

SPECIAL INTEREST DAY

TUESDAY 28 NOVEMBER 2023



HOLBEIN AND THE ILLUSION OF REALITY

Presented by Dr Gillian White

Holbein's work delights the eye with its realism. Who doesn't want to reach out and stroke the vibrant silks and glowing velvets of his sitters' clothing? Who doesn't gaze into the face of Sir Thomas More or Mrs Nicholas Small and feel drawn into their inner thoughts? Here – and in so many other examples – the artist creates an impression of almost tangible reality and, beguiled by his virtuosity, we believe his world exists.

But, of course, behind the apparent realism Holbein subtly manipulates us. Even in apparently straightforward portraits, his careful compositions direct our focus and control our responses. In his more complex works, we are led into a world of symbolism and hidden meanings, where a simple object, however realistically painted, stands for something else, for something altogether less tangible, and the painting's message has to be teased out of it.

This Special Interest Day explores the themes of realism and illusion through close study of a selection of Holbein's works. The three sessions cover his early career in Basel, his work for the Tudor court, and his portraits of foreigners in London. Amongst the paintings we'll be examining are his portraits of Erasmus, his lost depiction of the family of Sir Thomas More, The Ambassadors, The Whitehall Mural, and Holbein's portraits of Hanseatic merchants. We will meet a genius and spend the day in the company of the living, breathing men and women who sat for him.

There will be an exhibition on *Holbein at the Tudor court* at The Queen's Gallery, London from 10th November 2023 to 14th April 2024.

Dr. Gillian White

Dr. Gillian White specialises in the history and visual arts of late medieval and sixteenth-century England. After beginning her career at the Warwickshire Museum, she

then worked for the National Trust as Curator/Collections Manager at Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire, about which she wrote her PhD, doing much of her research in the archives at Chatsworth. She taught part-time at Leicester University for several years in the Centre for the Study of the Country House, and continues to teach History of Art in the Department of Continuing Education at Oxford University and elsewhere, as well as freelance lecturing.

Programme

To be held at Brushford Parish Hall, the programme is:

From 10.15 am Coffee served
10.45 – 11.45 Early career in Basel
12.00 – 1.00 Work for the Tudor court
1.00 – 2.00 Time for your picnic lunch
2.00 – 3.15 'ish Portraits of foreigners in London

Cost: £25.00 per person

To reserve a place, we would really appreciate if payments are made online. Please use your surname plus 'SID.1123' as the payment reference. Bank details - The Arts Society. Account no: 38034441. Sort code: 52-30-42. In addition, please email David Hannah with the following: Your name, the number of people you are booking for, your daytime tel number, and the total amount you have paid online. Email this to: dachannah@btinternet.com We will email you a confirmation of your booking.

Alternatively, please fill in the form below, and return it with a S.A.E for confirmation. (We will confirm your booking by email if you have included an email address). Please include your cheque made out to 'The Arts Society Exmoor' and post to: David Hannah, Nicholls Farm, Brompton Regis, Dulverton TA22 9NN.

For any queries please contact David on 01398 371204 or email: dachannah@btinternet.com

BOOKING FORM (for postal bookings): Special Interest Day: Tuesday 28 November 2023

Name			
Number of persons		Email address	
Tel		I enclose a cheque for £	

Please pay online (details noted above) - £25.00 per person. Alternatively, pay by cheque made out to:

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