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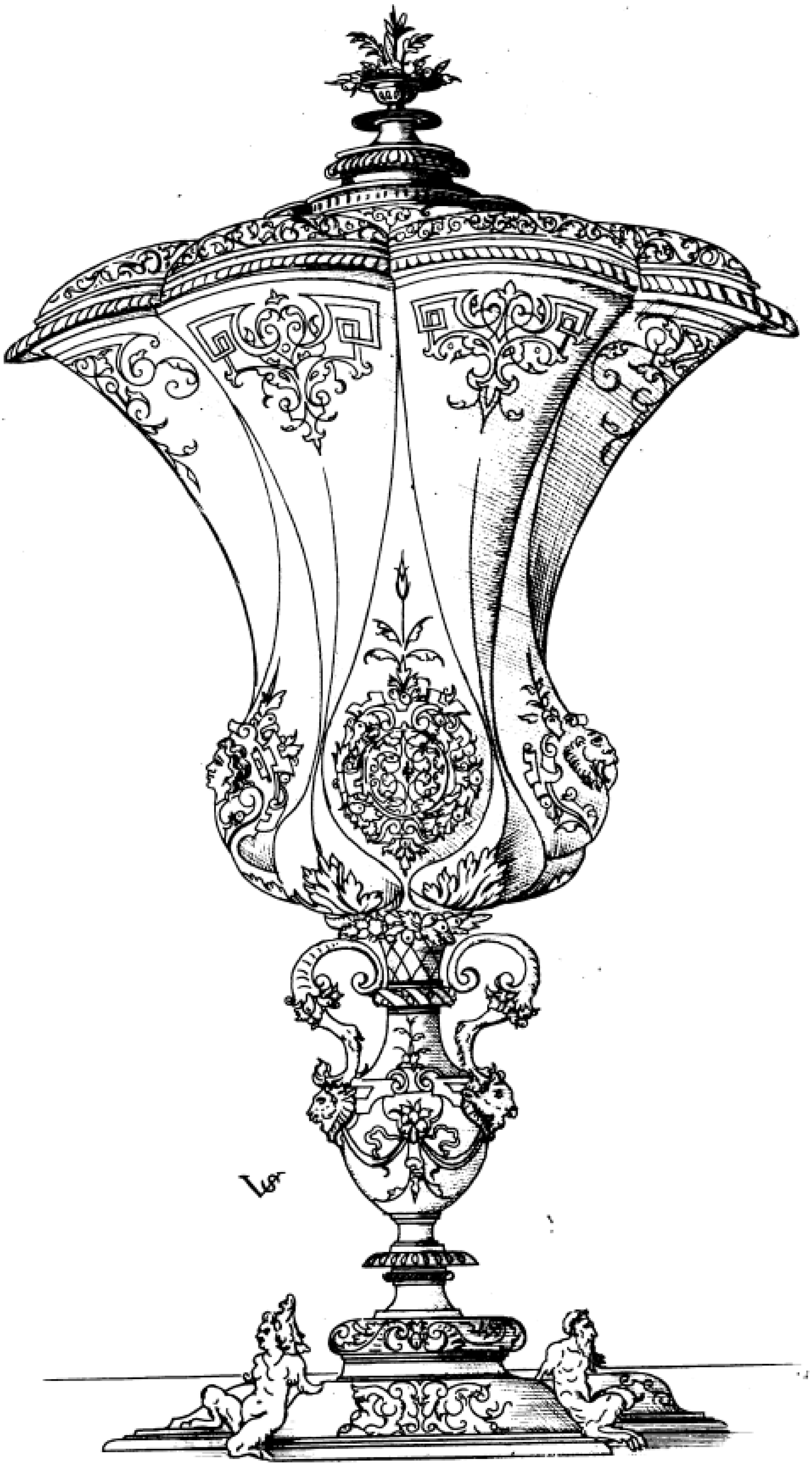

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Drinking-Cups Vaſes Ewers and Ornaments

deſigned for the Uſe of Gold

and Silverſmiths

TWENTY-ONE FAC-SIMILES OF EXTREMELY

RARE ETCHINGS

BY VIRGIL SOLIS

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JAMES RIMELL OXFORD STREET

1862

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VIRGIL SOLIS.

VIRGIL SOLIS, a German engraver, born at Nuremberg in 1514. According to the uſage of the time, he engraved both on wood and on copper, chiefly from his own deſigns. The copper-plates he engraved in the early part of his life reſemble the works of Hans Sebald Beham; but when he afterwards engraved after the Italian Maſters, he adopted a ſtyle more open and ſpirited. His wooden cuts are ſimilar to thoſe of Joſt Ammon, both with reſpect to the compoſition and execution. His works prove him to have been a man of conſiderable ability, and, though his deſign is formal and ſtiff, ſome of his figures poſſeſs great merit. On account of the ſmallneſs of his plates, this artiſt is ranked among the little maſters. His works are very numerous, amounting to upwards of eight hundred prints. He uſually marked them with a cipher compoſed of a V and an S.

There has been conſiderable diſcuſſion reſpecting Virgilius Solis, particularly whether he ever engraved in wood. Zani ſays, decidedly, "*non ha mai inciſo in legno.*" Perhaps all that need be ſaid on the matter is concentrated in the preliminary remarks of Bartſch to the catalogue of his prints in tom. ix. of "Le Peintre Graveur," of which the following is the ſubſtance:—"The little we know of the hiſtory of Virgilius Solis is ſupplied by an inſcription at the bottom of his portrait

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engraved by a maſter who ſigns with the letters B. J." The inſcription, which is in German, may be thus rendered:—

Virgilius Solis was my name;
Through all the world extends my fame;
For artiſts many, form'd by me,
Acknowledge my paternity,
And call me father. I did ever
To ſerve them uſe my beſt endeavour.
I painted, graved with the burin;
Illumined, to make art alluring;
Deſign'd, to waken their ability;
And etch'd, to teach their hands facility;
And ſubjects traced on blocks of wood:—
So, no one as my equal ſtood
In executing works of art
With ſkill refined in every part.
In juſtice, then, the voice of fame
Has given me Solis for my name;
For that imports that, like the ſun,
I ſtand alone—the only one.
When fifteen hundred ſixty-two,
As Chriſtians reckon, onward drew,
And years I counted forty-eight,
God pleaſed to call me from the ſtate
Of mortal life; and His beheſt
Has number'd me among the bleſt.

BRYAN'S *Dict. of Painters and Engravers.*

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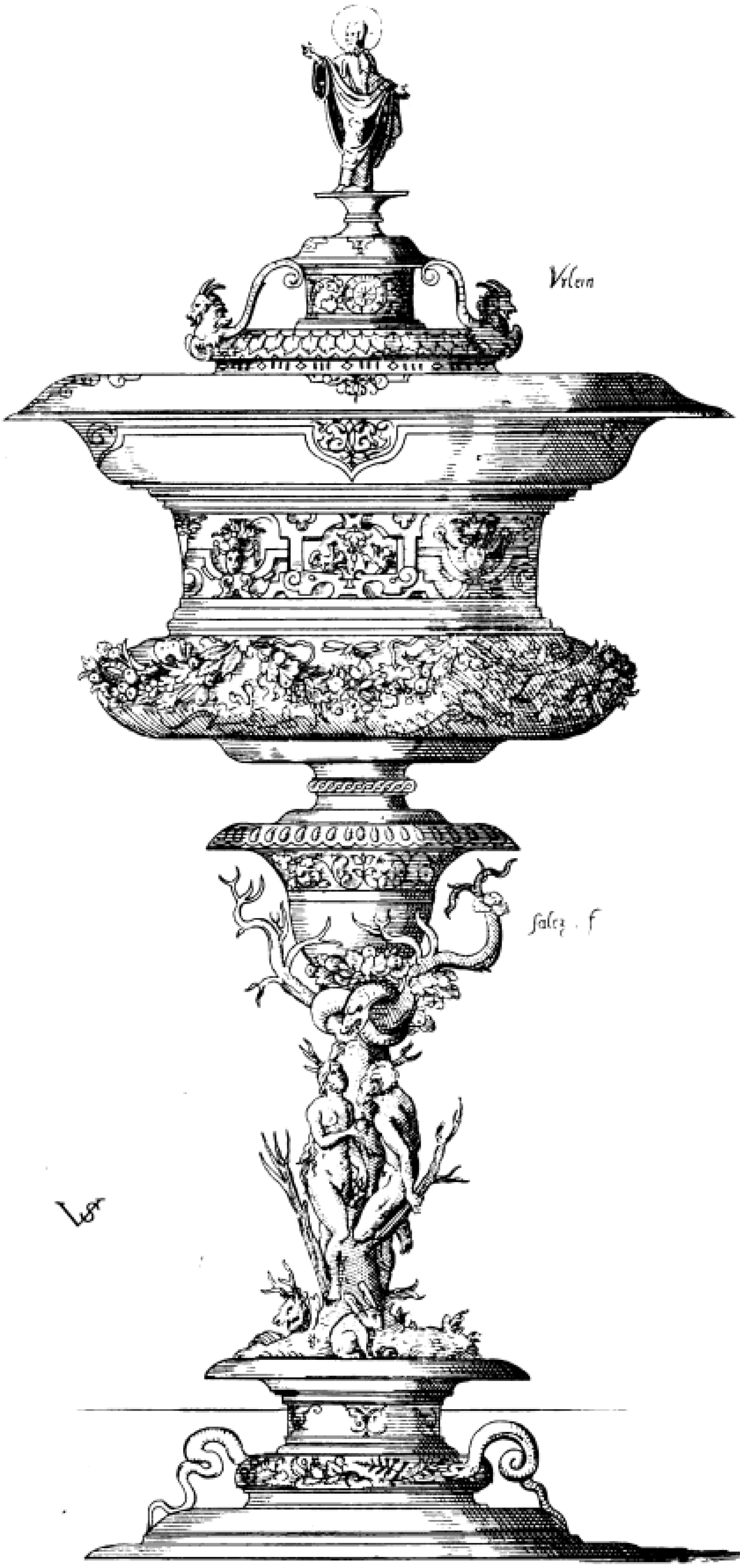

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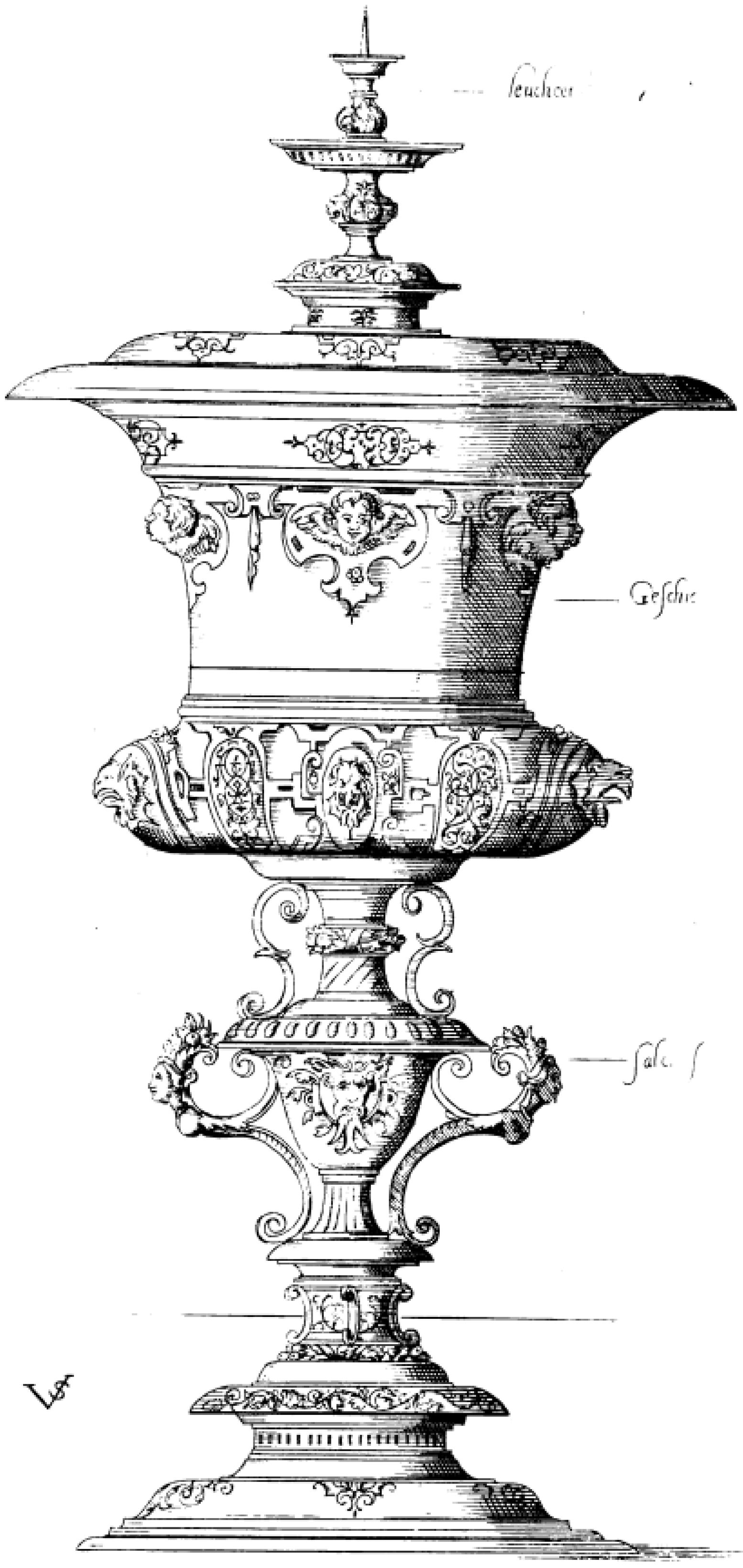

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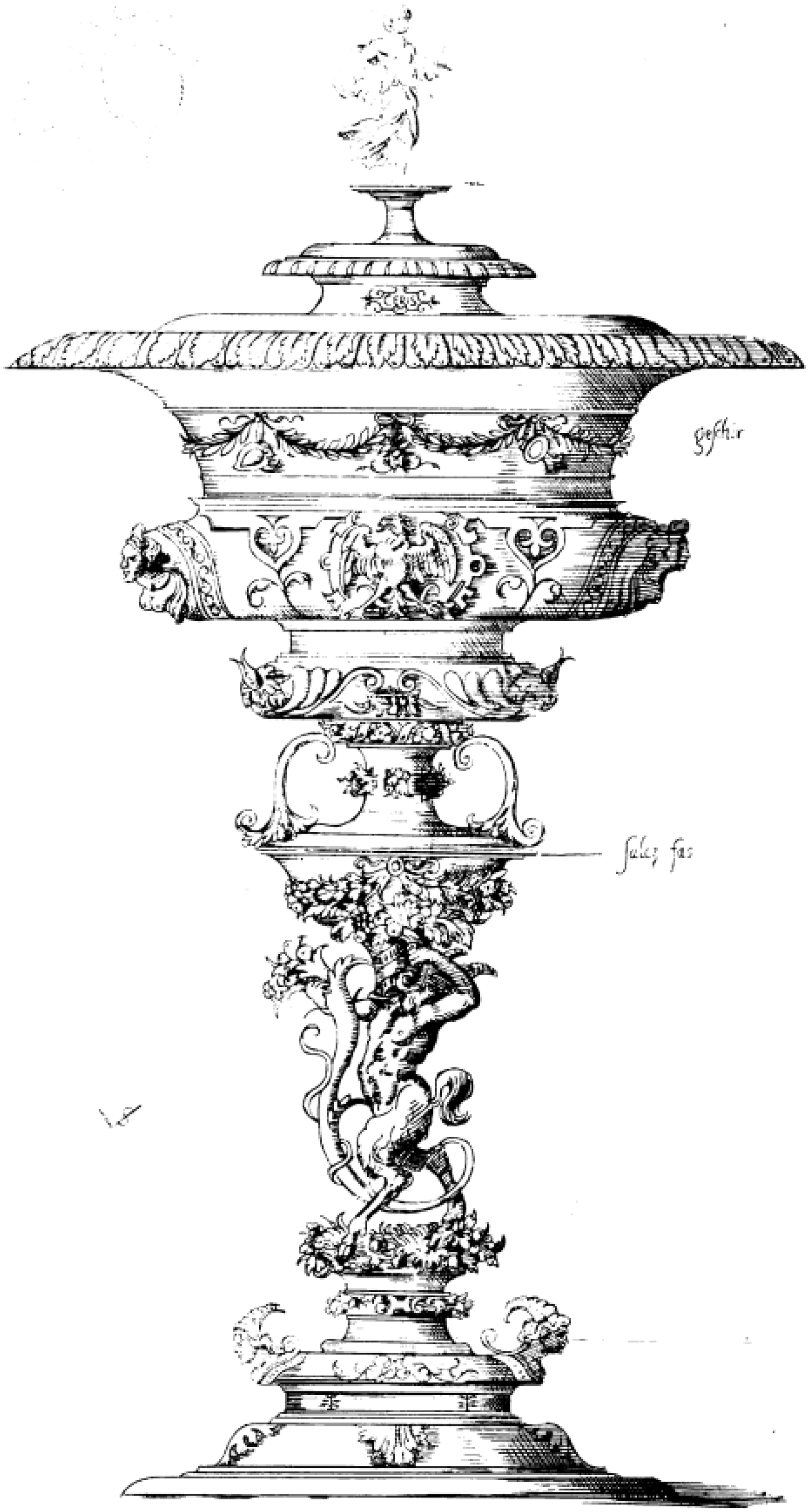

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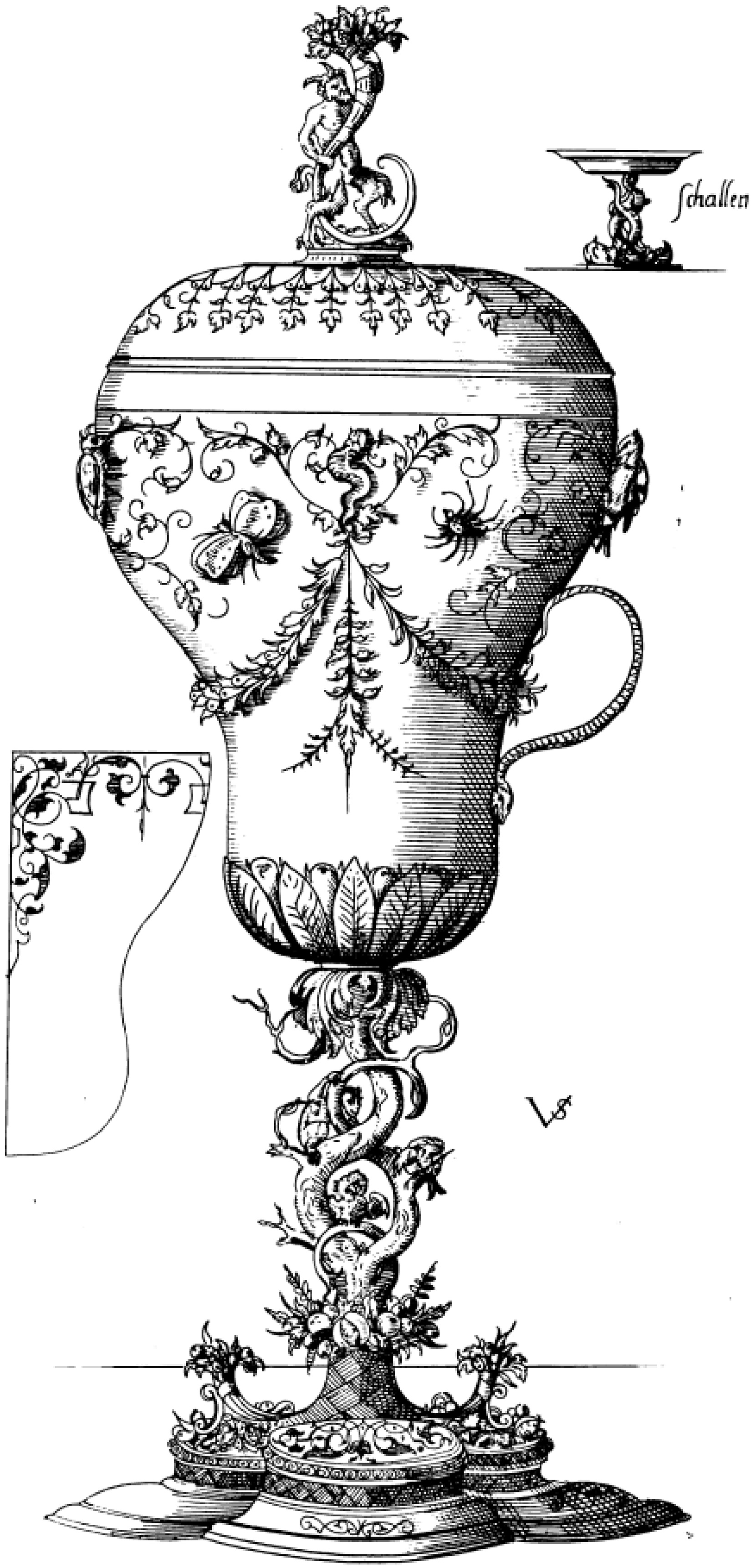

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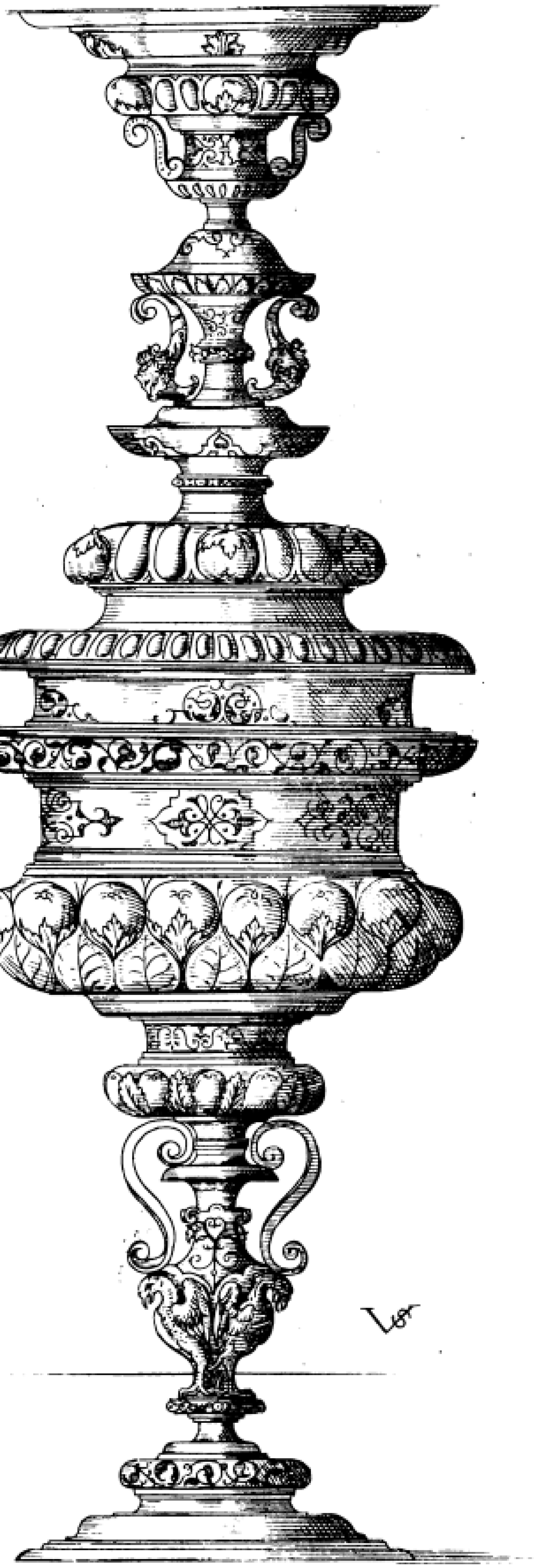

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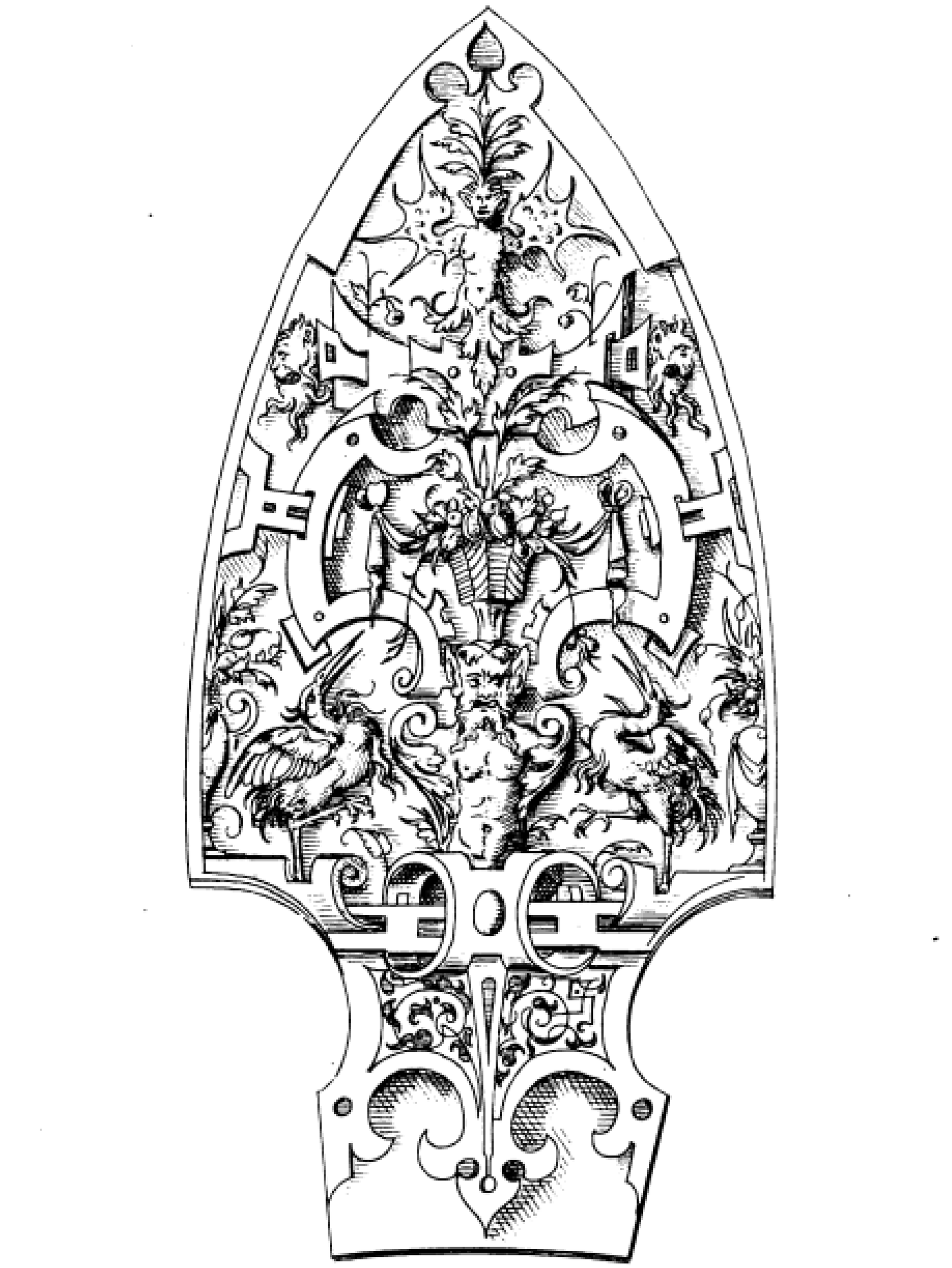

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