



## The arts past and present

### *Mosaics at Brading Villa*

Catherine Parkinson

I am a mosaic artist. I make mosaics for walls and floors. Mostly in natural stone, like marble. Just like the Romans. I find it amazing to think that this tradition stretches back nearly two thousand years. I've always been fascinated by how the Romans made mosaics. And I've seen lots of them, but I know much less about the iconography. Why were certain images chosen? And what might they actually mean?

I've come on a break to the Isle of Wight to soak up some of the seaside holiday atmosphere but also to take a special trip to visit Brading Villa where there are some of the best preserved Roman mosaic floors in the country.

I am meeting two archaeologists here, who can enlighten me about the mosaics' iconography. I am hoping that David Tomalin and Jessica Hughes will be able to answer my questions. What does the choice of images tell us about the villa owner? How do they relate to Roman mythology? And what were the artistic tastes of the Romans in Britain?