

Sculpture: Material and Memory

Dates	Tuesday 11 and Wednesday 12 May 2021
Times	11.00–13.00 BST
Location	Zoom (online)
Tutor	Dr Richard Stemp
Level	All Levels



Unknown Maker, *Bust of an African Woman*, c.1650

Course Description

The Wallace Collection presents a remarkable number of sculptures which are rarely the focus of our attention. Many are small in scale - which is why they are all too easy to walk past - but on this course, we'll stop to pay these intricate and preciously-wrought works the attention they deserve. We'll spend two mornings looking at sculptures, focusing on the details which learning online makes possible.

Sculptures from the museum itself will be our primary material, enabling us to understand the diverse forms and techniques of sculpture, while also enriching our knowledge of the breadth of the Collection. These works will be put into context by comparison with some of the world's more famous sculptures - 'star guests', which will be brought in to illustrate specific points, techniques and materials.

Session One: Materials

If we put the rich array of pigments aside, there is only a limited number of types of painting whereas sculpture uses a wealth of materials and techniques. For 'fine art', marble and bronze were the go-to materials, requiring a range of skills and techniques to create the finished product. The Wallace Collection also holds works made from clay, ivory, wood and wax - more than a dozen different materials can be located in the Sixteenth-Century Gallery alone.

For this first session, we will explore as many different materials as we can in order to appreciate the various ways of creating sculpture and to determine the reasons why these particular materials were used. We will also discover how methods of production might have changed over time.

Session Two: Memory

Our second day will focus specifically on the genre of portrait sculpture. As a means of celebrating people during their lifetime, and as an embodiment of their memory when they die, it is a genre in which the Wallace Collection is particularly rich. As well as portraits of its founders, there are sculptures of both British and French monarchs, and others of the 'great and the good' who were collected for historical and art historical reasons. We'll also look at the ways in which traditional techniques of portraiture were used to portray characters from faith or fiction, making the object of belief believable, or the imagined seem more real.

There are, however, no memorials - so for these we'll look at examples from outside the Collection. They will, in themselves, teach us more about the techniques of sculpture, and of its many forms and functions as well as enriching our engagement with sculptures in the Wallace Collection.

Course Tutor

Dr Richard Stemp is a graduate of Clare College, University of Cambridge, where he also completed his PhD on Sculpture in Ferrara in the Fifteenth Century. After a year at the Academy of Live and Recorded Arts he has shared his time between art and acting. Richard was a lecturer at the National Gallery for 24 years, and has worked regularly for London's leading galleries including Tate, Buckingham Palace and the V&A. His books include *The Secret Language of the Renaissance* and *Churches and Cathedrals*; he has written and presented two series for Channel Four: *Art in the National Gallery* and *Tate Modern*.

Previous Skills, Knowledge or Experience

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

Joining Information and Format

This course will be taught through Zoom Webinar. For more information, including instructions on how to download and use the system, please visit www.zoom.us/support.

Each course session duration is 120 minutes, including a five-minute break and Q&A session with the tutor. Tickets are for both dates. Ticket holders will be emailed the

Zoom link, Webinar ID and Passcode 48 hours in advance of the first course session, which should be retained for accessing both sessions.

Course Recording

This course will be recorded. Following each session, ticket holders will be emailed a link to view the recording, which will be available for one week only.
