



Select Jewellery & Watches (620)

Thu, 22nd Oct 2020, Live Online | Viewing in Mall Galleries, London

Viewing Times:

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Viewing by appt 20 to 22 October at The Mall Galleries, London

Lot 7

Estimate: £10000 - £15000 + Fees

A glass, enamel and diamond bracelet, brooch and earring suite, by Lalique, circa 1905-10

The bracelet of curved lattice design, set with carved green glass cabochons, with green enamel backing, each corner collet-set with an old brilliant-cut diamond, between black enamel bar connectors; together with a navette-shaped brooch and stud earrings en suite, *brooch and earrings converted from the original 'collier de chien' when it was shortened to a bracelet*, bracelet clasp signed Lalique

Qty: 3

Lengths: bracelet 17.0cm, brooch 7.5cm, earrings 1.8cm

Provenance: Formerly the property of Mrs. Florence Evelyn St George (nee Baker), 1870- 1936; thence by descent

Mrs. Florence Evelyn St George was one of the most celebrated and talked about socialites of her time. Born in New York in 1870, her father, George Fisher Baker, was the founder of the First National Bank of the City of New York and at one point the third richest man in America. At twenty-one, Evelyn married the Irish land agent Howard St George against her fathers wishes, and in 1905 the couple moved to Dublin. It was here that Evelyn's life would take a dramatic turn when she was introduced to the artist William Orpen.

William Orpen was a celebrated Irish artist working primarily in London, most known for his Edwardian society portraits. During World War I, Orpen worked as a war artist and achieved such success in this that he was knighted in 1918. St George and Orpen began a passionate and very public affair from about 1908, which is documented in numerous paintings of her by the artist throughout the time of their affair. She became not only his muse but his patron, commissioning numerous portraits of herself and of her children, one of which allegedly was fathered by Orpen.

Visually the couple made for much gossip, as she was a foot taller and eight years older, something that Orpen did not shy away from commenting on in his humorous sketches of the couple enjoying their time together. Evelyn was a fashionable woman, wearing exotic hats and fine jewels. In fact, she took yearly visits to Paris with her brother George to purchase all the latest fashions. During these trips, she would frequent luxury jewellers of the period such as René Lalique, where she would commission unique and beautiful pieces.