

European Galleries (Dec-Jun C&T Rotation), December 22, 2014-June 1, 2015

CHECKLIST OF THE EXHIBITION

Italian

Furnishing Textile, Late 1500s - Early 1600s

White cotton warps with red wool weft patterning

Gift of Mrs. Gustav Radeke 11.070

Fantastical Griffins, mermen, and sea serpents atop waves enclosed in roundels enrich this rare example of a late 16th- to early 17th-century Italian woven textile. It was likely used as an upholstery fabric, given its sturdy weave and the use of wool and cotton.

After the discovery of the Domus Aurea, a first-century villa built by Nero, ancient Roman motifs became popular. Known as grotesque style, these symmetrical compositions of figures, flora and fauna were employed in drawings, prints and textiles. Grotesque does not describe the designs, but the places from which their Roman precedents were excavated. The word grotto has roots in the Greek Krypte, for "hidden place," here referencing subterranean ruins.



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Jean-Démosthène Dugourc, designer
French, 1749-1825
Maison Pernon & Cie, manufacturer
Lyon, France, 1753-1808
The Alter (L'Autel) Furnishing Textile Panel, 1788
Yellow silk satin weave with white weft patterning
Elizabeth T. and Dorothy N. Casey Fund 2007.32.2

This luminous yellow textile would have been used as a wall covering in a late 18th-century interior. The brilliant sheen of the weave would have effectively reflected candlelight, making the contrast of the patterned areas even more pronounced.

It is thought to have been created for a member of the Spanish monarchy by the French firm Maison Pernon & Cie. The firm's most renowned designer, Jean-Démosthène Dugourc, claimed to have created *goût étrusque*, a style that incorporated grotesque designs and foliate scrollwork, as in this example. Upon closer examination, winged dogs, swans, and mythological figures become apparent here, attesting to the First Empire revival of Renaissance design and in particular the grotesque.



Italian
Chasuble, 1400s
Voided silk velvet ground and silk satin weave, metallic gold and silk embroidery floss
Museum Appropriation Fund 31.266

This ecclesiastical garment illustrates two different moments in textiles history. The base fabric, a deep red silk, is known as voided velvet for its open area without pile. It is decorated with pomegranates enclosed by graceful linear patterning called *feronnerie* ("iron work"), a style popular for most of the 15th century. The painting to the right, from ca. 1525, portrays the Christ child on a sumptuous voided velvet pillow, indicating his status as a godly being.

The embroidered central panel, or orphrey, was made in the 16th century in a style known as strapwork for its resemblance to strips of leather bent to suggest bold, three-dimensional shapes. Immensely



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popular as an embroidery device, strapwork complimented the line quality of ferronnerie and also worked well with grotesque designs, another Renaissance style.