

News Release

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NEW ACQUISITIONS GO ON PUBLIC DISPLAY FOR THE FIRST TIME IN NEW EARLY 20th CENTURY GALLERIES AT NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

Highlights include recently acquired portrait of Prince Edward, Duke of Windsor, (later King Edward VIII), painted on the Western Front in 1917; the Gallery's first stained glass portrait, and life-size First World War group portraits reunited for the first time in decades.



L-R Sir Arthur Thomas Sloggett by Francis Owen ('Frank') Salisbury, 1917 © National Portrait Gallery, London; Prince Edward, Duke of Windsor (King Edward VIII) as Prince of Wales by Francis Owen ('Frank') Salisbury, 1917 © National Portrait Gallery, London; Pauline Boty by Pauline Boty, stained glass, c.1958 © Pauline Boty Estate/ National Portrait Gallery, London. Photographs by Nick Smith © National Portrait Gallery, London

The National Portrait Gallery, London is to open brand new gallery spaces devoted to its early 20th Century Collection on 4 November 2017 it was announced today, 3 November 2017. The creation of these new spaces within the Gallery's free permanent Collection, has been made possible by a grant from the DCMS/ Wolfson Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund, and will see a number of recently acquired portraits go on public display for the first time. These include a portrait of Prince Edward, Duke of Windsor (later King Edward VIII) as Prince of Wales, painted during the First World War by artist Frank O. Salisbury, and a self-portrait by artist and actor, Pauline Boty, the Gallery's first work in stained glass.

Three life-size First World War group portraits, considered the Gallery's most important commission made shortly before the armistice on 11 November 1918, will also be reunited for the first time in decades. The recently restored, *Naval Officers of World War 1* by Sir Arthur Stockdale Cope, will sit alongside its companion pieces, *General Officers of World War 1* by John Singer Sargent and *Statesmen of World War 1* by Sir James Guthrie in an entirely new room devoted to the First World War.



L-R Statesmen of World War 1 by Sir James Guthrie, 1924-1930, © National Portrait Gallery, London; Naval Officers of World War 1 by Sir Arthur Stockdale Cope, 1921, © National Portrait Gallery, London; General Officers of World War 1 by John Singer Sargent, 1922, © National Portrait Gallery, London

The new galleries will offer a fresh approach to the presentation and interpretation of portraits from the period 1900 to 1960. Four new rooms will hold 121 portraits, hung chronologically, twenty per cent more works than displayed in the National Portrait Gallery's previous early 20th century galleries. Split into four main periods: The early 20th century; The Great War; The interwar years and the Second World War and Post-War recovery, the portraits on display show individuals from various walks of life depicted at similar moments, in an era of radical and rapid change. Defined by the men and women connected with those times, the picture that emerges is one of vibrant diversity, in which tradition and innovation co-existed. Sitters featured include Virginia Woolf, Sir Jacob Epstein, Dame Christabel Pankhurst, Sir Winston Churchill, King George V, Sir Kingsley Amis, Dame Barbara Hepworth, Roald Dahl, Dame Edith Sitwell, Amy Johnson, James Joyce, Sir Ernest Shackleton, Radcliffe Hall and Vanessa Bell.

The oil sketch of Prince Edward, Duke of Windsor, as Prince of Wales, acquired by the Gallery in 2015, was painted by artist Frank O. Salisbury, (1874-1962), on the Western Front in 1917. During the war, Edward's request to serve was refused owing to the potential dangers. Despite being a non-combatant, he spent most of the war visiting the troops. Salisbury recalled 'He sat very well... We were quite near the fighting line and the guns were going incessantly.' The portrait will be displayed in the First World War room alongside another newly acquired work by Frank O. Salisbury depicting Sir Arthur Sloggett, Director General of the Army Medical Services in France on the Western Front (1914-18), painted in France in 1917.

Pauline Boty's Self-portrait, c. 1958, acquired in 2017, is the National Portrait Gallery's first portrait in stained glass. Artist and Actor, Pauline Boty, (1938-1966), was one of the very few female artists associated with Pop Art and a key member of the movement in Britain. She studied at Wimbledon College of Art (1954-8) before studying stained glass at the Royal College of Art (1958-61). Boty participated in one of the first exhibitions of British Pop Art at the Whitechapel in London in 1961 and had her first solo exhibition in 1963. She was the only female Pop artist to be featured in Ken Russell's documentary *Pop Goes the Easel* in 1962. Boty's rare Self-portrait is believed to date from 1958, when she was a student at the Royal College of Art. The work incorporates many of the creative techniques associated with the influential stained glass department of the Royal College of Art at that period, including layering, acidifying of deep flashed layers, and expressive use of glass painting. The glass leading is experimental, with its eccentric use of arbitrary leads such as the piece cutting across the face of the figure.

Paul Moorhouse, former Senior Curator of the 20th Century Collection at the National Portrait Gallery, London and curator of the new galleries says: 'The 20th century was an era of breath-taking changes. An individual born in 1900 occupied a world that saw the advent of powered flight and, within a lifetime, the conquest of the moon. Society

broke free from Victorian constraints and the independent status of women was hugely important. The newly hung galleries tell these amazing stories. They bring together portraits of the men and women who were responsible for the developments that transformed Britain by ushering in the modern world. From the Polar explorer Ernest Shackleton to the Pop artist Pauline Boty, in their different ways they are all inspirational pioneers.'

Dr Nicholas Cullinan, Director, National Portrait Gallery, London says: 'We are delighted to be opening our transformed early 20th century galleries to the public, with a completely new hang and interpretation of the Collection, and we are grateful to the DCMS/ Wolfson Museums & Galleries Improvement Fund for their support. Visitors will be able to walk through the first half of a century that saw radical and sweeping changes, while the juxtaposition of portraits from the same era reveals the range of artistic styles that co-existed at the same time. This new approach will help inform our major transformation project, *Inspiring People*, which will see a comprehensive re-display of our Collection for the first time across all our galleries, from the Tudors to now.'

The Galleries:

The early 20th century

The first decade of the 20th century and the years preceding the outbreak of the Great War saw a gradual evolution in British society as the nation adjusted to the passing of Queen Victoria, an individual whose long reign had given the previous era a sense of continuity. Sir Luke Fildes's imposing portrait of her successor King Edward VII, and Sir John Lavery's 1913 portrait of the Royal Family at Buckingham Palace manifest visible connections with Britain's imperial past. However, portraits of Christabel Pankhurst and Virginia Woolf, from 1909 and 1912 respectively, are reminders that fundamental changes - especially in relation to the role of women - were afoot.

The Great War

Holding three of the Gallery's most important commissions, shown together for the first time in decades, Sir Arthur Stockdale Cope's magisterial painting *Naval Officers of World War 1; General Officers of World War 1* by John Singer Sargent and *Statesmen of World War 1* by Sir James Guthrie. These large works will be shown alongside newly acquired portraits of Prince Edward (later Edward VIII) and Sir Arthur Sloggett, and film footage of the Battle of the Somme.

The interwar years

The period that followed the First World War was characterised by progressive developments - socially, politically and artistically - and also by increasing uncertainty. Portraits of the pioneer aviators Sir John Alcock and Amy Johnson, and a newly acquired portrait of the celebrated philosopher Albert Schweitzer, are shown alongside Vanessa Bell's 1931 portrait of Aldous Huxley, whose novel *Brave New World* (1932) presented an anxious view of the future, a premonition that seemed confirmed by subsequent events. Portraits of King Edward VIII, who within months abdicated, and Wallis, Duchess of Windsor, the divorcee he married, evoke the constitutional crisis that resulted.

The Second World War and post-war recovery

A new selection of portraits of key individuals connected with the Second World War evoke the momentous events of 1939-45. Those represented include Viscount Montgomery ('Monty') of Alamein, Barnes Wallis who invented the bouncing bomb used during the dam busters raid, the pioneer plastic surgeon Sir Archibald McIndoe, and a special loaned portrait by Matthew Smith of Roald Dahl in RAF uniform. These are shown alongside recently acquired portraits of the great Austrian émigré painter Marie Louise Motesiczky and the self-portrait of Pauline Boty which provide striking visible evidence of a society seeking a way forward, and open to new means of expression. Donald Gilbert's portrait of television pioneer, John Logie Baird, expands the cultural context in which television, cinema, radio, advertising, magazines and colour printing communicated the latest developments in fashion, design, music, science and the arts.

The early 20th century galleries are curated by Paul Moorhouse, former Senior Curator of the 20th Century Collection and Head of Displays (Victorian to Contemporary) at the National Portrait Gallery, London.

For further Press information and image requests please contact: Laura McKechan, National Portrait Gallery Tel: 020 7312 2452 (not for publication) Email: lmckechan@npg.org.uk

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Notes to Editors:

ABOUT NATIONAL PORTRAIT GALLERY

The National Portrait Gallery was founded in 1856 to encourage through portraiture the appreciation and understanding of the people who have made and are making British history and culture. Today it promotes engagement with portraiture in all media to a wide-ranging public by conserving, growing and sharing the world's largest collection of portraits. The Gallery holds the most extensive collection of portraits in the world. With over 1000 portraits on display across three floors, from Elizabeth I to David Beckham, the Gallery has something for everyone. Artists featured range from Holbein to Hockney, and the Collection includes work across all media, from painting and sculpture to photography and video. As well as the permanent displays, the Gallery has a diverse and ever-changing programme of exhibitions and events that promote an understanding and appreciation of portraiture in all forms.

www.npg.org.uk

The Wolfson Foundation

The Wolfson Foundation is an independent grant-making charity that aims to promote the civic health of society by supporting excellence in the fields of education, the arts & humanities, health and science. Established in 1955, over £800 million (£1.7 billion in real terms) has been awarded to more than 10,000 projects across the UK, all on the basis of expert peer review.

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National Portrait Gallery, St Martin's Place WC2H 0HE, opening hours Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Saturday, Sunday: 10am – 6pm (Gallery closure commences at 5.50pm) **Late Opening:** Thursday, Friday: 10am – 9pm (Gallery closure commences at 8.50pm) **Nearest Underground:** Leicester Square/Charing Cross **General information:** 0207 306 0055 **Recorded information:** 020 7312 2463 **Website/Tickets:** www.npg.org.uk