



## Mrs Lavery Sketching

### Date

1910

### Primary Maker

Sir John Lavery

### Medium

Oil on canvas

### Dimensions

203.2 x 99 cm

### Description

This full-length portrait depicts John Lavery's second wife Hazel, who was thirty years his junior. It was painted the year after their marriage in 1909. They had first met in France in 1904 at the artists' colony of Beg-Meil in Brittany where Lavery was based at that time. Hazel was an aspiring artist who had travelled to France to be amongst artists. Her beauty captivated him and she became his muse and model until her death in 1935. His best-known portrait of her was that which was on the Irish pound note until the 1970s. This work was painted in Morocco and depicts Mrs Lavery in tropical kit. When exhibited in the Salon of 1911, it must have provoked comparisons with works by Monet, Sargent and Sorolla, although as one critic remarked it has achieved its own

'pictorial character'. In this work, she is seen sketching in oil in plein-air beneath a large parasol. The composition is reminiscent of Monet's 'Essai de figure en plein-air : Femme à l'ombrelle tournée vers la gauche' (Musée D'Orsay, Paris) and also of Sargent's 'A Morning Walk, 1888' (Ormond Family). She looks directly at the viewer with an intimate gaze. The influence of French Impressionism is evident in the sketchy manner in which the paint has been applied. It was probably painted out of doors. Belfast-born John Lavery received his art education in Glasgow, London and Paris. The Laverys settled in London where the artist became one of the best-known society portraitists of the Edwardian era.