

Biedermeier lyra secretary
19th century





The secretary became more and more popular as a piece of furniture in bourgeois households. During the Biedermeier period, owning a secretary was considered customary. It was not only used for writing, but also as a storage for the written. Social customs encouraged the writing of letters, poetry albums or journals to express education and a rising need to communicate. Lockable secretaries were used, to securely store those private texts.

The furniture on display here holds a secret compartment, as they were quite common at the time. It's front bears the shape of a lyra, earning this elaborated piece of furniture it's name. The lyra is an ancient Greek stringed instrument of the lyre family.





Once the writing board is lowered, the delicately furnished interior comes to light. It resembles a tiny hall of mirrors with a staircase and a balustrade. Such architectonic miniatures, as a decorative component for furniture, were fairly popular during the Biedermeier period.



The furniture is 170cm high, 110cm wide and 45cm deep. It is fully veneered and features circumferential inlays. Especially the front is most impressively veneered with mirrored inlays.

