


Wedding chest (cassone) - with Griselda scene

Furniture Collection

Accession Nr.:	70.258.1 
Artist/Maker:	közép-itáliai mester
Manufacturer:	Central Italian joinery
Date of production:	ca. 1480
Materials:	poplar
Techniques:	carved; gilded; painted
Dimensions:	width: 154 cm depth: 52 cm height: 51 cm

On the front panel of the chest there appears the figure of Griselda, the main protagonist in one of Boccaccio's novels (Decameron, X/10) and the ideal spouse. On two edges of the central cavalcade set in an Umbrian landscape we can see the betrothal and taking back of Griselda. Griselda stories in harmony with the purpose of the furniture were put on bridal chests in the Renaissance period. The best examples of these are to be found in Modena's Galleria d' Estense, Bergamo's Accademia, and Florence's Serristori palace. The last two chests are the work of Francesco di Stefano Pesellino (1422–1457) or his pupils. Pesellino was an eminent representative of Tuscan cassone and predella painting. As well as among his followers, the Griselda novels were favoured in the school of Filippino Lippi (1457–1504) also. The Budapest chest may possibly have been made in the 1480s. Its painter is not identical with the Griselda master, panel paintings by whom are kept at the National Gallery in London and at the Museum of Fine Arts in Budapest. From the mid-15th century, ten workshops specialising exclusively in chest painting operated in Florence. Between 1446 and 1463, two painters – Marco del Buono (1402–1489) and Apollino di Giovanni (1417–1465) – kept business records for their joint workshop with the greatest possible accuracy. We know from them that those ordering the chests were mostly fathers of the bride, but that additionally the names of bridegrooms, too, appear. The depiction, articulation and composition method of Italian quattrocento front chest panels is closely related to the nonmovable, so-called predella pictures of medieval winged altars, stemming from the horizontal format. Sometimes their masters are the same.

Literature

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