

Christopher Wood: Sophisticated Primitive

2 July - 2 October 2016



Exhibition Notes : Learning Through Art

Designed to support teachers and students as they explore the exhibition

- **Looking Together:** Ideas on how to engage with art during your visit to Pallant House Gallery
- **Exhibition Overview:** An introduction to the current exhibition
- **About the Artist:** A brief biography of the artist
- **Pre-visit Activities:** Useful links and pre-visit ideas
- **Key Themes:** An introduction to each section
- **Works in Focus:** Discussion questions to facilitate open-ended exploration
- **References and Connections:** Artists and art historical terms mentioned in the text

**PALLANT
HOUSE
GALLERY**

Looking Together

These notes are aimed to help you and your students think in terms of shapes, colours and space, to develop the skills and techniques to focus on an object, identify its essential elements and to find meaning and build a visual vocabulary.

Try to keep group numbers to a minimum so everyone can see the work and have time to participate in the discussion.

Use this line of questioning when looking at the **Works in Focus**.

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

Observation

Approach the work and take a closer look. Encourage your students to take a “visual inventory” of the art work, focusing on it and noticing details.

Take the time to look.

What lines and shapes do you see in this drawing?

Where is the figure in relation to the building?

Description

Describe the work as a group to establish an understanding of what is being seen.

It is useful to start by simply listing what everyone sees. Remember to explore the formal properties of the work, as well as naming recognisable objects, for example consider:

• **Line** and **Shape** as well as **Colour** and **Composition**

Material and **Technique**

Subject matter

By looking closely at this painting, can you describe the brushstrokes?

This process allows a wide range of participation and will benefit future interpretation.

Once you feel that the group has thoroughly described the work, summarise all the elements mentioned and point out any important details that have been missed.

What is implied by the way these two figures are interacting?

Interpretation

Interpretation is about assigning meaning to various elements of the work and thinking about its overall significance. Encourage breadth and variety, and use ideas generated to expand the conversation.

Ask questions that prompt your students to reflect on what is not clearly visible in the work but perhaps merely suggested.

Time and **Place**, **Narrative** and **Mood**

Artist's Intention and **Biographical Information**

Historical and **Social Context**

Balance your questions by sharing some of the interesting facts in these notes, make connections and encourage further discussion.

What overall mood is conveyed in this photograph?

How does this painting make you feel?

Connection

Encourage your students to connect the work to their life experiences as well as wider cultural and social events.

Personal Life Experience and **Emotional Effect**

Personal Opinion

Cultural Changes and **World Events**

Artwork by different artists

Why do you think the artist used these found objects together to create this sculpture?

Do you like this painting?

How does this drawing of a landscape compare to the painting next to it that depicts the same scene?

Summary

Toward the end of the discussion of each work, bring together the various threads of conversation, summarising and synthesising the points you have talked about.

Exhibition Overview

The exhibition examines the artistic development and creative journey Wood undertook during the ten years from 1920 until his premature death in 1930; at the age of 29. The title, *Sophisticated Primitive*, highlights a duality that ran throughout both his artistic and personal life, as well as two aspects of his creative development. He was at once a beloved figure of the beau monde that circled around the leading artists of Parisian society, whilst also being drawn to the ideal of a simpler and more meaningful life that would inform his art.

Wood was largely self-taught, despite being the only English painter of his generation to be accepted into the heart of European art and society, as well as being held in high esteem by modern artists in England. Although briefly studying in Paris, Wood educated himself in the principles of modern painting by observing, first hand, the best examples of Post-Impressionism, Cubism and Fauvism. Wood also looked to the work of Paul Cézanne, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Gauguin and Henri Matisse as well as Pablo Picasso and the painter-poet Jean Cocteau, both of whom the young painter came to know.

The exhibition includes a selection of his early work which shows how from the start Wood looked to the modern masters. He sought to take elements from their approach and technique and assimilate them into his own developing style. An early painting *The Card Players*, 1922, was directly derived from one of Cézanne's best known subjects, whilst van Gogh's stylistic influence emerged in a series of flower paintings, *Dahlias in a Red Jar*, 1926. Van Gogh was also central to Wood's developing sense of his identity as an artist and the importance of the relationship between an artist's life and their work.

This connection between lifestyle and creativity was at the heart of Wood's paintings but also proved to be a source of tension and emotional instability as well as great creativity. As a relatively naive young man, Wood was introduced to a sophisticated and decadent society; which he had to quickly learn to navigate. As this exhibition shows, Wood was aware and to some degree complicit of his role within this cultural group;



Dahlias in a Red Jar, 1926, oil on canvas, The Haines Collection

which included such leading figures as Picasso, Jean Cocteau and Sergei Diaghilev.

Wood was captivated by Diaghilev's infamous Ballet Russes. For Wood it represented a creative freedom and daring to which he could respond, as well as an opportunity to further his career; Diaghilev had a reputation for commissioning leading artists to design the sets and costumes. Included in the exhibition are Wood's unrealised set designs for *Romeo and Juliet* and *An English Country Life*, as well as his later designs for Luna Park ballet; for the Charles Cochrane Review in 1930.

The exhibition also considers Wood's position as a pre-eminent modern English painter. Although based mainly in France, Wood returned to England on a number of occasions where he associated with leading artists of the time; such as Augustus John and Frank Dobson. However, it was in 1926 when he made the acquaintance of Ben and Winifred Nicholson that Wood found true friends and artistic comrades. It was while in St Ives with the Nicholsons in 1928 that Wood met the retired fisherman painter Alfred Wallis.

Even though Wood felt that the English art world and audience were lagging behind in their appreciation of modern art, over the following years he worked to establish himself in the London art world. To his contemporaries in London his European connections verified his status as a progressive modern artist, whilst in Paris his English identity distinguished him from his rivals.

The exhibition also shows Wood's preoccupation with the concept of an artist finding creative inspiration from living among local communities; often away from a sophisticated urban centre. Wood found such a setting among the fishermen of St Ives, which he first visited in 1926 and again in 1928.

Wood's interest in nautical themes and his developing personal symbolism continued in work he produced in the sea port of Dieppe, Normandy which he first visited in 1929 and in the small fishing village of Trébol, Brittany, where he spent his last two summers.

As curator Katy Norris states in the introduction to the exhibition catalogue, Wood held a pivotal position in the British art world during the 1920s. His individual naive style was poised between the conventional forms of representational painting left over from the Edwardian era and the new style of abstraction that emerged during the following decades.

The exhibition features over 80 works, including paintings, drawings and copies of his letters and is accompanied by a fully illustrated exhibition catalogue by curator Katy Norris.

Words which are underlined refer to the References and Connection section at the end of these notes.



Loading the Boats, St Ives, 1926, oil on canvas, Manchester City Galleries

About the Artist

Christopher (Kit) Wood (1901–1930)

'You ask me what I am going to be: I have decided to try and be the greatest painter that has ever lived...You were quite correct when you say I have a lot of work before me'.¹

Christopher Wood, 1922

Born just at the beginning of the twentieth century, Wood's early years were limited to the comforts of a middle-class conservative upbringing. Close to his mother, after a period of illness caused him to be nursed at home, Wood was encouraged to take up watercolour painting. It is from the letters he wrote to his mother throughout his life, that we learn much about his life and thoughts on art.

After a hesitant start at college, first studying medicine and then transferring to architecture at Liverpool University, Wood moved to London; as an apprentice with a fruit importation company. It was here that he met the wealthy collector and financier Alphonse Kahn, who invited him to stay at his home in Paris.

1920s Paris was perceived as a more hedonistic culture than staid, post-war England. It was the centre of the art world and its 'decadence' was epitomised by the spectacular fantasy world of Diaghilev's Ballet Russes and the lives of the fashionable beau monde. It was into this world that Wood was introduced.

By the end of 1921 Wood had made the acquaintance of José Antonio de Gandarillas, a wealthy and well-connected social diplomat at the Chilean embassy. It was to be a relationship that defined the rest of his life. Between 1921 and 1927 their lives were closely interrelated. They travelled extensively around Europe and North Africa, which opened up new cultural experiences.

Still in his early twenties, Wood's 'magpie approach' to the work of a range of artists was all part of the process of finding his own style. One key aspect of Wood's creative development



Christopher Wood on a Cornish Beach, c. 1926–30

was his understanding of the artistic notion of Primitivism. Mainly experienced through his assimilation of Post-Impressionism and Cubist and Fauvist paintings, two aspects shaped his art.

First were the more formal and stylistic aspects such as gestural brushwork, decorative surface pattern and stylised pared-down forms. The second was his deep empathy for a more simple and authentic experience. It was through a fusion of imitation and originality that Wood eventually arrived at his own personal naive style.

In 1923 Wood saw the Ballet Russes's production of Pulcinella, with the backcloth and costumes designed by Picasso. The following year, Wood accompanied Cocteau to London where they saw the opening of the Ballet Russes's production of Le Train bleu, which Cocteau had produced. With Cocteau's encouragement, Wood harboured an ambition to design for the Ballet. Though Diaghilev turned down Wood's initial ideas, in 1926 he was invited to prepare stage and

costume designs for a forthcoming production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Wood was the first and only Englishman to create designs for Diaghilev.

Unfortunately owing to a difference in personality, Diaghilev finally engaged Max Ernst and Joan Miró to design a simple backdrop. Wood's interest in designing for the ballet persisted and he finally produced designs for Luna Park, a ballet for Charles Cochran's 1930 Review.

Wood's connection to the theatre as well as the themes of identity and masquerade pervade much of Wood's paintings, infusing them with an unsettling sense of unexplained emotional drama.

In September 1926 Wood made his first trip to Cornwall and later in the year met Ben and Winifred Nicholson in London. They formed a long and lasting artistic friendship. Winifred later recalled her initial impression of Wood as 'England's first painter. His vision is true, his grasp is real, his power is life itself.'² Wood was quickly invited to join the 7&5 Society and in the following May, shared an exhibition with Ben and Winifred Nicholson and the potter William Staite Murray at the Beaux Arts Gallery, London.

During 1927 Wood was travelling again with Gandarillas in the South of France. Although his work was beginning to gather attention he was feeling unsettled in his personal life. Inspired by what he perceived to be the mutually creative support epitomised by the Nicholson's marriage, he became involved with the young heiress and painter Meraud Guinness. Her family disapproved and by the autumn the couple had separated. They briefly reunited in early 1928 and planned to marry, which was prevented. The Nicholsons, Winifred in particular, invited him to stay at their home at Banks Head in Cumbria. Here Wood gained a renewed sense and appreciation for a simpler lifestyle. Although the draw of the city and its pleasures created a continual tension in his later years of his life. At this time Wood met a Russian émigrée, Frosca Munster, see *The Manicure (Portrait of Frosca Munster)*, 1929, who became his companion for the rest of his life.

By the end of August 1928 Wood was again in Britain, visiting Cornwall with the Nicholsons. The trip was to prove influential in the development



The Manicure (Portrait of Frosca Munster), 1929, Oil on canvas, Bradford Museums and Galleries

of his work; largely in part to his meeting in St Ives with the retired Cornish fisherman and 'primitive' painter Alfred Wallis. Wood rented a cottage next to Porthmeor Beach, St Ives, not far from Wallis' house, who he visited on an almost daily basis.

In the lives of the fishermen Wood found a subject-matter that he felt he could respond to deeply and he began to experiment with combining fantasy, memory and observation within his paintings; moving towards a personal symbolism derived from real experience.

Seeking out other coastal areas, Wood and Frosca visited Dieppe in 1929, where he painted the quayside. But it was in Cornouaille, Brittany, where Wood spent his last two summers and produced his most mature work. It was here that Wood rented a modest house in the tiny fishing village of Tréboul. But the simplicity and meaningful life of the indigenous population, as

Wood observed it, served only to emphasize the chaos of his own life; which had been heightened by his use of opium.

In 1930 Wood returned to Paris, where he shared an exhibition with Ben Nicholson titled *Les Deux Peintures Anglais* (15 - 30 May). Wood sold ten pictures to Lucy Wertheim, for the opening of her gallery in London. He travelled once again to Tréboul, where in an intense period of productivity, he made more than 40 paintings in less than six weeks. When he returned to Paris, Wood painted what were to be his last two paintings, *Zebra and Parachute*³ and *Tiger and Arc de Triomphe*.⁴

In August of 1930 Wood returned to England to visit his mother and sister at Salisbury. Probably suffering from withdrawal symptoms from his opium addiction, he was killed when he fell in front of an express train at Salisbury train station; aged just 29.

In 1938, a posthumous exhibition of his work was held at the Redfern Gallery, London, which proved very popular, drawing over 50,000 visitors. The last comprehensive review of Wood's work was held at the Arts Council in 1979. Since then his career has been examined in smaller or group exhibitions, such as the recent exhibition *Art and Life* at Dulwich Picture Gallery, London.

Pre-visit Activities

What is a gallery?

Discuss what a gallery is and what is special about looking at original artwork in comparison to a reproduction.

Who are galleries for?

Ask about any other galleries or museums they have been to and what they saw there?



Look

Have a look at the work of a selection of artists who inspired Christopher Wood. Talk about colour, style of painting, composition and subject matter. Think about which elements Wood was inspired by.

Paul Cézanne (1839-1906):
The Card Players, 1890-95

Vincent van Gogh (1853-1890):
selection of his landscape and flower paintings

Pablo Picasso (1881-1973):
Family of Saltimbanques, 1905
Les Femmes d'Alger (O. J. Version O), 1911
Two Women Running on the Beach, 1922

Jean Cocteau (1889-1963):
selection of his drawings

Henri Matisse (1869-1954):
Portrait of Madame Matisse, 1905

André Derain (1880-1954):
The Pool of London, 1906

Ben Nicholson (1894-1982):
1928 (foothills, Cumberland), 1928

Winifred Nicholson (1880-1954):
Northrigg Hill, 1926
From Bedroom Window, 1930

Alfred Wallis (1851-1942):
Grey Schooner, no date

Think like a Curator

The role of a curator is to decide on the theme of the exhibition, choose what artworks to display and where to put them.

As you explore the exhibition, think about the following:

- What is the theme of this exhibition?
- Why have certain artworks been put together?
- Is there anything you would put in a different place? and why?
- What was your favourite artwork? and why?
- Which artwork did you least like? and why?

Key Theme: Innocence and Experience - Formative Years

'Look beyond the different subjects of modern pictures to their fundamental components, to observe the movement, the arrangement, the colour and try and feel the thing in the right way'.⁵

At the age of just nineteen, with no formal art training, Wood moved to Paris. Within a year, he was established as part of the avant-garde circle that included leading artists such as Picasso, Jean Cocteau and Sergei Diaghilev; and had resolved to become a successful painter.

With little interest in the style or politics of Dada and Surrealism, the foremost avant-garde movements of 1920s Paris, Woods responded to the notion of modern paintings as a style of personal expression. His early works are clearly derived from a range of modern masters, such as Cézanne and Vincent van Gogh as well as Post-Impressionist and Fauvist paintings; with their 'primitive' inspired use of colour and simplified forms. Wood selected and assimilated various aspects and manifested it in his own work, such as the gestural brushwork, decorative surface patterns and stylised, pared-down forms, see *The Seine at Passy*, 1924.



The Seine at Passy, 1924, Oil on canvas, Dorset County Museum

In 1923 Wood took up training under Maurice Denis, a founding member of the Nabis Group. Denis insisted that before anything, a painting was essentially a flat surface covered in colours

arranged in a certain order. Wood was also greatly influenced at this stage by Picasso, especially his rose period. Picasso depicted Harlequins and circus performers, often in a limited palette of reds, pinks, orange, blues and earth tones. These various formal sources of inspiration as well as subject matter can be seen blended together in Wood's most ambitious early work, See **Work in Focus:** *The Fair at Neuilly*, 1923.

Wood recognised that if he was to become a successful artist he had to make his mark in Paris; the centre for modern art. This ambition is captured in his forthright painting **Work in Focus:** *Self-Portrait*, 1927. However, he was also keen to make a name for himself in London and to this end, he included this self-portrait in his first London exhibition held in the same year. Locating himself unmistakably in Paris the painting showed off his French credentials and the seriousness of his intent.

Wood was influenced by various artists at different stages of his career, but van Gogh remained a central role model, consistently underpinning his self-image. By the 1920s van Gogh was recognised as a pioneer of modern painting.

Wood had read van Gogh's letters and their impact is suggested in a letter to his mother; 'such a wonderful man. I have read all his memoirs and letters and how he struggled against every opposition, constant illness, no money and no one ever buying his pictures'. As well as a stylistic influence Wood responded to the synergy he saw between van Gogh's life and art. Again he wrote to his mother: 'He must have had such a beautiful mind.... The whole success of a painter depends on his character I am certain'.⁶

Wood constantly sought this connection, finding some glimpse of the life he thought he should lead among the fishing communities of both Cornwall and Brittany. Although in the early years, it was his life in Paris and the artistic circle in which he moved, that provided him with his artistic references and inspiration.

Work in Focus: Fair at Neuilly, France, 1922-23

Oil on board, 73.5 × 98.5 cm
Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in the painting?

In the foreground a group of figures are gathered in front of a central carousel; on which a child rides in a toy car. On the far left a bourgeois man stands behind his companion; a well-dressed woman, who is depicted in a flattened and stylised profile. His face is shown turned outwards, and his gaze seems to be caught by a mother with her two children; who stands just beyond him.

The mother's almost serene-like face draws your attention, as she stares directly out of the picture. It has the effect of isolating her from the bustle of her surroundings. She holds one child in her arms, whilst to her side, an older child turns his head to look at the activity to his left. A black and a white dog play in the centre of the foreground, at the feet of another group of three figures. A young man, probably from the carousel ride, tries to persuade the mother to allow her child a go on the ride. Her head is turned towards the child, whose outstretched arm leads you eye up towards the carousel and towards the centre of the painting.

Over their shoulder looms a large black and powerful horse. He has probably been unharnessed from the caravan behind, in which two figures sit looking out of the windows. The black of the horse is carried through to the trees that are depicted in the background. The patterns of their branches contrast with the geometric buildings that suggest an urban environment, whilst behind them, we can see surrounding hills.

How do the colours and patterns within the painting make you feel?

Do you think Wood painted this picture from direct observation or memory?

Why did Wood choose to depict a fair?

Have you been to a fair or circus. Using your five senses, describe what can you remember about your visit.

Would you like to go to this fair? Why?

Further ideas

- **Create** your own fairground scene, what would you include?
- **Write** a short descriptive story inspired by this scene.
- **Research** how other artists have captured the fairground and circus.

Work in Focus: Self-Portrait, 1927

Oil on canvas, 129.5 × 96.0 cm
Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in the painting?

A strong youthful face stares out from the canvas, full of determination. Dressed in a patterned jumper and dark trousers, Wood depicts himself standing on his studio balcony against the backdrop of Parisian rooftops. He is the central subject, filling most of the canvas; his body position suggests an openness of youth, confidence and intent.

Alongside his bohemian pipe and lighter, a paint box is splayed open on a table top, its contents exhibited as emblems of his trade. Brush in hand, he captures himself in the process of painting; although there is no indication of an easel.

The backdrop of balcony, rooftops and sky, divides the picture space into clear thirds which, while giving a suggestion of recession depth and a real location also creates a flatness which hints at a stage backdrop. There is also an overall sense of design and pattern, with the reds, blues and greys of Wood's jumper, repeated in the background which visually links him to his environment.

Why do you think Christopher Wood painted this picture?

How do the colours and the style of painting make you feel about him?

What backdrop would you give to your self-portrait?

Do you think all artists should create a self-portrait? Why?

Have you been to Paris?

Further ideas

- **Compare** self-portraits by a range of artists from different periods. What do they have in common; how do they differ and what is the artist trying to achieve?
- **Create** your own self-portraits. Think about how you want to present yourself, especially through your clothes, accessories and setting.
- **Write** a diary entry from the perspective of the artist for the day / week he painted this painting.

Key Themes: Spectacular Parallels

The Ballet and Diaghilev's 'Cult of Youth'

In Paris Wood took his influences not only from modern paintings but from the wider cultural spheres of dance, music and theatre. Like many young artists he was captivated by the Ballet Russes, whose daring performances and references to popular entertainments such as jazz and the circus epitomised the cultural freedom of the 1920s.

Wood first saw the Ballet Russes in 1923 when the company's production of *Pulcinella*; a ballet by Igor Stravinsky, was revived for the Paris stage. While *Pulcinella* is a character from the Commedia dell'arte, a 16th century Italian theatre tradition, in the hands of Picasso, who designed the costumes and sets, the ballet was reinterpreted with a fresh modernist vision. Wood attended many performances and overtime became a part of the fashionable community that supported and mixed with the performers.

By 1925 Wood was in Monte Carlo and in a letter to his mother he wrote: 'the Russian Ballet is here also which is the great attraction and the most agreeable spectacle in the world. All the modern musicians are here too, so with Diaghilev the creator of the Russian Ballet and his artists whom we know, we are like a big family of artists who see each other all the time'.⁷

As well as being at the heart of Wood's social circle, the company also had the reputation for

commissioning leading artists, such as André Derain, Matisse and Picasso to design sets and costumes. In this way, the ballet exerted a great influence on both Wood's personal and professional life.

In 1924 the company shifted their focus to the present-day Côte d'Azur in its ballet *Le Train Bleu*. It was an uncompromising celebration of contemporary leisure and fashion. The 'blue train' was a reference to the fast railway network that transported affluent pleasure seekers from Paris to the seaside resorts of the Mediterranean coast. Meanwhile the cast of the Ballet Russes played the roles of fashionable socialites. Coco Chanel designed the costumes, basing the swimming suits and tennis whites on her latest fashion collection. Picasso designed the stage curtain, which showed two classically inspired figures running along the beach. Accompanying Cocteau, who had produced the production, Wood attended the London opening in November 1924.

The chic aesthetic of *Le Train Bleu* influenced the look and feel of Wood's own paintings. In *The Bather*, 1925-26, and *Constant Lambert (The Composer)*, 1927, he depicted stylish bathers and figures in which he combined the timeless quality of Picasso's blocky classical forms with a more fashionable style.

Wood also recognised the opportunity to profit from the popularity of this chic aesthetic among a



The Bather, c. 1925-6 Oil on canvas, Jerwood Gallery



Constant Lambert (The Composer), 1927 Oil on canvas, Towner Art Gallery, Eastbourne

certain wealthy audience. Whilst staying in London he painted a large six panel decorative screen, see **Work in Focus:** *Beach Scene with Bathers, Pier and Ships*, 1925. In this he combined female bathers and fishermen which conjured up the seaside glamour of the Côte d'Azur.

Just as he hoped, the screen was purchased by the Earl of Latham and represented the first substantial sum of money that Wood earned from his art. The picture appeared in various magazines, including *Vogue* where it featured as a backdrop to a portrait of a socialite. Eventually it was sold to Lady Cunard, who later told Wood that she bought it specifically because of its fashionable associations.

Wood was increasingly intent on designing for the ballet. Initially he offered designs for his own ballet, based on the exploration of English identity entitled *English Country Life*, which Diaghilev turned down. However subsequently he was commissioned to create designs for a production based on *Romeo and Juliet*. Diaghilev had interpreted it so that the Ballet Russes production was a rehearsal of a production of *Romeo and Juliet*. Wood felt this limited the scope of his designs in which he created the allusion of a 'behind-the-scene' set and rehearsal room, see *Stage Design for Diaghilev's ballet, Romeo and Juliet*, 1925.

Although in the end, Wood's designs for this production were unsuccessful, his interest in theatre, performance and set design can be seen in his developing artistic style.



Stage Design for Diaghilev's ballet, Romeo and Juliet, 1925
Gouache on paper kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge

Work in Focus: Beach Scene with Bathers, Pier and Ships, 1925

Oil on a six-panelled screen, 167.6 × 365.8 cm
The Frank Cohen Collection



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in the painting?

Three groups of three figures are spaced across the six panels that make up this large-scale screen. In the centre are three youthful male figures, in blue bathing shorts. At their feet is a still-life arrangement of a lobster and fish. Their muscular strength is emphasised in their effort to pull onto shore a little white boat. On board are two figures, one standing on the helm, the other the bow and it is being rowed by numerous oarsmen.

To the left, a female figure, draped in a blue robe, stands beside a small beach hut and looks out across the scene; whilst at her feet recline two figures, wearing fashionable bathing suits. Their composition is reflected in the group of figures depicted in the right hand two panels. Two nude figures, this time one male and one female are seated. The seated woman looks out of the picture, with her arm raised behind her head, and a bathing towel draped over her knee. The man, seated in profile, is half obscured by a standing woman. Clothed in a blue day dress and high heels, she raises her arm and waves a handkerchief; apparently at the passing steam liner on the horizon.

Jutting out into the deep blue sea is a pier, supporting two architecturally flamboyant buildings; reminiscent of Brighton Pavilion with their flag topped domes.

An inky midnight blue sets the tone of the painting and adds a dreamlike quality to the image. This is enhanced by the classical-inspired forms and distant facial expressions of the figures, which give them a timeless quality; despite the allusion to contemporary fashions.

How do you feel the colours, forms and scale add to the mood of the painting?

Why do you think Wood has drawn the figures in this way?

Do you think he drew them from models or from memory?

How does it differ from other pictures of beach scenes that you have seen?

Further Ideas:

- **Write** a short description of the work, trying to persuade a collector they would like to buy it. Hold an art auction, would you buy this work?
- **Create** a fashion collection inspired by this work.
- **Perform** a piece of music which you feel could accompany this scene.

Key Themes: English Horizons - Cornwall and Cumbria

By the middle of 1926 Wood had his sights set firmly on establishing himself as the pre-eminent modern English painter aligning himself with Augustus John and Frank Dobson in London. He also began to associate with a wider circle of artists, including Cedric Morris, who had spent time in Paris and worked in a similar faux-naive style. After a period of learning and assimilation, Wood now recognised that he had to define his own style.

'I am going through a very difficult period at the moment as I must decide really what I am going to do in the future. All the pictures that I paint now will be fatal one way or another, to my career. They must be personal, quite different to everyone else's and full of English character'.⁸

With this determined spirit he travelled to west Cornwall and the Isles of Scilly with Gandarillas in August 1926. Wood had a connection with the area through his Cornish ancestors on his mother's side and from now on his Celtic sensibility began to play a larger role in shaping his sense of self and artistic identity.

Inspired by the landscape Wood rented a small wooden bungalow that looked out across the harbour towards Godrevy lighthouse on the opposite side of the bay, a view he painted in **Work in Focus:** *China Dogs in a St Ives window*, 1926.

'Wonderful country it is too, the coastland is terribly wild with huge rocks and towering black cliffs and little coves and creeks with the greenest water you ever saw with little white cottages clinging like wild flowers to the rocks'.⁹

Despite his obvious affinity with the landscape, Wood tended to work indoors and painted his pictures from memory rather than direct observation.

When Wood returned to London at the end of the year, he saw his role as the only leading modern artist in England. This increased his self-confidence but he also felt the great weight of expectation which he confided to his mother:

'the more I see of English people the more I am given to understand that I am the only young English painter who is expected to carry on. I pray to God I may be able to carry on this terrible responsibility'.

Through his friend Cedric Morris, he was introduced to Ben and Winifred Nicholson, a meeting which at the time would certainly have been of great significance to Wood. In the Nicholsons, Wood found modern painters whose work he respected as well as true friends; whilst in his paintings the Nicholsons saw a formal clarity and vivid use of colour which was in keeping with their own artistic principles.

Both Morris and Wood were nominated and accepted to join the 7 & 5 Society and were included in the group's annual exhibition in early 1927. It was held at the Beaux Arts Gallery and helped confirm Wood's place in the London art scene.

A close friendship ensued, with Wood inspired by what he perceived as the ideal supportive and creative relationship within the Nicholson's marriage, whilst for Winifred she found in Wood a poetic approach akin to her own style. In March 1928 Wood visited the Nicholson's home at Banks Head, Cumbria where all three painted together in the landscape, see *Cumberland Landscape*, 1928.



Cumberland Landscape, 1928 Oil on plywood Manchester Art Gallery

Above all, Wood's time at Banks Head confirmed to him the ideal of trying to live in a more modest way. He felt this would lead to a great clarity and purity in his work, which was in contrast to his lifestyle in Paris.

Back in St Ives in August 1928 with the Nicholsons, Wood made the acquaintance of Alfred Wallis. Wood responded to Wallis' direct style of painting, creating paintings that incorporated similar stylistic elements as well as developing his own personal symbolism. An example of such an inspired work was *Le Phare (The Lighthouse)*, 1929. It was painted on a piece of old board, while the boats are directly derived from Wallis' paintings.

Wood saw in the simply yet meaningful existence of rural people a model for the artist's life, which he captured in many of his pictures, see **Work in Focus:** *Porthmeor Beach*, 1928. Confident that he had at last discovered a subject-matter that could bring about his best work, Wood sought out other coastal areas. In 1929 with Fosca he visited Dieppe and then onto Brittany, where Wood spent two periods of extended time, in the summers of 1929 and 1930.



Le Phare (The Lighthouse), 1929 Oil on board, Kettle's Yard, University of Cambridge

Work in Focus: China Dogs in a St Ives Window, 1926

Gouache on panel, 63.5 × 76.2 cm

Pallant House Gallery, Chichester: on loan from a Private Collection (2009)



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in the painting?

The painting is of a view from the inside of Wood's St Ives cottage, out through the window, and across the bay to Godrevy lighthouse.

The scene is framed by a brown curtain that has been drawn to one side. This plays on the traditional idea of a painting being a view onto a scene. It also hints at Wood's involvement in designing for the theatre, as if revealing the scene in a play.

In the foreground a resplendent dog sits, in profile, on a bright red, high back armchair. Nestled into the side of the dog are two further little dogs, perhaps the 'china dogs' referred to in the title.

The edge of the open window cuts across the picture plane visually dividing the inside and outside spaces, as well as giving a suggestion of recession depth. The window also frames the view of the bay, causing it to become a picture within a picture.

A little boat chugs across the bay, while storm clouds in the top left corner draws attention to the lighthouse and the reminder of the perilous nature of the sea.

How do the colours in the painting make you feel?

The practice of depicting a scene through a window is commonly used in paintings. Why do you think Wood used this technique for this painting?

Why do you think he included a group of dogs in the painting, rather than someone sitting in the chair or an empty chair?

Have you sat by the sea and looked out on a similar view? Can you remember the feeling of being inside when the weather outside is stormy?

Further Ideas:

- **Think** about the idea of inside and outside space. How do you feel in different environments?
- **Collage** a selection of different images together to make a single image, what would you include?
- **Create** a short play which has this picture as its backdrop.

Work in Focus: Porthmeor Beach, 1928

Oil on canvas, 48.3 × 55.9 cm
Private collection



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in the painting?

A single figure, perhaps a lonely fisherman, walks along a path that weaves from the shore up into the rolling green hills. A stone wall snakes along the right hand side, framing the foreground and leading the eye around to the sea wall. The wall acts as a barrier between the beach and the edge of the town; indicated by a row of simplified buildings. At the far end of the beach a rocky hill rises up and is topped by a small white building; a chapel that looks out to sea. In the far distance stormy clouds roll over the far-off hills.

In the middle of the painting the open expanse of beach contrasts with the patchwork pattern of the land. Halfway up the shore, a simply drawn vessel and boat appear apparently discarded and lifeless. At the far left edge, out at sea, stands a lighthouse; a constant reminder of the perils associated with the sea and the fisherman's daily life.

Look at how the different colours work to create separate areas within the painting. How do they make you feel?

Trace the lines in the painting, such as the pathway, or the stone wall, and see how they link together.

Who do you think this figure is, and what is his story?

Imagine yourself in this painting, where would you be? What could you see from that position?

Further Ideas:

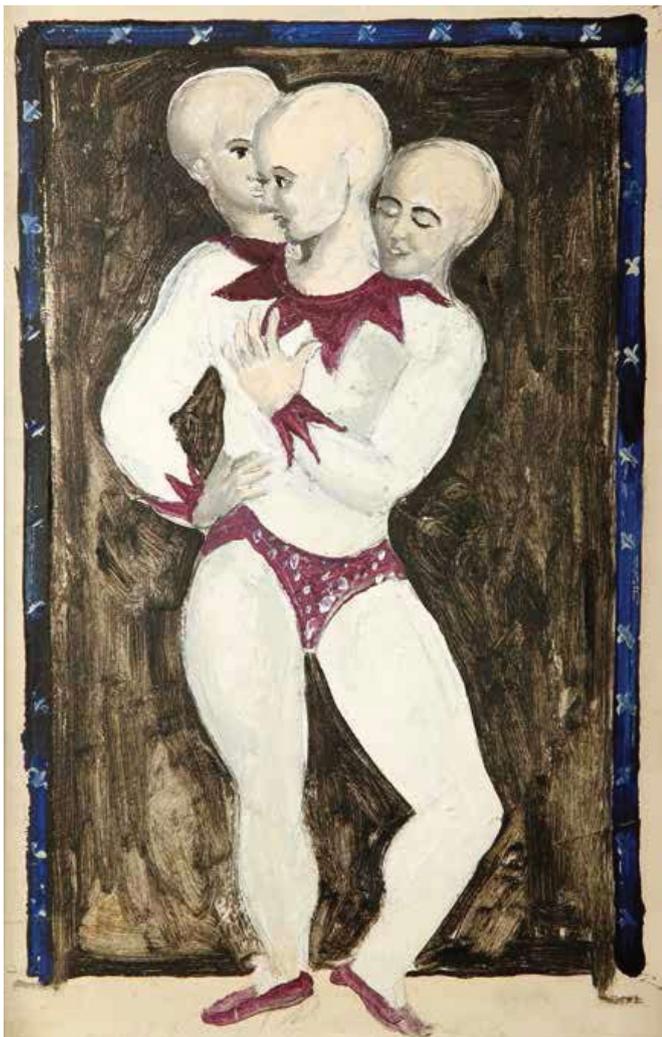
- **Go** for a walk in the landscape, if possible down by the sea. Think about how it feels and what you can see.
- **Write** a poem based on this picture.
- **Think** about the link between a place, its landscape and the working communities that are a part of its changing history.

Key Themes: Gathering Storm Clouds: Painting in Brittany 1929-1930

During the final two years of his life, Wood experienced huge professional and personal challenges. In late 1929 Wood achieved his ambition to design for the ballet. After Diaghilev's death, the former creative director, Boris Kochno was approached to produce three short ballets from Cochran's annual revue in London.

Wood was asked to design for the ballet *Luna Park*, described as a 'fantastic ballet in one act'. It tells the story of a hapless band of circus performers who cast off their disfigurements and run free in the outside world.

From Wood's sketches the cast consisted of a three-legged juggler, a one-legged ballerina, a man with six arms and a three-headed man, see *Sketch for 'Three-headed Man', in Luna Park*



Sketch for Three-headed Man, in Luna Park ballet, 1930
Watercolour and gouache on card, James L. Gordon Collection

Ballet, 1930. They were also distinguished by their shaved heads, which afforded them an androgynous uniformity. The strange figures and sense of hidden identity also came through into his paintings, see **Work in Focus: Yellow Man, 1930**.

In Kochno's memoir of the production he linked the fictional lives of the entertainers with Wood's own split identity. He wrote, the entertainers who are 'impassive during the day' at night they 'shake themselves free of their strange forms, and like Kit Wood, discover a second existence, full of secret passions and torments hidden from the general public'.¹⁰

In August 1929 Wood made his first trip to Cornouaille; known as Brittany's Cornwall. The topography of the area, with its beaches, rocky outcrops and clusters of cottages, was strikingly similar. He rented a modest whitewashed house in the tiny fishing village of Tréboul, around the bay from Douarnenez, where [Francis Rose](#) and [Max Jacob](#) were staying. During this period of rigorous painting he managed to produce a number of significant work which led to the well-respected gallerist Georges Bernheim offering him an exhibition, for May the following year.

Wood recognised the importance of this opportunity, when he wrote 'I think I am almost the first English painter to exhibit at a big Parisian gallery like this since Whistler', although he was greatly anxious for it to be a success. In the end Wood shared the exhibition with Ben Nicholson and was titled *Les Deux Peintures anglaises*. By the time of the opening the pressure was taking its toll on Wood's mental state. Winifred later commented: 'the insouciance and levity of Paris were in mocking contrast to those storm clouds which never had been far away and now lowered low'.¹¹

These conflicting forces are explored in two paintings that were included in the exhibition, see **Works in Focus: The Artist's Cottage near Paris, 1930** and *Little House by Night, 1930*.

Following the opening in Paris, Wood returned to Cornouaille, and spent most of what was to be his

last summer in Tréboul. The Brittany landscape, with its visible Catholicism and local traditions, encouraged Wood to dwell on themes of community and religious contemplation, and the integration of inner spirituality with the everyday, social world, see **Work in Focus:** *Dancing Sailors, Brittany*, 1930. For Wood, such a life represented the secure, simple existence that he longed for.

His appreciation of the Breton traditional way of life was akin to his admiration for the Cornish fishermen and this emotional response to his subject matter caused Wood to work at an intense rate. In just over a month he produced over forty pictures which he regarded as 'freer and more poetical' than those he had painted the year before. He was also once again under pressure to create enough work for an exhibition at Wertheim's London gallery, due to open in the autumn.

However, the ordered, meaningful life of the local people, as Wood observed it, served only to emphasize the chaos of his own life. As Winifred Nicholson recalled: 'there were pictures of churches, of the sea, of women praying, the colour was very simple and of the utmost purity like Hope itself. Human passion is at its highest tension, thought is mystic and the theme of travel beyond the horizon which had constantly recurred in all his work now reached a pitch of utmost intensity beyond which it is not possible to go'.¹²

Wood's love affair with Brittany and the romance of the sea was strongly felt in his painting *Sleeping Fisherman, Ploaré, Brittany*, 1930. It evoked the magical quality of the region, suggesting a place where it might be possible to escape into a world of dream.

As the season progressed Wood's concentration was broken by the gradual influx of tourists to the area. He saw their arrival as an intrusion into this otherwise sheltered part of the world.



Sleeping Fisherman, Ploaré, Brittany, 1930, Oil on board, The Laing Art Gallery, Newcastle upon Tyne

Work in Focus: The Yellow Man, 1930

Oil on board, 50.8 × 61 cm

Private collection



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in the painting?

Surrounded by a nocturnal landscape picked out in silvery greys and black, a pale faced man and his companion wander a deserted street. On one side of the road the houses are painted in firm lines, blocked and coloured. On the other, the moonlight has cast the street into silvery shadows. Although the setting has been identified as a street in London near where Wood was living, there is a strong dreamlike quality to the encounter.

The vivid yellow of the man's outfit, over which is draped a black cloak gives the painting its title and sets the figure apart from its dark and shadowy surroundings. In style it is close to the costumes designed by Wood for Luna Park, a ballet based on the duality of the characters lives and their hidden identities. The companion figure is dressed in white with a red cloak, his size suggestive of a child. They both have the shaved heads of the ballet characters; which gives them a timeless ambiguity.

The mysterious atmosphere is further enhanced by the textural quality of the painting. Wood created this by priming his canvas with an undercoat and scraping and incising the picture surface. This treatment is suggestive of set designs but also serves to convey a deeper psychological meaning.

What affect do the colours have on the atmosphere within the painting?

How does the painting make you feel?

What sense of time is captured in the picture?

Why do you think the buildings on either side of the street are depicted in a different way?

What does the open door on the left and the suggestion of a person in the top left window add to the narrative?

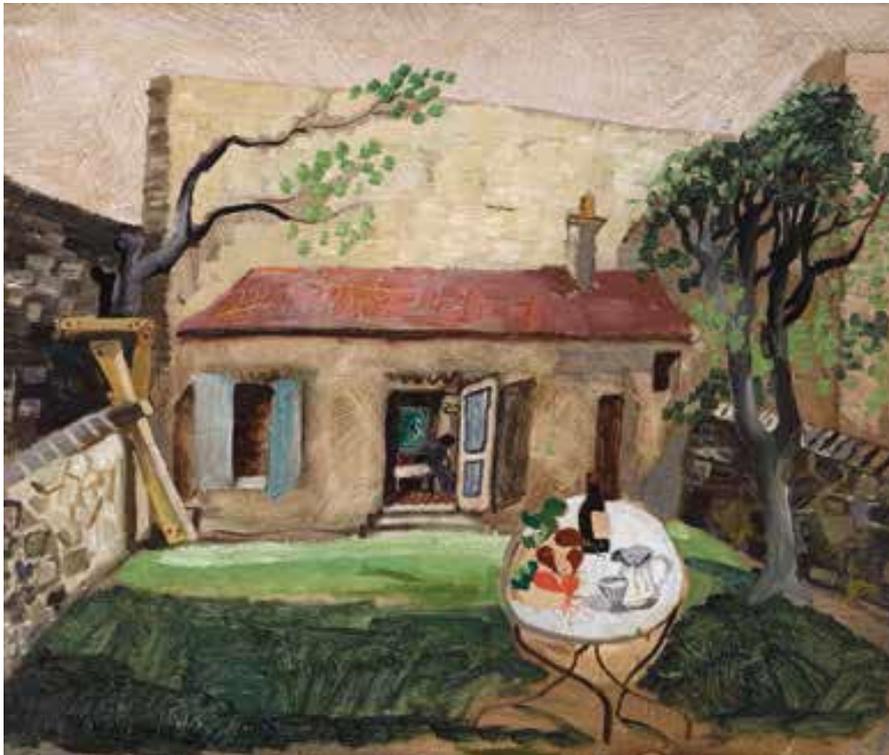
Further Ideas:

- **Perform** a play based on this image, think about what might have come before or just after this scene.
- **Sample** different types of music and see how they affect the mood of the picture? Does some music suit the image more than others?
- **Create** your own dreamlike image, how would it feel?

Works in Focus:

The Artist's Cottage near Paris, 1930

Oil on board, 53.5 × 65.6 cm, Private collection



Little House by Night, 1930

Oil on board, 54 × 65 cm, Private collection



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in these paintings?

Both paintings are based on a similar view of the single story cottage that had been rented for Wood by Bernheim at 36 rue Singer. Wood stayed here for just a month, but in that time he painted the house twice. In both paintings the window shutter and the door are thrown open; offering a glimpse of the interior space. Shallow steps lead down into a walled garden. In the foreground is a bistro table, set with various objects.

Contradictions that had preoccupied the young painter for much of his life play out across these otherwise similar scenes: day and night, light and dark, feminine and masculine, innocence and experience.

In *Little House by Night* the cottage is picked out in light, possibly moonlight, in an otherwise dark cloudy night. Through the open doorway a figure, possibly male, stalks the inside. On the table stands a bottle of wine and a hand of cards, the top card being the ace of hearts. These objects symbolise the nocturnal pleasures of Wood's Parisian life.

In *The Artist's Cottage, near Paris*, the cottage is bathed in sunshine and through the door a woman is shown sitting on the bed. On the table is a jug and glass accompanied by a selection of wholesome-looking vegetables, signifying good health and clean living.

Why do you think Wood chose to paint these two paintings?

How do the changes in colour affect the mood of the painting?

Which painting do you prefer and why?

Further Ideas:

- **Examine** how a dual personality is dealt with by other artists?
- **Create** your own pair of opposite images, what would they include?
- **Experiment** with changing different elements within a picture in order to change the atmosphere.

Work in Focus: Dancing Sailors, Brittany, France, 1930

Oil and household paint on board, 57.5 × 82 cm

New Walk Museum & Art Gallery, Leicester Arts and Museums Service



Look + Discuss

Observation - Description - Interpretation - Connection

What can you see in this painting?

In a sun baked square, edged with little white houses, people gather to watch two men and women dance. The men, identified as sailors, are dressed in blue jackets and trousers, white shirts and black hats. Two dance in line, one with his arm around the waist of a woman. To the side, another woman waits to join in the dance. The women are in traditional costume; black dress, apron and white headdress.

To one side a sailor, who appears to have lost his hat, sways off, waving a bottle in one hand, whilst two of his fellow revellers stand by the steps to one of the cottages. From the upstairs window of the cottage two women look down at the festive scene. On the opposite side of the square, in the shade of an open doorway a group of three women huddle in conversation.

Strung between the rooftops bunting flutters in the breeze and in the foreground two old musicians are playing. One plays an instrument similar to the bagpipes, whilst his companion, plays a clarinet-type instrument whilst playing a drum with his foot. They are seated on a bench made from a plank of wood and two upturned barrels.

Between the buildings the background of the sea or harbour can be glimpsed as well as tiny white houses on the hill behind. As Wood noted: 'There have been a lot of fetes here lately and all the white houses have little bouquets of bright flowers pinned to them and the narrow streets are strewn with flowers and palm leaves put in the shape of the sun. All the larger fishing boats are in the harbour being repainted for the [...] fishing season, the sailors are ... full of songs and drinks.'

What sort of atmosphere is captured in the painting?

What do you think Wood felt about this local community?

Do you think this was painted from direct observation or from memory or a postcard?

Can you imagine yourself in this picture? Think about the sounds, smells and what it would feel like.

Further Ideas:

- **Research** different types of traditional dress.
- **Create** a dance piece inspired by this painting.
- **Perform** the music which you think might accompany this scene.

Endnotes

- 1 Button, Virginia, *Christopher Wood (St Ives Artists Series)*, Tate Publishing, 2003, p.23
- 2 Norris, Katy, *Christopher Wood*, Lund Humphries in association with Pallant House Gallery, 2016, p.95
- 3 Oil on canvas, Tate, London.
- 4 Oil on canvas, The Phillips Collection, Washington DC.
- 5 Button, Virginia, *Christopher Wood (St Ives Artists Series)*, Tate Publishing, 2003, p.25
- 6 *ibid.* p.21
- 7 *ibid.* p.30
- 8 *ibid.* p.39
- 9 Norris, Katy, *Christopher Wood*, Lund Humphries in association with Pallant House Gallery, 2016, p.91
- 10 *ibid.* p.80
- 11 *ibid.* p.136
- 12 Button, Virginia, *Christopher Wood (St Ives Artists)*, Tate Publishing, 2003, p.60

References and Connections

Exhibition Overview

Post-Impressionism The work or style of a varied group of late 19th-century and early 20th-century artists including Van Gogh, Gauguin, and Cézanne. They reacted against the naturalism of the impressionists to explore colour, line, and form, and the emotional response of the artist, a concern which led to the development of expressionism.

Cubism A revolutionary new approach to representing reality invented in around 1907/08 by artists Pablo Picasso and Georges Braque. They aimed to bring different views of subjects (usually objects or figures) together in the same picture, resulting in paintings that appear fragmented and abstracted.

Fauvism is the name applied to the work produced by a group of artists (which included Henri Matisse and André Derain) from around 1905 to 1910, which is characterised by strong colours and fierce brushwork.

Paul Cézanne (1839–1906) A French artist and Post-Impressionist painter. His unique method of building form with colour and his analytical approach to nature influenced the art of Cubists, Fauvists, and successive generations of avant-garde artists.

Vincent van Gogh (1853–1890) Dutch post impressionist painter of landscapes, figures and still lifes for whom colour was the chief symbol of expression. In just over a decade from 1881 onwards, he produced over 2000 artworks; which had a far-reaching influence on 20th century art.

Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) French post-Impressionist artist Gauguin was an important figure in the Symbolist art movement of the early 1900s. His use of bold colours, exaggerated body proportions and stark contrasts in his paintings set him apart from his contemporaries, helping to pave the way for the Primitivism art movement. Gauguin often sought exotic environments, and spent time living and painting in Tahiti.

Henri Matisse (1869–1954) French painter, sculptor, graphic artist and designer. He exhibited in Paris in 1905 with a group of friends, who were dubbed the Fauves (wild beasts) because of the brightness of their colours. His bold use of colour and expressive forms dominated his work and positioned him as a leading figure of modern art.

Pablo Picasso (1881–1973) Spanish painter who worked in France as a painter, sculptor, etcher, ceramicists and designer. He worked in a variety of styles and is regarded as one of the greatest and most influential artists of the 20th century.

Jean Cocteau (1889–1963) was a French writer, designer, playwright, artist and filmmaker. He was one of the most influential creative figures in the Parisian avant-garde between the two World Wars.

Sergei Diaghilev (1872–1929) A Russian art critic, patron, ballet impresario and founder of the Ballets Russes, from which many famous dancers and choreographers would arise.

Ballet Russes A ballet company founded in Paris in 1909 by the Russian impresario Sergei Diaghilev. The original company included the dancers Anna Pavlova and Vaslav Nijinsky. Music was commissioned from Stravinsky and designs from Picasso, Rouault, Matisse and Derain.

Augustus John (1878–1961) Painter of portraits, including many distinguished contemporaries, figure compositions, landscapes and flowers; draughtsman, etcher and lithographer. He was associated with the New English Art Club and the Camden Town Group but remained largely independent from artistic trends and movements.

Frank Dobson (1886 – 1963) English sculptor who was influential in the promotion and development of modern sculpture in England. In his early paintings he was influenced by Post-Impressionism. Around 1914 he began to sculpt, inspired by Paul Gauguin's wood carvings and "primitive" sculpture. Dobson's first carvings showed the influence of Cubism, but he gradually turned to simplified figurative sculpture.

References and Connections

Alfred Wallis (1855 - 1942) English painter, fisherman and scrap merchant. In 1890 he moved to St Ives and when his wife died in 1922, he took up painting. His principal subjects were ships at sea and shipwrecks. Other typical subjects were landscapes with trees and houses. He used very few colours, often dark browns, shiny blacks, fierce greys, strange whites and green. Wallis regarded his paintings as expressions of his experiences. He was unaware of linear perspective, but arranged the objects depicted in terms of relative importance, determining their sizes accordingly.

About the Artist

Primitivism The term Primitivism is used to describe the fascination of early modern European artists with what was then called primitive art – including tribal art from Africa, the South Pacific and Indonesia, as well as prehistoric and very early European art, and European folk art. Such work has had a great impact on modern Western art. Primitivism also means the search for a simpler more basic way of life away from Western urban sophistication and social restrictions.

Max Ernst (1891–1976) German-born painter, sculptor and printmaker; one of the leading Surrealists. In 1922 moved to Paris, where his friendship with Breton and Eluard led to active participation in the Surrealist movement. His discovery of the technique of frottage (rubbing) in 1925 provided him with a means of evoking hallucinatory visions.

Joan Miró (1893–1983) Catalan painter who combined abstract art with Surrealist fantasy. His mature style evolved from the tension between his fanciful, poetic impulse and his vision of the harshness of modern life.

7&5 Society Established in 1919 it initially served as an exhibiting group which proclaimed no singular manifesto. However, when Ben Nicholson joined in 1924 he introduced like-minded modernist artists to the group. It became regarded as the leading modernist art group and in 1935 it held its first all abstract exhibition.

William Staite Murray (1881–1962) English studio potter. Murray's aim was to raise the profile and reputation of pottery to a level where it would be regarded as equal to painting and sculpture. He was made instructor in pottery at the Royal College of Art in London in 1926.

Innocence and Experience - Formative Years

Dada was an art movement formed during the First World War in Zurich in negative reaction to the horrors and folly of the war. The art, poetry and performance produced by dada artists is often satirical and nonsensical in nature.

Surrealism was a movement which began in the 1920s of writers and artists (including Salvador Dalí and René Magritte), who experimented with ways of unleashing the subconscious imagination. Established by French poet André Breton in Paris in 1924 it became an international movement including British surrealism which formed in 1936. They were strongly influenced by Sigmund Freud (the founder of psychoanalysis) and his theories about the unconscious. The aim of surrealism was to reveal the unconscious and reconcile it with rational life.

Maurice Denis (1870–1943) French painter, one of the leading artists and theoreticians of the Symbolist and Les Nabis movements. His theories contributed to the foundations of cubism, fauvism, and abstract art.

Nabis Group Les Nabis were a group of post-impressionist French painters active from 1888–1900 whose work is characterised by flat patches of colour, bold contours and simplified drawing.

Rose period Represents an important phase in the life and work of Picasso and had a great impact on the developments of modern art. It began in 1904 at a time when Picasso settled in Montmartre. It represents themes of clowns, harlequins, carnival performers, depicted in cheerful vivid hues of red, orange, pink and earth tones. Based largely on intuition rather than direct observation, Picasso's Rose Period marks

References and Connections

the beginning of the artists' stylistic experiments with primitivism; influenced by pre-Roman Iberian sculpture, Oceanic and African art.

Spectacular Parallels: The Ballet and Diaghilev's 'Cult of Youth'

Igor Stravinsky (1882–1971) A Russian (and later, a naturalized French and American) composer, pianist and conductor. He is widely considered one of the most important and influential composers of the 20th century.

Commedia dell'arte A form of theatre characterized by masked "types" which began in Italy in the 16th century and was responsible for the advent of the actresses and improvised performances based on sketches or scenarios.

André Derain (1880–1954) French painter, sculptor and graphic artist. One of the creators of Fauvism and an early follower of Cubism. He was a central figure to the developments of modern art in Paris in the first two decades of the 20th century.

Coco Chanel (1883–1971) French fashion designer. Her elegantly casual designs inspired women of fashion to abandon the complicated, uncomfortable clothes—such as petticoats and corsets—that were prevalent in 19th-century dress. Among her now-classic innovations were the Chanel suit, costume jewellery, and the "little black dress."

English Horizons: Cornwall and Cumbria

Cedric Morris (1889–1982) Welsh painter and horticulturist. He was a self-taught painter but attended the academies in Paris as a young man. Morris's paintings combine a strong sense of colour. His subjects include portraits, still-life, landscapes and flower paintings. He was a member of the art communities of Newlyn in Cornwall (1919–20), Paris (1921–6) and London (1926–39). Between 1937 and c.1975 Morris and Lett-Haines directed the East Anglian School of Painting and Drawing.

Gathering Storm Clouds: Painting in Brittany 1929–1930

Francis Rose (1909–1979) British painter Rose lived in Paris between 1929 and 1936, where he got his beginning as a set painter for Diaghilev's Ballets Russes.

Max Jacob (1876–1944) French poet, painter, writer, and critic. Max Jacob is regarded as an important link between the symbolists and the surrealists, He played a decisive role in the new directions of modern poetry during the early part of the 20th century.

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