**Wednesday 25 February at 18.00**

**Julia Lacey Brooke**  
*The Italianate settings of Shakespeare and other Jacobean dramatists*

‘Englese Italianato, è un diabolo incarnato’: this saying was quoted in 1570 by Roger Ascham, tutor to Elizabeth I, in support of his claim that travel to Italy by the young was a threat to their moral welfare. Yet Ascham was a humanist, and he had to acknowledge Italy as the cradle of the Renaissance. Two important texts, Machiavelli’s *Il principe* and Castiglione’s *Il libro del cortigiano*, had both been published in English by 1530, and came to be widely read. Julia Lacey Brooke lives near Arezzo, and is completing a book on the figure of the ‘Malcontent’ in Jacobean drama.

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**Wednesday 18 March at 18.00**

**Richard Serrin**  
*The art of Antoine Watteau*

Antoine Watteau (1684-1721) was the first painter to realise the implications for art of the new universe ushered in by Isaac Newton’s *Principia Mathematica* and the secularisation of philosophic thought in the 17th century. In this talk, Richard Serrin will argue that art historians have failed to recognise the explicit references to Watteau’s melancholy premonitions in his two greatest paintings, *L’embarquement pour Cythère* and *L’enseigne de Gersaint*, premonitions borne out only too well in succeeding centuries. When seen from this perspective, Watteau’s paintings take their seminal place in the artistic watershed that was the 18th century. Richard Serrin is an American painter who has lived and worked in Florence for 40 years.

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**Wednesday 4 March at 18.00**

**The Oberon Quartet**  
*An evening of chamber music*

The Oberon Quartet was recently formed in Florence by four young musicians: Pietro Horvath (violoncello), Anton Horvath (1st violin), Antonio De Sarlo (2nd violin), Friedrich Binet (viola). On this occasion they will play quartets by Haydn (n. 4, ‘The Sunrise’, op. 76), Boccherini (n. 2, op. 9) and Schumann (n. 1, op. 41).

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**Wednesday 11 March at 18.00**

**Anne Leader**  
*Burial practices in Renaissance Florence*

Though we have learned much over the past few decades about funerary and memorial practice in renaissance Florence, many interesting questions remain about how Florentines chose their final resting place and tomb marker. Investigation of who was buried where between 1247 (the first year lay people were allowed burial indoors) and 1480 (the year of the last Florentine tax return, or catasto) reveals interesting patterns within and deviations from standard burial practices in late medieval and early Renaissance Florence. Anne Leader is Rush H. Kress Fellow at the Harvard Centre for Renaissance Studies at Villa I Tatti.

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**Wednesday 25 March at 18.00**

**Derek Granger**  
*On the Waugh path*

A look at the way Evelyn Waugh’s novels have been turned into films, with particular reference to *A Handful of Dust*, which Waugh believed to be the best of all his humanist output. The talk will also discuss how a whole generation of English novelists was influenced by the arrival of a powerful new art form – talking pictures. Derek Granger, who wrote and produced *A Handful of Dust* (starring James Wilby, Kristin Scott Thomas, Rupert Graves, Anjelica Huston, Judi Dench and Alec Guinness) in 1998, will illustrate his talk with scenes from this film and from other Waugh adaptations.
Wednesday 21 January at 18.00

James Bradburne
*Three Queens, three widows, fifteen tapestries*

This talk examines the exhibition *Women in power: The return to Florence of two Queens of France*, currently at the Palazzo Strozzi, and considers the challenges of telling complicated stories in a simple and poetic way. The three queens are Caterina de’ Medici (1519-1589), consort of Henri II; Maria de’ Medici (1575-1642), second wife of Henri IV; and a composite Artemisia formed out of two different Artemisias from antiquity — the warrior queen of Halicarnassus (5th century BC) and the widowed queen of Caria (d. 350 BC), celebrated as the builder of the Mausoleum. James Bradburne is Director of the Fondazione Palazzo Strozzi.

Wednesday 28 January at 18.00

Ian Bickerton
*War’s unintended consequences, or, Why wars don’t always work*

When the outcomes of wars are looked at closely it can be seen that war does not continue — or further — a nation’s stated policy but dramatically alters it, and produces outcomes that were not only unintended but are frequently undesirable. In this talk Ian Bickerton will consider whether it is time to re-evaluate Claus Von Clausewitz’s proposition that ‘war is simply the continuation of policy by other means’ in the light of the history of wars fought by the United States. Professor Bickerton has been a member of the School of History at the University of New South Wales for the past 38 years; his publications include a History of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, Forty-Three Days: The Gulf War, Contested Spaces: The Historiography of the Arab-Israeli Conflict, and, most recently, Unintended Consequences: The United States at War (with Kenneth Hagan).

Wednesday 4 February at 18.00

John Law
*William Roscoe*

William Roscoe (1753-1831) was a Liverpudlian entrepreneur, an exponent of political reform and a supporter of the anti-slavery movement. He was also a self-taught polymath, a patron of the arts and literature and — though he never visited Italy — a student of Italian renaissance history. His biography of Lorenzo de’ Medici (1795) was the first in English, and a great publishing success in Britain and abroad. Dr John Law of Swansea University will concentrate on Roscoe’s treatment of Lorenzo as a politician and statesman, the criticism that treatment attracted and Roscoe’s response. He will show how the debate over Lorenzo’s reputation prefigured later discussion on the nature of communal and ‘despotic’ regimes in renaissance Italy.

Wednesday 11 February at 18.00

Thomas Galdi
*Florentine Old Master drawings*

Virtually all the great painters of renaissance Florence were also great draughtsmen: Verrocchio, Filippo Lippi, Botticelli, Fra Bartolomeo, Michelangelo, Andrea del Sarto and Pontormo. It was in Florence that drawing was regarded both as the essential step in planning a work of art and as an exalted goal in itself. Giorgio Vasari referred to *Disegno* as ‘the parent of our three arts, Architecture, Sculpture and Painting’. Thomas Galdi, who now lives in Florence and previously ran a gallery dealing in Old Master drawings in New York City, will consider the many forms, aspects and uses of Florentine 15th- and 16th-century drawings.

Wednesday 18 February at 18.00

Ilaria Sborgi
*‘This interval from fighting’: a marginal incident in Florentine history recounted by Dorothy Nevile Lees*

Dorothy Nevile Lees (1880-1966) was an English writer and journalist who lived in Florence between 1903 and 1966. For more than fifty years she contributed articles on Italy to various English and American newspapers and journals. She was pivotal to the publication of *The Mask*, an English theatre journal issued in Florence by Edward Gordon Craig. In the late 1950s and early 60s she was a member of the Board of Governors of the British Institute of Florence, to which she donated the ‘Edward Gordon Craig Collection’. Ilaria Sborgi’s lecture will focus on an unpublished article in which the author recounts a curious episode she witnessed at the end of the Second World War in Florence, when she attended a performance for Indian soldiers at the Niccolini theatre.