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EST. 1817

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Florence Harriet Fitzgerald (London 1857-1927)

Portrait of the artist

Oil on canvas loosely stretched on panel

37 x 24 in. (94 x 61 cm.)

Datable to c.1877-87



Provenance

The artist's family and by descent until 2022.

The sitter of the present self-portrait is a daughter of John Anster Christian Fitzgerald (1819 – 1906), the famous Victorian fairy painter and portrait artist. The Fitzgerald family have always called this a portrait of Florence and it is recorded as such in their collection. Of all of Fitzgerald's six children, Florence was the only artist of note and the most prolific.

She was born in 1857 and she looks to be between 20 and 30 years old in this picture, so an approximate likely dating is 1877-87. Born in Brompton, London, Florence studied at the British Museum and the Royal Academy schools. In 1889 she married the landscape painter Walter Follen Bishop (1856 – 1936) and together they travelled widely in Great Britain as well as in Australia, South Africa and the Channel Islands. A number of Australian paintings by both artists are known to exist.

Florence continued to exhibit widely at the Royal Society of Artists, Birmingham, the Royal Society of British Artists, the Liverpool Autumn Exhibition, Royal Cambrian Academy and eight times at the Royal Academy (between 1887 and 1900). Florence showed sculpture during much of her career but paintings became an increasingly important part of her oeuvre. She was a member of the Royal British Colonial Society of Artists, the Liverpool Academy of Arts and an Associate of the Royal Cambrian Academy of Art.

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Portrait of Florence Bishop (née Fitzgerald) by Disdéri,
albumen cabinet card, 189, National portrait Gallery.