

THE EARLY MODERN VILLA

Senses and Perceptions versus Materiality

Edited by Barbara Arciszewska



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Il delizioso ritiro of Johann Adam von Questenberg

MARTINA FRANK

Luigi Crespi (1708–1779) recounts that while Domenico Francia (1702–1785) was working on a fresco for the vault of the church of the Spanish Benedictines in Vienna,

he so masterfully succeeded, and with such truth, that many bets ensued among various people that saw it. The majority claimed that while he worked, many of the things painted were not truly painted but rather were real and true; hence one should go up on the scaffolding in order to clarify the matter by touching it.¹

Francia arrived in Vienna in 1723. In Bologna, he was the pupil of Marcantonio Franceschini (1648–1729) and later of Ferdinando Bibiena (1657–1743), and it was precisely the latter that sent him to Vienna, to the workshop of his own son, Giuseppe (1696–1757). Francia did not enter the workshop of the theatrical engineer

as an apprentice or as a simple assistant but rather as an accomplished artist who had already demonstrated his capacities as a painter and illusionistic artist. According to Crespi, with his double specialisation, he was called upon to collaborate with Giuseppe Bibiena in the preparation of *Costanza e Fortezza*, the extraordinary theatre festival held in Prague during the festivities that accompanied the coronation of Charles VI (1685–1740), the king of Bohemia. Francia had a very prestigious career ahead of him. In 1736, just after his work for Count Johann Adam Questenberg (1678–1752) in Jaroměřice in Moravia, which will be discussed below, he was called upon once again to fill the position of the royal painter in Sweden. In fact, even Carl Gustaf Tessin (1695–1770) praised the “little Italian painter who does wonders”, admiring his capacity to succeed both in *quadratura* and in painting.² In 1744, Francia was in Portugal, then in Rome, and in 1748, he returned to Vienna before his definitive return to Bologna in 1757.³

¹ Luigi Crespi, *Felsina pittrice*, vol. 3 (Bologna: Marco Pagliarini, 1769), 101: “egli così maestrevolmente vi riuscì, e con tal verità, che seguirono molte scommesse tra diversi, che si portarono a vederla, nel mentre la lavorava, tenendosi dalla maggior parte, che molte cose dipinte, non fossero altrimenti dipinte, ma rilevate, e vere, onde loro convenne salire sul ponte per chiarirsene col tatto” (all subsequent translations are by the author).

² Ingrid Sjöström, “Un espace pour les anges: architectures peintes par

Domenico Francia en Suède”, *Atti e Memorie dell’Accademia Clementina di Bologna* 33–34, (1994): 145–156.

³ For the Portuguese period, see Isabel M.G. Mendonça, “Domenico Maria Francia: um pintor bolonhês no Portugal joanino” (paper presented at the VII Colóquio Luso Brasileiro de História da Arte – Artistas e Artífices e sua Mobilidade no Mundo de Expressão Portuguesa, Porto, June 20–23, 2005).



Fig. 1. Jan Kupezky, Portrait of Johann Adam Questenberg, c. 1716–1718, private collection [photo: Eduard Safarik, 2001].



Fig. 2. Andreas and Joseph Schmutzer after Jan Kupezky, Portrait of Johann Adam Questenberg, c. 1728 [Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Bildarchiv Austria].

The image used by Crespi to reveal Francia's brilliance at feigning spaces and illusionistic forms takes up the Plinian narration of the encounter between Zeuxis and Parrhasius, in which only touch is able to unmask the optical illusion. In *quadratura* and theatre, this capacity to deceive the senses through verisimilitude takes on completely unique undertones because it is not touch, in the sense of "touching with one's hand", that is stimulated, but rather the motor sense that aspires to the physical experience of simulated space. Crespi uses the image of a very difficult physical test – climbing the scaffolding – but in reality, he describes a wholly mental process that presupposes the acceptance of the optical illusion. This *piacevole inganno* (delightful deception), as it had been called, which is capable of producing an illusion that allows the viewers a virtual experience, is the basic element in *quadratura* and scene design.

In the theatre, and particularly in Baroque opera theatre, the *piacevole inganno* of sight meets the

stimulation of the sense of hearing. The interaction between music and pictorial or architectural illusion generates a complex sensory experience, based on the complementariness between the two senses. Yet such extraordinary complementariness between what one could call the two constitutive means of expression accomplishes more than just simultaneously stimulating hearing and sight. The complex machinery and stage design have the capacity to trigger a multiplicity of sensory experiences in the public.

Count Johann Adam Questenberg was one of those noblemen who cultivated their passion for music and theatre at their country residences. At the centre of his activities was the castle in Jaroměřice in Moravia, but also his secondary residences, such as those in Rappoltenkirchen in Lower Austria and in Bečov in Bohemia, offered sites for this kind of activity. Questenberg's interests can be defined as typical of his age and representative of his status. Indeed, music culture

flourished in many Moravian and Bohemian castles.⁴ The Bishop of Olomouc, Count Schrattenbach (1660–1738), was the promoter of an important opera season in his summer residence in Kroměříž. In 1734, he was also able to inaugurate the renovated theatre in his castle in Visnok with the stage settings by the Bolognese illusionistic artist Gaetano Fanti (1687–1759).⁵ Other well-documented cultural activities took place in Lissa and Kuks, where Count Franz Anton Sporck (1662–1738), famous for his connection with Johann Sebastian Bach, had founded an important music chapel.⁶ He also founded, in 1724, the first opera house in Prague, housed in one of his palaces; it was celebrated for having introduced the Italian opera, especially in its Venetian version, to Bohemia.⁷

In 1727, Gottfried Benjamin Hancke dedicated some verses to Sporck, and these could have easily been applied to other personalities involved in the field of musical production, especially to Johann Adam Questenberg:

No more rhetoric! Music can move the senses and
the heart
With no effort and with compelling sounds ...
It seems as if Libussa, early back from the dead,
was now again in her Bohemian land; ...
For, what Italy thinks its proper pleasure
is now to be obtained not too far from where I am;
To cross the Alps is now no longer needed;
And what Venice is proud of the Kuckus can
show you.⁸

Franz Anton Sporck and Adam Questenberg knew each other and probably held an intense exchange in matters of music. A recently discovered calendar journal of Sporck's Hofmeister, the organist Tobias Anton Seeman,



Fig. 3. Andreas and Joseph Schmutzer after Johann Gottfried Auerbach, Portrait of Maria Karolina Questenberg [Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Bildarchiv Austria].

from 1727 documents Sporck's journey to Jaroměřice and Vienna. This text contains wealth of detailed information on musical practice in Questenberg's house and on the consumption of music and theatre, shedding new light on sensual pleasures at his court.⁹ In addition, recent studies

⁴ Jiří Sehnal, "Die adeligen Musikkapellen im 17. und 18. Jahrhundert in Böhmen und Mähren", in *Studies in Music History presented to H.C. Robbins Landon on his 70th Birthday*, eds. Otto Biba and David Wyn Jones (London: Thames and Hudson, 1996), 195–217.

⁵ Jana Spáčilová, "Die Rezeption der italienischen Opera am Hofe des Ollmuetzer Bischofs Schrattenbach", in *The Eighteenth-Century Italian Opera Seria: Metamorphoses of the Opera in the Imperial Age* (Colloquia Musicologica Brunensia, 42, 2007), eds. Petr Macek and Jana Perutková (Praha: KLP, 2013), 75–88.

⁶ Pavel Preiss, *Boje s dvoublavou saní František Antonín Špork a barokní kultura v Čechách* (Praha: Vyšehrad, 1981).

⁷ Daniel E. Freeman, *The Opera Theater of Count Franz Anton von Sporck in Prague* (Stuyvesant NY: Pendragon Press, 1992).

⁸ Gottfried Benjamin Hancke, *Weltliche Gedichte* (Dresden: Zimmermann,

1727), 123–128: "Weg mit der Redekunst! Music kan Hertz und Sinnen / Durch schmeichlerischen Thon ohn alle Mueh gewinnen ... Es scheint als waere schon in den Czechitten Landen / Libussa wiederum von Todten auferstanden Denn was Italien vor sein vergnuengen haelt, / Wird jetzt nicht weit von mir, so gut wie dort bestellt; Nunnebro darf man nicht die Alpen uebersteigen; / Womit Venedig prangt kann dir der Kuckus zeigen"; Stanislav Bohaldo, "Quand la Moldau remercie le comte Sporck d'avoir introduit l'opéra italien en Bohème. Gottfried Benjamin Hancke, traducteur, avocat et critique de l'opéra italien au domaine de Kuks", in *Baroque en Bohème*, ed. Marie-Elizabeth Ducreux et al. (Villeneuve-d'Ascq: Université Charles de Gaulle Lille III, 2009), 133–158.

⁹ Stanislav Bohaldo, "Questenberg a Sporck – oddělená a nezávislé barokní hudební subkultury na Moravě a v Čechách?", *Musicologica Brunensia* 46, no. 1–2 (2011): 15–34.



Fig. 4. Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou, Questenberg Castle, 1706–1728 [photo: Dusty Sprengnagel, 2014].

have examined in depth the question of the connection between Questenberg and Johann Sebastian Bach.¹⁰ In Vienna, Questenberg was a member of the Santa Cecilia convention, founded in 1725 by musicians of the imperial court and by other music lovers, and presided over by the director of the Hofkapelle. It has been suggested that in March 1749 the count requested the composer to write a Mass for 22nd November, the day of the celebration of the saint. On the other hand, Bach and Questenberg may have already met years earlier, in 1719, when both of them were staying in Karlovy Vary.¹¹

If there cannot be any doubt that Sporck and Questenberg shared a passion for music and opera and that both concentrated on musical practices in their country residences, it is essential to point to the differences between them. These cannot be simply defined by different religious

and philosophical beliefs, because for Sporck music was a linchpin in a vast spectrum of cultural interests which he carried out systematically. Questenberg, on the other hand, while taking on commitments suitable to his dignity, displayed a particular passion for music, which took a position of pre-eminence, if not exclusivity, among his interests. The portrait Johann Kupezky executed between 1716 and 1718 (Fig. 1) demonstrates how Questenberg wanted to be seen: as a musician and a patron.¹² Lacking the emblem of his social rank and assuming the role of an artist, he is shown sitting on the terrace of a library, with a view of the Jaroměřice Castle and its gardens to the left. The way he is represented does not lack biographical correctness: he was indeed a lute player and a composer of considerable accomplishment.¹³ That particular iconography proved very successful and was repeated in

¹⁰ Michael Maul, "The Great Catholic Mass: Bach, Count Questenberg and the Musicalische Congregation in Vienna", in *Exploring Bach's B-minor Mass*, ed. Yo Tomita et al. (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 83–104.

¹¹ Maria Hübner, "Neues zu Johann Sebastian Bachs Reisen nach Karlsbad", *Bach Jahrbuch* 92, (2006): 97–105.

¹² Eduard Safarik, *Jan Kupezky (1666–1740): ein Meister des Barockporträts* (Aachen – Roma: De Luca, 2001), 113–115.

¹³ Ernst Gottlieb Baron, *Historisch-theoretische & praktische Untersuchung des Instruments der Laute* (Nürnberg: J.F. Ruediger, 1727), 77; Maul, *Great Catholic Mass*, 85.



Fig. 5. Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou, Questenberg Castle, 1706–1728, garden facade [photo: Dusty Sprengnagel, 2014].

a series of portraits of the count. In 1728, Anton and Joseph Schmutzer prepared an engraving after Kupezky's painting (Fig. 2), and Questenberg commissioned at least two further versions of the portrait, one of which was given to the parish church in Jaroměřice in 1737. To these added was a miniature portrait which to this day is preserved in the Bomann Museum of Celle.¹⁴ Moreover, a very similar composition was chosen also for the portrait that Johann Gottfried Auerbach (1697–1753) dedicated to Johann Adam's daughter Maria Karolina in 1735 (Fig. 3). She is represented as a harpsichord player in front of the family's renovated castle in Rappoltenkirchen.¹⁵

The residence at the centre of this musical activity – the castle in Jaroměřice (Figs. 4–5) – has a long construction

history, interspersed with many interruptions and modifications. Difficulties due to pre-existing structures, financial problems and probably even uncertainties in the planning process influenced the evolution of its structure. Despite consistent research conducted in the incredibly rich family archive, which is today held in the Moravian Provincial Archive in Brno, many problems remain unresolved. The fundamental source research carried out by Vladimír Helfert (it is not by accident that this first study was dedicated to the musical patronage of Questenberg),¹⁶ Alois Plichta,¹⁷ Petr Fidler¹⁸ and more recently by Rostislav Smíšek¹⁹ and Jana Perutková²⁰ has constructed a solid body of evidence and paved the way for further investigation. It should be noted that Questenberg and his residence

¹⁴ Safarik, *Jan Kupezky*, 114.

¹⁵ Maria Karolina was taught the harpsichord by the court organist Gottlieb Muffat; see Maul, *Great Catholic Mass*, 90.

¹⁶ Vladimír Helfert, *Hudební barok na českých zámcích. Jaroměřice za hraběte Jana Adama z Questenberku* (Praha: České Akademie, 1916).

¹⁷ Alois Plichta, ed., *O životě a umění (Listy z Jaroměřické kroniky 1700–1752)* (Jaroměřice n. Rokytnou: Místní Osvětová Beseda, Brno: Musejní Spolek, 1974).

¹⁸ Petr Fidler, "Příspěvky ke slovníku umělců a řemeslníků 17. a 18. století I", *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity, F, Řada uměnovědná*

23, no. F18 (1974): 78–91; Id., "Příspěvky ke slovníku umělců a řemeslníků 17. a 18. století II", in *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity, F, Řada uměnovědná* 24–25, no. F19–20 (1975–1976): 127–137; Id., "Prandtauers Schlossprojekt für Jarmeritz. Zur Eigenart der barocken Planung", *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 37, (1984): 119–140.

¹⁹ Rostislav Smíšek, "Jan Adam z Questenberka a hmotná kultura zámku v Jaroměřicích na Rokytnou. Příspěvek ke šlechtické reprezentaci v první polovině 18. století", *Západní Morava* 9, (2005): 50–70.

²⁰ Jana Perutková, *František Antonín Mlýa ve službách hraběte Questenberga a italská opera v Jaroměřicích* (Praha: KLP, 2011). Id., *Der glorreiche*

have been studied predominantly by musicologists and theatre scholars, whereas only a multi- or interdisciplinary approach would do justice to the complexity of his personality and achievements.

Questenberg started planning his residence after his studies at the University of Prague and his return from a long journey around Europe. For nearly four years, from 1696 to 1699, he was travelling across France, England, the northern and southern Netherlands and finally Italy, where he visited Genoa, Milan, Verona, Padua, Venice (twice), Florence, Parma, Modena, Naples and, of course, Rome. The itinerary, his impressions and the on-route activities are well-documented thanks to his valet's diary. He visited many country residences and it seems that he was particularly impressed by the architecture and the garden design in the Netherlands, by Versailles (naturally), and in Italy by the Medicean Villa in Pratolino and by Villa d'Este in Tivoli.²¹ Furthermore, post-mortem inventories indicate that he had bought many engravings showing his favourite places. During this tour, Questenberg also started collecting books, including many architectural treatises, for his new library. Upon his return in 1702, Emperor Joseph I elevated him to the title of count and he became a *Hofrat* (court counsellor). Questenberg never developed a particular interest in the *Cursus Honorum* at the Viennese court and in 1735, soon after having become a *Kaemmerer* (chamberlain), he abandoned the court and limited his public activities to representing the emperor at the Parliament in Brno.²²

During 1702, with the works in Jaroměřice still in their first phase, Questenberg's efforts were concentrated primarily on the construction of the Viennese town residence in Johannesgasse.²³ An overall plan for the country residence was formulated by Jakob Prandtauer (1660–1726) between 1706 and 1708, but the design that was finally adopted does not correspond to the project preliminaries or the visual language that can be attributed to the architect. The documents analysed by Fidler yield the names of many architects and master builders active there in addition to Prandtauer, for example Franz Jaengl, Christian Alexander Oedtl, Ludwig Sebastian Kaltner,



Fig. 6. Anonymous painter, Portrait of Johann Adam Questenberg, c. 1716–1718, Jaroměřice Castle [Castle Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou].

Tobias Krawany, Domenico Angeli, Antonio Beduzzi or Josef Mungenast. However, none of these artists can be identified with certainty as the designer responsible for the residence.

Considering the chronology of the building's construction, it appears that the works started on the south side, where *corps de logis* and lateral wings were executed between 1709 and 1715 on the basis of pre-existing structures (Fig. 5). The garden, placed on a lower level and originally connected to the upper terrace by a double-flight staircase, was planned by Jean Trehet (1654–1740), who visited Jaroměřice in 1715.²⁴ This phase also saw the first works on the interior decoration, so that the garden could be enjoyed along with the rooms that looked out onto it. The grotto under the terrace was decorated by the plasterer Michael Fontana in 1714, the same year when the painter Johann Michael Findt from Znojmo frescoed the illusionistic pergola of flowers in the *sala terrena* located in the garden wing on the west. The current spatial arrangement, which is a result of modifications that occurred in the later eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, moved significantly away from

.....
Nahmen Adami. *Johann Adam Graf von Questenberg (1678–1752) als Förderer der italienischen Oper in Mähren* (Wien: Hollitzer, 2015).

²¹ Fidler, "Prandtauer's Schlossprojekt", 136.

²² Ibid.

²³ Id., *Zur Bauaufgabe in der Barockarchitektur. Das Palais Questenberg. Ergänzende Forschungen zu einer Prandtauer-Monographie* (Innsbruck: Selbsterverlag, 1985).

²⁴ Fidler, "Příspěvky ke slovníku umělců II", 137.

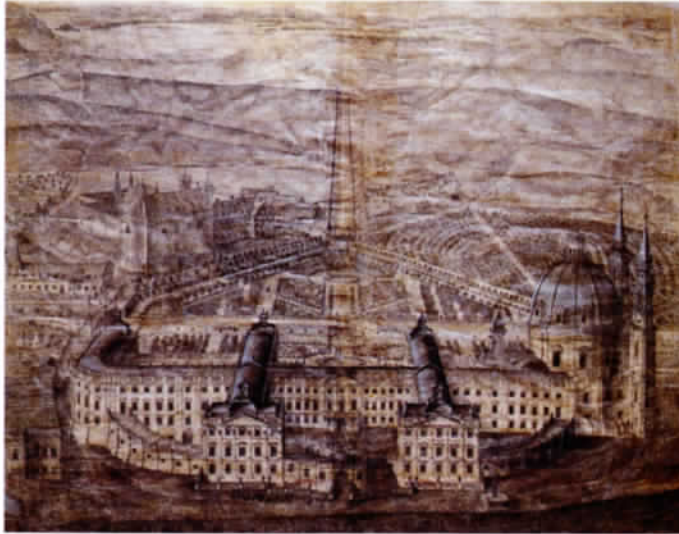


Fig. 7. Nicolaus Millich, Ideal view of the Questenberg Castle in Jaroměřice, c. 1728 [Castle Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou].

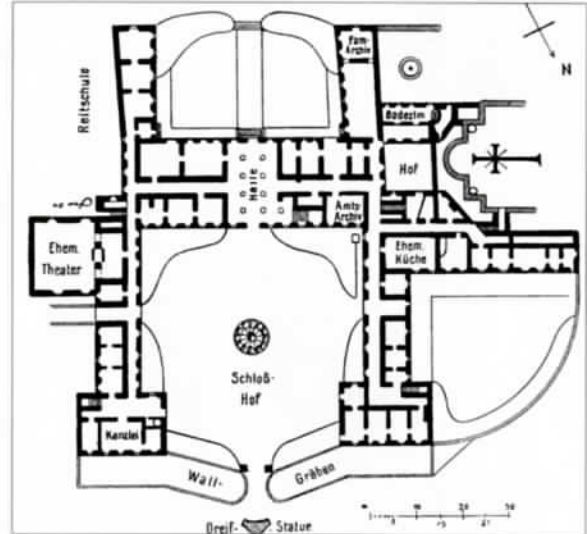


Fig. 8. Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou, Questenberg Castle, groundplan [Castle Jaroměřice nad Rokytnou].

this plan.²⁵ Only after 1720 did the work proceed on the construction of the north wings around the *cour d'honneur* (Fig. 4), the church on the west side, and the theatre wing on the east. The five-year-long interruption appears to have been caused by financial problems but did not affect the original plans. Except for the articulation of the facades and the decoration of the interior, the construction works were most likely finished in 1729 with the erection of the Rondell, a kind of pavilion that closed the *cour d'honneur* facing the village.²⁶ In 1728, a few alterations were introduced regarding the shape of the roofs. The works on the facades and interior decoration began in 1731 and ended in 1737. Questenberg's priority was apparently the completion of the theatre, which came into regular use as early as in 1723.²⁷

Kupezky's portrait, therefore, depicts the south facade of the building just after it had been completed. His presence in Jaroměřice between July 1718 and May 1719, reported by Alois Plichta, supports the hypothesis that the painter was familiar with the construction works.²⁸

However, Kupezky's view does not count as an objective cartographic document, insofar as it incorporates elements that did not yet exist but were only planned, for instance the church, whose construction is commonly believed to have started in 1720 or 1722, and the domed pavilions of the lateral wings.²⁹ The diagonal perspective adopted by the painter allowed him not only to adapt the background to the informal and relaxed character of Questenberg's portrait, but also to draw attention to the premises where his client intended to focus his future efforts. In fact, Kupezky highlights a portion of raw wall in the middle of the east lateral facade: this is precisely where the theatre wing would be added between 1720 and 1723.

The portraits of Questenberg known to us present several versions of the figure of the patron and his architectural endeavours. For instance, a portrait by an anonymous painter (Fig. 6), roughly contemporaneous with that by Kupezky, shows the young Questenberg with all the attributes of his dignity in front of the garden and the south facade of his castle.³⁰ The image alludes to

²⁵ Already in 1740, the collapse of the terrace led to its substitution with a cascade, which was later eliminated, and some time after Questenberg died in 1752 and the property was passed on to the Kaunitz family, the little domes of the lateral wings were replaced by pediments.

²⁶ Fidler, "Prandtauers Schlossprojekt", 134; also for the hypothesis regarding Josef Mungenast's authorship.

²⁷ Helfert, *Hudební barok*, 61.

²⁸ Alois Plichta, *Jaroměřicko. Dějiny Jaroměřic nad Rokytnou a okolí*, vol. 2 (Třebíč: Arca JiMfa, 1994), 129, 149.

²⁹ Fidler, "Prandtauers Schlossprojekt", 132, 135.

³⁰ *Ibid.*, 126–127.



Fig. 9. Jaroměřice, Questenberg Castle, Ballroom, 1731 [photo: author].

Questenberg's newly acquired social status as a count, to his position at the court and to his relationship with the *Reichsadel*, established thanks to his marriage with Maria Antonia Friedberg Scheer in 1707. The portrait is significant because of its iconography – the way in which it presents the protagonist and depicts the architectural background. The frontal representation confers greater solemnity on the palace and the garden, and Questenberg

appears here as a typical exponent of the court patronage that used architecture as a sign of distinction.³¹

The portraits of Johann Adam Questenberg reveal a complex personality in which two tendencies opposed or complemented each other: one focused on looking for social prestige and fame and the other on seeking pleasure of the senses, first and foremost, in music. When in 1728, on the occasion of the completion of the palace, Andrea and Joseph Schmutzer were commissioned to produce an etching of Kupezky's portrait of Questenberg; the result was a significant re-working of the pictorial model (Fig. 3). If the foreground still shows the terrace of the library with the figure of the count represented as a lute player, the background now features a rigorously frontal and symmetrical view of the garden and castle as seen from the south. This representation, which considerably emphasises the celebratory function of architecture, is probably based on a drawing – now lost – by Johann Nicolaus Millich. In fact, Millich's ideal view of the architectural ensemble as seen from the north, created around 1728 and presenting the same characteristics (Fig. 7), is still extant.³² According to Fidler, this drawing was part of a group of views featuring, in an idealized form and from different perspectives, the castle of Jaroměřice and possibly other family estates.³³ One of the functions of such views was precisely to provide the painters with models they could use as backgrounds for the family portraits they were commissioned to paint.³⁴ A plan from 1908 (Fig. 8) shows that the theatre and the ballroom underneath (called *Comoedi- und Ball-Haus* in the documents), accessible from the *cour d'honneur*, occupied the east wing of the building. In Millich's panorama, the theatre therefore appears as a part of architectural body that actually never existed in such a scale. The documents do not mention the name of the

³¹ The representation of architecture differs slightly from that in Kupezky's picture. The facades are crowned by a balustrade with sculptures and an open colonnade runs over the portico. Fidler (Ibid., 127) noted that this kind of representation cannot be associated with the existing building or any other specific project; it is more likely an adaptation of a model by Paul Decker, drawn from *Fuerstlicher Baumeister*.

³² Jiří Kroupa, *La Moravie à l'âge baroque, 1670–1790: dans le miroir des ombres* (Paris: Somogy éd. d'Art, 2002), 258.

³³ Fidler, "Prandtauers Schlossprojekt", 134.

³⁴ Whereas Schmutzer's etching seems to allude to both sides of Questenberg's personality, other portraits are of a purely celebratory and

official nature. The latter category includes, for instance, a painting by Christian Seybold, also from 1728, now lost and known only through another etching by Schmutzer (Lilian Ruhe, "Christian Seybold. Van *ein Maler gebuertigt von Maentz* tot *Pictor Aulicus* in Wenen; aanvullingen op biografie en oeuvre", *Desipientia* 21, no. 2 (2014): 46–56). Another example is a painting by Martin van Meytens, making the same use of architecture as a distinctive sign that was already present in Questenberg's portrait as a young man by an anonymous painter. Questenberg is portrayed holding the plan of his palace in Vienna. See Birgit A. Schmidt, "Johann Adam Graf Questenberg", in *Martin van Meytens der Jüngere*, eds. Agnes Husslein-Arco and Georg Lechner (Wien: Belvedere, 2014), 84–85.



Fig. 10. Jaroměřice, Questenberg Castle, Main Hall, ceiling fresco, 1735 [photo: Martin Mádl].

architect of the theatre, nor do we have much information about the stage designers called upon by Questenberg during the theatre's first ten years of activity.³⁵ However, quite significantly for the future, at that time Questenberg was already in contact with the Galli Bibiena workshop. In 1722 Antonio Galli Bibiena (1697–1774), who had just been nominated the second engineer of the imperial theatre, was busy, together with Gaetano Rosa and Gaetano Fanti, decorating the hall, gallery and library in the Questenberg palace in Vienna.³⁶

The work on the interior decorations at Jaroměřice was commenced in the early 1730s and followed an iconographic program prepared most likely by Konrad

Albrecht von Albrechtsburg (1682–1751).³⁷ In 1731, the ballroom, arranged in the west wing above the *sala terrena*, received a complex decoration system, based on the intertwining of grotesque plant and animal forms, *bandwerk*, *chinoiserie*, and architectural elements with mythological figures (Fig. 9). With regard to this room, the documentation provides the names of Franz Anton Findt (1691–1731), of the figurative painter Anton Hertzog (1692–1740) and of the illusionistic painter Francesco Messenta (1675–1745).³⁸ The central hall was ready for being frescoed in 1735. Beginning in 1730, Questenberg opted for wood panelling for the walls, modelled on the example of the Viennese Reichskanzlei,

³⁵ Among the few names documented is Franz Anton Findt, whose father Johann Michael had frescoed the room on the ground floor. Fidler, "Přispěvky ke slovníku umělců I", 81.

³⁶ Ulrike Knall-Brskovsky, *Italianische Quadraturisten in Wien* (Wien:

Boehlau, 1984), 238.

³⁷ Fidler, "Přispěvky ke slovníku umělců I", 78–79.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 81, 83 and 85. Hertzog may also be the author of the *Fall of the Giants* on the ceiling of the staircase.



Fig. 11. Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, drawing for the stage setting of the opera *Il delizioso ritiro*, scielto da Lucullo, 1738, Vienna, Theatermuseum [Vienna, Theatermuseum].

and commissioned celebratory portraits, most of which were painted by Johann Gottfried Auerbach. The contract for the vault fresco was signed by Domenico Maria Francia and Alessandro Ferretti on 15th May 1735.³⁹ The vault's iconography focuses on the allegorical depiction of Jaroměřice (Fig. 10), but with considerable attention devoted to the senses and sensual pleasures. The illusionistic architecture by Domenico Francia is set up like an attic accentuated with volutes and medallions, surrounded by balustrades and populated by cherubs and satyrs that connect the allegories of the Seasons in each corner with a dancing procession: Vulcan personifies winter; Ceres, summer; Bacchus, autumn; and spring appears as Apollo holding a cornucopia filled with flowers.

³⁹ Ibid., 81–82. Although the contract contains the term *Galeria*, the decoration refers to the main hall and not to the ballroom. For the analysis of the iconographic program, see Mariana Čapková, *Maliřská výzdoba hlavního sálu zámku v Jaroměřicích nad Rokytnou* (M.A. thesis, Brno:

The illusionistic opening in the sky frees the eye to explore the personification of Jaroměřice, accompanied by Diana, Amphitrite and the god of agriculture Chronos. At his feet, the Muse Euterpe is represented in a prominent position and large scale. She, in turn, is set against the lavish assembly of musical instruments at the base. The opposite side is occupied by a putto holding a trumpet and standing in front of several Turkish trophies to commemorate the victories against the Ottoman Empire and the glory of Jaroměřice. The two female figures to the left of Euterpe form an original celebration of the myth of Vertumnus and Pomona and through it refer to summer fruits (hence the sense of touch and taste) and theatrical art. The top figure, Pomona, is holding a small sickle in one hand and a basket of fruits in the other. Vertumnus, below, is handing over a theatre mask, while a putto is taking a military helmet from him, as if to remind us that Vertumnus is actually a male. Vertumnus is therefore an allegory of theatre, but also the god of the seasons. This aspect is elaborated in the left side of the painting, featuring a putto holding a compass and surmounted by a segment of the Zodiac circle that shows the astrological signs of the summer: Cancer and Leo. The compass is a symbol of constant diligence, effort and perseverance, to which the Zodiac circle adds the theme of the cyclical nature of time.

This composition can therefore be read as a celebration of the work of Johann Adam Questenberg, whose efforts allowed Jaroměřice to flourish not only as an agricultural centre, but also as an artistic and cultural one, with the more base senses satisfied by the fruits of the earth and the more elevated senses – sight and hearing – pleased by the arts supported at his court. The leading role that Questenberg attributed to Jaroměřice in promoting musical and opera activities is also evident if we consider that the elaboration of the fresco coincided with the opera *L'origine di Jaromeriz in Moravia*. It was composed by the count's *Kapellmeister* František Antonín Míča (1696–1744), with a libretto by Giovanni Domenico Bonlini (1673–1731). The opera was presented for the first time in 1730.⁴⁰ The central hall therefore celebrates

Filozofická Fakulta Masarykovy Univerzity, 2006), 26–44.

⁴⁰ Perutková, *František Antonín Míča*; Jana Spáčilová, "Libretista Prunich Jaroměřických Oper – Blinioni nebo Bonlini?", *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity* 41, (2006): 173.

the House of Questenberg and Johann Adam's role as a patron of music and theatre. Moreover, if we consider the hall's location above the garden terrace that conceals the cave, we cannot fail to recognise a similarity with the layout typical for numerous Ahnensäle and Kaisersäle, such as the ones found in the castles of Troja or Vranov.⁴¹ The contrast between a rough underground world and a superior, architecturally defined one appears for the first time in Villa Medici in Pratolino, which Questenberg had visited. For the count, this contrast represented the opposition between a primordial nature that was mute, deaf and blind, and the sophisticated culture of the higher senses which he promoted through music and theatre.

Throughout his artistic initiatives, Johann Adam Questenberg constantly resorted both to renowned artists and to ones who came from his own estates and whose talent he had recognised and encouraged. He commissioned some of the most successful composers of his time, such as Antonio Caldara (1670–1736), Johann Joseph Fux (1660–1741), Ignazio Conti (1699–1759) or Johann Adolph Hasse (1699–1783), but the music could also be composed *in situ*, as in the case of Míča's compositions. The stage settings were commissioned from Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, but also from Johann Joseph Schetinsky (1704–?) and Ignaz Buczek (1712–?). The latter was the son of a brickmaker from the area around Jaroměřice, whom Questenberg had sent to the Bibiena workshop.⁴²

Vladimir Helfert's claim that Questenberg adhered to the concept of eudemonia⁴³ probably means that his idea of happiness did not amount to a personal and exclusive enjoyment of the pleasures of the senses provided by music and the theatre, but that it also depended, to a great extent, on surrounding himself with subordinates whose artistic training he had ensured. This inclination may have

suggested to him the imaginary constellation shown in the composition of the central hall of his castle.

The transformation of the entire Jaroměřice estate into a place devoted to the promotion and enjoyment of music was completed in 1735 with the creation of a theatrical space in the gardens near the Rokytka river. The project, which involved several alterations to the garden designed by Jean Trehet twenty years before, was a part of the layout designed by Konrad Albrecht von Albrechtsburg, who on that occasion collaborated with Prince Eugene's garden inspector, Anton Zinner.⁴⁴ Significantly, the date, 1735, coincides with Questenberg's withdrawal from the court in Vienna. As a result, the count's increased presence in Jaroměřice influenced the program of performances, which hitherto essentially consisted of a winter season. From then on, the temporal distribution of the performances was expanded and a new theatre space was set up for the summer season. In fact, the period between 1735 and 1739 stands out for the quantity and quality of its performances.⁴⁵

Many of the artists hired by Questenberg to decorate the castle and provide the stage designs belonged to, or gravitated towards, Galli Bibienas' circle, at whose Viennese workshop that illusionistic perfection which was mentioned at the beginning of this essay had been taught and practiced. Domenico Francia is an example of such an artist, but so are Anton Hertzog, Franz Anton Danne or Giovanni Pellizuoli.⁴⁶ Moreover, Questenberg commissioned several stage settings directly from the first imperial theatrical engineer, Giuseppe Galli Bibiena, including those for *Il delizioso ritiro, scielto da Lucullo, console romano*. The opera, composed by Ignazio Conti with a libretto by Filippo Neri del Fantasia, was staged in June 1738 for the birthday of the count's second wife, Anna Kaunitz. The plot, based on a text by Plutarch,

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⁴¹ Friedrich Pollerros, "Virutum exercitia sunt gradus ad gloriam. Zum Concerto des Ahnensaals in Frain", *Wiener Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* 51, (1998): 110–112.

⁴² Fidler, "Přispěvky ke slovníku umělců I", 80.

⁴³ Helfert, *Hudební barok*, 47.

⁴⁴ Plichta, *O životě a umění*, 190; Theodora Straková, "Die Questenbergsche Musikkapelle und ihr Repertoire", *Sborník prací Filozofické fakulty brněnské univerzity. H, Řada hudebněvědná* 45, (1997): 14.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, 15.

⁴⁶ Pellizuoli, who died in Jaroměřice in 1734, had been charged to paint the fresco in the central hall before the commission was passed on to Francia; see Fidler, "Přispěvky ke slovníku umělců I", 87–88; Plichta, *O životě a umění*, 286–289. The drawings for stage settings by Giovanni Pellizuoli held in the Theatermuseum in Vienna are now published by Andrea Sommer Mathis, "Ein überraschender Fund im Sammlungsbestand der Handzeichnungen des Wiener Theatermuseums. Bühnenbilder aus der Wiener Werkstatt der Galli Bibiena für ein mährisches Adelstheater", in *25 Jahre Theatermuseum im Palais Lobkowitz*, ed. Christiane Mühlegger-Henhapel (Wien: Holzhausen, 91–103)

tells the adventures of Lucullus and focuses on the events that followed his abandonment of public life. Lucullus had retired to a country villa to dedicate himself to the convivial pleasure of the senses (hence the proverbial expression “Lucullan feast”) and to the patronage of the arts. Questenberg thereby used ancient history as a mirror where he could project his own existence. The parallels

between Questenberg and Lucullus are evident, and so are those between Jaroměřice and the *delizioso ritiro*. The stage settings, designed by Giuseppe Galli Bibiena and in part documented by various drawings (Fig. 11) preserved in the Theatre Museum in Vienna, seem to be like a theatre within a theatre, doubling the experience of reality through the stimulation of the senses.⁴⁷

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⁴⁷ Among the drawings identified so far is, for instance, a library (Fig. 11), which should be understood as an explicit reference to Questenberg's book

collection, already greatly emphasised in Kupezky's portrait.