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Especially from the duecento onward, an extensive program of figural and relief sculpture became one of the highest ambitions of Italian church patronage. Using marble excavated from reopened antique quarries or stripped from the ruins, monumental sculpture campaigns brought the cathedrals of Pisa, Siena, and Florence into competition with their rivals north of the Alps. At the same time, antique and modern sculpture also lent an aura of luxury and authority to Italian civic palazzi, from the Doge’s palace in Venice to the Roman Capitoline Hill. In the fourteenth century, sculpture still remained a primarily civic and ecclesiastical medium, but by the early sixteenth, the scope and scale of sculpture patronage and antiquities collecting in the private sphere had expanded vastly. Patrons began to appropriate for themselves the prestige of coordinated sculpture displays as well as the symbolic values long associated with “the antique.” Making use of ready-made ancient treasures – portraits, statues, and narrative reliefs – eliminated the obstacles of quarrying or carving that had left so many church façades unfinished and undecorated. Sculpture became an increasingly prominent element in the design of villas, courtyards, and facades oriented towards the display of antique and pseudo-antique objects.

Antique sculpture’s place in early modern architecture has been addressed tangentially in surveys of collecting, while more focused literature has centered on the place of sculpture in the studiolo (a study-like space holding books and collectables), Kunstkammer (a gallery-like space devoted to encyclopedic collections), or landscaped garden. A fuller appreciation for the unity of architectural design and sculpture display has, however, been hindered by the separation of the “sister arts” of architecture, painting, and sculpture and the consequent neglect of sculpture generally in the architectural literature. Added to this is the problem that so few works
of sculpture remain in their original settings. Early modern buildings have a bare and de-ornamented look that art historians have tended to accept without question, following a modernist preference for pure form established in the early twentieth century. Early modern treatises on the arts, moreover, themselves prescribed an artificial separation between sculpture and architecture. When Leon Battista Alberti and his followers laid down the “rules” for architecture and sculpture in separate treatises, they followed Vitruvius’ concept of architecture as the supreme art. Taking Vitruvius as his model, Alberti in the De re aedificatoria (first published 1485) claimed the primacy of the architect and his design, calling for full control over sculptural ornament in symmetrical, idealized schemes. His treatise stressed the need to arrange statues and reliefs “in appropriate and seemly positions” from which they could not be moved. Sculptures should be set in well-placed frames, according to fixed systems of proportion, following the model of antique pediments or triumphal arches. The perfection of an architectural design took precedence over any sculptural add-ons, an opinion reflected in Poliphilo’s description of the Temple of Venus and Cupid in Francesco Colonna’s architectural novella, the Hypnerotomachia Poliphili (published 1499). Poliphilo’s lengthy excursus on the temple portals first considers the ideal proportions of the architectural design, then turns to sculptural decoration as a matter of lesser importance. Despite the delight Poliphilo takes in these carvings, he has no qualms in stating that the architect:

must know above all how to arrange the solid mass and to complete in his mind the entire fabric, rather than the decorations that are accessory to the principal matter. It is the first thing that demands the fertile skill of one rare man, whereas the second needs numerous laborers or unschooled workmen (whom the Greeks call “doers”); and these, as I have said, are the instruments of the architect.

In many ways the fad for the collecting and display of antique sculpture was a boon to ambitious architects who wanted to make use of these “instruments” in their quest for recognition and status. It offered an anonymous, yet highly prestigious ornament that could be installed according to the architect’s own fantasy. Antique sculpture could be restored or reshaped to fit into a set design, or else moved to the less structured realm of the garden. Antiquities were also (usually) monochrome, in line with Sebastiano Serlio’s recommendation that ornament be colorless so as not to interfere with the architect’s personal vision. At the same time, however, the problem of displaying diverse objects in an ideal arrangement became increasingly difficult to resolve. Avid collecting, as well as the higher status of sculpture in the round or in relief in Italian art theory, made the display of antique sculpture a matter of utmost importance for patrons, who required new, creative solutions from architects. Sculpture had achieved a primacy that could not be ignored, no matter how much architects tried to reduce it to an accessory. Even if the architectural treatises of the sixteenth century generally keep silent on issues of sculpture display, it is significant that some of the most innovative
projects of the early modern era took antiquities collections as their point of departure, granting a remarkable sense of preeminence to sculpture, namely, Donato Bramante’s Belvedere palace gardens for the Pope, Raphael’s Villa Madama, and Michelangelo’s Capitoline square. The increasing size and visibility of sculpture necessitated greater collaboration between architects, restorers, and stuccoists, or required a new breed of designer in possession of more than one of these skills. Restored antiquities and stucco additions, for example, came together in a perfectly symmetrical scheme at the hanging garden of Cardinal Andrea della Valle designed in the 1520s by Lorenzo Lotti (better known as Lorenzetto), who was a sculptor and sculpture restorer as well as an architect (Figure 3.1).

By the mid cinquecento, after collecting had forever changed the course of architectural history, the opportunities for creating such elaborate displays became more limited. Collecting always required foresight or luck, and some of the greatest successes were the result of spectacular accidents: the discovery of the Laocoön and its display at the Belvedere; the demolition of the antique Arcus Novus that freed up a major cycle of relief panels for Cardinal della Valle; or the unearthing of colossal statues at the Baths of Caracalla for the Palazzo Farnese. As extraordinary finds such as these became less frequent, only the wealthiest patrons could acquire large collections, often by buying statues in bulk from less powerful...
families. In addition, in the face of increasing competition and other obstacles – the devastating Sack of Rome in 1527, or the Reformation – collecting became even more socially restricted. The integration of antique sculpture and architecture was thus realized in a relatively small number of projects, most of them short-lived and all of them elite.

The impact of collecting on architectural design is nevertheless substantial, with major implications for theory and practice. In an earlier era, the separation between antique spolia and its more recent architectural context was, in general, more evident to the eye. Antique objects had been prized for an authenticity and age that could usually be recognized as different from those of the setting itself. The dividing line between antique and modern became less visible, however, as architects created organized collections in which antiquities were fully subject to planned designs. Antiquities became inseparable features of architecture through sophisticated restorations, or through display in niches and other framing devices, creating the sense of an illusory imitatio of the antique. In these new and highly designed settings, marbles were immobilized and elevated, and – despite their fascination for visitors – removed from close scrutiny. These controlled, frozen impressions gave the authority of patrons greater prominence, articulating their objectives to the viewer with greater rhetorical precision: to save ancient marbles from the ruins, put them in the public eye, and preserve them for future generations. Patrons brought the quasi-spiritual beauty and ideal forms of the antique into what they hoped would be a permanent relationship with their palaces and family histories. Architects, for their part, could lay claim to such a profound understanding of ancient design that no distinction need be made between antique sculptures and their modern setting, since one channeled “the antique” just as well as the other.

What follows is a consideration of these and other select themes in the dialogue between architecture and antiquities, in particular in Roman palace courtyards and façades, the most prominent and public sites of sculpture display. The overlap between collections and mural painting will also be a focus of discussion, as well as the possible role of ekphrasis (the literary art of describing works of art) in the experience of architectural spaces adorned with sculptural narrative.

Designing the Collection

It is often assumed that Bramante’s Belvedere statue court (built after 1506), with its symmetrical system of niches housing life-size statues, marks the beginning of a sophisticated approach to antiquities display in architectural settings. Yet, even if the fame and accessibility of this courtyard made it enormously influential and seemingly unique, Bramante had built upon earlier practices that were already well established in quattrocento Rome. Before 1500, the courtyard of the Frangipane palace housed torsos in niches, and the Cesarini family dedicated an elaborate “statuary dieta” to the “decorous pleasure” of visitors, though its appearance
remains mysterious. The court and garden where Cardinal Francesco Piccolomini kept his Resting Hercules and Three Graces in the quattrocento probably also followed an ordered scheme. While he was still a Cardinal, the future Pope Julius II, Giuliano della Rovere acquired the statue now known as the Apollo Belvedere and housed it in an orange garden-cum-cortile at his residence next to the church of Saints Apostoli in Rome. When he built the Belvedere, della Rovere asked Bramante to bring these works of art together in a setting that was conceptually similar to that of his previous, Cardinal’s residence, but was now purpose-built and fully planned so that statues would be arranged symmetrically and framed by niches. The Belvedere imitated a variety of ancient display strategies – known from both archaeological evidence and literary descriptions – in which life-size, figural statues were set in wall niches, for example in antique theaters and baths that had doubled as art museums. Seen from another perspective, by giving them the honor of their own frame, the Belvedere’s method of display accorded antique sculptures the same sense of permanence and dignity that had always been granted to Christian cult statues. This nod to tradition and to Alberti’s requirements for a fixed, orderly display meant that sculptures could only be seen from a frontal view, despite the high artistic status of figures in the round, including the Apollo Belvedere itself.

The escalation of collecting from the late fifteenth to early sixteenth century was surprising to many, and some viewers reacted negatively to the display of antique nudes, especially in the houses and villas of cardinals and popes. Pagan sculpture in niches and on top of bases was a new and challenging sight, especially since it recalled statues of saints in shrines or on top of altars, or pagan idols worshipped in temples. Despite this, niches and statue bases gradually replaced less formal methods of propping up sculptures against walls or against the columns of a loggia, which was the practice in palaces that had not been designed with the display of a sculpture collection in mind. Judging from Maarten van Heemskerck’s views of the Palazzo Madama (the Palazzo Medici near Piazza Navona, constructed in the late quattrocento and refurbished in the early cinquecento), in these less structured settings viewers had been able to walk around, sit down next to, or even touch antiquities as they wished. The collection of the Sasso D’Amateschi family as it was drawn in the first half of the sixteenth century, in contrast, responds to the Belvedere’s symmetry and order with an early sixteenth-century refurbishment of an older courtyard that created a more prescriptive and architecturally ordered type of display. A drawing in Berlin (Figure 3.2) illustrates a courtyard that is already several decades old, with the family’s sculpture collection put on view in a setting relatively recently furnished with niches, bases, and frames. A bust identified as Pompey surveys the scene from the center of the back wall, while pendant statues of Apollo and Mercury turn toward each other across the entryway. Classicizing pilasters frame an elegant, backwards-facing torso set in a niche, while other torsos invite close looking through their arrangement in a gallery set into the right-hand wall. Statue bases raise the figures of Apollo and Mercury to roughly the same height and bring them in line with the surrounding pilasters. At the back of the cortile a
relief panel of Bacchus Visiting the Poet Icarius is set in the wall and framed as if it were a painting. Notably, this was a time when “galleries” of mythological paintings had only recently come into vogue in elite palaces, suggesting a parallel development between the exhibition of antique reliefs immured in walls and that of paintings in studioli and other parts of the noble house.\textsuperscript{11}

These changes are important for the history of architecture, since they imposed a new taste for sculpture-laden, highly decorated walls in courtyards, open-air loggias and façades. At the same time, as we have seen, genuine antiquities became scarcer.

\textbf{Figure 3.2} Anonymous (after Maarten van Heemskerck?), Courtyard of the Casa Sassi. Pen and brown ink, brown wash, 23 × 21.5cm. Inv Kdz 2783. Kupferstichkabinett, Staatliche Museen, Berlin, Germany. © Bildarchiv Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin/Photo: Joerg P. Anders/Art Resource, NY.
Competition among collectors led to larger displays in the palaces of fewer collectors, but even for the wealthiest patrons supplies could not meet demand. The situation encouraged new experiments in the use of “fake” antiques, creative restorations, and pastiches made up of diverse fragments. Of particular importance in this change was the wider use of white stucco, re-invented in the last decades of the fifteenth century and perfected in Raphael’s workshop, which brought sculpture display, all’antica décor, and architecture into even more tightly coordinated schemes. White stucco, made using marble dust and thus an ideal alternative to carved marble, was used in the Villa Lante and Villa Madama to create the illusion of antique relief extending over the entire wall surface. The material offered endless possibilities for the seamless integration of built structures and sculptural decoration, as well as for setting up unbroken transitions between antique and modern. Stucco greatly facilitated the movement of antique sculpture onto palace façades, significantly at the Palazzo Branconio dell’Aquila by Raphael and his workshop (designed in the 1510s and demolished in the seventeenth century). Here stucco medallions on the exterior functioned as shields and as advertisements of the owner’s numismatic collection inside. Painted panels on the upper floor, statuary in niches, and stucco garlands lent the palace its festive, celebratory character. The façade as a whole was borrowed from Trajan’s Forum, which was studied in Raphael’s circle and known to have been richly decorated with statues and trophies.

Palazzo Branconio set a new standard for the display of antique sculpture on palace exteriors. It also articulated the common bond between sculpture, painted façades, ephemeral arches, and theater sets in this era. It was well known that in antiquity the scaenae frons (the wall behind the stage) of antique theaters had displayed large, figural sculptures, and some of the most celebrated antique statues in Roman collections (such as the Muses in Palazzo Riario and the Villa Medici) had originally decorated ancient theaters. In the sixteenth century, during papal possessi (inaugural processions in which newly elected popes walked through Rome to take “possession” of the city) collectors would set up temporary arches on the street to show off their ancient statues, and participants in the procession would occasionally stop to view theatrical intermezzi staged in front of them. The gradual emergence of triumphal arch, collection, and theater put an end to any traces of the informality seen in quattrocento collecting, as antiquities were displayed in ever grander settings. The development of a distinctly triumphalist and monumental language plays out in the architectural type that Marcello Fagiolo and Maria Luisa Madonna termed the “facciata museo” (the façade museum), seen first at the Palazzo Branconio and then again at the Palazzo della Valle-Del Bufalo (Figure 3.1), the Palazzo Medici on the Pincian Hill, or the Villa Borghese. Andrea Palladio’s later vision of an ideal scaenae frons in his illustration to Daniele Barbaro’s commentary to Vitruvius’ De architectura (1567), as well as his Teatro Olimpico (1580s), integrate figural sculpture and relief in stage sets that model the ideal art collection. Likewise, displays of sculpture on stage sets are echoed in the monumental façades of sixteenth- and seventeenth-century villas.
The techniques for installing sculpture on façades and courtyards elevated statues above the heads of viewers, opening the questions of how perspective and angles of viewing factored into sculpture display, as well as architectural design. These are relatively unexplored topics, since scholars have tended to follow Leonardo’s opinion that the science of perspective belonged to painters alone. In contrast, Pomponio Gaurico’s learned treatment of perspective in his De Sculptura (1504) offers proof of an ongoing theoretical discussion of these issues as they relate to sculpture and display, as does Carlo Urbino’s “Libro Quinto della Prospettiva” in the Codex Huygens (circa 1570). This latter work considers the geometric problems that arise when colossal figures are observed from a “worm’s eye view,” that is, from below, when they are raised on “pedestals, on platforms, or other elevated surfaces (such as niches) in a determined location” (Figure 3.3). In the cinquecento, sculptures that
were life-sized or larger were usually put on view on identical, purpose-built bases that raised them to a consistent height, bringing them into visual order and, it seems, reflecting the belief that ancient sculptors had corrected the proportions of their figures so that they could be viewed from below. Passages in Plato and Vitruvius suggested as much. According to the latter, the proportions of colossal sculpture had to be adjusted to take into account the air’s density, which the eye strains to pierce through when it observes objects from afar.17

Theories of perspectival recession and viewing angles point to a specialized body of knowledge surrounding sculpture installation, raising the question of the “authorship” of collections in terms of their overall design. It seems that in the quattrocento, sculptors were usually brought in on an ad hoc basis, as when Verrocchio (between 1471 and 1481) created niches for the portrait busts set above the doorways at the Palazzo Medici in Florence. Later projects required a more specifically sculptural forethought from the first stages of architectural planning. As was mentioned above, Raphael’s collaborator, Lorenzetto worked alongside palace architect Antonio da Sangallo the Younger as designer and sculpture restorer at the della Valle hanging garden (Figure 3.1). Likewise, in Bramante’s Belvedere and Raphael’s Villa Madama, collecting became an impetus for highly creative solutions that put masterpiece sculptures in the best possible light. As James Ackerman has argued, “distinguished collections of antiquities assembled in the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries stimulated the urge to build; the statues had priority, and the architecture took shape around them.”18

It seems no coincidence that Michelangelo, the most “sculptural” architect of the cinquecento, would provide some of the most inventive solutions to the display of antique sculpture. The Piazza del Campidoglio (Figure 3.4) began in 1538/39 when Michelangelo set up a new base for an antique equestrian statue of Marcus Aurelius at the center of the piazza. The colossal bronze had stood for centuries in front of the Lateran palace, formerly a papal residence, until Pope Paul III decided to transfer it to the Capitoline. Michelangelo is said to have opposed the move of such an imperial image of papal might to the Campidoglio, the seat of Rome’s civic government and the last holdout of Rome’s independence from the papacy. Yet after the decision was made, the artist placed the statue at the very center of the piazza as a way of underscoring Rome’s status as the center of empire, caput mundi and umbilicus mundi (head of the world and “navel” of the world). The Capitoline complex as we see today was only completed in the seventeenth century, and it is not certain how far Michelangelo’s design for the piazza had progressed when he installed the Marcus Aurelius, or how closely it was adhered to in subsequent decades. With hindsight, however, the statue seems the starting point for the entire scheme, as is emphasized by the cosmological pattern on the pavement that radiates out from the figure’s base.19 The priority of sculpture on the Capitoline is also seen in the triangular staircase in front of the Palazzo Senatorio, which Michelangelo used as a showcase for antique reclining figures of the Nile and Tigris (restored as a Tiber), while reserving a niche between them for a figure of Jupiter that never arrived.
As a whole, Michelangelo’s piazza effectively turned the box-like statue court inside out, inverting the usual experience of the collection by making sculpture the core of the design and architecture the external, sculptural frame.

Michelangelo’s plan as architect of the Palazzo Farnese in the 1540s was, it seems, to create a long, perspectival axis leading between two colossal, antique figures of Hercules, out to the center of the garden marked by the Farnese Bull, and across the Tiber on a bridge that would lead to the villa Farnesina (Figure 3.5).

The sculpture display at the Palazzo Farnese, which required collaboration between Michelangelo and the in-house restorer, Guglielmo della Porta, brought pairs of pendant sculptures (the two figures of Hercules, two of Flora, and two gladiators) under the courtyard arcade. Using the bays of this arcade as substitutes for sculpture niches was a design inspired by the display of colossal antiques in the courtyard of the Palazzo Riario (the Cancelleria) in the early cinquecento; it would be repeated again at the Palazzo Barberini in the seventeenth century. The technique transformed the monumental elements of palace architecture into framing devices, combining the functions of courtyard and sculpture court. The restoration of statues and their alliance with the architectural scheme – with bases elevating the figures to bring their heads in line with the capitals of the piers – not only gave sculpture an appropriately dignified setting but also affirmed the full control of architect and patron over display. The
intention to overwhelm the viewer by personifying the imperial grandeur of palace and patron seems clear enough. Yet other possibilities of meaning were opened up by the combination of massive architectural and sculptural forms. The display of the Leaning Hercules is suggestive of a narrative opposition between the god, who is so exhausted from his labors that he can only lean limply on his club, and the piers, which seem to lift the cortile’s massive arches without effort. Michelangelo’s robust architecture shows off its super-Herculean strength, proving itself ill suited for the integration of delicate marble or stucco reliefs. Only colossal antique statues can attempt to rival its grandeur.

Collecting and Architectural Theory

Because of ancient precedent, availability, and their ability to fit into narrow spaces, certain ornamental antiquities tended to be favored again and again for re-use in architectural designs. Among the most ubiquitous were examples of recycled acanthus scroll carvings, following the example of classical architraves decorated with acanthus (most noticeably, at the Temple of Venus Genetrix in the Forum of
Caesar). Reliefs carved with acanthus scrolls, paired griffons, and marine subjects show up, for example, at the Palazzo della Valle di Mezzo built by Andrea and Bartolommeo della Valle in the first decade of the cinquecento. Here in the entablature of the piano nobile, antique reliefs were joined together to create a continuous frieze, as a regularized reinterpretation of a type of ornamental spolia that had often been used in medieval churches. Before Andrea and Bartolommeo della Valle used these motifs in their family palazzo, acanthus scrolls and griffins had appeared—intertwined with the family emblem of the eagle—on the tomb they commissioned for their father in the church of Santa Maria in Aracoeli in Rome. Such repetition points to the use of antiquarian model books shared between painters, sculptors, and architects. In fact, one of the most urgent goals of fifteenth-century archaeology had been to recover modelbook patterns that could be sized to cover empty space, as is seen in the hybrid creatures, candelabras, and vine tendrils that surface everywhere in early modern art and architecture. Art historians’ silence on motifs of this sort—outside of a specialized literature on the recovery of antique grotteschi—speaks to the status of all’antica “ornament,” a topic usually overlooked because of its apparent lack of narrative, as well as an anonymity and ubiquity that has excluded it from artists’ biographies and the history of style. Yet the antique motifs on the margins of early modern art and architecture are part of a powerful visual language that channeled the splendor of antiquity through long centuries of reuse. Artists sketching in collections continued to prioritize them to a striking degree. In the drawing of the Palazzo della Valle-Del Bufalo shown in Figure 3.1, for example, the artist singles out an acanthus motif for a detailed study covering one third of the page. As Alina Payne has described, while the discussion of invention in early modern architecture usually centers on the formation of a canon of orders, this is only one aspect of a much wider process of re-assemblage that brought together antique architectural and decorative fragments. Payne’s research has shed light on the place of ornament in practice and theory, considering how the antique bases, capitals, and other motifs studied in sketchbooks laid the foundations for architectural novelty (in façades studded with relief sculpture, or column capitals invented through the recombination of various antique parts). Antiquities collections and architecture overlap meaningfully in this realm of imaginative and inspirational performance. Yet it is notable how little all’antica recombinations affected the priority collectors placed on life-sized antique figures displayed in niches. Experiments with ornament and the language of classical architecture seen at the Casino of Pius IV, for example, surround antique statues, but do little to interfere with their primacy. The overlap between the display of pagan statues and Christian cult statues described above was crucial in creating this normative status, which profoundly affected the reception of antiquities and their arrangement in architectural settings through the neoclassical era and beyond.

The study of architectural fragments in sketchbooks invites reflection on the possible aesthetic overlap between building sites and collections of antiques, as well as on the role that collections played in the wider history of architectural theory.
Remnants of ancient architecture feature prominently in collections from the quattrocento onwards (Figure 3.6). Indeed, the presence of bases and capitals in these spaces – where they were sometimes displayed aesthetically, like sculptures – reminds us that the study of ancient architecture took place not only during solitary treks through the ruins. Architecture was also studied in collections, the social and aesthetic contexts that played such a meaningful role in antique revival. The relationship between the fragments of antique architecture prized in collections and building practice seems to have been quite direct in the Palazzo Venezia, where marble cornices added by Cardinal Cibo around the turn of the fifteenth century mimicked the guilloché decorations on a famous antique column base – once part of the Temple of Mars Ultor – then on view in the palace garden. Around the same time Giovanni Ciampolini displayed yet another base from the Temple of Mars Ultor, along with one from the Temple of Concord, inside his collection of antique sculpture. The bases are drawn adjacent to each other in artists’ sketchbooks (Figure 3.6), hinting at the possibility of a comparative display juxtaposing the two. Indeed, collections may have been crucibles of architectural theory, inspiring collaboration between artists and patrons. From a passage in Luca Pacioli’s *De divina proportione* (written in 1497 and published in 1509), we learn that during the
construction of his palace Count Girolamo Riario (1443–88) discussed with Pacioli and Melozzo da Forli the best way to carve an all’antica capital according to Pacioli’s formulations, shedding light on the sociable discussion of architectural problems.27 Learned gatherings devoted to architectural topics in collections took place in Angelo Colocci’s antiquities garden on the Quirinal, where the tools depicted on an ancient architect’s tombstone were used to determine the proper length of the antique Roman foot.

Another topic that still requires further study is the question of how all of the miniature pediments, pilasters, moldings, and ornamental details seen in the collection of Ciampolini and others might have served as authoritative examples for artists and architects. In collections visitors could have examined, for example, ancient relief sculptures showing emperors sacrificing in front of temple façades. These were prized as authentic “portraits” of ancient buildings shown intact and in detail. Well-known examples include the Marcus Aurelius reliefs exhibited on the Capitoline hill or the reliefs moved from the Arcus Novus to the della Valle collection, which Philandrier studied as a model for intercolumnar width.28 It is clear, however, that the goal was not always to take these sources so literally, or even to copy them faithfully. Comparing the relief of Bacchus Visiting the Poet Icarius in the Mattei collection with its re-elaboration in a drawing by architect Giovanni Maria Falconetto (Figure 3.7)29 reveals the artist’s ambition to compete with the architectural background shown in the ancient prototype by adding elaborate fenestration and daring perspectival effects.

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**Figure 3.7** Icarius relief, London, British Museum and drawing by Giovanni Maria Falconetto, Vienna, Albertina 13247, early sixteenth century. © Trustees of the British Museum and Albertina, Vienna.
Worlds within Worlds

Sculpture collections transformed cortili and façades into pictorial spaces, introducing a variety of mythological and historical narratives while bringing many different spatial and temporal axes together in one setting. In this sense they added tremendously to the experience of architecture. It seems that such a concept is first articulated in painting, or in what Sven Sandström has described as mural painting “that is really architecture.”30 One of the hallmarks of early modern painting is the invention of complex illusions in which wall spaces seem to be created out of many different materials and to operate inside different “realities.” In painted Uomini illustri cycles of the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, statue-like figures, pseudo-relief, and all’antica inscriptions mirror the varied representational formulae seen in ancient triumphal arches, as was fitting given their subject matter and honorific function. In the quattrocento, painting imitated architecture and sculpture in mural cycles that blurred the boundaries between real and imaginary space, as is seen for example in Mantegna’s frescoes in the Camera degli Sposi in Mantua (1465–74). By the end of the fifteenth century, a broad interest is seen in painted architecture ornamented with fictive sculpture and juxtaposed with real sculpted elements, for example in Pinturicchio’s Cappella Basso della Rovere at Santa Maria del Popolo in Rome (1484–92), where religious narratives and a sculpted tomb appear between fictive columns and above painted bronze and marble reliefs.

The ambitious designs seen in these ensembles developed in dialogue with the display of antique sculpture in real architectural frameworks, as is seen in the painted façades that became so popular in early modern Rome. Grisaille, or painting in black and white, was the preferred medium for these frescoes, allowing them to imitate stone sculpture quite explicitly. Painted sculpture programs on the outside of palaces imitate collections of antiquities installed in architectural settings, mirroring their techniques of display and commenting upon their aesthetic and symbolic functions. On the outsides of buildings, fictive architectural and sculptural elements might regulate a space that lacked perfect symmetry, just as real antiquities did when they were arranged on real walls. Painted statues and reliefs depicting a family’s ancient history became especially popular subjects of façade décor, which in some cases may have helped established the fiction that the genuine antiquities inside the palace were the relics of antique ancestors.31

Sculpture collections also mirrored painting, since antique reliefs were displayed in a way that emphasized their resemblance to painted historiae (history paintings). Sculpted reliefs were cut down into rectangular shapes and inserted into walls in a manner that imitated painting. The long sides of sarcophagi, for example, were often displayed independently in the form of immured panels surrounded by frames. At the Villa Medici on the Pincian hill (1570s–1580s), antique reliefs were fitted into stucco frames of a set size and proportion. In a technique seen at the Casa Sassi (Figure 3.2) and the Palazzo della Valle-Del
Bufalo (Figure 3.1), collectors followed the model of the triumphal Arch of Constantine by setting off spoliated reliefs in stone frames and arraying them in an upper register. The ancient triumph offers a meaningful bridge between painted histories and sculpture display, given the parallel that could be drawn between antique reliefs and the painted panels once shown in antique triumphs to narrate a returning general’s victories.

These pictorial techniques used for the display of sculpture in architectural schemes can also be considered in the light of the literary descriptions of fabulous imaginary buildings, set in the antique past or in more recent times, which were richly decorated with statues, gems, marbles, and sculptural reliefs. *Ekphrases* of architectural sculpture had featured prominently in such revered texts as Virgil’s *Aeneid* and Dante’s *Purgatorio*, which describes marble reliefs of Christian and classical subjects sculpted by God. Long passages about the antique or *all’antica* relief sculpture set in architecture appear as well in the *Hypnerotomachia Poliphili* (for example, in the description of the portal of the Temple of Venus mentioned above) or in Poliziano’s *Stanz’ per la giostra* begun in 1475, with its long description of the doors of the Temple of Venus and their “vivid carvings.” These figures, sculpted by the god Vulcan himself, “made Nature herself ashamed.” In this tradition, the sculptures described by the narrator seem magical and could sometimes even foretell future events, like those that adorn the fountain at the Castle of Merlin in Ariosto’s *Orlando Furioso* (first edition 1516). Texts such as these were likely to have been important in inspiring a preference for sculptural ornament among patrons, and in attaching a certain aura of wonder to sculpture displayed in grand palaces.

We can examine the connection between sculptural programs, architecture, and *ekphrasis* further by considering a painted representation of an architectural space, Botticelli’s *Calumny of Apelles* (Figure 3.8, 1490s). In depicting the principal scene of the panel Botticelli closely follows an *ekphrasis* by the ancient author Lucian about a painting of *Calumny* by Apelles. This classical text provides a model that Botticelli follows closely in his representation of the main characters and the narrative. Yet the architectural background originates solely in Botticelli’s own imagination. Here Botticelli has painted a grand throne room decorated with statues of Christian and pagan wise men and warriors in niches. All other architectural surfaces are encrusted with sculpted relief. What seems notable in this context is that the artist, given the task of painting Lucian’s description of a painting, has placed the scene in an architectural setting adorned with so many different examples of sculpture. It is as if Botticelli wanted to lay particular emphasis on the genre of *ekphrasis* by showing a room crowded with works of art, each being described or written about by viewers who walk past them. Perhaps it was expected that the sculpture on view in such a setting would be experienced like Lucian experienced Apelles’ painting, or perhaps Botticelli associated richly-ornamented, elite buildings generally with the literary tradition of the *ekphrasis*. In either case, elaborate sculpture programs emerge as a means of bringing architectural spaces closer to the realms of poetic
imagination and revelatory experience, as spheres of fantasy far beyond the mundane, everyday world.

**Becoming Antique**

The introduction of antique sculpture added infinitely rich historical, moral, and temporal dimensions to architecture. Bringing ancient objects into new, purpose-built settings stressed their ephemerality and reminded viewers of alternative histories of loss, evoking the much-touted idea that collectors had preserved relics of the antique past from barbarous men who would otherwise viciously destroy them. A principal theme of Petrarch’s *De Remediis utriusque fortuane* (completed 1360), or Poggio Bracciolini’s *De Varietate fortunae* (1448) had been the ephemerality of things, which — as reminders of the transience of human existence — incites men towards virtue. Embarking antiquities within monumental, seemingly permanent settings underscored the inherent nobility of collecting what was most vulnerable to destruction, and setting these fragile works before the eyes of the public as a spur towards virtuous behavior generally. Architecture plays an important role in this message, since the practice of immuring antiquities into walls seemed to stop the process of decay in a permanent fashion. It also established a bond...
between a family’s palace and its sculpture collection that made antiquities legally part of the house – just like the columns and masonry – ensuring their descent to direct heirs as well as discouraging future generations from selling them off.

Despite the fact that the premise for collecting lies in the contrast between ancient and modern, one finds, as we have seen, an increasing investment in the creation of integrated worlds aimed at making the difference between past and present indistinguishable. Archaeology and architectural theory had established the idea that, through careful study of the rules of classical architecture, new buildings by master architects who had successfully absorbed the principles of the antique would be just "as good as," or even the same as, their antique counterparts. Howard Burns described this phenomenon when he named Raphael as the first architect (perhaps with the exception of Alberti) to grasp fully the difference between classicizing modern architecture and genuine archaeological remains. He “understood that the ancient world was totally different from the modern one.” Aware of this historical reality, Raphael attempted to recreate the forms of ancient architecture, after conducting careful research on their original appearance. Thanks to such concerted efforts at revival, some early modern buildings even achieved the status of being “antique” themselves since they were created entirely according to ancient, rather than modern principles. Judging from their treatment in architectural sketchbooks and treatises, Palazzo Riario (the Cancelleria), the Belvedere, and Bramante’s Tempietto were considered equal to the antique, and were all either directly juxtaposed with antique buildings in artistic and literary contexts or included in books “on antiquities” by Serlio and Palladio.

In the case of the Cancelleria the extensive use of real antique building materials and the imitation of ancient masonry gave the palace special credentials, bolstering its “claim to antique status.”

These interpretations have emphasized the role of archaeological recovery in creating the illusion of an antique architecture reborn in the present. Casting doubt, however, on the possibility of a “correct” archaeological recovery of the antique, in 2006 Anne-Marie Sankovitch turned attention to the “mechanisms of dissimulation” that allowed architects to lay claim to such an impossible dream as a genuine revival of the antique past. Revivals, for Sankovitch, seek to erase all traces of temporal difference between past and present, making antique and modern indistinguishable. Yet there is no such thing as a real revival, only various manifestations of survival, since reconstructions were always distortions of their original models. As she argues, revivals “were marked by the anachronic condition of multiple temporality.” Her argument is based on the study of architectural treatises, in particular the images they use to create the illusion that two (impossible) revivals have actually been achieved: ruined buildings had once again become intact and whole, and new buildings had successfully brought the distant past to life. Arguably antiquities collections, as well, were invented as a complementary mechanism in the pursuit of these same, elusive revivals. Their purpose was likewise to pretend that the antique had been reborn (even that the antique has “desired and achieved its
own rebirth”) and that those who were responsible for this rebirth had somehow rediscovered the underlying precepts of antiquity.

In such a model, “the antique” is not regarded as a real phenomenon that artists could recover accurately. Attention is focused instead on the gap between the illusion of rebirth and the reality of multiple temporalities co-existing at once, as well as the fantasy that artists and architects devoted to the goal of closing it. In this discussion emphasis has been placed on the primacy of the architect’s voice, the author of a design that would determine the building’s relationship to the past. Antique works were incorporated into the architect’s primo disegno via ordered, symmetrical displays that were intended as permanent solutions to the problem of ruination.41 Only a culture that approached antique architecture as a theoretical corpus designed with such clarity and consistency that, even if it had failed to survive intact, all the tools necessary for its own reinvention, could develop such a keen awareness of its place in the wider scheme of history.42 However, considering this development in the context of the collection reveals that a fuller awareness of a historical past emerged not only within architectural practice, as part of an internal debate, but also in line with the hopes and desires of patrons. At a time when families traced their origins back to antiquity, their noble identity, antiquities collection, and palace relied on the illusion that the family had succeeded in bringing the ancient past back to life, restoring the virtues and achievements of the ancients in the present, and guaranteeing their continuation in the future.

Ordering and Reading

Well-planned layouts of sculpture gave elite palaces their reputation as semi-public settings built to serve entirely noble ends (aesthetic, genealogical, poetic, or political). As palaces defined themselves as civic monuments, or art academies, architectural spaces that used to be merely functional – the garden, or the cortile intended to receive light and rainwater – now became representational. Ancient sculpture elevated the spaces of domestic architecture by putting the tenets of classical rhetoric into practice, above all those of varietas and decorum.43 At the Palazzo della Valle di Mezzo, for example, the introduction of colored marble tondi and sculptural spolia introduces a distinct opulence and variety of prestigious materials to the realm of private architecture. Concern for decorum is manifested in a distinction between public and private realms: the display of military heroes and emperors on public, exterior façades (of Palazzo della Valle-Del Bufalo [Figure 3.1] and Palazzo Capodiferro-Spada, for example), and mythological statues in cortili and gardens.44 In architectural contexts sculptures were sometimes sorted according to genre (portrait, mythological nude, narrative relief) with each type displayed in a different framing device (reliefs in square frames, statues in niches, and portraits in roundels). A sense of ordered variety was achieved at the Villa Madama, Palazzo della Valle-Del Bufalo (Figure 3.1), and elsewhere by setting portraits busts in round niches
above statues in square niches, or rectangular reliefs above semicircular niches holding statuary.45 Since the size and shape of antiquities determined their placement within larger schemes, fitting a widely varied group of objects into a regular system became a matter of architectural virtuosity. An architect’s ideal vision of statue display is seen, for example, in the antique temples illustrated in Cesare Cesariano’s Di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione de architectura libri dece (1521), or the fourth book of Palladio’s Quattro Libri (1570), where horizontal figures lean against pediments and vertical ones stand proudly on top of columns. While a few of the figures illustrated by Palladio carry large attributes, or gesture wildly, the perfection and abstraction of his designs is suggestive of an ongoing tension between the patrons’ desire to foreground sculpture, and the architects’ desire to integrate them so seamlessly within their designs that they become virtually invisible to viewers.

Symmetry was widely adopted as the most fundamental design principle of the sculpture collection. The display of pendant figures was a particularly favored method of maintaining this principle, as Alberti described.46 Displaying similar versions of the same subject certainly encouraged close looking, by asking viewers to discern differences in carving between two nearly identical objects, or to make a judgment on which antique sculptor was superior to the other. The Medici, famously, had paired two statues of Marsyas by placing them on either side of the garden portal of their palazzo in Florence and having them restored by two different sculptors, Mino da Fiesole and Verrocchio. The display is suggestive of the “contest” that Petrarch saw in the display of the Quirinal Horsetamers, colossal statues standing on bases that identified them as the creations of Phidias and Praxiteles. Early modern viewers intuited, perhaps from archaeological examples, that in ancient Rome sculptures had often been displayed as pendants across doorways.47 The technique became a hallmark of early modern collections, as is seen at the Palazzo Farnese courtyard (Figure 3.5) and elsewhere. The recent reconstruction of the seventeenth-century collections of the Borghese, based on surviving inventories, has highlighted just how important these pairings were both to the experience of viewing and to the ordering of architectural space. Statuettes of Venus pudica and Venus volgare restored by Giacomo della Porta, two adolescent emperors, or two very similar versions of a satyr playing the flute, established horizontal visual axes that kept the vertical elements of doorways and windows in balance.48

The figural metaphors that pervade architectural thinking were often exploited as a means of harmonizing sculpture and its surroundings. As is well known, Vitruvius justified his preference for architectural symmetry with reference to the proportions of the human figure; it became an architectural commonplace that columns could always be imagined as gendered bodies that imitate the male and female form. It is no coincidence, then, that Stützfiguren, or figural supports that mirror the shape of the column, appear so often in early modern collections. These are the only works of sculpture discussed in any detail by Vitruvius, ensuring their high status in architectural theory and practice. A pair of antique Pans moved
to the Palazzo della Valle before 1490 were still attached to thin piers, and they carried baskets on their heads that could be thought of as stand-ins for column capitals. Over the following decades the reception of the della Valle Pans focused on their specifically Vitruvian identity. Prints of the Pans are used to illustrate Vitruvius’ take on the figural column in Philibert Delorme’s *Le premier tome de l’Architecture* (1567) and the first German edition of the architectural treatise by Walther Hermann Ryff (1548).

In the Pans and other *Stützfiguren*, sculpture acts out architecture’s load-bearing functions with the overtones of indignity and imprisonment that Vitruvius described in connection with this genre, which he associated with captives or servants carrying heavy burdens. Such associations underscore the notion that collections are inherently triumphalist and that they function like displays of military trophies. As we have seen, the triumph offered one of the most enduring metaphors for the collection, and these settings always referred back to the model of the antique triumphal arch as a paradigm for their conceptual identity and design. Above all the Arch of Constantine, bedecked in *spolia*, demonstrated how life-sized statues, roundels, and narrative reliefs could be brought together into a single architectural frame and recontextualized by a dedicatory inscription. The language of triumphal celebration and the model of the triumphal arch’s design is already present in Alberti’s description of suitable domestic décor: “I would have separate stone frames in appropriate and noble situations along the wall, in which to place pictures and also panels like those borne by Pompey in his triumph, depicting his glorious achievements by land and sea.”

Figuratively, collections were like displays of the spoils of war brought back by conquering generals. They also quite literally flaunted the spoils of victory, given that the sculptures on view had been won in brute competition with other families.

Early modern collections were always oriented towards genealogical celebration, and families were careful to display antique images in close proximity to their own coats of arms (as in Figure 3.2). The reuse of antique *spolia* in private architecture is inseparable from the age-old practice of showing off heraldic imagery in one’s palace, as is seen most clearly in examples from the mid to late quattrocento. One is the house of the newly wealthy pharmacist Lorenzo Manlio, completed by 1476 and still standing in the Roman Ghetto. Manlio had claimed direct descent from an illustrious ancient ancestor, the general Marcus Manlius Capitolinus, and used the façade of his house to call attention to his ancient Roman roots. An enormous inscription across the façade celebrated his completion of the house “for himself and his descendants.” Antique reliefs of a ferocious lion and wolf, both symbols of city of Rome, are still immured nearby, while an antique inscription naming a certain “Manlius” was once there but is now missing. In the quattrocento, the Porcari family, whose name alludes to their profession as pig farmers, sought a more noble identity by pretending to have descended from the antique senator Marcus Porcius Cato. They displayed numerous antique reliefs depicting pigs, as well as any inscriptions they could find that referenced the name “Porcius.”
Eventually, even after antiquities prized for their “artistic” value would overshadow the honorific imagery seen in the houses of Manlio and the Porcari, the strong association between statue displays, military victories, and ancestral bloodlines would continue. Houses and palaces encrusted with antique or pseudo-antique sculpture presented themselves as the living heirs to the ancient Roman *domus*. At the same time – tying together the fictive histories of the house with fictive histories of the family – they advertised the sense of illustrious genealogy that was such a fundamental part of early modern nobility.

**Divine and Noble Realms**

Despite the artificial separation of architecture and sculpture in both Renaissance theory and art historical scholarship, we have seen that the two arts were never separate, and indeed were tightly integrated in the early modern period. As patrons became bolder, commissioning grander and monumental displays of sculpture, tensions arose between Albertian claims for the architect as master over all forms of architectural ornamentation and the trend towards more prominent sculpture displays. Architects – calling upon the authority of Vitruvius – offered up ordered principles for the arrangement of sculpture, as a reaction against the haphazard look of medieval spolia, to assert the primacy of design, and to take a stand against the sort of “Gothic,” Northern European schemes in which sculpture runs the danger of overwhelming architecture. A variety of new solutions emerged, from symmetrical sculpture courts, to the re-invention of spolia (now transferred to secular settings and arranged in well-planned schemes), to the full integration of sculpture and architecture in bold, inventive designs such as the Villa Madama or the Capitoline. Experiments took place in elite commissions such as these, as well as in painted versions of integrated sculpture displays and in literary descriptions of ornamented architecture. New approaches clarified sculpture’s role in design as a means of unifying and embellishing walls, and its ability to re-contextualize architectural space. Bringing antique sculpture into the palace in the hopes of putting moral, artistic, and social values on display opened a new chapter in the dialogue between the arts, one that would continue for centuries to come.

**End Notes**

1. For further discussion of the traditional place of sculpture in church or civic space see Francis Ames-Lewis, *Tuscan Marble Carving 1250—1350. Sculpture and Civic Pride* (Aldershot, UK and Brookfield, VT: Ashgate, 1997).
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5. Weil-Garris Brandt, “The Relation of Sculpture and Architecture,” 81. Alberti sums this up in his discussion of concinnitas (De re aedificatoria ix.5), and much of his Book 9 is devoted to the need for the dignified and harmonious display of statues and relief in private buildings. For Alberti’s discussion of the frame and the pediment see notes 44 and 48 below. For the rise of integral design generally in early modern Italian architecture see Howard Burns, Building Against Time. Renaissance Strategies to Secure Large Churches against Changes to their Design, in L’Eglise dans l’architecture de la Renaissance, ed. Jean Guillaume (Paris: Picard, 1995), 107–131 and Marvin Trachtenberg, Building-in-Time from Giotto to Alberti and Modern Oblivion (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2010).


8. See Christian, Empire, cat. nos. 12, 17, and 26, with previous bibliography.

9. In 1506, for example, Cesare Trivulzio described the niche housing the Laocoön at the Vatican Belvedere as “something like a chapel”; see Hans Henrik Brummer, The Statue
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Court in the Vatican Belvedere (Stockholm: Almquist and Wiksell), 1970, 75. In an invec-
tive against the Belvedere collection written in 1512 Gianfrancesco Pico della Miran-
dola noted the resemblance of the statue bases to “little altars” (Sonia Maffei, “La fama
di Laocoonte nei testi del Cinquecento,” in Laocoonte. Fama e stile, ed. Salvatore Settis
(Rome: Donzelli, 1999), 174–5).

10. See Christian, Empire, cat. no. 23, with previous bibliography.

11. For the Sassi collection see Christian, Empire, cat. no. 35, with previous bibliography.

12. The sculpture program at the Palazzo Capodiferro-Spada can be read as a modern imi-
tation of an antiquities collection arranged in an ideal order (Caesars with imprese
and inscriptions on the façade, and in the cortile gods, nude figures holding up the family
coat of arms, ornamental motifs, and painted quadri in the upper register). For the mod-
ern pieces that complete the antiquities display in the courtyard of the Palazzo Mattei di
Giove see Lucia Guerrini, Palazzo Mattei di Giove. Le Antichità (Rome: “L’Erma” di
Brechneider, 1982), 313–45 (“Opere non antiche o di dubbia antichità”).

13. Pier Nicola Pagliara, “Palazzo Branconio,” in Raffaello architetto, ed. Christoph Luitpold
Frommel, Stefano Ray, and Manfredo Tafuri (Milan: Electa, 1984), 197–207; Charles
Burroughs, “Hieroglyphs in the Street: Architectural Emblematism and the Idea of the
Studies in Applied Emblematism from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Centuries, ed. Hans J.
Böker and Peter M. Daly (Turnhout: Brepols, 1999), 63–65.

prospettive,” in La Festa a Roma dal Rinascimento al 1870, ed. Marcello Fagiolo (Rome

15. See Kristina Herrmann-Fiore, “The Exhibition of Sculpture on the Villa Borghese
70. Collecting Sculpture in Early Modern Europe. Center for Advanced Study in the Visual
Arts Symposium Papers, ed. Nicholas Penny and Eike D. Schmidt (Washington, DC:
National Gallery of Art), 218–45. New research has recently begun to shed light
on the sculptural programs and painting cycles of theaters in the context of the wider
history of architectural décor, e.g. Lex Hermans, “The Performing Venue: The Visual
Play of Italian Courtly Theatres in the Sixteenth Century,” Art History 33(2) (2010):
292–303.

Morgan Library Codex M.A. 1139 (London: Warburg Institute, 1940), 58–82; Virginia Bush
Mockler, Colossal Sculpture of the Cinquecento from Michelangelo to Giovanni Bologna (PhD
diss., Columbia University, 1967), 46–50; Sergio Marinelli, “The Author of the Codex
book of Lomazzo’s Trattato also covers this ground (Giovanni Paolo Lomazzo, Trattato
dell’arte della pittura, scultura, et architettura (Milan: Paolo Gottardo Pontio, 1584).

17. Plato, Sophist 235–6; Vitruvius iii.5.9; Mockler, “Colossal Sculpture,” 46; see also illus-
tration in Cesare Cesariano, Di Lucio Vitruvio Pollione De Architettura libri dece (Como:
G. da Ponte, 1521), iii.60 and Walther Hermann Ryff, ed., Vitruvius Teutsch (Nurem-
berg: Johan Petreius, 1548), 127v.

18. James Ackerman, The Architecture of Michelangelo (Harmondsworth: Pelican Books,
1970), 163.


22. At the Porta di San Ranieri in the Pisa cathedral, for example, an antique acanthus scroll over the doorway is matched and extended by a twelfth-century imitation; see Adriano Peroni, “Spolia e architettura nel Duomo di Pisa,” in Antike Spolien in der Architektur des Mittelalters und der Renaissance, ed. Joachim Poeschke (Munich: Hirmer Verlag, 1996), 205–24. For a survey of architectural spolia in the medieval Mediterranean see Michael Greenhalgh, Marble Past, Monumental Present. Building with Antiquities in the Mediaeval Mediterranean (Leiden and Boston: Brill, 2009).

23. On the remarkable fame of these panels, which were well known in the quattrocento and imitated in the Palazzo Ducale at Urbino and at S. Andrea in Mantua, see Carlo Gasparri, “Sulle lesene con tralci di acanto Valle-Medici,” in Antikenzeichnung und Antikenstudium in Renaissance und Frühhochzeit, ed. Richard Harprath and Henning Wrede (Mainz am Rhein: Philipp von Zabern), 11–125.

24. Payne, “Creativity and bricolage.”

25. Evidence for architectural fragments in Italian collections (”spoglie”) is discussed in Laurie Fusco and Gino Corti, Lorenzo De’ Medici, Collector and Antiquarian (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 189–90.

26. Matilde De Angelis d’Ossat, “Le collezioni Barbo e Grimani di scultura antica,” in Roma. Il Palazzo di Venezia e le sue collezioni di scultura. Vol. 1. La storia del Palazzo di Venezia dalle collezioni Barbo e Grimani a sede dell’ambasciata veneta e austriaca, ed. Mariangela Barberini, Matilde De Angelis d’Ossat, and Alessandra Schiavon (Rome: Galimanni, 2011), 38–43; Laurie Fusco and Gino Corti, “Giovanni Ciampolini (d. 1505), a Renaissance Dealer in Rome and his Collection of Antiquities,” Xenia 21 (1991), 39–40, illustrated on the same page in the Codex Escorialensis, fol. 51r, Uffizi A4337 (Fig. 7), and the Holkham Hall Album 701, fol. 21. The base from the Temple of Mars Ultor appears often in artists’ sketchbooks and is also depicted in the foreground of Raphael’s Madonna della Quercia.

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32. *Aeneid* i.453–93; *Purgatorio* x.28–96.


34. *Orlando furioso* (xxxiii. 3–58). See also Tasso’s description of prophetic carvings on silver doors (*Gerusalemme liberata*, xvi.2–7).


40. Sankovitch, 192.

41. For a wider consideration of these issues see Trachtenberg, *Building in Time. Early Modern Anachronism*, is also the theme of Alexander Nagel and Christopher S. Wood, *Anachronic Renaissance* (New York: Zone, 2010).
42. As Vasari wrote about Filippo Brunelleschi, his studies were such that he “could see Rome in his imagination as it had stood before it fell into ruin,” Vasari, Le vite, 3: 150, quoted in Sankovitch, “Anachronism,” 191.


44. For the antique statues of togati and military figures on the façade of Palazzo della Valle-Del Bufalo see Christian, “Instauratio,” 45; for the modern figures imitating antique heroes on the Palazzo Capodiferro-Spada see Lionello Neppi, Palazzo Spada. Rome: Banca Nazionale dell’Agricoltura, 1975.


46. Alberti made the comment that “reliefs and panels, and any other decoration, must be so arranged that they appear to be in their natural and fitting place, as though twinned. The ancients […] with statues, especially for the pediments of their temples, they took care to ensure that those on one side differed not a whit, either in their lineaments or their materials, from those opposite,” De re aedificatoria ix.7, Joseph Rykwert, Neil Leach, and Robert Tavernor, ed. and trans., Leon Battista Alberti. On the Art of Building in Ten Books (Cambridge, MA and London: MIT Press, 1988), 310.


50. De re aedificatoria ix.4, in Rykwert et al., Leon Battista Alberti, 299.

51. For example, families with imperial eagles in their coats of arms favored antique sculptures and inscriptions with images of eagles (Christian, Empire, 288, 295). At the Sala Mori in the Castello dei Pio di Carpi, painted images of antique statues appear in the same frame as military trophies emblazoned with the family coat of arms. For allusions to antiquity in Venetian noble palaces see Patricia F. Brown, Venice and Antiquity. The Venetian Sense of the Past (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), 254–62.


53. Christian, Empire, 354–8, with previous literature.
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Abstract

By the early sixteenth century in Rome, the display of antiquities in palace and villa architecture was widespread. Moving antiquities onto center stage, patrons appropriated for themselves the prestige of coordinated sculpture displays that had long been a part of civic and ecclesiastical architecture, as well as the symbolic values associated with “the antique.” Sculpture became an increasingly prominent element in the design of loggias, courtyards, and façades oriented towards the display of antique and pseudo-antique objects. A variety of new solutions emerged, from sculpture courts, to arrangement of spolia in architect-driven, ordered and planned schemes, to the full integration of sculpture and architecture in bold, inventive designs, such as the Villa Madama or the Palazzo Farnese. Experiments took place in elite commissions like these, as well as in painted versions of integrated sculpture displays, or evocations of literary descriptions of ornamented architecture. New approaches clarified sculpture’s role in architectural design as a means of unifying and embellishing walls, adding new meanings and contexts to architectural space. The integration of antique sculpture and architecture in early modern Rome can be explored from multiple perspectives, taking account of its significant impact on architectural theory and practice.

Key Words

antique sculpture; architecture; divine; early modern Rome; noble realms; Palazzo Farnese; Villa Madama.