

GEORGIAN DELIGHTS  
AND  
REGENCY SPLENDOR

ENGLAND  
OCTOBER 13-20, 1997



Arts to Life

Jessica Deutsch

**Georgian Delights and Regency Splendor  
Shropshire, England,  
October 13-20, 1997**

A handsome house, a serpentine river, a wood, a Grecian temple and to be Lord of all he surveyed - such was the aspiration of any newly arrived 18th Century English country gentleman. It announced his status to his neighbor and defined his place in polite society. Taste, elegance, a refined eye and domestic bliss were further attributes of belonging as castles turned to villas and the boundaries narrowed between aristocrats and new industrialists.

This was an age of leisure and pleasure, of delight in the natural world, interest in the scientific, and joy in the luxuries of what money could buy. In a similar atmosphere of leisure and from the pleasure of a rural retreat of an elegant country house hotel, this seven-day program will explore the relationship between 18th century society and its arts. Centered in **Shropshire** and **Staffordshire**, where Wedgwood, one of the greatest businessmen of the age, built his factory, participants will visit National Trust and private homes, gardens and collections. Study of architecture and the interior will range from the early Georgian classicism of Palladio to the Regency exuberance of Robert Adam and John Nash. Collection studies will focus on domestic production of fine silver, furniture, glass and porcelain; French furniture; acquisitions from the Grand Tour; and ancestral portraits and documents dating back to the 12th century. A remarkable 20th century private collection, previously unopened to the public, allows for a day of connoisseurship study of the major cabinetmakers of the time.

A period dinner, the rituals of tea, a musical party, an 18th century dance and masquerade, a talk by the costume designer for *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice* enable us to further savor the period. Visions of the people who once strolled in parklands wrought by Lancelot 'Capability' Brown and Humphry Repton is evoked with open-air tours through **Attingham Park** and **Shugborough** allowing us to see why the English landscape garden became one of the great arts of the 18th century.

**Core Faculty**

*John Wilton-Ely*, Professor Emeritus in the History of Art, The University of Hull; *Gaye Blake-Roberts*, Curator, The Wedgwood Museum; *Ulrich Leben*, Deputy Keeper, The Rothschild Collection, Waddesdon Manor; *Tony Herbert*, Lecturer and Botanist; *John Bright*, Costume Designer; *John King*, Silver Specialist; *Gareth Williams*, Architectural Historian and Furniture Specialist; *Paul Stamper*, Author, The Historic Gardens of Shropshire; *Graham Child*, Senior Expert and Director of English Furniture, Sotheby's, London; *Jessica Deutsch*, Director, Arts to Life and former Director, Sotheby's Public Programs, New York.

**Highlights of the Program**

**Monday October 13th**

Transfers from Manchester Airport or Stoke-on-Trent station to **Rookery Hall**, near Nantwich, where participants will stay for the duration of the program. The luxurious hotel once an 18th century small chateau is situated in 38 acres of beautiful gardens. Convene in late afternoon as *John Wilton-Ely* and *Gaye Blake-Roberts* open the curtain on the 18th century, discussing industrialization, social change and country house building. Dinner in hotel.

**Tuesday October 14th**

We step into the age of the Georgian landowner at **Weston Park**, the Palladian style home of the Earl of Bradford, nestled in a gem-like landscape by 'Capability' Brown and James Paine. A gourmet lunch in the main dining room hung with family portraits by Van Dyck, Reynolds and Holbein is followed with a lecture and study with *Ulrich Leben* on the relationship between French and English furniture in the 18th century, and on Gobelins and Beauvois tapestries; porcelain with *Gaye Blake-Roberts*; and the Garden with *Tony Herbert*. *John Wilton-Ely* prepares us for subsequent study of the Regency period.

### Wednesday October 15th

A day of "upstairs downstairs" with *Gaye Blake-Roberts* as we visit the **Wedgwood Museum**, enjoy a demonstration in the factory and explore the variety of wares manufactured for polite society, then and now. Lunch in the old kitchen at **Shugborough**, the 18th century ancestral home of the fifth Earl of Lichfield. Free time to meander on the estate sets the tone for an 18th century evening. *The Earl of Harrowby* greets us at **Sandon Hall**, his family seat since 1776. Collection study is followed by a Georgian dinner. Performance of a vignette "A Lady at her Boudoir", and discussion with *John Bright*, costume designer for *Sense and Sensibility* and *Pride and Prejudice*, take us to the genteel upstairs world of the Georgian lady complete with petticoats, wigs, scents, paints and fans.

### Thursday October 16th

The interior of **Attingham Park**, built in 1782 and bequeathed to The National Trust by the 8th Lord Berwick, presents the full splendor of Regency decoration. Exclusive entree allows for the opening of the silver vaults for a hands-on session with *John King* on major 18th century silversmiths including Paul Storr; study of the interior including John Nash's picture gallery with *Gareth Williams*; glass and ceramics with *Gaye Blake-Roberts*; restoration with property manager *Belinda Cousens*; and the enjoyment of Humphry Repton's beautiful parklands with *Tony Herbert*. Firelight supper in the Stewards room and an 18th century musical recital.

### Friday October 17th

Adorning the hills of his ancestral estate, Sir Rowland Hill created at **Hawkstone Park** the most celebrated 'sublime' landscape of 18th century Europe. Grottos encrusted with shells, ornamental walkways, magical follies and cliffs with dizzying vistas make for a memorable morning walk with *Paul Stamper*. Afternoon visit to **Chillington Hall**, private home of the Giffard family since 1178. Our hosts will take us into early 18th century Baroque rooms with delicate plasterwork, and share the later more monumental work of Sir John Soane. Visit to **Ironbridge Gorge Museum**, candlelight dinner at **Rosehill House**, the restored home of the Darby family, Quaker ironmasters.

### Saturday October 18th

In-depth study at the private collection of Mr. Edwin Cohen. Here we explore work by outstanding 18th century craftsmen and designers. The variety and scope of this collection, assembled over a forty year period, allows us to see why from 1790-1840 cabinetmakers produced some of the most inventive and decorative furniture that has ever been made. Led by *Graham Child*, we will look at techniques and materials; examine fine laquerwork; gilding, veneering and marquetry; identify exotic woods; and discuss restoration. *Gaye Blake-Roberts* discusses other aspects of the collection, embracing paintings of the Grand Tour period. Evening at **Longner Hall**, hereditary home of the Burton family from 1342, where Mr. and Mrs. Burton invite us to dinner.

### Sunday October 19th

The Palladian Mansion at **Tatton Park**, seat of the Egerton family, designed by two generations of Wyatt architects and its splendid gardens, is the focus for an afternoon with *Gareth Williams* and *Paul Stamper*. *Elizabeth Bromley Davenport* greets us at **Capesthorpe Hall**, home of Lt. Col. Sir Walther Bromley-Davenport whose lineage dates back to medieval times. A tour of the collections is followed by a gala masked Regency dinner and performance of the waltz in empire costume.

### Monday October 20th

Breakfast in the print room and summation. Transfers to Manchester airport or train station.

### Fee, Registration and Tour Conditions

The fee for the program, exclusive of airfare, is \$4,250 per person based on double occupancy with a single supplement of \$350. This includes 7 nights at Rookery Hall (13th to 20th), all meals, transport by luxury coach, studies, special events and program materials. Transfers of participants to and from Manchester airport and Stoke on Trent train station are included. As Rookery Hall is a converted chateau the rooms, which are all top quality, vary in size. They will be allocated in order of receipt of registration. The program will be limited to twenty-two participants. **DEPOSIT:** A deposit of \$1,500 per person is required to effect reservation