

Sotheby's INSTITUTE OF ART

Art, Luxury, and Sustainability: Markets in Transition
Sotheby's Institute of Art, 30 Bedford Square, London WC1B 3EE
7 November 2025

PROGRAMME, ABSTRACTS, AND BIOGRAPHIES



Banksy, Camden, North London

PROGRAMME

9.15 - 9.45: Coffee and Registrations

9:45 – 10:00: Introduction, Dr Jonathan Woolfson, Director, Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

10:00 – 11:15: Session 1, Frameworks for Social and Environmental Sustainability in Art and Luxury.

Chair: Dr Federica Carlotto, Sotheby's Institute of Art, London.

- Chandni Jeswani, Independent Art Historian: Towards a Framework for Social Sustainability in Art and Luxury
- Dr Virginia Marano, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut, MASI Lugano: Designing Access: Disability as a Blueprint for Sustainable Transition in Art and Luxury
- Amy Jackson, Artist: Embedded Externalities: Rethinking the Value of Art through Climate Accountability

11:15 – 11:30: Q&A for Session 1

11:30 – 12:00: Coffee Break

12:00 - 13:15: Session 2, Institutions in Transition: Museums, Conservation and Sustainable Practices. Chair: Dr Barbara Lasic, Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

- Melissa Painter, V&A: Creating a Family of Sustainable Museums
- Jürgen Huber, The Wallace Collection: Conservation's Role in a Sustainable Future
- Lorraine Finch, Independent Conservator: Preserving Masterpieces and the Planet: Conservators at the Intersection of Art and Sustainability

13:15 – 13:30: Q&A for Session 2

13:30 – 14:30: Lunch (not provided)

14:30 – 15:45: Session 3, Craft, Artisanship and the Sustainable Future of Luxury Industries. Chair: Sabinna Rachimova.

- Amruta Rawate Patil, Independent Researcher: True Luxury, False Sustainability: Legal Silences in the Extraction of Artisanal Knowledge

- Dr Sydney Ayers Mercer, The King's Foundation: A Blueprint for Sustainable Luxury Fashion
- Dr Perrine Desmichel, ESCP Business School, Paris: Sleeping Beauties: When and Why Do Consumers Underuse Luxury Inherited Goods?

15:45 – 16:00: Q&A for Session 3

16:00 – 16:30: Coffee Break

16:30 – 17:30: Panel Discussion, From Challenges to Opportunities: Reflections on Sustainability in the Art World. Chair: Lula Rappoport, Gallery Climate Coalition.

- Elise Foster Vander Elst, Head of Exhibitions & Environmental Impact Lead, Design Museum
- Cliodhna Murphy, Global Head of Environmental Sustainability, Hauser & Wirth
- Dr Caitlin Southwick, Founder and Executive Director, Ki Culture

17.30 - 19.00: Drinks Reception

ABSTRACTS

10:00 – 11:15: Session 1, Frameworks for Social and Environmental Sustainability in Art and Luxury.
Chair: Dr Federica Carlotto, Sotheby's Institute of Art.

Chandni Jeswani, Independent Art Historian: Towards a Framework for Social Sustainability in Art and Luxury

The growing emphasis on environmental sustainability within the art and luxury sectors addresses critical ecological challenges, yet often overlooks social sustainability—the complex ethical, cultural, and human dimensions that ensure equitable and inclusive practices. This paper argues that social sustainability must be integrated alongside environmental goals to create holistic frameworks that foster resilience, justice, and cultural vitality in art and luxury industries. Building on interdisciplinary research and grounded case studies from museum curation, diasporic art communities, and sustainable fashion supply chains, this paper proposes a comprehensive framework that addresses social sustainability through four key pillars. First, ethical labor practices focus on fair wages, safe working conditions, and respect for artisans' and workers' rights across global supply chains, countering exploitative trends common in luxury production. Second, equitable sourcing and supply chains prioritize environmental stewardship while supporting local economies and marginalized producers, ensuring cultural authenticity and social responsibility coexist. Third, participatory and community-driven programming in museums and cultural institutions amplifies diverse voices, promotes inclusion, and strengthens cultural identity, challenging dominant narratives shaped by market exclusivity and institutional gatekeeping. Fourth, cultural preservation and celebration recognize the role of heritage, traditional knowledge, and diasporic practices as central to sustaining cultural ecosystems and promoting social cohesion. The paper further explores innovative intersections between social and environmental sustainability, highlighting digital platforms as tools for inclusive engagement and empowerment, circular economy models that reduce waste while sustaining artisan livelihoods, and alternative business strategies that rethink luxury's exclusivity through ethical consumption and shared value creation. These approaches confront systemic barriers such as cultural commodification, institutional inertia, and the erasure of non-Western perspectives in mainstream art and luxury markets. Ultimately, this paper calls for a paradigm shift in how sustainability is conceptualized and operationalized within art and luxury sectors. By positioning social sustainability as an indispensable counterpart to decarbonisation and environmental stewardship, it advocates for integrating social ethics into institutional policies, curatorial practices, and corporate governance. Such integration can cultivate cultural economies that are not only environmentally responsible but also socially just, inclusive, and resilient to future challenges. This framework encourages ongoing critical dialogue and practical innovation, inviting stakeholders across disciplines and geographies to reimagine sustainable futures in art and luxury grounded in equity, community, and cultural integrity.

Dr Virginia Marano, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut, MASI Lugano:
Designing Access: Disability as a Blueprint for Sustainable Transition in Art and Luxury

This paper argues that disability-informed design offers not only strategies for inclusion, but a critical framework for advancing sustainability across the art and luxury sectors. While existing sustainability models often focus on measurable outputs—carbon audits, material substitutions, and circular production—they frequently leave intact the deeper aesthetic and economic logics of speed, excess, and disposability. Disability frameworks offer a different paradigm. Grounded in lived experience, they centre slowness, interdependence, maintenance, and care—principles that align closely with degrowth and regenerative economic models. Rather than viewing access as a retrofit or compliance task, this paper positions it as a speculative design method with the power to reshape institutional practices and consumer expectations alike. Through case studies in curatorial and design practice, the paper explores how access-centred approaches are generating low-carbon, socially engaged alternatives. Crip Time (Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt, 2021) disrupted normative exhibition pacing through a focus on non-linearity, rest, and sensory variability. At the Wellcome Collection, *The Cult of Beauty* (2023–24) incorporated access elements—BSL, audio description, tactile engagement—not as peripheral services but as integral curatorial strategies that broaden participation while reducing environmental impact. In luxury fashion, adaptive design platforms such as Ffora and Open Style Lab offer an ethics of durability, repairability, and embodied function in resistance to the extractive logics of fast fashion. Together, these practices model what a transition to sustainable cultural and commercial systems could look like: not innovation for its own sake, but deep structural change grounded in equity, care, and environmental responsibility. Access, in this vision, becomes a blueprint for reimagining both value and viability in a climate-conscious future.

Amy Jackson, Artist: Embedded Externalities: Rethinking the Value of Art through Climate Accountability

In an era of escalating climate risk and material scarcity, luxury markets are being forced to reconcile the symbolic value of cultural objects with their hidden ecological costs. This paper explores a new value framework for contemporary art that incorporates its environmental externalities into the economic, aesthetic, and institutional value of the work itself. Rather than treating carbon footprint, material sourcing, or transport emissions as separate from artistic merit or market price, I propose a model where these factors become embedded in how we assess and transact art. Drawing from my experience in both sustainable finance and visual art practice, I present a conceptual and practical methodology for integrating impact data into the lifecycle of artworks—from creation to curation, collection, and deaccessioning. What happens to art's value when transparency around environmental harm is not a reputational afterthought but a core part of the work's identity? Can speculative and luxury markets still function when bound by the limits of planetary justice? This paper will draw on examples from artists and institutions engaging with these ideas, while also proposing a new lexicon and set of metrics for sustainability-informed collecting. It challenges us to rethink not only how we value art, but for whom (and at what cost) that value is produced.

12:00 - 13:15: Session 2, Institutions in Transition: Museums, Conservation and Sustainable Practices. Chair: Dr Barbara Lasic, Sotheby's Institute of Art.

Melissa Painter, V&A: Creating a Family of Sustainable Museums

V&A is a family of museums dedicated to the power of creativity. As a growing family of sites with two new sites, V&A East Storehouse (now open) and V&A East Museum (opening 2026), it's important that sustainability is woven into everything we do, and we also are preparing for impacts of a changing climate. We have ambitious science aligned Net Zero by 2035 target and replacing our sustainability plan with a robust climate action plan. V&A's Head of Sustainability will provide an overview of the new climate action plan, talk through the importance of measuring carbon across Scopes 1,2,3, to focus action and ensuring the plan is co-created with colleagues. The Climate Action Plan will be brought to life with case studies on sustainable design on our temporary exhibition programme, embedding sustainability in our new sites from uniforms, catering & collection care and championing sustainable artists, designs and makers.

Jürgen Huber, The Wallace Collection: Conservation's Role in a Sustainable Future

Our global socioeconomic model and the natural world are undergoing radical changes, with the uneven distribution of wealth and resources creating strain on many individuals and nations alike. As weather patterns become more extreme, so too does the debate around these challenges. Museums, as vital cultural institutions, are uniquely positioned to champion solutions to these challenges. While the Wallace Collection has already demonstrated a commitment to environmental and financial sustainability by reducing energy consumption and generating some of its own electricity, sustainability is a broad concept. We will examine how our extraordinary objects at the Wallace Collection have been cared for throughout their history, evaluating traditional treatment methods alongside more sustainable approaches. Through compelling case studies this presentation will demonstrate that many of these challenges are solvable. Using current data, Jürgen will argue that we possess the solutions and would like to inspire individuals to join those making positive contributions in solving these issues. This commitment to progress and social responsibility aligns, we believe, with the ethos of Sir Richard and Lady Amelie Wallace, who were remarkably forward-thinking and socially conscious individuals.

Lorraine Finch, Independent Conservator: Preserving Masterpieces and the Planet: Conservators at the Intersection of Art and Sustainability

It is paradoxical that the actions taken by conservators to protect art are hastening its demise as a result of the climate and environmental costs of conservation. Conservators at the Intersection of Art and Sustainability will outline how conservation creates emissions, as well as its environmental and social costs, using case studies from conservation studios globally. It will reveal which aspects of the conservation process are the most detrimental to the climate and the environment drawing upon published research and real world carbon footprinting from conservation studios for illustration. By increasing understanding and by providing an overview of the tools available to measure and track the impacts of conservation, individuals and organisations will understand how they are contributing to unsustainable practices thereby addressing one of the barriers to meaningful change. The lack of knowledge, frequently identified as a barrier to change, will be challenged next. Conservators at the Intersection of Art and Sustainability will discuss sustainable approaches to conservation. As well as examining practical actions for sustainability, it will explore how existing models must evolve, and

indeed be replaced. It will argue that transformational change is needed in both our ways of doing and thinking. Sustainable conservation is not simply about finding alternatives it is about thinking alternatively. Conservators at the Intersection of Art and Sustainability will conclude by stating that although environmental sustainability is the defining challenge facing both the art world and the luxury sector, it is not an insurmountable challenge; indeed it presents great opportunities.

14:30 – 15:45: Session 3, Craft, Artisanship and the Sustainable Future of Luxury Industries. Chair: Sabinna Rachimova.

Amruta Rawate Patil, Independent Researcher: True Luxury, False Sustainability: Legal Silences in the Extraction of Artisanal Knowledge

Luxury brands increasingly position handmade goods from the Global South as hallmarks of sustainability—evoking narratives of tradition, slowness, and ethical production. But these narratives mask a deeper contradiction: the very communities whose practices embody environmental sustainability are often excluded from the revenue, governance, and environmental benefit structures of luxury markets. This paper explores how the cultural and creative industries use sustainability reporting as a performance of ethics, while the systems that underpin such reporting remain structurally extractive. Taking examples from major fashion houses appropriating indigenous and artisanal practices—such as Kolhapuri leatherwork, Kantha embroidery, and handloom weaving—the paper shows how the handmade label becomes a marketing tool, while production is outsourced to mechanized, mass-scale systems that compromise the environment and alienate artisan communities. Artisans, too slow for luxury’s timelines, are replaced by machines that mimic their craft. Yet in policy frameworks—ranging from EU ESG disclosures to museum and fashion reporting tools—there is no mandate for heritage-based revenue sharing, environmental impact accountability, or protection of traditional knowledge within sustainability metrics. Drawing on legal frameworks (e.g., IP law, heritage law, and ESG guidelines), the paper proposes a reconfiguration of compliance models to center artisanal communities: including shared governance, community-led certification systems, and enforceable cultural contracts. It asks how law can intervene—not only to credit, but to guarantee rights, economic inclusion, and climate equity. Ultimately, this paper argues that sustainability in the luxury and art world cannot be meaningful until the environmental knowledge embedded in Global South practices is not only acknowledged—but shared, protected, and legally valued

Dr Sydney Ayers Mercer, The King’s Foundation: A Blueprint for Sustainable Luxury Fashion

In a world increasingly defined by ecological urgency, there is a crucial need to address systemic challenges in the fashion and luxury sectors. Through its Future Textiles education programme, The King’s Foundation is pioneering a new model for the fashion industry: one that is sustainable, regenerative, and rooted in craft excellence. Through project-based learning and interdisciplinary collaboration, The Foundation’s co-design model, which brings together educators, practitioners, and luxury brands, addresses the disconnect between education and practice. This paper will present practical examples of real-world action in addressing the challenges faced by the luxury fashion industry. Drawing on successful Future Textiles programmes such as the Modern Artisan, and Chanel Embroidery and Millinery Fellowships—as well as the forthcoming Costume Craft Programme in partnership with Amazon MGM Studios—this paper will explore how education, tradition, and innovation intersect to reimagine

sustainability in luxury fashion. Through these examples, the paper will highlight the importance of themes such as: sustainable production and sourcing; industry engagement, cross-sector collaborations, and alternative business models; and the vital role craftsmanship played in a regenerative fashion industry. Central to this work is a commitment to reviving and revaluing high-level craft as a vital component of sustainability. By empowering the next generation of makers and artisans through intensive, industry-informed training, the Future Textiles programmes support the creation of garments designed to be cherished and kept—challenging fast fashion's throwaway culture. Craft not only elevates the intrinsic and emotional value of clothing but also fosters more conscious consumer behaviour. The paper presents The King's Foundation's work in offering a compelling blueprint for luxury fashion that is not only beautiful, but meaningful and sustainable. With a focus on working in harmony with nature, regenerative and circular approaches are embedded at all levels, balanced with high technical skills to ensure longevity, planet positive approaches and appreciation of craftsmanship.

Dr Perrine Desmichel, ESCP Business School, Paris: Sleeping Beauties: When and Why Do Consumers Underuse Luxury Inherited Goods?

This research explores the paradox of consumer underuse of valuable inherited goods—items that are both emotionally cherished and materially precious, such as luxury watches or jewelry. Despite their potential to support sustainable consumption practices through reuse and repair, inherited items are often kept dormant. Across two surveys and six experiments ($N = 2,472$), we document a consistent behavioral pattern: consumers use inherited goods less frequently than comparable purchased or gifted items. We attribute this underuse to a psychological mechanism we term relic fetishism, whereby inherited goods are symbolically imbued with ancestral meaning, stripping them of perceived functional utility. This symbolic elevation dampens consumers' willingness to engage with inherited goods in practical ways—especially through after-sales services like repair, refurbishment, or upcycling. In doing so, consumers inadvertently miss opportunities to extend product lifecycles, despite rising environmental concerns and awareness of finite resources like gold. However, we find that priming consumers with green values—emphasizing sustainability and product longevity—significantly boosts both perceived in-use value and interest in repair services for inherited possessions. Our findings contribute to three research streams: First, inheritance and symbolic consumption, by demonstrating how emotional and identity-linked associations inhibit use; Second, product usage, by highlighting how provenance influences utilitarian behaviors; and third, most importantly sustainability in luxury, by identifying a psychological barrier to reuse and offering interventions to overcome it. As the luxury industry increasingly seeks circular economy solutions, this research suggests that symbolic meanings assigned to products must be carefully managed to ensure that sustainability goals—like repair, reuse, and repurposing—are realized. We discuss implications for brand communication, after-sales service design, and green consumer priming strategies to awaken these “sleeping beauties” and reintegrate them into everyday life.

BIOGRAPHIES

Dr Sydney Ayers Mercer, The King's Foundation, London

Sydney Ayers Mercer is Tutor in Architecture & Urbanism at The King's Foundation, where she teaches across academic programmes and university partnerships. She also works on special projects related to furniture history, traditional building and crafts, and heritage skills training. As an historian of architecture and design from 1750, Sydney's research explores how architecture (in the broadest sense) shapes and is shaped by societies, taste and cultural memory over time. She considers how the past informs and engages with the present and future, in a variety of methods and contexts.

Dr Federica Carlotto, Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

At Sotheby's Institute, Federica has pioneered the study and education of the luxury business. She is Program Director of the MA in Luxury Business. Prior to that she led the Semester Program "The Art of Luxury" from 2018 to 2021. She has 10+ years' experience in the analysis of material culture and knowledge transfer for Higher Education. Federica has appeared as a guest speaker at conferences and workshops in Italy, UK, France, Australia, Canada, and Japan on topics such as: consumption and creation of social identity; luxury trends; place branding and luxury products; the concept of luxury; cross-cultural issues in clothing (focus on Japan and Asia); social and anthropological history of costume and fashion. Her research outputs have been published in conference proceedings, peer-reviewed journals and edited books. Federica is the founder of SALT, a cultural branding consultancy with focus on luxury strategy. She collaborates on specific qualitative projects with other boutique consultancies, providing insights to companies in the luxury, fashion and beauty industry. The latest project includes the production of intelligence about the post-pandemic luxury consumption for Versace. Scholarship grantee of the Japanese Ministry of Education (MEXT) from 2005-2010, Federica has received her Ph.D in Fashion sociology from Bunka Gakuen University (Tokyo) and her MBA from Grenoble Graduate Business School (GGSB).

Dr Perrine Desmichel, ESCP Business School, Paris

Perrine Desmichel, (pdesmichel@escp.eu) is an Assistant Professor of Marketing at ESCP Business School. Her research and teaching interests revolve around experimental research, consumer behavior, and status-driven consumption. She has presented her work at major marketing conferences, including AMA, ACR, and EMAC, and has published articles in the Journal of Consumer Research, Journal of Retailing, Current Opinion in Psychology, and Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes. She is also the co-director of GRAIL (Global Research Alliance In Luxury). She holds a Master's degree from HEC Paris, a PhD from the University of Lausanne, and completed a Postdoctoral Program at the Kellogg School of Management (Northwestern University).

Lorraine Finch, Independent Conservator

Lorraine Finch is director of LFCP, which is accelerating the cultural heritage sector's climate and environmental actions through research, knowledge sharing and resource creation. Examples include 'Low Cost/No Cost Tips for Sustainability in Cultural Heritage,' which provides actionable solutions for implementing sustainable practices, and an open-access sustainability rider, which enables museum, library and archive professionals to embed sustainability into every decision. Lorraine is a sustainability leader who advocates on the international stage for sustainability in cultural heritage participating in conferences, leading workshops and training, publishing books and articles and collaborating with leaders in the field in the USA and Europe. In 2024 she collaborated with The National Archives, UK, to develop Carbon Literacy for Archives, and Carbon Literacy for Conservation and Collections Care - certified courses accredited by the Carbon Literacy Project, and partnered with The Getty Conservation Institute to create a Sustainability Assessment Framework. Lorraine is founder and Chair of the Institute of Conservation's Sustainability Group. She is a Director of Climate Museum UK and an accredited conservator of archives, photographs, film and sound. In recognition for her dedication and influence in sustainability Lorraine was presented with a David Middleton Sustainability Award, was crowned an Entrepreneur iAlso100 and is finalist for the inaugural UK Green Growth Award.

Elise Foster Vander Elst, The Design Museum, London

Elise Foster Vander Elst (she/her) is Head of Exhibitions & Environmental Impact Lead at the Design Museum. She has over two decades experience of creating cultural impact through exhibitions, events and action research in the UK and internationally. Elise is currently Head of Exhibitions and Environmental Impact Lead at the Design Museum. In this role she leads a team to deliver up to ten exhibitions and displays per year at the museum in London. Most recently, her focus is on reformed museum practice for a green transition. She is a pioneer in the field of low carbon exhibition making, developing industry-leading tools for carbon measurement and evaluation. Elise currently leads the Design Museum's new Environmental Responsibility consultancy arm, supporting UK museums to reflect on their current environmental approach and update sustainability strategies across their organisations. In 2024 she launched Museums 2030, a peer support network for UK museums and galleries working to develop greener exhibitions and regularly delivers Carbon Literacy Training for Museums.

Jürgen Huber, The Wallace Collection

Jürgen Huber is Senior Furniture Conservator (ACR accredited) with a wealth of experience in the preservation of world-class collections, specializing in historical furniture. He works in preventive and interventive conservation, project management, and cross-institutional collaborations, notably the Riesener Project. He is a passionate advocate of environmental and financial sustainability within cultural heritage, with a strong background in renewable energy implementation and sustainable practices.

Amy Jackson, Independent Artist

Amy Jackson studied Fine Art at the Ruskin, University of Oxford, achieving a scholarship and a 1st, later returning to The Smith School of Enterprise and the Environment. She is a conceptual artist, climate risk

specialist and human rights activist blending philosophy and nature to create immersive experiences in traditional galleries and unconventional spaces. Work includes street art, happenings, photography and installation. Jackson explores issues including climate change, consumerism, mental health and inequality. Her work often exists outside of the 'white cube' and inside the communities it touches. Experienced in responsible investment, she leads the sustainable finance strategy for London's £50bn pension fund. Featuring in the Financial Times, Economist, Guardian and CNBC. Jackson has exhibited at Kensington + Chelsea Art Week, Tate Britain, Modern Art Oxford, CICA Museum, CREA Cantieri del Contemporaneo Venice and Miami Art Week. Her work has featured in the Times, Art World Magazine, Time Out and Channel 4.

Chandni Jeswani, Independent Art Historian

Chandni Jeswani is a researcher and currently Manager, Commissions at Alserkal Arts Foundation, Dubai, and holds an MA in History of Art with Curating from Birkbeck, University of London. Her research focuses on architectural and cultural sustainability, diasporic communities, and ethical practices. She actively collaborates with Dubai Culture and Arts Authority and participates in Dubai's contemporary art scene, including Art Dubai

Dr Barbara Lasic, Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

Barbara Lasic is Senior Lecturer in Art and Design History, and Research and Knowledge Lead at Sotheby's Institute of Art. She is also a regular consultant at the Victoria and Albert Museum and the Wallace Collection. Barbara has published on the subject of French material culture, the history of collecting and the art market, and museum architecture. Her research interests include the production and consumption of French decorative arts, 1650-1900, the private and institutional collecting and display of French art, and the intersection of the art market and curatorial practice in the early twentieth century. Prior to her academic career, Barbara worked at the Victoria and Albert Museum as part of the curatorial team involved in the redevelopment of the Europe: 1600-1800 Galleries, and she also held curatorial positions at the Wellcome Trust and the National Maritime Museum, Greenwich. She is part of the Association for Art History Art Market Steering Group, and the editorial board of the Colnaghi Journal.

Dr Virginia Marano, Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz - Max-Planck-Institut, MASI Lugano

Virginia Marano (she/her) is an art historian and curator. She is currently a postdoctoral research associate in the Lise Meitner Group "Coded Objects," at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz – Max-Planck-Institut in Florence. She holds a PhD in art history from the University of Zurich. Her thesis examined the diasporic dimension in the works of Jewish women sculptors in Post-war New York, previously assimilated to feminism but not yet connected to the question of exile. She was a recipient of several scholarship and research grants from the Swiss government and the University of Zurich. In 2022, she was a SNSF Doc.Mobility fellow in the Art History Department at Hunter College/CUNY. She is the co-director and coordinator of the research project ["Rethinking Art History through Disability"](#) at the University of Zurich. In 2023, she was a fellow researcher at the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in Venice, working on the PNRR-PEBA project for the Removal of Physical, Cognitive, and Sensory Barriers in

Cultural Sites, funded by the NextGenerationEU program. In addition to her academic work, she serves as a curatorial assistant at MASI, Museo d'Arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano. She is a board member of the Fondazione Centro Giacometti and is an advisory board member for the Biennale Bregaglia. She thrives on interdisciplinary collaboration, and her recent interest is in Criptech art, which challenges ableism in the tools and methods of contemporary art, science, and technology. Her research-based work centers on intersectional feminist theory and practice, focusing on innovative curatorial approaches that prioritize decentralization and encourage collaborative practices.

Dr Marina Maximova, Regent's University, London

Marina Maximova is an art and cultural historian. She worked at Sotheby's Institute of Art as a Lecturer in Art Business until 2025. Prior to that, she taught in Loughborough University School of Art. Marina's research focuses on Russian and Eastern European art and markets and history of art institutions. Her doctoral thesis explored experimental curatorial practices in Soviet Russia. Outside of academia Marina worked in a variety of cultural organisations in Moscow and in London including Garage Museum of Contemporary Art, Tate Modern and Gazelli Art House.

Clíodhna Murphy, Hauser & Wirth

Clíodhna Murphy is Hauser & Wirth's Global Head of Environmental Sustainability and is instrumental in developing and implementing the gallery's climate action plan and commitment to at least halve the gallery's carbon emissions by 2030. With over 20 years' experience in the art world, Murphy has worked in project management and operations roles for a number of galleries and organisations, including Frieze Fairs and Tate. Murphy joined Hauser & Wirth in 2017 as Director of Operations based in London and, as part of that role, led the gallery's carbon footprint calculation initiative. In 2021, Murphy wrote on Science Based Target Initiative for the GCC (Gallery Climate Coalition) [here](#). Her work includes connecting the dots across the art industry, she is a Trustee of GCC, supports the climate charity Murmur as a Sustainability Advisor (Art) and is on MoCA LA's Environmental Council. Clíodhna is the author of [Sea Freight: Unlocking the Potential for International Art Transportation](#), [Climate Action Tips](#) and numerous case studies shared [here](#).

Melissa Painter, Victoria and Albert Museum, London

Melissa Painter is responsible for the strategy and delivery of the V&A's ambition to be Net Zero by 2035 and ensuring the V&A is ready for the impacts of a changing climate. Melissa has over 25 years' experience in sustainability, climate change and behaviour change in the public, private and charity sector. She has experience in programme management, strategy and policy development on all aspects of sustainability including waste reduction & recycling, water, energy efficiency, biodiversity and active travel both here in the UK and Australia on a local, regional and national level. Melissa is also member of the Executive group for the London Climate Ready Partnership, the centre for expertise on climate change adaptation and resilience to extreme weather in London. LCRP is comprised of cross sector organisations that have a role to play in preparing London for extreme weather now and in the future.

Sabinna Rachimova

Sabinna Rachimova is an opinion leader for the future generation of creatives. After graduating from Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, she worked for the leading fashion house Christian Dior and contemporary London brand Mary Katrantzou. As a child, she learned traditional Tatar handcraft from her grandmother, developing a deeply ingrained appreciation for the craft. This early influence was a key inspiration for her namesake brand. As an immigrant (born in Central Asia, raised in Europe, and now based in London) Sabinna is incredibly passionate about inclusivity and equal opportunities. In addition to her work as an acclaimed designer, Sabinna is a public speaker, spreading the word about both fashion tech and sustainable fashion, as well as a consultant with a focus on fashion start-ups and education across Europe and the UK. Since 2018, she has lectured at the University of Arts London, teaching on the MA Fashion Entrepreneurship & Innovation course, focusing on sustainable business concepts to encourage her students to disrupt the industry. In 2019, Sabinna was named one of Forbes 30under30 DACH for her achievements as an entrepreneur in the sustainable fashion industry.

Lula Rappoport, Gallery Climate Coalition

A native of Upstate New York, Lula's interests lie at the intersection of art, dialogue and social impact. With a diverse background spanning small galleries and nonprofits to institutions and government, she enjoys cultivating creative conversation around contemporary issues. Lula's degrees in studio art, political science and strategic communications foster her interdisciplinary perspective and prior to joining GCC, she worked on Imperial War Museums' art commissioning programme.

Dr Caitlin Southwick, Founder and Executive Director, Ki Culture

Caitlin Southwick is the Founder and Executive Director of Ki Culture. She holds a Professional Doctorate in Conservation and Restoration of Cultural Heritage from the University of Amsterdam. Caitlin has worked in the conservation field and in museums around the world, including the Vatican Museums, The Getty Conservation Institute, and Easter Island. She was a professional member of the American Institute of Conservation Sustainability Committee and is the Secretary of the Working Group on Sustainability for the International Council of Museums (ICOM).

Dr Jonathan Woolfson, Sotheby's Institute of Art, London

Jonathan Woolfson is the Director of Sotheby's Institute of Art, London. Jonathan's PhD is from the Warburg Institute where he specialized in the cultural history of England, Italy and Europe in the sixteenth century. He has taught at many institutions including the University of Kent, the Victoria and Albert Museum, New York University, Loyola University of Chicago and the University of Oxford, where he was Stipendiary Lecturer in History at Hertford College. He served as Academic Director of the Lorenzo de' Medici Institute in Florence for four years before joining Sotheby's Institute in 2010.