Settee

Furniture Collection

Accession Nr.:	5488
Artist/Maker:	Sené, Jean (1695 - 1746)
Date of production:	mid 18th century
Place of production:	Paris
Inscription:	SENE
Materials:	silk brocade; wood
Techniques:	carved; gilded; upholstered
Dimensions:	height: 110 cm width: 196 cm depth: 70 cm

The eight curved and hoofed legs are decorated with shell and flower motifs. They are joined by a seat rail showing similar decoration. The arm sup-ports and the back frame are arched, carved with the same flowery-leafy and shell ornaments. The upholstered seat is combined with the sides and back support. The brocaded silk is decorated with diagonal motifs of wavy ribbons of flower bunches that match the arched frame of flowery carving. The large couch was originally in the Haute-Goulaine castle near Nantes. Jenő Radisics, who bought it in Paris in 1893, attributed it to the master Sené. On the other hand, Mrs. Payr and, following her, Gyula Vegh, deciphered the maker's mark as Lene. The faded, almost illegible mark cannot serve as an acceptable basis for further research. Etched but faded *S* and *N* letters — with two *E*s in between — can be detected on the seat rail, though they cannot be taken as an official maker's mark. Moreover, they cannot be identified with either member of the Sené joiner family in Paris. The furniture made by the founder of the dynasty, Jean Sené, were not marked, except during the last period of his activity, when marking was made compulsory in 1743. From this time on, if he cared to mark his products at all, he marked them as *SENE LE PERE* — to differentiate them from the pieces of his son, Claude, who also became a master joiner in 1743. In Radisics's opinion "a typical sign of the 17th century taste is that the arm supports reach up to the back on the other hand, the general structure became fashionable only in the 18th century." Indeed, rocaille motifs are typical of the rococo. The silk upholstery is one of the most beautiful in the collection of the museum it was most likely made in Lyon in the middle of 18th century and belongs to the "wavy style" of silk clothes. The diagonal wavy lines still show some influence of the lace pattern (1695—1735), while not exhibiting any features of the fur pattern, which was popular from 1760 on. The upholstery is undoubtedly of the same age as the wooden structure — it was probably made especially for this settee. The piece is a typical example of the dividing line between the early and late rococo, and is as Radisics pointed out "an artistic masterpiece".

Literature

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