



JACK B.

YEATS

PAINTING & MEMORY

4 Sep 2021 – 6 Feb 2022

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NATIONAL
GALLERY OF
IRELAND



KEY
CAPITAL

Jack B. Yeats preferred not to talk at length about his paintings or to provide explanations or meaning. Instead, as Thomas MacGreevy recalled, he wanted his audience 'to contribute to the work of art in [their] own way'.

These self-guided resources are designed for you to explore the exhibition in small groups and form your own interpretations of Jack B. Yeats' work.

There are discussion questions and short tasks for each room.

Enjoy the exhibition!

Room 6: A Sense of Place

Explore this room and the timeline to introduce yourself to Yeats' life and work.

Room 7: A Cast of Characters

Find *The Barrel Man*, 1912 and *Humanity's Alibi*, 1947 (on the left-hand wall, next to the intro panel for this room).

These are two paintings of the same subject, made 35 years apart.

- What is similar about the paintings?
- How are they different?
- In what ways has Yeats' style changed?
- Which painting do you prefer? Why?
- The second work is more metaphorical. What do you think it means?

Room 8: Fleeting Moments

Choose a painting in this room.

- What is happening in this painting?
- Does the title tell us anything about it?
- What might the person/people in the painting be saying/thinking/feeling?
- What do you think will happen next?

Now try with another painting!

Remember: there are no right or wrong answers, this is all about forming your own opinions and thinking about your reasons for them.

Room 9: The Epic in the Everyday

Find *A Lament*, 1930 (on the far left on the back wall of this room).

Examine Yeats' use of materials and media.

- How does Yeats use paint?
- Can you see any paintbrush strokes?
- Can you see where he used a palette knife?
- Can you see layers of paint?
- Can you see areas where the canvas is exposed?
- Do you like this style? Why/why not?

Now try with another painting!

Room 10: Recollections & Reimaginings

In this room, you will focus on slow looking. The group leader will need a timer.

- Take 1 minute to choose a painting (each person should pick a different painting)
- Spend 3 minutes looking at the painting in silence
- Discuss together: What did you observe? How did it make you feel?