

The Founders of the Wallace Collection

Dates	Wednesday 11 and Thursday 12 November 2026
Times	18.00-20.00 BST
Location	Online (Zoom)
Tutor	Timothy Evers
Level	All Levels



Dighton, Richard Wallace© The Wallace Collection.

Course Description

Take a deep dive into the history of and the people who created the Wallace Collection. Named after Sir Richard Wallace and bequeathed to the British nation by his widow, Lady Wallace, it is a story filled with scandal, romance and colourful characters. There are those, like the larger-than-life 3rd Marquess of Hertford, whose bad behaviour repeatedly put him in the press's spotlight. Or the shrewd Marchioness, Mie-Mie, who set up herself as a woman of independent means in Paris. And, of course, Richard Wallace, who devoted much of his fortune to charitable causes.

Session One

We will begin by exploring the lives of the first three marquesses of Hertford. Courtiers, ambassadors and royal confidants each, their artistic interests reflected the spirit of their age. Through political upheaval and personal scandal, theirs is a story of a family under constant public scrutiny. We will also explore the lives of the artists and makers, such as Canaletto and Joshua Reynolds, and individual works of art that set the groundwork of what would eventually become the Wallace Collection.

Session Two

The 4th Marquess of Hertford was not only the great collector of the family but also the individual whose interests chiefly define the Wallace Collection as it is today. Secretive and voracious in his collecting, Hertford would stop at nothing to gather together the finest in paintings and decorative arts. It was not without some shock, however, when Richard Wallace was to inherit the majority of Hertford's collection and properties. A dramatic, fairy-tale like story followed, ending in one of the largest and most expensive gifts ever given to the British nation.

Course Tutor

Timothy Evers is the Wallace Collection's former Curatorial Administrator. In that role, he contributed material to the landmark exhibition *Caravaggio's Cupid* and edited the accompanying catalogue. In addition, he co-edited the new publication *The Wallace Collection: A Short History*. He has regularly taught classes at City Lit, Sir John Soane's Museum and for the City of London Libraries.

Joining Information

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 both 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.

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.
