



IN QUESTION SELF-PORTRAITURE IN QUESTION

Wednesday 1 July

Riddled with contradictions, complexities and conundrums, the self-portrait raises more questions than almost any other topic in painting. Are self-portraits so numerous just because the model is there for free? What image does the artist want to project of him or herself? Is it a realist, critical, or fantasist image? How is the actual business of painting a self-portrait affected by being painted from a reflection in a mirror? Van Dyck presented himself with a sunflower; Rembrandt as laughing; Murillo with an address to his sons; Judith Leyster in the act of painting a violinist; Sofonisba Anguissola while playing a clavichord, Courbet and Gauguin in numerous roles as if they were actors; Van Gogh with clashing colours which seem to represent the torments of his mind; Gwen John with an enforced stillness; Munch surrounded by a mysterious miasma; Picasso glaring at himself; Frida Kahlo using the medium to express her physical anguish; Freud to investigate every vein and patch of his face. In looking at self-portraits, we reconsider our own images of ourselves, and the question of how we want to be seen by others.

All Culture in Question lectures take place in the Art Workers Guild, Queen Square, Bloomsbury, unless otherwise indicated. Coffee is served at 10.30, the lectures begin at 11, and a light lunch with wine is served at 1 pm. The day ends at 3.30 pm. £90 members, £100 non-members.