

# A walk of art

London's museums are famous worldwide, but you can also spot plenty of public art by casually walking around the city. Here's a short loop that takes in impressive galleries and a number of surprising works that often go unnoticed.

<https://goo.gl/maps/tjTZrAWuni8DVWTU9>



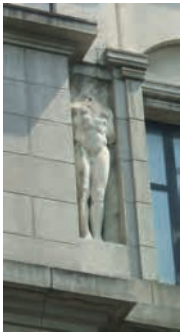


### ***First stop: Somerset House and the Courtauld Gallery***



Somerset House is a wonderful neoclassical building just a stone's throw away from the LSE campus – it's architecturally magnificent in its own right, and in the Spring of 2021 the Courtauld Gallery, housed in one of its wings, will reopen after extensive renovations. Not to be missed if you're a fan of impressionism and post-impressionism.

### ***Second stop: Jacob Epstein's Statues – Zimbabwe House***



More than a century ago, Jacob Epstein created 18 sculptures for what was then the building of the British Medical Association. They represented the world of science and medicine. And they were naked. They caused a scandal when they were unveiled and in the 1930s, after the head of one of them fell on the Strand, all the parts that protruded had to be removed. What is left of the statues is still in place, and these very recent ruins remind us about the fierce debates that contemporary art can generate.

### ***Third stop: A Conversation with Oscar Wilde***



In London you can find unusual statues that allow you to pose with Paddington, Roosevelt, Churchill and plenty more. On the Strand you have a chance to chat with Oscar Wilde, one of the most famous poets and playwrights of the 19th century.

### ***Fourth stop: Admiralty Arch, and its nose***



In 1997 a number of small sculptures of noses – yes, noses! – started to appear around Central London. Now seven of them remain, and one is just off Trafalgar Square, on the northernmost of the arches of Admiralty Arch. The arch itself is the significant landmark, but the nose is what makes Londoners giggle!

### ***Fifth stop: The Fourth Plinth of Trafalgar Square***

Three of the four plinths in Trafalgar Square host statues of kings and generals. The fourth was meant to have a similar fate, but money ran out and it remained empty for a long time. Now works of contemporary art take over the fourth plinth and change periodically. What do you think about drones flying over a mountain of whipped cream?



### ***Sixth stop: The National Gallery***

The National Gallery is London's home for the Great European Masters – Leonardo, Rubens, El Greco, Holbein and plenty more. These days the gallery allows you to pick one of three routes for your visit and if it is your first time, we strongly recommend Route A.



### ***Seventh stop: Agatha Christie's Memorial***

At the intersection of Cranbourn Street and Great Newport Street – just around the corner from the theatre that has hosted her *The Mousetrap* for an astonishing 68 consecutive years – you can find this memorial to Agatha Christie, one of London's cultural icons.



### ***Eighth stop: St Paul's Church***

Covent Garden is at the heart of the West End, and St Paul's Church (not to be confused with St Paul's Cathedral!) is famous for being "the actors' church". Its unusual architecture resembles that of a Roman temple and from its portico you can watch life (and people) go by in Covent Garden Piazza.



### ***Ninth stop: Sir John Soane's Museum***

Our neighbour at 13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, the Sir John Soane's Museum is one of London's most fascinating small museums. Whether you are visiting to take a look at its collection of paintings and artefacts, or to admire the house designed by John Soane himself, prepare yourself to be amazed. Booking is essential: <https://www.soane.org/>

