

SEMINAR 6

THOMAS GAINSBOROUGH: KEY CONCEPTS & IDEAS

- painted gentleman farmers and their families in their natural habitat
- produced landscape paintings featuring a lush, pastoral England
- chased in his paintings a perfect, completely desirable woman
- contributed to the notion that the artist's preoccupations are the proper subject of art
- raised the self-esteem of the British painter as an independent artist
- attempted to raise portraiture and landscape to the level of highest art

VOCABULARY TO DESCRIBE GAINSBOROUGH AND HIS PAINTINGS

- to have the will to exceed mere depiction
- a hireling of the rich
- to make one's name in London
- to turn women into goddesses
- to fight the narrowly prescriptive taste of one's own society
- to be continually harassed by strong sexual yearning
- to strive to expand the narrow horizons of painting in England
- to be a celebration of a well-off married couple and the fertility of their land
- to be full of delicate eros
- to wear an expression of complete self-satisfaction
- to have a melted, languorous look about oneself
- to celebrate a beautiful rather than crude sensuality
- to chase the creature of his dreams
- to please a more sophisticated clientele
- to buy oneself the services of a prostitute
- to give one's pictures a charge of muffled sexuality
- gorgeously dressed spirits of nature
- to conjure up the effects of dreaminess
- to build intricate little tabletop landscapes
- the shimmering, almost abstract quality of landscape paintings
- to impart the effect of beautiful vagueness to one's pictures
- pictures that defy the limitations of the portrait
- a disguised self-portrait
- a figure of a soldier pierced by the beauty around him
- a man helpless before a vision of a goddess
- to be transformed into a stag
- to be hunted down by one's own dogs
- to begin one's own fateful metamorphosis