

From history painting to Steve Bell's cartoons Parodies of Napoleonic art (1801-2019)

An exhibition curated by **Pascal Dupuy** (University of Rouen)

**On display at the Maison Française d'Oxford,
19 November 2021 - 10 January 2022**
Monday to Friday 9 am - 5 pm

**Private viewing in the presence of cartoonist Steve Bell and curator Pascal Dupuy
at 6 pm on Thursday 2 December.**

At the beginning of the 19th century, during a period of intense military conflicts between England and France, Napoleon I's self-glorifying artistic policy provided English caricaturists with a rich repertoire of patterns and symbols. Napoleon and Napoleonic art were to become the perfect targets and sources of inspiration for this generation of cartoonists.

Nowadays, the original paintings by David, Gros and their peers have become classics, and are still well-loved iconographic sources for contemporary cartoonists. While the political assaults on Napoleon have disappeared from their works, this iconography still allows present-day artists to confer to contemporary politicians the French emperor's alleged worst defects, such as his extreme ambition and overwhelming authoritarianism.

From James Gillray to Steve Bell, this exhibition aims to explore the singularity and humorous touches of British cartoonists, who have become masters in playfully adapting and taking advantage of the Napoleonic artistic style.

