THE LIMNER COMPANY



Attributed to NATHANIEL HONE (1718 - 1784)

Portrait enamel of a lady in a pink dress trimmed with ermine

Circa: circa 1740

Circa 1740

Enamel on copper

Oval, 32 mm (1 1/4 in) high

Gilt metal mount

Nathaniel Hone (1718-1784) was a Dublin-born artist known by many for his achievements in enamel. A skilled enamellist, he also completed miniatures in watercolour on ivory as well as full-scale portraits in oil, and a number of etchings and mezzotints.

Hone migrated to England at a young age and traveled throughout the country practising portraiture. Settling in London, he became very involved in the arts there, eventually helping found the Royal Academy. It is widely believed that in 1750 he left for Rome and in 1752 he became a member of the Accademia del Disegno in Florence, returning to England in the same year.

It is thought that Italy is where Hone first became acquainted with Sir Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792) with whom he entered a feud famously boiling over in the dispute over Hone's painting *The Conjuror*. The work is said to have satirised fellow Royal Academicians Reynolds and Angelica Kauffman (1741-1807). Although Hone sent the painting to the Royal Academy, the Council refused to display it. Undeterred, Hone found another place to exhibit the work on St. Martin's Lane.

Throughout his career Hone painted for several Royal clients as well as many of the English elite. The portrait miniatures within his larger body of work consist of ladies, duchesses, countesses, baronesses,

knights, earls, military officers, and many other members of high society. His sitters, particularly the women, display an especially wide range of fashions. From hairstyles and dresses to jewellery and other accessories, no two women are dressed the same. The lady in the current miniature dons luminous chandelier earrings drawing attention to her equally glowing skin. The floral accessory in her hair and the ermine-edged coat similarly bring out the rosiness of her cheeks while the brilliant blue dress underneath with its delicate silver embroidery matches her radiant eyes.