

## Life Stories: The Habsburgs

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<b>Dates</b>	Tuesdays 17, 24 September and 1 October 2024
<b>Times</b>	18.00-20.00 BST
<b>Location</b>	Online (Zoom Webinar)
<b>Tutor</b>	Clare Ford-Wille
<b>Level</b>	All Levels

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After Diego Velázquez, *Philip IV on Horseback*, about 1660 to about 1799 (detail)

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### Course Description

Discover one of the most influential dynasties in Europe and their profound impact on the world of art. Focusing on a small selection of artworks now in the Wallace Collection as well as those in other collections, we'll learn how the Habsburgs emerged as dukes of Austria and kings of Germany, playing vital roles in both politics and the arts from the 13th century on. Our discussions will include key members of the family, from Philip II of Spain to the female governors of the Netherlands who in turn enriched Habsburg collections and expanded cities such as Vienna, Prague, and Madrid. We'll also examine the 18th-century patronage of Empress Maria Theresia, and consider the dynasty's gradual decline during the 19th century under Franz Josef.

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### **Session One: The Early Habsburgs**

We'll begin with Rudolf IV of Vienna, learning how Vienna became the cultural and intellectual centre of Habsburg power. We'll see how Emperor Maximilian's marriage to Mary, Duchess of Burgundy and the Netherlands consolidated this further, enhancing the cultural patronage of the family. We'll also look at the impact of Spanish rule and culture with the marriage of Maximilian's son, Philip, and grandson, Charles, who became ruler of an empire 'on which the sun never set', with its priceless treasures from the New World.

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### **Session Two: The Divided Family**

In our second session we'll consider the abdication of Charles V in 1556 and the division of his vast empire between the two branches of the family. His brother, Ferdinand, received the German possessions and those to the east, including Bohemia and Hungary. Spain, the Netherlands and the possessions in the New World were inherited by Charles's son, Philip II. We'll learn about Philip's art patronage, including his connections with Titian, and that of Rudolf II, who patronised both the arts and sciences.

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### **Session Three: The Decline and Fall of the Habsburgs**

In our final session, we'll reveal how Empress Maria Theresia enhanced architectural and artistic projects in Vienna, particularly the summer palace and gardens of Schönbrunn. We'll also see how under Franz Josef, Vienna was expanded with many buildings culminating in those of the new style of art nouveau and the rich gallery and museum collections. We'll close with a focus on Franz Josef's brother, who became Emperor of Mexico and whose execution was famously painted by Édouard Manet.

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### **Course Tutor**

Clare Ford-Wille is an Associate Lecturer at Birkbeck College, University of London and also lectures regularly for many additional institutions, including the V&A, the National Trust, The Arts Society, the NACF as well as leading groups to places of art historical interest in Europe, Armenia and the USA.

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### **Previous Skills, Knowledge or Experience**

None required. This course is designed as an introduction to the subject.

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### **Joining Information and Format**

This course will be taught through [Zoom Webinar](#). Each course session duration is 120 minutes, including a five-minute break and time for Q&A with the tutor.

Tickets are for all dates. Ticket holders will be emailed the Zoom link, Webinar ID and Passcode 24 hours in advance of the first course session, which should be retained for accessing both sessions of the course.

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### **Course Recording**

This course will be recorded. Within 48 hours of each course session, ticket holders will be emailed a link to view the recording, which will be available for two weeks.

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