

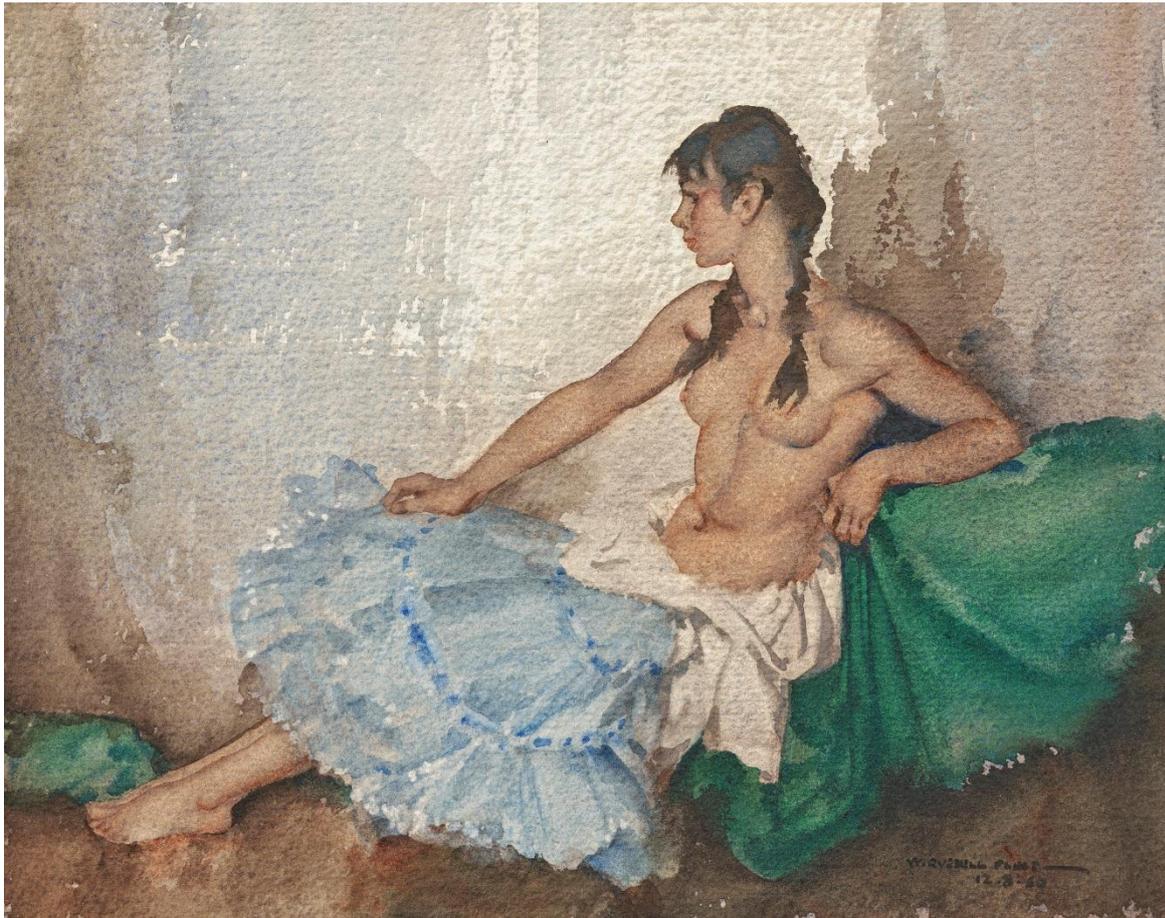
RICHARD GREEN

SIR WILLIAM RUSSELL FLINT RA PRWS

Edinburgh 1880 - 1969 London

Ref: CC 237

Maggie



Signed and dated lower right: *W Russell Flint / 12.8.60.*

Signed, dated and inscribed on the reverse:

W Russell Flint / Aug 12 1960 /

(The 55th Anniversary of my wedding) /

(The 60th "of my coming to London), /

(The 66th "of my going to work)

Watercolour: 7 ¼ x 9 ¼ in / 18.4 x 23.5 cm

Frame size: 13 ¼ x 17 in / 33.7 x 43.2 cm



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RICHARD GREEN

Provenance:

Private collection, UK;
Richard Green, London, 1992,
private collection, UK, 1994

When Sir William's favourite model, Cecilia, temporarily left him in 1960 (she became famous as the Camay Soap girl in television commercials), he found a new model, Margaret Covenay – Maggie - who he also painted with her distinctive pigtails in *Janelle and the Volume of Treasures*, *The Silver Mirror*, *The Dubious Bernini* and *New Model Inspecting Drawings of her Predecessor*.¹ Flint is quoted as saying: 'My best model had been lured away by the magnetic attraction of the films and I had to find somebody to take her place. The Byam Shaw School of Art, which is only one street away from my studio, kindly came to my rescue...my new *poseuse*, besides being intelligent, was enthusiastically and most helpfully interested in my work.'²

Famed as a watercolourist of remarkable technical skill, William Russell Flint also painted in oil and tempera and produced many etchings and drypoints. It was as an artist of feminine grace that he won universal acclaim, for his picturesque gypsies, flamenco dancers and languorous nudes and half draped beauties. For many years he also painted the landscapes and seascapes of England and Scotland, and travelled abroad, where he painted in Switzerland, Italy, Spain and France. Born in Edinburgh in 1880, Flint was the eldest son of a commercial designer and watercolourist. He was educated at Daniel Stewart's College, and at the age of fourteen he took up a six year apprenticeship as a lithographic artist and designer with a firm of printers. He also attended evening classes at the Royal Institute School of Art. Between 1902 and 1903 he worked as a commercial designer and magazine illustrator, and from 1902 to 1907 he was employed as a staff artist at Heatherley's Art School. He married Sybille Sueter in 1905. Already a successful black and white draughtsman, he now turned to colour illustration and was commissioned by the Medici Society to make illustrations for several of their *de luxe* editions.

During the First World War, Flint served as a lieutenant in the RNVR and later as a captain in the RAF. He was attached to the RNAS Airship section from 1916 to 1918 and was Admirably Assistant Overseer on HM Airship R34 from 1918 to 1919. After the war, Flint established his reputation as a painter, and became one of the most sought after artists of the day. Whilst his work won immediate favour with amateurs and connoisseurs alike, the exhibiting societies were also quick to give him official recognition. He was elected a member of the Royal Institute of Oil Painters in 1912, a member of the Royal Society of Painters in Watercolours in 1917, and President of the latter from 1936-56. He was knighted in 1947, and accorded a one-man exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1962, the highest distinction that an artist can achieve during his lifetime.

¹ Keith S Gardner, *Sir William Russell Flint RA PPRWS 1880-1969: A Catalogue Raisonne of the Unsigned Limited Edition Works*, Michael Stewart Associates, Bristol 1994, p.84.

² Keith S Gardner and Nigel D Clark, *Sir William Russell Flint 1880-1969: A Comparative Review of the Artist's Signed Limited Edition Prints*, Sir William Russell Flint Galleries, Bristol 1986, p.266, no.75, *New Model Inspecting Drawings of her Predecessor*.

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