

## Lecture Programme : 2024 - 2025



**16th April 2024**

**The Healing Power of Plants**

**Lecturer : Timothy Walker**

Mankind has exploited the medicinal properties of plants for thousands of years, yet the role of plants in modern medicine is still considered to be peripheral by many people. This talk attempts to put the record straight and to show that plant products are used every day by all of us to relieve pain and suffering, to heal wounds and cure diseases. This is a talk with a very wide appeal and relevance.

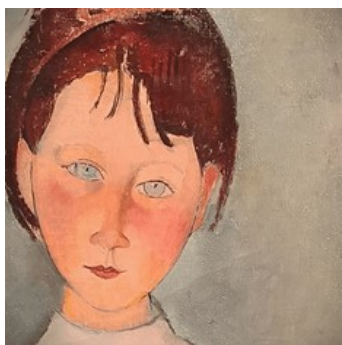


**21st May 2024**

**What have the Huguenots ever done for us? Mass migration and the Arts in Britain**

**Lecturer : Vivienne Lawes**

The mass migration of the French Protestant Huguenots in the 16th and 17th centuries impacted the arts, the military and finance sectors of the countries to which they fled after suffering Catholic persecution in their homeland. It is estimated that upwards of 50,000 people settled in the British Isles, and that perhaps one in six of the country's current population descends from Huguenot lineage.



**18th June 2024**

**Amedeo Modigliani**

**Lecturer: Lucrezia Walker**

Living and working in Montmartre and Montparnasse in turn-of-the-century Paris, Modigliani embodies the quintessential image of the bohemian artist: handsome, impoverished, living hard, engrossed in his own distinctive mode of expression, dying young only to be celebrated after his short life ended.

**16th July 2024**

**The Art of Winnie-the-Pooh**

**Lecturer: James Campbell**



2024 – 2028 marks one hundred years since Winnie-the-Pooh was introduced to children of all ages in the four iconic books created by A A Milne and E H Shepard.

First seen in *When We Were Very Young* (1924), Winnie-the-Pooh and the characters of the Hundred Acre Wood had their own adventures in *Winnie-The-Pooh* (1926), with *Now We Are Six* (1927) and *The House at Pooh Corner* (1928), giving us more wonderful poems and stories which include the introduction of both Tigger and Poohsticks.

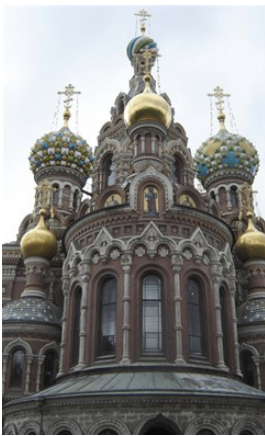
This lecture tells the story of how these much loved books were created by the genius of Milne and Shepard's ground-breaking collaboration and why they remain embedded in our national identity. A wonderful opportunity to see behind the scenes of these marvels of childhood for a hundred years.



**17th September 2024**  
**The Talent in Tite Street**  
**Lecturer: Jennifer Toynbee-Holmes**

London's Tite Street was one of the most influential artistic quarters in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. A staggering amount of talent thrived in just this one street in Chelsea, including James Abbott McNeill Whistler, Oscar Wilde, John Singer Sargent, Robert Brough, Glyn Philpot, Augustus John, Romaine Brooks and Gluck.

Throughout its turbulent history it remained home to innumerable artists, writers, suffragettes, queers and madmen. Here Whistler was bankrupted, from here Oscar Wilde was imprisoned, and Frank Miles went mad. This lecture ties together the private and professional lives of its inhabitants to form a colourful tapestry of art and intrigue.



**15th October 2024**  
**St Petersburg: the Venice of the North**  
**Lecturer: Jane Angelini**

St Petersburg is an epic city, founded in defiance of nature in a region of swampy marshland as Peter the Great's "window to the West". The city that evolved is a remarkably harmonious collection of baroque, rococo, neoclassical and art nouveau buildings that reflect his taste and that of his successors. The large sweeping vistas, the ordered architecture, the majestic palaces reflected in the waters of the canals make St Petersburg hauntingly beautiful.

The museum collections are outstanding and unlike any other.



**19th November 2024**  
**Thomas Heatherwick: a Modern Leonardo?**  
**Lecturer: Ian Swankie**

The past decade has seen the meteoric rise of this extraordinarily versatile British designer with his acclaimed Olympic cauldron, the iconic new London bus and designs for a spectacular new HQ building for Google.

Over the last twenty years the Heatherwick Studio has used an intriguing combination of curiosity and experimentation to produce a vast range of solutions to design challenges around the world. This talk looks at the problems presented, and the wonderfully creative ways in which Heatherwick and his team have responded.

**THIS IS A TICKETED EVENT TO INCLUDE DINNER**



**5th December 2024 - Christmas Event**  
**The Magic of Pantomime**  
**Lecturer: Ian Gledhill**

The history of this enduring and peculiarly British institution, from its origins in 16th century Italian commedia dell'arte through the influence of 19th century music hall, to the family shows that are still much loved today.

On the way we examine the origins of some of the stories used in pantomime as well as such traditions as the (female) principal boy and the (male) pantomime dame. The talk is interspersed with personal anecdotes from the speaker's years of working (and appearing) professionally in pantomime.

2025



**Tuesday 21st January 2025**

**A Decorative Art: the history of wallpaper**

**Lecturer : Jo Banham**

Wallpaper is often regarded as the Cinderella of the Decorative Arts – the most ephemeral and least precious of the decorations produced for the home. Yet, the history of wallpaper is a long and fascinating subject that dates back to the 16th century and encompasses a huge range of beautiful patterns created both by anonymous hands and by some of the best-known designers of the 19th and 20th centuries. This lecture explores the history and development of this product from earliest times up to the present day.



**18th February 2025**

**What really happened on Easter Island**

**Lecturer : Dr Paul Bahn**

Easter Island, or Rapa Nui, is the most isolated piece of permanently inhabited land on the planet, and yet it produced a most extraordinary Stone Age culture: hundreds of sophisticated coastal stone platforms, more than a thousand enormous stone statues, the richest rock art in the Pacific, and a unique writing system.



**18th March 2025**

**The Joan Cooper Memorial Lecture**

**Artemisia Gentileschi; daughter of Rome, painter of Europe**

**Lecturer : Chantal Brotherton-Ratcliffe**

What skills did it take for a woman to become a painter in 17th century Europe? Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1654) was by no means the only woman painter of her period, but she is a rarity, and she also ranks amongst the greatest painters of the 17th century. Her career spanned a time of great change in Italian taste, from the power and earthiness of Caravaggio, to the more elegant classicism of Reni and Domenichino. Her family connections meant that she moved between a number of different centres in Europe - Rome, Florence, Naples and London, and her work reflects the different tastes of these centres.

