

Is this the face of Alessandro di Marco? The forgotten features of a well-known Italian model

Scott Thomas Buckle



1 *The Beguiling of Merlin* by Edward Burne-Jones (1833-98), 1872-7. Oil on canvas, 186 x 111 cm. National Museums Liverpool (Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight)

2 *William J Stillman* by an unknown photographer, 1871. Carte de visite, 10.3 x 6.3 cm. Private Collection

In 1873, the artist Edward Burne-Jones started work upon a new version of *The Beguiling of Merlin* (Pl 1) after the paint on the version that he had begun the previous year had become unstable. The original commission for the painting came from Frederick Leyland in around 1870, although the picture was not completed until 1877.¹ Some of the delay was due to the need to find suitable models for the subjects of Merlin and the enchantress Nimuë. Burne-Jones himself had been enchanted by the beautiful Greek sculptress Maria Zambaco, and it was she who was to model for the head of Nimuë.² Finding a model for Merlin was to prove more difficult and, in response to a suggestion from Dante Gabriel Rossetti that the American writer William J Stillman might make a good model, Burne-Jones wrote:

I really think Stillman would do for me, but how can I ask him! I must think about it incessantly for the next few days, and may the Almighty enlighten me. I don't think I can ask him, knowing him so little and the pose being torture.³

The artist's widow, Lady Burne-Jones, recounted the above in her *Memorials* of her late husband, written some 30 years

later and added, 'But Mr. Stillman's kindness overcame all difficulties.'⁴

It has therefore been generally accepted that WJ Stillman did sit to Burne-Jones for the head of Merlin, but comparison between the model's features in the painting and contemporary likenesses of Stillman would suggest that this was not the case. Photographs of William J Stillman taken in the 1860s and '70s show him to have been bearded, with a high forehead and with quite prominent ears (Pl 2).⁵ By contrast, Merlin is depicted clean-shaven, with a more chiselled jaw, sunken cheeks and a furrowed brow. But if Stillman was not the model for the head of the beguiled Merlin in Burne-Jones's canvas, who was?

The Herschel Album (National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, Bradford) contains the only known print of a photograph taken by Julia Margaret Cameron in 1867 called *Iago, Study from an Italian* (Pl 3).⁶ When compared with the head of Merlin from Burne-Jones's *The Beguiling of Merlin* (Pl 4), it becomes apparent that both likenesses are taken from the same model. Cameron's indication that the model was an Italian excludes the American William J Stillman from the equation, who, in any case was out of the country at the time that the *Iago* photograph was taken, and did not return to England until 1869.⁷ The identity of the model who posed for Cameron's *Iago* has proved to be the subject of much speculation. Colin Ford has suggested that the same model had posed for GF Watts several times in the 1870s, most notably for *The Prodigal Son* (Watts Gallery, Compton).⁸ Mary Watts's catalogue of the Watts Collection recalls that the study was 'made from a well known Italian model'⁹ and this was thought to be a reference to the model Angelo



3 *Iago, Study from an Italian* by Julia Margaret Cameron (1815-79), 1867. Albumein print, 33.4 x 24.8 cm. National Museum of Photography, Film & Television, Bradford (Julia Margaret Cameron/SSPL)

4 Detail from painting illustrated in Pl 1

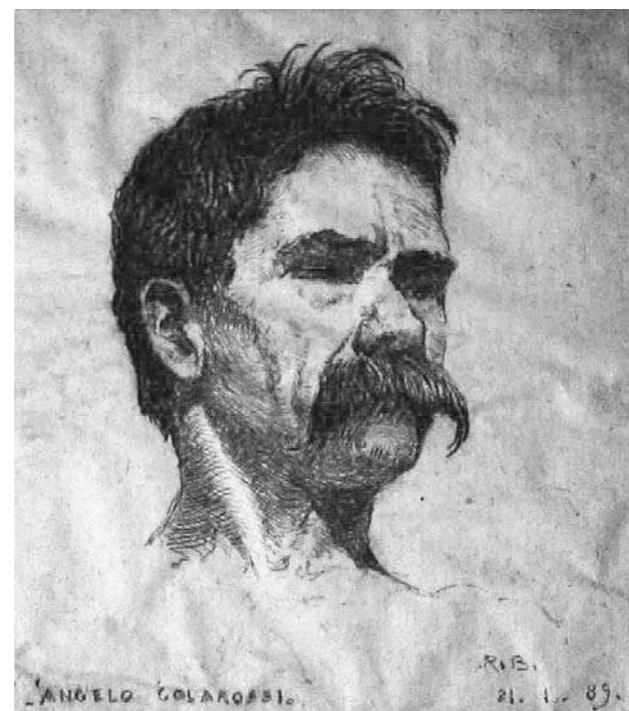
5 *Angelo Colarossi* by Robert Bryden (1865-1939), 1889. Etching, 12 x 10 cm. Private Collection, London

6 *Study of the Head of a Roman youth* by Frederic, Lord Leighton (1830-96), 1853. Graphite on white paper, 22.6 x 18.2 cm. Leighton House, London

7 *Portrait of Alessandro di Marco* by Eduardo Rosales (1836-73), 1857. Oil on canvas, 56.5 x 44.5 cm. Whereabouts unknown

Colarossi.¹⁰ Colarossi certainly was a well-known model in artistic circles of his day, posing for the likes of Leighton, Sargent, Millais, and Waterhouse, but upon comparison with known likenesses of him, the argument that he posed for *Iago, Study from an Italian*, appears less convincing. For much of his life Colarossi appears to have worn his hair short and sported a prominent moustache (Pl 5)¹¹ and there is no obvious similarity in facial features between him and the model who posed for Cameron's *Iago*.¹² Colarossi's son, also named Angelo, was apprenticed to the sculptor Sir Alfred Gilbert and modelled for his statue of *Eros* in Piccadilly Circus, London, but he wasn't born until 1876 – almost 10 years after Cameron's photograph of *Iago* was taken.

There were several Italian models who were regularly employed by British artists in the second half of the 19th century. Gaetano Meo is known to have modelled for Simeon Solomon, Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Alma Tadmara and Lord Leighton, as well as becoming a studio assistant to Sir William Blake Richmond;¹³ Domenico Mancini posed for Watts, Blake Richmond, Alma Tadmara, Sargent, Draper and Holman Hunt; and Alessandro di Marco and Antonia Caiva were both favoured by Blake Richmond and Burne-Jones.¹⁴ In the catalogue for the major Burne-Jones exhibition in 1998-9 we are told:



'He almost never identified his models, and it is generally unwise to hazard a guess on the subject... Even if we know their names, Burne-Jones's models cannot necessarily be identified... We should never underestimate Burne-Jones's extraordinary capacity to impose his ideal on his models.¹⁵

A review of Burne-Jones work at the Paris exposition in 1878 bears this out, discussing the facial similarity of subjects in three paintings by the artist, including the recently completed *The Beguiling of Merlin*:

Here, for instance, are three pictures, in all of which, both male and female, is the same type of character, expression, and face; and a similar peculiarity may be observed in all his later works. They are all the same person, or of the same family, with the same prominent chin, the same large sickly sad eyes, hollow cheeks, and full lips.¹⁶

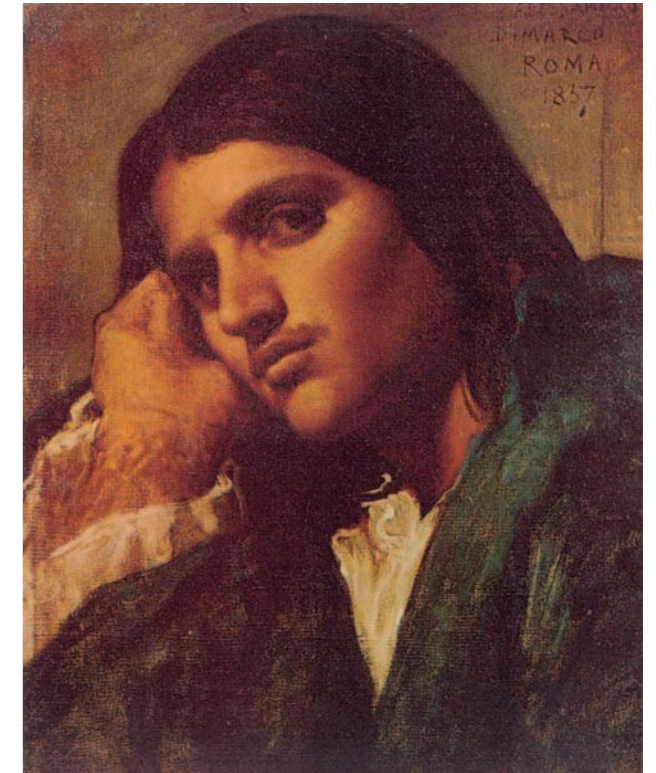
It could be surmised, then, that Burne-Jones may have imposed his ideal upon the features of William J Stillman when painting *The Beguiling of Merlin*, but comparison with Julia Margaret Cameron's *Iago, Study from an Italian*, sug-



gests otherwise. In this instance it would seem that Burne-Jones remained quite faithful in reproducing the features of an Italian model who had been photographed by Cameron six years earlier. Bearing in mind the above warning about attempting to positively identify any of Burne-Jones's models, I would like to propose that the sitter for both pictures was Alessandro di Marco, a model who is known to have posed for Burne-Jones and for several of his contemporaries.

Despite the many references to di Marco in books about Victorian artists, few authors have ventured positively to identify him as the model for any individual works and as a consequence it has proved difficult to present him in as clear a light as some of the other better-known artists' models working at around the same time. I hope to be able to demonstrate that Alessandro di Marco's features can now be more easily recognized, by offering a comparison with works that, with some certainty, are known to depict him.

Little at present is known of Alessandro's early life, but he is believed to have originated from the region of Piedmont in northwest Italy¹⁷ and it has been stated that his original trade was as an organ grinder.¹⁸ By 1853 he was in Rome, where he modelled for the young Frederic Leighton who was working on his painting *Cimabue's Celebrated Madonna is Carried in Procession through the Streets of Florence* (Royal Collection). Leighton's pencil *Study of the Head of a Roman youth* (Pl 6)¹⁹ shows a handsome boy of about 12 years of age, with shoulder-length hair and a confident smile. The artist also made a study in oils of the youth's head, the only known oil study of an individual head for *Cimabue's Celebrated Madonna*.²⁰ Despite Alessandro's obvious beauty, Leighton seems to have preferred another model at this time, Vincenzo, whom he described as 'the prettiest and wickedest boy in Rome', his face frequently featuring in sketches and paintings produced during his stay in the city.²¹ With the success of *Cimabue's Celebrated Madonna* at the Royal Academy in the summer of 1855, Leighton firmly established himself within the London art world, although he continued to travel around Europe for the next few years. Alessandro remained in Rome, where he was painted by the

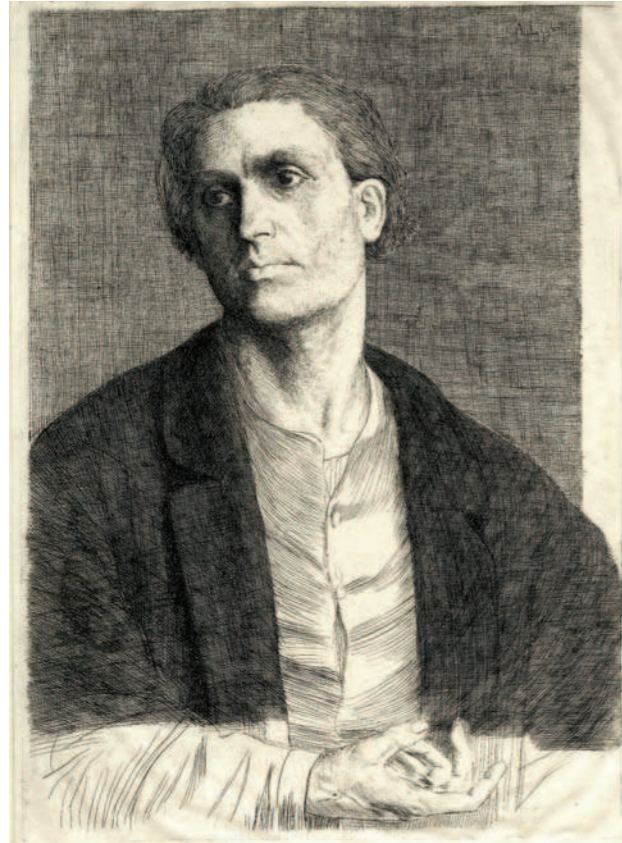


Spanish artist Eduardo Rosales. If there was any doubt as to the identity of the boy who appeared in Leighton's drawing four years earlier, Rosales clearly inscribed the sitter's name, date and location in his *Portrait of Alessandro di Marco, Roma, 1857* (Pl 7).²²

It is not known for certain if Alessandro continued to work as a model in Rome for the next decade, nor is it known how he first found work as an artists' model in London. It may be that, like so many other Italian models, he went on to find work in Paris. The artist Sir William Blake Richmond provides some invaluable information about the Italian models that he employed:

The war had forced Paris to disgorge the Italian models, who came over to us. There was, indeed, a splendid group of them to choose from, and finding the English pay better than the Parisians, many remained here for years. Among them was Alessandro di Marco, a man who seemed to stride out from Signorelli's grand frescoes, a man whom we all painted and drew from, a fellow so graceful and of such a colour, a kind of bronze-gold, having a skin of so fine a texture that the movement of every muscle was not disguised, not a film of fat disfigured his shapely limbs. Only a peasant, people say! Yes – but of a race of Kings – so noble he looked. Alessandro was the most inspiring model I have ever drawn from, so different to the retired Grenadier or cavalryman to whom we had been much used – fellows as stiff as drill could make them as a conscientious Englishman can be.²³

Alessandro di Marco was certainly working as a model in London by 1867. In a letter from Alphonse Legros to the painter Philip Hermogenes Calderon dated 7 January of that year, Alessandro is mentioned as a preferred model of Legros.²⁴ Legros had come to London in 1863 and earned acclaim as an art teacher and an influential printmaker, his friends and pupils including the likes of Burne-Jones, Simeon Solomon and Maria Zambaco.²⁵ Legros produced an etching of a *Portrait study of a man* (Pl 8)²⁶ in 1867, which shows a rather rugged-looking Alessandro di Marco, who also modelled for the *Martyrdom of St Sebastian* which the artist was working on during the same year.²⁷ Over the next



few years Alessandro also appears to have modelled for Legros in several other paintings. He can be seen as an organist in *A May Service for Young Women*, 1868 (Victoria & Albert Museum), as a young priest in *Rehearsing the Service*, c1870 (Tate Collection), as well as being the subject of a portrait by Legros in 1869 (formerly with Fine Art Society, London).²⁸ A chalk study of Alessandro's head

(Carlisle Museum and Art Gallery) for Legros' 1870 Royal Academy exhibit *Scène de Barricade* was once owned by Legros' pupil George Howard.²⁹ George Howard (later 9th Earl of Carlisle), is also known to have studied drawing with Burne-Jones, and is said to have shared his models Alessandro di Marco and Angelo Colarossi.³⁰

It looks probable that Leighton employed Alessandro di Marco to pose for the figure of Jonathan in *Jonathan's Token to David* (Pl 9) painted c1868. It is also possible that he was the model for his painting of *A Condottiere* (Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery) in 1872 and that he would have posed for some of the figures in Leighton's frescoes in the Victoria & Albert Museum, also painted in the 1870s.³¹ Leighton's fellow Olympian painter Edward John Poynter employed di Marco as a model when making studies for the decoration of the Palace of Westminster (Pl 10) and St Paul's Cathedral.³² An inscription by Poynter on a figure study for his 1869 painting *The Prodigal's Return* (formerly in the Forbes Collection) indicates that Alessandro was the model for one of the figures.³³ Poynter's choice of subject and model may have influenced GF Watts' treatment of the subject a few years later.

Simon Reynolds suggests that Alessandro di Marco was the model for several works by Sir William Blake Richmond, including *The Release of Prometheus*, *Orpheus*, *Hermes*, *The Athlete* and *The Arcadian Shepherd*.³⁴ He also appears to have modelled for some of the figures in the artist's 1885 Grosvenor Gallery exhibit *An Audience in Athens during the Representation of the Agamemnon* (Birmingham City Art Gallery).³⁵ There is a story that when working upon his painting *The Renaissance of Venus* (Pl 11) Walter Crane engaged Alessandro di Marco to pose for the female figure of Venus, after Crane's wife apparently objected to her husband using a naked female model.³⁶

The Venus, the larger canvas of the two, was the supreme effort, and prayers had been put up to the Olympian Frederic Leighton that he should descend to Shepherd's Bush and pronounce upon it; which he had duly done according to his good-natured

8 *Portrait study of a man* by Alphonse Legros (1837-1911), 1867. Etching, 37.2 x 27 cm. British Museum, London. © Trustees of the British Museum

9 *Jonathan's Token to David* by Frederic, Lord Leighton, c1868. Oil on canvas, 171.5 x 124.5 cm. The Minneapolis Institute of Arts, Minnesota. Image courtesy of the Minneapolis Institute of Arts, The John R. Van Derlip Fund, 74.71.

10 *A study for the mosaic of St George in the Central Lobby, Palace of Westminster* by Edward John Poynter (1836-1919), 1869. Black and white chalks on brown paper, 40.6 x 30.5 cm. British Museum, London. © Trustees of the British Museum

11 *The Renaissance of Venus* by Walter Crane (1845-1915), 1877. Tempera on canvas support, 138.4 x 184.1 cm. Tate Collection, London

12 *Study of the head of a man (possibly for Love Among the Ruins)* by Edward Burne-Jones, c1874. Pencil, 15 x 17 cm. Private Collection. Image courtesy of the Maas Gallery, London



custom. I did not then hear his criticism, but learned later on (and elsewhere) that he had delivered himself thus 'But my dear fellow, that is not Aphrodite – that's Alessandro!' – Alessandro being a well-known male model who had in fact materially assisted in the genesis of the Anadyomene.

For alas, the fiat of domestic authority had gone forth against female models as being neither necessary nor desirable additions to a young artist's equipment, and thus Walter Crane's goddess showed a blending of the sexes which was mystically correct but anatomically surprising.

Still she was a fine, upstanding slip of a boy, and in the clear sunlit atmosphere and the charming colour scheme of ivory, blue and almond she passed for Venus pleasantly enough, and later on, finding grace in the eyes of GF Watts, the painter, she hung for many years on the stairway of Little Holland House.³⁷

From 1868 onwards, Alessandro di Marco modelled regularly for both the Life School and the School of Painting at the Royal Academy of Arts.³⁸ The academician 'Visitors' who arranged his poses as a model included Leighton, Poynter and Millais.³⁹ The sculptor Sir William Hamo Thornycroft records one such sitting in his diary for May 1873:

... RA life school from 5 to 7. Leighton, visitor. Marco sitting as a gondolier in full action which he maintains the two hours without rest. He is so fine – continually reminds me of the fighting gladiator.⁴⁰

A month later, Thornycroft also recorded that he posed di Marco for a picture that his sister was painting:

Model (Alessandro) came to sit to Teresa for her medal picture. I posed the model for her and made sketches of him. He sat from 7 till 4. Received 8s and his food.⁴¹

The fact that he could pose for eight or more hours in one day without discomfort demonstrates that Alessandro would have been a much more suitable choice for Burne-Jones's *Merlin* than an unprofessional model. Hamo Thornycroft himself used di Marco as a model, his name appearing frequently in sketchbooks, notebooks and diaries,⁴² although he was later to enlist the services of Orazio Cervi as his favourite model.

Burne-Jones chose Alessandro di Marco and Antonia Caiva as his models for *Love Among the Ruins*,⁴³ a watercolour dating from the early 1870s which was badly damaged in 1893



when sent to a Paris photographer to be reproduced as a photogravure.⁴⁴ Burne-Jones was eventually to repaint the subject in a new version in oils, but a pencil study of Alessandro's head (Pl 12),⁴⁵ possibly made for the original composition, gives a good indication of what the Italian model looked like at around the time that work also began on *The Beguiling of Merlin*. The artist was later to write of his two models in a letter to Helen Mary Gaskell:

Antonia Caiva of the City of Basilicata stood for it – she was like Eve & Semiramis and people at the beginning of time... at the same time I had another Italian called Alessandro di Marco who was like Adam – ah! it was a fine time when I had those two and...if I had them now in their glory I could better use them – they came a little too early for me.⁴⁶

While there is indisputable evidence that Alessandro di Marco was working as an artists' model in London from 1867



13 Study of the head of Alessandro di Marco by Thomas Matthews Rooke (1842-1942), c.1875. Pencil, 11.5 x 18.5 cm. Private Collection, London

14 Study of the head of Alessandro di Marco by Thomas Matthews Rooke, 1879. Pencil, 11.5 x 18.5 cm. Private Collection, London

15 Studies for the figure of Merlin - *The Beguiling of Merlin* by Edward Burne-Jones, c.1873. Black chalk and pencil, 33.5 x 23.5 cm. Private Collection. © Christie's Images Limited 2004

16 *Jephtab's Victory* by Thomas Matthews Rooke, 1882. Oil on canvas, dimensions unknown. Whereabouts unknown. Image reproduced from *Sacred Art* by AG Temple, London, 1898

17 Study of a male nude - *An Audience in Athens during the Representation of the Agamemnon*, by Sir William Blake Richmond (1842-1921). Charcoal and white chalk, 35.5 x 17.5 cm. Jane Cohen, London



onwards, records of his personal life have proved to be more elusive. His name does not seem to feature in any of the UK Census returns for the successive decades that he is known to have been living in Britain. An 1874 marriage certificate does exist for a 37-year-old artists' model named Nicandro De Marco and his 23 year old wife, Marie Carmela Crolla. Their address is given as 8 Lawn Terrace, North End, Fulham, a street which was located directly opposite Burne-Jones's house, the Grange.⁴⁷ It is possible that Nicandro may have been a relative of Alessandro, or that they may even have been one and the same person. What does seem significant is that one of the witnesses at the wedding was Angelo Colarossi, the man formerly thought to have been the model for Cameron's *Iago, Study from an Italian*. In March 1875 the De Marcos had a son named Antonio, their place of residence on the child's birth certificate is listed as 14 Masbro Road, Hammersmith, an address which, in the 1881 UK Census, just also happened to be the home of Angelo Colarossi and his family.⁴⁸

During the 1870s and 80s, Burne-Jones's studio assistant Thomas Matthews Rooke compiled a sketchbook of head

studies from favourite models.⁴⁹ Among the sitters were many of Burne-Jones's regular models, including Bessie Keene and her mother Annie Keene, who also posed for a number of photographs by Julia Margaret Cameron.⁵⁰ At least two of the studies from the sketchbook show Alessandro di Marco: one is undated, but inscribed by the artist with the name of the sitter (Pl 13); a second is dated '6 January [18]79' (Pl 14).⁵¹ These provide important documentary evidence of the sitter's appearance, and go on to support the proposition that he was the model for both *The Beguiling of Merlin* and *Iago, Study from an Italian*. Rooke's portrait studies bear up in comparison with a sheet of preparatory head and hands studies for the figure of Merlin by Burne-Jones that was offered at auction in 2004 (Pl 15).⁵² The head studies of di Marco may not directly relate to a finished painting by TM Rooke, but Alessandro's features can clearly be discerned in Rooke's *Jephtab's Victory* (Pl 16), which was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1882.⁵³

From these likenesses we can attempt to build up a more accurate picture of what Alessandro di Marco looked like and hope to identify other pictures which he modelled for with a

greater degree of confidence. For instance, he can now be easily recognized as one of the central figures in Edward Armitage's 1868 painting of *Herod's Birthday Feast* (Guildhall Art Gallery, London) and he may also have been the model for Simeon Solomon's 1870 watercolour, *The Mystery of Faith* (Lady Lever Art Gallery, Port Sunlight),⁵⁴ a painting that echoes Legros' *Rehearsing the Service*. John William Waterhouse also appears to have painted Alessandro as the white-robed priest in his 1877 Royal Academy exhibit *A Sick Child Brought into the Temple of Aesculapius* (Collection Sir Tim Rice).

But it is Edward Burne-Jones who seems to have chiefly employed the Italian model, using his muscular physique in many compositions produced in the 1870s. It is only, however, where his facial features are recorded as well that we may have a greater chance of recognizing him.⁵⁵

Alessandro di Marco's popularity as a model was in its ascendancy during the 1860s and 1870s, although it appears that he was still being employed as a model by Burne-Jones and Blake Richmond (Pl 17) during the 1880s. Alessandro can once more be seen in Evelyn De Morgan's *The Gilded Cage* (De Morgan Foundation), much older in years, but still commanding a striking presence within the composition (Pl 18).⁵⁶ The story of his life remains chiefly untold, but his eyes alone speak volumes, and the surviving comments of artists and art historians hint that he was more than just an average

Victorian model earning his keep. There appears to be little or no record of what happened to him in later life, apart from one mention of him in the studio of the artist Edwin Austin Abbey at Fairford, Gloucestershire in 1891:

... in the autumn came Colarossi to pose for Mr. Sargent, and old Demarco, who had a very beautiful head, was there for Abbey, but later when Mr. Sargent needed a younger model Abbey took on Colarossi.⁵⁷

As a postscript, a short, but interesting letter addressed to Sir William Hamo Thornycroft survives amongst the sculptor's papers at Leeds. The note is undated, and reads:

Dear Sir
I hope you will pardon the liberty I am taking in writing to you but I wish to ask you if you would give me a sitting at the Royal Academy next month. I am the son of Alessandro Di Marco. I have a very good figure.⁵⁸

The letter is signed 'Antonio Di Marco'.

Antonio di Marco is known to have posed as a model at the Royal Academy schools, and a record of receipts for payments to him survives within the Academy's archives.⁵⁹ The address, '43 Iffley Road, Hammersmith W', inscribed at the top of his letter to Thornycroft, accords with that entered in his 1901 UK Census return, where his age is given as 26, his place of birth, 'Hammersmith', and his occupation given as 'Artists Model'. This would indicate that he is most likely to be



18 *The Gilded Cage* by Evelyn De Morgan (1855-1919). Oil on canvas. 90 x 107 cm. De Morgan Foundation, London. © De Morgan Foundation

the son born in 1875 to Nicandro De Marco and his wife, giving further support to the suggestion that Nicandro and Alessandro were the same person. Antonio would have been born at a time when Burne-Jones was still working on *The Beguiling of Merlin*. Like Colarossi, who was still living close by in Hammersmith with his family, it would seem that the name of another 'well-known Italian model' would be kept alive by a new generation.

In an attempt to shed some light upon the mystery behind one painting, the forgotten features of a once celebrated Italian model are once again put into focus. The 'same promi-

nent chin, the same large sickly sad eyes, hollow cheeks, and full lips' look out from so many paintings of the period, that it is a wonder that Alessandro di Marco's name is not better known today. If the argument that Alessandro was the model for both Burne-Jones's *The Beguiling of Merlin* and Cameron's *Iago, Study from an Italian* holds any sway, then he should deserve at least the same level of recognition as some other models of the period have attained.

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Soskice, Peter Trippi and Hettie Ward for all of their help and support.
1 For an in-depth study of the painting and its history see Edward Morris, *Victorian & Edwardian Paintings in the Lady Lever Art Gallery*, London 1994, pp7-11.
2 Letter from Edward Burne-Jones to Helen Mary Gaskell, February 1893, quoted in Penelope Fitzgerald, *Edward Burne-Jones*, London 1975, p150. Other sources have suggested that another of Burne-Jones's

favourite models, Mrs Keene may have been the model for Nimuč. W Graham Robertson, *Time Was: The Reminiscences of W.Graham Robertson*, London 1931, p281, states that Mrs Keene modelled for *Wivien and Merlin*, but this probably refers to the watercolour of that subject that Burne-Jones painted in 1861 (Victoria & Albert Museum), when Annie Keene would have been about 18 years old.
3 Georgiana Burne-Jones, *Memorials of Edward Burne-*

Jones, London 1904, pp39-40.
4 *Ibid.*, p40. Georgiana Burne-Jones neglects to record that Maria Zambaco modelled for the head of Nimuč, but then there is no mention of her by name anywhere in *Memorials*. Similarly, no names of professional models used by Burne-Jones are mentioned in the text of the book either.
5 Jeremy Maas, *The Victorian Art World in Photographs*, London 1984, p 159 and David B. Elliott, *A Pre-Raphaelite Marriage – The Lives and Works of Marie*

Spartali Stillman & William James Stillman, pp 46, 79.

- 6 Colin Ford, *The Cameron Collection*, London 1975, pp 92, 134.
- 7 Elliot, p58.
- 8 Ford, p134.
- 9 Mary Seton Watts, *Catalogue of the works of G.F.Watts, compiled by his widow*, 3 vols, unpublished c1910, I, p120.
- 10 Ford, p134, initially gives the name of the model as 'Alessandro Colorossi?' This is later corrected in Colin Ford, "'Mountain Nymph'" and "Damnèd Villain" – Posing for Julia Margaret Cameron', *History of Photography*, vol 27, no. 1 (Spring 2003), pp 60-65.
- 11 Angelo Colarossi was the model for the moustached old Genoese sailor in Sir John Everett Millais' 1870 painting *The Boyhood of Raleigh* (Tate Collection).
- 12 Martin Chisholm, 'The Man who was Eros', *Picture Post*, 28 June 1947, pp12-13, includes a photograph of Angelo Colarossi in later life.
- 13 Simon Reynolds's entry on Gaetano Meo can be found in Jill Berk Jimenez, *Dictionary of Artists' Models*, London/Chicago 2001, pp368-70.
- 14 Simon Reynolds, *William Blake Richmond – An Artist's Life 1842-1921*, Norwich 1995, p96. Reynolds (and other sources) gives her name as Antonia Cura.
- 15 Stephen Wildman and John Christian, *Edward Burne-Jones – Victorian Artist-Dreamer*, exh cat., Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1998, pp144-5.
- 16 Edward Henry Knight, *Reports of the United States commissioners to the Paris exposition*, 5 vols, Washington 1878, IV, p45.
- 17 *Annual report and bulletin – Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool* 1975, cat. 8610, in reference to an etching by Alphonse Legros states that 'the subject is Alessandro di Marco, a Piedmontese, who also served as a model for Poynter and other artists'. Other, as yet unverified, sources claim that he originated from Picinisco, a village in the Italian province of Frosinone, and the birthplace of other Victorian artists' models including Domenico Mancini, Orazio Cervi and Gaetano Valvona.
- 18 Fitzgerald, p82. Fitzgerald does not provide a source for this information. Robertson, pp302, 306, mentions a 'very charming Italian organ grinder' who became model-in-chief to both Arthur Melville and the author himself, although the organ grinder in question was named 'Antonio'.
- 19 Charlotte Gere *et al.*, *A Victorian Master – Drawings by Frederic, Lord Leighton*, exh cat., London 2006, p31, cat.1.4. The drawing is inscribed with the model's name 'Alessandro' [sic]. Studies for the sitter's hands are in the collection of the Victoria and Albert Museum (ref no.E.1844-1910)
- 20 Sotheby's New York, *19th*

- Century European Art*, Friday 23 April 2010 (lot 101).
- 21 Mrs Russell Barrington, *The Life, Letters and Work of Frederic Leighton*, 2 vols, London 1906, I, p154. Vincenzo modelled for the head of Romeo in Leighton's painting *The Reconciliation of the Montagues and Capulets* 1853-5 (Agnes Scott College, Decatur, USA)
- 22 Luis Rubio Gil, *Eduardo Rosales*, Barcelona 2002, p47 (formerly Viñas Geis Collection, Barcelona).
- 23 Mrs AMW Stirling, *The Richmond Papers*, London 1926, p272.
- 24 Paris, Bibliothèque d'Art et d'Archéologie, Papiers Clément-Janin, liasse 3, F 308, *lettre du 7 janvier 1867*. Legros wrote to request that he might borrow a habit that had belonged to Calderon's father (who had been a renegade priest).
- 25 Timothy Wilcox, *Alphonse Legros 1837-1911: catalogue de l'exposition présentée au Musée des Beaux-Arts de Dijon*, exh cat., 1988 p55 and passim.
- 26 *Ibid* p78, cat. 38, reproduces a later state of the etching (Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris) after the plate was cut down. The British Museum holds three different states of the etching within its collections.
- 27 Wilcox, pp78, 81.
- 28 *Spring 1990*, exh cat., Fine Art Society, London 1990, p6, cat. 4
- 29 Wilcox, p87, cat. 45
- 30 Caroline Dakers, *The Holland Park Circle*, Yale 1999, pp93-94.
- 31 Richard Ormond, *Leighton's Frescoes*, London 1975.
- 32 A study for the mosaic of *St George, Central Lobby, Palace of Westminster* (dated '10 August 1869') by Edward John Poynter is in the British Museum (repr Alison Smith, *Exposed – The Victorian Nude*, exh cat., London 2001, p189) and clearly shows Alessandro di Marco as the model, although his features are less recognizable in the finished mosaic in the Palace of Westminster. Di Marco also appears to have modelled for *Christ in Judgement* (c1882), a proposed mosaic decoration for the dome of St Paul's Cathedral. The large circular oil sketch was in the collection of the late Sir Brinsley Ford (Brinsley Ford, 'The Ford Collection', *Walpole Society*, LX, 2 vols, 1998, II, p160).
- 33 Christie's London, *The Forbes Collection of Victorian Pictures and Works of Art II*, Thursday 20 February 2003 (lot 270). The drawing is inscribed 'Mon Feb.8 Alessandro... /7 days'.
- 34 Reynolds, p96.
- 35 Bonhams Knightsbridge, *British and Continental Pictures*, 21 June 2011 (lot 323), featured a study of a seated figure that appears to have been drawn from Alessandro di Marco. (Pl 17)
- 36 Isobel Spencer, *Walter Crane*, London 1975, p75. Spencer suggests that Alessandro di Marco may have also been the

- model for Crane's *Love's Sanctuary*, (exhibited at the Old Bond Street Gallery in 1870).
- 37 Robertson, p39.
- 38 *Cash book: Life Academy and School of Painting*, 1857-1881 (Royal Academy of Arts RAA/TRE/3/13).
- 39 *Ibid.* Millais is recorded as the Visitor on 12 August 1871 when 'De Marco' gave six sittings in the School of painting. Alessandro may have modelled for Millais' *The Knight Errant* (Tate Collection), which was painted the previous year. Angelo Colarossi is also recorded as posing for the visiting artist at the RA schools on several occasions between 1868 and 1870.
- 40 Sir William Hamo Thornycroft, *Diary 1870-1882* (Henry Moore Institute, Thornycroft papers, J(a) p165)
- 41 Helen Upton, (*Hamo Thornycroft and his models The Alliance of Sculpture and Architecture, Studies in the History of Sculpture, Number 3*, Leeds 1993 p32.
- 42 *Ibid*, p30. A *Study for part of a right leg* (inscribed 'Alessandro di Marco July '73'), is illustrated as fig. 36.
- 43 Martin Harrison and Bill Waters, *Burne-Jones*, London 1973, pp113-114. Stirling, p274, however, states that Gaetano Meo '... sat to Burne-Jones for the man in *Love among the Ruins*'. This probably refers to the later version of the painting.
- 44 Georgiana Burne-Jones, opp237-8.
- 45 *British Pictures (1840-1940)*, exh cat., The Maas Gallery, London 1998, p22 (cat. 28).
- 46 Joseph A Kestner, *Mythology and Misogyny – The Social Discourse of Nineteenth-Century British Classical-Subject Painting*, Wisconsin 1989, pp84-85.
- 47 William E. Fredeman, ed, *The Correspondence of Dante Gabriel Rossetti*, 9 vols, Woodbridge, 2002-10, VI, pp201-202. Rossetti writes to Charles Augustus Howell on 13 July 1873, requesting him to visit 'Colorossi – 8 Lown Terrace, Northend' (sic) to collect some Italian chemises 'of the embroidered peasant kind'. The house that is referred to in the letter is clearly the same residence that 'Nicandro' was living at a year later.
- 48 Also resident at 14 Masbro Road in 1881 was the Italian model Orazio Cervi and his wife. The same year, Angelo Colarossi and his wife had a son whom they named 'Alessandro'.
- 49 The sketchbook, now disbound, was given by Mrs Celia Rooke to Julian Hartnoll, who still retains some of the contents.
- 50 Julian Cox and Colin Ford, *Julia Margaret Cameron – The Complete Photographs*, Los Angeles 2003, pp226-9. Annie Keene (usually referred to as Mrs Keene) appears in a number of photographs taken by Julia Margaret Cameron from around

- 1866, including *The Mountain Nymph Sweet Liberty*. Aside from the male model who posed for *Iago, Study from an Italian*, she is thought to be the only other professional model used by Cameron.
- 51 Both now in a private collection, London.
- 52 Christie's Australia, *The Collection of John Schaeffer at Rona, Sydney 15 & 16 May 2004*, lot 366, Edward Coley Burne-Jones, *Studies for the figure of Merlin – The Beguiling of Merlin*.
- 53 AG Temple, *Sacred Art*, London 1898, p91.
- 54 While the facial features greatly resemble those of Alessandro di Marco, the subject's eyes are blue. It could be that the artist deliberately changed the colour of the model's eyes to achieve a more dramatic effect. Burne-Jones also seems to have brightened the model's eyes in *The Beguiling of Merlin* to achieve a similar effect.
- 55 Alessandro di Marco may have been the model for *St Mark the Evangelist*, 1874 (Birmingham City Art Gallery, 1927P423) and he also appears to have modelled for the right hand villain *Saevitia* in a design for one of the cartoons for the *Masque of Cupid*, produced by Burne-Jones in 1871 (repr Julia Cartright, 'Sir Edward Burne-Jones, Bart. His Life and Work', *The Art Annual*, London, 1894, p17). Although dated 1888, Burne-Jones watercolour of *The Tree of Life (V & A)* appears to show Alessandro as the model for the crucified Christ, the scheme of designs for the American church in Rome being first conceived in the 1870s.
- 56 Catherine Gordon, *Evelyn De Morgan – Oil Paintings*, London 1996, p25, cat.72 records that the artist's sister, Mrs Stirling, maintained that the picture was painted in 1919 and left unfinished – only the figure of the man being fully painted – but goes on to state that this is patently untrue. The De Morgan Foundation's curator, Claire Longworth agrees that, on stylistic grounds, *The Gilded Cage* is more likely to date from the 1880s or 1890s.
- 57 EV Lucas *Edwin Austin Abbey Royal Academician, The Record of His Life and Work*, 2 vols, London 1921, I, p247.
- 58 *Hamo Thornycroft Papers* (HTP: C205), The Henry Moore Centre for the Study of Sculpture, Leeds City Art Galleries. Quoted in Upton, p30 n.
- 59 *Models' receipts 1897-1902* (Royal Academy of Arts RAA/TRE/7/1). Three payments to 'Antonio De Marco' are recorded for the year 1901.