

Programme 2022-23

October 6 2022

The subtle science & exact art of colour in English Garden Design

Timothy Walker Master of Horticulture, BA

In 1882 Gertrude Jekyll urged readers of *The Garden* to “remember that in a garden we are painting a picture”. An accomplished watercolour artist, Miss Jekyll, familiar with the principles of using colours, felt that in gardens these principles “had been greatly neglected”. This talk looks at how to apply these principles in designing a border, but also explores the ways in which a borders and paintings differ. However, it goes further than this and looks at how contemporary work of the likes of Turner, Monet, Rothko, Jackson Pollack evolved in parallel with ideas about what a garden or border should look like.

November 4 2022

The British Army in India – an unofficial view

Patrick Conner MA, DPhil

Many thousands of British soldiers - and, in some cases, their wives - sailed out to India in the 18th and 19th centuries. In the era before photography, many sent back drawings and paintings intended for private consumption. These now offer us a vivid insight into various aspects of their lives, sometimes unglamorous, often amusing. We see their journey out, their social activities, their bungalows, gardens and hill stations; their cuisine, recreations, life on the march, and their means of coping with heat, insects and other maladies...

December 1 2022

The Art of the Cartoonist

Henry Venning BA

In 'The Art of the Cartoonist' Harry traces the history of his profession with examples from early practitioners like Cruickshank and Hogarth, to more contemporary artists such as Giles and Schulz, bringing events right up to date with cartoons produced fresh on the page that day!

Yes, Harry will be drawing live. Prepare to hear some tricks of his trade, learn where to put eyebrows for maximum effect and discover exactly what the eskimo brothers said in The Funniest Joke Ever (possibly).

January 5 2023

Picasso's Guernica

Paul Chapman

Many consider Picasso's *Guernica*, created in 1937, his greatest masterpiece. Painted as a reaction to the bombing of the Basque town during the Spanish Civil War, it shows the horror, cruelty and devastation of modern warfare. More than a depiction of war. Picasso explores many themes, love, death, nationhood, motherhood and his own life at the time. The painting is also full of cross references to the history of art, Picasso nods to Rubens, Goya and Poussin and others. *Guernica* has a history of its own, once it leaves Picasso's studio, and its story continues. A painting worth spending some time to get to know a little better.

February 2 2023

Opera: The Melting Pot of Culture

Sarah Lenton

This lecture charts opera's close connection with the society that is paying for it. From the 17th and 18th century preoccupations with princely patronage, classical plots, courtly manners, high voices, enormous costumes and happy endings – through the gear change of the war and revolution to 19th century concerns of nationalism, epic themes and doomed heroines.

March 2 2023

Henry VIII and The Field of the Cloth of Gold
Gillian White

In June 1520 the kings of France and of England met in a field outside Calais to celebrate peace. This meeting became known as The Field of Cloth of Gold due to its extravagance and luxury, a magnificence captured in the famous painting at Hampton Court. Textiles, armour, goldsmiths' work, painting and even a dazzling temporary palace were all called upon to impress the watching world. The diplomatic negotiations were ultimately worthless but for Henry VIII and François I it was a chance to compete for honour and glory. This lecture explores the history and artistry of this magnificent yet arguably futile event.

April 6 2023

From Errol Flynn to Bottles of Gin: Literary Portraits and their Afterlives
Annalie Talent BA(Hons), PGCE

From Burns to Byron and from Jane Austen to the Brontës; this lecture will uncover the fascinating stories behind some literary portraits of the Romantic period. We'll look at various ways in which Romantic writers have been depicted in art, and how these likenesses have been received; both during the writers' lifetimes, and posthumously.

We will also explore the afterlives of literary portraits and their use in popular culture – from banknotes and fridge magnets to tins of shortbread and bottles of gin.

How do writers' portraits contribute to literary fame and celebrity? Do they affect our perception of their lives and work? And to what extent may portraits of writers be said to be fictions themselves?

May 4 2023

Morocco's Blues: why and how Morocco got painted blue

Elizabeth Gowing MA

Morocco Blues – why and how Morocco got painted blue draws on Elizabeth's time in Morocco in visits spanning more than 25 years. The lecture focuses particularly on the stories behind the blue pigment used for the fishing boats and doorways of photogenic Essaouira on the Moroccan coast, and the Majorelle Blue developed and patented by French artist Jacques Majorelle in Marrakech in the 1920s. The story of Morocco's blues takes us from Berber veils to Yves Saint-Laurent who restored Majorelle's Marrakech Garden, via Modernist Orientalist art and a protected mollusk...

June 1 2023

The Kennedy White House: the art, architecture and gardens of Camelot

Andrew Hopkins

This talk is about the White House's most celebrated twentieth century residents. Eleonora Roosevelt, for example, may have been more intellectual, while others utterly perfidious, - Nixon for one - but no other couple who inhabited the White House were ever so glamorous, sophisticated, celebrated. The tragic end to the Kennedy presidency, has tended to overshadow the astounding aesthetic and artistic changes made during their relatively brief tenure. The wonderful film tour of the residence made by Mrs Kennedy is still shown to visitors today, the Rose Garden was a fine creation by Jackie and her friend, renowned garden designer Bunny Mellon. So too, the interiors were restored seriously, based on historical research. Items belonging to the house throughout its history were purchased and returned, even in many cases gifted back by patriotic individuals. This richly illustrated talk returns us to congenial Camelot.

July 6 2023

Public Art

David Worthington BA Oxon, MA, FRBS

Public Art is a contentious subject. It is the most visible art form and therefore is an easy target. But how do they come to appear in our public spaces? This lecture tracks the development of public art over the last century and looks at various examples to see why some are loved and others loathed. It also explains the

process of procurement from the initial commissioning to the production and installation. I also show why we are all richer with the presence of art on the streets.