

Journeys with
'The Waste Land'

NOTES

All the artworks and objects in this exhibition have been chosen by The Waste Land Research Group; members of the public who have been collaborating since 2015 to curate this exhibition.

This document contains comments by different group members about their choices.

A

Berenice Abbot (1898 – 1991)
IBM, Untitled (Woman and Wires), 1940s
Berenice Abbott/Commerce Graphics/
Getty Images

“I’m fascinated by this image of a woman wiring an early IBM computer. These early technological advances led to the birth of the internet and the hyper-connected world we live in now. Reading *The Waste Land* has so many similarities to being online and clicking from one site to another, cutting between different sources, stories, ideas and voices. There’s a strange paradox of being able to instantly connect to anyone in the world, yet levels of loneliness and anxiety seem higher than ever. We’re connected but disconnected. I think Eliot is probing a not dissimilar conundrum in *The Waste Land*, just in a different era.”

St Augustine of Hippo (354 – 430 AD)
Part of a bifolium of Hippo’s Confessions, (tentatively identified by W. Urry), 1250 – 1350
Lent by the Dean and Chapter, Canterbury Cathedral

“One of the most important things to my reading of the poem is Eliot’s spiritual crisis at the time of writing *The Waste Land*; his desire for faith yet simultaneous struggle to achieve it.

This fragment is from St Augustine of Hippo’s ‘Confessions’, which Eliot quotes in the poem, drawing a parallel between his own situation and St Augustine’s journey to overcome secular influences and abandon the pagan world; ‘To Carthage then I came/ Burning, burning, burning, burning.’ In the section of the

poem called ‘The Fire Sermon’ Eliot also quotes Buddhist influences, bringing together very different Western and Eastern ideas on ascetism.”

Australian Aboriginal Shield
Late 19th – early 20th century

Oval wood shield with handle grip carved from single piece of timber
The Powell Cotton Museum

“Throughout the poem many voices occur simultaneously in time and space; Ancient Greek voices coexist with references to Dante, Wagner and Queen Elizabeth I, alongside contemporary voices in the pub and lovers’ quarrels. In 1923 Eliot wrote in his essay *Ulysses, Order, and Myth* that James Joyce ‘invented a method for dealing with the formlessness of modern life by creating a continuous parallel between contemporaneity and antiquity...’

This idea was shared by Australian Aborigines (going at least 50,000 years back) in their views about the nature of human life and death. They believe in the ‘dreamtime’, a condition beyond time and space. They call it the ‘all-at-once time’ instead of ‘one-thing-after-another time’. They experience the past, present, and future coexisting, uniting them with their ancestors.”

B

Fiona Banner (b.1966)
Breathing Bag, 2016

Plastic bag, microcontroller
Courtesy of the artist and Frith Street Gallery, London

“Plastic bags make me think of suffocation; the opposite of breathing.

But in this work, something that shouldn’t be living has a life of its own, and this feels very wrong. Is this disruption to the natural order what Eliot’s also alluding to in *The Waste Land*, where the dead seem more alive than the living and the living more dead than the dead?

Banner’s work is a direct response to Joseph Conrad’s novella *Heart of Darkness* written in 1899 about the emptiness underpinning humanity. This was a text that also influenced Eliot in writing *The Waste Land*; Conrad’s lines ‘The Horror, the horror’ were included as the epigraph in Eliot’s original manuscript.”

Christiane Baumgartner (b.1967)
Kleines Seestück I – IV, 2011

Woodcut on Shiragiku Japanese paper
Courtesy of Christiane Baumgartner and Alan Cristea Gallery, London

“When you stand back from the work you can see the image clearly, but when you get up close it’s quite confusing, like the poem. Both this work and the poem involve making marks on different surfaces to create meaning. There’s an interesting question about the moment at which something takes on a recognizable form, the moment at which nothing becomes something.

On one level this woodcut depicts a shell hitting the sea during World War Two. However, I also see it as being about technology and different experiences of time. The artist took photographs of her television showing a black and white war documentary. The photographs came out with those weird lines running through them. It’s these lines that she’s then carved into woodblocks, turning a split second of footage into a work made over months.”

Sir Peter Blake (b.1932)
Marcel Duchamp’s World Tour: Playing Chess with Tracey, 2003 – 2005
Acrylic on canvas
Norfeldt Art Collection

“There are lots of Kent references in this painting: Tracey Emin from Margate, of course; Peter Blake, who grew up in Kent; and Marcel Duchamp, who apparently visited Herne Bay. The tour bus in the background is on another journey.”

C

Frederick Callcott
Scale Surfboat Memorial, c.1899
Black stone on wooden plinth

“In the poem there are lots of images of people drowning. When Eliot was sitting in the shelter on Margate Sands he would have looked out to the spot where nine people died in 1897, when a lifeboat, ‘The Friend to all Nations’, fatally capsized. I imagine these deaths would have really resonated with Eliot, who was mourning the loss of colleagues who died during the First World War, such as Jean Verdenal.”

Leonora Carrington (1917 – 2011)
Masks for production of ‘The Tempest’, 1960
Private Collection

 Listening point.

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

Cecil Collins (1908 – 1989)

The Quest, 1938

Oil on canvas

Tate: Bequeathed by Elisabeth Collins, the artist's widow, through the Art Fund 2001

 **Listening point.**

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

D

John Davies (b.1946)

My Mother and Father, 2005

Pastel and charcoal

The artist, courtesy Marlborough Fine Art

"This drawing of the artist's parents has a strange, ghostly quality to it, almost like a photographic negative. It's from a series of drawings Davies has made of his late parents based on a photograph. Here, the figures are shown as shadows with featureless faces, adding to the sense of something past or lost forever. This drawing relates to the sculptural tableau Davies calls *My Ghosts* on display on the balcony, which chimes with the atmosphere of the poem, with its references to memory, shadows and death."

John Davies (b.1946)

Night through a Window, 2005

Pastel and charcoal

The artist, courtesy Marlborough Fine Art

"John Davies' drawing of night seen through a window with the curtains pulled back could be an empty stage from which the actors have departed and the lights have been turned off. Dominated by a black void that takes up most of the page, it is, in fact, an image of 'nothing'. Eliot is a

big influence on John Davies and although there isn't a direct connection between this drawing and *The Waste Land*, its representation of a kind of emptiness resonates for me with the poem. It also reminds me of Samuel Beckett's 1973 play *Not I*, famously performed by a disembodied mouth, in total darkness."

Tacita Dean (b.1965)

Sound Mirrors, 1999

16mm black and white film

Courtesy of the artist, Frith Street Gallery, London and Marian Goodman Gallery, New York/ Paris

"The sound mirrors at Denge, near Dungeness in Kent, were conceived during the First World War as part of an early warning system for air attacks. The huge concrete 'ears' were designed to listen out for the sound of approaching enemy planes and track their location. However, they couldn't discriminate between the sound of aircraft and the sound of anything else – wind, passing boats, local traffic – so soon became obsolete and were replaced by radar.

The idea of capturing everything at once, without discrimination, I think is a bit like what Eliot does in *The Waste Land*. You get voices and references coming at you from all directions. There are no filters in the poem."

Tess Denman Cleaver (b.1986)

*In the Waste Land... A set of poetic and performance texts developed through a workshop process using the language and landscapes of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land**, 2017-2018

Risograph, printed at Foundation Press (Sunderland).

Courtesy of the artist

This publication is part of a body of work created through a workshop programme led by artist Tess Denman-Cleaver. It has been delivered in partnership with The Richmond Fellowship and the Kent and Medway NHS Partnership Trust, and supported by Porchlight's Live Well Innovation Fund. Workshop group members include Chris Bradley, Jemma Channing, Des Cordery, Ange Fox, Claire Garrard, Ron Harbridge. With thanks to everyone else who contributed.

"In the Waste Land... has changed how I navigate the poem. Re-framing Eliot's text as a place that you can metaphorically inhabit and own (as well as disrupt and re-order) feels really empowering."

Benedict Drew (b.1977) and Nicholas Brooks (b.1975)

Sump, 2016

Video installation

Commissioned by Project/Number, London. Courtesy of the artists and Matt's Gallery, London

"I see this as a visualisation of *The Waste Land* in filmic form; a translation of the poem into a different kind of language. It feels confusing, devastating and unknowable; like a strange, uninhabitable other worldly terrain, something fragmented and disjointed, beyond the reach of our understanding. Whilst this wasn't made with the poem in mind, I see 'the roots that clutch', 'the stony rubbish', the shade under 'the red rock', the 'slimy belly of a rat' and can sense the 'fear in a handful of dust'."

E

T.S. Eliot (1888 – 1965)

Letter to Sydney Schiff sent from Margate on 6 November 1921

On loan from the British Library

"This is the letter that anchors *The Waste Land* to Margate:

I have done a rough draft of part III, but do not know whether it will do, and must wait for Vivien's opinion as to whether it is printable. I have done this while sitting in a shelter on the front – as I am out all day except when taking rest. But I have written, after a fashion, and practise scales on the mandolin.'

The shelter Eliot refers to on the seafront has been a very important site to us. It's where we all first gathered in 2015 to get the project off the ground, reading the poem aloud together."

T.S. Eliot (1888 – 1965)

The Waste Land

Fourteen copies of T.S. Eliot's *The Waste Land* including annotations by the owners. With thanks to David Herd, Tess Denman-Cleaver, Mike Tooby, Virginia Fitch, Des Cordery, Anny Squire, Julia Maddison, Anthony Giles, Katie Hogben, Judy Dermott, Nicholas Mortimer, Sally Waterman, Tim Meacham, Jemma Channing

T.S. Eliot (1888 – 1965)

'The Burial of the Dead'

Extract from Eliot's original manuscript of *The Waste Land* with the authors' corrections from *T.S. Eliot 'The Waste Land': A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts including the Annotations of Ezra Pound*, edited by Valerie Eliot, published by Faber & Faber Ltd, 1971. Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of

English and American Literature, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

“Eliot’s original manuscript was thought to be lost and was rediscovered 50 years ago, together with three bills from The Albemarle Hotel in Margate, dated 1921. Eliot’s working title *He Do The Police in Different Voices*, resonates with the multi-voiced approach we’ve taken to this exhibition.

Seeing the comments by Ezra Pound and Vivien Eliot also gives us permission to interpret, comment on and ‘own’ the poem ourselves. Like the poem, this show could be edited or changed. There are probably things you agree with, things you take issue with, and that’s fine. This is just one version of what a show about *The Waste Land* could be.”

T.S. Eliot (1888 – 1965)
‘On Margate sands...’

Extract from Eliot’s original manuscript of *The Waste Land* with the authors corrections from *T.S. Eliot ‘The Waste Land’: A Facsimile and Transcript of the Original Drafts including the Annotations of Ezra Pound*, edited by Valerie Eliot, published by Faber & Faber Ltd, 1971
Henry W. and Albert A. Berg Collection of English and American Literature, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox and Tilden Foundations

Sir Jacob Epstein (1880 – 1959)
Bust of T.S. Eliot, 1958

Bronze
Eliot College, University of Kent

“When we started sharing ideas for what could be in the exhibition, this is the first work I thought of. I found it hard to translate from a written text to something visual, so focused instead on Eliot himself.

This bust, made long after *The Waste Land* was written, was in Eliot’s home, so it’s not just ‘of’ him, it was also part of his everyday life, like a piece of furniture. Rather than the suffering Eliot experienced at the time of writing the poem, in this face I see contentment. It’s interesting to compare his serene expression here with the turmoil and angst of his inner life.”

F

Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian (b.1924)

Variations on the Hexagon, 2006
Mirror mosaic panel with blue glass and glass evil eye amulets
Victoria and Albert Museum. Given by Monir Shahroudy Farmanfarmaian

 Listening point.

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory
Photograph of a neutrino interaction event in the 15- foot bubble chamber at the Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory (Fermilab) near Chicago.

Courtesy of Fermi National Accelerator Laboratory / Science Photo

“These are pictures of quantum particles taken in a high-energy accelerator which is a machine which makes particles spin so fast they’re made visible. So this is basically the smallest, tiniest piece of matter, which we’re all made of. I picked this because I work as a translator to a committee about the history of quantum physics, which developed exactly during

the years that Eliot was writing *The Waste Land*. It also has to do with why I’m here, personally. When I moved to England several years ago, I read the line ‘On Margate Sands./ I can connect nothing with nothing’ and realised that this was exactly what I needed to do right then. For me, most of the works in this room are connected and I’m interested in the fact that mental illness, fragmentation and disjunction all have to do with being out of alignment in space and time.”

Elisabeth Frink (1930 – 1993)
Bird, 1952

Bronze
Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London

“Whether the bird sounds in ‘*The Waste Land*’ are strange and threatening or a sign that nature still can offer reassurance is very ambiguous for me. Frink’s early sculpture of a bird has often been described as typical of the post war feeling of anxiety, even prompting comparisons with military aircraft like the ones flown from the airfield near where she grew up in Suffolk.”

G

Philip Guston (1913 – 1980)
East Coker-Tse, 1979

Oil on canvas
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.
Gift of Musa Guston, 1991

“Eliot was very important to Guston. East Coker is where Eliot is buried and is the title of the last of his late poems, *The Four Quartets*. Even though it’s not directly connected to *The Waste Land*, we decided to include this work as it is a powerful way of showing how the entire

imagination and work of a great poet provides a way for a great painter to convey his own meditation on later life.”

H

Henrik Häkansson (b.1968)
A Tree Divided (Fraxinus excelsior), 2017

Ash tree (*Fraxinus excelsior*)
Courtesy of the artist and The Modern Institute / Toby Webster Ltd, Glasgow

The tree that has been felled for *Journeys with ‘The Waste Land’* is an ash tree affected by a fungal infection (*Hymenoscyphus fraxineus*), more colloquially known as ‘Ash Dieback’. The rate at which the disease is spreading means that up to 98% of the 150 million mature ash trees in the England, Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales could eventually be lost, which will bring about a devastating change to the landscape.

The Kent Downs Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty is running a project to raise awareness and to celebrate the ash tree before it’s too late. Find out more about The Ash Project at www.theashproject.org.uk

 Listening point.

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

Rozanne Hawksley (b.1931)
Pale Armistice, 1987

Funeral flowers (plastic, textile, silk, bone and metal frame)
IWM (Imperial War Museums)

“I was drawn to the many layers in this work – the symbolism of the wreath, its

ancient history as well as more recent traditions. It references loss but also inclusion (in that everyone is affected by war). The title of the piece is curious – I read somewhere that the artist was referring to pale meaning ‘brief’: a brief Armistice. We might shake hands on peace today but it won’t last. This seems very relevant to Eliot’s concerns regarding cycles of war and history.”

Patrick Heron (1920 – 1999)

T.S. Eliot, 1949

Oil on canvas

Lent by the National Portrait Gallery, London

Patrick Heron (1920 – 1999)

Portrait of T.S. Eliot, 1948–50

Oil on canvas

Eliot College, University of Kent

“There are many portraits of Eliot and each one is different from the rest. It makes me think about how, as people, we present different faces, depending on the situation. Also, how are we visibly changed by time? Do these two images portray the poet’s journey, the artist’s journey, or both? Is one more literal and one more emotional? There’s an interesting shattering in the 1949 version, which makes me think of Eliot’s personal breakdown and struggle with mental health issues. Like the poem it feels like it’s been assembled from pieces, but is actually the image I think looks more like Eliot, despite being so abstract. It makes me wonder about the degree to which the poem itself can be considered a self-portrait.”

William Hinton (publisher) (1919–2004)

Margate Hoy, 1785

Hand-coloured etching

Thanet District Council, care of Margate Museums Trust

“The Margate Hoy would have been one of the main forms of transport for Londoners visiting Margate before Eliot’s time. I think Eliot got the train. What this image signifies for me isn’t anything literal. It’s a way of thinking about the links between London (particularly the Thames) and Margate in the poem, the idea of journeying and the references to water which run throughout.

Also, I get seasick, and I have to say that’s my experience of reading the poem.”

Edgar Holloway (1914–2008)

Portrait of T.S. Eliot, 1934

Etching

Eliot College, University of Kent

“I’m intrigued by the idea that this portrait was done when the artist was only 20. How did he get Eliot to sit for him? Holloway was a young artist and had just hit on the idea of doing portraits in limited edition etchings of well-known figures as a way of making his living as an artist.

Later, this picture was given to the University by Eliot’s second wife along with the bust by Epstein.”

Edward Hopper (1882 – 1967)

Night Windows, 1928

Oil on canvas

The Museum of Modern Art, New York.

Gift of John Hay Whitney, 1940

“When I read the section of the poem called ‘The Fire Sermon’ I thought immediately of this work by Hopper. In the poem, ‘At the violet hour’ we have a single woman, a typist, moving through her daily chores. Despite her financial independence, she’s lonely and has an unsatisfactory sexual encounter with a

‘carbuncular clerk’. She seems detached from life, almost robotic in her actions.

I’ve been there, in that bedsit where the divan doubles as a sofa, going through the motions of existing. It reminds me, in particular, of working as an English teacher in the Czech Republic, making do and washing my jeans in the bathroom sink.”

J

David Jones (1895 – 1974)

Nam Sybillam, 1958

Painted inscription on paper

The T.S. Eliot Foundation

“Artist and poet David Jones was good friends with T.S. Eliot and this artwork was made as a birthday present for Eliot. It includes the text of the epigraph to *The Waste Land*. The epigraph is the first thing you encounter when you read the poem. It’s half in Latin and half in Greek, and references a prophetess, the Sibyl of Cumae. Apollo wanted to take the Sibyl as his lover and offered her anything she wanted in return. She asked to live for as many years as there were grains in a handful of dust. However, the Sybil refused Apollo’s advances and in return Apollo denied her eternal youth, condemning her body to wither away over many years until, eventually, she was kept in a jar.

It is this myth that Turner represents in *The Golden Bough* also in the exhibition.

The translation of the epigraph is very simple: the Sybil is asked what she wants and she answers ‘I want to die’. It’s a very mournful thought. Why would Eliot want to present the poem with these lines? “

David Jones (1895 – 1974)

Frontispiece to ‘In Parenthesis’, 1959–60

Pencil and watercolour on paper

Ar fenthyg gan / Lent by Amgueddfa Cymru

– National Museums Wales

“*In Parenthesis* was David Jones’ great poem about the First World War. This drawing was made for an edition of *In Parenthesis* for which Eliot wrote a foreword. I am moved by the way the drawing brings together many of Jones’ personal experiences at the front, especially with the Welsh Guards in the battle of Mametz Wood. The main character of Jones’ book is Dai Greatcoat who could be Jones or could be any typical soldier. I think of some of the voices of the poem when I see this image.”

David Jones (1895 – 1974)

Trystan ac Essyllt (Tristan and Isolde), 1962

Watercolour on paper

Ar fenthyg gan / Lent by Amgueddfa Cymru

– National Museums Wales

“A passage in German near the start of the poem is taken from the Wagner opera *Tristan and Isolde*. Translated into English the passage reads:

Fresh is the wind/ to your homeland / my Irish child / where are you lingering?

I feel it sums up the imagery of journeys and voyages that runs through the whole poem. The Irish girl could be going home, but the voice still asks, ‘where’, since the voyage may not be where the wind takes them. At the centre are the doomed lovers, caught up in their situation.”

K

R.B. Kitaj (1932 – 2007)

If Not, Not, 1975 –76

Oil and chalk on canvas

National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Purchased 1976

“This is a very busy image. It’s a response to *The Waste Land* and, like the poem I struggle to dissect all the elements of it. The trees make me think of paradise but at the same time, the aftermath of a catastrophe. You realise the perspective is skewed, the figures distorted and as you start to notice things like the gates of Auschwitz, a concentration camp, you realize the horror of war. I see the collage of images as Eliot’s fragments ‘shored against my ruins’ and, for me, this is the closest of all the images in the show to the poem. The whole show could just be this! This was painted in the 1970s, at the end of the Vietnam War when yet again we’d made another wasteland – we hadn’t learnt a thing.”

Winfred Knights (1899 – 1947)

Leaving the Munitions Works, 1919

Watercolour over pencil on paper

Courtesy of Sacha Llewellyn

“From what I’ve read, the younger Eliot thought of women with a combination of revulsion and fear. He was a brilliant man but not necessarily someone that, as a woman, you would have been happy to have known. Winifred Knights’ autobiographical work *Leaving the Munition Works* to me provides a contrast. Here are hardworking women who’ve stepped into traditionally male roles, looking like they are getting on with ordinary, everyday things.

In style the painting is very flat, which reminds me of Renaissance painting. By intermingling modern content with a historical style the painting echoes the collapse of time that occurs in *The Waste Land*.”

Käthe Kollwitz (1867 – 1945)

Hunger, 1923

Woodcut poster on 4-sheet folded newsprint

On loan from Leicester Arts and Museums

Service

“After the First World War there was huge unemployment and inflation in Germany. *Hunger* shows a woman crying in despair because she cannot feed her baby. Eliot knew Europe well and had friends in Germany. If England was in a bad way at that time, Germany was worse and I think this suffering would have been on Eliot’s mind when he was writing *The Waste Land*.

Hunger makes me feel pain for Käthe Kollwitz, who lost her youngest son in the war, and for all of the mothers in her situation. I can’t imagine how they coped. I fuss about my son’s welfare and he is only in Maidstone! If he was on the battlefield, I just can’t imagine...”

Barbara Kruger (b.1945)

Untitled (Do you feel comfortable losing?), 2006

Corian chess board and pieces, miniature speakers, electronic and computer components, customised metal and carbon fibre flight case

Courtesy of RS&A Ltd (London)

“This is about gender politics. In the poem you could see the dialogue between the characters as a visualization of the battle between the sexes. I see the colours of Barbara Kruger’s chess set as

symbolizing blood and chaos. In the section of the poem called ‘The Game of Chess’ Eliot refers to sexual encounters. He alludes, in his notes, to a play by Thomas Middleton called *Women Beware Women* where a game of chess takes place onstage whilst a seduction/rape takes place offstage. How Eliot depicts relationships in *The Waste Land*, and some of the phrases in this work like ‘you don’t have any choice’, feel very topical in light of the recent reports of sexual harassment across the entertainment industry.”

L

Matt Lewis (1972 – present)

Exploded Views, 2018

Multi-channel sound installation

Courtesy of the artist

“We asked Matt Lewis to create a threshold for visitors to cross over as they come up the stairs to enter the exhibition.

His response – inspired by the Greek myth of the Sibyl, consulted by Aeneas before venturing into Hades, and the subject of the epigraph to *The Waste Land* – uses a group of short recordings relating to the poem itself. These include a disembodied automated voice, crystal rock amplifiers and the sounds of a waste recycling centre. Each recording goes through a process of endless repetition and fragmentation, never finding resolution or conclusion. This is like The Sibyl herself, trapped in a feedback loop of eternal life without eternal youth, growing older and older and wanting only to die.”

Percy Wyndham Lewis (1882 – 1957)

Abstract Design, 1912

Ink and watercolour on paper

British Council Collection

“My grandfather had a tailor shop and I used to fold the mirrors round to make reflections that went on into infinity. I don’t look at this work by Wyndham Lewis, I look *into* it. I see a landscape to explore, not just geometry or a pattern. It’s a visual distortion of reality, in the same way that *The Waste Land* is a literary distortion of reality.

Eliot and Wyndham Lewis knew each other well. In 1914 Wyndham Lewis founded a magazine called *Blast!* and published some of Eliot’s work. *Blast!* was a beginning of Modernism in British visual art, whereas *The Waste Land* was a beginning of Literary Modernism.”

Percy Wyndham Lewis (1882 – 1957)

Ezra Pound, 1939

Oil on canvas

Tate. Purchased 1939

“Ezra Pound edited *The Waste Land* and cut it down significantly. We were originally going to place this work up high in the galleries, letting Ezra symbolically oversee the exhibition, but it seems fitting to have him here near the annotated personal copies of the poem that we’ve amassed, all with their own markings and notes. He did the pre-edit on the poem, but post-edits are another fascinating way to engage with the poem.”

M

Nalini Malani (1946 – present)

The Wasteland, 2008

Transfer, watercolor, pencil reverse painted on acrylic sheet

Courtesy of Galerie Lelong

“Nalini Malani’s family experienced Partition and left Pakistan for India when she was a young child. She lives in Mumbai, and went to art school in Paris in the early 1970s, where she encountered the European literary culture. She often uses transparent materials and light to create room sized installations. She fuses quotes from poetry with imagery reflecting her desire to understand and overcome division in society. A goal of her work is to show women as symbolising what the future of society could be – ‘If we listen to the woman’s voice, the woman’s instinct, I think that is the way we have to go.’”

Helen Marten (1985 – present)

Bluebutter Idles, 2014

Welded power coated steel, stitched fabric, french polished cherry wood, Valchromat, airbrushed steel, hand embroidered fabric, cast bronze, wicker, cast plaster, woven straw, leather, fired clay, shell, butter, rubber petal Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London © the artist. Purchased with the assistance of the Art Fund

“This work by Helen Marten doesn’t refer to the poem, but to me it creates a similar impression. It’s made up of lots of different elements, some which I recognise and others which I stumble over. It makes me think of Eliot’s reference to flotsam and jetsam on the river Thames.

Like the poem, the sculpture pulls you in and pushes you out. You think ‘Oh I recognise that object’, but then it’s hard to know where one thing stops and another starts. It’s like you’re joining a stream of consciousness that feels familiar but equally doesn’t make sense. It has a difficult aesthetic.”

Bernard Meadows (1915 – 2005)

Black Crab, 1951-2

Bronze

Tate: Purchased 1982

“After the Second World War *The Waste Land* assumed a new relevance in artistic circles. In 1952, art critic Herbert Read described a group of sculptors, including Bernard Meadows, as expressing the ‘geometry of fear’ saying they had ‘peopled *The Waste Land* with their iron waifs’. It was his way of describing the bleak nature of post-war British art, characterised by artists making stretched, spiky, tortured figures.”

Ana Mendieta (1948 – 1985)

Burial Pyramid, 1974

Super 8 transferred to high definition digital media, colour, silent, 3 minutes

Courtesy of The Estate of Ana Mendieta Collection LLC and Galerie Lelong & Co, New York

“For me this film is about re-birth. In the poem Eliot questions whether it’s possible for anything to grow out of the ‘stony rubbish’ that is *The Waste Land*. Given that he’s describing a world that’s physically, spiritually and culturally barren, Ana Mendieta’s video provides a positive response. Maybe it’s too literal an interpretation, but I see this ‘breaking through’ as a sign of creative renewal and hope.”

Lee Miller (1907 – 1977)

Portrait of Space, Al Bulwayeb, Nr Siwa, Egypt, 1941

C-type print made from a digital file taken from the original negative

Lee Miller Archives

 Listening point.

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

Henry Moore (1898 – 1986)

Row of Sleepers, 1941

Watercolour and ink on paper

British Council Collection

“Although it’s not relevant to understanding this image, it’s interesting that Henry Moore and Eliot knew each other. They first met in the 1920s at a soirée for students and staff at the Royal College of Art.

This image shows people sheltering in a tube station during the Second World War. There’s something so still and quiet about the figures, it’s as if they’ve turned to stone. The image reminds me of a line in the section of the poem called ‘The Burial of the Dead’, where Eliot describes the earth being covered in ‘forgetful snow’. It’s as if these sleepers are hibernating from the horrors of war. But at some point they will have to wake up and deal with the pain and loss.”

Henry Moore (1898 – 1986)

Two Seated Figures, 1948

Ink, chalk, crayon and watercolour on paper
British Council Collection

“In 1948 Moore represented Britain at the Venice Biennale. In the same year Eliot’s paperback *Selected Poems*, including a reprint of *The Waste Land*, first appeared.

Moore later commented on how much Eliot’s poetry and example meant to him, not least Eliot’s wish to nurture younger writers. Moore’s drawings for sculpture at this time sometimes make me think they are symbols of individual figures brought together yet isolated in a moment in an imagined landscape, perhaps in a city, perhaps in a desert.”

Lady Ottoline Morrell (1873 – 1938)

Portrait of Vivienne (‘Vivien’) Eliot (nee Haigh-Wood)

© National Portrait Gallery, London

“Vivien, Eliot’s first wife, played a crucial role in the genesis of *The Waste Land*, editing it along with Ezra Pound. ‘A Game of Chess’ is also said to be reflective of their marriage. Crucially Eliot wrote that ‘To [Vivien] marriage brought no happiness; to me it brought the state of mind out of which came *The Waste Land*.’”

Olive Mudie Cooke (1890 – 1925)

Etaples: British Military Cemetery, First World War (date unknown)

Lithograph on paper

IWM (Imperial War Museums)

 Listening point.

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

N

Paul Nash (1889 – 1946)

Wire, 1918

Watercolour on paper

IWM (Imperial War Museums)

“During the workshops and meetings about the exhibition we often discussed

the contrast between the images made by Paul Nash at the Western Front during the First World War, like this one, and *The Shore*, his painting of Dymchurch, Kent a few years later. By looking back at these war images we get a sense of Nash's state of mind, as someone who had lived through the experience of battle."

Paul Nash (1889 – 1946)

The Shore, 1923

Oil on canvas

Leeds Museums and Galleries
(Leeds Art Gallery)

"Paul Nash's painting reminds me of the beaches near where I grew up. I imagine walking through this landscape. You can see such a long way without anything to interrupt your sight or thoughts. It feels like a good place for clearing the mind. Maybe that's why Nash came to the Kent coast to recover from his experience of being on the battlefields during the First World War.

The parallel of Eliot having also visited Kent at a time of personal crisis makes it hard not to read this image in relation to the poem. Although it's a different part of coast it makes me think of Eliot looking out to sea as he wrote *The Waste Land*."

John Newling (b.1952)

Eliot's Notebooks, 2017

433 cast paper pages from compost produced from 1000 shredded copies of T.S. Eliot's poem *The Waste Land*.
Lent by the artist

"To make this work John Newling took hundreds of copies of *The Waste Land*, shredded them and mixed them with organic matter to make soil. You could say he's destroyed the poem but actually he hasn't. He's transformed the poem

into something life giving, something physically nourishing. When I read the poem, it is very dark, there is no hope. But Newling gives you hope, out of the destruction there is always hope.

The definition of a wasteland is where nothing grows, but from this poem the artist has created soil, which can sustain growth. And from this soil he has also produced paper. There is nothing written on them because the writing is the fibre of the paper. It is still a poem. You can't see it, you can't read it but it's there."

John Newling (b.1952)

Soil, 2017

Hessian sacks containing soil made from copies of *The Waste Land*
Courtesy of the artist

That corpse you planted last year in your garden, / Has it begun to sprout? Will it bloom this year?

"John Newling's making of compost represents how, as we despair of how nature is being devastated, we can also show care, and find new ways to nurture it. This is something that John demonstrates both literally and as a symbol."

P

Eduardo Paolozzi (1924 – 2005)

A History of Nothing, 1963

Black & white film, sound, 12 minutes
Courtesy of British Film Institute

"*A History of Nothing* is made up of a seemingly random sequence of images with no obvious narrative. It's a collage of moments from everyday life, just as *The Waste Land* is a collage of fragments from the early twentieth century. The film has the same feeling of disorientation

and confusion – it's hard to make out what it is about or what it is trying to say.

There is a similarity between the title *A History of Nothing* and Eliot's lines 'On Margate sands I can connect nothing with nothing.' Over the project we spoke a great deal about this: is the poem about nothing, or is it about everything? Perhaps nothing and everything are the same."

Deanna Petherbridge (b.1939)

The Cellar and the Attic (from Oneiric Houses), 1989

Pen and ink on paper
Courtesy of the artist

"There's a sadness and strangeness to this image. We see a couple but there's no sense of romance. Two elongated, listless bodies lie stretched out in urban space, which seems to extend endlessly around them. It's hard to tell whether they're on the outside of the building or the inside. The idea of isolation in the city is a thread that runs through the poem, and this particular work, and its distorted view of space, I find very evocative of Eliot's 'unreal city'."

Personal Artefacts lent by members of local faith communities

Philippe de Champaigne (c.1645 – 1650)
Saint Augustine, 1650

Publisher details unknown

This reproduction of the original oil painting is owned by a member of The Waste Land Research Group.

The Book of Common Prayer and Administration of the Sacrament: And Other Rites and Ceremonies of the Church, according to the Use of the United Church of England and Ireland. Together with the Psalter or Psalms of

David, 1662

Printed by Eyre and Spottiswoode, 1843
Owned by a member of The Waste Land Research Group

Hindu Prayer Bell

Brass

Private Collection

"I dreamt I saw St Augustine alive with fiery breath' – so wrote Bob Dylan in 1967.

St Augustine of Hippo is the saint of sinners, the one rock stars who have 'had it all' often find when they search for an answer.

This image (identified by another member of the Research Group) inspired me late on in the research process with my own crisis of faith.

In the poem Eliot is yearning for the truth, Veritas, and rest. He reached a cathartic moment after creating *The Waste Land*; we know he converted to the Anglican faith in 1927.

I'm not there yet but I am well on the road, on my own spiritual journey."

Mark Power (b.1959)

France. Paris. Rue Bichat. 04:00hrs,
18th November 2015.

© Mark Power/Magnum Photos

"I chose this image after a conversation about *The Waste Land* with a community group at the library. Everyone seemed to feel the poem was 'dark', 'suicidal' and 'deeply depressing', and didn't really want to engage with it. We then started talking about the terrorist attack in Paris, which had just happened, and suddenly someone said 'Imagine witnessing the attack, you'd probably feel not dissimilar to Eliot in writing *The Waste Land*.' This comment triggered a eureka moment.

Instantly, the tone and mood of the poem started to make sense to everyone there, and with this came the curiosity to find out more.”

R

Man Ray (1890 – 1976)

***Dust Breeding*, 1920, printed c.1967**

Gelatin silver print

Centre Pompidou, Paris / Musée national d'art moderne / Centre de création industrielle

 **Listening point.**

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

Paula Rego (b.1935)

***Abortion Sketches*, 1998**

Chalk

Abbot Hall Art Gallery, Lakeland Arts Trust, Kendal, Cumbria. Purchased with the Aid of Grants from the Resource/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, National Art Collections Fund, Friends of the Lakeland Arts Trust and Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation

“Paula Rego made these sketches just before the abortion referendum in Portugal in 2000. In *The Waste Land* there's reference to a home-induced abortion, carried out by a woman, Lil, towards the end of the First World War, when abortion was usually achieved via pills from a chemist. In the poem, the woman says 'the chemist said it would be alright, but I haven't been the same since'. I feel it's important to include this work, because women's rights over their bodies are still being threatened, for example if you look at America at the moment. The poem was written nearly

100 years ago but is as relevant now as it ever was.”

Julia Riddiough (b.1961)

***Shelter as Refuge*, 2016**

Photo printed on cotton photo rag

Courtesy of the artist

“This image is from a series made by the artist whilst connecting with groups and individuals taking sanctuary in the Nayland Rock Shelter on Margate sea front. This place that offered refuge to Eliot in 1921, as he wrote lines of the poem, still acts as a place of shelter for residents and visitors to Margate.”

Martin Rowson (b.1959)

***The Waste Land*, 1990**

Indian ink over pencil on A+ paper

By permission of the Master and Fellows of Pembroke College Cambridge

“Rowson is well known for his political cartoons. In his graphic novel *The Waste Land* he uses references to art, film and other visual sources to tell the story of a private investigator (Marlowe, of course – as in the narrator in Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* the source of Eliot's original epigraph for the poem) trying to unlock what's going on in the world of the poem. Inevitably, Marlowe ends up at Eliot's own 'Notes' still searching for answers.”

S

Rosalie Schweiker (b.1985) and The Waste Land Research Group
***Card Readings*, 2018**

Courtesy of the artist

“One of my first encounters with *The Waste Land* was in a pub, where, facilitated by Rosalie Schweiker we spent

time with the part of the poem that's also set in a pub. When we later discovered tarot reading to be a part of Schweiker's artistic repertoire (her practice is all rooted in social exchange) we invited her to work with us to develop a performance that could relate to Madame Sosostriis, the fortune teller in the poem. To see the result of this come and have an artistic card reading between 2 and 4pm on Saturdays.”

Walter Sickert (1860 – 1942)

***Off To The Pub*, 1912**

Oil on canvas

Leeds Museums and Galleries (Leeds Art Gallery)

“This brings to mind the pub scene in the poem, and illustrates the world when Eliot developed his ideas. It makes me think of Eliot's activities in London, meeting with groups of friends and artists (including Sickert), and enjoying the music hall and the city at night. However the painting also generates a powerful sense of the unspoken atmosphere between a couple.”

John Smith (b.1952)

***The Waste Land*, 1999**

SD video

Running time: 5 minutes

Courtesy of the artist

“There is a great deal of reverence for *The Waste Land* and for T.S. Eliot. This work turns all that on its head by staging the poem as a humorous spectacle. There's a scene in the poem that takes place in a pub. In John Smith's film we follow a guy reading the poem as he moves from the bar into the gents and back again. By showing you the journey to the toilet and back John Smith is literally taking the piss.

It makes me laugh, particularly because 'T.S. Eliot' is also an anagram of 'toilets'. Everyone can understand humour; it's an easy way into art.

“The fact that John Smith connects the poem to the interior of a pub toilet also reinforces that it's ok to connect the poem to anything. For me all interpretations are valid.”

Lalage Snow (b.1981)

***We are The Not Dead, Returning by the Road We Came*, 2010**

Private Michael Swan

Private Becky Hitchcock

Private Jo Yavala

Digital photographs printed onto vinyl

Courtesy of the artist

“These photographs, by photojournalist Lalage Snow, are of British soldiers, taken before, during, and after their service in Afghanistan in 2010. In the poem Eliot makes a reference to servicemen coming back at the end of the First World War, and expectations surrounding their return.

These images make me think about the impact of war. When I look at each series of faces I find myself searching for clues about what has changed. What am I hoping to find? Horror? Redemption? Hope?”

John Stezaker (b.1949)

***Scarecrow*, 2016**

Collage

Courtesy of the artist and The Approach, London

“It was only after choosing John Stezaker that we realized how influential *The Waste Land* has been for him. He wrote to us: 'I think I got my first inklings about collage and a fascination with the fragment from this poem.'

He also wrote to us that ‘as a child, the bomb sites of the industrial Midlands were [his] playgrounds’. Bombs created strange clearings within the urban environment and the original image he used for *Scarecrow* reminded him of these spaces and ‘rats alley’ in the poem ‘where the dead men lost their bones.’”

John Stezaker (b.1949)

Mask (Film Portrait Collage) CLXI, 2012

Collage

Courtesy of the artist and The Approach, London

John Stezaker (b.1949)

Mask (Film Portrait Collage) CCV, 2016

Collage

Courtesy of the artist and The Approach, London

“We chose these masks thinking about Eliot’s fractured relationship with his first wife Vivien. Their estrangement from each other and (crucially) themselves is as pertinent today as it was in 1921.

Stezaker’s work highlights how Eliot’s poem relates to the medium of collage. Stezaker describes Eliot’s line ‘These fragments I have shored against my ruins’ as ‘an epitaph for collage, in that collage ‘redeems fragments’. Stezaker describes collage in terms of ‘a relationship with the wasteland of everyday experience.’ Thinking about collage helps me to think about the poem.”

Jo Stockham (b.1961)

Never Home (almost home reclaimed), 2010

Hand-coloured digital print on banner paper
Courtesy of the artist

Jo Stockham (b.1961)

The women come and go, 2017–8

Hand-coloured digital print

Courtesy of the artist

“This atmospheric depiction of the River Thames makes me think of the London Eliot knew where smog, due to pollution, was common. When the smog thinned a mist would be left. This image suggests the violet light Eliot mentions in the poem, which I find mesmerising. Like Eliot and *The Waste Land*, Jo Stockham’s work has its own history of damage and recovery.

Jo has paired the river image with a photo taken of the Women’s Press Association during the Second World War. Her grandmother, who edited women’s magazines, is in the picture. The artist told us that whilst this photo is from 20 years or so after the poem was written, somehow, the ‘atmosphere’ of the poem belongs with the image. She said ‘I think it is the closest I get to a sense of the literary, which seems part of Eliot’s world.’”

Graham Sutherland (1903 – 1980)

Illustration for T.S. Eliot (1. and the dead tree gives no shelter), c.1973

Silk screen on paper

Ar fenthyg gan / Lent by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museums Wales

Graham Sutherland (1903 – 1980)

Illustration for T.S. Eliot (2. Qui non c’e aqua ma solo roccia/Rocce and nient’ acqua e la strade di sabbia), c.1973

Silk screen on paper

Ar fenthyg gan / Lent by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museums Wales

“When we were looking at works by Sutherland for the exhibition, National

Museums Wales drew our attention to these unpublished proofs. We had seen many connections in Sutherland’s paintings, but at a symbolic and imaginative level. Seeing these prints demonstrated that the artist had indeed directly addressed the poem, even though the results never saw the light of day.”

Graham Sutherland (1903 – 1980)

U-Shaped Form with Blue Sky, 1976

Oil on canvas

Ar fenthyg gan / Lent by Amgueddfa Cymru – National Museums Wales

T

Emma Talbot (b.1969)

What Do We Have / To Give Up / To Be Free?, 2017

Acrylic on silk

Courtesy of the artist

“This new work by Emma Talbot really sums up the poem for me. I’ve visited the artist’s studio twice to see it in process. It’s a reflective piece about contemporary life and brings intimate personal moments and anxieties together with reference to bigger political, economic and philosophical concerns. The artist describes ‘groups of figures moving through a dystopic space, caught in a toxic world of pollutants, displacement, prostitution, drugs and homelessness. Forms that float in a river suggest both dead bodies and haunting watchful eyes. Above these scenes, a standing figure represents those that profit from the global economies that cause such adverse conditions for so many’.”

Berny Tan (b.1990)

A Visual Guide to References in T.S. Eliot’s ‘The Waste Land’ (1922), 2011

Digital illustration

Collection of the artist

“This is one of works that comes up when you google *The Waste Land*. It’s an infographic – a visual representation of data – like a complicated pie chart. Berny Tan has colour coded all the different references in the poem. It’s designed to be informative, but it’s also a bit of a visual joke. Whatever you do, however you look at it or try to break it down, it’s still just meaningless. It’s almost taking the mickey and saying, none of this really makes sense, but does that really matter? I don’t know if the artist meant it to be that way, but it’s my interpretation.

“With this exhibition we’ve tried to translate something literary into something visual. Berny Tan is doing the same thing in a very analytical or mathematical way; it’s like putting the poem through a machine.”

Vibeke Tandberg (b.1967)

The Waste Land, 2007

36 collages made from paper, glue, pencil and acid free paper

Courtesy of OSL Contemporary, Oslo

“To create this work Vibeke Tandberg has taken a copy of *The Waste Land*, cut out each word individually and organised them so you can see how many times each word appears. It is the poem all jumbled up.

Tandberg is playing with meaning, intentionally breaking it down so that the meaning is lost. It makes me feel that it’s ok to not understand *The Waste Land*.

There are lots of different ways you could look at it. Tandberg has created this one arrangement, but there's lots of different ways you could group the words. One person's interpretation of the poem is just one of many different possible interpretations."

William Turnbull (1922 – 2012)

Heavy Insect, 1949

Bronze

National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh.

Purchased with the Iain Paul Fund 2007

"William Turnbull was associated with the sculptors described by Herbert Read's writing about the 'geometry of fear'. Like Elisabeth Frink and Bernard Meadows, the animalistic side of their imagery is made obvious by the title. However, I have to add that this work mainly reminds me of ancient images of boats, and echoes the decaying shipwreck on the Goodwin Sands portrayed in William Lionel Wyllie's painting also in the exhibition."

JMW Turner (1775 – 1851)

The Golden Bough, exhibited 1834

Oil on canvas

Tate: Presented by Robert Vernon 1847

 Listening point.

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

Cy Twombly (1928 – 2011)

Quattro Stagioni: Autunno, 1993-5

Quattro Stagioni: Estate, 1993-5

Quattro Stagioni: Inverno, 1993-5

Quattro Stagioni: Primavera, 1993-5

Acrylic, oil and graphite on canvas

Tate: Purchased with assistance from

the American Fund for the Tate Gallery and Tate Members 2002

 Listening point.

Please use the headphones located near the object to listen to members of The Waste Land Research Group discuss their selection.

U

Unknown photographer

Vivien and T.S. Eliot at 18 Crawford

Mansions, July 1916

Courtesy of the T.S. Eliot Foundation

"This image was taken in the early days of T.S. Eliot's marriage to Vivien Haigh-Wood. Their relationship was a troubled one, and it's interesting to reflect on what this photo, taken a year after their marriage, reveals."

Unknown photographer

Trams on Margate Promenade, c.1918

Mick Twyman Collection, Kent County Council

"When visiting Margate in 1921 Eliot would have taken the Cliftonville – Westbrook tram to the Bathing Pavilion to reach the Nayland Rock shelter. This photo is of the prom before the arrival of Dreamland in 1920 but it would still have been busy, with the constant rumble of the electric trams passing by and passengers alighting for the railway station."

Unknown photographer

Margate Sands, 1913

Mick Twyman Collection, Kent County Council

This is Margate Sands a few years before Eliot's visit, where he famously wrote:

'On Margate Sands. / I can connect / Nothing with Nothing.'

Isle of Thanet Gazette, 1921

Thanet District Council, care of Margate

Museums Trust

"I'm curious about how places change over time. How is Margate now different to Margate in 1921?"

V

Dr Roger Vittoz (1863-1925)

Traitement des psychonévroses par la

rééducation du contrôle cérébral

(Treatment of Neurasthenia by Means of Brain Control), 1921 (3rd Edition)

Private Collection

"Eliot wrote frequently to friend and poet Richard Aldington, including updates on his mental state. Having come to Margate feeling 'very shaky' he wrote to Aldington on the 6 November 1921 to update on his 'nerves' and describe his plans to leave Margate for Switzerland 'to consult and perhaps stay' under Doctor Vittoz, who he described as 'the best mental specialist in Europe'.

Roger Vittoz was a pioneer of neuroplasticity and interested in the ability of the brain to rewire itself by forming new neural connections. This 'rewiring', according to Vittoz, could be achieved by a series of exercises and techniques, for example, to repeat ideas of control to oneself three times, several times a day, to achieve a state of calm.

Might this be the technique that Eliot uses to close the poem?

'*Shantih, Shantih, Shantih.*'"

W

Edward Wadsworth (1889 – 1949)

The Black Country, 1920

Published by The Ovid Press, London

Private Collection

"Wadsworth and Eliot knew each other through the circle of artists and writers known as Vorticists and both contributed to *Blast!* the magazine founded by Wyndham Lewis. As the First World War progressed, Wadsworth worked on 'dazzle ships' – a form of camouflage made up of complex geometric patterns that made it difficult to estimate a ship's distance and speed. He frequently travelled from London to the Liverpool docks journeying through the Midlands and was inspired by this industrial landscape. This book accompanied his first exhibition after the war. You can see how his images of the bleak ageing industrial landscape, already in decline, still evoke the visual ideas of his abstract forms, but are now put at the service of communicating a very different sense of the modern world."

Emery Walker (1851 -1933), after William Blake

Facsimile Illustrations to the Divine

Comedy of Dante, 1922

Lithograph on paper in original folder

Private Collection

"In our research meetings we decided on William Blake's illustrations to Dante's poem as a good way of illustrating the references to Dante in *The Waste Land*. But when I looked up online catalogues for them I discovered that some museums had a version dated 1922. At first I thought this was an amazing coincidence, but then found there was

a limited edition of facsimiles done as a fundraiser to keep the Blake originals in public collections. Maybe these are another example of Eliot including something that was in the news as well as connecting to Dante's great poem that he loved so much."

Sally Waterman (b.1974)

Fortune-telling/Re-telling, 2007

Digital video on upturned monitor

Courtesy of the artist

"This work recalls the tarot reading given in Eliot's poem by fortune teller Madame Sosostris. It makes me think about how we make sense of the world, and our relationship to information. Also, of fake news, and how 'stories' come to take on the status of 'facts'.

The combination of personal photos, a game of patience and tarot cards hints at the difference between what is known (the past), what is playing out as we speak (the present) and what is unknown (the future). Whether looking backwards or forwards, these different methods are all ways of trying to pin down meaning in an uncertain world."

George Watson (birth death dates?)

Photograph of Jean Verdenal, 1915

Reproduced by permission of the Houghton Library, Harvard University

"I chose this photograph to represent Jean Jules Verdenal, a French Medical Officer. Eliot met Verdenal in Paris in 1910. They shared lodgings and became close friends sharing interests in French poetry, opera and philosophy. They went to see a production of Wagner's opera *Tristan and Isolde* together, which Eliot references in the poem.

It is obvious from letters written by Eliot, as well as dedications to Verdenal in his collected poems of 1917, 1920 and 1925, how much the friendship meant to him.

When war broke out Verdenal was sent to Gallipoli, where as part of the Medical Corp, he tended the allied wounded. He was killed in May 1915. There is some evidence that he died in the sea, helping evacuate soldiers onto hospital troop ships."

Jane and Louise Wilson (both b.1967)

Construction and Note, 1992

C-type print mounted on Perspex
Arts Council Collection, Southbank Centre, London

"The Wilson sisters' work always gives me a sense of unease. They are known for making work where there is a tension, an atmosphere, or something that isn't quite right.

When you encounter *Construction and Note*, you meet it in the present but you're taken by it into the past. It evokes disturbing memories and possibilities and captures something of the dark mood of the poem."

William Lionel Wyllie (1851 – 1931)

The Goodwin Sands, 1874

Oil on canvas
Lent by the Russell-Cotes Art Gallery & Museum, Bournemouth

"The section of the poem 'Death by Water' reminds me of the Goodwin Sands, just off the coast near Margate, where over 2,000 ships have been wrecked. When Eliot worked as a bank clerk in London I think he would have been aware of these incidents and the loss in both human and financial terms.

There are two shipwrecks in this painting by Wyllie; the first is ancient and rotting, almost part of the Sands, while in the background a modern ship appears to have run aground despite any advances in technology. I see its break up as an inevitability. Both this painting and Eliot's 'Death by Water' are perhaps warnings for any society not to consider itself indestructible."

Y

Carey Young (b.1970)

Lines Made by Walking, 2003

Looped sequence of 35mm photographic transparencies, projected with 2 second intervals

Courtesy of the artist and Paula Cooper Gallery, New York

"In the poem Eliot writes of the crowd flowing over London Bridge: 'I had not thought death had undone so many'. I connect Carey Young's work to Eliot's idea of people being broken and morally bankrupt; trapped in a hellish cycle and not being able to escape. This is London Bridge but it could be any city in the world, at any time. It's about the treadmill we're all on; doing the same things, and making the same mistakes, no matter where or when."

Across the three year research period a large number of people have been involved in developing the exhibition. Research Group members preparing this guide have decided to retain the anonymity of contributors. They invite you to meet them in person through the events programme, of which many of them are a part.

This guide is printed with gratitude to all members of The Waste Land Research Group, working with Research Curator, Trish Scott and Guest Curator, Mike Tooby.

A different version of *Journeys with 'The Waste Land'* will take place at The Herbert Art Gallery & Museum, Coventry, in association with The Mead Gallery, Warwick Arts Centre, from 15th September – 18th November, 2018.

Journeys with 'The Waste Land'
is generously supported by:



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**John Ellerman
Foundation**

Live well Kent
Community wellbeing

PAUL MELLON CENTRE
for Studies in British Art

OCA
Office for Contemporary Art Norway



On behalf of



by



T. S. Eliot

T. S. ELIOT FOUNDATION

Exhibition sponsor:



Exhibition Learning Partner:

