

# BERNINI & THE ROMAN BAROQUE

PAINTINGS FROM PALAZZO CHIGI IN ARICCIA

TRAVELING EXHIBITION SERVICE

**IA&A** INTERNATIONAL  
ARTS AND ARTISTS





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**T**he term *Baroque* connotes an abundance of detail, a sense of irregularity, and a sort of eccentric redundancy—all hallmarks of an extraordinary generation of artists who converged in Rome at the dawn of the seventeenth century. This artistic style became a cultural phenomenon, spreading concurrently from Naples to Venice, Vienna to Prague, and Bohemia to St. Petersburg, finally assuming its full global dimensions when it reached the Americas. *Bernini and the Roman Baroque: Paintings from Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia* explores the genesis of this one-of-a-kind artistic movement. Through a selection of 55 works from 40 artists, this exhibition illuminates Bernini’s influence and explores how it resonated across the Baroque movement.

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1. Carlo Maratti, called “Il Maratta,” and Mario Nuzzi, called “Mario del Fiori,” *The Summer*, 1658-59, oil on canvas, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.



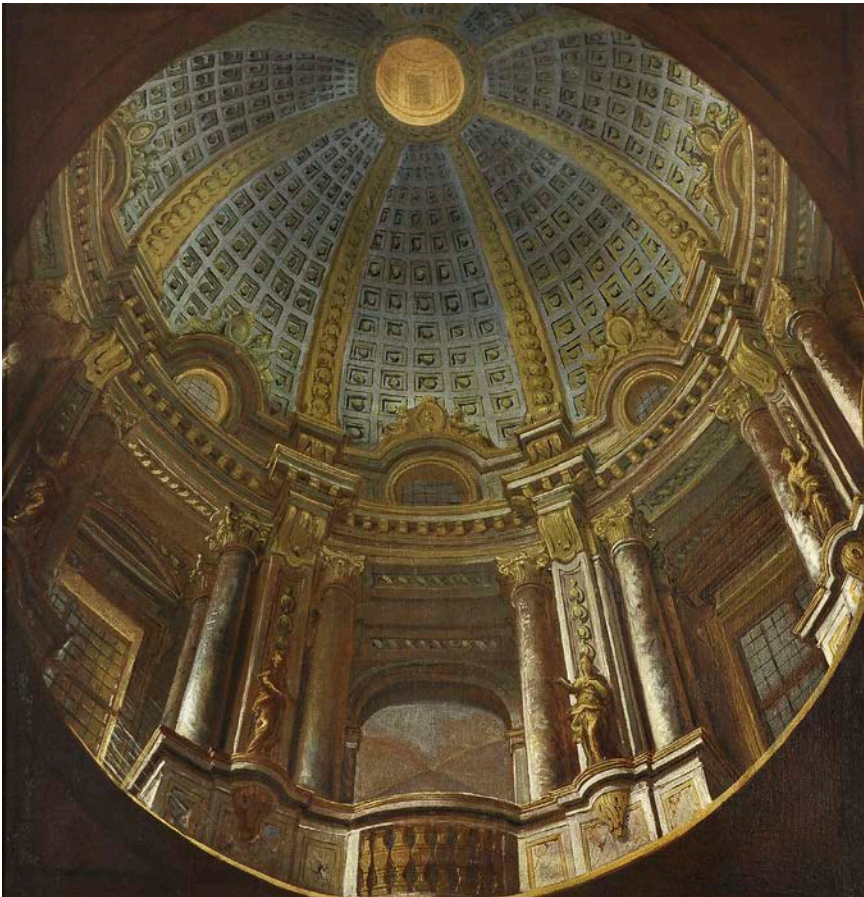




# INTRODUCTION

At the beginning of the seventeenth century, artists definitively set aside the Caravaggesque model for a more transversal dialogue between the real and the supernatural, the superfluous and the necessary. After the death of the Flemish master Peter Paul Rubens, the debate between “naturalists” and “classicists” (respectively, followers of the styles of Caravaggio and Annibale Carracci) originated a new figurative language, namely the “Baroque,” which found in Gian Lorenzo Bernini its undisputed protagonist. Thanks partly to the masterpieces conserved in the Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia, we can trace the spectacular path by which the “Baroque” became a universal vernacular expression.

*Bernini and the Roman Baroque* comprehensively maps the rich spectrum of genres and pictorial styles that characterize Baroque aesthetics. Its many luminous examples of these diverse categories—not only history painting but also alternative genres such as portraiture, self-portraiture and landscaping, as well as preparatory sketches used for large decorative frescoes—epitomize Baroque’s ultimate goal of elevating the viewer in mind and soul, communicating the moral and spiritual messages of the Catholic Church in its artistic heyday.



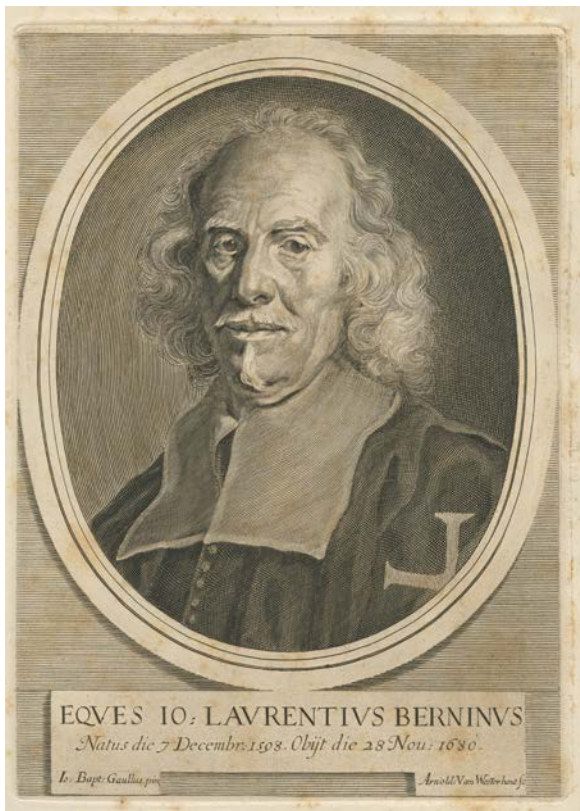
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2. Giacinto Brandi, *Lot and his Daughters*, 1670-75, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Lemme Collection. (opposite)
3. Andrea Pozzo, *Study for an Illusionary Dome*, c. 1676, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Collection Fagiolo, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.

# GIAN LORENZO BERNINI

**“A rare man and sublime talent, he was born for the glory of Rome with the Divine Disposition to bring light to that century.”**

-Domenico Bernini, *Life of the Cavalier Gio. Lorenzo Bernini*, 1713



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4. Giovan Battista Gaulli, called “Baciccio,” and A. Van Westerhout, *Portrait of Gian Lorenzo Bernini*, c. 1680, Burin on paper, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.
5. Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Gioacchino Francesco Travani, *Medal with the Collegiate Church of the Assumption in Ariccia*, 1662, gilded bronze, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.
6. Gian Lorenzo Bernini and Guglielmo Cortese, called “Borgognone”, *Sanguis Christi*, 1670, oil on canvas, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia. (opposite)

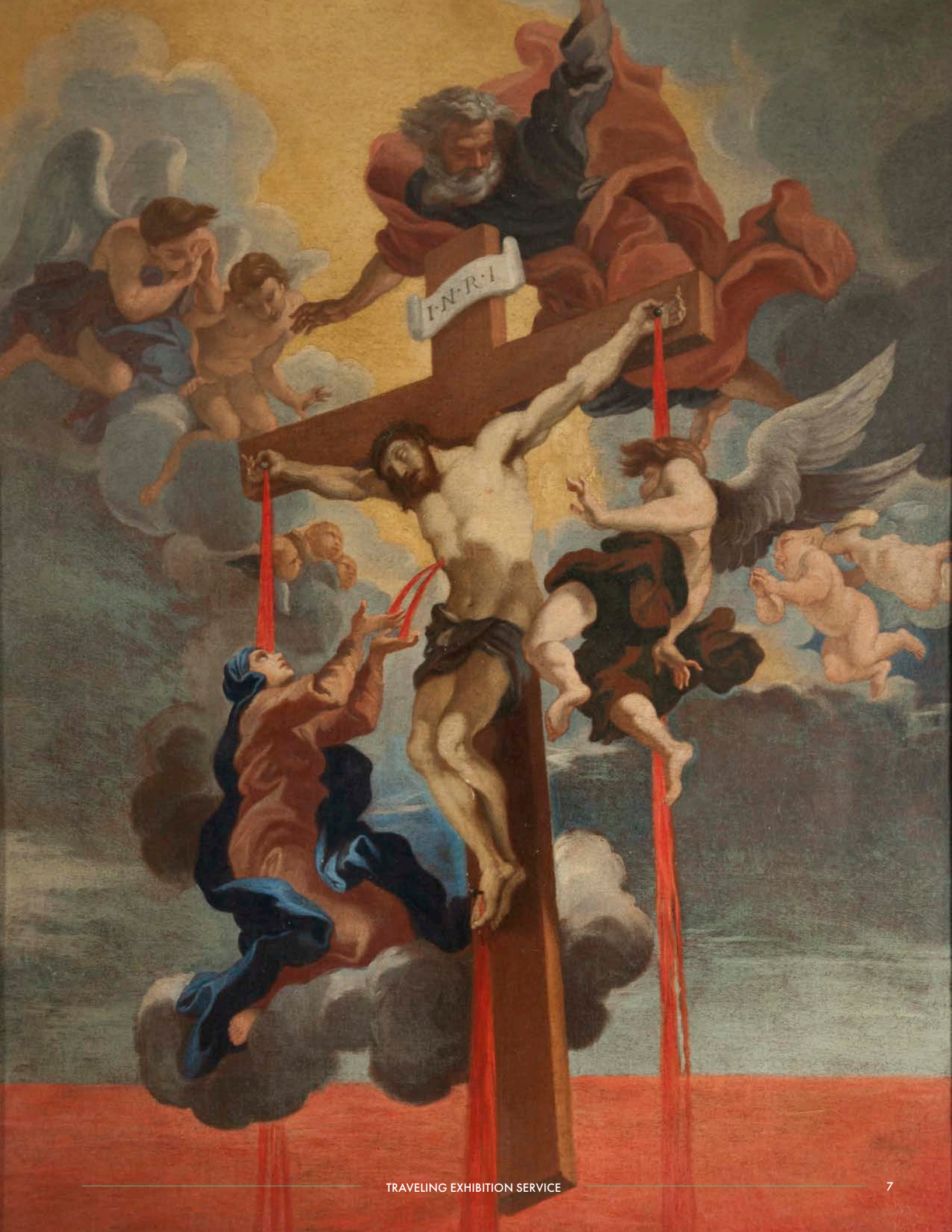
Gian Lorenzo Bernini (Naples 1598 - Rome 1680), Baroque art’s greatest strategist and interpreter, enjoyed a remarkably eclectic career that spanned half a century and flourished under the reigns of numerous pontiffs. A prolific architect and unrivaled sculptor, Bernini also distinguished himself as a painter, set designer, actor, and playwright. His polymathic curiosity led him always to explore new fields and to develop brilliant new decorative strategies, in which his unerring eye for visual detail, the magnificence of his materials, and the emotional expressiveness of his imagery all cohered prodigiously in a perfect fusion of aesthetic styles and ideas.

Bernini’s ideal of the “*Belcomposto*” (“the Beautiful Whole”), or “*Maraviglioso Composto*” (“the Marvelous Whole”), imagines a harmonious synthesis of sculpture, architecture, and painting, all reified in a single spatial unity. The ultimate aim of this syncretic approach was to visualize the unreachable within an accessible reality, creating in the viewer a feeling of exaltation, both aesthetic and spiritual— a sense of undisputed devotion. The kaleidoscopic, transversal innovations of Bernini’s best works reflect not only the strategic ambitions of the Baroque expression but also its fecund dialogues with contemporary aesthetic, political, and religious schools of thought.



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# PORTRAITS, THE REPRESENTATION OF POWER



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Bernini was but one of many European artists who converged in Rome in the advent of the Baroque, attracted by its extraordinary atmosphere of artistic ferment and experimentation. Here they were exposed to countless new techniques, languages, and ideas, and nurtured by valuable collaborations and friendships—not to mention rich patrons such as Rome’s powerful Chigi family, whose patriarch Fabio Chigi was elected Pope in 1655 and who soon embarked on an ambitious plan to beautify the city.

*Bernini and the Roman Baroque* offers a rich showcase of the spectacular pictorial genres favored by the Chigi family (and seventeenth-century patrons in general). For instance, the extensive portrait galleries of the Chigi Palace, from which the works in this exhibition are drawn, underscore the popularity and cultural significance of the portrait genre in seventeenth century Rome, as well as offering a glimpse into the rising status of the artists themselves. A subgenre—self-portraits—provides vivid evidence of the artists’ growing awareness of their own social and political importance; not only for the fact that they were starting to see in themselves a suitable subject for fine art, but also in the striking individuality and introspection we can see in many of their faces. Bernini and his sometime collaborator Baciccio experimented extensively with self-portraiture; throughout the seventeenth century, the number of self-portraits realized by Bernini was second only to that of Rembrandt.

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7. Giovan Battista Gaulli, called “Baciccio”, *Self Portrait*, 1668, oil on canvas, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia. (opposite)
  8. Ferdinand Voet, *Portrait of Cardinal Flavio Chigi*, 1670, oil on canvas, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.





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## THE LANDSCAPE, THE FORMS OF NATURALISM IN BAROQUE AESTHETICS

Artists of the seventeenth century revitalized the genre of landscape painting as well, elevating the traditional form to the status of an “autonomous genre,” in which landscape itself was seen as a privileged subject in its own right, not merely a background for man’s actions. In the hands of these portraitists, building on the work of earlier artists—notably, such sixteenth-century innovators as Adam Elsheimer, Claude Lorrain, Paul Bril, Jan Brueghel, and Antonio Tempesta—landscape became a subject equal to any other; not dissimilar to the way artists themselves were becoming rich subjects for their own self-portraiture. Among the seventeenth-century virtuosos of landscape painting are Joos de Momper, Jean Miel, Salvador Rosa, Cornelius van Poelenburgh, Jean Lemaire, and—though not displayed in this exhibition—masters such as Michelangelo Cerquozzi and Nicolas Poussin. *Landscape with Huntsmen* by Jean de Momper epitomizes a specific genre of landscape painting that centers on the sovereignty of nature, wherein human figures

blend completely into the surrounding environment. Exemplifying a different approach—one less tethered to realism—paintings such as *Landscape with a Roman mausoleum* by Jean Lemaire and *Landscape with ruins and pastoral scene* by the Dutch artist Van Poelenburgh evoke Nicolas Poussin’s classical idealism, which is consistent with the “ideal landscape” genre and is also referred to as “heroic landscape.” The Neapolitan painter Salvator Rosa, on the other hand, ignored the naturalistic and heroic aspects of contemporary landscapes in favor of a more severe depiction of nature that was in equal parts subjective and disturbing. In his *Landscape with a rock and a tree*, the emotional violence of an uprooted tree trunk presages the dramatic spirit of the nineteenth-century Romantic movement and such artists as Delacroix.

9. Jean de Momper, *Landscape with Hunting Scene*, 1665, oil on canvas, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.

10. Cornelius Van Poelenburgh, *Landscape with Ruins and Pastoral Scene*, 1621-23, oil on wood, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia. (opposite)











# HISTORY PAINTINGS AND THE MYTH OF ARCADIA: BETWEEN CLASSICISM AND REALISM

In the seventeenth century, history paintings (which depicted religious, mythological, and allegorical subjects as well as strictly historical events) typically served as an assertion of morals, whether spiritual or everyday. Their narratives, which often alluded to biblical episodes and mythological anecdotes, fulfilled the dual purpose of celebrating the authority of great families while affirming that man and nature were manifestations of divine perfection and, as such, were ideal subjects for painting—a riposte to the iconoclastic tendencies of the Protestant Reformation. The result was a rhetoric in which form and content oscillated provocatively between idealism and realism.

A striking example of such dialectics can be seen in Baciccio's *Saint Andrew*—a vividly contemplative composition—as well as in Beinaschi's *Two Apostles*, another religious-themed work, whose vivid chiaroscuro contrasts ingeniously with the gentleness of its contours. Alternatively, such mythology-themed compositions as Filippo Lauri's *Erminia among the shepherds*, Borgognone's *Venus presenting arms to Aeneas*, and *Orpheus and Eurydice* by the Cavalier d'Arpino all epitomize the principles of classical literary archetypes (after Virgil and Ovid) which celebrate the ideals of pastoral and bucolic life. These scenes were inspired by the utopian myth of "Arcadia," a nostalgic evocation of a remote, lost age in which man and nature coexisted in perfect harmony.

11. Giovan Battista Gaulli, called "Baciccio", *Saint Andrew*, c. 1680, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Lemme Collection, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia. (opposite)
12. Giuseppe Cesari, called "Cavelier d'Arpino", *Orpheus and Eurydice*, 1620-25, oil on canvas, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.



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# THE TRIUMPH OF THE BAROQUE, THE GLORY OF THE CATHOLIC CHURCH

Under the direction of Bernini and Pietro da Cortona, Baroque artists funneled their religious and innovative energies into the creation of great altarpieces and large decorative cycles in churches and Roman palaces. Vaults and ceilings were turned into “glorious skies,” while chapels were fashioned into sumptuous theatrical sets aimed at glorifying the apotheosis of the Catholic Church, the religious orders, and the aristocratic houses. These decorative cycles functioned as theatrical machines to transport the viewer into a realm of miraculous phantasmagorical visions, an illusory reification of the ultimate salvation professed by the Catholic faith.

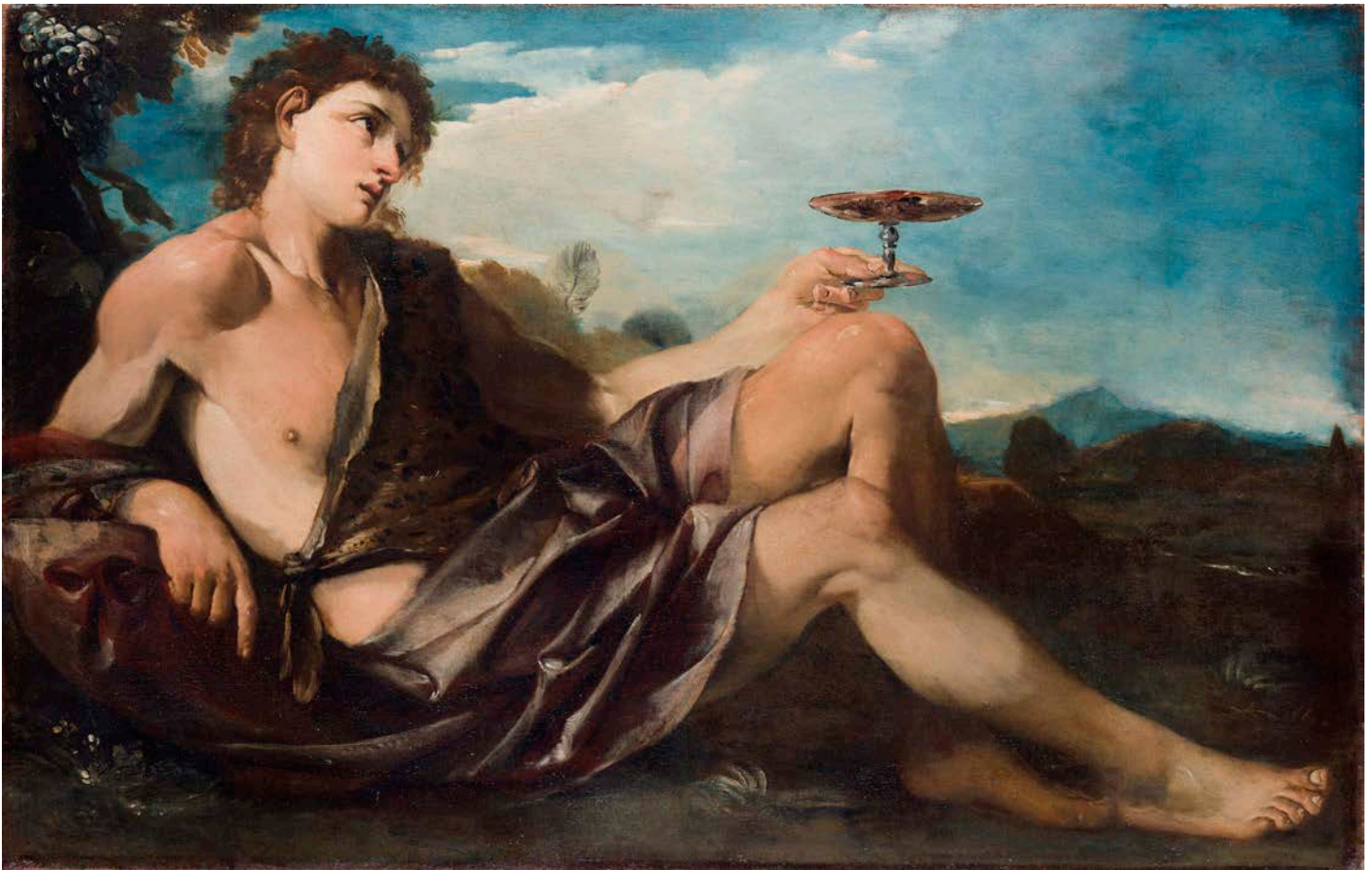


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In conclusion, *Bernini and the Roman Baroque: Paintings from Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia* invites the viewer on a stirring exploration of the exquisitely polyphonic universe of the Baroque, with the twin aims of sharing part of our great artistic heritage and generating a transnational dialogue on the evolution of visual language and modern thought. Over the course of the seventeenth century, the multifaceted spirit of the Baroque imposed itself almost everywhere—crossing aesthetic, political, and religious boundaries, anticipating the Enlightenment, promoting the scientific method (from medicine to agriculture, anthropology to sociology, etc.),

even foreshadowing the construction of modern states. In the same lavishly ecumenical spirit, this exhibition offers a nuanced visual narrative that, transcending the frontiers of time, compares beauty and appearance, necessity and superfluity, reality and illusion as keys for a provocative, contemporary reflection on the often indecipherable logics that govern our present.

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13. Ciro Ferri, *Saint'Ivo distributes the Charity*, 1660-70, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Collection Fagiolo, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.
  14. Jean Miel, *Sacred Family with Young Saint John*, 1655-58, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Collection Fagiolo, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.
  15. Pier Francesco Mola, *Bacchus*, 1662-66, oil on canvas, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.







# ABOUT THE CURATOR

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Author of numerous books and articles on painting, sculpture, architecture, and art history—particularly the art of the Roman Baroque—Francesco Petrucci is an international authority on seventeenth- and eighteenth-century art and architecture whose specialties also include archaeology, classical music, the decorative arts, and the restoration of monumental architecture. Born in the Albano Laziale region of Rome in 1958, Petrucci graduated in 1983 from Rome’s Sapienza University, where his doctoral thesis on the Palazzo Chigi of Ariccia was much honored. After supervising the restoration of the Palazzo Chigi in the ‘80s and ‘90s, he took over as its director in 1998. Other important positions Petrucci has held include Director of the Department of Urban Development and Public Works of Ariccia Town Council, President of the Accademia degli Sfaccendati music society, and Honorary Inspector of the Ministry of Culture for Archaeology. Since 2002, he has also served as professor emeritus in art history for Auburn University in the United States.

# ABOUT GLOCAL PROJECT CONSULTING

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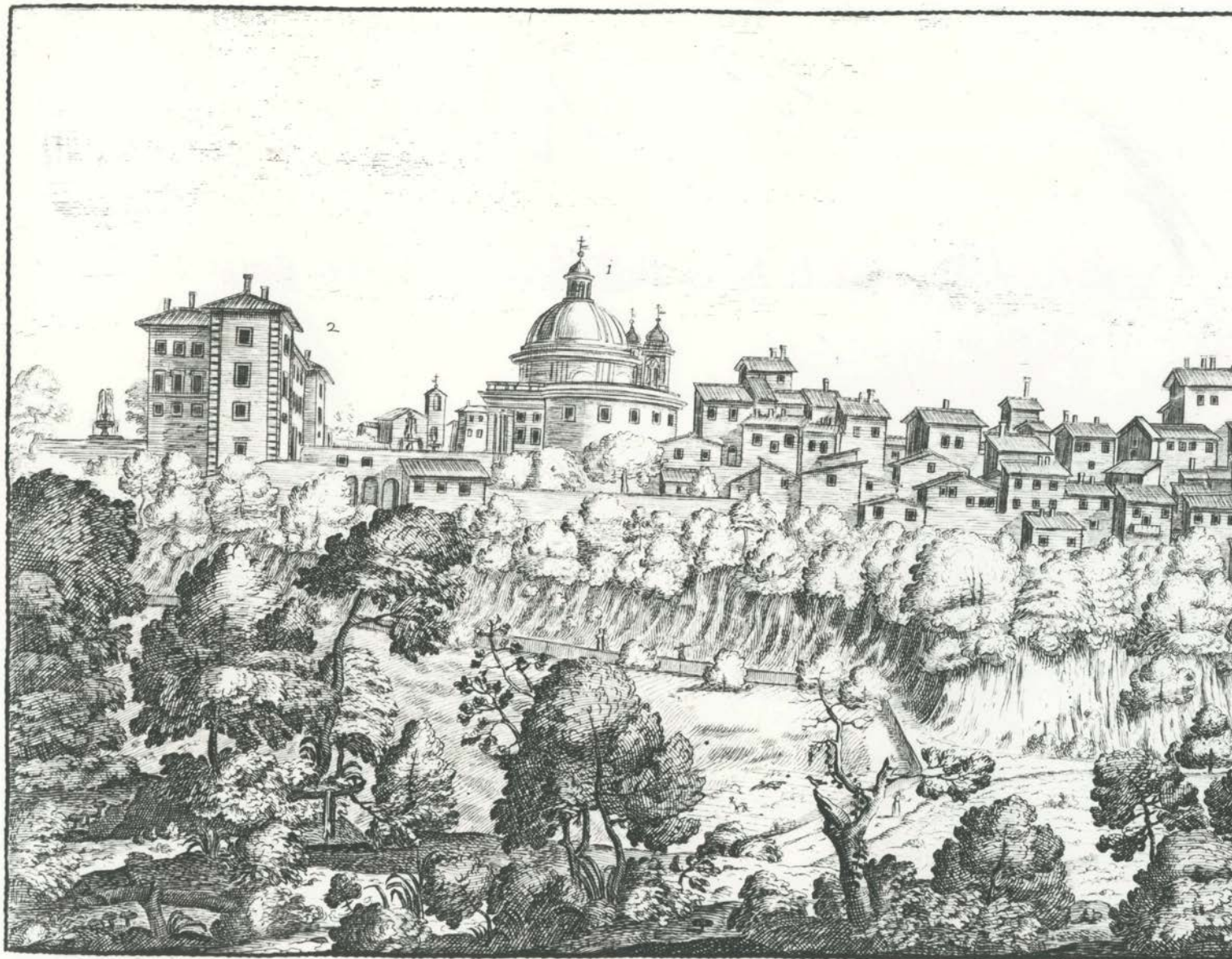
Founded in 2004, Glocal Project Consulting has attracted and inspired audiences to both enjoy and interact with art and culture. The company has successfully mounted displays of both antique and contemporary works of art in numerous countries, managing allotted budgets, whether from private or institutional concerns. In its first few years, Glocal Project Consulting provided management consultancy services, gaining in-depth knowledge of the art market and what it values most: (i) trustworthiness, (ii) punctuality, (iii) creativity, and (iv) flexibility. Having mounted many successful exhibitions in Europe and South America, the company has an established reputation in the art world and now plans to broaden its scope to other foreign markets, such as the UK, Northern and Eastern Europe, the Emirates, China, and other countries of the Far East.



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16. Giovan Battista Salvi, “the Sassoferrato”, *Saint Lucy*, 1630-40, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Collection Fagiolo, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia. (opposite)





*1 Chiesa Collegiata dell' Assunzione  
di Maria Vergine erretta dalla S<sup>ta</sup> di  
N<sup>S</sup> ALESSANDRO VII.*

VEDUTA DELLA NOBIL TERRA DELL' ARICCIA D  
DELL' ECC<sup>MO</sup> SIG<sup>RE</sup> PRENCIPED' AGOSTINO CHIGI  
TE DODICI MIGLIA DA ROMA. GioBatta



## ABOUT THE COLLECTION

The Chigi Palace in Ariccia offers a unique example of a Baroque residence, one that has remained virtually intact in its original opulent condition and with most of its original furnishings. Begun in the second half of the sixteenth century by the Savelli family—and then lavishly rebuilt and refurnished in Baroque style a century later by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, to glorify the rising prestige of one of the greatest Italian pope dynasties, the Chigi—the Palace is now a museum and a center for various cultural activities: exhibitions, concerts, guided tours, conferences, meetings, study programs, etc. The Permanent Chigi Collection showcases the Chigi family's incomparable artworks, which range from painting and sculpture to interior design and furnishings, ornamental architecture, and even period clothing and fabrics. These historic and wonderfully preserved artworks offer rare insights into the tastes, religious faith, and extravagant daily life of one of the most illustrious Italian families of the 1600s.



VCATO  
DISTAN: 2. *Palazzo dell'Ecc<sup>mo</sup> Sig. Principe.*  
*Falda dis. e fec. Per Gio: Giacomo Rossi in Roma, alla Pace cō Priu del S.P. 13*

17. Giovan Battista Falda, *View of Ariccia*, 1667, etching on paper, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.





FRONT Guglielmo Cortese, called "Borgognone", *Agar and Ismael*, c. 1670, oil on canvas, Courtesy of Collection Fagiolo, Palazzo Chigi, Ariccia.

BACK *Bernini and the Roman Baroque* on view at the National Museum of Belgrade

## EXHIBITION SPECIFICATIONS

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### Number of Works

55 paintings, engravings, sculptures, and decorative objects

### Organized by

Glocal Project Consulting

### Curator

Francesco Petrucci, chief curator, Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia; and Dominique Lora, assistant curator for Glocal Project Consulting

### Requirements

High security; 200-250 linear feet

### Participation Fee

Please inquire

### Shipping

IA&A makes all arrangements; exhibitors pay outgoing shipping costs within the contiguous US

### Booking Period

12 weeks

### Tour

January 2021–August 2022, limited to 4 venues

### Publication

*Bernini and the Roman Baroque: Paintings from Palazzo Chigi in Ariccia* by Francesco Petrucci

### Contact

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