

# Ruminations on the Garden-Building Art in the Middle of Italian Renaissance

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**Abstract:** *The Renaissance culture in the 15th century was centered on Florence and cultivated by the Medici family, while the Renaissance culture in the 16th century was centered on Rome and created by the Pope. At this time, after Lorenzo's death, the Medici family swept away the situation of family decline, and Julius II became Pope. Just as the Medici family had protected many humanists and promoted the development of literature and art in the past, Julius II also devoted the great artists at that time to Rome, protected and actively utilized them, thus the heyday of Renaissance culture and art appeared in Rome.*

**Keywords:** *Italian Gardens, Renaissance, Garden-building Art*

## 1. Introduction

Soon after Julius II became Pope, plans were made to restore the Vatican Palace on the Vatican in the north-west corner of the city of Rome. As early as Nicholas V, there were plans to extend the palace, but they have not yet materialised. The palace was later enlarged by Innocent VIII, who added a large garden pavilion with a high platform on a branch of the Vatican slightly away from the palace, which is also known as the "Tower of the Winds" because of its elevated position.<sup>[1]</sup> In addition to the restoration of the palace, the Pope drew up plans to connect this high terrace to the palace below, and appointed Bramante to design and build it. The Pope wanted to be able to admire the collection of ancient art in this building regardless of the weather.

## 2. Bramante's idea of gardening

When it comes to Bramante, who was promoted by the Pope, it is necessary to tell the story of his career as an architect. Born in a village two miles north of Rome, in the middle of the Apennines, in Urbino, he was a painter and an architect by trade. At the age of 30, he went to Milan to work for the Sforza family, attracting the attention of his visionary predecessor, Lodovico Ille. II. At the age of 30, Bramante went to Milan to work for the Sforza family, attracting the attention of his predecessor, the visionary Duke of Lodovico il Moro. For the next twenty-five years, Bramante spent time at this sumptuous court with Leonardo da Vinci. Leonardo da Vinci He was a close friend of Leonardo da Vinci and Caradosso. He built churches, bridges, etc., and was also the supervisor of works on the site. In 1499, with the fall of the Sforza family, Bramante left Milan and moved to Rome, where he spent several years studying ancient ruins and art. Soon afterwards, his talent was appreciated by the papal court and he was hired to design the fountain in the square of St Peter's Basilica. Then, in 1502, he built the famous 'Tempietto' for Fernando V and Isabella of Spain. This is a circular building with a peristyle, located in the Franciscan<sup>[2]</sup> monastery on the hill of Garniquillo. This elaborate building, reminiscent of the ancient temples, reveals how the design of the Bramantes was completely assimilated to the ancient style and formed a new style in the history of architecture. For this reason, Bramante was considered the most creative architect of his time. The Pope hired the 60-year-old architect to realise the aforementioned ambitious plans. Bramante first designed two covered colonnades consisting of three levels of arcades, which span the valley between the Vatican Palace and the garden pavilion. From one colonnade one can overlook the wooded slopes of the hillside; from the other, one can enjoy the views of Rome and Campania. At the same time as he designed the colonnade, Bramante also planned the so-called Belvedere Garden<sup>[3]</sup> (also known as the Garden of the Watchtower), which was situated in the narrow, undulating area enclosed by the two aforementioned colonnades. At the time the Romans were not concerned with the treatment of open spaces in harmony with palaces and villas, but because of the fact that Bramantes had been very close to Alberti, Da Vinci and others, he was able to make a name for

himself. However, because of his close association with Alberti, Leonardo da Vinci and others, and his exposure to the terraced gardens of Urbino, it was time for him to apply this terraced garden design to his proposed subject.

The rectangular site, 1,004 feet (306 metres) long and 213 feet (75 metres) wide, was divided into three terraces, and the top terrace, connected to the pavilion, was entirely set aside as a decorative garden. Because the pavilion at the end of the long side of the site was too small, the garden was not directly connected to the viewing building, and the Second set up a large semi-circular niche 85 feet high within the pavilion, which was fronted by a number of garden features. The niche provides the best viewpoint around the city through a colonnade with a semi-circular aisle. The colonnades on both sides of the courtyard open out to the interior, while the exterior is enclosed by a high wall in order to maintain the quietness of the courtyard environment. In the year following the construction of the courtyard, a shell-shaped fountain in the ancient style was installed in its centre. Beramante also extended the aforementioned overlying colonnade horizontally from the top terrace, giving a sense of a deep atrium to the lower terrace. A semi-circular end was also attached to the lowest palace level so that it echoes the semi-circular niche on the top platform. The atrium on the ground floor was used as an arena, with the semicircular section serving as its grandstand. The wide steps of the atrium lead up to the second terrace, which still has a grandstand and is said to have held 60,000 people. Despite the Pope's eagerness, progress on this project was slow, and it barely got off the ground when Beramante died. According to the plans drawn up at the time, only the east colonnade had been completed. The garden also has three terraces, the lower one shaded by green grass, the second terrace a high platform and the top terrace covered by a grove of trees. The west colonnade was completed by Ligorio, the architect of Pius IV, about half a century after the death of Bramante. Pius IV is said to have been fond of pomp and pageantry, so he often held his banquets in the arena on the lower terrace. Pius V, on the other hand, was averse to banquets, and first transformed the arena and then moved all the pagan statues that adorned the atrium (the Nile and Tiberias, Hercules,<sup>[4]</sup> Apollo, the group of Laocoon, etc.) to Florence and other cities. By 1588, during the reign of Sixtus V, the Vatican Library was built on the second terrace across the atrium. Only 25 years after its completion, this masterpiece by Bramante met with a tragic end. The top terrace was most magnificently decorated in the 17th century, when Paul V decorated a bronze fountain in the shape of a pine cone in front of the large niche designed by Bramante, which is 11 feet high and is said to have adorned the tomb of the emperor Hadrian. Since then, the garden has been called the "Pinecone Garden", a name that is inseparable from the fountain. It became a very narrow inner courtyard due to the construction of the library, and in the 19th century a new balustrade was built at the front of the second terrace, which survived the ruins of the formerly beautiful garden.

Although Bramante's gardening career was not completed, his contribution to the later image of Italian gardening cannot be underestimated. Using Rome as a starting point, he created and developed a style of terrace gardening. This was a transformative period in the history of Italian gardening, since then Italian gardens have been dominated by architectural compositions, i.e. wide terraces, steps linking the terraces, frescoed pavilions, bronze or marble fountains, ancient statues and so on. Not only did the work of Bramante soon afterwards become the object of imitation by cardinals, nobles, officials, merchants, scholars, artists and other classes of people, but there was also a great rush to build villas on the seven hills that served as the area of the ancient Roman villas and on the outskirts of the city.<sup>[5]</sup>

### 3. Raphael's vision of the garden

After the Belvedere Garden at Bramante, known as an Italian terrace gardening style, Raphael's garden for Giulio. The Madama, built by Raphael for Giulio de' Medici (later Pope Clement VII), is also known as a terrace garden. The Villa Madama (fig. 66) was built by Raphael for Giulio de' Medici (later Pope Clement VII). Giulio de' Medici inherited his interest in villas from his family, and when he was occasionally given an area in the hills of Mario, with its abundant water and stunning views, he wanted to build a large villa there. So he enlisted the services of Raphael, an artist of great renown at the time. Raphael, a native of Urbino, studied with Pietro Perugino. He studied painting under Pietro Perugino and then in Florence under Leonardo da Vinci and Michelangelo. In 1508, at the age of 25, Raphael was recruited to go to Rome, where he worked for Julius II and was favoured by Leo X. Raphael also had a close friendship with his fellow countryman, Bramante, and learned architectural techniques and was a keen student of ancient art. Raphael, who died at the age of 37, left behind countless paintings, and his design for the Villa Madama was surprisingly instrumental in the creation of the Renaissance garden. According to legend, Raphael travelled to Tivoli in April 1516 with Bembo, Count Castiglione and other Venetian friends. There, inspired by the ruins of the spectacular villa of the Emperor Hadrian, he jumped at the chance to reproduce the grandeur of the above-mentioned villa in the villa

on Mount Mario. The exact date of the creation of this villa is not known, although the work was well advanced around the middle of 1519. Although no one knows exactly how the work was progressing at the time of Raphael's death, there is no doubt that the construction of the building and its interior was well under way.

The drawings, completed by Raphael's assistant, Sangharro Jr. and his brother Battista. On the south side there is a semi-circular theatre supported by Ionic columns overlooking St Peter's Church, and on the north side there is a beautiful open gallery opening onto the garden. The main part of the building is the central gallery, with an interior decorated by Giulio Romano. Romano and Giovanni D'Amico. D. Udil. The interior was designed by Giulio Romano and Giovanni da Udille. The courtyard on the north side consisted of two terraces, which still exist. On the top terrace a three-storey arched gallery was built, defining the southern end of the garden; the high northern wall is decorated with two large statues and three large niches are cut into the wall connected to the hill, the central one being of great age. One of them has an elephant's head spouting water, surrounded by boxwood, which shoots water from the elephant's trunk into a water dish. Below the top platform a large rectangular pond has been cut into which the water from the elephant's head jets into the pond. A number of niches are arranged in regular and orderly juxtaposition on the north and south walls. The plan of the Sangallo shows a statue of a giant on one side of the gate, a large racecourse outside the gate, and chestnut and fig trees in the middle of the perimeter. To the east, two steps lead down to the citrus orchard, which can also be reached by a third terrace. This is a large garden with a circular fountain at the end (fig. 87). The sketches in Raphael's own hand, preserved in the hands of the Uffizi, show that he designed the garden on the north-east side of the building, which was very spaciouly planned, and he also designed it to be three-tiered and horizontal to suit the topography of the hillside. The main building faces the main entrance and in front of it is a stone-paved terrace linked by two steps. The top terrace has a square garden with a central pavilion forming a green corridor area; the second terrace is circular with a fountain in the centre; the bottom terrace is a larger oval in plan with two fountains. The terraces are connected to each other by a wide flight of steps. The repeated use of the circular and semi-circular shape of the garden and its buildings shows that the demands made by Alberti in his treatise on the garden were put into practice by Raphael and were indeed extremely far-reaching.

Although Raphael's intentions were not realised, the people of the time were impressed by the perfection of the villa's design. Raphael's friend, the poet Thebeldeo, wrote a poem in its praise, and Giulio Romano used the view of the amphitheatre as a backdrop for his frescoes. Romano also used the view of the amphitheatre as a backdrop for his frescoes. But from the beginning the Villa Madama was a shambles, and the year after Raphael's death Leo X died and was succeeded by Hedelijnas VI, who was indifferent to art, and work on the Vatican Palace was interrupted. The work on the Vatican Palace was interrupted. Giulio de' Medici the Medici lived in seclusion in Florence and the artists retreated to the palace, leaving it virtually untouched. Soon afterwards, although Giulio de' Medici was elected Pope. On 2 May 1527 the famous "Pillage of Rome" began and the villa was destroyed, including the front porch on the east side of the grand staircase, the marble amphitheatre was partially destroyed and the roof of the first floor collapsed. The marble amphitheatre was partially destroyed and the roof of the second floor collapsed. In 1530, the Pope returned to Rome and had the villa restored by the young Sangallo, but the grand staircase and the first floor roof were never rebuilt and the colonnade of the amphitheatre was left in ruins. Later, in 1538, Margherita, daughter of the emperor Charles V, married Ottavio Farnese, nephew of Paul III. When Margherita, daughter of the Emperor Charles V, and Ottavio Farnese, nephew of Paul III, came to Rome for their marriage, they sometimes stayed at the villa. As Margherita liked the villa so much, the Pope bought it for her exclusive use; from then on, it became known as Madama.

#### **4. B.W. Pound's compendium of 16th-century Italian villas**

Although Raphael's work was not completed as Italianate, its basic conception became a model for later villas, and thus had a strong influence on the development of villa architecture, and although countless gardens were built under his influence in the first half of the 16th century, it also spread to the northern cities because of the instability of the times. Only two years after the fall of the star, in 1522, the Duke of Urbino, Felicesco Maria, followed in the footsteps of Madama. In 1522, just two years after the fall of the star, Felicesco Maria, Duke of Urbino, followed the example of Villa Madama and built the buildings and gardens of Villa Emperia in Pesaro. At the same time, Giulio Romano, with the same name, was also a member of the Villa della Madama. Romano also came to Mantua with the memory of the Villa Madama and built the Palazzo del Te for the Duke of Gonchaga. A list of villas from the first half of the 16th century to the end of the 16th century is given by B.W. Pound as follows (Table 1).

Table 1: B.W.Pond: Outline History of Landscape Architecture.

S/N	years	Garden name	position			Created by	Designer
			Tuscany	Rome and southern Italy	Northern Italy		
1	1520	Villa Vicobello	Siena				peruzzi
2	1525	Delte Palace			Mantua		Romano
3	About 1527	Chelsa Villa	Siena				peruzzi
4	1530	Doria Palace			Genoa	Andrea Doria	Montosoli
5	1540	Castro Villa	Florence			Medici Family	Tripolo
6	1547	Lancelotti Villa		Frascati			Volterra
7	1548	Villa Farnese		Caprarola		Farnese	Viniola
8	1549	Villa Farkonieri		Frascati		Ruzfini	Bolomini
9	1549	Esther Villa		Tivoli		Ipolito Esther	Pirro Ligorio
10	1550	Boboli Gardens	Florence				Tripolo
11	1552	Villa Valmarana			Lisila		Palladio and Scarmozzi
12	1555	Round Hall Villa			Vicenza		Palladio and Scarmozzi
13	1560	Julia Villa		Rome		Julius III	Pirro Ligorio
14	1560	Villa Lante		Brasilia		Gambala	Viniola
15	1560	Villa Pia		Rome		Julius III	Pirro Ligorio
16	1560	Villa Medici		Rome		Richie	Lipi
17	About 1560	Villa Scarcy			Genoa		Alessi
18	About 1560	Rosacha Villa			Genoa		Alessi
19	About 1560	Villa Spinora			Genoa		Alessi
20	About 1560	Franzoni Villa			Genoa		Alessi
21	About 1560	Villa Palavicini		Frascati			Belgamasco
22	1563	Podesta Palace			Genoa		Alessi
23	1565	Gropalo Villa			Genoa		Alessi
24	1565	Chikonia Villa			Bischio	Count Jean Pietro Chiconia	Mozzoni
25	1566	Aimo Villa			Faenzoro		Palladio
26	1566	Katna Villa		Polly			A. Carlo
27	1567	Mondragon Villa		Frascati		Mark Altbaum	Veneola and Renaldi
28	1568	Esther Villa			Como	Tolomeo Gallio	Peregrino
29	1568	villa barbaro			Marcel		Palladio
30	1570	Villa Cornaro	Piombino				Palladio
31	About 1570	Pratorino Villa	Florence				Bernardo Buontalent
32	About 1572	Caboni Villa	Florence				
33	1575	Villa Petraya	Florence			Ferdinand de Medici	Bernardo Buontalent
34	About 1575	Pombic Villa	Florence				Sandy Di Tito
35	About 1575	Rasboni Villa	Florence				Amannadi
36	About 1580	Justi Garden			Verona		
37	1581	Maathai Villa					Duka
38	1590	Villa Bernardini	Luka				
39	1590	Camby Villa	Florence			Pucci Family	
40	1598	Aldo Brandini Villa		Frascati		Peter Aldo Brandini	Della Polta

## 5. Conclusion

In the first half of the 16th century, the Renaissance culture moved from Florence to Rome, where villas were built in the heart of the city and its suburbs; in the second half of the same century, the art of gardening flourished in Tuscany and, by extension, in Genoa in northern Italy. In the Middle Ages, although there were numerous monasteries and contract buildings, the names of their designers were almost unknown, and even less so were the designers of gardens. The Renaissance ushered in an era of respect for individuality, and architecture must be associated with the name of the architect who designed and built it. At the beginning of the Renaissance there were no professional gardeners in Italy, and most of the gardening work was done by architects. It was only from Alberti onwards that a new era of talent emerged, with the emergence of such expert and versatile gardeners as Bramante and Raphael, thus establishing Italy's unrivalled position in the history of gardening in Europe and the world as a whole in the 16th and 18th centuries.

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