

11 September 2009: Linda Smith

[Great Tarts in Art: High Culture and the Oldest Profession](#)

A mixture of art-historical analysis and scandalous anecdote, this lecture took a generally lighthearted look at changing attitudes to sexual morality down the ages, by examining the portraits and careers of some of history's most notorious mistresses and courtesans. Linda Smith is a well qualified art historian with a special interest in British Art, and lectures to a wide audience, in public galleries and secondary schools as well as on cruise liners and to private arts societies in the UK and overseas.

9 October 2009: Caroline Knight

[London in the Eighteenth Century: The Terraced House and the Garden Square](#)

We welcomed the return of Mrs Caroline Knight to give us this lecture on how the familiar image of the tall narrow terrace house overlooking a tree-filled square became a reality in London in the Eighteenth Century. The lecture looked at the origins and development of the West End with streets of substantial houses, providing flexible space for entertaining and living. This lecture touched on the gardens which the houses overlooked and ended with the only royal development, Regent's Park, with its picturesque landscape setting.

13 November 2009: Jane Angelini

[The Mosaics of Ravenna](#)

This lecture, rescheduled from last year, was given by Jane Angelini and was fascinating. Ravenna, with its cluster of 5th and 6th Century churches and baptisteries contains some of the finest examples of early Christian art, a kaleidoscopic array of glittering wall mosaics. This was an art form in which the Byzantines particularly excelled, producing examples of truly outstanding beauty in Ravenna. With the use of first class digital slides the lecture looked at the skills of the artists in some of the places of worship when Ravenna was a major port linking the Italian Peninsula to the Eastern Mediterranean and was a cultural centre of considerable importance.

11 December 2009: Christopher Bradley

[Three Wise Men: Gold, Frankincense and Myrrh – The Traditions of the Magi](#)

This Christmas lecture, given by Christopher Bradley told us about the Zoroastrian priest-sages, anonymous wise men who were specialists in medicine, religion and astronomy and who travelled from "The East" to worship the Christ child. Tradition has placed the number as three but earlier versions have other numbers – between 2 and 30! The Adoration of the Magi is one of the most popular religious subjects for great artists and we follow their work over five centuries starting in 12th Century Pisa.

15 January 2010: Dr Claire Walsh

[The Glamour Holiday – The Grand Era of Travel in the 1920s and 30s](#)

Dr Claire Walsh was unable to give us her lecture last year, so we were very pleased to be able to rebook this lecture. She showed us the posters and gave us the details of these holidays. By the 1920s the social elite needed to get away from the package holiday, so they sought out new destinations and activities. They ranged from the French Riviera to the African Bush and used Art Deco as the style to signal the exclusivity and modernity of luxury travel.

12 February 2010: Dr Anne Anderson

[Rene Lalique , Master of Art Nouveau Jewellery and Art Deco Glass](#)

We were delighted to welcome the return of Dr Anne Anderson. She lectured on Rene Lalique who is best known for his Art Deco glass; however he started as a jewellery designer in the 1890s. Dr

Anderson showed us his wonderful designs, using gold, horn, glass, enamel, opals and aquamarines rather than precious stones. His patron was Sarah Bernhardt. As his fame spread, his style was copied by others until he felt that he had exhausted the potential of jewellery. Having designed the first customised perfume bottle he then branched out into vases, tableware and lamps in glass.

12 March 2010: Dr Paula Nuttall

### [Botticelli's Florence](#)

On the 500th anniversary of Botticelli's death, Dr Paula Nuttall showed us his world of outstanding images. He is one of the best loved painters of the Florentine Renaissance, his patrons being the Medici family for whom he painted *The Birth of Venus* and *Primavera*. In later life Botticelli, like many Florentines, adopted the religious ideals of Savonarola, which are expressed in paintings such as the *Mystic Nativity*.

9 April 2010: Jo Walton

### [Eric Ravilious and the Lure of the Everyday](#)

Miss Jo Walton lectures on 20th Century British Art and we heard about Eric Ravilious – possibly the greatest English watercolourist of the century. His images of the landscape and everyday objects attract passionate devotees. He was an artist who combined a love of the landscape with a fascination for different types of transport – from trains to old cars, from gypsy caravans to the aircraft and destroyers he depicted as an Official War Artist in his precise dry watercolours. He was a prolific painter, printmaker and designer and his work reflects a deep interest in the world in which he lived.

14 May 2010: Jane Kelsall

### [Pearls before Swine, The Long History of a Royal Necklace](#)

We welcomed back Mrs Jane Kelsall to give us this lecture – on a long and interesting journey of a magnificent collection of pearls. These were originally a wedding present from Pope Clement VII to his niece, Catherine de Medici, who became Queen of France. They passed to Mary, Queen of Scots and then to Queen Elizabeth of England. Generations of the Royal Family owned them until a foolish act by Queen Charlotte caused a lengthy legal battle over their ownership between Queen Victoria and the King of Hanover, her uncle. Now our present Queen wears some of them, but where are the others?

11 June 2010: AGM & Cleopatra of Egypt: Fact or Fiction?

### [AGM & Cleopatra of Egypt: Fact or Fiction?](#)

Nicole Douek Who was Cleopatra VII, Queen of Egypt? And how does one separate fact and fiction, history and myth? Nicole Douek, an expert on Egypt discussed the character of the woman who is portrayed throughout history as either “wicked”, or as a pattern of female virtue, a true and tender lover who died for her man - a royal princess whose courage is proof of her Nicole Doueknobility. We found some answers to questions as old as the lady herself.