

V&A Academy

ART AND THE CITY: ANTIQUITY TO RENAISSANCE



Introduction

Explore a remarkable period in European art and architecture. Expert lecturers will bring to life artists of the sixteenth century, including Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo, Titian, Dürer and Brueghel.

Discover how the Renaissance, from its beginnings in Italy, came to affect the whole of Europe, with innovations in painting, sculpture and architecture. The most important new development was printing. Illustrated books and prints by Dürer and his contemporaries made images familiar to a wide audience, as well as providing sources for design and ornament. Printed books and pamphlets would play a central role in spreading new religious ideas during the Reformation period.

Information

Mondays, 22 September– 24 November, 11.00-15.30. Onsite and Online.

Watch lecture recordings on demand, available at the end of each day, until 2 February 2026.

Your course leader

Dr Kathy McLauchlan, art historian specialising in French painting and lecturer with the Arts Society, Morley College and Oxford University.

Note: V&A Academy programmes are subject to change without notice.

Week 1 – 22 September

Introduction

- 10.45 Introduction to the Course
- 11.00 Introducing the Art of the City **Kathy McLauchlan**
- 12.30 Beginnings of the City **Sue Rollin**
- 14.30 Babylon **Sue Rollin**

Week 2 – 29 September

The City in Art and Myth

- 11.00 Tales of the City **Justine Hopkins**
- 12.30 The City & Civilization **Justine Hopkins**
- 14.30 Art and the City **Justine Hopkins**

Week 3 – 06 October

Cities of Greece

- 10.00 Gallery Talk (Group A) : Images of the City **David Bellingham** –
additional ticket holders only
- 11.00 City State **David Bellingham**
- 12.30 Art and Architecture of Athens **David Bellingham**
- 14.30 Alexandria and other Hellenistic Cities **James Renshaw**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk (Group B): Images of the City **David Bellingham** –
additional ticket holders only

Week 4 – 13 October

Rome & its Empire

- 11.00 Art of Rome – Republic to Empire **Steve Kershaw**
- 12.30 Life and Art in Pompeii and Herculaneum **Steve Kershaw**
- 14.30 Pompeii and Herculaneum – The final Day **James Renshaw**

Week 5 – 20 October

Rome and its Legacy

- 10.00 Gallery Talk (Group A): Treasures of Milan **Cecily Hennessy** –
additional ticket holders only
- 11.00 Rome in the Later Empire **James Renshaw**
- 12.30 Rome and its Transformations **Cecily Hennessy**
- 14.30 Milan **Cecily Hennessy**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk (Group B): Treasures of Milan **Cecily Hennessy** –
additional ticket holders only

Week 6 – 27 October

Cities of Faith

- 11.00 Constantinople – Constantine to Justinian **Cecily Hennessy**
- 12.30 Ravenna **Cecily Hennessy**
- 14.30 Jerusalem – City of Heaven **Cecily Hennessy**

Week 7 – 03 November

Centres of Power

- 10.00 Gallery Talk (Group A): Paris **Sally Dormer** – *additional ticket holders only*
- 11.00 London 1040-1270: the Creation of an International Centre of Art **Sally Dormer**
- 12.30 Palermo between the 12th and 13th Centuries
Umberto Bongianino
- 14.30 Avignon: Papal Capital **Sally Dormer**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk (Group B): Paris **Sally Dormer** – *additional ticket holders only*

Week 8 – 10 November

Cities of al-Andalus

- 11.00 Early Islamic Cities **Umberto Bongianino**
- 12.30 Cordoba: Caliphal Splendour **Sue Rollin**
- 14.30 Granada: Last Flowering of al-Andalus **Sue Rollin**

Week 9 – 17 November

Art of Venice

- 10.00 Gallery Talk (Group A): Venice – Luxury Living **Sally Dormer** –
additional ticket holders only
- 11.00 Rise of a City **Kevin Childs**
- 12.30 Venice and the Fourth Crusade **Sally Dormer**
- 14.30 City of Empire **TBC**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk (Group B): Venice – Luxury Living **Sally Dormer** –
additional ticket holders only

Week 10 – 24 November

Display and Magnificence

- 10.00 Gallery Talk (Group A): Italian Civic Sculpture **John Renner** –
additional ticket holders only
- 11.00 The Italian City States in the late Middle Ages **John Renner**
- 12.30 Florence: from City to Court **Clare Ford-Wille**
- 14.30 City State: Siena **Sally Dormer**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk (Group B): Italian Civic Sculpture **John Renner** –
additional ticket holders only