

Manuscript of The Fairy Feller's Master Stroke **by Richard Dadd**

Acquisition of the autograph manuscript of a poem by Richard Dadd (1817-1886) 'Elimination of a Picture and its Subject, which describes Dadd's best-known picture, The Fairy-Feller's Master Stroke, which has been in the Tate Gallery since 1963. In this long, rambling and sometimes incoherent poem, Dadd explains the action in his painting and digresses on a number of subjects. The Fairy-Feller's Master Stroke was painted over nine years while Dadd was confined in the state lunatic asylum at Bethlem Hospital, following the murder of his father when he was 26. The poem was written shortly after his transfer to Broadmoor Hospital, having left the unfinished picture with the steward of Bethlem, for whom it had been painted. Bethlem Royal Hospital Archives are regarded as the principal centre for research on Dadd's life. Ink on paper, 193 x 117mm, 24ff, written on one side only, in a notebook in contemporary marbled wrappers. Signed and dated 'R D Dadd, Broadmoor, Jan'y 1865'

Nation/region

London

Grant awarded

£8,380

Award date

22/09/1998