



Dr Tristram Hunt in the Woon Gallery of Asian Art at Northumbria

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V&A Museum Director and Former Shadow Education Secretary honoured by Northumbria University

Historian and former Labour politician Dr Tristram Hunt, Director of London's Victoria and Albert Museum, has been awarded an Honorary Doctorate of Civil Law by Northumbria University, Newcastle.

Dr Hunt, who was M.P. for Stoke-on-Trent-Central from 2010-2017 and Shadow Education Secretary between 2013 and 2015 under then Labour Party leader Ed Miliband, attended Trinity College Cambridge, where he

secured a first-class degree in History. He was an Exchange Fellow at the University of Chicago before completing his doctorate in Victorian history at the University of Cambridge in 2000.

He has always had an interest in the intersection of science and the arts. From 1997 to 2000 he was a Special Adviser to Science Minister, Lord Sainsbury. He was an Associate Fellow at the Centre for History and Economics at King's College, Cambridge and Senior Fellow at the Institute for Public Policy Research.

His passion for history came to the fore in 2001, when he was appointed Senior Lecturer in History at Queen Mary, University of London. As well as presenting radio and television history programmes for both the BBC and Channel 4, Tristram is also the author of four history books, including the award-winning biography, "The Frock-coated Communist: The Revolutionary Life of Frederick Engels."

Dr Hunt had been a Labour Party supporter in the 1990s, working on the landslide 1997 General Election campaign. In 2010, Tristram was elected Labour MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central and three years later was appointed Shadow Minister for Education, then Shadow Secretary of State for Education. During his Parliamentary career, he also served on the Speaker's Advisory Committee on Works of Art.

After receiving his Honorary Degree from Northumbria University, Dr Hunt said: "I am immensely humbled and grateful to receive such an honour from Northumbria, a thriving university with a strong global outlook and a drive for research excellence that shares so much with the V&A. Northumbria University and Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums are at the heart of cultural life in the North East, and I very much look forward to continuing our partnerships here in the future".

Dr Hunt stood down from the House of Commons in 2017 following his appointment as Director of the Victoria and Albert Museum. In 2017 he oversaw the opening of the V&A Dundee, a central part of a £1 billion transformation of the city's waterfront. His priorities as Director of the V&A are focused on the transition to a multi-site museum, the redesign of the Museum of Childhood, and the development of a new museum and open access Collections and Research Centre in Stratford, East London, on the site of the 2012 Olympic Park.

He is also no stranger to Northumbria University, nor to Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums (TWAM). In March last year he gave a lecture “V&A – The Civic and the Global”, hosted in partnership between the University and TWAM, where he praised the important academic work being carried out by the University. He was also impressed with the long-term loans made to Northumbria by the Woon Foundation, and with TWAM’s global mission to help people determine their place in the world.

Dr Hunt actively supports the importance of regional museums, and the vital contribution that they make to civic life in Britain. The V&A has worked closely with colleagues at Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums for many years, and the V&A’s touring exhibitions have travelled to Shipley Art Gallery, Hatton Gallery, South Shields Museum and Laing Art Gallery.

With an interest in the history of great exhibitions – the V&A itself born from the Great Exhibition of 1851 – Tristram has been an advocate of the Great Exhibition of the North. With his support, the V&A has provided important content for the major hub exhibition at Great North Museum, in Newcastle.

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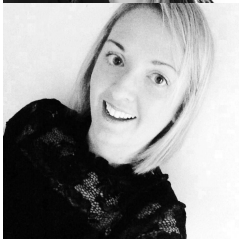


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