



Making a Prince's Museum: Drawings for the Late-Eighteenth-Century Redecoration of the Villa Borghese (Bibliographies & Dossiers)

Carole Paul

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In 1775 Prince Marcantonio Borghese IV and the architect Antonio Asprucci embarked upon a decorative renovation of the Villa Borghese. Initially their attention focused on the Casino, the principal building at the villa, which had always been a semi-public museum. By 1625 it housed much of the Borghese's outstanding collection of sculpture. Integrating this statuary with vast baroque ceiling paintings and richly ornamented surfaces, Asprucci created a dazzling and unified homage to the Borghese family, portraying its legendary ancestors as well as its newly born heir.

In this book, Carole Paul reads the inventive decorative program as a set of exemplary scenes for the education of the ideal Borghese prince. Her wide-ranging essay also situates the Villa Borghese among the sumptuous palaces and suburban villas of Rome's collectors of antiquities and outlines the renovated Casino's pivotal role in the historic transition from the princely collection to the public museum. Rounding out this volume is a catalog of the Getty Research Institute's fifty-nine drawings for the refurbishing of the Villa Borghese and Alberta Campitelli's discussion of sketches for the short-lived Museo di Gabii, the Villa's other antiquities museum.

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