

THE CHANGING ROLE AND STATUS OF SCENIC ARTISTS IN ENGLAND

CHRISTINA YOUNG

INTRODUCTION

This paper surveys the changing role and status of painters who painted cloth for scenery beginning with painters in the service of King Henry III (1216–1272), commissioned to paint both portraits and pageant banners. It traces the development of the guilds, the King's Painters and the King's Serjeant Painters who painted cloths for court events including pageants and masques over a 300-year period. It charts the subsequent move towards specialized scenic artists in the seventeenth century, once the theatre had been established outside the court, and the eventual split between artist and designer in the twentieth century. The research into scenic art, of which this survey forms a part, has begun to establish the scope of comparative documentary material and extant cloths, with the long-term objective of exploring how working in the two different contexts of scenic and fine art influence the practices and creative output of the artist.

FUNCTION AND FRAGILITY

The first records we have of portable paintings in England, in the form of works on panel, as well as extant examples, date from the thirteenth century (Binski 1986: 17). Not surprisingly, extant examples of early cloth painting are very rare; arguably it is the fragility, rather than the lack of production, that has resulted in a paucity of material from which to form a clear understanding of the original context and significance that these objects may have had.

The relatively light weight of cloth provides one distinct advantage over other supports for large-scale scenic painting. Additionally, when folded or rolled, it can be transported and stored. However, this functionality also means that it has been employed for temporary scenic commissions where speed, thrift and pragmatism played a part. In England throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, glue-sized bleached linen was used and the design executed in glue tempera

(Lloyds 1875; Vernon-Smith 2008 and see Vernon-Smith in this volume). The materials and techniques were very similar to those used for fourteenth-century northern European *tüchlein* paintings (Heydenreich 2008), and those used by Holbein in the sixteenth century for the painted cloth theatre at the Greenwich Festivities of 1527 (Foister 2001). Scenic cloths could be washed down, reused or cut up (Vernon-Smith, 2011). Fires have been responsible for the majority of losses of scenic cloth, along with the theatres that housed them. Everyday usage, handling and environmental conditions result with time in a material (whether flax, cotton or silk) that is brittle and fragile (Young 2012). Thus, painted cloth is innately ephemeral, but it is not necessarily unimportant at the time of its inception. Excluding the Royal Opera House working collection and the Victoria and Albert Museum collection of approximately 50 cloths mainly from the twentieth century, this research suggests that a further 30 scenic cloths in the UK from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries may survive.¹ Some still languish in storerooms, too big to be unrolled, too fragile to display.

THE 'KING'S' PAINTERS, SERJEANT PAINTERS AND THE PAINTER-STAINERS

It is with Henry III's reign and his patronage of the arts that it becomes possible to infer the types of painted cloth that might have been produced and who produced them. Some painters came from abroad² others were English and were often honoured by the king. Tristram quotes the record for 1256 of 'The King's Beloved Master William, the painter monk of Westminster, lately Winchester' (Borenius and Tristram 1955). The records associated with the Painted Chamber at Westminster allow a broader view of the commissions undertaken by the artists working for the Crown. Most notably Master Walter of Durham (in 1264) is mentioned as being involved.³ According to Binski, Master Walter, the 'King's' painter of London, was first mentioned by name in December

1266 (CLR 1266, 251) (Brown and Colvin 1963: 226–7; Binski 1986: 129). The unpublished Liberate Roll PRO E403/1230 (Edward I) includes a payment to Master Walter the king's painter 'pictorinostro' settling his account at the end of 1272. However, 'pictorinostro' ('our painter') does not imply any royal warrant or official post as the 'King's' painter.⁴

The painters in the service of the king at this time were not in close association with the trade guilds. This is partly because they were often recruited from outside London and therefore not allowed to join. The first known document for the painters forming any kind of organization was the Ordinance granted by the Lord Mayor in 1283, which related to the painting of saddlebows and continued on to more general rules, including the rule that painters may only do work that is applied with a brush (Borg 2005). The subsequent dearth of painters recorded in the first half of the fourteenth century is a consequence of a significant drop in population and the priorities of Edward I and Edward II. Specific reference for a guild relating to the painting of cloth originates from the 'Stenour' (Stainers) Ordinance granted on 18 March 1400, which stated they should 'only use new cloth and colours of good quality' (Borg 2005).⁵

In 1348, Hugh of St Albans painted King Edward III's ships, flags and 300 pennons with the arms of St George for the king's voyage to Gascony (Page 1902). In 1350, he is first recorded as working on St Stephen's Chapel at the Palace of Westminster. It is Hugh of St Albans and later Gilbert Prince who appear to have helped establish close links between the court and the Painters' Guild. Gilbert Prince was often in the service of the king, being paid £700 'for divers works, banners, pensions and painting' (Shaw 1934; Brown and Colvin 1963: 226–7). However, as stated by Colvin, there is no direct evidence that Richard II appointed Prince as 'King's' painter (Brown and Colvin 1963: 226–7). The panel painting *Richard II Enthroned* at Westminster Abbey has in the past been attributed to Gilbert Prince, but this attribution is unlikely. Dated to around 1395, it is executed in oil on an oak panel and is of the highest technical quality. Oil has also been identified in the ceiling panels of the Painted Chamber. Other high quality works, including the Wilton Diptych were executed in egg tempera. Thus, as Nadolny and Roy have stated, the techniques employed by painters working under the king's service were varied and no particular technique can be attributed to a specific artist (Nadolny and Roy 2006). However, it is likely that the artist who painted the Richard II portrait also painted decorative banners. In the fourteenth century, royal commissions for banners, flags and pageantry are recorded in the Rolls, but there is little direct evidence in the Rolls of painted cloth in other contexts.

John Brown was granted the first warrant as Serjeant Painter in 1511. Commissions included heraldic painting for the funeral of Prince Arthur in 1502, banners and coats of arms, and the design, supervision and painting of the Field of Cloth of Gold at Guines in 1520, and he was also Painter to the Navy in 1511. Decorative and heraldic commissions of various kinds are recorded for the subsequent Serjeant Painters.⁶

While, in theory, the Serjeant Painter had a clear line of succession and duties, at the same time painters both English⁷ and foreign enjoyed the patronage of the court, and were described as the 'King's Painter'. Their commissions were

mainly associated with portraiture but could include other duties. Holbein, described as Master Hans, worked on the revels at Greenwich in 1527, and later became known as the 'King's Painter'. Hans Eworth also made patterns (designs). Eworth, like Holbein and John Bettes senior, was more involved in the creative input and was commissioned to undertake decorative and heraldic paintings for revels 1561–73 but he was also commissioned to paint portraits of Queen Mary (1554) and Queen Elizabeth I (1569) (Auerbach 1954: 162). William Lizard (son of the 4th Serjeant Painter) appears many times in the accounts and had a supervisory role over other painters including John Bettes the Younger. William Lizard and Hans Eworth made 'patterns' or 'Modells' as recorded by the Clerk of the Revels Office:

William Lyzard for Golde, sylver and sundry other Cullers y him spent in paynting the howses that served for the playes and players at the Coorte; with their pperities and necessaries Incident the pticulrs wherof appeereat lardge in his bill; xiiijl. x vjs. jd. For the year 1571– (Cunningham 1842: 10).

Under the charge of the Serjeant Painter, other painters worked in the service of the king on decorative commissions for Hampton Court Palace, revels including Greenwich and for other ceremonial events. It is these painters who were more often likely to be members of the Painters' Guild, English and living within the Walls. Foister observes 19 names, listed as being members of the Painter-Stainers who were also recorded as having worked on the preparations for the revels at Greenwich (Foister 1993). It was the King's Painters, responsible for the royal portraits and not bound by guilds, who had the celebrity role within the court but who also produced decorative paintings. It is their influence, and most noticeably, Hans Holbein (1497–1543) that dominated court portraiture in England at this time. Holbein seems to have led a team of painters to create the painted cloths required for the temporary theatre at Greenwich.⁸ The sheer scale and amount of work required for the Greenwich Festivities required John Brown, the Serjeant Painter at the time, to act as a coordinator. The Serjeant Painter had a less glamorous and ultimately a less influential role in the development of painting in England but a very lucrative one. However, it was the Serjeant Painter who was responsible for the design and production of the stage scenery planned by the Master of the Revels. It is with John de Critz the Elder, who was given a 'Grant' for life jointly with Leonard Fryer in 1605, that portraiture is recorded as a commission for the Serjeant Painter. Thus the post encompassed all aspects of paintings as can be seen from the grant to Leonard Fryer and John de Critz of joint office of Serjeant Painter dated 11 May 1605 (C.66/1666):

The Serjeant painter had to be the painter of all our works whatsoever, both in our palaces or royal houses and in the Great Wardrobe, painting, gilding or embellishing also within our office of 'le Revells' and Stables, concerning our ships and barges and 'close barges', coaches, chariots, carriages, litters, wagons and 'close carres', tents and pavilions, Herald's coats, banners, trumpets banners, also painting in connection

with the solemnization of funerals in any way belonging (Auerbach 1954: 143).

The studio of John de Critz was not only responsible for the work as Serjeant Painter, including royal portraiture, but also for the production of copies of portraits he had painted.⁹ The combined role continued with Robert Peake the Elder who jointly held the post with de Critz from 1607. Despite the royal warrant, de Critz and Peake were not given contracts for the paintings of the naval fleet. Their recorded disputes over these contracts give an insight into the complex relationship between the Crown and the Painter-Stainers Company, as their main rival for these contracts was Isaacson whose family was influential in the Company (Town 2012).

In terms of scenic art, the Serjeant Painter had a creative input but the actual execution of the work was undertaken by a craftsman, likely to be from the guilds including the Painter-Stainers. The closer links between the King's Painter and guilds that had existed with Gilbert Prince now waned as the role evolved into the post of the Serjeant Painter. It is not until James Thornhill that the status of the Painter-Stainer was restored.

EVOLUTION OF THE ENGLISH STAGE AND SCENERY

The form of the stage originated in the medieval mystery plays where each scene was performed on raised platforms known as 'houses'.¹⁰ Painted cloths were used to decorate or form background context. From this form came the Elizabethan raised stage within a hall or open courtyard that evolved into the timber-framed open-air theatres typified by *The Swan* and *The Globe* (Leacroft 1973). Changeable scenery in England has been dated back to 1574 (Southern 1952) based on an entry in the Accounts of the Office of Revels:

John Rose senior for money by him dispersed
For lead for the chair of the burnyng Knight.
Candlestick to work by at the court.
For cord and pullies to draweupp the clowde

John Rose senior for nails of sundry sort used about
the cloud and drawing it up and down (Cunningham
1842: 202).

However, the mention of a 'travas' or curtain as part of the scenery for the Greenwich revels in 1527 (Foister 2001) may suggest the early use of a drop cloth. Although tournaments and royal processions incorporated elaborate painted cloths of castles, ships and decorative motifs, theatre stages were relatively simply decorated. This probably reflects the religious and political constraints of the period. While Italy had revived Greek and Roman plays, and patronage of talented architects, painters and musicians led to innovative staging and theatres, England outwardly remained confined by the dictates of the Reformation. State, church and court sought to censor the theatre resulting in a stifling of the influence of the Italian Renaissance on the English stage. It was not until

the 1600s that staging evolved, when Inigo Jones (1573–1652) – architect, painter, stage and costume designer – developed Renaissance concepts and perspective into the Stuart Masques for the royal court (Diehl 1997; Henke 2008).

Jones' earliest stage settings between 1605 and 1609 incorporated painted curtains withdrawn to change the scenes (Harris 1989). Arguably, the idea of 'backcloths' and 'frontcloths' could be said to originate from this change in the way performances were staged. Jones later replaced curtains with sliding shutters or flats. However, the concept of a foreground and background in which a single scene could be set, or multiple scenes hidden, had been established. Jones was the first celebrity stage designer; his overall control of the design process inevitably led to a change in the creative input of the scenic painters under his direction. Masques involved music, dance and elaborate costumes and scenery. Patronage by Elizabeth I and later Anne of Denmark had allowed theatre and masques to flourish and hence more painters of scenery were employed. Mathew Goodriche, recorded as a Painter-Stainer in 1619 (and a principal assistant to the then Serjeant Painter John de Critz) was apparently thought of highly by Inigo Jones (Borg 2005). John Gipkin (Gipkyn), recorded as a Painter-Stainer in 1594, painted scenes for the Lord Mayor's pageants as well as court masques conceived by Ben Jonson and Thomas Middleton (Tudor-Craig 2004). He was also commissioned to paint a series of copies of the kings and queens of England by the actor-manager Edward Alleyn (Chambers 1951; Foister 1994). One of the few extant paintings by Gipkin (all of which are on wood), is the Diptych of Old St Paul's, 1616, commissioned by Henry Farley in his bid to have St Paul's Cathedral restored and its spire replaced. Gipkin has, on one of the panels, realized Farley's dream into a fanciful, if topographically incorrect scene of St Paul's and its environs. It is likely that Gipkin's experience with pageants and masques made him a natural choice for such a commission. The painting technique exhibits a lack of finesse stylistically and in its execution, for example in the gilding, gold leaf has been applied without the use of a mordant¹¹ (Gillespie 2001). Gipkin's copies for Alleyn are also similar stylistically and not equivalent in quality to the court portraiture at that time.

The period of creative output enabled by masques and pageants was curtailed in 1642 when theatrical performances were outlawed by the Puritans¹² and thus not surprisingly, the names and business of the painters for the theatre all but disappear from contemporary documents.¹³ While scenic art suffered under the Lord Protector, Cromwell, the political appropriation of portraiture and the requirements of civic commissions enabled painters to continue their trade. In 1649 (the year Charles I was beheaded), Cromwell had himself painted by the leading portraitist of the day Robert Walker (a Painter-Stainer). The architect John Webb, Inigo Jones' assistant for pre-Reformation court masques, continued to work through the Puritan regime. He is recorded as scenic artist/designer at Rutland House, Charterhouse Yard (Lawrence 1889a) in 1656, where Sir William Davenant had managed to obtain permission to put on operas, thus avoiding the ban on theatre. Webb's designs created the continuity between the ideas introduced by Jones, in masques, and the scenic innovations that accompanied the resurgence of the theatre with the Restoration.



Figure 1 Clarkson Stanfield, the backcloth for Charles Dickens's own production: (a) detail 1 and (b) detail 2. Reproduced by permission/courtesy of the Dickens Museum. (Photos © Helen Davis, Ruth Bubb Ltd.)

Within the first year of Charles II's reign in 1660, Henry Hawes is documented as a scenic artist for the Duke's Theatre, Lincolns Inn Fields (Lawrence 1889a), which had been founded by Davenant. In 1662, the king issued patents for two London theatre companies in Drury Lane and Covent Garden. This firmly re-established the link between the court and the stage. In 1665 John Webb designed the scenery for the tragedy *Mustapha* for the Hall Theatre (Rosenfeld 1973). The scenery was painted by Robert Streater (also known as Streeter) (1621–1679). In 1663, Streater was given the warrant as Serjeant Painter.¹⁴ Thus, Streater, considered a fine history painter in his lifetime, enjoyed the patronage of the court as a decorative artist and scenic painter. This period can be seen as a highlight in which Restoration theatre nurtured such artists as Robert Aggos, freeman of the Painter-Stainers in 1646 (Borg 2005), later described as 'a good English landscape painter, both in oil and distemper. He was skilful in architecture, in which kind he painted many scenes for the play-house at Covent Garden' (Buckeridge 1754: 354), and James Thornhill (1675–1734), who designed scenery at Drury Lane in 1705. Thornhill was recognized as the leading decorative history painter, having influence and status as a Painter-Stainer, Serjeant Painter (from 1720) and as a director of Godfrey Kneller's Painting Academy. Scenic art had its first celebrity since Inigo Jones. While Thornhill's designs for the stage are extant it is unclear whether Thornhill actually painted the scenes at Covent Garden. It is around this period that scenic painting became a profession in its own right with George Lambert (1710–1765) becoming one of the first scenic painters to be employed directly for Lincoln's Inn Fields between 1726 and 1727 (Rosenfeld 1973: 61).

GEORGIAN THEATRE

In 1788 the Lord Chamberlain only allowed theatres to open three months of the year;¹⁵ this was the year in which Samuel Butler built (outside the town walls) the Richmond Theatre

(now the Georgian Theatre Royal) in Richmond, Yorkshire (Curtis *et al.* 2003: 4–5). The oldest surviving theatre in England today, within it one can understand the intimate relationship between the audience, performer and the scenery.¹⁶ The Georgian theatre brought with it a flourish in stage design. The use of a drop scene (to conceal scene changes) developed in the eighteenth century, replacing two flats that drew to each side. Painted backcloths also became part of the scenic repertoire coupled with a growing move towards realism, allowing a natural synergy between 'fine art' and 'craft'.

In 1771 David Garrick commissioned Philip de Loutherbourg (1740–1812) to direct all aspects of the stage design, including the lighting, at Drury Lane. A romantic landscape painter, his radical move was to break up the perspective of the stage by introducing elements at angles and subtleties of lighting. He had developed these ideas through his *Eidophusikon* 'image of nature'.¹⁷ Insisting on complete creative control, De Loutherbourg set the trend towards a separate creative designer for the stage. Scene painters were increasingly perceived as skilled craftsmen as opposed to artists. Working at the Drury Lane theatre as scenic artists during this period were Nicholas Dall, Inigo Richards and William Capon (Lawrence 1889a; Rosenfeld 1981).

FINE ART AND ALMOST ART

The Drury Lane theatre under Garrick had built up a strong scenic art department that continued to flourish throughout the nineteenth century. Two notable scenic artists who worked there were Clarkson Stanfield (1793–1867) and William Beverly (1814–1889) (Lawrence 1889b). Stanfield worked for the Drury Lane theatre as a scenic artist for the majority of his career. He was also recognized as a marine painter, exhibiting at the Royal Academy, and was elected a Royal Academician in 1835, a year after resigning from Drury Lane (Van der Merwe and Took 1979). He never abandoned scene painting entirely, though most of his later work was done for friends, including Charles Dickens (see Figure 1a and b).¹⁸



Figure 2 William Telbin, *The Powerscourt Waterfall, County Wicklow*.

A fascinating insight into the working life of a scenic artist can be gained from the 1924 memoirs *Studio & Stage* of the scenic artist Joseph Harker (1855–1927). He describes his apprenticeship under T.W. Hall at The Globe, London and the popularity of panoramas¹⁹ for which scenic artists were in great demand, particularly to realistically depict the battlefield during the Franco-Prussian War (Harker 1924). He goes on to pay tribute to his influential predecessors: De Louthenberg, David Roberts (1796–1864) and Clarkson Stanfield. It is Stanfield's panoramic scenes and marine paintings that are highlighted. He describes William Beverly as the 'Watteau of Scene-painting', influenced by 'Turner's supreme art'.

The lack of recognition of the scenic painter as artist was keenly felt by Harker who, in response to a comment made by the then President of the Royal Academy, Sir Aston Webb, who hoped that 'artists' would start designing more for the stage, listed seven Royal Academicians who had designed for the stage including Edward Burne-Jones (1833–1893) and Sir Edward Poynter (1836–1919). However, as Baldwin points out, these artists span a period of 80 years (Baldwin 1991: 643) and in fact represent a very small proportion of the output of theatre stage design in England at the time.

The scenic painter William Telbin (1846–1931) gives us one of the best insights into the profession in his articles written in 1889 and 1902 in the *Magazine of Art* (Telbin 1889). Telbin, in 1888, explains:

Is it probable that the stage will ever draw recruits from the Royal Academy whose ranks in the past it has helped swell? Is it likely that the successful picture-painter, in the fullness of his ripe experience would care to sink his individuality and freedom, and be directed and made subservient to another art, in which all permanent record of a great painter's work would be lost, and has been lost?²⁰

The loss of individuality in the creative process and ephemeral nature of the scenic cloths certainly would have been a factor.

Payment for such commissions would have been far less, and significantly it was established artists who designed for the theatre. But the 'craft' and 'trade' aspect would have also played a role in a class-obsessed Victorian Britain. Telbin suggests that it is easier for a scene painter to reduce down to 'cabinet' pictures than it is for an Academician to enlarge to a stage cloths. Figure 2 shows one of Telbin's own 'cabinet' paintings.

These scenic painters considered themselves as artists and craftsman fused into one profession. For both Telbin and Harker there is a sense of brotherhood and fraternity. Some would also exhibit at the Royal Academy (William Telbin Jr, William Beverly, Walter Hann, T.E. Ryan, William Harford and C. Wilhelm). However, as the design for the stage became a separate position, scene painters were increasingly perceived as skilled craftsmen as opposed to artists.

During the last 20 years of the nineteenth century there was an increasing shift towards archaeological, historical and contemporary realism on the stage. Scenic artists including Hawes Craven and W. Cuthbert were respected exponents, with Telbin being allied with romantic landscape painters such as Frederick Leighton RA and Alma-Tadma RA. Lighting also played a role; incandescent carbon filament electric lighting was fully introduced at the Savoy in 1881.²¹ Much discussion took place in the art magazines as to the merit of this trend. In 1884, Ruskin referred to the 'stage as a possible school of art' (Baldwin 1991: 643). Percy Fitzgerald (a self-styled critic) wrote extensively on realism, its aesthetic on the stage and the role of the audience as part of the stage (Fitzgerald 1881). The three-dimensional aspect of the space, rather than just a space for two-dimensional representation of a three-dimensional world, developed in the twentieth century. A conceptual synergy with fine art painting and the stage was also introduced in the twentieth century with the Cubists. Kasimir Malvevich's 1913 scenic designs for *Victory over the Sun* were the first Cubist-influenced paintings later exemplified by Picasso.²² The stage was treated the way Cubist painters treated the canvas 'as surfaces and materials to be activated and manipulated so that the object and field interacted in space to create a totally homogenised pictorial space' (Glover 1983). In Britain, established artists including John Piper, Graham Sutherland, John Minton, Rex Whistler, Sidney Nolan and Howard Hodgkin continued to design for the stage – more increasingly for the ballet and opera. The scene painters who turned these concepts into reality were as often as not left off the playbill. David Hockney (b. 1937) was commissioned to design sets for Stravinsky's *Rake's Progress* (at Glyndebourne) and nine additional commissions for the stage (Hardie 1995). The set for Stravinsky's *Le Rossignol* consisted of 149 painted canvases (on stretchers) of varying shapes and sizes. Hockney's large combined canvas paintings are reminiscent of the three-dimensional space occupied by his set designs. However, very few of the artists were involved in the physical making of the works.

Contemporary artists including Tracy Emin and Anthony Gormley have collaborated on stage productions which, although having a twenty-first century aesthetic, would be recognizable as stage scenery to a nineteenth-century scenic artist. In 2012, Chris Ofile (b. 1968) was commissioned to create a backcloth design for a new ballet at the Royal Opera House using Ovid's *Metamorphoses* and its influence on

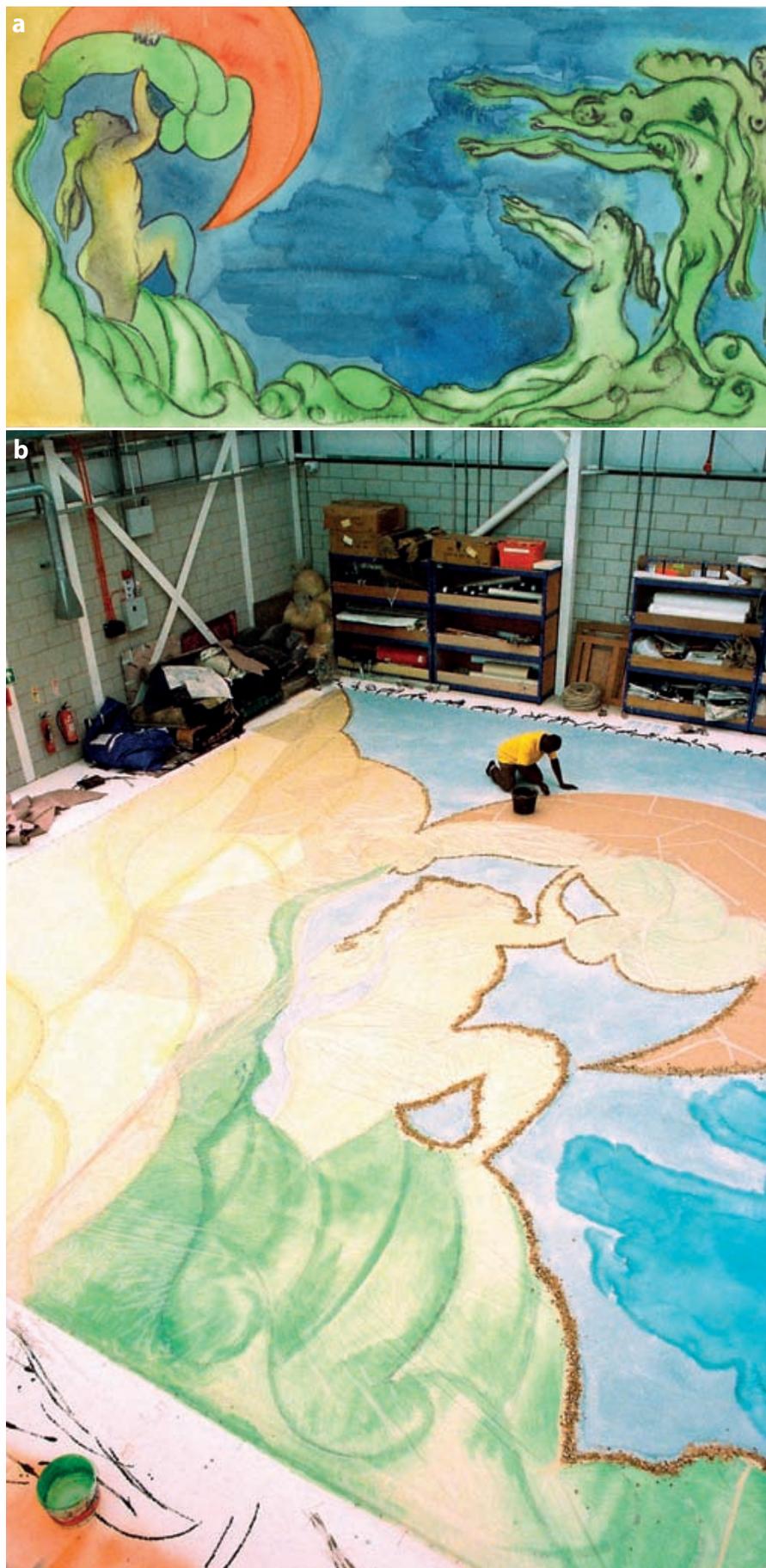


Figure 3 (a) Backcloth (*Study for Diana and Actaeon*), 2012, charcoal and watercolour on paper, 22.2 × 41.8 cm (© Chris Ofili, courtesy Afroco) and (b) Chris Ofili working on the backcloth for *Diana and Actaeon*, 2012 (© Chris Ofili, photo: Ben Marley, courtesy Afroco).

Titian's *Diana and Actaeon*, *Death of Actaeon* and *Diana and Callisto* (which were exhibited at the National Gallery as part of the *Metamorphosis: Titian 2012* exhibition) as the inspiration (Figure 3a and b). Ofili clearly found the experience of working on such a large scale liberating.²³ Unusually for a contemporary artist, he was keen to paint alongside the Royal Opera House's scenic artists Stella Theophanous and Louisa Mozzilli. When Ofili was asked how the experience of creating a work like this was different, he replied 'It's like going on an expedition, with a guide and no map' (the guide was Stella – scenic artist at the Royal Opera House). 'It's liberating ... you can draw a line for a minute, normally I am only drawing a line for a few seconds ... I would use my wrist, arm and maybe shoulder, with this there are steps, strides and twists'. When asked whether he felt scenic art fulfils a different role to fine art, he replied that he did not feel that, and that he enjoys and thinks others enjoy the magical quality of the Royal Opera House: 'People will see it in a certain way because it is still a class issue' (Ofili 2012).²⁴

By surveying the changing role, status and artistic freedom of scenic artists, focusing on painters who straddled the boundaries between 'fine art' and 'craft', one can start to understand the function and significance given to painted scenic cloths in England through time. It is hoped that this will raise awareness of the need to rediscover, unroll, re-evaluate, conserve and display the few remaining nineteenth- and twentieth-century cloths.

In the twenty-first century, technology has enabled the rise of small multimedia theatre companies such as IOU Productions, Invisible Thread and People Show. This has meant that the creative input has been put back in the hands of the practitioners. For the established larger production companies and theatres, stage designers have creative autonomy over their domain. Scenic painting has continued to flourish as a separate profession. Those practising today can still trace their teaching back through an in-house apprenticeship to the scenic artists that flourished with the Georgian theatre, developing new creative skills to work with diverse materials and elaborate designs, while keeping to traditions that would have been recognizable to the King's Painters 700 years earlier.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The author is grateful to the following: Prof. Chris Baugh, University of Hull; Dr Alan Borg; Gavin Clarke, National Theatre Archives; Julia Dudkiewicz, Society of Antiquaries; Cathy Hail, Victoria and Albert Museum; Dr Van Der Merwe, National Maritime Museum; Chris Ofili; Emma Troubridge and Franchesca Franchi, Royal Opera House; Hilary Vernon-Smith, Royal National Theatre; Alysia Sawicka, Courtauld Institute of Art.

NOTES

1. This estimate is based on private communications with researchers, scenic artists and conservators.
2. John of St Omer, Peter of Hispania and William of Florence.

3. Tristram suggests that Master William supervised the layman Master Walter of Durham.
4. The functions of such a post were manifold, responsible primarily as wall painters but also for supplying decoration for the royal barges. For example, Walter of Durham, supplied two painted wooden dragon's heads for the queen's barge in 1275–79 (PRO E101/467/9), his son Thomas of Durham, repainted the Painted Chamber and decorated the barge for Edward II's bride in 1307 (E101/1468/21) (Brown and Colvin 1963: 226–7).
5. In 1433, Richard Davy, originally recorded as a Painter in 1428, petitioned to be transferred to the Stainers; he later became Master of the Stainers Company in 1434. However, this separation of the craft seems short-lived as only six Stainers are recorded, the last one in 1441. In 1502, the formation of the Painter-Stainers Company formally brought these two guilds together under single governance (Englefield 1923).
6. Andrew Wright (1532–43), Anthony Toto (1544–54), Nicholas Lizard (1554–71), William Herne (1572–80), George Gower (1581–96) and Leonard Fryer (1598–1605).
7. Nicholas Hilliard (1547–1619) had payments and commissions for portrait miniatures but not for decorative or heraldic work: 'To Nicholas Hilliarde upon the Lorde Chamberleyne's warraunte dated 31 Jan? 1614[15] for a picture of the Prince in lynnne drawn to the waste with a riche christall thereon and deliuered to Mr Murray his highness Tutor vijij11' (Cunningham 1842: xlv).
8. The theatre was constructed for the reception of the French ambassadors at court.
9. This in part explains the variation in quality in the painting associated with him (Edmond 1978–1980).
10. They were either arranged around a central area as simultaneous sets or performed as a moving series of scenes in carts.
11. The work is on Baltic oak with a glue and calcium carbonate preparatory layer, with pigments bound in oil (Gillespie 2001).
12. <http://www.british-history.ac.uk> (accessed 16 June 2012).
13. During this period the painter to the king, William Dobson (1610–1646), went into exile in Oxford with Charles I. Dobson was later arrested and died in poverty in the year he was elected as Steward to the Painter-Stainers Company.
14. Streater completed the ceiling paintings of the Sheldonian Theatre, Oxford in 1668/9: http://www.ox.ac.uk/subsite/sheldonian_theatre/sheldonian_theatre (accessed 12 March 2012).
15. Samuel Butler's touring company performed long programmes, up to five hours long but not the complete play.
16. The 'Woodland Scene' dated to 1818 and 1836, is displayed at the theatre. It is 13 × 10 ft and depicts a forest with botanical accuracy. It is thought to be one of three surviving pieces painted by the Higgins in Royston, Cambridgeshire.
17. The Eidophusikon was 6 ft wide and 8 ft deep, comprised of five scenes and four transparencies that were combined and lit from various directions to produce visual effects.
18. The only known extant backcloth painted for Charles Dickens by Stanfield is rolled up in storage after remedial conservation work. At present, there are no plans for a full conservation treatment or to display it at the Dickens Museum.
19. There are thought to be 24 extant panoramas worldwide; the majority of these are from the second half of the nineteenth century, at least seven of which have had major conservation treatments. Three notable examples are the Gettysburg, Atlanta and Mesdag panoramas. The Gettysburg work, *Pickett's Charge*, was painted in 1884 by Paul Dominique Philippoteaux (1864–1916).
20. The Northampton Theatre still owns an original painted act drop of 1897 by Ernest Howard. It is in storage for preservation. The theatre also owns an even earlier act drop that belonged to the Old Royal Theatre in Marefair, Northampton, which closed when the present Theatre Royal opened. The act drop is only 17 ft wide by 12 ft 6 in. deep. The design was later copied to accommodate the new larger Royal Theatre.

21. Preceding 1817 candlelight, 1817 gaslight, 1837 limelight and 1848 electric carbon arc (Baldwin 1991: 643).
22. See Jane Pritchard, 'Paintings for performance: theatre cloths in the collections of the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, and the Royal Pavilion, Art Gallery and Museum, Brighton,' in this vol., pp. 116–22.
23. He first produced a small-scale watercolour of his design then a squared up 1:25 version from which the full-size cloth was painted by brushing and spraying highly pigmented acrylic paints on a bleached linen canvas.
24. The issue of class and status of fine art was commented on by Grayson Perry RA, also in 2012, about the perceived barriers between art and craft: 'That's why the art world had a problem with me making pots because craft is "almost art" ... part of the fallout from the academic intellectualisation of art over the past 150 years or so was separating the worker, the craftsman, from the gentleman painter. And of course now there's the delicious irony – here I am, Grayson Perry RA, the bloke that makes pots' (Barber 2012).

REFERENCES

- Auerbach, E. 1954. *Tudor Artists*. London: The Athlone Press.
- Baldwin, F.P. 1991. *Victorian Artists and Stage Design 1870–1905*, PhD thesis, Courtauld Institute of Art, University of London.
- Barber, L. 2012. 'Tasteless? She'll be the judge of that', *The Sunday Times Magazine* 3 June 2012: 14–21.
- Binski, P. 1986. *The Painted Chamber at Westminster*. London: The Society of Antiquaries.
- Borenus, T. and Tristram, E.W. 1976. *English Medieval Wall Painting*. New York: Hacker Art Books.
- Borg, A. 2005. *The History of the Worshipful Company of Painter-Stainers*. Huddersfield: Jeremy Mills Publishing Limited.
- Brown, R.A. and Colvin, H.M. 1963. 'The King's works 1272–1485'. In *The History of the King's Works Volume 1. The Middle Ages*, R.A. Brown, H.M. Colvin and A.J. Taylor (eds), 161–292. London: HMSO.
- Buckeridge, B. 1754 [1706]. 'An essay towards a British school'. In *The Art of Painting and the Lives of the Painters*, R. de Piles, 3rd edn. London.
- Cennini, C. 1954. *The Craftsman's Handbook*, D. Thompson (tr). New York: Dover Publications.
- Chambers, E.K. 1951. *The Elizabethan Stage*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.
- Croft-Murray, E. 1962. *Decorative Painting in England, 1537–1837*. London, 69–78, 263–74.
- Cunningham, P. 1842. *Extracts from the Accounts of the Revels at Court*. London: Shakespeare Society.
- Curtis, V., Waugh, D. et al. 2003. *The Georgian Theatre Royal: A Beautiful, Living Theatre; A Vital Part of our Theatrical History*. Richmond: Castle Print.
- Diehl, H. 1997. *Staging Reform, Reforming the Stage: Protestantism and Popular Theater in Early Modern England*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Edmond, M. 1978–1980. 'Limners and picturemakers', *Walpole Society* 47: 156–89.
- Englefield, W.A.D. 1923. *The History of the Painter-Stainers Company of London*. London.
- Fitzgerald, P. 1881. *The World Behind the Scenes*. London: Chatto and Windus.
- Foister, S. 1993. *Foreigners at Court: Holbein, Van Dyck and the Painter-Stainers Company: Art and Patronage in the Caroline Courts*, D.A. Howarth (ed.), 32–50. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Foister, S. 1994. 'Edward Alleyn's collection of paintings'. In *Edward Alleyn: Elizabethan Actor, Jacobean Gentleman*, A. Read and R. Maniure (eds). Dulwich: Dulwich Picture Gallery.
- Foister, S. 2001. 'Holbein's paintings on canvas: the Greenwich Festivities of 1527'. In *Symposium Papers XXXVII*, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, 109–23. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Gillespie, S. 2001. *Conservation Report for Old St Paul's Diptych*. London: Society of Antiquaries, London.
- Glover, J.G. 1983. *The Cubism Theatre*. Ann Arbor, MI: UMI Research Press.
- Hardie, W. 1995. 'Novelties: the 1990's'. In *David Hockney*, P. Melia (ed.), 132–43. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Harker, J. 1924. *Studio and Stage*. New York: Benjamin Bloom.
- Harris, J. 1989. 'Inigo Jones: universal man'. In *Inigo Jones: Complete Architectural Drawings*, J. Harris and G. Higgott (eds), 13–21. London: Philip Wilson Publishers Ltd.
- Harvey, J.H. 1947. 'Some London painters of the 14th and 15th centuries', *The Burlington Magazine* 89(536): 303–5.
- Henke, R. 2008. 'Border crossing in the Commedia dell'Arte'. In *Transnational and Intercultural Exchange in Early Modern Drama*, R. Henke and E. Nicholson (eds), 19–34. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing Ltd.
- Heydenreich, G. 2008. 'Canvas painting in the workshop of Lucas Cranach the Elder'. In *Preprints of the ICOM-CC 15th Triennial Conference, New Delhi*, J. Bridgland (ed), 432–8. New Delhi: Allied Publishers.
- Lawrence, W.J. 1889a. *Notebooks Vols 1–11*. Contributions Towards a History of Scene Painting Together with the Lives of the Most Eminent Scenic Artists, 3, Bristol University Theatre Collection RS/000003.
- Lawrence, W. J. 1889b. 'Scenery and scenic artists', *Gentleman's Magazine* 266: 608–14.
- Leacroft, R. 1973. *The Development of the English Playhouse*. London: Eyre Methuen.
- Lloyds, F. 1875. *Practical Guide to Scene Painting and Painting in Distemper/ with illustrations drawn by the author*. London: G. Rowney.
- Nadolny, J. and Roy, A. 2006. 'The original technique of the Westminster Abbey portrait of Richard II'. In *Medieval Painting in Northern Europe: Techniques, Analysis, Art History. Studies in Commemoration of the 70th Birthday of Unn Plahter*, J. Nadolny (ed.), 137–47. London: Archetype Publications.
- Ofili C. 2012. Interview by Christina Young (Royal Opera House Studios, Purfleet 11/02/12).
- Page, W. 1902. 'The St. Albans school of painting, mural and miniature. Part I: Mural painting', *Archaeologia* LVIII: 275–92.
- Reynolds, C. 2000. 'The function and display of Netherlandish cloth paintings'. In *The Fabric of Images: European Paintings on Textiles Supports in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Centuries*, C. Villers (ed.), 89–98. London: Archetype Publications.
- Rosenfeld, S. 1973. *A Short History of Scene Design in Great Britain*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Rosenfeld, S. 1981. *Georgian Scene Painters and Scene Painting*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Shaw, A.S. 1934. 'The Early English School of Portraiture', *The Burlington Magazine* 65(379): 171–84.
- Southern, R. 1952. *Changeable Scenery: Its Origin and Development in the British Theatre*. London: Faber and Faber.
- Telbin, W. 1889. 'Art in the theatre: the painting of scenery', *Magazine of Art* 12.
- Town, E. 2012. "'Whilst he had his perfect sight": new light on the life and career of John de Critz the Elder', *The Burlington Magazine* 154(1312).
- Troubridge, E., 2012. Personal communication, Royal Opera House Studios, Purfleet.
- Tudor-Craig, P. 2004. *Old St Paul's: The Society of Antiquaries' Diptych, 1616*. London: Society of Antiquaries and London Topographical Society.

- Van der Merwe, P.T. and Took, R. 1979. *The Spectacular Career of Clarkson Stanfield 1793–1867: Seaman, Scene-painter and Royal Academician*. Sunderland: Tyne and Wear County Council Museum.
- Vernon-Smith, H. 2008. 'Painting scenery for the theatre: materials and techniques', *Journal of the Traditional Paint Forum* 2(3): 439.
- Vernon-Smith, H. 2011. Personal communication, Royal National Theatre, London.
- Walpole, H. 1762. *Anecdotes of painting in England; with some account of the pincipal artists; and incidental notes on other arts; collected by the later Mr. George Vertue; and now digested and published from his original MSS. By Mr. Horace Walpole*. Twickenham, Thomas Farmer.
- Young, C. 2012. 'History of fabric supports'. In *Conservation of Easel Paintings*, J. Holl Stoner and R. Rushfield (eds), 116–47. Abingdon: Routledge.

AUTHOR'S ADDRESS

Christina Young, Courtauld Institute of Art, London, UK (christina.young@courtauld.ac.uk)