

V&A Academy

HIGH RENAISSANCE AND BAROQUE: REMBRANDT TO WREN

**Wednesdays
22 April – 24 June 2026**

V&A

Introduction



Wednesdays 22 April – 24 June 2026. Watch lecture recordings on demand, available at the end of each day, until 2nd September 2026.

Overview

Explore the world of art during the seventeenth century. Expert lecturers will bring to life artists, designers, and architects of the Baroque period, including Rembrandt, Velázquez, Wren, and Hawksmoor.

During the seventeenth century Europe was dominated politically and artistically by France, and Louis XIV's palaces, gardens and court life would be widely imitated. Spain also saw a flowering of art and architecture for both church and state, while the Netherlands developed a new type of market, with buyers going to shops and auctions rather than commissioning works directly from artists. In the same period England's leading Baroque architect, Christopher Wren, designed palaces for the Stuart kings, while his church buildings combined Baroque grandeur with Protestant simplicity. Across Europe luxury goods such as lacquer, textiles, and ceramics, started to arrive from the East in great quantities. Imported tea and coffee became fashionable drinks and fine wares were produced to serve them.

Your course leader

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

Week 1 – 22 April

Art and Exploration

- 10.45 Introduction to the Course, **Kathy McLauchlan**
- 11.00 Key Developments in the Arts, **Kathy McLauchlan**
- 12.30 Historical Background to 17th-Century Europe, **Caroline Knight**
- 14.30 Presenting the World: the Role and Development of Maps during the 17th Century, **Jack Englehardt**

Week 2 – 29 April

Baroque France

- 10.00 Gallery Talk (Group A): The Europe 1600-1815 Galleries, **TBC** - *additional ticket holders only*
- 11.00 Architecture in the Age of Louis XIV, **Barbara Lasic**
- 12.30 17th century French Sculpture, **Barbara Lasic**
- 14.30 Interiors and Furnishings: Louis XIV to Régence, **TBC**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk (Group B): The Europe 1600-1815 Galleries, **TBC** - *additional ticket holders only*

Week 3 – 6 May

The Dutch Republic

- 11.00 The Rise of the Dutch Republic, **Clare Ford-Wille**
- 12.30 Dutch Portraits, **TBC**
- 14.30 The Caravaggisti, **Clare Ford-Wille**

Week 4 – 13 May

Trade and the Exotic

10.00 Gallery Talk (Group A) Ceramics, **Susan Bracken**
additional ticket holders only

11.00 The London Art Market, **Susan Bracken**

12.30 The Chinese Export Trade, **Helen Glaister**

14.30 The Trade in Exotic Woods after 1600, **Adam Bowett**

15.30 Gallery Talk (Group B) Ceramics, **Susan Bracken**
additional ticket holders only

Week 5 – 20 May

The Golden Age of Dutch Painting

11.00 Rembrandt, **Clare Ford-Wille**

12.30 Genre Painting in the Netherlands, **Clare Ford-Wille**

14.30 Dutch Landscape, **Kathy McLauchlan**

Week 6 – 27 May

Painting for Interiors

15.30 Gallery Talk: Late 17th-Century Glass, **Justine Hopkins**
additional ticket holders only

11.00 Decorative Painting in England, **TBC**

12.30 The Practice of Portraiture, **Angela Cox**

14.30 Art of Still Life, **Kathy McLauchlan**

15.30 Gallery Talk: Late 17th-Century Glass, **Justine Hopkins**
additional ticket holders only

Week 7 – 3 June

British Architecture and Design

- 11.00 Stuart Interiors: Restoration and late Stuart Decoration and Display, **Julia Hamilton**
- 12.30 English Country Houses, 1660, **Caroline Knight**
- 14.30 The Church in London: Wren to Hawksmoor **Caroline Knight**

Week 8 – 10 June

Art of the Spanish Golden Age

- 10.00 Gallery Talk: Sculpture and its Materials, **Clare Ford-Wille**
additional ticket holders only
- 11.00 Royal Building from El Escorial to Buen Retiro, **Clare Ford-Wille**
- 12.30 Velázquez at Court in Madrid, **TBC**
- 14.30 The Word and the Book: Reading Spanish Religious Painting, **TBC**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk: Sculpture and its Materials, **Clare Ford-Wille**
additional ticket holders only

Week 9 – 17 June

Wealth and Splendour

- 10.00 Gallery Talk: Luxury Objects **Susan Bracken** *additional ticket holders only*
- 11.00 Wren and the Royal Palaces of the Later Stuarts **Caroline Knight**
- 12.30 Furniture types 1660-1720 **Adam Bowett**
- 14.30 The Italian Garden **Clare Ford-Wille**
- 15.30 Gallery Talk: Luxury Objects **Susan Bracken** *additional ticket holders only*

Week 10 – 24 June

Into the 18th Century

- 11.00 Baroque Time: English and European Clocks 1650–1720, **TBC**
- 12.30 The Baroque beyond Rome, **Clare Ford-Wille**
- 14.30 Into the 18th Century: Painting at the French Court, 1660-1720, **TBC**