

title: A structure of Carlo Maderno's work

abstract:

To speak of the most obvious example, the breadth of the theatrical and participatory character of the early baroque situation has been explicated – in papers by Steinberg, Salerno and Schwager amongst others – in the case of the Villa Aldobrandini, and shown to run from the implementation of a *theatrum mundi* stretching spatially from the hills of Frascati to Rome and temporally at least from Pliny to Cardinal Aldobrandini's evocation of the same in 1611; through to the complex and intimate structure of the *Sala del Parnasso*, a room inside-outside, seemingly buried, painted as an open bower, "hung" with frescos which at once give the impression of views onto the classical landscapes of Ovid and the illusion of tapestries depicting scenes from the same series, the whole room sounded out by a water organ and set within a water theatre and landscape for which participation – both serious and playful– is intrinsic.

We can say that this situation has a structure to it, one of a play-within-a-play (Spiel-im-Spiel, mise en abyme), a structure that it shares with Ovid's *Metamorphoses* themselves as with, for example, *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (1499), *Hamlet* (1600) or *Don Quixote* (1605).

This paper will investigate this Spiel-im-Spiel structure in relation to the formal and architectonic nature of Maderno's work, specifically:

- the façade of Santa Susanna
- Villa Aldobrandini
- Rusticucci chapel drawing
- portal to the Sala dei Corazzieri in the Quirinal palace
- the opening to the staircase in the Palazzo Mattei di Giove and the windows to the upper storey of the Palazzo Barbarini

Each of these will be analysed to show that in addition to the layering and concentration of, say, Santa Susanna, an attempt on Maderno's part to frame architectonic elements not so much with frames but with such architectonic elements themselves can be discerned, and that this play of elements within elements is common to many of the compositions where it appears Maderno had significant "spiel-raum". The argument will be made that this structure is a fruitful way of characterising the specific creativity of Maderno's work.

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