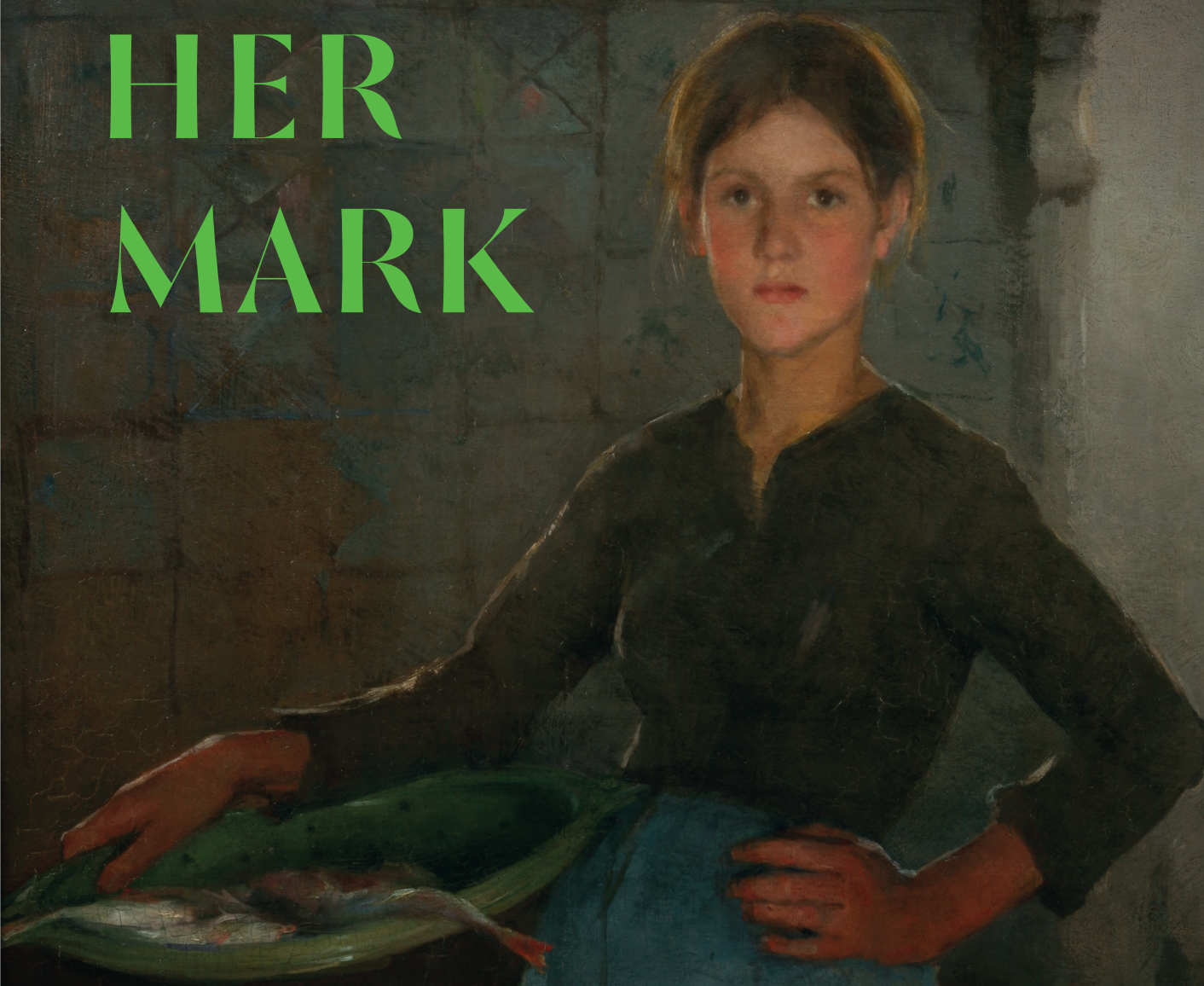


# MAKING HER MARK

PENLEE HOUSE  
— ⊕ —  
Gallery & Museum



**A CELEBRATION OF WOMEN IN ART**

**30 APRIL – 27 SEPTEMBER**

**PENLEE HOUSE GALLERY & MUSEUM**

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Elizabeth Adela Forbes, The Zandvoort Fishergirl.  
Image courtesy Penlee House Gallery & Museum, on loan from Newlyn Art Gallery

# MAKING HER MARK

## A CELEBRATION OF WOMEN IN ART

Bringing together over fifty artworks from Penlee House Gallery & Museum (Penzance), Museums Worcestershire, and OnFife (Scotland), ***Making Her Mark*** highlights the creativity, innovation and determination of some of the women who have shaped British art from the nineteenth century to the present day.

In the 1850s, influential art critic John Ruskin (1819-1900) popularised the view that greatness in art was, *'beyond the female range.'* Women artists have consistently disproved this, challenging – and breaking through – barriers restricting access to training, exhibition spaces, and commercial and critical success. The contribution of women in art is now being re-evaluated, and inequalities are being addressed by critics, the marketplace, and museums and galleries.

However, the legacy of centuries of inequality cannot be dismissed. As recently as 2018 artist and professor Joan Semmel stated, *'if there are no great celebrated women artists, that's because the powers that be have not been celebrating them, not because they are not there.'*

Historical exclusion means that women artists remain hugely under-represented in public art collections, including our own. We are actively looking to remedy this through making informed choices around collecting policies and seeking out opportunities to review and redress overall diversity in our collections.

*Making Her Mark* explores the challenges faced by women artists, celebrates their achievements, and looks to the future. The story of art is still being written...

# EMERGING FROM THE SHADOWS

Historically, women were prevented from joining art academies and societies, attending life classes, entering competitions and exhibiting. Most 'known' female artists were the daughters or sisters of male artists or had wealthy fathers who did not actively discourage them. Some pretended to be male – Rosa Bonheur (1822-1899), for example, wore men's clothing to attend horse fairs and study animal anatomy.

Exclusion from life classes, which taught anatomy, saw women confined to less prestigious subjects and it was not unusual for art dealers to scratch out a woman artist's signature and replace it with that of a male contemporary, making it easier to sell.

The British art world was dominated by the Royal Academy (RA), established 1768. Two of the thirty-four founding members were women, Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807) and Mary Moser (1744-1819), but women were not yet admitted to the RA schools. In 1860, Laura Herford sent in a drawing signed L. A. Herford. She was accepted before anyone realised she wasn't a man. This 'mistake' opened the door for other women.

Women formed their own societies and opened all-female or mixed schools. From the late nineteenth century access to state-funded education forced art institutions to modernise. Even so, when Laura Knight (1877-1970) created *Self Portrait with Nude* in 1913, a first for a woman artist, it was rejected by the RA and labelled 'vulgar' by the *Daily Telegraph*.

A small number of women were honorary or associate members of the Royal Academy and the Royal Scottish Academy (founded 1826), but it was not until 1936 that Dame Laura Knight became the first elected woman academician. In 1944, sculptor Phyllis Mary Bone (1894-1972) became the first woman elected to the Royal Scottish Academy.

# THE POWER OF COLLABORATION

The popular idea of the artist as a 'solitary male genius' excluded many people from the story of art, including women and those marginalised by class or race. Women have challenged this model through collaboration with partners, peers, and artist colonies or societies. Access to shared resources and ideas offered practical advantages, while working alongside established artists (who were often men) created opportunities for greater visibility, recognition, and success.

Art collectives play a vital role in the story of women in art. From the late nineteenth century, the Newlyn School, Lamorna Colony, and later the St Ives Modernists in Cornwall provided space where women could work and exhibit alongside male peers, asserting identities beyond wife, mother, model, or muse.

Much depended on the level of support at home, and children also had an impact. In 1889, Elizabeth Armstrong (1859-1912) and Stanhope Forbes (1857-1947) married and ten years later co-founded the Forbes School of Painting in Newlyn, heralded as a 'new era' in British painting. The marriage was one of mutual respect, but prevailing expectations of women as wives and mothers limited the recognition of Elizabeth's career.

A generation later, Dame Laura Knight played a central role in the Newlyn and Lamorna Schools, alongside her husband, Harold Knight (1874-1961). The couple did not have children, she continually experimented with subject matter, and her reputation eventually surpassed that of her husband.

Despite the limited progress experienced by some artists, inequalities persisted. In the 1940s, for example, Fife-born Wilhelmina Barns-Graham (1912-2004) joined St Ives' vibrant modernist community. It proved a turning point in her career, but she felt that the male artists were still offered far greater opportunities to exhibit and gain recognition.

Today, there are many artist co-operatives, such as the Glasgow Print Studio (founded in 1972) that continue to promote equality. Digital networks have enabled artists to form increasingly diverse, interdisciplinary, and global partnerships.

# CHANGING SUBJECTS

For centuries, the canon of 'great art' revolved around the human figure – a tradition that largely excluded women. Denied access to life-drawing classes because of taboos around nudity, women artists were restricted to 'acceptable' subjects such as still-life, botanical studies, portraits of friends, and domestic interiors.

Scenes of motherhood, ritual, and everyday life were often dismissed as minor or decorative, yet artists such as Elizabeth Forbes and Dod Procter (1890-1972) reveal deep insight into the private worlds that male artists rarely depicted.

During the twentieth century, changing social conditions and greater access to training broke new ground. Women such as Laura Knight and Joan Eardley (1921-1963) began to paint industrial scenes and urban life, forging paths far beyond decorative or domestic expectation.

As the century progressed, women were increasingly able to travel, make socio-political commentaries, turn to ecological activism, and produce striking abstract compositions - often creating artworks that challenged narrow gender expectations and defied easy categorisation.

The feminist art movement of the 1960s and 1970s had a transformative impact on subject matter, encouraging artists like Lys Hansen (b. 1936) and later Tracey Emin (b. 1963) to make art about their own bodies and challenge identity politics. Art emerged as a powerful form of activism, exploring the interconnections between gender, race, class, and sexuality.

Today, women are not confined by genre. Their work spans painting, performance, film, digital media, and social practice. From reimagining domestic spaces to tackling global systems of power, women continue to explore and expand what art can be, do, and represent.

# A SENSE OF SELF

In her book *The Mirror and the Palette* (2021) Jennifer Higgie proposes that the self-portrait holds special significance for women artists. Historically less able to access models, particularly nude models, a woman's self, seen in reflection, was a readily available subject.

Artists such as Paula Rego (1935-2022) used the self-portrait to work through love, loss, illness, ageing, and other milestones. Some, like Frida Kahlo (1907-1954) employed it to navigate ideas around pregnancy, childbirth and motherhood, taking an 'anti-beauty' approach, far removed from the Madonna and Child.

In 1963, feminist writer Betty Friedan coined the phrase 'the feminine mystique' to describe society's assumptions that women would be fulfilled by housework, marriage and children. Women who were truly 'feminine' were not expected to work, get an education, or have political opinions.

As feminism gained ground, women artists created work that displaced the traditional view of 'suitable' subject matter and challenged the way the female body is represented, moving away from the dominant 'male gaze' – the saintly mother, the goddess, the damsel in distress, the femme fatale.

In 1985, artist activists the Guerrilla Girls made a poster that asked, '*Do women have to be naked to get into New York's Metropolitan Museum of Art?*' Their point? Less than 5% of the artists in the Modern Art Sections are women; 85% of the nudes are female.

Women used their art to reference the daily challenge of balancing creativity with the role of carer, mother, and partner. Artists like Caroline Walker (b. 1982) explore women's paid work but also their unpaid domestic labour – shining a light on an essential, but often invisible, contribution to society.

# RECOGNITION AND CELEBRATION

In the UK women take up two-thirds of places on creative arts courses and around 50% of visual artists are women. However, the struggle for recognition and representation continues. In 2020 Katy Hessel, author of *The Story of Art Without Men*, conducted a YouGov survey – 30% of respondents could name no more than three women artists, while 83% of 18–24 year-olds could not even manage that. Over half said they had not been taught about women artists at school.

However, thanks to scholars, curators, educators and artists, there has been a marked improvement in the way women artists are studied, collected and valued. Exhibitions, solo shows and retrospectives featuring women artists are on the increase.

Historical exhibitions at major galleries, for example Artemisia Gentileschi (1593-1645) in 2021 and Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807) in 2024, are reshaping perceptions of women in art history. Solo exhibitions, such as Marina Abramovic's takeover of the Royal Academy's Main Galleries in 2023, are raising the profile of living women artists.

The National Portrait Gallery has re-displayed its twentieth and twenty-first century galleries, increasing the number of works by or featuring women from 37% to 48%. Women artists make up just 1% of the collections held by the National Gallery, but they are reviewing this, as are many other museums and galleries.

In 2011 the Royal Academy appointed its first female Professors, Tracey Emin and Fiona Rae. Eileen Cooper became the first female Keeper of the Royal Academy Schools, succeeded in 2017 by Rebecca Salter. In 2018 Joyce W. Cairns was elected the first woman President of the Royal Scottish Academy. Might the next President of the Royal Academy be a woman?

## **Emerging From The Shadows**

Elizabeth Adela Forbes née  
Armstrong ARWS (1859 - 1912)

### **A Zandvoort Fishergirl, 1884**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum,  
on loan from Newlyn Art Gallery*

Following training in London and Munich, Elizabeth Armstrong sought artistic inspiration, first in Brittany and then Holland. In 1884, at the age of 25, Elizabeth travelled to the Dutch coastal town of Zandvoort. This period marked an important stage in her artistic development, as she absorbed the influence of Dutch masters such as Vermeer, particularly in her sensitive handling of light and restrained colour. Deeply responsive to the artistic environments she encountered, she used each new influence to refine her own emerging style. In 1885, Elizabeth travelled to Newlyn, where she was to meet fellow artist Stanhope Forbes. In 1889 they married, making Newlyn their home and setting up the Forbes School of Painting in 1899. *A Zandvoort Fishergirl* echoes the Dutch masters with its calm palette, uncluttered background, and beautifully controlled backlighting. This portrait of a local girl hints at themes Forbes would later explore in Newlyn – everyday subjects rendered with dignity, clarity, and a quiet emotional depth.

Top: Elizabeth Adela Forbes née  
Armstrong ARWS (1859 - 1912)

### **Museum Interior, c.1875**

Oil on panel

*Penlee House - donated in 2007 by  
the Artist's Estate*

Born in Ontario, Canada, the much-loved youngest child of a Canadian government official, Elizabeth

Armstrong came to England in the 1870s, chaperoned by her mother, to study art at the South Kensington schools. Her father's sudden death led to a brief return to Canada, after which her studies continued in New York, London and Munich. Further trips throughout Europe gave Elizabeth the opportunity to experience life and draw inspiration from different communities. This work demonstrates the constraints faced by women artists in the nineteenth century. Denied access to life drawing at art schools, due to the presence of naked - often male - bodies, the study of busts and statues was a commonplace substitute.

Bottom: Peter Wishart (1846 - 1932)

### **SSA Life School, c.1880s**

Oil on board

*On Fife on behalf of Fife Council,  
purchased with assistance from the  
National Fund for Acquisitions and  
the Art Fund 1964, conserved with  
assistance from the Art Fund 2025*

This little Oil is interesting because it's a male artist painting a group of women artists painting. Born near Aberdour, Fife, Wishart was a great supporter of Scottish art. In 1891 he was one of several younger academicians who formed the Scottish Society of Artists, a breakaway group who felt that the Royal Scottish Academy should be more progressive in terms of representing new movements in art and supporting women artists. This was probably painted around the 1880s. It may be the Scottish Society of Artists (SSA) life schools, but it could also be the Scottish Art Atelier life schools. We can see that the models are heavily draped – it was considered unseemly for women to draw or paint the naked human figure. The lack of access to life drawing

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classes with nude models made it difficult for women to study anatomy, restricting their choice of subject matter.

**Katherine Cameron (1874 - 1965)**

### **Bumble Bees and Plant**

Etching

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, donated by Elizabeth Clarke 2007*

A landscape and botanical artist, Cameron was also a talented etcher, a skill shared with her brother, David Young Cameron of Glasgow Boys fame. She trained at the Glasgow School of Art and, along with Margaret and Frances Macdonald and Charles Rennie Mackintosh, was part of a group of artist-friends known as The Immortals. She is associated with the Glasgow Girls, influential artists and designers, including the Macdonald sisters, Jessie M. King and Bessie MacNicol. Cameron travelled Europe with her husband Arthur Kay, the art connoisseur and collector. He supported her career and they were popular figures in the Scottish art world. Praised for her 'sensitive draughtsmanship' and mastery of light, she was a member of the Royal Scottish Society of Painters in Watercolour from the age of twenty-two. Elected Associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers in 1920, she was also a member of the Glasgow Society of Lady Artists.

**Dame Laura Knight née Johnson RA (1877 - 1970)**

### **Topping Carrots, c.1904-1907**

Mixed media on paper

*Penlee House - bequeathed by Fay Juliet Huleatt-Boyd, 2025*

Born in Derbyshire, Laura's father died when she was six. Her mother taught at the Nottingham Art School and encouraged Laura to paint, becoming a

student at the School at the age of thirteen and later, a tutor. It was here that she met her future husband, Harold Knight, with whom she spent time in Staithes, a small fishing village in Yorkshire, and in Holland, where they studied the Dutch masters. In 1907, the Knights came to Cornwall, at first taking lodgings in Newlyn and later moving to Lamorna, where they became central figures in the growing artists' colony. The inclusion of the clogs as a style of footwear dates this picture to 1904-07, when the Knights made their first visit to Laren, Holland. This painting is an example of the domestic interiors that she painted at the start of her career. It is possible that this work is *Scraping Carrots*, exhibited at the Knight's Leicester Galleries exhibition in 1906.

**Top: Alethea Garstin (1894 - 1978)**

### **The Studio at Wellington Terrace** Oil on board

*Penlee House - purchased by the Friends of Penlee House, 2014*  
Penzance-born artist Alethea Garstin trained briefly at Heatherley's School of Fine Art but was otherwise taught by her father, the influential Newlyn School painter Norman Garstin. Accepted into the Royal Academy at 18, she built a long career marked by travel, illustration work for publications such as Punch, and close friendships with artists including Dod Procter. In 1940 she exhibited over sixty works at the Adams Gallery in Pall Mall. Her affluent upbringing afforded her the resources and freedom to focus on her creative development and she later became influenced by the Fauvist movement, which focused on personal expression and the emotional potential of colour. A well-loved figure in the Cornish art community, she was later praised by acclaimed artist Patrick Heron as

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'England's greatest Post-Impressionist painter.' This work depicts the artist's studio hut in the garden of the family home, which was adjacent to what is now Penlee Park.

Bottom: Helene Schjerfbeck (1862 - 1946)

### **Chicken among Cornstooks, aka Hons bland hostacker, c.1888**

Oil on panel

*Penlee House - purchased with funding from the Art Fund, the V&A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund and the Friends of Penlee House, 2007*

Schjerfbeck was one of the first European artists to visit St Ives, Cornwall. Born in Finland, her childhood was blighted by illness but the provision of drawing materials to relieve boredom ignited her artistic talent. She began studying at the Finnish Art Society's Drawing School aged 11, with help from a private benefactor. In 1880, she received a travel grant enabling her to study in Paris, where she met Austrian artist Marianne Preindsberger. In 1887 she received another grant, using it to visit Marianne – now married to artist Adrian Stokes - in St Ives. Helene re-visited St Ives in 1889 but returned to Finland the following year. She became a recluse, resulting in the self portraits for which she is most famous. This painting shows cornstooks or 'mows' in West Cornwall. The French Realist influence can be clearly seen in this early example of her 'en plein air' work.

Mary Jane Newill (1860 - 1947)

### **The Garden of Adonis, c.1898**

Embroidered, applique hanging  
*Worcestershire County Collection*

Mary Jane Newill was closely associated with the Bromsgrove Guild of Applied Arts – an influential Arts and

Crafts collective based in the Midlands. Trained at the Birmingham School of Art, she worked across a wide range of media including stained glass, embroidery, illustration, and painting. Newill built her career through a combination of private and public commissions and was one of the first women to exhibit stained-glass designs at the Arts and Crafts Exhibition Society in London. The *Garden of Adonis* was commissioned for the home of architect E. Butler in Sutton Coldfield. This embroidered hanging draws inspiration from classical mythology, depicting the myth of Adonis, a youth whose untimely death led to the creation of the 'Gardens of Adonis.' These gardens symbolised the fleeting nature of life, with fast-growing plants that withered quickly, mirroring Adonis's short-lived existence.

Gillian Ayres (1930 - 2018)

### **Sikar II, 1993**

Carborundum etching on paper  
*Worcester City Collection Gift from the Contemporary Art Society*

Gillian Ayres was one of Britain's leading abstract artists, celebrated for her bold use of colour, energetic brushwork, and commitment to the physical joy of painting. Born in London in 1930, she studied at Camberwell School of Art from the age of 16, where she began to develop her anti-authoritarian interest in abstraction. By the 1950s she was exhibiting with prominent abstract artists. Ayres was also a highly respected art educator, becoming the Head of Painting at Winchester School of Art - the first woman in Britain to hold such a position. Known for her resistance to rigid formalism, she had a lasting influence on generations of students. A monumental explosion of colour and energy, *Sikar II* exemplifies Ayres's

exuberant approach to abstraction during the early 1980s. The painting's title, drawn from Ayres's fondness for evocative and often geographically inspired names, hints at a sense of distant places without imposing narrative constraints.

Joan Manning-Sanders (1913 - 2002)

**St Anthony and the Pigs, 1932**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House - Gift of the Artist's son*

Joan was home schooled and self-taught. Her parents were friends with many of the Newlyn artists and, realising her talent, built her a studio at their home. At the age of twelve, Rev. Bernard Walke asked Joan to produce a series of New Testament themed watercolours for St Hilary church near Penzance. In 1927 Joan exhibited two paintings, produced a year earlier, in the Daily Express 'Young Artists' Exhibition' at the Royal Society of British Artists. Her work was so good the organisers mistook her age for 18 rather than 13. The following year, she came to national prominence as the youngest person ever to have a painting hung at the RA. However, by her thirties, Joan had all but disappeared into obscurity. Produced when she was only 19, this almost life-size work demonstrates the artist's skill in the figurative style. St Anthony followed the teachings of Jesus by giving up material possessions and living a very simple life, including working as a swineherd.

Bessie Davidson (1879 - 1965)

**Interior**

Oil on board

*On Fife on behalf of Fife Council, donated by Samuel Davidson 1936, conserved with assistance*

*from the Friends of Kirkcaldy Galleries 2026*

Born in Adelaide, Australia, to Scottish parents, Davidson is known for her impressionistic still lifes and interiors. She travelled widely with her mentor, the artist Rose McPherson (better known as Margaret Preston) but settled in Paris in 1910. In 1922 she became the first Australian woman elected to the Société Nationale des Beaux-Arts. Her leadership of women artists – informally through friendships and formally through organisations such as the Femmes Artistes Moderne – encouraged others to expand their horizons. During World War One (1914-18) she joined the French Red Cross. In 1931 she was appointed to the Legion d'honneur, the highest order of merit in France. Davidson's interiors present the feminine and domestic as worthy of artistic exploration. Open windows or doors allowed her to experiment with light and shadow. They also signify freedom – the world beyond. Carefully curated objects – books, textiles and furnishings – hint at the fullness of her own life.

Bridget MacDonald (b.1943)

**Winter Cattle, 2005-6**

Oil on linen

*Worcester City Collection*

Bridget Macdonald was born on a working farm in the Isle of Wight. After time spent in various jobs and bringing up three children, she studied Fine Art in the 1980s at Stourbridge College of Art and Wolverhampton Polytechnic. Her large-scale works draw deeply on rural life, literature, and art history, often referencing classical painters like Poussin and Claude. *Winter Cattle* was inspired by the vast views of Worcestershire seen from her Malvern

roof terrace and from the ten acres of land she and her husband tend in the Suckley Valley. The Black Galloway cattle depicted here were reintroduced to graze the area around to maintain shrub growth and protect rare grassland plants. The painting blends her personal experience of the area with almost mythological imagery, creating a meditative work that speaks to the continuity between past and present and explores themes of landscape and memory.

Anne Walke née Fearon (1877 - 1965)

**White Tulips, c.1910**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House - acquired with the help of the Friends of Penlee House as a memorial to the late Patrick West, 1998*

Born in London, Anne Walke (née Fearon) moved to Cornwall after her marriage to Bernard Walke, who was a Curate in Fowey at the time. Having studied at both the Chelsea and London Schools of Art, she continued to paint, exhibiting regularly in London, including at the Royal Academy. In 1912, Bernard was offered the post as Vicar of St Hilary Church, seven miles east of Penzance, where the couple stayed for over twenty years. The couple were close friends of many of the Lamorna Colony of artists, and Bernard invited several of the artists - including Dod and Ernest Procter, Laura Knight and Harold and Gertrude Harvey - to join Anne in decorating the church with religious panels and altar pieces. As much of her art centres around religious themes and church commissions, it is interesting to see a different subject in *White Tulips*.

Barbara Hepworth (1903 - 1975)

**Untitled**

Screenprint with pencil overlay  
*Worcester City Collection*

Barbara Hepworth was a pioneering British modernist sculptor known for her abstract, organic forms. She was born in Wakefield, Yorkshire, and studied at the Leeds School of Art alongside Henry Moore, later continuing at the Royal College of Art in London. In the 1930s, Hepworth became associated with the international modernist movement and was a founding member of the artists' group Unit One. She moved to St Ives, Cornwall, in 1939, where she lived and worked for the rest of her life. Hepworth gained international recognition during her lifetime, representing Britain at the Venice Biennale in 1950 and receiving a Damehood in 1965. She died in a fire at her studio in 1975 and her legacy is preserved in the Barbara Hepworth Museum and Sculpture Garden, run by Tate.

Dame Maria Paula Figueiroa Rego (1935 - 2022)

**Little Miss Muffet, 1989**

Etching with aquatint  
*Worcester City Collection*

Paula Rego was a renowned Portuguese-British visual artist celebrated for her powerful, often unsettling figurative works that explored themes of gender, power, politics, and storytelling. Born in Lisbon, Portugal, she studied at the Slade School of Fine Art in London in the 1950s and later settled permanently in the UK. Deeply influenced by her upbringing under Portugal's authoritarian regime, Rego used narrative imagery to critique social injustices, especially those affecting women.

*Little Miss Muffet* is part of Rego's Nursery Rhymes series made for her granddaughter. The etching transforms a seemingly innocent nursery rhyme into a psychologically charged scene that evokes a sense of predation and vulnerability. It also evidences Rego's ability to create prints that are both bold and detailed; the hand-shaken aquatint powder has been used to create the starry night sky, and the hairy body of the spider is textured using the point of an etching needle.

Eileen Cooper (b.1953)

**Taking Stock, 1990**

Aquatint & etching

*Worcester City Collection*

Eileen Cooper RA OBE is a British artist renowned for her figurative paintings and prints that explore themes of femininity and human identity. Born in Glossop, Derbyshire, she studied at Goldsmiths College (known for its activist programmes) and the Royal College of Art. In 2001, Cooper was elected a Royal Academician, and in 2010, she became the first woman to be appointed Keeper of the Royal Academy, a position she held until 2017. Her dedication to nurturing emerging artists continues to be a significant aspect of her practice. *Taking Stock* reflects Cooper's ongoing exploration of womanhood, creativity, and self-reflection. The composition is marked by her bold linework and rich, earthy palette, and presents a female figure poised between contemplation and action, 'Taking Stock'. The work is reflective of Cooper's distinctive figurative style, which blends mythic symbolism with introspective meditation.

**IN CASE:**

Ella Naper (1886 - 1972) and Dame Laura Knight RA (1877 - 1970)

**Two Dancers, aka Dancers of the Ballet Russes, c.1915**

Enamel on copper

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum*

The two figures appear to be freely based on Harlequin and Estrella from the ballet 'Carnaval.' This enamel was given by Laura to fellow Lamorna artists Charles and Ruth Simpson.

Ella Naper (1886 - 1972) and Dame Laura Knight RA (1877 - 1970)

**Pendant with waterlily mount and ballerina design, c.1915**

Silver and enamel

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - bequest of Maryella Pigott, 2023*

Although also a painter and potter, Ella Naper is best known for her jewellery and taught Laura Knight the art of enamel work. These two pieces reflect Knight's growing interest in ballet and theatre.

Amelia Robertson Hill (1820 - 1905)

**Portrait of Sir Joseph Noel Paton [1821 – 1901], c.1840s**

Plaster and resin

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, purchased 2007*

Amelia created a remarkable body of work in both bronze and marble. Unusually for a woman, she was awarded several public commissions for statues, including David Livingstone – one of the first full-length public statues in the UK executed by a woman artist – David Hume and Robert Burns. She exhibited at the Royal Academy until 1874 and the Royal Scottish Academy until 1902, two years before her death at

the age of eighty-five. Victorian attitudes towards gender equality meant that Amelia was denied membership of the RSA. She helped found an alternative – the Albert Institute of the Fine Arts – which welcomed women artists on the same level as their male peers.

Amelia Robertson Hill (1820 - 1905)

### **Self Portrait, c.1840s**

Wax

#### *On Fife on behalf of Fife Council*

Born Amelia Paton in Dunfermline, Fife, she became a prominent sculptor at a time when it was very unusual for a woman to be taken seriously in that medium. She was part of a hugely creative family; brother Waller was a successful landscape painter; brother Noël became Painter and Limner to Queen Victoria. She married artist and pioneer photographer, David Octavius Hill, at the age of forty-two. Hill was long-time Secretary to the Royal Scottish Academy. Amelia's familial and marital status provided access to tutors, other artists, studio space and entry into Edinburgh's artistic and literary circles. She also acted as studio assistant to her husband, painting alongside him

### **The Power of Collaboration**

Jessie (Jill) Caroline Dunbar  
Garnier née Blyth (1890 - 1966)

### **Camellias, 1939-1945**

Oil on canvas

#### *Penlee House Gallery & Museum*

Jill studied at Cheltenham Ladies' College and later, in 1913, at the Forbes School of Painting in Newlyn. She married Geoffrey Garnier, a fellow student, in 1917. The couple settled in Newlyn, where they had substantial studios built in their garden. Geoffrey put in a regular day's work as an etcher/engraver for almost 50 years. Jill,

however, had to divide her time between her art and running a home and raising a family.

Her life was one of constant frustration – complaining “Why do I have to spend half my time doing the housekeeping when I could be painting?” – but she continued to paint, albeit intermittently, almost until her death. She was also an accomplished needlewoman, producing exquisite embroideries to her own designs. Jill was known for her portraits and flower paintings. This Impressionist work is rich in colour, with a keen observation of falling light, and looks almost as though it could be embroidered.

Elizabeth Adela Forbes née  
Armstrong ARWS (1859 - 1912)  
**Portrait of Stanhope Forbes at  
the Easel, c.1890**

Chalk on paper

*Worcester City Collection. This  
acquisition was funded by the  
Shirley & Rolf Olsen Purchase  
Fund with support from  
Worcestershire Heritage, Art &  
Museums Charity*

Elizabeth Adela Forbes (née Armstrong) was a Canadian born painter and printmaker who made her career in Britain. She settled in Newlyn, Cornwall, in 1885 where she became a central figure in the collaborative Newlyn Colony and married fellow painter Stanhope Alexander Forbes. Together, the couple co-founded the Forbes School of Art in 1899. Women typically made up 60–75% of the students. This sensitive portrait of Stanhope shows an intimacy and tenderness within the couple's relationship. The Forbes had reciprocal admiration for one another's talent. However, conventional understandings of married

women artists during this period meant Elizabeth came to be regarded as an appendage of her more famous partner, exhibiting as 'Mrs Elizabeth Stanhope Forbes' from 1889. The couple had a son Alec who was tragically killed during the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

Wilhelmina Barns-Graham (1912 - 2004)

**Gurnards Head, No. 2, 1947**

Gouache on paper

*Penlee House - purchased with funding from the Art Fund and the Friends of Penlee House, 2024*

Born in St Andrews, Fife, Barns-Graham studied at Edinburgh College of Art from 1932 until 1937. In 1940 she moved to St Ives, Cornwall after receiving a travel scholarship. She was an active member of the Crypt Group and a founder member of the Penwith Society of Arts, developing her skills as she interacted with artists like Ben Nicholson, Barbara Hepworth and Naum Gabo.

Her work blossomed in the 1950s starting with abstract works but later developing a more confident style as she and her husband, David Lewis, travelled extensively in Europe.

However, as the male artists appeared to grow in popularity in the very competitive environment in St Ives and beyond, Barns-Graham felt her work, and that of other female artists, was being side-lined. Following their divorce in 1963, both her and Lewis enjoyed greater success. Gurnard's Head is an outcrop of rock near Zennor. The nearby pub was a popular watering hole for the St Ives artists.

Wilhelmina Barns-Graham (1912 - 2004)

**Atlantic Squall, 1975**

Ink on paper

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, donated by the Contemporary Art Society 1979*

From 1960 Barns-Graham divided her time between St Ives and the family home she had inherited in St Andrews, Fife. She exhibited regularly at The Scottish Gallery, Edinburgh and her work was championed by major names on the Scottish arts scene. A major reassessment of the St Ives group in the 1980s and 1990s cemented her position as a senior figure in post-war British art. In 1987 she set up a charitable trust, providing bursaries to support art students to travel and create new work. The last few years of her life were a time of extraordinary productivity. She was made CBE in 2001. Atlantic Squall is part of a group of works produced during the 1970s, inspired by sea waves and currents – the ways in which energy finds its forms – created by the meticulous use of a series of numerous parallel lines, painstakingly planned and executed.

Marian Leven (b.1944)

**Yellow Light, c.1998**

Watercolour on paper

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council*

A painter and printmaker, Leven was born in Auchtermuchty, Fife. She studied textiles at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen, where she met the artist, Will Maclean (born 1941). They married in 1962 and had three children. She returned to painting in the 1990s, quickly winning several major awards. Leven shares studio space and gallery representation with Maclean. They have collaborated on numerous land art projects, including the award-winning An Suileachan on the Isle of Lewis, commemorating the island's Land Reform heroes, and the HMV Iolaire

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Centenary Sculpture, a memorial to the 200 Lewis men drowned when the ship sank off Stornoway harbour on New Year's Day, 1919. 'Yellow Light' was painted at Leven's studio in Polbain, Wester Ross: 'The light changes all the time...the weather can be dramatic...My work is about my response to the Scottish landscape and weather, sometimes developed and interpreted in the studio from a fleeting glimpse.'

Hilda Bernstein (1915 - 2006)

### **Forest**

Etching & Aquatint

#### *Worcester City Collection*

Born Hilda Schwarz, Hilda Bernstein was the daughter of Russian-Jewish émigré parents, and her father was the Russian Trade Attaché to Britain. She emigrated from London to South Africa at the age of eighteen, where she joined a circle of activists including Nelson Mandela. Bernstein co-founded the Federation of South African Women and of the South African Peace Council, and married fellow anti-apartheid activist Lionel "Rusty" Bernstein in 1941. She later won an award for her contribution to gender equality and democratic freedom. Bernstein's career as an artist began in exile in London after 1964, following her escape from South Africa to avoid arrest. Despite having no formal training, she became a skilled etcher, printmaker, and painter, mainly producing works that reflected the beauty of the South African landscape, in contrast to the way in which the apartheid regime treated the land and its people.

Kay Walker née Earle (1890 - 1966)

### **Still life with Buddha**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - Gift of Mr & Mrs A Trevillion, 1997*

Kay studied at the Forbes School of Painting around 1910. She was an accomplished designer and painter and, through her design work, met Yorkshire textile manufacturer Alec Walker. During a job interview in London for a position as a designer for Alec's firm, Vigil Silk, her accounts of the artistic community encouraged him to visit Newlyn the very same day. They later married and founded the Cryséde textile company. Kay had a significant role in the development of the business, initially producing dress designs for the printed silk and linens. The thin application of paint and scratching technique used in this painting is reminiscent of Walker's friend and fellow artist, Dod Procter. The textiles draped over the statue of Buddha could well be Cryséde silks, printed in more subtle hues than the vibrant colourways they became known for.

Dod Procter née Shaw RA (1890 - 1972)

### **Portrait of Eileen Mayo, 1920-1930**

Oil on canvas

*Private Collection, on loan to Penlee House Gallery & Museum*

Doris ('Dod') Shaw was seventeen when her mother brought her and her brother to Newlyn to study at the Forbes' School of Painting. It was there that she met fellow student Ernest Procter, whom she married in 1912. Their son, Bill, was born in 1913, the same year that she first exhibited at the Royal Academy. Restricted from access to life classes at the School, many of the female students chose to paint each other. By the 1920s, classes were more accessible nationally and it was during her time as a student at the Slade that Eileen Mayo (1906-1994), began posing

for life classes. She went on to model regularly for Laura and Harold Knight, as well as for Dod. A highly respected artist, Mayo went on to teach at Saint Martin's School of Art before emigrating to Australia then New Zealand. She was made a Dame in the 1994 New Year's Honours, shortly before her death.

## **HALL**

### **Changing Subjects**

Corrina Eastwood

**Rokka Nixi, 2024**

Photographs

*Worcestershire County Collection  
Acquired with the help of the John  
Ellerman Foundation and the  
Elmley Foundation*

Corrina Eastwood is a British artist, art psychotherapist, and activist whose multidisciplinary practice spans film, installation, photography, and performance. Drawing on her Romani heritage and lived experience, Eastwood's work explores identity, marginalisation, and social justice through a distinctly feminist and intersectional lens. Eastwood continues to work at the intersection of creativity and care, challenging dominant narratives and creating inclusive, expressive spaces for underrepresented communities. This photographic series documents traditional cultural practices in a modern society; expressions of grief and death rituals of Romani communities and Romani family. Rokka Nixi meaning Say Nothing in Romanichal (English Romani) is a phrase the artists father would often use when communicating to her to not speak to outsiders.

Ingrid Webendoerfer (b.1945)

**Sofa, 1973**

Screenprint

*Worcester City Collection*

*Purchased by the Contemporary  
Art Society Special Collection*

*Scheme with funds from the Arts  
Council Lottery Fund and the  
Elmley Foundation*

Ingrid Webendörfer's work challenges the functionalism and commercialism of modern life. She has articulated a concern for architecture's loss of character, the degradation of nature, and the alienation of urban inhabitants. By altering photographs of real places, Webendörfer creates uncanny works that can 'resensibilise' viewers to their surroundings and suggest new possibilities for the future. In this surreal domestic scene, a red sofa appears to dissolve into living grass, its organic form echoed in the framed mirror above. The boundary between interior and landscape blurs, suggesting renewal and the quiet encroachment of nature into human space. The work embodies Webendörfer's interest in dreamlike transformations and the tension between constructed environments and the natural world.

Sandra Masterson (b.1948)

**Dreams**

Ink and gouache on paper

*Worcester City Collection*

Sandra Masterson currently lives and works in France. Her interest in art and the environment goes back to her childhood; Sandra's father was a gamekeeper, and she first started work as a technician in a plant physiology and microbiology laboratory in Brighton. Sandra's art practice has focused on the physicality of the world we inhabit. Her work is as much about process as it is about the finished piece; the act of walking and collecting soil and plant

materials is central to her art practice. Before moving to France, Sandra had been involved with the Centre for Contemporary Art and the Natural World and has also worked on several projects for various Geoparks.

## **GALLERY 2**

Gertrude Harvey née Bodinnar  
(1879 - 1966)

### **Ruined Mines**

Watercolour and gouache on paper  
*Penlee House - donated in 2023*

Gertrude was born in Newlyn, the eighth of ten children. Although from a traditional background, she became part of the artistic community, modelling for some of the painters and attending social events. It was through these contacts that she met Harold Harvey, who she married in 1911. The couple set up home in Newlyn, with Gertrude and their domestic surroundings featuring in many of Harold's paintings. The Harveys were very much part of the Newlyn arts scene and contributed regularly to local events. They were great friends with the Knights and the Napers. As a painter, Gertrude frequently exhibited alongside her husband in Newlyn, as well as eight times at the Royal Academy and thirty-nine times at the Leicester Galleries in London. Gertrude had no formal fine art training and mainly painted flowers. Though there are a few known landscape paintings by her, this is an unusual subject matter in that she captures Cornwall's industrial heritage.

Frances Walker (b.1930)

### **Leaving St Kilda, 2002**

Oil on panel

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council,  
purchased 2011 with assistance*

### *from the Friends of Kirkcaldy Galleries*

Born in Kirkcaldy, Fife, Walker is one of the most enduring names in Scottish art. She was Visiting Teacher of Art in the Outer Hebrides and then taught at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen, retiring in 1986. She was made CBE in 2020. Her work focuses on landscapes that have changed immeasurably, or are being changed, due to human impact. She has travelled to some of the world's most remote places, including South Georgia and Antarctica. Scotland's 11,000 miles of wild, craggy coastline provide an unending source of inspiration. St Kilda is a remote group of islands in the Outer Hebrides. The first settlement dates back 4000 years. On 29 August 1930, at their request, the last thirty-six islanders were taken to the mainland, their lifestyle no longer sustainable. St Kilda is managed by the National Trust for Scotland and is the UK's only dual UNESCO World Heritage Site.

Maria Dorothy Robinson née Webb  
(1840 - 1920)

### **Three Fishers went sailing out into the west, out into the west as the sun went down, 1895**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House - donated by David  
Tovey, 2016*

Born in Belfast, Maria trained at the Royal Dublin Society School, and the Atelier Julian, Paris. She visited the artists' colony in Concarneau, where she met her husband, Henry Harewood Robinson. They moved to St Ives, Cornwall in 1885, becoming founder members of the St Ives Arts Club. She was the more successful of the pair, exhibiting twice as many works as her husband and featuring at the Royal

Academy thirteen times. At this time there was moral disapproval of women artists who wanted to depict adult male figures, an issue that does not appear to have concerned Maria. This tranquil scene captures a fishing boat leaving St Ives harbour as the sun sets and the title came from a well-known poem, *The Three Fishers* by Charles Causley. The charming subject matter appealed to Victorian viewers, who would have known that although all is calm here, a later verse describes all three men drowning in a storm, leaving widows behind.

Kate Downie (b.1958)

**Span, 1999**

Lithograph

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, purchased 2000*

Born in the USA to British parents, Downie currently lives in Fife. She has won numerous awards and residencies, and her work is held in public and private collections worldwide. Predominantly a landscape artist, her career has covered painting, drawing, printmaking, performance and film. She explores the complex relationship between engineering, nature and art, responding to subjects as diverse as North Sea Oil platforms, breweries and hospitals. The Forth Rail Bridge is a much-loved landmark and UNESCO World Heritage Site. Opened in 1890, it was the world's first major steel structure. It took seven years to construct, with the loss of seventy-three lives. The bridge completed an unbroken link between Aberdeen and London. Its distinctive shape is made up of three cantilevered towers joined by two suspended, straight lines or 'spans'. Over two hundred trains cross each day – there is one on the bridge – carrying three million passengers per year.

Joan Eardley (1921 - 1963)

**Breaking Wave, c.1960**

Oil on board

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, purchased with assistance from the National Fund for Acquisitions 1973*

Born in Sussex, Eardley trained at the Glasgow School of Art. In 1955 she became the youngest woman painter elected Associate of the Royal Scottish Academy. At her studio in Glasgow's east end, she created colourful paintings and drawings capturing fast-disappearing working-class communities; at her fisherman's cottage in Catterline on Scotland's north-east coast she explored her fascination with the sea and the weather. Eardley's expressionistic seascapes were influenced by Tachisme – spontaneous brushwork, drips and scribble-like marks. If a storm was forecast, she would race from Glasgow to Catterline, putting her Lambretta scooter on the train. She painted on the shoreline, carrying large boards down the steep cliff path, anchoring them with ropes and stones. Eardley often used a combination of Oil and boat paint, thickly applied, adding texture with scraps of paper, seeds and grasses. Here, there are grains of sand and tiny bits of debris clinging to the paint.

Carol Rhodes (1959 - 2018)

**Canal, Hill, Rail, 2001**

Oil on wood

*Worcester City Collection*

Born in Edinburgh and raised in India where her parents were Christian missionaries, Carol Rhodes later returned to the UK to study at Glasgow School of Art in the 1970s. She initially worked in various roles within the art

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world and only began painting seriously in her thirties. She exhibited widely in the UK and internationally, with solo shows at institutions such as the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art and inclusion in major exhibitions at Tate Britain and MACBA in Barcelona. A left-wing activist, Rhodes was best known for her small-scale paintings of functional landscapes that record the anti-idylls of our industrialised nation: anonymous rest stops, industrial estates, factories, airports, and roads. In 2002, the environmentalist Marian Shoard identified these sites as 'edgelands' – liminal netherworlds 'neither urban nor rural'. Depicted from an aerial perspective and with a soft, muted colour palette, *Canal, Hill, Rail*, surveys the damaging capacity of modernity with a disturbing beauty.

Dame Laura Knight née Johnson RA (1877 - 1970)

### **The China Clay Pit, 1914**

Watercolour and gouache on paper  
*Penlee House, purchased by the Friends of Penlee House, 2001*

In 1907, Laura and Harold Knight came to Cornwall, first to Newlyn and later Lamorna, where they became central figures in the growing artists' colony. The Knights were very well connected within the Cornwall art scene knowing the Proctors, Napers, Harveys as well as Eileen Mayo, Alfred Munnings and Phyllis Yglesias. Laura specialised in combining landscapes and figures, often painting nude models out of doors which caused some controversy among the local population. However, her charming and lively personality overcame most resistance. There was also a rebellious streak to her as she persuaded her good friend, Rev. Bernard Walke, to keep watch whilst she painted outdoors

during World War II when such activity was forbidden. Laura's subject matter and medium varied greatly, showing her versatility as an artist. This work is especially interesting as it depicts an aspect of local industry in Cornwall.

### Sue Jane Taylor (b.1962) **North Sea Diver, Technip Aberdeen, 2010**

Conte crayon on paper  
*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, purchased with assistance from the National Fund for Acquisitions and the Friends of Kirkcaldy Galleries 2014*

Born in the village of Munloch, in the Black Isle, Taylor studied at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen and the Slade School of Art, London. She lives in Dornoch, Sutherland. Her work reflects her upbringing on the Black Isle, where the Oil boom of the 1970s and 80s had a dramatic effect on an area previously thought of as the UK's 'empty quarter'. More recently her focus has shifted to the growing renewables sector. Taylor has spent over thirty years recording Scotland's energy industries and workforce. She has gained access to extremely remote and publicly prohibited offshore installations and onshore fabrication plants, mostly male-dominated environments, where people were surprised to see an artist at work. In 1990 Taylor was chosen to create the Piper Alpha Memorial for Hazlehead Park, Aberdeen, commemorating the 167 men who died when the Oil platform exploded and collapsed on 7 July 1988.

Barbara Mary Russon (1930 - 2007)  
**Viaduct, Coalbrookdale, Shropshire, Early Morning**  
Acrylic on canvas  
*Worcester City Collection*

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Barbara Mary Russon was a British painter and illustrator born in Wednesbury, West Midlands. She trained at Wolverhampton College of Art and developed a distinctive artistic voice rooted in the industrial landscapes of her native region. Alongside her painting, Russon worked as an art teacher, a theatre scenic designer, and an illustrator – a versatile creative career that included time teaching in Sri Lanka. *Viaduct, Coalbrookdale, Shropshire, Early Morning* was created as a response to the decline of the Industrial Revolution. On the left, the souls and skeletons of past workers fade into Coalbrookdale's viaduct's opening, evoking the human cost of industrial change. Russon's artistic legacy lies in her ability to find beauty and melancholy in the overlooked structures of Britain's industrial past.

Dame Laura Knight née Johnson  
RA (1877 - 1970)

### **In the Dressing Room, 1925**

Etching

*Worcester City Collection Acquired with the support of the Friends of Worcester City Art Gallery & Museum*

Scenes behind the stage were a frequent focus of Knight, capturing the atmosphere of performers and theatre workers. Her social circles and art contacts allowed her an insight into the world of performance. She conveyed the preparation that goes into performances, her attention to detail when representing the less glamorous tasks prior to a show suggests an understanding and appreciation for the craft. *In the Dressing Room* shows a theatre dresser preparing a long gown for an actress who stands with her back to us, busy, at her dressing table. The

influence of the French Post-Impressionists is strong, perhaps reflecting Knight's period in school in Paris, but also representative of her most famous paintings of theatre, ballet and the circus created between the wars.

Dame Laura Knight née Johnson  
RA (1877 - 1970)

### **Beulah No. 2, 1930's**

Oil on canvas

*Worcester City Collection*

*Purchased with support from Art Fund, the Arts Council*

*England/V&A Purchase Grant*

*Fund, Worcestershire Heritage, Art & Museums Charity and kind donations from Art Gallery & Museum Members.*

Knight was first introduced to Gypsy life by Alfred Munnings at Newlyn. His love of horses led him to regularly visit fairs and race meetings and he encouraged Laura to attend, although she later said, 'it was the Cockney crowd, the bookies and their stands, and the gypsies I was after'. Despite it being a relatively brief fascination in her career, Laura's Gypsy paintings are considered some of her greatest. This portrait shows Freedom Smith also referred to as Beulah.

Beulah was married to a son of Lilo Smith, with whom Knight was friends. Beulah often modelled for Knight and is the subject of many studies.

## **GALLERY 3**

### **A Sense of Self**

Lily Martha Maud McDougall (1875 - 1958)

### **Self Portrait, (poss 1930s)**

Oil on canvas

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*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council,  
donated by Robert and Gertrude  
Wemyss-Honeyman 1963,  
conserved with assistance from the  
Art Fund 2026*

Born in Glasgow, McDougall studied in Edinburgh, Antwerp and Paris. She is known almost exclusively as a painter of flowers. Her subject matter is traditionally 'feminine' however she actively challenged the lack of recognition for women artists. In 1900, aged twenty-five, she had two works accepted for the Royal Scottish Academy Annual Exhibition. Both were hung 'on the line', a position reserved for small number of works deemed worthy of being exhibited directly at eye level. She was one of the first women admitted to the Society of Scottish Artists and regularly exhibited at the prestigious Glasgow Institute. Her father, William McDougall, founded the Scottish Society of Women Artists to challenge inequalities and promote opportunities. This painting probably dates from the 1930s. The hazy, impressionistic halo illustrates her love of flowers. Her face is strong, confident, enigmatic, her mouth unsmiling but not sad, her eyes gazing into the distance.

Alison Watt (b.1965)

**Figures in the Classroom, 1984**

Oil on canvas

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council,  
donated 2023, conserved with  
assistance from the Friends of  
Kirkcaldy Galleries 2026*

One of Scotland's leading contemporary painters, Watt's work is held in many collections, including the National Portrait Gallery, London and the Uffizi Gallery, Florence. Born in Greenock, she trained at the Glasgow School of Art, winning the National Portrait

Gallery's prestigious annual award. The youngest artist to have a major solo exhibition at the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art (2000), she was also the youngest associate artist at the National Gallery, London (2006). She received an OBE in 2008. Much of her early work is figurative, often self-portraiture – she is holding the rolled-up paper. This painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy and won the British Institution Fund Award in 1986. It was influenced by a series of paintings and drawings made in the 1930s and 40s by the Scottish artist James Cowie: 'The painting is drawn from a combination of lived experience, memory and appropriation from historical paintings...'

Top: Elizabeth Adela Forbes née  
Armstrong ARWS (1859 - 1912)

**Self-Portrait, 1885-1889**

Drypoint etching

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum –  
The George Bednar Donation*

Throughout her career, Elizabeth Forbes continually developed and changed her work in response to new stimuli. During her time in London during the 1880s she learnt etching from James Abbott McNeil Whistler and Walter Sickert, later producing over forty works, many of which are Breton and Dutch scenes. However, following her marriage to Stanhope Forbes, this element of her work declined as he disapproved of her friendship with Whistler and Sickert. Elizabeth's early work in Newlyn bears the hallmarks of French realist painting. She is particularly known for painting children, including her own son Alec, for whom she also wrote and illustrated the book King Arthur's Wood in 1904.

Dubbed 'the Queen of Newlyn' in her obituary, Forbes was a vibrant

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contributor to the art colony, exhibiting and selling more work than most of her male contemporaries. Had she not died at a relatively young age, she would have achieved much greater acclaim.

Bottom: Caroline Walker (b.1982)

### **Bathroom, Room 608, 2018**

Oil on board

*On loan from the artist*

Born in Dunfermline, Walker trained at the Glasgow School of Art. She lived in London for many years but recently returned to Fife. Her work explores gender identity and femininity, highlighting the diverse, social, cultural, economic and political experiences of women. Women's employment opportunities and how these can be further affected by class and ethnicity are recurring themes. This is part of a series depicting the often unseen or undervalued jobs performed by women – tailors, hairdressers, shop assistants, manicurists, cleaners. The 'behind the scenes' work of hotel housekeeping staff is rarely noticed by guests. Walker's 'glimpses' encourage us to consider the relationship between women workers and those who benefit from their labour. Her figures are unaware, lost in thought or concentrating on the task in hand, often viewed through a window, an open doorway, reflected in a mirror – reminding us that we are being allowed entry into a private, hidden world.

Dame Tracey Emin (b.1963)

### **I Loved my Innocence, 2019**

Print

*This acquisition was funded by the Shirley & Rolf Olsen Purchase Fund with support from Worcestershire Heritage, Art & Museums charity*

Tracey Emin is a British artist born in Croydon, London, and raised in Margate, Kent. Of Turkish Cypriot and English Romani descent, she had a turbulent early life and left school at 13 before studying at Maidstone College of Art and earning a Master's degree from the Royal College of Art. Emin emerged in the 1990s as a key figure in the Young British Artists (YBA) movement, often creating deeply autobiographical works in a range of media including painting, drawing, installation, sculpture, film, neon text, and sewn appliqué. Despite early criticism, Emin became a respected voice in British contemporary art. *I Loved my Innocence* is a wonderful example of Tracey Emin's raw, expressive, and confessional approach. The title suggests both tenderness and regret – a reflection on the passage from youth to experience. The confident intimacy of the subject, combined with the delicacy of the medium, also creates a subtle tension between resistance and fragility.

Imogen Bright Moon (b.1983)

### **The Patrin Tapestry IV: Trust, 2024**

Weaving, Hand-blended UK wools, Indian silks with rose, mint and flax fibres, and linen warp threads  
*Acquired with the help of the John Ellerman Foundation and the Elmley Foundation*

Imogen Bright Moon is a British Romani textile artist whose work explores identity, ecology, and heritage through traditional craft practices such as hand-spinning, weaving, and rug hooking. Her grandmother was a tailor, and her mother taught her to sew. After studying textiles, Imogen began as a pattern-cutter and costumier, working with the Royal Shakespeare Company and

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Vivienne Westwood. Moving to the East Sussex coast with her young children, she decided to approach textiles from a new perspective. She built a loom, taught herself to weave, and now uses her Brighton studio to make ethically principled work. 'Patrin' is a Romani word from the ancient Vedic-Hindi root meaning character-sign (paatr-chinh) and forms the basis of an organic nature-language which is part of Romani Intangible Cultural Heritage. Patrin can be read, felt and perceived in many senses, as a direct presence and language of nature. Trust in the Patrin is vital for correct guidance and dignity of spirit. The wools in this tapestry have been traditionally pot-dyed in the UK by dyer Sarah Matthes, who works with local plants, nuts and lichens.

Dod Procter née Shaw RA (1890 - 1972)

### **Self Portrait, 1920-1930**

Oil on canvas

*Private Collection, on loan to Penlee House Gallery & Museum*

In 1910 Dod and Ernest, chaperoned by Dod's mother, visited Paris to study at the Atelier Colarossi. Dod was influenced by the Impressionist and Post-Impressionist paintings she saw there, something that became more evident later in her career following her friendship with fellow artist Alethea Garstin. Dod Procter was well known for capturing other women through portraiture, but on this occasion, she has chosen the subject matter to be herself wearing a Cryséde silk scarf. The Procters were friends with Kathleen 'Kay' Earle, who had also studied at the Forbes School of Painting in Newlyn, and her husband Alec Walker. In the 1920s, the Walkers founded the Cryséde factory in Newlyn, producing

highly desirable woodblock printed silks and linens. There is a sense of self-reflection in this portrait as Procter represents herself confidently, reaffirming her as a talented woman artist.

Dorothy Black (b.1963)

### **Sybarite, c.1995**

Pastel on paper

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, purchased 1992*

Born in Forfar, Black trained at Edinburgh College of Art. She has lived and taught in Fife for many years. She uses a variety of mediums – combining printing techniques with drawing and painting – and often includes her love of pattern and textiles in her work. She says of this work: 'I was hugely influenced by Art Deco paintings, especially Tamara de Lempicka...I wanted the figure and fabric to appear sculptural, statuesque. I also enjoy the work of artists like Botticelli, where floating fabrics feature, not just to clothe figures, but as objects in their own right.' A 'sybarite' delights in beauty and luxury. The elegant drapery, in vibrant, jewel-like colours, echoes the sinuous S-shape created by the model. There is strength here too – the sharp, angular haircut, the large, capable hands, with their short fingernails, the muscular lines of arms and shoulders. A dramatic combination of femininity and power.

Lys Hansen (b.1935)

### **Features, Fingers, Foot, c.1985**

Oil on board

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, donated 2023*

Born in Falkirk, Hansen is one of the key figurative painters working in Scotland, part of a group of Scottish artists who rose to prominence in the

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1980s. They embraced feminism, addressed inequalities, abandoned 'accepted' depictions of the female form in favour of grotesque faces, distorted limbs, odd proportions: 'Women in my paintings are volatile inhabitants of my canvases, full of primal energy...active subjects, not passive objects.'

She explains this work – her son clinging to her body, smothering her with his limbs, his hand clutching at her face – 'I was having a real trauma with myself and with my life...I was a very good student... then suddenly I found myself with a baby and husband, and an expectation from society that you would walk that path of domesticity. But, there was a rage inside. And this is the only way I could relieve it, just to use the paint.'

Ruth Simpson née Alison (1889 – 1964)

### **Portrait of Ella Naper**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House - bequeathed by Maryella Pigott, 2023*

Ruth Simpson came to Newlyn in 1911-12 to study at the Forbes School of Painting. While there she met fellow artist Charles Simpson who she married in 1913. Initially they lived in Newlyn, where their daughter was born, later moving briefly to Lamorna, and then to St Ives, and were well established in all three artistic colonies. The couple set up a painting school where Ruth taught portrait painting, her special interest. Ruth painted many women artists such as Ella Naper and Gertrude Harvey. Ella studied at Camberwell School of Art in 1904 and in 1910 married artist Charles Naper. The couple moved to Cornwall to set up home in Lamorna where they became popular members of the art colony, forming close friendships

with the Knights and the Harveys. Ella frequently modelled for the artists, particularly Laura Knight. Ella is best known for her jewellery – beautifully crafted pieces in silver or carved bone, with designs based on flowers and insects.

## **GALLERY 4**

### **Recognition and Celebration**

Ithell Colquhoun (1906 - 1988)

### **Potentate II, 1963**

Mixed media on paper

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum*

Ithell Colquhoun was born in 1906 in India to wealthy British parents and was the youngest ever female student accepted into the Slade School of Fine Art, with further studies in Paris and Athens. She lived in London in the 1930s, taking inspiration from the 1936 International Surrealist Exhibition, and briefly becoming a member of the Surrealist Group before being expelled for her belief in the occult. In 1949, following an acrimonious divorce, she moved to West Cornwall, renting a studio in Lamorna. As well as painting, Colquhoun wrote extensively on place and on magic. Colquhoun's work explores and blends themes of spirituality, gender, and surrealism. This painting shows a stylised view of the female form with Dadaism and Occult influence, painted using the decalcomania technique favoured by Colquhoun and other Surrealist artists. Thick oil paint is applied to the board and flattened against another board, producing the characteristic ridges and furrows when the two are separated.

Dame Barbara Rae (b.1943)

### **Thursday's Child Suite: Seagate, c.1994**

Etching

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*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council*

Born in Falkirk, Rae trained at Edinburgh College of Art and is best known for her expressive, semi-abstract landscapes. Informed by her interest in people, language, history and culture, her vivid, colourful paintings reference the traces human interaction leaves on the landscape. Rae taught at the Glasgow School of Art from 1975-1996. She was elected to the Royal Scottish Academy in 1992 and the Royal Academy in 1996. She holds several honorary doctorates from Scottish universities and was made Dame Commander of the Order of the British Empire (DBE) in 2025. The Thursday's Child Suite was created at Dundee Printmakers in aid of the Child Psychotherapy Trust Scotland. The studio was situated in the city's Seagate area – the curved red lines on a yellow background may echo the cityscape, built on seven hills at the edge of the River Tay.

Anne Redpath (1895 - 1965)

**Peille, A Hillside Village, 1959**

Oil on canvas

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, purchased 1968*

Born in Galashiels, Redpath trained at Edinburgh College of Art. She lived in France with her husband and three children for fifteen years. Caring responsibilities left little time for painting. However, when her marriage ended, she returned to Scotland in 1934, quickly winning recognition for her expressive landscapes and vibrant still lifes. In 1952 she became the first woman painter elected to the Royal Scottish Academy. In 1960 she was elected Associate of the Royal Academy. She served as President of the Scottish Society of Women Artists,

receiving an OBE in 1955. Redpath was greatly influenced by her travels: 'To go to Spain and find dark grey skies and white villages; to Italy and find that the sky is more violet than blue... all this encourages one's range of colour and responsiveness.' Here, she transports us to an historic mountain village in Provence, in the south-east of France.

Dame Laura Knight née Johnson  
RA (1877 - 1970)

**Windermere and the Langdale Pikes**

Oil on canvas

*Purchased with support from Art Fund, the Arts Council*

*England/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, Worcestershire Heritage, Art & Museums Charity and kind donations from Art Gallery & Museum Members.*

This landscape is of Windermere in the Lake District, an unusual subject for Knight. Although undated, judging by the colour palette, the treatment of the extensive western sky and the impressionistic approach, it is contemporary with her Malvern landscapes. Knight was created a Dame in 1929, and in 1936 she became the first woman to be made a Royal Academician since founding members Angelica Kauffmann and Mary Moser in 1768. At the outbreak of World War Two, Laura was quick to enlist with the War Artists Advisory Committee and began assignments in 1939, with her first commission being a poster for the Women's Land Army.

Mary Somerville (1780 - 1872)

**Top: Italian Landscape, after 1832**

Watercolour on paper

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*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council,  
donated by Lieutenant-Colonel  
John Ramsay-Fairfax 1979*

Mary Somerville (1780 - 1872)

**Bottom: Bass Rock**

Watercolour on paper

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council,  
donated by Lieutenant-Colonel  
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Brought up in Burntisland, Fife, Somerville was one of the first female Honorary Members of the Royal Society and the Royal Astronomical Society. Somerville College, Oxford, and the Mary Somerville Data Centre, University of Edinburgh, bear her name.

In 1816, her second husband, William Somerville, became Inspector to the Army Medical Board. The family moved to London, where William was elected to the Royal Society. They moved in the leading scientific circles of the day. Mary published numerous papers and articles. Her book, *On the Connexion of the Physical Sciences* (1838) was her publisher's best seller until Darwin's *On the Origin of Species* (1859). She tutored Byron's daughter Ada Lovelace, another celebrated mathematician, and campaigned for women's suffrage – the right to vote. The Bass Rock, with its famous lighthouse, sits in the Firth of Forth. Italian Castle was probably painted after 1838 – they moved there for William's health. Mary is buried in the English Cemetery, Naples.

Dod Procter née Shaw RA (1890 - 1972)

**Morning, 1926**

Oil on canvas

*Tate. Presented by the Daily Mail 1927.*

In 1922, Procter began to paint a series of simple, monumental portraits of

young women, giving them a sculptural, almost statuesque, quality. Emphasising the fall of light across the figures, she gave them a powerful presence.

This painting features Cissie Barnes, the sixteen-year-old daughter of a fisherman from Newlyn. This painting was voted 'Picture of the Year' in the 1927 Summer Exhibition at the Royal Academy in London. It was bought for the nation by the Daily Mail newspaper and given to Tate, which made Dod Procter a household name. The popularity of the painting led to its being displayed in New York, followed by a tour of Britain. In 1929, both Dod and Ernest were elected members of the New English Arts Club and in 1942, Dod was elected as a Royal Academician, only the second female artist to be elected to the RA; the first being Laura Knight in 1936.

Marianne née Priendelsberger Stokes (1855 - 1927)

**Lantern Light, 1888**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - purchased by private treaty from Mr & Mrs Allan Amey with*

*assistance from the Art Fund, The MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund and the Friends of Penlee House*

Austrian-born Marianne Stokes studied art in Munich. Her talent was recognised early and won her prize money that enabled her to study in France, where she met Finnish painter Helene Schjerfbeck. Together they sought out places for 'plein air' social realism and were attracted to the thriving art colony at Pont-Aven in Brittany. It was here, in 1883, that Marianne met artist Adrian Stokes. In 1886, the now-married couple came to Cornwall, where they became leading figures in the St Ives

artists' colony and founding members of the St Ives Art Club. Both showed at the seminal Whitechapel exhibition of Cornish art in 1902. In this painting, depicting a young glass cleaner at the St Ives Art Club, Stokes has captured light in several different forms from the reflection in the glass to the glow of the lantern. In the 1890s, Marianne changed her style completely and began painting in a Mediaevalist style, often using tempera.

Marion Grace Hocken (1923 - 1987)  
**The Hollow Men, 1955**

Oil on board

*Penlee House, Penzance, on loan from a Private Collection*

Cornish-born Hocken began her artistic journey at art schools in Redruth and Brighton before studying under Leonard Fuller at the St Ives School of Painting. She was a botanist and Fellow of both the Zoological Society and Royal Entomological Society. She specialised in painting flora, a popular subject at the Paris Salon, also exhibiting at the Royal Academy. This painting is her most well-known and controversial work, born out of tensions within the Penwith Society of Arts, of which she was a founding member, and what she saw as the disturbing commercialism of St Ives. The title of the work comes from a 1925 poem by TS Eliot, but its exact significance is unclear. It caused outrage when it was exhibited at the Daily Express Young Artists' Exhibition in London. Many saw it as a damning critique of both St Ives and its artists. Hocken was so affected by the experience that she withdrew from St Ives's artistic circles and became a recluse.

Joyce Cairns (b.1947)

**Night Falls on Pocrá Quay, 1985**

Etching

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council*

Born in Edinburgh, Cairns trained at Gray's School of Art, Aberdeen and Royal College, London. She then did teacher training at Goldsmith's College, London, a place that fostered and promoted women artists. She taught at Gray's from 1976-2004, taking early retirement to concentrate on a large body of work focusing on the legacy of war, War Tourist. In 2018 she was elected the first woman President of the Royal Scottish Academy.

Cairns' work is largely figurative – a genre that was not encouraged when she was a student in the 1970s. Colourful, expressionistic and often largescale, her paintings are densely packed with figures, objects and activity. Themes of conflict, family, dreams, memories and actual events intermingle. The fishing village of Footdee (pronounced Fittie), at the mouth of Aberdeen harbour, where she lived for thirty-three years, was a huge source of inspiration. Pocrá Quay is at the entrance to Aberdeen Harbour.

Elizabeth Blackadder (1931 - 2021)

**Still Life with Indian Toys, 1981**

Watercolour on paper

*OnFife on behalf of Fife Council, Scottish Arts Council Bequest 1997*

One of Scotland's most beloved painters and printmakers, Blackadder blazed a trail for women artists. Born in Falkirk, she was the first woman elected full Academician of both the Royal Scottish Academy and the Royal Academy. Appointed Her Majesty's Painter and Limner in Scotland in 2001, she was made Dame Commander of the British Empire (DBE) in 2003. Her work has appeared on a series of Royal Mail stamps and is held by numerous

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galleries worldwide. She trained at Edinburgh College of Art, where she met, and later married, artist John Houston (1930-2008). Blackadder became the more famous, but Houston is well-known in his own right. They had no children and travelled widely. On their travels she collected toys, ceramics, textiles and glassware, which appear in her work. She was particularly influenced by Japanese art, visiting several times in the 1980s. This watercolour is painted on handmade Japanese paper.

### HALL

#### Responses to the exhibition

Young People from the  
Worcestershire Youth Voice Team

#### **Responses to the 'Making Her Mark' exhibition artwork**

Various media, including paint,  
photography and film

Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum worked with care-experienced young people through the Youth Voice Team, Worcestershire's organisation that empowers young people to influence local decisions and ensure their voices are heard. Supported by artist Nicola Prestage, the young people were guided through the exhibition artworks, reflecting on what they meant to them. Each chose an artwork to inspire their response. Then through a variety of media, including painting and film, they created powerful art that grew from personal experience. Workshops were held at both Worcester City Art Gallery and Museum and the Commandery, as well as the Youth Voices centre, providing inspiration from the venues and a safe environment to create and discuss with their peers.

Klub Kevrennek

#### **Baner Agan Lev (Banner of Our Voice), 2026**

Digital print on canvas

During the development of 'Making Her Mark', Penlee House Gallery & Museum worked with care experienced young people supported by Cornish charity Carefree Cornwall. The project began in summer 2025 with a series of taster sessions and visits to local cultural spaces with artist Elizabeth Howell. From September 2025, young people worked with artist Kate Turner, forming KLUB KEVRENNEK (Cornish for kind social and sharing). They explored intersectional voices and perspectives and imagined what a fairer world for women and marginalised genders could look like. Inspired by partner venue artworks, they tried different artistic techniques to create their own artworks. The project culminated with the creation of a collaborative protest banner to express their ideas, featuring a custom font designed by the young people, fragments of creative writing, and image-making developed throughout the project. With special thanks to the many young people from Carefree Cornwall who have contributed to this project and to Carefree staff Karen Stephens and Nikki Speer.

### TOP OF STAIRS

After T Lawrence

#### **Humphry Davy**

Oil on canvas

*Penzance Town Council*

Sir Humphry Davy (1778 - 1829), the famous chemist and inventor of the miners' safety lamp, was born in Penzance. During his career he discovered a number of chemical elements, including sodium and potassium, and investigated chlorine

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and its oxides. He was knighted in 1812, was made a baronet in 1818, and in 1820, he became President of the Royal Society.

Samuel John 'Lamorna' Birch RA  
RWS (1869 - 1955)

**Kerris Quarry, 1937**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - Gift of Mrs Mornie Kerr, the artist's daughter, 1956.*

The stretcher for this painting bears labels for an earlier painting 'Evensong', exhibited in Rome in 1911. Either Birch re-used the stretcher for this painting, or painted 'Kerris Quarry' over 'Evensong'.

**GALLERY 5**

Frank Bramley (1857 - 1915)

**Eyes and No Eyes, 1887**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - purchased with grant aid from: the Art Fund, V &A/MLA Purchase Grant Fund and the Friends of Penlee House, 2009*

The scene is set on Gwavas Quay showing the recently completed South Pier in the distance.

Harold Harvey (1874 - 1941)

**In the Whiting Ground, c.1900**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House - purchased with funding from the MLA/V&A Purchase Fund, the Art Fund, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Friends of Penlee House, 2006*

Whiting is a small fish, usually weighing about 1kg, which is caught between two and six miles off shore.

Walter Langley RI (1852 - 1922)

**Cornish Fisherfolk, 1908**

Oil on canvas

Walter Langley RI (1852 – 1922)

**Among the Missing — Scene in a Cornish Fishing Village, 1884**

Watercolour and pencil

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - purchased with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Art Fund, the V&A/MGC Purchase Grant Fund and the Friends of Penlee House*

Newlyn's fishing boats travelled all around the British coast. When one of these long-haul boats was lost at sea, a telegram sent to Newlyn Post Office would be posted on the wall to tell the villagers the name of the lost boat and the list of fishermen who were 'among the missing'.

Elizabeth Adela Forbes ARWS

(1859 – 1912)

**School is Out, 1889**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum – Gift of Monica Anthony*

Although there are alternative suppositions, it is believed that the setting for this painting is Paul School and that the small boy is Richard Vivian Spargo, whose two elder sisters are the red-haired girls laughing at him.

Stanhope Alexander Forbes RA

(1857 - 1947)

**Abbey Slip, 1921**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum Purchased 2010 with support from the National Heritage Memorial Fund; MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund; the Friends of Penlee House and over 250*

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individual donors, including donations made in memory of Gerda Dales, Mrs Margaret Anne Veitch, Lt.Col. Martin Scrase and Frank Julian.

Stanhope Alexander Forbes RA  
(1857 - 1947)

### **The Seine Boat, 1904**

Oil on canvas

*Private Collection, on loan to Penlee House Gallery & Museum*

A 'seine' net, which is being carried in this boat, was used for catching pilchards. The 'tuck' net, used with it, is in the boat behind.

Stanhope Alexander Forbes RA  
(1857 - 1947)

### **On Paul Hill, 1922**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - purchased with funding from the National Heritage Memorial Fund, the Art Fund and the Friends of Penlee House*

Stanhope Forbes lost his first wife, Elizabeth, to cancer in 1912 and their only child, Alec was killed in the First World War four years later. After the horror, this painting is full of optimism, with the next generation basking in Cornish sunshine, but in the far distance the Cenotaph (completed the year this was painted) shines like a beacon to remember those lost to save such an idyll.

Norman Garstin (1847 – 1926)

### **The Rain it Raineth Every Day, 1889**

Oil on canvas

*Penlee House Gallery & Museum - Gift of the artist*

The title appears in two of Shakespeare's plays, most notably in

'Twelfth Night', but also in the Fool's song in Act III Scene 2 of 'King Lear'. The blue structure in the middle-ground of this painting was a collecting box for the Royal National Lifeboat Institution, placed on Penzance promenade in 1877. For many years this painting lay hidden in the depths of St John's Hall as the Town Council felt that it pictured Penzance in a bad light and would put off tourists. Today, this painting is probably the most popular work in Penlee House's collections and prints of it have been spotted all over the world.