Public access description
This is a gilt bronze medal made in Italy and dated 1552. The obverse of this medal represents the laureated bust of Henry II. of France in armour. It was bought from the Soulages collection. Jules Soulages (1812-1856) was a collector of French and Italian Renaissance art. After his death his collection was acquired by the Museum. Born in Toulouse in 1803, Jules Soulages practised as a lawyer in Paris and was founding member of the Société Archeologique du Midi de la France. He created an extensive collection of French and Italian Renaissance decorative art from 1825, comprising around 750 objects, including furniture, glass, ceramics, bronzes, enamels and ivories. In the late 1840s Soulages moved back to Toulouse, where Henry Cole viewed his collection in 1855. Subsequent sale negotiations led to the production of a catalogue and two exhibitions in England at the Museum of Ornamental Art at Marlborough House, and at the Manchester Art Treasures exhibition respectively, both enhancing the celebrity of the collection, and resulting in its acquisition for the South Kensington Museum. Soulages died on 13 October 1857, aged 54.

Descriptive line
Medal, bronze gilt, bust of Henry II. of France, Italian, dated 1552

Dimensions
Diameter: 5.39 cm

Museum number
736-1865

Object history note
There is an electrotype copy of this medal (inv. no. 1857-104). It was bought from the Soulages collection in 1865.

URL
http://collections.vam.ac.uk/item/O154140/henry-ii-of-france-medal-unknown/