

Berwick-St-James Art Appreciation

Thursday 15th January at 7.30pm in the Reading Room

The Contested Landscape *John Constable & The Rural Idyll*



1821. *The Hay Wain*, John Constable

Born 1776, just a year after Turner, Constable did not enjoy the meteoric rise of his great rival, not becoming a full academician until 1828, the year in which his beloved wife Maria Bicknell died, leaving him with seven children to support. His so called series of 'Six-Footers', specifically the idyllic *Haywain*, which won a gold medal at the Paris Salon in 1824, met with approval from none other than Eugene Delacroix and has always retained its universal popularity. But, just how accurate a reflection of rural life were his works. Why is there in general so little evidence of human activity, specifically reference the abject poverty in much of the rural community. With images of his most memorable works, we can perhaps reveal how as a pioneer, Constable was a radical conservative and an innovative traditionalist, this being as true of his cultural politics, as it was of his artistic practice.

**Glass of wine, beer, or soft drink. £5 donation to Reading Room.
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