



SARAH COVE BA(Hons) ACR FIIC FBAPCR

Accredited Paintings Conservator • Technical Art Historian & Lecturer

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Lecture Synopsis: Fakes and Fortunes! (or, have I found a Constable in my attic?)

Sarah Cove ACR founded the Constable Research Project in conjunction with the V&A Museum in 1986 to study John Constable RA's materials and techniques from the technical and scientific point of view. Since then she has examined over 250 works from collections worldwide, from tiny oil sketches on fragments of canvas, paper supports and boards to the 'six-footers', some of Constable's most famous and iconic paintings including *The Haywain* (1821), *The Leaping Horse* (1825) and *Salisbury Cathedral from the Meadows* (1831). She has developed a technical chronology that assists with the dating of his known works, relatively few of which were signed and dated by the artist. This is useful for the attribution (or not) of newly discovered pictures.

Sarah was instrumental in the attribution of three significant Constable oils for BBCi's *Fake or Fortune?* series, appearing in 2014 and 2017. In 2014 she set up a Facebook page and website that have been hugely successful in raising awareness of her research. She is now regularly contacted by people worldwide that think they have found a previously unknown Constable!! Some have, some have not, as you will see in this lecture which gives a 'behind the scenes' look at how such decisions are made and will describe some extraordinary successes but also crashing disappointments. Stories will include a hugely publicised oil sketch seen on Breakfast TV, reputedly worth £250,000, and the chance discovery of a fabulous, almost abstract, rare oil study of the 1830s that had formerly belonged to an American G.I.

Sarah Cove ACR is an Accredited paintings conservator, technical art historian and lecturer based in Falmouth, Cornwall. In 1988 she was a Visiting Fellow at the Yale Center for British Art in New Haven, USA. She is a consultant to international museums and galleries, private collectors and salerooms. She has published widely on Constable's material and techniques including catalogue essays for Tate's 'Constable' (1991) and 'Constable: The Great Landscapes' (2006) exhibitions. She has appeared in BBCi's live broadcast of 'The People's Haywain' (2002), 'Constable in Love' with Andrew Graham-Dixon (2004) and BBC One's 'Fake or Fortune?' in 2014 and 2017. She has lectured internationally on Constable, including major public venues in the UK, the US, Australia and NZ.

For more information on the Sarah Cove and the Constable Research Project:

See <https://www.sarahcoveacr.com/constable-research-project-home>

www.facebook.com/constable.research.project (public access)

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