Diploma Lecture Series 2013
Revolution to Romanticism: European Art and Culture 1750-1850

Ruins and Romanticism

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Lecture summary:

Ruins are compelling ways of contemplating the passage of time, the rise and fall of civilisations, and destruction and decay. This lecture examines the fascination for ruins in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth century and their representation in painting. It examines the various meanings of ruins in art and their changing depiction in response to the re-evaluation of time, history and experience generated by the French Revolution.

Slide list:

2. The John Soane Museum, London
3. Johan Zoffany, Charles Townley’s Library, No. 7 Park Street, Westminster, 1781-83, oil on canvas, Townley Hall Art Gallery and Museum
4. Francesco Piranesi after Louis Jean Desprez, *The Gate of Herculaneum* (called "L’entrée de Pompeii"); classical ruins with figures and animals, c.1758-1804
6. Ruins of Umm al-Jimāl; vaults of a Roman basilica, 2nd century AD, Jordan
7. Zagorz Monastery, Poland
8. The ruins of Tanuf, Hajar Mountains, Oman
9. Roman ruins at Jerash, Jordan
10. Roman forum, Rome
11. Andrea Mantegna, *St Sebastian*, 1457-59, oil on poplar wood, 68 x 30 cm, Kunsthistorisches Museum, Vienna
13. Giovanni Paolo Pannini, *Gallery of views of ancient Rome*, 1758, oil on canvas, 2.31 x 3.03m
14. Giovanni Paolo Pannini, *Gallery with views of modern Rome*, 1758, oil on canvas, 2.31 x 3.03m
17. Hubert Robert, *Landscape with aqueduct*, 1767, oil on canvas
18. Robert, *The Fountains*, 1787-88, oil on canvas, 255.3 x 221.2 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago; Robert, *The Old Temple*, 1787-88, oil on canvas, 255 x 223.2 cm, The Art Institute of Chicago
19. Robert, *Fire at the Opera of the Palais-Royal, View from the Louvre*, 1781, oil on canvas, Bibliothèque de l'Opera Garnier, Paris
20. Hubert Robert, Demolition of the Houses on the Bridge of Notre Dame, 1786, oil on canvas, 73x140 cm
21. Hubert Robert, *The Bastille in the first days of its demolition*, 1789, oil on canvas, 77 x 114 cm, Musée Carnavalet, Paris
22. Revolutionary calendar and decimal clock
23. Hubert Robert, *Project for the Arrangement of the Grande Galerie of the Louvre*, 1796, oil on canvas, 46 x 55 cm, Louvre

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24. Hubert Robert, *Imaginary view of the Long Gallery of the Louvre*, 1796, oil on canvas, 115 x 145 cm, Louvre; Hubert Robert, *Imaginary view of the Long Gallery of the Louvre in ruins*, 1796, oil on canvas, 114 x 146 cm, Musée du Louvre
25. Hubert Robert, *The long gallery of the Louvre*, 1796, oil on canvas, 115 x 145 cm, Louvre
*26. Hubert Robert, *Imaginary view of the Grande Galerie of the Louvre in ruins*, 1796, oil on canvas, 114 x 146 cm, Musée du Louvre
27. Henry Fuseli, *The Artist Moved by the Grandeur of Antique Fragments*, 1778-79, red chalk on sepia wash, 41.5 x 35.5cm, Kunsthau, Zürich
31. Karl Blechen, *Gothic Church in Ruins*, 1826, oil on canvas, New Masters Gallery, Dresden
32. J.M.W. Turner, *Tintern Abbey: West Front and Interior of Tintern Abbey*, both c.1794, watercolour and graphite
33. JMW Turner, *The Ruined Abbey of Marmoutier, near Tours*, c.1826-8, Watercolour, gouache and pen and watercolour on paper, 140 x 192 mm
34. JMW Turner, *Sunlight on Ruins*, c.1820-30, Watercolour on paper, Tate
35. JMW Turner, *Moonlight among Ruins*, c.1820. Watercolour on paper, Tate

Reference:

Nina Dubin, Futures and Ruins: Eighteenth-Century Paris and the Art of Hubert Robert (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2010)


Ruins in British Romantic Art from Wilson to Turner (Nottingham Castle Museum, 1988)


Hubert Robert, *Roman Ruins*, 1760, oil on canvas, Worcester Art Museum, Worcester, Massachusetts
Hubert Robert, *Demolition of the Houses on the Bridge of Notre Dame*, 1786, oil on canvas, 73 x 140 cm

Hubert Robert, *Imaginary view of the Grande Galerie of the Louvre in ruins*, 1796, oil on canvas, 114 x 146 cm, Musée du Louvre
Joseph Gandy, Bank of England in ruins, 1830, watercolour, John Soane Museum
JMW Turner, *Interior of Tintern Abbey*, c.1794, watercolour and graphite, Tate