

# Greater London Area Study Course Bulletin January 2026

Welcome to another year of study courses put on by the Greater London Area of The Arts Society. Those that put in extensive work to enable these events are all volunteers and we are extremely grateful to them. We are always looking for more organisers so PLEASE contact me – without obligation – if you might be interested in joining our group.

In this newsletter there are up-to-date details of study days planned so far this year. You will see that there are several new events now available and there will be more in the near future.

Please check the Greater London Area website for any changes and new additions.

<https://theartsociety.org/greater-london-area>

As always please contact the study day organiser with any queries.

Very best wishes from us all.

Alison Watson

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07881825930

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## **REBELS NOT MUSES: THE WOMEN ARTISTS OF EUROPEAN MODERNISM**

Date: Friday 23 January 2026  
Time: 10:30 Registration for 10:45 start. 1530 finish.  
Venue: Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF  
Lecturer: Dr Rosamund Bartlett  
Cost: £38  
Contact: Tricia Savours  
email: [psavours@gmail.com](mailto:psavours@gmail.com)  
Tel: 020 8866 6358

The story of modern art as conventionally told inevitably runs from Monet and Cezanne through to Picasso, Kandinsky, Duchamp and Dalí. This day of lectures paints a new picture of avant-garde experimentation before and after WW1 by showcasing the lives and careers of the many female artists who also contributed to the Modernist movement, and are only now receiving due recognition. They include Harriet Backer, Marie Krøyer, Suzanne Valadon, Olga Rozanova, Sonia Delaunay and Sophie Taeuber-Arp.

## **FAMOUS INDIVIDUALS IN THE ARTS AND THEIR ILLNESSES LAST FEW TICKETS**

Date: Tuesday 3 February 2026  
Time: 10:30 Registration for 10:45 start. 1530 finish.  
Venue: Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF

Lecturer: Professor Alan Silman

Cost: £38

Tickets via Eventbrite

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/famous-individuals-in-the-arts-and-their-illnesses-tickets-1624886452119?aff=oddtcreator>

Contact: Olivia Freeman

email: [studycourses97@gmail.com](mailto:studycourses97@gmail.com)

Our speaker, a medical doctor, looks at the lives of three geniuses and how they continued to create, despite their medical impediments.

### **Beethoven: Deafness Was Far from His Only Health Challenge**

Beethoven's deafness is well known. From an unparalleled quantity of documented material this lecture will describe in his own words the impact of his deafness on his mental and physical health and on his phenomenal outputs. The talk is also richly illustrated with extracts of recordings of his works. Less well known, is the decline in his physical health and failure of many of his organs – the causes which will be discussed. Clearly dying, and in the most appalling physical distress, he was able to produce works such as the 9th Symphony, ironically based on the Schiller's 'Ode to Joy' – a contradiction that defies credulity. In a final twist the lecture will show that laboratory analysis in the past 5 years of Beethoven's Christmas cards have helped unravel the cause of his health problems!

### **Renoir: How Someone So Disabled Could Produce Works Of Such Extreme Beauty Is A Complete Mystery, Even To His Own Son**

This lecture is a biography of Pierre-Auguste Renoir, with a particular emphasis on the development of his rheumatoid arthritis and how that affected his life and his art. Renoir was already well into middle age when he developed his arthritis and in this talk, I describe how it developed, and using his diaries and other sources, provide details of how it affected him and what treatments he sought. My particular focus is on what adaptations were needed to allow him to carry on painting, despite marked disability and excruciating pain, to the end of his life. The talk is illustrated with several of his works of art, and defying the audience to understand, how despite such disability, he could continue to paint and sculpture. The role of his family, and indeed of his cats, in helping him manage adds to the human interest

### **Dickens: Great Hardship And Pain Is Reflected In His Novels**

In addition to being a prolific author, Dickens was a performer: he was at his most contented when giving public readings from his books. Looking at his life we should not ignore his traumatic early childhood which was replayed in his novels. Yet his later life was suffused with pain and psychological traumas as well as suffering from some unmentionable disorders! How

sad though that he was suffering so much that he had to cancel going to a ball put on by the Queen at Buckingham Palace at the end of his illustrious career

**Alan Silman** is an eminent Professor of Medicine and a Research Fellow at Oxford University, prior to that he was Medical Director of the charity Arthritis Research UK.

He is passionate about the arts and has researched intensively the medical history of well-known individuals. From this research, he has developed a series of lectures addressing how the lives and outputs, of such individuals were affected by their health. These talks have been given widely to a variety of audiences across the UK.

### **WHOSE SHAKESPEARE IS IT ANYWAY?**

Date: Thursday, 12 February 2026

Time: 10:45hrs Registration for 11.00 hrs start. – finish at 13.15hrs

Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, Covent Garden, WC2

Lecturer: Nick Hutchison

Cost: £30 (does not include coffee)

Tickets via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1955225745839?aff=oddtcreator>

Contact: Amanda Howard

Email: [amh@bandahoward.co.uk](mailto:amh@bandahoward.co.uk)

A two lecture study morning.

#### **Lecture 1: Whose Shakespeare Is It Anyway?**

When we talk about a Shakespeare play what do we actually mean? How have these plays come down to us across the centuries, and how faithful are modern editions to the originals? This interactive, entertaining and enlightening lecture (developed with Sir Jonathan Bate, the distinguished Shakespearean scholar,) discusses how we approach a Shakespearean text, where it comes from, and how modern editors reedit them, frequently mistakenly.

#### **Lecture 2: 'A Play Towards': Shakespeare from page to stage**

A lively and interactive lecture/workshop looking at how Shakespeare's company produced the plays in the 16/17 century. Highlighting the differences between early modern and modern theatre practise, including repertoire constraints on rehearsal, cue scripts, embedded stage direction, visible audience, universal lighting, and touching on textual clues. this workshop will change the way you look at Shakespeare's texts for ever.

### **FROM MUHAMMED TO MARX: The Changing Face of Art & Textile in Central Asia**

Date: Friday, 20 March 2026

Time: 10:45hrs Registration for 11.00 hrs start. – finish at 15.15hrs

Venue: Concert Artistes Association, 20 Bedford Street, Covent Garden

Lecturer: Chris Aslam

Cost: £40 (does not include coffee or lunch)

Tickets via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/1955501791499?aff=oddtcreator>

Contact: Amanda Howard

Email: [amh@bandahoward.co.uk](mailto:amh@bandahoward.co.uk)

A three-lecture study day exploring the period before, during and after the Communist Revolution, focussing on Central Asia and the way in which it was transformed.

### **Lecture 1: Colouring The Russian Empire: Prokudin-Gorsky, Pioneer Of Colour Photography**

This lecture examines the rise and fall of Sergey Prokudin-Gorsky, and his pioneering use of dichromatography, creating stunning colour photographs decades before colour photography was supposedly invented.

### **Lecture 2 : Cotton Pickers and Cosmonauts- Soviet Central Mosaics and the use of Public Arts as Propaganda**

This lecture explores the birth of the Soviet mosaic from its roots in Islamic mosaics and Communist propagandist posters through to the question of preservation in post-Soviet Central Asia. How did Soviet artists deal with the uncomfortable reality that Muslim Central Asia was a Russian colonial conquest?

### **Lecture 3 : Banned - Savitsky and the secret hoard of Avant Garde Art**

Despite the flourishing of Russian Avant Garde Art during the first 30 years of the 20th Century, as Stalin rose to power, he banned all but Socialist Realist expressions of art. Savitsky travelled throughout the Soviet Union, buying, bribing and cajoling until he'd amassed the second largest collection of Russian Avant Garde art in the world

## **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 (does not include coffee or lunch)

Contact: Amanda Howard

Email: [amh@bandahoward.co.uk](mailto:amh@bandahoward.co.uk)

Tickets from Eventbrite:

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

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

## **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 (does not include coffee or lunch)

Contact: Amanda Howard

Email: [amh@bandahoward.co.uk](mailto: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.

## **JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER**

**(Tate Britain Exhibition (21st May – 27 Sept 2026))**

Date: 3 June 2026

Time: 10:30 Registration for 10:45 start. 1530 finish.

Venue: Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF

Lecturer: Claire Ford-Willie

Cost: £38

Contact: Shahida Osman

Email: [shahida0450@yahoo.com](mailto:shahida0450@yahoo.com)

Tickets via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/1901758814809?aff=oddtcreator>

This is the first major European exhibition of Whistler's work in 30 years and will be a wonderful opportunity to enjoy and study every branch of Whistler's ground-breaking work, encompassing his highly innovative portraits, exquisite landscapes, as well as his drawings, and prints. His career ranged from his early life in St. Petersburg to his time in Paris and then his controversial and revolutionary work in London, beside the Thames. Much of his work is familiar but the exhibition will also include examples, which have not often or even ever been seen. The exhibition will include exquisite portraits, his technically novel landscapes, his drawings, prints, and designs.

**Lecture 1: Whistler's Early Career in St. Petersburg and Paris.**

**Lecture 2: Whistler as a Painter of Portraits and Landscapes.**

**Lecture 3: Whistler as Draftsman and Designer.**

Text from Tate Britain website: 21 May 2026 – 27 Sept 2026

*Experience the captivating world of rule-breaking American artist James McNeill Whistler*

*A truly global figure, Whistler re-wrote the rules of what it meant to be an artist. He pioneered new and innovative techniques, creating astonishingly beautiful, ethereal visions of modern life that would earn him a place as one of the most influential artists of the 19th and 20th centuries.*

*This retrospective – the first major European exhibition of Whistler's work in 30 years – brings together the artist's world-famous paintings alongside rarely, or never seen, works. It includes exquisite portraits, drawings, prints, and designs, from as early as his teens in St. Petersburg to the enigmatic late self-portraits.*

*The exhibition presents both a boldly experimental artist and cosmopolitan celebrity, disrupting the conventions of Victorian society in pursuit of truth, beauty, and progress.*

## **FRIDA KAHLO: PAINTING, POLITICS AND PATRIOTISM**

Date: 22 July 2026  
Time: 10:30 Registration for 10:45 start. 1530 finish.  
Venue: Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF  
Lecturer: Chloe Sayer  
Cost: £38  
Contact: Shahida Osman  
Email: [shahida0450@yahoo.com](mailto:shahida0450@yahoo.com)

Tickets via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/frida-kahlo-painting-politics-and-patriotism-tickets-1976396507156?aff=oddtcreator>

Frida Kahlo is considered an Icon and as one of the great artists of the 20th century. The Study Day will look at her life, work and times.

The Mexican painter Frida Kahlo (1907–1954) is regarded, as one of the great artists of the 20th century. This Special Interest Day will look at her life, work and times. The daughter of a German photographer and a Mexican mother, she survived polio at the age of six and a devastating road accident at the age of eighteen. Her injuries would lead, after many surgical interventions, to her death at the age of forty-seven. However, Kahlo lived the intervening years to the full. In haunting self-portraits, she explored her dreams, fears and desires.

Kahlo and her circle were inspired by pre-Columbian art, contemporary indigenous cultures, and the ideals of the Mexican Revolution. An explosion of creativity had followed the 1910 Revolution, as intellectuals, artists and photographers rejected European values and espoused mexicanidad. In 1929, Kahlo married the celebrated Mexican muralist Diego Rivera. United by their passion for their country, they shared the socialist ideals of the Mexican Revolution.

Importantly, Frida Kahlo celebrated her vibrant Mexican heritage in her paintings and her life. A keen collector of Mexican folk art, Kahlo was often flamboyantly dressed in Mexican garments. As Chloe Sayer will show, Kahlo used clothing and jewellery to express her pride in her cultural heritage. She also had a deep affection for popular festive traditions including the Day of the Dead.

While Frida was alive, she sold very few paintings. Today, however, she has cult status. Her 'look' inspires countless fashion designers. The Blue House, where she lived and died in Mexico City, attracts over 25,000 visitors each month. Feminists admire her for her independence of spirit, by the LGBTQ community for her non-conformity, and by the disabled for her courage in the face of

adversity. The term 'Fridamania' is often used to describe the intense level of admiration that she now attracts.

*This Study Day is timed to coincide with a major exhibition at Tate Modern: 'Frida: The Making of an Icon' (25 June 2025 – 3 Jan 2027). In addition to her paintings, it will feature photographs and memorabilia from her archives; also work by her contemporaries and by artists she inspired from later generations*

## **A HIGHLAND THING? GLASGOW SCHOOL & SCOTTISH COLOURISTS**

### **18th TO 20th CENTURY SCOTTISH ART**

Date: Tuesday 6 October 2026  
Time: 10:30 Registration for 10:45 start. 1530 finish.  
Venue: Linnean Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London, W1J 0BF  
Lecturer: Rosalind Whyte  
Cost: £38  
Contact: Shahida Osman  
Email: [shahida0450@yahoo.com](mailto:shahida0450@yahoo.com)

Tickets via Eventbrite:

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/a-highland-thing-glasgow-school-scottish-colourists-18th-20th-century-sa-tickets-1976641200039?aff=oddtcreator>

For many years, Scottish artists found it necessary to travel south to make their names and careers in art, but with the increasing importance of the cities of Edinburgh and Glasgow from the end of the 18th Century an independent Scottish art scene became possible. These developments will be traced through the work of individuals such as Sir Henry Raeburn, the first artist to find success whilst remaining in his native Scotland and Sir David Wilkie, important as one of the first to truly export Scottish art.

The first part of the day will also include a look at the work of Scottish architect, designer and artist, Charles Rennie Mackintosh, who is now a well-known name and a major draw for the tourist industry in Glasgow, with several of his buildings still existing, as well as his designs for Tea Rooms. However, his work was not always so well received, and, following some early success, which included his architectural masterpiece, the Glasgow School of Art, his prospects floundered. In this lecture, we track him from that early success in his native Glasgow, through the years of doubt and struggle, ultimately to the South of France where he enjoyed the last few years of his life travelling with his wife and collaborator Margaret and reinvented himself as a watercolour painter. With a wonderful array of beautifully designed buildings, furniture and interiors to enjoy along the way, we explore the life and career of Charles Rennie Mackintosh.

In the second part, we go on to explore the work of 'The Glasgow Boys', a group of radical young artists who challenged the art establishment and the dominance of classical subject matter in Scotland. In the early 1880s, united by their disillusionment with academic painting, they painted contemporary rural subjects, often working outside, directly in front of the motif.

This allowed them to produce paintings that were true to nature and to paint realistic objects in their natural environment. They were influenced in this by the social realism of certain Dutch and French artists, particularly the naturalist painter, Jules Bastien-Lepage. Their scenes of Scottish rural life challenged the art promoted by the Edinburgh oriented Scottish art establishment of the time and began a shift to Glasgow as the epicentre of art, which was supported by a group of wealthy industrialists in that fast-growing and industrialising city. They were always a loose grouping of artists, who provided each other with support, but all of them also continued to look elsewhere for inspiration. By the late 1880s, several of them began to take an interest in Celtic design and Japanese prints, so that the early rural naturalism evolved in many separate and distinct directions, often in stark contrast to their early work.

Our final session will focus on The Scottish Colourists, four artists (John Duncan Fergusson, Francis Cadell, Samuel Peploe and George Leslie Hunter) who, in the early 1900s turned their attention to Paris. Influenced by the French Fauves and Post Impressionists, they combined strong, vibrant colours with the painterly traditions of Scottish art, to produce innovative still life paintings, landscapes and portraits. This lecture will look at those bright, colourful works, but also at each individual's development, as they worked towards the artistic language that would come to define them.

Throughout the period covered, we will look at the parallels between Scottish and other European art, as well as periods of divergence.

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

**SOUL OF A NATION: CHOPIN, GRIEG, AND SIBELIUS AND THE DESTINIES OF POLAND, NORWAY AND FINLAND** 1 May 2026 (Tentative date TBC)

**BAROQUE ROME** Tuesday 9 June 2026

**SPICE, SALVATION AND SKELETONS: FOUNDATIONS OF THE DUTCH GOLDEN AGE** Wednesday 15 July 2026

**WESTMINSTER PALACE AND ABBEY: 1000 YEARS OF ROYAL HISTORY AND ART** Friday 18 September 2026

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

## **THE FOLLOWING EVENT IS SOLD OUT**

**JOSEPH WRIGHT OF DERBY: FROM THE SHADOWS** Wednesday 11th March 2026