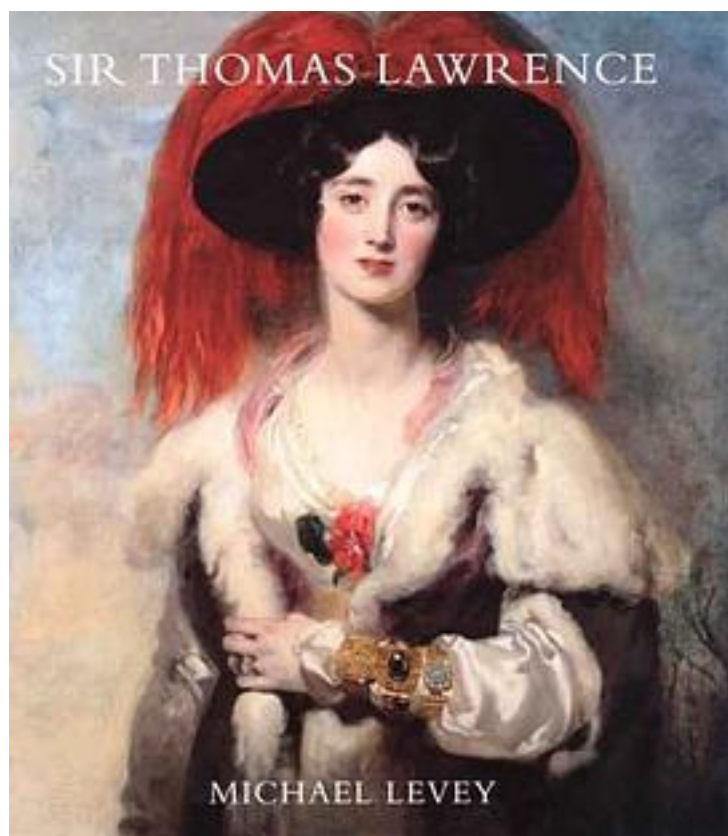


Sir Thomas Lawrence



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Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769 - 1830) was the most gifted and successful British portrait painter in the generation following Gainsborough and Reynolds, and his pre-eminence was publicly confirmed when he was elected President of the Royal Academy of Arts in 1820. Although he rose to fame when George III still actively ruled, he will always be associated with the Regency and the extensive, enlightened patronage he received from the Prince Regent, later George IV. Yet partly because of that association with a

period and a monarch generally derided, and partly because of its bravura style, Lawrence's work has often been dismissed as flashy and meretricious. This beautifully illustrated, eloquently written and comprehensive account reverses that view, demonstrating that Lawrence was an intelligent, hard-working and profoundly conscientious artist. This book is the first sustained study of the work of Lawrence to be published for many years, and the first ever to pay proper attention to his highly accomplished drawings as well as to his paintings. Tracing the steps in his career, Michael Levey analyses and illustrates the finest of Lawrence's achievements, making pertinent comparisons with the work of his British contemporaries and also with that of major foreign artists like Goya and Ingres. Admired from early childhood onwards for his instinctive ability to seize a likeness, Lawrence vividly recreated most of the leading personalities of his day, not only in England but in post-Napoleonic Europe, culminating in his masterly full-length portrait of Pope Pius VII. Yet some of his most attractive studies - painted or drawn - are of unimportant people, of friends and of children. Several striking works reproduced here have remained in private hands and will be largely unfamiliar. Utilising unpublished as well as published sources, focusing detailed attention upon individual works, and always urging the pleasure to be gained from Lawrence's virtuoso handling of paint and of chalk, this book constitutes an impressive, in-depth argument for serious reconsideration of him as an artist.

作者介绍:

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