

communiqué /press release**For immediate release**

A World Premiere
**THE PALLADIAN REVIVAL:
LORD BURLINGTON, HIS VILLA AND GARDENS AT CHISWICK**

19 July to 25 September 1994

Montréal, 18 July 1994 – Chiswick Villa is one of the most influential private houses in the history of architecture. Just as Andrea Palladio's Villa Rotonda helped to define for future generations the architecture of the Renaissance in Italy, so Chiswick is the *locus classicus* of the Palladian Revival of the eighteenth century. Its architect and owner, Richard Boyle, 3rd Earl of Burlington (1694-1753), was the leader of a movement to develop a "New Taste" in architecture. Burlington concentrated his thought upon the making of his new villa and its gardens, seeing the work at Chiswick as a laboratory for the application of his ideas. By returning to ancient Rome through the works of Palladio, Inigo Jones and their followers, he was able to revitalize Europe's age-old search for a rational architecture based on Classical models. His achievement not only signalled the close of England's Baroque period, it represented the first studied attempt in Europe to invest the art of building with a truly Neo-Classical approach to antiquity. The repercussions were immense, for Burlington was relentless both in his search for a new body of authoritative ideas in architecture and in his efforts to promote them. Acclaimed as "the modern Vitruvius" and "the Palladio and Jones of his time", his influence rapidly extended eastward to the European continent and westward to Ireland and North America.

Chiswick is unique, and uniquely important, in another way. A vast body of drawings for the project by Burlington and his associate William Kent (1685-1748) still survives, and so too, do the amazing views and paintings that Burlington himself commissioned to celebrate his achievement. Burlington was also one of the greatest collectors of architectural drawings in history, and his collection of the archives of Palladio and Jones was used as a direct source for the architecture and ornament of Chiswick. Chiswick Villa therefore lends itself to an extraordinarily instructive exhibition that enables us to follow, step by step, a major architect's thinking as he worked from source to design, from design to representation, in the making of a building which, as the architect Sir Norman Foster has written, "Ought to be a place of pilgrimage for every architect." (Heritage Today, June 1994).

The complicated evolution of the gardens at Chiswick holds its own fascination. As Lord Burlington's vision matured, the creation of distinct areas, each with its own reminiscence of the Antique world, took precedence over a purely scenographic arrangement of terminated vistas. Then in the 1730s William Kent added his radical and highly influential brand of garden design, linking the different areas to create a succession of pictorial adventures. Chiswick therefore bears witness to many of those innovations that were to make the eighteenth-century English garden famous.

For the first time, a major loan from the Trustees of the Chatsworth Settlement has made it possible to assemble all these documents in one exhibition. Designs by Palladio and Jones will be placed alongside drawings by Burlington and his draughtsmen. Precious garden studies by Kent and topographical views by a host of painters including Pieter Andreas Rysbrack and Jacques Rigaud will be shown in order to recreate this most celebrated of all English houses and gardens. While most of the objects in the exhibition come from Chatsworth, important material comes also from the Royal Institute of British Architects, Sir John Soane's Museum, and the National Portrait Gallery in London. Rare books from the Canadian Centre for Architecture's own collection have been added to complete the range of sources used by Burlington and to show how the Palladian Revival was perpetuated in print. A series of photographs by Richard Pare, commissioned for the exhibition by the CCA, shows the villa as it appears today.

The exhibition, a collaboration between the Royal Academy of Art in London, the Heinz Architectural Center at the Carnegie Museum of Art in Pittsburgh and the CCA, opens first in Montréal, where it will be seen from 19 July to 25 September 1994. It will then be exhibited in Pittsburgh from 29 October 1994 to 8 January 1995, and will return to London for presentation at the Royal Academy from 2 February to 2 April 1995.

A catalogue published in English and French editions by Yale University Press and co-edited by the CCA and Yale University Press accompanies the exhibition. Written by guest exhibition curator John Harris, this 280-page catalogue is illustrated with more than 120 color illustrations.

Also, to mark the presentation of the exhibition **The Palladian Revival: Lord Burlington, His Villa and Gardens at Chiswick**, the CCA is pleased to invite the public to attend two lectures, one by John Harris and one by the French architectural historian Professor Jacques Carré, on Tuesday, 13 September at 5:45 pm at the CCA's Théâtre Paul-Desmarais.

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