

Jewellery design



*Phoebe Ann Traquair
Cupid the Earth Upholder pendant
c. 1902
Gold and enamel on copper with foil*

The Scottish artist Phoebe Traquair created embroidery, murals and illuminated manuscripts as well as painted enamels. She distinguished between 'epic' (large-scale) work such as tapestries and wall painting, and 'lyric' (small-scale) work. In 1901 she began her apprenticeship in enamelling to Lady Gibson Carmichael at Castle Craig. From this time enamelling replaced book illustration as her favourite small-scale medium. She created vivid foiled enamel scenes, usually of mythical or spiritual subjects. Both her technique and designs were strongly influenced by medieval and Renaissance examples. Her jewellery, triptychs, caskets and mounted cups and covers, for instance, are all based on historical pieces.

The pendant is made from gold and enamel with foil on copper: showing a kneeling Cupid with widespread wings holding up a green globe on a vivid blue background. The enamelled plaque is modelled in relief, set in a pierced gold surround with one large and two small pendant drops of enamel set in gold. The gold surround is with two semi-precious stones. The central plaque is inscribed on the back: Cupid The Earth Upholder P.1902