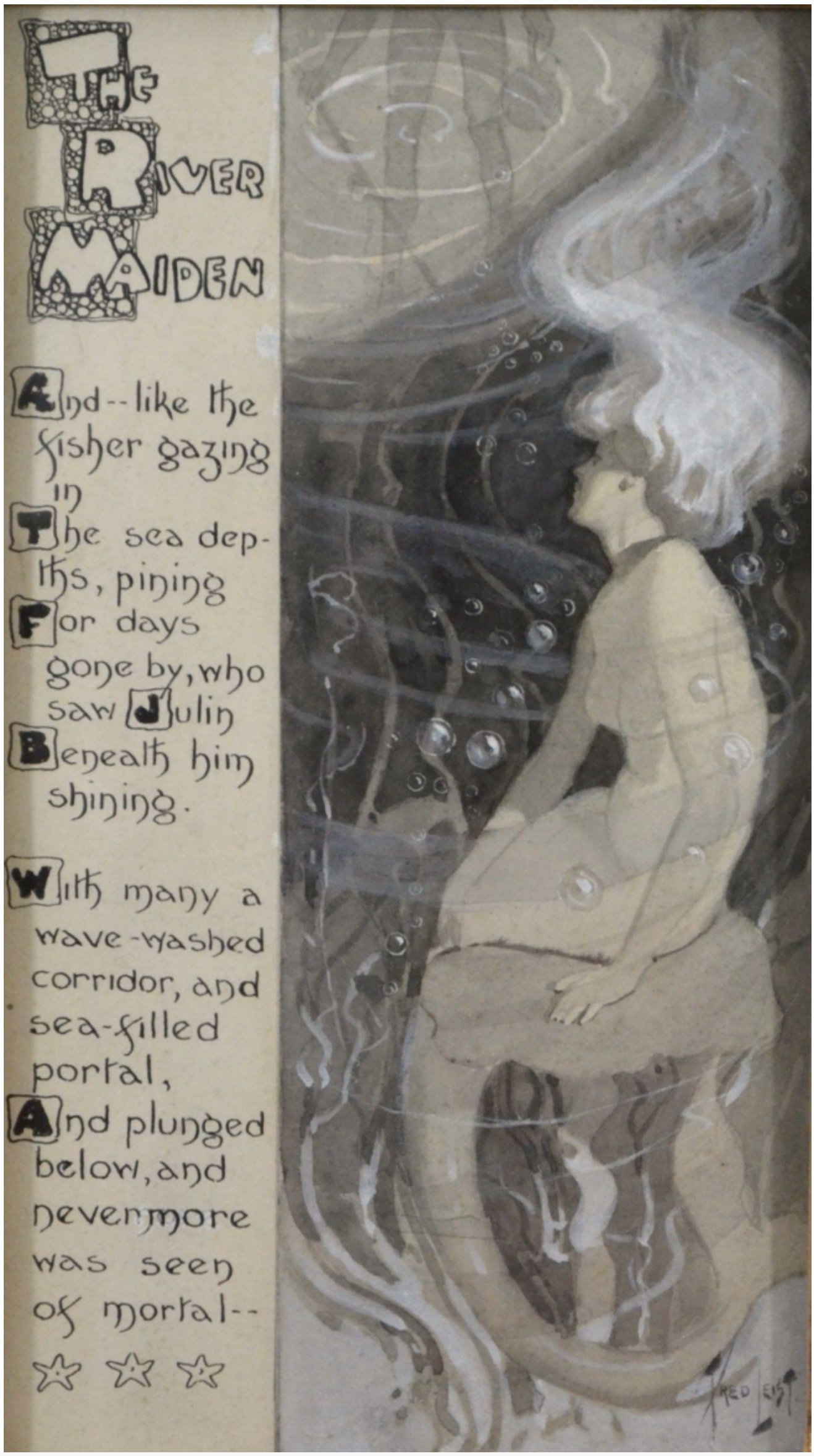
SARAH COLEGRAVE
FINE ART

The River Maiden

Frederick William Leist

Sold



REF: 247634

Height: 66.04 cm (26")

Sarah Colegrave Fine Art
London & Oxfordshire
+44 (0)77 7594 3722 sarah@sarahcolegrave.co.uk

Width: 36.83 cm (14.5")

Framed Height: 88.9 cm (35")

Framed Width: 60.96 cm (24")

Description

Leist was an Australian artist and illustrator. He was born in Surrey Hills, Sydney and studied at Sydney Art School under Julian Ashton. In the 1890s he worked as a black and white artist for The Bulletin and The Sydney Mail newspapers. After 1900 he was also the Sydney representative fro the Graphic magazine in London. In 1917 he was appointed an official war artist and served with the Australian Imperial Forces in France. He completed numerous paintings during the war and after his war service contributed two large murals for the Australian stand at the British Empire Exhibitions at Wembley in 1924. As a result of these he gained several commissions from the United States and toured the south west of America, including Texas, New Mexico and Arizona. He returned to Australia in 1926 and took up a position as Head of Painting at the East Sydney Technical College. He is represented in the collections of the Art Gallery of New South Wales; the Australian War Memorial in Canberra; Parliament House, Canberra and elsewhere. The present work illustrates two verses from The River Maiden by the Australian poet Victor Daley (1858-1905) and may have been used to illustrate its publication in The Bulletin magazine: Her gown was simple woven wool, But, in repayment, Her body sweet made beautiful The simplest raiment: For all its fine, melodious curves With life a-quiver Were graceful as the bends and swerves Of her own river. Her round arms, from the shoulders down To sweet hands slender, The sun had kissed them amber-brown With kisses tender. For though she loved the secret shades Where ferns grow stilly, And wild vines droop their glossy braids, And gleams the lily, And Nature, with soft eyes that glow In gloom that glistens, Unto her own heart, beating slow, In silence listens: She loved no less the meadows fair, And green, and spacious; The river, and the azure air, And sunlight gracious. I saw her first when tender, wan, Green light enframed her; And, in my heart, the Flower of Dawn I softly named her. The bright sun, like a king in state, With banners streaming, Rode through the fair auroral gate In mail gold-gleaming. The witch-eyed stars before him paled”” So high his scorning!”” And round the hills the rose-clouds sailed, And it was morning. The light mimosas bended low To do her honour, As in that rosy morning glow I gazed upon her. My boat swung bow-ward to the stream Where tall reeds shiver; We floated onward, in a dream, Far down the River. The River that full oft has told To Ocean hoary A many-coloured, sweet, and old Unending story: The story of the tall, young trees, For ever sighing To sail some day the rolling seas ’Neath banners flying. The Ocean hears, and through his caves Roars gusty laughter; And takes the River, with his waves To roll thereafter. But Love deep waters cannot drown; To its old fountains The stream returns in clouds that crown Its parent mountains. The River was to her so dear She seemed its daughter; Her deep translucent eyes were clear As sunlit water; And in her bright veins seemed to run, Pulsating, glowing, The music of the wind and sun, And waters flowing. The secrets of the trees she knew: Their growth, their gladness, And, when their time of death was due, Their stately sadnes...

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