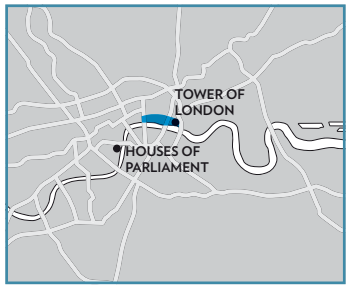
The City of London

The City is London's most ancient quarter and a global financial centre that has been closely connected with international trade and commerce for 2,000 years. The tightly built 'Square Mile' of small streets, crooked alleys, squares, courts, churches, civic buildings, offices and high rises stretches from the Royal Courts of Justice in the Strand (Temple Bar) to Aldgate in the east and from the Thames in the south to City Road in the north.



London first became a port of wealth and prominence under Roman occupation (AD 43–410). In the 2nd century, the Romans built a towering defence wall around the City, 20ft high and 8ft wide, as impressive as Hadrian's Wall in the North. It formed the foundations for the medieval city wall that was restored by King Alfred in the 9th century and remained standing until the 18th and 19th centuries. The legacy of this wall is that it loosely defines the perimeters of the City to this day and significant remains may still be seen at Tower Hill, the Barbican and on the modern road called London Wall.

After the Norman Conquest of 1066, William the Conqueror built three mighty fortresses in the City to subdue its citizens (the Tower, officially outside the City's limits, is the only one that remains). However, William also recognised the City's value to the wealth of the country and approved a London charter which upheld previous Saxon rights and privileges. In the 12th century, the City was granted the autonomy of self government, a privilege that continues today. Many of the City's grand livery companies (*see overleaf*) were founded in the 12th–13th centuries. By the 15th century the City was home to flourishing trading firms and in 1600 the great East India Company was established. In 1565, Sir Thomas Gresham founded the Royal Exchange, opened by Elizabeth I. The Plague of 1665 reduced the population by one fifth and then in 1666 the Great Fire razed five-sixths of the medieval city to the ground, destroying 86 out of 107 parish churches and the halls of 44 livery companies. Although the chief architect, Christopher Wren, wished to restructure along more planned, Enlightenment lines, the urgent need to rebuild meant that the City was re-erected over its medieval footprint, within the outline of the old Roman walls.

After the Fire many wealthy inhabitants moved west, but the City remained a great commercial centre. The Bank of England was founded in 1694 and this and other

CITY OF LONDON
Sir Norman Foster's Swiss Re Building (the 'Gherkin', 30 St Mary Axe) looms above the façades of an earlier era.

BLACKFRIARS & LUDGATE HILL

Map p. ???, ??. Underground: Blackfriars.

Blackfriars, the southwest corner of the City, occupies the area around Blackfriars Station, a major terminus with entrances on both the north and sound sides of Blackfriars Bridge. Blackfriars Millennium Pier is a stop for river bus services. Blackfriars takes its name from the Dominicans, who wore black habits and who established extensive monastic buildings between the Thames and Ludgate Hill. Edward I granted them the land in 1274 and allowed them to rebuild the City Wall around this area. It was customary in medieval cities for the two mendicant orders to set up houses close to the city walls. Thus the Dominicans were at Blackfriars, near Ludgate and the mouth of the Fleet river, while the Franciscans (Greyfriars) occupied the areas around Newgate and Aldgate. The Blackfriars buildings were used for state occasions and meetings of the Privy Council. A synod here in 1382 condemned Wycliffe's teaching as heretical. It was also here that a decree of divorce was heard between Henry VIII and Queen Catherine of Aragon. The friary was closed in 1538, during the Dissolution of the Monasteries

BLACKFRIARS LANE AND CARTER LANE

Queen Victoria Street, a wide thoroughfare created in 1867–71, sliced through many ancient streets and alleys and as a result created wedge-shaped sites on which triangular buildings were built. One of the last remaining is the **Black Friar pub**, opposite the station on the corner of New Bridge Street. The sculpture over the main door is of a rotund, black-robed friar smiling beatifically down on passing traffic. Built in the 1870s, the pub has a unique Arts and Crafts interior dating from 1905 (restored 1983) of polychrome marble slabs and beaten bronze bas-reliefs of jolly friars at work. In the restaurant, there are red marble columns, an arched mosaic ceiling and further decorative figures.

From the pub, cross under the railway bridge and immediately on the left is Blackfriars Lane, leading into Playhouse Yard, where Richard Burbage's theatre once stood. Further up Blackfriars Lane on the right is the **Apothecaries' Hall**, dating partly from the 1660s, partly from the 1780s. It is built on the site of the friary guest house.

Carter Lane, off Blackfriars Lane to the right, is an atmospheric street of mainly pre-20th-century buildings with narrow alleys leading off it. It has so far managed to escape development and is favoured by TV crews when a location redolent of yesteryear is required. The **former St Paul's Choir School** (F.C. Penrose, 1874–5) at the end of the street on the left, on the corner of Dean's Court, has been a youth hostel since 1975. The neo-Renaissance building is reminiscent of an Italian *palazzo* and would not look out of place amongst the buildings commissioned by Prince Albert in South Kensington. The sgraffito Latin frieze running along the first storey is from St Paul's letter to the Galatians, 6:14 'MIHI AUTEM ABSIT GLORIARI NISI IN CRUCE

QUEEN VICTORIA STREET
Detail of the decoration of the Black Friar pub.

DOMINI NOSTRI JESU CHRISTI / PER QUEM MIHI MUNDUS CRUCIFIXUS EST ET EGO MUNDO' (But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world).

In Dean's Court itself, the **former St Paul's Deanery** (1672) was designed by Wren. The two-tone red-brick façade, with sash and dormer windows, is a vision of restrained elegance. John Donne, when Dean, lived in the earlier house on the site. Since 1996, it has been the official residence of the Bishop of London. From here you can either continue up Dean's Court to St Paul's (*see p. ???*) or, from Carter Lane, go down Addle Hill and then Wardrobe Terrace to reach the church of **St Andrew-by-the-Wardrobe**

The organ, one of the oldest in the country, was a gift from Thomas Whiting in 1676 and is attributed to Renatus Harris (*see p. ???*). Thomas Bray, founder of the SPCK and SPG, was vicar here from 1708–22. William Symington, pioneer of steam navigation who built the *Charlotte Dundas*, died here 'in want' in 1831 and is buried in the church (tablet on west wall). In the south aisle is a finely carved panel of David playing the harp which, together with the lectern, dates from the early 18th century. Jeremy Bentham was christened here in 1747. The fine peal of eight bells was cast in the 18th century at Whitechapel bell foundry (*see p. ???*). Daniel Defoe was married here in 1683: he mentions Aldagte and its church frequently in his *Journal of the Plague Year*.

EATING AND DRINKING IN THE CITY

During the working week, the City is a hubbub of activity. Bars and restaurants are crowded and lively at lunchtime and the streets are filled with cafés and sandwich bars. Getting fed is not a problem. The situation is less easy at weekends: the streets are more tranquil and better for sightseeing, but the weekday workers' watering holes are shut. The list below includes traditional weekday haunts as well as a handful of places that cater to weekenders.

1 Lombard Street. Modern European bar and brasserie in the heart of the City. Popular with bankers at lunchtime but a hearty greeting is extended to all. Superb food. Closed weekends *1 Lombard St. T: 020 7929 6611, 1lombardstreet.com. Map p. ???, ??.*

Black Friar. A member of the Nicholson's group of pubs. Wonderful Arts and Crafts interior (*see p. ???*). Pub food. Open daily. Some outdoor seating. *174 Queen Victoria St. T: 020 7236 5474. Map p. ???, ??.*

Bonds. Bar and restaurant in an old banking hall serving 'modern', award-winning cuisine (ingredients combined in previously unthought-of ways). Good wine list. Restaurant open Mon–Fri, bar open daily, serving sandwiches and snacks at weekends from 3pm. *5 Threadneedle St. T: 020 7657 8090, bonds-restaurant.co.uk. Map p. ???, ??.*

Duck and Waffle. Brasserie with excellent views. Open almost round the clock (6am–5am). 40th Floor, Heron Tower, 110 Bishopsgate. *T: 020 3640 7310, duckandwaffle.com. Map p. ???, ??.*

Grand Café. Occupying the courtyard and upper level of the old Royal Exchange are the Grand Café, with brasserie-style food, and the Restaurant Sauterelle ('Grasshopper', named after the Gresham emblem; *see p. ???*), offering a Provençal-influenced menu midday and evening. Closed weekends. *Royal Exchange. T: 020 7618 2480, royalexchange-grandcafe.co.uk. Map p. ???, ??.*

Imperial City. Good Chinese restaurant under the Royal Exchange. Closed weekends. *Cornhill. T: 020 7626 3437, orientalrestaurantgroup.co.uk. Map p. ???, ??.*

Jamaica Wine House. Originally a coffee house, now a pub known familiarly as the 'Jampot', a popular City lunch spot. Downstairs at Todd's Wine Bar you can sit over a full meal or a trencher of tapas. Good wine list. Closed weekends. *St Michael's Alley (off Lombard St). T: 020 7929 6922. Map p. ???, ??.*

The Mercer. Angels on horseback, bubble and squeak and spotted dick? If your mouth begins to water, then the Mercer is for you. Large, airy space serving good old British scran. Lunch and dinner. Closed weekends. *34 Threadneedle St. T: 020 7628 0001, themercer.co.uk. Map p. ???, ??.*

New Street Wine Shop. A wine 'shop', technically, but big wooden tables, dozens of great wines by the glass, and simple charcuterie and sandwiches for sale. Closed weekends. *16 New Street (off Bishopsgate). T: 020 3503 0795, newstreetwineshop.co.uk. Map p. ???, ??.*

One New Change. Plenty of places to eat and drink in this shopping centre, and all are open daily, which makes it a possible solution if you are visiting the City at a weekend. Among the many options are Searcy's Champagne Bar (also offers snacks and lunch), Gordon Ramsay's Bread Street Kitchen, which serves *ceviche* (the 21st-century East Ender's equivalent of the jellied eel?) and Jamie Oliver's Barbecoa, where meat is seared and grilled in a variety of ways. *1 New Change. onenewchange.com. Map p. ???, ??.*

Pizza Express. Better than acceptable pizza, salads and pasta dishes. Swift, efficient service. Decent wine. Open at weekends. Close to the Barbican. *125 Alban Gate, London Wall. T: 020 7600 8880, pizzaexpress.com. Map p. ???, ??.*

The Ship. Tiny old pub in Hart St (*see p. ??? for details*). *Map p. ???, ??.*

Simpson's Tavern. 'The oldest chop house in London', in business since 1757 and still serving traditional English food (roast beef and Yorkshire pudding, Lancashire hot pot, ham with parsley sauce). Open Tues–Fri for breakfast and lunch, Mon lunch only; closed weekends. *Ball Court (off Cornhill). T: 020 7626 9985, simpsons-tavern.co.uk. Map p. ???, ??.*

Sweetings. Classic fish restaurant, in business since 1889. Delicious potted shrimps. Lunchtimes only, closed weekends. *39 Queen Victoria St. No reservations. sweetingsrestaurant.com. Map p. ???, ??.*

Viaduct. Historic tavern close to St Paul's and Smithfield Market. Bar food served at lunchtimes (they are proud of their roast beef sandwiches). Open for drinks until 11pm. Closed weekends. *126 Newgate St. T: 020 7600 1863, viaducttavern.co.uk. Map p. ???, ??.*

Ye Old Cheshire Cheese. Historic pub on Fleet Street (*see p. ???*) offering atmosphere, good cheer and edible pub food. Open Mon–Fri lunchtime and evenings. *145 Fleet St (entrance on Wine Office Ct). T: 020 7353 6170. Map p. ???, ??.*

TOWER BRIDGE

The resulting combined suspension and bascule bridge took eight years to build and its 11,000-ton steel core is clad in Cornish granite and Portland stone. The carriageway between the towers is composed of two bascules (or drawbridges), which are raised to allow tall ships to pass through. The original steam pumping engines used to provide hydraulic power to raise the bascules were replaced in 1976 by electric motors. The two high walkways between the towers were constructed to allow pedestrians to cross uninterrupted when the bascules were in operation. However, pedestrians preferred to cross at road level and the walkways became the haunt of unsavoury characters, leading to their closure in 1910. Although river traffic in this part of the Thames has diminished since its 19th-century heyday, the raising of the bascules is still an impressive sight (*a timetable of bridge lifts may be found on towerbridge.org.uk*).

VISITING TOWER BRIDGE

Entry to the Tower Bridge Exhibition (*open April–Sept 10–6, Oct–March 9.30–5.30; admission charge; shop; T: 020 7403 3761, towerbridge.org.uk*) is via the North Tower and visitors are taken up by lift. The two walkways (now covered, and which also serve as exhibiton space) afford impressive panoramic views of London; worth the entry fee alone. London's historic landmarks increasingly jockey for position with its new skyscapers. UNESCO and English Heritage are concerned that these giant edifices are unsympathetic and recently the World Heritage status of the Tower of London and Westminster was called into question. After a short film in the South Tower about the bridge's construction, you are transported down by stairs and lift to road level. Follow the blue line on the pavement to the final part of the tour, the Victorian Engine Rooms, which are situated on the south side of the river (Shad Thames). Here one can see the enormous pumping engines, accumulators and boilers that were originally used to raise the bascules. An interactive model of the bridge allows you to raise the bascules via both steam and modern hydraulic methods. Exit via the gift shop. You can either explore the south side of the river from here, where there are plenty of riverside places to eat (*see p. ???*) or return across the bridge to St Katharine Docks.

ST KATHARINE DOCKS

Map p. ???, ??. Underground: Tower Hill; DLR: Tower Gateway.

Since the 1990s, the area of the Thames known as the Upper Pool, which stretches from London Bridge to just below Tower Bridge on both sides of the bank, has been enjoying a revival and the area thrives once more, albeit in a 21st-century guise. The riverside walk has been opened up, new buildings have been built and old warehouses and wharves have been converted into living units, offices, shops and riverside eating and drinking establishments.

St Katharine Docks were the first of London's docks to be regenerated into commercial and leisure space after the demise of London's shipping industry. Today the serene waterside expanse houses accommodation, offices, restaurants, shops and an exclusive marina: it makes a good place to go for a drink or a bite to eat after visiting the Tower.

HISTORY OF ST KATHARINE DOCKS

A dock has existed here since 1125. In 1147–8, a hospital and priory were founded on the land under the patronage of Queen Matilda, wife of King Stephen, who referred to it as 'my hospital by the Tower'. The priory escaped dissolution thanks to Katherine of Aragon, by then its patron. She remained in the role, even after her divorce from Henry VIII, until her death. By the end of the 18th century some 3,000 people lived and worked in the precincts of the ancient hospital and church and thousands more continued to settle here, turning the area into a densely-built slum. In 1825 the area was taken over for development as a dock and the inhabitants were unceremoniously evicted.

St Katharine Docks as they exist today opened in 1928. They were built by Telford as two connected basins accessed via a lock at the entrance to the Thames. A range of warehouses by Philip Hardwick lined the quays so goods could be unloaded straight into them; the docks specialised in wine, brandy, tea, rubber, marble, ivory, sugar and other valuable commodities. After fire damage in the Second World War, and also because modern steam and container ships were unable to enter the docks, they finally closed as a commercial enterprise in 1968. Their redevelopment is seen as a model for urban regeneration.

Burdett-Coutts is commemorated near the west door. In the centre of the nave, further east, is the grave of David Livingstone (d. 1873) **(3)**, traveller and missionary in Africa. Across the front of the Belfry Tower is a bronze effigy of Lord Salisbury (d. 1903) **(4)**. On the west wall is a bust of General Gordon (d. 1885), the defender of Khartoum, by Onslow Ford. Among the crowded monuments is one (east side) to Viscount Howe (d. 1758) by Scheemakers, erected by the Province of Massachusetts while it was a British colony.

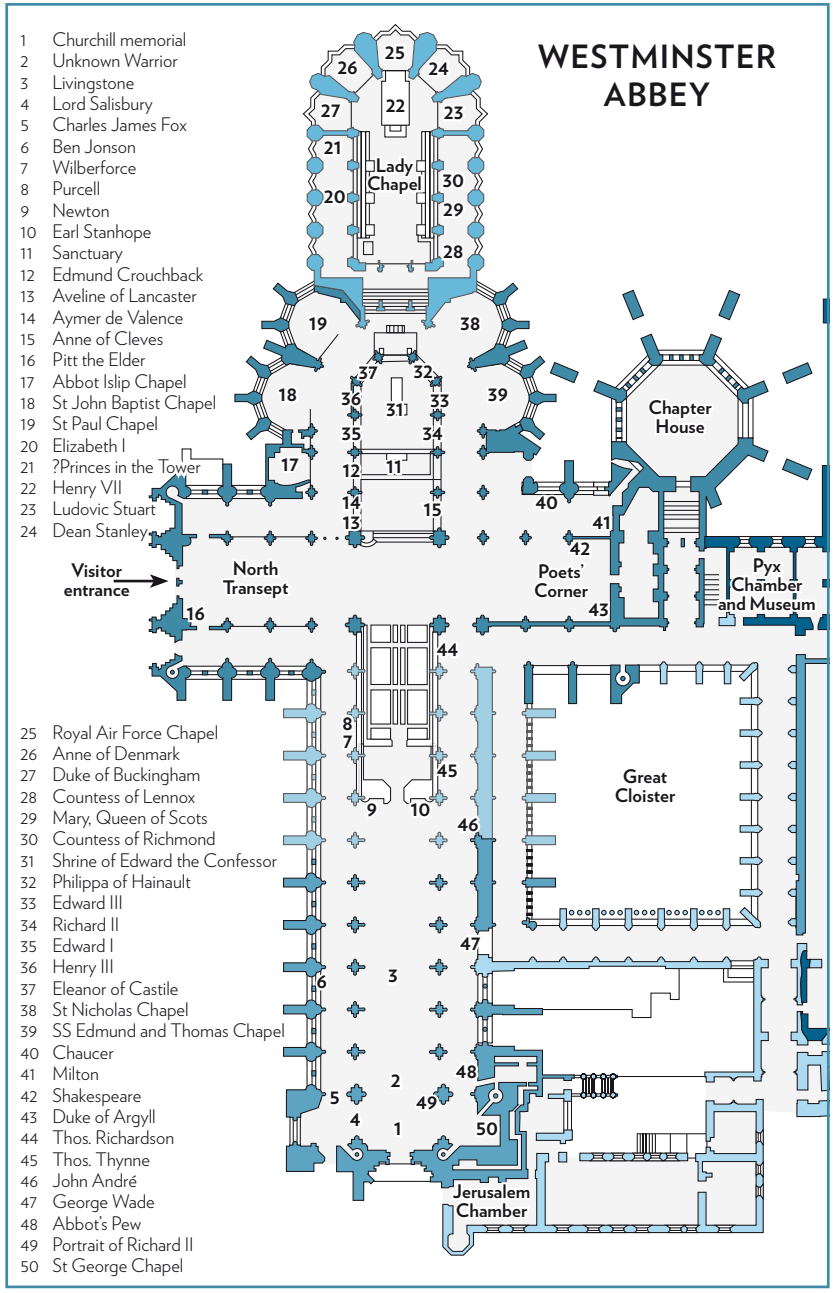
North aisle: Across the head of the aisle is a large monument to Charles James Fox (d. 1806) **(5)**. Floor slabs commemorate Ramsay MacDonald (d. 1937), Lloyd George (d. 1945), Ernest Bevin (d. 1951), Clement Attlee (d. 1967) and the noted Fabians and admirers of Soviet Russia Sidney and Beatrice Webb (d. 1947 and 1943), who were buried here at the behest of George Bernard Shaw. On the wall is a monument to Campbell-Bannerman (d. 1908). Dean Stanley (Arthur Stanley, the liberal churchman who was Dean of Westminster from 1864–81) called this part of the abbey 'Whigs' Corner'.

In the third bay, a small stone upright in the wall at the bottom, inscribed 'O Rare Ben Johnson' [sic], marks the grave of the dramatist and poet Ben Jonson (d. 1637) **(6)**. The memorial was made, according to John Aubrey, 'at the charge of Jack Young (afterwards knighted) who, walking there when the grave was covering, gave the fellow eighteen pence to cut it.'

The north choir aisle has fine examples of early heraldry on the wall. A series of medallions under the organ (right) commemorate famous scientists, among them Charles Darwin (d. 1882; tomb in north nave aisle) and Lord Lister (d. 1912). Matching lozenges in the pavement honour men associated with music, including Elgar, Vaughan Williams, Britten, William Walton, Adrian Boult and C.V. Stanford. In the next bay William Wilberforce (d. 1833) **(7)**, one of the chief opponents of the slave trade, and Sir Stamford Raffles (1759–1833), founder of Singapore, sit pensive in effigy above the tomb of Henry Purcell (d. 1695) **(8)**, composer and organist at the abbey.

Choir and sanctuary: The choir screen (1834, with medieval masonry) is the work of Edward Blore. Set into it are two impressive works by Rysbrack and Kent commemorating Sir Isaac Newton (d. 1727) **(9)** and Earl Stanhope (d. 1721) **(10)**, faithful public servant of George I.

It is in the **sanctuary (11)**, the raised space within the altar rails, that coronations take place. The altar screen is by Sir George Gilbert Scott (1867). In front is a beautiful Cosmatesque pavement of 1268, signed 'Odoricus'; it is thought to be by the hand of a member of the Roman Oderisi family. The original brass inlaid letters specified its intended cosmological significance: '*Sphaericus archetypum globus hic monstrat macrocosmum*' (This round sphere represents a model of the universe): an appropriate place for the coronation and anointing of a temporal sovereign. On the left are three beautiful architectural tombs, dating from between c. 1298 and 1325. Buried within them are Edmund 'Crouchback' Plantagenet, Earl of Lancaster (d. 1296) **(12)**, second son of Henry III and founder of the House



THE ROYAL ACADEMY OF ARTS

Map p. 603, E1. Underground: Green Park, Piccadilly Circus. Open daily 10–6 (until 10pm on Fri). Free guided tours of the Fine Rooms Tues–Fri 1pm. T: 020 7300 8000; royalacademy.org.uk. Admission charge. Restaurant/café.

Founded in 1768 under the patronage of George III, with the distinguished portraitist Sir Joshua Reynolds as its first President, the Royal Academy's aim was—and still is—the promotion of art and design through its teaching Schools, its Summer Exhibition of contemporary British work (an annual event since 1769) and via the staging of international loan exhibitions. It is for the last that the Royal Academy (RA) is perhaps best known today, being one of the principal venues in London for major national and international shows.

The RA has always been a self-governing institution, its President elected from its body of Academicians (RAs) composed, since the 18th century, of leading painters, sculptors and architects and, from the 19th century, engravers. As well as Reynolds, past Presidents include great figures such as Benjamin West, Sir Thomas Lawrence, Lord Leighton, Sir Edwin Lutyens and Sir Hugh Casson.

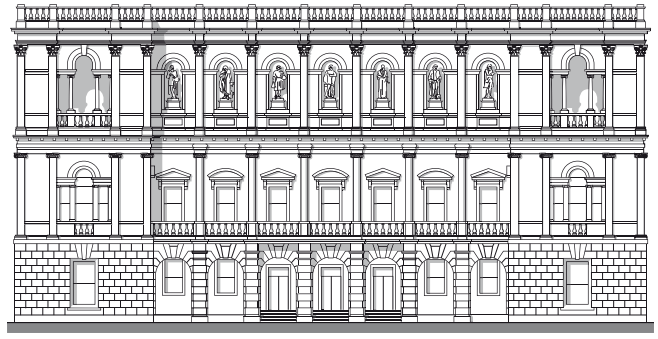
SIR JOSHUA REYNOLDS

Joshua Reynolds (1723–92), the son of a Devon schoolmaster, was one of the pre-eminent society portraitists of his generation, first President of the Royal Academy of Arts and 'founder of the British School of Painting'. While on a tour of Italy as a young man, he had beheld with awe the works of Michelangelo, Raphael and Titian and returned home with the aim of raising the status of the artist in Britain.

Reynolds had a competitive relationship with other painters. He was more at home with men from outside his field, the lexicographer Samuel Johnson and actor David Garrick among them. Indeed, he belonged, along with Johnson, to The Club, a group of a dozen or so men who met for supper and conversation at the Turk's Head Tavern in Gerrard Street, Soho.

Apart from his prolific output of pictures, Reynolds has left us his *Discourses on Art* (15 in total), which were mostly given by him at the annual prize-giving ceremony at the RA. They are more a series of occasional essays than a coherent theory, touching on subjects ranging from colouring and the life model to art education and the work of Gainsborough. Not a good speaker, he was inaudible to many who attended his lectures, and those who could understand him did not always like what they heard—or read: William Blake notoriously wrote on his copy of the *Discourses*, 'This Man was Hired to Depress Art'.

Reynolds's chief inspiration came from the Old Masters of Italy. His final remark to the RA was: 'And I should desire that the last words which I should pronounce to this Academy, and from this place, might be the name—Michael Angelo.' Suffering from loss of sight and acute deafness (a silver ear-trumpet was never far from his side), he died at the age of 69. He is buried in St Paul's Cathedral.



BURLINGTON HOUSE

BURLINGTON HOUSE

The present building, largely the work of Sydney Smirke (1866–76), encases a much older one, begun c. 1664 by Sir John Denham, then bought and completed in 1668 by the 1st Earl of Burlington. It was one of London's foremost private mansions. In the early 18th century it underwent radical alterations: first by James Gibbs for Juliana, Duchess of Burlington; and in 1717–20 by Colen Campbell for the Duchess' son, the famous promoter of Palladianism, the 3rd Earl of Burlington (*see Chiswick House, p. 476*). The current façade, which faces you as you pass through the central archway, has Campbell's Palladian ground and first storeys and Smirke's third storey, a heavy addition with niches containing statues of British and Italian Renaissance painters and sculptors. The wings creating the courtyard, by Banks and Barry in Italian Renaissance style (1868–73), house learned societies: to the left, the Linnaean Society, Royal Astronomical Society and Society of Antiquaries; to the right, the Royal Society of Chemistry and the Geological Society. The pleasant fountain jets in the centre of the courtyard are placed, apparently, according to Reynolds' horoscope.

Entrance hall

The low-ceilinged entrance hall (ticket office), remodelled in 1899, contains ceiling paintings by West (in the centre, *The Graces Unveiling Nature*, with the *Four Elements* around it) and roundels by Angelica Kauffmann (*Composition*, *Design*, *Painting* and *Invention*) removed from the RA's old meeting room in Somerset House on the Strand. The central grand staircase by Samuel Ware (1815–18) leads to the Main Galleries. Behind, past Sebastiano Ricci's grand Baroque paintings (*The Triumph of Galatea* and *Diana and her Nymphs*; c. 1712–15) and Kent's ceiling roundel of *Architecture* with the portrait of Inigo Jones (c. 1720), are the Fine Rooms (*see below*).

The Main Galleries and Fine Rooms

Smirke's **Main Galleries** consist of a central octagonal hall giving onto a succession of large, grand spaces. These galleries have witnessed spectacular crowds, especially in the 1880s and '90s during Leighton's successful presidency, when 350–400,000