

SUMMER EXHIBITION

THE BAG

A cultural history from the 16th to the 21st century

11th April to 25th August 2013

In its 2013 summer exhibition, the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum brings together around 300 bags from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries. The spectrum stretches from early coin purses, game bags, pouches, work bags, travel bags and so-called pompadours, to modern handbags for women. Made from leather, metal, linen, velvet and silk, these elegant pieces of history from the museum's collections are also often intricately decorated with gold and silver thread, beads, appliqué and ribbons. A number of the most precious examples were once owned by the Bavarian royals. Elector Maximilian I's famous game bag bears witness to the exemplary quality of the embroideries being worked for the court in Munich. A number of little purses probably made by the Wittelsbach princesses have also survived, in addition to a bag of velvet decorated with silver which once belonged to King Ludwig I. Furthermore, the acquisition of the Williams' Collection of Historic Dress in 1996 enabled the Bayerisches Nationalmuseum to add numerous bags and letter cases from the baroque, rococo and neoclassical periods to its holdings. These approximately 250 bags will be presented alongside choice modern pieces which typify and represent the different tastes prevailing from the roaring 20s to the noughties.

The exhibition presents bags of different types and contextualises them both culturally and historically using paintings, sculpture and other graphic sources. While coin purses filled to bursting point were worn for all to see as a sign of wealth in sixteenth-century civic society, bags and purses were mostly tucked away in the folds of voluminous costumes in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Around 1800, the "reticule" became a fixed part of the female wardrobe. This was a forerunner of the handbag which, in the late nineteenth century, took its first steps on the path to becoming the fashion-conscious woman's indispensable accessory. From sixteenth-century purses to the Kelly Bag, the exhibition shows visitors the variety of forms taken by as well as materials used for this multifaceted yet functional accessory.

The exhibition will be accompanied by a catalogue.

Images can be requested from: helga.puhlmann@bnm.mwn.de or by telephone + 49 89 21124270

Weitere Informationen

Öffentlichkeitsarbeit • Dr. Helga Puhlmann • Telefon (0 89) 21 12 42 70 • Fax (0 89) 21 12 43 66
Bayerisches Nationalmuseum • Prinzregentenstraße 3 • 80538 München
www.bayerisches-nationalmuseum.de • helga.puhlmann@bnm.mwn.de