

Joseph Wright of Derby: Art, the Enlightenment and Industrial Revolution

Image: Joseph Wright of Derby (1734-1797), *Self Portrait in a Black Feathered Hat*(c1767-1770). Oil on canvas.

Summary

Joseph Wright was the most significant artist of the English Midlands during the late eighteenth century. He painted portraits, landscapes and interiors and was probably the most perceptive painter of industrial and scientific subjects of his time. He was a close friend of two members of the Lunar Society, the geologist and engineer, John Whitehurst and the doctor, scientist and poet Erasmus Darwin. He painted their portraits and those of the industrialists Richard Arkwright and Jedediah Strutt. Four oil paintings and one sketch are explored in this exhibition.