

Yale Center for British Art Releases Tens of Thousands of Additional Images

NEW HAVEN—The Yale Center for British Art has just released more than 22,000 additional high-resolution images through its online collection available at <http://britishart.yale.edu/collections/search>.

To date, the Center has made more than 69,000 images freely available online. This supports the Center and Yale University's ongoing commitment to provide open access to images of works of art in the public domain. The Center, as a museum and research institution, has led such efforts since May 2011, when it first made images of works in its collection available online for the public to download, free of charge. The Center's images are available through its website as well as from the Center's associated services, from display-sized jpegs to full-page TIFF downloads and JPEG2000, a file format that allows images to be studied in high resolution and minute detail. These files are compatible with the International Image Interoperability Framework (IIIF), a project that aims to make the world's image repositories interoperable and accessible. Yale is a founding member of the IIIF consortium (<http://iiif.io>).

This release was made in conjunction with the celebration of Public Domain Day, which occurs January 1 of every year. Although most of the artworks themselves are not new entries to the public domain, in most cases this will be the first time that digital images of these works are easily and openly accessible to the world. These newly released images contain a treasure trove of over 1,700 prints after works by J. M. W. Turner, as well as masterpieces by William Blake, Thomas Rowlandson, and others.

Public Domain Day celebrates the moment when copyrights to many works of art expire. This includes films, writings, music compositions, paintings, drawings, sculptures, and rare books. As part of our public culture, the works become free to use, reproduce, and distribute.

“The Center is extremely proud to continue in its role as a leader in the field of online accessibility. We are confident that our founder Paul Mellon (Yale College, Class of 1929) would wholeheartedly support this development to further free and open access to our collections, virtually, and to advance public education in the history of British art,” said Amy Meyers, Yale Center for British Art Director. “This additional selection of images provides a wonderful opportunity for an advance view of our collections before our public reopening later this spring.”

The Center's building will reopen on May 11, 2016, after having been closed to the public for more than a year to complete a major building conservation project. The Center's public galleries and Lecture Hall have been renewed and reconfigured, while also bringing internal systems, spaces, and amenities to state-of-the-art standards.



Alan Newman, the Chief of Digital Imaging at the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC, has been a longtime collaborator in online open access to images of works of art. “Yale University’s clear 2011 open access policy, and the prescient best practices developed by the Center, serve as a cogent model for all collecting institutions on how best to fulfill our educational missions. Use without limitation is the unambiguous definition of open access for our digital age.”



Educational institutions and universities strongly support the trend toward making art more readily available to the public.

“The Yale Center for British Art’s donation of high-resolution images on Public Domain Day marks a high point in art research and scholarship resources. We all benefit when high-quality images can be seen and studied anywhere in the world without barriers. Art flourishes and thrives when museums open their virtual doors to all. Images speak volumes and inspire,” said Christine L. Sundt, Project Advisor to the College Art Association’s Code of Best Practices in Fair Use in the Visual Arts.



Images: George Hicks, *The Sinews of Old England*, 1857, watercolor, graphite, gouache, gum arabic, and scraping out on cream wove paper, Yale Center for British Art, Friends of British Art Fund; David Roberts, *Plaza Real and Procession*, 1835, watercolor and gouache over graphite on cream wove paper, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection; Isaac Spackman (1700–1771), *A Starling*, undated, watercolor and gouache on vellum, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund; J. M. W. Turner, *Norham Castle on the Tweed*, 1816, etching and mezzotint, first published state, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection; Thomas Rowlandson, *Cries of London No. 8, Hot cross buns two a penny buns*, 1799, etching with aquatint, colored by hand, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection; Yale Center for British Art, photo by Richard Caspole.

YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART

The Yale Center for British Art houses the largest collection of British art outside the United Kingdom. Presented to the university by Paul Mellon, the collection reflects the development of British art and culture from the Elizabethan period onward. The Center’s collections include more than 2,000 paintings and 200 sculptures, 20,000 drawings and watercolors, 30,000 prints, and 35,000 rare books and manuscripts. More than 30,000 volumes supporting research in British art and related fields are available in the Center’s library. Visit the institution online at britishart.yale.edu.



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CONTACTS:

Betsy Kim: +1 203 432 2853 | betsy.kim@yale.edu

Ronnie Rysz: +1 203 436 3429 | ronnie.rysz@yale.edu