

The Frick Collection: Detail Report



Casket: Putti and Mottoes of Courtly Love

Colin Nouailher (French, act. ca. 1541–ca. 1588)

Date ca. 1545

Medium Painted enamel on copper, partly gilded

Dimensions 4 3/4 × 7 1/4 × 4 3/4 in. (12.1 × 18.4 × 12.1 cm)

Credit Line Henry Clay Frick Bequest

Accession Number 1916.4.14

Currently On View

First Floor, Room 14, Enamels Room

Commentary In the mid-sixteenth century, enamellers increasingly produced three-dimensional objects decorated with secular scenes. This small casket is composed of thirteen plaques that depict naked putti playing musical instruments, engaging in mock battles, and courting young girls. Each scene is accompanied by phrases in old French on love's joys and cruelties, for example, AMOVR.DONE.IOYE (Love gives joy) and PAR AMOR VAINCV (Defeated by love). Such messages were often inscribed on love tokens and nuptial gifts, and this casket may have served a similar purpose. The front plaque at the lower left even depicts a putto presenting his beloved with a casket, along with the words LE PRINS DE BONE FOY (Take it in good faith). Source: Vignon, Charlotte. *The Frick Collection Decorative Arts Handbook*. New York: The Frick Collection/Scala, 2015.

Collection History J. Pierpont Morgan, London and New York. Duveen. Frick, 1916. Source: *Enamels, Rugs and Silver in The Frick Collection*. Volume VIII. New York: The Frick Collection, 1977.