



HALL OF THE LADIES

The Hall of the Ladies is still mostly arranged as it first was in 1812, when it was destined to be the living room in the apartment of Napoleon Bonaparte.

The stucco frieze was commissioned to one of the greatest artists of neoclassicism, the Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen, who worked in Rome at the end of the 18th Century. The frieze portrays the entrance of Alexander the Great in Babylon, a theme that was chosen to symbolise the entrance of Napoleon in Rome, an occurrence that in fact never came to be. This work of art was very successful at the time, to the extent that the Danish sculptor made several duplicates for other customers.

Dating back to the Napoleonic period are also the marble flooring, which embeds a Roman mosaic at the centre, and the lovely fireplace decorated with two Dacian slaves. The room's vault was also painted in 1812 by Felice Giani, who decorated the ceilings of the apartment's other rooms. A large painting dedicated to the Roman emperor Trajan was installed at the centre of the vault during the Napoleonic period but was then removed and placed in another area of the Palace. The removal unveiled the presence of a 17th Century fresco that is still visible today, showing the coat of arms of Pope Urban VIII, born Maffeo Barberini.

The present-day name of the Hall originates from the presence along the walls of four large circular paintings depicting King Charles Emmanuel III of Savoy and his three wives, all of whom died after only a few years of marriage, ultimately leaving the king widowed for more

than thirty years.