

GALLERIA
BORGHESE

BORGHESE GALLERY'S STORIES

A LITTLE HANDBOOK

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GALLERIA
BORGHESE



by the education department

BUT what is BORGHESE GALLERY ??



SCIPIONE BORGHESE

cardinal and
master of the house

1. It is the villa that **I** built in the early 17th century to house my collection of artworks and antiquities.
2. It was transformed by my heirs. At the beginning of 19th century, one of them sold the antiquity collection to Napoleon: now it is in Paris, at the Louvre Museum.
3. The whole building, with its furniture and the masterpieces inside, was bought by the Italian State at the beginning of the 20th century: so, today, it is a public **MUSEUM**, open to everyone, and not only to the **experts** and the Borghese family's guests!
4. It is a precious treasure chest, a world heritage site: we save it for you, for your sons and for the future generations.



How can you visit BORGHESI GALLERY ??

It is an historic building:
that makes it different from other museums.

For this reason I have thought about some RULES.

meanwhile ...

apart from the fact that I never liked chaos, the building really cannot contain too many people at the same time. And, to be honest, pushing your way through the crowd is not a good way to visit the museum!!! Then:

1. I had to consider - and I'm so very sorry for this - that a turn of visit is 2 hours long,
2. and every 2 hours only a fixed number of people can access to the museum.

some INFORMATIONS and RULES

BEFORE THE ENTRANCE

1. leave your **BAGS**, all the bags, even the small one (including backpacks), at the cloakroom.
2. Have you picked up your **TICKET**? You can find it at the ticket office, just outside the museum
3. This is a little handbook: it includes a map where to find the most important artworks and some information. If you would like to know more, check our website or go to the **BOOKSHOP** outside, near the ticket office!
4. Don't forget: food and drinks must be consumed outside of the museum! What a disaster would be if something spilled onto my beautiful and precious floor ...!
5. **RESTROOMS** are in the basement and on the stair-case, between 1° and 2° floor.

If the time has come, start to get in line to enter!



INSIDE

1. Wear your **MASK** correctly! It has to cover your mouth and your nose.
2. If you are with your parents, don't leave them: visiting all together is better, more interesting and amusing! After all, a Museum is not a good place to get lost!
3. Borghese Gallery is a public place: Do I have to tell you to have respect for the place and for others? You already know it, am I right? For example, don't lie on the floor, on the steps, or somewhere else: there are comfortable seats where you can rest (look for them at the first floor).
4. I have to ask you to turn your **MOBILE PHONES** - those strange objects that let you speak with distant people - to silent mode!
5. I saw many people use them **TO TAKE PHOTOS**! I like it! But, please, remember: no flash! You don't know how dangerous it can be for my works of art, especially for my paintings!
6. Inside the museum, everything you see is precious and delicate! Look, look everywhere, with attention, even closely... But needless to say that

YOU SHALL NOT TOUCH ANYTHING... right?



room VI
Bernini
*Enea, Anchise
and Ascanio*



room IV
Bernini
Rape of Proserpina



room III
Bernini
Apollo and Daphne



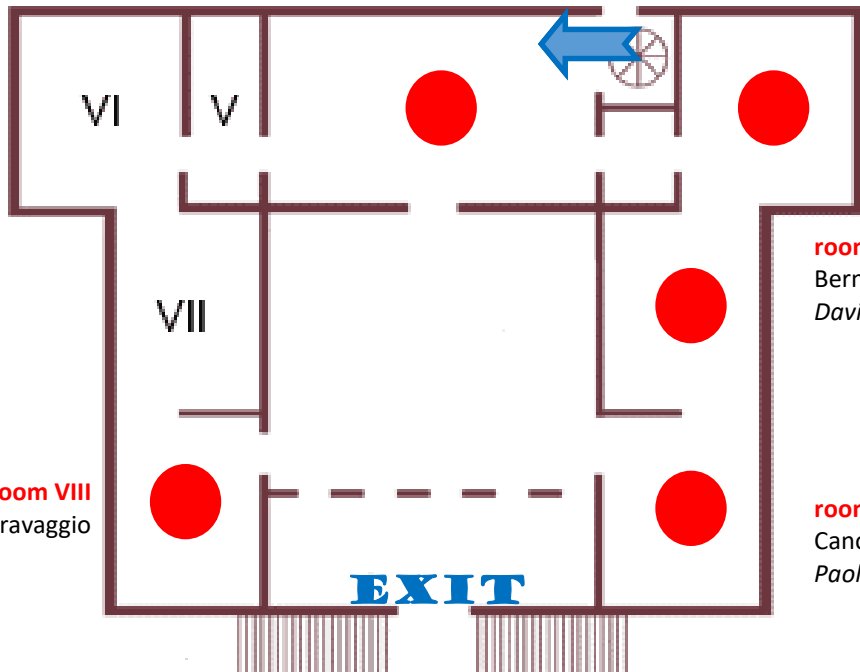
room II
Bernini
David



room I
Canova
Paolina



room VIII
Caravaggio

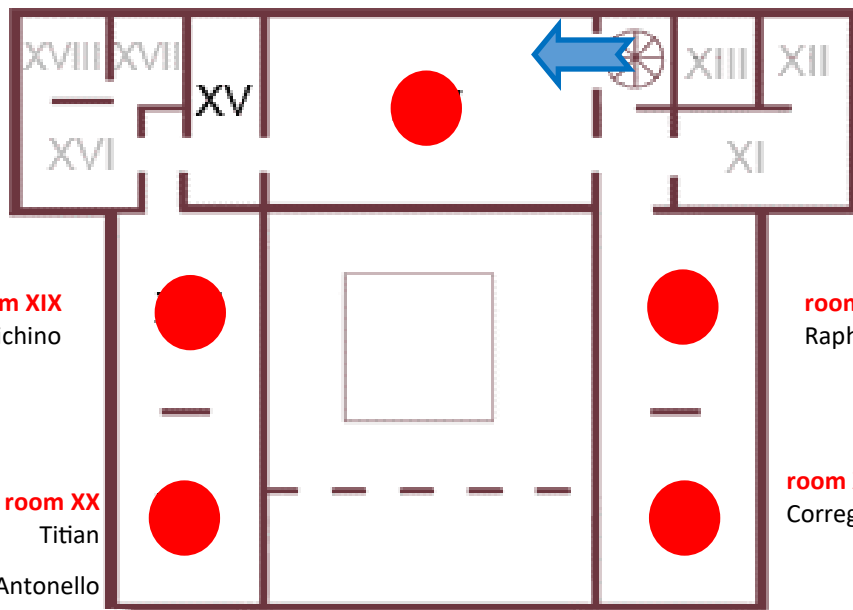


GROUND FLOOR



room XIV

Bernini
Scipione Borghese's portrait
 Bernini
Self portrait



room XIX

Domenichino



room IX

Raphael



room X

Correggio



room XX

Titian

Antonello
 da Messina



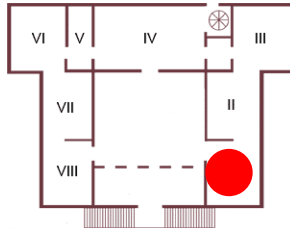
Antonio Canova

Paolina Borghese as Venus Victrix

1805-1808

The statue represents princess **Paolina**, sister of Napoleon Bonaparte and wife to one of cardinal Scipione's descendant, Camillo Borghese. In 1804, he asked Antonio Canova to produce this masterpiece. In that period Canova was already a famous sculptor: he was born in Northern Italy (Veneto), but he moved to Rome, where he had worked also for Napoleon. He was specialized in sculptures heavily inspired by ancient art. Look at Paolina: what do you think? doesn't she look like an ancient woman?

But why does she have an **APPLE** in her hand? This is explained by an ancient story (a myth): the story of the **Judgement of Paris**. Once upon a time Minerva, Juno and Venus asked Paris to say who was the fairest of them all. Paris chose Venus, because she promised him the love of the most beautiful woman on Earth. As a prize, Paris gave Venus a golden apple.



Paolina is beautiful like Venus:
She is the **MOST** beautiful.
And just like **Venus**,
she holds an **apple** in her hand.



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your ... PAOLINA

Canova chose this way to represent Paolina. But it is not the only possible one.

How would YOU do that?

Gian Lorenzo Bernini

David

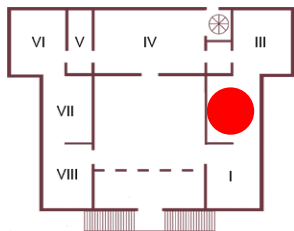
1623-1624

The statue was realized by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, a sculptor who will become very famous. He was born in Naples but he moved to Rome very young. His father Pietro, who was a sculptor too, introduced him to Scipione Borghese, for whom Gian Lorenzo would make many masterpieces. *David* was the fourth.

The **STORY of DAVID** is told in the Old Testament. The Jews were at war with the Philistines, who were winning because a “giant” was fighting along them: his name was **Goliath**. No-one could defeat him.

David, despite being only a boy, challenged him. David's king, Saul, gave him an armour, but he left it at his feet. He took a stone instead, and slung it with all his strength.

The giant was hit on the forehead. He fell to the ground and then David killed him, cutting off his **head**.



And now **LOOK!** Bernini sculpted David in the exact moment in which he is slinging the stone: he turns himself on his right leg - just like a shot-putter! The effort is incredible: he bites his lower lip and has a furrowed brow. Is he afraid? Is he concentrated? One thing is sure: he knows he can do it! He is doing his best!



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your ... DAVID

The one you have just read, it is only a possible story of this statue.

how could your story be?

Gian Lorenzo Bernini

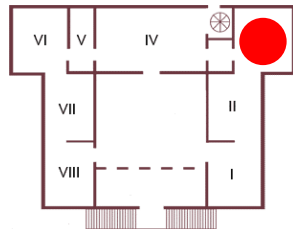
Apollo and Daphne

1622-1625

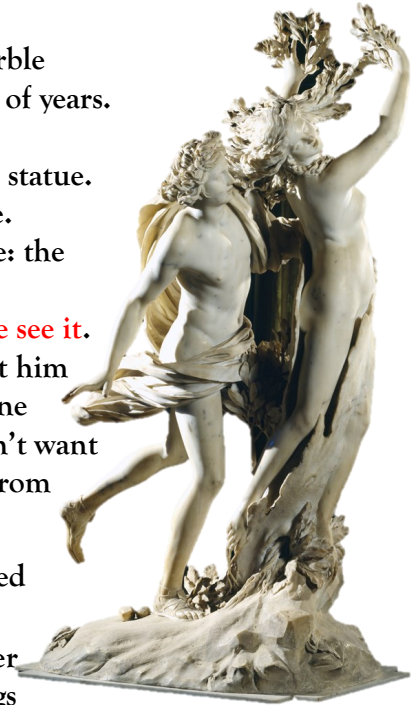
This carved group was realised by Bernini for Scipione Borghese, too. The marble block was bought in 1622 and Bernini worked to make this statue for a couple of years. The **story** comes from ancient times: it's told by Ovid (a Latin poet) in his *Metamorphoses*, a word that means "change of form". That's the theme of the statue. It is the story of Daphne who changed her form, from a woman to a laurel tree. Daphne's tale is a **myth**, which is story that explain everything you can imagine: the birth of a planet, of the seasons, the plants, the stars ...

Myth explains with a simple tale how the universe was made, and why it's as we see it.

And now the story: One day Cupid decided to play a trick on Apollo. He shoot him with a golden arrow (representing love) and the beautiful woman with a lead one (representing hate). Apollo fell madly in love with her. Unfortunately, she didn't want to hear anything from him. Apollo chased after her, but Daphne, to get away from him, ask the help of her father who turned the woman into a **laurel tree**.



And now **LOOK** what Bernini made! He carved the marble representing the exact moment in which Apollo touches Daphne and she suddenly changes her form: the fingers become leaves, her feet root, the legs a tree trunk. **HOW WONDERFUL!**
Can you believe it's **MARBLE??**



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your ... APOLLO and DAPHNE

The story you have read is the story of a “metamorphosis”, a change of form.

Do you want to invent a metamorphosis?

Gian Lorenzo Bernini

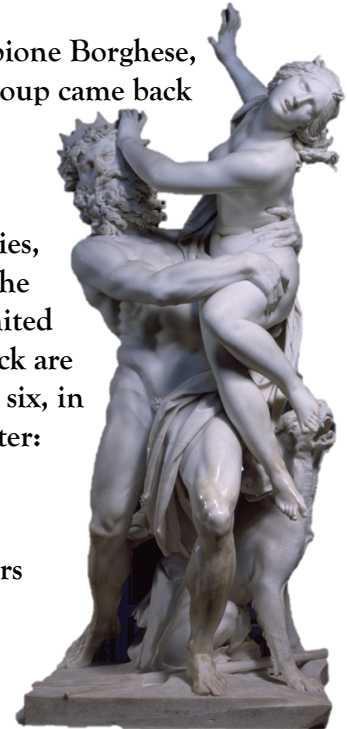
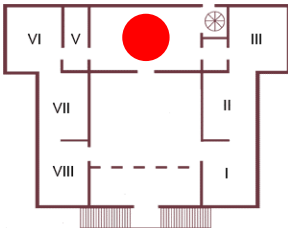
The Rape of Proserpina

1621-1622

This is the first of the big marble groups made by Gian Lorenzo Bernini for Scipione Borghese, who, however, gift it to cardinal Ludovico Ludovisi early on. Only in 1911 the group came back here. The **story** is told by Ovid (the latin poet) in the *Metamorphoses* and, like other stories in it, it is used to explain something about Nature.

Pluto, the God of the Underworld, sees Proserpina and falls in love with her, hopelessly. He abducts and carries her with him: but she doesn't want to! She cries, screams and tries to fight. Proserpina's mother, Ceres, looks for her, and when she finds out where her daughter was, asks Jupiter for help. Ceres will get to be reunited with her, but only for half a year. The six months in which Proserpina comes back are the Spring and the Summer months: the Earth is fertile and fruitful. The other six, in which she remains in the Underworld, are the months of the Autumn and Winter: the Earth looks dead.

And now **LOOK!** It is incredible the way Bernini carved Pluto grabbing the poor woman, while he is digging his fingers into her flesh she is trying to escape from him: look at the tear streaming down on her cheek! And finally, look for Cerberus, the three-headed hellhound who protects the Underworld! See how each head is different?

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your ... RAPE OF PROSERPINA

You should have noticed the three-headed dog. His name is Cerberus.

Do you ever think about how difficult must be having three heads?

Try to imagine a story ...

Caravaggio

Boy with a basket of fruit 1593-1595

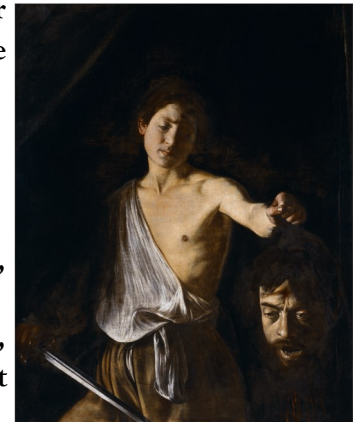
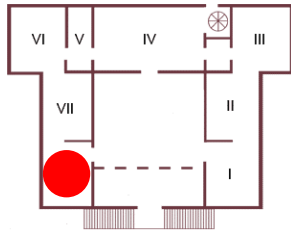
David with the head of Goliath 1609-1610

Caravaggio is a painter who came from Milan to Rome at the end of the 16th century. At the beginning he mostly paints canvases with **FRUIT**. The **Boy with a basket of fruit** is one of these paintings. Scipione was a “fan” of Caravaggio’s works: that’s why Borghese Gallery has **SIX** of his paintings, more than any other museum in the world. Scipione was so passionate about Caravaggio that he tried to have his paintings in every way he could. The **Boy with a basket of fruit** belonged to Cavalier d’Arpino, another roman painter who worked: it was among his property when Scipione ordered to confiscate his goods, for the sole aim to possess the Caravaggio’s paintings that were in the Cavalier d’Arpino’s workshop. And now **LOOK!** the boy is offering us the fruit in the basket: we could take some grape ... or a pomegranate? any figs, perhaps? It looks so **REAL**. They were right to appreciate these paintings!!



Caravaggio’s painting will change. Compare the **Boy with a basket of fruit** with the **David** on the other side of the room: how different the two are!

Beautiful and soft the first one and extremely dramatic the second. It is all dark, and the little light we can see is to bring out the most intense parts of the canvas: the Goliath’s head, the sword, the half-face of David. The line on his forehead tells us about a boy, who had to kill, but he is afraid and disgusted!



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your ... CARAVAGGIO

Imagine if you were Caravaggio.

What would YOU paint? And how?

ROOM XIV

Gian Lorenzo Bernini

Scipione Borghese's Portrait 1632

Self-portrait 1638-1640

Here is the master of the house, Scipione Borghese!

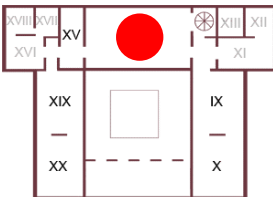
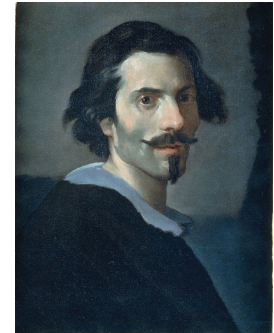
Scipione asks Bernini his marble portrait, and the artist represents him almost in the moment he is starting to speak, while he is opening his lips!

Scipione wears his cardinal's robe, including the typical hat, the biretta. But pay attention! Look at the buttons, and you'll discover a secret ...

On the other side of the table, there is another version of the Scipione's bust. The first one, on the left, has a crack on the head. Bernini made a new bust, and Scipione wanted all of them! Two is better than one, isn't it?

And in conclusion, over the table, you'll find some paintings. One of them is the portrait of Bernini, made by himself: in this case we have to use the term of **Self-portrait**.

Bernini was not only a sculptor: he was a great painter too, but also an architect, a scenographer, a playwright ... he was a jack of all trades!



your ... SELF PORTRAIT

Imagine to look at yourself in the mirror.

How would you paint your self-portrait?

Raphael

Deposition 1507

Lady with a Unicorn about 1506

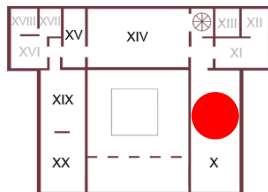
In this room there are - aside seats to rest - two masterpieces by Raphael, one of the most important artists of the Renaissance, like Michelangelo and Leonardo.

The story of the **Deposition** is very particular. Scipione loved Raphael, and this painting; he wanted it by any means! He ordered to steal it in Perugia, on the altar in which the painting was, and to carry it secretly to Rome. It is represented a precise moment of the story of Christ: just a short time before, his lifeless body has been deposed from the Cross, look at the upper right. Two figures, with a big effort, are carrying him towards his tomb, in the cave on the left. There are many people around: they are crying and praying, someone is desperate. On the right, a woman, the oldest one, is passing out: she is Mary, Christ's mother; she is supported by a group of women.

LOOK how beautiful is the kneeling woman, on the right!

Observe the colours, the gestures, what each figure is doing.

Then, on the step at the bottom left, **READ** the artist's sign.



And then there is the mysterious **Lady with a Unicorn**: a fantastic and wild animal. Once upon a time it was believed only a pure girl could tame it. This is one of the first paintings by Raphael.



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your ... unicorn

The unicorn is a fantastic animal, that means it doesn't exist in reality: but in the past they used to believe the unicorn lived in lost and far-off lands and had magical powers.

But if the unicorn were real? and if it were a pet in your home?

how would you draw your unicorn?

ROOM X

Correggio

Danae about 1531

Girolamo da Carpi - Nicolò dell'Abate

Landscapes between 1525 and 1550

This is the story of Danae: Jupiter, the king of gods, used to pursue the most beautiful women in the world. But in his own way, shapeshifting: in the case of Danae he went to her in form of golden rain.

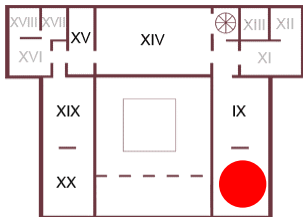
So nobody could see him!

This painting is part of a series, the so-called Loves of Jupiter: it was requested by the duke of Mantua to give it to the emperor Charles V. Correggio was a very famous painter. He was specialized in painting graceful figures: in his works there are often some cupids, kids with little wings that are playing together.



These two **Landscapes** are charming. The first one is also peculiar: if you look more closely, you could see very strange figures! Perhaps, it is a magic parade, surely it is a fantastic landscape.

In the second one, there are little figures dressed according to the fashion of that time, with elegant feathered hats!



LOOK at the colours of these landscapes, and above all at the different shades of greens!



your ... LANDSCAPE

You have seen two different ways to represent a landscape.

how could your landscape be? and with which figures?

Domenichino

The Hunt of Diana 1616-1617

Anonymous

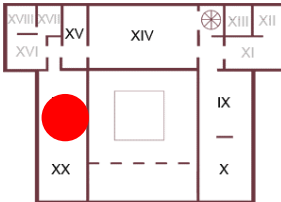
Young woman with a dog end of XVI century

Diana is the goddess of the hunt, and she is often represented together with his nymphs, very beautiful women who rest after hunting with her: far from prying eyes, they take a pleasant bath. Domenichino is a painter who, at the beginning of the 17th century, came in Rome to try his luck!

This is one of the paintings that cardinal Scipione wanted by force, even though Domenichino had made the painting for cardinal Aldobrandini! and how did he do that? that's easy: he ordered to put the painter in prison, just for a few days. But after those days, he paid him for the painting!



LOOK at the centre of the room.



There is a sculpture: a girl with a little dog. It is very tender, isn't it? The group is not antique, so it is not made in the Roman era. The anonymous sculptor, active in Rome at the end of the XVI century, used the contrast between the black marble, for the skin, and the white marble in which the dress is made: a very trendy solution at that time!



your ... ROOM XIX

In the centre of this room there is a sculpture: a woman with a dog. But what if there was another statue?

Which sculpture would you put in the centre of this room?
imagine ...

Titian

Sacred and Profane Love about 1514

Antonello da Messina

Portrait of a man 1474-1475

Sacred and Profane Love is a masterpiece by Titian, a famous painter who worked in Venice for most his life. He had a very long activity: he died really old!

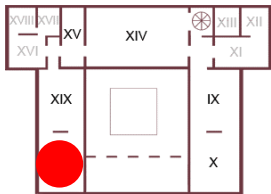
This painting was made when he was young, and it was commissioned, that means required and paid, by a venetian nobleman, a certain Niccolò Aurelio, for his marriage. This point is very important, because it is the most realistic explanation for the twin women: the nude and the dressed one. Actually they would be two sides of the same coin! The two women would represent the virtues a bride should have: beauty and purity (the nude), the fidelity of the marriage (the dressed).

Everything is mixed ... by a little cupid!

LOOK how Titian painted the robes and the colours, especially the “white” and the “red”: they are wonderful!

The Antonello's **Portrait** is one of the few paintings we know about this artist, from Messina, indeed. His technique is just crazy: if we look closely, we could note how delicate is the collar and it is closed with that white fabric button; Look how the artist painted his eyebrows, the beard and ... do you see that glaze???

He seems to say: I KNOW EVERYTHING!



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your ... Antonello da Messina

We do not know anything about the man who was portrayed by Antonello da Messina:
not his name, what he did in his life, why he was portrayed ... but he must have a story!

what could it be his story?

free your imagination!



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