

Victoria Gallery

Educator's Pack



the mcmanus

DUNDEE'S ART GALLERY & MUSEUM

This pack contains information regarding the themes of the Victoria gallery. On our website you can find further resources to explore and activities that can be undertaken within and outwith the gallery.

In the Victoria Gallery you can experience an authentic Victorian style art gallery here in Dundee.

Covering different periods, the gallery explores how styles of painting changed from 1750 - 1914, with examples of Scottish, Victorian and Edwardian art on display.

A visit to the Victoria Gallery provides a rich and unique experience for visitors.

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The Victoria Gallery

Topic Overview

This topic is a brief introduction to the Victoria Gallery. It examines why it was built, the art lobby that established it and how it originally would have looked.

The key educational message of this topic is:

Dundee has a significant and varied historic art collection.

Interactive Resources in the Gallery

Multimedia - "Design your own Gallery"

This interactive multimedia allows visitors to gain an insight into some of the factors that influence the way in which paintings are exhibited. Factors such as wall shape, colour, lighting, density of hang and style of painting all need to be considered during this process.

Suggested Activities

Gallery Design

Extending from the interactive resource "Design your own Gallery" - in the classroom evaluate the different factors that influence gallery design. What did pupils observe about the design of the Victoria Gallery? How would they improve its design? Think about why certain paintings are hung next to each other, considering factors such as scale, contrast in styles, frames, etc.



Collect lots of different images from newspapers and magazines and ask pupils to play around with different ways of positioning them on a sheet of paper. Create an exhibition of the pupils' work, where they can work in teams to take on the roles of the gallery design, curatorial and installation staff.

The Victoria Gallery

The key emotional objectives of the Victoria Gallery are that visitors should feel:

More confident in relating to and interacting with artworks.

Uplifted, revived in spirit and appreciative of the visual beauty of the gallery.

Impressed by the quality and variety of the art collection.

Inspired to find out more about individual paintings, artists and artistic styles.

History

This gallery, with its curved walls and barrel-vaulted glass ceiling, is preserved as the largest of the original Victoria Galleries. Built to celebrate the Queen's Golden Jubilee, they were added to the Albert Institute in 1889. Entirely funded by public subscription, they were designed by James Guthrie Orchar, a local industrialist and passionate art lover. Following Orchar's lead, Dundee's industrialists became generous patrons and established Dundee's permanent art collection.

Design

Orchar designed the unique interior of the Victoria Gallery, with its curved walls, which angle the upper pictures down towards the viewer. The double glass roof softens the daylight. To test the effectiveness of these features Orchar had a full-size model built in his engineering works at the Wallace foundry.



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The Victoria Galleries in 1889

The new Victoria Galleries cost £15,000, equivalent to £7m today. They were designed to accommodate Dundee's hugely successful Fine Art exhibitions. This picture shows the 11th in the series, with 1265 paintings covering every inch of wall space.



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James Guthrie Orchar



© Orchar Collection,
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James Guthrie Orchar

Born in Dundee, a carpenter's son, Orchar was a brilliant engineer and entrepreneur. A partner in Robertson and Orchar, he made his fortune inventing and exporting textile machinery. He was Convener of Dundee's renowned Fine Art exhibitions which ran from 1877 - 1891.

The Orchar Collection

Orchar's private collection survives intact, unlike the other large collections built up by Dundee's Jute barons. Bequeathed to the people of Broughty Ferry, and shown in the independent Orchar Gallery from 1923 until 1979, it was donated to the city of Dundee in 1987.

During his lifetime, Orchar amassed a collection of over 300 works. He focused particularly on artists of the Scott Lauder Group, many of whom were his personal friends.

Visiting the Victoria Gallery Now

The Victoria Gallery reinstates an authentic Victorian Art Gallery experience for visitors. The original curved red walls, vaulted glass ceiling, ornamental plasterwork and varnished dadoes create an impressive setting for the outstanding collection of historical oil paintings.

Throughout the Victoria Gallery, the paintings, dating from 1750 - 1914, are densely hung in the traditional Victorian manner. They are arranged in broadly chronological groupings around the walls. This system takes full advantage of the curved walls, and paintings are hung the full height of the walls.

Historic Paintings

Topic Overview

The key messages of the 'Historic Paintings' topic are:

Artistic styles changed from 1750 - 1914 and they reflected the social, cultural, political and economic conditions of the times.

Different paintings can have different meanings for different people.

Interactive Resources in the Gallery

'Historic Paintings' Listening Post

Spoken information and music relating to a number of specific paintings.

Multimedia "Raeburn - Two Men, One Masterpiece"

This interactive multimedia interprets the superb portrait of George Paterson by Sir Henry Paterson, which will be on display in the Victoria Gallery. It will explore a number of aspects of George Paterson's life. Raeburn's significance in the history of Scottish Art and a number of features of the portrait itself.

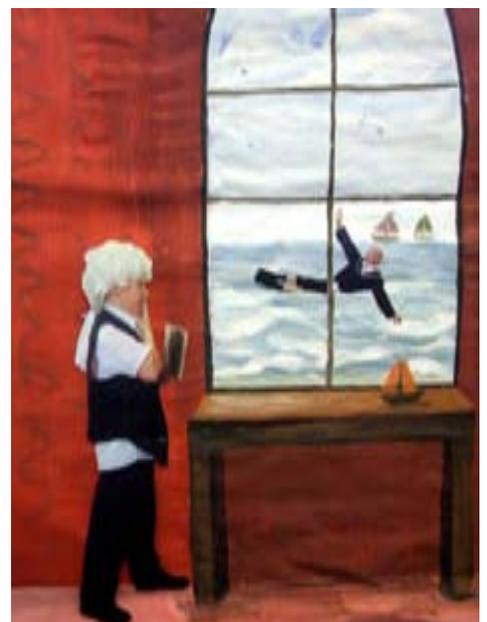
'The Orchar Collection' Listening Post

Spoken information and music relating to a number of specific paintings.

Suggested Activities

Think about all of the different types of human subjects that are portrayed in the Victoria Gallery: rich and poor, happy and sad; you can tell a lot about these people from their portraits. The investigation of these characters can link into many cross-curricular areas and initiate activities such as role play and creative writing.

Pupils can create their own Victorian portrait of another person in their class, considering how their subject's personality would translate as a Victorian character. The resulting portrait could be drawn or painted traditionally, or pupils can develop their ICT skills by using a digital camera to take photos of their subject. The painting to the right was created by pupils who mixed a traditionally painted background with photographs that were printed and cut out to create a collage. The worksheet "My Victorian Portrait" on our website is a useful sketching template which supports this activity.



Scottish Art 1750-1920

Scottish Art 1750 - 1920

"Dundee has the best collection of late Victorian Scottish Painting that can be seen anywhere."
- James Holloway, Director of the Scottish National Portrait Gallery

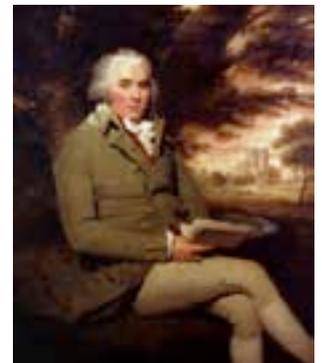
Our nationally important collection of historic Scottish oil paintings is shown alongside works by major English artists. The gallery is hung in three distinct groups, clockwise from the left:

Scottish Painting 1750 - 1850

Illustration:

Henry Raeburn: George Paterson of Castle Huntly, c1790

Raeburn revolutionised portrait painting, aiming to capture the essence of the sitter's character as well as their likeness. This portrait of local man George Paterson was commissioned on his return from India. It captures the calm intelligence and enquiring mind of this man of the Enlightenment.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

Victorian Painting 1850 - 1900

Illustration:

Hugh Cameron: The Little Housewife

Cameron studied under Robert Scott Lauder whose pupils became known as the Scott Lauder Group. Their works were popular with local collector James Guthrie Orchar and Dundee has the finest collection of their work in the country. Typically Victorian, this work contains a strong moral message. Despite the little girl's humble surroundings, 'Cleanliness is next to Godliness'.



© Orchar Collection,
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Edwardian Painting 1880 - 1920

Illustration:

Edward Arthur Walton: Hawthorn Bank, c1910

One of the Glasgow Boys, Walton's greatest love was for landscapes. In this late work, perhaps set in Galloway, we can admire the subtle, rich colour scheme. The composition appears simple but is elegantly constructed of varied shapes and tonal areas.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

Scottish Painting 1750-1850

During the eighteenth century Scotland was at the forefront of intellectual thought in Europe. The philosophers of the Scottish Enlightenment used reason to make sense of the world. In painting, this was reflected in the adoption of the classical style - harmonious, balanced and idealised.

Illustration:

Alexander Nasmyth: Castle Huntly, c1800

The classical style is clearly seen in this idealised landscape of Castle Huntly in the Carse of Gowrie. Its composition is beautifully balanced with the Italian-looking trees framing the view perfectly.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

In the early 1800s the romantic movement became enormously influential. The emphasis on classical order was replaced by strong emotions and a passion for the awesome power of nature.

Illustration:

Rev John Thomson of Duddingston: St Andrews Bay In marked contrast to the ordered classicism of Nasmyth's Castle Huntly, this romantic view emphasises the unpredictable power of the sea crashing against the rugged coastline.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

As Scotland became increasingly industrialised, its rural countryside and customs became subjects for artists. Called genre paintings, these incident packed scenes of everyday life, were popular throughout the period.

Illustration:

Alexander Carse: The Village Ba' Game, 1818

This is the earliest known painting of a football match. It shows a game between the 'Uppies' and 'Doonies' in Jedburgh in the Scottish Borders. Carse was influenced by earlier Dutch genre painting to create scenes packed with interest.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

Scottish Painting 1750-1850



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Scottish Painting 1750-1850



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Examples of Scottish Painting in the Victoria Gallery

1 - "The Bride of Lammermoor", 1831, Robert Scott Lauder

A moment of sheer melodrama from the famous novel by Walter Scott. The bride, Lucy Ashton, is stunned when her long lost lover, Ravenswood, returns the moment after she has been forced to sign a marriage contract to another man. She later goes mad, stabs her husband and dies.

2 - "The Rev. Samuel Martin", 1789, David Martin

This portrait celebrates the artist's younger brother's degree in Divinity from St Andrews University. Seated in his library, Samuel raises his finger to heaven. David Martin was Allan Ramsay's chief assistant in London and his style mirrors his master's characteristically elegant style.

3 - "Edinburgh Town and castle", 1831, David Roberts

This romantic view from the Grassmarket emphasises the towering height of Edinburgh Castle. Roberts was a great world traveller and the best topographical painter of his day.

4 - "Portrait of Charles Watson and Family", 1782, David Allan

Allan studied the newly fashionable classical style of painting in Rome in the 1770s. Back in Scotland, he developed the traditional conversation piece, an informal family portrait, combining his classical training with a charming naive style. The foreground elements of the composition frame the landscape which recedes to the distant Firth of Forth.

5 - "The Village Politicians", c. 1806, David Wilkie

With his realistic, humorous scenes of rural life, Wilkie became one of Scotland's most popular genre painter of the period. He was influenced by early Dutch painting. The gestures of these characters tell the story. The large version of this painting is on show in Scone Palace.

6 - "Mrs Duncan", c. 1830, Robert Scott Lauder

Hester Eliza Wheeler married George Duncan, a prominent Dundee businessman, philanthropist and art collector. She is formally posed wearing lace, furs and ostrich feathers. Contrast this with the informality of another fashionable lady, in George Henry's "The Feather Boa", which is also shown in the Victoria Gallery.

7 - "John Crichton, MD (1772 - 1860)", c. 1841, John Zephaniah Bell

From this genial portrait we can hardly tell that Crichton was an eminent and successful surgeon. This follows the artist's and sitter's religious beliefs, as fellow members of the strict Glasite Church. Contrast the low-key gravity of this portrait with the arch-sophistication of Ramsay's portrait of Edward Harvey, which is also shown in the Victoria Gallery.

8 - "Christ and the Two Disciples on the way to Emmaus", 1850, Robert Scott Lauder

Scott Lauder is best remembered as an extremely influential art teacher at Edinburgh's Trustees Academy. His pupils such as McTaggart, Chalmers, Pettie and Orchardson became known as the Scott Lauder Group. Here, mysteriously Jesus appears to his disciples after he has risen from the dead. At first they do not recognise him. (The Bible, Luke, Chapter 24)

Victorian Painting 1850-1900

Victorian artists loved paintings that tell a story - often illustrating scenes from popular novels. The continuing influence of the romantic movement encouraged an interest in heroic depictions of Scotland's Jacobite past. As greater numbers of Scots moved from the country to the city rural scenes, land and seascapes became more popular than ever.

Illustration:

John Blake MacDonald: 'Lochaber No More' - Prince Charlie Leaving Scotland. The Scottish identity, in which all Scots are believed to be kilted Highlanders, was created during the nineteenth century through the literature of Sir Walter Scott and paintings like this one. Its continued popularity illustrates the enduring fascination with Jacobite history and its charismatic figurehead Bonnie Prince Charlie.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

Dundee has an outstanding collection of works by the Scott Lauder Group, Scotland's first national school of painting. Their work is characterised by free brushstrokes and a vibrant use of colour. William McTaggart is the best known member of the group. It also included John Pettie and William Quiller Orchardson, who pursued successful careers in London. Other group members were George Paul Chalmers, Hugh Cameron, John MacWhirter, the Graham brothers and John Burr.

Illustration:

William McTaggart: Message from the Sea, 1883
McTaggart's gestural brushwork in which blank areas of canvas could be seen through the paint was revolutionary for this period. Though he may have seen the radical early work of the French Impressionists, McTaggart found his own way towards a loose impressionist style.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

In marked contrast to Scottish art, English art during this period was dominated by the Pre-Raphaelite Movement.

Illustration:

Dante Gabriel Rossetti: Dante's Dream on the Day of the Death of Beatrice, 1880. This painting is the finest Rossetti in a Scottish collection. Typically its literary subject matter incorporates elaborate symbolism. Unlike the painterly style of the Scots, Rossetti depicted minute detail using bright colour.



© Dundee Art Galleries and Museums

Victorian Painting 1850-1900



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Victorian Painting 1850-1900



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Examples of Victorian Painting in the Victoria Gallery

1 - "Girl in a Boat", c. 1867, George Paul Chalmers

This is an unusual subject for Chalmers, who normally painted figures in dimly-lit interiors. It nevertheless shows the characteristic bright colours and loose brushwork of the Scott Lauder Group.

2 - "Portrait of William Brownlee, D.L. (1836-1914) Provost of Dundee", 1902, John Singer Sargent

You were really someone if you were painted by Sargent, Inspired by the fluid brushstrokes of Hals and Velasquez, he created his signature swagger portrait and capture the confidence of Edwardian society.

3 - "The Blind Beggar", 1875, Josef Laurens Dyckmans

Ask yourself - would you give money to this blind man? Dyckmans painted five versions of this popular subject. The paint handling is very detailed and highly finished, you can even see the stitches in the clothing. This is in marked contrast with the loosely painted, atmospheric work by Chalmers hanging alongside it.

4 - "Gleaners", 1881, Hugh Cameron

Victorian city-dwellers loved this sort of painting, inspired by the perceived nobility of working on the land. "Gleaning" means gathering the leftovers after the harvest. Those that worked the land were seen to have a right to take what was left in the fields.

5 - "Love's Young Dream", c. 1860, John Burr

A less well-known member of the Scott Lauder Group, John Burr moved to London in 1861 and had a successful career as an artist. The title of this work is typically Victorian. Burr's paintings always tell a story, often with a lot of humour.

6 - "Retrievers with a Hare", 1870, Sir Edwin Henry Landseer

Landseer was Queen Victoria's favourite animal painter. He was especially noted for his paintings of dogs which are very lively and have personalities of their own.

7 - "Juliet on the Balcony", 1875, Thomas Francis Dicksee

This illustrates the famous balcony scene in Shakespeare's play "Romeo and Juliet".

"O Romeo, Romeo, wherefore art thou Romeo?

Deny thy father and refuse thy name

Or, if thou wilt not, be but by sworn my love,

And I'll no longer be a Capulet."

8 - "Disbanded", 1877, John Pettie

Set during the Jacobite Rebellion of 1745/6, this scene shows a heroic Highland Warrior returning home at the onset of Winter with his spoils of war. He has killed one of his Redcoat enemies. Victorian artists like Pettie helped create the romantic image of the kilted highlander. This nationalistic image still resonates today.

Edwardian Painting 1850-1900

The Glasgow Boys brought light into Scottish painting, rejecting Victorian sentimentality for the realism of everyday subjects. Influenced by French artists, what was painted became less important than how it was painted. A feature of early Glasgow Boys art is its use of the square brush technique.

By the end of this period, the radical Glasgow Boys were part of the Scottish art establishment. They were sought after as portraitists while John Lavery was also appointed as an official war artist.

Illustration:

John Lavery: Musical Ride of the 15th Hussars during the Military Tournament at The Glasgow International Exhibition, 1888. The Glasgow Boys were among the first to regard urban life as suitable subject matter for the artist. Lavery was influenced by the Impressionist artist Edgar Degas in his choice of modern subject matter and bold composition.



© Courtesy of Rosenstiel on behalf of the Estate of Sir John Lavery

Taking their lead from the European Symbolist movement, Scottish artists of the 1890s created work inspired by Celtic myth and legend.

Illustration:

John Duncan: Riders of the Sidhe, 1911
This richly symbolic painting steeped in Celtic mythology is the masterpiece of the Celtic Revival movement of which Dundonian John Duncan was the key proponent.



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Among the best Edwardian paintings on show are works by notable English artists Sir Frank Brangwyn and Sir Alfred Munnings.

Illustration:

Frank Brangwyn: Shipbuilding, c. 1910
Little known today, during the Edwardian period Brangwyn was a hugely successful artist, famous internationally as a mural painter. Courtesy of a gift from the artist himself, Dundee has a comprehensive collection of his work encompassing every aspect of his art.

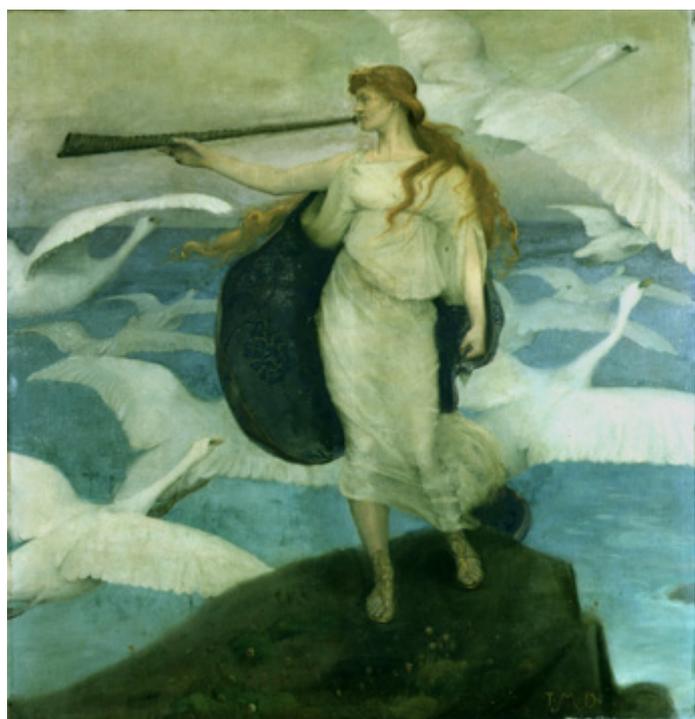


© Courtesy of David Brangwyn

Edwardian Painting 1850-1900



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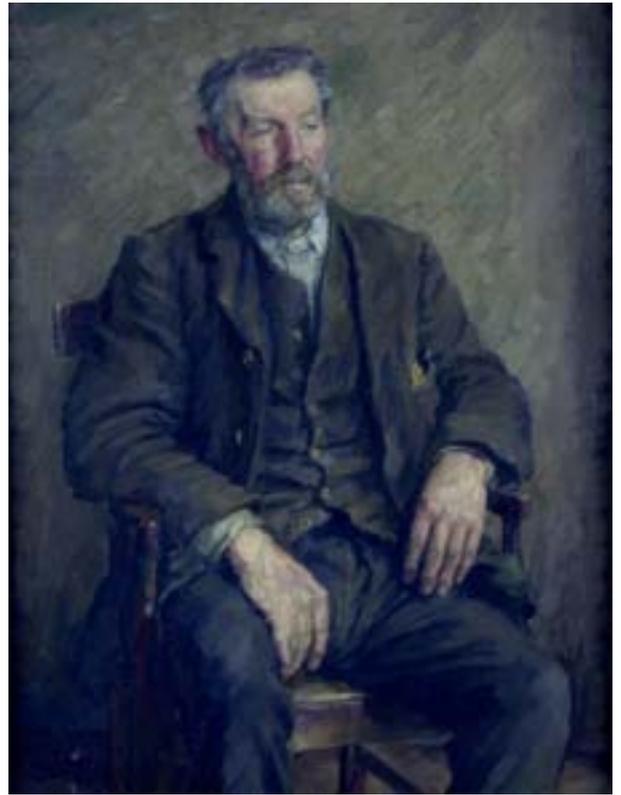


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Edwardian Painting 1850-1900



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Examples of Edwardian Painting in the Victoria Gallery

1 - "The Blackbird Song", 1908, Edward Atkinson Hornel

Based in Kirkcudbright, for the last thirty years of his life Hornel painted young girls in a landscape setting. This late Glasgow Boy's work shows his continuing interest in the decorative qualities of paint. Look particularly at the impasto (thickly applied paint) of the lush vegetation.

2 - "The Herald of Winter", 1894, Thomas Millie Dow

Dow studied in Paris in the 1870s and was much influenced by European symbolism. On his return he was associated with the Glasgow Boys and became a close friend of William Scott of Oldham. This allegorical work and Scott's "Memory of an Island", which is also shown in the Victoria Gallery, share a love of dramatic, decorative pattern and flat colour.

3 - "Memory of an Island", 1896, William Stott

William Stott studied in France where he was regarded as a popular and influential painter. He exhibited regularly at the Paris Salon. This decorative seascape was produced on his return to Britain. Its flat picture surface and muted colour scheme shows the strong influence of Whistler.

4 - "The Feather Boa", 1892, George Henry

Henry was a prominent member of the Glasgow Boys who were much influenced by the French Impressionists. In contrast to the formality of early portraits in this gallery, this woman is depicted very informally. Shown in fashionable dress, she looks as if she has just walked in off the street.

5 - "The Poppy Field", 1905/6, Sir Alfred Munnings

A letter from the artist dated July 1956 survives. "This is the first real go I had at a large outside painting, trying to see colour. I remember painting it on one of my father's fields. End of Red Lion Inn on the left, and right background - the churchyard trees at Mendham. Charlotte Grey leading the pony...3 afternoons work...or 2...I forget."

6 - "Forfouchten", 1919, David Foggie

The title is an old Scots word meaning "worn out". Foggie often painted working men and his sitter was Mr Kinnear, then aged 82, who farmed at Leuchars, Fife. The robust, painterly brush strokes suit the subject admirably. Foggie studied in Antwerp, like his Dundonian friends Stewart Carmichael, John Duncan and George Dutch Davidson.

7 - "The Fan", 1915, Gerald Leslie Brockhurst

Brockhurst was fascinated by Italian Renaissance painting and gained fame for his hard-edged portraits of dangerous, seductive women, including Wallis Simpson and Marlene Dietrich. The artist's glamorous first wife was the model for this early portrait. Her loose embroidered coat and dramatic bobbed hairstyle identify her as a member of the British avant-garde.

8 - "A Gipsy Maid", c. 1890-95, James Stuart Park

Park's work is from the later decorative phase of the Glasgow School. This is part of a series combining flowers with heads of girls. Despite its title, the sitter was not a gypsy. Ten year old Nan Love was the daughter of an Ayrshire farmer.