Making Carolean Theatre Real

Johan Sylvius’s painted performances and their surroundings in the Drottningholm Palace

Clara Strömberg
ABSTRACT

The thesis concerns the artworks by Johan Sylvius in the staircase, upper vestibule, upper north guard room and upper gallery of the Drottningholm Palace, as painted performances. They are studied as performative cultural encounters with a historically situated beholder but will also be regarded in relation to their spatial and artistic surrounding. From the theoretical framework of performativity and reception aesthetics, the results indicate that the images have the potential to inscribe the beholder within certain postulates on power relations and politics of identity, through working with splendour, naturalism, narrative and the function of the rooms they are located in. The results further point to the images’ manners of effecting the beholder on several levels through an employed pluralism and lastly, that they both build upon and re-produce the relation between monarch/nobility, where the former is the sole figure who both grants status and can remove it in an instance.

Key words: Sylvius, Tessin, Hedvig Eleonora, Drottningholm, performativity, reception aesthetics, Carolean autocracy, power relations, Baroque, seventeenth-century.
# Table of content

## Introduction
- Object of study
- Aims and questions
- Material
- Theory
  - *Theatricality and Willmar Sauter*
  - *Performativity, Erika Fischer-Lichte and Jacques Derrida and Camilla Kandare*
  - *Reception Aesthetics*
- Method
- State of research
- Delimitations
- Disposition
- Epistemological glitches and issues

## I. Demarcation of socio-historical and aesthetical context and a discussion of the epistemological issue regarding the beholder
- Constructing a palace and a position; becoming the queen dowager
- Epistemological discussion

## II. The Staircase and the Upper Vestibule
- The Staircase
- The Upper Vestibule

## III. The Upper North Guard Room
- The Four Seasons and the masquerade of 1689
- Two sides of the same coin: the autocrat father and “la source de dignitéz”
- The Four Seasons reappears: reading it together with Cronos

## IV. The Upper Gallery
- Virtue, Vice and Vanitas
- Reading the allegory: “la fama addormentata e risvegliata sarà il soggetto che va esser dipinto nella volta della galleria superiore di Drottningholm”
- Splendour as a mean to perform magnificence, elegance and power
- An elongated promenade room which emphasises the role and function of art
- Regarding method, approach and earlier scholarship on the upper gallery
- After Karl XI’s triumph of Lund, Fame awakens
- The vices, casted out like into an abyss of dark and gloomy clouds
- Reading the room in its visual relation to the staircase
Conclusion and Summary 92
Illustrations 102
Appendix: Written Program of the Allegory in the Upper Gallery 125
Literature and References 126
Introduction

During a canonization ceremony in the Basilica San Pietro on the 28 of April 1669, Queen Kristina’s (1626 – 1689) behaviour was reason to quite a controversy. When the first cardinal had been incensed, Kristina was next in line. Against decorum, the former queen of Sweden remained seated even when the papal master of ceremonies tried signalling for her to rise. A nearby seated duke tried to explain the same, yet Kristina replied him that she wanted to be incensed seated. To everybody’s astonishment, she had her way although it was profoundly against decorum for the cardinals to rise for the incensing but for an aristocratic woman (as she had left her queenly privilege in Sweden to subject herself to the Pope) to remain seated. Such decorum divergent behaviour was not unusual in the life of Kristina, which would make it unlikely that she was unaware of the decorum of the canonization (as was her explanation, afterwards). Camilla Kandare, who’s article CorpoReality: Queen Christina of Sweden and the Embodiment of Sovereignty this anecdote is found in, suggests for Kristina’s behaviour to be read as an attempt to re-create that lost regal position from her days as queen; of creating a higher status than what was real at the moment.\(^1\) Regardless of intention, it can be seen as an act of breaking with decorum, to claim a new place in that social milieu, as an unofficial queen of Rome. In the same instance as her decorum divergent behaviour is succeeded, her attempted status is affirmed by the spectators. This study will not revolve around Kristina of Sweden, but instead a selection of paintings by the Swedish artist Johan Sylvius (1620s - 1695) in the Drottningholm Palace. The anecdote of Kristina though, exemplifies a certain aspect and understanding of the potency of performances of status, both controversial and conventional ones, during the seventeenth-century which quite accurately pinpoints a matter of interest in this study. When regarding artistic performances in their encounter with a courtly social milieu, what could they be understood to potentially result in, if such is regarded with an awareness of the potential potency of social performances like Kristina’s?\(^1\)

The interest in Baroque art has been grand during the last decade. Scholars have written immense amount of research on canonical artists; in Sweden, David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl (1628 - 1698) and Nicodemus Tessin the younger (1654 – 1728) often occupy the main academic interest. Yet, in the midst of all that new research on Baroque art, still fairly forgotten is Sylvius, possibly due to his much-reduced oeuvre. It was in the year of 1686 that Sylvius arrived in Sweden after having spent a large part of his life abroad. He was commissioned to do al fresco-paintings in the Drottningholm Palace for the Queen Dowager Hedvig Eleonora (1636 – 1715). Sylvius had spent several years in Rome, working and being exposed to the art of his most fashionable contemporaries.² Tessin the Younger had recently been appointed supervisor of the construction of the palace and continued where his father Nicodemus Tessin the elder (1615 - 1681) had left off.³ Certainly, his employment at a palace which became a national nave for art and architecture during these decades must indicate that the much sparse art historical attention to Sylvius’s artworks, is in no sense justified. Thus, this study wants to give Sylvius a more prominent role in art history; not only as an art historical biographical character but in the sense that we attempt to analyse and understand his artworks as well. The rooms which he embellished with paintings came to be used often in the turn of the eighteenth-century by Hedvig Eleonora, who had quite an eye for theatre, spectacles and festivities (although the palace would not be fully constructed until after her death). Such can be understood as another premise for reading these specific paintings, with a perspective that accounts for their relation to such performances.

Several of the artworks in the Drottningholm Palace, made by the enigmatic Sylvius’s, will here be studied with reference to the Baroque world of images and the Carolean autocracy, aiming to shed light on one of Sweden’s artistic contributions to an international scene. Although there are only a few surviving paintings by him (the site-specific ones in Drottningholm, together with circa 50 drawings), Sylvius was defacto a fashionable and up-to-date Baroque artist of international merits. Further art historical interest in Sylvius’s works could provide a new perspective on the inscribed function (a narrative, artistic and spatial one) of the artworks of the Drottningholm Palace; on our first contribution to UNESCO’s list of World Heritage as well as on the work of a Swedish artist employed in the Era of Greatness.⁴ Also, it is of relevance to further distinguish and elevate the elaborate artistic and political performances commissioned by a woman in world where her reality must have been rather shackled by patriarchal systems. The Drottningholm Palace is known to have been Hedvig Eleonora’s own personal PR-project where she manifested not only herself in Sweden but also, herself as a part of the dynasty of her late husband.

Object of study

The object of study is the performativity of Sylvius’s artworks at the Drottningholm Palace as well as the artworks’ participation and role in the social milieu of the Carolean court. The study takes place within a discourse on the function of art in a culture where the currency of social rank is in constant need of re-negotiation. If performances do something and not only represent, then

---
² Börje Magnusson, Svenska teckningar: 1600-talet: en konstbok från Nationalmuseum, Rabén & Sjögren, Stockholm 1980, pp. 120.
what was it that the artworks of Sylvius at Drottningholm Palace did in this specific social and spatial context? The object of study touches upon the communication between artwork and beholder in the said context and in what way they activate each other.

Aims and questions

The aim of this study is to investigate and discuss how Sylvius's paintings in the staircase, upper vestibule, upper north guard room and the upper gallery, might have been used, how they functioned and how they communicated with the beholder, in the palace and the social milieu of the commissioner and the Carolean reign. That is, to investigate how these paintings relate to the notion of meaning production as a performative event taking place between actors like an artwork and a beholder.

- How could the paintings have initiated a communication with the beholder, to evoke the latter to respond/relate to the former?
- How could the performative encounter between painting and beholder be understood, in the demarcated context and social milieu of the Carolean court?
- Which identities and what reality could potentially be created through the encounter with the paintings, in the performative event? What is the performative potency of the images in the material?

Material

Al fresco paintings by Johan Sylvius:

- On the staircase's southern wall is Women Gazing into the Staircase (Figure 6), on the northern one is Men Gazing into the Staircase (Figure 5) and in the vault is The Triumph of Royal Virtue (Figure 11). Also, the marbling and decorative al fresco work of the same artist are included in the analysis. All paintings in the staircase by Sylvius were executed in 1686.
- In the ceiling of the upper vestibule The Gods on Mount Olympus, 1687 (Figure 15).
- In the ceiling of the upper north guard room Cronos with the Four Seasons, 1692 (Figure 17).
- In the ceiling of the upper gallery, An Allegory of the Autocracy’s Reign and Triumphs, 1689-90 (Figure 19, 21-28).

Additionally, the battle scenes on the walls of the upper gallery, executed between 1683 and 1695 by Johan Philip Lemke (1631-1711), the ceiling scene with Apollo and Minerva crowning the Queen Dowager’s monogram done in 1669 by Klöcker Ehrenstrahl in the staircase lantern, sculptures by Nicolaes Millich (1630 – 1699) done between 1682-85 and sculpture Maria Maddalena (Figure 20) from 1649 by Antonio Novelli (1602 – 1662), will together with the architecture be regarded as material which Sylvius’s paintings communicates with. They are of course equally crucial in the social milieu yet, as this thesis also has the purpose of shedding light on Sylvius’s work, the other artworks will not be the main material. The inclusion of other artworks than those by Sylvius, is due to my
hypothesis that the artworks of the room perform something together. Yet, the thesis departs from the artwork by Sylvius, with the purpose to contribute to the fairly forgotten and enigmatic artist.

Regarding primary material, of further importance is the program by Tessin the Younger for the upper gallery ceiling painting, in which he stated Sylvius’s directions regarding narrative, characters and chronology. Such material can be found in reproduction in *Hedvig Eleonoras Drottningholms antekningar till slottets äldre byggnadshistoria* (1889) by John Böttiger (1853 – 1936). As the work by Böttiger is only relatively accessible, I have reproduced it in the end of the thesis as an appendix.

**Theory**

The theory employed in this study is constructed from a theory of performativity, reception aesthetics and the concept of culture as a theatrical encounter (theatricality). The aim is to investigate the inscribed narrative function in Sylvius’s images and how they communicate with a beholder from the Carolean court (a beholder who is demarcated in the first chapter, through aspects like politics, the autocracy, court and image culture). The choices of theory aim to understand how the Baroque world of images might have functioned in relation to the Carolean court culture and more specifically, how the paintings by Sylvius relate to that world.

*Theatricality and Willmar Sauter*

Traditionally, performativity theory speaks of speech acts. When performativity is employed on art, the artworks in their encounter with a spectator is often conceptualized as image acts. I will continue in that tradition but explore it further with the help of the concept of theatricality. I would also like to regard that image acts as a theatrical event, or performative encounter, something which is achieved in the meeting with a beholder. In *The Theatrical Event: Dynamics of Performance and Reception*, theatre scholar Willmar Sauter uses the concept theatricality to describe art as a communicative event, a meeting between a participant and a spectator. The idea is not only that the images act upon us, but that we act together with the images to create the performative theatrical event. Sauter proposes that both artwork and spectator produce meaning, but that the meanings are far from analogous. Hence, both are variables in the equation of meaning production. It is the produced meaning, the performative effect of the meeting between a demarcated historical beholder and the artworks of Sylvius, which is under the loupe here. The aim in using Sauter’s theatricality concept, is to avoid un-reflected ideas of spectatorship (or rather, a non-notion of the spectator, the anonymous eternal spectator who are not accounted for in the analysis) to be reproduced; to better understand the relationship between spectator and image in the case of Drottningholm Palace and the Carolean court. The imposing of theatricality on the seventeenth-century and theatre as a model for studying its cultural expressions, is something I believe to be fruitful in this study, since art was often spoken of in words of theatre already since the sixteenth-century. The usage of theatricality and theatre as a model, could act as a bridge to better grasp the seventeenth-century concept of art.

---

6 Ibid., pp. 25.
raises questions of in what way the theatrical encounters initiated by Sylvius’s works, co-acted with the social theatre and how it functioned in the contemporary art concept of theatricality.

**Performativity and Erika Fischer-Lichte**

In the posthumously published book *How To Do Things With Words* (1962), J.L. Austin presents the notion of the performative utterance as separated from that of the constative. He discusses the difference between an utterance which only represent/describe and an utterance which *does* something, *acts*. Although Austin’s work will not be explicitly used here, his concept of words (or here, images, although Austin does not account for those) as having the potential to effect reality, essential also in this study. Evidently, images can be simultaneously constative and performative but this study takes interest in the images’ performative mechanism and characteristic. Austin’s importance for this study can be detected in the attempt to not only read the images iconographically (what they represent), but will rather sought to grasp their performative potential: what reality they can achieve. Thus, as a very general theoretical horizon.

If the concept of theatricality is used as a theoretical horizon to conceptualize Baroque culture and art concept, performativity will instead be used to grasp how communication between artwork and beholder might function and to understand what identity/truths/status might be established. Although the concept of performativity is ontologically quite agreed upon, in practice, the use of the concept differ from scholar to scholar. Here, theatre scholar Erika Fischer-Lichte will be my foremost guide to the theory. She provides the study with an epistemologically valuable discussion of the relation and interplay between beholder and artwork. She states that the beholder is the variable of all meaning-inducing events (here meaning, reception of art) and needs to be included in the analysis. If meaning is created in the encounter (like Sauter means, history and its objects does not understand itself but is understood by the spectator) and the beholder is a factor varying with time and context, then any universal reading of art is impossible. This results in a delimiting demand on context and the historical beholder: the study aims to regard the interplay of the artworks and beholder where the latter is belonging to court of Hedvig Eleonora, the commissioner of the palace. This might sound epistemologically difficult, yet my belief is that a selection of literature conceptualizing the history if ideas, events and art concept, in the investigated era, will demarcate the structures which formed the spectator as a subject and that such demarcation of context (political and art historical) can assess my own interpretations of the artworks, where I embody the seventeenth-century beholder. As mentioned, such will be done in the first chapter of the thesis.

Fischer-Lichte describes how meaning is created in the performative event. Three steps which together explain the *performance’s aestheticity* is charted out; basically, how an aesthetical performance functions. These steps, will act as a theoretical horizon when regarding the material in the study; they will be concepts which can help to recognize, explain and understand the mechanism of the performances initiated by Sylvius’s paintings; that is, to relate to the aim of understanding how the images functions. The first step, the *feedback loop’s autopoiesis* can be explained as the interchange of energy between the participants (beholder/artwork). The emergence of the artwork which will force the beholder to relate/act and generate a circulation of energy. To be able to apply this theory and investigate how the artworks functioned, one needs to regard how the artwork emerges and is given

---

a presence, through aspects of rhythm pattern, intensity and time brackets (how it appears in the room/how it relates to its surrounding). The fact that both the artwork and the beholder are part in the meaning production, is a theoretical claim embedded in this: meaning is extracted from the cultural encounter and the interplay, rather than the instance of creation. Fischer-Lichte separates the painting (the object which is completed by the artist) from the painting (the artwork which is being exposed and viewed). Fischer-Lichte’s view of meaning induced from the encounter, not the instance of creation, will be maintained yet extended with the help of reception aesthetics. This too account for the materiality of the artwork. Whereas the feedback loop’s autopoiesis accounts for the exchange/interplay between artwork and beholder, the materiality and formalistic aspects of the artwork and how it emerges (as a part of the exchange of energy between artwork and beholder) will be accounted for with reception aesthetics (see next subheading). Neither the beholder nor the material human-made artwork will act sole factors in determining meaning. Hence, reception aesthetics and a theory of performativity needs to be intertwined, especially in this first step of Fischer-Lichte’s theory.

The second step of a performative event is destabilization of binary oppositions. The proposal by Fischer-Lichte is that the dynamics of a performance can re-organize binary oppositions such as object/subject, art/reality and actor/beholder. As an example, art is often conceptualized in relation to reality; art imitates or represents reality. Yet, art is also, as will appear in the chapters two follow, an object which creates reality (identities, status, roles) and reality (the beholders) is co-creating of the artworks. In summarize: they all co-create the intrinsic meaning of the performative encounter. Thus, art cannot be a binary opposition to reality. To discover these dynamics, how art and reality are intertwined and how the dichotomies are re-organized, could shed valuable light on what it means for the artworks of the material to be performative. Fischer-Lichte discusses other dichotomies as well, but object/subject, art/reality and actor/beholder are the principal ones discussed in this thesis, especially with regard to the thesis question of what reality is created through the performativity of the artwork’s emergence.

Lastly, in the step liminal transforming of the participants, she accounts for the negotiation of new statuses and identities. Theoretically, it conceptualizes the possible result of the thesis. The collapse of dichotomies in the second step has created a liminal dimension; when a set of notions disappears, new ones must directly be negotiated as a part of the beholders/participants trying to grasp/process the performance. Here it is necessary to add that this study’s use of Fischer-Lichte’s concepts also comprises the maintaining of already established norms when the iteration of tradition is not interrupted. The performative event can both reproduce and renegotiate a set of identities and values, just like it can create new ones (which is rather what Fischer-Lichte speaks of). In especially one aspect, my employment of Fischer-Lichte’s concepts of the three steps of a performance’s aestheticity will differ from hers. She means that a change in social status and recognized identity, cannot be achieved through aesthetical experiences:

---

11 Ibid., pp. 164.
12 Ibid., pp. 169.
13 Ibid., pp. 176.
Yet one difference remains. While the liminal experience in ritual may transform the participants’ social status and alter their publicly recognized identity, no comparable effect seems to exist for the aesthetic experience of artistic performances. 

This I must object. Her discussion of how art cannot be separated from reality, ethics and politics evidently must result also in that the aesthetical aspect as well as the political can transform reality. I believe that such statement of her, is a result of a far too narrow concept of art. She speaks of art with a very contemporary concept, as she states that these aesthetical liminal performances, lack durability and social recognition; that they cannot perform any lasting effect on the participants’ social status, but that they instead can affect the participants emotionally and psychologically. Also, that it can reverse roles, from spectator to actor and vice versa, but once again, not have any lasting effect. Such concept of art might be more understandable when discussion Marina Abramovic’s and Ulay’s post-modern performance *Imponderabilia* (1977), as Fischer-Lichte does in relation to the quote above (note, “more”; I will not go into such a discussion of the performative potency of contemporary art). Yet when speaking of early modern art, the notion and role of art is much different. Art, as will be shown, had a function within the social society and it was not just a gallery venue to temporarily visit; instead, art was an all surrounding element in the spatial dimension and architectural embellishment of the nobility’s everyday life. Art, reality and politics co-functioned in grand monuments or palaces, to achieve power and splendour for its commissioner. In the chapters to follow, I will attempt to prove example how such assumption by this study’s theoretical authority, is not accurate regarding in relation to the material of this study.

**Reception Aesthetics and Wolfgang Kemp**

Reception aesthetics can be described as a more hands on and practical theory. If performativity accounts for the beholder/artwork interplay in the encounter, reception aesthetics is instead artwork-oriented: it provides a set of eyes with which to regard how the artwork acts upon the beholder and initiates communication. The inclusion of the theory in this study has a purpose to conceptualize how the artworks can be actors themselves within the theatre of the cultural encounter, how the artwork is an active part when meeting the beholder; as such, it is a necessary tool to be able to account for the “artwork-aspect” of the whole performative encounter. Reception aesthetics provides the study with concepts to approach the narrative, composition and communicational statements which are inscribed in the artwork and are aimed at an implicit beholder. The theory accounts for the very idea that the artwork aims to communication with someone and how such communication is initiated. Wolfgang Kemp is a central scholar in translating the theory from a literary realm to art history. His article *The Work of Art and Its Beholder* (1998) will provide my research with the tools to address the inscribed communicative function of the artworks of the material. Already on the second page of the article, he makes the following statement: “In the same way that the beholder approaches the work of art, the work of art approaches him, responding to and recognizing the activity of his perception”. Like performativity, the theory

---

14 Fischer-Lichte, 2008, pp. 76.
15 Ibid., pp. 179.
challenges the logocentric notion that an artwork’s true meaning can only be excavated with the tool of the so called “auteur”. Reception aesthetics looks at the artwork: what it says and how it says so. An important concept of Kemp’s, is asymmetrical communication. Artworks often communicate in an asymmetrical manner in that they only initiate it; it is responded when a beholder faces the artwork and relates to it, in any way. The aspects with which the artwork initiated communication with a certain beholder, Kemp calls tools of reception in the asymmetrical communication. These tools will be accounted for in the method section, but what can be said here is that they stimulate the beholder to respond to the artwork (to feel/relate/think/act) and in the same instance, co-create. In this study, these are key tools to understand how the paintings are performative, how they function in the said social milieu. Consequently, the asymmetrical communication makes the artwork performative when activating the beholder instead of being only constative.

Fischer-Lichte criticises reception aesthetics for being too artwork-oriented and only dealing with the “thingness” of the artwork. She declares that, since the same beholder can return to the same artwork and see new things depending on the context of his or her life, reception aesthetics is facing issues. The artwork seems to change appearance for the same beholder. Although Fischer-Lichte has a point here, I think she is being somewhat too theoretical and forgetting that such is exactly the reason why a multitude of readings are necessary. Such will be an epistemological issue in all hermeneutic attempts. This is also a reason to why I believe in marrying together, Fischer-Lichte’s more beholder-oriented theory, with Kemp’s artwork-oriented. Despite of Fischer-Lichte’s critic of reception aesthetics, it is my interpretation that her concept of the feedback loop’s autopoiesis, implies an account for the thingness of the artwork, in attempting to discuss a circulation of energy between artwork and beholder. In avoidance of being stuck in a post-modernistic dead-end and saying that no truth or knowledge whatsoever could come from this, I instead say that, yes, we are facing epistemological difficulties regarding the value of our knowledge but we still need to try to achieve understanding of our surrounding, also in the past tense. Through thorough methodology, self-reflexion and self-positioning, our research becomes more reliable, graspable, democratic and achieves a new kind of objectivity.

Method

Firstly, departing from Sauter’s theory of theatricality, one needs to dwell upon the aspect of the spectator. Sauter’s notion of meaning is that the beholder act together with the artwork to achieve the performative theatrical event. Thus, the images act upon us and we respond, a claim which means that the spectator is just as much a part of the meaning production. Both spectator

18 Ibid., pp. 186.
20 On the matter of how the humanities can achieve a new type of objectivity I suggest the following article Donna Haraway, “Situated knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective” in Feminist Studies, vol. 14, no. 3, Autumn 1988. She stresses how post-humanism has made evident the historicity of history. The fact that the historian is historically situated would result in a crisis and insufficiency of “objectivity”. From this, she stresses that the only way to be objective in a scientific manner that is not dependent on the paradigm of natural sciences (as we deal with very different matters) is to be transparent and to situate the historian. Transparency and self-reflexivity as the new objective.
21 Sauter, 2000, pp. 25.
and artwork are variables in the equation that results in the intrinsic meaning. As such, the first step in the method will be to demarcate the historical spectator: the spectator of the Carolean court. This, to be able to respond to all research questions, but most importantly the second one: how could the performative encounter between painting and beholder be understood, in the demarcated context and social milieu of the Carolean court? The demarcation of the historical beholder and subject is done through careful demarcation of the historical context which has proven necessary in relation to the allegories on display but also to the general culture of image. This is what the first chapter is dedicated to.

Further, when addressing the actual image material, Kemp with his reception aesthetics provides the thesis with the fundament for a method derived from his theory. As the theory aims to shed light on the aspects of the paintings which initiate the interplay of energy with the beholder, these will be the aspects which the method attempt to dig for in the material. The purpose of using Kemps theory is not to write a history of reception or taste. Although descriptions of the palace made by visitors at Hedvig Eleonora’s court would be a fruitful addition to my embodying of the historical beholder and could clarify certain aspects, like how one could move in the palace as well as what events and performances the paintings would surround, it is not within my object of study to study the reception. Rather, I am interested in how the artworks inscribed a certain spectating, what behaviour might have been inscribed in the narrative and composition as well as what potentially could have been their performative effect on a noble visitor during the long seventeenth-century. To respond to such matters, the method departs from the artwork itself, the intra communication (what is depicted) and consists of three steps:

- Demarcate the tools (the forms of address) with which the paintings communicate with the beholder.
- Read these tools with regard to their sociohistorical statements
- Read the same tools with regard to their aesthetical statements.

The tools of communication in step one, are spoken of by Kemp as forms of address. These tools or forms of address are aspects of the artwork which communicate with an implied beholder (whom we call the implicit beholder) through attempting to organize the perception of the beholder and control how the image is perceived. These forms of address are the elements that makes the communication of the artwork, asymmetrical. They make the artwork “talk” to someone, who is most likely not there when it is conceived. When studying the said material to grasp how they communicate and initiate a performative encounter with a beholder, the forms of address constitute a quite hands-on method to apply. The forms of address are:

- Orientation of actor: the composition of objects or figures in the intra communication. How are relations established between the characters in the paintings? How does the painting include or exclude the beholder in the intra communication?

---

23 Ibid., pp. 183.
24 Ibid., pp. 186.
- *Situating the beholder*: regarding the perspective, how is the intra communication of the painting presented in relation to the beholder?

- *Cicerone*: guiding figures who indicate to the beholder what to look at, how to relate to it or what point of view to take on as well as admits the beholder into their own rank/status/identity.\(^{25}\)

- *Cropping*: how do the paintings define themselves by means of exclusion? Kemp states that methodologically, this requires for concepts such as the visible versus the hidden, to be included in the equation. How does the cropping of the image relate or effect the world/behaviour of the beholder?

- *Intentional blanks*: since a work of art achieves meaning in a co-presence together with the beholder, it can be said to be unfinished without that beholder. The incompleteness, the blanks, could however be finished (the blanks filled in) by the beholder, or, as Kemp states “we mentally continue a path that is cut off by the frame.”\(^{26}\) Hence, to discover blanks and see them in relation to the said context, could prove fruitful when studying how the artwork initiate communication, an interplay and an exchange of energy with the beholder. How the artwork reserves a space for the beholder to become a part of the narrative/composition.

While reception aesthetics provides a method to foremost study the inscribed means of communication inside the painting, the theory of performance accounts for the interplay with the beholder; that is the flow of energy which makes the event into communication, to an encounter. The method derived from Kemp will be intertwined with Fischer-Lichte’s first step of the performance’s aestheticity. From that first step already mentioned in the theory section, I have extracted the following method and concepts to provide the study with a path, to investigate how the artworks involve the beholder to become actors of a co-presence:

- Regard how the artwork emerges through concepts of spatiality, like *rhythm, pattern, intensity, time* and *movement*.

- Regard how the performative event relates to dichotomies as *art/reality, actor/beholder and object/subject*.

- With regard to step one and two, investigate how identities and realities can be maintained or newly negotiated in certain events.

This method described so far departs from what is apparent in the room; it will lead to a focus on how the room and its decorations, present themselves. As of this, *all* iconographical aspects do not need to be accounted for in each room. It is instead a matter of what appears before the eye, how the artwork emerges, what it says to the beholder and what performative effect this encounter may have. To attempt at not making this study too subjective, I will thoroughly describe how the artworks appear before me, in the room; this, for the reader to more easily grasp from what observations and on what grounds I draw my conclusions. These descriptions are a methodological necessity in using a theory of reception aesthetics and performativity and also a matter of scientific transparency; a necessity making the subjective findings objective and also, making them scientifically

---

26 Ibid., pp. 188.
verifiable or others. For the reader to more easily be able to add to my research and for the research to become a part of the discourse on the function of seventeenth-century painting.

State of research

I will construct my state of research surrounding certain sub-fields (some works of course intersecting several of them), literature revolving:

- The Drottningholm Palace.
- Images by Johan Sylvius.
- Performativity, reception aesthetics and theatricality perspectives employed on Baroque artworks.
- The society, politics and world of ideas of the Carolean era.
- The world of images of the Baroque. In delimiting these areas, I hope to construct a field of research which can provide understanding for the types of questions and perspectives which this study aims at.

The previous scholarly work on the Drottningholm Palace is anything but sparse. There is a large amount of work but those works which has been foremost employed in this study will be accounted for here. The foundational work by Böttiger, *Hedvig Eleonoras Drottningholm: anteckningar till slottets äldre byggnadshistoria* (1889) has been of great use for this study, as for so many others. It importance is much due to Böttiger’s great archaeological work in the archives and documents of Drottningholm Palace. Further, the anthology *Drottningholms slott. Från Hedvig Eleonora till Lovisa Ulrika* (2004) gathers a great deal of experienced scholars and authorities on the subject of the palace, who have all contributed with their specific area of expertise. Especially the latter has provided with a great deal of understanding on many different aspects of the palace.

Moving on to the category of Sylvius’s paintings, Per Bjurström and Börje Magnusson might be considered two main scholars who have contributed to what is known about the artist. Yet, their research of this enigmatic art historical character is of a more biographic character or is revolving Sylvius’s drawings. His larger paintings are fairly un-investigated apart from in studies where they have taken a more peripheral role. One of the exceptions, is Cecilia Mårdh’s master thesis (1994) on Sylvius’s contributions to the Drottningholm Palace upper gallery. Her work is thoroughly charting out the iconography of the mural painting in the upper gallery, with great benefit for this thesis. However, as Mårdh has made certain initial assumptions regarding the character of the fresco which I disagree on, it might be of necessity to continue her research with a different methodology, one which accounts for the fresco’s relation to a beholder bound to a physical space. Thus, my methodology-choice of performativity and reception aesthetics. To apply such theory on the Baroque is an established scholarly practice, but is yet to be done in relation to Sylvius’s works. Mårdh’s work fall under the category of literature on Sylvius’s images and the Drottningholm Palace, but also, slightly under the category of literature on the society, politics and world of ideas of the Carolean era as well as literature on the Baroque world of images. My position towards her thesis will be accounted for in the fourth chapter, where the upper gallery is dealt with.
The thesis builds initially on the anthology article *Trapphuset och det övre galleriet* (2004) by Mårten Snickare, which regards the Drottningholm staircase and upper gallery. Just like Mårth, Snickare’s article falls under the category of literature on the Baroque world of images and the Drottningholm Palace, but foremost, it is an article which aids this study in the role of literature employing a perspective of performativity and theatricality on artworks from a similar era (and similar material as well). Yet, the thesis only departs from Snickare’s article, as it does not aim at only regarding the staircase/upper gallery in themselves, but centralizes Sylvius’s paintings in more rooms (due to a larger scope). A methodological postulate of this study which is highly inspired by Snickare’s article, is the idea to interpret the selection of rooms as a part of one large performance, especially regarding the staircase and the upper gallery as a core (a perspective which is, in my opinion, absent in Mårth’s thesis). By the same Snickare, the dissertation *Enväldets riter: kungliga fester och ceremonier i gestaltning av Nicodemus Tessin den yngre,* (1999) has proven greatly inspiring in understanding the same culture’s expression of royal splendour and power, political manifestations, in an art historical perspective. Both works by Snickare, have been crucial in achieving an understanding of the Baroque world of images and do hence fall under that category as well.

Falling under the same category of methodological inspiration and source is the interdisciplinary anthology, *Performativity and Performance in Baroque Rome* (2012). The articles provide inspiration and sources of how Baroque society and culture performs identity. They aid in understanding how similar cultural expressions as this study’s material, relate to similar questions of politics of identity. From the anthology, Kandare’s article *CorpoReality: Queen Christina of Sweden and the Embodiment of Sovereignty* is most frequently used and quoted in this study, although many others have been used as well. Kandare’s article could be argued to act both as theory and previous research in this thesis, but I have decided to address it here in the section of the previous research. This, since it is not specifically her concept of performativity which is employed, as her definitions of the seventeenth-century as a culture. The article’s content can be summarized shortly as regarding how the movement and display of the body in a culture of performativity, carried a transformative potency. As the reader will discover, such thinking has highly influenced my discussion of the material of this thesis. From the same anthology, Genevieve Warwick’s article *Allegories of Eros: Caravaggio’s Masque,* takes on a similar understanding of Baroque performativity and employs it on a more typically art historical object: Michelangelo Merisi da Caravaggio’s (1571 – 1610) Bacchus paintings as scenography during and embodiment of, the Roman masques. Her article conceptualizes the playful definition of who is actor/artwork or beholder/reality in an essential and important way for this study.

The dissertation *Servants of Fortune: The Swedish court between 1598 and 1721* (1999) provides the thesis with thorough historical research on the context of the paintings, not only the royal one but focusing even more on the reality of the servants (in this study, the courtiers) of the royal: the beholders. The political situation, the servants and the court’s relation to its monarch, is methodologically important in relating to the research question “Which identities and what reality could potentially be created through the encounter with the paintings, in the performative event? What is the performative potency of the images in the material?” To answer this, one need to grasp the situation of the Carolean autocracy as well as the court culture and sociohistorical context surrounding the commissioner. For this purpose, the dissertation by Persson has been of great aid, just like the anthology *Europe and Scandinavia: Aspects of the Process of Integration in the 17th Century* (1983) which focuses on the relation between Sweden and the continent, which inspired and effected the Swedish systems during the seventeenth-century. This anthology also provides material for discussing to what extent
Another anthology of similar importance, is *Queen Hedwig Eleonora and the arts. Court Culture in Seventeenth-Century Northern Europe* (2017). With several critical articles, the anthology has been a crucial inlet to regard the socio-historical, art historical and political context of the material. It focuses less on the courtiers and more on the commissioner of Drottningholm Palace: the woman standing firmly on the side and supporting the three kings of the Carolean dynasty, sometimes in a more explicitly centralized position but always active in the name of Pfalz. To describe the scholarly amplitude of the anthology, art historian Mikael Ahlund could be mentioned initially. He focuses on the role which nature plays in the palace of Drottningholm; both through landscape paintings, the surrounding nature and in an early formation of national identity. Ahlund contributes as literature partly on the material (the palace) but also, through accounting for the world of ideas in the Swedish Baroque. Kristoffer Neville in the same anthology, instead helps to describe the historical role of the architect in the designated time, but also the queen dowager’s role for Swedish early modern architecture. Although not explicitly referred to, too often, Neville sheds valuable light on the background of the pictures and the bureaucratic administrative situation of Swedish early modern architecture. Björn Asker’s article in the same anthology is of great importance in understanding the political administrative situation of Hedvig Eleonora and provides the study with historical documents and examples.

The categories of Baroque world of images and the world of images of the Carolean era and autocracy, often intersect each other. Besides the previously mentioned literature, Kurt Johannesson’s *I polstjärnans tecken* (1968) needs to be mentioned as his work is one of the corner stones for me as a researcher to understand the Carolean era, its art production and its relation to theatricality. Similarly, Allan Ellenius’s *Karlinska bildidéer* (1966) and *Den atlantiska anatomin: Ur bildkonstens idéhistoria* (1984), provides a further art historical perspective on the Carolean world of images and ideas, with focus on the political manifestations that lay within the artworks and the “scientific”, “historicist” and nationalistic attempts that can be seen in the movement of Gothicism.

**Delimitations**

The study is firstly limited to the paintings by Sylvius on the walls of the staircase as well as the painted ceilings of the upper vestibule, guard rooms and gallery of Drottningholm Palace. The reason behind such delimitation is that Sylvius, despite his international career, is quit an art historical-enigma and has been left in the great shadow of Klöcker-Ehrenstrahl. Thus, he is a point of departure in this study. The reason why not all of Sylvius paintings in the palace are included in the material can be clarified as follows.

To begin with, there is a further delimitation within the rooms where Sylvius paintings are located, to the upper north side of the palace: an area where many of Sylvius’s images can be found. Hence, the thesis will regard the staircase and then continue to the upper floor. Due to the thesis’s core and theoretical departure surrounding the staircase’s relation to the upper gallery (the viewing of the performances in each room, as one joint performance in the palace), the study will not account for the lower floor. Firstly, this has much to do with my first meeting with this material, a meeting which is very related to the article by my thesis supervisor Snickare, discussed in the state of research section: *Trapphuset och det övre galleriet*. From the article, my interest arose for the theatrical and performative potential behind these rooms together, in the social milieu of the Carolean court and its
festivities. From this and from my choice of method (the spatially bound movement in the palace), I have decided to also account for other rooms in which Sylvius have made contribution. This due to how he later evolved into the second foremost interest here. Returning to the core of the staircase and gallery relation, there is reason to believe that the correlation between the two of them is of importance for the usage of the palace. Architecturally, the staircase and the upper gallery were initially separated, but an intentional change in the drawing made by Tessin the Elder opened up the wall between the two rooms.27 The wall became an arcade which only later, probably around the year 1800, was enclosed with glass windows due to problems of dampness; this after a suggestion coming from court painter and conservator of paintings, Eric Hallblad (1720 – 1814).28 A spatial and visual link between the rooms and artworks seems to have been intended for and also explicitly used during festivities. Historical documents speak, specifically, of the twentieth birthday of Karl XII being celebrated in these two rooms.29 Further, as the interpretation of the images in the rooms will show, there is also a mutual pictorial awareness, of the two rooms. Since they correlated during performances and this is a study with a performative perspective, the relation between the rooms will be accounted for and is also something which effects the delimitation of rooms surrounding these two.

As always, the choice to focus on the upper floor can also partly be explained by the limitation in scope. To account for the whole palace, in an academic context, is simply too great of a task for this scope. Also, a limitation to the upper floor is a result of the method and research postulates: as the main question revolves the achieving of understanding of how the palace, its paintings and the spatial dimensions might have performed and established relations and identities with a beholder contemporary with Hedvig Eleonora, the material needs to be approached as if such a beholder is moving within them. As if he or she is bound to the spatial dimensions. Hence, the analysis will start as the beholder approaches the palace and then enters it, which leads that historical person coming from the seaside, into the staircase. As the stairs lead the beholder upwards, surely one could stop at the lower floor, but this would not lead us up to the gallery, to regard its relation to the staircase (which is the initial choice of object to study, in this thesis). Secondly, as this limitation in scope is a fact, the decision to focus on the upper floor rather than the lower one, is related to the general characteristic of the images. On the main floor, the images are to a larger extent subordinate to the function of the rooms.30 They do not initiate the communication in the same way and they are less active in the performances.

Further, the thesis will after the staircase and the upper vestibule, turn towards the north side and not regard the south side of the palace, before reaching the upper gallery. Such can be argued for with the help of Göran Alm and the article Beqvämlighet och skönhet (2004). In his article, it becomes evident that the north and south part of the palace differed in usage during Hedvig Eleonora’s time and in extension, that the north and south guard room would differ as a result. From the inventory of 1709, we can learn that the north side of the palace was the parade section (the upper one was the king’s and the lower the queen’s) while the south one instead was regarded as “living

27 Snickare, 2004, pp. 177. Since, a theory of performativity does not account for a pre-existent subject, intention is not an integral part of the theory. Yet, it gains importance as it speaks of how the rooms defacto became visually and spatially connected, rather than through Tessin the Elder’s decision.
28 Mårdh, 1994, pp. 34.
rooms” or everyday rooms. In defining the south side, Alm characterizes them as rooms used for the everyday work and affairs of the reigning power, rooms where power could be executed in everyday situations. These rooms would also hold the private living apartment, with bed rooms etcetera, of the royals. Instead, the north side stands for splendour, parade and festivity. Certainly, the life of the seventeenth-century royals and in extension the concept of an everyday room, cannot be directly translated to that of our time. All aspects of the life of the royal family was about politics and power, yet the difference of the two sides of the palace is still prevalent. Of course, such usage would change during the cause of time but since this thesis is regarding Hedvig Eleonora’s era, it will take in mind this original indication of how the rooms where use and regard it as an indication of the actual reception and movement of the rooms. Due to the thesis’s focus on more festive and ceremonial courtly situation, I will only regard the north side of the upper floor.

An exception is the hall of state, which is located in the upper south side and of course also has a ceremonial role yet one of a more directly political character, than the parade apartment for cour, celebrating birthdays or holding a masque. But most importantly, the ceiling of the hall of state was only initiated by Sylvius yet mainly executed by Evrad Chauveau (1660 – 1739). As Sylvius is a guiding figure, a premise for the study, the thesis will take a northern turn in the palace and regard foremost that side, although references will be made to the south one.

Disposition

The first chapter includes a demarcation of the chosen historical context divided into three parts: the court as a social milieu, the governing of the state (politics) and the culture of images. Besides this, there will follow in the first chapter an epistemological discussion of the beholder and the writing subject. The aim here is to demarcate the context with the purpose of not only scientific transparency as a new objectivity, but also to indicate the structures which created and effected the beholding of the visitor/beholder.

The following three chapters are divided after the beholder’s movement in the palace, rooms by room, begin with the staircase and the upper vestibule (chapter two), continuing with the upper north guard room (chapter three) and ending in the upper gallery (chapter four). The three chapters have a kinship in narrative, where the reader through the chapters, moves through the palace and the material is presented accordingly with how it emerges in the room. The chapters relate to each other as they continue to build on what the previous chapter has included. In this sense, the three chapters are connected as an effect of the rooms’ social and ceremonial correspondence.

Lastly, the conclusion summarizes the findings and discusses them with the aims and questions as a foundation.

---

32 The hall of state, a ceremonial core, is an exception in this division, as it is to be found in the south side of the upper floor. Surely, the room has its reasons to be included in the analysis of the parade rooms of the upper floor, especially since Sylvius’s paintings are to be found also there, but due to a limit in scope and also a focus and centralization of the material around the visual connection between the staircase and gallery, the hall of state was somewhat to distant to be included in this scope.
I. Demarcation of socio-historical and aesthetical context and a discussion of the epistemological issue regarding the beholder

Constructing a palace and a position; becoming the queen dowager

In this first chapter, I would like to begin by making the reader acquainted with a few historical figures and descriptions of events which are relevant to contextualize the analysis in the remaining chapters. With that said, I am in no way suggesting a universal truth to this context: the content is chosen by me as an art historian and a writing subject, due to its relevance for the understanding of my findings but also for my chosen methodology. The point is to include some practical information about the characters surrounding the object of study, which might be helpful for the reader as an overture to capture the mood and essence of the era. In the second part of this chapter, I will further elaborate some epistemological issues regarding context and beholder. Methodology, context and spectatorship is in this thesis highly intertwined and need to be initially pondered upon, before continuing to the analysis of the artworks.

Duchess of Schleswig-Holstein, Hedvig Eleonora, arrived in Sweden in 1654 as future consort of King Karl X Gustav (1622 – 1660). The marriage was short-lived and ended already in 1660, due to the premature death of the king. Consequently, Crown Prince Karl became King Karl XI of the young age of five. His 24-year-old mother, now queen dowager, was appointed to lead the Council of Realm, the group of noble men governing in her son’s name until 1672, something she came to do also for her grandson Karl XII (1682 – 1718) during 1697. After the death of her husband, Hedvig Eleonora had two main tasks: leading the Council of Realm and through this position looking after the future king’s interests as well as caring for her estates, provinces of administration (her Livgeding) and the court.33 On the matter of Hedvig Eleonora’s role in Sweden, as a queen and as a queen dowager, I suggest Björn Asker’s article *Hedwig Eleonora as dowager queen and administrator* (2017) for further readings. The queen dowager managed to remain in a position as First Lady also during the reign of her son and is by that, an interesting character to study regarding negotiation of power relations. She was in many ways, the

---

continuum of the autocracy as her grandson Karl XII and the autocracy only outlives her with three years.

For the Swedish cultural heritage, Hedvig Eleonora was a vastly important patron. Growing up at the Gottorp Palace in Schleswig-Holstein, she is said to have been well educated in European court culture as well as in arts, music and theatre. Böttiger states that: "Hedvig Eleonora, king Carl Gustaf’s consort, originated from a family which had through generations, nurtured their artistic interests."\(^{34}\) One of her deeds is the Palace of Drottningholm (among several others): a stone palace which had been built on Lovön outside of Stockholm for Queen Katarina Jagellonica (1526 – 1583), commissioned by the husband King Johan III (1537 – 1592).\(^{35}\) In 1661 the palace was bought by Hedvig Eleonora from Count Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie (1622 – 1686), only to burn down the day before New Year’s Eve, the same year.\(^{36}\) From the plan of the remaining walls and cellars, the architect Tessin the Elder was commissioned to construct a new building in 1662.

The building was constructed between 1662 – 1665 after the drawings of Tessin the Elder. Decorating the palace as well as constructing the garden would require many more years; the palace was not fully realized when Hedvig Eleonora past away in 1715. One of the first rooms to be decorated and used though, was the staircase; initiated by Tessin the Elder it was finished during the late 1690s under the superintending of Tessin the Younger.\(^{37}\) Tessin the Younger, who took over the supervising of the palace in the 1681, had studied in Rome, just as both the employed painters Sylvius and Klöcker Ehrenstrahl had done. Certainly, he must have found their experience of the fashionable Roman Baroque ideals a valuable tool; they had brought with them, from their European (predominantly Roman) sojourn, an aesthetic ideal highly up to date.\(^{38}\) When Sylvius returned to Sweden after having spent the larger part of his life abroad, Tessin the Younger had recently taken over after his father. Several of Sylvius’s years abroad were spent in Rome, working and being exposed to artworks by his contemporaries such as Gianlorenzo Bernini (1590 - 1680) and Pietro da Cortona (1596 - 1669). In 1664, he was listed as a painter in the prestige full Accademia di San Luca.\(^{39}\) Sylvius is thought to have left Rome before 1673, possibly for England, as he in the 1680s worked under the Italian artist Antonio Verrio (1636 - 1707) in Windsor Castle. As noted, he is an enigmatic character in art history and not too much is known of his endeavours. It was during his experience in London that he, through the help of the Swedish envoy Johan Leijonberg (1625 – 1691), offered his services as a painter to the Swedish court; where his and Hedvig Eleonora’s paths would eventually intersect.\(^{40}\) Sylvius came to work with the decorations of the Drottningholm Palace from the summer of 1686 until his death in 1695.\(^{41}\) Sylvius’s attributions to the palace are, together with about 50 drawings, his


\(^{35}\) Built around 1581 by Willem Boy (1520 – 1592). Ibid., pp. 9.


\(^{38}\) Ibid., pp. 181-185.

\(^{39}\) Börje Magnusson, Svenska teckningar: 1600-talet: en konstbok från Nationalmuseum, Rabén & Sjögren, Stockholm 1980, pp. 120.

\(^{40}\) Ibid., pp. 121. According to Böttiger 1889, pp. 47, letter to the Swedish envoy in London Leijonberg; Riksarkivet, Hedvig Eleonoras koncepeter 29th of August 1685 bref till envoyén Leijonberg i England om inkallande af Johan Sylvius.

\(^{41}\) Börje Magnusson, “Tessin Jr and Sylvius at Drottningholm, the impact of their studies in Rome”, Bulletin/Nationalmuseum., 1979 (3:1), pp. 50.
only known works today. The staircase decorated with murals, was together with the surrounding rooms used frequently by Hedvig Eleonora.

**Epistemological discussion**

Before beginning with the actual analysis, I would like to in advance raise and discuss an epistemological issue: who is the beholder with whom we travel through the palace? The theories of performativity and reception aesthetics, evoke the idea that the paintings communicate with a beholder. That beholder, is of course a physical person bound to the spatiality of the room. Peter Gillgren persuasively describes this issue, in studying Michelangelo Buonarroti’s (1475 – 1564) paintings of Capella Sistina:

Now and then, standing below and looking up at the splendid ceiling is difficult. It makes it necessary to accept that there is a distance between the viewer and what meets the eye. It means having to cope with the fact that viewing does not take place in the intellect only, but is fundamentally in need of a three-dimensional reality. In viewing, the spectator’s body is choreographed and pushed here and there [...] by the preconceived visual structure of both two- and three-dimensional designs. Such an embodied viewing, furthermore, builds up a distance and acoustic space between the art and the spectator. It also brings the spatial and sensual qualities of the visual arts to the hermeneutical discourse.\(^\text{42}\)

Hence, the space in-between the beholder and artwork is a locus for meaning production and deserves a place within hermeneutical practices. The body of the visitor is an inevitable factor to account for, especially when attempting to study the performative event which the images constitute as well as what such a performance potentially could result in, during the long seventeenth-century. The body which is of foremost interest as it moves through the palace and communicates with the images in the social milieu of the Carolean court, is a historical one; such a beholder would then be contemporary with the queen dowager and with the construction of the palace (hence the beholder is not restricted harshly to the seventeenth-century, but to the time around the turn of the eighteenth-century, that is, what is called the long seventeenth-century). Apparent in the chapters to come, I as a writer will attempt to embody such beholder.

On a more theoretical level, the active beholder can be thought of as three-dimensional. **Firstly**, the most direct aspect of the beholder is of course the writing subject, me. I, the researcher, am the real body and mind who moves through the palace and regards the material. **Secondly**, there is a beholder whom the artwork inscribes through composition, narrative, cropping and relating to the spatial dimensions. The artworks are actively communicating out from the painting, towards an implicated interpreter. This person, makes up the second dimension of the beholder of the thesis and will be addressed through the methodology of reception aesthetics. What kind of spectatorship is inscribed in the images and is enabling the communication and meaning production? **Thirdly** and lastly, there is of course the temporal dimension. The thesis’s focus is how the artworks potentially could emerge and function in the contemporary era of Hedvig Eleonora; how they functioned with/towards her visitors and courtiers. Thus, the third dimension of the beholder is the **historically situated subject**. The interpreter who was a part of late seventeenth-century Sweden, who was a subject to the Carolean autocracy and who may have visited the palace as a part of the royal court.

---

This dimension of the spectator will be the focus of the remaining part of this chapter. In a way, to answer the research questions I need to embody this historically situated beholder and read how the implicit beholder is activated. What is needed before continuing towards the actual material is a contextualisation of that historical beholder: he or she needs to be situated within the past. What structures created the social subject which moved in the palace and regarded the images? This will be done throughout the thesis, through descriptions of the Baroque culture of images and through conceiving an understanding of the Carolean court and culture during the last decades of the seventeenth-century as well as the turn of the eighteenth-century: for instance, in the chapter *The Staircase and The Upper Vestibule*, I attempt to describe the concept and role of art in general and then later read the material against such a backdrop; in the chapter *The Upper North Guard Room*, the court and its social/political relations are charted out (the social/political reality of the beholder and the relation between the concerned and the royals). Through these descriptions of the demarcated context, the aim is to conceive an understanding of who the visitor structurally might be, how his or her status was related to the queen dowager and the royal family as well as of how the images could have been perceived in the demarcated social milieu. The descriptions of context aim at charting out different contemporary ideas which the images are read against and in the same time, at demarcating the structures which might have formed the historical yet fictive subject travelling through the palace.

I would like to initially here mention and situate such a historical beholder, through demarcation of the context. The aspects which follow in short are only mentioned here; all the different perspectives brought up will re-appear in the chapters to follow as a part of the analysis and backdrop of the images/palace and there be further elaborated. The purpose to introduce the historical references here, is to emphasise their function of demarcating the historical beholder and to emphasise that the context is a tool for the researchers to grasp what influence the paintings potentially could have had on these subjects. Beyond this, there is a second reason to charting out the context: to demarcate what I as the writing researcher have found important to answer the research questions. These are my choices of historical context, which conceive of the foundation to understand the structures which are the historical subjects reading the images. The idea is not to demarcate this as the absolute historical context of the artworks, but rather as tool of scholarly transparency in the research lab which is this text.

The demarcated context, can be divided into three parts: a discussion of the court, the structure of government and the culture of images/the concept of art during the Carolean era. Beginning with that of the court, art historian Lars Ljungström wants to stress the significant role of court culture as a key for understanding the architecture and decoration of the Drottningholm Palace. What or who constituted the Carolean court? Surely, the court reflected society, meaning that there were different ranks of servants and subjects present. As the paintings represent intricate iconographies and I am interested in the communication between the paintings and their beholders, the thesis will focus more on the courtiers: a social group consisting of the noble men and women at the court with a higher degree of education, able to read the allegories. By this, I do not attempt to say that the images did not communicate with a person of lesser understanding of the narratives, but only that due reasons of iconography, the thesis will focus of the courtiers. With the help of Björn

---

Asker’s writing on the matter, we can further argue for the plausibility of the aristocracy having the opportunity to see these images. When observing how Hedvig Eleonora employed her members of the court, a clear pattern appears; she employed members of the higher aristocracy for higher positions and the lower, for lower positions at the court. As this might sound totally in order for the early modern era, it is bewildering in the sense that employment to the high positions at the court was not affected by her son Karl XI’s Reduction. When the nobility was punished and their financial/political status diminished, the same cannot necessarily be said for their place at the court. High nobility was still very present at the court and was employed for high positions. Hence, still present and adequate to count as a beholder of the images in the thesis. Further, Fabian Persson’s dissertation is of great service. In it, one can read that the court was a vital point of contact between the monarchs and the elite, meaning that the social sphere where the images were regarded, has been regarded by scholars as a scene for negotiating the power relation between the two. To be employed as a courtier of course meant a great deal of honour; it was also an opportunity to climb socially and it acted as a school for young people. Not only as a chance to scholarly road but also as a school for manners, dancing and fencing, to name a few. A social school of “becoming” noble. The same manners could be displayed at masquerades, dances and social events in general; events which were opportunities to make a good impression and to present oneself as a person of “high quality”. Further, these social possibilities of the court were dependent on the good grace of the king. Peroson claims that “the monarch was the ‘fountain of favour’, the source of grace, the centre of all patronage”. This leads us to the second aspect of context demarcating the historical beholding subjects, that of the state: the structure of the state is reason for a dissertation of its own, but what interests me here is more specifically the role/status of the monarch in relation to the nobility: the power relations in-between them, as defined by the structure of the governing of the state. As has already been mentioned, the king and the royal family was the source of grace, an opportunity for the noble to climb; yet simultaneously, that same monarch was a punishing and strong one. On an ideological level the relationship between monarch and subject was one of “care”. The ruler was considered somewhat of a father to his subjects, his children. The well of the people was considered a function of the king’s strength. He was harsh and strict, yet only for the best of the country and the people. Of course, in reality though, harsh he was. The seventeenth-century was in Europe the era of absolutism and the same goes for Sweden, where the century would witness a centralization of the governing of the state. Such absolutism would begin already during the reign of Gustav II Adolph in the 1620s (or earlier, depending on definition, but that is a discussion in itself), continue during the imperialistic years of Karl X Gustav, reach its highest peak in the 1680s with Karl XI and continue to be strong during Karl XII’s reign to then fall hastily. After 1972, when the 17-year-old Karl XI had been declared of age by the parliament, begun a campaign for diminishing the power of the high nobility (who had grown strong during the Regency in the name of the previously under-aged king). After the war against Denmark 1675-79, the young Karl XI was considered somewhat of a war hero.

---

47 Ibid., pp. 97-98.
48 Ibid., pp. 164.
Following an economic crisis, voices called for a clearance of the state finances, which would lead to a reduction of the financial and administrative power of the nobility (Reduktionen, the confiscation of lands and estates as well as removal of tax privileges). Through an alliance with the peasant stand and the lower aristocracy, Karl XI was in 1680 through a parliamentary decision, announced an absolute king. During the years to come, the autocracy was gradually expanded and ultimately, Karl XI answered only to God: he possessed all the governing power himself.\(^5\) Intertwined with the centralization was a bureaucratization of the Swedish state, society and politics. The centralization of the state and the growing administrative apparatus, lead to a certain worry among the high nobility of that the lower nobility and the commoners suddenly were beginning to reach higher positions within the offices of the state. This as an effect of new demands for efficiency within the increasingly bureaucratic state, something which required a new professionalism. Education was suddenly (almost) as important as heritage.\(^5\) This social mobility was certainly a threat for the high nobility, as it could indicate a loss of currency of their status. It became a threat to their political influence, through its effect of the distribution of power within the country.\(^5\) A threat of a similar kind was of course the autocracy, in which the Council of Realm lost their political power and right to control new appointments.\(^5\) To summarize, the confines were prevalent especially during Karl XI’s reign and continuously during the reign of his son, during the years regarded in the thesis. Especially effected were the noble, a group of the society who were in the social vicinity of the king and who’s fate was decided by the same punishing autocrat authority.

To further reinforce the plausibility of the courtiers to have been able to grasp the iconography of the images to some extent and to be such receptive beholders of art in a continental princely manner which is assumed for them to be in this thesis, on need to further dwell in the aspect of education. The anthology *Europe and Scandinavia: Aspects of the Process of Integration in the 17th Century*, edited by Göran Rystad, provides great research and collected knowledge on the history of connections between Sweden and Europe during the long seventeenth-century. In the anthology, it becomes evident that to a greater extent than before, studying on universities outside of Sweden became crucial to reach high offices after one’s studies. Much as an effect of the increased bureaucratization and following need for education, mentioned recently. Further, to travel, was not only of academic importance but also of a social kind; it was a mean to learn the ways of European princely and noble courts. Thus, the travelling also encompassed spending time in the circles of princes, nobles and Swedish diplomats, being exposed to Baroque art, art concept/function, theatrical festivities and much more.\(^5\) As stated by Linda Hinners in her dissertation: "It was natural to turn to other environments and centres of power for inspiration and knowledge of 'the good taste'."\(^5\) Thus, through the very audience, the aristocracy attending festivities or cour, surrounding

\(^{50}\) Sniekeå, 1999, pp. 21-23.
\(^{52}\) Ibid., pp. 70.
\(^{53}\) Ibid., pp. 68.
the royal family in political or festive situations, continental manners and understanding of governmental, artistic, ceremonial practices, were spread and transferred to Sweden. Such would possibly also have an effect of the actual political practice, as exemplified by Anna-Brita Lövgren: in a report from France, 1678, Carl Bonde (1648 – 1699) informed Karl XI of the political events of Louis XIV’s government. What is of interest for this study, is that Bonde reports how the French king, after the death of Chef Minister Cardinal Mazarin (1602 – 1661), had taken a more firm grip of his government and council. He further implied how the king gathers different councillors, depending on the subject matter. What he speaks of is rather several councils, gathering in different formations depending on the subject which would be discussed and the decisions to be taken, on the expertise of the ministers and secretaries involved. What is astonishing, is that not long after, during the two decades to follow, Karl XI’s council will take on similar methods. Consequently, that the Swedish royal milieu was directly influenced by continental manners. Continuing, the travelling nobles set up communication networks of their own. These communications networks had the purpose to tell and speak of learned experiences abroad and consisted of agents, diplomats, ambassadors and friends. As an example, De la Gardie had such a system, just like Count Carl Gustaf Wrangel (1613 – 1676) did. In their letters, they discussed science, art, acquisitions of books and artworks, but also the participation in ceremonies. The formation and existence of such networks, describes an educational ideal the nobility, one of a very broad, humanistic and scientific nature. According to Arne Losman, De la Gardie and Wrangel’s networks exemplifies the flow of information and process of spreading continental manners, to Sweden; something which one can see the result of, in their architectural pursuits as manifestations of rank and status. Hence, travelling, both that of the noble for their own purposes and of the ones sent out on commands of the king, in many ways, effected and spread knowledge in Sweden of princely, governmental and artistic ideals. Ideals which forms the general context of this thesis and which are structures that I assume to form the spectating historical subject.

Thirdly, I would like to address the culture of images as an art historical aspect which must have formed the gaze of the beholder. No gaze is neutral. The act of gazing is historically constructed through structures of the culture of images as well as the social structures of the involved social group. Hence, through charting out certain aspects which constituted the culture of looking at images in the discussed era, my aim is to avoid anachronism and historical discrepancy as well as to attempt to understand how the images might have appeared, and in extension how they might have related to the designated historical group of the nobility and the structures which formed the life of that group; in extension the gaze of the Carolean nobility. The Baroque way of narrating has been ascribed a naturalistic character, with the aim of making the beholder both relate emotionally and become an intrinsic part of the narrative. With this stated, the thesis aims to understand how the

---

material functioned in such performative culture of the time. Yet, this is not a history of reception. My interest here is not to investigate what certain specific historical figures thought and felt in the palace, nor to discuss if the culture is performative or not. Rather, the aim is to investigate how the culture of images, the historical context as well as the appearance and juxtapositions of images/architecture, co-existed and co-acted in the cultural encounter and event: what were the potential performative function of the artworks in the specific political and social milieu of the Carolean court?

Two concepts frequently explored in art production during the addressed century, are those of illusion and theatre. Both will be touched upon in this section, as a part of the demarcation of necessary context of art concept or image culture, to later re-appear in the chapters to follow. Firstly, the concept of illusion is visible in several ways in early modern Sweden: marbling, illusory perspectives and maybe less apparent but ever as important, the melting together of the art medias into one artwork. Such an illusionary transition, appeared as un bel composto in an international seventeenth-century discourse on art. The concept can be translated into a beautiful compound and is related to the artist Bernini. It conceptualizes the combining of different artistic medias, but is in general quite descriptive of the seventeenth-century’s love for illusions. Yet, in this fancy for the illusion rests, as un bel composto indicates, an awareness of the illusion. As Snickare proposes, we must at least assume that the art historian Filippo Baldinucci (1624 – 1696) was specific when choosing the word composto and not for instance unità (unity), in describing his contemporary Bernini’s art in 1682. To create un bel composto is to reach beyond the rules of painting, sculpture and architecture and to create a compound of them, something which encompasses the need for it to be evident that rules are transgressed. Meaning to achieve a composite of painting, sculpture and architecture, to an even more beautiful composition, without them losing their characteristic essence of beauty. Leaving the fabless of the illusion aside, it is not far to the other main concept of art, as related to theatre. When discussing seventeenth-century art concept, the notion of theatre often finds its way in. Warwick brings up the sculptor Bernini’s play I due covielli (1637) as an example of the concept of a play within a play, constituting a reflexive relation between actor and audience which is typical for the century’s art concept (Bernini is after all an artist, active also in theatre decorations). In the prologue, two actors were initially at the stage, standing back-to-back, the first facing the audience and the second facing a fictive audience. Both act on the stage towards the respective audience before them. As the prologue ended, the curtain fell between them and the play went along; after the end, the curtain once again rose and the fictive audience resembled the real one leaving the theatre. Such theatrical manners can be understood as encompassing a whole different concept of roles, something which corresponds well with Warwick’s other example of Caravaggio’s Bacchus paintings. They can be understood to convey a sense of masquerade, being both portraits of servants and depictions of ancient myths at once and would be used as a scenography for masquerade festivities (the masque) of the Roman elite: in a theatrical festive event. Another important aspect of the relation between beholder and image, is the emancipation from the rigorous tradition of using allegories, around the year 1600. In western Europe art was successively liberated from delivering only one message; what grew more popular was a

62 Ibid., pp. 142.
playfully and pluralistically usage of the allegory. Art concepts like such, are integral to keep in mind during the analysis, to answer how the paintings by Sylvius functioned in the said milieu.

The purpose of this section has been to demarcate the position of the beholder: to situate the structures which created the beholding subjects of the era of the paintings, regarding art conception, politics and the history of ideas, as well as to achieve understanding of the identity of the hypothetical beholder. It is also a matter of academic honesty to demarcate myself as an interpreter though the palace and the choices I have made regarding the context. My movement through the palace will be an embodiment of the three-folded beholder, whilst notions of seventeenth-century thinking of art and the said context, will guide my observations. The chosen methodology, together with my style of writing out my view of the art, attempt at transparency and in extension, to open up for other scholars to partake in the discourse. In our contemporary era, it is evident how we perceive our world differently yet still are able to discuss it together. My belief is that surely, the same must go for history: different opinions must be tolerable and also what a field actually consists of, yet I believe that some sort of consensus surely can be achieved despite different interpretations of history, since we often can proclaim some ideas more plausible than others. In the chapters to follow, I pronounce my ideas of how Sylvius’s artworks functioned and in what social situation, accounted for with attempted transparency and scholarly honesty, to contribute to the discourse of the object of study.

---

63 Ibid., 137-140.
II. The Staircase and the Upper Vestibule

“we mentally continue a path that is cut off by the frame.”  
- Wolfgang Kemp, 1998

The staircase

The quote from Kemp has already been included in the introduction, but such an eloquent sentence which so articulately expresses the art historical method in use here, might be useful to keep in mind during the chapters to come. What I attempt to do in the following chapters is exactly what the quote from Kemp conveys: to grasp in what way the beholder is invited to follow the mental path of the intra communication of the artworks and in extension, grasp what the result of such a performance potentially is, within the designated social milieu. This, to answer the thesis questions of how Sylvius’s artworks may have functioned in the architectural surrounding and with the social context of the Carolean court as well as what their potential performative result could be.

The staircase of Drottningholm Palace was one of the first rooms to be fully constructed in the palace towards the end of the 1690s, together with the two vestibules and the upper gallery. Sylvius’s career in the Drottningholm Palace is said to have begun here in the staircase, where he first made his artistic attributions during 1686. By then, the sculptures by Millich was already in place. The number of supervising architects had by then been two, first Tessin the Elder and later Tessin the Younger. I am not the first to notice a shift in style from the lower part of the staircase to the upper one: ascending the staircase we can experience a journey through time, through the art of the Baroque, from an older one to a newer one at the top of the staircase. Such a shift has been explained by changes attributed to Tessin the Younger taking over the construction from his father. Regardless, due to the chosen theoretical perspective of performativity, it is rather insignificant what details were of Tessin the Elder or the Younger’s invention. A more important perspective in this research is the theory of theatricality and performativity, suggesting that the physical artworks do

64 Kemp, 1998, pp. 188.
66 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 48-50.
68 Engaging qualified artists like Sylvius at the palace, was one of the means by which such new ideals were realized. Ibid., pp. 185.
something with the beholders. Thus, I will not dwell too long in the labyrinth that is the artist’s intention.

The thesis’s focus on Sylvius’s wall paintings can be argued for with their significance to the overall artistic program of the entire staircase. It should be noted that the colour of the balustrades and the staircase marbling was altered from maroon to yellow in the 1690s by Tessin the Younger, to match the yellow marble of Sylvius’s illusionary balustrades. County Governor Knut Törnhielm (1636 – 1699) wrote to Governor General Carl Gyllenstierna (1649 – 1723) in July 1686 about Tessin the Younger’s visit in the staircase. Tessin is to have regarded Sylvius’s perspectives on the side of the staircase (Figure 5 and 6) with great satisfaction. After this, the request came for new pillars in the room, to better match those yellow and white ones of Sylvius’s images. Hence, Sylvius’s images seem to be dominating the artistic program and more importantly, have a relation to the surroundings. The performative reading of his artworks will take a hypothetical beholder in mind, yet one historically situated during Hedvig Eleonora’s years as queen dowager (as can be read in the first chapter). Beginning here in the staircase, the bodily movement of such a beholder will be followed through the palace in the chapters. The palace is located on the island Lovön in Mälardalen (the area around the lake Mälaren). Mälardalen was during the late seventeenth-century quite far out on the country side, yet was during the early modern era a popular site for the nobility to construct their country palaces. It had been a trading centre since late Viking Age, which had given the area a prominent position in a Swedish political and financial context.

As stated by Ahlund, visitors of the palace were likely to have travelled to Drottningholm by boat. During the journey, the visitors must have been exposed to the wild nature of the region of Uppland, in the midst of which, the palace abruptly is materialized. The sudden appearance of the red stone palace with white decorative element (as was the original colouring), juxtaposed to the wilderness of the nature, must have emphasised the palace as a materialization of civilization and control. The rhythm of the journey surely contributed to such connotation: travelling through repetition of forest and more forest and all the sudden a break with iteration – a formation of magnificence. When entering the palace from the seaside, we are first met by the staircase (Figure 2). Since there is no grand vestibule, but we enter straight into the lower part of the staircase, the room can be said to have a twofold significance of both staircase and entrance hall. This sudden emergence, together with the narrow yet intense character of the lower part of the staircase, gives it a heavily intruding appearance which immediately becomes evident when the palace is entered. Right in front of the recently arrived visitor, is a colonnade of continuously shortened columns. Shortened to make the colonnade seem longer and the palace deeper than it truly is: the first but not the last of the many illusions in the palace. The colonnade is at its entrance crowned with Giovanni Carove’s (unknown date of birth) immersive and invasive creation of the commissioner’s stucco-monogram –

---

69 A colour which due to later restorations is not apparent, although the coherence between architecture and painting, to a certain extent, is (the balustrade in Sylvius’s painting is maroon just like the marbling on the wall, yet his background colours of the architecture, are more yellow). Snickare, 2004, pp. 183.
70 Riksarkivet (RA), Bref till generalguvernören C. Gyllenstierna. Found in Böttiger, 1889, pp. 49.
71 Mikael Ahlund, “The wilderness inside Drottningholm: David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl and the northern nature at the court of Hedwig Eleonora” in Queen Hedwig Eleonora and the arts: court culture in seventeenth-century Northern Europe, Kristoffer Neville and Lisa Skogh (ed.), Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London 2017, pp. 88. Also noted by Böttiger how the seaside to the east, was the original main entrance to the palace. Böttiger, 1889, pp. 33.
72 A shift from past tense to present here indicated that my analysis of the thesis surely cannot be done with other eyes than my own, yet it will be contextualized and argued for, with historical indications.
HERS – Hedvig Eleonora Regina Suecia; undoubtedly avoiding any misunderstanding of who’s household we have entered and by who’s mercy our faith is decided. The architectural embellishment of the staircase can today be characterized as a vivid interplay of maroon and purple marbling and white stucco, the latter chiefly by the hand of Carlo Carove (d. 1697), instantaneously creating movement in the recently entered lower part of the room. Yet we must imagine the marbling yellow, as such was the colour from the 1690s and during the rest of Hedvig Eleonora’s era.\(^73\) The movement created through the interplay of colours and architectural refinements will accompany that of the beholder, through the ascending of the double staircase. Such an effect is created through, beside the interplay of colours, architectural refinements like compound piers and Doric columns. Like trees in the forest, the piers and columns create a rhythmic interplay of the visible and invisible. The difference between the nature outside the palace and the forest-like multitude of stone pier are both creating a continuum in rhythm, yet also designating the significant difference between the deeds of mankind and nature. Baroque gardens and lavish, immeasurable architecture, have repeatedly been recognized as a homage to the potency of mankind to, with virtue and knowledge, control and tame nature.\(^74\) The rhythm and flow of wild living trees outside the palace, is simultaneously repeated yet differentiated and interrupted when it is transformed into a new rhythm of stone-pier-trees. The simultaneous continuum and break emphasis and convey the potency to control and beautify nature. Suddenly, we are in a yellowish and golden forest of culture and ennoblement.

The staircase will unwrap itself through our ascending. Per every step it will reveal a new curiosity or detail; the form is playful, typically of Baroque architecture. Already on the landing between the ground and first floor, through the forest of piers, we get a glimpse of Sylvius’s mural paintings. When the beholder has continued a few more steps upwards and has reached the first floor, on the northern and south wall, Sylvius’s first paintings are fully visualized. They represent illusionary doors, slightly opened to allow the beholder to glimpse into the vastness of the palace, yet not allowing the concerned to enter due to their illusionary character. The inclusion of the doors hints of the space behind them, a space we cannot yet enter, but which gives the movement upwards a sentiment of excitement and expectation but also, makes us aware of the confines and restrictions of our movement. The doors materialize the unwrapping of the artwork which has just recently begun but will accelerate as we climb the staircase even higher. From here is noticed how the visitors are not the lone characters in the room. They are accompanied by free standing, life-sized, white sculptures of the Muses, carved in marble by Millich: on our left side Calliope (Muse of epic poetry) and on the right Polyhymnia (Muse of hymns). Both Calliope and Polyhymnia are turned towards us, greeting us. Calliope looks right at us, drawing our attention to the two of them. While our eyes rest on the two muses, the second one of them, Polyhymnia instead gazes and points upwards, as if guiding us to continue further up the staircase. Apollo himself is facing us from his niche in the wall right in front of us, hinting somewhat of what will be thematized in the staircase (Figure 3).\(^75\) Along with the lower parts of the walls, between the first and second floor, are grisaille paintings representing the myth of Hercules, by the hand of Sylvius. Surely, a visitor might, depending on the occasion, step out of the staircase into the lower vestibule on the main floor. Yet, as the staircase is a part of the main material

\(^{73}\) The current restoration points back to the years of Tessin the Elder. who decided to make the staircase maroon, which his son changed to match Sylvius’s painted balustrades in a more yellow tone. Bedoire, 2004, pp. 99.

\(^{74}\) Johannesson, 1968, pp. 102.

\(^{75}\) Apollo has been described as carrying the characteristics of Karl XI, although these suggestions are definitely alluring they are also of a quite speculative character and will not be further explored here.
of the thesis and is to be regarded with the perspective and method of reception aesthetics, the images and artworks of the room become historical documents and indications of their own. We are here indicated by Polyhymnia to continue upwards. In the delimitation section of the introduction, questions like these are further developed.

If we make a left turn, around Calliope, we are met by the first large al fresco painting by Sylvius (the painted doors set aside) which will conceive of the main material in the thesis (Figure 5 and 7). The painting, which is located at the north side (A in Figure 1), depicts four men, two at the right in contemporary Occidental clothing and two to the left in Oriental clothing; the two latter ones, identified as pages by Böttiger, are more visualized and closer to the painted balustrade than the former ones are. The four men are represented as if standing on the upper floor yet to be reached by us, in an open arcade. Overall, the image is dazzling from all the expensive and ornamented Oriental fabrics; especially emphasized are the jewels and feathers in the turbans of the two closest men. The Occidental men are returning our gaze, while the Oriental are not. A black drapery is hanging over the balustrade, creating depth, movement and of course, acting as a sign of wealth. Architecturally, the columns in the painting give depth to the illusionary space, yet are not the same as in the palace: they are foremost of the Ionic order instead of the Doric one used by Tessin the Elder in the staircase. Continuing into the upper vestibule though, the Ionic order is identical to that of Sylvius’s paintings.\footnote{The brightness of Sylvius background columns might be an effect of restorations. The colour of staircase was from the 1690s a more bright and yellowish one which would have matched those of Sylvius’s background better.}

An architectural coherence between illusory and physical architecture is created through Sylvius’s imitation (closest to the frame both left and right) of the physical pilasters with broken pediment framing the painting. An illusionary transition, letting the different medias melt together into un bel composto. The concept un bel composto, which can be translated as a beautiful compound (meaning, of different artistic medias), is related to Bernini but is in general quite descriptive of the seventeenth-century’s love for illusions. Yet, in this fancy for the illusion rests, as un bel composto indicates, an awareness of the illusion. We must at least assume that the art historian Filippo Baldinucci (1624 – 1696) was specific when choosing the word composto and not unità (unity), in the description of Bernini’s art in 1682. To reach beyond the rules of painting, sculpture and architecture, making a compound of them as was ever so popular in the Baroque, it needs to be evident that rules are transgressed.\footnote{Snickare, 2012, s. 35.}

Meaning a composite of painting, sculpture and architecture, to an even more beautiful composition, without them losing their characteristic essence of beauty. The same goes for the illusions in the staircase: for the greatness of the artistic achievement to be recognized, it needs to be apparent that it is exactly that, an illusion, and not just another room of the palace. This explains also the use of both painted columns which follow the pattern of the physical room and painted columns which break with the architecture of the room: a playful spectrum of completely differentiated and identical columns and pilasters within the paintings and the room. The paintings needed to both correspond and break with the physical architecture, to be both a plausible and an obvious illusion. As the illusion is obvious yet perfected, a beholder from a context affected by such art concept is suddenly made aware of that the painting is a spectacle to regard but also, that it is so similar to our reality that it is acting upon our world. Art and reality become one but art is still designated to be able to more clearly say something about and towards, our reality.

Further, the inclusion of the Orient in this narrative is a typical way of adding splendour and dignity to the palace. Knowledge and understanding of the eastern countries were ways
to express the commissioners’ knowledge of other cultures but of course, in the same instance, embellish the same commissioner. When read against such backdrop, it is interesting to note that the two occidental men are the ones which more actively are made cicerones, characters which the other European visitors could relate to. Accordingly to Kemp’s theory of reception aesthetics, meeting the beholder’s gaze is a mean to achieve affect, to make the beholders relate, feel and think, with the characters of the artworks. The Oriental men are two characters to instead regard, rather than relate to. This speaks of, reflect and re-produce, a certain hierarchy and hegemony of the colonized and the colonizers. Although this thesis will not do a post-colonial analysis on the decorations in the Drottningholm Palace or the seventeenth-century court, it is critical to here note the historical relation to the colonial project. The competition in splendour and power of European courts is highly a subject within this thesis and one could say that the competition of European courts was a fuel in colonizing the rest of the world.

Returning to the men in the northern mural, the second man from the left is gesturing, not at any specific direction but seemingly for his fellows and us to regard the room as a whole. The man standing farthest to left is instead gesturing heavily, directing his whole arm, towards the lower part of the staircase; towards the space of the staircase landing between the lower and upper floor. This figure gesturing so actively gives the artwork an indeterminate character; the physical artwork does not make sense but creates a void in the staircase landing, as the question “What is the man pointing so intensively at?” cannot be answered. Through the theory of Kemp, this heavily gesturing man can be described as an intentional blank. Without visitors in the room, no one is regarding this man and he is pointing towards no one. If the room instead is occupied by visitors arriving for a masque or masquerade for instance, the gesturing man is drawing the attention of the beholder towards the other visitors in his pointing direction. He emphasises the ceremonial and social function of the staircase, to regard and receive guests entering the palace. Actually, he does not only emphasise it, but he makes us do the same as our eyes move from him, led by his gesture, to the other visitors in the staircase. He is a painted performance, making us regard the social activities of the room. The discussion of an intentional blank is important in understanding that the artworks are open ended, are interactive and are co-creating meaning with the beholder; drawing us into their narrative and events. Dependent on the relations of the visitors and the social theatre on display, this type of detail will act upon the physical and social space; in different ways emphasise it. Also, if the blank is not filled in by for instance beholders, the detail of the man pointing out from the painting does not make much sense: meaning cannot be performed and this specific function, is lost. This connects to my understanding of the epistemology of this type of research, coming from Sauter’s theory: historical documents are understood by their observers in the encounter with them, not just through their own being. Hence, it is not just the image itself I am interested in and which is the reason to this detour on the intentional blanks: I am interested in the cultural encounter and the meaning which it produces with its spectator, as it emerges on the stages and makes all actors part of one staged reality.

If we instead of turning left around Calliope after leaving the first floor, would have turned right around Polyhymnia, the second of Sylvius’s paintings would have greeted us on the south side of the double staircase (B in Figure 1; Figure 4 for view). It is located on the opposite side from the painting recently discussed and depicts three women and two mysterious figures behind them (Figure 6). Similarly to in the north painting, the figures are leaning on a painted balustrade in an open

---

78 Sauter, 2000, pp. 102.
arcade, gazing into the staircase. The three women in the front seem to be dressed in Orientalizing clothing, while a fourth person’s body is not visible behind the others and a fifth is left in the shadow. The fifth figure standing in the dark middle ground of the painting, shadows the women with an umbrella but is completely left in the darkness and is thus impossible to get a glimpse of. Also here, a black drapery is hanging over the balustrade, creating depth and movement as well as signals wealth. Architecturally, the illusionary room is similar to the one in the other painting, as the coherence of broken pilasters (foreground) as well as differentiation of column orders occur also here: that is, unbel composto. A coherence between painterly and physical space is achieved through the woman to the right in the picture, who is connecting her gaze to ours. In the vocabulary and method of Kemp, the woman acts as our cicerone, meeting and guiding the beholder’s attention. She welcomes us as beholders and guests but does also attract our attention through communicating out of the painting. In doing such, she includes the beholder in the intra communication of the painting and dissolves the border between the illusionary space and the physical space (our space): initiating communication between the two worlds. Breaking down the dichotomy of art and reality, which from the perspective of Fischer-Lichte will be crucial for the figures to get a hold of the beholder, effect reality and create something; for the performative potential. This figure is critical in making the beholder a co-actor of the performative event constituted through the meeting between art and beholder.

To summarize the findings so far, the figures in the artworks do in different ways act as if the social activity of the staircase, is a theatrical spectacle of its own as well as make our world and the painted one, into something shared. The woman leaning on the balustrade farthest to the left, seems to be engaged in communication with the woman hidden by her figure. The latter appears to be whispering something to the former; attracting her attention towards the events of the staircase, just like the heavily gesturing man does on the other side of the room. In this instance, an intentional blank is created and our movement and actions, become something to be regarded, similarly to the world of the painted figures. That is, this woman and the man pointing in the northern painting in the staircase are attracting our attention to our own theatre on display: the social theatre of the seventeenth-century becomes as much of an event to behold, as the painterly ones are. Such discussion can be further deepened through Kemp’s conceptualizing of the cropping of the image, which Baroque art theory developed an intensified playful relation to. The cropping of the painting was considered creating an artwork which was not a totality of its own, but rather a fragment of the world outside the frame. That means, it was considered a part of its surrounding, having a relation to the latter. In the staircase, the way the illusionary room melt into the real one (the perfection of the illusion) is a highly important feature in the performative mechanism. Through the continuation of architectural style, through cicerones guiding us upwards and indicating what to be astonished of (through what has been made a part of the artwork), Sylvius has included a whole narrative which is not visual in the physical painting: the cultural encounter. Such way of making of the beholder visible as a part of the artwork is conceptualized by theories of performativity, such as the here employed Fischer-Lichte’s feedback loop’s autopoiesis: when the artwork makes the beholder visible within the extended frame of itself, the concerned beholder is forced to relate to it; this sets in motion a circulation of energy and an interplay. The artwork makes certain postulates which designate the

80 Sauter, 2000, pp. 102.
81 Kemp, 1998, pp. 188.
beholder as someone who shall act and continue the path. The artwork calls for the beholder, makes him or her emerge on the stage and they co-create the performative event. Simultaneously, as will be shown, the artworks inscribe certain identities and postulates in the beholder. In the case of the discussed paintings here, the figures’ pointing and observing create a certain movement and interplay of gazes, which attract attention to the events of the physical room. In this way, the artwork can be said to draw attention to the social theatre of the visitors: making it emerge on the stage. Similar conception of art having a relation to its surrounding can be found in the contemporary of the building of the Drottningholm Palace. As an example, conveyed by Paul Fréart de Chantelou (1609 – 1694) concerning the sculptures of Bernini: “[…] things do not only appear as they are, but also appear in relationship with what is close to them and such relationship changes their appearance.”

His statement can be understood as conveying a conception of art as not ending with the frame. Thus, this way of thinking in the discussed era, would call for the artworks to be read within themselves but also in communication with the beholder and the surroundings. The next step will hence be to read the images with reference to the spatial dimensions and surrounding artworks. For that, I will depart from the previously mentioned female cicerones and read them against the rest of the room.

To the right in the southern painting, our cicerone is pointing upwards as if directing our gaze out from the painting and for our path to continue in the same direction. If the cicerones mentioned break down the dichotomy between the physical painting (art) and the physical space (reality), this woman can be said to have the potential to effect the visitors’ bodily movements further ahead, towards the top floor. Seen through the theoretical glasses of Fischer-Lichte’s theory, such evokes thinking of the last step in the performances aestheticity, the liminal transforming of the participants. When the artwork has emerged on the stage and further, broken down pre-conceived ideas which separates it from reality (when the aspects discussed has made the painting’s illusory room and our room into one), it has the potential to effect and alter that same reality. If the path is continued upwards as the woman indicates (the same goes for the left turn around Calliope), we will reach the highest point of the staircase, finding ourselves on the same level as the two top muses Clio and Melpomene (Figure 8). When we turn around to regard the staircase from above, the muses are facing us with their backs, a compositional aspect of naturalism frequently employed during the Baroque, dissolving the border between art and life: creating a sense of belonging with the narrative scene and its postulates/agenda, rather than being exterior to it (Figure 9 and 10). Such naturalistic relationship between the visitors and the muses was evidently also perceivable in the contemporaneity the palace construction, as can be seen in an engraving of the staircase by Willem Swidde (1660/1661 – 1697) from the Suecia Antiqua et Hodierna (produced between 1661 – 1715) where a certain kinship is created between the two (Figure 10). In the engraving, the muses and the visitors are mimicking each other and can barely be separated. The sculptures of the muses are given the same level of life-like movements in the depiction, as the real visitors are. They all seem equally alive. A similar impression is given while being in the actual room: walking all the way up from downstairs, we are surrounded by the muses from the first floor up to the second one, just like surely would have been surrounded by other visitors of cour/festivity (as seen in the engraving). The sculptures are life-sized and naturalistically placed in the room: they are facing different directions in a relaxed contrapposto, gazing at different events in the room. Through ascending the staircase, we seem to have been elevated to the sphere of the muses. Beginning with Calliope, Polyhymnia and Apollo, it might be apparent up

here that the staircase has become a sort of Mount Parnassus, the home of the muses. Yet, a visitor back in the time of the creation of the palace must have been aware of who’s home this really was, the Queen Dowager Hedvig Eleonora’s. Initially we were welcomed, somewhat intrusively, by the gesture of her monogram, HERS. Here, at the top of the staircase, at the top floor, we are once again met by her monogram in the lantern paining above us, a painting which is pointed out for us by the woman to the right, the cicerone, in Sylvius’s painting recently discussed. Thus, we are reminded that this Mount Parnassus belongs to the queen dowager and of her position as a powerful patron of the arts and a woman of letters. That such an identity is created for the queen dowager through this event of the room where we are made a part of the artistic centre, becomes even more plausible when seen against the contemporary image of Hedvig Eleonora as a patron of the arts. The same theme is, as an example, employed in Klöcker Ehrenstrahl’s allegory of the queen dowager reigning in the name of Karl XI, which can be found in the palace still today (Figure 31). The painting focuses on Hedvig Eleonora, who is enthroned and holds her hand on the rudder of state, surrounded by personifications of the arts. In the printed description to the painting, the artist makes it evident that the arts act on the order of the queen dowager, carry out her will and that they preserve her name for eternity: “These three arts have thus carried out her Majesty’s most gracious orders, and preserved her Majesty’s fame for posterity.” The arts conceived of a self-evident part of the image of Hedvig Eleonora and was used as an element related to her in the contemporary propaganda. Also, the arts were considered means of achieving something (her orders) and preserving her name for posterity. Thus, that there is an identity created for her as a patron of the arts and a kinship created between her palace and the Mount Parnassus, is further plausible. Here in the staircase, we are invited to mingle with the muses and to climb this elevated sphere, close to the clouds above (Figure 4 and 12, as examples) where we are reminded of this identity of hers.

We are standing at the very top of the staircase, led here by the cicerones on the walls but of course also through the very embedded function of the staircase. Standing up here, alongside Clio and Melpomene, it becomes evident that they both are pointing upwards to the ceiling (just like the woman on the south wall does, Figure 5, 8 and 10). If we follow their directions and turn our heads upwards, Klöcker Ehrenstrahl’s lantern painting becomes apparent (Figure 11 for the painting and 12 for its placement). It depicts the crowning of Hedvig Eleonora’s monogram (HE) by the Roman Gods Minerva and Apollo. The crowning takes place above the clouds, as depicted through cutting of panels in the shape of clouds in the upper part of the vaulted painted ceiling, just were the lantern begins. The vault in extension, depicts to the east Hercules and Fame below Royal Majesty and

84 This I would like to further suggest, with emphasis on the “woman of letters”-part, since a previous idea of Hedvig Eleonora has been that of a woman of the arts, but often in relation to Queen Kristina and therefore not as literate as the latter. On this matter, I suggest Anders Jarlet, “Hedvig Eleonora, Lund University and the learned” in Queen Hedvig Eleonora and the arts: court culture in seventeenth-century Northern Europe, Kristoffer Neville and Lisa Skogh (ed.), Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, London 2017. Also, as a suggestion for further reading on this topic, is Skogh, 2013.


86 As can be read in Snickare, 2004, pp. 183, Tessin the Younger is thought to, due to a set of drawings, have found the inspiration for Klöcker Ehrenstrahl’s crowning-piece during his Roman sojourn 1687-88, that is, after Sylvius had finished the wall paintings. Yet, since this study is not focusing firstly on the intention of the artist but rather on the cultural encounter of image and beholder, such fact is not compromising of the analysis that Sylvius paintings lead us upwards to regard the crowning piece since such is the potential of the finished room.
Virtue. To the west, Royal Majesty and Virtue reappears as a woman enthroned on the clouds with spire and eagle as symbols of power and the royal. Royal Majesty is communicating with a putto who has captured a man, Contempt for Virtue, probably an order by the Royal Majesty due to the gesture of the latter. History is turned against the beholder, holding up a blank sheet of paper (Figure 12). The theme of Hercules together with the Royal Majesty and Virtue as well as Fame, might be seen as a continuation of a narrative we were exposed through after passing Polyhymnia and Calliope: grisaille paintings by Sylvius, depicting the deeds of Hercules along with the walls. After his great deeds, follows his idealized virtue, something which is juxtaposed to that of the Royal Majesty. Further down towards the walls, four medallions infuse the queenly theme as three of them contain portraits of queens: Amalasuntha (circa 495 – 535), Tomyris (sixth century B.C) and Disa (Scandinavian folklore character). The depiction in the fourth medallion is hidden beneath one of the characters of the vault, and cannot be identified. The topic can be understood as the triumph of royal virtue over the vices, a theme which will be further developed in the fourth chapter as it is the very topic of the ceiling of the upper gallery. The ride through the staircase was firstly interpreted as a gesture of hospitality, as we were invited to an elevated sphere of art with the muses on an allegoric Mount Parnassus. Although we are at the top of the divine and virtuous Mount Parnassus, the inability to fully reach the culmination of the staircase, the painting in the lantern and the vault with the royal virtue, becomes apparent from here. Royal Virtue is unreachable for mere subjects of that same crown. Hedvig Eleonora herself is after all the one being crowned by the gods above through the transcendental symbol of her monogram; above the noble guests of palace, surrounded by mythological and ancient queens. The staircase encompasses and functions through a delicate interplay/rhythm of an elevation of the visitor and a reminder that the commissioner still is of higher prominence (further elevated to the sphere of gods and historical queens). The elevation thus also makes apparent the elevated status of this monogram, compared to the first monogram of Hedvig Eleonora on the ground floor. This elevated monogram is literally depicted above the clouds. Painted panel in the shape of clouds separates the lantern in which the crowning takes place, from the rest of the room (Figure 11). A binary opposition is achieved through the voltage: a dichotomy of the divine and profane symbol of Hedvig Eleonora which together embody a totality. Stating that there is a connotation of the divine, apparent in the ceiling painting might seem heretic in the context of a Lutheran seventeenth-century, yet the divine which is suggested here is not a Christian one: it is rather a Classical divine derived from the Greco-Roman mythology. Hedvig Eleonora is given the crown of laurel, a laurel wreath, from Apollo and Minerva. In Roman mythology, Apollo was the God of sun and art and Minerva of wisdom and warfare. The appreciation given to Hedvig Eleonora by the two of them emphasises these qualities in her. In general, the gods of ancient Greece and Rome where in the classicist tradition like the Baroque, rather an expression of the idealized, educated and the virtuous; not god-like in a Christian sense (that type of hubris we leave for her grandson, Karl XII). Hence, Hedvig Eleonora’s crowning by the Greco-Roman gods above the clouds should not be seen as an Apotheosis, but a statement of her virtue and education: a reminder and reproduction of her status as Sweden’s First Lady, higher than us all below. Virtuous, as a stand in for and the very connection to, the Royal Majesty.

I would next like to contextualize such a playful interplay between elevation and submission and look closer into the concept of art of the era. Around the year of 1600, Western European art underwent an emancipation from the rigor of the tradition of allegories. Successively

87 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 48.
freeing art from delivering a solitary message, an increasing number of artists begun using allegories more playfully and pluralistically. Art was more often in interaction with its beholders. A pluralism of interpretation and outcome was notably popular in the Roman Baroque, an artistic milieu familiar to Tessin the Younger and Sylvius. Hence, it is credible that the artistic creation by the mentioned artists could be characterized within such a concept of art favouring pluralism and where meaning was dependent on the social theatre on display in the physical room. Regarding the possibility for the beholders, in extension, to have been familiar with such a concept and able to communicate with the artworks, one needs to dwell somewhat in the education of the noble and their travels. The general level of education of the nobility and their travelling habits as a part of that education, argues for the fact that the Swedish aristocratic audience was receptive for a continental fashion like Baroque art. To a greater extent than before, studying on universities outside of Sweden became crucial to reach higher positions within society (in the new bureaucratic state, becoming civil servant, holding high offices, becoming a Councillor of Realm, etcetera) after one’s studies. To travel, was not only an academic endeavour but also, a mean to learn about the ways of the continent. Thus, the travelling studies also encompassed spending time in the circles of princes, nobles and Swedish diplomats abroad. Such of course led to continental manners being transferred to Sweden, through the very audience who would regard and communicate with the painted performances of the court (like the material in this study): spreading of an understanding of governmental, artistic, ceremonial and festive practices from European princely and noble courts. Also, the travelling noble set up communication networks of their own, with the purpose of spreading learned experiences from abroad. Agents, diplomats, ambassadors and friends exchanged letters, reported back to the core, the person who had set up the network. As an example, De la Gardie acted as such a core, just like Wrangel did. The letters taught the ones back in Sweden of science, art, acquisitions of books and artworks etcetera, but also of ceremonies which the writing part had participated in. The formation and existence of such networks, like De la Gardie’s and Wrangel’s networks, exemplifies that there was a flow of information and a process of spreading continental manners and practices of art, festivity and ceremony, to Sweden; something which one can see the result of, in the nobles’ architectural pursuits.

Returning to the pluralism so popular in the image culture of the seventeenth-century, it can further explain the way the staircase functioned through its structure of being two-folded. This duality can be read as an aesthetical statement of a pluralistic concept of art: there are literally two roads to choose from, two sides of the staircase. Thus, it is my interpretation, both in relation to the character of the palace and to the concept of art as dependent on the beholder, that the artwork’s grip of the beholder is not complete: visitors are theoretically and visually allowed to choose between the two ways to ascend the staircase. A two-folded possibility is prevalent, with the two sides both luring the visitor to them. Yet this two-folded possibility, needs to be seen against another mechanism of the spatial dimensions: the bodily confines. Despite these two ways to choose

88 Such pluralistic understanding of art is discussed by Warwick, 2012. Specifically referred to on page 137-140.
89 Although the artist’s intention is irrelevant from the chosen perspective of performativity, an understanding of a pluralism of interpretation and of the beholder as a co-participant, is plausible also through its popularity in the Roman context. Rome influenced the Swedish court through, for instance, Queen Kristina, Tessin the Younger and Sylvius. Yet not to be forgotten is the influence and understanding of Roman culture through the nobility visiting Italy, bringing home both architectural inspiration and an understanding of ceremonies.
92 Ibid., pp. 200.
from, movement of the palace must have been highly regulated by social decorum and in the end, both roads would lead up to the Gods crowning Hedvig Eleonora’s monogram above us. I would like emphasis the notion of bodily movements in the seventeenth-century with the help of two scholars. Firstly, Kandare stresses the significance of the procession in the seventeenth-century, something which many engravings and drawings attest to. Processions can be said to have demonstrated and negotiated the status of its participants, through aspects of space, movement and positioning individuals/groups. Kandare also introduces the concept of CorporealReality which could be fruitful to have in mind. She states that: “[…] it concerns the capacity of the moving body to make real: to actively – performatively – create and realize, rather than just passively reflect an already existing condition.” Through the concept, she makes a theoretically and historically convincing argument for the performative potency of the bodily movement: the body as a locus for representing identities. Dance (or movement in general, I suggest) was a way to define and refine oneself. The interest lied rather in what the body did, than how it looked. Movement should correspond with identity (or, desired identity). Secondly, the subject of the moving body is addressed by Snickare in his dissertation, through the notion of the processions during the seventeenth-century. The constant battle of power between the nobility and the monarchs, led to several restrictions which limited the nobility’s means of expressing splendour and power, for instance the splendour of the procession during a funeral. Such political restrictions indicate how manifestations of splendour through bodily movement was potent and dangerous: it could both manifest and claim power. The movement of bodies had an inherent performative potency which was of importance for actual rank and status, during time discussed in the thesis. These notions presented by Kandare and Snickare further legitimize the methodological grip of the thesis: to let the movement of the beholder’s body be the point of departure and the perspective from which the analysis proceeds. Although the notion of seventeenth-century as a culture were status was achieved through performance, is not a necessary requirement to apply a theory of performativity, it clues together the methodology and context. To return to the material of this study, the rooms of the palace were very restricted in the possibility to visit. Certain parts were meant to be used for certain types of activities and gatherings which of course also led to exclusion of some and inclusion of others. The very room of the staircase was often bound to the ceremonies of reception. Thus, the element of choice and pluralism embedded in the architecture of the staircase, must been seen juxtaposed to the fact that the staircase is a ceremonial room and that movement of the body was a matter heavily regulated and controlled by the authority. There is a duality here of freedom and confines performed in the staircase. This interplay is also important for the performative outcome and the effectiveness of the rhetoric. The beholder has “chosen”, but is in reality confined, to take this path and to be lead into the submissive relation to Hedvig Eleonora. Due to the element of choice, the forced path seems chosen.

What then, do the interplay of elevation/submission and pluralism/confines which has been exposed so far, create? What does such function mean within the social milieu and what is the potential performative achievement? Which identities and what reality can be created through the
performative event that the same images initiate? My proposal is that the paintings of Sylvius together with the architecture, lead the beholders into participating in the crowning of the monogram and that such can be seen as a tribute and homage to the Queen Dowager Hedvig Eleonora. In an iconographic sense, the laurel wreath represented victory and honour. Further, as it is given to the queen dowager above the clouds from the gods, surely, there is a praising ambient here. But does this representation of homage also produce identity? When the visitor has climbed the stairs and is standing on the top, facing east and with the back against the vestibule, above hovers Hedvig Eleonora (symbolized by her monogram) in a state of triumph and also adoration by the Greco-Roman gods. Depending on what opinion and action is evoked, if the beholder would approve or deny such an image, the performative outcome could succeed or fail. I would like to remind the reader of the example of Queen Kristina from the introduction. Similarly to how the cardinals allowed Queen Kristina to be incensed while seated, meant for them to allow her to heighten herself above the standing cardinals (yet officially ranked above her), the beholders could participate or not participate in the approving ambient. The aspect of choice becomes an integral part of the equation, in the case of Queen Kristina, just like in the case of the staircase of Drottningholm Palace. As previously evoked, through ascending the dual staircase, the beholder has been notified of the inhabitant two-folded-possibility of the artwork. If the beholder would rush out of the palace, horrified of the autocrat message of subordination conveyed, yes, then this performative outcome would have failed. Such is one result of the performance of the room. Yet, such a behaviour appears somewhat belonging to our time, rather than the early modern one: it would be naive to believe that they had much of a choice and that the confines of the autocracy in reality did not control the visitors’ movement in the palace.99 As noted by Persson in the on this matter, much useful dissertation Servants of Fortune, it is evident how Hedvig Eleonora wanted a certain degree of privacy at her court. Through this request, several regulations were made to conceive of a distance around the inner circle surrounding the members of the royal family. This of course meant for the lower classes to be excluded from the court, to no surprise.100 Instead, the societal elite, the aristocracy, was given access, yet a very restricted one.101 The family was foremost reachable within their palaces, when moving between rooms or in church. The Carolean Court was defacto a distant and restricted one. My point, as is stressed by Persson, is that the court was not completely shut off, yet access was restricted. A total shut-off was not possible, as the court was the point of contact for the nobility and royals. The royal family needed the nobility to manifest in front of and the nobility needed to get access to the monarchs.102 The royal family and their exploits was the everyday life of the nobility employed at the court. In Persson’s dissertation we find examples of councillors and counts, not knowing what to do of their day when cour was not held in the palace. Luckily for them, that the Swedish court became more and more open towards the last decades of the seventeenth-century, thanks to the Queen Dowager Hedvig Eleonora and Queen Ulrika Eleonora. After the death of Karl XI, cour hour was introduced two days a week, something which later was extended to two afternoons a week. These times where for dancing, conversing and playing cards in the presence of the royals.103 Hence, although the palace could be visited by the aristocracy accordingly to Hedvig Eleonora’s

100 Persson, 1999, pp. 51.
101 Ibid., pp. 52.
102 Ibid., pp. 55.
103 Ibid., pp. 53.
such was done only with a cicerone or during court when the movement of the aristocracy was a function of that of the royals. As has been previously noted, the staircase was bound to the ceremonies of court life. Looking closer at the engraving by Swidde (Figure 10), we get an indication of the bodily confines related to this very room. In the lower left corner, one sees a procession with people moving downwards. A lady seems to be the centre of the procession and her veil is carried by a page. Two cavaliers further down on her right side are greeting the procession with courtly manners and leading the procession are four halberdiers who emphasise the ceremonial character of the occasion, according to Snickare. The inclusion of the group clearly shows how the room is ceremonial and therefore bound to a certain decorum. In conclusion, bodily movement was fiercely confined and it is unlikely for the visitors to be in position to deny the tribute to Hedvig Eleonora in which they are subordinated to her; a tribute which they are lead into by Sylvius’s images and the decorum of court. The images bring such tribute, taking place in the dimension of the arts, into our physical world through breaking down binary oppositions like art/reality as described, by means of naturalism, cicerones and the cropping of the image. Evidently, the situation is ambivalent: the staircase says for us to choose, while access in reality was heavily controlled by decorum of the court.

The artworks disguise the confines and decorum, as a chosen road. This is where the potency of the performance lays. I want to propose (as implied by my theory) that by controlling the movements of the body in the room and creating a scenography to which the body can relate (interplay), you could also control identity. The juxtaposition of choice and confines embedded in the spatiality, makes the power of the queen dowager prevalent. The architecture and conformities of decorum, together with the performative act of the artworks, leads the visitor upwards, where they are forced into the adoration of the queen dowager as a patron of the arts.

Still awaiting is a contextualization of the tribute that occurred. What was a tribute in seventeenth-century Sweden? The contemporary Swedish word for tribute, hyllning is etymologically derived from the word huldning, which in the seventeenth-century encompassed more than its current denotation. It indicated more than an appreciation, but rather a grand and foremost formal swearing of loyalty and allegiance to the regent. In the light of this, the adoration and tribute of Hedvig Eleonora as crowned by the gods above the beholder, becomes a highly political statement and a negotiation of allegiance to the queen dowager. A re-negotiation of the current status and identity, where the subordinates are ranked bellow, yet are loyal to, Hedvig Eleonora. As Kandare puts it:

I understand social status in Western Europe of Christina’s time as on the one hand a fairly definite and stable rank or title acquired by (for example) birth, marriage or appointment, but the currency of which – its value and effectiveness in real-life interactions – was not predetermined or fixed. Rather, the actual meaning of a social position was in a state of constant flux since it was always relative to something else, being

104 Hedvig Eleonora complained about commoners travelling to her palaces, crossing the courtyards, looking through windows, forcing themselves into the church during service and taking up seats reserved for the nobility, something which led to even harsher restrictions in 1713. This “common populace” was not desirable, only people “of quality, or similarly interested and well-bred people” should be able to visit and see her palaces. From Persson, 1999, pp. 51 and Riksarkivet, Kungligt arkiv, K 129, Änkedrottning Hedvig Eleonoras koncepter Drottningholm Juli 1709
107 Hedvig Eleonora might not have been a regent per se, yet she was considered somewhat of an extension of the regent, especially during the years when her grandson Karl XII was away from Sweden and during the Regency’s in the name of her son and grandson.
in every new situation dependent on context and the other actors with whom the social position was never really stabilized, but might rather be thought of as a 'continuously renewed problem' [...] Frequently, participants found themselves having to – or being able to – assert their rights in the moment, by consciously staging their positions in the ways that embodied performance enables.  

The quote from Kandare gives further context to how Sylvius’s paintings function to reproduce a certain image of the queen dowager; this function of the paintings speaks of Hedvig Eleonora’s constant need to reproduce and re-value the currency of her position (just like all other at court). It was never to be taken for granted and needed to be constantly re-enacted, performed, lived and created in the encounter with her subjects. That is, at the court.

The upper vestibule

When the staircase has been ascended and left behind, we enter into the upper vestibule which is on the same level as the top muses are. The upper vestibule is rectangular and has openings into the northern and southern guard rooms, besides the arcade which partially separates the room from the staircase; the arcade under which we have just recently passed. The vestibule is visually and physically connected to the staircase through that open arcade, but also through the continuation of painted decoration and a similar choice of materials and colours: the same maroon marbling and white stucco decorations by Carlo Carove which can be seen in the staircase, can be found in the vestibule. Busts of Roman emperors, copies from the eighteenth-century, are standing along the walls, yet as they were installed in the nineteenth-century they will not be incorporated in an analysis. Instead, busts of Geatish kings by Millich, are original with the palace and were there during Hedvig Eleonora’s era and will be included. When we enter the room, the busts of Geatish kings meet us. They are placed above us in individual niches. The inclusion of the Geats in the upper vestibule surely meant much more for a seventeenth-century beholder than it does for us today. They are an example of the Gothicism, a movement which grew quite strong in the Nordic courts of the seventeenth-century, not least the Swedish one. Gothicism is an interesting chapter of its own, but I will here shortly account for the parts of it which is found relevant by me as the author for this art historical study.

The Swedish Gothicism was in the seventeenth-century a part of a very lively and patriotic historiographic project of glorifying the Swedish heritage. In the fifteenth-century, with creative new interpretations of medieval and classical sources, a genealogy is created prompting two things: the paradise of the Bible was located in what we today call Sweden and the civilization of Europe was nothing more than the offspring of this land.  

The real history of Gothicism is of course not linear as it is presented in this short historiography; Gothicism as a discourse was the product of several writing subjects and intersected with historical events. I will here attempt to summarize shortly the aspects of Gothicism most important for this study. To begin with, Johannes Magnus set up a genealogy going from the Abrahamic Patriarch Noah, to early medieval Swedish kings in his posthumously printed *Alla göta- och sveakonungars historia* (1554). Accordingly to the Book of Genesis, the land of Noah was divided on his sons, where Japheth was given the Nordic areas where there Paradise once was. This is where Swedish early modern scholars intertwine the stories of the Bible, with proto-history of the kings in what we today call Sweden. Japheth’s grandson Sveno, became the first king of Svea Kingdom (a kingdom within present day Sweden, as was the Geatish kingdom and this is where their stories become rooted in each other).

The ideas of Sweden being the origin of the Paradise, through Noah and Japheth, is taken further by Rudbeck. As the land of Japheth suddenly became overpopulated, the Swedish people spread over the globe and populated areas which would hold empires and civilizations like Ancient Greece and Rome. Gothicism thus presented Sweden as the origin of these civilizations which were highly idealized in the Baroque era. The ambitions of making Baroque Sweden a worthy heir to the glory of the Geats, Greeks and Romans, where inscribed in a Carolen general quest for the autocracy and the maintaining of it. The patriotic discourse of Gothicism did at times connect to the current royal dynasty of Pfalz, both through sculptures like those in the staircase and vestibule, but also in writing. On an illustration of Rudbeck’s great work *Atlantica* (1677 – 1702), the spreading of Sweden over the rest of the world is exemplified with a map where Sweden is centralized and from which a tree grows (it projects straight out from the map). The branches become humanity and on the highest leaf on the three is written *Carl XI*. The first version was published in 1679, amid Karl XI’s quest for the autocracy and war on Denmark. What was the foremost political punch of all of this? That the Swedish lands were the origin of civilization and culture, surely, but also a reminder of the glorious regents of the seventeenth-century who were heirs to that heritage. The genealogy gave the fairly young superpower Sweden and its reigning dynasty Pfalz, an ancient heritage of glory. There is this dualism over time, where the effect of these ideas need both the glorious past and presence to achieve something. Volatile times like after the death of Karl X Gustav in 1660 or during and after the war of the 1670s as examples, the power battle between the nobility (council) and the royals, were intensified; uncertain times in which new grounds could be gained but also, old territories lost. Volatile periods, like the last decades of seventeenth-century, fuelled the propaganda machines like building pursuits and history writing and both these areas seems to be effected by Gothicism. The contemporary reign could be strengthened with connections to a glorious past.

After this detour, I would like to raise a question in relation to the material: now that the architecture of the staircase and the paintings by Sylvius has led the beholder to regard these busts of Geatish kings, what might they represent and perform for an educated seventeenth-century beholder? Through the inclusion of the Geatish kings, the idea of Sweden as the origin of civilization is embedded in the narrative and performance of Drottningholm Palace. We must bear in mind that the beholder has just recently left the staircase in which he or she has been included in the tribute and
pledge of allegiance to Hedvig Eleonora. Her name was written in the ceiling and she is the continuum of the dynasty which now rules the origin of civilization: the Geatish land. The visitor has travelled to Drottningholm through nature and more nature and suddenly, this red gem of civilization appears: juxtaposed to the nature surrounding the palace when we approach it from the seaside, the effect is quite astonishing. When we enter the staircase, portraits of Geatish kings are placed in niches, which might be the second thing which hits the eye just after the invasive monogram of Hedvig Eleonora. When approaching the top floor, we are made aware of the muses and Apollo surrounding us. This palace seems to be holding Mount Parnassus within it. Ancient queens are in medallions of the staircase vault. When we have entered the upper vestibule, Hedvig Eleonora’s manifestation of her home as Mount Parnassus and herself as a patron of the arts is juxtaposed to more portraits of Geatish kings and idea of Sweden being the origin of civilization. Hedvig Eleonora and Drottningholm Palace are civilization, culture and power, embodied. In the staircase and on this upper floor, civilization finds its peak.  

Juxtaposed as such, Hedvig Eleonora, the Carolean autocracy’s contemporary land and Mount Parnassus which is the Drottningholm Palace, are connected to the origin of civilization through the discourse of Gothicism entering the rooms. Together, they embody and suggest the notion of how the Pfalz dynasty with Hedvig Eleonora as a representative, manages the Swedish heritage of civilization and culture. This performance is continued as we are visually led into the Baroque Garden outside the western windows of the vestibule (C in Figure 1). There we can see more results of her governing the origin of civilization. As the view through the windows of the garden becomes almost like three easel paintings hanging on the wall the theme of nature which has travelled with the beholder, is suddenly once again brought into the palace, but in the form of absolute tamed nature. Beginning with the wilderness outside, continuing with the transgression from wild trees into tamed man-made trees of piers and columns in stone with marbling, the same theme is evoked in the vestibule when the beholder gazes through the windows to the west, into the tamed nature of the vast Baroque garden. The garden, which was reduced in the nineteenth-century to the current appearance, must have been even more grandiose originally, although some of the fountain constructions were not fully realized until centuries later. Nevertheless, the vista becomes an outlook towards as well as an indication of, the infinite potency of Hedvig Eleonora and the magnitude of her living (see figure 13). Since the very idea of the garden encompasses life and change, the power to maintain and control it into the Baroque garden must be especially fierce (as the current reign evidently is, judging from the vista). This I would like to further elaborate through the concept of wild versus tamed nature in seventeenth-century Europe. During the Baroque, the fashion for landscape architecture turned the garden terrains into artistic and technological systems of parterre with ponds, fountains and hedges like architecture. This fashion is somewhat recognizable in today’s Drottningholm, but to understand how it may have appeared from the vestibule around the year 1700, we need to take help from contemporary etchings; this as later times have not cared for the Baroque garden too intensively. Although Suecia Antiqua et Hodierna by Erik Dahlberg (1625 – 1703) might exaggerate somewhat, it does give us an important access to the eyes of the late seventeenth-century Sweden. Furthermore, as

---

114 As an example, art historical authority on the Carolean Era, Ellenius, has explored the relation between Gothicism and images in seventeenth-century Sweden: Allan Ellenius, Den atlantiska anatomin: Ur bildkonstens idhistoria, Skogs grafiska AB, Malmö 1984. As might have been made apparent in this section, I use civilization and culture in a similar way because they both stand as counterparts to nature in the discussed context. My point is that they both represent humanity’s attempt to separate itself from the world of nature as a way to express eternal and absolute power.
it was commissioned during the Carolean era, it provides us with a primary source of how this reign wanted Sweden to appear. It speaks of ideals and political aims, which of course also shaped attempts and interests of the time. When regarding the garden both through the windows today and in the engravings (Figure 13), I would use the adjectives vast and tamed to describe it. The pattern (Figure 13 and 14) which appears is symmetrical and right-angled as well as is constructed by long isles for promenade between the arrangements of plants and hedges, all departing from a centre aisle. This isle projects from the pond lying closest to the palace, in a matter which up from the vestibule must have appeared almost endless: viewed from here, the axial pattern of isles is on the vertical, infinite. The vastness of the garden is surrounded by wild and untamed nature on the sides. As theorized by several before me, for instance Johannesson, the tamed nature of the Baroque garden reminded the visitors of the superior commissioner, as well as was a tribute to the human potency to, with virtue and wisdom, control and beautify its surrounding. Another perspective on the theme of nature in Drottningholm is presented by Ahlund. He states that Klöcker Ehrenstrahl was inspired by the landscape paintings of Claude Lorrain (1604/05 – 1682) in his own work, Black Grouses Courting (1675) which was placed originally in the Drottningholm Palace (now at Nationalmuseum in Stockholm). In using the form of Lorrain’s landscape painting, that is the idealizing classical tradition, he elevates and idealises the Swedish landscape. Ahlund means that Klöcker Ehrenstrahl in this sense performs a more complicated notion of nature here; not only a counterpart to the civilized culture but also, as a reflection of Swedish greatness. A two-folded understanding. Due to the vicinity between Ahlund’s and this study’s material, such idea is worth considering; to implement Ahlund’s idea of Klöcker Ehrenstrahl’s landscapes, on the “framing” of the garden with the windows and bringing it into the room like easel paintings. The juxtaposition of the wild nature and the strict controlled nature of the garden, stresses the feeling of Drottningholm being the very essence of the opposite of the forest around us: culture and civilization. But the Baroque tamed garden also materializes the idealization of the Swedish nature, similarly to Klöcker Ehrenstrahl’s painting; especially when framed by the windows and brought into the palace. As our journey to and within the palace so far has thematized the climbing of Mount Parnassus, the same theme is here evoked as we gaze out the window. Just as Johannesson suggests, the controlled nature of the parterre garden embodies, performs and proves the truth of how Hedvig Eleonora’s home and livging is the home of art, civilization and culture, as a counterpart to nature. We can see, beside the triumph of culture over nature in the livging, the absolutism and vastness of her control in the infiniteness of the garden. Further, the complete harmony and peacefulness might have reminded us how Hedvig Eleonora has restored here, the idealized Geatish paradise. The idealization of the court, palace and lands is further infused by the Hercules sculpture (1590 – 1594) by Adriaen de Vries (1556 – 1626). Representing not only, through being a war bounty in 1648 from the Wallenstein Palace in Prague in the Thirty-year-war, the strength of the military deeds, but also a long tradition of idealization practices. To place Hercules sculptures in gardens was a well-established Roman tradition during the Renaissance and Baroque, evoking the ancient myth of Hercules stealing Hera’s golden apples from the garden of the Hesperides. The Roman tradition was appropriated in in a Swedish contemporary culture, after the Roman sojourn of

115 The garden is surely an interesting chapter of its own, also incorporated in ceremonies of the court, yet as the thesis departs from Sylvius’s paintings and is further centred around the movement within the palace, I will not look at the garden from within it.


117 Ahlund, 2017, pp. 95.
the noble.\textsuperscript{118} The divine garden was according to the myth located farthest to the west just as the sculpture of Hercules and the garden in itself is placed to the west of the palace.\textsuperscript{119} Letting Hercules enter the Baroque the garden of Drottningholm just like he entered the divine garden of Hesperides, creates a kinship between the two gardens. Once again, bringing the virtuous and elevated classical divine into Hedvig Eleonora’s, seemingly eternal, provinces and land.

While it is most certainly the case that nationalism is more explicitly a discourse of Modern Europe and that the people of the European Baroque were farmers, councillors, noble or maybe belonging to a certain province rather than being “Swedish”, we can find elements in the seventeenth-century discussing somewhat similar matters as “the nation”. It might seem anachronistic, but Ahlund stresses that: “[…] nature was intertwined with court culture, dynastic manifestation, and the early formation of a national identity during the late Era of Greatness in Sweden.”\textsuperscript{120} He situates the birth of elevated and idealized landscape paintings (like \textit{Black Grouses Courting}), in a discourse on national identity, together with the Gothicism discussed earlier and the internationally aimed PR-project \textit{Suecia antiqua et Hodierna}.\textsuperscript{121} Together, he means that such discourse is part of an early formation of national identity and the very concept of the nation, something which went hand in hand with dynastic issues. In the context of Drottningholm, it is clear that Hedvig Eleonora, commissioning both the \textit{Suecia antiqua et Hodierna} (through the Regency for her son) and the palace, was aware of the concept of public relations, whether it had to do with the image of herself, her dynasty or of her country. As discussed in this section, the idealized landscape of the tamed Baroque garden can be seen as, not only a counterpart to the wilderness outside of it, or as a performance of the commissioner’s power and civilization/culture, but also as a formation of national identity and an idealization of that nation. A formation of an idea of the ideal Sweden which corresponds to Hedvig Eleonora’s commissioning of \textit{Suecia antiqua et Hodierna}. On the matter of the great work of engravings, its auteur Dahlberg said: ”foreigners should be able to see how much magnificence and beauty there is in our fatherland.”\textsuperscript{122} It is obvious that there occurred a creation of a self-image of Sweden, a national identity, as the quote supposes an international audience gazing in our direction. When Hedvig Eleonora’s courtiers regarded the greatness of the garden, it potentially could have appeared not only a manifestation of the queen dowager, but also a glorification of the court and the subjects which are under the wings of the dynasty.

If we for a moment leave the garden aside and lift our gaze upwards, the painted ceiling by Sylvius is made apparent. The ceiling is of contemporary Roman heritage and influence and the plafond depicts, al fresco, \textit{The Gods of Mount Olympus} (Figure 15).\textsuperscript{123} The plafond is surrounded by illusionary architecture in grisaille technique. In the corners of the vaulted ceiling are four allegoric compositions representing \textit{Faith}, \textit{Hope}, \textit{Love} and \textit{Justice}. In between them, two young and two elderly male figures are fighting against and winning over the \textit{Lusts} (Figure 16). I would like to shortly stop here, to reflect upon the aspect of the Baroque illusory technique employed. The vault is a compound of painted architecture in the grisaille-technique which frames the plafond itself. Sylvius is thought to

\textsuperscript{118} Bortolozzi, 2015, pp. 32.
\textsuperscript{120} Ahlund, 2017, pp. 88.
\textsuperscript{121} Ibid., pp. 95-96.
\textsuperscript{122} Erik Dahlberg, quoted from Ahlund, 2017, pp. 96. “Utlännningar bör ha se, huru mycket stort och vackert finnes inom vårt fäderneland.”
have been active in this room during 1687. Despite the frame separating the two parts of the ceiling, there is an escalation or a successive transition between the three medias in the room. Beginning at our level, we are standing in the physical room, in the physical world, surrounded by architecture: stone walls with yellow marbling at the time of Hedvig Eleonora. If we just elevate our gaze slightly, the yellow marbling has transgressed into a brightly coloured painted architecture. To a Baroque contemporary beholder, the illusory transition between physical walls with painted marble and a painted architecture in the vault above, must have been apparent, as it should be, accordingly to the idea of un bel composto. This beautiful compound, creates a bridge between the physical architecture and the painting above, which in extension brings the plafond painting closer, being bridged over through the grisaille paintings. The plafond painting is brought to our world, since the limits between physical reality and painted reality are blurred; the dichotomy of art and reality is destabilized. This leads us to the actual plafond. The painting is quite different in character from the earlier discussed paintings by Sylvius and takes on a more assisting role in this room (as opposed to Sylvius paintings in the staircase). Yet such is, as I suggest, the function of these images: they communicate with its surrounding in an interplay of voices, some louder than others. This ceiling fresco does not impose on or initiate asymmetrical communication with the beholder quite as directly as seen in the other paintings by Sylvius so far. There are figures which do gaze in our direction though, for instance the man seated to the lower right. He leads us into the narrative as a cicerone, invites us to regard the group. Yet these figures are not as coherently guiding us through the intra communication. Instead, I interpret them as rather inviting us into their narrative, making their reality in to ours. After being invited through the gaze of the mentioned god, we are left alone, in the midst of all these gods and goddesses; further, although binary oppositions like art/reality are destabilized (through the man gazing straight at us but also, the illusion of transgression between architectural physical space and the painted illusion in the vault) it is still evident that the group is seated above us and are un-reachable. They are on the same level as Hedvig Eleonora’s monogram above the staircase and are just like her, separated from us, but they crown us with their presence. They crown the court with their presence of divinity, but this presence is presented to us en masse. There are 37 of them and they rise above us, some of them disappear into the background. In summarize, the effect of a crowning presence of divinity is directed on us en masse, rather than as a precise attempt to contact and effect the beholder in mood, movement or opinion. Due to this, it is this mass effect which will continue into the last part of this chapter.

I have already in the previous chapter implied the totality which is materialized by the staircase: the voltage between the (classically) divine and the worldly, implying the totality of Hedvig Eleonora’s livgeding, influence and persona. Educated, virtuous and sophisticated, yet with comprehensive control of her surroundings. Standing here in the vestibule, this concept of totality suddenly gets another dimension: one of time. As the beholder has moved through the staircase, this bodily movement when reaching the upper vestibule, is made aware of the past of Sweden, through the Geatish kings surrounding us. An aspect of the past is brought into the artwork of the room. That such is a part of the historiography project of Gothicism is nothing new. As previously stated, the very project of Gothicism encompassed the aspect of time and of the past, through attempting to glorify the presence. My suggestion is to more actively incorporate the bodily movement into this equation: we have moved in the presence, up the staircase and we have seen the “historical” Sweden

---

124 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 50.
with the Geatish kings around us, yet somewhat above us, inaccessible, just like the past is. Further in front of us, ahead of us, is the garden which embodies and performs control, culture and beauty, but there is also, the very concept of change. From up here the garden is far ahead and is yet to be reached; it is in front of us and could be seen as the future. In this equation, we are bound to the presence, to the court of Hedvig Eleonora, which is glorified by the greatness of the Geatish past and the tamed, controlled future in front of us. In this sense, what is conveyed here is not only a totality of divine and worldly as previously suggested, but also of pasts, presence and future. Kurt Johannesson states in his dissertation that the staircase together with the upper vestibule is a fusion of antique idealization and Gothicism into a national heroism and I am not one to disagree.\footnote{Johannesson, 1968, pp. 262.} In the upper vestibule, the notion of the contemporary Swedish authority, embodied by the Pfalz dynasty, is expressed. Through the staircase, we have been made aware of the artistic centre of civilization which Hedvig Eleonora’s palace is. In the upper vestibule, the glory of the past and the future emerge in one presence: the Geatish and Greco-Roman heritage as Swedish heritage (as told by the Gothicism) meet with the future embodied by the garden ahead of us. They intersect in contemporary Sweden: the Carolean Sweden.

Lastly, I would like to address the figures in the vaulted part of the ceiling: four allegoric and illusory painted sculptures representing Faith, Hope, Love and Justice, in between which two young and two elderly male figures are fighting against and winning over the lusts. This view of the grisaille painting above the door which depicts men winning over the lusts, is likely to be the last thing that a visitor sees before entering the upper north guard room (D in Figure 1). The grisailles paintings are juxtaposed to the monogram of Hedvig Eleonora below (Figure 16). The truth and reality presented to the beholder, I suggest to be understood as follows: the vestibule has in a way filtered out the vices from the court. It has acted as a threshold where the virtue, classical gods, power and glory which have been displayed, have transformed the person moving in the room. What is left, and the same must go for the visitors, is the virtuous and glorious court of the queen dowager and her dynasty. Here, we are not so much pushed or forced to move (as in the staircase), but rather tempted into the apartments of the upper floor which so far has been suggested to offer astonishing culture, splendour and foremost, virtue, for whoever will enter. Thus, what such a beholder might bring into the next room, is this triumph over lust and vice which has occurred before their arrival at the court. Certainly, the image has the possibility to both impress and tempt the beholder. Impress with the postulate that such a defeat of the lust is related to the queen dowager through the monogram, but also tempt with the element of excitement; of the virtue of the Pfalz court.
III. The Upper North Guard Room

“Court life is like a fire, too close, one burns oneself, too far away, one freezes”\textsuperscript{126}
- Johan Adler Salvius to Magnus Gabriel De la Gardie, 30\textsuperscript{th} of June 1649

The Four Seasons and the masquerade of 1689

The upper north guard room is not spoken of as a guard room in any of the inventories before 1724.\textsuperscript{127} These indications of the function of the room matches the more general European use of a guard room in the era discussed in the thesis; it was not until the eighteenth-century when guard rooms were used exclusively as such. Instead, in the seventeenth-century they often had a somewhat wider definitions and use. The space could act as a guard room whenever court business would take place in the apartment behind it, but it could also act as a room which in itself had a ceremonial value, in as an example, building up excitement for what would occur inside the apartment. Beside those two functions, the room of course also acted as an official entrance to the royal apartments.\textsuperscript{128} Hence, although the upper north guard room had a security function in Hedvig Eleonora’s time, it is also evident that it was an entrance and a waiting room with a ceremonial value. Therefore, it could be enlightening to analyse the ritual and performative aspect of Sylvius’s artworks, with regard to such ceremonial practice, as it could also shed light on the usage of guard rooms in the turn of the eighteenth-century. If one begins to address the aesthetical appearance of the guard room, there is a difference in rank between the upper north one and the lower north one (the same goes for the south ones). This is indicated by architectural refinements: the walls of the upper one are sectioned with Ionic half-columns, as opposed to the less ornamented order in the lower apartments (Figure 18). Sculptor Giovanni Carove was responsible for the half-column-sectioning, as well as the corniche. Today we can see the trompe l’œil trophies in gold between the half-column which were added after 1744 and thus will not be included in the analysis.\textsuperscript{129} In the painted ceiling, Sylvius has depicted The Four Seasons and the story of Cronos (Figure 17). In the vaulted part of the ceiling, Sylvius has painted illusory sculptures representing the same seasons under painted arches; arches which behind the

\textsuperscript{126} Printed in AB Carlsson, ”Adler Salvius såsom rådgivare åt Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie” in Personhistorisk tidskrift, 12, 1910, pp. 151. ”Hofflefwerne är som een eld, alt för när, bränner man sigh, longt ther ifrån, fryser man”.

\textsuperscript{127} Alm, 2004, pp. 214.

\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., pp. 219.

\textsuperscript{129} Ibid., pp. 216.
illusory and sculptural seasons provide vistas towards the sky. This quadratura painting is separated from the plafond by a golden frame which in each of the corners of the room, is being held up by two painted caryatids. All through the vault curls a delicate flower garland, achieving a joint frame to the whole artwork of the painted vault and plafond.

I shall begin to analyse The Four Seasons while Cronos will be looked into later in the same chapter. In the narrative scene of The Four Seasons we find Spring as a nymph, sitting furthest down with Zephyrus (the western or spring wind) behind her. Closest to Spring, we find the winged Summer. Her wings are like those of a butterfly and under her arm she carries a sheaf. She is turned away from us and we cannot see her face but she seems to be directed inwards and upwards in the image; They all seem to be regarding Autumn, who is located above Spring, Zephyrus and Summer, to the right. She carries apples and blossoms under her arm (possibly projecting from a cornucopia) and grapes in her hand. Winter is represented as an old man and a woman, both in winter gowns, warming themselves from the heat of a fire. There are peacocks and monkeys in the illusionary arches surrounding the plafond, which are believed to be real features of the court of Hedvig Eleonora.130 It is also believed that the allegorical program was invented by Tessin the Younger, similarly to the other frescos by Sylvius’s hand. It is further understood that this specific ceiling, was planned in connection to the preparation of a birthday celebration, a responsibility not uncommon to the royal architect. In 1689 the same Tessin was appointed to plan a masquerade131 where the guests and courtiers would be dressed like the Four Seasons and compete in pleasing the royals, all in celebration of Hedvig Eleonora’s birthday. For the occasion, Tessin organized a ballet, in which the overture was a tribute to the royal family; more specifically, it thematized the royal family’s idealized virtue achieving harmony in god’s creation. Also in the ballet, the seasons were to compete in who pleased the royals better. The ballet was an interpretation of Charles Le Brun’s woven tapestries Les Saisons. The festivity was never realized, but Sylvius’s painting was. He signed it in 1692.132

The Baroque way of narrating has been ascribed a naturalistic character, with the aim of making the beholder both relate emotionally and become an intrinsic part of the narrative. Although the naturalistic features in the painting here might not be as characteristic as for instance Sylvius’s painted figures in the staircase, they still exhibit such a naturalistic aim to eliminate the border between physical and illusionary space as well as to include the beholder in the narrative of the paintings. That is, in different ways, destabilizing the binary opposition of art/reality. If we return to The Four Seasons by Sylvius with the chosen method, the relationship between artwork and beholder is a crucial aspect of how the aristocracy is admitted into such behaviour. If we once again take help from Kemp’s method, a cicerone is a guiding figure who indicates not only what to look at, as seen in the staircase, but also indicates how to relate to a certain scene through admitting the beholder into a certain point of view or status. In this asymmetrical communication with an implicit beholder, the figures are guiding us inside the intra communication, rather than demarcating our spatial path further in the

130 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 55.
131 Regarding the concept of the masquerade here, there is need for a definition of the usage of the term. The occasion of 1689 is in many ways very similar to the festivity of a masque, yet the masque implies a whole set of connotation which cannot with certainty be ascribed this specific festivity. Thus, I use the term masquerade. It is clear that the festivity of 1689 did have a directed overall narrative, that of The Four Seasons, yet how intensively the participants would have been directed in singing and dancing, or possibly only watching the royal children doing such, is not clear. What we know is that Tessin the younger planned a ballet an overture to the occasion, but how fiercely directed the festivity was is still uncertain.
room. Spatially though, they include us in the world of the artwork and simultaneously, impose their world and views, on us. To begin with, the painting exhibit a quite apparent cicerone and point of departure as Spring is facing us, meeting our gaze and leading us into the narrative scene. Just behind Spring, closely put together and dressed in identical attributes as the former, to almost make them into one and the same figure, is Zephyrus. Zephyrus picks up our gaze and leads it a head from Spring through their exterior kinship and then tosses us further through gazing in a different direction herself: towards Autumn. Similarly, Summer, who is seated in the direction of Zephyrus’s gaze on the way towards Autumn, is facing us with her back and does by that mean create a casual and naturalistic ambient; making us feel as if the events of the ceiling are not played out on a stage, but in the reality which we are a part of. Through these tools of including the beholder in the narrative the painting, the border between art and life is dissolved; art is no longer exterior to reality. In such situation of destabilized oppositions, new ideas/truths/power relations can be created accordingly to Fischer-Lichte’s theory. In this case, the artwork’s beliefs and identities are imposed on us. To declare how, I will begin with Autumn, who seems to have been made the centre of attention here. Spring is regarding her and it is also plausible that Summer is focusing on Autumn as she is turned inwards and slightly upwards. Also the woman in the Winter-duo, seems to be turned towards Autumn. The conclusion of the direction and play of gazes, of the intra communication in which we are inscribed, is that Autumn has become something to look at. We take part in making Autumn the centre of attention, in creating a level of excitement around her. Autumn has been made the main event and centre of the narrative also in the physical room, as it has become one with the illusory space above. She is slightly separated from the rest and is taking on a more prominent role than the others. She is hovering elegantly in the air and is gracefully looking down on Spring, Summer, Zephyrus and the rest of the room. Autumn is conceived as elegant and designated from the others. As the narrative of the image is believed to be invented as a backdrop to Tessin’s plan for the ballet and birthday celebration, it might be useful to account for the fact that Autumn would have been conceived as the most gracious and noble of all seasons in the ballet, something which corresponds well with and supports the analysis above.

Autumn is the centre of the narrative, both in the moment when the painting meets the beholder (as the painting emerges as a performative event) in the masquerade and in its ballet.

Beside these cicerones, there is a striking usage of ambiguous roles in the encounter of the masquerade of 1689 and the physical painting, which connects to the making of Autumn into the centre of attention. The narrative of the masquerade and the ballet as well as the fresco in the ceiling, are suddenly intertwined as the narratives intersect (both consists of actors/characters representing the Four Seasons and both glorify Autumn/queen dowager). Just like with the formalistic aspects of the artwork, it is neither regarding narrative and actors, evident where the limit of the artwork lays. The actors of the masquerade are not only actors of a social festivity, but also members of the aristocracy, beholding the palace and its interiors. This ambiguity is another feature which admits the beholder into the ideas/truths/power relations of the narrative, through performing the deconstruction of the dichotomy art/reality. As the visitors are playing the roles of those in the ceiling, the ceiling figures guide them in what role that is; a role or character glorifying the greatest season, Autumn, making her the centre of attention. Through the cicerones, the naturalistic composition and the corresponding theme of The Four Seasons, the beholder is admitted into the fixed narrative where Spring, Summer and Winter, together with Zephyrus, are glorifying Autumn. In this sense,
dichotomies of art/ beholder, actor/audience and reality/ art are broken down; beholder and figures of the ceiling painting all become a part of one big narrative. In this in-between-space, new truths are accordingly with Fischer-Lichte’s performativity theory, in creation. Johannesson also claims that Autumn suitably enough, was the queen dowager’s favourite season and the season she was born during, something which creates a certain bond between the birthday celebration of Hedvig Eleonora and the narrative scene celebrating Autumn. \(^{134}\) Thus, through the performative encounter, the idea of Hedvig Eleonora’s sovereignty is reproduced. When the picture is a celebration of Autumn and Autumn in the social situation is represented by Hedvig Eleonora, simultaneously as the invited members of the aristocracy find themselves dressed to match the celebration scene in the ceiling, they are suddenly forced into celebration of the physical Autumn: Hedvig Eleonora. Whatever the visitors’ real opinions would be on the queen dowager in celebration, those are set aside for the theatre on display in the room where she is being celebrated as the most splendid of all. Through a certain social context, that of the festivity in the honour of the queen dowager, the cropping of the image is by no means defined by the frame. Through letting the theme of masquerade (the social context) match the physical painting and vice versa, the social context is included in the image and the narrative of the image included in the social event; they cannot be separated from each other. If the image is a fragment of a totality, the totality is the social context of the queen dowager. The result of such a performative encounter between art and reality as an event, is that the aristocracy celebrates and elevates Hedvig Eleonora, as the designated and most splendid one. \(^{135}\) If this mechanism of admitting the beholder into the celebration of Hedvig Eleonora, is regarded with the mechanism of the staircase in mind, it can be seen as a confirmation of the pledging of allegiance and the glorifying tribute which took place here; a re-affirmation of that performance and its results. An iteration of the construction of the power relation where the nobility is subordinated to the queen dowager. As the visitors have continued through the staircase, not opposing the message of Hedvig Eleonora as crowned by the Greco-Roman gods as a patron of the arts and the mother of a superpower as well as the heir of the Geats; the visitors have, through proceeding into the vestibule and then further into the north guardroom to take part in a festivity, in a way obeyed such messages.

There is another aspect of this narrative which is yet to be included in the analysis. Johannesson has interpreted the seasons in the painted narrative to be holding gifts. For whom these gifts are is not specified, but when I attempt to see this feature in the painting, it cannot with absolute certainty be distinguished by me. The season are holding objects, sure, yet these can also be interpreted as mere attributes for identification of the different seasons. As an example, from under Autumn’s left arm, apples and different vegetation projects (possibly from a cornucopia). In her right hand we see her holding grapes upwards or almost as if projecting them out from the painting. Although these objects are not unquestionably gifts (in the for of our contemporary wrapped presents), it is not unbelievable, for a beholder at Hedvig Eleonora’s court to have seen them as such: as the presenting and delivering of abundance and richness, which is not far from the idea of a gift. It should be noted that there was a well-established practice of giving gifts to the monarch as a way of presenting yourself useful, obedient and pledging your allegiance to the same monarch. \(^{136}\) Furthermore, the same interpretation is encouraged by the fact that the planned event below was supposed to have been a

\(^{134}\) Johannessen, 1968, pp. 121.

\(^{135}\) Similar pictorial tools to make the view feel as if he or she is a part of, not excluded from, what he or she is looking at, has been discussed by van Eck, 2014, pp. 73-80.

birthday celebration. Surely, with the backdrop of those traditions of the court, the painting can be interpreted as if the seasons are offering their attributes as gifts, to the person in celebration below. If we add this analysis to what has been written so far, the Four Seasons who are holding presents in their hands, can be seen as an extension of the visiting members. If presenting gifts was a common practice at court and such practice took place in the artistic reality of the ceiling as well as that reality is imposed upon the physical reality of the visitors, the visitors become incorporated in the relation which is negotiated when a subject is giving a present to his or her monarch; that is, in the action which signals/ performs obedience to the ruler. As an interesting fact, Count Erik Sparre (1665 – 1726) presented a monkey to Hedvig Eleonora shortly after having become somewhat of a hero through saving her jewellery in the fire of the Stockholm Castle in 1697.\footnote{Persson, 1999, pp. 174.} I am not proposing that this monkey from Sparre is symbolized by the monkeys in the ceiling (the ceiling precedes the fire), nor that this ceiling gave Sparre the idea behind his gift. I am instead attempting to show how the painted ceiling and the events below mirror and reflect each other. What is included is to match the customs of reality and what is painted to create reality and negotiate its terms, is not so easily distinguished. My idea is that the painted ceiling becomes not only a guidance of how the aristocracy should behave, but also attempts and has the potential to control the behaviour of the group. As the seasons are giving gifts to the celebrated below as well as flattering and glorifying Autumn/Hedvig Eleonora and as the aristocracy are linked together with the seasons through masquerade costume, they are admitted into the same behaviour; the praising one. Snickare proposes a definition of festivity which can shed light on what has been written so far.

The festivity is a social act were many people come together. Although a festivity may through its form represent social differences and power hierarchies […] or fully exclude certain groups of society […], the essential character of the festivity is involvement, community and affinity, between the participants.\footnote{Snickare, 1999, pp. 9. ”Festen är en social handling där många människor kommer samman. En fest kan visserligen genom sin utformning gestalta sociala skillnader och makthierarkier […] eller helt utesluta visa grupper i samhället […], men festens grundläggande karaktär är delaktighet, gemenskap och samhörighet festdeltagarna emellan.”} The point here is that, a festivity, like a birthday masquerade, is a ritual to make the invited feel included and elevated, as opposed to the others. But it is also, through this inclusion and elevation, an opportunity, as everybody gather and socialise, to make up differences within that exclusive group. It is special to be invited, to be selected to celebrate the queen dowager in good company – but it is after all her who is celebrated and honoured – not the courtiers, although they are presented as people of status just being around the person in tribute.

To conclude the performative mechanism here, I would firstly like to state that, although the painting exists regardless of whether it is being viewed or not, this certain synergetic performative effect is achieved only when the specific occasion and audience appears below it. Secondly, the painting has a kind of prerogative against its audience, being there before the beholder, when this planned event takes place beneath it and as an act commissioned by the power towards its subject, in the house of the former. It has a prerogative to a certain beholder who is there, in the late seventeenth-century, invited to a masquerade with the same theme and narrative as the painting has. I do by this not intend that the painting has its own platonic truth to be discovered, but rather that

---

138 Snickare, 1999, pp. 9. ”Festen är en social handling där många människor kommer samman. En fest kan visserligen genom sin utformning gestalta sociala skillnader och makthierarkier […] eller helt utesluta visa grupper i samhället […], men festens grundläggande karaktär är delaktighet, gemenskap och samhörighet festdeltagarna emellan.”
this specific meaning is achieved foremost through a cultural encounter with this certain beholder at the masquerade. At the masquerade, the painting initiate the communication with the beholder and gets, by that mean, a prerogative against its audience. It is not Tessin the Younger’s intention which is interesting here from the perspective of the thesis, but rather that viewing the painting in relation to such social events, is one way to understand the seventeenth-century mechanism of this specific painting in the context of Drottningholm and the Carolean era. To understand what the painting may have said to a beholder from that time.

Two sides of the same coin: the autocrat father and “la source de dignitéz”

Leaving the ambiguity of The Four Seasons painting aside, Sylvius offers us another scene depicted in the ceiling which is necessary to investigate further. This scene depicts the story of Cronos from Greek mythology. Cronos was one of the Titans and is depicted as a winged elderly man with scythe in hand, eating a child; in this instance depicted, Cronos has just begun eating the arm of the child while the rest of the body is yet to be devoured. The myth of Cronos speaks of how he ate his children, fearing the future rivalry they would mean to him, as told in a prophecy. His wife Rhea, grieving the loss of her many children, succeeded on saving one of them: Zeus. When Zeus grew up, he challenged his father and just as the prophecy had said, Cronos and the Titans were dethroned. Zeus made Cronos vomit the devoured children and all was good. As begun the reign of Zeus and the gods on Mount Olympus.

In a theory of performativity, we need to rely on what is depicted and what the painting does in relation to its beholder. More specifically here, what it does in relation to a beholder contemporary with Hedvig Eleonora. In the painting, we see Cronos during his glory days, before the reign of the gods on Mount Olympus. For early modern visitors, who has recently passed through the staircase and the vestibule, pledging their allegiance to the queen dowager and having been made aware of the cultivated past, presence and future of the same Hedvig Eleonora, how would the painting Cronos appear? Here is required a more thorough compositional and formalistic analysis, to further understand how Sylvius’s painting works to include us in such a narrative as well as how the narrative of Cronos performs and creates something, in the real world of the Carolean autocracy; what it does to its contemporary beholder. The image depicts a moment in a quite “Baroque” sense. There is no long narrative played out, but instead a flash of moment; we are invited to behold and partake in a certain moment which becomes a part of our temporality. Cronos is positioned above the beholder, not only as the painting is in the ceiling but also through Sylvius’s use of illusions, foreshortening and painterly effects: we see one of his footpads which, together with the work of shadows, create a foreshortening effect, depicting Cronos as actually seated above us. Meanwhile, the poor child seems terrified, understandably. Such aspects have the potential to perform and create certain emotions within the beholder; threatening and terrifying feelings of being inferior to Cronos. These emotions are even more intensified by Cronos’s action being projected outwards from the painting, towards the physical space of the beholder.

Departing from such naturalistic features and functions to make the beholder and the painting a part of the same room, what moment is it which is imposed on us as beholders? Despite the long narrative of the myth, what is depicted here is the very moment when Cronos is eating his child, one of those who will overthrow him in the future. Such is the action which takes place and
constitutes the intra communication of the painting: a father punishing his child. This needs to be translated to the context of the late seventeenth-century, something which would explain the action as a political one with an autocrat purpose. Cronos attempts to end the lives of his own children, only to sustain his reign. To prevent them from taking away his power in the future. What we see is a man of huge power, devouring everything and everyone standing in his way; that is, his children, as told in a prophesy. We see a father, trying to maintain his power at every cost. Sylvius has not depicted Cronos after the fall, when the prophesy becomes reality and his son Zeus overthrows him. What we see is instead the strength of Cronos, not his fall. How should we understand this depicted moment, in the very specific context of the Carolean court? Well, I for one do not interpret it to be a personal depiction of the queen dowager eating her son, Karl XI. The royals of the Carolean dynasty embodied their offices and titles, they were the dynasty of Pfalz. The monarch was the ruler and his life was politics, just like the life the other family members were. Especially a woman, like Hedvig Eleonora, did foremost embody the dynasty of her husband. Hence, I suggest for the image to be understood in a contemporary political context, as an allegory of the strength of the ruler. To understand how such a narrative, functions in creation of a co-presence with its beholder (that is the subjects of Hedvig Eleonora, the king and the dynasty), I believe we must remind ourselves of the political situation of the late seventeenth-century; what was the relation between the ruler and his or her subordinates?

Firstly, the relation was a harsh one. The confines were prevalent especially during Karl XI’s reign, in for instance the Reduction: when the king reduced the nobility’s finances, status and power through confiscation of land and estates as a part of his absolutistic reign but also, as a part of increasing the status and finances of the Crown. Secondly, on an ideological level, the relationship was one of “care”. The ruler was considered somewhat of a father to his subjects, his children. The well of the people was considered a function of the king’s strength. He was harsh and strict, surely, yet only for the best of the country and the people. Another aspect of this relation (father/subject) is the honour of being employed at the court. Persson describes how the court was an opportunity to climb socially and how it acted as a school for young people. A school, not only in an academic sense (as a chance to scholarly road), but also for manners, dancing and fencing, to name a few. Manners could be learned as well as displayed during masquerades, dances and social events in general, as a way of making a good impression and to present oneself as a person of “high quality”. Social possibilities of the court like these ones, were dependent on the good grace of the king. Persson claims that “the monarch was ‘the fountain of favour’, the source of grace, the centre of all patronage”. A similar opinion is held by diplomat Johan Adler Salvius (1590 – 1652), comparing the court to “la source de dignité et de la reputation” and further in the same letter states that “Conversation, correspendence, reputation, usefulness, respect, esteem, are at the court”. Although this notion of court as an opportunity to become an elegant figure of high manners, is not something which Persson explicitly connects with the relationship between the ruler and his subordinates as a father and his children, I propose such a connection. My suggestion is that these two sides of the same coin come to live and

139 Persson, 1999, pp. 54
140 Surely not “care” in our sense today, hence the citationmarks.
141 Snickare, 1999, pp. 117.
143 Ibid., pp. 164.
144 Printed in AB Carlsson, "Adler Salvius såsom rådgivare åt Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie" in Personhistorisk tidskrift, 12, 1910, pp. 151 and the latter from pp. 152 in the original language "Conversation, correspendence, utilité, respect, estime, år mehre widh hofwet."
are performed by the ceiling in the upper north guard room; the two sides, firstly being constituted by the caring father who was the origin of all opportunities granted the noble at the court but who also, secondly, punished and controlled the same subjects. Rystad stresses that, as the autocracy grew strong during the 1680s, the council (in extension, the nobility) lost their political influence in several ways, one of them, meaning that they lost their right to control new appointments. This also meant that the king all the sudden, had the right to himself not only appoint people to new positions but also, to remove status and position from his subjects. Thus, the king as a sole individual could both grant privilege, be “la source de dignité et de la reputation”, and remove it as the punishing autocrat father.

The father, who is the intrinsic part in the myth of Cronos, is likely to have reminded this designated aristocratic group of beholders, of the king. Consequently, if the father is the king then the child of the father, is the subject of the ruler. Therefore, in a paternalistic seventeenth-century, it is possible for the image of Cronos eating his children to appear as a threat and urge aimed at the implicit beholders/the subordinates (who were the children of the monarch) to not attempt at dethroning their king/father. This depiction of the maintaining of power, is also imposed on its beholder, through the formalistic means charted out recently: through emotions, projection outwards as well as the illusionary placement of Cronos above. As Cronos is eating his children, evident for an educated beholder, the narrative becomes a threat of the punishments of the king. Especially due to the highly politicized character of the court and the royal family as well as that we have, by the north upper guard room, entered the king’s parade apartment. Such reading of Cronos is further asserted by the fact that the upper south guard room, thematizes a similar myth of the punishment received by children trying to fill their fathers’ shoes too soon: The Fall of Phaeton. The Fall of Phaeton is another Greek myth of how Phaeton, the son of solar deity Helios, insisted on driving his father’s chariot of the sun. Phaeton, to young and not strong enough to steer the chariot, scorched the surface of the earth, leading to Zeus striking Phaeton and the chariot down with his thunderbolts to prevent the whole earth from being destroyed. Phaeton of course, died from his hubris deed. As has been discussed, I will not consider the upper south guard room (as it is not a part of the parade apartment), but the similarity of the two upper guard rooms’ themes is too striking to not account for, if only as a parenthesis to the north one. Also in the south one, we are made aware of the punishment when trying to overtake a father’s (read ruler’s) position. Seen together, the choices made in the two narratives are emphasized; they both depict the strength and superiority of the father/ruler, while simultaneously telling us about the desired and advised inferiority of the children/subjects. The upper south guard room is located just across the vestibule from the north one, meaning that whatever way a beholder would be lead after the staircase from the vestibule, into the north or south side, a similar autocrat message of obedience would be delivered almost instantly after arriving at the top floor.

It might be useful to think of Fischer-Lichte’s feedback loop’s autopoiesis more actively here; to regard the exchange of energy taking place. The images discussed so far were not existing on their own, but were in communication with a beholder in a social environment. Since the thesis focus is the co-presence and co-existence (the cultural encounter between artwork and beholder and the meaning produced in that moment) it could be enlightening to dwell a little further into who the implied spectator was and in what way this spectator could be related to the scene of the child being punished by the father/ruler. Surely, there were (and has been during the years) different beholders, but what is interesting here in relation to the thesis methodology, is the spectator who can

---

explain and enlighten the initial mechanism of the painting. One of the foundational research questions has been to investigate how the images functioned in their original surrounding. When thinking of the beholder, we must assume that the implicit beholder (which the theory of reception aesthetics designates and looks for) must have been of an educated kind, as they must have been aware of the Greek myth of Cronos to understand such a narrative. Consequently, education of classical mythology would lead us to the members of the aristocracy, the courtiers, but this has already been established in the first chapter. Furthermore, that the aristocracy is the implied spectator can be argued for through documents of the administration of the court, with the help of Asker’s writing on the matter. These documents can tell us of who were there, not only physically but also socially close to the royals. In it, he makes clear that one of Hedvig Eleonora’s work tasks, was to deal with human resources through employing the members of the court. During her time, there is a clear pattern appearing; she seems to have employed members of the higher aristocracy for higher positions of the court and the lower, for lower positions. This might not seem a very surprising nor unique pattern, yet what is bewildering is that the employment to the high positions at the court was not affected by her son Karl XI’s Reduction. When the nobility was punished and their financial/political status diminished, the same cannot be said for their place at the court. The high nobility was still present at the court and was employed for high positions. The nobility was defacto there, viewing the images by Sylvius, not only at festivities but also at court. Whatever the reason was for such inconsistency in the political message conveyed from the reigning family to their subordinates, the integral indication is that the courtiers, the beholders of the images at the Drottningholm Palace, were directly and negatively effected by the political reduction; they can be called victims of the Reduction and were defacto under the confines of the dynasty. They conceived of a societal group which was in an uninterrupted battle of power with the monarchs, simultaneously as their status dependent on the latter; the monarch was the source of dignity just as the monarch was a punishing ruler of absolutism. His court, is where these paradoxical power relations were negotiated. It is plausible for the images in the palace to have functioned as an extension of the political change of the Reduction. Although the aristocracy surely did not fear being eaten alive by Karl XI, the image of Cronos eating his children, can easily be translated to the monarch (the father) punishing his children (the subjects) to preserve his power; just as had recently occurred in the Reduction. In this sense, the courtiers and the visitors of the palace continue the path already initiated by the painting. The painting and the commissioner (the ruler) has a prerogative against its beholder to initiate the communication and select the topic of conversation, much due to the already existing power relation between ruling dynasty and nobility. As

146 Also, the dissertation of Persson from 1999, which has been frequently referred to in this chapter, offers great knowledge and references on the matter.
148 Regarding the cour of the Carolean court, although it was not at the continental level of Versailles or the Gustavian court of 1771 – 1792, it was still existing. There are clear attempts at elevating the court culture to a more continental level. The fact was, that the court became more open towards the last decades of the seventeenth-century, thanks to the Queen Dowager Hedvig Eleonora, Queen Ulrika Eleonora and Karl XII. After the death of Karl XI, cour hour was introduced two days a week, something which later was extended to two afternoons a week. Persson, 1999, pp. 53
149 Such inconsistency of political messages can be explained in several ways. Firstly, as a continuum and tradition of the court. The court being a conservative institution, attempting to maintain the hierarchical division of society. Secondly, it can be understood as a compensation for this societal group. Lastly, the decision to still employ the victims of the Reduction to high positions at the court, can be interpreted as a classical “keep your friends close but enemies closer”, as employed by Louis XIV (1638 – 1715) at Versailles. Asker, 2017, pp. 56-57.
I have attempted to show, falling into disgrace with the monarch was an actual fear among the aristocracy. Not only for the more unknown characters of the court, but also for several of the monarch’s favourites, the absolute social elite. When the autocracy of 1680 was introduced, the Council of Realm lost not only their political power, but also the integral position to control appointments of the officials and civil servants of the state. This meant that the king all the sudden, had the right to himself not only appoint people to new positions but also, to remove status from a person.\textsuperscript{150} That such was a real danger to the highest nobility is apparent not only in the example of the Reduction, but also in the life of many noble men and women. As an example, De la Gardie fell into disgrace with Queen Kristina in 1653. What was reported is that his house “before so full of suitors, became so empty that no one came there, but those who claimed payment”.\textsuperscript{151} Despite the fact that De la Gardie’s misfortune in 1653 precedes the time of Hedvig Eleonora with a few years, they are still a part of the same generation of power elites and if anything, the royal influence was only strengthened during Hedvig Eleonora’s time, through her son’s endeavours. Thus, to fall into royal disfavour was a real danger for the social status of the noble. Although what is depicted here is Cronos devouring a child, death, such an image could surely evoke the death of one’s social status which royal disgrace was associated with. There are actual comparisons and associations between death and the social fall: Persson quotes court physician Zacharias Wattrang who suspected royal disgrace to be “harder than death itself”.\textsuperscript{152}

As stated by the same Persson, the court was a vital point of contact between the monarch and the elite.\textsuperscript{153} It was a crucial locus in the negotiation of the power relations between the two of them. Through the image of Cronos, courtiers were reminded that their position was based on nothing but the good grace of the king. We are after all standing in the upper north apartment, the king’s parade apartment. A natural place for political images which in the encounter with a certain beholder, becomes a performance of the relation between the nobility and their absolute king. Persson also complicates the image of the court, making it not only a place in which the king’s punishing power was prevalent, but also, his power to award as mentioned in the discussion of The Four Seasons; the court as an opportunity to climb socially, learn manners and achieve status. The court was as a coin with two sides – on the one side, there is the splendour and spectacle which was a social theatre for both the noble and royal and was perceived as an opportunity for the former to become the most dashingly dignified and elegant one within their group, but on the other side, spectacles which were carefully directed performances to control the subjects and empower the monarch. A synergetic effect where the king surrounded himself with a glorifying court to strengthen authority and to achieve power simultaneously as being close to the king signalled the prominence of the noble.\textsuperscript{154} Although the image of Cronos is clearly threatening, it is also reminding, especially juxtaposed to the lovely

\textsuperscript{150} Rystad, 1983, pp. 68-69.

\textsuperscript{151} Peder Juel, 6th of December 1653, from Persson, 1999, pp. 175. “Strax dette blev kyndigt, blev Grevens huus, som tillform var saa fuldt af Solicitanter og Opvartere, saa ledigt, at ikke et Menneske kom did, uden de som kraevde deres Gild af ham”. Of course, Kristina was a regent of a different position than Karl XI was, but the point of this section is to indicate the many different ways in which the monarch influenced and effected the actual reality of the noble. The many ways he or she could remove status and by that mean, must have been a great authority. Both before and after the autocracy.

\textsuperscript{152} Zacharias Wattrang, 6th of July 1678, from Persson, 1999, pp. 170. ”suårare är än sielfwa döden”.

\textsuperscript{153} Ibid., pp. 93.

\textsuperscript{154} Ibid., pp. 165-166.
festivity of the Four Season, the privilege, advantage and prominence which was associated with court life but which could be lost if one fell in disfavour with the monarch.

Of course, there is an issue appearing here which must be addressed before continuing. Although a contemporary beholder of Sylvius and Hedvig Eleonora might feel and relate to the moment depicted in the ceiling, feeling frightened by the strength of Cronos, there is also a risk here; the classical myth employed was a well known story. The beholder who was familiar with the myth of Cronos, who would relate to the child suffering from the father maintaining his power, would surely also be familiar with the end of the story. Despite of the fact that the depicted moment is the one where the father/ruler is strong, it is impossible for Sylvius and the commissioner to fully control the association of the beholder: to fully separate the strength of Cronos from his fall. Other spectators might also have misunderstood the myth or have had a different experienced relation to the monarch, and thus might add something different to the exchange of energy and the encounter with the painting. Yet, we cannot chart out all possible readings the images might have induced. The ones brought up here, are a few which due to the allegories employed and the social/political situation, is more likely to be the potential performative result. Yet, the reading speaks of the function of the Cronos image also on a general level. Both the artwork and the beholder are part in the meaning production; meaning is extracted from the cultural encounter and the interplay, rather than the instance of creation. Fischer-Lichte separates the painting (the object which is completed by the artist) from the painting (the artwork which is being exposed and viewed) and such a differentiation is important to keep in mind here.155 It is the latter version of the painting, the exposed artwork meeting a beholder, which is foremost under discussion here. This postulate is important in understanding the mechanism of producing meaning. What becomes evident about the mechanism of the performance is that, the performative encounter is only initiated by the artist. The emergence of the artwork forces the beholder to relate/act and generates a circulation of energy. Yet, the painting/artist cannot fully control response and the performative effect.156 Compared to the staircase, the encounter in the upper north guard room is much more open-ended. In certain beholders, Cronos may very well evoke thinking of the end of the story and the end of autocracy. This is simply a risk which comes with the performativity of the open-ended artwork and an aspect of how Sylvius’s paintings functions, to relate to the research questions of the thesis. Still, the pictorial usage of classical myths is a long tradition of interpreting and selecting aspects of the narratives most suitable for the purposes of the commissioner. In this case, I have attempted to show how the fragment of the myth of Cronos here, in the context of the social milieu of the autocracy and its politics as well as seen in relation to The Fall of Phaeton, has the potential to appear as a clear threat and urge aimed at the implicit beholders and the subordinates (the children of the monarch) to not attempt at dethroning their king and father.

To summarize the mechanism of the performance of Cronos here, it can be described as initiating the communication with the beholder, through certain features which makes that beholder relate to the narrative. Firstly, emotionally; the awfulness of being eaten alive, that is, punished for defiance (mirrored in the terrified face of the child, naturalistically depicted to be a part of our world), is a point which a beholder would potentially relate to. Further, the fact that Cronos’s punishment is formalistically directed outwards from the painting, towards the beholder from above, is another feature which strengthens this threatening aspect of the painting. Also there is an aspect of contextual relation, as the father punishing disobedient children to maintain his absolute power could easily be

156 Ibid., pp. 165.
translated to the ruler punishing his subjects, if the encounter with the image takes place in a context different from ours today (the paternalistic Carolean autocracy and in the aftermath of the Reduction) and with a noble beholder in constant negotiation of power relation with the monarch. Lastly, through the juxtaposition to the Four Seasons, an absolute ruler who is both the fountain of favour as well as (and also, because of that role) the one who can remove all privilege from the subjects, is performed and given life. Obedience is depicted as the road to all splendour and status. The image of Cronos becomes an elongated performance of the Reduction of Karl XI and his dynasty. This last aspect of the juxtaposition between the two narratives, will be further investigated in the following section.

The Four Seasons reappears: reading it together with Cronos

The narrative of Cronos has now been read against a general context of the Carolean autocracy, the court and the power relations established there. Consequently, I would like to attempt at reading also The Four Seasons as a more general performance and set aside the planned masquerade of 1689. The example of the masquerade in honour of the queen dowager, is a quite specific case where the artworks can be regarded with the backdrop of an actual social performance of past societies. Historically documented explanations to narratives are of course highly interesting examples of the function of art and offers great art historical possibilities (yet rare ones). However, the artworks are most often without specific grandiose social occasion surrounding them, whenever the masquerade is not taking place which is of course most of the time. As the masquerade after all never took place, the planned performative and synergetic effect which has been explored so far, was absent. The specific synergetic effect of the invited aristocracy being admitted into the season’s celebration of Autumn/queen dowager, which performs and re-negotiates Hedvig Eleonora’s triumphing and glorifying rank in the room, is lost. Yet, it is too easy to draw such conclusions of succeeding a nd failing performances. This does not imply that it is not necessary to regard the images to a planned, never performed, performance; the planning still tells us of a culturally specific usage of images and are as such of art historical significance as it speaks of a potential historical function of art. Although this occasion never took place, we can learn from it that this part of the Carolean society related to images like communication partners of a social event or like scenography of a theatre scene were the line between stage and audience is dissolved. Further, it does not mean that The Four Seasons could not have a more general performative potential. After all, as has been shown, the century witnessed an art concept favouring pluralistic meaning and functions. What it does mean is only that, as there was no birthday celebration and no masquerade mimicking Sylvius’s characters, the connection between the two worlds must have been of a different character. That specific mechanism and synergetic effect is not as likely to have occurred.

When discussing the function of Sylvius’s paintings in a Carolean courtly milieu, it would consequently be interesting to regard the narrative of The Four Seasons in a more general perspective. What were the social possibilities of the performative event and the cultural encounter, when the masquerade did not take place? To answer that question, it might be called for a reminder of the aspects which have been demarcated with the help of reception aesthetics. What has been noted so far, were the gazes within the intra communication which formalistically draws us into the narrative and admits us into the celebration of Autumn, or more generally speaking, connects us to the scene of The Four Seasons. Spring is capturing our attention through her gentle gaze of hospitality meeting
ours and from here Zephyrus takes over, leading us towards Autumn. Similarly, Summer is facing us with her back and is also dedicated to the events of Autumn as well as making us a naturally positioned part of the composition. Autumn, hovering elegantly somewhat above, is made into the centre of the narrative. Those purely formalistic features are not dependent on the masquerade. Spring meets our gaze regardless of whether we are visitors of a festivity, if we are there for the cour or simply passing through. Also, the room is consisting of different sections. There is a sectioning of the walls with ionic half-columns, sections of painted arches in the vaulted ceiling and of course the framing of the plafond; these borders of these sections are all to different degrees, gilded-brownish. This sectioning of the walls, the vaulted ceiling and the plafond creates a formalistic relation and coherence between the plafond, the vault and the physical space; something which is enhanced also by the similarity in colour and gilding. These compositional directions and the play of gazes in the intra communication of the painting, are tools to integrate the physical and pictorial spaces within each other; to make the physical space and the pictorial space, inseparable. Thus, this form draws the spectators into a splendid mythological event; an event where the Four Seasons are together upon the clouds amongst beauty, blossoms, fruits, a cornucopia as a symbol of prosperity and the warmth of the fire in the group which represents winter. If this is to be regarded in a more general performative context, without the birthday celebration, I would like to propose a connection to the already suggested idea of the court as an opportunity to gain privilege and prosperity (the monarch as the source of social climbing). Without the festivity which the plafond was planned in connection to, there is still another cultural event between artwork and beholder taking place: an encounter where the beholder is drawn into a concentrate of all the loveliness, splendour, fortune and beauty that is offered in this very room, in the Carolean court.

The room type, a guard room, was as discussed an official and ceremonial entrance to the apartment. In this context, the encounter between painting and beholder in this very room, can be seen as a physical and ceremonial threshold to the splendour and prosperity of court life, which was offered by the monarch whose apartment we are entering. As the beholder walks into the guard room and then further into the apartment, he or she is passing through the ceremonial threshold to all that is offered at the court: the visitor is drawn into such a scene and in the same time enters the king’s parade apartment. The reality of the apartment and the social milieu of the court, together with the image of The Four Seasons, perform and embody the fortunes and favours offered by the monarch to this societal group. In extension, their debt to the same monarch also becomes prevalent in the same instance. As such, the performative mechanism here can best be understood through the ritual. A ritual functions through movement of the body and affects emotionally, rather than convinces through reason. It portrays the myth, or certain ideas and notions, with the purpose to achieve something. Seen next to Fischer-Lichte’s concept for performances, the ritual has the potential (and purpose) to make its participants undergo a metamorphosis. If this general definition of the ritual is translated to the thesis here, it can be summarized as follows. The painting together with the function of the room, becomes a performance and an enactment where the visitor enters the room and the
painting shows what is offered at the court. Through entering the room as a ritual threshold and a representation of all that is offered and if the certain decorum and right behaviour is followed by this step, all prosperity above may become real; or is already real, in that very room, creating a demand for that right behaviour. The ritual’s effect situates the beholder within notions of good government, the autocracy and its ideals, to make them relatable, perceptible and true. Such ritual performative effect can be described as a synergy between the spatiality and function of the room, the formalism and iconography of the painting as well as the social context of the Carolean confines and opportunities. The idea (myth) of the monarch as the source of all opportunities and splendour offered the nobility, is performed and given truth as well as authority in this very performance. What is created is a situation where a certain behaviour of gratitude is required from the visitor. If obedience and gratitude to the source of splendour and privilege is not performed (as an answer to the act that the painting *The Four Seasons* constitutes), the image of *Cronos* tells the same visitor what the result of disobedience is. In this manner, the ceiling painting embody and initiate a communication with the beholder, an encounter, which performs the two sides of the coin that is the monarch and his court: it is on the one side glory, splendour and magnificence which might rub off on a subject closely seated to the monarch but on the other side, the dangers of disobedience which can lead to falling into royal disgrace.

When having regarded the upper north guard room in comparison with the idea of the ritual, one might return shortly to the previous upper vestibule and its features. If the upper north guard room is a ritual threshold, in which the accurate actions of the courtiers present them with the actual prosperity and opportunities of the Carolean court, then this ritual threshold is already initiated in the upper vestibule; in the vestibule, the courtiers were tempted into the apartments of the upper floor through the indication of the astonishing culture, splendor and virtue which will be offered to whoever, are invited, obedient and enters the apartment. In the upper north guard room, this ritual threshold is more explicitly thematized. Here we can actually see the splendor, we can take part in a social encounter and a performative event with the splendor and prosperity offered by the Four Seasons; in the staircase, we mingled with the muses and here, we are in an encounter with the Four Seasons, other figures of classical virtue. *The Four Seasons* in the guard room also connect to the previous theme of nature in the upper vestibule, as an embodiment of a harmonized and idealized form of nature. All that was suggested in the upper vestibule is proven true (we can also from here see the beauty, control and harmony of the garden, if *The Four Seasons* was not enough evidence and performance of it all), but the theme appears as well in a more serious form in Cronos, the threatening aspect of the monarch. The power aspects which was hinted of in the vestibule (by the garden) is more explicitly and threateningly performed as Cronos has begun to devour his subjects above.

As can be extracted from Kandare’s article on Queen Kristina’s endeavours in Rome, the body is a site to negotiate social status and identity. The controlling and refining of the movements of the body was a way to represent one’s person: Kandare speaks of corporeal eloquence. Through elegant manners, one’s identity and status was presented as equally elegant. Hence, there is a clear relation between the negotiation of the body’s physical form/movement and that same body’s

---

160 The garden with tamed nature, the Geatish heritage embodying the idea of Sweden as the origin of civilization and the crowning of the encounter with the Greco-Roman gods in the ceiling, where vices and lusts are fought in favour of power, glory and virtue, are some of the features to which I am referring here.


identity and status. How does this statement, relate to the previous statement of the court being a locus of negotiating power and identities and what is the role and function of the artworks in this relation? We have already seen the answer to that question presented in the staircase, where the body of the visitor is both invited through Sylvius's artwork towards the top of Mount Parnassus and from there, admitted into a huldning (tribute) to the queen dowager and simultaneously confined to act accordingly with the decorum (that is, to fulfil such tribute); an interplay of confines and choice to control the body and through that performance, achieve a certain identity of elevation but also submission, under the royal family. Can such be translated to the upper north guard room? The two narratives of Cronos and The Four Seasons become an extension of the bodies below, as the bodies themselves simultaneously become an extension of the narratives. The events played out beneath the painting, begin to control the bodies as the site of negotiation of social status and identity, through incorporating the bodies in its narrative. For instance, if the events of the planned birthday celebration of the queen dowager would have taken place, the noble’s masquerade mimicking the painted Four Seasons, would make the narrative a part of their own social narrative at the court. The tribute to Autumn in the ceiling suddenly forces the courtiers, dressed as the Four Seasons, into honouring of the queen dowager as Autumn. Just as well, through the formalistic aspect of gazes but also of letting the body of Summer “pick up” the body of the beholder through the gaze and evoke a feeling of being part of the same event, the beholder is drawn into the splendour and wealth offered by the seasons at the court of Hedvig Eleonora: offered by the thriving and prosperous Carolean court. Similarly, in the case of Cronos, it is the body of the subordinates which is being devoured: who’s arm is already disappearing into his mouth of the punishing father. Through the terrified face of the child as an emotional aspect of relating, the beholders might feel that their bodies are the ones which are used as a mean of sustaining the autocracy; next time it might be one of them who is to be “eaten” (social death) by the absolute ruler.

Let us now return to situation of Tessin the Younger planning a birthday celebration of Hedvig Eleonora in 1689. It might be fruitful to read both the narratives together with the birthday celebration as a frame of understanding but also to summarize the mechanism of the potential performance of the images. Despite the cancellation of the festivity, it can still bring knowledge on the character of Sylvius’s images, their potential performative function at the Carolean court and on the culture of images in late seventeenth-century Sweden. Let us visualize the festivity: it is the birthday celebration of the queen dowager, where we are invited guests and Swedish aristocracy. The image above narrates The Four Seasons. As we enter the room we see Spring, gazing at us and drawing us into the scene together with the corresponding sectioning, quadratura effects of the painted arches and the thin flower garland curling around the whole room. Binary oppositions like art/reality are dissolved, the Four Seasons are guest at the birthday celebration just like we are a part of their scene. Three of them are celebrating Autumn who is depicted as the most glorious on one. Below, we at the masquerade are all disguised accordingly with the theme and all are celebrating the Queen Dowager Hedvig Eleonora whose favourite season is autumn. As the image of The Four Seasons emerges and as we are dressed just like them, the image incorporates us in their activities: it makes us relate and act upon the celebration of the most splendid season (that is, of Hedvig Eleonora). The whole palace and the court of the queen dowager is glorious and an ever so glorious court sheds splendour on its centre, Hedvig Eleonora herself, who is the fountain of favour, the source of grace, the centre of all patronage and

163 Kandare, 2012, pp. 49.
also whom our privilege is in debt to. The relationship is mutual: a glorious royal spreads his or her splendour onto its entourage, to the surrounding courtiers. Yet, the ceiling holds another narrative which relates to the already initiated performative encounter. Above the Four Seasons, hovers a dark cloud on which Cronos is seated. As we are drawn into the narrative of *The Four Seasons* through its cicerones, we are nevertheless after a certain time led to regard this strong ruler of a father. He is reminding us of the long and strong arm of the king, who might at any sign of defiance punish those who do not behave accordingly with decorum, who is not subordinate to the absolutism now employed by Karl XI.

Before finishing this chapter, there is a need to make Cronos somewhat more intricate. The figure of Cronos was not only employed to evoke thinking of the myth presented so far, but he was also used as a symbol of *Time*, a second meaning which I believe can shed light on the mechanism of these images. Firstly and most apparently, Cronos is depicted as literally devouring a child which by the myth is explained as his own child. Secondly, he is also depicted as a winged man with scythe in hand, as often in images where he has been understood to represent Time. How should we understand *Time*, in this so far quite intricate allegory? Well, to begin with it can be read as thematising the eternity already discussed in the previous chapter surrounding the garden: we see both *Time*, in *Cronos*, but also, the cycle of the year through *The Four Seasons*. With the festivities, ceremonies and manifestations of the Carolean court performed below and time passing above (through Cronos), the whole cultural encounter in a way encompasses how time passes above us, but below the passing of time, the Carolean autocracy stands strong and eternal, just like the cycle of the four seasons. This is further plausible through the way which *The Four Seasons* are more visually connected to the beholders of the court, than Cronos is: through exchanging of gazes, through letting Summer face us with her back and hence making us a naturally and relaxed part of the scene as well as through the planned masquerade of 1689, we are in an encounter with the Four Seasons. Time passes but the courtiers and the royals are in the eternal harmonic cycle of the Carolean court and dynasty (just like the seasons changes cyclically and eternally). To continue this analysis, I would like to add another aspect of *Time* here. Such idea of the eternal cycle of the Carolean dynasty is connected to the *Truth* through a certain allegory popular in the Baroque: the allegory of *how Truth would be revealed by Time*.164

If we return to Sylvius’s painting with this reading in mind, what is it that Time/Cronos, is revealing? What is the *Truth*? Illusory depicted to be below Cronos’s wings, in his direction of gesture, we find the whole encounter of *The Four Seasons* with the social theatre and activity of the court. To add this to the conclusions made so far, *Time* reveals the *Truth* of the performance of how the monarch and his court is an opportunity and positive force for the nobility: the monarch as the fountain of favour, a father whom might be fruitful to be at the right side of. Cronos reveals the truth of the social etiquette, decorum, prosperity, opportunities and punishment; the whole relationship between the monarch and the subjects are revealed as true for the courtiers. He reveals the *Truth* of the social structures and power relations of the autocracy and does by that, reproduce them. The idea (myth) of the monarch as the source of all opportunities and splendour offered the nobility, is performed and given authority, being revealed as the *Truth*, by *Time*, through placing Cronos formalistically above the encounter of *The Four Seasons* and the court. Thus, he frames the encounter and its relations as true, just as *Time* frames and reveals *Truth*. Further, these relations between the royals and the

---

164 Ellenius, 1984, pp. 19-20. Ellenius makes a similar reading of an illustration of Rudbeck’s dissection of the globe in the *Atlantica* from 1679 and exemplifies also from Georg Stiernhielm’s version of *Cordex Argentaeus* (the “Silver Bible”) from 1671, where the same allegory of *Time revealing the Truth*, is used.
courtiers are not only claimed as a truth but also an eternal truth, through the eternal cycle of the Four Seasons which the court is both symbolized by and is in an encounter with.

With the pluralism of interpretation presented here (Cronos as the punishing father/ruler but also, next to The Four Seasons, the fountain of all opportunities and prosperity for the courtiers, alongside the aspect of Time revealing all of which is performed, as the Truth), I would like to make a short comment on how to grasp it all together. Such pluralism might in our understanding of the seventeenth-century as the century of autocracy, seem misplaced. In a century which witnessed so little power and influence of the subjects, in which the king answered only to god, where propaganda and censoring was fierce and which is famous for its religious inquisitions like the witch purges, we would probably today not imagine favouring and searching for manifold hermeneutic possibilities for spectators of art, but instead strong solitary messages. That such pluralism was sought after and appreciated during the century has already been stressed with examples from other scholars and shown in the analysis of the artworks in the Drottningholm Palace, but I would like to exemplify this further, through quoting a letter from Cardinal Bernardino Spada (1594 – 1661) to Giovanni Francesco Barbieri, Il Guercino, (1591 – 1666) on the 27th of October, 1629:

Having thought about the invention and disposition of the painting that I recently proposed to you I have settled upon the historia or perhaps favola of Dido as that which seems to me capable of a great variety of things according to the needs of the person who requested it. I have therefore had a little writing drawn up regarding the particulars of the fable and the disposition of the figures, but with the thought that this might serve to excite your mind rather than to bind or restrain it precisely to that disposition…

The seventeenth-century concept of art encompassed a love for the possibility of multiple reading of myths and allegories, as has been stressed repeatedly. The seventeenth-century witnessed a liberation of usage of allegories into a more free, playful and manifold practice; something which the quote from Spada shows and which can be seen in the painting discussed here. It is not necessarily a competition between the different meanings/functions, but rather an interplay and a versatility, where the different interpretations could co-exist in the same beholder. Further, this versatility of interpretations make each of the interpretations stronger; they intersect each other. They argue for the same strong monarchy and obedient subjects but through different tools and rhetorics. The ceremonies of the monarchy, which these artistic and visual embellishments were actors within, had the purpose to convince and influence the beholders/participants. They did so, on several levels simultaneously. Cronos is at once, a ruler who can both offer and take away all splendour at the court performed below him, just like he is Time who is revealing these relations and identities as the Truth. Time will reveal the greatness of the dynasty, the glory of its court and the submission of its true subjects, while the devious ones will not last and hence will lose that courtly splendour and its inherent opportunities: that is, will be “eaten” by Cronos.


There occurs a difficulty when regarding these paintings and attempting at a deeper understanding of which regent Cronos is referring to. As Sylvius begins to decorate the palace, the king is Karl XI, the son of Hedvig Eleonora. Yet, as the thesis focuses on the Carolean autocracy in general, it is not enough to account solemnly for the time of creation of the painting in the upper north guard room, as the images must have been seen and interpreted after the instance of creation, during the first years of the eighteenth-century. If we proceed just five years further in time from the fulfilling of the painting, in December 1697, Karl XII was crowned new king. Surely, Karl XI and Karl XII are two kings to which the image of Cronos could possibly refer (and context which the beholder could bring with them in the performative encounter): the strong *Pater Patriae*, devouring his rebellious children. Here becomes evident, certainly the performative strength of the images, but also their performative risk, as always with open ended artworks: they can adjust and change accordingly with the time. A new monarch with a new political agenda and relation to his or her subjects, potentially changes the performative effect. A new beholder puts new energy into the feedback loop’s autopoiesis: new aspects are thrown into the interplay of energy and into the communication with the artwork. My point here is that the regent in question, could be a specific one, depending on the mind of the interpreting spectator, but that Cronos could be understood here as a general and eternal ruler of the Pfalz dynasty. This due to the palace being the great project of Hedvig Eleonora, who was considered a continuum of the dynastic autocracy. She was defacto there during three kings. When Karl XII, was abroad (as he was for most of the time between 1700-1715) Hedvig Eleonora was the foremost representative of the dynasty, just as she was during the years of the Regency in the name of Karl XI. She was written of, during her time, as a representation of the dynasty: as the wife, mother and grandmother of kings. Hedvig Eleonora became somewhat of a, if not *Pater Patriae*, a *Mater Patriae*: the mother of the country, its kings and its subjects. Being a woman, though Hedvig Eleonora was less of an individual and more of a person who embodied her dynasty and in every way was to work for the strength of that dynasty. I am far from first to make such connection between the queen dowager and the Carolean dynasty. Ellenius states that “If Hedvig Eleonora can be said to symbolize the continuum in the Carolean dynasty, Drottningholm is just as much a monument over the dynasty as of her personal contributions”. Further, Persson asserts how, although the royal family used their country side palaces (like Drottningholm) to get some peace and quiet, the monarch was the ruler and politics was a vital part of the court even at the country side. To separate private from work, was not possible. I would like to extend his statement of the monarch, to also include the whole family. The royal family was the political role it had been given; the family was the state and it embodied politics. This meant that wherever the family members went, so did the politics of the dynasty and the autocracy. Besides this, the politics and the relation between the dynasty and its subjects, was in an eternal need of re-establishing. The members of royal family were important links in the chain between the noble and the king, in the noble’s quest for power, influence and glory.

---


169 Persson, 1999, pp. 54.

170 Kandare, 2012, pp. 57. Kandare speaks of relations in general and how they are in constant need of re-negotiation. I translate this to apply also to the relation between the dynasty and its subjects, that is the political relation.

queen dowager must have been one of the most important ones due to the above mentioned, which can bring further understanding as to why her own palace here in the upper north guard room seems to transgress to thematise the greatness of dynasty and not only the commissioner herself. They were all a part of one totality and from that totality, Hedvig Eleonora as a queen dowager achieved her own status: the dynasty, the autocracy, the monarch and the family. Hence, it is credible that through the fact that she commissioned the palace and in a way embodied her late husband’s dynasty, her whole palace and especially, the depicting of rulers, symbolized the dynasty. Such readings are further prompted by the fact that the ballet which Tessin the Younger planned, which the ceiling would be associated with, was an allegory of the wonderful harmony created by the royal family’s virtue. Such eternal regent of the dynasty, gives the performance a more open-ended character, a more performative character which lets the interpreter to continue to path that is cut off by the frame. It makes it relatable to more spectators and in extension more successful as a performance executed in the name of the monarchy.

Continuing on the question of Hedvig Eleonora and her relation to her dynasty and palace, I would like to bring Alm into the equation again. He states that the palace was built for the superpower and the autocracy and I believe that it is this which is made obvious as we have stepped into the parade apartment of the king. The transition in theme and topic which has occurred, from Hedvig Eleonora to the dynastic regent, can firstly be understood by the division of the rooms. The palace was associated with the queen dowager; it was commissioned by her, just as it became a symbol of her. Yet, we have now moved into the north guard room from the upper vestibule, into the king’s parade apartment, the theme naturally shifts from Hedvig Eleonora to the king and the dynasty. Continuing the same topic, it might be so that such theme which is employed in the parade apartment of the king, can be understood to co-create the queen dowager’s image as a symbol of the dynasty, and in that sense after all be about her. We must remember that Hedvig Eleonora’s connection to the Swedish court is achieved through her marriage with the late King Karl X Gustav. As he passed away in 1660, leaving behind him his 24-year old widow and a five-year-old son, Hedvig Eleonora’s place in the Swedish monarchy became volatile. Status was in constant need of re-affirmation as everything gained its meaning in relation to the situation and its surroundings, as previously shown. New situations acquired new validation of the currency of one’s status and the same goes for the widow of a king. The shift of topic from Hedvig Eleonora as an individual (a patron of the arts and the trustee of the Geatish heritage) over to the strength and grace of the dynasty, could have the function of establishing her role in Sweden and at the court, post Karl X Gustav: her connection to the line of succession. The development of the different performances so far, might therefore not only represent her role as the core of the dynasty but also reproduce the same role, which due to the volatile value of the widow of a king, was in constant need of re-negotiation. Left in a foreign country trying to affirm her status as the First Lady with the only claim to that place being her five-year-old son, the young heir to the late king. The images remind us of her role at the court as well as legitimize and sustain her status when her husband is gone. For her to remind us of such connections, is of crucial importance for her own status at the court. After all, Hedvig Eleonora never did step down from the position as queen, as she normally would have done in favour of the new king’s queen; she maintained

a strong position as the First Lady through all her life and that, certainly is a performative achievement which must have been rooted in her political, social and artistic endeavours.

If we think back to the analysis which has taken place so far, the focus has moved from Hedvig Eleonora, to an adaptable symbol of the different regents of the Carolean era and there has been more emphasis put on the autocracy itself. As has been made clear so far, the images in the north guard room have an inherent flexibility dependent on the reality of the beholder. They simultaneously represent and perform the two sides of the relationship between the dynasty/the ruler and the subjects: the favours offered at the court but also, the inherent danger and threat. Through such performance, the relation is re-established. The court was an opportunity to climb socially and such was welcomed; there was an official image of the monarch as a fountain of favour, yet one should never try to overthrow the top of the pyramid. In making the children of Cronos both a symbol of the subjects and an aspect to relate to, Sylvius initiated a cultural encounter where the threat of the Carolean absolutism is performed, when the implied spectator viewed and communicated with the painting. Simultaneously, the opportunities to dwell in magnificence is offered as a temptation through The Four Seasons. This juxtaposition of the temptations and dangers of the court makes the beauty even greater and the dangers more threatening: hence it had the potential of keeping its beholder in place, preventing them from attempting to over shine or overthrow the monarch, all to maintain and re-establish the relations established with the autocracy. At the same time as the reality of the nobility (their life and relation to the monarch) effected their gazing and perceiving of the images, the images co-created the power relations and status of that same societal group. As mentioned earlier, during the seventeenth-century occurred a successive liberation of the allegory use: a freeing of art from a rigorous tradition of art delivering one message, leading to a more playful and pluralistic usage of allegories. Such notion of an aesthetical statement can provide understanding of the pluralism of the ceiling in the upper north guard room, which has been made apparent in this chapter. Through such new concept of what an allegory can mean, the allegories employed in the upper north guard room could function on several levels simultaneously and encapsulate a complex web of power relations to be re-produced through the performances.

“Court life is like a fire, too close, one burns oneself, too far away, one freezes”. Such was the quotation from Adler Salvius with which this chapter begun. I would like to bring the words to mind here, as I believe that their symbolic meaning is more apparent after analysing the performative mechanism and functions of Sylvius’s paintings in the upper north guard room and thus are useful to have in mind when continuing a head in the Drottningholm Palace to eventually, through for example the general’s hall, reach the upper gallery.

175 Printed in AB Carlsson, ”Adler Salvius såsom rådgivare åt Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie” in Personhistorisk tidskrift, 12, 1910, pp. 151. “Hofflefwerne är som een eld, alt för när, bränner man sigh, longt ther ifrån, fryser man”.

176 The general’s hall is the closest room through which one can reach the upper gallery from the upper north guard room. The reason as to why the room is not considered in the thesis, is that it does not hold any images by Sylvius. Also, the room is heavily altered with the passing of time and is not the only way through the north side to the upper gallery. As such, it becomes too speculative to dwell into the different roads a beholder of the seventeenth-century might have taken. Instead, emphasis is put on the rooms of the material and how they relate to each other.
IV. The Upper Gallery

“A culture is performative through how it shows, displays, repeats, enacts, embodies. It affirms or breaks and then re-invents social beliefs.”
- Margaretha Rossholm Lagerlöf, 2012

Regarding method, approach and earlier scholarship on the upper gallery

The gallery was fully constructed when Tessin the Younger took over the supervising in 1681 and although his father stood for the decoration of the room, the program of the painted ceiling was written by the junior one. The preparations began in 1688 and the actual painting was realized by Sylvius between 1689-1690. When standing in the gallery, the beholder is surrounded by battle scenes painted by the German painter Lemke. The scenes depict Karl XI’s battles in the war against Denmark during the 1670s. The drawings were made by Dalberg who has, together with Lemke, signed several of the paintings. These battle scenes were hanged as can be seen today, in 1695, although the writing below the images are from the early eighteenth-century. The paintings occupy all wall space, apart from the space for windows in the eastern wall and the arcade of the western one, as well as where the two entrances to the gallery is located, to the north and south. The eastern wall opens towards the seaside and holds four paintings, while the western one opens towards the staircase and holds another four paintings of the war. Besides those, there are two battle scenes by Lemke placed above the doors to the north and south.

In Tessin the Elder’s first drawings, the eastern wall was enclosed and there was no visual connection between the staircase and the gallery. A deliberate change were the additions of three openings, making the enclosed wall into an arcade (which was later shut with windows around the year of 1800). When Sylvius started working on the painting, the gallery was yet to be decorated.


178 During Sylvius’s years as an active painter in Sweden, he had help from several assistant painters. Between 1689-90, these are believed to have been Erik Bonde and Johan Richter (1667 – 1748). Mårdh, 1994, pp. 13


The ceiling cornice, done by Carlo Carove, was gilded in 1692. The current floor with a labyrinth-like geometric pattern in dark brown stone from Öland and white marble, is original with the palace. The white marble bust of Karl XI by the hand of Millich which today can be seen in the centre of the room, was not placed in the gallery until the late nineteenth-century and will hence not be included in the analysis. What on the contrary is believed to have been placed in the gallery during the early years of the eighteenth-century and henceforth will be included in the analysis is the sculpture Maria Maddalena by Novelli. It should also be noted that the today most often used name for this gallery, The Gallery of Karl XI, was not the original one but is a later denomination which speaks of the afterlife of the images: later times have interpreted them as a tribute to the son of the commissioner. Such interpretation is according to me accurate, as will be made clear in the analysis, yet perhaps somewhat simplified. The interpretation comes much from Lemke’s battle scenes, which tells the beholder of the young king’s achievements in warfare during his first years as reigning king, but is also an effect of the upper gallery seen against the lower one. The lower gallery, positioned just beneath the upper one, instead speaks of the father’s war on the same country and of the same areas, barely two decades earlier and is therefore today often mentioned as The Gallery of Karl X Gustaf. The name used in this thesis, The Upper Gallery (övre galleriet) was the original name when speaking of that room, which is the main reason to calling it such.

In 1994, Mårdh published the thesis Johan Sylvius – en studie kring takfresken i Karl XI:s galleri på Drottningholms. In her thesis, she makes an iconographic reading of the allegory of the upper gallery as well as accounts for Sylvius and the history of restoring the gallery. I am immensely thankful for the great deal of work Mårdh has done, something which my thesis builds upon and which simplifies my preparatory work, yet there is a postulate within her thesis which I do not fully agree upon and which also serves an important methodological point of departure in this study of the gallery as well as for the whole thesis: Mårdh states that the ceiling painting is of a French character rather than an Italian one. She elaborates that statement through saying that it lacks its own will against the architecture and spatial relations; instead, it has a more decorative character. I would agree that the ceiling painting of the upper gallery is less active against the architectural relations in comparison with, for instance, the staircase paintings by the same artist. As an example, there are less typical examples of quadratura-effects or attempts at un bel composto: the three medias are more separated. Before jumping into the analysis, which very much finds its foundation in this postulate, I would like to quickly account for some examples of why I disagree with Mårdh here. Firstly, I would like to state the danger of such art historical categories as they limit the mind in an un-reflected way; they risk at reproducing old art historical truths and simplifications as well as miss out on important notions of the function of these artworks and of their aesthetical character. Sylvius was neither French nor Italian and just like the Tessins, his inspirations came from both northern and southern Europe. As Snickare states, Tessin is often characterized as French in style (especially in relation to Drottningholm), yet his concrete role models (his own educational drawings of other artworks as well as in his own collection of material like etchings) are foremost Italian. Therefore, to claim that the artwork is of a French

---

181 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 22-23.
184 Ibid., pp. 13-14.
185 Ibid., pp. 15.
character and thus lacks activity against the spatiality seems somewhat too rigid. I will try to not fall into the pitfalls of simplifications and instead see the material in itself, with relation to art concepts and practices as well as social structures of the demarcated context. Secondly, although there are no illusory transitions between architecture, cornice and painting like in the staircase, there are steps which lead the beholder into the illusory room of the vault. There are aspects which attempt at crossing over that architectural border; the separation is not complete. The walls are followed by the cornice where the upper part is conceived by three-dimensional lion-faces (Figure 21). Sylvius has painted an illusory continuation of Carlo Carove’s gilded cornice, just above the physical one, something which I see as a clear attempt to lead the three-dimensionality of the physical room, through the cornice and the lion sculptures, into the images of the painting. The gilded cornice, is further picked up by the frame of the two medallions separating the ceiling into three parts. Lastly, when employing Kemp’s theory of reception aesthetics on the ceiling, it becomes apparent that there defacto are cicerones who give the ceiling fresco an agency against the physical room. These will be addressed in the analysis of this chapter and is after all the very issue of the thesis, but just as an example one could mentioned on the western side, seated just above the cornice, a woman with floral crown who is meeting our gaze (Figure 26), just like another character with palm branch is pointing out from the northern medallion in the ceiling, down into the room (Figure 23). The reason for mentioning this here is two-fold. Firstly, it has the purpose of drawing attention to the sparse literature on the paintings of this monumental room in an important palace of the Swedish era of superpower but also to, secondly, emphasis the need to grasp the very performative function of the allegory in the ceiling (besides or, intertwined with, the iconographical one) which has been slightly over-looked in previous research. Proceeding from this, the chapter will begin with an account for the usage of a gallery in relation to the idea of images performing something; it will proceed further by approaching the visual means of communication (both, splendour, iconography and spatial relations).

**An elongated promenade room which emphasises the role and function of art**

Initially, it might be of use to reflect upon the function of the room type. The concept of a gallery in this era is what our twenty-first-century notion of an *art gallery* is derived from: it was a room to walk through and to look at art. Early accounts of elongated rooms with paintings and sculptures made for *promenade*, can be found in Vitruvius’s (ca. 80-70 BC – after 15 BC) *De architectura libri decem* (30 BC – 15 BC), something which was appropriated in early sixteenth-century France and conceptualized as a *gallery* in the writing of Sebastiano Serlio (1475 – 1554) from the 1540s. During the last decades of the same century, the gallery became immensely popular among Italian aristocratic families who often created enclosed galleries from their open loggias. As Snickare accounts for, by the sixteenth-century, the gallery had been well established as a room which was associated with the beholding of art – even so that rooms containing collections of art were suddenly called “galleries”. Due to this concept of a gallery as a *promenade* room and a room for *art beholding*, there seems to be reason to regard the material of this chapter, the upper gallery of Drottningholm Palace, from

---


parameters of bodily movement in the palace and how such movement corresponds with artistic/painterly communication, reflection and response.

To do such, the path of the visitor must first be recognized (due to my method of embodying a turn-of-the-eighteenth-century-visitor). We are given a hint of an answer from the historical documents, which indicate the ideal usage of the rooms: the northern side of the palace was the more public one, while the south one was, if not private then at least, more of a living space and not as much made for festive occasions and display of splendour. This would mean that the guests of cour or a festivity, accordingly with decorum, are likely to have entered the gallery from the north entrance (when moving from the staircase and the upper vestibule, through the northern guardroom, towards the gallery). Such an interpretation is confirmed by the temporal dimensions of Tessin the Younger’s program: the narrative of the frescoed ceiling (as has been interpreted by Mårdh and can be affirmed by Tessin’s program for the room) begins just over the northern entrance with Fame sleeping. In the program, we can read that: “Fame asleep and re-awakened will be the subject which is to be depicted in the vault of the upper gallery of Drottningholm.”

The topic is the sleeping Fame, who will be re-awakened; consequently, in the beginning, she is still sleeping, which she does just above the north entrance. She will awaken in the centre of the gallery, that is, in a south-wards direction. My interpretation is thus that there is a continuation of the narrative from north to south, something which corresponds to the planned function and characteristic of the upper floor. This interpretation will constitute the route and movement in this chapter, notwithstanding that the beholder of course would have been able to move freely in the gallery and see the images in a different rhythm. It might seem irrelevant with the inclusion of an auteur (as the discussion of an intended path might seem to suggest). Yet, just because I as a contemporary twenty-first-century visitor in the palace can chose between the north and the south entrances into the gallery, does not mean that the courtiers and nobility of the long seventeenth-century could do the same; hence, I would need some indication of what actually was the entrance in the seventeenth-century, to understand how to embody such a beholder and to relate to the images in manner that avoids anachronism.

To avoid such and to embody a historical beholder, the images and their written down program can be interpreted to articulate the intended movement for such beholder and can be assumed to correspond with the social decorum/function/limitations of the palace and their intended beholder. Such indicates that it is path from which the beholders were likely to read the images and will thus be the method with which the images are approached by me as a researcher: to read from north to south as an effect of the narrative function inscribed in both the images and in the decorum of the rooms.

Further, the plausibility of the beholders in the designated social group to have understood to look up towards the ceiling and read it from one side to the other, needs to be quickly reflected upon before continuing. The gallery of Karl XI in the Stockholm Palace can be seen a contemporary example which the visitors of Hedvig Eleonora’s Drottningholm surely must have been familiar with and which argues for such a plausibility. The gallery in the Stockholm Palace was not fully realized before the great fire of 1697 and it would wait until 1726 before it would be fully completed after the fire (although the palace was not used as residence for the royal family until 1754). Yet, it was not rare for visitors to be invited to see the palace even when it was still under construction.

189 From Nicodemus Tessin the Younger’s program of the allegoric ceiling painting in the upper gallery, printed by: Böttiger, 1889, pp. 52-53. “La fama addormentata e risvegliata sarà il soggetto che va esser dipinto nella volta della galleria superiore di Drottningholm.” See appendix.
190 See discussion of the interpreting subject first chapter, regarding how I embody the seventeenth-century visitor.
Despite that the Stockholm Palace’s gallery was not fully realized during Hedvig Eleonora’s time, such points to an awareness and inclination towards the construction and usage of these promenade art rooms, also in Sweden during long seventeenth-century and among the noble beholders. It is not unlikely for the visitors of the Drottningholm gallery to have experienced at least the Stockholm one (they were likely to also have experienced foreign galleries through their many travels or through reading of them in the communication networks and regarding printed illustrations) and that they would have understood to raise their gaze and read it from one side or the other.¹⁹¹

Splendour as a mean to perform magnificence, elegance and power

The rhetoric of Baroque art is multi-dimensional and functions on several levels, as has been evident in this study so far. Firstly, there is of course the allegorical dimension, the understanding of a narrative with a symbolic often mythological value that rests on a classical tradition; it achieves it status, value and strength through accumulating past generations usage of those same subject matters, characters and symbols. Secondly, as has been proven in this thesis and in much of the referred to literature, many Baroque artworks functions in a performative co-presence with its beholder. Such is often in art history exemplified with or connected to, the Counter Reformation attempting to attract devotees to remain with Catholic devotion and reform the Roman-Catholic church, making artworks rhetorically and emotionally witty as well as affective to its audience; further, from a Catholic sphere, spreading such rhetoric in a migration of images, through Rome’s status of capital of art during the long seventeenth-century.¹⁹² Yet, there is another more direct mean of achieving and awakening interest within the beholder, employed during the Baroque: splendour. The dimension of splendour hits the beholder instantly; it might not be ahistorical or biological, but it can be understood without much prior knowledge. The seventeenth-century concept of art encompassed a belief in art’s ability to convince. The educated higher classes were thought to be convinced through the mind and through reason, while the rest needed to be influenced and persuaded through the senses.¹⁹³ Splendour to awakening the senses, could thus also address a group which so far has been excluded from the social group of beholders: the court servants of the society’s lower classes. Most of these were not of an educated background.¹⁹⁴ Regardless of how much we dwell in the iconographic aspect of the artworks, there were defacto also servants of the court to whom narratives like Cronos, The Four Seasons and the iconography of the gallery, must have appeared incomprehensible. Besides, there is also the aspect of misunderstanding the allegorical program, which might (and also did) occur with the most educated spectator. In situations like those, the shiny black-and-white marble of the floor, the colourful frescos above (the intensity of lapis lazuli blue breaking through the net of figures rising above us), the vast view through the eastern windows, the contrast and juxtaposition of nature

¹⁹¹ As has been declared before and can be seen foremost in the first chapter of the thesis, the education of the aristocracy demanded, in the degree it was financially possible, a sojourn abroad. During the first part of the seventeenth-century, Swedish universities where considered lesser than foreign ones while during the second half of the century, Sweden would witness its universities achieving a higher status, yet the element of travel, to achieve knowledge of the continent’s manners, politics and culture, was still desired as a part of one’s education and becoming of a well-bred person.


and culture as well as the gilded bronze ornaments, is likely to still have been one of the first things that catches the eye of most beholders, both then and now (Figure 19). This first impression of the magnificence of the palace is of course a crucial part in the equation, also for the beholders who would continue to read the allegory and communicate the artwork through it. Ljungström states the following on the concept of magnificence and splendour, after stressing the importance of court culture for understanding the Drottningholm Palace:

[...] a seventeenth-century court was hardly conceivable without a higher degree of elegance than the subjects could master, since the concept of magnificence was inseparable from widespread notions about society, kingship, and good government.195

Magnificence was played out, or mastered as Ljungström says: it was performed, acted out and accomplished. The quote relates to the notion of status held throughout the thesis. How a title or rank achieves its currency through repeated re-enactments and performances of that same status; or, if you dare, a higher degree of social position. With this statement from Ljungström, the need to re-value one’s place in society is in a royal context, suddenly directly connected to the monarch’s actual power. To appear before the subjects as a monarch of strength, authority and regal reliability, one needed to exhibit the right degree of magnificence as well. In the mind of a twenty-first-century visitor, such magnificence would rather connote vanity than good government, but it needs to be understood in its own context. Society was conceptualized as a body in which all parts are necessary and in need of display, both high and low status: “[...] healthy only as long as every part and organ fulfilled its specific task.”196 The conceptualization of society as a body can be derived from Paul in the First Epistle to the Corinthians and was also argued for, with such divine connotations. Paul compares the necessity of all contributors to the early Christian community, a designated organization of people, to the necessity of all limbs in the body as it was created by God.197 It is not difficult to understand the society-as-a-body-comparison, as developed from that theological idea. The theocratic context is important in grasping the king’s absolute power and also, his need to display it: God was both the root of power and on whose behalf the king ruled. The king represented both the worldly and ecclesiastical power. From a more ideological context, the movement of Cameralism, is significant, as it believed in a strong centralized state to foster prosperity and piece as well as control all other levels of society.198 In both of these context of ideas, the king’s place on the top of the pyramid was nothing but in order and seen next to Ljungström’s argument, such needed to be displayed. All parts of society were not valued equally, yet they were considered necessary. Society was considered a social body in which all body parts were needed.199 From this comes that all status (of the different parts) not only should but must be visualized. This applied to the royals as well – all parts were crucial in the economy of status – and a strong regent, needed to manifest his or her splendour.200 For the beholders of the palace, absolute splendour like here, equalized strong regent and a balanced


196 Ibid., pp. 122.

197 Paul, First Epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 12.


harmonized society. Simultaneously of course, as much of the high nobility was unsatisfied with the autocracy, but such is an extreme political situation and needs to be separated from the foundational values and ideas on status within society. Besides Ljungström’s article, similar ideas were discovered by Böttiger in the nineteenth-century, as he studies the Baroque: “Splendour and desire to surround oneself with art objects was in this time [the high Baroque] so to speak, in the air”. In a quote in Ljungström’s article, we can find further evidence pointing to seventeenth-century observations of the same relation between good government and splendour, in a quote from Bishop Jacques-Benigne Bossuet (1627 – 1704). Bossuet, teacher to the son of Louis XIV, Le Grand Dauphin (1661 – 1711), stated that: “Expenses of magnificence and of dignity are in their way no less necessary [than fortifications, arsenals, and munitions] for the sustaining of majesty in the eyes of peoples and of foreigners.” Thus, there is most certainly reason to state that seventeenth-century court culture visualized splendour as a mean to achieve, or as a manifestation of, real power. That there were connections between the court of Louis XIV and Karl XI is a known fact, indicating that the continental ideals in the quote of Bossuet, can be said to account for a Swedish system as well; as an example, Karl XI’s formation of the Council of Realm changes into the formation of different “councils”, depending on the subject which would be discussed and the decisions to be taken, on the expertise of the ministers and secretaries involved. This, after having been told of Louis XIV similar arrangement in a letter from Bonde in 1678. Also, communication networks set up by noblemen like De la Gardie and Wrangel, helped to spread experiences abroad of science, art, acquisitions and participation in ceremonies. Examples like these speak of the flow of information and process of spreading continental manners to Sweden.

To summarize the performing of splendour in the upper gallery and its context in a world of ideas of the long seventeenth-century, it can be understood to re-produce the notion of the good regent as responsible and strong. The previously analysed journey through the palace has shown that there has occurred a shift in theme; from inscribing the beholder in a tribute to Hedvig Eleonora as a patron of the arts on Mount Olympus and an heir to the Geatish civilization, to leading the beholder (through means of form, iconography and communication) into a more general performance of obedience towards the autocracy, the dynasty and the regent. Reminding ourselves of such, one can interpret the splendour experienced on our journey through the palace to argue for the strength and good government of the dynasty and reign of absolutism. In the gallery, splendour culminates and such also corresponds with the fact that here, the allegory more than ever, thematizes exactly the above mentioned connection to splendour: politics and good government. Splendour being the very first impression that the gallery makes on us, is highly connected to the authority of the regent: it is a political message. A magnificent palace means a magnificent regent, which in extension connotes and re-produces the regent’s identity as one which signifies good government. It would of course also re-produce the power relations where the king is superior to his subjects, as an effect of his strength (his

201 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 1. “Praktlystnad och håg att omgifva sig med konstföremål låg dessutom vid denna tid så att säga I luften”.


204 Losman, 1983, pp. 195. On the subject of descriptions and reception of ceremonies, the following article is suggested as further reading on such endeavours by members of the Oxenstierna family: See for instance Bortolozzi, 2015.

splendid authority). To deepen the understanding of the performances of the room, the next step will be to relate this notion of splendour to Sylvius’s paintings in the ceiling and their spatial conditions.

Reading the allegory: “la fama addormentata e risvegliata sarà il soggetto che va esser dipinto nella volta della galleria superiore di Drottningholm”

Before addressing the iconography of the gallery and relating it to the reading so far, I would like to just make a few notes on the thesis’s methodological relation to iconography. Since the study uses a theory of performativity and reception aesthetics, I will not regard every aspect of the iconography, but depart from “what hits the eye”, the narrative function of communication inscribed in the artworks; further I will relate such aspects to the context of the beholder as a social subject and to the spatiality of the palace. That not all figures are of the exact same and crucial importance for the general performance, is something which one might find support for also in Böttiger’s notion of the ceiling. He states that it is obvious that some figures are more there to fill up a blank space rather than really contribute to the allegory. He also means, which I agree upon and will come back to later, that in some parts, Sylvius has painted whole groups of characters to symbolize just one concept or idea. The key method derived the chosen theory of performativity and reception aesthetics is to regard how the narrative is presented for the beholder and how such orientation of actors, inscribes a certain way of beholding. I will work through the images with a methodological point of departure found in how they communicate with a beholder (departing from my eyes of course). I will analyse and read them in relation to the demarcated context, the sociohistorical and the aesthetical one for my vision to embody the historical beholder. Those aspects of the artwork which are demarcated are the basis for the analysis (which appears in the text together with the descriptions of the images). This, as I as the interpreting subject have found them more crucial in the asymmetrical communication, according with the thesis methodology.

What happens when the visitor’s body enters the upper gallery? A body which so far has been made an intrinsic part of a performance of tribute and pledging of allegiance to the queen dowager and the dynasty? Naturally, an educated beholder would have understood to raise his or her head, to regard the images above (due to the common knowledge of the room type, within that designated social group). If anyone would be astonished and affected by the splendour for too long, the only sculpture in the room, the life-size Maria Maddalena by Novelli (Figure 20), could act as a cicerone: being life-sized, she meets us at our level to send our gaze further, in the direction of her gaze which is upwards, in a state of pious adoration. Looking up, a group of characters steals our gaze almost immediately as we enter the gallery (Figure 22, to the right in the image): towards the east just over the window (E in Figure 1, left as we enter the room), our attention is likely to be drawn to

206 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 51.
207 Regarding restoration and our ability to see the images as they were, then: the ceiling has been restored multiple times since Sylvius’s time. Mårdh identifies the colour of blue in the background and the washed squared area at the south end of the room, to be parts which surely might have looked significantly different in Sylvius’s era. As such, these will not be too fiercely included in the drawing of conclusions from the ceiling. Mårdh, 1994, pp. 33.
208 Today not knowing where this Maria Maddalena was placed makes it difficult to incorporate her too more in the analysis than this. What can be said though, is that the sculpture is almost life-sized, measures 156 cm and that she is depicted as if gazing upwards; surely in an act of devotion, but here in the gallery, where most of the communicative element are placed above, she becomes an indication and a cicerone to lead our gaze upwards.
a group of active characters moving towards us and the entrance. What most prominently picks up our gaze is the placement of the group, just in front of us, somewhat into the room. Secondly, it is the active woman with a burning torch in hand and snakes as hair, *Discord*, who makes this group so prominent. She rages aggressively towards the entrance of the room, possibly also towards us. Simultaneously, smoke from her torch stretches in that same direction, to further enforce the movement towards us. Through these means of communications inscribed in the artwork and its relation to the room, we are addressed by the characters in the ceiling just as we enter the room; we could identify Discord as a first cicerone here who also affects through means of emotions in her threatening movement. She is in a joint active movement with *Vanity* just behind her, lunging towards the north side of the room and with this movement, becoming a quite apparent focus of our gaze. Behind them are *Love For One Self*, who is decorating herself with flowers and *Thoughtlessness* with a mayfly on her head.

In between us and Discord are *Selfishness* and *Contempt for Virtue*, two bearded men, one laying down and the other sitting with a fishing rod. The six figures are painted as if in the darkness, an effect which is enhanced by the location of the group; they are depicted just above the window and are hence without direct sunlight. Being a cicerone, the smoke coming from Discord’s torch and the very direction of the whole group (the movement of Discord and Vanity as well as the gaze of the others) of course sends our direction further in the narrative; towards the part of the ceiling just above the north entrance which we have just passed through. To see where and at what Discord is lunging, we need to take a few steps into the room and turn towards the wall we just have entered through. Here (F in Figure 1) we are introduced by the very topic of the gallery, if comparing to Tessin the Younger’s program: *Fame asleep* (Figure 22). Fame is depicted as a winged woman, resting on dark clouds with her trumpet next to her. The eyes and ears on her wings are open and attentive, although Fame is in a deep and calm sleep. Being lead to Fame by the movement and actions of the cicerone Discord, the active eyes on Fame’s wings are now taking over our gaze and again drawing us into the narrative. We are made a part of the scene as the wings are hovering above us and through such naturalistic tools, including and embracing us into the illusory world; framing us as a part of the depicted scene below her wings. Through this, a sense of us all being a part of one reality is once again performed and re-created; a similar effect is achieved through introducing the main character of the narrative, only secondly after the group with Discord. It conveys a certain naturalism, making the images a cropped part of reality and us a part of the illusory depiction of reality. Alas, Fame is still calmly sleeping; despite or rather, because of her open and aware eyes on her wings gazing over the vivid scene. Her wing-eyes are always awake, always receptive to true virtue, for which she would awaken and spread the word of. Hence, as her eyes on the wings meet ours, it is made evident that our noble presence does not seem to wake up the true Fame; nor do Discord’s attempts at lunging towards Fame. It can all be seen as an asymmetrical communication initiated by the narrative and form inscribed in the painting, which through the composition of Fame’s wings, the way her many eyes meet ours, the naturalism conveyed and actions directed out from the painting, achieve a performative effect, make our reality into the whole which the painting is a cropped part of. Through this, the painting achieves a prerogative against us; it has the possibility to re-negotiate identity and

---

209 The following identification of figures in the allegory are indebted to Mårdh (1994) and also compared with Tessin the Youngers program for the ceiling, printed in Böttiger (1889). Difficulty arises as his program does not fully corresponds with Mårdh’s analysis. In those situations, I will take help from other sources, which are accounted for as they appear.

210 Neither Vanity nor Thoughtlessness are mentioned in the program but are identified, to me correctly, in Mårdh, 1994, pp. 17.
reality, a reality where neither Discord nor the court regarding the scene and being enclosed into through the naturalistic for, is not enough to awaken true Fame. Yet, virtue and righteous manners are soon to enter the picture.

Surrounding Fame are several figures out of which no one seems to be able to awaken her: Voluptuousness (or Luxury, Lusso according to Tessin the Younger’s program) is closest to the left and also most clearly lit. Together with her, she has Hate and Gluttony further to our left (Fame’s right side). To our right of Fame is instead Pride together with a woman depicted with a snake around her arm. The latter is resting, somewhat below the others previously mentioned. We only see her upper body and she is depicted to be resting above us, as if we gaze up towards her throat and chin (which achieves a similar effect of inclusion as Fame’s wings do). Although the characters all have a role in the narrative, there is a formalistic centralization and focalisation towards Fame, Voluptuousness and Pride (through means of light as well as balance of figures’ direction and movement) as the core of the narrative. As an example, such centralization is achieved through the woman next to Pride recently mentioned, who is left in the darkness but through the direction of her body, head and arm, directs our attention towards that focused group.

How then, should the group over the north side, centred around Fame, be understood to function in a performative encounter with a noble beholder of the long seventeenth-century? Regarding this first part, coming from the northern entrance, our movement is instantly mirrored by both Voluptuousness and Pride, who are turning towards Fame just like we recently turned in the same direction. Voluptuousness tries to slow Pride down, who seemingly without tact holds her hand above Fame, attempting to awakening her. Although Voluptuousness might not be much of a virtue, she is not the worst of vices. How should she be understood in this performative encounter with the beholder? I believe she is likely to act as a good example, just a bit of a peacock; someone who is slightly too much and acting over her status but who still attempts to show some sort of calm and elegance as she shows Pride that awakening Fame for the selfish purpose of one’s pride only, will not lead to any real Fame: she becomes a good example through her actions in the moment, yet does traditionally represent a bad personality, like seen in Annibale Carracci’s Ercole al Bivio (1596) where Hercules meets la Voluttà (closely related to Voluptuousness) and Virtue.211 The myth must have been familiar also to a Swedish audience due to the famous Georg Stierhielm’s (1598 – 1672) poem Hercules (1658) and exemplifies the fable for elegant myths on moral, where the reader is invited to relate to the young Hercules faced by the choice between the rocky difficult road of virtue and the more pleasurable and easy road of vice (like Voluptuousness). Hercules was often included to thematise virtue. Also, he as the triumph of virtue, was proposed as a role model for the young Karl XI during the 1650s and 1660s.212 To relate to Hercules here, is of further importance as there are several depictions of him which so far has been displayed before the beholder in the palace: on the walls between the lower and upper floor in the staircase in grisaille technique as well as in the vault of the same staircase. Here though, my interpretation is that Voluptuousness, possibly because of her essence as a vice, exemplifies the vice turned righteous who has begun a process of acting good (that is, calm, obedient and honest). The step, not before the choice like in the myth of Hercules, but afterwards. In a cultural context familiar with this specific myth as well as narratives of choice between vice and virtue, the image of a bad characteristic acting righteously, must emphasises the choice of

good behaviour. Potentially, Voluptuousness could have acted as somewhat of a figure to relate to, for the part of the high nobility dressing and behaving over their status, something which we have seen in the example of Queen Kristina in Rome becoming quite a controversy. Voluptuousness is heavily lit and fully nude as a sign of her character, but acts appropriately as she tries to slow Pride down; thus, embodying a state of just having chosen the good path before the bad one, yet simultaneously, through her nudity emphasising the choice/transition to virtuousness. The comparison between Voluptuousness and the nobility might seem daring, but finds relevance through previous scholars’ interpretation of the room. Mårdh has interpreted the vices in the north side of the gallery (Voluptuousness, Hate, Gluttony, Pride, Discord and Vanity, etcetera) to symbolize the “immoral” reign of the Regency for the under aged Karl XI. Voluptuousness understands that Pride’s manners are not welcomed; she is a character of both vice and virtue, but who has just decided for the “right” path. She becomes a point of relation for the nobility who sympathized with the Regency, which in the propaganda campaigns for the monarchy was defined as neglecting what was best for the country, only acting for their own purposes. Through such a point of relation for this specific group, the character of Voluptuousness brings the situation where she is with Fame and Pride, into our world. The communication with the beholder’s social context, is achieving of a destabilization of binary oppositions like art and reality, where the history of the noble’s reign is identified and characterized through the vices.

A co-presence is thus created. Such is further strengthened through the compositional relation to the physical world. After having turned from Discord to spectate the group with Fame in her direction, we are suddenly in positioned in front of Fame, Voluptuousness and Pride. Depending on our own movement, we can decide to mirror either Voluptuousness or Pride. Two characters who perform two possible ways to relate to Fame (one good and one bad, to simplify Voluptuousness somewhat). Our position before this scene and the dichotomy they perform, put us in a liminal state. We are positioned as if on a line separating the two a part. We are invited to reflect upon our own relation to the true Fame; we are given the choice to choose side, between being virtuous or not. Yet simultaneously, our choice is to be a virtuous vice (Voluptuousness) or just a bad vice (Pride). We are still evidently, not identified as purely virtuous, something which would awaken the true Fame who is still sleeping; that is, as will be seen further on, something which only the royal authority is privileged to do. Thus, the three characters as a group can be understood to express and perform a liminality. The balance of court life as well as the liminal state embodied by the group of three just discussed, can be understood against the backdrop of the contemporary idea of society as a body in which all parts are necessary and in need of display, both high and low status. This balance was ever so important for the nobility, as has been stressed in the earlier chapters; they were in a constantly liminal state of maintaining that balance, something which argues for the liminality of the painting to re-enact this social state they were in. In front of this painted performance of a liminal state between vice and virtue, which revolves around the making of oneself famous and splendid through the element of Fame, the beholder is reminded of the delicacy of the situation and of their own position to constantly re-negotiate their status. Especially with the experience of the encounter with the image of Cronos in the guard room, such delicacy is understood to be a matter of royal

---

213 Mårdh, 1994, pp. 25. Immoral here, being of course not my own valuing of the aristocratic Regency, but describes how that Regency was portrayed in propaganda after the autocracy had been introduced. The choice of word aims to emphasise the reason to the interpretation of the vices, in a gallery commissioned by the monarchy, as the Regency of noblemen.
disgrace or favour. Here at the court, the point of contact between monarch/nobility, one’s status could increase if one acted with obedience.

**Virtue, Vice and Vanitas**

Evidently, there is an atmosphere created around the figures surrounding the sleeping Fame. They are represented in the darkness and are either too intensively in a threatening manner trying to awaken Fame, or are acting as if completely uninterested, like Contempt for Virtue is. There is a small detail, perhaps only visible for the most attentive beholder but still interesting as a crowning piece of this group of vices: the short-lived insect of a mayfly on the head of Thoughtlessness. Such a detail, when spotted by an attentive beholder, gives another dimension to the vices: of their ephemeral effect. A mayfly on the head of Thoughtlessness is a small detail, yet is likely to have performed in its communication with a seventeenth-century beholder, the idea of *Vanitas* and *Memento Mori*. An interest arose during the century, for images thematising the idea that all worldly beauty is ephemeral and shall one day fade away with life itself. Vanity is in vain as we shall all die eventually. The theme was depicted in different ways, like in still life images of a floral arrangement with a rotten flower far in the back. *Et in Arcadia Ego* (1637 – 1638) by Nicholas Poussain (1594 – 1665) and *Vanitasstilleven met de Doornuittrekker* (1628) by Pieter Claesz (1597 – 1660) and are just two examples of Vanitas. Vanitas was not just a theme reminding us of death, but had a highly moralistic aspect to it. With that said, the mayfly on the head of Thoughtlessness is a small part of the long tradition of Vanitas imagery. The mayfly might be understood to tell us of how acting with dishonesty, discordance and vanity in selfish manners will never lead to any eternal glory; Fame is still sleeping as another of these mayflies (like Pride) tries to selfishly bring splendour and power to oneself but Fame only awakens to real glory. The interest for Vanitas was just as strong in Sweden; being a country suffering from long-lasting wars, high death toll and macabre processions towards gallows hills, Vanitas motifs were popular in both literary and pictorial art. The idea of the mayfly crowning the group of Discord, Vanity and Thoughtlessness, among others, is a small detail of large discourse on Vanitas in the era, something the visitors with knowledge to read the images surely may have been aware of; a truth/notion which the detail of a mayfly, might have re-enacted when communicating with that beholder. In this sense, the images in the ceiling are not only in communication with the beholders as moving bodies, bound to the spatiality in the room. In the staircase, the images communicate reliant on the room and its rhythm; the moving up the staircase, where the artwork emerges rhythmically and points direct us to other parts in the room. Here in the upper gallery though, there are of course the spatial dimensions which I have accounted for, but also social dimensions of a performative communication taking place more evidently. It is significant to epistemologically also discuss this different manner of “being performative”; that is, through communicating with the world of ideas of the beholder and create a co-presence through that joint social and political context. A co-presence which has the potential to further produce or re-produce, a set of truths and identities.

One can say that for a beholder aware of these vices and virtues, desired and undesired characteristics of the Carolean autocracy’s world of images, there is a clear notion evoked

---


215 Ibid., pp. 219.
in the first (north-eastern) part of the gallery: the vices are left in the shadow and will, despite their obsession and attempts at awakening the true Fame, remain there. They will not be able to awaken her with thoughtlessness, vanity, pride or selfishness. Their acts of vanity and selfishness make an ephemeral impression like that of a mayfly. As we are moving further into the room, it will become apparent and added to the equation how the virtues instead relate to Fame; what is the cause and effect of reputation. Opposite from Discord and Vanity (among others), to the left of Fame and above the western arcade open towards the staircase, we are introduced to these virtues in another group of characters (G in Figure 1). *Innocence*, a woman in white draping and a wreath of white flowers, is likely to be the first figure to attract our gaze, due to the brightness of her clothing and the light from the eastern window shining at her (Figure 22). Innocence does not meet our gaze but sends it forward though her own gaze, which is resting on a woman in green draping and hands together as if in a state of devotion: the *Divine and Absolute Hope*. The two are surrounded by *Vigilance, Magnanimous Courage* and *Fearlessness*. The play of gazes continues, as the Divine and Absolute Hope in turn is regarding the *Invincible Virtue* who is on a cloud in the centre of the north side of the gallery. She separates the virtues in the west from the vices (like Discord and Vanity) to the east. She is facing the beholder and the virtues with her back, holds a star in her hand and wears white and golden draping; slightly below and in front of her, directed with their tools against the vices, are *Obedience, Defence Against the Enemy’s Ill Deed* and the *Governing Order and Justice*. Binary opposition of art and reality are destabilized through means of naturalism. The Invincible Virtue and her company are depicted naturalistically above us and with their backs towards us. They are by this mean grouped together with the virtues to the west, but also with us: as we see her from behind her back, we must be standing in the midst of virtue. A virtue which is clearly separated from and acting against, the vices in the east. Further, the correspondence between the chiaroscuro effects and the actual daylight, also makes art a part of our reality; it destabilizes the opposition between art and reality and can by that mean achieve something new. Differently from the vices, the virtues are painted in strong light but are also located in front of the window, letting the rays of natural light land on the virtues in the same instance as a shadow is cast over the vices; this corresponds with and enforces, the painterly effects of light and shadows. Such accordance with the light of the room inscribes the activity in the ceiling of vice and virtue in the spatial relations of the visitor’s reality.216 As art and reality is made into one, a new dichotomy appears; that of vice versus virtue, enforced by the play of light. This also reinforces, as it takes place in one joint reality, the dichotomy of desired and un-desired identity in the Carolean social milieu: that of Obedience (the importance of Obedience in the Carolean autocracy has previously in this thesis, in chapter three, been made apparent), Defence Against the Enemy’s Ill Deed, Governing Order, Justice and of course, Virtue. Such is performed when the visitors are in the room, regarding the Invincible Virtue who naturalistically is made part of our physical world and suddenly separates us from the vices with means like Obedience. She offers her road as a choice for us, once again evoking a popular theme seen in Carracci’s *Ercole al Bivio*. Hence, as visitors, we have gone from the liminal state of good or bad, between Voluptuousness and Pride, to being offered the righteous path and the protection of the Invincible Virtue. That we are suddenly invited to the “good” side, could be seen as a way to inscribe desired characteristics, like obedience, into us; into the bodies of the court moving in the palace.

216 A tool employed especially often in more naturalistic depictions during the seventeenth-century. As an example, it can be seen Caravaggio’s *Vocazione di San Matteo* (1599 – 1600).
As a step in contextualizing the world of ideas and the structures which formed the spectating subjects, I would like to ask the following question: what can virtue be said to mean? The notion of virtue in art during the century, was that an artwork conveying virtue reflected the virtuousness of its commissioner. But virtue here is not only indicating the moral of the commissioner, but also that the same commissioner contributes to a greater good in a governmental sense; beauty and virtue equalized good government, just like splendour did. In extension, modesty and un-visualized virtue could be interpreted as political insignificance. The burst of virtues in the ceiling of the gallery, can thus also be understood to perform on several levels, not only as declaring desired and un-desired behaviour and giving the beholder the possibility to choose between the two roads, but also as a performance of the virtues present at court; the virtues which in extension become a performance of the significant and good government of the ruling dynasty and its court. Here, standing in the centre of the gallery we are in a liminal position between the virtues to the west and the vices to the east; through the employed naturalism we are inscribed in the scene, just between virtue and vice, but as stated above, tempted and invited to join the virtues. We as beholders are situated beneath the Invincible Virtue, able to choose whether to ally ourselves with, or oppose, such virtue (it is after all invincible); in extension, to ally ourselves with the virtuous government, that is, with the Carolean one. After having gone through the palace so far, we have been made aware of the strong confines of this reign. Surely, the choice was not very much of a choice in reality. Choosing to oppose the government would of course lead to falling into royal disgrace. Forced behaviour/obedience, disguised as a choice.

If we continue ahead, we are given more explicit examples of the reason and effects of that virtue which is offered as a path at the court. The ceiling in the gallery can be said to be separated into three sections, through the inclusions of two medallions in the ceiling. The first of these two medallions, separates the northern section of the ceiling from the centre one (H in Figure 1). The medallion consists of a tondo, separated from the rest of the painting by a frame. The three women, The Good Event, Victory and Triumph, are painted as if seen from underneath through the help of foreshortenings (Figure 23). Two of the women carries a cuirass upwards while the third does not help the others to elevate the warfare object as she is occupied with holding a palm branch in her hand and moving towards us, straight down into the room. She is separated from the others through being closer to us and being directed downwards. To identify who is who of the three characters is difficult and also in this methodology, not too necessary; what is more important is that the three characters are demarcated from the others and communicates to us en masse as The Good Event, Victory and Triumph. The plot thickens as one discovers that the palm branched figure is pointing with her right hand for our attention to be transferred to the western wall of the room. Mårth have interpreted the branch to be pointed towards Lemke’s battle scenes and we find the same indication in Tessin the Younger’s program: “the good event, the victory and the triumph, form the troffies and point towards the depicted battles down on the inner walls of the gallery.”

Employing Kemp’s theory of reception aesthetics, we can identify the character with a palm branch in hand, pointing downwards to the inner wall of the room, as a cicerone telling us of victory and good events. Following the

218 Mårth, 1994, pp. 18
219 Böttiger 1889, pp. 52-53. “l’evento buono, la vittoria e il trionfo formano gli trofei e additanop parte alla battaglie dipinti a basso all’interno delle muraglie della galleria.” See appendix.
direction pointed out for us by our cicerone, our gaze is lead in the direction of her gesture, towards Lemke’s battle scene depicting the battle of Lund of 1676 (Figure 27).

The battle was one of many in Karl XI’s war against Denmark. The war, which regarded the lands in the then (and still today) south of Sweden, was not the first in line. Karl X Gustav had taken the area from Denmark in a strategic move of leading his troops over the ice between Danish islands Jylland and Sjælland. In 1658, certain regions of the today south of Sweden that before were Danish, became Swedish after the peace treaty of Roskilde. As the war was revitalized in the late 1670s during the young Karl XI’s reign, the newly gained lands were in need of defence. Eventually, peace arrived in 1679 and the areas remained Swedish. After the war, there was both a propaganda campaign for, and a real opinion of, Karl XI as a war hero and that he was the sole reason to the triumph; the nobility was instead accused to have mistreated the army, navy and the state finances which had appeared neglected during the war and in its aftermath. The more important battle of the war for Karl XI, was the one in Lund 1676. The popularity the young king achieved through the war turned out immensely fruitful as it in 1680 resulted in the autocracy through a parliamentary decision. The conveying of a similar image can be seen in the already mentioned gallery of the Stockholm Palace, with its own program by the same architect, where the peak of the narrative depicts Karl XI as a war hero, putting the war to an end; he has the war on the one side of him and the peace on the other side. In the actual contemporaneity of the war, the outcome of it all was not an easily solved political question. Although the Swedish part saw itself as the triumphant, Denmark did not agree with that notion. From a perspective of performativity, it is not seldom in these grey areas of disagreement and discussion, where a performance can have even the more effect. Old truths can be eliminated for new ones to appear. Returning to the depictions in the ceiling, it is even more interesting that it is the formation of The Good Event, Victory and Triumph, who as cicerones impose this value of the depicted battle of Lund on us; against the contemporary dispute of who was the triumphant, it can be understood as a performance to make the battle into exactly a triumph for the Swedish side in the most positive tone (The Good Event). To create that truth. As Lemke’s battle scenes follows a chronology from north to south, in correspondence with our presumptive movement in the room, the war and the triumph are re-enacted every time a new visitor was moving in that direction, regarding the images accordingly with the aesthetic of reception inscribed in them (as declared above). For the designated beholder, a courtier or a noble visitor in general, such notion was potentially in extension an argument in favour of the autocracy which would follow the war.

**After Karl XI’s triumph of Lund, Fame awakens**

Leaving the first section of the gallery behind us, we bring with us an understanding of un-desired vices and their attempts, in vain, to spread the word of themselves and to awaken Fame. We have also been made aware of our liminal state of choice, where we can choose vice or virtue and where the Invincible Virtue offers us her road. Contextualized by the idea that the road of virtue also connotes the idea of the good government, does in extension mean that the choice of virtue can be translated to the choice to support the autocrat government, as the sender of the message, the commissioner, is the monarchy. As a last argument, we see in the medallion the reminder of the true

---

220 Snickare, 1999, pp. 22.
virtue of this government, as the Good Event, Victory and Triumph points out the triumph of Lund, 1676. Continuing to the middle part of the gallery, framed somewhat by the two medallions, is Glory next to Fame who now has awakened above the windows on the seaside (indication I in Figure 1, Figure 24 for image). A pictorially and performatively interesting aspect here, is the way Fame is depicted (Figure 25). The group is consisting of three women. In Mårdh’s words:

On the right side of The marriage union we see a group of three winged women and a some putti. It is Glory and The true fame who now has awakened. Provided with laurel wreaths and branches of palm tree they are blowing in their trumpets with full power.  

The same is noted in Tessin the Younger’s program: “one can see glory and the true fame awakened with their trumpets”. Just as Mårdh describes them, the three women are crowned by laurel wreaths and hold palm branches as well as trumpets in their hands. Being a visitor positioned beneath the paintings, about to identify who is who of the three women, one stumbles across a difficulty. Only two characters are mentioned by name in the program, Glory and Fame, yet we are faced by three characters in front of us. Such disparities between ceiling and program is not unique: in some parts of the ceiling, Sylvius seems to have depicted groups of figures to symbolize one virtue of Tessin’s program. Thus, one cannot too fiercely rely on Tessin’s program when regarding the meaning produced in meeting between the actual artwork and beholder. It is after all the performatif event which is regarded here and such is not necessarily relying on the written down program although it can function as a guiding voice. What can be said of the three characters is that, if they all have trumpets, it is only the most focused and visible one, at the top, who is wearing laurel wreath. Also, their clothing differentiates them into three characters. As the trumpet and laurel wreath is more likely to have been identified as attributes of Fame and as Fame awakening is the main theme of the room, I understand this centralized woman in laurel wreath to be Fame. What should then be done with the two other women, in front of and behind Fame? Surely, the program says Glory, but could they have been identified as Glory by the visitors during the long seventeenth-century? Such cannot be made sure, as the differences are so small between the three of them. Taking help from the method of reception aesthetics instead and regarding actual structure of the painting, the characters here are quite different from the ones which has been exposed to the visitors so far. Although they clearly are three in number, they are not as separated within the group as the previous characters are. Especially the two “Glories” besides Fame, intersect, mirror and almost melt together into one. My interpretation is that the two other women, can be understood as exhibiting an echo if you will, or showing the vastness and effect of the word now being spread by the awoken Fame. They are the intensity of Fame’s voice and trumpet. They project their trumpets in different directions and become by that mean an extension of Fame’s trumpet and an embodiment of the vastness of the spreading of her word; they together as Glory, elongate Fame’s word. The positioning of the two women around the

221 Mårdh, 1994, pp. 19. ”På Äktenskapsunionens högra sida ser vi så en klunga av tre bevingade kvinnor och några putti. Det är Äran och Det sanna nytet som nu har vaknat. Försedda med lagerkransar och palmkvistar blåser de med full kraft i sina trumpetar.”

222 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 52-53. “[…] si vedono la gloria e la vera fama risvegliata colle loro trombe;” See appendix.

223 Mårdh, 1994, pp. 20. Also noticed by Böttiger, 1889, pp. 51.

224 Fame depicted with laurel wreath and trumpet, can be seen in many rooms of the Drottningholm Palace and in the Stockholm Palace (on the western beam in the upper gallery, separating the actual gallery from the cabinet of war as well as in the plafond of the grand bedchamber of the same king's apartment), two name a few examples.
same axis (Fame) and how they subsequently are turned in different directions, mirroring each other, is something which further argues for such reading of the function of the painting: what I suggest, is not a depiction of two different characters, but rather a depiction of the effect of Fame, through the character of Glory.

Important to remind oneself of, is the succession of the narrative: after the battle of Lund, Fame awakens. Through her trumpet, Fame tells us of the heroism and glory of that battle. Such is not only discovered through the narrative, but also regarding the aesthetics of reception and the composition of the allegory. Standing in the room, beneath Fame and beholding her awakening, one discovers that her trumpet is projecting outwards and is active against the room. Being a visitor with knowledge and understanding of the fact that Fame spreads the word of something, through her trumpet, one might follow the direction of that trumpet: such would lead our gaze back to the medallion of The Good Event, Victory and Triumph and hence eventually, at the battle of Lund (Figure 23 and 27). Similarly, her gaze and attention is directed towards that same “good” event; if her gaze is understood as an extension of the mind, then that would mean that Fame in this very instance as we are regarding her here, spreads the word of the glory of the Karl XI’s battle of Lund. The vices failed to awakening her up but all the sudden, in the middle of the gallery, she is awake and she speaks of one thing: the Swedish king’s triumph of Lund.

Also over the seaside, positioned to the right or further south of Fame, is the woman whom Tessin the Younger in his Italian program calls, L’Unione maritale, the Marriage Union. In her right hand, she holds a globe and in the left, a flame of fire is bursting. Lavishly dressed in green garments with fur details, embroidery and jewels, she is being crowned by Love for God (amore verso Dio) and Prudence with a laurel wreath (Figure 25). Rays of light burst from her as she receives from Immortality, a flying character coming from above, another crown on her head which consists of stars. The crown of stars appears more transcendental than the laurel wreath. A figure dressed in cloak, cuirass and a winged helmet is guarding and regarding the event from the right (south), together with Justice (with fasces in hand) and Peace (with a burning torch and a branch of olive tree) who are embracing each other (Figure 26). How then, could the Marriage Union be understood in the performative event constituted so far? Well, the narrative in which the Marriage Union follows the war against Denmark, corresponds with the real events of the 1670s. Already before Karl XI’s war against Denmark, there were plans of a marriage union between the Swedish king and the Danish princess, sister of Kristian V (1646 – 1699) Ulrika Eleonora the Elder (1656 – 1693). As war erupted in 1675, such plans where postponed but were revitalized when peace arrived in 1679. To describe the relation between peace and marriage as a causality is no way an exaggeration, as the marriage was inscribed in the peace treaty written in Lund the same year and was considered an important aspect of the peace. Clearly, the marriage is of highly political matter and is in close affiliation with the Swedish-Danish war. The wedding ceremony was simple but the new queen’s arrival in Sweden was celebrated with splendour and with an artistic program signed Tessin the Younger which strongly connoted and manifested peace and triumph. The marriage union was presented as an act which would result in peace, harmony and “a general abundance”.225 When depicting the narrative in the gallery ceiling as has been accounted for so far, the events of the war and the peace are re-enacted every time a visitor enters the gallery from the north and moves towards the south. Manifestations like the performances of Ulrika Eleonora the Elder’s arrival, are here in the gallery given life again (something

225 Snickare, 1999, pp. 50.
which must have been a part of the collective memory of the visitors); the notion and myth of the Swedish triumph is re-produced just as the king’s achievement of peace, harmony and abundance for his people, due to his military triumph, political marriage, are. What is critical to grasp here is that the performative function, might not be as strongly in communication with the spatiality (although it is dependent on the movement from north to south), but more in communication with the very specific social milieu of the physical beholder of a courtier; of the social structures which formed the subjects that were the noble beholders. The structures were the king provides the courtier’s with glory, prosperity and peace but also, demands obedience. The splendour of the king, meaning the good government of the same authority is here explicitly exemplified; his achievements are re-enacted and the peace arrives once again, as we after the Marriage Union arrives at Peace embracing Justice. For a visitor of the late seventeenth-century, that unusually long peace was a lived reality and for a visitor of the early eighteenth-century, in the midst of Karl XII’s warfare, such peace might have been a reminder of the glorious past but also, a reminder to trust the warfare of the Carolean army and king.

Peace has arrived and the good government of the king is achieved. Fame is awakened and has told us of the triumph and the peace. Every time a beholder moves in this direction, regards the images of the war represented as a Triumph and Good Event, every time a beholder sees Fame speaking of this Triumph and sees the Marriage Union juxtaposed to the Peace, the real peace and its previous practices of celebration (like the procession of Ulrika Eleonora the Elder coming to Stockholm) are re-enacted and made true. After this section, being half way through the room, we suddenly see the results of the peace materialized as Happiness of the Public (Figure 24). She can be found in this middle part of the gallery, between the two medallions above the wall towards the staircase (J in Figure 1). Wearing a flower wreath and seated on a foreshortened silver throne which is somewhat sunken down in a cloud, she holds the caduceus and possibly a cornucopia. As Mårdh states, a cornucopia is accordingly to Cesare Ripa’s Iconologia the result of hard work and is the only mean to true happiness, something which the flowers (the fruit of the hard work) bursting from the cornucopia represent. The caduceus instead symbolizes peace and virtue. The image of Happiness of the Public can be understood as the representation of the true happiness a population can achieve through virtue, peace and hard work. To further reinforce such performance of the splendour and peace which has arrived here in this joint reality (as art is no longer exterior to reality, due to the many naturalistic elements and the accordance between narrative and actual historical events active in the beholders’ collective memory) further south from this group are Abundance and Joy represented as a group of women with flowers (K in Figure 1, Figure 26 for image). One of the women has a thin veil which flows in the wind behind her as she holds a cornucopia. The veil flows elegantly over her but also over us. Together with the woman seated furthest down on the cornice who is meeting our gaze, the veil frames our presence within that Abundance which has followed the war and the Marriage Union. Suddenly, we, being the subjects and people of the autocrat reign, are included in the prosperity and loveliness that the peace, achieved through the battle of Lund (according to image propaganda) and the marriage with Denmark. The reign and army of the king, seems to protect the people. Such should also be seen against the general opinion of Karl XI versus the Regency of noble men leading the country before him. The peasant stand together with the lower aristocracy called for clearance of the state finances after a financial crisis and accused the high aristocracy to have, through the Regency, neglected the finances, army and navy for corrupt purposes. Here in the ceiling, such notion is given

---

truth through the performative event with the beholder. Karl XI’s achievement in Lund, rather than the Regency’s, is the reason to Joy, Abundance and the Happiness of the Public. An important aspect here is also, that the group is one of the largest ones in numbers. The figures contributing to the allegory of Abundance and Joy are working with an effect en masse. Just as the very essence of Abundance is surrounding, the figures representing Abundance are sweeping over us like a wave. The Abundance has been performed in the ceiling as well as in previous rooms of the palace as connected to the rule of the dynasty, to the strong reign of the autocracy, especially in the north guard room with the image of The Four Seasons; an image that relates to the group of Abundance in this room.

The vices, casted out like into an abyss of dark and gloomy clouds

After this scene, we are met by the second medallion which initiates the last and third section of the ceiling. In this tondo (L in Figure 1), a crowned woman in white fabrics and a golden cloak is enthroned on the clouds with spire in hand and eagle next to her: the Royal Majesty (Figure 26 and 28). Below her is Patriotism seated next to the difficultly translated la cognizione delle cose, the cognition of things, let us call her Mastery. Tessin the Younger explains in his program that the three are gathering as a council, something which can act as guidance when embodying a beholder of the long seventeenth-century. The Royal Majesty is reigning with love for the native land, patriotism and with mastery/knowledge. She is gesturing slightly with her arm as if inviting us to regard the surrounding, the room and the court; her land, possibly. Her gaze instead, is directed in front of her, towards the north of the room, possibly inviting us to regard our path which has lead us far from the vices in the beginning. Her posture is active, almost as if about to lunge towards those same vices, prepared with her spire in hand. Just after the tondo, towards the staircase is a woman in armour stoically standing upright (M in Figure 1). She is heavily lit and she is brought into our reality through means of light; just like the case with the virtues in the north side, the natural light lands on her to reinforce the painted light resting on her, making her a figure of focus (Figure 28 for image of all the remaining characters of the ceiling). The woman is the Righteous Governing of the State, who, as Mårdh states it is “[…] equipped with all that could be considered necessary for the good governing of a country.” She is evidently, as binary oppositions are destabilized by the chiaroscuro effect, brought to this world. Heavy foreshortenings make her seem as if standing above us. Her stoic gaze rests on a scene at the end of the gallery. She is one of the last cicerones of the room and she makes the beholders move their gaze towards the end of the room. Our gaze is lead directly into a dramatic scene of many characters. Most visible through means of light and therefor likely to firstly catch our gaze is a group of four, located over the seaside, opposite from the Righteous Governing of the State (N in Figure 1): Authority (a woman with a book), Severity (a woman with sword and spire), Correction (a cloaked woman with laurel wreath, spire and book) and Punishment (a man swinging his axe). The movement of this group is directed towards the south-west; that is, towards the short end of the room. Punishment is swinging his axe in that direction, just as Severity and Correction projects towards the same end of the room with their weapons/attributes. In the direction of their actions, we find a large group of

228 Böttiger, 1889, pp. 52-53. "[…] la maestà regia col amor della patria e la cognizione delle cose in attione da consigliarsi […]" See appendix.
229 Mårdh, 1994, pp. 21. "[…] utrustad med allt som anses nödvändigt för ett lands goda styre."
quite bewildering figures (O in Figure 1). Counting eleven of them, they are not easily identified and they do not correspond with Tessin the Younger’s program. What instead is written by Tessin, is that:

\[\ldots\] the authority with severity, correction and punishment drives away the following, like jealousy, greed, oppression, corruption of the judges, error, fraud, ingratitude, disobedience, insolence, which can be seen together casted out like into an abyss of dark and gloomy clouds, which end the artwork.\[^{230}\]

There are two important aspects of Tessin’s statement here. Firstly, the figures end the artwork: terminano l’opera. The assumption to read the artwork from north to south is proven further plausible. Secondly, his statement shows that a person from the turn of the eighteenth-century, is likely have seen the group as a mass effect. The artist’s intention is not so important, as the fact that he is one of the beholders from a contemporary era. A mass of vices being driven out from the room, in the direction of our movement. \emph{Insieme precipitate com’ in un abisso di nuvole scure e fosce}. Like an abyss of dark clouds. It is not necessarily crucial to identify each one of the characters. They are not easily separated and for a beholder of the time, such must have been difficult due to the sparse light conditions both in the darkness of this group and in the actual room. What is more important, is the mass effect which Tessin speaks of. A mass of vices, casted out into an abyss of dark clouds. Thus, an interpretation of the function of the images as an effect en masse, seems credible. They are further painted as if being part of one joint body. To terrify and frighten through conceiving of a dark abyss of vices, clearly unwanted and driven away by royal authority (obvious here is who is the good guy and who is not). If we follow their direction, it becomes evident that they are moving towards the exit of the room, towards the door just below them on the south side. By this, the casting out of the vices is literally taking place in our world, in the court of the Pfalz dynasty. It becomes, similarly to Cronos, an actual risk, something which could happen to the beholders, if not acting virtuously enough (that is, if not supporting the virtuous government of the Pfalz dynasty). Kandare also introduces the concept of \emph{CorpoReality} which could be fruitful to have in mind at this point, if not before. She states that: “[…] it concerns the capacity of the moving body to make real: to actively – performatively – create and realize, rather than just passively reflect an already existing condition.”\[^{231}\] Through the concept, she makes a theoretically and historically convincing argument for the performative potency of the bodily movement: the body as a locus for representing identities. Dance (or movement in general, I suggest) was a way to define and refine oneself. The interest lied rather in what the body \emph{did}, than how it \emph{looked}. Movement should correspond with identity (or, desired identity).\[^{232}\] Here, as the expulsion of the vices in this room, corresponds with not only the exit but also our movement, make the group en masse relatable to the moving body of the room. It brings the expulsion of the vices into this room and also, into something which could happen to every single one of us. Similarly to in the beginning of the gallery, also here, there is a correspondence between real sunlight and the painted light, inscribing the punishment of the vices into this world. As the vices are thrown into an abyss, like a dark cloud, they are of course painted as if in the darkness but such is reinforced as the sunlight fails to reach their dark corner. Being possibly the most dramatic part of the painting, the effect here emotional. If one regards the orientation of actors here, punishment’s axe is directed to the whole

\[^{230}\] Böttiger, 1889, pp. 52-53. “[…] l’autorità colla servità, correttione e castigo s’caccia gli seguenti vitù, come l’invidia, l’avaritia, la calumnia, la corrutela ne giudicii, l’error, la fraude, l’ingratitudine, l’inubedienza e la sfacciatagine, che si vedono insieme precipitate com’ in un abisso di nuvole scure e fosce, che terminano l’opera.” See appendix.

\[^{231}\] Kandare, 2012, pp. 60.

\[^{232}\] Ibid., pp. 49-50.
group, but possibly even more towards a woman in the lower front of the group. She is falling into the darkness, as can be seen through the depiction of her hair and clothing which are directed upwards, yet her face is still in the light. As can be seen in Figure 28, she is most apparent of all the characters in her group; I would like to identify her as the last cicerone of the ceiling when reading from north to south. She can be seen, to begin with, demarcated in the mass of vices and she conveys a clear set of emotions: fear, panic and terror. She calls for the implicit beholder to regard her. Through the conveying of strong emotions and her position in the front of the group, fully lit, she becomes a cicerone who communicates to the beholder a perspective and relation to the events played out. The mechanism here can be described as a performance which attempts to inscribe into the beholder through means of affection, the same fear and surrendering towards the great axe of Punishment. Our moving body and our fears of the punishing autocracy, correspond with hers and suddenly, her identity is inscribed onto our bodies. What we as Carolean subjects, strongly effected by the autocracy’s punishment are suggested to feel here, is of course the inevitable strength and triumph of the Righteous Government, the Royal Majesty; one can see it as a re-enactment of the punishments of the autocracy, like the Reduction. Similar themes as are evoked in the topic of Cronos in the north guard room, are conveyed also here. Just like in the Cronos image, there is one figure here with whom we can relate and feel the fear; who gives the mechanism and function of the painting function, an aspect of pathos. Simultaneously, we might feel fear of a different kind not for but of, the dark cloud of vices. The vices scare but for the terrified woman we might feel scared and relate. For a courtier of the nobility seeing the ceiling and the punishment crowned by the Royal Majesty in the tondo (higher seated than the rest), it is not unlikely to have evoked thinking of the still recently carried out Reduction: the actual driving away of the crown’s enemies, through diminishing of political influence and finances.

Thus, to not show gratitude, honesty and obedience, will throw the unthankful and dishonest in a dark abyss. Here, the absolutism achieved through good government, successful wars, the allegiances of marriage and virtue in general, is proven strong. The depiction of good and honest royal government is represented and performed, through the classical tradition of the allegory, in a transcendental and eternal form. We are given examples of this government in the ceiling, yet in a transcendental allegorical language: the Marriage Union, Fame, the Royal Majesty and Good Government, etcetera. Completely in accordance with the established tradition to perform and visualize the virtues and strength of the regal authority. Yet, in the room, Lemke’s battle scenes present the beholder with a sub-narrative which gives the virtuous government a materialized dimension. Lemke’s images, as has been shown with the example of the battle of Lund, corresponds with the ceiling allegory and becomes the third part in the asymmetrical communication initiated by Sylvius’s painting. The ceiling fresco has told us of the greatness of the reign, which during the discussed time was the Carolean reign and such has also been performed in communication with the beholder throughout the palace. Beneath the elevated ceiling sphere, around us, in our physical presence we see the very reason to the power and superiority of the royal reign elevated above: Karl XI’s war against Denmark.

I would like to make short de-turn towards the topic of the vices here, to regard the notion of the vices and whether it is likely or not for these vices to represent the high nobility, the group which dominated the Regency in the name of the minor Karl XI, as is my hypothesis together with several other scholars. For this, I will take up three aspects. Firstly the correspondence between the chronology of the fresco and the reality. In the centre of the gallery, we see the Triumph pointing
towards the battle of Lund and including it into the narrative, after which the Marriage Union follows and after that, Peace. Such narrative would correspond to the real chronology, if the vices are understood as the Regency of noble men. Before Karl XI’s time as reigning king (before the battle of Lund and the war), there was the Regency of noble men; this Regency ended in 1672 when the then 17-year-old king was declared of age.233 Just four years later, the battle of Lund takes place. Also, the chronology ends with the vices being driven away, something which also matches the historical events of the war, marriage and peace, followed by Karl XI’s autocracy (supported by the peasants and the lower aristocracy in 1680) in which he diminished the nobility’s political influence. As an example of the actual driving away of the noble from their political influence, one might mentioned that from 1682, the noble men of the Council of Realm were no longer to be titled Councillors of Realm, but the King’s Councillors.234 Further, the Council was no longer a fixed group which gathered in the Council Chamber, but was now a more flexible group, depending on the king’s need and will (what was the matter of discussion, which specialization was required, settled what individuals would be gathered235) and their meetings took place in the king’s chamber, in his cabinet.236 According to Lövgren, the House of Nobility conducted a lively discussion when Karl XI was declared of age, of what relation the monarch would have to the Council of Realm, after his ascending of the throne. The hope and desire was for the young king to reign and particularly, appoint civil servants or new councillors, with advice from the Council (med råds råde). Just eight years later, to their great disappointment, the recognized status was instead that the Council should counsel the young king only when he asked it to.237

Secondly, one needs two account for the plausibility of the aristocracy to identify themselves with the vices. Surely, such was not their actual self-image, but it was the general propaganda image of that group which had ruled as the king was yet young. After his ascending of the throne in 1672, the high nobility was accused of neglecting the state finances, army and navy. The king though, was considered a war hero among the lower classes. The peasant stand and the lower nobility called for a clearance of state finances, something which not only lead to a financial diminishing of the high nobility’s finances but also, lead to their political demise mentioned repeatedly.238 Thus, as it is the monarchy, the political enemy of the nobility who are the sender of the images, it is plausible that the nobility would have understood that they were the vices in the ceiling, even though they surely would not have agreed upon that definition. This as the vices in the narrative could easily be exchanged by the nobility in the real chronology. Of course, by that I do not intend to reproduce the notion of Karl XI’s reign as virtuous and the Regency as one of vice, but only that such is the performance of identities in the ceiling painting and that such could be understood by both parties and also, have an effect on the nobility trying to act more virtuous/obedient if only to change that image the monarch might have of them. The structures and historical events which formed the general noble beholder, surely must have made that person aware of this power battle and power relation between the monarch and the high nobility. My point here is that the noble were directly under the confines of the authority. Their political power and status and their very role at the court

233 Asker, 2017, pp. 49.
234 Lövgren, 1983, pp. 75.
235 Ibid., pp. 83.
236 Ibid., pp. 78.
237 Ibid., pp. 87.
238 Snickare, 1999, pp. 21-23.
was as nothing but a sub-division of the king’s authority and splendour. They were directly effected by the autocracy and the king, not only as subjects, but also as a high societal class which depended on the splendour which that same authority could offer them; splendour which would maintain their status in relation to the lower classes. They conceived of a societal group which suffered from diminished power and finances because of the strong monarch but which simultaneously depended on him; the court of the monarch was the source of dignity just as the monarch was a punishing ruler of absolutism. This spectatorship is a crucial backdrop in understanding the function and the performative effect of the images and their surroundings interpreted in this research.

What should also be said is that, although there surely is a temporal and physical affiliation between ceiling’s narrative and the spatiality of the beholders and the court, its performative mechanism is different from what we have seen earlier in this study and in the palace. It is as if the fresco of the gallery concludes the performances of the staircase, upper vestibule and north guard room: we have seen the depiction of the splendour offered the nobility at the court becoming a ritual threshold into a certain correct behaviour of the beholder, which will be rewarded with splendour; we have seen images in the staircase and in the guard room which inscribes the beholders into a pledging of allegiance to the queen dowager as a metaphysical eternal regent of the dynasty: we have seen what might happen, as the image of Cronus showed, when such allegiance is not maintained. Here in the gallery, the same themes are once again revitalised and given presence. The circular performance of identity, the iteration, is given its most evident importance in the gallery’s relation to the staircase, which is the last topic of discussion of this chapter.

**Reading the room in its visual relation to the staircase**

An aspect of the room which so far has been neglected is the visual and historically documented relation between the upper gallery and the staircase. Through the openings in the wall which separates the rooms, the architect inscribed a potential for communication taking place between the two rooms and their respective visitors. This relationship will be explored here. The desired situation would certainly be an ability to inscribe such analysis in the one dealing with the ceiling; especially since a visitor would have been exploring the ceiling and its surrounding simultaneously, possibly pausing to regard the staircase from the arcades and then returning to the ceiling fresco. The reason for locating this discussion in the end of the chapter, is three-fold. The first reason is that the very concept of a gallery encompassed a certain amount of free movement which makes it difficult to discuss how the rhythm of the room would be, from looking at the artworks only. The very essence of the room type was that each individual to a higher extent than in the previous rooms, could stroll around freely. Secondly, there are few traces which helps a reception aesthetical perspective to regard the possible relation and leading the beholder towards the arcade (mainly one indication, which I will return to in short, a part from the fact that there were defacto openings between staircase/gallery). Lastly, the discussion of relation is separated from the discussion of the fresco for the sake of scientific transparency; for the reader to more easily follow my interpretations, to continue or oppose them.

To return to the allegory in the ceiling, there is mainly one clear point were an indication towards the openings between gallery/staircase is taking place; when the Good Event, Victory and Triumph in the first tondo point towards the western wall (Figure 23 and 27). Pointing and looking towards the battle scenes depicting Lund, 1676, they lead us towards the arcade openings
in the west, between which the battle scenes are hanged. Leaving the battle scenes aside, we can stand in the arcade and lean over the balustrade. Further, as has been mentioned, the very function of the gallery as a promenade room for art beholding, makes it plausible that visitors would have been able to and actually did, move towards the openings to regard the staircase as an artwork as well. Beside these factors of the room type and of the tondo pointing towards the openings, the very fact that there were openings further argues for movement towards the arcade.

When discussing the gallery in its relation to the staircase, there is one interesting case to study, which also documents the fact that the rooms where understood as connected and used together during festivities and performances during the long seventeenth-century. For the birthday celebration of Karl XII in 1702, the upper vestibule of the palace became a banquette hall where dinner was served and the gallery instead was occupied by musicians.²³⁹ The festivity took place in the absence of young king, who was then in Poland. It has already been proposed that there was a main function of the room type of a gallery, that of a promenade room for beholding of the artworks. With the example of Karl XII’s birthday, such statement needs to be modified somewhat; besides this more general function, there were contemporary galleries, which were used not only for display of art and magnificence, but also for banquets, theatre and as ballrooms. For instance, Roman galleries like the famous Farnese one, is documented to have been used for social spectacles as well.²⁴⁰ What is important to add to the reading of the palace, is that during a festivity like that of Karl XII’s birthday, the gallery and staircase is occupied simultaneously; there is a clear interplay of energy between the rooms, something which the placing of the musicians in the gallery indicates. With this documented relation between the rooms, we are given reason to understand the artworks of these rooms, as in constant communication with each other and with the beholders; both within a specific room and in-between rooms like in the situation of the gallery/staircase.

Thus, when a beholder of the long seventeenth-century would have moved towards the arcade, he or she would eventually have reached the opening and been able to lean over the balustrade into the staircase. This as the glass was yet to be installed during Hedvig Eleonora’s whole life time. From here, the same beholder would have gotten a good view of the staircase. What happens with the performance when such movement takes place? There occurs a very elegant thematising and performance of gazing. When regarding the staircase, both from within it but maybe even more so from the upper gallery, dichotomies like actor/audience or artwork/beholder are once again under renegotiation. In the gallery, we are suddenly mimicking Sylvius’s illusory characters behind the balustrades, or is it them who are mimicking us? Either way, they just like us, are leaning over the balustrade, a balustrade looking just like ours and are gazing into the staircase. We look at them and they look at the other visitors arriving in the staircase (accordingly to Swidde’s engraving). Further, as they seem to be drawing attention to the social activities in the staircase, they also inscribe us into that gazing behaviour. Thus, us regarding others must surely have drawn attention to the fact that we just like them, surely are regarded by someone. As we and the painted figures are reflecting each other’s behaviour, this destabilizes the dichotomy of art/reality. Where does the one or the other, begin/end? Also, what is obscured here, is the dichotomy of actor/audience. Who is who? To further understand the function and mechanism of this performance, Kemp’s theory of reception aesthetics might be of service. The concept of the intentional blank can be used to better understand the images relation to the spatial dimensions: the artworks together in both the rooms, reach another level of playful

²⁴⁰ Warwick, 2012, pp. 141.
meaning, when beholders fill up the arcade (literally an intentional blank) separating the gallery from the staircase. Without the beholder, the artwork can be said to be unfinished, but when we for instance stand in the arcade of the gallery “we mentally continue a path that is cut off by the frame.”

We are not so easily separated from the figures in the paintings of the staircase: nor are the concepts of art and reality in opposition anymore. As stated by Fischer-Lichte, when old dichotomies are shaken, new truths can be produced. This is one of the foundational aspects in how Sylvius’s paintings produce identity. Art and reality becomes closely intertwined, which makes the beholder’s movement of the staircase and presence in the room, a part of the artwork. When there is no longer a certainty of what is the play and who is the audience, the acts of the figures in the paintings melt together with those of the visitors.

Warwick exemplifies such a dissolving of previous dichotomies like actor/audience and art/reality, through exemplifying the concept of a play within a play and reflexive relations between actor and audience, with Bernini’s I due covielli (1637): in the prologue, two actors were initially at the stage, standing back-to-back, the first facing the audience and the second facing a fictive audience in the scenography, yet both performing as if drawing the respective audience they had before them; the prologue ended, the curtain fell between them and the play went along; at the end, the curtain once again rose and the fictive audience resembled the real one leaving the theatre. My point here is that an interpretation of the relation between the staircase and the upper gallery, encompassing an interplay of roles, was not unheard of in the Baroque. The same goes for visitors standing in the gallery, peaking through the arcade, maybe leaning over the balustrade into the staircase and there suddenly being mirrored by the painted figures on the wall; the painted figures’ pointing and regarding of the staircase, have the potential to be imposed on the beholders in the gallery, due to how art no longer is exterior to reality. Being cicerones in this performance, they have drawn our attention to the social theatre of the court and by that also initiating the competition of that social milieu through making us aware of the fact that, if they are watching people just like we suddenly are, surely, someone is also watching and comparing themselves to us. Thus, making the audience appear on the stage and in the narrative; making the constant need to redefine oneself in comparison to the new surroundings, evident. The roles are not only shifted, but in a constant interplay: both the painted guests in the wall space and the real ones standing in the arcade, suddenly achieves a double character as beholder and actors in a a social masquerade: a theatre. We are watching the illusory figures, being watched by them or the real guests as well as we are watching the real guests. Further evidence for the plausibility of such an effect of the performative encounter between artwork and beholder, can be found in Warwick’s examination of Caravaggio’s Bacchus paintings, already mentioned in previous chapters. She interprets his paintings from a perspective of function within a context the masquerade taking place in the palace where the images were on display; where they through being simultaneously portrait of real figures and allegorical myths, thus materialized and encompassed the very essence of masquerade. Caravaggio’s Bacchus paintings were both portraits of servants and depictions of ancient myth at once. This dual function of images, conveying a sense of masquerade and depicting an allegorical myth at once, is something which Warwick means that the beholders were aware of. Sylvius’s painted characters in the staircase (Figure 5 and 6) can be understood to have a similar function of destabilizing who is looking at who. Embodying the very essence of theatre and through this, drawing attention to

241 Kemp, 1998, pp. 188.
242 Warwick, 2012, pp. 147.
243 Ibid., pp. 142.
the social theatre on display at court. Something which further argues for the contemporary understanding of the room as drawing attention towards the social theatre of the court, is the engraving by Swidde, mentioned several times (Figure 10). Such a reflexivity of the beholder guest and the painted guests, is created through a kinship between the muses and the visitors. It can be understood to convey something similar to that which Warwick stresses: the visitors themselves are actors/characters in another narrative/theatre, the social one.

Another aspect of letting the staircase enter the gallery and letting the visitors of the gallery see the staircase, is that it re-inscribes us in the performances of the staircase. The performative encounter is repeated. The social theatre of the court is re-vitalized as described above, but also, through the very cyclic aspect of the staircase re-appearing. We can see the women in the illusory perspective regarding the activities in the staircase and suddenly, we are inscribed in that social theatre of the currency of status once again, as the illusory characters (in Figure 5 and 6) have pointed out visitors arriving in the palace, just as can be seen in the engraving by Swidde (Figure 10). The same performance is achieved in communication with Sylvia’s painted men over the illusory balustrade to the right/north, in that they actively regard the staircase with awe, something which tempts the beholder into regarding that same social milieu. Here, the balance of court life is once again re-vitalized as we are standing up here, almost on a balcony in the theatre, regarding the scene played out beneath us. Once again, the important function of being seen at the court and of seeing the royals, is given an artistic impression which communicates with the spatial surrounding of the actual court and the beholders. The advice given by Adler Salvius to De la Gardie, regarding one’s presence at the court, is given truth and embodied form: “a long-lasting absence from the court would be just so unadvisable as a continuous court life. Through long absence one is forgotten, through daily socializing uninteresting.”

We can see that the one of the functions of the images is the way that they relate to the spectators and in that relation, perform a theatre of display which also re-produces the same need for balance which Adler Salvius describes to the count. Thus, that court life was a theatre of social status where one needed to appear in relation to the other courtiers in a balanced and elegant way, is clear. The staircase and the gallery, became a stage for those practices and the artistic expressions became scenography and actors in that play, on that very stage.

The re-vitalizing of Sylvia’s images not only puts the social theatre of status, the social milieu of the court, on display but also re-produces that same milieu and the power relations on display, through the iteration of social acts. We have seen it before, when we moved through the staircase and here the same performance is re-enacted and repeated all over again. Given truth. The view from the gallery re-vitalizes ideas absolute power with a glorious descent. The woman farthest to the right (in Figure 6) meets our gaze and points upwards to remind us of Hedvig Eleonora’s position above, idealised, by the Greco-Roman Gods. We become reminded, not only of our previous pledging of allegiance which took place when acting accordingly with social decorum in the staircase, but we are also reminded of our obedience to this allegiance with the queen dowager and the dynasty. From the same position, we see her Livgeding stretching out to the east, right in front of us and beyond the vestibule. We get a glimpse of the Geatish kings protecting her lands but also acting as a threshold to the paradise from which Sweden was said to descend; such performance of a visual relation between the gallery and the staircase/vestibule corresponds to and performs a re-creation of

244 Printed in AB Carlsson, ”Adler Salvius såsom rådgivare åt Magnus Gabriel de la Gardie” in Personhistorisk tidsskrift, 12, 1910, pp. 151. “ett longsamt eloignement de la cour wore åfwen så orådeligit som ett continuerligt hofflefwerne. Genom longt borta warande blifwen man förgaten, genom dageligit umgänge ledse.”
the idea of Gothicism, of Sweden as the heirs to the Geats and the origin of European civilization. If turning back into the gallery, we see the deeds of the Royal Majesty, the warfare of the Pfalz absolutism dynasty, which administers and protects this Geatish heritage. The ideas presented to us and performed in the upper vestibule are thus re-affirmed and given actual example through Lemke’s battle scenes; the act of imperialism that they portray, juxtaposed to the garden, becomes an example of the growing Sweden, just like the garden materializes vastness, growth and future.

What then, is the point of visually repeating and bringing the previous painted performances into the gallery? Such can be understood and conceptualized by the performativity perspective. The chosen performativity needs to, here at the end, be somewhat extended with the concept of iteration, as employed by for instance Judith Butler (but of course also others). Butler speaks of iteration, the repetition, of acts and practices as a very foundation to the politics of identity becoming true. Speaking of gender acts, she means that gender is an effect of bodily stylization, through repeated acts, gestures, movements and behaviours which create an illusion of a lasting and true gender. Gender is performed repeatedly through our acts and social staging.

Translating her performativity theory on gender into one of identity in general, one might understand it as follows: for identity to be not only produced but also maintained, through a performance, it is necessary that there occurs some sort of iteration of that negotiated identity. Such is stressed also by Fischer-Lichte, who speaks of the necessity of performances having durability. This is what we see in the repeated performance through the opening in the wall between the staircase and upper gallery. Through the inclusion of an arcade in the promenade gallery, a possibility to regard the one room from the other has been inscribed and with that a circularity. Narratives and messages become re-told, identities re-created and by that, it is all re-affirmed. Through such iteration, the notions and ideas of the performances become true; a consistent and durable part of reality. The iteration of acts which corresponds with a certain identity, affirms them once again but also, makes them stronger. Possibly, in the imagination of the spectator, the message of the not visible upper north guard room, can be re-awakened as well, as the missing piece between the visible staircase and gallery. The point is that the very functions of the rooms and their images, are plural and communicate with the beholder on several levels, repeatedly. The pluralism, as has been stressed through the thesis, is crucial in grasping the function of the art of this era. It was highly appreciated and a mean in awaking interest, emotion, response and thoughts, in the mind and body of the beholder. To reach and effect the latter as well as, through this, make certain notions of government, the king and his subjects, true.

Similarly, when standing in the staircase, the arcades opening towards the gallery, frame groups of figures on the eastern part of the ceiling fresco; in Figure 30, seen from between the first and second floor, in the staircase, one can regard the Marriage Union, almost shining with the transcendental crown of stars put on her head. Important here, is that what figure, symbol or aspect which is framed by the three arcades, depends on the movement of the beholder. The function of the allegorical gallery ceiling, seen from the staircase, is fully in relation the spatial dimensions of the architecture. As the “image” which appear in the “frame” changes with the movement of the beholder, a certain rhythm and dynamic impression is created. We see the gallery only in fragmented parts, hinting of what will come and achieving an element of excitement. When the gallery finally appears in its full glory as we enter the room from the north entrance, the vividness of the colours, the pattern of the floor and the mass effect of the allegory, overwhelm us.

Conclusion and Summary

"A king without a castle is no king at all"

As such begins the BBC TV-series *Versailles*, with the words of the dying mother of the French King Louis XIV, Anne of Austria (1601 – 1666). The series which most certainly aims at firstly entertaining its audience, still seems to have grasped something essential of seventeenth-century culture of performance and its usage of splendour, art and *il buon gusto*, something which the words of Anne exemplifies. The comparison with this fictional statement of Anne is of further relevance as she was contemporary with Hedvig Eleonora, was the mother of a king who influenced the son of Hedvig Eleonora and was a queen dowager who just like the latter, came to lead the Regency in the name of her son. I believe we can summarize the findings of this study to be in line with the words by the French queen mother from the drama series. No regent is ever stronger than his or her splendour and manifested magnificence suggests, displays and performs. The potential performative effect of a palace as a locus for negotiating power relation and its artistic embellishment functioning to achieve certain relations, has been made evident in this study. Such has been done accordingly with the aims to investigate how the paintings by Sylvius in the designated rooms, functioned in the social milieu of the Carolean dynasty and in communication with a certain historical beholder. I will summarize the findings and conclude with a discussion of those findings, in relation to the research questions.

A summary of the findings of chapter two, three and four

To begin with, the paintings by Sylvius in *the staircase* have the potential to lead the beholder upwards. Due to their formative arrangements, the intra-communication and the relation to the architecture but also due to the pluralistic and playful concept of art as well as the confines of the autocracy, they guide and indicate what the beholder should focus on. They meet our gaze, send it forward through pointing and gazing themselves in different directions, mostly into the actual room (drawing attention to the social theatre on display) and upwards. They control the interplay of gazes and can be characterized as asymmetrical in their communication, evoking the beholder to move,
respond and communicate with the artworks and the room: to continue the path which was cut off by the frame. This is much the effect of their naturalistic features (the continuation of architecture and painted architecture, like the painted balustrades matching the real ones) which destabilizes binary oppositions like art/reality, making art and reality into one and the same sphere. As such is done, new truths can be affirmed or old ones re-affirmed. With the help of Klöcker-Ehrenstrahl’s lantern painting, the same queen dowager’s identity is reinforced. With the crowning by the Greco-Roman gods, her virtue and education is enhanced and re-produced: a reminder and reproduction of her status as Sweden’s First Lady, higher than all below. Apollo and Minerva being the ones crowning her, infuse her qualities within art and warfare together with her wisdom. The images of Sylvius are the very tools which have lead us here, lured us into the tribute of the queen dowager, which takes place above us; they have made us into an audience and simultaneously as we do not oppose the tribute, co-actors within it. The immanent juxtaposition of choice and confines of decorum, is what gives this performance its strength; we are seemingly, due to the two-folding of the staircase, given an element of choice. Yet, either way, our choice will lead us up to such pledging of allegiance (as a tribute, huldning, meant in the designated context) and subordination. Also, the actual context of the strong Carolean autocracy and the ceremonial character of the staircase, hinder us from doing anything but continuing up to such a position. The confines force the beholder into such adoration of the queen dowager. Simultaneously, we are made aware of Hedvig Eleonora’s position as a patron of the arts and of her palace being the abolution of civilization: Mount Parnassus. All the sudden, the tribute to the queen dowager and the positioning of her monogram as above the visitors, present her as a glorified and idealized royal, to whom we as courtiers or aristocrats are subjected. Continuing into the upper vestibule, Sylvius’s painting there takes on a more assisting role. In the room, we have been presented to the total superiority of the Swedish kingdom and its current dynastic rule. The Geatish kings are surrounding us, exemplifying the Swedish past and above us are the Greco-Roman Gods gathering at Mount Olympus, crowning our encounter below them. Out the windows on the other side of the vestibule, we see an example of the queen dowager’s power: the garden which embodies and performs control, culture and beauty. Having reached this upper vestibule after climbing the stairs, it is almost as if we have entered a whole different sphere; one that was not visible to us, before our elevation to the sphere of the muses and the court of the queen dowager. Up here, the by national propaganda claimed heritage of Sweden, the Geats and the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome, all intersect in the elevated sphere on the top of the staircase which we are invited to as we have obeyed the tribute of the queen dowager. Through the illusionary grisaille surrounding the plafond in the vault, there is a connection created between the upper sphere of the room and the lower one (where the beholder and the court is situated); through such connection, the gods and the Geats are brought to the world of the beholder. Before leaving the room, we are made clear of the driving away of the lusts, an image in grisaille just above the door which is juxtaposed to the monogram of the queen dowager; suggesting and hinting of the virtue which will follow in the next room, in the court of the dynasty and the king’s parade apartment.

To summarize the study of the upper north guard room is not an easy thing to do. The chapter contains reading of two different narratives, in different steps; seen by themselves, together and in different formations but always in a performative relation to their spatial surrounding, socio-historical context and aesthetical cultural context. Although Sylvius’s painting of the upper north guard room is at first sight a more simple artwork to approach, it is in many ways the most complicated one, much due to its pluralistic artistic language and history. It speaks to the beholder on several levels,
during a specific festivity, during regular cour and through two narratives at ones, both carrying an
iconographic dualism. The aesthetical statement of pluralistic meaning production in the Baroque era,
can provide understanding of the pluralism of the ceiling in the upper north guard room, which has
been made apparent in the third chapter. With understanding of the seventeenth-century’s playful
relation to the usage of allegories, one can better grasp how the allegories employed in the upper north
guard room could function on several levels simultaneously and encapsulate a complex net of power
relations to be re-produced through the performances.

The reading of Sylvius’s painting has shown that it dissolves the border between art and
life through certain tools of including the beholder in its narrative scene; art is no longer exterior to
reality. The direction and play of gazes, the naturalistic form and the relation created between physical
walls and the plafond painting (through the similarly coloured sectioning), together make the two
worlds into one. Regarding the narrative of The Four Seasons in relation to the birthday masquerade of
1689, in the honour of the queen dowager, such inscribes the beholder into a celebration of the queen
dowager as Autumn; just like the seasons celebrate Autumn as the most splendid one. She is the centre
of the narrative, both in the moment when the painting meets the beholder (when the painting
emerges as a performative event) as well as in the masquerade and its ballet. As Autumn was to be
related to the queen dowager, it is her who is made the centre of the event (through naturalistic form,
interplay of gazes and through the corresponding masquerade theme/narrative in the painting). The
narrative of the masquerade and the ballet as well as the fresco in the ceiling, are suddenly intertwined.
As the deconstruction of the dichotomy art/reality has occurred, new truths can be produced, which
in this case, would have been the truth of the glory of the greatest season and in extension, the queen
dowager. Being visitors and beholders of the palace and having reached the upper north guard room,
they must have passed through the staircase where they were lead upwards by Sylvius images towards
a pledging of allegiance to Hedvig Eleonora and a performance of her identity as sovereign and
elevated; the role as crowned by the Greco-Roman gods, as a patron of the arts and the mother of a
superpower as well as the heir of the Geats. The visitors have, through proceeding into the vestibule
and the north guard room to take part in a festivity, obeyed such messages and through that mean, re-
produced that identity for her. This specific meaning is achieved foremost through a cultural
encounter with this certain aristocratic beholder at the masquerade. At the masquerade, the painting
initiate the communication with the beholder and gets a prerogative against that audience, especially
with the experience of the staircase in a near past. Viewing the painting in relation to such social
events, is one way to understand the seventeenth-century mechanism of this specific painting in the
context of Drottningholm and the Carolean era, regardless of whether the masquerade took place or
not. It speaks of the usage of artworks as co-creators of a social presence and as scenography for
carefully planned manifestations of power and splendour.

If we instead regard the more general function of The Four Season, whenever the
masquerade did not take place, what is foremost crucial is the idea of the regent as a two-sided coin.
On the one side, he offered splendour, status and prosperity. The court of the regent could be a road
to education, to civil offices, to learn and expose your manners and your elegance. Yet on the other
side, at that same court, the power of the autocrat regent was executed. The social spectacles in which
the noble could prove themselves worthy of their status, were carefully designed events to empower
the monarch. Hence, the court was a point of contact between the royal and the aristocracy, where
their power relations were negotiated, often during the Carolean court, on the terms of the former.
Yet the social situation had a synergetic effect, in which the king surrounded himself with a glorifying
court of nobility to strengthen authority and to achieve power simultaneously as being close to the king signalled prominence of the aristocracy. My suggestion is for this to be what the painting in the upper north guard room, also embodies and performs. The compositional directions and the play of gazes in the intra communication of The Four Seasons integrate the physical space into the pictorial one. The scene with the Four Seasons, together on the clouds amongst beauty, blossoms, fruits, prosperity and the warmth of the fire, is suddenly the scene which we as visitors of the palace are drawn into. Understanding that the room had both a ceremonial function as well as that of an entrance, it becomes almost like a ritual. We enter the room, as we have surrendered to the autocrat message given in the staircase and the upper vestibule, to the greatness of the dynasty, and through such obedient behaviour, we are transferred into all the prosperity that same punishing monarch can offer his subjects. The notion of the monarch as the source of all opportunity and splendour, is given truth: the evidence can be seen around us. To further strengthen such performance, the punishing father Cronos is present. His strength and sovereignty is reflected in the face of the terrified child, naturalistically made a part of our world and making the noble beholder relate to the child of Cronos; also due to the contemporary idea of the ruler as a father and the subjects as his children. Thus, the story evokes thinking of the confines and punishment which was related to this same source of splendour that the king (father) was. Cronos becomes an elongated performance of the Reduction of Karl XI and his dynasty. Cronos is of course threatening in itself, but together with the festivity in The Four Seasons, they embody the privilege, advantage and prominence which was associated with court life; a privilege which could be lost if one fell into royal disgrace. Cronos simultaneously represents Time which reveals the Truth of the performance that he frames with his wings, accordingly with the popular allegory employed in this context.

To summarize, the ceiling allegory of the upper gallery can be seen as a chronology which begins with Fame sleeping despite the many dishonest, vain and selfish attempts to awaken her. The asymmetrical communication is initiated by the narrative, its form and the general room type of a gallery. Regarding the form, the composition of Discord lunging towards us and Fame, the way Fame’s wings encloses us beneath them and the way her many eyes meet ours, convey a naturalism and a performative effect which makes our reality into the whole which the painting is a cropped part of. Through this, the painting achieves a prerogative against us; it has the possibility to re-negotiate identity and reality, a reality where neither Discord nor the court regarding the scene are enough to awaken the true Fame. Yet, virtue and righteous manners are soon to enter the picture. Towards the west, the virtues are depicted in strong light corresponding with the natural light, achieving a clear dichotomy of vice and virtue which also, is inscribed into this room: the correspondence between real light/shadow and chiaroscuro effects destabilizes previous dichotomies of art and reality. The vices are in the darkest corner and the virtues are heavily lit by natural day light. As art and reality are made into one, a new dichotomy appears; that of vice and virtue, enforced by the play of light. This also reinforces the dichotomy of desired and un-desired identity in the Carolean social milieu, as it takes place in one joint reality: behaviour of Obedience, Defence Against the Enemy’s Ill Deed, Governing Order and Justice. This performance is further enforced by the placement of the Invincible Virtue in the centre of the north part, separating vice from virtue and offering us the possibility to gather with the virtues, that is behave as desired by the authorities. We are in a liminal position between vice and virtue, between the two of them but positioned according with the painted performance as if standing behind the Invincible Virtue. She offers her road as a choice for us, indicating what road we should take. That we are suddenly invited to the “good” side, suggests for us to behave a certain way and
inscribes the desired characteristics into us; into the bodies of the court moving in the palace. Of course, the real confines of the autocracy and decorum is likely to have had the beholders align themselves with such notion. This, as the monarch both grants status and takes it away. This theme is enforced by Voluptuousness, Fame and Pride, performing and expressing a similar liminality themselves. The former, being vice turned good and acting virtuous towards the latter who just selfishly attempts to awaken Fame. Voluptuousness exemplifies the vice turned righteous who has begun a process of acting good (that is, calm, obedient and unselfish), something which emphasises the choice of virtuous behaviour. Both are turning towards Fame and represent two ways of acting towards here; they put us in the position to choose between one manner or the other. Yet, our choice is after all only about being a virtuous vice (Voluptuousness) or a bad vice (Pride). Once again, giving us the possibility to rise above others, being virtuous and given status, yet simultaneously, making us feel the confines and our position beneath the royal. We are still evidently, not identified as purely virtuous, something which would have awakened the still sleeping, true Fame.

It becomes evident, as we move further in, that royal authority is the only one privileged to awaken Fame; she will only let herself be awakened before the Good Event of the Victory of Karl XI and the Carolean army in Lund, 1676. As Fame, when sleeping earlier had her eyes closet, she is eternally attentive to true triumph and heroism and cannot be fooled by the earlier selfish attempts of the vices to awaken her: this due to her always open/listening eyes and ears on her wings. Beholding the now awakened Fame over the windows towards the seaside in the middle part of the gallery, we can see her gaze and trumpet leading us towards The Good Event, Victory and Triumph, which tells us of the battle of Lund 1676. By that mean, every time a visitor moves as such, regards the awakened Fame and the battle of Lund gets pointed out for that same person as a Good Event and a Triumph, the idea of the battle as a triumph is re-produced; a notion which attempts to argue for a Swedish triumph in a reality where the triumphant of the war, was not agreed upon. Related to the peace is the Marriage Union, inscribed in the peace treaty of 1679. When the marriage is juxtaposed to the battle of Lund, the celebration of the queen’s arrival in Stockholm is once again, re-performed. It is given life again and so is the celebration of the queen as a celebration of the peace as the defeat of Denmark. The marriage signals peace and also, triumph.

After the peace, follows Abundance: it is raining over us, en masse and most explicitly becoming an actual part of the court, corresponding with the splendour surrounding us. We can see the effects of the war and the peace in this very room: above us (Abundance and Joy inscribing us in their world) and around us (courtly splendour). Happiness of the Public, Generosity, Humanity, Abundance and Joy, are thrown over the beholder in the most glorious virtuous manner. The Righteous Governing of the State is stoically gazing to the south and leads the beholder through her gaze, towards the south end of the room. As the beholder has been led to the end of the narrative, Punishment swings his axe towards the vices whom are driven away all at once. Through painting the vices being literarily over the door (the possible exit of the gallery) the expulsion of the group is brought into our world: it is from this very court where the vices are being driven away. The same effect of making art not external but a part of reality are the chiaroscuro effects of Sylvius which correspond with the real play of light. The way the vices are thrown into an abyss of dark clouds, corresponds with the location of the group in one of the darkest corners of the room. In the group, we are faced by our last cicerone, the woman furthest down in the foreground, who is designated through means of light; making her visible and her fear entering the stage. Through affection, she is likely to have inscribed the beholders of the court into the fear of her experience. If daring enough,
one could see the vices driven away as a definite end to the aristocracy’s Council through the Reduction. The punishment of the vices, crowned by the Royal Majesty in the tondo, is likely to have evoked thinking of the still recently carried out Reduction: the actual driving away of the crown’s enemies, the nobility, from power and influence. Also, the very narrative of the ceiling, corresponds with a real narrative where there is a Regency that ends in 1672, a war between 1675 - 1679 and a marriage union with Denmark in 1679, after which the autocracy is introduced and the Reduction takes place from 1680 onwards. When the Carolean subjects strongly affected by the autocracy’s punishment, regard these images and feel the fear of the painted woman, through the collective memory of that historical sequence just described, the events are re-enacted and the effects of the punishments of the autocracy (like the Reduction) are re-enforced.

In the upper gallery, the importance of iteration, of repeating the manifestations of power relations which has been stressed by for instance Butler, is made evident. In the room, through the openings into the staircase there is inscribed a possibility to re-vitalize the performances of the staircase and vestibule; most importantly from here, the social theatre of court life is once again put on display as the beholders mimic Sylvius’s painted figures who gaze into the staircase and thus, inscribes us in a similar behaviour. They awake interest and draw attention to the visitors of the room. The staircase and the gallery, in their visual relation, become a stage for social practices and the artistic expressions in the rooms; they become scenography and actors in that social theatre on that stage. The re-vitalizing of Sylvius’s images not only puts the social theatre of status, the social milieu of the court, on display, but also re-produces that same milieu and the power relations on display, as dichotomies like art/reality are destabilized and the painted figures become, just like us, visitors, regarding both us and the ones in the staircase.

Splendour is an embodiment of good government. The movement through the palace has indicated a shift in theme, from inscribing the beholders in a tribute to Hedvig Eleonora as a patron of the arts and an heir to the Geatish civilization, to leading the beholder (through splendour, iconography and communication) into a performance of obedience towards the autocracy, the dynasty and the regent as well a re-enactment of the punishment of the (according to the autocracy) disobedient. Thus, one might understand the splendour experienced on our way through the palace which culminates in the gallery, to argue for the strength and good government of the dynasty and reign of absolutism. A magnificent palace means a magnificent regent, which in extension connotes and re-produces the regent’s identity as one which signifies a good and strong government. Through this, Hedvig Eleonora also enforces and strengthens her volatile position as a queen dowager in a foreign country where her only claim to status is her son and later grandson. Making herself, through her palace, a representative, symbol and mother, of a dynasty of eternal and absolute kings.

A general discussion of findings in relation to the research questions

There have been three major research questions and I will attempt to discuss each of them separately. Surely, their answers have during the analysis intersected each other and are not easily separated, but to achieve some sort of scientific transparency and clarity, I will attempt to answer the three of them separately.

The first question was: how could the paintings have initiated a communication with the beholder, to evoke the latter to respond/relate to the former? The method derived from firstly reception aesthetics has been of high value for answering this question and for the first meeting with the
paintings. In a way, reception aesthetics help developing the first step of the performance’s aestheticity of Fischer-Lichte: accounting for how the artwork emerges at the stage of the encounter. One of the main elements present in all paintings to different extent, is the one of naturalism. Sylvius has, in different ways, made the artworks stretch out form their frames, into the physical world where they encounter the visitors of the palace; they intrude on our sphere. There have been characters which gaze out from the painting, towards us, who point and direct us further both in the physical world and in the intra communication of the artworks. There are also pure formalistic features, like the employment and creation of un bel composto, making the transitions between architecture, sculpture and painting smooth and barely visible and in extension our physical world and the world of the paintings, into one. Through these means, the beholders are drawn into the world of the images, almost as if the paintings call for us to enter their world. Seen with the eyes from Fischer-Lichte’s theory, such destabilizes binary oppositions like art and reality and is a foundational aspect for the transformative power of these performances. A foundational aspect in making the images in their encounter with the beholder (in the event), achieve something.

This leads us to the next question: how could the performative encounter between painting and beholder be understood, in the demarcated context and social milieu of the Carolean court? To answer this, one very much touches upon both the first and the third question. The performative potency is indebted to the formalistic features mentioned above, but resides also in the narratives employed. These narratives, are carefully chosen because of their relation to the social milieu and reality of the implicit beholder, that is, the aristocracy. Through addressing the social and political reality of the beholders through a naturalistic composition which includes those historical events into the narrative paintings, they encourage a response. In different ways, the mythological themes are related the actual historical events of the late seventeenth-century, to its world of ideas and its myths and notions on propagandistic building of a nation, on power, on the reigning authority and his subjects. As an example, the ceiling fresco of the upper gallery is not only functioning performatively in relation to the movement of the body and the spatial relations, but also through communicating with the world of ideas of the beholder. It creates a co-presence through referring and relating to the social and political context of the beholder; a co-presence which has the potential to further produce or re-produce, a set of truths and identities. As such, the discussions of the fourth and last chapter (of course also the other ones, yet not as apparently) has made evident the width of the theory of performativity when used together with a more artwork oriented theory like that of reception aesthetics. Together, they clarify the way which artworks and utterances create something, not only in relation to the bodily movement which much of art history with performativity theory focuses upon, but also, on a more cerebral plan; when discussing with, effecting and re-producing the actual structures which forms the subjects that are the spectators. This also argues for the necessity to account for an area which scares much of art history and its actors: that of subjectivity. The beholders of the artworks were defacto human beings with emotions and a lived experience; an experience and an emotional reality which the artworks were in communication with. Thus, it has been shown that, to disregard the potential response of the subjects that are the spectators, is to miss out on a very crucial aspect of how art functioned in the Carolean era and what constituted a performative encounter. To this I will return, lastly in this conclusion.

The potency of the images to create something finds much strength also in the relation to the actual functions of the rooms. For instance, the staircase has a ceremonial function and will, one way or the other, lead the visitor to the same goal; towards an elevation of being present at the court and to a submission towards the queen dowager and her dynasty. In the upper north guard
The very function of being an entrance with a ceremonial value, strengthens the ritual function of this room and does, in correspondence with the images representing the two sides of the monarch, also materialize the social metamorphosis which could be the result of the beholders acting accordingly with decorum; subjecting oneself and thus be rewarded by the “source of dignitéz”. In the gallery, the function of a promenade rooms is instead what enables the beholder to move more freely and to discover the allegory which is performed. It also, invites the beholder to fill up the intentional blanks of the arcade, making the them mirror the painted figures behind the illusory balustrades of the staircase and once again re-awakening that performance of the first room of the palace. The room type also enables movement from north to south which, together with the images’ guidance, leads us through the intra communication of the images. Hence, the performative encounter is an intersection of narrative, formalistic and spatial emergence of the artwork. This emergence is a performative encounter between the artworks, the moving body of the subject (bound to spatiality) and the collective memory of that group. In one way, the function of the rooms might be considered to relate to the first question at first glance. Surely, such an objection is in no way wrong, the function of the rooms is of much importance for how communication is initiated, especially in the last example of the upper gallery. Yet, as much as that is true, I have decided to relate the function of room to the second research question, as the usage of different types of rooms are, as has been shown, highly a consequence of, and needs to be understood against, the social milieu, decorum of court life and the confines of the autocracy.

The third and last question was: *which identities and what reality could potentially be created through the encounter with the paintings, in the performative event?* There is of course one simple answer and several much more complicated answers to this question. The simple one is that the images make art and reality into one and do by that, make the visitors of the palace aware of the greatness of the dynasty and their own submissive status towards that same dynasty. Yet, this is done in a complicated and pluralistic way, through simultaneous elevation and suppression of the spectators. The performances can be characterized as a careful interplay of choice/reward and confines/punishment. Thus, the royal authority reproduces the same set of values which its power rests upon. The beholders are first invited, with hospitality, to climb the Mount Parnassus of Drottningholm and are elevated to the sphere of the muses. In the upper vestibule, the Greco-Roman gods and the Geats intersect in the presence which is the Swedish royal court, reminding the visitors of their joint heritage: the Geats and Sweden as the origin of civilization. The Geatish discourse must also have had a more international level of performativity: achieving an image of Sweden/the dynasty’s greatness abroad through foreign spectators of the palace. But having climbed this Parnassus, Hedvig Eleonora as the continuum of the dynasty, is still above the beholders. They are subjected to her and she is being crowned by a laurel wreath by Apollo and Minerva. The spectators are lead into this position. The real bodily confines of the autocracy and the function of the staircase would prevent them from objecting such autocrat messages; they are transformed from passive bystanders to active participants in the ritual/encounter which is a tribute, a pledging of allegiance to the queen dowager and the dynasty. By that, they have taken a submissive position towards the queen dowager, that is, towards the dynasty which she as a woman is a representative/embodiment of. In the upper north guard room, the beholders are invited to the most prosperous festivity of the court. A prof of the monarch rewarding obedience and granting the same spectators status; they have after all obeyed the tribute in the staircase of Hedvig Eleonora, to get to this point. The room with Sylvius’s painting, performs the power relation between monarch and nobility as the former being both the source of status but also the punishing authority who can
remove it. The source of all magnificence and of the courtiers’ status is just one side of the coin which is the monarch. That side, is in a synergy with the other side, the punishing father/ruler who in an instance can remove all magnificence from the courtiers: remove them from courtly and governmental positions and throw them into royal disgrace. In the gallery, the beholders are given the choice to relate to and join the virtuous side: to be protected by the Divine and Invincible Virtue, from the vices. A choice which is not really a choice but rather a disguised requirement; a demand to behave in a virtuous, humble and obedient way to not fall into royal disgrace. In the same room, the vices are driven away in the end and the courtiers/visitors are once again, included in the Abundance, Joy and Prosperity which follows the peace and Marriage Union with Denmark. In this way, they are made aware and also given an identity of status, virtue and splendour, through their presence at the court and obedient behaviour. Yet they are reminded of the strong arm of the authority in a threatening manner which achieves obedience within the visitor, as it is made clear that the status granted will be removed, if obedience is not displayed. In this way the displayed splendour also achieves obedience, but more through the act of temptation rather than threat (like Cronos works with). In the gallery, the splendour becomes an actual performance, an act of the good government of the king, through manifesting his status for the beholders. They are also made aware of their inadequacy of awakening Fame; they seem to be too insignificant and not enough virtuous. As Fame later is awakened by the achievements of Karl XI in the war against Denmark, the courtiers’ relation towards the king, is made clear: less important, less virtuous, less glorious and saved by their monarch. Through inscribing real events into the allegory of the ceiling with a clear dichotomy of virtue and vice, the image also impose certain values on those past events and experiences: the Regency was deceitful, the war against Denmark was a royal and national triumph (as well as a necessary mean to peace) and the Reduction was nothing but a driving away of the vices, that is, the disobedient noble. The obedient noble, can remain in the splendour of the royal court.

I would like to make a quick detour to valuing the results of the performative analysis taken place in this study. There exists an epistemological difficulty, as often in humanist research, to know what the real effects of the performances might have been. To take inspiration from Kandare, it is difficult to know whether the outplays of Kristina in the Basilica San Pietro was considered a mistake and an abuse frowned upon by the spectators, or if they resulted in any real social achievements for the former queen. The same goes for this thesis. It is difficult to know how the performances initiated by the images, with certainty effected the achieved these results presented here. Instead, the value of the results of this study has been to discuss the potential potency of the performative encounters and events that Sylvius’s paintings initiate and take part in. To understand how the paintings could function in relation to a certain situated beholder and to chart out potential performative results: what identities and truths the performances could re-establish. What I have attempted to show is thus the necessity to look beyond the frame. To see these paintings by Sylvius in their communication with both beholder and surrounding artworks. To see the rooms and the moving body in it, as one event and performative artistic encounter, which had both a function and a potential to strengthen royal authority and to achieve identities within those ideals, that would reproduce power relations between the said actors. By these examples and by this study, it becomes evident that the princely building pursuit was of great significance for the actual power of the regent. It was a tool to control politics of identity/status and in extension, a tool for the governing of the state. A locus for the negotiation of power relations. As such, the line by Anne of Austria in the BBC-
series was possibly even more accurate than the writers had imagined: a king without a castle, really is no king at all.

Regarding the methodology of the thesis, as has been made evident, the difficulty of this type of study is the embodiment of an early modern spectator. To imagine what the palace and its images might have appeared like for a beholder who, different from us today, cannot just google “Drottningholm Palace” before going there, but who must have heard of it many times and for whom the red stone palace then appeared out of nowhere, in the midst of forest, during the first visit. To imagine how Sylvius’s images must have been vividly active, playful and exiting for a beholder who do not live in a culture where one is bombarded by images every minute of their life. Seventeenth-century art, as has been shown, functioned through stirring emotions like fear, joy, excitement within its beholders; beholders who defacto were living subjects, experiencing the world with their senses and were formed by the structures (of politics and ideals) of that time. Thus, as I have attempted to show, I consider it highly necessary to account for the spectating and feeling subject as well as the meaning which could be produced in the space between that certain someone and the artwork.

Performativity theory and reception aesthetics have the potential to do such: they account for subjectivity without losing the “scientific” of it all. Surely not perfectly, but within a scientific paradigm of art history, pushing its somewhat narrow and limiting borders defined by the natural sciences (dealing with very different matters). The theories together have found a way to regard the artwork as it emerges in the room and transparently render the observations of the researcher as well as scientifically discuss those within a context of ideas, history and art that provides the research with the eyes of the historical beholder. To scientifically, through transparency as a new objectivity, discuss the artwork’s encounter with a beholder.

What is important to understand is how the pluralistic concept of art in the long seventeenth-century, favoured open-ended artworks which would evoke the beholders to on different levels, involve themselves with the artwork and their point of views, notions, emotions, truths and ideals. This, simultaneously as the commissioner behind the artwork, is the most fierce and undemocratic autocrat system, which depended on the submission of the subjects but also, on the presence of those same subject by their monarch. The court became a vital point of contact between the aristocracy and the royals where these performances took place. Through bodily confines, the body became a locus of negotiating identities. Through the images’ open-ended character and through the reality of the bodily confines, the performance of re-producing the autocrat system achieves it strength: it becomes relatable and communicative on several levels, simultaneously as it becomes inevitable for the beholders (due to their corporeal reality) to do anything but obey. Such pluralism co-functions in the discussed material, with the aspect of iteration. Through continuous display of ideas and truths throughout the rooms, narratives and messages become re-told, identities re-created and re-affirmed. The iterative aspect is what makes the performances true. The repetition of these painted acts and encounters creates an illusion of a lasting and true set of notion and identities. They become a consistent part of reality and make the performances stronger. The images are pluralistic and communicates on several levels, repeatedly. The pluralism and repetition, as has been stressed through the thesis, are crucial in grasping the function of the art of this era. Art was frequently employed as a mean to awaken interest, emotions, response and thoughts in the mind and body of the spectator. To reach and affect the latter as well as, through such, make Carolean theatre real.
Illustrations

Figure 1. Plan over the upper floor of Drottningholm Palace with indications A-O, signposting points of references in chapter two to four. By Clara Strömberg.
Figure 2, View of the lower part of the staircase from the entrance, stucco work by Giovanni and Carlo Carove, 1665 – ca 1670. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 3, View of the staircase from the first floor, marble sculptures by Nicholaes Millich, 1682–86, and stucco work by the Giovanni and Carlo Carove, 1680s – 1690s. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.

Figure 4, View of the staircase, Nicolaes Millich, Johan Sylvius and Giovanni and Carlo Carove, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 5, Illusory men behind a balustrade, 1686, Johan Sylvius, al fresco, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 6, Illusory women behind a balustrade, 1686, Johan Sylvius, al fresco, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 7 and 8, Views of the staircase, by architects Nicodemus Tessin the Elder and Younger, Nicolaes Millich, Johan Sylvius, Giovanni and Carlo Carove. Also, a view of Johan Sylvius's painted vault *The Triumph of Royal Virtue*, as well as David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl's lantern painting *Apollo and Minerva crowning the Queen Dowager’s monogram*. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.

Figure 9, View of the staircase towards the gallery, from the top floor, Nicolas Millich, Johan Sylvius and the Carove brothers, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 10, Depiction of the staircase of the Drottningholm Palace, engraved by Wilhem Swidde in 1694 after drawing by Erik Dahlberg, for Suecia Antiqua et Hodierna, Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm.
Figure 10, Views of the staircase, 169, Nicolaes Millich, Johan Sylvius and the Carove brothers, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 11, David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl, *Apollo and Minerva crowning Hedvig Eleonora’s monogram with a laurel wreath*, 1669. Oil on canvas. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.

Figure 12, Johan Sylvius, *Royal Majesty and Virtue, History and the Contempt for Virtue (left) as well as Royal Majesty and Virtue, Fame and Hercules (right)*, 1686. Al fresco. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 13, Waterworks in the garden of Drottningholm, view to the west, seen from the upper vestibule of the palace, engraved by Willhem Swidde 1694 after drawing by Erik Dahlberg for Suecia Antiqua et Hodierna, Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm.

Figure 14, Plan over Drottningholm Palace with garden, engraved by Martin Mijtens 1695 after drawing by Erik Dahlberg for Suecia Antiqua et Hodierna, Kungliga Biblioteket, Stockholm.

Figure 16, The wall and vault of the upper vestibule, with entrance towards the upper north guard room, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 17, Johan Sylvius, *Cronos and the Four Seasons*, 1692. *Al fresco*. Drottningholm Palace. photo: Clara Strömberg
Figure 18. The upper north guard room: wall, corniche, vault and plafond painting. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg
Figure 19, The Upper Gallery of Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 21, Carlo Carove (ornamentation) and Johan Sylvius (panting), Detail from upper gallery. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.

Figure 22, Johan Sylvius, detail from ceiling, *Fame Asleep Surrounded by Vices and Virtues*, 1689-90. Al fresco, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 23, Johan Sylvius, detail from ceiling, *Tondo with the Good Event, Victory and Triumph*, 1689-90. Al fresco, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.

Figure 24, Johan Sylvius, detail from ceiling, *Fame Awakening, The Marriage Union and the Happiness of the Public*, 1689-90. Al fresco, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 25, Johan Sylvius, detail from ceiling, *Fame Awakening, and the Marriage Union*, 1689-90. Al fresco, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.

Figure 26, Johan Sylvius, detail from ceiling, *Abundance and Tondo with the Royal Majesty*, 1689-90. Al fresco, Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 27 The upper gallery, detail showing The Good Event, Victory and Triumph, pointing towards Lemke’s battle scene (Lund 1676) on the western wall. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 28, Johan Sylvius, detail from ceiling, *the Righteous Governing of the State, the Punishment of the Vices and Tondo with the Royal Majesty, Victory and Triumph*, 1689-90. Al fresco. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 29, View of the staircase as seen from the gallery. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 30, View of the Marriage Union in the gallery, as seen from the staircase, 1689-90. Al fresco. Drottningholm Palace, photo: Clara Strömberg.
Figure 31, David Klöcker-Ehrenstrahl, *Allegori över änkedrottning Hedvig Eleonoras förmyndarregering* 1692, Nationalmuseum. Photo: Linn Ahlgren. Public Domain.
Appendix: The Written Program of the Allegory in the Upper Gallery

The by, Nicodemus Tessin the Younger written program for the ceiling fresco in the upper gallery of the Drottningholm Palace. Reprinted in Hedvig Eleonoras Drottningholm: anteckningar till slottets äldre byggnads historia (1889) by John Böttiger and from there, reproduced for this study. Misspellings or somewhat odd uses of punctuations, are all accordingly with the text found in Böttiger (1889) page 52-53.

Program by Tessin the younger

La fama addormentata e risvegliata sarà il soggetto che va esser dipinto nella volta della galleria superiore di Drottningholm. Tutta la volta se potrà al meglio distribuire in tre parti, ciò è dire, da ciascuna banda trà le ultime due finestre con certe bizzarrie finte da stucco, colle loro incavature, bassarilievi e varie figure di bronzo, rilevati d'oro; fìi quali ornamenti saranno in qualche maniera il giro sopra la cornicione colle sue emblemate, però con buon giudizio talmente che per levar via simmetria troppo stentata, le nuvole di qua e la vadino cuoprendo gli ornamenti suddetti. E mentre tutta l'opera nelle tre parti mentionate sarà rappresentata nelle nuvole, vi è da osservare che quelle nuvole all'intorno delle virtù hanno sa esser chiare e al contravia all'intorno delle virtù (sic!) oscure, secondo il buon parer dell' operatore.

Sopra l'entrata delle stanze di Sua Maestà verso la banda del settentrione si vedria dentri oscure nuvole la fama, coll'otto, il lusso e la gola che l'adormentano, dall'altra parte verso la testa della medesima fama vi saranno il fasto, sotto figura didecoro, la vanità sotto figura di gloria, l'insidia sotto figura di munificenza, deli quali vitù il fasto cercara di svegliar la fama, ma in vano.

Il lusso sudetto farà segno col dito alla bocca, ch'il fasto non sia tanto temerario, mentre che dalla buona fama havessero insieme a pretendere il medesimo merito e prezzo equale. Seguita l'inconsideratione condotta dell'amor di se stesso, dall' arroganza, l'interesse proprio, il disprezzo della virtù s'unisce con loro, la discordia viene arraiata colla sua face a metter il tutto sotto sopra.

L'innocenza trovandosi in quel laberinto se confida nella speranza divina e certa, l'ardir magnanimo, l'intrepidità e la vigilanza, s'accordano colla virtù insuperabile, le quale insieme colla ordina dritto e giusto come anche colla difesa contro nemici malefici e l'ossequio se mettono in opera a riparar il tutto; l'evento buono, la vittoria e il triumfo formano gli trofei e additano per parte alle battaglie dipinti a basso all'intorno delle muraglie della galleria. Nel mezzo della volta saratà rappresentata l'unione maritale con un splendore all' intorno la quale sarà coronata dell'amor vero Dio e dalla prudenza; da una banda s'abbacciano la giustizia e la pace, all'altra si vedono la gloria e la vera fama risegliata colle loro trombe; l'intelletto, la clemenza, la bontà, la generoista, l'humanità coll felicità publica; l'abondanza giubilo el l'allegrezza la circondano e l'imortalità colla sua corona di stelle si vede nel più alto delle nuvole. - Nella terza distributione se figuràra la maestà regia col amor della patria e la cognizione delle cose in attione da consigliarse, come si habbia di procedere, la fatica et l'industria si ritrovano, la previdenza e la ragione di stato publio s'uniscono colla distintione del bene e male, l'autorità colla severità, corettione e castigo s'accia gli seguenti vitù, come l'invidia, l'avarita, la calunnia, la corruetela ne giudicii, l'error, la fraude, l'ingratitudine, l'imubedienza e la sfacciatagine, che si vedono insieme precipitate com' in un abismo du nuvole scure e fosse, che terminano l'opera.
Literature and References

Archive material

Riksarvet, Bref till generalguvernören C. Gyllenstierna.

Riksarkivet, Hedvig Eleonoras koncepter 29 Augusti 1685 bref till envoyén Leijonberg i England om inkallande af Johan Sylvius.

Riksarkivet, Kungligt arkiv, K 129, Änkedrottning Hedvig Eleonoras koncepter Drottningholm Juli 1709.

Uppsala Universtietshibliotek, L 512 hovdramatik.

Printed sources


Gillgren, Peter and Snickare, Mårten (ed.), *Performativity and Performance in Baroque Rome,* Ashgate, Farnham 2012.


Magnusson, Börje, "Tessin Jr. and Sylvius at Drottningholm, the impact of their studies in Rome", *Bulletin,* Nationalmuseum, Stockholm 1979.


*Personhistorisk tidskrift*, Svenska Autografsällskapet, nr 12, 1910.


Internet
