

Understanding British Portraits Annual Seminar

Tuesday 9 October 2018, 10.00 — 16.50 National Portrait Gallery, London

Chaired by Dr Jane Whittaker, The Bowes Museum, and Dr Sarah Moulden, National Portrait Gallery

Programme

10.00—10.40 **Registration and refreshments.** Please enter the National Portrait Gallery by the main doors on St Martin's Place. Doors open 10.00.

10.40—10.50 Lecture theatre. Welcome from **Dr Alison Smith, Chief Curator, National Portrait Gallery**

Morning session chaired by Dr Jane Whittaker, Head of Collections, The Bowes Museum

10.50—10.55 **Introduction from morning chairperson**

11.00—11.20 **Dr Rosemary Keep, independent scholar**

'He must be the finest boy in his eyes': portraits of grandparents and grandchildren, c.1550-c.1700

This paper will examine the long-neglected portraits of grandparents and their grandchildren from the period between about 1550 and 1700. It will stress the important role which these played in familial self-fashioning and the early-modern culture of memorialisation.

11.20—11.40 **Alice Ottazzi, PhD candidate, University of Turin and Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne**

Les anglais sont à la mode: engraved British portraits albums in 18th-century Paris

Mezzotints represented the majority of English prints that circulated in 18th-century France, a vehicle for renewed interest in the English artistic tradition abroad. Thanks to the rediscovery of two unpublished collections of John Smith's mezzotints, ascribed to the marquis de Beringhen and to the marquis de Paulmy, it is possible to reconstruct the dynamics of reception of the mezzotint portraits in Enlightenment France, and to reflect on their impact on French artistic production. Furthermore, the reception of these albums will be correlated to the emergence of a French interest in other series of engraved British portraits.

11.40—12.00 **Alison Cooper, Curator, South West, National Trust**

'Fame and Friendship: Kauffman and Reynolds at Saltram' – a Curatorial Case Study

The National Trust at Saltram is celebrating 250 years of the Royal Academy through a new display focussing on works by two of its founding members - Sir Joshua Reynolds and Angelica Kauffman. Both artists have a close association with Saltram and its owners John and Theresa Parker who were friends as well as their patrons. This presentation will discuss some of the key portraits in focus as part of the display but will also offer a curatorial case study regarding the challenges – and opportunities – of curating a temporary display within a historic setting. It will cover questions such as - how can we take collections on permanent display and highlight them differently as part of a particular theme? Is it possible to do this whilst still preserving the interior setting or will a display detract from other key collections? How can we provide interpretative layers for our many audiences and can we keep traditional audiences happy whilst aiming to engage new ones?

12.00—12.30 **Chaired discussion with the morning's speakers**

12.30-13.50 **Lunch** provided for all, and time to visit the galleries



Afternoon session chaired by Dr Sarah Moulden, Curator, 19th-Century Collections (and Interim Curator, 20th-Century Collections), National Portrait Gallery

14.00—14.05 Introduction from afternoon chairperson

14.05—14.25 **Rachel Dickson, Ben Uri Research Unit for the Study of the Émigré Contribution to British Visual Culture from 1900**

Portrait of a Man: Wilhelm Hollitscher (Huyton Internment Camp, Liverpool), 1940

This case study explores the fascinating backstory leading to the revelation of the identity of the sitter in a striking portrait of a German so-called 'alien' by a fellow internee, Hugo Dachinger (1908-95), made during internment outside Liverpool in 1940. Using excerpts from the sitter's diary and a discussion of the painting, alongside information from the sitter's grandchildren, the presentation will provide a fresh examination of an historic image, linking it powerfully to the present day, and highlighting the importance of family archives and memory.

14.25—14.45 **Bethan Lewis, Project Curator, Arts Council Collection National Partners Programme, Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool**

'Leo Fitzmaurice: Between You and Me and Everything Else'. An Arts Council Collection National Partners Exhibition at the Walker Art Gallery, National Museums Liverpool. An introduction to the exhibition, on display at the Walker Art Gallery from September 2018 until March 2019.

Commissioning a contemporary artist to use collections in a new way has been revealing; it has prompted fresh ways of looking at portraiture, and has inspired conservation, research and vibrant education resources, engagement spaces and programming. This presentation will explore these outcomes, the way the exhibition and the portraits within it have been made accessible to the Walker's diverse audiences, and the legacy of the exhibition.

14.45—15.05 **Robin Baillie, Senior Outreach Officer, National Galleries of Scotland**

Good Hair/Bad Hair: 400 years of (young men's) hurt

This case study offers a critical review of the recent *Razor's Edge Barbershop*, which invited young men to talk about how they felt about their appearance and identity, whilst getting their hair cut...in a Portrait Gallery. This learning project, aimed at hard-to-reach young men, accompanied the exhibition *Looking Good: The Male Gaze from Van Dyck to Lucian Freud*, at the Scottish National Portrait Gallery, Edinburgh, from June to October 2017.

15.05—15.35 **Refreshments provided for all**

15.40—16.00 **George Mind, CDA PhD candidate, University of Westminster and the National Portrait Gallery**

Women's studio portraiture and the visual culture of the suffrage campaign in Britain

Drawing on the collections of the National Portrait Gallery, the Museum of London and the Women's Library at LSE, this paper explores the role of women photographers in the campaign for suffrage and how their practice of studio portraiture shaped the visual culture of the movement.

16.00—16.20 **Catlin Langford, Assistant Curator, Royal Collection Trust**

'Shot her way to success': The life and work of Eva Barrett

In 2017 the Royal Collection embarked on a project to scope and catalogue its vast collection of twentieth-century photographs, leading to the discovery of a series of portraits by the largely unknown British photographer Eva Barrett. Despite her contemporary anonymity, during the early and mid-twentieth century, Barrett was an acclaimed photographer, commissioned by royalty and politicians alike. This paper will discuss Barrett's photographs and career within the larger context of women photographers and attempts to re-establish Barrett's importance as an early and pioneering woman photographer.

16.20—16.50 **Chaired discussion with the afternoon's speakers, and close**