

## “1915”

On first glance, this painting appears to be a collage of newspaper mastheads with their text. They cover many issues of the day and together they form a cultural collection of events from 1915. We see happy children on an amusement ride, we are urged to “laugh” and “smile”, there’s a theater bill with Mary Pickford. BUT look closer. A tension develops between these happy suggestions and suddenly the mood changes with headlines proclaiming “war”, “torpedo”, “explosion”. A newspaper photo of the sinking of the LUSITANIA with clippings listing the victims of the disaster. We are getting closer to the essence of the painting; on the far left we see the figure of a passenger: Charles Frohman, a celebrated theater impresario, who declares (in script) “why should we fear death, it is the greatest adventure man can have!”. Frohman lost his life in the disaster. Quinton’s message: death will come to all of us whether by nature, accident or by war, but it is not to be feared. The newspaper mastheads have been painstakingly reproduced in paint (same font scale and weight) which gives them authenticity and were painted on the canvas copying actual newspapers saved by the family, which the artist would have found in the house. Using these, Quinton told his story. Although the disaster occurred due to a German torpedo in 1915, the picture was painted in 1978, when Quinton was 76 years old.

For further interest

Bibliography

Charles Frohman - <https://www.rmslusitania.info/people/saloon/charles-frohman/>

Edith Cavell - <https://edithcavell.org.uk/>

Elbert Hubbard - <https://www.rmslusitania.info/people/saloon/elbert-hubbard/>