

LADFAS Visit

A view of Scottish Portraits

Glasgow Office of Lyon and Turnbull

October 5th 2016

Appraisal by Mary-Jane Selwood

On Wednesday 5th October a few of our members were treated to a small exhibition of Scottish portraits at Lyon and Turnbull's Glasgow Office. The exhibition was instigated by Charlotte Rostek and curated by James McNaught of Lyon & Turnbull. It consisted of no more than twenty paintings which nevertheless represented the full range of Scottish portraiture from the mid 18th century to the present day (e.g. Allan Ramsay to Stephen Conroy). We very much appreciated Iain Gale's excellent introduction to the exhibition which not only guided us chronologically through the display but also reflected in depth on artists' different motives and approaches to portrait painting. He concentrated on two commissioned portraits by the acknowledged master in this field, Allan Ramsay, which demonstrated that even a commissioned painting of a famous sitter can tell you as much about the painter as his subject. It was interesting to compare the Ramsay portraits with some less formal ones where the painter enjoyed more personal connections with his subject. Sir James Guthrie's full-length portrait of his friend and fellow artist Maggie Hamilton comes to mind, as well as Anne Redpath's affectionate portrait of her son David Michie as a teenager. As all the paintings were on loan from private collectors this was a unique opportunity to study the development of Scottish portraiture in such an intimate setting.