

Rose Art of J. W. Waterhouse

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Welcome to the official American Rose Society Program on the rose art of John W. Waterhouse.

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As artists go, J. W. Waterhouse's life is surprisingly unexceptional. He was born in Rome in 1849. Both his parents were English and both were artists. He spent the first six years of his life immersed in Roman classicism. And though he grew up in the midst of an art laden family, he seems to have been more interested in bookish pursuits than art for much of his early life. He was a voracious reader of the classics and Greek mythology. In England, at the age of 20, he applied to study painting at the Royal Academy. However, unlike most hopeful students, his only instructor had been his father. He was rejected. A year later, he applied again and this time gained acceptance as a SCULPTURE student. With his foot in the door, he later managed to switch to painting. He sold his first major work in 1874, *La Fileuse*, at the age of 25. He married, had two children (both of whom died in childhood) and seems to have settled into a lucrative career painting Victorian portraits, specializing particularly in those of young ladies. Stylistically, he's often lumped in with the Pre-Raphaelites though, in fact, he was never a part of their brotherhood. In 1885 he became an associate member of the Royal Academy and was elected to full membership ten years later. He was an accomplished academician and reasonably popular with upper-crust London society - an influential painter in the prevailing Pre-Raphaelite style of the time, but hardly remarkable. Painter of classical, historical, and literary subjects. Waterhouse was born in 1849 in Rome, where his father worked as a painter. In the 1850s the family returned to England. Before entering the Royal Academy schools in 1870, Waterhouse assisted his father in his studio. His early works were of classical themes in the spirit of Alma-Tadema and Frederic Leighton, and were exhibited at the Royal Academy, the Society of British Artists and the Dudley Gallery. In the late 1870s and the 1880s, Waterhouse made several trips to Italy, where he painted genre scenes. After his marriage in 1883, he took up residence at the Primrose Hill Studios. He was elected to the Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolour in 1883 and resigned in 1889. In 1884, his Royal Academy submission 'Consulting the Oracle' brought him favorable reviews; it was purchased by Sir Henry Tate, who also purchased 'The Lady of Shalott' from the 1888 Academy exhibition. The latter painting reveals Waterhouse's growing interest in themes associated with the Pre-Raphaelites, particularly tragic or powerful femmes fatales, as well as *plein-air* painting. In 1885 he was elected an associate of the Royal Academy and a full member in 1895. In the mid-1880s Waterhouse began exhibiting with the Grosvenor Gallery and its successor, the New Gallery, as well as provincial exhibitions in Birmingham, Liverpool and Manchester. Paintings of this period, such as 'Mariamne' (1889), were exhibited widely in England and abroad as part of the international symbolist movement. In the 1890s Waterhouse began to exhibit portraits. In 1901 he moved to St John's Wood and joined the St John's Wood Arts Club, a social organization that included Lawrence Alma-

Tadema and George Clausen. He also served on the advisory council of the Saint John's Wood Art School.

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In [1883](#) he married Esther Kenworthy, the daughter of an art schoolmaster from Ealing who herself exhibited her own flower paintings at the Royal Academy and elsewhere. Waterhouse married Esther, who was 25 when he was 34. The newly married couple lived in an artistic colony in Primrose Hill. They had two children but, tragically, both died at a young age.

John William Waterhouse was a classical, romanticist painter, giving to his art highly imaginative interpretations of mythological characters and personages from ancient history as well as from poetry and literature. Early in his career Waterhouse used friends and members of his family as sitters.

It is believed his sister Jessica (Jessie) was one of his earliest models. She is thought to appear in Waterhouse's [Miranda](#) (1875) and *Whispered Words* (1875). Mary Waterhouse Somerville, his sister-in-law, and his wife Esther also sat for the artist. Mary is thought to have posed for "The Lady of Shalott".

The faces of other models and friends filled his sketchbooks and canvases over the years. Anthony Hobson wrote: "Any consideration of his later work will show how closely his pictures are built around the actual presence in the studio of a few favorite models ..."

It is thought that a model by the name of Muriel Foster also posed for Waterhouse for many of his paintings and recent discoveries seem to bear this out.

Any consideration of his later work will show how closely his pictures are built around the actual presence in the studio of a few favorite models, and the tender vulnerability of this beautiful young girl must have made a powerful impact on the middle-aged artist.

Another model has been identified as Gwendoline Gunn. As a close friend who sat for the artist she must have been an inspiration to him, though, and is surely a part of that unique beauty that is represented in the art of J. W. Waterhouse.

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A classic English beauty, her face delicate and seductive in her early years. Waterhouse painted her first in *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* when she was still very much a young girl, around fifteen. Waterhouse continuing to paint her feminine beauty at every turn from around 1893 until about 1906, and then again starting in 1909 until the end of his life. Moreover, the fact that she appeared in so many of his works raised critical questions at the time as to whether he should have used a single model so consistently, not to mention raising eyebrows due to his practice of starting every painting of her as a nude. However, despite the number of times her face appeared in Waterhouse's works, the name of his favorite model was unknown or forgotten until recent times. As late as 1981 she was still very much a mystery figure if it weren't for the finding of a pencil sketch bearing the name Miss Muriel Foster.

Little is known about Muriel's life. She apparently studied nursing during the years she posed for Waterhouse and eventually found her place in that field at the Oakland's

Nursing Home in St. Leonards-on-sea, Hastings. It was there she died in 1969 at the age of 91.

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Another woman, Mary Lloyd, a professional artists' model who sat for several well-known Victorian painters including Sir Frank Dicksee and Lord Leighton is seen in these artist renderings. Her likeness has sometimes been confused with that of Dorothy Dene, a fellow model.

In 1933 an article was published about Mary: *The story of Mary Lloyd who had the face of an angel, but outlived her luck*. Following the publication of this article it seems that little, if anything, was written about Mary Lloyd until a decade ago. Her role as a model and muse to some of the most eminent Victorian painters was seemingly forgotten, eclipsed by the brighter memory of Dorothy Dene.

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Due to Miss Lloyd's refusal to pose nude, Draper employed another model, Rhoda Winter, for the figure drawings for Athene. Mary retained her respectability by posing for older reputable artists such as Holman Hunt, Burne-Jones, Tadema, Richmond and Draper, and at the Royal Academy Schools she would only pose draped or for head studies. As the older generation dwindled in the twentieth century and she suffered a serious illness, she was forced into the decline that would see her living in a squalid garret and taking in ironing for a living. By 1909 she was modeling at the Royal Academy Schools and gone was her reign as one of the most popular muses in London. Her name was even erroneously logged in the work ledger at the Academy Schools in later years as *Marie Lloyd*. When Draper painted Mary she was at the pinnacle of her career and at her most beautiful. The artists who painted Mary in the 1890s adapted her features to fit their personal conception of beauty and, though she was in her mid-thirties when she was modeling, in the eyes of the artists who painted her she had the ageless beauty of an antique marble Venus. Tadema painted her as a Roman idler in 'A Coign of Vantage', while Dicksee painted her as an enigmatic sorceress in 'The Magic Crystal' and as a narcissist in 'The Mirror'. She was a favorite model of Leighton's and in the mid-1890s she posed for several pictures, including 'Lachrymae' and probably also 'Flaming June' (despite the traditional suggestion that Dorothy Dene posed for this canvas). Draper emphasized the strong features of the model for his conception of Athene, the powerful Goddess of War and Wisdom. He first sketched a profile of Mary's head in his sketchbook in June 1893, whilst she was living in the most artistic area of London, on Queen's Road in St John's Wood. Lloyd relied on artists recommending her services to their friends, and Draper's introduction came via Leighton... It was common practice for artists to exchange models... Draper, in turn, introduced Mary to Ralph Peacock, who painted her in 'A Study' of 1896."

Mary's physical characteristics were dark wavy long hair, an upturned nose, thick eyebrows, a long neck and a strongly defined jaw-line.

His models provide a theme of interest in themselves. They are absolutely central to his work, and they are feminine almost without exception... he was addicted to drawing and

there is a whole series of finely modeled female heads in chalk, a number of which may be of friends rather than professional models... But the paintings show how as the years went by he continually sought his ideal vision of womanhood, rather than some character type adapted to each new subject. The extraordinary thing is that he found her and remained faithful to her in his art, reflecting the distant ideal of medieval courtly love in the warmed mirrors of Italian passion and Greek sensuality.

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“In the Peristyle” : 1874

A peristyle is a series of columns surrounding a building or enclosing a court.

You can see the rose bushes in the background with just a few light colored roses on it.

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“Portrait of a Young Woman” - 1875-1878

This painting was discovered on the BBC television program 'The Antiques Roadshow'. At the Coalville show (26 March 1998), Peter Nahum identified a portrait of a woman in a red dress (complete with a glaring hole in the canvas) as an early Waterhouse painting. The model is thought to be John's sister Jessica.

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“After the Dance” - 1876

The picture shows a Roman interior, with a portion of the atrium and a peep into the court beyond. Two figures, a boy and a girl, recline on cushions, one sitting and the other languidly stretched on the tessellated pavement with a tambourine alongside. In the distance a group of minstrels on the extreme left complete the composition... There is no pretence of archaeological display, nor any highly-wrought detail, or accessories introduced for the mere mastery of textures.

Two Greek girls, gracefully draped, resting themselves in the *atrium* of the house wherein they have been dancing. The coloring is quiet, and yet not without a certain richness, the prevailing tints being yellow, green, brown and grey. One girl lies on her back, the other sits at her side.

A rose is seen in the hand of the seated figure.

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“A Sick Child brought into the Temple of Aesculapius” – 1877

A small bouquet of light pink roses can be seen behind the central figure lying in a basket.

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“Diogenes” - 1882

Diogenes of Sinope, d. c.320 BC, was a Greek philosopher, perhaps the most noted of the Cynics. He pursued the Cynic ideal of self-sufficiency, a life that was natural and not dependent upon the nonessential luxuries of civilization. A student of Antisthenes, he is credited with the development of the chreia (moral epigram), with a scandalous attack of convention entitled Republic (which influenced Zeno of Citium), and with tragedies illustrative of the human predicament. Because Diogenes believed that virtue was better revealed in action than in theory, he made his life a protest against what he thought of as a corrupt society. He is said to have lived in a large tub, rather than house, and to have gone about Athens with a lantern in the daytime, claiming to be looking for an honest man--but never finding one. In later art, Diogenes is often depicted in a torn cloak, with a dog, carrying a lantern.

A basket of pink roses lies on the steps behind the figure in pink.

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“A Flower Market – Old Rome” - 1886

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“Ophelia” - 1894

Ophelia is the daughter of Polonius, sister to Laertes, and rejected lover of Hamlet in Shakespeare's tragedy *Hamlet*. Ophelia is a symbol of innocence gone mad. A dutiful daughter, she is manipulated into spying on Hamlet and must bear his humiliating and brutal remarks. She believes him to be mad, commenting sadly "O, what a noble mind is here o'erthrown." Having lost Hamlet's affection, she herself goes mad when her father is killed by Hamlet. Her mad scene (act IV, scene 5) is one of the best known in Western literature. Her madness and death and Hamlet's behavior at her graveside further inflame Laertes to vengeance.

A small pink rose bush is near the bottom right of the rendering.

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“The Shrine” - 1895

A young woman stoops to smell the enticing fragrance of a bowl of dark pink roses. Another small pink rose grows against the wall at the left of the rendering.

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“St. Cecilia” - 1895

Cecilia lived in Rome around 230 AD. She is famous for taking a lifelong vow of chastity which she kept despite her enforced marriage. She converted her husband to Christianity and both suffered martyrdom. In medieval times, a misreading of her Acts led to her connection with church music and when the Academy of Music was established at Rome in 1584, she was adopted as its patroness. Her saint's day is celebrated on 22 November.

This painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1895, with the quotation from Tennyson's 'The Palace of Art':

'In a clear walled city on the sea.

Near gilded organ pipes - slept St. Cecily'. A reviewer in The Art Journal wrote:

'.. in St Cecilia, the important work which represents nearly two years unremitting toil and experiment, the aim is wholly decorative, the color superb, and the painting swift and direct; that of a man who has reached his goal. The feeling is entirely mediaeval... The effect is decorative first, then somewhat ecclesiastic; entirely removed from realism and the world of our daily life.' This painting was auctioned in June 2000 and fetched a world-record price for a Victorian painting.

The model for both of the angels was Muriel Foster.

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“Mariana in the South” - 1897

The character Mariana in William Shakespeare's 'Measure for Measure' is the jilted lover of Angelo, the acting governor of Vienna. Angelo abuses the powers of government invested in him by the duke, by offering to pardon Isabella's brother, Claudio, who has been sentenced to death for seduction, if she will sacrifice her honor to him. The duke, disguised as a friar, learns of Angelo's terrible conduct and contrives Claudio's escape. The ruse is for Isabella to consent to attend Angelo's house at midnight, but to send Mariana in her place, thereby foiling Angelo's designs whilst liberating Claudio. Alfred, Lord Tennyson, made Mariana the subject of two poems, 'Mariana' and its sequel 'Mariana in the South', dwelling on her abject despair as she waits in the lonely moated grange for her lover to return, while her surroundings decay around her. Her tears fall night and morning and she cannot draw pleasure from anything in heaven or on earth. Tormented by haunting voices from her past, she is overcome by weariness and yearns for death.

A dark pink rose is pictured reflected in the mirror.

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“Flora and the Zephyrs” - 1898

Flora was the Roman goddess of flowering plants. The Zephyr was the wind from the West. Zephyrus was the god of the West Wind, and dwelt with his brother wind, [Boreas](#), in a palace in Thrace. He was father of the immortal horses, Xanthus and Balius, Achilles' battle steeds who galloped with the speed of wind.

A circlet of white roses surrounds Flora while a child behind her brings more roses in a bundle. Red roses are pictured at the feet of the child.

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“Ariadne” - 1898

Each year, as payment for the slaughter of Minos' son, the Athenians offered a tribute of youths and maidens to the monstrous Minotaur that dwelt in the Cretan labyrinth.

Designed by Dedalus, the labyrinth was built of such complexity that nobody had ever escaped from its confines. Ariadne's father, Minos, the King of Crete, selected Theseus as part of the offering, but on his arrival at the island Ariadne fell in love with him and, loath to see him die, secretly gave him a spool of thread by which he could trace his way from the maze. Theseus slew the Minotaur and fled from Crete, carrying Ariadne away as his wife, but when they arrived at the island of Naxos the Olympic gods shrouded his mind with forgetfulness and he deserted her while she lay asleep.
White roses are seen on the wall above the leopard.

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“The Awakening of Adonis” - 1900

In Greek mythology, Adonis was a youth of remarkable beauty, the favorite of the goddess Aphrodite. Traditionally, he was the product of the incestuous love Smyrna (Myrrha) entertained for her own father, the Syrian king Theias. Charmed by his beauty, Aphrodite put the newborn infant Adonis in a box and handed him over to the care of Persephone, the queen of the underworld, who afterward refused to give him up. An appeal was made to Zeus, the king of the gods, who decided that Adonis should spend a third of the year with Persephone and a third with Aphrodite, the remaining third being at his own disposal. Adonis became an enthusiastic hunter, and was killed by a wild boar during the chase. Aphrodite pleaded for his life with Zeus, who allowed Adonis to spend half of each year with her and half in the underworld. The central idea of the myth is that of the death and resurrection of Adonis, which represent the decay of nature every winter and its revival in spring. He is thus viewed by modern scholars as having originated as an ancient spirit of vegetation. Annual festivals called Adonia were held at Byblos and elsewhere to commemorate Adonis for the purpose of promoting the growth of vegetation and the falling of rain. The name Adonis is believed to be of Phoenician origin (from 'adon, "lord"), Adonis himself being identified with the Babylonian god Tammuz.

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“Miss Margaret Henderson” - 1900

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“The Lady Clare” - 1900

This painting is based on *The Lady Clare* by Alfred Lord Tennyson.

It was the time when lilies blow,
And clouds are highest up in air.
Lord Ronald brought a lily-white doe
To give his cousin, Lady Clare.
I trow they did not part in scorn:
Lovers long betrothed were they;
They two will wed the morrow morn;
God's blessing on the day!

"He does not love me for my birth
Nor for my lands so broad and fair;
He loves me for my own true worth,
And that is well," said Lady Clare.
In there came old Alice the nurse,
Said, "Who was this that went from thee?"
"It was my cousin," said Lady Clare;
"To-morrow he weds with me."
"Oh, God be thanked!" said Alice the nurse,
"That all comes round so just and fair:
Lord Ronald is heir of all your lands,
And you are not the Lady Clare."
"Are ye out of your mind, my nurse, my nurse,"
Said Lady Clare, "that ye speak so wild?"
"As God's above," said Alice the nurse,
"I speak the truth: you are my child.
The old earl's daughter died at my breast;
I speak the truth, as I live by bread!
I buried her like my own sweet child,
And put my child in her stead."
"Falsely, falsely have ye done,
O mother," she said, "if this be true,
To keep the best man under the sun
So many years from his due."
"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret for your life,
And all you have will be Lord Ronald's,
When you are man and wife."
"If I'm a beggar born," she said
"I will speak out, for I dare not lie,
Pull off, pull off the brooch of gold,
And fling the diamond necklace by."
"Nay now, my child," said Alice the nurse,
"But keep the secret all you can."
She said, "Not so; but I will know
If there be any faith in man."
"Nay now, what faith?" said Alice the nurse,
"The man will cleave unto his right."
"And he shall have it," the lady replied,
"Though I should die to-night."
"Yet give one kiss to your mother, dear!
Alas, my child! I sinned for thee."
"O mother, mother, mother," she said,
"So strange it seems to me!
"Yet here's a kiss for my mother dear,
My mother dear, if this be so,

And lay your hand upon my head,
And bless me, mother, ere I go."
She clad herself in a russet gown,
She was no longer Lady Clare:
She went by dale, and she went by down,
With a single rose in her hair.
The lily-white doe Lord Ronald had brought
Leapt up from where she lay.
Dropped her head in the maiden's hand.
And followed her all the way.
Down stepped Lord Ronald from his tower:
"O Lady Clare, you shame your worth!
Why come you dressed like a village maid,
That are the flower of the earth?"
"If I come dressed like a village maid,
I am but as my fortunes are:
I am a begger born," she said,
"And not the Lady Clare."
"Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"For I am yours in word and in deed;
Play me no tricks," said Lord Ronald,
"Your riddle is hard to read."
Oh, and proudly stood she up!
Her heart within her did not fail:
She looked into Lord Ronald's eyes,
And told him all her nurse's tale.
He laughed a laugh of merry scorn:
He turned and kissed her where she stood;
"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the next in blood--
"If you are not the heiress born,
And I," said he, "the lawful heir,
We two will wed to-morrow morn,
And you shall still be Lady Clare."
A large pink rose is seen in the models hair behind her right ear.

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"Nymphs finding the Head of Orpheus" - 1901

Traditionally, Orpheus was the son of a Muse (probably Calliope, the patron of epic poetry) and Oeagrus, a king of Thrace (other versions give Apollo). According to some legends, Apollo gave Orpheus his first lyre. Orpheus' singing and playing were so beautiful that animals and even trees and rocks moved about him in dance. Orpheus joined the expedition of the Argonauts, saving them from the music of the Sirens by playing his own, more powerful music. On his return, he married Eurydice, who was soon killed by a snakebite. Overcome with grief, Orpheus ventured himself to the land of

the dead to attempt to bring Eurydice back to life. With his singing and playing he charmed the ferryman Charon and the dog Cerberus, guardians of the River Styx. His music and grief so moved Hades, king of the underworld, that Orpheus was allowed to take Eurydice with him back to the world of life and light. Hades set one condition, however: upon leaving the land of death, both Orpheus and Eurydice were forbidden to look back. The couple climbed up toward the opening into the land of the living, and Orpheus, seeing the Sun again, turned back to share his delight with Eurydice. In that moment, she disappeared.

Orpheus himself was later killed by the women of Thrace. The motive and manner of his death vary in different accounts, but the earliest known, that of Aeschylus, says that they were Maenads urged by Dionysus to tear him to pieces in a Bacchic orgy because he preferred the worship of the rival god Apollo. His head, still singing, with his lyre, floated to Lesbos, where an oracle of Orpheus was established. The head prophesied until the oracle became more famous than that of Apollo at Delphi, at which time Apollo himself bade the Orphic oracle stop. The dismembered limbs of Orpheus were gathered up and buried by the Muses. His lyre they had placed in the heavens as a constellation. Small white roses are pictured at the feet of the model on the left.

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“Psyche opening the Door into Cupid’s Garden” - 1904

Psyche represents the human spirit or soul, and in mythology she was represented as a princess so beautiful that people adored her instead of Venus. To put an end to this sacrilege, Venus sent her son Cupid to make Psyche fall in love with the ugliest creature he could find. but when Cupid saw her he fell in love and forgot his mother's command. They became lovers, though Cupid forbade Psyche ever to look upon him. When at last she did, he fled in fear of what Venus would do to him in revenge. Psyche roamed the earth in search of her lover, facing obstacles thrown in her way by Venus to prove that she was worthy of her son. One of these tasks involved a golden box which she was forbidden from opening. When she did open it, she fell into a deep sleep of death. Eventually, however, Jupiter agreed that the lovers could be united for eternity. The couple's daughter was named Voluptas ("pleasure"). In Greek mythology, Venus is represented by Aphrodite , Cupid by Eros and Jupiter by Zeus.

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“The Soul of the Rose” - 1908 (aka My Sweet Rose)

Tennyson’s ‘Maud’

Maud has a garden of roses
And lilies fair on a lawn;
There she walks in her state
And tends upon bed and bower,
And thither I climb’d at dawn
And stood by her garden-gate;

A lion ramps at the top,
He is claspt by a passion-flower.

Rosy is the West,
 Rosy is the South,
Roses are her cheeks,
 And a rose her mouth.

For I am not invited,
But, with the Sultan's pardon,
I am all as well delighted,
For I know her own rose-garden,
And mean to linger in it
Till the dancing will be over;
And then, oh then, come out to me
For a minute, but for a minute,
Come out to your own true lover,
That your true lover may see
Your glory also, and render
All homage to his own darling,
Queen Maud in all her splendour.

Come into the garden, Maud,
 For the black bat, night, has flown,
Come into the garden, Maud,
 I am here at the gate alone;
And the woodbine spices are wafted abroad,
 And the musk of the rose is blown.

II.

For a breeze of morning moves,
 And the planet of Love is on high,
Beginning to faint in the light that she loves
 On a bed of daffodil sky,
To faint in the light of the sun she loves,
 To faint in his light, and to die.

III.

All night have the roses heard
 The flute, violin, bassoon;
All night has the casement jessamine stirr'd
 To the dancers dancing in tune;
Till a silence fell with the waking bird,
 And a hush with the setting moon.

IV.

I said to the lily, 'There is but one
 With whom she has heart to be gay.
When will the dancers leave her alone?

She is weary of dance and play.'
Now half to the setting moon are gone,
And half to the rising day;
Low on the sand and loud on the stone
The last wheel echoes away.

V.

I said to the rose, 'The brief night goes
In babble and revel and wine.
O young lord-lover, what sighs are those,
For one that will never be thine?
But mine, but mine,' so I sware to the rose,
'For ever and ever, mine.'

VI.

And the soul of the rose went into my blood,
As the music clash'd in the hall;
And long by the garden lake I stood,
For I heard your rivulet fall
From the lake to the meadow and on to the wood,
Our wood, that is dearer than all;

VII.

From the meadow your walks have left so sweet
That whenever a March-wind sighs
He sets the jewel-print of your feet
In violets blue as your eyes,
To the woody hollows in which we meet
And the valleys of Paradise.

VIII.

The slender acacia would not shake
One long milk-bloom on the tree;
The white lake-blossom fell into the lake
As the pimpernel dozed on the lea;
But the rose was awake all night for your sake,
Knowing your promise to me;
The lilies and roses were all awake,
They sigh'd for the dawn and thee.

IX.

Queen rose of the rosebud garden of girls,
Come hither, the dances are done,
In gloss of satin and glimmer of pearls,
Queen lily and rose in one;
Shine out, little head, sunning over with curls,
To the flowers, and be their sun.

X.

There has fallen a splendid tear
From the passion-flower at the gate.
She is coming, my dove, my dear;

She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near;'
And the white rose weeps, 'She is late;'
The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear;'
And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,
My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.
Come into the garden, Maud,
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She is coming, my life, my fate;
The red rose cries, 'She is near, she is near;'
And the white rose weeps, 'She is late;'
The larkspur listens, 'I hear, I hear;'
And the lily whispers, 'I wait.'

XI.

She is coming, my own, my sweet;
Were it ever so airy a tread,

My heart would hear her and beat,
Were it earth in an earthy bed;
My dust would hear her and beat,
Had I lain for a century dead;
Would start and tremble under her feet,
And blossom in purple and red.

Slide 25

“Gather ye Rose-buds while ye may” - 1908

Based on a poem by Robert Herrick (1591-1674) *To Virgins to Make Much of Time*.

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old Time is still a-flying;
And this same flower that smiles today,
To-morrow will be dying.

The glorious lamp of heaven, the Sun,
The higher he's a-getting;
The sooner will his race be run,
And nearer he's to setting.

That age is best, which is the first,
When youth and blood are warmer;
But being spent, the worse, and worst
Times still succeed the former.

Then be not coy, but use your time,
And while ye may, go marry;
For having lost but once your prime,
You may for ever tarry

In this picture, the maiden stands looking out of a window while she is reflected in a mirror behind her head. We see in the reflection, two purple flowers one standing erect symbolizing the present, and one bent over indicating things past their prime.

Slide 26

“Mrs. A.P. Henderson” - 1909

A lovely pink diaphanous gown adorned with a lovely pink rose

Slide 27

“Thisbe” - 1909

Also known as 'The Listener'. Thisbe, a maiden of Babylon, was forbidden by her parents to marry her beloved Pyramus. The two lovers defied their families by exchanging vows through a chink in the wall which divided their houses, and plotted to elope together, fixing upon a white mulberry bush at the tomb of Ninus as the appointed spot. Arriving at the site, Thisbe was surprised by a lioness, fresh from the kill, and, in her haste to escape into a nearby cave, let slip her veil. The lioness mauled the veil, coating it with the blood of her prey. On his arrival, Pyramus discovered the cloth and believing it to be stained with the blood of his love, stabbed himself through the heart. Thisbe, coming out from hiding, found Pyramus' body and overcome with grief, threw herself upon his sword. Their mingled blood seeped into the ground and turned the fruit of the mulberry tree black as a sign of mourning for them.

In the background on the window ledge a dark blue vase seems to hold a small bouquet of small pink roses.

Slide 28

“Gather ye Rosebuds While ye may” - 1909

Celebrating the splendor of youth and the joys of spring, this important rediscovery was made by Odon Wagner. The work has never been exhibited in public and was reproduced only once during the artist's lifetime. The painting is signed and dated 1909 and has been established as the first picture in the Symbolist 'Persephone' series that engrossed Waterhouse from 1909 to 1914.

Slide 29

“Vanity” - 1910

A young beauty admires her reflection in a hand mirror while placing a pink rose in her hair.

Slide 30

“Penelope and the Suitors” - 1912

While her husband, Ulysees, was absent fighting in the Trojan War, Penelope waited faithfully for him in Ithaca. When he failed to return at the end of the war she was plagued by persistent suitors and, even though she remained aloof, the local noblemen could not be discouraged. Desperate to avoid re-marriage, she conceived the idea of postponing her decision until she had completed weaving a piece of tapestry intended as a shroud for Laertes, Ulysees' father. Every night she unraveled the work she had done during the day thereby prolonging her labor until the return of Ulysees finally delivered her from the suitors.

One of the suitors extends a bouquet of roses to the hapless Penelope.

Slide 31

“Mrs Charles Schreiber” - 1912

Slide 32

“Sweet Summer” - 1912

A light pink rose bush stands guard over a raven-haired reclining figure.

Slide 33

“The Annunciation” - 1914

While the lily is most often seen pictured in this setting, we see that Waterhouse also included a small rose bush in the foreground of the painting.

In Christianity, the Annunciation is the announcement by the angel Gabriel to the Virgin Mary that she would conceive a Son of the Holy Spirit to be called Jesus (Luke 1:26-38).

Slide 34

“I am half sick of shadows,’ said the Lady of Shalott - 1916

There she weaves by night and day

A magic web with colours gay.

She has heard a whisper say,

A curse is on her if she stay

To look down to Camelot.

She knows not what the curse may be,

And so she weaveth steadily,

And little other care hath she,

The Lady of Shalott.

The Lady of Shalott is a magical being who lives alone on an island upstream from King Arthur's Camelot. Her business is to look at the world outside her castle window in a mirror, and to weave what she sees into a tapestry. She is forbidden by the magic to look at the outside world directly. The farmers who live near her island hear her singing and know who she is, but never see her.

The Lady sees ordinary people, loving couples, and knights in pairs reflected in her mirror. One day, she sees the reflection of Sir Lancelot riding alone. Although she knows that it is forbidden, she looks out the window at him. The mirror shatters, the tapestry flies off on the wind, and the Lady feels the power of her curse.

An autumn storm suddenly arises. The lady leaves her castle, finds a boat, writes her name on it, gets into the boat, sets it adrift, and sings her death song as she drifts down the river to Camelot. The locals find the boat and the body, realize who she is, and are saddened. Lancelot prays that God will have mercy on her soul.

This is one of Tennyson's most popular poems.

A small rose can be seen in the lower part of the mirrored reflection.

The model for this rendering of the Lady of Shallot is thought to have been Beatrice Flaxman. It is thought that she posed for several of his paintings as he seemed to have a fondness for red-haired models.

Slide 35

“The Decameron” - 1916

Giovanni Boccaccio wrote *The Decameron* between the years 1348-53. The work is regarded as his masterpiece, and, stylistically, it is the most perfect example of Italian classical prose, and its influence on Renaissance literature throughout Europe was enormous. *The Decameron* begins with the flight of 10 young people (7 women and 3 men) from plague-stricken Florence in 1348. They retire to a rich, well-watered countryside, where, in the course of a fortnight, each member of the party has a turn as king or queen over the others, deciding in detail how their day shall be spent and directing their leisurely walks, their outdoor conversations, their dances and songs, and, above all, their alternate storytelling. This storytelling occupies 10 days of the fortnight (the rest being set aside for personal adornment or for religious devotions); hence the title of the book itself, Decameron, or "Ten Days' Work." The stories thus amount to 100 in all. Each of the days, moreover, ends with a canzone (song) for dancing sung by one of the storytellers, and these canzoni include some of Boccaccio's finest lyric poetry. In addition to the 100 stories, Boccaccio has a master theme, namely, the way of life of the refined bourgeoisie, who combined respect for conventions with an open-minded attitude to personal behavior.

Slide 36

“Fair Rosamund” - 1917

Rosamond (born circa 1140, died circa 1176). Also spelled Rosamund, known as 'The Fair Rosamond'. Rosamond was a mistress of Henry II of England. She was the subject of many legends and stories.

Rosamond is believed to have been the daughter of Walter de Clifford of the family of Fitz-Ponce (the ruins of the castle where she was born are located just outside the book town of [Hay-on-Wye](#), Wales). She is said to have been Henry's mistress secretly for several years but was openly acknowledged by him only when he imprisoned his wife, Eleanor of Aquitaine, as a punishment for encouraging her sons in the rebellion of 1173-74. Rosamond died in or about 1176 and was buried in the nunnery church of Godstow before the high altar. The body was removed by order of St. Hugh, bishop of Lincoln, in 1191 and was, seemingly, reinterred in the chapter house.

The story that she was poisoned by Queen Eleanor first appears in the French Chronicle of London in the 14th century. The romantic details of the labyrinth at Woodstock, including the clue that guided King Henry II to her bower, were the inventions of storywriters of later times. There is no evidence to support the popular belief that she was the mother of Henry's natural son William Longsword, Earl of Salisbury.

A lovely pink climber adorns the window, while small pink roses are held in a golden vase on the table.

Slide 37

“The Enchanted Garden” - 1917

This was one of Waterhouse's final paintings. He left it unfinished at his death. 'He created this haven of warmth in the winter of his life, but almost unwittingly imbued it with a deeper meaning. Past the Dantesque guardian at the entrance, the snow is falling on the steps: it gathers on the entablature above the rounded Renaissance arches which evoke the Italy of his birth, and a few flakes are seen against the shadows of the arcade. But in the garden the roses bloom; one of the girls bends to inhale their scent, and the poppies presage a quiet oblivion. Roses and snow together sum up the duality of desire and restraint in all his work, and because poetry was ever-present in his life, he must also have had Tennyson's Arthur in mind, and 'the island-valley of Avilion, where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow. Nor ever wind blows loudly.'

The painting makes a fitting epitaph, for what is the work of Waterhouse if not an Enchanted Garden?

Slide 39 (The End)