

At the first floor of Villa Farnesina, in collaboration with the Istituto centrale per la grafica, the exhibition entitled “The Fable of Cupid and Psyche in the graphic translations of the Regia Calcografia. Drawings, Photographs, Copper plates” shows the activity of draughtsmen and engravers called to work, between 1898 and 1920, for the last editorial project carried out by the Regia Calcografia. The project consisted in the printed translation of the pictorial works of the Raphaellesque fresco cycle of the Loggia of Cupid and Psyche. Alongside this series of eight copper plates and their preparatory drawings, the collection also contains a rare ensemble of fourteen photographic prints, acquired by the Roman institution itself in the 1870s. At that time, photography and engraving had gradually competed with each other for the documentation of the paintings, even though for a long time engraving was still preferred to photography. The exhibition symbolically summarizes the last phase of the historical path of classic Italian engraving which, from its origins, drew from the work of Raphael and his school the main source of inspiration, strength and driving force for the development of his own publishing market and that, from the nineteenth century will be replaced by photographic reproduction.



TIMETABLES

OPEN EVERY WEEKDAY (Mon-Sat)
from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m.
last entry at 1:30 p.m.

Special opening on every second Sunday of the month
from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.
last entry at 4:30 p.m.

Special openings on demand
COVID-19 provisions on website www.villafarnesina.it


TICKETS

Full price	10€
Reduced	9€
Student reduction	7€
Student reduction in School groups reduction	5€

Bookshop with publications, gadgets and postcards

Booking / Contacts

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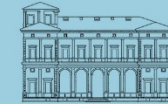
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#LincciRaffaello500 #LincciChigi500

To reach us: bus n. 23, 280 - Stop at “Lgt Farnesina”

Visitors who will show the ticket of the Vatican Museums within 7 days from the visit, will get a reduction on the Villa Farnesina ticket

Graphics by *Eduardo Mattiozzi*



Raphael in Villa Farnesina Galatea and Psyche

curated by
Antonio Sgamellotti and Virginia Lapenta



6th October 2020 - 6th January 2021

Villa Farnesina - Roma
Via della Lungara 230 - 00165 Roma



Galatea

The execution technique and the Egyptian blue

The detailed re-examination of the surface of the fresco allowed a better comprehension of the execution technique. The junction between the *giornate*, the position of the *cartoni*, the incisions, the signs left by the artist's hand rest; are all elements which allowed us to have a better understanding of the way Raphael and his students gave life to the fresco. The technical investigations carried out on the *Triumph of Galatea* brought to the surface important information on both the materials and the way in which these were used. The most astonishing discovery was that of a blue pigment of artificial origin currently known by the name **Egyptian blue**, one of the oldest man-made pigment whose preparation process seems to date back to 3100 BC. This result, was, at first sight, disconcerting in that one usually thinks of this pigment as having disappeared with the end of Greco-Roman culture. However, the Egyptian blue is one of the rare pigments whose recipe passed down to us through ancient classic books, Vitruvio in particular describes its preparations calling it *caeruleum*. Raphael knew this author well, and studied him in the very period in which he created the *Triumph of Galatea* to approach the painting of the ancients, not only from an iconographic point of view, but also from a technical point of view.

Cupid and Psyche

An interrupted team work

In the Loggia of Cupid and Psyche there is a perfect synergy between several artists (Giulio Romano, Giovan Francesco Penni and Giovanni da Udine) guided by the careful and vigilant direction of Raphael. The painter from Urbino limited himself to little interventions for sporadic retouching and was the author of only a very few figures in the cycle. The frescoes illustrate the famous love story between Cupid and Psyche, told in the *Metamorphoses* by Lucio Apuleio Madaurensis in the 2nd century AC. The adventurous love story unfolds between episodes in heaven and on earth, but only the so-called "celestial" ones are depicted in the Loggia. This lack led to think of an interruption of the cycle, a hypothesis later supported by the discovery of sketches that depict part of the episodes set on earth (which were probably intended for the currently empty lunettes). Another element in favor of the incomplete cycle is the discontinuity of the vegetable festoons, completed only at the end of the 1600s.



The Loggia... becomes digital



At the link <http://vcg.isti.cnr.it/farnesina/loggia/> an interactive system is available thanks to which it is possible to observe at a close distance both the stories of Cupid and Psyche, by Raphael, Giulio Romano and Giovan Francesco Penni, and the very particular pergola with all kinds of animal species made by Giovanni da Udine based on a design by Raphael. The system will allow, on one hand, to examine the figurative elements of the pictorial cycle enriched by historical and technical-artistic information; on the other, to more easily distinguish the numerous plant and animal species. It will thus be possible to enjoy all those pictorial details that are difficult to observe from the normal viewing distance of the vault (8 meters), as well as to have botanical, zoological, iconographic information and those of the results obtained from non-invasive scientific analyzes. Inside the "Digital Loggia" it will also be possible to consult the works exhibited by the Istituto centrale per la grafica at the first floor of Villa Farnesina.