

Wedgwood 250 (online, 14–15 May 21)

online, Royal Photographic Society & Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry, May 14–15, 2021

Michael Pritchard

Wedgwood 250 is an online meeting, organised by the Royal Photographic Society and the Society for the History of Alchemy and Chemistry, to mark the 250th anniversary of the birth of Tom Wedgwood on 14 May 1771.

Tom Wedgwood, fifth child of the midlands potter Josiah Wedgwood, is now best remembered for his 1802 paper in which he outlined a chemical method of preserving an image. This became widely recognised as major precursor to the development of photography in the 1830s. But Wedgwood's short life (he died aged 34 in 1805) encompassed much more. A member of the loosely defined radical romantic movement, he associated with such major figures as William Godwin, Samuel Taylor Coleridge, Thomas Beddoes, Humphry Davy and many others. Speakers at this meeting will discuss these and other aspects of his life and work, as well as his enduring legacy as a founder of photography.

Originally planned as a live event, the meeting will now run online over two afternoons. The full programme, paper abstracts, speaker biographies and a facsimile of Davy and Wedgwood's 1802 paper will be sent to all registrants shortly before the meeting start.

Registration is now open for this conference.

For more information contact Dr Michael Pritchard (michael@rps.org) or Professor Frank James (frank.james@ucl.ac.uk).

PROGRAMME

14 May

2.00

Tom Wedgwood

Opening

2.10

Geoffrey Batchen - keynote

All His Numerous Experiments: Tom Wedgwood and the history of photography

3.00

Break

3.30

Lucy Lead

Tom Wedgwood: Through the eyes of an archivist

4.10

Michael Gray

Through a Glass Darkly: Thomas Wedgwood's Experiments Reconsidered

4.50

Brian Dolan

Growing Up Wedgwood

5.30

End

15 May

2.00

Tim Fulford

Wedgwood, Beddoes and Davy

2.40

Catrin Jones

Wedgwood, ceramics and the transfer of images

3.20

Break

4.00

Michael Pritchard

'A faint promise of success'. How the photographic press represented Thomas Wedgwood and his experiments in the long nineteenth century

4.40

Rose Teanby

Tom Wedgwood - A Posthumous Portrait

5.20

End

Reference:

CONF: Wedgwood 250 (online, 14-15 May 21). In: ArtHist.net, Apr 30, 2021 (accessed Jan 20, 2026),
<<https://arthist.net/archive/33987>>.