

For Immediate Release

Nicholas Ferguson reveals Samuel Courtauld Society

– The Courtauld Starts 75th Anniversary Celebrations –

October 9, LONDON – Nicholas Ferguson, chairman of The Courtauld Institute of Art, one of the world's leading centres for the study of art history and conservation, has announced the formation of the Samuel Courtauld Society.

Named after one of the UK's leading 20th century philanthropists, the new Samuel Courtauld Society aims to attract committed philanthropists and donors willing to support the Institute, which Courtauld created in 1932, as it starts a year-long celebration of its 75th anniversary.

Nicholas Ferguson, who is also Chairman of SVG Capital and the Institute of Philanthropy, said:

"The Courtauld is a very special institution because of the pre-eminence of its academic staff and its exceptional collections. Its success to date would not have been possible without its supporters. I hope that those who are passionate about the visual arts and the importance of a world-class art history teaching and research institute will look at the Samuel Courtauld Society as a way of supporting the Courtauld."

Philanthropy has been a key factor in creating The Courtauld. In 1943, Samuel Courtauld captured this: "Art is universal and eternal; it ties race to race, and epoch to epoch. It overlaps the divisions and united men in one all-embracing and disinterested and living pursuit... Moreover, the way to receive [Art's] gifts can be thrown open to all; it is not reserved for the wealthy, the idle and the learned....".

Details of the Samuel Courtauld Society and other ways of supporting The Courtauld can be found at www.courtauld.ac.uk/scs.

To mark the start of the 75th anniversary, Märit Rausing Director, Deborah Swallow revealed a newly rebranded visual identity for the Institute and the Gallery and a new website available from 9 October at www.courtauld.ac.uk.

"Since its inception 75 years ago, The Courtauld has been at the forefront of the study and conservation of art of all periods and genres. As we move into our next 75 years, our aim is to continue to champion excellence in art education as well as wider access and understanding of the value of visual arts to individuals and society. In fact, we believe an informed, critical understanding of the visual arts is more important now than ever."

The new website will allow the wider Courtauld community to navigate its many offerings more easily and improve access to its many resources. These include an on-line, interactive collection of 7,000 drawings and paintings.

Over the years, The Courtauld has taught many of Britain's top art professionals, including Sir Nicholas Serota (Director of Tate), Neil MacGregor (Director of the British Museum) and Mark Jones (Director of the Victoria & Albert Museum), as well as prominent critics such as Brian Sewell and Andrew Graham-Dixon. The new website records the experiences and comments of alumni (see <http://tinyurl.com/2bael7>).

The Courtauld was the first academic centre for the study of art history in the United Kingdom and established art history as a serious academic discipline in this country.

It was founded in 1932 as part of the University of London through the support of Lord Lee of Fareham and Samuel Courtauld and has been a self-governing college since 2002. The Courtauld Gallery, with its famous Impressionist and Post-Impressionist collections, is a much-loved cultural destination.

Ends

Notes to editors

The Courtauld Institute of Art was founded in 1932 and is one of the world's leading academic institutes for the teaching and research in the history of art and conservation. It is located in the heart of London in the north block of Somerset House. The Institute is a world-class centre for academic study, and the Gallery houses an internationally renowned collection of paintings, drawings and decorative arts spanning 600 years of art history. The Gallery is particularly celebrated for its outstanding collection of Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings, which includes such masterpieces as Manet's *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère* and van Gogh's iconic *Self-Portrait with Bandaged Ear*.

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