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A Short Cultural History of Britain

**Ministry of Education and Science,
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“Luhansk Taras Shevchenko National University”**

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*A manual for students of foreign languages departments
of higher education institutions*

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A Short Cultural History of Britain is a manual intended for students of foreign languages department, specialities “Language and Literature (English)”, “Philology. English and Oriental language and literature” and “Translation Studies”. Its aim is to give a general idea of artistic styles in European art from the Gothic style through the Romantic movement, and the detailed information on the history of theatre, music, visual arts and architecture of Great Britain.

The content of the book conforms to the requirements of the syllabus of “Country Studies: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland” for senior students. It can be used by teachers of English at colleges and secondary schools, and by students of institutes, universities and other educational institutions.

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PREFACE

A Short Cultural History of Britain is intended for the learners of English who study the language of their major, and need to know more about Great Britain, and who can study British culture as part of a general English course. For the sake of clarity and readability, the authors have concentrated on major artistic trends, issues and artists, but, certainly, the given manual is far from being a comprehensive survey of the arts and letters of almost the last five hundred years.

The book is divided into two parts – one deals with the artistic movements and trends, and identifies interwoven relationships existing between literature, drama in particular, and visual arts, music and theatre. The second gives a brief history of music, theatre, painting, sculpture and architecture. Each part of the book is followed by a set of assignments (questions, comments, tests and the like) guiding the students in their process of the material comprehension. The authors do not aim at covering everything, but the bibliography at the end provides sources and a guide to further reading.

The Main Artistic Styles

A word “style” in old Latin denoted “a small rod with pointed end for scratching letters on wax-covered tablets and flat end for obliterating”.¹ Style may take its definition from a single artist, author, musician (as Homeric or Wagner), from a time or a period (as Medieval or Renaissance), from the subject (as philosophical or tragic), from a general type (as monumental), from its geographic origin (as Florentine), from the purpose of the creator (as ironic or diplomatic) and some others. Often several of these categories are combined, e.g. the Russian Baroque Style.

Style is a historical category. Nowhere style remains constant or unified. Everywhere there are survivals from earlier styles, anticipations of succeeding styles, and interpretations of the past or present. However one group of style characteristics is, at any given time, dominant. Acad. D.S. Likhachev states that one of the most important characteristics of any style is a unity of a series of certain qualities. This unity covers both the subject-matter and the manner of setting it forth.²

Most changes in style in the arts are often attributed to political and economic causes. Without ignoring them it is necessarily to state that changes in style since the 14th century in European art are chiefly due to the desire of artists, writers, musicians to discover new ways of artistic expression. Each epoch seems to have new eyes and ears: “Art is the creation of individuals, but is also the expression of a place and a time”.

Every age has a number of artistic currents running side by side; often there lies a choice of several currents, and the creator can decide whether he will go with this or that current, with the main current or against it. Often the artist is not fully aware of the matter of style; and the latter is sometimes more what the creator takes for granted that what he knowingly creates.

¹ The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language. 4th ed. Boston: Houghton Mufflin Company, 2000. – 1072 p.

² Лихачев Д.С. О филологии. – М.: Высшая школа, 1989. – 208 с.

The transformations of styles from the 14th century to the second part of the 19th century in arts and letters were all deeply affected by a continual study and restudy of Roman art and Latin literature.

New styles usually began in Italy, but the greatest achievements in these styles were often the work of non-Italians (Shakespeare, Racine, Bach, Rembrandt), though they bear the mark of Italian influence. What began in Italy at one time or another spread to the rest of Europe. Only the Gothic style, Neo-Classicism and Romantism invented by the 18th century in Germany and England did not have Italian roots.

Gothic Art

The name of Gothic came into existence in Italy at the Renaissance. Its origin may be traced to the fact that students at that time supposed that buildings of the earlier Middle Ages, which differed from the true Roman manner, were the work of Goths who overthrew the Empire.

Gothic Art was almost exclusively ecclesiastical and its centre of activities was the church. The highest achievements were in architecture which concentrated on creating a House of God. The Gothic style emerged in the first cathedrals of Ile-de-France in the 12th century.

Gothic architecture is characterized by the use of ribbed vaults, buttresses and flying buttresses; it is also identified by the systematic use of the pointed arch and by new decorative forms. The emphasis is laid on vertical movement. Pointed arches, with their steeple effects, permitted greater heights than were obtainable with the round arch previously employed by the Romans.

The new style of architecture created a new demand for monumental figure sculpture. It was on the portal of the Gothic cathedral that medieval sculpture began an existence independent of architectural functional architecture and sculpture and had become equal partners. Following the vertical rhythm of the portal jambs the statues, at first were stiff and rigid, but soon the figures began to assume vitality, their limbs became free, the draperies began to billow and hang in fold following the movements of the bodies. The

heads and bodies were mere types, but soon they began to achieve individuality and to show characteristics of age and status while the demand for the portrayal of mental qualities led to the expression of psychological values.

The growth of monumental sculpture deeply influenced the work of carves in wood, ivory, bone: it gave a new stimulus to the art of goldsmith.

Gothic period was the greatest of all ages in history of stained glass. The early Gothic windows had relatively larger openings. This made it necessary to introduce iron subdivisions to support the glass panels. At first this consisted of simple verticals and horizontals. Later they grew more complicated with circles and quatrefoils. Within these forms there were figure compositions called medallions. The figures of the medallions allowed the action of the Bible stories. The whole thing was surrounded by stylized floral or ornamental borders.

In England of the Gothic buildings among of the most outstanding are the choir of Canterbury Cathedral, Westminster Abbey, Wells Cathedral in Somerset. The period of the English Gothic began in 1175 when Bishop Reginald began building of the cathedral in Wells and lasted till 1500. All such dates are, of course, the very roughest approximation, for one period in the art merges almost imperceptibly into another. As the old declines, the new rises within it and there is in history no clear beginning and no ends in the whole sequence of things.

One must remember that Gothic art was the first great renewal of culture after the breakdown of the Roman Empire in the West. The artists and writers of the Later Middle Ages had developed a marked taste for realism in painting (e.g. illustrations in Queen Mary's Psalter, about 1310), sculpture and literature (Chaucer, Thomas the Rhymer). Great interest in sharp observation and good deal of technical ability to represent it in arts and letters were not lost in the next age.

Renaissance

Renaissance is “revival of arts and letters under the influence of classical models in 14th – 16th century”.³ The style appeared in Italy; as a rule it is divided into two periods – the Early Renaissance (in Italy runs from 1300 to 1500) and the High Renaissance (from 1500 to 1530). The movement toward a new style proceeded along two lines: a) a continuation of the Gothic desire to get realistic effects; b) the representation of a classical ideal of a harmonious universe. The genesis of the style is to be found in a more secular attitude toward life.

The growth of towns and of the middle class by the 13th century had become a marked feature of the society on the Isles. In 1377 roughly 12% of the British population was urban. The accumulation of wealth in towns and their active civil life helped to bring a more worldly view of life. An old society that was agricultural, feudal and ecclesiastic now had been growing within it a new society that was urban, national and secular in outlook. A new society, centred less on nobles and priests and more on bourgeois men of affairs, was coming into being. Man, rather than God, became for many thinkers the centre of all things.

The artistic, literally and musical styles in these two centuries are marked by an attempt to achieve new forms of expression. For sculpture, architecture, poetry and prose there were surviving classical models, for painting almost nothing of the classical past was known directly, but the style of classical sculpture was a help for the renewal of painting. Music without the help of classical models rose at that period to the position of a major art.

The first great figure of Renaissance letters was Petrarch (d. 1374). His verses in the 15th and 16th centuries set a pattern; poets borrowed from him – his vocabulary, his figures of speech, and his method of analyzing of emotions. They loved his elegance and perfection of form. His place in the history of literary style lies in the emphasis on the idea that formal perfection in literature is of great

³ The Concise Oxford Dictionary / Ed. by J. Pearsall. 10th ed. – Oxford University Press, 1999. – p. 949

value in and for itself, and that the best guide for the writer is the study of classical literature.

Boccaccio, his great compatriot, showed how to use contemporary material for functional purposes and how to handle medieval themes together with those of classical mythology and history. In "The Decameron" he presents all sorts of human types, but his tendency is to treat them as types, i.e., as persons dominated by a single trait, such as greed, lust, jealousy. His tales were widely-read. In far-off England he influenced Chaucer, Lyly, Dryden. He justified the natural man and the claims of appetite against the asceticism and the mysticism; he proclaimed that man was not only to toil and suffer, but to enjoy life.

In the 13th century Italian poets invented the sonnet, a genre unknown to the ancients. Besides the sonnet the Italians created the novella, the pastoral romance and the romantic epic. And they perfected them to such a degree that the rest of Europe accepted them as classic. Besides French, English and German writers drew hundreds of plots from Italian tales.

The painting, sculpture and architecture remained primarily a religious art. Secular subjects, particularly those drawn from classical sources, had a growing appeal and popularity but remained secondary to religious subjects. Most of the great paintings of Leonardo, Raphael, Titian focused on religious themes though this painting glorified the God-like qualities inherent in man. The painter was not to copy nature. The subject should be of an elevated sort. Genre scenes from everyday life could find no place in the repertory of the grand manner. Landscape background must be reduced to a minimum, and individual peculiarities of human appearance eliminated.

England, in comparison with France, was culturally a stage farther from Italy, the land of Renaissance. While Frenchmen were producing works of art in a new Renaissance style, England was either still following medieval styles, or was importing sculptures and paintings from abroad.

The highest achievements of the Renaissance style in England were in drama and music. The public loved the theatre and to supply the demand there was a great outpouring of plays in the later 16th and early 17th centuries. The first highly gifted poet who

turned to writing popular plays was Ch. Marlowe (1564 – 93). His special contributions were to discover the effectiveness of blank verse for playwriting and the value of history as material for plays. Marlowe represents his age and the spirit of Renaissance in his belief in life and in his enthusiasm for all experience. Shakespeare is the greatest man of letters of the period. But a number of his best comedies and his greatest tragedies all lay in future, and belong in their style and spirit to the Age of Mannerism, rather than to that of Renaissance. Though it is difficult to date the close of the Renaissance style, usually scholars connect it with the death of Elizabeth I (1603) and the arrival in power of the troublesome Stuarts.

Music was used on all sorts of occasions: coronation, tournaments, weddings, baptisms, feast days, burials. The educated public was getting interested in music, judging from the more frequent representation of singers and instrumental performers in painting and literature. Musical style at that period was influenced by the patronage of the church. But the Age saw also the princes and nobles among the patrons of music. This helps to account for the large amount of secular music. The chief centres of musical instruction were the choir schools, cathedrals, chapels of princes and nobles. The standards of performance of religious music were very high.

Music is primarily vocal, though there begins to be more writing for solo instruments and ensembles. The leading musical forms were the mass, the anthem, the secular madrigals. Music was supposed to represent a harmony that existed in the universe. The chief characteristics of the Renaissance music are the following: its absence of strong rhythmic accent, a lack of emphasis on originality of themes used, its absence of climax.

The greatest English composer and the “last master of the Renaissance style” of church music was William Burd (d. 1623), who wrote settings for both Catholic and Anglican religious services. His writing is very extensive and includes not only religious works but much secular vocal music and some instrumental compositions. Burd’s style shows great sensitivity to the text. No one ever surpassed him in the writing of canons. Burd is called “the father” of keyboard music because of the series of remarkable compositions he

wrote for the virginal. His keyboard music was influential not only in England, but all over Western Europe.

Mannerism (1530 – 1600 and Later)

The term “mannerism” is used to mark the Post-Renaissance age in all the arts. The word was first given currency by Vasari, who spoke of men who painted in the manner of some earlier master and thus did not work from nature but from the details taken from earlier artists, building them up into new, strange and complicated groupings.

The tendency in art and literature now was to refashion visible things and ordinary experiences according to fanciful patterns of the imagination. The very essence of the new style was experiment: each artist or writer seems to have been determined to express himself in tensely personal style.

Factors influencing the change of style from the High Renaissance to Mannerism were many disturbing and unsettling elements in the political, social and religious life of the period after 1520 (the Lutheran Revolution, the Fall and Ruin of Rome in 1527, Spanish influence and tyranny over the Italian states, the Reformation in England, economic stagnation, Copernicus’ theory). Everything seemed insecure and as a result narrowness, formality and intolerance took the place of the broader horizons, the democracy and the receptiveness to new ideas of an earlier age. The Age of Mannerism stood between a faith in a good, natural order and growing awareness of chaos, between the Renaissance joy in life and a growing disillusion in which men become more aware of darkness and uncertainty. The Renaissance believed in harmony, proportion and it found these in the universe. Mannerist art reveals an impression of confusion. It lacks the feeling of strength and security of the art of the High Renaissance.

In Mannerism there is often a mere federation of forms that sometimes verges on chaos. At times it seems to lack any general sense of structure and gives independent organization to separate parts of a work. On occasion, there is little relation in a painting or a poem between the size and thematic importance of figures and incidents. Motifs that seem to be of secondary significance in a

picture or a poem are often made very prominent, and what is apparently the leading theme is devalued and depressed. Mannerism's style loves elaborate figures of speech and plays on words, paradox, prolonged metaphors, hyperbole, allusions and so on. Mannerist artists and writers were fond of the symbolical and the allegorical. Handbooks of emblems, symbols and other iconographical guides were very popular and much used. It is necessary to add that similar attitudes prevailed in later artistic movements – romanticism, impressionism, surrealism.

As the Mannerist style was extended beyond Italy, its influence was mixed with the simultaneous influence of the Italian Renaissance and was usually combined with local traditions that still maintained many medieval characteristics. In English architecture, for example, Gothic traditions are combined with classical features in strange mixtures: e.g. steep roofs, defence towers and exuberant decorative details.

Mannerism runs through English literature of the later 16th and early 17th centuries. Both the content and the style of writing changed rapidly at the end of the 16th century. Interesting innovations in prose style were made by Lyly in his "Euphues", the first English novel of manners: his mode of expression is highly artificial (abundance in puns, laboured similes, alliteration, assonance, etc.). Shakespeare's later plays ("Measure for Measure", "Hamlet", "King Lear") show many of the characteristics of Mannerism: there is much inner tension in the leading characters, and in their handling there is much emphasis on the illogical, contradictory elements in life. He swung away from the joyous mirth and gay romance of his earlier work.

The extreme individualism and the spirit of experimentation that marked the age of Mannerism had called out a consistent effort toward restraint and toward finding rules for the artist and writer. An age of extreme individualism became also a great age of rule-making. Rules derived from ancient and elaborated by Humanist theorists, together with the use of reason were to act as a bulwark against free expression of the author's personality and passion, subjectivity and individualism. No detail was too small to be covered by these theorists: the produced rules covered both the general

structural outline of a work of art or letters and the subordinate details of all the parts.

The Baroque (1600 – 1750)

By the 18th century the word “Baroque” was used for anything queer, overelaborate or contorted. The use of the word came partly from a Portuguese word meaning a rough or imperfect pearl.

The artistic styles of the Baroque show the same admiration for classical Roman grandeur, the same love of harmony and symmetry as the High Renaissance did. But the baroque is at the same time more exuberant, dynamic and ornamented. The Baroque took over from Mannerism its inner tensions and its experimentalism but it resolved these tensions into harmonious unity. Mannerism represented an expressive deviation from classical and realistic norms; the Baroque is a return to these norms but with much of the emotion, tension and colour of Mannerism. The style is addressed more to the imagination and the emotion than to the reason, but imagination and emotion that recognize the order that reason can create.

The age of the baroque was a golden Age of scientific discovery. The writers, artists of the Baroque were aware of the discoveries of science and they allowed a great deal of interest in the ideals of the philosophers of the Age. This interest was primarily centred on man. In depicting man there was a tendency to show the essential nature of man in all ages, above time and above particular. The interest of the Baroque Age is focused on discovering general patterns of social conduct and on the analysis of fixed types of human beings.

The rapid economic, political and cultural development of France in the 17th century literary, artistic and musical geniuses gave France the leadership in the arts. England lagged behind France and Italy in art and musical development. Its highest achievements are with architecture and literature.

The most notable feature of Baroque architecture is the enormous scale of its buildings and its striving to achieve the grandeur and monumentality of ancient Roman architecture.

Emphasis was laid on designing ensembles of churches and palaces with squares or gardens about them. The style favoured oval ground plans of churches and oval rooms in palaces and public buildings. Among the most striking features of Baroque buildings are the vast, sweeping staircases. Baroque buildings admirably fitted the splendour of church services and the grand scale of entertainment that characterized the age. The greatest master of Baroque in England was the architect Ch. Wren. Wren's St. Paul's Cathedral in its originality of structural engineering and in the beauty of its proportions and decorative detail, is one of the great achievements of Baroque.

Next to France, England produced the largest number of outstanding writers during the Baroque Age. The literature of the period appealed less to the mass of men than that of the preceding age, especially this is true in the drama. The plays of Fletcher, Beaumont, Shakespeare were for the masses; those of Racine, Corneille, Milton appealed only to the upper classes and intellectuals. The plots were often complicated, authors were steeped in classical mythology, philosophy and poetry. The greatest genius of the Baroque in England is John Milton (1608 – 1674), the author who penned "Paradise Lost", "Paradise Regained", "Samson" and who created his own lofty and majestic style.

With Dryden (1631 – 1700) begins another trend in English literature that is marked by the influence of rationalism and of scientific writing. It is known that the prose of the 16th and most of the 17th century was either modeled on Latin and often cumbrous or it had been assimilated to poetry and was fanciful and turgid. What this prose needed was clarity, precision and the ability to convey ideas to the common man. So, the Royal Society rejected all forms of undesirable ornaments of speech and favoured "a close, naked and natural way of speaking". J. Swift in his definition of prose style demanded the necessity of "proper words in proper places".⁴ This was a kind of protest against the complicated and elaborate periphrases by which the most common concept were often described. Among the most ardent apologists of this direction were

⁴ Falcovich M.M. and others. *Hot to Speak about Art in English*. M., 1976, pp. 81 – 91

R. Steele, D. Defoe, H. Fielding, J. Swift. They developed a manner of writing which by its strength, simplicity and directness was admirably adapted to ordinary everyday needs.

The age of Baroque was a golden period in the history of music (Bach, Handel, Vivaldi). No other period can boast of a greater variety of new forms or of an equal number of great composers. For the first time instrumental music has an equal importance with vocal music. There began with Frescobaldi (d. 1643) a development of organ music. Opera with its combination of dramatic poetry, acting, scenery, costuming and music became the most characteristic musical realization of the Baroque. England lagged behind Italy in musical development. No great musical genius appeared until Purcell (circa 1659 – 1695). He wrote the opera “Dido and Aeneas”, cantatas, anthems, sonatas for chamber orchestra, compositions for the organ. In Purcell’s music there is an interesting blend of Italian, French and native English musical forms and traditions. Unfortunately for English music, no composer appeared after Purcell to maintain the national traditions.

Neo-Classicism and Romanticism (1750 – 1840)

Between 1300 and 1500 each change of style had succeeded the preceding style with much overlapping. Now, two styles, Neo-Classicism and Romanticism, developed side by side, each style taking something from the other, but remaining nonetheless distinctive.

Neo-Classicism in art and letters arose from a new deeper examination of the heritage of classical antiquity. It was a stylistic reaction against the frivolities and whimsies of the Rococo, the final phase of the Baroque. Neo-Classicism was against individualism and originality. The attitude of the artists and writers influenced by this style was to fix their attention on the universal man. The local, the temporary and the particular are to be excluded. The Neo-Classicism saw in history a long decline from a superior state of things: art, literature, religion had all begun well and all had been corrupted. The way of salvation was not in advance but in revision. This trend worked toward a great simplification of style: decoration in

architecture was reduced to a minimum, and in all the fine arts simplicity and clarity of outline was emphasized.

The word “romantic” had been used in English since the 17th century to describe medieval legends or ideals that are remote or strange. It was first used in a more modern sense during the later 18th century. Romanticism brought forth new attitudes toward man and nature in nearly all phases of life. It appeared as a strong reaction against the rationalism of the 17th and 18th centuries. Among its sources scholars usually single out Locke’s empiricism and the teaching of Methodists.

To Locke knowledge comes from sensation and from reflection on sensation. Thus Locke’s emphasis is on individual experience and on the idea that truth is to be found primarily in and through the particular, that truth is to be arrived at by imaginative and emotional faculties rather than by reason. The Methodists also belittled human reason and laid great emphasis on developing the personal and emotional aspects of religion. The idea was cultivated that only emotion can capture the inner relations of things and know their significance. The whole spirit of Romantic revolt against rationalism is summed up by Wordsworth, who speaks of a man so scientifically-minded and dehumanized, that he would “peep and botanize on his mother’s grave”. The results of Romanticism are more evident in literature and music than they are in the arts.

Britain had been the first country where Romanticism in literature unfolded. British Romantic writers (Coleridge, Scott, Byron, Shelly, Keats) were among the most outstanding in Europe. New sources of literary material were discovered from the Middle Ages, among Oriental peoples and in the noble savages of North America. The ancient poetry of the Germanic and Celtic peoples, medieval lyric poetry, chivalric romances, the plays of Shakespeare all came into vogue. They praised the wisdom and happiness of those in the middle and lower classes, especially of the peasants on the land who lived a simple life. Nearly everything that earlier classically minded ages had either rejected or ignored now came into fashion as subjects for literary treatment.

In Britain writers renewed English literature with new themes and new styles of writing: Burns with his love of the lowly and of animals, Blake with his mystic reveries, Crabbe with pictures

of the daily life of those close to the soil. The Romantics saw new things in nature, the reflection of their own moods: nature meant a good order in the universe and also the rejection of the artificialities of the upper-class decorum. The new type of a protagonist appears in literatures – the Romantic hero is usually an individual devoured by melancholy or a fiery rebel against society and its rules, authorities and traditions.

Romanticism left a much deeper impression on literature than on fine arts. Most of sculptors worked in Neo-Classical traditions as it is difficult for them to capture the infinitude, the mystery and the movement which are at the heart of Romanticism. These could be more easily realized in painting. One of the great achievements of early 19th century Romantic painting was in the field of landscape art. The Baroque Age and the Neo-classical painters centred their attention on the human figure and minimized the setting. But the Age of Romanticism was the age of landscape art. Among the painters of the century the most prominent were John Constable and Joseph M.W. Turner. None of the great English landscape painters looked at the world through the eyes of any past artist: each saw the world of nature in his own way. For Constable the subject was less important than the handling of light and shade. He never hunted for the exceptional. A river bank or a group of trees under changing skies were all he required to evoke a picture full of poetry and loveliness. No other English painter had so faithfully reproduced the atmosphere, the feeling of the countryside.

Turner's subjects were often as dramatic as his colour and lighting: it was the grandeur of sunlight and shadow, of mountain and sea, and the vast forces of nature that were at the centre of his interests. "The Fighting "Temeraire", "Calais Pier", "The Burning of the Houses of Parliament", "The Snow Storm" are definitely among the best and most original works of the 19th century.

Check your knowledge of the material, be ready to speak and enlarge on the following points:

1. When and where did the name Gothic come into use?
2. Where did the Gothic style appear and what can be said about its main principles?
3. What was the new kind of sculpture characterised by?

4. What famous cathedrals of Gothic do you happen to know? Could you bring pictures (photos) of them and describe the monuments of architecture?
5. What are the main features of the age of Renaissance art?
6. Where did Renaissance art flourish more richly?
7. What were the peculiarities of the age of Renaissance on the British soil?
8. What were the factors influencing the change of the style from the High Renaissance to Mannerism?
9. What are the peculiarities of the Mannerist style?
10. Why is it considered that the best plays by Shakespeare belong to the age of Mannerism rather than to that of Renaissance?
11. What was the Baroque art centred on? What are the peculiarities of the style?
12. What were the main trends in English literature?
13. What were the sources, peculiarities and consequences of Neo-Classicism?
14. What do you know about the sources of Romanticism?
15. What themes and problems are characteristic of the Romantic movement?
16. What genres were predominant in English arts and letters at that period? Why?

Comment on the following and illustrate your answers with vivid examples:

1. Changes in style are chiefly due to the desire of artists, writers, musicians to discover new ways of artistic expression.
2. In history there are no clear beginnings and no end in the whole sequence of things.
3. The Renaissance epoch was an age that demanded giants and created them.
4. A variety of ways of writing, thinking about criticizing and defining art co-exist in any given age, but in the Romantic period the varieties are especially diverse and the distinctions notably sharp.

British Painting

The 18th Century: The Golden Age of British Painting

The history of British painting is intimately linked with the broader traditions of European painting. Kings and queens commissioned portraits from German, Dutch, and Flemish artists. Holbein, Antonio More, Rubens, Van Dyck, and other eminent foreign portraitists were almost English painters, attracted to Britain and loaded with honours. British painters found inspiration and guidance from their journeys abroad, in Italy especially.

Van Dyck, the Flemish artist, was the father, of the English portrait school and set before it an aristocratic ideal. He married a daughter of a lord and settled in England. He trained a few English pupils, Dobson, Jameson and the miniaturist Cooper. Nevertheless his principal imitators and successors were like himself foreigners, settled in London.

In the early eighteenth century, although influenced by Continental movements, particularly by French rococo, British art began to develop independently. The first English painter on a grand scale is also the most English of painters: William Hogarth observes London life with the keenest of eyes, and makes his main contribution by presenting the bustling scene in vivid narrative paintings. He painted in satirical genre, as well as in the genre of portraiture.

Hogarth was followed by a row of illustrious painters: Thomas Gainsborough, with his lyrical landscapes, “fancy pictures” and portraits; the intellectual Sir Joshua Reynolds, who painted charming society portraits and became the first president of the Royal Academy; and George Stubbs, who is only now being recognized as an artist of the greatest visual perception and sensitivity.

If portrait painting is one of the glories of English art, landscape is another; in both directions it rose to supreme heights. In 1760s a new generation of English artists established itself in London, with a new kind of art and a new attitude to art. There were

distinguished painters in landscape, sea-painting, and animal painting.

There were, then, two main styles of landscape, the classical and the Dutch. The works of these two schools were regarded as models, and from them were derived rules, principles, and canons of taste by which all landscape could be judged. The best landscapes painted in England at the close of the seventeenth and the beginning of the eighteenth centuries were topographical in nature. In marine painting the leading figure was Samuel Scott (1702 – 1772), Hogarth's contemporary, one of the brightest representatives of classical school. He painted his views of London, so precious as historical records. He was one of the founders of the Society of Water-Colour Painters which was to have such important developments. The real creators of English landscape, however, are Wilson and Gainsborough.

Richard Wilson (1714 – 1782) took to landscape somewhat late, having first devoted himself with success to the portrait. It was at Rome, where he lived for six years, that Wilson painted his first landscapes. Having returned to England he pursued his career as a landscape painter, in the Roman style, sometimes interrupting his reminiscences of Italy to paint the beauties of Wales, where he was born. In spite of a certain monotony we must concede to Wilson's works the charm of noble serenity, especially when his wide skies shed a limpid light upon the waters of a lake surrounded by the harmonious lines of mountains. Despite the fact that his pictures are a bit idyllic (“River Scene with Bathers”, “The Villa of Maecenas”, and some others), they provoke certain associations and make spectators think of no other but this only way to paint this or that landscape.

Thomas Gainsborough began by imitating the Dutch when he painted Harwick Harbour or the county around Sudbury. Strictly his first paintings are not pure landscapes as they include portraits, but the synthesis of the two genres is so perfect that the pictures become portraits of more than a person but of a whole way of life. In his later pure landscapes, the woodenness melts under the brush of a painter who loved the radiant shimmering fluency of his medium as perhaps no other English painter has ever done. From the start

Gainsborough announced much more clearly than Wilson the road to be followed by English landscape.

A most interesting figure representing science painting was Joseph Wright of Derby (1734 – 1797), a painter with a remarkable range of interests. He was conventionally London-trained in portraiture. In his works there comes through something of the hard-headed, practical yet romantic excitement of the dawn of the Industrial Revolution. He saw the world in a forced and sharpening light — sometimes artificial, the mill-windows brilliant in the night, faces caught in the circle of the lamp. In Wright's mind modern science was no less of a miracle than the antique (“An Experiment on a Bird in the Air-Pump”, “A Philosopher Giving a Lecture on the Orrery”). A lot of his pictures exist on many levels but, as they were not expressed in terms of the classical culture of the age, Wright's subject pictures were for long not given their due. He himself stood apart from that (classical) culture; although he early became an associate of the Royal Academy, he soon quarreled with it.

George Stubbs (1724 – 1806) presents in some ways a similar case: he never became a full member of the Royal Academy. He was, for his contemporaries, a mere horse-painter. The son of a Liverpool currier, he supported himself at the beginning of his career in northern England by painting portraits, but at the same time started on his study of anatomy, animal and human, that was to prove not only vitally important to his art but also a new contribution to science. Stubbs believed that nature and not art was the only source of improvement. All his painting is based on knowledge drawn from ruthless study, ordered by a most precise observation (his book “The Anatomy of the Horse”, pioneering work both in science and art). A separate development was Stubbs's portrayal of wild animals (“Horse Attacked by a Lion”). His true and great originality was not on conventional lines and could not be grasped by contemporary taste.

William Hogarth (1697 – 1764)

William Hogarth was one of the greatest and most significant English artists of all times and a man of remarkably individual character and thought. Born before the turn of the century, he was the

first major painter to reject foreign influence and establish a kind of thoroughly British art. He had anything but respect for the great Italian masters, though he deliberately took a provocative attitude. In his works he observed both high and low life with a critical eye, showing his protest against social injustice and fashionable society. He produced portraits in a completely new manner, that he called “phizmongering” (low artistic standard of portraying, meaning a soulless reproduction of human physiognomies on canvas), adding to his works elements of satire and caricature.

William Hogarth was born in the heart of London, son of a young schoolteacher from the north of England who came to the city to make his fortune, wrote textbooks, found himself correcting for printers, and married his landlord's daughter. That it was a family of Presbyterian roots, tells something about Hogarth's unquestioning equation of art and morality, about his concern with reward and punishment.

When William was ten his father was imprisoned for debt for five years – the years of William's adolescence that would have seen him either on his way to a university or an apprenticeship. When the family emerged his father was a broken man, and William was scarred. He never mentioned this period, but he repeatedly introduced prisons, debtors, and jailers, literally and metaphorically, into his paintings.

At seventeen he went to live with Ellis Gamble, a silver engraver, to learn his humble craft. He wrote a great deal in later years about this time, emphasizing how it kept him from pursuing high art. Whether due to dissatisfaction or to the death of his father, he did not complete his apprenticeship, but instead set up on his own as an engraver. He engraved "monsters of Heraldry" and small shopcards, but he devoted every spare minute to book illustration, topical prints, and study at the newly founded Vanderbank Academy of Art.

The earliest surviving paintings that are certainly by Hogarth are "The Beggar's Opera" and "Falstaff Examining his Recruits" (1730) sketched directly from the stage. "The Beggar's Opera", indeed, retains the stage as a visible audience. Hogarth made at least five paintings on the subject, progressing within little more than a year from a clumsy student of oils to a polished painter whose natural expression is through paint. His freshness of colour and feeling for the creamy substance of oil paint suggest more acquaintance than he admitted to with the technique of his French

contemporaries. His first success as a painter was in “conversation pieces” – relatively small and cheap group portraits, usually representing members of the same family or close friends shown together in an informal fashion, drinking tea, playing cards, or talking to each other. The genre was very popular in England at that times, but Hogarth was not an inventor of the genre, which can be traced back to Dutch and Flemish art of the 17th century. Yet Hogarth still felt constricted: they were only portraits, they represented too much work for too little money, and work that was not suited to the genius.

The first successful series “Harlot's Progress”, of which only the engravings now exist (the originals were burnt in 1755). Following the practice of other painters who had allowed their major work to be engraved and sold by subscription, he added one novelty: he dispensed with a printseller, managed the subscription himself, and kept all the profits; he also found soon enough that only he could adequately engrave his own paintings. The success of the venture was beyond his most sanguine expectations: nearly 2,000 sets were subscribed for at a guinea each, and their fame reached from the highest to the lowest. The series were followed by “The Rake's Progress” in rapid succession: “A Midnight Modern Conversation”, “The Distressed Poet”, “The Four Times of the Day”, and “Strolling Actresses in a Barn”.

When Hogarth arrived on the scene foreign artists had dominated English portraiture since Van Dyck. Hogarth had inherited the English painters' hostility to foreign artists who took all the good commissions from native artists, driving some English artists into bankruptcy. However, he responded by beginning to paint portraits himself, and as usual focusing his efforts on a major show on piece – a life-size, full-length portrait of his friend Thomas Coram, founder of the Foundling Hospital. “Portrait of Captain Coram” was painted in 1740. The subject is sea-captain, sitting on a chair, which is placed on a platform with two steps leading up to it. The portrait is done in the compositional manner typical to England of that time and usually associated with portraits of noblemen and royal family. Captain's relatively modest position in society is emphasized by his simple dress, by intimacy and realism of his broad body and short legs that do not reach the floor. By depicting Coram

in realistic manner, Hogarth breaks the mould, combining high and low portrayal styles. In the same year Hogarth donated the portrait to the Foundling Hospital, and in the 1740s he organized his artist friends to donate more paintings establishing in the Foundling Hospital the first public museum of English art.

In the early 1740s while still painting portraits, he began to plan a new “comic history” cycle, this time of high life “Marriage a la Mode”, for which he made his first trip to Paris. The outbreak of war with France delayed these plans till the year 1745, when he published “Marriage a la Mode”. It was his famous set of pictures, describing negotiations about the marriage between the daughter of a rich citizen Alderman and young Lord Viscount Squanderfield, the son of old Earl. All the accessories depicted are full of pride and pomposity, the sense of the coronet pervades the pictures, the brides are together, but apart, busy with other things and thoughts. On other pictures it is shown how the new family is ruined by lord taking his pleasure elsewhere than at home and lady sitting at home and listening to foreign singers, spending the money on auctions and having fun at masquerades. The moral of the series is not to marry a man for his rank or a woman for her money. Hogarth now radically reduced the complexity, and replaced the readable with an expressive structure in which meaning emerges from shapes, and emblems either submerged or blown up into a powerful image. The pictures are now represented in London National Gallery.

The simplification of structure is first evident in the monumental portrait “Garrick as Richard III”, and the great portraits of the 1740s – “Dr. Hoadly, Bishop of Winchester”. “Graham Children” (1742) depicts the charm of childhood, the ability to compose vivid colours and penetrating studies of character. The quality of Hogarth as an artist is advantageously represented in his series of sketches, with its prominent “Shrimp Girl” as a masterpiece of world art, where Hogarth harmonically combined the form and the content, representing freshness and vitality. The new development was also accompanied by an attempt to paint another series – this time a “Happy Marriage” – that did not get beyond a series of oil sketches.

In the middle of all this fuss, in early 1754, he began to advertise his last ambitious series, four paintings of an election. The

engravings were not all published until 1758. The last half of the decade, however, was a time of falling productivity, and letters of the time show Hogarth, just turned sixty, a tired and ageing man. In 1757 he announced that he was through with comic histories and modern moral subjects. The last comic history was painted for his friend Earl of Charlemont – “The Lady's Last Stake” (1758 – 1759). The last four years are years of illness, and uneasy withdrawal that broke off for one last burst of energy. What brought him back were (he said) the need of money. His last print, issued six months before his death was a “Tailpiece, Of the Bathos” to finish off his volume of prints.

The genius of Hogarth is often regarded as rebellious against artificiality; he expressed in his pictures a new mood and a critical spirit of his age. He was the first native English painter to become famous in the world. The greatest reason of his popularity and one of his achievements is establishing comedy as a category in art at the same level as in literature. He had no pupils, but he had contemporaries who tended in the same direction.

Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723 – 1792)

Joshua Reynolds is, historically, the most important figure in British painting. He was born on July 7, 1723, at Plympton St. Maurice in Devon. He received a fairly good education from his father, who was a clergyman and the master of the free grammar school of the place. This is worth mentioning because it shows that Reynolds was born and brought up in an educated family at a time when most English painters were hardly more than ill-educated tradesmen, and it is probably true he did more to raise the status of the artist in England through his learning and personal example than by his actual quality as an artist. At the age of seventeen he was apprenticed in London to Thomas Hudson, who was popular as a portrait painter. Reynolds remained with Hudson for only two years, and in 1743 he returned to Devonshire, where he employed himself in portrait painting. As early as 1746 he painted the “Eliot Family Group”, and this already shows the fundamental basis of his art – the deliberate use of allusion to the Old Masters or Antique sculpture as a classical allusion might have been used by an 18-century speaker or writer. This is the essence of his own style and the reason for the

rise in public esteem for the visual arts which is so marked a feature of his age.

Taken to the Mediterranean on a ship commanded by a friend, he reached Rome in 1749 and stayed there three years. While studying, he eked out his finances by occasional copying of Old Masters, doing portraits of English visitors and the caricature portrait groups then in style. Up to this time the main influences on his style had been Hogarth, Ramsay, and to a moderate extent only, Hudson; in Rome he made a really prolonged study of the Antique, of Raphael and, above, all, of Michelangelo. Here he learned the intellectual basis of Italian art, and this was something that scarcely any other British painter had done up to then, even in Rome itself. In 1752 he returned to London via Paris and within a short time had achieved a considerable success.

Reynolds bought a large house with studios and exhibition gallery as well as facilities for his many students and assistants. He lived in high style and collected Old Master paintings as part of the role of being successful and fashionable, and also because his viewpoint as an artist made such collecting inevitable. Although his prices increased constantly, commissions kept pace: portraits, group pictures and historical themes. His sitters included the socially prominent people of the time and when the Royal Academy was founded in 1768, he naturally became its first president; he was also knighted. This success was the product of his exceptionally strong will and determination to succeed. In 1784 he became principal painter to the king and employed various assistants to do the many royal portraits expected of him. At the same time he acted as agent and dealer for noblemen interested in collecting Old Masters.

Reynolds' point of view as a painter was just as "safe" as his social outlook; he believed that by analysis of Old Masters he could build a composite style of great art. Though he did have a personal creative power and variety of pictorial invention when he chose to let himself go and forget that he was a great man. We find many paintings with a life and grandeur beyond the many borrowed elements. His portraits are honest and effective because their expression is related to the type of sitter, e. g. Dr. Johnson, Admiral Keppel and others. Many of his portraits are originally composed in decorative pattern and organized in light and space arrangements,

treated in a historical manner, history pictures proper and some curious combinations of the two, such as “Dr. Beattie (The Triumph of Truth)” or “Three Ladies Adorning the Term of Hymen”.

The weight and power of the art of Reynolds are best seen in those noble male portraits, “Lord Heathfield”, “Johnson”, “Sterne”, “Goldsmith”, “Gibbon”, “Burke”, “Fox”, “Garrick”, that are historical monuments as well as sympathetic works of art. In this category must be included his immortal “Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse” (1789). This last picture creates the impression of dignity and solemnity; the dominant tone is rich golden brown, interrupted only by the creamy areas of the face and arms and by the deep velvety shadows of the background. The central figure (a famous British actress of that time) sits on a thronelike chair. She does not look at the spectator but appears in deep contemplation. In the background, dimly seen on either side of the throne, are two attendant figures. One, with lowered head and melancholy expression holds a bloody dagger; the other, his features contorted into an expression of horror, grasps a cup. Surely these figures speak of violent events. In “The Tragic Muse” Reynolds achieved an air of grandeur and dignity which he and his contemporaries regarded as a prime objective of art and which no other portrait of the day embodied so successfully.

Reynolds was a great force in his time and contemporaries borrowed freely the various elements of his art, particularly his self-assured manner. Among his best works are those in which he departs from the traditional forms of ceremonial portraiture and abandons himself to inspiration.

Thomas Gainsborough (1727 – 1788)

The only truly original landscape artist of the period was also one of its greatest portrait painters, Thomas Gainsborough. No other painter applied himself so successfully to both branches of art, though he said that he preferred landscape and only painted portraits for a living. Though he revealed an unequalled success in combining the two – that is, in adjusting the human figure to a background of natural scenery. Moreover, he excelled in conversation pieces, animal painting, seascapes, genre and even still life. Such was his peculiar variety.

Thomas Gainsborough was born in Sudbury in 1727 and was the son of a merchant. His father sent him to London to study arts. He spent 8 years working and studying in London. There he got acquainted with the Flemish traditional school of painting. In his portraits green and blue colours predominate. His works of landscape contain much poetry and music. His best works are “Blue Boy”, “The Portrait of the Duchess of Beaufort”, “Sara Siddons” and others.

He was the kind of painter who paints as if by nature. His works have neither the solidity nor the eclectic resourcefulness of Reynolds, and their substance seems often to depend simply on the fluent and lyrical movement of his brush. Unimpressed by the classical masters (he never went to Italy), he turned to two other sources nearer at hand: Dutch landscapes and French sensibility. The first, combined with the detailed observation of nature, can be seen in his early “Landscape with a Cornfield”, the second – in more fanciful works like the “Landscape with Gypsies”.

Gainsborough had from the first shown peculiar skill in representing his sitters as out-of-doors, and thus uniting portraiture with landscape. One of the first pictures he painted in Suffolk is among his masterpieces – the double portrait of Mr. and Mrs. Andrews (“Robert Andrews and Mary, His Wife”, 1748 – 1749). Here was an opportunity to Gainsborough to display his powers as a landscape painter, and it is no accident that, for the first time in this type of picture, the sitters have been withdrawn to one side of the canvas and the landscape, the broad acres of a well-tended estate, given equal prominence.

At the same time he made a close study of Van Dyck, and his later portraits show the same diffused light and feathery touch. He had a reputation for catching better likenesses than Reynolds, and portrayed his sitters in a more relaxed manner. In his last ten years he extracted the genre elements from his landscapes and enlarged them into life size fancy pictures such as the unfinished “Housemaid”.

The landscapes of Gainsborough are not rapid sketches of nature, he never painted out-of-doors; he painted his landscapes in his studio from his drawings, from memory when he returned from his walks or rides. He just constructed the scenes and modeled them

to reach a composition. At his highest level he went far beyond the current formulae and achieved a degree of integrated three-dimensional arrangement.

His ability to regard all creatures with unaffected sympathy extended to a subject that Reynolds, for one, would never have associated himself with – the painting of animals. Gainsborough had a countryman's love of dogs, which frequently enter into his portraits in a completely natural way – his “Pomeranian Bitch and Puppy” is a particularly happy example of his ability to raise them to the level of artistic portraiture. Gainsborough's strength lay in his free and excellent drawing, and many of his paintings give the feeling of the artist thinking with his brush, an immediacy usually reserved for watercolours.

The particular discovery of Gainsborough was the creation of a form of art in which the characters and the background form a single unity. The landscape is not kept in the background, but in most cases man and nature are fused in a single whole through the atmospheric harmony of mood. Gainsborough emphasized that the natural background for his characters should be nature itself. His works, painted in clear and transparent tones, had a considerable influence on the artists of the English school. He was in advance of his time. His art became a forerunner of the Romantic Movement.

Thomas Lawrence (1769 – 1830)

Thomas Lawrence was born at Bristol on April 13, 1769. By 1779 he had achieved something like a renown as a prodigy who could with equal ease take pencil profiles or recite from memory passages of John Milton, an outstanding English poet. As a gifted child, he was largely self-taught; at the age of 10 Lawrence was making accomplished portraits in crayon. He was influenced by Sir Joshua Reynolds during his youth; his style developed very little throughout his life.

Lawrence was a son of an innkeeper, moved with his family to Devizes and then to Bath. He took to painting in 1786 and became a pupil at the Royal Academy school in 1787; in the following year,

at the age of 19, he exhibited his first portrait, “Lady Cremorne”, a work of astonishing competence.

He was handsome, charming, and exceptionally gifted. His early success was phenomenal, and at the age of twenty, he was asked to paint Queen Charlotte, the wife of George III. The king was pleased with the portrait and on the death of Sir Joshua Reynolds in 1792, he appointed Lawrence as the royal painter. At the exhibition it was not, however, “Queen Charlotte” but “Miss Farren” which caught the popular imagination and gave the first real indication of the type of portrait Lawrence was to introduce.

Lawrence was a highly skilled draftsman. He soon abandoned pastels but continued to make portraits in pencil and chalks. These were separate commissions and were rarely studies for paintings, as it was his usual practice to make a careful drawing of the head and sometimes the whole composition on the canvas itself and to paint over it. His works exhibit a fluid touch, rich colour, and great ability to realize textures. He presented his sitters in a dramatic, sometimes theatrical, manner that produced Romantic portraiture of a high order.

The years 1806 – 1812 saw a consolidation of his powers. It was generally agreed that at the successive Academy exhibitions of 1806, 1807 and 1808 he excelled himself in the “Fancy Group” (Mrs. Maguire and Arthur Fitzjames), “Sir Francis Baring, John Baring and Charles Wall”.

He was knighted in 1815 and became President of the Academy five years later. In 1818 – 1820 he was in Aachen, Vienna and Rome on behalf of the Prince Regent, making full-length portraits of the allied sovereigns who had contributed to the defeat of Napoleon; these works now hang together in the Waterloo Chamber at Windsor Castle – a unique historical document of the period. By these works Lawrence was recognized as the foremost portrait painter of Europe. On his return to England in 1820 he was elected president of the Royal Academy.

He was very successful in commercial terms, and made a great deal of money. He was also a collector and formed one of the finest collections of Old Master drawings ever known.

In the last years of his life Lawrence achieved some of the finest and most penetrating work. He was now an honorary member of most of the Academies of Europe.

Lawrence died on January 7, 1830 and was buried with great honours in St. Paul's Cathedral. The death of Lawrence came as a shock to the nation for he had become a national figure to a degree achieved by no English painter before him.

Romanticism and Early 19th century British Painting

Romanticism, with its emphasis on the imagination and emotion, appeared in Britain as an artistic movement in the early decades of the nineteenth century and flourished until mid-century. It aroused as a response to the disillusionment with the Enlightenment values of reason and order in the aftermath of the French Revolution of 1789.

The art of this period is marked by great diversity. It is shown in the interest in the scientific investigation of nature and its application to artworks. The past was investigated not only through the use of literary descriptions but also by using the technique of archaeological verification in order to obtain a fuller and more accurate view of the past. The ancient literary texts which described the individuals and the life of antiquity were now sought out, revived, and widely read. Literary texts were read with more critical eye, in search of heightened emotional experience. Greece and Rome received a great deal of emphasis in the new evaluation of history, especially in the first half of the romantic period. Finally, the intensified concentration on psychological responses, the emotion and the emotional, is becoming obvious. It becomes increasingly apparent in the scenes taken from everyday life, that the key to the subject and composition of a given painting is its emotional orientation. This interest included an emphasis on the imagination.

British painting in the early 1800s carried on many of the traditions of the previous century. Portraiture was still of central importance, and paintings of noble subjects from the Bible and from

ancient and modern history continued to be produced. However, at the same time less elevated types of subject matter – such as paintings of animals, field sports and picturesque scenes of rustic life – developed in popularity.

With the end of the Napoleonic wars, British travelers could visit the mountain and river scenery of Europe again and the classical landscape of Italy was once more a magnet for artists. In Britain, the transformation from a mainly rural, agricultural economy into an urban, industrial one gathered pace and modern cities became subjects for some artists. Major provincial towns, including Liverpool, became important centres of art with their own institutions for teaching and exhibiting.

After Gainsborough there is no lack in landscape painters in England. During this time three men working on very diverse lines made themselves felt as far original personalities. Two of them were geniuses, Constable (1776 – 1837) and Turner (1775 – 1851) and the third a charming painter and delicious colourist, Bonington (1802 – 1828), who should have gone very far had he lived.

John Constable was the first English landscape painter to ask no lessons from the Dutch. His art expresses his response to his native English countryside. For his major paintings, Constable made full-scale sketches direct from nature at a single sitting (as in “Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds”); he wrote that a sketch represents just one state of mind which you were in at the time. When his landscapes were exhibited in Paris at the Salon of 1824, critics and artists embraced his art as "nature itself". Another his tendency was using a lot of green colour while painting nature. Constable's subjective, highly personal view of nature goes in accordance with the individuality that is a central principle of Romanticism.

Bonington painted water-colours which are little masterpieces of oil-paintings no less attractive. He became a disciple of the budding French romanticism with a grace, fantasy, and freshness of colour all his own, and in some few landscapes (such as “Parterre d'eau a Versailles”) he shows a breadth of vision and a sureness of touch foreshadowing the greatness he might have achieved had he not died at the age of twenty-six.

Joseph Mallord William Turner was English Romantic landscape painter whose expressionistic studies of light, colour, and atmosphere were unmatched in their range and sublimity. His name is famous and most-loved above all other English landscape painters. He became known as 'the painter of light', because of his increasing interest in brilliant colours as the main constituent in his landscapes and seascapes. His works include water colours, oils and engravings.

The work of William Blake (1757 – 1827), poet, draughtsman, engraver and painter, is made up of Gothic art, Germanic reverie, the Bible, Milton and Shakespeare, to which were added Dante and a certain taste for linear design. Blake is the most mystic of the English painters.

This interest in the individual and subjective – at odds with eighteenth-century rationalism – is mirrored in the Romantic approach to portraiture. Traditionally, records of individual likeness, portraits became vehicles for expressing a range of psychological and emotional states in the hands of Romantic painters.

Side by side with isolated figures, such as Turner and Blake, flourished the second generation of portrait painters – Romney (1734 – 1802), Hoppner (1758 – 1810), Raeburn (1756 – 1823), were all excellent painters. Romney is famous for his numerous pictures of the celebrated Lady Hamilton. The pictures of young men and maidens painted by Hoppner are full of charm and refinement. Raeburn's colour is rich and warm, and his touch broad and vigorous; he has the gift of posing his sitters with decision and really possesses some of the attributes of a great painter. At this happy moment everyone in England painted good portraits.

With the coming of Romanticism the artists began to use the reality of nature in their works. The desire for understanding and expression of human life in all its aspects led the Romanticism back to the past. The Romantic painters sought inspiration in the history, making particular use of events in the Middle ages. They were attracted by exotic environments, but also acquired a growing understanding of contemporary life. Romanticism opened a new way to Realism, most effectively it was shown in landscape painting, where the invented landscapes were rejected and the beauty of nature was found in the countrysides and landscapes around the artists.

William Blake (1757 – 1827)

British poet, painter and engraver, who illustrated and printed his own books, Blake is better known as a poet than as an artist.

It took years before historians and critics discovered the importance of his work on the development of printmaking and fine art painting. Blake proclaimed the supremacy of the imagination over the rationalism and materialism of the 18th century and his work has been categorized as part of Romanticism. There are two major aspects of his art. On the one hand, he used his designs as commentaries on social or political events of his own time. At other times, his designs are penetrating transformations of a literary text into visual term. His interpretations are always personal. But his images are never commentaries on his own subjective states. On the contrary, his art is in the mainstream of romanticism because it explores an enormous range of literary texts and experiences. His use of imagery to explore these experiences is unusually rich and varied; establishing a new vocabulary of forms to convey the extraordinary range of his ideas.

Born in London – his father ran a hosiery shop – he was taught to read and write by his mother, and then worked in the family business. His family was religious and the Bible would remain a source of inspiration for Blake throughout his life. At an early age, he started engraving copies of drawings by the great Old Masters of the Renaissance, like Raphael, Michelangelo and Albrecht Durer. At the age of 14, his family recognised his talent for drawing and sent him to an engraver to be apprenticed. His apprenticeship lasted 7 years and included time spent copying images of Gothic architecture from churches of London, such as Westminster Abbey, where he drew an inspiration which was to haunt his mind all his life. But none of those unknown Gothic carvers had the grandeur and force of Michelangelo, whose forms he began to copy and adapt even as a boy, so that both these influences worked within him and affected his style. After his apprenticeship, he became a student at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in London.

Blake's first themes were taken from English history. Like Milton, whom he admired, and whose poems he repeatedly

illustrated, he had great pride in his own country. But he quickly became interested in other themes. The soul of man, its enslavement and redemption, was the permanent impassioned theme of his writing and of his art.

His wholly original engraving, "Glad Day", was made in 1780. This youthful form, naked, with arms stretch out to the sunrise, seems to stand like a herald on the threshold of Blake's manhood, and to embody his mission to illuminate the world. From this time onward he is a master, using his own methods and idioms. When, unable to find a publisher for his first book of poems, "Songs of Innocence", he determined to print and publish them himself, he combined text, illustration, and decoration in a manner curiously suggestive of a medieval manuscript. Blake's dream was to produce a printed book that should rival in beauty the illuminated manuscripts of medieval monks! And his books are unique in the history of printing. As a painter he stands out in the history of English art. It is impossible indeed highly to appreciate the "Songs of Innocence" unless one knows the pages in which the verse seems spontaneously, to flower into design and decoration.

Blake's reputation as an important figure in the history of art rests largely on a set of 21 copperplates he executed to illustrate the Old Testament Book of Job. He employed the traditional technique of line-engraving in unconventional ways. He used visual aids and text in the margins to emphasis points; he incorporated symbolic images from his personal mythology and quoted from other parts of the Bible. His interpretation is personal, complex and multi-layered and his meanings continue to provide a point of debate even today.

Blake tells you nothing about the physical side of life. He paints heaven and hell, fiends and angels and singing stars: "The Soul Hovering over the Body", "Death on a Pale Horse", "Macbeth and the Witches", "Elijah and the Chariot of Fire". His pictures are never still or dead; they do not interpret the everyday life of man; he uses the human figure to carry us out of our physical selves, to throw us into spiritual moods, to make us feel heavenly joy, almighty wrath or tenderness.

Considered from any point of view Blake is one of the most interesting and extraordinary figures in the whole history of English

painting, but this reversion to a typically English manner of expression gives him an historical interest which is often overlooked. Blake's genius was altogether too strange to have much influence on his contemporaries, but in some imaginative painters and illustrators (Edward Calvert, Samuel Palmer), traces of his inspiration constantly appear, and in his insistence on pattern and emphasis on the abstract elements of design, he was a forerunner of much modern art.

John Constable (1776 – 1837)

One of the foremost landscapists in history, Constable represents a full step forward in the modern development of landscape art. He was a product of Eastern England with its luxurious meadows, distant horizons, picturesque villages, and above all its everchanging sky with constantly moving cloud formations. Although Constable's outlook on nature was primarily naturalistic, his individuality of style and interest in "sentiment" made him part of the Romantic period in which he lived.

John Constable was born in Sufford, on June 11, 1776. He was the son of a wealthy miller. He began to take interest in landscape painting while he was at grammar school. His father did not favour art as a profession. As a boy Constable worked almost secretly, painting in the cottage of an amateur painter. His keen artistic interest was such that his father allowed him to go to London in 1795, where he began to study painting. In 1799 Constable entered the Royal Academy School in London.

At this time the model for landscape painting in England was still the classical ideal landscape of the 17th century. After his first exhibition in the Academy, Constable realized that within such limitations he could not paint the English countryside as he saw it, and in his search for more suitable methods he created his own art.

In 1802 he began the practice of sketching in oils in the open air, a form of study which he continued throughout his life. He was the first landscape painter who considered that every painter should make his sketches direct from nature. He made hundreds of outdoor oil sketches setting down his first spontaneous and emotional

reactions to natural beauties, capturing the changing skies and effects of light. These visual impressions, even more than his finished works are regarded as his real contribution. He was happiest painting locations he knew well, particularly in his native Suffolk. He also frequently painted in Salisbury, Brighton and Hampstead, making numerous studies of the clouds over the Heath. His larger scenes were sketched full-size in oil, and the sketch was then used as a model for the finished painting.

Constable's art developed slowly. He tried to earn his living by portraits. His heart was never in this and he achieved no popularity. He sold his first painting to a stranger in 1814 and was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy in 1819. Having become through his marriage and the death of his parents financially independent, he felt confident enough to embark upon a series of large canvases, the subjects of which were taken from the banks of the River Stour and, which he exhibited in successive years at the Royal Academy. He put into his landscape cattle, horses, the people working there. He put the smiling meadows, the sparkle of the sun on rain, or the stormy and uncertain clouds. The most notable works of Constable are "Flatford Mill on the Stour" (1817), "The Hay Wain" (1821), "A View on the Stour near Dedham" (1822) and "The Leaping Horse" (1825).

In England Constable never received the recognition that he felt he was due. The French were the first to acclaim Constable publicly. With the exhibition of "The Hay Wain" at the Royal Academy in 1821 Constable's work became known to French artists. Recognition outside his own country reached the climax in 1824, when "The Hay Wain" and "A View on the Stour near Dedham" were exhibited at the Louvre and excited great admiration and heated critical discussion. "The Hay Wain" was awarded a gold medal, and Constable's influence over the young French artists, in particular Delacroix, dated from this event, and the so-called "Barbizon School" (the school of landscape painting in France in the first half of the 19th century, received its name due to the village Barbizon, where most of landscape painters resided), who followed Constable's lead in working outdoors. Later still, the French Impressionists built on Constable's efforts to capture the moods of light.

In 1829 his wife died, and election in that year to full membership in the Royal Academy he regarded as belated and without significance.

From this time onward Constable was subject to fits of depression. He had been left with a family of seven young children and forced himself into extra exertions on their behalf.

His last major picture of Suffolk was completed in 1835. "The Valley Farm" shows another view of Willie Lott's cottage in Flatford which is also seen in "The Hay Wain". Constable said this picture was "painted for a very particular person – the person for whom I have all my life painted".

Constable enjoyed clouds, sunshine, trees and fields for their own sakes, in addition to viewing them as potential vehicles for human emotions.

During his lifetime Constable's originality prevented wide recognition of his merits among both artists and the public in England, though he had devoted friends and admirers and sold a fair amount of work to private patrons. In England he inspired no painters of any importance, though there were a number of minor imitators, and it was not until his influence was transmitted through France back to England in the later part of the 19th century that Constable became a force in English painting.

Joseph Mallord William Turner (1775 – 1851)

Joseph Mallord William Turner was an English Romantic landscape painter, watercolourist and printmaker, whose style can be considered as the foundation for Impressionism. Although Turner was considered as a controversial figure in his day, he is probably one of the best-loved Romantic artists of England. He became known as "the painter of light", because of his increasing interest in brilliant colours as the main constituent in his landscapes and seascapes. His works include water colours, oils and engravings.

Joseph Mallord William Turner was born in London, England, on April 23, 1775. His father was a barber. His mother died when he was very young. His family lived in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, a fashionable quarter for hairdressers. The future painter spent a lot of time among the warehouses and docks of the busiest

harbour of his time. Sights of England's naval power and marine, glimpses of the ships made their impact on his young mind.

The boy received little schooling. His father taught him how to read, but this was the extent of his education except for the study of art. By the age of 13 he was making drawings at home and exhibiting them in his father's shop window for sale.

From 1789 – 1793 Turner had attended the Royal Academy Schools, where he drew the antique and also from life. But copying the works of others and sketching from nature were the main teaching methods for Turner. At 14, the young artist's first known sketchbook was a small book that he filled with drawings of landscapes, churches, houses, and trees. He became especially fond of old buildings, castles, churches, and ruins that he found during his walking tours of the countryside. Walking long distances of as much as 25 miles in a day, with sketchbook in hand, would become a practice that he continued throughout most of his life. He travelled widely in England and Wales, sketching mountains, ruins, famous buildings, etc. Throughout his life topographical painting was to provide a major source of income. In 1790 he had a water-colour exhibited at the Academy and was praised by critics.

In November of 1799 he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy of Art, at the age of 24. At this time he moved from his parents home to 64 Harley Street, later completing a gallery in 1804 at this address, to exhibit his own works. In 1802, when he was only 27, Turner became a full member. He then began traveling widely in Europe.

Profound as Turner's love of the mountains was, it was scarcely so fundamental as his love of the sea. He found his inspiration in waves and storms, upon clouds and vapour. Not only the sea, but the way it depicted and affected the ships was important to him. To a sailor, and Turner was at heart a sailor, a ship is a living creature, courageous and loyal. If Turner sympathised with ships, he sympathised equally with the men within them and loved to depict fishermen. He only cared in fact to portray the mood of the sea as it affected the experiences of man. A good example of this can be "Calais Pier" (1803), one of Turner's greatest works.

After his continental tour in 1802, his eyes seemed to have been opened to the beauty of English scenery. Up till how he had

painted mainly ruins, stormy seas, and gloomy mountains now he began to choose subjects from agricultural or pastoral country and often from scenes with trees and water.

In 1807 Turner was elected “Professor of Perspective” at the Royal Academy, a subject that he would teach at the Academy for many years. No salary was attached to the office, but he was paid fees for each lecture he gave. Turner’s relations with other academicians are puzzling. He was certainly admired but criticized sometimes by other painters who thought that Turner in some of his works departed too far from the standards of the imitation of nature. But if Turner was hurt by this criticism, he definitely hid his wounds and continued working in his own style.

The years 1805 – 1813 can be regarded as a new phase of Turner’s works. His greatest masterpieces of the period are “Windsor” and “Sun Rising through Vapour”. Unfortunately some of the delicacy of tones is lost in reproductions; and only in the original do the trees and castle appear completely substantial. Colour, as well as tone, has produced this effect of distance, of mist and of growing sunlight. The colour has in general a golden warmth, to which the eye must become accustomed.

From 1815 to 1818 Turner hardly exhibited at the Academy. The epoch of his great imitations was over and he was clearly entering the “middle period” in his works, when the old accomplishments had ceased to satisfy him, and the new vision was not yet in focus. At this point, in the autumn of 1819, he visited Italy for the first time. Venice was the inspiration of some of Turner's finest work. Wherever he visited he studied the effects of sea and sky in every kind of weather. Instead of merely recording factually what he saw, Turner translated scenes into a light-filled expression of his own romantic feelings. As in Rome, he filled his sketch-books with accurate and very beautiful water-colours. All his pictures were painted on his return, and as long as the pink and white stone, the shadows full of light and the fantastic interplay of sky and water were fresh in his memory he could make anything carry conviction.

The year 1829 was a turning point in his career. About then he began to adopt his final, and in many ways his most original style as a colourist. In 1829 “Ulysses Deriding Polyphemus” was exhibited. Turner had then already begun to use in oil the gorgeous

colour schemes with which he had earlier experimented in water-colour, and which were the marked characteristic of the last twenty years of his life. From then till 1845 he painted what are in many ways his most original masterpieces.

1838 is the date of the "Fighting Temeraire". In some way this work sums up all Turner's powers. It has all his splendour of invention, with all his depth of feeling. It is significant that he refused to sell it and that it is said to have been his favourite among his works. The beautiful golden battle-ship, whose days are over, is being towed to its last resting place by an ugly modern snorting tug. The colour of the sky is magnificent, the effect of the passing of time has been painted; but while in the earlier picture light is increasing, here the sun is sinking, the day is tired; the young moon has already dimly appeared; the darkness is gathering and soon the colours will fade.

After over forty years of severe discipline as a draughtsman, his hold upon structure has begun to relax; and he is now absorbed exclusively in rendering colour, light and atmosphere. In 1844 Western Railway locomotive, traveling at speeds of more than 90 mph, was the fastest train in Europe at the time. Turner being a passenger, remarked that he had put his head out the window during a rain storm, for more than nine minutes to observe the effect of the speed and wind. That was later resulted in "Rain, Steam, Speed" (1844).

Turner can be judged by the pictures which he did not exhibit. These are very numerous. It is true, of course, that many of them contain no definition of form, and sometimes no recognizable object. "Things" have completely disappeared, unless we can account as such an occasional red sail, or those inexplicable concentrations of colour which catalogues in despair have described as "Sea Monsters" or "Vessels in Distress". But this does not mean that they are unfinished; on the contrary, the paint which covers these large canvases has been applied and graded with the utmost care and delicacy.

Turner's later work made no immediate contribution to the development of art. In 1850 he exhibited for the last time. One day Turner disappeared from his house. His housekeeper, after a search of many months, found him hiding in a house in Chelsea. He had

been ill for a long time. He died the following day, December 19, 1851.

Turner left a large fortune that he hoped would be used to support what he called “decaying artists”. His collection of paintings was bequeathed to his country. At his request he was buried in St. Paul's Cathedral.

In 1974, the Turner Museum was founded in the USA by Douglass Montrose-Graem to house his collection of Turner prints. A prestigious annual art award, the Turner Prize, created in 1984, was named in Turner's honour, but has become increasingly controversial, having promoted art which has no apparent connection with Turner's. Twenty years later the more modest Winsor & Newton Turner Watercolour Award was founded. A major exhibition, “Turner's Britain”, with material (including “The Fighting Temeraire”), was held at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery from 7 November 2003 to 8 February 2004. In 2005, Turner's “The Fighting Temeraire” was voted Britain's “greatest painting” in a public poll organised by the BBC.

The Pre-Raphaelites

The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood (1848) was a militant group, the first organized revolt against the Royal Academy, the sanctioned art institution of the day. The leaders of the movement, Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828 – 1882), William Holman Hunt (1827 – 1910), John Everett Millais (1829 – 1896) and Edward Burne-Jones (1833 – 1898). Their ambition was to bring English art (such as it was) back to a greater “truth to nature”. They deeply admired the simplicities of the early 15th century, and they felt this admiration made them a brotherhood, and each of its members had to append to his signature the initials P. R. B. (“Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood”).

While contemporary critics and art historians worshiped Raphael as the great master of the Renaissance, these young students rebelled against what they saw as Raphael's theatricality and the Victorian hypocrisy and pomp of the academic art tradition. The

friends decided to form a secret society in defense to the sincerities of the early Renaissance before Raphael developed his grand manner.

Ford Madox Brown (1821 – 1893) painted his first Gothic pictures filled with an arid precision, a scrupulous attention to minute details, a harsh colouring, in a word almost everything which was to become the rule in Pre-Raphaelitism. “Truth to nature”, a conception which Constable had applied to landscape painting, suggested such realism as might be gained in painting from nature, that is, in the open air, and indeed for a while this was a Pre-Raphaelite practice, showing in theory a certain correspondence with the aims of Realism and later of Impressionism in France. The Pre-Raphaelites adopted a high moral stance that embraced a sometimes unwieldy combination of symbolism and realism. They painted only serious – usually religious or romantic – subjects, and their style was clear and sharply focused on direct observation. They differed also in devoting themselves to figure subjects in the main, with an ethical and narrative content. A further difference was the tendency encouraged by Rossetti in particular to look back sentimentally and nostalgically to the past, which took on a dream-like attraction.

The great period of Pre-Raphaelite painting can be placed within the decade 1850 to 1860. Millais as a young man produced a number of works of great beauty with religious and Shakespearean themes. His “Ophelia” (1852) with its almost photographically minute background painted on the Ewell River near Kingston-on-Thames and its figure portraying the beauty of Miss Siddal, posing in a bath full of water, remains a remarkable picture. Holman Hunt painted a masterpiece of its kind in “The Hireling Shepherd” (1851) with a sunlit background of willows and cornfield which, for a moment makes one think of Claude Monet.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti became the recognized leader and even formed a second grouping of the brotherhood in 1857, after Millais and Hunt had gone their separate ways. Rossetti came from an artistic and versatile Italian family, and it was perhaps the confidence engendered by this background, and his dynamic personality, rather than his artistic talent, that earned him his prominent position. Rossetti was a poet as well as a painter, and in common with the other Pre-Raphaelites, his art was a fusion of

artistic invention and authentic renderings of literary sources. The brotherhood drew heavily from Shakespeare, Dante, and contemporary poets such as Robert Browning and Alfred Lord Tennyson – Rossetti in particular was greatly attracted to Tennyson's reworkings of the Arthurian legends. He reached the highest point of his art in watercolour of an imaginary past and great emotional intensity (“The Day Dream”, 1880).

In addition, the Brotherhood members were very concerned with the world in which they lived and the social problems brought about by the Industrial Revolution, and accompanying rapid growth of cities. In some cases, they painted scenes of modern life with a moral message, as in Rossetti's “Found” (1853 – 1882). This painting shows a young country woman turning in desperation to a life of prostitution, being unable to find suitable work in London metropolis. In other cases, these concerns were reflected in scenes of fantasy and escape, such as Edward Burne-Jones' “The Council Chamber” (1872 – 1892), inspired by the fairy tale of “Sleeping Beauty”, in which the figures are shown, literally, closing their eyes to the world around them.

It is a sad aspect of the Pre-Raphaelite story that none of these painters lived up to their first promise and in various ways lost direction. The remark applies almost equally to Millais, Rossetti, and Hunt though the decline in each case was individual. The nostalgic element overcame the challenging realism. A second phase (late 1860s) inspired by Rossetti and represented by William Morris (1834 – 1896) and Edward Burne-Jones is mainly of note for a change. This period is often called “Aesthetic movement”. This style reflected a desire to move away from the sentimental narratives of the early Victorian period and to focus instead on images of “beauty” (often women) in which colour harmony, the beauty of form, and compositional balance took precedence over narrative.

The 20th Century British Art: Modern Movements

20th century British Art was greatly influenced by the social and political upheaval caused by the World Wars during the first half of the century. In the early 1900s Britain came out of Victorian era and became more liberal, but the outbreak of World War I in 1914 slowed down that progress.

From the 1880s until the opening of World War I the history of British painting is marked by a slow and rather tentative absorption of impressionist principles of light and colour. By the time the next shock was applied to British taste by Roger Fry (1866 – 1934) and his 1910 and 1912 exhibitions of post-impressionist art, the New English had developed a mild impressionist academy of its own. Meanwhile, Walter Richard Sickert (1860 – 1942), a pupil of Whistler and later a great admirer of Degas, had developed a more strict impressionism in contrast to the somewhat anaemic New English Variety. He became a mentor of a new group of younger English artists, including Spencer Gore, Harold Gilman and Charles Ginner, who founded the Camden Town Group in 1911 (a group of artists who were interested in French Post-Impressionist painting). Their program, following Sickert, might be described as the practice of a kind of middle-class realism in opposition to the fashionable interiors of Academic painting.

In 1915 Wyndham Lewis (1882 – 1957) launched his short-lived vorticist (from vortex – “вихрь”) movement, an attempted synthesis of cubist and futurist elements (formalistic trends in contemporary art). However accentric that movement may now seem, it was an important sign that the British painter was at last being brought into direct contact with the mainstream of continental art.

Although the “Roaring Twenties” gave the country a sense of optimism, the 1930s saw Britain in the grip of economic depression. Between the world wars, artists soon began to reflect a wide range of styles and intentions. Christopher Wood (1901 – 1930), Cecil Collins (1908 – 1989), and Laurence Stephen Lowry (1887 – 1976) developed a childlike naivety. Using a finely detailed realism, Stanley Spencer (1891 – 1959) sought to express a

visionary apprehension of everyday life, painting mystical works, as well as landscapes. Ben Nicholson (1894 – 1982) evolved an entirely abstract art; Paul Nash (1889 – 1946), Ceri Richards (1903 – 1979), and Graham Sutherland (1903 – 1980) responded to surrealism (a new continental movement, showing preoccupation of artists with the subconscious).

While the dominant force in British paintings during the 1930s was neo-romanticism, there was a strong counter-movement among certain painters, led by William Coldstream (1908 – 1987) and Victor Pasmore (1908 – 1998). In 1937 they established a school in Euston Road, London, with the purpose of teaching students to return to the object and to keep their eyes on what they saw. Coldstream's and particularly Pasmore's painting have romantic overtones, but by contrast with the interpretation of nature which Sutherland, Nash and their followers have practiced, the Euston Road School painters were urban realists.

During World War II there was a notable increase in artistic vitality in Britain, which reflected a community of feeling between artists and public during a period of heroic struggle for survival. In this climate, artists were almost unable to make a living selling works of art, but “modern” artists were accepted, as they had never been before, and British Art of that period developed great power and influenced the thinking of the next few decades. The most outstanding British artist of the war years are John Piper (1903 – 1992), sculptor Henry Moore (1898 – 1986), Keith Vaughan (1912 – 1997), Graham Sutherland and some others.

After World War II English art became increasingly pluralistic. A strong figurative tradition was continued, in very different styles, by Francis Bacon (1909 – 1992), whose nightmarish visions are some of the most forceful expressions of contemporary spiritual despair, Lucian Freud (1922 – 2011), John Bratby (1928 – 1992), Keith Vaughan, Carel Weight (born 1908), Richard Hamilton (1922 – 2011), Peter Blake (born 1932), David Hockney (born 1937). Abstract painting, which has never had a strong following in England, was practised by Victor Pasmore, Patrick Heron (1920 – 1999), William Turnbull (born 1922), and Bridget Riley (born 1931), the leading figure in Op art (optical art).

In the mid 1950s the country was in the grip of the advertising industry and this gave rise to the “Pop Art Movement”. This style took its origins in the mass media (comic strips, advertisement and advertising slogans), the consumer sphere (supermarkets), traffic scenes (street hoardings) and industrial products (motor cars and television sets), the image of youth and the image of the star (the Monroe cult). Some Pop artists used these motifs as themes, others treated them simply as structural devices, but some Pop artists adopt a critical attitude to the commercial world. The concepts of Pop Art and Pop Culture (“pop” = “popular”) came into vogue in the mid-1950s, as a result of a meeting which was held in the Institute of Contemporary Art in London to discuss fashion, the mass media, industrial design, science, fiction and allied subjects.

There have been three distinct phases in the development of English Pop Art. The first of these, which lasted from 1953 to 1958 and was concerned with technology, was represented by artists like Richard Hamilton and Eduardo Paolozzi. The second which saw the incorporation into Pop Art with abstract techniques, produced artists like Richard Smith and Peter Blake; and the third (1961), which attracted major importance to painterly qualities and figuration, was represented by painters like David Hockney, Allen Jones and Peter Phillips.

Contemporary British Painting

The 1960s decade – the decade that gave birth to contemporary art – saw a great increase in national wealth, the spending power of the individual hugely enhanced. Air travel became available to everyone; gramophone records played for longer and every adolescent had the resources to buy them.

By the early 1970s anti-war thinking gave rise to “peace and love” movement, and as a result “Conceptual Art” appeared. It dealt with issues that the concept would become the art work, that released artists to produce works based on aesthetic choices of the past.

British art in the last two decades of the 20th century, often called neoconceptual, has been quite eclectic and employed a variety of often mixed and sometimes surprising media (the birth of the Internet). Much of the art deals with life's big questions, has a certain

shock value, and shares a preoccupation with mortality and bodily decay. In 1990s a group of artists, known as Young British Artists (YBAs) developed new methods of producing art. Probably the best known of England's artists is Damien Hirst (born 1965), whose images have included dot paintings, cabinets of pharmaceuticals, and, most famously, animals, sliced or whole, displayed in glass vitrines. Another bright representative of this group is Tracey Emin (born 1963). A wide range of other contemporary English works and artists include Richard Billingham's deadpan photographic images; Rachel Whiteread's plaster casts and rubber sculpture of domestic objects; Jenny Savile's fleshy and disturbing nudes; Gary Hume's cool and brilliantly colored abstracts; and Marc Quinn's controversial works, notably a cast of his head made with his own blood. The annual Turner Prize, founded in 1984 and organized by the Tate, has developed as a highly publicized showcase for contemporary British art. Among the beneficiaries have been several members of the YBA movement – Damien Hirst, Rachel Whiteread, and Tracey Emin.

British contemporary art in the beginning of the 21st century has constantly reinvented itself and produced inspiring and innovative works full of energy and optimism for the future.

British Museums and Art Galleries

Britain's finest museums and art galleries feature over 400 major museums and art galleries of national and local importance with appeal to all ages, all displaying outstanding collections.

Whether you love Old Masters or modern art, contemporary sculpture or Impressionist paintings, London has an art gallery to suit you. From British art in Tate Britain and contemporary work in the Tate Modern to photography collections in the National Portrait Gallery, the sheer abundance of world-class artworks on display in London will inspire even the most discerning art lovers. Even better, as entry is free in most cases, you can visit London's major art galleries and museums time and time again.

The first place is taken by the publicly owned British Museum in Bloomsbury. Established in 1753, it is one of the greatest museums of human history and culture in the world. The present-building museum was constructed in the period 1823 – 1852. It covers 13,5 acres. The museum is renowned for its antiquities drawn from all ages and civilizations and for its books, prints and drawings, maps and coins, things of world historical importance. The museum's print room is justly famed, as is the manuscript collection which ranges from Aristotle's "Constitution of Athens" to modern British classics. The museum's collections are extraordinarily varied, especially in antiquities of Egypt, western Asia, the Orient, Greece, Rome and Britain. It is a real jewel in the cultural crown of Great Britain. As part of its very large website, the museum has the largest online database of objects in the collection of any museum in the world, with 2,000,000 individual object entries, 650,000 of them illustrated, online at the start of 2012. There is also a "Highlights" database with longer entries on over 4,000 objects, and several specialized online research catalogues and online journals (all free to access).

The National Gallery bordering the north of Trafalgar Square was built in 1838 to house the collection of Old Masters paintings. It came into being when the government bought the collection of John Angerstein, an insurance broker and patron of the arts, which included 38 paintings.. Today it contains a collection of western

European painting from the 13th century to 1900. The collection covers all schools and periods of painting, but is especially famous for its examples of Rembrandt and Rubens. The British schools are only moderately represented as national collections are shared with the Tate Gallery that was opened later, and some collections of British paintings from the National Gallery were transferred there. Every painting in London National Gallery is worth looking at. Among them are masterpieces by Botticelli, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, Gainsborough, Turner, Renoir, Cezanne and Van Gogh. There are special exhibitions, lectures, video and audio-visual programmes, guided tours and holiday events for children and adults. The gallery is an exempt charity, and a non-departmental public body of the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Its collections belong to the public of the United Kingdom and entry to the main collections is free of charge.

The National Portrait Gallery at the back of the National Gallery in Charing Cross Road, is a collection formed in 1856. The collection has more than 4,000 famous faces of Great Britain, including today's Royal family. Visitors come face to face with the people who have shaped British history from kings and queens to musicians and film stars. Artists featured range from Holbein to Hockney and the collection includes work across all media, from painting and sculpture to photography and video. As well as the permanent displays, the National Portrait Gallery has a diverse programme of exhibitions and free events and a stunning rooftop restaurant with spectacular views across the London skyline.

Tate Britain was founded in 1897 as the National Gallery of British art. It owes its establishment to Suie Henritate who built the gallery and gave his own collection of 65 paintings. Now it holds the largest collection of British art in the world. The gallery shows work from the last five centuries, including contemporary British art, in a series of free changing displays. Tate's Collection includes masterpieces by British artists such as Hogarth, Gainsborough, Constable, Millais, Burne-Jones, Whistler, Sargent, Sickert, Hepworth and Bacon. The extraordinary work of Turner can be seen in the Clore Gallery, modern sculpture is also represented in the gallery.

The Tate is an institution consisting of four museums: already mentioned Tate Britain in London, Tate Liverpool (1988), Tate St Ives, Cornwall (1993) and Tate Modern, London (2000). It is Britain's national museum of modern and contemporary art from around the world is housed in the former Bankside Power Station on the banks of the Thames. The awe-inspiring Turbine Hall runs the length of the entire building and you can see amazing work for free by artists such as C?zanne, Bonnard, Matisse, Picasso, Rothko, Dal?, Pollock, Warhol and Bourgeois. It is the most-visited modern art gallery in the world, with around 4,7 million visitors per year. The entrance to the Tate is free of charge; fees are only for special events and exhibitions. It also has a big website, Tate Online (1998).

The Victoria and Albert Museum is a treasure house of vast dimensions and wealth. Built in 1852, it is the world's greatest museum of art and design, representing over three thousand years of human creativity, with collections unrivalled in their scope and diversity. Situated in South Kensington, in recent years the V&A has undergone a dramatic programme of renewal and restoration. Highlights include the Medieval Renaissance galleries containing some of the greatest surviving treasures from the period, the breathtaking William and Judith Bollinger Jewellery Gallery and the stunning British Galleries, illustrating the history of Britain through the nation's art and design. In addition to its outstanding free permanent collection, the V&A offers an internationally-acclaimed programme of temporary exhibitions and an extensive events programme.

The Saatchi Gallery was established by Charles Saatchi in 1985. It is well known for controversial contemporary pieces of art and displays of work by relatively unknown artists. In 1992 it held the Young British Artists shows, a fixture for several years where Damien Hirst and Tracey Emin rose to fame. These shows featured Hirst's famous pickled animals and coloured spots, and Emin's unmade bed and tent (which was destroyed in a fire in 2006). The gallery was originally housed on Boundary Road, St John's Wood, and moved to County Hall, Westminster in 2003. Its current site is at the Duke of York's Headquarters where it has been since 2008. In 2012 the gallery is to be given to the public and will be renamed to the Museum of Contemporary Art.

Check your knowledge of the material, be ready to speak and enlarge on the following points:

1. Name the main artistic genres of the 18th century. Give vivid examples.
2. What makes William Hogarth one of the most significant British painters?
3. What subjects prevailed in Gainsborough's pictures?
4. Who is the author of the picture "Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse"?
5. What century is regarded as the Golden Age of British art? Who were its major representatives?
6. What are the main tendencies of English Romanticism in arts?
7. Why William Turner is considered as a controversial figure in his day?
8. Of what kind were the pictures which Turner did not exhibit?
9. Speak about the creation of Turner's picture "Rain, Steam and Speed".
10. Name some of the most famous canvases by John Constable.
11. What was Constable's contribution to the art of landscape painting?
12. Who were the main members of the Pre-Raphaelite brotherhood? What were their main ambitions?
13. Outline the main movements in the British Modern art. Name and briefly characterize the major artists.
14. What are the characteristics of Pop Art in Great Britain?
15. What contemporary British painters do you know?
16. Name the most popular British art galleries. What do you know about collections exhibited there?
17. How many museums does the Tate institution consist of? Name them.

British Architecture

The architecture of England has a long and diverse history from beyond Stonehenge to the designs of Norman Foster and the present day.

It was generally thought that once the Romans pulled out of Britain in the fifth century, their elegant villas, carefully-planned towns and engineering marvels like Hadrian's Wall simply fell into decay as British culture was plunged into the Dark Ages. It took the Norman Conquest of 1066 to bring back the light, when William the Conqueror arrived and brought civilization and fine stone buildings to British people. However, that is not quite true. Romano-British culture – and that included architecture along with language, religion, political organization and the arts – survived long after the Roman withdrawal. And although the Anglo-Saxons had a sophisticated building style of their own, little survives to bear witness to their achievements as the vast majority of Anglo-Saxon buildings were made of wood. The Saxons built in the round-arched style known as “Romanesque” because it copied the pattern and proportion of the architecture of the Roman Empire. The chief characteristics of the Romanesque style were barrel vaults, round arches, thick piers, and few windows. Romanesque is generally called “Norman” in England, but quite a lot of what we think is Norman may possibly be Saxon. The Normans destroyed a large proportion of England's churches and built Romanesque replacements, a process which encompassed all of England's cathedrals. Most of the latter were later partially or wholly rebuilt in Gothic style, and although many still preserve substantial Romanesque portions.

In the wake of the invasion William the Conqueror and his lords built numerous wooden castles to impose their control on the native population. Many were subsequently rebuilt in stone, beginning with the Tower of London.

The Tower of London

The Tower of London is one of the most famous and ancient buildings of London. It was first built by William the Conqueror, for the purpose of protecting and controlling the city. It covers an area of 18 acres within the Garden rails.

The present buildings are partly of the Norman period, but architecture of almost all the styles which have flourished in England may be found within the walls, as each monarch left some personal marks on it. The Tower has in the past been a fortress, a palace and a prison; it has housed the Royal Mint, the Public Records, the Royal Observatory, the Royal Zoo and the jewel house. Now it is the museum of arms and armour and is still one of the strongest fortresses in Britain.

The oldest and most important building is The Great Tower or Keep, called the White Tower. It was begun by Bishop Gundulf in 1078 on the orders of William the Conqueror. The structure was completed in 1097, providing a colonial stronghold and a powerful symbol of Norman domination. The White Tower is surrounded by other towers which all have different names.

The Tower was occupied as a palace by all Kings and Queens. It was the custom for each monarch to lodge in the Tower before his coronation, and to ride in procession to Westminster through the city.

The security of the walls made it convenient as State prison. The walls of the Tower remember the bloody executions, imprisonment and torture of the prisoners who were kept in the great London castle. The mysterious deaths, the execution of Queens of England – Catherine Howard and Anne Boleyn, the executions of men of peace like John Fisher Bishop of Rochester and Sir Thomas More. When Queen Elizabeth was a princess, she was sent to the Tower by Mary Tudor and kept there for some time.

The responsibility for looking after the prisoners was given to the Yeomen Warders or Beefeaters. Ravens have lived at the Tower of London for hundreds of years, as their ancestors used to find food in the Tower. There is a legend that if the ravens ever leave the Tower of London the White Tower will crumble and a great disaster shall befall England. That is why ravens are guarded.

The Gothic Style Westminster Abbey

Early in the 12th century, a new style in architecture and decoration emerged. At the time it was called simply “The French Style”, but later Renaissance critics called it “Gothic”. This was a reference to the imagined lack of culture of the barbarian tribes, including the Goths, which had ransacked Rome during the time of the Roman Empire. Gothic architecture is characterized by the use of ribbed vaults, buttresses and flying buttresses; it is also identified by the systematic use of the pointed arch (rather than the round arch) and by new decorative forms.

The appearance of the Gothic style in England cannot be adequately explained by the penetration of French influences. Occasionally some important English Gothic buildings, such as the choir of Canterbury Cathedral (1174) or Westminster Abbey (1245), exhibit very close and definite connections with contemporary French works; but always there are insular modifications. The majority of English Gothic buildings do not look in the least French.

Westminster Abbey, standing next to the Houses of Parliament in London, is a Gothic monastery church that is the traditional place of coronation and burial for English monarchs. Neither a cathedral nor a parish church, Westminster Abbey is a place of worship owned by the royal family.

The Abbey is the work of many people and different ages. The oldest part of the building is thought to be built in the 8th century. Then in the 11th century Edward the Confessor decided to build a monastery. Only a small part of this Norman monastery, consecrated in 1065, survived. The original Abbey, in Norman style, was built to house Benedictine monks. It was rebuilt in the Gothic style between 1245 and 1517. The first phase of the rebuilding was organized by Henry III, in Gothic style, as a shrine to honor Edward the Confessor and as a suitably regal setting for Henry's own tomb.

Although the Abbey was seized by Henry VIII during the Dissolution of the Monasteries in 1534, and closed in 1540, becoming a cathedral until 1550, its royal connections saved it from the destruction that caused damages to most other English abbeys. The expression “robbing Peter to pay Paul” may arise from this

period when money meant for the Abbey, which was dedicated to St. Peter, was diverted to the treasury of St. Paul's Cathedral.

Westminster Abbey still remains the most French of all English Gothic churches. The abbey's two towers were built between 1722 and 1745 by Sir Christopher Wren and Nicholas Hawksmoor, constructed from Portland stone to an early example of a Gothic Revival design. The Henry VII Chapel (1503-1512), is one of the most outstanding chapels of its time, with a magnificent vault. The fans are suspended from ribs like a series of pendants. Unbroken rows of statues in wall niches and elaborate choir stalls complete an interior. The chapel has a large stained glass window, the Battle of Britain memorial window. This chapel formed a fitting climax to English Gothic architecture.

Since the coronation of William the Conqueror in 1066, all English monarchs (except Lady Jane Grey, Edward V and Edward VIII, who did not have coronations) have been crowned in the Abbey. The Archbishop of Canterbury is the traditional cleric in the coronation ceremony. St. Edward's Chair, the throne on which British sovereigns are seated at the moment of coronation, is housed within the Abbey.

In the Abbey there are tombs and memorials of almost all British monarchs, numerous politicians, sovereigns, artists, writers and musicians. The abbey is stuffed with tombs, statues and monuments. Many coffins even stand upright due to the lack of space. In total approximately 3,300 people are buried in the church and cloisters. Some of the most famous are Charles Darwin, Sir Isaac Newton and David Livingstone. After Geoffrey Chaucer, "the father of English poets", other poets were buried around Chaucer in what became known as Poets' Corner. Among them are Samuel Johnson, Charles Dickens, Thomas Hardy, Rudyard Kipling. There are memorials to William Shakespeare, John Milton, Walter Scott, William Thackeray and others.

The Abbey has also seen many Royal Weddings through the years, in 2011 it was the venue for the wedding of Prince William and Kate Middleton.

Inigo Jones and Christopher Wren St. Paul's Cathedral

Between 1500 and 1660 British architecture experienced tremendous change. Church building declined. Great houses, instead, sprang up across the land. Most were eager to employ the new Renaissance architecture, first developed in Italy. Cut off from the continent, they relied on new architectural books printed to encounter this, and a new breed of men to interpret them – the surveyors – that emerged in this period. Gradually, medieval Gothic architectural forms were dropped, although buildings remained varied and playful. Hampton Court Palace (1515), Longleat House, Wiltshire (1580), Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire (1591 – 1597) are bright architectural examples of that time. Eventually, Inigo Jones (1573 – 1652) designed Britain's first classically-inspired buildings, as sophisticated as anything being built in Italy at the time.

Inigo Jones was the first architect to bring the Italian Renaissance to Britain. His long career was characterised by variety: he designed houses, churches, interiors, theatre sets, and even costumes. His earlier reputation was connected with the playhouse rather than with architecture, and it was he who was largely responsible for the development of the theatre into the form it preserved throughout the 18th and 19th centuries. His theatrical designing was introductory to the real architectural career which began when he designed the Queen House at Greenwich. By the time James I came to power, this palace was a large and rambling structure. In 1615 James I decided to update this, commissioning Inigo Jones to design a new compact palace for his queen, Anne of Denmark. Begun in 1616, the work was stopped for over 20 years, and then the palace was completed for Henrietta Maria between 1630 and 1635. The plan of the palace was completely symmetrical, with strict classical details and the principal rooms on the first floor, and to a great extent it influenced British architectural tradition later after Inigo Jones.

His first authentic building, and also his finest, was the Banqueting House in Whitehall intended to form part of an ambitious royal palace. This was not only the first, but one of the finest masterpieces of the English Renaissance: the first of the buildings that were

not mere Italian transcripts, but were as English as the stone of which they were built. The native English style arosed, having absorbed the foreign influences and adapted them to English climate, building techniques and materials.

Christopher Wren (1632 – 1723) was one of the greatest Englishmen ever. He was an English scientist and mathematician and one of Britain's most distinguished architects. He invented new ways of using traditional English building materials, such as brick and roof tiles, to keep within the limits of classical design.

Christopher Wren attended Westminster School and Wadham College, Oxford, where he graduated in 1651. He experimented with submarine design, road paving, and design of telescopes. Before taking up his architectural career he had been successively Gresham Professor of Astronomy in London and Savilian Professor at Oxford, retaining his post until his architectural practice in London took up so much of his time that he had to resign.

In 1664 and 1665, Wren was commissioned to design the Sheldonian Theatre in Oxford, and a chapel for Pembroke College, Cambridge and from then on, architecture was his main focus. Since the purpose of the building was for solemn public acts, Wren chose a classical amphitheatre as the basic form, and adapted the plan of the Theatre of Marcellus in Rome. In this earliest work we can already see the combination of practical ingenuity and aesthetic feeling expressed in terms derived from classical civilization, which is the hallmark of Wren as an architect.

In 1665, Wren visited Paris, where he was strongly influenced by French and Italian baroque styles. In 1666, the Great Fire of London destroyed much of the medieval city, providing a huge opportunity for Wren. He produced ambitious plans for rebuilding the whole area but they were rejected, partly because property owners insisted on keeping the sites of their destroyed buildings. Wren designed 51 new city churches, as well as the new St Paul's Cathedral. Each church was different, though all were classical in style. He insisted on the finest materials and a very high standard of workmanship. Wren also influenced the design of houses, both in town and in the country. In 1669, he was appointed surveyor of the royal works which effectively gave him control of all government building in the country.

St. Paul's Cathedral is considered to be the turning point in Wren's career. On June 21, 1675 was laid the first stone of the New St. Paul's, which was not finished for thirty-five years. The cathedral was completed on October 20, 1708, the 76th birthday of Sir Christopher Wren. It is built of Portland stone in a late Renaissance to Baroque style. Its impressive dome makes it a famous London landmark.

St. Paul's Cathedral is laid out in the shape of a cross. At the "top" of the cross are the choir and the altar, where the sacrament of communion takes place. The interior of the cathedral is very beautiful and full of monuments, dedicated to a wide range of people, such as Admiral Nelson, the Duke of Wellington, Lord Leighton, Thomas Middleton. Also remembered are poets, painters, clergy and residents of the local parish. The nave has three small chapels in the two adjoining aisles: St. Dunstan's Chapel, dedicated to St. Dunstan, who was Bishop of London and Archbishop of Canterbury over 1,000 years ago; All Souls Chapel, dedicated to soldiers of World War I, and the Chapel of the Order of St. Michael and St. George.

Many notable figures are buried in St. Paul's Cathedral crypt, such as Florence Nightingale and Lord Nelson. Sir Christopher Wren himself was fittingly the first person to be buried there, in 1723. The inscription on his burial slab states, "Reader, if you seek his memorial, look all around you". The main space of the cathedral is centred under the dome, which rises 108.4 meters from the cathedral floor. In the south-west pier of the dome a staircase ascends by 616 steps to the highest point of the cathedral. An easy ascent leads to the Library. At the corner of the gallery, on the left, a very narrow stair leads to the Clock of enormous size. The dome contains three circular galleries: the internal Whispering Gallery with its unusual acoustics (if someone whispers close to the wall on one side, a person on the other side can hear him); the external Stone Gallery, from where you can enjoy the view, and the external Golden Gallery at the highest point of the dome, under the lantern.

Sir Christopher Wren did far more than churches. He was responsible for Tom Tower at Christ's Church, Oxford, the library at Trinity College (1677 – 1692), and the Royal Hospital at Chelsea (1682). He also enlarged and remodeled Kensington Palace,

Hampton Court Palace (1689 – 1694), and the Naval Hospital at Greenwich (1696). He is rightly regarded as the most influential British architect of all time.

Georgian and Victorian Architecture

The 18th century saw a turn away from Baroque elaboration and a reversion to a more austere approach to Classicism. A new style was needed for a new age, and the new ruling class, which aspired to build a civilisation that would rival that of ancient Rome, looked for a solution in antiquity. This brought a return to the Italian Palladianism (by the 16th century Italian architect Andrea Palladio (1508 – 1580) that had characterised the earliest manifestations of Classical architecture in England. Later Neoclassical architecture was established, country houses, representing this style, include Woburn Abbey and Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire (1758 – 1777). The latter has austere, delicate interiors, with their remarkably unified decoration, that show Robert Adam, its architect, at the height of his powers. During this period new forms of domestic construction, the terrace and the crescent, appeared.

By the end of the 18th century austere neo-classical masterpieces were still being produced; but so too were battlemented castles, picturesque sixteen-bedroomed cottages and even, as the 19th century dawned, oriental palaces such as John Nash's Royal Pavilion at Brighton. Among the notable architects practising in this era were Robert Adam (1728 – 1792), Sir William Chambers (1723 – 1796), John Wood (1728 – 1782) and James Wyatt (1746 – 1813).

The architecture in the Victorian Age (1837 – 1901) was characterized by novelty and remarkable inventions. Two notable contributions to the world architecture were made. One was the introduction of cast-iron and sheet glass into building construction, which resulted in the Crystal Palace and the London Coal Exchange (1846 – 1849) and many railway stations with glass roofs and cast-iron columns. Since the speed travel to great distances suddenly became possible, railway architecture gained its popularity during Victorian times. The other was the small detached house built of local material and in the style of earlier buildings in its district. It was

designed for the middle classes, for artistic people of moderate income.

The renewal of church building led to the Gothic revival, a development which emerged in England and whose influence was largely restricted to the English-speaking world. It had begun in the 18th century influenced by Romanticism, a trend initiated by Horace Walpole's house Strawberry Hill, but in the Victorian era the revival became a movement driven by cultural, religious and social concerns which extended far beyond architecture seeing the Gothic style and the medieval way of life as a route to the spiritual regeneration of society. The first great and famous building of that movement was the new Houses of Parliament, the grandest work of Victorian Gothic architecture and England's most successful public building of the 19th century. It was designed by two British architects: Charles Barry (1795 – 1860), who won the competition to its design and made the plan, the outline and the style of the Houses, and Augustus Welby Northmore Pugin (1812 – 1852), whose contribution to the Houses is found largely in its decoration.

The Houses of Parliament, or Westminster Palace (1840 – 1860), replaced the building destroyed by fire in 1834. Seen from across the river the Houses of Parliament give a fine illusion of simplicity. At the east front of the Palace we can see great square towers at either end, the central lanterns, the armoury of pinnacles and turrets, crockets and perforated iron-work like spears. The very ground-plan of this highly complicated set of buildings was primarily dictated by the demands of highly complicated system of government. All these committee-rooms, library, courts and robing-chambers were found necessary to the comfortable working of the government.

The Palace of Westminster has three main towers: the largest and tallest is the 98,5-metre Victoria Tower, the most famous Clock Tower, commonly known as Big Ben (96 metres), one of the main symbols of Great Britain, which fame surpassed that of the Palace itself, and the Central Tower, the shortest (91 metres).

The Palace of Westminster contains over 1,100 rooms, 100 staircases and 4,8 kilometres of passageways, which are spread over four floors. The ground floor is occupied by offices, dining rooms and bars; the first floor houses the main rooms of the Palace,

including the debating chambers, the lobbies and the libraries. The top-two floors are used as committee rooms and offices. It was summed up earlier this century as classic in inspiration, Gothic in detailing, and carried out with scrupulous adherence to the architectural detail of the Tudor period.

The huge glass-and-iron Crystal Palace, designed by Joseph Paxton (1801 – 1865) to house the Great Exhibition of 1851 in Hyde Park, shows another strand to 19th century architecture - one which embraced new industrial processes, when the new technology of iron and steel frame construction exerted an influence over many forms of building.

Joseph Paxton was neither architect, nor engineer who had made extensive experiments in the construction of large greenhouses. What was required was a hall of extraordinary dimensions, yet one that could be dismantled with a minimum of expense, leaving the amenities of the park unscathed. This was a greenhouse on an unprecedented scale, a cathedral of glass. Indeed, sections were named after cathedral architecture: for example, the cross wings were called transepts. In less than eleven months the designs were approved and the building completed, over 560 metres long, 120 metres wide and 33 metres high. All the world came to see this enormous glass house that was so much bigger than any cathedral. The Crystal Palace fulfilled all the requirements demanded of it. In 1853 it was dismantled without difficulty and rebuilt at Sydenham hill and stood there until its destruction by fire in 1936. It was an epoch-making structure and it gave the world the first hint of the advantages to be gained in a metal-framed building.

The Victorian period also saw a revival of interest in English domestic architecture. This development too was shaped by much wider ideological considerations, strongly influenced by Arts and Crafts Movement and William Morris (1834 – 1896), who made an effort to return to hand-crafted, pre-industrial manufacturing techniques. Morris's influence grew from the production of furniture and textiles, until by the 1880s a generation of principled young architects was following his call for good, honest construction. An important event in Morris's life was the building and decoration of Red House at Bexleyheath (1859 – 1860), designed for Morris by Philip Webb (1831 –1915). Red House is the building which started

the Arts and Crafts movement. It is designed as an L-shaped building, two-storeyed with high-pitched red-tiled roofs and deeply recessed Gothic porches. The interior struck the visitor as very simple but grand with its high ceilings, exposed beams, brick arches and plain brick fireplaces. The main rooms, on the first floor, were the studio and the drawing-room.

Modern Architecture

It is difficult to sum up architecture in Britain in the 20th century. New types of buildings have emerged and the scale of buildings and developments has become more varied than ever before: from fifty-storey skyscrapers to endless low-scale cul-de-sacs (deadlocks), with their detached houses. Vast public buildings and developments dominate the centre of most cities and towns; in the suburbs and villages uniform buildings can be found throughout; and the planning authorities have standardised the appearance of private developments. The other obvious change has been the growing international nature of architecture: many British architects have found more success at home than abroad; buildings are no longer rooted to their locality, with ever more diverse materials used in their construction; and stylistically buildings look less “British”, beginning, arguably, with the invasion of the so-called International Modernism, that emerged as a reaction against the world before First World War, including historical architectural styles. Only a handful of Modern Movement buildings of any real merit were produced here during the 1920s and 1930s, and most of these were the work of foreign architects such as Eric Mendelsohn (1887 – 1953), Serge Chermayeff (1900 – 1996), Berthold Lubetkin (1901 – 1990) and Erno Goldfinger (1902 – 1987), who had settled in this country and galvanised the position of modern architecture within England. The De la Warr Pavilion at Bexhill-on-Sea, Sussex, is a superb expression of all that is best about the Modern Movement. Commissioned by Lord De La Warr, mayor of Bexhill, and built by Eric Mendelsohn and Serge Chermayeff between 1933 and 1936, it was an attempt to make Bexhill as attractive as exotic French and Italian resorts. It goes without saying that it failed, but the recent

restoration of the Pavilion's clean, sweeping lines is a cause for national celebration.

The Second World War transformed Britain. The post-war period presented a magnificent architectural opportunity in England and in Europe. Vast areas of destroyed and damaged property needed rebuilding. The reconstruction began under Attlee's Labour government in 1945, there was a desperate need for cheap housing which could be produced quickly. The use of prefabricated elements, metal frames, concrete cladding and the absence of decoration – all of which had been embraced by Modernists abroad and viewed with suspicion by the British – were adopted to varying degrees for housing developments and schools. Local authorities, charged with the task of rebuilding city centres, became important patrons of architecture. This represented a shift away from the private individuals who had dominated the architectural scene for centuries.

The best known pioneer in the field of modern town planning was Sir Patrick Abercrombie (1879 – 1957). He was best known for his extensive work in replanning Britain's bombed cities, particularly Plymouth and London. Here he illustrated that his ideas were ahead of his time, and he anticipated traffic and road problems which are now urgently with us. In 1944 he presented his Greater London Plan, emphasizing the need for decentralization and planning for an overspill from the Metropolitan area. Sir Patrick established the profession of town planning in Britain and he trained the next generation to continue his work.

The Royal Festival Hall (Sir Leslie Martin (1908 – 2000) and the Architecture Department of the London County Council) is all that survives of the complex laid out on London's South Bank for the 1951 Festival of Britain. The festival buildings were important for the opportunity they afforded of presenting a showcase for good modern architecture and Martin's concert hall is a timely reminder of what good festival architecture looks like. The Festival Hall reopened in the summer of 2007 after an extensive refurbishment and work to improve the difficult acoustics of the main concert hall.

High-Tech architecture emerged as an attempt to revitalise the language of Modernism, it drew inspiration from technology to create new architectural expression. The two most prominent architects of this period are Richard George Rogers (born 1933), best

known for his work on the Lloyd's building (1978 – 1986) and Millennium Dome (completed 1999) both in London, and Norman Robert Foster (born 1935), with his most famous English building Swiss Re Buildings (completed 2003). Nowadays both architects continue their respective influence and inspire contemporary designers.

By the late 1980s the Modern Movement, unfairly blamed for the social experiments implicit in high-rise housing, had lost out to irony and spectacle in the shape of Post-Modernism, with its cheerful borrowings from anywhere and any period. Many shopping malls and office complexes for example Broadgate used Postmodern style. Notable practitioners were James Stirling (1926 – 1992) and Terry Farrell (born 1938), although Farrell returned to modernism in the 1990s. A significant example of postmodernism is Robert Venturi (born 1925) and his Sainsbury Wing of the National Gallery. But now, in the new Millennium, even Post-Modernism is showing signs of age.

Check your knowledge of the material, be ready to speak and enlarge on the following points:

1. What masterpieces of British architecture do you know?
2. In what way is the history of Great Britain reflected in its architecture?
3. What are the most important parts of the Tower of London? Which museum does it house at present?
4. What is the legend of the Tower? What other traditions associated with this masterpiece so you remember?
5. Name some of the most important Gothic buildings in England. What features are typical of this style of architecture?
6. Where is Poet's Corner situated?
7. Who do you think is "the architect of London"? What is his best-known creation?
8. What architect of Georgian period do you remember?
9. What notable contributions did the Victorians make to the world architecture?
10. Briefly describe the interior and exterior of the Houses of Parliament.

11. Define the progressive nature of the Crystal Palace.
12. Describe the Royal Festival Hall.
13. What trends and styles of British Modern architecture do you know?

The History of English Music

The history of English music has followed, to a great extent, the same pattern as that of other European countries since the earliest times. There have been periods of great flowering and periods of lesser importance alternating with each other. The famous comment “Das Land ohne Musik” (The land in which there is no music) was certainly made by someone in the 19th century, immersed only in the importance of his own period and the immediately preceding ones, without thought for the immense riches of the past. In the late 13th century England produced one of the most complex and perfectly organized pieces of music known up to that day “Sumer is icumen in”. In general, culturally England was an important centre in the Middle Ages, and musically it was on a par with France and even Italy. It is known that sacred polyphony, i.e. music in which voices sing together in independent parts or a manner of accompanying chant with one or more added voices, was well established in England in the early 12th century and 100 years later, the English polyphony took on traits distinguishing it from continental styles. The 13th century saw the emergence of first Court Chapels, groups of salaried musicians and clerics. They were established by King Louis IX of France and King Edward I of England (1239 – 1307) and only after the middle of the 15th century the fashion spread to other aristocratic and church leaders. Members of the Chapel, served as performers, composers, scribes furnishing music for church services. Evidently, these musicians contributed to the secular entertainment of the court and accompanied their rulers on journeys and voyages.

In the early 15th century, John Dunstable (ca. 1385 – 1453) achieved the widest reputation among several important composers, such as Leonel Power and John Benet. It is believed that he composed both religious and secular music, the samples of the latter

are quite problematic for attribution. As for sacred music, about 50 works attributed to him have survived, including two complete masses, three Magnificats, numerous motets, fragments and mass sections.

The greatest masters of the English 16th century music, Thomas Tallis (ca. 1505 – 1585) and his pupil William Byrd (1540 – 1623) were primarily composers of church music. Thomas Tallis had a huge reputation as a composer of artfully complex music, full of arcane technical devices and hidden symbols. He worked his way up from being the musical director of the modest little priory in Dover to being a key member of the Chapel Royal in London. He was right at the centre of power, which in one way was advantageous, as it gave him the best singers and players to work with. But in another way it was risky, as England in the mid 16th century was convulsed by religious upheaval. The initial traumatic break with the Roman Church brought on by Henry VIII led to the forcible closing and desecration of monasteries. A new liturgy in English was established through the reign of Edward VI, but all these reforms were undone by the Catholic Mary Tudor (Bloody Mary). Stability only arrived with Elizabeth I, who reverted to her father's faith. Throughout his service to successive monarchs as organist and composer, Tallis avoided the religious controversies, though he stayed an "unreformed" Roman Catholic. He proved to be a master of the simple style demanded for the new English liturgy. But right to the end of his life he composed for private patrons "underground" Catholic pieces, florid and complex works in the old Catholic musical tradition, the most notable of which is "Spem in Alium" ("I have no other Hope, than God").

The whole of the church music was choral, i.e. for voices in unison or in part unaccompanied by instruments. In general, the forms in which the music of the period reached its highest development were the motet and the madrigal. Both are elaborate polyphonic compositions written for voices in parts.

From a musical viewpoint there is practically no difference between them, but motets at the beginning were more liturgical in character, and the texts were usually in Latin. As a rule they were written for performance on principal holy days. As a new genre "motets" emerged in France in the early 13th century (apropos, Latin

“motetus” comes from French “mot” in the meaning “word”). Over the course of centuries poets and composers developed new forms of the motet, including some with French words and secular topics. Sacred motets might have been performed in services, but secular ones were not. They were almost certainly music for the elite, including clerics, teachers, poets, musicians and their patrons.

The madrigal, originated in Italy, is a song for two or three voices that sing the same text, usually an idyllic, pastoral, satirical or love poem. Though both motet and madrigal have foreign roots, but nowhere in Europe did the writing of madrigal reach a higher state of development than in England, where they were composed in greater number and variety than in any other country – 92 collections of madrigals were published in England between the years 1598 – 1638.

The Elizabethan age in England (1558 – 1603) was marked by the emergence of a new art of music and drama wholly independent of the church, that led to the art of masque. It was a fusion of poetry, scene-painting, music, dance, stage machinery, and elaborate costumes. These spectacles, mounted but once, or at most three times, were very expensive to produce. The court spent the phenomenal annual sum of £3,000 – 4,000 on such entertainments. The masque demanded relatively little action but sensational stage effects. It glorified royal virtues, sang of the monarch’s perfection and danced to represent the harmony of his or her rule. The most expensive masque staged in 1634 cost approximately £21,000.

In general, the second half of the 14th century through the 20ies – 30ies of the 17th century could be described as music mad. It was a universal recreation of the people – from the agricultural labourers to the cultivated classes and the Royal Court. The playing of violas, lutes and other instruments, singing of madrigals, glees, catches and other compositions was a common practice.

England had its own native tradition of secular music in the 16th century. Monarchs, Henry VIII, his second wife, Ann Boleyn, their daughter, the would-be Queen Elizabeth I, were musicians, playing various instruments, and composers. Elizabeth I protected the greatest composers of her reign Tallis and Byrd, both Catholics, but loyal subjects of and servants to her, from prosecution for their religious practices and for providing music for their friends and patrons to use in their clandestine Roman services.

In the early 1600s, the solo song with accompaniment became more prominent, especially the lute song, which was a more personal genre than the madrigal, and the lute accompaniments were always subordinate to the vocal melody. The leading composers of lute songs were John Dowland (1563 – 1626) and Thomas Campion (1567 – 1620).

But in 1642 the Civil War broke out which threw the country into confusion and disorganized all social life. Puritanism emphasized on preaching, moral strictness and abstinence from pleasures. Theatres were closed down and all music fell out of favour for almost 20 years, till the years of Restoration (1660). Although the Puritan Commonwealth of the mid 17th century greatly disrupted the English musical tradition, the late 17th century produced several distinguished figures, including Henry Purcell (1659 – 1695), one of England's greatest composers, popularly known as the "British Orpheus".

After the Restoration period England had a lively musical culture. The royal family commissioned large works for orchestra, chorus and soloists for ceremonial or state occasions, such as royal birthdays, holidays and the like. Audiences eagerly returned to the theatres, where plays often included masques or musical episodes. The English continued to enjoy playing viol consort music (ensemble, instrumental music). This was music for well-to-do amateurs to play for their own entertainment. English composers of the period favoured the catch, a canon with a humorous, often ribald text. Catches were sung unaccompanied by a convivial group of gentlemen, in an elevated, musically intellectual parallel to the bawdy songs and coarse jokes of other all-male gatherings. Social dancing was an important part of English life with strong dance traditions at court, in cities and rural areas. The London publisher and music lover John Playford (1623 – 1687) collected and published "The English Dancing Master", including a large number of genuine folk melodies and popular airs along with instructions for the dances. But attempts to introduce Italian or French opera in the 1670s failed, as there was little interest in dramas set to continuous music, with the only exception – Henry Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas".

Henry Purcell was born in Westminster, London, and his entire career was supported by royal patronage. The boy was

admitted to the Chapel Royal as a chorister and proved to be a gifted prodigy as a composer, having published his first song at the age of about 9, and composed innumerable songs and anthems, and wrote the music to the works by leading playwrights – Dryden and Shadwell. In 1680 he was appointed organist of Westminster Abbey, the most honourable position an English musician could occupy at that time. Purcell held a number of prestigious and simultaneous positions throughout his life, including organist of the Chapel Royal (1682), organ maker and keeper of the king's instruments, composer to the court. In 1687 after almost a ten-year interval he resumed his connections with the theatre by scoring the music to Dryden's tragedy "Tyrannical Love" and Dryden's version of Shakespeare's "The Tempest". The composition of his opera "Dido and Aeneas" forms a very important landmark in the history of English dramatic music. The opera is the first professional one on the British soil, but Purcell's greatest work is undoubtedly his "Te Deum" (1694), the first English "Te Deum" composed with orchestra accompaniment. Henry Purcell was a very prolific composer and wrote in his short life a vast amount of music of every sort. In addition to "Dido and Aeneas" he composed 5 semi-operas, which like masque, employ spoken as well as sung passages, music to 10 plays staged in London theatres, 77 anthems, 25 Glorious Odes, more than 100 solo songs and 40 duets, and over 50 catches, and a great number of pieces for chamber orchestra and solo instruments. His Latin epitaph in Westminster Abbey says that his art might be only surpassed in the heaven. Henry Purcell didn't have pupils or followers. The choral traditions were later developed by Handel, and as for opera, the 18th and 19th centuries were greatly dominated by Italian, French and German composers.

In England the popular form of opera in the vernacular language was ballad opera, first presentation of which was in London in 1728. The genre was spawned by the overwhelming success of "The Beggar's Opera", with libretto by John Gay (1685 – 1732), music arranged probably by Johann Ch. Pepusch (1667 – 1752) and staged by John Rich (1692 – 1761). The ballad opera consists of spoken dialogue interspersed with folk or traditional tunes, well-known airs and arias from other works of the stage, ballads. The lyrics are generally fitted to existing tunes and it was only in this way

that vast riches of English folk-lore as well as musical riches of the past have been preserved. The subject-matter of many operas is the day-to-day life of the common, usually country, people. John Gay's play satirized London society by replacing the ancient heroes and elevated sentiments of traditional opera with modern urban thieves and prostitutes, and their crimes. "The Beggar's Opera" was both attack on the then Prime-Minister Robert Walpole's corrupt administration, and a satire of fashionable London's obsession with Italian opera. John Gay and his team used operatic conversations, poetry and music to create humour through incongruous juxtapositions, with the view showing that criminal underworld was a mirror image of high society, dominated by money, self-interest and celebrity-criminals. Financially the opera was a tremendous success and a popular pun was in circulation in London – "The Beggar's Opera" made Gay rich and Rich gay".

The fashion for ballad operas peaked in the 1730s, but they continued to be composed and staged over the next several decades in Britain. Over time, ballad opera composers borrowed less and wrote more original music. In the 19th century two new genres, very close to ballad opera, appeared – operetta and musical comedy (or musical). Operetta is a new kind of light opera with spoken dialogue. The great masters of operetta was the team of W. S. Gilbert (librettist) and A. Sullivan (composer). Sullivan wanted to be known as a serious composer, but his opera on Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe" (1891) was nowhere near success as his collaborations with Gilbert, especially "The Pirates of Penzance" (1879) and "The Mikado" (1885). Musical comedy or musicals features songs and dance numbers, spoken dialogue in a comic or romantic plot. English theatre manager George Edwardes established the genre by combining elements of variety shows, comic operas and light plays in a series of productions at the Gaiety Theatre in London in the 1890s. British musicals were soon staged in the USA, and the New York Theatre district on Broadway became the main centre for musicals, along with London's West End.

But one important event that led to emergence of a new form of entertainment took place in London in 1672, that was the first public concert. Until the 1670s concerts were private affairs, given for an invited audience by amateurs or professionals, employed by a

patron or learned academics. Then in London several trends came together: a moneyed middle class interested in listening to music, a great number of first-class musicians in the service of the royal court, and London theatres with their rather modest incomes, which encouraged them to find means of supplementing their salaries. The first impresarios rented rooms in taverns or theatre halls, charged an entrance fee, and paid the performers out of the proceeds. Soon the commercial concert halls were built and modern concert life began. Public concerts gradually spread to the continent, first to Paris in 1725 and then to major German cities in the 1740s.

The serious music of the 18th – 19th centuries was dominated by the German composer George Frideric Handel (1685 – 1759), who matured as a composer in England. His music was enormously popular and he was the first composer working for public at large – not just for church, or royal court, or town council, though he served numerous aristocratic patrons and enjoyed the lifelong support of the British royal family. He composed more than 20 oratorios (a genre he invented), more than 40 Italian operas and more than 100 Italian cantatas, 45 concerts, a considerable amount of instrumental music. For coronation of King George II in 1727 he composed four splendid anthems, including “Zadok the Priest”, performed at every British coronation since then. Handel was the first composer whose music has never ceased to be performed.

Edward Elgar (1857 – 1934) was the first “truly” English composer in more than 200 years to enjoy wide international recognition. He was born in Worcester where his father was for many years organist in the Roman Catholic Church of St. George. The boy had varied opportunities for a musical education; he learnt to play several instruments and worked as conductor of an amateur orchestra before he succeeded his father as organist at St. George. In the 1880s Elgar wrote a certain amount of church music in accordance with the universal language of the classical tradition. Music critics wrote that Elgar’s music was untouched by folk-lore or any other noticeable national tradition. He derived his harmonic style from German composers, mostly Brahms and Wagner, and he drew from the latter the system of leitmotives in his oratorios.

“The Dream of Gerontius” first performed in Birmingham in 1900 was received as a new revelation in English music, both at

home and abroad. His experience in writing church music is to be regarded as a great contribution into the movement of developing the more artistic and sensuous side of religious music, a thing which took place in all European music. The same great interest was attached to his later oratorios – “The Apostles” (1903) and “The Kingdom” (1906). The orchestral pieces, such as “The Enigma Variations” (1898 – 1899) and the Violoncello Concerto (1918 – 1919) were brackets of Elgar’s two greatest decades, comprising the mentioned above grand choral works, First Symphony, his series of “Pomp and Circumstance” marches, including “Land of Hope and Glory”. They have been the hit tunes of British concert halls, especially at Promenade Concerts. But by the early 1920s, his music was no longer as popular as it once was, and it took a more intimate, darker turn after the First World War, above all in his “Cello Concerto”, which he once described as “a man’s attitude to life”. His wife died in 1920 and her death silenced the music that was in him, as she was the only person he relied on more than any other for support and encouragement. Elgar never fully recovered and spent much of the last 14 years of his life in virtual creative silence: till his dying day Edward Elgar made public appearances chiefly as conductor.

The English musical Renaissance, begun by E. Elgar, took a nationalist turn in the 20th century, when composers looked for a distinctive voice for English music after many decades of domination by foreign styles. For the whole generation of composers at the early years of the 20th century the major sources of inspiration were the rich heritage of English folk music and the polyphony of Elizabethan and Jacobean ages, mainly by Tallis and Purcell. Ralph Vaughan Williams (1872 – 1958), Cecil Sharp (1859 – 1924), Gustav Holst (1874 – 1934) and other composers collected and published hundreds of folk songs, leading to the use of these melodies in their own compositions. William’s “Norfolk Rhapsodies” and “Dives and Lazarus”, Holst’s “Somerset Rhapsody” or Britten’s “Our Hunting Fathers” are just a few examples.

No doubt the most noticeable figure in the 20th century music is that of Benjamin Britten (1913 – 1976), a prolific composer, whose output of orchestral, chamber, vocal, choral music was prodigious. His music ranges from simple pieces for children to

elaborate challenging works addressed to elite listeners. His first real opera “Peter Grimes” (1945) established Britten’s reputation and became the first English opera since Henry Purcell to enter the international repertory. The success was cemented by his subsequent operas “The Rape of Lucretia” (1946), “Albert Herring” (1947), “The Turn of the Screw” (1954) and “A Midsummer Night’s Dream” (1960). Apropos, no English composer since the 17th century had dared to set a Shakespeare play as an opera. All his life Britten was concerned with humanitarian problems, ideals of public service, and ideas of tolerance and pacifism. The latter found its expression in his “War Requiem” (1961 – 1962), commissioned for the consecration of the new cathedral in Coventry. The very idea in the “Requiem” of alternating the words of the Catholic liturgy with war poetry by Wilfred Owen was a bold one.

Among the greatest composers of the 20th – 21st centuries are Michael Tippett (1905 – 1998), William “Havergal” Brian (1876 – 1972), Peter Maxwell Davies (b. 1934), Gerald Finzi (1901 – 1972), John Barry (1933 – 2011), Harrison Birtwhistle (b. 1934), Mark Anthony Turnage (b. 1960).

Serious music in Britain is a minority interest, though the opera houses and concert halls are sold out, as a rule, well in advance. But since late 1950s, early 1960s British musicians have had a great influence on the development of world music in the “pop” (popular) idiom. A quartet “The Beatles” from Liverpool and numerous rock groups (bands) created a kind of revolution in the 20th century culture. Their music embraces a wide variety of musical styles; musicians experiment with recording technology, while the search for individual sound has resulted in development of many new styles within the broad tradition of rock, heavy metal, hard rock, acid (psychedelic) rock, avant-garde rock and others. The 1970s saw the emergence of new styles, such as disco with its steady meter and lush orchestrations; punk, a hard-driving style, voicing teenage alienation, and rap with its heavy beat and themes of male dominance. Since the 1960s and on, pop music has been an enormous and profitable business. Within Britain the total sale of various kinds of musical recording are more than 200 million a year.

A widespread feature of European musical life since the end of World War II has been the increasing number of summer musical

festivals. Many high-quality arts festivals take place in Britain, the most ambitious of them is the Edinburgh Festival, which firmly holds its place in the front rank of European festivals. It lasts for about three weeks each year in August – early September and embraces all the performing arts – music, drama, opera, film, as well as photography, painting, literature. There is a dozen of different performances every day around the city, both indoors and outdoors. The Festival dates back to 1947 and its founders had a vision that it could enliven and enrich the cultural life of Scotland and Britain, and that of Europe. The hope has come true.

The late 1940s saw the emergence of a number of arts festivals that have become attractive both to the performers and public at large. The most notable are Cheltenham Festival (1945) devoted primarily to promotion of contemporary British music against a broad world background; Alderburgh Festival (1948) co-founded by B. Britten, a famous tenor Peter Pears and a writer Eric Crozier. Britten's music is at the core of its programs, and one of the ideas the festival was organized with was education and support of young talents. Britten and friends brought together international stars (Menuhin, Richter, Rostropovich, Fischer-Dieskau) and emerging talents, established a centre and school for talented young musicians. The Bath International Music festival, known all over the country and overseas as the “celebrities” festival, presents a number of high quality events including orchestral, chamber and contemporary classical music, contemporary jazz, world and folk music, with a range of free-to-the-public outdoor events. Over the 60 years the Bath Festival has been host to many internationally acclaimed artists.

The Glyndebourne Opera festival is a private enterprise, receiving no public subsidy and it has to make a profit in order to flourish. Statistics says that the box office must hit around 95% of capacity to fulfill the budget; donations from individuals and corporate sponsorship (e.g. more than £2 mln in 2010) are also quite important. The opening production in 1934 was “Marriage of Figaro” (“Le Nozze de Figaro”) by Mozart and since then his operas have been Glyndebourne's bread, butter and jam. The festival has a long-term commitment to the Baroque repertoire – Handel, Vivaldi, staging alongside well-known and “palatable” masterpieces by Bizet, Verdi, Rossini. The season in summer lasts for about 3 weeks, but

apart from it, there is also a national tour every autumn with some Arts Council subsidy. The ticket price may vary from £100 (the cheapest) to £2,000.

Unlike glamorous and expensive Glyndebourne, the Promenade Concerts (better known as the BBC Proms) are very democratic with cheap tickets and stellar performers. The concerts were a special creation of Henry Wood in 1895. His aim was “to run nightly concerts to train the public in classical music”, and “to bring the best classical music to the widest possible audience”. At first the concerts took place in the Queen’s Hall, maybe the best concert hall in London it has ever had, but the building was flattened in an air raid during World War II. The annual eight-ten-week marathon is held from mid July to mid September in the Royal Albert Hall. The programs are well-stuffed, so that a large repertory can be handled in the course of the season – classics have always been on the program as well as music by British composers and new works with British and world premiers. The latest novelties to attract the public are Human Planet Prom based on the BBC ONE Natural History series, Family Prom, Comedy Prom, featuring famous comedies, Horrible Histories Prom bringing to life the popular children’s stories and the latest acquisition of the Proms 2011 – the Audience Choice Prom – the orchestra took requests from a list of up to 300 pieces, rehearsed everything and preformed to the packed hall.

The BBC Proms doubtlessly is the world’s greatest festival of classical music – there are nearly 90 concerts in the season, and every concert is broadcast on Radio 3. Around £10 mln is spent on the Proms, 2/3 of it from licence payers.

Glastonbury and Reading festivals evidently are the two most well-established rock music festivals. Glastonbury is the largest green-field music and performing arts festivals in the world. It is a huge tented city on an enormous site with a perimeter of about eight and a half miles. Everyone in Glastonbury is to have a wild time in their own way – the more commercial aspects (one feels as if he is in the West End) are around the Pyramid, Other and Dance stages; there are also Jazz World and Acoustic areas and specially designed family oriented areas like the Kidz Field, the Theatre and Circus fields as well as the ones for fans of more alternative and less noisy aspects of music-making.

There is a great variety of musical festivals in the country, devoted exclusively to choral singing, one of the most ancient traditions, dating back to the 12th century. The practice of commercial singing started flourishing after the restoration of 1660. A middle-class public for music was growing and it was this public which came to provide audiences for Handel's oratorios and Bach's cantatas. In the 19th century choral singing was seen as a way to occupy leisure time, develop a sense of unity, elevate musical tastes and encourage spiritual and ethical values. Large amateur choruses played a leading role at music festivals, where singers from across a region gathered together to perform. Choral singing was encouraged by the performances of Handel's "Messiah" in aid of Charity institution for children of unknown parentage. Regular festivals centered on Handel's works began in 1759, though the oldest in the country goes back to 1683 in honour of St. Cecilia, and since 1724 the Festival of Three Choirs has been regularly held in Gloucester, Hereford and Worcester. While performing music of the past the choral societies and festivals also encouraged the compositions of new works in the same mold (E. Elgar, W. "Havergal" Brian, Vaughan Williams, Delius and many, many others).

The country is very proud of its world-known orchestras, both symphony and chamber, choral societies and groups, and stellar performers. Among the oldest highly-acclaimed ones are the Halle orchestra from Manchester, the first professional symphony orchestra in Britain (1858), the London Symphony Orchestra (1904), the BBC Symphony Orchestra (1930), the London Philharmonic (1932) and a long string of first class permanent orchestras in Liverpool, Birmingham, Edinburgh, Cardiff, and a lot of chamber and string orchestras and brass bands.

Education in practice as well as the theory of music is provided at numerous colleges and departments, of which the most important are the Royal Academy of Music (1822) and the Royal College of Music (1883) in London. But the first degrees in music known to have been conferred by a University were awarded at Cambridge in the 15th century and a professorship of music was created there in the 17th century. Oxford awarded music degrees from the early 16th century. Nowadays important educational establishments include Trinity College of Music (1872) of the

University of London, the Guildhall School of Music and Drama (1880), London, and the Royal Northern college of Music in Manchester (1792).

Check your knowledge of the material, be ready to speak and enlarge on the following points:

1. What are the differences (if any) between madrigals and motets?
2. What is the masque? Why were they rarely staged?
3. Can you agree that the Elizabethan time may be described as “music mad”? Give your reasons.
4. Why does Henry Purcell occupy such a remarkable position in the history of English music?
5. What were the factors contributing to the emergence of a new form of entertainment, that is of public concerts?
6. Why do you think “The Beggar’s Opera” has enjoyed such a great popularity since 1728?
7. George Frideric Handel is perceived by many British people as an English composer. Can you give any reason why?
8. What were the novelties introduced by E. Elgar into the religious music?
9. Who were the founder fathers of the Promenade Concerts? What were and are the aims of the festival?
10. What is the Edinburgh festival famous for?
11. What makes the Glyndebourne Opera festival so peculiar among other festivals of the kind?
12. Could you name the most noticeable figures of the British pop scene and enlarge upon their creative activities?

English Theatre

English theatre had its formal beginnings in the Latin liturgical enactments of the church. The medieval theatre, dating back to the 10th century was a profoundly religious one – its aim was illustration of certain common fragments from the Old and New Testaments of the Christian Bible. The then theatre appeared in the liturgy, when a number of liturgical elaborations (tropes) expanded the services of Catholic Mass. At first there was no impersonation, but it was a dialogue. In 1240 Pope Innocent II decreed the drama to be removed from the church on a number of grounds. First, drama had become too large for the presentation in churches and cathedrals; second, exquisite costumes and elaborate scenery, theatricality of the plays, the growing virtuosity of performers, stage effects had little to do with the Mass, and even outshone it. The clergymen feared that popularity of the colourful dramatic insertions might supplant more traditional means of worship and devotion.

The greatest stimulus to non-liturgical religious drama was provided by the institution of the feast of Corpus Christi in 1264. This summer feast days became the focus of urban street theatre organized under the auspices of largely secular craft guilds, each of which assumed responsibility for commissioning and maintaining the texts of the plays that they engaged to perform, casting, funding, rehearsing, making and storing the costumes, properties, movable platforms which the performances required, and the like.

The plays have been given numerous names (mysteries, passion plays, pageant plays, morality plays, cycle plays and some others) but their pattern was always the same – a number of scenes inspired by the stories from the Bible, written in the vernacular language of the population (apropos, the texts of the plays were regularly revised, adapted and amplified). These scenes (playlets) were presented in a sequence and performed on or around a stage or stages, some of them were movable and were moved from one location to another. As a rule, the performances lasted more than one day, e.g. one passion play lasted 40 days on end and had about 300 actors (men only) playing almost 500 parts. All the surviving English medieval plays (both complete texts and fragments) are of unknown

authorship as arts and letters of the time, in accordance with the principal doctrine, were anonymous – devoted more to piety than to self-celebration.

Besides, the plays very often were multi-authored, written by 2 – 3 and more playwrights in collaboration, the common practice up to the Shakespearean time even in the 16th – first half of the 17th centuries. The title pages of published plays bear the name of the acting company for whom they were written rather than the name of the dramatists.

The first playhouses (theatres) appeared in London in the late 16th century, thus ending the tradition of performances by travelling companies in streets, squares or inn-yards. “The Theatre” was the first playhouse to be erected in London in 1576 in which the Earl of Leicester’s men performed on being granted the Royal Patent. The Curtain Theatre, London’s second playhouse was opened a year later. There is no definite information as to who built it, but it was associated with the name of James Burbage, actor, shareholder and entrepreneur. In Shakespearean time there were about a dozen playhouses in London, mainly on the south bank. The newly-built theatres were impressive wooden structures of notable beauty, quite spacious with huge seating capacities: the Swan theatre (built c. 1595) held as many as 3,000 persons, the smaller “Rose” (built in 1599) could hold 2,300 people, including roughly 800 groundlings who stood around the stage. As a rule, theatres were built on three levels, unroofed or only partially roofed of either polygonal or so shaped as to allow a polygon to pass itself off as a circle. The large central expanse was open to the sky. The walls surrounded a yard, at one end of which the actors performed on a raised stage, which projected itself from an inside wall into the midst. This projection of the stage made for a greater intimacy between actors and audience. The performers could make greater and subtler use of facial expression and of gesture to enforce their greater verbal and vocal flexibility.

Theatres were open to public 5 days a week with the exception of Thursday and Sunday. Performances began at 2 o’clock in the afternoon; props were few, scenery was simple, but professional actors were expensively, even extravagantly costumed in embroidered velvet, satin, with lace and pearls as decorations.

Companies were rather small and composed exclusively of male actors with boys or young men playing women's parts. As a rule one and the same actor performed 2 – 3 roles in the performance.

The English theatre at Shakespeare's time charged a remarkably low admission price – 1 penny for the place on the "standing" level. But if anyone wanted to sit, he was let in at a further door (the second level) and he gave another penny, and if he desired to sit in the most comfortable place of all, where he could see everything well and could also be seen, he gave another penny at another door. Only penny then was no more than the price of a quart of beer and cost 3 times cheaper than the cheapest London dinner. During the intervals food and drink were carried round amongst the audience. Apropos, when in 1997 the Globe, named "Shakespeare's Globe", the replica of the authentic Shakespearean theatre was opened in its historical site, they charged today's £5, the sum equal to Elizabethan 1 penny admission fee.

In the late 1570s and on literature and theatre showed a penchant for moving across boundaries the Age of Renaissance demanded – courage, curiosity, adventure and discovery were trademarks of the time. Stories, novellas and plays were translated into/from foreign languages almost as soon as they were published or produced. Shakespeare and his fellow playwrights took most of their plots from foreign sources, e.g. Marlow's "The Tragic History of Doctor Faustus" is based on the medieval German myth, Shakespeare's "Romeo and Juliet" on the Italian writer Bondello's novella. Playwrights often peppered their dialogues with foreign phrases, which the audience was expected, at least partially to comprehend: in Shakespeare's "Henry V" there is even the so called "French" act.

The plays were written in dozens as theatres used to stage about 20 – 25 plays a year; of those thousands of plays hundreds have survived. Bearing in mind that the London theatres were, as a rule, sold out, and also that London's population was between 150,000 and 200,000 people imply that perhaps as many as 25,000 theatre-goers per week visited 6 – 8 playhouses (on average) then working. The Elizabethan and Jacobian playwrights wrote both comedies and tragedies of character, comedies of manners and comedies of humours, earlier romantic and satiric comedies. It was

the period when interest in classical tragedy was revived that proved decisive in the evolution of a distinctive national mode: English tragedy was marked by the high-flown, somber and bloody influence of the Roman playwright Seneca.

Many of the schools and universities, especially Cambridge and Oxford, were hothouses of dramatic activity and talent. But everything ended in a disaster with the rise of Puritanism, the civil war and Puritan rule (1642 – 1660) which plunged the country into cultural chaos – theatre life was disrupted, practically destroyed – the Puritans outlawed drama when they seized power and burned the playhouses to the ground, for example the Globe was closed in 1642 and pulled down two years later, in 1644.

Theatre after Puritan Rule

The public theatres were reopened with the Restoration, and the first performance in November 1660 was Shakespeare's "Henry IV" (part I). The new theatre had to be responsive to the recent past and at the same time had to reflect new tastes and fashion. The revival of theatre life in the country is usually connected with the names of two influential impresarios: William Davenant (1606 – 1668) and Thomas Killigrew (1612 – 1683). The first was rumoured to be the godson and even the bastard of Shakespeare. He was a skillful playwright and librettist of court masques in the reign of Charles I; in the Restoration period he introduced a great number of innovations, such as overtures, instrumental interludes during scene-changes, "ayres" with unsung dialogue and some others.

The new buildings of playhouses that appeared differed greatly from the Shakespearean theatres – first, they were much smaller in size, accommodated mere hundreds, not thousands of spectators. Second, they were elitist, playing to highly restricted audiences – the Royal court, wealthy, urban intellectuals (lawyers, doctors, bourgeoisie) and the like, all those, who could afford rather high admission fee of one to four shillings (at least a dozen time as much as at Shakespeare's time). Sometimes theatres were housed in royal palaces and when they went to public buildings, the latter were purpose-built, expensively designed and roofed. The new playhouses followed the French fashion – a rectangular hall divided into 2 parts

– stage and a pit surrounded by 2 – 3 galleries. The proscenium arch had flat wings, painted shutters and backcloth that allowed complex illusions of space and distinct changes of scene.

The striking “novelty” of Restoration theatre was expanded admission of women into the acting profession – another sign of the influence of continental practice. Since the year 1660 women have been permitted to perform on the English stage. But the greatest changes happened to the plays, both inherited from the Renaissance theatre and the new ones, composed by John Dryden, Thomas Otway, William Congreve. As for the riches of the past, the plays by Ch. Marlowe, W. Shakespeare, B. Jonson, J. Fletcher underwent a process of cosmetic “improvement” – the texts were revised according to new canons and tastes. It was recommended to avoid stage violence and vigorous physical action; the ideal play was one, in which the characters spent most of their time simply posing, gesturing, talking. Just a few plays, among them “Hamlet”, “Othello”, “Julius Caesar” survived without major alteration. The improvements and embellishments often changed the texts beyond recognition, e.g. Nahum Tate adapted “King Lear” in 1681 and omitted the Fool, introduced a love-plot for Cordelia and Edgar, and finally a happy ending in which King Lear, his youngest daughter and Gloucester all survive.

The period in the development of arts and letters in the 17th – early 18th centuries is marked by the domination of the so called “Rules”, i.e. a number of ideas derived from Aristotle’s “Poetics”. Accordingly, a play was recommended to have a unified plot, a single setting and no subplots, and the most important – observe the three unities – the unities of place, time and action. In the late 17th century one more restriction becomes of paramount importance – the unity of tone, in accordance with which tragedies could not contain comic episodes, comedies should be free of moments of pathos, and the verse pattern must remain unaltered throughout the play.

The Restoration theatre cultivated heroic and neoclassical tragedies (sometimes they could be heightened to a point of pompous absurdity), musical entertainments, and comedies; the latter became the most popular genre of all. Restoration comedy is based on wit, sophisticated repartee and knowledge of the exclusive code of manners in the “smart” society. It sets the models of merriment,

cleverness, sexual irresistibility and verbal wit. Restoration comedy mirrors and comments on the sheen of the “polished” society, in which aristocratic snobbery, double standards, adultery, sexual infidelity reign. The vivid examples of Restoration comedy are W. Congreve’s “The Way of the World”. W. Wycherley’s “The Country Wife” and “The Man of Mode” by E. Etherege.

The first efforts at a more natural theatre took the form of sentimental comedies and pathetic tragedies featuring admirable characters of noble sentiments. Significant examples are Joseph Addison’s once highly esteemed and financially successful tragedy “Cato”, Richard Steele’s “The Conscious Lovers” and John Gay’s “The Beggar’s Opera”. The latter is the only one that has remained a standard repertory piece in present-day theatre. Their followers Oliver Goldsmith (1730 – 1774) and Richard B. Sheridan (1751 – 1826) exposed the social shortcomings and vices in plays full of action, confusion and wit.

The 19th century theatre, especially the Victorian theatre, was in favour of comedy and melodrama rather than tragedy. Melodrama, as a form, developed from a popular taste for spectacle from press reports and accounts of criminal enterprise, from Gothic and historical fiction, from continental romantic theatre and native romantic sentiment. The later achievements of British drama are usually connected with names of Oscar Wilde (1854 – 1900), George Bernard Shaw (1856 – 1950) and a constellation of the 20th century dramatists.

Today the British theatre is among the most innovative and vigorous in the world. The centre of theatre life is London, but all large cities and many minor towns have their publicly supported theatres, where different plays are performed by “repertory” companies (troupes). There are two types of theatre in the United Kingdom – subsidized and non-subsidized (commercial). Subsidized theatres are publicly owned and receive some financial support from public funds through the Arts Council and also from the local authorities. Subsidies cover a considerable part of financial burden, the rest of money comes from sale of tickets, sponsorship and private donations, made by both British and foreign people and companies. For example, the USA is a crucial part of the Royal Shakespeare Company’s financial wellbeing – about 40% of private donations and

sponsorships come from America – about £2 million a year. Subsidized theatres have a permanent company of directors, designers, actors and each season stage several productions, which are preserved in their repertoire. The number of subsidized theatres and companies is not very large, among them are the Royal Shakespeare Company, the National Theatre, the Royal Opera House (Covent Garden), the Old Vic Theatre, the English National opera and some others.

Non-subsidized theatres receive no subsidy and are run on a commercial basis. They have to cover all their cost mainly from the sale of tickets; some money comes from sponsorship. A commercial theatre is simply a privately-owned building with no resident company, and run by a manager (a board of managers) who arranges with a director to stage a particular production. The director casts the play, rehearses it, and then the production opens. It is performed every evening but Sunday as long as enough tickets are sold to make it commercially profitable. When the income from the ticket sale falls below a certain level, the play is taken off, and the theatre manager arranges for another production to be staged.

There are more than 300 commercial theatres in the United Kingdom, about 100 of them are in London, where they are active year-round and offer many fine plays and productions. About a half of London non-subsidized theatres are concentrated in the fashionable West End. The commercial theatres focus on light comedies, musicals and other forms of entertainment, though beginning with the formation of the English Stage company in 1956, some commercial theatres (the most well-known of them is the Royal Court Theatre), also seemed to lead the way in encouraging, commissioning and presenting the work of new dramatists, both native and foreign (plays by John Osborne, Harold Pinter, John Arden, Arnold Wesker that revolutionised the British stage were premiered in the Royal Court theatre).

Financially the West End theatres depend on foreign tourists to fill up to 40% of their seating capacities. However, the real vitality of British theatre is to be found in the regional, “fringe” (open to experiment) and pub theatres all over the country. English actors are considered to be the most polished and versatile actors in the world. The names of Paul Scofield, Lawrence Olivier, Vivien Leigh,

Michael and Vanessa Redgrave, Anthony Hopkins, Judy Dench and many, many others are well-known to millions of theatre-goers and theatre-lovers in the United Kingdom and overseas. British theatre has such a famous acting tradition that both the BBC and Hollywood are forever raiding their talent for people to star in films.

The Royal Opera House (Covent Garden)

The Royal Opera House in London is one of the most famous and celebrated in the world, having just a few rivals – the New York Metropolitan Opera and La Scala in Milan. Covent Garden is the home of the Royal Opera, the Royal Ballet, and the orchestra of the Royal Opera House.

The first theatre was opened in 1732 amidst a fruit and vegetable market which survived in that location until 1974. For almost first hundred years the playhouse was used to present drama, pantomime, occasional ballet (dance) performances and, beginning with 1734 operas and oratorios by George Fr. Handel were premiered in Covent Garden. There was a royal performance of his “Messiah” in 1743, which was a tremendous success and began a tradition of Lenten oratorio performances. For more than 20 years until his death in 1759 Handel gave regular seasons there, and many of his operas and oratorios were written for Covent Garden or had their first London performances there.

The Theatres Act 1843 broke the patent theatre’s monopoly of drama and the year 1847 saw the emergence of the Royal Italian Opera with the performance of Rossini’s “Semiramide”. For decades operas were presented in Italian, even those originally written in French or German until 1892, when the outstanding composer and conductor, Gustav Mahler presented the debut of Wagner’s “Ring” cycle. The word “Italian” was then quietly dropped from the name of the opera house. The same year the theatre became the Royal Opera House, and the number of French and German works in the repertory considerably increased.

The present-day building is the third theatre (built in 1859) on the site following the disastrous fires in 1808 and 1856. The building has the traditional horseshoe-shaped auditorium with 4 tiers of boxes, balconies and the amphitheatre gallery. Its seating capacity

is 2,256 people, and after the 1997 – 1999 refurbishment and extension the Royal Opera House acquired greatly improved technical, rehearsal, and educational facilities, much more public space and a new studio theatre (the Linbury Theatre).

The Royal Opera is a subsidized company – the Arts Council’s support makes up approximately 35 – 40% of the budget. A decade ago the subsidies covered about 55 – 60%: the statistics testifies to the fact that more and more people are getting interested in serious art, opera in particular.

The National Theatre

After more than 60 years of proposals, high hopes and false starts, Great Britain finally got its National Theatre (certainly the *Royal* National Theatre) in 1962. In fact, Britain got an official announcement that National Theatre was to come into being. In July 1962, with agreements finally reached between the London County Council, the government, the Royal Shakespeare Company, the Old Vic, a Board was set up to supervise the construction, and a separate Board was established to run a National Theatre Company, and lease the Old Vic theatre. On 22 October 1963 the National Theatre Company presented its inaugural production of “Hamlet”. The outstanding English actor, director, film star Sir Lawrence Olivier became artistic director of the National Theatre at its formation and held the post until his retirement in 1973. The National Theatre Company remained at the Old Vic until 1976, when the construction of the Olivier (the largest of 3 halls) was completed.

The National Theatre is located in the South Bank area of central London. The complex of the Theatre houses three separate halls (theatres) of varying size and design and was designed by architects Denys Lasdun and Peter Softly. The Olivier Theatre (named after its first artistic director, Sir Lawrence Olivier), is the main auditorium, and was modeled on the ancient Greek theatre at Epidaurus. Its seating capacity is 1,160 people. Its design ensures that the audience’s view is not blocked from any seat, and that the audience is fully visible to actors from the stage’s centre. The Olivier is mainly used for classical productions of British and world dramatists.

The Lyttleton Theatre, a medium-sized hall (accommodates an audience of 890) is named after Olivier Lyttleton, the first president of the National Theatre Council, and used, mainly, to stage popular light plays to attract the audience with less sophisticated tastes.

The Cottesloe theatre is a very small one with movable seats, adaptable studio space for experimental productions. It is named after the president of the South Bank Council, who was in charge of the whole project.

The National Theatre presents a varied programme ranging from ancient Greek dramatists to contemporary international drama, new plays by present-day playwrights, but in general its choice of plays and directors has always been rather cautious. Each of the three theatres can run up to five productions in the repertoire, thus further widening the number of plays which can be staged during a season.

The annual turnover of the National Theatre is approximately £55 mln – earned income comes from ticket sales, revenue from the bookshops, restaurants, snack-bars and the like. The subsidy from the Arts Council covers about 35 – 40% of its costs and about 10 – 12% come from private donations made by individuals, trusts, companies.

The national Theatre Company tours the country extensively showing its best productions and beginning with the 2009 – 2010 season it has simulcast live productions to the cinemas in the United Kingdom and abroad. To expand its audience the National theatre participates in an Entry Pass scheme which allows young people under the age of 26 to purchase entrance for £5 to any production at the theatre.

The Royal Shakespeare Theatre

The Royal Shakespeare Theatre is a subsidized theatre owned by the Royal Shakespeare Company dedicated to the Bard, the great English poet and playwright W. Shakespeare, in 1999 chosen as the “British Personality of the Millennium”. The theatre is situated on the western bank of the river Avon in the town of Stratford-upon-Avon, the homeplace of the poet and dramatist.

The Royal Shakespeare Theatre was opened on April 23, 1932 on the site adjacent to the original Shakespeare Memorial

Theatre (opened in 1879), which was destroyed by fire in 1926. The Royal Shakespeare Company has renovated the Royal Shakespeare Theatre as part of a £112,8 mln Transformation project which included the creation of a new thrust stage auditorium which brings actors and audiences closer together, with the distance of the furthest seat from the stage being only 15 metres. The auditorium is a “one-room” theatre, which allows the actors and the audience to share the same space, as they did when Shakespeare’s plays were first produced. The stage reaches out into the audience, who are seated on three sides of it. This one-room theatre creates a more traditional Shakespearean performance area, allowing the audience to draw closer to the actors and creating a more personal theatre experience. The new refurbished theatre has become more accessible to the people with disabilities – there are three times as many wheelchair spaces in the theatre in comparison to the previous auditorium. The Royal Shakespeare Theatre was officially opened on 4 March 2011 by Queen Elizabeth II and Prince Philip.

The Royal Shakespeare Company celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2011, but certainly its history began long before 1961. The idea of a theatre in Stratford-upon-Avon was not new in 1875 when Charles Flower donated the building site. His radical suggestion was that it should have a permanent subsidized ensemble company of actors.

From April 1879 when the Shakespeare Memorial opened it held annual festivals. Between 1888 and 1917 Frank Benson's touring company appeared every spring. The year 1919 marked a turning point as new directors and companies were invited to perform. That autumn a resident company opened with its regular season in Stratford. The theatre was modernized after world War II and new directors attracted bigger names to Stratford. This “star” system peaked in 1959 as famous actors returned to perform with the new artistic director, Peter Hall. He then introduced long-term contracts for actors and created Stratford's first ensemble company.

In 1961 the company was renamed the RSC; work began on raising a subsidy, while regional and foreign touring were increased along with regular London performances in the Barbican and a commitment to working with new writing alongside Shakespeare.

Check your knowledge of the material, be ready to speak and enlarge on the following points:

1. What were the peculiarities of the medieval theatre? Why was it removed from the church?
2. When and where did the first playhouses appear in Britain? Could you describe them?
3. What were the specifics of the Renaissance theatre in England?
4. What was typical of the Elizabethan and Jacobian drama?
5. What were the most striking peculiarities of the Restoration drama and the theatre life?
6. What do you know about the so called “Rules” reigning in the arts and letters of the late 1660s – early 1730s?
7. What is the Victorian theatre noted for?
8. What types of theatre do you know?
9. Could you give and account of the most famous theatres of the United Kingdom?

Final Test on the History of British Culture

Choose the best option A, B, C or D.

1. The revival of arts and letters under the influence of classical models in the 14th – 16th century is called
 - a) Gothic
 - b) Renaissance
 - c) Baroque
 - d) Neo-Classicism
2. The epoch of Mannerism began in:
 - a) 16th century
 - b) late 15th century
 - c) early 17th century
 - d) late 17th century
3. Who is the author of the famous picture “Marriage a la Mode”?
 - a) Joshua Reynolds
 - b) Thomas Gainsborough
 - c) William Hogarth
 - d) John Constable
4. Which of these artists does not represent the 18th century?
 - a) Wright of Derby
 - b) Thomas Lawrence
 - c) William Hogarth
 - d) William Blake
5. The development of religious drama was stimulated by institution of the feast of
 - a) Halloween
 - b) St. Valentine’s Day
 - c) Corpus Christi
 - d) Monarch’s official birthday
6. The largest theatre in Elizabethan London was
 - a) the Globe
 - b) the Swan
 - c) the Rose
 - d) Covent Garden

7. What artistic genre was the most popular during the 19th century?
 - a) portraiture
 - b) landscape
 - c) science and animal painting
 - d) self-portraits
8. The famous masterpiece of John Constable is
 - a) "The Hay Wain"
 - b) "Fishermen at Sea"
 - c) "Death of a Pale Horse"
 - d) "Calais Pier"
9. Masque as a genre emerged in
 - a) the Middle Ages
 - b) the Elizabethan age
 - c) the Restoration period
 - d) the Victorian time
10. Theatres in Elizabethan time were open to public
 - a) every day
 - b) on Sundays only
 - c) on Saturdays and Fridays
 - d) except Thursdays and Sundays
11. Who among these painters had "a life-long passion for the sea"?
 - a) William Turner
 - b) Joshua Reynolds
 - c) John Constable
 - d) Thomas Lawrence
12. The English musical tradition was disrupted in
 - a) the Elizabethan time
 - b) the Restoration period
 - c) the Jacobean period
 - d) the Puritan Commonwealth time
13. Which of the Turner's pictures was voted Britain's "greatest painting" in a public BBC pole in 2005?
 - a) "Fishermen at Sea"
 - b) "Windsor"
 - c) "The Fighting Temeraire"
 - d) "Rain, Steam, Speed"
14. The first truly English professional opera was composed by ...

- a) Edward Elgar
 - b) Antonio Vivaldi
 - c) Richard Wagner
 - d) Henry Purcell
15. Which was typical of London Renaissance theatre?
- a) originality of plot
 - b) expensive costumes
 - c) women playing women's parts
 - d) high admission price
16. Who of these artists is not among the leaders of P. R. B.?
- a) William Holman Hunt
 - b) Dante Gabriel Rossetti
 - c) John Everett Millais
 - d) Ford Madox Brown
17. A new continental movement, showing preoccupation of artists with the subconscious was called
- a) vorticism
 - b) impressionism
 - c) surrealism
 - d) neo-romanticism
18. Women were permitted to perform on the English stage ...
- a) at Elizabethan time
 - b) at Jacobean period
 - c) at the time of Restoration
 - d) in the 19th century
19. Which genre originated in England?
- a) opera seria
 - b) comic opera
 - c) lyric opera
 - d) ballad opera
20. A group of artists organized in 1990s to develop new methods of producing art was called
- a) Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood
 - b) Camden Town Group
 - c) War Artists
 - d) Young British Artists
21. When did the Pop Art Movement appear?
- a) late 1940s

- b) mid 1950s
 - c) 1960s
 - d) early 1970s
22. The Restoration theatre was in favour of
- a) the theatre of absurd
 - b) operetta genre
 - c) musicals
 - d) heroic tragedies and comedies
23. Insert the name: “.....” made Gay rich and Rich gay”
- a) “Dido and Aeneas”
 - b) “Macbeth”
 - c) “The Tempest”
 - d) “The Beggar’s Opera”
24. ..., established in 1753, is one of the greatest museums of human history and culture in the world.
- a) The Tate
 - b) The British Museum
 - c) The Victoria and Albert Museum
 - d) The Saatchi
25. Beefeaters are Yeomen Warders that guard
- a) Westminster Abbey
 - b) Buckingham Palace
 - c) the Tower of London
 - d) the Big Ben
26. The Victorian theatre cultivated ...
- a) melodrama
 - b) tragedy
 - c) historical chronicles
 - d) passion plays
27. The first artistic director of the National Theatre was
- a) George Bernard Shaw
 - b) Oscar Wilde
 - c) Judy Dench
 - d) Lawrence Olivier

28. Ribbed vaults, buttresses and flying buttresses, pointed arches and new decorative forms are main characteristics of ... style.

- a) Gothic
 - b) Romanesque
 - c) Renaissance
 - d) Classic
29. The Henry VII Chapel is one of the most outstanding chapels in
- a) Westminster Abbey
 - b) St. Paul's Cathedral
 - c) the Tower of London
 - d) the Banqueting House
30. The composer of the oratorios "The Apostles" and "The Kingdom" is ...
- a) Edward Elgar
 - b) Henry Purcell
 - c) Benjamin Britten
 - d) Thomas Tallis
31. The National Theatre appeared in the UK in ...
- a) 20th century
 - b) 19th century
 - c) 18th century
 - d) 21st century
32. The architect of the Queen House at Greenwich is
- a) Christopher Wren
 - b) Inigo Jones
 - c) Charles Barry
 - d) John Wood
33. When was St. Paul's Cathedral completed?
- a) 1675
 - b) 1697
 - c) 1708
 - d) 1712
34. The Royal Shakespeare Company is ...
- a) a subsidized theatre
 - b) a non-subsidized theatre
 - c) a private theatre
 - d) the Royal family's property
35. Who combined the words of the Catholic liturgy with war poetry in "The War Requiem"?

- a) Elton John
 - b) Paul McCartney
 - c) Benjamin Britten
 - d) Andrew Lloyd Webber
36. The festival embracing all performing arts is held in ...
- a) Edinburgh
 - b) London
 - c) Glyndebourne
 - d) Reading
37. Whispering Gallery is a place in
- a) Hampton Court Palace
 - b) Crystal Palace
 - c) St. Paul's Cathedral
 - d) Westminster Abbey
38. The profession of town planning in the 20th century was established by
- a) Sir Leslie Martin
 - b) Sir Patrick Abercrombie
 - c) Norman Robert Foster
 - d) James Stirling
39. The National Theatre Company's first production was ...
- a) "The Importance of Being Earnest"
 - b) "Othello"
 - c) "Hamlet"
 - d) "Waiting for Godot"
40. The "father" of the Promenade concerts (the BBC Proms) is ...
- a) Edward Elgar
 - b) Henry Wood
 - c) George Frideric Handel
 - d) Benjamin Britten

Total: 40 marks

Your score: ____ marks

List of Projects and Individual Work

1. The Golden Age in English music (Elizabethan and Jacobean time).
2. Henry Purcell – the story of the British Orpheus.
3. Music and Arts festivals in the United Kingdom.
4. The choral tradition in the United Kingdom.
5. Benjamin Britten, the most prolific and versatile English composer of the 20th century.
6. The development of musical theatre in the United Kingdom.
7. British alternative music (1950s and on).
8. The folk-lore tradition in the 20th century music.
9. The emergence and flowering of the genre of musicals.
10. The West End – the heart of British theatre.
11. Give the outline of Edward Elgar and his career as a conductor, teacher and composer.
12. British pop music – an example to follow.
13. The Beatles and Beatlemania.
14. Musical and drama education in the United Kingdom.
15. The national Theatre and the Royal Shakespeare Company – two magnets of the British theatre.
16. History of the interwar theatre in Britain (1918 – 1940s).
17. Cultural centres of London – the South Bank and the Barbican.
18. Sir Anthony Van Dyck – the father of English portrait school.
19. The brilliant school of English portrait painting of the 18th century.
20. Landscape painting – a glory of English art.
21. William Turner – “the painter of light” and a genius of the first order.
22. Pre-Raphaelites: Romance and Realism.
23. British women artists of the 19th – 20th centuries.
24. Pop Art Movement in Great Britain: origin, methods, famous artists.
25. Contemporary British painting: movements and figures.
26. Museums and art galleries of London: modern exhibitions.

27. Gothic revival architecture in the United Kingdom.
28. Christopher Wren as the architect of London: his main masterpieces.
29. Stuart and Georgian churches.
30. The latest movements in British architecture.

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Анотація

Методичний посібник „Історія культури Великої Британії” призначено для студентів факультету іноземних мов спеціальностей „Мова та література (англійська)”, „Філологія. Англійська і східна мова та література” та „Переклад”. Посібник має за мету надати студентам загальне уявлення про Європейські стилі мистецтва, від готичного до романтизму, а також детальну інформацію про історію театру, музики, живопису та архітектури Великої Британії.

Зміст посібника відповідає вимогам навчальної програми з курсів „Країнознавство Великої Британії” та „Лінгвокраїнознавство” для студентів старших курсів. Методичний посібник може використовуватися викладачами середніх загальноосвітніх шкіл та коледжів, а також викладачами та студентами інститутів, університетів та інших навчальних закладів.

Аннотация

Методическое пособие «История культуры Великобритании» предназначено для студентов факультета иностранных языков специальности «Язык и литература (английский)», «Филология. Английский и восточный язык и литература» и «Перевод». Пособие имеет целью дать студентам общее представление об европейских стилях в искусстве, от готического к романтизму, а также подробную информацию об истории театра, музыки, живописи и архитектуры Великобритании.

Содержание пособия соответствует требованиям учебной программы курсов «Страноведение Великобритании» и «Лингвострановедение» для студентов старших курсов. Методическое пособие может использоваться преподавателями средних общеобразовательных школ и колледжей, а также преподавателями и студентами институтов, университетов и других учебных заведений.

Summary

A Short Cultural History of Britain is a manual intended for students of foreign languages department, specialities “Language and Literature (English)”, “Philology. English and Oriental language and literature” and “Translation Studies”. Its aim is to give a general idea of artistic styles in European art from the Gothic style through the Romantic movement, and the detailed information on the history of theatre, music, visual arts and architecture of Great Britain.

The content of the book conforms to the requirements of the syllabus of “Country Studies: the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland” for senior students. It can be used by teachers of English at colleges and secondary schools, and by students of institutes, universities and other educational institutions.

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A Short Cultural History of Britain

*Методичний посібник для студентів
факультету іноземних мов вищих навчальних закладів*

(англійською мовою)

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