

Art Friends Warwickshire

ARTLOOK

March 2020

Dear Art Friend

We are already two events into our first season and we would like to thank all those of you who have responded so enthusiastically to our venture. Our number of supporters grows steadily and membership take-up equally so. The first three events have been sell-outs and we are seeking alternative venues to allow us to grow our audience. Any recommendation you could send us would be appreciated.

Things are moving apace and we hope you enjoy our newsletter, now entitled *ARTLOOK*, our platform to highlight forthcoming events, review past meetings and hopefully include feedback from our members. In the near future we plan to establish our own website to help promote Art Friends Warwickshire more widely.

Our first AGM will be held on 17 March and we look forward to receiving your comments on the day. It has been a sell-out but there is a waiting list.

Forthcoming Events

Details for upcoming events are found in the following pages and include:

Thursday, 23 April: Following on from her January talk, Dr Victoria Avery has kindly offered to provide us with a personally guided tour of the *Feast & Fast* exhibition at The Fitzwilliam, Cambridge.

Friday, 15 May: Professor Paul Smith has been invited by the Royal Academy to speak on the occasion of its forthcoming *Rock & Quarry* exhibition. He has generously offered to deliver to our members the same talk on Cézanne's many paintings devoted to the landscape of Provence.

Wednesday, 10 June: *Epic Iran*, the V&A exhibition starting in October, stimulated us to invite Fuchsia Hart to give us a good background to the subject. We are at a new venue for us, Bearley Village Hall with free parking for up to 40 cars.

Wednesday, 23 September: travel by executive coach to the home of Horace Walpole.

Diary Date: Friday 16 October: our annual Shottery afternoon tea. Our speaker will be Dr Rosie Dias from the University of Warwick, topic to be announced in next *ARTLOOK*.

Reviews

Feast and Fast

In January Dr Victoria Avery gave a lively and informative overview of the current Exhibition she has curated at The Fitzwilliam Museum, *Feast and Fast*. As well as reviewing some of the spectacular displays that have been created especially for the show, she explained how curators today must be mindful of sustainability. She contrasted the high cost of jettisoning block-buster artworks across the world

accompanied by a minder, with the investment in restoration work of precious pieces of art already held by museums. The underlying role of food – its cultivation and consumption – appears across an astonishingly wide spectrum of art, much demonstrated in her exhibition. The surplus was donated to support a conference at The Fitzwilliam linked to *Feast and Fast*.



We were happy to have as our guest Julia Finch, director of Compton Verney, and unsurprisingly she and Vicky Avery found a lot to discuss. Julia is keen for us to continue our link with Compton Verney and is also happy to introduce us to arts organisations in the South West where she once worked.

Dr Victoria Avery and Julie Finch

Women Artists



Vivien Heffernan and Susan Yeomans

Vivien Heffernan returned to Princethorpe College in February to talk about the slow emergence of women painters over the centuries. Thanks to their artist fathers, Sophonisba Anguissola and Artemisia Gentileschi were taught to paint and earn important money through sales of their work. Up until the second half of the last century, the male preserve of painters and manners of the day ensured that women artists had to restrict their subjects to portraiture and domestic scenes. The work of Berthe Morisot and Dora Carrington is well known, but that of Marie Denise Villiers and Joan Eardley less so. Vivien ended with a striking portrait by Paula Rego of Germaine Greer to underline the strength of today's women painters.



Alex Darkes, Assistant Head, Development at Princethorpe College, welcomed us to Princethorpe and thanked us for our past support, under the Art Fund banner, with the awarding of an annual prize for photography. He announced that our new organisation will continue to reward art achievement at Princethorpe. From the funds raised at the meeting and to mark this year's Bauhaus centenary, an annual Art Friends Warwickshire Bauhaus trophy will be presented for the student who shows the most promising contribution to the aesthetics of design.

Alex Darkes with 2019 winning photograph by Fleur Street

Fund Raising

The surplus raised for our events will be presented either to an arts related organisation suggested by speakers donating their time, or will roll forward into a funding pot to be distributed at the recommendation of the Awards Committee. The proceeds of our January event have been allocated to an art history conference being staged by The Fitzwilliam, based on *Feast and Fast*. As reported above, the Princethorpe event will fund the annual Art Friends Warwickshire Bauhaus award.

Brian Phillips, *Chairman of Art Friends Warwickshire*

Committee: Gill Ashley-Smith, Sandra Clowes, Alex Corrin, Dianne Page, Susan Yeomans

2020 Programme – April to September

Booking forms below

Private Guided Tour *Feast & Fast – the art of food in Europe 1500 -1800*

Thursday 23 April 2020

Executive Coach trip: The Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge

Following her lively talk in January, Dr Victoria Avery, Keeper, Applied Arts at The Fitzwilliam Museum has invited us to see her exhibition for ourselves and will conduct a personal guided tour. *Feast & Fast* brings alive through art how we have



prepared and consumed food over the centuries. This research-led multi-sensory exhibition will showcase hidden and newly-conserved treasures from The Fitzwilliam and other collections, and feature four spectacular historical reconstructions with food at their centre (see left), including a Jacobean sugar banquet, a European feasting table and a Georgian confectioner's workshop. It will tease out many contemporary and controversial issues – such as the origins of food

and food security, over-consumption in times of austerity, and our relationship with animals and nature – thereby linking the past with our present, and encouraging us to question and rethink our relationship with food.

The visit is limited to 40 people, divided into two groups. The first one-hour tour is before lunch, the second after lunch. Remaining time is available for individual exploration of the extensive Fitzwilliam collection or indeed Cambridge generally. Tea and coffee will be available on arrival. Lunch is not included in the visit but the Fitzwilliam has a good large café and there is a Loch Fyne opposite.

Cézanne, the Mont Saint-Victoire and Bibémus Quarry

Friday 15 May 2020

Venue: St Andrew's Church Hall, Church Lane, Shotton, CV37 9HQ



In anticipation of the Royal Academy's forthcoming exhibition *Cézanne: Rock and Quarry* (12 July to 18 October), we have invited back the University of Warwick's Professor Paul Smith, a Cézanne specialist, to give us some background. His outline for his talk:

'Shortly after leaving the airport at Marseilles, the Mont Sainte-Victoire becomes visible, seeming almost to hover in air even from 30 km away. Moving around Aix-en-Provence and its environs, it suddenly appears from certain vantage points for

only a few seconds; while along the routes taken by Cézanne on his way to paint it, it is plainly visible from up to 10 km away. If the mountain is a white limestone mass that dominates the landscape, the orange-red rocks of nearby Bibémus quarry are hidden away, only accessible through the narrow gate that guards it. Their colour is nevertheless echoed all over the Bibémus plateau, and on the descent into the village of Le Tholonet, the colour of the rock intensifies to a deep red.

'This talk will describe Cézanne's fascination with these sites which, in the case of the Mont Sainte-Victoire, endured for fifty years. It will set out his profoundly physical attachment to the countryside around Aix, and his love of its vivid colours – not only red, but also the saturated greens of pine trees, and the intense blue of the Southern sky. It will examine the legend that the local rocks and soil were stained by the blood of invading barbarians slaughtered by the Romans in the 2nd century BC, and how such myths were revived towards the end of the 19th century by poets who found favour with the ageing painter.'

'It will also address how Cézanne saw his beloved landscape, and how he sought to capture what he called its 'heaviness', or substantiality. Working from photographs taken in situ, it will demonstrate that his method of painting particular motifs at particular times of day was designed – unlike the methods of his Impressionist colleagues – to bring out what was most characteristic of the landscape as a thing he experienced or lived.'

When Persia came to London: an introduction to the Arts of Iran

Wednesday, 10 June 2020

Venue: Bearley Village Hall, Snitterfield Road, Bearley, Stratford-upon-Avon, CV37 0SR

Ahead of this autumn's major exhibition at the V&A, *Epic Iran*, we have invited art historian, Fuchsia Hart to talk about art in Iran.



In 1931, London's Burlington House hosted a blockbuster exhibition on the arts of Iran. The *International Exhibition of Persian Art* brought together hundreds of the finest examples of art from Iran under the same roof for the very first time. In the process, London was gripped by a wave of 'Persophilia'. From silk carpets to lustre ceramics, through a discussion of this extraordinary exhibition, we will explore some of the most significant objects from Iran and the way in which they have been displayed and viewed in Britain.

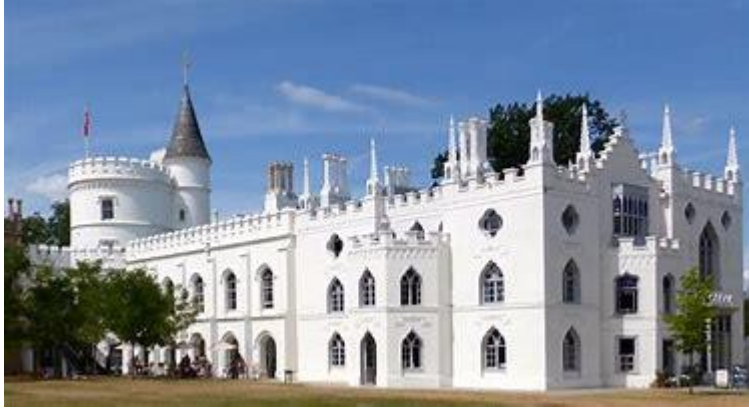
Fuchsia Hart is an historian of Iran and its art. She is currently a teaching fellow in Islamic Art at the University of Warwick. Fuchsia has worked in the cultural heritage sector in Afghanistan, as well as in the UK. She is now at the V&A as tutor on *Arts of the Islamic Middle East*, as well as working at the University of Oxford where she is currently finishing her doctorate on 19th century shrines in Iran and Iraq.

Epic Iran (17 October 2020 to 3 May 2021) will shine a light on one of the greatest historic civilisations, its journey into the 21st century and its monumental artistic achievement, which remain unknown to many.

STRAWBERRY HILL, TWICKENHAM

Travel by Executive Coach to the home of Horace Walpole

Wednesday 23 September 2020



Horace Walpole took a lease on a small cottage in 1747 with fine views over the River Thames. Having bought the lease in 1749, he later adopted the name Strawberry Hill for his property and spent the next 50 years purchasing more land and developing his vision of a Gothic castle and estate of 46 acres. Strawberry Hill was the first house since medieval times to be built in the Gothic style, and

can claim to be the starting point of the Gothic Revival. Walpole was a great collector acquiring a host of objects to fill his home. Many of these objects were sold in the Great Sale of 1842 because of ... but that's a story you'll hear at the house. Suffice to say that the current trustees have been scouring the world in efforts to have many of the original objects returned. After a £9 million, two-year long restoration, Strawberry Hill House reopened to the public in 2010.

There will be a refreshments and comfort break en route. On arrival, we begin with a talk about the house and its founder then we will have the opportunity to tour the house viewing the many objects from Walpole's time. Also, there will be the chance to view the gardens (Walpole was a great proponent of the "modern English Garden. Details of the optional lunch will be sent to bookers in August together with final information.