

Band & Motif Sampler by Judith Wroes 1794

Derived from the Latin 'exemplum' - an **example** - a sampler is a piece of **embroidery or cross-stitching** produced mostly in the **19th & 18th century** as a demonstration or a test of **skill in needlework**. They often **included** the alphabet, numbers, figures, motifs, decorative borders & frequently the **name** of the person who embroidered it & the **date**. Their **aim** was essentially to either **instil religious values or worthy personal qualities** such as perseverance & concentration in the young girls (invariably) who worked them. Often also they acted as a '**Curriculum Vitae**' - providing a practical example of the stitcher's skills of embroidery when seeking employment as a **Lady's Maid, a life 'in service'** - sometimes also a **husband!** Today, samplers are much sought after both as **highly decorative works of art** in their own right - they **look especially great when presented in a group** - but also for the **fascinating social history** which can often be gleaned from them. We always have some **early/mid 19th or 18th century** samplers - occasionally **even earlier** than this. Our samplers are **always researched** as fully as possible, & we sell each one with as much **detail** about them as we can.

- **Age.** This charming **George III** piece is dated **1794** - that is over **225 year's old!** In **November 1791** **Colonel Napoléon Bonaparte** was promoted to 1st Lieutenant and appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Armies of the French Republic!
- **Condition.** '**Outstanding**'. Given its **age**, the vibrancy of this sampler's **colours are amazingly vibrant**. There is **minimal damage** to the background linen & just the tiniest area of apparent stitch loss to the centre base of the piece.
- **Quality, content, constituent material & originality.** This vibrant **linen silk sampler** is completely charming with **skilful stitch work** throughout. To the **top** it features **two bands of text** with comprising a (still very readable) typically **reflective & moralistic message** about the **transience of life likened to a flower & melting snow**: this possibly is taken from the hymn "**Ah! few and full of sorrow**" composed by **Henry Purcell (1659-1695)** - pictured. In the lower half, Judith has stitched on a **lawned area**, in red gold, green & gold thread, **two floral urns, a pair of charming birds, four large closely clipped shrubs, plus a pair of dogs, two contrasting smaller shrubs, and what seems to be a small cat or lion?!** The whole is then surrounded by **delicate strawberry border** stitched in **green, brown and gold**.
- **Provenance.** The piece has the **simple text**; '**Judith Wroes Work 1791**'. It seems likely that she was from a relatively affluent background as **evidenced by the quality of the work & silk thread**. Apart from the date, this sampler has a **number of early features** which support the late 18th Century attribution: the **archaic form of language** used in the chosen verse & the (interestingly used just once) use of the **long 's' (ſ)** which disappeared from British printing between 1780 and 1800 e.g. "ſee" ('See') **line 4** of the first verse.
- **Other.** This sampler has been **conserved** it by placing on an acid free **Conservation Pro** mount board with **fresh pure linen**. It has then been **re-presented in a stunning period maple frame** - in itself is a fabulous antique. The **age, incredible colour & un-faded** fantastic condition of this quite **charming sampler** make it a **lovely example**. It offers scope to **enhance any contemporary or period setting!**



