**History of Art Course Sessions May/June 2022**

**1. In an English Country Garden: Abstraction and the Landscape**

During the 1950s many artists embraced the possibilities of painterly abstraction. Across Europe and North America, new modes of gestural painting came to the fore. In Britain, the examples of European *Tachisme* and American Abstract Expressionism helped reinvigorate an indigenous tradition of landscape painting. This session focuses on British artists whose work represent the landscape in an abstract or semi-abstract manner. It considers how artists represent and respond to place and space; the importance of landscape and location for artistic and national identities; and how pictorial responses to the countryside are shaped by the wider transformation of the British landscape.

**2. The Yorkshire Mafia: Hepworth and Moore**

Continuing with some of the themes from week one, this session offers an introduction to the work of two of the most important sculptors of the twentieth century.

*Related exhibitions*:

Henry Moore: Sharing Form, Hauser and Worth, Somerset, 28 May- 4 Sept 2022

Barbara Hepworth: Art & Life, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh, 9 April – 2 Oct 2022 and Tate, St Ives, 26 Nov – 1 May 2023

**3. Surrealism Beyond Borders**

The public perception of Surrealism is largely shaped by the slick realism of Salvador Dalí and by TV documentaries that emphasise the movement’s links to psychoanalysis – dreams, the unconscious, and the uncanny. Leaving these notions to one side, this session looks at Surrealism from a political and global perspective. It considers how French Surrealism was informed by anthropology, ethnography, and colonialism, and, conversely, considers Surrealism’s global afterlives and legacies.

*Related exhibitions:*

Surrealism Beyond Borders, Tate Modern, London, until 29 Aug 2022

Eileen Agar: Angel of Anarchy, Leeds City Galleries, Leeds, until 7 May 2022

**4. Modern Classicisms: The Avant-garde and Antiquity**

Modern art is often seen as making a radical break with tradition. Yet as much as modern artists rebelled against the strictures of the past, they also continued to make use of its themes and techniques. This session considers the continued appeal of antiquity within twentieth-century art. It looks at modern artists who sought inspiration in the ancient past and how modern art shaped our understanding of the reception and interpretations of antiquity.

**5. The Art of War: Picturing Conflict**

This session considers how modern artists responded to the conflicts that engulfed twentieth century Europe – World War One, World War Two and the Spanish Civil War. It will also look more general at how conflicted fed into the depictions of the male body, examining how modern artists envisioned the body was at once impenetrably armoured and hopelessly disfiguring.

**6. Space is the Place: Art and Astronomy**

This session looks at how artists have sought to represent the universe and our place within it. It considers historical intersections between art, science, and astronomy, and the work of living artists who have respond to space exploration. It looks at how artists respond to scientific images of the universe and how scientific images of the universe are often shaped by the legacies of artistic romanticism.

*Related exhibition:*

Seeing Stars, The Stanley & Audrey Burton Gallery, University of Leeds, 26 April-31 July 2022