

The magnificent residence of the Farnese

On the death of Antonio da Sangallo the Younger, in 1546, **Paul III** also gave Michelangelo the task of completing the work on the **Palazzo Farnese** on Campus Martius. Michelangelo's intervention was to give a finished form to the high ambitions of patronage of the noble Roman family. The stately cornice and the insertion of a central balcony in the facade, surmounted by an imposing coat of arms, gave the construction a verticality and majesty that were entirely new and at odds with the then widespread tendency to design merely horizontal facades.

The grandeur of Michelangelo's architectural style was well suited to the desires of the pope, who then suggested an even more ambitious project. Paul III wanted to connect the garden behind the new palace with a property he owned on the other side of the Tiber, by the construction of a bridge and of terracing that would bring both banks to the same level. If it had been realized, this project, of a magnificence without precedent, would have given great prominence to the superb sculpture of the **Farnese Bull**, recently dug up on the family's property, which Michelangelo intended to set at the center of a fountain in the garden of wonders.