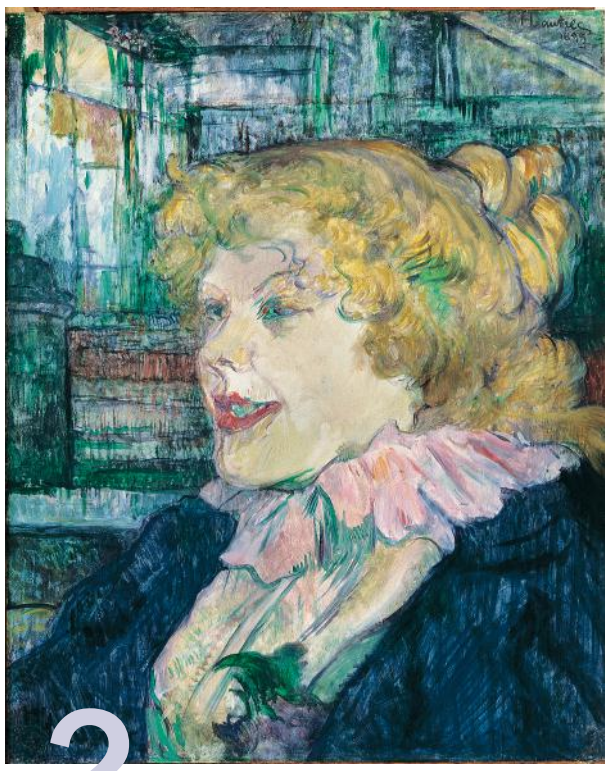




1.



2.



3.

Late works

1899-1901

1. *Au Cirque, danseuse de corde*, 1899, Drawing in colour pencils reproduced as a photo-aquatint
2. *L'Anglaise du "Star"*, 1899, Oil on wood
3. *La Modiste*, 1900, Oil on board

1. THE CIRCUS

Lautrec was interested in “popular” forms of entertainment, the café-concert, dance halls and the circus. These were dominated by impresarios who sought to profit from public fads and the new markets which these changing tastes and interests generated. Around 1880, circuses proliferated in Paris and fascinated the avant-garde who saw in them suitable subjects for modernity. A relationship of patronage developed between young artists and show organisers, with the artists offering new unconventional imagery and the organisers paying modest sums for works that tied in with the shows or exhibiting them. At the beginning of the 1880s, René Princeteau, Lautrec's first master and friend, took the young artist to *the Fernando Circus* at the top of Rue des Martyrs. Between 1886 and 1887, Lautrec created a series of works including the ink drawing in the shape of a fan *At the Fernando Circus*, later used for a lithograph *The Tarnais Dinner Menu* (1896). Interned for mental disorders due to alcoholism in Dr Sémelaigne's rest home at Neuilly in the spring of 1899, Lautrec returned to the world of his childhood and drew from memory a series of 39 drawings on the circus in order to prove that he had regained his mental health and his capacity to work. They form a coherent whole in which the interplay of contrasts and the expressiveness of the line are treated with force and elegance. The unity of place and space, the elliptic lines of the arena and the allusive shapes give these drawings all their power. Lautrec returns to his tried and tested procedure of capturing a pose and cutting out the image to play on the illusion of his presence at the ringside. The ensemble of the drawings would be published posthumously in two series of facsimiles (22 drawings published in a portfolio by Manzi, Joyant & Cie in 1905, 17 drawings by la Librairie de France in 1931).

2. 3. PORTRAITS

When Henri de Toulouse-Lautrec was allowed out of the sanatorium at Neuilly at the end of May 1899, Adèle de Toulouse-Lautrec found him a companion, Paul Viaud, to stay with him and stop him from drinking. They journeyed together and for two years running, in 1899 and 1900, stopped over at Le Crotoy in June, Le Havre in July, and Taussat for the summer before returning to Malromé. During his short stay in Le Havre, Lautrec fell for a barmaid in Le Star, a sailor's bar. A red-chalk drawing emphasises the round smiling face of the young woman known as Miss Dolly. The picture *the English girl at the "Star", Le Havre*, using light and luminous tonalities, has a nearly abstract geometric background that sets off the young woman's face, enhancing her youth and gaiety. Lautrec seeks to transcend the traditional image and go beyond the appearances to capture the temperament. In 1893, he painted *Woman at the window*, a portrait from behind of a prostitute whose features he had already sketched three times in precise studies in a bawdy house. Ensclosed in an impenetrable reverie, she keeps her secrets and becomes the personification of solitude.

In 1900, Lautrec carried out several works using as his model Louise Blouet, an employee and then a mannequin at the Renée Vert fashion house. The bust portrait *The milliner, Mademoiselle Louise Blouet d'Enguin* is almost classical with a new exploration of light to highlight the delicacy of the fine features of the face and Venetian blond hair tied back in a loose bun in an intimate face to face with a milliner. The full-length portrait acquired by the MTL in 2009 is a testimony to Lautrec's modernity. The bold geometric composition rests on an interplay of vertical hatching forming a green rectangle that intensifies the stature of the figure in the foreground.