

SA494437

Portrait of a Young Lady c.1750; Attributed to Philip Mercier.

Price

Sold**Item Reference: SA494437****Date of manufacture: 18th Century**

Dimensions

Height = 94 cm (37.0")

Width = 81 cm (31.9")

Depth = 5 cm (2.0")

Description

Oil on canvas in a very fine carved and giltwood period frame. The sitter is depicted holding a shepherd's crook; clearly she is in the land of Arcady (Arcadia) which was a mythical domain where innocence, love and happiness reigned and was a fashionable setting for portraiture and literature. She holds cherries which symbolise the early summer of one's life. The cherry was also known as the Fruit of Paradise, given as a reward for virtue, it also symbolises Heaven. A green parrot, as well as demonstrating the wealth of the sitter to own such an exotic creature, also...curiously...symbolised virginity. This was probably because of its association with the Virgin Mary in earlier art. The flowers in her hair and dress represent youth and its fleeting nature and, in particular, the ones tucked into her dress symbolise future fecundity. This is little doubt that this beautiful portrait was commissioned to commemorate the marriage of the this young woman. PHILIP MERCIER (also known as Philippe Mercier; 1689 in Berlin – 18 July 1760 in London) was a French painter and etcher, who lived principally and was active in England. He was born in Berlin of French extraction, the...

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