

SA536044

Portrait of Barbara Villiers, Duchess of Cleveland c.1665; Studio or Circle of Lely.

Price

Sold**Item Reference: SA536044****Date of manufacture: 17th Century**

Dimensions

Height = 89 cm (35.0")

Width = 78 cm (30.7")

Depth = 5 cm (2.0")

Description

Oil on canvas in a modern reproduction frame. As the most notorious and most frequently painted of King Charles II's mistresses, Barbara Villiers Duchess of Cleveland remains one of the most enduring symbols of the indulgences and excesses of the Restoration Court. This portrait derives from a work by Sir Peter Lely painted c.1662. A portrait, identical to this one, apart from being painted within a feigned cartouche, sold at Bonhams in December 2003 for £10,157 including buyer's premium. At the Restoration Villiers was established as the king's favourite mistress and despite his marriage to Catherine of Braganza and the jealousy of other courtiers, she maintained a powerful influence at Court. At least three of her children were acknowledged as his by the king and by 1665 she was termed the 'maitresse en titre'. Among her various liaisons was one in 1668 with the actor Charles Hart in retaliation for the king's growing attraction for actresses such as Moll Davis and Nell Gwyn. In 1670 she was created Baroness Nonsuch, Countess of Southampton and Duchess of Cleveland. This was a reward for her services but also a compensation for retirement. By the early 1670s her i...

Seller Details

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