

Henry Lamb



Portrait of Edwin John

Reference: 11234

KAREN TAYLOR FINE ART

Dimensions:

Height: 35.50 cm / 14 in

Width: 25.50 cm / 10 in

Henry Lamb (Australian/British 1883 – 1960)

Inscribed l.r.: Edwin John, pencil

Provenance

The Estate of the artist;

Davis & Langdale Company, New York (DLA 3328);

Where purchased by Sarah John (1946 - 2024);

Bequeathed to the present owner

This drawing dates from c. 1913-1915. Edwin John (1905-1978) was the fourth son of Augustus John and Ida and was born in Paris. After a brief career as a middleweight boxer he became a watercolourist. He inherited the estate of his aunt Gwen and did much to secure her posthumous reputation.

Henry Lamb was born in Adelaide, Australia in 1883. He studied medicine in Manchester before abandoning it in 1905 to train as an artist. At twenty-two he left for London to study under Augustus John and William Orpen at their Chelsea Art School at 72 Flood Street. They held weekly classes in life drawing and painting, still life, figure composition, landscape and decorative painting.

He was a talented student and he and John formed a strong friendship. For a while Lamb imitated John's bohemian manner of dress, wore gold earrings and grew his hair longer. He also began to draw like John.

Lamb was a frequent visitor to the John household into the 1930s and became close to Dorelia (with whom he had an affair) and to the children who he encouraged to draw.

This drawing also has echoes of the work of Stanley Spencer. Spencer (like John) had studied at the Slade from 1908-1912 under Henry Tonks. Lamb and Spencer met in 1913 and were close friends for a while. Another drawing of Edwin from this period was with Piano Nobile in 2024 (Augustus John and the First Crisis of Brilliance, 26 April -13 July 2024, no. 12).