







# Artists in SOHO

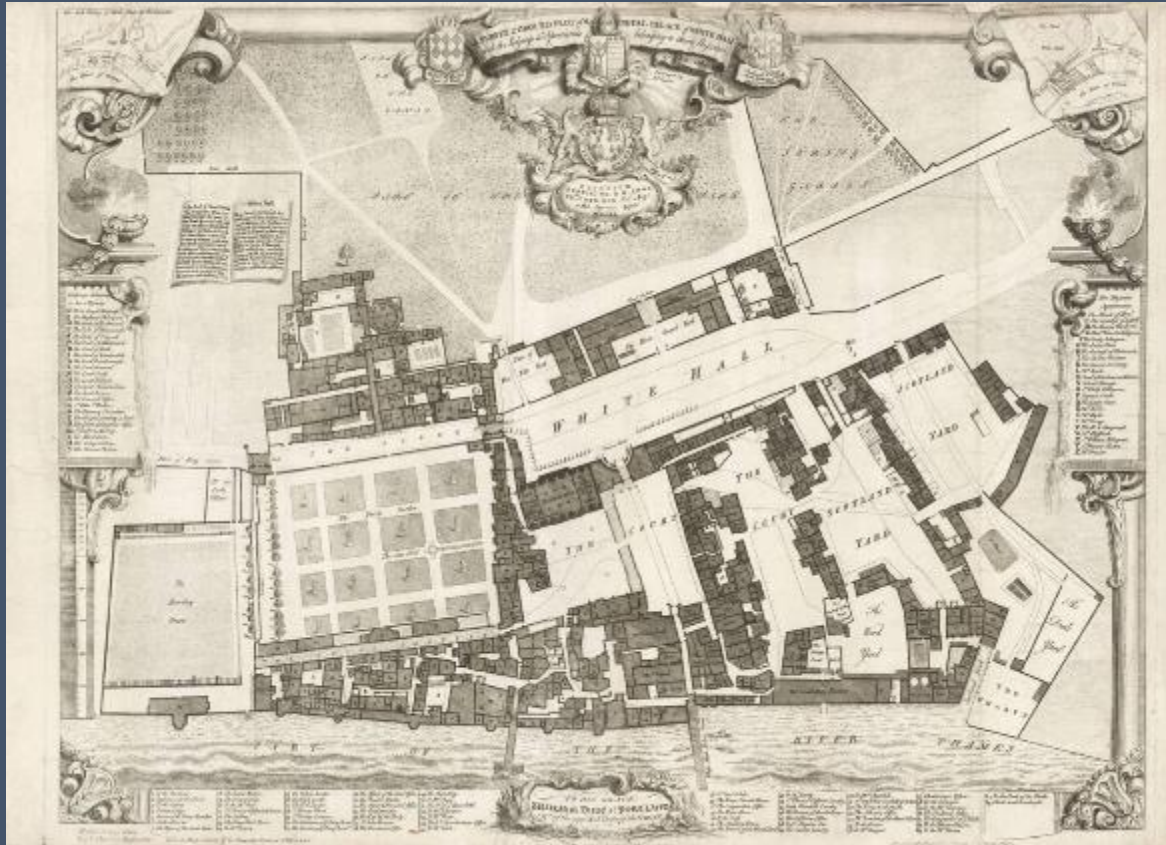
From Lawrence to Freud

DICKINSON



## Introduction:

Although the neighbourhood known as Soho in London is only about a mile square – bounded by Oxford Street to the North, Shaftesbury Avenue to the South, Charing Cross Road in the East and Regent Street to the West – it has historically served as home to an unusually diverse and significant group of creatives. Having been established as a Royal Park, Soho welcomed aristocratic residents in the 17<sup>th</sup> Century, but, by the 18<sup>th</sup>, it was becoming known as a hub for artists, artisans, and theatrical performers, an identity it boasted into the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.



George Vertue (after John Fisher), *A Survey & Ground Plot of the Royal Palace of White Hall*, 1747 which shows the palace buildings to the south and the parks (including modern day Soho) to the north

## 16<sup>th</sup> – 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries:

The name 'Soho' was allegedly derived from old hunting cry, 'soohoo', and the area – previously farmland – was laid out as a park for the nearby Palace of Whitehall by Henry VIII in 1536. Henry had seized the territory in the 1530s during the dissolution of the monasteries and Reformation period. It was gradually sold off by the crown in the latter part of the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Centuries, with large tracts released in 1554, between 1590 and 1623, and in 1676.

By the 1660s, the area then known as Soho fields belonged to Henry Jermyn, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of St Albans, and buildings began cropping up in the area with Soho Square laid in the 1680s. In 1698, a freehold of the north part of the region was granted by William III to William Bentinck 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Portland, while the south part was sold to Robert Sidney Earl of Leicester. Soho became a fashionable area for the aristocracy and large properties began appearing, among them

Monmouth House, Leicester House, Fauconberg House, Carlisle House, and Newport House, none of which now remain.



Sir Peter Lely, *Portrait of Henry Jermyn, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of St Albans (1604 – 1684), 1674, Kedleston Hall, Derbyshire*

Soho's residents naturally required some form of entertainment, and the Theatre Royal Drury Lane has been in constant use since 1663, when it was first built by Thomas Killigrew and featured performers including Royal favourite Nell Gwynn and Charles Hart. The original structure burned down in 1762 and was rebuilt two years later, under the leadership of Colley Cibber, David Garrick and Brinsley Sheridan. This second iteration was demolished in 1791 to make way for the construction of a larger structure in 1794. It met a similar fate, burning down in 1809. The final building, constructed in 1812, remains in operation, currently under the stewardship of Lord Andrew Lloyd Webber. It was later joined by other successful theatres, including the Lyric (1888), one of about a dozen theatres constructed during the creation of the West End in the late 19<sup>th</sup> Century. London's leading theatrical performers were painted by a series of some of the finest names in portraiture, among them William Hogarth, Thomas Gainsborough, Joshua Reynolds, Johann Zoffany, and Thomas Lawrence.



Engraving of the Theatre Royal Drury Lane, November 1812, The Victoria and Albert Museum, London.  
This was the third theatre to have been built on the site and is the one that still stands today



Soho's population grew with various waves of immigrants, most of them fleeing the persecution they faced elsewhere. After 1688, the area saw an influx of French Huguenots, unwelcome in Catholic France after Louis XIV's revocation of the Edict of Nantes in 1685. They brought with them a flourishing metalworking industry, as well as skills in the weaving of fine silks. Soho also saw the arrival of a thriving Italian community in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries, with many arrivals opening family-run shops and restaurants, and of Greek immigrants beginning in 1670, when around 100 or so original arrivals fled Ottoman rule; Soho was the site of London's first Greek Orthodox church, built in 1677 on the corner of what is still known as Greek Street.

## 18<sup>th</sup> – 19<sup>th</sup> Centuries:

The influx of immigrants and artisans to the Soho neighbourhood led, gradually, to the departure of the aristocrats for the newly fashionable Mayfair, where most had resettled by the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century. They were replaced, over the course of the ensuing Centuries, by more artists, actors, musicians, and other creatives. A number of Italians made the journey, drawn by the



The plaque erected at 41 Beak Street by London County Council in 1925

prospect of wealthy patrons just as the patrons themselves had been drawn to Italy by the lure of the Grand Tour. Jacopo Amigoni, known for his mythological schemes, spent a decade in London from 1729-39, while the view painter Antonio Joli arrived in 1744 and stayed until the end of the decade. Francesco Zuccarelli left his native Venice for London in 1752 and liked it so much he spent the majority of the next two decades there, becoming a founding member of the Royal Academy in 1768. But there was one Italian painter in particular who made a more lasting impression than perhaps any other during his English sojourn, when he lived in the heart of Soho at what is now number 41 Beak Street: Giovanni Antonio Canal, called Canaletto.



Giovanni Antonio Canal, called Canaletto, *The City of London from the River Thames with St. Paul's Cathedral*, c. 1748, Lobkowitz Palace, Prague

In his invaluable *Memoirs*, George Vertue writes: ‘Latter end of May [1746] came to London from Venice the Famous Painter of Views Cannalotti...of Venice, the Multitude of his works done abroad for English noblemen & Gentlemen has procured him great reputation & his great merit & excellence in that way, he is much esteemed and no doubt but what Views and works He doth here, will give the same satisfaction – though many persons already have so many of his paintings.’ Scholars have suggested that it may have been the limitations on English travel to the Continent during the War of Austrian Succession (1740-48) that initially prompted the famous *vedutista* to seek out his noble patrons on their own soil. He remained in the city for a total of nine years, barring a one-month return to Venice in 1750-51, and attracted new patrons including the 9<sup>th</sup> Duke of Norfolk, the 4<sup>th</sup> Earl of Chesterfield, the 5<sup>th</sup> Lord King, and Thomas Hollis. In total Canaletto painted 48 views of English subjects, 35 of which were views of London.

It was not only painters who lived in the Soho neighbourhood; the area attracted artisans of all varieties. When, on 25 July 1749, Canaletto advertised the viewing of one of his new London panoramas, he recorded his address ‘at Mr. Richard Wiggan’s, Cabinet-Maker, in Silver-Street [now Beak St.], Golden Square.’ Around the corner, at number 12 Greek Street, was the pottery studio of Josiah Wedgewood (from 1774-95), who collaborated with George Stubbs in addition to producing his fashionable china. The local creatives, seeking a gathering place, founded the Literary Club in 1764 at the Turk’s Head on Gerrard Street. It was initially organised by Joshua Reynolds and Samuel Johnson, and, by the time Johnson died in 1784, had grown to 35 members.



William Walker, after James Doyle, *A literary party at Sir Joshua Reynolds*, 1848, The British Museum, London. Figures include Joshua Reynolds, Samuel Johnson and Edmund Burke among others, many of whom were members of the Club on Gerrard Street



Soho continued to be a destination of choice for artists and musicians in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, when John Constable – more typically associated with Hampstead – lived for a time on Frith Street, while the poet Percy Bysshe Shelley was on Poland Street and the Hungarian composer Franz Liszt on Great Marlborough Street.

## 20<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> Centuries:

“London, like the paint I use, seems to be in my bloodstream” (Leon Kossoff)

Soho in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was a very different place to the Soho frequented by the *milordi* who patronised Canaletto’s studio in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century. In 1906, Inspector McKay of the Met’s C Division called Greek St ‘The worst street in the West End of London...I will go further and say that some of the vilest reptiles in London live there or frequent it.’ By way of riposte, the Rev. J.H. Cardwell of St Anne’s in Soho declared: ‘I will say that there is not a single disreputable character in Greek Street. I will even go so far as to say that there is scarcely one in the whole of Soho.’ The truth was probably somewhere in between, with artists and other creatives mingling with prostitutes and petty criminals in the streets and drinking establishments of the neighbourhood.

Among the landmarks were some of London’s oldest pubs, including two on Greek Street: the Hercules Pillars, on whose site there had been a pub since 1733, and the Coach & Horses, around since 1724. On the other side of Golden Square was The Black Horse on Rathbone Place, whose doors opened in 1809, where Keith Vaughan later depicted the loneliness of solitary drinkers. Along with The Wheatsheaf, The French House, The Burglar’s Rest, The Marquis of Granby and others, these pubs served as meeting places for those on the fringes of society – not only artists, but also anyone who identified as ‘queer’ or ‘other’ in the days when society was closed to them. Kit Wood, for instance, having blended seamlessly into Parisian *avant-garde* circles, quickly found his place in Soho following his return to London in 1926.



Henri Matisse, *The Red Studio*, 1911, previously in the bar at The Gargoyle Club, 69 Dean Street, now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York



The famous green interior of The Colony Room Club, 41 Dean Street

In addition to pubs, Soho became known for social clubs, which proliferated in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century as gathering places for creatives. The Gargoyle club was founded at 69 Dean St in 1925, with a theatrical interior designed by Henri Matisse, Edwin Lutyens and Augustus John; Matisse was made an honorary member for his trouble. The members, inclined towards the more glamorous

end of society, included Somerset Maugham, Noel Coward, Virginia Woolf, Duncan Grant and Adele Astaire, among others. The Colony Room Club, on the other hand, attracted some of the grittier members of London's artistic scene. Founded at 41 Dean Street in 1948 by Muriel Belcher, it became the favoured meeting place for artists including Bacon – who, having walked in the day after the club opened, was given free drinks and £10 per week to bring in his wealthy friends and patrons – and Lucian Freud, as well as David Bowie, and many of the so-called Young British Artists of the 1990s. 1985 saw the founding of the Groucho club, named for Groucho Marx and frequented by leading names in publishing, media and entertainment.



Costume designs by Pablo Picasso for *Le Tricorne* by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, 1919

Soho was also home to a rotating landscape of theatres and musical venues, including the sleazier establishments that sprung up in the Post-War era as well as more wholesome ones. The Windmill Theatre was established on Great Windmill Street in 1931, and soon began offering nude 'tableaux vivants', based on the successes of Paris's Folies Bergère and Moulin Rouge theatres. It continued to be a destination for theatre aficionados and aspiring actors and actresses, as well as the artists who painted them, including the glamorous Hitchcock blonde Madeleine Carroll, painted by Herbert James Gunn in 1931. Even Picasso made an appearance, in 1919, for the premiere of *Le Tricorne* by Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, having designed the set and costumes. The late 1950s saw the openings of the Marquee Club (1958) and Ronnie Scott's (1959) in quick succession, both Jazz and live music venues that hosted a range of leading lights in the industry. Soho is inextricably linked with the 'Swinging 60s', a cultural revolution that encompassed music, fashion, political activism and women's liberation, among other movements. In the 1980s, Soho became a centre for queer culture, with members of the gay and lesbian community finding themselves welcome in establishments run by friends and associates.

One of the most vital parts of the artistic scene in Soho in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century was the breadth and depth of artistic friendships formed in the neighbourhood. Freud reportedly saw Bacon every day for 25 years after their first meeting in the mid-1940s, and the two can be seen together in a



1963 John Deakin photograph along with friends and fellow artists Frank Auerbach, Michael Andrews and Timothy Behrens. These artists collected one another's work and became parts of one another's families: Freud, for instance, was the son-in-law of the sculptor Jacob Epstein through his marriage to first wife Kitty Garman. They shared studios – John Minton worked alongside Keith Vaughan – as well as relationships (Epstein was involved with Isobel Rawsthorne, who also had an affair with Bacon; Minton was briefly in an amorous triangle with Adrian Ryan and Freud) and sat for one another's portraits. Together, the artists of the Soho school painted and exhibited, establishing themselves as a counterpoint to the Abstract Expressionism that dominated in Europe and America.



John Deakin, *Wheeler's Lunch*, 1963

Left to right: Timothy Behrens, Lucian Freud, Francis Bacon, Frank Auerbach, Michael Andrews

Soho in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century is a very different place, with landmark pubs replaced by chain restaurants and sleazy revues with family-friendly musicals. The emerging artists have mainly fled the neighbourhood, pushed east by rising rents. Many up and coming names have left London entirely, while those more established artists who are in a financial position to afford the expense of the metropolis still choose to live elsewhere: Tracey Emin in Margate, David Hockney in Normandy and Damien Hirst in Devon.

## Conclusion:

Although Soho's heyday as the nucleus of London's avant-garde scene may be behind us, its legacy is far-reaching. Thanks to a combination of affordable accommodation, a host of venues for socialising and swapping ideas, a lively theatre scene and proximity to wealthy patrons and collectors, Soho was uniquely positioned to serve as a creative melting pot for over three centuries. Its streets, bars, stages and denizens are memorialised in some of Britain's most innovative artworks, the influence of which continues to be felt today.

## Exhibited Artworks:

**Frank Auerbach (b. 1931)**

*Head of JYM III*, 1980

chalk and charcoal on paper  
76.2 x 58.4 cm. (30 x 23 in.)

£260,000 + ARR

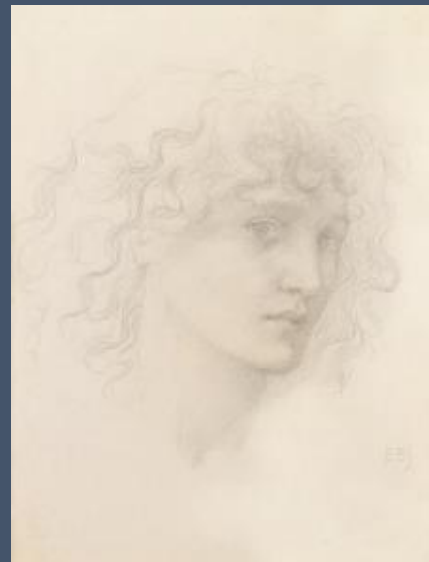


**Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones, Bt., A.R.A (1833 – 1898)**

*Study for 'Laus Veneris'*, c. 1873

signed with initials lower right *EBJ*  
pencil on paper  
21.6 x 17.2 cm. (8 ½ x 6 ¾ in.)

£68,000



All prices may be subject to Import VAT

**Sir Jacob Epstein, K.B.E. (1880 – 1959)**

*Isabel Nicholas Rawsthorne, 1932*

bronze with a light brown patina  
71 x 63 cm. (28 x 25 in.)  
cast in an edition of 5; this cast 3/5

£75,000 + ARR



**Reginald Grenville Eves, R.A. (1876 – 1941)**

*The Misses Hunter (after John Singer Sargent)*

oil on canvas  
63.5 x 76.2 cm. (25 x 30 in.)

£11,000



**Dame Elisabeth Frink, R.A. (1930 – 1993)**

*Horse maquette, 1980*

signed and numbered on the bronze base *Frink 1/8*  
bronze on a black marble base  
excluding base: 32.2 x 33.7 x 9.8 cm.  
(12 3/4 x 13 1/4 x 4 in.)  
cast in an edition of 8; this cast 1/8

£120,000 + ARR



All prices may be subject to Import VAT



**Lucian Freud, O.M., C.H. (1922 – 2011)**

*Portrait of a man, c. 1955*

oil on canvas

50.8 x 40.6 cm. (20 x 16 in.)

Price on Request



All prices may be subject to Import VAT



Lucian Freud, O.M., C.H. (1922 - 2011)

*Profile Donegal Man*, 2008

oil on canvas

52 x 40.5 cm (20 ½ x 16 in.)

Price on Request



All prices may be subject to Import VAT

**Henri Gascar (1635 – 1701)**

*Portrait of a Court Beauty, believed to be Nell Gwynn, reclining in a landscape*

oil on canvas  
128.4 x 186.5 cm. (50 ½ x 73 ¾ in.)

£70,000



**Herbert James Gunn (1893 – 1964)**

*Madeleine Carroll (1906 – 1987) in a white evening gown, possibly by Fortuny, c. 1931*

signed lower right *H. James Gunn*  
oil on canvas  
127x 96.5 cm. (50 x 38 in.)

£78,000 + ARR



**Sir Thomas Lawrence, P.R.A. (1769 – 1830)**

*Mrs. Thomas Oom, née Papendiek, later Mrs Joseph Planta (1783 – 1854), c. 1805*

oil on canvas  
76.2 x 63.5 cm. (30 x 25 in.)

Price on Request



All prices may be subject to Import VAT



**Frederic, Lord Leighton of Stretton,  
P.R.A., R.W.S., H.R.C.A., H.R.S.W.  
(1830 – 1896)**

*The Rocks of the Sirens, Capri, c. 1859*

oil on canvas laid down on board  
25.4 x 38.8 cm. (10 x 15 ½ in.)

£72,000



**John Minton (1917 – 1957)**

*London, 1941*

signed, dated and inscribed lower right  
*John Minton May 1941, For Peter*  
oil on canvas  
25.4 x 40.1 cm. (10 x 15 ¾ in.)

£65,000 + ARR



**John Minton (1917 – 1957)**

*Portrait of a Man (thought to be David Tindle),  
1952*

signed and dated upper right *John Minton 1952*  
pen and ink on paper  
38 x 22 cm. (14 15/16 x 11 11/16 in.)

£19,500 + ARR



All prices may be subject to Import VAT

**Christopher R.W. Nevinson, A.R.A  
(1889 – 1946)**

*Figures walking by the docks, c. 1934*

signed lower left *C.R.W. NEVINSON*  
oil on canvas  
61 x 76 cm. (24 x 30 in.)

£85,000



**Sir Joshua Reynolds, P.R.A. (1723 – 1792)**

*Portrait of Mrs. Moses Franks, half length, in a white dress with blue sash, 1766*

oil on canvas; in a painted oval  
75 x 63.5 cm (29 ½ x 25 in.)

Price on Request

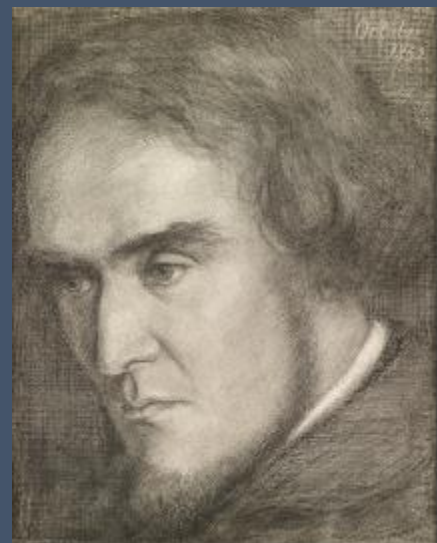


**Dante Gabriel Charles Rossetti (1828 – 1882)**

*William Bell Scott (1811 – 1890), 1852*

dated upper right *October 1852*  
pencil, chalk and wash on paper  
29.8 x 24.1cm. (11 ¾ x 9 ½ in.)

£88,000



All prices may be subject to Import VAT

**Walter Richard Sickert (1860 – 1942)**

*The Rialto Bridge and the Palazzo dei Camerlenghi,*  
c. 1901-02

oil on canvas  
75 x 52 cm. (29 ½ x 20 ½ in.)

Price on Request



All prices may be subject to Import VAT



**John Smart (1741 – 1811)**

*A Lady, wearing fur-bordered mauve dress and with pink powdered hair, 1785*

signed with initials and dated lower left J.S. / 1785  
watercolour on ivory  
5.4 x 3.8 cm. (2 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 1 <sup>1</sup>/<sub>2</sub> in.)

£35,000



**David Tindle (b. 1932)**

*Portrait of John Minton (1917 – 1957), c. 1951*

signed with initials and dated lower right  
DDT, 51

inscribed verso *From John Gawsforth's Collection,  
21 Warwick Crescent. 1953*

37.4 x 27.3 cm. (14 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>7</sub> x 10 <sup>5</sup>/<sub>7</sub> in.)

£8,500 + ARR



**Keith Vaughan (1912 – 1977)**

*Study for 'Discovery: At the beginning of time', c. 1950-51*

oil on board  
40.5 x 84 cm. (15 <sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 33 in.)

£120,000 + ARR



All prices may be subject to Import VAT

**Keith Vaughan (1912 – 1977)**

*Study for 'The Bar', 1953*

signed lower centre *Keith Vaughan*  
gouache and ink on paper  
16.8 x 13.5 cm. (6 ½ x 5 ¼ in.)

£28,000 + ARR



**Walter Ernest Webster, R.I., R.O.I. (1877 – 1959)**

*Isabella with a violin*

signed lower right *Webster*  
oil on canvas  
76.2 x 63.5 cm. (30 x 25 in.)

£9,000 + ARR



**Christopher Wood (1901 – 1930)**

*Three Figures, c. 1926*

oil on canvas  
100.5 x 65.5 cm. (39 ½ x 25 ¾ in.)

£4,500



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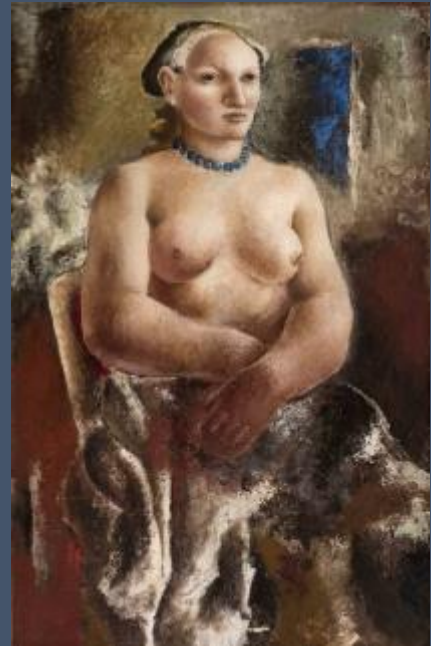
**Christopher Wood (1901 – 1930)**

*The Blue Necklace (Portrait of Frosca Munster)*, 1928

oil on canvas

100.5 x 65.5 cm. (39 ½ x 25 ¾ in.)

£350,000



**Jack Butler Yeats (1871 – 1957)**

*The Last Corinthian*, 1910

signed lower right *JACK.B.YEATS.*

oil on canvas

38 x 28 cm. (15 x 11 in.)

£210,000 + ARR



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Frieze Masters  
Gloucester Green  
The Regent's Park  
NW1 4HA

+44 (020) 3372 6111  
[www.frieze.com](http://www.frieze.com)

Simon C. Dickinson Ltd.  
58 Jermyn Street  
London  
SW1Y 6LX

+44 (020) 7493 0340  
[london@simondickinson.com](mailto:london@simondickinson.com)  
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