, an abandoned boat- draw focus to the center of the canvas, and the principal motif of labor

Constable made six large paintings of the Suffolk countryside. In an effort to draw attention to his work, he used six-foot canvases for each of the paintings in the series- now referred to as the “six footers.” Such large scale canvases were usually reserved for Biblical, historical, or mythological subjects. This series of monumental landscapes, which responded to a desire for an old pastoral England, show Constable’s determination to secure professional stature.

Flatford Mill from the Lock, c. 1811

- Oil sketch is one of at least five that Constable made during the summers of 1810 and 1811 as preparatory studies for *A Water-mill: Flatford Mill, Suffolk*, 1812, the first in his series of large “six-footers”
- Outdoor sketch made on the Stour River In the vicinity of his childhood home
- Both paint handling and color scheme used to capture the effects of topography, weather, and atmosphere

Ann and Mary Constable: The Artist’s Sisters, c 1818

- Younger sister Mary stands on the right dressed in delicate muslin gown and red riding hood
- Older sister Ann on the left dressed in woman’s version of a masculine riding habit
- Ivy vine- symbol of friendship and fidelity- links the figures and alludes to their mutual devotion
- Constable distinguished himself as a landscape painter who was also capable of great psychological insight when inspired by affection and understanding

Joseph Mallord William Turner, British, 1775-1851

Turner by contrast to Constable traveled widely. Most of his most spectacular images were inspired by his trips to Italy, where he was dazzled by the light and atmospheric traditions that simultaneously seemed to reveal and obscure this ancient romantic land. Turner often merged intense observation with what he had read or imagined of a historical or poetic place, and the resulting emotion served as a springboard to his exploration of brilliant color and light. Both Turner and Constable, though very different in their approaches, had a profound influence on the course of European and American landscape painting in the later nineteenth century.

The Grand Canal: Scene – A Street in Venice, c. 1837

- View from the Grand Canal with the celebrated Rialto bridge in the distance
- Painted on Turner’s first visit to Venice in 1819
- Painting based on the 1819 sketch, shows an imagined view of the once opulent city
- Turner had a particular narrative in mind from Shakespeare’s play *The Merchant of Venice*

- Painting presents an array of images and associations that would have been familiar to English visitors to Venice
- Figure of Shylock appears in the right foreground, leaning out a window
- Shylock brandishes a document, a set of scales, and a knife – all references to his demand of a pound of flesh in exchange for a loan
- Colorful banners decorate the buildings, and a temporary structure accommodates crowds of richly dressed onlookers
- Image of Venice is a dreamscape – shimmering highlights and reflections on the water

Neapolitan Fisher-girls Surprised Bathing by Moonlight, c. 1840

- Dazzling effects in paintings such as this one, where clearing clouds unleash a sudden burst of moonlight in the night sky, led to Turner's renown as a painter of light
- Explosion of moonlight startles a group of women who have been bathing in the Bay of Naples.
- Vesuvius erupts in the background, while a fire burns in the right foreground, underscoring the brilliance of the cold, white moonlight
- Turner sought to produce a sublime response- generally understood in the eighteenth century as “a sort of internal elevation and expansion,” that “raises the mind above its ordinary state; and fills it with a degree of wonder and astonishment, which is certainly delightful”