

24 November 2009

Sargent, Sickert & Spencer

8 December 2009 – 5 April 2010

An exhibition opening next month at The Fitzwilliam Museum focuses on three of the most original painters of the late 19th and early 20th centuries: John Singer Sargent, Walter Sickert and Stanley Spencer.

Drawn from The Fitzwilliam Museum's holdings of paintings, watercolours and drawings by these three artists, which are amongst the finest in the UK, this exhibition offers the chance to explore the 'hidden depths' of the Museum's world-class collections.

At first glance, the lives and careers of these artists appear disparate. Sargent (1856-1925), an American based in Europe, was one of the leading portraitists of his day, whose suave society paintings appeared in sharp contrast to the darker social realism of his contemporary, the German-born 'London Impressionist' Sickert (1860-1942) – and even further from the naïve visions of Spencer's (1891-1959) native Berkshire. Yet, as this exhibition shows, their lives and careers intersected in a number of ways.

Presenting over seventy works, from landscapes and portraiture to interiors and nudes, and including little-seen sketches and studies, *Sargent, Sickert & Spencer* examines what divided these painters stylistically, and what united them artistically. The exhibition will explore a number of themes:

- Artists on the move: an exploration of these artists' travels, with images depicting locations as diverse as Jerusalem, Corfu, Sicily and Majorca (Sargent), Paris, Dieppe, London (Sickert) and Sarajevo (Spencer), with particular focus upon Sargent's and Sickert's views of Venice
- War zones: depictions of soldiers and military life by Sargent and Spencer and their friends and associates, including Henry Tonks and Muirhead Bone
- Music, music halls and theatres: surveying Sickert's images of music and performance, set in Paris, London and Dieppe
- Landscapes: a genre each of these artists embarked on with relief or resignation, from Sargent's *Olives in Corfu* (1909) to Spencer's *Landscape in North Wales* (1938)
- Interiors and the nude: reviewing images such as Sickert's *Mornington Crescent Nude* (1907) and Spencer's *Self-Portrait with Patricia Preece* (1937), exploring their frequently unsettling depictions of nude female models
- Spencer, God and love: an examination of Spencer's overarching themes, as explored in such visionary masterpieces as *Love Among the Nations* (1935-1936) and *Love on the Moor* (1949-1954)

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These works will also be juxtaposed with others from the Museum's collection, including drawings by Charles Keene, Degas's depiction of Lyon Cathedral, and *Sermons by Artists*, a collection of writings by Spencer, Paul Nash and others.

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Details for publication:

Sargent, Sickert & Spencer

8 December 2009 – 5 April 2010

The Fitzwilliam Museum, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RB

OPEN: Tuesday – Saturday: 10.00 – 17.00
Sundays and Bank Holiday Mondays: 12.00 – 17.00

Closed Mondays, Good Friday and 24-26 & 31 December and 1 January

ADMISSION FREE

Further information and images from:

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Notes for Editors

The Fitzwilliam Museum

The Fitzwilliam Museum houses the University of Cambridge's art collection and is a public museum and art gallery with an international reputation. More than half a million objects and works of art are held in five curatorial departments: Antiquities, Applied Arts, Coins and Medals, Manuscripts and Printed Books and Paintings, Drawings and Prints.

The Fitzwilliam's treasures range from Ancient Egyptian, Greek and Roman antiquities to the arts of the 21st century and include masterpieces by Titian, Canaletto, Stubbs, Constable, Monet, Renoir and Picasso, one of the world's foremost Rembrandt print collections, Handel music manuscripts and the famous Fitzwilliam Virginal Book, one of the most significant collections of Korean ceramics outside South-East Asia, medieval illuminated manuscripts and outstanding collections of pottery, porcelain and medieval coins.

The Fitzwilliam Museum welcomes over 300,000 visitors a year, offers a wide-ranging programme of temporary exhibitions and events, and has an award-winning Education Service. The Museum is open Tuesday – Saturday: 10.00 – 17.00, Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays: 12.00 – 17.00. Free admission. Website: www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk

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