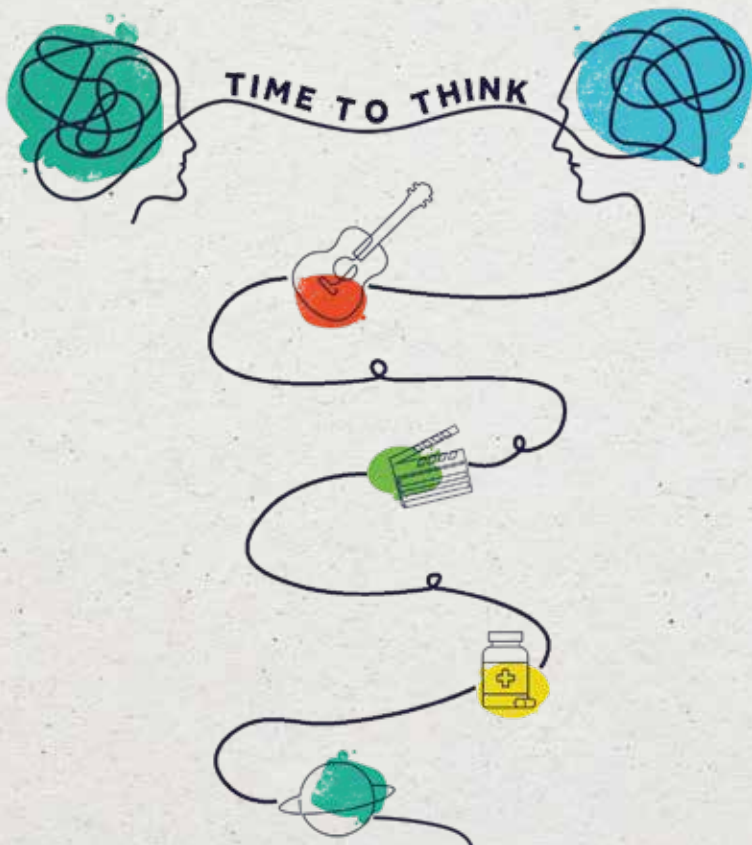


GRESHAM COLLEGE

Lectures That Inspire

Autumn 2026



TIME TO THINK

From our astronomical future, global film cultures and the mysteries of music, to LGBTQ histories and staging Shakespeare, this year's academic programme offers something for everyone!

We are particularly looking forward to the inaugural series by our new Professor of Physic, Matt Higgins, exploring the remarkable medicines that have transformed humanity. The programme also includes the final two events by Professor of Rhetoric, Melissa Lane, bringing a wonderful tenure to its close.

We will also be presenting a series of lectures in Durham this year. Please visit our website for further details, to view the full annual programme and to book tickets: www.gresham.ac.uk



SUPPORTING GRESHAM COLLEGE

"For more than four centuries, Gresham College has been sharing new ideas freely, with anyone interested in the City of London, and now beyond. The Gresham College community of thinkers and learners is unique in my experience as a Professor. **We welcome your participation and your support for keeping this opportunity for learning free of charge.**"

Melissa Lane, Gresham Professor of Rhetoric

DONATE TODAY! gres.hm/donation

DON'T MISS...



Is the HIV pandemic over?

Now, for HIV-infected people able to access anti-retroviral therapies, life expectancy is normal. Professor Matt Higgins looks at how these amazing medicines were developed and asks, what does the future hold in the quest to stop AIDS?

Wed, 16 Sep 2026 • 6pm • Barnard's Inn Hall / Live Online



AI as Therapist? Intimacy Without Understanding

AI systems are increasingly positioned as supports for anxiety, loneliness, and distress. Professor Matt Jones examines large language models trained to simulate therapeutic dialogue alongside biofeedback systems that modulate physiological states.

Tue, 29 Sep 2026 • 6pm • Barnard's Inn Hall / Live Online



What is the Purpose of Yoga: Transcendence or Transformation?

Professor Sir Jim Mallinson draws on texts, art, and fieldwork to trace the evolution of the role of the body in yoga over its 2,500-year history, comparing its premodern goals and modern pursuits.

Mon, 05 Oct 2026 • 1pm • Barnard's Inn Hall / Live Online

PLUS...



The Uses of Rhetoric, Past and Present

Building on Professor Melissa Lane's expertise on Greek rhetoric and Professor Quentin Skinner's on its Renaissance and early modern development, this symposium explores rhetoric's positive and negative uses in communication today.

Mon, 19 Oct 2026 • 6pm • Barnard's Inn Hall / Live Online



Speaking Through Othello: Black Performance and the Training of Feeling

Professor Jason Allen-Paisant rethinks Shakespeare's most charged role through psychoanalytic theory, critical theory, and artistic practice, examining its symbolic demands on Black performance.

Wed, 18 Nov 2026 • 6pm • Barnard's Inn Hall / Live Online



How to See the World As a Child Sees It

Artists Andy Field and Beckie Darlington discuss three of their projects in which they have collaborated with children from across the world to create artworks that enable adults to see things through those young people's eyes.

Wed, 09 Dec 2026 • 6pm • Barnard's Inn Hall / Live Online

ESSENTIAL INFORMATION

REGISTERING FOR LECTURES

All our lectures are free to attend in person or watch live online. Registration to watch online is available now for all lectures via our website. Registration for in-person tickets opens one month ahead of the lecture's date. Follow the links on our website to book your ticket via Eventbrite. Please note, we over-issue tickets because of no-shows, so please be aware a ticket will not guarantee entry. We advise you to arrive 30 minutes in advance of the start time. We do not allow people to save seats for others. Unfortunately, we are also no longer able to accommodate latecomers in our overflow room.

If you are from a UK school or college and want to bring a school group to one of our public lectures, please email schools@gresham.ac.uk. You can also see details of this term's schools-only lectures on our website.

VENUES

We host most lectures in Barnard's Inn Hall, Holborn, but also use other central London venues. Please check our website for more details on venues and timings. Barnard's Inn is wheelchair accessible, but please contact us before the lecture so we can reserve an appropriate space for you. You are also welcome to reach out with any specific accessibility questions or additional needs: enquiries@gresham.ac.uk | +44 (0)20 7831 0575.



OUR HISTORY | OVER 400 YEARS OF FREE EDUCATION

Gresham College was London's first institute of higher education when it was founded in 1597, under the terms of Sir Thomas Gresham's Will. Unusually for the time, Gresham lectures were free and given in both English and Latin – most other higher education of the period was in Latin only – making them accessible to anyone who could attend. We have been providing free education to the public ever since.

FULL PROGRAMME AUTUMN 2026

All lectures take place at 6pm and in Barnard's Inn Hall, Holborn, London, unless otherwise stated.

- 07 Sep **Why Do We Need Empathy?** Jane Shaw
- 09 Sep **Cello - In Search of a Voice** Kate Kennedy
- 14 Sep **The Sky at Night, Tonight...** Chris Lintott • 7pm • Conway Hall
- 15 Sep **Cracking the Whip: Strings, Chains, and Dinosaurs** Alain Goriely
- 16 Sep **Is the HIV pandemic over?** Matt Higgins
- 17 Sep **The Myth and Promise of the U.K. Jury Trial** Clive Stafford Smith
- 22 Sep **The Future of Creativity** Daniel Susskind
- 23 Sep **Cosmology's Mad Idea...** Chris Lintott • 7pm • Conway Hall
- 24 Sep **Carbon: Our Flexible Friend...** Helen Czerski
- 25 Sep **Festival of Astronomical Ideas**
Various speakers • From 11am • In-person tickets only
- 28 Sep **Where is Queer Love in the Shoah History?** Anna Hájková
- 29 Sep **AI as Therapist? Intimacy Without Understanding** Matt Jones
- 30 Sep **Women of Bath and Willesden: Ordinary Women in English Literature** Marion Turner • 1pm
- 01 Oct **Shakespearean England and Views of the Irish Language**
Mícheál B. Ó Mainnín
- 05 Oct **What is the Purpose of Yoga: Transcendence or Transformation?**
Jim Mallinson • 1pm
- 06 Oct **Our Sovereign Soil** Ian Mudway
- 07 Oct **What do You Need a Mathematician for? Perspectives from the 17th Century** Volker Remmert
- 13 Oct **The Science of Puppetry...** Steve Allen & Robin May
- 14 Oct **Rather Trivial Things? Finding the Precious in an Alternative Museum History** Kate Hill
- 19 Oct **The Uses of Rhetoric, Past and Present (symposium)**
Melissa Lane, Quentin Skinner, Jane Shaw
- 20 Oct **The Global Fight Against LGBTI Rights** Phillip Ayoub

- 21 Oct **Why Is There Music?** Milton Mermikides • **LSO St Luke's**
- 22 Oct **Plato on Truth, Lies and Power** Melissa Lane
- 27 Oct **Rethinking Deterrence for a Disrupted World**
Martin Connell • **Mercers' Hall**
- 28 Oct **Around the World with Indian Cinema** Ranita Chatterjee
- 03 Nov **What History is NOT** Sathnam Sanghera
- 04 Nov **Material Witness: Understanding the Objects of Auschwitz**
Zoë Waxman
- 05 Nov **Guantanamo on the Euphrates...** Clive Stafford Smith
- 10 Nov **A Mystery Still: Historical (Trans)Gender Variance and James "Miranda" Barry** Ann Heilmann • **1pm**
- 10 Nov **Building with Magnets: The Mathematics of Repulsion and Attraction** Alain Goriely
- 11 Nov **Our Sun, Our Star** Chris Lintott • **7pm • Conway Hall**
- 12 Nov **How Did Our Garden Grow? The History of Hatton Gardens**
Vivian Watson • **1pm**
- 18 Nov **Love's Transcendence in the Poetry of John Donne, George Herbert and RS Thomas** Mark Oakley • **1pm**
- 18 Nov **Speaking Through Othello** Jason Allen-Paisant
- 19 Nov **Life, Death and Bubbles: The Story of Earth's Nitrogen**
Helen Czerski
- 24 Nov **Sixteenth-Century London Dialect...** Laura Wright
- 25 Nov **Musical Myths and Miracles** Milton Mermikides • **LSO St Luke's**
- 30 Nov **The Romantic History of Copyright** Daniel Susskind
- 01 Dec **AI as Muse?...** Matt Jones
- 03 Dec **Can We Have a World without Pain?** Matt Higgins
- 07 Dec **Offence and the Future of Courtesy** Linda Woodhead
- 08 Dec **Shakespeare Now: Creativity and Controversy** Emma Smith
- 09 Dec **How to See the World As a Child Sees It**
Beckie Darlington & Andy Field
- 16 Dec **The Maths of Christmas** Sarah Hart



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