



11 June 2022 - 25 September 2022

Venues

EASTBOURNE

Exhibition Title

2022 Eastbourne, Towner Art Gallery, A Life in Art: Lucy Wertheim

More Information

In 1971 Lucy Carrington Wertheim (1883-1971) bequeathed over 50 works to Towner Art Gallery following a long association with the gallery and friendship with David Galer the curator. Within this gift were paintings by Christopher Wood, Frances Hodgkins, Cedric Morris, Phelan Gibb and Alfred Wallis, now key works in Towner's permanent collection. 2021 marked 50 years since Wertheim's gift and therefore an opportune moment to celebrate this pioneering female gallerist by reuniting works from her collection and the artists she fervently championed in an ambitious exhibition. During her lifetime Wertheim generously supported many public galleries, whether through gifts or exhibition loans.

She passionately believed that young British artists should have the same opportunities as their European counterparts, a belief which led to her opening her own London-based gallery in 1930, the Wertheim Gallery, and initiating the Twenties Group, an exhibiting collective for artists in their twenties. Wertheim was embedded in the inter-war arts scene; she surrounded herself with artists such as Frances Hodgkins, Christopher Wood, Helmut Kolle and Kenneth Hall and sought out young and unknown talent to show at her gallery. Her own instinctive taste was reflected in the bold, vibrant na'ive' style that characterised the work of so many of these artists. Her dedication to 'her artists' spanned five decades, during which she amassed a significant collection of paintings and drawings, mounted hundreds of exhibitions, loaned to schools, and gifted many works to galleries and museums both nationally and internationally. Though Wertheim is known among specialist gallerists and collectors, she is relatively unknown by the broader public - although they are familiar with many of the artists she represented. A Life in Art will introduce new audiences to Lucy Wertheim, highlighting how she supported, motivated and showcased the artists that she discovered. Paintings, drawing and sculptures from her disbanded collection will be brought together again for the first time in 50 years alongside works exhibited in the Wertheim Gallery. The exhibition will illustrate the significance of the close relationships she developed with her artists and the impact of her patronage on their careers. Wertheim's voice will form part of the exhibition narrative, through extracts from letters and her memoir *Adventure in Art*, published in 1947. The exhibition includes Moore's *Head of a Girl*, 1923, which was formerly in Wertheim's collection and remained in her home until her death in 1971. In her memoir, Wertheim wrote of Moore, "I fell under the spell of his work in 1928 and within a year had acquired from him 'The Reclining Nude' in alabaster, 'Head of a Girl', and two smaller carvings in addition to numerous drawings."

Exhibition Info

Lucy Carrington Wertheim (1883-1971) supported many public galleries and young artists, and bequeathed over 50 works to Towner Art Gallery. This exhibition will bring together paintings, drawings and sculptures from her disbanded collection for the first time in 50 years alongside works exhibited in the Wertheim Gallery, which she established in 1930. The exhibition includes Moore's *Head of a Girl* which was shown at the Wertheim Gallery's opening exhibition.