

SA1183220

James Ferguson Miniature Portrait on Vellum

Price

GBP 575

| USD \$776 | EUR 673

Item Reference: SA1183220

Date of manufacture: 18th Century

Dimensions

Height = 6 cm (2.4")

Width = 5 cm (2.0")

Description

The artist and polymath James Ferguson was born into a poor Scottish family. With the help of an elderly neighbour, he taught himself to read and write. Growing up, Ferguson developed a love for astronomy whilst tending sheep, and for mechanics; he was engaged to several masters, some encouraging but others treating him cruelly. He first drew his distinctive miniature portraits in 1734 whilst a guest at the Edinburgh home of Lady Dipple. His first sitter, Lady Jane Douglas, was so pleased with her portrait that she encouraged her friends to commission the young artist. Finely drawn in India ink on vellum, this portrait shows a lady in a décolleté dress with a patterned bodice trimmed with lace and decorated with a large silk bow. Her dress is accessorised with a pearl necklace and large pearl drop earrings. Whilst the painting is in good condition the unpainted area shows some age-discoloration. The portrait is set in a gilt metal frame with a reeded edge and rubbing to the reverse side. James Ferguson's artistic career spanned 26 years and funded his studies in anatomy, surgery and physics but ultimately it was his love of astronomy that dominated his life and career. ...

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