

SA879551

Portrait of a Young Lady 1615,
by a Follower of William Larkin.

Price

Sold

Item Reference: SA879551

Date of manufacture: 17th Century

Dimensions

Height = 124 cm (48.8")

Width = 94 cm (37.0")

Depth = 6 cm (2.4")

Description

Oil on oak panel, inscribed 'Ao1615' and 'At 19'. (in the year 1615, in her 19th year). During the reign of Elizabeth I, portraiture in England became stylised, exaggerated and iconographic, as result of the Queen's desire to control her own image. This caused a blossoming of a particularly English style that was obsessed with surface, and the display of wealth through costume. It reached a brilliant climax during the second decade of the reign of James I, with artists such as William Larkin. This is an extremely fine painting of a young aristocrat who displays her extraordinary wealth in her clothing. At this period clothing was a vital indicator of status and it was not uncommon for the aristocracy to wear garments that cost as much as a prosperous farm was worth. It is impossible to overstate the importance of this display of status at this time. Portraits were seen as constructions of identity and status in society, and are impossible to contemplate without acknowledging the presence and importance of fabrics, clothes, accessories and jewellery. Red was a very expensive and fugitive dye and here the red dress is literally encrusted with diamonds and pearls; the ret...

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