

Lecture Programme : 2027 - 2028



20 APRIL 2027

FRIDA KAHLO and DIEGO RIVERA

Lecturer: Chloe Sayer

Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) and Diego Rivera (1886-1957) have iconic status in Mexico. Rivera's intricate visual narratives, rich with allegory and symbolism, adorn the walls of public buildings. Inspired by Aztec and Maya imagery, and by early Italian fresco painting, his vast murals combine social criticism with faith in human progress. Kahlo's work, unlike Rivera's, is small in format. Arguably Mexico's most original painter, she made herself the principal theme of her art. Her paintings reflect her experiences and dreams. This lecture surveys the work of both artists. It chronicles their turbulent marriage and Mexico's history after the Mexican Revolution.



11th MAY 2027

TUDOR ART: A NEW STORY

Lecturer: Christina Faraday

Despite the fame of Holbein's portraits, art might not be the first thing that comes to mind when we think of the Tudors. Yet from Henry VII onwards, the Tudor dynasty made unprecedented use of images and objects to promote their rule. This lecture will uncover the rich variety of painting, architecture, tapestry and other decorative objects that surrounded English viewers in the 16th century, putting these artworks into their religious, political, social and artistic contexts.

The lecture will consider issues such as the extent of Renaissance influences at the court of Henry VIII, the revival of medieval and neo-chivalric themes under Elizabeth I, and the lesser-known artistic atmosphere during the reigns of Henry VII, Edward VI and Mary I.



15 JUNE 2027

CATHERINE THE GREAT: AUTOCRAT AND PATRON OF THE ARTS

Lecturer: Rev Canon Chris Newlands

From relatively humble beginnings, Catherine rose to be one of the few European rulers to receive the title 'The Great'. Aside from her political ambitions and successes, as a patron of the arts, she created an unparalleled collection of paintings, ornaments and sculptures, many of which remain at the centre of The Hermitage Museum. This lecture recounts her rise to power, and her passion for acquiring things of beauty for her private collection.



20 JULY 2027

THE SACRED ART OF TIBET

Lecturer: Zara Fleming

Isolated from the outside world for centuries, Tibet is home to a rich artistic tradition inspired by the teachings of Buddhism. Buddhism began in India during the 5th century BCE and over the centuries developed into three distinct paths – the Hinayana, Mahayana and Vajrayana. Both the Mahayana and the Vajrayana introduced an extraordinary system of visual imagery, and it was these two traditions that permeated Tibet from the 7th century onwards. This lecture explores the wealth of this sacred artistic tradition – and explains how the paintings and sculptures are created, and the diverse ways in which they are used.



17 AUGUST 2027

SPECIAL INTEREST MORNING

TICKETED EVENT

THE ROYAL PALACES OF INDIA and THE ART OF THE DIVINE: HINDU GODS AND GODDESSES

Lecturer: John Stevens

India's royal palaces are magnificent, historic residences reflecting a blend of Rajput, Mughal and European architectural styles. This lecture takes you inside numerous stunning examples, including the incomparable Laxmi Villas Palace in Baroda (the largest private residence in the world) and the striking art deco Umaid Bhawan. As well as exploring the sublime architecture of the buildings and the beautiful works of art they contain, the lecture also looks at the historical contexts of their construction and the fascinating lives of their most notable residents.



Hinduism is considered to be the oldest religion in the world. For at least 4,000 years, artists have striven to create works of art that capture the beauty, power and personalities of its numerous gods and goddesses. This lecture explores a variety of exquisite works of religious art created by famous Indian artists working in a variety of mediums. It also explores the myths, legends, traditions and philosophies surrounding the most fascinating gods and goddesses that inhabit the Hindu divine pantheon.

21 SEPTEMBER 2027

EDWARD BURNE-JONES AND THE LEGEND OF THE BRIAR ROSE

Lecturer: Amy Lim



Leading pre-Raphaelite artist Edward Burne-Jones was consumed for decades by his *Briar Rose* series of paintings, one of the greatest works of Victorian art. They tell the story of Sleeping Beauty in a mystical dream-world that intertwines medieval romance, decorative craftsmanship and natural beauty. Their exhibition in 1890 caused a sensation, and artists, royalty and thousands of ordinary people flocked to see them. This lecture will look at these beautiful paintings in depth, and recount their creation, exhibition, and the magnificent setting that Burne-Jones designed for them at Buscot Park in Oxfordshire, where they still hang today.

19 OCTOBER 2027

FABERGE; OBJECTS OF DESIRE

Lecturer: Cynthia Coleman Sparke



Exactly how did a modest jewellery concern with an extremely un-Russian sounding name become an enduring symbol of Romanov luxury? This talk takes us beyond the legendary Easter eggs to consider the design sources, materials and techniques that distinguished the legendary Russian firm from its contemporaries. We look, in particular, at Fabergé gifts that were selected to convey romantic ties, filial devotion, diplomatic esteem, and even loyalty from a beloved pet.

16 NOVEMBER 2027

ST PETER'S BASILICA – 2000 YEARS OF CHRISTIANITY IN ROME

Lecturer: Stuart Harvey



Join professional Rome tourist guide Stuart Harvey for a journey through 2000 years of Christianity as we explore the art and history of the spectacular St Peter's Basilica in the Vatican. Its origins take us back to the tradition that St Peter was crucified upside-down by the Emperor Nero and buried in the nearby necropolis. The original basilica built by Constantine was rebuilt in the 1500s to designs by Michelangelo and decorated in the 1600s under the great baroque master Gianlorenzo Bernini, who also designed the sweeping colonnades of St Peter's Square, where the Pope gives a weekly audience to the faithful.

7 DECEMBER 2027

**TICKETED EVENT
CHRISTMAS DINNER**

followed by THE ADORATION OF THE MAGI

Lecturer: Anne Haworth



'There came wise men from the east....' The story in the Gospel of St Matthew relating events celebrated in the Christian Feast of Epiphany is all too brief. Yet artists of the Renaissance period infused glowing detail into those tantalising words as they imagined the arrival at Bethlehem of the three Magi, each bearing a gift to honour the Christ Child. In these paintings, sculptures and stained-glass windows, the three mysterious kings from the Orient, named Melchior, Caspar and Balthazar, are resplendent in finely woven silks and precious jewels.

2028



18 JANUARY 2028

THE ECHOING SCREAM: THE BIRTH OF EXPRESSIONISM

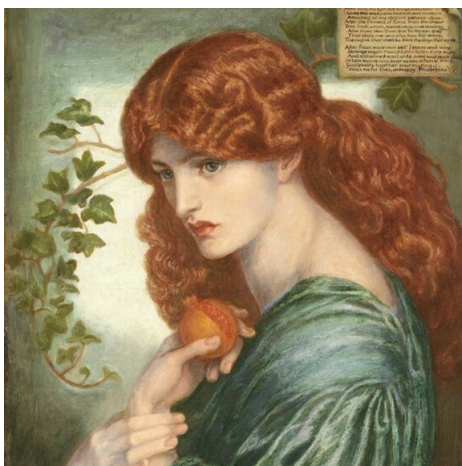
Lecturer: Gavin Plumley

When Edvard Munch created *The Scream* in 1893, he was responding to an intense emotional experience. Today, we would call it a panic attack. Crippling and anxious making, this primal cry was also a rallying call: for Munch and for the wider world of art. It gave birth to a movement known as expressionism, showing life not at it is (realism) or as it might be perceived in a fleeting moment (impressionism), but as it is experienced within the unembellished core of our being. Explosive and emotive, the aftershocks of Munch's vision were felt across the world: in art and music, literature, dance and film.

15 FEBRUARY 2028

THE ROSETTI SIBLINGS: the painter, the poet, the tax collector and the nun

Lecturer: Lucinda Hawksley



The four Rossetti children, Anglo-Italians born in a xenophobic England, were an incredible family. Dante's early career saw him impoverished and debt-ridden, although he would become one of the most successful artists in England, keeping the gossips busy with rumours of love affairs, insane behaviour, and charming stories of the menagerie of exotic animals he kept at his Chelsea home. William, forced to make up for Dante's refusal to get a job, worked for the Inland Revenue, but moonlighted as a writer and a caustic critic. Christina and Maria broke several young men's hearts, choosing their careers over love.

The Joan Cooper Memorial Lecture

21 MARCH 2028

AN INTRODUCTION TO THE NEWLYN SCHOOL

Lecturer: Alison Bevan



Stanhope Forbes (1857-1947)
Fish Sale on a Cornish Beach
The Box, Plymouth

In the 1880s, the fishing village of Newlyn in the far west of Cornwall became a mecca for rural realist painters, who documented the lives of the local community in their beautiful and moving paintings. This talk will outline the key characteristics of this famous art movement, introducing the 'father of the Newlyn School' Stanhope Forbes and his talented wife Elizabeth (nee Armstrong), along with a host of their fellow artists, including Frank Bramley, Walter Langley, Albert Chevallier Tayler and Henry Scott Tuke, as well as some of the real-life characters they depicted.

