THE LIMNER COMPANY



RICHARD GIBSON (1615 - 1690)

Portrait miniature of a young Lady, wearing a blue gown, the ruffled edge of her white chemise visible above the low-cut bodice, her dark hair curled, with large pearl drop earring and necklace

Circa: circa 1660

circa 1660

Watercolour on vellum

Oval, 55 mm. (2 $^{1}/_{8}$ in.) high

This portrait miniature dates to around the time of Restoration of the Monarchy in 1660. The young sitter would likely have been a lady of the court, or member of London's elite.

Richard Gibson had been a well-liked figure at the court of Charles I before the Civil War. The King himself was present at his wedding in 1641, and gave away the bride, Anne Sheppard (d.1707). At this time, Gibson held the position of 'Page of the Back-Stairs', while also being recorded as painting miniatures by Abraham van der Doort (c.1575-1640).[1]

Gibson is thought to have spent the Civil War between London and Wilton House, Wiltshire, the home of his patron, Philip Herbert, 4th Earl of Pembroke (1584-1650), who had introduced him to court. Gibson remained associated with Pembroke's wider family and their circle into the Restoration era. It was in this subsequent period, at the end of the 1660s, that the monogram with which Gibson sometimes signed his works changed from 'DG' to 'RG'. 'DG' is thought to represent one or both of the artist's nickname as either 'Dick Gibson' or 'Dwarf Gibson',[2] and his decision to change this to the more formal 'RG', is possibly indicative of a more serious artistic standing. Indeed, he was soon to be appointed 'picturemaker' to King Charles II.

[1] van der Doort's catalogue, 104, cited in Murdoch, J. (2006, January 05). Gibson, Richard [called Dwarf Gibson] (1605/1615?–1690), miniature painter. *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*. Retrieved 2 Apr. 2026, from https://www.oxforddnb.com/view/10.1093/ref:odnb/9780198614128.001.0001/odnb-9780198614128-e-10631.

[2] Gibson was 3ft 10 inches in height.