

WOMEN

Women in British Art
1834-1951



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Women in British Art 1834-1951

This exhibition is a celebration of the gradual emergence into the twentieth century of professional and vocational women artists from Victorian Britain. Their pictures are set against a similar number of works by men, *of* women. It is a selection, not a survey, extending to just after the Second World War.

In the Victorian period, women had their own art schools and their own exhibiting venues, but the best artists aspired to share platforms with men on an equal footing. Women did have to struggle, but whilst it was a slow process they were gradually accepted in many institutions, and even actively encouraged by some. The term 'Victorian' has now become a name used by sociologists to identify repression, exploitation and hidebound male attitudes - but 'Victorian' could equally describe a vibrant era of ongoing reform, with incremental but inexorable advances in education, health, worker's rights, housing and women's rights. It was a time of fundamental change, and although Britain was essentially Georgian at the beginning of Victoria's long reign in 1837, by 1901 it was on the cusp of the modern age.

In Victoria's wake, two World Wars gave women a real voice in many walks of life, and art was no exception; female artists were liberated from 'feminine' subjects, flowers and children, to paint images of real life beyond their homes, whether in hospitals or on the street. They were restricted to the Home Front; in the First War, only four Official War Artists were women, of whom three had their work rejected. In the Second War, 52 of roughly 400 artists appointed by the War Artists Advisory Committee were women, although they received fewer and shorter commissions, lower pay and far less publicity. Two women were given overseas commissions, but only one was salaried and neither was allowed to travel abroad until after the fighting had ended.

Today, amongst 80 Royal Academicians, nearly half are women, but even now they stand behind an easel less often than they appear on canvas, cast in idealised roles by male painters. The various pictures by and of women in this exhibition mirror the complex and evolving roles that women had in Victorian and Modern British Art.



1 Paul Falconer Poole 1807-1879

The Cottage Girl

Oil on panel
18 x 15 inches

This picture was exhibited in 1834, when Poole was painting scenes of 'rustic life as the traveller often meets with it among some of the waste places in Wales or Ireland' (*Art Union*, 1848), much in the manner of Mulready. This picture of rustic purity is much more finely painted than Poole's later essays in

the same genre. It was described in great detail and reviewed by the *Worcester Herald*: 'There is no room to charge the artist with slovenly execution or neglect ... The artist has finished the sky, the stony bank, and every part of the landscape, with as much care as the face and person of the girl, and with nearly as smooth a surface'. After his death, *The Portfolio* of 1884 summed up Poole's capabilities: 'he produced slowly and deliberately ... he strove for intellectual or emotional expression rather than the imitation of the appearance of things; subject was a motive and an incentive to his artistic energy, an important factor in his art, which leant to the dramatic and romantic'.



2 William Etty 1787-1849

Nude

Oil on board
16¾ x 12½ inches

In this vision of womanhood, the model is a real-life Venus. Etty took delight in the fleshiness of the body, and painted it with an enthusiasm bordering on mania. His biographer Alexander Gilchrist wrote that Etty was 'never weary of watching each shifting curve and outline, each tint, and tone,

graduation of shade or colour, amid the inexhaustible effects of the Models before him; he reproduced and interpreted them, as neither Old Master nor New had done before' (*Life of William Etty, R.A.*, 1855). After his death, the artist JE Hodgson perceptively remarked 'He proposed one thing to himself, to paint the naked body, and his views did not extend to the fullness of its beauty, to the grace of its curvature and the perfection of its structure; they were confined to the representation of the colour and the lustre of its skin' (*Magazine of Art*, 1889, p 386). His subjection of *disegno* to *colore* in his painting was born out of his admiration for the Venetian masters, Titian and Veronese.



3 Charles West Cope 1811-1890

The Innkeeper's Daughter

Oil on canvas; titled verso
14½ x 11¼ inches

This picture, spontaneous and lively, is probably Cope's *Study of a Girl's Head*, listed in the 1834 in the catalogue of his paintings (*Reminiscences ...*, p 375), which Cope gave to fellow artist and travelling companion, Arthur Glennie. It has the fluency of a sketch from life. Cope had a difficult

childhood; his elbow was broken by bullies at school, and he lost his father, an artist, in a stage coach accident - but he went on to have an illustrious academic career, painting royal portraits and murals for the House of Lords. After studying in Paris, in 1833/4 he travelled throughout Italy, venturing south where he painted this. Whilst staying at Salerno he visited the temples at Paestum, and wrote, 'Arrived late in the evening. Found out a fellow to take me to Paestum for two dollars (seven or eight carlines too much). Started at four next morning, and arrived at Paestum about ten, and was much pleased with the temples, especially that of Neptune'.





4 **Charles Sillem Lidderdale 1831-1895**

Study of an Irish Head

Oil on canvas; signed and dated 1866
13¾ x 11¾ inches

An attractive early picture by this artist, who was eventually blighted by his failing eyesight, so his later work falls away in quality. *The Globe* described this picture of a 'bright-eyed wild Irish girl, from the life, under broad daylight' when it was exhibited in the British Institution in 1866. Her doll-like features and enlarged eyes were a 'type' of natural beauty.

5 **19th Century British**

No Choice?

Oil on canvas
12 x 10½ inches

In this painting of about 1850 a distraught young woman with unkempt hair and a once clean dress has apparently reached the end of a hard road amongst the complex of arches by the river under the Adelphi buildings near St Martin-in-the-Fields in London. There is no idealism here; rather, Dickensian drama and social realism. Above the arches that supported their mansions dwelt the great and the good, but underneath lurked the homeless and the desperate. Balefully lit, this unfortunate girl holds her crucifix, a vestige of hope, as she seems to dissolve into the gloomy miasma of the Thames. This tragic theme was given romantic emphasis by the late poems of Thomas Hood concerning the London poor: *The Song of the Shirt* and *The Bridge of Sighs*.



6 Frederick Walker 1840-1875

The Love Token

Watercolour with bodycolour
14 x 10½ inches

Fred Walker's characteristic technique in watercolour was lush and saturated with bodycolour, warmly lit and suffused with mood. Ruskin described his figures as posed in 'galvanised-Elgin' attitudes, carefully set

in narrative scenes. In this typical picture of the 1860s, a girl is daydreaming between feminine pastimes, her novel and her piano. She has received a Valentine, and with a smile she looks distractedly at a painting reflected in the mirror of a wedding, the supposed goal of every conventional woman. Walker died at 35, unmarried, having lived with his mother most of his life.



7 John William North 1842-1924

Laundry Day, West Somerset

Watercolour with bodycolour; signed and dated 1875
25 x 35 inches

In 1863 North moved to West Somerset, where he lived and painted for the rest of his life. On occasion, his friend Fred Walker, who died in 1875, would help him with the figures in his more ambitious watercolours, and this is probably one of them. Thick with bodycolour, the figures

stand out against the watercolour landscape, in which North has employed every trick to render different effects of opacity, colour and texture. A woman brings laundry to others under an ancient tree, but, otherwise occupied with reading, embroidery and lady-like pastimes, they don't seem pleased at the prospect of hanging it out to dry.



8 George Winchester b.1814, fl.1853-1866

Waiting for the Artist

Oil on canvas; signed and dated 1859
16 x 12 inches

Records tell us that in 1859 the artist lived at Northfleet in Kent on the south bank of the Thames, from which address he exhibited this picture at the British Institution in 1860, but a wealth of detail in this intimate and personal picture give us more information. We know we are in the studio of the artist - one of the pictures in the portfolio is signed by him and dated 1859. From the high boots under the table and the fishing net on the back of the door, we can guess that he lived near water. A sketch of a boat spills from his portfolio. A glance at the mantelpiece tells us that the artist smoked and wrote letters. It is a small and modest room, doubling as his parlour. The furnishings suggest that he was middle class, and that it is a bachelor's room. Sitting in the centre of the room is a pretty girl; we are not shown a wedding ring and she has not tidied up the artist's things in a wifely way, but she is too well dressed to be a model. She has brought flowers, seemingly a visitor. She is *Waiting for the Artist*, the title of this painting.

The clock and the daylight tell us it is twenty past eleven in the morning. The *Evening Standard* lying with the carelessly dropped hat and coat had only been published since the 11th of June that very year (1859), in London. So, we may infer that having arrived back late the night before, he dumped his things on the floor, and has overslept this morning whilst the girl waits. The reason for this trip? He has had a painting rejected by the Royal Academy for the summer exhibition of 1859 - the rejection notice is under his palette, clearly legible - and he went immediately up to town by the new railway connection to London to submit the picture to the British Institution for their February show in the next year instead. Their notice is under his hat.

This thoroughly modern life story in a picture, so wittily told, evidently charmed the selection committee of the British Institution. But there is a romantic postscript - the *Kentish Gazette* announced George Winchester of Northfleet married to Elizabeth on the 24 April 1860. Is the girl in the painting Elizabeth, and did the painting play a role in the match?



9 Sir William Fettes Douglas 1822-1891

Maiden Meditation

Oil on canvas; signed and titled verso
7 x 8 inches

The phrase 'maiden meditation', taken from *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, was often used to describe girlish innocence. During Act II, scene 1 of the play, Oberon describes how Cupid's arrow failed to strike a 'fair vestal', who 'passed on, / in maiden meditation, fancy-free'. Although the arrow misses its target, it eventually pierces a 'little western flower, / Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound'. Here, a young woman with tousled hair holds a white flower - the chair's seductive shade of rich, ripe red highlights her purity. Douglas's manner of painting was similar to Landseer's, using warm colours mixed liquid and laid on with a broad brush.



10 Joseph Bouvier 1827-1912

Edward VI and Lady Jane Grey

Oil on board; signed and dated 1862, labelled
9 x 11 inches

A new edition of *The Scholemaster* by Roger Ascham, tutor to the Tudor Kings and Queens Edward VI, Mary I, and Elizabeth I, was brought out in 1863, the year this picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy, three hundred years after it was first published. Soon after the Protestant Lady Jane Grey was proclaimed queen in 1553, she was imprisoned in the Tower by supporters of her sister Mary, a Catholic, and was executed before she could be crowned. Known as the 'Nine Days' Queen', she was to some a victim of bloody Tudor politics, to others, a Protestant martyr, and to many since, a

Humanist one. When Ascham visited her he found her reading Plato's *Phaedo* whilst every one else was out hunting. He described her as one of the most learned women of her day: 'Before she was 12-years-old, she was mistress of 8 languages'. Here she is depicted with her cousin, Ascham's pupil, Edward VI, and from the way she is turning the pages of the book, it seems that she is teaching him. Joseph Bouvier was one of six children of the artist Jules Bouvier. All became painters, including at least two sisters.



11 Emily Hunt 1836-1922 with the assistance of William Holman Hunt

Jealous Jessie

Watercolour and bodycolour with scratching out; signed and dated, labelled
10 x 14 inches

This Pre-Raphaelite watercolour shows Thomas Combe's collie dog in Combe's garden in Oxford. Combe lived at North House in the quadrangle of the Clarendon Press, of which he was Superintendent. He was an important patron of the Pre-Raphaelites, and in particular of William Holman Hunt who loved him like a father. The title and the feather suggest that a violent peacock-related incident has just occurred.

In 1857 Emily moved in with her brother William Holman Hunt at 1 Tor Villa, Kensington, so that he could teach her to draw. Mentoring her

work took up a good deal of his time, and on 11 May 1862 he complained to Thomas Combe: 'When I get up from my own work to rest my eyes for a minute or two, I find my sister's work so backward that I have to labour at that till it's time to leave off'. At that date, *Jealous Jessie* was on view at the Royal Academy as entirely the work of Emily Hunt. However, as Judith Bronkhurst has suggested, the handling of the dog's face is much more detailed and assured than the rest of the sheet; the treatment of the eye and the way in which the shadows round it are delineated are entirely characteristic of William Holman Hunt's practice. He may also have suggested the unusual composition.





12 **After Edouard-Louis Dubufe 1820-1883**

Rosa Bonheur

Mezzotint by Samuel Cousins, RA (1801-1887), signed by sitter and engraver. Bears dedication to M. et Mme Lefèvre from Rosa Bonheur. Published in 1856 by Gambart & Co
17½ x 13 inches

The animal painter Rosa Bonheur was probably the most famous female artist of the nineteenth century. Born in Bordeaux, the oldest child in a family of artists, her mother taught her to read and write by asking her to choose and draw a different animal for each letter of the alphabet. She was hugely successful in Britain and France, partly thanks to the acumen of her dealer Gambart, who published best-selling engravings after paintings such as her enormous (8x16 feet) *The Horse Fair*. Unusually, she had a permit from the Paris police to wear men's clothing, which she found more practical for working with animals. She lived with her first partner, Nathalie Micas, for over 40 years, and after her death began a relationship with the American painter Anna Elizabeth Klumpke. This superb mezzotint was engraved by Samuel Cousins, the first engraver to be elected Royal Academician-Engraver. The dedicatee was the art dealer Léon Lefèvre, Gambart's nephew and heir to the dealership.

13 **Attributed to Thomas Heatherley 1824-1913**

Fairies on a Mushroom

Oil on board; wrongly ascribed to Maclise and inscribed 'Given to SC Hall, Publishers' verso
11 x 15½ inches

Variouly described by his students as resembling a 'medieval necromancer' or a 'creeping Jesus', Thomas Heatherley ran Heatherley's School of Fine Art, the first art school to admit women on equal terms with men (from the start in 1845, when it was called Leigh's). Heatherley was married to a freethinker, Kate, one of the first champions of Women's Suffrage and a fierce advocate of birth control: 'She achieved two children and then basically bugged off!' (Veronica Ricks, current Principal of Heatherley's). She later moved to the Seychelles, where she preached to the native women about birth control. When she returned to Britain she was disappointed not to be able to join the Suffragettes in their more violent demonstrations, and, dying in 1914, did not witness their ultimate triumph. This painting, of about 1860, is in Heatherley's highly distinctive manner, derived from Bosch and Brueghel. Each fairy is a 'type' of female beauty, from dark to fair complexion. It was once thought to be by Maclise, and appears to have belonged to SC Hall, the editor first of the *Art Union* until 1839, and thereafter of the *Art Journal*.





14 **Edith Martineau 1842-1909**

Helen Thornycroft

Watercolour and bodycolour; labelled
14 x 9¾ inches

Helen Thornycroft grew up in a family of sculptors (her mother too), and enrolled as a painter at the Academy schools in the wake of Martineau, who was six years her senior and one of the first women admitted there in 1862. Martineau exhibited a number of unidentified 'Heads' at the Dudley Gallery and at Suffolk Street in the 1860s and '70s, the first of which was at the Dudley in 1868 when Thornycroft would have been 26; it is possible that it was this painting. Thornycroft is dressed against the prevailing fashion in a daring mix of styles, Renaissance Revival and Aesthetic, her hair à la Grecque (a style she favoured after she was 'nearly scalped' as a girl when her hair was caught in the machinery of a steam engine built by her brother Isaac). Thornycroft set up her own studio in the 1880s, and became Vice-President of the Society of Women Artists from 1899 to 1909.

15 **Adelaide Claxton 1835-c.1905**

At the Theatre

Watercolour; signed and dated 1868
10 x 17 inches

Adelaide Claxton and her sister Florence were London watercolourists, nicely observant of social mores, with wit and bite. Taught initially by their father, the painter Marshall Claxton, they studied at Carey's art school (Carey was successor to Sass), and went on to collaborate and exhibit together. They frequently contributed illustrations to *The London Society Illustrated Times*; this one, by Adelaide, may have been for an article in an 1868 edition entitled *A Rehearsal at Her Majesty's Opera*, the year the watercolour is dated. One may imagine that it was considered too racy to publish - here, a fine gentleman spurns the flirtatious beauty at his side for the demure blonde, whose older companion slumbers at the back of the opera box. Adelaide married in 1874 and seems not to have exhibited after 1876.

16 John Atkinson Grimshaw 1836-1893

Brunetta

Oil on canvas; signed and dated '1882+', signed, titled and dated again verso

24½ x 19 inches

This painting is one of the first to feature the artist's model and muse, Agnes Leefe, who was an actress at the Leeds Grand Theatre. Grimshaw invited her to stay with his wife and family in their home, Knostrop Hall, in 1879. Although Grimshaw's grandson insisted that their 'association was only professional', the artist's daughter remembered that 'Poor Mama ... was deeply hurt ... Agnes Leefe remained, living in the studio, but having her dinner with us – between 4 o'clock and 5 – and sleeping upstairs in a front attic bedroom'.

Leefe has been variously described as 'model, studio assistant, governess', even 'lady's companion'. She was the sitter in many of Grimshaw's best figure subjects in his 'Aesthetic Movement' manner, similar to that of Alma Tadema and Tissot. Grimshaw's working method, in landscape and in figure painting, could be described as developing 'variations on a theme'; It was not a process of refinement, of sketches towards a finished

picture, but one of experimentation in different moods, with each successive version subtly different. Our painting is the prototype of four subsequent re-inventions. A year later, Grimshaw painted *Fiammetta*, a very similar composition of the same size (now in Bradford Art Galleries, Cartwright Hall). In the same year he painted another, smaller version that he called *Lauretta*, and in 1885 he exhibited a fourth version, *A Vestal*, the largest yet at 24 x 20", and his only picture to be shown at the Grosvenor Gallery.

'Fiammetta' is the name Boccaccio gave to Maria Aquino, the woman he loved but never married. He imagined her as cold as a marble statue, which no fire can ever warm. Agnes Leefe, then, is set as an object of unrequited love, before a marble frieze with classical figures and trailing ivy, with a garland of ivy in her curly dark hair. Ivy was sometimes used by artists to signify a woman's dependence on a man for support, as on a sturdy oak.





17 **Sir Edward John Poynter 1836-1919**

Reading and The Knot

A pair. Both oil over silver gilt on panel; monogrammed and dated 1871 and 1872.

Labelled by Agnew's with title, stock numbers 26334&5

8 x 8 inches

These and a third (called *The Sandal*, untraced), were painted between 1870 and 1872. The three panels, all the same size, were exhibited at the Dudley Gallery as a group entitled *Three Summer*

Days, set into a drawing room cabinet of carved walnut and pear wood, the upper portion surmounted by statuettes. The cabinet was commissioned by Cristobal de Murrieta and



designed by Edward Tarver for Gillow, the makers. Tarver was the architect of Wadhurst Hall in Sussex, the new house of the de Murrieta brothers, wealthy Spaniards who had made a fortune out of trading with Argentina. They lost their money in the 1890s when Argentina defaulted on bond payments. Wadhurst Hall was sold, and the panels appeared, out of the cabinet, in a sale in 1916. At some point they were lavishly framed by Agnew's in gilded tabernacle frames. The pictures, the same size and

shape as tiles, are painted on gilded wood panels, the gold adding an extraordinary lustre to the glazed colours that are laid on with varying thicknesses to generate effects of reflection, translucence and opacity. Poynter, the son of an architect, although eventually a grand painter of Neo-Classical subjects and President of the Royal Academy, was at the beginning of his career an accomplished decorative designer (perhaps his most famous project being the cafe at the V&A), who worked with William Burges.

18 Sir Edward Coley Burne-Jones 1833-1898

Maria Zambaco

Pencil; initialled and dated MDCCCLXXI [1871]

12¾ x 14½ inches

This drawing, described by Professor Martin Postle as 'among the finest of Mary Zambaco', is a smouldering psycho-sexual image of the Greek beauty who became Burne-Jones's lover. The febrile drawing of her filigree hair, the delicate shading of her skin, her languid and deliberately awkward posture and the compressed format are powerfully expressive of his obsession with her. A deliberate imbalance provokes an urge to turn it through 90 degrees to stop her falling out of the picture, unsettling the viewer, just as the artist was unsettled by Maria.

Maria Zambaco and her cousins Marie Spartali and Aglaia Coronio - all daughters of wealthy expatriate Greeks - were nicknamed 'The Three Graces' in London, where they were famed for their looks, wealth, independence of mind and intelligence. Maria, uninhibited and estranged from her husband (a slightly disreputable doctor) was, as Fiona MacCarthy puts it, 'a striking figure with "almost phosphorescent" white skin and comelike glorious red hair'. She was an aspiring artist, trained at the Slade - Burne-Jones gave her lessons in his studio and she sat to him for Cupid in 1866, when her mother commissioned *Cupid and Psyche*. He had 'dispensed with most other models now, in

favour of Maria Zambaco's delicate, distinctly Grecian features, her large expressive eyes, well-sculpted nose and neatly pointed chin'. Burne-Jones cast her in many of his paintings: *Pygmalion and the Image* (1875-8), as the statue created to be worshipped by the artist; as his enchantress in *The Wine of Circe* (1870); his goddess in *Venus Concordia* and *Venus Discordia* (1870-3); and his temptress in *The Beguiling of Merlin* (1872-7), the pursuit of the ancient magician by the sexually predatory Nimue. Their tumultuous affair was doomed, for, despite Maria's threats of suicide in 1869, Burne-Jones would not leave his wife for her.

There was a public scandal in 1870, when Burne-Jones's watercolour *Phyllis and Demophoon* was exhibited at the Old Watercolour Society's annual exhibition. Both figures, lovers from Ovid's *Heroides*, were uncompromisingly naked and the woman's features were unmistakably Maria's. After two weeks of complaints, Burne-Jones removed the picture. Burne-Jones never completely deserted her, perhaps visiting her in Paris and writing to her, and she reportedly rented a studio next to his in the 1880s. Her face continued to haunt his paintings long after their affair had ended.







19 **Edith Martineau 1842-1909**

Touching the Strings

Pencil, watercolour, bodycolour and gum arabic with scratching out; signed and dated 1886
17½ x 16½ inches

This Aesthetic Movement watercolour, in a carved period frame, revels in texture, from sumptuous red velvet, to smooth, cool marble.

20 **Frances ('Fanny') Mary Minns 1847-1929**

An Autumn Hedgerow near Carisbrook

Oil on paper
11 x 15 inches

Fanny Minns was a flower painter of independent means who studied art in Dresden, illustrated books and painted pottery. She lived in Carisbrook on the Isle of Wight (the castle can be seen across the fields in the painting). Old man's beard, berries, and dog roses proliferate.

21 Sir Hubert von Herkomer 1849-1914

Hagar

Watercolour and bodycolour; initialled and dated 1892
22¼ x 30¼ inches

Herkomer set the scene on a dry, dusty road in late summer. The colouring is deliberately brown and sombre. The leaves are turning; autumn is round the corner, and possibly a hard winter. The mother and child have walked a long way, carrying very few belongings. Exhausted, the child has given up on an uphill stretch of road. The mother looks ahead resolutely - she will not turn back. Their situation appears desperate - only the determination of the mother offers hope. Herkomer had a social conscience and never forgot his own childhood: 'We had an anxious time of it when I was a boy. We were constantly in want of money'. Early in his career in England he produced illustrations for *The Graphic* magazine, which often carried poignant images of the poor and of outcasts.

At the Royal Watercolour Society, where it was shown in 1893, this picture would have been understood on more than one level. First, it was clear from the title that it is a reworking of the story in Genesis. Abraham's wife Sarah appeared to be barren, so she offered him her slave Hagar to bed, and Hagar then conceived a son, Ishmael. When Ishmael had grown to boyhood, Sarah at last conceived her own son to Abraham - this was Isaac, who became Abraham's heir. The disinherited Ishmael mocked his half-brother, so Isaac's furious mother forced Abraham to cast Hagar and Ishmael out. Ishmael is today remembered as the father of the Arab race, and Isaac the father of the Jews, with this event in their childhood as the start of all the trouble between them (the Koran has Ishmael as the rightful heir to Abraham, not Isaac).

The painting would also have been understood as a hard-hitting comment on the morals of a society that could allow a mother and a young boy to be thrown out, perhaps because the husband had found a younger, prettier wife, or perhaps because the child was illegitimate - or, just as likely in 1892, because the husband was dying, falling ill or losing his job. In the 1890s Britain's rural communities were badly hit by the dramatic fall in the grain price, caused by a flood of cheap imported grain from America, and a series of bad harvests. Itinerant farm-workers looking for employment, sometimes accompanied by their families, became a common sight on the roads of Britain, and around Bushey in Hertfordshire where Herkomer lived. He painted his first 'social realist' picture in 1885, his

famous *Hard Times*, a similar subject in which a poor labourer rests as his wife sits exhausted by the side of the road with one son on her lap and the other resting on her. The wife in that picture, the same model as for Hagar in this, was Annie Quarry, a labourer's wife who had two sons, the younger of which would have been of the right age for the boy in our picture. In *Hard Times*, the wife is a figure of dejection and exhaustion, but in this picture, Hagar is cast as a pillar of strength and defiance.

The presumably male, and slightly disconcerted, critic of *The Era* reviewed the picture: 'She is a poor woman - a woman of strong and passionate nature, who has been driven from her lonely home by some domestic tyrant, who has possibly found a more attractive mate. The Hagar of this picture is weary and footsore, but still defiant. The tired boy at her side, who has tramped with her in search of "fresh fields and pastures new", knows little of her mental trouble. Clutching the skirts of her ragged dress, he sinks upon the bank besides his desolate mother, and falls peacefully asleep. But there is no sleep for her. She looks fiercely ahead as if thinking of some possible refuge - some friends of the past miles away, where she may find help in sympathy. But in her heart, as in her face, there lives the sense of man's injustice and treachery. The traces of beauty, of a bold and scornful type, are still to be seen on the features but the prevailing expression is one of deep hatred. If this woman had the opportunity she would wreak her vengeance on those who have turned her adrift upon the world'.

The presumably female author of 'Our Ladies' Column' in the *Leicester Chronicle* felt Hagar's sorrow, but did not notice any vengefulness: 'As I looked at this picture I felt that the artist, when he painted it, had more in his mind than a mere conception of the biblical Hagar and Ishmael, and that these figures do but represent many an outcast of more recent times, whose sad stories this reminder of the sorrows of the original Hagar must recall to all our thoughts'.

After it was exhibited in London, this picture was shown at the first International Art Exhibition of the Munich Secession (the first in a series of 'Secessions' by modern artists from traditional art societies in Germany and Austria). Herkomer was born in Bavaria, and kept a residence there (in Landsberg am Lech, now a Herkomer Museum).





22 **Frank Miles 1852-1891**

Brown Study

Oil on canvas; signed twice verso, on canvas and stretcher
20 x 24 inches

After exhibiting his first picture at the Royal Academy in 1874, Frank Miles established himself as one of London's most fashionable portraitists. His Chelsea home became 'the haunt of Society', frequented by Oscar Wilde and the Prince of Wales, along with scores of society girls and actresses; his portraits of Ellen Terry and Lillie Langtry were much admired and widely reproduced.

The sitter here is the self-taught photographer Eveleen Myers (née Tennant), sister of the painter

Dorothy Tennant and wife of the poet, classicist and founder of The Society for Psychical Research, Fred Myers. There is a drawing of her by Miles done in 1876 in the National Portrait Gallery, where there are two albums of her photographs. She also sat for Millais in 1874, and for George Frederic Watts in 1876 and 1880.



23 Louise Jopling 1843-1933

A Portrait Sketch

Oil on canvas; signed and labelled: 'Portrait sketch [a 3 hours study] by Louise Jopling'
20 x 15¾ inches

Louise Jopling's portraits commanded prices that few, if any, other British female artists achieved. Leighton, Burne-Jones and Tissot were her friends, as were Whistler and Millais, both of whom painted her portrait. She was known for her quick sketches from single sittings, which she painted throughout her career; a review in *The Graphic* of the 1886 Society of Lady Artists (founded as The Society of Female Artists in 1857, becoming 'Lady' in 1869 and 'Women' in 1890) exhibition mentions a 'female head of great beauty' that was 'painted in one sitting by Mrs. Louise Jopling'. It is possible that the sitter

here was one of Jopling's students - or possibly her niece, the daughter of her sister Marie Cockell.

Born Louise Goode, she exhibited under her married names; as Mrs Romer, she had accompanied her husband to Paris when he was appointed private secretary to Baron Rothschild in 1865. The Baroness discovered her talent and advised her to take lessons with M. Chaplin. The year after her husband's death in 1873 she married another artist to become Mrs Jopling. In this marriage she was the primary earner, which she found a heavy responsibility, necessitating constant production, regular sales and a continual search for commissions and clients. In 1879, despite her own illness and that of her son Percy, she produced eighteen pictures.

In 1887 after the death of her second husband she became Mrs Rowe, but continued to exhibit as Mrs Jopling, the name under which she had achieved recognition. In 1901 she became the first woman to be elected to the Royal Society of British Artists.





24 **Evelyn de Morgan (née Pickering) 1855-1919**

Head of a Girl

Coloured chalks on buff paper
11½ x 8 inches

On the morning of her seventeenth birthday, Evelyn Pickering recorded in her diary that: 'Art is eternal, but life is short ... I will make up for it now, I have not a moment to lose'. She studied at the Slade and, a precocious draughtsman, won several awards and a scholarship (which she declined, because it required drawing in charcoal, which did not suit her precise, hard-edged drawing style). Her uncle, the painter John Rodham Spencer-Stanhope, who lived in Florence from 1880, encouraged her to travel and study in Italy. A wealthy and well-born woman, she married the impoverished ceramicist William de Morgan in 1887. The model here, Ethel Pickering, was Evelyn de Morgan's sister-in-law, married to her brother Percival. Little is known of Ethel, save for family notes, which describe her as fiercely independent; she amassed considerable wealth, and apparently built herself a large house in the Scottish borders.

25 **Maud Naftel 1856-1890**

When Hops are Housed and Gardens Bare

Watercolour and bodycolour; signed and dated 1888
23¼ x 35½ inches

Maud Naftel came from a well-known family of artists, the daughter of Paul Naftel and his wife Isabel (née Oakley, herself a painter in watercolours and the daughter of another, Octavius Oakley). She studied at the Slade, the first British art school to allow women to study art on equal terms with men by permitting them to sketch live models, and in Paris with the support of her family. She exhibited extensively, and wrote a book, *Flowers and How to Paint Them*, published posthumously in 1891.

The scene has been identified as Rectory Park, Horsmonden, in Kent. The picture was reviewed by *The Star* in 1889 when it was exhibited at the Royal Society of Painters in Water-colours: 'a good example of her style - a graceful, vigorous style, which, free from the restraints of a rigid realism, yet wins admiration by its manifest sincerity of purpose and its sympathetic fidelity to nature'.

26 Charles Edward Halle 1846-1914

Mrs Patrick Campbell as The Second Mrs. Tanqueray

Oil on canvas; signed
23½ x 19½ inches

The famous actress Mrs Patrick Campbell, born Beatrice Tanner, studied music at the Guildhall. In 1884, when she was nineteen, she eloped to marry Patrick Campbell, who was killed in the Boer War sixteen years later.

In October 1888 she went on the stage, and in 1893 appeared in Buchanan's *The Black Domino* - but shortly after it opened she received a fortnight's notice from the impresarios, the Gatti Brothers, on the grounds that her voice and gestures were ineffective and that nothing 'got over the footlights'. However, she had been spotted for the lead in a new drama, Pinero's *The Second Mrs. Tanqueray*, at St James's Theatre (where this painting hung), and this 'fragile creature of Italian origin', as Pinero called her, had her chance. From the moment that she stepped onto the stage on the opening night of 27 May 1893, her success was assured, for, with her part-Italian beauty and her rich, expressive voice, she had a unique gift of portraying passionate and complex women; 'the flash and gloom, the swirl and the eddy, of a soul torn by supposed intellectual emotion', as Edmund Gosse put it.

Mrs Campbell's last great role was as Eliza Doolittle, the flower-girl Galatea of her friend George Bernard Shaw's *Pygmalion*. She inspired admiration and loyalty; Shaw wrote to her 'I want my dark lady. I want my angel. I want my tempter, I want my Freia with her apples. I want the lighter of my seven lamps of beauty, honour, laughter, music, love, life and immortality. I want my inspiration, my folly, my happiness, my divinity, my madness, my selfishness, my final sanity and sanctification, my transfiguration, my purification, my light across the sea, my palm across the desert, my garden of lovely flowers, my million nameless joys, my day's wage, my night's dream, my darling and my star'. Off the stage she was tempestuous and tactless, but good-hearted; upon it she was an actress in the grand manner. One of her more famous sayings was after her second marriage: 'I commend the deep, deep peace of the double bed after the hurly-burly of the chaise longue'.





27 **Mary E Williams b. 1838**

Flowers

Three oils on canvas; one labelled 'Mrs. Williams, Bedford Park, Chiswick'

15½ x 27½ inches each

Mary Williams, a decorative artist who painted on various supports from china to firescreens, exhibited at the Society of Women Artists. She also embroidered, made prints, and in 1905 published a collection of 'appropriate thoughts from well-known writers... printed in red and black, and artistically tied at the top with a ribbon' (review, *Light of Reason*) entitled *The New Thought Meditations*. In 1903 she was Honorary Secretary of the Dress Designers' Society, whose president was Walter Crane (honorary members, amongst others, included the sculptor George Meredith

Frampton). A spinster, she lived in Bedford Park, Chiswick, in the 1880s, known as 'the world's first garden suburb', developed by Jonathan Carr to designs by Godwin. It was the place for people of 'artistic sensibility' to live – WB Yeats, the actor William Terriss, the actress Florence Farr, the playwright Arthur Wing Pinero and the painter Camille Pissarro lived there. Bedford Park is 'Saffron Park' in GK Chesterton's *The Man Who Was Thursday* and 'Biggleswick' in John Buchan's *Mr. Standfast*.





28 Sir James Dromgole Linton 1840-1916

Agnes Ashbee

Watercolour and bodycolour; monogrammed and dated '90
19¼ x 14½ inches

Agnes Ashbee was one of three sisters of CR Ashbee, designer and a pivotal figure of the Arts and Crafts movement. She was 21 when this was painted; she remained unmarried, like her sister Elsa, because - as suggested by CR Ashbee's wife, Janet - 'she was too well educated'. She was a 'good watercolourist'

and in this portrait she holds a sheet of music; all of the Ashbees played various instruments and sang. The critic of the *Manchester Guardian* wrote about this picture when it was exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-colour in 1891: 'A singularly subtle colour scheme is that shown in the "Miss Ashbee". Here varying shades of rich brown in the lady's costume and hat are, with a daring crowned by complete success, illumined with a note of slate colour and of positive blue in the bunch of corn-flowers worn in the bodice'. The connection between artist and sitter may have been the Art Workers Guild, of which Linton and CR Ashbee were both Brothers.



29 **Anthony Augustus Frederick Sandys 1829-1904**

Marie Meredith

Coloured chalks; signed and titled
17 x 13 inches

In this lucent example of Sandys's fine technique in coloured chalks, he has drawn the daughter of his friend the novelist George Meredith, (who sat for Henry Wallis's *Death of Chatterton*). This drawing was done in 1893, when Marie was 23, and just married. Sandys was fond of her and called her by

the affectionate names of 'Marietta' or 'Riette', while her father called her 'Dearie'. In December 1894 Meredith wrote to Sandys 'I have bidden the Dearie march to the finish of her portrait, and she has vowed over again that she wished to and would. Your call will compel her. She has had visitings and receivings to do since her marriage'.



30 **George William Smetham-Jones**
1864-1905

Portia

Watercolour; signed and dated 1893
38¼ x 25 inches

This is Portia in *The Merchant of Venice*, disguised as a male lawyer in order to plead for the life of her beloved Bassanio, who is indebted to Shylock for a pound of flesh against a loan. Bassanio defaults, and Shylock insists on his revenge - but when Portia tries and fails to appeal to Shylock's humanity, she defeats him in court with a legal loophole: if Shylock sheds blood in getting his pound of flesh, he will have broken the terms of the bond. Portia is often depicted as fair and passive; instead, here we have a dark, dynamic, and powerful Portia, one of literature's older and most famous female role models.

When it was exhibited at the Royal Institute of Painters in Water-colours in 1893, the critic of *The Era* wrote 'an agreeable figure of the lady whose knowledge of the law was so happily employed to defeat the savage revenge of Shylock ... The members of the court are lightly sketched, the figure of Portia being the prominent feature of the work'.



31 **British, c. 1900**

The Narcissus

Oil on canvas; monogrammed
18 x 14 inches

The distinctive Arts and Crafts brooch in this interesting painting is in the manner of the artist/designers Arthur and Georgie Gaskin or Jessie Marion King. The sitter is equally distinctive, but the painter is amateur and we have been unable to put a name to him or her.





32 **Winifred Sandys 1875-1944**

Gertrude 'Girlie' Sandys, the Artist's Sister

Pastel; initialled
19¾ x 14¼ inches

Winifred Sandys was the eldest of the painter Frederick Sandys's seven daughters and three sons. Taught by their father, all of the children became artists to some degree, but Winifred was the most successful, exhibiting work in pastels and watercolours and excelling at miniature painting. It was Winifred who supported the family

33 **Winifred Sandys 1875-1944**

Dianeme

Pastel; signed and titled
12½ x 9 inches

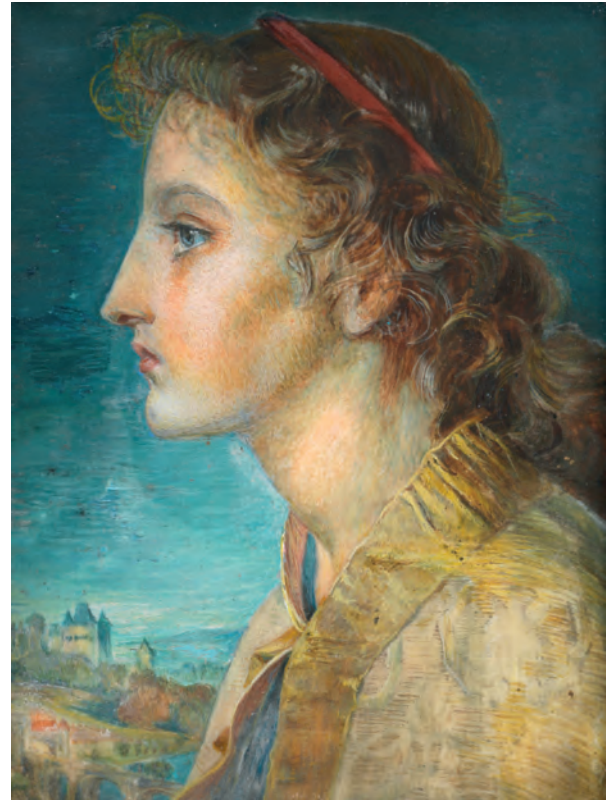
through the sale of her pictures after their father died in 1904. After Winifred's sister Gertrude (known as 'Girlie', the sitter in this picture and the next three) died in 1920, Winifred married Girlie's widower, Lionel Crane, the son of the artist Walter Crane. Dianeme is the subject of a poem by Robert Herrick.



34 **Winifred Sandys 1875-1944**

Gertrude 'Girlie' Sandys, the Artist's Sister, in Fancy Dress

Pastel; signed and dated 1911
19¼ x 9½ inches



35 **Winifred Sandys 1875-1944**
after Frederick Sandys

Oriana

Watercolour and bodycolour on card
4¾ x 3½ inches

This is a copy in miniature of Winifred's father Frederick Sandys's painting *Oriana* of 1861, in the Tate. The subject is from Tennyson.

36 **Winifred Sandys 1875-1944**

Gertrude 'Girlie' Sandys, the Artist's Sister

Pastel; initialled
23 x 17 inches





37 **Philip Wilson Steer 1860-1942**

The Domino

Oil on canvas; signed and dated 1904
31 x 23 inches

Steer's title is from *The Black Domino* (a popular play at London's Adelphi Theatre), the plot of which hinges around the heroine's use of a cloak, or 'domino', to disguise her identity at a masquerade. She holds a mask in her hand.

Another version of the subject – larger, and less immediate, was exhibited at the New English Art Club in 1904 as *The Black Domino*. The model for both versions, and several other pictures by Steer of about this time, has been identified as Theodora Bennett, who was born in 1879 and lived near Steer's house and studio in Cheyne Walk. Steer had studied in Paris in the early eighties, and became a founder member of the New English Art Club, 'grafting French Impressionism on English stock' (Tate).



38 Sir Gerald Kelly 1879-1972

Mademoiselle

Oil on canvas; signed
27¼ x 22½ inches

This informal sketch, on a continental stretcher, is an early work probably painted in Paris when Kelly was studying there in the early 1900s. In 1903/4 he exhibited a number of paintings of women at the Salon, with titles such as *Petit*

Portrait, La Rose, Celeste, Velours Noir, and Brownie. The young artist's style was emerging from the gloomy (in Kelly's case) influence of Whistler and he was painting more freely at last. As to the sitter, it is possible that it is Kelly's dancer girlfriend in Paris, whose name we do not know, but whose spurning of Kelly led him to leave Paris for Burma in 1908 with £50 lent to him by his friend the novelist Somerset Maugham.



39 **Nico Jungman 1872-1935**

Stefi Geyer

Watercolour; signed and inscribed with title, and 'London'
17¼ x 11 inches

Stefi Geyer (1888-1956) was a celebrated and precociously talented Hungarian violinist, here painted in about 1904, when she played before the King at St James's Hall in London at the age of fifteen. She was adored by the composer Béla Bartók, who composed his violin concerto for her three years later. That piece is also about her; the first movement is gentle, poised and quiet, much as he described her in his letters, and is marked *andante sostenuto* (slow and sustained). Bartók

wrote to her that the second movement, marked *allegro giocoso* (fast and playful), depicted her 'cheerful, witty, and amusing' qualities. Both portraits were projections, and she could not reciprocate his feelings. She rejected him, and his concerto, but she kept a copy of the score in a locked drawer. After their deaths, it was revived by David Oistrakh. Jungman was a naturalised Englishman, but returned to Holland frequently and painted Dutch subjects for exhibition in London. He also illustrated books.



40 **Harold Knight 1874-1961**

Laura

Oil on canvas
24¼ x 20¼ inches

Harold and Laura Knight were the golden couple amongst the artists' community in Newlyn at the beginning of the twentieth century. They had met as students at the Nottingham School of Art in about 1890, when he was 17 and she was 15. Towards the end of her life, Laura remembered their reunion in 1896 after his return from Paris, and his painting of her: 'Only a few moments passed, however, before the bond between us that had been in existence since we first met made itself known - perhaps showing greater strength than ever before. In imagination I lived through his

experience; hand in hand we walked through the galleries; eye to eye saw the great masterpieces; I learnt of aesthetic and technical developments hitherto undreamt of. With my hair done in a new French style that Harold fancied, I posed for a portrait of head and shoulders ... I often wonder if that fine and rather mysterious work still exists'. This memoir, written at least fifty years later, suggests a date of 1896/7 for this haunting early portrait, but the picture was first exhibited in 1905 (in Dublin), suggesting a later date. The colour and lighting derive from the Hague School, particularly the Dutch painter Jozef Israëls, who held dominant influence over the Staithe community of artists amongst whom the Knights lived from 1898 to 1907. However, the Knights probably did not encounter much of Israëls's work at first hand until they honeymooned at Laren, a village by the Zuiderzee in Holland, where there was an art colony founded by him and Anton Mauve. The canvas is on a continental stretcher.



41 **Charles Conder 1868-1909**

The Red and White Hat

Oil on card
18 x 22¾ inches

Conder, as an impecunious student, contracted syphilis in his native Australia paying his landlady his rent in bed. In 1890s Paris he knew Toulouse-Lautrec, Beardsley and Wilde, and spent summers painting in Dieppe, often with his friend Jacques-Emile Blanche. This painting, probably set in a brothel in about 1900, may have been exhibited in 1930 in a joint posthumous exhibition with Ambrose McEvoy at the Beaux Arts Gallery. A reviewer of the exhibition wrote in *Art News and Notes*: 'Charles Conder was one of the shining lights of the nineties. His subtle delicate sense of colour, his dream-like imaginativeness made his contemporaries forget his fundamental weakness, his amateurishness. There is nothing in this exhibition to show that his contemporaries had a better judgement than one ripened by the experience of post-impressionism. He remains still a charming colourist'.

42 **Cecil J. Webb, dates unknown**

Breton Confidantes

Tempera on panel; labelled with artist's name
24 x 18 inches

This painting was shown at the first exhibition of the Allied Artists' Association (AAA) at the Albert Hall in 1908. Set up by the critic Frank Rutter, the aim of the AAA was to provide a British platform for the display of modern artistic trends akin to that established by the Salon d'Automne and the Salon des Indépendants in Paris, with no selection jury. Billed as the 'London Salon', there was a limit of five works per artist, and there were some 4,000 entries, mostly British. Webb used all of his quota, showing five tempera panels of the same size of Breton folk, which were well reviewed by *The Yorkshire Post and Leeds Intelligencer*: 'A very effective method is adopted by Mr. Cecil J. Webb in his 'Breton Fisherman' and four other pictures. The initial drawing is left to play the most important part, but is eked out with transparent glazes that give a fine feeling of colour'.





43 **Dod Procter 1892-1972**

Burmese Girl

Oil on card; inscribed verso with artist's name
15 x 12½ inches

Dod Procter, née Shaw, was a pupil at the Forbes's school in Newlyn, where she met the slightly older Laura and Harold Knight. She also met her future husband, Ernest. The Procters became the next 'golden couple' of the school. They travelled to Rangoon in 1919, having been commissioned by a wealthy Chinese businessman to decorate the Kokine Palace. After finishing the project, they travelled inland to Mandalay before returning by riverboat along the Irrawaddy. Burma at that time remained an isolated country, where most women and children still wore vibrantly coloured local costumes, described by colonial administrator Sir George Scott as 'reminiscent of wind-stirred tulip beds or a stir-about of rainbows'. In the 1920s, Dod Procter's increasingly sensual female nudes were considered too risqué for exhibition, and her *Virginal* was rejected by the RA in 1929 in widely reported controversy, but in 1942 she became only the second woman (after Laura Knight) to be made Royal Academician since 1768.



44 **Emmy Haskell, née Mestritz 1882-1959**

Princess Serafina Astafieva

Bronze bust circa 1927; Monogrammed EH and marked by the foundry 'F Barbedienne, Paris'
7 x 3 inches

Princess Serafina, who posed Nefertiti-like for this little bronze of 1927, was a Russian dancer. In 1916 she opened a dance school at the Pheasantry in Chelsea which established a direct link between the Diaghilev ballet and British dancers in the early 20th century. One of her pupils was the young Dame Alicia Markova, who went on to join the Ballets Russes in 1924 and had her lessons sponsored by Emmy Haskell and her son Arnold (who married Markova's younger sister Vivienne), author of *Balletomania*.



45 **Dorothy Webster Hawksley 1884-1970**

Artemis

Watercolour and bodycolour on silk, heightened with gold; signed
7½ x 6¾ inches

Hawksley was born in London, the daughter of an instrument maker and grand-daughter (on her mother's side) of a marine artist. She studied at the RA Schools (where she was a Landseer scholar and a life painting medallist) and then taught for two years at the Women's Department of King's College, London, in Kensington, where Byam Shaw was also on the staff. She exhibited at the Royal Academy from 1904 to 1964 and at the



46 **Dorothy Webster Hawksley 1884-1970**

Odalisque Feeding a Fawn

Watercolour and bodycolour on silk, heightened with gold; signed
7½ x 8½ inches

Paris Salon, and was a member of the Society of Mural Decorators and the Society of Painters in Tempera. In the 1920s she evolved a schematic style in watercolour that is highly personal though strongly influenced by Japanese prints and owing much to the early Italian masters and the example of Cayley Robinson.

47 **Dorothy Webster Hawksley 1884-1970**

Peace

Watercolour and bodycolour; signed
40 x 29 inches

This picture, laden with symbolism about peace in the aftermath of the Great War, was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1919. The father of the child in the painting is absent, perhaps killed. The red of the mother's dress may refer to the blood spilt. The mother and child sit at a spring, as if life is rising again above the barren landscape beyond, while the kingfisher nearby, also known as a halcyon, is an ancient symbol of peace. The full moon, long associated with feminine cycle, suggests fertility - the future is quite definitely female in this painting.





48 Madeline Green 1884-1947

The Step-Dancer

Oil on canvas; signed, inscribed verso
36 x 23 3/4 inches

Madeline Green lived and painted for most of her life in Ealing, West London, where she had a studio first in, then near, her parents' house. She won a scholarship to the RA Schools, which she attended from 1906. She quickly found her unique style and went on to exhibit regularly at the Royal Academy, the Glasgow Institute and, unusually for a British artist, the Paris Salon. In 1925, the magazine *Le Petit Parisien* described one of her pictures: 'l'étrange intérieur exsangue de Madeline Green' (strange pale interior). The famous art dealer Joseph Duveen gave her publicity by buying her picture *The Future* in 1927 and giving it to Manchester Art Gallery. Green wrote that it was 'done in body colour underneath, and glazed with pure colour and oil ... I always paint in this way - and although it takes a time, I don't think the same effect can be obtained otherwise'.

Green was a loner, not belonging to any group or school. From her isolated world in Ealing, where she lived unmarried for most of her working life, she projected herself through her pictures, role-playing variously as a mother and a wife, as a costermonger, as a dancer, as sinner and saint - or simply in a variety of different costumes and hats, open-mouthed and staring directly out of her pictures.

With Britain still at war, military subjects and portraiture dominated the RA in 1918. Amongst them was shown Green's self portrait as a step dancer, which, by contrast, was 'an image of optimism' according to Nina Edwards, who recently illustrated it in her fashion history *Dressed for War*, describing the 'striped green silk taffeta iridescent harem trousers ... [and] a white blouse rather low-necked and feminine, in soft Pierrot-like folds'. In 1918, trousers on women, especially stylish pantaloons like these, were considered daring, enough at least for this painting to be satirised by *Punch* in a cartoon that year. When it was exhibited at the Society of Women Artists in 1919, the critic of *The Observer* wrote 'Taste and refinement mark Miss Madeline Green's *The Step Dancer*. It is well spaced, and painted in muted tones, as of tarnished silver'.



49 Madeline Green 1884-1947

Miss Brown

Oil on canvas; initialled and labelled extensively
18 x 10 1/4 inches

Here Green has punned on her name, presenting herself as humble 'Miss Brown', in costermonger's clothes.



50 **Madeline Green 1884-1947**

The Girls

Oil on canvas; signed and labelled
16½ x 21¼ inches

Green often painted herself twice, even thrice, in front of her big studio window, in conversation pieces. Her other selves suggest introspective psychological dialogue, but defy obvious meaning. In this fine example, the space between her and her doppelgänger is bridged by a single arm, but the figures remain distinct. One flirtatiously tries on a blue hat, but is otherwise dressed in virginal white; the other displays a wedding ring and a daring red scarf.



51 & 52 **Madeline Green 1884-1947**

Studio Nudes in Green and Red

Both oil on canvas
35¾ x 20 inches

These are early student works from
the life class.

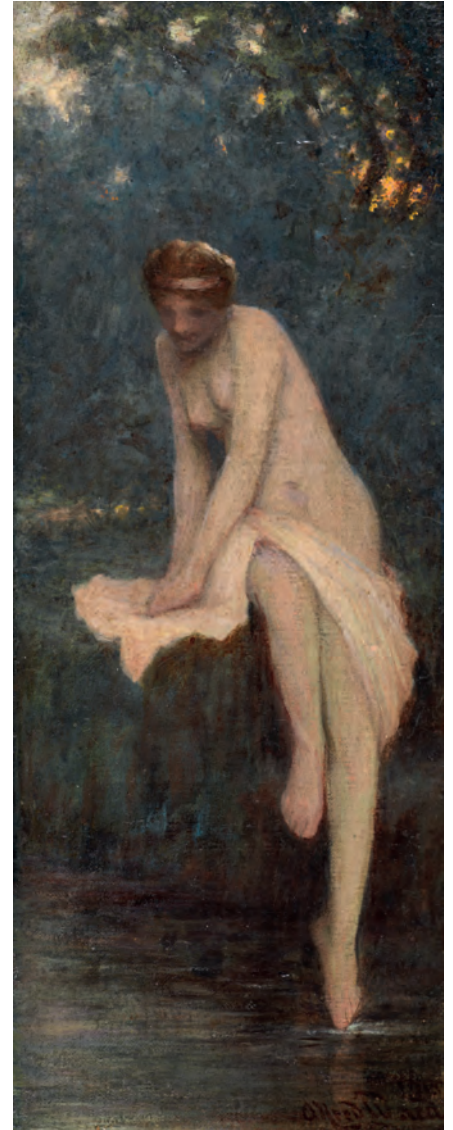
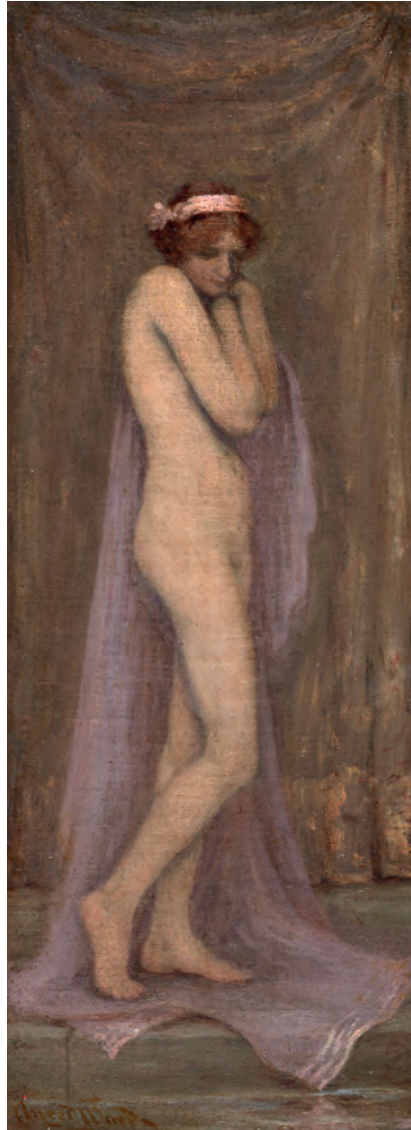


53 **Arthur Ambrose McEvoy**
1877-1927

The Governess

Oil on canvas; signed
36 x 28 inches

McEvoy was a society portraitist in a new manner, fast and impressionistic. He studied at the Slade with John and Orpen, and learnt from both Whistler and Sickert. Claude Johnson, whose wife 'Wigs' was his patroness and the subject of this lively painting, was popularly described as 'the hyphen in Rolls-Royce', because as the Commercial Managing Director he was central to the success of the firm. McEvoy, who was a friend of the Johnsons and designed early advertisements for Rolls-Royce, painted their portraits in 1916 and 1917, and the couple owned several other pictures by him. Wigs Johnson sat for him many times, and was the model for the Tate's 1928 painting.



54 **Alfred Ward fl. 1873-1929**

Nudes

A pair. Both oil on canvas; signed
10 x 4 inches

When Ward had an exhibition at the end of his career at the Arlington Gallery in Bond Street in 1929, the *Belfast News Letter* wrote that he 'began his artistic career as an ardent supporter of the pre-Raphaelite movement'. His later work is more in the French manner, gauzy and muted. His *Psyche* of 1883 attracted this comment in the *Bristol Mercury*: The 'drooping form and gracefully posted head of the sleeper, the soft, delicate flesh tints, and the skilfully painted white drapery bespeak the chastened powers of the artist'.



55 Charles Sims 1873-1928

Vivienne

Tempera on paper; signed
14 x 20½ inches

Sims lost his oldest son in the First World War. This tragedy and his traumatic experiences as a War Artist began to un hinge his fragile mind. Despite phenomenal success (his portrait *Countess Rocksavage and her Son*, exhibited at the RA at the same time as Sargent's, was voted Picture of the Year in 1923, eclipsing the more famous artist), his paintings became increasingly mystical and experimental as mania overtook him, until his suicide in 1928. Sims met Vivienne Jeudwine, the sitter here, in 1920, and made several studies of her and her son, who was probably the artist's illegitimate offspring. Our picture, which may date to the early 20s, is so sensual that it used to be titled *The Artist's Wife*, which Vivienne never was; indeed, her marriage to another man in 1928 contributed to his decline. Sims was Keeper of the RA Schools in the 1920s, and an influential and popular book, *Picture Making*, mainly consisting of notes from his technical studio diary, was published posthumously in 1934. In it he described his experiments with tempera, 'brush mark by brush mark ... For broken colour, the tempera may be used like pastel, taking very little colour into a stiff brush and scrubbing it on. I prefer to cover the canvas as little as possible, treating the picture rather as a coloured drawing'.

56 Averil Mary Burleigh 1883-1949

The Dancer

Watercolour with pencil; signed and dated 1925
22 x 14½ inches

Burleigh held a one-woman exhibition of watercolours at the Fine Art Society in 1925, which featured pictures of her daughter Veronica modelling exotic dances against fanciful backdrops of the medieval town of Falaise in Calvados. This one is likely to have been no 6, *The Dancer*. The exhibition was reviewed by *The Sphere*: 'The subject matter of her recent work has largely turned towards catching the rhythmic action of certain dances, her medium being water-colour, handled with a colourful, vigorous technique'.







57 **Alfreda Gertrude Beaumont 1891-1987**

The Wild Swans

Tempera on linen; signed and dated 1934
Round, 32 inches across

The story is from Hans Christian Andersen's fairy tale *Wild Swans*, in which Princess Elisa's eleven brothers are transformed into swans by their step-mother's curse, only able to become human again at night. Elisa, banished from the palace, arrives at the shore where eleven swans fly in a line towards her. They land as the sun sets, transforming back into princes, and the siblings are reunited. The picture was praised by the *Gloucester Citizen* when it was exhibited at the RA in 1934: 'A most graceful tempera study of "The Wild Swans", which is a delightful symphony of white, gold and blue'. Beaumont was the niece of the painter Frederick Beaumont, and her sister was also a painter.

58 **Dame Laura Knight 1877-1970**

The Patient

Watercolour and charcoal; signed
13½ x 9¼ inches

Knight, famous for her impressionist paintings, was a superb draughtswoman and portraitist. In 1936 she became the first female artist to be elected RA since its foundation in 1768. She was particularly interested in painting people on the margins of society (for example, gypsies and circus performers), and in 1927 she and her husband visited the Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland, at the invitation of her friend Dr William Baer, where she painted studies of some of the African-American children who were his patients. In a 1927 interview with *The New York Times*, she said: 'To the artist there is a whole world of beauty which ought to be explored in negro life in America'.



59 **Robert Duckworth Greenham 1906-1975**

Anybody's Woman

Oil on canvas; signed and dated '34, labelled with title
15 x 11½ inches

This picture is of the movie star Jessie Matthews, probably from a photograph. Matthews was a costermonger's daughter who began her theatre career at twelve and starred in the silent movie *The Beloved Vagabond* at sixteen. Dubbed 'The Dancing Divinity' by her fans in the States, she was Britain's first international movie star, whilst simultaneously scooping up

principal roles in sold-out plays in the West End in the mid-to-late 1920s. She fell in love with her married co-star, Sonnie Hale, on the set of Noel Coward's *This Year of Grace* in 1930, and soon became embroiled in one of the most public divorce scandals of the 20th century. Crowds queued outside the packed courtroom to listen to Hale's wife provide evidence of the couple's adultery. The most damning was the stack of explicit love letters from Jessie to Sonnie, which prompted the judge to pronounce her 'a woman of an odious mind', a quote used by several newspapers in the following morning's headlines. In a piece she wrote for the magazine *Picturegoer* in 1934, the year this picture was painted, she said, 'If I ceased to be a star all that interest in my home life would evaporate, I believe. Perhaps it is the price one has to pay for being a star'.



60 **Trevor Tennant 1900-1980**

The Artist's Wife, Dorothy Annan

Oil on panel; signed
16 x 12 inches

Tennant and Dorothy Annan were members of the Artists' International Association, a politicised group of artists founded in 1932. Their aim was the 'Unity of Artists for Peace, Democracy and Cultural Development'. A left-wing organisation, the group brought together artists and designers to produce pamphlets, posters and public art commissions

placing artistic creativity at the heart of everyday life. The Association embraced all media, both modernist and traditional in style, but much of their work was social realism with an anti-Fascist and pacifist theme. Annan was a painter and a ceramicist, born in Brazil and educated in France and Germany, who had her first one-woman show at the Leicester Galleries in 1945. Her most famous surviving public commission is her 1960 ceramic mural for the vast telephone exchange on Fleet Street in London, now listed and relocated to the Barbican, but her largest mural, *Expanding Universe*, at the Bank of England, was destroyed in 1997.



61 **Hilda Marion Hechle 1886-1939**

Nocturne des Alpes

Oil on canvas; signed and labelled
36 x 54 inches

The scene is Oeschinen Lake, looking up at the Blüemlisalp in the Bernese Oberland, where Hechle climbed and painted around 1934. Her obituary in *The Times* read: 'Gifted with imagination and a good sense of design, she broke away from the usual rather sentimental treatment of mountains in favour of a simplified statement with the rhythms of structure strongly accentuated so that the effect of great scale was preserved even in a small picture'. Hechle was born and raised in the Peak District of Derbyshire, an area famous for its climbing tradition. She became an experienced climber and scrambler, and was a stalwart of the Ladies Alpine Club, where she gave a lecture in 1928 in which she issued 'some valuable practical directions, i.e. that the best place from which to draw one mountain is from half way up another' (*Ladies Alpine Club Yearbook*, 1929, p 40). Hechle's fanciful work as an illustrator is populated by fairies and spirits, and there is an almost animist dimension to her paintings of mountains that she painted on the spot at altitude (this painting is on an unusual folding stretcher, for ease of carriage).

62 **Ethel Gabain 1883-1950**

Tea in Winter

Oil on canvas; signed and labelled
19½ x 15¼ inches

Gabain, who was half French, studied at the Slade and in Paris and was a well known lithographer who did not exhibit her first oil painting until 1927, when she was 44. This painting, of Carmen Watson, was exhibited at the Royal Glasgow Institute in 1936. Watson, who sat for Gabain for over sixty paintings, gave a gushing interview to the *Sunday Express* in the same year: 'A Botticelli Smile – Carmen Watson, blonde, petite artist's model, is the most sought-after girl in London. She has been working 12 hours a day for six years, and is now booked up for three months. "Long hair, punctuality, and an 'indefinable something' are my greatest assets," she said ... "Artists tell me I am the Botticelli type. They say there is something about my smile they can't quite capture. So they go on trying ... Even Mr Gerald Kelly, who usually paints only his wife, did a portrait of me"'. Gabain went on to become President of the Society of Women Artists in 1940.





63 **Nora Lucy Mowbray Cundell**
1889-1948

The Madonna of the Street

Oil on board; signed and dated '23' and titled verso
15¾ x 11½ inches

Cundell studied at the Slade under Tonks and at the Westminster School of Art under Sickert. She was an independent and adventurous woman, who travelled across America by car, driving 3,000 miles in a week. In the 1920s from her address in London, she showed a series of paintings of working women at the Royal Academy, *The Cook*, *The Needlewoman* and *The Laundress*, done with compassion and humour. She exhibited as 'NLM Cundell', tricking critics into referring to her as 'Mr'. The woman in this painting is clearly a figure of authority in her street, seated on a household chair on the pavement like a throne, and prominently displaying her wedding ring. The same model appears centrally in a later, more ambitious painting, *The Kitchen* of 1927. Cundell held her first one-woman exhibition at the Redfern Gallery in 1923, which was reviewed by *The Times*: 'There is no showing-off ... only fine, simple flowing composition, and very careful but very sure detail. The subjects are not smart pretty ladies, but mostly working women; there is no "best-clothes" display about the exhibition. But there is life and truth, and the beauty of them'.

64 **Alfred Kingsley Lawrence** 1893-1975

Jennifer

Oil on canvas; initialled, inscribed '... Clark' verso
42½ x 39½ inches

Lawrence, a portraitist in the grand manner, exhibited a group portrait of *Jane, Jennifer and Susan Clark, wife and daughters of the lawyer Sir Andrew Clark Bt.* in 1951 at the RA, from which we may identify the sitter of our painting as Jennifer, the youngest, painted with unrestrained 'swagger' in a Fifties palette.





65 **Primrose Harley 1908-1978**

Goblin Market

Watercolour pen and ink; signed, titled verso
11¼ x 8 inches

Modern scholars of Christina Rossetti's 1862 poem *Goblin Market*, about two sisters, one of whom is tempted by goblins to eat forbidden fruit but is saved from a horrible wasting death by the love and bravery of her sister, have offered feminist and homosexual interpretations of it. The imagery is remarkably sexual. Christina's brother Gabriel and many women artists have taken the poem as their subject. Primrose Harley was an illustrator and a painter of flowers.



66 **Roland Strasser 1895-1974**

Lady into Fox

Oil on canvas; signed; signed again, inscribed and dated 1949 verso
47¼ x 30¼ inches

Strasser's wild portrait is of prima ballerina Sally Gilmour in her role in the ballet *Lady into Fox*, first performed in 1939. This Ballet Rambert production, based on a surreal novel by David Garnett, starred Gilmour as a happily married woman who inexplicably transforms into a fox, to the distress of her husband. In the dark of the night, with her hair pricked up like ears, and surrounded by poisonous foxgloves, Gilmour seems fused to her fiery-eyed fox pelt. Strasser, an exotic and adventurous painter, was born in Vienna to a family of artists, and was trained there and in Munich. He travelled all his life all over the world, lived in London, Paris, Bali and Sydney, and ended up in Santa Monica.



The Maas Gallery