





# **Tudor and Early Stuart Portraits at the Yale Center for British Art**

A Technical Catalogue

*Jessica David and Edward Town*



Tudor and Early Stuart Portraits at the Yale Center for British Art

# Introduction

Although known as a collection of eighteenth and early-nineteenth century art, the Yale Center for British Art is home to a significant number of portraits from the Tudor and Early Stuart period. For many years, these portraits remained understudied. The works varied in both their state of preservation and their significance. Some were attributed to the handful of artists whose names are known from the period, and others, typically in a poorer state, were consigned to storage and anonymity.

Over the past decade and a half, several UK-based collections have produced technical catalogues of their early portraits, yielding a host of discoveries about contemporary studio practice, while demonstrating the pivotal role that scientific analysis can play in establishing a technical profile of the working methods of specific artists. In effort to utilize these new sources and better understand our own early portraits, YCBA staff has developed an in-depth technical catalogue comprising its thirty plus full-size oil paintings and fifteen miniatures. Many of the paintings were once part of a set of portraits that have splintered over the centuries. Much of the work of this project has involved the careful recovery of all the evidence that survives for these otherwise poorly documented paintings. Integral to this process has been collaboration and the sharing of data with other institutions resulting in the largest technical survey of portrait production in early modern Britain.

Partnering with Yale's Institute for the Preservation of Cultural Heritage, the project has benefitted from cutting-edge technologies that can look through the veils of age and condition to shed new light on some of the most important paintings and painters of the period. The result of this synthesis of conservation, art history and science is the most thoroughgoing account of Tudor and early Stuart painting.



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YALE CENTER FOR BRITISH ART, NEW HAVEN



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# **Contents**

Introduction	5
Catalogue	10
Cat. 1. Portrait of a Woman, possibly Elizabeth Pope	11
Cat. 2. Portrait of a Lady	13
Glossary of terms	15
Bibliography	16
Acknowledgments	17

# Catalogue



**Cat. 1. Portrait of a Woman, possibly Elizabeth Pope**

11



**Cat. 2. Portrait of a Lady**

13



Eliz. Wife of Edwar  
Ld. Almoner of Englan  
Da. of Sir Iohn Smythe &  
Ld. Chiefe Baron of the  
Exchequer.

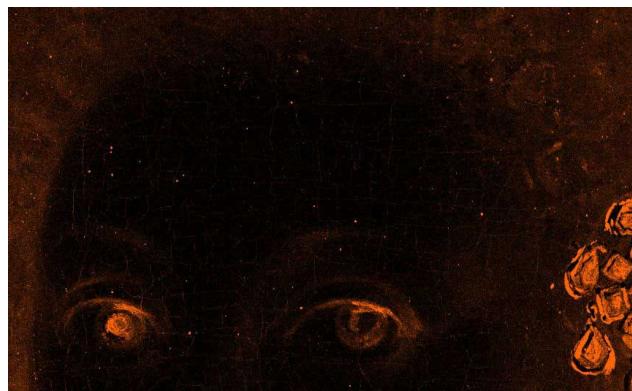
## Cat. 1. Portrait of a Woman, possibly Elizabeth Pope

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<b>Artist</b>	Robert Peake the Elder
<b>Year</b>	ca. 1615
<b>Dimensions</b>	76.2 x 59.1 cm
<b>Medium</b>	oil on canvas
<b>Location</b>	Yale Center for British Art

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This painting is newly identified as Elizabeth, daughter of Sir Thomas Watson (d. 1621) of Westminster and Halstead, Kent. The reidentification of the sitter is largely based on the striking resemblance between her and a portrait of Elizabeth Watson now at Tate Britain (fig. 1.1). Close comparison and an overlay of the two faces reveals that this is the same likeness, reversed and reused. The original source, most likely a drawing taken from life, was adjusted minimally to accommodate a slight shift in angle; in the Tate portrait, Watson's face is narrower and seen more frontally.



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## Cat. 2. Portrait of a Lady

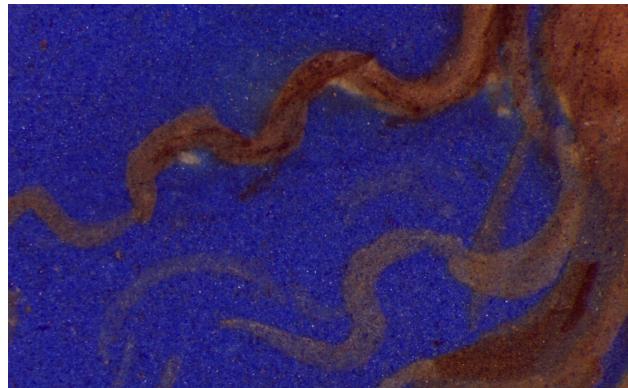
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<b>Artist</b>	Nicholas Hilliard
<b>Year</b>	between 1600 and 1615
<b>Dimensions</b>	7 x 5.7 x 1.3 cm
<b>Medium</b>	watercolor and gouache on vellum
<b>Location</b>	Yale Center for British Art

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### MAKING THE PAINTING

This miniature was executed in watercolor on vellum adhered to card. On the reverse of the card are diagonal lines of black and blue paint (fig. 2.1). The slightly raised “lips” along the edges of the black lines suggest they were masked off before application. The pattern may relate to a playing card, which were commonly used as a support for miniatures in this period although in most cases the suit or face of the card is visible on the verso.



# **Glossary of terms**

# Bibliography

## **test**

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## **test 2**

Lynd, Robert S., and Helen Merrell Lynd. *Middletown: A Study in American Culture* San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1929; reprint, Harvest/HBJ, 1956.

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