

SA287952

Naive Portrait of a Family, possibly American c.1770.

Price

Sold**Item Reference: SA287952****Date of manufacture: 1750**

Description

This is an enchanting naive portrait of a family of four, possibly American. The unknown artist has filled the portrait with symbolism, which would be readily understood by the contemporary viewer. The husband places his arm protectively around his wife whilst he rests his hand on a volume entitled 'Pope's Essays'; Alexander Pope wrote several 'essays' of which perhaps the most famous was 'The Essay on Man'. The poem is an affirmative poem of faith: life seems to be chaotic and confusing to Man when he is in the centre of it, but according to Pope it is really divinely ordered. The limited intelligence of Man can only take in tiny portions of this order and can experience only partial truths, hence Man must rely on hope which then leads into faith. It is Man's duty to strive to be good regardless of other situations. The wife rests her hand on a basket of flowers signifying her fruitfulness and the warning that time is fleeting. The eldest boy has a parrot; these were expensive and exotic birds, thus displaying the wealth of the family. Also, in portraiture and contemporary literature, parrots, which could be trained to speak and perform tricks, were used as examples o...

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