

From Flanders to Italy: The Impact of Netherlandish Painting in the Renaissance

Date/Time	Tuesday 23 rd February 2027 11.00-16.30	Price	£49 in person £44 post event recording
Venue	Lettsom House, 11 Chandos Street, London W1G 9EB	Lecturer	Dr Paula Nuttall

Although famously disparaged by Michelangelo as being 'without reason or art', Netherlandish painting was widely admired in Renaissance Italy, and had a transformative effect on Italian art itself. Its pioneers, Jan van Eyck and Rogier van der Weyden, were praised as the greatest painters of their day by Italian humanist writers, on account of their remarkable ability to reproduce reality in their paintings, and their unprecedented use of the oil medium. Their works graced the collections of the elite, including the rulers of Ferrara, Urbino and Naples. Italian merchants based in Bruges acted as purveyors, as well as commissioning works on their own account, notably the Florentine banker Tommaso Portinari, patron of Memling and Hugo van der Goes, and purveyor to the Medici. Increasing familiarity with Netherlandish paintings from about 1470 resulted in a wide range of responses from Italian painters – including Antonello da Messina, Piero della Francesca, Domenico Ghirlandaio and Leonardo da Vinci – from the assimilation of the Netherlandish oil technique, to the appropriation of Netherlandish landscape forms and portrait types, and the adaptation of novel Netherlandish devotional imagery.

Lecture 1: Commentators and Collectors

Humanist texts on Netherlandish painting, and works recorded in Italian collections.

Lecture 2: Patrons and Purveyors

The activities of Italian merchants in Bruges

Lectures 3 and 4: Artistic Responses

The influence of Netherlandish painting in Italy –in particular the adoption of oil painting, approaches to landscape and portraiture. We conclude with a postscript on early responses to Italian renaissance art in the Netherlands.

Lecturer

Dr Paula Nuttall is an art historian specialising in the Renaissance, with a particular interest in artistic relations between Italy and the Netherlands. She has published widely on this topic, and has contributed to major exhibitions, including Van Eyck: An Optical Revolution (Ghent, 2020).