



## The First Georgians: The German Kings Who Made Britain (w/t)

2014 marks the 300<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Hanoverian succession to the British throne. To mark the occasion, the BBC and Royal Collection Trust are embarking on a unique partnership - encompassing a three-part series presented by Dr Lucy Worsley for BBC Four, and an exhibition at The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace.

*The First Georgians: The German Kings Who Made Britain (w/t)*, will present the revealing and surprising story of Britain in the reigns of George I and George II (1714-60) – the age of the 'German Georges'. In 1714, Britain imported a new German royal family from Hanover, headed by Georg Ludwig (aka George I) - an uncharismatic, middle-aged man with a limited grasp of English. Lucy Worsley will reveal how this unlikely new dynasty secured the throne –and how they kept it.

An intimate and close-up portrait of these German kings of Britain, the series will follow George I, his son George II, and their feuding family as they slowly established themselves in their adopted kingdom - despite ongoing threats from invading Jacobites and a lukewarm initial response from the British public.

Lucy will show how what was happening at court intersected with enormous changes that were reshaping Britain. The years 1714-60 felt like a 'peculiar experiment in the future': modern cabinet government began under the Hanoverian kings, satire spoke the truth to power, and 'liberty' was the watchword of the age.

Lucy will travel to Hanover to discover that the politics and dynastic squabbles, which defined the reigns of George I and George II, frequently had a continental backstory. And she will unravel the central paradox of the German Georges: it was their weaknesses - the infighting between king and Prince of Wales, and their frequent absences in Hanover – that, in a very real way, helped to secure the dynasty and shape our modern British political system.

*The First Georgians: The German Kings Who Made Britain* (w/t) is being produced in partnership with Royal Collection Trust, to coincide with the exhibition *The First Georgians: Art & Monarchy 1714 – 1760* at The Queen's Gallery, Buckingham Palace from 11 April to 12 October 2014. Curated by Desmond Shawe-Taylor, Surveyor of The Queen's Pictures, the exhibition is the first to explore the reigns of George I and George II, shedding light on the role of this new dynasty in the transformation of political, intellectual and cultural life. Through over 300 works from the Royal Collection collected or commissioned by the Georgian royal family, it tells the story of Britain's emergence as the world's most liberal, commercial and cosmopolitan society, embracing freedom of expression and the unfettered exchange of ideas.

Lucy will discover the personal side of the early Georgians through the spectacular paintings, drawings and furniture on display in the exhibition. With Royal Collection Trust curators, she will see how objects in the Collection reveal Britain at the very moment it was becoming the modern country we know today.

**The First Georgians: The German Kings Who Made Britain (w/t)**

A BBC Bristol Production for BBC Four

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