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 olej, plátno / oil, canvas, 120 × 60 cm  
 soukromá sbírka / private collection  
 Photo © Athanor s.r.o.



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# The Hvězda Summer Palace in Prague, the Villa Trivulzio in Rome, and Giovanni Maria Stella

The Hvězda Palace in what was originally the ancient Hunting Grounds of Prague contains one of the most complete and well-preserved stucco cycle of the 16th century in Europe [1].<sup>1</sup> This display complements the exceptional architecture of the building, which owes its name of Hvězda (Star) to the six-pointed star shape of its plan [2]. The ground floor is in fact divided by six corridors, which converge on a central hall and connect five halls of rhombic plan and a sixth space, in which is located the staircase.<sup>2</sup> All the vaults are decorated by monochrome stucco work, whose sumptuous nature and great iconographical complexity contrasts with the austere exterior of the building.<sup>3</sup> Commissioned by Archduke Ferdinand II of Tyrol (1529–1595), son of Emperor Ferdinand I Habsburg (1503–1564) when he was governor of Prague, the Hvězda Palace was completed in a very short time, between 1555 and 1560.<sup>4</sup> Despite numerous articles on the architecture, the stucco decoration and its iconography, many questions about the models, the cultural context, and the artists involved on such an original ensemble remain open.

Starting from the most recent studies, the article aims to broaden the parameters of comparison by considering some aspects of the Roman milieu after Raphael's death. It will in particular focus on a monument which has not yet been taken into consideration and would set a crucial precedent for the decoration of Hvězda. These proposals will, we hope, allow a renewal of the view of the Palace of Ferdinand II, his cultural connection with other models and the dynamics of artistic exchanges between Central Europe and Italy. They will also suggest that these links may have been far more closely and directly tied to key sources of inspiration in Rome than scholars have so far dared to consider.

The basic position among earlier researchers was occupied by Jarmila Krčálová, who recognized the unique quality and artistic value of the stucco decoration of Hvězda.<sup>5</sup> In her view, the master in charge of the work — or the group of artists involved here — must have been familiar with classical stucco and boasted of direct experience, not filtered by the intermediary of prints or drawings, of this material. Therefore, Krčálová sketched out a list of Italian monuments that the *capomastro* should have known before working on Hvězda.<sup>6</sup> She was convinced that he came from the North of Italy, like the majority of foreign artists present at the Prague court, but refuted earlier views on Andrea Aostalli or Giovanni Campione.<sup>7</sup> She opted also for a certain '*Anton Brack Stuccoarbeiter*', evidently Antonio Brocco from Campione,<sup>8</sup> who is not mentioned in regard to Hvězda, but is recorded in 1571 in Tyrol, where many artists in the service of Archduke Ferdinand II in Prague followed him in Innsbruck. In the absence of concrete evidence, however, Krčálová came to the conclusion that the principal stucco master of Hvězda should remain unidentified. This circumspect approach was not always adopted by later researchers. Dorothea Diemer in particular wished to confirm Antonio Brocco's role as the unique director of the programme, developing some stylistic comparisons with the Singing Fountain in Prague and the stuccos of the Castle of Ambras at Innsbruck.<sup>9</sup> With a few exceptions, this view has been largely shared until now.<sup>10</sup>

Proposing other and perhaps more direct comparisons in terms of style, techniques, and composition, we would like to highlight the activity of a family of sculptors and architects, the Stella, originating from the area of Lake Lugano like Antonio

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Brocco. Their contribution to the Italian Renaissance and its export to the court of Prague has so far been largely underestimated.

### The Villa Trivulzio at Salone and 'Gianmaria da Milano'

A broader understanding of Hvězda's stuccos can be facilitated by comparing it with an outstanding monument of the Roman High Renaissance, the villa of cardinal Agostino Trivulzio, located near the river Aniene at a place named Salone [3]. It is only recently that the villa has been the subject of a comprehensive study by Andrea Bonavita, with a unitarian vision between patron, architects, and decorators.<sup>11</sup> Built to the plans of Baldassare Peruzzi around 1523, it was decorated 10 years later, around 1535–1536. According to Vasari, the young Daniele da Volterra painted some frescoes and a certain 'Gianmaria da Milano' modelled a set of 'stuccoes and grotesques':

*'ma pose [Trivulzio] grandissima affezione a Daniello [da Volterra], mandandolo poco appresso a lavorare dove avea fatto fuor di Roma a un suo casale, detto Salone, un grandissimo casamento, il quale faceva adornare di fontane, stucchi e pitture, e dove appunto allora lavoravano Gianmaria da Milano ed altri alcune stanze di stucchi e grottesche.'*<sup>12</sup>

The identity of Gianmaria remained unknown for a while. Cornelius von Fabriczy proposed that he was the architect and painter Giovanni Maria Falconetto (1457–1534),<sup>13</sup> but as Christoph Frommel observed, this artist died before, or at the very start of the decorating of the villa Trivulzio.<sup>14</sup> We owe Andrea Bonavita for finding Gianmaria's surname, thanks to a document of 20 September 1548 which records a payment of 18 scudi to 'Joannes Maria Della Stella from Milan', for restoring some antique statues 'which had belonged to the Reverend Cardinal Trivulzio'.<sup>15</sup> The identity of the name (Giovanni Maria), the patron (Trivulzio) and the origin (Milan, although it is a vague reference) show that the restorer and the stucco worker must be the same person. The fact that an artist could work in marble and stucco, i.e., by modelling and carving was common practice at the time. Sculptors trained as marble carvers, like Nicolo Da Corte († 1552), Guglielmo Della Porta (1510–1577) or Silvio Cosini (1495–1549), were also active as stucco workers in one of the most eminent buildings in Northern Italy, the Palazzo Doria in Genoa (1529–1533).<sup>16</sup> It was perhaps on that site, and together with these artists, that Giovanni Maria Stella learned the stucco technique, as we will see.

Bonavita could then recognize the sculptor of Salone thanks to another document which reveals that 'Magister Ioannes Maria de la Stella q. magistri Francisci' was present in Lugano on 14 January 1542, in order to take possession of the inheritance of his sister Caterina on behalf of himself and his brothers Paolo and Giovanni Domenico, both established in Prague.<sup>17</sup> This record identifies also Stella as a member of a family of sculptors from Melide,

a village on the shores of Lake Lugano, unified by artistic practices, collaborative skills and geographical mobility.<sup>18</sup> The most famous exponent of this group, Paolo Stella, went to Prague in 1538 to supervise the construction of the summer Palace of Emperor Ferdinand I, better known as the Belvedere. He thus opened a bridge between Italy and Prague that was to be potentiated by his brother Giovanni Maria.

Bonavita confirms then the identification through formal comparisons. He notes that the atlantes of the vault on the ground floor loggia of Salone are similar to those decorating three bays of the *Loggia degli Eroi* of the Palazzo Doria in Genoa.<sup>19</sup> The relationship between the torso and the architecture, the expressive charge of the faces and the invention of the drape held in the background are similar elements. Completely renewed by Perino del Vaga in anticipation of the visit of Charles V in spring 1533, Palazzo Doria had a fundamental impact on many residences in the Habsburg dominions.<sup>20</sup> Its transformation required a large number of artists, of whom Vasari offers some names: Girolamo da Treviso, Domenico Beccafumi, Giovanni Antonio da Pordenone, Silvio Cosini, Giovanni Angelo Montorsoli, as well as 'molti lombardi' (many Lombards).<sup>21</sup> This generic and perhaps derogatory term alludes to the community of sculptors originating from the Lake Lugano area to whom the Stella belonged.<sup>22</sup> Their presence on the working team of Palazzo Doria is very likely, considering that Paolo is documented in Genoa on 11 January 1531, i.e., during the most acute phase of the renovation of the building.<sup>23</sup>

On this site, the Stella could have known their compatriots Giovanni Giacomo Della Porta, Guglielmo Della Porta and Niccolò Da Corte, who had founded a workshop — or better a firm — in order to acquire the most relevant sculpture commissions during the 1530s.<sup>24</sup> We must note in this regard that this workshop dissolved in 1537, a few months before Paolo Stella was called to Prague. Then that Guglielmo Della Porta seemed to be following in the footsteps of the older Giovanni Maria Stella when he moved to Rome.<sup>25</sup> He decorated with stucco the Massimi chapel in the church of the Trinità dei Monti with Daniele da Volterra, who had just completed the paintings of Salone,<sup>26</sup> and he started in 1546 to restore the Farnese collection of antiquities, which would receive later the statues of Cardinal Trivulzio restored by Stella.<sup>27</sup>

Bonavita's second comparison establishes a link between Rome and Prague. It demonstrates that the stucco scrolls on the frieze of the ground floor loggia are very close to those in stone that run along the outer frieze of the Belvedere Summer Palace.<sup>28</sup> [6, 7] The ample size of the fleshy foliage with a mask above the vault show strong similarities. As we know, Paolo Stella was elected in December 1537 by Ferdinand I through the imperial ambassador of Genoa Gómez Suárez de Figueroa to direct the construction of the Belvedere.<sup>29</sup> He arrived in Prague in April 1538 to present a model and immediately returned to Italy to look for collaborators.



1 / View of the main hall on the ground floor of the Hvězda summer palace with stucco decoration, ca. 1556–1560

Photo: Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Vlado Bohdan

It is possible that his brothers Giovanni Domenico and Giovanni Maria went to Prague to help him in the initial phase of the work.

In fact, with the fresh experience of Villa Trivulzio in Rome, Giovanni Maria would have been able to propose the opulent, turgid, and classical form of the scrollwork of the Belvedere frieze. There are no ornaments of such a large dimension in Genoa except, but in a smaller size, in the frieze of the *baldacchino* of the Chapel of St John the Baptist in the Cathedral. This very fine work was executed by the Della Porta — Da Corte workshop during the years of the renewal of the Palazzo Doria (1530–1532) and must have been well known to the Stella brothers. Its entablature shows a valuable model for the Belvedere, as well as the Ionic capitals with the scrolls connected by a festoon.<sup>30</sup> In this respect, the exterior architectural decoration of the Belvedere reflects Genoese and Roman examples from the 1530s, and the Stella might have been the intermediaries of this transfer of forms.

Work on the Belvedere stopped momentarily on 2 June 1541, when a fire raged through the castle and forced Paolo to repair the damages.<sup>31</sup> This was perhaps an opportunity for Giovanni Maria Stella to return to Italy, where he is attested to have managed his brother's

inheritance, as we have seen.<sup>32</sup> It seems that he then went to Naples to work on the stucco decorations in the refectory of the convent of Santa Maria di Monteoliveto Maggiore, now Sant'Anna dei Lombardi, directed by Vasari in 1544–1545.<sup>33</sup> A letter from Don Miniato Pitti written to Vasari on 1 August 1545 mentioned in fact a certain '*messer Gianmaria degli Stuchi*' who could possibly be Stella.<sup>34</sup> The association of the name with a technical qualification — typical of the Tuscan habits of giving a professional skill as a surname<sup>35</sup> — suits perfectly the sculptor from Melide, who must have appeared as a gifted plasterer after his experiences at Palazzo Doria and at Villa Trivulzio. And having seen his ability at Salone, Vasari had some good reasons to take him into his service at the Neapolitan convent, the first major undertaking of his long career. Pitti's letter alludes also to a certain '*Sangallo*' with a sibylline comment ('*I am sorry he cannot fulfil his wish*').<sup>36</sup> He is probably Francesco Giamberti da Sangallo (1494–1576), son of the architect Giuliano da Sangallo and friend of Vasari, who was sporadically present in Naples between 1538 and 1546.<sup>37</sup> With his architectural skills, Sangallo would have helped Vasari with the difficult task of transforming the medieval refectory of the Olivetan Convent into a space in line with the standards of Tuscan-Roman decoration.<sup>38</sup>



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## 2 / Sketch of the basement

of the Hvězda summer palace ca. 1555

pen-and-ink drawing, paper, 35.2 × 25 cm

National Library of Austria, Vienna

Photo: Österreichische Nationalbibliothek

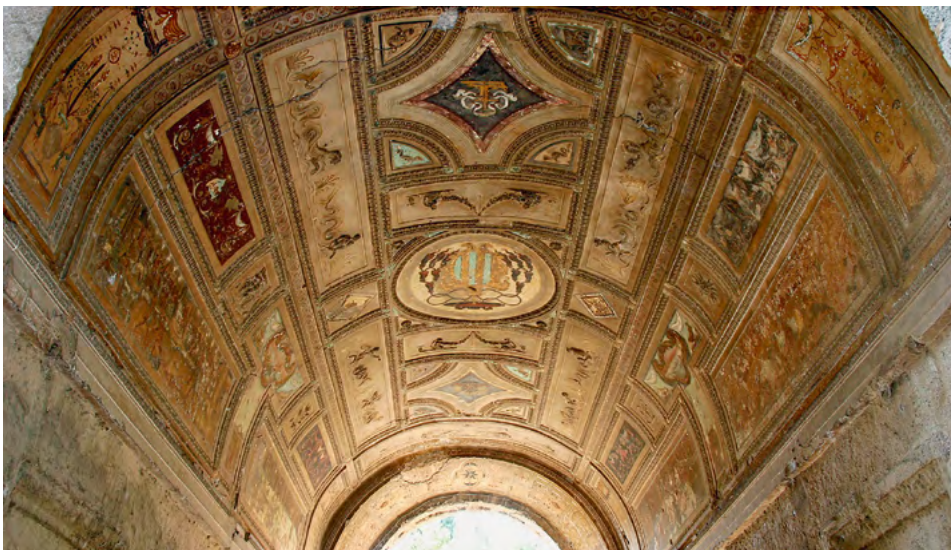
## Giovanni Maria Stella from Melide

In Czech and Italian studies the figure of Giovanni Maria Stella has remained in the shadow of his older brother Paolo and his name has been frequently confused with that of other artists.<sup>44</sup> It was the case for ‘Giovanni Maria Padovano’, the well-known Giovanni Maria Mosca (ca. 1495 to 1573) who also migrates to Northern Europe, though to Krakow at the court of Sigismund I Jagiellon, uncle of Ferdinand I.<sup>45</sup> The fact that Mosca’s most challenging work in Italy, the relief of the *Miracle of the Goblet* for the *Capella dell’Arca* in Saint Anthony in Padua (1520–1529), was completed by a certain Pietro Paolo Stella, who is, however, distinct from Paolo Stella from Melide — as we will try to demonstrate in another publication — which makes the situation even more complex.<sup>46</sup> Giovanni Maria has been also confused with a certain Zuan Maria, documented at Prague Castle, who is actually Giovanni Maria Aostalli from Pambio, a village on the shore of Lake Lugano, not far from Melide.<sup>47</sup> The limited choice of names given to the sculptors coming from the Luganese area and their multiple, varied and changing ways of collaboration increases of course the difficulties of identifying some of them. Giovanni Maria was also recognized with the ‘maister Pauln brueder’ who should, in a document relating to the construction of the Belvedere of 12 October 1550, ‘fix and finish the coat of arms and the windows started on the *Lusthaus*’ (*die angefangen Wappen, so auf die Fenstern in lusthaus gehören, ausmachen und vollenden*).<sup>48</sup> In the absence of further evidence it is, however, not possible to determine whether this mention refers to Giovanni Maria or to his brother Giovanni Domenico Stella.<sup>49</sup> The presence of Giovanni Maria is instead clearly established in September 1556, when he deals with the inheritance of his deceased brother Paolo.<sup>50</sup> He requested that the ‘abandoned building and plot of land’ that he inherited should be registered as his property. This referred to a derelict house and building site bequeathed by Paolo who seems earlier to have procured a permit to build a house for himself in the Hradčany district of Prague. Two witnesses confirmed that Giovanni Maria’s brothers had both passed away. On the same day he sold the property to Jerolím Tuchar, the Steward of Archduke Ferdinand, who paid him 200 threescores of Meissen groschen in cash, and promise to give another 200 in two instalments on the feast of St Gallus (16 October) of 1559 and of 1560. Stella did not stay permanently in Bohemia, as we find him in 1566 in Lombardy, renting land in Cagno near Caversaccio in the diocese of Como.<sup>51</sup> The document reveals that he and Paolo had both been ennobled at the Prague court, being mentioned as ‘nobilis D. Jo. Maria della Stella de Milide’ and ‘quondam nobilis domini Pauli et Johanni Dominici’.<sup>52</sup>

He is also documented as a stucco worker in collaboration with Matteo Quaranta for the chapel of Ippolita de Monti at San Severino e Sossio (May–November 1546)<sup>39</sup> and seemed to have had, like Stella, a managerial role within the large workshop set up by Vasari to fulfil the Neapolitan commissions.<sup>40</sup> These works include other stucco decorations where Stella’s collaboration would have also been required, like the chapel of Girolamo Seripando in San Giovanni a Carbonara and the villa of Pedro de Toledo in Pozzuoli built by Sangallo himself.<sup>41</sup>

Seven years after the Neapolitan stay, Vasari collaborates with Giacomo Vignola and Bartolomeo Ammannati on an emblematic monument of roman antiquarian culture, the villa of Pope Julius III, on the east side of the Via Flaminia.<sup>42</sup> The building seems to have attracted an even greater variety of artists than the Palazzo Doria. This is particularly true for the stucco workers, which includes people from Venice, the Marches, Netherlands, Spain, and Florence — in this case Francesco da Sangallo himself who works on the stuccos of the nymphaeum in 1552.<sup>43</sup> It is surprising not to find Giovanni Maria Stella among such a cosmopolitan group and we can suppose that his absence was due to activity in Central Europe.





3 / Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome, 1520s

Photo: Andrea Bonavita

4 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, vault decorated with stucco in the vestibule, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome

Photo: Andrea Bonavita

5 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, passageway with the four cardinal virtues, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome

Photo: Andrea Bonavita



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6 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco frieze, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome  
Photo: Andrea Bonavita

### Giovanni Maria Stella at Hvězda?

Giovanni Maria Stella has been regarded so far as a mere collaborator of his brother Paolo. But his activity in Genoa, Rome, and Naples with artists of the stature of Perino del Vaga, Baldassare Peruzzi and Giorgio Vasari considerably increases his role. Observing that his presence in Prague coincides with the years of the decoration of Hvězda and that he had recognised experience in the field of stucco, we can legitimately ask the question whether he was involved in its decoration. It is indeed unlikely that he came to the capital only to deal with Paolo's inheritance. We know that the work stretched roughly from 1556 to 1560, as in 1556 the provincial scrivener Volf Vřesovec laments that the stucco decorations are progressing slowly,<sup>53</sup> and in 1559 Bonifaz Wohlmüt reports that the building is almost completed.<sup>54</sup>

Following this hypothesis, we have to compare the stuccoes of Hvězda with the only monument where Giovanni Maria's presence is clearly attested, the Villa Trivulzio. Its decorated spaces include the vestibule [4, 15], the north-eastern loggia open to the countryside [6], and a room later converted into a chapel on the ground floor, a room above the loggia [9, 13] and a connecting corridor on the first floor [5]. Against all expectations, a number of striking similarities appear on formal, compositional, and technical levels. This is particularly evident in the frieze of the first floor room of Villa Trivulzio, formed by thin, cleverly intersecting lines, which appear in similar form in the Hall of Diana-Luna at Hvězda [8]. In more detail, the motif of square brackets flanking a diamond-shaped field in the middle is exactly reproduced in Prague [10], as well as the rectangular field situated between two squares, whereby the perimeter line is formed by a thin and single

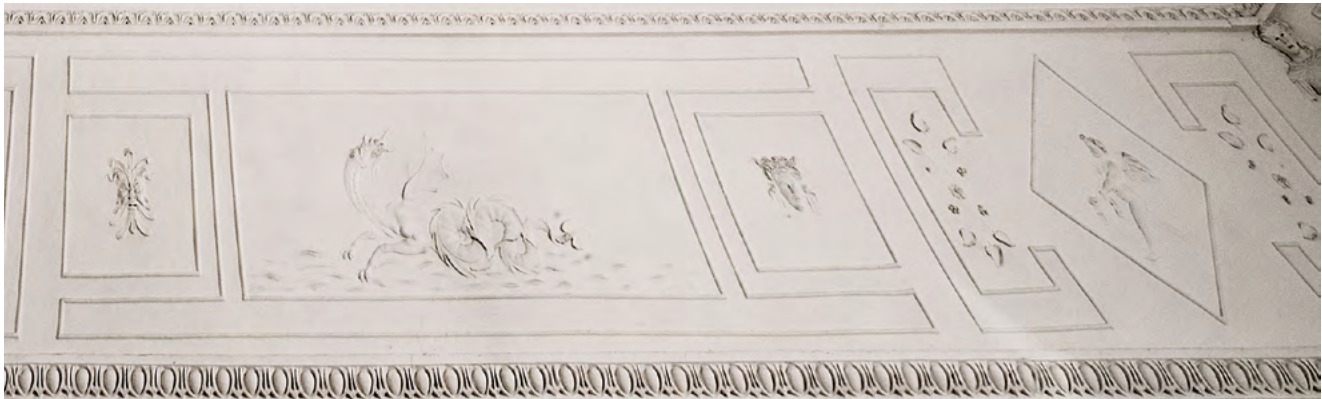
### 7 / The Stella brothers, detail of a stone frieze, 1540s

Belvedere Summer Palace, Prague

Reproduction: Antonín Balšánek, Belvedere. Letohrádek královny Anny na Hradčanech, Praha 1897, plate 41.







8 / **Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco decoration**, ca. 1556–1560  
Hvězda Summer Palace, Prague  
Photo: Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Vlado Bohdan

line, not doubled [11]. The motif of a pair of crossed stems with leaves connected in the middle by a bucranium inside a rectangle can be found in an identical form in the Hall of Jupiter and in the Cleopatra corridor at Hvězda [14]. Even closer in terms of composition and division of fields are the mouldings of the vault of the vestibule at Salone [15], which form an atypical structure that we find in the Saturn Room in Prague with the inclusion of a Heron motif inside [16]. These similarities are so strong that they can hardly be explained only by a transfer of forms through drawings, print, or moulding. They imply direct practice on site to acquire a sense of volume, composition, and technique as we find at Hvězda. In this meaning, of fundamental importance is the comparison of the marine creatures of the vestibule at Salone with those that populate the different rooms of Hvězda.<sup>55</sup> They are modelled in rough outline, from the relief shape to the incised drawing against a neutral background, with an analogous treatment of the coiled tails (with sharp ‘toothing’ executed entirely by incised drawing), and with a similar way of indicating the surface of the water through many small waves. [17, 18].

In another context, a design dating from 1548, which Petr Uličný ascribes to Paolo Stella and identifies as a project for the decoration of the Vladislav Hall of Prague

Castle shows a clear connection with the frieze on the first floor of Villa Trivulzio [9, 12].<sup>56</sup> In both cases, the fine lines create a meander in the form of a swastika on the edges of the rectangular fields. Assuming the attribution to Paolo Stella, we can imagine an exchange of information with his brother, possibly occurring when he went to Prague to work at Belvedere around 1538 or on another occasion. Last but not least, it should be added that the scene of the *Roman Charity* in the central hall of Hvězda is directly inspired by the one painted by Perino del Vaga in the west wing of Palazzo Doria in Genoa.<sup>57</sup> The layout of the architecture, including the central column and the benches with brackets are identical and so is the figure of Pero standing with crossed legs. This would be further proof of Giovanni Maria’s presence on the great Genoese building site in the early 1530s.

### **The stucco decoration of Hvězda in broader contexts**

As Jarmila Krčalová pointed out, the stucco works in the Hvězda Summer Palace are deeply different from Raphael’s decorative systems, which synthesise a broad repertoire of forms, show robust frames and express

9 / **Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco frieze**, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome  
Photo: Andrea Bonavita



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10 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco decoration, ca. 1556-1560

Hvězda Summer Palace, Prague

Photo: Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Vlado Bohdan

11 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco decoration, ca. 1556-1560

Hvězda Summer Palace, Prague

Photo: Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Vlado Bohdan

12 / Paolo della Stella, Design for a frieze with the insignia of the Order of the Golden Fleece for the arch of the Vladislav Hall, 1548

National Archive, Prague, Bohemian Section of the Court Chamber IV, box 191, fol. 36.

Photo: National Archive, Prague



in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, but we can assume that Giovanni Maria Stella saw other classical works in Rome, or outside along the *viae consulares*, which no longer exist or have suffered irreversible damage.<sup>61</sup> Furthermore, the tombs of Baia and Pozzuoli near Naples were well known in the XV<sup>th</sup> century and must have had a decisive impact on Stella when he moved to Naples.<sup>62</sup> In this respect, his probable involvement in the decoration of Pedro de Toledo's villa in Pozzuoli with 'stucco sottilissimi', inevitably placed him in a direct confrontation with the classical monuments which surround the Bay of Baia.<sup>63</sup> One may also wonder whether the adjective 'sottilissimi' used by Vasari does have a precise stylistic meaning referring to a way of imitating antique stucco, with low relief, slight frames and fine ornaments, as we observe in Salone and Hvězda.

As we have seen, the figure of Antonio Brocco is considered by most scholars as the main stucco artist for the stuccoes at Hvězda.<sup>64</sup> His name was suggested first by Jarmila Krčálová, but then abandoned in the absence of concrete proof.<sup>65</sup> Dorothea Diemer proposed it again on the basis of some stylistic comparisons with the bronze statues of the Singing Fountain, modelled by Brocco between 1562 and 1568. She then added to her demonstration the stucco decoration of the castle of Ambras near Innsbruck, precisely the Kaiserzimmer, where the name 'Anthoni Prackh' is registered between 1571 and 1572.<sup>66</sup> These comparisons are in her view incontrovertible and attest to the action of one unique artist.<sup>67</sup> If the hypothesis has the merit of proposing new dynamics, in practice the similarities remain quite generic and hardly go beyond a simple iconographical parallelism. The schematic ribbon-like hair, flat lips, and rigid expressions of the bronze figures in the Singing Fountain have few points of convergence with the free, vibrant, and ironic stucco masks of the central room of Hvězda.<sup>68</sup> And above all, the stucco works of Ambras, where Brocco is documented, does not display a direct, close, and deep knowledge of antique roman stucco, as is the case in Prague. In this sense, the comparison made by Diemer of the episode of Mucius Scaevola in both castles, instead of showing an identical hand, does

a close dialogue with the painting.<sup>58</sup> At Hvězda, the smooth backgrounds and slight frames where figures are created with just a few strokes of the palette knife as though intended to capture the illusion of freshness, reveal the direct inspiration of classical stucco.

A number of stylistic analogies between the decoration of Hvězda and antique monuments have indeed already been noted by scholars.<sup>59</sup> Particularly revealing are the comparisons with the tomb of the Valerii on the Via Appia and the underground basilica of Porta Maggiore in Rome,<sup>60</sup> the first partially painted, as was originally intended in Salone, the second strictly monochrome as it is the case of Hvězda. Those monuments were discovered





13 / **Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco frieze**, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome  
Photo: Andrea Bonavita

the exact opposite, confirming that we are dealing with two artists with different backgrounds. In Hvězda, the figures are quickly sketched and seem to float on a plain surface without depth, while in the Kaisersaal of Ambras, they are monumental, sharply defined and with clear references to contemporary painting. We agree of course with Diemer in noting the perfect similarities between the figures in the Singing Fountain and the stucco reliefs at Ambras both documented as works by Brocco.<sup>69</sup> The real gap is between these two monuments and Hvězda.

On the contrary, a direct and convincing confrontation is proposed by Diemer between the stuccoes of Hvězda and those of the Royal Palace of Dresden, completed before 1556.<sup>70</sup> The Preziosensaal on the ground floor show a type of colourless stucco similar in composition and stylistic treatment with those of Prague.<sup>71</sup> The documentary presence in January 1553 of a ‘*master Prochi with his brothers and scholars*’ found by Heinrich Magirius brings Diemer an additional evidence in confirming Brocco’s presence in Dresden, as well as Hvězda and Ambras.<sup>72</sup> We must observe, however, that in the same period (1553–1555) a certain ‘*Johann Maria*’ is also recorded in the Residenzschloss as the lead artist of a group of six Italians associates.<sup>73</sup> The homonymy, the directorial responsibility, the chronological consistency and the stylistic similarities with Hvězda, all contribute to identifying the Dresdner ‘*Johann Maria*’ with Stella himself. In this case, a working phase in the Residenzschloss in the first half of the

1550s would fit perfectly into his chronological path and would also explain its absence from such a crucial site as the Villa Giulia in Rome. Of course, it is possible that ‘*Meister Prochi*’ — we do not know, however, whether it is Antonio, Giovanni, or other members of this ramified family — worked on the stucco decoration at the Residenzschloss in Dresden and the Hvězda Palace, but we believe that the leading personality at both sites was Stella. His absence from Ambras is demonstrated *a contrario*, by a complete lack of formal and compositional relationships with the antique stucco decoration technique in this Castle, where instead the name of Brocco is quoted twice.<sup>74</sup>

Giovanni Maria Stella’s activity in Rome and Naples in the 1530s gave him direct access to some particularly well preserved antique monuments. The assimilation of classical stucco may have been strongly stimulated by the contacts with of Baldassare Peruzzi, an artist with great pedagogical skill and capable of combining a scrupulous study of Antiquity with an exceptional innovative strength.<sup>75</sup> Working first at Palazzo Doria, then at Villa Trivulzio, Giovanni Maria would have passed from the Raphaelesque tradition of Perino del Vaga to the more intellectual and philological declination of the antiquity by the Sienese architect. In this sense, the Italian training of Stella provides a key to explaining the peculiarity of the Hvězda stuccoes, which cover an entire floor and offer an imitation of the decorative systems of the first century AC on a scale that has no parallel in 16<sup>th</sup> century Europe.



14 / **Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco decoration**, ca. 1556–1560  
Hvězda Summer Palace, Prague  
Photo: Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Vlado Bohdan



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15 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, vault of the vestibule, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome  
Photo: Andrea Bonavita

### Giovanni Maria Stella as architect?

Aside from the stucco-workers, the identity of Hvězda's architect is still an unresolved issue. The role of Ferdinand II of Tyrol, who boasts a broad culture, a real interest in Italian architecture and a well-stocked library, has often been considered crucial in the ideation and the building of the palace.<sup>76</sup> On the other hand however, the case of sovereigns or high dignitaries with a broad

knowledge of architecture was not uncommon in the 16th century.<sup>77</sup> If Ferdinand II followed the construction and perhaps made some suggestions, he still had to entrust one or more architects to direct the works and make the plans.<sup>78</sup> From this perspective, the possibility of Stella's involvement could be seriously considered.

Here too the impact of Baldassare Peruzzi can be also taken into account. The plan of Hvězda shares formal aspects with the architecture of military bastions, a field



16 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco decoration, ca. 1556-1560  
Hvězda Summer Palace, Prague  
Photo: Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Vlado Bohdan





17 / **Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the vestibule**, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome  
Photo: Andrea Bonavita

in which Peruzzi, well instructed by Francesco di Giorgio Martini, enjoyed great authority.<sup>79</sup> Peruzzi left numerous architectural drawings, including plans of polygonal centred buildings, which seem to anticipate Hvězda.<sup>80</sup> This material was used by his disciples Sebastiano Serlio and Pietro Cataneo for their architectural treatises, the illustrations of which are also an important precedent for it.<sup>81</sup> Particularly interesting is Cataneo's *Quattro primi libri di architettura* which was acquired by Ferdinand II in 1555, a few months before works began on Hvězda.<sup>82</sup> In the conclusion of the treatise, the author defends the possibility of creating new forms without right angles 'to please the caprices of the lords', an assertion which seems to plead for a building similar of Hvězda.<sup>83</sup> Cataneo adds that 'such architecture would have no precedent in Antiquity and would serve no other purpose than to be magnificent and pleasing to the eye'.<sup>84</sup> Combining a purely utilitarian architecture, such as a defensive one, with one purely aesthetic with no other goal than to be pleasing and magnificent could be an oxymoron particularly adept to the 16th century.

What is perhaps important to stress is that Stella's acquaintance with Peruzzi through Cardinal Trivulzio



18 / **Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the vestibule**, 1530s  
Villa Trivulzio at Salone, Rome  
Photo: Andrea Bonavita

allowed him to come into contact with a sophisticated tradition, which could provide him with the background necessary to elaborate a project such as Hvězda.<sup>85</sup> We should not doubt that Giovanni Maria Stella had architectural competence. The transition from sculpture to architecture was quite natural for artists from the Luganese area, and in the 16th century, switching from stucco decoration to architecture was not uncommon either. Two of the most prolific architects of the century, Giacomo Della Porta (1532–1602) and Domenico Fontana (1543–1607) started out as stucco workers.<sup>86</sup> And at the time of Giovanni Maria Stella, the Spaniard Francisco del Castillo (1528–1586) began to work on the stucco decoration of the Villa Giulia in Rome before developing a crucial practise as an architect in Upper Andalusia.<sup>87</sup>

We can also observe that the coat of arms of Giovanni Maria Stella represents a six-pointed star.<sup>88</sup> [20] We should not think that the sculptor from Melide would have the audacity to give such a personal touch to the archduke's castle, but a play on forms with crypto-emblematic references would be quite in tune with the cultured context of the 16th century in Central Europe. As an ennobled artist, Stella could play an influential role at the Prague court and perhaps achieve the function of '*fabricae nostrae Pragensis magister*' which his brother Paolo held until his death.<sup>89</sup>

## Conclusion

Although it is not possible to state with certainty that Giovanni Maria Stella directed the stucco decoration of Hvězda, and earlier of the Residenzschloss of Dresden, or that he even drew up the stellar plan of the palace, we must note the direct, immediate, and explicit links between the stuccoes at Hvězda and those at Villa Trivulzio of Salone on the one hand, and the importance of Stella's professional career in Italy on the other. The artist restored some of the most famous Roman antiquities, frequented milestone building sites and had a recognised expertise in the art of stucco. This remarkable professional career may provide valuable insight in explaining the quality of the stuccoes at Hvězda.

It should also be noted that the artists at Hvězda mastered the techniques of classical stucco work with remarkable brilliance, in a quite different way from what the sculptors of northern Italy were experimenting with

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19 / Giovanni Maria Stella and co-workers, details of the stucco decoration, ca. 1556–1560  
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Photo: Institute of Art History of the Czech Academy of Sciences – Vlado Bohdan

in Genoa, Mantua or Venice. Only an artist who had lived and worked in Rome and Naples would have been able to produce such an exact imitation of the antique stucco decoration.

Moreover, if we can indeed connect the persona of Giovanni Maria Stella with the Prague realisations, it substantially broadens the possible understanding of the nature of contacts between Italy and Central Europe. Northern Italian artists who came to Bohemia in the 16th century are often considered — also due to their missing biographies — to have brought the key inspirations of Italian art indirectly, second-handed. In the person of Giovanni Maria Stella, however, there is a personality directly active in the Roman circle, who brought here

a first-hand link to artists such as Peruzzi and Vasari. We can only guess that there may have been more figures with similar connections working in Bohemia. However, even if the example of Giovanni Maria Stella is isolated, it profoundly influences our understanding of the relationship between Central Europe and leading cultural centres in Italy. Given the rich network of family and collegial ties that existed among artists from the area of Lugano abroad, it is certain that sources of inspiration, motifs, techniques, and personal experiences were shared and disseminated. It suggests that even a handful of artists such as Stella could have brought 16th-century Bohemia much closer to Rome, Florence, or even Naples than is generally believed.



#### NOTES

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<sup>1</sup> On the Hvězda Summer Palace cf. most recently Ivan Prokop Muchka, Ivo Purš, Sylva Dobalová and Jaroslava Hausenblasová, *The Star*.

#### 20 / Seal of Paolo della Stella

Prague Castle Archive, Court Construction Office (HBA) Collection, box 1, folder 6.

Photo: Prague Castle Archive



Archduke Ferdinand II of Austria and His Summer Palace in Prague, Praha 2017 (cited as 'The Star'). — Ivo Purš, 'Grotesque Stucco Motifs in the Star Summer Palace', *Umění* LXVII, 2019, pp. 396–416. — From the older literature cf. Zikmund Winter, *Řemeslnictvo a živnost XVI. věku v Čechách (1526–1620)*, Praha 1909, pp. 54–72. — Karel Chytil, 'Mistři lугánští v Čechách v XVI. stol.', *Ročenka Kruhu pro pěstování dějin umění za rok 1924*, Praha 1925, pp. 32–66. — Jan Morávek, *Letohrádek a obora Hvězda*, Praha 1933. — Jan Morávek, 'Ke vzniku Hvězdy', *Umění* II, 1954, pp. 199–211. — Eva Šamánková, *Architektura české renesance*, Praha 1961. — Ivan Prokop Muchka, *Stylové otázky v české architektuře kolem roku 1600* (master's thesis), Department of Art History, Faculty of Arts, Charles University, Prague 1969. — Jarmila Krčálová, 'Renesanční architektura v Čechách a na Moravě', in Jiří Dvorský (ed), *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění II/1*, Praha 1989, pp. 9–11. — Pavel Preiss, *Italští umělci v Praze*, Praha 1986, pp. 50–55. — Jan Bažant, 'Villa Star in Prague: A New Look at the Northern Renaissance', *Ars* XLI, 2008, pp. 55–72. — Jan Chlíbač, *Italští sochaři v českých zemích v období renesance*, Praha 2011, pp. 108–117. — Pavel Kalina, *Praha 1437–1610. Kapitoly o pozdně gotické a renesanční architektuře (Chapters on Late Gothic and Renaissance Architecture)*, Praha 2011. — Jan Bažant, *Villa Star in Prague. The Northern Renaissance Masterpiece, Advanced Guide to Czech Monuments*, Prague 2012. — Jan Bažant and Nina Bažantová, *Vila Hvězda v Praze (1555–1563). Mistrovské dílo severské renesance*, Praha 2013. — Martin Krummholz, 'Barokní architektura a štukatura', in Petr Macek, Richard Biegel and Jakub Bachtík (eds), *Barokní architektura v Čechách*, Praha 2015, pp. 641–642.

2 A series of plans of the different floors from about 1555 are preserved in the Österreichische Nationalbibliothek in Vienna, cf. Morávek, 'Ke vzniku' (note 1). See also Muchka, in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 89–90, figs. 91–95.

3 For the stucco decoration of Hvězda see in particular Miloš Suchomel, 'Štuková výzdoba letohrádku Hvězda', *Umění* XXI, 1973, pp. 99–116. — Jarmila Krčálová, 'Ke genezi štukové výzdoby letohrádku Hvězda', *Umění* XXI, 1973, No. 5, pp. 407–414. — 'The Star' (note 1), with an overview of the previous literature and more recently, the iconographical approach, cf. Purš (note 1), pp. 396–416.

4 On Archduke Ferdinand of Tyrol see in particular Blanka Kubíková, Jaroslava Hausenblasová and Sylva Dobalová (eds), *Ferdinand II. Arcivévoda Ferdinand II. Habsburský. Renesanční vladař a mecenáš mezi Prahou a Innsbruckem*, Praha 2017. — Sylva Dobalová and Jaroslava Hausenblasová (eds), *Archduke Ferdinand II of Austria. A Second-Born Son in Renaissance Europe*, Wien 2021.

5 Krčálová (note 3).

6 Ibidem, p. 410.

7 Chytil (note 1), p. 52. — Suchomel (note 7).

8 Krčálová (note 3), p. 413. On Antonio Brocco, see also Jarmila Krčálová, 'Brocco, Giovanni Antonio', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* XIV, 1972, pp. 404–406, and the successive note.

9 Dorothea Diemer, 'Antonio Brocco und der 'Singende Brunnen' in Prag', *Jahrbuch der Kunsthistorischen Sammlungen in Wien* XCI, 1995, pp. 19–36. — Eadem and Peter Diemer, 'Die Musenquelle am Festungsbau. Eine neuentdeckte Stuckdekoration des Antonio Brocco in Bayern', *Münchener Jahrbuch des bildenden Kunst* LI, 2000, pp. 101–136.

10 In favor to Brocco: Chlíbač (note 1), pp. 108–117. — Bažant and Bažantová (note 1). — Jan Bažant, 'Dante, Raffael, Michelangelo a vila Hvězda v Praze', *Historica olomucensia, supplementum* I, 2014, pp. 25–49, esp. p. 26. — Sylva Dobalová, in Kubíková, Hausenblasová and Dobalová (note 4), p. 164. — Sylva Dobalová and Ivan Prokop Muchka, 'Stavební

projekty arcivévody Ferdinanda II. v Praze a Innsbrucku', in ibidem, pp. 32–37, cited from p. 34. For a more cautious approach on Brocco's role: Martin Krummholz, 'Artisti dei laghi in Bohemia', in Renata Sulewska and Mariusz Smoloński (eds), *Artyści znad jezior lombardzkich w nowożytniej Europie*, Warszawa 2015, pp. 131–142, esp. p. 136. — Ivan Prokop Muchka, 'Antonio Brocco, his workshop and "secondary" motifs', in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 285–316, in part. 291–293. — Purš (note 1), p. 396.

11 Andrea Bonavita, *Villa Trivulzio alle sorgenti di Salone. Il ritiro di un cardinale milanese nella campagna romana*, Milano 2020. We are grateful to the author for kindly making the last text available to us before it was published. For the older literature, see: Cornelius von Fabriczy, 'Das Landhaus des Kardinals Trivulzio am Salone', *Jahrbuch der Königlich Preussischen Kunstsammlungen* XVII, 1896, pp. 186–205. — Christoph L. Frommel, *Die Farnesina und Peruzzis architektonisches Frühwerk*, Berlin 1961, pp. 62–64. — Idem, 'Baldassarre Peruzzi als Maler und Zeichner', *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* XI, 1968, pp. 130–132. — Isa Belli Barsali and Maria Grazia Branchetti, *Ville della campagna Romana. 2. Lazio*, Milano 1981, pp. 104–117 (with a useful description of the villa's interior). — Paolo Fancelli, 'La villa Trivulzio a Salone di Roma', in *Architettura del Cinquecento a Roma, 6. Conoscenza e rappresentazione dell'architettura*, Roma 2011. — Benedetta Moreschini, 'Un edificio da salvare. Villa Trivulzio a Salone', *Commentari d'arte* VI, 2000, pp. 29–38. — Andrea Bonavita, 'How Cardinal Agostino Trivulzio's collection of statues entered the Farnese collection', *The Burlington Magazine* CLVIII, January 2016, pp. 4–9.

12 Giorgio Vasari, *Le vite de' più eccellenti pittori scultori ed architettori* (1568), ed. by Gaetano Milanesi, 9 voll., Firenze 1907, VII, p. 51.

13 Fabriczy (note 11), pp. 193–195.

14 Frommel, 'Baldassarre Peruzzi' (note 11), pp. 130–132. The work on the decoration of the Villa must have started by 1535 at the latest, because it was supposed to have been directed at the beginning by Peruzzi, who died on 6 January 1536. Frommel (ibidem, p. 131), recognised Peruzzi's style in the stucco frieze of the first-floor room. Because Daniele da Volterra was busy in Siena throughout 1535, he evidently worked at the Villa later on, when the stucco decoration was already underway or had been completed. In fact, Vasari implies that the work was carried out at various periods of time, mentioning that Daniele arrived at the site 'dove appunto allora lavoravano Gianmaria da Milano ed altri' (cf. note 12 above).

15 Bonavita, 'How Cardinal' (note 11), pp. 7, 9, app. 1. Giovanni Maria Stella received 18 *scudi* out of a total of 150 *scudi* for 'laborum in aptandis status marmoreis'. The document is preserved in Rome, Archivio di Stato, Tribunale del Governatore di Roma, Processi sec. XVI, vol. 12, fol. 4.

16 On Palazzo Doria, see Antonio Merli and Luigi Tommaso Belgrano, *Il palazzo del principe d'Oria a Fassolo in Genova*, Genova 1874. — Elena Parma, *Villa del Principe Doria a Fassolo*, Genova 1977. — Lauro Magnani, *Il tempio di Venere. Giardino e villa nella cultura genovese*, Genova 1987, pp. 34–43. — Piero Boccardo, *Andrea Doria e le arti*, Roma 1989, pp. 25–40. — Clara Altavista, *La residenza di Andrea Doria a Fassolo. Il cantiere di un palazzo di villa genovese nel Rinascimento*, Milan 2013. On the stuccos of Palazzo Doria, cf. recently Marco Campigli, 'Silvio Cosini, Niccolò da Corte e la scultura a Palazzo Doria', *Nuovi studi* XX, 2014, pp. 83–104, in part. 92–96, figg. 162–181.

17 Luigi Brentani, *Antichi maestri d'arte e di scuola delle terre ticinesi. Notizie e documenti*, vol. 6, Lugano 1957, pp. 303–304.

18 A documentary research on the Stella family is being published by Extermann and Zapletalová (in print).

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- 19 Bonavita, 'Villa Trivulzio' (note 11), pp. 169–170, figg. 9.19, 9.20.
- 20 The monumental sculptures of Palazzo Doria (fountains, chimneys, portals) were imitated for other residences in Habsburg territories (for the Netherlands, cf. Géraldine Patigny and Grégoire Extermann, 'The Count of Boussu's Genoese fountain: a work by Niccolò da Corte, Gian Giacomo and Guglielmo della Porta rediscovered in Brussels', *Simiolus* XLIII, 2021, No. 4, pp. 248–263). Its architecture partly inspired the Belvedere in Prague (see Extermann and Zapletalová, in print).
- 21 Vasari (note 12), V, pp. 117, 612–616, 645–649; VI, pp. 640–641.
- 22 Sculptors and architects from the area of Lugano were present in Genoa since the XI<sup>th</sup> century with the name of Antelami (cf. Clario Di Fabio, 'I magistri Antelami a Genova fino al primo Duecento: origini ed esiti artistici di un fenomeno storico e di un monopolio', in Arturo Carlo Quintavalle [ed], *Storia di Parma*, VIII/1, *La storia dell'arte: secoli XI–XV*, Parma 2019, pp. 75–93).
- 23 The documented which attests Paolo Stella's presence in Genoa is dated 11 January 1531 and was discovered by Davide Gambino (Jan Bažant and Anne Markham Schulz, 'Stella, Paolo', *Dizionario biografico degli italiani* XCIV, 2019, pp. 195–198, esp. p. 196).
- 24 On the Della Porta workshop, see Hanno-Walther Krufft and Anthony Roth, 'The Della Porta Workshop in Genoa', *Annali della scuola normale superiore di Pisa. Lettere, Storia e Filosofia*, 1973, pp. 893–954. — Yasmine Helfer, 'Guglielmo della Porta: dal Duomo di Genova al Duomo di Milano', *Prospettiva* CXXXII, 2008, pp. 61–77. — Grégoire Extermann, 'Santo Varni e la dinastia dei Della Porta', in Laura Damiani Cabrini, Grégoire Extermann and Raffaella Fontanarossa (eds), *Santo Varni: conoscitore, erudito e artista tra Genova e l'Europa*, Chiavari 2018, pp. 250–272.
- 25 Giovanni Maria Stella had to come in Rome by 1535 at the latest for the stucco decoration of Villa Trivulzio (see note 14 above). A monograph on Guglielmo Della Porta is being completed by Grégoire Extermann.
- 26 For Della Porta's role in the Massimi Chapel see Grégoire Extermann, 'Tra Roma e Genova, il contributo di Galeazzo Alessi e Giovanni Battista Castello alla decorazione in stucco', *Bollettino d'arte*, 2022, in print. For the Massimi Chapel in general see Barbara Agosti and Maria Beltramini, 'Il cantiere della cappella Massimo nella Trinità dei Monti da Raffaello a Perino: cronologie e modelli decorativi', in Silvia Ginzburg, Letizia Tedeschi, Vitale Zanchettin (eds), *Il cantiere nel Cinquecento: architettura e decorazione. 1. Roma*, in print.
- 27 For Guglielmo Della Porta's activity as a restorer cf. Christina Riebesell, 'Die Roma Gruppe im Palazzo Farnese und die polychromen Antikenergänzungen Guglielmo Della Portas', in Max Kunze (ed), *Wiedererstandene Antike*, Tübingen 2003, pp. 41–51. — Grégoire Extermann, 'Dédoublément, polychromie et axialité. L'aménagement statuaire du Palais Farnèse au XVI<sup>e</sup> siècle par Guglielmo Della Porta', in Sabine Frommel and Pavel Migasiewicz (eds), *La sculpture au service du pouvoir dans l'Europe de l'époque moderne*, Roma 2019, pp. 151–166. The provenance from the Cardinal Trivulzio of six statues now in the Farnese Collection of the National Archaeological Museum of Naples was discovered by Bonavita, 'How Cardinal' (note 11), see fig. 1–3, 5, 6, 11.
- 28 Bonavita 'Villa Trivulzio' (note 11), pp. 169–170, fig. 9.21.
- 29 Karl Köpl, 'Urkunden, Acten, Regesten und Inventare aus dem k. k. Statthalterei-Archiv in Prag', *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* X, 1889, pp. LXIII–CC, n. 6000. — Antonín Balšánek, *Belvedere. Letohrádek královny Anny na Hradčanech*, Praha 1897, esp. pp. 17–18. — Karel Chytil, 'U kolébky architektů', *Dílo* V, 1907–1908, n. 4, pp. 73–96, p. 88. — Chytil (note 1), pp. 35, 57, note 3. On Gómez Suárez de Figueroa, imperial ambassador to Genoa from 1529 to 1569 — and frequently confused with Gómez III Suárez de Figueroa y Córdoba (1523–1572) I Duke of Feria — cf. Rafael Vargas-Hidalgo, *Guerra y Diplomacia en el Mediterráneo: correspondencia inédita de Felipe II con Andrea Doria y Juan Andrea Doria (Ilustrada con cartas de Carlos V. Don Juan de Austria, Juana de Austria, Andrea Doria, Juan Andrea Doria, virreyes, generales, embajadores y espías)*, Madrid 2002, pp. XLV–XLVIII.
- 30 The similarity between the ionic capitals of the baldacchino and those of the Belvedere is also observed by Petr Uličný, 'The Summer Palace in the Royal Garden of Prague Castle and the First Renaissance Recreational Building in Central Europe', *Umění* LXVII, 2019, pp. 514–537, esp. p. 518.
- 31 *Ibidem*, p. 517.
- 32 See note 17 above.
- 33 On Vasari's works on Monteoliveto Maggiore, cf. Pierluigi Leone De Castris, 'Vasari e Monteoliveto', *Bollettino d'arte* LXVI, 1981, pp. 59–88. On Vasari's stay in Naples, see Vasari (note 12), VII, pp. 674–678. — Andrea Zezza, 'Per Vasari a Napoli', in Barbara Agosti, Silvia Ginzburg and Alessandro Nova (eds), *Giorgio Vasari e il cantiere delle Vite del 1550*, conference proceedings (Florence, 26–28 April 2012), Venezia 2013, pp. 147–165. — Barbara Agosti, *Giorgio Vasari: luoghi e tempi delle Vite. Nuova edizione rivista e con l'aggiunta di una bibliografia vasariana*, Milano 2021, pp. 64–69. — Serena Quagliarioli, *Colore, stucco, marmo nel Cinquecento. Il percorso di Giulio Mazzoni*, Milano 2022, pp. 23–30.
- 34 Karl Frey, *Der Literarische Nachlass Giorgio Vasaris*, 3 voll., München 1930–1940, I, p. 157, n. 74. We would like to thank Serena Quagliarioli for the discussion about Stella's hypothetical presence in Naples (Summer 2019). — On this topic, see Quagliarioli (note 33), p. 26.
- 35 On the use of professional qualifications as an alternative to patronymics or surnames in Florentine Renaissance, cf. Christiane Klapisch-Zuber, *Se faire un nom. L'invention de la célébrité à la Renaissance*, Paris 2019, pp. 20–26.
- 36 'mi incresce, non sortisca il suo desiderio', Frey (note 34), p. 157. This may be an allusion to an unrealized decoration project of the convent (see note 38 below).
- 37 On Sangallo in Naples, cf. Fernando Loffredo, 'Pedro de Toledo, lo stemma di Castelcapuano e Francesco da Sangallo a Napoli: la produzione di emblemi monumentali e un confronto col portale di Castel Sant'Elmo di Tommaso Boscoli', in Fabio Mangone (ed), *Castelcapuano*, Napoli 2011, pp. 42–69, in part. 47–49. — Dario Donetti, *Francesco da Sangallo e l'identità dell'architettura toscana*, Roma 2020, pp. 61–67, 118–119. — Quagliarioli (note 33), pp. 24, 26, 30. The existence of a Florentine sculptor of the same name, Francesco di Vincenzo Bacelli da Sangallo, 10 years younger and recently identified by Alessandra Giannotti ('Francesco da Sangallo: un nome per due scultori', *Paragone* LXVII, 2016, No. 126, pp. 3–24), raises the question of whether some of the Neapolitan commissions belong to Bacelli instead of to Giamberti (*ibidem* p. 12). The frequently attested presence of Giamberti in Florence during the 1540s seems in fact difficult to reconcile with an activity in Naples. However, as Fernando Loffredo observes, not all Florentine testimonies have a strict documentary value and furthermore, the long commission of the tomb of Piero de' Medici at the Abbey of Montecassino, from 1532 to 1552, could have served as a relay between Florence and Naples (Loffredo [note 37], pp. 51–52). In addition, a series of clues tends to identify Sangallo in Naples with Giamberti: his familiarity with Vasari (attested by the letters of Miniato Pitti, cf. notes 34 and 38), the collaboration with Matteo Quaranta, in Montecassino as well as for the chapel of Ippolita de Monti at San Severino e Sossio (cf. note 39



below), and some stylistic similarities with his Florentine works, in the coat of arms of Castelcapuano (Loffredo [note 37], pp. 44–46, figg. 4–8) and in the stucco heads of the ex Lannoy Chapel in Sant'Anna dei Lombardi (Francesco Caglioti, 'Quel che resta di Francesco da Sangallo, stuccatore a Napoli', unpublished paper in a symposium, *Lo stucco nell'età della Maniera. Cantieri, maestranze, modelli. Il Centro e il Nord Italia*, Alessandra Giannotti and Patrizia Tosini Rome [org.], 23–24 May 2019). Last but not least, the first mention of Sangallo in Naples in 1538 is linked to the construction of the villa of Pedro de Toledo in Pozzuoli, a task perfectly suited to the son of Giuliano da Sangallo, who had drawn a project for the royal villa of Ferdinando d'Aragona in Naples 50 years earlier (Donetti [note 37], pp. 63–67).

**38** Donetti (note 37), pp. 118–119. An earlier letter from Miniato Pitti, 16 April 1545, mentions a drawing made by Vasari and Sangallo to decorate a room of the convent with a view of the city and 'loggie et librerie at altre cose' (Frey [note 34], p. 146, n. 68).

**39** For the Chapel of Ippolita de Monti, see Riccardo Naldi, 'La cappella di Ippolita de Monti nella chiesa dei Santi Severino e Sossio a Napoli. L'arredo e le sue modificazioni, con un'ipotesi sul tabernacolo cinquecentesco', *Napoli nobilissima* CLX, 2014, pp. 119–160 (the stucco decoration was destroyed at the latest in 1791, *ibidem*, p. 135).

**40** 'circa quindici giovani che meco di stucchi e pitture lavoravano' (Vasari [note 12], VII, p. 676). For the collaboration with Sangallo, see note 38 above.

**41** On the Chapel of Girolamo Seripando, cf. Riccardo Naldi, 'Il "Crocifisso" per Girolamo Seripando e il suo contesto', in Idem (ed), *Marco Cardisco, Giorgio Vasari. Pittura, umanesimo religioso, immagini di culto*, Napoli 2009, pp. 106–135. On the villa of Pedro de Toledo, cf. Mauro Venditti, 'Una presenza vicereale a Pozzuoli: la dimora fortificata di don Pedro de Toledo', *Archivio Storico per le province napoletane* CXXIV, 2006 (2007), pp. 251–287. — Fernando Loffredo, 'La villa di Pedro de Toledo a Pozzuoli e una provenienza per il "Fiume" di Pierino da Vinci al Louvre', *Rinascimento meridionale* II, 2011, pp. 93–113. — Donetti (note 37), pp. 63–67.

**42** A complete study on the Villa Giulia is not yet available. See Tilman Falk, 'Studien zur Topographie und Geschichte der Villa Giulia in Rom', *Römisches Jahrbuch für Kunstgeschichte* XIII, 1971, pp. 101–178. The proceedings of a recent symposium are currently being published ('*Vigna Iulia, che egli fece fare con spese incredibili*' *Nuove ricerche sul cantiere architettonico e decorativo di Villa Giulia e le sue trasformazioni nei secoli*, Valentina Balzarotti, Serena Quagliaroli, Giulia Spoltore (org.), Rome, Villa Giulia, 21–22 December 2021).

**43** Falk (note 42), p. 150, nn. 334–336. The stucco worker from the Marches is Federico Brandani (1520–1575), the one from Spain is Francisco del Castillo (1528–1586), while the identity of Gian Matteo from Venice and Romolo from Flanders remains unknown.

**44** Giovanni Maria Stella is mentioned in general terms by: Chytil (note 1), pp. 35–36, 57. — Luigi Simona, II. Artisti della Svizzera Italiana in Boemia ed Austria nel XVI e XVII Secolo, *Nuove Ricerche, fascicolo III*, Lugano 1933, pp. 10–20, esp. pp. 10–11. — Luigi Brentani, *Antichi maestri d'arte e di scuola delle terre ticinesi*, Lugano 1957, pp. 303–304. — Aldo Crivelli, *Artisti ticinesi dal Baltico al mar Nero: Svezia — Polonia — Cecoslovacchia — Austria — Jugoslavia — Ungheria — Romania — Turchia* (series *Artisti ticinesi nel mondo* II), Locarno, Lugano, Chiasso, Bellinzona, Ascona and Biasca 1969, p. 62. — Idem, *Artisti ticinesi in Europa: Germania — Danimarca — Inghilterra — Olanda — Belgio — Svizzera — Francia — Spagna* (Artisti ticinesi nel mondo III), Locarno, Lugano, Chiasso, Bellinzona, Ascona and Biasca 1970, p. 31. — Max Pfister,

*Repertorium der Tessiner Künstler. Der vergessene grösste Kulturbeitrag der Schweiz an Europa*, voll. I–II (German version: *Repertorium der Magistri Luganensii: Der vergessene grösste Kulturbeitrag der Schweiz an Europa*), Thalwil and Rapperswil 1994. Aldo Crivelli mistakenly believed that he came from Melano. He is said to have worked in Obersachsen and in the Czech lands, perhaps in Moritzburg and the Residenzschloss in Dresden (either in 1536 or in 1546). Cf. Crivelli 1969 (note 44), p. 62. — Idem 1970 (note 44), p. 31.

**45** August Prokop, *Die Markgrafschaft Mähren in kunstgeschichtlicher Beziehung* III, Wien 1904, p. 673. — Chytil (note 29), p. 88 (the author refuted the identification in 1925: Idem [note 1], p. 57, note 3). — Simona (note 44), p. 11, while Crivelli 1970 (note 44), p. 31, distinguishes both artists with a question mark. On Giovanni Maria Mosca, cf. Anne Markham Schulz, *Giovanni Maria Mosca called Padovano, a Renaissance sculptor in Italy and Poland*, University Park, Pa, 1998. For an update, cf. Beatrice Cirulli, 'Mosca, Giammaria, detto il Padovano', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* LXX, 2012, pp. 273–276.

**46** The identity of both artists is generally accepted, cf. ultimately Bažant and Markham Schulz (note 23).

**47** Simona (note 44), p. 11.

**48** Cf. Prague, National Archives, State České oddělení dvorské komory (Bohemian section of the Court Chamber, Czech acronym ČDKM) IV, box 190, fasc. I, fol. 52. Transcribed and published in: Kreytzi 1887, p. LIX, entry 4182 (12. 10. 1550).

**49** 'Maister Pauln brueder' has been identified as Giovanni Maria Stella by: Winter (note 1), p. 56. — Chytil, (note 1), 1925, p. 57, note 3. — Karel Šmrha, 'Vlašští stavitelé v Praze a jejich druzi [1530–1620]', *Umění* XXIV, 1976, pp. 159–184, esp. p. 165. As Giovanni Domenico Stella by Jan Bažant, *Pražský belvedér a severská renaissance*, Praha 2006, p. 145. — Uličný (note 30), p. 517.

**50** Prague, Prague City Archives, ms. 2190, fol. 137r (originally fol. 139r). — *Ibidem*, ms. 61, fol. 57r. Attention was drawn to this entry by Winter (note 1), p. 56. See further Chytil (note 1), p. 57, note 3. We are grateful to Radka Heisslerová for transcribing the archive materials.

**51** Bellinzona, Archivio di Stato, Archivio notarile (Archivio Torriani), notaio Giovanni di Augusto Della Torre 1540–1571, box 2395, document dated 9. 3. 1566. Attention was drawn to the existence of this notarial deed by Alfredo Lienhard-Riva, *Armoriale ticinese. Stemmario di famiglie ascritte ai patriziati della Repubblica e Cantone del Ticino, corredato da cenni storico-genealogici* (1945), Milano 2011, p. 465. — Giuseppina Ortelli Taroni, 'Vita e tradizioni di melidesi', in Mario Agliati, Giuseppina Ortelli Taroni and Mario Redaelli (eds), *Melide e Milì* (ristampa parzialmente anastatica dell'edizione 1983), Taverne 2003, pp. 157–239, esp. p. 215.

**52** Alfredo Lienhard-Riva connected the Stella from Melide with a coat of arms illustrated in the Codex Archinto in Turin. In view of the large number of families with this surname, however, it is not possible to confirm this identification or adopt any clear standpoint on it. Cf. Lienhard-Riva (note 51), p. 465. Torino, Biblioteca Reale Torino, shelfmark St. It. 138/1–2, Insigna familiarum (better known under the name Codice Archinto), vol. I, fol. 224v (according to the new system of numbering on the bottom right, fol. 209v).

**53** 'die historien geen ichtwas langsam von stadten', cited from Morávek, 'Ke vzniku' (note 1), p. 204.

**54** Sylva Dobalová, in 'The Star' (note 1), p. 58, note 215.

**55** On the vaults of Hvězda are distributed some 110 marine creatures (cf. Muchka, in 'The Star' [note 1], p. 287). It is proof of the success of this

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motif, also present at the Preziosensaal of the Residenzschloss in Dresden cf. note 71 below.

56 Paolo Stella, *Design for a decorative strip with the symbol of the Order of the Golden Fleece for the vault of the Vladislav Hall, 1548*, wash pen and ink drawing on paper, Prague, National Archives, Bohemian section of the Court Chamber IV, box 191, fol. 36. See Petr Uličný, 'Od císaře k oráči a zase zpět. Panovnické cykly ve Starém královském paláci na Pražském hradě', *Umění LXVI*, 2018, pp. 466–488, esp. p. 476. (Earlier Jarmila Krčálová, 'Renesanční architektura v Čechách a na Moravě', in Jiří Dvorský [ed.], *Dějiny českého výtvarného umění II/1*, Praha 1989, pp. 6–62, esp. pp. 58–59, note 19). See further Eliška Fučíková — Kateřina Zenklová, in Kubíková, Hausenblasová and Dobalová (note 4), p. 157 (cat. entry II/56).

57 This connection is also pointed out by Bažant and Bažantová (note 1), p. 40.

58 Krčálová (note 3), pp. 407–415. Cf. also Muchka, in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 122–123.

59 Krčálová (note 3), p. 408. — Suchomel (note 3). — Ivo Purš in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 134–146. Cf. also Purš (note 1).

60 Comparisons are made by Ivo Purš in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 155–161, fig. 187–198 but only from an iconological perspective.

61 The stuccoes of the colosseum vault, of which a drawing attributed to Giovanni da Udine is preserved, are a key example of imperial stuccoes even visible in the 16th century (Ivo Purš in 'The Star' [note 1], pp. 136, fig. 150–151).

62 Cf. *Ibidem*, pp. 137–138. Some stuccoes from Baia are preserved in the British Museum in London (*ibidem*, fig. 156–160).

63 Vasari (note 12), VII, p. 676. For the villa of Pedro de Toledo, see note 41 above.

64 See notes 9–10 above.

65 See note 8 above.

66 The name of Anton Brack is also registered in the adjacent Spanish Room (Diemer [note 9]), p. 33).

67 Diemer (*ibidem*, p. 26) states that the confrontation between the bronzes of the fountain and the stuccoes of Hvězda 'konnte kaum eindeutiger sein' and concludes that 'der enge stilistische Zusammenhang des Stückes in Schloss Stern mit dem Brunnen auf dem Hradschin' provides for the first time 'eine sichere Grundlage in der Zuschreibungsgrosse der berühmten Stuckdekoration' (*ibidem*, p. 30).

68 *Ibidem*, fig. 20–21, 24–25, 26–27.

69 *Ibidem*, fig. 22–23, 29–30.

70 *Ibidem*, pp. 31–32. For the Residenzschloss of Dresden, see Cornelius Gurlitt, 'Das Königliche Schloss zu Dresden und seine Erbauer. Ein Beitrag zur Geschichte der Renaissance in Sachsen', *Mitteilungen des sächsischen Altertums Vereines XXVIII*, 1878, pp. 1–58.

71 Cf. the confrontations by Muchka in 'The Star' (note 1), fig. 524, 525, 527, 532, 533, 551, and more recently, Angelica Dülberg, *Zur Tätigkeit der Brocco-Werkstatt in Dresden*, in Beket Bukovinská, Lubomír Konečný (eds), *Dresden — Prag um 1600. Zum Transfer von Kunst, Kultur und Wissenschaft, Veranstaltung. Studia Rudolphina 2*, Praha 2018, pp. 36–46, 260. Another stuccoed room on the first floor — the Porzellensaal — was destroyed in the second world war.

72 'meister Prochi und seinen Bruder und Buben' (Diemer and Diemer [note 9], pp. 128–129). See also Muchka in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 291–301 for an iconographical analysis.

73 Gurlitt (note 70), pp. 14, 46–47, rejected the identification of this 'Johannes Maria' with 'Giovanni Maria' da Padua', i.e., Mosca (see note 45

above), but this hypothesis prevailed later, cf. Stefan Delang, 'Das Schloss im Zeitalter der Renaissance. Das Renaissanceschloss', in Gerhard Glaser, Erich Jeschke and Werner Schmidt (eds), *Das Dresdner Schloss. Monument sächsischer Geschichte und Kultur*, Dresden 1992, pp. 68–73, esp. pp. 70, 71. — Heinrich Magirius, 'Das Schloss im Zeitalter der Renaissance. Die bildkünstlerische Ausgestaltung der Fassaden des Schlosses', in *ibidem*, pp. 74–77, esp. p. 74.

74 Diemer (note 9), p. 33.

75 Contacts between Peruzzi and Stella may perhaps have been facilitated by the large presence of artists from the area of the Lombard Lakes in Siena, home town of Peruzzi, since the 15th century (cf. Giancarlo Gentilini, *Collezione Chigi-Saracini. La scultura. Bozzetti in terracotta, piccoli marmi e altre sculture dal XIV al XX secolo*, Siena 1989, pp. 182–184). In Rome, they could have been favoured by the Confraternity of Saint Roch, whose members were mainly Lombards and Sieneese, and whose church was designed by Baldassarre Peruzzi himself (cf. Vitale Zanchettin, 'Costruire nell'antico. Roma, Campo Marzio 1508–1523; Peruzzi, la Confraternita di San Rocco e i cantieri intorno al Mausoleo di Augusto', in Christoph L. Frommel [ed.], *Baldassarre Peruzzi, 1481–1536*, Venice 2005, pp. 123–153). A reflection on the impact of Peruzzi on Hvězda should be developed on another occasion.

76 David Schönherr, 'Erzherzog Ferdinand von Tirol als Architect', *Repertorium für Kunstwissenschaft I*, 1876, pp. 28–44 — was first to propose an attribution of Hvězda's architecture to Ferdinand II. This view is widely shared today (cf. Uličný [note 30], p. 531). Ivan Prokop Muchka in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 83–86, remains cautious. For Ferdinand's library, cf. *ibidem*, pp. 78–81. In an inventory of 1596 are listed 26 books on architecture, geometry, and perspective.

77 Cf. the case of Philipp II (1527–1598), cousin of Ferdinand II, who closely followed the construction of El Escorial, and of his minister, cardinal Antoine Perrenot de Granvelle (1517–1586), who possessed the most recent treatises of architecture and built in Brussels one of the first residences inspired by the Italian Renaissance in the Netherlands — cf. Krista De Jonge, 'Le palais Granvelle à Bruxelles: premier exemple de la Renaissance romaine dans les anciens Pays-Bas?', in Krista De Jonge and Gustaaf Janssens (eds), *Les Granvelle et les anciens Pays-Bas*, conference proceedings (Leuven 1994), Leuven 2000, pp. 341–387. — Almudena Pérez de Tudela, 'El barón Marturano y las trazas italianas para la Basílica del Escorial: su estancia en Nápoles con el virrey Granvela', in *El Monasterio del Escorial y la arquitectura*, conference proceedings (November 2002), San Lorenzo del Escorial 2002, pp. 539–553, in part. 545–546.

78 Muchka in 'The Star' (note 1), p. 85, considers Ferdinand II as unable to produce architectural drawings. Sarah Lynch suggests a decisive role for Bonifaz Wolmut, who owned books, knew Serlio's treatise perfectly and followed Hvězda's construction — see Sarah W. Lynch, 'The Archduke and the Architect: The Personal and Professional Relationship between Archduke Ferdinand II and the Architect Bonifaz Wolmut', in Dabalová and Hausenblasová (note 4), pp. 193–212. Wolmut criticised however Hvězda's stucco decorations (*ibid.* pp. 209–210) and since they fit so perfectly into the plan of the building, one wonders whether the artist who had a responsibility in the stucco, in this case Stella, did not also have a responsibility for the plan.

79 *Ibidem*, pp. 95–114. Peruzzi worked as a military architect for the Republic of Siena from 1527 to 1532 (cf. Alessandro Angelini and Mauro Mussolin, 'Peruzzi, Baldassarre', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani LXXXII*, 2015, pp. 547–548).



**80** Cf. Heinrich Wurm, *Baldassare Peruzzi. Architekturzeichnungen*, Tübingen 1984, pp. 111, 143, 250, 289, 291, 344, 345.

**81** The impact of Serlio's and Cataneo's treatises on Hvězda is observed by Ivan Prokop Muchka, in 'The Star' (note 1), pp. 81–83. — Idem, 'Circular courtyard in central Europe', in Sabine Frommel, Pedro Galera Andreu (eds), *El Patio circular en la arquitectura del renacimiento. De la casa de Mantegna al palacio de Carlos V*, conference proceedings (Granada 2014), Granada 2018, pp. 219–228, in part. 222. Vasari states that Serlio largely used Peruzzi's drawings for his treatise (Vasari [note 12], IV, pp. 606–607).

**82** For Cataneo, see Arnaldo Bruschi, 'Cataneo, Pietro', *Dizionario Biografico degli Italiani* XXII, 1979, pp. 299–302. — Simonetta Coppa, 'L'architettura della difesa nella trattatistica. Da Vitruvio all'età umanistica', in Franca Manenti Valli (ed), *Architettura fortificata. Un problema interpretativo e operativo, il sistema castellano matildico. Atti del convegno Castella 78*, Reggio Emilia 2002, pp. 67–87.

**83** 'per compiacere massime a i capricci de' signori' (Pietro Cataneo, *I quattro primi libri di architettura* [1554], Ridgewood, NJ 1964, p. 54). Cf. also Muchka (note 78), p. 222.

**84** 'né ch'io approvi che sia da usare, se non per capriccio, come ho detto, di chi havesse assai da spendere. La quale harebbe però del grande, & al'occhio si dimostrarebbe molto grata' (Cataneo [note 83], p. 54).

**85** Cataneo must have been many times in Rome, but we do not know the dates of his journeys and a meeting with Giovanni Maria Stella remains conjectural.

**86** The debuts of both Giacomo Della Porta and Domenico Fontana as stucco decorators are mentioned by Giovanni Baglione, *Le vite de' pittori scultori et architetti. Dal Pontificato di Gregorio XIII del 1572 in fino a' tempi di Papa Urbano Ottavo nel 1642* (Rome 1642), Velletri 1924, pp. 80, 84.

**87** On Francisco del Castillo, see: Arsenio Moreno Mendoza, *Francisco del Castillo y la arquitectura manierista andaluza*, Jaén 1984. — Antonio Angel Ruiz Rodríguez, José Manuel Gómez-Moreno Calera and Inés Maria Alamo Fuentes, 'Francisco del Castillo, autor de la fachada de la Chancilleria de Granada', *Cuadernos de arte de la Universidad de Granada* XVI, 1984, pp. 159–172.

**88** Prague, Prague Castle Archives, fonds Imperial Office of Works (Hofbauamt, HBA), box 1, folder 6. Our thanks are due to Martin Halata for his help in locating archive documents.

**89** Letter of Ferdinand I, Augsburg 29 January, 1551 (Hans von Voltelini, 'Urkunden und Regesten aus dem k. und k. Haus-, Hof- und Staats-Archiv in Wien', *Jahrbuch der kunsthistorischen Sammlungen des Allerhöchsten Kaiserhauses* XV, 1894, pp. XLIX–CLXXIX, n. 11820).

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## Letohrádek Hvězda v Praze, vila Trivulzio del Salone v Římě a Giovanni Maria Stella

Článek se zabývá autorstvím štukové výzdoby letohrádku Hvězda v Praze (1556–1560), jednoho z nejlépe dochovaných a nejkoharentnějších dekorativních cyklů 16. století ve střední Evropě. Pomocí komparací, archivních údajů a dedukcí upozorňuje na málo známou postavu Giovanniho Marii Stelly, bratra slavnějšího Paola Stelly, který od roku 1538 stavěl letohrádek v Královské zahradě na Pražském hradu, emblematickou stavbu pražské renesance. Giovanni Maria pocházel z Melide na břehu Luganského jezera a před svých příchodem do Prahy udělal v Itálii velkou kariéru, která ho zavedla do Janova, Říma a Neapole. Vrcholem jeho umělecké dráhy bylo působení ve službách kardinála Agostina Trivulzia, pro něhož restauroval sbírku starožitností a řídil štukovou výzdobu vily Salone u Říma pod vedením Baldassarra Peruzziho. Článek se věnuje štukovým dekoracím vily Trivulzio del Salone v Římě, které se zdají být stylově i ornamentálním repertoárem nejbližším předchůdcem štuků ve Hvězdě a činí z Giovanniho Marii nejpravděpodobnějšího kandidáta na hlavního autora pražského cyklu. Tento atribuční návrh odsouvá postavu Antonia Brocca, považovaného často za autora výzdoby, do pozadí a otevírá nové cesty pro další bádání. Zprvce blízká podobnost štuků ve Hvězdě se štuky Residenzschloss v Drážďanech provedenými o několik let dříve naznačuje, že Giovanni Maria mohl řídit i tuto dílnu a lze jej identifikovat s postavou „Johanna Marii“ zmiňované v dokumentech. Zadrugé Stellova přímá znalost Baldassarra Peruzziho v Římě a patrně i jeho spolupracovníků Sebastiana Serlia a Pietra Catanea, mimo jiné velkých tvůrců obranných staveb s polygonálními půdorysy, umožňuje hypoteticky uvažovat o tom, že Giovanni Maria Stella, pakliže nebyl přímo architektem stavby, se mohl alespoň podílet na jejím ideovém konceptu. V neposlední řadě Stellova brilantní umělecká kariéra v Itálii, jeho styky s umělci významu Perina del Vagy, Peruzziho a Vasariho, stejně jako jeho propojení s pražským prostředím prostřednictvím jeho bratra Paola mohou sloužit pro lepší porozumění kontextu vzniku letohrádku Hvězda a jeho výjimečnosti a velkého uměleckého významu v 16. století v habsburské monarchii.

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## The Hvězda Summer Palace in Prague, the Villa Trivulzio at Rome, and Giovanni Maria Stella

This article focuses on the author of the stucco decoration of the Hvězda [Star] Summer Palace near Prague (1556–1560), one of the most coherent decorative cycles of sixteenth-century Central Europe. With the help of stylistic comparisons, archival data and historical deduction, the article draws attention to the figure of Giovanni Maria Stella, brother of the more famous Paolo Stella, who from 1538 built the Villa del Belvedere, another emblematic building of the Prague Renaissance. Originally from Melide on the shore of Lake Lugano, Giovanni Maria led an successful career in Italy that took him to Genoa, Rome and Naples, before moving to Bohemia. The high point of this trajectory took him into the service of Cardinal Agostino Trivulzio, for whom he restored the collection of antiquities and directed the stucco decoration of the Villa at Salone outside Rome, under the direction of Baldassarre Peruzzi. The article points precisely to the Salone stuccos which appear to be the most immediate precedent in terms of style and ornamental repertoire to those of Hvězda, and make Giovanni Maria the most likely candidate for the Prague cycle. This proposal places the figure of Antonio Brocco, hitherto thought to be responsible for the decoration, decisively in the background and opens new avenues for further investigation. The close similarities between Hvězda and the stuccos of the Residenzschloss in Dresden made a few years earlier suggest that Giovanni Maria likewise directed this building site and can be identified with the figure of ‘Johann Maria’ mentioned in the documents. Finally, Stella’s brilliant trajectory in Italy, his acquaintance with artists of importance such as Perino del Vaga, Peruzzi and Vasari, as well as his branching out in the milieu of Prague through his brother Paolo, are new arguments to explain, contextualise and relate the great artistic significance of the Hvězda Summer Palace in the sixteenth-century Habsburg empire.