

## **JACK B. YEATS**

### **Biography**

- 1871** August 29, Jack Butler Yeats born at 23 Fitzroy Road, London, son of John Butler Yeats, artist, and Susan Pollexfen of Sligo
- 1879** Went to Sligo to live with his grandparents, William and Elizabeth Pollexfen. He went to school there, and stayed with them until 1887
- 1887** Rejoined his family in London in order to attend art school. His grandmother was strongly in favour of him following a career as an artist. Attended classes at South Kensington School of Art, Chiswick School of Art, Westminster School of Art. Season ticket for the American Exhibition at Earls Court, starring Buffalo Bill
- 1888** First black and white illustrations accepted for publication in *The Vegetarian* in April
- 1891** Illustrating for *Ariel* and *Paddock Life*. First book illustrations
- 1892** Designing posters for David Allen & Sons in Manchester. Illustrated *Irish Fairy Tales* by his brother W.B. Yeats
- 1894** Staff Artist on *Lika Joko*.  
In August he married Mary Cottenham White, who had been a student with him in Chiswick, and was eight years older than Jack. They rented a house called 'The Chestnuts' on the River Thames, at Chertsey
- 1895** First exhibited at the Royal Hibernian Academy in Dublin, a watercolour called *Strand Races, West of Ireland*
- 1897** Moved to Strete, Devon to live at 'Snail's Castle' (Cashlauna Shelmidy). Began to concentrate on watercolour painting. Painted his first oil. First one-man show of watercolours in November, at the Clifford Gallery, Haymarket
- 1898** Jack and Cottie visited Northern Italy, on what seems to have been a belated honeymoon, combined with a celebration of the success of his first solo exhibition the previous year. They took a first-floor suite in a hotel on Lake Como, and then travelled to Milan, Venice and elsewhere.  
Present in Sligo and Carricknagat for the centenary celebrations of the 1798 rising
- 1899** Held the first exhibition of Irish works, in Dublin and London, and used the title *Paintings of Life in the West of Ireland*, which was to distinguish his solo exhibitions for the next three decades.  
Visited Coole at the invitation of the playwright, Lady Gregory, and the Aran Islands.  
Visited Paris in June

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- 1900 Returned to the West of Ireland with Cottie. He travelled regularly in the West throughout the next ten years, while still living in Devon
- 1901 Publication of a miniature play, *James Flaunty*
- 1902-3 Edited *A Broadsheet*, at first with Pamela Colman Smith, then alone, until the final number in December 1903
- 1903 First visit of the poet, John Masefield, to Strete
- 1904 Visited New York on the occasion of his exhibition of watercolours, organised by John Quinn, at the Clausen Galleries. Contributed to Hugh Lane's *Selection of Work by Irish Painters* at The Guildhall, London
- 1905 Visited the Whistler exhibition in London.  
C.P. Scott commissioned John Synge to write about the Congested Districts in the West of Ireland. Masefield suggested Yeats as illustrator, and Synge welcomed this collaboration. It was successful, and led to a friendship between the two men
- 1906 Painted his first landscape in oil, in Clifden, Co. Galway, and before long painting regularly in oil
- 1908 Yeats' father, John Butler Yeats, visited New York, to settle there permanently. First issue of *A Broadside* published at Dun Emer Press by Elizabeth Yeats, who left Dun Emer to found the Cuala Press, and published *A Broadside* there until 1915
- 1909 Publication of *A Little Fleet*. Yeats stayed at Ballycastle, Co. Mayo, in the summer, painting landscapes in oil. Showed with the Allied Artists in London, and continued to exhibit with them for some years
- 1910 Moved permanently to Ireland, and took a lease on Red Ford House on the outskirts of Greystones, in County Wicklow
- 1912 Exhibited at the *Salon des Independants* in Paris. Published *Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1913 Began to learn Irish. Contributed five oil paintings to the Armory Show in New York (*International Exhibition of Modern Art*)
- 1915 Beginnings of illness and depression. Elected ARHA
- 1916 The Easter Rising. Elected RHA. Yeats' pictures among those destroyed in the burning of the Royal Hibernian Academy. Breakdown of health. First 'half-memory' sketches
- 1917 Moved from Greystones to Donnybrook, renting a house at 61 Marlborough Road
- 1920 Closed his Dublin exhibition in sympathy with the national strike protesting against the refusal of the British authorities to recognise the status of political prisoners

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- 1921 Member of the Glasgow Society of Painters and Sculptors. Exhibited for the first time with the Society of Independent Artists in New York, and continued to show at their annual exhibitions
- 1922 Contributed to the *Exposition d'Art Irlandais* in Paris, and lectured there to the Irish Race congress on modern Irish painting. Aonach Tailteann medal for *Approaching Rosses Point Early Morning*. Death of his father in America
- 1924 VIIIe Olympiade, Paris; silver and bronze medals for *The Liffey Swim*
- 1925 Dissociated himself from the Cuala Press and the making of prints, and devoted himself to painting
- 1929 Moved to 18 Fitzwilliam Square, Dublin. This was his last residence. James Joyce purchased two Liffey paintings
- 1930 Published his first important prose work, *Sligo*. Exhibited in Toronto. Visit from Samuel Beckett, who later bought his paintings
- 1933 Published *Apparitions* and *Sailing, Sailing Swiftly*
- 1939 Appointed a governor of the National Gallery of Ireland. *Harlequin's Position* produced by the Abbey Experimental Theatre. Death of W.B. Yeats
- 1940 Elected a member of the London Group, and contributed to *British Painting since Whistler*. Death of his sister, Elizabeth Yeats
- 1942 Joint exhibition with William Nicholson at the National Gallery, London
- 1943 First exhibition at Victor Waddington's gallery in Dublin
- 1945 *Jack B. Yeats National Loan Exhibition* held in Dublin.  
*Jack B. Yeats* by Thomas MacGreevy published by Victor Waddington
- 1946 D. Litt Dublin University
- 1947 Death of his wife, Mary Cottenham Yeats. Painted *The Green Tent has Collapsed*, and published his last novel, *The Careless Flower*.
- 1948 Retrospective exhibition organised by Ernest Musgrave for Temple Newsam House, Leeds; taken over by The Arts Council of Great Britain for the Tate Gallery, London, and tour to Aberdeen and Edinburgh
- 1949 *In Sand* produced at the Abbey Theatre.  
Diploma of the Accademia Culturale Adriatica, Milan.  
Death of Lily Yeats
- 1950 Invested an Officer of the Legion of Honour at the French Embassy in Dublin

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- 1951 American touring retrospective exhibition, opened in Washington D.C.; began to spend winters in the Portobello Nursing Home
- 1954 Exhibition at the Galerie des Beaux Arts in Paris
- 1955 Last paintings. Went to live permanently at Portobello House
- 1956 Loan exhibition of later paintings in Belfast.  
Letter from Oskar Kokoschka in November
- 1957 Died on 28 March. Buried at Mount Jerome Cemetery, Dublin  
Loan collection exhibited by the Society of Scottish Artists at the Mound Gallery in Edinburgh

## Exhibitions of Oil Paintings

- 1902 Wells Central Hall, Dublin, *Sketches of Life in the West of Ireland* (2 oils shown)
- 1906 Leinster Hall, Dublin, *Sketches of Life in the West of Ireland* (1 oil shown)
- 1909 Leinster Hall, Dublin, *Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland* (1 oil shown)
- 1910 Leinster Hall, Dublin, *Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland* (oils and watercolours shown)
- 1912 Walker Art Gallery, London, *Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1914 Mills Hall, Dublin, *Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*  
Walker Art Gallery, London, *Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1918 Mills Hall, Dublin, *Drawings and Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1919 Mills Hall, Dublin, *Drawings and Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*  
Little Art Rooms, London, *Drawings and Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1920 Mills Hall, Dublin, *Drawings and Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1921 Stephen's Green Gallery, Dublin, *Drawings and Paintings of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1922 Stephen's Green Gallery, Dublin, *Drawings and Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1923 Stephen's Green Gallery, Dublin, *Drawings and Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1924 Gieves Art Gallery, London, *Paintings of Irish Life*  
Engineers' Hall, Dublin, *Pictures of Life in the West of Ireland*
- 1925 Tooth, London, *Pictures of Irish Life*  
Engineers' Hall, Dublin, *Paintings*
- 1926 Tooth, London, *Paintings of Irish Life*
- 1927 Engineers' Hall, Dublin, *Paintings*  
Ruskin Gallery, Birmingham, *Paintings of Ireland*
- 1928 Tooth, London, *Paintings*
- 1929 Alpine Club Gallery, London, *Paintings*  
Engineers' Hall, Dublin, *Paintings*
- 1930 Alpine Club Gallery, London, *Paintings*
- 1931 Engineers' Hall, Dublin, *Paintings*

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- 1932 Ferragil Galleries, New York, *Exhibition of Paintings*  
Barbizon Museum of Irish Art, New York, *Exhibition of Paintings*  
Leger, London, *Ireland and Irish Life in Paintings*
- 1936 Dunthorne, London, *Recent Paintings*
- 1939 5 South Leinster Street, Dublin, *Exhibition of 11 Paintings*
- 1940 Contemporary Picture Galleries, Dublin, *Paintings*
- 1941 Contemporary Picture Galleries, Dublin, *Later Work*
- 1942 National Gallery, London, *Nicholson & Yeats*
- 1943 Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Later Paintings*
- 1945 Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Paintings*  
National College of Art, Dublin, *National Loan Exhibition*  
Goodwin Galleries, Limerick, *Paintings*
- 1946 Wildenstein, London, *Oil Paintings*  
Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Oil Paintings*
- 1947 Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Paintings*
- 1948 Temple Newsam House, Leeds, *Loan Exhibition*  
Tate Gallery, London, *Loan Exhibition*; touring to Aberdeen Art Gallery; Edinburgh  
Royal Scottish Academy (organised by the Arts Council of Great Britain)
- 1949 Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Oil Paintings*
- 1951 Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston, *A First Retrospective American Exhibition*;  
touring to Phillips Gallery, Washington D.C.; De Young Memorial Museum, San  
Francisco; Colorado Springs Fine Arts Center; Toronto Art Gallery; Detroit Institute of  
Arts; New York National Academy  
Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Paintings*
- 1953 Saidenberg Gallery, New York, *Paintings*  
Wildenstein, London, *Recent Paintings*  
Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Oil Paintings*
- 1954 Galerie Beaux Arts, Paris, *Peintures*
- 1955 Victor Waddington Galleries, Dublin, *Oil Paintings*
- 1956 Museum and Art Gallery, Belfast, *Paintings* (organised by CEMA, the Council for  
Encouragement of Music and the Arts)

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- 1957 Mound Galleries, Edinburgh, *Loan Collection* (compiled by the Society of Scottish Artists)
- 1958 Waddington Galleries, London, *Later Works*
- 1960 City Art Gallery, York, *Paintings* (presented for the York Festival)  
County Library and Museum, Sligo, *Selection of Paintings*
- 1961 Town Hall, Sligo, *Loan Collection* (presented by Sligo Art Society)  
Waddington Galleries, London, *Paintings*  
Waddington Galleries, Montreal, *Paintings*
- 1962 Willard Gallery, New York, *Oil Paintings*  
Felix Landau Gallery, Los Angeles, *Paintings*  
Irish Section of the XXI Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d'Arte, Venice, *Paintings*  
Municipal Gallery, Dublin, *Paintings from the Biennale Exhibition* (presented by An Chomhar Cultúra Éireann)
- 1963 Waddington Galleries, London, *Paintings*  
County Library and Museum, Sligo, *Joint Exhibition of Paintings from the Collections of the late Ernie O'Malley and the Yeats Museum, Sligo*
- 1964 Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Derry, *North West Arts Festival*  
Arts Council of Northern Ireland, Belfast, *May Festival*
- 1965 Institute of Technology, Hayden Gallery, Massachusetts, *Loan Exhibition*  
Waddington Galleries, London, *Paintings*  
New Gallery, Belfast, *Loan Exhibition*  
Municipal Gallery, Waterford, *Loan Exhibition*
- 1966 Dawson Gallery, Dublin, *Oil Paintings*
- 1967 Victor Waddington, London, *Oil Paintings*  
Trinity College, Dublin, *Paintings from the Collection of Howard Robinson* (to June 1968)
- 1969 Waddington Fine Arts, Montreal, *Jack B. Yeats Retrospective Exhibition*
- 1971 University of Toronto, Hart House Gallery, Toronto, *Paintings*; touring to Montreal  
Museum of Fine Arts  
Kenny Gallery, Galway, *Paintings, Broadsides and 7 Studies for a Self-Portrait*  
Victor Waddington, London, *Paintings*  
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, *Jack B. Yeats: A Centenary Exhibition*; touring to  
Ulster Museum, Belfast (in part); Cultural Center, New York  
County Library and Museum, Sligo, *Jack B. Yeats and his Family* (in association with  
Rosca 71); touring to Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin  
Coe Kerr Gallery, New York, *Centennial Exhibition*  
Peacock Theatre, Dublin, *Theatrical Pictures* (mounted to coincide with *That Gift of the Gab: a Selection from the Writings of Jack B. Yeats*, a rehearsed reading compiled

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by Hilary Pyle and directed by Edward Golden, 22 November 1971, at the Peacock Theatre)

- 1973 Victor Waddington, London, *Oil Paintings*
- 1975 Victor Waddington, London, *Paintings*  
Waddington Galleries, Montreal, *Paintings*
- 1976 Kenny Art Gallery, Galway, *Paintings and Drawings*
- 1978 Theo Waddington, London, *Oil Paintings*
- 1980 Alabama Museum of Art, Birmingham, Alabama, *Jack Yeats: Irish Expressionist*
- 1981 Theo Waddington, London, *Selection of Works*
- 1983 Waddington Galleries, London, *Jack B. Yeats*
- 1986 National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, *Jack B. Yeats in the National Gallery of Ireland*
- 1987 Waddington Galleries, London, *Jack B. Yeats*
- 1988 Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin, *Yeats at the Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art*
- 1989 County Library and Museum and Sligo Art Gallery, Sligo, *Jack B. Yeats, 1871-1957, and Contemporaries*
- 1990 Centre de Congrès, Monaco, *Images in Yeats*  
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin, *Images in Yeats* (the Monaco Exhibition with the National Gallery Collection of Watercolours and Drawings)
- 1991 Arnolfini Gallery, Bristol, *Jack B. Yeats: The Late Paintings*; touring to Whitechapel Art Gallery, London; Haags Gemeentemuseum, The Hague  
Kerlin Gallery, Dublin, *Ivon Hitchens, Jack B. Yeats*
- 1992 Waddington Galleries, London, *Jack B. Yeats: An exhibition of paintings to celebrate the publication by Andre Deutsch of 'Jack B. Yeats: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings'*  
Taylor, de Vere White, Dublin, exhibition to mark the publication of *Jack B. Yeats: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings* (organised by Theo Waddington)
- 1994 Solomon Gallery, Dublin, *Jack B. Yeats and Other Important Irish Artists*
- 1995 RHA Gallagher Gallery, Dublin, *Jack B. Yeats* (curated by Waddington Galleries and Theo Waddington Fine Art, London)
- 1996 City Art Galleries, Manchester, *Jack B. Yeats: A Celtic Visionary*; touring to Leeds City Art Galleries; Ormeau Baths Gallery, Belfast

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Waddington Galleries and Theo Waddington Fine Art, London, *Jack B. Yeats: Paintings and Works on Paper*

- 2004 Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, *Jack B. Yeats; Amongst Friends* (curated by Bruce Arnold, Yvonne Scott and Theo Waddington)
- 2005 Waddington Galleries, London and Theo Waddington, The Irish Art Project, Ireland, *Jack B. Yeats Paintings, Watercolours & Drawings*
- 2008 Compton Verney, Warwickshire, *Jack B. Yeats: Masquerade and Spectacle* (organised in collaboration with the National Gallery of Ireland)
- 2009 Theo Waddington's Irish Art Project, London, *Father and Son; John B. Yeats and Jack B. Yeats: Paintings, watercolours and drawings*

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## Public Collections

Aberdeen Art Gallery  
Birmingham Art Gallery  
Boston Museum of Fine Arts  
Bristol Museum and Art Gallery  
Cleveland Museum of Art, Ohio  
Colby College, Maine  
Crawford Municipal Art Gallery, Cork  
Cyfarthfa Castle Museum, Merthyr Tydfil  
Fogg Art Museum, Cambridge, Massachusetts  
Huddersfield Art Gallery  
Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin  
Leeds City Art Gallery  
Limerick Municipal Art Gallery  
Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris  
Museum Tel Aviv, Israel  
National Gallery of Canada, Ottawa  
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin  
Phillips Collection, Washington, D.C.  
Princess Grace Irish Library, Monaco  
Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, Edinburgh  
Seattle Art Museum  
St. Columb's and Glebe Gallery, Co. Donegal  
Sligo County Library and Museum  
Smithsonian Institution, Washington, D.C.  
Tate Gallery, London  
Toledo Museum of Art  
Ulster Museum, Belfast  
University of Wisconsin  
Walters Art Gallery, Baltimore  
Waterford Municipal Art Gallery  
York City Art Gallery

**Books and publications by Jack B. Yeats**

- 1901 *James Flaunty or the Terror of the Western Seas*. London, Elkin Mathews
- 1903 *A Broadsheet*, edited by Jack B. Yeats. Illustrated by Pamela Colman Smith, Jack B. Yeats and others. London, Elkin Mathews, published monthly January 1902 - December 1903  
*The Scourge of the Gulph*. London, Elkin Mathews; republished in *A Repertory of Marionette Plays*, ed. P. McPharlin. New York, Viking Press, 1929  
*The Treasure of the Garden*. London, Elkin Mathews
- 1904 *The Bosun and the Bob-tailed Comet*. London, Elkin Mathews
- 1908-1915 *A Broadside*, edited and illustrated by Jack B. Yeats. Dublin, Dun Emer Press, June; Cuala Press, formerly the Dun Emer Press, published monthly July 1908 - May 1915
- 1909 *A Little Fleet*. London, Elkin Mathews
- 1912 *Life in the West of Ireland*. Dublin, Maunsel
- 1922 *Modern Aspects of Irish Art*. Dublin, Cumann Leigheacht an Phobail
- 1930 *Sligo*. London, Wishart
- 1933 *Apparitions*. London, Jonathan Cape  
*Sailing, Sailing Swiftly*. London, Putnam
- 1936 *The Amaranthers*. London, Heinemann
- 1938 *The Charmed Life*. London, Routledge; republished by Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974
- 1942 *Ah Well*. London, Routledge; republished with *And To You Also* by Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974
- 1943 *La La Noo*. Dublin, Cuala Press; Reprint, Irish University Press, 1971
- 1944 *And To You Also*. London, Routledge; republished with *Ah Well* by Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1974
- 1947 *The Careless Flower*. London, Pilot Press
- 1964 *In Sand*. Dublin, Dolmen Press
- 1971 *Collected Plays*. Ed. R. Skelton. London, Secker & Warburg  
*Broadside Characters*. Dublin, Cuala Press
- 1979 *A Little Book of Bookplates*. Dalkey, Cuala Press
- 1991 *The Selected Writings of Jack B. Yeats*. Ed. R. Skelton. London, Andre Deutsch

For a comprehensive list of group exhibitions and further bibliographic information, please refer to:  
Pyle, H., *Jack B. Yeats: A Catalogue Raisonné of the Oil Paintings*. London, Andre Deutsch, 1992