



# Choir Stalls and Their Patrons

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
University of Rijeka  
Sveučilišna avenija 4, Rijeka

**Rijeka**  
**13-16 September 2018**

**University Campus**  
**Trsat, Rijeka**  
**Hall 207**

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The Department of Art History, Faculty of Humanities  
and Social Sciences, University of Rijeka



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## Choir Stalls and Their Patrons

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences  
University of Rijeka, 2018

The conference seeks to explore and discuss the relation between choir stalls and their patrons. It aims to present original research in this field as well as to establish productive dialogue between scholars with a particular research interest in choir stalls. Artworks and their patrons have raised and continue to raise many research questions. While choir stalls have been studied extensively for the misericords with profane carvings, less research has been done on the commissions for this type of church furniture. In recent years the focus of choir stall research has moved toward makers and patrons, hence the previous colloquium's topic was dedicated to the craftsmen and their workshops. The 2018 conference will focus on problems of ecclesiastical and secular patrons and questions such as who were the patrons of choir stalls and to what extent were they responsible for the final result, or are there differences or similarities between choir stalls considering different patrons - members of chapters, parishes, female and male monastic communities, confraternities and private persons.

## PROGRAMME

### THURSDAY, 13 SEPTEMBER 2018

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Sveučilišna avenija 4, Rijeka  
Hall 207 (II floor)

9:30 Registration

10:00  
Opening of the conference - greetings and introductory speech  
Ines Srdoč-Konestra, Dean of the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
University of Rijeka  
Frédéric Billet, President of Misericordia International  
Marina Vicelja Matijašić, Department of Art History, Faculty of Humanities and  
Social Sciences, University of Rijeka

#### Keynote lecture

10:15 - 11:00  
LOUISE BOURDUA, University of Warwick, Coventry  
*Patrons and their Projects: Connecting Choir Stalls*

11:00 - 11:15 Break

#### Section I - France

11:15 - 12:30  
Communications (anticipated time for each paper is 30 minutes)  
*Chair: Christel Theunissen*

FRÉDÉRIC BILLIET, Sorbonne-Université, Paris  
*Representations of Patrons in the French Medieval Choir stalls*

CÉCILE D'ANTERROCHES, Independent scholar, France  
*The craftsmen who built the stalls of the castle of Gaillon, along with George I d'Amboise  
their patron*

#### Section II - Spain

12:30 - 13:45  
*Chair: Willy Piron*

ÁNGEL FUENTES ORTIZ, Universidad Complutense de Madrid  
MARÍA TERESA CHICOTE POMPANIN, The Warburg Institute, London  
*Solving the Riddle of the Cuemans's Choir of Cuenca: the History of a Doomed Project*

DOLORES TEIJEIRA PABLOS, Instituto de Estudios Medievales, Universidad de León  
FERNANDO VILLASEÑOR SEBASTIÁN, Universidad de Cantabria  
*Bishop Juan Arias Dávila and King Henry IV in Segovia cathedral. A fake stalls patron?*

13:45 - 15:30 LUNCH

#### Section III - Italy

15:30 - 16:45  
*Chair: Petra Predoević Zadković*

JOANNE ALLEN, American University, Washington DC  
*Corporate Sponsorship: Choir Stall Patronage in Renaissance Florence*

LORENZO MASCHERETTI, Università Cattolica del Sacro Cuore, Milan  
*Novus Alexander Macedo, vere Magnus, vere Pius. The patronage of Alessandro Martinengo  
Colleoni in 16th century Bergamo*

16:45 - 17:00 Break

17:00 - 17:45  
*POSTER PRESENTATIONS – art history students of the Faculty of Humanities and Social  
Sciences, Rijeka*

17:45  
*PRESENTATION OF THE STALLA PROJECT of the Centre for Arthistorical Documentation,  
Radboud University Nijmegen, The Netherlands*

18:15  
*PRESENTATION OF THE CHOIR STALLS AND THEIR WORKSHOPS - Proceedings of the  
Misericordia International Colloquium 2016*

## FRIDAY, 14 SEPTEMBER 2018

Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences,  
Sveučilišna avenija 4, Rijeka  
Hall 207 (II floor)

Communications (anticipated time for each paper is 30 minutes)

### Section IV – North Europe I

10:00 - 11:45

*Chair: Palma Karković Takalić*

CHRISTEL THEUNISSEN, Radboud University, Nijmegen  
*Choir Stall Patrons in Northwest Europe*

WILLY PIRON, Radboud University, Nijmegen  
*Moritz von Spiegelberg as the patron of the choir stalls in the Sankt Martini of Emmerich*

INGRID VAN Woudenberg, Independent scholar, The Netherlands  
*Margaret of Austria, regent and woman of her period of time?*

11:45 - 12:00 Break

### Section V – North Europe II

12:00 - 13:45

*Chair: Nikolina Belošević*

JULIANA DRESVINA, St John's College, Oxford  
*Oxford misericords and their patrons, medieval and modern: a brief history*

BARTULI ANNA, Faculty of History, Moscow State University  
*„Bocholt-chair“ – why it's interesting*

MIKI WITMOND, Independent scholar, The Netherlands  
*The many layers of the saint Gertuds panels in Nivelles*

13:45 - 15:30 LUNCH

### Section VI - Croatia

15:30 - 16:45

*Chair: Joanne Allen*

BARBARA ŠPANJOL-PANDELO, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Rijeka  
*Choir Stalls in Croatia and Their Patrons*

ANA MARINKOVIĆ, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Zagreb  
MATKO MATIJA MARUŠIĆ, Institute of Art History, Zagreb  
*The Commissioners of the "San Marco-Type" Choir Screens across Stato da mar*

Closing remarks

17:30 **General Meeting of Misericordia International**

19:00 Dinner for participants

## TWO DAY FIELD TRIP 15 – 16 September 2018

(Rijeka – Zadar – Šibenik – Trogir – Split – Rijeka)

### SATURDAY, 15 September 2018

Conference field work (Rijeka – Zadar - Šibenik)  
Departure 8.00 am

Morning session - ZADAR / The guided walking tour includes visits to choir stalls in the Cathedral of St. Anastasia and choir stalls in the church of St. Francis.

Lunch

Departure for ŠIBENIK (optional – guided walking tour of the Cathedral of St. James on UNESCO World Heritage List since 2000)

Overnight stay in single and double rooms

### SUNDAY, 16 September 2018

Departure 9.00 am  
Conference field work (Trogir – Split)

Morning session - TROGIR / The guided walking tour and visit of the choir stalls in the Cathedral of St. Lawrence

Lunch

Afternoon session – SPLIT / The guided walking tour and visit of the choir stalls in the Cathedral of St. Domnius

End of the field trip approximately 15.00 pm.

Return to Rijeka approximately 22.30 pm.

Travel costs: 150 Euro (included: bus transfer, hotel, lunch)

## ABSTRACTS

Misericordia International Colloquium 2018, Rijeka

LOUISE BOURDUA  
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### ***Patrons and their Projects: Connecting Choir Stalls***

The study of artistic patronage has become increasingly complex since its reexamination, beginning in the 1960s, aligning it with social history and a distancing from the history of style. Gone are the traditional notions of a struggle between a demanding patron eager to control and an artist desperate to free himself in order to be creative. Collaboration was the rule. Patrons are no longer perceived as sole individuals in the commissioning process, but as one of many actors, alongside advisers and intermediaries, and as connected to social networks as to the objects they commissioned. Investigating choir stalls through the lens of patronage allows us to connect them to the social world beyond the buildings in which they now stand. Moreover, as stalls were often part of larger furnishing projects, patronage studies allows them to be connected to other objects. This paper therefore reflects on what patronage studies can bring to the investigation of choir stalls, using diverse case studies ranging from the fourteenth to the sixteenth centuries. The geographical focus is predominantly Italian but reference is made to Europe more widely.

FRÉDÉRIC BILLIET  
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***Representations of Patrons  
in the French Medieval Choirstalls***

Patrons of choir stalls and donors are sometimes identified through archival studies. When they are known, the names can be linked with some portraits, coats of arms, symbols of the family name or specific elements characterizing the personality. Through the discovery of such indices in the choir stalls of Levroux, we shall try to show the diversity of the representations of patrons in the French medieval choir-stalls.

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***The craftsmen who built the stalls of the castle of Gaillon,  
along with George I d'Amboise their patron***

In 1508 rose one of the most splendid castles of the Rouen area, in French Normandy. His patron chose a type of ornamentation that harmoniously combines French and Italian art. The stalls he built for the upper chapel of this castle are a remarkable proof of this choice. For carving and decorating them, the craftsmen who were hired, even if they were not Italian masters of art, nevertheless really knew how to put their mastery of the techniques of the peninsula at the service of the inspiration of Georges d'Amboise. The result is a magnificent work that combines Renaissance and Gothic art at the age of the humanism's revival.



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### ***Solving the Riddle of the Cuemans's Choir of Cuenca: the History of a Doomed Project***

On Wednesday 12 November 1753, the Chapter of the Cathedral of Cuenca held an extraordinary session which aim was to discuss the creation of a new set of choir stalls. They claimed that the old choir stalls were too narrow for the daily offices and that their aspect and structure were 'almost indecent'. Finally, the Chapter ordered the creation of a new choir and, soon after, the prior of the Collegiate Church of San Bartolomé in Belmonte showed his interest in the acquisition of the Cathedral's old choir. Five years later the choir was finally installed in Belmonte where it still stands nowadays.

The first choir of Cuenca is a complex artwork which combines medieval and renaissance elements. It is frequently mentioned by art historians, nevertheless, its history is still shadowy. Indeed, its first documented record indicates that it was commissioned around 1454 to Egas Cueman and Hanequin de Bruselas, two Flemish artists who reached the Iberian Peninsula and greatly influenced the development of artistic trends in Castile. Modern studies argue that this choir was soon replaced by a new structure by Master Lorenzo, who worked in the late 1470s. The choir continued to suffer modifications during the sixteenth century and, according to the most recent publications, nothing of the original choir by Egas and Hanequin has survived until today.

The aim of this presentation is to challenge this assumption by analysing in depth the Cuenca choir stalls in their present location in the Collegiate Church of Belmonte. Thanks to an in-depth reading of the surviving documentary sources and to the

study of the choir stalls' structure and decoration, we will demonstrate that remains of the original choir by Egas and Hanequin are still preserved in Belmonte. Besides, we will show how these parts conditioned the creations of posterior artists such as Master Lorenzo and his renaissance successors, as they were forced to integrate the old pieces into their work. After elucidating these points, the paper will investigate the life of this choir stalls and the patrons behind its successive interventions. We will finally demonstrate that the 1450s choir suffered continuous restorations as it was soon ruined by a technical miscalculation during its sculpting that radically influenced its posterior life.

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### ***Bishop Juan Arias Dávila and King Henry IV in Segovia cathedral. A fake stalls patron?***

Juan Arias Dávila (ca.1436-1498?) was one of the most important Castilian prelates of the last third of the fifteenth century, despite his Jewish origin and having held only the episcopate of Segovia (1461-1497). The prelate intervened in the political affairs of the court and in the religious issues of the bishopric and stood out for his role as cultural promoter. To his impulse is due, among other business, the first printed text in Spain, but also important architectural and sumptuary works that completely renovated the old cathedral and other works in the city of Segovia during his episcopate.

His relationship with King Henry IV of Castile, prior to his fall from grace after 1466, until then favored the collaboration of both in the improvement of the old cathedral of Segovia and other initiatives, such as the establishment of a frustrated University, but also in purely artistic actions such as the construction of the cathedral cloister by Juan Guas.

Among the works traditionally attributed to the collaboration of both includes the choir stalls, made between 1458 and 1462, and which would be moved to the new cathedral later, where today it is preserved, enlarged and reformed. In 1459, the king donated 30,000 maravedíes for its construction, financing a large part of it, which would explain the inclusion of the royal shields in the most indicated seats.

Actually, this presence of the king in the choir is a reflection of royal patronage that the Castilian monarchs exercised and always claimed for the purpose of the provision of vacant sees. The royal presence in the Choir of the Cathedral of Segovia

would open a tendency to arrange real seats in the high stalls, in the immediate area to the gate, in some cases explicitly and in others in an unspoken way. Thus, it happens in Segovia and later in Plasencia where Rodrigo Alemán was forced in 1497 to "fazer dos sillars que se han de asentar en los cabos de los coros" for the Catholic Kings; in whose back of inlays are represented the monarchs Isabel and Fernando, richly attired, enthroned and crowned, with the scepter and an open book. In the case of Segovia, we know from the chroniclers that Henry IV, in fact, frequently sat in his choir chair, given his love of music and his devoted character, and participated in the singing of the cathedral hours.

This paper seeks to know better the sponsors, the works they developed at the Cathedral of Segovia as well as their artistic interests, to deepen in the knowledge of the choir stalls of the Segovian cathedral, and to establish the role they played in the building. The role of other possible employers, such as Luis de Acuña (1449-1456) or Fernando López de Villaescusa (1457-1460), will also be analyzed. Finally, the connections of this work with another set will be approached, also due to the artistic promotion of Arias Dávila: its great and interesting library.



JOANNE ALLEN  
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### ***Corporate Sponsorship: Choir Stall Patronage in Renaissance Florence***

Within the broad context of wooden church furnishings in Renaissance Florence, this paper will present a case study of choir stall patronage in the Vallombrosan monks' church of San Pancrazio, based on an analysis of unpublished archival documentation. Monastic, lay, and corporate patronage all contributed to furnishing the church, raising questions about the ownership, decorative character, function and usage of choir stalls.

In the early Renaissance, members of the wealthy Rucellai family emerged as major benefactors of San Pancrazio, but local corporate patronage also played a significant role. Each quartiere of Florence was divided into four neighborhood consituencies or "gonfalone". In 1444, the Lion Rosso gonfalone – the zone in which San Pancrazio was located – funded "a choir... bearing the coat-of-arms of the said district". The gonfalone stipulated that their emblem of the red lion "should be intarsiated [...] in those places as will be seen to be proper to said syndics or their successors". In the original arrangement of the stalls in the nave of San Pancrazio, the two lion motives would have been visually prominent, probably located at the eastern extreme of two L-shaped ranges, facing the high altar.

How did this choir stall patronage relate to the practical usage of the furniture? Interestingly, in most meetings of the gonfalone there were around 30 residents in attendance, who would assemble in the church, according to their documentation "in the usual place". Since they had funded its construction and emblazoned their emblem on its wooden furniture, it appears likely that they would have utilized it for their regular meetings. Moreover, the surviving choir (which was later transferred to Vallombrosa Abbey) comprises 24 original stalls, a reasonable number to seat the gonfalone, given that some would have been lost or damaged over the centuries. With their relatively democratic seating plan and air of liturgical solemnity, church

choir stalls were ideal for hosting serious gatherings. In Santa Trinita in Florence, for example, the Strozzi sacristy chapel choir was used for meetings of the Unicorno gonfalone and other meetings involving laymen.

Later, the monastery's archive reported that in 1499, Pandolfo Rucellai gave Abbot Giovanni Gualberto thirty gold florins with instructions to finish "a choir that the aforesaid Pandolfo had started a long time ago behind the high altar and likewise an altarpiece by the painter Bernardo Rosselli". The abbot instructed the woodworker to add certain intarsia and molding, this time using the monastery's funds. Patronage of the retrochoir demonstrates how the Rucellai family infiltrated their power and influence across multiple spaces in the church interior of San Pancrazio. Whether the family utilized this area during liturgical celebrations is unknown, yet comparable Italian examples demonstrate that private lay patrons certainly felt a high level of ownership over the sacred spaces they financed.

Using this case study and others in Florence as starting points, this paper will show how patronage studies can reveal insights into the functions and usage of choir stalls in both religious and secular civic life. By viewing church buildings as complex arenas for social encounters, my paper will add to our understanding of the fluid relationship between the sacred and secular in early modern Italy.

LORENZO MASCHERETTI

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***Novus Alexander Macedo, vere Magnus, vere Pius.  
The patronage of Alessandro Martinengo Colleoni  
in 16th century Bergamo***

Alessandro Martinengo Colleoni (about 1453 - 1530) was the nephew of Bartolomeo Colleoni, the famous condottiero honored by the Venetian Republic with Andrea del Verrocchio's equestrian monument located in front of the Dominican church of Santi Giovanni e Paolo in Venice. Alessandro Martinengo inherited from his grandfather not only the surname, but also a particular devotion towards the Dominican order: in fact Bartolomeo Colleoni founded in the 1460s a Dominican male convent near to the church of Santa Maria della Basella in Ugnano, a small village in the nearby of Bergamo, where afterwards he decided to bury his cherished daughter Medea. Alessandro Martinengo on his side was really munificent towards the Dominicans during his life, especially displaying great generosity to the reformed community of Santo Stefano in Bergamo. So that the friars decided in 1504 to give him the patronage of the main chapel of their church (unfortunately destroyed in 1561).

Alessandro promoted an expensive campaign of restoration and decoration of the site, leaving a legacy amounting in one thousand ducats and committing to Lorenzo Lotto the astonishing altarpiece (the so called Pala Martinengo). Some years later he ordered in his testament the construction of a tomb for him and his wife, Bianca Mocenigo: a funerary monument, now reinstalled elsewhere, reflecting in materials and decorative motifs the style of Bartolomeo Colleoni's funerary chapel in the church of St. Maria Maggiore in Bergamo and perfectly showing the influence of the local Renaissance. Meanwhile Alessandro decided to provide the chapel with new wooden stalls for his family and for celebrants: the decoration of the wooden choir, where we can see his arms, was charged to fra Damiano Zambelli (about 1480 - 1549), a Dominican friar who during the 16th century became the most important representative intarsia master of the Northern Italy, as his Bolognese masterpiec-

es testify. At the beginning of his career Zambelli lived his professional training in Venice, where he probably met his master, Sebastiano from Rovigno. Thanks to this experience he acquired new technical and iconographical skills, such as the use of representing for the first time recognizable urban sceneries, in contrast with the 15th century Lendinaresque tradition of idealized backgrounds. For example in the stalls for Santo Stefano in Bergamo fra Damiano included two panels with representations of the main squares of Bergamo and Brescia which are also a homage to Alessandro Martinengo's double nationality.

The paper aims to present the active role of Alessandro Martinengo Colleoni in the transformation of the main chapel of the Dominican church of Bergamo: in fact the choir with its inlaid decorations was connected to other elements of the interior, such as the monumental altarpiece or the frescoes on the tramezzo; the theoretical relationship among the different pieces of furniture contributed to create the idea of a Gesamtkunstwerk. In this operation the patron must have been supported by a theorist, who could be recognized in one of the Priors ruling the convent in that period.

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### ***Choir Stall Patrons in Northwest Europe***

In this paper, I will give an overview of choir stall patronage in Northwest Europe. Little research has been done on the commissioning of this type of church furniture, partly because of the lack of documentary sources available. Furthermore, the patronage of stalls created as utilitarian furniture has not until recently been considered an appropriate research topic. It was assumed that choir stalls were commissioned by the clergy, but this was certainly not always the case. Visual and - the rare - textual sources tell another story. Not only the clergy ordered choir stalls but also secular persons such as nobility, bourgeois and members of the town council. In this paper, I will focus on the choir stall patrons, ecclesiastical and lay, of Northwest European countries. By looking at the furniture itself and archival research, what examples are there and what do they tell us? Who were their patrons and who were the principal protagonists in both the commissioning and fabricating process? And what can be said about patronage of choir stalls in a broader sense?

WILLY PIRON  
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### ***Moritz von Spiegelberg as the patron of the choir stalls in the Sankt Martini of Emmerich***

Coats of arms are very common on choir stalls. They are mostly depicted at the bench-ends and often show the coat of arms of cities or of the patron. On the choir stalls of Emmerich are also coats of arms, not on the bench-ends but on the dorsals. They were placed there by direct order of the donor. The patronage of the Emmerich choir stalls is rather unusual because they were ordered not by a chapter, a brotherhood or a sovereign but by a private person. The choir stalls with originally 38 seats, were made in 1486 by order of the canon Moritz Graf von Spiegelberg. The coats of arms form an extensive Ahnenprobe or patent of the nobility of Von Spiegelberg. In this case, it means that the coats of arms of Von Spiegelbergs ancestors were depicted on both sides of the choir stalls and thus gave a testimony of his immaculate descent. In this paper, the Emmerich choir stalls, their patron and the decoration with coats of arms will be discussed.

INGRID VAN WOUDEMBERG

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***Margaret of Austria, regent and woman  
of her period of time?***

The building history of the church of Brou is closely connected to its patroness Margaret of Austria, the regent of the Netherlands in the beginning of the 16th century. In the church are located several richly decorated monuments. Especially the three tombs have received the attention of many researchers. On the contrary, the choirstalls, existing of 74 chairs and fabricated from 1530 till 1532, received less attention. This is the case for the documents in the archives as well as the scientific researchers, although the choir stalls raise several interesting questions, such as: Are the choir stalls 'French' or 'Brabantine'? Is the wood originating from the surroundings of Brou or from elsewhere? Could the choirstalls be typified as Late-Gothic, Manieristic or are there some Renaissance influences to be distinguished? And so on.

In the following lecture I will stress some iconographic particularities: Are the images on the choirstalls at random chosen? Or is there maybe a link between the choice for some pictures and the fact that Margaret of Austria is a woman? Has the female patron, Margaret of Austria perhaps had a special influence on the themes which are pictured, which are referring to her personally?

JULIANA DRESVINA

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***Oxford misericords and their patrons, medieval  
and modern: a brief history***

Oxford is interesting for many reasons, including the fact that it has several places with surviving medieval misericords (whereas Cambridge has none). The best known ones are the late 14th-century set of over sixty carvings in New College. The 20-strong set in All Souls College, installed in 1442, also mentioned in a number of publications; it is usually connected with the earlier set at Higham Ferrer and with the Ludlow stalls. Much less known are the misericords of Magdalen College, which do not even appear in [www.misericords.co.uk](http://www.misericords.co.uk) or Christa Grossinger's *The World Upside Down*.

In my research I am trying to trace the genealogy of the surviving Oxford misericords and suggest a variety of possible statements they make, not least reflecting the ambitions of the founders: first of William of Wykenham, bishop of Winchester, who apparently used Richard II's master carpenter Hugh Herland for the timber-work design for his new foundations of Winchester College and New College Oxford; then of Henry Chichele, the archbishop of Canterbury and formerly Fellow of New College, the founder of All Souls College, and finally of another bishop of Winchester, William Waynflete, who founded Magdalen college in 1458.

My main interest lies in the less-researched and somewhat mysterious Magdalen misericords. No evidence survives about their early history, until President Frewen in 1626 remodelled the chapel completely but kept the misericords; they were also considered valuable enough to be moved to the antechapel during another drastic remodelling in the early 19th-century. Despite some parallels with the New and All Souls misericords, the Magdalen ones seem to have a more consistent iconographic programme, which may have been the result of the later rearrangements, during which modern scholars were trying to make sense of their ancestors' enigmatic artefacts.

BARTULI ANNA

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### ***„Bocholt-chair“ – why it’s interesting***

The choir seats refer to the usual church furniture of Western Christianity. They locate at the eastern end of religious buildings because of their special functions: the representation of the customs of monastic orders and the Christian way of thinking about order. Ornamental motifs adorned almost the entire surface of the seats and were made with high quality. Next to a strict program on Christian themes, the marginal imagery of the grass-roots was side by side. But laymen did not see this, because the entrance to the choir for them was closed (before the Reformation).

This bright world with its wonderful and ridiculous is for the modern viewer one of the charming areas of medieval art. It gives more information about the life of previous centuries than religious art, which has always been clamped in the censorship. The main purpose of this work is about the description of the choir seat of the Lübeck Dom, the so-called “Bocholt-chair” - with an emphasis on the connection between the decor and the heraldic signs of the bishop, as well as the consideration of the monument in the context of the era. Heinrich Bocholt wrote an official report on his work at the 18th year of the bishopric in the free city of Lübeck, in 1335. From these data we learn that in this year the building of the choir of the main cathedral of the city was completed, as well as “cum...sedilibus et aliis necessariis” (“seats and other necessary”)

The choir seat of the middle of the 19th century, is framed by two side flaps of the Gothic era - the time of Bishop Bocholt. They contain a rich decor: above the two columns, the capitals of which are interwoven with a grapevine, rises a triangular pediment, decorated with crab. Inside the formed figure there is an ornamental belt of cruciform buds of flowers. But the semantic center of this composition is the emblem of Bocholt. The second leaf contains less decor - a tracery with three small bishop’s emblems. The sharp triangular gable contains on one side the emblem of Bocholt inside the quadrifolium, and on the other - a three-parted flower with ele-

ments of the tracery. The completion of the composition was crowned with a lost crown, or possibly a crucifix. There are 3 high seats located in the western part of the choir, which was made in the same time. The elements (the shape of the columns) of their carved decor coincide with the pattern of the flaps discussed above. They were made in the workshop of the Lübeck master (who made an altar for the monastery church of Cismar in Holstein). Two of the three leaflets are used in the production of a four-seat seating, occupying the entire length of the wall - between the entrance into the choir from the west. The last leaf was used to decorate the lettner’s staircase. According to the researchers, the seat for Lübeck’s clergy is influenced by the French-Rhine school, because the side flaps are curved in a special C-shape. It should be noted that it is at this point in time, that the Hansa Union has had the greatest power, and Lübeck was the capital. Therefore, the art of this period should be magnificent.

MIKI WITMOND

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### ***The many layers of the saint Gertuds panels in Nivelles***

In the three carved panels (ca. 1527) of the former abbesses chapel in the abbey church Sainte-Gertrude in Nivelles (Belgium) so far only the saint herself and Charles Quint have been recognized and the rest is presumed to be merely decoration. Conceived in the sophisticated and refined Burgundian culture of riddles and ambiguity, poetry and music, these apparently simple panels of superior quality have a complex structure of their own. In their form the motifs and ornaments contain different meanings, original motifs are distorted, and if correctly read, several veiled interrelated layers can be found. In fact it's nothing strange to the arts of this time, but the complexity and scale are exceptional. The panels have hidden liturgical (Tenebrae), theological (psychostasis), architectural (Rome and Jerusalem), literary (Vergil, Dante, Lucian of Samosata), musical (Lamentatio) and biographical layers and the composer Marbriano de Orto can be identified as the commissioner and co-designer of the panels, together with the sculptor who executed the work. Marbriano's involvement was reconstructed on basis of his biography, other works he designed and by the sources and examples he used.

The paper will demonstrate the dissection of the motifs, reveal some of the meanings and argue that the figures should be seen as actors, each playing multiple roles and telling myths. Like the classical pantomime dancers did.

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### ***Choir Stalls in Croatia and Their Patrons***

In Croatia are preserved numerous medieval choir stalls especially on the Eastern Adriatic coast. They are primarily preserved in the churches of franciscan monasteries, but also in some cathedrals. Most of them are still in their original positions, however their function today is far from ideal. In order to understand their function better the aim of this paper is to present an overview of the preserved Croatian choir stalls with the special emphasis on their patrons and donors.



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### ***The Commissioners of the “San Marco-Type” Choir Screens Across Stato da mar***

The so-called “Venetian-type” of the choir screen, embodied in the late fourteenth-century iconostasi of San Marco, has been recognised as part of the symbolic imagery of the political establishment in the Venetian newly acquired territories. The emulation of the San Marco model can be traced in a number of fifteenth-century churches both in Terraferma and Stato da mar, notably the cathedrals in the eastern Adriatic cities. This specific type of the choir screen, featuring a pergola crowned by figures of the apostles flanking the centrally placed crucifix, has been introduced to Venetian Dalmatia by highly positioned commissioners, both ecclesiastical prelates and lay representatives of Serenissima. The aim of the present paper is to shed light on the background of the commissioners as agents and executors of the described iconographic device. On the one hand, we shall scrutinise the related written sources in order to grasp the contemporary views on these symbolic practices, while on the other hand, shall try to recognise their possible parallels in the Ionian and eastern Mediterranean domains.

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## NOTES

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