

GALILEO MUSICAL TRIVIA

Janek got the idea of writing a musical inspired by the life of Galileo while leafing through the book Starry Messenger, written and illustrated by Petr Sís.

Along with stage designer Šimon Caban and costume designer Simona Rybáková, Janek headed out to Florence for inspiration. They were escorted out of the technical museum where Galileo had an entire floor dedicated to him because Šimon was photographing the exhibits. They thankfully did not confiscate his film, so in the musical, you may encounter faithful replicas of the devices that Galileo used in his research

Gianna de Medici never existed. “It is a kind of essence of the feminine political intrigue of the Medici family. And the touch of a soft hand in the field of science is always welcome”, explains Janek.

When studying historical sources, Janek discovered that which no historian has put together - in 1593 both Giordano Bruno and Galileo Galilei were vying for the position of head of the mathematics department of the University of Padua. So it is more than likely that besides the proven exchange of correspondences, they also met.

Janek imagined Cardinals Angeloni and Badaloni as representatives of the very worst qualities of the Roman Curia. And he and Šimon greatly enjoyed the scene where they commandeered the collections of the new Pope. Only later, two years after the premiere, Tomáš Trapl, a representative of Inchofer, brought Janek a publication mentioning that Maffeo Barberini had had two cousins. Both cardinals, of course. And that they were taking care of the pope’s famous collection for which he had no time due to his obligations. Bingo!

Maffeo Barberini was not only Galileo’s protector and patron. He admired the genius scientist so much that he even wrote glorious poems about him. That makes his naming as pope all the more of a dramatic break. As Urban VIII, he was forced by circumstances to lead a trial against Galileo that could cost him his life.

Eppur si muove - And yet it moves - well that was something Galileo really never said nor could even have said. Because his life hung in the balance. The stake in Piazza del Fiori was already standing. And Galileo was not released after his sacking, but rather was sentenced to life in prison.