The Fairy and the Sea Serpent by John Anster Fitzgerald

John Anster Fitzgerald



REF: 1628

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Description

JOHN ANSTER FITZGERALD
(1823-1906)

The Fairy and the Sea Serpent

Signed
Oil on canvas laid onto panel
Framed

19 by 28 cm.; 7 ½ by 11 in.

John Anster Fitzgerald was born in Lambeth, the son of William Thomas Fitzgerald and his wife Maria Howorth. Fitzgerald senior was originally from an Irish family but had been born in Antigua where he worked from the Navy pay-office for much of his life, before retiring to London and becoming a minor poet.

It seems that John Anster Fitzgerald may have been a self-taught artist. Although a portrait and genre painter he is best known as one of the leading Victorian Fairy Painters. He specialized in fantasy subjects, often of fairies and highly imaginative surreal scenes in the style of Hieronymus Bosch. He first exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1845 and also exhibited at the British Institution, Society of British Artists and the Royal Watercolour Society. In addition he worked as an illustrator, contributing to the London Illustrated News. He was a member of the Maddox Street Sketching Club and Savage Club where he was known to have entertained fellow members with amusing imitations of famous actors. His weird and wonderful subjects have often led to the belief that he may have been acquainted with hallucinogenic drugs.

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