

J.W. WATERHOUSE: SOME RECENT DISCOVERIES

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“Lost works” by John William Waterhouse regularly come to light and occasionally unknown works do too. Recent discoveries include a previously unknown painting now identified and attributed to Waterhouse, and a second painting identified and attributed as the first extant painting by his wife, Esther Kenworthy Waterhouse, to come to light. Additionally, I am pleased to confirm and publicize a re-attribution by scholar Peter Trippi of a third painting as the work of William Logsdail rather than Waterhouse. I conclude with a discussion of a photographic detail that corrects much erroneous speculation during this present century about the artist’s connection with “Miss Muriel Foster” as his supposed model.

Young Model in the Studio

Nineteenth-century European depictions of young peasant girls are commonplace in salerooms, although not so common are those unsigned, high-in-quality, and thus “difficult-to-place” in auctioneers’ parlance. Catalogued recently in a British country auction as 19th-century French School, “Portrait of a gypsy girl” is an unusually fine portrayal on canvas of a seemingly Italianized young English rose. Far from emanating from gypsy encampments in France, she seems more at home in the contemplative environment of a romantic artist’s studio, perhaps in the Primrose Hill area of London. With Waterhouse’s early Italian background, a French influenced plein-air stylistic element, and a dedication to personifying a classical pageant of female roles in art via his models, this latest attribution, *A Young Model*¹ (fig.1), seems to present the youngest of these to have been depicted in the studio by Waterhouse. She appears to be about ten- or eleven-years-old and is posed under a high-studio north-light, as evidenced by the strong illumination on her hair, its ribbon, and the shadowing under her chin, nose, and eyebrows. Although immature, those familiar with the Waterhouse nymphs of the 1890s will recognize her as fitting the characteristics he would seek in models for casting

The Journal of Pre-Raphaelite Studies, 31 (Fall 2022)