

# The Arts Society Isle of Man

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## Programme 2025-2026

Non-members are welcome at our lectures. Guest charge £10.

Lectures are at 11.30am for 1 hour at the Manx Museum Lecture Theatre and are streamed live to Zoom for members who prefer to watch at home or work. Venues, times and costs for Events will be notified to members and on Facebook.

### 16 SEPTEMBER 2025: Scott Schiavone

#### Fashionable Folds: The Fan as the ultimate fashion accessory.



Fans have been used for millennia, principally for cooling but also for religious and ceremonial purposes. In Europe, they later developed into a ubiquitous accessory for the fashionable elite. Fans were produced to commemorate births, marriages and deaths, were decorated with scenes of love and pastoral scenes of idyllic aristocratic life. This lecture explores not only the rise of the folding fan in Europe as fashion's most statement-worthy accessory but also the artistry and craftsmanship of fan making in relation to the changing fashionable trends in dress throughout Europe from the 16th to the 20th century.

Scott Schiavone is a Fashion Historian and Curator. He is both a University of Glasgow and London College of Fashion alumnus having graduated from the MA (Hons) History of Art and MA Fashion Curation in 2004 and 2010 respectively. He has worked with fashion and textile collections across the UK, including Glasgow Museums, National Museums Scotland and The Harris Museum in Preston where he is currently the Decorative Art Curator. His areas of expertise are nineteenth and twentieth century French, British and American womenswear, luxury fashion accessories and marginalised social histories of fashion.

### 21 OCTOBER 2025: SUZANNE PERRIN

#### JAPANESE ARCHITECTURE & GARDENS



This lecture explores the development of Japanese architecture away from its earlier Chinese models and how this was highlighted by open interiors with direct connection to the surrounding space and garden, creating exterior links with the interior.

Suzanne is an independent researcher and historian specialising in Japanese History, Art & Culture, and founded Japan Interlink in 1995 to promote the understanding of Japan in the UK. She studied Nihonga traditional Japanese painting at Nagoya University of Arts and gained a certificate there, and reached Level 3 in Japanese Language at the Japan Foundation in London. Suzanne has lectured to a wide range of institutions including universities, museums and adult education groups in the UK and overseas. She has published articles on Japanese culture and contemporary living for various magazines, and published her first book in 2016.

**18 NOVEMBER 2025: Raymond Warburton**

**PAUL CEZANNE: THE APPLE OF HIS EYE(S)**



Cezanne is one of the most well-known names from the art world of the 19th and early 20th centuries. Yet when it comes to his life and his art – apart from the fact he painted mountains, bathers and apples - he is hardly known at all. This lecture will explain Cezanne’s approach to art, and give five pointers to bear in mind when looking at his paintings. The lecture will look into his personal relationships with his father and mother, his wife and son, and Emile Zola, and what they meant to him. And, in the light of all the apples he painted, the lecture will reveal what - or who - was the ‘apple of his eye’.

Ray has had a life-long love of art. However, in his twenties, Ray studied social sciences at the London School of Economics and the School of Oriental and African Studies. These studies led to a career in health and social care, with art being an evening and weekend passion. But all that changed in 2011, when Ray became a guide at Tate Britain and Tate Modern. Then from 2014 to 2017, he studied art history at the Open University, and then at the University of Buckingham, from where he gained an MA in the History of Art.

**16 DECEMBER 2025: Matthew Wilson**

**GETTING THE DRIFT: SNOW IN THE HISTORY OF ART.**



A Christmas-themed lecture about snow in art history which has a lot to tell us about the many emotions that snow provokes. In European art, snow arrived relatively recently, with Bruegel’s The Hunters in the Snow (1565) the first serious, large-scale consideration of snow’s joyousness, terror, and spirituality. This lagged some way behind China where landscapists, informed by Daoist attitudes to the sanctity of nature, had meditated on winter scenes several hundred years previously.

Picture: Peter Bruegel – Hunters in the snow.

Matthew studied History of Art at the Courtauld Institute and is an author, lecturer, and educator. As a freelance journalist he writes for numerous publications including BBC Culture, The Spectator, The Economist and Aesthetica Magazine. He has written two books on symbolism and his latest book is 'Art Unpacked' - a fully illustrated introduction to understanding art (Thames & Hudson 2023).

**20 JANUARY 2026: JOHN STEVENS**

**THE ARCHITECTURE OF MUGHAL INDIA: PALACES, MOSQUES, GARDENS AND MAUSOLEUMS.**



Before the British arrived in India, the Indian subcontinent was ruled by the Mughal Emperors. The stunning buildings and gardens they constructed from the sixteenth to the eighteenth century have left an indelible stamp on India’s architectural and cultural landscape. Mughal architecture fused elements from Islamic, Persian, Turkish and Indian architectural traditions, and gave rise to some of the most beautiful and iconic buildings in the world.

Dr John Stevens gained his PhD in History from UCL, before going on to teach British Imperial History, Indian History and Bengali Language at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS, University of London). He is a regular visitor to India and Bangladesh and has lectured at numerous Indian universities. He also works as a consultant on Indian affairs and teaches the Bengali language to private students.

**17 FEBRUARY 2026: RUSSELL NASH**

**THE MEN WHO MADE MENSWEAR.**



This lecture tells the story of men's tailoring over the past 200 years, told through the lives of the men who commissioned and created and wore it. Tailors, shirtmaker, hatters and other craftspeople in London's west end, especially around Savile Row & Jermyn Street have shaped the way men dress since the Regency. How did men such as Beau Brummell, The Duke of Windsor, Tommy Nutter, Montague Burton, Alexander McQueen and John Stephen create their signature looks which influenced the mens fashion? This lecture also looks at the wider cultural shifts since the early 19th century to the present day and how they affected the way that men present themselves.

Russell trained and worked as an actor, puppeteer and theatre maker for 15 years. He also spent time as a journalist, jewellery business owner and writer. In 2015 he qualified as a London Blue Badge Tourist Guide. Around this time, he rekindled his love of art and art history. He now regularly guides the major art galleries and museums in London including the National Gallery, National Portrait Gallery, Tate Modern & Britain and the British Museum. He has delivered lectures for institutes and museums, as well as numerous U3A groups and other societies.

**17 MARCH 2026: ALICE FOSTER**

**GOING DUTCH: VERMEER'S WOMEN.**



Vermeer and his contemporaries celebrated the importance of the Dutch household, and women's role within it. Dutch seventeenth century interiors almost always include images of women, or remind us of their presence - at work, at leisure or parenting. Dutch painters depicted with great sensitivity this mysterious domestic realm, often inhabited only by women and children. Alice Foster traces the variety of subject matter revealing the modernity of a new nation in seventeenth century Holland.

Alice has lectured for Oxford University Department of Continuing Education since 1998. She lectures regularly at the Ashmolean Museum, Oxford, and at the Oxfordshire Museum in Woodstock. Her busy freelance career includes organising History of Art study days with colleagues, and regular weekly classes in Oxfordshire and Worcestershire. In 2004 Alice joined The Arts Society and has lectured in Britain and in Europe. In 2025 she undertakes tours of Australia and New Zealand. Since 2003 Alice has been a tutor on study holidays in Italy. Currently, Alice is a residential tutor at the Argyll Hotel on the Isle of Iona, specialising in Scottish art. In 2010 she was elected President of Banbury Fine Arts Society.

**21 APRIL 2026: ANDREW SPIRA.**

**THE ART & CULTURE OF ARMENIA.**



Armenia is one of the best kept secrets of the ancient and modern world. It has for centuries stood at the meeting point of great empires - the Persian, Byzantine, Ottoman, Soviet - but, due to its indomitable tenacity of spirit, it has outlived them all. It was the first country in the world to accept Christianity as its state religion (over 1700 years ago) and has retained its unique form of sacred culture. Of all the arts practised over the years - metalwork, tapestry, carving - none was more precious than the art of the illuminated manuscript. Reflecting an exotic mix of influences from East and West, this craft was raised to the highest levels of enchantment and beauty.

Andrew Spira studied at the Courtauld Institute and Kings College, London. For several years, he worked at the Temple Gallery, London (specialists in Byzantine, Russian and Greek icons) and as a curator at the Victoria and Albert Museum where he worked on the British Galleries and for the Silver, Metalwork and Jewellery Department. Besides lecturing extensively on a wide range of subjects, he has taken numerous groups (including ADFAS and Arts Society groups) on cultural visits to Russia, Armenia, Georgia, Romania, Crete, Turkey, Tunisia and all over Europe.

<b>19 MAY 2026: JOANNA BANHAM</b>
<b>THE MANY FACES OF WILLIAM MORRIS.</b>



William Morris was a man of prodigious energy, talent, and versatility. He was a designer, a craftsman, a writer, a lecturer, a conservationist and a revolutionary socialist. His over-arching passions were a love of art and making, and a hatred for what he perceived as the greed and inequality that characterised contemporary society. This lecture reviews Morris's life, ideas and achievements, exploring not only the highlights of his career but also his relationships with his wife Jane, and other artists and designers with whom he worked, and the reasons why he is still so important and influential today.

Picture: National Portrait Gallery.

Jo Banham is a freelance curator, lecturer and writer. From 2006-2016 she was Head of Adult Learning at the Victoria & Albert Museum, and before that Head of Learning and Access at the National Portrait Gallery, and Head of Public Programmes at Tate Britain. She recently curated an exhibition on William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement for the Juan March Fundacion in Madrid and the Museu Nacional d'Art Catalunya in Barcelona and she is currently writing a book on the History of Wallpaper.

<b>16 JUNE 2026: LYDIA GOODSON</b>
<b>RAPHAEL : DRAFSTMAN, PAINTER, ARCHITECT AND DESIGNER.</b>



The painter Raphael was so famous and admired in his lifetime that when he died in 1520 at the age of only 37 it was remarked in Rome that his death had caused sufficient grief in heaven for the walls of the Vatican to tremble and crack. This talk looks at the career the extraordinary fame of Raffaello Sanzio: from his upbringing in Urbino, his earliest works in Umbria, to the height of his fame, working for the great and the good in sixteenth century Rome.


Lydia is an art historian and lecturer specialising in the art and material culture of Renaissance Italy. After a career in television production and raising a family Lydia returned to academia and now holds a BA in Renaissance History, an MA in History of Art and was awarded her PhD in 2020 from the Warburg Institute of the University of London. She is an art history tutor for CityLit and regularly speaks to other adult learning groups.

The Arts Society Isle of Man, which is not a charity, was formed in 1996 by an enthusiastic group who laid the foundations for today's local society. It is an autonomous unincorporated members society and pays an annual fee to The Arts Society (a registered charity in England and Wales, and Scotland) to access support functions and to assist with its activities.

New members are welcome. To join the Arts Society Isle of Man, contact Sue Creer on [suecreer@hotmail.com](mailto:suecreer@hotmail.com) or Liz Berry on [lizberry@manx.net](mailto:lizberry@manx.net)

A Lecture or Event may be cancelled or changed at short notice. Members will be advised by email and Facebook.