

PEOPLE IN THE PICTURE CHILDREN'S TRAIL



GEORGE · W · LAMBERT
RETROSPECTIVE
heroes & icons
29 JUNE – 16 SEPTEMBER 2007

■ national gallery of **australia**

Portraiture activities to do at home:

- Look closely at yourself in a mirror and draw a self-portrait. What expression will you choose? Draw yourself in different moods.
- Paint a portrait of someone else. Dress them up first for a fancy-dress portrait.
- Use a camera to make a group portrait of friends or family. How will you arrange them and why? What will be in the background and why?

Cover image

The red shawl (Miss Olave Cunninghame Graham) 1913
(detail) oil on canvas 96.7 x 76.7 cm

Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney Purchased in 1934

nga.gov.au/Lambert

25 nga
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George W Lambert painted many portraits of himself and others. A portrait is a picture of a particular person. Follow the picture clues to find each portrait on the trail.

As you enter, look out for Lambert. The gladiolus, his birthday flower, will lead you to him.

Look at the way Lambert is standing. What do you think he was like?

Strike a pose of your own.

Self-portrait with gladioli 1922 (detail)
oil on canvas 128.2 x 102.8 cm
National Portrait Gallery, Canberra
Gift of John Schaeffer AO in 2003



Two women are sitting down to rest and talk in the middle of their busy day. Imagine what they are saying to each other.

How many white things can you find in the painting? Is every white the same?

La blanchisseuse (The French landlady) c.1901
(detail) oil on canvas 147.3 x 160.6 cm
Private collection, Melbourne



This painting is called Important people. Lambert wanted to paint a portrait of ordinary people, not just people who were wealthy or powerful.

Which characters represent:

- physical strength
- motherhood
- new life and the future
- hard work and business skills

This unusual collection of people is pictured in front of a cart by the sea. Name six things you can see in the background.

Find straight lines and curved lines in the painting. How does Lambert direct your eyes to the baby?

Important people c. 1914, 1915, 1921 (detail)
oil with pencil on canvas 134.7 x 170.3 cm
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Purchased in 1930



Lambert asked his wife Amy, his son Maurice, his baby son Constant and his artist friend Thea Proctor to model for this group portrait. Everyone except the baby is standing in position, facing Lambert as he paints them.

Why is it hard to paint a baby? What is the baby doing?

What are the other people in the portrait holding in their hands?

Where are the people standing? Does the background look real or imaginary? Look at the softness in the clouds, the folds of the clothes and the faces of the people.

Portrait group (The mother) 1907 (detail)
oil on canvas 204.5 x 162.5 cm
Queensland Art Gallery, Brisbane
Purchased with the assistance of SH Ervin in 1965



This sculpture is a portrait of Henry Lawson, one of Australia's most famous writers. He wrote poetry and short stories about Australian life.

Lambert was asked to dress Lawson in the clothes of an Australian bushman. What is Lawson wearing? He is pictured with a swagman and a farm dog, characters that often featured in his stories.

Lawson is standing with his arm outstretched and gazing out. Look at his bushy eyebrows and moustache. He may be reciting poetry or lost in thought. What do you think he is doing?

Henry Lawson memorial 1927–30 bronze (detail)
250.0 x 130.0 x 135.0 cm
Botanic Gardens Trust, Sydney Gift of the Henry
Lawson Memorial Fund committee in 1931



Lambert was an official war artist in Palestine and Gallipoli during the First World War. The art he made helps people to remember the soldiers and what happened during the war.

This is a portrait of an Australian Light Horseman. How do we know he is a soldier? How do we know he is a sergeant?

Imagine how the Light Horseman is feeling as he looks down, holding his hat to his heart.

Look out for Lambert's battle paintings and drawings in the exhibition.

A sergeant of the Light Horse 1920 (detail)
oil on canvas 77.0 x 62.0 cm
National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne Purchased
through the Felton Bequest in 1921



Meet Miss Gladys Neville Collins.

Think of some words to describe her clothes. Where do you think she would wear this outfit?

Find her other glove.

Look at her white collar, fancy hat and blue coat. What do you think they are made of? How would they feel to touch?

Miss Collins is like an actor performing for the viewers. Pretend you are rich and famous and show someone your laugh.

The white glove 1921 (detail)
oil on canvas 106.0 x 78.0
Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney
Purchased in 1922