

**Urbino: Art and Patronage from the Montefeltro to the Della Rovere**

<b>Date/Time</b>	Friday, 25 October 2024 11am-4.30pm	<b>Price</b>	£45
<b>Venue</b>	Lettsom House, 11 Chandos street, London W1G 9EB	<b>Lecturer</b>	Dr Paula Nuttall

Duke Federico da Montefeltro (ruled 1444-82) transformed the tiny state of Urbino, in the Italian Marches, into one of the jewels in the Italian Renaissance crown. He built a palace considered then, as now, the most beautiful in all Italy, and furnished it with the best that contemporary craftsmanship could provide, including Netherlandish oil paintings and tapestries, Florentine intarsia and a spectacular library of lavishly illuminated books. His artists included Piero della Francesca and Raphael's father, Giovanni Santi. Writing a generation later, Baldassare Castiglione immortalised the beauty and graciousness of this court in his *Book of the Courtier*.

Federico's son Guidobaldo I added works by Raphael and Michelangelo to this legendary collection. When he died childless in 1508, Urbino passed to the Della Rovere, who moved the court to the more accessible nearby town of Pesaro. Here Francesco Maria I and Guidobaldo II built a splendid new palace, and patronised Bronzino and Titian, while the cultivated Duchess Eleonora Gonzaga created the Villa Imperiale, outstanding among surviving renaissance villas and gardens. Eventually, in 1631, this line also died out, and Urbino reverted to what it had been before the rise of Federico da Montefeltro: a minor fiefdom of the Papal States.

Lecture 1: Federico da Montefeltro and his patronage: Palace, Fortresses, Churches

Lecture 2: Furnishing the Palace: Paintings, Studiolo, Library

Lecture 3: Guidobaldo I and the passing of the Montefeltro

Lecture 4: The Della Rovere

**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). Former Course Director of the V&A Late Medieval to Early Renaissance Year Course and Associate Lecturer at The Courtauld, she lectures for the V&A, London Art History Society and the Arts Society.