



## 17th Century English Portrait Of A Lady C. 1670 - Circle Of William Wissing (1656 - 1687)



26 000 EUR

Period : 17th century

Condition : Parfait état

Material : Oil painting

Width : 148 cm

Height : 122 cm

Depth : 3 cm

### Description

A fine, rare, large-scale 17th century portrait of an elegant raven-haired beauty by an artist in the circle of William Wissing. The noble guardian (traditionally identified as Louise de Kérouaille, Duchess of Portsmouth) is depicted in three-quarter view seated on a bank in front of a rocky outcrop with a vast wooded valley landscape beyond. She appears delightfully undressed, expensively dressed in the brightly colored and fashionable silk garments of the time. Gold or saffron colored dresses like the one worn by our babysitter were extremely fashionable and expensive, her white shirt is trimmed with lace and her suit has a low, wide neckline that reveals her cleavage, it also has bow ties. jewelry To complete the look, her hair is worn in curls, some of which are piled dizzyingly atop her head, while

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#### PERIOD PORTRAITS

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others cascade naturalistically around her bare shoulders. Also noteworthy is the expressive use of the sitter's forearms as the center of attention and site of erotic attraction, as she caresses a necklace of shimmering pearls between her fingers. Throughout the 17th century there was a thriving trade in pearls, which were transported from Asia to Europe. The Gulf of Manner (between South India and Sri Lanka) was one of the pearl diving hotspots of the time. Divers weighed down heavy stones to dive into the depths, and they often had to retrieve up to 1,000 oysters before discovering a single pearl. With her elaborately jeweled dress, pearl hair ornaments, earrings and necklace, it is clear that this noble lady had riches in abundance.

William Wissing (1656-1687) Willem Wissing, known in England as William Wissing, was a Dutch portrait painter who worked in England. He was born in Amsterdam or The Hague and studied in The Hague under Willem Doudijns (1630-97) and Arnoldus van Ravestyn (1615-90). In 1676 he moved to England, where he studied and assisted Peter Lely. After Lely's death in 1680, Wissing became his most important student. Godfrey Kneller was the only contemporary portraitist in England to rival Wissing. Wissing's royal guardians include Charles II of England, Catherine of Braganza, George of Denmark and James Scott, 1st Duke of Monmouth. In 1685, James II of England sent Wissing to the Netherlands to paint portraits of his Dutch son-in-law and daughter, the future William III of England and the future Mary II of England. These portraits were often repeated; versions are on display in the Great Hall of the Wren Building at the College of William and Mary in Williamsburg, Virginia. Wissing died in 1687 at the height of his fame as a portrait painter, at Burghley House, the home of John Cecil, 5th Earl of Exeter near Stamford in Lincolnshire. Some suspected he was poisoned out of jealousy of his success. According to Arnold Houbraken, his epitaph was "Immodicis brevis est aetas",

meaning: "Brief is the life of the exceptional". He was buried in St Martin's Church, Stamford, Lincolnshire. This sensual and delicately characterized work is in an excellent state of conservation and is offered ready to hang in a sculpted and gilded "Lely style" frame. I am very grateful to Jacqui Ansell, Senior Lecturer, Christie's Education, for the detailed information and analysis she provided on fashion, costume and historical context. High resolution images on request. Worldwide shipping available. Canvas: 50" x 40" / 127m x 102cm. Framed: 48" x 58" / 148cm x 122cm.