

**Mark Gertler: Paintings from the Luke Gertler Bequest  
& selected important UK collections**

**Ben Uri Gallery, 30 October - 13 December 2019**



Mark Gertler, *Daffodils in a Blue Bottle*, Luke Gertler Bequest, with Art Fund Support

BURU (the Ben Uri Research Unit) is proud to announce the exhibition, *Mark Gertler: Paintings from the Collection of Luke Gertler & selected important UK collections*, showcasing five important paintings from the Estate of the artist's son, Luke Gertler (1932–2017), which are on loan from Art Fund: *The Artist's Parents* (c. 1909–10), *The Artist's Brother, Harry* (c. 1911), *Daffodils in a Blue Bottle* (1916), *Trees at Sanatorium, Scotland* (1921) and *The Coster Woman* (1923). These loans represent the major themes and motifs of Gertler's early career: portraiture (particularly of members of his own family), the still life, and landscape, and have provided the catalyst and context for the current show.

Following the recent Gertler display at Tate Britain (Feb–Oct 2018), this exhibition also marks the 80<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the artist's death and these loans, executed between c. 1908 and 1924, span Gertler's personal and artistic journey from the East End to Hampstead via the Slade School of Fine Art. They are complemented by paintings and drawings from the Jerwood and Ben Uri Collections, as well as selected important UK private collections, with a particular focus on the fine draughtsmanship that underlies Gertler's *oeuvre*. Highlights include *Head of a Girl* (1910, Jerwood Collection) – formerly in the Collection of Paul Nash – the study for *The Violinist* (1912, Private Collection), further separate drawings of both sitters for Gertler's much-loved *Rabbi and Grandchild* (1913, both Private Collections), Ben Uri's celebrated *Rabbi and Rabbitzin* (1914), figurative drawings for Gertler's best-known painting, *Merry-Go-Round* (1915, 1916), a *Coster Woman* study (1924), and a head of the writer Arnold Bennett (c. 1927).

Editors notes:

'Whitechapel Boy' Mark Gertler (1891–1939) was born in London's East End to Austrian-Jewish immigrant parents, spent his early years in the family's native Galicia in the Austro-Hungarian empire, and returned to the East End in 1896. The first and youngest 'Whitechapel Boy' of his generation to attend the Slade School of Fine Art (1908–12), he was part of the 'Crisis of Brilliance' generation, which also included David Bomberg, (Dora) Carrington, Paul Nash, C. R. W. Nevinson and Stanley Spencer. He began exhibiting with Vanessa Bell's Friday Club in 1910, with the New English Art Club in 1911, at the Chenil Galleries in 1912, among fellow Whitechapel Boys in Bomberg and Epstein's so-called "Jewish Section" at the Whitechapel Art Gallery *Review of Modern Movements* in 1914, and with the London Group in 1915, where his early pictures caused 'uproar'. In the same year he left the East End for Hampstead, where he chose to settle for the rest of his life. His post-Slade work was profoundly influenced by Post-Impressionism and he exhibited with Roger Fry's Omega Workshops (1917–18), before developing an admiration for Renoir during the 1920s, reflected in his five solo shows at the Goupil Gallery (1921–6). Following his collapse from tuberculosis in 1920, he was plagued by ill health and depression in his

final years, despite further shows at Agnews, the Lefevre and the Leicester Galleries. After his suicide on 22 June 1939, *The Times* obituarist called him one of 'the half-dozen most important painters under fifty working in England'.

A fully illustrated publication and a series of tours and talks will accompany the exhibition. There will also be a small related display of work by Gertler's fellow 'Whitechapel Boys' in the lower gallery.

Curated by Gertler's biographer and cataloguer Sarah MacDougall, Head of BURU and Ben Uri Collection

**Image Credit:** Mark Gertler, *Daffodils in a Blue Bottle*, 1916, oil on canvas, Luke Gertler Bequest, on loan with Art Fund support

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**Ben Uri Gallery:** 108A Boundary Road, St John's Wood, London NW8 ORH

**Open:** Mon and Fri, 10–5 p.m., Tues and Thurs, 10–4 p.m., **Wednesdays until 8.00 p.m.**

**£5 entry, Web:** [www.benuri.org.uk](http://www.benuri.org.uk) and [www.benuricollection.org.uk](http://www.benuricollection.org.uk)