

SA390832

Portrait of a Lady, possibly
Barbara Villiers, c.1662; Circle
or Studio of Lely.

Price

Sold

Item Reference: SA390832

Date of manufacture: Before 1700

Description

Oil on canvas in a carved and giltwood frame. A beautiful portrait of a beautiful young woman; she regards us with a coolly provocative look. Her hand, raised to her head, was the acknowledged symbol for thought and consideration, especially of a fashionable 'melancholy' type. Melancholia was considered the sign of a sensitive, intelligent and poetic nature. This was a pose much used by Lely; he painted Barbara Villiers, Countess of Castlemaine, Duchess of Cleveland and long term mistress of Charles II in similar poses several times, only the position of the head is different. See Image 5, painted in 1662 when Barbara was 22 years old, where she wears exactly the same clothes and jewellery as in this painting. SIR PETER LELY (1618 - 1680) was the most important portraitist in the reign of Charles II, although he had painted portraits throughout the Commonwealth. Principal Painter to the King, he painted everyone of importance, maintaining a busy and active Studio to help with the huge demand for his portraits. Members of his Circle, and his Followers, many of them talented artists in their own right, emulated his style to supply this constant market. SIZE:54 x 44 inches...

Internal Ref: 8928

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