



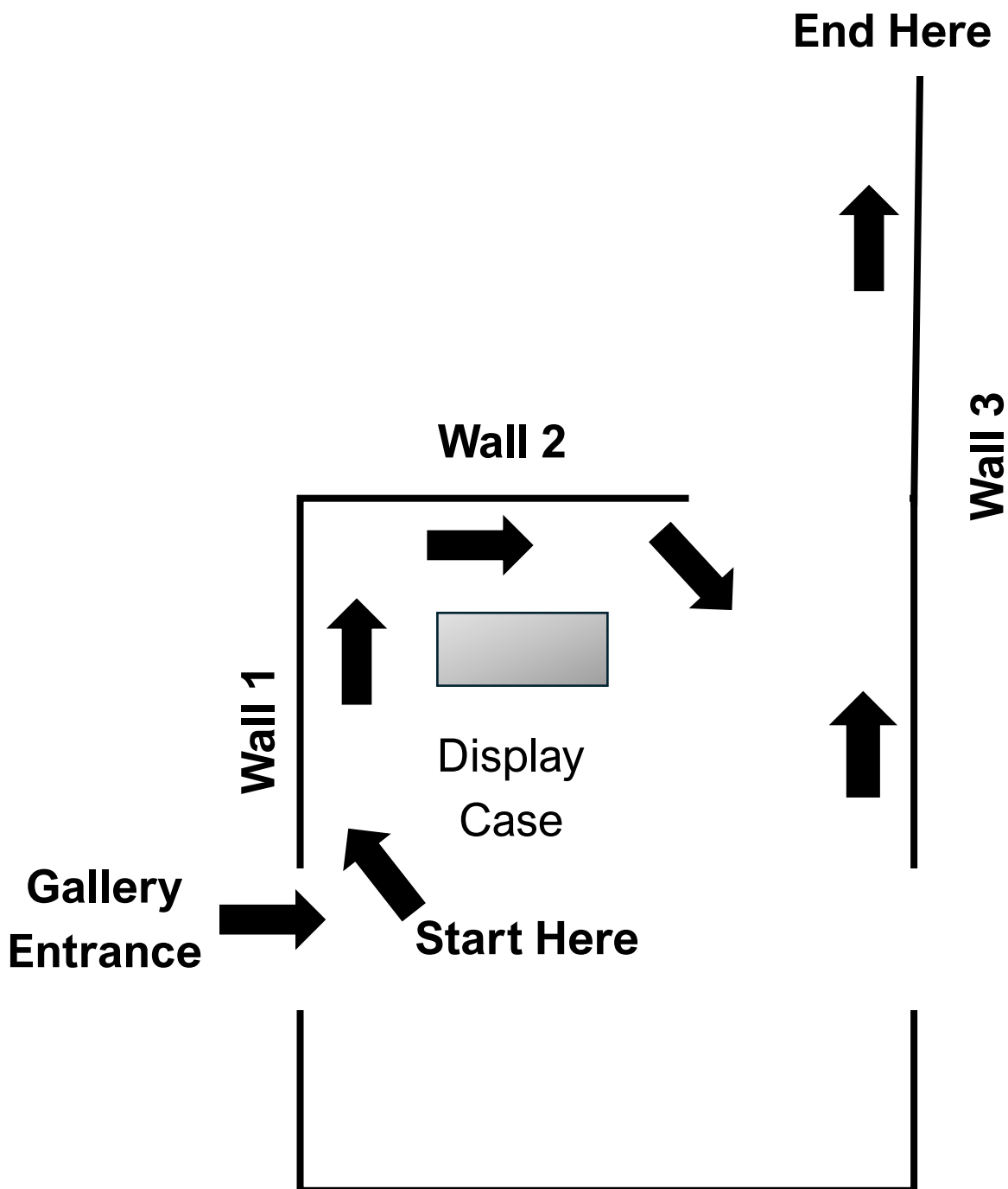
Modern Life:
The LS Lowry Collection

Friends and Neighbours

Large Print Guide

Map

Friends and Neighbours



Wall 1

Friends and Neighbours

Lowry claimed to paint what he saw, but most of his portraits are imagined, his industrial scenes are often invented and his late drawings show fantastic hybrid figures, part human and part animal.

Nonetheless, Lowry described them all as '... my friends and neighbours. Look along Stalybridge Road and you will see every one of them - all done from life.' Lowry constantly observed and sketched what was around him but he transformed these initial drawings into his own vision of the world.

'Ann' is an example of Lowry combining fiction and reality. His friends had no reason to think she did not exist, but no one ever met her in person and

his explanations of who she was varied. She appears in many guises throughout Lowry's career and it is likely that she was an imagined character, her appearance perhaps inspired by some of his female friends or by public figures of the time such as the opera singer Maria Callas or the ballerina Margot Fonteyn who he would have seen dance at the Royal Opera House in London.

Girl Seen from the Front, undated

Girl Seen from the Back, 1964

Oil on canvas

This child with long hair is one of the characters in Luigi Pirandello's 1925 play, *Six Characters in Search of an Author*. The play was revived in London in 1963, starring Sir Ralph Richardson. Lowry's friend, the artist Sheila Fell, suggested they see it. Fell recalled Lowry being 'bowled over by it. ...he talked about it endlessly, analyzing it, wondering at it. It absolutely fascinated him.'

Lowry himself said, 'I went to see it nine times. By the third visit I had become interested in the child with the long hair. By the fourth I thought: "I'm gone, I'm gone – I'm bats about this child." The visual aspect of those characters fascinated me...'

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

Wall 2

Child with Doll, 1968

Pencil on paper

Lowry's late figures can be unsettling. In this drawing it is hard to tell if the girl's eyes are open or closed, made-up or bruised. Her half smile seems cruel and disengaged and it is ambiguous as to whether it is a doll or a baby that she holds.

On loan from a private collection

Man Looking over a Fence, 1964

Oil on canvas

Lowry's solitary figure looks in our direction, but we can't be sure if he is looking at us, or beyond to something behind us. He seems forever trapped and separated by the barrier of railings. By reducing his colours to largely black and white, Lowry emphasises a stark sense of isolation, similar to that in *The Funeral Party* (also on display) painted 11 years earlier.

On loan from a private Liechtenstein Collection

Portrait of a Girl with Short White Socks, 1960

Oil on board

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

Portrait of Ann, 1957

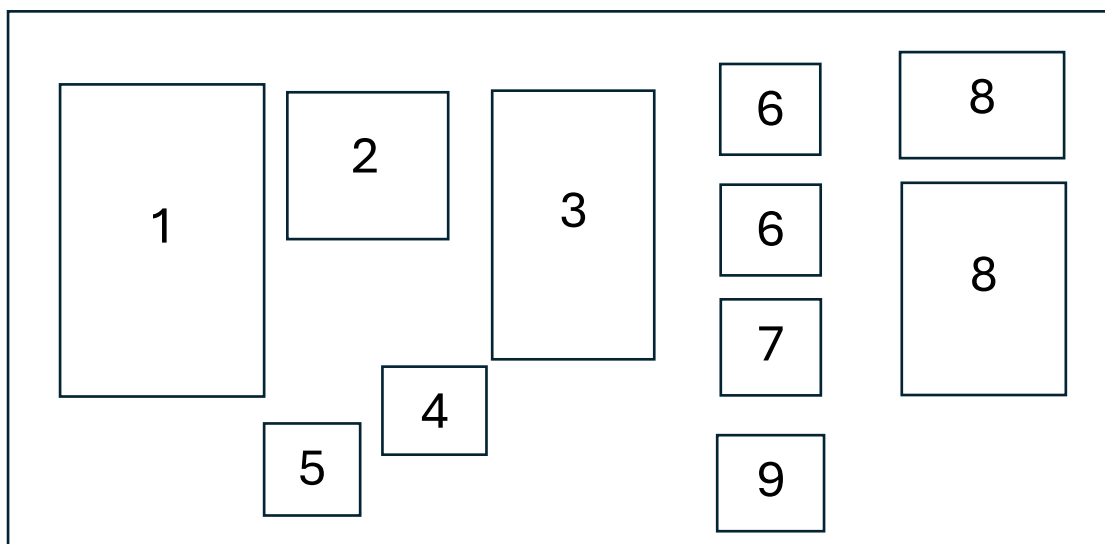
Oil on board

According to Lowry this work was the first portrait he had painted in nearly thirty years. Lowry described the sitter as aged 25, from Leeds and, 'the daughter of some people who have been very good to me.' He also described her as his godchild Ann Hilder (or Helder). Despite extensive research, no one has yet been able to confirm the identity of Ann.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Display Case

Friends and Neighbours



1.

Great Ancoats Street, about 1929

A Northern Street, 1935

Bennett Street Sunday School, about 1949

Pencil on paper

The Lowry Collection, Salford

2.

Things We Have Seen, about 1970

Black and blue ballpoint pen on paper

On the back of the frame is written 'Done after lunch
at The George, Huddersfield, Jan 1970'.

On loan from a private collection

3.

Various sketches, about 1970

Ballpoint pen on Seaburn Hotel headed notepaper

Lowry regularly stayed at the Seaburn Hotel near Sunderland, often in the same room where he could view the promenade and the sea from his window.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

4.

The Tree with Railings, Stockport, 1931

Pencil on a postcard

On the back of the postcard Lowry has written to his friend, the author Harold Timperley,

‘Pendlebury. Is this it! Or have I found another one!

Hope all is well. L.S.L PS I saw it one mng

[morning], when I was there for a few minutes.

Feb 22.31’ He repeated the subject of a lone tree surrounded by railings in an oil painting later the same year.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

5.

Near Blackpool, 17 May 1908

Pencil on paper

Drawn in an autograph album belonging to 'N Nicoll' this small sketch is among the earliest works by Lowry in Salford's collection. Other pages show drawings, cartoons and poems by friends and acquaintances of the book's original owner. For many years, Lowry and his parents took holidays on the Fylde coast, near Blackpool, or near Rhyl in Wales.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

6.

Sketches drawn on the back of an envelope, about 1945

Pencil on paper

The drawings appear to show figures standing near a rope or chain barrier on a flat, possibly floating, surface. They may relate to the drawings and paintings Lowry produced of the chain ferry, or 'floating bridge' at Southampton. Even simpler versions of the subject are sketched on the front of the envelope, reproduced alongside.

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

7.

Pocket-sized sketchbook with various figure studies, undated

Pencil on paper

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

8.

Anatomical Studies, about 1919 – 20

Pencil on paper

From a group of anatomical studies originally bound together in a notebook and made by Lowry as a student. Lowry kept this notebook throughout his life. Studying anatomy ensured students understood, for example, how the limbs were connected to the body, what happened when a figure moved and how weight was distributed in numerous poses.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

9.

Study for the Improved Industrial Dwellings,
undated

Pencil on paper

Scribbled over and torn in half this drawing was nonetheless kept by Lowry and was among many other sketches in his workroom at the time of his death.

On loan from the Estate of LS Lowry

Wall 3

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.' In this case, the fight is more humorous than violent as one man pulls the other's hat down over his eyes and the two small dogs in the foreground eye each other suspiciously.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

Father and Two Sons, 1950

Oil on canvas

This triple portrait is one of Lowry's most striking compositions. The father, and the son in the red bow tie, meet the viewer's gaze with a mixture of wariness, defeat and resentment. The second son seems more distracted and disengaged. The low position of the figures on the canvas emphasises their drooping shoulders and adds to their air of dejection.

The figure of the father bears a resemblance to William Henry Shephard who was related to Lowry by marriage. It has been suggested that the sons are therefore Lowry's cousins Bertie and Billie Shephard. When Lowry had his first London exhibition Bertie wrote, 'It is good to think that some of the nice people get a little recognition.'

On loan from a private Liechtenstein Collection

Head of a Man, 1938

Oil on canvas

Head of a Man has been described as 'like a reflection one might catch of oneself after a sleepless night, all healthy vigour drained, leaving only strain, tension, physical discomfort and utter despair.'

In Lowry's own words 'I was simply letting off steam. I started a big self-portrait ... I thought, 'What's the use of it? I don't want it and no one else will.' I turned it into a grotesque head. I'm glad I did it. I like it better than a self-portrait.'

The Lowry Collection, Salford

The Funeral Party, 1953

Oil on canvas

In 1957 the *News Chronicle* described *The Funeral Party* as 'a painting with all the love and compassion drained away.' Lowry himself entertained listeners with his explanation that the man on the right is being treated as an outcast for coming to the funeral in boots and a red tie.

The figures in the painting are shown in an undefined space, linked together as group but separated from the rest of the world. It is impossible to tell if they have gathered before or after the funeral or exactly what each person's relationship is to the other characters depicted.

The Lowry Collection, Salford

The Park Bench, 1945

Oil on canvas

Several works by LS Lowry depict groups of people seated together either in the street or in a park. Two characters engage in conversation, but the others simply sit – in company, yet on their own.

On loan from a private collection

2025 The Copley Prize

The Copley Prize is an annual art competition organised by Lowry for primary school aged children to enter their own artworks, inspired by LS Lowry. Hundreds of children submit work each year.

This year's winner is 'Bustling Street' by Sophia Van Den Bos. Aged 10

"I drew this artwork inspired by Lowry, but more modern and colourful...Lowry's art inspires me to see beauty in everyday life."