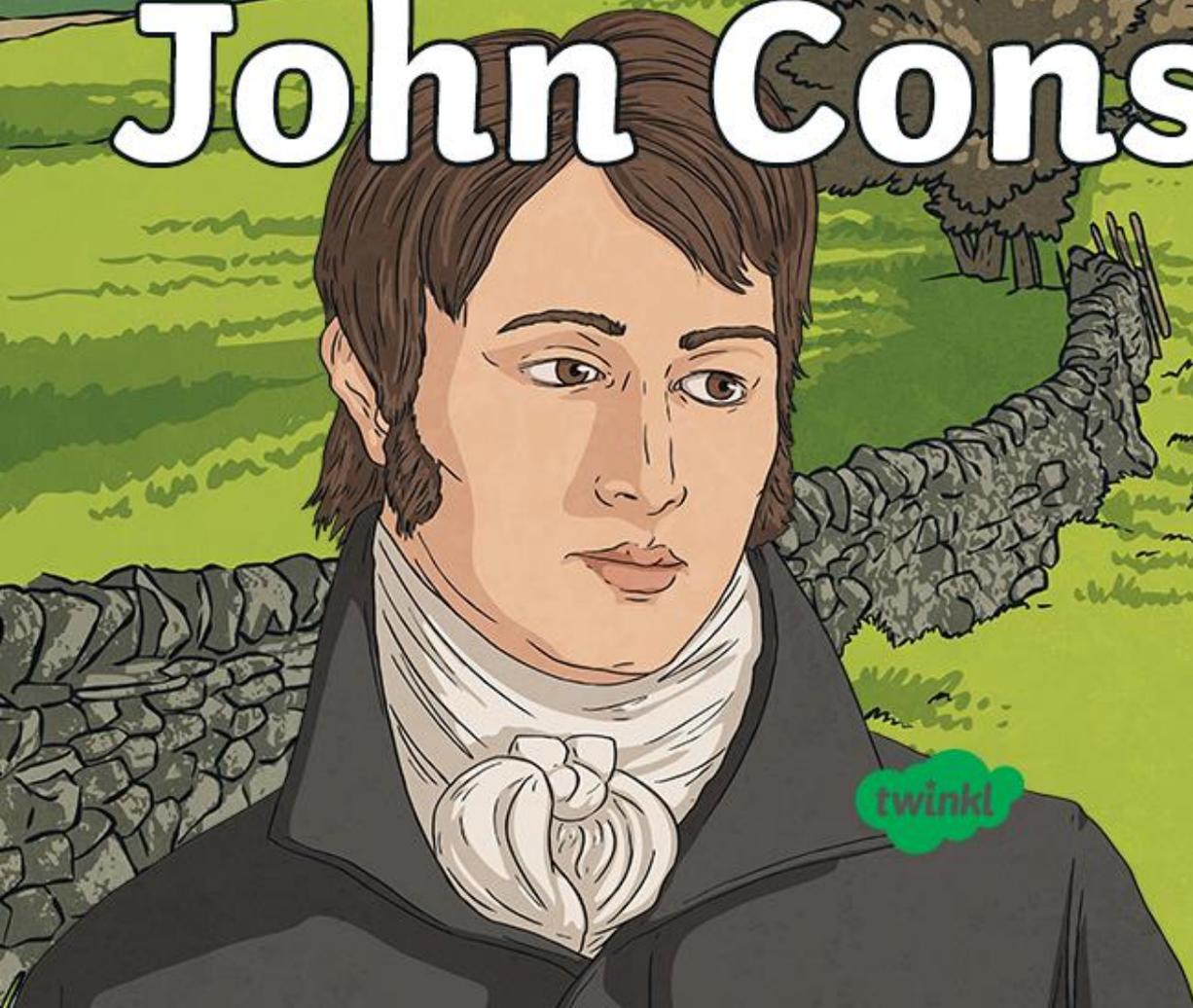


All About the Artist

# John Constable



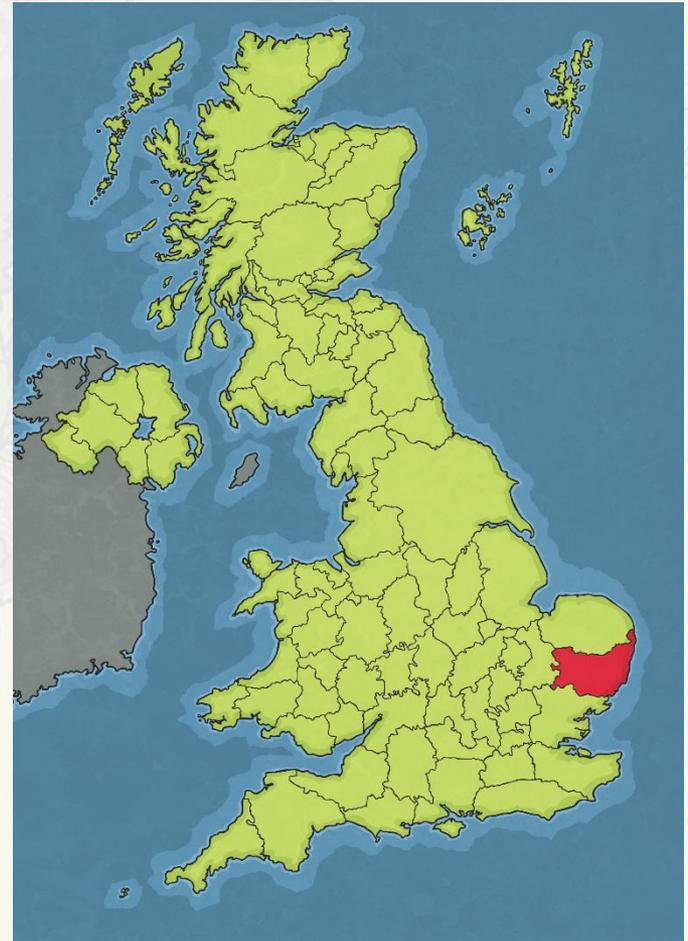
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# All About John Constable

John Constable was born in Suffolk in 1776.



He was an artist and is most well known for his English landscape paintings.



# Early Interests

Constable showed an interest in art from a young age. He liked to go out and sketch scenes of the countryside nearby.

At first, his father wanted him to follow him into the family corn business, but in 1799 he agreed Constable could study art at the Royal Academy.



Malvern Hall, Warwickshire, c.1820-21

# His Paintings

Constable liked to paint the countryside around where he lived, an area called Dedham Vale. He often included buildings, such as churches, cottages and farms and was particularly fascinated in the formation of clouds, which feature in many of his works.

One of his most famous paintings is the Hay Wain, which he painted in 1821.



The Hay Wain, 1821



The Hay Wain, 1821

# Technique

Constable produced many detailed sketches of landscapes, before painting them in oil.

Unlike the fashion for smooth, neat paintings at the time, Constable liked to use very thick oil paints, which he spread and splattered with a knife and scratched with the end of his brush.

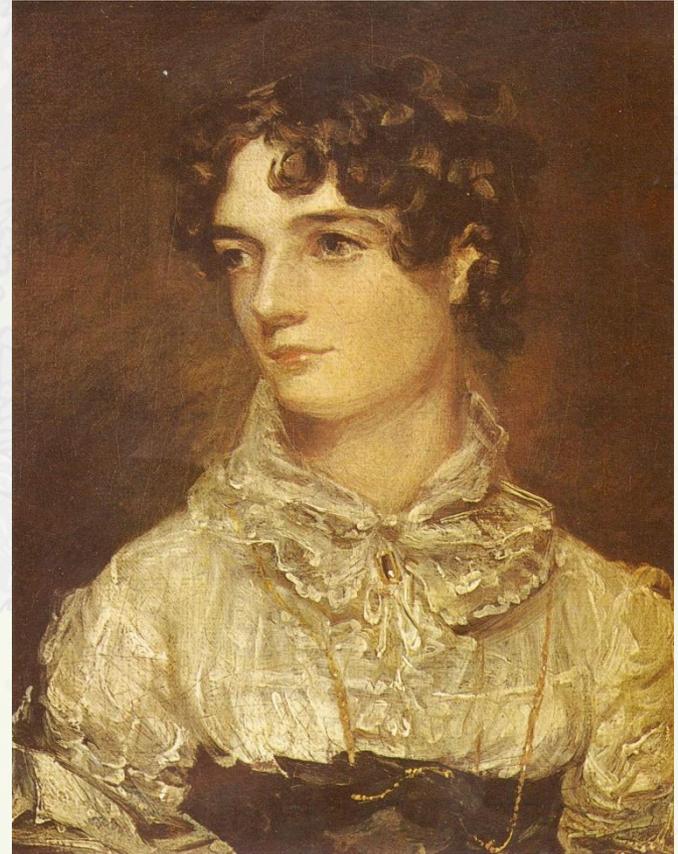


The Harvest Field, 1797

# Making a Living

Constable's realistic paintings were not popular with the British public during his lifetime; he only sold about 20 paintings. He made a living from painting portraits, which he didn't enjoy.

His landscapes were liked in France and he exhibited paintings, including the Hay Wain at the Paris Salon (an art academy), where it won a gold medal.



Maria Bicknell, 1816



Salisbury Cathedral from the Bishop's Grounds c.1825

# Personal Life



Parts of Suffolk are now known as 'Constable County' and tours can be taken of the places Constable painted.

Constable married his childhood friend, Maria Bicknell.

They went on to have seven children.

He spent winter in London and summer in Suffolk.

When his wife died, Constable thought he would never paint again.

Luckily, he did but he wore black for the rest of his life and raised his seven children alone.

# Giant Paintings

Constable liked to create huge paintings on canvas. He started painting on canvases which were six foot, which he called 'six footers'. It showed that he believed landscape paintings were important and it was also a way of getting his paintings noticed at exhibitions.

Some of them can be seen today at Art Galleries in London, including this one, which is exhibited in Tate Britain.



Salisbury Cathedral  
from the Meadows, 1831



What can you see in this this 'six footer'?

# Leading the Way

Although Constable was considered old-fashioned by his peers for wanting to paint realistic landscapes, he was actually very modern in the way he approached his work. Most artists at the time would have painted straight on to canvas, whereas he liked to sketch numerous detailed designs using oil paints, before starting on his final piece. Many of his sketches were 'six footers' too. These are as admired as his finished paintings today.



Stratford Mill, full sized sketch 1819



Stratford Mill, finished painting 1820

# His Final Years

Constable became a member of the Royal Academy in 1829, where he was a popular lecturer with his students.

He also began giving talks about the history of landscape painting.

These talks were very successful.

He died at the age of 60, on 31<sup>st</sup> March 1837 and was buried in Hampstead, London.



Hadleigh Castle, 1829



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