



Portrait of Sir Hugh Lane

Date

1906

Primary Maker

John Singer Sargent

Medium

Oil on canvas

Dimensions

74.3 x 62.2 cm

Description

John Singer Sargent was one of the most fashionable portrait painters of his day. In 1874 he studied in Paris with the French portrait painter Carolus Duran (1838-1917). Sargent greatly admired the work of Vélazquez and

Frans Hals and in 1879 he travelled to Madrid and Haarlem to study the works of these masters. The furore surrounding Sargent's portrait of the society beauty Madame Gautreau or Madame X when exhibited at the Paris Salon of 1884 resulted in his moving to London. The subsequent enormity of his popularity in England and America as a society portrait painter ultimately led Sargent, who had tired of the genre, to abandon portraiture after 1910. Hugh Lane was an admirer of Sargent and this work was commissioned by Lane's supporters and presented to him at a ceremony in Dublin on 11 January 1907 in recognition of his 'strenuous labour for the public good, tireless energy, and splendid generosity; combined with brilliant organising capabilities and fine judgement.' Sargent depicts Lane the art dealer, collector and founder of one of the first galleries of modern art as a languid and elegant figure and the portrait had pride of place in Lane's own home. Sargent portrayed Lane as an elegant aesthete in jacket, stock and striped waistcoat, clutching gloves to his chest, with an expression that is romantic, far-away, even melancholic. The portrait was presented to Lane on the 11 January 1907 at a ceremony in the Hibernian Hotel, Dublin.