# Settee (part of a sitting suite)

Furniture Collection

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| **Accession Nr.:** | 62.1442.1 |
| **Place of production:** | France |
| **Materials:** | elmwood; mahogany; silk fabric |
| **Techniques:** | carved; gilded; painted in white |
| **Dimensions:** | height: 115 cm<br>length: 244 cm<br>depth: 65 cm |

In France, the empire style was characteristic from the time of the Consulate (1799–1804) until the Bourbon restoration, and in aristocratic homes right up until 1830, owing to the fact, among others, that Napoleon, who was crowned emperor in 1804, wished to revive the magnificence of the Roman emperors. The two greatest architects and interior designers of this period, Charles Percier (1764–1838) and Pierre Francois Leonard Fontaine (1762–1853), had published their work Recueil de decorations interieurs as early as 1801. Those giving the biggest commissions were Josephine Bonaparte (1763–1814) and Mme. Recamier (1777–1849). 169 Their furniture designed by Percier and Fontaine already heralded the new style: empire. The emperor's style of furnishing was adopted by his widely distributed relatives, and spread across the whole of Europe. The white-and-gold furniture ensemble shown here probably belonged among the one-time furniture and fittings of the Amsterdam palace of Bonaparte Napoleon, King of Holland (1806–1810). The cylindrical legs and frame of the settee are decorated with flat-carved gilded palmettos, leaves and rosettes, and the upholstered armrests are supported by winged lions. The high, angular seat-cushions of the chairs without arms are rather hard and uncomfortable. The principal characteristics of sets of seating of this kind are a programme-like ceremoniousness, cool pathos and theatricality. All this was lightened by the one-time beauty of the Lyon silk fabric, which was woven to measure and made expressly for the furniture. From the 1930s until the late 1940s, this set was in the Rojtokmuzsaj.

## Literature


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