

# A Taste of Bowdon Arts Society

## Our Past Lectures



### **Adventures Amongst Nomadic Tribes Of Iran And Afghanistan - Searching For The Woven Art Of The Nomads**

*Brian Macdonald shared how 'My time spent in Iran and Afghanistan during the 1970's began to foster a passion for the wonderful woven art produced by nomads on basic ground looms'.*



### **Rococo In France - A Lighter Touch - Watteau To Boucher**

*Matthew Morgan lecturer. Buffeted by wars, revolutions and national chauvinism, Rococo is a style that has been defined as frivolous, thoughtless, shallow and inherently elitist by art historians. However, it is the defining style of the 18th Century and continues to exert an influence on contemporary art.*

*Director in Valuations at Christies.*



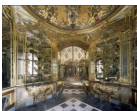
### **Women, Botany And Art – From The Garden To The Easel**

*Twigs Way delivered a visually stunning overview of the role of female artists in floral and botanic art from 16th to 19th Century. This lecture considers themes including perceived divisions between floral and botanic art, the amateur and the professional, and of course the vexed question of marriage!*



### **Christmas Backstage At Covent Garden**

*Sarah Lenton shared how every year the Royal Ballet and Opera puts on a season of Christmas shows: How do they cope with magic coaches, snow bags, 17 Sugar plums, 12 Princes and the entire Lower Ballet School backstage? This talk took us into the wings, down the traps and under the stage including as the legendary Christmas Tree of Nutcracker is moved onto its lift.*



### **The Green Vaults Of Dresden**

*Nicholas Merchant took us to the green vaults. In the late 17th Century, 'August the Strong' of Saxony arranged his accumulated treasures in such a way as to be the forerunner of the modern museum. The Green Vaults were where he placed his most curious and valuable objects in their own luxurious chambers, there they remain to this day, glittering, glowing and scintillating, impressing the milling throngs who come to see them as they always have done.*



### **Bloomsbury Group – The Art Of Vanessa Bell**

*Julia Musgrave introduced us to avant-garde painter, designer, decorator, inspired colourist, mother and muse, Vanessa Bell was the warm heart of the Bloomsbury Group, a set who Dorothy Parker once described as 'living in squares and loving in triangles'. Navigating the tides of sexual and artistic revolution with tolerance, irreverence and wit she had a central role in the social and aesthetic life of Bloomsbury.*



### **A Classical Gallery Of Rogues: The Eternal Pantheon**

*Gillian Hovell took a playful look at the Greek and Roman gods. The Romans adopted the Greek gods, renamed most of them and used them for their own end. These gods continue to appear around us today in surprising forms and in a variety of artistic media. Why and how are their images still used, and what messages do they bear today?*



### **And So, To Bed**

*Janusz Karczewski-Slowikowski traced the significance and use of beds from the medieval period through to the 18th century, from the great 'State Beds' and also through the history of their construction, decoration and often costly textiles associated with them. In times gone by, married or single, rich or poor, one never slept alone...*

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## **The Foreign Invention Of British Art From Renaissance To Enlightenment**

Leslie Primo helped to explain why foreign painters seemed to be preferred by the aristocracy in London to native-born English painters and what was their impact on English art and art practice. This lecture traced foreign artists from the Tudor period through to the Renaissance and Baroque, their origins and contributions. Holbein, Gerrit van Honthorst, Paulus van Somer, van Dyck, Peter Lely and Rubens.



## **Secret Art In The Passport**

Martin Lloyd who enjoyed a career in HM Immigration Service shone a light on the passport. From the wax seal to the microchip, man has exploited the skill of the artist and artisan in his attempt to manufacture a forgery-proof document. The lecture took us through three centuries of passport design, explains the overt and uncovers the covert to illustrate the defences built in. You will never see your passport in the same light again.



## **Legend & Lustre - Jim Thompson & Thai Silk**

Denise Heywood told of the achievements & showed the intricate process of Thai silk production and its illustrious heritage, including royal robes & temple murals of Jim Thompson, aesthete & art collector fell in love with Bangkok and its ancient art.



## **Now you see it - now you don't: the art of visual deception**

This lecture was a look at the profound mystery of perception. Bertie Pearce: Lecturer, performer & journalist.. Member of the Inner Magic Circle took us through the eternal fascination with the unfathomable, the weird ambiguous state of seeing things which are not there – yet are there.



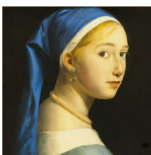
## **The Power of Jewellery - Adornment & Ritual from Prehistory to the Present**

Judy Rudoe: Senior curator at the British Museum. President of the Society of Jewellery Historians discussed the meaning of jewellery to different societies across time & across the world revealing how jewellery has been worn & used, taking us from ancient burial ornaments by anonymous masters to the big designers of the modern world.



## **A Very British Art Form - The Story of Pantomime**

Malcolm Jones: Accredited lecturer at V & A Theatre Museum and RADA. Works with Age Exchange Community Arts on creative arts programmes described Pantomime, originally used to describe performances at Drury Lane Theatre based on the Italian Commedia dell'arte and as an opportunity for political satire.



## **'Can computers cry? – Art touches human emotions which machines cannot feel.'**

Justin Reay FSA FRHistS: Published historian, tutor in History of Art & Architecture for independent Colleges at Oxford, member of AI & Arts Interest Group at Alan Turing Institute demonstrated how art arises from human imagining to feed our emotions.



## **Bodies In Balance – Asian Medicine In Art**

Zara Fleming took us through the great medical traditions of Asia (India, China & Tibet) through a rich diversity of artistic treasures both historical and contemporary including exquisite Indian paintings, rare Chinese acupuncture charts, Tibetan tangkhas and Japanese woodblock prints. Lecturer.

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## **The Art Of The Cartoon**

Harry Venning traced the history of the cartoon from early practitioners like Cruickshank and Hogarth, to more contemporary artists such as Giles and Schulz, bringing events up to date with cartoons produced fresh on the page that day.



## **Constable & Turner - Rivals for Greatness**

Ed Williams took us through British art in the early 19th Century which was dominated by two singular visionaries, John Constable and JMW Turner. Both men challenged convention, were notoriously 'difficult' and were to herald changes in British art with their ground breaking and unconventional approaches in painting which ultimately gave rise to modernism.



## **John Barbirolli & The Gramophone**

Raymond Holden, award-winning writer, broadcaster & lecturer discussed John Barbirolli, conductor & saviour of the Halle Orchestra in Manchester. His monumental number of recordings allowed him to alert listeners & musicians to a wide variety of works that may have flown under their artistic radars. Lecturer.



## **Charismatic Crook Or The Worlds Greatest Art Dealer**

'Europe has a great deal of art, and America has a great deal of money' remarked Joseph Duveen the British art dealer whose wit & charm convinced the hard-nosed, tight-fisted titans of Wall Street - Frick, Mellon, Rockefeller, JP Morgan, Vanderbilt that 'when you pay high for the priceless, you're getting it cheap'. Lecturer Mark Meredith.



## **The Rivalry Between Leonardo and Michelangelo**

James Lindow took us through Leonardo and Michelangelo who although being two of the most well-known figures in Italian Renaissance art, enjoyed a keen rivalry that is not well understood.



## **The English Renaissance - A New Direction**

In this lecture Hugh Ellwood considered the period of turmoil between the reign of Henry VIII and the Civil War as experienced in art, architecture, literature and music.



## **Undressing Antiques**

Mark Hill from the Antiques Roadshow gave us a persuasive introduction to buying antiques and integrating them into today's homes. The lecture took a look at what current and future generations of collectors are buying, why they are buying them and how they are displaying them.



## **Quest for the Holy Grail - tapestries considered to be William Morris's finest achievement**

Thomas Mallory's *Le Mort d'Arthur* was a major source of inspiration for Morris and Burne Jones and culminated in their finest artistic achievement, the series of tapestries called "The Quest for the Holy Grail". Through her personal conservation of these tapestries, Jacqueline Hyman showed a rare insight into their construction and design with unique detailed images.

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## **Raphael: Genius of the Renaissance in Rome**

*Raphael died in Rome on Good Friday 1520 aged just 37. This lecture looked at his short but astonishing career as painter, architect, administrator and draftsman and considers his lasting influence on subsequent artists.*

*Lecturer: Jo Walton: Teacher and Lecturer. Guide at Tate Britain and Tate Modern.*



## **Balenciaga, Dior and Fath: Haute Couture's Holy Trinity**

*Haute Couture achieved some of its finest moments during the years following World War II. Paris reaffirmed its position as the capital of fashion and produced some of the most luxurious clothes money could buy. This lecture explored their lives and creative output.*



## **Insiders/Outsiders: Refugees from Nazi Germany and their Contribution to British Visual Culture**

*Despite the traumatic nature of their dislocation and the obstacles they often encountered on arrival in the UK, those who fled Nazi dominated Europe made a deep and long-lasting contribution to British culture. Monica Bohm-Duchen focussed on the visual arts.*



## **The Huguenot silk weavers of Spitalfields: From riches to rags**

*Welcomed at first with open arms, bringing luxury skills, the Huguenots' fortunes fluctuated wildly. The lecture examined the fashionable patterned silk dresses for which they were famous and how the trade finally died out. Lecturer: Sue Jackson.*



## **The Life of Lee Miller**

*Antony Penrose: Director of the Lee Miller Archives and The Penrose Collection showed us "The life of the extraordinary Lee Miller – model, muse, fine art and documentary war photographer and so much more". Told with reference to those with whom she exchanged creative inspiration – Man Ray, Pablo Picasso, David E. Sherman, her father Theodore Miller and her son, our lecturer, Antony Penrose.*



## **Banksy and Basquiat: Superstars of Street Art**

*This lecture looked at the art of Banksy and Jean-Michel Basquiat. What binds them together is "street" or "graffiti" art. The lecture will trace their careers and describe their major artworks. Raymond Warburton will make connections between them and attempt to evaluate their contribution to contemporary art.*