



Electa Barrell, Mrs. Samuel Wilder

Date

about 1830

Primary Maker

Samuel Lovett Waldo

Medium

oil on canvas

Description

Electa Barrell Wilder (Mrs. Sampson Wilder) is a half-length portrait of a seated woman. The sitter's head is turned slightly to the right, whereas her shoulders are nearly in three-quarters view and her lower body is in right profile. The sitter's brown hair is braided and pinned on top of her head in a coil; she has tight curls at the sides of her face. Wilder's skin is pale pink, with darker pink on the cheeks. Her eyes are blue. The sitter wears a long-sleeve, rose-colored dress with a three-layered, cape-like collar that covers the shoulders. The dress is decorated with ribbons at the bodice and wrist; the collar and sleeve are trimmed with velvet that matches the color of the dress. At her neck, Mrs. Wilder wears a white, three-tiered ruff with an abstracted floral design that is comprised of an oval center and eight petals. Her sleeves are trimmed in white cuffs. A white shawl with a lavish border of

yellow, orange, and red flowers, and green foliage is draped over the chair in which the sitter is posed; the shawl has fringe along its edge. Mrs. Wilder sits in an armchair with a tan, upholstered armrest. The chair is decorated with classicized, foliate carving on the vertical element of the armrest. The sitter's proper right arm bends at the elbow and her forearm rests on the arm of the chair. Her fingertips curl slightly under and are thereby cast into shadow by the light that falls from the upper left to the lower right. That light produces a shadow of the figure on the wall at lower right. There are also shadows under the ruff and collar of the dress, under the arm on the armrest and on the woman's lap, and throughout the folds of the textiles. The olive-colored background is darker at the left side of the composition and lighter to the right of the figure.

Dimensions

canvas: 91 x 71.1 cm (35 13/16 x 28 in.)