



Libraries through the lens

Wiblingen Abbey library, Ulm, Germany

THIS month's Libraries Through the Lens marks a departure for Thomas Guignard's usual imagery, highlighting how his photography has widened his own areas of architectural interest.

He says: "My little photography project on library architecture keeps evolving over time. At first, I was only focused on contemporary library design, then veered towards the Brutalist icons of the 1970s, through which I became interested in postwar Modernism, etc.

"Without any formal training, this journey became how I gradually learned more about architecture history and theory. As I turned my hobby into this

new learning path, I also started photographing more diverse architectural styles.

"Which is how we come to this photograph of the Wiblingen Abbey library near Ulm, Germany. This rococo extravaganza sits pretty much at the exact opposite of the modern (some would say austere) rooms I still confess a personal preference for, yet I can't deny its photogenic appeal!

"Constructed between 1737 and 1740, the library was among the northern wing expansion of the abbey, under the direction of Maurermeister Christian Wiedemann of Elchingen and his son Johann who continued his father's work

upon his death in 1739."

Thomas adds: "The frescoes were added in 1744 by Franz Martin Kuen and the sculptures representing Christian and classical allegories are the work of Dominikus Hermenegild Herberger.

"Following the Napoleonic wars, the abbey was closed and became residence for the Württemberg rulers before serving as infantry barracks. Today, the abbey church still serves the local Catholic parish and the cloister is shared between the university of Ulm, a retirement home and a museum, through which the library can be freely visited."

● <https://thomasguignard.photo>