

Biuletyn Historii Sztuki
LXXXII:2020, nr 2
ISSN 00063967

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*Trompe l'œil in the Decoration of Alba
Amicorum from circa 1750 to circa 1815
from the Collection of the Wrocław University
Library*

*Trompe l'œil w dekoracjach alba amicorum
z około 1750–1815 ze zbiorów Biblioteki
Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu*

Artykuł jest próbą systematyzacji oraz interpretacji motywów o charakterze iluzjonistycznym – od pojedynczych obiektów ukazanych jako leżące na stronie, poprzez zabiegi zmieniające wygląd strony, jak np. zagięte rogi kart, aż po martwe natury – stanowiących elementy wpisów sztambuchowych w jednej kolekcji. Na przykładach wskazany został ich związek z częścią tekstową. Mogły one ilustrować treść wpisu, ale też rozwijać ją i uzupełniać. Zwłaszcza kompozycje typu *quodlibet* kryć mogły aluzje do osoby właściciela albumu i wspólnych wspomnień, stanowiąc wizualny odpowiednik „memorabiliów”. Badane motywy ukazane zostały jako nie zawsze spełniające wszystkie kryteria *trompe l’œil*, ale niewątpliwie aspirujące do iluzjonizmu, a dodatkowo dobrze wypełniające łączone z twórczością sztambuchową zadania.

Słowa kluczowe: sztambuchy, alba amicorum, trompe-l’œil, quodlibet, XVIII wiek, Śląsk



The article is an attempt at systemizing and interpreting *trompe l’œil* motifs and devices – from single objects shown as if resting on a page, through those altering the appearance of the page, such as folded page corners, up to still lifes – that constitute elements of book-of-friendship entries in one particular collection. Examples are used to show their relations with the entry text: illusionistic elements could illustrate, but also extend or complement it. It was particularly the *quodlibet*-type compositions that could allude to the book’s owner and the shared memories, forming as if a visual counterpart of ‘*memorabilia*’. The researched motifs do not always comply with all the criteria of *trompe l’œil*; they do, however, aspire to being illusionistic, additionally fulfilling well the tasks that are associated with books of friendship.

Key words: Books of friendship, alba amicorum, trompe-l’œil, quodlibet, 18th century, Silesia

The collection of the University Library in Wrocław encompasses numerous books of friendship, better known as *Stammbücher* or *alba amicorum*, from 1567 to at least 1939.¹ They come in different shapes and with a variety of decoration being part of the entries. The least researched seem to be the *alba amicorum* from the 18th century and newer, with the decoration for long believed to be in a greater part uninteresting as lacking artistic value.²

This article focuses on what must be seen as attempts to apply *trompe l'œil* devices in the *alba amicorum* entries from the second half of the 18th and early 19th centuries, preserved in the collection of the Wrocław University Library. This kind of decoration had been introduced in books of friendship earlier,³ but in the period under discussion it seems to have appeared regularly and in a variety of forms. Although indeed different from the renown examples of eye-deceiving art, and most often painted or drawn by unprofessional

This paper was written under a grant by Faculty of Historical and Pedagogical Sciences, University of Wrocław, and is a part of doctoral project on *alba amicorum* in Wrocław the University Library.

I am deeply thankful to Agnieszka Drożdżewska PhD for all her suggestions and discoveries concerning musical notations in *quodlibets* and in books of friendship in general; to Prof. Grzegorz Podruczny for consulting the military depictions in the researched *alba amicorum*; and to Justus Vesting MA, for his patient assistance with transcriptions and provided information on biblical passages. I am also grateful to Prof. Dr. Werner Wilhelm Schnabel for his review and words of encouragement.

¹ Alicja BORYS, “Album Amicorum Johanna Reimanna (1544–1597). Najstarszy znany sztambuch w zbiorach Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu,” in *Śląska republika uczonych*, eds. Marek HAŁUB and Anna MAŃKO-MATYSIAK (Dresden: Neisse Verlag; Wrocław: Oficyna Wydawnicza “Atut” – Wrocławskie Wydawnictwo Oświatowe, 2012), vol. 5, 109–28; Akc. 1969/374 (book of friendship of Marie Louise von Bergmann Korn). For catalogues of *alba amicorum*, see: Ilona BANET and Marian SZYROCKI, “Die Stammbücher der Universitätsbibliothek Wrocław des 16. bis 18. Jahrhunderts,” in *Stammbücher als kulturhistorische Quellen*, ed. Jörg-Ulrich FECHNER (München: Kraus International Publications, 1981), 65–71 (Wolfenbütteler Forschungen, 11); Edward BIAŁEK, “Die Stammbuchsammlung in der UB Wrocław,” *Germanica Wratislaviensia*, 68: 1985, pp. 133–47. Albums that used to be a part of the Stadtbibliothek Breslau collection were included in Ernst VOLGER, “Über die Sammlung von Stammbüchern (77 Stück) in der Stadtbibliothek zu Breslau,” *Schlesiens Vorzeit in Bild und Schrift* 44 (1880): 445–74; a manuscript for the latter, Akc. 1967/14; *Katalog der Stammbücher der Stadtbibliothek Breslau. Band 1: Nummer 1–230*, Akc. 1967/11 (Cat. 141); a partial, preparatory version of the latter (numbers 151–188), Akc. 1967/12; *Verzeichniss der nachstehend citirten Stammbücher der Stadtbibliothek zu Breslau*, vol. 1–2, Akc. 1967/13. Most of the albums was included in the Repertorium Alborum Amicorum database, <https://raa.gf-franken.de>, accessed 15 Aug 2019. Unless stated otherwise, all the signatures and accession numbers (“Akc.”) refer to the collection of the Wrocław University Library. Some of the discussed *alba amicorum* are or soon will be available in Digital Library (<https://www.bibliotekacyfrowa.pl/>).

² A book of friendship handwritten catalogue of the Stadtbibliothek Breslau (Akc. 1967/11) on a regular basis used descriptions such as “bildlicher Schmuck ohne Wert”, “kunstlose Malerei”, “dilettantischer Bildschmuck” for the decoration of a specific album as a whole, although in some cases more moderate opinions would also be expressed, e.g. for the album owned by Samuel Reiche (Akc. 1949/1032). Although the catalogue occasionally conveys a similar opinion on some of the older illustrations, very often at the same time acknowledging their historical value.

³ Peter AMELUNG, “Die Stammbücher des 16./17. Jahrhunderts als Quelle der Kultur- und Kunstgeschichte,” in *Zeichnungen in Deutschland. Deutsche Zeichner 1540–1640*, ed. Heinrich GEISSLER (Stuttgart: Staatsgalerie Stuttgart, 1979), vol. 2, 214.



1. Johann Christoph Saphir's entry in the album amicorum of Christoph Johann Geier (Akc. 1949/1020, f. 160 [163]), Hirschberg/Jelenia Góra 1784.

Photo: Wrocław University Library

authors, this kind of decoration with no doubt deserves a more thorough look. The first part of this article presents an array of illusions: popular motifs, from single elements to more elaborate compositions, as well as certain practices applied to build and increase the visual deception. In the second part, possible reasons for applying *trompe l'œil* devices in books of friendship are discussed, with a focus on their role in building a message of a single book-of-friendship entry, as well as on the meaning of this kind of decoration in the context of the *album amicorum* practice and tradition. Finally, a word of explanation was given upon the authorship and quality of the researched decorations.

Kinds of trompe l'œil motifs and devices in alba amicorum

1. Single illusory objects

The simplest, as for complexity, not quality, form of *trompe l'œil* appearing on pages of the researched *alba amicorum* was a single visual element painted or drawn to look as if it were lying on the page. Two examples of such an eye-deceiving element appeared in the book of friendship of Christoph Johann Geier (Akc. 1949/1020, f. 135 [138]; f. 160 [163]⁴, fig. 1). In both cases, the illusory element was a paper snippet imitating a fragment of a page ripped out of a printed calendar, with names of weekdays, zodiac, and liturgical memorials. To increase the illusion, in the entry of unnamed Walck (f. 135 [138], Kempten 1784) the colours of the background and of the illusory piece of paper were slightly diversified. Additionally, both paper snippets were shown as casting shadow on the page. In the

⁴ The numbers in brackets are original or at least older folio/page numbers, provided here as the 19th- and early 20th-c. literature refers to them.

2. Anonymous (signed only with an initial "K.") entry in the album amicorum of Friedrich Samuel Fiedler (IV O 57, f. 6), no place, no date.
Photo: Wrocław University Library



3. Part of Ernst Ludwig Sommer's entry in the album amicorum of Samuel Reiche (Ak. 1949/1032, f. 56v–57 [pp. 106–107]), Schweinitz/Świdnica near Zielona Góra 1757. Photo: Wrocław University Library

entry by a Hamburg-based man named Saphir (f. 160 [163], Hirschberg/Jelenia Góra⁵ 1784, fig. 1), the drawn piece of paper was additionally superimposed on the text of the entry. A paper snippet could also come in a more longitudinal shape, resembling a bande-roule. An example of this variation is an undated illustration in the book of friendship owned by Friedrich Samuel Fiedler (IV O 57, f. 6; fig. 2).

In the aforementioned cases, the illusion is persuasive due to the skills of the authors, capable of applying different *trompe l'œil* devices. In many examples, however, those devices were applied separately and with less proficiency. On the leaf added to the entry by Jaenert to the *album amicorum* of Johann Ernst Lorenz Früison (Ak. 1949/1035, f. 77v–78 [p. 159], Halle 1786) two playing cards – at least one of them, a jack of clubs, copied after the edition published between 1650 and 1675 in Lyon by Claude Valentin⁶ – were

⁵ For locations in Silesia, the German name of the city, used in the book of friendship, is followed by a Polish name after a slash. The names are written in their current spelling, and supplemented if necessary.

⁶ Copies of this particular set were published online by the National Library of France, accessed August 15, 2019, <https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/btv1b10539702m.item>.



4. Anonymous (“J. I. H. Br[...]”) entry in the album owned by Ernestine Wilhelmine Lessing (Akc. 1949/1064, f. 47), Breslau/Wrocław 1799. Photo: Wrocław University Library

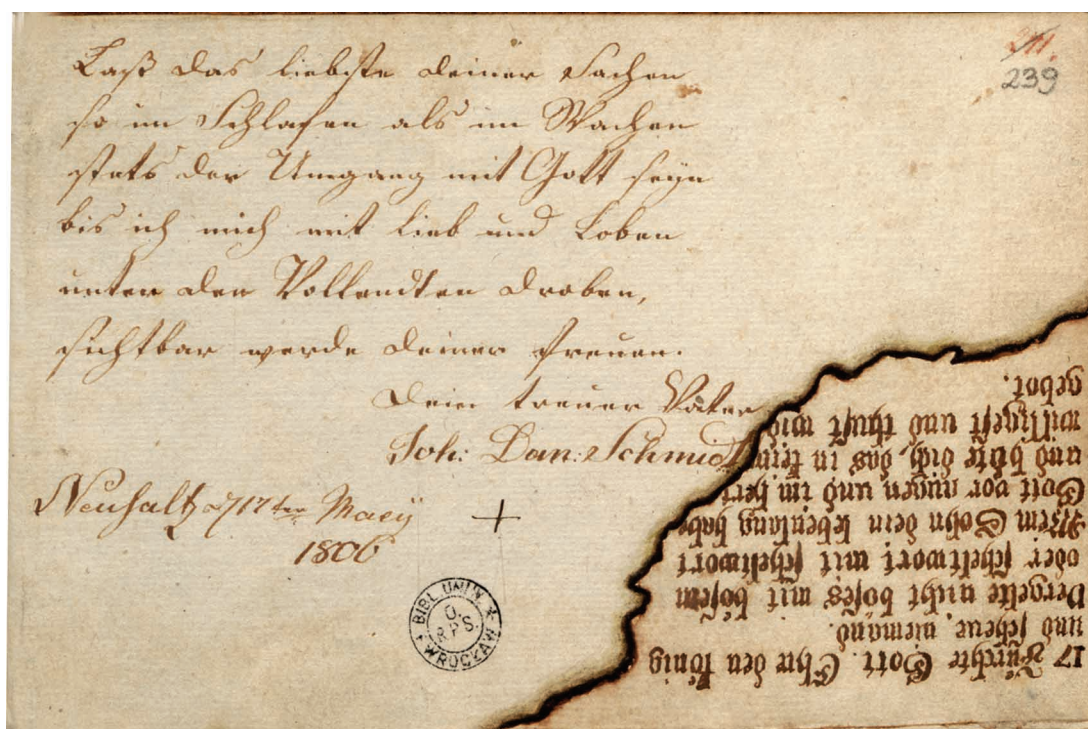
shown as overlapped, which may be seen as an attempt at creating a simple illusion, despite the lack of e.g. illusory shadows or traces of wear of the paper edges and surface.

It was not only relatively flat objects that could be depicted in this manner. Flowers adorning the entry by Sophia Matilda Target in the book of friendship of August Bach (IV O 11 a, f. 74v–75 [98v–99], 1808) were shown as casting shadow on the surface of the leaf, similarly to the plants and creatures depicted in much earlier *trompe l’œil* illuminations.⁷

In one case: an entry by Ernst Ludwig Sommer to the *album amicorum* of Samuel Reiche (Akc. 1949/1032, f. 56v–57 [pp. 106–107], Schweinitz/Świdnica near Zielona Góra 1757; fig. 3), the object presented as lying on the page appears to be a rounded pink-coloured piece of glass. It was placed in the middle of a non-illusionistic *en grisaille* view of fenced off houses, gardens, and dirt roads with some trees. The part of this landscape visible through the glass is slightly distorted, e.g., the course of the fence and size of objects differ from those in the surrounding landscape. Combining *trompe l’œil* with non-illusionistic images was not rare and some examples as well as implications of such a practice have been discussed in more detail below.

Occasionally, the illusory objects were shown not as lying on, but rather going through the page, just like the hairpins flanking the game-board with wordplay in the entries of Carl Friedrich Wilhelm Apel in the book of friendship of unnamed Schmidt (Akc. 1949/1066, f. 48v–49, Breslau/Wrocław 1804) and of Johann Friedrich August Schmidt in the album of Fritz Namsler (Akc. 1949/1029, f. 82v–83 [pp. 197–198], Breslau/Wrocław

⁷ Thomas DaCosta KAUFMANN and Virginia ROEHRIG KAUFMANN, “The Sanctification of Nature: Observations on the Origins of Trompe l’œil in Netherlandish Book Painting of the Fifteenth and Sixteenth Centuries,” *The J. Paul Getty Museum Journal* 19 (1991): 43–64.



5. Johann Daniel Schmidt's entry in the book of friendship owned by his son, C. H. Schmidt (IV O 59a, p. 239 [241]), Neusalz/Nowa Sól 1806. Photo: Wrocław University Library

1805), possibly copied after the previous one. Another needle pin was fastening an illusory “dog-ear” to the surface of the folio in the entry made by Josepha Kotissek in an anonymous, marked only with the “F. S.” initials, book of friendship (Akc. 1949/1070, f. 90v, Opeln/Opole 1803).⁸

2. Decoration changing the layout of the page

Despite the poor drawing quality, a “dog-ear” drawn by Josepha Kotissek was obviously meant to convince a person paging through the album that the corner had been folded down by an inattentive previous reader. *Trompe l'œil* motifs were often used in such a manner: to change the appearance of the *album amicorum* page, e.g. by imitating a folded corner, slightly burnt edges, or additional leaves.

An example of the latter can be found in the illustration accompanying an entry by J. C. Brade, pastor of the Lutheran church in Grünberg, in the aforementioned book of friendship of Reiche (Akc. 1949/1032, f. 60v–61 [pp. 112–113], Grünberg/Zielona Góra 1761). Brade used an ink-drawn image of the church where he was appointed, modelled after a print by the renown Silesian illustrator Friedrich Bernhard Werner.⁹ This image was

⁸ I read the name of the subscriber incorrectly as “Kotischek” in my former paper, see: Anna MICHALSKA, “Świątynie przyjaźni. Funkcje motywu architektury i rzeźby ogrodowej w sztambuchach z przełomu XVIII i XIX wieku na przykładzie zbiorów Biblioteki Uniwersyteckiej we Wrocławiu,” *Quart* 13, no. 2 (2018): 34, fig. 9.

⁹ Friedrich Bernhard WERNER, *Perspectivische Vorstellung derer Von Sr. Königl. Maytt. in Preussen dem Land Schlesien allergnädigst concedirten Bethäuser; Wie auch derer nach dem Westphäl: frieden Schlus von Kayserl: M: M: allergnädigst verlihenen Evangel: Luthr: Drey Privilegirten Fridens und 6 Gnaden Kirchen, zu vollständigem vergnügnen*, part IV: Fürstentum Glogau, Sagan, Schiebussler Kreis, [Breslau] 1751, no. 9.

framed with thick black lines. On the right-hand side, a remaining part of the page was surrounded with an identical frame, presumably to create an illusion of a subsequent page.

The painting or text written on the illusory next page could also be unveiled by a sizeable “dog-ear”. In another illustration in the same book of friendship, left by Georg Friedrich Pirscher¹⁰ (f. 57v-58, [p. 108], Grünberg/Zielona Góra 1761) the imitation of a folded corner unveils both an *en grisaille* image on the next page and a legible handwritten text on the illusory verso of the folio. The handwritten text may be identified as another book-of-friendship entry, with a few verses of inscription followed by the headword “symbolum”, introducing a personal motto of the contributor. With a religious allegory in the middle, partially covered by the calendar page and the aforementioned “dog-ear”, this composition could also be seen as a still life. A folded corner included in the entry to the album owned by Ernestine Wilhelmine Lessing (Akc. 1949/1064, f. 47, Breslau/Wrocław 1799; fig. 4), signed by “J. I. H. Br[...]”, shows a colourful image on the non-existing subsequent page. None of the examples from Wrocław is in this aspect as impressive as the one accompanying the entry of Siegmund Griendl to the *album amicorum* of August Wilhelm Mumme (Yg St. 8° 66/78, collection of Universitäts- und Landesbibliothek Sachsen-Anhalt, p. 3), with a genuine symphony of folded down and up again corners.¹¹ The remaining corners of the page, if not filled with decoration, could be cut off to increase the illusion.

A comparable effect could be achieved with a corner which was not folded, but burnt – a variation on the same motif. In the entry to the book of friendship of Carl H. Schmidt (IV O 59a, p. 239 [241]; fig. 5), such an illusory burnt corner of the page with the main text of the entry written unveils an imitation of a printed page of a book.

Another example of illusion transforming the book-of-friendship page consists in placing an entire entry on an illusory page. In the book of friendship of Gottlieb Michael Fetter, the entry of Johann Hortzschansky¹² (Akc. 1995/4, f. 112, Görlitz 1760; fig. 6) was written – with a necessary perspective distortion – on the sheet of paper shown as floating in the wind over the landscape.¹³

As shown above, illusion changing the layout of the page was most often combined with other images, eye-deceiving or not. Additionally, several illusory objects and motifs could be combined into a still life.

3. *Still lifes*

However, books of friendship in general, and those in the collection from the Wrocław University Library in particular, could also contain other kinds of still lifes, a very popular type being an eye-deceiving version, often referred to in literature as *quodlibet*. As the definition of that term in art history appears to be vague, it requires a disambiguation.

¹⁰ Or: Rocher, see: Akc. 1967/11.

¹¹ Accessed August 15, 2019, <http://digital.bibliothek.uni-halle.de/hd/content/pageview/2578344>.

¹² Hortzschansky, also spelled as Hóřčanski, was a Lusatian teacher, historian and folklorist, see: Ines KELLER, “Hóřčanski (Hortzschansky), Jan (Johann),” in *Sächsische Biografie*, issued by Institut für Sächsische Geschichte und Volkskunde e. V. Accessed 15 August, 2019, <http://www.isgv.de/saebi/>.

¹³ For an example of a similar *trompe l'œil* device, see: Perik LOESCH, *Der Freundschaft Denkmal. Stammbücher und Poesiealben aus fünf Jahrhunderten im Bestand der Sächsischen Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek Dresden* (Dresden: Sächsische Landesbibliothek – Staats- und Universitätsbibliothek, 2003), 118.



6. Johann Hortschansky's entry in the book of friendship owned by Gottlieb Michael Fetter (Akc. 1995/4, f. 112), Görlitz 1760. Photo: Wrocław University Library

The term itself is believed to have appeared in the art sales catalogues in Germany from the mid-18th century, therefore predating the term *trompe l'œil*.¹⁴ Although the latter one is often seen as a synonymic term,¹⁵ it was not used as such in this article, where *quodlibet* denotes a specific illusionistic still life: a *trompe l'œil* composition presenting every-day, usually small-sized objects, arranged either in a letter rack or on a flat surface, such as a table top, wall, board, or other, lying next to each other, partially superimposed.¹⁶ The definition of *quodlibet* applied in this paper also draws from the findings of Eugen von Philippovich from 1966.¹⁷ Although he regarded the terms *quodlibet* and *trompe l'œil* as synonyms, he pointed out that this kind of an eye-deceiving still-life may have a general topic (*Gesamthema*), introduced by the selection of the depicted objects, and may refer to a certain person who can be seen simultaneously as an addressee and a topic of this work of art.

Although in the fundamental study of *alba amicorum* by Robert and Richard Keil this kind of decoration: “varied clutter of pictures, cards and similar [objects]” (orig. “ein buntes Durcheinander von Bidlern, Karten u. dgl.”), is mentioned under the name of “Spielerei”,¹⁸ the term *quodlibet* prevails in contemporary publications.¹⁹

¹⁴ Alan CHONG, “Contained Under the Name of Still Life: The Associations of Still-Life Painting,” in *Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands 1550–1720*, eds. Alan CHONG and Wouter KLOEK (Zwolle: Waanders Publishers, 1999), 36, footnote 95. As the musical term, *quodlibet* had been used significantly earlier.

¹⁵ See: Eugen von PHILIPPOVICH, “Quodlibets – eine Abart des Stillebens,” *Alte und Moderne Kunst* 11, no. 89 (1966): 20–23; Ingeborg KRUEGER, “Trompe l'oeil oder Quodlibet,” *Das Rheinische Landesmuseum Bonn. Berichte aus der Arbeit des Museums* 8 (1973): 87–89.

¹⁶ See: KRUEGER, “Trompe l'oeil”.

¹⁷ PHILIPPOVICH, “Quodlibets,”; see also: Celeste BRUSATI, “Capitalizing the Counterfeit: Trompe L'Oeil Negotiations,” in *Still-Life Paintings from the Netherlands 1550–1720*, 60.

¹⁸ Robert KEIL and Richard KEIL, *Die Deutschen Stammbücher des sechzehnten bis neunzehnten Jahrhunderts* (Berlin: G. Grote'sche Verlagsbuchhandlung, 1893), 229.

¹⁹ To mention only the monumental Werner Wilhelm SCHNABEL, *Die Stammbücher und Stammbuchfragmente der Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg*, vols. 1–3 (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag, 1995) (Die Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg).



7. *Quodlibet*, part of August Leopold Brand's entry in the album owned by Fritz Namsler (Akc. 1949/1029, f. 90v–91 [pp. 213–214]), Breslau 1798. Photo: Wrocław University Library

In books of friendship entries in the collection of the Wrocław University Library from the given time period a dozen or so of those compositions were preserved.²⁰ They could be either independent of the text of the entry – usually placed on the adjacent page, like in the entry by August Leopold Brand in the *album amicorum* of Fritz Namsler (Akc. 1949/1029, f. 90v–91 [pp. 213–214], Breslau 1798; fig. 7) – or integrally connected. In the entry by unnamed Marbach in the book of friendship of Christian Gottfried Geier (Akc. 1949/1038, f. 50, Halle 1795; fig. 8), the text and autograph were placed on a drawn piece of paper, among the books, prints, drawings, and a tobacco smoking pipe set, constituting the still-life. Some of those compositions were drawn or painted on the pages only later pasted into the album, in some cases most likely transferred from another *album amicorum*.²¹

Most of aforementioned *quodlibets* – with only one exception, the entry by Amalia Wagener dedicated to Ernestine Wilhelmine Lessing (Akc. 1949/1064, f. 12v–13, Berlin 1798) – were composed or commissioned by men. The illustration made by Amalie Wagner was counted among *quodlibets*, even though it was composed with only two different kinds of objects: playing cards and author's own visiting card with a flower wreath around her name, superimposed over them. Two *quodlibets* appeared in the books of friendship owned by women: Ernestine Wilhelmine Lessing (Akc. 1949/1064), who seemingly started running a book of friendship at the early age of 9,²² and A. E. Arnoldin (Akc. 1949/1063).

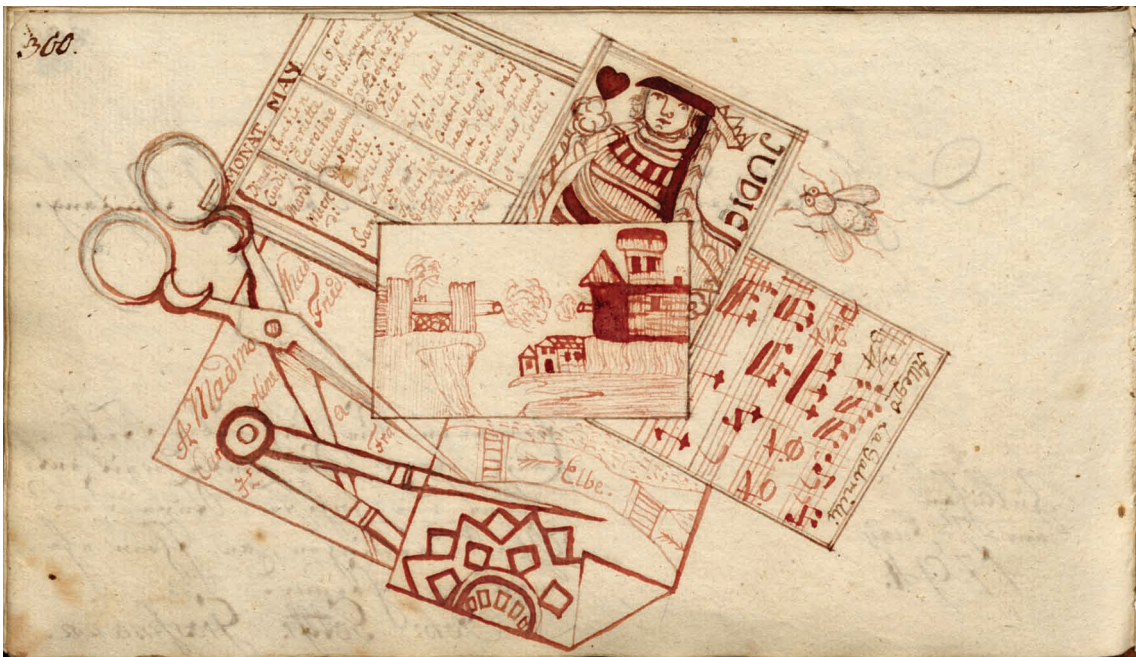
²⁰ The exact number depends on the decision if compositions like those provided by aforementioned Pirscher in Reiche's album (Akc. 1949/1032), the one by Amalia Wagener discussed below, or that by Schlegel (Akc. 1949/1032, f. 68v–69 [pp. 130–131]) should or should not be counted as *quodlibets*.

²¹ E.g. entries on f. 16 and on an additional page pasted over f. 109 in the book of friendship owned by Friedrich Samuel Fiedler bear page numbers while pages of his album (Akc. IV O 57) had not been originally paginated. Thus they seem to have been transferred from another album.

²² Wilhelmine Ernestine Lessing was born to Marie Friderike Voß and Karl Gotthelf Lessing on March 15, 1789, in Breslau/Wrocław. Entries in her book of friendship come from 1798–1801. See: Arend BUCHHOLTZ, *Die Geschichte der Familie Lessing* (Berlin: Druck von O. v. Holtten, 1909), vol. 1, 273; vol. 2, no. 161; Akc. 1967/11, p. 173, no. 226.



8. *Quodlibet*, Marbach's entry in the book of friendship owned by Christian Gottfried Geier (Akz. 1949/1038, f. 50), Halle 1795. Photo: Wrocław University Library



9. *Quodlibet*, part of unnamed Bitter's entry in the book of friendship of Carl Heinrich Storch (Akz. 1949/1078, f. 135v–136 [pp. 300–301]), Frankfurt a/O. 1796. Photo: Wrocław University Library



10. L. F. Wex's entry in the album amicorum of Friedrich Samuel Fiedler (IV O 57, f. 16), 1785.
Photo: Wrocław University Library

Among the paraphernalia depicted as parts of the *quodlibet* most popular were playing cards, contained in nearly every single example. Other types of objects that could appear in such a composition were usually flat: calendar pages, maps and plans, painted, drawn or printed images of different kind, documents and pieces of paper covered with handwriting, musical notations, sealed letters, etc., however more spatial items, such as books, smoking and drinking utensils, scissors, pair of compasses or even living creatures – arthropods sitting on the page – were also portrayed.

Playing cards are shown in very different sizes, depending on the complexity of the *quodlibet*: from the almost real life size (e.g. in IV O 57, additional page pasted over f. 109), to tiny ones (fig. 8). They are most often pip cards, but the entry of unnamed Bitter in the book of friendship of Carl Heinrich Storch (Ak. 1949/1078, f. 135v–136 [pp. 300–301], Frankfurt a/O. 1796; fig. 9) is accompanied by the representation of a queen of hearts bearing the inscription “Judic”.²³

Another noticeable category of items are drawn, painted, or printed images. They come in one colour (often grey or pink, in one case blue) or in many. Most of them are smaller than full-page, limited with a single or double black frame. Images are sometimes sketchy and partially covered, so their subject cannot be recognized or interpreted, or is barely suggested. Some other *quodlibets* contain, however, sizeable representations of landscapes, buildings and other architectonic structures, and, less often, narrative scenes, human figures, flowers and symbolical images, sometimes with religious connotations: the latter particularly visible in the *quodlibet* addressed to A. E. Arnoldin (Ak. 1949/1063, p. 34–35, Ohlau/Oława 1818). In one case, a leave with a family tree with blank heraldic shields was included in the composition (fig. 7). Sometimes those images were themati-

²³ “Judic” or “Judith” was in some card sets a traditional name for queen of hearts. See: Daniel SCHULZ, “Spielkarten aus dem Ludwigsburger Schloss,” *Das Blatt* 29, no. 54 (December 2016): 4.

cally related to other elements of still lifes. One in Storch's album (fig. 9) contains a representation of a battle, most likely a siege of a city with the use of artillery, superimposed on a plan of an unnamed fortress over the river Elbe.

Maps could be either more or less realistic ones, like a partially visible depiction of the coastline of the Duchies of Schleswig and Holstein in the *quodlibet* offered by Carl David Lange to Johann Ernst Maximilian Gloxin, the album owner (Ak. 1949/1021, f. 57v–58 [p. 110–111], Breslau 1783), or fantastic ones, like a map showing cities such as Leipzig, Halle, Weimar, Eisenach, or Erfurt as located close to the Baltic Sea (entry of L. F. Wex, IV O 57, f. 16, 1785; fig. 10). In some cases, such a fantastic map seems to be a carrier of a hidden message, rather than a mapping of any existing area, to mention only two pages from the *quodlibet* composed by Kitz (book of friendship by König, Ak. 1976/42, f. 80v–81, Kassel 1775), representing a fantastic map with some proper geographical names (“Mare Rubrum”, “Flus Ister”, etc.), and a plan of an artillery fire, both with locations and positions inscribed with puzzling words in different languages (e.g. German, Latin, French, English).

Sometimes books were presented among paraphernalia: a single title page, or an entire book, opened, with visible pages or covers and spine, the latter also inscribed with a title; like the law handbook in the entry of Marbach (fig. 8). In some *quodlibets* the book was represented by a page with a handwritten title, like Ovid's *Methamorphoses* in the *quodlibet* offered to Ernestine Wilhelmine Lessing (Ak. 1949/1064, f. 60v–61, Breslau 1799) that could be interpreted either as a poorly imitated frontispiece, or a set of quotations or personal notes from the reading. Edges of marbled papers sheets, often appearing in *quodlibets*, may also denote books, as they were commonly used in bookbinding.

Illusory pages represented e.g. lottery tickets with a specific number, documents with coats of arms, issued by the King, lists of songs with numbers and incipits, financial documents mentioning sums in Reichstaler or Louis d'or, visiting cards, musical notations, and many others.

Sometimes illusory pages included in the still life could be shown with folded down corners, or with burnt or uneven edges (fig. 8), or shaped like a banderole (fig. 9).

Musical notations in *quodlibets* were either placed on single pages or in books, usually elongated. Due to the nature of the *quodlibet*, and to the size of the book of friendship, some key information is often missing: shadow cast on the initial part of the stave makes the clef and key signature illegible (*Menuet* in the entry by Kitz in one of the books of friendship owned by König, Ak. 1976/42, f. 80v–81), or the major part of the notation was on an illusorily burnt part of the page (fig. 8); yet some pieces are recognizable, such as a folk song *Freut euch des Lebens* (Ak. 1949/1064, f. 60v) or a notation entitled *Allegro La Gabrielli* in the aforementioned entry of Bitter in the album Carl Heinrich Storch (fig. 9). In fact, it is a transcription of the first lines of *La Gabriele* or *La Gabriel* composed by Carl Philipp Emanuel Bach for harpsicord or grand piano, in C-major (Wq. 117/35). The composition was most likely never published and distributed only in handwritten copies.²⁴ Other compositions, although not always traceable among the recorded musical pieces, can be, for example, associated with the students' life of the time, like a song starting with a verse “Bruder feiert der Freundschafts Stunde” and with musical notation suggesting it was meant to be sung as a canon in the aforementioned *quodlibet* by Marbach.²⁵

²⁴ The *Répertoire International des Sources Musicales* mentions several manuscripts, but no printed version, accessed August 15, 2019, <http://www.rism.info>.

²⁵ For more thorough reflection on the topic, see: Tatsuhiko ITOH, “Music and musicians in the German Stammbücher from circa 1750 to circa 1815” (PhD diss., Duke University, Durham, 1992), 270ff. Itoh refers to *quodlibets* as to “quasi-collages”.

lines, just like the ones very often appearing in non-illusionistic book-of-friendship illustrations, forming a rectangle around a still life (Akc. 1949/1021, f. 57v–58 [pp. 110–111]; Akc. 1949/1063, pp. 34–35), sometimes even “cutting off” a part of it (fig. 7). Also applying an additional *trompe l'œil* device could have a similar effect. A folded corner added to a page on which the *quodlibet* was drawn (Akc. 1949/1038, f. 50; IV O 57, additional page pasted over f. 109; fig. 11) does not increase the illusion, but on the contrary, exposes the fact that a still life is nothing more than a two-dimensional image. It also has to be stated that already the size of a typical album of friendship page of that time, compared to the size of many of the objects typically presented as parts of the still life, has to make the eye-deceiving effect in most cases only conventional.

An exceptional example of a *trompe l'œil* still life could be another entry in the book of friendship owned by Samuel Reiche, left by Ernst Gottlob Schlegel from Brieg/Brzeg (Akc. 1949/1032, f. 68v–69 [pp. 130–131], 1760). The entire composition was subdivided with black lines into three bigger parts. In the side ones, some buildings were presented. In the central part, a young soldier was depicted in pale pink and with an additional oval frame. Behind the figure, some more buildings were shown in pale blue. Both the pale colours and framing, resembling a division of a glass window, could be an attempt to imitate a partially stained-glass window decorated with enamel painting, through which the cityscape is partially visible. However *trompe l'œil* still lifes could explore the motif of a glass surface,²⁸ it is not possible to unambiguously answer the question about the author's intention in this particular case.

4. Imitation of another technique or material

Another kind of illusion appearing in the researched books of friendship is imitating different technique of decoration. In most cases, the authors of the illustrations chose the imitation of techniques traditionally applied in books of friendship, such as paper-cuts or prints. The simplest example of this approach can be traced in the already mentioned painted shadows cast by some elements of the decoration. They can suggest that a drawing or painting made on any other material was later cut out and affixed to a blank page. Numerous illustrations with no claim for illusionism, usually round, showing e.g., landscapes, every day or symbolical motifs (e.g. IV O 59b, book of friendship owned by Louise Sand, f. 59; Akc. 1977/78, album of Johann Benjamin Ferdinand Steubler²⁹, pp. 68–69, fig. 12; Akc. 1949/1032, album of Samuel Reiche, p. 28 [f. 53]; Akc. 1949/1035, book of friendship of Johann Ernst Lorenz Früson, f. 72v [p. 149]). A shadow could also suggest a three-dimensional character of some elements, such as ribbons surrounding the emblem accompanying the entry from 1782 in the *album amicorum* of Carl Theodor Ferdinand Schreckfisch (Akc. 1949/1095, pp. 240–241, f. 126v–127, emblem “Amicus in mortem”, part of the entry by C. L. Tralles, Breslau/Wrocław).

Imitation of a print could mean not only a printed image, but also lettering or a book layout (e.g. fig. 5, discussed in detail below). On the basis of the researched material it can be concluded that very often drawn book-of-friendship illustrations were indeed copies of printed images.³⁰ The resemblance of both techniques (e.g., use of hatching) and the afore-

²⁸ See: Michael BATTERSBY, *Trompe L'Oeil: The Eye Deceived* (London: St. Martin's Academy Editions, 1974), 143f.

²⁹ Names after: Universitätsarchiv der Martin-Luther-Universität Halle-Wittenberg, Rep. 46, Nr. 7 (1791–1806), fol. 33v–34, matriculation number 184.

³⁰ See: MICHALSKA, “Świątynie przyjaźni,” 22, 24, footnote 9.



12. Part of Friedrich Wilhelm Schneider's entry
in the *album amicorum* of Johann Benjamin Ferdinand Steubler
(Akc. 1977/78, pp. 68–69), Breslau 1792.
Photo: Wrocław University Library

mentioned diversified quality of illustrations makes it difficult to determine whether the author of such a depiction was attempting to imitate a print, or was simply copying the desired motif with no regard for the original technique. The complexity of the issue demands a discussion in a separate article.

More rare were attempts to imitate a technique or decoration style which could not appear pasted on a page, such as the aforementioned stained-glass or the use of the *en grisaille* technique that could be interpreted as of a stone relief. The entry by J. W. L. von Avemann (Akc. 1949/1084, f. 1 [p. 27], Berlin 1794; fig. 13)³¹ in the *album amicorum* of Helene Christine Wilhelmine von Eben und Brunn contained an elliptical image of a lady in a tunic carrying a vase and a basket with flowers is surrounded by a structure resembling a part of an ancient frieze, with overshadowed spaces in between stone blocks and visible fractures.

Meaning of the trompe l'œil decoration

Attempts to use a *trompe l'œil* image as a souvenir or token of friendship during the 18th and early 19th centuries should not be surprising; at the time, the eye-deceiving decoration could be found on table tops (with illusory objects painted or inlaid in marble³²),

³¹ Today only half of the entry, namely the illustration, is preserved. The name of the author of the entry was recorded in the *Verzeichniss der nachstehen citirten Stammbücher...* (Akc. 1967/13). The author could be identical with “Avemann Joh. Wilh. aus Copenhagen”, who in 1776 left an entry in the missing album owned by G. H. D. Rathje, formerly in the Stadtbibliothek Breslau, see: *Verzeichniss der nachstehen citirten Stammbücher...*; Akc. 1967/11, p. 39f.

³² An example of the former is one painted by Louis-Léopold Boilly, dated before 1793, today on display at the Wimpole Hall, UK, as a property of National Trust; examples of the latter can be found at the Prado, made around 1760–70 by Charles-Joseph Flipart for La Granga residence, see: BATTERSBY, *Trompe L’Oeil*, 98, 100.



13. Part of J.W.L. von Avemann's entry in the album amicorum of Helene Christine Wilhelmine von Eben und Brunn (Akc. 1949/1084, f. 1 [p. 27], Berlin 1794). Photo: Wrocław University Library

pottery and porcelain, including objects of everyday use, such as card game boxes or cups, paintings used for covering fireplaces during the summer (*devant de cheminée* in French), and many others.³³ It became a specialty of some artists, such as Nürnberg-based Christian Gottlob Winterschmidt (1755–1809)³⁴. *Quodlibets* can be found among personal notes, serving e.g. as journal entries.³⁵ The question is, therefore, how the *trompe l'œil* decorations conformed to the idea of *album amicorum* and which functions they could be charged with in such a context.

To explore the aesthetic possibilities first, any illustration accompanying the entry added an esthetical value to it, at the same time proving either the signator's skills or his or her willingness to employ a professional craftsman or artist. Imitating other materials or techniques could be an attempt to get a more "prestigious" one, which for some reasons could not be used. For instance, stone naturally could not appear in a book of friendship, and yet its association with "constancy" and "firmness" was often mentioned in entries, and the album itself or a single entry could be described as a "monument" to friendship.³⁶ Real prints, although quite often used in *alba amicorum*, could not be as easily accessible as a drawn copy.

In aforementioned Brade's entry in the album of Reiche (Akc. 1949/1032, f. 60v–61 [pp. 112–113]) one illusion: an imitation of a printed image, is accompanied by another, namely an imitation of a subsequent page, introduced for practical reasons to adjust the size of the image to the page.

³³ BATTERSBY, *Trompe L'Oeil*, 13f., 137.

³⁴ KRUEGER, "Trompe l'oeil," 88.

³⁵ Around the middle of the century, such was the case with drawings of Hans Christian Andersen, for example a *quodlibet* (HCA/1977/191) and its enhanced, coloured version (HCA/2005/154), both at the Hans Christian Andersen Museum in Odense.

³⁶ E.g. embroidery "so vest / wie dieser Fels: soll unser / Freundschaft sein:" by J. E. E. Auntkin in the album owned by Heinrich [E. G. H.] Richter (Akc. 1975/30, f. 163, no place, no date), see: MICHALSKA, "Świątynie przyjaźni," fig. 2.

Furthermore, different kinds of illusion were introduced for purely aesthetic reasons. Playing cards accompanying the entry of Jaenert (Ak. 1949/1035, f. 77v–78 [p. 159]) are nothing more than an illustration – most likely taken from another book of friendship – added to enrich the textual part of the entry, being a humorous variation on a common saying about being unlucky in cards and lucky in love:

Man sagt wer glücklich spielt der soll unglücklich freÿn,
Nun aber möcht ich gern in beyden glücklich seÿn,
Gesezt daß wird die Charten stets gut fielen,
So steht mir ja auch freÿ um eine Frau zu spielen.

The aesthetic reasons do not seem to be the sole motivation behind the *quodlibet* composed by Gloxin's cousin (Ak. 1949/1021, f. 98v–99 [pp. 198–199]). The core illustration: the young man in a Wertherian costume, adorning an urn with a garland of flowers, would represent a typical decoration for that time, drawing from the idea of a monument in a landscape garden.³⁷ It corresponded with the textual part of the entry, claiming: “Im Himmel einen Vater und in der Hütte / einen Freund! / dies ist der Wunsch / der beÿ unser Tren-/nung dir als das / letzte ‘Lebwohl!’”, since the monument could be interpreted as devoted to the idea of friendship or to the memory of a particular friend. The *trompe l'œil* setting, however not unusual (images illusorily attached to a wooden or even marble surface with wax were not unusual in books of friendship³⁸) could be seen as simply adding an artistic flavour, but the presence of the arthropods seems to be drawing from the tradition of illusionistic art of the previous centuries, combining naturalism and symbolic meaning of those creatures.³⁹ In this case, animals referring symbolically to change (a caterpillar and butterfly) or to vanitas (a spider and a fly, also a spider's web) could be explained with the situation: leaving words of valediction to a member of the family and apparently a dear friend.

Those semiotic possibilities of applying a *trompe l'œil* decoration could be far more significant. An imitation of a printed page, for instance, was offering an opportunity to change the status of the text presented in this way. In the entry left by Johann Daniel Schmidt in the book of friendship owned by his son (IV O 59a, p. 239 [241], Neusalz/Nowa Sól 1806; fig. 5), the eye-deceiving burnt corner was introduced to unveil an illusory page from a printed book, taking into account the verse number, most likely from the Bible:

17 Fürchte Gott. Ehre den König
und scheue niemand.
Vergelte nicht böses mit bösem
oder scheltwort mit scheltwort
Mein Sohn dein lebenslang habe
Gott vor augen und im hert[zen]
und hüte dich, das [du] in kein[e Sünde]

³⁷ MICHALSKA, “Świątynie przyjaźni”.

³⁸ Numerous examples were preserved in the collection of the Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg, see: *Die Handschriften der Stadtbibliothek Nürnberg*, e.g. no. 224, 227, 236.

³⁹ Harry BERGER, *Caterpillars. Reflections on Seventeenth Century Dutch Still Life Painting* (New York: Fordham University Press, 2011). See also: KEMP, “Fliege”.

willigest und thust wid[er Gottes]
gebot.⁴⁰

In fact, such a verse does not appear in the Bible. It is a compilation of different biblical (respectively: 1 Peter 2:17 and 3:9; Tobias 4:6) and extra-biblical (*scheue niemand*) verses, with some verbs conjugated (singular *vergelte* instead of plural *vergeltet*) to match the new subject – a moral instruction given by a father to his son before the departure of the latter for university. Although in the main part of the entry the contributor had already expressed his wishes for young Schmidt (“Laß das liebste deiner Sachen / so im Schlafen als im Wachen / stets der Umgang mit Gott seyn [...]”⁴¹), the *trompe l'œil* verses, legible only after turning the book around, extended this message and strengthened it with the authority of the Holy Scripture.

A *trompe l'œil* motif or composition could often introduce an additional, hidden message or a piece of information. Even a simple snippet ripped out of a calendar page could be chosen and placed carefully, to hide and at the same time unveil the name of the inscribing person, like in the presented example, where it is “covering” the given names of the author named Saphir (fig. 1), and yet one of them: Christoph, appears as the Name Day printed in the calendar. As the initial of the first letter: “J” is also visible, the author may be identified as Johann Christoph Saphir.⁴²

Interestingly, *quodlibets* offered an opportunity to include as much additional information as desired. The entire certain date or at least a year of the entry could be presented in the form of a calendar page of a frontispiece. *Quodlibets* could also contain an allusion to the contributor’s or book owner’s academic life or chosen vocation. In one composed by already mentioned Brand for Fritz Namsler (Akc. 1949/1029, f. 90v–91, pp. 213–214, Breslau 1798; fig. 7), the contributor included a book opened on the frontispiece with the title *Die / GroâeKunst / sein eigner MEDICUS / zu seyn*, referring most likely to really existing medical handbooks, published under almost the same title and with a very similar title page from 1721.⁴³ The clue hidden in the *quodlibet* is one of the reasons why Namsler has been believed to have been a physician.⁴⁴

Some of the illustrations were meant to develop a message included in the textual part of the entry. In the *quodlibet* accompanying the entry of Kitz from Brilon in Westphalia in a book of friendship of König (Akc. 1976/42, f. 80v–81, Kassel), the illustration was not only executed by Kitz himself (he left the signature “F. A. Kitz invenit et fecit 1775”), but also inscribed to explain its connection to the textual part of the entry – a quotation from Johann Peter Uz. A renown exponent of the 18th-century cult of friendship, in two stanzas of his poem *Die Zufriedenheit*, Uz described personified Joy (*Freude*) leaving unpeaceful

⁴⁰ Supplements in brackets added by Anna Michalska

⁴¹ Text entry was based on a prayer for 17 October published in *Gebete und Betrachtungen in Versen auf alle Tage des Jahrs*, Neudietendorf 1796. Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, accessed August 15 2019, <http://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb11278128-6>.

⁴² In 1790, a man of the same name became a member of Hamburgische Gesellschaft zur Beförderung der Künste und nützlichen Gewerbe, see: *Verhandlungen und Schriften der Hamburgischen Gesellschaft zur Beförderung der Künste und nützlichen Gewerbe. Erster Band. Geschichte der Gesellschaft, Einrichtung und Zweck derselben und Verhandlungen vom Jahr 1790* (Hamburg: Carl Ernst Bohn, 1792), 100.

⁴³ *Die Kunst sein eigner Medicus zu seyn, oder sich durch Beobachtung seines natürlichen Triebs gesund zu erhalten* (Franckenhausen, 1721), Bayerische Staatsbibliothek, accessed August 15 Aug 2020, <http://mdz-nbn-resolving.de/urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10471771-5>.

⁴⁴ Akc. 1967/13, p. 58.

palaces and choosing very different premises to live in: cottages, where carefully selected guests praised the idea of friendship. The *quodlibet* invented, as it was proudly stated, by Kitz, consisted of several elements, in part already discussed above: a playing card, a map and military plan, an open booklet with musical notation entitled *Menuet*, and two depictions of architectural structures: a garden belvedere in a form of a monopteros and a Renaissance villa with a Palladian window; the latter one bearing the inscription: *Tempel der Freude*, left with no doubt by the contributor himself. On the one hand, this inscription could have been introduced to make the depiction less random, to purposefully connect it with the textual part of the entry. On the other, such a villa may have represented Kitz's idea of a place appropriate for spending time with the closest people.

Other elements of Kitz's *quodlibet*, however, do not seem to refer to the verses by Uz, and have to be explained differently. Numerous of the objects arranged, or disarranged, by the authors of the *quodlibets* are specific enough to be recognized and properly described, and yet their actual meaning remains imponderable. It was quite a common practice of the time to write down so-called *memorabilia* in a book of friendship: information about how and where the book owner and the inscribing person met, what experiences they shared, and alike. Occasionally those *memorabilia* would be supplemented with images.⁴⁵ A *quodlibet* and *memorabilia* could be part of one entry, this being the case of the entry made by aforementioned Marbach (fig. 8), where *memorabilia* occupy an entire page (Ak. 1949/1038, f. 50v). It cannot be excluded that in some cases elements of a *quodlibet* could serve as a visual equivalent of a *memorabilia* note. Since the purpose of such practice was to evoke a vivid memory of a friend,⁴⁶ a *quodlibet* offered endless possibilities to build such a message. As already mentioned, the entire textual part of the entry could be disguised as a letter – a common way of communication for distanced friends. Images could represent places of meaning for both the contributor and the album owner. A kind of an arbour outside city walls presented in Namsler's album (fig. 7) may have been a venue for friendly gatherings, possibly a part of any *établissement*. Other objects could refer to the professional career, discussed books, joint musicmaking, games, etc. Pages with legible musical notation added another “multi-medial” touch: not only text and visuals, but also sound was used to compose a *memento* of the friendship.

If desired, the *trompe l'œil* device could help to hide a part of a message. Half-burnt pages, not completely visible drawings or maps, could be a challenge to viewer's perceptivity. In the aforementioned entry in the *album amicorum* of Wilhelmine Lessing, a famous writer's niece, the illusory folded corner “covers” most of the name of the inscribing person, making him anonymous to people from out of one specific social circle (fig. 4). Moreover, the “dog-ear” unveils the image on an illusory subsequent page, depicting a stone cross in a grassy meadow by a river and a forest in the background. Without any doubt the cross was a grave-marker; books of friendship of the time were full of little sketches of graves: knolls with crosses, marking death of a friend who had once made an entry. The anonymous contributor covered his name, but at the same time, he placed little blue flowers on the ground next to the cross: *Vergissmeinnicht*, forget-me-nots, one of the most popular symbols of friendship. The entire entry expressed the belief that although

⁴⁵ See: *Album amicorum* of Carl Heinrich Storch (Ak. 1949/1078, f. 124, [p. 275], Züllichau/Sulechów), with a humorous reference to the family name of the album owner.

⁴⁶ Werner Wilhelm SCHNABEL, *Das Stammbuch. Konstitution und Geschichte einer textsortenbezogenen Sammelform bis ins erste Drittel des 18. Jahrhunderts* (Tübingen: Max Niemeyer Verlag, 2003), 102f., 472ff.

people were mortal and their names had to vanish, a true friendship would reach behind the grave – a message very common for the *alba amicorum* of that time, yet rarely transmitted in such a way.

The idea to play with the book owner, and, obviously, all the subsequent contributors: hiding part of the message, or not giving it in the most direct way, belonged to the book-of-friendship tradition. Already older, especially 17th-century books of friendship included wordplays, rebuses, or other kinds of puzzles, meant to prove author's inventiveness and challenge the intelligence of any person interested in reading the entry. The extremely popular in Early Modern *alba amicorum* emblematic structures was also this kind of a "hidden message", with a very important visual component. Applying some of the *trompe l'œil* devices had a very similar effect. They were forcing the perceiver to take action: refrain from trying to fix the folded corner, turn the book around (the disorder in which the items were portrayed requires this to make different pieces legible), or to use a magnifying glass to read tiny letters and notes.

Authorship and quality of the trompe l'œil decorations

As already stated, the matter of artistic proficiency was crucial in the emergence of *trompe l'œil* and its vast popularity starting in the 17th century. Numerous stories concerning eye-deceiving pieces of art were tales of a brilliant and cunning artist who was able to fool his master or opponent into believing that the illusory curtain, grapes (Zeuxis and Parrhasius) or fly (e.g. Filarete) were real.⁴⁷

Without any doubt, some of the 18th- and early 19th-century book-of-friendship illustrations of this kind were commissioned from professional artists. The most obvious example of this practice is an illustration accompanying the entry by Friedrich Gustav Schilling in the *album amicorum* of Friedrich Samuel Fiedler (IV O 57, additional page pasted over f. 109, Neustadt Dresden 1786). The watercolour was painted on a separate page and glued into the album. Depicted items allowed to apply almost every eye-deceiving device: illusory papers have frayed edges, as if the missing parts have been torn away, or fold marks. The surface of the playing cards was presented as bearing signs of use: it is darker than other papers and has stains on it. Hair pins cast a different shadow when placed flat than when pinned through a piece of paper. The corner is not simply folded down completely flat, but rather curled. A small piece of paper on top, bearing the motto concerning friendship, is shown as pinned through.

Amateurs were with no doubt attempting to imitate *trompe l'œil* decoration, applying the motifs or devices they were capable of imitating. The results would be divergent, from very convincing to ones whose illusionism was merely agreed on. In numerous cases, the decision to include them in this paper was more a result of tracing the signs of author's intention to make the depicted object eye-deceiving or to reach towards the pictorial tradition of *trompe l'œil*. However, what used to be the reason for disregard or negative assessments for the scholars of the 19th century, can now be seen as a value of those depictions. A professional illustration always raises the question of divided authorship (author of the entry – author of the illustration) and connection between the textual and visual component of the

⁴⁷ Julia CARRASCO, "Kunst und Illusion in Kassel. Eine Einführung," in *Kunst und Illusion. Das Spiel mit dem Betrachter*, eds. Justus LANGE and Julia CARRASCO (Petersberg: Michael Imhof Verlag, 2016), 10. A list of illusory flies can be found in: KEMP, "Fliege".

entry.⁴⁸ In the case of an amateur illustration, this connection is undeniable, and searching for any hidden messages justified. Despite the artistic proficiency, the miniature from Fiedler's album is completely deprived of any informative content: the calendar page does not give any date, the inscription is perfectly neutral, and the face of the portrayed person covered. The only local feature is the text accompanying the musical notation, seemingly written in a Lusatian dialect transliterated into German.⁴⁹

Conclusion

The term *trompe l'œil* has never been applied as a category of book-of-friendship decoration for the collection of the Wrocław University Library. Most of the presented examples differ from the well-known, impressive *trompe l'œil* paintings or miniatures. The very size of the book page had to make most of the *quodlibet* compositions unconvincing. Quite often the contributors were most likely torn between the visual tradition of book-of-friendship illustration and an attempt to apply an illusionistic device, as with the *quodlibets* squeezed into frames – or even between two different kinds of illusion. And yet, despite all this, I have no doubts that those depictions cannot be properly understood outside the context of the *trompe l'œil* tradition, even though they rarely could fulfil the technical requirements of this kind of art: elaborated, thoughtful design, meticulous brushwork, and alike. As a part of an *album amicorum* entry, they were adopted to serve purposes characteristic of this kind of literature, namely transmitting biographical information and building a kind of a visual *memento*, often including an element of a puzzle.

⁴⁸ SCHNABEL, *Das Stammbuch*, 104f.

⁴⁹ I am thankful to Dr. Agnieszka Drożdżewska for this observation.

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