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## Antoine Berjon (1754 - 1843), Hollyhocks



5 200 EUR

Signature : Antoine BERJON (Lyon 1754 - Id. 1843)

Period : 19th century

Condition : Très bon état

Material : Oil painting on paper

Width : 24 cm

Height : 31,3 cm

### Description

Oil on paper, mounted on canvas. 31.3 x 24 cm.  
Signed twice in ink on the right side. This still life by Antoine Berjon embodies all the refinement and sensitivity of a master of the genre. The work depicts a bouquet of hollyhocks arranged in a glass carafe, placed on a dark wooden table. The flowers, with their delicate and silky petals, display a range of reds, pinks, and nuanced whites, punctuated by a few yellow touches--perhaps a faded daisy. The deep, neutral brown background enhances the floral motif without distraction, creating a solemn and silent atmosphere. Berjon excels at rendering textures: the translucence of the glass, the subtle reflections on the carafe, the veins of the leaves, and the almost tactile softness of the petals. This attention to detail, inherited from his training as a

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miniaturist, lends the work a scientific precision imbued with poetry. A soft, lateral light gently caresses the flowers, enhancing their volume and creating a subtle interplay of light and shadow. The slightly tilted stems, drooping leaves, and seemingly unbalanced blossoms animate the composition and break away from rigidity. Here, Berjon places himself in the tradition of 17th-century flower painters while foreshadowing a Romantic sensibility. The work celebrates the ephemeral beauty of living nature in a sober and meditative composition. With its elegant execution and quiet intensity, this painting demonstrates the technical mastery and delicate observation of a true master. Antoine Berjon grew up in the Vaise district of Lyon. He began his career working alongside his father, a butcher, before turning to medical studies. He later studied drawing with the sculptor Perrache in Lyon. He also worked as a textile designer in a silk factory and quickly moved on to painting. Frequent business trips to Paris allowed him to meet many artists, including the portraitist Jean-Baptiste Jacques Augustin, with whom he formed a friendship. The silk factory where he worked was destroyed during the siege of Lyon (1793), prompting him to settle in Paris, where he lived in poverty for several years. After a late return to Lyon, he worked for an embroidery factory before being appointed professor of flower painting at the École des Beaux-Arts in Lyon, a position he held until 1823, when he was succeeded by Augustin Alexandre Thierriat. Berjon exhibited several times at the Paris Salon, notably in 1791, 1798, 1799, 1804, 1810, 1817, 1819, and 1842. In 1819, he was awarded a silver medal. In 1796, he also presented in Paris an engraving made using a technique he himself had invented.