Ceramic picture - Carousel (Lady on Horseback)

Ceramics and Glass Collection

Accession Nr.:	9569
Artist/Maker:	Rippl-Rónai, József (1861 - 1927) / glass-engraver
Place of production:	Paris (presumably)
Inscription:	hátoldalán festve: RRJ / csinálta 1897
Materials:	factory-made tile
Techniques:	handpainted; painted with polychrome glazes
Dimensions:	height: 17,5 cm length: 25 cm width: 1,2 cm width: 19,4 x 27 cm thickness: 10-12 cm

The factory-made tile was cut to the size required by the composition. On the front the picture is painted with thick, domed glaze patches the indented, dark contours prevent the colours running into each other. This technical solution reminds us of cloisonne enamel and is in harmony with the artistic principle "cloisonnisme". The use of the brown contours - called "round contours" by Rippl-Rónai - , with the applied clear, vivid, complementary yellow-ultramarine and ochre-turquoise colours, the natural grays and browns were typical of tapestries designed by Rippl-Rónai. In this picture, a young lady in a feathered hat sits on the carousel horse, with her belt and long skirt flapping behind her. The picture is decorated with a flower border on the two shorter sides. In the background, there is the canvas of the circus jiut, while the bottom edge shows the plinth of the carousel, with simple, suggestive geometrical shapes. The picture evokes the sense of peacefulness and motion. The ftappy, playful topic, the carousel and the female figure already predicts the symbolist interpretation of the rotation of life. Rippl-Rónai, who was always able to keep the naturalness of the experience and the deep symbolic meaning in balance, was deeply involved in this question. He planned to issue a coloured drawing series with the "Carousel" title in the "Insel" magazine of O. J. Bierbaum, but the magazine ceased publication. The pencil sketch of the ceramic picture is now in the Hungarian National Gallery (Inv.No. 1911-326). Unfortunately, there is no further information as to the identity of the workshop, except for the name written later on the object. It was produced probably in connection with André Matthey's activity, because he is named as the maker of ceramic designs prepared by the painters of the Nabis group by Ambroise Wollard. There is further reference of a connection between Matthey and Rippl-Rónai in the fact, that among the plates made by Matthey there are some decorated with typical motifs of Rippl-Rónai. The Nabis artist group and their early association with Matthey (1895-1900) also apparently ties the wall fountains of Aristide Maillol, the ceramics of Pierre Bonnard and, most significantly, the tile pictures of Kerr-Xavier Roussel and Maurice Denis together. In 1897, at the exhibition of Siegfried Bing's Art Noveau Salon, Rippl-Rónai introduced some of his “majolica decorations”, including probably the piece described above.

Literature

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- Szerk.: Fréches-Thory Claire, Perucchi-Petri Ursula: *Die Nabis - Propheten der Moderne*. Kunsthaus, Zürich, München, 1993. - Nr. 184, 197, 210.
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