



Ideas for the Mask of 'The Dance of Death': Four Heads

Catalogue Number

HMF 1111a

Artwork Type

Drawing

Date

c.1934

Dimensions

paper: 308 x 485 mm

Medium

brush and watercolour, pen and ink, pencil

Paper Support

off-white lightweight wove

Signature

(added later) pencil I.I. Moore/34

Inscriptions

pencil I.r. Ideas for the mask of 'The Dance of Death'; brush and watercolour c. FAN/behind/head

Ownership

The Henry Moore Foundation: purchased 1985

More Information

Robert Medley, who owned this and the following sketch, was a painter and stage designer who joined the staff of Chelsea School of Art in 1932 to teach life drawing and painting. Medley designed the sets for W.H. Auden's first play, *The Dance of Death*, performed by the Group Theatre, and it was through him that Moore was asked to design the mask. The play was a considerable success when it was first performed in London in 1934. Moore and Auden, fellow Yorkshiremen, stayed in touch, and some forty years later Moore was working on a series of lithographs to accompany poems by Auden when the poet died near Vienna, where the two had met only ten days earlier.