



Discover More

Welcome to our Autumn 2016 newsletter. I'm delighted to write to you at the start of an academic year which sees the launch of our brand new MA programme in Collections Care and Conservation Management and a Diploma in Art and Contemporary Crafts.

Both of these courses support our ambition to provide true study progression throughout our education programme, offering students the chance to study on anything from a one-day course right through to MA. Look out for further information about our new ten year strategy later in the year.

In the meantime, thank you for your ongoing support of West Dean College. Your commitment is vital to our future.

With best wishes,
Alex Barron
Chief Executive



Alice McVicker; MA Visual Arts, 2016

What's new this term

This academic year we have introduced two new courses to our education programme. Delivered through a module-based approach, they offer greater flexibility for students. The Diploma in Art and Contemporary Crafts draws on our extensive range of short courses across disciplines such as painting, drawing, sculpture, printmaking, textiles, ceramics, wood, metal and jewellery. It enables students to develop the essential practical and contextual skills to establish a successful and sustainable studio practice and provides a route into the Graduate Diploma in Visual Arts at West Dean College or postgraduate study at other institutions.

The MA in Collections Care and Management provides the theoretical and practical skills required for a lead role in the care and management of collections in

a historic house context. It is suitable for conservators and curators with significant collections care responsibilities, as well as graduates from conservation or other museum-related disciplines who intend to develop careers in this area. Students have access to professionals within leading organisations in the field, such as conservators, conservation scientists and academics from organisations including the National Trust, English Heritage, the British Museum and a range of private-sector conservation consultants. This collaboration ensures it remains highly relevant to today's heritage sector.

For more information on West Dean College courses visit our website westdean.org.uk/study

Alumni spotlight: Where are they now?

Tabea Rude graduated in 2015 (MA in Conservation of Clocks and Related Objects). She was awarded the Southern Section Antiquarian Horological Society prize for best conservation-restoration project for her scrupulous restoration of a Russian Poljot Marine Chronometer. She now works for The Clockworks; a unique London studio that combines a museum, workshop, library and meeting space under one roof with the aim of advancing education in electrical time-keeping.

Amelie Drewdun graduated in 2012 (Degree in Conservation of Ceramics and Related Materials). She is now a Conservator at the Bristol Museum.

Laurie Price graduated in 2013 (Diploma in Conservation of Metalwork). For over a year she worked as the Assistant Conservator of Engineering and Technology at the National Museum of Flight in Scotland. She recently became Mill Engineer and Conservator at Whitchurch Silk Mill, Ascot.

Šárka Darton graduated in 2015 (Master of Fine Arts). Since then she has exhibited widely, including 3 installations on display in The Louvre, Paris, in October 2016 as part of an international contemporary art show.





Spotlight on...

Michelle Kirk (MA in Conservation, specialising in Furniture and Related Objects)

What made you choose furniture conservation?

After studying Fine Art at the University of East London I wanted to develop my experience of working with wood. I completed short courses in fine woodworking and carving, and worked at the Royal Opera House and the Victoria and Albert Museum. While at the V&A I discovered that by researching pieces of furniture you uncover the social history. I wanted to be able to preserve those objects and share their stories.

What made you select West Dean College?

My colleagues at the V&A encouraged me to apply for the MA I'd need to become a conservator and they recommended West Dean. It was tough as the application process was competitive and I knew I couldn't fund my studies without a scholarship, but I was encouraged to apply and privileged to receive a scholarship from The British Antique Dealers' Association.

What has been a highlight of your studies?

As part of our Preventative Conservation module we worked as a team to develop a conservation plan for the Nuremburg Doll's House which dates back to 1669. This is a popular object from the House Collection here at West Dean and it was great to work as part of a conservation team as you would for a heritage house or museum.

What other accomplishments have you had over the year?

Over the summer I completed a work placement at the Musical Instrument Museum in Edinburgh. Lots of musical instruments use similar decorative techniques to furniture such as inlays and carvings, so it was interesting to apply my skills in new ways. I worked on an 18th century French Hurdy Gurdy, which was missing a large number of ivory and ebony inlays, leading me to research alternatives to ivory, such as the Tagua Nut.

Is there anything you are particularly looking forward to in the coming year?

I will soon complete an 8 week placement at Brighton Pavilion working with the conservation team to preserve the structure and contents of the Saloon Gallery. This is an exciting opportunity to work in a popular visitor attraction alongside expert conservators.

What are your hopes and plans for the future?

I would love to work in a historic house as I am excited by the idea of combining object conservation with interpretation and teaching the public about the role of conservation. A lot of young people don't know about careers that are available to them if they have an interest in art, such as conservation, curating and scientific research. I'd like to raise awareness of that.

Scholarships and bursaries can be a lifeline for students who demonstrate excellence and a commitment to their creative and academic development, but who are unable to fund the cost of their studies. Today the College builds on the legacy of Edward James by making provision to support emerging creative talents to realise their artistic ambitions and potential, despite financial hardship.

Thanks to the great generosity of supporters we are able to provide funds to students across all courses through The Edward James Foundation Scholarship and Bursary Fund, but it is hugely over-subscribed.

We're grateful to everyone who provides a named scholarship or contributes to our endowment fund, but we need to do more to ensure that we can provide support to every student who needs it. The legacy of your support is the impact your scholars make on our shared cultural heritage when they enter the world as artists, makers, educators and conservators.

To learn more about the importance of scholarships and bursaries visit westdean.org.uk/scholarships.

Celebrating 25 Years of Glorious Gardening

In spring this year we launched an appeal to renovate West Dean's Victorian Nectarine, Late Vinery and Fig Glasshouses in the fruit garden and to recognise the wonderful contribution that our Head Gardeners, husband and wife team, Jim Buckland and Sarah Wain, have made over the 25 years since they began to transform West Dean into award-winning gardens. In the years since 1991, they have revitalised the 19th century landscape and overseen tremendous changes which have brought the gardens international respect for both the quality and variety of horticultural practice.

In recognition of their contribution, friends, family, gardening peers and donors gathered on a September afternoon to celebrate a lifetime of horticultural commitment. It was also an opportunity to say thank you to our wonderful supporters who have raised over £35,000 this year to make restoration of the Fig House possible. Work will continue next spring on the Nectarine and Late Vinery Glasshouses.

“Conserving these glasshouses is central to our vision – it's what we do. West Dean Gardens has a unique range of Victorian glasshouses that are part of the fabric of the place. By conserving them we are able to ensure their continued use and future enjoyment by the next generation,”

Sarah Wain.



West Dean College awards outstanding students

In July this year we were delighted to celebrate the graduation of 115 students and awarded exceptional performance at our annual prize-giving ceremony.

Postgraduate Diploma students Jessica Hyslop (Books) and Victoria Bullard-Smith (Metalwork) were awarded the Chairman's Prize for outstanding achievement in Conservation. Jessica's level of craft skill, dedication and sensitivity in her work was impressive, whilst Victoria demonstrated a natural talent and produced some "beautiful, original work with a high level of artistry."



The Founder's Prize for outstanding achievement was awarded to creative arts student, Fons Vogel (Musical Instruments, Professional Development Diploma). Fons demonstrated a clear understanding of traditional making techniques, working with great skill, craftsmanship and technical proficiency.

A further 16 talented students were presented with awards by industry professionals including the British Antiques Dealers' Association, The Worshipful Company of Cutlers and the Southern Section Antique Horological Society.

Leave a gift to shape the future

West Dean College and Gardens is a place of inspiration and creative promise. A gift in your will helps us educate future generations of artists and conservators.

Our graduates play a crucial role in the creation and preservation of our shared cultural heritage. By remembering West Dean College and Gardens in your will, you will help preserve these historic grounds and nurture the artists and crafts people of tomorrow. Speak to your solicitor or visit westdean.org.uk/giftinwill to find out more.

New specialist tools in the clocks workshop

Students on the Conservation of Clocks programme will benefit from the use of a new lathe this academic year. Funding from The George Daniels' Educational Trust has supported the purchase of a Schaublin 102 lathe which will help students attain a higher degree of precision in their clock-making. Practical work is a priority in the clocks workshop and all students must learn to make a clock in its entirety from scratch. The new lathe ensures students are much better equipped to achieve a high quality finish on their making and repairs and can tackle more highly technical projects.

We are incredibly grateful for this kind of support, without which, it would not be possible to invest in engineering tools of this quality. The advanced level of professional

skills our students gain by working on unique and often rare objects from acclaimed collections is in demand by prospective employers and prepares students to work on culturally important objects.



Representatives of The George Daniels' Educational Trust with the new lathe



René Magritte, La reproduction interdite, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam
Creditline photographer Studio Tromp, Rotterdam.

Surreal icons touring

Work from The Edward James Foundation collection forms part of two major exhibitions this year. Surreal Encounters brings together work from the collections of Roland Penrose, Gabrielle Keiller, Ulla and Heiner Pietzsch and Edward James to demonstrate the passion of these collectors alongside the artists' work. The majority of the works have rarely or never been publicly exhibited.

Sussex Modernism: Retreat and Rebellion explores why radical artists and writers were drawn to the rolling hills, seaside resorts and quaint villages of Sussex in the first half of the 20th century. It examines how artistic innovation ran hand-in-hand with political, sexual and

domestic experimentation in the communities they created.

More than 120 works will explore connections between artists from Eric Gill and David Jones from Ditchling, Vanessa Bell and Duncan Grant at Charleston and the surrealist collaborations of Edward James and Salvador Dalí.

Sussex Modernism; Retreat and Rebellion runs from 28 January to 23 April 2017 at Two Temple Place, London. Visit twotempleplace.org for more information.

Surreal Encounters runs from 7 October 2016 to 22 January 2017. Visit www.hamburger-kunsthalle.de/en for more information.

Mad About Surrealism runs from 11 February to 28 May 2017. Visit www.boijmans.nl/ for more information

Tapestry Commission Open Call

West Dean College operates one of only two tapestry weaving studios in the UK and it is part of our core charitable objectives to champion, teach and develop this traditional craft within the context of contemporary art.

The studio's first commission came from Henry Moore's daughter in 1974 when she asked the studio to weave 23 tapestries of his works. Since then, our Master Weavers have collaborated with artists including John Piper, Martin Creed, Basil Beattie and Tracey Emin.

This year we launched the first ever Tapestry Commission Open Call, won by Eva Rothschild, a leading sculptor with international recognition. Rothschild will be in residence at the Studio working closely with Master Weavers to develop the final design.

"I am delighted to be undertaking the tapestry commission at West Dean," says Rothschild. "All of my work in this area has been self taught and the commission offers me the opportunity to collaborate with master weavers at the highest level to develop a new artwork and to expand the vocabulary of my practice in general."



Eva Rothschild; What The Eye Wants exhibition view
Modern Art London 2014



Edward James: a patron of the arts

Edward James was patron to some of the most influential surrealist artists and poets of the 20th century. His patronage extended far beyond the reach of West Sussex and supported many artists and writers including Salvador Dalí, René Magritte, Giorgio de Chirico, Leonora Carrington and John Betjeman. His visionary support of these artists at the beginning of their journey remains the core purpose of the charity today.

His achievements are largely unknown and we are only now beginning to realise the extent of his archive and the impact his collecting had on the careers of influential artists. The College has begun a research programme to effectively catalogue the Edward James archive and discover more about him, his eclectic collection and his influence on art and culture. We will be seeking investment to curate the archive in order to make it accessible to a wider audience. Only then can we truly understand his legacy to the nation.

Three things you didn't know about Edward James

1. Magritte painted three portraits of Edward James including one of his most iconic paintings, *La reproduction interdite*; a portrait of Edward gazing into a mirror.
2. Edward James sponsored *Minotaure*, a Surrealist magazine and one of the richest sources of pre-war surrealist information. It was edited by André Breton, founder of the surrealist movement, and often featured original Picasso works on its front cover.
3. Edward James designed a carpet that immortalised the wet footprints of his wife Tilly Losch, capturing the ballet dancer's otherwise ephemeral passage after bathing. The design plans for the carpet have recently been conserved by West Dean College Books conservation students along with other objects from our collection of paintings, furniture and artefacts.

For further information contact the Development Office:

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