

Women and the Arts Forum 2022

Women Artists and the National Gallery

Tuesday 8 March 2022, International Women's Day

1.30pm

Welcome from Gabriele Finaldi

1.35pm

Introduction to the Women and the Arts Forum
from Diane Apostolos-Cappadona

1.40pm

Welcome from Christine Riding

1.45pm

Conference overview from Susanna Avery-Quash

1.50pm

*Short film: Women in the Early Modern
Artist's Workshop*

Maria Alambritis, National Gallery
Imogen Tedbury, Royal Museums Greenwich

2.00pm

Live discussion: Women in the Workshop
Maria Alambritis, National Gallery
Imogen Tedbury, Royal Museums Greenwich

2.10pm

Copy-right: Women Artists in the Gallery c. 1900
Meaghan Clarke, University of Sussex

2.40pm

*Women Copyists, Art Schools and Careers,
1900-1910*
Sarah Herring, National Gallery

3.00pm

*Women Catholic Copyists in the 19th century: the
Case of Rebecca Dulcibella Orpen (1829-1932)*
Corinna Henderson, Temple Newsam

3.10pm

*Susanna Avery-Quash in conversation
with Ulyana Gumeniuk*

Susanna Avery-Quash, National Gallery
Ulyana Gumeniuk, artist

3.40-3.50pm - Interval

3.50pm

*Female 'old masters' in the Margins:
Tracing Renaissance Women Artists in
19th-century Women's Travel Writing,
Journalism and Art History*
Maria Alambritis, National Gallery

4pm

*Introduction to the Modern and Contemporary
Team's Oral History project*
Daniel Herrmann, National Gallery

4.10pm

*Short film: Rosalind Nashashibi at
the National Gallery*

4.20pm

*Rosalind Nashashibi in conversation
with Priyesh Mistry followed by Live Q&A*
Rosalind Nashashibi, Artist in Residence 2020
Priyesh Mistry, National Gallery

4.50pm

Concluding remarks from Christine Riding and
Susanna Avery-Quash, National Gallery

Programme

Dr Emma Capron, Dr Imogen Tedbury and Dr Maria Alambritis:

Women in the Early Modern Artist's Workshop: Film screening and live discussion

Instead of revisiting works painted by women artists in the National Gallery Collection (which have been the subject of several video series in recent years), this film takes a different, more expansive approach to the role played by women in the artistic production of the Renaissance. Its aim is to shine a light on the crucial parts women fulfilled in and around male artists' studios – how wives, sisters, and daughters were either directly involved in painting as workshop assistants, or acted as sales agents and studio managers, helping to ensure the success of the business. Though scarcely documented, reassessing these women's agency gives a fuller picture of the early modern period. It runs counter to the narrative of exceptionalism that only draws attention to the few women who managed to defy norms and build a career for themselves. While these extraordinary trajectories fully deserve to be celebrated – as they increasingly have been in recent years – this exclusive focus obfuscates the crowds of less visible, often unnamed women who fundamentally but quietly shaped visual culture. Accounting for their role also offers a critique of the heroic, lone artistic genius narrative, emphasising that most paintings in the National Gallery were highly collaborative ventures. As a way into this subject, Emma Capron and Imogen Tedbury conceived a ten-minute film on four of these important but overlooked women: Nicolosia Mantegna (née Bellini), Margaret van Eyck, Agnes Dürer and Marietta Robusti ('La Tintoretta'). Hosted by Maria Alambritis and Imogen Tedbury, the video deliberately adopts an 'in conversation' structure, in which both researchers take turns asking each other about the women under review, in front of relevant

paintings in the National Gallery. The video will also feature known portraits of these women and other relevant works associated with them from beyond Trafalgar Square.

Professor Meaghan Clarke

Copy-right: Women Artists in the Gallery c. 1900

Histories of museums have conventionally been written around eminent male figures; however, 19th-century images of art galleries point to a profusion of women in them. What were these women doing? Scholars have pointed to the early prominence of women in art writing, as exemplified by Anna Jameson and Elizabeth Eastlake. In addition, attention has recently turned to the significance of women as patrons and collectors of art. These contributions were paralleled by the continual presence of women artists in the galleries. Copying was a key aspect of artistic training. Galleries functioned as artists' workshops for many women copyists. Copies circulated widely in exhibition culture and the modern art market. An exploration of surviving works, copy registers, the periodical press and catalogues reveals the social, cultural and economic importance of these gallery 'workshops'. Moreover, copy-work offers insight into shifting debates around gender politics at the turn of the century.

Sarah Herring

Women Copyists, Art Schools and Careers, 1900-1910

This paper looks at the National Gallery's Copyist Registers for the first decade of the twentieth century. The vast majority of the copyists listed are women, a large number of them recommended by art schools in London. Many are from the Slade School of Fine Art,

but a further number are from the schools which were aligned with the South Kensington Government School (which became The Royal College of Art in 1896), such as Lambeth, Clapham, Westminster and Camden. Others came from Goldsmiths Institute or the private Grosvenor Life School in Vauxhall. Where able, the women have been identified and situated, alongside their art schools, within debates at the time around the education of women, suitable professions for them in art and design, and the tension and interplay between fine art and commercial art, or design. One livelihood that was open to women was the copying of paintings for sale, and a number of those listed in the Gallery's registers would have been copying in that capacity. Frances A. Gerard talked to numerous women during a visit to the Gallery, reported in her article 'Students Day at the National Gallery', *Cassells Family Magazine*, in 1893. Such conversations highlight the different circumstances behind the women's names; those who were there in such a capacity were described by her as showing 'signs of the hard battle of life in many lines and wrinkles, and a general air of weariness'. These contrast with the carefree students in brightly coloured smocks.

Corinna Henderson

Women Catholic Copyists in the 19th century: The Case of Rebecca Dulcibella Orpen (1829-1932)

This paper looks at 19th-century female religious amateur art and copying at the National Gallery, drawing attention to one particular case study: Rebecca Dulcibella Orpen of Baddesley Clinton who, in 1881, visited the National Gallery to copy Leonardo da Vinci's *The Virgin of the Rocks*. An amateur artist who converted to Catholicism in 1865, her copy was used in the chapel at Baddesley Clinton (now National Trust) that she and her aunt, Georgiana, Lady Chatterton, had sole responsibility for decorating. As part of a 'Catholic House', Rebecca's devotional painting

was key to the exploration of her own identity within the context of the Victorian Catholic revival.

Dr Susanna Avery-Quash and Ulyana Gumenuik in conversation

In this live interview, contemporary artist and copyist Ulyana Gumenuik talks with Susanna Avery-Quash about her experience as a female copyist in the museum space, the influence of the Old Masters on her work and the profound impact of the collection at the National Gallery on her own practice.

Dr Maria Alambritis

Female 'old masters' in the Margins: Tracing Renaissance Women Artists in 19th-century Women's Travel Writing, Journalism and Art History

Predominantly absent from the history of their own discipline, 19th-century women art historians have also historically been accused of abandoning their fellow art-practicing sisters to obscurity and failing to afford them adequate recognition in their own writings. However, while the names of artists like Artemisia Gentileschi, Elisabetta Sirani and Lavinia Fontana are not among the numerous artist monographs written by women through the 19th century, they certainly were not completely invisible to the female gaze. During a period in which representation on the walls of the National Gallery frequently both facilitated and was informed by the publications of art historians and critics, it was often only abroad that one could see the work of less familiar female artists. Looking to women's writing in ephemeral forms, such as journalistic reporting and travel diaries, reveals tantalising traces of women writers' encounters with Renaissance women painters and sculptors. As Lia Guerra has described, 'within a marginal genre, the marginality of women travelling with their companions or by themselves and sometimes writing their

own travel accounts provides the interesting phenomenon of a marginalised gaze on marginal subjects'. Demonstrating a concerted interest in how such women made a name for themselves in the public cultural forum, these accounts suggest a sense of how figures like Gentileschi, Sirani and Fontana emerged and were considered at the moment in which art history was being defined as a history of great men. Between Anna Jameson's never-realised *Memoirs of Celebrated Female Artists* to Laura Ragg's unique *Women Artists of Bologna* (1907), this history of women writing women is faint, but nevertheless discernible. This paper will draw out some of the most pertinent examples and explore the possible reasons for this absence and what it can tell us about the history of women 'old masters' through the eyes of 19th-century women art historians.

Daniel Herrmann

Introduction to The National Gallery
Oral History Project

This new and ongoing project focusses on documenting the voices and recollections of previous National Gallery Artists in Residence. Starting with artists Vivien Blackett, Maggi Hambling, Rosalind Nashashibi, Ana Maria Pacheco, June Redfern, Paula Rego and Alison Watt, the project aims to create primary sources for current and future research and to inspire new generations of artists. For the March 2022 conference Daniel Herrmann will discuss the methodology developed by PhD researcher Kate Devine for the oral interviews and some of the challenges they have confronted and overcome in the process.

Rosalind Nashashibi and Priyesh Mistry 2020 National Gallery Artist in Residence: Film screening and live Q&A

This panel will screen an exclusive edit of a film produced for Rosalind Nashashibi's Artist's Residency at the National Gallery in 2020/21. Focussing on the invention of her paintings within the display of 17th-century Spanish Baroque paintings in Room 30, *An Overflow of Passion and Sentiment* (December 2020 – June 2021), the film explores the development of her paintings, the artist's experience of working with the collection, and which paintings within the National Gallery have meant most to her. The screening will be followed by a discussion between the artist and Priyesh Mistry about the production of her new moving image work filmed within the Gallery with a Q&A from members of the audience.

Speaker Biographies

Dr Maria Alambritis is the Vivmar Curatorial Fellow at the National Gallery. An interdisciplinary scholar in the art, literature, and culture of the long 19th century in Britain, her research interests include overlooked women artists and writers, the history of art history, and the reception, collecting and taste for the Italian Old Masters. She recently completed her AHRC Collaborative Doctoral Award PhD with Professor Hilary Fraser of Birkbeck, University of London and with Dr Susanna Avery-Quash of the National Gallery, titled 'Modern Mistresses on the Old Masters: women and the writing of art history 1860–1915' and is co-editor of the special issue dedicated to 19th-century women art historians 'Old Masters, Modern Women', published in Birkbeck's *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2019). Prior to her PhD, Maria held curatorial roles at Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery and the Royal Academy, London.

Dr Susanna Avery-Quash is Senior Research Curator (History of Collecting) at the National Gallery, in charge of pre-1900 objects in its History Collection, and responsible for activities associated with its research strands, 'Buying, Collecting and Display', 'Art and Religion', and the 'Women and the Arts Forum', including managing research partnerships, organising conferences, and supervising graduate students. Her research focuses on the study of important private and public art collections, trends in artistic taste, and the historical art market. Her recent publications include several co-edited volumes: *The Georgian London Town House: Building, Collecting and Display* (2019); *Leonardo in Britain: Collections and Historical Reception* (2019), *London and the Emergence of a European Art Market, 1780-1820* (2019) and *Old Masters Worldwide: Markets, Movements and Museums, 1789-1939* (2021). She was co-curator for the exhibition,

Creating A National Collection: The Partnership between Southampton City Art Gallery and The National Gallery (Southampton, 28 June - 4 September 2021). She is a Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, an Honorary Research Fellow at Birkbeck, University of London, and at the University of Buckingham's Humanities Research Institute.

Dr Emma Capron is Associate Curator of Renaissance Painting at the National Gallery. Previously she was the Anne L. Poulet Curatorial Fellow at the Frick Collection in New York, where she curated the exhibition *The Charterhouse of Bruges: Jan van Eyck, Petrus Christus, and Jan Vos* (2018-19). She also held fellowships at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and at the Louvre, in Paris. Among other publications, her discovery of Simone Martini's last documented work appeared in *The Burlington Magazine* in 2017. She completed her PhD on altarpieces in late medieval Avignon at the Courtauld Institute in 2019.

Professor Meaghan Clarke is a Professor of Art History at the University of Sussex. Her new book is entitled *Fashionability, Exhibition Culture and Gender Politics: Fair Women* (2020). She is the author of *Critical Voices: Women and Art Criticism in Britain 1880-1905* (2005; 2017) and her recent articles include 'Women in the Galleries: New Angles on Old Masters in the Late Nineteenth Century', *19: Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century* (2019) and "'The Greatest Living Critic": Christiana Herringham and the Practice of Connoisseurship', *Visual Resources* (2017). She has published essays and articles in collections and journals including *Tate*, *Art History*, *RACAR*, *Henry James Review* and *Visual Culture* in Britain.

Ulyana Gumenuik is a figurative artist, the daughter of a Ukrainian artist-dissident who was introduced to constructivist and formalist concepts at the early age of nine. Her work has a strong fantasy element, and her artistic process is intertwined with her practice of copying after the Old Masters, particularly drawing on the collection at the National Gallery. She attended St Petersburg Academy of Fine Art's secondary art school, 1988–92; its faculty of painting, 1993–6; and St Martins's College of Art and Design, 1996–8. She has exhibited at the Canadian Ukrainian Foundation, Toronto, Canada (it holds her work), 1996; Unicorn Gallery and Aberdeen Art Gallery, both 1999; and *BP Portrait Award*, National Portrait Gallery, from 1999.

Corinna Henderson was previously a National Gallery Curatorial Trainee (2019–2021) and she is now Assistant Curator, Designation Development Fund Project at Temple Newsam in Leeds where she is working on a new framework of interpretation for the fine and decorative arts collection. She specialises in 18th- and 19th-century British and European painting, women artists and the country house interior.

Sarah Herring is Associate Curator of Post-1800 paintings at the National Gallery. She has a particular interest in landscape, has been involved in such exhibitions as *Forests, Rocks, Torrents. Norwegian and Swiss Landscape Painting from the Lunde Collection* (2011), and her most recent publication is *The Nineteenth Century French Paintings. Volume 1, The Barbizon School* (2019), part of the series of National Gallery Schools Catalogues. With Emma Capron she is co-curator of the forthcoming exhibition, *Discover Manet and Eva Gonzalès*, which will explore a number of themes around Manet's imposing portrait, including the education and position of women artists in the 19th century.

Daniel Herrmann is Curator of Modern and Contemporary Projects at the National Gallery. He leads on relating the national collection to contemporary art and culture through exhibitions, displays, commissions, residencies, research and interpretation. His recent exhibitions include *Young Bomberg and the Old Masters* (2019); *Rachel Maclean: The Lion and The Unicorn* (2018); and *Bridget Riley: Messengers* (2019). Previous exhibitions at the Whitechapel Gallery include award-winning retrospectives of *Eduardo Paolozzi* (2017); *Hannah Höch* (2014); and *Gillian Wearing* (2012). He is currently working on the National Gallery's inaugural Contemporary Fellowship with Art Fund: Nalini Malani (2023) and on the catalogue raisonné of the prints of British artist, Eduardo Paolozzi.

Priyesh Mistry is Associate Curator of Modern and Contemporary Projects at the National Gallery. He was responsible for mounting the exhibition *Rosalind Nashashibi: An Overflow of Passion and Sentiment* (2020), the live exhibition *Dance to the Music of Our Time* (2021) and more recently has been involved with upcoming projects with Artist in Residence, Ali Cherri, and the inaugural Contemporary Fellowship Artist, Nalini Malani. Before this, he was Assistant Curator, International Art at Tate Modern, London, working on the *Hyundai Commission 2019: Kara Walker* in the Turbine Hall and the major retrospective on *Anni Albers* (2018) as well as numerous collection displays.

Rosalind Nashashibi is a filmmaker and painter and her often collaborative work uses cinematic traditions to develop unforeseen narratives and alternative ways of looking. Nashashibi began her residency in September 2019. She worked in the National Gallery's on-site Artist's Studio, benefitting from the proximity to the Gallery's collection, research and teams. The residency culminated in a publication and display of her new work in dialogue with the Gallery's Spanish Baroque collection in Room 30 in December 2020. In 2017, Nashashibi was shortlisted for

the Turner Prize, and her work has been featured in prestigious exhibitions including *Documenta 14* (2017), *Sharjah Biennial 10* (2011), *Manifesta 7* (2008) and representing Scotland in the 2007 *Venice Biennale*. She was the first woman to win the Beck's Futures prize in 2003. Her work is included in many public collections, among others the British Arts Council, UK; Centre Pompidou, Paris; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Tate Britain, London. Nashashibi is currently Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Goldsmiths University, London.

Christine Riding is The Jacob Rothschild Head of the Curatorial Department, and Curator of British Paintings at the National Gallery. Before joining the Gallery, she was Head of Arts and Curator of the Queen's House at Royal Museums Greenwich (2011–18), where she curated the *Turner and the Sea* exhibition (2013). From 1999 to 2011, she was Curator of 18th- and 19th-Century British Art at Tate.

Dr Imogen Tedbury was the Simon Sainsbury Curatorial Fellow for paintings before 1500 at the National Gallery. She was previously the J. Clawson Mills Fellow in the Robert Lehman Collection, at The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, and Assistant Curator at Royal Holloway, University of London, where she wrote a book, *Modern Portraits for Modern Women*, about the college's portraits of female principals and pioneers in women's higher education, and discovered a lost portrait of Millicent Fawcett. Her PhD explored the reception of Sienese painting in Britain. She left the National Gallery to take up a position as the Curator of Art before 1800 (maternity cover) at Royal Museums Greenwich, followed by a Henri Frankfurt and Grete Sondheimer Short-term Fellowship at the Warburg Institute, University of London.