

Miss Sunday Wilshin, the actress, in the play Nine Till Six

Sold



REF: 11000

Height: 61 cm (24")

Width: 37 cm (14.6")

## Description

Signed, dated & numbered 'OP.93' lower left, 1930  
Tempera on panel

PROVENANCE : M Martin. The Artist until 1967.

EXHIBITED : Royal Academy, London, 1930, no.893  
Art Exhibitions Bureau, London, 1930, no.4  
Arlington Gallery, New York, 1938

According to two labels verso this work shows Sunday Wilshin in her character in the play *Nine Till Six*. *Nine Till Six* ran on Broadway from September to October 1930 at the Ritz Theatre, New York. Basicsearches have not revealed any information on a run in London and more direct research is in hand. *Nine Till Six* was subsequently released as a British drama film in 1932 made at Ealing Studios and Sunday Wilshin played Judy. *Nine Till Six* is a romantic drama in which the love lives of several London dress shop employees are chronicled. Much of the story centers upon the head dressmaker who gets into trouble by borrowing one of her own designs to attend a gala with a rich fellow and finds herself accused of stealing it

This portrait showcases Armfield's mastery in the use of tempera (in this case on board). The influence of decorative arts is obvious in the stylised figure and the minimalist approach to details. Armfield was also strongly influenced by the Pre-Raphaelites, an influence that in this picture is most obvious in the ethereal quality of the sitter's face. In spite of the contemporary attire, Armfield manages to capture a sense of timeless beauty.

Panel height: 61 cm, 24in. Length 37 cm, 13 ½ in.

In the original, four-tier, silvered frame, Frame height 75.5 cm., 30 in., Length 50.5 cm., 20 in

Maxwell Ashby Armfield was born at Ringwood of Quaker parents. His father being a milling engineer, Armfield entered the Birmingham School of Art in 1899. There he came under the influence of Henry Payne, Gaskin and Southall, who taught him the tempera technique he was to practice for the rest of his life, and was deeply impressed by the Pre-Raphaelite paintings in the Art Gallery. In September 1902, after visiting Italy at the suggestion of Gaskin, he went to Paris, enrolling at the Académie de la Grande Chaumière and sharing a studio with three other students - Norman Wilkinson (also from Birmingham), Keith Henderson and the sculptor Gaston Lachaise. In 1904 his painting *Faustine*, inspired by the English poet Algernon Swinburne, was bought for the Luxembourg.

Returning from London the following year, he embarked on a series of one-man exhibitions that were henceforth to mark his career, showing first at Robert Ross's Carfax Gallery (1908, 1912), subsequently at the Leicester Galleries and elsewhere, as well as contributing regularly to the RA, NEAC and RWS (member since 1941). In 1909 he married the writer Constance Smedley, with whom he was to work closely until her death in 1941.

Armfield's stay in the US - In the spring of 1915, Maxwell Armfield and his wife Constance Smedley left their Cotswold house and sailed to the United States, where they were to stay until 1922. There he concentrated on oil painting in the avant-garde style, but did not abandon his small tempera still life and landscape paintings. He joined a group of artists who included George Bellows and Robert Henri, who ...