



## Siege Battery Pulling In

### Date

1918

### Primary Maker

Wyndham Lewis

### Medium

Charcoal, pen and ink, watercolor, and gouache wash on paper

### Description

The writer and artist Wyndham Lewis studied painting at the Slade School of Art in London from 1898 to 1901. After graduating, he

traveled through Europe from 1902 to 1908, becoming one of the first British artists to be apprised of and influenced by contemporary art from France and Germany, including that of the Expressionist and proto-Cubist movements. By 1913–14, when he, Henri Gaudier-Brzeska, Edward Wadsworth, and others were formulating the Vorticist movement, he was considered to be at the forefront of British avant-garde art. The term “Vorticism” was coined by Ezra Pound, Class of 1905, H1939, in reference to the “vortex,” or “that point in the cyclone where energy cuts into space and imparts form to it . . . the pattern of angles and geometric lines which is formed by our vortex in the existing chaos.” Lewis became one of the main proponents of the movement, contributing numerous articles to its journal, *BLAST*, and writing its manifestos. Although Vorticism was formally related to Italian Futurism, the London group arose specifically to differentiate its members from the Futurists. The movement lasted from the summer of 1914 until 1919, a period roughly concurrent with World War I. The art Lewis produced during this period was marked by architectonic planes and machinelike forms. These elements can be detected in *Siege Battery Pulling In*, although the imagery is much more figurative and less abstracted than in his work of five years before. The composition documents Lewis’s experience at the front, where he served from March 1916 to 1919 as an artist with the Canadian Corps. It is one of a series of works he created in 1918 that focused on the industry and labor occurring at the front rather than on battle per se. (SOURCE: Alcauskas, *INNOVATIVE APPROACHES, HONORED TRADITIONS*, 2017)

### Dimensions

Sheet: 12 1/2 × 18 3/4 in. (31.8 × 47.6 cm)