



PALAIS
LIECHTENSTEIN

THE PRINCELY PALACES

THE LIECHTENSTEIN GARDEN PALACE

The Rebirth of a Princely Palace

The comprehensive renovation of the GARDEN PALACE, which began at the start of 2001 and is largely completed, was conceived from the outset with the return of a significant portion of the Princely Collections from Vaduz at its core.

RESTORED FRESCOES TO IST FORMER SPLENDOR

The frescoes all had to be cleansed of the dust of centuries and now shine again in their original color brilliance. Pozzo's ceiling fresco in the Hercules Hall and Rottmayr's frescoes in the ground floor halls were in a pleasingly untouched condition and mainly required the consolidation of a few loose parts and thorough cleaning. Only Rottmayr's ceiling mirrors in the Sala Terrena were more severely affected by 19th-century restorations and partial complete recreations by Karl Geyger in the 20th century, requiring extensive measures to ensure the complete reconstruction of the baroque ensemble.

Greater problems arose with the frescoes on the ground floor, which had suffered more from climate fluctuations in the originally open weather-independent Sala Terrena. Here as well, the restorers managed to achieve a harmonious overall condition that integrates the frescoes into the baroque ensemble.

RESTORATION OF CEILING PAINTINGS

The restorers faced greater problems with the oil paintings. While the paintings by the Bolognese Marcantonio Franceschini were in quite good condition, the works by the Venetian Antonio Bellucci had suffered significantly more. After their transfer from the CITY PALACE in Bankgasse to Rossau in the 19th century, they underwent numerous format changes, additions, retouching, and overpainting; moreover, all paintings were later covered with a thick, heavily yellowed varnish.

The restoration aimed to resolve all technical issues of the paintings – loose paint flakes, water damage, and previous restorations – as well as to achieve a uniform condition through careful varnish thinning, making the paintings' original colors visible again. The greatest attention was paid to preserving residual varnish and all glazes to maintain the original substance and some of the patina.

Only two of Bellucci's paintings had their later additions removed and the original format restored; for these additions, which show fragments of a leopard or a portrait on the back, paintings from the gallery were evidently cut up and reused.

STUCCO DECORATION REGAINING ORIGINAL SHARPNESS AND PLASTICITY

Unlike most other Viennese interiors, the GARDEN PALACE did not undergo any 19th-century stucco revisions aimed to adapt to the representational demands of historicism. Santino Bussi's work retained their original condition. The stucco lacked plastic sharpness at the start of the restoration due to several layers of later coatings, which were carefully removed. The uniformity of the appearance was achieved through retouching with translucent lime milk, which allows the material of the lime stucco to be felt again. Especially the parts where the fully plastic stucco transitions into linear drawing on the base surface, the composition has become readable again. The tension between the fully plastic modeled



parts, the relief, and the drawing brings out the full depth effect of the forms, highlighting one of the essential qualities of this stucco.

CLEANING AND RESTORATION OF VASES AND SCULPTURES

The palace as well as the garden had an extensive collection of sculptures by Giovanni Giuliani, most of which were lost. Only a few vases and two monumental statues remain from the garden sculptures. The original Giuliani sculptures on the forebuildings were replaced by copies decades ago.

The vases and sculptures in the garden suffered from extreme salting and extensive surface destruction. They were originally smoothly coated with a stucco lustro layer, simulating precious marble. After necessary desalination, sculptors had to carefully replace all missing parts before applying the oil paint coating.

Two significant sculptures by Giovanni Giuliani for the Sala Terrena, made after models by Soldani on behalf of Prince Johann Adam Andreas I, had also disappeared and have now returned to the Palace.

Several parts were missing from the sculptures, which were restored based on photographs. Due to the severe salting, an oil coating was chosen, corresponding to the original condition.

The Giuliani vases inside showed similar problems, mainly from losses in the applied ornaments, which had to be replaced.

MODERNIZATION INSIDE

To even consider the return of the artworks currently stored under optimal conditions in the depots of Vaduz Castle, the entire Palace was brought up to the latest security and climate standards of a museum. The insufficiently available ancillary rooms were expanded and housed in a newly created basement under the Sala Terrena.

The stone parts of the Sala Terrena, originally covered with a lime wash and exposed as well as reworked in the 19th century, regained their historical lime coating. The flooring was also restored according to historical documents.

When the gallery building was restructured at the beginning of the 20th century, the Liechtenstein family archive was housed in the rooms of the ladies' apartment until 2001. For this use as a family archive, steel shelves were installed, and the floors were raised by about one meter, similar to the library in the gentlemen's apartment. The original room proportions and the quality of the furnishings were no longer perceptible.

During the restoration, the floors of the former ladies' apartment were returned to their original level; the rooms with the restored Rottmayr frescoes are now again experienced in their original proportions, entirely oriented towards the monumentality of Roman Baroque.

The rooms also regained their historical flooring, originally "marble slabs from Kehlheim," and are now used for events and special exhibitions.

When the Palace in Herrengasse was left by the princely family at the end of the 19th century, the library with its furnishings was moved to the gallery building in Rossau. The rooms of the gentlemen's apartment were converted and adapted for this purpose, and the bookcases themselves were adjusted



to the new conditions. A photo from that time shows the historical parts and the new, not yet polychromed additions, so we know quite precisely which parts were added at that time.

The protective varnish on the surfaces was heavily yellowed, so after cleaning, as with the paintings, the original color of the coating became more apparent. The gildings were cleaned and supplemented. Their soft shimmer, along with the reinstalled classicist chandeliers and wall appliques with their silk shades, defines the atmosphere of the rooms.

The rooms on the first floor (Piano Nobile), painted white in recent decades, have been restored to their historical colors, providing a worthy setting for the artworks.

The discovery of the historical parquet flooring from the late 18th century, installed when the gallery moved into the house, brought great joy. After its extensive restoration, it significantly contributes to the color scheme and the desired atmospheric density.