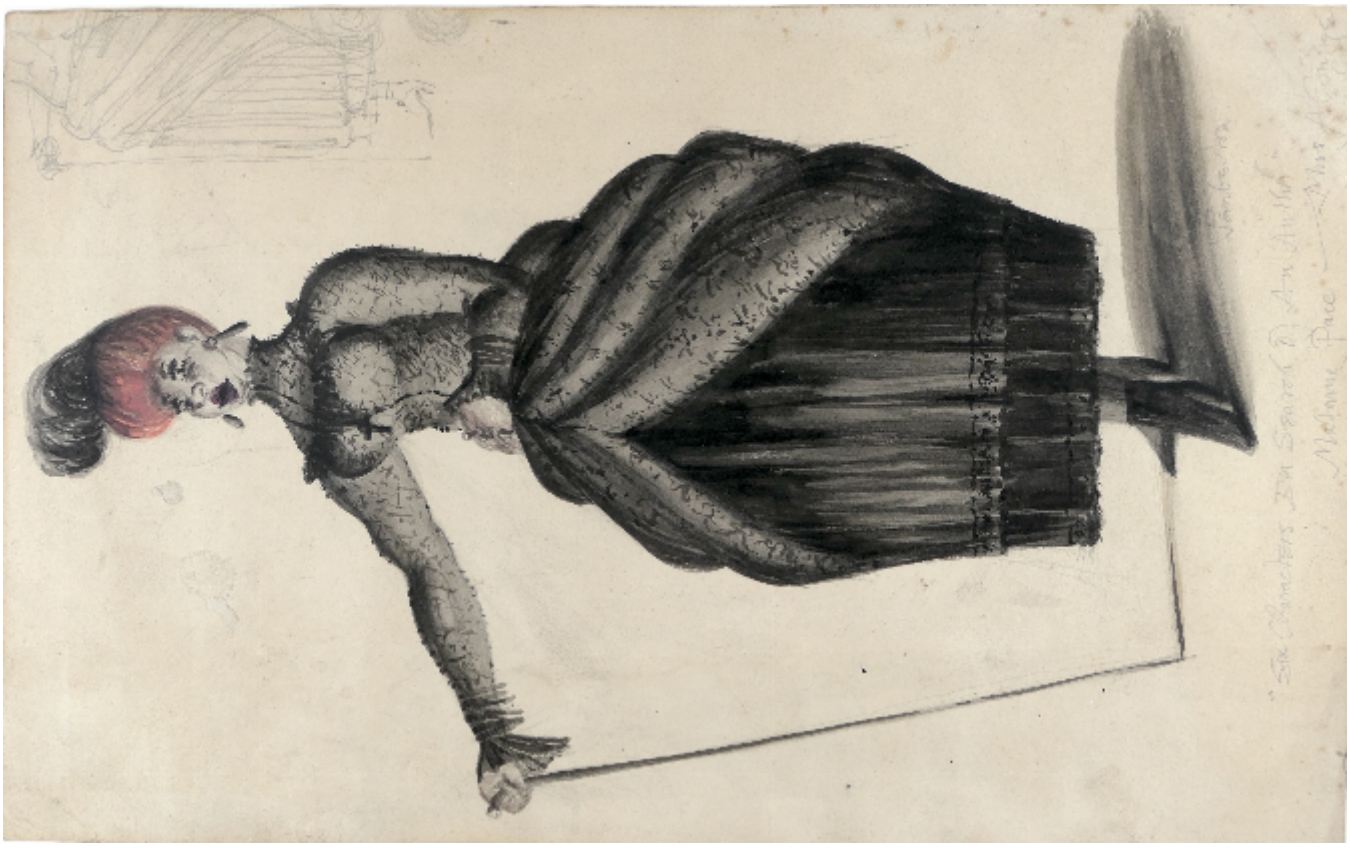
Edith Te Kara Aldridge as Madame Pace, from Six Characters in Search of an Author

John Pemberton

£450



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REF: 1117

Height: 46 cm (18.1")

Width: 28.5 cm (11.2")

Framed Height: 62 cm (24.4")

Framed Width: 44 cm (17.3")

Description

This powerful costume design exemplifies John Pemberton's qualities as a fine artist as well as a theatre designer, with the quirkiness of his Surrealist imagination and style evident. It shows the Indigenous New Zealand actor Edith Te Kara Aldridge (1915-2010), who played both Madame Pace and the Wardrobe Mistress in Nganio Marsh's 1950 production of Luigi Pirandello's 'Six Characters in Search of an Author' at the Embassy Theatre, London.The picture is accompanied by a copy of the original production programme, which records that the play's "Setting" or "Decor" was by John Pemberton, who was presumably also responsible for designing the costumes, which were made by Joanna Banks. Madame Pace's role is as a pimp, luring "poor girls from good families" to work as prostitutes. The absurdist play about the relationship between authors, characters and theatre practitioners was first performed in 1921 in Rome, to a mixed reception. It first came to the West End in 1922 and was also performed in 1931. The New Zealand writer, Dame Ngaio Marsh, revived the play in 1948, with a production in Christchurch starring Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. The next year, she brought this production to London, featuring the Maori actor, Kara Aldridge.

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