

2026  
MAY-AUG

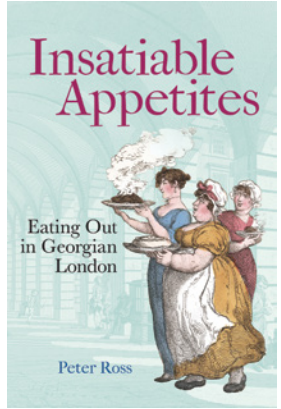
# GUILDHALL LIBRARY EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

The Library of London History



Tuesday 30 June, 6-8pm  
**'COMPLIMENTS TO THE CHEF'**

Thursday 14 May, 2-3pm  
**SALOOP, GINGERBREAD, BROTHELS AND JELLY**



Starts Tuesday 5 May – 29 October 2026

EXHIBITION  
**BROADSIDES: SPEAKING TO THE PEOPLE**



## Guildhall Library

Aldermanbury, London EC2V 7HH

[guildhall.library@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:guildhall.library@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

[cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/guildhall-library](http://cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/guildhall-library)

Follow     

EVENTS ARE FREE UNLESS OTHERWISE STATED AND WILL BE TAKING PLACE EITHER ONLINE, ONSITE OR BOTH (HYBRID); EXCEPT WALKS. BOOKING IS ESSENTIAL AND WE CANNOT ENSURE A PLACE WITHOUT A TICKET. DETAILS OF HOW TO BOOK CAN BE FOUND ON THE BACK PAGE.

# EVENTS

Tuesday 5 May, 2-3pm  
**TYBURNIA**

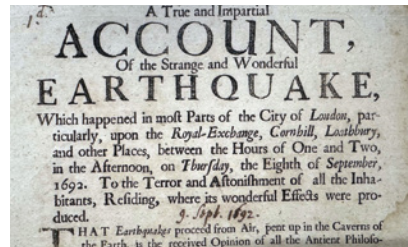
For almost seven centuries, Tyburn was London's theatre of death, where huge, disorderly crowds gathered to witness multiple public executions. Then, in less than fifty years, the area was transformed into: 'The elegant, the prosperous, the polite Tyburnia, the most respectable district of the habitable globe.' Pete Smith will introduce you to both sides of Tyburnia and to some of its residents, both temporary and permanent.



Wednesday 6 May, 11am-1pm  
**WALK: CITY LANES & ALLEYWAYS**

A walk with City Guide Jill Finch; from St Paul's Cathedral to Liverpool Street station, following in the footsteps of her virtual tour earlier this year. Discover some of those enigmatical entries and echoes of the medieval City of London.

£10 plus booking fee  
Meet outside Caffè Nero by St Paul's tube station (take exit 3 to street)



Wednesday 6 May, 6-7.30pm  
**NEW EXHIBITION LAUNCH - BROADSIDES: SPEAKING TO THE PEOPLE**

From biting political satire to dry announcement of laws, with songs, illustrations or a heaping of melodrama, the cheaply printed broadside has been witness to much of London's history and is explored by our new exhibition. Join exhibition curator Sarah Hume to learn more. Light refreshments served



Saturday 9 May, 11am-1pm  
**WALK: AROUND THE MARBLE ARCH**

Join Pete Smith to discover a fascinating corner of West London, where high life meets lowlife. On the route you will meet: a man who lives in a clock, a successful Victorian painter with a dark secret, a picnic table for endangered species, several martyrs and countless murderers. The walk begins under the clock on Platform One at Paddington Mainline Station.

£10 plus booking fee  
Monday 11 May, 1 June & 6 July, 10am-2pm  
**SWORDERS FINE ART AUCTIONEERS: VALUATION DAYS**

A Day of Discovery: Free Art, Antiques & Design Valuations with Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers. Join the specialists from Sworders Fine Art Auctioneers for a complimentary valuation day dedicated to art, antiques and design. Whether you are considering selling or are simply curious, bring along your items to receive expert auction advice, learn more about your treasured pieces and explore their potential in today's market.

In-Person Only



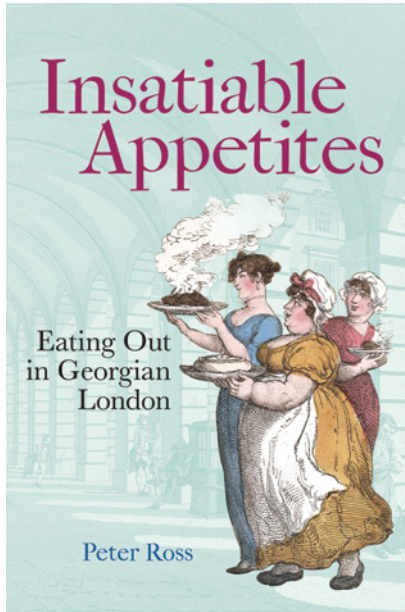
Wednesday 13 May, 10 June & 19 August, 2-3pm  
**HISTORY AND TREASURES OF GUILDHALL LIBRARY**

Join our librarians to learn about the history of Guildhall Library and view some of the library's amazing treasures.



For advance enquiries, please contact london@sworders.co.uk or call 020 3971 2500. Home valuation visits are also available upon request.

# EVENTS



Thursday 14 May, 2-3pm  
**SALOOP, GINGERBREAD, BROTHELS AND JELLY**  
Join us to celebrate the publication of *Insatiable Appetites: Eating out in Georgian London* by Dr Peter Ross, former Principal Librarian at Guildhall Library. Through the course of a single day, this book takes readers on a journey through breakfast, lunch, dinner and supper in Georgian London, drawing on contemporary archives to follow citizens from all walks of life as they navigate the city's diverse food landscape. It reveals not only culinary pleasures and horrors, but also the social challenges and daily struggles that shaped life in the capital.

Tuesday 19 May, 2-3pm  
**SHAKESPEARE IN ART**  
No playwright has been subject to as much interpretation as Shakespeare, and it is said that every age recreates him in its own image. His deep understanding of human nature, his contribution to the English language, the profound beauty and insight of his verse, and the grand themes and variety of his plays have inspired some of Europe's greatest artists and musicians. The variety of narratives in Shakespeare launched the careers of many artists in Britain in the 18th century when, if you loved Britain, you also loved Shakespeare. Join Val Woodgate, Arts Society Lecturer, to learn more.



Wednesday 20 May, 2-3pm  
**FROM A MUMMIFIED RAT TO THE CREATION OF SOUTH KENSINGTON: THE EXTRAORDINARY LIFE OF SIR HENRY COLE**

Sir Henry Cole's life achievements are impressive and very varied — Creator of the Great Exhibition 1851, Instigator of the Royal Albert Hall, First Director of the V&A, Reformer of the National Archives, Campaigner for the Penny Black, Inventor of the Christmas Card, to name a few. "We must have steam. Get Cole!" — Prince Albert. Known for his relentless energy, passion and zeal for improvement, Cole's crusade in improving arts and culture for the masses created institutes that are thriving today. Come along and discover his fascinating story told by Alice MacDonnell, his Great (x4) Granddaughter — who has been piecing together his legacy to reinstate his rightful place in our history books.

Thursday 21 May, 6-8pm  
**BOOK LAUNCH: LOGIC HAS ITS LIMITS – A NEW HISTORY OF THE CITY OF LONDON CORPORATION**

We are proud to host Ian Doolittle's new book launch. His accompanying talk- 'The Corporation of London - What's in a Name?' - traces the odd history of the City's corporate status, presenting Ian's personal interpretation of this once-much-debated issue. The event will also include a display of books from the Guildhall Library curated by Ian.  
Book available to purchase on the night for £35

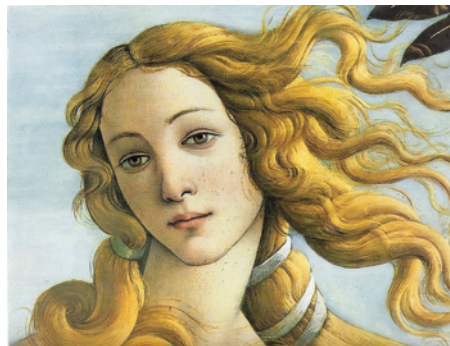


# EVENTS



## Tuesday 26 May, 2-3pm **TRACEY EMIN - A SECOND LIFE**

Tracey Emin was one of the *enfants terribles* known as the YBAs (Young British Artists) in the late 1980s and throughout 1990. Now she is a highly respected Royal Academician and was made a Dame (DBE) in 2024. Tate Modern's exhibition, *Tracey Emin - a Second Life*, covers her whole career, including the infamous work *My Bed* from 1999. This lecture will cover the works in the Tate exhibition plus her tent, entitled *All the People I have Slept With 1963 - 1997*, which was destroyed by fire in 2004. Join Frank Woodgate, The Arts Society Lecturer, to find out more.



## Wednesday 27 May, 2-3pm **BOOKS & BOHEMIANS IN BLOOMSBURY**

Once part of the Bedford Estate, Bloomsbury is now home to the University of London, Birkbeck University and the British Museum, an intellectual and cultural hub. Take a virtual stroll through its streets and squares with City Guide Jill Finch, to see these sights but also hear stories of authors and artists, and of course, the bad behaviour of the Bloomsbury set.

## Thursday 28 May, 2-3pm **GOLDEN SECTION: DIVINE PROPORTION IN ART AND ARCHITECTURE**

For thousands of years the mystery of the Golden Section has inspired thinkers from all disciplines - from artists to architects, mathematicians to musicians and many more. Join Alexandra Epps, The Arts Society Lecturer, to discover the secrets of its sacred geometry and divine beauty within creations from the classical to the contemporary.



## Thursday 4 June, 2-3pm **KENSINGTON SISTERS: BROMPTON & KENSAL GREEN CEMETERIES COMPARED**

An exposition of these two wonderful cemeteries in the same borough. Hear about their notable occupants and how they compare and differ. Join Robert Stephenson, City of London Guide, to find out more.

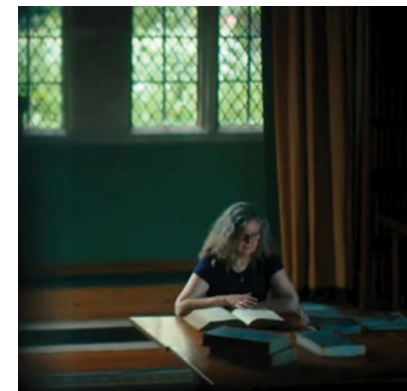
## Monday 8 June, 10.45am-12.45pm **WALK: 'BRUTAL BARBICAN'?**

I love the Barbican, but it is renowned as a 'Marmite' development. Join me, Colin Davey, historian and City of London Guide, for an in-depth stroll, with history, architecture, stories, and a touch of controversy.

£10 plus booking fee  
Meet outside Barbican tube station

## Tuesday 2 June, 2-3pm **MY RESEARCH AND JOURNEY INTO THE WHITECHAPEL MURDERS**

Author Sarah Bax Horton charts her personal journey and research into the Whitechapel Murders from Jack the Ripper's Autumn of Terror in 1888 to the closure of the police files in 1896. Inspired by her great-great grandfather police sergeant Harry Garrett, she began her research in the Metropolitan Police Archives. As her expertise developed, she drew on wider sources to write two books about the Whitechapel Murders and, ultimately, to identify Jack the Ripper and the Thames Torso Killer. Join Sarah Bax Horton, author of *One-Armed Jack and Arm of Eve* to find out more.



# EVENTS

## Tuesday 9 June & 11 August, 2-3pm TUNNEL VISION - ART & ARCHITECTURE OF THE UNDERGROUND

London's network of underground trains and stations has inspired graphic designers, painters and architects since the first subterranean journey in 1863. This talk by London Blue Badge tour guide Louise Halfpenny travels through artworks as varied as the world-famous tube map, Sir Henry Moore's poignant photos of Bank Stations as bomb shelters and Jock McFadyen's 1990s paintings of tube stations (on display at The Guildhall Art Gallery until September 20).



## Thursday 11 June, 2-3pm ORANGES & LEMONS: A CITY NURSERY RHYME

"Oranges and Lemons" is an English nursery rhyme which refers to the bells of several churches, all within or close to the City of London; its roots go back to the 18th century. Using the rhyme as a road map, City of London Guide Jill Finch will take a virtual stroll through the streets of the City and the East End to visit the various churches and look at their history.



## Friday 12 June, 1-4pm LONDON FESTIVAL OF ARCHITECTURE: OUR RELATIONSHIP WITH LONDON'S HISTORICAL ARCHITECTURE

Historic places connect us with the past which supports a sense of continuity, serving as a foundation of personal and collective identity. Anyone interested in discovering more about London's architectural history should visit Guildhall Library where an extensive exhibition and display of books and images will take you on a journey through time from Norman architecture through to Brutalism, exploring the stories behind London's development.

Drop-in event

## Tuesday 16 June, 2-3pm FANS FROM THE ROYAL COURTS - A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE EUROPEAN FOLDING FAN

This talk aims to give a brief historical view of European fans from the 16th century, when the folding fan arrived in Europe from the East, until the beginning of the 20th century. It is illustrated with fans that have a connection with royalty, some of them made to celebrate royal events and some that can be identified with their royal owners. Join Mary Kitson to learn more.



# EVENTS



Wednesday 17 June, 2-3pm  
**LONDON'S PARKS**

Pete Smith dissects the lungs of London: the city's parks. Find out how the Tudors' love of hunting has left us a green legacy and learn what we owe to William III's delicate chest, Charles II's liking for a dip and George IV's pet vanity project. Along the way you will hear about a duke's library, two dead dogs and the time Oliver Cromwell nearly shot himself.

Thursday 18 June, 6-7pm  
**GUILDHALL LIBRARY  
LGBT+ COLLECTIONS  
FOCUS**

In celebration of Pride month Senior Librarian Melanie Strong will be looking at the library's sources for LGBT history. Finding LGBT

sources in the library can be difficult due to previous cataloguing practices and outdated terminology. This talk will highlight sources from early 18th century reports on Molly houses through to the present day, which will be available to view in the library.

**In-Person Only**



Saturday 20 June, 11am-1pm  
**WALK:  
A PARK FIT FOR A PRINCE**

Meeting by the north exit from Baker Street Underground Station, which leads into Baker Street itself, this circular walk explores the finest of London's Royal Parks. Regent's Park was formerly a royal hunting ground, whose transformation started as a vanity project and became an inspired piece of town planning. On this stunning walk, Pete Smith hopes to convince you that this area has much more to offer than a wax museum and Sherlock Holmes's consulting rooms.  
**£10 plus booking fee**



Tuesday 23 June, 2-3pm  
**THE PAINTINGS OF  
HIERONYMUS BOSCH**

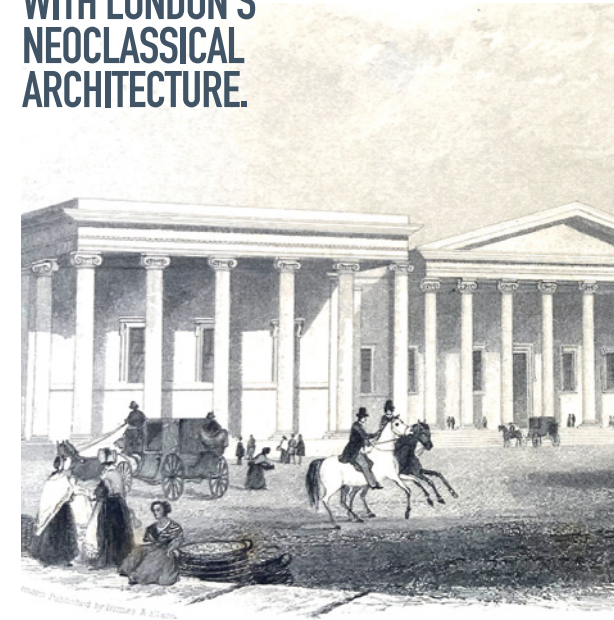
Bosch's world of devils, demons and deadly sins is truly unforgettable. At the same time, his extraordinary treatment of religious themes can be deeply moving. His works are among the most mysterious in the whole of European art, yet if we examine them in the context of contemporary politics and cultural sources not only are they perfectly understandable, but they also provide an amazing insight into the time when the artist lived. Join Val Woodgate, The Arts Society Lecturer, to find out more.



Wednesday 24 June, 11am-1pm  
**WALK:  
ORANGES & LEMONS:  
A CITY NURSERY RHYME**

Following on from her talk, this guided walk by Jill Finch takes in the third church in the rhyme Holy Sepulchre. We will visit the church and take in the area around it, as we ponder the meaning of the rhyme.  
**£10 plus booking fee**  
Meet at 11am outside Caffè Nero by St Paul's tube station (take exit 3 to street)

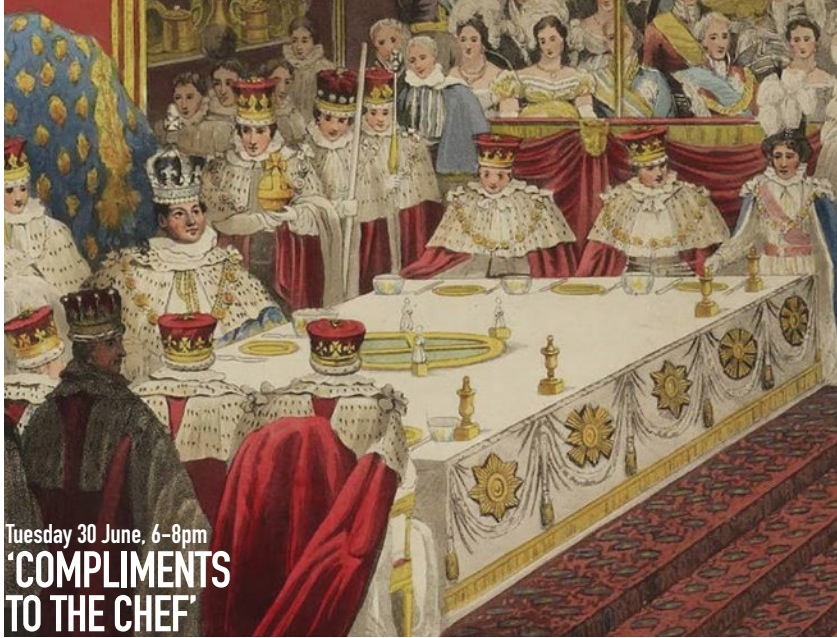
Thursday 25 June, 6-7 pm  
**GUILDHALL LIBRARY  
COLLECTIONS FOCUS:  
OUR RELATIONSHIP  
WITH LONDON'S  
NEOCLASSICAL  
ARCHITECTURE.**



Join Senior Librarian Isabelle Chevallot to celebrate the London Festival of Architecture and explore a display of books with plans and images of the work of Neoclassical architects including Robert Adam, George Dance the Younger, John Soane, John Nash, Robert Smirke and Benjamin Wyatt.

**In-Person Only**

# EVENTS



Tuesday 30 June, 6-8pm  
**'COMPLIMENTS  
TO THE CHEF'**

For 29 years spanning two centuries, Daniell Clarke served as Master Cooke to Queen Elizabeth I and King James I (VI). What can London tell us about Clarke's dramatic and transformative times? At his 400th anniversary, Lester Hillman dishes up a menu spiced by the Armada, the Gunpowder Plot, Shakespeare, globalised cuisine, orchestrated food theatre and more.

Light refreshments served

Thursday 2 July, 2-3pm  
**THAMES TRADESMEN**

What was a bumboat? Why is a lighterman called a lighterman? Where could you buy exotic wildlife, from a parrot to a tiger? Which workers on the river were so notorious for their bad language that even the great lexicographer Dr Johnson was lost for words? In this illustrated talk, Pete Smith introduces some of the many trades to thrive along the Thames, some long defunct and many still thriving.



Saturday 4 July, 2-3pm  
**WALK:  
PASS THE PORT**

The Romans established London as an international port, and ever since, its river has been a vital highway for trade, for pleasure and, for much of that time, for its very survival. Starting from the exit from Blackfriars Station, across the road from the extraordinary Black Friar pub, join Pete Smith for a walk along the fringes of the capital's liquid history, ending at the Tower of London.

£10 plus booking fee



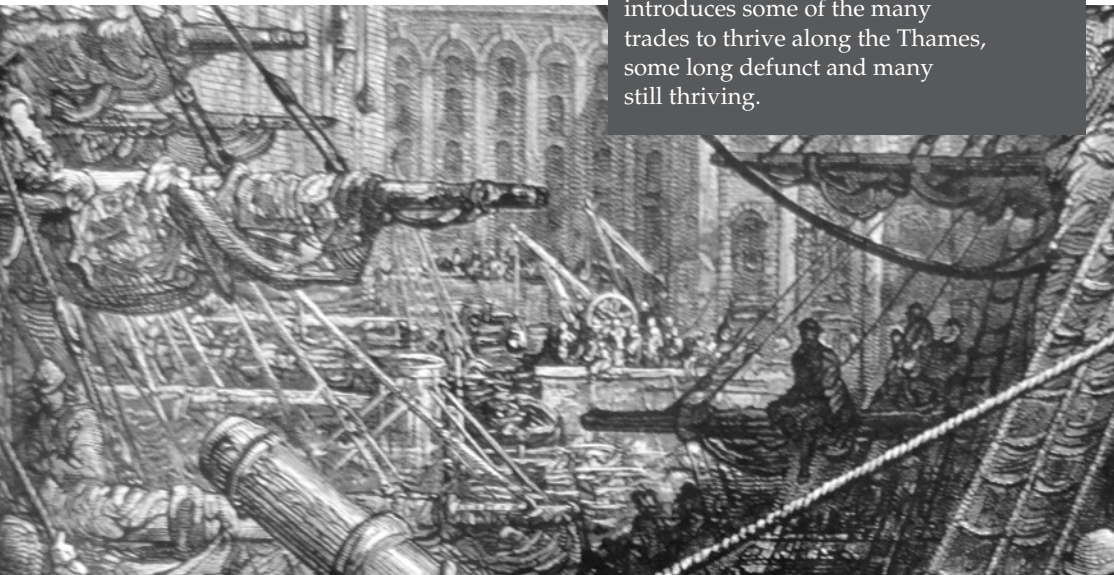
Wednesday 8 July, 2-3pm  
**CHRISTOPHER WREN  
& THE CITY CHURCHES**

The aftermath of the Great Fire of London provided an opportunity for a young architect to redesign the religious look of the City. Christopher Wren did not just build a new cathedral and a few churches; he created a Skyline – a City of Spires. This talk by City of London Guide Jill Finch looks at some of the churches rebuilt by The Office of Wren in the 17th century Square Mile.

Tuesday 7 July 2-3pm  
**GUILDHALL LIBRARY  
COLLECTIONS FOCUS:  
THE PARLIAMENTARY  
CRISIS AND SLIDE INTO  
THE FIRST ENGLISH  
CIVIL WAR, 1640-42.**

Join Senior Librarian Isabelle Chevallot to explore the significance of a display of key primary resources held by the library, relating to King Charles I's deteriorating relationship with parliament that led to the outbreak of the English Civil War.

In-Person Only



# EVENTS



Thursday 9 July, 6-7pm  
**HISTORY AND TREASURES OF GUILDHALL LIBRARY**

Join our librarians to learn about the history of Guildhall Library and view some of the library's amazing treasures.

**In-Person Only**

Monday 20 July, 11am-1pm  
**WALK:  
A CITY CHURCH CRAWL**

The aftermath of the Great Fire of London provided an opportunity for a young architect to redesign the religious look of the City. Christopher Wren did not just build a new cathedral and a few churches, he created a Skyline – a City of Spires. This walk with City of London Guide Jill Finch looks at some of the churches rebuilt by The Office of Wren in the 17th century Square Mile. £10 plus booking fee  
Meet outside Caffè Nero by St Paul's tube station (take exit 3 to street)



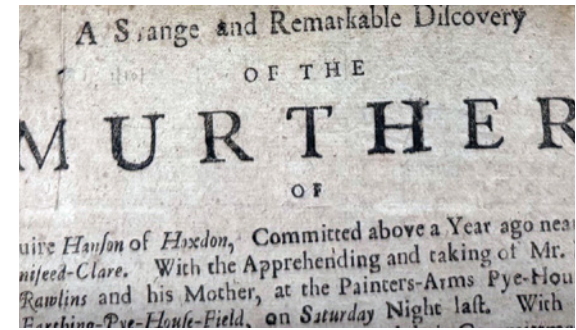
Thursday 23 July, 2-3pm  
**JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER**

For over forty years the Paris-trained artist Whistler lived in England, where both he and his art attracted fame and notoriety. His fascinating work reflects London and its river, and the Victorian society and times in which he lived. Join Val Woodgate, The Arts Society Lecturer, to find out more.



Tuesday 4 August, 2-3pm  
**BEFORE & AFTER THE GREAT FIRE**

17th century London was a busy, overcrowded city, one of the largest in Europe with a population around 350,000; it was a City of contrasts, poverty and wealth side by side. In the 1640s the City had been torn apart by Civil War. In 1665 what became known as the Great Plague of London halved its population. And, of course, there was always the threat of Fire... This talk by City of London Guide & Lecturer Jill Finch tells the tale of two cities of London.



Wednesday 5 August, 2-3pm  
**GUILDHALL LIBRARY COLLECTIONS FOCUS:  
CRIME BROADSIDES**

The genre of true crime is not a modern invention, as this talk by Rare Books Librarian Sarah Hume will explore. Crime was a rich field for broadside printers, with murders, arson, poison and executions selling fast and selling well.

**In-Person Only**



Thursday 6 August, 2-3pm  
**LONDON'S TRADITIONAL CUSTOMS AND CEREMONIES**

An overview of the capital's many fascinating customs and observances. It celebrates the persistence of ostensibly nonsensical rituals over hundreds of years. Join Robert Stephenson, City of London Guide, to find out more.

# EVENTS

## Wednesday 12 August, 6-7pm GUILDHALL LIBRARY COLLECTIONS FOCUS: LONDON THEATRE

Theatre has always played a large part in London history from Roman times, through to Shakespeare and the modern West End. Senior Librarian Melanie Strong will dive deep into Guildhall Library's theatre collections which include early modern play texts, playbills, ephemera as well as the history of individual theatres.

In-Person Only



## Thursday 13 August, 2-3pm CITY LIMITS: WHITECHAPEL

One of London's earliest suburbs, Whitechapel grew up along the Roman road linking Aldgate to Colchester. It was originally part of the parish of Stepney, but in the early fourteenth century a whitewashed chapel was established, and although the last church on this site was lost in the Blitz, it is still remembered in the name of the district. Pete Smith will trace Whitechapel's extraordinary history, which spans three waves of immigration, close links to the sea and seafarers, two 19th century mass murders, a great hospital, and a historic bell foundry where both Big Ben and America's Liberty Bell were cast.

Saturday 15 August, 11am-1pm

## WALK: ALDGATE TO STEPNEY

This walk, led by Pete Smith, starts from the booking hall of Aldgate Underground Station (Circle and Metropolitan Lines), just outside the old City gate, and follows a route that would have been well known to Chaucer, who lived for a dozen years above the gatehouse. It uncovers traces of Whitechapel's varied past, as well as signs of its vibrant present, including: a huge plague pit, two sticks and an apple, the Elephant Man, a philanthropist whose name was Mudd, a number of dark deeds, and quite a few heart-warming ones. £10 plus booking fee



Tuesday 18 August, 2-3pm

## THE PRE-RAPHAELITE BROTHERHOOD

In 1848 a group of young artists formed a secret society which they called The Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood. They wanted to establish a new kind of art based on serious subject matter and the painstaking study of nature. Holman Hunt said "... our talk is deepest treason against our betters". As proof of this, their early works in the new style provoked a storm of hostile criticism. A few years later, however, works by the Pre-Raphaelites were to be among the most popular exhibits at the Royal Academy. Join Val Woodgate, The Arts Society Lecturer, to find out more.

# EVENTS

## Thursday 20 August. 2-3pm THE EXPRESSIVE POWER OF BRONZE – THE SCULPTURES OF ELISABETH FRINK

This lecture examines the work of one of the outstanding figures of 20th century sculpture, an artist who achieved an international reputation for her monumental works depicting the human figure, birds and other animals. Sadly, she died in her early 60s but, from the first small sculpture acquired by the Tate Gallery (when she was a student of 21) until her death, she produced an astonishing body of work. Her bronzes varied in scale and feeling, from small, threatening birds to the life-size, tranquil *Walking Madonna* in Salisbury Cathedral Close. Join Frank Woodgate, The Arts Society Lecturer, to find out more.



## Thursday 27 August. 2-3pm GUILDHALL LIBRARY COLLECTIONS FOCUS: CHINESE COOKBOOKS

Cookbooks are often a unique snapshot into the past. Join Library & Archives Officer Holly Turner to explore our collection of Chinese cookbooks and discover how they reflect the 20th century, from rapid globalisation in the 1950s to the MSG panic of the 1980s.

In-Person Only



# EXHIBITION

Starts Tuesday 5 May – 29 October 2026

## BROADSIDES: SPEAKING TO THE PEOPLE

From the 16th century on, broadsides covered the walls of London, dispensing news, gossip, advice, and more. From biting political satire to dry announcement of laws, with songs, illustrations or a heaping of melodrama, the cheaply printed broadside has been witness to much of London's history. This exhibition explores the history of broadsides and how they were used to speak to the general public, high and low alike.

# GUILDHALL LIBRARY EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

The Library of London History

**GUILDHALL LIBRARY  
IS OPEN 10AM-4PM,  
MONDAY TO THURSDAY**

Guildhall Library has reduced numbers of staff at the moment and so if you would like to undertake research at the Library we would encourage you to book a place and let us know ahead of your visit what you would like to consult. If you do visit without an appointment, we cannot guarantee that we will be able to produce the material you require – however, as usual, we will do our best!



For further information and details of how to make a booking, please visit [www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/guildhall-library](http://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/guildhall-library)

**ALL EVENTS REQUIRE BOOKING.  
PLEASE BOOK THROUGH EVENTBRITE:  
GHLEVENTS.EVENTBRITE.CO.UK**

**IF YOU HAVE ANY QUERIES REGARDING BOOKING PLEASE CONTACT:  
GHLEVENTS@CITYOFLONDON.GOV.UK**



## **Guildhall Library**

Aldermanbury, London EC2V 7HH

[guildhall.library@cityoflondon.gov.uk](mailto:guildhall.library@cityoflondon.gov.uk)

[cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/guildhall-library](http://cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/libraries/guildhall-library)

Follow 