

Prof Giuliana Pieri: Good evening everybody. It gives me the greatest pleasure to introduce Dr. Xavier Bray, who is the current director of the Wallace Collection in London. I'm going to say a few things to introduce Xavier. I also wanted to say that I'm particularly pleased that so many of you are here today to listen to this lecture, which is part of an ongoing series called *Making Space for Art*. It's been going on now for three years. It's had great support from the College and particularly from our Humanities Research Centre, which has now become an institute.

At the same time what we're doing tonight is also we're launching a new Research Centre, which is a Centre for Visual Cultures within the School of Modern languages, Literatures and Cultures. The reason why I'm here talking to you is because my name is Giuliana Pieri. I'm the head of the School of Modern languages, Literatures and Cultures. You can see on the screen, we'll dim the lights in a minute so you can see the screen better. The title of tonight's talk is *To change or not to change the Wallace Collection?*

Let me tell you a little bit about our speaker. Dr. Bray is a world-renowned really scholar, specialist in 17th, 18th century art and particularly the Spanish Golden Age. He's had so far a very glittering museum career. He started off an assistant curator at the National Gallery in 1998. Then he moved to Bilbao to lead a curatorial program at the Museo de Bellas Artes. Sorry, my Spanish is pretty bad. In 2002 he returned to the National Gallery as head of Spanish art. I'll tell you a little bit about-- I'll do a list of some of the exhibitions that he did there which I think were literally groundbreaking.

In 2011 he took up the post of chief curator at Dulwich Picture Gallery. Then in October 2016 he moved to the Wallace Collection, where he is now the director. He has curated and co-curated a number of exhibitions, which include *A Brush with Nature: The Gere Collection of Oil Sketches*, *An Intimate Vision: Women Impressionists*, the fabulous show *El Greco* at the National Gallery, the equally fabulous *Caravaggio*, the even more fabulous *Velázquez*. Probably one of the shows that for me really encapsulated a real change in the tastes of the British public, which is *The Sacred Made Real: Spanish Painting and Sculpture 1600-1700*.

Then the last exhibition perhaps I should mention is the *Goya: The Portraits*. When I was saying about this almost game-changing exhibition, that's not something that I say lightly. Dr. Bray has been, in my view, the single most important curator to change our taste, which I have to say in this country was predominantly focused on the Italian renaissance on to the Golden age and Spanish art, really shifting the attention from the 15th to the early 16th century on to the late 16th and 17th century, and really bringing back the Baroque and other genres very much, and other movements, very much on to the wider public and the map.

After saying all these wonderful things about him as a scholar, I thought I'll just say something a little bit more lightweight and talk a little bit about who Xavier is. He's an extraordinary singer. In fact, we almost lost him to opera and somehow rather, he went into curatorship rather than singing. I know he loves to listen to BBC Radio 3

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live, and one of his favorite programmes is Private Passions. Maybe some of you also share that interest.

I was doing a bit of what has been the press on Xavier for the last year, and I found something quite amusing because only about a month ago, he was on the FT featured on cool people doing their London commute, and Xavier always does his commute on a bike. He has been for as long as I can remember. The other thing that I wanted to say is about his real commitment to curating by changing things, shifting public taste, going beyond the boundaries of what is normally expected.

I think there's a real excitement about curating, but particularly about his curating, which I'm sure will come through during this talk. Thank you very much for joining us, Xavier.

Dr. Xavier Bray: Thank you very much, Giuliana.

[applause]

Dr. Xavier: It's great to be here, thank you very much to Giuliana for inviting me. This space is quite something. I had heard about the Royal Holloway Picture Gallery but had never made it and I'm really pleased to see it at long last. Also, the building itself on the outside although I can't really compare it with the Wallace itself but it's the same brick.

[laughter]

It was actually looking at Mr. Holloway and Jane Holloway's memorial outside, and the fact it was given to the British nation and the whole philanthropic background to the foundation here which I'm looking forward to hearing more about.

This place, the Wallace Collection, has a very interesting story and very much is the main contribution to that wonderful 19th-century phenomenon of great wealth being used to acquire great works of art but also this desire to teach and to communicate. Richard Wallace on whom I'm going to tell you a bit about in this lecture was one of the great players and I feel that he's slightly forgotten. As you'll see he's one of the missions that I have for the Wallace.

I've been in this job as director for about a year, actually exactly a year. It feels like five years already but it's relentless and it's very exciting at the same time and I think I'm secretly enjoying it, but there is a lot to do. When I first thought about applying for the job I really wasn't sure. Mainly because from the outside, when you think about the Wallace, you think of yes a great collection but a collection that is very much stuck in time very static that not much happens.

Of course things do happen in the Wallace but never really at the forefront of British museum culture and yet it is in Central London, it is a national museum. As you'll see it is probably one of the greatest collections ever. However, it is still relatively

unknown. Taxi drivers still drive past and say that's the hidden gem of London. No, that's where the *Laughing Cavalier* lives, and that's all they say about it, but let me try and enlighten you.

We are in this wonderful square, the Manchester Square. Unfortunately, we don't have the keys to the private square. It means that this whole area is inaccessible which is extremely frustrating because can you imagine having a picnic or a cream tea on a lovely summer's day in front of this beautiful house? Instead, we are pretty much like a roundabout. When you go in front of it you sometimes almost get killed crossing the road to get into the Wallace. Once you've made it, it's a bit like going into the Ritz, it's incredibly ornate, very luxurious, very beautiful and it does indeed feel like the private home of somebody and indeed it was the home of Richard and Lady Wallace from the 1870s to about 1897.

You have this great staircase, a staircase that actually came originally from the Royal Bank of France and if you go to the Wallace you'll notice in the cornucopias not vegetables and fruit but coins, Louis d'or, and the first representation of the banknote or a bank credit. Unfortunately, the Royal Bank of France went bust very soon after having introduced the whole concept of the bank credit and in the end, this staircase was sold off and bought in the 1840s by the Fourth Marquess of Hertford who was one of the great collectors.

Of course, the Wallace Collection for most people is very celebrated for its collection of French 18th century art. Decorative art, sculpture, furniture, painting, and including this beautiful excellent Chinese porcelain that have been mounted with gilt bronze to serve as incense burners. In a way, this slide just a quick iPhone photograph of one of the installations at the Wallace sums up the speciality of the Wallace. This idea where the arts are brought together as one.

We have a great painting by Watteau of this huge or this musical playing figures. This man here is tuning his guitar but he's wearing his beautiful pink silk dress. Then when you go to Wallace you'll notice that the pink of the porcelain is there to sort of play with that central-most. Not only that but the painting stand is not unlike the stonework work that you have on the tabletop.

This is one of the very rare places really where you can appreciate the arts as one. Where you can see sculpture, decorative arts, furniture, and painting in one. Of course, that's how it would have been appreciated in the French aristocratic families of the 18th century, where all the senses would have been inspired. Now when I go to the National Gallery for example having worked there for 10 years I feel the place is rather empty. Just pictures. Where is the furniture, where is the interaction with the other arts? I think that's why the Wallace Collection is a key place.

Also, we do have key works such as the famous *Swing* by Fragonard, a picture that I'm only recently discovering. Of course, I know it well, and it's one of the key icons, but actually, we know very little about it. We've never actually done a dossier, an explanation of where does it come in Fragonard's career, who commissioned it,

File name: 2017_11_08_Xavier_Bray_talk.mp3

why? It's always been seen as this frivolous image of a young man having a great time seeing up his mistress's skirt as she swings up and down and lets her slipper slip off. It's about the French aristocracy wasting time enjoying the leisurely time that they could experience before the French revolution. It's a very interesting atmosphere the Wallace Collection in the way that this is kind of art that was appreciated by people who had time, who had luxury of life. Who didn't have to go to work and answer all those emails that we still do today. It's very much the sense of letting go, and this picture really sums it up very beautifully.

Interestingly, it also puts people off the Wallace Collection. I know people particularly nowadays are much more into realism are kind of frivolous picture about this is seen as sketch or sugary or not the kind of art that one should be looking at.

It's been very interesting talking to contemporary artists, one of them being Catherine Yass, a video artist who absolutely hates this picture because it's all about the male look and the sort of rather secondary role that a woman plays in it and yet she's fascinated by it. That's something that I'm going to try and come back to. This is a collection we should try and engage with.

Of course in the collection, we have the famous *Laughing Cavalier*, an early Frans Hals, 1624. Probably one of his best pictures when he was really quite meticulous in his technical approach. A portrait that contains that sense of not knowing whether he is mocking you or whether he is just extremely arrogant, we don't know anything about it. Amazingly we don't know who he is. Was it a pendant portrait to his lady friend, possibly his future wife? The only clues we have are in the sleeves we have all these symbolic images of the era, of the fire, of even a buzzing bee possibly a sort of allusions to his passionate love for his wife. We just don't know. This is one of the great icons of the collection.

Now when I first joined the Wallace Collection, I felt that I should try and understand the reason why it's here. Why is it in London? Who was Richard Wallace and how come he had this collection? I found the first clue in above a door, right up high in what was the cloak room shop in this plaque. This plaque, when we got it down says, the Wallace Collection bequeathed to the British nation by Amelie Wither of Sir Richard Wallace Baronet 1897. Of course, this led me all to Amelie, who was she?

Amelie was a perfume seller in the Galeries Lafayette and Richard Wallace was the supposed illegitimate son of the Fourth Marquess of Hertford. They together appeared to have kept the collection together and decided to bequeath it to the nation. This is the beginning of an extraordinary story. Here she is, Lady Wallace. You don't want to mess with her, she looks quite a vicious lady but she wasn't. She was quite a shy woman. Never really spoke proper English it is said, but very keen to keep the collection together with her husband. She is the one that eventually, in her will, gave it to the nation because her husband Richard died seven years before she did. He dies in 1890, she dies in 1897.

Interestingly, as I was going through the archive and looking at old photographs when the museum first opened to the public in 1900, she was at the top of the stairs greeting you into her house, right in the middle with her husband to the right, and probably to the left, the Fourth Marquess the supposed father. As you can see the plaque on top.

Unfortunately, that doesn't happen anymore. When you come up the stairs. This is where she would have been with the plaque here. You have this very beautiful neoclassical piece by Dubois, one of the great early neoclassical architectural and gilt bronze ornaments. It is a great work of art, but unfortunate people don't realize what it is and they just walk past it. I'm wondering whether we should start thinking about possibly in order to tell our public why we're here to reinstall this introduction.

The key here really is Sir Richard Wallace. I think he is a character that really deserves much more attention and appreciation. Here he is in the 1850s when he was employed as the private secretary to the Fourth Marquess of Hertford in Paris. The Fourth Marquess of Hertford was an aristocrat, a landowner, extremely wealthy, but didn't like London particularly much, and decided to spend most of his life in Paris, where he lived off his money from property - not only in Paris, but also in Northern Ireland - and spent this money on collecting. He never married. The legend is that he did produce an illegitimate son in the name of Richard Wallace.

Having said that we are wondering whether he was actually an adopted child and whether as the private secretary he was an intimate of the Fourth Marquess. Hence in 1870 when the Fourth Marquess dies, he doesn't leave his fortune and collection to the cousin, the rightful heir of the title of the Marquess. He leaves everything, Richard Wallace, which of course caused a lot of fuss within the family, but he became the rightful heir.

The interesting thing is that he becomes a man of society. In 1870, he decides to take the whole collection from Paris to London for safekeeping because you have to remember, it was the time of the Paris Commune, the Tuileries Palace had just been burnt down and he was nervous for the future of the collection. He decided to bring it to London. He was pretty much welcomed by British society. Here he is posing at Baker Street, one of the locals of photography. Then you get the sense of what he's like in this stage. I like particularly this half caricature portrait of Richard Wallace by a painter called Dighton with his cigar in the left hand and looking out.

He, rather than just spending the money or selling the collection or doing all sorts of things. He decides to carry on with collecting but also spending the money in a very generous philanthropic manner. One way of best explaining this is with the famous fountains that he gave to the city of Paris in 1871. He realized that there was very little water, few water points throughout the city and he set up this water system whereby you could literally with a cup, drink water from these fountains which are known as the *Fontaine Wallace*, beautifully designed with these caryatids holding up the dome. They are still used throughout Paris where, there as a child, I used to drink from these. It's quite nice to see them again.

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Not only did he do that, but when he came to London he decided to go back to the house that he inherited in Manchester square. While he was refurbishing it to most people's surprise, he decided to show the collection, not in storage, but show it at the Bethnal Green Museum which is today, of course, the Museum of Childhood in East London. It was there for two years and the whole collection, and it was visited by 5 million visitors.

It was one of the most extraordinary events, really. I mean big exhibitions whereby lots of people would show off parts of their collections, such as the celebrated Manchester Exhibition are not new, but a single man's collection in this Victorian building visited by the working class of London. You can see them here. Actually, indeed it's entitled *Art Connoisseurs at the East End*. People were aware of enabling people who don't normally have access to such wealth to be able to see it within a public forum.

I'm pretty sure that this is what inspired Richard Wallace to think about the future of the collection and to eventually gift it to the nation, which one could quite easily say it was one of the greatest gifts ever made to a nation in terms of the quality, the range, and the sheer cost value. If we were to value the Wallace collection's 6,000 pieces, we could easily hit the Christie's or Sotheby's record, but I, of course, won't be doing that.

What Richard Wallace does is that not only does he keep the collection together, but he adds to it. He adds pieces that I hope most of you will be very surprised to know are at the Wallace. It's not just 18th century French art that he collected as well, like his supposed father, but also objects such as these. This is an 11th-century Irish bell. It's almost a Book of Kells in three-dimensional. It's a bell used by the monks of the Monastery at St. Mura in County Donegal to go and evangelize the pagans.

It's the most extraordinary piece because it would have been a bit like an iPhone today where you could transport it and literally celebrate mass wherever you felt like celebrating mass. If you look very carefully you will see that this is the crucifix here, the rock crystal is the body of Christ and the remaining amber stone which of course would have been here. Here are the Wounds of Christ. This would have been a portable altar, quite likely used to convert, but also to celebrate mass in the middle of an Irish swamp. It might have even contained relics in these little cavities. A most extraordinary object that Richard Wallace seems to have not just been fascinated by but was also ready to pay big money for.

He also bought this extraordinary horn, a horn that is reputed to belong to St. Hubert. St. Hubert, the dissolute king, who spent most of his time drinking and having fun with ladies and hunting. One day as he was about to shoot down a deer, an image of the crucifix appeared between the antlers, and this is the horn he was apparently blowing that day. Of course in medieval times, this was one of the most celebrated relics. It's damaged, unfortunately, here now you've got the main part of the horn, but when you look at the decoration, you can see this early Gothic decoration, but again, a piece that Richard Wallace acquired.

File name: 2017_11_08_Xavier_Bray_talk.mp3

The piece that converted almost convinced me to apply for the job as director at the Wallace was this. An extraordinary gold head sculpture, life-size, of Asante king, a piece of sculpture, probably the most important piece of sculpture outside Africa in the public collection. A piece that Richard Wallace bought in 1874 when Asante gold was being auctioned in order to help the widows of the men who had been fighting in present-day Ghana.

Politically correct in terms of its provenance is probably not the right way to think about it, but it is one of the great objects that have survived and is now can be seen at the Wallace collection. I'm hoping very much to one day borrow more pieces probably from present-day Ghana and other places to try and create a context around this extraordinary piece of sculpture that is at the Wallace.

Then also Richard Wallace bought this little figure of the Christ-child made out of rock crystal but then decorated with gold filigree, a piece that was made in Goa by probably an Indian craftsman who probably did lots of Vishnu's as a child but could also bring his hand to making images of Christ as a good shepherd. This is one of only three that survive in the world, which has this wonderful fusion of Eastern and Western culture.

Again, we don't know too much about what Richard actually thought about these pieces, but there's no doubt that he was very well informed, very interested in social and anthropological matters as well of course, collecting on the very high, high quality.

He also was very, very keen on arms and armor. Of course, if you come to the Wallace, we have got one of the greatest collections of arms and armor. This is how Richard Wallace exhibited his in the most extraordinary - almost like a Scottish laird - with everything on top of each other. He decorated he did put examples next to each other, that related to one another. He was very interested in attempting to catalog the works. This is something that interestingly, the Wallace collections armor is probably the best-cataloged part of the collection. We've had great experts work on it. It's a part of the collection that we're very much hoping to refurbish eventually so that it can be properly shown with proper lighting and treated more like real artwork. When you look at them in detail-- I have to admit I'm now a convert to arms and armor, having been mainly a paintings person, I treat them as sculpture almost.

This is a great piece, a helmet by Kolman Helmschmidt, Augsburg, arms and armor maker. It's just the way that metal has been softened and then manipulated to create beautiful shapes within, and then these little bits of engraving and then gilding, It's just the art form in itself is astonishing. Then you have this extremely Milanese armor with this wonderful point. When you look at it properly, and unfortunately can't really do that at the Wallace at the moment, it's against the wall, but if we were to light it properly and sit in the round, I wouldn't be surprised if a Tate curator thought it was a Brancusi rather than a piece of armor.

There are many areas that one could try and bring out the collection and rethink it, particularly in its presentation.

The gallery that Richard was very keen to introduce in his home was the great gallery, which had been basically a space above his stables. He kept the stables underneath, but he installed this large great gallery, which of course is still there. It's just been refurbished. It's not hung as intensely, as he did, but I have to admit looking at the way he hung his pictures is of great inspiration to possibly what we might eventually do, but in this room, we have some of the great pieces of European art ranging from Titian to Rubens, van Dyck, Velasquez over there. There are quite a few people in this slide. Most of the time-- every time I go up there's about four or five people visiting it.

Of course, what the challenge here is, how do we make the Wallace better known, better used, as a source of great inspiration of study of material culture, but also how'd you make it a thriving cultural centre in this part of London, which is literally five minutes from Oxford street. I suppose the way to do it really is of course, respect the house quality, the idea that you walk into an intimate space.

It has to be said compared to other Museums in London, it's one of the most wonderful experiences to visit. There's no barriers, there's nobody telling you off. You can look at things and get very close to works of art. When you get into these smaller rooms, there's the sense of the domestic, and you can see great objects sitting on surfaces that are likely to have inhabited in the past, but what we're doing slowly is selecting objects, taking them out of the general hang and putting them in an exhibition space.

It's a very straightforward idea, but we recently did it with this very important piece of gilt-Bronze by an artist who I didn't know, but is one of the great gilt-bronze sculptors of the 18th century. Somebody called Gouthiere, and when you look at the object itself, it's astonishing. This is pulled free. This would have been an incense burner. They belonged to Marie-Antoinette, it's got this wonderful detail. There's a mix, of heads of satyrs with one for Moses and then grapes, and then the snake that comes right down to eat from this, what appears to be a forbidden fruit.

What we did this in terms of designing quite simply the poster for an exhibition that we've planned back in last spring was to select details such as this introduced the title. When you look at the pieces, we had an exhibition, we lit them as if they were lit by candlelight, and it's very difficult to reproduce the effects, but it was the most extraordinary experience to see examples of great French gilt-bronze in a much more neutral space away from their interior decorate that created domestic spaces upstairs.

It has to be said, a lot of the curators were surprised to realize that some of these pieces belong to the Wallace. They hadn't really engaged with them before, particularly these two iron gilt bronze fire dogs. That of course would have looked



magnificent originally alongside the fire, but he has seen almost as great sculptural pieces in themselves.

This is something that I'm keen that we continue to do to the extent that I've convinced the trustees at the Wallace to extend our present exhibition space, which is relatively small to actually triple its size so that we can be a bit more ambitious in the kind of exhibitions we deliver, but also I'm afraid to also have a business plan attached to it, we start charging admission.

At the moment, we don't charge admission for the exhibitions we do, which of course costs money, but with proper sponsorship, I'm hoping to mount exhibitions such as this one here. This is the man who loved the Wallace in the 1920s and came to look at the armories was Henry Moore. He spent many hours drawing after the helmets and particularly the Italian Renaissance helmets, as I show you here on the right.

To the extent that when following the Second World War, he to do a whole series of what he called *Helmet Head Series*, which were basically based on his reactions and emotions towards the Second World War, he came up with a whole series such as these, and he was fascinated by the outer core, that very solid sphere that protected the inner core. Of course, the original person wearing it would have been made of brain and matter. What he does to that whole interior is the whole of experiment that he was interested in within the sculpture.

Although most of Henry Moore specialists never referred to this site, as you can see, the relationship is incredibly close to the almost a risk that we might demystify Henry Moore's working manner, but working approach, but also its whole artistic side to his whole series of *Helmets Heads*. It will be very interesting if we get the lighting right, if we are able to space it in the right way. I think showing these pieces alongside each other could be an extraordinary experience and that's something we're working on.

We also had this extraordinary piece of Sikh armor, a helmet, which takes into account the knot of the hair, which again, the Sikhs were great armor makers and it will be a wonderful exhibition to mount as well as diversify our audience. This is, of course, something that most national museums have to do now, as part of being a national museum. We need to be able to open up our collections to a greater public and amazingly, the Wallace because it doesn't just have 18th-century French art, it also has great Sikh armor, which of course will give us the perfect opportunity to get to know our pieces better, but also, to branch out to a different public.

Most recently I've been wondering what to do with this space. This is a space that is known as the smoking room. It's the smoking room because this is where Richard Wallace would smoke his hookah pipes. We still have quite a few of his hookah pipes. I have no idea what he put in them, but he would sit there in the evenings and he would handle his objects.

As I've been researching on this, on this room, mainly because it's, it looks quite alight at the moment, but it's a very dark room and you can see very little of what's in

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it. But when you look in the far right corner, this area here, you realize that this covered with wonderful Iznik Turkish tiles.

Indeed, these tiles give you a clue as how the smoking room was originally conceived by Richard Wallace. They're astonishing pieces. They were set up by Mintun and Associates in the 1880s for Richard Wallace for his, his smoking room. I found these old photographs that show what the room originally looked like where these wonderful tiles covered the whole walls and even the ceiling.

It's very interesting to see what was in it and how it changed from the early 1890s to the 1930s, where you can see lots of pieces of armor, particularly the oriental collection of armor and these wonderful Chinese incense burners here. It appears to be the room where Richard Wallace wanted to bring in the different cultures East and West. Indeed, it's something that I think we should probably start thinking about to restore it, to how it would've looked in Richard Wallace's time.

I'd quite like this to be the area where you can discover who Richard Wallace was, what his tastes for art was, but also share his passion in the objects he collected in this very special, intimate space. This is something we're working on and I'm already contacting Iznik tilemakers in Turkey to see if they can actually reproduce, and so that we can have the possibility of reconstructing this space. Another way I think that the Wallace, and this was something that was done previously by two directors back was to engage with the contemporary. This is something of course, I'm very interested in doing but I'm interested in doing it well and properly rather than just ticking a box. What was interesting is that this is a show that happened I think in 2005 when Damien Hirst was-- he wasn't invited -- he invited himself to takeover a series of rooms and he said, he would pay for the new fabric, which unfortunately, we've had to live with ever since in return to be able to show his work.

That side was this and I think, it's a polystyrene sculpture or resin sculpture of the famous écorché. This figure that has a flayed skin to show what lies beneath the skin and it's a rework onto Damien has work in itself. This is what it looked like. Here's the wallpaper, which now has the Venetian paintings on them. I'm dying to get rid of it, but he had a whole series of skulls and opened up the space to have his pictures.

I'm quite interested to see what happens to the space when you take out all the pictures that hang from bottom to top particularly in what is today the 19th century galleries. It's not unlike the lower tier of these galleries here. It gives me of course, many ideas of what we might be able to do in the future if we were to work with an artist that we could actually collaborate properly with. Anyway, it of course it had a great success this exhibition, not in terms of critical success and actually, people enjoyed it but it did attract many people to come and ponder on why the Wallace was doing this.

What might have been more a successful show was when Lucian Freud before sending his paintings to Acquavella in New York decide to show them at the Wallace. I remember going to see this myself and it was quite something to see

File name: 2017_11_08_Xavier_Bray_talk.mp3

these nudes in the galleries. You can see the Dutch galleries in the distance but then you could see Lucian's work amongst them and that's I think an interesting experiment to suddenly bring in a live artist, he was alive then, within the gallery and again, you can see how suddenly the room is filled. One could argue that these are things that one could be doing in order to attract more attention.

I think the Wallace has many things to think about whether we want to go down that route of the contemporary as well as go down the more traditional route of setting up exhibitions. You probably all know that Lady Wallace's will, which I'm showing you here, says quite clearly what she wanted to happen to the collection. That she bequeathed it to the British nation, all the porcelain, bronzes, and furniture that were all placed on the ground and first floors at Hertford House.

That the government should find a place, a site that's a central part of London. Interestingly, she didn't say that the house came with the gift. It was just the collection and that a special museum should be built and that the collection should be styled the Wallace Collection and that it should always be kept together and unmixed with other objects of arts and shall be called the Wallace Collection.

This last sentence, "always be kept together, unmixed with other objects of art," has of course lead, most of my predecessors, directors and trustees to interpret this as this is a closed collection. That it can't be lent, nothing can change. You can't bring anything in and mix it with the collection. You can't show a drawing by Poussin for his own painting in the collection, or you can't lend and that's something that was very strictly adhered to until about the 1990s. Then slowly Damien Hirst, Lucian Freud showed their works here, so you could see that they were rethinking the will.

What's interesting is when the will was made in 1897 their main preoccupation, the government's main preoccupation was where to put the Wallace Collection and pretty much the whole committee was very keen that this should be placed right next to the National Gallery with a bridge that would take you into the Wallace Collection. Basically, the Sainsbury Wing as it is today. I have to say, I've very annoyed with the Sainsbury because it should be really the Wallace Collection makes the National Gallery.

I think what they understood I think, in the will was that yes, a place should be built for it and it should be kept together. It shouldn't be broken up because we know the National Gallery was not collecting French paintings for their own collection because they knew that one day the Wallace Collection would become the National Museum but to keep it together would mean that you could have access to it through the bridge. Look at French painting, when they're back into the National Gallery. That was essentially what the National Gallery director Mr. Poynter was trying to convince the committee.

Unfortunately, the government being government decided to go for the cheaper option and just buy the lease of the house, which of course is worth a lot of money today but then it was nothing. They refurbished it by just installing a few loos, a

File name: 2017_11_08_Xavier_Bray_talk.mp3



turnstile and just left the collection as it pretty much was, apart from, of course, getting rid of the bedrooms and anything that suggested that it was where they lived. It was turned into a house gallery as such.

Of course, it would have changed so much had the Wallace Collection been on Trafalgar Square but that's history now. What I think is important is to try to understand what Richard Wallace would want today in the 21st century. How he would like his collections to be appreciated, understood and used, quite literally as a way of disseminating ideas but also, teaching the public, which is something he would have particularly enjoyed in his own lifetime.

It's very interesting to see this picture here. This is the Great Exhibition at the Royal Academy. Richard Wallace is here. There are many other important philanthropic figures and politicians. He was definitely a man of society and this exhibition has wonderful notes from different collections but it includes the van Dyck and Philippe le Roy and his wife, two great, full length portraits and it's interesting that he in his lifetime was a great lender. He loved sharing his collection and of course, this is something that I think, I would like to think, the Wallace could start thinking about. This is of course, one has to scale cautiously along the way.

From my point view, I think anything temporary should be totally not only improved but encouraged so that the Wallace can take. I just wanted to show this portrait of Richard Wallace before his death. A man who did I think, go into-- he did retire from public life in the last few years of his life but he did collect right to the very end and you can tell that he was a true aesthete.

I'm sure that he would have loved the possibility, the idea that for example, the great portrait by Rembrandt of Titus, his son, should be reunited with one day with other portraits by Rembrandt of his son Titus as a young boy but growing up, so that you could create a new context. This would be such a fantastic exhibition to put on at the Wallace. Or to look at the two portraits we have of Prince Baltasar Carlos and the son of the King of Spain by Velázquez. We had this one and this one but to reunite all the other portraits of Baltasar Carlos could be such a stunning exhibition.

I think the Wallace has great potential. I am only a year into the job but I think this-- what I'm trying to communicate to you is that it probably is time to change the attitudes to what the Wallace can and could offer. I think the Wallace has a great future ahead in terms of its ability to really engage the public with great art and that I have no doubt about and I hope I will be able to do that. I thank you very much and please, if you have any questions I'd be delighted to answer any of them. Thank you, Giuliana.

[applause]

Julian: Thank you very much.