

IMMA
FREUD CENTRE

IMMA Collection: Freud Project 2016 - 2021



Introduction

Since 2016 IMMA has presented the *IMMA Collection: Freud Project*, a five year loan to the Collection of 52 works by Lucian Freud (1922-2011), one of the greatest realist painters of the 20th century. 2021 is the final year of the *Freud Project at IMMA* and as we emerge from the global effect of Covid-19 we are delighted to bring to our audiences as our concluding programme or 'finissage', a combination of digital and physical elements, the exhibition *The Artist's Mother: Lucie and Daryll – a response by Chantal Joffe*; *The Maternal Gaze*, a series of short videos by 22 artists and creatives in response to the theme of the Artist's Mother and *Soul Outsider*, a new contemporary music commission composed by Deirdre Gribbin and performed by Crash Ensemble, in a recording that accompanies Freud's portraits in the Freud Centre.

www.imma.ie/whats-on/imma-collection-freud-project-the-artists-mother

Front cover

Lucian Freud, *The Painter's Mother Resting I*, 1976,
Oil on canvas, 90.2 x 90.2 cm,
Collection Irish Museum of Modern Art,
On Loan, Private Collection
© The Lucian Freud Archive / Bridgeman Images



Chantal Joffe
My Mother with Fern, 2017,
Oil on canvas, 40.8 x 31.3 cm
© The artist

The Artist's Mother: Lucie and Daryll - a response by Chantal Joffe

Room One

We invited artist Chantal Joffe to begin a dialogue with Lucian Freud's portraits of his mother as part of our ongoing programme in the context of the Freud Project. Originally scheduled for September 2020, Covid-19 intervened and so we have re-orientated this exhibition to include a focused display of six works by Chantal Joffe in the Freud Centre, with a virtual display of 15 further works by Joffe in conversation with the Freud Project through an exhibition in a virtual gallery space on the Vortic platform, courtesy of Victoria Miro Gallery and viewable on the IMMA website.

The exhibition *The Artist's Mother: Lucie and Daryll – a response by Chantal Joffe* is accompanied by a rich online programme of videos, essays, poetry and programmed talks, a compilation of images and voices that explore the role of mothers and carers and the bonds of creativity and intellect.

The encounter between Freud and Joffe's work is elaborated through Joffe's conversations with poet and artist Annie Freud, Lucian's eldest daughter. The exhibition includes Annie Freud's recitation of her poem *Hiddensee*, 2019, which reflects on the impact of her grandmother Lucie Freud (née Brasch), who as a mother of a young family with her husband Ernst, was forced to flee Germany in 1933 ahead of the rise of Nazism. Her poem considers Lucie's experiences and her adjustment to a new life in England. In addition, an essay by Annie Freud, entitled *In the Picture* conveys a vivid description of Lucie, to whom Annie was very close, and the generative role Lucie played in her son's art.

Lucian Freud (1922-2011) made 13 paintings of his mother Lucie Freud (1896-1989) as well as numerous drawings and sketches, during the 10 years before Lucie's death at the age of 93 (apart from childhood and adolescent drawings). Always very secretive, in his youth Freud resisted his mother's favoritism towards him (over his two brothers), and her attention and unerring instinct for knowing what he might be up to. After Freud's father died in 1970 his mother attempted suicide. She was rescued but there were side-effects and she no longer engaged with life. Freud felt he could be with her because she had lost interest in him and therefore he could paint her. He would collect her from her home and bring her to breakfast before starting the day's sitting. Three mornings a week she would climb the stairs to his studio on the top floor.

Chantal Joffe, also, has long focused on portraiture. All of her works in this exhibition, in the gallery and online, relate to her mother Daryll and are displayed in the context of two of Freud's remarkable paintings of his mother at IMMA; *The Painters Mother Reading*, 1975, and *The Painters Mother Resting I*, 1975-76. She has depicted Daryll in an exceptional series of paintings and pastels over time, most recently as a result of looking at Freud's work. Daryll Joffe, was an exile who arrived in London aged 23. There she worked as a childcare officer and had her first child Emily. Moving to the US following her husband's teaching job at Stanford University and later Vermont, Daryll's other children Natasha, Chantal and Jasper were born in the US. The family then returned to London in 1983 where Daryll and her children all now live.

The Artist's Mother: Lucie and Daryll and its programme provide a focus for contemporary discussions of motherhood, focusing particularly on the complex relationship between mother and child over time. Both Freud and Joffe's artistic processes provide certain insights into the intense bond between mother-subject and artist-child and especially the difficulty of seeing the real woman with adult eyes.

Freud's working process was forensic, slow, and required hundreds of hours of his sitter's time so that he might capture the essence of their personality. Freud found 'the harder you concentrate, the more things that are really in your head start coming out...'

The Painter's Mother Resting I, 1975-76, is one of a remarkable series of three paintings of Lucie wearing a paisley-patterned dress, resting on a bed. Freud stated he had difficulty with the pattern, "I remember worrying that my sadness would get into the paisley shapes and disrupt the dress and the calm of it". The paisleys seem a psychological stress point for Freud perhaps embodying some other contingency. At first glance this painting looks simple and direct but it is complex, in the way that relationships are complex. In *The Painter's Mother Reading*, 1975, Lucie looks down at a book which Freud gave her for the sitting. It was the Egyptian book, a publication of great inspiration to him, but he noted she was not registering.

Chantal Joffe returned to painting her mother in old age, after she began to lose her sight. "My Mum has quite bad sight now. It is a hard thing to say but it became easier to paint her because she couldn't then see the paintings. It's complicated," she says, "she is only truly seen when she can no longer see me or how I paint her".

Joffe starts a portrait with a slow and continuous process of reading, looking and watching, over time. This is followed by gestures in paint or pastel which are fluid and immediate. The movement and rapidity of her process pick up on the incidental and the accidental, from emotions of memory and of the moment. In works such as *Sanibel*, 1994 and *My Mother at St Leonard with the Dogs*, 2015, you sense the artist's hand, the sentience of repetition and memory of movement. Form becomes an emotional heartland, "the curve of an emotion" in James Joyce's words, borne of rhythms and patterns that effect us from childhood such as nursery rhymes, prayers, games.

Works such as *My Mother at the Door*, 2020, made in London during the Lockdown, lay down line, form and colour in a visceral process that conveys the immediacy of the encounter and mood and with a palpable sense of personal feeling and experience of one's mother. Double portraits such as *Conversation*, 2016 and *Self Portrait in a Striped Shirt with my Mother II*, 2019 catch the atmosphere of everyday situations and exchanges. As in Edward Hopper's paintings, motifs of windows and doors are used in Joffe's works as framing devices that keep the viewer right there looking, reading the space, relationships and everyday experience.

The Maternal Gaze

Curated to accompany the theme of the Artist's Mother, *The Maternal Gaze* is a series of 22 specially produced reflective short videos by artists, writers and creatives. Contributors include Olive Barrett, Jean Brady, Patricia Brennan, Fergus Byrne, Paola Catizone, Antonio d'Souza, Barbara Geraghty, Chris Jones, Hina Khan, Tomasz Madajczak, Roxana Manoucherhri, Rosaleen Murphy, Deirdre Ni Argain, Joe Odiboh, Beth O'Halloran, Laragh Pittman, Evy Richard, Domnick Sorace, Stephen Taylor, Amna Walayat, Insaf Yalcinkaya.

The series was produced by Trish Brennan and Domnick Sorace. Visit the IMMA website to view the series www.imma.ie



Lucie Freud, mother of Lucian Freud with the latter's eldest daughter Annie and her baby daughter May Cornet, Glenartney, Perthshire, Scotland, 1975, coincidentally the year of the portrait *The Painter's Mother Reading*.

Photograph by Jean-Loup Cornet.

Soul Outsider, 2020, by Deirdre Gribbin

First Floor Room Three

IMMA commissioned renowned London-based, Northern Irish composer Deirdre Gribbin to write a new piece of contemporary music in response to the Freud Project. Gribbin has focused on Lucian Freud's female portraits reflecting on relationships between sitter and artist and the inner self laid bare. Entitled *Soul Outsider*, her interpretation is spun through an interwoven three movement narrative: 'Night Painting', 'Human Animal' and 'Under Eyes'. *Soul Outsider* is performed by Crash Ensemble, Ireland's most respected and internationally recognized new music ensemble.

Gribbin describes:

"Lucian Freud said of his own work "What do I ask of a painting? I ask it to astonish, disturb, seduce and convince". I am interested in how we, as individuals, adopt personas and hide behind these for others to perceive us as we would wish to be seen. Often mental instabilities, anxieties and despair are hidden from view. 'Soul Outsider' refers to the inner self that is exposed so perfectly in the work of Lucian Freud through his often, brutal observations of his subjects. "I focused on his female subjects and on the work of his daughter Annie Freud who writes so deeply about her grandmother Lucie's relationship with Freud".

"Freud's use of paint and perspective, his approaches to structure, texture and timbre are precepts that influenced my approach to composing the work. This is evident in Freud's close observations of the narratives explored in the faces and bodies he paints. I began sketching with music which was akin to wide brushstrokes to establish musical gesture which gave the music a sense of immediacy and energy which was then honed and crafted into a three-movement work, 'Soul Outsider'."

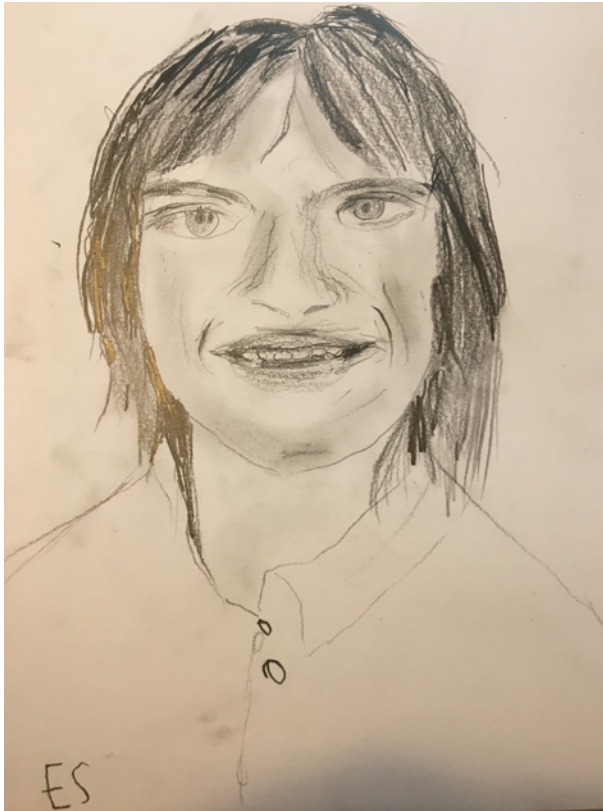
"Having a child with Down Syndrome, I am constantly aware of the perception of the outsider or the one who is displaced in society. This comes from perceptions of how he is seen. Lucian Freud was subject to a different kind of displacement. His family was forced to leave Germany with the emergence of the Nazis. His displacement was internalised but undoubtedly affected his life as artist and documenter of the human soul. This is evident in Freud's close observations of the narratives explored in the faces he paints. It enabled him to reveal his subjects often in disturbing honesty. In the words of artist Tracey Emin, Freud is "...making us look at what we don't want to look at..."*.

In this quartet I have explored an intimate musical response to the reality of a glance, a look, a revelatory gesture or intense emotion, through dialogues between electric guitar, clarinet, percussion and cello. The work depends on shaping and transforming inflections of line intrinsic to the human form. Through the music, the inanimate sitter becomes animate."

IMMA is grateful to the Arts Council for enabling this work through an Arts Council Commission Fund.

A recording of *Soul Outsider* may be heard at intervals in this room and adjoining galleries. The presentation of a selection of Gribbin's score folios affords visitors the opportunity to view the structure of the composition, with Gribbin's visceral notes on the instrumentation of the work.





Portraits from Lucian Freud

by Ethan Stein aged 14

Muscle Omelette
Crazy cramped faces
With crazy thoughts.

Skinned arms,
Broken and strange
Fossil omelette.

Dusty nose
Skinny flies
Salted ears
Garbage hair
Black rotten ears
Damp sliding neck into wet sand
Mouth slithering
Sticky marshmallow

Malicious mottled men,
Are Monstrous.

Self Portrait and poem by Ethan Stein, aged 14.

Deirdre Gribbin

Deirdre Gribbin is an award-winning composer from Northern Ireland whose work has been described as “astonishingly accomplished” and “pure magic” (The Times) and “a charismatic voice in new music” (The Guardian). Her music often explores the impact of having grown up through Northern Ireland’s Troubles. Her orchestral work *‘Unity of Being’* opened the *‘UK with NY’* Festival in New York City after the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and she was the subject of major feature in the New York Times. Deirdre is interested in advocating for greater diversity in programming and opportunities for those traditionally excluded from the study of and creative engagement with music composition. www.deirdregribbin.com

Ethan Stein

Ethan Stein is the son of composer Deirdre Gribbin and theatre director Lou Stein. Now 15 years of age, Ethan is already challenging the perceived limits of achievement of those with Down Syndrome. He has been a member of the inclusive theatre company, Chickenshed, since he was six, appearing in many of their productions, including singing at Wembley Arena with Tom Jones in front of 16,000 people when he was nine years old. Ethan’s poem “Grieving Elephants” was set to music by Deirdre and featured as part of BBC Radio 3’s “Seven Ages of Women” concert celebrating International Women’s Day 2020. His poem about climate change “The Last Ice” was featured on RTE’s ‘Arena’ programme.

Crash Ensemble

Crash Ensemble is Ireland’s leading new music ensemble; a group of world-class musicians who play the most adventurous, ground-breaking music of today. Founded in 1997 by composer Donnacha Dennehy, some of the most distinctive living composers have written for the group, including Terry Riley, David Lang, Michael Gordon, Louis Andriessen, Arnold Dreyblatt, Kevin Volans, Glenn Branca, Nico Gerald Barry. Many well known and highly respected artists from diverse musical backgrounds have performed with the ensemble such as Gavin Friday, Dawn Upshaw and Lisa Hannigan. Crash have recordings on NMC, Cantaloupe, Nonesuch and the Bedroom Community labels and have their own label, Crash Records. As well as performing throughout Ireland, Crash regularly performs internationally.

IMMA Collection: Freud Project 2016-2021

The *IMMA Collection: Freud Project* features a selection of 52 works by one of the greatest realist painters of the 20th century, Lucian Freud. Freud was born in Berlin in 1922 to Ernst, architect son of the psychoanalyst Sigmund Freud, and his wife Lucie Brasch. In 1933, ahead of the rise of Nazism, Freud then aged 10, fled with his family to London, where Freud lived for the rest of his life. Lucian Freud is renowned for his intimate, honest, often visceral portrayal of the human form. He changed the way we see portraiture and the nude in art.

An intensely private man, Freud's life and art cannot be separated and much of his work is autobiographical. His subject matter was his family, friends, his surroundings and often himself. He was committed to painting, first and foremost. Working only from life in his studio, Freud often asked his subjects to sit for hundreds of hours over multiple sittings to better capture the essence of their personality.

This presentation includes some of the artist's most remarkable and memorable pieces. The works, generously on loan to the IMMA Collection from private collectors, have been presented in the Freud Centre in IMMA's Garden Galleries since 2016. The latter has provided a space for sustained looking, thinking, and learning that continues to provoke new reflection on Freud's work and what it means in the contemporary world.

Over the past five years we have presented a multidisciplinary programme of related exhibitions, artists' commissions, residencies, learning programmes and research partnerships that have revealed new perspectives on Freud's painting and how his work is situated in contemporary practice. We have variously explored his life and work as an artist but also as an investigator and excavator of the human condition, of our inner space and complex psychological relationship with the world around us.

Room Two

In addition to the works and programmes described above, elsewhere on display in the Freud Centre are 37 works that explore several of the artist's key themes such as portraiture, mainly from among his close family and friends, individually but frequently in double portraits such as of his daughters '*Bella and Esther*', 1988, reclining on a sofa; their poses awkward and askew yet with a sense of ease both with each other and with the artist.

Freud's portraits might also combine a human and animal such as Susannah and her whippet in *Double Portrait*, 1988. Hands and paws, whippet's legs and sitter's forearms entwine in an interrelationship of living things. Freud was particularly interested in the physical and psychological relationships between human and animal sitters and there is no hierarchy in such works. In his 'Naked Portraits' which are not nudes in the classic sense but real, undressed people, he scrutinised his sitters as though they were animals, their real natures only truly evident when they divested themselves of their clothes and their facades.

The Pearce Family, 1998, began as a portrait of the artist's daughter Rose Boyt and her husband Mark Pearce, but Freud decided to extend the canvas as Rose's family grew, wanting to let "the subject finish the picture: allow the life full swing."

Room Three

Reflection and mirroring are recurring themes especially in Freud's self-portraits. This room includes an early, finely painted work, *Self-Portrait*, 1949, and one of the most arresting in Freud's oeuvre: *Reflection, (Self-Portrait)*, 1985, painted in thickly applied pigment to depict the sags and crevices of advancing age without vanity. Two unfinished self-portraits of the artist, with a black eye, are featured in the background of the powerful *Two Irishmen in W11*, 1984–1985. They are inspired by reproductions from Freud's treasured volume: J.H. Breasted's *History of Egypt*, 1936, of highly individualized sculpted faces. Freud's etching, *The Egyptian Book*, 1994, displayed nearby, directly acknowledges the book's importance to the artist.

Regarded as one of Freud's most significant works, *Two Irishmen in W11*, 1984–84, features an Ulster bookmaker father and his 19 year old son. The young man is also the sitter in *Man in a Silver Suit*, 1998 and *Head of an Irishman*, 1999 and appears on the right in *Two Brothers from Ulster*, 2001. These paintings are indicative of Freud's longstanding friendships in the racing world.

Also in this room is an etching that relates to the painting, *Self-Portrait: Reflection*, 1996. During the printing process the master printer, Mark Balakjian, created the dark shadows on the shoulders by smearing a dirty rag across the plate.

First Floor Room One

Pat Doherty was introduced to Lucian Freud by Andrew Parker Bowles, another of Freud's sitters. The first completed painting was *Donegal Man*, 2006, and a later, companion piece: *Profile Donegal Man*, 2008, as well as a portrait fragment and an etching, both related to the earlier work, all of which are presented in this room and convey a more rounded account of Freud's approach.

Also in this room is *Man in a Check Cap*, 1991, Mick Tobin, a retired boxer who sold newspapers outside Covent Garden underground station when Freud knew him. The portrait of Christopher Bramham presents a younger painter and part of the School of London whose work Freud admired.

First Floor Room Two

Two Brothers from Ulster, 2001, is an example of a double portrait, depicting two men the artist returned to as sitters several times throughout his late career. Drawn from his close circle of friends, family and peers, a wide range of people from all walks of life, Freud's sitters are portrayed with intimacy, directness and unflinching honesty. The young man in *Two Irishmen in W11*, 1984–1985, appears again here in *Head of an Irishman*, 1999.

Head of a Girl, 1975-76, depicts the sitter in a meditative mood, looking down or to one side and away from the viewer. Katy McEwen was a student at the Slade who introduced Freud to Cremnitz white, a lead-heavy pigment with distinctive body and texture. He reserved this pigment for rendering skin with textured sculptural effect.

First Floor Room Three

Freud's choice of palette was always muted and earthy; he never used saturated colour, considering that it conveyed an overtly emotional significance that he wished to avoid. Subtle accents of colour in the nails and clothing of a *Woman in a Butterfly Jersey*, 1990-1991, make the face register as monochromatic. This is yet another example of Freud's interest in the passing of time, as the same sitter appeared in several canvases such as *Figure with Bare Arms*, 1962, some 30 years earlier.

Man in a Silver Suit, 1998, is the same sitter as in *Head of an Irishman* painted a year later. Using a limited palette, Freud has used a spectrum of cool hues in the depiction of the sitter's clothes, contrast with the warm tones of his face and hands. The background wall, a greenish yellow, creates an overall feeling of compression.

Featured in this room is the new contemporary music commission 'Soul Outsider' by Deirdre Gribbin (see page 7 for more information).

First Floor Room Four

Freud often turned to his immediate surroundings for inspiration, such as in *Landscape with Bat*, 1980, where the landscape is his garden. In keeping with his lifelong interest in horses, which he loved to ride bareback, *A Filly*, 1970, is a portrait of a horse Freud briefly owned.

As already mentioned Freud was deeply interested in the relationships between people and their dogs, seen here in *Guy and Speck*, 1980-1981, of Guy Hart, antique dealer and former jockey, who shared with Freud a passion for horse-racing.

The Big Man, 1976-1977, portrays a combination of powerful bulk and quiet intelligence. His physical presence is made manifest in paint with the aid of a mirror, expanding our view of the subject. He was Freud's bookie and sat for many portraits in lieu of the artist's betting debts, also *Head of the Big Man*, 1975, in room three.

The Artist's Mother: Lucie and Daryll – a response by Chantal Joffe, The Maternal Gaze and Soul Outsider by Deirdre Gribbin have been curated by Christina Kennedy, Head of Collections and lead curator of the IMMA Collection: Freud Project.

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* Christina Kennedy and Johanne Mullan (editors), Lucian Freud, *IMMA Collection: Freud Project*, (p123), IMMA, 2016.

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