

## Collecting through the Ages

**Dates** Friday 5 July 2024  
**Times** 10.15-17.30 BST, followed by a drinks reception until 19.00  
**Location** At the museum (Theatre) and online (Zoom)



Bishan Singh, *The Court of Maharaja Ranjit Singh (1780-1839)*, Amritsar or Lahore, 1863-4. © Toor Collection

### Event Description

The Wallace Collection and the outstanding artworks it contains were brought together through 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 across the ages at our first Collecting Past and Present event. You'll hear from leading academics and specialists on a variety of subjects, from the collecting of Shakespearean relics to the houses of Calouste Gulbenkian. Also join us for a conversation with a leading modern-day collector of Sikh, Indian and Islamic art, Davinder Toor, who will offer exclusive insights into his passions and inspirations.

## **Programme**

10.15-10.30 **Welcome**

10.30-11.15 ***Women as Collectors of 18th-Century Cabinets***

**Dr Verena Suchy**

In the theory and history of collecting, women collectors have often been absent. Examples of noble women from different German principalities, however, indicate that in the 18th century it was common – if not necessary – for aristocratic women to assemble collections of jewellery, decorative art and precious objects. Examining these collections with Dr Suchy will shine a light on the collecting practices of women and their political and representative functions.

11.15-11.45 **Refreshments**

11.45-12.30 ***Shakespearean Relics in the Royal Collection***

**Dr Kirsten Tambling**

1816 was the tercentenary of Shakespeare's death, and, in this year, George, Prince Regent, ordered seven toothpick cases fashioned from 'Shakespeare's Tree'. He was thus inserting the monarchy into a buoyant contemporary trade in Shakespearean 'relics'. Focusing on the 18th and 19th centuries, Dr Tambling will investigate Shakespearean relics in the Royal Collection and the significance of royals collecting Shakespeare.

12.30-12.45 **Short break**

12.45-13.30 ***Amabel, Countess de Grey, as Collector and Curator in post-Orléans London***

**Professor Peter Humfrey**

Diarist, practising artist and commentator on the political events of her time, Amabel was also a well-informed collector, both of Old Masters arriving on the London art market in the wake of the French Revolution, and of the work of her younger contemporaries. Further, she was heir to a distinguished collection of paintings from her family and was active in documenting and rehanging it. Professor Humfrey will take a closer look at this fascinating character.

13.30-13.45 **Q&A**

13.45-14.45 **Lunch (not provided)**

14.45-15.30 ***Stephen T. Gooden and the Marketing of Edward Burne-Jones's Legend of St George and the Dragon Series***

**Dr Barbara Bryant**

In 1894, a series of seven paintings by Burne-Jones came to auction at Christie's. Dr Bryant will consider the protracted attempts by various dealers to sell the series in the 1890s until the successful sale by the relatively new gallery owner Stephen T. Gooden. Gooden's achievement will give an insight into how art dealers of this period marketed the modern masters.

15.30-15.45 **Short break**

15.45-16.30 ***The Making of a House for Calouste Gulbenkian's Art Collection***

**Dr Vera Mariz**

Dr Mariz will explore the various residences that housed Calouste Gulbenkian's art collection, with a primary emphasis on 51 Avenue d'Iéna. While the acquisition process of the latter mirrors that of acquiring artworks, Gulbenkian's satisfaction remains uncertain. Newly discovered materials and innovative approaches offer fresh interpretations of the hôtel Gulbenkian, which will be presented as an intimate testament to Gulbenkian's essence as an art collector.

16.30-17.15 **In Conversation with Davinder Toor**

Two centuries ago, Punjab's Sikh ruling elite lavishly patronised artists and craftsmen to enhance the splendour of their empire. By the mid-19th century, the Sikh empire had met its demise at the hands of the East India Company. Over the following century and a half, Sikh artefacts were dispersed across the globe. Some ended up in British institutional collections, while others were bought and sold by collectors. With Curatorial Assistant Alexander Collins, Davinder will discuss how he has pursued his passion as a collector to create a lasting legacy to the empire of the Sikhs.

17.15-17.30 **Q&A**

17.30-19.00 **Drinks reception**

## Contributors

**Dr Barbara Bryant** is an independent art historian and consultant curator. She has published and lectured widely on British art, the history of collecting, 19th-century portraiture, the Aesthetic Movement and the history of the gallery Gooden and Fox. She organised the exhibition *G.F. Watts Portraits: Fame & Beauty in Victorian Society* and co-curated *G.F. Watts Victorian Visionary*, as well as contributed to *Symbolism in Britain: The Age of Rossetti, Watts and Burne-Jones*.

**Peter Humfrey** is Emeritus Professor of Art History, University of St Andrews. His principal speciality is Venetian painting of the Renaissance period, but his other main area of research is the history of collecting Old Master paintings in Britain in the Georgian and Regency periods.

**Dr Vera Mariz** is Research Curator at the Calouste Gulbenkian Museum. Over the past two years, she has been coordinating a project centred around 51 Avenue d'Iéna, Gulbenkian's iconic residence in Paris, in addition to other endeavours related to the collector and the history of the collection. She also holds a research position at ARTIS - Institute of Art History, School of Arts and Humanities, University of Lisbon, specialising in the history of collecting, art markets and digital art history.

**Dr Verena Suchy** is Assistant Curator in the Decorative Arts Department of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg. Between 2013 and 2021, Verena was Research and Curatorial Assistant at some of Germany's most famous collections: Hessen Kassel Heritage, the Forum Wissen Göttingen and the Arts Collection of the University of Göttingen. She was a Fellow at the International Graduate Centre for the Study of Culture (GCSC), Giessen, from 2016 to 2019, and the Herzog-August-Library Wolfenbüttel in 2020.

**Dr Kirsten Tambling** is a writer and academic in London, currently teaching at the Courtauld Institute of Art. Between 2016-22, she was Postdoctoral Research Associate on the 'Shakespeare in the Royal Collection' project at King's College London. Her writing and reviews on art and literature have appeared in *Apollo Magazine*, *The Art Newspaper* and the *Literary Review*.

**Davinder Toor** is a leading figure among a new generation of Sikh, Indian and Islamic art collectors. He has acted as a consultant to major private collectors, auction houses and institutions such as the British Museum, Victoria and Albert Museum and the Wallace Collection. He currently lectures on the 'Arts of the Royal Sikh Courts' and 'Sikh Painting and Manuscripts' for the Victoria and Albert Museum's prestigious 'Arts of Asia' course.

## 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.