

LARGE PRINT GUIDE

L.S. LOWRY

THE ART AND THE ARTIST

CITY AND STREETS

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TEXT PANEL

CITY AND STREETS

‘A street is not a street without people ... it is as dead as mutton.’

Lowry loved watching people – outside mills, at fairgrounds, football matches or busy markets. As clerk and rent collector for the Pall Mall Property Company Lowry visited tenants in some of the poorer districts of Manchester. Along with parts of Salford, these areas provided much inspiration for his work.

In the 1930s and 1940s what interested him most were the rhythmic patterns formed by a crowd, rather than the individuals within it. The figures in his paintings ebb and flow in groups, each carefully positioned to lead the viewer’s eye into the composition, but seeming to move naturally.

Workers streaming into, or out of, factories or mills have become classic Lowry images.

By the 1950s Lowry's interests had moved on. His later work shows smaller groupings of individuals, often with no background details at all. What remained constant, as Lowry remarked, was that 'All my people are lonely. Crowds are the most lonely thing of all. Everyone is a stranger to everyone else.'

Mill Scene, 1965

Oil on canvas

‘I dislike them myself...yet as soon as I start, what happens? Pitiful-looking people throng around gloomy factories with smoking chimneys. I stare at the blank canvas and that is what I see – and what I have to paint.’

The Lowry Collection, Salford

The Flat Iron Market, about 1925

Chalk on paper

The triangular plot of land on which the market stood provided its name. Both the church and the building on the right, formerly a police station, still stand although the market closed in 1939.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Bandstand, Peel Park, 1924

Pencil on paper

The bandstand, built in 1902 and demolished in 1965, was a central feature of Peel Park.

‘From the start I have been very fond of this view and have put it in many paintings. You know that I never paint in this spot, but look for a long time, make drawings and think.’

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Industrial Landscape, 1953

Oil on canvas

Lowry's industrial scenes rarely depict specific locations. His large panoramic views are composites, part real and part imagined. Some features recur, for example the distinctive shape of particular church spires or of Stockport viaduct.

The overall impression is of a vast blighted landscape dominated by smoking chimneys and flooded land and populated by tiny figures.

'Most of my land and townscape is composite...Made up; part real, and part imaginary...bits and pieces of my home locality. I don't even know I'm putting them in, They just crop up on their own, like things do in dreams.'

The Lowry Collection, Salford, purchased with the assistance of the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the National Heritage Memorial Fund and The Art Fund

(Clockwise from top left)

Newtown Mill and Bowling Green, Eccles, about
1928 - The Lowry Collection, Salford

Eccles Town Hall 1963- The Lowry Collection,
Salford

Eccles Town Hall has been adopted by The Lowry
to commemorate the Ruby Wedding Anniversary
of our Silver Patrons, David and Veronica Yates

Pendlebury Scene, 1931 The Lowry Collection,
Salford

Houses in Broughton, 1937 The Lowry Collection,
Salford

All Pencil on Paper

Market Scene, Northern Town, 1939

Oil on canvas

This scene is based on Pendlebury Market, close to the artist's home.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Industrial Scene with Monument, 1972

Oil on board

'I see lots of people everywhere, myself. One lot going one way and another lot going the opposite way as a rule. I sometimes wish I didn't see folk everywhere.'

Mill scenes continued to appear occasionally among some of the last works Lowry painted. In these late pictures the figures are reduced to very simple forms.

On loan from a private collection

A Mill, about 1960

Ballpoint pen on the reverse of a Royal Academy invitation

Although this sketch appears to have been drawn quickly, the shapes of the mill, its windows, and the crowds of people moving in front of it are clear. Although by the 1950s Lowry claimed to be tired of painting and drawing the industrial scene, he never gave up this subject matter completely.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

The Lodging House, 1921

Pastel on paper

In 1921 Lowry exhibited eight works in an exhibition in the architect Roland Thomasson's office in Manchester. Though none of his pictures sold at the time, *The Lodging House* did sell later, Lowry's first work to do so. 'It was to a friend of my father's... He gave me £5 for it.'

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Francis Terrace, Salford, 1956

Pencil on paper

Francis Terrace was built in the 1850s. Like some other streets in Salford it was flagged, self-contained and overlooked the street below. The terrace was demolished in 1959 but Lowry chose to depict it as part of a commission from Ted Frape, Curator at Salford Art Gallery, to record some of the areas around the gallery before they were redeveloped.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Rear of Property on Bolton Road, Pendlebury,
about 1930

Pencil on paper

The Lowry Collection, Salford

The River Irwell at the Adelphi, 1924

Pencil on paper

The River Irwell winds through Salford, with a particularly large bend at the Adelphi, near Peel Park. Lowry sketched regularly in this area and the river appears in many of his works. The Irwell was often flooded, as Lowry shows in this drawing.

Such scenes may have been the inspiration for his later industrial paintings where lakes or flooded areas feature in the midst of a desolate urban landscape.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Pit Tragedy, 1919

Oil on canvas

The Lowry Collection, Salford

LIGHTBOX TEXT PANEL

The Lake 1937

Oil on canvas

Lowry's most desolate industrial landscapes are bleak scenes of flooded devastation where human figures are dwarfed by their surroundings.

Although individual buildings are sometimes recognisable from local landmarks, these are imagined scenes, combining mills, collieries, church spires and smoking chimneys in a composite, panoramic view.

The stagnant 'lake' of water at the centre of the composition derives from images of the River Irwell which frequently flooded in winter. Lowry's drawing of the Irwell, made in 1924, became the visual reference point for many of his industrial panoramas.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

River Scene 1942 Glasgow Museums © The Estate of L.S. Lowry. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2015. Image © CSG CIC Glasgow Museums Collection.

The River Irwell at the Adelphi 1924 © The Lowry Collection, Salford

(Main image) Peel Park flooded 1946 Salford Local History Library collection

View from the Window of the Royal Technical College, Salford, looking towards Manchester, 1924- Black chalk and pencil on paper

This view shows the rear of Salford Museum & Art Gallery, the terrace above Peel Park and, in the background, St Simon's Church and the factories along the River Irwell.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Industrial Landscape, Wigan 1925

Oil on board

Industrial Landscape, Wigan is painted in the darker tones of Lowry's early works. His later pictures are all painted on a white ground, a layer of white paint used to cover the whole canvas before any other colours are added. This pale ground helps to give Lowry's paintings their distinctive appearance.

On loan from a private collection

The Lake, 1971

Oil on canvas

On loan from The Professional Footballers'
Association

View from the Window of the Royal Technical
College, Salford, 1924

Pencil on paper

Lowry was able to draw the views from the
Technical College windows when he was
attending Salford School of Art, located on the
upper floors of the building. This view is taken from
the balcony of the Art School (now the Peel
Building of the University of Salford) looking
towards the centre of the city.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

A Fight, about 1935

Oil on canvas

Lowry apparently witnessed this scene outside a lodging house in Manchester.

‘What fascinates me is...the atmosphere of tension when something has happened... Where there’s a quarrel there’s always a crowd...it’s a great draw. A quarrel or a body.’

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Two extracts from *LS Lowry* directed by John Read, BBC, 1957

Running times approximately 60 seconds and 90 seconds

Please note: the extract showing the artist painting in his workroom is silent

© BBC

Mrs Swindells' Picture, 1967

Oil on canvas

Bessie Swindells was Lowry's housekeeper for 22 years and lived half a mile away from his home in Mottram in Longdendale. This picture, which shows Albion Mill with St Mary's Church, Swinton in the distance, was painted for her and when a title could not be decided upon it was named *Mrs Swindells' Picture*.

On loan from The Professional Footballers' Association

Coming from the Mill, 1930

Oil on canvas

In a letter to Salford Museum & Art Gallery Lowry wrote, 'It gives me great pleasure that Salford have bought this picture - for I have always thought it was my most characteristic mill scene.'

The painting is based on an earlier pastel drawing Lowry made in about 1917 which was one of his first composite industrial scenes. As with all of Lowry's best known works *Coming from the Mill* is very carefully constructed, the figures leading the viewer's eye from scene to scene within the painting.

Bargoed, 1965

Oil on canvas

Lowry was introduced to the South Wales mining valleys by his friend and collector, Monty Bloom. Their visits to the area re-awakened Lowry's interest in industrial subjects. The combination of rugged landscape and densely packed coal mining towns, clinging to the sides of the steep valleys, inspired a small number of late works. *Bargoed* was painted when Lowry was in his seventies.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Returning from Work, 1929

Oil on canvas

On loan from a private collection

The Railway Platform 1953

Oil on canvas

Lowry never learned to drive and was a frequent traveller by bus and rail, but only a few works by him depict railway scenes (mostly showing Paddington station in London). This view, on a long narrow canvas emphasising the crowd stretched out along the busy platform, is painted as though seen by the artist from the opposite platform or a stationary train.

On loan from the Professional Footballers' Association

At Paddington Station, undated

Blue ballpoint pen and pencil on card

On loan from a private collection

Study of a Football Match, undated

Pencil on paper

Like many of Lowry's early drawings, kept for many years in his home, this industrial scene with a football match in the foreground shows considerable wear and tear with two corners lost completely. The players and spectators are dominated by the industrial landscape around them.

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

LIGHTBOX TEXT PANEL

Going to the Match 1953

Oil on canvas

Going to the Match shows Burnden Park, home to Bolton Wanderers Football Club, and was painted in the year the club played in the Cup Final. Lowry entered the painting into a competition sponsored by the Football Association to mark their 90th anniversary and wrote to his friend David Carr, 'You were right about that football painting, it has won a prize...I was never more surprised in my life when I heard.' Lowry rarely depicts a football match in progress. His main interest is in the spectators, or events happening on the fringes of the crowd.

On loan from the Professional Footballers'
Association

Manchester City vs Sheffield United 1938 (oil on canvas)

Private collection © The Estate of L.S. Lowry. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2015. Image © [2011] Christie's Images Limited.

Rugby Match c1960 (ballpoint pen and pencil on paper) Private collection © The Estate of L.S. Lowry. All Rights Reserved, DACS 2015.

Spectators watch Bolton Wanderers reserve team play at Burnden Park 25 September 1937

Photograph by Humphrey Spender © Bolton Council

Going to the Match, 1953

Pencil on paper

Although Lowry's small sketch is hastily drawn and only indicates the basic details, the composition of his large finished oil painting has changed very little from this first drawing. The sketch is now reunited with the painting, having recently been purchased by the PFA for their collection.

On loan from The Professional Footballers' Association

Going to the Match, 1946

Oil on panel

In this different version of the subject the stadium, just visible between the two buildings, may also be based loosely on Bolton Wanderers' ground at Burnden Park. On loan from the Professional Footballers' Association

Music Score: Lowry, 2016

Francis Macdonald, music score, 2 minutes 44 seconds

Played every half past the hour from 11.30am

Member of the alternative rock band, Teenage Fanclub and classical composer, Francis

Macdonald used the works of L S Lowry alongside ideas of melancholy, humour and the 'Northern sound' of colliery bands to compose his own interpretation of Lowry's distinct landscapes and familiar style.

Composed by Francis Macdonald

Performed by Rogue Orchestra

Conducted by Joe Hargreaves