

Introduction and Training

Although he worked for five successive Kings of France from François I to Henri IV, and for the Queen Mother Catherine de Medici, Antoine Caron is a forgotten artist. The aim of the exhibition is to return a major personality of the Renaissance to his rightful prominent position. Several portraits confirm his worthiness, as not only do they record his features a few years from his death at seventy-eight, but they also prove all how popular Caron was at the time.

During the 1540s, he trained at the Château de Fontainebleau, on the ongoing projects there, where the talent and inventiveness of the Italian painters, Rosso Fiorentino, Francesco Primaticcio and later Niccolò dell'Abate, were expressed. He participated for example in creating the grotesques for the Ulysses Gallery designed by Primaticcio. He soaked up the sensual and erudite art of his elders but seems to have been especially close to Niccolò dell'Abate. The Italian draughtsman's technique seduced him profoundly. Caron also asserted himself as a worthy heir to Niccolò dell'Abate in all the great areas of art: history painting, scenography, allegory, decoration, and landscape.