

8 November 2022 : Ian Gledhill

Gilbert & Sullivan - the birth of the English Operetta

In the 1860s the British musical stage was dominated by the operettas of Jacques Offenbach and his French contemporaries. However, French operetta in its original form was considered too risqué for British audiences, and the shows had to be bowdlerised to a considerable extent. It was the unique partnership of Gilbert and Sullivan that produced a home grown answer to the French which was, in Gilbert's words, "free of anything that could give the slightest offence". Dominating the London musical stage for over 15 years, they showed that the British could match the French and Viennese in musical theatre, and paved the way for later composers such as Sidney Jones, Lionel Monkton and Ivor Novello.



PROGRAMME 2022

13 December 2022 : Simon Seligman

'Debo' - Mitford, Cavendish, Devonshire, Duchess, Housewife 1920-2014

Deborah 'Debo' Devonshire, the youngest Mitford sister and wife of the 11th Duke of Devonshire, was hefted by marriage to one of Europe's greatest treasure houses, Chatsworth. In the second half of the 20th century, she imbued it with a spirit, elegance and sense of welcome transforming it from decades of taxation, war and social change into one of the best-loved and popular historic houses, gardens and estates in the country. With multiple responsibilities it is no wonder her passport stated her profession as 'housewife'. She became a best-selling author and sell-out speaker, championing the countryside, its skills, traditions, livelihoods and food, trustee and patron of numerous charities, businesses and good causes, and the most famous poultry keeper in the country. A true polymath who had a lasting impact on Chatsworth and on everything she touched and everyone she met;



Maestro-di-marradi-cassone late 15c marriage chest

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*Tickets for individual lectures are available prior to the lecture
from the membership desk - £10 pp*

Lectures held at the Square Chapel Arts Centre
Second Tuesday of the Month
12.45 for 1.00pm.



11 January 2022 : Jennifer Toynbee-Holmes

Venice - from Canaletto to Monet

The festive works of Canaletto and Francesco Guardi, the last great 18C painters of views, shaped the image of Venice in the minds of northern Europeans long after the city's demise. The most important pictures of Venice of the 19C and early 20C were painted by some of the most progressive artists from Europe and the United States including Turner, Manet, James McNeill Whistler, Walter Sickert, John Singer Sargent, Paul Signac, and Monet. These artists challenged the run-of-the-mill visual stereotypes, developed unique strategies and techniques, and made considerable contributions to the development of modern art..

8 February 2022 : Marathon! : Rupert Willoughby

One of the world's most popular athletic events commemorates Pheidippides's epic run from the battlefield of Marathon to his native Athens. Apart from the amazing courage of Pheidippides, why remember a battle that took place over two and a half thousand years ago? Since the 19th century, historians have argued that it was a crucial event, one that had decided 'the whole future of human civilisation'. As John Stuart Mill put it, 'the Battle of Marathon, even as an event in English history, is more important than the Battle of Hastings'. Rupert re-creates the background and the battle itself in thrilling detail. He looks at the various ways in which ancient Athens has influenced our art and culture, and argues that Marathon was, indeed, the battle that saved 'Western Civilisation'. Eye-opening, edge-of-your-seat stuff. .

8 March 2022 : Clive Stewart-Lockhart :

George Chinnery, The Greatest Artist of British India and the Far East.

Horace Walpole said, in 1783, that 'No man ever went to the East Indies with good intentions' and George Chinnery was certainly that man. Running away from debt and his wife, whom he charmingly described as 'the ugliest woman I have ever seen', he settled in India for 23 years before running away from debt again to China. This talk covers his portraits of many of the leading figures of the East India Company, most notably Colonel James Kirkpatrick, his 14 year old Indo-Persian wife and their children, key figures in William Dalrymple's White Mughals, as well as his beautiful scenes of everyday life and landscapes.

12 April 2022 : Gillian Hovell

The Iconic Roman Villa – through the Keyhole

Roman villas are popular modern destinations for family days out in England and in Europe. But what are we really looking at during our visit? Gillian shares the archaeologists' tricks of the trade to show what we should look for to bring a two-thousand-year-old home to life. Roman villas developed over the centuries from humble origins to country working estates, city mansions or the stunning seaside homes of the ultra-rich. Roman villas are so much more than a pile of ruins; they are glimpses through the keyhole into the dynamic lives of the real Romans and their families.



[photo by Immanuel Giel of museum model of Roman Villa at Fishbourne]

10 May 2022 : Elizabeth Gowing:

Edith Durham's Bold Edwardian Collection of Beautiful Balkan Things

'Such costumes as I have never seen before and never shall again perhaps', the lecture is illustrated with rich fabrics and great stories. Edith's early 20C travels took her across the Accursed Mountains between Kosovo, Montenegro and Albania to what are now UNESCO World Heritage Site monasteries, through bazaars 'glowing with goods'. We follow the trail and exploration of an Edwardian traveller and visit the people and artefacts she found.

14 June 2022: Jane Gardiner

The Sun King and the Court of Versailles

For all the things that have been written about the great Sun King, Louis XIV, he is best remembered for the creation of Versailles, the immense chateau he built on the site of his father's old hunting lodge and which became the seat of French government, the setting for all grand court ceremonial and the envy of every other European monarch.

[image V&A]



12 July 2022: Paul Rabbitts:

A Concise History of our Great British Public Parks

A fascinating insight into the history of our Great British Public Park. Having enjoyed them, what do we know about them and their origins? Great Royal Parks, 18C Pleasure Gardens to their Victorian heyday. What is 'parkitecture'? Examples of lodges, lakes, bandstands, fountains, lidos, palm houses and floral displays, to their decline in the 60's, 70's and 80's. The design and architecture of parks from across the UK is examined, including Halifax.

[photo © the Arts Society Halifax]



11 October 2022: Anna Warrilow

Renaissance Cassoni - Wedding Chests & the Art of Marriage in 15C Florence

Marriage in Renaissance Italy was anything but a love match. Indeed, these were dynastic unions intended to strengthen family ties. Often commissioned by the groom and carried aloft through the city streets, this lecture looks at the rich decoration of furniture intended as part of the marriage dowry. These exquisite chests or *cassone* were often illustrated with improving or historical images for the benefit of the newly married couple.

[see front for Lecturer's image]