

ADFAS Blue Mountains Inc.

Program 2021

ADFAS Blue Mountains acknowledges that we meet on the lands of the Darug and Gandangara peoples.

February

Susannah Fullerton

The Importance of being Oscar: The life and works of Oscar Wilde



Oscar Wilde said that he had put only his talent into his works, but had put his genius into his life. Susannah Fullerton discusses Wilde's extraordinary life story, his fall from fame and the creation of his great works of literature. Dramatic readings bring those works to life and slides provide the sort of sumptuous visual background that Wilde himself would have appreciated.

March

Ian Swankie

The Classical Reinvented – the Brilliant Legacy of Sir Christopher Wren



In this talk we wind the clock back to the seventeenth century and enjoy an armchair tour of some of Wren's magnificent structures including city churches, the Old Royal Naval College, Greenwich and, of course, his greatest masterpiece

St Paul's Cathedral. Wren was primarily a mathematician and astronomer and we'll see how these disciplines are harnessed in his work. We will also look at the origins of the classical orders of architecture and discover how Wren's love of this ancient system is everywhere to be seen in his legacy.

April

Jos Hackforth-Jones

London's Complexions: Between Worlds, Non-European Visitors to Britain 1710 – 1850

This lecture will examine some of the fascinating individuals who were presented to the monarch at court during this period and how they impacted on British society.



May

Nicola Mezey

Jewel of the Crown – Sainte Chapelle



Sainte Chapelle is a gem of beauty and technical innovation in the heart of Paris, possibly the most perfect surviving medieval ensemble. It was designed not only to celebrate France and its kings, but as a life-size reliquary, a worthy shrine for some of the most significant and talismanic of Christian remains, including the Crown of Thorns. Built in a mere 5 years (1243-1248), this extraordinary survival captures the best of the arts at a precise moment in time, summoned up by all the resources available to a king. This lecture looks at the architecture, the sculpture but, above all, the exquisite stained glass, setting Louis IX in the company of the blessed and turning the interior into a floating vision of heaven on earth.

June

Nick Gordon

The Venice Biennale - Modern and Contemporary Art in Venice



Venice is one of the world's great art cities, with its medieval mosaics, Renaissance masterpieces and wonderful collections of modern art. It also has a rolling series of biennales – of art, cinema, architecture, dance and theatre – which take up half of each year, and which have expanded phenomenally since the Biennale was invented in Venice in the 1890s. In this lecture, Dr Nick Gordon explores how the Biennale has transformed Venice from a provincial town on the edge of Italy into the pre-eminent playground for modern and contemporary art.

July

Stella Lyons

Ladies of the Night: Art history's most scandalous muses



Prostitutes have been used as muses and models by artists throughout art history. In 16th century Venice, courtesans were frequently depicted as luscious nudes reclining as Venuses or scantily clad Floras, serving as early advertisements for the most successful courtesans of Europe. In 19th century Paris, prostitutes were a key subject for artists, painted by Toulouse-Lautrec, Edgar Degas and most famously, by Manet. This talk looks at the many different depictions of prostitution, from Titian's seductive women, to Ingres' sensual odalisques, to Egon Schiele's erotically charged sketches and examines how the role of prostitution has been idealised, glamorised and brought to public attention

August

Lucrezia Walker

John Peter Russell: The Lost Impressionist



John Peter Russell was an impressionist painter born and raised in Sydney. Russell moved to Europe in his late teenage years to attend art school where he became friends with Vincent van Gogh, He was regarded by Rodin as equal to Monet, Renoir and Matisse. Walker, a regular lecturer at the National Gallery, will tell us more about how important this Australian artist is.

September

Chloe Sayer

Frida Kahlo and Diego Rivera: The Golden Age of Mexican Painting



Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) and Diego Rivera (1886-1957) have iconic status in Mexico. The Mexican Revolution of 1910 swept away the old régime and banished European influence in the arts. Kahlo and Rivera, in their different ways, helped to shape the cultural identity of twentieth-century Mexico. Together they made Mexico a magnet for the rest of the world. The Mexican mural movement, born during the 1920s, was destined to produce some of the greatest public art of the last century. Diego Rivera's panoramic images adorn the walls of public buildings, combining social criticism with a faith in human progress. Inspired by early Italian fresco painting, as well as by Aztec and Maya imagery, his intricate visual narratives

incorporate allegory and symbolism.

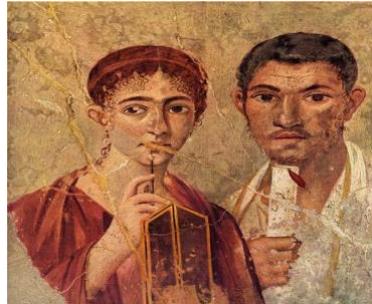
Compared with the monumental scale of Rivera's work, Kahlo's work is small in format. Arguably Mexico's most original painter, she made herself the principal theme of her art. Her paintings reflect her experiences, dreams, hopes and fears. Kahlo and Rivera were married in 1929. Their volatile marriage and the turbulent times they lived through are the subject of the film 'Frida' (USA, 2002). They are key figures in 'The Lacuna', a historical novel published in 2009

by Barbara Kingsolver and currently on the reading list of many Book Clubs in Australia and the UK.

October

Gillian Hovel

Pompeii: Digging deeper with the muddy archaeologist



This lecture provides a deep insight into the many kinds of art found in the homes and streets of Pompeii. They reveal a thoroughly modern world, one full of material goods and works of art, in which craftsmanship and artistry were draped around the Romans themselves and amidst their everyday lives. Hovel will explore how the Empire provided materials and the opportunity for this wealth of art to be accessible to more people than ever before. Pompeii's survival gives us a glimpse of the Roman Empire in all its vastness. Its burial captured a moment in time when the Empire was a multicultural, vibrant and growing power, that reached into the lives of everyone, rich or poor. It's triumph and tragedy still speak to us across the millennia.

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