



ALBERT JOSEPH MOORE, A.R.W.S. (1841-1893)

Dancing Girl Resting

Signed with artist's anthemion (lower right),
also indistinctly inscribed in pencil on the stretcher 'Mr H. Moore/12 Newman Street W'
Oil on canvas
22 x 16 in. (55.9 x 40.6 cm.)
31 ½ x 25 ¼ in. (80 x 64 cm.) (framed)



Provenance

George Rae (1817-1902), by 1876 [his inventory number 1769F].

Anonymous sale, Bearne's, Exeter, 9 March 1976, lot 391.

Julian Hartnoll, London, purchased from the above.

Joseph Setton (Pre-Raphaelite Trust Inc.), purchased from the above.

Exhibited

London, 12 Newman Street, Studio exhibition, February 1864, unnumbered.

Wrexham, *The Art Treasures and Industrial Exhibition*, 1876, no. 526, as *Roman Dancing Girl Resting* (lent by George Rae).

Liverpool, Walker Art Gallery, *Grand Loan Exhibition of Pictures from Lancashire Collections*, and Exhibition of the Liverpool Society of Painters in Water-Colours and Liver Sketching Club, 1 January – 31 July 1886, no. 855, as *Girl Resting* (lent by George Rae).

London, Grafton Galleries, *Exhibition of Pictures by the late Mr. Albert Moore, and of Works of Modern British and Foreign Artists*, January – March 1894, no. 185, as *Dancing Girl Resting* (lent by George Rae).

Manchester, Manchester City Art Gallery; travelling to Minneapolis, Minneapolis Institute of Arts; and New York, Brooklyn Museum, *Victorian High Renaissance: George Frederic Watts 1817-1904, Frederic Leighton 1830-1896, Albert Moore 1841-1893, Albert Gilbert 1854-1934*, 1 September 1978 –

8 April 1979, no. 68 (lent by the Pre-Raphaelite Trust).
York, York City Art Gallery; and London, Julian Hartnoll, *The Moore Family Pictures*,
2 August – 10 October 1980, no. 63 (lent by the Pre-Raphaelite Trust).

Literature

F. G. Stephens, 'Fine Art Gossip', *Athenaeum*, no. 1895, 20 February 1864, p. 271.
Wrexham and Denbighshire Advertiser and Cheshire Shropshire and North Wales Register,
'The Art Treasures and Industrial Exhibition in Wrexham', 5 August 1876, p. 8.
Alfred L. Baldry, *Albert Moore: His Life and Works*, London, 1894, pp. ix, 30, 102, ill. opp. p. 30.
Gregory Hedberg in *Victorian High Renaissance*, exh. cat., City Art Gallery, Manchester. Minneapolis,
1978, pp. 132, 139, no. 68, ill. p. 139.
Richard Green in *The Moore Family Pictures*, exh. cat., York City Art Gallery and Julian Hartnoll,
London, 1980, pp. 21-2, 56-7, no. 63, ill. p. 57.
Robyn Asleson, *Albert Moore*, London, 2004, pp. 39-41, 81, 85, 104, 112, 137, 149, ill. p. 40, Pl. 33.
Julian Treuherz, 'Aesthetes in business: the Raes and D.G. Rossetti', *Burlington Magazine*, vol. 146,
January 2004, p.19, ill. same page fig.17.

'In *Dancing Girl Resting*, the atmosphere of perfect repose and hedonistic sensualism combines with the element of beauty to provide a pointed contrast between the ideals of art and the realities of modern life.'

R. Asleson, *Albert Moore*, p. 41

Dancing Girl Resting is a significant early work by Albert Joseph Moore. Painted in 1864, it is close in date, size and subject to *A Dancing Girl* (19 ½ x 15 in.) and all the more interesting as the whereabouts of the latter picture is unknown. Sensual and exotic, the picture reveals the direction in which Moore's art was to develop.



Albert Joseph Moore
Elijah's Sacrifice, 1863
Oil on canvas
39 x 69 in. (99 x 173.1 cm.)
Bury Art Museum

In the catalogue for the 1980 exhibition *The Moore Family Pictures* held at York City Art Gallery and Julian Hartnoll's Gallery in London, Richard Green describes *Dancing Girl Resting*:

'It is an important transitional work in Moore's career coming between early Old Testament subjects such as *Elijah's Sacrifice* [Bury Art Museum] of 1863 and his first experiments in purely pictorial arrangements of figures such as *The Marble Seat* [untraced] shown at the Royal Academy in 1865 and *Apricots* [Cecil French Bequest, London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham] and *Pomegranates* [Guildhall Art Gallery, London] shown there in 1866. Narrative subject matter has not yet been fully discarded but Moore seems to be principally concerned with the arrangement of the draped figures against a background of veined marble and matting. The pictorial space is limited by the background plane in a way which is to become characteristic of his mature work and indeed the whole concept of *Dancing Girl Resting* looks forward to Moore's later studies of standing female figures in classical draperies. Its colouring – comparatively small areas of reds, browns and other warm colours set against larger areas of white, greys and other natural colours – is close to that of *The Shulamite* [Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool], a similarly transitional work, exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1866. The leopard-skin rug on the which the dancing girl stands appears to have been a favourite studio prop for it reappears in *Pomegranates* and *A Wardrobe* [Johannesburg Art Gallery], on the floor, and in *A Quartet* [Private collection], where it is worn by one of the violinists; the lyre hanging on the marble-clad wall appears to be that used by Poynter in his *Orpheus and Eurydice* painted in the 1862 (Pre-Raphaelite Trust). Another oil with a similar subject, entitled *A Dancing Girl*, is recorded by Baldry [Moore's pupil and first biographer] under the same date 1864, but this is as yet untraced.'



Albert Joseph Moore
Pomegranates, 1865-6
 Oil on canvas
 10 x 14 in. (23.4 x 35.5 cm.)
 Guildhall Art Gallery, London



Albert Joseph Moore
Apricots, 1866
 Oil on canvas
 16 ¾ x 11 ¼ in. (42.5 x 28.5 cm.)
 Cecil French Bequest, London Borough
 of Hammersmith & Fulham



Sir Edward John Poynter, P.R.A
Orpheus and Eurydice, 1862
 Oil on canvas
 20 ¼ x 28 in. (51.2 x 71.1 cm.)
 The Joe Setton collection (Pre-Raphaelite Trust)
 Christie's, 10 December 2020, lot 19
 Orpheus clutching the lyre leading his dead wife
 Eurydice from the underworld.

Both *A Dancing Girl* and *Dancing Girl Resting* were exhibited in Moore's small one-man show in his studio at 12 Newman Street in central London, in the winter of 1864. The critic F. G. Stephens wrote in the *Athenaeum* (20 February 1864, p. 271): 'Two smaller pictures by this artist, a Girl dancing, and the same reposing, we saw at the same studio. The latter, as she stands, panting through parted lips, with heaving bust, her arms gracefully a-kimbo, and hands upon her hips, is, with the drapery of her wholly-robed figure a charming picture.'

Alfred Lys Baldry, Moore's pupil, studio assistant and friend, and later successful art critic, was ferociously loyal to his master and wrote the first biography on the artist, *Albert Moore: His Life and Works*, published in 1894. On *Dancing Girl Resting* and *A Dancing Girl*, he describes:

'The first of these two pictures, in which the dancer, in transparent white drapery, and with a red scarf twisted round her head and shoulders, leans against a warm grey marble wall hung with matting, while on a leopard skin at her feet sits a nude, brown-skinned child, is much more akin to the works of 1861 or 1862 than those of 1866. The "Girl Dancing", a less elaborate painting, is similar in colour and feeling, save that the swirling white draperies and the red head-dress of the girl are set against a background of green draperies and brown wood panels carved with peacocks in low relief, instead of the marble and matting of the other picture. The floor in both is inlaid with quaint patterns in coloured marbles, white, red, and black.' (p. 30).

As previously mentioned, the whereabouts of *A Dancing Girl* is unknown, thus it is interesting to read Baldry's account and imagine the composition from his description. In both pictures Moore abandons his earlier Biblical subjects painted much in the style of his friend Simeon Solomon, and heads in a new direction. When the present work was included in the major exhibition, *Victorian High Renaissance* in 1978/9, Gregory Hedberg wrote in his catalogue entry (p. 139): 'Both paintings are essentially subject-less and the fact that Moore executed two versions where he changed the colour and content of the background indicates a new interest in purely aesthetic concerns.'

Moore was no longer interested in narrative content and often reluctant to even give his pictures titles; many titles were simply one word. He did not wish to tell a story or convey a moral. Along with James Abbott McNeil Whistler, whom he befriended around 1864, they became key figures in the development of the Aesthetic Movement, believing that beauty, harmony, colour and line were of fundamental importance in a painting. Aestheticism opposed the sentimental, moralising and popular storytelling of much of Victorian art. Moore was an admirer of the Ancient world, yet his classical young women draped in Grecian robes pay little heed to archaeological or historical accuracy as seen in the works of Alma-Tadema and Poynter. Nor did he wish to paint scenes from mythology or with great drama, such as those produced by the masterful Frederic Leighton. Rather, Moore's aestheticism developed into the non-narrative and ultimately, almost into the abstract.

The transition noted in *Dancing Girl Resting* and its companion is taken to the next stage in *Pomegranates*. In her monograph on Moore, Robyn Asleson writes that the composition includes a '... combination of familiar props (such as the mosaic floor, leopard skin and wall hanging employed previously in *Dancing Girl Resting*) with allusions to Japanese art, which according to Baldry rank alongside Greek art as a seminal influence of Moore's evolving formal system.' (p. 85). The composition is comprised of concentric circles on the cabinet and the round forms of the figures creating a cohesive and harmonious effect. Exotic fabrics and textiles from Turkey, India, China and Japan displayed at the International Exhibition of 1862 in South Kensington broadened the growing fascination with the East and Orient.

Moore and Whistler developed mutual admiration and affection for each other. In fact, it was Moore's meticulous technique that influenced Whistler. His *Symphony in White, No. III* (1865-7, Barber Institute of Fine Arts) shows a beautifully pared down composition with horizontal bands intersected by the curves of the two young women in white at either end of the picture.



James Abbott McNeill Whistler
Symphony in White, No. III, 1865-7
Oil on canvas
20 1/4 x 30 1/4 in. (51.4 x 76.9 cm.)
Barber Institute of Fine Arts,
University of Birmingham

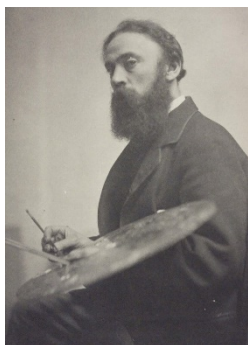
‘Whistler ultimately dispensed with the laborious preparatory work for which he had so little patience, but the radical geometry of Moore’s design schemes governed the whole of his future art production. The two men never lost their sense of partnership in a joint crusade, and it was evidently with his friend’s blessing that Whistler publicly appropriated much of Moore’s artistic theory as his own.’ (Asleson, p. 98)

Moore has signed the painting with a stylised anthemion – ‘an ornament occurring in a wide range of cultures but noted in his day as peculiarly prevalent in Greece and Japan.’ (Asleson, p. 86). Whistler adopted this practice from Moore with his butterfly motif.

In addition to painting, in the 1860s Moore designed tiles, wallpaper and stained glass for Morris, Marshall, Faulkner and Co., and also worked as an ecclesiastic and domestic mural painter. In conveying the beautiful, Moore’s art in its various forms, was an significant catalyst in heightening sensibility, and initiating change to both the fine and the decorative arts. He made an extensive study of antique sculpture, particularly the Elgin marbles displayed in the British Museum. His interest in decorative colour harmonies appear in his paintings from the mid-1860s onwards. Moore’s compositions conveyed his understanding of geometry and the classical closed-form. His elaborate working methods involved several preparatory studies of the nude figure and separate ones of drapery. He would make a charcoal cartoon of his perfected sketch of the nude figure and transfer it onto the canvas. Then he would paint the diaphanous drapery over the form. This process enhanced the appearance of the transparency of the fabric revealing the nude figure beneath. His painting technique initially involved

grey monochrome. When this was dry, he would add a thin, fluid layer enabling the grey design to be visible, followed by a strong impasto, and when dry he applied a veil of semi-opaque grey. Thus, this system made the nude figure still visible under the painted drapery.

Albert Joseph Moore was born and raised in York, the son of the portrait and landscape painter William Moore. His older brother Edwin Moore was a watercolourist and teacher, William Jr, a landscape painter and teacher, John Collingham Moore, landscape and genre painter who worked in Rome with the Etruscan School, and Henry Moore, the noted marine and landscape painter, watercolourist and etcher.



Although Moore exhibited at the Royal Academy throughout his career, he was never made a member. From its inaugural exhibition in 1877, he showed regularly at the Grosvenor Gallery and subsequently became an associate of the Society of Painters in Water Colours.

Albert Moore, c. 1892
Platinum print by
Frederick Hollyer
Victoria and Albert Museum

Graham Robertson (1867-1948) who became Moore's student in 1879 and returned as studio assistant for two years in 1885, published reminiscences giving affectionate insight into Moore's character and eccentricities in marked contrast to his fastidious working practice. The artist was a thoughtful perfectionist who inspired loyalty and admiration among his friends. On his death in 1893 Robertson and Baldry organised a memorial exhibition of Moore's work held at the Grafton Galleries the following year. *Dancing Girl Resting* was amongst the exhibits (no. 185, lent by George Rae).

Provenance

By 1876 *Dancing Girl Resting* was in the collection of George Rae (1817-1902). In his article 'Aesthetes in business: the Raes and D.G. Rossetti', (*Burlington Magazine*, vol. 146, January 2004), Julian Treuherz illustrates the painting and suggests it may have been acquired by Rae from Moore's studio exhibition in 1864. Rae's inventory number, 1769F, is on a label on the stretcher. Scottish-born, Rae was a Birkenhead banker, stockbroker and major art collector, particularly of the Pre-Raphaelites and landscapes by Liverpool artists. Professionally Rae became a much admired and authoritative figure in the banking world. Under his chairmanship the North and South Wales Bank became one of the largest in the United Kingdom. In 1885 Rae published *The Country Banker: His Clients, Cares, and Work*, drawing on his forty years' experience. It became a classic best-selling textbook on the subject and was re-issued in no less than ten editions well into the 1970s.

He was an avid patron and supporter of Dante Gabriel Rossetti, owning nearly 20 of his works, the largest number in private hands at the time, including *The Beloved*, commissioned in 1863 and completed in 1866 (Tate Gallery). He later owned Rossetti's *Monna Vanna* (1866, Tate Gallery). In addition to several pictures by Ford Madox Brown and Arthur Hughes, he owned 80 paintings by contemporary Liverpool artists William J. J. C. Bond and William Davis. With his astute judgement, Rae preferred to buy from the artists themselves whom he met in Liverpool, London and Paris, rather than relying on agents and dealers. Such was his enthusiasm, by the early 1890s he had acquired some 200 pictures. Rae formed

a remarkable collection, frequently lending pictures for exhibitions, many of which are now in national collections. Rae produced a printed catalogue of his collection that from 1879 was kept at Redcourt, his new house in Birkenhead. Treuherz states that a copy of this rare publication, appearing to date from 1901, is in the collection of the Birmingham City Museum and Art Gallery.

Dancing Girl Resting emerged on the auction market at Bearne's in Exeter in 1976 when it was purchased by Julian Hartnoll for Joseph Setton and his company the Pre-Raphaelite Trust Inc. It has remained in his collection by descent ever since. In 1968 Joseph Setton (1916-1984) began collecting works by the Pre-Raphaelites and the two generations of artists they inspired after reading Percy Bate's seminal book *The English Pre-Raphaelite Painters: Their Associates and Successors*, published in 1899. Setton was captivated and he sought the guidance of Julian Hartnoll, announcing that he wished to purchase any picture illustrated in Bate's publication. This was at a time when the Pre-Raphaelites and their followers were out of fashion. Setton, with a discerning eye and the passionate enthusiasm of an ardent collector, coupled with Hartnoll's knowledge and insight, proved a fruitful partnership lasting until Joe's death in 1984. Although Moore's *Dancing Girl Resting* was not illustrated in Bate's book, it was one of the many fine pictures in Setton's outstanding collection and certainly a beautiful and exotic example of Moore's early work.

We are grateful to Richard Green for information provided in this catalogue note.