

## SPECIAL INTEREST DAY - Monday 15<sup>th</sup> September 2025

*'IF YOU GO DOWN TO THE WOODS today.....'*

Justine Hopkins looks to the fascinating story of trees in art and literature, getting to the roots of how artists, writers and poets have long viewed the tree, crossing time and space, where reality and dream meet and mingle in strange and unexpected ways.

*'The Word for World'* is Trees. They have always caught the human imagination. The human eye is naturally drawn to trees in landscape. In Norse mythology the first man and woman were created from an ash and an elm tree; in New Zealand large old trees are given personal names; even Christianity itself can be seen as a journey between trees - from the Garden of Eden to Golgotha. Not surprising, when you consider how, all over the world and throughout history, trees have been central to human life, enhancing our environment both physically and metaphysically, feeding our bodies and our minds.

Trees in all the varied stages of their life, growth and death have been and remain a constantly recurring theme of painting, sculpture and literature. They have inspired artists to explore new ideas and new ways of expressing themselves: their influence on art extends right to the present-day, as integral to Modernism as to classic landscape, while tree literature ranges from poetry to science and science fiction to forestry. The day explores the manifestations of this literally deep-rooted fascination, across time and in all sorts of places, some perhaps less obvious than others.

Dr. Justine Hopkins is a writer and lecturer in art history. Her work takes her to UK universities, Oxford and Cambridge, leading galleries and museums, as well as many independent institutions. She is an accredited Arts Society lecturer. She also writes historical fantasy novels.



### ARTISTS INCLUDE:

Lucas Cranach, Piero della Francesca, Uccello; Gainsborough, Constable, Turner, Samuel Palmer, Caspar David Friedrich; Cézanne, Van Gogh, Piet Mondrian; Paul Nash, Michael Ayrton, David Hockney, David Nash.

### WRITERS INCLUDE:

Shakespeare, Dante, Tolkien, Kipling, Louis MacNeice, Housman and the anonymous Epic of Gilgamesh.

## PROGRAMME FOR THE DAY

### Lecture 1

*Growing in the human brain?*

Trees out of fact into imagination, from Gilgamesh to Samuel Palmer



Thomas Gainsborough: Cornard Wood, Sudbury, Suffolk 1748 [National Gallery]

## Morning Lecture 2

*Never two leaves alike?*

Painting the reality of trees from Constable to Van Gogh and Cézanne



Vincent van Gogh: View of Arles, Flowering Orchards 1889  
[Neue Pinakothek, Munich]

## Afternoon Lecture 3

*Enchantment and terror?*

Modern trees from Picasso to Hockney



Michael Ayrton: Entrance to a Wood 1945  
[Arts Council]

## TIMETABLE

|                 |              |
|-----------------|--------------|
| 10:00am         | Registration |
| 10:30 – 11:30am | Lecture 1    |
| 11:30am         | Coffee       |
| 12:00 – 1:00pm  | Lecture 2    |
| 1:00 – 2.15pm   | Lunch        |
| 2:15 – 3:15 pm  | Lecture 3    |
| 3:15            | Questions    |

**Tickets cost £50.00pp** and includes an excellent lunch and glass of wine or soft drink.

Our **Special Interest Days** are very popular and are usually fully booked well ahead of the event.

Early booking is recommended.

[Go to Booking form](#)

To reserve your place you can book 'online'.

**When booking for events** we are encouraging members to '**Book Online**' if at all possible. It's easy to do and only takes 2 minutes. It has the following advantages:

- You receive an instant acknowledgement of your booking.
- You will receive an emailed copy of your booking form so you can be sure of the detail.

Should you require additional information or help, please contact our organiser Lesley Nadel  
E: [lesleynadel@aol.com](mailto:lesleynadel@aol.com) T: 07909 918890