

Your Face, My Fortune: British Portrait Painting Through the Ages

Start date 11th November 2016 **End date** 13th November 2016

Venue Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge

Tutor Dr Justine Hopkins **Course code** 1617NRX037

Director of Programmes Emma Jennings

For further information on this course, please contact Public Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr
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To book See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

After a first degree at Bristol University in English and Drama, Justine Hopkins turned to Art History, studying for an MA at the Courtauld Institute specialising in European Art of the Romantic period. She then spent a year in Belize and the British Museum drawing Ancient Mayan pottery, before gaining a PhD from Birkbeck College, London for her researches into the interactions of Science, Religion and Landscape Painting from the French Revolution to the Origin of Species.

Since then she has worked as a freelance lecturer in Art History for Bristol, Cambridge, London and Oxford Universities; the Tate, National and National Portrait Galleries; Sotheby's, Christies' and assorted independent institutions, and is a registered NADFAS lecturer. Her biography of the c20th sculptor and painter, Michael Ayrton, was published in 1994; she has also contributed articles to a wide variety of periodicals and dictionaries, including the New Dictionary of National Biography and the Oxford Dictionary of Western Art. An article for Sculpture Journal on the sculptor Ivan Meštrović will be published this year. She currently lectures regularly for NADFAS; at the Royal West of England Academy in Bristol, where recent Day Schools include Laura Knight at the Theatre; and at the V&A, where she contributes to various Year Courses and has run Short Courses on Art Nouveau, Edwardian England and William Hogarth.

She lives in Bristol, in a house built in 1637 with timbers from ships that sailed against the Armada which she shares with an educational consultant and a black cat called Martha.

Course programme

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00	Dinner
20:30 – 22:00	<i>To Find the Mind's Construction in the Face?</i> Reasons to Paint Portraits.
22:00	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	<i>Truth lovingly told?</i> British Portraiture in the Eighteenth Century
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	<i>The summary of the life of a person: Victorians and Edwardians revealed</i>
13:00	Lunch
13:45 – 16:00	Field Trip to Murray Edwards College, Cambridge
16:30 – 17:15	Tea and discussion arising from Field Trip at Madingley Hall
17:15 – 18:30	Free
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30	<i>Chronicler or Judge?</i> Hogarth, Sargent, Sutherland: Case Studies in Excellence
21:30	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	<i>Distorted into Reality</i> : Portraiture in the Twentieth Century
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	<i>To do something a photo can't</i> : The Challenge of the Modern Portrait [with discussion and close]
12.45	Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

Course syllabus

Aims:

- To consider the various artistic, social, historical and commercial factors affecting the status and development of portraiture in Britain through particular examples of artists and situations.
- To look at developments in painting techniques and equipment with reference to their significance for portraiture.
- To discuss the significance of the National Portrait Gallery as the first institution of its kind established anywhere in the world: what this implies about the place of portrait painting in the hierarchy of British art and society and how the Gallery in its turn has affected the development of portraiture since its foundation.
- To explore the notion of an identifiably “British Portraiture”.

Content:

The course sets out to examine the development of portrait painting in Britain from the sixteenth century to the present day. Our principal focus will be on the mid-eighteenth to mid-twentieth centuries, a period distinguished by a remarkable number of outstanding portraitists, from William Hogarth to Lucien Freud. Their innovatory and often controversial practices revolutionised the whole conception of what an artist could and should achieve with a portrait, permanently changing the expectations of sitters, and of the wider public, to match their new ambitions.

Among particular artists studied, such names as Reynolds, Gainsborough and Lawrence; Millais, Whistler and Sargent; John, Spencer and Bacon are almost universally familiar nationally and internationally, but we will also explore the contribution of artists perhaps less well known, although often no less daring. Women portrait painters appear comparatively late in history; that this reflects social prejudice rather than artistic ability will be amply demonstrated by setting the work of such artists as Laura Knight, Vanessa Bell and Maggi Hambling alongside that of their male contemporaries. We will also consider why the British have such an apparent affinity for the painted portrait, whether there is or ever has been a ‘national style’ in portraiture, and what it is people hope to find in the faces of strangers that brings over two million visitors a year to the National Portrait Gallery.

Presentation of the course:

Presentation is by lectures illustrated with digital slides and including time for general discussion and for students to raise points of particular personal interest. There will be a field trip on Saturday afternoon led by the tutor to look at examples of portraits by British artists and compare them with some of similar date by foreign artists, with consideration of interactions and influences. This will include a “debrief” session on return to Madingley to discuss issues and ideas arising from the visit and the course to date.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

- Have an understanding of the various reasons for painting portraits at different periods and in various situations, and an overview of the position of portraiture in the artistic and social hierarchies of different periods, with an appreciation of how all these factors may affect the appearance of individual works.
- Have a basic ability to recognise the probable date and purpose of a portrait through a consideration of aspects of style and technique as well as such externals as costume and prior knowledge of the sitter's identity.
- Appreciate the complex relationship between an artist, a sitter and the resulting portrait: the shifting balance between the three which occurs through the period being considered, and how external factors including family reaction, public opinion and commercial considerations further complicate the reception and eventual fate of the finished work.

Reading and resources list

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Elizabeth Cayzer	Changing Perceptions: Milestones in Twentieth-Century British Portraiture	The Alpha Press 1998
Tarnya Cooper & Sandy Nairne	National Portrait Gallery: A Portrait of Britain	National Portrait Gallery 2014
Peter Funnell & Jan Marsh	A Guide to Victorian and Edwardian Portraits	National Portrait Gallery 2011
Simon Schama	The Face of Britain: The Nation Through its Portraits	Viking 2015
Roy Strong	The British Portrait	ACC Art Books 1999
Shearer West	Portraiture (Oxford History of Art)	Oxford University Press 2004
Joanna Woodall (ed)	Portraiture: Facing the Subject	Manchester University 1997

Website addresses

www.npg.org.uk [National Portrait Gallery]

www.tate.org.uk/learn/online-resources/glossary/p/portrait [Tate Galleries]

www.therp.co.uk [The Royal Society of Portrait Painters]

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Information correct as of: 11 October 2016