

ART ~ WAVE

# The Ladies of Miller's Story

11 - 26 September 2021



[art-at-fitzroy-house.co.uk](http://art-at-fitzroy-house.co.uk)

Fitzroy House, 10 High Street, Lewes, BN7 2AD



@art\_at\_fitzroy\_house

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## How did this exhibition come about?

By Alison Grant

I was sitting in the shadow of the still smouldering Notre Dame In April 2019 when I received an email from a friend, Anthea Arnold, who had been approached by Deborah Gage asking if I would like to purchase a collection of Art Works for my "museum", by Caroline Lucas, who was one of the Ladies of Miller's.

I confess that I didn't know who these Ladies of Miller's were let alone how they came to be known by that title, but to quote Clive Bell *"There is nothing mysterious about the name; the house is called Miller's because to a miller it once belonged"*.

Although Fitzroy House isn't a museum and I couldn't afford to buy the collection, I did some research and learned that they had had a vision quite like my own when I purchased Fitzroy House, (although with fewer of their star-studded Artist connections!)

Clive Bell goes on to say:

*"It is hoped that now it may become a home and, who knows? Someday perhaps a nursery of art, of all the arts, in Sussex, and a lure to all art-lovers. At Miller's there will be a series of exhibitions, there will certainly and soon be, music. If the place can stretch itself a little, presently there will be plays and dancing."*

From their prospectus:

*"The centre has been founded in order to provide the people in and around Lewes with the opportunities to enjoy such arts as such as painting, music and literature....the arts are not the trimmings of life but the very texture of it."*

I was introduced to Sarah Voorspuy who, along with her sister, Emma Penfold, had inherited the collection from their aunt Peggy Herriot, who, with her husband, Martin Heriot, owned Shelley's hotel in Lewes.

Francis Byng Stamer (1882-1968) and Caroline Lucas (1886-1967), "The Ladies of Miller's", had spent their last years living there.

Emma and Sarah remember them quite well from when they were children and can confirm that they were indeed eccentric! It is thanks to their generous loans that we are exhibiting here today.

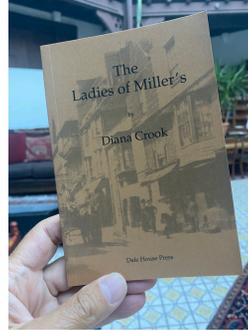
Miller's itself was in a state of disrepair and decay and much had been ruined by the leaks and damp but luckily some was saved, some already in private collections and some documentation in storage, currently held at The Keep (the records office in Brighton).

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## The Ladies of Miller's by Diana Crook

Diana Crook has written a book about the Ladies and a talk about them takes place in Fitzroy House on 18th September 2021.

The book is also on sale here at £5.



## Reviews of Caroline Lucas' work

Rottingdean Grange 1955

*"Miss Lucas, it appears from her works, has always followed her own path, and brings an individual touch to whatever medium she is using."*

Mr J.B.Manson, a past director of the Tate, described her artistic nature as *"...wilful, intrepid and independent, these are the traits that make her last exhibition more than usually interesting"*

Gazette 24/09/55

*"The wide variety of exhibits makes it possible to trace Miss Lucas's development as an artist in oils, stone and pottery....and all through her career, Miss Lucas has shown a firm individual touch".*

## Credits

The Living History Installation was created by William Emmett from Emmett and White Antiques and Interiors in Alfriston.

Loans of artworks and artefacts are from Diana Crook, Emma Penfold, Sarah Voorspuy.

**With thanks to** John Worth, Sarah Voorspuy, Emma Penfold, Will Emmett, Diana Crook, Julia Ramos, Anthea Arnold, Eleanor Austin, Julian Bell, Debo Gage, Erica Richardson, Lind Beddow, Penny Fewster and Alanagh Raikes.

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Two Sisters by Cedric Lockwood Morris  
(1889-1982) 1935

Originally titled "The English Upper  
Classes"

The subjects of this haunting portrait are Frances Byng-Stamper (left) and her sister Caroline Lucas. It was painted when Cedric Morris was trying to get together an exhibition of contemporary Welsh art.

Frances, who lived at Manorbier Castle in Pembrokeshire, was the exhibition's secretary.

Morris was himself an upper middle-class bohemian, but his relations with the mostly wealthy and anglicised members of the exhibition committee were edgy, and he gave this work the alternative title of "The English Upper Classes"

Today, Morris is best remembered for his flower paintings, but his portraits are perhaps his most distinctive and radical achievement. While not caricatures, they often simplify and sometimes exaggerate the features to intensify the psychological impact.



**Cedric Morris – Two Sisters**

The Ladies took offence at the picture of them and ceased all communication with him.

Works by Caroline Lucas, except where labelled



Sylvia in my studio



Still life with E Diaprunum  
Jar and Flowers



Flowers



Interior of cottage at Brodanew



Untitled



Caroline Lucas  
The Villa in Janiculum, Rome



Robert Colquhon  
The Trinket Seller



Du Plessism 1947  
Miller's Press Lithograph  
'The Red Church'

# Works by Caroline Lucas



# Works by Caroline Lucas



Marble Bull by Caroline Lucas



