

DECEMBER 31, 2019

# **The Woman in White: Joanna Hiffernan and James McNeill Whistler**



James McNeill Whistler, *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl*, 1862

oil on canvas, overall: 213 x 107.9 cm (83 7/8 x 42 1/2 in.),

framed: 244.2 x 136.5 x 8.3 cm (96 1/8 x 53 3/4 x 3 1/4 in.)

National Gallery of Art, Washington, Harris Whittemore Collection, 1943.6.2

National Gallery of Art, July 3–October 10, 2022

The American-born artist James McNeill Whistler (1834–1903) and Irish-born model Joanna Hiffernan (1839–1886) met in 1860 and began a close professional and personal relationship that lasted for two decades. Bringing together for the first time nearly all of Whistler’s depictions of Hiffernan, *The Woman in White* explores their partnership and the iconic works of art resulting from their life together. Featuring approximately 60 paintings, drawings, and prints, and related ephemera, the show unites one of the Gallery’s most renowned works—*Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl*—with the second and third “Symphonies in White,” from Tate Britain and the Barber Institute of Fine Arts, respectively. The exhibition will also present a selection of paintings on the Victorian theme of the woman in white by several of Whistler’s fellow artists, including Dante Gabriel Rossetti, John Everett Millais, John Singer Sargent, and Fernand Khnopff. These works will help to situate Whistler’s depictions of Hiffernan among the late 19th-century currents of realism, classicism, aestheticism, and symbolism in Europe and America while addressing the question of how *Symphony in White, No. 1: The White Girl* came to occupy its unique place in the history of art.

The exhibition has been curated by Margaret F. MacDonald, professor of art history, University of Glasgow, in collaboration with Ann Dumas, curator, Royal Academy of Arts, and consulting curator of European art, Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, and Charles Brock, associate curator, department of American and British paintings, National Gallery of Art.

*The exhibition is organized by the National Gallery of Art, Washington, and the Royal Academy of Arts, London.*

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[\*The Woman in White: Joanna Hiffernan and James McNeill Whistler\* Exhibition Page](#)

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# Contact Information

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