



Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman

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Focusing specifically on Thomas Gainsborough's portraits of well-known, "liberated", society women, *Thomas Gainsborough and the Modern Woman* draws us away from his predominant reputation as a landscape painter. It shows how such portraits were both an affirmation by Gainsborough of his own position in the artistic world of Georgian England, and of the desire of his famous, and often notorious, sitters to be seen as self-assured progressive women.

Author Benedict Leca takes as his starting point the Cincinnati Art Museum's famous and newly restored portrait of Ann Ford (1760). Widely considered the finest of the masterpiece portraits created by Gainsborough at Bath in the early 1760s, it typifies the artist's comparatively permissive attitude with regard to how women should be presented, and offers a compelling view of the manner of painting that established the artist as the foremost portraitist of modern life.

Featuring portraits from international collections, including Tate Britain, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the J Paul Getty Museum and the National Gallery, London, this new volume also includes an essay by Aileen Ribeiro examining the portrait of Ann Ford in detail, and by Amber Ludwig discussing the role of feminine identity in 18th-century London.

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