

Collections 1700 – 1800

**Solitude - Richard Wilson**

Oil on canvas

100.3 cm x 125.1 cm



Richard Wilson (1713/14 - 1782) has been described as the 'Father of British Landscape painting'.

Born near Machynlleth, Wilson studied art with Thomas Wright of London (1729), achieving acclaim as a portrait painter. However, when Wilson undertook the Grand Tour (1750), the effect of the time he spent in Venice and Rome meant that he abandoned portraiture in favour of painting landscapes in the 'Italian Manner'. Returning to Britain (1757) Wilson found patrons within the landed gentry, his work leading Ruskin to say that "with Wilson the history of 'sincere landscape art' began." He also took Thomas Jones of Pencerrig (1742 - 1803) as a pupil for two years.

Solitude (original title: Landskip [sic] with Hermits) is one of his most important landscapes. 'It was designed to appeal to wealthy landowners...who liked to think of themselves as hermits in the privacy of their estates.' (Richard Wilson Themes & Variations, p.14)