

THÉRÈSE LESSORE
& THE LONDON GROUP



Thérèse Lessore

and

the Early Years of the London Group (1913-1920)

14th - 26th March 2024

Preview Days: 12th-13th March

Gallery talk with Jason Price (and late opening until 7.45 pm)
Thursday 14th March

6 Mason's Yard, Duke Street, St James's, London SW1Y 6BU
(Mon-Fri: 10.45 am - 5.45 pm)

HARRY MOORE-GWYN

BRITISH ART



cat. 1

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945)

The Audience at the New Bedford Theatre, c.1919

Oil on canvas, 24 by 28 cm (9.5 by 11 ins)

Provenance: with Jonathan Clark Ltd in 1992

Lessore's interest in theatre and music hall pre-dated the meeting of her future husband, Walter Sickert, during the First World War. Likewise, whilst it is easy to focus on the two artists' similarities in subjects like these (the New Bedford also being a favourite subject of Sickert), they are also striking in their differences. Lessore's style as a painter (one that Sickert observed when admiring her work in the inaugural London Group shows) was far more graphic, picking out the underlining sense of design in the subject matter as well as the individual character of her audience members. The present works are studies for a larger painting of the New Bedford that Lessore completed in 1919 (see Christie's, *The Painters of Camden Town (1905-1920)*, loan exhibition cat., 1988, p.139, no.108).



cat.2

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945)

The Audience at the New Bedford Theatre, c.1919

Oil on canvas, 24 by 28 cm (9.5 by 11 ins)

Provenance: with Jonathan Clark Ltd in 1992



cat.3

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945)

The Audience at the New Bedford Theatre, c.1919

Oil on canvas, 24 by 28 cm (9.5 by 11 ins)

Provenance: with Jonathan Clark Ltd in 1992



cat.4

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945)

Figures in a Theatre Box

Oil on canvas, 24 by 28 cm (9.5 by 11 ins)

Provenance: the family of Christine Angus (Walter Sickert's second wife)



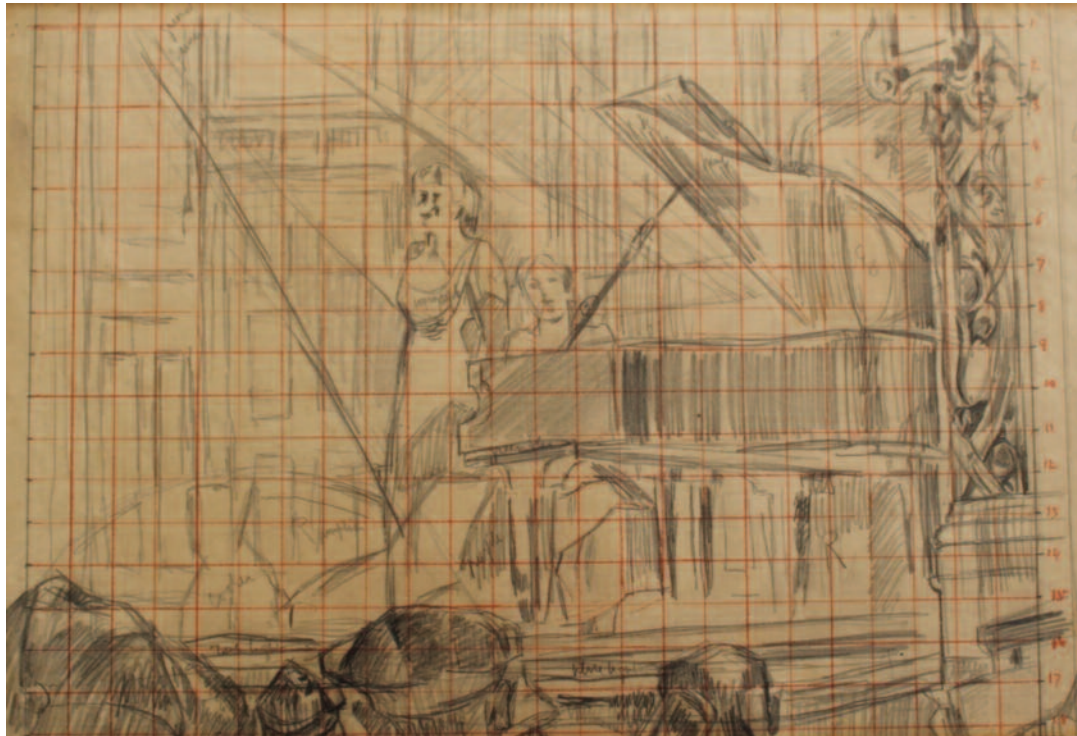
cat.5

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945)

The Gallery Audience at the Euston Theatre of Varieties

Signed l.r.: Lessore

Watercolour over pen and ink, 21 by 16 cm (8.25 by 6.25 ins)



cat.6

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945))

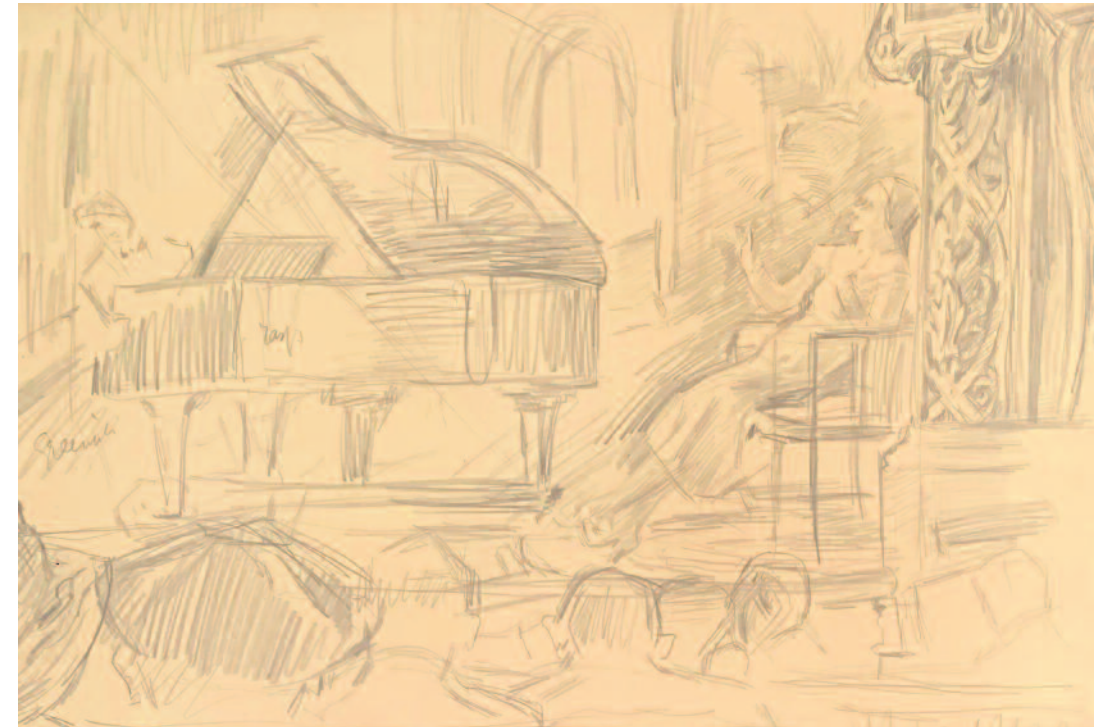
The Song Recital

Squared for transfer

Pencil, 22.5 by 34 cm (9 by 13.5 ins)

Provenance: the family of Christine Angus (Walter Sickert's second wife)

These two on-the-spot sketches, apparently taken at the same musical performance, show an interest in the music and concert hall that Lessore inherited from her husband Walter Sickert. Even in such sketches, she has begun to hone her own style and compositional quirks, such as the framing of the subject against the sharply defined features of the back of her audience.



cat.7

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945)

The Song Recital (singer seated)

Pencil, 22.5 by 34 cm (9 by 13.5 ins)

Provenance: the family of Christine Angus (Walter Sickert's second wife)



cat.8

Thérèse Lessore (1884-1945)

Swallow's Circus at New Worlds Fair, Royal Agricultural Hall, Islington, c.1929

Oil on canvas, 57.5 by 76.5 cm (22.75 by 30.25 ins)

Provenance: Foster's, London, 27 March 1935; Frederick Lessore, thence by descent

It has been suggested that the rider depicted could be Ekaterina Wassillowna who performed 'voltage on unsaddled horse' in the 1929/30 circus. Ekaterina's act was third on the bill and a photograph of her appearing in the programme shows her holding a feathered headdress, not dissimilar to the one worn by the performer in the present painting. Ninth on the bill was the Wolthings Trio, which Lessore captured in *The Daredevils* (now in Hastings Art Gallery). The 1929/30 circus was the very last season in which the circus Swallow owned and operated appeared in Islington, because he had to sell everything off in the autumn of 1930. While he still occupied the role of circus director at the New World's Fair for several years, from December 1930 all the acts were hired in for the Christmas season, essentially meaning he had to build a circus from scratch each year. We are very grateful to Jason Price for his assistance in researching the present work.

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Above: advertisement for the World's Fair showing the interior of the Royal Agricultural Hall (now the Business Design Centre in Islington)

Opposite: a photograph (and related caption) showing Ekaterina Wassillowna from the official programme for the New World's Fair for the 1929-1930 season. The 1929-30 circus was significant in being the last season that John Swallow owned and operated the event in Islington. Forced to sell everything in the Autumn of 1930, he stayed on as director for a few years after this, hiring in every act for the Christmas season.

All images and research provided by Jason Price.

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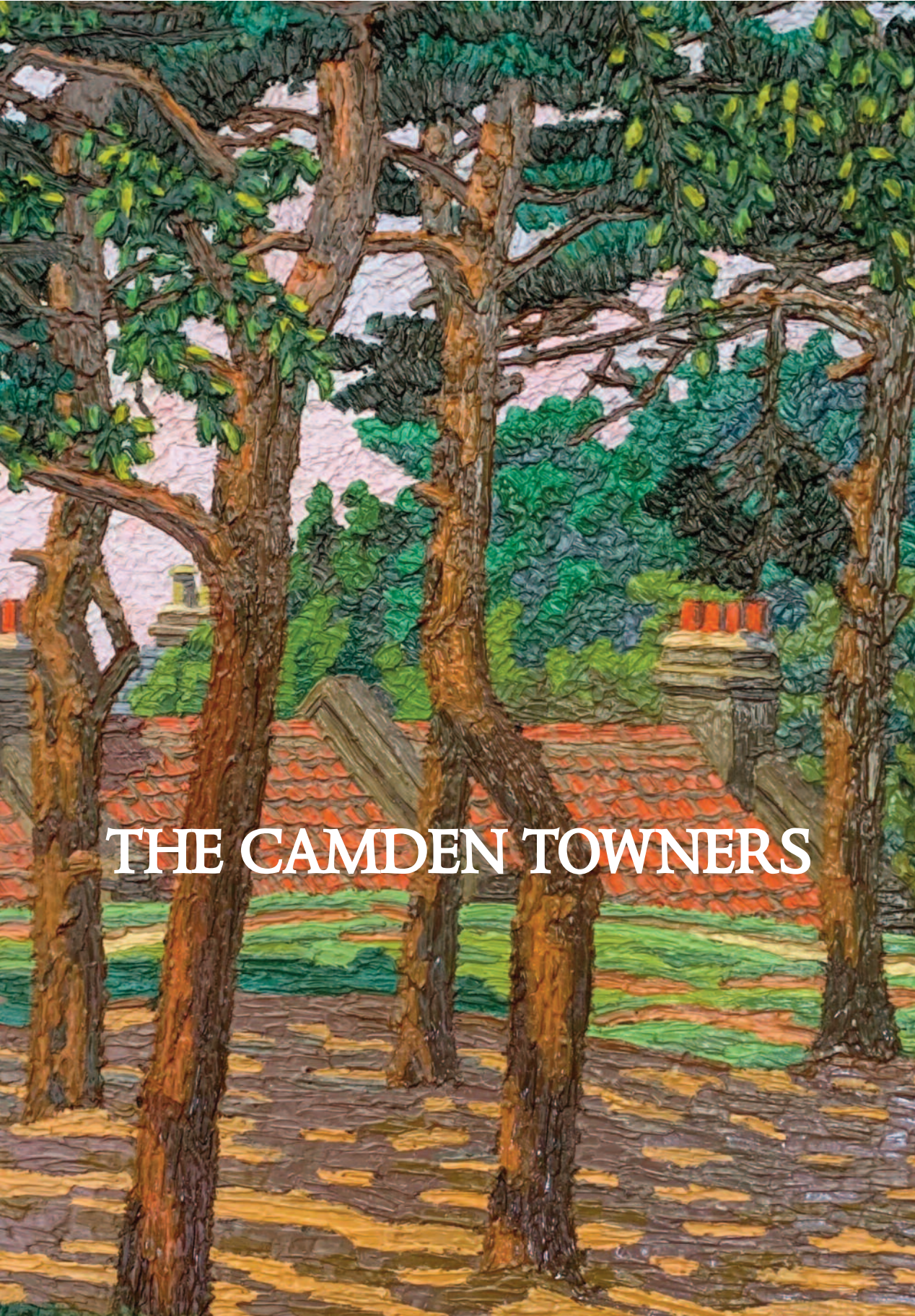
THE CIRCUS—continued



Ekaterina Wassillowna

This daring and graceful artiste is making her first appearance in England, and her daring feats have already made for her a first-class reputation throughout the Continent.

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THE CAMDEN TOWNERS



cat.9

Walter Sickert, RA (1860-1942)

Musicians at the Gaité Rochechouart

Signed l.r. *Sickert* and inscribed with title *Gaité Rochechouart* (sic)

Black and white chalk over pen and ink on brown paper, 20.5 by 28.5 cm (8 by 11.25 ins)

Sickert frequented the Parisian music hall of the same name in the early 1900s. The present work is related to the painting *Les Loges* which depicts the audience behind the same conductor (see Wendy Baron, *Sickert Paintings and Drawings*, Yale, 2006, p.335, no.288). This lively study of one of the pit's violinists and singer suggests a possible extension to that composition.



cat. 10

Walter Sickert, RA (1860-1942)

Clarence Gardens, Camden Town, c.1920

Signed l.r.: Sickert

Oil on canvas, 39.5 by 55.5 cm (15.5 by 21.75 ins)

Provenance: Savile Gallery, *Paintings by Walter Sickert*, May 1926, no.20; Marlborough Gallery, London; Anthony D'Offay; the Fine Art Society, London

Exhibited: London, Fine Art Society, *Camden Town Group Centenary Exhibition*, 2011 (illustrated)

Literature: Wendy Baron, *Sickert Paintings and Drawings*, New Haven and London, 2006, no. 528 (illustrated)

Clarence Gardens was painted by a number of artists in the Camden Town Group, including both Harold Gilman and William Ratcliffe in around 1912. Sickert himself had a studio in Robert Street in the 1890s - a road that ran between Cumberland Market and Clarence Gardens. Although the square survives, the housing around it was destroyed during World War Two.



cat. 11

Robert Bevan (1865-1925)

Return to the Village, c.1901-03

Signed l.r.: Robert Bevan

oil on canvas, 64.5 by 81.5cm (25.5 by 32 ins)

Provenance: Sir Siegmund and Lady Eva Warburg, by 1961, and thence by descent to the present owner

Literature: R.A.Bevan, *Robert Bevan, A Memoir by His Son*, Studio Vista, London, illustrated no. 16

Exhibited: London, Colnaghi Gallery, *Paintings of Robert Bevan*, 1961 (as *Return to the Village, Poland*)

Few British artists were painting with such radical and modern use of colour at this early stage of the twentieth century. Some sixty years later, Sir Philip Hendy, then Director of the National Gallery, in his preface to the 1961 Bevan retrospective exhibition at Colnaghi's, commented that Bevan was perhaps the first Englishman to use pure colour in the twentieth Century.



cat.12

Charles Ginner, ARA (1878-1952)

On the West Heath Hampstead, 1925

Signed l.r.: *C. Ginner*

Oil on canvas, 43 by 55 cm (17 by 21.5 ins)

Provenance: acquired by Viscountess Helburn at the Goupil Gallery in 1925; acquired by the previous owners at the Fine Art Society, New Bond Street, in 2011

Exhibited: Goupil Gallery, London, November – December 1925, no.37; Fine Art Society, London, *Camden Town Group Centenary Exhibition*, June-July 2011, no.2



cat.13

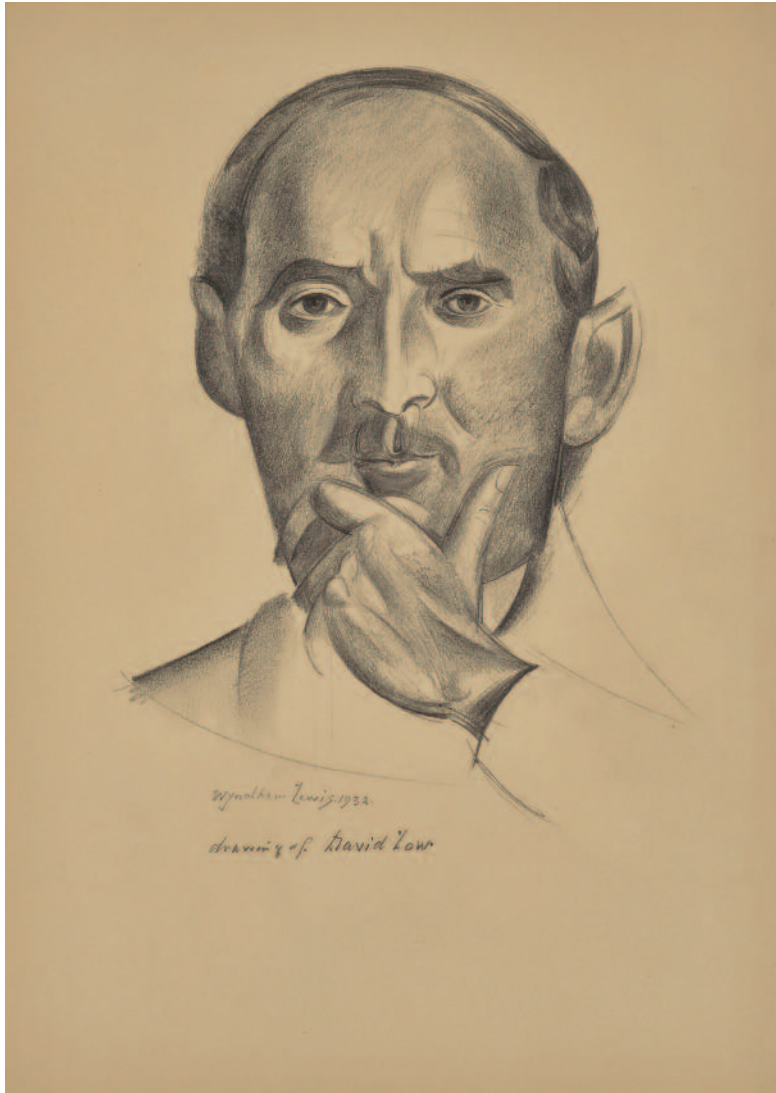
Walter Bayes, RWS (1869-1956)

Summer on a Breton Beach

Signed with monogram l.l.: *W.B.*

Oil on canvas, 23 by 34.5 cm (9 by 13.5 ins)

Bayes's exhibits at the first Camden Town Group exhibitions in 1911 received significant critical attention, *The Daily Telegraph* critic noting in December of that year "There is something satisfying in the austere modernity of Mr Walter Bayes... He is able to suggest beneath the aerial envelope, beneath the perpetually changing vesture of the earth, something of architectural structure, of permanence" (*The Daily Telegraph*, 14 December 1911, quoted in Wendy Baron, *The Camden Town Group*, Scholar Press, 1979, p.214). Critics went on to label Bayes as both a "Modernist" for the simplification of form (something in evidence in this painting) and a "Classicist" in respect of his concern for rhythm and design. The latter of these ultimately set him apart from other members of the Camden Town Group. Elegant coastal subjects formed a significant part of the body of work he created at this date, including works such as *The Glass Door* which was shown at the Second Camden Town Group Exhibition in December 1911 (no.51). One of his favourite locations were the beaches at or near Locquirec in Brittany where Bayes regularly holidayed with his family during the 1910s. It is possible this picture depicts the same section of an estuary beach depicted in his painting *Two Men on a Beach* (Ashmolean Museum, acc.no.WA.1967.36.2), which is thought to have been painted just before the First World War.



cat. 14

Percy Wyndham Lewis (1882-1957)

Portrait of David Low

Signed and dated l.l.: *Wyndham Lewis/1932* and with further inscription *Drawing of David Low*

Pencil, 27 by 19.5 cm (10.5 by 7.75 ins)

Provenance: Private collection from 1957; Christie's, London, 7th March 1997, lot 18

Literature: Michel Walter, *Wyndham Lewis: Paintings and Drawings*, Thames & Hudson, London, no.773

Exhibited: Olympia, London, 1-6 March 2005, *Wyndham Lewis*, cat.no.WL-072



cat. 15

Duncan Grant (1885-1978)

Standing Female Nude with Raised Arms, c.1916

Pen and sepia ink, 17.5 by 11 cm (7 by 4.25 ins)

Provenance: The Estate of David "Bunny" Garnett (1892-1981) (the artist's son-in-law) ; with The Bloomsbury Workshop, London



cat. 16

Christopher Richard Wynne Nevinson, ARA (1889-1946)

Boulogne

Signed l.r.: C.R.W. Nevinson

Watercolour over pencil, 10 by 14 ins (25.5 by 35.7 cm)

The present work is directly related to Nevinson's etching *Boulogne*, issued in an edition of 25 (see fig 1 opposite). Jonathan Black has dated that work to 1920 (see Jonathan Black, *C.R.W. Nevinson - The Complete Prints*, Lund Humphries, 2014, no.73).



cat. 17

Mark Gertler (1891-1939)

Standing Female Nude

Signed with initials l.r.: MG

With a further drawing of a female nude in pencil (verso)

Red chalk, 28 by 20 cm (11 by 8 ins)

Provenance: with the Bloomsbury Workshop



cat.18

Ethelbert White, RWS (1891-1972)

Near Les Halles Paris, c.1920

Signed l.l.: *Ethelbert White*

Watercolour, 29.5 by 36.5 cm (11.5 by 14.25 ins)

This appears to relate to a drypoint from the early 1920s *A Street near Les Halles, Paris* (see Hilary Chapman, *Ethelbert White, Painter - Printmaker*, Primrose Hill, 2003, no.D10, p.78).



cat.19

Ethelbert White, RWS (1891-1972)

A Pony and Trap in Open Country

Signed l.l.: *Ethelbert White*

Watercolour, 33.5 by 42.5 cm (13.25 by 16.75 ins)



cat.20 (a-c)

Ethelbert White, RWS (1891-1972)

A Somerset Landscape (a)

Light Through a Thicket of Trees (b)

Downland Landscape (c)

Each with the artist's studio stamp (verso) and inscribed *Somerset* on earlier original mount
Coloured chalks with pencil, each 14 by 10.5 cm (5.5 by 4.25 ins)

These bold early colour studies (probably c.1919) are possibly ideas for larger pictures. Ethelbert White's style was much informed by his membership of the London Group (he joined in 1915) and where he fell under the influence of artists such as Charles Ginner and Robert Bevan who were significant early supporters. His best work (always strongly graphic in style) was executed between cc.1915 and 1930. His work became far looser and impressionistic towards the end of his life.



cat.21

Ethelbert White, RWS (1891-1972)

A scene from Mikhail Fokine's ballet Thamar

Signed l.l.: *Ethelbert White*

Gouache over pen and ink, 27.3 by 33.7 cm (10.75 by 13.25 ins)

Exhibited: the Fine Art Society, London, *Ethelbert White (1891-1972), A Memorial Exhibition*, 1979, no.21

In this scene from Fokine's ballet *Thamar*, The Prince dances before Thamar, Queen of Georgia, to prove he is worthy to be her suitor. The ballet was produced by Diaghilev's Ballet Russes in 1912 with music by Balakirev and designs by Leon Bakst. White illustrated a booklet on *Thamar* for Beaumont's *Impressions of the Russian Ballet* (no.10) in 1919.



cat.22

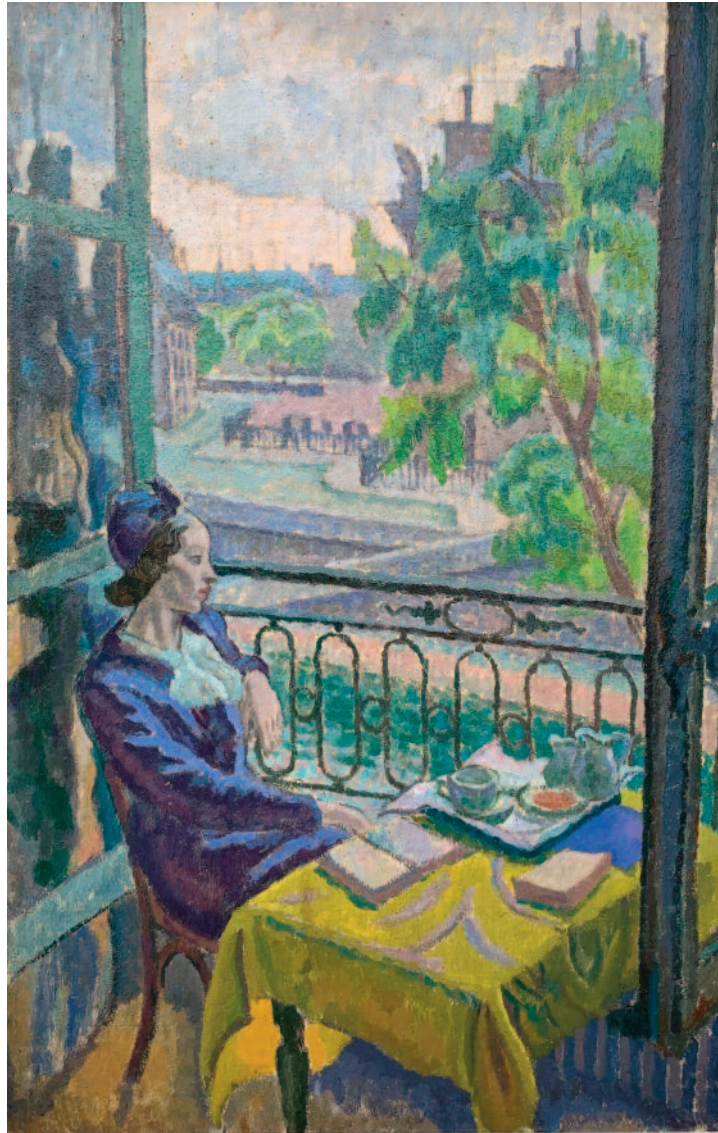
Roger Fry (1866-1934)

The Interior of the Church at Etaples

Signed l.r.: *R.Fry/29*

Pen and sepia ink, 35 by 24 cm (13.75 by 9.5 ins)

Provenance: the Bloomsbury Workshop



cat.23

Charles Maresco Pearce (1874-1964)

Paris Window

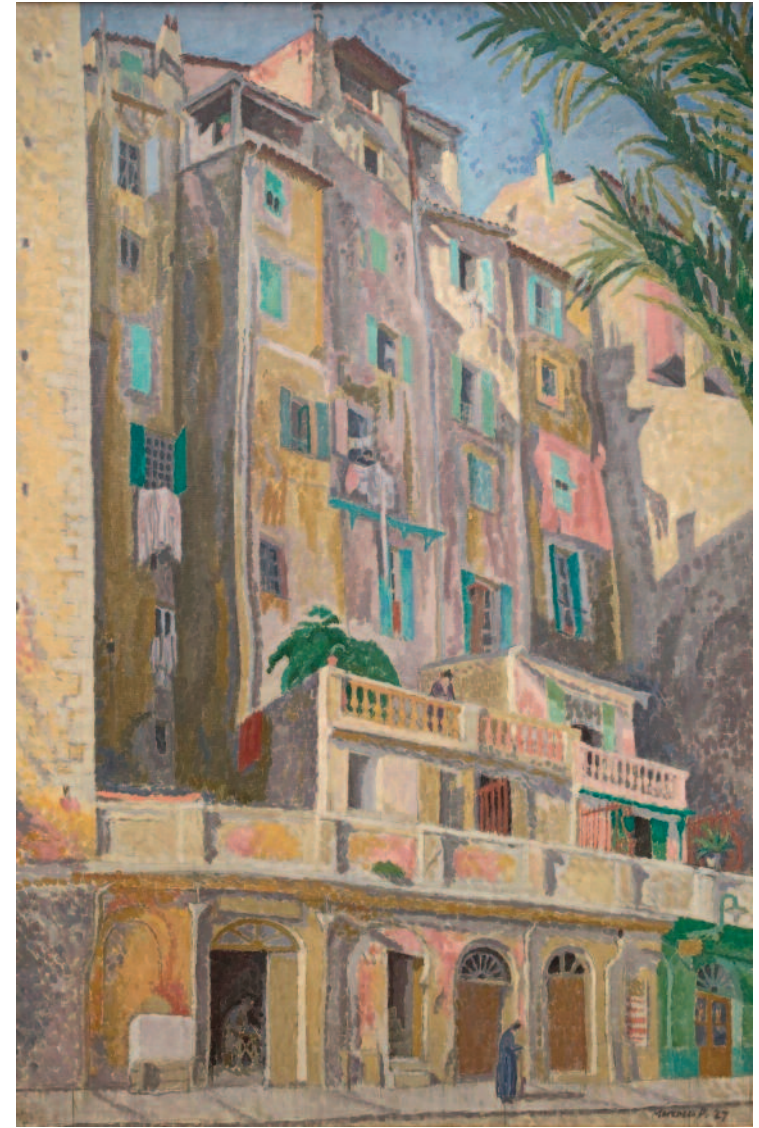
With the artist's original labels (reverse of board)

Oil on board, 74 by 38 cm (29 by 15 ins)

Provenance: acquired directly by the previous owner from the artist's daughter, Rebecca Mirkin, in 2008

Exhibited: probably New English Art Club, 1928

Pearce spent his summers in Paris and Mentone in Southern France - he was a fine colourist in the manner of the Camden Town Group artists. According to the artist's daughter, the present work depicts the artist's mistress in her Paris apartment.



cat.24

Charles Maresco Pearce (1874-1964)

Mentone

Oil on canvas, 95.25 by 63.5 cm (37.5 by 25 ins)

Exhibited: French Gallery, New Bond Street; Cartwright Memorial Hall, Bradford; Christie's, London, Centenary Exhibition of the New English Art Club, 1986

Provenance: possibly Wyndham T.Vint, Bradford

Pearce was a pupil of Sickert and a significant patron of other artists in his circle. He was considered for membership of the London Group as early as 1914, finally becoming a member in the 1920s.



cat.25

Douglas Fox Pitt (1864-1922)

A Mediterranean Seascape

Signed l.r.: *D Fox Pitt*

Watercolour over soft pencil, 21 by 38 cm (8.25 by 15 ins)



cat.26

Walter Taylor (1860-1943)

Pelham Crescent, Hastings

Oil on canvas, 91.5 by 71 cm (36 by 28 ins)

Provenance: with the Michael Parkin Gallery

Exhibited: London, probably London Group Exhibition, 1922, no.59

Taylor was a founder London Group member and exhibited several views of Hastings at their summer exhibition in 1920. The present work was probably no.20 in that show.



cat.27

John Nash, RA (1893-1977)

The Flour Mill at Bures, Suffolk

Signed l.l.: *John Nash*

Watercolour over pencil on Ingres paper, 39 by 47 cm (15.25 by 18.5 ins)

Provenance: with the Goupil Gallery, London circa.early 1920s

John Nash was invited to become a founder member of the London Group following a very well recieved exhibition at the Doren Leigh Gallery in the previous year. His brother Paul was not invited to join until the following year.



cat.28

Bernard Meninsky(1891-1950)

Still Life with Grapes and Pears

Oil on canvas, 37 by 50 cm (14.5 by 19.75 ins)

Meninsky was one of a number of significant artists who joined the London Group the year following the end of the First World War in 1919. Others in the same year included Vanessa Bell, Keith Baynes and the mosaicist Boris Anrep.



cat.29

Vanessa Bell (1879-1961)

A Portrait of Angelica Garnett, c.1930

With the artist's studio stamp (l.l.)

Pencil, 22.5 by 18.5 cm (9 by 7.25 ins)

Provenance: the artist's estate; the Bloomsbury Workshop

The present work depicts Angelica, Vanessa Bell's daughter with Duncan Grant, aged about twelve.

HARRY MOORE-GWYN

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Cover illustrations: detail of cat.5 (front cover); detail of cat.11 (back cover)

Centre page: detail from the reverse of a dinner menu for a meal held at the Spinning Wheel Restaurant in Hampstead on 27th April 1917. The signatures of a number of London Group artists are recorded here, including from our catalogue: C.R.W.Nevinson, Douglas Fox Pitt, Walter Taylor, Bernard Meninsky and Charles Ginner (image courtesy of Patrick Baty)

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A painting by Harry Moore-Gwyn, depicting a rural scene. In the foreground, a man in a blue coat and hat stands next to a horse-drawn cart, holding a long pole. The cart is pulled by a white horse. In the middle ground, there is a white house with a chimney and a thatched-roof house. The background shows a landscape with trees and a body of water. The painting is characterized by its use of color and texture, with a focus on the rural setting.

HARRY MOORE-GWYN
BRITISH ART