

## Weekend Wonder: Beatrice Offor - sharing our heritage from Bruce Castle Museum & Archive Saturday 21 March to Sunday 22 March 2020

This weekend is the first during this period of social isolation – so we thought that whilst the museum is temporarily closed and people need to stay inside at home, we would share some of our local heritage with you. Our wonderful collections are here to explore, and we hope we can bring some cheer and interest across the internet to you.

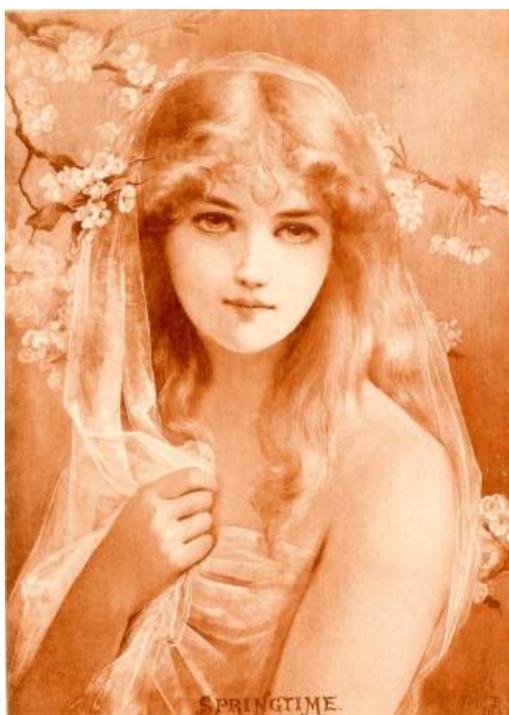
We will be showing photographs, paintings, documents and objects from the museum and archive alongside thoughts, little histories and memories brought to you by museum and archive staff as well as inviting guest historians, local authors, young curators and volunteers to contribute too.

This is the first sharing of our heritage email – [Weekend Wonder](#)

**Today – 21 March – would have been the birthday of Beatrice Offor RA (1864 – 1920).**

If the museum had been open to the public today then we would also have been celebrating her life with the launch of the exhibition '[Sisters, Sirens & Saints: Imagining the Women of Beatrice Offor](#)', as well as the first-ever conference about Beatrice Offor – a morning of talks showcasing her life and work. This [Special Event](#), along with the exhibition, was part of the wonderful Women's History Month programme of events that had been planned for Haringey – but [our Special Event](#) is only postponed and will be rescheduled later in the year. In the meantime, here's a glimpse of what will be in store ....

Bruce Castle has over 40 artworks by Beatrice Offor, mostly oil paintings. But many don't realise that she produced many prints and postcards based on her original drawings and paintings. Here are three pictures by Beatrice, including two postcards published by her that were popular at the time.



1. Inspired by the beautiful sunshine today promising the arrival of Spring, we thought we would choose this Edwardian postcard showing 'Springtime', as imagined by Beatrice in 1904.

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2. From the collections at Bruce Castle, some of you might already know the oil painting 'A Melody' by Beatrice Offor. This postcard was produced from that painting. It was published for a French audience and called 'Une Chanson Melodie'.

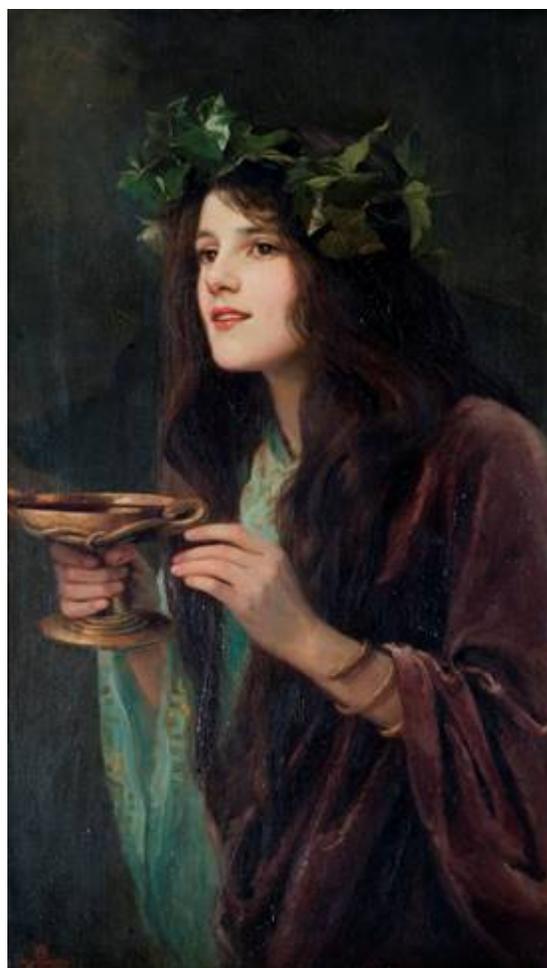
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3. The oil painting (far below) by Beatrice shows the sorceress 'Circe', from The Odyssey. Painted in 1911 from Beatrice's studio at her home at 8 Bruce Grove, Tottenham, 'Circe' was exhibited at the Royal Academy that year.

Popular still today, this particular painting by Beatrice can be found on many websites – and she has also been 'on the road' in 2019 and 2020, being exhibited at a temporary exhibition at the College of Psychics back in the summer and again more recently she has been on her travels to Italy. 'Circe' has joined paintings from around the world for an exhibition that shows different imaginings by artists in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries of Greek mythological characters in Homer's Odyssey. It has been a great honour that Beatrice's work has been chosen for such a prestigious exhibition.

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The exhibition in Forlì, (south-east of Bologna in north Italy), has very sadly – like the rest of Italy – been in shutdown. We hope that later in the year people in that region of Italy will be able to enjoy the exhibition once more before the painting returns to be part of our own exhibition.

4. When Beatrice Offor's widower James Beavan died in 1926, his son Robert gave the family's collection of Beatrice's artworks to Bruce Castle Museum. James had been an Alderman for Tottenham Urban District Council from 1905 and had donated other items for the museum's collections when it had newly opened in 1906. In 1931, many paintings from the Offor Collection were put on display in Tottenham Central Library, which used to be on Tottenham High Road near the High Cross. Some of Beatrice's paintings were painted on such a grand scale that few walls are large enough to display them. Here is a view of what was known as 'The Lecture Hall' at Tottenham Library. Looking across the top of the shelves we can see Beatrice's paintings arranged around the walls.



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works in this country in the public domain. Her oil paintings can be seen on the Art UK website: [www.artuk.org](http://www.artuk.org) (just search for Beatrice Offor).

We hope this has been a tantalising preview of the potential of what you can explore about Beatrice Offor in the future exhibition, the talks and related events and collections at Bruce Castle.

More sharing of our heritage next week.

Keep well

Best wishes

**Deborah Hedgecock** Curator

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