

BP PR 3 2012

▪ **John Piper at Blenheim Palace** **Special Exhibition 11th February – 9th April 2012**

To celebrate the opening of the new season in 2012, Blenheim Palace will host its very first art exhibition – a display of work by the renowned 20th century British artist, John Piper (1903-1992).

The exhibition will mainly focus on Piper's depictions of Blenheim Palace but also explore the interlinking strains of his Oxfordshire connections, his writing, his architectural drawings and paintings of other country houses, as well as some of his collaborative work - prints, stained glass, books, ceramics and tapestry - all of which display the exceptional versatility of his creative output.

Piper is well known for his deep-rooted love of English architecture and the countryside. A series of eleven watercolours (including some iconic images of the Palace, which so effectively convey the drama of its Baroque architecture) were undertaken in the last decade of the artist's life and remain a splendid manifestation of his mature work.

Jeri Bapasola, Archival Researcher at Blenheim Palace, and curator of the exhibition comments: '*John Piper's paintings of Blenheim Palace represent some of the most striking 20th century images of the house, along with its garden temples, fountains, lodges and bridges. The watercolours were commissioned by the present (11th) Duke of Marlborough. Most of these have never been seen together by the public and are being exhibited for the first time in the Long Library at Blenheim Palace, in 2012, to mark the 20th anniversary of the artist's death.*'

SPECIAL EVENTS & ACTIVITIES

Thursday 1st March 2012, 11.00am - 4.00pm - Print Workshop

Join a practical workshop in the basic techniques of printmaking. Starting at 11.00am the day will include a tour of the Piper exhibition with Jeri Bapasola (Curator of the exhibition) followed by the print workshop in the afternoon. You will be able to make your own print to take home with you. No previous experience is necessary, printing materials will be provided; please bring your own plastic/protective apron. Booking essential, places limited to 15. (Last date for booking 24th February 2012 Tickets: £55 / £50 for Friends/Annual Pass holders (includes Palace, Park and Gardens entry, exhibition tour, prints workshop and materials).

Saturday 17th March 2012, 2.30pm

A talk on John Piper by Frances Spalding. A talk by the author of a recent biography on the artist, followed by: '**Working with Piper**' by **Geoffrey Eastop**

Eastop shared a pottery studio with the artist from 1969-1984. Book signings will take place after the talks, as well as a sale of pottery by Geoffrey Eastop, made especially for the exhibition shop.

Saturday 31st March 2012, 3.00pm

A talk on the Shell Guides, John Piper and John Betjeman by David Heathcote

Author of 'A Shell Eye on England'. Admission for the talks is included within a Park & Gardens ticket, (Adults £11.50. Concs. £8.50, Child £6.00) or free for Friends and Annual Pass holders.

Booking essential, places limited to 60 for each talk. For full details and to book special events & activities: Tel: 01993 810530 or email operations@blenheimpalace.com

A Piper Exhibition Shop will offer a new range of products inspired by John Piper's paintings of Blenheim Palace and other exclusive gifts, books and accessories.

Blenheim Palace, Park and Gardens

From the inspirational history of the Palace, to the beauty of the surrounding parkland and formal gardens, Blenheim Palace offers a memorable day out for all. The John Piper Exhibition will be on display in the Long Library inside the Palace. Blenheim Palace is home to the 11th Duke and Duchess of Marlborough and his family, and is the birthplace of Sir Winston Churchill. The splendour and tranquillity of the 'Capability' Brown landscaped parkland and the Formal Gardens are unrivalled in Britain.

Blenheim Palace is situated in the heart of the Oxfordshire Cotswolds and is only eight miles from Oxford. For further information about Blenheim Palace please call the 24 hour information line on 0800 849 6500 or visit www.blenheimpalace.com

Notes to Editors

- The Piper Exhibition is included within a Palace, Park and Gardens ticket. Adult £20 Concs. £15.50, Child £11.00, Family £52. (Includes free annual pass!)
- Buy One Day Get 12 months free – when you buy a ticket to the Palace you will receive an Annual Pass for free. For more information, terms & conditions visit www.blenheimpalace.com
- To book a place on one of the special events please call 01993 810530 or email operations@blenheimpalace.com
- Jeri Bapasola, Archival Researcher at Blenheim Palace and curator of the exhibition is an established author with several publications on Blenheim Palace, titles include:
 - *'The Finest View in England: The Landscape and Gardens at Blenheim Palace'*
 - *'Household Matters: Domestic Service at Blenheim Palace'*
 - *'Threads of History: The Tapestries at Blenheim Palace'*
- Blenheim Palace and Formal Gardens open from 11th February to 14th December 2012.
- The Palace and Formal Gardens are closed on Mondays and Tuesdays in November and December. The Park is open daily except Christmas Day.
- The Park opens at 9am, the Formal Gardens at 10am and the Palace and Pleasure Gardens from 10.30am. Last admission to the Palace and Gardens is at 4.45pm. The Palace and Pleasure Gardens* close at 5.30pm and the Park at 6pm.
- Child age 5-16 inclusive. Under 5's free. Full details of ticket prices are available on request.

For further information about Blenheim Palace please call the 24 hour information line on 0800 849 6500 or visit the website at www.blenheimpalace.com

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