



Grand Tour relief panel in Rosso antico marble

late 18th century early 19th

measures 42,5cm (W) × 15,5cm (H) × 1,8cm (D)



1



2

Relief panel in rosso antigo marble depicting Titus (40-97 AD) in a quadriga^[1] celebrating a triumph. Victory stands behind him, crowning him with a laurel wreath.

The two figures behind the chariot^[2] are, Minerva as Dea Roma, the Goddess of Rome and the god Mercury.



3



4

On the right, at the center of the temple^[3] we can see a column with a snake around it, with a fire that burns inside, maybe representing the sacred fire of Vesta that was the sacred eternal flame in Ancient Rome. The fire burning was considered to be the symbol of Rome and as long as it would keep burning, Rome would stand. The sacred fire burned in Vesta's circular temple, built in the Roman Forum below the Palatine Hill. Although the circular temple in our relief is very different from the one in the Roman forum, the artist was probably inspired by the temple of Athena^[4] built at Villa Borghese in 1789.



5



6

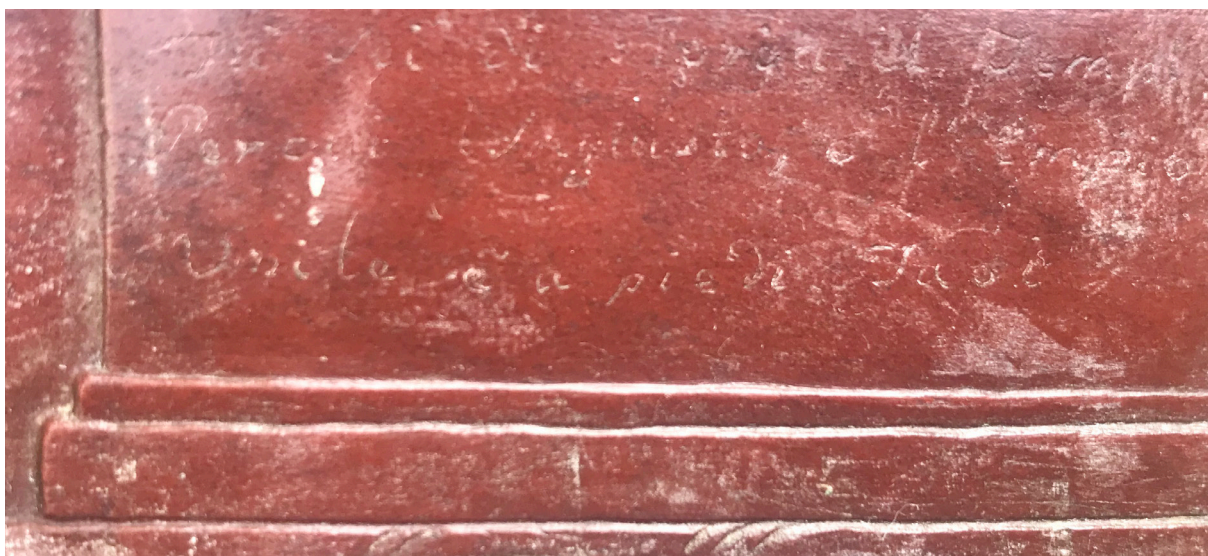


7

A praetorian guard^[5] stays between the temple and the quadriga. Titus was a prefect of the Roman imperial bodyguard, known as the Praetorian Guard, under emperor Domitian.

At the base of the temple^[6] we can see the remains of an inscription.

Probably the theme was inspired by the bas relief at the Arch of Titus^[7] in Rome, which was erected by Domitia in c. 81 AD at the foot of the Palatine hill on the Via Sacra in the Forum Romanum. It commemorates the victories of his father Vespasian and brother Titus in the Jewish War in Judae (70-71 AD).



Detail picture showing the remains of the inscriptions on the base of the temple