

Rossettis: In Relation (London, 15–16 Jun 23)

Tate Britain (Clore Auditorium), Jun 15–16, 2023

Alice Read, London

Tate Britain's current exhibition 'The Rossettis' suggests a different model for thinking about how artists' careers and lives are shaped – not as the singular and self-contained subjects often presented by a monographic approach – but one that is relational, collaborative and part of familial and professional networks. While the exhibition is centred around Christina Rossetti, Dante Gabriel Rossetti and Elizabeth Siddal, the conference will use this model as methodology, exploring how the work of art and life are enmeshed. We encourage interventions that look at and go beyond these artists to think through intermedial relationships between the poetic, pictorial, musical and decorative arts. The Rossettis exhibition also prompts discussion of the relationship of the arts to activism, organising, politics and labour. Contemporary artists and writers continue to draw on the work of these artists, directly and obliquely. What does it mean to think about the Rossettis (plural) today?

This conference is a collaboration between Tate Britain, the Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art and the History of Art Department at the University of York.

Tickets

Price £5. Tickets for sold separately for each day. Please book through Eventbrite.

<https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/rossettis-in-relation-tickets-634669382207>

PROGRAMME

Day 1: Thursday 15 June, Tate Britain

13.00–13.30 – Registration and refreshments in Clore Foyer

13.30–14.00 – Welcome and opening comments Sarah Victoria Turner (Paul Mellon Centre) and Carol Jacobi (Tate Britain)

14.00–15.15 – Panel 1: Methodologies Chair: Liz Prettejohn (University of York)
(Three × 15-minute papers + 30 minutes conversation)

Natalie Prizel (independent scholar), "Dante Gabriel Rossetti's Race Relations"

Imogen Hart (independent scholar), "Dorothy Walker and May Morris in Relation"

Kimberly Rhodes (Drew University), "Shakespeare's Sisters: Sororal Subterfuge and Pre-Raphaelite Identity"

15.15–16.00 – Refreshments in Clore Foyer

16.00–17.15 – Panel 2: Relationships Chair: Sria Chatterjee (Paul Mellon Centre)
(Three × 15-minute papers + 30 minutes conversation)

Glenda Youde (University of York), “A Complex Relationship: Gabriel, Christina and Elizabeth Rossetti”

Wendy Parkins (University of Otago, New Zealand) “‘I Never Quite Gave Myself’: Pre-Raphaelite Women and Gifts of Creative Exchange”

Jennifer Rabedeau (doctoral candidate, Cornell University), “Pre-Raphaelite Women in Relation”

17.15-18.30 – Drinks Reception in Grand Saloon

18.30-19.30 – Private view of the Rossettis
Gallery Talks (Five minutes each):

Debbie Hicks (Oxford University), “The Model Paints Back: Marie Spartali’s Reformation of Rossetian Aesthetics”

Suzanne Fagence (writer, curator, broadcaster), “‘Shall I Find Comfort?’: Jane Morris and the Rossettis”

Megan Williams (University of Surrey), “Helen and Olivia Rossetti: Art and Anarchy”

Helen Bratt-Wyton (National Trust), “Rossetti, Pre the Pre-Raphaelites”

Mark Samuels Lasner (University of Delaware Library, Museums and Press), “The Lock of Elizabeth Siddal’s Hair”

Amy Griffin & Gabriella Macaro (Tate), “A new view of Rossetti’s technique, dilitante or workaholic?”

Day 2: Friday 16 June, Tate Britain

10.00–10.20 – Registration and refreshments in Clore Foyer

10.20–10.30 – Welcome

10.30–11.45 – Panel 3: Close Reading Chair: Nicholas Dunn-McAfee (University of York)
(Three × 15-minute papers + 30 minutes conversation)

Thomas Hughes (The Courtauld Institute of Art), “Transformation in Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s *La Ghirlandata* (1873) in Relation to Christina Rossetti”

Marte Stinis (research associate, University of York and the Netherlands Institute for Art History), “Love and Longing: Intermedial Relationships Between Painting and Music in the 1850s”

Roisin Neenan (PhD student, University of St Andrews) “‘Absorption is Not Annihilation’: Kisses and Originality in Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s Poetry and Art”

11.45–12.00 – Comfort break

12.00–13.15 – Panel 4: Labour(ing) and Art(work) Chair: Tim Barringer (Yale University)
(Three × 15-minute papers + 30 minutes conversation)

Deborah Lam (lecturer, Department of English University of Bristol), “Hard Work, Soft Work: Dante Gabriel Rossetti’s Effort in Relation”

Frances Varley (The Courtauld Institute of Art), “Making Meaning in Rossetti’s The Blessed Damozel at the Manchester Art Museum”

Tara Contractor (assistant curator of European Painting and Sculpture, The Philadelphia Museum of Art), “The Little Sister Art’: The Rossettis and the Illumination Revival”

13.15–14.15 – Lunch (not provided)

14.15–15.30 – Panel 5: International Exchanges Chair: Eduardo De Maio (University of York)
(Three × 15-minute papers + 30 minutes conversation)

Helena Cox (art curator at the University of York and PhD candidate in History of Art), “Czeching Out the Rossettis – Artistic and Literary Networks Mediating Pre-Raphaelite Art in 1900s Czech Lands”

Sophie Lynford (Delaware Art Museum), “The Rossettis in America”

Sadbh Kellett (University of St Andrews), “‘Better than the Lancelot of Arthurian Legend’: Katharine Tynan, Gaelic Mythology, and the Pre-Raphaelites”

15.30–16:30 – Conversation reflecting on the themes of conference and exhibition with Carol Jacobi, Liz Prettejohn, Tim Barringer, Caitlin Meehye Beach and Sarah Victoria Turner

Reference:

CONF: Rossettis: In Relation (London, 15-16 Jun 23). In: ArtHist.net, Jun 5, 2023 (accessed Jul 6, 2025),
<<https://arthist.net/archive/39456>>.