



THE
WALLACE
COLLECTION

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**MAKING CULTURE
MATTER**

2022 - 2025

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THE WALLACE COLLECTION IS AN INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED TREASURE HOUSE OF OUTSTANDING MASTERPIECES, FROM PAINTINGS, SCULPTURE AND FURNITURE TO PORCELAIN, ARMS AND ARMOUR.

Built over the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries by the Marquesses of Hertford and Sir Richard Wallace, it is one of the finest and most celebrated collections in the world. The Collection was given to the British Nation in 1897 by Lady Wallace so that it could be kept together and enjoyed by generations of visitors.

It was an astonishing bequest and one of the greatest gifts of art works ever to be transferred into public ownership.

WE BELIEVE THAT CULTURE MATTERS.

Sir Richard and Lady Wallace had a mission to share their works of art with the public, and this wish to create a public space was at the heart of their bequest. Following in their footsteps, today we look after the Collection, through research and conservation, and preserve it for future generations. Our aim is to share the Collection with as broad an audience as possible: to enlighten, to spark the imagination, and to emotionally engage.



Cover
Jean-Honoré Fragonard,
The Swing, about 1767–8

Right
Mosque lamp, Cairo,
about 1350–57

WE BELIEVE THAT ART AND CULTURE HAVE NEVER BEEN MORE IMPORTANT.

The world is a markedly different place since our previous strategic plan was conceived in 2018. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, 2020 and 2021 were unprecedented years of challenges for the arts and heritage sector. The Wallace Collection closed its doors for the first time since World War II, and once we were able to reopen, visitor numbers and self-generated income suffered greatly.

For many, the ability to access art and culture digitally through online programming during the pandemic was a lifeline.

Art has an important role to play in supporting mental health and well-being, reducing anxiety and alleviating stress. Being able to support the mental health of our audiences in this way has been critical to the Collection's mandate throughout the pandemic.

Digital programming has also opened the Collection to new audiences who have historically had barriers to participating on site because of disability, age, geography or simply time constraints. This programming will form a central plank in our strategy for the next four years and beyond.



OUR GOAL HAS ALWAYS BEEN TO CREATE A PLACE OF UNDERSTANDING, CULTURAL PLURALISM, CURIOSITY AND LEARNING.

The Wallace Collection holds a unique selection of fine and decorative art. From precious artefacts once owned by Sikh warriors and Mughal emperors to spectacular Asante gold and Renaissance bronzes, the Collection contains surprising and diverse objects from all corners of the globe.

The works of art that we look after for the nation help us understand the history of human endeavour, and we are committed to providing access to as wide a public as possible and to helping visitors engage with this diversity.

We recognise that museums play an important role in establishing and cementing histories and setting narratives, and that these may include narratives supportive of, or insufficiently critical of, imperialist values and historical racist attitudes. We are addressing this with new research projects, interpretation, and public programming.

To support this work, we have created an Equality, Diversity and Inclusivity working group, made up of staff members drawn from across the organisation to help us improve our practices and diversify our points of view. We want to positively integrate the principles of equality, diversity, and inclusion across all of our activities by creating opportunities for meaningful action in the institution.



Right
Parade shield, North Italy, about 1570

SUSTAINABILITY MUST PLAY A CENTRAL PART IN OUR FUTURE STRATEGY FOR THE COLLECTION.

Hertford House, the Grade II listed London mansion within which the Wallace Collection is housed, was built in the late-eighteenth century as a domestic building and refurbished by Sir Richard Wallace in the 1870s. Now, it holds ones of the greatest collections of fine and decorative art, and in 2019 welcomed more than 450,000 visitors.

Hertford House's capability to preserve the works of art is essential to keep the collection safe for future generations. However, the building lacks insulation, appropriate climate control and ventilation, while the constant flow of visitors makes keeping stable conditions in the building extremely difficult, as well as costly and energy inefficient.

The Collection must now upgrade and modernise our technical infrastructure, and over the next four years, we will create and embark upon a strategy that will allow us to address these challenges in a sustainable fashion. We want to keep our works of art safe and in the best conditions possible, while lowering our carbon footprint and putting sustainability at the heart of all decisions we make.



Right
Elephant goad, Jaipur, about 1860-70 (detail)

WE HAVE ACHIEVED A LOT BUT THERE IS STILL MUCH TO DO.

Since 2018, we have built new temporary exhibition galleries and launched an ambitious programme of exhibitions, which have focused on revealing surprising and intriguing artistic connections.

Our first exhibition celebrated Sir Richard Wallace, whose contribution to the Collection had never been fully appreciated. Sir Richard was both an extraordinary collector in his own right and the first 'curator' of the Wallace Collection, who refurbished Hertford House to show off and display one of the greatest nineteenth-century collections of works of art.

Our first ticketed exhibition explored the influence of the Collection's arms and armour on the sculptural practice of the twentieth-century British sculptor Henry Moore; our second sought to bring supremely talented but forgotten Indian artists from the eighteenth century into the spotlight. We also partnered with Manolo Blahnik, the great designer of exquisite footwear, to show his creations next to the works which had inspired them. As a result of these innovative exhibitions and collaborations, in 2019/2020, before the pandemic, we welcomed 487,000 visitors, a record number, to the Wallace Collection.

We have continued to connect with new audiences, by expanding and diversifying our public programme to reach out to our community. In 2020/2021, our programme pivoted dramatically to respond to the need for digital engagement, and our talks and courses reached a record number of people. To engage with our visitors onsite, we launched a free multi-media app in partnership with Bloomberg Connects, which had over 13,000 downloads in its first six months.

We celebrated the completion of a five-year collaborative research project with the Royal Collection Trust and Waddesdon Manor on the cabinetmaker, Jean-Henri Riesener, which culminated in a display of some of his most celebrated pieces, the publication of a long-awaited monograph on the artist and the launch of a hugely successful and acclaimed microsite which shared the results of our research with the public.

We have refurbished our façade, which now is restored to the original splendour that Sir Richard and Lady Wallace would have known. We have focused on the infrastructure of Hertford House, repointing our chimneys, and bringing visitor restrooms up to date, as well as improving the lighting in the French eighteenth-century galleries.

And perhaps most importantly, following a momentous reinterpretation of the original bequest in 2019, we are now able to lend our works of art, fulfilling the generous spirit of Sir Richard and Lady Wallace, who believed that art should be shared as widely as possible.

Our ability to loan has made it possible to collaborate with colleague institutions both nationally and internationally, giving the Collection a new global reach to audiences all over the world.



Right
Giovanni Battista Cima da Conegliano,
Saint Catherine of Alexandria, about 1502

OVER THE NEXT FOUR YEARS, WE WILL CONTINUE TO STRIVE TOWARD OUR AIM OF CREATING AN EXCELLENT VISITOR EXPERIENCE FOR ALL AGES WHICH STIMULATES ENGAGEMENT WITH OUR COLLECTION.

We know we will face many challenges in an uncertain economic environment, and it will take time for us, for the sector and for the UK, to recover from the difficulties caused by the pandemic.

However, we remain positive. We have talented and dedicated members of staff who have responded to the past two years with creativity and courage; we look after one of the finest collections of decorative and fine art in the world; and we have a track record of innovative programming. Our outlook is international, and we strive to be a centre of excellence, recognised by our audiences around the world.

OUR PRIORITIES:

- To maintain, research and preserve the Collection for future generations
- To broaden and deepen visitor engagement, connecting with audiences onsite and digitally
- To build and support a strong exhibition programme
- To lay a strong financial foundation for the future
- To embark upon a Masterplan programme to transform the museum



Right
Close-helmet for the tournament,
attributed to Conrad Richter, about 1555

MAINTAIN, RESEARCH AND PRESERVE THE COLLECTION FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

- Continue to celebrate the research led by our curatorial and conservation teams, by sharing them through national and international collaborations and intensive research projects.
- Publish:
 - a new comprehensive catalogue of our Ottoman, Middle Eastern and Asian Arms and Armour, showcasing new research, photography and conservation which sheds light on this long overlooked but incredibly rich part of the Collection.
 - a new monograph on the museum's extraordinary group of *Vedute* paintings, including works by both Giovanni Antonio Canal, known as Canaletto, and Francesco Guardi, drawing on the results of the conservation and technical analysis of our twenty-eight pictures.
 - a research publication on Fragonard at the Wallace Collection, which is the culmination of a major conservation project and scientific analysis of the museum's paintings by Jean-Honoré Fragonard including the world famous *Les Hasards Heureux de L'escarpolette*, or *The Swing*.

- Begin a conservation programme which examines the nineteenth-century French paintings in the Collection, a group of works which are representative of the 4th Marquess and Sir Richard Wallace's taste and provide an unusually complete record of establishment taste of the time. The majority of these paintings need treatment and technical analysis.
- Embark upon a comprehensive cataloguing of the museum's works of art collection, which has never been researched holistically. Support this project through new photography and conservation work.
- Share the ground-breaking research of our curators and conservators by reconsidering the way we communicate with our audiences through our gallery interpretation; formulate these plans acknowledging unconscious bias and diversity of viewpoint.
- Mentor future curators and conservators, by creating an internship programme that focuses on diversity and widening participation to careers in museums, ensuring that vital skills are passed down to the next generation.



BROADEN AND DEEPEN VISITOR ENGAGEMENT, CONNECTING WITH AUDIENCES ONSITE AND DIGITALLY

- Invest in visitor research and outreach to better understand our audience in order to complement the framework set out by DCMS; acting as a truly national museum with audiences that are not London-centric.
- Create interactive online education, community and public programmes, complementing an on-site offer, which celebrates the intrinsic value of the arts and recognises the positive impact that they bring to our quality of life and sense of wellbeing and identity.
- Continue to develop our free multimedia visitor guide in partnership with Bloomberg Connects, which engages audiences more deeply with the works of art and provides a richer self-guided on-site visit, whilst encouraging pre- and post-visit curiosity through online resources.
- Design and implement a new website structure, which supports the creation and dissemination, as well as the long-term storage, of online content. In tandem with these developments, institute and develop a new CMS (Collection Management System) and a DAMS (Digital Asset Management System), to upgrade our functionality, look after our assets to the best of our ability, and integrate with the website to create a seamless experience for the user.
- Embed the Collection's new CRM (Customer Relationship Management System) within the organisation, to ensure contacts receive the best possible engagement with the Collection.
- Create opportunities for deep engagement with online content through digital microsites, which explore our core strengths as the Collection and provide important evergreen sources of knowledge.
- Digitise our archive and historic image library to connect with visitors, researchers and other audiences internationally, offering everyone the opportunity to engage with the story of the Collection and our very important collections of specialist archive holdings.
- Engage with new technology, including Virtual Reality (VR), to create interactive experiences with the Collection for online visitors.



Right
Cristoforo de Predis,
Initial 'A' with Galeazzo Maria Sforza
in prayer, probably 1477

BUILD AND SUPPORT A STRONG EXHIBITION PROGRAMME

- Continue to programme exciting and innovative exhibitions, which speak to one or many of the following aims:
 - Celebrate, promote and add to the body of research of the Collection's core strengths in Arms and Armour, French eighteenth-century art, or Old Masters.
 - Provide historical context for our wide-ranging and diverse collection.
 - Explore unusual and interesting connections that help visitors see the Collection through new eyes.
 - Expand audiences by exploring themes that might appeal to individuals beyond our core visitor demographic.
- Increase visitor numbers and audiences through the exhibition programme, attracting new types of visitors to the museum.
- Use the exhibitions as an opportunity to increase self-generated revenue through ticket sales and catalogue purchases, as well as encouraging secondary spend in the restaurant and the shop. Increase membership from visitors engaged with the exhibitions programme.



Right
Francis van Bossuit,
The Toilet of Bathsheba,
about 1680-90

LAY A STRONG FINANCIAL FOUNDATION FOR THE FUTURE

- Strive to increase and diversify self-generated revenue from the restaurant and café, retail, venue hire, and the public programme, alongside exhibitions.
- Continually monitor costs to ensure that the Collection's overheads remain manageable, and that the museum is receiving the best possible value for money for all of its contracts and services.
- Consider all aspects of the Collection's infrastructure to ensure the museum is making continual improvements, which may require investment but produce maximum efficiency, such as cloud-based IT solutions or long-term planning for large capital works.
- Maintain a transparent and productive relationship the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS), and partner with them to deliver on agreed priorities.

Focusing on providing excellent donor stewardship to retain and cultivate current donors, the Collection will also reach out to new supporter bases, while increasing the scale of our ambition with trusts and foundations and using the exhibition programme to attract corporate involvement.

The Collection's Endowment currently stands at just over £10 million, which is a key source of income in times of economic instability and underpins our future ambitions. Over the next four years, the Collection will be launching a Masterplan, which will need to be underpinned by an ambitious capital campaign. Our ambition is to raise Endowment funds alongside Masterplan gifts to secure the legacy of the Masterplan transformation and provide support for ongoing costs.

Fundraising activity over the next four years will be crucial to supporting all of the Collection's aims and objectives, with a particular emphasis on the Masterplan and its transformation of the museum. Support from the Board of Trustees for success in fundraising endeavours will be essential.



Right
Andrea del Sarto, *The Virgin and Child with the Infant Baptist*, about 1517-19

EMBARK UPON A MASTERPLAN PROGRAMME WHICH WILL TRANSFORM THE MUSEUM

We will take the first steps towards a multi-stage transformation project which will rethink the way we use space within Hertford House. This project will include all areas of the building, focusing on improving visitor experience, the display of the collection and income generating opportunities.

This plan will be an opportunity to redisplay our world-famous arms and armour collection, which includes exceptional Asian and North African works of art as well superb European princely pieces, at the heart of Hertford House. We will also seek to highlight our fine collection of French nineteenth-century paintings and our wonderful Medieval and Renaissance works of art, which are housed in outdated and tired galleries.

Sustainability will be at the heart of this project. Our plans will work to make the building more energy efficient, by using state of the art technology to achieve the best possible conditions for our works of art. We will also seek to increase our financial sustainability by increasing opportunities for self-generated revenue through new plans for the restaurant and retail offerings.



Right
Dagger, Iran or Central Asia,
last quarter of the 15th century

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Since 1900, the Wallace Collection has been a centre of excellence, founded on the simple philanthropic principle of free access for all. To achieve our ambitious aims over the next four years, we must be as pioneering and outward-looking as our founders.

Our vision will help to shape the Collection for future generations of visitors – keeping excellence at the core of the Collection – whilst forging a new path that prepares for financial and climate uncertainty, encourages and supports diversity, and above all, engages and enthuses our audience.



Right
Pot-pourri vase and cover,
Sèvres Manufactory, about 1761

Caspar Netscher,
The Lace Maker, 1662

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