Portrait of a Lady

William Hoare Of Bath

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Description

William Hoare of Bath (1707-1792)
Portrait of a Lady

Half-length, wearing a pink and white slashed dress
Pastel
59.5 by 44 cm., 23 ½ by 17 ¼ in.

In the early 1720s, William Hoare entered the studio of Guiseppe Grisani, an Italian who had moved to London in 1718. When Grisani returned to Italy in 1728, Hoare accompanied him. There is some confusion as to whether Hoare stayed in Italy until c.1739, or whether he made two trips; the first lasting until 1732 and then a second trip which ended circa 1738/9. Either way, Hoare's time in Italy was productive, not only was he able to study the work of the old masters and his contemporaries, but his charming personality and excellent classical education made him popular with the other British in Italy at the time, especially the young gentlemen on their Grand Tours. Thus he met many of the people who were to become his later patrons.

On his return to England, Hoare quickly moved to Bath, where his brother the sculptor Prince Hoare (c.1711-1769) was based, and where the rapidly growing population meant a ready market for portraits in oil or pastel. George Vertue regarded Hoare as largely responsible for the rise in popularity of pastel painting. He remained based in Bath for the rest of his life, making trips to London and occasionally exhibiting at the Society of Artists and the Royal Academy. His reputation was such that the King, requested that Hoare be made a founding Member of the Royal Academy in 1769.

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