

# The Parkville Frame Gallery

## Newsletter

### 2021 Newsletter #21-4

#### Subject: Sculpture

In our 2021 Newsletter #21-1 we mentioned that we are now offering a limited number of sculpture pieces. One such piece is a reproduction of the well-known sculpture known as ***Apollo and Daphne***. The original sculpture was carved by the famous Italian sculptor Gian Lorenzo Bernini between 1622 and 1625.



***Apollo & Daphne***  
Gian Lorenzo Bernini

The original piece is a life size carving that can be seen in the Borghese Gallery in Rome. This work depicts the culmination of the history of Apollo and Daphne (Phoebe and Daphne) in Ovid's *Metamorphosis*. Cardinal Scipione Borghese commissioned this work at the beginning of Bernini's career. Bernini started the sculpture in 1622, and finished it in 1625. Work was suspended for one year during the process so that Bernini could complete his sculpture of David.

According to the Ovidian story, Cupid shot Apollo with a golden arrow; Apollo fell in love with Daphne and chased after her. However, Daphne was shot with a lead arrow; she resisted and ran from Apollo. As Apollo was finally about to catch Daphne, she screamed for help from her father, the river god Peneus.

He turned her into a laurel tree to end her misery. As with the sculpture *Rape of Persephone*, Bernini wanted the viewer to walk around the sculpture to see the story unfolding. Bernini intended the sculpture to be viewed first from Apollo's back. From that point of view, the viewer can see that Apollo is in motion, but it is unclear exactly what he is doing. Moving slightly to the right of the sculpture, it becomes clear that he is chasing after Daphne and reaching out his hand to grab her. At that angle, Daphne still appears to still be mostly a woman. Continuing to the right of the sculpture, the viewer notices that Daphne is crying out and is beginning to turn into a tree. Her body begins to be covered with bark, her fingers are turning into leaves, and her feet are morphing into roots. From the far right of the sculpture, the viewer sees the stunned expression on Apollo's face. Apollo appears to realize that he is actually touching a piece of bark and he never actually touches Daphne.

The pedestal of the Apollo and Daphne sculpture has an inscription composed in Latin by Cardinal Maffeo Barberini (later Pope Urban VIII). The inscription reads: "Those who love to pursue fleeing forms of pleasure, in the end find only leaves and bitter berries in their hands." Even though the sculpture depicts a pagan story, the inscription ties the moral of the story to Cardinal Borghese. The inscription essentially warns against excess frivolity and promotes devotion to the church.



**Muses** (1804)  
Bertel Thorvaldsen

Another sculpture we are offering is a relief carving titled **Muses**. This sculpture, created in 1804 by Danish sculptor **Albert Bertel Thorvaldsen**, is actually a portion (the right end) of a larger relief sculpture titled *Dance of the Muses*. In the original full-length sculpture (shown below) we see Apollo, the god of music, seated on a rock playing his lyre with nine muses (three shown here), dancing around the Three Graces (**note**: we also have the sculpture: *The Three Graces*).

During the early 19th century Danish sculptor Bertel Thorvaldsen (1770-1844) was considered to be the greatest sculptor in Europe. A student of classical art, he incorporated the styles of ancient Greece and Rome into his own work.



**Dance of the Muses** (full-length panel)  
Bertel Thorvaldsen

We encourage you to explore our somewhat limited, but growing collection of high-quality sculpture reproductions. These reproductions can be framed in a variety of ways. They will make interesting additions to your home, office, or business. We have several different items to choose from, and can special order many others.

We look forward to seeing you soon, and please visit us on our web site at:

**[parkvilleframegallery.com](http://parkvilleframegallery.com)**

*Enjoy fine art -- well framed*