



# Pride, vanity, image and status.

Evonne Baltrock



## Painting by Pompeo Batoni (1708-1787), of Charles, 7<sup>th</sup> Earl of Northampton

This stood out to me on being introduced to the painting mainly because of its element of showing off.

The key indicator of this extravagance is the use of **space** around the Earl, because only the wealthiest could afford to have the a full length portrait of themselves done, let alone all the extra space surrounding him.

The Earl in this portrait displays his wealth and status greatly by making sure the viewer can see his fine **furnishings** and part of his grand house (the curtain, the chair), as well as his books implying he is well read, and his hunting dog that suggests he owns vast estates. On top of this he wears incredibly lavish robes, and even the floor is displayed beneath him, so that the tile pattern can be admired.

All these features have been **illuminated** by the way that the light falls behind him as well as from the side, and the high up angle he takes with the sky behind him, making him almost comparable to a **god like figure**, especially with the bust of Athena sat next to him.

All of these features would have us believe that the purpose of this painting was to exert the **pride** and high position of the Earl to all those who came across it.

## Leather shoes, dating 1550-60, Treasured possessions exhibition.



- ▶ These shoes were found in the 'shoe makers room' of Corpus Christi college (they needed a shoe maker's room!)
- ▶ What struck me about these shoes was that they were completely impractical; large holes had been deliberately left in to display the bright colourful stockings of the chap wearing them, bold stockings being the height of fashion at the time!



- ▶ Near these shoes was another set of shoes with obviously uncomfortable heels, made of meticulously embroidered silk, as well as a 'costume book' (dating 1549-1578), compiling colourful pictures of men and women's costumes this book was seen as a 'strong moral code for self-comportment', suggesting how stricter **attention** to ones outward appearance and fashion became a growing social movement in this period.



So much like the painting by Batoni, a trend has emerged from 1500s-1700s fashion of not necessarily practicality, or having painting made for personal memory, but instead putting on display as much wealth and extravagance of an individual as possible, in both clothes and art work.





## Child's button blanket

- This child's button blanket made by Fred Yeltatzie and Theresa Mitchel in the 1950s, from the Northwest Coast of North America, is made out of felt applique and meticulously rimmed with silver buttons. It would be worn at ceremonial occasions by higher status family members.
- This shows again an importance of displaying status through clothing traditionally, and in other parts of the world.



## Headdress, Peking, China (19<sup>th</sup> cent./early 20<sup>th</sup>)..

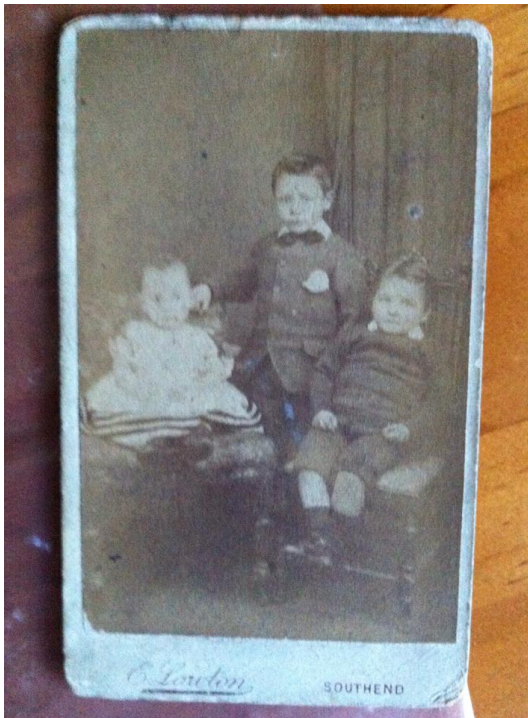
- ▶ Made with the blue feathers of the kingfisher, this headdress would have been worn by a very high ranking lady, such as a queen or concubine of the king. The phoenix on the side were only permitted to be worn on the heads of those with royal status in China.
- ▶ While very beautiful, it would have been very heavy, and worn with a purpose of exerting superiority.



## Piece of the Berlin Wall

- Once covered in graffiti as a statement, and so more of a **retaliation** against status and authority, as an expression of freedom., through that art work.
- The way the wall has been dispersed in chunks since it became rubble symbolises a shared heritage an pride in it having been taken down and remembered through it's remaining fragments. **A status of a turning point in history of many individuals.**

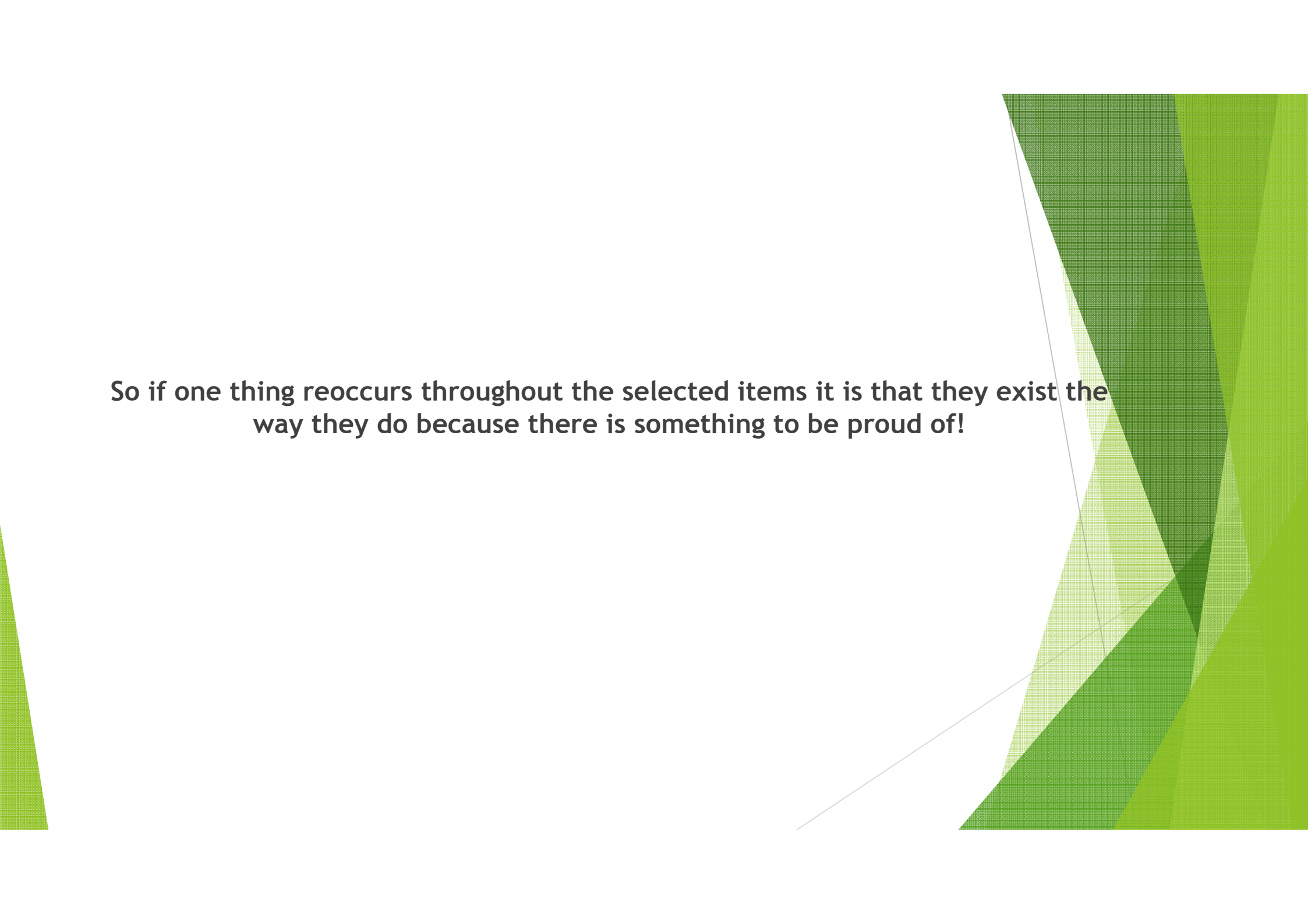




## Typical family photos

- These children would be dressed up to be captured at their very best, in what would likely have been kept as a family keepsake.
- The younger boy takes a firm posture as a sign of growing to maturity before adulthood, as he may have been encouraged to do.
- This photo may have been taken to display how proud a family may have been of their children, and what may have been their home. This may have been in relation to their social class or the upbringing of a new generation, which they have chosen to show in the new technology of photography.

**So if one thing reoccurs throughout the selected items it is that they exist the way they do because there is something to be proud of!**

The background features abstract, overlapping geometric shapes in various shades of green, ranging from light lime to dark forest green. The shapes are layered, creating a sense of depth and movement. The overall composition is clean and modern, with the text centered in a bold, black, sans-serif font.