Tapestry - Proserpine and Ascalaphus

Textile and Costume Collection

Accession Nr.:	67.833.1
Date of production:	late 17th - early 18th century
Place of production:	Brussels
Materials:	silk; wool
Techniques:	tapestry -weaving
Dimensions:	height: 346 cm width: 321,5 cm sűrűség (felvető): 7-8 / cm

The tapestry is probably a part of a series depicting the story of Ceres. According to Ovid (Metamor-phoses, Book V. 341—571). Dis, the ruler of the nether world, abducted Proserpine, the daughter of Jove and Ceres, and took her into his nether realms. The mother searches for her daughter all over the Earth, and when she learns where she was taken, she asks for the help of Jove to get her back. Jove agrees, providing that the daughter has not eaten from the food of the dead. It was Ascalaphus who claimed that she "had taken out seven seeds from a pomegranate and had eaten them". And thus, "with his evil accusation, he barred her from returning to the upper world". As revenge, Ceres turned Ascalaphus into an owl. The tapestry shows Proserpine in a French garden, with a pomegranate in her hand. To the right, behind the tree we can see Ascalaphus spying on her. The same park appears on the tapestry signed with the mark of Simon Bouwens' workshop in Amsterdam however, the bordure of the tapestry described above and the elaboration of the parts brings it closer to the tapestries made in Brussels. As Mrs. Margaret Swain told us, a tapestry with similar composition, although with a different border, can be found in a private collection in Scotland.

Literature

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