WELLINGTON, NAPOLEON AND WATERLOO
200TH ANNIVERSARY

WEDNESDAY 17 JUNE

TIM CLAYTON

As Emperor of the French from 1804-1814, Napoleon abolished feudalism, established legal equality and religious toleration, legalised divorce and introduced the Code Napoléon which has been imitated up to the present day. As general, his campaigns have been studied ever since his time. By 1805, he faced not only the British, with whom he had been at war for a decade, but also a Third Coalition of Austria and Russia. He crushed these forces at Austerlitz, and went on to major victories at Jena, Auerstadt, Friedland, and Wagram, resulting in his ruling over 70 million people in an empire that dominated Europe. The backlash came with defeat in Russia in 1812, and at Leipzig in 1813, and the capture of Paris in 1814. Napoleon was forced into exile in Elba, only to escape in February 1815 and launch a major attack on the Seventh Coalition. He defeated Blücher's Prussian army, but two days later was held by Wellington to fight at Waterloo. Two hundred years later almost to the day, we investigate the great Battle of Waterloo with Tim Clayton, one of our most exciting historians, and author of 'Waterloo: Four Days that changed Europe's Destiny'. The Daily Telegraph's Ben Wilson wrote of the book "One of Clayton's strengths is that he makes the fog of war central to the narrative; we are pitched into the chaos and din of Waterloo and, crucially, the three days of manoeuvring and fighting that preceded it. We experience it as Wellington or Napoleon or an ordinary soldier would have done: a series of isolated, terrifying events, shrouded in smoke and confusion'.

MEET   10.30 am coffee for 11am lecture at Pushkin House
ENDS   4 pm Pushkin House
COST   £85 members, £95 non-members, including coffee, lunch with wine