

# The Courtauld

# Strategy

2024-2029



# Contents

Chairman's Preface	4
Director's Introduction	6
Our Vision	8
Mission and History	10
Summary of Strategic Priorities	12
1. Transforming our Campus	14
2. Diversifying our Community	16
3. Enriching our Teaching and Research	18
4. Activating our Gallery	20
5. Expanding our Partnerships	22
6. Harnessing our Digital Potential	24
Supporting the Courtauld's pursuit of Excellence	26



# Chairman's Preface

**The Courtauld was conceived and founded by Samuel Courtauld in 1932 with the support of other enlightened philanthropists and collectors. Their aim was to promote the public understanding and enjoyment of the visual arts and to provide university-level teaching in the history of art.**

Today, more than ninety years later, we enjoy an international reputation for the quality and depth of our scholarship, and the beauty and richness of our Gallery. A self-governing academic institution that is part of the University of London, The Courtauld is home to the largest community of art historians and conservators in the UK, and our graduates play prominent roles across the global art world. We also care for one of the greatest art collections in the UK, made up of works from the late medieval period to today, including masterpieces by such artists as Michelangelo, Turner, Monet, Degas, Cezanne, Van Gogh and Matisse.

As we approach our centenary, we strive to pursue the most original and rigorous art-historical research, and to give our students the most stimulating and enriching of educations. We seek to provide our Gallery visitors with extraordinary experiences, and to fulfil Samuel Courtauld's dream of opening up art to all. And we aim to be a leading advocate for the importance of the visual arts, and for the crucial role of art-history in a world increasingly saturated with images.

To achieve this ambitious set of goals requires far-sighted planning, creative thinking, and constant renewal. It also requires strategic focus. To this end we have spent the past twelve months developing this five-year Strategy for The Courtauld, which sets out our current priorities, makes clear our continuing commitment to excellence, and maps out a clear path for our future.

This Strategy will see us creating an extraordinary new campus for The Courtauld at Somerset House, equipped with all the facilities our students and researchers need to thrive. It also commits us to maximising access to our academic and exhibition offerings, and to enriching our teaching and curatorial offerings. Finally, it sees us building on our strategic partnership with King's College London and embracing the most advanced forms of digital scholarship.

As we approach 2032, this Strategy renews our commitment to the ideals on which we were founded. At the same time, it signals our determination to create something unique for future generations of students and visitors - a truly world-class centre of excellence in the study and appreciation of the visual arts.

**Lord Browne of Madingley**



# Director's Introduction

## **In 2023, I was given the privilege and responsibility of being appointed Märit Rausing Director of the Courtauld Institute of Art.**

One of my first priorities on taking this role was to work with colleagues in developing a new Strategy for The Courtauld, which would serve to distil our collective ambitions and to provide a clear sense of direction for the Institute over the next five years.

I spent much of my first few months talking to as many of my Courtauld colleagues as I could, including members of our academic faculty, curatorial team, Governing Board, and professional services teams. I also met with numerous external supporters and stakeholders, including many members of our remarkable alumni community. In these conversations, I asked a basic question: 'How would you like to see The Courtauld developing over the coming years, and what do you think should be our priorities as we go forward?'

The following Strategy document, which is built around six strategic priorities, is built upon these hundreds of hours of conversations. It is also a document shaped by the opportunities and challenges The Courtauld faces in the broader educational and cultural landscape, and by the basic

imperatives of maintaining our international reputation for excellence and of securing our long-term financial sustainability. As this document makes clear, this is going to require us to grow in scale and to diversify our offerings, while ensuring that our academic and curatorial performance continues to go from strength to strength.

Most importantly of all, this Strategy is driven by two interlocking ambitions. One is to provide our students with a uniquely stimulating and supportive place in which to learn about the visual arts, develop as individuals, and engage with the great city in which we are based. The other is to provide our many thousands of visitors and interlocutors with a uniquely satisfying and informative set of experiences in the sphere of the visual arts.

This Strategy is designed to help us fulfil these ambitions, and to ensure that The Courtauld, over the next five years, continues to develop and thrive.

**Professor Mark Hallett**  
Märit Rausing Director



# Our Vision

**Our vision is to become the world's most ambitious, dynamic and innovative centre for the visual arts.**

**More specifically, we aim to become:**

---

A unique place of learning, where students have the opportunity to benefit from an unrivalled range and depth of teaching in the history, conservation, curation and business of art.

Britain's leading public advocate for the study of the visual arts, and for the importance of such knowledge to a thriving culture, economy and society.

---

A thriving hub of individual and collaborative research, generating the world's most original and rigorous new thinking on the visual arts.

A global pioneer in the digital sphere, opening up the study of art to an international audience through innovative and accessible forms of online provision.

---

An extraordinary art gallery offering a distinctive curatorial programme and one of the UK's most satisfying visitor experiences.

An institution that offers an exemplary model of inclusion, openness and accessibility, and that lives up to our founder Samuel Courtauld's vision of 'art for all'.

---



Édouard Manet (1832-1883), *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, (detail), (1882), oil on canvas. The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust) © The Courtauld

# Mission and History

**The Courtauld's mission is to advance the understanding of the visual arts of past and present across the world, through pioneering research, innovative teaching and inspiring exhibitions, and through the sensitive stewardship of our internationally renowned collection.**

Founded by collectors and philanthropists in 1932, the Courtauld has been at the forefront of developing the field of art history ever since. A research-led higher education institution, we are home to the largest community of art historians and conservators in the UK. More than 40 faculty teach and carry out research on subjects ranging from early medieval art to contemporary digital art, with an increasingly global focus.

An independent college of the University of London, and awarding University of London degrees, we offer a range of degree programmes from BA to PhD in History of Art, Conservation and Curating, drawing on the resources of our world-famous Courtauld Gallery and art collection. We currently have more than 600 students, and our alumni are leaders and innovators in the arts, culture and business worlds, helping to shape the global agenda for the arts and creative industries.

The Courtauld Gallery is also home to one of the finest art collections in the UK. Comprising paintings, works on paper and decorative arts, the collection is especially renowned for its Impressionist masterpieces. It is owned by the Samuel Courtauld Trust. The Courtauld works closely with the Trust to advance the stewardship, development and wide public enjoyment of the collection.

Based since 1989 at London's Somerset House, we are in the midst of a major renovation and redevelopment project. The first stage of this project was completed in 2021, with the opening of the new Courtauld Gallery, café, shop and Learning Centre, and the construction of the West Wing Conservation Studios. The second phase of the project, which involves the transformation of the Courtauld's teaching premises and the creation of new premises for the institution's academic and professional staff, is due to be completed in 2027-28. In the meantime, most of The Courtauld's History of Art and Curating teaching takes place at our temporary campus at Vernon Square, with the Conservation teaching programme largely based at Somerset House.



# Summary of Strategic Priorities, 2024-2029

1. Transforming our Campus
2. Diversifying our Community
3. Enriching our Teaching and Research
4. Activating our Gallery
5. Developing our Partnerships
6. Harnessing our Digital Potential



# Transforming our Campus

**Over the coming five years, we will create a world-leading environment that seamlessly integrates the teaching, research, and presentation of the visual arts.**

## Objectives

- We will continue to improve the facilities at our premises at Vernon Square, ensuring that our current students have a campus of which they can be proud.
- We will transform the East Wing of the Institute's premises at Somerset House into a magnificent series of teaching and learning spaces, including a new library and rooms for our Research Forum and doctoral student community.
- We will provide purpose-designed premises on the Strand to accommodate our academic and professional services colleagues. These premises will house a large number of offices and meeting rooms, and host a portion of our teaching.
- We will ensure that the Courtauld is fully integrated into what is becoming a new and dynamic cultural quarter at the Aldwych. This pedestrianised and landscaped space includes the Courtauld, Somerset House Trust, King's College London (KCL), the London School of Economics and 180 The Strand. This constellation of institutions is generating an abundance of intellectual, artistic and entrepreneurial energy, and the new Courtauld will take its place right at the heart of this hotbed of ideas and creativity.



# Diversifying our Community

**We are committed to ensuring that The Courtauld becomes a model of inclusion, accessibility and openness within the higher education sector.**

We aim to see the development of a diverse student, staff and visitor body that is more representative of the city in which we are located, and of the society in which we operate. This will require us to promote art history to a wider range of potential students, and convince them of the subject's merits and usefulness, both as a field of intellectual enquiry and as a means of acquiring skills that lead to success in the contemporary jobs market.

## Objectives

- Our newly appointed Director of Governance will take the lead in implementing a new Equality, Diversity and Inclusion (EDI) strategy and action-plan at the Courtauld.
- A new EDI policy, emerging out of this work, will be published in 2024. This will embrace all aspects of our activity and will be designed to ensure that we follow best practice in this area.
- We will mount a new marketing and communications campaigns designed to make the study of art history attractive to a far wider range of students.
- We will continue to develop our outreach programmes and partnerships with schools and colleges, and use them to expand and diversify our pool of potential applicants.
- Our Advancement team will work with our donors in a drive to expand the provision of bursaries for students from under-represented communities.
- We will review every stage of our appointment procedures, from advertisement to interview, with the aim of making The Courtauld an attractive employer to the widest possible range of potential employees.
- We will develop a diverse programme of exhibitions and displays at the gallery and use this to reach out to new audiences and demographics.



# Enriching our Teaching and Research

**Having recently transformed our undergraduate provision, we are now embarking on a major expansion of our teaching provision at postgraduate level. We will also pursue ambitious plans to enrich and diversify our research culture.**

## Objectives

- We will launch a newly revised MA in History of Art in the autumn of 2025, designed to maintain all the best elements of our current MA whilst offering our students the chance to encounter an even wider mix of approaches and perspectives.
- We will launch a new MA in Curating in the autumn of 2025, building on our existing track-record in this area, and responding afresh to the extraordinary global demand for courses that teach curating in all its forms.
- We will also launch a new MA in Art and Business in the autumn of 2025. This will be designed to offer students an extensive knowledge of the history of the art market and to give them the kinds of professional, financial and entrepreneurial skills required to thrive in auction-houses, dealerships, private galleries and across the contemporary art world more generally.
- We will continue to reinforce our faculty across all its current areas of strength - in Conservation, in British, European and North American art, as well as the arts of Asia- while also continuing the process of extending our research and teaching to engage with the arts of related geographical regions across the world.
- We will support our faculty and students to develop new approaches to the history of art, conservation and curating, particularly around digital technologies.
- We will launch a new Visiting Professorships programme, which will be designed to complement the existing strengths of our faculty.
- We will explore the possibility of creating new teaching and research centres in particular areas of art-historical strength, to complement our existing Centre for the Art of the Americas, and Ho Centre for Buddhist Art and Conservation.
- We will continue to support our world-leading Conservation department and explore ways of further expanding its reach and impact.
- We will continue to build a research culture at the Courtauld that is second to none, through further investment in our renowned Research Forum, the development of a world-leading academic events programme, and the nurturing of a flourishing doctoral and post-doctoral community.



# Activating our Gallery

**Following the refurbishment of The Courtauld Gallery, we will now seek to ensure that our beautiful new gallery spaces host a dynamic, diverse and varied programme that is geared to a broad demographic of visitors.**

## Objectives

- We will ensure that the Gallery attracts larger audiences and is more visible in the cultural landscape of London and the UK, and that it develops an increasingly diverse exhibition programme.
- We will maintain excellent standards of care, display and interpretation in our curation of the permanent collection, and we will actively pursue opportunities to develop the collection as well as sharing it generously with audiences in the UK and internationally.
- We will continue developing the deeply researched historical shows for which we are so widely respected, and which will remain a core part of our main exhibition programme.
- Building on the successes of our Peter Doig and Claudette Johnson exhibitions of 2023-24, we will also develop a strand of shows focusing on the art of today, curated by our new curator in contemporary art.
- We will implement a new programming timetable, in which the Denise Coates galleries will host three exhibitions a year, the Drawings Gallery and the Project Space will each host three displays a year, and the Tangen Gallery of 20th Century Art will host a rotating programme of annual displays. This timetable will be led by our in-house curators, working in collaboration with academic faculty and visiting curators.
- We will develop a bespoke range of public activities and events around the gallery's timetable of exhibitions and displays.
- We will continue to develop our Learning programme, so as to see a greater and more diverse audience of young visitors accessing our galleries.



Claudette Johnson, *Blues Dance*, 2023, pastel, watercolour and gouache on paper, 183 x 122cm © Claudette Johnson. Image courtesy the artist and Hollybush Gardens, London  
Photo: Andy Keate

# Expanding our Partnerships

**Building on the success of our existing partnership with KCL, we will continue to pursue collaborations that offer us the chance to develop new areas of interdisciplinary expertise and to further improve our student experience.**

## Objectives

- We will continue developing our collaborations with KCL, with whom we entered a Strategic Partnership in 2022. These include multiple institutional exchanges at the undergraduate level and a new MA in Contemporary Art and the Moving Image. We will partner with King's Business School in delivering our new MA in Art and Business. Finally, we are also in discussions with KCL about a variety of jointly led research projects, engaging with topics such as AI and contemporary visual culture.
- We will pursue discussions with a number of art schools in London, to explore the possibility of developing a new MA programme that would bring art history students and art students into productive dialogue.
- Building on our existing partnership scheme with the University of Boston, we will pursue similar international partnerships with other universities and arts institutions, both in the US and beyond.
- We will also pursue potential collaborations with commercial partners, from the worlds of fashion, the arts and the media. Such collaborations provide the potential to translate academic research into something that is accessible and appealing to wider audiences, and to develop The Courtauld's cultural profile.
- Our graduates - who include the directors of numerous national art galleries, and thousands of other high-profile individuals working across academia and the art world - are a remarkable resource. We will work to instill a new sense of partnership across our alumni community, and to encourage an even greater participation in our activities.





# Harnessing our Digital Potential

**Our sixth and final priority is to make The Courtauld a thriving centre of digital research, teaching and dissemination.**

## Objectives

- We will invest in generating a high-quality, sustainable digital infrastructure at The Courtauld, and in robust data and digital asset management systems and processes that will enable us to pursue cutting-edge digital research and teaching.
- We will encourage and support digital humanities research and teaching, working with colleagues at KCL and elsewhere.
- We will contribute to important debates around Artificial Intelligence (AI), Augmented Reality (AR), and Virtual Reality (VR) in the arts, the heritage sector and in society at large.
- We will continue to harness digitisation as a means to share our library and gallery collections, building on the work we have already done in digitising the Conway photographic collection and the Courtauld Gallery collection.
- We will build upon our successes as a provider of short-course online teaching by providing a new raft of such courses, geared to a global public. As we move into a world in which people have more portfolio careers, and periodically wish to extend their knowledge through intense forms of study, we have the opportunity of providing an unequalled range of short online courses in such subjects as History of Art, Curating, and Art and Business.
- We will pursue the possibility of the Courtauld generating an open-access digital resource that, translating scholarly research into engaging and accessible form, would introduce people to the pleasures and wonders of the visual arts. This would provide a platform for those who might wish to pursue further study in the subject, ideally at the Courtauld itself. Such a resource will make the Courtauld a place where anyone, from anywhere, can learn about art.

# Supporting The Courtauld's Pursuit of Excellence

**To deliver this ambitious agenda, we will require the involvement and commitment of the entire Courtauld community. Over the next five years, we will ensure that this community is fully supported, and that all of its members are given the opportunity develop and thrive.**

This will see us:

- continuing to invest in all aspects of the student experience, and giving students the facilities, accommodation and professional support they need to succeed.
  - supporting our professional services colleagues, and continuing our ongoing transformation, modernisation and improvement of working practices and procedures across The Courtauld.
  - ensuring that all aspects of The Courtauld's governance fully comply with our statutory obligations and are in line with best practice in the higher education and gallery sectors.
  - collaborating with our affiliated unions to ensure that all members of staff are appropriately remunerated and enjoy the best possible working conditions.
  - supporting the workings of The Courtauld's Board of Governors, so that all members of the Board can successfully deploy their expertise on behalf of the organisation.
  - supporting The Courtauld's donors, friends and alumni, through the means of an effective and visionary Advancement team.
  - delivering a robust form of financial stewardship that guarantees The Courtauld's long-term sustainability.
  - promoting environmentally friendly practices across The Courtauld.
- Through such means, we hope to engage every single member of The Courtauld's extensive community in this Strategic Plan, and inspire a positive, energised and highly motivated sense of common purpose that runs across the organisation as a whole.



Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890), *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*, 1889, oil on canvas. The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust) © The Courtauld

## **The Courtauld Institute of Art**

Vernon Square, Penton Rise  
London WC1X 9EW

## **The Courtauld Gallery**

Somerset House, Strand  
London WC2R 0RN

**[courtauld.ac.uk](http://courtauld.ac.uk)**



**@TheCourtauld**



**@Courtauld**

Image credits: Fergus Carmichael; Claudia Janke; Kevin Meredith