

GRAND DESIGNS



1 **Alberto Pullicino**
1719–c1765 Italy
Five Views of Malta
after 1749
oil on canvas
acquisition date unknown

Alberto Pullicino painted his original *Views of Malta* for the Chevalier Turgot in 1749, making several other later versions with slight variations. Sets of paintings such as these were often hung in grand salons, to impress visiting dignitaries. Five of the Gallery's set focus on the harbour and the nations' ships which are using it for safe anchor. Only the view of Floriana focuses on the agricultural hinterland where smallholders had their walled fields and gardens.

2 **Aelbert Cuyp**
1620–1691 The Netherlands
River Scene with a Ferry Boat
date unknown
oil on canvas
gift of Sir George Grey, 1887

The flag identifies this ferry as *De Zwaan* (The Swan), which travelled between Rotterdam and Dordrecht, Cuyp's home, where he remained in Dordrecht for most of his life. His active painting career came to a close after his marriage to a wealthy widow in 1658, when he took over her business affairs.

3 **Salvator Rosa**
1615–1673 Italy
Landscape with a Rock
date unknown
oil on canvas
purchased 1964

Salvator Rosa demonstrates his superb skill as a landscapist in this tiny work. He is able to make an affecting landscape from a few simple elements such as the rocky cliffs, the glimpse of water, a framing tree and the sky. The scene is bathed in light, and Rosa contrasts two opposing elements – the rugged cliffs on the left and the smooth plane of water in the background – to masterly effect.

4 **William Hodges**
1744–1797 England, India, New Zealand
Landscape date unknown
oil on panel
Mackelvie Trust Collection
purchase date unknown

It is possible that this painting dates from when William Hodges was in India between 1779 and 1784, as the rapid brushstrokes and simplified view, the sleeping figure and the treatment of water are comparable to some of his other paintings from this period.

5 **Allan Ramsay**
1713–1784 England, Scotland
Portrait of a Man c1750
oil on canvas
purchased with assistance from the Friends of the Auckland Art Gallery, 1976

Famous for expressing all the conscious elegance of the fashionable *beau monde* during the reign of George II, Allan Ramsay's mature style embraced the gay or fashionable society, informal portraiture style popular in France. This unknown gentleman looks as if he is enjoying a joke with the artist. A great conversationalist and a wit, Ramsay shone in the literary circles of his day.

6 **Leonardo Coccorante**
1680–1750 Italy
Landscape with Roman Ruins and Figures
date unknown
oil on canvas
purchased 1961

Although this scene recalls the Bay of Naples it is a *capriccio* (an imaginary composition formed from aspects of different places). This mode of landscape painting was popular among Italian landscape artists during this period because of the number of European tourists on the Grand Tour who wanted a memento of their journey.

7 **Joseph Wright of Derby**
1734–1797 England
Portrait of the Hon Mrs Boyle
date unknown
oil on canvas
Mackelvie Trust Collection,
purchased 1956

Nothing is known of the Honorable Mrs Boyle, but her gentle expression suggests that she has a kind and sensitive nature. The delicate colouring in this portrait, the soft tones of the sitter's face are complemented by the masterly handling of her costume.

8 **Andrea Locatelli**
1695–1741 Italy
A Classical Landscape
date unknown
oil on canvas
purchased 1954

The landscape scenes that wealthy tourists on the Grand Tour of Italy eagerly acquired were a bit like postcards, taken home to remind them of their travels as well as to impress their visitors. Andrea Locatelli was a specialist in the genre, artfully placing classical ruins in an idyllic Roman campagna or countryside.

9 **John Nost Sartorius**
1759–1828 England
Captain O'Kelly's 'Eclipse' 1780
oil on canvas
gift of Moss Davis, 1933

Bred by the Duke of Cumberland, younger brother of George III, Eclipse was eventually bought by Dennis O'Kelly, who coined the famous phrase 'Eclipse first and the rest nowhere'. The fastest horse of his day, Eclipse produced at least 260 direct descendants, including New Zealand's Phar Lap.

10 **Richard Wilson**
c1713–1782 Wales
Hadrian's Villa c1775
oil on canvas
purchased 1957

Constructed for the Emperor Hadrian in 125 AD on the sundrenched plains below Tivoli, these ruins could be any crumbling building in the landscape, with only the title drawing attention to the villa's former glory. Peasants dwelling in its midst seem unaware of its antiquity, for the once noble arches now provide a place for washing to dry in the hot sun.

11 **Joseph (Old) Nollekens**
1702–1748 Flanders, England
At the Fair c1735
oil on copper
purchased 2003

This is one of a set of 18 paintings that Joseph Nollekens created for Earl Tynley of Wanstead, whose house can be seen in the background. The artist recorded all the booths and activities at a typical fair: a masked performance of the Italian *Commedia dell'Arte* can be seen, alongside stalls selling their wares, including paintings, prints and musical instruments.

12 **Hendrik Mommers**
c1623–1693 The Netherlands
Landscape with Peasants
date unknown
oil on canvas
purchased 1961

Hendrik Mommers specialised in market scenes and landscapes. As spectators we cannot be sure if the array of vegetables laid out like a frieze in the foreground of this painting is produce that the man is selling, or whether he has just been paid to take them to market on the women's behalf.

13 **Jacob Jacobsz de Wet**
1640–1697 The Netherlands
Gideon and the Angel
date unknown
oil on panel
gift of Mr & Mrs Morris Yock, 1962

When feeling abandoned in the wilderness, an angel appeared, telling Gideon to place his unleavened cakes on a rock and pour broth over them. The angel struck the cakes with his staff, and they were destroyed by fire, demonstrating to Gideon that the Lord was protecting him (Jeremiah, 6:21 and 6:23).

14 **Michael Dahl**
1659–1743 Sweden, England
King George I
date unknown
oil on canvas
gift of His Excellency the Governor General, Sir Willoughby Norrie, 1957

Thackery wrote of George I: 'A despot in Hanover, he was a moderate ruler in England...He was more than fifty-four years of age when he came amongst us: we took him because he served our turn, we laughed at his uncouth German ways, and sneered at him. He took our loyalty for what it was worth; laid hands on what money he could; kept us assuredly from Popery and wooden shoes ...' He also brought with him his mistresses, secretaries, cooks and African slaves.

15 **Henry Fuseli**
1741–1825 Switzerland, England
The Serpent Tempting Eve (Satan's First Address to Eve) 1802
oil on panel
gift of Sir George Grey, 1887

An illustration to John Milton's *Paradise Lost*, this jaunty male serpent seems enamoured by Eve's seductive form. From the early Renaissance, painters sometimes depicted the snake with a woman's head, reinforcing Eve's supposed responsibility for the Fall of Humanity.

16 **Henry Fuseli**
1741–1825 Switzerland, England
Study for the Three Witches in Macbeth c1783
oil on canvas
purchased with funds from the M A Serra Trust, 1980

This oil sketch epitomises the turning point for Macbeth in Shakespeare's play. A Death's Head moth, barely discernable in the background, reinforces the three witches' message and prefigures the tragedy that is about to unfold.

17 **Tilly Kettle**
1734–1786 England
Portrait of Anne Howard-Vyse 1780
oil on canvas
Mackelvie Trust Collection
purchased 1977

Anne Howard-Vyse wears a fashionable bonnet designed to cover women's voluminous white wigs, which were often wildly decorated with ships, animals, and other paraphernalia. Anne has spurned a wig, and her resolute gaze and natural dark locks suggest that she is a woman not to be taken lightly, rather than a mere follower of fashion.

18 **Henry Raeburn**
1756–1823 Scotland
Portrait of David Cowan c1823
oil on canvas
bequest of the Barbara Coughlan Estate, 2009

Henry Raeburn's attention to gleaming surfaces and fine detail in his paintings may have been sparked by his early training as a jeweller. He was in much demand in Edinburgh, which was a lively centre of artistic and intellectual debate.