

**CATALOGUE OF AN  
EXHIBITION OF EARLY  
ENGLISH PORTRAITS AND  
LANDSCAPES**

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Catalogue of an Exhibition of Early English Portraits and Landscapes by John H. McFadden

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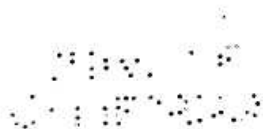
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**JOHN H. MCFADDEN**

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**FOUNDER'S DAY  
EXHIBITION**



SIR HENRY RAEBURN, R.A.  
Lady Elibank

CATALOGUE  
OF AN EXHIBITION OF  
EARLY ENGLISH PORTRAITS  
AND LANDSCAPES

LENT BY  
MR. JOHN H. McFADDEN

APRIL THE TWENTY-SIXTH  
THROUGH JUNE THE FIFTEENTH  
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DEPARTMENT OF FINE ARTS  
PITTSBURGH

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## FOREWORD

THE richest period of English art is represented by the paintings in this exhibition of Early English Portraits and Landscapes, which includes canvases by Hogarth and Wilson, by Reynolds, Gainsborough, Romney, and Raeburn, by Lawrence and Hoppner, and Constable and Turner — men whose masterpieces are the glory of the national collections of art in England and Scotland, and of many private collections in those countries as well. Indeed, it may be said that not only are the works of these great painters the glory of the national collections of art in England and Scotland, but they contribute to the artistic wealth of the entire world, and lend distinction to any collection in which they may appear.

It would doubtless be difficult to define just how greatly the painters of this period influenced each other in their work, but this much is certain: the power and influence of a really great work of art is instant and far-reaching. The most potent influence in the development of art is art itself.

For instance, the influence of Constable upon modern landscape art is fully recognized by the ablest landscape painters of our time. His powerful works, painted with great directness and sincerity and possessing as they do the essential qualities of truth and harmony, have done much to stimulate and advance the art of landscape painting.

It is at least interesting to note that wherever art

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has risen to a high degree of perfection it has been advanced by artists more or less closely allied, and that the artists of great genius who were born in England during the eighteenth century and who worked during the same period and under the same influences, bear an interesting relation in this respect to other groups of artists of other periods and of other countries.

The Greek sculptors, Phidias, Polycletus, Myron and Calamus, lived and worked during the latter part of the fifth century B.C., the golden age of Greek art. In Italy, in Florence and Venice, at the beginning of the sixteenth century, Michaelangelo, Raphael, and Titian were painting their important frescoes. And the golden era of Dutch painting is compressed into the brief period between 1625 and 1670, the period of Frans Hals, Rembrandt, Pieter de Hooch, Meindert Hobbema, Jacob van Ruisdael, Gerard Terborch, and Jan Vermeer. In later times, the art of France was greatly advanced by two distinct groups of painters — the group of 1830 and the modern impressionists.

There is a prevalent impression, especially among writers, that a few great artists have been born at rare intervals, but it is very probable, if not certain, that the power and influence in any one period of two or more men of great or exceptional intellectual power, acting and reacting through their art upon each other has been responsible for the extraordinary development and achievement of art at certain times in the history of the world.

The English school of painting first became of international importance during the eighteenth century,

and its highest achievement has been in the field of portraiture and landscape. In portraiture, distinction and beauty of line and form, and a profound knowledge of the subtle quality of colour: in landscape, a tendency toward a direct and simple representation of the truth of nature: these are characteristics of English art of the eighteenth century.

Thomas Hogarth has been frequently referred to as the founder of the English School because he was the first man of great genius to appear. Born at the very end of the seventeenth century, in 1697, he was already famous in London for his paintings and engravings at a time when Sir Joshua Reynolds, Gainsborough, and Romney were still young boys. Hogarth's first notable success was a series of six paintings, a moral story told by consecutive scenes representing phases of London life. In his portraits there is a certain force and directness, and an unerring grasp of the character of his subjects.

Richard Wilson, who was seventeen years younger than Hogarth, was the earliest of the English landscape painters, a pioneer in that field of painting which has since become of great importance. His paintings, ignored and unappreciated during his lifetime, are coming to be more and more valued.

That Sir Joshua Reynolds, Thomas Gainsborough, and George Romney, three men of rare ability, all lived and worked in London during a period of about fifteen years, and yet, because of jealousies and misunderstandings, were not even on terms of cordiality, seems an extraordinary fact.