

Anglo-Turkish Society / Royal Anthropological Institute lecture, 21 November 2017, 6.00 pm

Speaker: Bettany Hughes

Venue: Royal Anthropological Institute, 50 Fitzroy St, Fitzrovia, London W1T 5BT

Title: Istanbul: The World's Desire

Award-winning historian, broadcaster and author Bettany Hughes presents an epic new biography of Istanbul, the city with three names - Byzantium, Constantinople, Istanbul, the gateway between the East and the West, and between the North and the South which served as the capital of the Late Roman, Byzantine, Latin and Ottoman Empires. Investigating what it takes to make a city, Bettany explores this city 'the world's desire' that is racing up the modern political agenda. Based on meticulous research gathered over a decade and brand new archaeological evidence, this captivating portrait of the momentous life of Istanbul is visceral, immediate and scholarly narrative history at its finest. Using the very latest techniques and finds – including Neolithic footprints preserved in the deep mud of the Bosphorus – Bettany walks the streets of the city and brings back to life the story of its inhabitants across 8000 years.

Booking essential: [link soon to be arranged](#)

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One of the remarkably preserved early Byzantine era ships with its cargo still in situ. During the archaeological digs connected with the recent Marmaray under-Bosphorus tunnel project, 36 sunken ships, 30 of which are merchant vessels equipped with sails and five of which are galleys propelled by rowers, that sank in the old harbour of the city, between the fifth and 11th centuries have been uncovered. The excavations, which have continued uninterrupted for eight years, have revealed artefacts from various historical periods, the most recent being the late Ottoman era, while objects from the early Ottoman, Byzantine, Roman and Classical periods have also been discovered.