

Kimbell Education Programs

THE LURE OF DRESDEN

Bellotto at the Court of Saxony



Bernardo Bellotto, *The Zwinger Complex in Dresden* (detail), 1751/52, oil on canvas. Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden. Photo: Elke Estel/Hans-Peter Klut

Kimbell Art Museum

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PREPARING STUDENTS IN ADVANCE

We look forward to welcoming your school group to the Museum. Here are a few suggestions for teachers to help to ensure a successful, productive learning experience at the Museum.

LOOK, DISCUSS, CREATE

Use this resource to lead classroom discussions and related activities prior to the visit. (Suggested activities may also be used after the visit.)

REVIEW MUSEUM GUIDELINES

For students:

- Touch the works of art only with your eyes, never with your hands.
- Walk in the Museum—do not run.
- Use a quiet voice when sharing your ideas.
- No flash photography is permitted in special exhibitions or permanent collection galleries.
- Write and draw only with pencils—no pens or markers, please.

Additional information for teachers:

- Please review the bus parking information provided with your tour confirmation.
- Backpacks, umbrellas, or other bulky items are not allowed in the galleries. Free parcel check is available.
- Seeing-eye dogs and other service animals assisting people with disabilities are the only animals allowed in the Museum.
- Unscheduled lecturing to groups is not permitted.
- No food, drinks, or water bottles are allowed in any galleries.
- Cell phones should be turned to silent mode while in the Museum.
- Tobacco use, including cigarettes, cigars, pipes, electronic cigarettes, snuff, and chewing tobacco, is not permitted in the Museum or anywhere on the Museum's grounds.

PRONUNCIATION GUIDE

PEOPLE

Bähr , George	beh-ar / ye-orje
Bellotto, Bernardo	bel-LOHT -toe / bear-NAHR-doe
Brühl , Heinrich von	br-ool / hine-richk / vahn
Chiaveri, Gaetano	KEY-ah-ver-ee / guy-TA -noh
Knöffel , Johann Christoph	kuh-neh-fel / yo-han / kris-toff
Permoser, Balthasar	per-muhs-ehr / bahl-tah-sahr
Pesne, Antoine	pehn / an-twan
Pöppelmann , Matthäus Daniel	puhp-pel-mahn / ma-tay-hus / dah-niel
Spahn , Johann Heinrich Christian	shp-ahn / yo-han / hine-richk / krist-e-ahn
Thiele , Johann Alexander	TEAL-luh / yo-han / alex-zahn-der
Wittel, Gaspar van	vit-tell / gah-spar / vahn

PLACES

Belvedere	bell-vuh-der'eh
Campo San Giacometto di Rialto	cam-poh / sahn / ji-a-koh-met-toh / dee/ re-alto
Elbe	el-buh
Frauenkirche	frauw-en-ker-shuh
Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister	geh-mel-de-gahl-er-ee-ay / ahl-teh / my-ster
Katholische Hofkirche	kah-tol-he-shuh / hoff-ker-shuh
Königstein	kuh-nick-shtein

[Marienkirche](#)

mah-re-en-ker-shuh

[Pirna](#)

puhr-nah

[Schloss Moritzburg](#)

sch-loss / moh-ritz-bourg

[Sonnenstein](#)

zohn-nehn-shtein

[Staatliche Kunstsammlung](#)

shtaht-lich-uh / Kuhnst-zahm-luhn-ghen

[Zwinger](#)

sving-ehr

TERMS

[Meissen](#)

my-sin

[Sejm](#)

same

[Vedute](#) / [Veduta \(pl, sing\)](#)

veh-DUE-teh / veh-DUE-tah

ABOUT THE EXHIBITION



Bernardo Bellotto, *Dresden from the Left Bank of the Elbe, above Altstadt Bridgehead of the Old Town*, 1748, oil on canvas
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany

Bernardo Bellotto is recognized as one of the greatest view painters in history, acquiring his fame in mid-eighteenth-century Dresden as the court painter for the elector of Saxony, Frederick Augustus II—who was also King Augustus III of Poland. Over the course of a decade, Bellotto produced dozens of breathtaking depictions of the city and its environs, most of them monumental in scale. The success and renown of these grand, expansive works would earn Bellotto prestigious commissions at prominent courts throughout Europe. The artist's urban views of Dresden and neighboring Pirna are among the most fascinating portrayals of the Augustinian Baroque city and its surroundings. By artfully depicting Dresden's lively squares, prominent buildings, elegant mansions, and charming landscape, his pictures have lastingly shaped our cultural memory of the city's appearance. The rich detail of the paintings and their realism still impress viewers today and bring to life the earlier splendor of the capital of the Saxon electors, which went into decline during the Seven Years' War, starting in 1756. In fact, more than two centuries later, after the bombardment of Dresden in the Second World War, Bellotto's panoramic views of the city served as important records for the reconstruction of the destroyed buildings.

Bellotto's magnificent paintings of Dresden are now in the collection of the Gemäldegalerie (Picture Gallery) of the Dresden State Art Collections—a large selection of these are on view in this exhibition. They are introduced with portraits and allegories of the elector and his queen, as well as view paintings of Venice and Saxony by Bellotto's uncle and teacher Antonio Canaletto and the Dresden court painter Johann Alexander Thiele.

THE MAGNIFICENT COURT AT DRESDEN

When Bernardo Bellotto arrived in Dresden in 1747, the Saxon capital was a cultural center flourishing as never before, with the court attracting artists and scholars from throughout Europe. Two rulers in particular played a key role in this development: Elector Friedrich August I (also known as “Augustus the Strong,” who in 1697 was subsequently crowned August II, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania) and, in turn, his son, Friedrich August II (who was crowned August III, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania). Both had a passion for the visual arts, science, theater, and music and avidly supported and invested in their advancement in Saxony. Culturally, the Saxon court modeled itself on Venice, inviting musicians, stage designers, and artists from the “floating city” to the Elbe. The Saxon kings also emulated the opulence and spectacle of the French court at Versailles.

Dresden is not only indebted to these two kings for its Baroque architectural legacy, with numerous iconic buildings such as the Zwinger, the Hofkirche, and the Augustus Bridge, but also for many outstanding works of art—ranging from precious treasury objects, antique sculptures, porcelain, prints, and drawings to one of the most significant collections of old master paintings in the world. As major patrons of the arts, however, these two regents were actually upholding a long-standing tradition of collecting and conserving art in Dresden that stretched back to the first electors in the Albertine branch of the House of Wettin in the sixteenth century.



Left to right: Antoine Pesne, *Elector Friedrich August I of Saxony, as King August II of Poland (1670–1733)*, c. 1711, oil on canvas
Pietro Antonio Rotari (Workshop), *Elector Friedrich August II, as King of Poland August III, 1755–56*, oil on canvas
Pietro Antonio Rotari (Workshop), *Maria Josepha, Consort of King August III of Poland*, after 1755, oil on canvas
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany



Pietro Antonio Rotari (Workshop), *Elector Friedrich August II, as King of Poland August III, 1755–56*, oil on canvas

Pietro Antonio Rotari (Workshop)
Italian, 1707–1762

Elector Friedrich August II, as King of Poland August III

1755–56, oil on canvas

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany

August III's portrait—after a lost original by the Italian painter Count Pietro Antonio Rotari, who moved to Dresden in 1752–53 after a long period at the Viennese court—underscores his sovereignty as King of Poland. His election by the Sejm, the assembly of Polish nobles, was secured after much diplomatic wrangling and significant sums of money. The monarch's breastplate and commander's baton allude to his role as supreme military commander. The badges of the Catholic Order of the Golden Fleece and the Polish Order of the White Eagle (the latter in the blue sash) signify his Catholicism and bond with the Polish people.

Under August III's rule, Dresden and Saxony continued to enjoy the golden age of music, art, and architecture that had begun during his father's reign. The king also enlisted a number of architects and artists—principally Italians, including Bernardo Bellotto and Rotari—to work at the court in Dresden. However, his reign was also marked by military conflicts—notably the Seven Years' War, which took a heavy toll on Saxony. The costs of maintaining the Kingdom of Poland, financing wars, and running the court in a style befitting a powerful king led to Saxony's economic ruin.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

What is the king wearing? What is he holding? Discuss the different materials and textures that you see. How might these details communicate the sitter's wealth and status as King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania?

Describe the king's expression and posture, or, better yet, stand tall and recreate it yourself! How does recreating the pose make you feel? What do you think it communicates to viewers?

Describe an eye-catching detail. What colors do you see? How do they help your eye travel around the painting?

Where is the light source? Where do you notice strong shadows or highlights? How does the artist draw attention to the king's face?

CREATE your own self-portrait or work with a partner to create portraits of each other. Be sure to wear a favorite outfit and hold something meaningful to you.

CANALETTO AND THE VENETIAN *VEDUTA*

Bernardo Bellotto was trained by his uncle, Giovanni Antonio Canal (1697–1768), called Canaletto, at the height of his own artistic career. While urban panoramas and scenes of the inner city had become increasingly popular in seventeenth-century Dutch art, at the beginning of the eighteenth century, *veduta* painting was still a very new subject in Italy. The Dutch artist Gaspar van Wittel had introduced it, by the turn of the century, to Venice, where it was promptly taken up by local artists. Canaletto began to work in this genre from about 1722 and soon came to dominate the market, receiving scores of commissions from foreign collectors, particularly English aristocrats. A “grand tour” of the continent’s great artistic capitals was the culmination of a young gentleman’s education. Canaletto’s commissions reflected the increased demand among travelers and collectors for views of Venice as mementos of their time in the city.

Canaletto established the *veduta* as a portrait of the city, emphasizing its topography and architecture, with vignettes of daily life. While his *vedute* carefully document the actual urban setting, they are always effectively staged scenes, whose details are adjusted for compositional effect. His portrayal of buildings, piazzas, streets, canals, and their spatial relationships to each other was facilitated by optical instruments such as the camera obscura. In his uncle’s studio, Bellotto, too, learned how to use optical aids to produce perspectively accurate drawings and transfer them to the canvas.



Canaletto, *The Campo S. Giacometto di Rialto in Venice*, 1725–26, oil on canvas
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany



Canaletto, *The Canal Grande in Venice*, 1722–23, oil on canvas

Canaletto
Italian, 1697–1768

The Canal Grande in Venice

1722–23, oil on canvas

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany

Canaletto captured everyday life in the lagoon city in great detail—from the pomp of the procurator striding out of Palazzo Corner della Ca’ Grande on the left to goods being unloaded at the Campo San Vio. The execution of the peeling façade of the Palazzo Barbarigo is incredibly atmospheric—painted with very free, almost impressionistic brushstrokes. The intriguing *sgraffito* adorning the wall depicts an unrigged merchant ship. This *veduta* and its pendant were among the 268 paintings (including works by Van Dyck, Reni, and Vermeer) purchased for August III in 1741 from the collection of Count Franz Joseph Georg von Walstein of Bohemia. They were likely the first paintings by Canaletto ever seen in Dresden. They can be precisely dated because they depict a raft-like vessel with a structure resembling a crane, identifiable as a *scavafango* (a type of dredger) used to deepen the canals. Historical records confirm that it was employed at this location on the mouth of the Canal Grande in May 1722, reaching Santa Maria della Salute by early 1723.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

Describe the different colors that you see and where you find them. How do they help direct your eye around the painting?

Where is the light coming from? How does it interact with the water and architecture? Which areas of the painting are brightest and which areas are more in shadow?

Take time to explore the many vignettes that compose this scene. What are the different people doing? If you could be anyone in this painting, who would you be and why?

What do you find most interesting about this view? Why do you think the artist chose to create such a detailed painting of this area of Venice?

ZOOM IN on a part of this painting that you find most interesting. Sketch a drawing of it on an expanded scale or write a short dialogue featuring one of the characters it includes.

JOHANN ALEXANDER THIELE AND THE PANORAMA OF DRESDEN

Prior to Bernardo Bellotto's arrival in Dresden, Saxon court painter Johann Alexander Thiele (1685–1752) captured the city and its environs in sweeping panoramas, often painting the same subject from different angles and perspectives. Appointed court painter to August III in 1738, Thiele primarily produced views of the Saxon countryside—wide, expansive vistas that express the diversity and riches of the Saxon landscape and sometimes romanticize its beauty. Thiele infused the Dutch and Flemish landscape traditions of the previous century with his own theatrical, Baroque manner.

In contrast to the Venetian *vedute* painters, who created faithful depictions of buildings and perspectival space, Thiele changed what he saw and made the buildings appear less tangible. Favoring painterly effects over verism, he often worked from his imagination and freely invented framing backdrops and dramatic, receding vistas. Thiele's panorama of Dresden from the right bank of the Elbe is painted from a position similar to Bellotto's famous "Canaletto View." Although Dresden's newly constructed landmarks—the Alexander Bridge, Hofkirche, and Frauenkirche—are clearly identifiable, in contrast to Bellotto's clarity and precision, their definition is somewhat hazy, as they seem to merge into the surrounding landscape and passing clouds.



Johann Alexander Thiele, *View of Dresden with Augustus Bridge*, 1746, oil on canvas
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany



Johann Alexander Thiele, *Landscape with Moritzburg Castle*, 1738, oil on canvas

Johann Alexander Thiele
German, 1685–1752

Landscape with Moritzburg Castle

1738, oil on canvas

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany

From a high vantage and framed by towering trees of a forest, our gaze is drawn to an enchanting image of the hunting château Schloss Moritzburg, surrounded by ponds at the center of an expansive, manicured parkland. Thiele depicts the castle with a mix of realism and fantasy, recreating some features that were never realized. Encircled by a wall with round towers at its corners, the original Renaissance palace was built in the 1540s by Duke Moritz, later Elector Moritz of Saxony. In the 1720s, Augustus the Strong ordered a wholesale redesign with expanded quarters set on a raised terrace suitable for hosting opulent festivities. In the foreground of this painting, King August III, in blue and yellow hunting dress, and his future prime minister, Count Heinrich von Brühl, lead a festive hunting party. In contrast to the more topographically descriptive Italian *veduta* painting style, Thiele works in the more painterly manner of Dutch and Flemish landscape painters.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

Describe what you see happening in this landscape. Which details help to tell the story? Who are these people? What are they doing?

Discuss how the artist organizes this spectacular view. How does Thiele create a sense of space? What light effects do you notice? Which colors attract your eye and where are colors repeated?

How does the artist frame this view and create a sense of scale? What directional lines do you see? How do they lead your eye in and around the painting?

Compare the images in the foreground and background. What differences do you notice? Why are both important?

RESEARCH Moritzburg Castle, which still stands today in Moritzburg, Germany! How have other artists depicted the castle in the past? Compare these images with Thiele's painting. What surprises do you find?

BERNARDO BELLOTTO AND THE MARVELS OF DRESDEN

Bernardo Bellotto, who, like his uncle, also called himself “Canaletto,” arrived in Dresden in 1747. Although his career would later take him from Dresden to Vienna, Munich, and Warsaw, he was never to set foot in the city of his birth again. His talents were quickly rewarded; in 1748, Bellotto was promoted to court painter and given preferential status, with an annual salary of 1,750 thalers, compared to his fellow painter Thiele’s salary of 1,000 thalers. Bellotto’s production of large-scale, detailed paintings during his stay in Dresden prior to the Seven Years’ War is impressive. He realized fourteen views of Dresden, eleven *vedute* of the outlying village of Pirna, and individual depictions of the Königstein Fortress. He re-created nearly all of the paintings of Dresden and Pirna for then prime minister Count von Brühl; he also produced etchings after most of these pictures. Although Bellotto delivered the paintings upon completion, they were not exhibited immediately; instead they were kept in a storeroom, possibly because the rooms for their display were not yet complete. Whatever the reason, the war and its aftermath saw to it that they remained in storage until they were discovered and exhibited in 1834.

Bellotto’s views of Dresden are masterpieces of *veduta* painting. Full of lively narrative and painted with wonderful artistry, they give us glimpses into the life of this electoral and royal capital unrivaled by works by any other painter. No simple, pedantic reproductions of reality would have this power, however. Bellotto’s *vedute* are, in fact, careful artistic constructions. The impression of realism turns out, on closer inspection, to be a product of Bellotto’s readiness to take artistic liberties whenever he felt his compositions demanded them. Only art can create visual expressions of a world so saturated with reality.



Bernardo Bellotto, *The Old Fortifications in Dresden*, 1749–50, oil on canvas
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany



Bernardo Bellotto, *Dresden from the Right Bank of the Elbe, below the Augustus Bridge*, 1748, oil on canvas

Bernardo Bellotto
Italian, 1722–1780

Dresden from the Right Bank of the Elbe, below the Augustus Bridge

1748, oil on canvas,

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany

This is Bellotto's most celebrated view of Dresden, known today as the "Canaletto View." He made the original version for August III in 1748. The second picture that he completed in Dresden, Bellotto conceived it as a pendant to the view from above the Augustus Bridge. The artist subsequently made three replicas of this work, including one for Prime Minister von Brühl. This version was most likely made for the Saxon chief inspector of the treasury, Johann Heinrich Christian Spahn. As compensation for money he had embezzled, Spahn was obliged to surrender to the Electoral Picture Gallery his own painting collection, including this work.

Bellotto skillfully placed the river, diagonally, as a stage on which he unfolds his city panorama. The Katholische Hofkirche provides a strong vertical accent on the right, repeated by the considerably smaller dome of the Frauenkirche in the distance. A wonderful, late-afternoon sunlight illuminates the Augustus Bridge, spanning the gently flowing Elbe. The buildings take on exceptional architectural plasticity in the strong contrasts created by the low-lying sun, making every detail stand out. Bellotto's mastery as a painter is especially evident in the assured brushstrokes that create glittering reflections on the ripples of the water, creating, as it were, a duplicate city.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

How does sunlight illuminate this scene? Which direction is the light coming from? What time of day/year is it? Describe the weather.

Look closely at the different people in the painting. Can you count them all? What are they doing? Who is working and who is relaxing? How do you know?

Bellotto captures both movement and tranquility in this painting. What elements of the scene appear to be shifting or in motion to you? Which parts feel more static?

Why do you think the artist chose to paint this particular view of Dresden? What might it tell us about the city and its people?

PLAY a game of "I spy" using the details found in Bellotto's painting. Below are a few sample hints:
I spy with my little eye something . . .

- white as snow
- blowing in the breeze
- that starts with the letter S
- short and furry
- repeated twelve times
- that rhymes with rattle

BERNARDO BELLOTTO'S MAJESTIC VIEWS OF PIRNA

From 1753, after his portraits of the royal capital, Bellotto was commissioned to paint *vedute* of Pirna, a small town on the Elbe, about twenty kilometers upstream from Dresden. A surviving decree from the elector required the Pirna bailiff “to assist the royal court painter, Bernardo Bellotto Canaletto, who has been charged with preparing drawings of the surroundings of Pirna etc., without demur, supplying everything he requires,” thus ensuring that Bellotto’s on-site drawings would be topographically and architecturally accurate.

Known today as the “gateway to Saxon Switzerland,” Pirna holds a strategic site, located on the route from Dresden to Bohemia. Atop a rocky spur overlooking the town, the medieval castle of Sonnenstein, which had been converted into a modern fortress, guarded the trade routes to Bohemia, by land and water. In his various views of the town, Bellotto orchestrates the motifs of the Elbe and river valley, the looming Sonnenstein Fortress, and the old town dominated by the large roof of the Marienkirche. Bellotto’s extraordinary talent is evident in the way the play of light lends plasticity to the modeling of the architecture and creates reflections in the water, and in the life-like rendering of the figures at work or leisure. For centuries, the quarries near Pirna were the region’s most important source of sandstone. Bellotto captures a vivid image of the huge sandstone blocks from the nearby stone quarries stockpiled on the riverbank, waiting shipment to the Saxon capital.



Bernardo Bellotto, *Pirna from the Posta Hills*, 1753–54, oil on canvas
Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany



Bernardo Bellotto, *Sonnenstein Fortress above Pirna, Seen from Hausberg*, 1753–55, oil on canvas

Bernardo Bellotto
Italian, 1722–1780

Sonnenstein Fortress above Pirna, Seen from Hausberg

1753–55, oil on canvas

Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany

This evening view of Sonnenstein Fortress combines a pastoral scene with an urban landscape. The town of Pirna, cast in shadow by the setting sun, stretches out at the foot of the fortress in the valley on the left. The fortress itself and the meadow in the foreground are still bathed in the mild evening light. A shepherd and shepherdess watch over their herd of sheep, goats, and a cow, lending the scene an air of bucolic peace and calm. Bellotto found inspiration for the sheep and the goat in two prints by the Dutch artist Nicholaes Berchem, published a century earlier. Behind them, two elegant gentlemen in red tails point toward the distant Dresden skyline, where one can just make out the dome of the Frauenkirche and a few towers. Between Dresden and Pirna unfolds a wide Elbe landscape of meadows, bushes, and trees; the foothills of the Elbe Sandstone Mountains loom on the horizon.

FOR CLASSROOM DISCUSSION / ACTIVITY

Discuss how your eye travels around the painting. What do you notice first and what strategies does the artist use to redirect your gaze? Think about Bellotto's use of space, shape, and color.

Take a moment to observe the people and animals in this painting. Who else is appreciating the magnificent view? How do you know?

Why do you think the king commissioned Bellotto to create paintings of Pirna? How does this scene compare to Bellotto's views of Dresden? Why might this painting have pleased the king?

IMAGINE you are one of the characters in Bellotto's painting and take an inventory of your senses. What sounds do you hear in this space? What do you smell? What sights are shifting all around you? What might you feel at your fingertips?

BERNARDO BELLOTTO: A TIMELINE

- 1722 Bernardo Bellotto is born in Venice, son of Lorenzo Antonio and his wife Fiorenza Domenica, née Canal, sister of the painter Giovanni Antonio Canal, called Canaletto (1697–1768).
- c. 1735 Bellotto enters the workshop of his uncle, Canaletto.
- 1738 Bellotto is admitted to the Venetian painters' guild.
- c. 1741 The artist embarks on a study trip to the outskirts of Venice with his uncle.
- 1741 Bellotto marries Maria Elizabetha Pizzorni in Venice.
- 1742 He takes a study trip to Rome, stopping in Florence and Livorno.
- 1744–45 He travels in northern Italy and paints *vedute*, including two of Turin for Charles Emmanuel III, King of Sardinia, Duke of Savoy.
- 1747 Bellotto is called to the Dresden Court. He leaves Venice with his wife, their five-year-old son, Lorenzo, and servant Francesco Checo.
- 1748 Bellotto is appointed court painter by King August III.
- 1758 He sells five paintings of Königstein Fortress—which August III, having fled to Warsaw during the war with Prussia—could not accept. Bellotto travels from Dresden to Vienna.
- 1759 In Vienna, he enters into the service of Empress Maria Theresa, making thirteen views of Vienna and the court palace. Twenty-five paintings by Bellotto and other valuable works are stored at Königstein Fortress.
- 1760 Bellotto's home is destroyed when Prussian troops attack Dresden.
- 1761 The artist arrives in Munich; he paints three *vedute* for the Bavarian court.
- 1762 Bellotto returns to Dresden. In an inventory, he estimates his losses (art collection, library, printing supplies, and more) at 50,000 thalers—a huge sum of money.

- 1763 Upon the death of August III, Bellotto loses his appointment as court painter. He paints replicas of earlier works, allegories, and architectural fantasies for private clients.
- 1764 Bellotto receives a temporary contract to instruct entry-level courses in perspective at the newly founded Dresden Academy of Arts.
- 1766 He requests a leave of absence with the intention of traveling to Saint Petersburg.
- 1767 Bellotto arrives in Warsaw, on route to Russia. King Stanisław II August Poniatowski offers the artist employment as a *vedutista* in his court.
- 1768 Bellotto is named royal court painter in Warsaw, where he and his family relocate.
- 1770 Bellotto's son, Lorenzo, dies.
- 1774–77 Bellotto completes twenty-two *vedute* for the Royal Castle in Warsaw.
- 1780 On November 17, Bellotto dies. He is buried in the Capuchin Church in Warsaw.



Bernardo Bellotto, *Dresden from the Right Bank of the Elbe, above the Augustus Bridge*, 1747, oil on canvas
 Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, Gemäldegalerie Alte Meister, Dresden, Germany

THE AGE OF AUGUST II AND AUGUST III: A TIMELINE

- 1694 Friedrich August I, called Augustus the Strong (1670–1733), becomes elector of Saxony.
- 1696 Augustus the Strong bids for the Polish crown, a title decided not dynastically but by royal election. His son, Prince-electoral Friedrich August II, is born.
- 1697 Augustus the Strong secretly converts to Catholicism, allowing him to rule over Catholic Poland. He is elected August II, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania.
- 1704 Augustus the Strong is dethroned in Poland; Stanisław Leszczyński is elected king.
- 1706 Augustus the Strong renounces the Polish throne.
- 1709 Augustus the Strong regains the Polish throne.
- 1719 Prince-electoral Friedrich August (1696–1763) and Maria Josepha, Archduchess of Austria (1699–1757), marry in Dresden.
- 1722 Prince Friedrich Christian, son of Prince-electoral Friedrich August, is born.
- 1733 August the Strong dies in Warsaw. His son becomes elector of Saxony under the title Friedrich August II of Saxony. Count Heinrich von Brühl (1700–1763) is named cabinet minister, president of the chamber, and general treasury inspector. The double election of Stanisław Leszczyński and Friedrich August II of Saxony sparks the War of the Polish Succession (1733–38).
- 1734 Friedrich August II is crowned King August III of Poland.
- 1740 The Holy Roman Emperor, Charles VI, dies. Maria Theresa is his successor in the Austrian Hereditary lands. Frederick the Great of Prussia invades Silesia, beginning the War of the Austrian Succession.
- 1745 Following a Prussian victory, Dresden remains occupied by Frederick the Great until the treaty of Dresden is signed. Austria is forced to renounce Silesia.

- 1746 Brühl is appointed prime minister of Saxony.
- 1756 Frederick the Great invades Austrian-allied electoral Saxony, beginning the Seven Years' War. Prussian troops occupy Dresden. Electoral Saxony falls under Prussian control.
- 1759 After a defeat, Frederick the Great is forced to release Dresden to the army of the Holy Roman Empire.
- 1760 Saxony is once again occupied by Prussian troops. Dresden is bombarded, with extensive damage to the city and its suburbs.
- 1763 The Seven Years' War draws to a close. On October 5, August III dies, followed by Brühl's death on October 13. Prince-elector Friedrich Christian becomes elector but dies on December 17.



Map of Europe between 1748 and 1763

This map shows Europe in the years after the Treaty of Aix-la-Chapelle (1748), which marked the end of the War of Austrian Succession, and the Seven Years' War (1756–63). Europe did not see another major geographical change until 1766. Saxony is the small country marked in yellow at the center of the map; its ruler, Bellotto's patron, also reigned in Poland/Lithuania. The red line marks the borders of the Holy Roman Empire.

BUILDING BAROQUE DRESDEN

- 1704 Matthäus Daniel Pöppelmann (1662–1736) begins to draft plans for a new palace in Dresden.
- 1706 Pöppelmann commences work on Königstein Fortress.
- 1710 The Meissen Porcelain Manufactory is established after Johann Friedrich Böttger (1682–1719) succeeds in producing delicate red stoneware and white hard-paste porcelain—the first to do so outside Asia.
- 1710–19 The first phase of construction begins on Pöppelmann’s Zwinger complex, assisted by the sculptor Balthasar Permoser (1651–1732). It is conceived as a ceremonial festival ground for the 1719 marriage of Saxon Prince-electors Friedrich August II and Archduchess Maria Josepha of Austria.
- 1716 Pöppelmann builds the Opera House at the Zwinger, the largest theater on German soil.
- 1722–28 The second phase of construction on the Zwinger is completed.
- 1723–36 Moritzburg Castle, conceived as a hunting lodge, is redesigned for Augustus the Strong.
- 1726–34 The Protestant Frauenkirche (Church of Our Lady), commissioned by Dresden’s city council and designed by George Bähr (1666–1738), is erected. The distinctive silhouette of its dome was inspired by the dome of the church of Santa Maria della Salute in Venice.
- 1727–31 The Elbe Bridge (Augustus Bridge) in Dresden is rebuilt to Pöppelmann’s plans, its seventeen arches constructed with blocks from the Elbe Sandstone Mountains.
- 1729–33 The old Dutch Palace (later known as the Japanese Palace), purchased in 1717 to house Augustus the Strong’s enormous collection of Chinese, Japanese, and Meissen porcelain, is reconstructed by Pöppelmann and colleagues.
- 1737–40 Johann Christoph Knöffel (1686–1752) constructs the Brühlsches Palais (Brühl’s Palace). Count von Brühl’s estate was developed to include an art gallery building, belvedere, library, and gardens.

- 1738 The Opera House at the Zwinger is rebuilt by Andrea Zucchi (1679–1740) and Giovanni Battista Groni (1682–1748). Its reopening rings in a new era for the court opera.
- 1738–55 The Katholische Hofkirche (the Catholic Court Church) is built for Saxony's recently converted rulers to plans by Gaëtano Chiaveri (1689–1770).
- 1745/46 Under Knöffel's direction, the royal mews are converted into the Gemäldegalerie (Picture Gallery). The paintings are displayed, floor to ceiling, in uniform ornate, gilded frames with royal insignias on green damask walls.



Michael Keyl, *Map of Dresden with Fortifications and Sieges in September 1759 and July 1760, during the Seven Years' War*, after 1760, colored engraving