



**\*LAST CHANCE TO SEE – Exhibition closes 1 January 2018\***

**Immediate release**

## **IWM North presents largest UK retrospective of Wyndham Lewis**

From 23 June 2017 until 1 January 2018, IWM North presents *Wyndham Lewis: Life, Art, War*, the largest UK retrospective of the artist and writer's work to date.

Marking one hundred years since Lewis (18 November 1882 - 7 March 1957) was first commissioned as an official war artist in 1917, the exhibition comprises more than 160 artworks, books, journals and pamphlets from major public and private, national and international collections. Staged in Imperial War Museums' centenary year, *Wyndham Lewis: Life, Art, War* is IWM's largest visual arts exhibition to date. The exhibition also marks 60 years since Wyndham Lewis's death.

A radical force in British art and literature, Lewis was the founder of Britain's only true *avant-garde* movement, Vorticism. Lewis' life and art encompassed the most violent and chaotic period in human history; from the First World War to the nuclear age. He was a controversial figure whose ideas, opinions and personality inspired, enticed and repelled in equal measure.

From a mythologized birth in Canada, Lewis spent his youth in England and traveled Europe. In 1913, he joined Roger Fry's Omega Workshops before setting up his own rival group, aptly named The Rebel Art Centre. From there arose Vorticism in 1914, its arresting manifesto *BLAST* encapsulating the restless mood pervading Britain on the eve of the First World War. Serving as commissioned artillery officer during the conflict, Lewis was appointed an official war artist first for the Canadians and then the British.

*Wyndham Lewis: Life, Art, War* is presented through key themes including: The Man of the World, Beyond Action and Reaction, The Enemy, Self-Condemed and Sea Mists.

The exhibition also charts Lewis' 'underground' period of reflection and reinvention after the First World War, when his career as a writer began in earnest. *Wyndham Lewis: Life, Art, War* further charts Lewis' period of self-imposed exile in North America in the 1940s and his descent into total blindness upon his return to London after the Second World War.

Exhibition highlights include *The Crowd* (1915), from Tate, a large oil painting from Lewis' Vorticist period; *The Armada* (1937) from Vancouver Art Gallery; alongside works from

Lewis' period as an official war artist such as the monumental canvas *A Battery Shelled* (1919) from Imperial War Museums' collection.

Richard Slocombe, Senior Curator at IWM and Curator of *Wyndham Lewis: Life, Art, War*, said: "One never really gets to the bottom of Wyndham Lewis, he is elusive and contrarian. That's what makes him so fascinating. Lewis lived through incredibly turbulent times where war, or the threat of war, was ever present. This exhibition will shed light on the work of a highly-gifted, original, but often ignored artist and one of the great personalities of the twentieth century."

The exhibition is open from 23 June until 1 January and tickets can be purchased from the IWM website [www.iwm.org.uk/wyndhamlewis](http://www.iwm.org.uk/wyndhamlewis)

– Ends –

### ***Wyndham Lewis: Life, Art, War***

IWM North

23 June 2017 – 1 January 2018

Tickets can be purchased online on the IWM website [www.iwm.org.uk/wyndhamlewis](http://www.iwm.org.uk/wyndhamlewis)

**Adult £8, Child £4, Concessions £6, Members Free. Group booking discounts will apply.**

**For further information, including interviews and image requests please contact:  
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### **Notes to Editors**

#### **IWM North**

The multi award winning IWM North brings the national collection to northern audiences. Designed by world-renowned architect Daniel Libeskind to represent a globe shattered by conflict, the iconic building, innovative and dynamic exhibitions, use of digital media through hourly Big Picture Shows and public events explore how war shapes lives and inspires and encourages debate.

Open Daily: Last entry 30 minutes before closing. (Closed 24 – 26 December). Free Admission

Winter Hours: 10am – 4:30pm (7 November – April 2017)

Summer Hours: 10am – 5pm (April 2017 – November 2017)

IWM North, The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester M17 1TZ (close to MediaCityUK Metrolink and Junction 9 of the M60).

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#### **IWM**

IWM (Imperial War Museums) tells the story of people who have lived, fought and died in conflicts involving Britain and the Commonwealth since the First World War.

Our unique Collections, made up of the everyday and the exceptional, reveal stories of people, places, ideas and events. Using these, we tell vivid personal stories and create powerful physical experiences across our five museums that reflect the realities of war as both a destructive and creative force. We challenge people to look at conflict from different perspectives, enriching their understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war and its impact on people's lives.

IWM's five branches which attract over 2 million visitors each year are **IWM London**, IWM's flagship branch that recently transformed with new, permanent and free First World War Galleries alongside new displays across the iconic Atrium to mark the Centenary of the First World War; **IWM North**, housed in an iconic award-winning building designed by Daniel Libeskind; **IWM Duxford**, a world renowned aviation museum and Britain's best preserved wartime airfield; **Churchill War Rooms**, housed in Churchill's secret headquarters below Whitehall; and the Second World War cruiser **HMS Belfast**.

### **IWM Centenary**

2017 marks Imperial War Museums (IWM) centenary. IWM was established while the First World War was still being fought. Since its establishment people have entrusted IWM with their stories of war from 1917 to the present day, in the knowledge it will continue to share these stories with future generations. IWM will commemorate its 100 years through a centenary of stories from its rich collections across its five branches (IWM London, IWM North, IWM Duxford, Churchill War Rooms and HMS Belfast).



100 YEARS

### **First World War Centenary**

2014 - 2018 marks the centenary of the First World War, a landmark anniversary for Britain and the world. IWM is marking the centenary by leading a vibrant, four year programme of cultural activities across the world. For more information visit [www.1914.org](http://www.1914.org)

