

	Object:	Base of an Etruscan Funerary Monument
	Museum:	Szépművészeti Múzeum Dózsa György út 41. 1146 Budapest
	Collection:	Antik Gyűjtemény
	Inventory number:	ANT_2006.2.A

Description

In the 6th century B.C., local workshops in Chiusi, one of the greatest centres of archaic Etruscan art, developed a unique artistic form for the creation of funerary monuments. The urns and sarcophagi carved of local limestone, and the typically Etruscan, pillar-shaped funerary monuments composed of several elements, were decorated with scenes related to funerary rites. All four sides of the Budapest cippus feature reliefs representing scenes of funerary games in perfect condition. The various events are easily recognisable: besides athletes participating in chariot and running races, wrestling, and boxing, discus and javelin throwers are also present. The contests are supervised by referees holding tall staves and official insignia consisting of a bundle of three rods (fasces), administration is carried out by scribes. The sporting events are accompanied by musicians, and complemented with a show of acrobatics, as well as the presence of masked Phersu figures, common in Etruscan festivals, who connect the human and divine world. Our most beautiful literary source on funerary games in honour of the deceased, which were also common in the Greek world, is to be found in Book 23 of the Iliad, when Achilles funds games and offers prizes in memory of his dead friend, Patroclus. The scenes represented on the Budapest cippus appear in almost identical form on monuments (tomb frescoes and vases) from other Etruscan centres in the 6th and 5th centuries, which suggests that this may have been the usual programme of Etruscan funerary rites. Following SZILVIA LAKATOS

Basic data

Material/Technique:	carved, pietra fetida
Measurements:	29.5 x 52.5 x 52.5 cm

Events

Created	When	480 BC
	Who	

	Where	
[Relation to person or institution]	When	
	Who	Etruschi
	Where	

Keywords

- Relief sculpture