



LS Lowry: Modern

Life

Things We Have

Seen

Large Print Guide

Things We Have Seen

Lowry claimed to paint what he saw, but most of his portraits are imagined, his industrial scenes are often invented and his late drawings show fantastic hybrid figures, part human and part animal. Nonetheless Lowry described them all as ‘...my friends and neighbours. Look along Stalybridge Road and you will see every one of them – all done from life.’ Lowry constantly observed and sketched what was around him, but these initial drawings of things seen were filtered into the artist’s own vision of the world.

‘Ann’ is an example of Lowry combining fiction and reality. His friends had no reason to think she did not exist, but no one ever met her in person and his explanations of who she was varied. She appears in many guises throughout Lowry’s career and it is likely that she was an imagined character, her appearance perhaps inspired by some of his female friends or by public figures of the time such as the opera singer Maria Callas or the ballerina Margot Fonteyn who he would have seen dance at the Royal Opera House in London.

Portrait of Ann, 1957

Oil on board

According to Lowry this work was the first portrait he had painted in nearly thirty years. Lowry described the sitter as aged 25, from Leeds and, 'the daughter of some people who have been very good to me.' He also described her as his godchild Ann Hilder (or Helder). Despite extensive research, no one has yet been able to confirm the identity of Ann.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Child with Doll, 1968

Pencil on paper

Lowry's late figures can be unsettling. In this drawing it is hard to tell if the girl's eyes are open or closed, made-up or bruised. Her half smile seems cruel and disengaged and it is ambiguous as to whether it is a doll or a baby that she holds.

On loan from a private collection

TOP

Man Looking over a Fence, 1964

Oil on canvas

Lowry's solitary figure looks in our direction, but we can't be sure if he is looking at us, or beyond to something behind us. He seems forever trapped and separated by the barrier of railings. By reducing his colours to largely black and white, Lowry emphasises a stark sense of isolation, similar to that in *The Funeral Party* (also on display) painted 11 years earlier.

On loan from a private Liechtenstein Collection

BOTTOM

Family Group, 1956

Pencil on paper

Lowry's later drawings were a surprise to an audience more familiar with his industrial scenes. The Stone Gallery in Newcastle, where he exhibited several times in the 1960s, described showing these pictures as 'almost like starting from scratch with an unknown painter.'

The Lowry Collection, Salford

The Funeral Party, 1953

Oil on canvas

In 1957 the *News Chronicle* described *The Funeral Party* as 'a painting with all the love and compassion drained away.' Lowry himself entertained listeners with his explanation that the man on the right is being treated as an outcast for coming to the funeral in boots and a red tie.

The figures in the painting are shown in an undefined space, linked together as group but separated from the rest of the world. It is impossible to tell if they have gathered before or after the funeral or exactly what each person's relationship is to the other characters depicted.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

TOP

Man Lying on a Wall, 1957

Oil on canvas

'People ... refuse to believe me when I tell them I saw a man dressed just like that, doing just that, from the top of a bus... It was the umbrella propped against the wall which caught my eye and prompted the picture... The chap was well-dressed and obviously enjoying the smoke and his rest.'

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Adopt a Lowry: adopted to celebrate the 100th birthday of Dr Henry J Shine, a prolific napper. For many years a print of this painting has been displayed in the Shine family home alongside a photo of Dr Shine himself napping on a bench outside the Texas Tech University library, where he was chair of the Chemistry Department. We are delighted the family has chosen to mark this wonderful occasion by sharing their story with us.

BOTTOM

Gentleman Looking at Something, 1960

Oil on plywood

Lowry's late works focus on small groups and individuals - characters previously lost in the crowd. Here, only two lines give a sense of place - perhaps the edge of a pavement. Figures walking out of the picture or looking at something hidden to the viewer appear often in his work.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Untitled (Man in Hat, Staring Out), about 1959

Pencil on paper

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

TOP

A Group of Fantasy Figures, with Hills and Water, undated

Pencil on paper

In Lowry's most surreal late drawings, animals and humans morph into each other, creating strange hybrid creatures which seem to co-exist quite happily. The art critic, Eric Newton, described one of Lowry's drawings as being, '... peopled with a race of sub-human black and grey beings and a sprinkling of sub-canine pets.'

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

BOTTOM

The Haunt, 1969

Oil on panel

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

Girl Seen from the Front, undated

Girl Seen from the Back, 1964

Oil on canvas

This child with long hair is one of the characters in Luigi Pirandello's 1925 play, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. The play was revived in London in 1963, starring Sir Ralph Richardson. Lowry's friend, the artist Sheila Fell, suggested they see it. Fell recalled Lowry being 'bowled over by it. ...he talked about it endlessly, analyzing it, wondering at it. It absolutely fascinated him.'

Lowry himself said, 'I went to see it nine times. By the third visit I had become interested in the child with the long hair. By the fourth I thought: "I'm gone, I'm gone – I'm bats about this child." The visual aspect of those characters fascinated me...'

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

TOP

Head and Shoulders of a Man, about 1920

Pencil on paper

Lowry produced a series of drawings in the 1920s, now known as 'office heads'. All drawn on square sheets of paper, they are caricatured sketches of colleagues and visitors to the Pall Mall Property Company.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

BOTTOM

Untitled (Boy Kicking Boy), 1965

Pencil on paper

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

Untitled (Large Full Length Figure in Profile), 1968

Coloured pencil and pencil on paper

This figure occupies almost all of the paper on which it is drawn, its scale helping to make it one of the most striking of Lowry's grotesque characters.

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

Display Case

On the Sands, about 1920

Pencil on paper

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Adopt a Lowry: adopted by Raychel, Richard & Trinity Rogers.

Dedicated to Peter Hancock who created memorable, fun, family holiday adventures.

Colliery near Pendlebury, 1916

Pencil on paper

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Adopt a Lowry: adopted by Raychel, Richard & Trinity Rogers.

Dedicated to Diane Hancock and William C. Smith from whom we have inherited a love of history, enabling us to appreciate the lived experiences of our ancestors, often found in art.

Things We Have Seen, about 1970

Black and blue ballpoint pen on paper

On the back of the frame is written 'Done after lunch at The George, Huddersfield, Jan 1970'.

On loan from a private collection

Various sketches, about 1970

Ballpoint pen on paper

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Untitled (Street Scene), undated

Blue ink on lined paper



On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

Steam Traction Engine, Glasgow, 1946

Pencil on paper

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Adopt a Lowry: adopted by Shamyla and Rick. On 28 September 2018, we met each other for the first time in front of this drawing.

This gallery will therefore forever have a special place in our hearts and we love coming back here to remind us of that special moment. We hope that this place brings lots of love and joy in your lives as well   .