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EXPLANATORY ESSAY
AND SEVEN ARTICLES
SUBMITTED BY
PETER BLACK
FOR THE DEGREE OF
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IN
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The submission that I have assembled, consisting of 7 articles and five books, is a selection of publications that have resulted from research conducted since 1986. While I am originally a print specialist, the publications cover a wide range of subject matter, chronology and medium. The common thread is an interest in art on paper, whether as a field for original creation or one in which an artist's subsidiary, preparatory or published work is studied for evidence of his/her public output as a painter. It is the questioning, object-based approach of a curator, using exhibitions and related publications in order to bring works together to share insights into how artists work. Latterly, my research has tackled key questions of attribution, function and dating for important historical works of art in the Hunterian: Hunter's Rembrandt and Rubens paintings, as well as the recently acquired early oil painting on panel by Hogarth. The significance of this research can be appreciated, and to an extent measured, in three ways: through the impact of permanent displays and temporary exhibitions of the works of art discussed; developments within teaching and research within the University of Glasgow, as well as responses in subsequent critical literature.

My research began with the preparation of a *catalogue raisonné* of the prints of Stanley William Hayter (1901-1988), regarded by some as 'the greatest engraver of the 20th century'.¹ I published this in 1992 jointly with the artist's widow, Désirée Moorhead. Taking Moorhead's notes, which were based on the artist's own collection and notebooks, I combined them with my own methodical records of impressions listed in auction and

¹ The assessment of Bryan Robertson, Director of the Whitechapel Art Gallery, in the introduction to his 1957 *S.W. Hayter's Retrospective* exhibition catalogue.

exhibition catalogues and those which I examined in public collections in Britain, France and the US, where the artist lived 1940-1950. The book also contains a contribution from a distinguished former head of the Graphic Arts Division of the Smithsonian Institution, Jacob Kainen. Each of us wrote an essay about an aspect of the artist's production, and in addition to the catalogue I contributed the book's various appendices. The catalogue was a milestone for research on Hayter's prints, impressions of which could previously only be assessed by reference to exhibition and sale catalogues. It is a highly regarded standard work.² In a separate article, published in the international journal of printmaking, *Print Quarterly*, also included here, I described the development of Hayter's innovative colour printing technique. Catalogue and article appear as standard references in bibliographies of printmaking, for example the new standard work on techniques, Ad Stijnman's *Engraving and Etching 1400-2000: A History of the Development of Manual Intaglio Printmaking Processes* (Archetype, 2012). Together, catalogue and article provide the first account of Hayter's entire output and development as a printmaker. Museums holding Hayter's prints, for example the British Museum or the Metropolitan Museum of Art, refer before anything else in their catalogues to Black and Moorhead.³ Numerous websites quote my descriptions of Hayter's development, for example the British Council's pages devoted to artists who exhibited at the

² The New York Art Critic David Cohen reviewed it in 'Hecht and Hayter', *Print Quarterly*, Vol. 10, No. 1 (March 1993), pp. 78-81. He said: 'It should be hoped that the book under review will set a standard for catalogues raisonnés to come...both in relation to its design and conception. Although it is hardly a bargain at £95, it is an achievement to have contained all 452 entries within a single volume, with full colour for all the colour images and double-page spreads for many works, maintaining a relative fidelity to scale. New photography has been undertaken for the catalogue to ensure high quality and consistency of colours. There is generous provision of full-page details to give some indication of the tactility and textural richness that are such important aspects of Hayter's gravure. All the information scholars and collectors could reasonably expect has been garnered; for instance, the compilers have managed to research the highest *tirage* number recorded for editions not published to their stated maximum. But, wisely, readers are spared any stabs at iconography, and also the verbosity of state by state description.'

³ Their respective catalogues can be found at http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/collection_online/search.aspx and <http://www.metmuseum.org/collection>

Venice Biennale.⁴ Scholars working on printmakers whose work intersects with Hayter also make use of my work, for example Lois Oppenheim writing on Beckett and Martin Butler on Blake.⁵

Hayter was one of several living artists, whose work I researched. I would like to mention here, because of the impact my research had on subsequent work by other writers, two artists for whom I planned major catalogues which were not realised. One was the sculptor, stained glass artist and printmaker Geoffrey Clarke RA (1925-2014), and the other the Austrian-born expressionist painter, Marie-Louise von Motesiczky (1906-1996). For both I organised a major late-career exhibition.⁶ My research on Clarke and Motesiczky, which includes publishing 'signpost' biographies of each, had a significant effect on their late careers and has left numerous traces in the subsequent literature.⁷ For example, my role in promoting Clarke's career forms part of Judith LeGrove's narrative in her catalogue raisonné of the prints.⁸ The impact of my research is most obvious in the case of the émigré Motesiczky, of whose paintings I began a catalogue raisonné two years before she died. Although my work on the catalogue then ceased, Ines Schlenker and Jill Lloyd set to work

⁴ (<http://venicebiennale.britishcouncil.org/people/reference/s-w-hayter>).

⁵ *The Painted Word: Samuel Beckett's Dialogue with Art*, Ann Arbor, University of Michigan Press 2000, p. 186. Martin Butler, 'William Blake, S. W. Hayter and Color Printing', *Blake, An Illustrated Quarterly*, 36/2, Fall 2002, accessed online at <http://bq.blakearchive.org/bonus.butlin>.

⁶ *Geoffrey Clarke, Symbols for Man, Sculpture and Graphic Work 1949-94*. Lund Humphries, London, 1994. The exhibition began at Ipswich Museum and travelled to the Herbert Art Gallery, Coventry and Pallant House, Chichester. [Exhib. Cat] *Marie-Louise von Motesiczky*. Österreichische Galerie, Oberes Belvedere, Wien 1994. My role in securing the Vienna retrospective for Motesiczky is documented in Diana Athill's memoir *Somewhere Towards the End*, Granta Books, 2008, p. 9.

⁷ The biographical articles are: 'Obituary of Marie-Louise von Motesiczky'. *The Independent*, 15 June 1996. 'Marie-Louise von Motesiczky', in Delia Gaze (ed.), *Dictionary of Women Artists*. London, Fitzroy Dearborn 1997, Vol. 2, pp. 991-4. 'Clarke, Geoffrey'. In *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon*. Munich/Leipzig, Sauer 1998. ISBN 3-598-22759-0. pp. 404-5.

⁸ Judith LeGrove. *Geoffrey Clarke. A Sculptor's Prints*. Sansom and Company, Bristol, 2012, P. 51: 'Peter Black, a specialist in modern prints, added Clarke to his portfolio in 1989, encouraging the acquisition of Clarke's works by the British Museum, as well new printings of six etchings from the 1950s (by Hugh Stoneman of the Print Centre in London), further copies of Blue Head (cat. 114) and a new etching, Gateway (cat. 207), both printed by Glenn Mingham. Black organised the touring exhibition, Symbols for Man (1994-5), for which he wrote a substantial catalogue, and continued to promote Clarke's work actively until his appointment at the Hunterian in 1998.'

on a catalogue and biography. Both drew on my notes, and extensive references are made to my work. Lloyd's biography closes with a quotation from my obituary of the artist about the experience of knowing her.⁹

The nature and significance of my research since 1998 is different, in that it has focused more on historical artists and has been produced with the primary aim of advancing the presentation and study of the art collections of the Hunterian, University of Glasgow. The exhibitions I have organised have been innovative, and the related publications have presented numerous discoveries and attributions. In 2003 I mounted an exhibition of prints as part of the Hunterian's Whistler centenary celebrations. The catalogue of this show, *Copper into Gold: Whistler and 19th-century Printmaking*, which is included here, made a small but significant contribution to the study of Whistler's printmaking. It took an original approach by not linking Whistler with the Etching Revival, placing him instead in the context of Impressionism and the emergence of abstract painting immediately after 1900. Reviews in two prestigious journals acknowledged that the exhibition and publication included new information about Whistler. In *Print Quarterly*, former Whistler curator Martin Hopkinson praised the technical discoveries documented in the catalogue.¹⁰ Robin Spencer, also a Whistler expert, wrote about the show in *The Burlington Magazine*, assenting to my re-

⁹ My research is cited in Ines Schlenker, *Marie-Louise von Motesiczky 1906 -1996 A Catalogue Raisonné of the Paintings*, Hudson Hills Press, New York 2009, pp. 51, 53, 102, 134, 156, 169, 244, 277, 498; and in Jill Lloyd, *The Undiscovered Expressionist*, Yale University Press, New Haven and London, 2007, pp. 165, 208, 223.

¹⁰ Martin Hopkinson, 'Whistler in Glasgow and New York'. *Print Quarterly*, XX, 2003, 4, pp. 420-422. 'How often one finds that writers on Whistler's printmaking follow well-trodden paths. So it is refreshing that Peter Black, the author of the catalogue to one of the several exhibitions celebrating the centenary of the American's death, challenges often-accepted views in *Copper into Gold: Whistler and 19th-century Printmaking*, as well as introducing new information that has surprisingly escaped Whistler scholars. Black tears the artists out of the constricting straitjacket of the Etching Revival, acclaiming Whistler's etchings of Venice and Amsterdam as "the greatest etchings of Impressionism"'.

dating to 1896 of the Hunterian's painting, *Grey and Silver The Thames* (YMSM 121), by relating it to the lithograph *The Thames*.¹¹

In terms of impact on research in Glasgow, my most influential work has been on William Hunter's art collections. This led in 2007, the year of the Hunterian's bicentenary, to the exhibition and accompanying book which is included here, "*My Highest Pleasures*": *William Hunter's Art Collections*. This edited volume investigates the collections, but also Hunter's wider involvement in the London art world. It includes essays by colleagues as well as an important edited text of Hunter's surviving lectures on anatomy for artists, which was one of two contributions by Helen McCormack, whose 2009 PhD on William Hunter I jointly supervised with Alison Yarrington.¹² I wrote the bulk of the catalogue section (pp.117-165) and an essay on Hunter and taste (pp. 63-100), which together amount to about half of the book. The exhibition and book have altered perceptions of Hunter, whose paintings were viewed by previous writers, admittedly mainly working in scientific disciplines, as oddities within the collection.

The publication presented an altogether new picture of William Hunter as a collector and professor of anatomy for the painters of the St Martin's Lane Academy and, from 1768, the Royal Academy. It has transformed the way in which Hunter's collections are displayed in the Hunterian as well as stimulating new research by others. In the academic session 2015-2016 a PhD student embarked on research into Hunter's anatomical drawings. (This is one of the first of a group of Leverhulme-funded "Collections" scholarships.) One of the contributors to *My Highest Pleasures*, Helen McCormack, has since completed a book on

¹¹ Robin Spencer. 'Whistler, Glasgow'. *Burlington Magazine*, CXLV, September 2003, pp 670-672. Spencer wrote of the show that '... its precise visual analysis of seventy images and its skilful use of comparative material offers new perspectives.'

¹² The collaborators were: Mungo Campbell, Deputy Director of the Hunterian, Anne Dulau, Curator of British and French Art, and Helen McCormack. The publication (by Paul Holberton) was awarded a Paul Mellon Centre Publication grant in 2006. In the final months my place as Helen's co-supervisor was taken by John Bonehill.

William Hunter.¹³ Furthermore, a group of scholars is now working on an exhibition and publication to celebrate the tercentenary of Hunter's birth in 2018.¹⁴ Back in 2007, the *Highest Pleasures* exhibition was well received; one very positive reviewer focused on important discoveries presented in the displays made during the research.¹⁵ I organised a conference on Hunter and his collections, which took place in 2008, and from which a volume of essays was published in 2015 by Ashgate, titled *William Hunter's World, The Art and Science of Eighteenth-Century Collecting*. The authors refer frequently to "My Highest Pleasures".¹⁶

The approach to Hunter's art collections was deliberately broad, with particular attention paid to links between works of art and other objects, especially the books in his library which the collector amassed for research in support of one of the great Enlightenment museums. Two of the articles included here document individual discoveries made within Hunter's wider collections. The 2009 article in *Print Quarterly* about Pierre-Jean Mariette's collection of etchings by Filippo Napoletano drew attention to the presence in Hunter's library of collections of prints with a distinguished intellectual provenance. The article is cited in a recent book about the great French collector and connoisseur Mariette, whose 1754 manuscript account of Filippo's prints is an important document in the history of printmaking, which had escaped attention of specialists.¹⁷ The other article published a

¹³ To be published by Ashgate in 2016.

¹⁴ The project is being led by Mungo Campbell of the Hunterian.

¹⁵ Christopher Baker, 'William Hunter's Collection, Glasgow' *Burlington Magazine*, CXLIX, September 2007, pp. 641-2. Baker wrote of 'two fascinating recent additions to the Hunterian's collection...' one of which is a cast bronze anatomical figure after the Danish artist Michael Spang (d.1762). 'The second is a remarkable discovery, made by Peter Black during the research for the exhibition, of two previously unknown drawings by Inigo Jones...bought by Hunter at the Mead sale...'

¹⁶ "My Highest Pleasures" is cited on pp. 9, 26 33, 57, 68, 74, 79, 94, 227, 269, 277, 279. It is also cited in, for example, Norbert Schürer (ed.), Charlotte Lennox, *Correspondence and Miscellaneous Documents*, Lanham, Md, Bucknell University Press, 2012, p. 389; Charles Hanson, *The English Virtuoso*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2009, p. 269; Sally M Promey, *Sensational religion: sensory cultures in material practice*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 2014, p. 512.

¹⁷ Cited in Smentek, Kristel, *Mariette and the Science of the Connoisseur in Eighteenth-Century Europe*, Ashgate, Farnham 2014, p. 82, 264.

lead cast of Hunter's dissection of a pregnant uterus, which came to light during preparations for the "My Highest Pleasures" exhibition. This object forms part of a series of casts of Hunter's celebrated dissections of women who died in childbirth, and led to his great work the *Anatomy of the Human Gravid Uterus* in 1774. The cast was rescued from a basement and conserved for inclusion in a new display about eighteenth-century medicine in the Hunterian Museum and is thus another beneficiary of the research towards the 2007 exhibition.

My research into Hunter's art collection resulted in the reassessment of several paintings, including his Rubens oil sketch, the *Head Study of an Old Man with Curly Beard*, which is the subject of one of the articles included here. Despite the use of Rubens's 'trademark' streaky *imprimatura*, this vigorously painted panel had been left in attributional limbo by Julius Held in his *Oil Sketches of Peter Paul Rubens* (1980), with the implication that it was a studio work. The book about *Tronies* in which the essay appears, published in 2014, has been reviewed in academic journals including *Renaissance Quarterly* and *De Zeventiende Eeuw, Cultuur in de Nederlanden, in interdisciplinair perspectief*, in both of which my contribution was singled out for mention because of interest generated by the attribution.¹⁸

Closely related to my work on the Rubens Head study painting is an article which analyses a related head study drawing by Rubens, acquired for the Hunterian in 2004. This discusses the little pen drawing in the context of a large group of mysteriously small

¹⁸ *Renaissance Quarterly*, Vol. 68, No. 2 (Summer 2015), pp. 641-643. Fabienne Huguenin stated: 'Another noticeable attribution is pointed out by Black, who identifies the Glasgow head Old Man with Curly Beard (ca. 1609, the Hunterian, University of Glasgow) as Rubens's work, an attribution already suggested by Julius Held (The Oil Sketches of Peter Paul Rubens: A Critical Catalogue [1980]) but now corroborated in comparison with several copies, for which the head served as original template. In addition, the tronie was employed in some of Rubens's finished paintings, a fact that provides the dating of this particular piece of art.' Bert Watteeuw, Curator of research collections at the Rubenianum, *De Zeventiende Eeuw, Cultuur in de Nederlanden, in interdisciplinair perspectief*, Vol. 30, no. 2, 2014, described my contribution as a 'fascinating and detailed analysis of a Rubens tronie, which discusses its creation, its use in the workshop and its afterlife.'

sketches by Rubens and Van Dyck which repeat the images of known head studies, or *tronies*. The heads were drawn in rows in groups of 9-12, although the original sheets have often been torn apart in later years for commercial reasons. It was already understood that these small but exquisite heads in pen and chalk are drawn studies of oil studies. My analysis adds that they are evidence of a forgotten memory exercise practised in Rubens's workshop in which a large repertoire of standardised head studies furnished a range of useful types, painted in poses which are often sanctified by resemblance to a Renaissance or ancient prototype.

Also arising from research on Hunter's old master paintings was the 2012 exhibition and accompanying book, *Rembrandt and the Passion*.¹⁹ The technical contribution by Dr Erma Hermens, as well as collaboration with colleagues from the Scientific Department of the National Gallery, was an essential element that guided the writing and shaped our revised appraisal of the painting as a work deliberately left unfinished by the artist. A seminar was held in Glasgow during the exhibition, which was attended by numerous Rembrandt experts whose responses to the revised account of the painting have been very positive.²⁰ There has been only one Rembrandt publication in the intervening years to which the *Rembrandt and the Passion* research is directly relevant. Simon McNamara's book based on his PhD thesis mentions the Glasgow research only briefly and to say that Black and Hermens

¹⁹ *Burlington Magazine*, CLV, February 2013.

²⁰ Perhaps the nicest was a letter of 20 January 2015 from Holm Bevers, curator at the Kupferstichkabinett in Berlin, to say that 'The Rembrandt catalogue is one of my favourite Rembrandt publications in recent years; it is brilliantly written and full of interesting information.' Press reaction was uniformly positive. Giles Sutherland wrote in *The Times*: 'This impeccably researched show is the result of formidable collaborative scholarship and insight'. For Richard Verdi, reviewing in *The Burlington*, *Rembrandt and the Passion* was 'a small but illuminating exhibition exploring its genesis, technical history and relationship to other works by Rembrandt, his predecessors and contemporaries. Accompanying the display was a handsome and informative catalogue which restores this much neglected work to its rightful place in the master's oeuvre as among his most moving passion paintings.'

support a dating for the Hunterian's Rembrandt later than the 1630s. (This is an oversimplification.)²¹ Rembrandt and the passion is listed, however, in the bibliography of the recent *Rembrandt: the late works* exhibition (National Gallery and Rijksmuseum 2014). (The painting was also included in *Rembrandt and the Dutch Golden Age* at the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest, in 2014, accompanied by a substantial book for which I wrote the catalogue entry.)

I have organised three monographic print exhibitions with catalogues. One was a retrospective for Philip Reeves in 2001. The other two were projects which resulted from collections research. In addition to the Whistler show, *Copper into Gold*, mentioned above, *The Prints of Edvard Munch* (2009) is represented here by the book, in which I wrote two of the three chapters as well as extended catalogue entries and explanatory appendices. The whole was presented for a general audience. It remains in print and is well regarded because of the instructive selection of works. These were chosen—from the Munch Museum in Oslo, which has the largest Munch collection in the world—to illustrate the artist's best work in all techniques. It also presents, in a manner followed by Munch himself, all the major themes of his work which amount to what he termed the 'Frieze of Life'. The book is cited in the bibliography of the standard catalogue of Munch's prints, by Gerd Woll, *Edvard Munch, Complete Graphic Works* (revised and updated edition), Orfeus Publishing/Philip Wilson 2012. The essays which I wrote emphasise subjects little treated in the Munch print literature: his influence in Britain, and the impact of his most important prints, the woodcuts, on the development of German Expressionist printmaking.

²¹ Rembrandt's Passion Series, Cambridge Scholars Publishing, Newcastle upon Tyne, 2015.

The most recent essay included in this submission, 'Hogarth, Hudibras and House Painting', was published in the April issue of the *British Art Journal* and is, I believe, one of my most important pieces of research. It establishes the attribution to Hogarth of an early monochrome oil painting on panel which was acquired in 2013 by the Hunterian. This attribution fits closely with the studies of Rubens and Rembrandt and consists similarly of an investigation using all available material evidence as well as identifying the artist's visual sources. Painted somewhere, *in situ*, on domestic pine panelling, the work illustrates a scene from Samuel Butler's satirical poem *Hudibras*; the same scene also appears in Hogarth's 1726 set of *Hudibras* engravings. The significance of this research is far reaching because it has added to Hogarth's oeuvre an oil painting which predates by three or four years the first of his *Beggar's Opera* paintings, of 1728, which was until now the earliest certainly by him. The existence of this demonstrably earlier work reveals that in the early part of his career, despite the current scholarly position that he worked only as an engraver, Hogarth undertook decorative paintings in patrons' houses. The style and materials of the painting point to the influence of Sir James Thornhill who was, from 1729, Hogarth's father-in-law. Thornhill's most celebrated works in the years when Hogarth began to undertake academic study in emulation of Thornhill were interiors painted in monochrome, notably the Painted Hall at Greenwich and the dome of St Paul's Cathedral. The painting provides the first concrete evidence of Hogarth's activity as a house painter, which was known from the 1810 Nichols and Steevens anecdote about Hogarth and Thornhill working together on a (lost) ceiling at Headley Park, in Hampshire.²² The attribution hinges on the relationship between the image of the painting and the two sets of *Hudibras* engravings by Hogarth. The earlier

²² John Nichols and George Steevens, *The Genuine Works of William Hogarth, illustrated with Biographical Anecdotes, A chronological catalogue and commentary*, London, 1808-17, vol. 1, p. 44. The date of Thornhill's work at Headley Park is not recorded.

set are small illustrations for a book and were based on the anonymous plates of the first illustrated edition (1710) of Butler's satirical poem. Later, and as I argue, after the Hunterian painting was made, Hogarth produced his larger Hudibras engravings, the first, in fact, of his famous progresses, though linked, like other early commissioned prints, to a famous text. The painting is very likely the sole survivor of a set of monochrome paintings painted on panelling in a domestic house, possibly Little Houghton Manor in Northamptonshire. Such painted rooms and the wainscot panelling which provided the ready-made supports for a series of pictures, were soon outmoded and very few survive intact. The Victoria and Albert Museum has examples of individual panels by the most famous exponent in Hogarth's youth, Robert Robinson (1652-1742) who, like Hogarth also worked as an engraver.

The Hogarth article is exemplary of the object-based, curatorial way in which I work. This research is not just academic, but has facilitated the acquisition for Glasgow of an important work of art of substantial art historical interest. In the process I have, as often in the research outlined here, made recourse to an obscure text, I have collaborated with technical art historians for scientific analysis of the materials of the painting, and crucially, I have used my knowledge of Hogarth's earliest prints to place the painting very precisely between his first and second Hudibras sets.

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