

A MEDIEVAL WEDDING PROCESSION - Adrien Moreau (1840 – 1906)



A wedding procession makes its way through a deep forest, to the sound of bagpipes and cornett played by two musicians.

As a genre and history painter, Adrien Moreau was fond of the Middle- Ages. He exhibited his works at the Paris Salon. He also illustrated books and painted fans.

The medieval wedding scene studied here appears on hand-screens as well as folded fans. The usual process of adaptation is so radical that it only leaves the main elements untouched. The two musicians have been suppressed and the forest with thick-set trees and high grass has been replaced by a few light strokes suggesting foliage.



A fan with a painted copy of Moreau's work was recently sold on the Internet. It is signed "Fleury" and features one of the musicians, the piper.



Fan signed 'Fleury'

I have not been able to locate the painting by Moreau and only know it through its engraved version. Consequently no possible comparisons can be made as far as colours are concerned. Yet Lauronce and Fleury used the same colours for the newly-weds' costumes: either they copied each other, or they followed Moreau. In that case, the bridegroom's pretty baby-blue jumpsuit (all right, his doublet and hose) would be in keeping with the original. As for the bride's dress, it is white on both fans. Historically it is most unlikely, but it can't be ruled out artistically. Moreau may have wished to favour contemporary customs over historical facts.

A painted version described as 'after Moreau' was sold by a French auction house. It seems to me too crudely executed to be trusted as a faithful copy of Moreau's painting.


