



Newsletter 132 – June 2024

STRIKE A POSE: STEPHEN FARTHING AND THE SWAGGER PORTRAIT



*A Dance to the Music of Time (Cecil after Larkin), 2020,
by Stephen Farthing
Courtesy of the Artist*

'Swagger' portraits are the portraits of public display, establishing status, confirming wealth and conferring dignity. The sitters in swagger portraiture are presented as confronting the world with a direct self-assurance. The moniker can be applied to portraits from across the centuries: from the uninhibited majesty of Tudor court portraiture, to the shimmering, performative opulence of John Singer Sargent's Gilded Age and beyond into the 21st century. Whatever the date and whoever the artist, a sense of glamour, theatricality and ostentation are the defining characteristics of the swagger portrait.

In the course of his long career, artist, writer and teacher Stephen Farthing RA (b.1950) has returned again and again to the portraits of the past for inspiration. Since the earliest days of his practice in the 1970s his work has been punctuated by an engagement with swagger portraiture, including the work by Hyacinthe Rigaud, Daniel Mytens and, most recently, William Larkin.

2024 marks fifty years since The Suffolk Collection was given to the nation through the auspices of Margaret 'Daisy' Howard née Leiter, 19th Countess of Suffolk. To celebrate this milestone, from late June to early November Kenwood will play host to an exciting exhibition bringing together historic swagger portraits from the Suffolk Collection with works by Farthing.

Widely regarded as one of the most important painters of his generation, Farthing studied at St Martin's School of Art and at the Royal College of Art, London, as well as The British School at Rome. Since the mid-1970s he has shown at major museums and galleries around the world. In 1989 Farthing represented the UK at the São Paulo Biennale and in the same year became the first Artist in Residence at the Hayward Gallery. More recently in 2014 he was commissioned by the National Trust to create an installation of paintings and drawings at Ham House. Farthing was appointed a Royal Academician in 1998 and has held teaching positions at the University of Oxford, the New York Academy of Art and the University of the Arts, London.

Led by the English Heritage Creative Programme team, *Strike a Pose: Stephen Farthing and the Swagger Portrait* (29 June – 3 Nov) will showcase Farthing's contemporary responses to historic paintings in dialogue with the portraits and artists that inspired them. Responding to the forms, textures, colours and patterns of historic swagger portraits, Farthing's work brings into focus how the extravagant presentation of the sitters and their environment created by Larkin and others was as essential a part of their visual identity and status as their physical likeness. Farthing's work offers a unique and thought-provoking lens through which to explore the Suffolk Collection and swagger portraiture more broadly.

Staged in the first-floor rooms at Kenwood, the exhibition will feature nine monumental paintings by Farthing, spanning the entirety of his career, presented in dialogue with works from the Suffolk Collection. The exhibition will be accompanied by a Bloomberg Connects audio guide, digital content and a programme of activities for schools and youth groups, as well as an event for English Heritage Members. During the exhibition, Farthing will also spend three weeks in residence at the Dairy, creating a new work inspired by a painting from Kenwood's collection. *Mrs Jordan as Viola* by John Hoppner from the Iveagh Bequest

was the work selected by staff and volunteers, and visitors are invited to drop in to witness Farthing at work.

Strike a Pose: Stephen Farthing and the Swagger Portrait has been developed in collaboration with independent curator Paul Bonaventura and is part of the Creative Programme at English Heritage. The Creative Programme commissions artists to produce creative works that draw inspiration from our iconic sites and collections and encourage engagement with heritage and history in new and thought-provoking ways.

Artist's statement

"I made all of the works in this exhibition to share my understanding and enjoyment of painting and swagger portraiture.

Over the past fifty years I have painted portraits, cities, landscapes, seascapes, architectural interiors and paintings of paintings, always looking for the same two things: a sense of order and the possibility of poetry.

My swagger portraits concern themselves with the paraphernalia that so often accompanies wealth and social success. When I paint them I enter a world where the sitter's identity is established by their status, pose, clothing and surroundings, not their sense of humanity or soul. They are translations that aim to present an image that is as much about the past as it is about now.

Like all painted portraits, swagger portraits tell us about the artist and the subject; they are part portrait, part self-portrait. Although my swagger portraits are visual feasts, in my more thoughtful moments I think of them as reminders of our own mortality."

Louise Cooling - Curator of Collections & Interiors, Kenwood

CURATORIAL REPORT

Displays and Exhibitions

Preparations for the Creative Programming-led project, *Strike a Pose: Stephen Farthing and the Swagger Portrait* continues. The exhibition dates are confirmed for 29 June to 3 November 2024. In addition to those from Stephen himself, loans have been secured from the Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool and the Towner, Eastbourne, as well as a private lender. The English Heritage Learning Team are working with Stephen to plan a number of events for school groups (KS 2-4) and discussions are underway for a programme of events for life-long learners. Curator Louise Cooling is currently working with Stephen and with Mary Canham, EH Interpretation Manager, to develop the gallery text for the exhibition.

Three oil sketches by John Constable are currently on loan to Kenwood from the Royal Academy of Arts, London. Painted in Hampstead in the months of July and September 1821, the three works are displayed alongside Kenwood's

own *Hampstead Heath with Pond and Bathers* and will be on show until July 2024.

Conservation

The Suffolk Collection painting attributed to the school of Flemish portraitist Anthonis Mor, identified as Mary Beaton, Lady-in-Waiting to Mary, Queen of Scots, is currently undergoing conservation in the English Heritage studio. To date the painting has undergone infrared imaging and the conservators are exploring the possibility of carrying out dendrochronology to narrow down dating of the panel support. While not yet complete, varnish removal has so far revealed extensive overpainting in the face, hands and background, probably carried out in the 19th century.

Research, Talks, Tours, Digital and PR

A series of short films featuring Louise discussing highlights from the collections at Kenwood were shared on the EH national Instagram and TikTok channels throughout January. The social media team have been delighted by the response and level of engagement and more content is planned.

On Judith Leyster:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C17Z15ttKxE/?hl=en>

On Kenwood Library:

https://www.instagram.com/reel/C2NS9s_NZap/?hl=en

On Vermeer's Guitar Player:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C2e6e2Jtpk/?hl=en>

On William Larkin's painting of Edward Sackville:

<https://www.instagram.com/reel/C2xY3dUKqNp/?hl=en>

In early February, Louise recorded a further series of films with the English Heritage social media team. The films explore the history of the high heel through the paintings in the Iveagh Bequest and Suffolk Collection, as well as shoe buckles, highlighting the Lady Maufe Collection. The films were posted to the EH Instagram and TikTok channels to coincide with London Fashion Week.

Louise worked with colleagues in the social media and curatorial digital teams on content to mark *Women's History Month* in March.

Loans Out

Kenwood's portrait of *Pieter van den Broecke* travelled from the National Gallery, London to the Rijksmuseum for the second leg of the major Frans Hals retrospective. It will be on show in Amsterdam until 9 June 2024, before moving on to the final venue at the Gemäldegalerie, Berlin (7 July – 3 Nov 2024).

Three paintings by Angelica Kauffman, *The Artist in the Character of Design Listening to the Inspiration of Poetry*, *Rinaldo and Armida* and *Armida in Vain Endeavours with her Entreaties*

to *Prevent Rinaldo's Departure* travelled to the Royal Academy of Arts, London for Angelica Kauffman RA. The exhibition is a revised version of the exhibition originally scheduled for 2020 and will run from 1 March to 30 June 2024.

Upcoming Loans Out

Emma Hart as The Spinstress by George Romney will travel to the Gallerie d'Italia in Naples between 24 October 2024 and 2 March 2025 for *William Hamilton: A protagonist of the Enlightenment in Naples* (provisional title). The exhibition will explore the life and interests of diplomat, antiquarian and volcanologist Sir William Hamilton.

Returned Loans

John Joseph Merlin's skeleton table clock and gouty chair returned from loan to the Bowes Museum, Co. Durham in January.

Volunteering

Following the launch of a new round of Spotlight Talk development in October, Louise and Michelle have worked together to support volunteers in the development of fifteen new talks. Eleven talks have been successfully launched, with volunteers continuing to work on the outstanding talks with a view to launching them in summer 2024.

Louise Cooling - Curator of Collections & Interiors, Kenwood

LANDSCAPE MATTERS

This spring's public consultation about outdoor events at Kenwood was appropriately held in the Green Room and 16 people attended. The meeting reviewed past events and planned summer outdoor events. Christmas at Kenwood saw fewer visitors than hoped for, and it will not take place in December 2024. As part of English Heritage's imaginative efforts to raise essential extra income, tipis will be erected in the Kitchen Garden for private events. They have been scheduled for three weeks in June and for the month of August. Other scheduled events are listed below. The autumn public consultation will be on Monday 4 November 2024.

Landscape questions are often raised at our AGM. This year, questions included querying the way the Viewpoint outside the Stable Block is closed off while event kit is stored there. English Heritage cannot currently find an alternative site. The lack of a descriptive label for Hepworth's *Monolith (Empyrean)* was also questioned, and the poor condition of the newly planted hedge of *Euonymus japonicus* 'Green Spire.' Unfortunately the previous label was stolen, and the wet winter has not been kind to small new plants. English Heritage intend to create a new label for the sculpture as part of the current Masterplan exercise, and the Curatorial team and Gardens Advisor are giving the low hedge another growing season's chance.

We continue to receive questions from members about Kenwood's rhododendrons; most of the rhododendrons on the path between Hepworth's *Monolith (Empyrean)* and the West Meadow have responded well to a slightly gentler pruning than reduction to ground level. The maintenance programme to encourage pruned and replacement plants will continue into the next winter.



Other landscape work, either completed or planned for this summer and autumn 2024, includes some pruning of laurels at the back of the Brew House garden; a complete clear out of the overgrown borders around Farm Cottage below the Dairy, allowing more light into the buildings; the removal of a birch, a willow and reduction of some holly to permit clearer historic views towards the Dairy and the House from Beech Mount; reduction of the historic hedge and removal of holly and birch near 'Swing Back Gate', which is below the Henry Moore, just before entering into Ken Wood and the West Meadow.

We reported in our June 2023 Newsletter that Wood Pond and Thousand Pound Pond now fall under the Reservoir Act 1975 (as amended). After survey, it is apparent that some tree removal will be necessary to ensure stability of the banks and bridge. We await more details.

Looking ahead to the winter, a reminder that *An Audience with Father Christmas* will return; this has become very popular, so be ready to book as soon as you see it advertised! A great local service is the sale of Christmas Trees at West Lodge car park by Pines & Needles, so we hope they will return in 2024.

Thank you to all our members for your regular feedback about all aspects of Kenwood House, its world-class paintings collection, and the estate. Our objective is always to ensure the House, its art collection

and the estate are safeguarded for generations to come. We welcome any comments you might have about current or future plans.

Hampstead Heath News

Hampstead Heath is a charity, and is run by the City of London. It is a vital resource for us all. To encourage Heath users to share the aspirations of the Heath Vision, there is a donations page where you can donate to specific projects:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/green-spaces/hampstead-heath/donate-to-hampstead-heath>

Check out the Heath Hands website if you would like to find out more about Heath Hands, currently celebrating their 25th anniversary. Heath Hands are volunteers who help out at Kenwood and all over Hampstead Heath. They make an important contribution to keeping the Kenwood estate looking so spectacular throughout the year.

This year's *Community Fun Day* will be on Sunday 23 June from 2 - 6pm and centred around the Parliament Hill Bandstand.

The 2024 *Kite Display* will be at Parliament Hill and its bandstand on 30 June, 12- 4pm.

Summer Fairs

Don't forget that *Highgate Fair in the Square* is on 8 June and the *Hampstead Big Fair* is on 7 July. Come and say hello to us at our stall! *Highgate Festival* is from 8 - 16 June.

VISIT TO THE VAN DE VELDES: GREENWICH, ART AND THE SEA

17 December 2023



Battle of Schooneveld, Van de Velde the Elder, 1673, (detail)

How satisfying to find connections between Kenwood and Greenwich through the recent exhibition on the Van de Veldes. Kenwood has a number of seascapes, including two by Van de Velde the Younger. It also claims Allison Goudie, Curator at the Queen's House and of the outstanding 2023 exhibition, as a previous curator at

Kenwood. Another connection is the unique Solebay tapestry, a centrepiece of the exhibition. Read on.

Willem van de Velde the Elder and his son Willem van de Velde the Younger were the leading marine painters of the 17th century and are considered the founders of English marine painting, inspiring later generations of artists from Turner to Kehinde Wiley.

The context behind the large exhibition of over 200 paintings is one of skill, propaganda, and immigration. Contemporaries of Rembrandt, the Van de Veldes were invited to live in England following the restoration of the monarchy. They were given a studio in the Queen's House in 1672 and a salary of £100 a year each to create drawings and paintings of 'Sea Fights'. Our tour illustrated how their studio functioned, as well as showing us their prodigious output.

Van de Velde the Elder was the equivalent of a photojournalist. He would document ships and sea battles at close hand from a small boat, making detailed sketches to work up as paintings later, in the studio. Importantly, he used graphite, rarely used in this period, but vital for Van de Velde as it is waterproof. His work is from life, containing a human element not normally seen in large scale propaganda. And propaganda it was: against the backdrop of the political and social upheaval of the Restoration, it was important to Charles II and to his brother James, Duke of York, Lord High Admiral of the Fleet, to commission works which established Stuart royal authority and showed the English Navy in a good light.

For this reason, Charles commissioned a series of six monumental tapestries around the Battle of Solebay, off the Suffolk coast, to which Van de Velde had been an eyewitness. The problem was that the outcome of the battle was not decisive and both sides claimed victory. Despite being Dutch, Van de Velde had to turn it into a celebration of one of the most important Stuart naval engagements.

The original cartoons are now lost, and the tapestries are the only surviving English naval tapestry series. It is thought that skilled émigré Dutch weavers, many of whom were Catholic, created them in the Clerkenwell workshops of Francis Poyntz. The first three are in the Royal Collection at Hampton Court. The history of the last three is muddier, but we know that Horatio Walpole owned them for a while, and then they ended up in Pyrford Court in Surrey, as part of the 2nd Lord Iveagh's collection. In 1968, two of these were acquired by Hampton Court, and the one in the exhibition, *The Burning of the Royal James at the Battle of Solebay, 28 May 1672*, was bequeathed to the National Maritime Museum.

The human element is everywhere in the Van de Veldes' work: huge pen paintings show men overboard as an integral part of the larger scene; despite the monumentality of the Solebay battle, the tapestry nonetheless contains the tragedy of a small person in the water; the commotion of many small vessels is exquisitely depicted by Van de Velde the Younger in a portrait of their own yacht, with the Van de Velde family in it. This human element extends to works in the exhibition by contemporaries of the Van de Veldes,

and yet the impact of the Van de Veldes on English art lasts all the way into our era, as the exhibition illustrated with a staged photograph by contemporary artist Maisie Broadhead, entitled *Rear Window (Dinner)*, a 21st century spin on 17th century Dutch painting.

There are 1,500 Van de Velde drawings in the Greenwich collection (of the 2,500 in the world); the wealth of available material and considered curation resulted in a riveting exhibition. Our thanks to Mark King for arranging it and to Allison Goudie for giving us VIP treatment.

VISIT TO HOLBEIN AT THE TUDOR COURT, QUEEN'S GALLERY

29 January 2024



Sir Thomas More, Holbein the Younger, (detail)

The Tudors are a complicated lot. So it was helpful to enter their world and get them fixed in our minds before visiting the exhibition at our own pace. Senior Curator at the Queen's Gallery, Kate Heard, gave us an excellent talk, explaining why the Royal Collection is important to an understanding of Holbein's work in England, and what they discovered during preparation for the exhibition.

Holbein was born in Augsburg in 1497. He left Germany in about 1526 as the Reformation took root, and came to England via Basle, where he met Erasmus. Erasmus provided Holbein with an introductory letter to his first English patron, Sir Thomas More. Holbein's fame in England spread by word of mouth. He quickly gained royal favour, and had connections in all the large families, the Lestranges, the Wingfields, the Parrs, the Norfolk and Suffolk Brandons. His welcome into these families generated portraits that bring us face-to-face with the leading figures in 16th century England.

Holbein returned to Basle in 1528 where he had left his wife and family, perhaps because he did not want to forfeit his citizenship. However, by 1532 he was back in England, commissioned for a group portrait of the closed group of the Steelyard Merchants (of the Hanseatic League), and he

stayed for the rest of his life. There is little archival evidence to show how Holbein worked; his drawings were made with widely available materials, mainly chalk and watercolour, but his use of them captures the personalities of his sitters. There was just one pricked drawing in the exhibition: that of Sir Thomas More, for transfer to the portrait panel now at the Frick. By way of contrast to the rapidity of his drawings, in 1533, Holbein created the oil portrait of Derich Born, inscribed "Derich his very self." A Royal Collection/Getty collaboration examines Holbein's technique, revealing how he slowly built up the contours around Born's face, with the end result an exact likeness of Derich Born himself. In 1536, Holbein was made King's Painter, along with Lucas Horenbout, with a salary of £30 p.a.

The poster girl of the exhibition, Mary Shelton, later Lady Heveningham, c1543, cousin of Anne Boleyn, was joined by 48 other portrait sketches. One is a stand-out portrait of John Poyntz, c1532, who accompanied Catherine of Aragon to England in 1509. The exhibition comprised detailed drawings, paintings, miniatures, furnishings, armour and books. There were pleasingly juxtaposed preliminary sketches and finished oils of prominent courtiers in Tudor England: William Reskimer, Page of the King's Bedchamber, Sir Henry Guildford, Comptroller of the Household; and then the oil portrait of Thomas Howard, surrounded by drawings of his family members.

Even though there were a lot of us, it was not difficult to get up close to the drawings in the first rooms, and finally stand in the last gallery to admire Henry VIII's armour, the monumental *Field of Cloth of Gold* oil painting by unknown artists, c1544, Holbein's drawings of the royal family, and also paintings by Holbein's followers. His paintings never lost their appeal and were acquired by successive monarchs. Holbein died in 1543, but thanks to an inventory of the contents of Whitehall Palace in 1547, we know that his exquisite drawings were already part of the Royal Collection. His drawings lead the viewer into his world, and his sitters take on their distinct personalities, even with a distance of nearly 500 years.

VISIT TO TWININGS PRIVATE TEA TASTING

20 February 2024



Pu'er tea lozenge in packet

"It tastes like damp sofa", so said one of the select company of Friends who came to the tea-tasting masterclass at Twinings, upon tasting some Oolong green tea. We tasted 6 different teas, starting with the mildest white silver needle tea, through green, and yellow, and finishing at the strongest black tea (but still nothing like as strong as builder's Yorkshire Tea). The temperature of the water matters depending upon the leaf; the strongest tea is a lozenge, separately wrapped, with the oldest origins. It is produced in Yunnan province and is called Pu'er. You can re-use it 10-12 times. It was carried by donkeys over mountain passes on the Silk Road, and humidity caused it to ferment during the long journey.

Tea-tasting is much like wine tasting: appearance, aroma, flavour, after-taste. Happily, our opinions varied greatly, what did not suit one was pronounced just right by another. What smelled of seaweed to one, smelled of burnt hay to another. Our conclusion: an extremely imprecise science and hats off to the professional tea-tasters at Twinings, one of whom is still a member of the Twining family.

Before the drinking of the tea itself, we were given a talk about the history of Twinings and the history of tea. Legend has it that the Chinese emperor stopped for a rest, his servant boiled water for him to drink, and a leaf from the wild tea bush dropped unnoticed into the water. He found it refreshing, and from there, cha (or jia, then tu, then te) was born.

From its beginnings in China and its travels on the Silk Road, through its development in India and Kenya, to its introduction to England and its connection to slavery. Thence we travelled past the story of Earl Grey, Queen Victoria's royal warrant, and Elizabeth Twining, social reformer of the 1860s. An interesting fact was the genesis of the sugar bowl: the bowl accompanying a tea pot was originally used for spent tea leaves. Once sugar became a feature of tea, that bowl became used as a sugar bowl. But by 1788, the abolitionists persuaded 300,000 British people to boycott sugar in protest against slavery.

As loyal Friends of Kenwood who had done our homework, we nodded knowledgeably about Catherine of Braganza, who brought tea to England with her Portuguese court upon her marriage to Charles II. England lagged behind the rest of Europe in its tea consumption: coffee-houses had already taken root, and the demographic was different. For this reason, the original Twinings establishment, where we had our masterclass and which dates from 1706, remains long and very narrow. This is because one end of the shop gave onto the Strand, the door through which, since 1717, genteel company could enter to the Golden Lyon Tea House, while the other entrance via the riverside was Tom's Coffee House, rather less salubrious. There were lots of coffee houses in London, so Twinings decided to concentrate purely on tea toward the end of the 18th century.

Twinings made tea bags for the first time in 1956, and it has been owned by Associated British Foods since 1964. We dutifully bought a box or two of our own personal preference of tea before we left, and then we repaired, as

any self-respecting 18th century Londoner would have done, to the pub down the road.

VISIT TO FASHION CITY EXHIBITION

12 March 2024



Princess Diana's Maternity Dressing, coat by Belleville Sassoon, c.1980-81

The Museum of London Docklands is set by the water in a great big warehouse, and it has a very nice café too.

But we were there for the *Fashion City* exhibition, which is the first of its kind to shine a light on how immigrant designers made London an iconic Fashion City. Many were Jewish, but not all. Of the approximately 100,000 Jewish migrants who came to London between 1881 and 1914, approximately 60% found employment in the clothing or accessories trades.

Moses Moss (Moss Bros) did not enter the rag trade this way: he came from a long-established Anglo-Jewish family and started his business selling second-hand clothes around King's Cross in 1860, whence he upgraded to Covent Garden in 1881. Fast forward through Sasha Goldstein's (Cecil Gee's) 'American Look' to Irvine Sellar, who only died in 2017 and who ended up as one of the capital's major property developers (think Shard). The son of a glove manufacturer, he founded his first fortune through his Carnaby Street shop which was the first to cater for men and women in the swinging 60s: it became Mates, which he sold very well in 1981.

Then there was Mr Fish, who dressed David Bowie and Mick Jagger in their unforgettable maxi-smoking dresses. This was all just in the men's outfitters' part of the recreated High Street in an inspired curatorial use of space, where

1970s records played through a speaker. There were also women's clothes shops reinvented here: the most glorious hatters such as Otto Lucas, off-the peg clothes looking depressingly brown, but also stunning dresses sold by the house of Rahvis. The sisters, Raemonde and Dora Rahvis seemed to be abrasive and courted any type of publicity, but there's no denying their 1952 sequined and embroidered evening gown was stunning. There was also Sara Raiher's beaded wedding dress from 1972 designed by Netty Neymar, and justifiably a whole section on David Sassoon's work for Princess Diana.

Also exhibited were examples of accessories, shoes, handbags, belts, travelling cases, the tools of the trade, and equally importantly, stories of the other East London migrant communities involved, particularly Bengalis. A Brother sewing machine was particularly touching: it's now a family heirloom which was owned and used by the Bengali seamstress Anwara Begum, and she called it 'my lucky charm.'

The very end of the exhibition had a book where visitors with personal connections to the London rag trade could write their comments and recollections – it was worth taking the time to read some extraordinarily touching unheard stories of past and present relatives and friends.

We take the High Street and its names for granted; some remain, some have disappeared. But the excellent curator's introduction to the exhibition and our subsequent High Street stroll drove home the extensive roots of London as a world Fashion City. The exhibition has broad, cross-community appeal, as it demonstrates London's role as a major centre of modern cultural influence and production. Yes, due in part to a specific immigrant group's contribution to the economy and culture, but the story is a wider London story.

The exhibition has been very successful and is extended until 7 July 2024, so there's still time to visit.

VISIT TO MUSEUM OF BRANDS

10 April 2024



The London Lighthouse in Notting Hill was once the hospice for AIDS patients and before that the building was a Jewish boys' school. But now it is home to the collection

of Robert Opie (son of the Opies of nursery rhymes fame) and his Museum of Brands.

Go there for a speed lesson on the fascinating history of brands and go there if you want to trigger your own memories. The Friends of Kenwood were given a fascinating curator's overview of the collection before we were left to our own devices to wander along a corridor called the 'Time Tunnel.' This is a permanent exhibition of densely packed display cases of every British brand imaginable. These start in the 19th century and go all the way to the present day, showing how daily life has changed and containing some wonderfully choice objects: who knew that there was such a thing as a Marmite Easter egg? Your reviewer's favourite display case was the one with the Teletubbies, looking perplexed at sharing a case with an electronic Action Man, a moving Tyrannosaurus Rex and a newspaper headline of the car crash of Princess Diana and Dodi Fayed. A fascinating conflation of social history.

Then there's a room with temporary exhibits, showing particular moments in history; for instance, the development of the Robertson's Golden Shred brand, and of (Tate &) Lyle's Golden Syrup. Lyle's Golden Syrup soon will feature redesigned packaging across almost all of its range that for the first time since 1883 drops its iconic swarm of honey bees flying around a lion that was killed by Samson. Everyone of a certain age took it as an article of faith that 'Guinness is good for you' (and for Kenwood!) and if you didn't know it already, 'Guinness is welcome in the home'. We were presented with a whole shelf of animals and fowl associated with those legendary Guinness advertising campaigns.

An unexpected sideline of the Museum of Brands is their outreach in the community: they have a highly successful programme of multi-sensory 'Brand Boxes' which they take out to care homes where residents with dementia can reminisce about products they remember from their earlier lives.

There's a cafe too and a small garden which dates from the time the building was the hospice. Our thanks to Mark King, for altogether a highly recommended, unusual museum in Notting Hill, and then you can go and have lunch on Portobello Road!

VISIT TO ANGELICA KAUFFMAN, RA

17 May 2024

We were extremely privileged to receive a private early morning tour of the Angelica Kauffman show at the Royal Academy by Annette Wickham, co-curator of the exhibition with Bettina Baumgärtel. Readers will know that Annette Wickham gave an excellent members' lecture in the spring, which is available to view on our YouTube channel. Bettina Baumgärtel is Head of Paintings at the Museum Kunstpalast in Düsseldorf, and the leading authority on Angelica Kauffman.

The exhibition managed to open on 6 February 2020 in Düsseldorf, to where two of Kenwood's Angelica Kauffman paintings had travelled. But then Covid struck,

the London leg was cancelled, and the Royal Academy chose to re-open with a Picasso exhibition. So it was a great pleasure to discover that the much-delayed exhibition would be resurrected in 2024.

Despite the challenges of planning an exhibition with such delays, Annette was persuasive in her argument that Kauffman should be better recognised in the UK, and presented her as an intelligent artist who subtly manipulated the artistic canon to suit her own, female, purposes. A founding member of the Royal Academy, friend of Sir Joshua Reynolds, unable to receive a formal artistic education because she was a woman, it was entirely appropriate that Kenwood should lend to the exhibition three of the four paintings by Kauffman in the Iveagh Bequest.

Kauffman's training was forged as she travelled around Europe, embracing a continental neo-classicism which was never really understood in England. This lack of understanding seems to have persisted down the centuries, and some newspaper reviews of the exhibition equally missed the point. Kauffman was an accomplished artist, commercially astute, and (even with a disastrous sham marriage), remained in control of her own life. Speaking several languages and musically gifted, she moved easily in the fluid European circles of the 18th century. She finally left England for Rome after the anti-Catholic Gordon Riots of 1780. There she continued to paint English tourists on the Grand Tour, and remained closely connected to the neo-classical school of painting.

Kauffman's success at portrait painting is amply illustrated by accomplished portraits of Winckelmann and Reynolds, and her reputation preceded her to England through her portrait of David Garrick, all in the exhibition. Her second husband, Antonio Zucchi, meticulously kept her account book and, incredibly, this is in the RA archives. To be able to see this record in the hand of the artist who painted the ceilings in Kenwood's Adam Library and Entrance Hall gave us all a frisson.

Kauffman's themes were clever and original: Cleopatra not presented as a naked lover of Mark Anthony but as a grieving widow; Penelope unpicking her loom in order to remain in control of her destiny, a theme rarely represented visually before Kauffman; Eleanor of Castile saving her husband Edward I; Alcestis, making a heroic act of self-sacrifice.

Two of the 1780 ceiling roundels from the entrance to the Royal Academy, *Design and Composition*, were in the exhibition, but the other two, *Colouring and Invention* were already on their way to Tate for the exhibition *Now You See Us: Women Artists in Britain 1520–1920*, which opened in mid-May and runs until 13 October 2024. The subject matter of these roundels is the elements of art; often depicted as male, Kauffman devised all four personifications to be female. Her small self-portrait *The Artist in the Character of Design Listening to the Inspiration of Poetry* (1782) from Kenwood, harmonises brilliantly on the opposite wall to the large *Self-portrait at the Crossroads between*

the Arts of Music and Painting (1794) which references Hercules at the crossroads and is from Nostell Priory.

This was a small exhibition in the face of many practical difficulties thanks to the pandemic, and much-overdue in terms of anchoring Angelica Kauffman in the context of 18th century English art. But to succeed in this aim, the RA or someone else will probably have to have another go in future years.



KENWOOD ESTATE SPRING WALK

23 May 2024

One of the highlights of the spring at Kenwood is to go on our walk with Head Gardener, Crissy Mulrain. The estate is burgeoning with greenness and birdsong, and it's an uplifting morning.

Crissy is a bit of a detective: she showed how to connect some of the early owners of Kenwood with plants on the estate which we can see today.

The ancient woodland in North Wood and in Ken (or Caen) Wood predates any significant human intervention and we have admired sessile oak and beech on previous walks. Key to the 18th century tale at Kenwood was John Stuart, 3rd Earl of Bute, who eloped with Lady Mary Wortley Montagu (junior), and who was Prime Minister under George III from 1762 - 63. He was rumoured later to be having a liaison with Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, widow of Prince Frederick. But in his spare time he was interested in botany, funded botanical exploration and specimen discovery, and was a friend of Linnaeus. How fitting that we have recently had a members' visit to the Linnean Society.

The original Lime Avenue and the 'Pleasure Ground,' a walled garden with parterres to the south of the original house, predate Stuart's ownership, but it is probable that he was responsible for introducing some of the original specimen trees at Kenwood. The Zelkova (the Caucasian elm), down by the pond, now with a smart estate fence around it to protect its compacted roots is one example; the swamp cypress (*Taxodium distichum*) is another.



Zelkova

Walking through the American Ground, Crissy pointed out some rare and exciting plants: the *Crinodendron* (Chilean lantern plant) is evergreen and hardy down to -7 degrees Celsius. Much too small to be an original Stuart planting, but it's interesting to contemplate the roots of its existence at Kenwood. Another exotic evergreen shrub is the *Nandina domestica*, great year-round value for the gardener, and part of the *Berberis* family; it's also known as the sacred bamboo, hailing from China and found planted around temples. *Cornus kousa*, a native of Japan and Korea also features in this area.

The rhododendron island beds are all that remain of the original flowerbeds which Repton designed (he made three visits to Kenwood at the end of the 18th century), and their purpose was to be part of an ornamental garden. Familiar to us all now, but at the time, rhododendrons were new, exotic and unusual. The handkerchief tree (*Davidia involucrata*) never fails to inspire awe; although its introduction to the UK was later than some of the other specimens we discussed, the Kenwood tree has the widest canopy spread of any *Davidia* in the UK! This year, it has just kept going, despite the wind and the rain.

Our final stop was up by the Dairy. We have written before about the *100 Meadows Project*: this is a 10-year plan, in partnership with Plantlife. English Heritage pledged to enhance, revive and create 100 meadows in their portfolio as part of the celebration surrounding the coronation of the King in 2023.

97% of all meadows have disappeared since the second world war. But they are an important habitat and 40% of British flora are grassland species. On the day of our walk, Heath Hands volunteers were busy spot-weeding by hand some of the invasive species on the West Meadow. The

meadow normally gets one hay cut a year; but starting in June, EH plans to undertake more frequent cuts to replicate grazing. The aim is to stop grass taking over and keep down invasive species. They will also harrow two experimental strips on West Meadow in preparation for the sowing of acidic meadow grass. It is not certain how much can be begun over summer 2024, but if you see a large machine turning the turf on West Meadow, you will know why!

Our thanks, as ever, to Crissy for a fascinating morning, seamlessly drawing together centuries of plant life and history.

THE MASTERPLAN FOR KENWOOD

As reported at the April 2024 AGM, a lot of work has been going on behind the scenes to refine the initial drafts of the Master Plan. New consultants have now been working on the project for nearly a year, and despite changes in English Heritage senior management over the past 12 months, the Friends of Kenwood have continued to play an important part and provide continuity to the process.

We believe our involvement is vital to this defining document, which we hope will provide a long-term strategic framework for Kenwood's future. There is still much work to be done after it has been submitted to the English Heritage Board and we will give our members updates about how it affects operational, curatorial and marketing objectives at Kenwood as soon as we can.

FRIENDS OF KENWOOD AGM

14 April 2024

The 47th Annual General Meeting of the Friends of the Iveagh Bequest, Kenwood (the Friends of Kenwood) was held at Kenwood House on Sunday, 14 April 2024. It was attended by 30 Friends (including 7 officeholders) and 3 representatives from English Heritage (EH).

The Chair, Dame Jenny Abramsky, reported on the Friends' activities since the last AGM on 23 April 2023. The Friends have supported English Heritage by funding the Reynolds display showcasing the impressive collection at Kenwood, with interpretation and a booklet. Having supported the acquisition and conservation of the Lady Cohen miniatures, the Friends funded the new miniatures display case. We donated towards Heath Hands' project of creating an Interpretation Room at the Kenwood Dairy and hope this will further engage people from the local community when they visit Kenwood.

The Sunday lectures continued to be of high quality and were well attended. They are live streamed to make them available for the wider membership. Most of the lectures are recorded and form a valuable resource. In September 2023 the Earl of Iveagh kindly conducted a unique tour of Elveden Hall for a large group of Friends.

With the financial support of the Friends, English Heritage has commissioned a new Masterplan for the House and estate. The Chair is on the committee overseeing the work and we hope the Masterplan will be completed in 2024.

The Friends received with enormous gratitude a generous bequest from former member Rosemary Campbell, which will enable us to support future projects at Kenwood.

The Friends are grateful to Louise Cooling and Alan Derbyshire for giving the annual lecture on the conservation of the Lady Cohen Collection of Miniatures which was attended by a full house including Lady Cohen and her guests, and followed by a drinks reception to celebrate the bequest.

This year, the Friends again held their Christmas drinks party in the Upper Hall.

The Chairman reported that membership had been steady, with 584 members as of April 2024, with several Ordinary members upgrading to Life membership. We are grateful to our corporate benefactors, Killik & Co, Pentland and Julius Baer, for their steadfast support, as well as to our Vermeer (Chris Carter) and Rembrandt (Elizabeth Meek and Jenny Abramsky) Friends.

The Treasurer, Ken Solomons, reported a surplus of £19,582 for the year, after grants of £6,000 had been made to EH to support the exhibition of Kenwood's collection of Reynolds's paintings to celebrate the tercentenary of his birth, and £500 to Heath Hands towards the cost of an interpretation room in the Dairy.

English Heritage reported that two additional site supervisors had been appointed, and that Kitty Fletcher was covering as Operations Manager while Judita Krlickova is covering the post of Site Supervisor. A further ten new Visitor Assistants joined the team in March 2024. Maria Precado joined the gardens team and Joanna Bowers returned as Retail Manager in March 2024. The new head chef Satyajit Deshbandhu joined in December 2023. Several events are scheduled to be held on the estate in 2024.

Louise Cooling, Curator of Collections and Interiors, Kenwood, reported marking the tercentenary of Sir Joshua Reynolds with a temporary display *Spotlight on Reynolds: Lord Iveagh's Favourite Artist at 300* exploring the life, work and technique of the artist through Kenwood's seventeen paintings, twelve of which were brought together in the same room for the first time. The first presentation of the Lady Cohen Collection of Miniatures went on display on October. Several paintings were lent to exhibitions at home and abroad, including the portrait of Pieter van den Broecke to the first major Frans Hals retrospective in nearly forty years. Three paintings by Angelica Kauffman – *The Artist in the Character of Design Listening to the Inspiration of Poetry*, *Rinaldo and Armida* and *Armida in Vain Endeavours with her Entreaties to Prevent Rinaldo's Departure* are on loan to the Royal Academy of Arts, London for *Angelica Kauffman RA*.

Work has begun on two new projects for 2025: *American Heiresses*, a John Singer Sargent centenary exhibition which will be the first charging exhibition staged at Kenwood in many years, and *Double Vision*, a display exploring Vermeer's *Guitar Player* to coincide with the 350th anniversary of the artist's death. Both projects are being supported by the Friends.

Reciprocal loans have included Judith Leyster's *The Jolly Drinker* from the Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam and three oil sketches by John Constable from the Royal Academy of Arts, London. The sketches were displayed alongside Kenwood's *Hampstead Heath with Pond and Bathers*.

Conservation of *Diana, Countess of Elgin* by Cornelius Johnson from The Suffolk Collection was completed in late summer 2023.

Beth Potts joined the Conservation team supported by Bronwen Sharp from Down House, Sarah Lambarth, Senior Collections Conservator for the South and external conservators from Virtu Conservation Housekeeping.

Louise Cooling and Wendy Monkhouse, Senior Curator, South delivered several interesting talks during the year. Louise delivered several private tours to various groups while Wendy took part in a Q&A event about Vermeer's *The Guitar Player* with Simon Schama as a collaboration between English Heritage and the FT Festival. Louise contributed several articles to the English Heritage website as well as their members' magazines and through social media channels.

English Heritage thanked the Friends of Kenwood for their funding support for conservation of the existing collection, a temporary display, the digitisation of the Andover Albums and for acquiring a watercolour of the Library at Kenwood by Frank Hoar.

The Chair thanked all Council members for their time, expertise and commitment to Kenwood.

The Report, in full, will be available on the Friends' website:

<https://friendsofkenwood.org.uk/news/>

Mala Gole, Secretary, Friends of Kenwood

LECTURES AND EVENTS AUTUMN 2024

Please see the separate Lectures and Events sheet for more details of our lectures, visits and events, or visit our website

Lectures

Lectures take place in the Lecture Room starting at 11 am. Numbers are limited and so pre-booking is advised - details for booking will be given in the Friends of Kenwood email news bulletin that precedes the lecture.

Our lectures will also be live-streamed on our YouTube channel. Details for joining the live-streamed lecture will also be given in the

Friends of Kenwood email news bulletin. Whenever possible, the lectures are recorded.

Sunday 22 September, **Flaming June: The Making of an Icon**
Daniel Robbins

Sunday 20 October, **People of Colour in Enlightenment Britain**
Tim Moore

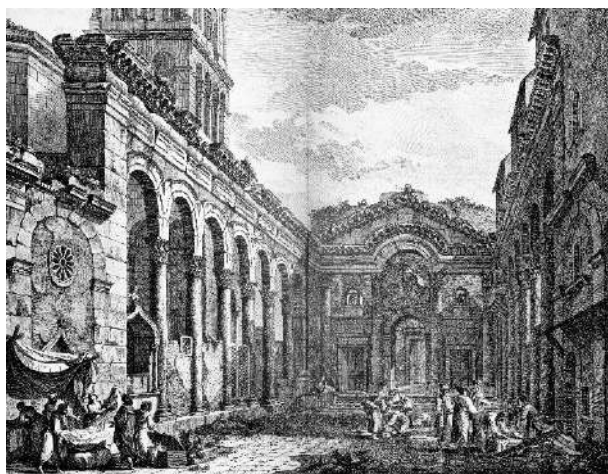
Sunday 17 November, **Michelangelo, Architect**
Grant Lewis

Sunday 8 December, **TBC**
TBC

You are warmly invited to a Christmas Drinks party in the Upper Hall after this lecture.

Events

Tuesday 8 October, **Friends Annual Evening Event**



Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace in Split, Robert Adam, 1764

We are hosting a keynote lecture by Dr Adriano Aymonino on the theme of the Adam brothers' Grand Tours and how they fed into their professional careers with a reference to the architecture of Kenwood and particularly to the 'Great Room'.

Further details about the talk and invitations for the Talk and Drinks Reception to follow.

Autumn Estate Walk

Thursday 24 October, 10.30 am, **Autumn at Kenwood**

OUTDOOR EVENTS AT KENWOOD SUMMER 2024

Luna Cinema

No details at time of going to press.

The Lord Chamberlain's Men

Sunday 18 August: **Hamlet** (on the Half-Moon Lawn at 7pm, doors open 6pm)

The UK's premier touring all-male theatre company

Financial Times Weekend Festival

7 September

The Institute of Art and Ideas at Kenwood

21 & 22 September: **How the Light Gets In**

KENWOOD HOUSE OPENING TIMES

Kenwood is open 7 days a week, from 10am – 5pm until 28 October, when it moves to winter hours 10am – 4pm.

Second-Hand Bookshop

The Second-hand Bookshop in Mansion Cottage near the Brew House café is entirely run by volunteers. It has become a great success story for Kenwood and opening hours have now been extended to every day of the week, 12pm – 4pm. It has some fabulous books for sale and takes donations during opening hours. All profits remain at Kenwood.

Kenwood Needs Volunteers!

To keep Kenwood open in the way it was intended, nearly every day of the year, English Heritage needs Volunteers. If you know of anyone who might be interested in joining the existing group of wonderfully loyal Volunteers, please go to the English Heritage Volunteering page or send an email marked for the attention of the Kenwood Volunteer Manager to Kenwood.House@english-heritage.org.uk.

YOUR FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP DON'T DELAY – RENEW TODAY!

The new membership year begins on 1 June 2024, and membership rates are:

Single annual membership	£25 p.a.
Joint annual membership	£35 p.a.
Associate (u-18s & full-time students)	£9 p.a.
Single Life Membership	£375
Joint Life Membership	£500

Rembrandt Friend	£300 p.a.
Vermeer Friend	£750 p.a.

Please continue to support us and our work for Kenwood by renewing your membership as soon as you can.

You can pay in a number of ways. You can pay by **Direct Debit** or **PayPal**, both available via the Join Us page on our website, <https://friendsofkenwood.org.uk/join-us/>.

You can also pay by **Bank Transfer** to our account. All details can also be found on the Join Us page on our website.

The advantage of paying by Direct Debit is that you do not have to think about renewing every year and your cards are sent to you automatically.

Although you can continue to pay by cheque (payable to 'Friends of Kenwood'), please note that we would much prefer an electronic form of payment which will help us process your payment more quickly.

If you do not pay by Direct Debit, please notify us of your payment.

If you wish to support us even more generously, you might consider becoming a Rembrandt or a Vermeer Friend, all details are also on our website.

The loyalty of our members is really important to the Friends of Kenwood. We are so grateful for your support and commitment, which helps us advocate for Kenwood, and encourages us in our ambition to safeguard Kenwood as English Heritage's greatest asset.

We need lots of support as well as encouragement so please renew your membership and encourage your friends and family to join too!

For more instant updates, please keep checking our Facebook, X(formerly Twitter) and Instagram posts.

Don't forget we also have a YouTube channel which has turned into a fantastic digital archive for most of our lectures and talks on many of the most well-known paintings at Kenwood.

Help the Friends of Kenwood when you shop online!

Please consider supporting us through GiveAsYouLive. It is very easy to use and costs nothing.

A number of our members already help us by nominating us as their chosen charity when they make online purchases.

Once you have registered, we receive a small donation each time you make a purchase.

To sign up for Give As You Live, you just have to register at <http://www.giveasyoulive.com/join/kenwoodfriends>.

Please think about using this effortless way to support the Friends of Kenwood when you do your online shopping. Thank you!

SUPPORTING THE FRIENDS OF KENWOOD

We rely on your support to keep our high profile at Kenwood House, and we would welcome any donation

you feel able to make. Kenwood is under the care of The English Heritage Trust, itself a registered charity with no government funding. Our aim at the Friends of Kenwood is to keep Kenwood a top priority within English Heritage's national portfolio.

If you would like to make an additional financial contribution to our work, please contact our Treasurer, Ken Solomons by emailing him at kssco@aol.com or writing to him c/o Kenwood House, NW3 7JR.

You can also support us by remembering the Friends of Kenwood in your will. If you choose to include the Friends in your will, you will need to direct your gift to our registered charity number: 273258. It is simple to do and tax efficient.

A further benefit of leaving a gift to Friends of Kenwood, or any other qualifying charity, is that this amount will not be subject to Inheritance Tax. In addition, if total charitable bequests amount to at least 10% of the taxable estate, then the Inheritance Tax chargeable on the balance is reduced from 40% to 36%.

VERMEER AND REMBRANDT FRIENDS

The Friends would like to extend grateful thanks to the following for their continuing support:

Vermeer Friend: Chris Carter

Rembrandt Friends: Jenny Abramsky, Elizabeth Meek

CORPORATE BENEFACTORS

The Friends would like to extend grateful thanks to the following for supporting us as Corporate Benefactors:



LECTURES AND VISITS SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2024

Lectures take place in the Lecture Room starting at 11am and are livestreamed so that Friends can also watch at home. Whenever possible, the lectures are also recorded for future viewing on our YouTube channel.

Up-to-date information for each lecture will be in the Friends of Kenwood email news bulletin, where you will also find the booking link for the lecture.

LECTURES

Sunday 22 September, **Flaming June: the making of an icon**

Daniel Robbins



Flaming June, by Sir Frederic Leighton, 1895

Frederic Leighton's *Flaming June* has become one of the most reproduced images in the whole of British art. It was first exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts in 1895, admired by critics and a huge success with the public. However, by the 20th century, as artistic styles and taste changed it fell into obscurity and was even lost, only to resurface in the early 1960s. Marking the year-long display of the painting at the Royal Academy, this talk explores

the circumstances of its creation right at the end of Leighton's life, its immediate critical reception and the remarkable story of its passage through the 20th century, culminating in its acquisition by the then Governor of Puerto Rico in the 1960s.

Daniel Robbins is Senior Curator with the Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea, responsible for two significant artist houses - Leighton House and Sambourne House. He led the recent award-winning refurbishment of Leighton House and has curated many exhibitions and contributed to numerous publications on 19th century art, architecture and design.

Sunday 20 October, **People of Colour in Enlightenment Britain**

Tim Moore



*Lady Elizabeth Murray and Dido Elizabeth Belle,
by David Martin, c. 1776*

The European Enlightenment saw an unprecedented amount of globalisation. As the world's largest naval superpower, Britain had a huge role on the international stage, and its mainland hosted people from an increasingly diverse set of nations and cultures. For Black History Month, this talk looks at the rich presence of the people of colour who called Britain their home during the Enlightenment, from humble

servants to decorated princes. It will also focus on Kenwood House itself and its own historic connections with people of colour.

Dr Timothy Moore is a lecturer of English and History at Oxford and a Project Curator for the National Trust. His research specialises in inclusive histories of the 18th and 19th centuries, including histories of people of colour, queer histories, and histories of disability.

Sunday 17 November, **Michelangelo, Architect**
Grant Lewis



St Peter's Basilica in Rome

Michelangelo looms large in 2024. In November, a Royal Academy exhibition will spotlight the young artist's activities in the key year of 1504, while the British Museum hosts an exploration of his busy final decades before his death in 1564, aged 88. Looking at both

periods of Michelangelo's life, this lecture celebrates one of the lesser-known aspects of the artist's career: his architecture. Michelangelo grumbled about not being an architect, but with time he angled for some important commissions, before becoming the Popes' go-to architect in his sixties. His career involved some of the Renaissance's most iconic buildings. In one of his first, brief engagements, undertaken in the 1500s, Michelangelo sought to finish the drum of Brunelleschi's famous dome for Florence Cathedral; half a century later, he was designing an equally ambitious dome of his own, this time for no less a church than St Peter's Basilica. Rebuilding St Peter's was Michelangelo's main focus in his later years; but he also juggled its construction with other building engagements, causing the elderly artist to devote more time to architecture than painting or sculpture.

Grant Lewis is the co-curator of *Michelangelo: The Last Decades* at the British Museum. A specialist of Italian art, especially drawings, he has rediscovered a large group of unattributed drawings by Sienese painters in the Museum collection, and has also published on artists including Titian, Giulio Romano and Parmigianino. Other recent exhibition projects have explored Genoese and Venetian art. He teaches at Cambridge and the Courtauld.

Sunday 8 December, **TBC**

You are warmly invited to a Christmas Drinks party in the Upper Hall after this lecture.

AUTUMN ESTATE WALK

Thursday, 24 October, **Autumn at Kenwood**

A walk with Kenwood's Head Gardener. Meet at North Front of Kenwood House at 10.30am.

This walk is free for Friends of Kenwood; non-members £5.

Book in advance (essential) by emailing info@friendsofkenwood.org.uk

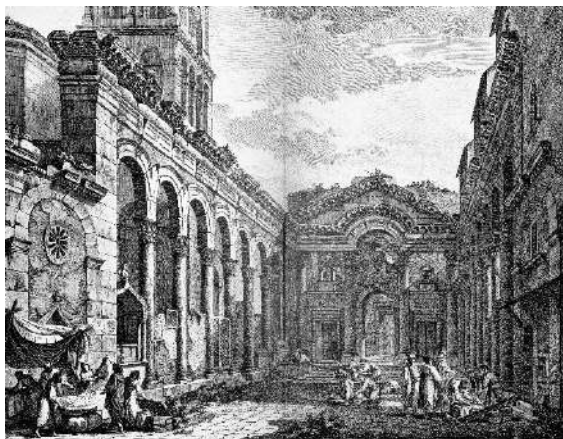
VISITS

We are visiting places in the London area which are accessible by public transport.

Visit booking: *To book a place for a visit, please use the Eventbrite or other link which can be found on the Lectures/Events page of our website, or look out for the link in our regular email news update.*

EVENT

Thursday 8 October, **Friends Annual Evening Event**



Peristyle of Diocletian's Palace in Split, Robert Adam, 1764

We are hosting a keynote lecture by Dr Adriano Aymonino on the theme of the Adam brothers' Grand Tours and how they fed into their professional careers with a reference to the architecture of Kenwood and particularly to the 'Great Room'.

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