



Pen box with nine portraits of ladies and gentleman in European dress

Date

Qajar period, 19th century

Medium

Lacquer, pigment and gold on wood

Description

Persian, lacquered pen box with nine portraits of ladies and gentleman. A narrow box for holding writing instruments, made up of an inner case compartment sheathed within an outer, opening at one end. The inner case compartment is lacquered black inside with the exterior of its walls covered with floral motifs in gold on a red background. U-shaped joints at one end form a handle and part of the sheath decoration. The outer sheath bears nine miniature portraits in reserves, 3 on top, and 3 on each of the long sides, set on a dense ground of floral motifs. The portraits on the sides seem to be of the same personages: a man in a high-collared red jacket flanked by two ladies. The main portrait on top shows lady.

Dimensions

1 5/8 × 8 3/4 × 1 5/8 inches (4.1 × 22.2 × 4.1 cm)