



Rita Duis (Astley-Bell) (American, 1905 - 1997)
Untitled (Irises)
Watercolor on paper
24 x 18 inches
#18017

Signed Duis A.W.S. lower right

Rita Duis (Astley-Bell)

Artist Rita Duis (Astley-Bell) led an incredibly colorful life. She was born into a wealthy New York family in 1905. In 1930, Duis was scandalously sued for \$100,000 for breach of promise by her suitor Graham Bell. In 1958, socialite Duis had a very public and bitter divorce from her husband Leonard Astley-Bell, president of Asiatic Petroleum Company, that was splashed across the New York papers. Duis claimed that Leonard Astley-Bell committed bigamy, as he obtained a Mexican divorce from her without her knowledge and then married another woman. Later in life, Duis moved to Chicago when her daughter Wendy married Lincoln Park Zoo Director Dr. Lester Fisher.

Duis exhibited at the Salmagundi Club in New York. She died in Chicago in 1997.