



The Arts Society South West London (reg. charity no. 1195700) is a member society of The Arts Society

President: Lady White

Naples

Dear Members,

I hope that you will enjoy looking through the 2023 Newsletter and find some lectures and visits that will excite your interest. Please add them to your diaries now.

We have looked at events scheduled for 2023 and the lectures on Donatello and Marina Abramović should be good introductions to the exhibitions at the V&A and Royal Academy respectively. Our February lecture is a 'carry-over' from 2022 when lecturer, William Wilkins, fell ill on the day, and Christopher Wren deserves a place in our schedule because 2023 is the tercentenary of his death. Finally, the lecture entitled 'Murder Most Florid' ties in nicely with the visit to the poison garden at Alnwick, Castle part of the Northumbria tour. We hope that the 2023 lectures will both inform and entertain.

Sincere thanks to Lael Nelson and Ruth Dover, for selecting our lectures and lecturers with such care.

At the time of going to press, our visits list is not fully finalised – some venues remain reluctant to commit to dates too far in the future. We will notify you once details are confirmed. One highlight should be the evening, with wine and refreshments, at the Royal College of Arms, when the mysteries of heraldry will be revealed. Jane Crang has done a magnificent job in compiling a list for 2023 and for completing the Covid-affected 2022 programme.

The 2023 tour will be to Northumbria with a study afternoon linked to it. The 2022 trip to Naples was very successful and our Tours and Visits are good ways to socialise with like-minded people. The deadline for bookings will have passed by the time that you read this but cancellations do occur, so please contact a committee member to add your name to the waiting list. Sincere thanks to Caroline Walker for overseeing the 2022 Away Trip and Study Day and for liaising with Heritage Travel over the Northumbria tour.



2022 was a very special year; it marked the 50th anniversary of the first full year (in 1972) of our Society. A celebration was held in July at St Mary's Church, Barnes, with Florian Schweizer (CEO of The Arts Society) and Lady White, founder of our own Society (and Co-Founder of the National Association of Decorative and Fine Arts Societies) as special guests. We are honoured to have Lady White as our President and were delighted to welcome her and her family to an evening of wine and canapés. Patrick Craig delivered a stunning lecture on the Golden Age of Music in Venice.

The organisation of the 50th Anniversary event was a team effort. Special thanks go to Jane Skerrett for securing the venue, Caroline for organising the catering, Kate Kirkland for dealing with financial matters, Gwen Hewitt for handling publicity and Lael and Ruth for identifying such a good lecturer. Also helping on the night were



Winefride Bolton and Felicity Irlam plus Jane Crang, who with Caroline, Ruth, Kate and Lael took over the duties of the Chairman and Vice-Chair when both tested positive for Covid.

2022 was our first full year as a registered Charity. We marked it with a further donation to the Quaker Chaplain's Fund at Wandsworth Prison where the money was used to buy art materials and create teaching videos. A big thank you goes to Jane Seaborn (Young Arts and Heritage Volunteering Secretary) and art teacher, Charles Penny (a former member of the Society) for devising an art programme.

Thanks also to Gwen (our Vice-Chair) for suggesting HMP Wandsworth as a worthy cause. We are proud too of having successfully applied for an Arts Society Community Grant on behalf of the Barnes Community Centre.



Two committee members, Jenny Edwards and Jane Skerrett, stepped down during the year and at the AGM, we said goodbye to three long-serving committee members; Caroline Walker, Gillian Ennis and Jane Seaborn. Caroline had taken on many roles over the years, including that of Vice-Chair and Jane was a Programme Secretary before taking on Young Arts and Volunteering. Gillian's expertise with the website was invaluable. We are grateful to all three and look forward to others joining us to help shape our Society and to continue the good work that Lady White began over 50 years ago.

Gill Grunwald

Gill Grunwald *Chairman*

SUBSCRIPTIONS & MEMBERSHIP

Subscriptions for 2023 are £45 single and £80 for joint membership.

If you pay by Standing Order, please ensure that you are paying the correct amount. **If you pay by cheque**, please write one immediately (dated 1 December 2022) and make it out to **TAS SW London**.

It should then be sent to: The Treasurer, Kate Kirkland, 16 Westpoint, 49 Putney Hill, London SW15 6RU. (Tel: 020 8788 0559)

Only one reminder will be sent.

The Arts Society South West London is now a Charity and will benefit if you Gift Aid your payment. **Please ask our Treasurer for details and a Gift Aid Form.**

WE WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

For membership enquiries please email theartssocietyswondon@gmail.com

NB: INSURANCE DISCLAIMER

The Arts Society South West London cannot be held responsible for any personal accident, loss, damage or theft of members' personal property.

Members are covered against proven liability to third parties.

LECTURES

Venue: Dryburgh Hall, Putney Leisure Centre, SW15 1BL or by Zoom (to be confirmed)
At 8pm on the second Monday of each month (excluding April and August)

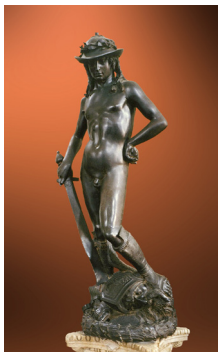
9 JANUARY

DONATELLO AND THE SCULPTURE OF THE RENAISSANCE

Lecturer: Jo Walton

Donatello may have been born in Florence over 600 years ago but his sculpture is so powerful that it still speaks directly to us today. Working alongside masters such as Brunelleschi, Ghiberti and Masaccio, he was one of the pioneers of the Renaissance and helped to change the way people looked at the world. From delicate idealism and startling realism, to the astonishing emotional force of his later works, this survey looks at the huge range of his sculpture, setting it against the vivid and colourful world of Italian politics in the age of the Renaissance.

Jo Walton has combined teaching and lecturing with a career in art bookselling and has been a volunteer guide at both Tate Britain and Tate Modern. She is now a freelance lecturer for The Arts Society, the Art Fund, Friends of Dulwich Picture Gallery and local art societies.



13 FEBRUARY

THE STORY OF TWO ICONIC WELSH GARDENS: MIDDLETON HALL (NOW THE NATIONAL BOTANIC GARDEN OF WALES) AND ABERGLASNEY

Lecturer: William Wilkins



The late Elizabethan garden at Aberglasney is the only surviving cloister garden in the UK and was discovered and saved, at the 11th hour, with the help of an American benefactor. The lecture also reveals the discovery and restoration of a supposedly vanished park around the vestiges of a great house at Middleton, and recounts how it became the National Botanic Garden of Wales and the setting of the largest single span glasshouse in the world, designed by Norman Foster.

William Wilkins divides his life between Wales, London and Venice. He went to the

Royal College of Art, did some teaching, and worked in the Architect's Dept. of the GLC before successfully exhibiting in New York and elsewhere. He combined his love of architecture and landscape architecture to set up The Welsh Historic Gardens Trust, the National Botanic Garden of Wales and the Aberglasney Restoration Trust as well as numerous other cultural and heritage projects.

13 MARCH

SOROLLA: THE MASTER OF LIGHT

Lecturer: Arantxa Sardina

Joaquin Sorolla was a master of light, managing to capture, like no other, the light of the Mediterranean beaches he loved and the energy of Spanish life. He painted what he saw, quickly, to capture that precise moment. As he said "I could not paint at all if I had to paint slowly. Every effect is so transient, it must be rapidly painted."

The lecture will look at Sorolla's life and art, from early education to success. Having been almost forgotten, he has been rediscovered in the last few years.

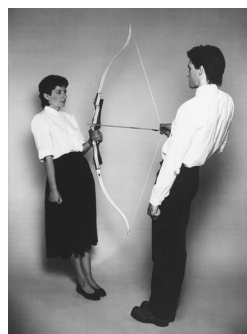


Arantxa Sardina is an official volunteer guide at the Tate Gallery, covering the permanent collections and some of the temporary exhibitions at both Tate Modern and Tate Britain. She completed her MA in Art History at the Open University in 2019, where her dissertation focused on fellow Spaniard Joaquín Sorolla, master painter of Mediterranean light and friend of John Singer Sargent.

8 MAY

MARINA ABRAMOVIĆ

Lecturer: Helen Oakden



In 2023, the RA is hosting the first ever UK exhibition on Marina Abramović and the artist is likely to become a hotly debated topic. Abramović is a pioneer of performance art and the lecture will look at her 50-year career from its dramatic beginnings to how the artist, now in her 70's, has developed her work to reflect her changing perceptions of the world. The lecture will consider whether performance art can outlive the performance itself; are the photos, videos and re-performances of younger artists just as valid? Abramović has a superbly powerful presence and creates a very intense relationship between performer and viewer.

Helen Oakden is the Head of the History of Art Department at St Mary's School, Ascot. She studied at Manchester University and received her Masters' Degree in architectural history from the Courtauld Institute of Art. Based in London, she has previously worked for the Royal Academy and National Gallery, as well as leading specialised art history courses across Italy.

12 JUNE

HEAVEN ON EARTH: A ROAD TRIP THROUGH MEDIEVAL BURGUNDY

Lecturer: Caroline Shenton

Settled by the Romans, who brought wine and gastronomy, Burgundy is a region of France packed with stupendous and moving architectural wonders dating from the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Autun, Vézelay, Fontenay, Pontigny and Cluny were spiritual service stations for crusaders, pilgrims and monks, profoundly influencing Western European art in the Middle Ages. The lecture will provide an armchair tour through this wonderful Romanesque region, and look at how the Benedictine abbeys and Cistercian monasteries there created some of the best wines in the world.

Dr Caroline Shenton is an archivist and historian. Formerly Director of the Parliamentary Archives in London and, before that, a senior archivist at the National Archives, her books 'The Day Parliament Burned Down' and the sequel 'Mr Barry's War', have won a number of awards. Her third book, 'National Treasures' tells the extraordinary and sometimes hilarious stories behind the saving of London's art and museum collections in World War Two.



10 JULY

MID 18C ENGLISH ROCOCO SILVER: ITS SOCIAL CONTEXT AND THE ADVENTURES OF ITS OWNERS AND MAKERS

Lecturer: *Ralph Hoyle*



Using images as well as pieces of silverware that the audience can examine afterwards, the lecture examines the Huguenot influence on this most decorative period where new silver-smithing techniques were fused with new designs. It will include the search for the original owners using heraldry, show portraits of them, and reveal some of their stories. Ranging from fabulously wealthy aristocrats to middling sorts, they variously; had a stint in the Tower of London, suffered family tragedies, had their descendants gamble away their estates or found their wife in a bed where she should certainly not have been.



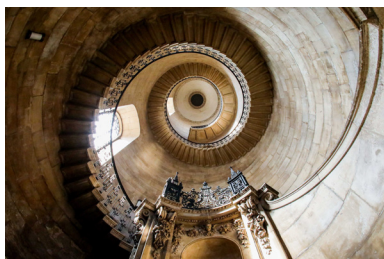
Ralph Hoyle is a long standing member of the Silver Society and was a schoolboy member of the Wine Label Circle (a society devoted to the study of silver decanter labels) eventually becoming its President. He has given talks to the Art Fund, Sheffield Assay Office, American Society for Eighteenth Century Studies, Historic Houses and at small charity raising events.

11 SEPTEMBER

SIR CHRISTOPHER WREN AND THE REBUILDING OF THE CITY OF LONDON OUT OF THE PLAGUE OF 1665 AND THE GREAT FIRE OF 1666

Lecturer: *Janet Gough*

Starting at the Monument to the Great Fire of London, designed by Sir Christopher Wren and Robert Hooke, the lecture uses Wren's buildings to tell the story of the rebuilding of London after the Plague and disastrous Great Fire of 1666. Drawing on royal patronage and up-to-the-minute science, Wren worked with a team of eminent collaborators to rebuild 51 new churches, crowned by the extraordinary domed, baroque St Paul's Cathedral.



Janet Gough read History and History of Art at Cambridge and worked in the City and then for Sotheby's auction house for ten years. Janet was the Director of Cathedrals and Church Buildings for the Church of England for eight years and she continues to champion historic churches. She became a lay canon of Bangor Cathedral in 2021. She has written a number of books on the cathedrals of England.

9 OCTOBER

MURDER MOST FLORID

Lecturer: *Mark Spencer*

Forensic botany is not a new science; indeed it has played a role in solving major cases for decades, including the infamous murder of aviator Charles Lindbergh's infant son. Plants are silent witnesses; their presence at a crime scene can help to identify a suspect or locate a victim. Even mundane plants such as brambles and nettles can provide insights into when a crime was committed and fragments of leaves and seeds on the footwear of a suspect



can place them at the scene. An understanding of landscape history and land-use helps to distinguish between a clandestine burial site and a medieval grave.

Originally a horticulturist, Mark Spencer went on to study Botany

at university and became a field botanist for a regional conservation organisation. Following 12 years as a botany curator at the Natural History Museum, London, he is now a consultant forensic botanist and occasional public speaker on TV and radio. His interests include the history of botany and botanic gardens, invasive non-native species and the flora of NW Europe.

13 NOVEMBER

ART OF THE ATACAMA DESERT: MUMMIES, LLAMA HERDS AND THE WORLD'S TALLEST GIANT

Lecturer: *Paul Bahn*

The Atacama Desert in Chile is not only the driest place on earth, filled with spectacular landscapes, but also home to two kinds of prehistoric rock art. First, rock paintings and engravings (often very beautiful and mostly depicting llamas) and second, the world's greatest collection of 'geoglyphs' – huge drawings made on the landscape. They include the 'Giant of the Atacama', by far the biggest human depiction known from prehistory. The talk presents the best examples of the Atacama's art and discusses what is known of the purposes of these enormous drawings.



Paul Bahn studied Archaeology at Cambridge University and wrote his PhD thesis on the Prehistory of the French Pyrenees. He has held post-doctoral fellowships, at Liverpool and London, plus a J. Paul Getty fellowship in the History of Art and the Humanities. His main interest is prehistoric art (especially rock art) most notably of the Palaeolithic era. In 2003, he led a successful search for the first Ice Age cave art in Britain.

11 DECEMBER

THE STORY BEHIND THE SONG

Lecturer: *Steve King*



'Save The Last Dance For Me' was recorded by the Drifters in 1960, with Ben E King on lead vocals, but what single event in the life of one of its writers inspired the track? Was 'Every Breath You Take' by The Police really written as a love song? What is the truth about the Beatles song 'Lucy in the Sky with Diamonds', and why did

George Harrison stop composing for three years in 1976? The lecture reveals the real stories behind some of the world's best known songs.

Steve King spent 35 years working in the radio industry, at the highest level in broadcasting, and has been recognised by the industry on many occasions. He has managed some of the biggest radio brands in the UK and worked with many well-known artists including Olly Murs, Robbie Williams, U2 and Rita Ora. He has directed over 50 multi-artist events at venues including the Royal Albert Hall, London Palladium and Wembley Arena.

VISITS

A charge is made and prior booking is required. At present it is not possible to give firm dates for all the following but we hope to arrange visits in 2023. We will keep members updated via the website and by email.

THE ROYAL HOSPITAL CHELSEA

Tours are led by Chelsea Pensioners, who tell the story of the 330-year history of the Hospital, taking in the splendour of the Grade I and II listed buildings and their artistic masterpieces. The guides bring to life the long-standing ambassadorial role of the Chelsea Pensioners, along with personal stories of their time at the Hospital.



29 MARCH

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF ARMS



This will be an evening visit. The tour will be led by one of the College's Officers of Arms and will reveal the fascinating history of how coats of arms came to be used and the medieval role of heralds, who used to be in charge of the organisation of tournaments between knights, keeping score and introducing contestants. Today, their activities include the granting of new coats of arms and the registration of family trees.

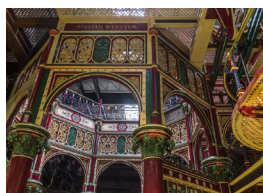
The evening will include a buffet supper with wine.

COSMIC HOUSE

This remarkable house in Holland Park represents a key landmark in the development of Post-Modernist architecture. A testament to the polymathic talents of Maggie and Charles Jencks, it was designed in collaboration with architect (Sir) Terry Farrell and built between 1978 and 1983. We are hoping to book a curator's tour.



CROSSNESS PUMPING STATION



Built in 1865 by Sir Joseph Bazalgette as part of Victorian London's sewerage system, Crossness Pumping Station is a Grade I Listed industrial heritage site and a masterpiece of 19th-century engineering, architecture, and design. With the opening of the Elizabeth Line to Abbey Wood, access to the site has become more viable.

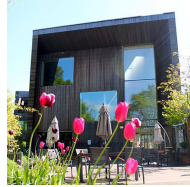
THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE

We are hoping for the resumption of behind the scenes tours of the Royal Opera House (a visit originally planned for 2020).



LIGHTBOX GALLERY, WOKING

This prizewinning gallery houses one of the largest publicly accessible collections of Modern British Art. Its main focus is on the art movement that developed in the early and middle years of the 20th century and the sculpture collection includes works by Elizabeth Frink, Barbara Hepworth, Jacob Epstein and Eduardo Paolizzi plus works by young and emerging artists.



JUNE/JULY 2023 - DATE TBC

All day coach trip

LONGFORD CASTLE



Longford Castle, SE of Salisbury, was originally built in the late 16th century with an unusual triangular floorplan. In the 18th century, the second Earl of Radnor employed the architect James Wyatt to transform it into a hexagonal palace but the project was abandoned part way through and it was left to the fourth Earl (and Victorian architect Anthony Salvin) to complete it.

One of the grandest stately homes in Britain, it has been the residence of one family – the Huguenot des Bouverie family (later Earls of Radnor) – for almost 300 years.

The Castle houses part of the National Gallery's art collection and we hope to arrange a special interest tour of the collection and the Castle.

A possible stop on the way back might be ROCHE COURT, site of the New Art Centre (a gallery and sculpture park).



STUDY AFTERNOON

Venue: St Mary's Church, Putney SW15 1SN. Prior booking is required and a charge is made.

WEDNESDAY 19 APRIL 2:00–4:30 PM

NORTHUMBRIA IN THE MIDDLE AGES

Lecturer: Sally Dormer

The study afternoon is designed to complement the tour to Northumbria but all members are welcome to attend.



In the 7th and 8th centuries, the Kingdom of Northumbria (located north of the River Humber) was one of the foremost centres of intellectual excellence in Western Europe. Viking raids in the late 9th century put paid to this culturally vibrant world, but NE England remained important throughout the Middle Ages. The city of Durham, home to Saint Cuthbert's relics and the Prince Bishops, attracted skilled craftsmen and became immensely significant for pilgrims, ecclesiastics and sovereigns alike after the Norman Conquest.

There will be two lectures, with a break in between for tea.

'Sovereigns, Monks, and Scholars: Oswald, Aidan, Cuthbert, and Bede' – 2pm to 3pm

'Saints and Politics: St Cuthbert and the Prince Bishops of Durham' – 3.30 pm to 4.30pm

Sally Dormer has a BA (in History), a PhD (in Medieval Manuscript illumination) and an MA (in Medieval History of Art). She is a lecturer and tutor for the Early Medieval Year Course at the V&A, Dean of 'European Studies' for two US Universities and a freelance lecturer for The Art Fund.

A possible Special Interest Talk

In 2021 and 2022, we made donations to the Quaker Chaplain's fund at HMP Wandsworth. As a follow-up, we hope to arrange for Liz Bridge, the Chaplain at the Prison, to talk to us about Art in Prison and how our donations have been used.

AWAY TOUR

TUESDAY 16 - SATURDAY 20 MAY 2023

TOUR TO NORTHUMBRIA

Each year, we organise an Away Tour, alternating between destinations in the UK and those abroad.

Our 4-night trip for May 2023 is to Northumbria and has been arranged by Heritage Travel. It is based at the 4* Hotel Indigo in Newcastle.

The trip includes walking tours of Newcastle and Durham, visits to Durham Cathedral, the Laing Art Gallery in Newcastle, the Bowes Museum, Alnwick Castle (and its gardens) plus an excursion over the causeway to the Holy Island of Lindisfarne. The trip will be by coach from Putney, with stops at Harewood House and Nostell Priory on the journeys there and back.

Although booking has closed for the tour, places may be available if there are late cancellations. The 2024 Away Tour will be overseas. Suggestions for possible destinations would be welcome.



Photo © credits: All Wikimedia unless stated (CC stands for Creative Commons, SA stands for Share Alike, numbers stand for Licence type, names in brackets belong to the contributor). **Page 1:** Anniversary Photos – Sarah Smith. Barnes Community Centre presentation – Caroline Silver Lewis. **Page 2:** St George – courtesy of the lecturer (J Walton). David – CC SA 2. Welsh Gardens (Aberglasney & Middleton) – courtesy of the lecturer (W Wilkins). Sorolla (Women Walking on the Beach and Sketch for an oil painting) – courtesy of the lecturer (Arantxa Sardina). Abramovic (The Artist with a Candle (A) and Rest Energy by Ulay/Abramovic) – courtesy of the lecturer (Helen Oakden). Burgundy images – courtesy of the lecturer (C Shenton). **Page 3:** Rococo Silver – courtesy of the lecturer (R Hoyle). Christopher Wren – courtesy of the lecturer (Janet Gough) and The Times (Getty Images) for the woodcut. Murder Most Florid – courtesy of the lecturer (M Spencer). Atacama – courtesy of the lecturer (P Bahn). Song Stories – courtesy of the lecturer (S King). **Page 4:** RH Chelsea – CC 3 (Camster 2). College of Arms – CC SA 4 Int (Grindbox). Cosmic House – CC SA 4 (No Swan So Fine). Crossness – CC SA 2 (Christine Matthews). Royal Opera House – CC SA 2 Generic (Norio Yakayama). Lightbox – Lightbox publicity. Longford Castle – CC SA 2 (Barry Deakin). Roche Court – CC SA 4 Int (Nicola Togneri). Study Afternoon (St Cuthbert) – British Library MS 26 (Yates Thompson). Tour – Newcastle – Geoff Duke (Pexels). Tour – Lindisfarne – CC SA 3 (Martin Cigler).

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