



# WILLIAM HOGARTH

(10 November 1697 – 26 October 1764) was an English painter, printmaker, pictorial satirist, social critic, and editorial cartoonist. His work ranged from realistic portraiture to comic strip-like series of pictures called "modern moral subjects", perhaps best known being his moral series *A Harlot's Progress*, *A Rake's Progress* and *Marriage A-la-Mode*. Knowledge of his work is so pervasive that satirical political illustrations in this style are often referred to as "Hogarthian".

Hogarth was born in London into a poor middle-class family. In his youth he took up an apprenticeship where he specialised in engraving. His father underwent periods of mixed fortune, and was at one time imprisoned in lieu of outstanding debts; an event that is thought to have informed William's paintings and prints with a hard edge. His work was influenced by French and Italian painting and engraving.





«MARRIAGE A-LA-MODE: 1, THE MARRIAGE SETTLEMENT»





## EARLY LIFE

William Hogarth was born at Bartholomew Close in London to Richard Hogarth, a poor Latin school teacher and textbook writer, and Anne Gibbons. In his youth he was apprenticed to the engraver Ellis Gamble in Leicester Fields, where he learned to engrave trade cards and similar products.

Young Hogarth also took a lively interest in the street life of the metropolis and the London fairs, and amused himself by sketching the characters he saw. Around the same time, his father, who had opened an unsuccessful Latin-speaking coffee house at St John's Gate, was imprisoned for debt in Fleet Prison for five years. Hogarth never spoke of his father's imprisonment.

Hogarth became a member of the Rose and Crown Club, with Peter Tillemans, George Vertue, Michael Dahl, and other artists and connoisseurs.





«THE GRAHAM CHILDREN»





«Portrait of a Man»

## CAREER

By April 1720, Hogarth was an engraver in his own right, at first engraving coats of arms, shop bills, and designing plates for booksellers.

In 1727, he was hired by Joshua Morris, a tapestry worker, to prepare a design for the *Element of Earth*. Morris heard that he was "an engraver, and no painter", and consequently declined the work when completed. Hogarth accordingly sued him for the money in the Westminster Court, where the case was decided in his favour on 28 May 1728. In 1757 he was appointed Serjeant Painter to the King.





«DAVID GARRICK AS RICHARD III»





«MARCH OF THE GUARDS TO FINCHLEY»





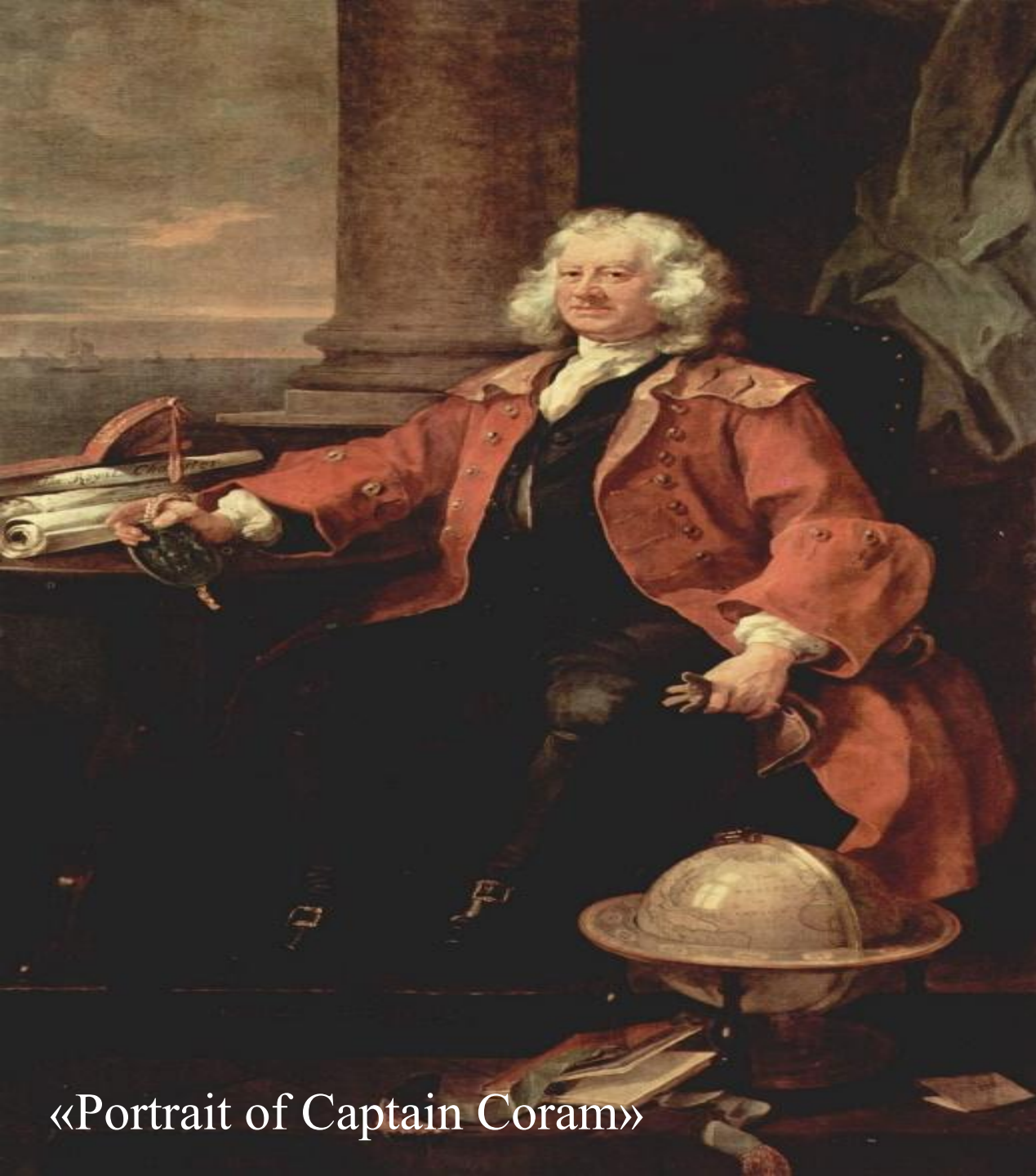
# MORALIZING ART

In 1731 Hogarth completed the earliest of his series of moral works, a body of work that led to significant recognition. The collection of six scenes was entitled *A Harlot's Progress* and appeared first as paintings (now lost)<sup>1</sup> before being published as engravings. *A Harlot's Progress* depicts the fate of a country girl who begins prostituting – the six scenes are chronological, starting with a meeting with a bawd and ending with a funeral ceremony that follows the character's death from venereal disease.

The inaugural series was an immediate success and was followed in 1733-1735 by the sequel *A Rake's Progress*. The second instalment consisted of eight pictures that depicted the reckless life of Tom Rakewell, the son of a rich merchant, who spends all of his money on luxurious living, services from prostitutes, and gambling – the character's life ultimately ends in Bethlem Royal Hospital. The original paintings of *A Harlot's Progress* were destroyed in the fire at Fonthill House in 1755; the oil paintings of *A Rake's Progress* (1733-34) are displayed in the gallery room at Sir John Soane's Museum, London, UK.

When the success of *A Harlot's Progress* and *A Rake's Progress* resulted in numerous pirated reproductions by unscrupulous printsellers, Hogarth lobbied in parliament for greater legal control over the reproduction of his and other artists' work. The result was the Engravers' Copyright Act (known as 'Hogarth's Act'), which became law on 25 June 1735 and was the first copyright law to deal with visual works as well as the first to recognize the authorial rights of an individual artist.





«Portrait of Captain Coram»

## PERSONAL LIFE

On 23 March 1729 Hogarth married Jane Thornhill, daughter of artist Sir James Thornhill.

Hogarth was initiated as a Freemason before 1728 in the Lodge at the Hand and Apple Tree Tavern, Little Queen Street, and later belonged to the Carrier Stone Lodge and the Grand Stewards' Lodge; the latter still possesses the 'Hogarth Jewel' which Hogarth designed for the Lodge's Master to wear. Today the original is in storage and a replica is worn by the Master of the Lodge. Freemasonry was a theme in some of Hogarth's work, most notably 'Night', the fourth in the quartet of paintings (later released as engravings) collectively entitled the *Four Times of the Day*.

He lived in Chiswick from 1749, when he bought the house now known as Hogarth's House and preserved as a museum; he lived there for the rest of his life. The Hogarths had no children, although they fostered foundling children. He was a founding Governor of the Foundling Hospital.

Among his friends and acquaintances were many English artists and satirists of the period, such as Francis Hayman, Henry Fielding, and Laurence Sterne.



# Death

Hogarth died in London on 26 October 1764 and was buried at St. Nicholas Church, Chiswick, London.



«MISS MARY EDWARDS»