

# Hogarth & The Art of Noise

24 May - 1 September 2019



## First exhibition to explore the use of sound in William Hogarth's art is staged at London's Foundling Museum

Opening in May 2019, the Foundling Museum stages the first exhibition dedicated to the way William Hogarth (1697-1764) used sound in his art. *Hogarth & The Art of Noise* reveals Hogarth's innovative use of sound, introducing audiences to a previously unexplored but important aspect of his art, and further cementing Hogarth's legacy as the 18th century's most original artist.

Famed for his social commentary, no painter before or since has made such overt use of sound as a way of communicating a narrative. Taking as its focus the artist's masterpiece, *The March of the Guards to Finchley*, the exhibition unpacks the painting's rich social, cultural and political commentary, from the Jacobite uprising and the situation for chimney boys, to the origins of God Save the King. Using sound, wall-based interpretation, engravings, and a specially-commissioned immersive soundscape by acclaimed musician and producer Martyn Ware, the exhibition will reveal how Hogarth orchestrated the natural and man-made sounds of London, to depict Britain in all its guises and capture the vibrancy and complexity of contemporary 18th-century life.

William Hogarth, *The March of the Guards to Finchley*, 1750 ©  
The Foundling  
Museum

Hogarth's enduring appeal lies in his ability to speak directly to the public;

cutting through the noise of political propaganda, public outcry and daily life. As a painter, printmaker, satirist, social critic, and editorial cartoonist, his work addresses complex political, social and cultural challenges, while his wit, scepticism, empathy and intelligence engages audiences from all walks of life. From his fictional ‘modern moral subjects’ like *A Rake’s Progress*, to his depictions of current events as seen in *The March of the Guards to Finchley*, Hogarth treated London as a stage and its citizens as actors and audience for his rowdy dramas. The dynamic and vibrant nature of his art is evidenced by its translation for theatre, an artform Hogarth was passionate about and a world he immersed himself in. Hogarth’s love and understanding of theatre is shown in his paintings of leading actors and performances in progress, as well as his membership of The Sublime Society of Beef Steaks, founded by John Rich, the manager of the Theatre Royal, Covent Garden.

Hogarth was a great early supporter of the Foundling Hospital, encouraging leading artists of the day to donate work, thereby establishing the UK’s first public art gallery. *Hogarth & The Art of Noise* continues the Museum’s legacy of presenting a diverse programme of exhibitions that offer different ways of engaging with the Foundling Hospital story, from its artist supporters to life at the institution itself. The exhibition is supported by The 1739 Club.

### **A New Song (To An Old Tune)**

Complementing the exhibition will be a display on the first floor of the Museum of work by contemporary British artist, Nicola Bealing. Using a mixture of print and painting, Bealing’s work takes as its starting point the subjects and narratives found within 18th century broadside ballads – descriptive or narrative songs on popular themes, often sung or sold in the form of cheap sheet music in the streets. Vibrant, bawdy, surreal and humorous in its nature, her work bears many similarities to that of Hogarth’s, an artist she cites as having inspired her.

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#### **Press enquiries**

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#### **Notes to editors**

**The Foundling Museum** explores the history of the Foundling Hospital, the UK’s first children’s charity and first public art gallery, and through a dynamic programme of exhibitions and events celebrates the ways in which artists of all disciplines have helped improve children’s lives for over 275 years. The Foundling Hospital, which continues today as the children’s charity Coram, was established in 1739 by the philanthropist Captain Thomas Coram, as ‘a hospital for the maintenance and education of exposed and deserted young children’.

Instrumental in helping Coram realise his vision were the artist William Hogarth, who encouraged leading artists of the day to donate work, and the composer George Frideric Handel, who gave annual benefit concerts of his Messiah. In doing so, they created London's first public art gallery and set the template for the way in which the arts can support philanthropy.

**Coram** has been creating better chances for children since 1739. They help children and young people today through their pioneering work in adoption, parenting support, housing support, alcohol and drug education, creative therapies and championing legal rights in the UK and overseas. [coram.org.uk](http://coram.org.uk)

**Martyn Ware** was born in 1956 in Sheffield, UK. After leaving school he worked in computers for three years before forming The Human League in 1977. In 1980 he formed the production company/label British Electric Foundation, and in the same year, Heaven 17. Ware has written, performed and produced two Human League, five British Electric Foundation and nine Heaven 17 studio albums. As record producer and artist he has featured on recordings totaling over 50 million sales worldwide. Artists include Tina Turner, Terence Trent D'Arby, Chaka Khan, Erasure, Marc Almond and Mavis Staples. In 2000 Ware founded Illustrious Co Ltd with Vince Clarke to exploit the creative and commercial possibilities of their unique three-dimensional sound technology practice, in collaboration with fine artists, the performing arts and corporate clients around the world. He also lectures extensively on music production, technology, and creativity at universities and colleges across the world. He was recently appointed the first ambassador for the international arts organisation In Place Of War, and is a board member and trustee for the charity Street Sports Hope in Sierra Leone. Ware is proud to be a supporter of artist's rights, and is also a proud socialist and international activist, helping to fight oppression and injustice worldwide.

**Nicola Bealing** (b. Hertford 1963) lives and works in Cornwall. She studied at Hertfordshire College of Art & Design and the Byam Shaw School of Art, London. Recent solo exhibitions include *Capital Crime*, Matt's Gallery, London (2018); *Death and Circuses* (2016) and *Mono* (2019), Kestle Barton, Cornwall; *Bad Gardening* (2017), Tremenhore Sculpture Garden, Cornwall. Group exhibitions include: *The Art of Rivalry* (2018), OSR Projects, Somerset; *Show Women* (2018), Jerwood & Ingram Collections, Gibberd Gallery, Essex; *Perspective* (2018), Petronilla Silver, London; Royal Academy Summer Exhibition (2019); *Strange Worlds: The Visions of Angela Carter* (2016), RWA, Bristol; The Columbia Threadneedle Prize (2016), London & Palazzo Strozzi, Florence; *The White Hotel* (2014), Gimpel Fils, London. Nicola Bealing is represented by Matt's Gallery, London.

#### Visitor Information

The Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square, London WC1N 1AZ  
+44 (0)20 7841 3600 / [foundlingmuseum.org.uk](http://foundlingmuseum.org.uk)

Open: Tuesday - Saturday 10:00-17:00, Sunday 11:00-17:00, Monday closed

Admission: Adults £13.20 with donation, Concessions £9.90 with donation.

Free for 21 & under, Foundling Friends & National Art Pass holders