
The Well Dressed Tent

Being A Survey of Tent Ornamentation
through Period Art

by LD Friedrich Wilhelmssohn

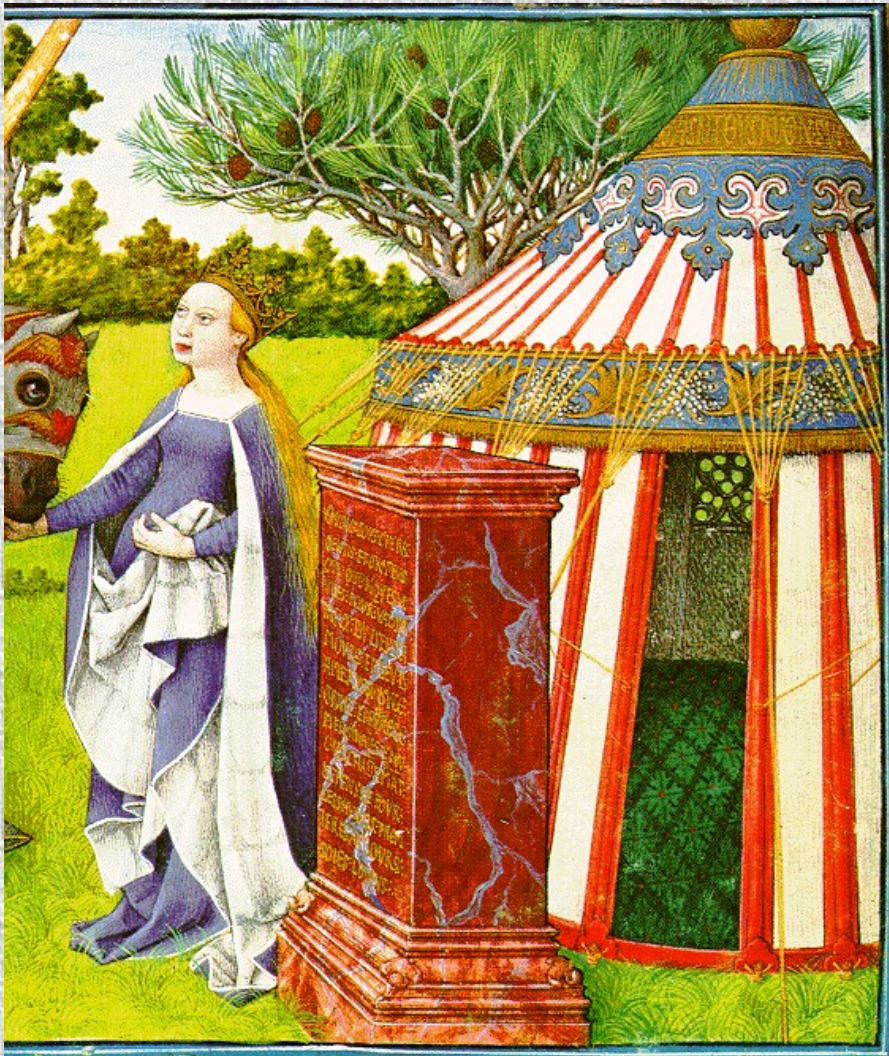
MKA Gene Eisele

At Studium Generale, Bofferach

Kingdom of the Outlands

March 21st AS 44 (2009)

The Well Dressed Tent



Outline

- Tents were decorated!
 - ◆ Very simple
 - ◆ Very elaborate
- How was it done?
- How can we recreate it?

Detail from illumination in King Rene d'Anjou's "Book of Love, 1457

The Well Dressed Tent



- Simple seam stripes
- Valance fancier
- Ball finial

The Capitulation of Colle di Val d'Elsa
1479

“Biccherna” or cover of a revenue office account book

The Well Dressed Tent



- Equestrian portrait of Guidoriccio da Fogliano
 - ◆ SIMONE MARTINI
 - ◆ 1328-30
 - ◆ Fresco, 340 x 968 cm
 - ◆ Palazzo Pubblico, Siena

The Well Dressed Tent



- Seam Stripe
- Ball Finial
- Heraldry Displayed
- Colored edging on valance
- Studded leather peaks
- Note Thatched wedges
 - ◆ Unique arms on shields

The Well Dressed Tent



- Seam stripes
- Fancy Valance
- Ball finial (disk?)
- Arms displayed
- Studded leather Peak

St. Martin Renounces His Weapons

Simone Martini

1312-1317

Fresco, Cappella di San Martino, Lower Church,

San Francesco, Asissi

The Well Dressed Tent

- Solid Colors
- Fringe
- Valance and Ridge decorated
- Pennant



Mucius Scaevola

BALDUNG GRIEN, Hans
1531

Lime wood, 98 x 68 cm
Gemäldegalerie, Dresden

The Well Dressed Tent



- Solid colors
- Interesting story
 - Siena was suffering from earthquakes
 - Citizens moved into tents outside the city

Madonna del Terremoto
Francesco di Giorgio Martini
1467, Panel 40 x 53 cm, Archivio di Stato, Siena
“Biccherna” or cover of a revenue office account book

The Well Dressed Tent



- Solid Colors
- Daged Valances
- Heraldic Display
- Peak Pennants

From Paolo Santini's 15th-century engineering book, De Machinis, ff. 13v-14r.

The Well Dressed Tent



- Fancy Valances
- Finials
 - ◆ Fleurs
 - ◆ Birds
 - ◆ Artichokes?

Camp before a tournament. In British Library?
Original 1630's Italian. A redrawing appears in "Daily Life in Chaucer's England"

The Well Dressed Tent



- Solid Colors w contrasting details
 - ◆ Text
 - ◆ Gothic Arches
 - ◆ Rays

Charles of Blois, duke of Brittany, is taken prisoner at the Battle of La Roche-Derrien (1347).

(BNF, FR 2643)

Jean Froissart, Chronicles
fol. 180

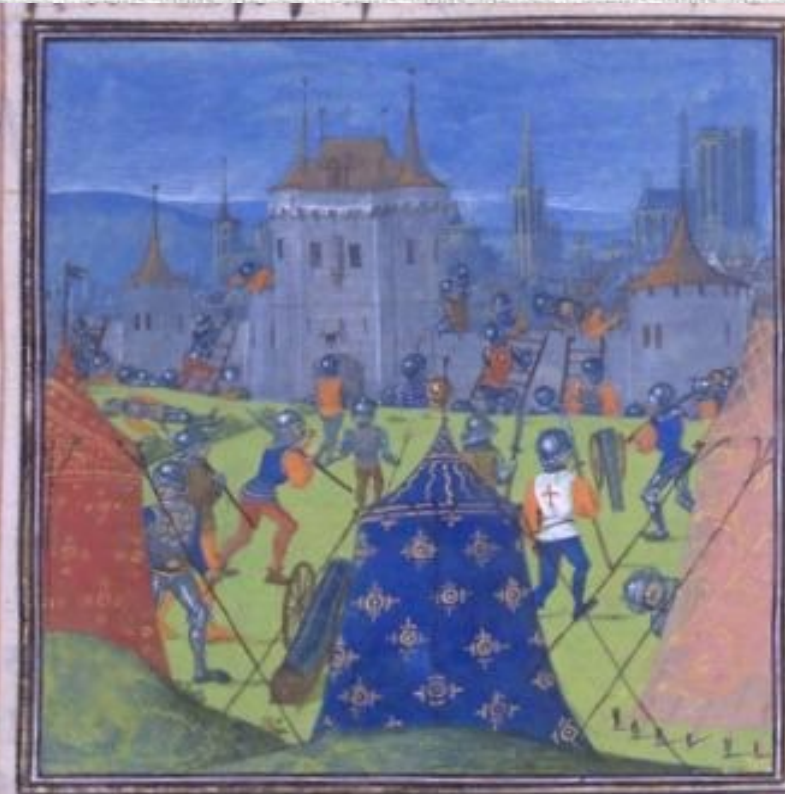
Flandres, Bruges 15th Century.
(170 x 200 mm)

The Well Dressed Tent

moist longuement cy ple
commet le roy d'angleterre as
s'iega la cite de reims. Le
deuxcens. iv. chap.



©Bibliothèque nationale de France



Comet messe trois mareschal
du duc de castille print une
ville noee ruelles a sept lieues
de st Jacques seant ou royaume
de castille

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- Note that ornamentation does not always follow seams

Two more from Froissarts Chronicals

Siege of Reims
Siege of Roalès

The Well Dressed Tent



- Alternating color panels on roof
- Brocade Walls?
- Lined with different brocade?



The Romance of Alexander (Alexander the Great)
Flemish illuminator Jehan de Grise and his workshop, 1338-44

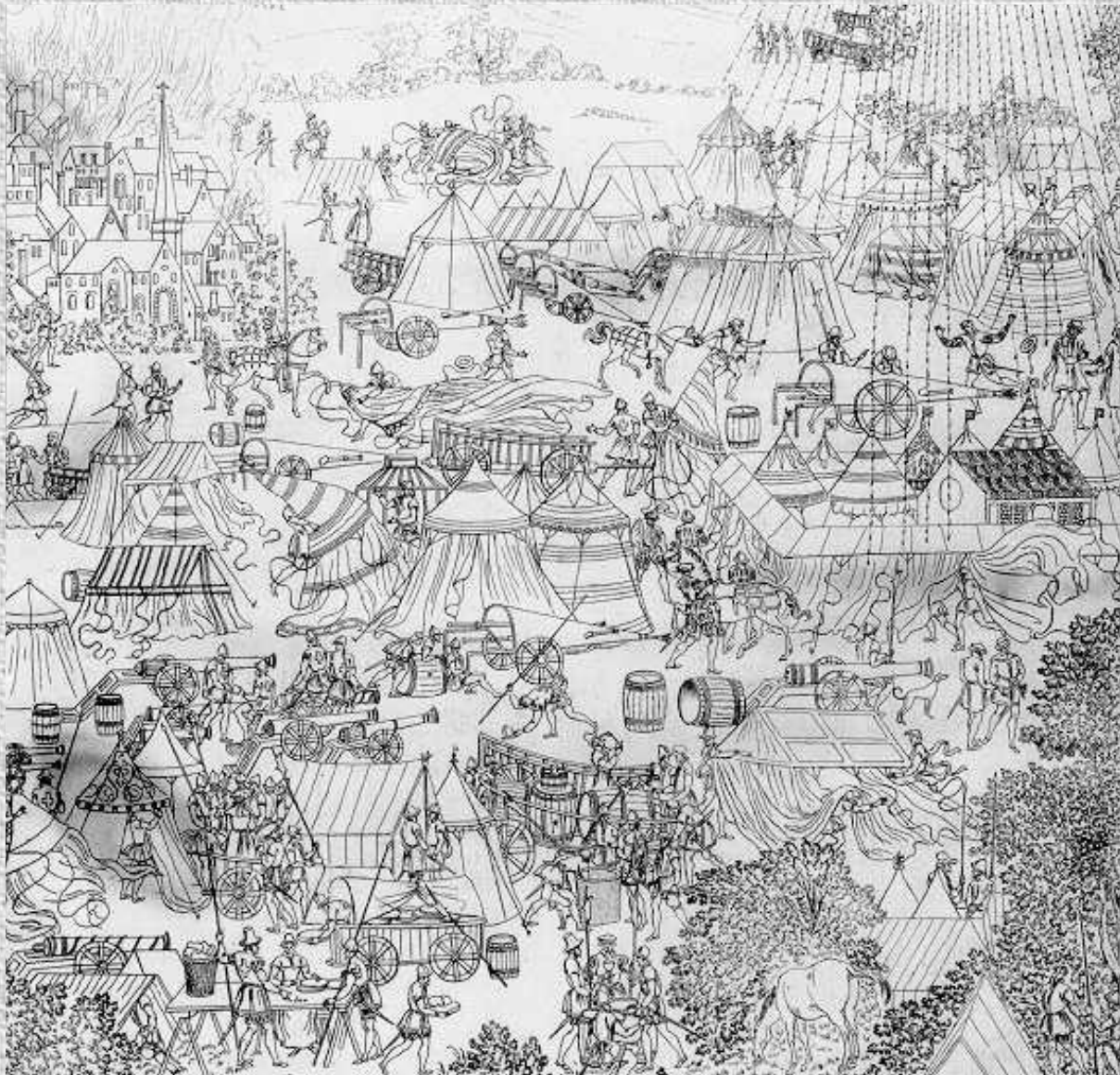
The Well Dressed Tent

- Interesting detail on door edging



The Romance of Alexander
Hi-res images from Oxford University
image.ox.ac.uk
Bodleian Library MS 264

The Well Dressed Tent



- Horizontal Stripes
- Swirls
- Lozenges
- Plain

Seige of Bologne by Henry VIII in 1544

Engraving by James Basire after S.H.Grimm from the original paintings at Cowdray which were destroyed by fire, National Army Museum.”

Original date of art is questionable.

The Well Dressed Tent



- Gothic Arches
- Indigo?

The Siege of Samaria
From a 15th-century French "historical
bible",
Francais 9, Fol. 172,
Guiard des Moulins, at the BNF.

The Well Dressed Tent



- Fringe
- Embroidered Valance?
- Text

From King Rene's
"Book of Love"
1457

The Well Dressed Tent



- Seam stripes
- Top and bottom of roof only

German woodcut
1520

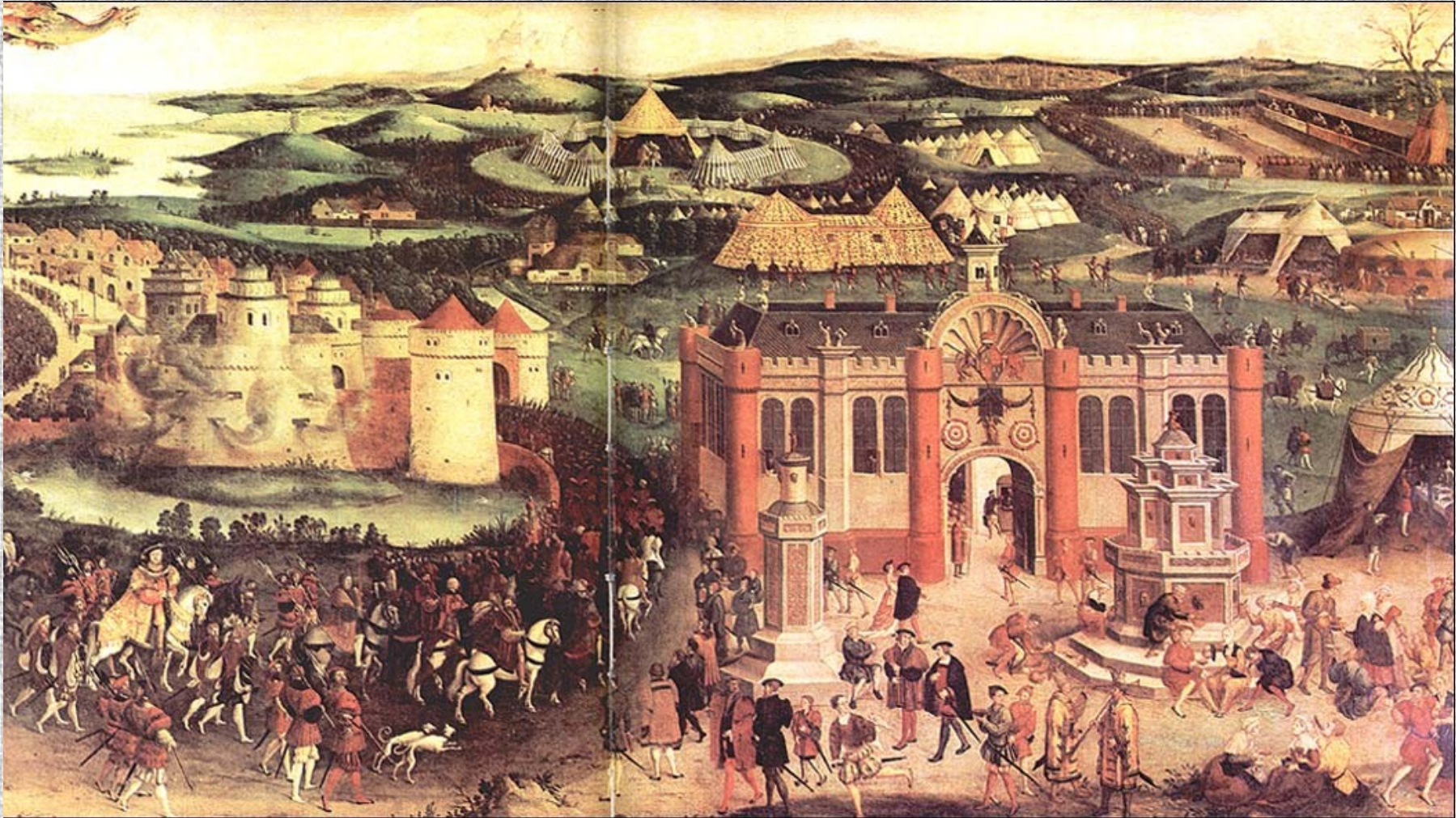
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- Iron tent spikes

Army Pitches Camp from
Chanson d'Aspremont
1240-1250
British Library

The Well Dressed Tent



Field of the Cloth of Gold, Colored print 1774 from a 16th century oil painting.
Original painting in the royal collection.

The Well Dressed Tent

- How did they do it?
 - ◆ Painting
 - ◆ Embroidery
 - ◆ Appliqué
 - ◆ Brocade
- The only surviving examples I have found are appliqué.



Tent in Basel, Switzerland
Belonged to the Golden Star Guild prior to 1655
photo by Master Terafan Greydragon (Peter Barclay)

The Well Dressed Tent

- Can see colored stitching on inside
- Indigo dye?



Tent in Basel, Switzerland

photos by Master Terafan Greydragon (Peter Barclay)



The Well Dressed Tent

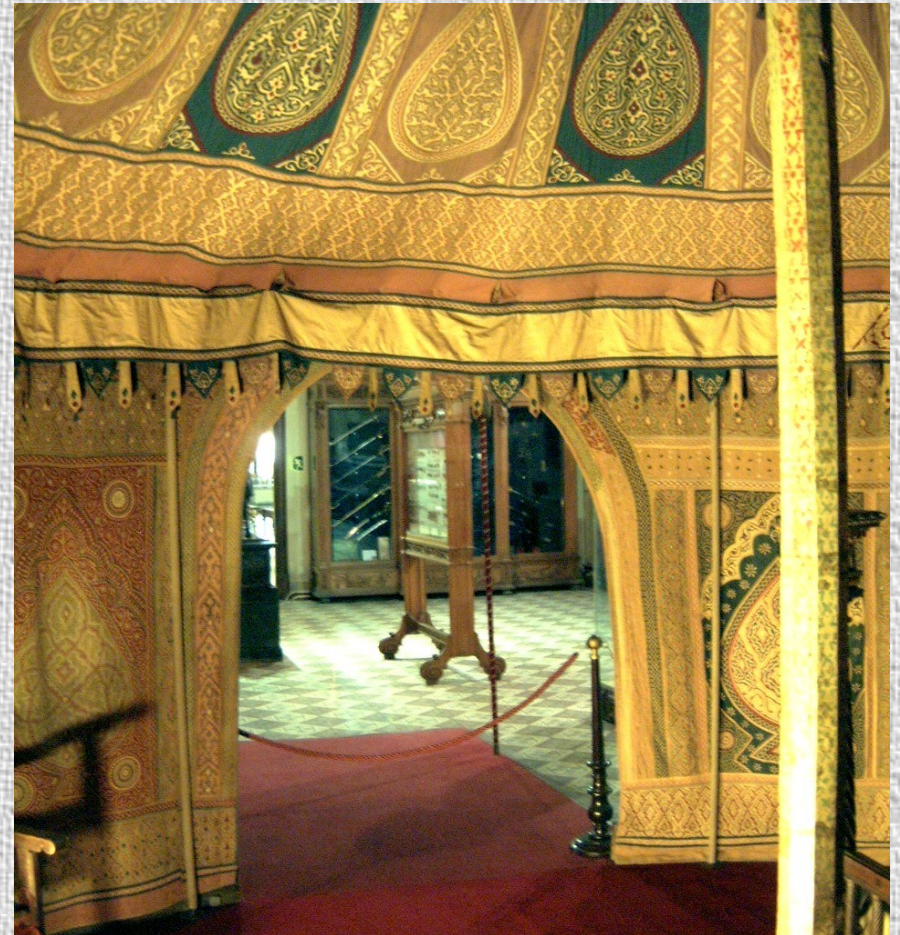
- Wood, Leather and Iron Peak cap
- Leather and Iron banner
 - ◆ Removable Spike



Tent in Basel, Switzerland

photos by Master Terafan Greydragon (Peter Barclay)

The Well Dressed Tent



Tent in Spanish Army Museum, Madrid, Spain
Given to Alphonso de Sousa, Governor of the Portugese colony in India (1542-1545)
Later given to King Carlos V of Spain
photos by Master Terafan Greydragon (Peter Barclay)

The Well Dressed Tent

- Made in India
- Walls and roof lined with appliquéd layer



Tent in Spanish Army Museum,
Madrid, Spain
photos by Master Terafan
Greydragon (Peter Barclay)

The Well Dressed Tent

- How can we do it?
 - ◆ Painting.
 - ◆ Exterior Latex house paint diluted 1:1 with water
 - ◆ Appliqué
 - ◆ Should be easy with simple designs
 - ◆ Embroidery
 - ◆ Yeah Right!
 - ◆ Also, I've found no evidence it was done this way in period
 - ◆ Brocade
 - ◆ Could work very well for an interior lining
 - ◆ Probably not good for exterior (strength, waterproofing)
-

The Well Dressed Tent

- Recap
 - ◆ Tents were decorated
 - ◆ Colored cloth as well as undyed
 - ◆ Very simple to extremely complex patterns
 - ◆ Applique definitely period
 - ◆ Other methods conjectural
- ◆ These notes will be available online at welldressedtent.com



Photo: A beautiful but naked pavilion. (tent and photo by Friedrich Wilhelmssohn)
