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Art

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Exhibition note

by [Christie Davies](#)

On "Wyndham Lewis Portraits" at the National Portrait Gallery, London.

"Wyndham Lewis Portraits"
National Portrait Gallery, London.
July 3-October 19, 2008

Wyndham Lewis is best known as a modernist and as the leader of the Vorticists, but the Vorticists' swirling style of vigorous erratic curves is not best suited to the art of portraiture. There remains a prevailing prejudice that we should be able to recognize a particular individual in his or her portrait rather than see them sliding away into featurelessness through the force of the painter's gravity. Accordingly Lewis devised a technique which he called "Burying Euclid deep in the living flesh." It is doubtful whether Euclid, who revered above all the simplicity and regularity of the circle and the straight line, would have been impressed by this evocation of his name in connection with the irregular intersecting curves of this leading Vorticist.

Lewis's embedding of geometrical shapes i ...

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