

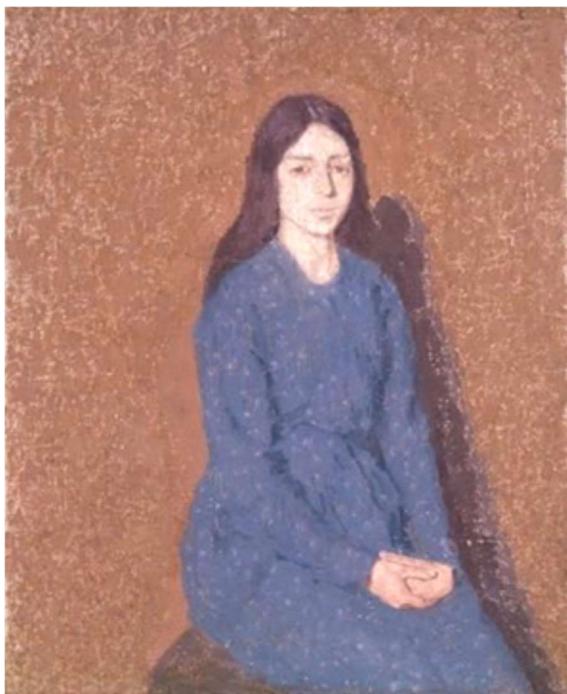
Saturday 14th February 2026 at 10.30am
Reardon Smith Lecture Theatre, NMW, Cathays Park, Cardiff

Lucy Wood Senior Curator of Art at Amgueddfa Cymru

Will give a talk entitled

Gwen John: Strange Beauties

Lucy Wood is Senior Curator of Art at Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales. She is co-curator of *Gwen John: Strange Beauties* and co-editor of the accompanying monograph with Rachel Stratton, Yale Center for British Art. She was Project Curator at the British Museum of the exhibition *Feminine Power: The Divine to the Demonic* (2022), and Associate Curator, Modern and Contemporary, at the National Portrait Gallery, where she curated exhibitions including *Elizabeth Peyton: Aire and Angels* (2019) and *Njideka Akunyili Crosby: The Beautiful Ones* (2018). She is a PhD candidate in Theology and Philosophy at the University of Oxford and a board member of the Centre for Philosophy and the Arts, King's College London.



Girl in a Blue Dress,
Oil on canvas, Amgueddfa Cymru

A lecture not to miss

The fee of £10 for the talk followed by coffee and biscuits in the Oriel Suite may be paid on the day as follows:

- Cash – notes preferred
- Cheques payable to: Friends Museum Wales

OR

- Paid prior to the event by BACS: Acct. name Friends National Museum Wales
Sort code 30-96-26 A/C no. 83447260 Please use ref: GwenJohn and your initials

Gwen John once described herself as “a seer of strange beauties,” casting herself as a visionary with the ability to look beyond surface appearances. Admired for her paintings of women and interiors, she depicted the same subjects repeatedly, each time observing and rendering them anew.

Born in 1876, John grew up in Haverfordwest and Tenby in west Wales. Her artistic path led her to London and Paris, where she lived until the end of her life. In her later years, John’s Catholic faith and artistic practice became increasingly entwined. After her death in 1939, hundreds of drawings and watercolours were found in the artist’s studios. The extensive collection was acquired in 1976 by Amgueddfa Cymru. *Strange Beauties* brings together celebrated oil paintings with works from her studio collection, many exhibited for the first time. The first comprehensive survey of John’s work in forty years, it explores her critical engagements with European modernism, her expressive use of colour, and how she moved beyond traditional figuration towards a more abstract visual language rooted in a poetic view of the world.