

Art in Great Britain
Theatre in Great Britain.

Great changes took place in social life of England during the reign of Queen Elizabeth I (1558-1603). England turned from a secondary European power into a first-rate naval power after defeating the Great Spanish Armada in 1588.

It was the time of the English Renaissance. First playhouses in England appeared at that time. The actors including Shakespeare, helped the architects to design the new playhouse which was called the Globe. It was built in Maiden Lane near the Thames which has become the theatrical district of London since that time. The Globe Playhouse is a part of the history of the English theatre. The district of Maiden Lane and Drury Lane is still the heart of the theatrical life in London.

There are many schools of acting in Great Britain. The Royal Academy of Dramatic Art is the most prominent and successful of all schools of acting. The Central School of Speech Teaching and Dramatic Art provides a first-class of experts in every department.

There is also the Old Vic Dramatic School and the Embassy School of Acting at Swiss Cottage.

The word "theatre" in general refers only to drama and does not include opera and ballet.

English people tend to distinguish between the theatre (meaning the building) and the company (meaning the actors, directors, etc.).

The British theatre can be divided into two sections: the professional theatre and the little theatre.

There are today about 200 professional theatres. The dominant pattern of the stage is shaped in Central London, where thirty nine theatres are usually opened all the year round.

All but four of London's theatres - the Old Vic, Sadler's Walls, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden and the Royal Court - are let out for hire from play to play. Compared with the provinces in London theatre flourishes.

There are about 10,000 nominally professional players in Britain. Jobs on the stage or even behind it can be found for only a small fraction of them. In the "commercial" theatre an actor never knows if his new job will last four days or four years.

The position of the dramatist is also difficult. There about 120 active English authors now working in the theatre. Not more than thirty can hope, as a rule, to see their work staged in the West End, on the whole they cannot hope to find a public.

Britain has long and rich dramatic traditions. The two national companies, the National itself, and the Royal Shakespeare's company are the society hostesses of drama, elegant and sophisticated but isolated from the rest of the British theatrical world by their prestige. The first company stages a wide range of modern and classical plays. The second is performing in Stratford-upon-Avon and in London.

The Royal Shakespeare Company is divided between the country and the capital, playing concurrently at two theatres for most of the year. They appear on their Stratford-upon-Avon home, the Royal Shakespeare theatre, from April till November; and at their London home, the Aldwych theatre, from June till March.

If we speak about modern theatre we use the word troupe.

It is necessary to know something about the way in which the theatre is organized in Britain, especially the system of subsidized and commercial theatres. Theatres in Britain are of two types: subsidized and commercial. Subsidized theatres are publicly owned and supported from public funds by a subsidy, from the Arts Council. This is a state body whose members are appointed by the Minister for the Arts. According to the official Handbook Britain 1974, its main objects are: "to develop and improve the knowledge, understanding and practice of the arts...".

They have a permanent company of directors, actors, designers, etc., and each season stage several productions, which are presented in repertory.

Three most well-known are:

1. The Royal Shakespeare Company. The Royal Shakespeare Theatre, Stratford-upon-Avon, The Aldwych Theatre, London.
2. The National Theatre Company

The National Theatre (in the sense of the building) is a whole complex consisting of three theatres of varying size and design situated on the South Bank of the Thames beside Waterloo Bridge. The theatres are:

- a) The Olivier theatre, the largest (1160) seats, named after Laurence Olivier, famous actor and first director of the National theatre, 1962 -1973;
- b) The Lyttleton theatre, a medium-sized theatre (890seats), named after Oliver Lyttleton, first president of the National Theatre Council;
- c) The Cottesloe Theatre, a very small theatre, named after the president of the South Bank Council, which was in charge of the whole project.

The National Theatre was opened in March 1976, and the National Theatre Company was founded in 1963.

3. Old Vic (a Victorian theatre company, Royal Victoria Theatre, the Old Vic Company).
4. The English Stage Company (The Royal Court Theatre, London).

Most provincial towns of a certain size have a subsidized theatre. Among the best-known are: the Birmingham Theatre, the Liverpool Repertory Theatre, the Oxford Playhouse, the Nottingham Playhouse, the British Old Vic, the Belgrade Theatre, Coventry.

The Royal Opera House, Covent Garden.

Covent Garden is the name of the district of London in which the opera house is situated and this name is widely used to denote the Opera House itself. The R.O. House stands not far from one of the most famous of London streets, the Strand, in the West End. It is the best Opera House in Europe with one of the finest orchestras.

Covent Garden is opened almost the entire year. The story of Covent Garden is the story of opera in London.

Sadler's Wells Theatre, which is also situated in London, was originally used for drama, as well as opera and ballet, but this proved too complicated and it soon restricted itself to opera and ballet.

Glyndebourne Opera House is a commercial one in Sussex, not far from London.

There are hardly any opera houses in the provinces. Most provincial cities, even very large ones, such as Birmingham and Leeds, have no opera house, and people living there can see opera and ballet only when touring companies perform in a theatre or concert hall. However, interest in opera and ballet has recently increased, and an example of this can be seen in the opening of the opera house in Glasgow in 1975.

Most opera houses have two companies: an opera company and a ballet company. For example, the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden has:

- the Royal Opera company and
- the Royal Ballet company which was formed in 1946.

As mentioned above, these companies perform at the Royal Opera House, Covent Garden. Apart from these two companies, there are several other separate opera and ballet companies which perform in theatres and concert halls.

The English National Opera was formed in the early 1970s and incorporated the former Sadler's Wells Opera Company. They perform at the London Coliseum, A theatre used for various kinds of musical entertainment.

The Ballet Rambert Company was founded in 1926 by Marie Rambert who was born in Poland. It specializes in modern ballet and is based in London, performing in various theatres.

The London Festival Ballet Company was formed in 1950 and is mainly a touring company.

The New London Ballet is an offshoot of the London Festival Ballet, has been founded in 1972. One of the most famous ballet companies is the Royal Ballet.

World-famous for its promenade concerts is Albeit Hall in London. Among first-class orchestras

are BBC Symphony, London Symphony, London Philharmonic, Royal Philharmonic, etc..

Regional theatre denotes a theatre outside London. It is generally preferred to provincial.

Commercial theatres are those which receive no subsidy and are therefore ran on a commercial basis. This means that they have to cover all their costs from the sale of tickets, besides which they hope to make a profit. Most of the London theatres are of this type. Since they are nearly all situated in the West End.

Commercial theatres are not private. A private theatre is one which is not open to the public, for example, in someone's house, or in a palace.

The whole image of the English theatre has changed of late. It is more-respectable, less tied to commercial considerations and more culturally ambitious.

Contemporary British playwrights are Harold Pinter, Tom Stoppard and some others.

Considerable interest is shown at present for the professional arts festivals which take place each year, for example, in Edinburgh International Festival. It is the largest of its kind in the world.

The wide spread dramatization of fiction in the 20th century is get another link with literary tradition. There have been dramas based on the life and work of the Brontes, such as "Jane Eyre", on Gaskell's "Cranford". The English stage of the twentieth century has produced on the whole theatrical rather than literary drama. One of the best qualities of the serious English drama during the twentieth century has been its tenacity, its ability to survive in small repertory theatres and converted parish halls.

It was Bernard Shaw who lifted the realistic drama to its highest potentiality, by making primarily intellectual drama. Of considerable renown among the English playwrights are John Osborne, Robert Bolt, David Storey, Edmund Bond, Nicholas Simpson and others. There are two hundred professional companies in Britain today and many new theatres, some new, in provincial cities and towns. There is a festival theatre at Chichester, Sussex. There is a ballet company in the north of England called the Northern Dance Theatre, which performs mainly at the Opera Theatre of the Royal Northern College of Music, in Manchester. But London is the theatrical centre. There are thirty theatres in the West End.

Although opera and ballet are generally considered to be separate from the theatre.

Opera and ballet are traditionally much less popular than drama in Britain and there are relatively few opera houses.

Painting

Painting, meant literally, is the practice of applying color to a surface (support) such as paper, canvas, wood, glass, lacquer, or other. However, when used in an artistic sense, the term "painting" means the use of this activity in combination with drawing, composition and other aesthetic considerations in order to manifest the expressive and conceptual intention of the practitioner.

Painting is used as a mode of representing, documenting and expressing all the varied intents and subjects that are as numerous as there are practitioners of the craft. Paintings can be naturalistic and representational (as in a still life or landscape painting), photographic, abstract, be loaded with narrative content, symbolism, emotion or be political in nature. A large portion of the history of painting is dominated by spiritual motifs and ideas; sites of this kind of painting range from artwork depicting mythological figures on pottery to biblical scenes rendered on the interior walls and ceiling of The Sistine Chapel to depictions of the human body itself as a spiritual subject.

What enables painting is the perception and representation of intensity. Every point in space has different intensity. That painting is one of the basic skills needed by an artist to make masterpieces and works of art. The means of representing this intensity in painting is therefore the shade, nuance, i.e. the span between white and black with all visible gray shades - the difference in intensity. Line is considered as reduced surface, the difference in surface intensity (i.e., intensity of reflected light) is marked by thickness of line. In practice, only by use of shades painter can articulate shapes - if the two meeting surfaces are of very different intensity, the line will be thick, if the surfaces are close in intensity, the line will be pale. Color and texture are separate qualities, and they can not be used to articulate form, but can be mixed (for instance with gray) without restriction. By using just color (of the same intensity) one can only represent symbolic shapes, and not 3D space or construction of an object. It is important to distinguish between using this basic painting means and ideological means, like geometrical figures, various points of view and organization (perspective), symbols, etc. For instance, "white wall" is an idea, and for a painter, a white wall has different intensity at each point; a painter will perceive all various shades and reflections from nearby objects on a particular wall, but ideally, a white wall is still white in pitch darkness. In technical drawing, thickness of line is also ideal, this kind of drawing gives ideal outlines of an object within a perceptual frame different from the one used by painters.

Color and tone are the essence of painting as pitch and rhythm are of music. Color is highly subjective, but has observable psychological effects, although these can differ from one culture to the next. Black is associated with mourning in the West, but elsewhere white may be. Some painters, theoreticians, writers and scientists, including Goethe, Kandinsky, Newton, have written their own color theory. Moreover the use of language is only a generalisation for a color equivalent. The word "red", for example, can cover a wide range of variations on the pure red of the visible spectrum of light. There is not a formalised register of different colors in the way that

there is agreement on different notes in music, such as C or C# in music, although the Pantone system is widely used in the commercial printing and graphic design industry for this purpose.

For a painter, color is not simply divided into basic and derived (complementary or mixed) colors (like, red, blue, green, brown, etc.). Painters deal practically with pigments, so "blue" for a painter can be any of the blues: phtalocyan, Paris blue, indigo, cobalt, ultramarine, etc. Psychological, symbolical meanings of color are not strictly speaking means of painting. Colors only add to the potential, derived context of meanings, and because of this the perception of a painting is highly subjective. The analogy with music is quite clear - tones in music (like "C") are analogous to "shades" in painting, and coloration in painting is the same as the specific color of certain instrument - these do not form a melody, but can add different contexts to it.

Rhythm is important in painting as well as in music. Rhythm is basically a pause incorporated into a body (sequence). This pause allows creative force to intervene and add new creations - form, melody, coloration. The distribution of form, or any kind of information is of crucial importance in the given work of art and it directly affects the esthetical value of that work. This is because the esthetical value is functionality dependent, i.e. the freedom (of movement) of perception is perceived as beauty. Free flow of energy, in art as well as in other forms of "techne", directly contributes to the esthetical value.

Modern artists have extended the practice of painting considerably to include, for example, collage, which began with Cubism and is not painting in the strict sense. Some modern painters incorporate different materials such as sand, cement, straw or wood for their texture. Examples of this are the works of Jean Dubuffet and Anselm Kiefer. (There is a growing community of artists who use computers to literally paint color onto a digital canvas using programs such as Photoshop, Painter, and many others. These images can be printed onto traditional canvas if required.)

In 1829, the first photograph was produced. From the mid to late 19th century, photographic processes improved and, as it became more widespread, painting lost much of its historic purpose to provide an accurate record of the observable world. There began a series of art movements into the 20th century where the Renaissance view of the world was steadily eroded, through Impressionism, Post-Impressionism, Fauvism, Expressionism, Cubism and Dadaism. Eastern and African painting, however, continued a long history of stylization and did not undergo an equivalent transformation at the same time.

Modern and Contemporary Art has moved away from the historic value of craft and documentation in favour of concept; this has led some to say that painting, as a serious art form, is dead, although this has not deterred the majority of artists from continuing to practise it either as whole or part of their work.

Recently, painting has been used in paint-on-glass animation.

Aesthetics and theory of painting

Aesthetics tries to be the "science of beauty" and it was an important issue for 18th and 19th century philoshopers like Kant or Hegel. Classical philosophers like Plato and Aristotle also theorized about art and painting in particular; Plato disregarded painters (as well as sculptors) in his philosophical system, sustaining that a painting is a copy of reality (a shadow of the world of ideas so it cannot depict the truth) and is nothing but a craft, similar to shoemaking or iron casting. Leonardo Da Vinci, on the contrary, said that "Pittura est cousa mentale" (painting is an intellectual thing). Kant identified Beauty with the Sublime, not referring particularly to painting,

but this concept was taken by painters like Turner or Caspar David Friedrich. Hegel recognized the failure of attaining a universal concept of beauty and in his aesthetic essay wrote that Painting is one of the three "romantic" arts, along with Poetry and Music for its symbolic, highly intellectual purpose. Painters like Kandinsky or Paul Klee also wrote theory of painting. Kandinsky in its essay sustains that painting has a spiritual value also he attaches primary colors to essential feelings or concepts, something that writers like Goethe had already tried to do.

Iconography has also something to say about painting. The creator of this discipline, Erwin Panofsky, tries to analyse visual symbols in their cultural, religious, social and philosophical depth to attain a better comprehension of mankind's symbolic activity.

Beauty, however, a concept of which Painting is essentially linked, cannot be defined as an objective matter, purpose or idea. Much aesthetics and theory of art is connected with painting. In 1890, the Parisian painter Maurice Denis famously asserted: "Remember that a painting – before being a warhorse, a naked woman or some story or other – is essentially a flat surface covered with colors assembled in a certain order." Thus, many twentieth century developments in painting, such as Cubism, were reflections on the business of painting rather than on the external world, nature, which had previously been its core subject.

Julian Bell (1908-37), a painter himself, examines in his book *What is Painting?* the historical development of the notion that paintings can express feelings and ideas:

"Let us be brutal: expression is a joke. Your painting expresses – for you; but it does not communicate to me. You had something in mind, something you wanted to 'bring out'; but looking at what you have done, I have no certainty that I know what it was...."

Painting media

Different types of paint are usually identified by the medium that the pigment is suspended or embedded in, which determines the general working characteristics of the paint, such as viscosity, miscibility, solubility, drying time, etc.

Examples include:

- Acrylic
- Encaustic (wax)
- Fresco
- Gouache
- Ink
- Oil
 - Heat-set oils
 - Water miscible oil paints
- Pastel, including dry pastels, oil pastels, and pastel pencils
- Spray paint (Graffiti)
- Tempera

Popular painting styles

'Style' is used in two senses: It can refer to the distinctive visual elements, techniques and methods that typify an *individual* artist's work. It can also refer to the movement or school that an artist is associated with. This can stem from an actual group that the artist was consciously involved with or it can be a category in which art historians have placed the painter. The word

'style' in the latter sense has fallen out of favour in academic discussions about contemporary painting, though it continues to be used in popular contexts.

Painting styles:

- Abstract; Abstract expressionism; Post-Abstract Expressionism; Baroque; Color Field; Constructivism; Contemporary Art; Combined Realism; Cubism; Expressionism; Folk; Graffiti; Impressionism; Lyrical Abstraction; Mannerism; Minimalism; Modernism; Naïve art; Neo-classicism; Orientalism; Outsider; Photorealism; Pluralism; Pointillism; Pop art; Postmodernism; Post-painterly Abstraction; Primitive; Pseudorealism; Realism; Rectoverision; Romanticism; Romantic realism; Socialist realism; Surrealism; Tachism

Vocabulary

art noun [uncountable] the use of painting, drawing, sculpture etc to represent things or express ideas, or the things that are produced by art:

- In some political states during the twentieth century, there was strong support for the view that art should serve a social purpose.
- Johns used ordinary objects as the subjects of his paintings, and transformed them into high art. (=art that is considered to be very serious, and understood properly only by very clever people)

fine art (also the fine arts) noun [U or plural] forms of art, especially paintings or sculpture, that are produced and admired for their beauty and high quality:

- He is now studying for a degree in fine art.

the arts (also the creative arts) noun [plural] art, music, plays, films, literature etc all considered together:

- public subsidy of the arts

culture noun [uncountable] activities and things relating to art, music, literature etc:

- All forms of culture entail communication through images, language and symbols.

popular culture noun [uncountable] the music, books, films etc that are liked by a lot of people and that are not considered to be high art:

- Photography was to become the heart of the intensely visual popular culture of the twentieth century.

artistic adjective [usually before noun] relating to the arts, especially to painting, drawing etc:

- his exceptional artistic ability
- There were calls for greater artistic freedom.

cultural adjective [usually before noun] relating to the arts:

- All the prisoners are urged to pursue educational and cultural activities.

visual arts noun [plural] art such as painting, sculpture etc that you look at, as opposed to literature or music:

- Leonardo da Vinci had an impact not only on the visual arts but also on literature and science.

performing arts noun [plural] art forms such as dance, music, or drama which involve doing things to entertain people

decorative arts noun [plural] the design and production of beautiful things for the home, such as furniture, pottery, and cloth

plastic arts noun [plural] art that involves producing objects such as sculptures or pots

performance art noun [uncountable] a type of art that can combine acting, dance, painting, film etc to express an idea

work noun [countable] something such as a painting, play, piece of music etc that is produced by a painter, writer, or musician:

- The Metropolitan Museum of Art's collection contains more than two million works of art.

drama (also (the) theatre) noun [uncountable] the art of plays and the way that they are written and performed, especially as a subject of study:

- He offers an interpretation of Greek drama which brings to the fore the question of tragic guilt.
- The university has a strong department of theatre studies.

(the) ballet noun [uncountable] performances in which dancing and music tell a story without any speaking:

- In classical ballet, the patterns made by the dancers' bodies are usually symmetrical.

(modern) dance noun [uncountable] dancing which is done as an art form, but is not in the style of traditional ballet

opera noun [uncountable] musical plays in which all of the words are sung:

- the last of the great composers of opera

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