

LECTURES AND VISITS DECEMBER 2016 TO JUNE 2017

All lectures begin at 11.00 am in the Lecture Room except for the lecture on Sunday 23 April which begins at 11.30 am after the Annual General Meeting

Seating is limited in the Lecture Room due to fire regulations. The Lecture Room is open from 10.30 am

LECTURES

Sunday 11 December, **The Emperor and the Architect: Self-made Men, Sir John Soane and Napoleon**

Dr Jerzy Kierkuc-Bielinski

Sir John Soane (1753-1837), was one of the most significant architects in British history. He made his name as the architect of the Bank of England and then became an official architect to the British Government, a role he held throughout the turbulent period of the Napoleonic Wars. Surprisingly, despite his official status, Soane was also a great admirer of the Emperor Napoleon, even including a 'shrine' to the Emperor's career in his superlative house-museum at No. 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields. This lecture will explore why a patriotic British architect would lionise the Emperor of the French through an examination of Soane's architecture and his extraordinary collections.



Prior to his appointment as Kenwood Curator of Collections in 2015, Dr Kierkuc-Bielinski was Exhibitions Curator at the Sir John Soane Museum.

This lecture is followed by the Christmas Drinks Party.

2017

Sunday 15 January, **Canaletto and his London Legacy**

Dr Pat Hardy

Canaletto's stay in London (1746-55) resulted in strikingly beautiful views of the city and influenced the future direction of London landscape art. The city through Canaletto's eyes looked tidied up, clean and neat. But the presence of a significant number of artists working in London prior to his visit suggests that his impact is more complicated than has originally appeared. By looking at Canaletto's views of London and his influence, a rich visual account of this massively expanding city emerges, one in which Canaletto plays an important, though not a solitary role, in formulating. Dr Hardy is Curator of Paintings, Prints and Drawings at the Museum of London and contributed to the *Celebrating Canaletto* exhibition catalogue at Compton Verney in 2015.



Sunday 19 February, **Living with Swinburne – the highs and lows of editing the nineteenth century’s most controversial poet**

Tim Burnett

Tim Burnett will be talking about the poet whom he has studied for many years. He is currently working on a new edition of his work. A lyrical poet, as well as a novelist and critic, Algernon Swinburne was one of the most original writers of his time. Considered decadent in some quarters, the sensuality of his verse caused controversy. He was, however, a significant inspiration to many of the younger generation. Tim Burnett, former Keeper of Manuscripts at the British Library, will describe the modus operandi of preparing a critical edition of a major poet and recounts some of his experiences, both positive and negative – but mostly positive – in pursuit of this ideal.



Sunday 19 March, **Ightham Mote**

Bernadette Gillow

Ightham Mote is a unique 14th century timber-framed manor house surrounded by water with more than 700 years of history from the medieval knight who built it to the anglophile American, Charles Henry Robinson, who bequeathed it to the National Trust in 1985. Despite Robinson’s best endeavours to keep the house standing, it was collapsing into the moat and the Trust embarked on a massive project of conservation and reconstruction, during which much of the House’s history was revealed. Bernadette Gillow, who has lived on the site, is General Manager of Ightham Mote and other Kent properties and has been actively engaged in managing the restoration. Her lecture focuses on the families who lived there, those who visited, and how the House was modified, enlarged and embellished as fashions changed.



Sunday 23 April, **Blows of the Chisel, Beats of the Heart: encountering Barbara Hepworth’s ‘Monolith (Empyrean)’**

Dr Justine Hopkins

Barbara Hepworth’s sculpture, Monolith (Empyrean), constructed in 1953, weighs two and a half tons and stands nine feet high, hand-carved from a distinctive blue limestone. Conceived in part as a monument to her dead son, it is resolutely abstract yet has at the same time an organic vitality which insists on a human dimension. That paradoxical tension lay at the heart of Hepworth’s work through a career spanning almost half a century and is the reason why her sculpture remains so powerfully resonant even today. This lecture explores Hepworth’s energy, commitment and passionate



beliefs from the starting point of Kenwood's outstanding example of her creative achievement. Dr Hopkins lectures widely on British art including at the V&A and at the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Her biography on the painter and sculptor Michael Ayrton was published in 1984.

The above lecture starts at 11.30 am, following the AGM.

Sunday 28 May, **to be confirmed**

Sunday 25 June, **Vermeer and the Illusion of Reality?**

Dr Richard Williams

Vermeer's paintings look so astonishingly realistic that some scholars believe he used lenses or other optical equipment to create effects resembling photography. But is this true? Richard Williams takes a closer look at Vermeer's approach to painting and asks whether we are being shown an accurate view of Dutch interiors or something far less reliable and yet more intriguing. Dr Williams received his doctorate from the Courtauld Institute of Art and a post-doctoral fellowship from Yale University. After many years as a specialist in Northern European art in the Department of History of Art at Birkbeck College he joined Royal Collection Trust as Learning Curator, based at Windsor Castle.



VISITS 2017

Tuesday 10 January, **'Rodin and Dance: The Essence of Movement', The Courtauld Art Gallery** at 10.45 am

This is the first major exhibition to explore Rodin's fascination with dance and bodies in extreme acrobatic poses. It focuses on the series of small scale experimental sculptures known as the Dance Movements made in 1911. These leaping twisting figures in terracotta and plaster are presented alongside a series of remarkable drawings in which Rodin, towards the end of his life, explored movement and new forms of dance. It offers a rare glimpse into Rodin's unique working practices. The sculptures were private pieces, known only to a few during his lifetime. The extreme contorted poses have been described by some critics as veering on the pornographic. The exhibition is highly acclaimed and we shall have the privilege of being guided by the curator, Dr Alexandra Gerstein.



The Courtauld Gallery is housed in the first purpose built premises for the Royal Academy of Arts, Somerset House, designed by Sir William Chambers and opened in 1780. This gracious building also houses a superb permanent collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist art as well as some choice early Renaissance and Baroque paintings. After the tour (and there is a café), it is recommended that you take some time to visit the permanent collection.

The cost is £7 for admission to the exhibition and the tour.

Please complete a booking form which can be downloaded from our website http://www.friendsofkenwood.org.uk/events_and_visits.html

Wednesday 8 February, **Guided tour of the Kenwood Dairy** at 10.50 am

Dr Jerzy Kierkuk-Bielinski, Curator, The Iveagh Bequest, will lead a guided visit to the Dairy. Placed strategically on a hill where it could be admired from the house, the Dairy was designed and built for Louisa, 2nd Countess of Mansfield by George Saunders in 1793-6. We usually think of a dairy of this type and period as a 'maison de plaisance'. However, the Countess had a serious interest in developing and modernising agriculture both at Kenwood and Scone Palace. This activity was especially important for Scottish landowners after the Jacobite uprising of 1745 in order to support the Scottish economy.



There is no cost for this visit because we are Friends of Kenwood, but you must apply for tickets and numbers are limited.

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Wednesday 10 May, **The Wallace Collection**, at 10.45 am

The Wallace Collection of major French paintings, furniture and objets d'art, English paintings, Old Master and Dutch paintings, medieval armour and artefacts is housed in an elegant historic London town house that once belonged to the Marquesses of Hertford. The quality of the art throughout the Museum is breathtaking. Much of the collection was acquired in Paris during the 19th century where the 4th Marquess and his illegitimate son, Sir Richard Wallace, lived much of their lives. Our visit will focus on the Great Gallery, one of the finest picture galleries in the world, with masterpieces by, among others, Rembrandt, Velazquez, Rubens, van Dyck, Titian, Poussin and Claude. If time permits, we shall also see some of the smaller Dutch paintings in rooms nearby. Dr Lucy Davis, Curator of Paintings will lead the tour.



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GARDEN WALK

Thursday 18 May, **LOOKING AT THE LANDSCAPE WITH FRESH EYES**

Meet under the north portico at 10.30 am. This walk is free for Friends of Kenwood; non-members £3.

Please contact Elizabeth Inglis on 020 8450 8802 or via email efinglis@dsl.pipex.com

