

THE ART OF THE FRESCO

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Small Bird with Cherries

In 79AD Mount Vesuvius near Naples erupted and covered the ancient town of Pompeii and its surrounding countryside in lava and ash. Although the disaster devastated the city at the time, killing its citizens and burying everything, the buildings and works of art were preserved for centuries under the ash. Since few paintings have survived from this era, Pompeii is one of the few precious sources for much of what we know about ancient painting and decoration.

With the same eruption the summer resort of Herculaneum was also buried as were dozens of private residences. Amongst these there are three villas that are particularly noteworthy: Boscoreale and Boscotrecase (north of Pompei and nearer to the volcano), and Nero's wife Poppea's villa on the sea at Torre Annunziata (ancient Oplontis).

"Small Bird with Cherries" is a detail from the painted frieze in the so-called White Room at Boscotrecase. The entire room was acquired by the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York at the beginning of the 20th century.

£200

17cm x 31cm

Boscotrecase, Italy

c.12 BC