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4 April 2026

Seaton Delaval Hall Celebrates VANBRUGH300



Seaton Delaval V300 Weekend images courtesy of The House of Hues

We're delighted to bring you the latest edition of the Vanbrugh300 newsletter, welcoming both returning readers and those joining our celebrations for the first time.

In this issue, we reflect on the recent [Vanbrugh300 weekend at Seaton Delaval Hall](#), shining a spotlight on its remarkable architecture. With the Cast of Players projection artwork, the Northern Butterflies performance, and a series of engaging workshops, it was a brilliant launch to the Vanbrugh300 weekends still to come!

We also look back on last week's events, including the commemoration of Vanbrugh at [St Stephen Walbrook](#) and the Georgian Group's [2026 symposium: Vanbrugh: From Stage to Stone](#).

To learn more about VANBRUGH300, [visit our website](#) and explore the [What's On page](#) to see upcoming events and activities.

[Visit the VANBRUGH300 Website](#)

Seaton Delaval Hall Vanbrugh300 Weekend



Our first Vanbrugh300 weekend took place last weekend at Seaton Delaval Hall, marking a fantastic start to the celebrations. Families enjoyed a fast-paced, interactive 20-minute storytelling performance by Lucy Lill and Alys Torrance, which whisked audiences through the many roles and achievements of one of Britain's most surprising and multi-talented figures. Meanwhile, the "Hats Off to Vanbrugh!" family design session invited participants to create their own wearable pieces of architecture inspired by the design of Seaton Delaval Hall. It was an inspiring way to begin the Vanbrugh300 weekends and shine a well-deserved spotlight on Seaton Delaval Hall. Some of our highlights included:



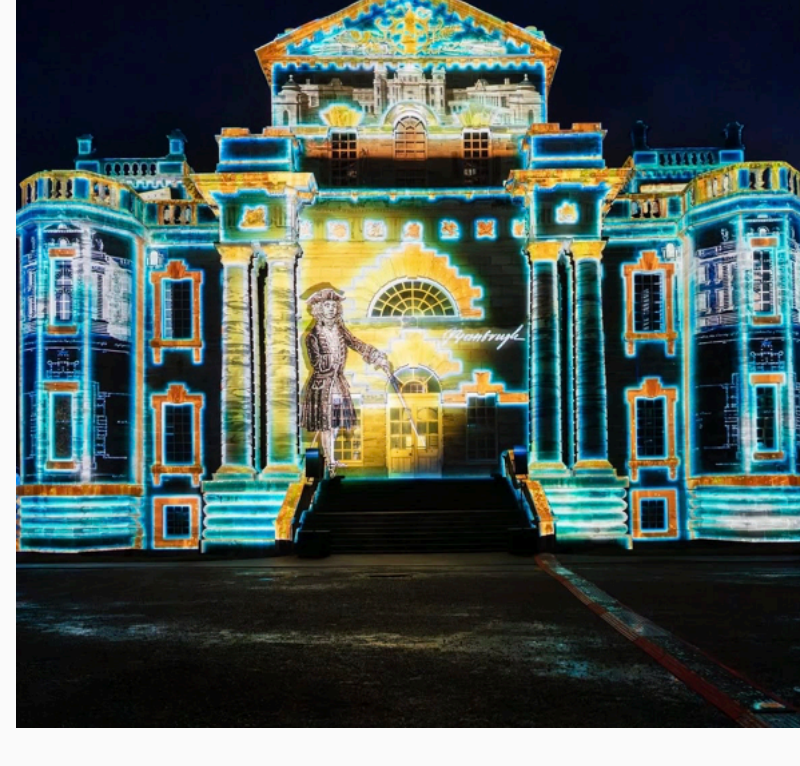
Working with local community artist Ruth Mary Johnson and Andrew Weatherhead, **Northern Butterflies** explored the life and work of Sir John Vanbrugh through drama, imagination and play, culminating in their own original performance. Northern Butterflies is a small creative charity in Southeast Northumberland supporting people with learning disabilities and those with mental ill-health, using artistic practice to boost wellbeing and confidence.

The performance was funded by the National Lottery Heritage Fund and is a core part of the community programme for Vanbrugh 300. One of the key objectives of the project is to develop and strengthen relationships with community groups, particularly those who may not have previously engaged with the sites, and to encourage new audiences to take part in festival activity.



Sam, group leader from Northern Butterflies, said: "we were delighted to have been part of this extraordinary, exceptional project Vanbrugh 300. I personally have been impressed by the dedication and achievements of those performing. Ruth has a natural gift and worked magnificently with the learners creating a unique performance in such a short space of time. It makes me wonder on a longer delivery what the group could achieve next. I feel the project has proved to the learners what is possible and I know they are all very proud of themselves. Seaton Delaval Hall has a special place in many of the learners hearts. I feel the project arrived at the right time for us on our heritage journey and I look forward to the working with Ruth again aligning art and audio in other heritage sites."

[Watch the Performance](#)



The Cast of Players, a projection artwork, was a celebration of Seaton Delaval Hall, its communities and its architect, Sir John Vanbrugh, capturing the unique blend of grandeur and reverence. Vanbrugh's iconic building was reimagined as a vast magical toy theatre, staged and prepared by the flamboyant Delavals, with all their flair for theatrics contained within. 300 people (and pets) celebrated their connections to Seaton Delaval Hall through portraits by photographer Richard Eyers which were bought to life through projection and sound by Illuminos.

[Watch the projection artwork](#)



The launch of **Vanbrugh: Rockstar of the English Baroque**, is a new display introducing visitors to Sir John Vanbrugh - architect, playwright, soldier, and spy. Each partner site will explore Vanbrugh's life and work, alongside his relationship with his patrons and the buildings he created in each location. This initiative will be featured in more detail in our next newsletter, where you can find dates, venues, and further information! [\[READ MORE\]](#)

[Find out more about V300 Weekends and Exhibitions](#)

Choral Evensong commemorating Sir John Vanbrugh at St Stephen Walbrook Service



A beautiful Evensong Service of Commemoration was held at St Stephen Walbrook in the City of London to celebrate the life and legacy of the remarkable architect and playwright Sir John Vanbrugh. The service took place on 26 March 2026, marking the 300th anniversary of Vanbrugh's death in 1726. Until now, there has been no monument to Vanbrugh at his place of burial. Supported by The Georgian Group and the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects, the service concluded with the unveiling of a new wall monument designed by Caroe Architecture.

The Address was given by Lord Chartres, who reflected on Vanbrugh's life and work before blessing the new monument. The Officiant was the Revd Stephen Baxter, and the Readers included Vanbrugh's biographer Charles Saumarez Smith, Nick Howard, Co-Chairman of Castle Howard, and Chris Bicknell, Master of the Worshipful Company of Chartered Architects. Music was performed by St Stephen's Voices, directed by Andrew Earis, with Jonathan Dods at the organ. A full recording of the service is available on St Stephen Walbrook's YouTube channel.



Images courtesy of Carla Salvatore, taken during the commemorative service for Sir John Vanbrugh at St Stephen Walbrook.

[Watch the Service](#)

The Georgian Group's 2026 Symposium Vanbrugh: From Stage to Stone



Last week saw The Georgian Group host its annual symposium, *Vanbrugh: From Stage to Stone*, held in partnership with the Ax:son Johnson Centre for the Study of Classical Architecture at Downing College. This multidisciplinary conference explored the impact and enduring legacy of Sir John Vanbrugh. The programme featured an outstanding line-up of speakers, offering fresh insights into all aspects of Vanbrugh's life and work, and examining why his work continues to be celebrated in this tercentenary year.

Thanks to the support of The National Lottery Heritage Fund, a full recording of the symposium will be made available on our dedicated Vanbrugh300 website - so do keep an eye out if you weren't able to join us on the day.

Vanbrugh300 on the Today Show

The Today Show marked the anniversary of Vanbrugh and the festival on 26 March. The segment explored Vanbrugh's lasting legacy, from his dramatic Baroque masterpieces such as Blenheim Palace and Castle Howard to his influence on British cultural and architectural history. Featuring expert insights and reflections on his bold, theatrical style, the programme highlighted how Vanbrugh's work continues to captivate and inspire three centuries on. You can listen on BBC Sounds. **The Vanbrugh segment starts at 2 hours, 55 minutes, 30 seconds.**

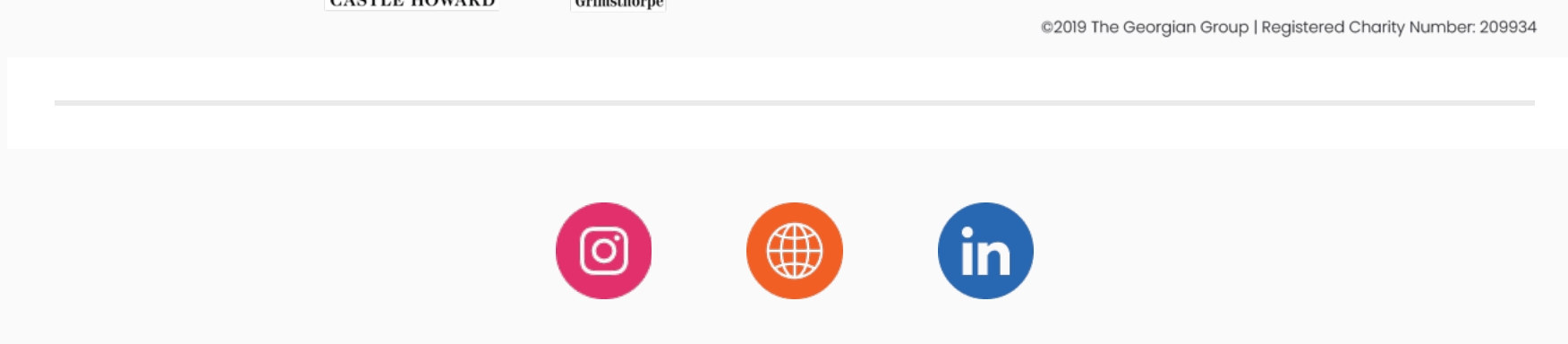


[Listen Here](#)

Dates for your Diary this April

- **11 April** - [Vanbrugh300 Guided Tour](#): Spotlight on Castle Howard's Visionary Architect
- **18 April** - Lecture: [Vanbrugh's Landscape and Garden Buildings](#)
- **24 April** - [Soane Late: The Drama of Architecture](#)
- **25 - 26 April** - [Blenheim Palace Vanbrugh300 Weekend](#)
- **29 April** - [Panel Talk: Vanbrugh's Hidden Blenheim](#)
- **30 April** - [Vanbrugh: Rockstar of the English Baroque at Grimsthorpe Castle](#)

[Explore the full programme at Vanbrugh300.co.uk](#)



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