

Understanding British Portraits

Knole Seminar

Monday 17 March 2014, 9.45 — 16.00 Knole, Sevenoaks, Kent

Biographies of speakers and chairperson

Melanie Caldwell, freelance Paintings Conservator, PG Dip (Courtauld), previously worked for the National Trust; 20 year association with their Painting Collections including Knole. Previous research projects for the National Trust include looking at efflorescence on the Stanley Spencer paintings at the Sandham Chapel; and backing paintings as a preventative conservation measure.

Catherine Daunt is currently working towards a DPhil on 'Portrait Sets in Tudor and Jacobean England' at the University of Sussex. Funded by the Leverhulme Trust, her doctorate is part of a major research project led by the National Portrait Gallery entitled *Making Art in Tudor Britain*. From 2008 to 2011 she worked at the National Portrait Gallery as Assistant Curator and previously worked as Assistant Exhibition Officer at Nottingham Castle Museum and Art Gallery. She undertook her BA at the University of Oxford (1998-2001) and her MA at the University of Manchester (2004-5).

Anne French is a freelance art historian and curator. She was previously Deputy Curator at Kenwood, and joint Keeper of Art at the Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle. She was co-author and curator of *Below Stairs, 400 years of servants' portraits* (National Portrait Gallery, 2003), which brought together for the first time images of British men and women working in domestic service, and of *Art Treasures in the North: Northern Families on the Grand Tour* (2000 & 2009). She is currently researching regional portraiture in North-East England and the delayed development of art, architecture and cultural icons there during the 'long' eighteenth century. Anne is also the author of exhibition catalogues on Gaspard Dughet, on Gainsborough, and on one of his most eccentric sitters, John Joseph Merlin, 'The Ingenious Mechanick'. She has edited several exhibition catalogues in the field of eighteenth-century British art.

David Taylor is Curator of Pictures and Sculpture at the National Trust, a collection that includes c.14,000 oil paintings, 40,000 works on paper and 9,000 sculptures, housed in over 200 properties in England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Previously he was Senior Curator at the National Galleries of Scotland, where he curated the 16th- and 17th-century collection at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery. He has published and lectured on various aspects of Early Modern portraiture, and has curated exhibitions on Peter Lely, topographical views by John Slezer, George Jamesone, the Scottish Enlightenment, Scottish portraits between the Reformation and the Glorious Revolution and the Old Master collection at Upton House. His exhibition Stanley Spencer: Heaven in a Hell of War (co-curated with Amanda Bradley) is currently on show at Pallant House, Chichester.

Robert Sackville-West. After studying History at Oxford University and business at the London Business School, Robert Sackville-West (Lord Sackville) worked in publishing, in 1985 founding Toucan Books, which creates illustrated non-fiction books for an international market. He now combines that with chairing Knole Estates, the property and investment company which – in parallel with the National Trust – runs the Sackville family's interests at Knole. Among other voluntary roles, Robert has a long-standing interest in education. Until 2008, he was chairman of the governing body at Sevenoaks School, and is currently a governor (and chair of the Finance and Premises Committee) at the Knole Academy in Sevenoaks; he is also a director of the UK board of the International Baccalaureate Organization. He is the author of the critically acclaimed *Inheritance: The Story of Knole and the Sackvilles* (2010).

Jacob Simon is formerly Chief Curator at the National Portrait Gallery, and now a part-time Research Fellow in a voluntary capacity. He is the author of *The Art of the Picture Frame: Artists, Patrons and the Framing of Portraits in Britain* (National Portrait Gallery, 1996) and of a chapter on 17th-century frames at Ham House in Christopher Rowell (ed.), *Ham House: 400 years of collecting and patronage* (Yale/NT, 2013). He is responsible for *The Art of the Picture Frame*, the section of the Gallery's website devoted to picture frames, including the online resource, *British picture framemakers, 1610-1950*. These can be found in the Research section at www.npg.org.uk/research.

Emma Slocombe is a National Trust curator based in Kent and East Sussex. Her property portfolio includes Knole, Sissinghurst, Scotney Castle and Smallhythe Place. She is currently on secondment as lead consultant and curator on 'Inspired by Knole', a £17.5 million conservation and interpretation project supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund to secure the future of the building and collections at Knole. In addition to general curatorial duties, she has managed the delivery of the Knole Conservation Management Plan (Oxford Archaeology, 2013) and is leading research into the history of the interiors and collections at Knole, currently focusing on the history of presentation of the picture collection. She has a special interest in costume and textiles and will be publishing her research into the history of presentation of the 17th century royal state furniture in the Brown Gallery in *Furniture History* this year. Recent completed projects include a five year project to open the New House at Scotney Castle to the public, 'Dress in the Limelight', a reinterpretation of Ellen Terry's beetle-wing dress at Smallhythe Place and the conservation of the James II Bed at Knole. She has published 'Lady Macbeth at the Lyceum' (*National Trust Historic Houses and Collections Annual* in association with *Apollo*, 2011) and 'John Piper at Scotney Castle' (*John Piper in Kent and East Sussex*, ed. Nathaniel Hepburn, 2011).

Edward Town spent the last three years as the postdoctoral research assistant for the 'Making Art in Tudor Britain' project at the National Portrait Gallery. His role involved researching material relating to the production of artwork in the Tudor and early Stuart period, and a substantial amount of this work will appear in the form of 'A Biographical Dictionary of London Painters' in this year's *Walpole Society*. Prior to this, Edward spent three years working on a collaborative AHRC doctoral award scheme with Sussex University and the National Trust, researching the early seventeenth century transformation of Knole by Thomas Sackville, 1st Earl of Dorset.