

	Object:	The Rape of Europa
	Museum:	Szépművészeti Múzeum Dózsa György út 41. 1146 Budapest
	Collection:	Régi Szobor Gyűjtemény
	Inventory number:	RSZ_5363

Description

Zeus, the untiring seducer, took on the image of a tame bull in order to draw near to the Phoenician princess playing on the shore with her companions. After the bull, bedecked with flowers, had managed to trick the beautiful Europa onto his back, he swam across the sea to the island of Crete. In the oft-depicted Ovidian version of the story however there is no mention of the pugnacious resistance apparent in the Budapest small bronze. In Ovid's *Metamorphoses* the princess was quite taken by the overtures made to her by Zeus turned bull. It is likely, then, that the author of the Budapest sculpture took inspiration not from this popular work, but from a less well known ode by Horace, in which the Roman poet writes of Europa's desperate protestations. This is the only cast known of this small bronze, and although the identity of its author remains doubtful, the unusual choice of source betrays he was familiar with Humanist works. The style of this outstanding piece is closest to the works of Andrea Briosco, given the sobriquet Riccio (curl) after his dense, curly hair. Riccio, known for his excellent bronzes, nursed close relations with the Humanist circles of the prestigious University of Padua, and influenced by this made a whole series of classically inspired small bronzes. Renaissance small bronzes are now considered sculptures, but at the time many were intended as functional objects. Such is the Europa, the interior of which is designed to hold incense. Miriam Szőcs

Basic data

Material/Technique:	bronze
Measurements:	18 x 16.5 x 7.5 cm

Events

Created	When	1505-1510
	Who	Andrea Riccio (1471-1532)
	Where	

Keywords

- Renaissance
- Sculpture