

Creative perception, decoding of hidden images, contextualisation and interactive learning process

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I propose a new approach to art history applying multimedia. My proposal is focused on the Piazza della Signoria as an example of cultural heritage and as a tool for research and communication. How can we create meaningful participation within the city, discover the Piazza della Signoria, learn about history, and share the experience? The aim is to decipher the public space and to learn and see it by opening the traditional relation between object and spectator through interactive involvement by finding the hidden image, the secret message, and understand the story behind it.

The Enigma of the Piazza della Signoria in Florence

The Renaissance sculpture displayed in this public space form an impressive outdoor museum commissioned by either the Republican or the Medici families. Each of these figures is a tool for propaganda. The tour reveals the Piazza della Signoria in Florence as the theatre of a political and erotic stage. The actors are the monumental sculptures: *Judith and Holophernes* by Donatello, *David* by Michelangelo, the *Fountain of Neptune* by Ammannati, *Hercules and Cacus* by Bandinelli, *Perseus* by Cellini, and the *Rape of the Sabine Women* by Giambologna. These sculptures are interacting like in a performance where each artist tries to outdo the others. Every figure of this forum incorporates a narrative dimension bringing together several temporalities involving representations of the Old Testament, heroes of ancient Greco-Roman mythology, and the mortals: the sovereigns of Florence.

My aim is to analyze the positioning of these sculptures and their interactions within this historical space: the Piazza della Signoria, the platform of political and civic life in the city. In the 16th century, the L-shaped piazza was enlarged by the Palazzo della Signoria and the Palazzo degli Uffizi within a perspective where the sculptures serve as both guardians and focal points: each gaze interacting with one another.

There is a specific point of view exposing these protagonists through a totally different

context. An ambiguous sensuality characterizes the colossal *David* by Michelangelo in the courtyard's midpoint as well as Cellini's *Perseus* beheading the Medusa, which dominates the public area from the Loggia dei Lanzi. The figures seem to be petrified by Medusa. I will reveal how through a specific angle they conjure their destiny.