

Close Encounters

Dates	Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29 March 2023
Times	14.00-16.00 BST
Location	Theatre and galleries, at the museum
Tutor	Jo Rhymer
Level	All Levels



Frans Hals, *The Laughing Cavalier*, 1624 (detail)

Course Description

Develop ways to prolong your interest and enjoyment of Western European paintings. Using visual analysis skills, we'll investigate a small but varied selection of works to help increase your familiarity with the Wallace Collection, and to introduce new ideas to engage with art beyond the course. Our exploration will include works by artists Crivelli, Hals, Lawrence and Nattier.

We'll focus mainly on paintings that depict a form of encounter. In considering this theme, we'll also explore our own potential role in relation to what is depicted. Encountering art at first hand can be a unique and rewarding experience, so each session's illustrated talk will be followed by an intimate gallery tour.

Session One

In our first session, we'll use Crivelli's *Saint Roch* and Sassoferrato's *The Mystic Marriage of Saint Catherine* to explore connections that might not always be immediately obvious. Through our investigations, we'll consider the impact of the museum environment to that of the paintings' original setting, and how looking slowly at such works might augment their intended effects.

We'll also look at portraiture and landscape paintings and discuss the limits imposed by a picture's frame - and how visual analysis enables us not only to sustain our interaction with a painting, but also to consider artists' decisions.

Session Two

In our second session, we'll consider how familiarity with a painting might prevent us from sustaining our encounter with it. How can we overcome the idea of 'knowing' a painting so well that we no longer need to look again? Exploring Hals's *The Laughing Cavalier*, we'll consider ways of seeing a well-known painting afresh. And beyond the immediate effects of this celebrated work, what else might we notice when we look slowly?

Our gallery tour will include the exploration of a painting and a sculptural bust. How might comparing a painting by Nattier with a nearby three-dimensional work by Houdon reveal differences in encounters and effects?

Course Tutor

Jo Rhymer is Informal Learning Lead Producer at the Wallace Collection. She is also a freelance lecturer for the V&A, is a Panel Tutor at the University of Cambridge Institute of Continuing Education and accredited lecturer for The Arts Society. She is an art historian specialising in 19th- and early 20th-century French art.

Previous Skills, Knowledge or Experience

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

Joining Information and Format

This course will take place in person in our Theatre, Lower Ground Floor. The course involves some walking and standing in gallery spaces with limited seating.

To help keep everyone safe, capacity in the Theatre is restricted to support social distancing. Please do not attend if you have any symptoms associated with COVID-19, have had a positive coronavirus test, or have been asked to self-isolate.

For full visiting details, please see www.wallacecollection.org/visit.
