



TECHNE AHRC funded PhD studentship – Partnership Award offered by the University of Surrey and Watts Gallery – Artists' Village

Project: *Global Watts: Allegories for All (1880-1980)*

Supervisors: University of Surrey supervisors – Dr Constance Bantman (School of Literature and Languages¹) and Professor Patricia Pulham (School of Literature and Languages)
Watts Gallery supervisors – Dr Nicholas Tromans (Brice Curator) and Alistair Burtenshaw (Director of Watts Gallery)

Additional academic supervision to be provided by Dr Vicky Greenaway (Department of English, Royal Holloway, University of London)

The Studentship

Applications are invited for a TECHNE Partnership PhD studentship, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, starting in October 2017. The studentship includes a stipend of £14,553 (plus fees at home/EU rates) for three years. Students can apply for an additional six months' stipend to engage in extended development activities such as work placements.

In addition, the student will receive £550 per annum to support engagement with the Partner. Watts Gallery will also provide £550 p.a. to the student, matched by the University of Surrey in the form of a travel bursary. The student will have access to occasional free accommodation on the Gallery premises, and receive support in applying for travel grants.

As a TECHNE student, the person selected will have full access to the TECHNE Doctoral Training Partnership development activities and networking opportunities, joining a cohort of

¹ Name change effective as of 1st August 2017.

about 50 students per year from across seven universities in London and the south-east; see www.techne.ac.uk. TECHNE students can apply for additional funding to support individual or group training and development activities.

Project Description

The student will complete a PhD entitled 'Global Watts: Allegories for All (1880-1980)', providing the first comprehensive assessment of the international importance and influence of British artist George Frederic Watts (1817-1904).

The art of G. F. Watts is unique in the history of British art in having such a global reach during the late 19th and 20th centuries; his allegories offered a visual language that seemed to unite humanity and transcend national borders. Key works, such as *Hope*, *Mammon*, *The Minotaur*, *Love and Life*, *Love and Death*, *Time*, *Death & Judgement*, existing in multiple versions and reproduced both as photographs and art-prints, had currency all over the world, their meanings changing across locales. While Watts himself was a reclusive figure, his imagery had a global presence unmatched by almost any other artist in the years around 1900. The project covers the period c.1880-1980, charting the circulations and appropriations of Watts's works over a century: Watts became an artistic celebrity in the UK from c.1880 when a series of major retrospective exhibitions began. The importance of the study lies in an assessment of how a global visual culture became possible through Watts's works: how were values of global significance seen to be embodied in these images? How does this restructure our ideas of the international and the insular in Art History (especially British Art history) of this period? What were the limitations (geographic, class-based, interpretative) of this global visual culture? Is this an example of the diffusionist reach of European colonialism, or on the contrary, the creative appropriation of British culture by others? The research will explore in depth the 'non-art' contexts for Watts, seeing the responses to reproductions and the political uses of his art as significant cultural history, rather than peripheral developments. Points of focus include Watts's imagery in relation to the European Symbolist movement in the 1890s, the Suffrage movement and the African-American Civil Rights Movement.

The project will adopt a transnational and interdisciplinary approach to art and cultural history, emphasising the role of personal networks, cultural metropolises, key individuals, institutions and media in the circulation, dissemination and reinterpretation of Watts's work. It will track works through the European and American art-worlds, as well as cartoons and caricatures based on Watts's pictures, evidence of ownership of reproductions after his works, and literary and verbal traces of responses to them. The geography of the reception of Watts will extend well beyond the normal frame of reference for such studies, as his works are known to have been admired in, for example, the United States, Russia, Japan and India.

In addition to the thesis, the appointed candidate will contribute to the organisation of an end-of-project exhibition on their research topic, to be held at Watts Gallery. It is expected that opportunities for public engagement and academic publication/ conference attendance will arise in the course of the project. The student will share their time between both institutions, spending around 12 months at the Gallery (distributed as required over the project duration, and frontloaded for training purposes), doing research and undertaking related curatorial activities, and supporting the organisation of the related exhibition in the final stages of the project.

As the leading repository and research institution on G.F. Watts, the Gallery will contribute specialist knowledge and access to essential primary and secondary sources on the PhD topic. The student will have access to the collections of the Gallery, which hold over 6000 diverse objects, including over 250 oil paintings, 800 drawings and watercolours, 130 prints, 200 sculptures, and 240 pieces of pottery as well as unique ephemera and memorabilia related to Watts, Mary Seton Watts and the history of the Gallery. The Library brings together the body of publications and theses on all aspects of the life and work of the Wattses and their circle, and 19th-century art more broadly. The student will receive training and support with archival work, Art-Historical skills and contexts from the Gallery's team in the initial stages of the project, and as required subsequently. In addition, the student will be inducted into the curatorial process in the context of their research, including collections management, loans negotiation, framing, mounting works of art, logistics, budgeting, insurance, interpretation. They will develop key skills in working effectively with museum professionals. The training offered by Watts Gallery will centre on turning research into impactful public events and working in a museum environment in the context of the research project.

Supervision and Partnership

The primary PhD supervisor Dr Constance Bantman is based in the School of Literature and Languages at the University of Surrey. She is a specialist of Anglo-French cultural and political exchanges in the 19th and 20th centuries and the methodology of transnational history. Professor Patricia Pulham will join the School in September 2017 as Professor of Victorian Literature; her research interests centre on nineteenth and twentieth-century literature, art and culture, with a focus on decadent writing and aestheticism, queer studies, late-Victorian Gothic fiction, and the neo-Victorian novel. Dr Vicky Greenaway (Royal Holloway, University of London) will also be part of the academic supervisory team; her research interests are the interconnections of literature and the visual arts in the nineteenth century generally, with an additional interest in the relationship of poetry and painting in Pre-Raphaelite and Aesthetic poetry.

The School of Literature and Languages (<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/school-english-languages/research>), to which the student will be affiliated, is committed to building close collaborations between researchers and teachers working in the fields of literature, modern languages, linguistics and intercultural communication, and research and teaching in these areas are at the cutting edge of the disciplines and focus in particular on transnational literary studies and understanding how texts and languages work across national boundaries, how they function, and how they interact. The School is also home to a notable cluster of world-leading expertise in Victorian literary studies, with researchers working on mid- and late-Victorian literature, culture and politics, including the interface between literature and visual culture. We have a thriving postgraduate community and a strong track record of innovative research; visit our English PhD page for more information (<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/postgraduate/english-literature-creative-writing-film-studies-phd>). The newly-formed interdisciplinary 'Mobilities' research group brings together researchers from across the School and will provide a congenial School-based research group for the selected candidate.

The appointed person will have access to the University's Doctoral College (<https://www.surrey.ac.uk/doctoral-college>). The Doctoral College provides outstanding

training and development opportunities for postgraduate researchers. It offers a comprehensive programme of face-to-face training workshops, coaching, mentoring, online resources, as well as supporting information. It also includes a dedicated Doctoral College Careers and Employability team experienced in delivering career support to postgraduate researchers and early career researchers.

The Watts Gallery supervisor for this project is Dr Nick Tromans, Brice Curator and a world-leading expert on G. F. Watts. Dr Tromans has extensive postgraduate supervisory and examining experience. The Watts Gallery supervisory team will also include the incoming Director of the Gallery, Alistair Burtenshaw; Hilary Underwood, Editor of the Watts Register, will advise on the database of Watts's work with all details of location; Conservation Fellow Sally Marriott will provide specialist guidance regarding the reproduction of Watts's works.

The Gallery's mission statement is 'to be a national centre for the study of Victorian and early 20th century art, design and social history', promoting and publicising research on Watts, his artistic circles and Victorian art (<http://www.wattsgallery.org.uk/>). Every member of the curatorial team holds a PhD, resulting in a very strong research culture. The Gallery is the leading institution for research on Watts, publishing important volumes on his work and times; most recently *The Art of G F Watts*, by the curator and project supervisor Nick Tromans, 2017. The Gallery set up and leads the international Artist's Studio Museum Network and has a range of high-profile national and international partnerships. In 2016, it was listed among Britain's Top 25 Small Museums by *The Times*. Its activities extend to career training for the Arts and Heritage sector: in 2011, it launched a 2-year curatorial fellowship scheme, setting an excellent track record of training and subsequent employment in this area.

The Gallery's developing collaboration with the University of Surrey is central to its research on Watts, curatorial and educational activities. Both institutions share a strong track record of collaboration, including for doctoral training. They collaborated in the successful 2012 'Dickens and the Visual Imagination' conference, and recently shared a collaborative PhD project. The short distance (about 3 miles) between them will facilitate sustained contact with both partners and supervisors, the two partner institutions and their resources.

A formal agreement regarding the Partnership between the University of Surrey and Watts Gallery will be signed at the commencement of the project and the student will be asked to confirm that they have read and understood this agreement.

Eligibility

Applicants must have a good first degree (usually a minimum 2:1) and have obtained, or be working towards, a Master's degree (or equivalent) in History of Art, or Modern Languages, English or History, with a demonstrable interest in Art. Given the multilingual nature of the project, they must have near-native competency in English; competence in other modern languages would be a strong benefit, especially French. Language competency will be assessed during the selection process. A key factor in the project's success will be the candidate's ability to work very flexibly, to turn to their advantage the collaborative, interdisciplinary and multilingual nature of the project. They will be willing to undertake

training as per the project's requirements, and prepared to travel abroad, sometimes for significant periods of time.

Applicants must meet the RCUK residency requirements as described in paragraphs 43-46 of the 'Conditions of Research Council Training Grants' <http://www.rcuk.ac.uk/documents/documents/termsconditionstraininggrants-pdf/> and comply with conditions set out in the AHRC Training Grant Funding Guide <http://www.ahrc.ac.uk/skills/phdstudents/currentawardholders/>

Students must also meet eligibility requirements of the Art and Humanities Research Council for graduate students. The minimum English language proficiency requirement for candidates who have not undertaken a higher degree at a UK HE institution is IELTS 6.5 (with a minimum of 6.0 in all skills).

The closing date for applications is **12:00 noon (UK time) on Wednesday 19 July**

Interviews will take place on **10 or 11 August**.

Further Information and application

For informal enquiries, please contact Dr Constance Bantman (c.bantman@surrey.ac.uk) or Nicholas Tromans (curator@wattsgallery.org.uk).

Apply online at <https://www.surrey.ac.uk/postgraduate/english-literature-creative-writing-film-studies-phd>

Applications must include a CV, a covering letter, two authenticated examples of written work completed during either Masters or undergraduate study, scanned copies of signed/stamped qualifications (certificates or transcripts), evidence of English language level (if English is not your first language), a copy of your passport, and contact details for two referees.

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