

AS Medway 2022 lectures for website

Hans Christian Andersen: wit, artist, traveller; stories, sketches, papercuts, with paintings of the day.

Karin Fernald

11:00am Tuesday 18th January 2022

As a child, Hans Andersen made puppet costumes, taught by his cobbler father. Later in life he sketched, though he never had lessons. He produced collages which anticipate early 20th century modernism and his papercuts of swans, ballet dancers, court ladies, dancing millers, storks, the sandman and other folklore figures, are exquisite and magical. He was a sharp observer of life in Copenhagen, saying of his stories "Every character is taken from life; I know and have known them all." He was a keen traveller over much of Europe and part of Asia; "Life is to fly with railway flight around the earth – we're long enough underneath it!" And, influenced by his friend, scientist H.C. Orsted, he was thrilled by the scientific discoveries of his day, even putting them into some of his 156 published stories. With slides of Andersen's sketches, papercuts and collages, and illustrations of his stories by artists from all over the world, including Arthur Rackham, Edmond Dulac, Lars Bo and Kai Nielsen, and with paintings by Christen Kobke and other Danish artists from Andersen's day. In her new study day on Andersen, Karin will enlarge further on all of the above.

The story of the Cook sisters and how they used opera to save lives.

Anne Sebba

11:00am Tuesday 15th February 2022

Ida and Louise Cook were destined never to marry after decimation of the men of their generation in World War One. When Ida became a successful Mills and Boon novelist they used their earnings to indulge their love of opera, travelling all over the world but especially to Salzburg. Familiarity with Austria enabled these two eccentric opera loving sisters to undertake dangerous undercover missions in the 1930s rescuing Jewish musicians and others from the Nazis.

This talk will explore the world of Opera in the 1920s and 30s - the clothes, music, celebrities, and the signed photographs coveted by fans. It will also show how Opera transformed the lives not just of these two sisters but of at least 29 families they saved. In 2010 the Government posthumously created the Cook sisters British Heroes of the Holocaust.

History of cartoons: from William Hogarth to Private Eye.

Ian Keable

11:00am Tuesday 15th March 2022

The first time the word cartoon was used in the sense that we know it today was in 1843 in *Punch* magazine. But the employment of satire, caricature, speech bubbles and the writing of captions had been around long before then. In this talk Ian tracks

the early stages of cartoons and how, through the works of Hogarth and James Gillray, they gradually evolved. Copious illustrations abound from the masters of their craft such as John Tenniel, John Leech, David Low, Vicky, Ronald Searle, Heath Robinson and Giles; and, bringing it right up to date, with Gerald Scarfe, Steven Bell and Peter Brookes.

The story of Indian contemporary art.

Georgina Bexon

11:00am Tuesday 19th April 2022

The past few decades have proved to be seminal for the momentum of contemporary art in India. The rapid growth in the country's domestic economy and global outreach triggered significant political, social, cultural and experiential change which has been reflected in the work of talented artists; their fertile imaginations setting about the task of reflecting and explaining the shifting world about them.

These artists describe multiple versions of contemporary life; their figurative themes range from hectic street scene to the newest shopping mall, from vibrant Hindu celebration to commercial urban setting. Abstract and expressionistic work signals ideologies from reassuring ancient myth to cynical present and everything in between. Whether the chosen media is oil paint, steel, concrete, textile or everyday city debris, the work of this new generation of artists fiercely demands our attention and challenges us to see India through their eyes, and their experience.

A band of brothers: Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co

Joanna Banham

11:00am Tuesday 17th May 2022

William Morris's firm of Fine Art Workmen was a close-knit group of artists, designers, and architects, including D. G. Rossetti, E. Burne-Jones, and Philip Webb as well as Morris himself. Much influenced by the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, they worked collaboratively on a variety of projects including the painting of the Oxford Union Debating Hall, and the decoration of Red House, before setting up the firm whose mission was to reform the decorative arts in Britain. This talk examines the origins of Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co in these early projects and the work associated with the firm in its first decade.

Revolution in the art school: the Bauhaus (1919 – 1933).

Vivienne Lawes

11:00am Tuesday 21st June 2022

Contemporaneous with the Art Deco design movement, the Bauhaus revolutionised art school education, despite only running for 14 years in its native Germany. Members of staff escaping Nazi Germany soon established teaching practices in America, and the famous Preliminary course eventually formed the basis of art foundational training in Britain. The Bauhaus was unusual for an art school of the period in that it encouraged students to produce work in the avant-garde modernist style in all fields of art, design and architecture, with an eye to industrial production – all at a time when art schools elsewhere still drew from 19th century plaster casts.

Art UK: Uncovering the nation's hidden oil painting collection

Mary Rose Rivett-Carnac

11:00am Tuesday 19th July 2022

Art UK was set up to catalogue every oil painting in public ownership in the UK. This unique and ambitious project involved visiting 3,000 collections across the country and photographing over 212,000 paintings. These paintings are reproduced in an acclaimed series of hardback catalogues entitled Oil Paintings in Public Ownership. The paintings are freely available to view on the Art UK website (www.artuk.org). The lecture offers an insider's view of the project and describes some unusual collections visited, intriguing paintings uncovered, detective work involved and assistance given by The Arts Society's members. Each lecture is tailored to reflect the locality of the venue.

The Ballets Russes: when art danced with music.

Jennifer Toynbee-Holmes

11:00am Tuesday 20th September 2022

When Diaghilev created ballet in the west in the early twentieth century, he brought extraordinary revolutionary energy from Russia. By bringing together talented artists of different disciplines; choreographers, dancers, musicians, designers and painters; Fokine, Nijinsky, Stravinsky, Prokofiev, Picasso and Coco Chanel to name but a few, Diaghilev fused the latest in art, music and dance in spectacles that dazzled and astonished audiences around the world.

The dream Diaghilev created of dance joining hands with the other creative disciplines to create a total work of art changed the course of ballet forever.

Using stills and video clips we take an exciting look at the Ballets Russes that dominated the ballet stages of the world from its explosion in Paris in 1909 until Diaghilev's death in 1929.

Eagle, Dan Dare and the art of Frank Hampson.

Howard Smith

11:00am Tuesday 18th October 2022

This is the extraordinary story of a million selling boy's magazine created by a vicar and an art student in 1950. 20% of the readers were girls. This is the backstory of why and how they created this ground-breaking magazine and then sold it to Hulton Press. The lead story of Dan Dare was the only one to have its own full studio producing the weekly double-page spread. See how this studio worked and the graphic tricks artist Frank Hampson used to create reality. Why did the Ministry of Defence order six copies each week and what prize did David Hockney win in 1950? All is revealed in this lecture which obviously has some space elements in it – but it is really an amazing story of achievement, with artwork, ephemera and vintage film clips.

From Tchaikovsky to Tin Pan Alley - uplifting music for Christmas.

Sandy Burnett

11:00am Tuesday 15th November 2022

To kick off our seasonal celebrations, musician and broadcaster Sandy Burnett is on hand to share his selection of much-loved Christmas tunes. Expect an hour of the finest festive music from across the globe – his selections include sparking moments from Tchaikovsky's ballet *The Nutcracker*, a heartwarming ballad from Mel Tormé, something from Soweto, a heavenly chorus from Johann Sebastian Bach's Leipzig, an illustration of the English carol tradition at its finest - and something more cynical from Eartha Kitt...