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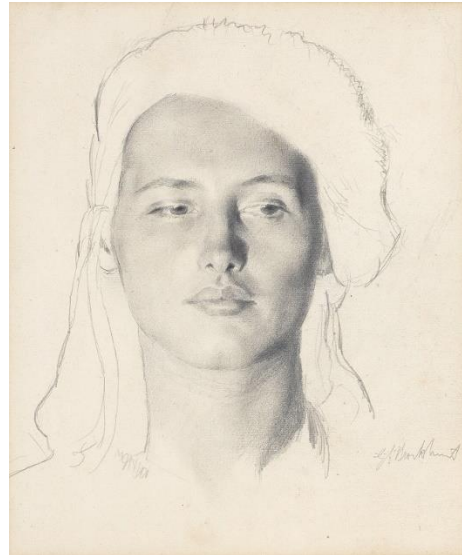
Gerald Leslie Brockhurst R.A., R.P., R.E.
(Birmingham 1890 - 1978 New Jersey,
USA)

Portrait of Nancy Woodward

Signed (lower right) 'G.L.Brockhurst' and
inscribed 'Nancy' and 'Nancy (?) B' under the
mount

Pencil

9 7/8 x 7 7/8 in. (25.1 x 20 cm.)



Gerald Leslie Brockhurst was a celebrated British painter and etcher, best known for his portraits of society figures in the 1930's and 1940's, including Marlene Dietrich, Merle Oberon and the Duchess of Windsor, and his small etched prints of beautiful women, many of them modelled by his wives and lovers.

He was considered precociously gifted and an excellent draughtsman. He won several prizes at the Royal Academy Schools and went on to have a highly successful career painting captivating society portraits of the glamorous women of Britain and then the USA, where he settled in 1939, working in New York and New Jersey. He was considered one of the most fashionable British portrait painters of the early twentieth century.

By 1937 Brockhurst was able to command vast sums for his portraits, however it was also in this year that his relationship with his young muse Kathleen Woodward, who he had met at the Royal Academy Schools while she was a 17 year old model in 1926, were made public causing a great scandal. Kathleen, who he had renamed Dorette, is the young woman gazing at her reflection with a powerfully dual vulnerability and sexuality, in what is considered Brockhurst's masterpiece in the etching medium: *Adolescence* (Fig.1). Their affair led to Brockhurst's very public and acrimonious divorce from his first wife, Anaïs Folin, a marriage which was already under strain due to his previous affair with his wife's sister Marguerite. In August 1939 Brockhurst and Dorette moved to the United States, where they settled in Franklin Lakes, New Jersey and married in 1947.

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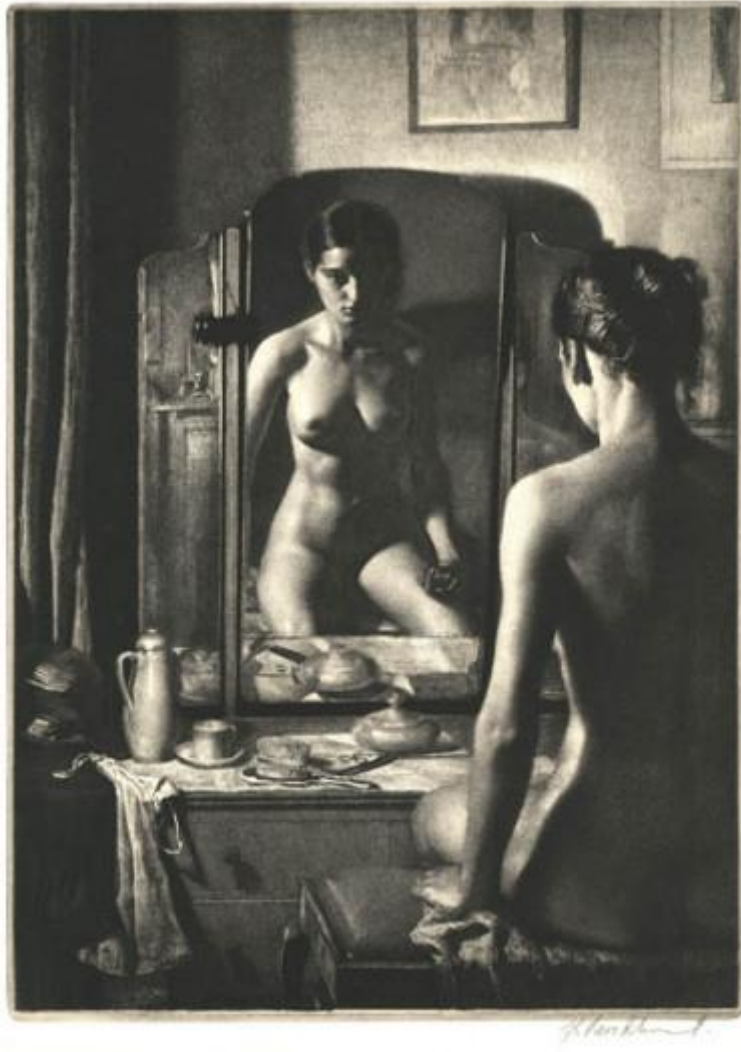


Fig 1: *Adolescence*, 1932, etching, Art Institute of Chicago (and various other important collections)

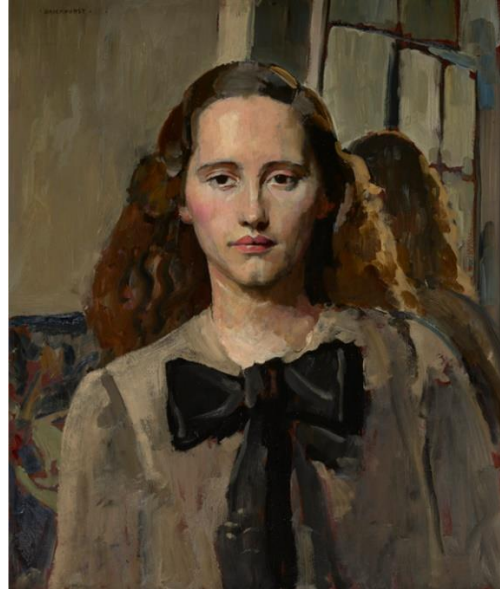
It was during these highly charged years of the 1920's and 1930's that Brockhurst also created several portraits of Dorette's sister, Nancy Woodward, the sitter of the present drawing. In these portraits she is captured with a calm assertive self-confidence, as in the present work despite not meeting the viewers gaze. There appears to be an easiness between artist and sitter and the rapport between the two is felt. This is also the case in two painted portraits of Nancy, one which is in the Atkinson Art Gallery Collection. A drawing of Nancy from around 1927, in the Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art, features a similar inscription of her name, lower left.

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Dorette's Sister, oil on panel, 62 x 52 cm, Atkinson
Art Gallery Collection.



Portrait of Nancy Woodward, c.1930's, private
collection.



Nancy Woodward, pencil on paper, 38.7 x 27.8, Scottish National Gallery of Modern Art.