

# FRIENDS OF THE ASHMOLEAN MUSEUM

## WINTER 2017 - 18

### Members Lectures at the Ashmolean Museum

All lectures will be presented in the Headley Lecture Theatre, with a capacity of 100 on each occasion.

#### 1. Curator's Choice – Broken Branches

**Fri 8 December 3.45pm | £18**

Complimentary hot drinks and cake served from 3.15pm

Dr Clare Pollard, Curator of Japanese Art at the Ashmolean, has picked this intriguing and powerful wooden sculpture by Yamazaki Choun as her choice. The late 19<sup>th</sup> to early 20<sup>th</sup> Century was a fascinating period for the arts in Japan, as artists discovered unfamiliar European ideas. Clare will discuss this work in the context of the development of modern sculpture in Japan. Organiser: Anthony Wagg

#### 2. Not another book on the Mona Lisa!

**Tue 9 January 5pm | £20**

Complimentary drinks served after the lecture

Is there really anything more to learn about the Mona Lisa? Professor Martin Kemp, world authority on Leonardo da Vinci, will tell us that there is. Research with co-author Giuseppe Pallanti has revealed fascinating new facts about Leonardo's family and early life, plus fresh evidence about Lisa's family. With this new insight, Mona Lisa is not 'just a portrait'. Professor Kemp will show us that these were actual people and that Lisa Gherardini, the person, lived a life just as astonishing as that of Mona Lisa, the legend. The book 'Mona Lisa: The People and the Painting' will be available in the Museum shop on the evening.

Organiser: Rosemary Wharton

#### 3. 800 Years of Church Wall Paintings in Oxfordshire

**Tue 27 February 4.30pm | £18**

Complimentary hot drinks and cake served from 4pm

This talk by Dr Ellie Pridgeon, a Tutor in History of Art for the University of Oxford Department of Continuing Education and a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London, will focus on wall paintings in Oxfordshire churches from the medieval period to the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. After looking at the painted interiors at South Newington, Chalgrove and Black Bourton to understand the various functions of medieval murals and their subsequent eradication at the Reformation, the focus will shift to the Victorians – including the Pre-Raphaelites in Oxford – and their efforts to create their own sense of 'the medieval'. Organiser: Jane Young.

#### 4. Buried Treasure: The story of the Watlington Hoard, its discovery, conservation and importance

**Tue 6 March 4.45pm | £20**

Complimentary drinks served after the lecture

Described by Ashmolean Director, Dr Xa Sturgis, as "one of the most exciting and important acquisitions we have ever made", the Watlington Hoard was discovered by a metal detectorist in 2015 and consists of over 200 Anglo-Saxon coins and other early medieval artefacts. Dr Julian Baker, Curator of Medieval and Modern Coins, will talk about how the find sheds new light on this turbulent part of our history, when King Alfred was defending Wessex against the Vikings. Organiser: Tom Price.

#### 5. Cool Modernism in America: 1915 - 1930

**Thu 29 March 3.45pm | £20**

Complimentary drinks served after the lecture

1915 to 1930 was a time of rapid industrial and economic growth in the western world, and a generation of men and women sought to free themselves from Victorian restrictions. Dr Katherine Bourguignon will speak about how the 'Roaring Twenties' in America – the era of 'The Great Gatsby', jazz, and Art Deco – inspired a host of artists such as Georgia O'Keeffe, Edward Hopper, Arthur Dove and Helen Torr to create a series of stunning and iconic artwork that is illustrative of this period. Members are welcome to a private view in the exhibition gallery until 6pm. This forthcoming exhibition – *America's Cool Modernism: O'Keeffe to Hooper* – is organised by the Ashmolean Museum and the Terra Foundation for American Art, and is co-curated by Dr Katherine Bourguignon and Dr Xa Sturgis. Organiser: Ros Nicholas.

## Members Trips

### 6. Victoria and Albert Museum, London – *Opera: Passion, Power and Politics*

Wed 17 January | £42

Depart from Oxford Playhouse 8.30am, Redbridge P&R 8.40am, Sandhills bus stop 9.00am | Return from London at 4.00pm

The stunning new entrance and courtyard at the V&A add wonder to this beautifully realised major exhibition on the glamour and excitement of operatic performances. Immerse yourselves in 400 years of opera, illustrated by seven premières in seven European cities. There is also plenty of time to explore the wonderful collections in the V&A and neighbouring museums. Refreshments available to purchase at the museum café. Organiser: Tom Price. Tickets available: 55.

### 7. Eton College

Wed 31 January | £40

Depart from Taylorian 9.40am, Water Eaton P&R 9.50am, Sandhills bus stop 10.05am | Return from Eton 3.15pm

Enjoy a guided tour of the various treasures housed in this 557-year-old school. Founded in 1440 by Henry VI, Eton College is steeped in history. Expect to see remarkable late medieval wall paintings (late 15<sup>th</sup> to early 16<sup>th</sup> Century), objects from the Eton College Collections, and modern stained-glass windows in the College Chapel by artists Evie Hone and John Piper. Refreshments served on arrival (included), and lunch is available to purchase at nearby pubs. Organiser: Anthony Wagg. Tickets available: 50.

Access: in this historic environment there are steps, uneven walkways and narrow passages.

### 8. Bodleian Library and Weston Library Oxford

Wed 7 and Wed 21 February (please indicate on form) | £34

Meeting point: Sheldonian Theatre main entrance on Broad Street 9am | Tour concludes at 12.45pm

The Bodleian Library is one of the oldest libraries in Europe, and the second largest in Britain after the British Library. Take in 400 years of the Library's history in this 90-minute guided tour, visiting the Divinity School, Convocation House, Chancellor's Court, Duke Humfrey's Library, Radcliffe Camera's upper reading room and Gladstone Link. Hot drinks and pastries will be served in the Weston Library café. This will be followed by a talk in Blackwell Hall about the Weston Library by renowned Oxford tour guide Alastair Lack, and the chance to look at the new exhibition *Designing English* on the graphic design of old English manuscripts. Organiser: Ros Nicholas. Tickets available: 26.

Access: there are a number of stairs and some walking at the Bodleian Library and there are no lifts available.

### 9. River & Rowing Museum, Henley-On Thames

Wed 14 February | £34

Depart from Oxford Playhouse 10.30am and Redbridge P&R 10.45am | Return from Henley at 3pm

One of the UK's leading independent museums, the River & Rowing Museum celebrates the River, the sport of Rowing, and the town of Henley-on-Thames. In this award-winning building designed by David Chipperfield, you will find an exhibition of the 20th Century British artist John Piper (*John Piper – A very British Artist*; first permanent home for the artist's work in the country), as well as Dame Barbara Hepworth's work in the *Barbara Hepworth: Finding Form* exhibition. There will also be a curatorial talk. Refreshments are available to purchase from The Wild Fork Café, which offers delicious wood-fired pizzas and the best of British seasonal food. Please phone 01491 415602 to book a table. Organiser: Sue Peach. Tickets available: 53.

### 10. Christ Church Picture Gallery & Upper Library, Oxford

Fri 9 March | £28

Meeting point: Christ Church College entrance on St Aldates at 2.15pm | Tour concludes 4.45pm

The Picture Gallery is one of the finest private collections in the country, with paintings by major Italian artists including Veronese, Tintoretto, van Dyck and Hals, and drawings by Leonardo, Raphael, Michelangelo and Dürer. The Upper Library houses a magnificent collection of books and manuscripts. The visit will include a special tour of the Gallery's permanent displays and temporary exhibition, led by the Curator or expert guides, and of the Upper Library (not normally open to the public) with the Librarian & Keeper of Special Collections. The day will conclude with a delicious King's Tea on the High Table in the Great Hall. Organiser: Sue Hine. Tickets available: 28.

Access: the Picture Gallery is reached by a narrow flight of stone steps and there are no lifts available

### 11. The Guildhall, Guildhall Art Gallery and All Hallows by the Tower Church, London

Thu 22 March | £42

Depart from Oxford Playhouse 8.30am, Redbridge P&R 8.45am, Sandhills bus stop 9am | Return from London at 3.30pm

The Guildhall, dating from 1411 and with an 800 year old history, is home to the City of London Corporation. The adjacent Guildhall Art Gallery, which was completely rebuilt following WWII bomb damage, houses a collection that is predominantly Victorian, and includes Pre-Raphaelite masterpieces. The surviving Roman Amphitheatre is also partially on view. Founded in 675AD, All Hallows by the Tower Church is the oldest church in the City. Enjoy a light lunch at the church café (included) before embarking on a guided tour in the afternoon. Organiser: Roger Parks. Tickets available: 51.

Access: The Guildhall is fully accessible, but there are some steps at the church.