

**Wednesday September 10<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**The Dancing Faun**

**Lecturer: *Bertie Pearce***

In this lecture Bertie recounts the extraordinary tale of how a small bronze statue, which had sat in his grandfather's garden for 40 years, was discovered as a masterpiece and ended up in the Getty Museum, California. Adriaen De Vries (c.1556-1626) was a Northern Mannerist sculptor born in the Netherlands. A technical virtuoso, he created spectacular bronzes for the most discerning patrons of his time, including the Holy Roman Emperor Rudolf II of Prague. He excelled in refined modelling and bronze casting and in the manipulation of patina and became the most famous European sculptor of his generation.



**Wednesday October 8<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**The Genius of Antonio Stradivari**

**Lecturer: *Toby Faber***

Explores the central mystery embodied by the inimitability of Stradivari's violins by following some of his instruments from his workshop to the present day.

Two hundred and fifty years after Antonio Stradivari's death, his violins and cellos remain the most highly prized instruments in the world. Loved by great musicians and capable of fetching fabulous sums when sold, their tone and beauty are legendary. Every subsequent violin-maker has tried to match them. Not one has succeeded. How can that be?



**Wednesday November 12<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**George Stubbs (1724-1806) : the English Leonardo**

**Lecturer : *Christopher Garibaldi***

Many art historians and critics have compared the work of Stubbs to that of Leonardo da Vinci, one even christening him the 'Leonardo of Liverpool' to reflect his humble origins as the son of a Liverpool leatherworker. The comparison can seem hubristic until one considers the intense scientific method and investigation that lay behind the production by Stubbs of his world-famous *Anatomy of the Horse* published in 1766 – a work which revolutionised the understanding and depiction of equine subjects. This lecture looks at the life and work of this country's greatest animal painter, putting Stubbs in the context of British sporting artists of the eighteenth century more generally.



**Wednesday December 10<sup>th</sup> 2025**

**The Shakespeare of Sculpture:  
the dynamic Baroque works of Gian Lorenzo Bernini**  
**Lecturer : *Justin Reay***

Bernini received commissions from an early age, designing architectural features such as the Baldacchino in St Peter's Basilica, the colonnade of the Piazza, and large fountains across 17th century Rome. It is his figurative sculpture however which ensures his reputation as one of the greatest European sculptors, the equal of Michelangelo, Canova and Rodin. His works were famous in his lifetime, and are credited with introducing the dynamic form of the Baroque in sculpture.



**Wednesday January 14<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**John Singer Sargent: the Private Radical**  
**Lecturer: *Gavin Plumley***

Whether drawing duchesses or portraying princes, John Singer Sargent (1856–1925) was high society's leading portraitist. Flaunting a consummate technique, his luxurious canvases mirrored his subjects' wealth. Yet beneath the dazzling veneer of works such as *Madame X*, *The Daughters of Edward Darley Boit* and *Lady Agnew of Lochnaw* lurks a much rawer world by far. Sargent certainly scandalised Parisian society and the city's Salon with his frank depictions of human sexuality, yet he was even more modern than they might have feared. This talk charts the artist's life and his prolific output, showing that, like the era he came to represent, Sargent was always on the cusp of seismic change.



**Wednesday February 11<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Hogarth at the Hustings:  
the Election Entertainment Series and the birth of political  
satire.**

**Lecturer : *Rupert Dickens***

The long British tradition of political satire has come to the fore recently in the year of a General Election. At the root of that tradition is William Hogarth's Election Entertainment series of paintings and prints from the 1750s. His ruthless exposure of electoral corruption and hypocrisy sets the stage for later generations of satirists, including James Gillray, *Private Eye* and today's digital artist, Cold War Steve. We will look closely at the Election series, explain Hogarth's many jokes and references and reveal some themes with surprising topical relevance, from voter identification to the politics of immigration.



**Wednesday March 11<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Art, Money and Dead Sharks: how the YBAs revolutionised British Art**

**Lecturer: *Jacky Klein***

The Young British Artists – Damien Hirst, Tracey Emin, Rachel Whiteread, Jake and Dinos Chapman, Gary Hume and co. – burst onto the British art scene in the late 1980s, shaking up the establishment and engaging a new generation of audiences with their shock tactics and ironic art. Collected by notorious gallerist Charles Saatchi and featured in major exhibitions such as the Royal Academy's 'Sensation', these artists captured a new zeitgeist and propelled Britain to the centre of the art world.



**Wednesday April 8<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Caravaggio: the Bad Boy of the Baroque**

**Lecturer: *Dan Evans***

This scandalous and sometimes vicious painter produced work with cinematic compositions and intensely visceral details. His downfall is the stuff of a film not yet made and despite dying prematurely his canvases influenced a generation that followed.



**Wednesday May 13<sup>th</sup> 2026**

**Danish modernism: the Skagen painters**

**Lecturer : *Caroline Levisse***

Located at the northernmost point of the Jutland peninsula in Denmark, Skagen is an attractive spot in the summer for its unusual light. From the 1870s to the beginning of the 20th century this fishermen's village was home to an artists' colony. Some of its more famous members include Anna and Michael Ancher, Marie and Peder Severin Krøyer, as well as Laurits Tuxen. Reacting against styles enforced by the Academies and influenced instead by French Modernism, they painted *en plein air* and represented scenes from every-day life. Fishermen at work, social gathering and domestic scenes are common in their works.



**Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> June 2026**

**Annual General Meeting**

*Lecture topic to be announced.*

*Illustrations:* Talk 1 - 'The Dancing Faun' by Adriaen de Vries; Talk 2- 19thC print of Stradivari examining an instrument.; Talk 3 - 'Lustre, Held by a Groom' by George Stubbs; Talk 4 - Clay model of a lion from the Fontana dei Quattro Fiumi, Rome, Bernini; Talk 5 - 'Madame X' by John Singer Sargent; Talk 6 - 'Soliciting Votes' from Hogarth at the Hustings; Talk 7 - 'My Bed' by Tracey Emin; Talk 8 - 'Self portrait of the artist as Bacchus' by Caravaggio; Talk 9 - 'Launching the Boat' by Oscar Bjorck.