Pioneering portrait photographer Dorothy Wilding



Frieze, 1923

Works by the photographer – who took the iconic portrait of the young Queen Elizabeth II featured on UK stamps – go on show in Gloucester thanks to National Lottery funding.

> Black-and-white studio photo of two ballet dancers
>
> Alice Nikitina and Anton Dolin in 'The Ball', 1929

The life and career of Dorothy Wilding (1893–1976) is being celebrated in an exhibition opening today, International Women's Day (8 March). The show at Gloucester's Eastgate Centre offers an opportunity for budding young photographers to see and be inspired by some of her most striking images.

Dorothy was one of the UK's most accomplished and commercially successful woman photographers. Her career spanned a body of work produced over 60 years – most notably from the 1920s to the 1950s – from her studios in London and New York.

Famous faces

> Black-and-white studio photo of actress Anna May Wong

Anna May Wong, 1929

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The exhibition features 130 of her most iconic photographs of legendary film stars, writers, celebrities and royalty – one image for every year since her birth in Gloucester.

As well as her portraits of the young Queen Elizabeth, the exhibition includes images of Tallulah Bankhead, Cecil Beaton, Noël Coward, Vivien Leigh, Joyce Grenfell, Barbara Cartland, Yul Brynner, Harry Belafonte and the Duke and Duchess of Windsor.

The portraits are reprinted in a large contemporary style. Original prints and books, magazines, coins and stamps featuring Dorothy's work are also on display.

Accompanying podcasts, a pop-up photo booth, late openings for younger people and creative workshops will further celebrate Dorothy's impressive and unusual career as a woman photographer in this era.

> With the support of National Lottery players…grants are enabling museums to stay relevant, increase their impact and inspire their communities.
>
> *Lisa Ollerhead, Director, Association of Independent Museums*

New Stories, New Audiences

Sepia photo portrait of Dorothy Wilding wearing a beret and glasses.

Self Portrait, 1956

The exhibition was made possible thanks to the New Stories, New Audiences grant scheme, run by the Association of Independent Museums (AIM). Supported by £786,900 of National Lottery funding, the scheme helps small museums across the country to broaden their audiences and tell new stories.

A grant of £11,274 was allocated to the AIM to distribute to the project. Gloucester-based charity Hundred Heroines, in partnership with Sisters of the Lens and the National Portrait Gallery, collaborated to bring the exhibition to Dorothy Wilding's home town. The exhibition is also supported by The Ampersand Foundation.

Small museums, big impact

Lisa Ollerhead, Director, Association of Independent Museums, said:

"We're delighted to see a rediscovered story in a collection open on International Women's Day to inspire people of all genders. It's another great example of how, with the support of National Lottery players, our New Stories New Audience grants are enabling museums to stay relevant, increase their impact and inspire their communities."

The exhibition opens on 8 March at 6.30pm and runs until the 23 May 2023.

Find out more

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Display of gig posters at The Museum of Youth Culture The Museum of Youth Culture



ynamic Collections successes

The Waterscapes Aviary at Slimbridge Credit: WWT and Amy Alsop

Celebrating Slimbridge and 75 years protecting wetlands