

Van Dyck: The Great 17th-Century Influencer

Dates	Tuesdays 13, 20 and 27 May 2025
Times	18.00–20.00 BST
Location	Online (Zoom)
Tutor	Jacqui Ansell and Dr Matthew Morgan
Level	All Levels



Anthony Van Dyck, *Marie de Raet*, 1631 (detail)

Course Description

Why is Sir Anthony Van Dyck considered a landmark painter in Western European art? Learn about this era-defining artist, whose precocious talent led him to enjoy international fame, fortune and a lavish lifestyle.

We'll explore how Van Dyck was inspired by the work of eminent Renaissance artist Titian, and of his contemporary Rubens, to develop his own audacious style. We'll investigate how his loose, dynamic brushwork manifested in monumental history paintings and vivacious portraits, helping him to attract powerful patrons. We'll also discuss the Wallace Collection's works within a wider context, revealing the elements of his style that set him apart from contemporaries.

Session One: Early Influences (Dr Matthew Morgan)

In our first session, we'll look at the early influences on Van Dyck's work: his Antwerp origins, his visit to Italy and the importance of artists Titian and Rubens. Van Dyck is celebrated for his outstanding mythological and religious subjects and we'll discuss a selection of significant examples, including his painting *Paris*, now in the Wallace Collection. We'll discover this artwork's relevance within a wider discussion of the subject of the Judgement of Paris – one of the most popular Greek myths seen in art.

Session Two: Portraiture – Power and Performance (Jacqui Ansell)

In week two, we'll look closely at several remarkable Van Dyck portraits in which dress melts into drapery, lending the sitters an air of elegance and ease. We'll discover that Van Dyck's skill in painting flattering dress was such that it was claimed he was the 'first that e're put ladies' dress into a careless romance'. Through discussion of self-portraits and paintings of illustrious patrons, we'll contextualise works now in the Wallace Collection, and evaluate the ways in which pose, props and clothing combine to create powerful images that appeal to posterity.

Session Three: Van Dyck's Lasting Legacy (Dr Matthew Morgan)

In our final session, we'll learn how Van Dyck inspired an enduring fascination in Britain with portraiture, and how his vibrant works were much admired long after his death. His sitters' confident poses, sumptuous drapery and seeming psychological depths, remained touchstones for generations of artists and their sitters. We'll uncover his influence in particular on the great 18th-century portrait painters Reynolds, Gainsborough and Hogarth, as well as portrait painters today.

Course Tutors

Jacqui Ansell is an experienced art historian and educator – accredited by The Arts Society – who lectures frequently at major London galleries. After several years writing, presenting and tutoring courses for Christie's Education, she now offers tailor-made tours of London galleries and works freelance offering her expertise in decoding and dating paintings. You will find articles by Jacqui on the Wallace Collection website, which discuss the form and meaning of dress in portraits – her specialist subject.

Dr Matthew Morgan is a freelance art historian, educator and museum professional. He has been the Museum Director of Turner's House, and he is also an Associate Lecturer at Birkbeck, University of London. He has worked in the heritage sector for 10 years, including at the Royal Collection, the National Gallery, the Wallace Collection and the V&A. Prior to that he was a Director in Christie's Valuation Department. He has contributed to TV documentaries, podcasts, radio shows and has lectured widely across the country, and made a series of short films which can be seen on YouTube.

Joining Information and Format

This course will be taught through [Zoom Webinar](#). Each course session duration is 120 minutes, including a five-minute break and time for Q&A with the tutor.

Tickets are for all dates. Ticket holders will be emailed the Zoom link, Webinar ID and Passcode 24 hours in advance of the first course session, which should be retained for

accessing all sessions of the course.

Course Recording

This course will be recorded. Within 48 hours of each course session, ticket holders will be emailed a link to view the recording, which will be available for two weeks.
