

Women Artists,
Copyists, Dealers
and Artists in
Residence

26.6.2024

Widening
the
Narrative

9:30–10:00 Registration
10:00–10:15 Welcome

Part 1:

The Artist, Gender and Identity

10:15–11:30 Session 1:
'Woman Artist' Reassessed
11:30–11:45 Break
11:45–13:00 Session 2:
Curating 'Women Artists'

13:00–14:00 Lunch Break (not provided)

Part 2:

Women and the National Gallery Collection

14:00–15:00 Session 3:
Copyists and Dealers
15:00–15:15 Break
15:15–16:15 Session 4:
Contemporary Projects
16:15–16:30 Break

16:30–17:45 **Keynote:**
Paula Rego and 'Crivelli's Garden':
Women Re-Imagined

17:45–18:30 Drinks Reception

The Women and the Arts Forum and its Conference is generously funded by Professor Diane Apostolos-Cappadona in honour of her mother, Stacia Apostolos.

The National Gallery's Women and the Arts Forum Conference 2024

Widening the Narrative:
Women Artists, Copyists, Dealers
and Artists in Residence

Wednesday 26 June 2024

The Society of Antiquaries

Burlington House

London

Christine Riding

Director of Collections & Research, National Gallery

Dr Susanna Avery-Quash

Lead Curator, National Gallery

Welcome

Welcome to the second annual Women and the Arts Forum Conference. This series aims to expand the National Gallery's research into the intricate interplay between gender and the realms of art and culture.

As we are seeing worldwide, museums are awakening to the imperative task of readdressing history's omissions and amplifying the voices of women. Our mission is clear: to broaden the scope of our institutional history by recognising and celebrating the often-overlooked contributions of women.

The Women and the Arts Forum Conference 2024 is a significant addition to the National Gallery's Bicentenary celebrations. We are proud to present a symphony of narratives, illuminating the roles of women as artists, copyists, dealers and participants in the contemporary programme. Under the theme of 'Widening the Narrative', the conference aims to challenge conventions, reframe dialogues and delve into topical issues. With talks, conversations, films and roundtable discussions from experts in the field, we rethink the discourse on and curation of 'women artists', while also highlighting the pivotal role women have played in shaping both the Gallery's rich past and the broader landscape of art history.

Join us as we collectively celebrate the invaluable contributions of women to the arts and champion a more inclusive and equitable future in the art world.

1

The Artist, Gender and Identity

Chaired by Dr Catherine McCormack
Author, and Lecturer at Sotheby's Institute of Art

Session 1: 'Woman Artist' in Context

The term 'woman artist' can sometimes imply a separate category, suggesting that the gender of the artist is more significant than their artistic merit. It may additionally overshadow the individuality and achievements of women artists by defining them primarily by their gender rather than their artistic talent and creativity. On the other hand, the term 'woman artist' can be helpful in contexts where it is important specifically to acknowledge and highlight the gender diversity within the art world. It can promote visibility and help address issues of gender inequality and discrimination by drawing attention to the unique experiences and perspectives of women. In this panel, speakers delve into the complexities and histories surrounding the term 'woman artist' and its intersection with gender and identity, examining the extent to which it can enrich our understanding of artistic expression and challenge prevailing norms.

Dr Paris A. Spies-Gans
Eliza Goodpasture

Collecting and Exhibiting 'Women Artists' in London

Conversation

In this conversation, Paris Spies-Gans and Eliza Goodpasture will discuss the evolving place of women artists in the British public eye. First, they will consider the many ways these artists' histories have been erased, from the eighteenth century to the present day. Then, they will address the exciting *and* concerning aspects of the unprecedented attention that women artists are currently receiving – from tokenism and concepts of marketability to ongoing debates around integrating women into long-vaunted histories of art. Finally, they will suggest some ways that we can look forward in how we collect, label and exhibit work by women. Situating their conversation in the context of the National Gallery and the broader history of women artists in London, they hope to prompt rich discussion about the complexities facing scholars and curators of 'women artists' today.

Dr Jonathan King
Dr Amy Mechowski

Rosa Bonheur and 'The Horse Fair'

Film Premiere

Bequeathed to the National Gallery in 1859, *The Horse Fair* by Rosa Bonheur was one of the first paintings by a woman to enter the collection since its formation 35 years prior. The work is a copy of the original, four times the size, that brought Bonheur international fame when it was exhibited at the Paris Salon in 1853. The National Gallery's version was painted to facilitate prints for sale. It is widely accepted that Bonheur included her self-portrait in the centre of the painting, dressed in the masculine garb that was required to access the horse market in the first place. If this is the case, why might she have chosen to do this? And what can this tell us about her experience as a 'woman artist'? The contextual and representational facets of the painting invite such fascinating questions, allowing us to explore Bonheur's formation of a queer female identity in mid-nineteenth century France. In the film, Jonathan King and Amy Mechowski explore these topics in conversation, informed by recent scholarship and archival material at the National Gallery.

The film has been generously funded by Professor Diane Apostolos-Cappadona in honour of Stacia Apostolos.

Chaired by Letizia Treves

Global Head of Research & Expertise in Old Masters, Christie's

Session 2: Curating 'Women Artists'

Dr Flavia Frigeri
Annette Wickham
Tabitha Barber

Short Presentations followed by a Roundtable Discussion

The art world is seeing a timely intervention with more exhibitions centring around 'women artists.' Such exhibitions help address historical imbalances by giving visibility to artists who have been historically overlooked or marginalised. They also challenge traditional narratives in art history that often prioritise male artists and contribute to a more diverse and inclusive art world by showcasing a wider range of perspectives and voices. On the other hand, exhibitions on women artists have been critiqued as tokenistic or solely focused on gender, rather than on the artistic merit of the works themselves. Additionally, some may argue that such exhibitions could inadvertently perpetuate the marginalisation of women artists by segregating them from mainstream art discourse. Presented by expert curators with a range of perspectives, specialisms and experiences, this panel tackles the key questions raised when exhibiting art by women. From ideas of 'greatness' and the discriminatory criticisms of measuring 'quality' to issues of canonicity and visibility, curators delve into each of their respective exhibitions on art by women, and consider the challenges, boundaries and importance of such exhibitions as they begin to appear more in gallery programming.



2

Women and the National Gallery Collection

Chaired by Dr Maria Alambritis
The Vivmar Curatorial Fellow, National Gallery

Session 3: Copyists and Dealers

Considering the wider roles women have had in the art world, this panel explores the international experiences of women copyists and the activities of Jewish women dealers, particularly in relation to the National Gallery. By understanding the diverse ways in which women have actively engaged with the Gallery and its collection, we gain a more comprehensive understanding of art history and the societal factors that have shaped it. Additionally, examining women's engagement with the Gallery helps identify and address not only their opportunities, but historical and contemporary barriers to their participation in the art world, ultimately fostering a more inclusive cultural landscape.

Sarah Herring

The National Gallery Copyist Register for the First Decade of the Twentieth Century: An International Perspective

Paper

This paper looks at the international nature of the Copyist Register for the first decade of the twentieth century, examining in particular a substantial group of US women students and artists who registered to copy. Almost all of these had studied, or were studying in Paris, and many presented themselves as exhibitors at the Paris Salon. The discussion will touch on that city's domination of the art world at this period, and its popularity as a place of study, particularly for students from the USA but also for British students who travelled there after initial studies in London. Education in Paris and London will be compared, with a particular focus on the Slade School of Fine Art, established in 1871, and modelled from the start on the French system. Reasons for the pull of Paris over London will be explored, particularly as for women an education in the French capital was by no means straightforward. But while US women did not generally choose to pursue their education in London, they did come over to study and copy paintings in such places as the National Gallery, and the paper will highlight and discuss some of those who did.

Dr Isobel Muir

London's Jewish Women Art Dealers, 1870–1950

Paper

In this paper, Dr Isobel Muir will examine some of the activities of Jewish women in the London art world, as art dealers and professional curators, at the vanguard in a professional sphere that remained predominantly male throughout most of the twentieth century. During her PhD research, she discovered that the National Gallery played an important role in the careers of several Jewish women, who attempted to shape its collecting practices and establish themselves within its walls and without. Broadly speaking, the paper will cover several Jewish women's careers from the opening of the Grosvenor Gallery in 1877, by Lady Blanche Lindsay (née Rothschild), to the appointment of the National Gallery's first female curator in the 1940s and consider some of the reasons for the greater visibility of women in the art trade after the Second World War.

Chaired by Daniel Herrmann

Curator of Modern & Contemporary Projects, National Gallery

Session 4: Contemporary Projects

Throughout its history, the National Gallery has provided a platform for celebrated contemporary artists. Since the 1980s, artists have been invited to take up residency within the Gallery to develop their work in response to its world-renowned collections. From Maggi Hambling to Bridget Riley, several women have taken up the role of Artist in Residence and Associate Artist since these schemes have been established. This panel focuses on a new oral histories project at the Gallery, which has been set up to capture crucial personal perspectives, experiences and narratives that might otherwise be lost to time. Providing a unique insight into women's experiences at the National Gallery as part of the contemporary programme, oral histories help diversify historical records and contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the past, in this instance, also enriching the National Gallery's own institutional history.

Annabel Bai Jackson

The National Gallery Oral Histories Project: Women's Narratives

Paper

This paper outlines the work of the National Gallery's Oral Histories Project, which explores the Gallery's role in developing contemporary artistic practice across the 20th and 21st centuries. Conducted by the Modern & Contemporary team, the project collates interviews with past Artists in Residence and Associate Artists to produce a resource for future art historians. The interviews, both existing and newly recorded, pivot around the artist's experiences at the Gallery; their practice in the context of the collection; and the work of the institution at the time of their residency.

This year, the project is focusing on the women artists who participated in the residencies between 1980 and 2016, including Maggi Hambling and Ana Maria Pacheco. Using two recent interviews as case studies, the paper investigates the historic experiences of women artists within a male-dominated institution and collection, as well as the form of the oral history interview as a resource for this type of research. Oral histories foreground subjectivity and narrativity over an objective retelling of events; as remarked by Alessandro Portelli, 'memory is not a passive depository of facts, but an active process of creation of meanings.' The project thereby seeks to examine how women artists, primarily working in a visual idiom, remember and create meanings through their words.

Priyesh Mistry
Céline Condorelli

A Machine for Seeing – Céline Condorelli's National Gallery Residency

Film and Conversation

2023 Artist in Residence, Céline Condorelli, spent a year working in the National Gallery's on-site artist's studio pursuing her research in our encounters with culture and the less visible structures that support it. Through her observations, Condorelli came to understand museums as 'machines for seeing' that teach us how to perceive and value art, from visitor selfies in front of paintings to our Scientific Department that develop ever more technical equipment to examine and reveal more of our collection.

Through the art works in her exhibition *Pentimenti: The Corrections*, which opened in Room 31 in September 2023, Condorelli invited us to become aware of our own way of seeing, to pay attention to the space and materials of the National Gallery, how we behave in it, and how it is connected to the world outside. This session will begin with the premiere of a short film made with Condorelli at the time of her exhibition, exploring the themes and collaborations she made in the production of her work during her residency. This will be followed by a short conversation with Priyesh Mistry, Associate Curator of Modern & Contemporary Projects and a Q&A.

The film has been generously funded by Professor Diane Apostolos-Cappadona in honour of Stacia Apostolos.

Introduced by Christine Riding

Director of Collections & Research, National Gallery

Professor Dame Marina Warner

In conversation with Dr Lauren Elkin

Paula Rego and 'Crivelli's Garden': Women Re-Imagined

Keynote Speech

We are thrilled to welcome the writer Marina Warner, who will deliver a short presentation on *Crivelli's Garden*, followed by a conversation with Lauren Elkin.

Paula Rego was the National Gallery's first Associate Artist from 1990 to 1991 when she created *Crivelli's Garden* for the Sainsbury Wing Dining Room. Rego's residency at the Gallery provided her with the opportunity to roam the galleries and explore deeply what she called a 'masculine' collection and Carlo Crivelli's painting, *La Madonna della Rondine* (*The Madonna of the Swallow*) commanded her special interest. Her response reinterprets the original work and introduces allusions to many other paintings in the collection. Rego not only engaged with Crivelli's artistic techniques and themes but also injected her own imaginative and contemporary perspectives into the dialogue surrounding the historic masterpiece. Engaging with the National Gallery Collection in her own way, Rego offers in *Crivelli's Garden* a contemporary and nuanced exploration of female experience, infusing biblical and mythological narratives with her own feelings and insights. Through her reinterpretations, Rego highlights the complexities of gender, challenging traditional portrayals and inviting viewers to reconsider the roles and representations of women in art and society.



Paris A. Spies-Gans holds a PhD in History from Princeton University, an MA in Art History from the Courtauld Institute of Art, and an AB from Harvard University. Her research has been supported by fellowships from the Harvard Society of Fellows and the J. Paul Getty Trust, among other institutions. Her first book, *A Revolution on Canvas: The Rise of Women Artists in Britain and France, 1760–1830* (PMC/YUP 2002), has won several prizes in the fields of British art history and eighteenth-century studies and was named one of the top art books of 2022 by *The Art Newspaper*. She is currently working on her second book, *A New Story of Art* (US/Doubleday and UK/Viking).



Eliza Goodpasture is completing her PhD at the University of York. She holds an MA from the Courtauld Institute of Art and a BA from Bowdoin College. Her research has been supported by grants from the Paul Mellon Centre, British Association for Victorian Studies, Association for Art History and Graduate Women International. She received first prize in the annual Doctoral Fellowship Competition at the Humanities Research Centre at the University of York. Eliza writes regularly about art and culture for general audiences. Her writing has been published by the *Guardian*, *Financial Times*, *Art Review*, *Frieze*, *Hyperallergic*, and elsewhere.



Jonathan King is the Bernays Curatorial Fellow of British Paintings at the National Gallery, where he is also a researcher and administrator for the Women and the Arts Forum. He completed his PhD on the artist Vanessa Bell at the University of York in 2022. His research specialism spans British art of the eighteenth through to the twentieth century, with an interest in queer and feminist approaches to art history. Jon was previously a researcher at Ben Uri Gallery and Museum, focusing on immigrant artists in Britain since 1900. In early 2020 he was awarded a Research Fellowship at the Yale Center for British Art, and in 2019 he was a Graduate Teaching Assistant in the University of York's History of Art department. He is currently turning his PhD on Bell into a book.

Amy Mechowski has an MA and PhD from UCL. She was a curator at the V&A from 2007 to 2013, working on major exhibitions and capital projects. She continues to collaborate with both established and emerging artists in her curatorial practice. She left the Museum to devise and lead courses for Sotheby's Institute of Art before returning to the V&A in 2016 as Head of the Learning Academy. Amy has been a Research Fellow at the Yale Center for British Art and her research topics include performativity and spectatorship. She is the author of chapters in books on the female gaze and the female nude in 19th-century sculpture as well as Live Art and public engagement in museums. Amy currently leads the 19th-century module of 'Stories of Art' at The National Gallery and is Curatorial Programmes Lead at Sotheby's Institute of Art.

From top:
Paris A. Spies-Gans
Eliza Goodpasture
Jonathan King
Amy Mechowski



Flavia Frigeri is an art historian, lecturer, and 'Chanel Curator for the Collection' at the National Portrait Gallery. She recently guest curated the group exhibition *Beyond Form: Lines of Abstraction, 1950–1970* at Turner Contemporary, Margate, UK and is now working on a retrospective of avant-garde French-Portuguese artist Maria Helena Vieira da Silva for the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice, Italy. From 2016 to 2020 she was a Teaching Fellow in the History of Art Department UCL and a member of faculty at Sotheby's Institute, London. Previously she was 'Curator, International Art' at Tate Modern, where she co-curated *The World Goes Pop* (2015), and was responsible for *Henri Matisse: The Cut-Outs* (2014), *Paul Klee: Making Visible* (2013) and *Ruins in Reverse* (2013). She is the author of *Pop Art and Women Artists* both in Thames & Hudson's Art Essentials series and the co-editor of a volume of collected essays, *New Histories of Art in the Global Postwar Era: Multiple Modernisms* (Routledge, 2021). She is a trustee for the AAH – Association for Art History.



Annette Wickham is Curator of Works on Paper for the Royal Academy Collection and co-curator of the current *Angelica Kauffman* exhibition. She has curated and contributed to numerous displays and exhibitions at the RA and has published on aspects of the Academy's collection and history. Her research interests include women artists at the Royal Academy and the history of art education. Recent publications include the Kauffman exhibition catalogue (with Bettina Baumgartel), *Laura Knight: A Working Life* (2019, with Helen Valentine) and chapters on the history of drawing at the RA Schools in R. Simon and M. Stevens, *The Royal Academy: History and Collections* (2018).



Tabitha Barber is Curator of British Art, 1500–1750, at Tate Britain, specialising in the early modern period. She curated *Now You See Us: Women Artists in Britain 1520–1920* (2024) and *British Baroque: Power and Illusion* (2020). She has contributed to AHRC-funded projects, including the *Iconoclasms Network* (University of Birmingham/Tate) and *Court, Country, City 1660–1735* (University of York/Tate), and Getty-funded research on Tudor and Stuart works. She has organised numerous in-focus displays at Tate Britain, including *Andrea Soldi and the English Levant Merchants* (2008–9) and *William Dobson: Artist of the Civil War* (2018–19). Tabitha specialises in the work of Mary Beale.

From top:
Flavia Frigeri
Annette Wickham
Tabitha Barber



Sarah Herring is Associate Curator of Post–1800 Paintings at the National Gallery. She has a particular interest in landscape, and has been involved in such exhibitions as *Forests, Rocks, Torrents. Norwegian and Swiss Landscape Painting from the Lunde Collection* (2011). In 2019 she published *The Nineteenth Century French Paintings. Volume 1, The Barbizon School*, part of the series of National Gallery Schools Catalogues. With Emma Capron she was co-curator of the 2022/23 exhibition, *Discover Manet and Eva Gonzalès* (Hugh Lane Gallery, Dublin and National Gallery, London) which explored a number of themes around Manet’s imposing portrait, including the education and position of women artists in the nineteenth century.



Annabel Bai Jackson is the Dorset Curatorial Fellow for Modern and Contemporary Projects at the National Gallery, where she focuses on the Gallery’s work with living artists and the post–1800 part of the collection. She previously worked at the Barbican Centre as a Curatorial Assistant, and earned her Master’s degree in English 1900–present from the University of Oxford. As a writer, she has contributed to *Apollo*, *Sight & Sound*, and *The Oxford Review of Books*.

From top:
Sarah Herring
Isobel Muir
Annabel Bai Jackson

Isobel Muir is Associate Curator of Post–1800 Paintings (maternity cover) at the National Gallery. She recently obtained an AHRC-funded Collaborative doctorate at the National Gallery and Durham University (2020–24), where she researched Jewish collectors, donors and fundraisers at the National Gallery, 1824–1945. Prior to carrying out this research project with the National Gallery, she held several curatorial roles in the pre–1900 Paintings and Works on Paper departments of the Royal Collection Trust, and the Learning department at Dulwich Picture Gallery.



Céline Condorelli was the National Gallery’s 2023 Artist in Residence. Her work addresses the boundaries between public and private, art and function, work and leisure, in order to reimagine what culture and society can be. In September 2023–January 2024 she held an exhibition of her work *Pentimenti (The Corrections)* in Room 31. Recent presentations also include *Akin*, Tavros, GR (2023), *After Work* at Talbot Rice Gallery, Edinburgh and South London Gallery (2022), and *Our Silver City, 2094* at Nottingham Contemporary (2021). Condorelli has published numerous texts in publications and print journals, and several books, and is currently professor at HfG (Hochschule für Gestaltung) Karlsruhe. She was one of the founding directors of Eastside Projects, Birmingham.



From top:
Céline Condorelli
Priyesh Mistry
Marina Warner
Photo: John Cairns
Lauren Elkin
Photo: Sophie Davidson

Priyesh Mistry is Associate Curator of Modern & Contemporary Projects at the National Gallery where he manages an ambitious programme of artists residencies, exhibitions, and contemporary commissions. Recent projects include with Céline Condorelli on her National Gallery residency and exhibition *Pentimenti (The Corrections)* (2023), *Paula Rego: Crivelli’s Garden* (2023) and *Nalini Malani: My Reality is Different* (2023) among many others. Previously, he was Assistant Curator, International Art at Tate Modern. He is a Trustee of Studio Voltaire and a member of the Faculty of Fine Arts at the British School at Rome and the Fourth Plinth Commissioning Group led by the Mayor of London’s office.

Marina Warner writes fiction, criticism and cultural history. Her books explore myths, symbols and fairy tales, including *Monuments and Maidens* (1985), *From the Beast to the Blonde* (1994) and *Forms of Enchantment: Writings on Art & Artists* (2018), out now in paperback with Thames & Hudson. Recent publications include her ‘unreliable memoir’, *Inventory of a Life Mislaid* (2021), *Helen Chadwick: The Oval Court* (2022) and *Temporale* (2023). Her forthcoming books, *Sanctuary: Ways of Telling, Ways of Dwelling* and *Myths, Magic and Marvel: Writings on Literature and Culture* will be published next year. She is Professor of English and Creative Writing at Birkbeck College, a Distinguished Fellow of All Souls College, Oxford, and an Honorary Fellow of the RA.

Lauren Elkin is the author of several books, including *Art Monsters: Unruly Bodies in Feminist Art* (2023) and *Flâneuse: Women Walk the City* (2016), a Radio 4 Book of the Week, New York Times Notable Nonfiction book of 2017, and finalist for the PEN/Diamonstein-Spielvogel award. Her essays have appeared in *Granta*, the *London Review of Books*, *Frieze*, *Art Review*, *Harper’s*, *Aperture*, *Tate Etc.*, and the *New York Times*. She has profiled artists like Cornelia Parker and Sutapa Biswas and contributed to catalogues for artists including Sarah Lucas, Lubaina Himid, Vlatka Horvat, Hannah Starkey, and Caroline Walker. An award-winning translator, her recent work includes Simone de Beauvoir’s *The Inseparables* (2023); upcoming translations include Constance Debré’s *Nom* and Marie-Laure Bernadac’s biography of Louise Bourgeois. Her next book, a novel entitled *Scaffolding*, will be published by Chatto & Windus in June 2024.

The Women and the Arts Forum is convened by Dr Susanna Avery-Quash and Dr Jonathan King. The conference forms part of the Forum's annual programme, aiming to address the various and integral roles that women, past or present, have had in the arts, particularly in relation to the National Gallery's history and collection.

We would like to thank Professor Diane Apostolos-Cappadona who has generously funded the conference in honour of her mother, Stacia Apostolos.

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Elisabeth Louise Vigée Le Brun,
Self Portrait in a Straw Hat (detail),
1782, oil on canvas, 97.8 × 70.5 cm
(© National Gallery, London,
purchased 1897)