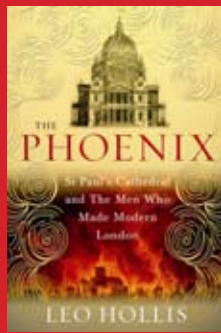


Book



Inundated with plague, civil war and devastating fire, the legacy that the seventeenth century leaves on London is striking; St. Paul's Cathedral and the Bank of England both originate from this era. Opening in the 1640s, *The Phoenix* delves into the lives of five extraordinary men who helped the capital to rise out of the ashes and explores the complex politics, science and philosophy of the day.

The Phoenix: St Paul's Cathedral and the Men Who Made Modern London is published on 15 May. Weidenfeld & Nicholson, £20

www.orionbooks.co.uk

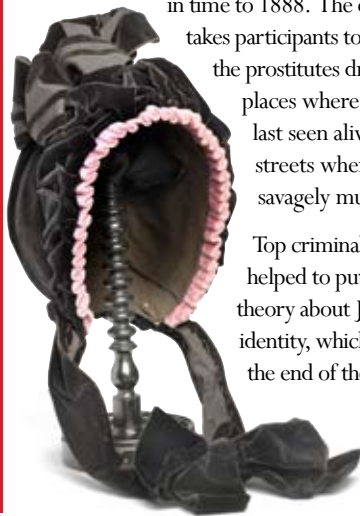
EVENTS

LONDON'S MOST FAMOUS SON?

One of the capital's best-known personalities is also its most notorious, says *Claudia Rodrigues*

Even today, 120 years after the hunt began, Ripperologist speculation continues. We still don't know exactly who Jack the Ripper was, but he is undoubtedly one of London's most famous figures.

One vivid way to learn more about the controversy is to go on a Ripping Yarns tour of the Whitechapel alleyways, soaking in the evidence, travelling back in time to 1888. The evening walk takes participants to pubs where the prostitutes drank, the places where they were last seen alive, and the streets where they were savagely murdered.



Top criminal profilers have helped to put together a theory about Jack's true identity, which is revealed at the end of the tour. Could the murders have been part of a plot

involving Prince Albert Victor, Duke of Clarence, with a Royal cover up to protect him? Or, less plausibly, was the killer actually a baboon, as one theory of the time suggested?

As an alternative way of exploring the tale, this month Museum in Docklands will host the first exhibition ever dedicated to investigating the Ripper's murders and their legacy. This display brings together the surviving original documents for the first time; police files, photographs, letters from the public and Charles Booth's meticulously drawn poverty maps will all be on show. Personal accounts of people who used to live in the East End will also provide visitors with insight into what it was like to endure the difficult conditions of the time.

Ripping Yarns walking tour
www.jack-the-ripper-tours.com

Jack the Ripper and the East End
15 May – 2 November
Museum in Docklands
0870 444 3856
www.museumindocklands.org.uk



New Contemporary Chinese Artist

Next month the work of one of China's new contemporary artists, He Hong Wei, will be exhibited in London for the first time. Wei's main subject matter is birthplace, due to the importance of the home in Chinese culture. When he returned to his own home in Inner Mongolia, he witnessed a rundown and desolate setting, a lost way of life, a shadow of his happy childhood memories. Even though his journey home was difficult, He Hong Wei presents through these works a variety of possibilities for every traveller to find their way to their spiritual home, hoping that they will all gain access to their spiritual home. This is, perhaps, where the true charm of his paintings lies.

Compared to an ancient, epic Chinese scroll painting, the whole collection has yellow and purple hues running throughout, linking the past, the present and the future, but at the same time every painting in the series possesses individuality and its own aesthetic characteristics. With brush strokes evoking real exuberance and passion, rich colours and firm lines converge, blend and flow, coming together in a pattern of life that is entirely Hong Wei's own. No. 4 brings a feeling of winter; a light snow is falling and tall trees stand darkly in front



No. 4

of the gate. The colour red evokes the warmth of home and a child's scribbles can still be seen on the door. In No. 7, the neighbours' black poplar looms over the shabby house with red bricks lying on the ground, waiting to take over its space.



No. 7

Hong Wei draws a great deal from traditional Chinese painting and calligraphy, but also shows the influence of Western masters such as Cezanne and Picasso.

Hometown: a Series comprises 29 paintings, of which 25 are to be presented for exhibition and sale by Oc-Eo Art at Gallery27, 27 Cork Street, Mayfair, W1 from 30 June to 12 July

For further details and an invitation to a private view please contact Oc-Eo Art

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