

SA1173352

Portrait of a Lady, Elizabeth Wray in a Silk Dress & Pink Wrap c.1698; Circle of Michael Dahl, Oil on canvas

Price

Sold

Item Reference: SA1173352

Date of manufacture: 17th Century

Dimensions

Height = 88 cm (34.6")

Width = 76 cm (29.9")

Depth = 6 cm (2.4")

Description

Bathed in soft light and framed by a luminous oval of carved and gilded wood, this portrait captures a moment of poised anticipation: a young woman on the threshold of adult life, composed yet full of inner vitality. Painted around 1695–1705, and attributed to the Circle of Michael Dahl, this portrait is most plausibly a depiction of Elizabeth Byng (1680–1759), later the wife of Reverend William Wray, Rector of Broad Chalke, Wiltshire. The painting likely marks a key moment in her life—possibly her coming of age, or a betrothal—during a period in England when portraiture served as a statement of social identity, familial pride, and future alliance. Elizabeth was born into a distinguished and intellectually engaged family. Her father, John Byng, was a gentleman of the City of London; her mother, Elizabeth Bateman, came from a family rooted in the capital's mercantile and professional class. But it was through her brothers—Robert Byng (1666–1720) and Edward Byng (c.1676–1753)—that Elizabeth stood at the very heart of the English artistic world. Both Robert and Edward were active in the vibrant portrait scene of late seventeenth-century London. Edward, in particular, bec...

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