

# ROMA AMOR



Visit **Love: Contemporary Art Meets Love**, an exhibit at the Chiostro del Bramante that showcases some of the most celebrated works inspired by love of the past hundred years, by artists such as Tom Wesselman, Andy Warhol, Robert Indiana, Marc Quinn, Yayoi Kusama, and many more. *Closes 19 February.*

Dive into the month of love headfirst by going on a hunt for some of the most romantic works of art in the city, from ancient statuary to cutting-edge street art, and everything in between.

**Tiffany Parks** leads the way.

#### >>CUPID AND PSYCHE

Hidden away in the Room of the Gladiators on the quieter side of the Capitoline Museums (namely, Palazzo Nuovo) is a 2nd-century BC marble statue of a young couple in a tender and intimate embrace. The tale of Cupid and Psyche is one of impossible love: that between a mortal and a god, and not just any god but the god of love. Through many tests set by her exacting mother-in-law Venus, Psyche finally succeeds in earning her place at Cupid's side and is welcomed to Mount Olympus.





#### >> ALEXANDER AND ROXANE

Upstairs in Villa Farnesina, the summer residence of wealthy Siennese banker Agostino Chigi, the great man's bedroom was frescoed by some of the heavyweights of the high Renaissance. In particular, Sodoma (one of Raphael's teachers) recreated the wedding night of Alexander the Great and his bride Roxane in honor of Chigi's own nuptials. The sensuous pair are surrounded by winged cherubs and the god Hymen, symbol of matrimony.



#### >> ALICE PASQUINI MURAL

In 1954, photographer Gianni Berengo Gardin captured an image of two lovers sharing a kiss on a park bench in Paris as a tram passes behind them, a spontaneous snapshot of the City of Light. This new mural by Alice Pasquini, Italy's most celebrated street artist, recreates this iconic photograph on a wall along Via Fanfulla da Lodi in the Pigneto neighborhood.

#### >> THE BRIDE AND GROOM'S SARCOPHAGUS

One of the most famous works of Etruscan sculpture, this terracotta sarcophagus depicts a married couple happily enjoying a banquet together in the afterlife. The idea that the deceased would be cheerful participants in their own funeral banquet was a thoroughly Etruscan concept, revealing a positive outlook on life and death. The work also illustrates Etruscan women's important role in society. See it at the National Etruscan Museum at Villa Giulia.



#### >> HOLY AND UNHOLY LOVE

Titian's *Amor Sacro e Amor Profano*, painted in 1514, depicts the two Neoplatonic aspects of love: sacred and profane. Although at first glance, the well-dressed woman would appear to represent a sacred or courtly love and the nude the profane version, some art historians insist it is the other way around. Either way, it's a delightful work to gaze upon in the company of your own love (sacred or otherwise). Borghese Gallery.

#### >> APOLLO AND DAPHNE

Bernini's renowned depiction of Apollo in pursuit of the forest nymph Daphne, captured the moment the latter begins to transform into a tree, may not be a representation of a pure or reciprocal love, but it's nevertheless a stunning illustration of unbridled passion. Considered one of Bernini's absolute masterpieces, *Apollo and Daphne* can be admired at the Borghese Gallery, along with several other of the great baroque sculptor's works.