



Cartoon drawing of the arrival of St Paul in Rome by Frank Brangwyn

## Brangwyn's Cartoons at Christ's Hospital

Christ's Hospital Chapel has been home to a stunning series of sixteen mural paintings by Sir Frank Brangwyn (1867 – 1956) for the last century. An artist of international renown, Brangwyn was commissioned to paint the sequence in 1912, finally completing them in 1923. They depict the spread of Christianity throughout the world, their intention being to inspire and teach generations of pupils at Christ's Hospital school. It is little known that Brangwyn also gave the school seven conté crayon preparatory drawings (cartoons) for the murals. These large-scale, richly coloured, framed studies have remained in the school's museum store since the 1920's, subsequently falling into a vulnerable state of disrepair.

This exhibition: *Brangwyn's Cartoons at Christ's Hospital*, at Christ's Hospital Museum is the culmination of a 6 month project to conserve these hidden treasures to their former glory, revealing their splendour to new audiences from the Horsham district and beyond. The conservation programme has enabled fresh interpretations to be made of the studies, showing Brangwyn's early planning for the Chapel murals, recording his changing ideas and inspirations as they evolved. Involving cleaning, re-mounting, backing and framing by a specialist paper conservator and framer, the progress of the drawings has been documented throughout, resulting in the stabilising of these important cartoons for future generations to enjoy. This pioneering exhibition invites comparison between the figurative, subtle sketches and the rich and decorative murals – such knowledge-sharing and interpretation enables fresh discussion to be had about Brangwyn's prodigious work and career.

Fulfilling and celebrating Horsham Year of Culture's themes of *Hidden Horsham District* and *Our Past, Present and Future* (August and November), Christ's Hospital Museum's exhibition showcases the cartoons, running from spring 2019 to April 2020, freely open to the public, as well as pupils and staff.

The Brangwyn Cartoon project creates new opportunities to widen access to CH's Chapel and its beautiful heritage site. The Museum will be offering a programme of public *Mural Tours and Talks* for all ages.

While 2017 marked the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Brangwyn's birth, 2019 celebrates the centenary of him working on these murals. Sharing historical records and stories from this First World War period provides a fascinating insight into Brangwyn's professional relationship with his Christ's Hospital employers. Here was an Anglo-Welsh artist born in Bruges, who trained with the famous Arts and Crafts maker William Morris and yet bridged the Modern Movement in art. He worked prolifically across all media, in a career that spanned some 70 years, before ending his days in Ditchling, Sussex.

Interest in Brangwyn as an artist is far-reaching and a further exhibition of his Christ's Hospital drawings in the context of his wider artistic achievements is planned at Horsham Museum and Art Gallery as part of the Year of Culture.

As a lasting legacy, Christ's Hospital Museum's exhibition continues into spring 2020, enabling visitors prolonged and free access to the unique, historic and cultural landmark that is Christ's Hospital.

How to visit us

Our opening times are: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10am – 4pm. We are a school site, so visits are by prior arrangement only: 01403 247444; [chmuseum@christs-hospital.org.uk](mailto:chmuseum@christs-hospital.org.uk)

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