

Women Collectors

Date	Friday 1 November 2024
Times	10.15-17.30 GMT, followed by a drinks reception until 19.00
Location	At the museum (Theatre) and online (Zoom)



The Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild, Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat. © Pierre Behar

Event Description

The exceptional artworks in the Wallace Collection were brought together across the 18th and 19th centuries by an extraordinary family of collectors – the marquesses of Hertford and Sir Richard and Lady Wallace.

Delve into the history of collecting through the ages with Collecting Past and Present. During this study day, leading specialists will explore women collectors, from Queen Anna of Denmark in Jacobean England to Mildred Anna Williams in Gilded Age America. You'll also hear an exclusive conversation with Kate de Rothschild Agius, who will shine a light on the important contributions made by women collectors from the Rothschild family, as well as reflect on her own collecting passions and inspirations.

Programme

- 10.15-10.30 Welcome
- 10.30-11.15 ***'Describing her Splendour': Anna of Denmark's Collections***
Kathryn Jones
Though modest in size, Anna of Denmark's remarkable *Kunstammer* at Denmark House is the first collection of a queen consort for which any detailed inventory survives and suggests a familiarity with humanist philosophy. Kathryn will seek to examine the contents of the queen's *Wunderkammer*, its context with other courtly collections and Anna's legacy in the collections of later royal consorts.
- 11.15-11.45 Refreshments
- 11.45-12.30 ***Sophie Arnould's Art Collecting and Architectural Patronage***
Dr Barbara Lasic
One of the most celebrated performers of her day, Sophie Arnould collected art in her own right. Through an examination of her sale catalogue illustrated by Gabriel de Saint-Aubin, as well as a visual interrogation of François-Joseph Belanger's plans for her (unbuilt) neoclassical townhouse, Barbara aims to reconstruct her collecting practices and locate them within the context of late 18th-century Parisian taste.
- 12.30-12.45 Short break
- 12.45-13.30 ***Women, Coins and Colonialism***
Niti Acharya
Elite British women in Britain and India collected coins to materially and intellectually map South Asia in the 19th century, and others acquired them to provide financial security. Niti will show how some women used Indian coins to expand their field of knowledge about the Indian Subcontinent, contribute to the wider emerging study of coins in India and the UK, and use them as a form of life insurance during the turbulent British colonial occupation of South Asia.
- 13.30-13.45 Q&A
- 13.45-14.45 Lunch (not provided)
- 14.45-15.30 ***Knoedler & Co: A Tale of Two Collections***
Samantha Deutch
A 1995 publication claimed that Mildred Anna Williams, a benefactor of San Francisco's Legion of Honor, was Henry Clay Frick's paramour and beneficiary. Though initially undocumented, Samantha's new research - previously unknown shared art provenances and materials in Knoedler & Co.'s and Frick's archives - corroborates these assertions, shedding light on gallery-client dynamics, Williams's rise in society and fresh perspectives on two collections.
- 15.30-15.45 Short break
- 15.45-16.30 ***Collecting on the French Riviera: Béatrice Ephrussi de Rothschild***
Oriane Beaufiglioli
Béatrice, daughter of Alphonse de Rothschild, second in line to the French branch of the famous banking family, was the first of her family to build a Rothschild museum of her own, giving her house in Saint-Jean-Cap-Ferrat and all her collections and belongings to the Académie des Beaux-Arts in 1933. An original exponent of the so-called 'Goût Rothschild', she collected Chinese textiles, as well as Renaissance sculptures, Sèvres porcelain and Impressionist paintings. Oriane will explore further.

16.30-17.15 ***In Conversation with Kate de Rothschild Agius***

The Rothschilds are recognised across the world for their exceptional contributions to the arts dating back to the 19th century, particularly their collecting. The great collections assembled by male members of the family, like Ferdinand de Rothschild at Waddesdon Manor, have often overshadowed those put together by women. With Curator of Decorative Arts Alexander Collins, Kate will discuss some of the most important women collectors in her family, as well as her diverse collection of drawings, which embraces all European and British schools from the 15th to 19th centuries.

17.15-17.30 Q&A

17.30-19.00 Drinks reception

Contributors

Niti Acharya is a doctoral researcher at the University of Lincoln and the British Museum working on an AHRC-funded project to investigate the intersectionality between gender, empire and material culture. She is also a social and community history curator focused on highlighting histories about, and with, communities traditionally underserved by heritage.

Oriane Beaufils is the Heritage and Collection Director at the Villa Ephrussi de Rothschild. After graduating from ESSEC Business School and the University of Glasgow, she worked for several years at Christie's and Sotheby's as a junior specialist in the sculpture and works of art department. She graduated from the Institut Nationale du Patrimoine in 2016 and was appointed Curator of Paintings, Decors and Drawings at the Château de Fontainebleau. She specialises in High Renaissance and Mannerist art and is currently pursuing her PhD on Rosso Fiorentino.

Samantha Deutch, the Digital Art History Lead at The Frick Collection and Frick Art Research Library, is a creator and founding editor of the Library's online *Archives Directory for the History of Collecting in America*. Currently, she is co-editing a peer-reviewed publication on women collectors in the United States: *Collecting Lost Legacies: Women Tastemakers, Collectors, and Patrons*.

Kathryn Jones is Senior Curator of Decorative Arts for the Royal Collection Trust and has published a catalogue of the European silver in the Collection, as well as working on exhibitions on royal collectors from Charles I to Queen Mary. She has also contributed to the *Enlightened Princesses* exhibition catalogue (Yale, 2014), examining the collections of Queen Caroline and Queen Charlotte.

Dr Barbara Lasic is Senior Lecturer in History of Art and Design and Research and Knowledge Lead at Sotheby's Institute of Art in London. She is also a regular Consultant Lecturer at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Wallace Collection. Prior to her academic career, Barbara worked at the Victoria and Albert Museum as part of the curatorial team involved in the redevelopment of the Europe: 1600–1800 galleries, and she held curatorial positions at the Wellcome Trust and the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

Kate de Rothschild Agius studied at the Courtauld Institute. On leaving, she worked as a Curatorial Assistant at the Fogg Art Museum in their drawings department. She set up as a dealer in Old Master drawings in 1973, and stopped dealing and started collecting in 2006, the same year she became Chairman of the Patrons of the British Museum. From 2013–23, Kate was a Trustee of the Wallace Collection and remains involved with the museum through co-chairing (with her husband Marcus Agius) the Wallace Development Board.

Joining Information and Format

Take part at the Museum: This event will take place in the Theatre, Lower Ground Floor at the museum.

Watch Online: This event will also be broadcast live from the museum on Zoom. All ticketholders will also receive a link to view a recording of the talk, which will be available for two weeks only.
