
MUSIC IN ART

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EDITOR

ZDRAVKO BLAŽEKOVIĆ

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DECORATION OF PERFORMANCE SPACE: MEANING AND IDEOLOGY

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THE IMPERIAL COURT THEATER IN VIENNA FROM BURNACINI TO GALLI BIBIENA

ANDREA SOMMER-MATHIS

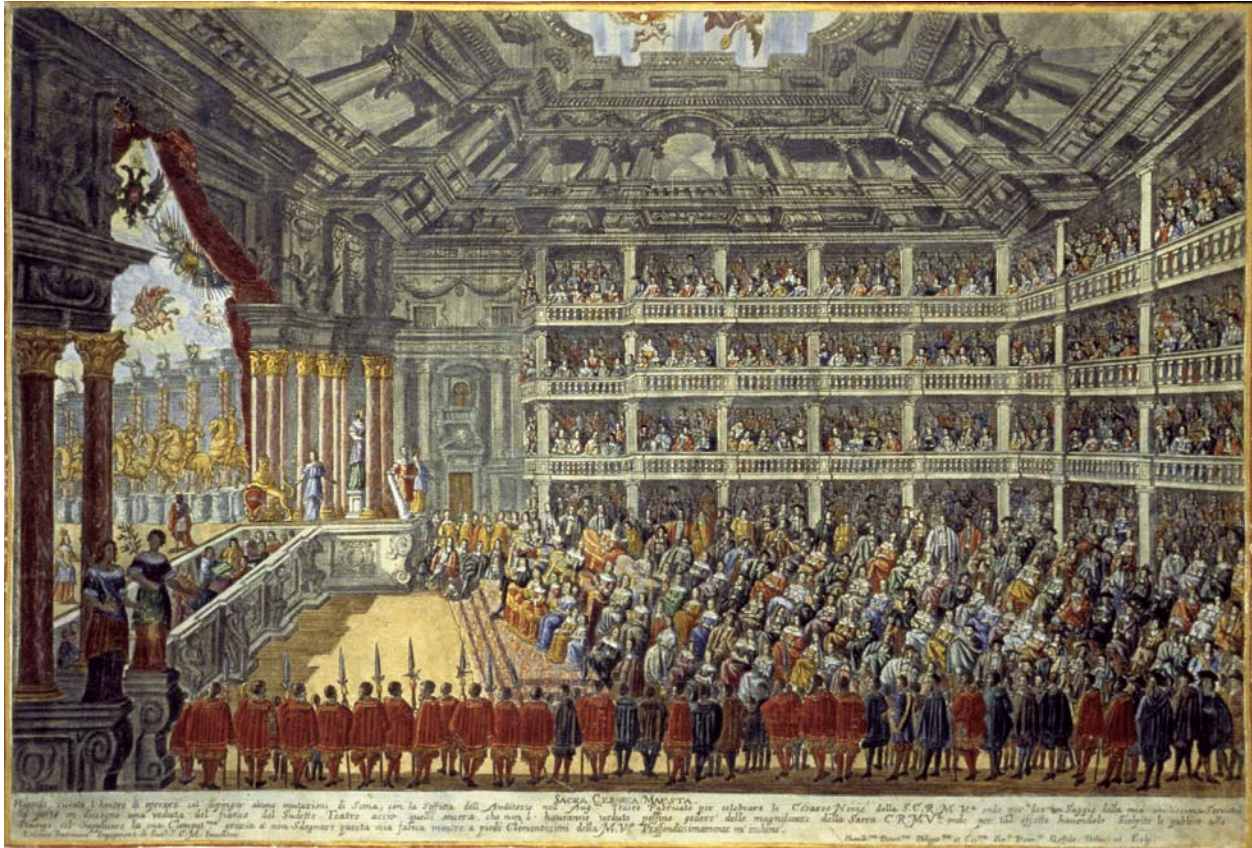
Österreichische Akademie der Wissenschaften
Institut für Kulturwissenschaften und Theatergeschichte

The best known image of the imperial court theater in the seventeenth century is undoubtedly that of the auditorium of the so-called Teatro sulla Cortina during the performance of the Viennese Baroque opera par excellence, *Il pomo d'oro* [fig. 1].¹ The frequent reproduction of this engraving has created the impression that this theater was the only one, or at least the most important theatrical venue at the imperial court of Vienna. In fact, the surviving documentation indicates the production of only three other operas in this building during the fifteen years between its inauguration in 1668 and its demolition in 1683, what is a very small proportion of the total number of operas staged in Vienna in the course of the seventeenth and the first half of the eighteenth century. Most of the performances took place not in free-standing mono-functional theater buildings, but in spaces inside or adjacent to the Hofburg (the Imperial Palace) or one of the other Habsburg residences; these could be halls of varying sizes, a gallery, an apartment, a patio, a courtyard, or a garden. The adaptation of the various indoor and outdoor spaces to the respective festive occasion ranged from the installation of a simple platform to the construction of complex structures with lavish stage sets and machinery.²

The present article focuses on those theater buildings, which were characterized by a clear division between proscenium, stage, and auditorium. Consequently, the discussion pertains principally to three theatrical venues: the two halls of the so-called Große (or Leopoldinische) Hoftheater, the Theater auf dem Tummelplatz, and the Teatro sulla Cortina.

GIOVANNI BATTISTA CARLONE AND GIOVANNI BURNACINI: FROM A BALLROOM TO THEATER HALLS. The Große Hoftheater (Great Court Theater) dates back to a ballroom built by the Italian architect Giovanni Battista Carlone (1580/90–1645) between 1629 and 1631, for the wedding of the future Emperor Ferdinand III and his first wife, the Spanish Infanta Maria. The Great Hall measured about 45.5 meters in length and 19 meters across. Together with its smaller anteroom, which had a lower ceiling, it formed the single largest space within the Imperial Palace. These two halls, following their multiple refurbishments, are today the Redoutensäle.³

Carlone's original ballrooms were used not only for dance performances, but also for tournaments and opera productions. Unfortunately, no illustrations from the first half of the seventeenth century have been preserved, but a detailed report by the Polish nuncio Mario Filonardi (d.1644) on an opera performance in 1635 gives at least an idea about the appearance of the Great Hall at the time.⁴ The nuncio spoke of a *comedia*, i.e., a *commedia in musica*, the contemporary term for an Italian opera. Filonardi did not name the opera but we learn that it was staged in a large room decorated with illusionistic wall paintings of several emperors, each placed between two columns. He also described the stage scenery and the decoration of the proscenium: The frontispiece depicted a fountain in the middle of a forest. On both sides, one saw shepherds with fruit baskets on their heads, above the stage a cornucopia with pearls, and, in the middle of the architrave, a large imperial eagle.



1. Frans Geffels, Auditorium of the Teatro sulla Cortina in Vienna during the performance of *Il pomo d'oro* (1668). Colored copper engraving, 34.2 × 50.5 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, Misc. 143-GF/25 Mus. © ÖNB.

A contemporary source in Latin confirms the existence of wall paintings of several Habsburg emperors designed according to a complex humanistic genealogical concept.⁵ It is probable that similar iconographic motifs were featured not only on the walls, but also on the ceiling of the Great Hall. In addition, as a symbol of the Holy Roman Empire, the huge double-headed eagle seen on the architrave of the proscenium underscored the representative function of the hall.

Yet the decoration of the ballroom described in these sources barely survived into the second half of the seventeenth century. When Giovanni Burnacini (Cesena?, ca. 1610–Vienna, 1655) was appointed court architect in 1651, on the intervention of Empress Eleonora Maddalena Gonzaga, the third wife of Ferdinand III, the refurbishment and enlargement of the ballroom was his first assignment as architect and stage designer in Vienna [fig. 2].⁶ Burnacini had previously worked in Ferrara, Mantua and Venice, where he had built, *inter alia*, the opera house Teatro SS. Giovanni e Paolo.

The newly adapted Great Hall was inaugurated in 1652 with the tournament-opera *La gara*, performed on the occasion of the birth of the Spanish Infanta Margarita Teresa, who would marry Emperor Leopold I in 1666.⁷ Given that he had staged a semi-theatrical performance of another tournament opera, *Le pretensioni del Tebro, e del Pò*, in Ferrara a decade earlier, Burnacini was well versed in this genre. Indeed, it is likely that the reputation he acquired with that earlier production, described in great detail in a booklet published in Ferrara, played a role in securing his appointment at the imperial court of Vienna.⁸

The author of the Viennese tournament-opera, Alberto Vimina (Michele Bianchi, 1603–1667), provides us with exact information on the appearance of the hall, the four changes of the scenery, the two ballets, and



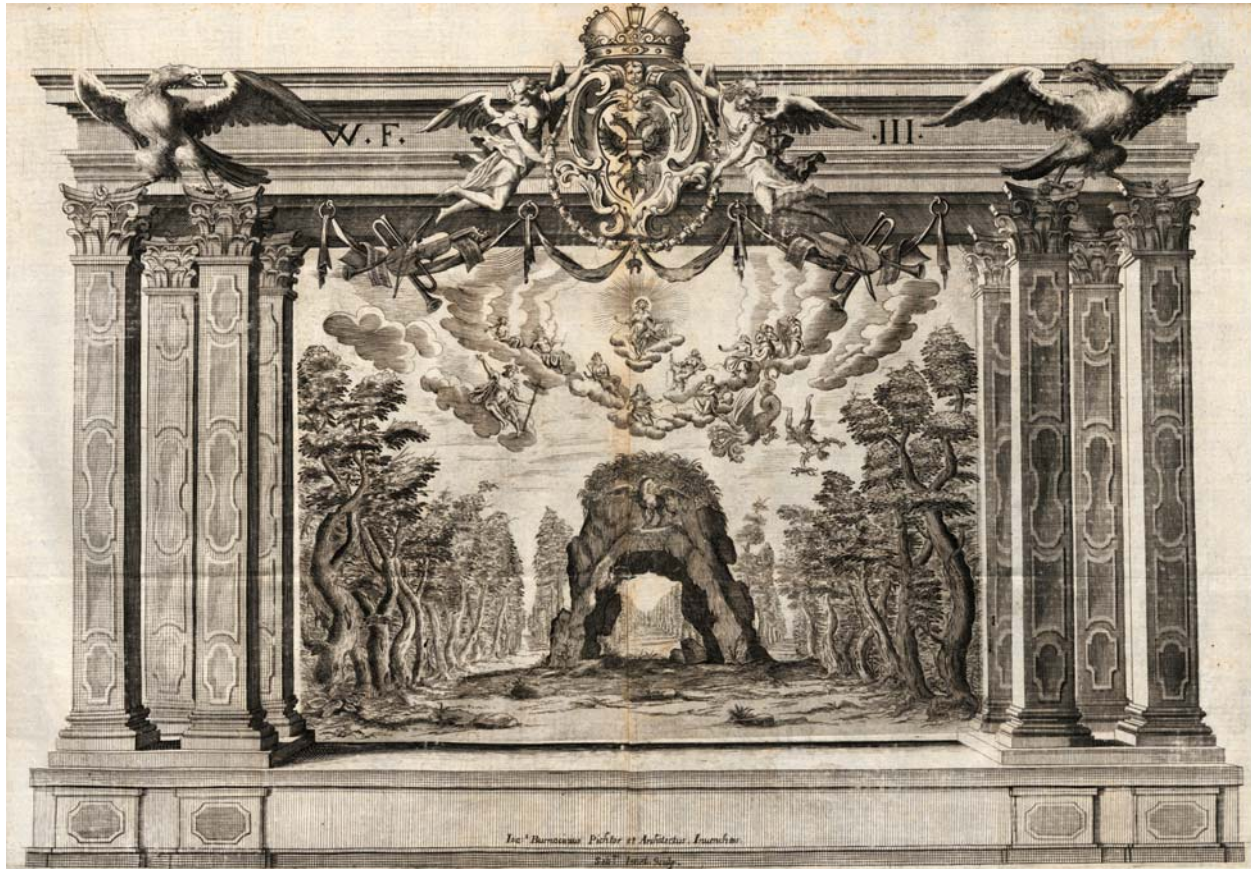
2. Portrait of Giovanni Burnacini in the libretto of the opera *L'inganno d'Amore* (Regensburg, 1653). Copper engraving, 27.5 × 21 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 47.Kk.74-Mus. © ÖNB.

the tournament that introduced the third act. The printed libretto also contains six copperplate engravings of the stage settings designed according to the original drawings of Giovanni Burnacini, which were recently identified in Stuttgart.⁹

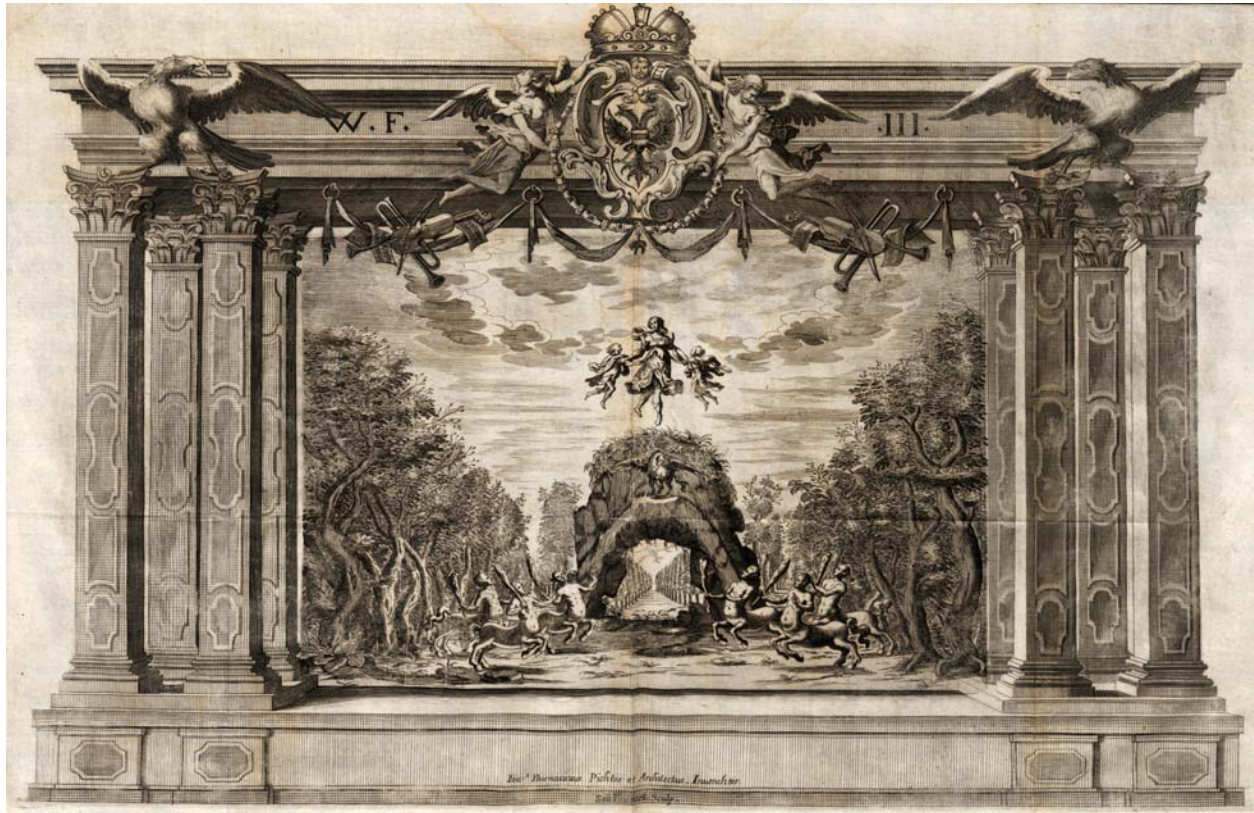
The stage design for the prologue shows a suite of courtyards with a deep central perspective typical for the time [figs. 3 & 3a]. Two scenes represent the mountain of the Muses, the Parnassus, a frequent fixture in festive decorations from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries; the Florentine *intermedii* of Bernardo Buontalenti and the stage designs of Giulio and Alfonso Parigi, Giacomo Torelli or Ferdinando Tacca are cases in point [figs. 4-4a & 5-5a].¹⁰ More innovative was the scenery of a room with a barrel vault supported by Ionic columns in groups of four [figs. 6 & 6a]. The setting for the last act of *La gara* was another hall, this time decorated with female statues and male figures with legs in the form of snakes similar to those of the later designs of Giovanni Burnacini's son, Lodovico Ottavio [figs. 7 & 7a].



3. Sebastian Inet based on the design by Giovanni Burnacini, Scenery (courtyard) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Copper engraving, 35.3 × 50.5 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 79.B.1-Mus. © ÖNB. – 3a. Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (courtyard) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Pen and ink drawing. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fol. 106r. © WLB.



4. Sebastian Inet based on the design by Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (Parnassus) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Copper engraving, 35.3 × 50.3 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 79.B.1-Mus. © ÖNB. – 4a. Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (Parnassus) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Pen and ink drawing. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fol. 106r. © WLB.



5. Sebastian Inet based on the design by Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (Parnassus with centaurs) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Copper engraving, 35.5 × 50.6 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 79.B.1-Mus. © ÖNB. – 5a. Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (Parnassus with centaurs) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Pen and ink drawing. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fol. 106r. © WLB.



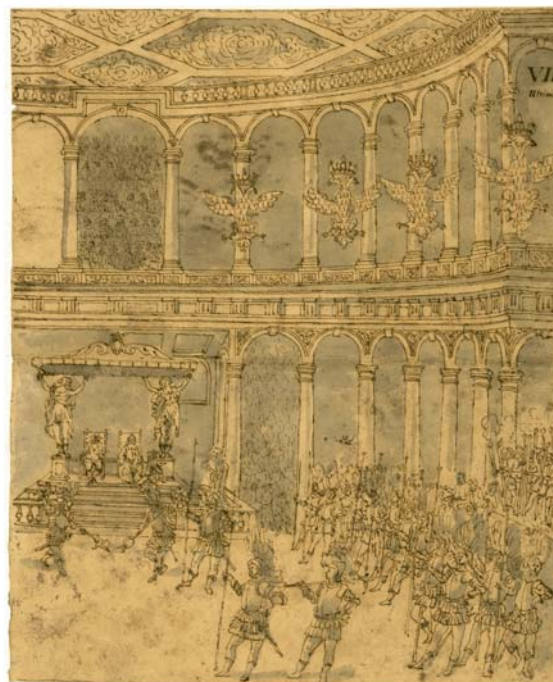
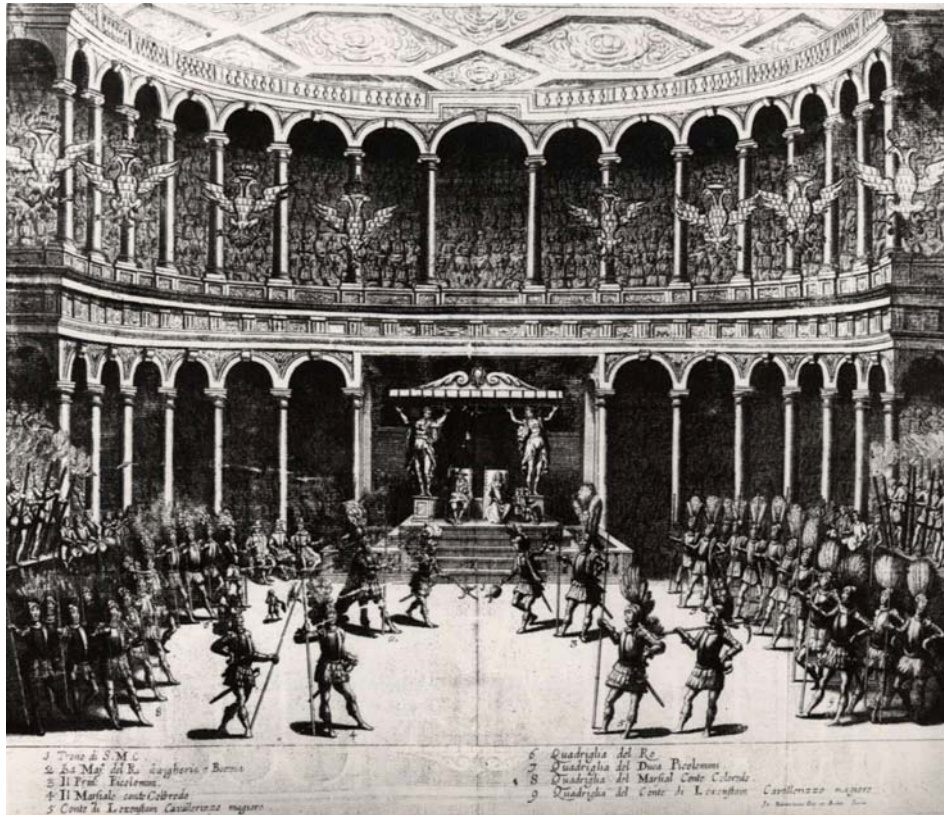
6. Sebastian Ienet based on the design by Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (room with a barrel vault) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Copper engraving, 35.5 × 50.6 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 79.B.1-Mus. © ÖNB. — 6a. Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (room with a barrel vault) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Pen and ink drawing. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fol. 108r. © WLB.



7. Sebastian Inet based on the design by Giovanni Burnacini, Stage design (hall with statues) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Copper engraving, 36 × 51 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 79.B.1-Mus. © ÖNB. — 7a. Giovanni Burnacini, Design (hall with statues) for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Pen and ink drawing. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fol. 107r. © WLB.



8. Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini, Design of the proscenium for the Viennese court theater, in the top left corner (ca. 1659). Pen and ink drawing. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fol. 110r. © WLB.



9. Sebastian Ienet based on the design by Giovanni Burnacini, Auditorium during the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Copper engraving, 39.8 × 48 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 79.B.1-Mus. © ÖNB. – 9a. Giovanni Burnacini, Part of the auditorium for the tournament-opera *La gara* (Vienna, 1652). Pen and ink drawing. Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fol. 107r. © WLB.



10. Jacob von Sandrart after Giovanni Burnacini, Title page of the libretto of the opera *L'inganno d'Amore* (Regensburg, 1653). Copper engraving, 16.5 × 12 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 47.Kk.74-Mus. © ÖNB.

The scenes of *La gara* were framed by a proscenium comprising a base without any decorative elements and four columns on each side (for Burnacini's design) [fig. 8]. They carried the entablature, which featured a medallion held by an angel on each side displaying the main insignia of the House of Habsburg: the double-headed eagle with the Austrian shield in the center, the imperial crown on top and the chain of the Order of the Golden Fleece below. Musical instruments hung from the architrave. On each side, an eagle with outspread wings rested on the abacus atop the Corinthian capitals of the two anterior columns.¹¹

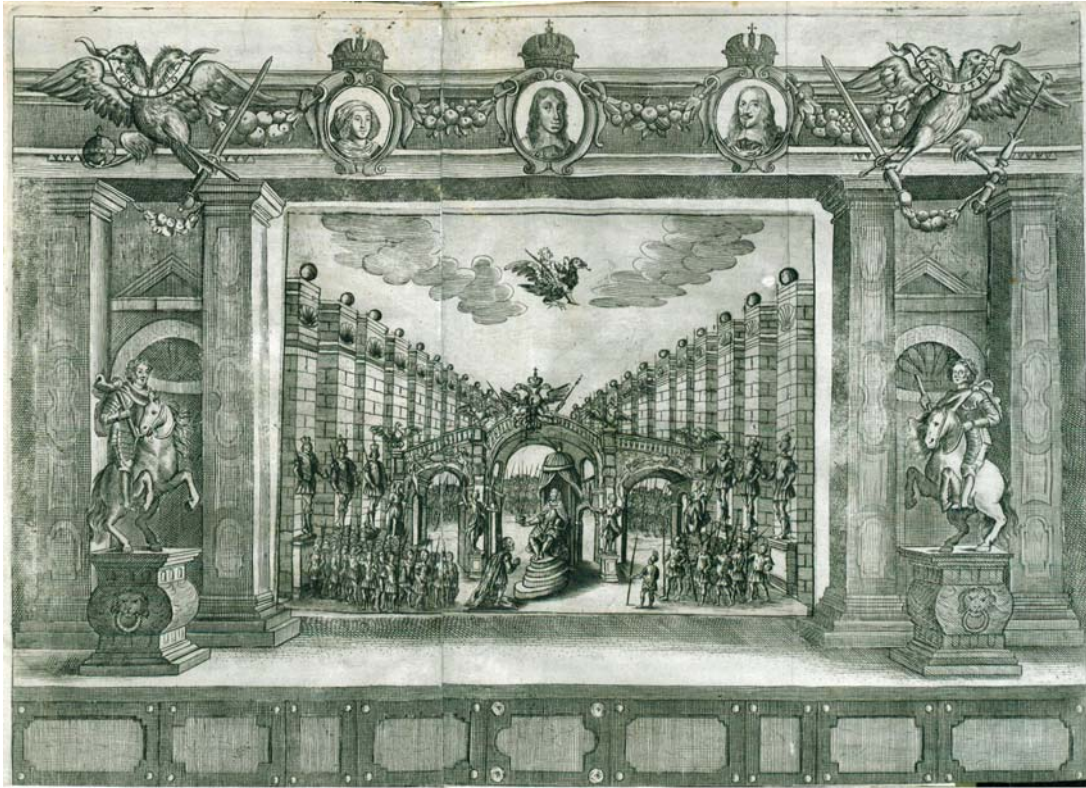
The third act of *La gara* included a tournament that took place not on stage, but in the auditorium [figs. 9 & 9a]. The fighters, disguised as personifications of the four parts of the world, appeared on two ramps and



11. Jakob van Sandreas after Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini, Stage design (courtyard) for the opera *L'inganno d'Amore* (Regensburg, 1653). Copper engraving, 29 × 36.5 cm. Theaterwissenschaftliche Sammlung der Universität zu Köln, 5015.

entered into a contest for the privilege of celebrating the birth of the Spanish Infanta. To facilitate this part of the performance, Burnacini had created a divisible, quite deep orchestral balustrade. Its parts were moved to the sides of the hall, right in front of the lower boxes. In this way, he obtained not only space for the combat activity, but also a platform on either side for the pages who served as torchbearers. The podium with the thrones for the imperial couple, Ferdinand III and Eleonora Gonzaga, was covered with an opulent canopy supported by two huge allegorical figures representing Peace and Virtue. During the tournament, the thrones were moved towards the back of the hall. For lighting, eight chandeliers in the shape of double-headed eagles could be lowered from the coffered ceiling of the auditorium.¹²

Giovanni Burnacini's modification of the imperial court theater for *La gara* was characterized by the use of several iconographic elements, which, in the course of the seventeenth century, were to become firmly integrated into theater decor in Vienna. Apart from the clear predominance of the symbol of the imperial eagle we can observe an increasing number of other Habsburg insignia – the imperial crown and the chain of the dynastic Order of the Golden Fleece on the proscenium – and of allegorical elements, such as the statues of Peace and Virtue, which supported the canopy above the imperial thrones. These iconographic motifs were featured in all Viennese theater buildings refurbished or newly constructed between the middle of the seventeenth and the middle of the eighteenth century.



12-13. Giovanni Burnacini (?), Stage designs for the Jesuit drama *Pietas victrix* (Vienna, 1659): final scene with throne (above) and camp (below). Copper engravings, 27 × 19 cm. Wien, Universitätsbibliothek, AHB, II-247.226. © UB.

GIOVANNI BURNACINI: A WOODEN THEATER TRANSPORTED FROM REGENSBURG TO VIENNA (THEATER AUF DEM TUMMELPLATZ, 1659–1662). In 1653, one year after the performance of *La gara*, Giovanni Burnacini was commissioned to create a new theater for the production of the opera *L'inganno d'Amore* – this time not in Vienna but in Regensburg, where the court resided during the Imperial Diet [fig. 10].¹³ With the help of his son, Lodovico Ottavio, and Venetian artisans, Burnacini built a wooden theater after the Italian model; it comprised a large auditorium and a gallery with sixty boxes. According to a contemporary source, this detached theater building could accommodate several thousand people, which was, without any doubt, a typical Baroque exaggeration; moreover, it was claimed that the stage allowed up to eight changes of scenery without having to bring down the curtain.¹⁴

The engravings of the six stage settings show how Giovanni Burnacini sought to substitute new forms and decorative elements for the conventional decor employed in *La gara*, thus preparing the way for his son, Lodovico Ottavio, who was to become his successor as architect and stage designer at the imperial court. The proscenium of the new theater in Regensburg differed markedly from its Viennese predecessor: A plain stage supported two columns on either side with Doric capitals, placed on pedestals decorated with animal heads [fig. 11]. On both sides, the space between the two columns was decorated with military trophies. The entablature was adorned with triglyphs and a medallion that featured the crowned double-headed eagle.

Following the end of the Imperial Diet in Regensburg, the wooden theater building was disassembled. We know for sure that the sceneries and the stage machinery for *L'inganno d'Amore* were transported along the Danube to Vienna, where they were stored in the arsenal.¹⁵ Whether the wooden components used for the construction of the theater in Regensburg were also brought to Vienna is not entirely clear.¹⁶ It seems likely that they were, because in 1659 another free-standing wooden theater was erected in Vienna on the so-called Tummelplatz at very low cost.¹⁷ It was built for a company of *commedia dell'arte* actors under the direction of Andrea d'Orso. Yet their tenure at the imperial court turned out to be short indeed.¹⁸

The theater's opening on 4 January 1660 was already overshadowed by a great misfortune: When three royal ladies-in-waiting, curious to see the emperor whose box was directly beneath theirs, lent over the balustrade, it gave way and they fell, seriously injuring themselves and a number of audience members below. Emperor Leopold escaped injury because he had left his seat to greet his uncle, Archduke Leopold William.¹⁹

The Jesuits interpreted this accident as a sign of God and interceded immediately to demand the cancellation of the *commedia dell'arte* performances. They considered the plays of the Italian actors a great threat to the moral integrity of the audience and, moreover, feared the loss of their own supremacy in the field of the spoken theater.²⁰ In the end, they held sufficient sway with Emperor Leopold I for him to have the Theater auf dem Tummelplatz demolished in 1662 without inviting any other theater company to his court, his own great passion for the Italian comedians notwithstanding.²¹

EXKURSUS: GIOVANNI BURNACINI (?): PIETAS VICTRIX – THE JESUIT THEATER (1659). In the seventeenth century, several members of the House of Habsburg, especially the Emperors Ferdinand III, Ferdinand IV, and Leopold I, regularly attended the performances of the Jesuit theater and generously provided funding for the order's theatrical activities. The ordinary repertoire of Latin school dramas was complemented by lavish performances produced in the Jesuit colleges to celebrate major dynastic festivities; these so-called *Ludi Caesarei* in honor, and in the presence, of the imperial court demanded the same elaborate stage settings as the court opera productions of the time.

The absolute climax was the magnificent performance of the Latin drama, *Pietas victrix*, created to celebrate the coronation of Emperor Leopold I in Frankfurt am Main in 1658. It was performed on his return to Vienna, on 21 and 22 February 1659.²² The author was Nicolaus Avancini (1611–1686), who was professor of theology and philosophy at the University of Vienna and rector of the Jesuit college, but also a poet, playwright and stage director. *Pietas victrix* focused simultaneously on the military struggle between the Christian Emperor Constantine and the pagan tyrant Maxentius, and on the spiritual contest between *Pietas* (Piety) and *Impietas* (Impiety). Needless to say, Constantine and the Christians were victorious.

The play was divided into five acts with varying numbers of scenes. There was also singing, dancing, and fighting, and the play ended with an exaltation of the Austrian emperors from Rudolph I to Leopold I,



14a-b. Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini, Stage designs for the opera *Il Re Gildoro*: scenery of the prologue and the royal hall (Vienna, 1659). Copper engravings, 34.5 × 48.5 cm (each). Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, *35.C.4-Mus. © ÖNB.

presented as the legitimate successors of Constantine. The last scene presented Constantine on a throne in front of an imposing triumphal arch crowned by the double-headed eagle of the House of Habsburg [fig. 12]. Constantine was surrounded both by his loyal subjects and the statues of Austrian emperors. In front of him, on his knees, his son was waiting to receive the imperial crown from the hands of his father – a symbol of the perpetual continuity of the monarchy, the *Translatio imperii*.²³

This and the other eight stage designs are documented by the engravings of Gerard Bouttats (1630–1668) included in the printed edition of Avancini's drama.²⁴ Some of them are signed with "G.B.f.", which might indicate that the court architect Giovanni Burnacini was the stage designer for *Pietas victrix*. Since Burnacini died in 1655, he cannot have been the scenographer for the production of 1659, but it seems possible that Avancini used earlier drawings designed for the drama *Theodosius Magnus Justus et Pius, Imperator*, which was scheduled for the inauguration of the new academic theater in 1654, but was not performed due to the premature death of King Ferdinand IV. In 1659, the play was transformed into a *Ludus Caesareus* and produced with sceneries reminiscent of those of the Italian stage designers Giacomo Torelli and Giulio Parigi.²⁵

All nine scenes of *Pietas victrix* were framed by a massive proscenium arch with an equestrian statue on a pedestal on either side [fig. 13]. On the architrave there were three crowned medallions showing members of the House of Habsburg. Their identification has been controversial among scholars of *Pietas victrix*. The portrait of the female in particular has caused confusion and led to misidentifications, but neither is there a consensus on the identity of the two male figures. The most likely interpretation identifies the figure in the middle as Emperor Leopold I, the figure to his left as the Dowager Empress Eleonora II Gonzaga, and the figure on the right as Archduke Leopold William. The three medallions are flanked by two double-headed eagles. Each holds in its beak one half of a banner displaying the motto of Emperor Leopold I, *Consilio et Industria*, and a sword in one foot; the one on the left holds an orb, and the one on the right a scepter in the other foot.

The period of such lavish performances in the style of the *Ludi Caesarei* ended with the death of Emperor Joseph I in 1711. His brother and successor to the throne, Charles VI, did not share the interest of his predecessors for the Jesuit theater, and Maria Theresa even forbade theater performances in the Jesuit colleges, first in Vienna (1760) and then in the whole Province of Austria (1768). In 1773, Pope Clement XIV Ganganelli (1705–1744) suspended the Jesuit order altogether.

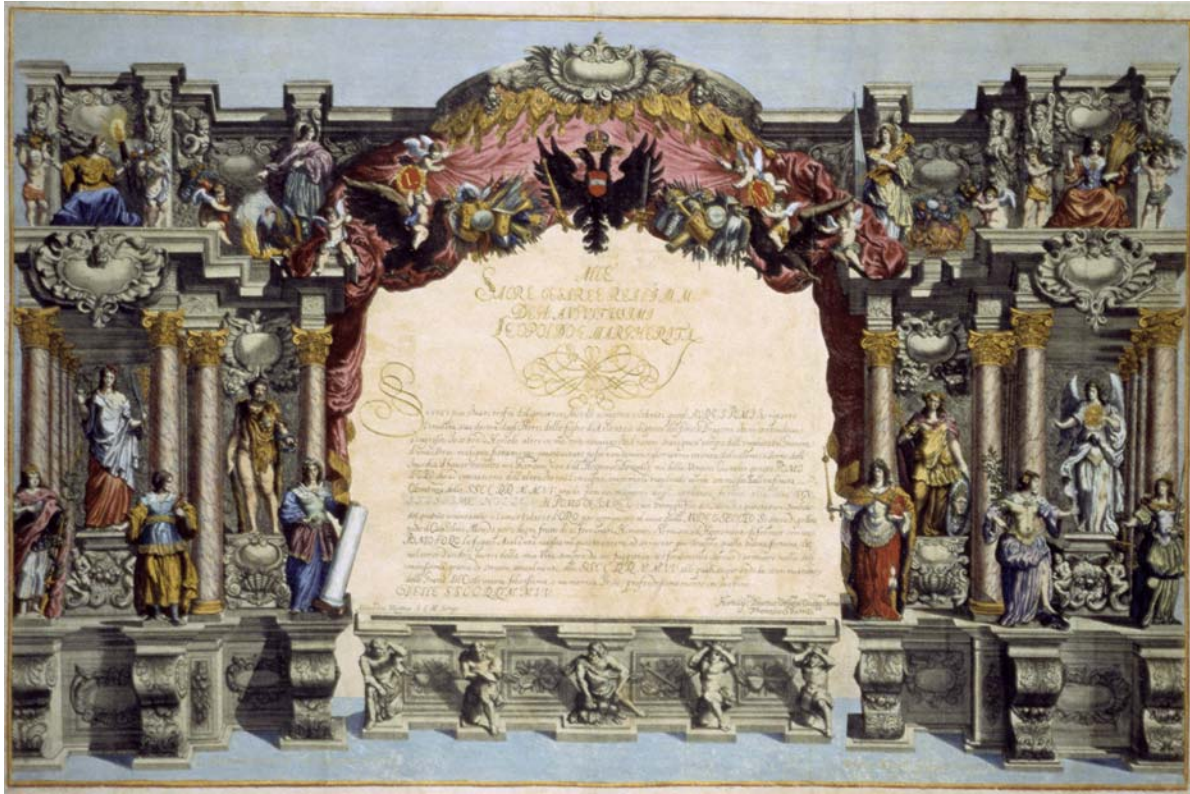
LODOVICO OTTAVIO BURNACINI: THE REFURBISHMENT OF THE THEATER HALL IN THE IMPERIAL PALACE (GROSSES HOF THEATER, 1659–1683). At about the same time as the performance of *Pietas victrix* in the Jesuit College and the construction of Vienna's first free-standing theater on the Tummelplatz, the two halls of the Große Hoftheater in the imperial palace were refurbished for the Carnival festivities of 1659/60. The architect responsible for this modification was the son of Giovanni Burnacini, Lodovico Ottavio (1636–1707), who had come to Vienna with his father and assisted him in his first major productions, *La gara* in Vienna (1652) and *L'inganno d'Amore* in Regensburg (1653). After the death of Giovanni in 1655, Lodovico Ottavio succeeded his father as architect and stage designer at the imperial court. His appointment to this role was formally finalized by Emperor Leopold I in 1659.²⁶

His first set of decorations, created between 1659 and 1662, was still very much in the style of his father. They featured a rectangular frame and a stage that was not particularly deep. The shape of these settings was rather simple and consisted mainly of vertical lines with few curvatures – making them quite distinct from his later stage designs with their exuberant forms and decorative elements.

The engravings of the sceneries for the operas *Il re Gilidoro* and *Il Pelope geloso*, both performed in 1659, show that Lodovico Ottavio's initially did not change the proscenium of the Great Hall and its architectural structure [fig. 14a–b].²⁷ He merely changed the appearance of the columns by substituting fluting for the previous panneling. Yet subsequently he did also change the form and structure of the proscenium arch, as can be seen in the engravings of the stage designs for *La forza della Fortuna e della Virtù* in 1661 and for *La Zenobia di Radamisto* in 1662 [figs. 15 & 16].²⁸ Here one can clearly see a remarkable change from the classicist forms of Giovanni Burnacini to the Baroque style of his son. In general, Lodovico Ottavio maintained the basic structures of the stage designed by his father, but dissolved its forms and embellished them with new decorative elements including arabesques and fantastic animal heads.



15-16. Franciscus van der Steen after Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini, Stage designs for the prologue (sea with beach) of the opera *La forza della Fortuna e della Virtù* (Vienna, 1661) and for the gallery in the opera *La Zenobia di Radamisto* (Vienna, 1659). Copper engravings, 31.5 × 48.8 cm (each). Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 79.C.36-Mus; 79.C.37-Mus. © ÖNB.



17. Melchior Künsch after Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini, Dedication page for the opera *Il pomo d'oro* with the proscenium of the Teatro sulla Cortina, included in the folio edition of the libretto (1668). Colored copper engraving, 48.5 × 72.5 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, Misc. 143-GF/1 Mus. © ÖNB.

LODOVICO OTTAVIO BURNACINI: A THEATER FOR THE SELF-GLORIFICATION OF THE DYNASTY (TEATRO SULLA CORTINA, 1668–1683). Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini's most famous theater project was of course the Teatro sulla Cortina, the second free-standing theater building in Vienna after that of the Tummelplatz. It was erected on the occasion of Emperor Leopold's (first) marriage to the Spanish Infanta Margarita Teresa in 1666.²⁹ The theater was not in fact completed in time and formally opened its doors only two years later, in July 1668, with the performance of the wedding opera, *Il pomo d'oro*, now on the occasion of the empress's birthday.³⁰

The Teatro sulla Cortina was a wooden building with no external ornaments. From the outside, it looked more like a barn than a representative theater building. The interior, however, comprised a palatial auditorium with sumptuous boxes distributed over three floors. The illusionist paintings on the ceiling can be attributed to the Flemish artist Frans Geffels (1625–1694), who also designed some of the stage settings and created the view of the auditorium during the performance of the festive opera, *Il pomo d'oro* [fig. 1].³¹

In addition to the engraving of the auditorium and the twenty-three stage designs, another copperplate has been preserved in the folio edition of the libretto of *Il pomo d'oro*. It shows the lavish proscenium in the form of a triumphal arch, which serves as a frame for the dedication of the libretto by Francesco Sbarra to the imperial couple [fig. 17].³² He referred to the main points of Burnacini's iconographic program and particularly to the twofold symbolism of the golden apple as a fruit in the Garden of the Hesperides in the context of pagan ancient mythology, and as the imperial orb of the Catholic monarchs. The marriage of the two members of the House of Habsburg was interpreted as the beginning of a new Golden Age.³³

Unlike the examples discussed so far, the architectural structure of Burnacini's proscenium for the Teatro sulla Cortina was hidden behind a wealth of ornamental elements and dominated by fourteen allegorical



18. Matthäus Küsel after the design by Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini, Proscenium and stage curtain of the Teatro sulla Cortina for the opera *Il fuoco eterno custodito dalle Vestali* (1674). Copper engraving, 33.2 × 49.5 cm. Wien, Österreichische Nationalbibliothek, Musiksammlung, 35.B.6-Mus. © ÖNB.

figures, which have been analyzed, with differing results, by Sabine Solf, Kristiaan Aercke, and Maria Golubeva.³⁴ They all agree, though, on the presence of several mythological and allegorical figures traditionally associated with the Habsburg dynasty such as Hercules, Pallas, Mercy, Justice, Constance, Merit and Peace.

Due to the enormous size of the Teatro sulla Cortina, only the most elaborate operas were produced in this building. In the years following the performance of *Il pomo d'oro*, the building seems not to have been used at all, and in 1672 one reads of the first signs of dilapidation and of repair work undertaken to address them. The theater was reserved for only a small number of operas that were staged in a particularly elaborate manner. Documentation survives for only three further performances: the birthday opera for Emperor Leopold I, *Il ratto delle Sabine*, and, on the occasion of the birth of the Archduchess Anna Maria, *Il fuoco eterno custodito dalle Vestali*, both in 1674; and, to mark the birth of the heir to the throne, Joseph, in 1678, *La monarchia latina trionfante*.³⁵ The libretti of the four operas staged in the Teatro sulla Cortina are the only textbooks published at the Viennese imperial court during the final third of the seventeenth century. They include not only copper engravings of the stage settings, but also contain an image of the opulently designed proscenium and the stage curtain [fig. 18].

Since the building was almost entirely made of wood and was situated in an extremely exposed position on the city wall, it represented a permanent source of danger during the Ottoman assault on Vienna in 1683. Hence, as a precaution, it was demolished to ensure the enemy could not set it alight. After the siege, the emperor decided not to rebuild the theater, and the operatic performances at the Viennese court again took place not in a detached building, but in various locations in the Imperial Palace, especially in the two halls of the Große Hoftheater.

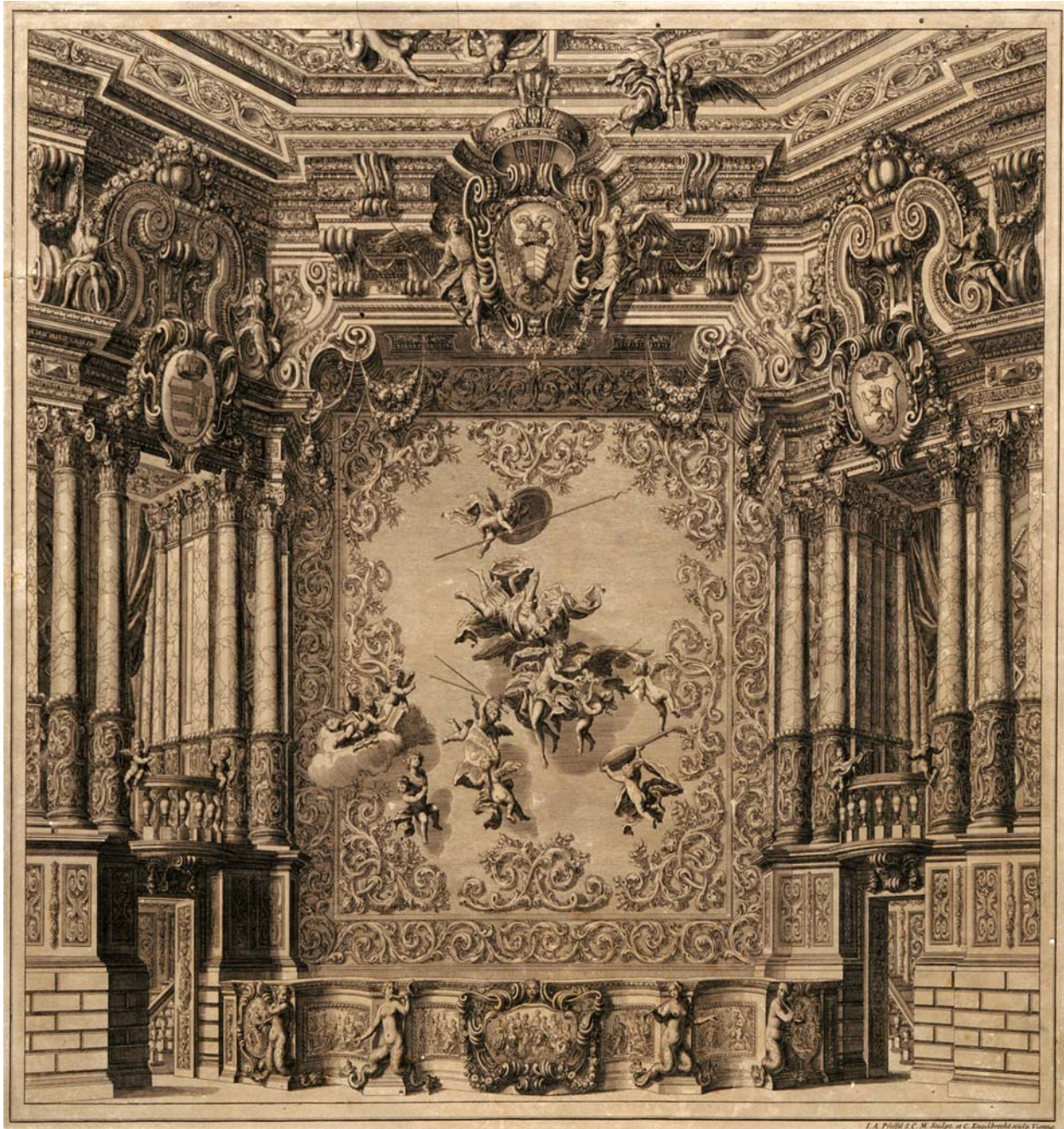


19. Johann Andreas Pfeffel and Christian Engelbrecht after the design by Francesco Galli Bibiena, Auditorium of the Great Court Theater in Vienna (before 1716). Copper engraving, 51.5 × 46 cm. München, Deutsches Theatermuseum, Inv. VII/550. © DTM.

FRANCESCO GALLI BIBIENA: THE THEATER AS A TEMPLE OF THE ARTS (GROSSES HOFTHEATER, 1704/08–1744/47). The final stage of the usage of the two halls in the Viennese Hofburg as venues for theater and opera performances is closely related to the Galli Bibiena family, at that time the best known and most influential dynasty of architects and stage designers in Europe.³⁶

Until 1683, the two halls of the Große (Leopoldinische) Hoftheater continued to function as the most important venues for opera productions at court. Although the building had not been damaged during the Ottoman siege, the theater was subsequently not used for fifteen years. In 1698, Emperor Leopold I ordered a comprehensive refurbishment of both halls, most likely in preparation of the festivities to mark the wedding of his son and heir, Joseph I, and Princess Amalia Wilhelmina of Brunswick-Lüneburg.

As yet, scholars have found no explanation for the fact that, on this occasion, the emperor did not commission his court architect, Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini, to undertake the work but instead called on Fran-



20. Johann Andreas Pfeffel and Christian Engelbrecht after the design by Francesco Galli Bibiena, Proscenium and stage curtain of the Great Court Theater in Vienna (before 1716). Copper engraving, 51.5 × 46 cm. München, Deutsches Theatermuseum, Inv. VII/549. © DTM.

cesco Galli Bibiena (1659–1739) from Bologna who had not previously been involved in the Viennese theater scene. The only evidence for this assignment is provided by the Latin inscription on an engraving of the renovated auditorium.³⁷ The cartouche featured three names: that of the patron, Emperor Leopold I, that of the director of the court theater, Count Ferdinand of Molarth, and, finally, that of the architect, Francesco Bibiena. The date of construction is given as 1704, though some scholars have deciphered it as 1703 or 1708.

No documentation concerning a sojourn of Francesco Galli Bibiena in Vienna at the time has survived and nothing more specific can be said about his involvement.

The refurbishment started in 1698 but was interrupted several times. The work had to be temporarily halted already in the following year when a major fire destroyed the theater and some of the adjacent rooms in the Imperial Palace. Since the court was in mourning following the death of Leopold I in 1705 and given the repercussions of the War of Spanish Succession (1701–1714), the official inauguration of the refurbished theater did not take place until 21 April 1708, when the opera *Il natale di Giunone festeggiato in Samo* was performed to celebrate the birthday of Dowager Empress Eleonora Magdalena Teresa.³⁸

Two engravings by Johann Andreas Pfeffel and Christian Engelbrecht, one of the auditorium and the other of the proscenium of Francesco Bibiena's theater, and two drawings bear testimony to the majestic appearance of this theater, which for many years served as a model for court theaters throughout Europe [figs. 19 & 20].³⁹

The theater was a wooden structure. Boxes were distributed across three richly carved galleries with a huge imperial loggia, decorated with statues, garlands, emblems and the already mentioned cartouche, in the middle. The ceiling painting, most likely created by the Jesuit architect, Andrea Pozzo (1642–1709), showed the Olympian gods surrounded by allegorical figures representing the arts. The latter were hunting a number of monstrous harpies whom, according to ancient mythology, they could transform into sweet sirens.⁴⁰ They, in turn, were depicted on the front of the orchestra balustrade, alongside other mythological scenes referring to music and a scene in the middle that showed Apollo and the Muses. The theater curtain (in its drawn state) showed Mars, the god of war, and the allegorical figure representing Victory, receiving both weapons and symbols of the arts from a number of putti.

The proscenium arch was adorned with the usual symbols of princely power: the imperial coat of arms with the double-headed eagle supported by Fame and Virtue in the middle, which was earlier included in Giovanni Burnacini's proscenium in the same location. Of the two boxes for the trumpeters, the one on the left displayed the insignia of the Kingdom of Hungary, the one the right those of the Kingdom of Bohemia.

What distinguished the decor of the theater built by Francesco Galli Bibiena from the work of his predecessors was the complex iconographic program that embraced the entire auditorium – the proscenium arch, the curtain as well as the orchestra balustrade. To be sure, on stage we find the same symbols as we did in the seventeenth century – the double-headed eagle, the imperial crown, and the coats of arms of other territories inherited by the Habsburgs. Yet the representation of the theater as a temple of the arts and a place of peace that utilized all available surfaces from the ceiling to the front of the orchestra balustrade was entirely novel.

During the first half of the eighteenth century, Bibiena's theater was reserved for the performance of Italian operas based on librettos by Pietro Pariati, Apostolo Zeno and Pietro Metastasio, and set to music by Antonio Caldara, Giovanni Bononcini or Johann Joseph Fux. Several members of the Bibiena family – the brothers Francesco and Ferdinando, and the latter's sons Giuseppe and Antonio – contributed to the stage designs.

This chapter of Viennese theater history drew to a close during the reign of Maria Theresa when, in 1747, the two halls of the Große Hoftheater were transformed into ballrooms (today's Redoutensäle), thus returning to their beginnings in the first half of the seventeenth century. Towards the end of the Ancien Régime, theater ceased to function as a means of conspicuous self-representation for the imperial court. Maria Theresa also lacked the economic means to maintain such a representative theater building. On the other hand, theater did continue to serve as a temple of the arts but this would involve completely different architectural forms and iconographic elements.

NOTES

I would like to thank Lars Fischer for the copyediting of this text.

¹ Cf. Andrea Sommer-Mathis, "Das Theater auf der Kurtine", *Die Wiener Hofburg, 1521-1705: Baugeschichte, Funktion und Etablierung als Kaiserresidenz*, ed. by Herbert Karner. Denkschriften der philosophisch-historische Klasse 444; Veröffentlichungen zur Kunstgeschichte 13; Veröffentlichungen zur Bau- und Funktionsgeschichte der Wiener Hofburg 2 (Wien: Verlag der Österreichischen Akademie der Wissenschaften, 2014), 422-427.

² Cf. Andrea Sommer-Mathis, "Musik, Theater und Tanz: Die Wiener Hofburg als Schauplatz von szenischen Aufführungen", *Die Wiener Hofburg, 1521-1705*, 470-493.

³ Herbert Karner, "Vom Tanzsaal zum Saaltheater (Redoutensaaltrakt)", *Die Wiener Hofburg, 1521-1705*, 361-376.

⁴ "La Comedia fu recitata in una gran sala depinta con l'Imagini di varij Imper[er]ari posta ciasched[un]a trà doi Colonne parim[en]te depinte: sopra vi sono doi gran Candelieri per porui nell'occorrenze numero grande di lumi per occ[asio]ne di Balli, o altre Feste magg[i]ori nell'istesso modo che per simili occ[asio]ni si costum in Francia. [...] Il Frontispicio della scena da basso era una Fontana in mezz'ad una selua: dai lati erano doi Pastori con Canestre di Frutti in testa, e sopra un Cornucopia perlato: et in mezzo l'Architraue una gran Aquila Imperiale: la scena era diuisa in sei spartim[en]ti per parte tutti depinti di Boscaglia: et in fondo una gran prospettia di doi Palazzi: sopra un Cielo, dal qual discese un Cupido restand' in aria senza far apparire, come vi dimorasse." Letter of Mario Filonardi, the Polish nuncio at the imperial court of Vienna, to Antonio Ferragallo, secretary of Cardinal Barberini in Rome (29 September 1635). Biblioteca Apostolica Vaticana, Barb. Lat. 6596, fol. 16r-16v.

⁵ "Rudolpho II. Imperatori placuisse etiam opinionem Lazii argumento est, quod Viennae aulam illam, in qua Comœdiæ exhiberi solent picturis majorum suorum exornaverit secundum eandem Lazii & Gebuilheri designationem Genealogicam à Francis Regibus petitam, quam picturam ego meis oculis vidi ante annos 30 quae tamen aula nunc (ut mihi refertur) deletis picturis reformata, & ampliata est. Superent tamen adhuc multi Viennæ, qui eam picturam viderint." Johann Ludwig Schönleben, *Dissertatio polemica de prima origine Augustissimae domus Habsburgo-Austriacae, in qua viginti diversae opiniones auctorum ventilantur, et vera origo a Carlo Magno Imperatore eiusque maioribus Franco-Germanis cum multiplici praerogativa participati sanguinis, ante alios Europeos principes, ostenditur, & solidè probatur* (Ljubljana: Joann. Baptistae Mayr, 1680), 53.

⁶ Cf. Flora Biach-Schiffmann, *Giovanni und Ludovico Burnacini* (Wien; Berlin: Krystall-Verlag, 1931), 29-41; Manfred Boetzkes, "Giovanni Burnacini", *The New Grove Dictionary of Opera*, ed. by Stanley Sadie (London; New York: Macmillan, 1992), vol. III, 649; Marialuisa Angiolillo, "Burnacini, Giovanni", *Saur allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die Bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker* (München; Leipzig: K.G. Saur, 1997), vol. XV, 252.

⁷ [Alberto Vimina], *La Gara*. Opera drammatica rappresentata in musica per introduzione di torneo fatto in Vienna per la nascita della Serenissima Infanta di Spagna Donna Margarita Maria d'Austria dedicata a Sua Eccellenza il Signore Marchese di Castel Rodrigo Gentilhuomo della Camera di S. Maestà Cattolica, del suo Consiglio, e suo Ambasciatore straordinario in Corte Cesarea da Alberto Vimina (Wien: Matteo Riccio, 1652).

Cf. Franz Hadamowsky, "Barocktheater am Wiener Kaiserhof",

Jahrbuch der Gesellschaft für Wiener Theaterforschung 1951-52 (1955), 17-18; Margret Dietrich, "Huldigungsspiele an die Erb-Infantin Margaretha: La Gara am Hofe Leopolds I.", *Spanien und Österreich im Barockzeitalter: Akten des dritten Spanisch-Österreichischen Symposiums* (Kremsmünster, 25-30 September 1983), ed. by Wolfram Krömer. Innsbrucker Beiträge zur Kulturwissenschaft. Sonderheft 58 (Innsbruck: Verlag des Instituts für Sprachwissenschaft, 1985), 61-74; Herbert Seifert, *Die Oper am Wiener Kaiserhof im 17. Jahrhundert*. Wiener Veröffentlichungen zur Musikgeschichte 25 (Tutzing, Hans Schneider, 1985), 15, 40-41, 134, 212, 292-293., 360, 369, 372-374, 396, 441; Andrea Sommer-Mathis, "La gara", *Il quadro della visione: Arcoscenico e altri sguardi ai primordi del teatro moderno*, ed. by Elena Tamburini (Roma: Bulzoni Editore, 2004), 75-76; eadem, "Luoghi teatrali alla corte imperiale di Vienna nel Seicento: Dalla sala all'edificio teatrale", *Sentir e meditar: Omaggio a Elena Sala Di Felice*, ed. by Laura Sannia Nowé, Francesco Cotticelli, and Roberto Puggioni (Roma: Aracne, 2005), 79-80; eadem, "Lieux de représentation théâtrale à la cour impériale de Vienne au XVII^e siècle de la salle à l'édifice", *Les Lieux du spectacle dans l'Europe du XVII^e siècle: Actes du colloque du Centre de recherches sur le XVII^e siècle européen*, Université Michel de Montaigne-Bordeaux III, 11-13 mars 2004, ed. by Charles Mazouer (Tübingen: Gunter Narr, 2006), 364-365; eadem, "Musik, Theater und Tanz", 477-478.

⁸ "Nella Città ritrouauasi Gioanni Bornacini, che, pochi giorni sono, come sai, prudente Architetto, per fare, che riuscissero credibili financo a gli occhi le marauiglie della sua perizia, volle rappresentarle come effetti d'una Maga; Di quell' Armida, che lo stesso Donn' Ascanio fece sì bella, che non rapì solo il cuore ad un Rinaldo, ma trasse al corteggio delle sue bellezze gl'intelletti più continenti.

Al Bornacini dunque fu dato la cura del nuouo Teatro, e della Scena; Egli attorniato, si può dire, dal coraggio di chi lo animaua, non puote sgomentarsi al poco numero de' giorni, che li furono conceduti, ancorchè protestasse di conoscere quella bella, e breue composizione, in quanto alla breuità, inferiore alle angustie di quel tempo, alla cui vastità per la bellezza non poteua riuscire, che superiore.

Da chi possa pretese quell'azione, per causa della breuita, e del poco numero delle machine, disuguale al solito de' Cauallieri Ferraresi all'eccesso delle loro diuozioni, ed al merito di Chi s'onoraua, fu determinato, con ostentarla per un solo riuerente ossequio del cuore, ch'ella comparisse appunto in quel Cortile, ch'è il cuore della Città." [Ascanio Pio di Savoia and Francesco Berni], *Le pretensioni del Tebro, e del Po' cantate, e combattute in Ferrara, nella venuta dell'Eccell. Sig. Principe Don Taddeo Barberini Prefetto di Roma, Generaliss. dell'Armi di S. Chiesa, etc. Componimento del Sig. Donn' Ascanio Pio di Savoia, e descrizione di Francesco Berni* (Ferrara: Francesco Suzzi Stamp. Camerale, 1642), 20-23.

"Trouarai nel Cortile un Teatro di vaghissima, e capacissima forma ordinatamente disposto. Sarà egli con una gran tela coperto. Nel nouero de' palchi altrettanto affaticaresti lo sguardo, quanto potrai dilettarlo, nel vederli tutti sino a terra con nobili arazzi superbamente addobbati. Entrando in quel luogo, se volgerai gli occhi intorno, alla presenza delle Dame spettatrici ti parerà d'entrare in un Cielo stellato. Tratto da quegli animati splendori non aurai tempo d'osservare il gran numero de' torchi accesi, che per tutto più luminosi faranno i funerali dell'ombre." *Ibid.*, 24-25.

⁹ Stuttgart, Württembergische Landesbibliothek, Sammlung Nicolai, vol. 12, fols. 106, 107, 110.

¹⁰ Cf. Andrea Sommer-Mathis, "Parnaß – Helikon – Olymp: Der Musenberg im höfischen Fest. Zur Darstellung der Musik in den Florentiner Renaissancefesten", *Imago Musicae* XIII (1996), 75-106.

¹¹ "Ne gli angoli esteriori del piano supremo s'ergerano su i suoi piedestalli due statue [sic!] dorate della maggior grandezza naturale, vna delle quali rappresentava la pace, e l'altra la virtù. Si mostravano in atto di sostenere [sic!] con le braccia aperte, & elevate il pomposo baldacchino delle loro Auguste Maestà, a fronte delle quali si mirava il Prosenio [sic!] non men maestoso, che ben'inteso. Era questo formato da otto pilastri, o colonne quadrate, che sostenevano l'Architrave fregio, e cornice d'ordine Corinthio. Nel mezzo del frontispicio si vedevano l'insegne gentilitie dell'Augustissima Casa, ai lati l'aquila Imperiale. Ma nell'intercolunnio di fronte erano due gran statue collocate, (tutto che non appariscano nel qui alligato disegno) vna rappresentava la musica, l'altra la pittura.

Ne manco vago, ne con minor artificio, e ben'intesa architettura si scorgea fabricato l'anfiteatro, che in semicircolo estendendosi, s'alzava sin' al soffitto con due gran scallinate, dove se-dea, con molt'aggio, molto numero di dame, e Cavalieri.

Lo rendeano vagamente adorno due ordini di colonne, erette l'vno sopra l'altra, divise con bel modo da gli Architravi fregi, e cornice. Era il prim'ordine di struttura Dorica, il secondo Ionico, che rivoltava gli archi sopra l'inferiore in egual distanza, e proportione." Vimina, *La Gara* (1652).

¹² "Si squarciò l'Orchestra, dove stavano gl'istromenti musicali, la quale tirata in vicinanza del muro, allargò lo spatio destinato per campo, e servì di gradini ai paggi, che colle torcie doveano assistere al Torneo. Si calarono dagli angoli della scena ponti levatori, ch'estendendosi sul piano della sala, rendevano facile, e commodo il passaggio a cavalieri; e si viddero ancora dalla sommità del soffitto otto lumiere in forma d'aquile, tutte cariche di lumi, che scendendo furono ad illustrare più magnificamente il Teatro. Ispettatori da tanti eccitamenti provocati all'ammirazione, si confondevano irresoluti a qual'oggetto principalmente fissassero lo sguardo. Quand'ecco novo susurro fù cagionato nel vedersi il trono di CESARE, e de gli altri Prencipi dell'AUGUSTISSIMA CASA haver ceduto con moto invisibile il luogo, retiratosi sotto l'Anfiteatro, donde più commodamente potessero quelle Maestà vedere l'Abbatimento." Vimina, *La Gara* (1652).

¹³ *L'inganno d'Amore*. Drama di Benedetto Ferrari. Dedicato alla S.C.M. dell'Imperatore Ferdinando Terzo. Rappresentato in musica in Ratispona nell'anno dell'Imperiale Dieta 1653 (Regensburg: Christophoro Fischero, 1653).

Cf. Hadamowsky, "Barocktheater", 32-34; Seifert, *Oper*, 41, 134, 212, 214-215., 293-294, 373-374., 381, 441-442; Claudia Böhm, *Teatralia anlässlich der Krönungen in der österreichischen Linie der Casa d' Austria, 1627-1746* (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1986), 201-239; *Feste in Regensburg, von der Reformation bis in die Gegenwart*, ed. by Karl Möseneder (Regensburg: Mittelbayerische Druckerei- und Verlags-Gesellschaft, 1986), 199-218; Sommer-Mathis, "L'inganno d'Amore", *Il quadro della visione*, 78-79; eadem, "Luoghi", 80-81; eadem, "Lieux", 365-367; Doris Gerstl, "Die Oper *L'inganno d'Amore* als Instrument der Politik Ferdinands III. Ferrari, Burnacini, Bertali, Ventura und Sandrart am Regensburger Reichstag", *Barocke Kunst und Kultur im Donauraum*, ed. by Karl Möseneder, Michael Thimann, and Adolf Hofstetter (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2014), 602-614; Sommer-Mathis, "Musik, Theater und Tanz", 486-489.

¹⁴ „Das gantze Theatrum war von eitel Brettern auffgerichtet / in der Grösse und Höch eines ziemlichen Kirchen=Gebäus. Von innen / waren zu sehen auf beyden Seiten 2. Lange Gänge über einander: über dem Eingang zu allerhöchst nur ein einziger Zwerchgang / von welchem die Subsellia biß hinunter auf den

Fußboden giengen / und etlich tausend Personen umb zuzusehen / einen bequemen Sitz machten. [...] Das Theatrum veränderte sich wol auff achterley Manier / ohne Vorziehung eines einigen Vorhangs." *Theatrum Europaeum* (Frankfurt am Main, 1663), vol. VII, 343.

¹⁵ "Hoff Camer Paßbrieff auf 3 Flöß mit allerhandt gemahl vnnd Machinen beladen, von hinnen nacher Wienn Zum Khay: hofftheatro, Frey bringen vnnd Paßsieren Zulasßen. In Simili An die hinderlasßene Hoff Camer, Per überebnung besagter 3 Flöß ins Khay: Hoffbawambt alda." Vienna, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Österreichische Hofffinanz, Protokollbuch R 831 (1653), fol. 621r.

¹⁶ "Hrn. Johann Bornacini [...] 9 den 2. 8ber [2 October 1653] auf abbruch vnd hinweckführung besagten Theatri 200 fl. vnd den 30. Jenner Ao. 1654 150 fl.;" fol. 572r: „Den 5 dito [5 November 1653] Marc Antonio Bornacini, deß khay. Archideti gehilffen, zu bezallung der tagwercher so zu einbring- und legung der von Regenspurg alhero nacher Wienn in das kay. Arsional unterschiedlich geliferten commedianten sachen gebraucht worden [...] 9 19 fl. 30 kr". Vienna, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Hofzahl-ambtsbuch 98-Ii (1653), fol. 560v.

¹⁷ The total expenses for the construction of the building and the accommodation of the actors amounted 1243 fl. 50x 3d, whereas the theater in Regensburg had cost 13.218 fl. Vienna, Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Niederösterreichische Herrschaftsakten, W 61/A 41, fol. 8r-9v. The Tummelplatz was the courtyard in front of the riding school, today Josephsplatz.

¹⁸ "Nella Cauallerizza di Sua M[ae]st[er]a Ces[ar]e ch'è luogo aperto, e spazioso, si uà apprestando un Teatro nouo per i Commedianti d'Italia, che si sono di già incaminati a questa uolta." – "Il Teatro delle Commedie è quasi hormai giunto alla perfezione, che hora maggiorm[ent]e si desidera compito, stante l'arriuio qua de Comici d'Italia (per quello, ch'io m'immagino, auendone ueduti due)." Letters of Giovanni Perellio to Duke Alfonso IV d'Este (20 September 1659 and 4 October 1659). Quotations from Seifert, *Oper*, 651.

¹⁹ "Hal'imperatore fatta venir d'Italia una compagnia de comici italiani non più in queste parti introdotti. Ha fabricato un nouo teatro per godere qualche ricreatione del carneuale; ma un accidente strauicante rese nella prima sera del recitarsi alle comedie un infausto principio, perchè terminata la comedia alcune dame di corte, ch'erano di sopra al palco di S[ua] M[ae]st[er]a, dal spirito giovinile non meno che dalla feminil curiosità portate ad affacciarsi con un pocco d'ardore fuori del palco per veder nel teatro, tre di esse, non si sa se per debolezza della facia del palco medesimo o pure per troppo impeto del gettarsi con la vita tropp'oltre precipitorono del palco medesimo, che nel 3° ordine rese di tant'alto precipitosa la caduta. [...] Si rese considerabile il detto accidente, perché l'imperatore nel punto stesso che cade la facia del palco, mentre teneua fuori la testa, si ritirò dentro del suo palco di sotto, in modo che miracolosamente schivò il colpo, che gravemente poteva offenderlo. Gode però tanto S[ua] M[ae]st[er]a di questa inusitata ricreatione, che tutto si sorpassa e continua." Letter of Alvise Molin to the Doge in Venice (10 October 1660). Quotation from Seifert, *Oper*, 659.

²⁰ "li padri Jesuiti sono tanto contrari alli Comedianti che non si polle dire di piu abenche non fano ne atto ne parole disoneste alcuna." Letter of Bartolomeo Franceschini to Mantua (17 January 1660). Quotation from Seifert, *Oper*, 660.

"Comedia, che fu la ultima, et credo che non se ne fara piu perche li giesuiti fano tutto quello che poseno acioche sua Ma[es]ta licencia li Comedianti." Letter of Bartolomeo Franceschini to Mantua (14 February 1660). Quotation from Seifert, *Oper*, 662.

Cf. Marko Deisinger, "Weltliches Vergnügen, die Jesuiten und ein spektakulärer Unfall im Theatersaal. Andrea D'Orsos Commedia dell'arte-Truppe am Wiener Kaiserhof 1660", *Frühneuzeit-info* 27 (2016), 18-34.

²¹ His stepmother, Empress Eleonora of Gonzaga, was also sorry for the untimely end of the Italian performances and wrote to her brother, Duke Carlo II of Mantua, on 14 July 1662: "ó sentito come V[ostra] A[ltezza] abbia preparato li Comedianti però qua non potranno uenire perche Sua M[aest?a] à fatto bater giu il Teatro. A Me mi dispiace asai che confeso che le sentirei molto uolontieri." Quotation from Seifert, *Oper*, 673.

Cf. Hadamowsky, "Barocktheater", 32-34; Seifert, *Oper*, 175-176, 399-400; Otto Schindler, "Commedia dell'arte am Josephsplatz und das Phantom der Bibliothéque de l'Opéra: Der Mythos des Tabarin und Ms. Rés. 625", *Biblos XLV/1* (1996), 83; Otto Schindler, "Mio compadre Imperatore: Comici dell'arte an den Höfen der Habsburger", *Maske und Kothurn XXXVIII/2-4* (1997), 78-79.

²² Nicolaus Avancini, *Pietas victrix sive Flavius Constantinus Magnus, de Maxentio Tyranno victor*: Acta Viennae Ludis Caesareis Augustissimo Romano: Imperatori, Hungariae Bohemiaeque Regi Leopoldo, a studiosa iuventute Caesarei et Academici Collegii Societatis Jesu, mense februario, die anno M.DC.LIX (Wien: Matthäus Cosmerovius, 1659); new editions: Nicolaus von Avancini, "Pietas victrix, seu Constantinus Magnus", *Das Ordensdrama*, ed. by Willi Flemming, Deutsche Literatur. Sammlung literarischer Kunst- und Kulturdenkmäler in Entwicklungsreihen. Reihe Barock. Barockdrama 2 (Leipzig: Philipp Reclam, 1930; repr.: Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1965), 184-303; Nicolaus Avancini S.J., *Pietas victrix: Der Sieg der Pietas*, ed. by Lothar Mundt and Ulrich Seelbach. *Frühe Neuzeit* 73 (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2002).

²³ Cf. Kurt Adel, *Das Wiener Jesuitentheater und die europäische Barockdramatik* (Wien: Österreichischer Bundesverlag, 1960); Angela Kabiersch, *Nicolaus Avancini S.J. und das Wiener Jesuitentheater, 1640-1685* (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1972), 185-194; Robert Arthur Griffin, *High Baroque Culture and Theatre in Vienna* (New York: Humanities Press, 1972), 55-81; Umberto Gandini, "Il teatro barocco di Nicola de Avancini, gesuita trentino alla corte degli Absburgo", *Studi Trentini di scienze storiche* LI (1972), 421-441; LII (1973), 30-69; Theophil Antonicek, "Musik- und Theaterleben an der Alten Universität", *Das alte Universitätsviertel in Wien, 1385-1985*, ed. by Günther Hamann, Karl Mühlberger, and Franz Skacel (Wien: Universitätsverlag für Wissenschaft und Forschung, 1985); Ruprecht Wimmer, "Constantinus redivivus: Habsburg im Jesuitendrama des 17. Jahrhunderts", *Die österreichische Literatur: Ihr Profil von den Anfängen im Mittelalter bis ins 18. Jahrhundert (1050-1750)*, ed. by Herbert Zeman (Graz: Akademische Druck- und Verlagsanstalt, 1986), part II, 1093-1116; Eugene J. Devlin, "The Imperial Play as Final Chapter in the Jesuit Theatre in Austria", *Comparative Drama* 23 (1989), 141-155; Franz Hadamowsky, *Das Theater in den Schulen der Societas Jesu in Wien (1555-1761): Daten, Dramen, Darsteller. Eine Auswahl aus Quellen in der Österreichischen Nationalbibliothek* (Wien, Köln, Weimar: Böhlau Verlag, 1991); Sommer-Mathis, "Pietas victrix", *Il quadro della visione*, 88-90; Christiane Lindner, *Der große Theatersaal der Jesuiten in der Alten Universität in Wien* (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 2014), 13-18; Herbert Seifert, "Oratorien, Sepolcri und Ordens-theater in Österreich", *Spettacolo barocco! Triumph des Theaters*, exhibition catalogue, Vienna Theatermuseum, 3 March 2016-30 January 2017, ed. by Andrea Sommer-Mathis, Daniela Franke, and Rudi Risatti (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016), 138-139; Sommer-Mathis, "Pietas victrix", *Spettacolo barocco!* 308.

²⁴ The only preserved copy is at the Universitätsbibliothek in Vienna, Sign. II-247226. It seems that the copy contains all nine engravings of the stage designs.

²⁵ Willi Flemming, "Avancinus und Torelli", *Maske und Kothurn X* (1964), 376-384.

²⁶ Cf. Flora Biach-Schiffmann, *Giovanni und Ludovico Burnacini* (Wien; Berlin: Krystall-Verlag, 1931), 49-51, 92-99; Hadamowsky, "Barocktheater", 19; Margret Dietrich, "Architetti e scenografi italiani nella vita teatrale austriaca", *Il Veltro* 21 (1977), 623-635; Bretter *die die Welt bedeuten: Entwürfe zum Theaterdekor und zum Bühnenkostüm in fünf Jahrhunderten*, ed. by Ekhart Berckenhagen and Gretel Wagner (Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 1978), 71-72; Seifert, *Oper*, 375-379; Manfred Boetzkes, "Burnacini, Ludovico Ottavio", *The New Grove of Opera*, ed. by Stanley Sadie (London, New York: Macmillan, 1992), vol. I, 649-650; Marialuisa Angiolillo, "Burnacini, Giovanni", *Saur allgemeines Künstlerlexikon: Die Bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker* (München; Leipzig: K.G. Saur, 1997), vol. XV, 252-55; Andrea Sommer-Mathis, "Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini scenografo e costumista di Antonio Draghi", «*Quel novo Cario, quel divin Orfeo*» Antonio Draghi da Rimini a Vienna. Atti del convegno internazionale (Rimini, Palazzo Buonadrata, 5-7 ottobre 1998), ed. by Emilio Salla and Davide Daolmi. *ConNotazioni* 7 (Lucca: Libreria Musicale Italiana, 2000), 387-410.

²⁷ *Il Re Gildoro*. Favola Drammatica Musicale di Aurelio Amalteo. Alla Sac. Ces. M. di Leopoldo Primo Imperatore, Rappresentata in musica nel teatro di S.M.C. in Vienna M.DC.LVIII (Wien: Matteo Cosmerovio, 1659). — Cf. Seifert, *Oper*, 43, 135, 215-216, 294, 375, 443-444.

Il Pelope geloso. Dedicato alla Sacra Cesarea Maestà di Leopoldo Primo Imperatore, de Romani sempre Augusto Rè di Bohemia d'Hungaria, &c. Arciduca D. Austria, &c. Representato per lo Giorno Natalitio della Sacra Real Maestà di Leonora Gonzaga, Imperatrice. Inventione drammatica, del Dottor Gio: Francesco Marcello, Citta: Veneto. Anno M.DC.LIX. — Cf. Seifert, *Oper*, 26, 44, 136, 217, 295, 375-376, 44, 654-655.

²⁸ [Francisco Ximenes Aragona (pseud. Teofilo)], *La forza della Fortuna e della Virtù o vero Gli Amori d'Arena*. Dramma per musica di Teofilo. Rappresentato alla Corte Imperiale per solennizzare il giorno natalizio della Sac: Ces: Maestà di Leonora Imperatrice. Per comando della Sac: Ces: Maestà di Leopoldo Imperatore. Ed à questa humilissimamente consacrato (Wien: Matteo Cosmerovio, 1661). — Cf. Seifert, *Oper*, 47, 138, 219-220, 308, 379, 382, 448, 670.

[Carlo de'Dottori], *La Zenobia di Radamisto*. Drama per musica. Recitato nel giorno natalizio della Sac. Ces. Maestà di Leonora Imperatrice. Per comando della Sac. Ces. Maestà di Leopoldo Imperatore ed a questa humilissimamente consacrato, dal Co. C. di D. (Wien: Matteo Cosmerovio, 1662). — Cf. Seifert, *Oper*, 49, 139, 221, 309-310, 379, 450.

²⁹ Imperial decree concerning the construction of the Teatro sulla Cortina (20 February 1666), Finanz- und Hofkammerarchiv, Niederösterreichische Herrschaftsakten, W 61/A 41, fols. 13^v-15^v. — Cf. Biach-Schiffmann, *Giovanni und Ludovico Burnacini*, 52-60, 99-120; Hans Tintelnot, *Barocktheater und barocke Kunst: Die Entwicklungsgeschichte der Fest- und Theater-Dekoration in ihrem Verhältnis zur barocken Kunst* (Berlin: Verlag Gebr. Mann, 1939), 56-59; Hadamowsky, "Barocktheater", 35-36; Peter Fleischacker, *Rekonstruktionsversuch des Opernhauses und des Bühnenapparates in dem Theater des Ludovico Ottavio Burnacini* (Ph.D. diss., Universität Wien, 1962); Herbert Seifert, "Die Festlichkeiten zur ersten Hochzeit Kaiser Leopolds I.", *Österreichische Musikzeitschrift* XXIX/1 (January 1974), 6-16; Carl B. Schmidt, "Antonio Cesti's *Il Pomo d'oro*: A Reexamination of a Famous Habsburg Spectacle", *The Journal of the American Musicological Society* XXIX/3 (1976), 381-412; Bretter *die die Welt bedeuten*, 25-27, 78-82; 85; Jean-Marie Valentin, "Il Pomo d'oro et le mythe impérial catholique à l'époque de Leopold Ier", *XVII^e Siècle* 36 (1984), 17-31; Herbert Seifert, *Der Sig-prangende Hochzeit-Gott:*

Hochzeitsfeste am Wiener Hof der Habsburger und ihre Allegorik, 1622–1699. *Dramma per musica* 2 (Wien: Musikwissenschaftlicher Verlag, 1988), 23–40; idem, *Oper*, 379–385, 400–405; Franz Hadamowsky, *Wien: Theatergeschichte, von den Anfängen bis zum Ende des Ersten Weltkriegs*. *Geschichte der Stadt Wien* 3 (Wien; München: Jugend und Volk, 1988), 142–143; *Theatrum Mundi: Die Welt als Bühne*, exhibition catalogue, Munich, Haus der Kunst, 24 May–21 September 2003. ed. by Ulf Küster (Wolfratshausen: Edition Minerva, 2003), 67; Sommer-Mathis, “Il Pomo d’oro”, *Il quadro della visione*, 93–95; eadem, “Fest und Festung: Die Wiener Burgbefestigung als Bauplatz von Tanzsälen und Opernhäusern im 16. und 17. Jahrhundert”, *Österreichische Zeitschrift für Kunst und Denkmalpflege* LXIV (2010), 83–92; eadem, “Das Theater auf der Kurtine”, *Die Wiener Hofburg, 1521–1705*, 422–427; eadem, “Innenansicht des Theaters auf der Kurtine während der Aufführung der Festoper *Il pomo d’oro* in Wien 1668”, *Spettacolo barocco*, 252.

³⁰ Francesco Sbarra, *Il pomo d’oro*. Festa Teatrale rappresentata in Vienna per l’Augustissime nozze delle Sacre Cesaree Reali Maestà di Leopoldo, e Margherita (Wien: Matteo Cosmerovio, 1668).

³¹ The dedication of Frans Geffels below the image of the auditorium provides accurate information on his merits: “Hauendo riceuto [sic!] l’honore di operare col’ dipinger alcune mutazioni di Scena, con la Soffitta dell’ Auditorio nell’ Aug.^{mo} Teatro Fabricato per celebrare le Cesaree Nozze della S.C.R.M.V.^a onde per dar un Saggio della mia umilissima Seruitù hò posto in disegno una veduta del fianco del Sudetto Teatro acciò quelli ancora, che non l’hauranno ueduto possino godere delle magnificenze della Sacra C.R.M.V.^a onde per tal effetto hauendolo scolpito lo publico alle Stampe, col’ Supplicare la sua Clement.^{ma} grazia à non Sdegnare questa mia fatica mentre a piedi Clementissimi della M.V.^a Profondissimamente m’inchino.”

³² Dedication of Francesco Sbarra to the reader: “Il Sig. Lodovico Burnacini Ingegnero di S.M.C. che hà inventate, e mirabilmente espresse co’ suoi spiritosi disegni le scene, le machine, e gl’habiti, è stato anche l’Autore del famoso Teatro, che a tale effetto con magnificenza non più veduta s’è fabricato di pianta, così ben inteso, e disposto, che non ostante la sua vastità capace di 5000. Spettatori, non hà lasciato desiderarsi da i più remoti la perfetta intelligenza delle voci.” — The statement that the auditorium had given room for 5,000 people, was undoubtedly a Baroque exaggeration; one can assume a maximum capacity of 1000 spectators.

³³ Dedication of Francesco Sbarra to the imperial couple: “Se tra i più chiari trofei del generoso Alcide uengono celebrati quegl’ AUREI POMI che riporto l’inuitta sua destra dagl’Horti delle figlie d’Atlante à dispetto del feroce Dragone, che ne contendea l’ingresso. Io se ben d’Hercole altro in me non rauuiso che l’essere stato gran’ tempo dall’implacabil Giunone d’una Sorte maligna, fieramente perseguitato posso nondimeno gloriarmi in onta del uelenoso Serpe dell’Inuidia d’hauer raccolto nei Giardini, non dell’Hesperie Donzelle, ma delle Vergini Castalie questo POMO D’ORO che ad imitatione dell’altro, che trà l’insegne imperiali risplende uiene ammesso dall’infinita Clemenza delle S.S.C.C.R.R. M.M.V.V. trà le pompe maggiori degl’applausi festiui alle loro AUGUSTISSIM NOZZE. IL POMO CESAREO è un Gieroglifico del Mondo, e questo è un Simbolo del giubilo universale, e l’uno e l’altro è d’ORO per esprimere al uiuo quell’AUREO SECOLO. Se spera di godere tutto il Catholico Mondo per i degni frutti di si fortunati Himenei. Se riusci ad Hippomene di fermar con un POMO D’ORO la fugace Atalanta, uagliami questo ancora ad arrestar per sempre quella buona fortuna, che nel corso d’undeci lustri della mia Vita sempre da mè fuggitiua m’è finalmente sortito d’arriuare nella stimatissima gratia di seruire attualmente alle S.S.C.C.R.R.M.M.

V.V.”

³⁴ Sabine Solf, *Festdekoration und Grotteske: Der Wiener Bühnenbildner Lodovico Ottavio Burnacini. Inszenierung barocker Kunstvorstellung* (Baden-Baden: Valentin Koerner, 1975), 38–47; Kristiaan P. Aercke, *Gods of Play: Baroque Festive Performance as Rhetorical Discourse* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1994), 221–252; Maria Goloubeva, “Il Pomo d’oro and the Problem of Dynastic Continuity in the Reign of Leopold I”, *Majestas* 5 (1997), 79–98; eadem, *The Glorification of Emperor Leopold I in Image, Spectacle and Text*. Veröffentlichungen des Instituts für Europäische Geschichte Mainz 184, (Mainz: Verlag von Zabern, 2000), 107–111.

³⁵ Nicolò Minato, *Il ratto delle Sabine*. Drama per musica, nel giorno natalizio della S.C.R.M.^{ta} dell’Imperatore Leopoldo, per comando della S.C.R.M.^{ta} dell’Imperatrice Claudia l’anno M.DC.LXXXIV. et alla medesima consacrato. Posto in musica dal S. Antonio Draghi, Intendente delle Musiche Teatrali di S.M.C. e M.^o di Cap. della M.^{ta} della Imperatrice Eleonora. Con l’Arie per li Balli del sig. Gio: Erico Smelzer, Vice Maestro di Cap di S.M.C. (Wien: Gio. Christoforo Cosmerovio, 1674).

Nicolò Minato, *Il fuoco eterno custodito dalle Vestali*. Drama musicale per la felicissima nascita della Sereniss: Arciduchessa Anna Maria, figlia delle S.S.C.C.R.R.M.M. dell’Imperatore Leopoldo, e della Imperatrice Claudia Felice. Et alle medesime M.M. consacrato. Posto in musica dal S. Antonio Draghi, intendente delle musiche teatrali di S.M.C., & M. di Cap. della M. dell’Imperatrice Eleonora. Con l’arie per li balletti del S. Gio: Erico Smelzer, V.M. di Capella di S.M.C. (Wien: Gio. Christoforo Cosmerovio, 1674).

Nicolò Minato, *La Monarchia latina trionfante*. Festa musicale in applauso del felicissimo natale del Sereniss: Gioseffo Arciduca d’Austria, figlio delle Augustiss: Maestà di Leopoldo Imperatore, et Eleonora Maddalena Teresa Imperatrice, nata Principessa di Neoburgo. Alle medesime M.M. consacrata. Posta in musica dal S. Antonio Draghi, intendente delle musiche teatrali di S.M.C. & M. di Cap. della M.^{ta} dell’Imp.^{ca} Eleonora. Con l’arie per lo combattimento, e per lo balletto del S.^r Gio: Enrico Smelzer, V.M. di Cap. di S.M.C. (Wien: Gio. Christoforo Cosmerovio, 1678).

³⁶ Cf. Franz Hadamowsky, *Die Familie Galli Bibiena in Wien: Leben und Werk für das Theater* (Wien: Georg Prachner Verlag, 1962); *Disegni teatrali dei Bibiena*, ed. by Maria Teresa Muraro and Elena Povoledo. Cataloghi di mostre 31 (Venezia: Neri Pozza Editore, 1970); *Galli Bibiena und der Musenhof der Wilhelmine von Bayreuth*, ed. by Peter O. Krückmann (München; New York: Prestel, 1998); *I Bibiena: Una famiglia europea*, ed. by Jadranka Bentini and Deanna Lenzi (Bologna: Marsilio, 2000).

³⁷ “Theatrum hoc quo Leopoldo I Imperat[ori] curis animo aliquando relaxerat prefecto et auspice Ferdinando comite de Molarth Franciscus Bibiena Bononiensis fecit anno 1704”. Deanna Lenzi, “Francesco Galli Bibiena, Grosses Hoftheater di Vienna, 1704 (cat. 74a–c)”.

³⁸ Silvio Stampiglia, *Il natale di Giunone festeggiato in Samo*. Componimento per musica (Wien: Cosmerovio, 1708).

³⁹ Two engravings are preserved in Munich, Deutsches Theatermuseum, Inv. VII 549 and VII 550; cf. Lenzi, cat. 74a and 74b, *I Bibiena*, 309; *Theatrum Mundi*, cat. 16a and 16b, 70; Sommer-Mathis, “Innenansicht des Großen Hoftheaters mit Blick auf die Kaiserloge (cat. 8.4)”, *Spettacolo barocco*, 314; one drawing is in New York, Collection of Peter P. Marino; cf. Lenzi, cat. 74c, *I Bibiena*, 309; and one drawing is in Lisbon, Museu de Arte Antiga, inv. 224.

⁴⁰ Herbert Karner, “Vom Tanzsaal zum Saaltheater (Redoutensaaltrakt)”, *Die Wiener Hofburg, 1521–1705*, 373–376 (fig. IV. 199a and 199b), 482.