



Power and Portraiture: painting at the court of Elizabeth I

7 June-29 October 2017, Wed-Sun

Waddesdon Manor

On public view for the first time two portraits newly attributed to Nicholas Hilliard (?1547-1619).

Waddesdon Manor's special display *Power and Portraiture: painting at the court of Elizabeth I* is centred on two portraits here attributed to Nicholas Hilliard with unprecedented confidence. Hilliard is famous for his miniatures, painted in watercolour on vellum. Archival documents suggest that he also made paintings 'in greate' – full-scale portraits in oil paint. Scholars have suggested various oil paintings that might have been painted by, or under the direction of Hilliard (including the 'Pelican' and 'Phoenix' portraits, Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool and National Portrait Gallery, London, respectively) but these attributions rely heavily on stylistic comparison with his miniatures and it is hard to make conclusive comparisons between works of such different scale, type and medium. The Rothschild portraits also share many similarities of style and technique with Hilliard's miniatures, particularly the treatment of the faces, lace and jewels. However, what makes the Rothschild portraits so exciting is that scientific analysis carried out at the Hamilton Kerr Institute shows that they are painted on panels constructed of French oak rather than Baltic oak the English painters usually used. The male sitter – Sir Amias Paulet – was Elizabeth I's resident ambassador to France from 1576 to 1579 and for some of this time Hilliard (who was in France from 1576 to 1578) was a member of his retinue. The stylistic affinities with other works by the artist, together with the evidence that links these paintings with Hilliard's time in France, allows scholars to attribute these splendid paintings to Hilliard with unprecedented confidence.

Curator: Juliet Carey

Special Display images: https://www.dropbox.com/sh/hy5wfw2rt8rukok/AADcdU_05uKSu-g3NR2uqDA4a?dl=0

Web page: <https://waddesdon.org.uk/whats-on/elizabethan-power-portraiture-hilliard/>

Free Events (booking advised):

Special Display Tour: *Power and Portraiture*

Thursday 22 June & Thursday 28 September

2.30pm-3.30pm

---Ends---

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Notes to editors: <https://waddesdon.org.uk/about-us/press/notes-for-editors/>

Picture captions: Attributed to Nicholas Hilliard, *Queen Elizabeth I*, 16th Century. Waddesdon (Rothschild Family) © Hamilton Kerr Institute
Attributed to Nicholas Hilliard, *Sir Amias Paulet*, 16th century; oil on panel; 815 x 610mm; Waddesdon (Rothschild Family); acc. no. 28.2017. Photo: © Hamilton Kerr Institute.