



Serving Knife (Kredenzmesser)

Date

1535–1540

Primary Maker

Melchior Diefstetter

Medium

steel, gilt brass, bone, hardwood inlay

Description

Usual form, irregularly "I"-shaped gilt brass or bronze handle of 8 cast pieces (seam lines are visible at the top and bottom of each inlay segment). "Pommel" squarish, lobed form, with spiralled terminals. Integral, short, necked plinth. Front & reverse faces

filled with 4 horn-and-hardwood inlays. Two styles of pattern, 1 of 3 colors in chevron pattern, the other of 2 colors checkered. Both faces of pommel & grip have cut rosettes of 5 or 6 points, formed in openwork, petalled design. This should be compared to those rosettes found on Hans Sumersperger's work of c. 1500 at Vienna. Pommel & grip incised with swirling tendril motives. Basal part of grip is of 2 halves formed as inverted truncated "T" of lenticular section. This is decoratively divided transversely as three mouldings, each differently incised. The uppermost is a row of pearl-like incisions, bordered with raised mouldings. Below this is an obliquely-cut alternating design of punched circles, and lines with crescents. The finial design below is a single sunken border, circularly pierced, with a pendant acanthus motif. Formerly blued or blackened steel blade of slight lenticular section flaring to broad, rounded tip. Blade tang is open in center; blade is stabilized in the grip by projections visible as rectangular steel strips on each side of the grip.

Dimensions

11 × 46 cm (4 5/16 × 18 1/8 in.), 1 lb, 13.5 oz (weight)