

**Sir Nicholas Penny**

**The Slade Professor of Fine Art Lectures Series 2020**

The lectures will trace some of the practices that were long considered essential in the education of an artist – notably, the study of the nude model and of plaster casts, expressive heads, and drapery – as well as some of the major themes and subjects that depended upon, or arose from, such practices. The intention is to reveal some of the premises, and to explore some of the priorities, that were shared by European artists from Verrocchio to Picasso. Special attention will be given to works by Raphael, Bernini, Guido Reni, Canova and Degas in addition to many less familiar sculptors and painters. Every lecture will give special attention to the different ways in which ancient Greek and Roman sculpture was invoked, imitated, interpreted and, occasionally, rejected.

The lecturer, Sir Nicholas Penny, is Visiting Professor at the China Academy of Art in Hangzhou. He was Director of the National Gallery from 2008 to 2015. Prior to that he held senior curatorial posts in the National Gallery, the National Gallery of Art (Washington, D.C.), and the Ashmolean Museum. He has been Mellon Professor at the Center for Advanced Study in the Visual Arts; Research Fellow at King's College, Cambridge, and at Clare Hall, Cambridge; and Lecturer at the University of Manchester. He obtained his doctorate at the Courtauld Institute of Art, having read English Literature at St Catharine's, Cambridge. His books include *Taste and the Antique* (with Francis Haskell), *Raphael* (with Roger Jones), and *The Materials of Sculpture*. He writes regularly, as both a scholar and a critic, for the *Burlington Magazine* and the *London Review of Books*.

**Avatars of Antiquity**

Premise and Practice in European Painting and Sculpture 1500 – 2000

Lecture titles:

1. Inventing the Classic
2. Dorothea beside Ariadne
3. Aurora and her Sisters
4. From the Life
5. Drapery as Metaphor
6. The Vulnerable Ideal
7. Reading the Passions
8. Entangled Figures