



YORKSHIRE GARDENS TRUST

# Noble Prospects: CAPABILITY BROWN

*and the Yorkshire Landscape*



Working for you

**Mercer Art Gallery, Harrogate**  
25 June - 11 September 2016

# The Yorkshire Gardens Trust and the Mercer Art Gallery are delighted to announce the first ever exhibition dedicated to the Yorkshire landscapes of Lancelot 'Capability' Brown (1716-1783).

The exhibition in summer 2016 celebrates the tercentenary of the birth of Brown but also marks the twentieth anniversary of the founding of the Yorkshire Gardens Trust.

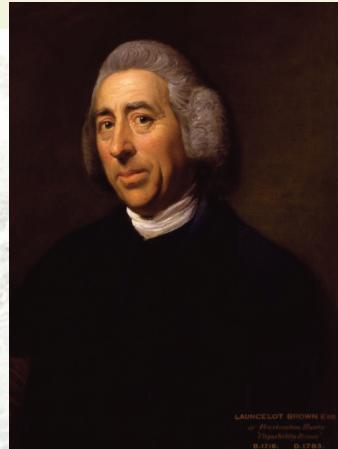
Brown gained his nickname from his habit of referring to the 'capabilities' of each site he visited. In the vast historic county of Yorkshire, he found many ways to enhance the varied topography.

He enlivened plains at Scampston, Sledmere and Burton Constable in the East Riding and at Byram near Pontefract; he sculpted hills at Harewood, created lakes at Hornby, remodelled antiquities at Roche Abbey, swept away earlier gardens at Howsham and planted thousands of trees at Whitley Beaumont in his quest for the perfect landscape for each individual client.

Brown's Yorkshire patrons ranged from ancient titled families such as the Irwins of Temple Newsam to those with new money such as Sir Lawrence Dundas at Aske. What they all had in common was the desire to have an Arcadian landscape created by the most fashionable and respected designer of the day.

 /nobleprospects

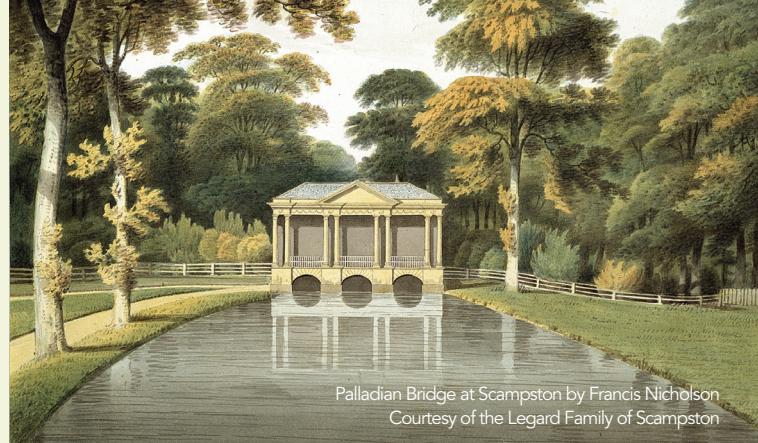
[www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/  
capability\\_brown\\_2016](http://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk/capability_brown_2016)



Capability Brown by Nathaniel Dance  
© National Portrait Gallery, London



Roche Abbey by S.H. Grimm (detail)  
Courtesy of Museums Sheffield



Palladian Bridge at Scampston by Francis Nicholson  
Courtesy of the Legard Family of Scampston

Among the exhibits will be original designs and documents by Brown including his large-scale plan for the works at Temple Newsam and his contract with the Earl of Scarbrough to enhance the landscape setting of the ruins of Roche Abbey. There will be 18th century watercolours showing his landscapes, and artworks that inspired his vision. Brown's portrait by Nathaniel Dance will come to Yorkshire from the National Portrait Gallery and all other exhibits are drawn from Yorkshire collections both public and private.

*The Yorkshire Gardens Trust and the Mercer Art Gallery have jointly commissioned photographer Simon Warner to produce a film exploring Brown's Yorkshire landscapes today and this will be running during the exhibition.*

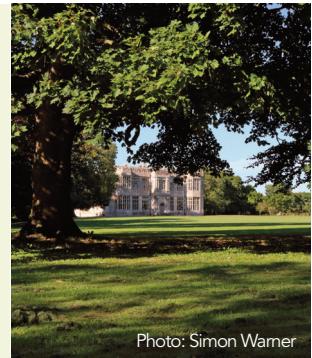


Photo: Simon Warner

Also showing from 18 June to 18 September will be *KATE WHITEFORD: False Perspectives* which features work by internationally known artist Kate Whiteford commissioned by the Mercer Art Gallery to complement the Capability Brown tercentenary celebrations. Whiteford explores the reality and the artifice of Brown's work by transforming the gallery space with her large-scale drawings of trees. Also included will be Whiteford's watercolours related to Brown's landscapes at Harewood and Compton Verney and the artist's choice of works on paper from the Mercer's collection.



Harewood House from the South by J.M.W. Turner  
By kind permission of the Executors of the 7th Earl of Harewood  
and the Trustees of the Harewood House Trust

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 /mercercartgallery  @mercercartgallery

Open Tues to Sat 10 to 5, Sun 2 to 5.  
Closed Mondays except Bank Holidays.  
Admission FREE



The Yorkshire Gardens Trust, an educational charity founded in 1996, works to help conserve, protect and promote Yorkshire's rich heritage of parks, gardens and designed landscapes. New members are always welcome.  
[www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk](http://www.yorkshiregardenstrust.org.uk)

### **Noble Prospects: Capability Brown & the Yorkshire Landscape**

could not have happened without the support of Savills, The Landscape Agency, Saffery Champness, Coutts, The Capability Brown Festival 2016, ArtFund (through a Jonathan Ruffer Curatorial Research Grant) and Natural England. The display of individual exhibits has been made possible by The Calmcott Trust, The Friends of the Mercer Art Gallery, Leeds Philosophical & Literary Society, Historic Houses Association, Yorkshire Friends, Mr & Mrs J. Samuel and private donors.



*Cover image:* Cascade at Scampston by Francis Nicholson  
Courtesy of the Legard Family of Scampston