

= Leslie Hunter =

George Leslie Hunter (7 August 1877 ? 7 December 1931) , was christened simply George Hunter , but he adopted the name Leslie in San Francisco , and Leslie Hunter , became his professional name . Showing an aptitude for drawing at an early age , he was largely self @-@ taught , receiving only elementary painting lessons from a family acquaintance . A Scottish painter , he also spent fifteen formative years from the age of fifteen in the USA , mainly in California . He was later regarded as one of the four artists of the Scottish Colourists group of painters . Following his youth in California , he returned to Scotland , painting and drawing there and in Paris . Subsequently , he traveled widely in Europe , especially in the South of France , but also in the Netherlands , the Pas de Calais and Italy . Hunter painted a variety of still @-@ lifes , landscapes and portraits , and his paintings are critically acclaimed for their treatment of light and the effects of light . They became popular with more progressive critics and collectors during his lifetime and have grown to command high prices since his death , becoming among the most popular in Scotland .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life = = =

Hunter was born in Rothesay , at 7 Tower Street , on the Isle of Bute . The date was 7 August 1877 . He was the youngest child of five , born to William and Jeanie (née Stewart) Hunter . George , as he was then known , showed an aptitude for drawing when very young and when he was about thirteen , his mother arranged for him to have painting lessons with a lady acquaintance . In February 1892 , Hunter 's elder sister Catherine died . Shortly after , in March , another elder sibling , James , also died . Both were in their early twenties . It is thought they may have been victims of an influenza pandemic . William , the father , and Jeanie , seem already to have contemplated emigrating , because a home had been sold . Evidently , the tragic deaths sealed the matter , and the remaining family departed for California via New York on 1 September 1892 , aboard the SS Ethiopia .

= = = Emigration to California and move to San Francisco , leaving parents = = =

Thus Hunter was fifteen when he emigrated with his parents and two surviving siblings to California . Initially , he lived with his family on an orange grove , 50 miles east of Los Angeles . He continued sketching and loved the climate , but showed little interest in farm management . Hunter began making a living in 1896 , primarily as a newspaper and journal illustrator . He mixed with significant literary figures such as Bret Harte and Jack London , who were associated with the San Francisco Bohemian Club . Hunter provided illustrations for Overland Monthly . In 1899 , a full @-@ page black and white drawing for Overland Monthly is signed G. Leslie Hunter , the first recorded occasion of his use of " Leslie . " In 1902 , Hunter became part of a group of artists that included Maynard Dixon and Arthur Putnam . They desired independence from the hierarchies of the establishment art world and , together , they formed the California Society of Arts as an alternative to the conservative San Francisco Art Association . Clearly , Hunter had a completely different artistic exposure compared with others of the Scottish Colourists group , such as John Duncan Fergusson or Samuel John Peploe . Hunter was at this stage quite a successful American graphic artist , considering his young age . " Sunset , The Pacific Monthly " , was another journal commissioning his work and altogether , Smith & Marriner catalogue over two hundred publication and book illustrations commissioned from Hunter .

= = = Beginnings in fine art = = =

In 1904 , Hunter made a visit to Paris , funded by his earnings as an illustrator . He was inspired by

the numerous artistic experiences there , and became fully resolved to take up oil painting . When he returned to San Francisco in 1905 , he began preparing for his first solo exhibition , which was to be held the following year . However , Hunter 's early work was destroyed in the fire that followed the 1906 San Francisco earthquake , and he returned to Scotland shortly afterwards , settling in Glasgow . Initially he continued to make his living there primarily as an illustrator . His oil painting began with still lifes on black backgrounds , influenced by the Dutch style .

In 1907 , whilst back in Paris , Hunter met Alice Toklas , whom he had known previously in San Francisco . She took him to see the collection at 27 rue de Fleurus , that was being started by Gertrude Stein and her brother Leo Stein . Toklas wrote of this re @-@ meeting that Hunter was at first shocked by the style of artists such as Matisse , but obviously strongly impressed .

Hunter began to achieve limited success after a trip to the Etaples art colony in northern France in 1914 . Here , inspired by French art and the local landscape , he began to develop the style and ability that would later identify him as a colourist . However , the onset of the First World War forced him to return to Scotland , where his work became noticed by Alexander Reid of Reid & Lefevre . In 1915 , Hunter held his first one @-@ man exhibition with Reid in Glasgow . Hunter 's work at this stage of his career focused primarily on still lifes , inspired by Chardin , Kalf and Manet . During the 1920s , Hunter began to be associated with a group of three other artists : John Duncan Fergusson , F. C. B. Cadell , and Samuel Peploe . The four of them became known as the Scottish Colourists , although the term was not used until 1948 , by which time only Fergusson was still alive .

= = = European travel and return to Fife = = =

In 1922 , Hunter began to make a series of trips to mainland Europe , where he visited Paris , Venice , Florence and the Riviera . Fergusson accompanied him on a number of these visits . Hunter 's visits abroad produced a large number of paintings and his style changed noticeably in this period of European travel as he began using dabs of colour placed instinctively to portray underlying form .

When Hunter returned from his first series of trips abroad , in 1922 , he settled in Fife , on the east coast of Scotland and , between 1924 and 1927 , he remained in Scotland , dividing his time between Fife and Glasgow . His paintings from this period include a number inspired by views of Loch Lomond , and these landscapes increasingly took inspiration from the work of Cézanne to create colourful and atmospheric compositions . In 1925 , Hunter 's work was displayed at an exhibition in Leicester Square in London , along with works by Peploe , Cadell and Fergusson . Walter Sickert , in his introduction to the exhibition , wrote that " Hunter uses the refractory ... to inspired ends on normal and traditional lines " .

Hunter traveled again to the South of France on a number of occasions between 1927 and 1929 , and based himself at Saint @-@ Paul @-@ de @-@ Vence . He sent paintings back to Reid to be exhibited in Glasgow and London , but he spent a great deal of time sketching and his output of finished oil paintings was low . One exhibition in London had to be postponed due to a lack of paintings . The France trips culminated in 1929 with a critically acclaimed exhibition at the Ferargil Galleries in New York .

= = = London , ill @-@ health and death = = =

However , shortly after returning to the French Riviera in 1929 , Hunter suffered a severe breakdown , forcing his sister to bring him home to Scotland in September . He recovered , and began to paint a number of portraits of his friends , including one of Dr Tom Honeyman , the Director of the Glasgow Art Gallery and Museum from 1939 until 1954 . Honeyman , at the time an art dealer , had assisted Hunter in developing his career , and painting the portrait may have been a gesture of thanks .

In 1930 he embarked upon a series of drawings and watercolours of Hyde Park , which were due to be exhibited in London . Hunter hoped to move to the city permanently , as he found it livelier than Glasgow and the art market was more secure . However , his health deteriorated and he began to

suffer badly from stomach pains . He died in Glasgow in the Claremont Nursing Home on the 7 December 1931 , aged 54 . The cause of death was cardiac failure due to blood poisoning , following an unsuccessful gall bladder operation . A member of Glasgow Art Club , work by Hunter was included in the club 's Memorial Exhibition of 1935 , in memory of those of its members who had died since the First World War .

= = Popularity = =

Hunter 's paintings were popular with critics during his lifetime , and he had successful exhibitions in Glasgow , London and New York . Shortly before his death , the Glasgow Herald commented that while Hunter was already " well known as a painter of landscape and still @-@ life , " his move to portrait painting would " cause a good deal of interest and discussion . "

Many years after his death , solo exhibitions of Hunter 's paintings were still held and , in 1953 , the display of a selection of watercolours and paintings in Glasgow attracted numerous visitors . The art critic of the Glasgow Herald described the " varied and uneven genius " of the painter , and praised one painting as having been executed with " such a freedom and economy of touch one cannot well see how any amount of extra thought or technical application could have bettered it . "

Paintings by Hunter have gone on to sell for large sums in the early 21st century , with one painting described as the " star lot " in a Bonhams auction in June 2010 selling for £ 144 @,@ 000 . Another painting was sold in June 2010 for £ 78 @,@ 000 . Nick Curnow , head of pictures at Lyon & Turnbull , said of it " This is a very special painting , so typical of Hunter . "

= = Style = =

Hunter focused for much of his life on landscapes and on still lifes , working in both pen and ink and oil on canvas . His still lifes of fruit are particularly distinctive , but he also painted a variety of landscapes , especially of Scotland and France . In his earlier paintings , Hunter was influenced by Cézanne to produce domestic landscapes . Later , however , in common with the other members of the Scottish colourists movement , he was heavily influenced by contemporary French artists like Monet and Matisse , and his paintings began to make bolder and more energetic use of colour .

Hunter particularly strove to capture in his paintings the effects of light , and would repeatedly paint the same objects or locations under a range of lighting conditions . His brush style was influenced by the French avant garde and , especially in his later work , is described by art critics as " open and free " and " energetic " .