

Modern art on the Mersey

Many of us are mystified by the apparent simplicity of some modern art. We see a pile of assembled junk or what looks like paint splashed on to a canvas by a small child and cannot understand its value. And why is something made before the First World War called modern?

Pay a visit to the Tate Liverpool museum in the near future and decide for yourself. The international modern art currently on display has been selected by the museum staff from the Tate Collection to represent modern art from 1900 to today.

Chosen to reflect the richness and diversity of modern art, the display is divided into six sections which will change regularly over the next three years. Each focuses on a different art movement or theme, chronologically presented. Specific artists are also looked at in more detail for shorter periods.

'Towards Abstraction', one section of the

display, looks at the first decades of the twentieth century. Artists like Henri Matisse and Pablo Picasso were moving away from trying to make realistic depictions of the world. They became more concerned with colour and design; landscapes and domestic interiors were represented as abstract shapes in unnatural colours.

The effects and mood created by the First World War can then be seen in the artwork from this period, with contrasting images of violence and beauty. As the wars passed, artists then sought to start afresh and find new ways to express themselves.

The widely recognised pop art of the post-war years reflects elements of modern life from that time, such as the rise in consumerism. Andy Warhol produced his famous picture of Campbell's condensed soup as a result of his fascination with mass production, abundance and excess.

To take a look at and find out more about what inspired and generated the modern art from our own and our parents' lifetime, the display at the Liverpool Tate has something to interest everyone. Entrance is free, as are talks which will take place at 12.30pm daily.

What: DLA Piper Series: International Modern Art
Where: Tate Liverpool, Albert Dock, Liverpool, L3 4BB
When: Until 2008.
 Open Tuesday-Sunday 10.00-17.50. Closed Mondays except Bank Holiday Mondays, closed on Good Friday, 24-26 December and 1 January. Free entry
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