

Figures from Flemings

Three Centuries of Portraits and Figure Studies

8th July - 30th August 2003

An exhibition of figurative paintings through the ages entirely drawn from the Collection's own works. Curated by Dr. Cecilia Powell

The Fleming Collection is rich in Scottish portraits and figure studies, ranging from works by masters of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries such as Ramsay and Raeburn, through to contemporary artists including Eduardo Paolozzi, Peter McLaren and Alison Watt.

Over the period covered by this exhibition, portraiture – and the whole approach to the depiction of the human figure – has undergone radical change. The traditional pursuit of realism, combined with sympathetic insight, has been challenged by other artistic goals, resulting in deliberate distortion of the body and intense interest in states of mind. While nineteenth-century portraits and figure studies were often marked by sentiment or sentimentality, twentieth-century ones have been notable for the power and range of their expression and their psychological insight. Some of the works in this exhibition tell a story; others resemble still-life painting in their concentration on colour and pattern. Some use the dynamic language of modernity and abstraction; others hint at distant sources beneath their outward emphasis on the here and now.

This exhibition will include works by Allan Ramsay (1713-1784), Sir Henry Raeburn (1756-1823), George Henry (1858-1943), Stanley Cursiter (1887-1976), Dorothy Johnstone (1892-1980), David Donaldson (1916-1996), James Cumming (1922-1991), Eduardo Paolozzi (b.1924), John Bellany (b.1942), Margaret Hunter (b.1948), Peter McLaren (b.1964) and Alison Watt (b.1965).