THE LIMNER COMPANY



FRANÇOIS MEURET (1800 - 1887)

A Young Lady in a tulle and cotton white gown with pale pink roses at her corsage

Circa: circa 1840-50

circa 1840-50

Watercolour on ivory (licence VHSLDP6T)

Oval, 96 mm (3 $^{3}/_{4}$ in) high

Signed 'Meuret'

Ormolu easel-stand frame with tied ribbon surmount

Painted during the middle of the 19th century, the sitter likely visited the artist François Meuret at his Paris studio in Rue Neuve des Petit-Champs. She may have seen his portraits hanging at the Salon, where he exhibited from 1822-1852. By the time this portrait was painted, Meuret had received a first class medal (1843). The portrait of the young woman here shows her dressed in her wedding gown and would have been an important souvenir of that important occasion. In composition and style the portrait foreshadows the arrival of the photograph which was about to have such an impact on the painting studios of miniaturists.

Born in Nantes, Meuret studied in Paris with Louis François Aubry (1767-1851), setting up his solo studio on the same street as his former master. Meuret was miniature painter to Louis-Philippe (1773–1850), king of France. He was appointed chevalier of the Légion d'Honneur in 1864. Schidlof in his book ‘The Miniature in Europe’ describes him as ‘one of the best artists of the period’. Taking commissions largely from courtiers, he also shared a love of the artist Winterhalter with Queen Victoria, his attention to detail in miniature mirroring Winterhalter’s oils. Meuret was also important in furnishing the courts in the rest of Europe with portrait miniatures of their relations. In 1846, Hélène, duchesse d'Orléans, wrote to Queen Victoria on 17 July 'mon portrait est fini' and outlined her plans for Queen Louise of the Belgians to convey it to Windsor Castle on her forthcoming visit. This was successfully accomplished and Queen Victoria wrote in her Journal on 28 July 1846: 'Dear Hélène has sent me by Louise a charming portrait of herself – a miniature by Meuret, which is the image of her' (now Royal

Collection Trust, RCIN 420348).