



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

The autumn exhibition *Below Stairs: 400 Years of Servants' Portraits* offers an unusual opportunity to see fascinating images of those who usually remain invisible. The exhibition offers intriguing stories of the particular individuals at the centre of great houses, colleges or business institutions and reveals the admiration and affection that caused the commissioning of a portrait or photograph.

We are also celebrating the completion of the new scheme for Trafalgar Square with the young people's education project and exhibition, *Circling the Square*, which features photographs that record the moments when the Square has acted as a touchstone in history – politicians, activists, philosophers and film stars have all been photographed in the Square.

Photographic portraits also feature in the *DJs* display in the Bookshop Gallery, the Terry O'Neill display in the Balcony Gallery and the *Schweppes Photographic Portrait Prize* launched in November in the Porter Gallery.

Gerald Scarfe's rather particular view of the men and women selected for the Portrait Gallery is published at the end of September. *Heroes & Villains*, is a light hearted and occasionally outrageous view of those who have made history, from Elizabeth I and Oliver Cromwell to Delia Smith and George Best.

The Gallery is very grateful for the support of all of its Patrons and Members – please do encourage others to become Members and enjoy an association with us, or consider becoming a Patron, giving significant extra help to the Gallery's work and joining a special circle of supporters.

*Sandy Nairne*  
Sandy Nairne  
Director

## MY FAVOURITE PORTRAIT



© Bruce Oldfield



It's always difficult when you're asked to choose one item to highlight in a collection, particularly when it's from my favourite London Gallery.

On this occasion I made no hesitation and headed straight up to the first floor and into the Early Twentieth Century Gallery.

I'm drawn here because of my long-time interest in the art and writing of the interwar period and find it interesting to see how like minds saw each other and how artists perceived and represented themselves.

It's a room of contrasts from Mervyn Peake's manic self-portrait to the elegant image by Gerald Brockhurst of the Duchess of Windsor, but the picture that engages me most is Christopher Wood's stylish and telling portrait of the pianist and composer, Constant Lambert.

Both men were in their twenties, both highly regarded in their own field, inhabiting the elevated Bohemian circles in London of the Sitwells, William Walton and the Nicolson's, and in Paris of Diaghlev, Picasso and Cocteau.

The painting shows a rather fey Constant Lambert sporting a navy shirt and a vivid fuchsia tie sitting uncomfortably upright, his hands crossed in his lap. Behind his right shoulder sits a very large bottle of gin and a single glass. He was to die 20 years later of chronic alcohol abuse while Christopher Wood threw himself under a train at the age of 29.

**Bruce Oldfield**

*Bruce Oldfield OBE has been one of our foremost fashion designers for 30 years, and his glamorous creations have been sought after by many well-known names such as Jerry Hall, Barbra Streisand, Catherine Zeta-Jones and Diana Ross.*

## GALLERY ON TOUR

### HOLBURNE MUSEUM OF ART, BATH



*Garrick Reading to his Wife*

This autumn the Holburne Museum of Art in Bath opens the third in its series of annual exhibitions on Georgian portraits. *Every Look Speaks* explores portraits of the actor David Garrick (1717–1779), the subject of more great portraits than any Briton excepting kings and queens. Gainsborough, Hogarth,

Reynolds, Zoffany and their rivals found him an inspirational subject as they vied to capture his elusive genius on canvas.

The exhibition will include three loans from the National Portrait Gallery, painted over three successive years when Garrick was at the height of his success. The drawing by Nathaniel Dance (1735–1811) of 1771 is an intimate sketch of Garrick at the breakfast table; the two had been friendly since meeting in Rome in 1764. Garrick kept the drawing in his library, and his wife Eva Maria considered it the best likeness of the hundreds made of him. In 1773 Garrick's old friend Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723–92) painted the actor reading to his wife. They had been married happily for twenty-four years, and Garrick is said to have relied on her opinion and advice in many areas of his work. The classicising profile portrait by John Keyse Sherwin (1751–90) was drawn around 1772, an heroic style that conferred on Garrick the eternal fame usually reserved for kings or poets.

*Every Look Speaks* will be accompanied by a fully illustrated catalogue with an essay by Dr Desmond Shawe-Taylor, Director of the Dulwich Picture Gallery. It runs at the Holburne Museum of Art, Great Pulteney Street, Bath BA2 4DB, from 16 September to 7 December 2003. Open from Tuesday to Saturday 10am–5pm, Sunday 2.30–5.30pm. For details of special events, please call 01225 466 669 or visit [www.bath.ac.uk/holburne](http://www.bath.ac.uk/holburne).

## AUTUMN 2003

### PHOTOGRAPHY DISPLAYS

Room 31 | Balcony Gallery | Room 41 | Bookshop Gallery

Since the opening of the new Ondaatje Wing, Photography Displays at the Gallery have acted as a major draw to our ever increasing number of visitors. The autumn 2003 programme includes a wide cross-section of types of photography, nearly all recently acquired and shown for the first time. In order to take in all the aspects a tour should start on the First Floor in the Early Twentieth Century Galleries (Room 31). Currently on view, and continuing until Gallery refurbishment at the end of September, are several displays. As an introduction *Recent Photographic Acquisitions* in the display case at the far end of the Gallery shows 12 items including a Steichen portrait of the 1920s of Beatrice Lillie and turn of the century portraits by H. Walter Barnett and Langfier of Mewes and Davis, architects and designers of The Ritz. There are also 1951 Festival of Britain portraits of artists and composers by Lola Walker (who was one of three official photographers appointed at the time).

In the same room are displays of newly discovered photographs taken by photographers working for Baron Studios. Eight portraits, newly printed from original negatives from the 1950s and 1960s show the musician sisters Jacqueline and Hilary Du Pre with their instruments, the comedian and actor Arthur English with his kipper tie, the designer F. H. Henrion in his studio and Sooty and his handler Harry Corbett at an early stage in their careers. These images came from a very large collection of negatives dating between 1956–1974, which were generously given to us by Godfrey Argent in 1996.

On the same level the Balcony Gallery plays host to a new display of forty works by the celebrity photographer Terry O'Neill taken over 30 years. The display follows that of his contemporary Patrick Lichfield and as in the previous case allows us to acquire a group of works from significant photographers of the recent past. Highlights include a previously unseen early Beatles photograph from 1963 as well as unfamiliar portraits from the 1980s of Derek Jarman and Kenneth Branagh and the Queen and Prince Phillip in an unusually relaxed 'at home' study with a favourite corgi performing for the camera. This continues until March 2004.

Moving down to the Ground Floor there are new displays in the Transept including a group of 14 photographs of leading

environmentalists, photographed earlier this year, by Nicola Kurtz. The subjects are shown in settings such as with favourite livestock on their organic farms or appropriate locations particularly associated with their campaigning work. This mini-display was initiated by the photographer who had previously shown a series of black and white portraits of crime writers in the Bookshop Gallery last year.



Harry Corbett with 'Sooty' by Count Zichy, 1954



Princess Julia by Chris Lopez

On the opposite wall of the Transept is a new grouping *Figures from Public Life* that includes recently acquired portraits of Paul Boateng and David Lammy by Sal Idriss. They are shown in the context of other photographs of subjects such as the Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone and the newly appointed Chairman of the Commission for Racial Equality, Trevor Phillips. Presently the Ground Floor displays serve to reflect contemporary figures in the news. By changing the photographs on display regularly we can stimulate the interests of our more frequent visitors as well as responding to events of the day.

Along the corridor to the right is Room 41. This is currently given over to *Recent Commissions* and *New Acquisitions* with the inner room devoted to a packed display of photographs whose current focus is of leading people in the art world by

Johnnie Shand Kydd and a cross section of pop personalities from Beth Orton, Ms Dynamite through to seasoned rockers and performers Ozzy Osbourne and Jools Holland.

Descending down to the Gallery's lowest level we find the ever popular basement Bookshop Gallery is the venue for 21 new photographs of DJs by Chris Lopez. The staging of this display breaks new ground for the Gallery and reflects the ever changing professions that make up the role models for some of the Gallery's younger visitors. Normally only heard on the radio and internet, Lopez gives us the faces of this significant group of figures who have had a major impact on youth culture. Over the last few years DJs have competed in importance with the musicians whose music they play, mix and edit.

In November, the results of our first annual *Schweppes Photographic Portrait Prize* will be seen in the Porter Gallery. The aim of the competition is to expose and highlight the talents and work of lesser known photographers. Their works, in time, will, we hope, enter the collection and form part of the growing collection of contemporary photographs. Our aim continues to keep the Gallery in the forefront for those whose interests lie in discovering what is best and most inspirational in contemporary photographic portraiture.

**Terence Pepper** Curator of Photographs



Zac Goldsmith by Nicola Kurtz

© Nicola Kurtz 2003

© Chris Lopez 2003

## BELOW STAIRS:

### 400 YEARS OF SERVANTS' PORTRAITS

16 October 2003 – 11 January 2004 | Wolfson Gallery



© The Arts Club

*The Arts Club's woman chef by Francis Edwin Hodge, 1935*

The world of the domestic servant may seem as remote as the Planet Zog, but, amazingly, it was fully operational less than a lifetime ago. When we were making the film *Gosford Park*, I was lucky enough to be able to rely on the help and experience of some remarkable individuals who had been in service during the 1930s, the period in which the film was set and, when talking to them, I was constantly struck by how recent the servant-motored life had been.

It was the Second World War which drew a line under everything. Of course, there were servants after the war and quite large staffs survive even to this day in rare households, but nevertheless I realised as my researches progressed, that after 1939 the pyramid structure of promotion, the logic of a career in service had gone. Presumably it has gone forever. As my late father once said, when challenged for his views on the continuing blight of the class system, 'What class system? All we have now is class prejudice. The system has been destroyed.'

What I attempted to convey in my script was that being a servant was a job like any other, with its merits and disadvantages. Obviously, there are many far more degrading ways of earning a living than being a trusted servant in a large country house but it is a complicated issue, this servant-master relationship and not always very charming. In the Duke of Portland's house at Welbeck, for example, staff had to turn their faces to the wall whenever members of the family walked by, but that was exceptional and in fact, the hierarchies below stairs were, if anything, more severe and unforgiving than those above. For most servants the personalities of the butler, the cook and the housekeeper were of more immediate relevance than those of the family upstairs and tyranny in the Servants' Hall certainly existed. The ladder of promotion was laid down and had to be observed with no steps missed. In fact this led to a constant uprooting of

the ambitious servant, which explodes the cherished myth of ancient retainers remaining with families until they keeled over with old age into the moat. Although some servants may have given a lifetime's service to one family, the vast majority were forever on the move. In the 1880s the average time for a footman to remain in a London house was eighteen months. When one considers that few housemaids stayed beyond their mid-twenties, one can understand why almost every letter of the period is filled with enquiries about decent cooks and competent ladies' maids, where to find a still-room maid, a reliable footman or an assistant chef. Sometimes the anxiety to fill an empty post could lead to bad behaviour and a certain amount of poaching of staff went on between houses which was considered to be frightfully bad form. On and on the entreaties go until one has a glimpse of the burden that maintaining a large household must have become – which was, of course, one of the reasons for its eventual demise.

Contrary to modern belief, I am not of the opinion that servants invariably felt oppressed by their sense of difference. If they had done, the system would not have lasted a thousand years and, after all, is it any different from being a factory worker today? All that most of us are interested in is when our next holiday is. In any event, to be at the top of the tree was quite something; to be the butler at Blenheim Palace was a very important job and he would have been respected by one and all. But, above all, as I have said, for most people being a servant was just a job. Indeed, for women it was often the only job available and service for a young housemaid was in many ways the working class equivalent of finishing school, where she would learn to sew and cook before leaving to get married. For men, a career in service might sometimes be seen as a soft option but (and it was when compared to going down a pit) it was a pretty acceptable occupation too.

In *Gosford Park* the director, Robert Altman, wanted to examine the whole concept of class. He was interested in very disparate people who are brought together by circumstance rather than desire, all with a different agenda, and he felt that the extraordinary proximity of the servants and the masters in a great house was a good opportunity for this. To bring it off effectively, it was vital that everything was accurate and that the details were absolutely right. Robert Altman minds very much about the details of the films he makes, but then, happily, so do I. By his own admission, he was making a film about people he knew nothing about – an alien tribe that lived differently and spoke differently. Partly of course he wanted to protect himself from



*Viscount Coke with Heads of Department at Holkham in 1993 by Andrew Festing*

By kind permission of the Earl of Leicester and the Trustees of the Holkham Estate



*Heads of Six of Hogarth's Servants by William Hogarth, c 1750–5*

accusations of inaccuracy but, more than this, he wanted the evocation of the period to be as right as it possibly could be and so, as a result, and almost uniquely for a writer, I was on set during the entire shooting of the film, in my hat of Technical Advisor.

One thing I do know: I could never have made the film with an English director, who would have felt undermined by my constant comments. I was forever pouncing on details: 'Get the gloves off him.' 'Get rid of the forks and the napkins' 'She wouldn't be in this room.' Being American and filming a story about a foreign world meant that Altman's amour propre was not in the least bit wounded by any observations or criticisms I made even if I did become rather a 'Monsieur Non' figure. The trouble is, in that situation, you only open your mouth when something is wrong. If everything's correct, you say nothing. But we managed to rub along together and in the end we were both pretty proud of the result.

*Below Stairs* is a serious and illuminating exhibition and one shouldn't judge the system it commemorates too harshly. Rather, we should applaud the National Portrait Gallery for daring to address a subject that has been taboo for far too long.

**Julian Fellowes**



*Hon. Thomas and Hon. John Hamilton with a Negro Servant by William Aikman, 1728 (detail)*

## CIRCLING THE SQUARE:

### PHOTOGRAPHY HISTORY AND A LONDON LANDMARK

13 September 2003 – February 2004 | Studio Gallery

Trafalgar Square has finally shaken off the builders' hoardings and emerged free from the strangulating grip of traffic with a newly pedestrianised north side and entrance into the Square itself. The scheme has also led to the widening of the pavements in and around the Gallery and inspired a dramatic new proposal for the improvement of the area surrounding St Martin in the Fields. With the Greater London Authority now managing the Square and providing round the clock 'heritage wardens' crime statistics have dropped significantly and the area is enjoying something of a renaissance. All of which is good news for the National Portrait Gallery, which together with the National Gallery form what planners lovingly refer to as the active edge. Indeed Trafalgar Square stands at the symbolic and geographic heart of London and while our two institutions might represent the arts, the other arterial routes that radiate from Nelson's Column lead down Whitehall to Government, through Admiralty Arch to the Monarchy and along the Strand to Fleet Street and the former centre of the British press.

Its significance as a central point has not been lost on either the State which has encouraged its use as a site of nationalist celebration or political dissenters who have rallied there to voice their grievances. The list of events that have passed through and left their mark include Chartist and Women's suffrage, the Jarrow March and the Black Shirts, two World Wars, coronations and state funerals, royal weddings and world cups, poll tax riots and the peace movement. It is the perfect expression of a performance of collective national identity with all its inherent complexities and complications. These inscriptions are of course indelibly marked on the photographs taken in the Square by generations of photographers in an unbroken sweep of over 160 years. It is this legacy of images that form the basis for the exhibition opening in the Studio Gallery this September entitled *Circling the Square*.

A selection of images taken by itinerant photographers who doubled as pigeon feed sellers and made postcard portraits are complemented by more recent photographs taken by groups of young people as part of a photography education programme organised by the National Portrait Gallery Education Department. One of the groups is made up of young homeless people from the London Connection day centre based at St Martin in the Fields. The challenge of setting up large format cameras and negotiating with passers-by to appear in their portraits has obvious educational benefits and the opportunity



*The Staff of Trafalgar Square, c 1860, Unknown photographer, Albumen print*



*Postcard c 1908*

of exhibiting their work alongside some of the acknowledged masters of the medium will provide a memorable positive experience for a group whose recent experiences may have been largely negative.

Photography and Trafalgar Square are forever intertwined. It is believed that the very first photograph to be made in London and the very first cityscape to be taken in Britain was a Daguerreotype view down Whitehall made in the autumn of the first year of the announcement of photography, 1839. There is of course a delicious irony in the French claim to photography being triumphantly planted on the southern slope of a space dedicated to the memory of the Battle of Trafalgar.

The British claimant to the authorship of photography William Henry Fox Talbot made his salt print impression from a calotype negative of Trafalgar Square in early April 1844. Chantrey's statue of William IV had been put in place just two months earlier. The base of the column still encased in scaffolding and surrounded by workman's huts and advertising hoardings reveals its empty sockets. The first of the bronze reliefs would not be attached until 1849. *The Times* sarcastically commented, 'that for the great edification of the sightseeing world and doubtless to the great happiness of that useful class of British subjects – the bill stickers a wooden barrier may still tell of Jullien's concerts, Adelphi and circus attractions...so that most elegant and complete square in Europe with its massive and finely chiselled granite, its fine jet of water, will be disfigured by another unsightly hoard.'

As the popular press became the dominant media in the 1900s the need for a constant supply of photographs gave rise to a labyrinth of photographic press agencies. Spectacle attracted the camera and the possibilities of the ever present camera encouraged spectacle. On slow news days photographers would be despatched to London landmarks to create pictures from nothing and add colour to the pages. Typical and saleable stories included the use of the fountains and the lions as an impromptu adventure playground, the vagaries and extremes of the weather, the ever present problem of homelessness and vagrancy and the periodic cleaning of the column.

In 1937 the *Daily Express* employed a photographer of a different calibre when they commissioned France's 'little surrealist', Henri Cartier Bresson to photograph the crowds assembled in the square to witness the coronation procession of George VI. With his Leica camera and in a state of constant motion he deftly pickpocketed images from an unsuspecting crowd.

The exhibition also incorporates two other important forms of photography into its mix, fashion and portraiture. There is a beguiling study of two models on the portico of the National Gallery by Norman Parkinson, a typically wild image of Jill Kennington hoisted onto the plinths by sixties photographer,



Rosemary Evison, *Trafalgar Square, 1957*

John Cowan and a pair of photographs of models on the lions taken for British *Vogue* by Oliver Toscani who subsequently made his name linking icons of national identity with fashion in a series of controversial campaigns for Benetton.

The exhibition departs from the Gallery's more accepted role as a collector of portraits of the men and women who have shaped British History. However it fulfils our aims of being a museum of political and social history and as a centre of excellence for the display and promotion of photography and offers the challenge of presenting a different and inclusive form of national portrait set against an unchanging backdrop.

**Roger Hargreaves** *Photography Education Officer*

© Rosemary Evison

## HORATIO NELSON

Room 17 | Weldon Galleries

**Dominating Trafalgar Square, on a column 185 feet high stands a 17 foot high statue of Lord Nelson. To celebrate the revival of the square, Tom Pocock discusses Beechey's portrait of Nelson.**

The picture in the Kensington saleroom on that viewing-day in 1966 was just catalogued, 'Portrait of a Naval Officer' and was in need of cleaning. Odd, I thought, that they don't know it's Nelson and passed by. That day, or the next, Sir Hugh Leggatt, the art dealer, also noticed and recognised the portrait but he realised that it had been painted by Sir William Beechey. At the auction, he bought it for a relative song. It is now in the National Portrait Gallery.

For many, this is the portrait of Nelson, but not to all. Some students and biographers of the admiral have chosen others: the self-confident Nelson of Abbott; Füger's uptight Nelson; Gahagan's relaxed, marble Nelson; the harsh profile by De Koster; or even the debauched admiral as seen by a Sicilian artist. The principle organiser of the coming bicentennial commemoration of Trafalgar would choose the modern waxwork at the Royal Naval Museum, Portsmouth, while I prefer the old one by Catherine Andras in Westminster Abbey, which Emma Hamilton wanted to kiss on the lips although the paint was still wet.

The width of choice can be seen in Richard Walker's comprehensive work, *The Nelson Portraits*, published five years ago. All are obviously Nelson, yet all are different and that is as it should be. Their variety reflects the complexities of the man and that is what makes him so fascinating. He is Superman and Everyman. He is the captain who challenges a timorous



Horatio Nelson, Viscount Nelson by Sir William Beechey

midshipman to race him to the masthead and the admiral who tells his captains that they can do no wrong by laying their ships alongside the enemy. He is the tender husband and the hysterical adulterer. He is the humane commander and the ruthless conqueror, who can deliver captive Italian rebels – men and women – to the cruelty of a Neapolitan court and who threatens to burn Copenhagen. He is the phrase-maker and writer of fine prose, who, a few hours

before his death in battle, composed the most beautiful prayer in the English language. He is described by a friend as being 'in many points a great man; in others, a baby' but who gave his country a century of global dominance.

Nelson's story yaws between extremes of human behaviour and can assume an Arthurian quality; no wonder his most recent biographer wrote of 'the poetry of Trafalgar'. The many faces of Nelson glitter across two centuries like a cut diamond.

**Tom Pocock**

*Tom Pocock's many books include* Horatio Nelson, Nelson and His World, Nelson's Women, The Young Nelson in the Americas and The Terror Before Trafalgar: Nelson, Napoleon, and the Secret War.

# SPECIAL OFFER FOR NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY SUPPORTERS

## AUTUMN OFFER

### HEROES & VILLAINS BY GERALD SCARFE



© Gerald Scarfe

Agatha Christie by Gerald Scarfe

#### An Introduction to *Heroes & Villains* by Gerald Scarfe:

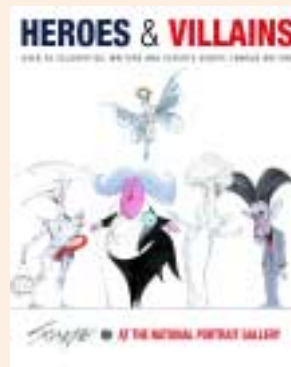
When I was hanging an exhibition of my work at the National Portrait Gallery in 1999, I spent many hours walking around the Gallery, looking at the portraits in detail. I began to wonder what these people were really like, and whether I was getting a true picture of them. I tried to ignore the skill and flattery of the artist and find the person behind the image – and I wondered if, had I been painting Henry VIII himself, for instance, I would have been brave enough to portray him as he really was. Unlikely, I think – I'd probably have been as flattering as the rest of them, preferring to leave the palace with my head.

That's where the idea for this book came from: a light-hearted attempt to scrape away the oil, watercolour or pastel from the canvasses and depict some of the National Portrait Gallery's most illustrious inhabitants with the unflattering pen of a caricaturist, rather than the flattering brush of the portrait painter.

So, in a way, this book represents a criticism of commissioned portraiture. Perhaps I have a biased view of this, tending to see caricature as being nearer to representing the truth of a person than an attractive oil painting does. I've been through the experience of being painted myself and to my mind was made to look better than I was – or at least depicted in my 'best light'. On the few occasions I have had people to sit for me, I may have pulled my punches, knowing that the sitter will ask to see his likeness at the end – just as in any social situation, there's an instinct to be polite.

I prefer to watch my subjects unobserved, at a general gathering, perhaps: a drinks party or party political conference. Here I make quick sketches, sometimes only a few lines, and try to capture on paper his or her character. I then take these sketches back to my studio and amalgamate them into one drawing, capturing the essence, like reducing a sauce to its essential flavour. Even where politicians are concerned, I wouldn't dream of insulting them personally, but in the quietness of my studio I'm not concerned by what my subjects will think. I'm not purposefully setting out to be vicious to people – just attempting to say what I want about them without any interference. Caricature is my job: I've made my living being rude to people. I see it as truth.

**Gerald Scarfe**



*Heroes & Villains* by Gerald Scarfe is available from the Gallery Bookshop at the Gallery price of £20.00 (hardback). Patrons and Members receive a 10% discount.

A selection of caricatures by Gerald Scarfe will be on display in the Bookshop Gallery from 30 September 2003 to 4 April 2004.

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#### FACE TO FACE

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Front cover: **Oliver Cromwell, Heroes & Villains** by Gerald Scarfe © Gerald Scarfe

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