



Describe the people around Alexander in each painting. What objects can you find in both versions? Can you find a statue of the Greek god Zeus in either? Who holds the Gordian Knot in this painting? Does it look like Alexander is going to attempt to untie it? Do you think you could have untied it? What do you think the onlookers think of Alexander? Are their reactions the same in both paintings? In which painting do the figures' postures appear more natural, and in which more rigid or staged?



These are Giovanni Paolo Panini's renditions of *Alexander the Great Cutting the Gordian Knot* and *Alexander the Great at the Tomb of Achilles*. How did he make Alexander stand out in each? Can you find a statue of Achilles and a statue of Zeus? On the left, what do you think the men on the balcony are discussing? Compare the state of the buildings in each painting. What is one difference or similarity you notice between Panini's style and those of the two previous paintings?

As an architect, Panini painted many Roman vistas. This led him to devote much time to painting **capriccios** (Appendix D), a type of landscape or architectural composition depicting a mixture of imaginary and real features such as buildings or ruins. Often, he integrated these with narratives. Note how the **scaled** figures of various sizes help create perspective and depth.



While Odysseus slowly made his way home, his wife Penelope and his son Telemachus faced their own challenges at home in Ithaca. Study Joseph Wright's painting of *Penelope Unravelling Her Web*. Thinking her husband dead, Penelope promised her aggressive suitors that she would choose a new husband when she finished weaving a tapestry. Can you guess why she would undo all her weaving each night? Whom do you think the shadowed statue in the foreground depicts? Where is the light source? Can you find Argos, the family pet, hidden in the shadows? How old do you think Telemachus was at this point in the story? Do you know how many years Odysseus was away in total?