

Book of Omens

William Henry Hunt

Sold



Description

WILLIAM HENRY HUNT
London 1790-1864 London

'The Book of Omens'

Indistinctly signed lower right
Watercolour heightened with bodycolour, gum arabic, stopping out and scratching out
262 x 28.2 mm., 10 ¼ x 11 in.

Hunt depicts an impressionable young woman who has been reading a book of omens and is consequently startled by a real or imaginary noise she has heard in a dark corner of the room. He often used members of his family as sitters and the present watercolour may show his daughter Emma, which would date it to circa 1845.

Hunt was born in Covent Garden, London and, showing promise as a draughtsman, his father apprenticed him to John Varley in about 1804. He entered the Royal Academy school in 1808 and soon afterwards he earned commissions from the Duke of Devonshire and the Earl of Essex to drawing interiors at Chatsworth and Cassiobury Park respectively. From birth, he had deformed legs and walking was difficult so interiors, still-lives and portraits were obvious subject matters. From the late 1820s he started exhibiting still-lives and soon achieved great success with collectors.