

— Fred Yates
Paint and Life

26 June – 13 July 2013



John Martin Gallery

Fred Yates, *Paint and Life*

This exhibition of paintings by Fred Yates spans a period of forty years from his first Cornish paintings to a group of canvases completed just a year before his death in 2008. As an exhibition it is not intended to chart the twists and turns of his development as a painter, on the contrary, I wanted to show how Fred's final, highly expressive canvases painted in France seemed to return to the ideas and techniques he first developed forty years earlier in his first period of intense activity as an artist. The Tate's major survey of Lowry this summer provides an opportunity to see Yates alongside an artist who was so important to him and with whom he is often compared; yet also to understand that it was Lowry who gave Yates the confidence to be himself, to find his own voice and to be anything other than another Lowry.

Lowry's influence on Yates was significant and no doubt his example was the inspiration behind Yates's decision to risk abandoning his teaching career and become a full-time artist in 1969. As another Manchester man, Lowry had proved it was possible to break through the patrician art establishment of post-war Britain and create an art that spoke to ordinary people, an objective that Yates held foremost in his work throughout his life. In 1954, Yates had come second to Lowry in a competition on the subject of 'Art and Football' and his celebratory dinner sitting next to Mr Lowry at the Cafe Royal was one of his proudest moments. Yet despite this early success it took another fifteen years for Yates to summon the courage to quit teaching; he knew that unless he found his own voice as an artist he would simply be bundled together with a wave of 'Northern School' artists. Yates looked on Lowry as a mentor, whose tireless, self-taught refinement of technique in drawing and painting was the key to unlock his own originality. Yates had grown to loathe academic art training and needed to 'unlearn' what he had been taught and what he had taught others for the previous two decades. From 1967 to about 1974 Yates devoted himself to defining his own style, experimenting with more expressive ways of using oil paint and finally emerging with the fearless approach to painting that was to characterise his technique for the next four decades.

As he gained in confidence as a painter his subjects began to emerge out of his new environment. Like Lowry, Yates set out to paint the world around him but his world was not the industrial north; in Cornwall it was the rural lanes, cottages and harbours that provided the backdrop to his experiments in painting. Despite his desire for a solitary life, Yates also needed an audience; he was a showman who was in his element chatting to the summer crowds that would watch him paint in the street and who might often find their way into the paintings. His deep affection for people meant that even in the largest crowds everyone was defined as an individual: shy children, prim elderly ladies, prostitutes and dog-walkers, fashionable tourists, fishermen, nannies with prams and gangs of punks; and most famously, the ubiquitous Manchester ladies in cloche hats and knitted shawls who first saw him paint in the forties and who had asked to be included – a promise Yates dutifully maintained throughout his life.

—John Martin, 2013



Self Portrait, c.1967 (cat. 1), oil on board 85 x 62 cms, 33½ x 24½ ins



—*People Beside the Quay*, c.1969 (cat.3), oil on board, 80x46 cm, 31 x 19 ins



—*National Provincial Bank*, 1967, (cat. 2), oil on board, 62x58 cm, 23x22 ins



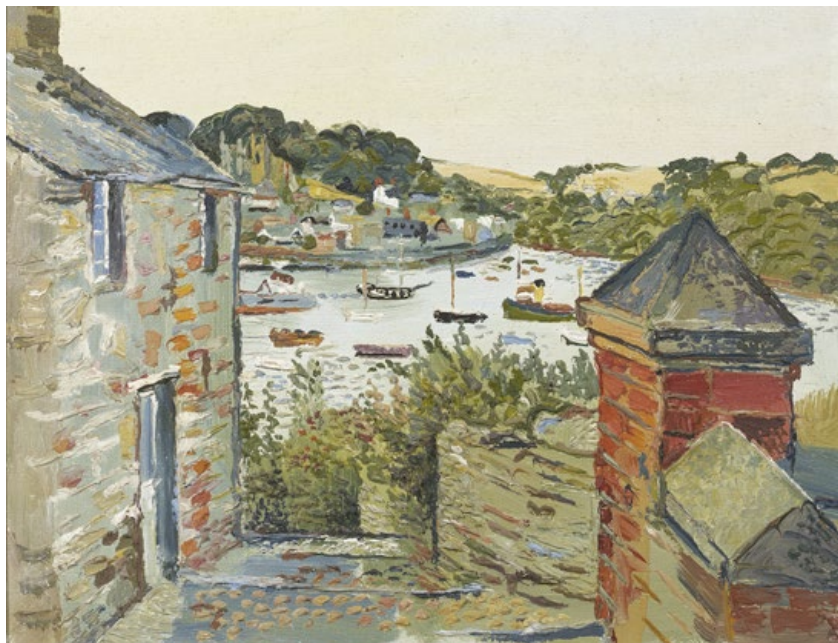
—*Family Outing*, 1970 (cat.4), oil on board, 51 x 38 cm, 20 x 15 ins



— *Cottage with Children*, c.1978 (cat.6), oil on board, 51 x 38 cm, 20 x 15 ins



—*The New Arrivals*, c.1978 (cat.7) oil on board 78 x 115 cms, 28¼ x 45½ ins



— *Fowey from Polruan*, 1976, (cat. 5), oil on board, 36 x 48 cms, 14 x 19 ins



—*Path Beside a River* c.1978 (cat.8) oil on board, 61 x 87 cm, 24 x 34 ins



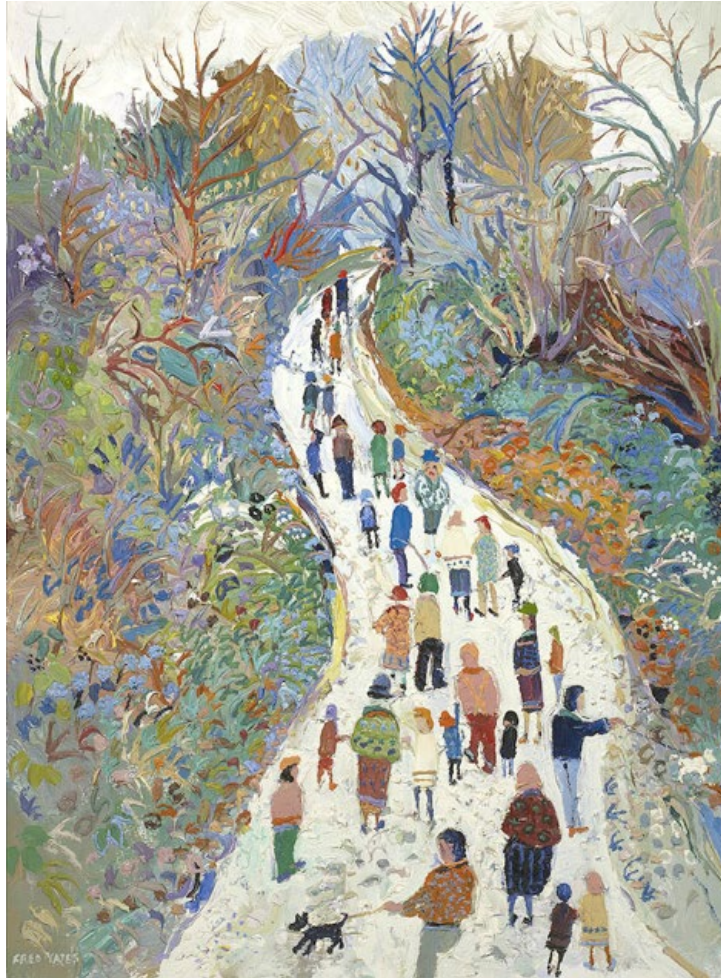
—*Diana Loves Charles Charles Loves Diana*, 2007, (cat. 10), oil on board, 53 x 76 cms, 21 x 30 ins



—*Rue de Budapest*, c.1998 (cat.11), oil on board, 47 x 92 cms, 18¾ x 36¼ ins



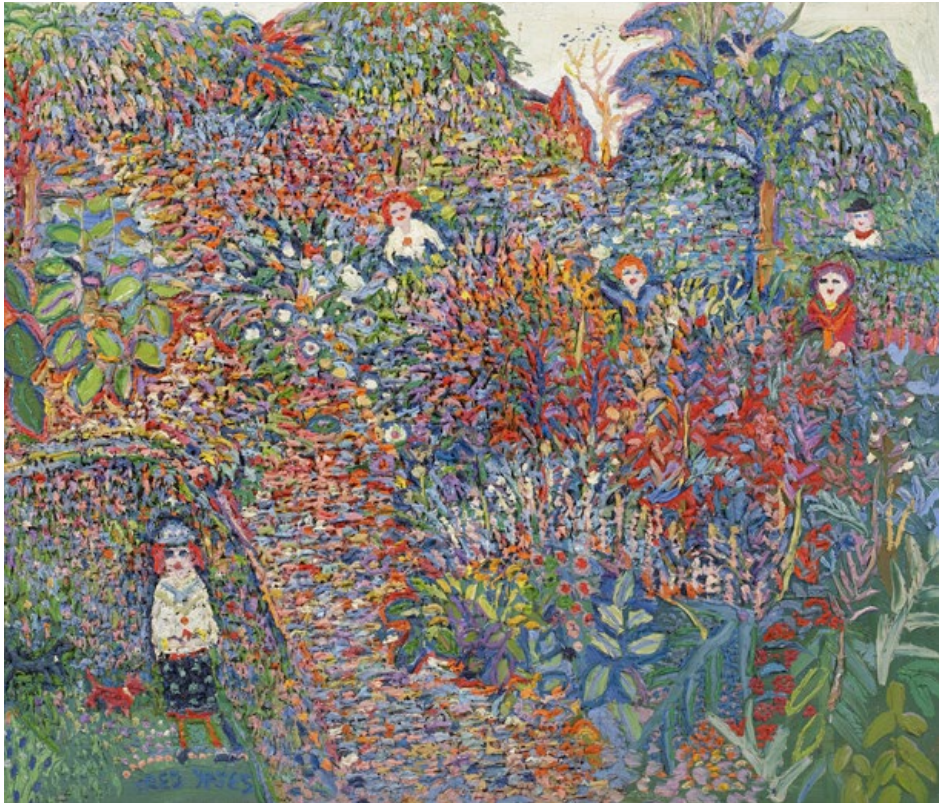
—*Stockport AFC*, c.1994 (cat.13), oil on canvas, 60 x 79cms, 23¼ x 31 ins



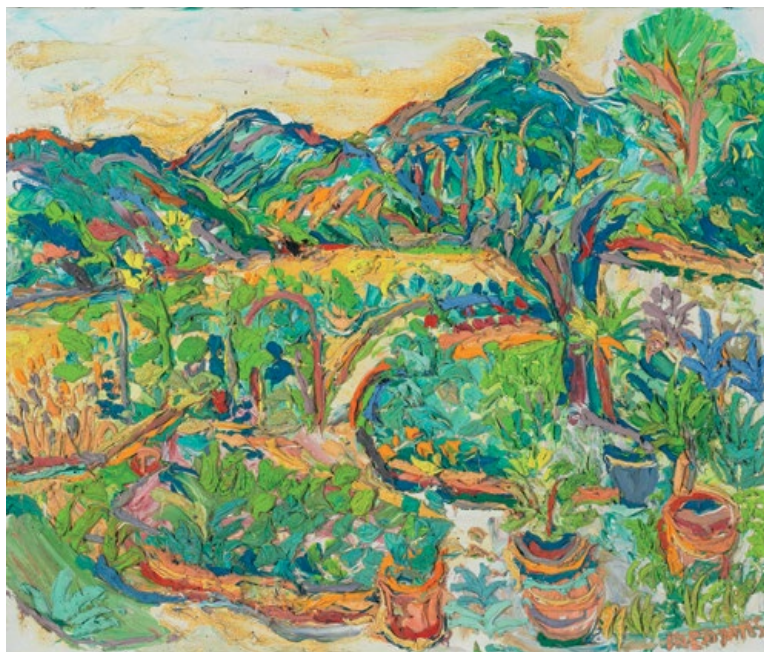
— *Winter Walk* c.1995 (cat.29) oil on canvas, 101 x 76 cm, 40 x 30 ins



— *Going to the Beach*, c.1998 (cat.40), oil on canvas 101 x 76 cm, 40 x 30 ins



—*Gossips in Bloom*, c.1999, (cat. 17), oil on canvas, 71 x 91 cms, 28 x 36 ins



— *Mon Jardin La Motte*, 2006 (cat.25), oil on canvas 59x73 cm, 23x30 ins



— *Dublin Dream 2*, 2006 (cat.7.) oil on canvas, 80x80 cm, 32x32 ins



— *Vous Desirez, Monsieur*, 2004, (cat.20), oil on board, 62x38 cm, 24x15 ins



— *The Human Triangle*, 2007 (cat.30), oil on canvas, 67 x 61 cms, 26¼ x 24 ins



—*Dressing Up for Wakes Week, Salford, 2007, (cat.28)*, oil on canvas, 50 x 61 cms, 20 x 24 ins



— *Old Woman Knitting*, 2007 (cat.33), oil on canvas, 41 x 26 cms, 16½ x 10½ ins



—And they all Turned out to Watch the Artist, 2007, (cat.24), oil on canvas, 33 x 41 cms, 13 x 16 ins



—*Street Rendezvous*, 2007, (cat.26), oil on canvas, 50 x 61 cms, 20 x 24 ins



— *Tall Flowers in a Blue and White Vase*, 2007, (cat.23), oil on canvas, 120 x 40 cms, 48 x 16 ins

LIST OF PAINTINGS

1. Self Portrait, c.1967	oil on board	85 x 62 cms, 33½ x 24½ ins
2. National Provincial Bank, 1967	oil on board	62 x 58 cms, 23¼ x 22½ ins
3. People at the Quayside, c.1969	oil on board	80 x 46 cms, 31½ x 18 ins
4. Family Outing, 1970	oil on board	45 x 90 cms, 18 x 36 ins
5. Fowey from Polruan, 1976	oil on board	36 x 48 cms, 14 x 19 ins
6. Cottage with Children, c.1978	oil on board	45 x 78 cms, 17¾ x 30¾ ins
7. The New Arrivals, c.1978	oil on board	78 x 115 cms, 28¼ x 45½ ins
8. Path beside a River, c.1978	oil on board	61 x 87 cms, 24 x 34½ ins
9. Park Pond, Winter, c.1978	oil on board	49 x 61 cms, 19½ x 24 ins
10. Charles Loves Diana, 1981	oil on board	53 x 76 cms, 21 x 30 ins
11. Rue De Budapest, c.1988	oil on board	47 x 92 cms, 18¾ x 36¼ ins
12. Looking On, c.1988	oil on board	94 x 59 cms, 37 x 23¼ ins
13. Stockport AFC, c.1994	oil on canvas	60 x 79 cms, 23¼ x 31 ins
14. The Walk, Marazion, c.1998	oil on board	51 x 76 cms, 20 x 30 ins
15. Going to the Beach, c.1998	oil on canvas	76 x 101 cms, 30 x 40 ins
16. Winter Walk, c.1999	oil on canvas	101 x 76 cms, 40 x 30 ins
17. Gossips in Bloom, c.1999	oil on canvas	71 x 91 cms, 28 x 36 ins
18. My Garden in France IV, 2000	oil on canvas	61 x 72 cms, 24 x 28½ ins
19. Self Portrait Painting, 2004	oil on canvas	33 x 40 cms, 13 x 16 ins
20. Vous Desirez, Monsieur? 2004	oil on board	62 x 38 cms, 24½ x 15 ins
21. Dublin Dream 2, 2006	oil on canvas	80 x 80 cms, 31½ x 31½ ins
22. Pink Rose, 2007	oil on canvas	64 x 54 cms, 25½ x 21¼ ins
23. Tall Flowers in Blue & White Vase	oil on canvas	120 x 40 cms, 47¼ x 16 ins
24. All Turned Out to Watch the Artist	oil on canvas	33 x 41 cms, 13 x 16¼ ins
25. Mon Jardin, La Motte, 2006	oil on canvas	59 x 73 cms, 23½ x 29 ins
26. Street Rendezvous, 2007	oil on canvas	50 x 61 cms, 19¾ x 24 ins
27. Riverside Window, 2007	oil on canvas	50 x 61 cms, 19¾ x 24 ins
28. Dressing up for Wakes Week, Salford	oil on canvas	50 x 61 cms, 19¾ x 24 ins
29. Not Much Doin', 2007	oil on canvas	30 x 90 cms, 12 x 35½ ins
30. The Human Triangle, 2007	oil on canvas	67 x 61 cms, 26¼ x 24 ins
31. The Enchanted Forest, 2005	oil on canvas	99 x 99 cms, 39 x 39 ins
32. The Heat of the Day, France, 2007	oil on canvas	100 x 100 cms, 39½ x 39½ ins
33. Old Woman Knitting, 2007	oil on canvas	41 x 26 cms, 16½ x 10½ ins

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