



Blush Roses in a Glass

Date

c. 1860-1900

Primary Maker

Ignace-Henri-Jean-Theodore Fantin-Latour

Medium

Oil on canvas

Dimensions

44 x 36 cm

Description

Fantin-Latour's work manifests a strange mixture of irreconcilable styles; the painted realistic portraits and still-compositions as well as mysterious, romantic figure pieces in a proto-symbolist style which was largely

inspired by his passion for Wagner's music. However, it is for his still-life pictures, mainly of flowers, that Fantin-Latour is remembered. 'Blush Roses' is one of many paintings of flowers carried out between 1860 and the end of the century. Often undated, they are difficult to place chronologically, especially as the same accessories are often used over a widespread period. Roses were his favourite flowers, particularly, as here, full, almost overblown blooms, painted in pastel colours with pale pink centres. Although he was part of the Impressionists' social circle, meeting regularly at the Café Guerbois, Fantin was impervious to their innovations in the use of colour and his carefully controlled application of paint is quite alien to their energetic surfaces. He avoids the loose brushwork of Manet's still-life painting and the simplification in Renoir's. Instead Fantin looked to the authority of the French tradition of still-life for his sources, although he rarely tries to emulate Chardin. He avoids Chardin's brown tonalities and frontal, eye-level presentation of the object in favour of cooler colours, favouring angled objects, such as the table in 'Blush Roses', and a slightly higher viewpoint. Fantin was an admirer of the work of Courbet, and he attended his classes briefly in 1850s. In 'Blush Roses', the contrast between the dark background and the pale flowers links him with the older artist; the intimate mood of the picture, however, remains his own. (Extract from 'Images and Insights', Hugh Lane Municipal Gallery of Modern Art, Dublin, 1993, p. 210) Blush Roses Oil on canvas, 44 x 36 cm Presented by Lady Ardilaun, 1905 Although friendly with Whistler and part of the Impressionists' social circle, Fantin-Latour remained impervious to their innovations in the use of colour and portrayal of light. Instead, his style was particularly influenced by the French tradition of still life painting and by 17th century Dutch art. It is for his still-life painting, especially flower-pieces that the artist is best remembered. Roses were his favourite flowers. Blush Roses, with its contrast between the dark background and the pale flowers also testifies to the artist's admiration for the work of Courbet. This is one of a number of many

paintings of flowers carried out between the end of the century and 1860. Often undated, they are difficult to place chronologically, especially as the same accessories are often used over a widespread period.