

SA956334

Portrait of Margaret Brooke,
Lady Denham (c.1642–1667)
c.1660's; Circle of Peter Lely
(1618-80), Antique oil on
canvas painting

Price

Sold

Item Reference: SA956334

Date of manufacture: 17th Century

Dimensions

Height = 110 cm (43.3")

Width = 118 cm (46.5")

Depth = 5 cm (2.0")

Description

In this touching composition, painted around the time of London's Great Fire in 1666, a young woman has been depicted sitting on a stone seat wearing a bright amber-yellow dress and a gauzy scarf, held by her left hand, white full sleeves to the elbows, and resting her head on her right hand. At first the image seems like a straightforward one, but it in fact carries aesthetic and allegorical illusions, and their meaning would have been immediately recognised by contemporary audiences. The exact pattern and pose was used by Lely in his portrait of a lady, traditionally identified as Barbara Palmer, née Villiers (1640-1709), Countess of Castlemaine and 1st Duchess of Cleveland, three-quarter-length, in a yellow dress, a coastal landscape beyond (Christies London 7 Dec 2017, Lot 29, Sold for £368,750). The sitter in this exquisite portrait is Lady Denham, a famous court beauty during the latter half of the seventeenth century and thus a frequently painted women of her generation. Born, Margaret ("Elizabeth" in some sources) Brooke, around 1642, the daughter of Sir William Brooke (c.1598-1643), an English soldier and politician. She and her sister Frances, afterwards Lad...

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