

JOHN MITCHELL

FINE PAINTINGS



Willem van Leen (1735 - 1825)

Roses, irises, a tulip and an auricular in a vase with a bird's nest

oil on panel
19 ¼ x 14 ½ in. (49 x 37 cm.)
signed, circa 1800
with original frame

Provenance:
Private collection, Paris.

Van Leen was a Dutch flower painter who came from Dordrecht. He visited Paris in his twenties where he befriended the leading flower and still life painter of the period, Gérard van Spaendonck. After the French Revolution he decided to remain in Paris and was commissioned by the Grand Duchess of Russia to decorate rooms in her palace at Pavlovsk in St Petersburg.

Although his palette was similar to van Spaendonck, van Leen had a softer touch with his brushes and often included a loose stem or spray of flowers into his compositions. This flowerpiece is similar in colouring and composition to van Leen's painting in the Fairhaven Bequest at Cambridge's Fitzwilliam Museum.