

**Lucca and the Art of Luxury**

<b>Date/Time</b>	Tuesdays February 9/16/23, March 2/9, 2021 11am - 1pm	<b>Price</b>	£90
<b>Venue</b>	Online via Zoom	<b>Lecturer</b>	Dr Geoffrey Nuttall

During the late middle ages and Renaissance, luxury silks were consumed in staggering quantities and at fabulous expense by Western Europe’s secular and ecclesiastical elites. The silks were supplied almost exclusively by merchants from the small Tuscan city of Lucca, making these merchants enormously wealthy and cosmopolitan in outlook, bringing them into close contact with the royal houses of Europe and enabling them to employ artists as diverse as Jan van Eyck, Gentile de Fabriano and Jacopo della Quercia.

This course charts the rise of the silk industry in Lucca between 1375 and 1435, illustrating the beautiful fabrics created and describing how these silks were used as assertions of authority and power within the lavish display culture of the European courts. It examines the activities of the Lucchese as patrons and purveyors of works of art across Europe, offering fresh insights into the ways artistic patronage operated and suggesting new ways of thinking about how ideas and works of art were transmitted between artistic centres at the dawn of the Renaissance.

**Lectures**

**Session 1** Lucca, A City of Silk and Gold: tracing the origins of the silk industry and how Lucchese silks were designed, made and sold across Europe.

**Session 2** Lucca and its Mercantile Colonies: examining Lucchese artistic patronage outside the mother city.

**Session 3** Lucca and the Courts of France and England: looking at the role the Lucchese played in Paris and London as patrons and purveyors of works of art.

**Session 4** Lucca and the Libraries of France and Burgundy: focusing on the close relationship between the Lucchese and the production of luxury manuscripts in Paris at the time of the Limbourg Brothers and the Boucicaut Master.

**Session 5** Lucca and the Court of Paolo Guinigi: investigating the artistic patronage of the ‘Lord of Lucca’.

**Lecturer**

Dr **Geoffrey Nuttall** has several degrees including an MA in History of Art from Birkbeck and a PhD from The Courtauld. He is a specialist in the Courts of Europe and their dealings with the merchants of luxury goods. He lectures at the V&A and international conferences, and recently held a fellowship at the Huntington Collections and Art Gallery in California.