

Maria Nitka

## Kuntze/Chuntze/Konicz in the Casino Borghese, and the identity-alterity of the artist

In the Roman Casino Borghese at Villa Borghese<sup>1</sup>, on the first floor, there are three double doors leading from the Stanza di Ercole to the Stanza di Didone and onto the terrace. The doors are covered with painted decoration; its main part consists of medallions positioned in the upper section of the door leaf, which is divided into two parts. These medallions contain small depictions of musicians, who are grouped in pairs. They are playing various instruments; some of them are wearing 18<sup>th</sup>-century garments and playing the flute, the others are playing harps. The viewer's attention is attracted in particular by the two medallions showing musicians dressed in national costumes, but not Italian ones. On one of them there is a man wearing trousers and a shirt tied around his waist and playing the *gusle*, and sitting behind him there is a peasant in a fur coat and *zupan* playing the violin (Fig. 1).<sup>2</sup>



Fig. 1 Taddeus Kuntze, Medallion at the door in Stanza di Ercole, mid-1780s, oil on panel, Casino Borghese Rome

On the second medallion there is a young man wearing a caftan and a fur hat holding *kobzas*, and behind him there is a woman also dressed in a national costume (Fig. 2).

Although people playing instruments were often presented as an element of marginal scenes supplementing complex iconographic programmes, these peasant musicians differ sharply from the courtly scenes visible on the neighbouring doors, for example in the Stanza di Priade. The figures, depicted in rooms starved of daylight, with instruments unknown in the classical tradition, do not belong in the scenes of peasant musicians then popular in Rome which appear as staffage for ancient ruins and are also present on the sister doors in the Stanza di Priade. These exotic musicians belong to a different world. Archival materials inform us that these medallions were created



Fig. 2 Taddeus Kuntze, Medallion at the door in Stanza di Ercole, mid-1780s, oil on panel, Casino Borghese Rome

by Taddeus Kuntze, a transalpine artist from Grünberg (Zielona Góra), who came to Rome in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century from Cracow.<sup>3</sup> He is known in art history variously as Taddeo Kuntze, Thaddäus Kuntz, Tadeusz Konicz or Taddeo Polacco; he is also mentioned as Chuntze, Konik, Kunicki, Gunz, Konitsch, Kunitzer.<sup>4</sup> Was it the origins of the author and his experience that determined the genesis of these “exotic figures”? Can these visual threads be related to Kuntze’s “identity”? And if so, to what identity?

The question of the artist’s identity, although not in the context of the medallions in the Villa Borghese, has resurfaced repeatedly since I began writing the biography of “Taddeus Kuntze”. The painter was born in Grünberg in 1727 and acquired his education in Cracow thanks to the patronage of Bishop Andrzej Stanisław Kostka Załuski<sup>5</sup>, who in 1747 sent him to Rome, where Kuntze stayed for most of his life, achieving significant artistic success.<sup>6</sup> The position he gained on the banks of the Tiber rapidly earned him a place in the history of art as a German or Polish artist.<sup>7</sup> His “nationality” has remained a subject of varying interpretations and contradicting opinions.<sup>8</sup> So just who was the painter from Grünberg and how might he have understood his “nationality”? Can the medallions from Casino Borghese somehow help to define his artistic identity?

A popular method of attributing an identity to an artist is by trying to discover his intentions, which are considered to be reflected in his works.<sup>9</sup> Self-portraits are, it is claimed, a specific type of such “intentional” paintings. They are often interpreted as a testimony to an artist’s personality, expressing his or her artistic intentions almost *explicite*. We are fortunate enough to know one of Kuntze’s self-portraits (Fig. 3).

The painter depicted himself against the background of the Plazzo Quiriniale, in front of the ancient monument, dressed in typical Sarmatian attire<sup>10</sup>: a *żupan* and a hat. According to the 18<sup>th</sup>-century mindset the Sarmatians were considered to be the progenitors of the noble nation of the Poles. Therefore, Kuntze’s self-portrait in Sarmatian attire may be considered an auto-presentation in which the artist identified himself as a Polish artist. The theory that the painter considered himself a Polish artist may be justified.



Fig. 3 Taddeus Kuntze, Self-portrait, about 1770, location unknown, before 1945 collection of A. Szeptycki, Łabunie

However, such “self-identification” may be easily challenged because Kuntze expressed his identity more directly. There is evidence, produced by the artist himself, related to his national identity. These are the signatures put on the works particularly favoured by Kuntze: in the *Stanza di Eliodoro* (Palazzo Apostolico, Vatican) decorated with a fresco by Raphael (1751), and the fresco by Dominichino in the Sant’Andrea della Valle church in Rome (1756).<sup>11</sup> The addition of a signature under someone else’s work may be a testimony of a sense of belonging to a given artistic circle, and this gesture can be understood as a form of self-identification of an artist. Both frescos were signed with the name of “Tadeo Kunze tedesco”. In Rome in the 18<sup>th</sup> century, artists from the North, above all from German-speaking countries, was described with the adjective *tedesco*. Therefore, according to this method Kuntze may be considered a German artist.

Simple identification based on an interpretation of the artist's artistic "intentions" is not entirely equivalent to the identity of Taddeus Kuntze as expressed in his self-portrait and signature on the frescos. The other popular procedure of trying to give an artist an identity is historical and sociological analysis. This analysis could be performed by exploring the artist's functioning identities in the historical sources and in the artistic and patronage circles in which he operated. In the first case the dichotomy of the artist's national identity is revealed: in some sources he is described as a German artist, in others as a Polish artist.<sup>12</sup> The analysis of the way he functioned in society only confirms this dichotomy. He cooperated with different patrons, including Italians and Spaniards, but he also worked for Poles.<sup>13</sup> Moreover, he created a painting with a "regional" or "national" motif for the church of San Stanislao dei Polacchi – *The Resurrection of Piotrowin*, where one of the figures is dressed in Polish costume.<sup>14</sup> However, we are not sure as to his artistic "intentions". Was it the artist's own initiative or a request by the patrons? Or perhaps the role of this figure is that of "characteristic" staffage helping to identify the scene as "Polish". Bearing in mind the deceptiveness of interpretations based on the artist's "intentions" as mentioned in connection with the *Self-portrait*, these motifs cannot be directly associated with the artist's will or identity. As in 18<sup>th</sup>-century Rome the "artist's intention" cannot be determined and artistic identity cannot be captured, we are left with the possibility of following the thought about "the death of the author" and analysing works by Kuntze in comparison with his other works,<sup>15</sup> and subsequently among other works from his artistic circle in order to place the figure of the "author-artist" in the semantics of this field and seek his identification there.

The musician figures created in the Casino Borghese provide perfect material for such an interpretation of artistic identity. They are, as a matter of fact, "characteristic", "distinguished", belonging to a different set of signs than the classic canon, and at the same time part of the decoration in the Casino Borghese: a space dedicated to showcasing only classic art, arranged by an international group of artists. In 1775 Prince Marcantonio IV Borghese (1730–1809) ordered decorative work in the villa

which was to create an interior customised for the exposition of the antique collections of the Borghese family.<sup>16</sup> The interior design work was led by Antonio Asprucci and included architecture, painting and sculpture.<sup>17</sup> The most important part of this design was the painting decoration, including the frescos – with the biggest fresco in the Salone – and *quadri riportati*, over-door decorations and the doors in the stanzas on the *piano terra* and *piano nobile*. The painting decoration was created by an international team of artists. The part on the *piano terra* was executed mostly by Roman painters: Domenico de Angelis, Francesco Caccianiga, Pietro Angeletti, Nicola Buonvicini, Tommaso Maria Conca, Giovanni Battista Marchetti and the French painter working in Rome Laurent Pécheux. The *piano nobile* was decorated in the mid-1780s by the Roman artists Domenico Corvi and Ermenegildo Costantini in cooperation with a large group of northern artists, including Gavin Hamilton, Anton von Maron, Benigne Gagneraux and Cristoforo Unterperger.<sup>18</sup> It was this group that Kuntze joined.

The patronage of the Prince of Borghese thus brought together artists from Rome, Italia and the whole of Central and Eastern Europe. For some of them, including Kuntze, it was not the first commission from the Princes of Borghese. Before Kuntze painted the medallions in the Casino Borghese, he performed another task for this family: in the 1770s he painted frescos featuring landscapes in the Villa Borghese in Frascati. Moreover, he was one of the authors of the fresco decoration in the Roman church of Santa Catarina da Siena: in the sacristy he made an illusionistic plafond presenting angels glorifying the Blessed Sacrament, and in the nave he painted chiaroscuro angels around the plafond decorated by Giovanni Battista Marchetti.<sup>19</sup> Other painters working in the church of Santa Catarina da Siena included Laurent Peucheux, Domenico Corvi, Ermenegildo Costantini, Domenico Corvi and Tommaso Conca.

This same group of artists subsequently cooperated in the redecoration of the Palazzo Borghese (in Rome at via Ripetta) commissioned by Prince Marcantonio IV Borghese.<sup>20</sup> In 1771–1774 the palace of the Borghese family, Kuntze made two plafonds and cooperated as a painter of figures on the land-

scapes.<sup>21</sup> The painters working for the Prince of Borghese mostly represented the *scuola romana*, which in those times formed part of the artistic circle defined by Robert Longhi as “cultura di via Condotti”.<sup>22</sup> They created their works in the sphere of illusionist painting, often with sensitivity to coloristic values. Kuntze’s painting was perfectly aligned with this tendency, with the two important plafonds in Palazzo Borghese painted with immense lightness. In the Casino Borghese Marcantonio IV Borghese invited the same proven team of painters and commissioned them with the task of decorating the *piano terra*. However, here it is noticeable that some of the artists, e.g. Laurent Pécheux, sacrificed their free painting style in favour of direct dialogue with the ancient tradition. In the *piano nobile* the diversity of tendencies is even more considerable. There are decorated illusionistic rooms designed by Cristoforo Unterperger and anti-naturalistic frescos by Gavin Hamilton. In the painted decoration of the *piano nobile* the diversity of stylistic tendencies is dominant over examples of the painting of the “cultura di via Condotti” described above. Among these works, on the margin of the main decorations, are works by Kuntze which, interestingly, are varied in terms of style. The first work is that featuring chiaroscuro figures *all’antica* around the plafond by Giuseppe Cades in the Gabinetto, while the second one is the abovementioned composition of the human figures on the doors.<sup>23</sup> These works show that Kuntze fully deserves the title of “pittore dei figure”, as he was described in archival materials<sup>24</sup>, for he was capable of referencing both the antique tradition and picture figures belonging to a completely different stylistic and formal palette.

The various stylistic tendencies present in the Casino Borghese create a unique and at once coherent space for the museum as a place dedicated to art exhibitions – exhibitions of antique art, of course. It is an apotheosis of the fine arts and glorification of the Borghese family as their protectors that is at the centre of the iconographic programme of the Casino Borghese.<sup>25</sup> The primogenitor of the family, the mythical Furio Camillo, is presented in all his glory in the salon, on the plafond by Marino Rossi. He features as an *exemplum virtutis*, and among the virtues presented is the promotion of the arts in Rome. The glorifica-

tion of the family Borghese, depicted on the plafond, is achieved by displaying its ancient ancestors and also by emphasizing the roles of its members as Roman patrons of the arts.<sup>26</sup> These threads are continued in other rooms, whose iconographic programmes underline even more strongly the ennoblement by the collection; the decoration *Stanza del Gladiatore*, for instance, is devoted to the main figure in the collection, the gladiator Borghese.<sup>27</sup>

In analysing the concept of the museum at the Casino Borghese, one needs to realise that antique art constituted as vital a part of it as early modern art. The Princes of Borghese were presented not only as depositories of the Roman tradition, i.e. ancient art, but also as protectors of the contemporary art deriving from the antique heritage. It must be highlighted that the combination of the ancient art and the contemporary art in Casino Borghese was immediately reflected in the theoretical thought, especially in the publications by Ennio Quirino Visconti.<sup>28</sup> Casino Borghese’s pictorial decoration has become an exemplification of the inclusiveness of the *scuola romana*, which was excellently described a few decades later by Luigi Lanzi. It was Lanzi who emphasised the inclusiveness of the *scuola romana* by noting in its description: “For as the inhabitants of Rome are a mixture of many tongues and many different nations, of whom the descendants of Romulus form the least proportion, so the school of painting has been increased in its numbers by foreigners whom she has received and united to her own and who are considered in her academy of S Luke as if they had been born in Rome and enjoyed the ancient rights of Romans.”<sup>29</sup>

The redecoration of the Casino Borghese to create a new museum space was a coherent work. This is particularly true in terms of the correspondence of the individual elements of the decoration with the semantics of the main narrative cycles.<sup>30</sup> The meaning of the “marginal” figures of the musicians on the medallions should be considered within the “frame” of their location, the Stanza di Ercole, one of the most important rooms on the *piano nobile*. The vault of this room is decorated with frescos by Cristoforo Unterperger depicting the labours of Hercules. The central scene represents the apotheosis of Hercules as an eagle;

the side scenes show the events leading up to his heroic death (including the figure of Deianira and the murder of Nessus). As the monographer of the redecoration in the Villa Borghese noted, the scenes representing the life of Hercules are the apotheosis of his heroism, and this divine hero embodied the virtues represented in the lunettes<sup>31</sup>, which were also practised by the Borghese family; the element inviting this interpretation was the eagle (the family's coat of arms), in whose form Hercules accomplished the Olympic glory. As such, the programme is *speculum principis*. The Borgheses' practice of virtues included also their role as patrons of art, which consisted in providing moralizing examples worthy of emulation.<sup>32</sup> What is characteristic for the concept of the Borghese museum is that this theme was also related to the programme of the collection in the Stanza di Ercole, which most probably contained the picture by Gerrit van Honthorst depicting Susanna and the Elders.<sup>33</sup> This theme for the room corresponded with its purpose: it was probably a study – the place where the Prince studied and acquired his education. The victory of virtue was additionally emphasized by the scenes of wild animals on the overdoors by Wenceslao Peters, yet another transalpine artist.<sup>34</sup> Repression of instincts and overcoming “wildness” refers to the topos of education, one element of which is art, and was a suitable subject for a room of study.

Thus the exotic musicians depicted in the medallions on the doors of the Stanza di Ercole are part of the museum, which in accordance with humanistic tradition also encompassed the room of study. However, the Casino Borghese museum concept is entirely for a new type of museum: a house of Muses understood as a place devoted exclusively to the fine arts.<sup>35</sup> The Villa Albani, which housed the collection of this family, was used as an important reference for creating this new vision for a museum in Rome (and then throughout Europe). Its design, tailored specifically to the exhibition of art, was commissioned in the middle of the 18<sup>th</sup> century by Cardinal Albani, who engaged the best artists from all over Rome. Anton Raphael Mengs, who made the painting decoration for one of the plafonds in the Villa gallery in 1764, was one of them.<sup>36</sup> It was a fresco entitled *Parnassus*, showing Apollo on the eponymous mount accompan-

ied by the nine Muses, who are devoted to art and science, which was underlined by their attributes which included, naturally for the iconographic tradition, musical instruments. The musicians in exotic attire painted by Kuntze on the door in the Stanza di Ercole in the Casino Borghese are clearly different to the inhabitants of *Parnassus*, although like some of the Muses and Apollo himself, they are depicted with musical instruments. Can this coincidence of attributes mean anything? Or, to rephrase the question: can these “exotic” figures be meaningful in the idea of a museum as a house of Muses ruled by Apollo?

To answer this question, it is worth turning back to Kuntze's depiction of the musicians and focusing in particular on their place within the overall composition of the Stanza di Ercole. In comparison to the plafond by Mengs, which was placed centrally in Villa Albani, the musicians painted by Kuntze are on the margins of the museum's design. However, margins in art are sometimes significant. They reveal inventiveness or fantasy open to “other realities”, often liberating art from its mimetic function. In the 18<sup>th</sup> century the *capriccio* was a popular genre that showed landscapes from an “imagined” world. Pictures of these painted caprices are also visible on the door in the Casino Borghese, especially as frenetic landscapes or fantastic ruins. However, the *capriccio* need not be a “peculiar” landscape; it can be an “ordinary” mimetic representation because it is one of the realizations of the concept of *phantasm*. A phantasm is by definition a product of the imagination, so it is in contradiction to a reproduction of nature.<sup>37</sup> This does not mean that these fantastic landscapes were not based on studies of nature, such as views (*vedute*) by Giovanni Battista Piranesi.<sup>38</sup>

This ambivalence towards nature in painting can be seen in the numerous decorations on the walls in the Casino Borghese, especially the *piano nobile*. There are illusionistic frescos by Cristoforo Unterperger alongside anti-illusionistic works by Gavin Hamilton. We encounter different “gazes”, where the one-point perspective is abandoned. One of the most important rules for interpreting art is challenged: the rule that art is a reflection of nature. According to the concept of Leon Battista Alberti, a painting was a “window” through which to observe a story.<sup>39</sup> This

theory of representation implied that perception was subject to a single point of view, determined by the linear perspective. In the Casino Borghese, the art collected was not intended only as a reflection of reality, but to constitute a theoretical model subject not to mimetic rules but rather to aesthetic principles. Therefore, in this place dedicated exclusively to storing and exhibiting art – an autonomous field of creation based on autonomous rules – a new art came into being. These rules were interpreted in a variety of ways, which was explained in detail, as mentioned, in the elaborate commentary related to the Casino. The collection in the Casino Borghese is thus not only a glorification of the family, documenting its antique legitimacy – though this is repeatedly emphasised – but is essentially a collection of art which is described, catalogued, and most importantly continued in the modern art. As the monographer of the Casino Borghese underlines, the artists were given a free hand to select the style of decoration of the rooms, and this diversity is indeed visible.

In this context, or more precisely this “framework”, the musicians painted by Kuntze constitute an element incorporated into the composition of the new concept of an art museum. The frame, in contrast to the context, offers space for developing interpretations, rather than “explaining” a piece of art.<sup>40</sup> In the narrative about the art museum created under the patronage of Borghese, in addition to ancient art and its interpretations, figures from a “different” reality, or another story, also featured. They are seemingly distant from the *scuola romana*, which – according to Luigi Lanzi in the quotation cited above – was to bring together artists from the whole of Italia and unify their styles on the basis of an interpretation of antiquity. In order to explain the function of these “peculiar”, “strange” figures we might go back to the classic exemplary story of what a museum is: to the fresco of *Parnassus* by Mengs in the Villa Albani. If the figure of Apollo and his Muses there are a synecdoche of the fine arts, then the “different” musicians painted on the margins – the doors of the Stanza di Ercole – are a sign of another music, and simultaneously another art. If the *Parnassus* by Mengs contains the *pars pro toto* of the new art: a conscious theoretical construction arising out of the interpretation of antiquity, then in the

multiple strands and facets of the story of the museum at the Casino Borghese the exotic musicians can be understood as signs of the presence of other artistic stories from a world different than the classical world. The musicians do not only define “identity” but also, and in fact rather, underline “alterity”<sup>41</sup>, which was sought after at that time not only in the Casino Borghese but also in Rome and across Europe. It appeared in a variety of forms in the iconographic layer in the Villa Borghese, where Kuntze made frescos in the “Chinese” style.<sup>42</sup> The ability to paint human figures from “elsewhere” was a specific “vacuum skill” of this painter in the still more diversified *scuola romana*.<sup>43</sup> But the “alterity” in the painting of Kuntze and of the other artists working in the museum at the Casino Borghese also referenced other elements. The various gazes in the paintings broke with the single narrative perspective, which was created by the central perspective. On the margins, acting as painted digressions, the stories are dispersed, rather than focused on one point of view close to the centre as in Alberti’s painting, while the centre itself lost the status of Alberti’s window. A similar phenomenon occurred in literature, where various new ways of telling the stories of newly discovered lands appeared.<sup>44</sup>

Paradoxically, by collecting classical art in one place the door opens – here even literally – to new narratives. The figures of musicians depicted by Kuntze on the door show the inclusiveness of the *scuola romana*, which, contrary to the abovementioned definition by Luigi Lanzi, did not have to be based on an ancient aesthetic doctrine. Therefore, in the Casino Borghese the ancient art was variously interpreted within the main narratives, while a range of different narratives were assimilated on the margins. The musicians at the Casino Borghese are therefore, in the narrative about art, the *pars pro toto* of artists from “elsewhere”.

The musicians depicted by Kunze do not indicate the “identity” of the painter but represent his “alterity”. In the context of the Villa Borghese this “alterity” is confronted with the ancient tradition and included in the dialogue, creating a new entirety. Such new narratives were formulated within the framework of the Roman school also by other artists from Eastern Europe – e.g. Franciszek Smuglewicz. That new

model of painting could express not only universal but also individual narratives. The “alter” stories often on the margin form a new entirety, which is built not on subordination but on the incorporation and modification of the classical pattern and “alter” elements. “Alterity” has become part of the Roman artistic tradition and artists can use it as a creative strategy. As such, Kuntze, to be seen as part of the Roman artistic world, did not have to “identify”; it was sufficient that he simply marked his “alterity”.

Reviewed by Jessica Taylor-Kucia

## Endnotes

1. The Casino Borghese (Villa Pinciana) is the main building in the Villa Borghese complex – a site located on Monte Pincio in Rome. The Borghese had owned this area since the time of Pope Paul V's father. The villa was founded at the beginning of the 17th century; the Casino was built between 1608 and 1625. See the monograph on the Villa Borghese: Alberta Campitelli, *Villa Borghese. Da giardino del principe a parco dei romani*, Roma 2003.
2. The *gusle* is a single-stringed musical instrument traditionally played in Slavic countries, the Balkans and the Middle East. The form of the instrument varies but usually the gusle player holds it vertically between his knees, with the left-hand fingers on the strings. The *župan* is a characteristic long men's garment with sleeves worn with a colourful fabric belt. It was typical attire for noblemen in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth from the beginning of the 16th until the mid-18th century.
3. T. Kuntze has never been the subject of a monograph. His artistic work is most comprehensively discussed by: Zuzanna Pruszyńska, Konicz Tadeusz, in: *Słownik Artystów Polskich i obcych w Polsce działających* [Dictionary of Polish and Foreign Artists Active in Poland], eds. Jolanta Maurin-Białostocka, Janusz Derwojed, vol. IV, Warszawa-Wrocław 1986, p. 366-374; Zuzanna Pruszyńska, *Twórczość Tadeusza Kuntzego w Rzymie* [The Artistic Output of Tadeusz Kuntze in Rome], in: *Między Polską a światem. Od średniowiecza po lata II wojny światowej*, eds. Mieczysław Morka and Piotr Paszkiewicz, Warszawa 1993, p. 42-56; The recent literature is collected by: Aleksandra Bernatowicz, *Kuntze, Tadeusz*, in: *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon. Die Bildenden Künstler aller Zeiten und Völker*, Berlin-Boston 2014, vol. 82, p. 283-284.
4. Pruszyńska enumerated 36 versions of his surname: Pruszyńska 1986, *Konicz Tadeusz*, p. 366
5. Andrzej Stanisław Kostka Żałuski (1695–1758) was a bishop in the Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth and also held the position of Grand Chancellor of the Crown from 1735 to 1746. As a politician he was engaged in the movement that advocated reform of the political system of the Commonwealth. He is most famous as the co-founder of the Żałuski Library, and a dedicated protector of the fine arts. Marianna Banacka, *Biskup Andrzej Stanisław Kostka Żałuski i jego inicjatywy artystyczne* [Bishop Andrzej Stanisław Kostka Żałuski and His Artistic Enterprises], Warszawa 2001.
6. The date of Kuntze's birth was discovered by: Marian Wnuk, *W sprawie daty urodzenia Tadeusza Kuntzego* [Concerning the Birth Date of Tadeusz Kuntze], in: *Biuletyn Historii Sztuki*, vol. LXII, no. 3–4, 2000, p. 631. The work of Kuntze in Rome is analyzed in: Erich Schleier, *L'ultimo pittore del rococo a Roma. Opere sconosciute di Thaddäus Kuntz*, in: *Arte illustrate*, vol. XXVIII/XXIX, 1970, p. 92-109; idem, *Taddeo Kuntz decoratore del Palazzo Rinuccini a Roma*, in: *Antichità viva*, vol. XX, 1981, p. 23-29, 43-44; idem, *Inediti di Taddeo Kuntz*, in: *Scritti di storia dell'arte in onore di Federico Zeri* 2, Milano 1984, p. 859-879; idem, *Una decorazione poco nota di Taddeo Kuntz in una chiesa romana*, in: *Arte cristiana*, vol. LXXVI no. 7-8, 1988, p. 303-308; idem, *Ein unerkanntes Altarbild von Thaddäus Kuntz in Viterbo*, in: *Mélanges en hommage à Pierre Rosenberg*, eds. Anna Cavina and Jean-Pierre Cuzin, Paris 2001, p. 417-421.
7. T. Kuntze was mentioned in the first German, Polish and Italian dictionaries of art: Johann Rudolf Füssli, *Allgemeines Künstlerlexikon, oder: Kurze Nachricht von dem Leben und den Werken der Mahler, Bildhauer, Baumeister, Kupferstecher, Kunstgiesser, Stahlschneider ...*, Zürich 1779, p. 349; Pietro Zani, *Enciclopedia metodica critico-ragionata delle belle arti*, Parma 1822, vol. 11, p. 183; Edward Rastawiecki, *Słownik malarzów polskich, tudzież obcych w Polsce osiadłych lub czasowo w niej przebywających* [Dictionary of Polish and Foreign Painters Settled in Poland or Temporarily Sojourning in it], Warszawa 1850, vol. I, p. 229-232.
8. In the German art history literature Kuntze is mentioned as a German artist (Friedrich Noack, *Das Deutschtum in Rom seit dem Ausgang des Mittelalters*, Stuttgart 1927, vol. II, p. 340). In Polish academic discourse, however, he has traditionally been considered a Polish artist (Maciej Loret, *Życie polskie w Rzymie w XVIII wieku* [Polish Life in Rome in the 18th Century], Roma 1930, p. 282-285; 287-294).
9. See e.g.: Joanna Woods-Marsden, *Renaissance Self-Portraiture. The Visual Construction of Identity and the Social Status of the Artist*, New Haven, London 1998.
10. In Poland from the end of the 16th century the ideology based on the conviction that the Polish nobility was derived from the Sarmatians was widespread. This belief played an important role in shaping Polish noble culture, differentiating it from West European culture. The external expression of Sarmatism was attire different than West European dress, its most important elements were the *żupan* and *kontusz* (a characteristic long garment with sleeves and a sash) worn with a *sabra* (*szabla*). See e.g.: *Sarmatismus versus Orientalismus in Mitteleuropa*, eds. Magdalena Długosz, Piotr O. Scholz, Berlin 2012.
11. Noack 1927, *Das Deutschtum in Rom*, p. 340.
12. For the former case, in the files in the archive of the Academy of Saint Luke and in Liber status animorum Kuntze is listed as “Tadeo Chuntze Tedesco” (Parochia di San Andrea delle Fratte in Roma, 1770, p. 19v.), while for the latter, in the archive of the church of Santa Catarina dei Senesi he is referred to as “Taddeo Polacco” (Memorie e inventari degli oggetti esistenti nella Provveditoria e locali appartenenti alla Ven. Arciconfraternita di S. Caterina di Siena in Roma, Filza 20, Fasc. 175). Loret 1930, *Życie polskie w Rzymie*, p. 368-339).
13. *Madrazo: ród malarzy* [Madrazo: A Family of Painters], ed. Anetta Błaszczyk-Biały, Muzeum Narodowe, Poznań 2010; Loret 1930, *Życie polskie w Rzymie*, p. 289-291.
14. Loret 1930, *Życie polskie w Rzymie*, p. 285.
15. I recall the well-known theory expressed in Roland Barthes' famous essay *The Death of the Author* (in: *Aspen Magazine*, no. 5-6, 1968, trans. Richard Howard; [www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen5and6/threeEssays.html#barthes](http://www.ubu.com/aspen/aspen5and6/threeEssays.html#barthes), 20.05.2016) that argues against traditional interpretations in art criticism based on incorporating an author's intentions and biographical context in interpretation of a work of art. The consequences of that theory for art history have been extensively described. My study is based on Mieke Bal's interpretation: Mieke Bal, *Travelling Concepts in the Humanities*, Toronto 2002, p. 253-284.
16. The history of the redecoration of the Casino Borghese is discussed in: Carole Paul, *The Borghese Collections and the Display of Art in the Age of the Grand Tour*, Aldershot 2008, p. 118-232. For more on the patronage of Prince Marcantonio IV Borghese in the park and pavilions complex see: *Villa Borgheses. Soria e gestione. Atti del Convegno Internazionale di Studi Roma*, ed. Alberta Campitelli, Milano 2005, p. 103-112; Liliana Barroero, *Pittori e scultori per la casa Borghese*, in: *Villa Borghese. I principi, le arti, la città dal Settecento all'Ottocento*, ed. Alberta Campitelli, Roma 2003, p. 89-93.
17. The designs of A. Asprucci are presented in: *Making a Prince's Museum. Drawings for the Late-Eighteenth Century Redecoration of the Villa Borghese*, ed. Carole Paul, Los Angeles 2000.

18. Paul 2008, *The Borghese Collections and the Display*, p. 183-232.
19. Gabriele Borghini, *S. Caterina da Siena a Via Giulia (1766-1776). Passaggio obbligato per la cultura figurativa del secondo Settecento Romano*, in: *Storia dell'arte*, vol. LII, 1984, p. 211-218.
20. Paul 2008, *The Borghese Collections and the Display*, p. 65-113.
21. Schleier 1984, *Inediti di Taddeo Kuntz*, p. 871-875.
22. Roberto Longhi, *Il Goya romano e la "cultura di via Condotti"*, in: *Paragone*, vol. LIII, 1954, p. 28-39.
23. Kuntze was also the author of figures inserted in paintings "a prospettive" (views with architectural perspectives) by G.P. Marchetti, which were in Stanza dell'Aurora. Paul 2008, *The Borghese Collections and the Display*, p. 212-213.
24. Kuntze won the competition at Scuola del Nudo in 1759.
25. The iconographic programme of the Casino Borghese is more broadly discussed in: Paul 2008, *The Borghese Collections and the Display*, p. 113-231.
26. *Ibid.*, p. 131.
27. The painted decoration referenced works from the collection of the Borghese. The most important example is Stanza del Gladiatore, whose decoration referenced a statue of the Gladiator. Marina Minozzi, *La Stanza del Gladiatore nel cantiere di villa Borghese*, in: *La Stanza del Gladiatore ricostituta. Il capolavoro della committenza Borghese del Settecento*, eds. Anna Coliva, Marina Minozzi, Milano 2004, p. 35-90.
28. Ennio Quirino Visconti was the author of several catalogues of the Borghese collection, in which he also wrote about the Casino Borghese redecoration project. The most important of these is: *Sculture del palazzo della Villa Borghese detta Pinciana*, vol. 1-2, Roma 1796. In addition to Visconti's books there were also reports in the contemporary press (*Giornale delle belle arti; Memorie per le belle Arti*) and guidebooks (by Piere Rossini) about the redecoration of the Casino Borghese. Serenella Rolfi, *Le descrizioni di Villa Borghese*, in: *Villa Borghese*, ed. Campitelli 2003, p. 71-76.
29. Luigi Lanzi, *History of Painting in Italy; from the Period of the Revival of the Fine Arts to the End of the 18th Century*, trans. Thomas Roscoe, vol. II, London 1828, p. 105.
30. Paul 2008, *The Borghese Collections and the Display*, p. 203.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 206-207.
32. Susanna Petereit Guicciardi, *La Sala di Ercole. Programma decorativo e forma pittorica*, in: *Cristoforo Unterperger: un pittore fiemmesse nell'Europa del Settecento*, ed. Chiara Felicetti, Roma 1998, p. 85-91.
33. Paul 2008, *The Borghese Collections and the Display*, p. 207.
34. The painted scenes of wild animals are described by Antonio Nibby, *Monumenti scelti della Villa Borghese*, Roma 1832, p. 144-145.
35. Carole Paul, *Introduction. The Grand Tour and Princely Collections in Rome*, in: *The First Modern Museum of Art*, ed. Carole Paul, Los Angeles 2012, p. 10-15.
36. Elisabeth Schröter, *Die Villa Albani als Imago mundi. Das unbekanntere Fresken- u. Antikenprogramm im Piano Nobile der Villa Albani zu Rom*, in: *Forschungen zur Villa Albani*, eds. Herbert Beck and Peter C. Bol, Berlin 1982, p. 185-299; Steffi Röttgen, *Mengs, Alessandro Albani und Winckelmann. Idee und Gestalt des Parnass in der Villa Albani*, in: *Storia dell'arte*, vol. XXIX/XXXI, 1977, p. 87-156.
37. The concept of phantasm (*phantasma*) has been a subject of extensive debate in philosophy since the time of Plato and Aristotle, and remains so in postmodern philosophy; see Giorgio Agamben, *Stanzas. Word and Phantasm in Western Culture*, trans. Roland L. Martinez, Minneapolis – London 1993, p. 22-31, 87-107. In this article the notion of phantasm is understood as an Aristotelian concept than in the sense of the dictionary definition as a "ghostly apparition" and "illusory mental image".
38. Selena Anders, *Patronage in the golden age of the "Capriccio"*, in: *The Architectural Capriccio. Memory, Fantasy and Invention*, ed. Lucien Steil, Farnham 2014, p. 41-60.
39. "I will say what I myself do when I paint. First, I trace as large a quadrangle as I wish, with right angles on the surface to be painted, in this place, it [the rectangular quadrangle] certainly functions for me as an open window through which the historia is observed". Leon Battista Alberti, *On painting, (De pictura; Della pittura*, 1435), ed. and trans. Rocco Sinisgalli, Cambridge 2011, p. 39.
40. In dawing distinctions between the notions of "context" and "frame", I am referring to the theory of Mieke Bal. She analysed a new cultural entirety of past and present objects distant from historical reconstruction of the intention of an author. Bal 2002, *Travelling Concepts*, p. 133-138.
41. The notion "alterity" refers to that concept in: Bal 2002, *Travelling Concepts*, p. 38.
42. Kuntze worked in the pavilion called *Giuochi d'acqua* at the Villa Borghese, where he painted Chinese figures for the "stanza cinese". Campitelli 2003, *Villa Borghese*, p. 307-308.
43. In the 1780s Kuntze often created genre works, he also painted "ancient-style" frescos for the more demanding art market in Rome.
44. One of the greatest examples is *The Manuscript Found in Saragossa* (1804-1810) by Jan Potocki, which incorporates different narrative points of view, with reader and narrator together discovering a "new reality". This is useful as a comparison of the use of different "gazes" and "focalization".

## Picture credits

Fig. 1 and 2: Casino Borghese Rome; Foto Maria Nitka

Fig. 3: Loret 1930, *Życie polskie w Rzymie*, p. 325

## Summary

This paper scrutinizes the medallions, which were created by Taddeus (Tadeusz) Kuntze in the mid-1780s, for the Casino Borghese, one of the first modern museums, in Stanza di Ercole, Rome. In terms of the iconographic program of the Casino Borghese, the images of musicians portrayed in the medallions relate to the idea of an artist identifying to a cultural field other than the "classical" one. In fact, the medallions present a distinctive strategy of fostering a broadening definition of the artist, who until then was defined in national terms as Polish or German. In the context of the scuola romana, these medallions will be interpreted as a mark of the artist's "alterity" in eighteenth-century Rome.

## Author

Maria Nitka, obtained her PhD in History of Art at the University of Wrocław, defending the doctoral dissertation titled *Twórczość malarzy polskich w papieskim Rzymie w XIX wieku* [Works of Polish Painters in Papal Rome in the 19th century] published in 2014. Her research studies focus on Polish, Lithuanian and Ukrainian artists in Rome in the late 18th and 20th centuries. Currently, as a part of her work at the Institute of World Art Studies in Warsaw, she is co-editing the catalogue of works by Henryk Siemiradzki.



**Title**

Maria Nitka, Kuntze/Chuntze/Konicz in the Casino Borghese, and the identity-alterity of the artist, in: *Mobility of Artists in Central and Eastern Europe between 1500 and 1900*, ed. by Aleksandra Lipińska in collaboration with Stéphanie Baumewerd, kunsttexte.de/ostblick, Nr. 3, 2016 (9 pages), [www.kunsttexte.de/ostblick](http://www.kunsttexte.de/ostblick).