

DUKE STREET GALLERY

INFORMATION SHEET



JEAN BAPTISTE MONNOYER (1634-1699)
STILL LIVES - A PAIR

Materials

Oil on Canvas, Both Signed
16" x 44"

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Jean Baptiste Monnoyer (1634-1699)

Born in Lille in 1636 Monnoyer was sent to Antwerp at an early age to study the history of painting. At the tender age of 14 he was apprenticed to work in Paris (1650) on the interior decoration of the Hotel Lambert. When talent was apparent in those long-off days, it was acted on and appreciated immediately. His work at Hotel Lambert was seen by Charles Le Burn, Louis XIV's Minister of Arts, who became Jean-Baptiste's patron. With such support Jean-Baptiste found himself employed decorating the Royal Palaces of Versailles, Trianon, Meudon, Vincennes and Marly. He was presented to the Academie Royale in 1663 and received (accepted) in 1663. His acceptance work was 'Flowers, Fruit & Objets d'Art' (now at the Museum Fabré, Montpellier). He was also invited to provide designs for floral motifs and borders for the Gobelins and Beauvais Tapestry Studios.

In 1673 Monnoyer sent four still-life flower paintings to his first Salon. By 1679 he had been created Conseiller but by then he was in England, having been persuaded in 1678 by the Duke of Montagu (British Ambassador to the Court of Louis XIV). There he won instant acclaim with his flower pieces and still-lives, which the aristocracy flocked to commission him to produce to adorn their homes. His works decorated Broughton, Montague House (now the site of the British Museum) Windsor Castle, Kensington Palace and Hampton Court. His patrons included Queen Mary, the Duke of St Albans and the Earl of Carlisle.

Jean-Baptiste Monnoyer is best known for his paintings and composition of flower pieces, still-lives, composition for over mantles and over doors. Throughout, there is the hallmark of his French upbringing; delicate line and colour combined with an awareness of Dutch, Flemish and Italian Baroque painting. His works are to be found in the great houses of the United Kingdom and the major Museums and Art galleries throughout the world.