

8-17-2012

## The Villa Barbaro: An Integration of Theatrical Concepts in Search of Absolute Illusion and Spatial Unification

Chelsea Hoffman

Follow this and additional works at: <http://commons.colgate.edu/car>

 Part of the [Architecture Commons](#), and the [Theatre and Performance Studies Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Hoffman, Chelsea (2012) "The Villa Barbaro: An Integration of Theatrical Concepts in Search of Absolute Illusion and Spatial Unification," *Colgate Academic Review*: Vol. 9, Article 10.

Available at: <http://commons.colgate.edu/car/vol9/iss1/10>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Work at Digital Commons @ Colgate. It has been accepted for inclusion in Colgate Academic Review by an authorized administrator of Digital Commons @ Colgate. For more information, please contact [skeen@colgate.edu](mailto:skeen@colgate.edu).

## Chelsea Hoffman '11 – Humanities

*The Villa Barbaro: An Integration of Theatrical Concepts in Search of Absolute Illusion and Spatial Unification*

### Introduction

In her 1985 doctoral thesis, Inge Jackson Reist provides the first case study of the Villa Barbaro in its entirety, examining the philosophic and iconographic beliefs that propelled the development and execution of the project's *concetto*. While much of her work analyzes the villa with regard to its primary focus on, and interest in, echoing the harmonic proportions and composition of nature, Reist also posits the idea that the villa is synthesizing two traditions of theater in order to establish a distinct form of theatricality.<sup>1</sup> The following thesis is an exploration of this idea, and proposes that the defining premise of this new theatricality is rooted in its treatment and understanding of space. At the Villa Barbaro the beholder understands the theatrical through a unification of Vitruvian theater and *quadratura* principles, each of which explore artistic space as being congruent with the viewer's reality. Three men stand primarily responsible for the generation of this reconceived theatricality: the patron, the architect, and the painter.

The Villa Barbaro is born from a particular political and social history. The economic stability of Venice was dependent upon its trade market. However, the year 1453 marked the start of a period of financial crisis after Venice's trade-based economy was threatened by a series of unfortunate events. Beginning with the establishment of Turkish control in Constantinople, the Venetians were slowly expelled from their trade centers in the Eastern Mediterranean. When Vasco da Gama found a direct sea route to India in 1498, many Venetian routes lost all significance. With growing numbers of unemployed and a lack of agricultural independence, demand for settlement of the *terraferma*, or the land surrounding Venice proper, rose.

By 1530, many Venetian nobles were enlarging their estates to make an agricultural surplus that could be supplied to Venice for profit. This signaled the re-birth of the Roman villa. The concept was modernized and refined in "villa books" that were widely circulated in the sixteenth century.<sup>2</sup> The designs corresponded to a specific way of living. According to the ancient Greeks, the two prevailing lifestyles—the *vita activa*, the active life, and the *vita contemplativa*, the contemplative life—had the capacity to be combined into the *vita rustica* through a villa lifestyle. This integration was echoed in the villa form itself that joined the structures of the palazzo and the farm.<sup>3</sup> The articulation of agriculture and horticulture as occupations worthy of a gentleman is furthered by authors such as Columella, Varro, Cato, and Rutilio Palladio, all of whom were read by and influential to one of the Villa Barbaro's patrons, Daniele.<sup>4</sup> Authors such as these articulated the villa's role to be one of creating a socially

---

<sup>1</sup> Inge Jackson Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser" (PhD, Columbia University, 1985), 290.

<sup>2</sup> Manfred Wundram and Thomas Pape, *Andrea Palladio*, trans., Fiona Hulse (Köln: Benedikt Taschen Verlag GmbH & Co., 1989), 126.

<sup>3</sup> Sonia Holden Evers, "The Art of Paolo Veronese: Artistic Identity in Harmony with Patrician Ideology" (University of California at Berkeley, 1994), 183.

<sup>4</sup> James S. Ackerman, *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses*, Bollingen Series Xxxv (Washington, D.C.: Princeton University Press, 1990), 93.

relaxed atmosphere with economic benefits.<sup>5</sup> Palladio articulates these same sentiments in his famous 1570 publication *I Quattro libri dell'architettura*:

[The patron] will pass the rest of the time watching over and improving his property and increasing his wealth through his skill in farming, and where, by means of the exercise that one usually takes on the villa on foot or on horseback, his body will more readily maintain its healthiness and strength, and where, finally, someone whose spirit is tired by the aggravations of the city will be revitalized, soothed, and will be able to attend in tranquility to the study of literature and quiet contemplation.<sup>6</sup>

Palladio's combined discussion of healthful exercise with revitalization and contemplation articulates the villa as combining the *vita activa* and *vita contemplativa*. As Palladio is the architect of the Villa Barbaro, his description is a crucial articulation of the culture from which the Villa Barbaro originated.

In 1549, Francesco Barbaro, the governor of Verona, and a senator of the Venetian Republic, died, leaving his estate situated in the foothills of the Dolomites at Maser, to his two sons, Marc'Antonio and Daniele Barbaro.<sup>7</sup> The brothers decided to enlarge and reinvigorate the medieval structure that sat on the estate property. They chose Andrea Palladio as the architect, a decision that was in many ways a natural extension of Daniele's simultaneous work with Palladio on *I dieci libri dell'architettura di M. Vitruvio*, the first Italian translation of Vitruvius's *De Architectura*.

Construction of the villa was delayed, and scholars speculate this to be due to a lack of funds. Daniele laments in 1550, the depleted state of his finances due to diplomatic activities abroad.<sup>8</sup> It appears that the exhausted financial state of the family also contributed to the employment of interior fresco decorations, a practice most often exercised to save funds and reduce material costs. Naturally, the frescoes, executed by Paolo Veronese, were the final aspect of the villa to be finished, and documentation of their completion is lacking. However, in 1648, Carlo Ridolfi, Italian art biographer and painter, cited Veronese's painting *Frederick Barbarossa kissing the Hand of the Antipope Victor IV* as owing its creation to the reputation that Veronese established for himself with his works at Maser.<sup>9</sup> As the work was commissioned in January of 1562, the implication is that Veronese's work at Maser was complete by late 1561. The date of 1555 is generally accepted as the date for the completion of the structure itself.

---

<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 102-03.

<sup>6</sup> Andrea Palladio, *The Four Books on Architecture*, trans., Robert and Richard Schofield Tavernor (Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997), II.xii.45. "...doue il resto del tempo si passerà in uedere, & ornare le sue possessioni, e con industria, & arte dell'Agricoltura accrescer le facultà, doue ancho per l'esercitio, che nella Villa si suol fare à piedi, & à cauallo, il corpo più ageuolmente conseruerà la sua sanità, e robustezza, e doue finalmente l'animo stanco delle agritationi della Città, prenderà molto ristauo, e consolatione, e quietamente potrà attendere à gli studij delle lettere, & alla contemplatione..."

<sup>7</sup> Witold Rybczynski, *The Perfect House* (New York: Scribner, 2002), 133.

<sup>8</sup> However, in 1559, Pope Pius IV granted Daniele a pension of 500 *scudi* for his bishopric in Verona, and agreed to double that sum the following year. Reist, 38.

<sup>9</sup> Andreas Prieuer, *Paolo Caliari, Called Veronese*, trans., Paul and Fiona Hulse Aston (Cologne: Konemann, 2000), 64.

The *casa di villa*, the term that Palladio uses to refer to the proprietor's residence, demonstrates an integration of the magnificent, via its temple façade, with agricultural functionality, visible in the flanking farm buildings.<sup>10</sup> Palladio organized the structure along a central spine, with rooms designed *en filade*, which creates an easy hierarchy of spaces (Fig. 1). Three buildings project off of the spine, two of which are farm structures. The latter flank the *casa di villa* and recede back in space. These buildings are inaccessible from the central spine, and must be entered from without, as they house spaces for making wine, stables, and other areas that are essential to a functioning farm. Each is surmounted by a dovecote, which serves as a reminder of medieval tradition, and was built with the intention of housing fowl for the master's table.<sup>11</sup> While traditionally, the wings of a villa were divided according to husband and wife, the Villa Barbaro's division was according to the brothers due to their joint use of the estate. The west wing housed the private rooms of Marc'Antonio and the east wing held those of Daniele. The third building is centered along the structure's spine and projects outward. This block contains the villa's public rooms, and the six rooms frescoed by Paolo Veronese.<sup>12</sup> The presentation and aesthetic of these rooms largely appeal to Daniele's opinions on *all'antica* decoration as expressed in his Vitruvius edition. Programmatically, the rooms reflect the intertwining of numerous themes, including the harmony of the spheres, the villa's abundancy as a farm, conjugal happiness, and the importance of Christian prudence. While the frescoes were designed to reflect and embrace the contemporary perspectival tradition, i.e. *quadratura*, they simultaneously integrate an approximation of Vitruvian spatial understanding.

This paper will now examine various spatial conceptions that existed and proliferated during the Renaissance and Baroque periods. The examination will include a discussion of the form of painting known as *quadratura*, as well as the various contemporary and ancient beliefs driving the design of theatrical space. The discussion will then investigate the ways in which the professional work of patron Daniele Barbaro influenced and sculpted the entire project. It will be revealed how his driving concept began to experiment with a unique reconciliation of contemporary and ancient constructions of theatrical space.

Following, an analysis of the structure's architecture will explore the existing tradition of integrating the villa and the theatrical form. An examination of the entire architectural construction will reveal intentionally designed performative moments, and specific attention will be paid to the nymphaeum and its alignment with the tradition of the *teatro dell'acqua*. Finally, a study of Veronese's frescoes will reveal a conflation of spatial and temporal layering that generates a single unified realm of possibility. This unification is essential to the specific form of theatricality perpetuated by the villa.

## I. Conceptualizing Space in Renaissance and Baroque Art

During the Baroque era, scientific thought possessed a significant impact upon the creation and the expectations of the arts. The Copernican Revolution beginning in the first half of the sixteenth century meant a re-conception of the way in which space was organized. Coupled with this, Giordano Bruno's 1584 publication of *De l'Infinito Universo et Mondi* on the plurality of solar systems and the suggestion of an infinite and homogenous universe, redirected

<sup>10</sup> Ackerman, 89; Stan Neumann, "Villa Di Maser," (Italy: World Heritage UNESCO, 2006).

<sup>11</sup> Julian Barnes and Michelangelo Muraro, "A Villa of Abundance: Villa Barbaro," *FMR* 14, no. (1994): 34.

<sup>12</sup> In reality, the villa holds other frescoed rooms, however they exist in the private quarters and therefore remain unexamined by scholars.

people's attitudes toward the immensity of the immediately inhabited environment.<sup>13</sup> Thus, the art of the Baroque period was interested in engaging with and offering the possibility of moving through space. The artist's aim became to create a domain in which the viewer and object could exist simultaneously.

Brunelleschi's famous experiment of 1425, that resulted in the invention of linear perspective is representative of the increasing role mathematics and geometry were playing within art. Artists were striving to achieve perfection of illusion and Brunelleschi's discovery was fundamental in giving them the tools with which to engage the problem of space. His discovered perspective is a monofocal system, meaning that in order for the viewer to experience its absolute illusion, he/she must do so through a single eye, since the orthogonals are all designed to travel toward a single vanishing point. However, since humans' binocular vision naturally requires two vanishing points, one for each eye, people began experimenting with stereoscopic projections. Artists such as Leonardo da Vinci and Piero della Francesca experimented with designing polyfocal systems in the late 1400s, although neither published their theories, so their ideas didn't make it into literary circulation for another half century.<sup>14</sup>

### **Quadratura**

The development of polyfocal systems was necessary for the advent of *quadratura* painting. The term *quadratura* is often used interchangeably with that of *tromp l'œil*; they are, however fundamentally different terms. The latter is French for "deceive the eye," and implies works that are smaller and more intimate, often painted within domestic spaces. Today, the term *quadratura* is defined as, "painting that uses techniques of foreshortening and perspective to create architectonic spatial effects on walls and ceilings."<sup>15</sup> The two origins of the term are the route *quadra*, meaning "square," and *quadrettatura*, meaning "division into squares." Both can be understood as references to one of the common practices of constructing *quadratura* works—that which is essentially using a grid pattern to transfer works onto the wall or ceiling, while cognizant of honoring proper perspectives.<sup>16</sup> Thus, *quadratura* works are more specific and restrictive in their subject matter than those that are designated as *tromp l'œil*.

*Quadratura* painting is often viewed as part of the building's architecture, because it is an immovable attribute of the space and greatly impacts the way in which a viewer is to experience the environment.<sup>17</sup> These works are classified into two categories, the first category is comprised of works labeled *di sotto in sù*, which translates to, "from below upward," and encompasses ceiling frescoes. The second category is *sfondati*, which refer to mural paintings that give the illusion of depth beyond the wall. Many Renaissance and Baroque handbooks of the period outlined the primary and singular goal of the *quadraturista*, or perspective painter, to be one of

---

<sup>13</sup> John Rupert Martin, *Baroque* (New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1977), 155.

<sup>14</sup> It wasn't until the publication of Francesco's Melzi's *Trattato della pittura* in the 1530s, that some of Leonardo's theories were widely circulated. It is unclear, however, how much of Leonardo's works are contained within Melzi's work. Ingrid Sjöström, *Quadratura. Studies in Italian Ceiling Painting* (Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International 1978), 20.

<sup>15</sup> Sjöström, 12. Originally published in F. Negri Arnoldi, "Prospettici E Quadraturisti," in *Enciclopedia Universale dell'Arte* (Venice-Rome: 1963), 99; Sjöström, 12.

<sup>16</sup> This method of perspectival drawing is heavily advocated by Dürer, and, in fact, is depicted by him in a famous 1527 drawing.

<sup>17</sup> Sven Sandström, *Levels of Unreality* (Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1963), 15.

deception.<sup>18</sup> In fact, the painter's aim in constructing these works was twofold: first to deceive, and then to reveal the illusion and evoke feelings of awe, shock, surprise, and delight in the viewer. These aims stand in conjunction with those of a set designer, where the viewer's ability to unravel the illusion enacted before the his/her eyes assures him/her of what is fact and what is fiction.

As illusion is the aim of *quadratura*, the concepts of motif, technical execution, and composition are all subordinated to the creation of some semblance of reality. The illusion, however, is a transient state, as it is entirely dependent upon the technical and perspectival construction of the painting, and even then, only effective from a specific location within the room. The fragility of the painting's effects presupposes the concept of absolute illusion, defined as the moment in which illusion and reality are indistinguishable from one another. The state of absolute illusion, however, is fleeting since any movement from the ideal viewpoint distorts and destroys the image.

Renaissance popularity of *quadratura* was inspired by Brunelleschi's developments in perspectival construction, however, in order to create a more effective illusion, artists working with this genre aspired to develop more complete systems. These were particularly necessary in larger oblong spaces, which allowed viewers a wider range of movement and therefore resulted in more grotesque and extreme distortions as the viewer traveled further from the designated viewpoint. The most popular of these polyfocal systems, although not published until Egnazio Danti's *Le due regole della prospettiva pratica* of 1583, was developed by Giacomo Barozzi da Vignola in the 1530s and 40s. The system was born out of the principles of linear perspective. Used for oblong rooms, it consisted of dividing the ceiling along its two diagonals, creating four distinct triangles. Each triangle was then assigned a central vanishing point (Fig. 2). With the smaller rooms Veronese employed a monofocal system, assigning the eyepoint to the doorways, such that the frescoed ceilings are properly perceived upon first entrance. However, since a *quadratura* work constructed thusly, with an eccentric main point, possesses the greatest number of distortions, Veronese didn't apply this system to the larger rooms. Rather it is likely that he used the aforementioned polyfocal system, particularly in the *Sala dell'Olimpo*, which contains the villa's most significant *di sotto in sù* construction.

Although *quadratura* is most often attributed to, and recognized as a Baroque phenomenon and product, its contemporary revival was rooted in Renaissance Perspectivism and Illusionism. The Renaissance conception of the "window perspective," a system demanding the creation of a naturalistic reality that remained separate from the one that was occupied by the viewer, was beginning to give way to the idea of viewer inclusion. However, the origins of *quadratura* hail back to the Greeks. Beginning in the first century B.C. in ancient Greece, mural painting was employed as a means of disguising a wall's materials through the appearance of nobler ones, such as polished marble.<sup>19</sup> As the form developed, artists generated what scholars refer to as the Second Pompeian Style, an early illusionistic style characterized by relative, as opposed to linear, perspective. This resulted in constructions that remained somewhat at a loss for illusionistic achievement. Though the ancient artists didn't possess a thorough knowledge of perspective, they did incorporate and understand the function of light.<sup>20</sup> Their exploitation of the room's natural light source allowed the viewer a logical understanding that certain depicted elements were meant to protrude—such as columns, friezes, and socles—and others were

<sup>18</sup> Sjöström, 14.

<sup>19</sup> Sandström, 17.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

intended to recede—such as exedras. Their use of light, at least, allowed for the completion of a perceived alternate reality if not a complete absolute illusion.

Scholars have long noted stage architecture as a source for the Second Pompeian Style.<sup>21</sup> The discovery of the Casa di Augusto on the Palatine in the early 1960s fueled scholarly discussion and interest in this relationship (Fig. 3). An examination of many of the Casa's interior frescoes reveals a similarity to Vitruvius's description of a tragic stage set: "Tragic sets are represented with columns and gables and statues and the other trappings of royalty."<sup>22</sup> In fact, the employment of columns at the Casa di Augusto is the mode by which the ancient artist framed his construction, and the red pigments evoke the presence and charge of royalty. The two masks that flank the projecting platform recall the theatrical tradition that the mural is expressing; and the elevation of the mural's platform above floor level is suggestive of the elevated and demonstrative nature of the stage.

The ancient relation of the two forms, stage and mural painting, continues in the Renaissance with the simultaneous development of scenographic and *sfondati* techniques. Scholars often attribute the rise in popularity of *quadratura* painting to the increased popularity of theater because the form of painting allowed artists to transfer the theatrical into art.<sup>23</sup> Theatricality in painting stems from early understandings of dramatic theory and the tragic form, as articulated in Aristotle's publication of *Poetics*. He argues that tragedy "is a representation, not of men, but of action and life, of 'happiness and unhappiness; and that 'happiness and unhappiness; are bound up with action."<sup>24</sup> Though the second part of the book, that which defines the comedic form, is lost, Aristotle's differentiation between a comedy and a tragedy is a result of the mood and social status of the characters involved. Both theatrical forms, however, are defined as being highly dependent upon the presentation of emotion and the imitation of reality. During the Baroque period, representing the theatrical in art was understood as an exploitation of emotion characterized by extreme gestures and exaggerated feeling. In *quadratura* paintings that lack the presence of figures, and thus an implied narrative, the theatrical is expressed through the creation of an alternate space and setting. The establishment of an illusionistic spatial background allows the inhabitants to construct the narrative moment, casting them into the role of actors whom perform daily within their homes.

The drive for the theatrical in art also emanated from the developing concept of the *gesamtkunstwerke*, or the "total work of art."<sup>25</sup> Interest in the *gesamtkunstwerke* was another of

<sup>21</sup> Steven Cerutti and L. Richardson Jr., "Vitruvius on Stage Architecture and Some Recently Discovered *Scaenae Frons* Decorations," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 48, no. 2 (1989): 172.

<sup>22</sup> Vitruvius, *Ten Books on Architecture*, ed. Thomas Noble Howe, trans., Ingrid D. Rowland (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999), V.vi.8. "...quod tragicae deformantur columnis et fastigiis et signis reliquisque regalibus rebus..."

<sup>23</sup> Fernanda de' Maffei, "Perspectivists," in *Encyclopedia of World Art*, ed. Massimo Pallottino (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966), 222.

<sup>24</sup> Aristotle, *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, ed. Jonathan Barnes, trans., I. Bywater, The Revised Oxford Translation (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995), 2320. *Poetics*, Book 6. Besides having received his education in the Aristotelian influenced Padua, Daniele finished and published his great uncle, Ermolao's translation of Aristotle's *Ethics*, directly exposing him to the latter's writings. Reist, 99.

<sup>25</sup> *Baroque: Style in the Age of Magnificence* ed. Michael Snodin and Nigel Llewellyn (London: V&A Publishing, 2009), 156. When discussing Bernini's work in the Cornaro Chapel of Santa Maria della Vittoria in 1682, Baldinucci referred to this same concept as, "un bel composto." Steffi Roettgen, *Italian*

the factors contributing to the acceptance of *quadratura* during this period—it allowed the painter to combine architecture, sculpture, and painting. This all-encompassing work is, in many ways, equivalent to the theatrical form of the opera. Born from the tradition of the classic Greek musical drama, this new Italian genre was interested in the creation of a unity of the arts through dance, song, theater, and painting. And, as a social diversion, the opera developed as a place that was as much about seeing as being seen. The individual boxes held by members of the nobility became the equivalent of mini-stages, where the occupants were performing in hopes of advancing social status.<sup>26</sup>

This form of social performance implies an actor's direct contact with his or her audience, and therefore a collapsing of the spatial and psychological distance between the two parties. It was precisely this concept of audience and actor integration that propelled the theatrical developments of the Renaissance and Baroque periods.

### Contemporary Theatrical Space

Italian Renaissance theater was less concerned with the generation of literary material, and more focused upon the development of theatrical space which trended towards a courtly style that preferred the creation of absolute illusion, as opposed to the antiquarian style promoted by Vitruvius.<sup>27</sup> Of the several perspectival treatises published in the first half of the sixteenth century, one of the most famous is Sebastiano Serlio's *I sette libri dell'architettura*. At sixty-two, Serlio published the first installment of the treatise, Book IV, in 1537. The recent invention of the printing press contributed to the work's popularity and authority as well as its role in establishing theatrical precedent.

Predominantly recognized for its standardization of the classical orders, the treatise also contained a small section that appeared in 1545, in Book II, on the perspectival painting of interiors and exteriors. In Serlio's writings, he establishes a standard for scenic and theater design that manifests itself into the modern theater with which the contemporary viewer is most familiar, the proscenium (Fig. 4).<sup>28</sup> His intent was to prescribe a scheme that would allow for the

---

*Frescos: The Baroque Era 1600-1800*, trans., Russell Stockman, First Edition ed. (New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2007), 8.

<sup>26</sup> Edward Muir, *The Culture Wars of the Late Renaissance: Skeptics, Libertines and Opera* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007), 118.

<sup>27</sup> The courtly style was a common classification for theaters employing a monofocal system because, since the single viewpoint could easily be assigned to the highest ranking noble in attendance, thereby physically reinforcing the existing social hierarchy, this was the form most often used in courts. Reist, 272-73.

<sup>28</sup> The full description of Serlio's is as follows: "First of all then, I shall begin with the stage-floor at the front, which should be at eye-level and flat—it is marked C—and from B to A the stage-floor should be raised upwards at A a ninth part. The thicker vertical, where P is, should be the wall of the stage, that is the very last one. The point O is the vanishing point. Where the line of points which is on a level from L to O finishes on the last wall of the stage will be the vanishing point—it, however, serves only for that wall, and this line will always be the horizon for the faces of the stage buildings facing forwards. On the other hand, for the parts of the stage buildings which recede, their vanishing point will be the more distant one marked O. It is quite clear that if the stage buildings actually have two sides which look two different ways, they will also have two vanishing points. That is all concerning the section of the stage. On the other hand, the *Proscenium* is the part marked D. The part E, raised half a foot above ground level, represents the *Orchestra*. The seats for the most eminent nobles are where F can be seen. The first seating steps, marked G, should be for the noblest ladies; rising above these are the places for lesser

most successful perspectival set designs. It is important to note that Serlio's prescribed stage is meant as a temporary structure to be set within a reception hall or courtyard. The vanishing point for the constructed scene lies behind the far wall of the hall.<sup>29</sup> Additionally, the set was comprised of several wings containing perspectival elements, for which the vanishing point lay in the middle of the stage, which was elevated to be at eye-level with the audience. Audience seating was organized in accordance with social standing, such that the higher one's rank, the closer one was seated to the ideal viewpoint. Serlio additionally necessitates the sloping of the theater floor, in order to achieve an ideal perspective.<sup>30</sup> The tailoring of theatrical perspective to a specific location within the audience creates a unique and distinct relationship between the stage and the audience, in which a specific and measured presentation of the former is provided for the latter.

Serlio's exclusion of the *scaenae frons* was a deliberate choice in order to create the depth necessary for successful perspectival illusion. For a contemporary culture responsive to illusion and perspective, the presence of this element merely appeared to create a solid barrier between the stage and the set, directly within the realm of the imagination. It, therefore, needed to be removed. Within the Serlian text there is no discussion of the *scaenae frons*, let alone moving it to the stage front with the intention of creating a framing or bounding structure for the stage; nor does Serlio mention using any device to establish a barrier between the audience and performance. However, scholars still speculate about the presence of a dividing element derived from the *scaenae frons* in his constructed theater at Vicenza.<sup>31</sup> Given that Serlio's stated goal was to create an absolute illusion, it is logical that he would extend the first set of wings to the sides of the theater and include a capping element to prevent viewers from glimpsing any referents to reality. Therefore, the presumption of scholars Oscar Brockett, Margaret Mitchell, and Linda Hardberger, that there existed a framing element in front of the stage, is entirely logical.

---

noblewomen. The broader space at H is a walkway; the part at I is similarly another walkway. The seating steps between these should be for noblemen. From I upwards the seating steps are for noblemen. From I upwards the seating steps are for lesser noblemen. The large space marked K (which may be larger or smaller depending on the size of the place) should be for common people. The theatre and the stage which I built in Vicenza were more or less in this arrangement." Sebastiano Serlio, *On Architecture*, trans., Vaughan and Peter Hicks Hart, vol. 1 (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996), 82.

<sup>29</sup> Serlio promotes a monofocal system as a result of his tutelage by the famous scenographer, Baldassare Peruzzi. Sjöström, 36. However, in 1711, Ferdinando Galli Babilena introduced the concept of two vanishing points in his treatise, *Architettura civile, preparata su lo geometria e ridotta alle prospettive*. The concept was partially derived as a response to an improperly used monofocal system, and partially derived from a desire to open up the illusion of the theater to a wider number of the audience. *Ibid.*, 69-70.

<sup>30</sup> Later, many other scenographers played with this same principle through the inclination of all four framing walls toward the vanishing point in order to further the perceived perspective. George R. Kernodle, *From Art to Theatre* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943), 179. In fact, certain moments can be read in Maser in which Veronese uses this technique to reinforce the illusion, specifically on the northern wall of the *Stanza del Bacco*.

<sup>31</sup> Oscar G. Brockett, Margaret Mitchell and Linda Hardberger, *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States* (San Antonio, Texas: Tobin Theatre Arts Fund, 2010), 68. David Rosand, "Theater and Structure in the Art of Paolo Veronese," *The Art Bulletin* 55, no. 2 (1973): 221.

That this bounding element was intended to physically divide the audience from the stage is implied through Serlio's inclusion of a space, labeled D, that runs the whole span of the auditorium between the stage and the orchestra. Intended for the use of various temporary scenographic elements, or the performance of *intermezzi*, this space is marked *proscenio*, Italian for "proscenium."<sup>32</sup> In ancient Roman theaters the proscenium refers to the entire area of the stage, however, the term has slowly evolved to indicate the wall that divides the auditorium from the stage.<sup>33</sup> Serlio's intention that the *proscenio* be used for the performance of *intermezzi* reinforces his desire to use it as a dividing element. As short musical spectacles that were performed between acts of a play, at tournaments, or court balls, the popularity of *intermezzi* grew in response to cultural emphasis on the creation of the perspectival set.<sup>34</sup> The aim of the perspectival set to establish an environment characterized by its uniformity of time and space relied on specific mathematic and geometric constructions and meant that only *intermezzi* were able to provide relief from a continuous single local. The representation of the *proscenio* as a ground-level area in front of the stage further establishes a divide between the actors and audience through vertical and horizontal distance.

The inclusion of the *proscenio* is reminiscent of certain traditions established by many small theaters of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries. These theaters were employing framing devices within their set designs, the frame itself was a scenic element or emblem, and the stage included space in front of the frame as well as behind it.<sup>35</sup> Serlio's design seems to accommodate and synthesize this former tradition along with the ancient Roman design descriptions provided by Vitruvius.

Another popular element often used in conjunction with perspective scenes and introduced to theatrical productions in early sixteenth century Italy, is the curtain.<sup>36</sup> In many instances the curtain was used along with an arcaded construction, like the *scaenae frons*; an individual curtain would conceal each arch, allowing for the creation of multiple different permanent locals on stage (Fig 5). In all its uses, the curtain is a dividing element, either by concealing the stage and acting as a division between audience and actors, or through the separation of stage and set. The curtain goes unmentioned by Serlio in his writings, however many authors of the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were unconcerned with the extraneous elements of the stage and focused mainly upon the correct organization of perspectives and the relation of the scenographic components to the audience. In fact, Serlio's theatrical writings are only published at the end of Book II, the last of his books to be published, and the topic is only addressed as a discussion of spatial problems dealing with perspective. These facts indicate that this was the last topic upon which he wrote. Thus, it is highly likely

<sup>32</sup> One of the most popular and characteristic theatrical forms during the early Renaissance was the *intermezzo*. The origins of the *intermezzi* are unclear: scholars speculate them to have been either derived from the Greek chorus interlude, or from traditional banquet entertainment. The earliest ones recorded were mythological performances in the late fifteenth century. *The Renaissance Stage: Documents of Serlio, Sabbattini and Furtenbach*, ed. Barnard Hewitt, trans., John H. McDowell Allardyce Nicoll, and Geroge R. Kernodle (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1958), 1.

<sup>33</sup> "Proscenium, N", Oxford University Press <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/152913?redirectedFrom=proscenium> (accessed February 4 2011).

<sup>34</sup> Brockett, 78.

<sup>35</sup> *The Renaissance Stage: Documents of Serlio, Sabbattini and Furtenbach*, ed. Barnard Hewitt, trans., John H. McDowell Allardyce Nicoll, and Geroge R. Kernodle (Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1958), 4.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 7.

that certain details are excluded due to hasty construction and the relative importance of said details to Serlio.

The origin of the proscenium also has its roots in other common theatrical forms of the day, for example the *tableau vivant*, French for “living picture.” These originated as medieval liturgical dramas that would conclude a mass with a series of frozen pictures.<sup>37</sup> However, traditionally these still moments also included a framing device, though it was often simply introduced as extended aspects of the picture itself presented in such a way as to frame the subject (Fig. 6).<sup>38</sup> For example, the artist might include flanking trees or an arched city gate or entryway to a castle. Similarly the proscenium frame was a standard device of fourteenth century puppet and street theaters, which often served as the evaluation and introduction of new theatrical material.<sup>39</sup>

The development of perspective sets throughout the subsequent decades was concentrated around three primary principles.<sup>40</sup> The first being the establishment of a definite relationship between the audience, actors, and setting through the assignment of the viewpoint to a distinct location—oftentimes the duke’s box—directly opposite of the vanishing point for all the orthogonals necessary in the creation of the setting. The second principle was that the pictorial reality of the stage was created by a unified space and the concept of a singular picture plane that was divided from the audience via a frame, otherwise known as the proscenium. Finally, there existed the concept of duplication, or the idea that space on stage was represented by a series of receding planes all held within the primary frame, much like the organizing principle of painting.

Focus on these ideals indicated a desire to establish a relationship between the audience and stage, yet one that was physiologically, as opposed to physically, grounded. In other words, through the use of a viewpoint and a perspectival construction, set designers were attempting to provide a certain perception of the space on stage, which was dependent upon physical location between audience and set. Yet, there was no attempt to reflect the environment of the set in the immediate surroundings of the audience thereby creating spatial continuity between the two. The absence of the latter consideration ushered contemporary theatrical development away from a Vitruvian unification of space, and emphasized the importance of creating correct illusions.

### **The Continuing Influence of Vitruvian Theatrical Space**

Very little is known about the life of Vitruvius. Everything that scholars have determined about him is gleaned from his published text *De Architectura* which appeared around 27-23 BC.<sup>41</sup> For the Romans, the work was a master treatise on the art of building. The publication of Leon Battista Alberti’s publication of *De re aedificatoria* in 1485, evoked the forms of ancient architecture and boasted them to be models for the future.<sup>42</sup> Thus, Alberti’s writings were one

---

<sup>37</sup> Danielle Paz, "Tableau Vivant", The University of Chicago <http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/tableauvivant.htm> (accessed February 14 2011).

<sup>38</sup> Kernodle, 188.

<sup>39</sup> George R. Kernodle, *The Theatre in History* (Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1989), 296.

<sup>40</sup> Kernodle, *Art to Theater*, 178.

<sup>41</sup> Vitruvius appears not to have been famous in life, declaring that he expected his treatise would make him known. Lucia Ciapponi, "Vitruvius," in *Catalogus Translationum Et Commentariorum. Medieval and Renaissance Translations and Commentaries*, ed. Edward F. Cranz (Washington: 1976), 399.

<sup>42</sup> Leon Battista Alberti, *De Re Aedificatoria*, trans., Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach and Robert Tavernor (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988), x.

of several factors contributing to the Renaissance revival of ancient forms, and contributed specifically to a renewed interest in ancient theatrical structure, particularly that written about by Vitruvius.

Within the context of this paper, Vitruvian theater is to be understood as containing an expressed interest in achieving a fluid and unified spatial construction between the three main zones within a theatrical structure: that of the audience, that of the actors, and that of the set. For Vitruvius, the flow between the three was emphasized by their mutual relation within and around a single circular perimeter:

This is how to make the configuration of the theater itself. Whatever the size of the lower perimeter, locate a center point and draw a circle around it, and in this circle draw four triangles with equal sides and at equal intervals. These should just touch the circumference of the circle. (By these same triangles, astrologers calculate the harmonies of the stars of the twelve heavenly signs in musical terms.) Of these triangles, take the one whose side will be closest to the performing platform. There, in that area that cuts the curvature of the circle, lay out the *scaenae frons*, and draw a parallel line from that place through the center of the circle; this will divide off the platform of the proscenium and the area of the orchestra. Thus the platform will have been made deeper than that of the Greeks, because all the artists do their work on it. In the orchestra, on the other hand, are the places reserved for the senators' seats. The platform itself should not be more than five feet high, so that those seated in the orchestra will be able to see all of the actors' gestures.<sup>43</sup>

Although Vitruvius's passage on the geometric specifications for the theater is notoriously debated and misunderstood, what has generally been accepted is his introduction and use of the circle as a guiding element that establishes and contains the three spatial zones, as seen in the diagrams that accompany the Rowland translation of Vitruvius (Fig. 7). The circle is the first element drawn, containing and dictating the placement of each of the necessary elements for a theater. The first structural element to be introduced within the circle is the line demarcating the *scaenae frons*. In ancient Roman theaters, and architectural accounts provided by Vitruvius, the *scaenae frons* is an element that stands at the back of the stage and holds approximately five openings through which the set is visible. The immediacy in placement references the importance of the feature; not to mention that the inclusion of that component within the circle connotes the incorporation of the areas in front of and behind the structure—i.e. the stage and the

---

<sup>43</sup> Vitruvius, 68-9. V.vi.1-2. "Ipsius autem theatri conformatio sic est facienda uti quam magna futura est perimetros imi, centro medio conlocato circumagatur linea rotundationis, in eaque quattuor scribantur trigone paribus lateribus et intervallis, quae extremam lineam circinationis tangant, quibus etiam in duodecim signorum caelestium descriptione astrologi ex montionica convenientia astrorum ratiocinantur. Ex his trigonis cuius latus fuerit proximum scaenae, ea regione qua praecidit curvaturam circinationis, ibi finiatur scaenae frons, et ab eo loco per centrum parallelas linea ducatur, quae disiungat proscenii pulpitem et orchestrae regionem. ita latius factum fuerit pulpitem quam Graecorum, quod omnes artifices in scaena dant operam, in orchestra autem senatorum sunt sedibus loca designata. Et eius pulpiti altitudo sit ne plus pedum quinque, uti qui in orchestra sederit, spectare possint omnium agentium gestus."

set.<sup>44</sup> Vitruvius renders the line that denotes the front of the stage through the circle's center, assigning half the area of the circle to the orchestra and the other half to the stage and set. Since the orchestra is understood as a flexible area that can be stage or audience, the circle effectively holds all the required theatrical zones and allows for the completion of a whole from the various parts, implying unification. If the orchestra is used as stage space for temporary set elements, then its upper boundary is used to indicate the beginning of audience seating, and a larger semi-circle is drawn proportional to the original circle in order to determine the far edge of the seating. However, his introduction and design of the *scaenae frons* element, in effect, challenges the idea of the unification of space within the circle. Its creation of a massive wall that clearly bifurcates the space only allows for brief openings through which the set can be glimpsed.

The Teatro Olimpico serves as a visual understanding of Vitruvius's concepts of space. The theater was commissioned by Vicenza's Accademia Olimpico, an intellectual guild dedicated to the scientific disciplines, particularly mathematics, physics, and astronomy. The society contained a democratic social structure and was inclusive of members of numerous professions, including the arts, in addition to its aristocrats.<sup>45</sup> In 1579, their attention was caught by the recent theatrical silence in Vicenza, the last performance having been Giangiorgio Trissino's *Sofonisba* staged for a carnival celebration in 1562.<sup>46</sup> With a professed dedication to the classical drama, the Academy petitioned to build a permanent theater designed by the great architect Palladio.<sup>47</sup>

For Palladio, the theater's design represented the culmination of almost forty years of study. His collaboration with Daniele Barbaro on the translation of Vitruvius's *De Architectura* in 1556 exposed him to Vitruvian theatrical theory.<sup>48</sup> Between 1541 and 1580, Palladio created numerous studies and elaborations on the ruins of ancient theaters, including those at Verona and Pula, the Marcello in Rome, and the Berga in Vicenza. Needless to say, the Teatro Olimpico is designed in accordance with Palladio's understanding of Vitruvian theory; although due to the constraints of the space that had been conceded to the Academy for their theatre, Palladio's design is more elliptical in shape rather than circular, as prescribed by Vitruvius.

Palladio's approach in designing the structure was to make the theater an architectural problem dealing with the ordering and construction of space for the first time during the sixteenth century. Previously theater architects were more concerned with the creation of pictorial illusion. Palladio's designs foreground the relationship between the actors and the spectators as the primary architectural problem, thus showing an awareness of theatrical space aside from that which exists on and behind the stage.<sup>49</sup> Since contemporary artists were

---

<sup>44</sup> Certain Roman architects moved the *scaenae frons* to the top of the circle, thereby completely removing one spatial realm, that of the set, from the whole. Frank B. Sear, "Vitruvius and Roman Theater Design," *American Journal of Archaeology* 94, no. 2 (1990): 252-53.

<sup>45</sup> Maria Elisa Avagnina, *The Teatro Olimpico*, ed. Guide Marsilio (Venenzia: Marsilio Editori, 2005), 7.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 10.

<sup>47</sup> Prior to this, it is believed that the Academy was using a temporary theater designed by Serlio, which he believed to be representative of the ideal theatrical space and therefore mentioned in his writings. It was however destroyed. Kernodle, *Art to Theater*, 169.

<sup>48</sup> Scholars theorize that aside from providing the illustrations for Barbaro's translation, Palladio helped with some aspects of the translation and the development of the interpretation. Branko Mitrovic, *Learning from Palladio* (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004), 25.

<sup>49</sup> Licisco Magagnato, "The Genesis of the Teatro Olimpico," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 14, no. 3/4 (1951): 214.

primarily concerned with advancing the development of pictorial illusion, most didn't even acknowledge or address the space of the audience beyond the assignment of seating.

Palladio's treatment of the space is predominately notable due to his use of the *scaenae frons* (Fig. 8). Contrary to most contemporary theaters, where this element is eliminated in favor of establishing a greater framing element, Palladio placed it at the back of the stage, where it divides the illusionistic scenery from the stage itself. Since the introduction of several distinct spaces through separate arches of the *scaenae frons* results in distinct vanishing points for each arch, Palladio's placement of the element is often interpreted as a violation of the traditional understanding of a Peruzzi-Serlian perspectival construction.<sup>50</sup> The use of multiple vanishing points, unfamiliar to the Peruzzi-Serlian construction, along with the presence of an interrupting element—i.e. the *scaenae frons* itself—contradicts their understanding of a perceived continuous space between stage and set.

Palladio's interest in the space of the audience as an architectural problem is reflected in his Vitruvian treatment of the area. Using various architectural elements he establishes continuity between the *scaenae frons* and the colonnaded exedra that crowns the back of the audience seating, or *cavea*, using them as bounding elements of a single space (Fig. 9). For example, the use of the Corinthian style on the engaged columns of the *scaenae frons* is repeated on the columns at the back of the *cavea*. Both the engaged and non-engaged columns use statues as capital elements. Finally, the pattern of alternating triangular and rounded pediments that cap the statuary niches of the *scaenae frons*, is adopted in the alternating niche shapes that line the walls enclosing the *cavea*. Such a spatial unification opens the up stage, creating a natural flow of space between the actors and the audience. This fluidity is heightened by Palladio's treatment of the *orchestra*, which is designed, like those of the Roman theaters, to be used either for additional audience seating or for the actors, depending upon which is required more by the current performance.<sup>51</sup> The case of the former brings the audience closer to the world of the stage, while the latter situation brings the actors into the physical space of the audience.

The *scaenae frons* itself is reminiscent of a Roman triumphal arch as it is a massive surface that is penetrated by three openings. It is believed that Palladio imagined perspectival paintings in the space beyond the openings.<sup>52</sup> This choice is the result of several factors; first, at the time that he constructed his design the Academy had only been conceded enough land to allow for the theater to end with the *scaenae frons*.<sup>53</sup> The space was not available for the perspective streets that exist today. However, Palladio's reading of Vitruvius indicated that the latter conceived of the stage as holding space behind the *scaenae frons*. The Vitruvian passage reads:

Scene buildings have their own principles, developed as follows: the central doors have the ornaments of a royal hall, and the doors to the *hospitalia* [guest quarters] to the right and left are placed next to the area prepared for scenery. The Greeks call these areas *periaktoi* because there are machines in these places that have rotating triangles. Each of these has three different sets of decoration; when there is going to be a change of setting in a play, or the epiphany of a god in a clap of thunder, then these are rotated to change the appearance of the decoration on the

<sup>50</sup> Rosand: 221.

<sup>51</sup> Richard and Helen Leacroft, *Theatre and Playhouse: An Illustrated Survey of Theatre Building from Ancient Greece to the Present Day* (Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Methuen London Ltd., 1984), 47.

<sup>52</sup> Magagnato: 216.

<sup>53</sup> *Ibid.*, 217.

exterior. Alongside these places, their front panels should represent one entrance onstage from the forum, and one from abroad. There are three types of sets: one that is called tragic, one called comic, and the third satyric. Their ornamentation is unlike, and conceived on differing principles. Tragic sets are represented with columns and gables and statues and the other trappings of royalty. Comic sets look like private buildings with balconies, and the views from their windows are designed, in imitation, on the principles of private buildings. Satyric sets are ornamented with trees, caves, mountains, and all the other rustic features, fashioned to have the appearance of landscape.<sup>54</sup>

Palladio interpreted the word *secundum* to mean *behind*, thus he believed the *scaenae frons* was intended to be a sort of architectural curtain, beyond which were visible the *periaktoi*, rotating triangular elements with each face depicting a painted scenic background that expresses a different genre—tragedy, comedy, and satire—and each holding the implication of further depth of space.<sup>55</sup> Thus, Licisco Magagnato believes that had Palladio more space available to him, and been alive to complete the theater, the illusionistic sets would exist much the same as they do today.<sup>56</sup> An examination of Palladio's woodcut of a Vitruvian *scaenae frons*, published in Daniele's *I dieci libri dell'architettura*, illustrates renderings of perspectival understandings of space inserted within the perforated archways (Fig. 10). Indeed, each of the two perspectives visible are aligned with different vanishing points, although from the woodcut one is unable to tell if Palladio is intending the streets to be physically constructed or painted backdrops. However, the existence of the perspective renderings behind the arches references an implied blending of forms between the ancient *scaenae frons* and the contemporary linear perspective.

A careful consideration of the Vitruvian text reveals that the space behind the *scaenae frons* pertains to the mechanics and development of the set rather than belonging to the set itself. In the introduction to his Alberti translation, scholar Joseph Rykwert indicates the *scaenae frons* to have been a new innovation at the time of Vitruvius's writings.<sup>57</sup> It was celebrated as a "permanent stone stage set." The rotating set faces were primarily meant to provide the only change possible for a permanent stone set, as well as to hide the machines that exist behind them. Indeed, Vitruvius's description of the changing *periaktoi* as "chang[ing] the appearance of the decoration on the exterior," confirm the *scaenae frons* to be a stable interior set, while the decorative faces on the *periaktoi* are meant to imply various possible exterior locations, and thus they are meant to imply a continuation of space beyond the *scaenae frons*. This reading of the

---

<sup>54</sup> Vitruvius, V, vi, 8. "Ipsae autem scaenae saus habent rationes explicitas ita, uti mediae valvae ornatus habeant aulae regiae, dextra ac sinistra hospitalia, secundum autem spatia ad ornatus comparata, quae loca Graeci periaetes dicunt ab eo, quod machinae sunt in his locis versatiles trigonae habentes singulares species orationis, quae, cum aut fabularum mutations sunt futurae seu deorum adventus, cum tonibus repentinis [ea] versentur mutantque speciem orationis in fronts. Secundum ea loca versurae sunt procurentes, quae efficient una a foro, altera a peregre aditus in scaenam. Genera autem sunt scaenarum tria: unum quod dicitur tragicum, alterum comicum, tertium satyricum. Horum autem ornatus sunt inter se dissimili disparique ratione, quod tragicae deformantur columnis et fastigiis et signis reliquisque regalibus rebus; comicae autem aedificiorum privatorum et maenianorum habent speciem prospectusque fenestris dispositos imitatione, communium aedificiorum rationibus; satyricae vero ornantur arboribus, speluncis, montibus reliquisque agrestibus rebus in topoedis speciem deformati."

<sup>55</sup> Magagnato: 218.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid.

<sup>57</sup> Alberti, ix.

*scaenae frons* as being the set itself means that through establishing continuity between the architecture of this element and that of the theater itself a greater continuity of space is established between the area meant to be experienced by the actors and the *cavea* that is intended for the audience. They both occupy a space that is designed with the same architectural features, meaning that when the *periaktoi* are rotated, changing the backdrops, the altered local occurs for everyone in the theater, not simply those on stage.

The understanding of Vitruvian design as implying space beyond the *scaenae frons* adopted a physical manifestation in the Teatro Olimpico. Although Palladio died in August of 1580, his understanding of the set's continuation was shared and executed by his successors. Following his death, which was only six months after the project began, his son, Silla, along with the architect and scenographer Vincenzo Scamozzi, completed the structure. Scamozzi is thus credited with the design and creation of the three perspectival street scenes, which were planned after the theater was granted more land in January of 1582. Influenced by the democratic structure of the Academy, the scenes are designed so that each spectator has an un-obscured perspective view down one of the three streets, making the design a forerunner to Bibiena's concept of multiple perspectives.<sup>58</sup> Due to the democratic nature of the design, the streets are not purely Serlian, but they do represent the contemporary Renaissance theatrical tradition through the use of a physical perspectival construction which blends into a painted perspectival backdro

The resulting architectural design of the Teatro Olimpico is representative of a fusion of Roman and contemporary views on perspective, much like that which is seen at the Villa Barbaro. The attempt to create a unified space between the actors and set is achieved and thwarted through the presence of the *scaenae frons* just as the wall of a building, if it possesses windows and doors, can connect and separate one to the natural world. The spatial unity of audience and stage that is characteristic of Vitruvian theater is, however, clearly visible through consistent architectural features that frame the theater's perimeter. Simultaneously, the use of perspective in Scamozzi's street sets, while not designed with a single vanishing point in the manner prescribed by Serlio, does manipulate the audience perception in order to create the psychological unity that Serlio desired.

## II. Barbaro's *Concetto*

History has remembered Daniele Barbaro for his contributions to humanism, specifically his Italian translation and annotation of Vitruvius's *De Architectura*. However, his accomplishments far exceed that. The Barbaro family claimed ancient Roman ancestry that predated the founding of the Venetian Republic itself. They were recorded in the *Libro d'oro* in 992 A.D.<sup>59</sup> Born into the Barbaro family, Daniele's education included a wide range of subjects including natural philosophy, mathematics, astronomy, medical botany, medicine, archeology, architecture, religion, science, and mechanics. He received his education at the Medical or Arts Faculty of Padua University, where his concentrations included Greek, Latin, natural and moral philosophy, logic, and mathematics.<sup>60</sup> While at the University he composed his first treatise,

<sup>58</sup> Brockett, 83.

<sup>59</sup> Evers, 117. The *Libro d'oro* is a publication of the family names within the Venetian nobility. To have one's name recorded is irrelevant of wealth, status, social contacts, or recommendation, but rather a result of blood or marital relations to the head of the noble family.

<sup>60</sup> The department that issued Daniele's degree is not in question, rather "Medical or Arts Faculty" is its name. Louis Cellauro, "Daniele Barbaro and Vitruvius: The Architectural Theory of a Renaissance Humanist and Patron," *Papers of the British School at Rome* 72, no. (2004): 293.

*Della eloquentia*, on rhetoric and eloquence.<sup>61</sup> Although the document wasn't published until 1557, scholars often cite it as an example of Daniele's early attempts to gain a comprehensive understanding of the arts and sciences. They believed the delay of publication to be because of a contemporary belief in the need for a text to sit a minimum of seven years before printing in order to gain significant meaning.<sup>62</sup>

Scholars cite the conclusions from Daniele's publication as inspiration for the Villa Barbaro's *effetto*, or the overall consideration and effect of the program.<sup>63</sup> In accordance with Daniele's astrological and philosophical interests, and his published *Della eloquentia*, the Villa Barbaro's *effetto* is the harmony of the spheres. His dialogue on eloquence operates on the premise of Art, Nature, and the Soul arguing before Rhetoric as to their relative hierarchical relations to one another, as well as Reason, Science, and God. It is revealed that Art improves upon Nature, however Nature provides Art with its subject. Both Nature and Art are agents of divine communication, and both provide materials for discerning unknown aspects within the Soul.<sup>64</sup> Thus, many of the ceiling frescos at Maser depict iconographic themes, and allegorical and mythological events, however all are linked in a synthesis of astrological doctrine on power, and the interrelation between the stars and earth.<sup>65</sup> All of the monumental allegorical depictions are interspersed with representations of the aristocracy's rural life. The juxtaposition of these two scales of time and space represents one of Daniele's primary beliefs: that a rationalization of mathematical principles in a microcosm cannot fail to illuminate an understanding of the larger cosmic system, or macrocosm.<sup>66</sup> In many ways, the Villa Barbaro in its entirety is a modeling of this concept.

This idea, like many of Daniele's, is rooted in Vitruvian thought—specifically his understanding of nature as being synonymous with the universe as an ordered whole, and the symmetry of the human body being that which illustrates this concept most easily. That art is designed to imitate this symmetry is elucidative of his notion that a common set of rules organizes both Art and Nature.

That so many of Daniele's concepts are manifested in the structure's design is evidence of his deep involvement in the building's planning and execution. Small details, such as Palladio's irregular column placement, likewise verify Daniele's influence. Contrary to Palladio's usual practices, the columns at the Villa Barbaro encircle the corners.<sup>67</sup> Other features too, such as the arch framing the balcony of the southern façade and penetrating the pediment and entablature, along with the execution of interior decorative sculptural elements in stucco, indicate choices atypical to Palladio and thus, most likely Daniele's influence. In his publication of Vitruvius, Daniele articulates that the patron is to prepare the program and the architect is then to carry out the design without "flattering or avoiding the patron."<sup>68</sup> Since Daniele's belief in architecture as the loftiest of the arts prompted him to study the subject in depth, one can only

---

<sup>61</sup> Reist, 106.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 106-07.

<sup>63</sup> Richard Cocke, *Veronese* (London: Chaucer Press, 2005), 20.

<sup>64</sup> Reist, 102.

<sup>65</sup> Marcello Francone, "Veronese: Gods, Heroes and Allegories," ed. Musee Luxembourg (Italy: Skira editore, 2004), 25.

<sup>66</sup> Reist, 118.

<sup>67</sup> Mitrovic, 116.

<sup>68</sup> James S. Ackerman, "Daniele Barbaro and Vitruvius," in *Architectural Studies in Memory of Richard Krautheimer*, ed. Cecil L. Striker (Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1996), 3.

imagine that he must have fashioned himself quite the expert and overwhelmed Palladio with suggestions and ideas for the villa's design. The linear nature of the plan itself, and the sprawling placements of the central structure and flanking farm buildings in relation to one another indicate to many scholars that the Barbaro brothers were attempting to imitate the triclinium of the ancient Laurentine Villa.<sup>69</sup> Additionally, while the ionic temple front is not uncommon to Palladio's villas, a passage from Daniele's commentaries on Vitruvius indicates his particular interest in that form, and thus that he likely had influence over this element as well: "...pediments give the edifice grandeur and magnificence. The ancients used pediments on temples and public buildings, and it is probable that this was suggested by their houses..."<sup>70</sup> As Daniele articulates the temple-front to be a design for "public buildings," the placement of the temple front is noteworthy since it represents the public façade of the villa.

In a 1974 article entitled, "Palladio und die Villa Barbaro in Maser. Bemerkungen zum Problem der Autorschaft," scholar Norbert Huse argues that the *concetto*—i.e. the building's concept, including the relation of fresco and architecture—should be attributed to the patrons, and specifically Daniele.<sup>71</sup> Huse extrapolates this to mean that Palladio assented to designing a structure that was to be a work in progress, and Huse suggests that Veronese, with Daniele's consent, then took responsibility for the execution of the frescoes and design of all the interior decoration. However, given Barbaro's history of having designed the program of Veronese's first major Venetian commission, the *Sala del Consiglio dei Dieci* of the Ducal Palace in 1553, it seems a significant leap to assume that Daniele would relinquish control to Veronese of the program design for his personal villa. Huse's assertion appears doubly unlikely given that the fresco program's *effetto* had such deep ties with Daniele's previous philosophical articulations.

And, even Daniele's philosophical beliefs appear to have been influenced by Vitruvius. His articulation of Nature being the inspiration for Art, holds echoes of Vitruvius's interests in *eurythmia*. Daniele's fascination with Vitruvius manifests itself in both tangible and theoretical design elements of Villa Barbaro. Undoubtedly, the heavy influence of Vitruvianism at the villa is linked with Daniele's simultaneous work on *I dieci libri dell'architettura*.

### ***I dieci libri dell'architettura di M. Vitruvio***

Daniele's ability to work on humanist texts was very much dependent on his schedule of political and ecclesiastic duties. The Barbaro family possessed a facility for diplomacy, often being assigned to posts in foreign countries in duchies that held particularly hostile relations with Venice.<sup>72</sup> Following the tradition of his family, Daniele began a diplomatic career in 1549, when he served as the Venetian ambassador to Edward VI of England. While abroad, Pope Julius III appointed Daniele Patriarch-Elect of Aquileia, beginning his ecclesiastic career and recalling him to Venice after two years abroad. This return home allowed Daniele time to focus upon his work on Vitruvius.

In 1556, Daniele published his second treatise, *I dieci libri dell'architettura di M. Vitruvio*, that he ultimately revised and expanded for a later edition in 1567. The work is praised as the most accurate and informed of all the Renaissance treatises on Vitruvius, partially

<sup>69</sup> Prieuer, 64. Norbert Huse and Wolfgang Wolters, *The Art of Renaissance Venice*, trans., Edmund Jephcott (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990), 127.

<sup>70</sup> Wolters, 126.

<sup>71</sup> Lionello Puppi, "'Painter, Sculptor, Architect...'" Paolo Veronese among the "Sister Arts," in *Veronese: Gods, Heroes, and Allegories*, ed. Marcello Francone (Italy: Skira, 2004), 42.

<sup>72</sup> Reist, 72.

due to its foundation in a thorough knowledge of Roman remains.<sup>73</sup> It was also the first vernacular translation of Vitruvius and possessed illuminating woodcuts produced by Palladio to accompany Barbaro's words.<sup>74</sup> Most comprehensive was the way that Daniele contextualized and related Vitruvius to contemporary ideas, making reference to theoretical authors such as Alberti, Piero della Francesca, Dürer, and the more modern Serlio and Philander. The resulting effect is the creation of a new form of Renaissance Vitruvianism designed to accommodate modern architectural thought.<sup>75</sup> With its attentiveness to Renaissance artistic conventions, the Villa Barbaro is quite akin to this Renaissance Vitruvianism that Daniele presents.

Daniele's aims for the treatise were twofold: first, he intended to "elucidate the mind of Vitruvius" rather than engage in the academic debate surrounding Vitruvian interpretations.<sup>76</sup> Second, he was attempting to elevate Venetian architecture from a mediocrity of form to the *all'antica* style believed to have previously directed Venetian architects.<sup>77</sup> His preface begins with a philosophical definition of the arts and architecture, derived from his Aristotelian education and Aristotle's five intellectual virtues: art, prudence, science, wisdom, and intellect. The first two are said to be concerned with the concept of "uncertain truth," while the latter three ascribe to "certain truth." Barbaro writes:

Some Arts use the sciences more and others less, and it is important to know the Arts in this respect. Those, which need Arithmetic, Geometry and the other mathematical disciplines have greatness; the rest without these (as Plato says) are of little worth and abject, as something born from simple imagination and from fallacious conjecture...And here, by contrast, appears the dignity of Architecture, which approves and judges the works, which are produced by the other Arts.<sup>78</sup>

He believes that through architecture there is the possibility of unifying the two spheres of truth, and creating a physical materialization of the "certain truth" inherent in mathematics. And, inherent within the materialization of certain truth is the achievement of virtue.

---

<sup>73</sup> In 1554, Daniele was in Rome with Andrea Palladio, where they thoroughly studied the ancient ruins. Rybczynski, 134.

<sup>74</sup> The praise that Daniele lavishes upon Palladio is quite extensive: "For the important illustrations I used the work of Messer Andrea Palladio, architect of Vicenza, who, of all those whom I have known...has...best understood the true meaning of architecture and vastly profited from it, having not only grasped its most beautiful and subtle principles but having also put them into practice, both in his beautiful and exquisite drawings of plans, elevations, and sections and in the execution and erection of many superb buildings...works which vie with the ancients, which enlighten his contemporaries, and will arouse the admiration of those yet to come." Ibid., 135. Daniele also acknowledges Palladio as providing advice in addition to the illustrations for the edition. Ackerman, "Barbaro and Vitruvius," 1.

<sup>75</sup> Reist, 113.

<sup>76</sup> Margaret Muther D'Evelyn, "Venice as Vitruvius's City in Daniele Barbaro's Commentaries," *Studi Veneziani* 32, no. (1996): 83.

<sup>77</sup> Ackerman, "Barbaro and Vitruvius," 1.; D'Evelyn: 94.

<sup>78</sup> Cellauo: 300. Originally published in Barbaro, *Commentaries* (Italian edition, 1567), 5. "...alcune Arti hanno più della scienza, & alter meno, & a conoscere l'Arti questa è la via. Quella, nelle quali fa bisogno l'Arte del numerare, la Geometria, & l'altre Mathematiche, tutte hanno del grande: il rimanente senza le dette (come dice Platone) è vile, & abietto, come cosa natta da semplice imaginazione, fallace coniettura...E quivi apparirà la dignità dell'Architettura, laquale approva e giudica le opere, che dale alter Arti di fanno."

The form of *quadratura* painting, through its generation of three-dimensional architectural elements on a two-dimensional surface, elevates the art of fresco to a comparable level. Its similar reliance on the sciences imbues it with a comparable ability to relay a level of certain truth. There is a certain amount of irony in finding truth within an intentionally constructed illusion, but recalling the aims of the *quadraturiste*, to first deceive and then reveal his construction, the expectation is not unreasonable. Reality underlies and remains discernable within all *quadratura* constructions; its discovery is merely dependent upon movement. Recognition of this fact is a simultaneous acknowledgement of the capacity of *quadratura* to illuminate certain truth.

The intended unification of the two truths is articulated through the condensation of multiple spatial and temporal layers that will be examined in later chapters. And, because of the manner in which Veronese constructed his *quadratura* frescoes, the materialization of certain truth mirrors the way in which truth functions within the parameters of reality. Just as truth isn't always evident, Veronese's constructions present a superficially alternate reality that one must explore and deconstruct in order to discover the physical boundaries of the space. However, part of Veronese's skill is in his ability to make an understanding of reality accessible without cheapening the illusion.

### Achieving Harmony

The following is the late Renaissance and early Baroque understanding of harmony: "[a] combination or adaptation of parts, elements, or related things, so as to form a consistent and orderly whole."<sup>79</sup> In other words, the concept prescribes to a belief in ordered and eloquent unification. Due to the Villa Barbaro's heavy emphasis on the importance of proportion and geometric principles, it is often cited as an achievement in late Renaissance harmony. Much of the Renaissance concentration on proportion was fueled by their examinations of ancient texts, such as Vitruvius.

Previous Renaissance commentators and architects often approached Vitruvius with skepticism according to the fact that many of his recommendations didn't conform to measurements taken from archeological sites. However, Daniele insists that the ancient author never intended for his prescriptions to be interpreted as explicit regulations. His argument is as follows:

And they do not take into consideration what Vitruvius has said above [V.vii.7] and more clearly said in the present passage [VI.ii.2-4], that the same rules and symmetries should not always be observed, because the nature of the place often requires other reasons for measurements, and architectural necessity obliges us to add to or to subtract from those we had proposed. Thus in this case, Vitruvius says, we can clearly see the subtlety [*sottigliezza*], and judgment [*giudicio*] of the architect who, subtracting from or adding to his measurements, does it in such a way that the eye plays its part, and that adaptations entailed by necessity are made with beautiful and subtle reason.<sup>80</sup>

<sup>79</sup> "Harmony, n.", Oxford University Press <http://www.oed.com.library.colgate.edu/view/Entry/84303?redirectedFrom=harmony#eid> (accessed April 06 2011).

<sup>80</sup> Celliuro: 304. Originally published in Barbaro, *Commentaries* (Italian edition, 1567), 282. "...& non hanno considerazione a quello, che Vitruv. ha detto di sopra, & molto più chiaramente dice nel presente

Daniele employs Vitruvius's own concept of *eurythmia*, the ideology that forms have a corresponding symmetry or proportion between them, in order to explain the discrepancies found between ancient theory and practice.<sup>81</sup> This thought process leads him to his concluding articulation of the importance of optics and perspective within the architectural field, acknowledged with the words, "the eye plays its part." In articulating this conclusion he cites several of Vitruvius's specifications, referencing, in particular, the tilting of a frieze one twelfth of its height, and the thickening of the column bases that are placed at a building's corners.<sup>82</sup> Both of these provisions are with the consideration of viewer perspective, and the intent of providing an image that the mind will translate into a visually perfect concept.

For Daniele, proportion is the essence of architecture's brilliance, for that is where the two spheres of truth are truly united. His belief is such that without proportion, the senses cannot experience pleasure: "...what delights and pleases us, and not something else, does so because it contains proportionate measurements, and moderate temperament."<sup>83</sup> Vitruvius's interest in and beliefs pertaining to proportion is related to the Greek concept of *analogia*: that works are generated from a module thereby producing symmetry. And, just as nature produced symmetry in the human form, an architect's task is to produce symmetry in material construction. In effort to illuminate Renaissance theory on harmonic proportions, Barbaro draws a significant parallel between Vitruvius's discussion of *eurythmia* to that on harmonic proportions. Although Vitruvius only discussed harmonic proportion as it pertains to music and acoustic design, Alberti perpetuated the idea that it was no longer enough for a Renaissance architect to design using simple proportionality, yet now he must apply the concepts of harmonics and musical intervals to achieve perfection of form. He wrote, "...that the numbers by means of which the agreement of sounds affects our ears with delight, are the very same which please our eyes and our minds."<sup>84</sup> Daniele subscribed to this belief and his ultimate attention and prescription to proportion and harmony is manifested in the villa's *effetto*, applying the architectural thought that Vitruvius originally reserved for acoustic design of theaters to the Villa Barbaro.

Rudolf Wittkower's analysis of the villa reveals the rooms to be arranged in groups of three such that their widths relate as 16/12/16, 20/10/20, and 9/18/9. These ratios correspond to the harmonic ratios 4/3/4, 2/1/2, and 1/2/1.<sup>85</sup> Wittkower argued that the ratios of room

---

luogo, cioe, che non sempre si deve separe le istesse regole, & simmetrie, perche la natura del luogo richiede spesso altra ragione di misure, la necessità ci astringe a dare, o levare di quelle, che proposte havevamo. Pero in quel caso dice Vitruvio, che si vede molto la sottigliezza, & giudizio dello Architetto, il quale togliendo, o dando di più alle misure, lo fa in modo, che l'occhio ha la parte sua & regge la necessità con bella & sottile ragione."

<sup>81</sup> Vitruvius concedes that a good building must satisfy the following requirements: *firmitas, utilitas, venustas* [durability, utility, and beauty]. Accordingly he defines six aesthetic categories: *ordinatio, dispositio, eurythmia, symmetria, decor, distributio*.

<sup>82</sup> Cellauro: 305-306.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 317. Originally published in Barbaro, *Commentaries* (Italian edition, 1556), 57. "...cio che ci diletta, & piace, non per altro diletta e piace, se non perche in se tiene proportionata misura, e moderato temperamento."

<sup>84</sup> *Ibid.*, 319. Originally published in Alberti, *De Re Aedificatoria* (Florence, 1485), Book IX, Chap 5. Paraphrased by Barbaro in his *Commentaries*. "...certissimum est naturam in omnibus sui esse persimilem. Sic se habet res. Hi quidem numeri per quos fait ut vocum illa concinnitas auribus gratissima reddatur, idem ipsi numeri perficiunt, ut oculi animusque coluptate mirifica compleantur."

<sup>85</sup> Mitrovic, 89.

width/length chosen by Palladio were done so in correspondence with their musical interpretations.<sup>86</sup> More recent scholarship published is by Deborah Howard and Malcolm Longair, proposes rather that Palladio worked with a defined list of harmonic numbers, which they define as any number between 1 and 100 that is a multiple of any combination of 2, 3, and 5.<sup>87</sup> Any proportion between harmonic numbers holds a musical interpretation. Yet, after studying all of Palladio's plans published in *I Quattro libri*, Howard and Longair reject the likelihood of Palladio's proportions holding any relation to music on the basis of his exclusion of ratios such as 9/8 and 15/8, and his minimal use of 6/5 and 5/3.<sup>88</sup> Branko Mitrovic also notes that while Palladio personally admitted to using ratios from a list, he never discussed the consideration of musical relations while constructing his architectural designs.<sup>89</sup> However, Vitruvius's interest in harmonic proportion was discussed solely in relation of theatrical construction. Thus, even if Palladio professes it to be unintentional, his use of harmonic proportions in a villa that is meant to recall a theater is appropriate.

As cosmological harmony is the intended *effetto*, aside from the use of harmonic proportions, the heavily employed Olympic motif recalls greater astrological ideas. The *Sala dell'Olimpo* is vaulted by a fresco examining the cosmological balance. What is interesting is Vitruvius's notation that the same triangles that designate the architectural design of the theater are those that "astrologers [use to] calculate the harmonies of the stars of the twelve heavenly signs in musical terms."<sup>90</sup> Thus, a concrete tie exists between Vitruvian geometric considerations and certain motifs of villa's *effetto*.

### Daniele and the Theatrical

Naturally, Daniele's translation and interpretation of Vitruvius's notoriously debated and misunderstood passage on the geometric construction of the theater is especially relevant to his understanding and views on space. Palladio's illustration for this section of text presents a heavy division between stage and set through a massive stone *scaenae frons* (Fig. 11). The weight and presence of this element differs from Serlio's interpretation. Daniele's conscious omission of Serlian views on theater, despite references to Serlio's commentaries in other places of his translation, reflects Daniele's goals as a translator. The absence of any remarks on Serlian thought indicates an intentional effort to divorce his remarks from the pervading notions of Serlio. As noted earlier, Serlio's illustration omitted any type of *scaenae frons*; rather the physical distance between stage and orchestra acts as a dividing element between the audience and actors, establishing two different spatial realms. Palladio's *scaenae frons*, while durable and present, most clearly illustrates it to be a permanent set element.

A geometric analysis of the illustration reveals a layering of concentric circles (Fig. 11a). The outer circle that envelops the entire theater, and all its internal spaces and zones, appears to be the original one, as prescribed by Vitruvius. The inner circle mostly encompasses ambiguous space given that half of it is the orchestra, a previously identified ambiguous zone. The middle circle, contains a section of the audience, the orchestra, the stage, and extends to just beyond the

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 88-9.

<sup>87</sup> Deborah Howard and Malcolm Longair, "Harmonic Proportion and Palladio's "Quattro Libri"," *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 41, no. 2 (1982): 121.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid., 120-21.

<sup>89</sup> Mitrovic, 89.

<sup>90</sup> Vitruvius, 68-69. V.vi.1-2. "...quibus etiam in duodecim signorum caelestium descriptione astrologi ex montionica convenientia astrorum ratiocinantur..."

*scaenae frons*. Having established that the *scaenae frons* combined with the *periaktoi* represents the spatial realm of the set, and the space behind it is merely for utilities, then this circle encompasses all the spaces required for theatrical presentation. Noting the size with which Palladio has depicted the *periaktoi*, this circle does, in fact, encompass each of the three zones. Within the structure is also visible a grouping of harmonic proportions, at a 1:2:1 ratio (Fig. 11b). Since Vitruvius stipulates the use of harmonic proportions within theatrical design, this is unexpected. However, this same proportion is also used at the Villa Barbaro between the *Stanza del Cane*, *Sala dell'Olimpo*, and *Stanza della Lucerna*.

Daniele's general interest in theater is widely established by scholars, yet few reference the publication *Scenographia Danielis Barbari Electi Patriarche Aquileiensis Pictoribus et Sculptuibus Perutilis*, a treatise on scenography of 1569. It coincides with the publication of his *La pratica della prospettiva*, a perspective treatise for artists, dealing mainly with painting, specifically that of *quadratura*.<sup>91</sup> While both publications occur eight and seven years, respectively, after the Villa Barbaro's completion, one must consider the political and ecclesiastic duties to which Daniele had to attend in the interim. From 1562-63 he participated in the Council of Trent, helping to formulate the Church's *Index of Prohibited Books*; and in 1560 Daniele received the appointment of official historian of the Venetian Republic.<sup>92</sup> His return to theater following his conclusion of official duties indicates a continuing interest in the subject. His knowledge of Vitruvius and his previous experience designing the layout for the medicinal garden of the University of Padua in 1545 are both evidence of his awareness of theatrical presentation. And, Daniele's unpublished and unnamed tragedy, set in 1541 Hungary, and written to inspire unified Christian action against the Turks, stands as a further affirmation of an interest in and consideration of the theatrical genre.<sup>93</sup>

The manifestation of the theatrical at Maser is not entirely traditional in that it casts ideas and philosophical concepts in the role of the actors. Thus, rather than the articulation of a traditional narrative, the villa is constructing a performance of ideas. Giulio Camillo's memory theater in Venice represents one of the first of these ideological theatrical constructions. The similarity between the *conchetto* of the memory theater and the programmatic aim of that at Maser indicates that Daniele feasibly considered Camillo's memory theater when designing the program for the Villa Barbaro. Camillo (1480-1544) was a great rhetorician, Neoplatonist, and master of the art of memory; nicknamed Delminio, he had an influence on several architects and architectural scholars of the period, including Scamozzi and Serlio.<sup>94</sup> That Barbaro would have been familiar with Delminio and his experiments is almost certain. Three decades prior to Daniele's matriculation at the University of Padua, Delminio was a student of philosophy there. Delminio spent most of his life attempting to formulate a system of topical knowledge, and it is this concept to which his constructed memory theater is dedicated. The concept is articulated in his publication *L'Idée del teatro* of 1550. The structure manifests itself as a seven-tiered cabinet system comprised of painted images and is meant to embody the entire history of human thought.

---

<sup>91</sup> Sjöström, 38.

<sup>92</sup> Cellauo: 294.

<sup>93</sup> Richard Cocke, "Veronese and Daniele Barbaro: The Decoration of Villa Maser," *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 35, no. (1972): 236.

<sup>94</sup> Marco Frascari, "The Mirror Theatre of Vincenzo Scamozzi," in *Paper Palaces: The Rise of the Renaissance Architectural Treatise*, ed. Vaughan and Peter Hicks Hart (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998), 253.

It borrows much from the cosmological understandings of the time with the number seven corresponding to the number of known planets.

The essential idea is that the images would activate the imagination and inspire the speech of an orator, as well as being a corporal time machine in which past, present, and future are all related through physical structure.<sup>95</sup> Thus, not only does this building set a precedent for using the concept of an image theater to communicate broad philosophical ideas, something that the Villa Barbaro is created to do as well, but the ideas that the two structures express are also similar. The Villa Barbaro's program is likewise designed to express overarching cosmological concepts about the relationship between the organization of the universe and the organization of the human world. Additionally, Veronese's frescoes similarly represent a condensation of time and space and the interplay of the two as will be examined later.

Perpetuated by Thomas St. Aquinaes's writings on Aristotle's *De Memoria et Reminiscentia*, the contemporary belief existed that memory, along with intelligence and foresight comprised prudence.<sup>96</sup> Memory was further understood by both Aquinas and ancient orator Cicero to be comprised of the forming and association of mental images and places. The pilgrimage that was being constructed on the Sacro Monte di Varallo exemplified a group of images constructed in conjunction with siting to afford lasting memories. The pilgrimage was designed as a series of realistic wax figures enacting the passion of the stories of the New Testament via *tableaux vivants* through several small chapels laid out around the mountain. The performative element of the figures, along with the ability for visitors to walk among them engendered a similar collapsing of psychological and physical space within a theatrical situation that Daniele was striving for at Maser. As a diplomatic, and therefore a traveling ecclesiastic, it seems reasonable that Daniele would be aware of this constructed pilgrimage, particularly as it was built in response to the dying feasibility of Venetian pilgrimage routes due to political unrest.

Thus, the development of theatrical ideas at the Villa Barbaro appears to be combining the psychological and physical treatment of space seen at the Sacro Monte with the philosophical interests of Camillo. Yet both projects, express an overarching interest in memory, which is curiously less articulated at Maser.

Recent scholarship by Reist has also suggested, as a secondary aim, the villa's articulation of Daniele's belief in the *Theatrum mundi*.<sup>97</sup> A common conviction among his contemporaries, Daniele describes the cosmic theater as an interlocutor in one of Sperone Speroni's *Dialoghi*, saying: "Finally, we mortal men and women stand on earth, rather in the center of a kind of theater; and all around and on every side of the heavens sit the gods, all intent on observing the tragedy of our existence."<sup>98</sup> The pervasive presence of Olympic imagery at the Villa Barbaro, and the life-like quality adopted by much of it, distinctly gives one the impression of being observed and that one is performing for the figures whom are watching from above. Reist sees this concept manifesting itself most prominently within the *Sala dell'Olimpo* where the Olympians dominate the vault, observing the villa's inhabitants from above. The

<sup>95</sup> Ibid.

<sup>96</sup> David Leatherbarrow, "The Image and Its Setting: A Study of the Sacro Monte at Varallo," *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 14, no. (1987): 112.

<sup>97</sup> Reist, 526-27.

<sup>98</sup> Inge Jackson Reist, "Divine Love and Veronese's Frescos at the Villa Barbaro," *The Art Bulletin* 67, no. 4 (1985): 627. "Finalmente...noi siamo in terra huomini, & donne, quasi in mezzo di qualche teatro; e d'ogn'intorno per ogni parte del cielo siedono li Dei, tutti intenti a guardare la tragedia dell'esser nostro."

manifestation of this concept only further articulates Daniele's intentions to make his home a conceptual theater.

In order to construct an understanding of the villa as *Theatrum mundi*, Daniele uses the same three characters from his dialogue *Della eloquentia*: Art, Nature, and the Soul. Daniele defines Art as improving upon concepts inspired by Nature, just as Aristotle defines theater as drawing inspiration from life. Aristotle's definition implies that in a theatrical situation, the lives of the audience are the inspiration for the narrative. Maser, as a representation of the *Theatrum mundi*, casts Nature, and the associated Olympians, as the audience, yet the villa's architecture and frescoes simultaneously derive their inspiration from both the surrounding landscape and the gods. To complete the metaphor, the Soul would be understood as the set. Daniele maintains that Art and Nature provide for illumination of the Soul. Within a theatrical construction, the set itself cannot be understood without the addition of the narrative spun by the actors, and neither are complete without the observing presence and contextual narrative supplied by the audience. Although, since the Villa Barbaro carries additional theatrical implications other than simply being a manifestation of the *Theatrum mundi*, the relative relationships of Art, Nature, and the Soul, are not always equal to Daniele's conclusions. An examination of the frescoes and architecture will shortly reveal how the inhabitant can also be assumed to be the audience with Nature and the figural frescoes as performers.

### III. Palladio's Architecture

Palladio's architectural design articulates a process of controlled viewing through its symmetry, axiality, and planned approach. Extreme emphasis is placed upon the presentation of the formal façade as a framed and measured vision. Centered on the primary axis of approach that slices through the villa's fields, a contemporary visitor was required first to pass through the agricultural landscape (Fig. 12). Throughout this journey, one is aware of the durability and presence exuded by the structure in juxtaposition with its surrounding lands. The contrast between the two creates a symbiotic relationship in which each solidifies the identity of the other through its own presence. Simultaneously, the villa's dominating horizontal character reaffirms its connection to the land through the avoidance of commanding verticals. The resulting relationship between the two is a flexible and dynamic one, where each is dependent upon the contextual visual evidence of the other.

A central element on this processional axis is a statue of Neptune, holding his triton, with a dolphin between his legs and standing upon a shell basin supported by seahorses (Fig. 13). The sea god became the husband of Venice in a ceremony that continues to be reenacted annually in the *Fiesta della Sensa* with the Doge throwing a ring into the sea to commemorate the marriage.<sup>99</sup> At Maser, Neptune sits at the front gate, as the patron of Venice and all sea powers, looking back on the villa itself.<sup>100</sup> His direct gaze, watching the villa, reaffirms the gods' observance and the idea of the *Theatrum mundi*. Lining the axis from Neptune to the villa are numerous statues depicting several Olympic gods, including Venus, Vulcan, Minerva, Juno, and Mars, all of who are represented within Veronese's frescoes and are central to the theme of harmony.

This entire procession is designed to frame the building's façade as a scenographic construction. The central façade recalls an ionic temple front, although it appears as if it had been simply snapped onto the building's front similar to a stage flat (Fig. 14). The eastern and

---

<sup>99</sup> Evers, 126.

<sup>100</sup> Today, a road divides the axial procession from Neptune to the villa.

western facades lose much of the grandiosity of the southern front. The windows are no longer capped with pediments, and the sills and lintels are unimaginative linear forms without the ornamented casings of those on the southern façade. Additionally, the joining seam between the central building and arcade is incongruous with the window openings ending right at the corner and leaving no transitional wall space. It is as though attention to this detail was disregarded since the view of the façade is of primary and single import just as in a Serlian construction where all emphasis is placed on a single viewpoint.<sup>101</sup> Such disregard is similar to the scenographer's attitude towards the refinement of details on the wings, which are generally only concerned with representation on two sides, assuming the audience will not have visual access to the remaining ones.

The villa itself is arranged with its back to a hill, thus only overlooking the landscape from one direction. As it is built into a slope, the front of the structure possesses two stories and the back is comprised of only one, which enfolds a rear courtyard. Since each façade is specific to a particular social realm; the rear being the domain of the private, and the front façade that of the public, the building becomes a transitional element between two levels and two worlds.<sup>102</sup> The second story, or *piano nobile*, that is common to both facades, provides the link between public and private spaces via an axis that is a continuation of the processional approach. The axis bisects the public rooms, and culminates in a window overlooking the agricultural fields on the southern end, and a door entering onto the private nymphaeum on the other.

### The Theatrical Tradition of the Nymphaeum

The nymphaeum, or sculptured exedra and fish pool located behind the villa, serves a dual function (Fig. 15). Primarily diverting the water flow of a nearby mountain spring in order to supply a reliable water source, it also exists as a reflective space and the villa's relaxing and spiritual retreat. The spring whose water the nymphaeum utilizes was, in fact, the reason for the original choice of site. As an axial anchor the nymphaeum is an agent of fertility for the farm while simultaneously associating the family with the Venetian Republic and their relative class.<sup>103</sup> The importance of the nymphaeum is acknowledged and framed through the fresco decoration of the northern rooms, in which water themes pervade the painted landscapes. Conversely, the southern rooms maintain *terraferma* imagery connecting those frescoes back to the contextualizing landscape that is visible through the central window and balcony on the *piano nobile*. The framing of the southern landscape, particularly the agricultural fields, creates a foundational recognition of the land as the source of economic prosperity and privilege for the family.

If one were to compare the plan of the Villa Barbaro and Palladio's rendering of the Roman theater that was published in Daniele's *I dieci libri dell'architettura* there is a moment of

---

<sup>101</sup> Neumann.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid.

<sup>103</sup> Venetian society materializes itself as a tripartite hierarchy, the existing classes being: the nobility, the citizenry and the *popolani*, or the popular. Venetian citizenship is determined by a code established in the thirteenth century and, ultimately a person's social station is designated by birth and lineage and is independent of wealth. This explains how the Barbaro brothers could experience financial trouble while still maintaining a place in the patrician order. Being a patrician male, one was afforded a spot in the *Gran Consiglio*, Venice's governing political body, and a position that opened up numerous other avenues of power. Blake de Maria, *Becoming Venetian: Immigrants and the Arts in Early Modern Venice* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010), 25.

remarkable formal similarity. The rear courtyard and nymphaeum appear a quotation of Vitruvius's orchestra and stage, in which the niche sculptures stand as audience members, patiently awaiting the inhabitants' entrance. The latter's movement within the courtyard comprises the narrative as though the lives of the inhabitants are a drama unfolding on the stage. The villa itself stands as the set with the high-arched portals and windows as the visual equivalent of the perforations within a *scaenae frons*.

With its positioning of the nymphaeum sculptures as audience members, this reading is an articulation of the *Theatrum mundi*. The sculptures themselves are actually representations of the gods—Bacchus, Juno, Actaeon, Diana, Neptune, Amymone, Helios, and Venus. The human performance that is enacted for them holds consistent with Daniele's writings of the human race staging their personal tragedies for the pleasure of the gods. The geometric organization of the nymphaeum also depicts the overlapping of a square, the symbol of earthly perfection, and a circle, the symbol of heavenly perfection (Fig. 1a). The square is situated on the stage, in the realm of the human actor, and the circle encompasses the Olympic audience. The joining of these two forms within a theatrical context is visible in Palladio's illustration of a Roman theater, and seen again here, their coexistence is a continued argument for the concept of a *Theatrum mundi* within the nymphaeum.

As the Olympic sculptures are represented in an artistic form, and can just as easily be understood as performing their mythological dramas for the Barbaro brothers, a fluidity between spatial perimeters it established. The way in which the nymphaeum is designed to frame the spring through a central arched niche flanked by two massive caryatids, creates an awareness of the surrounding landscape via highlighting the villa's situation and construction within the topography.

The theatrical reading of the nymphaeum, combined with its connection to the landscape recalls Vitruvius's prescriptions for a satiric set: "Satyric sets are ornamented with trees, caves, mountains, and all the other rustic features, fashioned to have the appearance of landscape."<sup>104</sup> Besides the mountains rising behind the structure, and the enveloping trees, the satirical is further referenced within the inscriptions that read below each of the Olympic statues. Each inscription cautions the reader against a sin characteristic of the god with which it is associated. In other words, the inscription below Juno cautions against pride, Actaeon counsels against lust, etc. To quote Francesco Sansovino's 1560 articulation of satire: "The satirist openly records the errors of his subjects in an artless way, as though being provoked by the multitude of their vices...for satire requires the rude and open truth."<sup>105</sup> Here, the author of the verses, un-intimidated by the divine status of the gods, recounts the greatest flaws of each.

The manner in which certain of the verses are composed, from a first person narrative perspective, gives the statues themselves voices. To read the inscription below Diana: "I flee from Cupid and chase after wild beasts, For one never conquers love except by fleeing."<sup>106</sup> The

---

<sup>104</sup> Vitruvius, V.vi.8. "...satyricae vero ornantur arboribus, speluncis, montibus reliquisque agrestibus rebus in topoedis speciem deformati."

<sup>105</sup> Carolyn Kolb and Melissa Beck, "The Sculptures of the Nymphaeum Hemicycle of the Villa Barbaro," *Artibus et Historiae* 18, no. 35 (1997): 25. Originally published in *Scrittori d'Italia*, no. 248: *Trattati di poetica e retorica del Cinquecento*, ed. Bernard Weinberg, 2 vols., Bari, 1970, vol. II, pp. 517-18 (CK).

<sup>106</sup> *Ibid.*, 17, 21. "Chè non si vince amor se non fuggendo." Note that each of the inscriptions is comprised as a twelve syllable couplet using, not any specific dialect, but simply an undistinguished Italian riddled with regionalisms.

provision of voices for the sculptures, emphasizes their roles as actors for the inhabitants, because now they each have a specific message and narrative to tell.

Since the sculptural and reflective concept of a nymphaeum was derived from Roman culture, the presence of such a structure was believed to be a requirement for an *all'antica* villa design.<sup>107</sup> By the seventeenth century, the form was termed *teatro dell'acqua*, and implied a space that was interested in examining the interplay of art and nature, the predominant concept explored by Daniele in his *Della eloquentia*.<sup>108</sup> Many Baroque villas designed their associated *teatri dell'acqua* to be like the one at the 1611 Villa Aldobrandini: an exedra ornamented with a multitude of basins, pools, and fountains interacting with numerous sculptures and niches. However Bramante's design and execution of the Belvedere Court in 1506, reframed the traditional understanding of a nymphaeum, such that it became an actual water theater in which naval battles could be staged. The understanding of the nymphaeum at the Villa Barbaro as enacting the *Theatrum mundi* blends these two traditions, while also referencing the historical purpose many villa courtyards served as actual theaters.

### The Villa as Theater

Development of the courtyard theater occurred as a result of renewed Renaissance interest in ancient theatrical forms. A contemporary structure of the Villa Barbaro, Vignola's Villa Giulia was similarly designed to evoke theatrical readings of perspective, particularly in the design of its nymphaeum. Bartolomeo Ammanati, a contributor to the design, noted in a 1555 letter, "...to make a comparison the boulevard makes the proscenium and the semicircle of the palace makes the theatre that I am going to describe you the scene."<sup>109</sup> This deliberate invocation of theatrical construction is articulated in numerous other contemporary buildings including Girolamo Genga's Villa Imperiale near Pesaro.

With a historic precedent incorporating the theatric and villa forms, both Palladio and Daniele saw it as a necessary element of the Villa Barbaro in order to satisfy the proposed type. Daniele's own commentary from his Vitruvian translation verifies this belief, "we really want to make clear that from the profession of the theatres one will learn a lot of rules on architecture, which may come in handy in other trades, which will be much adorned by them."<sup>110</sup> To Barbaro, the architecture of the theater was easily transferable to other structures, including that of the villa.

The arcade that links the Villa Barbaro's three buildings is a transitional axis allowing movement between the patrons' residencies and the farm buildings (Fig. 14a). The axial moment underneath the stairs articulates this best, being a small passage that is used universally by both nobles and servants. Spaced above each arch along the arcade are relief-carvings of various masks. This imagery references theatrical tradition, particularly that of masked performances in ancient Greece. However, the masks also evoke the contemporary style of *commedia dell'arte*, a style in which each performer wore a mask possessing exaggerated features in order to

<sup>107</sup> Neumann.

<sup>108</sup> Ronald Martin Steinberg, "The Iconography of the Teatro Dell'acqua at the Villa Aldobrandini," *The Art Bulletin* 47, no. 4 (1965): 455.

<sup>109</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 281. "...il viale per farne comparizione fa il proscenio; ed il semicircolo del palazzo fa teatro quest-alto ch'io vi descrivero fa scena."

<sup>110</sup> Ibid., 270. Originally published in Barbaro, *I dieci libri dell'architettura*, p 157. "...volemo bene che s'accertisca, come dalla fabrica de i Theatri si potra imparara molte regole dell'architettura delle quali ci potremo servire in altre sorti di fabriche, & con quelle adornarle mirabilmente, & prender animo..."

accentuate the absurdity of the genre. The mask imagery is further embedded within the villa's ornamentation, both on the interior and exterior.

The arcade also acts as a sort of stone curtain that marks a visual transition from the interior to the exterior. It frames the landscape through arched perforations akin to the *scaenae frons* of a Vitruvian theater allowing momentary glimpses of the painted set backdrops, in this case the landscape. The thicker columns on the arcade of the wings are designed to support the increased weight of the dovescotes. In order to hide this increased thickness, Palladio strategically placed niches and statues (Fig. 16). Reist additionally proposes their similarity to the statuary element on a *scaenae frons*, and suggests this parallel may have been deliberate.<sup>111</sup> Especially in light of scholars belief in a historic tradition of staging performances before these arcades such that they may adopt the actual role of the *scaenae frons*.

In fact, based on evidence from the diary of Marino Sanuto, scholars have suggested that Venetian nobles used their porticos as a *scaenae frons* in the staging of *all'antica* style performances.<sup>112</sup> In these instances, and as patrons began to develop the concept of the courtyard theater, the building and garden function as the backdrop. Sanuto specifically discusses the Villa Cornaro and its associated Odeio Cornaro, the villa's space designated for theatrical performance.<sup>113</sup> The presence of the Odeio Cornaro highlights the villa as a place for theatrical spectacle. The incorporation of a theater into a villa's architectural complex was commonplace during both antiquity and the Renaissance.<sup>114</sup> The allegorical program at the Odeio Cornaro, however, is informed by references to modern sources, lacking the integration of forms that appears in the Villa Barbaro.<sup>115</sup> There exists no evidence that this practice occurred at the Villa Barbaro, and it would additionally seem unlikely in light of the nymphaeum.

Rather, certain evidence suggests that the villa was designed, not for traditional theatrical performance but as a representative of the ordering of theatrical space. The situation of the villa appears to be a derivative from Pliny's concept of the panoramic *Theatrum mundi*:

Imagine to yourself an amphitheater of immense proportions, such as the hand of nature alone could form. Before you lies a vast extended plain bounded by a range of mountains...At the foot of these hills the eye is presented, wherever it turns, with an unbroken view of the numberless vineyards...The exposure of the main part of the house is full south; thus it seems to invite the sun, from midday in summer...into a wide and proportionably long portico, containing many divisions.<sup>116</sup>

---

<sup>111</sup> Ibid., 328.

<sup>112</sup> Ibid., 284-86.

<sup>113</sup> An Odeon, being a small theater for musical performance, has its roots in ancient Roman architectural design. Daniele was aware of this tradition as evident from his annotations to Vitruvius's Book V.viii: "Odeum era quasi un piccolo Teatro dove si quardavano i certami & le prove di Musici, io stimo che ivi si assettassero, i Musici, come nel choragio si assettavano gli histrioni, che d'indi pio entravano in scena." Ibid., 286-87. Originally published in Barbaro, *I dieci libri dell'architettura*, p. 169.

<sup>114</sup> Ibid., 269-70.

<sup>115</sup> Ibid., 451-52.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid., 280. Originally published Pliny, *Letters*, V, vi, tr. William Melmoth, Loeb edition, Cambridge, Mass, 1915, 1, 378-81. "Imaginare amphitheatrum aliquod immensum, et quale sola rerum natura posit effingere. Lata et diffusa planities montibus cingitur...Sub his per latus omne vineae porriguntur unamque faciem longe lateque contexunt; quarum affine imoque quasi margine arbusta nascuntur...Magna sui parte meridiem spectat aestivumque solem ab hora sexta, hibernum aliquanto

Pliny's articulation of villa as amphitheater introduces the theatrical framework through which to understand the structure. It is both a stage where the inhabitants are performing for the surrounding landscape and the implied Olympic presence within the land; yet, the villa is also the seat of the audience, from which they can watch the narrative of the landscape unfolding around them. The former understanding is generated from Pliny's implication of the amphitheater being constructed by Nature, and thus being the surrounding landscape. If the landscape is the amphitheater, Nature is situated as the audience and therefore the inhabitant is the performer. Simultaneously, Pliny's framing of the scene from the perspective of the inhabitant of the structure, locates the person in an observational role. Since a theatrical construction places the audience in the observational role, this implies the inhabitant to be the audience.

Thus, Palladio has created a shifting conception of theatrical roles at Maser, in accordance with Pliny's discussion. Designating three spatial zones, Palladio has allowed for the possibility of three possible relations between them. The physical structure can be understood as the actor, the inhabitants as the audience and the landscape as the scenery. The building can also be viewed as the scenery, with the inhabitants as audience, and the landscape as the actor, especially in light of its agricultural function. Or, the inhabitants can be the actors, the landscape the audience, and the building the scenery. The shifting construction establishes certain characteristics as uniform to the differing roles, and it is this level of similarity that allows different things to act in a similar manner. For example, all three—inhabitant, land, and structure—possess the possibility of change, whether it be the physical movement of a person, the altering landscape with seasonal shifts, or the play of light across the façade that alters one's perception of it. This capacity to change implies the possession, and performance, of a narrative. The fluid and ambiguous nature of each item's role within the villa theater contributes to a sense of unity and flexibility that reinforces a dynamic and variable relationship between the three. This relationship is, in turn, representative of Vitruvius's conception of the relation between audience, actors, and set.

As interpreted by Barbaro and Palladio, Vitruvius was striving to create a unity of experience between the audience, actors, and set. In an architectural construction in which each component has the capacity to act as another, such as that at Maser, an approximation of common experience is achieved, or as close to a common experience as can be reached between three unique entities. The addition of Veronese's frescoes reinforces this discovery of commonalities within unique constituents in that the frescoes can be both observer and observed, as well.

### **Palladio and Veronese**

The connection between architecture and fresco is crucial to the unity of the villa, and, by extension, an understanding of its expressed theatricality. It is achieved through Veronese's continuation of certain of Palladio's design elements. Primary among these is the inclusion of the balustrade throughout the landscapes, which integrates the concepts of architecture and painting. Additionally, above the portals where Palladio failed to include pedimentary structures, Veronese reproduces Palladio's exact forms, incorporating them into the *quadratura* framework and unifying a spatial understanding between both arts and worlds, that of reality and that of illusion. The inclination toward an egg-and-dart motif over the immediately more

---

maturius quasi invitat in porticum latam et pro modo longam. Multa in hac membra, atrium etiam ex more veterum.”

popular bead-and-reel motif, is seen in both mediums, and indicates the influence of Vitruvius on both artist and architect.<sup>117</sup> Moreover, Veronese's construction of two portals in the *Sala della Crociera* each mirror, in location and form, a portal created by Palladio (Fig. 17). The four entryways exhibit extreme similarity of form and proportionality to those in Palladio's Temple of Pola, a construction from the town from which the Barbaro ancestors originate.<sup>118</sup>

While the central spine organizes the architectural composition in terms of movement and the creation of hierarchical space, the perpendicular axes and the location of the main entrance at their joining point creates a conundrum for the navigation of space. It is here that Veronese's work functions to organize space and conduct traffic. Through the body positioning of various figures he achieves this aim. The eight *suonatrici* direct the visitor's movement, each gesturing back toward the crossing and the southern window. Such a manipulation of space and movement is more characteristic of an architect than a painter, adding a new dimension to Veronese's role at Maser. Certain scholars have read his inclusion of the Villa Maser within one of his frescoed landscapes as a way of affirming his recognition as architect.<sup>119</sup>

Whereas the previously established view was that Palladio's architecture formed a frame for Veronese's frescoes, the re-articulation of Veronese as a metaphoric architect creates an understanding that both men worked to manipulate movement and create space. Unlike at Palladio's other villas, the frescoes at Maser provide the primary tourist attraction for contemporary culture. With the establishment of a paragonal relationship between fresco and architecture, the question remains as to whether there is a way to alleviate or eliminate this mindset. Certain moments perpetuate the ideal of Palladio's work being merely the frame for or subordinate to Veronese's frescoes. These moments include such as the continuous entablature in the *Sala della Crociera* that exists as the frescoes' upper boundary, and the perfect framing of the gentleman hunter within the *en filade* portals. Additionally, Veronese's use of the wall as a grounding plane, which he then slides forward and backward to create alcoves, niches, and rooms, signifies Palladio's work as a base rather than a character itself. And, the fact that Veronese is able to manipulate space so easily and effectively perpetuates the consideration of him as the *uomo universale*, master of the arts of painting, architecture, and sculpture.

Conversely, the greatest argument in understanding art and architecture as equals is that despite Veronese's creation of alternate spaces and illusory worlds, he ultimately concedes to its fraudulence. This concession is clearly visible in the *Sala della Crociera* (Fig. 18). There, the entrance of a page and a girl from *tromp l'œil* doors implies the existence of a room beyond the walls, and it is up to the viewer to articulate for him/herself how large or small that environment is. Taken in the context of the landscapes on the north-south axis, the possibility of the existence of that space is in question since the viewer's understanding of the combined frescoes requires the space beyond the walls to be both interior and exterior. and the doors adopt the language of a theatrical flat. The impossibility of the insinuated combination with the viewer's immediate reality enables an easy rejection of his suggested realities. The tenuous nature of his architectural constructions creates a relationship in which Veronese is assenting to Palladio's construction of space and simply helping visitors to navigate that which is firmly established.

Although, the personal and professional relationship between Palladio and Veronese has long been debated. Traditionally, fresco decoration occurs independently of the architect's

---

<sup>117</sup> Ibid., 371.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid., 372.

<sup>119</sup> Puppi, 46.

association, giving him minimal control over the structure once it is complete.<sup>120</sup> Many scholars subscribe to this notion, claiming that Palladio disregarded Veronese's frescoes, and never forgave him for introducing imaginary and irrational windows and doors throughout the structure.<sup>121</sup>

Their primary argument is Palladio's failure to mention Veronese's work within his publication, *I Quattro libri*, although the book was published at least eight years following the frescoes' completion. Palladio's printed words are as follows:

The building below is at Maser, an estate near Asolo, a castle in the Trevigiano, owned by the Most Reverend Patriarch-elect of Aquileia and the magnificent Marc'Antonio, the Barbaro brothers. The part of the building which projects forward somewhat has two stories of rooms; the floor of those above is level with that of the courtyard behind, where a fountain with an abundance of stucco and painted ornament is cut into the hill behind the house. This fountain forms a little lake that serves as a fishpond; having left this spot, the water runs to the kitchen and then, having irrigated the gardens to the right and left of the road which gently ascends and leads to the building, forms two fishponds with their horse troughs on the public road; from there it goes off to water the orchard [bruolo], which is very large and full of superb fruit and various wild plants. The façade of the owner's house has four Ionic columns; the capitals of those at the corners have volutes on adjacent sides...At either side there are loggias which have dovecotes at their ends, and below them there are places for making wine, the stables, and other places essential for a farm.<sup>122</sup>

What scholars find as being further significant is his extensive praise for the nymphaeum, believed to have been designed and executed, at least partially, by Marc'Antonio. If one is to interpret Veronese's work at Maser as predominantly architectural, then the omission is perhaps Palladio's method of claiming his personal work and influence at the villa.<sup>123</sup> The fact that Palladio usually addressed and issued credit to most artists for their work within his structures continues speculation on the subject.

<sup>120</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 34.

<sup>121</sup> Evers, 163; Douglas Lewis, "Palladio's Painted Architecture," in *Vierhundert Jahre Andrea Palladio* (Heidelberg: 1580-1980); Neumann.

<sup>122</sup> Palladio, 129. II.xiv.51. "La sottoposta fabrica è à Maser Villa vicina ad Asolo Castello del Triuigiano, di Monsignor Reuerendissimo Eletto di Aquileia, e del Magnifico Signor Marc'Antonio fratelli de' Barbari. Quella parte della fabrica, che esce alquanto in fuori; ha due ordini di stanze, il piano di quella di sopra è à pari del piano del cortile didiero, oue è tagliata nel monte rincontro alla casa vna Fontana con infiniti ornamenti di stucco, e di pittura. Fa quella fonte un laghetto, che ferue per peschiera: da questo luogo partitasi l'acqua scome nella cucina, & dapoi irrigati I giardini, che sono dalla destra, efinistra parte della strada, la quale pian piano ascendendo conduce alla fabrica; fa due peschiere co I loro beuatori sopra la strada commune: d'onde partitasi; adacqua il Bruolo, ilquale è grandissimo, e pieno di frutti eccellentissimi, e di diuerse seleaticine. La facciata della casa del padrone hà Quattro colonne di ordine Ionico: il capitello di quelle de gli angoli fa fronte de due parti...dall una, el altra parte unsono loggie, le quail nell' estremità hanno due colombare, efotto quelle uisono luoghi dasare i uini, e le stalle, e gli altri luoghi per l'uso di Villa." Andrea Palladio, *I Quattro Libri Dell'architettura* (Venice: Domenico de'Franceschi, 1570), II, 51.

<sup>123</sup> Puppi, 46.

Ironically though, the correspondence that Veronese's work holds with Palladio's architecture is unprecedented in other Palladian villas. It was extremely rare to see a unity of villa art and architecture throughout the period, leading to speculation as to Palladio's role in and influence of the decoration of the Villa Barbaro.<sup>124</sup>

It can be argued that the coordination in this instance is likely the result of the Barbaro brothers, two amateurs who considered themselves authorities in the world of art. Daniele's several publications indicate his extensive study of the subject and his possession of numerous opinions on the matter. Additionally, Europe was on the brink of the Baroque period of church control and artistic regulation. Daniele had recently returned from England where tensions were high between Catholics and Anglicans, and the influence of Martin Luther's ideas was growing. A series of disheartening letters written from Daniele in London to his Aunt Cornelia chronicle the shifting religious views in the period following Henry VIII's death. And several years following the villa's construction, Daniele attended a session of the Council of Trent. It was precisely this religious turmoil that drove the Church to heavily censor artistic works. Part of this shifting attitude in art production meant that the patron had more control over commissions and drove cultural taste more than previously. Though the villa doesn't have overpowering ecclesiastic imagery, it is still the villa of a clergyman, in other words someone of the tradition of Catholic power and regulated patronage. Thus in all likelihood the Barbaro brothers dictated the majority of the architectural and artistic program.

#### IV. Veronese's Frescoes

Veronese's fluidity of composition and attention to detail make the cycle unique and give it a sense of completeness. His organizational strengths lie in his establishment of an architectural setting and the relationship between it, the rest of the composition, and viewer. His other strengths include his treatment of light and texture, the numerous layers to his works, and the narrative sense that envelops each one.<sup>125</sup> Veronese's achievements reflect his attitude toward craft, and heightened interest in formal conventions and painting technique as opposed to meaning.

During the middle of the century the established taste was demanding more and more ambitious perspective backgrounds, a creation of deeper space that would accommodate more dramatic action, and engage the viewer's eye more thoroughly, drawing him deeper into the projected illusion.<sup>126</sup> Veronese's ability to create such elaborate and complete architectural settings often played a significant role in many of his compositions, not the least of which is the aforementioned *Feast in the House of Levi* (Fig. 19). However, its characteristic shallowness, just as in constructed theatrical spaces, translates to an inability to be reconstructed in three-dimensional form due to the impossibility of certain distances, though they may appear plausible. In many ways, it was this conflation of space that led to his troubles with the Holy Tribunal in 1573. They interpreted a space much shallower than that which is implied, which in turn placed un-holy figures such as, "baffoons, dogs, weapons, or similar buffoonery," within the perimeter immediately occupied by Christ. Scholars attribute Veronese's level of comfort in architectural

---

<sup>124</sup> Wolters, 323.

<sup>125</sup> Richard Cocke, "Wit and Humour in the Work of Paolo Veronese," *Artibus et Historiae* 11, no. 21 (1990): 125.

<sup>126</sup> Rosand: 219.

presentation as being related to his connections with some of the most influential architects of the day, including Sanmicheli, Sansovino, and Palladio.<sup>127</sup>

At Maser, Veronese was charged with the creation of space and the exploration of depth. Huse and Wolters have suggested that as such extensive patrons of the arts, and especially in light of Daniele's interest in and experience with perspective, the Barbaro brothers were unimpressed by simple optical illusions, but were rather desirous of an art that "plays with the possibilities and limits of perception and an illusion that recognizes itself as such."<sup>128</sup> The result, a work of art that simultaneously adopts the role of stage set, actor, and audience, owes its sophistication to its admitted fictitiousness, and its self-referential qualities.

### The Program

Although the earliest documented description of Veronese's frescoes was published by Vasari, it was written by Ridolfi. It reads:

In the room with the cross vault he painted the Muses with their instruments, architectures, happy countries and military trophies. On some fake doors he painted pages and servants, in the vaults festoons and branches. On one side of the room he made noble architectures above which one sees a man running and a Dame and other people with books and musical instruments in their hands, who look at the sky where the planets and their insignia are represented. Other than this, he divided into two chambers columns with shutters of fake bronze satyrs, above the doors colored figures representing Nobility, Kindness, Honor, Splendor, and similar ones, which allude to the dignity of the family; and on the ceilings appear Juno, Ceres, Flora, Vertumn and Bacchus, who naked and sensual holds some grapes, as a way to tell us of the abundance of flowers, wheat, and fruit in that beautiful country. All these things he renders with such grace and nobility that they seem divine; to them he showed his devotion by making pictures.<sup>129</sup>

While it gives a general impression of the program, discussing many of the key elements depicted, it doesn't afford the viewer a complete picture of the rooms' arrangements, and Ridolfi misidentifies certain elements, such as his hasty designation of the *suonatrici* as muses. Although the nomenclature for the frescoed rooms is inconsistent in scholarship on the villa, the most commonly used names are as follows: *Sala dell'Olimpo* (North), *Stanza del Cane*

---

<sup>127</sup> Ibid., 217.

<sup>128</sup> Wolters, 323.

<sup>129</sup> Cocks, "Veronese and Barbaro," 228-29. "Nella sala fatta à Crociera figurò le Muse con loro stromenti, architetture, liete paesi et trofei militari. In alcune porte finte ritrasse paggi e staffieri, e ne' volti festoni e rami di frondi. Da un lato della Sala compose altresì nobile architetture, a sopravi un corridore con Dame, & altri con libri e stromenti musicali in mano, che mirano un Cielo, ove sono rappresentati I Pianeti con le insegne loro. Oltro di ciò divise in due Camere colonne con imposte di Satiri finti di bronzo, sopra le porte figure colorite, che rappresentano la Nobiltà, il Bominio, l'Honore, la Magnificenza & alter simili, che alludono alla dignità di quella famiglia: e ne' soffitti appaiono Giunone, Cerere, Flora, Vertunno e Bacco ignudo morbidissimo che preme un grappolo d'uva, per dinotarci la copia de' fiori, de' grani e de' frutti di che abbonda quell delizioso paese, alle quail cose rese tale gratia e nobiltà, che sembrano per à punto cose di Cielo, e vi fece alcune divotioni finte in quadri."

(Northwest), *Stanza della Lucerna* (Northeast), *Sala della Crociera* (central cruciform-shaped hall), *Stanza del Bacco* (Southwest), and *Stanza del Tribunale d'Amore* (Southeast).<sup>130</sup> The main entrance to the villa places the visitor in the northern arm of the *Sala della Crociera*, named for its cruciform shape. The frescoes of this room are all contained below a continuous entablature, one of only two architectural elements within the space. Additionally, Veronese has constructed all of the recessed spaces to be visually raised a step, and established a rhythm of Corinthian columns between the individual images. These three elements act together as framing members for the rest of the frescoes.

Generally two over-arching thematic conditions are represented within the room, each arranged axially. Oriented North-South are a series of landscapes that are meant to suggest the enlargement of space through its opening up to the exterior through *alfresco* imagery (Fig. 20). They are designed to read from the room's center as if that is where the duke's box of this spatial arena lies. Although, none of the vistas depicted are representative of the surrounding landscape, many of them depict ancient ruins that contemporary visitors to the villa would likely recognize from popular etchings circulated in the day.<sup>131</sup> The antique theme is permeated with contemporary depictions of carriages passing on ordinary afternoons and other such moments.

Throughout all six of the decorated rooms the viewer finds landscape frescoes, each one framed within *quadratura* structure. They are designed to root the viewer within the contextual countryside by creating a base experience that consists of glorifying the antique world and lauding the agricultural work that represents the villa's purpose. Their presentation is in accordance with the popular Renaissance trope of rendering a continuous landscape interrupted by a wall screen.<sup>132</sup> Nowhere is this better understood than in a moment in the *Stanza del Bacco* where a branch disappears behind the *quadratura* framework only to reappear in the lunette (Fig. 21).

Depicted on the East-West axis, along the arms of the cruciform, are eight *suonatrici* inset into niches and each possessing a unique instrument—tambour, béarnaise tambour, trombone, flute, violin, lute, oboe, or lyre. Their musical association reinforces Barbaro's *effetto* of the harmony of the spheres, and recalls the harmonic ratios employed by Palladio. The presence of the instruments also resulted in their interpretation as muses by several scholars, with the ninth muse located in the *Sala dell'Olimpo*.<sup>133</sup> Each is depicted in *contriposto*, guiding the visitor back to the crossing through the positioning of shoulders, heads, instruments, feet, etc. (Fig. 22a and 22b).<sup>134</sup> Centered between each set of *suonatrici* are a series of doors, on the northern walls they are real, and on the southern they are painted. The artificial portals introduce the first playful element of the program: a page and small girl enter from the western and eastern doorways respectively. Intended as the viewer's point of entry into the illusionary world, the figures are meant to cross the boundary between real and fictive space by evoking the villa's physical inhabitants. To further support this reading they are depicted as performing a physical act of transition implicit in crossing a threshold.

Beneath each of the *suonatrici*, Veronese rendered a *faux* antique cameo of a horseman in classical, medieval, or Renaissance armor. The three windows are likewise each flanked by

<sup>130</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 46.

<sup>131</sup> Wolters, 323.

<sup>132</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 45.

<sup>133</sup> Cocke, "Veronese and Barbaro," 229. Prieuer, 67. Additionally, as noted above, Ridolfi first read the *suonatrici* as muses.

<sup>134</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 44.

standards, broken and whole lances, trumpets, and other war trophies. This battle imagery seems at odds with the peace of villa life, existing to remind one of the concept of balance that is implicit in harmony. The life-size tools of war sit used, and currently at rest, yet also in a state of readiness (Fig. 20). These likely exist as commentary on the current period of political and religious turmoil. The standards also reference the ancestor, Marco Barbaro, whose heroic actions in the twelfth century led to the family's receipt of a new coat of arms.<sup>135</sup>

The only space devoid of fresco within the *Sala della Crociera* is the vault beginning above Palladio's physical entablature. In 1774, the landscapes within the hall sustained irreparable damage when they were completely obscured by a series of religious paintings more appropriate to the time. Additionally, the villa's nineteenth century owners altered the room's architectural structure, dividing the arms of the cruciform to create separate rooms, and thereby lowering the ceiling height in certain areas. With such alterations, Reist has proposed that perhaps the ceiling originally possessed decoration that was destroyed or obscured throughout all these modifications.<sup>136</sup> Scholar Luciana Crosato expresses certainty that the vault contained fresco work, and laments its destruction as leaving an incomplete understanding of the imagery in the *Sala della Crociera*.<sup>137</sup> However, there is no evidentiary support to verify either scholar's suggestion of original fresco work on the vault.

Moving southwest to the *Stanza del Bacco*, the emphasis is on cosmological harmony and the immediate environment. The ceiling fresco that gives the room its name depicts Bacchus, in the role of Apollo as leader of the muses, presenting the juice from a bunch of grapes to two shepherds (Fig. 23).<sup>138</sup> The composition, like many of the ceiling frescoes in the smaller rooms, is presented as a *quadro finto* or *al finto* construction, a two-dimensional image that is simply affixed to the ceiling. It is flanked by two sieve constructions that are designed as three-dimensional continuations of the room's space and illustrate a series of vines creeping upward over latticework. The separation of the ceiling into three sections with a framed *quadro finto* construction allows for the creation of unique moments, as opposed to the perpetuation of a single mood, as done with the landscapes. The difference is accentuated by the aforementioned northern wall fresco in which a branch is interrupted by the *quadratura*, yet seen continuing in the landscape panel above. The room's articulated theme, the fecundity of the farm, is rearticulated in the lunette above the door that depicts Venus feeding Cupid. Positioned to the right of Bacchus, reclines a melancholic Saturn in a reverie and soothed by the music: the allusion, of course, being to the harmony of the spheres.<sup>139</sup> The ability of music to soothe is similar to Daniele's belief in the serenity achieved through proportionality and *eurythmia* in architecture. The harmonic ratios Palladio used for the construction of the villa, intentional or not, are again invoked through the musical imagery, thereby furthering the understanding of the villa being designed for relaxation.

Across the hall, in the southeast corner, the *Stanza del Tribunale d'Amore* continues the thread of musical polyphony. Above the highly stuccoed and ornamented fireplace sits a group of musicians whose instruments and relationship relative to one another indicate that they are

<sup>135</sup> Evers, 118.

<sup>136</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 49.

<sup>137</sup> Evers, 185. Original source: Luciana Crosato, "Considerazioni Sul Programma Iconografico Di Maser," *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Institutes in Florenz* 26, no. (1982).

<sup>138</sup> Apollo and the nine muses are the most common representation of paradise throughout many Renaissance gardens. Evers, 135.

<sup>139</sup> Cocke, "Veronese and Barbaro," 234-235.

representative of Concord and Harmony, the latter subduing the former. Here they're paired with the notion of conjugal prosperity, as Venus dominates the ceiling. She is flanked by Mars and Cupid, and her telling gesture, a single finger laid against her lips, speaks to the eloquence of love being stronger than that of words (Fig. 24).<sup>140</sup>

Such a theme is clearly intended for the wedded Marc'Antonio rather than the celibate Daniele. According to Venetian wedding custom, a couple's accomplishments would be enacted in theatrical production, with the actors often wearing grotesque masks, following a marriage. Sonia Evers understands this tradition as an explanation for the large number of masks incorporated into the villa's decoration, within the fresco work of this room and others, as well as those sculptured above the entablature in the *Sala della Crociera* and those displayed on the arcade.<sup>141</sup> The image painted within the *Stanza del Tribunal d'Amore* may also serve as a permanent theatrical tribute to the marriage of Marc'Antonio.

Additionally, the room possesses whimsical elements that exist within the *quadratura* frame. Just as in its partner room, the *Stanza del Bacco*, the northern and southern walls are constructed to represent two projecting spaces that flank a central receding one. Constructed within this framework Veronese introduces a dog rounding a corner, an artist's brush and slippers lying atop a column's base, and the glimpse of a family portrait within the fresco itself. These moments reiterate the ideas of the space as one of action and movement and its existence as an illustrative background tracking the movements of its occupants.

At the northern tip of the cruciform sits the *Sala dell'Olimpo*, the major transition space of the villa. Its eastern and western portals lead to the private apartments, while its southern entrance and the room itself are established public spaces. The ceiling's depiction represents the thesis of the villa's program. Daniele's description of this *concetto* is as follows, "...universal in all things designed, measured, weighed and numbered..." (Fig. 25).<sup>142</sup> The result is a space that is meticulous in the representation of detail, while also being illustrative of multiple time scales. The ceiling fresco is only visible if the viewer assumes a southward stance. It depicts the seven gods of the sky—Saturn, Jupiter, Mars, Apollo, Venus, Mercury, and Diana—each possessing a planetary association, and all encircling a woman sitting atop a grotesque creature exhibiting snake-like qualities (Fig. 25a). In previous scholarship, her identity has been catalogued as Eternity, despite the lack of attribute, Truth, Earth, Aristodama, *Donna di bontà*, Divine Wisdom, and Divine Love.<sup>143</sup> Richard Cocke has suggested that the key to understanding her identity is a woodcut from Gafurius's 1518 publication *De Harmonia Musicorum Instrumentorum Opus* (Fig. 26).<sup>144</sup> The woodcut illustrates an unconventional listing of the planets, each one connected to one of the eight Muses via a headless snake. The ninth muse, Thalia, sits at the snake's head. Cocke suggests that the nameless woman on the *Sala dell'Olimpo* vault is Thalia, and the ninth and missing muse from the *Sala della Crociera*. He

---

<sup>140</sup> Ibid., 236.

<sup>141</sup> Evers, 199. Giustiniana Giustiniani and Marc'Antonio Barbaro were married in 1534 and as the presiding patrician couple, numerous thematic moments depicting conjugal bliss, such as those within this room, are believed to have been intended to mark their union. Cocke, "Veronese and Barbaro," 235.

<sup>142</sup> Cocke, "Veronese and Barbaro," 233. "...universale in tutte le cose ate ad esser, misurate, pesate e numerate..."

<sup>143</sup> N. Ivanoff, "Il Sacro E Il Profano Negli Affreschi Di Maser," *Ateneo Veneto* (1961).; N. Ivanoff, "La Libreria Marciana," *Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'arte* vi, no. (1968): 65-66.

<sup>144</sup> Cocke, "Veronese and Barbaro," 231.

believes the continuation of the Corinthian order from the cruciform hall further sustains this theory.

Reist, however, disagrees with Cocke's assertion, arguing that there isn't enough of an iconographic continuance between rooms to give credence to the possibility of the woman being Thalia. Her argument is rather founded in the Pythagorean and humanist thought in which Barbaro was immersed. Empedocles, a Pythagorean philosopher, was the only one to argue for a single unifying force within the cosmos, which the woman's position within the fresco would suggest that she is. Simplicius paraphrases Empedocles's system:

[T]he material Elements are four in number, Fire, Air, Water, and Earth, all eternal but changing in bulk and scarcity through mixture and separation...The Elements are continually subject to an alternate change, at one time mixed together by Love, at another separated by Strife.

This, in conjunction with the woman's representative similarity to Venus, and the perpetuation of Divine Love as the essential unifier of the cosmos by numerous of Barbaro's contemporaries and mentors, including Giovanni Pico, Benedetto Varchi, Gioseffo Zarlino, and Natale Conti, convince Reist of her identification as Divine Love.<sup>145</sup> The similarities of the woman to Venus are reminiscent of the close identification between the goddess and Venice, both being from the sea. This association again reinforces the villa's patrons as Venetian patricians.<sup>146</sup>

Alternatively, Evers identifies the central woman as Aristodama, whom, according to Greek myth was visited by Asclepius, Hellenic god of healing and redemption, in the form of a dragon. The result was the semi-divine hero, Aratus whose son is responsible for the extension of Greek culture into Italy. Greek traveler and geographer, Pausanius, describes a similar image of Aristodama depicted as seated on a dragon in the central chamber of the shrine of Asclepius at Sikyon.<sup>147</sup> This depiction representing the joining of Aristodama and Asclepius would be indicative of Aratus and the resulting extension of Greek culture into Italy. In light of Daniele's commitment to spreading the culture of the ancients, and his belief in Venice's inheritance, this reading certainly seems plausible.

Given the multitude of interpretations, it is also possible that the woman's ambiguity was intentional, such that she can be read as each of these individuals, for none are exclusive of the others, and all of them perpetuate a sense of peace and a united Christendom that Daniele was striving to achieve. The ambiguity and layering allows for a fluid reading similar to that which Palladio established in the relations of architecture, inhabitants, and landscape. Here, instability within the narrative requires the viewer to complete the reading and through this action the viewer inadvertently casts him/herself within the narrative itself since the existence of the story is dependent upon the viewer's completion of it. In essence, the ambiguity provides numerous points of entry that appeal to multiple people.

---

<sup>145</sup> Reist's reading also reaffirms the identities of the eight women in the *Sala della Crociera* as *suonatrici* rather than muses. Her understanding is corroborated by the absence of certain attributes such as: Melpomene's tragic mask, Thalia's comic mask, Clio's scrolls, Calliope's writing tablet, Urania's globe and compass, and Polyhymnia's veil. Reist, "Divine Love and Veronese's Frescos at the Villa Barbaro," 621-624.

<sup>146</sup> Evers, 128.

<sup>147</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

The four corners of the ceiling are anchored by the figures of the gods Vulcan, Cybele, Neptune, and Juno, representative of the four elements: fire, earth, water, and air. The room's two lunettes depict spring and autumn respectively, the time of planting and the time of harvest. These cosmological orders—planetary, seasonal, and Olympic—are then juxtaposed by the microcosmic, i.e. figures of the immediate world. Behind an illusionistically rendered second-story balustrade stands Giustiniana Giustiniani, Marc'Antonio's wife, and their child. On the western vault, are Marc'Antonio's two sons, Francesco (b. 1546), and Almero (b. 1548), one with a book depicting the *vita contemplativa*, and another with a dog indicating the *vita activa* (Fig. 27). The interactive gazes of these figures affirm their place in the same spatial sphere as the viewer, both physically and psychologically. The direct eye contact established by Giustiniana engages the viewer, providing the impression that she is directly addressing the latter and waiting regally and patiently for a response.

Situated on the same axis as Giustiniana and visible through the *en filade* construction is the depiction of a nobleman, returning from the hunt, and entering through a *trompe l'œil* door (Fig. 28). He is again meant to be an inhabitant of the contemporary viewer's world. Scholars read his cameo multiple ways: Some have suggested that he is the archetypal father returning from the hunt, the only figure missing from the family in the *Sala dell'Olimpo*.<sup>148</sup> The majority, however, recognize him as a self-portrait of Veronese. Evers questions the accuracy of this assumption, in light of the fact that no other self-portraits of Veronese are known to exist along with the sheer presumptuousness of including a self-portrait in the private quarters of one's patron.<sup>149</sup> Yet, a record does exist of a portrait of Aretino, a famed Italian writer and playwright who was patroned by many of the Medicis, hanging over the entrance to the bedroom of Alessandro de'Medici. This establishes a precedent for patrons displaying portraits of their artists in private quarters, making the understanding that gentleman hunter at Maser is Veronese's self portrait more plausible.

The identity of the woman depicted as entering from another *trompe l'œil* door from the far western room has been understood as that of Giustiniana Giustiniani again, although it is rendered in a different style, indicating it to have been the work of an assistant (Fig. 29).<sup>150</sup> Its position in the western wing, however, is logical in accordance with that wing being the one belonging to Marc'Antonio's family. Similarly, she is depicted as entering from a garden when, in fact, behind that wall lies the villas orchards and kitchen garden.

Flanking the room's southern entrance, in *quadratura* niches, are two bronze statues: one of Peace and the other of Discord (Fig. 30). They echo the room's theme of harmony, while also linking the mythological with the secular through their playful rendering. They exhibit exaggerated facial expressions and gestures associated with a Baroque theatrical style; similarly, their engagement of the viewer's attention, similar to the portraits of Giustiniana and the family, contrast the more aloof allegorical renderings. The *Stanza della Lucerna* and *Stanza del Cane*, each off the *Sala dell'Olimpo* also contain bronzes depicted in a similar manner.

The northeast room, the *Stanza della Lucerna*, introduces a new theme that has not yet been explored within the villa, that of the primacy of faith. The necessity of the incorporation of a religious program is attributed to the recent appointment of Daniele as Patriarch-elect of Aquileia.<sup>151</sup> On the ceiling, the viewer is confronted with the depiction of Charity protectively

<sup>148</sup> Cocke, "Wit and Humour in the Work of Paolo Veronese," 133-34.

<sup>149</sup> Evers, 181-82.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid., 180.

<sup>151</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 62.

shielding a beggar while standing at the feet of the Catholic Church, who is pointing upward in a gesture toward the eternal symbol, a snake biting its tail (Fig. 31). The purpose of the Catholic Church is the instruction of Charity to be inspired by the eternal values of faith in her continued protection of the beggar. The image is flanked by a man, identified as the Love of God, and restraining a woman who has been interpreted as both Vice and Temperance.<sup>152</sup> Frescoed in the southern lunette is a depiction of the holy family portraying Joseph as a prudent paterfamilias in keeping with the ceiling's theme (Fig. 32).

Christian prudence is one of the greatest virtues, and is achieved through certain spiritual activities, such as charity and faith, as articulated on the room's ceiling. Again, the contemporary understanding of prudence as a compound of memory, intelligence and foresight was derived from Aristotelian thought, thus its articulation within the villa is not unexpected. In line with harmonic ideals, the inclusion of this virtue within the vivid imagery and illusionism of the villa's program is in keeping with the concept of invoking the strength of memory as seen at the Sacro Monte and in Camillo's theater.

The room derives its name from the lamp that hangs from the hands of a *putto* entering from an illusionistic oculus in the southeast corner. This moment is particularly interesting as it heightens the concept of a uniform occupied space. The motif surrounding the oculus represents the only *grotteschi* decoration in the entire villa program, despite *grotteschi* being a required motif of any Renaissance *all'antica* decoration.<sup>153</sup> The general absence of this particular motif is accepted as Daniele's rejection of it, in accordance with Vitruvius's belief that this particular painting style perpetuates falsehoods:

Now these things do not exist nor can they exist nor have they ever existed, and thus this new fashion has brought things to such a pass that bad judges have condemned the right practice of the arts as lack of skill. How, pray tell, can a reed really sustain a roof, or a candelabrum the decorations of a pediment, or an acanthus shoot, so soft and slender, loft a tiny statue perched upon it, or can flowers be produced from roots and shoots on the one hand and figurines on the other? Yet when they see these deceptions, people never criticize them, but rather take delight in them, nor do they ever notice when any of these things are possible or not. Minds beclouded by feeble standards of judgment are unable to recognize what exists in accordance with authority and the principles of correctness. Neither should pictures be approved that are not likenesses of the truth, nor, if they are made elegant through art, is that any reason why favorable judgment should immediately be passed on them, not unless their subjects follow sound principles without interference.<sup>154</sup>

---

<sup>152</sup> Cocks, "Veronese and Barbaro," 237.

<sup>153</sup> The term *grotteschi* denotes wall decorations containing floral and fantastic motifs derived from a type of Roman wall painting that was discovered in the Baths of Titus at the end of the fifteenth century. The word's root is Latin, "grotto" meaning small cave or hollow, since the halls of the baths originally held a cave-like aesthetic upon discovery.

<sup>154</sup> Vitruvius, 91-2. VII.v.4. "Haec autem nec sunt nec fieri possunt nec fuerunt. Ergo ita novi mores coegerunt uti inertiae mali iudices convincerent artium virtutes. quemadmodum enim potest calamus vero sustinere tectum aut candelabrum ornamenta fastigii seu cauliculus terram tenuis et mollis sustinere sedens sigillum aut de radicibus et cauliculis ex parte flores dimidiataque sigilla procreari? At haec falsa videntes homines non reprehendunt sed delectantur, neque animadvertunt si quid eorum fieri potest nec

While both general *quadratura* painting and *grotteschi* present impossible situations, Vitruvius accepts the possibility of the former because its visual evidence is founded in, and mimics, reality, unlike the latter. His expectation that painting be “likenesses of truth,” hold the implication that art is designed to provide a certain amount of illumination, just as Daniele’s assertions in *Della eloquentia* that Art and Nature both provide insights into the Soul.

The *Stanza del Cane*, named such for the whimsical inclusion of a small dog before one of the illusionistic windows, lies opposite to the *Stanza della Lucerna*, in the northwest corner, and echoes many of its same themes. The figures on the ceiling have been variously identified as Abundance protecting her cornucopia that *Fortezza*, or Force, is attempting to appropriate while Concord looks on; Venice sitting atop the globe with the lion of St. Mark; and Fortune defending her riches from Ambition, or Pride, while Fraud watches (Fig. 33).<sup>155</sup> The latter seems most feasible given the role of Fortune in Marc’Antonio’s diplomatic career. Similarly, Saturn was believed to be a reference to Daniele, due to the former’s role in Neoplatonic thought as the patron of religious and philosophical contemplation. Both Fortune and Saturn are represented in the composition of processional sculptures that line the southern approach to the villa.

Similar to its partner room, the overall message of the *Stanza del Cane* is the importance of prudence and the regulation of public life.<sup>156</sup> Likewise, its southern wall holds a depiction of the Holy Family, however this time with St. Catherine, the protector of the Barbaro family (Fig. 34). The Ionic decor of these two rooms is a result of its association with female saints, as well as, Palladio and Vitruvius’s prescriptions of Palladio and Vitruvius for the appropriate decoration for rooms of lesser import. As these two rooms each mark the visitors passing from ceremonial rooms into private apartments that qualify as being of “lesser import.”<sup>157</sup> The application of ancient design theory with regard to the columnar ornamentation is only one example of the influences of *all’antica* style.

### ***All’Antica Style***

Due to the architectural frameworks Veronese establishes, his work in the villa is most often discussed in conjunction with the Renaissance tradition of *quadratura* painting. However, Reist proposes that it be examined in connection with ancient sources instead, as those seem to be Veronese’s influence more than artists like Andrea Mantegna and Giulio Romano.<sup>158</sup> Veronese uses paint to establish a foundational plane, transforming the brick and stuccoed walls into various colored marbles, including greens, purples, and peaches, just as the early Greeks

---

ne. iudiciis autem infirmis obscuratae mentes non valent probare quod potest esse cum auctoritate et ratione decoris. neque enim picturae probari debent quae non sunt similes veritati, nec si factae sunt elegantes ab arte, ideo de is statim debet recta iudicari, nisi argumentationis certas rationes habuerint sine offensionibus explicatas.”

<sup>155</sup> It’s interesting to note that the globe in the fresco possesses the Line of Papal Demarcation.

<sup>156</sup> Cocks, "Veronese and Barbaro," 238. Originally published in Barbaro, *Commentaries* (Italian edition, 1629), 3. Barbaro’s Vitruvian commentaries include notes on the subject: “...Prudenza è habito che dispone lo intelletto a regolare la volontà in quelle cose, che alla unione e bene della republica, e della famiglia, e di se stesso convengono. La onde giusti, modesti, forti, liberali, amici, veraci e in somma buoni, e virtuosi diventiamo...”

<sup>157</sup> Prieuer, 73.

<sup>158</sup> Reist, “Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser”, 380.

employed mural painting as a means of disguising a wall's materials with the appearance of nobler ones, such as polished marble.<sup>159</sup>

Aside from the application of various Renaissance systems of perspective, the secondary manner in which Veronese chose to explore and construct depth was in accordance with the later Roman style.<sup>160</sup> His creation of scope through the placement of a solid color field adjacent to a light or dark swatch allowed the primary color to jump forward or backward, respectively. This style, along with a conscious neglect of preparatory drawings mimics ancient methods. Many scholars maintain that no evidence exists of any preparatory drawings used at Maser, and that Veronese incised the works right onto the wall.<sup>161</sup> The inclination towards the ancient techniques accounts for the two dimensional nature of his frescoes upon close examination and, therefore, some of the failed illusionism.

The influence of Vitruvius and his general remarks on painting cannot be overlooked as having guided Veronese's design,

in which they also imitated the shapes of buildings, and the projection into space of columns and pediments, while in open spaces like exedrae, because of the extensive wall space, they painted stage sets in the tragic, comic, or satyric style, and adorned their walkways, because of their length, with varieties of landscape, creating images from the known characteristics of various places. For ports, promontories, seashores, rivers, springs, straits, shrines, sacred groves, mountains, herds, and shepherds are depicted; some places are portrayed in monumental painting with the likenesses of the gods or the skillfully arranged narrations of myths, such as the Trojan battles, or the wanderings of Ulysses through various landscapes, and other subjects that have been created according to nature on similar principles.<sup>162</sup>

Not only is the presence of all these motifs visible within Veronese's cycle, but also the use of columns, exedra spaces, etc. Aside from specific ornamentations prescribed by Vitruvius, what is worth noting is the way in which Vitruvius describes the decoration: using the words *scaenarum frontes*. The Rowland translation interpreted that pairing as "stage set," evoking the concept of the *scaenae frons*. The comparison is emphasized through permanence of both *quadratura* painting and the stone stage set. This contextualizes Vitruvius's initial discussion of domestic fresco in theatrical terms which he further reinforces through the employment of the words *tragico*, *comico*, and *satyrico*: tragic, comic, and satyric.

---

<sup>159</sup> Sandström, 17.

<sup>160</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 378.

<sup>161</sup> Evers, 168.

<sup>162</sup> Vitruvius, 91. VII.v.2. "...postea ingressi sunt ut etiam aedificiorum figuras, columnarum et fastigiorum eminentes proiecturas imitentur, patentibus autem locis uti exhedris propter amplitudines parietum scaenarum frontes tragico more aut comico seu satyrico designarent, ambulationes vero propter spatia longitudinis varietatibus topiorum ornarent ab certis locorum proprietatibus imagines exprimentes. pinguntur enim portus promuntoria litora flumina fontes euripi fana luci montes pecora pastores, nonnullis locis item signantur megalographiae habentes deorum simulacra seu fabularum dispositas explicationes, non minus troianas pugnas seu Ulixis errationes per topia, ceteraque quae sunt eorum similibus rationibus ab rerum natura procreata."

The other item of import is Vitruvius's understanding of painted architecture as a form of reality. "For a painting is an image of that which exists or can exist..." This implication gives Veronese power not only as an artist but also as an architect. If what was it constructed as illusion is attributed a certain weight as reality, Veronese's words similarly blur the boundaries of illusion and reality.

The articulation of orders according to space—in other words, the use of the Ionic orders in the lesser rooms and Corinthian in the grander public spaces—observes Vitruvius's stipulations on the selection of decor appropriate for a space's function. More specifically, the capitals and garlands depicted within the *Sala dell'Olimpo* mimic some found in Vicenza's Teatro Berga, an ancient Roman theater.<sup>163</sup> This source is further evidence of the intent to ascribe not simply an application of Vitruvius's architectural ideals, but also to theatrical design and principles in the construction of the Villa Barbaro.

There is also evidence suggesting that Veronese looked to Pliny the Elder and the Younger for inspiration. In praising the works of his contemporary, Spurius Tadius, Pliny the Elder describes frescoed walls that are pictured with, "...country houses and porticoes and landscape gardens, groves, woods, hills, fish-ponds, canals, rivers, coasts, and whatever anybody could desire, together with various sketches of people going for a stroll or sailing in a boat or on land going to country houses riding on asses or in carriages, and also people fishing and fowling or hunting or even gathering vintage"<sup>164</sup> All of these activities are directly represented within the landscape frescoes of Maser at least once, with the exception of "gathering vintage."<sup>165</sup> Its absence can be attributed to the villa's function as a vineyard, meaning that in the harvest months the "gathering of the vintage" is seen from the villa windows as part of the actual landscape. The ceiling frescoes of the *Stanza del Bacco* also approach the subject with their illustration of Bacchus bestowing a bouquet upon the shepherds. These multiple other depictions of the harvest make its inclusion within the landscapes unnecessary.

Pliny the Younger's influence is through his writings on the *otium* of villa life, which he declares to be the refreshment of one's body through hunting and reading. Veronese's illustration of this concept is through the returning gentleman hunter and Barbaro's sons seen reading on the eastern vault of the *Sala dell'Olimpo*.<sup>166</sup> The concept of leisure itself is reinforced through the presence of the servants, which also underpins the family's presentation as a dynamic urban unit that is nostalgic for the days of grandeur.

On the whole the figures are presented through a playful lens, as if constructed as a game designed to taunt and amuse the visitor. Imagine standing in the *Sala dell'Olimpo*, staring up at the image of Giustiniana Giustiniani, only to have her enter the room from the eastern portal. Suddenly one is faced with two of the same persona, simultaneously breaking and expanding and the laws of reality and possibility. The choice to work with this level of disarming illusion

---

<sup>163</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 370.

<sup>164</sup> Ibid., 383-84. Originally published Pliny the Elder, *Natural History*, XXX, xxxvii, 116, Loeb edition, 9, 346f. "...villas et porticus ac topiaria opera, luces, nemora, colles, piscine, euripus, amnes, litora, qualia quis optaret, varias ibi obambulantium species aut navigantium terraque villas adeuntium asellis aut vehiculis, iam piscantes, aucupantes aut venantes aut etiam vindemiantes."

<sup>165</sup> "People strolling" are depicted on the east wall of the *Sala della Lucerna*, "sailing" is seen on the west wall, "going to a country house or horseback or in a carriage" is illustrated on the north wall of the *Stanza del Bacco*, "fishing" is seen in the southwest corner of the *salone*, and "hunting" is seen in the *Stanza del Bacco*, *Sala della Crociera*, and the figure of the gentleman returning from the hunt.

<sup>166</sup> Cocke, "Wit and Humour in the Work of Paolo Veronese," 133.

originates from a Greek ideal best articulated through the story of Zeuxis, in which he painted a still life so convincing that birds flew down from the sky to peck at it. When his opponent, Parrhasius, was asked to pull back the tattered curtains so the judges could assess his work, he was unable to, for the curtains were the work.

While the influence of all these ancient sources and motifs reinforce the belief and concept of Venice being the heir to ancient Rome, the Renaissance interest in illusion, perspective, and theatrical space had an arguably equal effect upon Veronese's developed cycle. The whimsical placement of dogs, cat, artistic elements, and even the partial family portrait all display a lightness and comedic element, reminiscent of the *commedia dell'arte* whimsy with its exaggerated realm of possible situations.<sup>167</sup> The artist's involvement and familiarity with contemporary theatrical practices and developing techniques is evidenced by certain surviving sheets of costume sketches he produced for characters typical of a tragedy: queen, prince, counselor, priest, lady of the court, guards, servants, and a blind old man (Fig. 35a and 35b).<sup>168</sup>

Another of Veronese's stylistic achievements is his use and detailing of costume elements. His treatment of costume design enhances the theatrical nature of his works. In fact, at Maser, his use of contemporary dress on all of the figures contributed to the creation of illusion. To the modern viewer, the clothes all appear outdated, and this particular effect is lost, yet originally, the appearance of the figures to be dressed similar to the inhabitants reinforced their potential reality and the idea of a collapsed stage, which was shared by both audience and actor.

### A Theatrical Construction

Programatically, the frescoes link the sacred with the secular, reserving the ceilings for the former, and the walls for the latter.<sup>169</sup> The one room in which this dividing line begins to blur is the *Sala dell'Olimpo*, where the family members are painted on the lower vault, approaching the four figures of Vulcan, Cybele, Neptune, and Juno, along with the other Olympic gods. This moment is the closest reconciliation of these two thematic threads within the entire program. Yet, even here, a *quadratura* framework separates the two realms. So, while Andreas Prieuer argues for the existence of a tense relationship between the structural and decorative elements of the villa, it seems that the only tension existing in the program is in the incomplete reconciliation of these two worlds.<sup>170</sup>

Spatially, Veronese's compositions are all articulated in groups of three. Reist argues that this is the result of the ancient tradition of articulating space either sequentially or symmetrically, where Veronese adopted the latter form at Maser.<sup>171</sup> However, the explanation

---

<sup>167</sup> This comedic style was an integration of the everyday life and theater. It was an elevation of the vernacular whereas previously the subjects most appropriate for theater and glorification were gods and nobility. The genre resulted from a blend of recent Humanist thought and direct observation. Each city-state developed its own unique characters, with those of Pantaloon and the Captain being particular to Venice. While the character names are endless, ultimately they all retained the essence of a few, such that there remained a fixed set of characters employed within the genre. Pierre Louis Duchartre, *The Italian Comedy*, trans., Randolph T. Weaver (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966), 19-20.

<sup>168</sup> Rosand: 233. In fact, evidence survives of Veronese's role in providing costume inspiration for a production of *Oedipus the Tyrant* at the Teatro Olimpico in March 1585. Cocks, *Veronese*, 5.

<sup>169</sup> Pape, 129.

<sup>170</sup> Prieuer, 64.

<sup>171</sup> Reist, "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser", 391.

could just as easily be that he was sustaining a pattern established by Palladio. Regardless, Veronese's triads assume an a-b-a pattern of projecting and receding spaces. The existence of the framing elements—continuous entablature, upward step, and columns—helps to further articulate a sense of space by providing contextual clues of the eyes and establishing a central plane from which Veronese can build up from or remove.

Aside from the *quadratura* elements and their articulation of clear spatial boundaries, Veronese blurs these boundaries by constructing architectural elements in impossible combinations such as the corner moment that was earlier examined in the *Sala della Crociera*. Through the implication of interior and exterior connecting in a sort of imaginative reality, these moments establish the required viewers mind-set to be one of imagination. The imagination is Veronese's most important device in the creation of space. The understanding of optics scholars E. H. Gombrich and M. H. Pirenne is that *quadratura* illusions work according to the expectations of the viewers; they believe that the viewer's subconscious will complete the illusions, especially if they are not anticipating an encounter with the room.<sup>172</sup> Viewers want the illusion to exist and so they will bend the rules of reality in order for it to be so. That Veronese makes the illusion so easy to understand as being distinct from reality is what makes his presentations so sophisticated and theatrical.

An examination of the spaces with which Veronese is working reveals three primary zones. The first is the area that is inhabited by the viewer, or the spaces that have been established through Palladio's architecture. The other two are constructed through the frescoes, however the frescoes themselves possess three layers. The first layer is that of the *quadratura* elements, and the life-size figures of Giustiniana, servants, pets, hunter, pages, and children. The second layer is the landscapes, although, since these are designed to be a continuation of the villa's space, they can be grouped with the *quadratura* elements in the second zone of spatial construction. And the final layer of the frescoes, and the final spatial zone, is composed of the mythological and allegorical component that adorns many of the ceilings. The way in which these zones are constructed and interact is much the same as the way in which spaces within a theater communicate.

Each of Veronese's constructed spatial layers corresponds to one established by Vitruvius, i.e. the space of the audience, that of the actors, and that of the set. The audience relates to the space of the viewer in which one is able to physically move. The area of the actors is much the same as Veronese's *quadratura*, figures, and landscapes. These items are designed to be an extension of the audience's reality, just as Vitruvius had placed the *scaenae frons* to the rear of the stage in order to afford a better fluidity of spatial experience between the actors and audience. Additionally, the way in which many of Veronese's figures are depicted as paused mid-action heightens the viewer's sense of expectation, much as one experiences when faced with the raising of a stage curtain. There is an anticipation of actor entrance and action that Veronese has mimicked in the rendering of dynamic figures. The set pieces, designed to create an environment and to provide a canvassing foundation for the performance, are akin to the allegorical and mythological paintings that articulate the villa's *effetto* and enunciate the mind-frame through which Barbaro wants the viewer to understand the building and its decorations. However, the assignment of these spatial roles is unstable when we introduce the concept of the *Theatrum mundi*. If one is to understand the frescoes thusly, the viewer becomes the actor, with

---

<sup>172</sup> E. H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960), 250.; M. H. Pirenne, *Optics, Painting, & Photography* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 96.

the *quadratura* framework and landscape elements as the set and background, and the representations of the Olympians are the audience.

Similarly, the three distinctive zones articulated by the private, public, and mythological spaces create a triptych division of space. In this understanding of Vitruvius's application of theatrical spaces the private space is the realm of the audience, whom in a theater are able to quietly observe retaining their personal privacy silence, just as the framed figures of the hunter and Giustiniana are able to do at Maser. The public spaces, designed for social performance, are thus the stage; and because of the *en filade* construction, one can observe the public areas from the private ones. And, again the mythological layer exists as the set. The fluidity between the spaces remains through visual cues and links. The life-size figures that are visible through the *en filade* doorways connect the private wings back to the public sphere of the *Sala dell'Olimpo*. Here the proximity of the familial figures to the cosmological theme of the vault connects the mythological to the secular.

Certain scholars have read the architectural framework as having been designed to emphasize the mythological representations in the heaven above.<sup>173</sup> And, while the *quadratura* does function as a framing element, it doesn't solely foreground the allegorical; due to its monochromatic rendering, any colorful objects are illuminated in contrast, especially in the *Sala dell'Olimpo*, where the illustrated family members are as prominent as the culminating ceiling fresco. As representative of the celestial realm, the latter, along with the other ceiling frescoes, denotes an ecclesiastic understanding of spatial divisions. In fact, this division of the secular and sacred is largely what drives the division of the first and second spatial areas from the third. As the cause of the discontinuation of one realm—a place possessing a singular understanding of space, and thereby a unified reality—the celestial world and its representative frescoes holds the same function as *intermezzi* do in a play. They provide a change of scenery, and each present a unique and concise message in and of themselves.

The primary difference is that the frescoes can juxtapose more than two settings at once, creating a sort of montage, and presenting a temporal element more elaborate than the simple contrast of two locals. Especially when viewing the landscapes that are comprised of a series of related but unique moments and settings, Veronese's constructed montage is heightened. Due to the magnitude and inherent characteristics of a fresco cycle, the entire work cannot be perceived in a single moment rather it is regarded and digested over a given period.<sup>174</sup> The process of viewing becomes a temporal one with an unfolding narrative, much as one would experience a theatrical event.

Additionally, there is the layering of times within the frescoes themselves. The presence of the seasons on the lunettes of the *Sala dell'Olimpo* recalls a semi-annual time scale, while the gods and their associated planets evoke the various paces of celestial movement. The frozen poses of the figures mid-action, denote the instant, a frozen moment that has the potential to pass, and should pass, while the viewer is engaged. The ancient ruins situated in the background of the landscapes indicate the operation of time on human scale, marked by the rise and fall of various civilizations. In essence, Veronese has designated two primary functions for time within the frescoes: the historical reference—a broad, contextualized understanding—and the narrative sequence, a more immediate and temporary application.<sup>175</sup> The conflation of several layers of

---

<sup>173</sup> Francone, 25.

<sup>174</sup> Rosand: 225.

<sup>175</sup> Ibid., 233.

time is in accordance with Daniele's understanding of that dimension and its representation within the villa. In a letter dated 1550, he wrote:

Elemental nature is divided into four spheres, into fire, air, water and earth, and this is the constitution of the entire machine of the world with differentiated and perfect order...The nature of the four elements needed to be reconciled and moved by a superior virtue, and therefore the celestial nature was introduced, worthy, noble, and far from contrarities...and thus the Empyrean Heaven is all luminous; while the firmament, or starry Heaven, is mobile and multiformed, partly luminous and partly transparent, and the crystalline Heaven is mobile and uniform, and transparent throughout. I say, then that the influences of Heaven can bring about the differentiated meaning of the years, the months, and the days, as they influence the production of things such as minerals, plants, animals...<sup>176</sup>

In the *Sala dell'Olimpo*, depictions of the elements are seen anchoring the corners of the vault, with celestial associations swirling in their center. The harmonic associations of the cosmological organization are meant to structure the villa's program. Therefore the vaulted fresco in the *Sala dell'Olimpo*, depicting the Heavenly beings, organizes the program and unfolds the various temporal layers, just as Daniele articulated Heaven's ability to illustrate and unfold the temporal layers of our world.

The accumulation of numerous times connotes the formation of a cultural consciousness, and cultural memory. This articulation of a greater societal memory is the only evocation of the ideas and influence of memory that largely drove the Sacro Monte and Camillo's theater, two of the existing constructions that provided inspiration for Daniele and his *concetto*. The way in which the Villa Barbaro handles the concept however, doesn't pre-suppose the necessity of physical location in order to create lasting memory, since the very nature of cultural narrative is as a ubiquitous entity. Similarly, Camillo's theater discusses cultural memory. Hence for each of them, the relation to site is through the physical nature of the fresco paintings that evoke the concept of cultural memory, and are tied to the building and its physical siting.

In the context of spatial unification, the fusion of temporal layers mimics and reinforces the over-lapping spatial relations. It vastly expands the realm of possibility, which is the ultimate function of illusion. Now, there is a domain in which infinite possibilities exist: all times, and all spaces, sacred and secular.

---

<sup>176</sup> Reist, "Divine Love and Veronese's Frescos at the Villa Barbaro," 618. Original source Venice, Biblioteca Marciana, MSS Ital., I, 33, 4846 ("Lettere Teologiche di Daniele Barbaro"). "La natura elementare è divisa in Quattro sfere, nel fuoco, nell'aere, nell'acqua, e nella terra, e quest'è la costituzione di tutta la macchina del mondo con ordine distinta e perfetta...La natura de' Quattro elementi la quale bisognava che fosse conciliata e mossa da virtù superiore, e pero è stata introdotta la natura celeste degna nobile lontana da contrarietà...e così è il cielo empireo tutto luminoso; ovvero mobile e multiforme, e così è il firmamento, cioè il cielo stellato, parte luminose, parte trasparente, ovvero mobile ed uniforme ch'è il cielo cristallino trasparente per tutto...Dico adunque che gli influssi del cielo possono fare distinta significazione degli anni, dei mesi e dei giorni. Influiscono anche alla produzione delle cose, come sono miniere, piante, animali..."

## Conclusion

It is evident from the design and execution of the Villa Barbaro that the structure stands as a harmonization of popular artistic and theatric styles with the ancient Roman methods of Vitruvius. All three men—patron, architect, and painter—crucial to the villa's design had considered the dictates of Vitruvius, particularly his designs for the ancient Roman theater, but also the ideas of illusionism and constructed realities that influenced contemporary theatrical practice.

Renaissance Illusionism inspired the development of *quadratura* painting, the desire to capture an absolute illusion and to prescribe an alternate reality. In theater, this manifested itself in Serlian constructions, and the generation of the proscenium frame that created a physical divide between audience and actors for the sake of establishing a unique world on stage that was separate from reality. Yet, the perspectival constructions of contemporary theater still depended upon the use of a viewpoint, intended as the audience entry point into the narrative, and their psychological connection with the theatrical world.

Veronese's use of perspectival constructions affords this psychological connection, along with the heavy presence of masks that reflects the tradition of *commedia dell'arte*, stands as direct reference to contemporary traditions. Yet, the employment of *quadratura*, and its general aim to construct an absolute illusion, is the greatest incorporation of contemporary artistic practice. This interest was supplemented with an inordinate regard for Vitruvian ideals, whose overwhelming application was largely derived from Daniele Barbaro's work on a vernacular translation of *De Architectura* contemporaneous with the villa's design and construction.

Vitruvius's ideas manifested themselves within the villa through the application of orders, the healthful location, the execution of fresco, the emphasis on proportionality, and the understanding and application of spatial zoning. Yet, Vitruvius's understanding of theatrical space—in other words, the creation of fluid zoning between audience, actors, and set—was largely prominent in the generation of the building's *concetto*.

Veronese's frescoes are easily understood as mimicking the three theatrical spatial zones, and the relations they hold with each other strive to imitate a spatial unification. The space of the viewer is equivalent to that of the audience, the first two layers of Veronese's frescoes—*quadratura* with figures, and landscape—are designed to be extensions of one another and are considered the actors, and the space of the set is manifested in the allegorical and mythological images. Within these three layers there is an attempt to blend and join, such that all ultimately exist within the same realm. The conflation of temporal modes is intended to engender a sense of cultural memory and to further reinforce the unification of space. The roles are also able to shift. As the villa is understood as a manifestation of Daniele's belief in the *Theatrum mundi*, the inhabitant suddenly becomes the actor, being observed by the Olympic figures depicted upon the vaults. Thus, the landscapes and *quadratura* are the set of this new narrative.

Vitruvius's fluid understanding of space is further articulated through Palladio's architecture. He created a shifting conception of theatrical roles in which one of several conditions is applicable. The structure can be understood as the actor, with the inhabitants being the audience and the landscape the scenery; the building can be viewed as the scenery, with the inhabitants as audience, and the landscape as the actor, especially in light of its agricultural function; or the inhabitant is seen as the actor, with the villa as the set, and the landscape as the audience. The latter is another articulation of the *Theatrum mundi*, in which the people are performing for the gods implied within the landscape itself. This particular idea is clearly visible within the structure of the nymphaeum in which the stuccoed statues of the Olympians are

arranged in semicircular design, and face the villa as though waiting for a narrative performance by the inhabitants. As the Olympians are artistic creations, the nymphaeum similarly projects an understanding of the reverse situation, in which the statues, as imitations, and the associated villa structure, are the performers, the landscape is the set, fashioned in the form of Vitruvius's satiric prescriptions, and the inhabitants are the audience. This shifting construction creates the fluidity of space that makes for the establishment of a common experience. Unification and common experience is a goal of Vitruvian theater.

The tie between villa and theater forms is of ancient origin, and resulted in many people constructing theaters within their villas, or at least designing arcades that could double as a *scaenae frons*, or nymphaeums that could be transformed into courtyard theaters. This precedent fed Daniele's desire to construct a metaphoric theater within his villa.

The central belief is that Daniele Barbaro was largely responsible for the idea for the villa and its ultimate manifestation. The fresco program's *effetto* is articulated in his earlier publication, *Della eloquentia*, in which he expresses the relationship between Art, Nature, and the Soul. His conclusions from the treatise allow one to understand Art, Nature, and the Soul as holding theatrical connotations as the actors, audience, and set. The ability for these concepts to be translated into the villa's construction, along with the historic climate regarding patronage and control of artistic creation contributes to scholarly understanding of Daniele's role in designing the villa's *conpetto*.

The concept of Vitruvian theatrical space that the villa is working to articulate and its similarity to the notion of absolute illusion that *quadratura* often strives to achieve, provide the link by which contemporary and ancient theatrical practices are effectively tied. Yet *quadratura* is also about the viewer's discovery of the illusion and appreciation for it. At Maser, the reaffirmation of reality is seen in the frescoes' self-referential moments and Veronese's brushwork that acts to consistently return the viewer's eye to the plaster, creating an increasing consciousness of illusion, and simultaneously an increasing awe at his talent. Similarly, Vitruvius's use of a *scaenae frons*, or permanent stone set, creates a certain break in the set's elements, i.e. the stone *scaenae frons* and the painted *periaktoi* that are inserted within it. This minor fracture in the illusion allows for an awareness of reality that makes unified space somewhat unachievable. Serlio's choice not to create a physical unification of space between actors and audience, and reliance on a monofocal construction that means most of the audience don't experience an illusion tailored to their placement within the room, creates a similar break in unified space. The inability for any of these spatial theories and constructions to create a unified environment and experience is the ultimate concession. While each method is striving to achieve it, each is unable to do so. The Villa Barbaro is merely attempting to integrate techniques from each method with the hope of constructing a unified theatrical experience.

## Appendix A: List of Illustrations

Cover: Andrea Palladio, Villa Barbaro. c. 1555, Maser, Italy. Available from: Wikimedia Commons, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 1. Andrea Palladio, *Villa Barbaro at Maser*. 1570, Woodcut Illustration, 28.58 x 20.00 cm. Elizabeth Barlow Rogers Collection, New York, New York. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 1a. Applied Circle and Square Geometries. Andrea Palladio, *Villa Barbaro at Maser*. 1570, Woodcut Illustration, 28.58 x 20.00 cm. Elizabeth Barlow Rogers Collection, New York, New York. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 2. Unknown, Comparison of a monofocal system (a) and a popular polyfocal system with four viewpoints (b). 1978, Diagram. From: *Quadratura*. Stockholm: LiberTryck, 1978. Figure 68.

Figure 3. Unknown, *Room of the Masks*. c. 1<sup>st</sup> Century B.C., Fresco. Casa di Augusto, Palatine Hill. Available from: Wikimedia Commons, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 4. Sebastiano Serlio, Theater Plan and Section. 1545, Diagram. Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris. From: *Paper Palaces*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. Page 181.

Figure 5. Unknown, Arcade Facade. 1493, Woodcut Illustration. Lyons. From: *From Art to Theater*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944. Figure 48.

Figure 6. Unknown, *Charles V before Jerusalem*. 1515, *Tableau vivant* above triumphal arch. Bruges. From: *From Art to Theater*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1944. Figure 48.

Figure 7. Unknown, Theater Design: The Roman Theater. 1999, Diagram, 16.50 x 20.50 cm. From: Rowland translation of *De Architectura*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999. Figure 83.

Figure 8. Andrea Palladio and Vincenzo Scamozzi, *Scaenae frons* of the Teatro Olimpico. 1580-86. Vicenza. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 9. Andrea Palladio and Vincenzo Scamozzi, Teatro Olimpico Stage and Seating. 1580-86. Vicenza. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 10. Andrea Palladio, *Scaenae frons* of the ancient Roman theater. 1567, Illustration from the Barbaro *Vitruvius*. From: *Paper Palaces*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998. Page 239.

Figure 11. Andrea Palladio, Roman Theater. 1567, Woodcut Illustration. From: *I dieci libri dell'architettura*. Milano: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1997. Page 149.

Figure 11a. Applied Geometries 1. Andrea Palladio, Roman Theater. 1567, Woodcut Illustration. From: *I dieci libri dell'architettura*. Milano: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1997. Page 149.

Figure 11b. Applied Geometries 2. Andrea Palladio, Roman Theater. 1567, Woodcut Illustration. From: *I dieci libri dell'architettura*. Milano: Edizioni il Polifilo, 1997. Page 149.

Figure 12. Andrea Palladio, Villa Barbaro. c. 1555, Brick. Maser, Italy. From: *The Villas of Palladio*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1986. Page 107.

Figure 13. Guido Andolfato, Maser - Villa Barbaro. 2010, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, <http://www.fotopedia.com/items/flickr-2346618228> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 14. Andrea Palladio, Villa Barbaro. c. 1555, Brick. Maser. Available from: Wikimedia Commons, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 14a. Andrea Palladio, Villa Barbaro. c. 1555, Brick. Maser. Available from: Wikimedia Commons, <http://commons.wikimedia.org/> (accessed April 13, 2011).

Figure 15. Andrea Palladio and Marc'Antonio Barbaro, Nymphaeum. 1555-59. Villa Barbaro, Maser. From: *The Villas of Palladio*. Boston: Little, Brown & Company, 1986. Page 105.

Figure 16. evansevens, Villa Barbaro built Palladio completed 1558. 2008, Digital Image. Available from: Flickr, <http://www.flickr.com/photos/linkside/2524820338> (accessed April 18, 2011).

Figure 17. Paolo Veronese, Northwestern wall of the *Sala della Crociera*. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org/index.shtml> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 18. Paolo Veronese, *Sala della Crociera*. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org/index.shtml> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 19. Paolo Veronese, *Feast in the House of Levi*. c. 1571-73, Oil on Canvas, 5.56 x 12.8 m. Gallerie dell'Accademia di Venezia, Venice. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org/index.shtml> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 20. Paolo Veronese, Southeastern wall of the *Sala della Crociera*. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org/index.shtml> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 21. Paolo Veronese, Northern wall of the *Stanza del Bacco*. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: Wikimedia Commons, <http://commons.wikimedia.org> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 22a. Paolo Veronese, *Suonatrici* with Tambour. c. 1561, Fresco. *Sala della Crociera*, Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 22b. Paolo Veronese, *Suonatrici* with Lyre. c. 1561, Fresco. *Sala della Crociera*, Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 23. Paolo Veronese, *Stanza del Bacco* ceiling. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 24. Paolo Veronese, *Stanza del Tribunale d'Amore* ceiling. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 25. Paolo Veronese, *Sala dell'Olimpio* vault. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14, 2011).

Figure 25a. Paolo Veronese, *Sala dell'Olimpio* vault detail. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. From: *Paolo Caliari, called Veronese*. Cologne: Könemann, 2000. Plate 67.

Figure 26. Gafurius, *The harmony of the spheres*. 1518, Book, *De Harmonia Musicorum Opus*. From: *Veronese and Barbaro*. Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes: Vol. 35. Page 231.

Figure 27. Paolo Veronese, *Giustiniana Giustiniani and her Nurse*. c. 1561, Fresco. *Sala dell'Olimpo* vault, Villa Barbaro, Maser. From: *Paolo Caliari, called Veronese*. Cologne: Könemann, 2000. Plate 71.

Figure 28. Paolo Veronese, *Maser Self Portrait*. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14. 2011).

Figure 29. Paolo Veronese, *Portrait of a Woman with Fan*. 1560-61, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14. 2011).

Figure 30. Paolo Veronese, South wall of the *Salla dell'Olimpo*. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14. 2011).

Figure 31. Paolo Veronese, *Stanza della Lucerna* vault. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14. 2011).

Figure 32. Paolo Veronese, *Madonna della pappà*. c. 1561, Fresco. South wall of the *Stanza della Lucerna*, Villa Barbaro, Maser. From: *Paolo Caliari, called Veronese*. Cologne: Könemann, 2000. Plate 70.

Figure 33. Paolo Veronese, Southern wall of the *Stanza del Cane*. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14. 2011).

Figure 34. Paolo Veronese, *Stanza del Cane* vault. c. 1561, Fresco. Villa Barbaro, Maser. Available from: ARTstor, <http://www.artstor.org> (accessed April 14. 2011).

Figure 35a. Paolo Veronese, *Costume Studies*. École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. From: *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Figure 121.

Figure 35b. Paolo Veronese, *Costume Studies*. École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts. From: *Painting in Sixteenth-Century Venice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997. Figure 122.

## Works Cited

- Ackerman, James S. *The Villa: Form and Ideology of Country Houses* Bollingen Series Xxxv. Washington, D.C.: Princeton University Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Daniele Barbaro and Vitruvius." In *Architectural Studies in Memory of Richard Krautheimer*, edited by Cecil L. Striker. Mainz: Philipp von Zabern, 1996.
- Alberti, Leon Battista. *De Re Aedificatoria*. Translated by Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach and Robert Tavernor. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1988.
- Aristotle. *The Complete Works of Aristotle*. Translated by I. Bywater The Revised Oxford Translation, Edited by Jonathan Barnes. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1995.
- Avagnina, Maria Elisa. *The Teatro Olimpico*, Edited by Guide Marsilio. Venezia: Marsilio Editori, 2005.
- Baroque: Style in the Age of Magnificence* Edited by Michael Snodin and Nigel Llewellyn. London: V&A Publishing, 2009.
- Beck, Carolyn Kolb and Melissa. "The Sculptures of the Nymphaeum Hemicycle of the Villa Barbaro." *Artibus et Historiae* 18, no. 35 (1997): 15-33, 35-40.
- Brockett, Oscar G., Margaret Mitchell and Linda Hardberger. *Making the Scene: A History of Stage Design and Technology in Europe and the United States*. San Antonio, Texas: Tobin Theatre Arts Fund, 2010.
- Cellauro, Louis. "Daniele Barbaro and Vitruvius: The Architectural Theory of a Renaissance Humanist and Patron." *Papers of the British School at Rome* 72 (2004): 293-329.
- Cerutti, Steven and L. Richardson Jr. "Vitruvius on Stage Architecture and Some Recently Discovered Scaenae Frons Decorations." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 48, no. 2 (1989): 172-79.
- Ciapponi, Lucia. "Vitruvius." In *Catalogus Translationum Et Commentariorum. Medieval and Renaissance Translations and Commentaries*, edited by Edward F. Cranz, III, 399-409. Washington, 1976.
- Cocke, Richard. "Veronese and Daniele Barbaro: The Decoration of Villa Maser." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 35 (1972): 226-246.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Wit and Humour in the Work of Paolo Veronese." *Artibus et Historiae* 11, no. 21 (1990): 125-145.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Veronese*. London: Chaucer Press, 2005.
- Crosato, Luciana. "Considerazioni Sul Programma Iconografico Di Maser." *Mitteilungen des Kunsthistorischen Insitutes in Florenz* 26 (1982): 211-56.
- D'Evelyn, Margaret Muther. "Venice as Vitruvius's City in Daniele Barbaro's Commentaries." *Studi Veneziani* 32 (1996): 83-104.
- de Maria, Blake. *Becoming Venetian: Immigrants and the Arts in Early Modern Venice*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010.
- de' Maffei, Fernanda. "Perspectivists." In *Encyclopedia of World Art*, edited by Massimo Pallottino, XI. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1966.
- Duchartre, Pierre Louis *The Italian Comedy*. Translated by Randolph T. Weaver. New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1966.
- Evers, Sonia Holden. "The Art of Paolo Veronese: Artistic Identity in Harmony with Patrician Ideology." University of California at Berkeley, 1994.
- Francone, Marcello. "Veronese: Gods, Heroes and Allegories." edited by Musee Luxembourg. Italy: Skira editore, 2004.

- Frascari, Marco. "The Mirror Theatre of Vincenzo Scamozzi." In *Paper Palaces: The Rise of the Renaissance Architectural Treatise*, edited by Vaughan and Peter Hicks Hart. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1998.
- Gombrich, E. H. *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1960.
- "Harmony, N.", Oxford University Press <http://www.oed.com.library.colgate.edu/view/Entry/84303?redirectedFrom=harmony#eid> (accessed April 06 2011).
- Ivanoff, N. "Il Sacro E Il Profano Negli Affreschi Di Maser." *Ateneo Veneto* (1961): 99-104. \_\_\_\_\_ . "La Libreria Marciana." *Saggi e Memorie di Storia dell'arte* vi (1968).
- Kernodle, George R. *From Art to Theatre*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1943. \_\_\_\_\_ . *The Theatre in History*. Fayetteville: The University of Arkansas Press, 1989.
- Leacroft, Richard and Helen. *Theatre and Playhouse: An Illustrated Survey of Theatre Building from Ancient Greece to the Present Day*. Portsmouth, New Hampshire: Methuen London Ltd., 1984.
- Leatherbarrow, David. "The Image and Its Setting: A Study of the Sacro Monte at Varallo." *RES: Anthropology and Aesthetics* 14 (1987): 107-122.
- Lewis, Douglas. "Palladio's Painted Architecture." In *Vierhundert Jahre Andrea Palladio*. Heidelberg, 1580-1980.
- Longair, Deborah Howard and Malcolm. "Harmonic Proportion and Palladio's "Quattro Libri"." *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians* 41, no. 2 (1982): 116-143.
- Magagnato, Licisco. "The Genesis of the Teatro Olimpico." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes* 14, no. 3/4 (1951): 209-220.
- Martin, John Rupert. *Baroque*. New York: Harper & Row, Publishers, 1977.
- Mitrovic, Branko. *Learning from Palladio*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2004.
- Muir, Edward. *The Culture Wars of the Late Renaissance: Skeptics, Libertines and Opera*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2007.
- Muraro, Julian Barnes and Michelangelo. "A Villa of Abundance: Villa Barbaro." *FMR* 14 (1994): 13-44.
- Negri Arnoldi, F. "Prospettici E Quadraturisti." In *Enciclopedia Universale dell'Arte*, XI, 99-116. Venice-Rome, 1963.
- Neumann, Stan. "Villa Di Maser." 26'. Italy: World Heritage UNESCO, 2006.
- Palladio, Andrea. *The Four Books on Architecture*. Translated by Robert and Richard Schofield Tavernor. Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press, 1997.
- Pape, Manfred Wundram and Thomas. *Andrea Palladio*. Translated by Fiona Hulse. Köln: Benedikt Taschen Verlag GmbH & Co., 1989.
- Paz, Danielle, "Tableau Vivant", The University of Chicago <http://csmt.uchicago.edu/glossary2004/tableauvivant.htm> (accessed February 14 2011).
- Pirenne, M. H. *Optics, Painting, & Photography*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1970.
- Priever, Andreas. *Paolo Caliari, Called Veronese*. Translated by Paul and Fiona Hulse Aston. Cologne: Konemann, 2000.
- "Proscenium, N", Oxford University Press <http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/152913?redirectedFrom=proscenium> (accessed February 4 2011).
- Puppi, Lionello. "'Painter, Sculptor, Architect...'" Paolo Veronese among the "Sister Arts"." In *Veronese: Gods, Heroes, and Allegories*, edited by Marcello Francone. Italy: Skira, 2004.

- Reist, Inge Jackson. "Divine Love and Veronese's Frescos at the Villa Barbaro." *The Art Bulletin* 67, no. 4 (1985): 614-635.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Renaissance Harmony: The Villa Barbaro at Maser." PhD, Columbia University, 1985.
- The Renaissance Stage: Documents of Serlio, Sabbattini and Furttenbach*. Translated by John H. McDowell Allardyce Nicoll, and Geroge R. Kernodle Edited by Barnard Hewitt. Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami Press, 1958.
- Roettgen, Steffi. *Italian Frescos: The Baroque Era 1600-1800*. Translated by Russell Stockman. First Edition ed. New York: Abbeville Press Publishers, 2007.
- Rosand, David. "Theater and Structure in the Art of Paolo Veronese." *The Art Bulletin* 55, no. 2 (1973): 217-239.
- Rybczynski, Witold. *The Perfect House*. New York: Scribner, 2002.
- Sandström, Sven. *Levels of Unreality*. Stockholm: Almqvist and Wiksell, 1963.
- Sear, Frank B. "Vitruvius and Roman Theater Design." *American Journal of Archaeology* 94, no. 2 (1990): 249-258.
- Serlio, Sebastiano. *On Architecture*. Translated by Vaughan and Peter Hicks Hart. Vol. 1. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1996.
- Sjöström, Ingrid. *Quadratura. Studies in Italian Ceiling Painting*. Stockholm, Sweden: Almqvist & Wiksell International 1978.
- Steinberg, Ronald Martin. "The Iconography of the Teatro Dell'acqua at the Villa Aldobrandini." *The Art Bulletin* 47, no. 4 (1965): 453-63.
- Vitruvius. *Ten Books on Architecture*. Translated by Ingrid D. Rowland, Edited by Thomas Noble Howe. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1999.
- Wolters, Norbert Huse and Wolfgang. *The Art of Renaissance Venice*. Translated by Edmund Jephcott. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1990.