

The Knight's Hall of Brežice Castle



A Walk amid Waters, in the Fresh Air and on Earth with a Fiery Glow



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The publication is a summary of four publications published as part of the multidisciplinary cycle The Four Elements: Water (2016), Fire (2018), Earth (2019) and Air (2021).

Designed and printed by: Kolortisk, Krško

Print run: 1000

Published by: Posavje Museum Brežice, represented by Alenka Černelič Krošelj, Director
October 2021

The publication was made possible by:



REPUBLIKA SLOVENIJA
MINISTRSTVO ZA KULTURO

The Knight's Hall – A Walk amid Waters, in the Fresh Air and on Earth with a Fiery Glow

The Knight's Hall, a monument to Baroque art that fascinates and captivates anyone who sets foot in it without knowing what to expect, is the very heart of the Brežice Castle. Its pulse is felt throughout the castle, including by all of us who have the honour and privilege to be part of the life of this castle, which is home to the museum that has carried the name Posavje Museum Brežice since 1949, when it was decided the new museum would be housed in the castle.

The hall has been a source of inspiration for various programmes characterised by thousands of years of Posavje region's plains and hills. One of these programmes was set up in 2016: the multidisciplinary programme titled The Four Elements, which focuses on the exhibitions and publications related to the four elements – water, fire, earth and air – and a wide variety of accompanying programmes and events.

To round off and also carry on the programme, we created this publication, which provides summaries of the exhibition texts and the findings of various researchers, including Oži Lorber, a curator and art historian, who contributed the lion's share. Our aim is for the readers to get to know the artists and other creators of this awe-inspiring hall, gain an insight into the time of its creation in circa 1703 and enjoy the hall this way as well.



Creators

The Brežice Castle, which was demolished in 1515 and later rebuilt (rebuilding works started in the mid-16th century and were completed in the early 17th century), was bought by Count Ignaz Maria Attems (1652–1732) in 1694. Attems held various positions and had a knack of finding the right sort of people to “work with”, including his first wife Maria Regina, née Wurmbandt (1659–1715), whom he married in 1685, and the painter Frančišek Karel Remb, a protégé of his.

For his patron and client, the young artist – at the time aged only 28 – created a masterpiece, which has been fascinating viewers with its carefully selected iconographic features for more than 300 years. Remb was born in 1675 in the town of Radovljica. He was first taught by his father, painter Janez Jurij (c. 1648–1716), before continuing his education in Italy. His education was sponsored by Attems, who took him from Brežice to Graz and Vienna, where Remb was a successful and distinguished artist. He died in 1718.



A self-portrait of the painter Frančišek Karel Remb, who was born in 1675 in Radovljica and died in Vienna at the age of 43 (in 1718).

What was crucial for the selection of the iconographic features, which are based on the stories of the Greco-Roman mythology written by the Roman poet Ovid in his *Metamorphoses* (“Transformations”), was the excellent education of the man who commissioned the art. It is not known whether Count Ignaz Maria Attems (1652–1732) had the castle and especially its eastern part restored to mark his fiftieth birthday. There is no doubt, however, that the hall, whose name refers to a knight, although it was actually a “count's”, was created at a time when the count was celebrating five decades of his successful life. After his schooling in Graz, Attems had gone on a Grand Tour. He had a number of jobs that allowed him to acquire a considerable wealth from his initially more limited means. In 1688, he rose to the rank of the supreme quartermaster of the Slavonian Military

Frontier. This position, which suited his personality very well, was highly lucrative due to the long-lasting Great Turkish War (1683–1699). In recognition of his work that had contributed to the Turkish defeat, Attems was conferred the title of Councillor of the Inner Austrian Privy Council in 1696.

He purchased many castles and mansions with the accompanying estates and converted them into residences that featured some fine painted artworks. The works were most likely supplemented with luxurious furnishings, most of which have unfortunately not been preserved. In 1688, he bought the Stattenberg seignior and had a mansion built there. In 1691, he bought Hartenstein and most of Pilštanj, and in 1694 Brežice. In 1707, he bought the Gösting Mansion and estate, and had a wall painting painted there. In 1714, he bought the Rajhenburg Castle, in 1717, the Windisch Feistritz Mansion and commissioned a wall painting there and in 1721, the Turn Mansion in Brestanica. He died in 1732 in Graz. He is buried in the Franciscan monastery in Graz, where a tombstone has been preserved to this day.

The Knight's Hall is the most recognisable part of the Brežice Castle, which is a cultural monument of national significance. The hall was restored between 2011 and 2012, and its south-facing wall in 2015. Much like at the time it was created, the hall is still a place to enjoy the arts and various festive ceremonies, and especially an outstanding Baroque art gallery, created by an exceptional painter and the man who commissioned it.



¹ Maria Regina died in 1715 at the Brežice Castle and was buried in the Chapel of St. Dismas of the Brežice Franciscan monastery, which was demolished during World War II. Part of her tombstone has been preserved and is on view as part of the exhibition *The Four Elements: 2 – FIRE*.

² Ovid was a Roman poet (43 BC–17/18 AD), who included the Greco-Roman mythology and the mythology of ancient cultures in his narrative poem. *Metamorphoses* were considered some sort of a guide to ancient mythology.





The Knights Hall

The Knight's Hall with frescoes and six oval paintings by F. K. Remb, which were included when the frescoes were painted, circa 1703.



Maria Regina Attems, née Wurmbrand, with her only surviving daughter Henrietta Charlotte (1687–1742), married name Trautmannsdorf, and the two youngest surviving sons, Ernest Amadeus Thomas (1694–1757), the future Bishop of Ljubljana, and Ferdinand Hyacinth Maria (1694–1757), who later became a Jesuit. Replica: the Knight's Hall of Brežice Castle; original: Graz, Joanneum, Alte Galerie.

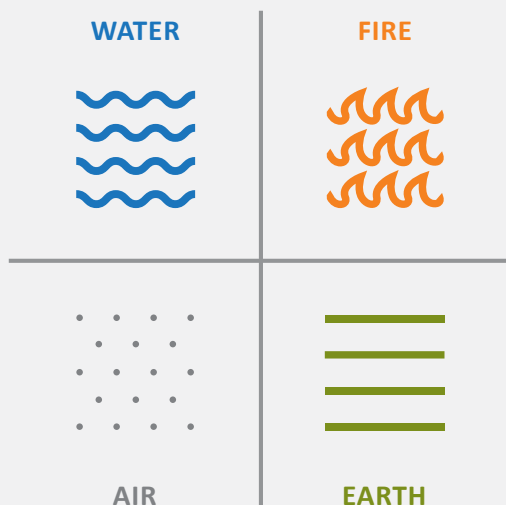
³ Various publications feature different data on the portrayed individuals. The interpretation by Boris Hajdinjak, included in the publication *The Four Elements: 3 – EARTH* (2019), pp. 92–95, has been used for this publication.



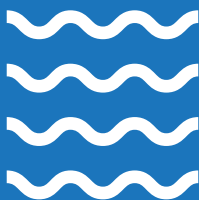
Ignaz Maria I Attems (1652–1732) with his eldest sons:
 Franz Dismas (1688–1750), the eldest surviving son and heir apparent,
 Thaddeus Cajetan (1691–1750), the second eldest surviving son and second
 heir, and Joseph Innozenz Xaver (1692–1702), who died when the painting
 was in the making. Replica: the Knight's Hall of Brežice Castle; original: Graz,
 Joanneum, Alte Galerie.

The Four Elements

The barrel vault in the section where the wall turns into the ceiling features scenes from the Greek and Roman mythology or Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, which are also allegories of the four elements. According to the Ancient Greek tradition, there are four basic elements: air, fire, earth and water. These elements are combined in time and space, passing and changing into one another, however, if the balance among individual elements is disturbed, accidents or disasters happen, as found in ancient myths and legends.



The Element WATER – *East*



Season: winter

Time of day: from midnight to sunrise

Temperament: phlegmatic

Period of life: childhood

Zodiac signs: Cancer, Scorpio, Pisces

Shapes: waves





The Element Water (Aqua)



On the eastern side of the vaulted section, where the wall meets the ceiling, four scenes represent **the allegory of water (aqua)**.





Scene 1

Painter Francišek Karl Remb (1675–1718) depicted **Poseidon** – called Neptune by the Romans – as a white-bearded old man with the figure of an athlete, holding a down-turned trident, his attribute, in his right hand. His loin area is covered by seaweed and his gaze is fixed on the two galloping horses with fins instead of feet. A young sea goddess **Amphitrite** – called Salacia by the Romans – is eagerly snuggling up to him. Her loin area and the left bosom are covered by a transparent grey veil, which rounds up into a fluttering bow at the top, linking up the divine couple. Sitting on a chart made of shells, pushed by a wooden flap, the pair is enjoying a merry gallop of the horses led by winged boys. A trio of Nereids, wrapped up in drapery of fluttering cloth, is playing in front of the two horses. With her back facing the viewer and her face in profile, Galatea ("she who is milk-white") is arguably one of the most beautiful Nereids, one that was passionately loved by the one-eyed Cyclops, Polyphemus. Playing in the troublous sea waves, there are two pairs and three trios of Nereids, patronesses of those who find themselves in danger at sea. On the left side, in a rougher part of the sea, a trio of Tritones, male sea creatures with a fish tail jutting out of the water, are seen swimming. They are blowing giant sea shells like a trumpet, representing Poseidon and Amphitrite's son Triton. The scene at the back with two groups of three Nereids illustrates a giant rock arch with azure grey clouds and playful putti right above it. In terms of shape, the figures' stylistic characteristics show a direct influence of Lotto's workshop and the Roman masters of Early Baroque, Pietro da Cortona (1596–1669) and Guido Reni (1575–1642), especially in the clothing draperies and in the figures' and putti's physicality. Remb imbued the figures with timelessness, expressed through their psychological dramatics, physical perfection and flawless beauty. The colours are a prominent feature with their brown and red earthly shades, the airy azure of the sea and the skies, as well as the green, grey and bluish attires, mostly floating in the wind and wrapped around the deities' light-skinned figures.



Scene 2

The one-eyed Cyclops **Polyphemus** (Greek Polyphemos = Roman Polyphemus), the son of Poseidon and the nymph Thoosa, was passionately in love with the sea nymph Galatea (Greek: "she who is milk-white"), who was considered one of the most beautiful Nereids among her peers. Galatea, however, did not care for him, she fell in love with Acis, a young and handsome shepherd of Sicily. Once Polyphemus saw them embracing and in a fit of jealousy, he killed Acis with a giant rock. The painter depicted Polyphemus sitting on a high rock, which rises directly from the choppy sea. The bottom right-hand corner of the painting shows a cave entrance with part of Polyphemus' flock. Polyphemus is playing the pipe, the music helping him heal the pain caused by unrequited love.

Polyphemus



Scene 3

A dramatic scene from the legend of **Pyramus and Thisbe** tells a story of two ill-fated lovers, whose love was forbidden by their parents. They decided to escape but at the place where they were supposed to meet, Thisbe was surprised by a lioness, so she hid but lost her cloak while doing so. The lioness tore up the cloak with her bloody mouth. Pyramus found nothing but Thisbe's cloak. Convinced that his beloved had been murdered, he stabbed himself. When Thisbe found him dead, she killed herself. Remb depicted the moment when Thisbe found her beloved Pyramus stabbed, lying by the fountain well. In despair at this tragedy, she stabbed herself with a dagger. This is a story about love that brought together two young Babylonian lovers whose parents opposed their love. This is also the story described by the Roman poet Ovid. One of the authors later inspired by Pyramus and Thisbe's tragic story was Shakespeare. He first used it in his work *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, and later in *Romeo and Juliet*. Due to the latter's literary fame, the memory of these two ancient lovers faded into oblivion.



Scene 4

According to an ancient tale by Gustav Schwab, the winged god Hermes sent a flock to the meadow where Agenor's daughter **Europa** and other Tirian girls were playing with flowers and weaving garlands. Among the flock was Zeus, transformed into a bull, who was in love with young Europa, so he wanted to seduce her. Europa found the beautiful bull more and more likeable and thus invited her friends to go closer to him, so they could decorate him with flower garlands. When Europa got on top of the bull, he ran to the sea and swam off. Remb depicted the moment when the sea was waving in the wind all around the swimming bull with Europa on his back and her clothes fluttering in the wind. As she was afraid of waves, she lifted her legs shyly, held the bull's horn with her right hand and opened her left hand. Shaken and with her gaze fixed on the shore, she was calling out to her maids. The kidnapping of Europa is one of the most popular Baroque motives. One of its well-known depictions was done by Guido Reni, who had been commissioned to do it by the king of Poland, Wladislaw, just before 1640. Reni incorporated Cupid into the painting. Remb, however, included a winged infant with a torch in his hand, who might be Phosphorus (Greek: "the light-bringer", Latin: Lucifer), the morning star personified, the one that always precedes the morning and the guardian of stars (the son of Eos and the father of Ceyx and Daedalion).

Europa



Zeus, in love with Europa and transformed into a bull, kidnapped the girl he loved, taking her across the ocean all the way to Crete, where he transformed into a handsome young boy. As a ruler of Crete, he promised Europa to protect her in return for her love and devotion. A bit confused, she said yes. The next morning, when she regretted it, Aphrodite came and told her the truth about Zeus and her kidnapping. She cheered Europa up by telling her that the part of the world where she had been living would be called Europe. Europa, a mortal, gave birth to three Zeus's sons: Minos, Rhadamanthus and Sarpedon.



Drawing: Janže Lorber



Drawing: Jakob Klemenčič

The Element AIR – *North*



Season: spring

Time of day: from sunrise to noon

Temperament: sanguine

Period of life: youth

Zodiac signs: Gemini, Libra, Aquarius

Shapes: volutes



The Element Air (Aer)

In the northern section of the coved vault, **the element air (aer)** is represented by a scene with Apollo and Eos.

Quicker to chase away the winds and the clouds

The Greco-Roman god **Apollo** and Greek goddess **Eos** (Aurora in Roman mythology) riding in a sun chariot pulled by doves and surrounded by birds are an allegory of the element air. Aurora, the Roman goddess of dawn, the protector of fine weather and the deity that ushers in every new day, is depicted on the golden chariot in the company of Apollo, the god of light, sun and spring, moral purity and art, especially music. Perhaps the painter F. K. Remb (1675–1718) was inspired by a scene from a ceiling fresco by Guido Reni, created between 1613 and 1614, which also features the two deities. Here, Apollo is placed on the sun chariot holding a shield with the inscription ‘Citius ventos et nubila pellit’ (quicker to chase away the winds and the clouds) in his left hand. He has completely surrendered himself to the guidance of the goddess of dawn. Aurora, clad in a drapery moved by a gust of wind, drives the golden chariot by controlling a pair of white doves through a dark cloud into the waking morning, where a rainbow arches across the entire sky.

The darkness of the night is also chased away by Zephyrus, the son of Eos (Aurora) and astrological deity Astraia, clad in a turquoise drapery. Zephyrus, the messenger of spring, stands for the west wind, which brings moisture and rain, much needed in the spring for plant growth. He is also associated with hyacinths.

Apollo and Eos

Love, victory and peace

Underneath the sun chariot, a variety of birds, also heralding a new day, have taken to the air. They include the common tern (*Sterna hirundo*), the redwing (*Turdus iliacus*), a parrot accompanied by a mistle thrush (*Turdus viscivorus*) and a pair of the great tit (*Parus major*) birds on a lintel, the great spotted woodpecker (*Dendrocopos major*), domestic pigeons (*Columba livia domestica*),

the hoopoe (*Upupa epops*), the smew (*Mergellus albellus*), the squacco heron (*Ardeola ralloides*) and the common magpie (*Pica pica*) with its characteristic long tail. Birds as spiritual messengers carry a symbolic message and represent solar, Ouranic values. Birds, both local and exotic, are symbols of love, victory and peace, restfulness and serenity. Together with the rainbow arching across the sky after a storm, the birds represent the beauty that signifies the calmness and happiness of peacetime.

Light rediscovered

Apollo, brandishing a shield with the inscription 'Citius ventos et nubila pellit' (quicker to chase away the winds and the clouds), is paying homage to goddess Aurora, the symbol of awakening and rediscovered light, including light brought to the land by peace. Count Ignaz Maria Attems, (1652–1732), a patron of arts who commissioned the frescoes, became a member of the Secret Council of Inner Austria on 12 September 1703, following the end of a sixteen-year war with the Ottomans (1683–1699), during which he rose to the rank of supreme quartermaster for the Slavonian Military Frontier. The hard-won peace and a new role in society were undoubtedly the cause for celebration, symbolically represented by the scene with Apollo and Aurora in the dove chariot surrounded by all kinds of birds, both local and exotic, whose melodies are creating an exceptionally festive atmosphere.



The allegory of the element air features the Greco-Roman god APOLLO and Greek goddess EOS (Roman AURORA) in a dove chariot on the northern part of the coved vault.

The Element FIRE – *South*



Season: summer

Time of day: from noon to sunset

Temperament: choleric

Period of life: maturity

Zodiac signs: Aries, Leo and Sagittarius

Shapes: triangular or pointed, with sharp edges



Drawing: Gregor Smuković



The Olympian god Hephaestus – the god of fire

The Element Fire (Ignis)



The allegory of **the element FIRE (Ignis)** on the south side of the vaulted section where the wall meets the ceiling inside the Knight's Hall depicts Hephaestus's forge.

Greek god Hephaestus (Roman god Vulcan), crippled and limping, one of the twelve Olympians, the son of Zeus and Hera, brother of Ares, Hebe and Eileithyia, is the god of fire and metals, the patron of craftsmen, sculptors and metallurgy. As a limping god of fire, the patron of blacksmithing and handicrafts, and the embodiment of fire, he is portrayed in his earthly smithy, right beside the blazing forge and bent over the anvil, wielding a hammer and gasping, along with his two helpers, as he forges a thunderbolt for his father, Zeus, the king of all gods of Mount Olympus. In the background of Hephaestus' smithy, Remb painted an antique shield with a spear, juxtaposed by a cannon, a fearsome new-age gun mounted on wheels, which does not have its roots in antiquity, dating back to the painter's day, the late 17th century. According to Hesiod, Hephaestus was assisted by three Cyclopes, unruly one-eyed giants, the sons of Gaia and Uranus: Brontes (Thunder), Steropes (Lightning) and Arges

(Flash), brothers of the Titans and the Hecatoncheires. In a volcano, the three Hephaestus' helpers forged a sceptre, thunderbolts and flashes of lightning for Zeus, god of the sky and thunderstorm, a trident for Poseidon, a suit of armour for Heracles, as well as weapons with full fighting gear for all the gods and demigods.

Born crippled and misshapen, Hephaestus was rejected by his mother, Hera. According to Homer's *Iliad*, she threw him down from Olympus into Oceanus near the island of Lemnos, where he was found and raised by seafarers, along with two Nereids, sea nymphs Thetis and Eurynome. Some ancient accounts have it that his limping was the result of this fall alone. On the island of Lemnos he was cared for not only by Thetis and Eurynome but also the seafarers who had saved him. It was with them that he learned the trade of blacksmithing and made his first pieces of jewellery. Some assume the cult of Hephaestus formed on account of the island's volcanic activity; the Roman god Vulcan was also believed to reside under Mount Etna (still the largest active volcano in Europe), in eastern Sicily. A torchlight run was organised to mark the Hephaestus festival. His consort was beautiful Aphrodite, the goddess of love, who was unfaithful to him with his brother, Ares. Hephaestus, however, was loved by lovely Charis, one of the charming Graces, his loyal companions.

He is well known for legends portraying him as a famous blacksmith: he helped deliver Athena, who was trapped in the head of Zeus. On Zeus's order, he chained Prometheus to the Caucasus mountains and fashioned the body of the first woman, Pandora, from mud. He ensnared his unfaithful wife Aphrodite and her lover Ares in an invisible chain-link net, and he made a golden throne for his mother, Hera, from which she could not stand up. He breathed magical power into the pieces he forged so as to gain control over their recipients – he punished them for bad deeds and rewarded them for good ones. Since beautiful ladies were fascinated by his masterpieces, mostly jewellery, he had a very successful love life – in spite of his lameness. He was a god who could bring the inanimate to life and the other way round, and one who consistently achieved outstanding successes in both blacksmithing and love.



Fire is also featured in the coat of arms of the first wife of Count Ignaz Maria Attems (Ljubljana, 15 Aug 1652 – Graz, 28 Nov 1732), Countess Maria Regina Attems, née Wurmbrand-Stuppach (Graz, 3 Jun 1659 – Brežice, 24 Apr 1715), depicted on the south end of the Knight's Hall ceiling. Inside an oval and edged with volutes is the family coat of arms of Maria Regina's father, Georg Andreas von Wurmbrand-Stuppach. The dragon figure spitting fire atop a crown in the coat of arms is associated with a legend from the genealogy of the House of Wurmbrand-Stuppach. Incidentally, the maiden name Wurmbrand too is associated with fire since the German word 'der Brand' means fire.



The Element EARTH – *West*



Season: autumn

Time of day: from sunset to midnight

Temperament: melancholic

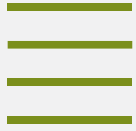
Period of life: old age

Zodiac signs: Taurus, Virgo and Capricorn

Shapes: with edges, squares



Drawing: Anja Medved



The Element Earth (Terra)



The coved vault section in the west-facing part of the hall is painted with scenes which transition from one into another, representing **the allegory of EARTH (Terra)**.



Scene 1

Dionysus

The first scene at the southern end of the western coved vault depicts **Dionysus (Bacchus** in Roman mythology), the god of fertility, plant life, wine and ecstasy. Painter Frančišek Karl Remb portrayed him as a naked male figure of extensive curves with legs spread apart as a drunken god, surrounded only by ivy and laurel, the god's recognisable attributes. Pan with a flute in his hands lays at his feet, leaning against leopard skin, another Dionysus' marker. He is entertained in his drunken state by two nymphs (maenads, one holding a child) and satyrs, one of whom is pouring wine into his goblet. Dionysus, son of Zeus and Semele, Ariadne's husband and father of Priapus and Hymen is regarded as a twice-born god and is one of Greek mythology's Twelve Olympians. The unborn son was hidden until his birth by Zeus in his thigh, a turn of events that came about due to his mother Semele, the daughter of Theban king Cadmus, being tricked by Zeus' jealous wife Hera, who suggested she should demand to see her lover in his full glory. The god of thunder and lightning duly appeared and the manifested lightning killed Semele. Zeus then retrieved the unborn child and placed him inside his thigh. After his birth, Dionysus was found by Hermes and entrusted to nymphs to be raised on a remote island. According to a different legend, he was taken care of by Semele's sister Ino. He proved his divine origins through good works, forever surrounded by an entourage of satyrs and nymphs – maenads. Dionysus was worshipped especially on the islands of the Aegean Sea as the saviour of all human worries, of all bodily or spiritual distress. His attributes are grapevine with grapes, a basket of fruits, leopard skin and the indispensable thyrsus – a wand covered with ivy vines and grapevine, and topped with a pine cone. As the twice-born god, he is regarded as a dying god and the god of resurrection. In Roman mythology, he is named Bacchus.

Euripides talks about the cult worshipping of Dionysus in Greece. His cult was associated with wine and drunkenness, both by Greeks and, later, by Romans. As Bacchus, he was mainly seen as a god of revellers, games and entertainment, despite this original Greek cult forming the main source of Greek spiritualism. According to the cult of Dionysus (Chevalier), soul is related to the divine and in a certain sense more real than the body.

“When Dionysus raised his mother Semele (goddess of earth) from Hades to Olympus, he wanted to open the doors to immortality to all of earth’s children.” According to Chevalier, this is one of the meanings of the symbol of Dionysus. He was also regarded as a patron of tragedy and comedy.



Scene 2

Dionysus and Ariadne

Dionysus and Ariadne

Frančišek Karl Remb depicted the young Cretan princess Ariadne at the moment Theseus left her on the island of Naxos, where she was found still asleep by Dionysus, who gently woke her up with a feather and with one finger over the lips in a gesture of silence.

Ariadne, the daughter of Cretan king Minos and his wife Pasiphae, fell in love with Theseus, the heroic son of Athenian king Aegeus, and helped him escape the labyrinth. By giving him a magical sword and a ball of red thread, she helped him slay the Minotaur and find his way out. Ariadne, who was promised marriage by Theseus, eloped with him, heading towards Athens, but was left behind on the island of Naxos, where she was found by Dionysus, whose wife she was to become. As her wedding gift, she received a crown with seven shining diamonds. Ariadne died shortly after the wedding and the grieving Dionysus threw away the crown that reminded him of his beloved bride. After her death, Dionysus took her from Hades to Olympus, much like his mother Semele before. The cast-away crown was caught by the gods and placed high in the sky. Today it is known as the Northern Crown, still twinkling with Ariadne's seven diamonds. The story of Ariadne, the daughter of King Minos, was one of the most popular tales in antiquity.



Scene 3

The dancing nymphs with Silenus and a satyr are revelling around a monument with Pan's image, celebrating the spring worshipping of Dionysus or Pan, the protector of shepherds and their herds. Remb's chosen themes for this tale are painted in warm colours, and thus extremely soft and magnificent. The painter conveys both a picturesque impression of restlessness and magnificence in the dance of the revelling nymphs. Compared to the literary sources, where nymphs are being chased by satyrs or sileni, this depiction is one of light-heartedness, with nymphs playfully dancing to the rhythm of the melodious music alongside Silenus and the satyr – with the latter possibly being the young Dionysus, raised by the former. It is known that Dionysia, the festivals of Dionysus, also featured women and girls, maenads and bacchae, who in a wild procession wandered into the woods calling for the god to appear. They were chased by horny satyrs, called fauns by the Romans, half men half animals with goat horns, tail and legs. This group also included the sileni, whose aim was to escape from everyday life. The annual holidays, called the Rural Dionysia and the City Dionysia, were held in March and December. Tragedies and comedies were performed in March, and drama developed from dithyramb, a hymn sung in Dionysus's honour. Initially, there was only one Silenus (Greek for 'one with a squat nose'), an old bald man, fat and rotund with a hairy breast, and also the one who raised Dionysus. One of the later sileni or satyrs was Marsyas, known as the inventor of the aulos, some sort of a reed instrument, or the one that found also celebrated by the Romans, but after the last of them turned into orgies, they were prohibited in 186 BC.



Scene 4

Pan

Whereever there are nymphs and satyrs, who love the forests, mountains and shady caves, there is **Pan** (**Faunus** in Roman mythology), who loves to dance, sing and play his pan flute named after his beloved Syrinx. **Pan**, the Greek god of shepherds, herd fertility, forests and pastures, the son of Hermes (the other important Arcadian god), is depicted with horns, leaning on a rock and playing the Syrinx alongside his step-brother, a young shepherd Daphnis (the inventor of pastoral poetry), whom he taught to play the flute. Beneath them are two young women, who are taking care of a child, feeding it ambrosia (nectar), the food of the gods that gives gods and the chosen ones immortality and eternal youth. Pan is often associated with spring, fertility, and pastoral music. His mother was a nymph; Kalisto according to some, Penelope or Driope according to others. Hermes, the messenger of the gods, god of trade, thieves, and travellers fell in love with a nymph that gave birth to Pan, a child with goat horns, beard and hind legs. His appearance gave the mother such a scare that she fled in panic and left the child. The ancient Greeks believed that Pan caused fear and anxiety with his appearance as well as suddenly appearing somewhere, thus scaring people and herds, which caused panic. Father Hermes meanwhile received his son with glee, wrapped him in rabbit hide and took him to Olympus, where he proudly showed him to the gods. Since the other gods mocked Pan's appearance, the young god fled into dangerous Arcadian forests, where he roamed, danced, sang and played his pan flute. Legend has it that he made his flute from seven reeds in honour of the nymph Syrinx, whom he was in love with, but she changed into reeds when he touched her.

According to a legend, Syrinx was also a **hamadryad**. Hamadryads were forest nymphs whose mother was Dryope, a tree nymph residing in black poplar, found in the mythological tale of forest spirit Oxylyus, with whom she had several daughters – hamadryads. Each of them was responsible for her own kind of trees – Karya (walnut or hazel), Balanos (oak), Kraneia (cornel), Morea (mulberry), Aigeiros (black poplar), Ptelea (elm), Ampelos (vines) and Syke (fig) – and also died together with the trees. Forest nymphs or **dryads** (after Greek *drys*, meaning 'tree, oak') were mainly the protectors of oak forests; they lived in the trees, died with them and were born with new ones.

Here, the painter portrayed the forest nymphs as an orchestra of female instrumentalists with various antique and baroque instruments, who prepared an acoustic reception to **Ares**, fully clad in his military gear.



Scene 5

Ares (known as **Mars** by the Romans), the Greek god of destructive, aggressive war, is returning victorious from a battle with a troop of horsemen. He can be recognised by the following attributes: a helmet with a feather plume, a sword and a shield, while the two animals dedicated to him, the dog and the hawk are missing. Ares is one of the Twelve Olympians, the son of Zeus and Hera and the brother of Hephaestus, Hebe and Eileithyia. He fathered Eros with his mistress Aphrodite, and is the father of the Amazons, Phobos, Deimos (fear) and Eris (quarrel). On the other hand, the union of the adulterous couple also resulted in Harmonia (consent), the personification of harmony and coherence, who married King Cadmus and gave birth to two daughters, Ino and Semele. Harmonia became the matriarch of the Royal House of Thebes, from which Dionysus is also descended. At the same time, the relationship between Ares and Aphrodite is also an allegory that could be linked to the patron Ignaz Maria Attems and his wife Maria Regina, née Wurmbrand: the liaison between a fearsome warrior and a beautiful woman that leads to noble harmony, the basis for cultural development.

Perhaps the nymph being born from a tree opposite Ares depicts Athena playing the flute. Athena, originally a bird goddess, but in Ancient Greece



mostly known as the goddess of wisdom, weaving, crafts and military discipline, stands in direct contrast to Ares, known for his cruel violence and bloodlust. Athena's attribute is an owl and the goddess is usually shown with an aegis on her chest, a helmet and a shield. According to the stories in Attica, Athena was the one who invented the aulos, some sort of a reed instrument, which she discarded after seeing how blowing it puffed out her cheeks and ruined her beauty. Or the nymph might be there to remind Ares – whose warlike step is headed towards the tree nymphs, who are playing music on Baroque orchestra instruments – of clever warfare tactics and strategy.

Ares corresponded to Roman Mars, the god of war and flora, the protector of fields and livestock, the patron of the Romans in wars and also of the peasants. Mars, the original italic peasant god, who people prayed to, hoping for successful plant growth and plentiful births in the barn, later became the Roman god of war. The wild animals sacred to him are the wolf and the woodpecker.

Is this scene a depiction of the Enchanted Forest and the knight Rinaldo?

The Knight's Hall has attracted various researchers, whose findings offer different interpretations of the depicted scenes. For instance, Stanko Kokole linked the scene with Torquato Tasso's (1544–1595) epic poem *Jerusalem Delivered*, also known as *The Liberation of Jerusalem* (Italian: *La Gerusalemme liberata*), i.e. with a scene from Canto 18, which is based on historical events from the First Crusade, which came to an end with a siege of Jerusalem in 1099. The noble Christian knight Rinaldo is seen bravely walking onto a clearing in the enchanted forest. In the subsequent scene (which is not depicted in the Knight's Hall), he comes to a stop, perplexed to see an apparition of the



beautiful Saracen princess and powerful witch Armida. Remb depicted the moment when the surprised Rinaldo watches the 'birth' of forest fairies that emerge from the trees, trying to distract him from chopping with music and dancing. He included a number of modern musical instruments, thus indicating the purpose of the hall, i.e. the enjoyment of music and the arts in a hall that was more splendid than any others at that time and still is over 300 years later.

⁴ This contribution was published in the publication titled *Imago Musicae*, which accompanied the exhibition.

The Knight's Hall – Walls



The eastern wall of the hall features several landscape scenes with a Greek temple and a Roman Forum with the Pantheon, as well as two elaborate Renaissance gardens, which are separated by groups of three giants and three medallions with oil paintings.

Three medallions that feature unidentified scenes are originals:



- an unidentifiable mythological scene – a conversation between two men, a shaved and a bearded one



- the allegory of summer – female figures with grain and fruit



- an unidentifiable mythological scene – figures of young men and women with children



The western wall of the hall features scenes with the ruins of ancient architecture and a Renaissance equestrian monument, which are separated by groups of three giants and the following three medallions:



- a portrait of Maria Regina Attems with her children



- an allegory of wealth and eminence

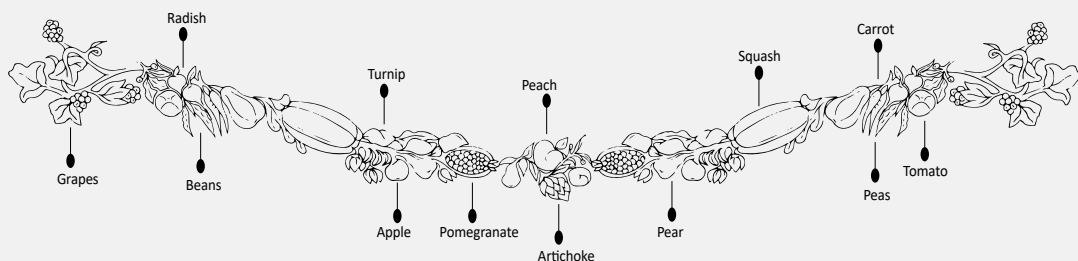


- a portrait of the man who commissioned the frescoes, Ignaz Maria Attems, with his sons

The walls behind the Baroque staircases are painted with scenes of nature and the north-facing side features a depiction of a mysterious ship with a military helmet and a swan.



The area where the walls transition to the vaults features garlands with depictions of various kinds of fruit and vegetables, such as apples, pears, pomegranates, pumpkins, artichokes, carrots.



Drawing: Anja Medved

The walls also feature wall cartouche in ochreous grisaille.

The eastern wall

This might be
Apollo and Castalia



Diana and Actaeon



Daphnis and Chloe



Sleeping Venus



Western wall



Heracles and Omphale



Apollo and Daphne



Heracles at the crossroads



Andromeda and Perseus

Ceiling



The Judgement of Solomon



Job at the rubbish dump



**This might be Esther
before king Ahasuerus**



An unknown scene



Ceiling

The ceiling features depictions of allegories of the Attems family's virtues and allegories of science and arts. On the northern side, the ceiling starts with the coat of arms of Count **Ignaz Maria Attems**, and on the southern side with the coat of arms of Countess **Maria Regina Attems**, née **Wurmbrand**.

From north to south

The coat of arms of Count Ignaz Maria Attems (1652–1732), the castle owner and the person who commissioned the painting.

Ignaz Maria Attems





The allegory of Fortuna (Gr. **Tyche**) with a cornucopia, the personification of luck. Greek God Cronus (Rom. Saturn), an old man with a scythe; a putto is cutting his wing and another one is holding his sand clock. Below him is **Iustitia** (Lat 'justice'; Gr. Dike), the woman with a balance and an ostrich. Another woman is giving jewellery to the goddess of fate **Nemesis** (Lat. 'to give what is due').



Allegories of art and science



Allegory

The allegory of science – this might be Muse **Urania** (Gr. 'heavenly'), one of the Nine Muses, a Muse of astronomy and astrology



The allegory of painting –
figural group



The allegory of medicine –
Hygieia with Asclepius's stick



The allegory of sculptural art consists of three figural groups with sculptures from different periods



The allegory of music, this might be Muse Euterpe (Gr. 'rejoicing well' or 'delight'), a Muse of music, especially lyrical singing and the personification of lyrical poetry



The allegory of geometry – this might be Muse **POLYHYMNIA** (Gr. 'the one of many hymns'), who is a Muse of geometry, pantomime and meditation



The allegory of poetry – this might be Muse **CALLIOPE** (Gr. 'beautiful-voiced'), the Muse of epic poetry, the oldest and the wisest of all the Muses



The coat of arms of Countess **Maria Regina Attems**, née **Wurmbrand** (1659–1715)



The Cloud drawing and the drawing based on Poseidon, Dragon and Tree drawings by: Jakob Klemenčič

