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Cultural Heritage

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Front cover: *Elaine*, *c.*1862–5, Emma Sandys (1843–77), oil on panel, 36.9 x 39.1cm, Wightwick Manor, West Midlands (NT 1288985) (see page 66–7)

Opposite (left to right): *Spaceframe* (see page 38) • *The Art of Swimming* (see page 50) • Tristram Hunt (left) and John Orna-Ornstein (see page 14) • Dyrham Park, South Gloucestershire (see page 40)

Contents

Dr Tarnya Cooper
Curatorial and Conservation Director,
National Trust

Welcome

Welcome to the second issue of the National Trust's *Cultural Heritage Magazine* (*CHM*), which showcases the latest curatorial and conservation news, research, and expertise across the National Trust's collections, houses and gardens.

In this issue, alongside scholarly content on conservation and research projects, you'll find insights into the work of our conservation studios and interviews with staff. We also feature highlights of the objects we have lent to international, national and regional museums over the past year, helping to ensure that our collections can be shared as widely as possible in new contexts that enhance scholarship.

This issue also includes articles on Mrs Greville's outstanding and important collection of decorative arts at Polesden Lacey in Surrey, which has recently been re-displayed, a new conservation and presentation project at Dyrham Park in Gloucestshire, and a feature on 20th-century sculpture at Dudmaston in Shropshire. Marking the publication of a new title in our Collections series, *100 Books from the Libraries of the National Trust*, Nicola Thwaite, one of its authors, discusses a personal favourite – a 17th-century swimming manual from the library at Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire.

Elsewhere in this issue, I particularly enjoyed the 'In Conversation' feature, which brought together the Trust's Director of Curation and Experience, John Orna-Ornstein, and the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, Dr Tristram Hunt. Their discussion ranges across the concerns of the cultural heritage sector today, touching upon provenance research and restitution, the culture wars, and the power of heritage to inspire creativity. I loved Tristram's description of National Trust places as 'neurologically cleansing' – it seems to capture something essential about why so many of us continue to visit heritage sites. Recent National Trust audience research supports this, revealing just how many people come to the Trust's houses, gardens and landscapes to experience beauty, or as a moment for social connection with family and friends. We also know that an interest in history is a significant motivation, and 41 per cent of people responding to the DCMS 'Taking Part' survey in 2019 said the reason they visited a heritage site was because they have a general interest in history/heritage.

People come to National Trust places to experience beauty and history, and to feel socially connected

We were delighted with the positive response to the launch issue of *CHM*, published last October. Readers were particularly enthusiastic about the variety of content and the strong core of research-based articles that explore the collections in depth. Please continue to let us know what you would like to hear about – we look forward to hearing from you.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/discover/history/art-collections/cultural-heritage-publishing

Above, clockwise from top left Hidcote Manor Garden, Gloucestershire (see page 68) • *The Honourable Mrs Ronald Greville DBE* (detail) (see page 24) • 575 Wandsworth Road, London (see page 14)

Briefing

News, events and publications

Conservation of a feather frieze at A la Ronde, Devon • Photo: National Trust Images

A la Ronde interiors

The major project to conserve and repair this unique 18th-century property has now begun in earnest, with specialists working to secure the fragile and intricate decorative features. A la Ronde is a 16-sided house designed to catch the natural daylight through its unusual diamond-shaped windows as the sun moves around the building. The creation of Jane and Mary Parminter, two dynamic and well-travelled cousins who commissioned the house following their travels across Europe, it originally sat within a wider estate containing almshouses, gardens, a chapel and orchards.

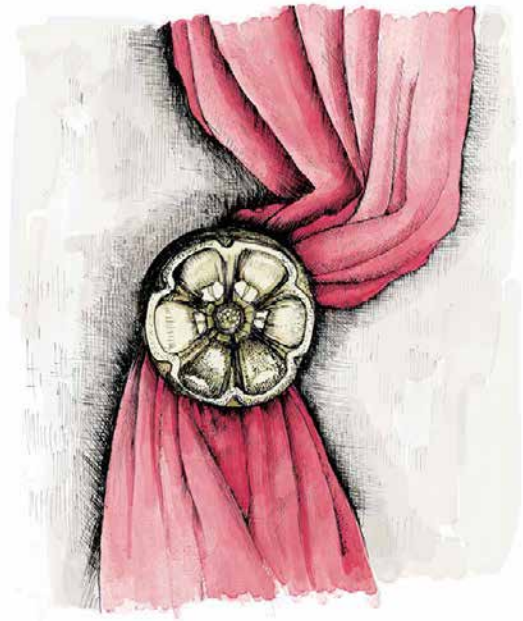
Following work to address issues with the roof and chimneys, visitors can now see the delicate feather friezes in the Drawing Room, which have undergone significant conservation work. The intricate surfaces of the feather friezes had gathered loose dust particles and other matter. They had also attracted the attention of pests that feed on the protein in the feathers themselves, as well as on the glue used to attach them to the painted paper and boards beneath, which were becoming increasingly fragile. This meant that the friezes required cleaning and consolidation to improve the visibility of the original colours and patterns and to prevent future losses. Further work is under way to understand more about the way the friezes were made.

Even more fragile at A la Ronde is the Shell Gallery, the grotto at the apex of the building, which is also now undergoing conservation. The gallery was decorated over 200 years ago with a wide variety of materials – not only hundreds of shells but also bone, moss, feathers, ceramics, wall-paintings, medals, coral, mica and lichen, along with watercolour drawings that were fixed to the walls.

In April and May this year, visitors have been able to see the specialist conservation team in action, while enhanced digital access has made it possible to follow the team's progress online, too. Preparation work has already revealed features not seen since the house was built, such as the numbering of panels beneath each drawing in white chalk, executed in the same distinctive hand.

The project has been made possible thanks to funding from the Wolfson Foundation, the National Lottery Heritage Fund and the National Trust, as well as the generous support of visitors.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/devon/a-la-ronde



Felbrigg Cabinet

Conservation of the Cabinet Room at Felbrigg Hall, Norfolk, has included the cleaning and re-instating of paintings, furniture and carpets, culminating in the commissioning of replica silk damask curtains to match the original set (*c.*1830). A range of specialists was called upon to complete this ambitious project, overseen by Textile Historian Annabel Westman.

Crimson damask was woven by Humphries Weaving and nearly 100 metres of silk gimp trim was hand made by Brian Turner Trimmings to edge the curtains, lined in crimson sateen and made up by specialist Lisa Dawson. Butler & Castell restored the gilt cornice box, while Collier Webb conserved and reproduced the original tie-backs. Finally, the silk pelmet is currently undergoing conservation by textile conservator Melanie Leach, with additional gimp woven by Clare Hedges. The initiative has given the room a renewed sense of place. (Illustration by Natalie Scurll)

John Sales (1933–2022)

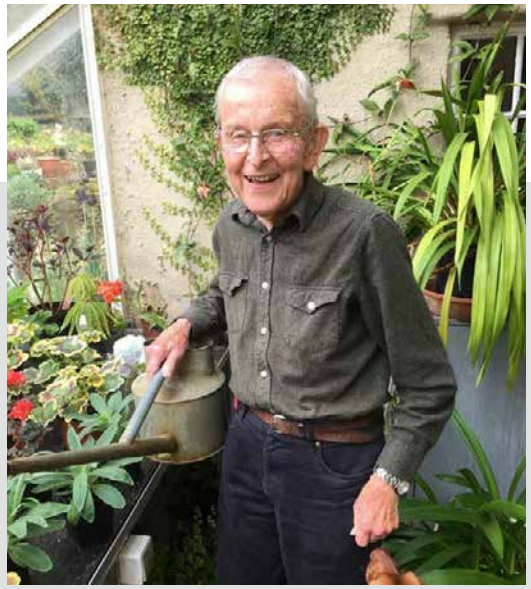
A revered figure in the world of horticulture and the National Trust's Head of Gardens for nearly three decades, John Sales died peacefully in December 2022, aged 89.

To find a glorious monument to John, one only has to walk into any National Trust garden and look around to see the legacy he has left us all.

John passed his National Diploma in Horticulture while a student gardener at Kew, where his interest in historic gardens and garden design was sparked. Later, he was Senior Horticulture Lecturer at Writtle College, before going on to become a Chelsea Flower Show judge and national diploma examiner for the Royal Horticultural Society, an RHS Gardens committee member, Vice-President of the Garden History Society (now the Gardens Trust) and a proud recipient in 1991 of the Victoria Medal of Honour, the highest accolade awarded by the RHS.

John joined the National Trust as a gardens advisor in 1971, becoming Head of Gardens two years later, a role in which he would make a hugely significant contribution to the charity's gardens, parklands and all who looked after them. For John, gardens were continuous processes and gardeners themselves were vital assets whose skills and passion could give great delight.

John inspired hundreds of gardeners through the transformation that many gardens experienced, as they moved



John Sales at home in 2020 • Photo: Lyn Sales

from private ownership to National Trust custodianship. Through his compassionate leadership, he repaired, cared for and renewed countless gardens, reinvigorating some of the UK's most significant landscapes.

His patient dedication and eye for detail has ensured that the UK's historic gardens and parklands are rightly recognised for their contribution to European culture. He embraced conservation professionalism and brought such disciplines as Conservation Plans into the Trust's work, to ensure the long-term care of its gardens.

With his infectious love of people, warmth and twinkling smile, John was brilliant to work with. His unique vision and deep wisdom made him a natural north to the learning compass of so many, and it is hard to imagine no longer being able to call upon his sure ability to point us in the right direction.

Andy Jasper
Head of Gardens and Parklands, National Trust

Conservation Focus

The Textile Conservation Studio on the Blickling Estate in Norfolk has just drawn up its 30th annual report, marking a significant milestone in the studio's evolution. The team has been as busy as ever: Textile Conservator Aimee Grice-Venour has completed the first stage of treating the Ham House sleeping chairs, carefully reactivating the 1970s adhesive treatment and supporting the seat upholstery.

Hardwick's last Gideon tapestry is nearing the end of its three-year treatment with Textile Conservators Yoko Hanegreefs and Elaine Owers managing the team, who are stitching the last few sections. The next step is the mammoth task of re-joining and relining the tapestry, ready for the rehang this summer when Hardwick will be celebrating the completion of this 20-year project.

Work to the curtains from the State Bed at Blickling Hall has just been completed by Textile Conservator Nadine Wilson and Senior Textile Conservator Claire Golbourn. The curtains have now been fitted with new British-woven silk linings, which were made in Suffolk. As well as continuing work on costume from Smallhythe Place and the State Bed from Erddig, the team has been on site across the country at Hardwick, Felbrigg, Petworth, Scotney Castle and Sizergh, undertaking everything from rehanging and surveying tapestries to condition-checking collections and improving presentation.

Conservators weigh the 81kg frame of a Joshua Reynolds painting • Photo: National Trust/Sarah Maisey

Work also continues apace at the Royal Oak Foundation Conservation Studio at Knole, Kent (above). The studio is helping to mark the 300th anniversary of the birth of Sir Joshua Reynolds in July this year. Senior Paintings Conservator Sarah Maisey and Senior Frames Conservator Gerry Alabone will lead work on two National Trust pieces, Saltram's *The Honourable Theresa Parker* and Knole's *Sir John Frederick Sackville 3rd Duke of Dorset* (*c.*1775). This offers an important moment to appreciate these major paintings and their frames side by side for the first time.

Paintings Conservator Anna Vesaluoma has now completed transformative cleaning work to Dyrham Park's delightful *Turkey, Geese, a Shelduck, and Other Fowl* (1656–95) by Melchior de Hondecoeter.

Objects Conservator Felicity Bolton has been helping reinstate the glorious porcelain in Lacock Abbey's Stone Gallery, previously off display due to broken elements, losses, dirt and failing old restorations. Finally, Senior Furniture Conservator Nicola Shreeve has just finished work on a sedan chair with bearers at Hughenden, made locally for Benjamin Disraeli.

Sutton Hoo ship brought to life

Sutton Hoo is one of the National Trust's star properties and the site of a world-famous discovery. In 1939 a 27m-long clinker-built ship was found there, laid in the ground with a central burial chamber furnished with precious artefacts. Most of these artefacts have been reconstructed and are now in the British Museum, but the ship itself, perhaps the most striking artefact of all, has never been rebuilt – until now.

The Sutton Hoo Ship's Company, a charitable organisation working from a community space on the Woodbridge waterfront, is rebuilding the ship from the keel up, led by Master Shipwright Tim Kirk and Project Manager Jacq Barnard, and with the help of historians, shipwrights and volunteers. Starting from the rows of iron rivets and the impression of the hull in the sand, the company has modelled the shape of the ship from stem to stern.

Timber has been provided by Suffolk landowners and by the National Trust's Blickling Hall, Norfolk. The Ship's Company is using its waste wood to help local projects reinstate pathways and to make wood-turned souvenirs. It is also planting woodland to replace the trees used in the build.

Replica Anglo-Saxon tools have been made and the volunteer crew has learned to wield them. The five sections of the keel have been joined together and the first planks secured in place. This has provided precious insights into how the vessel – the largest so far known from the 7th century – was originally constructed.

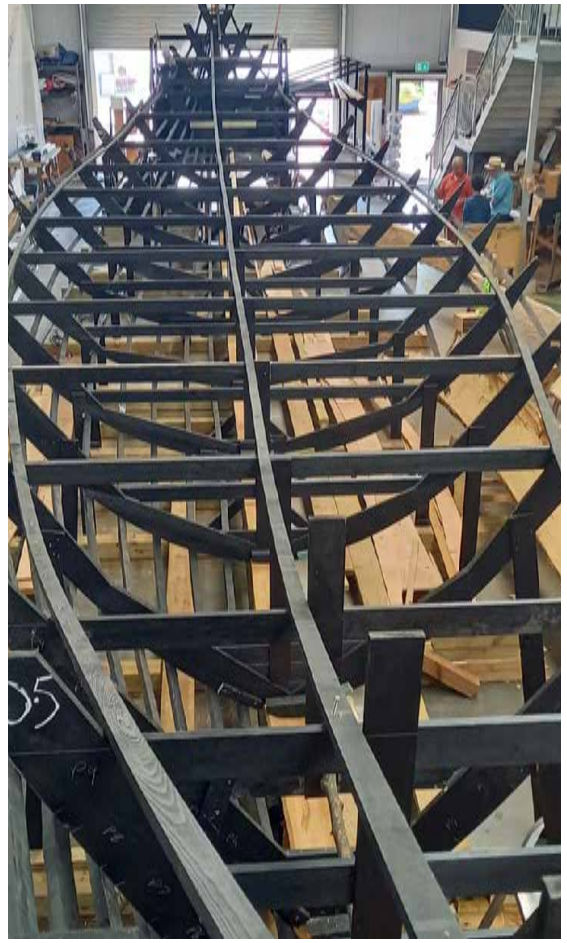
Riveted central backbone section where the keel (centre-right) attaches to the 'underloute', or keel extension • All photos © Sutton Hoo Ship's Company

Once the ship has been launched, an intrepid crew will be trained to row with its 5m-long oars. It will then set off along the river routes that led into East Anglia's neighbouring kingdoms of Wessex, Mercia and Northumbria. It is hoped that these voyages will attract more volunteers and enthusiasts to campaign for the care these rivers demand and the recreation they offer. Following trials of the ship under sail, new adventures may take her along Europe's river routes and into the Mediterranean, where many of the Sutton Hoo finds originate.

The ship will fly the flag for early English sea-farers, for archaeology – and, of course, for the National Trust, Sutton Hoo's custodian.

Martin Carver
Trustee of the Ship's Company and Chair of its advisory group, the Ship's Company WITAN

https://saxonship.org



The black-painted temporary mould over the oak backbone, to which the planking is attached; although the Anglo-Saxons would not have used this method, the mould ensures that the build accurately reproduces the original of *c.*AD624

Mount Stewart in bloom

Spring bulbs were a particular highlight in the formal gardens at Mount Stewart, County Down, during the 1940s. During April and May, Edith, Lady Londonderry made numerous references to 'Tulip Time' in her garden diaries.

To recapture this spectacle, the garden team mass-planted 30,000 new bulbs for spring 2023. In particular, 13,000 tulips have been planted across the Mairi, Shamrock and West Terrace beds to create the best tulip display seen at Mount Stewart for more than 10 years. These have been colour-themed to each area, with the Mairi Garden in blue and white (blue Dutch iris alongside white tulips), the Shamrock Garden in red, and the West Terrace beds in yellow and orange. Depending on the season, these should be in flower from around late April.

New plantings have also gone into Lily Wood, including 600 *Cardiocrinum giganteum* – white, highly scented Himalayan lilies growing up to 3m tall. These were one of Lady Londonderry's favourite flowers and Head Gardener Mike Buffin estimates that as many as 10,000 *Cardiocrinum* lilies once flowered in the wood.

Around 1,000 other highly scented lilies have also been added to the wood for late summer displays from July to September. Together, these will create one of the largest lily displays in the UK.

Spring at Mount Stewart, County Down • Photo: National Trust Images/ Jonathan Hession

Research Round-up

Through the Trust's partnership with the University of Oxford, two projects are under way. 'Reading the Room' starts to explore innovative methods to access and interpret books in historic libraries. The Trust cares for more than 290,000 books, and this initial project will consider opportunities offered by the Trust to encounter rare books in non-institutional spaces, to explore libraries and their collections in their historic house context.

In the second University of Oxford project, Dr Sean Ketteringham is seconded to the Trust for a one-year post-doctoral fellowship, examining the relationship between domestic spaces and art collections produced in Britain between 1918 and 1968. The project builds on Dr Ketteringham's PhD exploring the Modernist Home and 2 Willow Road.

The Trust and the Research Centre for Museums and Galleries at the University of Leicester recently launched 'Everywhere and Nowhere', a collaboration to share, for the first time, stories of disability from the sites and collections in our care. The project aims to access richer and fuller untold histories of disability from across Trust sites and collections, and has produced a film which can be viewed online: Everywhere and Nowhere.

Partnering with Historic Royal Palaces, the University of York and Newcastle University, the Trust is participating in a new project entitled 'Henry VIII on Tour: Landscapes, Communities and Performance'. The project studies the itinerary and places Henry VIII visited while 'on progress', exploring how they were transformed by the experience of royal visits and how the communities caught up in the experience were affected. The Vyne, Knole, Greys Court and Petworth will participate in the project.

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/features/research-at-the-national-trust

Henry VIII, Studio of Hans Holbein the Younger, *c.*1543–7, oil on panel, 237.5 x 120.7cm, Petworth House, West Sussex (NT 486186) • Photo: National Trust Images/ Derrick E. Witty

In Conversation

Dr Tristram Hunt
Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum

John Orna-Ornstein
Director of Curation and Experience, National Trust

Dr Tristram Hunt is the Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum, where he has championed design education, encouraged debate around the history of the museum's global collections and overseen the transition to a multi-site museum. A former Labour MP, he is the author of several books including *The Radical Potter: Josiah Wedgwood and the Transformation of Britain* (2021).

John Orna-Ornstein is the National Trust's Director of Curation and Experience, leading the Trust's work in caring for its houses, gardens and collections, as well as its approach to the visitor experience and programming. He has worked in the cultural sector for 20 years and was formerly Director of Museums for Arts Council England.

Continuing *CHM*'s series of dialogues between senior National Trust staff and their professional counterparts, John Orna-Ornstein talks to Tristram Hunt about the complementary roles of the National Trust and the V&A, the challenges of the culture wars and the power of historic design to inspire modern creativity.

They met at 575 Wandsworth Road (NT), London, the former home of Kenyan-born poet, author and civil servant Khadambi Asalache (1935–2006), who decorated it throughout with elaborate fretwork, wall paintings and with his collection of English lustreware ceramics.

JO Tristram, this is your first visit to this wonderful house. As the director of the world's greatest design museum, what do you think of this tiny little gem of a place in terms of creativity and design?

TH I think it's a total treasure and I'm so glad that the National Trust saved it for the nation. It's an incredible combination of Moorish design and African heritage expressed in Khadambi Asalache's own unique style and through the quality of his self-taught carving. From a V&A perspective, it recalls Owen Jones's *The Grammar of Ornament* but also William

Fig. 1 Tristram Hunt (left) and John Orna-Ornstein at 575 Wandsworth Road, Lambeth, London • Photo: National Trust Images/Leah Band

Morris's creed that you should have nothing in your house that is not beautiful. And it's a very English story, too, when you think about the ceramics and some of the other artefacts. You feel you are 'in the world' but you also feel that you are at number 575 Wandsworth Road.

JO Does it work for you, as a fusion of English lustreware and astonishing fretwork?

TH It does work. Because I work in a museum I'd probably up-light it more to bring out some of the drama of the work – the light is fading here on a February day – but, again, what's so special is that this is a home.

It reminds me of some of those beautiful 18th-century snuffboxes we have at the V&A from the court of Frederick of Prussia. There's something so precious and so beautiful and wondrous about it, but in wood. And I also think, weirdly, of *The Diary of a Nobody*, and of the importance of creating something very beautiful in that English way of celebrating the home and its solidity.

The National Trust must be offered homes all the time, so what was the thinking here, what made you say 'OK, we'll take this one'?

JO I think the Trust has rarely regretted saying yes but we've often regretted saying no in the subsequent decades. Not surprisingly, we're rarely offered great houses and estates nowadays – but we are sometimes offered small houses. During the '90s and early 2000s we acquired a number of small properties, and the madness and the wonder of this house,

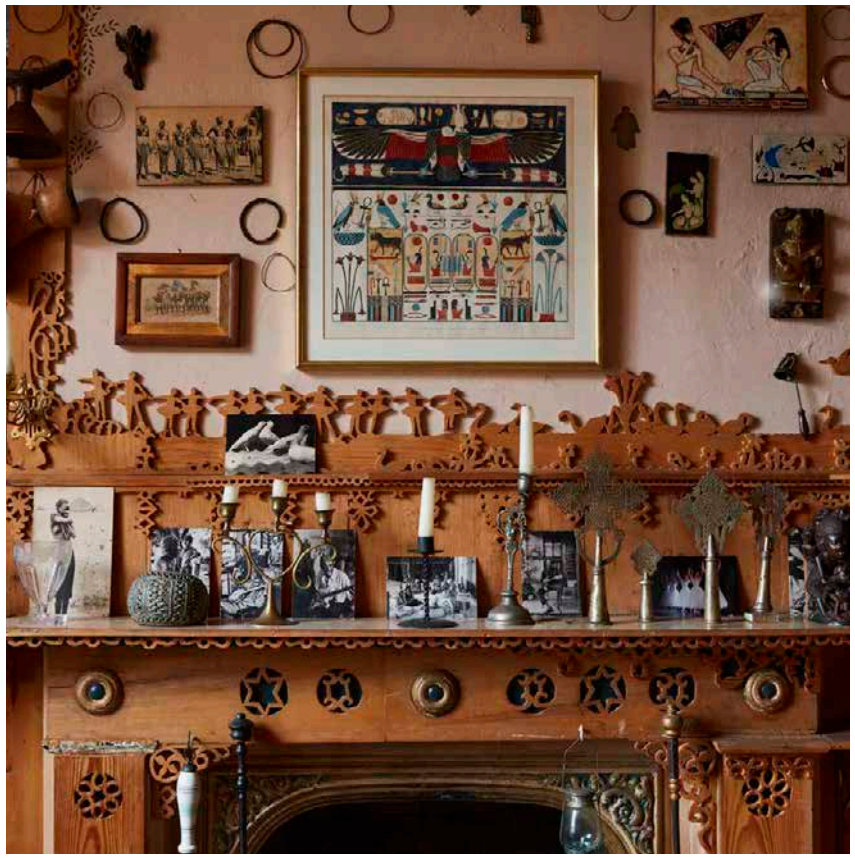


Fig. 2 An intricately carved mantelpiece at 575 Wandsworth Road • Photo: National Trust Images/Leah Band

with its international dimension, yet very much embedded in London, entranced us.

TH It's a different story to the more familiar National Trust narratives, isn't it? It's a very personal design story that's different to the social history of the back-to-backs in Birmingham or the Liverpool history of the Beatles' homes. You have those properties that often tell the bigger urban story or the global story of design. Here, I just love the fact that Asalache was a civil servant at the Treasury, so he was probably dealing with these horrific spreadsheets of doom by day, then catching the 87 bus and coming back to this self-created Moorish wonderland.

JO The amazing thing now, of course, is that visitors get to enjoy that. So this does feel entirely different to your stereotypical National Trust house. I was thinking on the way here about what the strongest contrast is and it's probably somewhere like Kedleston – a house that was built to show off, that's always had a sort of tourist function, with that massively impressive Marble Hall.

This is somewhere that's so much more intimate and comfortable. They're both equally wonderful, but that for me is one of the joys of the National Trust – we do hold these precious small gems of places and, at the same time, the great country houses.

TH It makes you wonder, too, what's happening in the other basements along this road, who else is busy, as we speak, polishing and carving and creating?

In a sense the Trust has to work harder here, where the visitor numbers have to be so carefully controlled, than at some of the larger properties in your portfolio – the Hardwicks and the Kedlestons – for example bringing schoolchildren in and getting them to think about the everyday nature of designing. You've got a great canvas here to explore that.

JO It was always thought that the visitor numbers would have to be tiny but there could be a much bigger impact in terms of thinking about creativity. As she was kindly showing us around the house earlier, Laura Hussey [House & Gardens Manager at 575 Wandsworth Road] quoted the phrase 'inch-wide and mile-deep' to describe engagement here.

That's why I thought of this house when we were looking for a London venue for our meeting today – it's so creative and it's got the different stories, the international and the local, but also because the thing that excites me about this place is not just what it was but the way it's used now. Laura and the team run an astonishing learning programme, they work with schools, they work with higher education, they work with partially sighted people, they work with care homes, and even, digitally, with people who can't come here in person.

That idea of creativity in the past inspiring creativity in the present – that's what really excites me. That's what I would love all National Trust places to be doing.

TH Something I think the National Trust is very successfully pursuing, is telling really interesting global stories through its properties – telling here, for example, a colonial and post-colonial story of a Kenyan-born writer, drawing on multiple global design traditions in one of the most multicultural parts of the UK.

When we think back to Octavia Hill, one of the co-founders of the National Trust, her initial focus was on housing and the importance of aesthetics and design in housing. For me, institutions like ours always work best when they think about their founding premise and the people who brought them about, and then update them.

JO There's an interesting echo of that here because this small house was originally subdivided and there were three families, 13 people, living in it. And out of that overcrowded house came this wonderful creation, which is a lovely echo of Octavia Hill's ideas.

TH In the context of that return to founding principles, one of the things we're currently doing at the V&A is focussing on the importance of teaching art and design – the V&A began as the hub of a design school in the 1830s and 1840s. I think we have a real crisis of creativity in the state education system at the moment, so it's vital that we use all of our skills and assets to inspire, to broaden horizons.

What's so wonderful here at Wandsworth Road is that this wonderful work of design was created by someone who lived just down the road, it reminds us – this is possible. I think that's part of the education function of an organisation like the National Trust. There's a potential to provide not just broader historical education but also, through the incredible collections that you're so privileged to look after, to provide design and art education too.

JO Absolutely, and our founders established the National Trust because of the deficit, then, of nature and beauty – in the way that there is today, as you were just saying. So I think our roles are very much aligned.

TH As we look out of the window here onto some challenging post-war planning, there is that design deficit, that beauty deficit. But also what's so wondrous here is the absence of the digital – you have to look, to really *look*. You have to stop and absorb, and the totality of it is kind of neurologically cleansing.

JO I think our institutions have a huge role to play in that sense – I really value the work we do digitally, and I love the work the V&A does in the digital space. But I particularly value providing the opportunity to be present in a space, whether it's about the birdsong and the wind in the trees, or whether it's being in a place like this.

It's lovely that we're able to come into this intimate space and sit around the table and have a conversation.

TH And in a sense that builds on what the National Trust has been doing ever since the days of Erddig [restored in the 1970s and presented to show the lives of both staff and historic family], providing that sense of what a lived home is, that it's not just a show home.

JO Thinking about the V&A, it was essentially established for a public audience, while National Trust properties weren't. How does that change our thinking, when private places suddenly become public spaces?

TH I think one of the wonders of the National Trust is that you do want to go into people's homes. You do want that sensibility, and there's also the joyous familiarity of it, that you can go and see 'the Great Hall' or 'the Long Staircase'.

In a museum we can't move everything around all the time but we can change the conversations between the objects and the people. It was a great privilege to work with the National Trust on the *Beatrix Potter: Drawn to Nature* exhibition [February 2022–January 2023], for example. We were able to bring together collections from the National Trust and the V&A and then present a really interesting display of Beatrix Potter as an urban figure, as a rural figure, as a teacher, as a businesswoman, as a farmer – all of those components within the museum.

But then we're consciously a public space. In some National Trust houses you also have

Fig. 3 *Beatrix Potter: Drawn to Nature*, the V&A's interactive exhibition, realised through a major partnership with the National Trust • Photo: Victoria and Albert Museum, London

that sense of there being a place for retinues and hangers-on, whereas the domestic is a very different aesthetic.

It's really important to make sure that we protect and champion all of these different notions of heritage – from Goldfinger and modernism to straight-up-and-down Victorianism. They're all part of the accretion of our history, which should be protected even if they're not the great stately homes.

JO What do you think it means for some of the great stately homes that they are now owned not by the family but by the nation? Do you think there are ways that they could better reflect the whole nation? Could we think differently about commissioning or collecting at some of our properties?

TH Well, you can and you can't, because people do want to know about the history of the Devonshires or the Stanhopes. They respond to that sense of the connection of the family to the place because it's so much a part of social and local and regional history.

At the same time – and I think this is what's so interesting about what's going on at Kedleston – is that you can tell fascinating global stories that connect to diaspora communities in a way that can be very surprising. Through Kedleston you can tell a story of Derbyshire, and you can tell a story of India and South Asia, and you can tell a story of Egypt and the Middle East, all through one space that connects – I imagine – to diasporic South Asian communities in nearby Leicester and Derby but also to Middle-Eastern communities.

Unpicking those global stories is so important for a hyper-mobile multi-cultural

society that doesn't think of these properties as simply relics of the past because they're intimately connected to the story of why some of those diasporic communities are in the UK.

JO And that's why we're so keen not to replace in any way, but to broaden the histories of the places we look after. As you say, Kedleston is a perfect example of that.

We've also been running a really interesting project with the University of Leicester in recent months looking at the histories of disabled people in National Trust houses. What was so extraordinary about it was that we uncovered the histories of about 80 disabled people, 75 of whom had never been explored before in any

Fig. 4 Tristram and John at Asalache's kitchen table • Photo: National Trust Images/Leah Band

way. So just to supplement our understanding of those places and the people connected with them was a lovely thing – and largely uncontroversial.

TH I think the way one opens up that interpretation, so that people feel a sense of connection to these objects and places is important. Where we have to be careful is how we use language: we codify people from previous centuries in ways that make sense to us but that, within the context of their own time, might not have made sense to them. How we classify people today, relative to the past, is such a complex and sensitive issue.

We're currently dealing with this at the V&A in relation to the terminology we use to talk about our collections. Some people see it as rewriting the past, others see it as providing a contemporary account of how people would have seen themselves in these settings. We'll never get the balance exactly right but being alert to the power of those words is important.

JO In the changes we're currently making to our collections records we're recording everything we do, we're not replacing what was there before, we're not passing judgement.

And, actually, that leads us on to one of the more difficult questions I wanted to ask you. The last few years have been a challenging time for museums and heritage organisations in the context of the culture wars. Things feel a little bit quieter and calmer now – how do you see the current situation?

TH I think there's less political heat on it at the moment, but it's a long-term situation.

I know the National Trust has been in the thick of a lot of this, but I'm quite sanguine about it – people who are engaged, sometimes agitated, connected, debating the past through museum collections or National Trust properties, is all to the good. The more people are involved in that conversation the better.

Where it goes off the rails is when hard-working staff start getting abuse, or any notion that the National Trust isn't doing exactly what it was set up to do – which is to interpret these spaces and think about heritage.

JO And of course we want to be part of those conversations. In fact, the challenge that we've had at the National Trust and elsewhere in the sector has made us think much harder about history and our role, and we've actually become more ambitious.

We became an Independent Research Organisation (IRO) about three years ago but it's only in the last year that we've had a really comprehensive approach and strategy to our research work around history.

TH I think the investment you've put into curators and research is yielding these really interesting accounts of the past that work their way through the system.

To my mind, as a historian, the notion that these great houses were not involved in the 18th-century economies of the transatlantic slave trade is like madness. We've known this for decades – Edward Said was analysing Jane Austen's *Mansfield Park* 30 years ago, exploring where the money came from. We need to be honest about that, and actually what we're seeing at the V&A is that while lots of people are interested in design history, more and more people are also interested in provenance, in where objects came from, in where the money to pay for them came from, in where people came from. And to connect to new audiences and retain them, we have to meet them where they're interested.

I think the work around Churchill and Chartwell is really illuminating in this context. Churchill's life is the story of Empire in different

Fig. 5 Hinemihi, the Māori meeting house at Clandon Park, Surrey • Photo: National Trust Images/Ian Shaw

manifestations, and he saw himself as this world-historic figure within the cadences of British imperialism. You can't appreciate Chartwell without having a grasp of that.

JO While we're in the territory of challenging questions, I also wanted to talk about restitution. Is that something that feels like a big challenge to the V&A at the moment or is that conversation an opportunity?

TH It is an opportunity. The debate within the UK often suggests nothing is happening here compared to France and Germany. In fact, whether it's the University of Aberdeen or the Horniman Museum, there are lots of restitution conversations going on.

There are particular legal obstacles to any of the actions taking place at the British Museum or the V&A because we're restricted by law, but that doesn't mean, whether it's our Ethiopian collections or our Asante [Ashanti] Ghana collections, that we can't be really transparent about their colonial origins, whether they were loot and how they were acquired.

And, again, the public want to know all that. But we also need to make the case for museums – you've got this incredible array of objects, this conversation between different works of art and design from different periods and countries, and that's their strength. If we all just had national collections it would be a poor visitor experience, a poor learning opportunity. And with the diaspora communities we have

now, it's part of their histories and their education to think about these objects and where they are. So it's a complex conversation but it's exciting because we're unearthing the history more and more.

Do you have claims that you're looking into?

JO We do, on the Māori meeting-house carvings at Clandon Park in Surrey – Hinemihi. Our trustees have agreed not a simple return but an exchange of carvings. It's a lovely example of how a conversation like that can be mutually beneficial.

In 2017 we received a request to return Hinemihi and after much consideration and dependent on all the processes we need to go through (the carvings form part of a listed building), we have agreed the exchange. We'll be given new carvings made by the direct descendants of the people who produced the originals and the historic carvings will go back and be looked after in New Zealand, so it feels really beneficial on both sides.

TH It's not zero-sum is it? Objects that have been the subject of dispute can sometimes become this great bridge for understanding and dialogue.

And speaking in more general terms, I think the board or the trustees or the director of a museum or heritage organisation should be able to clearly enunciate why they think an object should stay, as well as being really clear about its history. There's probably been a bit too much obfuscation in the past and, frankly, not enough historical research on the provenance of objects, and that has to shift.

JO That's our determination at the moment, to better understand our collections so that as there are global conversations about their meaning and where they should be, we are in a good position to have those conversations.

TH Like us, you're an IRO, so you've got to be a scholarly organisation and that's about understanding the history and the provenance properly. And it's nothing we should be afraid of. We're learning more. This is what we're about. This is where we should be.

In terms of our broader research work we're also really excited at the V&A to be working with you – we've got a British Academy Innovation Fellowship working on the research around country houses, and for the V&A we're coming up to the 50th anniversary of the exhibition on the destruction of the country house that Roy Strong commissioned in 1974, so it's an interesting moment to reflect on that.

JO We also have a conference that we're programming together next May, on the country house – on its rebirth and its role today. It would be wonderful if something about creativity came out of that. The conference and research project will be a fantastic thing, but I wonder – as we sit here surrounded by the fruits of Asalache's self-taught craftsmanship – whether there's also something around the roles of the V&A and the National Trust and everyday creativity, which could extend beyond the conference and beyond the academic world, that is more about your core purpose of bringing creativity into everybody's lives.

TH Definitely. One of our recent projects has focussed on how we work with schools and share our collections to teach design and technology. Having sessions in museums or in class is one thing but having the sessions in a domestic or stately interior shows the multiplicity of design, from the railings or the front door to something like the incredible Lutyens-designed kitchens at Castle Drogo.

There are these beautiful spaces within so many National Trust properties that speak to that, so I think that would be really exciting.

Treasured Connections, Treasured Possessions

The formation of Margaret Greville's collection

Richard Ashbourne
Assistant Curator,
London and South East

James Rothwell
National Curator,
Decorative Arts

Alice Strickland
Cultural Heritage Curator

'[She filled] the great and beautiful house she created … with paintings by Lely, Raeburn, Reynolds, Lawrence and Cuyp and furniture, porcelain and tapestry, every item of which is a treasure.'

Stephen Fortescue, *People and Places*, 1978

Margaret Greville (1863–1942) (Fig. 1) was the fabulously wealthy heiress to the brewery fortune of her father, William McEwan, and a member of the aristocracy through her marriage to the son and heir of Lord Greville, of an old political dynasty. She had both money and position – a powerful combination in Edwardian Britain – as well as being a successful businesswoman in her own right and a significant collector. She was also one of the most important political and society hostesses of the first half of the 20th century, regularly entertaining princes, grand dukes, prime ministers and ambassadors at Polesden Lacey, Surrey, and at 16 Charles Street, London. At both residences she worked with two interior decorators, Mèwes and Davis, and White, Allom & Company (1907–9 and 1913–14 respectively), to create lavish interiors for the display of her collection (Fig. 2).

According to the *Sunday Referee* newspaper, 'The beautiful house in Charles-street, where Mrs. Greville lives, is a perfect setting and her natural environment, and the room where we sat [was furnished] with … beautiful tapestry chairs, old portraits.'[1] Margaret

Fig. 1 *The Honourable Mrs Ronald Greville DBE*, 1891, by Charles-Émile-Auguste Duran (1837–1917), oil on canvas, 206 x 99cm, Polesden Lacey (NT 1246442) • Photo: National Trust Images/ John Hammond

Greville's acquisitions built upon the strengths of her father's collection. Her art-historical knowledge must have developed during visits to collections such as Hertford House (now the Wallace Collection), where she signed the visitors' book alongside her father on 11 July 1894, just three years before Lady Wallace bequeathed it to the nation.[2]

Once Margaret Greville came into her inheritance in 1913, she complemented her father's collection with Italian medieval and Renaissance religious works and European and British portraits. She took advice from, among others, Tancred Borenius, the first professor of art history at University College London. Following Mrs Greville's death, he told James Lees-Milne that 'some of the pictures were good, the china was first-rate, and the whole collection a most interesting one'.[3] Towards the end of Mrs Greville's life she recorded the paintings she and her father had collected in a small green leather-bound notebook, proudly embossed in gold with the words 'My Pictures'.

In the archives of the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, a recently discovered letter from Margaret Greville illustrates her joy at visiting a fellow collector's house. The letter is a rare glimpse into Mrs Greville's own thoughts as, at her own request, all of her personal correspondence was destroyed following her death.

How can I tell you how much real pleasure you gave me today, as I try to write the remembrance of the beauties & y[our] perfect home, are so fixed in my mind, my wretched pen is pulverised. I have an awful feeling I intruded, & as I realize how all the world must love to pass that little palace which conceals such an arcadia I truly realize how privileged I was. I did so revel in everything, & I carry away with me such a delicious remembrance … & I so hope some-day years hence to return to Boston just to have the pleasure of seeing you seated in y[our] beautiful home – I can't show you anything I fear in England, but I can offer you a real hearty welcome – I had a perfect day today …[4]

There is no record of Mrs Greville hosting the proposed visit by Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840–1924), a fellow visitor to Hertford House who created one of the great private art collections in America. Gardner left her museum, which opened in 1903, 'for the education and enjoyment of the public forever'. Margaret Greville would have viewed works by Botticelli, Titian, Vermeer and Rembrandt. In the same philanthropic vein, she bequeathed Polesden Lacey to the National Trust 'for the largest number of people to have enjoyment thereof', anticipating that her collections would be combined 'to form a Picture and Art Gallery in a suitable part or parts of the house'.

> Her dining and tea tables had to be equipped suitably magnificently

Mrs Greville's collections are strong in many areas, including Dutch Old Masters, early French and Italian pictures, British portraits and portrait miniatures, Italian maiolica, Chinese and Japanese porcelain and Meissen. To give a sense of the richness of the collections at Polesden Lacey, this article concentrates on just two aspects – the silver and the *objets d'art*, including pieces by Fabergé. Both have recently been subject to extensive new research.

Silver

With royalty, ambassadors, government ministers and the cream of society at her dining and tea tables, Margaret Greville had to equip them suitably magnificently, and this meant that large quantities of silver were required for both Polesden Lacey and 16 Charles Street. Much of the practical dining silver – cutlery, sauce boats, salt cellars, candelabra and such like – was modern, albeit in traditional styles, but there was also a need for display pieces. In particular, the centre of the table had to be decorated, and it was traditional in aristocratic circles for this to be achieved through a mixture of elaborate floral arrangements and impressive pieces of antique silver (Fig. 3). For the purpose, Mrs Greville amassed a significant quantity of late Stuart silver, highly sought after at the time and much of it made even more so by its chinoiserie decoration.

Fig. 2 Interior detail of the Gold Saloon, Polesden Lacey • Photo: National Trust/Andreas von Einsiedel

Fig. 3 The dining table at Polesden Lacey, adorned with some of Mrs Greville's silver • Photo: National Trust Images/Andreas von Einsiedel

Fig. 4 Footed salver, 1683/4, possibly by Thomas Smith, London, sterling silver, 38.5cm (diameter) (NT 1246855) • Photo: National Trust Images/David Brunetti

Fig. 5 Covered sugar box, 1763/4, by Samuel Taylor, London, sterling silver, 16.5 x 10cm (NT 1246849) • Photo: National Trust Images/David Brunetti

to its base and rim, which bears the mark of the brilliant Huguenot goldsmith David Willaume I (1658–1741).

The tea table at Polesden Lacey was renowned – Beverley Nichols recording that it was 'the grandest, most formidable, most glittering, and altogether the most impressive'.[5] Tea was served either in the glamorous, gilded surroundings of the Saloon or in the more intimate adjoining Tea Room, and Mrs Greville had all the necessary accoutrements in silver, including teapots, kettles, teaspoons galore, salvers, sugar basins and canisters for the tea itself. She favoured pieces of the Georgian era, partly out of necessity as tea silver did not fully develop until the 18th century. Sadly, the elegant kettle of 1810/11 with a fluted spout was among a substantial amount of tea silver sold by the National Trust following Mrs Greville's death but three teapots survive,

Symmetrical table arrangements required multiples and so there are at Polesden Lacey today ten two-handled cups or porringers, five bellied mugs, six casters, eight tankards and five footed salvers. The choice of tankards for table decoration was an unusual one, possibly unique, and must have been prompted by Mrs Greville's overt pride in McEwan's Brewery as the source of her wealth. Of particular note among these pieces is a salver (NT 1246855) of 1683/4 (Fig. 4), which is possibly by Thomas Smith (active from 1680) and has exceptional, contemporary chased chinoiserie decoration on its broad surface, and a coolly sophisticated tankard (NT 1246835) with robust gadrooning

Fabergé creations were harnessed as gifts by the Edwardian elite

including a fine example of 1729/30 by John Fossey (NT 1246852). There is also a pretty, matched set of covered sugar box (Fig. 5) and tea canisters by Samuel Taylor of 1763/4 and 1770/1 (NT 1246849) in the rococo style with profuse chased floral decoration. Cakes and scones might have been served from the trio of elaborate mid-18th-century baskets originally intended for bread during dinner. That of 1750/1 by Phillips Garden (NT 1246847), with its shell shape, pierced decoration, dolphin feet and mermaid scroll handle, follows a design first produced by Paul de Lamerie, whose early biographer P.A.S. Phillips was prompted to remark that 'nothing more successful as table ornaments ever emanated from the goldsmith's [i.e. Lamerie's] workshop'.[6]

Mrs Greville's collecting strategy was evidently highly successful as it even attracted comment in the press, *The Daily Telegraph* reporting in 1930 on the dining room at the Charles Street house: 'Dark green brocade and some magnificent oil paintings, mostly of landscapes, decorate this very beautiful room. Silver candlesticks in pairs, and between these silver tankards, cups, goblets and bowls, were placed on the tables – Mrs Greville is very proud of her rare silver.'[7]

Objets d'art

> *Except in rare cases I never remember the Edwardian ladies buying anything for themselves; they received their Fabergé objects as gifts from men, and these gifts were for the psychological moment.*[8]

Fabergé creations were harnessed as gifts by the Edwardian elite, as Henry Bainbridge, Fabergé's London agent, notes here. Mrs Greville made purchases from this branch of the Russian Imperial jewellers at least 31 times, including a portrait of King Edward VII's terrier,

Caesar, which she gave to Queen Alexandra a few months after the king's death.[9] Caesar sits by the king in the photograph of Mrs Greville's party at Polesden Lacey on 5–6 June 1909 (Fig. 9). Such a personal gift indicates her position as a genuine friend of royalty and favoured hostess, but it also suggests how gifts could be deployed to assert social status.

Margaret Greville's own Fabergé collection includes an egg encrusted with a clasp of diamond icicles (Fig. 6). It retains its case, the lid satin of which is stamped 'Petrograd', enabling it to be dated to *c.*1914, when St Petersburg was first known by that name. The city's earlier name is stamped in the case of Mrs Greville's Fabergé gum pot (Fig. 7), the provenance of which has been traced using the London branch's sales ledgers. It was bought by Grand Duke Michael Mikhailovich of Russia (1861–1929) for £7 15s on 28 November 1908 (ledger number 15016).[10] The Grand Duke, a grandson of Tsar Nicholas I who was exiled because of his unauthorised marriage to Sophia, Countess de Torby, may have given it to Mrs Greville when he stayed at Polesden Lacey on 26–8 June 1909, a few weeks after the king. Mrs Greville possessed more than one signed photograph of him. His daughter Anastasia also visited Polesden Lacey. While it is possible that Mrs Greville used the pot for sticking envelopes and stamps, it is more likely to have been a treasured token of affection and a conversation-starter with guests. The display of her Fabergé signified her intimacy and influence with the royal, rich and powerful. In her will, Mrs Greville left most of her collection to the National Trust, but a handful of Fabergé pieces went to her long-serving maid Adeline Liron, including a blue enamel cigarette case set with a diamond X.[11]

The Fabergé contributes to Mrs Greville's collection of *objets d'art*, which also includes jade and 18th-century enamels. One of these, a thimble case, was a gift from Queen Victoria Eugenie of Spain (1887–1969), who founded a needlework guild, the Ropero de Santa Victoria.[12] Bainbridge recalled that Mrs Greville was fond of knitting, so it seems an apt choice.[13] There are even imitation Fabergé pieces, including a rock-crystal hare complete with fake case (NT 1247167.13). Its underside is un-carved, contrasting with highly finished true Fabergé pieces.

Objects were occasionally re-gifted. One Christmas Eve at Polesden Lacey, Beverley Nichols received a jade paperknife from Mrs Greville. Ivy Muriel, Lady Chamberlain, was present and was said to be outraged, having given it to Mrs Greville three years previously.[14] A jade carving of monkeys in the collection (Fig. 8) retains a sticker for John Sparks Ltd of London, a dealer in Chinese arts that was awarded a Royal Warrant by Mrs Greville's

The display of her Fabergé signified Mrs Greville's intimacy and influence with the royal, rich and powerful

friend Queen Mary. En masse, these *objets d'art* characterise not only elite Edwardian taste, but also an accompanying culture of high-end shopping and reciprocal gift-giving.

The richness of Mrs Greville's collection has enabled the items discussed here – plus much else besides – to appear in the exhibition *Treasured Possessions: Riches of Polesden Lacey* (until 29 October 2023) without any apparent denudation of the sumptuous showrooms. Extensive new findings from the associated research are being added to National Trust Collections online, conservation work continues on highlighted pieces, and subsequent exhibitions are being planned.

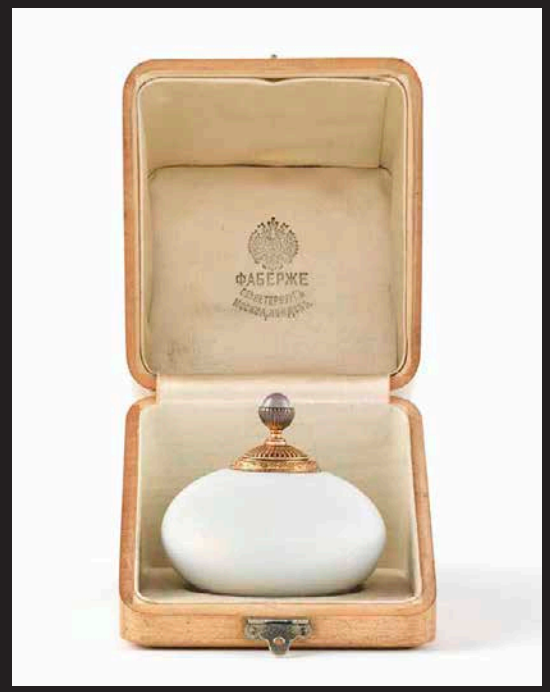


Fig. 6 Egg-shaped box, *c.*1914, Fabergé, rhodonite, diamonds, gold, holly wood, satin and velvet, 4.5 x 3.5cm without case (NT 1247132) • Photo: National Trust Images/David Brunetti

Fig. 7 Gum pot in case, *c.*1908, Henrik Wigström, Fabergé, white enamel, gold, moonstone, holly wood, satin, and velvet, 4.6 x 4.8cm without case (NT 1247190) • Photo: National Trust Images/David Brunetti

Fig. 8 Two monkeys, *c.*1890–1910, carved white jade, 5.5 x 5.3 x 2.1cm (NT 1247184) • Photo: National Trust Images/David Brunetti

Fig. 9 Guests at Polesden Lacey, including King Edward VII and his terrier Caesar, 1909, unknown photographer, silver gelatine print, paper, card, 35 x 42cm with mount (NT 1246691) • Photo: National Trust Images/Richard Holttum

Treasured Possessions: Riches of Polesden Lacey

A major exhibition marking 80 years since Dame Margaret Greville left Polesden Lacey and her collection to the National Trust. Running until 29 October 2023.

For more information, see: Treasured Possessions: Riches of Polesden Lacey

NT 1247140 • National Trust Images/David Brunetti

As a result, Mrs Greville's rightful place as a significant art collector of her generation is ever more firmly established and understood, as her network of fellow collectors, including Queen Mary and Philip Sassoon, continues to be explored. Polesden Lacey stands as a lasting record of her vision, its wonders open for everyone to enjoy.

Notes

1. *Sunday Referee*, 20 January 1929, pp.10–11.

2. Helen C. Jones, 'More than Mere Ornaments: Female Visitors to Sir Richard Wallace's Art Collection', 19: *Interdisciplinary Studies in the Long Nineteenth Century*, iss. 31, 2020 (Accessed 12/01/2023).

3. James Lees-Milne, *Ancestral Voices: Diaries 1942–1943*, 15 December 1942, London, 1975, p.112.

4. Margaret Greville (1863–1942), letter to Isabella Stewart Gardner from New York, 17 November 1909. Ink on paper, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston (ARC.001977).

5. Beverley Nichols, *Down the Kitchen Sink*, London, 1974, pp.159–60.

6. Timothy Schroder, *British and Continental Gold and Silver in the Ashmolean Museum*, vol. 2, 2009, p.690.

7. *The Daily Telegraph*, 19 November 1930.

8. Henry Charles Bainbridge, *Peter Carl Fabergé: Goldsmith and Jeweller to the Russian Imperial Court; his Life and Work*, London, 1949, p.88.

9. Kieran McCarthy, *Fabergé in London: The British Branch of the Imperial Russian Goldsmith*, Woodbridge, Suffolk, 2021, pp.154–5.

10. The authors are grateful to Kieran McCarthy for this information.

11. Christie, Manson & Woods Ltd, 'The Hon. Mrs Greville, Valuation for Probate', National Trust Archives, 1943.

12. Gerard Noel, 'Ena, princess of Battenberg, queen of Spain, consort of Alfonso XIII', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*.

13. Op. cit., note 9, p.217.

14. Siân Evans, *Mrs Ronnie: the Society Hostess who collected Kings*, London, 2013, p.110.

Dynamic and Resonant

The sculpture of Anthony Twentyman at Dudmaston

Brendan Flynn
Independent curator and art historian

The Watcher
1969, sandstone on circular millstone base, 213 x 46 x 46cm (NT 814384)
The Watcher was the first commission given to Twentyman by Sir George Labouchere. Positioned by the lake, it gazes towards the Clee Hills, silhouetted against the dark waters of the lake and the steeply sloping lawns behind it. From one viewpoint it almost resembles a hound, seated and watchful. This is the artist's most ambitious work in stone, the pierced form showing his debt to the example of Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth.

All photos: National Trust Images/Leah Band

It used to be said that the history of art is the history of patronage. A wonderful example of this can be seen at Dudmaston in Shropshire, where Sir George Labouchere (1905–99) and Rachel, Lady Labouchere (1908–96), commissioned the local sculptor and painter Anthony Twentyman (1906–88) to create a series of works for the grounds and gardens of their house. It was an opportunity few artists receive and few patrons have the imagination and confidence to give. Twentyman put his heart and soul into the task and the resulting works represent a remarkable harmony of contemporary art and English landscape that continues to surprise and delight visitors. The sculptures complement Sir George's important collection of British and European Modern Art displayed in the house.

Anthony Twentyman was born at Bilbrook Manor in Codsall, Staffordshire. The creative gene ran deep in the Twentyman family. His mother Grace was a talented cartoonist, his father a brilliant wood turner and Master of the Turners Company, while his brother Richard (1903–79) was a distinguished architect and painter. Anthony drew and painted from an

Bird Form
1970, bronze on marble stand, 9 x 15 x 10cm (NT 814371)
Not all of Twentyman's small bronzes are maquettes for larger sculpture. Many, like *Bird Form*, were made as works of art in their own right, expressing his love of the natural world. In the words of Dudmaston Research Volunteer Hazel Statham: 'This isn't a true representation of any known bird but it has all the character and charisma of one. This little bird looks ready to fly. It invites you to pick it up and set it free. I'd love to own this sculpture. It would bring happiness every day and be a constant reminder of the wide variety of birds that call Dudmaston home.'

early age and from his father he learnt the basic principles of 'wood smoothing', although he had no formal art training. Informally, he learnt much from his lifelong friend, the woodcarver and sculptor Donald Potter (1902–2004). He studied engineering at Pembroke College, Oxford but did not graduate, deciding instead to immerse himself in the family import and export business, Henry Rogers & Sons Ltd of Wolverhampton, where his father was a director.

When war broke out he joined the RAF and was posted to Singapore. He was captured by the Japanese when the city fell in 1942. For three and a half years he was a prisoner of war in the notorious Palembang Camp in Sumatra and finally in Changi Prison. After his release, his passion for art helped him to rebuild his life. In 1947 he commissioned John Piper (1903–92) to paint a picture of Bilbrook Manor House. The Pipers became his close friends and they were frequent visitors to

Abstract Form
1970, red-painted sandstone, 78 x 74 x 53cm (NT 814379)
In spring and high summer its quite easy to overlook this little sculpture nestled in the dappled shade of the trees in the orchard. In autumn and winter its curves and angled forms emerge crisply defined in the sunlight, the weathered stone speckled with lichen. On one side is a small circular recess painted red, perhaps representing the sun. On the reverse is an incised arrowhead: simple, universal symbols that resonate long after in the mind's eye.

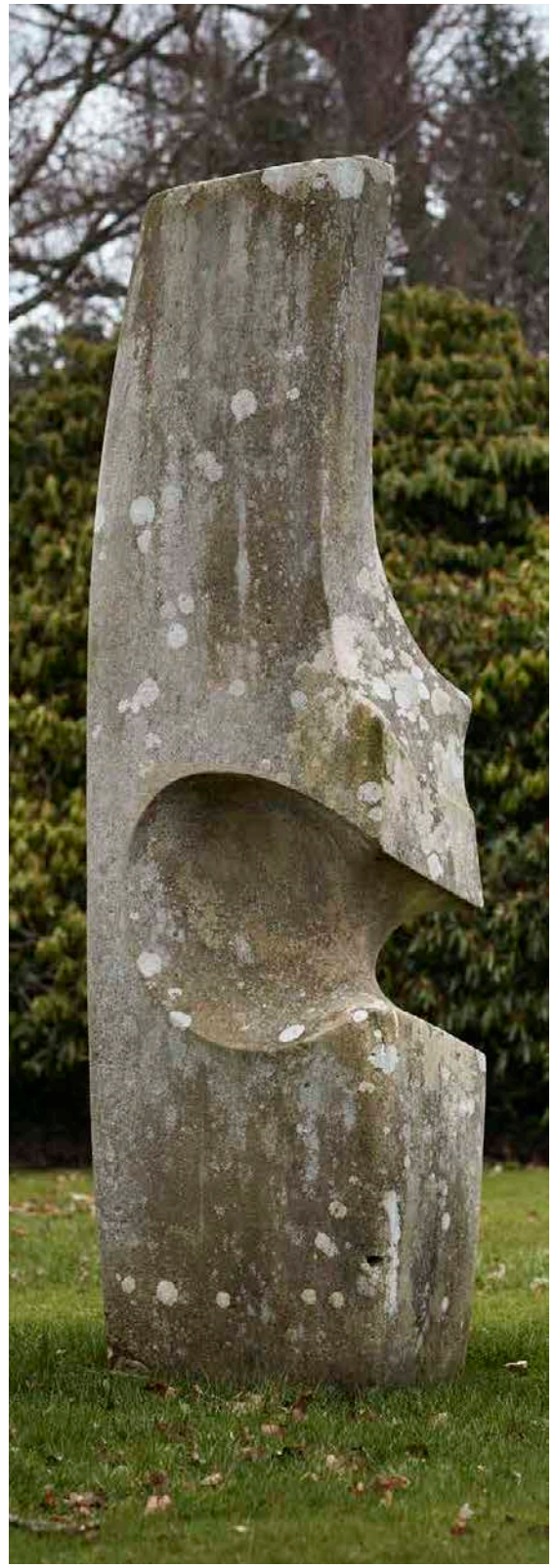
Dog Memorial
1974, granite on slate base, 124 x 52 x 36cm (NT 814381)
One of the most touching and understated works is the memorial to Sir George Labouchere's black Labradors, Katie and Jenny. The smooth ovoid granite block is decorated with semi-circular motifs and inscribed in Latin: JENNY – CANIS NOBILIS – AMICA CARA – 1968–1974, and on the base face and on the rear face: KATIE 1971–1985. The wording was devised by Lord Scarman of Quatt.

Bilbrook and to Twentyman's later home and studio at Claverley. He stayed with them at Fawley Bottom Farmhouse and at their little cottage at Garn Fawr in Pembrokeshire. In 1954 he was locally acclaimed as the first artist to have an abstract work accepted for exhibition by the Royal Birmingham Society of Artists. His mentor Donald Potter introduced him to polyphant, a Cornish greenstone that was easy to work, and encouraged him to specialise in stone carving.

By 1960 Twentyman had withdrawn from the family business to devote himself to painting and sculpture. He collected the works of major contemporary artists, John Piper of course, and members of the St Ives group at the cutting edge of British Modernism, including Ben Nicholson (1894–1982), Patrick Heron (1920–99) and Wilhelmina Barns Graham (1912–2004). He particularly admired the work of Barbara Hepworth (1903–75) and showed alongside her in 1969 at Blenheim Palace Gardens. She urged him to study the rugged coastal landscape of Penwith that had inspired her work and he complied, travelling to Cornwall to sketch the ancient standing stones at Men an Tol and Lanyon Quoit.

He showed in London at the Marjorie Parr Gallery and in small group exhibitions. In 1983 he was elected as fellow of the Royal Society of British Sculptors, but British Art was already moving away from the values of post-war Modernism. Without commissions, Twentyman's potential would have remained untested. It was the patronage of Sir George and Lady Labouchere that inspired him to create a body of work of the highest quality, defining his achievements as an artist and, having passed the estate to the National Trust, safeguarding his work for generations to come.

Spaceframe
1985, larch, plywood and paint on two concrete bases, 210 x 364 x 110cm (NT 814383)
This work was a bold departure from Twentyman's adopted medium of direct carving in stone. It is a dynamic construction of intersecting beams that appear as if frozen in mid-fall. It has the rhythmic, gestural flow of a Japanese brush painting, the red circle acting as a notional sun that leads the eye up and out into the landscape. The structure was inspired by the internal strut arrangements of a Hurricane aircraft, a reminder of the artist's wartime role in the RAF.



The Blade
***c.*1970–88, installed 2022, limestone, 220cm (height) (NT 815369)**
Though only recently installed in the American Garden, *The Blade* looks as though it has always been there, framed by lawns and great trees. The broadcaster and art historian Nicholas Tresilian, who donated the work to Dudmaston, noted its resemblance to the outline of a jet engine turbine blade. Equally, it suggests a weathered bone or tool of knapped flint. It is this subtle ambiguity between organic and mechanical, ancient and modern forms that gives Twentyman's works their visual tension and strength.

Dyrham Transformed

Revealing hidden schemes and re-examining historic narratives at Dyrham Park

Eilidh Auckland
Property Curator

Amy Knight-Archer
Architect, Nick Cox Architects

Claire Reed
Cultural Heritage Curator

Sweeping down the drive at Dyrham Park, South Gloucestershire, leaving the Cotswold scarp behind you, the honey-coloured house at its end seems almost inevitable. In reality, Dyrham Park was the product of a very specific time and the creation of a very particular individual, William Blathwayt (*c*.1649–1717). Blathwayt was the son of a London lawyer, who rose to become one of the most influential ministers, civil servants and colonial figures of the late 17th century. Blathwayt's house was a monument to his success and ambition, and a reflection of the world in which he operated.

In the years that followed, the house remained largely unchanged. It wasn't until the mid-19th century, when Lieutenant Colonel George Blathwayt (1797–1871) inherited Dyrham Park, that significant renovation was undertaken. Extensive structural repairs were carried out, while structural alterations introduced a new private suite of rooms in the south-west corner of the house. Many of the principal rooms were re-plastered and redecorated, albeit often in sympathy with their 17th-century roots.

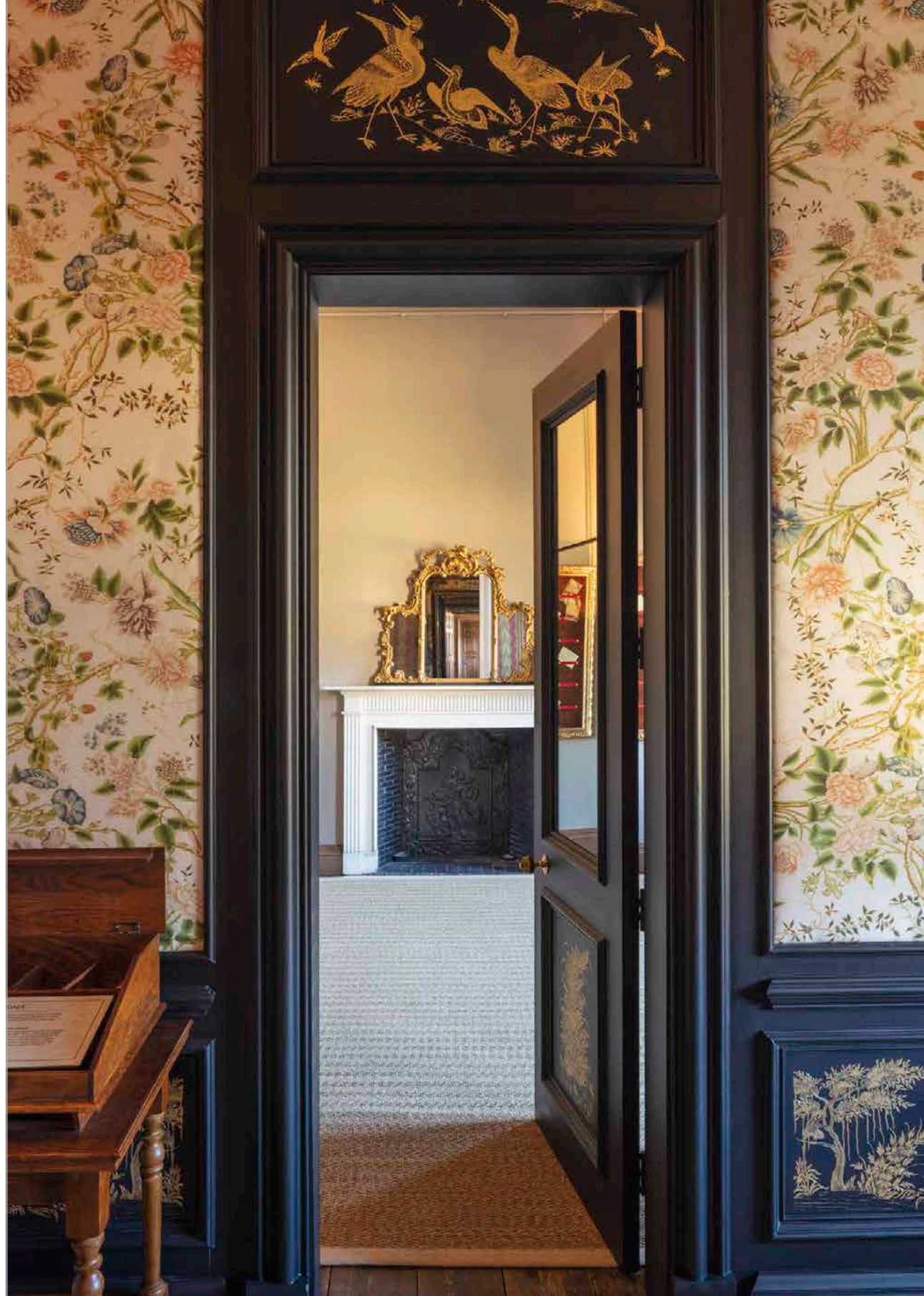


Fig. 1 The reimagined Japan Closet, which was introduced as interpretation • Photo: National Trust Images/ James Dobson

The mid-20th century saw further redecoration, and rooms such as the Great Hall received their coat of white paint at this time. In 1956, when the Ministry of Works purchased Dyrham Park through the Land Fund, further renovation work was undertaken, which included tackling dry rot, addressing antiquated electrical services and creating domestic apartments. In 1961 Dyrham Park was transferred to the National Trust. Some further decorative changes were made but they were insufficient to address years of decline.

Crossing the threshold back in 2015, there was a sense that something had been lost. Rooms and staircases had been painted white, decorative surfaces had deteriorated and spaces that had once glittered in candlelight seemed dimly lit and uninspiring. The National Trust's project to transform the house, recently completed, has attempted to recapture something of its original vibrancy and dynamism and to enable visitors to step inside the world of the late 17th century. Historic schemes and historic narratives have been uncovered and unpicked, and the project concluded with the installation of new interpretation in January 2023.

Research and preparation

In late 2015, following repairs to the roof and the installation of conservation heating, Dyrham Park was given the go-ahead to complete the wholesale re-presentation and interpretation of the house. Research and planning had begun two years previously, and the completion of the Conservation Management Plan in 2015 was followed by a further year of provenance research by Collections Review Manager Demelza Williams. The appointment of conservation architects Nick Cox Architects and creative design consultancy Hara Clark provided the tools to create confident presentation plans. Senior National Curator Rupert Goulding's research of the Blathwayt archives, which are scattered around the world, fuelled the core narrative.

Following this extensive research and preparation, those schemes that were anachronistic or failing were selected for re-presentation, with the aim of recreating the interiors of 1692–1710. This was the period in which the current house was built and furnished by William Blathwayt, then at the peak of his career. He filled his house with the luxury goods that his privileged position gave him access to – black walnut and red cedar timber from England's new colonies;

Fig. 2 The Old Staircase during structural survey in 2018 • Photo: National Trust/Laura Williams

Fig. 3 The Old Staircase in 2019, with completed graining and old paint removed • Photo: National Trust/David Evans

gilt leather, delftware and paintings from the Netherlands; and tapestries and marble from across continental Europe. Many of these items remain on display in the house today.

Before the work of recreating the historic interiors could begin in earnest, however, extensive consultation was needed, drawing on the expertise of historians, conservators, wallpaper specialists, lighting experts, paint specialists, ecologists and archaeologists, as well as structural, mechanical and electrical engineers. The aim was to create authentic decorative schemes and engaging, multi-sensory interpretation.

The first of many contractors, Ellis and Co., arrived in 2018 to address the most urgent structural repairs and to redecorate the Old Staircase. Emery Brothers Ltd led the final stage of work, transforming a number of the principal rooms in the main body of the house. This included conservation fabric repairs, structural repairs, and mechanical and electrical installation works, as well as redecoration to reflect original 17th-century graining schemes. The skill, expertise and care of the craftspeople was critical in delivering a high-quality outcome at every stage.

As each phase began, new contractors arrived, parts of the house were closed and others reopened, volunteers were briefed and visitors informed. For the past four years the house has remained open, with glimpses of work taking place through Perspex windows.

A stable structure

One of the most pressing concerns was structural stability. Surveys of the floors and staircases indicated some serious problems, including weak floorboards, pest-eaten timbers and compromised floor joists. The most serious issues were in the staircases and two ground-floor rooms. In the Oak Passage, most of the services had been driven through the joists, leaving the floor unsupported. This floor was on the main visitor route and needed immediate attention. Beneath the Vestibule floor, pieces of stone garden urns, possibly from the late 17th-century gardens, were supporting joists that had been eaten by furniture beetle.

The Best Staircase was being supported on a post that was sinking into a marble floor, which rested on rotten timbers over a six-foot void. A beam on the upper section of the Old Staircase hung from a single, late 17th-century nail. All the remedial work that was needed to resolve these problems also had to take account of the bats, newts and rare beetles that establish themselves in and around most country houses. Senior Building Surveyor Kath Campbell-Hards and Senior Project Manager Tim Cambourne worked closely with the local planning department to ensure that all the works had listed building consent. Nick Cox Architects were always on hand to ensure the works were of the highest standard.

> Any chance to record archaeological features was enthusiastically taken

As each floorboard or panel was removed, Paul Martin of Absolute Archaeology investigated and recorded what was found. The house sits on the site of a Tudor manor that was partly incorporated into Blathwayt's new building. It is difficult to determine where one ends and the other begins, so any chance to record archaeological features was enthusiastically taken. Working with volunteers, Paul was a regular fixture throughout the project, proving especially popular with visitors.

Fig. 4 Application of walnut graining onto softwood panelling using a feather • Photo: National Trust/David Evans

Dramatic decoration

One of the most dramatic changes to the interiors at Dyrham Park has been the transformation from pallid, off-white paint schemes back to the rich, dark graining of previous centuries. Imitation timber graining, applied with specialist brushes and other tools, was employed to create the impression that higher quality wood had been used. The elaborate late 17th-century graining and realistic mid-19th-century graining of several rooms had been coated in white paint by Lady Islington, a tenant in the 1930s, and again by the National Trust with the advice of interior decorator John Fowler (1906–77) in the 1970s.

Late 17th-century invoices detailed the colour scheme for each room and, together with detailed paint analysis, graining artists were able to mimic the figuring and spirit of the earlier schemes. There was a distinct difference between the styles of the two main periods of decoration, with the late 17th-century graining being more florid and stylistic, and the Victorian graining aiming to convince onlookers that the panelling was real hardwood.

Working with James Finlay, adviser on historic house decoration, the choice of paint colour and type was one of the most nerve-racking decisions. Although there was plenty of evidence from paint analysis and archival records, and although paint schemes can be altered, the idea of changing the appearance of the rooms was challenging for some. Many visitors and volunteers loved the Dyrham Park they had grown up with and were shocked that the chipped, dirty white paint might be removed. Happily, the effect of the new graining is stunning and much admired.

Outside, the opportunity was taken to improve the finish of the newly conserved

wrought-iron gates in the garden. The elaborate, late 17th-century gates lie at the foot of the avenue in the West Garden and had long awaited repairs. The 1960s black-gloss paint of the gates and railings was replaced with a dark grey, and the stone wall was repaired. This, like the decoration in the house itself, was informed by the careful analysis of historic paint layers.

Interpretation

With the redecoration of the interiors under way, the focus shifted towards interpretation, beginning with the creation of a new exhibition space. Working with Hara Clark and building contractors Corbel, this was created in an area that was off the previous visitor route. It provided an opportunity to delve deeper into some of the stories of William Blathwayt and the world in which he worked. Feedback gathered from visitors to the exhibition, including a desire to hear more about Blathwayt's colonial role, has directly informed the approach to subsequent interpretation.

As work to the main body of the house progressed, the stories it had to tell came into sharper focus. The building of the house at Dyrham Park took place in the early years of the transatlantic slave trade and William Blathwayt was one of the key colonial figures of that time. As Surveyor and Auditor General of Plantations, Blathwayt accounted for income due to the Crown from different royal colonies. He received part of his salary from colonies that were economically reliant on slavery – Barbados and Virginia each contributed £150 per year (the equivalent of around £18,000 today). Blathwayt's house reflected his colonial connections – in the wood for his staircases, which arrived from North America, and, most clearly, in the giltwood and polychrome stands depicting enslaved men (NT 452977), which Blathwayt received from his uncle Thomas Povey (1613/14–*c*.1705) and which remain in the Balcony Room, where they were on display by 1703.

As we approached this element of Dyrham's history, contact was made with Bath Ethnic Minority Senior Citizens Association, a community group that had worked with Dyrham in 2007. This relationship will continue with a visit later in 2023 and, hopefully, further collaboration. To date, advice has focussed on introductory texts and video, setting the scene. In addition, part of the suite of interpretation also consists of the introduction of guest 'voices'. Articulating a wide range of external perspectives, each voice comments on one of the spaces in the house, addressing everything from the design of the gilt leather to Blathwayt's colonial connections. Presented on imitation parchment, they sit alongside room overviews and are designed to be changeable.

Perhaps the most striking of the new interpretation, however, lies in the re-presentation of the main show rooms. Following extensive research, a new picture hang was created, which complemented themes found throughout the house. A furniture presentation plan was put into action to ensure that collection highlights had pride of place and supported the narrative. New lighting, designed by David Atkinson, added a subtle lift to once dark and tired-looking rooms. Uplighters in some of the more challenging rooms enabled architectural features to be seen. Interactive 'viewfinders' complement written information. As visitors look through these Perspex windows, etched with 17th-century scenes, the landscape before them is overlaid with the long-lost gardens.

Discoveries

In its careful unwrapping of Dyrham Park, this conservation project has allowed the house to share some of its secrets.

In the Ante Hall, as the repair of unassuming off-white paint and plaster to the west wall was undertaken, a shock of muddy green and dark

Fig. 5 The Exhibition Space opened in 2020 following major disruptions to the schedule and ways of working • Photo: National Trust/ Dawn Biggs

Fig. 6 View towards the Gilt Leather Parlour • Photo: National Trust/ David Evans

Fig. 7 The Family Parlour, which provides visitors with a sense of the property's historical origins • Photo: National Trust Images/James Dobson

red was uncovered. These were fragments of wall painting. Thomas Povey commissioned murals for his London house and it had long been suspected that his nephew would have had his own. Those in the Ante Hall appear on the first layer of plaster and seem likely to date from the 17th century. Painted imitation stonework was found above the west entrance to this room, while in the corner to its right some kind of foliage appeared to be visible. Intended as a backdrop for caged birds, the space would have felt strikingly different to the cool, calm entrance hall used by visitors today. The wall-painting fragments have been re-covered and protected with fresh plaster, and, as part of the interpretation project, a birdcage with birdsong has returned.

On the floor above, in the final rooms of what was once Blathwayt's personal apartment, the remnants of a long-lost Japan Closet were uncovered. Layers of 20th-century decoration were peeled back to reveal a small room, seemingly just two metres wide, which was decorated in blue-black japanning. This 17th-century attempt to imitate the lustre of lacquer would have been striking. Blathwayt and his guests would have sat, drinking tea or in conversation, surrounded by painted satin hangings, dark paintwork and gold decoration. Dyrham Park was once filled with fabrics and furniture from East Asia, little of which has survived, and this room is the most obvious example of a largely lost layer of decoration.

The historic scheme has been preserved beneath new paper and paint. As interpretation, a freestanding partition wall, designed by Scena, has been installed to capture something of the look of the space. It stands on the footprint of its lost south wall. The hangings are changeable, so different fabrics can be displayed; they currently replicate some from the state bed at Plas Newydd (NT 1175746.3). This is research in action: as the National Trust's understanding changes, so too will the appearance of this wall.

Revelation and reflection

Long in planning and execution, the project has navigated numerous challenges, not least a pandemic. Now complete, the transformation of the house at Dyrham Park has recaptured something of the world of the late 17th century, pulling visitors deeper into its story. More than simply a re-presentation of spaces, however, a key theme has been one of discovery – both in terms of revealing hidden historic schemes and in re-examining historic narratives.

Blathwayt's role in colonial administration, in particular, had somewhat receded from view, and in unpicking the fabric and furnishing of his house, the extent of the colonial connections woven throughout the building became increasingly apparent. Today, as visitors marvel at the opulence of their surroundings, they are also encouraged to reflect on its origins.

Sink or Swim

An intriguing manual from Kedleston's library

Nicola Thwaite
Assistant National Curator

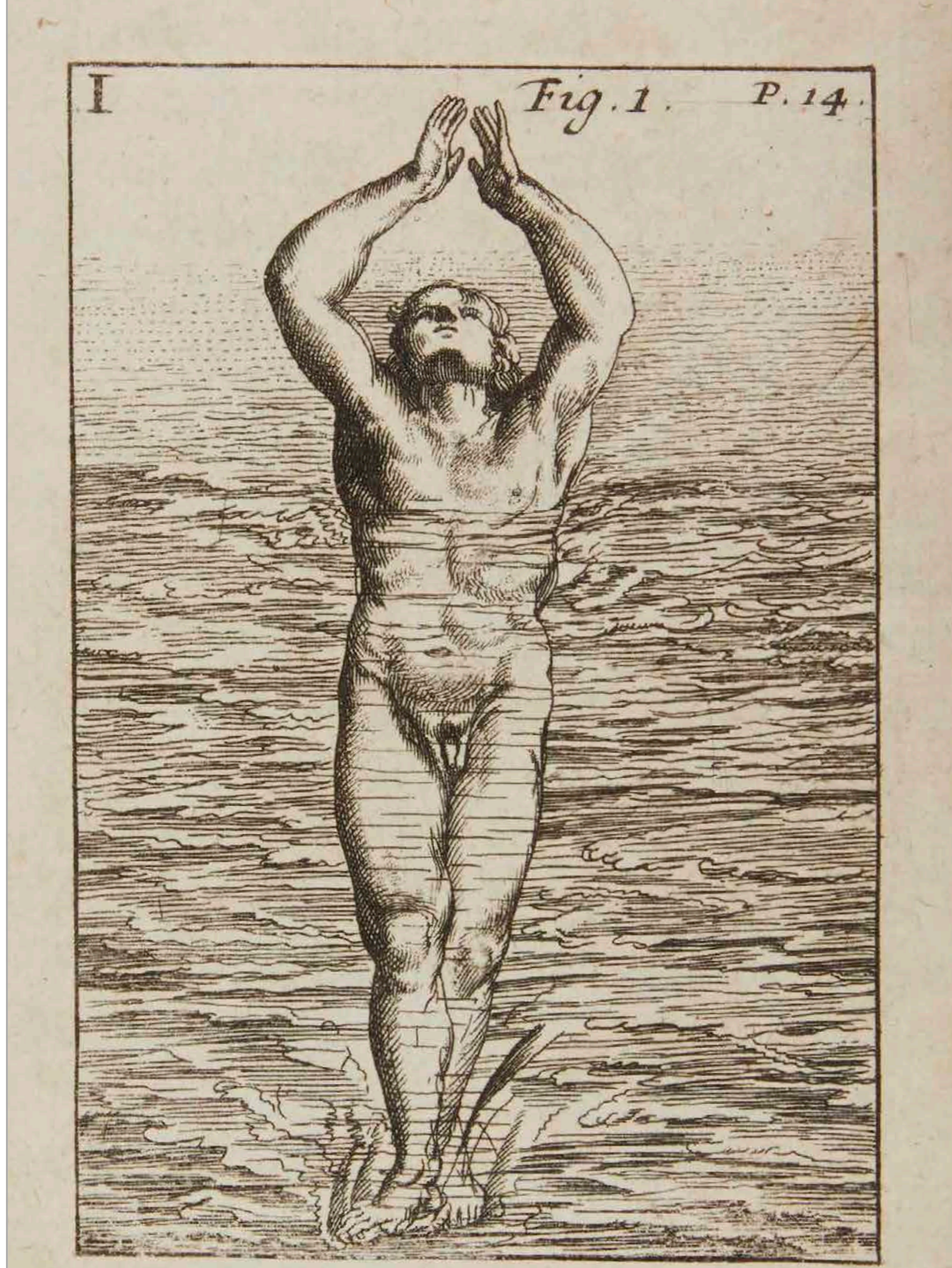
Opposite: An 'expert' way of jumping in feet first. This is not the recommended method, essentially a sitting position 'meeting the water first with their buttocks and calves'. To avoid water entering nose and ear, jumpers were advised to hold their breath.

All images reproduced from *The Art of Swimming* (1699) by Melchisédech Thévenot • All photos: National Trust Images/ Leah Band

Melchisédech Thévenot (*c.*1620–92), a French diplomat fluent in several languages, was appointed Royal Librarian to Louis XIV (1638–1715) in 1684. He was also a cartographer and scientist, corresponding with notable European contemporaries including mathematician Christiaan Huygens (1629–95) and natural philosopher Robert Hooke (1635–1703).

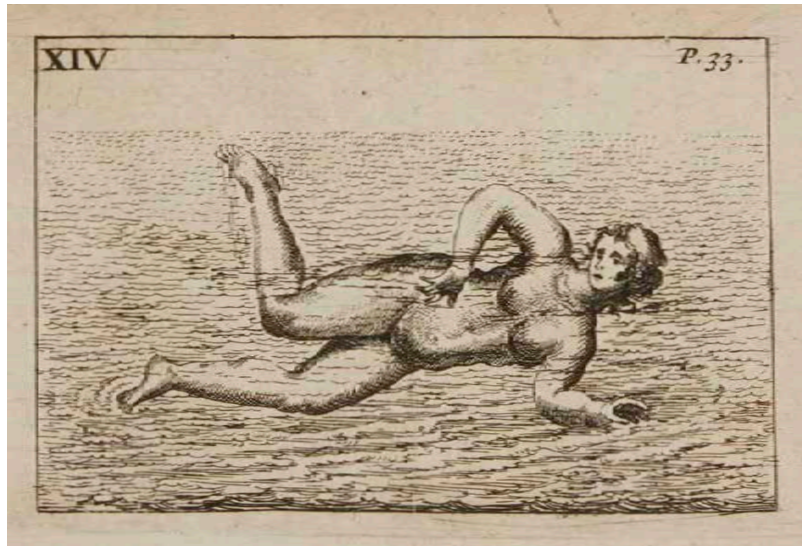
Thévenot's *L'art de Nager* – published posthumously in 1696 – was largely based on *De Arte Natandi*[1] by the English clergyman Everard Digby (d.1605),[2] although there is only a brief acknowledgement of this in Thévenot's preface.[3] An English translation – *The Art of Swimming* – was published only three years later in two issues[4] and both French and English editions were reissued over the next century, indicating a contemporary demand for instruction on the subject.[5] It has been identified as an influence on later swimmers including Benjamin Franklin, who enjoyed showing off his proficiency in the water.[6]

In this early guide to 'wild swimming' in rivers and lakes, naked bathers demonstrate the various methods of diving, floating and



To swim like a dog. The author advises that 'doggy paddle' has been a lifesaver for many non-swimmers, so 'you are not to imagine that this way is difficult'. The rather panicked look on the swimmer's face suggests he may not agree.

To swim neither on back nor belly. Most of the swimmers are visibly male but, although it seems unlikely that women would have publicly swum naked at this time, at least two plates (XIV and XX) show people with rounded breasts and no visible male genitalia. Could they be female?



swimming. Further advice on lifesaving methods was added by the unknown English translator. Some of the advanced moves may be for showing off to others, including the unexpected advice on cutting one's toenails while floating, to demonstrate dexterity.

The plates in the original French edition are attributed to Charles Moette (1672–1754), son of the publisher.[7] In this English edition the illustrations are not printed or reworked from the original plates but more likely unofficial copies from the published images: as a result of this reversal, every swimmer is facing in the opposite direction and plate 'IV' has become 'VI'.

This copy is part of the historic Curzon family library,[8] housed in the original cases of the 18th-century Neo-classical library at Kedleston Hall in Derbyshire, the palatial show-house designed by architect Robert

To dive. The first method for swimming underwater 'safely, speedily, and handsomely', although other, safer methods are preferred. Perhaps harshly, the author comments 'If men sink to the bottom of the water, it is their own fault, nature has laid no necessity on 'em of doing so'.

Adam (1728–92). There is no evidence in the book itself to show when it was acquired by the family, but it is a well-used copy in a plain binding, with a few missing pages – although all the plates survive – and was probably bought as a useful book to be read rather than to impress visitors. So it is perhaps not too fanciful to imagine generations of Curzons using it to learn how to swim in the streams or landscaped lake of the Kedleston estate.

Notes

1. Published by Thomas Dawson in London in 1587, *English Short Title Catalogue* S105338.

2. Nicholas Orme, 'Digby, Everard (d.1605), Church of England clergyman and author', *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*, 23 September 2004.

3. 'This is the first treatise [on swimming] ... in the French tongue, nor do I know of but two ... in any other: the one of Everard Digby an English man, whereof I have here made some use ...'.

4. *ESTC* R471054. Only one other known copy at the Folger Shakespeare Library, Washington DC; *ESTC* R2501 is another issue in the same year.

5. See Nicolas Orme, *Early British Swimming, 55 BC–AD 1719*, Exeter, 1983, pp.105–7.

6. Sarah B. Pomeroy, 'Benjamin Franklin, Swimmer: An Illustrated History', in *Transactions of the American Philosophical Society*, vol. 110, no. 1, 2021, pp.iii–93.

7. Bibliothèque Nationale de France. Digital copy available at https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k854136j.

8. National Trust collections NT 3114492.

Shaped by Love and Loss

A collection of ancient Greek vases at Nostell Priory

Abigail Allan
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'Rome … which from our cradles, we have been taught to adore'
S. Sharp, *Letters from Italy describing the Customs and Manners of that Country*, 1766

Walking up the long pathway to Nostell Priory in West Yorkshire on a misty morning, the enormous, asymmetrical house looms out of the gloom. With Chippendale furniture, Robert Adam interiors, and world-class paintings, Nostell is full of treasures. Among the less well-known items is a group of painted Greek vases made in Athens and South Italy *c*.500–300BC, which were collected by John Winn (*c*.1794–1817) and his younger brother Charles (1795–1874). Mistakenly called 'Etruscan' until the mid-19th century, these 12 vases once belonged to a collection of over 130 at Nostell, sold at Christie's in 1975[1] and 1998,[2] before some were repurchased by the National Trust. The oldest is an Athenian lekythos, an oil container, made *c*.500–480BC (Fig. 1). It is decorated with four figures seated on stools, one of whom is Dionysos, the Greek god of wine and drinking, surrounded by bunches of grapes and vines. The most recent vase – and one of the most impressive – is a hydria, a water vessel, made in South Italy and painted by the Capua Painter *c*.360–300BC (Fig. 2). It depicts Eros, the god of love, lust and sex, seated on a pillar. Not all Nostell's vases, however, are so well executed: a small neck-amphora painted by the Roccanova Painter (active *c*.360–330BC) was misfired in the kiln, meaning the figures decorating its surface are difficult to discern (Fig. 3).

The first and largest purchase of Greek vases for Nostell had been arranged by John Winn while on the grand tour in Italy, probably between September 1816 and March 1817, when he was in Naples. The grand tour was a continental trip taken by young upper-class men, with Italy, by the 17th century, as its focus.[3] The tour acted as a finishing school, completing the Classical education that dominated private schools: gentlemen were 'taught to adore … Rome … from [their] cradles.'[4] Souvenir-buying was an important part of the tour, allowing individuals to prove their taste, wealth and suitability as gentlemen to their peers at home. Antiquities soon became the most popular purchases,[5] allowing men to bring to their 'homes and bosoms … the learning, talent, and taste' of Greco-Roman antiquity.[6]

John Winn inherited Nostell after the property had undergone a period of debt, and his immediate predecessors had done little to extend or embellish either the house or its collections. In 1795 the property was a 'yet unfinished modern house, in the midst of a bare and flat park'.[7] Consequently, John Winn purchased many goods on the tour, planning to 'bring the house to some sort of completion'.[8]

However, on 17 November 1817, John Winn died of an unknown illness. He was just 23. The news hit his friends and family hard, causing his friend Dr Harrison, who had been with him in Rome, 'deep anguish'.[9] His untimely death meant that his brother Charles Winn suddenly had the heirship thrust upon him. Unlike John, he had not been raised for this: as a second son, he had never embarked on an extended grand tour, although he had accompanied John for the first summer of his tour, visiting France and parts of Italy. Nonetheless, Charles became the property's most prolific collector, responsible for 'the majority of the paintings and books and a substantial proportion of the furniture and other objects which survive at Nostell today.'[10] With John's sudden death, many of his purchases were incomplete, while others were stranded abroad. Charles, however, ensured that they were securely delivered home,

Fig. 1 Athenian black-figure lekythos depicting four seated figures, including Dionysos, at Nostell Priory, *c*.500–480BC, Class of Athens 581, Attic ceramic, 18.9 x 8.9cm (NT 959646) • Photo: National Trust/Abigail Allan

annotating John's account book in pencil, adding, for example, 'querie [sic] if not 2 inlaid slabs which are now at Nostell', against John's entry about a marble table he had bought.[11] The first purchase Charles completed for John was that of the Greek vases, which he bought in 1818 for £500,[12] with Dr Harrison, who was still in Italy, acting as an intermediary with the dealer, the Abbé Campbell. Theses vases were Charles's first major purchase, marking the beginning of his lifetime of prolific collecting.

Charles's motivation for purchasing these vases was likely, in part, the same as John's: the need to demonstrate his social belonging within the upper classes (doubly important since he had not been raised as heir). The Greek vases were the perfect place to begin his furnishing of Nostell. Although 'vases had been fairly low on the list of desirable antiquities' during the early 18th century, the art historian Johann Joachim Winckelmann (1717–68) and later the vase collector William Hamilton (1730–1803) had been crucial for increasing their cachet.[13] Charles was certainly aware of this, Dr Harrison informing him that 'the vases must be inestimable', and that they would 'always reflect credit on the possessor'.[14] Their artistic, historical and financial value was well-recognised: Johann Wolfgang Goethe (1749–1832), the German novelist, remarked in 1787 that 'nowadays one pays a lot of money for Etruscan vases' because 'every traveller wants one',[15] while figures such as Adam Buck (1759–1833) and Thomas Hope (1769–1831) continued to build collections in Britain in the early 19th century. Additionally, prominent figures among the continental European elites – including Count Lamberg in Austria (1791–1848) and the Prince of Canino (1775–1840), Napoleon's brother[16] – had vase collections, putting Charles in good company.

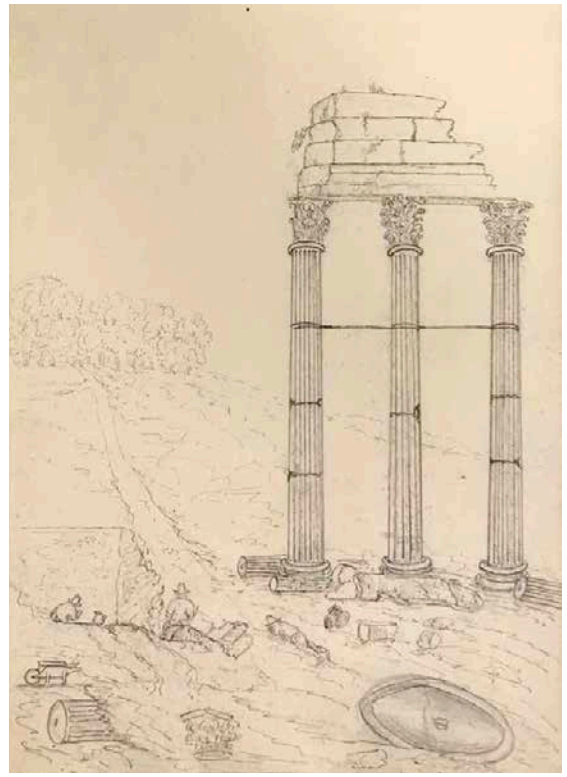
Fig. 2 Campanian (South Italian) red-figure hydria depicting Eros, at Nostell Priory, *c.*360–300BC, the Capua Painter, Campanian ceramic, 29.2 x 17.2cm (NT 959599) • Photo: National Trust/Abigail Allan

Fig. 3 Lucanian (South Italian) red-figure miniature neck-amphora, at Nostell Priory, *c.*350–330BC, the Roccanova Painter, Lucanian ceramic, 14.4 x 7.5cm (NT 961026) • Photo: National Trust/Abigail Allan

That collecting the vases allowed Charles to mix with national and European aristocracy is evidenced in their letters of sale, in which Lord Belmore (likely the 2nd Earl Belmore (1774–1841)) and the Duke of Bavaria (Ludwig I (1786–1868)) are identified as being interested in this collection.[17] The Winns had long had ambitions to move from the landed gentry to the nobility, a task now in Charles's hands (although it was not achieved until his son's lifetime). Evidently, Charles's purchase of the vases was motivated primarily by their obvious social capital.

But while John had begun to collect these vases 'solely [with] the laudable ambition of embelishing [sic] the house', Charles was explicitly described as having 'a taste for antiquities'.[18] While on his miniature tour with John, he had sketched archaeological sites (Figs 4 and 5) and collected small archaeological 'curiosities' such as Roman coins and bronzes. Throughout his life, however, Charles's tastes evolved more towards British archaeology rather than antiquities: he joined the British Archaeological Association, but not the Society of Antiquaries, and while his library contained many books about local Yorkshire archaeology, there were far fewer works about Greco-Roman archaeology.[19] Nonetheless, his interest in antiquities clearly ran more deeply than had John's.

Ultimately, Charles had a much more personal motivation for purchasing John's vases. Letters between the brothers and their younger sister, Louisa (*c.*1800–61), show the siblings' highly affectionate relationship, John signing himself 'your truly affectionate brother', and reminding Louisa 'P.S. Charles desires his love to you.' Later, Louisa encouraged John to collect: he 'brought [her] a piece of stone from [a Scottish] Island' in 1815, and while on his grand tour Louisa requested specific gifts, reminding John of his 'kind promise of procuring me some Harp strings … the real Roman', and encouraged him to 'procure some curiosities from Herculaneum.'[20] The siblings were clearly close, and their mutual affection had encouraged their collecting. Consequently, John's death may well have played a powerful role in encouraging Charles to purchase the vases. In a letter concerning the sale, Harrison stated that he knew Charles had 'always had a strong bias to follow the suggestions of [his] late brother', and comforted Charles by writing that he had 'no hesitation in saying that [he] had not the least doubt but had he lived [John] would



Figs 4 and 5 Pages from Charles Winn's sketchbook, labelled 'The Remains of the Temple of the Sun in the Forum Romanum. Rome May 13th 1816' (above), and 'The Remains of the Temple of Jupiter Stator. Rome May 16th 1816' (opposite, left), watercolour on paper, West Yorkshire Archives (WYW1352/1/1/12/32 • Photos: Abigail Allan, with the permission of Wakefield Archive Services

Fig. 6 One of the miniature Athenian lekythoi at Nostell Priory, decorated with an owl, 5th century BC, near to 450BC, unattributed, Attic ceramic, 11.1 x 4.1cm (NT 961040) • Photo: National Trust/Abigail Allan

have made the purchase'.[21] In the same letter, Harrison wrote 'you state you are determined to have them', a determination which, in the context of a series of letters discussing Charles's and Harrison's grief at John's loss and John's own unfulfilled desires, seems to have stemmed at least partly from Charles's wish to safe-keep John's memory, memorialising his life by preserving his last act of collecting.

There are well-established precedents of collections serving as physical connections between the living and the deceased. The antiquarian and writer Horace Walpole (1717–97), after witnessing the dispersal of his father's collection, compiled the *Description of Pictures at Houghton Hall* 'as a way of explicitly cataloguing the collection for posterity', forming 'a textual connection between father and son'.[22] 150 years later, the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud (1856–1939) also began collecting antiquities upon the death of his father, mourning 'the most important event, the most poignant loss, of a man's life'.[23] Similarly, Nostell's Greek vase collection gave Charles a lasting physical connection to John. Furthermore, vases were then thought to be 'connected' in antiquity with 'mystic death and regeneration' because of their decoration.[24] Charles would have recognised this sepulchral connection. Moreover, some of the shapes he collected were known to be related to the themes of grief, death and mourning, most obviously the lekythoi (Figs 1 and 6). The lekythoi were called 'lagrimale' by the Italian dealers,[25] 'lagrimatojo' by the dealer selling to Charles,[26] 'lachrymary vessels' by English near-contemporaries,[27] and 'lachrims' by Charles himself,[28] all terms describing the lekythoi's supposed role as containers for mourners' tears. With the collection acting as a physical connection to John, the vases' associations with grief, death and tombs would have seemed especially poignant.

These events and the siblings' shared history conjure a picture of a grieving man determined to secure his brother's last act, all the more significant to him as he remembered how he, John, and Louisa had collected small things together throughout their lives. Charles's diligence in safeguarding John's purchases likely went beyond wanting them to decorate his country pile and increase his social standing: his attachment to them and attentiveness to John's account book seemed 'sentimental',[29] suggesting he purchased them in his brother's memory. Unable to bring John home, Charles brought his vases home instead. The timing of the vases' purchase seems pivotal in Charles's life: with their powerful emotional significance for him, their acquisition seems to have been formative in his career as a collector. Without them, it is unclear whether Charles would have come to have such a profound material impact on Nostell's contents throughout his lifetime.

Notes

The preceding article is based on parts of the author's MPhil thesis, *Cataloguing, Interpreting, and Curating Nostell Priory's (National Trust) Ancient Greek Vases*, which was funded by a Crankstart Scholarship. She is now expanding this into a DPhil thesis, funded by the AHRC, which will research all of the National Trust's collections of ancient Greek vases, spread across 11 properties. Nostell's Greek vases are currently in storage but will be back on display by 2025 as the focus of a temporary exhibition.

1. Christie's London, 30 April 1975, *Greek and Etruscan Vases from Nostell Priory*.

2. Christie's London, 23 September 1998, *Antiquities*.

3. Cesare de Seta, 'Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century' in A. Wilton and I. Bignamini (eds), *Grand Tour: The Lure of Italy in the Eighteenth Century*, London, 1996, p.13.

4. S. Sharp, *Letters from Italy describing the Customs and Manners of that Country*, England, 1766, p.51.

5. Francis Haskell, 'Preface', op. cit., note 2, p.11.

6. J. Britton, *The Union of Architecture, Sculpture and Painting*, London, 1827, p.vii.

7. Henry Skrine, *Three Successive Tours in the North of England, and Great Part of Scotland*, London, 1795, p.ix.

8. Edward Potten, 'Beyond Bibliophilia: Contextualizing Private Libraries in the Nineteenth Century', *Library and Information History,* vol. 31(2), 2015, p.76.

9. Letters between Dr Harrison and Charles Winn, 1818–19, (West Yorkshire Archives WYW1352/1/1/12/70).

10. Sophie Raikes, '"A cultivated eye for the antique": Charles Winn and the enrichment of Nostell Priory in the nineteenth century', *Apollo*, vol. 157, iss. 494, 2003, p.A3.

11. John Winn's annotated account book (West Yorkshire Archives WYW1352/1/1/10/3) in Edward Potten, 'Beyond Bibliophilia: Contextualizing Private Libraries in the Nineteenth Century', *Library and Information History,* vol. 31(2), 2015, p.77.

12. Op. cit., note 9.

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16. M. Vickers, 'Value and Simplicity: Eighteenth-Century Taste and the Study of Greek Vases', *Past and Present*, vol. 116, 1987, p.125.

17. Op. cit., note 9.

18. Ibid.

19. Op. cit., note 8, p.88.

20. Letters between Louisa and John Winn, (West Yorkshire Archives WYW1352/1/1/13/1 and WYW1352/1/1/13/2).

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22. Nicole Cochrane, 'Ancient Art and the Eighteenth-Century Auction: Collecting, Catalogues and Competition', *Journal for Eighteenth-Century Studies*, vol. 44(3), p.282.

23. Sigmund Freud in Joanne Morra, *Inside the Freud Museums: History, Memory and Site-Responsive Art*, London and New York, 2018, p.120.

24. Thomas Hope, *Household Furniture and Interior Decoration Executed from Designs by Thomas Hope,* London, 1807, pp.22–3.

25. Jahn Otto, *Beschreibung der vasensammlung königs Ludwigs in der Pinakothek zu München, mit XI tafeln*, Germany, 1854, n.819.

26. Abbé Henry Campbell, *Catalogo di una collezione di vasi Greci ec., appartenenti all'Abate Campbell del S.O. Gerasolimitano*, Naples, 1818, no. 6.

27. Sophie von la Roche, *Sophie in London, 1786: Being the Diary of Sophie von la Roche*, London, 1786, pp.107–8.

28. Charles's sketches, 1818, (West Yorkshire Archives WYW1352/1/1/12/70).

29. Edward Potten, 'Beyond Bibliophilia: Contextualizing Private Libraries in the Nineteenth Century', *Library and Information History,* vol. 31(2), 2015, p.77 commenting on John Winn's annotated account book (West Yorkshire Archives WYW1352/1/1/10/3).

Loans

Selected highlights, 2023

It is proving to be another busy and exciting year for the National Trust's loans programme, through which we lend items from the collections to exhibitions organised by museums, galleries and cultural heritage organisations in the UK and around the world. The Trust is a generous lender, and this important part of its work enables audiences to see collections in different and innovative ways, while supporting new research and sharing knowledge. In 2022, over 750,000 people visited exhibitions that included National Trust collections items.

Highlights in 2023 include the tour of *Beatrix Potter: Drawn to Nature*, the Trust's exhibition partnership with the V&A Museum, London, to three venues in the United States. Other exhibition blockbusters the Trust is lending to this year include *Crown to Couture*, the largest exhibition to be staged at Kensington Palace, and *The Tudors: Art and Majesty in Renaissance England*, which opened at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York, in 2022 and tours further North American venues during 2023.

The Trust is also pleased to be lending iconic objects to several notable UK exhibitions, including *Reframing Reynolds: A Celebration* at The Box, Plymouth, which marks the 300th anniversary of the artist's birth, and *Rubens & Women* at Dulwich Picture Gallery, London, which explores how the artist's relationships with women informed his career and inspired his work.

Beatrix Potter: Drawn to Nature, National Trust/ V&A Touring Exhibition

Various US venues
7 April 2023–9 June 2024

Drawn to Nature is a co-curated exhibition by the National Trust and the V&A Museum, London, which follows the famous author's journey from London to the Lake District and from artist to farmer. It explores the love of nature that shaped and inspired Beatrix Potter's achievements in publishing, natural science, farming and conservation.

The Trust and the V&A have two of the largest Beatrix Potter collections in the world. The exhibition showcases the collections of both institutions and offers an unparalleled insight into the life of the woman behind the characters that are still universally adored today. Watercolours, sketchbooks, furniture, lithographs, books, ceramics, photographs and other objects bring to life a bright and determined woman, who, through her craft, created a meaningful life for herself in the place she loved best – the Lake District.

Many of the objects in the exhibition have been reunited for the first time since they passed from Potter's ownership. A sketch of a Wedgwood vase undertaken by the author as a teenager, in the V&A collection, is displayed alongside the vase itself, normally on view at Hill Top, her farmhouse in the Lake District, now owned and cared for by the Trust. The power of the author's imagination and her penchant for observation shine through when objects such as these are placed side by side, as does the evolution of her skill and her propensity for sketching and painting.

The exhibition opened at the V&A in February 2022, where it was seen by over 170,000 people. In 2023 over 30 objects from the Trust's collection will travel to three venues across the United States: Frist Art Museum, Nashville, the High Museum of Art, Atlanta, and the Morgan Library and Museum, New York.

https://fristartmuseum.org/exhibition/beatrix-potter/

https://high.org/events

https://www.themorgan.org/exhibitions/drawn-to-nature

Above and opposite Beatrix Potter items are prepared for exhibition by National Trust staff at The Royal Oak Conservation Studio at Knole, Kent • Photos: National Trust Images/James Dobson

The Tudors: Art and Majesty in Renaissance England

Various US venues
10 October 2022–24 September 2023

In the first American exhibition to survey the legacy of Tudor artistic patronage, *The Tudors: Art and Majesty in Renaissance England* features two important loans from Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire: an iconic portrait of Queen Elizabeth I (NT 1129128) commissioned by her courtier 'Bess of Hardwick' (1527–1608), and the spectacular 'Sea-Dog Table' (NT 1127744), of *c.*1575 (opposite). Both objects have been at Hardwick since at least 1601.

Celebrating the splendour and symbolism of the Tudor arts, the exhibition explores the intersections of art and politics over three momentous generations of rule. The 'Sea-Dog Table', after the designs of Jacques Androuet du Cerceau (d.1585), drawn around the time he worked at the court of Renée, Duchess of Ferrara, the French King's aunt, is distinguished by its association with the royal families of 16th-century France, Scotland and England.

The portrait, possibly adapted from a miniature, is the finest image of Queen Elizabeth I in the Trust's collection. Ageless, the Queen appears in a white satin dress sumptuously embroidered with land and sea creatures. The richly symbolic needlework indirectly references Bess of Hardwick's own talents as an embroiderer.

https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/tudors

https://www.clevelandart.org/exhibitions/tudors-art-and-majesty-renaissance-england

https://www.famsf.org/exhibitions/tudors

Crown to Couture

Kensington Palace, London
5 April–29 October 2023

This immersive fashion exhibition featuring 200 objects explores the splendour of dress at the Georgian court and its surprising parallels with the iconic red-carpet looks of today, such as those seen at the annual MET Gala. Historic portraits and fashion items will be shown alongside iconic 20th- and 21st-century fashion 'moments', including pieces worn by Audrey Hepburn, Lady Gaga and Lizzo.

The Trust is lending three paintings to the exhibition. One of these, from Petworth, West Sussex, is a portrait (opposite) by Johann Zoffany (1733–1810) of the actress Frances Abington (1737–1815), who could be considered one of the first fashion stylists: *Frances Barton, Mrs Abington as the Widow Bellmour in Arthur Murphy's, The Way to Keep Him* (NT 486294). Two portraits from Ickworth, Suffolk, of the prominent and notorious 18th-century courtiers Lord and Lady Hervey, will also be on display: *John Hervey, 2nd Baron Hervey*, (NT 851716) and *Mary Lepel, Lady Hervey* (NT 851717), after Kneller, by John Fayram (active *c.*1713–d.1744).

Above 'Sea-Dog Table', *c.*1575, after Jacques Androuet du Cerceau (d.1585), wood, gilding and marble, 85 x 147 x 85cm, Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire • Photo: National Trust/Robert Thrift
Right *Frances Barton, Mrs Abington as the Widow Bellmour*, *c.*1765, by Johann Zoffany (1733–1810), oil on canvas, 99 x 113cm, Petworth House, West Sussex • Photo: National Trust Images/Derrick E. Witty

www.hrp.org.uk/kensington-palace/whats-on/crown-to-couture/

The Legend of King Arthur: A Pre-Raphaelite Love Story

William Morris Gallery, London
Until 22 January 2023

Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery, Carlisle
4 February–3 June 2023

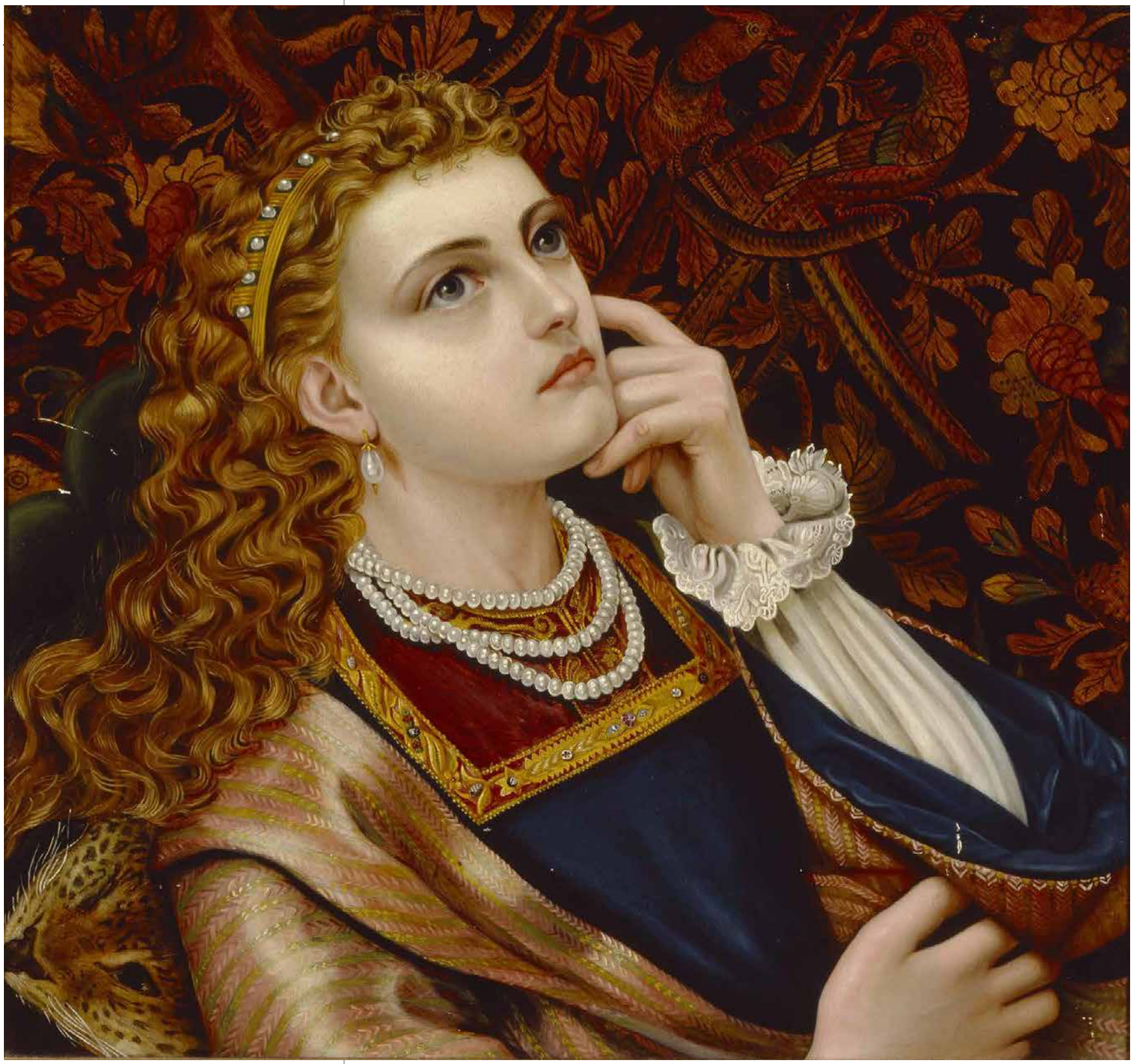
Falmouth Art Gallery, Cornwall
17 June–30 September 2023

This touring exhibition explores the legend of King Arthur through the eyes of Pre-Raphaelite artists and with a focus on locations in Cornwall. The exhibition features items from several important collections and the Trust is delighted to be lending three pieces by women artists of the pre-Raphaelite movement, from Wightwick Manor, Wolverhampton.

The loans comprise an oil painting (right) of Elaine, wife of Lancelot, by Emma Sandys (1843–77) (NT 1288985), and two drawings of Sir Galahad (NT 1291774 and NT 1291775) by Elizabeth 'Lizzie' Siddal (1829–62).

tullie.org.uk/events/the-legend-of-king-arthur-a-pre-raphaelite-love-story/

open.falculture.org/2022/08/05/arthur/



Right *Elaine*, *c*.1862–5, Emma Sandys (1843–77), oil on panel, 36.9 x 39.1cm, Wightwick Manor, West Midlands • Photo: National Trust

Meet the Expert

Lottie Allen
Head Gardener, Hidcote Manor Garden, Gloucestershire

Fig. 1 Lottie in the garden at Hidcote, which was designed by Major Lawrence Johnston (1871–1958) • Photo: National Trust/Graham Pearson

I wasn't drawn to horticulture as a child. Instead, my inspiration came from the wider natural environment – through bird watching, tree-spotting and habitat creation. As a young Quaker, sitting in Meetings for Worship, I remember feeling a sense of calm come over me as I focussed my mind on the trees I could see through the windows.

Spending time in the natural environment as well as taking part in a range of outdoor pursuits galvanised my desire to work outside. After A Levels I embarked on a BSc (Hons) in Landscape and Amenity Management at Writtle College. In my second year we had the opportunity to complete a placement, and I headed back to the South West to Coleton Fishacre. If you've visited it, you'll know why it still holds a very special place in my heart; if you haven't, then put it on your bucket list!

The garden and its team couldn't have been more supportive in my formative horticultural years. I lived on site and took every opportunity to immerse myself in horticulture. One year became two, and then I returned to college, inspired by the garden's volunteers to write a dissertation on managing volunteers in a historic garden – a niche subject at the time, but one that has since served me well.

Since leaving college, I have spent the past 20 years working and managing teams at Montacute House, Tintinhull Garden, Tyntesfield, St Michael's Mount, and now Hidcote Garden. The team of 12 that works in the garden at Hidcote is an eclectic mix of individuals with very different CVs. We are all successful examples of the different training routes into horticulture, from school-leavers to career-changers and everyone in between. We now have two apprenticeships at Hidcote, a model that exemplifies the current work-based route into the industry at a time when training provision needs to inspire and engage with our future. I really hope this model proves successful – it's so important that our industry doesn't rest on its laurels, it needs to showcase why horticulture favours the brave.

No two days are the same as Head Gardener at Hidcote. Often more desk-based than I may have preferred at an earlier stage in my career, I now work to facilitate the efforts of a large team. This includes all manner of things: planning financial spend, operating as part of the Property Leadership Team, responding to unforeseen situations, and above all guiding our ambition to reflect the ideals of Major Lawrence Johnston (1871–1958), the gifted garden designer and plantsman who designed the garden at Hidcote in phases between 1907 and 1938. Johnston's vision was of 'a wild garden in a formal setting' – something that captures my mind and soul.

The challenges of conservation and access are never far away, which means developing ways for others to understand our decisions, and working with confidence and without apology. The new Conservation Management Plan (CMP) includes no fewer than 72 policies that help us to 'hold the line' when considering the breadth of conservation, and the changing climate is integral to that ambition. Two years ago, we tackled the 22 yew columns in the Pillar Garden, which had grown out of shape and scale to their surroundings. Within six months, most of the single bare stems had vigorously responded (Fig. 2 shows the 'pillars' about 18 months after pruning, clothed in new growth). It was a significant task – and not the year to see the Pillar Garden at its best – but now we have tackled the yews, the planting and hard landscaping can be addressed.

Building on the CMP, we have developed a Garden Management Plan that will give the team a clear understanding of our priorities and how we aim to tackle some of the more challenging character areas such as the Upper Stream, Old Garden and Long Borders. These areas lack distinction and harbour pernicious weeds but they represent Johnston's 'large canvas', where he used a bold palette of colour, height and texture. His approach will serve us well in our aspirations as we mark the 75th anniversary this year of Johnston transferring the garden to the National Trust's care. We will be celebrating his legacy throughout the year with a series of exhibitions reflecting on Hidcote's remarkable power to inspire.

Fig. 2 Hidcote's garden, which is celebrating 75 years of National Trust ownership this year • Photo: National Trust Images/James Dobson

The National Trust Collections Series

In addition to the *Cultural Heritage Magazine*, the National Trust's Cultural Heritage Publishing (CHP) programme publishes research-based books on our collections, properties, gardens and other cultural assets – including the popular Collections series, which is written by the Trust's curators and other in-house experts and is aimed at a broad audience.

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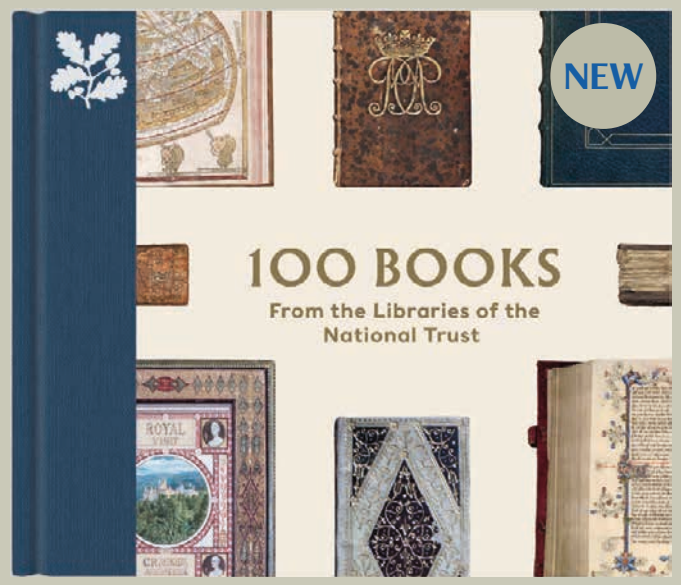

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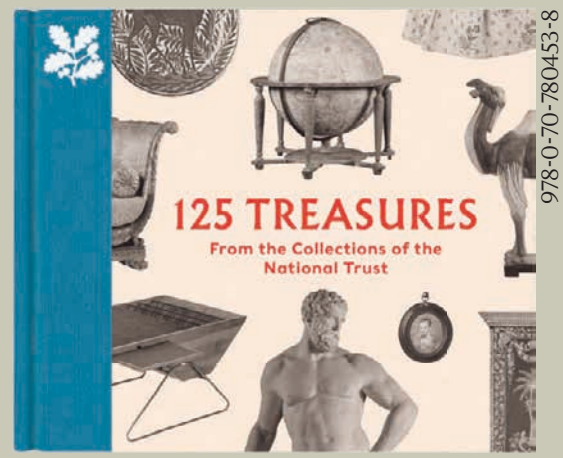

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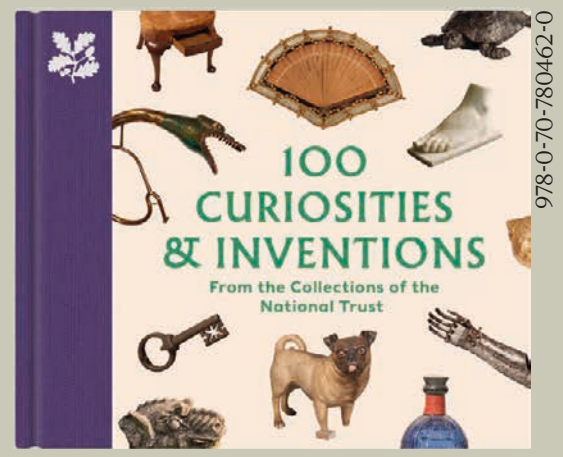

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