



PALAIS
LIECHTENSTEIN

THE PRINCELY PALACES

THE GOLDEN CARRIAGE

ORIGINAL USE OF THE GOLDEN CARRIAGE

This magnificent carriage was commissioned in 1738 by Prince Joseph Wenzel I of Liechtenstein for his official entry as ambassador of Emperor Charles VI in Paris (and Versailles) in December of the same year. The commission was given to the renowned French designer Nicolas Pineau.

Prince Joseph Wenzel I of Liechtenstein later reused the carriage for another significant occasion: In 1760, Empress Maria Theresa entrusted him with the task of escorting the fiancée of her son, Crown Prince Joseph—Princess Isabella of Parma—to Vienna for their wedding. On September 3rd, the prince made a grand entrance into Parma in the Golden Carriage as part of a splendid procession of gala coaches, an event depicted in a painting by Martin van Meytens, which is part of the Princely Collections. On September 13th, 1760, Prince Joseph Wenzel I of Liechtenstein began the return journey to Vienna with Isabella of Parma. The carriage was disassembled and carefully packed for transport. Upon arrival in Vienna, it was reassembled and used for the ceremonial entry into the city on October 6th, 1760, with modifications made specifically for the bride Isabella.

The Golden Carriage remained at Feldsberg Castle (Valtice), the seat of the Liechtenstein family, throughout the 19th century until the beginning of World War II. It was then brought to Vienna and exhibited at the Wagenburg in Schönbrunn. During the *Long Night of Museums* in 2003, the Golden Carriage was transported on a low-loader through the city to its current location at the GARDEN PALACE Liechtenstein in the Rossau district.

CONSERVATION MEASURES

The conservation work addressed various structural and cosmetic concerns. This included renewing the support of the central carriage cabin and inspecting and correcting the different pulling and tensioning systems. Leather and/or textile elements were preserved and selectively reinforced using historically appropriate materials and techniques.

Parts of the carved chassis had suffered from wear and previous repairs. In some areas, details of the original carvings were lost due to coarse overfilling and regilding. These areas were mechanically uncovered and adjusted to match the original substance, achieving a balanced condition and clear definition of the forms.

Fire-gilded parts often showed significant discoloration, which was reduced to better harmonize with the surrounding gold leaf. New gilding that had not been patinated was adjusted accordingly. The paintings—presumably from the workshop of François Boucher—were also included in the conservation process. Later overpainting done in Vienna was removed, cracks and losses were filled, and the original harmonious overall appearance was restored.