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Collection online

ornament

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Object type [ornament ?](#)

Museum number 1960,1101.48

Description **Gold myrtle spray.** The stem is made from gold sheet over a bronze core. There are three sizes of leaf: the two larger pairs are pushed into holes in the stem, the smallest pair inserted into the end of the tube. Inserted beside the pair of middle-sized leaves are myrtle flowers on long wire stems. These consist of a cup with a serrated top, a six-petalled flower, and a central rod holding a ring of twenty-four blob-ended stamens and capped with a disc. The discs have an inner and an outer ring of fine spiral-beaded wire, both of which were presumably once filled with enamel.

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Culture/period [Classical Greek ?](#)

Date 400BC-350BC

Findspot **Excavated/Findspot: Eleusis, tomb (near):**
(Europe,Greece,Attica,Eleusis);
Excavated/Findspot: Piraeus, tomb (near) ?
(Europe,Greece,Attica,Piraeus)

Materials [gold ?](#); [bronze ?](#)

Dimensions Height: 9 centimetres (as preserved)
Weight: 7.2 grammes



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Curator's comments Found in 1816.6-10.115.Williams and Ogden 1994

The end of the spray is crimped, indicating that it was once inserted into something. The presence of a bronze core, however, may suggest that the spray was not part of a full-scale wreath, for these are usually constructed from a hollow gold tube without a bronze core.

Another myrtle spray of similar construction, but with myrtle fruit as well as flowers, was found in central Macedonia. Unfortunately it was a chance find, so nothing more is known of its function.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: A.H. Smith, JHS 46 (1926), p. 255, fig. 2. Spray from Macedonia: Makedonia, no. 210.

(Pictured in JHS much compacted and with only one myrtle flower - the other found separately and restored?)

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Bibliography	Williams & Ogden 1994 10
Location	On display: G19/dc1
Exhibition history	Exhibited: June - October 2012, UK, Edinburgh, Scottish National Gallery, 'Expanding Horizons: Giovanni Battista Lusieri and the Panoramic Landscape'.
Subjects	leaf
Acquisition name	With contribution from: The Art Fund (as NACF) Previous owner/ex-collection: Thomas Bruce, 7th Earl of Elgin
Acquisition date	1960
Department	Greek & Roman Antiquities
Registration number	1960,1101.48

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