

Laurence Stephen Lowry 1887 - 1976

Key Facts

Born in 1887 and raised in the outskirts of Manchester, Lowry was an only child. His father was an estate agent and his mother an aspiring pianist. Lowry had an unhappy childhood, wasn't very popular at school and had few friends.

Financial difficulties meant the family had to move to the more run down industrial area of Pendlebury in 1909. The landscape was dominated by textile mills and factories and this imagery left its mark on the young Lowry.

Lowry studied painting and drawing under the French impressionist Adolphe Valette at the Municipal College of Art (1905–15), and at Salford School of Art (1915–25), while working as a rent collector during the day.

Many of Lowry's paintings capture scenes of life in industrial England. His landscapes are often populated by stylised 'matchstick men' figures. Lowry never adopted an Impressionist technique or colour range but used just five colours: vermilion, ivory black, Prussian blue, yellow ochre and flake white.

In 1932, Lowry's father died and he was left to look after his mother who had always been in poor health. Lowry painted when his mother was asleep in bed.

In 1939 Lowry had his first solo exhibition in London. In the same year, Elizabeth Lowry died. Lowry described his life as altering 'utterly and completely' after her death. With the outbreak of the Second World War, it was 1943 before he exhibited work again.

Lowry became an official war artist in 1943 and he was the Official Artist of the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953.

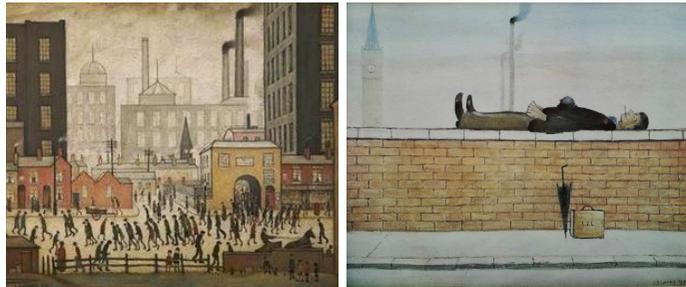
Lowry died in 1976 aged 88.

The Lowry gallery in Salford opened in 2000 and houses a collection of more than 400 works in oil, pastel and watercolours from all periods of L S Lowry's life.

Lowry's 'The Football Match' painted in 1949 sold at auction for £5.6m.

Key Skills

Drawing	Draw confidently in a variety of styles using a choice of techniques.
Painting	Use oil and chalk pastels and be able to talk about how colour, tone, texture and pattern have been used to achieve an effect.
Discuss an artist's work	Talk critically about and get inspiration from the work of L S Lowry. Write about the artist and artworks by finding information and describing their responses.



What else was going on in the World?

1914 - 1918	World War I
1939 - 1945	World War II
1953	Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II



Key Vocabulary

Impressionism	Captures a feeling or experience rather than an accurate picture.
sketch	A rough or unfinished drawing often made in preparation for a more finished piece.
tone	The lightness or darkness of a colour.
texture	The way an object looks as it feels.
pattern	A design of lines, shapes, forms and colours which are repeated.
chalk pastel	A stick of pure powdered pigment. Can be easily smudged and blended.

