2011 Royal Society of New Zealand Distinguished Speaker

Professor Robin Clark CNZM FRS Hon FRSNZ

Science meets art: investigating pigments in art and archaeology

The very weak scattering of light by molecules (the Raman Effect, discovered in 1928) has recently emerged as the basis of a powerful technique for identifying and characterising pigments and dyes in art and archaeology. By studying pigments on old manuscripts, papyri and ceramics many questions of great historical, conservational and cultural interest can be answered. A firm scientific basis now exists for detecting forgeries. Rarely has scientific technique made such an impact on seemingly unrelated disciplines.

The lecture will be illustrated by reference to key illuminated manuscripts, paintings, icons, papyri, stuccoes and postage stamps.

Lectures:

Auckland
7pm Wednesday 23 March
Auckland Museum Events Centre
The Domain, Parnell, Auckland
(entry via the Southern Entrance, car parking available in the Domain and also in the Museum underground car park $8)

Nelson
7pm Tuesday 29 March
The Suter Theatre,
208 Bridge Street, Nelson

Wellington
7pm Thursday 31 March
Soundings Theatre
Te Papa Museum
Cable Street, Wellington

Hamilton
7.30pm Tuesday 5 April
Gallagher Concert Chamber,
Academy of Performing Arts,
University of Waikato Campus,
Hamilton (entry via Gate 2b on Knighton Road)

These lectures are free and open to the general public. However, to ensure a seat, please obtain a ticket at **www.royalsociety.org.nz/distinguished-speaker**

Enquiries to:
lectures@royalsociety.org.nz
or 04 470 5781

Professor Robin Clark
Born in Rangiora and a graduate of Canterbury University, Professor Robin Clark is now an internationally celebrated scientist, based at University College London where he was for many years the Sir William Ramsay Professor, Dean of Science and Head of Chemistry, recently becoming Ramsay Professor Emeritus. Professor Clark is a Fellow of the Royal Society of London and Member of the American Philosophical Society, and was recently awarded the Franklin-Lavoisier prize for his work in Raman microscopy. He has been involved in the examination of some of Europe's best known artwork such as the Lindisfarne Gospels, Gutenberg Bibles, 'old masters' including Vermeer's *Young woman seated at a virginal*, rare postage stamps, old maps, artefacts from Samarra, China, etc., and in the detection of forgeries from Egypt, Spain and elsewhere.

the Royal Society of New Zealand
Te Apārangi