

## James Gillray@200: Caricaturist without a Conscience? (Oxford, 28 Mar 15)

The Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, Mar 28, 2015

Deadline: Nov 15, 2014

Ersy Contogouris, Université de Montréal

James Gillray@200: Caricaturist without a Conscience?

James Gillray's reputation in the two centuries since his death has been as varied and layered as his prints. Trained at the Royal Academy, he failed at reproductive printmaking, yet became, according to the late-eighteenth-century Weimar journal *London und Paris*, one of the greatest European artists of the era. Napoleon, from his exile on St Helena, allegedly remarked that Gillray's prints did more to run him out of power than all the armies of Europe. In England, patriots had hired him to propagandize against the French and touted him as a great national voice, but he was an unreliable gun-for-hire. At a large public banquet, during the heat of anti-Revolutionary war fever, he even raised a toast to his fellow artist, the regicide, Jacques-Louis David. Gillray produced a highly individual, highly schooled, and often outlandish body of work with no clear moral compass that undermines the legend of the caricaturist as the voice and heart of the people, so that the late Richard Godfrey described him as a caricaturist without a conscience. Following 2001 and 2004 retrospectives in London and New York, and fuelled by scholarship of a new generation of thinkers, our era's Gillray is just now coming into focus.

To commemorate the 200th anniversary of Gillray's death, and in conjunction with the Ashmolean Museum's exhibition, *Love Bites: Caricatures of James Gillray* (26 March-21 June 2015), based on New College's outstanding collection, we are organizing a one-day symposium at the Ashmolean Museum to hear and see the latest Gillray scholarship.

We seek proposals papers that address any aspect of Gillray's work or that consider artistic duty or purposeful negligence of duty in the period around 1800. Comparative, formal, contextual, and theoretical approaches to Gillray and our theme are all welcome. Proposals should be a maximum of 200 words and be accompanied by a short bibliographical statement.

Organised by Todd Porterfield, Université de Montréal; Martin Myrone, Tate Britain; and Michael Burden, New College, Oxford; with Ersy Contogouris, Université de Montréal.

All enquiries should be addressed initially to the New College Dean's Secretary, Jacqui Julier, [jacqui.julier@new.ox.ac.uk](mailto:jacqui.julier@new.ox.ac.uk), to whom all abstracts should be submitted by:

15 November 2014

The programme will be announced on 21 November 2014.

Reference:

CFP: James Gillary@200: Caricaturist without a Conscience? (Oxford, 28 Mar 15). In: ArtHist.net, Sep 21, 2014 (accessed Jun 5, 2025), <<https://arthist.net/archive/8454>>.