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Digitally Reconstructing the Reynolds Retrospective Attended by Jane Austen in 1813: A Report on E-Work-in-Progress

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Digitally Reconstructing the Reynolds Retrospective Attended by Jane Austen in 1813: A Report on E-Work-in-Progress

Keywords

art exhibit, Jane Austen, reconstruction

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On 24 May 1813, Jane Austen visited an important and much-talked-about art exhibit at the British Institution in Pall Mall, London. The show was a retrospective of the works of Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-92), England's celebrated portrait painter. Sadly, no visual record of this show is known to have survived, although it attracted hundreds of visitors daily during its three-month run. Many details of the art exhibit, however, can be reconstructed from the original 1813 "Catalogue of Pictures," a one-shilling pamphlet purchased by visitors as a guide through the three large rooms where hung 141 paintings by Reynolds. Armed with surviving copies of this 1813 pamphlet, narrative accounts in nineteenth-century newspapers and books, and precise architectural measurements of the original exhibit space, a design team at the University of Texas at Austin has begun work on a website that attempts to reconstruct the exhibit as Jane Austen saw it. Hence our website's title: "What Jane Saw."

Why reconstruction this museum show from 1813?

In truth, even if Jane Austen had not attended this public exhibit, it would still be well worth reconstructing. The British Institution's show was a star-studded "first" of great magnitude for the art community and a turning point in the history of modern exhibit practices. The 1813 show amounted to the first commemorative exhibition devoted to a single artist ever staged by an institution. Although Reynolds, who had died a mere twenty-two years earlier, did not yet qualify as an Old Master, he was already hailed as the founder of the British School and celebrated as a model for contemporary artists to emulate. The preface to the exhibit catalogue, written by Richard Payne Knight, treats the work of Sir Joshua Reynolds as a national treasure in order "to call attention generally to British, in preference to Foreign Art" (9). Knight allows that some of Reynolds's paintings are better than others, likening the show to a pedagogical tool for artists and connoisseurs. He also insists upon the show's modernity, hailing "the genuine excellence of modern" artists over the work of their forbearers (9). In light of the coverage it received in the popular press and the London crowds that attended, the British Institution's Reynolds exhibit presaged the modern museum blockbuster.

In the age before the photograph, portraits of the rich and famous were often reproduced by engravers as inexpensive prints. These black and white reproductions circulated Reynolds's images of contemporary celebrities widely, providing pinups to the middling consumer. In this manner, Reynolds's works functioned as the modern photographs of Annie Leibovitz do today, making it hard to say whether he recorded or created celebrity with his art.¹ Recent scholarship, including my own, is beginning to demonstrate Austen's extensive and sustained interest in the celebrity culture of her time.⁴ Among the canvasses in the Reynolds retrospective, the portraits of "abnormally interesting people" whom we now term celebrities offer concrete examples of just how Austen was exposed to London's vibrant culture of celebrity (Roach 1).

Austen's interest in the art of painting is already well known; she famously described her own writing in a metaphor borrowed from miniature painting ("two-inches of ivory").³ For literary historians of Austen, there is the tantalizing possibility of tracking the show's influence to specific allusions in (or influences upon) her fiction. Already, Reynolds arguably makes his own cameo appearance in *Pride and Prejudice*, which was published by Thomas Egerton just a few months earlier—and first advertised on 28 January 1813. In Austen's novel, a Mrs. Reynolds tours the heroine through Pemberley's portrait "gallery," providing a verbal portrait of Mr. Darcy

that alters prior opinion and turns the story.⁴ Although Mrs. Reynolds remains a minor character, the information she offers is the lynchpin in the novel's central romance.

Ultimately, it is Austen herself who playfully connects art galleries with her characters in *Pride and Prejudice* in a letter to her sister Cassandra, dated 24 May 1813, where she writes of that day's plans to visit several exhibits. In the letter, she turns these visits into a virtual search for portraits of "M^{rs} Bingley" and "M^{rs} Darcy." She writes being "very well pleased . . . with a small portrait of M^{rs} Bingley, excessively like her" in the Exhibition in Spring Gardens, but that she has not yet found "one of her Sister . . . M^{rs} Darcy." Although she declares that there is "no chance of her in the collection of Sir Joshua Reynolds's Paintings which is now shewing in Pall Mall, & which we are also to visit," she jokes, "I dare say M^{rs} D. will be in Yellow" (212).

Although our site is by no means complete, I have been urged to share the early story of its genesis and hint at its utility to the study of Jane Austen. The problems faced during the site's initial phase of development may interest others eager to contextualize women's writing through digital reconstructions of important historic spaces. As architectural design tools such as Google's free SketchUp are adopted by scholars of the long eighteenth century, it becomes possible to imagine elegant and historically accurate digital re-constructions of a range of cultural spaces now lost to time: houses, parks, markets, shops, theatres, as well as galleries. Such reconstructions can enhance our understanding of the cultural practices that generated, and are recorded by, the literary texts that we study. Although academic investment in Second Life, the online virtual world, appears to be waning, historic spatial reconstructions may yet prove the next big trend in the digital humanities.

Historical details and architectural facts

The Reynolds exhibit at the British Institution's so-called Pall Mall Picture Galleries opened on 10 May 1813 and closed on 14 August 1813. Official gallery hours were "Ten till Five," although these were extended during the busy opening by two hours on either side of that window (*Morning Post*). The Institution hired extra attendants for the duration and installed railings to better protect the valuable pictures from expected crowds. The Prince Regent was the guest of honor at a red-carpet opening reception on the evening of the 8th of May, which was attended by celebrities such as Lord Byron and Sarah Siddons (who could admire her younger self hanging in the gallery). A posh dinner at Willis's, formerly Almack's, followed, to which the guests walked under a protective awning. During the show's early weeks, it proved so popular that it drew up to 800 visitors per day. Candle-lit evening openings at irregular intervals during the three-month run further attracted "much fashionable company" (Haskell 56). The Royal family enjoyed a private visit on 29 June 1813, with newspapers reporting that the party "all appeared highly delighted" and lingered in the gallery "about an hour" (*Morning Chronicle*).

The address of the British Institution was No. 52 Pall Mall. These same premises had housed Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery some years prior. Although this address still exists today, the building has been extensively redesigned both in interior layout and exterior façade, so could not serve us as an architectural template.⁵ Luckily, Thomas Rowlandson records the interior space in 1808:



Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827), *British Institution, Pall Mall*, 1808. Aquatint on paper. “Pub. 1st April 1808, at R. Ackermann’s Repository of Arts.”

And in 1860, historian Thomas Smith recounts how an early visitor to the British Institute experienced its exhibits—down to the three attendants who took tickets and umbrellas. His description provided us with the exact dimensions of the interior rooms:

The Gallery consists of three Rooms. The length of the North Room is 41 feet; that of the Middle Room, 36 feet 9 inches; and that of the South Room, 36 feet 11 inches. Each Room is 23 feet 7 inches wide. The Rooms are divided by 14-inch walls at each end of the Middle Room; these walls are pierced by arches 8 feet wide at the base, and measuring 11 feet from the floor to the crown of the arch. The height of the Rooms from the floor to the top of the cornice is 17 feet; the coping springing from the cornice rises about 7 feet to the base of the sky-lights, projecting into the Rooms at the sides about 4 feet, and about 8 feet at the ends, which has been found to afford ample protection to the pictures hanging on the walls. . . .

The side walls, North and South ends, and North and South faces of the dividing walls, present more than 4000 square feet available for hanging and arranging the pictures. (19-20)

Smith's account of the generic visitor's experience, which starts in the "vestibule," may also come closest to a narrative record of Jane Austen's visit:

In this vestibule the money-taker, and the attendant who has the charge of all umbrellas, sticks, parasols, &c. are stationed.

Having paid due attention to these officials, the visitor now crosses an inner vestibule, mounts a few steps, and reaches a landing, where a third official takes the cheque which has just been received from the money-taker, and supplies a Catalogue if required. A flight of fifteen stone steps, eight feet wide, covered with matting, introduces him into the centre of the middle room of the Gallery. If he now proceeds to the end of the North Room, which is directly before him, and turns round, looking southwards, he will be greeted with a *coup d'oeil* of the vista of the three rooms through the arches, more striking than can be readily imagined. He will then be at leisure to examine the pictures in detail, commencing with No. 1 at the North end of the North Room. (Smith 19)

Just so, our website encourages visitors to use the 1813 original *Catalogue* to guide their way through the paintings on display—starting with the whole length portrait of George III, which in the Reynolds show was "No. 1" at the top of the North Room.

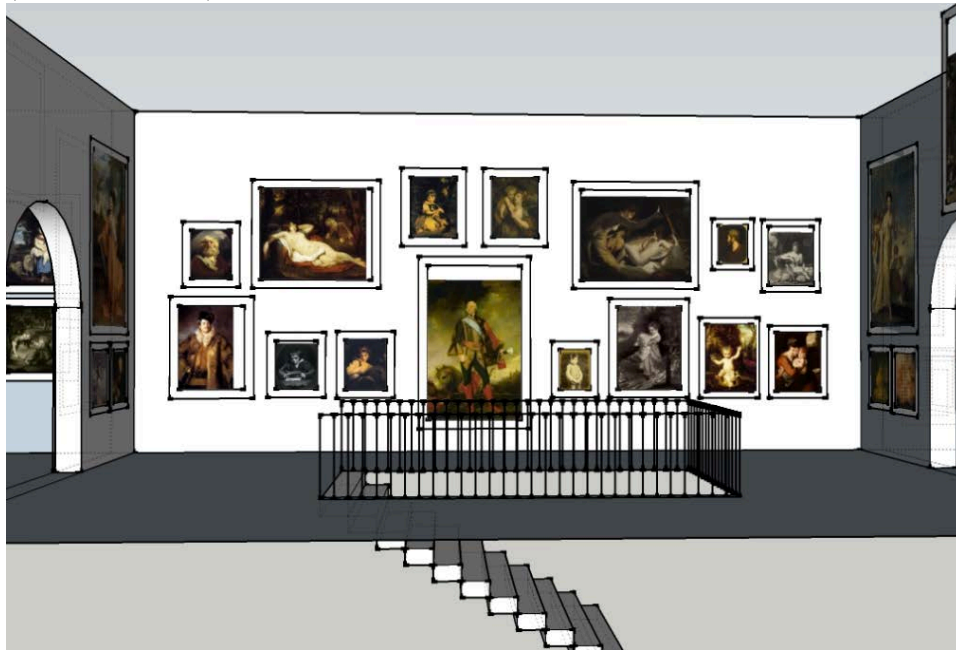
North Room.				Dimensions.				Proprietors.
				Height.		Width.		
<i>North End.</i>				Feet	In.	Feet	In.	
1	Portrait of his Majesty, W. L.	1781	9	0	6	0		The Royal Academy.
2	Portrait of Mrs. Siddons as the Tragic Muse	1784	7	4	4	9		William Smith, Esq. M. P.
3	Piping boy		2	9	2	1		Marchioness of Thomond.
4	Sleeping girl		2	6	2	1		Samuel Rogers, Esq.
5	Boy with cabbage nets	1790	2	6	2	1		Duke of Dorset.
NORTH ROOM.— <i>East Side.</i>								
6	Portrait of Lord Richard Cavendish		7	9	4	0		Duke of Devonshire

The Austens, like all visitors, could purchase the one-shilling guide to steer them through the exhibit's "North," "Middle", and "South" rooms where hung the 141 paintings. We structured our e-exhibit in accordance with this sequential list of pictures. The 20-page booklet, after a lengthy membership list and Knight's laudatory preface, identifies each picture by title and owner. Unfortunately, unlike old books and their bound title pages, paintings often lose or lack physical labels. Many of the original titles assigned to the several thousand canvasses known to have been painted by Reynolds have changed with shifts in ownership. Whereas the exhibit catalogue identifies most pictures simply by the names or aristocratic titles of the sitters, marriages and promotions had already affected some names by 1813. For example, canvas No. 21 in the 1813 show, "Portraits of Lady Lucas and Lady Grantham" is now known as "The

Ladies Amabel and Mary Jemima York.” Relying upon the excellent catalogue raisonné of Reynolds’s work by David Mannings, we were able to identify all the canvasses in the show by their current titles and known location or owner. These paintings are now spread out over such a wide geographical area that reconstituting what Austen saw in real space and time seems impossible. This made a digital exhibit even more appealing.

Desire for accuracy and methodology

Relative sizing for this virtual reconstruction has been determined from exact measurements in the historical record. The scaled height and width for each painting correspond to the measurements listed in the original exhibit catalogue (confirmed by Mannings), while architectural dimensions have been taken from Thomas Smith’s 1860 account. The design team fed these precise dimensions into Google SketchUp, which generated templates that allowed us to hang the individual walls of our e-gallery. This is what a SketchUp modeling template for one (still unfinished) wall looks like:



The SketchUp templates then served as the basis for hand-drawn sketches of each of the rooms, like this one below, into which the images of the paintings are digitally reinserted:

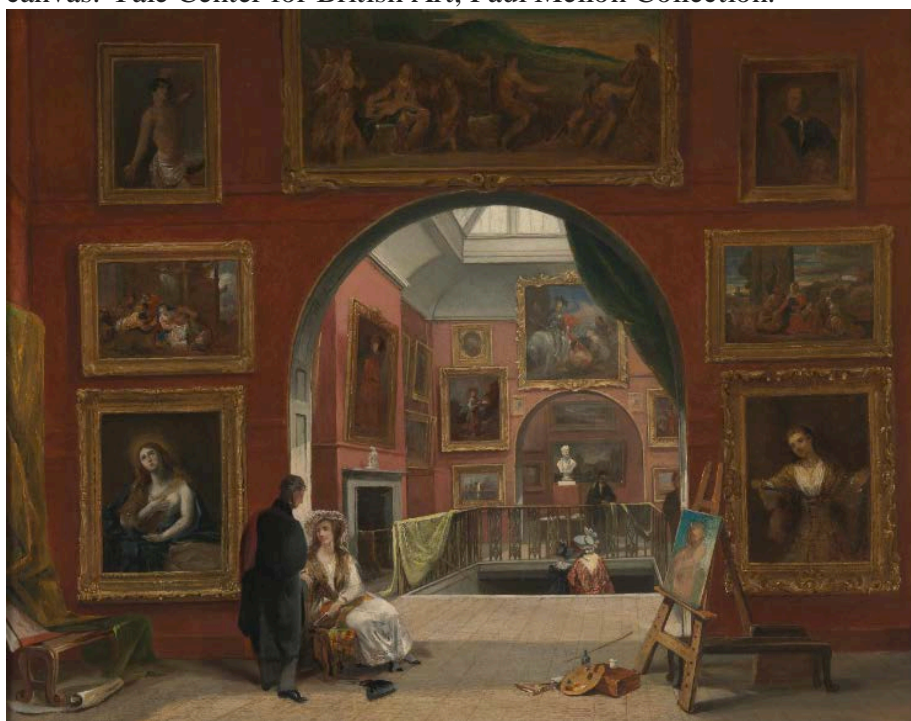


As you can see, we styled our website’s final look after the Rowlandson print from 1808, allowing a near-Regency aesthetic to modify the all-too-modern appearance of our digital tool. The above sneak peek, in fact, duplicates the precise perspective of the Rowlandson. Using either the original catalogue or a site map, a visitor to the website will be able to navigate to any desired exhibit wall. We intend to digitally reproduce the entire exhibit space, allowing the viewer to browse any room, wall, or picture of interest. Clicking on individual paintings will then open up a lightbox with more information about the sitter or scene as well as points of connectivity with Austen’s work.

We’ve struggled with seemingly small details, including whether or not to include in our e-gallery a guardrail mentioned in the historical record. On 4 May 1813, tighter security measures were deemed necessary to protect the borrowed Reynolds pictures from expected crowds: it “was ordered that the Rail round the Room be brought six inches further into the Room, & raised to the height of three feet.”⁶ We decided not to include this three-foot-high rail that would run like a dark line through the paintings in our e-gallery, obscuring the views of the canvasses for the e-audience when the original visitor would simply have stepped up to the low guardrail to peer over it. Similarly, we fussed over how historically accurate and varied our picture frames should be. We ultimately decided to hint at variety, using details merely as helpmates to the viewer’s imagination and not as definitive historical recreations of specific framing styles. How were the paintings attached to the walls? Rowlandson’s print, as well as the later canvasses of the interior space by Davis and Woolmer, suggested to us that the British Institution likely hung paintings from hooks, rather than suspend them from picture rails by wires, so no visible wires in our gallery.



John Scarlett Davis (1804-1845), *The Interior of the British Institution Gallery*, 1829. Oil on canvas. Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.



Alfred Joseph Woolmer (1805-1892), *Interior of the British Institution (Old Master Exhibition, Summer 1832)*, 1833. Oil on canvas, Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Collection.

Over the show's three-month run, from 10 May to 14 August 1813, the paintings on exhibit were altered slightly in number and arrangement. The show closed briefly in the middle of June for a reorganization that accommodated late arrivals. The multiple editions of the exhibit *Catalogue*

(Mannings mentions four) record these changes, with the total pictures increasing to 143 in later versions. Since Austen saw the show ten days after it opened, allowing for a few early tweaks but not the June expansion, our website honors the second edition of the *Catalogue* as its virtual copy-text—which still shows only 141 paintings.⁷

The *Catalogue* duly records which painting hung on which wall in any specific room and even indicates approximate neighbors through its chronological numbering system. *Catalogue* order does not, of course, reveal precisely how the pictures were hung—above, below, or beside its chronological neighbor, etc. In arranging the pictures on any given wall, we must curate the virtual show by making educated guesses about relative placement, balance, and alignment. Hanging the paintings on our virtual walls took much longer than expected. While some walls virtually fell into place of their own accord, with large canvasses or royal portraits clamoring for centrality, other walls defied any semblance of balance. Knowing that our own post-salon aesthetic and our familiarity with modern museum practices risked an anachronistic wall aesthetic, we took our visual cues from surviving contemporary images that show exhibits and art galleries both before and after 1813.⁸

The Rowlandson print of 1808 determined our site's overall look and color palette, yet shows more generous spacing on the British Institute's walls than the sheer number of Reynolds canvasses allowed for the 1813 show. Although the Reynolds retrospective contains 15% fewer pictures than the 167 canvasses exhibited in the same space in 1805, under the aegis of Boydell's Shakespeare Gallery, we nonetheless assumed that, given contemporary models, the hang would prove dense and crowded. After all, at the Royal Academy, pictures were hung with frames touching, filling all available space from baseboard to ceiling. The elegant Reynolds show, however, proved more sparsely hung than these other venues, perhaps influencing modern museum practices in yet another way.

Provocatively for a commemorative one-man show, Reynolds's work was displayed thematically rather than chronologically, although dates of the pictures were provided in the catalogue. "Everything suggests," observes art historian Francis Haskell, "that the paintings were hung in accordance with social protocol, combined with the need for symmetry and a generally pleasing effect" (Haskell 54). Members of the royal family are indeed, as protocol demands, given central placement in every room. The "portrait of His Majesty," George III, is aptly labeled number one in the catalogue, marking the king as the formal starting point of the exhibit. Reynolds's portrait of Queen Charlotte hangs directly opposite, on the south wall in the South Room—allowing the royal couple to gaze at one another from the far ends of the gallery. Between them they neatly survey, as it were, gallery visitors in the same manner in which they might have hosted a grand dinner party.

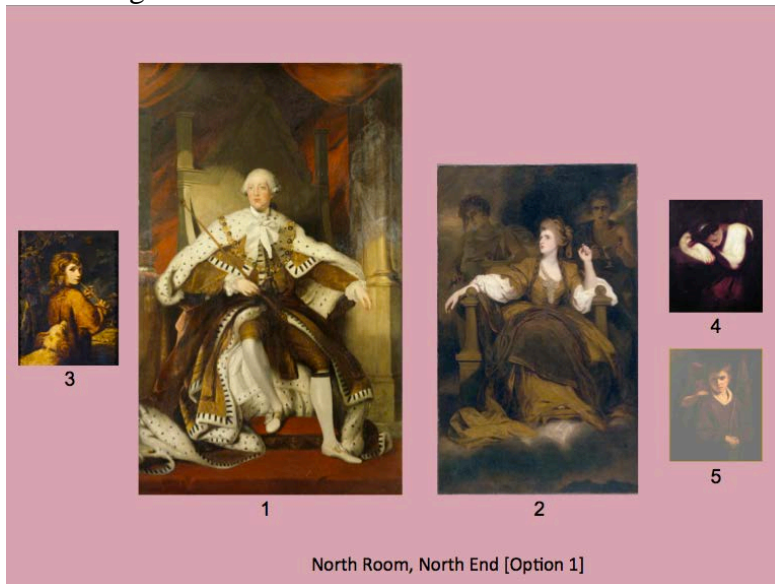
But even such obvious concessions to protocol allowed for strong interpretive gestures from the original curators. For example, the striking juxtaposition on the starting wall of whole length portraits of George III and Sarah Siddons, seated dramatically beside him on her own throne, allows the celebrity actress to, well, steal the show. This particular portrait, in which Siddons strikes a pose reminiscent of the Prophet Isaiah on the Sistine Chapel ceiling, was extravagantly praised by contemporary critics and remains, arguably, Reynolds's best-known work. The prominence of this portrait in the show befits the legend that Reynolds, whose signature appears

on the edge of the dress, told Siddons that he had resolved to go down to posterity on the hem of her garment. Two years into a Regency that reconciled England to the reality of a mad king, Siddons is positioned as the reigning celebrity of the retrospective, even if propriety demands that the-king-in-name-only take precedence as canvas number one. Siddons's reputation for queenly roles (especially Lady Macbeth) and her conscious imitation of Queen Charlotte in a cultivated public persona further inform her prominence beside the king.⁹ Siddons's proximity to the king's body, as it were, risks becoming piquant in view of the three small "fancy pictures," a popular genre at the time, that accompany them on the wall. These three children ("Piping boy," "Sleeping girl," and "Boy with cabbage nets") make for a visual family grouping, complete with dog.¹⁰

Austen scholars, including Penny Gay, Jocelyn Harris, and Paula Byrne have already argued for the prominence of celebrity actresses in Austen's worldview. Might Siddons's reigning placement in the show be further evidence of the theatre's prominence in the celebrity culture of Austen's time? Other famous actors are also present in the retrospective. For example, in this same starting room, Reynolds's famous portrait of David Garrick (No. 32, "Garrick – between Tragedy and Comedy") hangs centrally on a nearby wall, while Frances Abington suggestively bites her thumb as Miss Prue in a smaller canvas in the south room (No. 103 "Portrait of Mrs. Abington").¹¹ But Siddons, placed beside the king at the "top" of the gallery, is allowed to outshine her thespian colleagues.

Room for interpretation

Because of her presence on the starting wall, Siddons's prominent hold over the show is indisputable, no matter how precisely the original curators hung the five canvasses on the North wall of the North Room. Nonetheless, there are several possible arrangements, each of which give a slightly different emphasis to her presence. We sweated over the options. I want to show them here to demonstrate the nature of our curatorial choices, even if the numerical sequence of the catalogue and the canvas measurements restricted those choices to but a few.

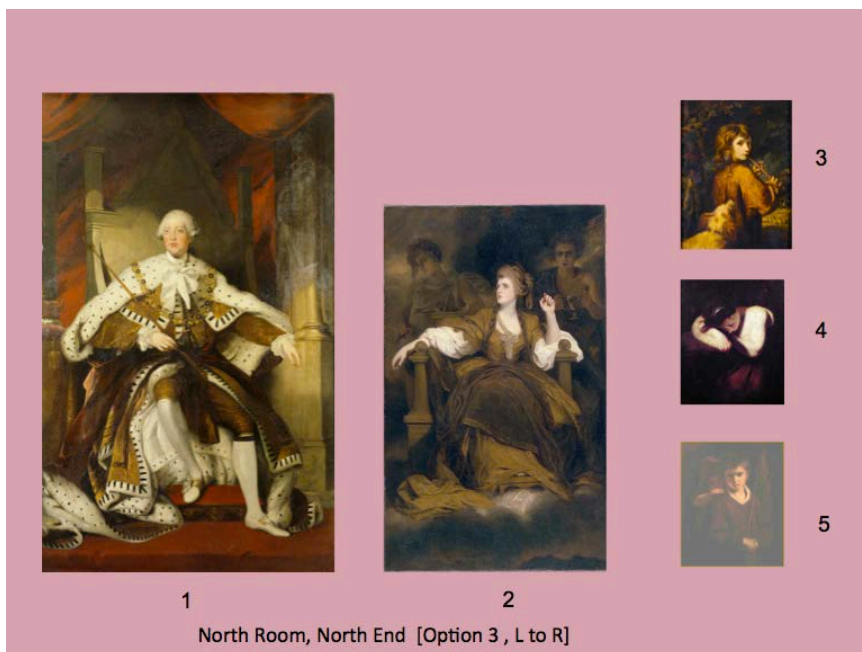


Option 1: We started with this approximate layout as the most balanced choice for the wall—and one that showed off Siddons's dominance. Yet, it breaks away from the left-to-right numerical

sequencing that appears to govern the walls in the show and does not match the opposite end of the gallery where Queen Charlotte hangs in the perfect center of the far South wall, flanked by two full-length portraits of prominent men. Surely king and queen needed to hang symmetrically across the gallery space—each in the precise middle?

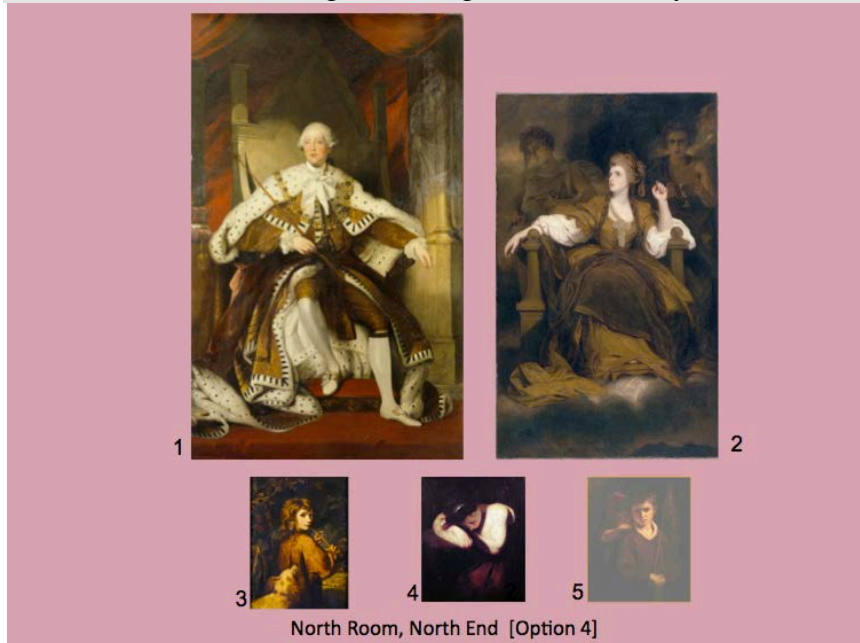


Option 2: This is the option that we turned to once we realized that numerical sequence and symmetry with Queen Charlotte demanded that the king be placed high and in the exact middle. It shifts Siddons to one side, making her less visible through the arches of the gallery rooms than visitor interest might have warranted.



Option 3: A strict left-to-right and top-to-bottom progression through the numbered pictures

suggested this third arrangement. This, however, shifts the king left, breaking the symmetry of the exhibit while allowing Siddons greatest centrality and dominance.



North Room, North End [Option 4]

Option 4: Given that on the opposite wall Queen Charlotte hangs above a small landscape (and her fellow wall-mates above small portraits of other people) this arrangement allowed layout symmetry between North to South ends but has the Queen facing not just her husband through the arches but Siddons as well.

While pondering our choices, we realized that the original curators who hung the 1813 show had to have made similar calculations about balancing visual symmetry with social signal. Artistic symmetry, celebrity prominence, and social precedence compete for dominance on every wall.

Not only did Siddons attend the opening reception as a celebrity guest, she continued to attract crowds during Austen's adulthood—even though she was then in her 60s. In fact, drawn by Siddons's fame, Jane and her brother Henry “planned to go to the theatre” on 22 April 1811 “to see Mrs Siddons but,” Deirdre Le Faye reports, they “are told she will not be appearing and so give up their seats.” Unfortunately for Jane Austen, Siddons “performs after all” that night (Le Faye 400). Austen must have been hugely disappointed, especially since Siddons retired the following year. This makes Austen's encounter with Siddons on canvas in 1813 as good a view of the actress as she'd ever manage. Her niece Fanny Knight did see the famous actress perform on 12 May 1812, when she “[d]ined in haste & went to Covent Garden to see Mrs. Siddons in Belvidera” (Le Faye 423). In *Mansfield Park*, of course, Austen makes the staging of a play a central part of her story.

As the example of Siddons suggests, in a website exhibit, each portrait can become a lens into Austen's world—a contact point with the themes of her art or experiences of her life. In a classroom setting, a portrait of King George III can launch an explanation of the Regency, while that of Sarah Siddons can gloss the importance of the theatre or the early cult of celebrity. The metadata of the website will list, therefore, these types of intersections with Austen's work and life for use in the undergraduate classroom.

Funding, launch date, and permissions

The “What Jane Saw” e-project has strong institutional support from Liberal Arts Instructional Technology Services at the University of Texas at Austin, who are providing all the technical know-how that goes into making a handsome and user-friendly website. The brand that is “Jane Austen” doubtless opened the doors to this support. Sir Joshua Reynolds, although another big name, is not generally as famous as Jane Austen. Hollywood’s continued interest in this female author trickles down to the practical side of even digital innovation. I became keenly appreciative of Austen’s star status when, at the close of a high-energy planning meeting, one meta-data expert enthusiastically quipped, “when I tell my mother-in-law that I’m working on this Jane Austen project, she might finally stop thinking that I’m wasting my life with all this computer stuff.” Ok, so he was joking. Nonetheless, that, of all the show’s high-profile visitors, Jane Austen was a witness to this 1813 event focuses the appeal for everyone working on the reconstruction project. That the website will be a focal point for a planned “big tent” undergraduate course on Austen open to all majors is another practical aspect in favor of institutional support. As digital humanities funding becomes increasingly competitive, projects where the rationale rests upon lesser-knowns become harder to sell. Spatial reconstructions, by offering multiple contact points with history, might corral the reputational capital of a number of authors or historical personages—and even cross disciplinary boundaries.

Although some of these images are already in the public domain, permissions need to be arranged to eventually permit the hoped-for public access to the website. We trust that the owners of the paintings will recognize the pedagogical purpose of our e-exhibit. Although the internet allows unprecedented access to visual images, including many of these 141 canvasses that are now dispersed throughout the globe in museums and private collections, we respect copyright restrictions. While the site remains under construction, we’ve used images of individual paintings freely available on the internet as placeholders. Some paintings behind passwords in private collections are currently represented by their contemporary reproductions as black-and-white prints. Color aside, these engravings often cropped or adjusted the portraits, so may not accurately render the canvas image. Color and tones, of course, can differ greatly for e-images of even the same painting. Where more than one copy of the same painting is known to exist (Mannings records how Reynolds’s studio occasionally made multiples for different clients), we’ve selected the best available image, regardless of which Reynolds copy hung in the gallery in the 1813 show. Funds allowing, we hope that good scans of the precise material objects can, in time, replace such visual approximations.

Our goal is that “What Jane Saw” may be opened to the public to celebrate the 200th anniversary of Austen’s visit to these galleries, namely on 24 May 2013.

Acknowledgments:

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Lawrence, Sarah Kianovsky, and Molly Schwartzburg, for their help and advice with the site's data and design, and Heather McPherson and Karen Valihora for their welcome improvements to an earlier draft of this article.

Notes

1. For a discussion of Reynolds and the emergent cult of celebrity see, Martin Postle. For a wider discussion of emergent celebrity culture in the deep eighteenth century, see Joseph Roach.
2. See for example, Janine Barchas, “Hell-Fire Jane”; Jocelyn Harris, and Douglas Murray.
3. A few important articles that have explored sister-arts moments in Austen’s fictions, or her taste in art, include: Lance Bertelsen, Alistair M. Duckworth, Christine Kenyon Jones, and Peter Sabor.
4. For an editorial gloss of this prominent allusion to Reynolds, see Vivien Jones. In the wake of Jones, see also Janine Barchas, “Artistic Names in Austen’s Fiction” and Karen Valihora., especially chapter 7.
5. The British Institute was disbanded in 1867.
6. British Institute Minutes, 7 May 1813, RC.V.13 vol. 3 in National Art Library, Victoria and Albert Museum. Quoted in Konstantinos Stefanis. See his note 44.
<http://www.tate.org.uk/research/tateresearch/tatepapers/>
7. Our copy of the exhibit *Catalogue* came from the Sterling and Francine Clark Art Institute, Williamstown, Massachusetts.
8. For samples of arrangement styles, see Haskell. For the most comprehensive reconstruction of how pictures were displayed at the Royal Academy, see David Solkin. For comparison, it may also be useful to look at Francis Wheatley’s watercolor of the *Interior of the Shakespeare Gallery* (1790) at the Victoria & Albert Museum [<http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O77440/watercolour/>] and also Thomas W. Gaehtgens and Louis Marchesano.
9. For detailed discussion of Siddons’s self-fashioning and her relationship with Queen Charlotte, see Laura Engel, esp. 36-48, and Felicity Nussbaum.
10. A few biographies of Siddons suggest actual royal connections, but the facts are thin. She was a known favorite of the Prince Regent, who became godfather to her son, George Siddons. His entry into the Indian Civil Service may in all likelihood have been smoothed by his mother’s elite associations.
11. Although Reynolds also painted an elegant full-length portrait of Abington as the comic muse, it was not part of the 1813 show. See the “Text” volume of Mannings, 55-57.

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