Portrait of Arnošt Chotek in the Uniform of a General of the Imperial and Royal Cavalry

The portrait of the seated general and prominent Czech nobleman (oil on canvas, 105 × 84.5 cm / frame: wood, carved and gilded, 115 × 95 cm) was initiated by the artist himself during visits and personal discussions held over the course of Vochoč's commission for Arnošt Chotek (1844–1927), specifically during the restoration of part of the family portrait gallery, ordered by the then owner of the Veltrusy estate and château.

Jan Vochoč carried out the restoration of paintings at the Veltrusy château from August 1916, working intensively from 1917 until 1919. Vochoč's regular visits and stays resulted in the cleaning, renovation, and light retouching of twenty works from the château's gallery.

For an artist who had studied at art academies in Prague and later in Munich, taken part in the artistic life of the Czech colony in Paris together with his friend Alphonse Mucha, travelled through Southeast Europe, visited the Czech intellectual and artistic minority in Bulgaria, and shared in the monastic community on Athos, this was the last and already exhausting stage of life, yet one still driven by a persistent, provocative dream – to hold his own exhibition in the Mecca of art and the city on the Seine, of paintings shaped both by the echoes of Post-Impressionism and by Pointillism and the Parisian avant-garde.

Chotek's 1919 portrait is in fact one of the very last of Vochoč's works, as the painter passed away in March 1920. It documents the painter's portrait technique, fully in the spirit of the Munich academic training, both in overall composition and in detail – including the masterfully captured physiognomy of the sitter, with full respect for the volume and character of the period military attire (ceremonial uniform), and it is a brilliant testimony to the painter's skill and academic training.