

Classics Day 2023

Luxury and beauty in the classical world

1 July 2023 – British Museum, BP Lecture Theatre



Welcome to our annual study day, a partnership between City Lit and the British Museum. Bettany Hughes and other leading Classicists will discuss the importance of appearance, opulence and prestige from different eras and parts of the ancient world.

The day complements the British Museum's current exhibition **Luxury and power: Persia to Greece** (open until 13 August), with curator Dr Jamie Fraser introducing the themes of the exhibition and highlighting key aspects of its content. Prof Michael Scott will present a lecture on luxury in ancient Athens. Acclaimed broadcaster Bettany Hughes will discuss 'Venus and Aphrodite and the search for physical and spiritual beauty'. At the end of this session, Bettany Hughes will be presented with a City Lit Fellowship Award in recognition of her commitment to lifelong learning. The day will conclude with Caroline Vout from Cambridge University, who will offer a lecture around 'The Ugliness of Ancient Art'. Michael Scott, Bettany Hughes and Caroline Vout will be available for book signings.

Programme*

10.25–10.35 Welcome and introductions

10.35–11.20 **Introducing “Luxury and Power: Persia to Greece” – Dr. Jamie Fraser, British Museum**



Doctor Jamie Fraser is an archaeologist and Curator of Ancient Levant and Anatolia in the Middle East Department at the British Museum. He is the Lead Curator of Luxury and power: Persia to Greece. Previously, he was Senior Curator at the Nicholson Museum at the University of Sydney.

11.20–11.30 Short break

11.30–12.15 **Watch out for fish fanciers and tunic-trailers! Ideas of luxury in ancient Athens – Prof. Michael Scott, Warwick University**



Professor Michael Scott is Professor in Classics and Ancient History at the University of Warwick and Director of the Warwick Institute of Engagement. His research and teaching focuses on aspects of ancient Greek and Roman society, as well as ancient Global History. His books include *From Democrats to Kings* (2009, icon Books), *Space and society in the Greek and Roman worlds* (2012, Cambridge University Press), *Delphi: centre of the ancient world* (2014, Princeton University Press), *Ancient Worlds: An Epic History of East and West* (2016, Hutchinson/Windmill) and many others. He has written and presented a range of TV and Radio documentaries for National Geographic, History Channel, ITV and the BBC.

12.30–14.00 Lunch break and book signing

The speakers will be available in the bookshop to sign copies of their books in these timings:

12.30–13.00: Michael Scott

13.00–14.00: Bettany Hughes and Caroline Vout

* Subject to last-minute changes

14.15–15.30 **Venus & Aphrodite and the search for physical and spiritual beauty – Prof. Bettany Hughes**



Professor Bettany Hughes is an award-winning historian, author and broadcaster, who has devoted the last 25 years to the vibrant communication of the past. Her speciality is ancient and mediaeval history and culture. A Scholar at Oxford University she has taught at Oxford and Cambridge Universities and lectured at Cornell, Bristol, UCL, Maastricht, Utrecht, Manchester and Swansea. She is a Tutor for Cambridge University's Institute of Continuing Education, Research Fellow of King's College London and recently joined the New College of the Humanities as Professor of History.

*Following the lecture, Prof. Bettany Hughes will be presented with a **City Lit Fellowship** by Mark Malcomson CBE, Principal of City Lit.*

15.30–15.45 Break

15.45–16.30 **The Ugliness of Ancient Art – Prof. Caroline Vout, Cambridge University**



Professor Caroline Vout is Professor of Classics at the University of Cambridge, and Byvanck Chair of Classical Archaeology at Leiden University. She has published widely on Greek and Roman art and its reception, ancient history and Latin literature. Her books include *Power and Eroticism in Imperial Rome* (2007) and *The Hills of Rome: Signature of an Eternal City* (2012), both Cambridge University Press, *Sex on Show: Seeing the Erotic in Greece and Rome* (2013, The British Museum) *Classical Art: A Life History from Antiquity to the Present* (Princeton, 2018) and *Exposed: The Greek and Roman Body* (2022, Profile/Wellcome). Caroline is also Director of Cambridge's Museum of Classical Archaeology.

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