

WALTER SICKERT

28 April – 18 September 2022

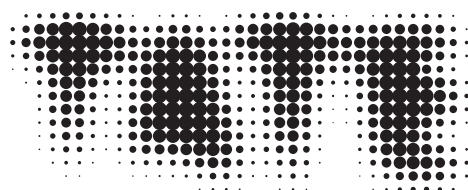
ROOM 1

SICKERT'S IDENTITIES

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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INTRODUCTION

WALTER SICKERT

Walter Richard Sickert's approach to art making was distinctive, provocative and influential. He was a master of self-invention and theatricality, transforming how everyday life was captured on canvas. Spanning his six-decade career, this exhibition uncovers the people, places and events that inspired him. Born in Munich, Germany in 1860, Sickert moved with his family to England when he was eight years old. His father was an artist, introducing him to the work of prominent French and British artists, but Sickert initially pursued a career as an actor. He switched to art in 1882, studying briefly at the Slade School of Fine Art, London, before becoming a pupil of American artist James Abbott McNeill Whistler. Sickert became a central figure of the British artistic avant-garde, as both a painter and a critic. Sickert created important artistic links between Britain and France, and he spent significant periods of his working life in France. He was a founding member of the New English Art Club, formed as a French-influenced alternative to the more traditional Royal Academy, and the leader of the Camden Town Group of artists who were influenced by post-impressionism.

Sickert's innovative painting techniques and subject matter always kept him at the forefront of developments in British art. Sickert said: 'The plastic arts [visual arts] are gross arts, dealing joyously with gross material facts.' It was Sickert's embrace of this materiality – both in his handling of paint and in the exploration of the lives of ordinary people and places – that was ground-breaking in his time. These ideas would go on to inspire generations of younger artists, as well as prominent contemporary painters who cite him as an influence.

Anti-clockwise from entrance

ROOM 1

SICKERT'S IDENTITIES

1.SICKERT'S IDENTITIES

This room brings together self-portraits Sickert produced throughout his career. Looking at the works, we can see the wide range of techniques and source material Sickert used and the varied ways he presented himself publicly. Having trained as an actor, Sickert could skilfully adopt different personas in his self-portraits, depending on his preoccupations at the time. As well as examinations of the inner self, these works can be interpreted as performances of identity. Early self-portraits feature strong lighting which creates an intense, dramatic effect. Later paintings show the established artist in his studio, surrounded by the tools of his trade. He presents himself as an artist, actor, and even as biblical characters. His later portraits are often based on photographs taken by his wife, Thérèse Lessore.

Self-Portrait

1882

Pen and ink on paper

This intense self-portrait is Sickert's earliest documented work. It shows the artistic influence of his father, Oswald Sickert, who was a painter and engraver. The portrait's closely worked linear technique also draws on the example of Victorian illustration. Sickert would admire this style of pen and ink drawing, in particular the work of the Punch magazine illustrator Charles Keene, throughout his career.

Islington Local History Centre

X80064

Self-Portrait

c.1896

Oil paint on canvas

This self-portrait shows Sickert in a difficult year when his marriage was disintegrating and his financial situation was precarious. Painted with an auburn, brown and black palette, Sickert's angular brushstrokes are typical of his work during the 1890s. The sombre palette and cross-light across the artist's face suggest a brooding introspection.

Leeds Museums and Galleries.

Gift from Miss Ellen M. Heath, 1942

X79367

Self-Portrait. The Painter in his Studio

1907

Oil paint on canvas

Self-Portrait. The Painter in his Studio encapsulates a period of artistic experimentation for Sickert. He was spending time with artists such as Spencer Gore and Lucien Pissarro as part of the Fitzroy Street Group, named after the location of Sickert's studio. In this work, Sickert has painted a mirror reflection of himself and the interior of his studio.

The mirror is placed on a mantelpiece crowded with plaster casts, taking up the whole canvas. The work evokes Sickert's working environment, and demonstrates his skill in creating multiple planes and viewpoints within his compositions.

Art Gallery of Hamilton, Ontario, Canada

X80025

Self-Portrait. Juvenile Lead

1907

Oil paint on canvas

The self-portrait shows Sickert dressed in smart attire and a distinctive bowler hat. First exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in Paris in 1907, the original title was *L'Homme au Chapeau Melon* ('The Man with the Bowler Hat'), drawing attention to this distinctively British item. The current title was first used in 1928, and refers back to Sickert's earlier career as an actor. The artist described the portrait as a 'life-sized head of myself in a cross-light which will I think become something in time', expressing the fascination with light which would endure throughout his career.

Southampton City Art Gallery

X79396

Self-Portrait. The Bust of Tom Sayers

1907

Oil paint on canvas

The objects surrounding Sickert in this portrait reveal his contrasting artistic interests at the time. The blue-and-white ceramic vase relates to the aesthetic movement and Sickert's early mentor James Abbott McNeill Whistler, while the marble bust of boxer Tom Sayers references his interest in popular culture. Sayers was a well-known English bare-knuckle prize fighter, who was heavyweight champion between 1857 and 1860. He lived in the Camden Town area of London where Sickert was later based for many years.

The Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Presented by the Christopher Sands Trust, 2001

X79215

Self-Portrait in Grisaille

1935

Oil paint on canvas

This self-portrait was based on a photograph of Sickert attending the private view of the Royal Academy Summer Exhibition, London, in 1932. Sickert's painting *The Raising of Lazarus* was on display, and it was widely considered to be the picture of the year. It generated enormous publicity and was sold to raise funds for the struggling Sadler's Wells Theatre.

National Portrait Gallery, London; Given by Sir Alec Martin through the Art Fund, 1943

X79387

Image caption

Thérèse Lessore Photograph of Walter Sickert
Islington Local History Centre

Self-Portrait. Lazarus Breaks his Fast c.1927

Oil paint on canvas

This work is the first of a series of three self-portraits with biblical titles that Sickert painted in the late 1920s. Made soon after he had recovered from a serious illness, the title refers to a man who Christ raised from the dead. The composition was based on a photograph of Sickert taken by his wife Thérèse Lessore. Imitating the tonal contrasts of the photograph allowed Sickert to abandon line, constructing the painting from loosely painted patches of colour. Sickert was also interested in how photography could freeze a dramatic moment.

Private collection
X80108

Image caption

Thérèse Lessore Photograph of Walter Sickert
Islington Local History Centre

The Servant of Abraham

1929

Oil paint on canvas

In contrast to the unkempt and vulnerable figure in *Lazarus Breaks his Fast*, displayed nearby, here Sickert presents himself as a powerful biblical figure. Although the picture is relatively small, the artist's head is larger than life-size. He appears to loom over the viewer, evoking a forceful presence. The dramatic framing can be compared to modern forms of image-making such as photography and cinematography. Sickert imagined the work as part of a larger wall-painting, stating, 'We cannot well have pictures on a large scale nowadays, but we can have small fragments of pictures on a colossal scale'.

Tate. Presented by the Friends of the Tate Gallery 1959
T00259

The Front at Hove (Turpe Senex Miles Turpe Senilis Amor)

1930

Oil paint on canvas

Many of Sickert's landscape paintings include self-portraits. In this work, the man in the bowler hat resembles contemporary photographs of the artist. The Latin subtitle, 'an old soldier is a wretched thing, so also is senile love', introduces a subtle self-mockery, implying that his advances to the young woman beside him will be in vain. The setting is Adelaide Crescent in Hove, England, once fashionable, but dilapidated by the 1930s. Sickert juxtaposes the decline of architecture and human figure in a meditation on the aging process.

Tate. Purchased 1932
N04651

Reading in the Cabin

1940

Oil paint on canvas

Reading in the Cabin is a double portrait of Sickert and his wife Thérèse Lessore. It was produced from a photograph of the couple featured in the press. Sickert selected a horizontal section of the photograph and altered compositional elements such as the depth of the room, creating a shallower space. He described his process of translating photograph to painting as 'something similar to what is done by an actor with a role in the theatre'.

Corsham Court Collection

X80046

WALTER SICKERT

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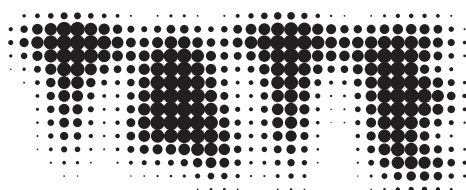
ROOM 2

THE APPRENTICESHIP YEARS:
FROM WHISTLER TO DEGAS

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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Wall text to the left of the entrance, then clockwise round the room

ROOM 2

THE APPRENTICESHIP YEARS: FROM WHISTLER TO DEGAS

After a brief spell at the Slade School of Fine Art, Sickert began his artistic career in 1882 at James Abbott McNeill Whistler's studio, as an assistant helping to print etching plates. Sickert's own etchings at the time were close in style to Whistler's, often representing urban scenes with a deliberate economy of line. He was also influenced by Whistler's small oil panels, painted from life.

Displayed in this room are panels by both Sickert and Whistler, depicting shopfronts in Dieppe and London. They show that Dieppe was an important location for Sickert from his earliest days as an artist. We can also see how Sickert adopted Whistler's tonal approach to painting, which he learned preparing Whistler's palette before sketching trips.

The later works in this room show a shift in Sickert's approach. French artist Edgar Degas became his mentor in 1885, inspiring him to plan his compositions with preliminary drawings and to use bolder colours.

James Abbott McNeill Whistler 1834–1903

Sketch Portrait of Walter Sickert

1894–5

Oil paint on canvas

This spontaneous sketch is one of three portraits Whistler painted of Sickert. Whistler was Sickert's friend and mentor during his early career. The portrait indicates how important the artists' relationship was for each other at the time.

Although they fell out towards the end of the 1890s, Sickert always acknowledged the profound influence Whistler had on his practice.

Hugh Lane Gallery

X80028

White Violets

c.1884

Etching and engraving on paper

White Violets is an early example of Whistler's influence. Sickert used techniques he learned as an apprentice in Whistler's studio, such as subdued, muted colours restricted to a few tones, and the loose handling of paint.

The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust)

X80058

Venice, The Little Lagoon, after Whistler

c.1884

Drypoint, black carbon ink on paper

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge

X80041

The Burning of the Japanese Exhibition
1885

Etching, black carbon ink on paper

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge
X80042

Six Pence Three Farthings
1884

Etching, brown ink on paper

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge
X80043

James Abbott McNeill Whistler 1834–1903

A Shop

1884–90

Oil paint on wood

The Hunterian, University of Glasgow
X79328

The Butcher's Shop, Dieppe

1885

Oil paint on panel

In the summer of 1885, Sickert spent time in Dieppe with Whistler, Degas and other artists. The Butcher's Shop, Dieppe exemplifies the spontaneous panel paintings he produced during this trip.

York Museums Trust (York Art Gallery). Presented by the Very Reverend Milner White, Dean of York, 1951
X79403

Shop Front, The Laundry

1885

Pencil, pen and ink on paper

Shop Front, The Laundry takes a modest street scene as its subject. Sickert would later square up the drawing and use it as the basis for a panel painting (which is on display nearby). This meticulous preparation of the composition demonstrates Sickert's growing admiration of Degas's carefully planned method of working in stages. Sickert's new way of working contrasted with Whistler's alla prima approach, where layers of paint were applied in a single session.

Islington Local History Centre

X80065

The Laundry Shop

1885

Oil paint on panel

Sickert increasingly adopted Degas's oil painting technique, building layers of paint over a preparatory drawing. Sickert described how this allowed the picture to be 'brought about by conscious stages', each layer drying between coats. The sharply delineated, grid-like composition of *The Laundry Shop* shows a close attention to individual components. This contrasts with the flatter, more blurred outlines of *A Shop in Dieppe* (displayed nearby).

Leeds Museums and Galleries. Bought 1937

X79366

James Abbott McNeill Whistler 1834–1903

Shop Front: Dieppe

1897–9

Pen, brown ink, chalk, watercolour and gouache
on brown paper laid down on card

The Hunterian, University of Glasgow
X79330

A Shop in Dieppe

1885–9

Oil paint on canvas

In *A Shop in Dieppe*, Sickert's palette and loose handling of the paint is closely aligned to Whistler's shopfront paintings from this period, like *Shopfront* and *Shopfront, Dieppe* (displayed nearby). It was painted in front of the subject by the *alla prima* (or wet-on-wet) technique in which the pigments are laid on in a single session.

The Hunterian, University of Glasgow
X79333

The Red Shop (or The October Sun)

c.1888

Oil paint on panel

In the late 1880s, Sickert increasingly prioritised surface richness and freshness of colour over the muted tones of Whistler's palette. In this work, the brown-ochre-gold colour scheme and vermillion contrasts create a vivid effect, which also typifies his music hall pictures of this period.

Norfolk Museums Service (Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery), bequeathed by H.B. Broadbent 1949
X79225

James Abbott McNeill Whistler 1834–1903

The Priest's Lodging, Dieppe

1897

Oil paint on wood

The Hunterian, University of Glasgow
X79332

James Abbott McNeill Whistler 1834–1903

A Shop with a Balcony

1897–9

Oil paint on wood

The Hunterian, University of Glasgow

X79329

La Saison des Bains, Dieppe

1885

Oil paint on panel

This work ('The Height of the Season, Dieppe') is a spontaneous panel painting produced during Sickert's visit to Dieppe in the summer of 1885. Sickert spent the summer season with Whistler, Degas and many other influential artists, which had an enduring impact on his artistic practice. Sickert especially admired Whistler's seascapes, and composed a number of his own paintings which depicted the coast, including this painting and Seascape (displayed nearby).

Brooklyn Museum, Gift of Ferdinand Gottschalk, 18.37

X80136

James Abbott McNeill Whistler 1834–1903

The Bathing Posts, Brittany

1893

Oil paint on wood

Sickert later described works like this as the epitome of Whistler's artistic genius: 'He will give you in a space nine inches by four an angry sea, piled up, and running in, as no painter ever did before. The extraordinary beauty and truth of the relative colours, and the exquisite precision of the spaces, have compelled infinity and movement into an architectural formula of eternal beauty. Never was instrument better understood and more fully exploited than Whistler has understood and exploited oil paint in these panels.'

The Hunterian, University of Glasgow

X79331

Seascape

c.1887

Oil paint on wood

National Galleries of Scotland. Bequeathed by
Dr Dorothea Walpole and Mr R.H. Walpole 1963
X80050

The Acting Manager

1884

Etching, printed in black-brown ink on wove paper

The Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.
Purchased, 1963
X80085

The End of the Act, or The Acting Manager

c.1885–6

Oil paint on canvas

The figure in this work is Miss Helen Couper-Black, the general manager of British theatre company, D'Oyly Carte, which specialised in presentations of Gilbert and Sullivan's comic operas. Sickert combines a Whistlerian palette with an allusion to portraits Whistler painted in the early 1870s. Sickert also draws on his own theatrical experience, successfully conveying human emotion in the pure exhaustion of the pose.

Private collection

X80109

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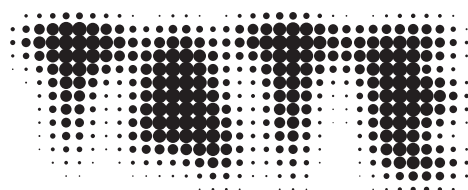
ROOM 3

THE MUSIC HALL:
ARTIFICES OF THE STAGE

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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Wall text to the left of the entrance, then clockwise round the room

ROOM 3

THE MUSIC HALL: ARTIFICES OF THE STAGE

Initially inspired by Degas's paintings of Parisian café-concerts, Sickert's music hall paintings catapulted his career to new heights. From a young age he was described as 'stage-struck' and acted professionally before becoming an artist. Sickert visited music halls almost every night and made sketches that not only captured the effects of light and movement onstage, but also the people watching in the audience. His subsequent paintings adopted unusual viewpoints while playing with colour, expressing the vibrancy of the performative atmosphere. However, critics described music halls as 'working-class entertainments', perceiving popular culture as an inappropriate subject for fine art.

Music halls were popular entertainment venues in the 19th and early-20th centuries. Sickert's paintings of London, but also Paris and Dieppe, trace their development and demise – from nightly live performances to hosting the first cinematic screenings in Britain.

The cinema as well as radio and music recordings became popular, leading to a decline in music hall audiences. Yet, Sickert never lost his interest in theatrical subjects and later turned his attention to other forms of popular entertainment.

Edgar Degas 1834–1917

The Ballet Scene from Meyerbeer's Opera 'Robert le Diable' 1876

Oil paint on canvas

Degas's painting depicts a dance performance from German composer Giacomo Meyerbeer's opera Robert le Diable. The dance is called 'Ballet of the Nuns'. Portraying ghosts of nuns rising from their tombs, the dancers are shrouded in gossamer veils and white dresses. Degas's portrayal of movement, the effect of light on stage, and his innovative inclusion of the orchestra influenced Sickert. We can see Degas's influence in many works by Sickert in this room.

Victoria and Albert Museum, London. Bequeathed by
Constantine Alexander Ionides
X79399

**Bonnet et Claque. Ada Lundberg at the
Marylebone Music Hall**
c.1887

Oil paint on canvas

The woman in the foreground of this painting is music hall comedienne Ada Lundberg, who Sickert has depicted performing in front of a crowd of men at the Marylebone Music Hall. Now a largely forgotten performer, Lundberg was well-known at the time. The men in the audience are identified in the title by Sickert as a 'claque', a group of supporters who were hired to applaud Lundberg while on stage. One of Sickert's early representations of the male gaze upon female performers, he would continue to explore the relationship between male and female figures throughout his career.

Private collection
X80110

Little Dot Hetherington at the Bedford Music Hall

c.1888–9

Oil paint on canvas

This is the first painting in which Sickert used a mirror as a framing device for the stage. This enabled him to depict multiple perspectives, while maintaining the contact between the performer and audience. Hetherington is painted singing 'The Boy I Love is Up in the Gallery', a song made famous by music hall star Marie Lloyd. Sickert regularly depicted the Bedford Music Hall and this is the first work in which it features. Also known as the Old Bedford, it was a popular entertainment venue located on Camden High Street in north London.

Private collection

X79416

The Pit at the Old Bedford

c.1889

Oil paint on canvas

Fondation Bemberg, Toulouse

X79302

Vesta Victoria at the Old Bedford

c.1890

Oil paint on canvas

The painting shows a performance by music hall entertainer Vesta Victoria at the Old Bedford Music Hall. Victoria was known as 'England's premier comedienne' and became an internationally renowned star of the stage. She was particularly well received in North America, where people revelled in her comedic performances full of sly innuendos and delivered with a dead pan expression. Sickert includes the intricate architectural features of the Old Bedford in the composition, allowing a simultaneous glimpse of the stage, orchestra pit and audience sitting in the stalls and in the upper gallery.

Burrows Family

X80115

The P.S. Wings in the O.P. Mirror

c.1888–9

Oil paint on canvas

The title of the work indicates the Prompt Side (or stage left) wing as shown in the mirror situated on the Opposite Prompt (stage right). It creates an unusual scene in which the performer and audience face different directions. It was included in the 'London Impressionists' exhibition in 1889, and a review published in the Star stated: 'Probably the cleverest of all, the reflection of a figure in red in a mirror; the low-toned audience is admirably contrasted with the reflection of the brilliant red figure, and the feeling of reflected light with which all the picture is filled is admirably suggested.'

Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts

X79390

The Sisters Lloyd

c.1889

Oil paint on canvas

This painting depicts two members of the variety group The Sisters Lloyd. The original 'sisters' Rosie Lloyd and Bella Orchard were actually cousins, but the roster also changed over the years to include other family members. It is likely that Rosie and Bella are the figures depicted in Sickert's composition, dressed in matching white dresses and wide-brimmed hats, and shown against a flat stage background. They were related to the acclaimed music hall performer Marie Lloyd, known as the 'Queen of the Music Hall'.

Government Art Collection. Purchased from
Leicester Galleries, December 1958

X80063

Minnie Cunningham at the Old Bedford

1892

Oil paint on canvas

Minnie Cunningham was a popular performer at the Old Bedford Music Hall. Painted from the audience's point of view, Cunningham appears dressed in a bright red dress and hat, which contrasts with the muted colours of the stage that surrounds her. Sickert had first seen Cunningham perform at the Tivoli Theatre of Varieties in London and invited her to sit for him. He first exhibited the painting with the subtitle, 'I'm an old hand at love, though I'm young in years', a quote from one of Cunningham's songs.

Tate. Purchased 1976

T02039

Brighton Pierrots

1915

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert painted this work during the early part of the First World War, and it has a pervasive atmosphere of strangeness and melancholy. A party of vaudeville entertainers perform on the Brighton seafront under both the setting sun and artificial stage lights. In contrast to the scenes of bustling music halls, many of the deckchairs are empty, perhaps hinting at the absence of so many men in the war; the gunfire of the Western Front could sometimes be heard along the south coast of England.

Tate. Purchased with assistance from the Art Fund and the Friends of the Tate Gallery 1996

T07041

The Trapeze

1920

Oil paint on canvas

As well as his scenes of music halls and theatres, Sickert also studied other forms of entertainment including the circus. The trapeze artist is most likely a member of Cirque Rancy, a circus troupe known to have travelled around several French cities while Sickert was living in Dieppe.

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge
X79288

Gaîté Montparnasse

c.1907

Oil paint on canvas

The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Mr. and Mrs. Allan D.
Emil Fund, 1958
X79381

Gaîté Montparnasse, dernière galerie de gauche

1907

Oil paint on canvas

These paintings of Gaîté Montparnasse are from a group of works in which Sickert focuses on the interior decoration of French music halls. Though painted from differing viewpoints, the two paintings depict the architecture and decoration of Gaîté Montparnasse, a music hall which still stands on Rue de la Gaîté in Paris. We can see the sweeping curve and interior decorations of the gallery, occupied by a captivated audience.

The Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford. Presented by the Christopher Sands Trust, 2001

X79216

L'Eldorado

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

The Henry Barber Trust, the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, University of Birmingham

X79219

Théâtre de Montmartre

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

Théâtre de Montmartre is one of a group of Parisian café-concert scenes painted in 1906, when Sickert was in Paris organising an exhibition of his work. The painting is the only known composition of the now-closed Montmartre Theatre. The artist not only conveys the audience's response to the performance on stage but also their interactions with one another while framed within the formal structure of the gallery architecture.

King's College, University of Cambridge

X79364

Vernet's, Dieppe

1925

Oil paint on canvas

While living in Dieppe, Sickert continued to emulate Degas's paintings of Parisian café-concerts, and his interest in depicting popular entertainment grew. He repeatedly depicted Vernet's, a popular musical venue located at the far end of Quai Henri IV, facing the harbour in Dieppe. Sickert went every evening, sketching small pencil studies of performers and patrons to pass the time before the gambling tables at the casino opened at midnight. They formed the basis for many of his Dieppe music hall paintings.

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge
X79300

Gallery of the Old Bedford

c.1894–5

Oil paint on canvas

Gallery of the Old Bedford is the first of Sickert's music hall paintings to depict the audience in the gallery rather than the stalls. An early title of the painting was 'The Boy I Love is Up in the Gallery', the same song Dot Hetherington is singing in Little Dot Hetherington at the Bedford Music Hall on display nearby. Sickert's depiction of those situated high in the gallery suggests a shift in focus to the incidental performativity of people watching (and interacting with) entertainers on stage.

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X79404

Noctes Ambrosianae

1906

Oil paint on canvas

Nottingham City Museums & Galleries

X79388

The New Bedford

1907–9

Oil and tempera paint on canvas

The Bedford Palace of Varieties was a theatre in Camden Town, located near Sickert's home in Mornington Crescent. Commonly known as the New Bedford, it stood on the site of the Old Bedford which had been one of Sickert's favourite nightly venues. The redevelopment of the site included modern amenities such as plush seating and electric lighting, as well as a capacity of over 1,000 people. The painting also depicts the lavish decorations incorporated into the interior architecture, which frames those sitting in the private box. Smartly-dressed people sit in the stalls below.

Leeds Museums and Galleries. Bought 1937

X79368

Gallery of the Old Mogul

1906

Oil paint on canvas

The Old Mogul was the original name of the Middlesex Music Hall which stood on Drury Lane. The painting is one of the earliest depictions of a cinematic screening. Before the emergence of cinemas, films were infrequently projected in music halls as part of the evening's schedule. Partially obscured, it is believed that the film being screened here was one of the first Westerns ever shown. Sickert painted the scene from the perspective of the audience, showing people clamouring to see the film, expressing their excitement to see moving image on screen.

Private collection

X80131

Eugene Goosens Conducting

c.1923–4

Oil paint on canvas

Daniel Katz Ltd, London

X83874

Two cases in the centre of the room. First case, facing the entrance to the room, from left to right, contains

Studies of Dancing Couples

Undated

Pencil on paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery
X84081

Man Seated with a Woman Alongside

c.1913–14

Chalk, pen and ink, heightened with white, on paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery
X84083

Figures in a Box, Gaîté Montparnasse

c.1907

Chalk, pen and ink, white heightening on squared up paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X84082

Music Hall Gallery with Figures

c.1888

Pencil on paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X84088

Figures in an Auditorium

c.1888

Pencil on lined paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X84086

Audience with Woman in Hat Seen from the Back

c.1888

Pencil on paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X84087

**Second case facing the exit to the room, from left to right,
contains**

String Players in a Women's Orchestra

c.1922–3

Pencil on paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X84085

Brass and Wind Instrumentalists

c.1922–3

Pencil, pen and ink on paper

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X84084

Drawing of a theatre/music hall audience, [Vernet's café-concert, Dieppe]

c.1919–20

Ink on paper

Tate. Presented by Mrs Andrina Tritton, December 1981

Z7611

**Drawing of a man in top hat and coat tails on stage,
[Vernet's café-concert, Dieppe]**

c.1919–20

Pencil on paper

Tate. Presented by Mrs Andrina Tritton, December 1981
Z76112

**Drawing of a man in hat and jacket on stage,
[Vernet's café-concert, Dieppe]**

c.1919–20

Pencil on paper

Tate. Presented by Mrs Andrina Tritton, December 1981
Z76113

Drawing of a ballerina pirouetting

c.1919–20

Ink on paper

Tate. Presented by Mrs Andrina Tritton, December 1981
Z76114

WALTER SICKERT

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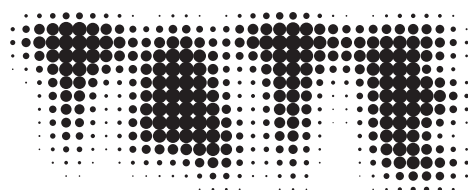
ROOM 4

BEYOND PORTRAITURE

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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Wall text to the right of the entrance, then anti-clockwise round the room

4. BEYOND PORTRAITURE

Sickert took up portrait painting in the hope of using it to earn a regular income and to raise his profile. However, most of his portraits were not specially commissioned so did not benefit him financially. His sitters, many of them well-known personalities, show the extent of his connections within cultural circles and high society in both England and France. Sickert's portraits depict a range of characters, such as the emaciated figure of the artist Aubrey Beardsley (1894) and the glamorous singer Elizabeth Swinton (Mrs Swinton 1905–6).

Sickert's informal portraits, painted in London and Venice, are perhaps closer to genre paintings than portraits. Rather than showing individuals' characters and inner lives, Sickert painted more generic figures or 'types' of people, in carefully observed interiors. Often, these surroundings are equally as important as the figures in suggesting a narrative and an emotional connection between sitter and setting.

Aubrey Beardsley

1894

Tempera on canvas

It is likely this painting of British artist and writer Aubrey Beardsley shows him walking through Hampstead Church graveyard. He had been attending the unveiling of a memorial to Romantic poet John Keats, in 1894. At this time Beardsley was living with tuberculosis, the same disease which had killed Keats. The painting was published in the journal *The Yellow Book* in 1894 when Beardsley was its art editor.

Tate. Purchased with assistance from the Art Fund 1932
N04655

Jacques-Émile Blanche

c.1906–10

Oil paint on canvas

In 1885, Walter Sickert met the French painter Jacques-Émile Blanche, whose patronage and social influence contributed to his early successes in France. Blanche's facial features, rendered in a pointillist manner similar to that used by Sickert in other works of this period, contrasts with the depiction of the smooth, dark fabric of his overcoat. Although conventionally dressed, the back of a stretched canvas is visible leaning against the wall behind him, evoking his identity as an artist and collector.

Tate. Purchased 1938

N04912

Israel Zangwill

c.1896–8

Oil paint on canvas laid on board

British writer Israel Zangwill, author of the novel *Children of the Ghetto*, was a friend of Sickert's first wife, Ellen Cobden. Here, Sickert depicts him in a Venetian setting which most likely represents Ghetto Nuovo, an area of the city where Jewish people had once been segregated. Sickert sketched Zangwill several times during April 1896, when they were both in Venice.

National Galleries of Scotland. Purchased 1959

X80051

Mrs Swinton

1906

Oil paint on canvas

Singer Elizabeth Swinton was one of Sickert's friends and patrons. They met in 1904 at a party for French sculptor Auguste Rodin, held by collector Mary Hunter. Sickert immediately noticed Swinton's rich singing voice and they soon became friends, each supporting the other's career. Sickert took a different approach to artists such as John Singer Sargent's glamorous full-length portraits of Swinton. Sickert painted her in front of a Venetian skyline, although she had never visited the city. Author Virginia Woolf wrote about Swinton: 'She has seen every sort of sunrise and sunset whether dressed in diamonds or white night-gown.'

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge
X79284

Victor Lecourt

1921–4

Oil paint on canvas

When painting this portrait in Dieppe, Sickert wrote that he was 'having sittings by electric light nearly every day'. The resulting picture combines areas of bold, flat colour with rhythmic patterning, revealing how Sickert was preoccupied with the effects of artificial lighting. The back of Lecourt's suit and the outline of his beard are ablaze with light, which also bounces off the wallpaper motifs behind him, suffusing this evening scene with warmth. Sickert characterised the sitter as a 'superb great creature like a bear'.

Manchester Art Gallery. George Beatson Blair bequest, 1941
X79371

Harold Gilman

c.1912

Oil paint on canvas

British artist Harold Gilman became friends with Sickert in 1906 and often attended the discussions and exhibitions held at Sickert's studio at 19 Fitzroy Street. Sickert's portrait of his fellow artist reflects their close friendship during this period. He painted several portraits of his Camden Town Group colleagues. The bright colours and thin, dry application of the paint shown here is characteristic of paintings by members of this group.

Tate. Presented by the Trustees of the Chantrey Bequest 1957
T00164

Cicely Hey

1923

Oil paint on canvas

Cicely Hey was a painter and close personal acquaintance who modelled for Sickert several times. In 1960, Hey described her memories of Sickert creating the painting: 'Well I wasn't sitting for him specially that afternoon, I think I was having tea with him... we were sitting by the fire... the flames were reflecting on my face. I had my back to the light, a window behind... It was the light effect that caught him, it was nothing to do with a portrait, it was that particular and unusual lighting.'

The Whitworth, The University of Manchester

X79400

Jeanne. The Cigarette

1906

Oil paint on canvas

Jeanne and Hélène Daurmont were Belgian sisters living in London who were regular models for Sickert during spring 1906. Jeanne. The Cigarette is an example of Sickert's informal portraiture, capturing a moment of introspection, and, unusually, showing a woman smoking. The sitter remembered Sickert's kindness in suggesting cigarette breaks when she was tired from modelling. Sickert worked up the painting from a quick sketch, capturing this pause in the formal sitting.

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Bequest of Mary Cushing Fosburgh, 1978 (1979.135.17)

X79377

Le Châle Vénitien

1903–4

Oil paint on canvas

Le Châle Vénitien ('The Venetian Shawl') was painted during Sickert's last visit to Venice. During this period, Sickert produced a large number of figure paintings of local women posed indoors within his rooms at Calle dei Frati. His favourite models were Carolina dell'Acqua and La Giuseppina, who were also sex workers. In this painting the model (in all likelihood Carolina), sits gracefully, full-length, at the end of a floral couch, in a bare interior.

Ivor Braka

X80071

Blackbird of Paradise

c.1892

Oil paint on canvas

The woman in this portrait has not been identified. Rather than being a portrait, Sickert probably made the work as a character study, capturing the subject's exuberant and energetic expression. Tellingly, it was first exhibited as 'A study of expression' at the New English Art Club in November 1892. It was only later that Sickert adopted a title alluding to a favourite poem by W.H. Davies, 'The Bird of Paradise'. The Birmingham Gazette wrote the expression on the woman's face is 'bold and graphic', but the Graphic said Sickert 'has vaguely indicated a type of humanity of the most degraded kind'.

Leeds Museums and Galleries. Bought 1945

X79369

La Giuseppina against a Map of Venice

c.1903–4

Oil paint on canvas

This work was painted during Sickert's last visit to Venice. La Giuseppina was one of his favourite models who he met on an earlier visit in 1900, recognisable for her top-knot bun hairstyle and sharp, angular facial features. We can see the unusual way Sickert uses intense colour and light brushwork to great effect, with the floral chintz couch (the same one that is depicted in muted tones in other Venetian figure studies) set aflame in expressive red colour.

Mr and Mrs Michael Hughes

X80116

Two Women on a Sofa – Le Tose

c.1903–4

Oil paint on canvas

In Venice from around 1902–3, Sickert experimented with setting figures in natural poses in everyday surroundings. This picture's subtitle, 'Le Tose', means 'the girls' in Venetian dialect. Sickert's models were Carolina dell'Acqua and La Giuseppina, who also appear in other works on display nearby. Their faces are blurred and impossible to read, creating a sense of ambiguity. We can only look at how their bodies are posed to read meaning. Each figure looks back at the painter, one seems bored, the other more relaxed. They sit near to one another so are evidently on close terms.

Tate. Bequeathed by Sir Hugh Walpole 1941

N05296

Girl at a Window, Little Rachel

1907

Oil paint on canvas

This is one of a series of six paintings and numerous drawings of Rachel Siderman, Sickert's frame-maker's 13-year-old daughter, known affectionately as 'Little Rachel'. She looks through the window onto Mornington Crescent Gardens. Sickert described the series as a 'set of studies of illumination'. Here, Little Rachel gazes out at the Camden Town landscape from a darkened room. The work focuses on the effects of the light coming through the window onto her face and clothing.

Tate. Accepted by HM Government in lieu of tax and allocated to the Tate Gallery 1991

T06447

The Mantelpiece

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

The Mantelpiece depicts a woman appearing to nonchalantly fix her hair in the mirror. Sickert's detailed depiction of the objects that surround her allow the viewer to imagine details of her life. This type of informal portraiture, underpinned by a suggested narrative, is typical of Sickert's work throughout his career. Also characteristic of his work is his use of mirrors to create multiple picture planes, and an interplay between reflection and reality.

Southampton City Art Gallery

X79398

The New Home

1908

Oil paint on canvas

The New Home depicts a 'coster girl', or female street-seller. She poses against an interior background of honey-coloured floral wallpaper, in one of Sickert's studios in Camden Town. In a letter to his friends, artists Ethel Sands and Nan Hudson, the artist described the model as one of two coster girls dressed 'in the sumptuous poverty of their class, sham velvet &c'. The title invites a possible narrative for the viewer as the woman wears her street seller's coat and hat, suggesting she is not yet at home in these new surroundings.

Ivor Braka

X80073

WALTER SICKERT

28 April – 18 September 2022

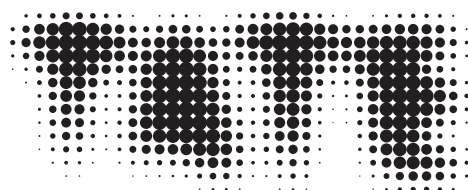
ROOM 5A

THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT:
DIEPPE AND VENICE

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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ROOM 5A

THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT: VENICE AND DIEPPE

In 1899 Sickert wrote: 'I see my line. Not portraits. Picturesque work.'

Landscape paintings were among Sickert's most successful works, especially views of Dieppe and Venice for which he found a ready market through his dealers in Paris. Sickert frequently returned to favourite painting locations such as Dieppe (where he lived between 1898 and 1905) and Venice (which he visited regularly from 1895). He repeatedly painted their buildings and streets, developing source material he had sketched on the spot into finished paintings in his studio. He often focused on the facades of two famous buildings: St Mark's Basilica in Venice and the church of St Jacques in Dieppe, where he explored the effect of light on the architecture at different times of day. This approach of looking at the effects of shifting light probably drew inspiration from French impressionist Claude Monet's Rouen Cathedral series.

In Dieppe, Sickert remained interested in the human aspect of the urban scene, often including scenes of everyday life in the foreground of his paintings. Here he was inspired by French artist Camille Pissarro's views of Dieppe.

The Façade of St Jacques

1899–1900

Oil paint on canvas

Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts

X80027

The Façade of St Jacques

1902–3

Pencil and oil paint on canvas

Private collection

X80119

The Façade of St Jacques

1907

Oil paint on canvas

Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, (On Loan From a Private Collection 1995)

X82969

The Façade of St Jacques

1899–1900

Oil paint on canvas

The Whitworth, The University of Manchester

X79376

The Façade of St Jacques

1902

Oil paint on canvas

Private collection

X80140

The Lion of St Mark

c.1895–6

Oil paint on canvas

The Lion of St Mark concentrates on the iconic sculpture of a winged lion which stands at the entrance of St Mark's Square. The monument is prominent in the foreground while the Doge's Palace, the former residence of the supreme authority of the former Venetian Republic, is shown in the background. Sickert's depiction of the gothic archways of the Palace lead the viewer's eye into St Mark's Square, towards the basilica, but only includes a partial view of the landmark. The unusual viewpoint was likely based on sketches composed while Sickert travelled by river boat.

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge
X79301

St Mark's, Venice (Pax Tibi Marce Evangelista Meus)
1896

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Bequeathed by General Sir Ian Hamilton GCB,
GCMG, DSO 1949
N05914

The Horses of St Mark's
1901–6

Oil paint on canvas

Bristol Culture: Bristol Museums & Art Gallery
X79223

The Façade of St Mark's. Red Sky at Night
c.1895–6

Oil paint on canvas

Southampton City Art Gallery
X79397

St Mark's, Venice
1896–7

Oil paint on canvas

Courtesy of the British Council Collection
X79224

Santa Maria del Carmelo

c.1895–6

Oil paint on canvas

Santa Maria del Carmelo depicts the 16th-century façade of the Roman Catholic church, known commonly as the Carmini. Viewed across the Rio di Santa Margherita, the painting shows a procession of people walking to a Holy Communion in the late afternoon. The specific time of day is conveyed by the closely observed shadow pattern.

The Ashmolean Museum of Art and Archaeology.

Presented by the Christopher Sands Trust, 2001

X79218

Les Arcades et La Darse

c.1898

Oil paint on canvas

Les Arcades et la Darse ('The Arcades and the Dock') depicts the working harbour of Dieppe in the foreground of the composition while the imposing church of St Jacques dominates the skyline. The arcades which ran along the waterfront were a favourite subject for Sickert, connecting the working harbour with the more picturesque streets around the cathedral.

Fondation Bemberg, Toulouse

X79304

L'Hôtel Royal, Dieppe

c.1894

Oil paint on canvas

The Hôtel Royal on the seafront of Dieppe was one of Sickert's favourite subjects. Illuminated by a pink sky, the composition of the hotel, with wide lawns and strolling figures, conveys a holiday atmosphere. This contrasts with Sickert's explorations of architectural detail and light effects in his views of St Jacques church. At the end of the summer season of 1900 the hotel was demolished, then completely rebuilt the following year.

Sheffield Museums Trust

X80089

The Theatre of the Young Artists

1890

Oil paint on canvas

The Theatre of Young Artists depicts an outdoor theatre which was set before the imposing façade of the church of St Jacques. The group's name, 'Théâtre des Jeunes Artistes', can be seen on a banner above the stage. Sickert captures a live performance taking place before a massed audience. He composed the painting with a predominantly muted palette, similar to colours used by Whistler. However, the work is enlivened by flashes of colour.

The Atkinson, Southport

X80102

WALTER SICKERT

28 April – 18 September 2022

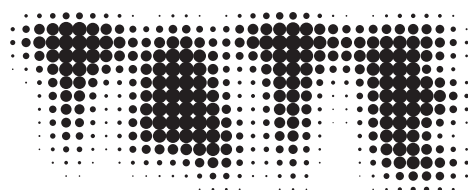
ROOM 5B

THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT:
DIEPPE, PARIS, LONDON

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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ROOM 5B

THE URBAN ENVIRONMENT: DIEPPE, LONDON AND PARIS

Sickert's street scenes evolved from small formats that were relatively dark, to bigger paintings that were brighter and more colourful. He was influenced by developments in modern art such as French impressionism, the vivid colours of fauvism, and the bold outlines and symbolism of the Nabis group of French artists. Viewing these works as more commercially attractive, Sickert's French dealers encouraged this change.

In 1902, Sickert painted a group of large-scale works for Dieppe's Hôtel de la Plage, as well as capturing the vibrancy of Dieppe street life in other works. He only rarely painted Paris and London views, but these included several atmospheric night scenes, displayed here.

Rue Notre Dame des Champs, Paris.

Entrance to Sargent's Studio

1907

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert lived intermittently in Paris, teaching at several schools and exhibiting his work there. This painting depicts an unassuming street located south of the river Seine, where John Singer Sargent had a studio in August 1875. The soft blurred colours, highlighted by illuminated coffee shops and streetlamps, are reminiscent of Whistler's nocturnes (paintings showing the effects of light in the evening). They demonstrate the prolonged influence that the artist had on Sickert's practice. This is one of the few representations Sickert made of Paris's city streets.

The Ashmolean Museum, University of Oxford.

Presented by the Christopher Sands Trust, 2001

X79217

The Fair at Night

c.1902–3

Oil paint on canvas

The Fair at Night is an early example of Sickert's use of especially vibrant colours, more common in his later work. The muted background is enriched with acidic greens, lurid yellows and vivid scarlets. Sickert uses broad, sweeping brushstrokes to create a dynamic evocation of the local fair in Dieppe.

Touchstones Rochdale Art Gallery, Link4Life. Ogden Bequest purchase, 1942

X80088

Le Grand Duquesne

1902

Oil paint on canvas

In this work Sickert depicts a statue of Dieppe's celebrated naval hero Admiral Abraham Duquesne in the Place Nationale. His foreshortening and silhouetting of the statue against the sky gives it a dramatic presence.

Manchester Art Gallery

X79373

Bathers, Dieppe

c.1902

Oil paint on canvas

Bathers, Dieppe was commissioned by the owner of L'Hôtel de la Plage, Dieppe as one of a series for the hotel, but it was never installed. Seemingly regarding the painting highly, Sickert instead exhibited it at the Salon des Indépendants of 1903. He used the painting to experiment with composition, abandoning both foreground and horizon, structuring the painting using the horizontal waves and the stripes of the bathers' costumes instead.

National Museums Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery

X79405

Café des Arcades (or Café Suisse)

c.1914

Oil paint on canvas

Café Suisse was a popular café located close to the Avant Port harbour in Dieppe. This angular receding view is dominated by the façade lining the boulevard Quai Duquesne, whose arches reveal the sun-soaked architecture of the opposing building. Sickert wrote to artist Ethel Sands in 1914 that he had arrived in Dieppe, noting, 'Of course I have brought a note-book & done some studies already for the café-arcade picture. I think I will do some small oil panels'.

Leeds Museums and Galleries. Bought 1942

X79365

Celebrations, Dieppe

1914

Oil paint on canvas

Celebrations, Dieppe depicts a historic moment on the streets of Dieppe. The inclusion of both the Union Jack and Tricolour flags on the Hotel de Ville suggest that the painting portrays 4 August 1914, the date when Britain joined forces with France and Russia to declare war on Germany. A strong sense of national pride and a belief the war would be short encouraged many to celebrate the alliance of the three nations at the beginning of the First World War.

Private collection, Courtesy of PIANO NOBILE, London
X80068

Nuit d'amour

c.1920

Oil paint on canvas

While living in Dieppe, Sickert continued to emulate Degas's paintings of Parisian café-concerts, and his interest in depicting popular entertainment grew. As we can see in other works displayed in Room 3, he repeatedly depicted Vernet's, a café-concert located at the far end of the Quai Henri IV, facing the harbour in Dieppe. *Nuit d'amour* ('Night of Love') is an unusual exterior view of the venue, which Sickert visited most nights. The light radiating from the illuminated building hints at the lively performances occurring inside.

Manchester Art Gallery. Purchased with the aid of a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and with the assistance of the National Art Collections Fund and Friends and Patrons and Associates of Manchester Art Galleries

X79372

Maple Street

1916

Oil paint on canvas

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Gift of Emma Swan Hall, 1998 (1998.451.2)

X79379

Queens Road Station, Bayswater

1915–16

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert most likely chose to depict

Queen's Road Station (now named Bayswater), London, as it was the closest underground station to his home on Kildare Gardens, off Westbourne Grove. He lived there between February 1915 and early 1917. The composition combines a solitary figure with a plethora of advertising notices.

Prominent at the top of the painting is a sign for the famous Whiteley's department store, which claimed to be the largest department store in the world when it opened in 1911.

The Courtauld, London (Samuel Courtauld Trust)

X80059

The Garden of Love or Lainey's Garden

c.1927–8

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert met English artist Thérèse Lessore in January 1914, when she was elected to the London Group (a society of artists). They married in Margate on 4 June, 1926, and soon after moved to Brighton. In 1927, Sickert and Lessore returned to London and settled at Southey Villa, Quadrant Road, near Essex Road in Islington – the likely location of this painting. Thérèse, or 'Lainey' (as Sickert liked to call her) tends to her garden, an intimate space surrounded by London's urban landscape. The road no longer exists but in its place stands a community centre named after Sickert.

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,
University of Cambridge
X79287

Rowlandson House – Sunset

1910–11

Oil paint on canvas

Tate. Bequeathed by Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck 1940
N05088

Easter

c.1928

Oil paint on canvas

Despite his association with the Camden Town Group of artists, who took their subjects from the streets of the London district, Sickert rarely depicted the streets of London itself. Two examples displayed here are *Maple Street*, which depicts a street in the Fitzrovia area, and *Easter*, which depicts Dawson Brothers, a linen-drapers' shop on City Road close to Old Street tube station. The shop was in business from the 1840s until the late 20th century. Sickert has painted the almost-deserted street at night, illuminated by a window display of Easter bonnets.

Courtesy of Board of Trustees of National Museums NI
X80035

WALTER SICKERT

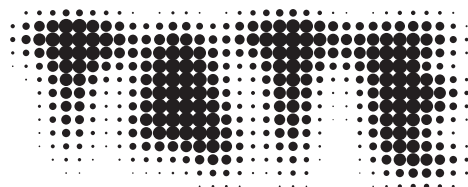
28 April – 18 September 2022

ROOM 6
THE NUDE

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



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ROOM 6

THE NUDE

In 1910 Sickert published an article in *The New Age* titled, 'The naked and the Nude'. In Sickert's view, academic 'Nude' paintings were so artificial in setting and in form, that they bore little resemblance to the naked human figure.

In the years preceding the text, he had been producing works which challenged such traditions. Inspired by French artists such as Pierre Bonnard and Edgar Degas (on display here), who aimed to connect the long-established genre of nude painting with modern urban life, Sickert painted urban working-class women in contemporary settings, presenting them as naked rather than as an idealised nude. Sickert was also interested in the aesthetic qualities afforded by painting nudes in interior settings, like the patterns created on flesh by light streaming from a window.

Sickert first exhibited his nudes in Paris in 1905, where they were well-received. But in Britain, critics strongly objected to their subject matter when they were first shown in 1911. A naked woman in a dimly-lit room, with crumpled sheets on an iron bedstead, suggested poverty and prostitution to the British press. By painting realistic female bodies in everyday interiors, Sickert created a major innovation in British paintings of the nude. His work has gone on to influence later British painters, such as Lucian Freud (on display here) and Francis Bacon, in their treatment of the nude. However, in recent years, critics and viewers have asked if Sickert's paintings objectify women, questioning the power dynamics between model and artist, and within the scenes depicted.

Edgar Degas 1834–1917

Après le bain, femme nue couchée

1885–90

Pastel on paper mounted at the edges by the artist on board

The title of this work translates as 'After the Bath, Sleeping Nude'. Degas's pastel drawings of nudes were a key point of reference for Sickert. Consistent with Sickert's interest in modern urban life, these works located the nude figure within domestic spaces, engaged in intimate activities and unaware of being observed. Degas gives the viewer the illusion of access to a private world through 'keyhole' viewpoints, offering a voyeuristic partial glimpse of the scene. Degas's use of pastel also inspired Sickert to create several nudes using this tactile medium.

David and Ezra Nahmad Collection

X79384

The Little Bed

1902

Pencil and chalk on paper

The Little Bed is one of the earliest of Sickert's nude studies to depict a woman in bed and anticipates the Camden Town nudes he painted a few years later. Inscribed 'Neuville 1902', it was drawn in Dieppe. It is likely that the model was Augustine Villain, who Sickert lived with at the time.

University of Reading Art Collection UAC/10520
X80087

Le Lit de fer

1905

Pastel on buff paper

Sickert drew this nude in his studio in Fitzroy Street, London in 1905, marking the beginning of his serious exploration of the nude as a subject. His use of pastel as a medium was inspired by the work of Edgar Degas. *Cocotte de Soho* (another pastel displayed nearby) was shown with *Le Lit de fer* ('The Iron Bed') at the Salon D'Automne in Paris in 1905.

Private collection

X80086

Cocotte de Soho

1905

Pastel on millboard

Cocotte de Soho was displayed as part of Sickert's exhibition at the Salon d'Automne in 1905. At the time, 'cocotte' was an informal French term for a sex worker. The title is unusual in identifying the sitter as a London sex worker and was perhaps intended to convey a suggestion of a London underworld to his French audience.

Private collection

X80077

Nude Stretching: La Coiffure

1905–6

Pastel on paper

Daniel Katz Ltd, London

X80078

Le Lit de cuivre

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

Loaned by the Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery,
Exeter City Council

X80052

Nuit d'été

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

The explicit pose of the female figure in *Nuit d'été* ('Summer Night') echoes that of Bonnard's *Femme assoupie sur un lit* (displayed nearby). However the surroundings, including the iron bedstead, and the dark-toned palette would have evoked a scene of poverty and sex work for contemporary viewers. When it was shown at Bernheim Jeune galleries in 1907 together with a group of Sickert's other nude paintings, Parisian reviewers described the 'impoverished disorder of cluttered hotel rooms' and 'whores with withered bodies, weary from the harsh work of prostitution'.

Private collection, courtesy of Offer Waterman, London

X80074

The Iron Bedstead

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

Private collection, courtesy Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert

X80105

Mornington Crescent Nude

c.1907

Oil paint on canvas

This painting shows Sickert's interest in what he described as 'contre-jour' (against the light) effects, where only parts of the model and her surroundings are highlighted by the light coming through a window. In 1910 he wrote:

'The chief source of pleasure in the aspect of a nude is that it is in the nature of a gleam – a gleam of light and warmth and life. And that it should appear thus it should be set in surroundings of drapery and other contrasting surfaces.'

The Syndics of the Fitzwilliam Museum,

University of Cambridge

X79285

Clockwise from intermediate text

THE CAMDEN TOWN MURDER SERIES

From painting a single nude, Sickert soon began to explore different ways of posing two figures in an interior. Works set in Venice and London (seen earlier in this room) depict semi-naked and clothed women in conversation, seated on a bed. Sickert then developed a series of paintings depicting a clothed man and naked woman. He posed his models in the same dingy rooms in Camden Town where he had painted his nudes, using many of the same props such as the iron bedstead. These paintings have become known as the Camden Town Murder series.

The Camden Town Murder was the name given to a real event: the murder of Emily Dimmock in Camden in 1907. The murder attracted huge press attention. Sickert took advantage of the interest and controversy raised by giving some of his paintings titles that allude to the murder. He also reworked them and gave them alternative titles. This allowed the viewer to imagine different narratives and relationships between the figures. Sickert was interested in the emotional connection between the figures in their different configurations, rather than any kind of illustration

of Dimmock's murder. The series has long intrigued audiences because of the ambiguity between title and subject matter. For Sickert, these works furthered his exploration of narrative painting. However, some people are critical of the potential for violence they see within the scenes.

The Camden Town Murder

c.1907–8

Oil paint on canvas

This painting is one of Sickert's first explorations of the Camden Town Murder theme. It was first exhibited at the Salon d'Automne in Paris in 1909 as *L'Affaire de Camden Town* before being shown as *The Camden Town Murder Series No.1* or *No.2* in the first Camden Town Group exhibition of 1911. The painting was also shown under the alternative title *Summer Afternoon*.

Daniel Katz Family Trust

X79305

The Camden Town Murder, or What Shall we do for the Rent?

c.1908

Oil paint on canvas

The Camden Town Murder, or, What shall we do for the Rent? illustrates the ambiguity of Sickert's narratives and the way that alternative titles encourage multiple readings. The interaction between the figures can be interpreted in different ways depending on the title, from a murder scene to a setting of social deprivation where the woman has to turn to sex work to make ends meet. The work was not exhibited with the title The Camden Town Murder until 1939.

Yale Center for British Art, Paul Mellon Fund
X79402

A Consultation

1907–8

Chalk, heightened with white on faded green paper

Lord and Lady Irvine of Lairg
X79419

Persuasion. La Belle Gâtée

c.1908

Black chalk, heightened with white on violet - faded to buff - paper

Persuasion. La Belle Gâtée and A Consultation (displayed nearby) show how a given title could make the meaning of the work evolve from a scene of conversation or intimacy, to one of lack of consent and threat. La Belle Gâtée translates as the 'beautiful spoilt woman'.

Bristol Culture: Bristol Museums & Art Gallery

X79222

Conversation

1909

Black chalk, heightened with white, pen and ink
on buff paper

Conversation has the same composition as *L’Affaire de Camden Town* but uses a standing female figure, showing how the painting would evolve from a scene of female conversation to the more threatening juxtaposition of male and female figures.

Royal College of Art Collection

X79395

L’Affaire de Camden Town

1909

Oil paint on canvas

L’Affaire de Camden Town (‘The Camden Town Case’) is the painting in the Camden Town Murder series which most directly suggests impending violence in the poses of the male and female figures. It is also the only work to retain the Camden Town Murder title throughout its history.

The studies for L’Affaire de Camden Town show how the painting changes from a scene of female conversation to the juxtaposition of male and female figures and the suggestion of impending violence. This evolution allowed Sickert to change the implied narrative as he developed and refined the series.

Private collection

X79417

Dawn, Camden Town

c.1909

Oil paint on canvas

Dawn, Camden Town was well documented in the press due to its inclusion in the third (and last) Camden Town Group exhibition. In the Star, in 1912, the work is described with a distaste for the unconventional depiction of a realistic naked woman in an everyday interior: 'A hideous middle-aged woman in a state of nature seated on a bed in a wretched attic... Beside her is an ordinary street-corner loafer fully dressed... They seem unaware of each other's existence, and they appear to belong to two different realms of thought.'

Private collection, courtesy Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert
X79420

La Hollandaise

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

In this painting, Sickert focuses on the play of light on skin, and the way that it highlights certain parts of the body while obscuring the model's face. The title *La Hollandaise* ('The Dutch Girl') does not reveal the woman's identity, but may refer to the nickname of a sex-worker in 19th-century French author Honoré de Balzac's series of novels *La Comédie humaine*. The brush marks form a surface so rough that, if you look at it closely, the image seems to fragment.

Tate. Purchased 1983

T03548

The Studio: The Painting of a Nude

c.1906

Oil paint on canvas

The Studio: The Painting of a Nude demonstrates the porous border between Sickert's nude and narrative subjects.

The female model stands naked in the centre of the room, observed by the dressed (and mostly unseen) figure of the artist. The inclusion of the artist highlights the interaction between artist and model taking place in the studio in a way that is not usually visible when only the model is seen.

Due to the placement of the mirror, both the front and back of the woman is visible.

Property of a European Collector,
Courtesy of PIANO NOBILE, London
X80069

Woman Washing her Hair

1906

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert was committed to painting everyday life. Here, he shows a woman in circumstances where she might naturally be naked. Using a keyhole view, Sickert implies she does not know she is being observed. This is one of a series of nudes featuring a model known as Blanche, who Sickert painted in his Paris studio in autumn 1906. Describing her body, he wrote she was 'the most enchanting little model, the thinnest of the thin like an eel and exquisitely shaped with red hair'.

Tate. Bequeathed by Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck 1940
N05091

La Maigre Adeline

1906

Oil paint on canvas

Lent by The Metropolitan Museum of Art,
Bequest of Scofield Thayer, 1982 (1984.433.24)
X79378

Fille Vénitienne allongée

1903–4

Oil paint on canvas

This is one of a group of figure studies Sickert painted in Venice in the winter of 1903–4, exploring the dynamics of two women in conversation, seated on a bed. These two-figure groups are early studies of the themes he would develop in his Camden Town conversation pieces, (on display in the next room). The title translates as 'Venetian Girl Lying Down'.

Rouen, Musée des Beaux-Arts

X79391

Middle of the room, free standing wall

SICKERT'S MODELS

Like most artists of his generation, Sickert worked with models, some of whom would become close friends or lovers. More often, the relationship was professional, with the model being paid for their work. We know the identity of some of his models: Augustine Villain in Dieppe, Carolina d'Acqua and La Giuseppina in Venice, Blanche and Adeline in Paris, Hubby and Marie in London. Others are unknown.

Lucian Freud 1922–2011

Naked Portrait

1972–3

Oil paint on canvas

Freud is known for his closely observed images of people, particularly naked women and men. Here, the figure is shown lying awkwardly on a bed in a pose similar to those used by Sickert. The title suggests that this is a painting of a particular person, setting it apart from the anonymous or generalised nude genre. But Freud's inclusion of his tools in the foreground reminds us of the interaction between artist and model, and that we are, in fact, looking at the artificial setting of an artist's studio.

Tate. Purchased 1975

T01972

Pierre Bonnard 1867–1947

Femme assoupie sur un lit

1899

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert's reinvention of the nude genre of painting for British audiences was deeply influenced by Bonnard. In this work by Bonnard ('Woman Dozing on a Bed'), the woman's unusually explicit pose is likely to have influenced Sickert's Camden Town paintings, such as *Nuit d'été*, on display nearby. However the mood of Sickert's paintings is very different from the erotic charge of Bonnard's work.

Paris, musée d'Orsay, acquis en 1947

X79383

Opposite side of wall, right to left

Jack Ashore

1912–13

Oil paint on canvas

Jack Ashore is one of a few paintings after the Camden Town Murder series to represent a naked woman together with a clothed man, expressing a palpable sexual tension between the figures. The models Marie Hayes and Hubby (whose real name is not known) appear in nearly all Sickert's figurative paintings, drawings and etchings during this period. Hubby was one of Sickert's childhood friends. He had run away to sea, which may have inspired the title of this painting.

Pallant House Gallery, Chichester, (Wilson Gift through the Art Fund 2006)

X80045

The Prussians in Belgium

c.1912

Oil paint on canvas

Beginning its life as a Camden Town interior, Sickert probably gave this work its title some years later in response to the outbreak of the First World War. A critic in the Daily Telegraph observed in 1915: 'With his usual dexterity Mr Walter Sickert presents in a sordid interior a half-nude, weary-eyed girl seated on a bed, and with her a bald-headed elderly German of more or less Bismarckian type, sitting at ease as he smokes a cigarette. To this ravishing love-idyll he gives the title "The Prussians in Belgium!!"'.
"The Prussians in Belgium!!".

Private collection, courtesy Hazlitt Holland-Hibbert
X82566

WALTER SICKERT

28 April – 18 September 2022

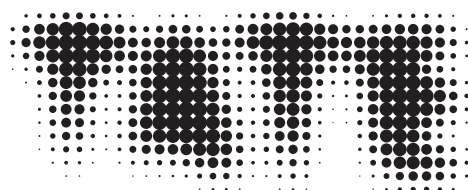
ROOM 7

CONVERSATION PIECES

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



Please return to the holder



Wall text to the left of the entrance, then clockwise round the room

ROOM 7

MODERN CONVERSATION PIECES

Sickert's fascination with narrative painting led to him radically reinventing the 'conversation piece'. These group portraits in informal settings were originally popularised by William Hogarth and other 18th-century British artists. Also drawing on contemporary French paintings of figures in interiors, Sickert created a uniquely British style for the 20th century. Arranging stage sets in his studio, Sickert aimed to depict everyday life in the modern city. He painted figures showing conflicting emotions, appearing to be in tense relationships, heightened by claustrophobic environments. The same subject matter appears in multiple paintings, with alternating combinations of figures and different titles. Sickert leaves the narratives behind such works unfixed and open for us to interpret – he felt their visual content and materiality were more important than written descriptions.

Two Coster Girls

c.1907–8

Oil paint on panel

Two Coster Girls continues Sickert's exploration of compositions with two female figures in an enclosed interior that he had begun in Venice. Costermongers were street vendors who sold fruit, vegetables or flowers from a basket. In December 1907, Sickert remarked to artists Ethel Sands and Nan Hudson that he had found two new models: 'Here I am deep in two divine coster girls – one with sunlight on her indoors, wearing the trompe l'oeil hat all the coster girls wear here with the crown fitting the head inside & expanded outside to immense proportions. It is called an "American sailor" (hat).'

Government Art Collection. Purchased from the Fine Art Society, May 1979

X80061

Flower Girl

1911

Oil paint on canvas

Private collection

X80134

A Few Words: Off to the Pub

c.1912

Oil paint on canvas

Collection of Margo and Nicholas Snowman

X80107

Off to the Pub

1911

Oil paint on canvas

Through the poses of the figures and title of the work, here Sickert evokes the aftermath of a domestic row. The male model is 'Hubby', whose real name is unknown. He joined Sickert in 1911 to help around the studio, and modelled for a number of pictures.

Tate. Presented by Howard Bliss 1943

N05430

Granby Street

c.1912–13

Oil paint on canvas

Granby Street is one of a sequence of works, including *Ennui* (displayed nearby), that explore claustrophobic environments and the conflicted emotions of everyday relationships through the interaction of two figures in a domestic interior. The painting has an interesting history: it was owned by British artist Francis Bacon and was the only original artwork Bacon displayed on the walls of his studio.

Private collection

X80121

Ennui

c.1914

Oil paint on canvas

The title of this painting means 'boredom'. By their lack of communication, Sickert suggests there is a strained relationship between the figures. Despite being close together, they face in opposite directions, staring into space. They appear almost trapped in their surroundings. Posed in his studio on Hampstead Road, the models are Marie Hayes and Hubby. Furnishings reinforce the theme, in particular the bell jar containing stuffed birds, suggesting a suffocating environment. Although Sickert's titles suggest an interpretation, his reuse of settings and compositions mean we find no sense of moral or narrative certainty in the work.

Tate. Presented by the Contemporary Art Society 1924
N03846

L'Armoire à glace

1924

Oil paint on canvas

Translated as 'Wardrobe with Mirror', the wardrobe from the title dominates the composition. Sickert's maid, Marie Pépin, posed as the woman in the background. Juxtaposing the woman with the oversized wardrobe implies a narrative, and Sickert described the scene as 'a sort of study à la [the novelist] Balzac. The little lower middle-class woman... sitting by the wardrobe which is her idol and bank, so devised that the overweight of the mirror-door would bring the whole structure down on her if it were not temporarily held back by a wire'.

Tate. Purchased 1941

N05313

The System

1924–6

Oil on linen and canvas

Accepted by H.M. Government in lieu of Inheritance
Tax and allocated to the Scottish National Gallery of Modern
Art 2009
X80047

Baccarat – the Fur Cape

1920

Oil paint on canvas

In 1920, Sickert made several paintings of the casino at Dieppe, the focus of fashionable life in the summer. While attending the casino, Sickert frequently sketched small pencil studies of the games and patrons. He began by sketching the gamblers openly, but apparently following a complaint that players might be recognised, he was forced to draw surreptitiously on small cards which he held beneath table level. This was an entirely new subject for him. He later used the drawings to compose fictitious gambling scenes which expressed the tense atmosphere of playing, winning and losing at the tables.

Tate. Bequeathed by Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck 1940
N05089

Baccarat

1920

Oil paint on canvas

Private collection c/o Grant Ford Limited
X82970

The Soldiers of King Albert the Ready

1914

Oil paint on canvas

The Soldiers of King Albert the Ready was created for the Belgian Relief Fund, inspired by Belgian heroism in defiance of the German invaders in Liège. The painting depicts a subject composed by the artist rather than a specific incident. Sickert employed a young soldier to pose in a number of positions, bought props (such as wagon wheels), and requested to borrow uniforms of hospitalised Belgian soldiers in order to create a convincing composition. The work is also technically significant in being Sickert's first use of two-tone camaieu underpainting to establish the composition and its tonal contrasts before adding colour.

Sheffield Museums Trust
X80094

The Integrity of Belgium

1914

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert produced only a few war paintings. He was too old to be appointed as an official war artist in Britain during the First World War, but he still wanted to paint military subjects to aid the war effort. The Integrity of Belgium depicts a Belgian infantryman surveying a battlefield during the German invasion of Belgium in 1914. It was exhibited at the Royal Academy War Relief Exhibition in January 1915.

Government Art Collection. Purchased from Phillips,

5 November 1991

X80062

WALTER SICKERT

28 April – 18 September 2022

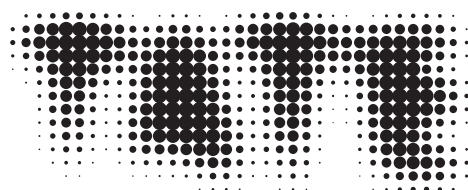
ROOM 8

TRANSPOSITION:
THE FINAL YEARS

LARGE PRINT GUIDE



Please return to the holder



Clockwise round the room

Wall text to the left of the entrance

ROOM 8

TRANSPOSITION: THE FINAL YEARS

From his initial interest in music halls, Sickert's fascination with popular culture continued throughout the 1930s. He began to paint on a larger scale and use a brighter colour palette. Scenes from the theatre and stories in the popular press dominated his output. He would use black and white photographs as visual sources, which he translated into vivid colour on the canvas. Sickert was fascinated by how black and white photography's flattened perspectives and stark tonal contrasts resulted in simplified forms. He retained these elements, creating almost abstract effects in his finished paintings.

Sickert also produced a series of works based on Victorian engravings, which he entitled 'Echoes'. In contrast, his theatrical scenes were based on photographs taken himself or by his assistants during rehearsals, or on press cuttings. Here, he featured his favourite performers, such as Peggy Ashcroft and Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies, whom he painted repeatedly.

He also used press-cuttings as the source for images of royalty or historic events such as Amelia Earhart's solo flight across the Atlantic in May 1932. Sickert's use of photography is now recognised as a significant precursor of subsequent developments in art. Pop art's transposition of found popular images is indebted to Sickert, as is the use of photography as source material by late 20th-century artists, such as Francis Bacon.

Portrait of Degas in 1885

c.1928

Oil paint on canvas

Portrait of Degas in 1885 was created from a photograph of Degas from 1885, the year when Sickert's friendship with the French artist began. Degas's artistic style was a key inspiration for Sickert's approach to painting, and this work serves as a celebration of their friendship.

Ministère de l'Europe et des Affaires étrangères

X80060

Sir Hugh Walpole

1929

Oil paint on canvas

This painting was probably commissioned by Hugh Walpole in the late 1920s, a period in which Sickert was regularly asked to paint portraits. The painting can also be considered as an experiment with light, depicting Walpole as a vibrant half-figurative, half-abstract figure whose features are blurred by light and erased by shadow. Walpole was a British author who wrote novels, short stories, literary biographies, plays and screen plays.

Lent by Glasgow Life (Glasgow Museums) on behalf of Glasgow City Council. Purchased, 1947

X80054

Rear Admiral Lumsden C.I.E., C.V.O.

1927–8

Oil paint on canvas

Contemporary accounts describe Sickert admiring the athletic figure of a liberally tattooed fellow-swimmer on one of his early morning visits to Brill's Baths, in Brighton, or a swimming bath in Hove. Sickert went on to invite the man to pose for him. When he arrived at Sickert's studio, he was dressed in the uniform of an Admiral of the Fleet and turned out to be Rear Admiral Walter Lumsden who had retired, after a distinguished naval career, ten years earlier. Although not commissioned, this life-size, full-length portrait set the formula for Sickert's later commissioned portraits such as Lord Faringdon (displayed nearby).

Private collection, Devon

X82968

**King George V and his Racing Manager:
A Conversation Piece at Aintree**
c.1929–30

Oil paint on canvas

This work was made from a press photograph rather than a personal snapshot. It is a double portrait of King George V and Major F.H.W. Fetherstonhaugh, who was manager of the Royal Racing Stables, attending the Grand National at Aintree in 1927. The work was criticised at the time because of the informality with which it portrayed the King. However, Sickert valued the way that using an unposed photograph allowed a more nuanced portrayal of the relationship between the two men, unlike a formal portrait.

Lent by Her Majesty The Queen
X79393

King George V and Queen Mary

1935

Oil paint on canvas

King George V and Queen Mary was based on a press photograph of the royal couple. This unposed source means that the painting unusually includes a large white void in the centre of the composition. The figure of Queen Mary is cropped by the frame of the carriage, giving the effect of movement frozen in a film still.

Private collection

X79421

HM King Edward VIII

1936

Oil paint on canvas

Painted from a press photograph, King Edward VIII is portrayed arriving at a church service in his Welsh Guards uniform on 1 March 1936, only a few weeks into his reign. Sickert's creative use of press photographs allow him to capture fleeting moments and facial expressions, as well as explore how a change of scale could affect the interpretation of a scene. The King's ungainly posture and sideways glance create a mood of uncertainty. He appears to hold his bearskin protectively in front of him. The full-length format gives the portrait an air of gravitas and monumentality, contrasting with the nervous figure portrayed.

Private collection

X79422

Alexander Gavin Henderson, 2nd Lord Faringdon
c.1935

Oil paint on canvas

This portrait of Alexander Gavin Henderson, 2nd Lord Faringdon was probably commissioned by the sitter himself, during a period when Sickert regularly painted portraits of the aristocracy. An article in the Evening Standard 'Londoner's Diary' from October 1938 states that it was based on photographs taken by Sickert's wife Thérèse Lessore, although these have not been traced.

Faringdon Collection Trust
X80053

Miss Earhart's Arrival

1932

Oil paint on canvas

Amelia Earhart was the first woman to fly solo across the Atlantic. She landed in Northern Ireland in May 1932, but this painting depicts her arrival in a thunderstorm at Hanworth, near London, the following day, where she was greeted by crowds of spectators. Earhart can be glimpsed in the middle distance of the right-hand side of the picture. Sickert based his painting on a press photograph, and the work aroused much public interest. The Times praised Sickert's "'snapshot" effect, retaining all its vivacity'.

Tate. Purchased 1982

T03360

The Miner

c.1935–6

Oil paint on canvas

The Miner is based on a press photograph published in 1935, depicting a miner's embrace with his wife upon his return from a stay-down strike in the pit. After painting the work, Sickert is reported as saying: 'That picture gives you the right feeling doesn't it? You'd kiss your wife like that if you'd just come up from the pit, wouldn't you?'

Lent by Birmingham Museums Trust on behalf of
Birmingham City Council
X79220

Sir Thomas Beecham Conducting

1938

Oil paint on burlap

Thomas Beecham was Director of the London Philharmonic Orchestra. Painted from a press photograph, the rich umber background offsets the monumental presence of the famous conductor and impresario, underlit by the stage lighting to dramatic effect.

The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Bertram F. and Susie Brummer Foundation Fund, 1955

X79380

Gwen Again

1935–6

Oil paint on canvas

Private collection

X80122

Jack and Jill

c.1937–8

Oil paint on canvas

Jack and Jill was based on a promotional image for the 1936 New York mobster film *Bullets or Ballots*. It depicts actors Edward G. Robinson and Joan Blondell as the title characters, Detective Johnny Blake and Lee Morgan. The work is unusual in having a film rather than a stage production as its inspiration. The two likely sources of the painting are either the original promotional press photograph which was published in *Film Week*, or a cinema card for the film – an advertising tool once found in customer-facing areas of the cinema and used to encourage future visits, akin to contemporary movie trailers.

Oskowitz Family

X79423

Pimlico

c.1937

Oil paint on canvas

Aberdeen City Council (Art Gallery & Museums Collections).

Purchased in 1938 with income from the Macdonald

Bequest

X80031

Juliet and her Nurse

c.1935–6

Oil paint on canvas

This composition depicts a scene from British actor and director John Gielgud's production of *Romeo and Juliet*, at the New Theatre, London between October 1935 and March 1936. Juliet was played by Peggy Ashcroft and the Nurse by Edith Evans. Other cast members were Gielgud himself and Laurence Olivier in alternating roles as Romeo and Mercutio.

Leeds Art Fund. On loan to Leeds Museums and Galleries,

Bought 1937

X79370

'The Taming of the Shrew'

c.1937

Oil paint on canvas

This painting is based on a press photograph of director Claude Gurney's production of William Shakespeare's play, which opened at the New Theatre (now named the Noël Coward Theatre), London, in March 1937. It shows the actors Edith Evans as Katherine, and Leslie Banks as Petruchio.

Courtesy of Bradford Museums and Galleries

X80039

Miss Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies as Isabella of France

1932

Oil paint on canvas

Sickert's painting shows the actress Gwen Ffrangcon-Davies in Edward II by Christopher Marlowe. Isabella of France was known as 'La Louve' or 'the she-wolf' because of her fierce character. The painting is based on a photograph by British photographer Bertram Park, prominently acknowledged by Sickert in the lower right corner. Sickert cropped the composition and heightened the tonal contrast for dramatic effect, changing the informal quality of the original photograph into an imposing, monumental painting.

Tate. Presented by the Art Fund, the Contemporary Art Society and C. Frank Stoop through the Contemporary Art Society 1932

N04673

High-Steppers

c.1938–9

Oil paint on canvas

High Steppers is based on a film-still of the Tiller Girls, a famous British dancing troupe who performed in the 1928 silent comedy film *Little Bit of Fluff*. The Tiller Girls were among the most popular dance troupes of the period, characterised by their high-kicking routines and synchronised movements, which are expressed in Sickert's dynamic composition. The likely source image was published in the *Evening Standard* in 1927, under the headline 'An Art English Girls Know Best'. As *High Steppers* was painted in 1932, Sickert probably kept the newspaper article for years before using it for this work.

National Galleries of Scotland. Purchased 1979

X80049

Variation on 'Othello'

c.1933–4

Oil paint on canvas

This work depicts Ira Aldridge as Othello and Valerie Tudor as Desdemona. The combination of actors is a fiction as Ira Aldridge lived during the 19th century and Valerie Tudor was a contemporary actor. Aldridge was born in New York in 1807 and came to England in 1824. He was the first African-American actor to establish a professional career in a foreign country. Aldridge became an enormously famous actor and toured throughout Britain and Europe. On the closing night at a given theatre, he would often talk to the audience on the injustice of slavery.

Bristol Culture: Bristol Museums & Art Gallery

X80040

The Seducer

c.1929–30

Oil paint on canvas

The Seducer is an example of a type of Sickert's late work which he called 'echoes'. These were subject pictures and portraits based on and 'echoing' black and white 19th century prints and illustrations. Sickert's father had been an illustrator and the 'echoes' convey a sense of nostalgia for the Victorian era. The Seducer is based on an original work by British artist John Gilbert, whose romantic and melodramatic narratives Sickert admired.

Tate. Purchased 1989

T05529

Two cases in the centre of the room.

First case, large vitrine, from top left contains

These Names Make News, 'Snapper Snarls',

Daily Express, 24 July 1936

1936

Facsimile

© British Library Board, Daily Express 24 July 1936, p.6

Z76394

'A Novel Portrait of The King'. Daily Express,

23 December 1930, p.3

1930

Facsimile

Mirrorpix

Z76397

'Welcome "Lady Lindy"!', Daily Sketch, 23 May 1932
1932

Facsimile

© British Library Board, Daily Sketch 23 May 1932, p.1
Z76395

**'Gwen Ffraongcon-Davies as the Queen Isabella',
Vogue, December 1923**
1923

Facsimile

Bertram Park / Vogue © The Conde Nast Publications Ltd.
Z76399

**Bullets Or Ballots, lobbycard, Edward G. Robinson,
Joan Blondell, 1936**

1936

Facsimile

LMPC via Getty Images

Z76400

**Scenes at the Mine-Strike "Front", Daily Express,
18 October 1935, p.24**

1935

Facsimile

Mirrorpix

Z76398

'The Londoner's Log', The Sunday Express, 26 July 1936

1936

Facsimile

© British Library Board. The Sunday Express 26 July 1936, p.2

Z76396

Tall case contains

**Camera lucida (with 12 lenses and housed in a leather case),
which once belonged to W R Sickert**

Camera lucida is Latin for 'light chamber'. It is an optical device that is used as an aid to artists. Containing two mirrors (one standard mirror and the other semi-transparent), the camera lucida allows artists to see both an object in front of them as well as the paper below at the same time. Through this optical illusion, artists can accurately 'trace' an object directly onto the paper. This is the device that Sickert used to copy an image from newspaper articles before it was squared-up and then enlarged to create his paintings.

Tate. Purchased, March 1997

Z76115

WALTER SICKERT

28 April – 18 September 2022

Supported by the Walter Sickert Exhibition Supporters Circle:
Robert and Matthew Travers,
PIANO NOBILE, London

Tate International Council and Tate Patrons

Walter Sickert is organised by Tate Britain in collaboration with the Petit Palais, Paris.

The exhibition is curated by Emma Chambers (Curator, Modern British Art, Tate Britain), Caroline Corbeau-Parsons (Curator of Drawings/ Conservatrice des Arts Graphiques at Musée d'Orsay and former Curator, British Art, 1850–1915 at Tate Britain), the late Delphine Lévy (former Executive Director, Paris Musées) and Thomas Kennedy (Assistant Curator, Modern British Art, Tate Britain).

Media partner

THE TIMES
THE SUNDAY TIMES

Entrance image: Walter Richard Sickert
Little Dot Hetherington at the Bedford Music Hall 1888–9
(detail) Private Collection. Photo: James Mann

Scan the QR code to find out more about Sickert



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