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An American in London: Whistler and the Thames

May 3–August 17, 2014, Arthur M. Sackler Gallery

When the young American artist James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) arrived in London in 1859, he embraced the river Thames and its environs as his particular subject. For the next twenty years he explored new ways of seeing the city and depicting what his friend, the French critic and poet Charles Baudelaire, called “the profound and complicated poetry of a vast capital.” The Sackler Gallery’s first international loan exhibition of works by Whistler features more than 80 paintings, prints, and rarely seen drawings, watercolors, and pastels of famed London sites and the Thames. The exhibition culminates with an ensemble of Whistler’s nocturnes, including the iconic “Blue and Gold–Old Battersea Bridge.”

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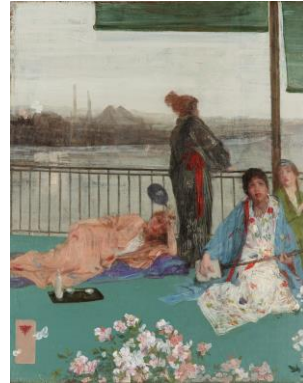
Nocturne: Battersea Bridge
James McNeill Whistler
1872–1873
Pastel on brown paper
H x W: 18.4 x 28.1 cm (7 1/4 x 11 1/16 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1904.64a-c



Brown and Silver: Old Battersea Bridge
James McNeill Whistler
1859–1863
Oil on canvas mounted on masonite
H x W: 63.8 x 76 cm (25 1/8 x 29 15/16 in)
Addison Gallery of American Art, Gift of Cornelius N. Bliss, 1928.55



Old Battersea Bridge
James McNeill Whistler
1879
Etching on paper
H x W: 20.1 x 29.5 cm (7 15/16 x 11 5/8 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1898.370



Variations in Flesh Colour and Green—The Balcony
James McNeill Whistler
1864—1870; additions 1870—1879
Oil on wood panel
H x W: 61.4 x 48.8 cm (24 3/16 x 19 3/16 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1892.23a-b



Nocturne: Blue and Gold—Old Battersea Bridge
James McNeill Whistler
ca. 1872—1875
Oil on canvas
H x W: 68.3 x 51.2 cm (26 7/8 x 20 3/16 in)
©Tate, London 2013, Presented by The Art Fund, 1905



Wapping
James McNeill Whistler
1860—1861
Oil on canvas
H x W: 72.1 x 101.8 cm (28 3/8 x 40 1/16 in)
National Gallery of Art, John Hay Whitney Collection



Caprice in Purple and Gold: The Golden Screen
James McNeill Whistler
1864
Oil on wood panel
H x W: 50.1 x 68.5 cm (19 3/4 x 26 15/16 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1904.75a



Chelsea in Ice
James McNeill Whistler
1864
Oil on canvas
H x W: 18 x 24 cm (7 1/16 x 9 7/16 in)
Colby College Museum of Art, The Lunder Collection



Billingsgate
James McNeill Whistler
1859
Etching on paper
H x W: 15.3 x 22.5 cm (6 x 8 7/8 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1898.278



The Tall Bridge
James McNeill Whistler
1878
Lithotint on paper
H x W (overall): 27.6 x 18.1 cm (10 7/8 x 7 1/8 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1888.22



Eagle Wharf (Tyzac Whiteley and Co.)
James McNeill Whistler
1859
Etching on paper
H x W: 13.8 x 21.4 cm (5 7/16 x 8 7/16 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1898.270



Thames Police
James McNeill Whistler
1859
Etching on paper
H x W: 15.2 x 22.5 cm (6 x 8 7/8 in)
Freer Gallery of Art, Gift of Charles Lang Freer, F1898.275



Battersea Reach
James McNeill Whistler
1863
Oil on canvas
H x W: 20 x 30 cm (7 7/8 x 11 13/16 in)
Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington, DC, Bequest of James Parmelee



Grey and Silver: Old Battersea Reach
James McNeill Whistler
1863
Oil on canvas
H x W: 50.8 x 68.6 cm (20 x 27 in)
The Art Institute of Chicago, Gift of Honoré and Potter Palmer, 1922.449