

*Lyceum of Mathematics and Computer Science*

# William Hogarth

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The Person I Admire

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# William Hogarth

- **William Hogarth**, the son of Richard Hogarth, a Latin teacher, was born in Smithfield, London, in 1697.
- Hogarth's father opened a coffee-house in London but the venture was unsuccessful and in 1707 he was confined to Fleet Prison for debt. Hogarth was released five years later during an amnesty.
- By 1720 Hogarth had own business engraving book plates and painting portraits. Around this time Hogarth met the artist, Sir James Thornhill. Impressed by his history paintings, Hogarth made regular visits to Thornhill's free art academy in Covent Garden.
- Hogarth also painted pictures that told a moral story. The first of these, *The Harlots Progress* (1732), shows the downfall of a country girl at the hands of people living in London. Other examples of this approach included *The Rake's Progress* (1733-35) and *Industry and Idleness* (1747).



- After a period painting portraits of the rich and famous, Hogarth returned in 1751 to producing prints of everyday life. Prints such as Beer Street, Gin Lane and the Four Stages of Cruelty were extremely popular and sold in large numbers.

- In 1762 Hogarth published his anti-war satire The Times. This work upset a large number of MPs and one of the country's leading politicians, John Wilkes attacked Hogarth in his newspaper, The North Briton. Hogarth retaliated by producing his engraving, John Wilkes, Esq. In the engraving Wilkes is wearing a horn-like wig and holds his symbolic cap of liberty in such a way as to make a halo for himself.

William Hogarth

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**Gin Lane.** 1751. Engraving. The British Museum, London, UK.

**The Tavern Scene. (A Rake's Progress).** 1732-1734. Oil on canvas. Sir John Soane's Museum, London, UK

**Mary Edwards.** 1742. Oil on canvas. The Frick Collection, New York, USA.

**South Sea Scheme.** 1721. Engraving. The British Museum, London, UK

**Tailpiece: The Bathos - final print (1764)**





William Hogarth

The Marriage a-la-Mode



Hogarth was a social painter who produced his own pictorial drama composition comprising various scenes of society's social life. His art was a reflection and interpretation on the social condition of his time. Hogarth's magnificent powers of composition were fully displayed in his series of engravings, the most famous is "The Marriage a-la-Mode".

Soon after producing his print of Wilkes, Hogarth became seriously ill. In July 1763 he had a paralytic seizure but the following year he started work again and in April, 1764, produced his final print Tailpiece: The Bathos (1764). William Hogarth died on 25th October, 1764.