

KYNANCE FINE ART

SOLD - Northern Townscape

LS Lowry RA (1887-1976)



REF:

Description

Pencil Signed and dated "L S Lowry 1935" (lower right) 27.9 x 33 cms (11 x 13 ins)

Lawrence Stephen Lowry was born on the 1st November 1887 in Lancashire, the only child of Elizabeth, a teacher and Robert, a clerk. According to Lowry, he had an unhappy childhood. Lowry's time at school was unremarkable. After leaving school Lowry worked as a clerk in an accountant's firm and took private art lessons in the evenings. He continued in full time employment until he was 65 keeping it a secret to give the impression he was a full-time artist. In 1905, he was offered a place at the Manchester School of Art. He was taught by the French Impressionist, Pierre Adolphe Valette, who introduced Lowry to Impressionism and the drawings of great artists. In 1909, the family moved from a leafy Manchester suburb to the industrial town of Pendlebury. At first Lowry hated it there but was to become obsessed by the stark industrial landscape. From 1915 until 1925 he studied at the Royal Technical College, Salford. This is where he developed his interest in industrial landscapes and where his unique style began to evolve. He would make pencil sketches whilst walking the streets of Manchester and Salford to use in his works. He first exhibited at the Manchester Art Gallery in 1919. Lowry only really started to be recognised for his work after his mother died in 1939, when he had his first solo show in London. He had looked after her until her death. In 1943 he became a war artist and in 1945 he was awarded an honorary Master of Arts degree by the University of Manchester. In 1953 he was appointed as the Official Artist for the Coronation of Queen Elizabeth II and in 1962 he was elected a Royal Academician. He never married and died of pneumonia in 1976 aged 88. The Lowry Art Gallery was opened in Salford Quays in 2000. In 2013 The Tate had a major retrospective of his work. His work is held in many public and private collections. He is most famous for his urban landscapes with human figures. Northern Townscape is a fine and early example of this style. A classic street scene showing workers, housewives and children with terraced houses set against an industrial background with chimneys billowing smoke. It is unusual as he has applied a colour wash. 'Few British painters have provided in their drawings so complete and revealing a conspectus of their aesthetic, intellectual, and intuitive objects, as L.S. Lowry. His drawings for the most part are intended to be complete in themselves... Lowry learned how to extract from the medium of pencil a rich, wide range of qualities. Even an approximation of 'colour'... In his industrial drawings, the artist gradually refined a composite townscape which was to be no place in particular, and yet all places of its kind. At the same time he was evolving a race of people, no particular people, and yet all people of their kind.' (See M. Levy, Drawings of L.S. Lowry, London 1963, pp.7,14.)