

## Modern and Contemporary Galleries

### Tradition and Experiment

#### Early Twentieth-Century Art 1900 - 1939

In Britain, the beginning of the 20th century coincided with the end of the Victorian age. Artists and designers experimented, challenging traditional ways of seeing and making; now trying to create a new art for a modern era.

In painting, it was often traditional subject matter such as portraits, landscapes and interiors that would be tackled in new ways. The bustle and the brutality of urban life was an inspiration or something to escape from.

Boundaries became increasingly blurred between design and decoration, painting and making and individual expression replaced academic authority. Art was made to be affordable and at a scale that would fit into ordinary homes.

Some called the celebration of the modern into question after the horrors of the First World War. Traditional imagery was simplified or became childlike and slowly broke down into fragmented visions. Dream and chance tapped into subconscious anxieties and in 1939, world war intervened once again.