

The Courtauld

Media Pack

2021

About The Courtauld

The Courtauld works to advance how we see and understand the visual arts, as an internationally-renowned centre for the teaching, research of art history and a major public gallery. Founded by collectors and philanthropists in 1932, the organisation has been at the forefront of the study of art ever since through advanced research and conservation practice, innovative teaching, the renowned collection and inspiring exhibitions of its gallery, and engaging and accessible activities, and events.

The Courtauld cares for one of the greatest art collections in the UK, presenting these works to the public at The Courtauld Gallery in central London, as well as through loans and partnerships. The Gallery is most famous for its iconic Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masterpieces - such as Van Gogh's *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear* and Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*. It showcases these alongside an internationally renowned collection of works from the Middle Ages and Renaissance through to the present day.

Academically, The Courtauld faculty is the largest community of art historians and conservators in the UK, teaching and carrying out research on subjects from creativity in late Antiquity to contemporary digital artforms - with an increasingly global focus. An independent college of the University of London, The Courtauld offers a range of degree programmes from BA to PhD in the History of Art, curating and the conservation of easel and wall paintings. Its alumni are leaders and innovators in the arts, culture and business worlds, helping to shape the global agenda for the arts and creative industries.

Founded on the belief that everyone should have the opportunity to engage with art, The Courtauld works to increase understanding of the role played by art throughout history, in all societies and across all geographies - as well as being a champion for the importance of art in the present day. This could be through exhibitions offering a chance to look closely at world-famous works; events bringing art history research to new audiences; accessible and expert short courses; digital engagement, innovative school, family and community programmes; or taking a formal qualification. The Courtauld's ambition is to transform access to art history education by extending the horizons of what this is, and ensuring as many people as possible can benefit from the tools to better understand the visual world around us.

The Courtauld is currently undertaking an ambitious transformation project that will make it accessible to even more people. The Courtauld's home in historic Somerset House - London's working arts centre - is closed for a major programme of renovation. The Courtauld's students and academic staff are based near King's Cross. The Gallery is scheduled to reopen in November 2021. The collection cared for by The Courtauld Gallery is owned by the Samuel Courtauld Trust, which has been a partner in the Courtauld Connects project.



The Courtauld's history

Samuel Courtauld, a pioneering collector and philanthropist, established The Courtauld in 1932, with Sir Robert Witt and Viscount Lee of Fareham, as an institute dedicated to the teaching and public dissemination of art history and conservation.

As the first dedicated art history higher education institution in the UK, The Courtauld led the development of art history as an academic subject in this country. Initially based in Samuel Courtauld's former house in Portman Square, the original aim of the founders was to provide both a general higher education in and appreciation of art, and to train professionals who wanted to enter the art world - however, this approach evolved towards the idea that the study of the arts was in fact inextricably bound up with history and society.

This drive to position art history as part of the humanities field, to embed high academic standards and to create original research was continued under Anthony Blunt, who was Director of The Courtauld for 27 years. A powerhouse of intellectual activity, from the start The Courtauld also had a technological department for the scientific examination and restoration of works of art, and added a History of Dress programme in 1965. By the time of Blunt's retirement, it had become a centre of international renown - and grown from 45 students in 1938, to 220 students in 1974. From 1958, its growing collections were housed in a gallery above the Warburg Institute.

The timing of the end of the lease of Portman Square and the search for a new building coincided with discussions about the future of Somerset House. The renovation of the North Block of this beautiful historic complex in the heart of London became the first stage of a renovation of the site. It allowed the collections to be united with the Institute and the Gallery to become a major visitor attraction when The Courtauld moved there in 1989.

Since 2002, The Courtauld has been an independent college of the University of London, and continues to work to advance how we see and understand the visual arts. With around 580 students at undergraduate and postgraduate level, it is now entering an ambitious new phase of activity, transforming its home in Somerset House to make its world-class artworks, research and teaching accessible to even more people.

About Courtauld Connects

Courtauld Connects is an ambitious transformation programme that will make The Courtauld's world-class artworks, research, teaching and public education programmes to even more people. The first stage of Courtauld Connects will be completed in November 2021, with the reopening of The Courtauld Gallery and the Learning Centre, and the construction of the West Wing Conservation Studios.

The biggest development since The Courtauld moved to Somerset House, this visionary project - supported by The National Lottery Heritage Fund and donations from generous foundations and supporters - will transform the Gallery and spaces for teaching, research and students. It will create new dynamic spaces for temporary exhibitions; enable the sharing of more works from The Courtauld's collection; make the historic building more physically accessible; and create a new Learning Centre.

The first phase of the transformation project, set to complete in November 2021, will include:

- The spectacular LVMH Great Room - the first art exhibition space in London, that once hosted the Royal Academy of Arts' summer exhibitions - which will be restored to its original proportions, providing a spectacular new home for The Courtauld's unrivalled collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings
- The magnificent Blavatnik Fine Rooms on the Second Floor, showcasing artworks spanning the Early Renaissance through to the 18th century
- A newly constructed Medieval and Early Renaissance Gallery
- A brand-new Bloomsbury Gallery on the top floor, showcasing the work of Bloomsbury Group artists as part of an immersive domestic experience
- The Gilbert and Ildiko Butler Drawings Gallery
- Katja and Nicolai Tangen 20th Century Gallery
- The Denise Coates Exhibition Galleries - a suite of two newly created rooms housing regularly changing exhibits, as well as improved space for the Gallery's acclaimed temporary exhibitions
- An improved Prints & Drawings Study Room enhancing access to this important part of the collection
- A new layout with greatly improved accessibility, which will give visitors the time and space to enjoy the beautiful art around them
- A redesigned visitor reception to enable all visitors access to the Gallery through the new John Browne Entrance Hall
- A new Learning Centre will provide improved facilities for schools, families, young people, community groups and adult learners
- A new shop and a new café
- A new Project Space to showcase work from across the wider Courtauld, including the Conservation Department and the photographic collections
- A new Object Study room to help students, academics and other users get closer to the collection
- A new infrastructure for the care and well-being of the collection.
- The first phase of the ambitious Courtauld Connects project has also included the complete refurbishment of the suite of teaching facilities within The Courtauld's world-leading Department of Conservation, which has been made possible thanks to a significant gift from The Linbury Trust

New information will help visitors with a wide range of knowledge and interests find out more about the artworks on display - building on The Courtauld's expertise as a centre for art history study.



CGI of the LVMH Great Room. Image: Nissen Richards Studio



Blavatnik Fine Rooms. Image: Nissen Richards Studio

The Courtauld



The LVMH Great Room. Photo © Hufton + Crow



Blavatnik Fine Rooms. Photo © Hufton+Crow



Blavatnik Fine Rooms. Photo © Hufton+Crow

The Courtauld

History and key dates

1932

Samuel Courtauld, Viscount Lee of Fareham and Sir Robert Witt form The Courtauld Institute of Art. It is based in Portman Square, Samuel and Elizabeth Courtauld's former home

1934 - 1935

The Scientific Department was commissioned and opened. At its founding, it explicitly focused on technical research of paintings rather than practical conservation treatment

1934 - 1939

Viscount Lee and Samuel Courtauld arranged for the Warburg Institute in Hamburg to be resettled in London, including a number of scholars and its library, following the advent of the Nazi government in Germany

1947 - 1974

Anthony Blunt becomes Director and oversees the development of the The Courtauld during the 1950s and until his retirement in 1974

1958

The art collection moves from Home House to above the Warburg Institute in Bloomsbury establishing The Courtauld Gallery

1974 - 2004

Anthony Blunt is succeeded by Peter Lasko, Michael Kauffmann, Eric Fernie and James Cuno

1985

Department of Wall Painting Conservation created

1989 - 1990

The Courtauld moves to Somerset House

2002

The Courtauld becomes an independent college of the University of London

2004

Professor Deborah Swallow is appointed Director

2007

MA programme in Curating the Art Museum is established

2013

MA programme in Buddhist Art, History and Conservation is established

2018

The Courtauld Gallery closes as part of a major renovation project

2019

Teaching and learning temporarily relocates to King's Cross

2021

First stage of renovation completed with the opening of The Courtauld Gallery, cafe, shop and Learning Centre and the construction of the Linbury Conservation and Technology Studios

Key facts

Teaching and learning

- An independent college of the University of London
- Offering a range of degree programmes:
 - a BA, Graduate Diploma and MA in the History of Art
 - a Postgraduate Diploma in the Conservation of Easel Paintings
 - an MA in Wall Painting Conservation
 - an MA in Buddhist Art: History and Conservation
 - an MA in Curating the Art Museum
 - MPhil and PhD research degrees in all these subjects
 - Around 580 students taking degrees from undergraduate to PhD
- 42% of the 64 students awarded a BA in Art History in 2019/20 received a First
- 56% of the 176 students awarded an MA in Art History in 2019/20 received Distinction and 3% of them received a High Distinction
- With over 35 permanent faculty members, The Courtauld has the largest faculty of art historians and conservators in the UK
- Over 8,000 alumni, spread across 80 countries
- Over 80% of our alumni work in the Creative Industries worldwide; in the UK this is a growing sector that contributes 5.5% to the economy and is worth over £100bn

Our Gallery and collection

- The Courtauld Collection contains over 34,000 works including:
 - 600 paintings
 - Over 550 pieces of sculpture and decorative arts
 - Approximately 7,000 drawings
 - Approximately 27,000 prints
- The collection continues to grow and develop, under the stewardship of the Samuel Courtauld Trust. Thanks to their work, and the support of generous donors and benefactors, almost 80 new works have been added since 2014

Research

- In the 2019/20 academic year, The Courtauld awarded 16 PhDs in topics from Soviet Book Design to The Masculine Image in Qajar Iran
- 30,000 people attended Courtauld Research Forum events in the 2019/20 academic year – either in person or online
- Open Courtauld Hour, our innovative mini series of events, brings art history to new audiences, and has engaged with over 20,000 people since launching in April 2020

Public programmes - broadening our reach

- The Courtauld has produced a wealth of free art history material for schools, colleges, families and community groups in 2019-20 – including: 2 cross-curricular online learning resources focused on Architecture, 5 online learning resources to support Courtauld National partners' schools, and 6 online family art activities
- 79 teachers from 62 non-selective state schools and colleges across the UK took part in 3 Teachers' CPD Events, either in person or remotely in 2019-20
- Over 5,000 young people and almost 300 teachers participated in The Courtauld's Learning Programmes in 2019-20, including schools' workshops and projects, young people's workshops and Summer University, which moved online in response to Covid-19
- Over 700 people took a Short Course at The Courtauld in the 2019/20 academic year, studying either in person or remotely

Libraries

- The Witt Library is the largest of The Courtauld's two main image collections, and consists of photographs, reproductions and cuttings of paintings, drawings and engravings of western art from 1200 to the present day. With 2,152,000 images in over 19,000 boxes, occupying 1.3km of shelving, it is believed to be the largest of its type in the UK and the third largest in the world
- The Conway Library contains over one million images: photographs and cuttings of world architecture, architectural drawings and publications, sculpture (approximately 10,000 sculptors are represented), ivories, seals, metalwork, manuscript illumination, stained glass, wall paintings, panel paintings and textiles
- Both the Witt and the Conway image libraries are undergoing a process of digitisation to make them more accessible to the public
- The Courtauld Book Library is home to a significant collection of some 200,000 books, exhibition catalogues and journals, focussed on art history and related subjects

Courtauld Connects - activity during Gallery closure

- Over 140,000 people visited works through National Partnership exhibitions in Coventry, Preston and Wolverhampton from January 2018 to February 2020
- Overall 1,055,000 people saw Courtauld masterpieces on their world tour: 142,000 people in London, 483,000 in Paris and 430,000 in Tokyo and Nagoya
- The Courtauld's National Partnership programme has worked with 400 children and young people, 10 schools and colleges, and over 20 volunteers across areas of the UK with a link to The Courtauld's industrial heritage, exploring The Courtauld's collection and local history
- Over 1000 volunteers have helped with the digitisation of 1.1m images from the Conway Library, learning new skills and meeting new people, while making the images more accessible to the general public

Highlights of The Courtauld's collection

- The collection cared for by The Courtauld Gallery is owned by the Samuel Courtauld Trust
- World-famous Impressionist masterpieces including Van Gogh's *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*, Manet's last major painting *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, and Renoir's early masterpiece, *La Loge*
- The largest collection of paintings by Cézanne in the UK, including such masterpieces as *The Card Players*
- One of the UK's great drawings collections, including works by Albrecht Dürer, Leonardo da Vinci, Rembrandt, and Goya, and featuring such singular masterpieces as Michelangelo's *Dream of Human Life*
- An outstanding Renaissance collection comprised of important paintings from Italy and northern Europe, including two rare works by Pieter Bruegel the Elder and one of the only major altarpieces by Botticelli to be housed in a UK museum collection
- A world-class collection of paintings by Rubens, which is part of an important holding of 17th century paintings
- A comprehensive collection of works from the 'Golden Age' of watercolour, including a magnificent collection of 30 drawings and watercolours spanning the career of J.M.W. Turner
- A rich collection of modern works, including early 20th century masterpieces such as Amedeo Modigliani's *Female Nude* and Oskar Kokoschka's imposing *Prometheus* triptych
- Paintings by leading artists of the Bloomsbury Group, Vanessa Bell, Duncan Grant and Roger Fry, together with avant-garde decorative arts produced by them at their Omega Workshops
- An important collection of decorative arts, with outstanding Islamic metalwork, Gothic ivories and Renaissance ceramics



Vincent van Gogh, (1853-1890) Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear, 1889,
The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust)

The Courtauld Collection – Gifts and Bequests

The Courtauld Collection is the result of a series of gifts and bequests by some of the leading collectors of the 19th, 20th and 21st centuries, including Samuel Courtauld, Count Antoine Seilern and Sir Robert Witt. This has created a collection of great depth and quality which retains some of the character of its private origins.

- **1932** - Samuel Courtauld made his first major gift of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist masterpieces to The Courtauld, including Paul Cézanne's *The Card Players*. The majority of the rest of the collection would be presented to The Courtauld over the following years
- **1934** - Samuel Courtauld gave Édouard Manet's last major painting, [*A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*](#), to The Courtauld
- **1935** - Following his death in 1934, Roger Fry's executors present the eclectic private collection of this influential art historian, critic and artist. The gift includes paintings by his bohemian friends of the Bloomsbury Group and avant-garde designs by the Omega Workshops, as well as examples of non-western art
- **1947** - [*The Morelli-Nerli Chests*](#) were given to The Courtauld as part of the Lee Bequest after Viscount Lee dies in 1947
- **1948** - 'La Loge', by Pierre-Auguste Renoir, is one of the works given in the Courtauld bequest of 1948. It is one of the most celebrated masterpieces of Samuel Courtauld's collection and one of the most important works of the Impressionist group. Other notable works received in this bequest include Van Gogh's *'Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear'* (1889), Paul Cézanne's *'Still Life with Plaster Cupid'* (c.1894), Camille Pissarro's *'Lordship Lane Station, Dulwich'* (1871), Claude Monet's *'Antibes'* (1888), and Georges Seurat's *'The Bridge at Courbevoie'* (1886-87)
- **1952** - Sir Robert Witt dies, bequeathing his collection of approximately 3,000 Old Master drawings to The Courtauld in addition to his extensive collection of prints. The Witt bequest establishes the collection of prints and drawings
- **1966** - The collection of Thomas Gambier Parry (1816-88) was bequeathed to The Courtauld by his grandson Mark Gambier-Parry. At the heart of Thomas Gambier Parry's collection is a major group of early Italian gold-ground paintings by artists such as Lorenzo Monaco, Bernardo Daddi and Fra Angelico. In addition to early Renaissance paintings, the Gambier-Parry bequest included Gothic ivories, Limoges enamels, sculpture, maiolica, glassware, and a small but highly important group of Islamic metalwork
- **1967** - The Courtauld is presented with the fine collection of English watercolours formed by William Wycliffe Spooner (1882-1967) and his wife, Mercie
- **1978** - One of the greatest single benefactions ever received by a British gallery - the Princes Gate Collection - elevated The Courtauld Gallery to an entirely new level of public importance. The collection includes some 130 paintings and 400 drawings, with a special emphasis on the Renaissance and the 17th Century. It brought many of the greatest individual works into The Courtauld's collection including Michelangelo's *'The Dream'*
- **1982** - Lillian Browse presents 32 works of art to The Courtauld, including eminent works of art by Edgar Degas, Auguste Rodin and Walter Sickert
- **1984** - Ben Nicholson's *Painting 1937* was given to the Gallery as part of the Hunter Bequest
- **2004** - The bequest from the late Dorothy Scharf of 51 British watercolours, including eight by Turner, becomes the most significant single addition to The Courtauld's distinguished collection of works on paper in more than 25 years
- **2008** - Leading architectural photographer Anthony Kersting bequeaths his entire archive of 120,000 black and white photographs to The Conway Library at The Courtauld
- **2020** - The Courtauld receives Paul Gauguin's illustrated manuscript *Avant et après* through the H.M. Government's Acceptance in Lieu Scheme. It will be displayed for the first time in its history as part of the reopening presentation of the collection. Linda Karshan presents the first part of an important collection of 20th century drawings in memory of her husband, Howard Karshan



General Information

The Courtauld Gallery
Somerset House
The Strand
London
WC2R 0RN
www.courtauld.ac.uk
+44 (0) 20 3947 7600
galleryinfo@courtauld.ac.uk

Travel information:

By London Underground

Nearest stations

- Temple (Circle & District lines; 250 metres, 5-minute walk)
- Covent Garden (Piccadilly line; 650m, 8min)
- Charing Cross (Bakerloo & Northern lines; 700m, 10min)
- Embankment (Circle & District lines; 700m, 10min)

By rail

Nearest stations

- Charing Cross (700m, 10min)
- Blackfriars (1km, 13min)
- Waterloo (1km, 13min)

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