



LS Lowry 1887-1976

Large Print Guide

Promenade

LS Lowry 1887-1976

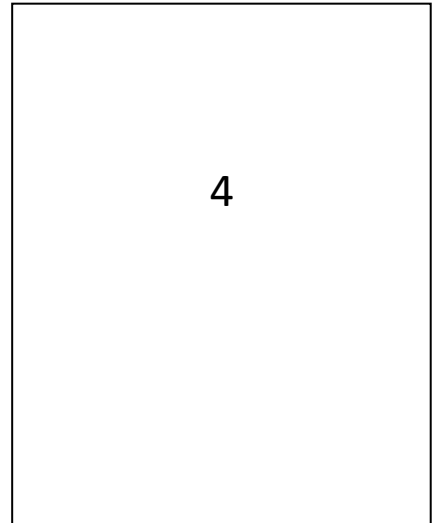
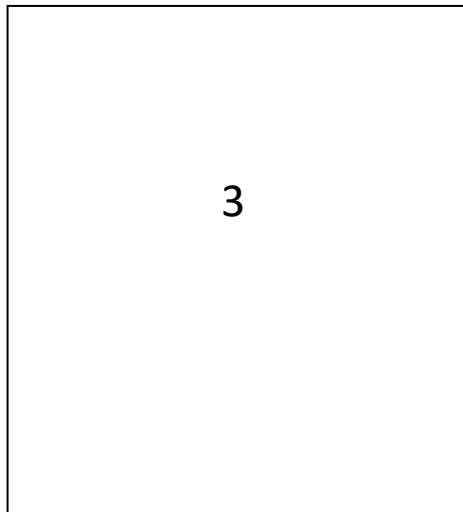
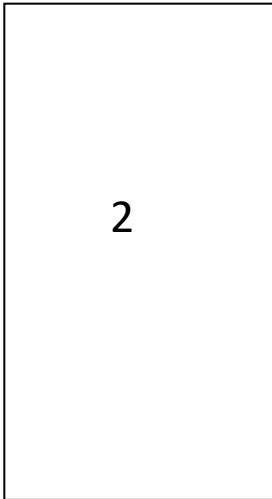
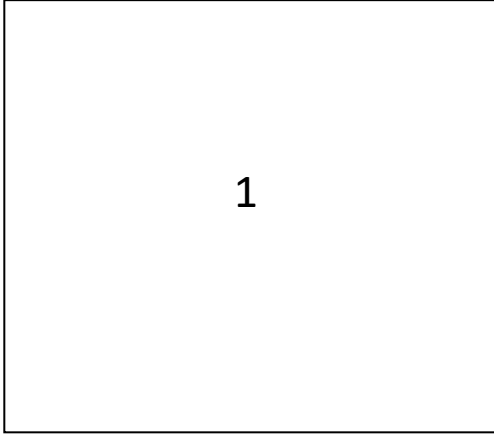
LS Lowry is one of Britain's favourite artists and in recent years the range and complexity of his work has become increasingly understood and appreciated. His subject matter ranges from seascapes and empty landscapes to portraits and surreal sketches, and he was one of the first British artists to thoroughly explore the modern industrial landscape.

The displays along this gallery look at some of the other artists and photographers whose work explores similar themes to Lowry's. They also highlight author Robert Roberts' vivid descriptions of Salford in the early 1900s - reflecting everyday life in the city which inspired Lowry - and Lowry's little known admiration for a varied mix of other artists, from the Pre-Raphaelite Dante Gabriel Rossetti to the Surrealist Paul Delvaux.

Follow the display down to The Lowry Collection of paintings and drawings in the next gallery.

The Lowry makes every effort to trace copyright holders for all images reproduced in exhibition graphics. If you know who the copyright holder is for any uncredited works please let us know.

Lowry's Contemporaries



1. LS Lowry *Mill Scene* 1965

The Lowry Collection, Salford

©The Estate of LS Lowry. All rights reserved, DACS 2015

2. Charles Ginner 1878-1952

Leeds 1914

© Estate of Charles Ginner

Photo © Leeds Museums and Galleries (City Art Gallery)
UK/The Bridgeman Art Library

Like Lowry, Charles Ginner has used a limited colour palette and strong geometric lines in this industrial view across Leeds Canal. Ginner was a key member of the Camden Town Group, a short lived association of artists who painted everyday urban life.

3. Julian Trevelyan 1910-88

Bolton Mills 1938

© The Estate of Julian Trevelyan

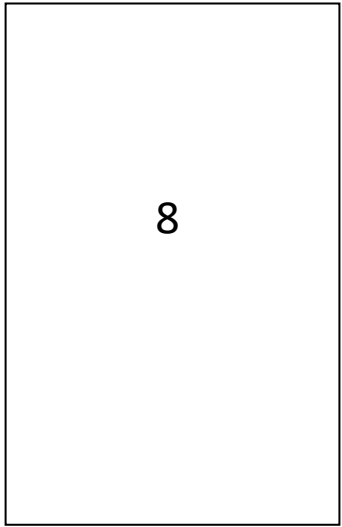
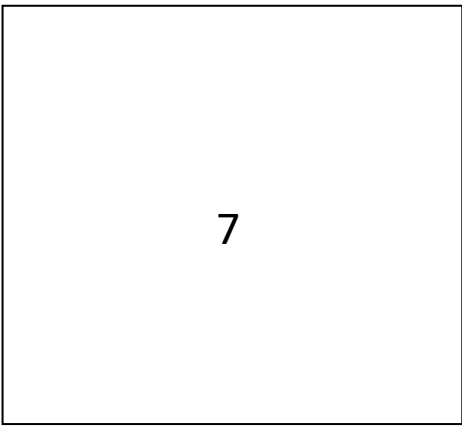
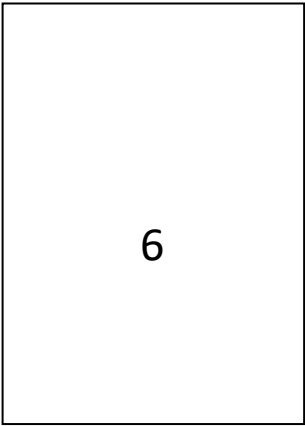
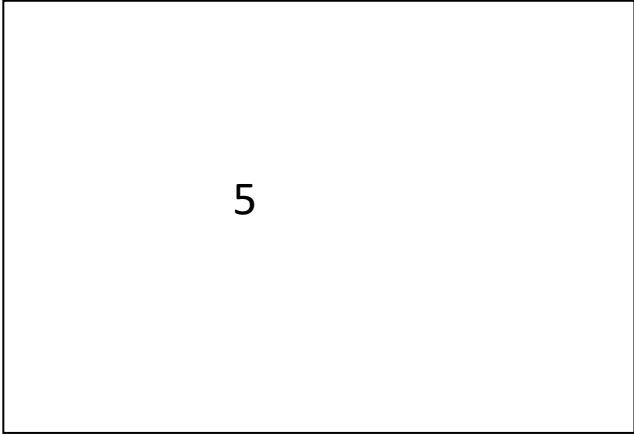
Trevelyan's bright, modernist vision of mills around Bolton uses collage to provide a fresher perspective on the industrial landscape and a less claustrophobic view than Lowry's.

4. Bill Brandt 1904-83

Halifax 1937

©Brandt Estate

Brandt's documentary photographic style contrasts the extremes of British society in memorable portraits and landscapes, shown in publications such as *Picture Post* and *Harper's Bazaar*.



5. LS Lowry *The Cripples* 1949

©The Lowry Collection, Salford

6. George Grosz 1893-1959

A Married Couple 1930

© Estate of George Grosz, Princeton, N.J./DACS 2015

Image © Tate, London 2015

Grosz painted the dark side of Berlin before and after wartime, featuring war wounded, prostitutes and corrupt officials. Here he paints a blunt and unflattering view of the upper classes.

7. William Roberts 1895-1980

Playground (the Gutter) 1934-5

© Tate, London 2015

Roberts' early interest in abstract painting was replaced by a clearer and more playful figurative style which he used in images of ordinary people on city streets.

8. Edward Burra 1905-76

The Gorbals 1944

© Estate of the Artist c/o Lefevre Fine Art Ltd, London

Image © Lefevre Fine Art Ltd, London/Bridgerman Images

Burra's watercolour includes a similarly bizarre group of characters to those found in some of Lowry's late work. Strange creatures with faces like Halloween masks peep out of windows or converse with men in the street.

9

10

11

12

9. LS Lowry *Seascape* 1952

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

10. Paul Nash 1889-1946

Totes Meer (Dead Sea) 1940-41

© Tate, London 2015

Paul Nash was fascinated by his own mortality, and this mournful scene, painted during the Second World War, echoes Lowry's own, often bleak vision.

11. Graham Sutherland 1903-80

Black Landscape 1939-40

©Estate of Graham Sutherland

Image © Tate, London 2015

This ominous and inhospitable Welsh view reflects the artist's anxiety about the threat of war. The landscape itself has a brooding presence and the title of the painting suggests impending darkness.

12. Sir William Nicholson 1872-1949

The Downs, Rottingdean 1909

© Desmond Banks

Image © [2011] Christie's Images Limited

Nicholson often painted unassuming subjects – corners of rooms, modest still lifes or unimposing landscapes. Like Lowry, he often celebrated the small things in life which were overlooked by others.

LS Lowry, Robert Roberts and Salford

‘If we cross the Irwell to Salford, we find on a peninsula formed by the river a town of eighty thousand inhabitants, which, properly speaking, is one large working-men's quarter... Whoever passes over... sees filth and wretchedness...’

Friedrich Engels *The Condition of the Working Class in England* 1845

During his lifetime Lowry travelled throughout the British Isles but Salford remained at the heart of much of his work. He moved to Pendlebury in 1909 and it was there that he was first inspired to depict the industrial landscape around him.

In 1976, the year Lowry died, Robert Roberts' memoir, *A Ragged Schooling: Growing Up in the Classic Slum*, was published. Roberts, one of seven children whose parents ran a corner shop, became an engineering apprentice at the age of 14 before retraining as a teacher. Born in 1905 he was growing up in Salford at the time Lowry moved there. The city which came to fascinate Lowry was the city Roberts described.

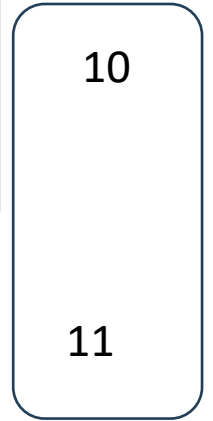
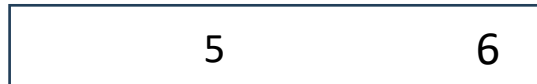
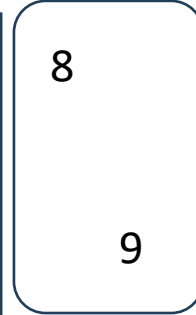
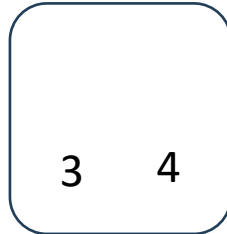
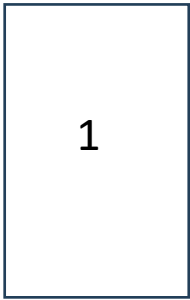
Salford had improved since Engels' damning description of the city quoted above but 'much that was vile remained'. Station

Road, where Lowry and his parents lived, was a more prosperous area than the streets where Roberts grew up, but Lowry knew the whole city well, partly through his role as rent collector. Although he was familiar with his tenants' way of life he did not pretend to be one of them. He maintained a distance, remaining an observer: I just painted what I saw – or the way I saw it, and what I wanted to paint.'

Towards the end of his life, living in Mottram-in-Longdendale, Lowry rarely visited Manchester and Salford, saying both cities had changed beyond recognition. Roberts' 'village', south of Peel Park and bordered by Oldfield Road and Cross Lane, was similarly transformed: 'That little world between the railway lines...has now been swept away... Perhaps the next generation will landscape it...and all that dark excrescence of an industrial age, like the poor folk who lived and toiled there, will have vanished like a lost medieval village.'

All Salford quotes are taken from Robert Roberts *The Classic Slum: Salford Life in the First Quarter of the Century* 1971 and Robert Roberts *A Ragged Schooling: Growing up in the Classic Slum* 1976

Images



1. Photo: LS Lowry with local children on the streets of Salford 1957

Photo by Popperfoto via Getty Images

2. Photo: Panoramic view of Salford

Photo via Salford Local History Library Collection

Flowers in a Window

‘Window curtaining with us had high significance; the full drape, if possible in lace, being a necessity for any family with pretensions to class. No one scorned the clean modest half curtain, but a newspaper across the panes showed all too clearly that still another household had been forced to hoist the grey flag of poverty.’

3. LS Lowry *Flowers in a Window* 1956

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

4. Photo: *Flowers in a window*

Salford Local History Library Collection

Peel Park and The Royal Technical College

‘One sunny Wednesday afternoon [my mother] took me to Peel Park. We sat on a high esplanade and looked far over the countless chimneys of northern Manchester to the horizon. On the skyline, green and aloof, the Pennines rose like the ramparts of paradise. ‘There!’ she said, pointing. ‘Mountains!’ I stared, lost for words.’

5. Photo: *Looking Down into Peel Park from the Steps*

Salford Local History Library Collection

‘Our own technical institute had opened its doors in 1896 and had been dubbed ‘Royal’ by Edward VII. The sons of Under-managers, foremen and top class mechanics were soon flocking there. We in the village looked upon it with awe, but nobody would have the courage to enter. We had a relative, a young millwright of real ability, who did venture here, then walked round and round the building and came home. He decided, he said, that it wasn’t ‘for people like me’.’

Lowry attended life drawing classes at the School of Art based in the Technical College for many years and made a series of drawings showing the views from the windows as well as numerous studies of Peel Park.

**6. Photo: *A View from the Window of the Royal
Technical College, Salford, looking towards
Manchester 1924***

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

Lodging houses

7. LS Lowry *The Lodging House* 1921

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

In 1921 Lowry exhibited eight works in an exhibition in Manchester. Though none of his pictures sold at the time, *The Lodging House* did sell later, Lowry's first work to do so. 'It was to a friend of my father's... He gave me £5 for it.'

'By ten o'clock every morning all beds in a common lodging house had to be vacated and made again, ready for the evening. A municipal inspector called regularly, and any man found too ill to rise was removed at once to the workhouse.'

'With us', boasted one dosshouse keeper, 'a bloke gets a kip and a meal – half a saveloy on bread and marge; a penny mix – ha'p'orth o' tea with a ha'p'orth of sugar; and a Woodbine! How's that, then? Bed, breakfast, and send 'im out smokin' for fourpence!'

Corner shops

8. LS Lowry *The Corner Shop* 1970

Private collection.

© The Estate of LS Lowry. All Rights Reserved, DACS
2015

‘The shop, like its competitors around, opened at 7a.m. and closed an hour before midnight. ‘The rest of the time,’ my mother said, ‘was my own’.’

‘In an ordinary week at the start of the century she served some four hundred and fifty customers and took about eight pounds, mostly in pennies, halfpence and farthings. ... The cloth money pouch Mother washed frequently... but so dirty was the coinage handled that soon the inside became soot dark again.’

‘With cash, or on tick, our villagers, about three thousand in all, patronised fifteen beer houses, a hotel and two off-licenses, nine grocery and general shops, three greengrocers...two tripe shops, three barbers, three cloggers, two cook shops, one fish and chip shop...an old clothes store, a couple of pawn brokers and two loan offices.’

9. Photo: *Ellor Street* 1960

Salford Local History Library Collection

The Flat Iron Market

10. LS Lowry *The Flat Iron Market* about 1925

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

The market occupied a triangular plot of land which gave it its name. Lowry's view, made in chalk, is sketched in a looser style than many of his pencil drawings.

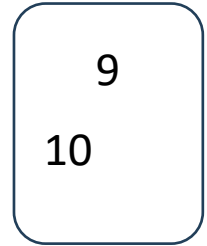
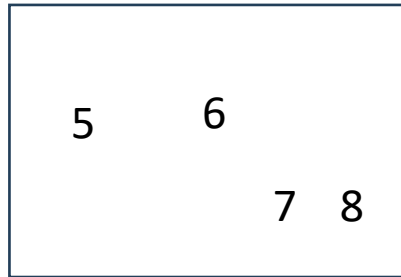
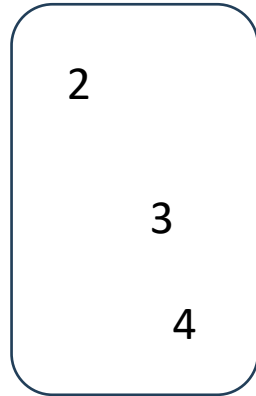
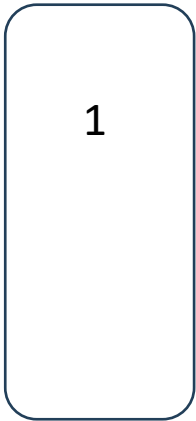
'Those in greatest need found even the old brokers' shops too expensive: they bought everything from the local Flat Iron Market. ...established close by a ganglion of railway lines, it lay constantly under the thickest smoke pall in Britain.'

11. Photo: *Flat Iron Market, Chapel Street, Salford 1894*

Photograph by Samuel Coulthurst. Courtesy of Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives, Manchester City Council

Samuel Coulthurst was a street photographer who took many photographs in Manchester and Salford using a camera concealed on a handcart.

Images



Fights in the streets

1. LS Lowry *A Fight* about 1935

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

‘...bitterness and bad blood...burst on the community in drunken Saturday night brawls. ...before the fighting proper began between the males, housewives shrieked abuse at one another, ... aiming to prove to the world that the other party and its kindred were ‘low class’ or no class at all. One waved, for instance, a ‘clean’ rent book (that great status symbol of the times) in the air, knowing the indicted had fallen in arrears.’

‘As a child before the first world war I hardly knew a weekend free from the sight of brawling adults and inter-family disputes.’

Children in the streets

2. LS Lowry *Houses in Broughton* 1924

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

‘Though the senior members of a household would try to uphold its prestige in every way, children in the streets had a reprehensible habit of making friends with anyone about their own age who happened to be around, in spite of the fact that parents, ever on the watch, had already announced what company they should keep.’

‘One saw a quarter of a class sixty ‘strong’ come to school barefoot. Many had rickets, bow legs or suffered from open sores.’

3. LS Lowry *Coming out of School* 1927

Tate.

© The Estate of LS Lowry. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2015

4. LS Lowry *The River Irwell at the Adelphi* 1924

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

‘Sometimes an outing took us over the Irwell. ‘Keep away!’ our elders admonished constantly. ‘You’ll get fever.’ We heeded them not, for here tumbled a river on whose purling

waters the very rainbows appeared, at times, to melt, though basically it ran the colour of plain chocolate.'

Work

‘Before 1914 most working men put in not less than a 54-hour work week, starting at six in the morning, with a break of half an hour and one hour for breakfast and dinner’.

‘The real social divide existed between those who, in earning daily bread, dirtied hands and face and those who did not.’

5. LS Lowry *Coming from the Mill* 1930

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

6. Photo: *Acme Spinning Mill, Pendlebury*

Salford Local History Library Collection

The Acme mill in Pendlebury appears in many of Lowry’s industrial scenes. He told various stories about how he started painting the industrial landscape around him but often claimed that seeing workers leaving Acme mill at the end of the day was what first inspired him

7. LS Lowry *Mill Girl* 1912

Private collection

© The Estate of LS Lowry. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2015

8. Photo: *Women in Shawls*

Courtesy of Manchester Libraries, Information and Archives,
Manchester City Council

‘The day’s work usually finished at 5.30 p.m. People generally lived closer to their work than they do now but most were too tired at the end of it to take part in leisure activities outside the home except at week ends, when factories closed on Saturday at mid-day or one o’clock.’

‘On some building sites a foreman might find fifty labourers pleading for a mere half-dozen jobs. It was not unknown for him to place six spades against a wall at one hundred yards’ distance. A wild, humiliating race followed; work went to those who succeeded in grabbing a spade.’

Francis Terrace

9. LS Lowry *Francis Terrace, Salford, 1956*

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

10. Photo: *Francis Terrace, Salford*

Salford Local History Library collection

Lowry was commissioned by the curator of Salford Museum & Art Gallery to record some of the areas in Salford which were due to be demolished in the 1950s. Francis Terrace was one of the locations Lowry chose to draw. Built in the 1850s the terrace was self-contained and overlooked another street below. Although Lowry's drawing seems accurate at first glance it is rare that his works are entirely topographically correct. Here he has altered the scale and position of the buildings seen at the end of the street and added a chimney.

St Augustine's Church, Pendlebury

St Augustine's Church was close to Lowry's home in Station Road. He drew and painted it several times, focusing on the building, which he presents as a huge, brooding form, rather than its surroundings. The tall memorial in the foreground of the church is removed completely in Lowry's drawing, though he includes a smaller memorial to those killed in an explosion at Clifton Hall Colliery.

11. LS Lowry *St Augustine's Church, Pendlebury* 1930

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

12. Photo: *LS Lowry at St Augustine's Church*

© Harold Riley

Oldfield Road Dwellings

Oldfield Road Dwellings were built by the Yorkshire and Lancashire Railway Company to house artisan workers. There were 60 'houses' in all, facing Salford Royal Hospital, on the edge of the area where Robert Roberts grew up. The distinctive shape of the building – curved at one end and rectangular at the other – fascinated Lowry. The Dwellings were demolished in around 1970.

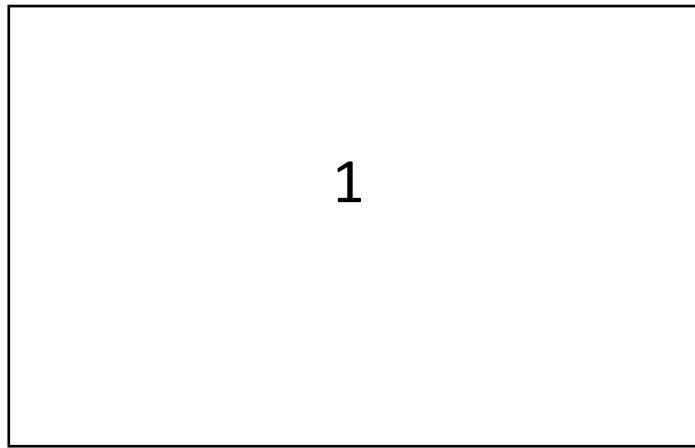
13. LS Lowry *Oldfield Road Dwellings* 1926

© The Lowry Collection, Salford

14. Photo: *Oldfield Road Dwellings*

Salford Local History Library collection

Lowry as a Collector



1. Photograph: *LS Lowry & Pat Cooke*

LS Lowry with Pat Cooke. Ford Madox Brown's *Moses and the Brazen Serpent* can be seen in the background.

Photograph by Denis Thorpe

Throughout his life Lowry bought work by young artists to show them support and encouragement. He didn't often display their pictures in his house - they sat stacked against walls or piled under the bed. Many of the artists' names are unknown today

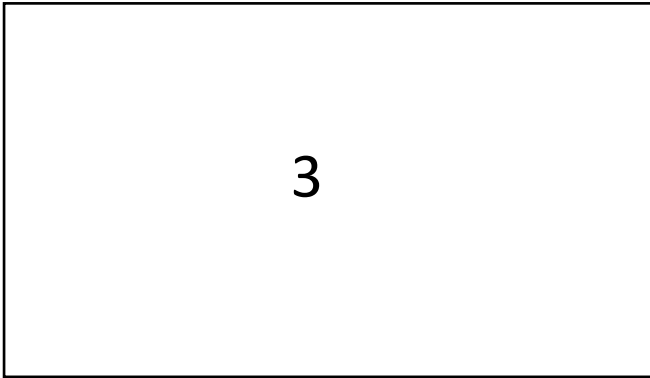
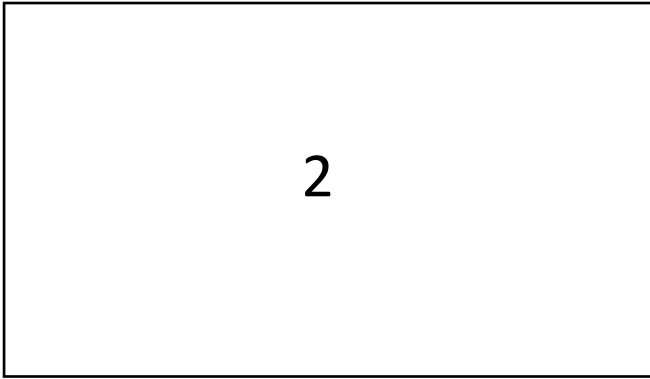
but several had successful careers and were longstanding friends including Sheila Fell (1931-79), Pat Cooke (1935-2000), James Fitton (1899-1982) and David Carr (1915-68).

Lowry's taste in art was varied. By the time he retired from the Pall Mall Property Company in 1952, on a full pension, he was also making a profit from the sale of his own work and could afford to buy paintings and drawings by artists he admired. His collection included a drawing by the 18th Century caricaturist Thomas Rowlandson (1756-1827), two bronze busts and two drawings by Jacob Epstein (1880-1959) and *Portrait of a Young Man* 1944 by Lucian Freud (1922-2011).

The Pre-Raphaelites Dante Gabriel Rossetti (1828-82) and Ford Madox Brown (1821-93) were the two artists Lowry admired most. In 1967 he purchased Ford Madox Brown's charcoal drawing, *Moses and the Brazen Serpent* 1872, which hung on his living room wall, but as far as he was concerned 'There's no one like Rossetti. ... I don't care much for his subject pictures but his women are very wonderful. I can't find anything quite like them...[they are]...unreal pictures.' *Annie Miller* 1860, one of Lowry's favourite Rossetti drawings, also hung in the living room, but most of Lowry's Rossettis were on his bedroom walls including *Pandora* 1869, *Reverie* 1868 and his only oil painting by the artist – *Proserpine* 1873 (and repainted by Rossetti in 1877 following damage).

'As a student I admired DG Rossetti, and after him, Madox Brown. The queer thing is I've never wavered, they're my two favourite artists still.'

LS Lowry interviewed in 1956



2. Photo: *Bedroom at The Elms*

LS Lowry's bedroom with drawings by Rossetti on display including, from left to right above the bed, *Mrs William Morris* about 1870, *Aspecta Medusa* 1867 and *Alexa Wilding* 1866. *Reverie* 1868 (the model for which was also Morris' wife Jane) can be seen to the right of the door.

Photograph by Denis Thorpe 1976

3. Photo: *LS Lowry in Living Room at The Elms*

LS Lowry in his living room in 1967 with a bronze sculpture by Jacob Epstein on the dresser to the right and Rossetti's *Alexa Wilding* 1873 on the right of the wall behind Lowry. Alexa Wilding modelled frequently for Rossetti in the late 1860s and throughout the 1870s and a second portrait of her can be seen in the photograph of Lowry's bedroom.

Photographer unknown

4

5

4. Dante Gabriel Rossetti *Proserpine* (detail) 1874

Tate

Image credit © Tate, London 2015

Rossetti painted eight versions of *Proserpine* including this one in the Tate collection, very similar to Lowry's own.

5. Lucian Freud *Portrait of a Young Man* 1944

Private collection

© The Lucian Freud Archive/Bridgerman Images

This drawing was described by one visitor to Lowry's home as being 'squeezed between two Tompion clocks in Lowry's living room'. Lowry found the drawing disquieting but told a friend that 'it would not be half the picture' without the subject's exaggerated little finger.

6

7

6. Patricia Cooke *LS Lowry* (detail) undated

Salford Museum and Art Gallery

© Estate of Patricia Cooke

Image © Salford Museum & Art Gallery

Pat Cooke first met Lowry as a child when her father carried out some building work on the artist's house in Mottram-in-Longdendale. Hearing that she was interested in drawing he asked to see some of her work. Her portrait of Lowry hung on his living room wall for many years.

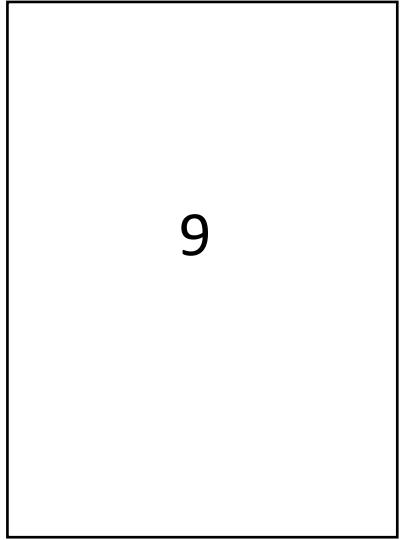
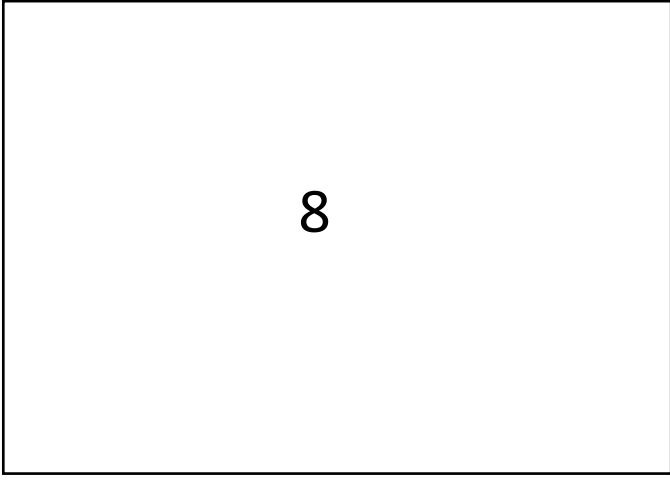
7. James Fitton *Café* 1950-57

Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry

© Tim and Judy Fitton

Image © Herbert Art Gallery & Museum Coventry,
UK/Bridgerman Images

Fitton was younger than Lowry but trained with him at Salford School of Art. After the life drawing classes in the evenings, Lowry often walked with him to the docks in Salford where Fitton worked a night shift. Fitton moved to London and became an Associate Member of the Royal Academy in 1944. He and Lowry remained friends and Fitton supported Lowry's own election as an Associate in 1955.



8. Paul Delvaux *La Rue du Tramway (Street of the Trams)* 1938-1939

Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

© Paul Delvaux Foundation SABAM, Belgium and DACS, London 2015

Image © Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art

Delvaux's paintings often place nudes in incongruous settings such as railway stations or streets full of grand classical buildings. Work by his contemporary, René Magritte (1898-1967), also fascinated Lowry: 'His paintings have an unearthly strangeness. How does he do it?', he asked Pat Cooke.

9. David Carr *Self Portrait* about 1947

Ferens Art Gallery

© The Estate of David Carr

Image © Ferens Art Gallery, Hull Museum, UK/Bridgerman Images

David Carr's friendship with Lowry began after Carr purchased one of Lowry's works and wrote to the older artist. The two men visited each other, Lowry staying with Carr's

family in Norfolk, and discussed their work in correspondence over a number of years.

10

10. Sheila Fell *Village Beneath Lake District Fells* about 1960

Private collection, on loan to Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery Trust

© Anna Fell

Image courtesy of Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery Trust

Lowry viewed Sheila Fell's first exhibition at the Beaux Arts Gallery in London in 1955 and asked to meet the artist. With her parents' permission he provided her with a small weekly income to help her while sales of her work were uncertain. He was a regular visitor to the family's home in Aspatria, Cumbria, and accompanied Sheila on sketching trips.