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march insight

MATTHEW DENNISON points to the matters of the moment

new opening

Once criticized for the predictability of its crowd-pleasing blockbuster shows, the Royal Academy has recently presented an exhibition programme of considerable breadth, embracing diverse cultures, media, periods and schools. Its recently unveiled ***CITIZENS AND KINGS: PORTRAITS IN THE AGE OF REVOLUTION 1760–1830*** includes nearly 150 works – depictions of rulers (1), renegades and revolutionaries in two and three dimensions by noted masters Reynolds, Goya, David, Lawrence, Canova and Thorvaldsen, as well as less well-known practitioners. Among the show's themes is the role of portraiture in establishing in visible form the legitimacy of rulers' claims to govern. *Royal Academy of Arts, Burlington House, Piccadilly, W1 (tel: 020-7300 8000). Until April 20, daily, 10am–6pm (Friday, until 10pm); admission, £10*

English urban interiors – as depicted in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century paintings – have formed the subject of two previous exhibitions at The Geffrye Museum, Kingsland Road, E2 (tel: 020-7739 9893). Building on the success of those shows, the museum unveils ***HOME AND GARDEN: DOMESTIC SPACES IN PAINTINGS FROM 1914 TO 1960*** on February 20. Some 40 paintings include works by Eric Ravilious, Vanessa Bell, Walter Sickert, Paul Nash and Edward Le Bas (2). *Tuesday to Sunday, 10am–5pm (Sunday, from 12pm); admission free*

what to see

Among founding trustees of Farnham's Crafts Study Centre – Britain's first purpose-built modern craft museum, at the time of its opening – was *éminence grise* of interwar British craft, Muriel Rose, who is currently the subject of ***MURIEL ROSE: A MODERN CRAFTS LEGACY*** at the museum. As a commercial gallery manager and exhibition curator, Muriel Rose championed a broad range of crafts (3), from calligraphy to traditional quilting. The exhibition includes ceramics, textiles, metalwork, furniture and jewellery. *Crafts Study Centre, Farnham Campus, Falkner Road, Farnham, Surrey (tel: 01252-891450). Until November 3, Tuesday to Saturday, 10am–5pm (Saturday, until 4pm); admission free*

Unsurprisingly, William Roberts (1895–1980) took exception to fellow artist Wyndham Lewis's assertion, more than 40 years after the only Vorticist exhibition ever held (one in which Roberts also participated), that 'Vorticism, in fact, was what I, personally, did, and said, at a certain period.' Throughout his long career, William Roberts's work showed characteristics associated with the short-lived modernist movement: his figurative paintings (4) are bold, angular and frequently harshly coloured; individual figures have a mechanistic appearance. ***WILLIAM ROBERTS: ENGLAND AT PLAY*** is at Pallant House Gallery, 9 North Pallant, Chichester, West Sussex (tel: 01243-774557), until March 18. *Tuesday to Sunday, 10am–5pm (Thursday, until 8pm, Sunday, from 12.30pm); admission, £6.50* ▷

1 Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, *Napoleon on his Imperial throne*, 1806. 2 Edward Le Bas, *Interior*, 1951. 3 Paul Nash, printed paper for the Curwen Press, 1930s. 4 William Roberts, *Rush Hour*, 1971

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