

15 September 2017: Dale Chihuly: the world's foremost glass artist

Charles Hajdamach

American glass artist Dale Chihuly (born 1941) is the super-star of the glass world. With his passion for glass and his constant exploration of glass's luminous qualities and colour possibilities, he creates glass sculptures which are extravagant, colourful and spectacular. His glass magic has transformed the studio glass movement and altered our visual perceptions of this extraordinary material forever.

13 October: Riviera Paradise: A fusion of art, design and pleasure on the Côte d'Azur in the 1920s and 30s

Mary Alexander

Since the C19 English high society had 'wintered over' on the Côte d'Azur, but always left by April. In the early 1920's, however, an intoxicating mix of artists, writers, musicians and international visitors created a new summer season. We will 'time travel' to meet them.

10 November: Architecture, music and the invention of linear perspective

Colin Davies

Leon Battista Alberti, the original 'Renaissance man', wrote: 'We shall therefore borrow all our rules for the fixing of proportions from the musicians'. It turns out that there is a mathematical link between visible and audible proportions, or harmony. Filippo Brunelleschi, took the idea further in his invention of 'linear perspective' and thereby, incidentally, revolutionised western painting.

8 December: From Magic Lanterns to Metro Goldwyn Mayer: The birth of the Silver Screen and the artists it inspired

Geri Parlby

The moving image has been a powerful source for imagination from the first moment a magic lantern flickered into life in the 17th century. We will be looking at how the Motion Pictures industry developed, went on to change the face of entertainment and inspired some of the greatest artists of the early 20th century.

12 January 2018 : The Art of the Joke

Susie Harries

Artists have always used jokes to make serious statements - about themselves, about the world, and about the nature of art. This lecture looks at artists' jokes, from the margins of medieval manuscripts to Marcel Duchamp's moustache on the Mona Lisa, from Arcimboldo to Banksy . . .

9 February: Mars and the Muses: The Renaissance Art of Armour

Tobias Capwel

Armour was one of the great Renaissance art-forms, in essence creating a living sculpture; a process which demanded fantastic skill and mastery of all decorative techniques available to the Renaissance metalworker. It was an intensely personal art, and embodies complex messages about status, divine power, attitudes and identities.

9 March: A Bar at the Folie-Bergère

Lizzie Darbyshire

Edouard Manet's "A Bar at the Folies-Bergère" of 1882 is one of the most treasured possessions of the Courtauld Collection. Here we are invited to engage with a young barmaid at work in a fashionable Parisian establishment. All seems to be well - but is it? This lecture explores the many different facets of this iconic painting and guarantees you will never look at it in the same way again.

13 April: Stonehenge and the British Stone Circle: the history, art and archaeology of these great landmarks

William Forrester

Just like any great cathedral, stately home or museum, Britain's stone circles deserve and reward study. We examine the many theories of why they were built: observatories, or cult centres, or hospitals, or highways to the afterlife or even UFO landing sites? . We also consider their place in art – featuring works by Constable, Turner, Henry Moore and others.

11 May: The Mystery of Holbein's "Ambassadors"

Anthony Russell

Hans Holbein's painting dates from a tradition in the arts when no object was without meaning and symbolism. However, practically all of this meaning has been lost to the modern observer. This lecture considers the tempestuous circumstances of its creation and the hidden messages concealed within it. The painting tells us much about the state of Europe at the time and the hopes and fears of its major players.

8 JUNE: AGM & "Mille Miglia – cars and culture"

Libby Horner

In 1955 Stirling Moss and Denis Jenkinson won the 1000 mile open-road endurance race round Italy with a staggering average speed of 98.53 mph which didn't allow them any time for pit stops or culture. This lecture follows the route in a more leisurely fashion, with numerous detours to sample local food, wine, music, architecture and art.