

= Anna Maria Luisa de ' Medici =

Anna Maria Luisa de ' Medici (11 August 1667 ? 18 February 1743) was the last scion of the House of Medici . A patron of the arts , she bequeathed the Medici 's large art collection , including the contents of the Uffizi , Palazzo Pitti and the Medicean villas , which she inherited upon her brother Gian Gastone 's death in 1737 , and her Palatine treasures to the Tuscan state , on the condition that no part of it could be removed from " the Capital of the grand ducal State [and from] the succession of His Serene Grand Duke . "

Anna Maria Luisa was the only daughter of Cosimo III de ' Medici , Grand Duke of Tuscany , and Marguerite Louise d 'Orléans , a niece of Louis XIII of France . On her marriage to Elector Johann Wilhelm II , she became Electress Palatine , and , by patronising musicians , she earned for the contemporary Palatine court the reputation of an important music centre . As Johann Wilhelm had syphilis the union produced no offspring , which , combined with her siblings ' barrenness , meant that the Medici were on the verge of extinction .

In 1713 Cosimo III altered the Tuscan laws of succession to allow the accession of his daughter , and spent his final years canvassing the European powers to agree to recognise this statute . However , in 1735 , as part of a territorial arrangement , the European powers appointed Francis Stephen of Lorraine as heir , and he duly ascended the Tuscan throne in her stead . After the death of Johann Wilhelm , Anna Maria Luisa returned to Florence , where she enjoyed the rank of first lady until the accession of her brother Gian Gastone , who banished her to the Villa La Quiete . When Gian Gastone died in 1737 , Francis Stephen 's envoy offered Anna Maria Luisa the position of nominal regent of Tuscany , but she declined . Her death , in 1743 , brought the royal House of Medici to an end . Her remains were interred in the Medicean necropolis , the Basilica of San Lorenzo , Florence , which she helped complete .

= = Biography = =

= = = Early life = = =

Despite her mother 's efforts to induce a miscarriage by means of riding , Anna Maria Luisa de ' Medici , the only daughter and second child of Cosimo III de ' Medici , Grand Duke of Tuscany , and his consort , Marguerite Louise d 'Orléans , was born in Florence on 11 August 1667 . She was named after her maternal aunt Anne Marie Louise d 'Orléans , Duchess of Montpensier .

Her parents ' relationship was quarrelsome ; Marguerite Louise took every chance to humiliate Cosimo . On one documented occasion , she branded him " a poor groom " in the presence of the Papal nuncio . The enmity between them continued until 26 December 1674 ; after all attempts at conciliation failed , a stressed Cosimo consented to his wife 's departure for the Convent of Montmartre , France . The contract created that day revoked her privileges as a *petite fille de France*) , and declared that upon her death all her assets were to be inherited by her children . Cosimo granted her a pension of 80 @, @ 000 livres in compensation . She abandoned Tuscany in June 1675 ; Anna Maria Luisa never saw her again . Although Cosimo doted on his daughter , she was raised by her paternal grandmother , Vittoria della Rovere .

= = = Electress Palatine = = =

In 1669 , Anna Maria Luisa was considered as a potential bride to Louis , le Grand Dauphin , the heir @-@ apparent of Louis XIV of France . Cosimo III did not like the idea of a French marriage , and never devoted himself fully to the cause (she was later rejected) . Instead , Cosimo offered her to his first choice , Peter II of Portugal . Peter 's ministers , fearing that Princess Anna Maria Luisa would dominate Peter II and fearing she might have inherited Marguerite Louise 's manner , declined . In fact , contemporaries thought her traits to be a combination of those of her father and paternal grandmother , Vittoria della Rovere .

Following refusals from Spain , Portugal , France and Savoy , Leopold I , Holy Roman Emperor , suggested Johann Wilhelm , Elector Palatine . James II of England put forward his brother @-@ in @-@ law , Francesco II d 'Este , Duke of Modena , but the Princess deemed a duke too lowly in terms of protocol for the daughter of a grand duke . The Elector Palatine obtained the style Royal Highness from the Holy Roman Emperor for Cosimo III in February 1691 . (Cosimo had hitherto been outranked by the Duke of Savoy ? much to his anger ? who derived royal status from his successful pretendership to the abolished Cypriot throne) . Consequently , Johann Wilhelm was ultimately chosen . He and Anna Maria Luisa were married by proxy on 29 April 1691 . At the accompanying festivities , a contemporary describes the Electress 's physical attributes : " In her person , she is tall , her complexion was fair , her eyes large and expressive , both those and her hair were black ; her mouth was small , with a fullness of the lips ; her teeth were as white as ivory "

She departed for Düsseldorf , her husband 's capital , on 6 May 1691 , accompanied by her younger brother , Gian Gastone . Johann Wilhelm surprised her at Innsbruck , where they officially married . The Palatinate Anna Maria Luisa arrived in was ravaged by the ongoing Nine Years ' War , in which Louis XIV assaulted the Palatinate on behalf of his brother , Philippe of France , Duke of Orléans , occupying the city of Philippsburg in the process .

The Electress became pregnant in 1692 ; however , she miscarried . It is thought that soon after arrival she contracted syphilis from the Elector , which explains why Anna Maria Luisa and Johann Wilhelm failed to produce any children . Anna Maria Luisa and Johann Wilhelm , notwithstanding , shared a harmonious marriage . The Electress spent her time enjoying balls , musical performances and other festivities . He commissioned a theatre for her where the comedies of French playwright Molière were performed . Because Anna Maria Luisa patronised many musicians , the contemporary Palatine court enjoyed regard as an international centre of music . She invited Fortunato Chelleri to court and appointed him maestro di cappella (" music teacher ") . Agostino Steffani , a polymath , was sponsored by the Electress from his arrival in Düsseldorf , in 1703 , until her return to Tuscany ; the Conservatorio library in Florence houses two editions of his chamber duets .

Anna Maria Luisa arranged a marriage for her younger brother at the instigation of their father : On 2 July 1697 Gian Gastone de ' Medici married Anna Maria Franziska of Saxe @-@ Lauenburg , heiress of the eponymous duchy , in Düsseldorf . Gian Gastone 's wife repulsed him , and for that reason , they separated in 1708 .

The same year as Gian Gastone 's marriage , the Peace of Ryswick ended the Nine Years ' War : French troops withdrew from the Electoral Palatinate and Johann Wilhelm received the County of Meigen . Following the revocation of the Edict of Nantes , a document which had hitherto given rights to Calvinists , in 1685 , 2 @,@ 000 French Huguenots emigrated to the Electoral Palatinate . Johann Wilhelm , under criticism for his treatment of the Palatine Protestants from the Elector of Brandenburg introduced a Religionsdeklaration in 1705 , which sanctioned religious freedom .

= = = Tuscan succession = = =

Cosimo III wished to alter the male @-@ only Tuscan line of succession so as to allow the accession of his daughter , Anna Maria Luisa , in the event of a male @-@ line succession failure . But his plan was met with fierce opposition from the European powers . Charles VI , Holy Roman Emperor , Tuscany 's nominal feudal over @-@ lord , subscribed , but only if he should succeed her . Cosimo and herself were at odds with the proposal . Without a concord in sight , the " Tuscan question " became dormant .

Some years later , as the question of the succession became more urgent , Cardinal Francesco Maria de ' Medici , Cosimo III 's brother , was released from his vows and coerced into marrying the incumbent Duke of Guastalla 's elder daughter , Eleanor , in 1709 . The Electress urged him to care for his health and " give us the consolation of a little prince . " However , two years later , he died without issue , taking with him any hope of an heir .

Following the death of his heir apparent , Ferdinando , in 1713 , Cosimo deposited a bill in the Senate , Tuscany 's titular legislature , promulgating that if Cosimo and his new heir apparent , Gian

Gastone , were to predecease the Electress , she would ascend the throne . Charles VI was furious ; he replied that the Grand Duchy was an imperial fief and therefore he alone possessed the prerogative to alter the laws of succession . To complicate things further , Elisabeth Farnese , heiress of the Duchy of Parma , the second wife of Philip V of Spain , as a great @-@ granddaughter of Margherita de ' Medici , exercised a claim to Tuscany . In May 1716 , Charles VI , who constantly changed his stance on the issue , told Florence that the Electress 's succession was unquestioned , but added that Austria and Tuscany must soon reach an agreement regarding which royal house was to follow the Medici .

In June 1717 , Cosimo declared his wish that the House of Este should succeed the Electress . Charles VI had previously offered the Grand Duke territorial compensation ? in the form of the State of Presidi ? if he chose quickly , but reneged . In 1718 , Charles VI repudiated Cosimo 's decision , declaring a union of Tuscany and Modena (the Este lands) unacceptable . Hereafter , a stalemate existed between them .

= = = Return to Florence = = =

The Elector Palatine died in June 1716 . His widow , Anna Maria Luisa , returned to Florence in October 1717 . Dowager Grand Princess Violante Beatrice , her brother Ferdinando 's widow , and Anna Maria Luisa did not enjoy an amiable relationship . Upon hearing of Anna Maria Luisa 's intention to return , Violante Beatrice prepared to depart for Munich , her brother 's capital , but Gian Gastone wished her to stay , so she did . To keep the two ladies from quarrelling over precedence , Cosimo III defined Violante Beatrice 's status just before the Electress 's arrival by appointing her Governess of Siena .

On 4 April 1718 England , France and the Dutch Republic (and later Austria) selected Don Carlos of Spain , the elder child of Elisabeth Farnese and Philip V of Spain , as the Tuscan heir (with no mention of Anna Maria Luisa) . By 1722 , the Electress was not even acknowledged as heiress , and Cosimo was reduced to a spectator at the conferences for Tuscany 's future . In the midst of this , Marguerite Louise , Anna Maria Luisa 's mother , died . Instead of willing her valuables to her children , as prescribed by the 1674 agreement , they went to the Princess of Epinoy , a distant relative .

On 25 October 1723 , six days before his death , Cosimo III distributed a final proclamation commanding that Tuscany shall stay independent ; Anna Maria Luisa shall succeed uninhibited after Gian Gastone ; the Grand Duke reserves the right to choose his successor . Unfortunately for Cosimo , Europe completely ignored it . Gian Gastone , now the Grand Duke , and Anna Maria Luisa were not on good terms . He despised the Electress for engineering his unhappy marriage with Anna Maria Franziska of Saxe @-@ Lauenburg , while she detested his liberal policies : he repealed all of his father 's anti @-@ Semitic statutes and revelled in upsetting her . Consequently , the Electress was compelled to abandon her apartment in the left wing of the royal palace , the Pitti , for the Villa La Quiete . She refurbished La Quiete 's house and gardens with the assistance of Sebastiano Rapi , the gardener of the Boboli Gardens , and the architects Giovanni Battista Foggini and Paolo Giovannozzi . In the period 1722 ? 1725 , the Electress embellished the villa further by commissioning twelve statues of various religious figures .

In spite of their mutual dislike , the Electress and Violante Beatrice attempted to improve Gian Gastone 's poor public image together . Rumours abounded that the Grand Duke had died ; it was a rarity for the public to see him . To dispel the said rumours , the Electress compelled him to make an appearance ? his last one ? in 1729 , on the feast day of the patron saint of Florence , John the Baptist . The Ruspanti , Gian Gastone 's morally corrupt entourage , hated the Electress ; and she , them . Violante Beatrice tried to withdraw the Grand Duke from their sphere of influence by organising banquets . His conduct at these literally sent those in attendance scrambling for their carriages : he vomited repeatedly into his napkin , belched and told rude jokes . These distractions ceased upon Violante Beatrice 's death in 1731 .

In 1736 , during the War of the Polish Succession , Don Carlos was banished from Tuscany as part of a territorial swap , and Francis III of Lorraine was made heir in his stead . In January 1737 , the

Spanish troops , who had occupied Tuscany since 1731 , withdrew ; 6 @,@ 000 Austrian soldiers took their place .

Gian Gastone died from " an accumulation of diseases " on 9 July 1737 , surrounded by prelates and his sister . Anna Maria Luisa was offered a nominal regency by the Prince de Craon , the Grand Duke 's envoy , until Francis III could arrive in Florence , but declined . At Gian Gastone 's demise , all the House of Medici 's allodial possessions , including £ 2 @,@ 000 @,@ 000 liquid cash , a vast art collection , robes of state and lands in the former Duchy of Urbino , were conferred on Anna Maria Luisa . In regards to this , her most notable act was the Patto di Famiglia (" Family Pact ") , signed on 31 October 1737 . In collaboration with the Holy Roman Emperor and Francis of Lorraine , she willed all the personal property of the Medici 's to the Tuscan state , provided that nothing was ever removed from Florence .

= = = Death and legacy = = =

The " Lorrainers , " as the occupying forces were dubbed , were popularly loathed . The Viceroy , the Prince de Craon , whom the Electress disliked for his " vulgar " court , allowed the Electress to live undisturbed in her own wing of the Pitti , living in virtual seclusion , only on occasion receiving a select @-@ number of guests under a black dais in her silver @-@ clad audience room . She occupied herself financing and overseeing the construction of the Cappella dei Principi ? started in 1604 by Ferdinando I de ' Medici , Grand Duke of Tuscany ? to the tune of 1 @,@ 000 crowns per week , and she donated much of her fortune to charity : £ 4 @,@ 000 per annum . This is equivalent to £ 577 thousand in present @-@ day terms . On 18 February 1743 , Anna Maria Luisa de ' Medici , Dowager Electress Palatine , died of an " oppression on the breast " . Sir Horace Mann , 1st Baronet , a British resident in Florence , recalled in a letter that " The common people are convinced she went off in a hurricane of wind ; a most violent one began this morning and lasted for about two hours , and now the sun shines as bright as ever ... " The royal line of the House of Medici became extinct with her death . Her will , having been completed just months before , according to Sir Horace Mann , left £ 500 @,@ 000 worth of jewellery to the Grand Duke Francis and her lands in the former Duchy of Urbino to the Marquis Rinuccini , her main executor and a minister under her father , Cosimo III . She was interred in the crypt that she helped to complete in San Lorenzo ; although not entirely finished at the time of her death , her testament stipulated that part of the revenue of her estate should " be used to continue , finish and perfect ... the said famous chapel San Lorenzo " .

Anna Maria Luisa 's single most enduring act was the Family Pact . It ensured that all the Medicean art and treasures collected over nearly three centuries of political ascendancy remained in Florence . Cynthia Miller Lawrence , an American art @-@ historian , argues that Anna Maria Luisa thus provisioned for Tuscany 's future economy through tourism . Sixteen years after her death , the Uffizi Gallery , built by Cosimo the Great , the founder of the Grand Duchy , was made open to public viewing .

In 2012 after concern caused by the 1966 Flood of the Arno River , her bones were exhumed . A scientific examination found no traces of syphilis , which she had long been thought to have died from .

= = Ancestors = =

= = Titles , styles , honours and arms = =

= = = Titles and styles = = =

11 August 1667 ? 29 April 1691 : Her Highness Princess Anna Maria Luisa

29 April 1691 ? 8 June 1716 : Her Serene Highness The Electress [Palatine of the Rhine]

8 June 1716 ? 18 February 1743 : Her Serene Highness The Dowager Electress [Palatine of the Rhine]