

Newsletter

THE
HOLBURNE
MUSEUM

FOR SUPPORTERS OF THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM AUTUMN 2021



INSPIRED BY
ROSSETTI:
music at the
Holburne on
7th October

JOHN NASH AND GRINLING GIBBONS
AT COMPTON VERNEY:
Wednesday 10th November 2021



ELISABETH FRINK
For Patrons and
Exhibition Circle
Members:
An exhibition at
Messums, Wiltshire

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Top left:
Dante Gabriel Rossetti
(1828-1882) *The Blue Bower*
(detail) 1865, oil on canvas
© Barber Institute of Fine
Arts, purchased 1959

Below left:
John Nash, (1893-1977)
Harvesting (detail)
1946, lithographic poster
© Private Collection

Right:
Elisabeth Frink, (1930-1993)
Seated Man, 1983, bronze
© The Executors of the
Frink Estate and Archive
Photograph courtesy of
Sandra Beckefeldt

Dear Holburne Supporters

Welcome to the Autumn issue of the Newsletter, I do hope you will find plenty to enjoy within these pages. Following our very enjoyable quiz evening in August, we are planning more events for the Autumn season, beginning with what I hope will be a series of occasional musical evenings at the Holburne.

The first concert, on 7th October, will feature virtuoso guitar playing by Sam Brown, accompanying the gifted soprano Angela Hicks. They will be presenting a delightful programme of music and song inspired by the exhibition *Rossetti Portraits*.

On Saturday 4th December, we will welcome a choir of very gifted young voices,

conducted by Laurence Williams and accompanied by Sam Brown on the lute. The choir will perform some beautiful songs and carols to herald the festive season.

We are also organising some new day trips, one to Compton Verney in Warwickshire, offering a rare chance to see fine carvings by Grinling Gibbons and art by John Nash. We also have planned a visit to Salisbury, to see the Cathedral and a special show of beautiful wood engravings, with time perhaps for a spot of Christmas shopping too!

Exclusively for our Patrons and Exhibition Circle Members we have two very special events linked to the Elisabeth Frink exhibition at Messums Gallery in Wiltshire, including a talk by

Chris Stephens on the Frink artworks which are now part of the Holburne Collection.

Do check the back cover for details of a special talk by Sir Nicholas Penny, former director of the National Gallery in London.

It has been wonderful to have your continued and vital support, thank you very much for staying with us!



Chairman, Holburne Supporters



A message from Chris Stephens



Dear friends

I hope that you have had an enjoyable summer and been able to benefit from the easing of restrictions on our lives.

Though travel to exotic climes continues to be difficult, I trust you took full advantage of the opportunity to immerse yourself in Canaletto's Venice and to admire the extraordinary craftsmanship of mediaeval Islamic Metalwork. We have had a busy summer and were delighted to see such an enthusiastic response to the Museum's reopening in May.

It has also been fantastic to see so many people enjoying a range of activities and performances in our garden.

We have an equally rich offer this autumn, led by the magnificent exhibition of Rossetti's portraits. The first exhibition on this theme, it will include some of the Pre-Raphaelite's masterpieces and will examine the nature of portraiture itself.

I am delighted to be showing in conjunction with Rossetti's work a series of photographs, *The New Pre-Raphaelites*, made by Sunil Gupta in 2009 in response to a commission to make work concerning human rights in India. Each image is based on a painting by the Pre-Raphaelites or their contemporaries.

Early in the summer, I spent a wonderful sunny day with the artists Aaron Angell and Steven Claydon during their three-day firing of a Japanese anagama kiln run by Dr Robin Wilson at Oxford University.

Aaron and Steve are two of the most exciting artists working with clay and I am delighted that we are showing the products of

that firing in *Hornet*, *hailstone*, *crab eye*, *aerodrome...* (etc) as the next stage of our exploration of ceramic practice.

As many of you will know, the Holburne has a relationship with the University of Bath that has lasted almost fifty years. I am excited that this has reached a new level with our programming of the Andrew Brownsword Gallery at The Edge.

The gallery will open in September with the most unusual *My Kid Could Have Done That!*, a show - built on the experiences of lockdown - of artists' collaborations with their own young children. We are delighted to be able to broaden our offer to the city of Bath through this new collaboration.

With best wishes, Chris

Dr Chris Stephens, Director

Rossetti's Portraits exhibition

24th September 2021 to 9th January 2022

A unique show devoted to one of the giants of Victorian art, and the first exhibition dedicated to Dante Gabriel Rossetti's portraits. Entry to the exhibition is unlimited and free to all our supporters.

Dante Gabriel Rossetti
(1828-82)

Monna Vanna

1866, oil on canvas

© Tate, London



Sunil Gupta: *The New Pre-Raphaelites*

To accompany our major new exhibition of Dante Gabriel Rossetti's portraits, the Holburne is proud to announce a display of photographs by Sunil Gupta that explore the legacy of the Pre-Raphaelites and their influence on contemporary art.

In 2008, London-based artist and photographer Sunil Gupta (b.1953, New Delhi) was commissioned by Autograph in London, to produce a body of work addressing human rights in India. Sunil chose to focus his photographic work on the struggle against Section 377 of the Indian Penal Code. Instituted during British rule in the 1860s, it criminalised gay sex between consenting adults and remained in place until it was finally repealed by the Supreme Court of India in September 2018.

Known as the Anti-Sodomy Law, Section 377 facilitated the arbitrary arrest and exploitation of LGBTQI+ Indians. In turn, this led to a closeted culture where alternate sexuality was pushed underground and made researching and treating serious medical problems such as STDs and HIV/AIDS extremely difficult.

Gupta's photographs allude to works by members of the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood, an artistic movement founded in 1848, only a few years before Section 377 was introduced. He says: "I was struck first by the vividness of the [paintings'] colours and then by the ambivalent sexuality of their subject matter."

Inspired by the Tate's collection, Gupta invited friends and fellow activists to model for him and re-enact the original works; at the time their involvement constituted an act of resistance, courage, and commitment, much like their UK counterparts who campaigned against Section 28 (in effect between 1988 and 2003 in England and Wales).

Richly coloured, textured and patterned backdrops highlight the sitters' colourful costumes, and their occasional nudity, Gupta demonstrates his eye for detail. It is important to note that the women portrayed in *The New Pre-Raphaelites* were at the time living on the margins of society. Although technically free from accusations of committing the crime of sodomy, before 2018



they risked being hunted down and, in some cases, burnt alive by their families who would rather see them dead than face social ostracism.

The exhibition runs from 24th September 2021 to 19th January 2022

Above: Sunil Gupta (1953 -)
Untitled #6 (Lady in Blue), 2008
 From the series *The New Pre-Raphaelites* Courtesy the artist and Hales Gallery, Stephen Bulger Gallery and Vadehra Art Gallery
 © Sunil Gupta All Rights Reserved, DACS 2020

Museum profile: Emma Morris



It's a real gem of a Museum and I am delighted to be working here.

I have visited Bath a number of times over the years from when I was a child and have always loved the city. I am looking forward to getting to know it better and finding all the hidden treasures and clothes shops! I am living in Larkhall which has a fantastic community and everyone has made me feel very welcome.

public through our Crowdfunding appeal and the Cultural Recovery Fund. Since reopening in May we have been very busy and it's been wonderful to welcome everyone back to the Museum.

Q: How does your role at the Holburne compare with previous positions?

I have always worked in the arts and started my career working in the theatre before moving over to the visual arts when I took up the role of Deputy Director at The Photographers' Gallery in London.

Whilst I have been a Director of a museum before, I am not from a curatorial background and have always been responsible for strategy, business development and fundraising.

In the latest in our series of profiles of people who work at the Holburne, we have a question and answer profile of Emma Morris, who is the new Head of Business and Development at the Museum.

Q: Welcome to Bath! Have you any strong first impressions (hopefully positive!) of the city, people and the Holburne itself?

Thank you!

I first visited Holburne when I lived in Dorset and was incredibly impressed with the exhibitions, collection displays, the beautiful building and friendliness of the staff and volunteers.

Q: Your role at the Holburne has a new title, how would you describe what you do?

Anything to do with making money basically! I am responsible for all the commercial and fundraising activities including the shop, venue hire, membership schemes, securing funding from Trusts and Foundations as well as driving footfall to the Museum. The Holburne doesn't receive any core public funding so we have to raise every penny ourselves.

The last sixteen months have been incredibly challenging for our sector and we have been extremely lucky to have been supported by the

Top left, photograph of Emma Morris, courtesy of Katherine Boyd Davies

Museum profile: Emma Morris continued

Q: What aspects of your work do you enjoy the most?

My role is very diverse which means that every day is different, which I really enjoy. When I started the role we were all still working from home so it was very odd to meet all my colleagues online. Some staff are still working from home and I am looking forward to when everyone is back in the Museum and we can meet in person, rather than on Zoom!

I consider myself very lucky in be working in such a fantastic museum in this beautiful city. The Holburne has a dog friendly policy so I bring my 14 year old Jack Russell in to the office and we walk along the canal every lunch time, it's pretty magical.

Q: Earlier in your career you worked with photography, a big change to the collections here in Bath... are there connections?

I love photography and have worked for two amazing photography organisations

during my career, the big difference is that neither had collections. I don't believe we have any photography in our collection but of course we are continually photographing the collection for our database and website.

I was delighted to discover that we are having an exhibition by the photographer Sunil Gupta, 'The New Pre-Raphaelites', in September and there are discussions about potential photography exhibitions in the future so watch this space!

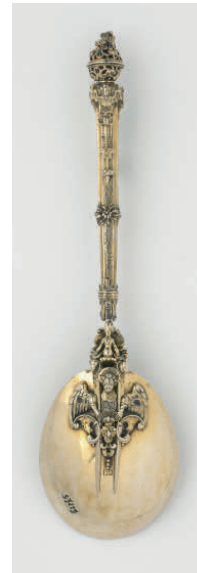
Q: Have you had time to explore the Holburne collections much...do you have any favourite items or galleries?

I love the miniatures and spoons and am looking forward to learning more about the collection over the coming weeks and months.

I think the way we display the collection is really innovative and engaging and I could easily spend hours in the galleries looking and learning

more about the collection and William Holburne. I recently had a tour of the collection store rooms which are fascinating.

Whilst the temporary exhibitions we present at Holburne are wonderful, the collection is the beating heart of the Museum.



Above:
Friedrich Hillebrandt (1555-1608)
Folding combination fork and spoon,
silver-gilt, Nuremberg, about 1595
© Holburne Museum S327

"Delight once more" - music for Dante Gabriel Rossetti



Thursday 7th of October at 7:30pm (doors open at 7:00pm)

Angela Hicks soprano | Sam Brown romantic guitar

An intimate evening with one of the UK's most innovative young song duos, inspired by themes from the Rossetti exhibition: love, nostalgia, portraits and dedications.

Music by Schubert, Schumann, Mendelssohn and Tarrega.

Tickets £18 each, from www.holburne.org/events

Photograph courtesy of Chris Brown

Grinling Gibbons and John Nash at Compton Verney

Wednesday 10th November 2021 |

A full day trip to Compton Verney in Warwickshire to see two contrasting exhibitions; intricate wood carvings by Grinling Gibbons and landscapes by John Nash.

We will have private tours of both special exhibitions, and there will be free time to explore the fascinating and varied permanent collections here, and if the weather is kind, to stroll around the parkland, designed by Capability Brown.

The remarkable life and legacy of **Grinling Gibbons** (1648-1721) will be celebrated by this exhibition, one of many events to commemorate the tercentenary of the most renowned British woodcarver of the 17th century, often called the 'Michelangelo of wood'. Gibbons carved with an unsurpassed realism that could literally fool the eye. A fine example is the limewood cravat, pictured on the right, exquisitely carved to imitate Venetian lace, which was once owned (and worn) by Sir Horace Walpole. The exhibition will explore the influences that shaped Gibbons' vision, skills and techniques, and the stylistic impact he had on this country.

John Nash (1893-1977) was one of the most versatile and prolific artists of the 20th century. This exhibition is the most comprehensive survey of his work in over 50 years, and will include oil paintings, wood engraving, lithography and watercolour. Combining acute observation and a strong individual vision, his output includes many of the finest depictions of the British landscape. A selection of his beautiful and detailed botanical paintings will also be on view.

Tickets, *available only in advance*, are £65 each, to include private return coach transport, refreshments on arrival, a light 2-course lunch, gallery entry and private tours of both exhibitions. Please complete and return **booking form 1** on p.13. The coach will leave the Holburne promptly at 8:30am, returning at about 6:30pm. This trip is being organised by Mark Hake; *please allow us time to respond to your booking, as we are volunteers and not based at the Museum*, thanks.



Grinling Gibbons, (1648-1721)
Limewood cravat
with raised and
openwork carving,
c1690 © Victoria
and Albert
Museum, London

A day in Salisbury

Monday 29th November 2021

A day trip to Salisbury to visit the wonderful Cathedral and admire its inspirational architecture and many fine artistic treasures, ancient and modern. We will also have an opportunity to see a special exhibition of beautiful wood engravings, and explore the collections at the Salisbury Museum, with a talk by one of the Museum's expert guides.

There are many superlatives associated with Salisbury Cathedral; it has the tallest spire in Britain at over 400

feet high and weighing over 6,500 tons, the best preserved copy of the Magna Carta, and the oldest working clock in Europe, dating from 1386. Stroll around the 80 acre Cathedral close, take in the wonders of the Chapter House, or climb the 332 steps to see the view from the spire!

In the early afternoon we will visit the special exhibition at Salisbury Museum, showing over 120 original wood block prints – as well as many rare original illustrated books – by twenty of the leading British

wood engravers of the last hundred years. Artists represented include Eric Ravilious, Gwen Raverat, Leon Underwood, John Nash, Paul Nash, Anne Desmet and Monica Poole. The Museum will also have a display by wood engraver Howard Phipps, who's work is rooted in the Wiltshire landscape.

There are also fascinating displays of art, archaeology including Stonehenge artefacts, ceramics, fashion, glass and social history to explore in the Museum.



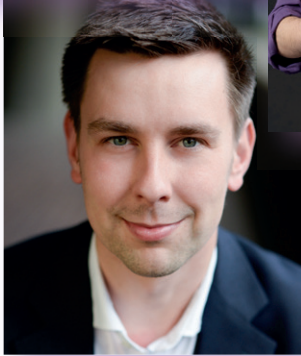
Left: the west front of Salisbury Cathedral

Above: Eric Ravilious, (1903-1942) *Sagittarius*, 1929, wood engraving
Image courtesy of Salisbury Museum

Tickets, *available only in advance*, are £42 each to include: private return coach transport to Salisbury, entry to Salisbury Cathedral and Salisbury Museum, and talks at both locations by a guide. Please complete and return **booking form 2** on p.13.

The coach will depart the Holburne Museum promptly at 9:00am, and return at about 6:00pm. This trip is being organised by Jonno Davis; *please allow us time to respond to your booking, as we are volunteers and not based at the Museum*, thanks!

Nowell, nowell: a Tudor Christmas



Saturday 4th December 2021 at 7:30pm (doors open at 7:00pm)
Dowland Youth Works | Laurence Williams, director | Sam Brown, lute

Dowland Youth Works was formed in 2018 to introduce gifted young singers to the world of early music. You are warmly invited to an Elizabethan evening of songs and carols in the company of this special ensemble and their director, Laurence Williams, accompanied on the lute by Sam Brown. Music by Byrd, Tallis, Dowland and their contemporaries.

Tickets are £18 each, from www.holburne.org/events

Photographs show, top left: Dowland Youth Works choir, top right: Sam Brown with lute, lower centre: Laurence Williams, director and conductor.

Holburne Insights: an object I love, the Witcombe Cabinet

This 17th century lacquerwork cabinet is the finest of its kind. Carefully protected from direct light in our Fletcher Gallery, this piece has intrigued me for many years. Its ornate Dutch Baroque-style stand and crest seem at odds

with the delicate details decorating its surface.

At first glance one might assume it was made in China or Japan, but it was an English maker who created this imitation, copying 'oriental'

porcelain which was highly fashionable and much sought after by wealthy Europeans.

Here is an imagined world of 'exotic' motifs including a tea-drinking scene (on one of the inner drawers), cherry blossom, peonies, chrysanthemums, and butterflies, as well as figures dressed in traditional robes.

Close to the Witcombe cabinet you will find a Chinese ceramic plate (made between 1662-1722) which gives a glimpse of how the cabinet might originally have looked. The cabinet's 'japanned' lacquer work was intended to imitate the white, gleaming ceramic surface of this Chinese porcelain. Over 500 years later, the shellac varnish has yellowed but I always try to imagine the Witcombe Cabinet as it was intended to be seen – an ivory-white 'centre-piece' decorated with exquisite red and green scenes of faraway lands. As for the stand... that's another story!

*Written by Louise Campion,
Learning & Education Lead*

Left: The Witcombe Cabinet
English, unknown London workshop,
about 1697
Japanned and silvered wood
Accepted by HM Government in
Lieu of Inheritance Tax and allocated
to the Holburne Museum, 2005



Booking forms for Compton Verney and Salisbury trips

Please note that tickets for the two concerts (£18 each) on 7th October and 4th December can only be booked via the Holburne Museum website: www.holburne.org/events

BOOKING FORM 1 COMPTON VERNEY

WEDNESDAY 10th NOVEMBER 2021

I/we would like tickets at £65.00 each

Please indicate any food allergies or intolerances

Name (s)

Address

..... Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

NB by giving us your contact details you consent to us contacting you directly with further details about this particular trip. Your details will not be passed on to any other parties.

Please send cheque, payable to the 'The Holburne Museum' to: **MARK HAKE**, HOLBURNE SUPPORTERS, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

IMPORTANT: PLEASE WRITE A **SEPARATE** CHEQUE + **SEPARATE** ENVELOPE FOR EACH EVENT, THANKS

BOOKING FORM 2 A DAY IN SALISBURY

MONDAY 29th NOVEMBER 2021

I/we would like tickets at £42.00 each

Name (s)

Address

..... Telephone

Email (or send stamped self-addressed envelope).....

NB by giving us your contact details you consent to us contacting you directly with further details about this particular trip. Your details will not be passed on to any other parties.

Please send cheque, payable to the 'The Holburne Museum' to: **JONNO DAVIS**, HOLBURNE SUPPORTERS, c/o THE HOLBURNE MUSEUM, GREAT PULTENEY STREET, BATH, BA2 4DB

IMPORTANT: PLEASE WRITE A **SEPARATE** CHEQUE + **SEPARATE** ENVELOPE FOR EACH EVENT, THANKS

Patrons and Exhibition Circle Members



A couple of years ago, Chris Stephens, the director of the Holburne Museum, had the pleasure of being invited to choose some items for our collection from the Elisabeth Frink Estate and Archive. This generous gift was made possible by the artist's late son, Lin Jammet.

We are taking the opportunity of the forthcoming Frink exhibition at Messums Gallery Wiltshire "*Man is an Animal*" to have a private reception at the Holburne for Patrons and Exhibition Circle Members. Chris Stephens will give a talk about this exciting gift to the Holburne, with the opportunity to see one or two of the artworks that have been kindly donated.

We will follow this with a private visit to Messums Gallery, near Tisbury in Wiltshire, to view the exhibition - the most extensive collection of large-scale sculptures by Dame Elisabeth Frink to be shown in this country since her death in 1993. The display will contain many important loans from both institutions and private collections and was first exhibited at the Gerhard Marcks Haus Museum in Bremen, Germany.

Also on show, in Messum's 13th century barn gallery, will be Frink's original *Blue Door* studio from her home at Woolland, the birthplace of many of these works. Her studio has been reconstructed here as a source of insight and information about her working processes and artistic career.

Dates and ticket prices to be advised in due course. Please let us know if you would be interested in joining us for either or both of these unique occasions, exclusively for Patrons and Exhibition Circle Members. Contact Emma Morris, Head of Business and Development: e.morris@holburne.org

Elisabeth Frink, (1930-1993)
Judas, 1963, bronze, Yorkshire Sculpture Park
 © The Executors of the Frink Estate and Archive
 All Rights Reserved, DACS 2021
 Photograph courtesy of Yorkshire Sculpture Park

Angell & Claydon ceramics display at the Holburne

Aaron Angell & Steven Claydon

Hornet, hailstone, crab eye, aerodrome... (etc)

9 September 2021 to 3 January 2022

Hornet, hailstone, crab eye, aerodrome... (etc.) presents the fruits of a recent anagama kiln firing by Aaron Angell and Steven Claydon. These two leading British artists share an anachronistic approach to historical influence, in this instance in the vernacular of ceramics from late-medieval rural Japan from where anagama kilns originate.

Don't miss the artists *In Conversation* via Zoom with our Curator of Contemporary Art, Will Cooper, at 7pm on Thursday, 9th December 2021. Details on www.holburne.org soon



Aaron Angell (1987 -)

Caterpillar Engine #6

anagama natural ash, iron 'Shigaraki' body & Limoges
porcelain, biodoro, yohen, kani-no-me, 2021

© the artist



A new exhibition at the Holburne in 2022

Tudor Portraits

Chris Stephens, Director of the Holburne:

"The Holburne seeks to bring the best art of all periods to Bath and the South-West. I am delighted that the generosity of the National Portrait Gallery's *Inspiring People* project enables us to work in partnership with the Gallery and others around the country to produce an ambitious exhibition focused on the art of the Tudor period. This is a unique opportunity to exhibit major works of art, rarely shown outside London, from the greatest public collection of art of this fascinating period. It is the most exciting development in the Holburne's long-running and fruitful friendship with the NPG."

Unknown Continental artist

Queen Elizabeth I, (detail)

oil on panel, c.1575

© National Portrait Gallery, London

We can only continue to create great exhibitions and bring the best art to Bath with your help.

If you are interested in helping the Museum to **rebuild and recover** by **supporting a future exhibition** or **becoming a Patron** from £50 per month, we would love to hear from you. Donations, however large or small, *will* make a difference. Please donate via www.holburne.org/support-us...thank you!

STOP PRESS + STOP PRESS + STOP PRESS + STOP PRESS

A talk by Sir Nicholas Penny (Art historian and Director of the National Gallery, London from 1990 to 2000)
"The National Gallery and Longford Castle: a new style of relationship" + **14th October 2021 at 6:30pm**, in the Picture Gallery at the Holburne Museum.
 This talk will be of particular interest to those able to join the trip to Longford in September, but will be equally fascinating as in insight into how public and private collections can interact to their mutual benefit. Tickets £10 each, via www.holburne.org/events

The Holburne Museum

Great Pulteney Street, Bath BA2 4DB

The Museum is open Mon-Sat: 10-5
 Sunday and Bank Holidays: 11-5
 Closed 24th-26th Dec and 1st Jan

The Holburne Museum is an independent museum and charity no: 310288

All Museum Supporters enjoy free unlimited entry to the collections and special exhibitions