

THE ARTS SOCIETY GREATER LONDON AREA

Study Course Bulletin April 2026

Please find below the latest and up to date list of study courses being presented by The Arts Society, Greater London Area. As you know availability changes so please go to our website for full and current information: <https://theartsociety.org/greater-london-area>

The new series of lectures arranged by Sue Mills and Pat Wood entitled '**The Culture and History of the Nordic Lands**' has now opened for booking. Please see the website for more details and an application form or contact Sue Mills suecolinmills@yahoo.co.uk

If you have questions about any of the days, please contact the named organiser.

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TOO MANY COOKS! FOOD, FASHION & FINE DINING IN ART & ARCHITECTURE

Date: Friday, 17 April 2026
Time: 10.45hrs for 11.00hrs start – 15.15hrs
Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, WC2E 9HP
Lecturer: Sarah Pearson
Cost: £40 (coffee & lunch not included)
Contact: Amanda Howard
Email: amh@bandahoward.co.uk

Tickets from Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1980462111488?aff=oddttdtcreator>

The secret world below stairs: food, fashion and fine dining in art and architecture

Lecture 1 The Evolution of the Kitchen

In the first lecture we examine how kitchen design has changed over the centuries. From the open fire of the Saxon Hall we see how the kitchen became a separate space whose design was driven not just by practicality but also by food and fashion. A large banquet required a number of fireplaces to prepare it, whilst the taste for fine puddings and sweet treats led to the development of cold rooms and the need to store ice through the summer months. We visit some fine examples of kitchen architecture and consider historical literature regarding kitchen design.

Lecture 2 The Fine Art of Feasting

The second lecture examines how food and feasting are presented in art and sculpture from the Medieval period to the modern era. These artworks reveal not just what was eaten but also how it was eaten, highlighting changes to presentation, glassware, and cutlery. Food could be depicted in a humorous way, as for example by Hogarth and his contemporaries or could images demonstrate culture and refinement showcasing up to date fashion such as eating oysters or

drinking tea. Through these artworks we enter the world of feasting and see how it changes through time.

Lecture 3 Personalities and Predilections

The final lecture focuses on historical personalities, examining through art and literature how food, fashion and drama featured in their lives. From the vast entertainments of Catherine de Medici to the Christmas menu of King George II, sit back and enjoy the tales of what can go right , and wrong when entertainment is pushed to the limit

SOUL OF A NATION: CHOPIN, GRIEG, AND SIBELIUS AND THE DESTINIES OF POLAND, NORWAY AND FINLAND

Date: Friday, 1 May 2026
Time: 10.45hrs – 15.30hrs
Venue: Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF
Lecturer: Rosamund Bartlett
Cost: £38
Contact: Patricia Savours
Email: psavours@gmail.com
Tel: 020 8866 6358

The arts were vital to nations occupied by foreign powers as they struggled to gain independence in the 19th century. This day of lectures explores the phenomenal role in that process played by the music of Chopin, Grieg and Sibelius. Using excerpts from their works, as well as paintings from the period, their lives and careers will be discussed in the context of Polish, Norwegian and Finnish cultural history.

FAKES, FORGERIES & THE EXPERIENCE OF ART

Date: Thursday, 14 May 2026
Time: 10.45hrs for 11.00hrs start – 15.15hrs
Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, WC2E 9HP
Lecturer: Sarah Jaffray
Cost: £40 (coffee & lunch not included)
Contact: Amanda Howard
Email: amh@bandahoward.co.uk

Tickets from Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/fakes-forgeries-and-the-experience-of-art-tickets-1980634856172?aff=oddtcreator>

From paintings 'by' Vermeer and Leonardo to ancient Roman artefacts and NFTs, this course explores a variety of fakes, both forgeries and replicas, to question the motives for producing such objects. We examine how this history of fakes impacts our understanding of art by

challenging our perceptions of what has cultural value. We look at how the art market drives the production of fakes, how the power of 'the expert' complicates authenticity and how the conservator supposedly reveals the 'truth' of an artwork.

This study day uses case studies of famous forgers and the history of art fakes (including sanctioned replicas) so that we can explore how the art market creates the conditions for fakery. More broadly, we explore the concept of authenticity with the goal of examining what we give value to and why.

BAROQUE ROME

Date: Tuesday, 9th June 2026
Time: 10:30hrs for 10:45hrs start – 15.15hrs
Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, WC2E 9HP
Lecturer: Charlie Hall
Cost: £40 (coffee & lunch not included)
Contact: Amanda Howard
Email: amh@bandahoward.co.uk
Tickets from Eventbrite:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1982691772464?aff=oddtcreator>

A three-lecture special interest day on Baroque Rome, where art, architecture, and history collide

Lecture One:

The Sacks of Rome from the 4th century BCE to 1527

Lecture Two: Baroque Rome

Seventeenth Century Rome was an extraordinarily productive centre for the arts. This lecture discusses what emerged, and who were the prime movers in these original and exciting times.

Lecture Three: Caravaggio - Baroque 'n' roll

Michelangelo Merisi travelled to Rome from the village of Caravaggio, at the tail end of the sixteenth century. He rapidly developed a luscious style that combined the drama of artists such as Tintoretto with the meticulous accuracy and observational skills of the Flemish artists. His work was spotted by a highly influential man, the Florentine Cardinal Francesco Del Monte, and his career took off.

See Eventbrite page for full details

THREADS OF HISTORY: THE WORLD OF THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY

Date: 17th June 2026
Time: 10:30 Registration for 10:45 start. 1530 finish.
Venue: Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF
Lecturer: Rupert Willoughby

Cost: £38

Contact: Olivia Freeman

Email: Studycourses97@gmail.com

Tickets from Eventbrite: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/threads-of-history-the-world-of-the-bayeux-tapestry-tickets-1983948831361?aff=oddtcreator>

A trilogy of talks about the Normans. A lively introduction to the Bayeux Tapestry, unravelling its mysteries; then the orgy of building after 1066 that changed the face of Saxon England, finally a celebration of the life of William the Marshal, a Norman knight of the Magna Carta period.

Lecture 1 THREADS OF HISTORY: THE WORLD OF THE BAYEUX TAPESTRY

In this lively introduction to the tapestry – so much more than the story of Hastings – Rupert unravels some of its mysteries, places it in the context of its age and firmly establishes it as a landmark in the history of Western art.

Lecture 2 THE NORMANS – CONQUEST AND LEGACY

An account of the orgy of building after the Conquest that all but effaced the fabric of Saxon England, with the focus on individual patrons and their lives.

Lecture 3 KNIGHT ERRANT: THE LIFE AND ADVENTURES OF WILLIAM THE MARSHAL

Celebrating a key figure in the age of Magna Carta, Rupert stirringly evokes a gorgeous world in which the knight was dominant. In their coats of mail like silk shirts and their golden spurs, these were 'the angels men complain of, who kill whatever they come upon'.

See Eventbrite page for full details

SPICE, SALVATION & SKELETONS: FOUNDATIONS OF THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE

Date: Wednesday, 15th July 2026

Time: 10.30hrs for 10:45hrs start – 15.15hrs

Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, WC2E 9HP

Lecturer: Rupert Dickens

Cost: £40 (coffee & lunch not included)

Contact: Amanda Howard

Email: amh@bandahoward.co.uk

Tickets from Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1982076707789?aff=oddtcreator>

The Dutch Golden Age of the 17th century, one of the most vibrant periods of western art, displayed the talents of Rembrandt, Vermeer and Hals among many much-loved artists. This series of three lectures will show how an economic miracle, religious toleration and a scientific revolution formed the backdrop to an upsurge in creativity in the visual arts. Familiar masterpieces will be seen in a new light and lesser-known works will be unveiled as we explore the themes of trade, tolerance and technology to reveal the foundations of the Dutch Golden Age.

VERMILLION TO AZURE: PAINTING IN THE SOUTH OF FRANCE

Date: Tuesday, 8th September 2026
Time: 10:30hrs for 10:45hrs start – 1£.15hrs
Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, WC2E 9HP
Lecturer: Justin Reay
Cost: £30 (coffee not included)
Contact: Amanda Howard
Email: amh@bandahoward.co.uk
Tickets from Eventbrite:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1983272879571?aff=oddtcreator>

This Special Interest Morning takes us from the russet earth and verdant river-banks of the 'Côte Vermeille' of French Catalonia in the western Mediterranean, eastwards to the dazzling light and intense colours of the French Riviera – the 'Côte d'Azur' of Provence. The first of two talks discusses Impressionists and Modernists in this ancient region, mostly French artists from Paris, and we then follow in the footsteps of artists from Britain who fell in love with the light, the climate and the simple, elegant culture of the south of France.

Many of the artists and landscapes we will see in these talks will feature in the Royal Academy's forthcoming exhibition 'Painting the French Riviera'.

See Eventbrite page for full details

WESTMINSTER PALACE AND ABBEY: 1000 YEARS OF ROYAL HISTORY AND ART

Date: Friday, 18th September 2026
Time: 10:30hrs for 10:45hrs start – 15.30hrs
Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, WC2E 9HP
Lecturer: Dr Jonathan Foyle
Cost: £40 (Coffee & Lunch not included)
Contact: Amanda Howard
Email: amh@bandahoward.co.uk
Tickets from Eventbrite:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1986820145539?aff=oddtcreator>

Join us for a deep dive into the art and history of one of London's oldest royal landmarks.

Before a fire in 1512, medieval Westminster Palace was the seat of the English monarchy, presenting the grandest hall, the intensely painted king's bedchamber and a glittering chapel; and in the adjacent royal abbey church the golden coronation seat and ultimately the nation's mausoleum. Today we still speak of the 'Palace of Westminster' and it strictly retains its status as a palace. But what was it like? Within and beneath the Victorian Houses of Parliament are significant remains of the old palace that, along with the observations and recording of

antiquarians over the centuries, enable a reconstruction of royal life, art and meaning at the heart of the nation. This richly illustrated series of talks leads us back into royal Westminster's vanished chambers.

Lecture 1. Edward the Confessor to Henry III (c.1040-1272)

Lecture 2. Edward I to Henry VIII (1272-1547)

Lecture 3. Edward IV to present (1547-)

THE FOLLOWING EVENTS ARE NOW SOLD OUT

FAKES, FORGERIES & THE EXPERIENCE OF ART 14 May

JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER - TATE EXHIBITION 3 June 2026

FRIDA KAHLO: PAINTING, POLITICS AND PATRIOTISM 22 July 2026

A HIGHLAND THING? GLASGOW SCHOOL & SCOTTISH COLOURISTS. 18TH TO 20TH CENTURY SCOTTISH ART Tuesday 6 October 2026

FORTHCOMING EVENTS. SAVE THE DATE – tickets are not yet available

JADE: A STONE OF ANCIENT EMPIRES, A RESPLENDENT ART DECO JEWEL Thursday 5th November 2026

FESTIVE TALE: THE STORY OF CHRISTMAS MUSIC Friday 4 December 2026

VAN EYCK: THE PORTRAITS Tuesday 8 December 2026