

Study of a Woman with an Earring

Gerald Leslie Brockhurst

Sold



Description

Gerald Leslie Brockhurst, R.A. (1890-1978)
Study of a Woman with an Earring

Signed lower right: G.L. Brockhurst
Pencil
30 by 27cm., 11 $\frac{3}{4}$ by 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

Provenance:
With Daniel Katz, London

Brockhurst's talents were evident very early on and he was admitted to the Birmingham School of Art by 1901, before then entering the Royal Academy Schools in 1907. A travel scholarship took him to Paris and Italy in 1913, where he was inspired by the work of the 15th century Italian masters, especially Botticelli, Piero della Francesca and Leonardo da Vinci, whose work had a lasting impact on his development as an artist. Between 1915 and 1919, Brockhurst and his first wife and muse, Anaïs Folin lived in Ireland, where they became friends with Augustus John (1878-1961) and his circle. In 1919, they returned to London when the Chenil Gallery put on the first major exhibition of Brockhurst's work.

During the 1920s Brockhurst became fascinated by etching and produced a remarkable body of works, mainly of women and primarily of his wife. The following decade however, saw his return to painting and the emergence of a new muse and model, Kathleen (Dorette) Woodward, with whom he began a passionate affair (the couple later married in 1940, following Brockhurst's divorce). His technical virtuosity and power, combined with remarkable psychological insight rapidly cemented his position as one of the most celebrated and fashionable portraitists of the interwar period. He was able to command large fees (up to 1000 guineas) for his work and limit his commissions to just 20 a year. Notable sitters included the Duchess of Windsor, Marlene Dietrich, Merle Oberon, John Paul Getty and Mrs Paul Mellon.

At the height of his powers in 1939, Brockhurst moved to America, settling first in New York and then New Jersey where he remained for the rest of his life and where he continued to paint and undertake portrait commissions.