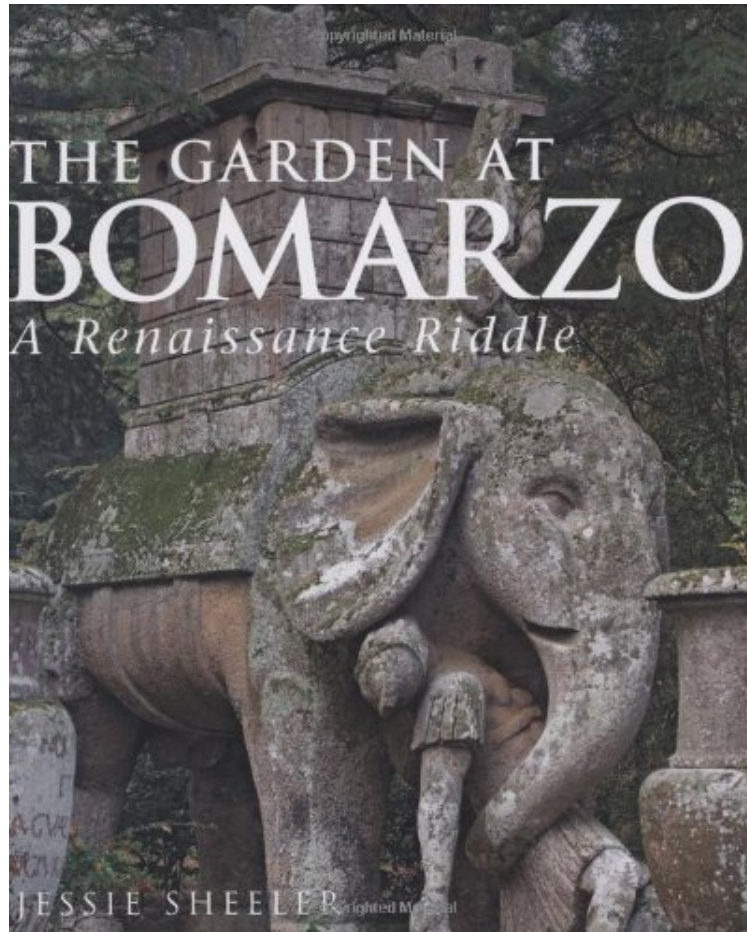


[Free pdf] The Garden at Bomarzo: A Renaissance Riddle

## The Garden at Bomarzo: A Renaissance Riddle

Jessie Sheeler

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**Jessie Sheeler : The Garden at Bomarzo: A Renaissance Riddle** before purchasing it in order to gauge whether or not it would be worth my time, and all praised *The Garden at Bomarzo: A Renaissance Riddle*:

1 of 1 people found the following review helpful. *The Garden at Bomarzo a Renaissance Riddle* Jessie Sheeler By Dr Lindsay Gerard Sharp This is the best general history of the 'Scaro Bosco'- Count Vicino Orsini's incredible 'garden' at Bomarzo in Upper Lazio. To her credit Jessie has powerful empathy with Vicino and, despite more recent general research in related subjects since 2006, this work is still by far the best. The pictures are terrific, although continuing 'restoration' project work at Bomarzo is slowly altering what is there- such as the 'Garden of the Herms', below the leaning house, which was completed by June of 2014. Jessie has selected key sections from Vicino's letters which display this deliberately mysterious intellectual's world picture and colours it with insights such as those relating to true Cinquecento Epicureanism, especially Orsini's rampant sexuality. Various 'rude' words are quoted directly- translated accurately by linguist Sheeler- and this may help explain the book's subdued reception in polite 'Garden Society'. You don't often hear words like this spoken at the frightfully nice Chelsea Flower Show! She acknowledges

the power water had as the major animator of the Sacro Bosco- and notes there was a reputational issue at the time leading to the garden's appalling contemporary reputation. Very recent, as yet unpublished, research has uncovered evidence that Dr Sheeler is correct- water animated automata of classic sexual imbroglios, pictured inter-alia in Hypnerotomachia Poliphili, and related back to a famous 'garden' in what is now Belgium, were almost certainly installed by Vicino inside the walls. Other more decorous animated works existed on the approaches and. last year. an unknown incomplete extension of the 'garden'was photographed close by. These are exciting times for the new wave of garden archaeology, while this book should be seen as the standard 'general'reference for the foreseeable future.<sup>6</sup> of 7 people found the following review helpful. Secrets behind a captivating Renaissance garden in ItalyBy Henry BerryBomarzo is a place in central Italy. The Lord of Bomarzo in the middle part of the 1500s was a Vincino with a wife named Giulia. Vincino lived a long time after his wife died. Though he displayed a sense of melancholy throughout the rest of his life and occasional periods of depression, this cannot be attributed solely to the untimely loss of his wife. For from the garden he founded and remained involved with during his life as well as what other sketchy biographical facts there are to go on, the Lord of Bomarzo had a rather gloomy soul; though one enlivened by intellectual curiosity about diverse interests of the Renaissance, including classical culture, mythology, alchemy, literature, and sculpture. The Garden at Bomarzo was not particularly a memorial to the Lord's departed wife, but rather something of a museum of sculptural representations of the Lord's varied intellectual interests. A war elephant with its trunk curled around a soldier, a small classical theater, a temple, large stone acorn, the three-headed mythological dog Cerberus, and a dragon being attacked by lions are among the statuary of the Renaissance garden. The "riddle" of the garden is posed by inscriptions in Latin in prominent spots of many of the statues. "The cave and the fountain free one from all serious thought" and "I want to tell you, and make you in amazement/purse your lips and raise your eyebrows" are two of these. Sheeler--who has a background in classics studies--does not solve the riddle, but to the extent possible makes sense of the garden's diverse objects and cryptic statements. The Renaissance-era personality of the Lord Vincino go a long way toward this explanation. "The ambivalences and the attractive intelligence in his own character find an expression in the variety and puzzling allusiveness of the [garden's] works...." The Lord was a respected soldier who also had leanings toward "Epicurean pacifism"; he sought out the company of his social superiors for intellectual stimulation while chaffing against the social conventions of the time; the balance between his sensuality and intellectuality shifted at different times of his life. The Lord of Bomarzo shows something of the modern spirit of individuality and independence arising in the Renaissance, while still referring to medieval symbolisms and beliefs for expressing itself. The many color photographs, several full-page and a couple double-page, of the moss-covering, in some cases partly deteriorated statues of the Bomarzo garden are a treat in themselves of classical and baroque statuary.

Probably the most enigmatic garden in Europe, the Sacred Wood at Bomarzo in central Italy has been called extravagant, mysterious, unholy, surrealist, fascinating and good fun, but it has never been perfectly understood – which is possibly just as its creator intended. The recurring theme of the ornamentation in the garden is the struggle of man's soul to distinguish between earthly and divine love, to see what is real and what illusion. Drawing on familiar figures from classical literature and contemporary Italian works, Vicino poses challenges to his audience, forcing an intellectual as well as an aesthetic response to the complex landscape of Bomarzo.

The pick of the coffee-table books this Christmas. Independent on Sunday An attractive book, beautifully produced and intelligently written, and to be recommended to all who wish to visit Bomarzo. Garden History This is garden history at its best, and a stirring story of an interesting man of plants, sculpture and letters. The excellent text is matched by sensitive photography by Mark Edward Smith who captures the shady mysteries of the palace and the dappled groves of the garden, You could not do better than to read this if you intend visiting Bomarzo and it is surely a good consolation, if you are not able to go. Museum of Garden History magazineAbout the AuthorJessie Sheeler was brought up in Edinburgh and read Classics at Edinburgh University. In the early 1960s, working with Ian Hamilton Finlay, she co-founded the Wild Hawthorn Press and its poetry magazine Poor. Old. Tired. Horse. After various teaching jobs and a spell as an assistant in day care centres in New York, she settled with her family in Hampshire where she became Head of Classics at the co-educational boarding school Bedales. She now lives in Scotland on the Solway coast, teaching Latin and desperately trying to keep two and a half acres of unruly garden under control.