

## **Jack B. Yeats; *A Painted Universe***

**Showing from Sat. 8 Nov. 2025**

Jack Butler Yeats (1871–1957) is one of Ireland’s most celebrated twentieth-century artists. The Niland Collection, housed at The Model, holds an extensive body of his work spanning the full arc of his career – from early pen-and-ink illustrations and lively watercolours, to the expressive oil paintings that define his mature style.

Yeats belonged to one of Ireland’s most remarkable artistic families. His father, John Butler Yeats (1839–1922), was a portrait painter, while his siblings – William Butler Yeats (1865–1939), Susan Mary Yeats (1866–1949) and Elizabeth Corbet Yeats (1868–1940) – were all distinguished figures in literature, art and publishing. Unlike them, Jack spent his childhood in Sligo with his maternal grandparents, Elizabeth and William Pollexfen. The vivid life of the town and its people left a deep and lasting impression on him. From an early age, he was captivated by the colour and drama of everyday life – a fascination that became the foundation of his art.

Throughout his career, Yeats returned to the people and scenes of his youth – the sailor, the clown, the traveller and the balladeer, amongst others. Over time, these subjects came to embody universal human experience in his work. His shift to oil painting from 1910 onwards marked a turning point. The early oils, grounded in realism, depict ordinary lives and the social and political world of early twentieth-century Ireland. From the mid-1920s, however, his art grew increasingly expressive and symbolic, as the paint itself became a means to convey emotion and transcendence.

In his later works – charged with pathos and intensity – familiar figures take on a metaphysical dimension, revealing Yeats’s lifelong quest to paint not only the world he saw, but the inner universe he felt. *A Painted Universe* invites visitors to encounter these presences and step into Yeats’s artistic world, where memory, emotion and experience are transformed into colour, form and light.

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### **Press Information**

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