Emmett & White
ANTIQUES & INTERIORS

18th-Century Portrait Watercolour Miniature of a Young Lady in an Ebony Frame, Circa 1770

£100

Emmett & White Ltd
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REF: 7781

Height: 5 cm (2")

Width: 4 cm (1.6")

Framed Height: 13 cm (5.1")

Framed Width: 11.5 cm (4.5")

Description

A delicate and beautifully observed 18th-century portrait miniature of a young lady, painted in watercolour and dating to circa 1770. Presented in a handsome ebony frame, the portrait possesses the intimate scale and quiet refinement that make Georgian miniatures such compelling and personal works of art.

The sitter is portrayed with the grace and poise associated with the period, her features rendered in finely layered watercolour with subtle modelling to the complexion, hair, and costume. At this small scale, the artist has achieved a remarkable sense of character and presence, capturing not only the likeness of the young woman but also the elegance of her dress and the restrained charm of late Georgian portraiture.

Portrait miniatures were among the most cherished personal possessions of the 18th century. Commissioned to commemorate engagements, marriages, family connections, or absence from loved ones, they were often exchanged as tokens of affection and kept close at hand. Their small size made them ideal for display in a private cabinet or dressing room, while also allowing them to be carried or gifted as deeply personal mementoes.

The deep ebony frame provides a strong and sophisticated contrast to the softness of the painted image, enhancing the miniature's jewel-like quality. Together, the portrait and frame form an evocative survival from the social and artistic world of the 1770s.

A refined and intimate example of Georgian portraiture, ideal for collectors of miniature painting, 18th-century works on paper, and decorative arts. It would display beautifully within a collection of portrait miniatures or as a singular historic accent in an interior.

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