



Although I have been to the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum numerous times, I decided to reserve the museum pass because I really needed a quick dose of spring. As you can see from the above photo, spring has arrived in Isabella's courtyard. With Easter and my son's communion right around the corner, I also found much needed inspiration to get my flower beds in order as well. The best part about walking into the hallway towards the courtyard is that I could smell the fragrances immediately. To me, there is nothing better than a whiff of hyacinth's while enjoying a moment of peace and sunlight on the bench overlooking the garden.

After making my way around the ground level and viewing the floor to ceiling painting by John Singer Sargent, my second stop was the second floor. During my visit, I had the pleasure of meeting Renato, a security officer, who has been in the gallery for 17 years and at the museum for 30 years. He sort of became my own personal guide. Per his suggestion, I started in the Early Italian Room which is straight ahead once you get to the top of the stairs. It was in the Short Gallery that he and I spent most of our time talking. He told me just where to stand to view the painting of Mr. Gardner (at the corner of the cabinet facing the front of the building) and how Mrs. Gardner was really good friends with artist, J.A. McN Whistler. Rumor has it that there is a Rembrandt in the cabinet tucked away for safe keeping. He remarked that Mrs. Gardner, "must have had modern intelligence" because she knew so much about art and the connections her pieces had to one another.

It was after my conversation with him that I went viewed the courtyard from floors 2 and 3 with a different lens as well. He went on to tell me that she visited Venice every year and her admiration for the city can be seen in the design of her home. For example, she placed balconies on each floor overlooking the courtyard, the use of columns and parapets to protect the garden and home.

It is evident to me that Mrs. Gardner had an enormous appreciation in various types of art and the natural surroundings. One fact I learned today was that she incorporated, Medusa, the god of philosophy beauty and art into the tiled center of the courtyard floor. I can just see her waking up every morning from the private apartment on the fourth floor and glancing down at her muse. Until next time.....