



EST. 1968



751. European Lady

China, 18th Century, c. 1775
Height: 46,5 cm Width: 36,5 cm

An oval reverse mirror painting of an elegant European lady. She looks away to the left, with a mask in her raised right hand. An sumptuous ermine-trimmed cloak is draped over her low-cut gown. She wears pearl earrings,



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necklace and a large brooch on the décolletage. On her head is a plumed turban, one long coil of brown hair falling over her left shoulder. The gilt frame is probably the original Chinese one, copied from a Western prototype.

This painting is reproduced from a print of a painting by Henry Morland, *The Beauty Unmask'd*. A copy of the mezzotint by Philip Dawe (1770), is in the British Museum. Prints and engravings with European subject matters, would have been sent to China to be reproduced in the painting workshops.

The European technique of reverse mirror and glass painting, was probably imported into China through Jesuit missionaries in the early 18th century. Mirrored glass, was imported from Europe. Areas of silvering were carefully cleared, then painted in mirror image on the back of the glass. Mostly oil paints were used, sometimes mixed with gum. Canton is known to have been the main centre for glass painting.

Provenance:

Private Collection, United Kingdom