

VENUE

Benenden Village Hall

Coffee from 10:00 – 10:30

Announcements 10:40

Lectures from 10:45 –12:00.

Booking Guests

Members may bring a guest to 3 lectures per year. Please check that there is availability with the Membership Secretary, at least one week in advance, preferably by email. £10 cash payable at the door.

Membership Enquiries

Contact the Membership Secretary. 2027 subscriptions will be due by 1st November 2026. (£50 single, £90 joint), preferably by standing order. Please notify the Membership Secretary of resignations by the end of September.

Charitable Donations

The main object of the Arts Society is the promotion and advancement of the arts, culture and heritage to the public. To this end, in addition to the annual programme of events, the Society has made donations to local organisations which have the same objectives, such as the Cranbrook Museum and the Romney Marsh Historic Churches Trust.

Through Young Arts we have supported the Peasmarsh Chamber Music Festival which brings live music to local schools as well as projects in other schools in the area.

Technical Support

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The Arts Society High Weald cannot be held responsible for any personal accident, loss, damage or theft of members' personal property. Members are covered against proven liability of third parties.

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**THE ARTS SOCIETY HIGH
WEALD**

**Member Society of
The Arts Society**

PROGRAMME CARD

January – December 2026

www.theartssocietyhighweald.org.uk

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS 2026

Tuesday, 27 January 2026

Gateway to the World: Lisbon and the Art of Empire

Isabelle Kent

When Vasco de Gama sailed from Lisbon in 1497 he left behind many of the greatest Gothic jewels of Europe. On his return he brought with him treasures from around the world. This lecture looks at some of these treasures, and how the art and architecture of Lisbon responded.

Tuesday, 24 February

Re-imagining the Nation – 19th Century Danish Landscapes

James Vaux

In the 19th century, Denmark lost territory and regional power but produced its finest art. This talk looks at how landscape painting was powerfully used to re-imagine a new, smaller Denmark, to create a different sense of the nation and to unite its diverse regions.

Tuesday, 31 March

Francisco de Zurbaran

Gail Turner

The first dedicated exhibition of the 17th century Spanish painter Francisco de Zurbaran's work in the UK commences in May 2026 at the National Gallery. This exhibition will show-case a wide range of his work, including large altar pieces and still lifes. This lecture will examine Zurbaran's life and career, and his contribution to Spanish art of that period.

Tuesday, 28 April

Cantiones Sacrae 1757 – The Lives and Music of Tallis and Byrd

Patrick Craig

Cantiones Sacrae, the first ever volume of English printed music, contains some of Tallis and Byrd's most glorious works. Patrick received a beautiful new edition of this volume of 32 motets as his leaving present after completing 1,000 concerts singing with the Tallis Scholars. He will explore the lives of the two men who created it and play many of its treasures.

Tuesday, 26 May

George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham

Lucy Hughes-Hallett

George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, was the favourite of King James I - who addressed him as 'my sweet child and wife' - and subsequently chief minister to King Charles I. Buckingham was a beauty, and he surrounded himself with beautiful things. This lecture will detail his life and his patronage of the arts.

Tuesday, 30 June

The Rebuilding of Ypres Following Total Destruction in WW1

Christopher Chanter

This lecture will include photographs of Ypres prior to WWI, the same buildings after destruction and then after reconstruction.

Tuesday, 29 September

Antony Gormley: A Body of Work

Rosalind Whyte

Antony Gormley's career spans nearly 40 years, during which time he has made sculpture that explores the relationship of the human body to space, often using his own body as his starting point. As well as works that he is well known for, this lecture will look at some of his earlier and less well-known works, to give an overall view of the development of his work across his whole career.

Tuesday, 27 October

Behind the Walls – Creativity, Visions and Horrors in Renaissance Italian Convents

Sarah Dunant

By the middle of the 16th century dowries in Italy were so expensive that most respectable families could not afford to marry off all their daughters. The rest became nuns, entering convents at puberty and never leaving. Not all of them went willingly. But along with stories of enforced incarceration and horror, there was also unexpected space for creativity: art, scholarship, writing, drama and music. There was also the possibility of another kind of fulfilment – and power – that of ecstatic union with the spiritual husband, Jesus Christ. Behind those walls a great deal was going on.

N.B. The October lecture will be preceded by the AGM, which will start at 10.15 am.

Tuesday, 24 November

How to Look Slowly: Impressionism

Joanne Rhymer

Looking slowly at an Impressionist painting might at first seem counterintuitive, since one of the concepts associated with Impressionism is that the artist captures quickly in paint a fleeting, fugitive moment. Although their works frequently appear to have been painted speedily; in reality, this was not always the case.

Tuesday, 15 December

How we Laughed: The Golden Age of British Comedy

Tyler Butterworth

It's said the 1970s and 80s was the golden age of British comedy, as we started to drift away from theatres and radios, and found ourselves living through a wonderfully rich period of television comedy. Some say this period has never been bettered.

The committee invites you all to join them for mulled wine and mince pies following the December lecture.

VISITS

Wednesday, 20 May

Romney Marsh Churches

Guided visit to four historic churches not included in our previous trips: Brenzett, Newchurch, Snargate and Snave, with a pub lunch.

Thursday, 17 September

Whistler Exhibition at Tate Britain

Introductory lecture, buffet lunch and exhibition entry.