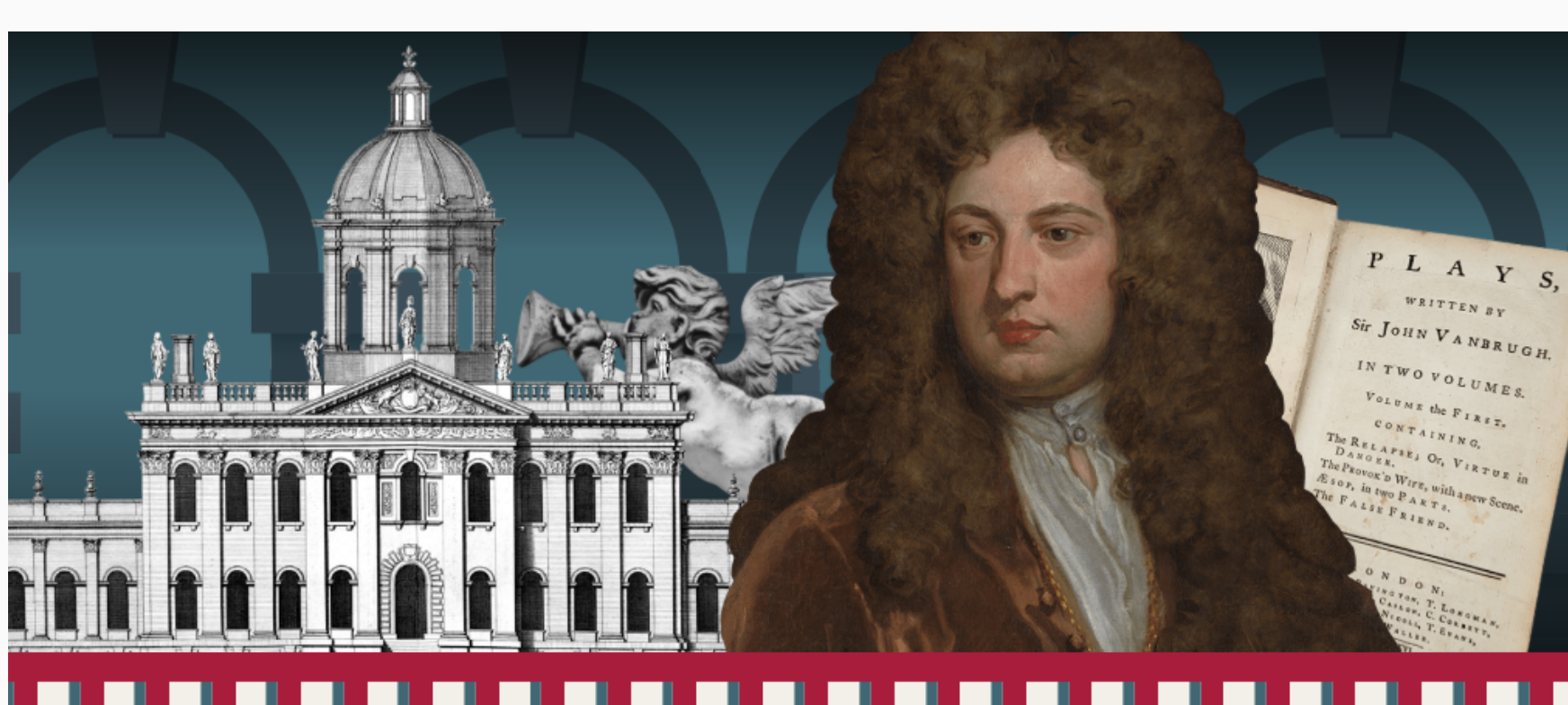


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16 May 2026

The Radical Beginner: Vanbrugh's First Masterpiece



We're pleased to share the latest edition of the Vanbrugh300 newsletter, with exciting updates and opportunities to celebrate the life and legacy of Sir John Vanbrugh - whether you've been following the programme from the beginning or are joining us for the first time.

In this issue, we look ahead to [Castle Howard's Vanbrugh300 Weekend](#) on Saturday 30 – Sunday 31 May, a special opportunity to experience one of Vanbrugh's most celebrated architectural masterpieces. We're also delighted to feature an article by Francis Terry on [The New Tapestry Drawing Room at Castle Howard](#).

Alongside this, we are highlighting the newly available [Vanbrugh: From Stage to Stone Symposium recordings](#), now free to access on the Vanbrugh300 website. We also look back on the [first event in our free Vanbrugh300 lecture series](#), which took place at Blenheim Palace, marking an exciting milestone in our anniversary programme. And finally, the recent [BBC Radio 4 Front Row episode](#) celebrating Sir John Vanbrugh.

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](#)

Castle Howard VANBRUGH300 Weekend Saturday 30 – Sunday 31 May

Get ready for a weekend of creativity, discovery, and fun for all ages! Enjoy a lively 20-minute family storytelling performance by Lucy Lill and Alys Torrance, inviting audiences to step into Sir John Vanbrugh's shoes and uncover the many chapters of his extraordinary life. Children and families can also explore *Playshapes: Castle Constructors*, an interactive play experience designed by Yorkshire-based artist Pippa Hale in collaboration with *Timberplay*, inspired by Vanbrugh's architectural vision for Castle Howard. Plus, don't miss *Staging the Baroque: Vanbrugh at Castle Howard*, a new exhibition curated by architect Roz Barr, exploring Vanbrugh's masterful use of scale, shadow, and light in creating one of Britain's most iconic stately homes.



[Find Out More](#)

The New Tapestry Drawing Room at Castle Howard By Francis Terry

The new Tapestry Drawing Room at Castle Howard is a completely new architectural treatment to a room which was destroyed by fire in 1940. The room had been left as an empty shell of charred stonework ever since. The brief was to restore the room to what Vanbrugh would have done and incorporate the four Vanderbank tapestries which were designed and woven for the room in 1706. The room was designed by... [\[READ MORE\]](#)



Vanbrugh: From Stage to Stone Symposium Recordings

Held in partnership with the The Georgian Group and the Ax:son Johnson Centre for the Study of Classical Architecture, this academic symposium took place at Downing College on 27 March as part of the Vanbrugh300 festival, celebrating the life, work, and enduring legacy of Sir John Vanbrugh.

We're pleased that recordings of the symposium are now available to watch - or revisit - featuring the day's engaging papers and panel discussions. These can be viewed on the [Vanbrugh300 website](#) or [The Georgian Group YouTube channel](#), with thanks to the [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#) for supporting the filming of the event.



[Watch the Symposium](#)

Vanbrugh300 Free Lecture Series Begins at Blenheim Palace

The first event in our free Vanbrugh300 lecture series took place at Blenheim Palace, marking an exciting milestone in our anniversary programme. It was a wonderful evening, with over 100 attendees joining Lady Henrietta Spencer-Churchill and an expert panel - Christine Stevenson, Jeremy Musson, Edward Lewis, and Adrian Attwood - to reflect on the life and work of Sir John Vanbrugh, principal architect of Blenheim. Combining historical insight with present-day perspectives, the event inspired many attendees to discover more about Vanbrugh and his enduring legacy.



[Discover More Free Lectures](#)

Last chance to visit [Blueprints of Power at Blenheim Palace!](#) The exhibition closes on 31 May, so don't miss this final opportunity to explore Vanbrugh's vision and legacy.

Celebrating Sir John Vanbrugh on BBC Radio 4's Front Row

Nick Ahad speaks to art historian Sir Charles Saumarez Smith, co-curator of the Vanbrugh exhibition at the Sir John Soane's Museum, and Rory Fraser who is writing a biography on Vanbrugh, discussing the man happy creating dramas for the British stage and dramatic buildings on the British landscape. You can listen on BBC Sounds.



[Listen on BBC Sounds](#)

Dates for your Diary

- **9 June** - [Vanbrugh's Country Houses: a lecture by Jeremy Musson](#) at The Georgian Group
- **11 June** - [One in a series of free lectures](#), Ophelia Field and Rory Fraser at Stowe House
- **11 June** - [One in a series of free lectures](#), Amy Boyington at Grimsthorpe Castle
- **13 June** - [One in a series of free lectures](#), Nick Howard, Es Devlin and Francis Terry at Castle Howard
- **13 June** - Opening of the installation [Story of the Four Winds at Castle Howard](#)
- **19 June** - [In Conversation: Sir Charles Saumarez Smith and Jeremy Musson at Grimsthorpe Castle](#)
- **20 June** - [Grimsthorpe Castle Vanbrugh300 Weekend](#)

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



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