THE LIMNER COMPANY



OZIAS HUMPHRY (1742 - 1810)

Portrait of a Gentleman, wearing a fur-trimmed scarlet coat, blue waistcoat and white cravat, his hair powdered

Circa: circa 1770-1780

Watercolour on ivory

Ivory registration number: 1KZMNEMS

Oval, 1 ¾ in (45mm) high

A comparison of this portrait to others by Ozias Humphry indicates that it comes from the period before he departed to India, around 1770-1785. In his early career, Humphry had remained close to Sir Joshua Reynolds, infamous portrait painter. He became known as the 'Reynolds in little' – a reference not only to the influence he took from the artist but also the fact that he would paint clients in miniature form.

There are clear signs of influence from Reynolds in the present work. In particular, the fur-lined coat that the sitter, who remains unidentified, wears. Such a coat was popular amongst contemporary artists for either depicting themselves, or other sitters. For example, Zoffany can be seen to adorn himself in a coat like this in his group portrait of the Royal Academicians.

Later in life, when Humphry's sight began to fail, he became the official portrait painter in crayons to George III and began to more healily depend on this medium. He died in 1810 in Bedford Square, London.