

Summary

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Bernardo Dovizi da Bibbiena (1470–1520) was one of the closest advisors of Pope Leo X. As a *cardinale di palazzo* he had his own private chambers in the Apostolic Palace, which were located on the third floor of the Loggia di San Damaso, above the papal apartments, to which they were connected by a private staircase. The new rooms, designed by Raphael and his students between 1513 and 1517, included a bedroom, a small loggia and a bathing chamber, which is the subject of this article. Its interior, which emulates the spatial solutions of ancient bathrooms, was filled with a painting decoration with a rich iconographic program arranged by the founder himself.

This article will analyze the interior arrangement and painting decoration of Cardinal Bibbiena's bathing chamber in the context of the spatial dependencies of his Vatican apartments. On the basis of the preserved source texts, the issue of privacy and accessibility will be reconsidered. The problem of analogies between the Renaissance bathing chambers and the studiolo will also be discussed, both in terms of their decoration and the motifs of their establishing.