Armchair - with later upholstery

Furniture Collection

Accession Nr.:	5484
Artist/Maker:	Boulard, Jean-Baptiste (1725 - 1789) / worshop
Place of production:	Paris
Inscription:	nincs
Materials:	beechwood; silk fabric
Techniques:	carved; painted
Dimensions:	height: 97 cm width: 63 cm depth: 52,5 cm

The chair stands on four splayed, cylindrical, fluted legs. The heads of the legs are carved with leaf frets, while the seat-rail is decorated with a rosette in a square above the legs. Between the rosettes there are strings of pearls, threaded on double rods. The upholstered seat is curved. The horizontal, upholstered arm-rests are held by voluted and fluted supports that stem from the front legs. The frame of the upholstered back is curved, decorated with leaves, plaits and strings of pearls, and rosettes in squares in each corner. There are two turned buttons at the top.

The Museum purchased the armchair, made in the Paris workshop of Jean-Baptiste Boulard around 1785, in 1893. The original upholstery did not survive, and it was repaired in 1926 using the silk fabric of a French girls's dress from about the same time. The dress had come to the museum independently of the chair and was probably damaged to the extent of being unfit for exhibition. The other fragments of the dress have remained in the collection and have not been exhibited before, so that their original colours, in the storeroom conditions, have not faded to the same extent as the upholstery of the chair.

The story illustrates the damage that light causes to colours, and also tells of a museum practice that seems absurd today but was quite accepted in the first half of the 20th century.

Literature

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