Ballets Russes Dancer in Red Tights

Loudon Sainthill

Sold



REF: 94962

Height: 148.59 cm (58.5")

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Width: 120.65 cm (47.5")

Description

Loudon Sainthill was born in Hobart, Tasmania. In 1932-33 he studied drawing and general design at the Applied Art School, Working Men’s College, Melbourne. He first worked as a mural artist but his interest in the theatre was fired by the Australian tours of Colonel de Basil’s Ballets Russes de Monte Carlo (1936-37 and 1938-39). An exhibition of his paintings of the dancers let to an invitation to return to London with the company and he left Sydney in May 1939, making a series of paintings of the dancers during the voyage. On his arrival in London these were exhibited in a highly successful exhibition at the Redfern Gallery. Later that year he returned to Australia in charge of a major British Council exhibition of theatre and ballet designs, which opened in Sydney in February 1940. Over the next few years he worked in Melbourne as a costume and theatre designer before being enlisted into the Australian Army Medical Corps in 1943, being discharged in 1946. In 1949 he sailed again for England and settled in London where he designed for Robert Helpmann’s production of the ballet Iles des Sirenes with Margot Fonteyn. Following this he was commissioned to design The Tempest at the Shakespeare Memorial Theatre, Stratford-on-Avon, which opened with huge success in May 1951. Thus began a busy and successful theatre design career. In addition to this work he was also a visiting teacher of stage design at the Central School of Arts and Crafts, London. Following his death in 1969 an exhibition of his paintings was held in London in 1973 helping to raise money for a scholarship (named after him) for Australian design students to study abroad. His work is held in the collections of the National Gallery of Australia, the Victoria & Albert Museum and in other public collections. This work was executed during his time working with the Ballet Russes and may have been included in his Redfern Gallery exhibition of 1939.