

PALEO
RTE

TREASURE MAPS

Twenty Itineraries
Designed to Help
You Explore the
Cultural Heritage
of Palermo and
its Province



Soprintendenza per i Beni culturali
e ambientali di Palermo

ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE *BELLE ÉPOQUE*

by Marilù Miranda

REGIONE SICILIANA
Assessorato dei Beni culturali
e dell'Identità siciliana



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THE FIRRIATO OF VILLA FRANCA

Liberty, denomination of a style that derives from the name of the company Liberty & Co of London of Sir Arthur Lasenby Liberty, was the grandiose period of art and architecture which gave rise in Palermo, as in the rest of Italy and Europe, to what is known as the 'Floral City', modern, and sinuously elegant. The architect Ernesto Basile is the rising star, who worked, together with a whole range of colleagues, collaborators, apprentices, artists and decorators, patrons and executors, on the creation of this 'Small Capital of Stile Liberty'. Basile, in fact starting, from 1894, date of the construction of the 'Chiosco Ribaudò' in Piazza Verdi, becomes the most significant interpreter of this new language, in harmony with the cultural climate of Europe of the time. This included the theories of William Morris, creator of the Arts and Crafts movement, and the new ideas on Industrial design by the Architect Henry van de Velde.

Along these lines, Palermo was able to develop a school of extremely talented designer architects and artist-decorators capable of working in close observance of the relationship 'between the culture of a project and the culture of its execution'. There is a consequential proliferation of creative and productive realities in the field of applied arts, from the ébéniste to the metalworker, from ceramics to mosaics, from fine glassware to fashion, some of whom obtained international fame and helped to confirm Palermo as one of the principle centres of Stile Liberty in Italy, on a par with Turin and Milan. All of this must be seen in relation to the cultural and economic development of the era and is epitomised for the first time in the Great National Exhibition of 1891, which occupies, in Palermo, a part of the 'ex Firriato of Villafranca'. This was an extensive estate belonging to don Giuseppe Alliata e Colonna, Prince of Villafranca, sited alongside the new 'Boulevard' della Libertà. The Exhibition area, once terminated, is subsequently used

for an extensive building programme, both of rented accommodation and of a new type of residential unit; one-family houses and middle-class villas. These *status symbols* of the new entrepreneurial middle-class, were extremely functional internally, and externally were spatially articulated, decorated in a completely new style and with spacious gardens fronting onto the street. The resultant buildings were the fruit of an integrated system of design that united a variety of artists under an 'enlightened' direction, which reached its peak of perfection under Ernesto Basile. These projects expressed the 'Unity of all the Arts' propounded by Morris, which is encapsulated in the combined works of artists such as: the sculptors Benedetto Civiletti, Mario Rutelli, Antonino Ugo and Ettore Ximenes; the painter-decorators such as Ettore De Maria Bergler, Luigi Di Giovanni, Giuseppe Enea, Carmelo Giarrizzo, Rocco Lentini, Francesco Lojacono, and Antonino Leto; the stucco and plaster decorators

Archimede Campini and Gaetano Geraci; the “fine glass makers” Salvatore Gregoriotti and Pietro Bevilacqua. It was thanks to their concerted efforts that the elegant buildings constructed between Via dell’Esposizione, nowadays Via Dante, Via Sannmartino and Via della Libertà, present compositive and stylistic elements of that new Art (only later known as Stile Liberty), which ‘more than any other interpreted the values of the domesticity of the middle-class’ and whose principal exponent was Ernesto Basile. Specialised companies produced a vast selection of decorative elements both prefabricated and ‘moulded’, such as accolades and panels for railings (balustrades) in bas-relief, high relief, openwork, ceramic enamelled tiles, mosaics of glass tesserae, wrought iron work such as wall catches, corner profiles, lightning conductors, shoe-cleaners, shelves and gratings (window bars) that more than any other element represent the force and the energy of the curvilinear, all enveloping, vibrant and rhythmic style of the language of the Stile Liberty. The invention of the ‘special plaster’ by the Li Vigni brothers, Antonio and Francesco, in 1901, provided a material that was perfect for the realisation not only of plastic decorations and friezes but also for the cladding of the façade and the imitation of stone. The most notable architectural examples of this period are to be found in the area of the ex-Firriato. Here there is what might be called a sample collection of the cultural elements of the Stile Liberty, which represent the positivity and the joy of a ‘civil urban life style’.

“The new, magnificent neighbourhoods sprang up and it seemed as though the future of the honest Palermitans, who until then had lived in the ‘nè vaneddi’ [in Sicilian dialect alleys or narrow streets], had suddenly improved and the elegant buildings, with fabulous rents, were immediately

snatched up, without a care in the world. (...) The house, therefore, had to be in one of the new neighbourhoods; that is the desire. Whoever intends to get married, even after they have unwisely eloped for love [a runaway, in Sicilian, ‘a fuitina’ “the short escape”, since most of the times the couples comes back shortly after and celebrate their ‘rehabitating marriage’], always makes for Via della Libertà, because the name itself is an encouragement. The rent, whatever the amount, is not a concern. Everything depends on finding a home and an owner who will rent it out; everything else is of no importance. In fact, can one really use the old inherited furniture in this new house, with its elegant decorations more or less floral and Stile Liberty, with the pure white marble staircase? (...) It therefore becomes necessary to hurry to Ducrot, Mucoli, Launaro and Beniamin and other similar ‘scritturiana’ [in Sicilian dialect the word refers to artisans expert in the production of furniture] to order a complete set of furniture for the new house. In the entrance hall there has to be a coatstand, heavy chairs, a carved walnut chest and it is not possible to do without any of these. (...) Once the eye has become used to the new style and new habits have become the norm, how can one be content with what one had before? The windows and the doors need curtains, as without, the house seems bare; in the centre of the ceiling the light fixture with a glass ball has been replaced by a luminaire; the furniture must be covered with bronze statues, blown glass vases, maiolica and tea sets, all indispensable for the creation of the necessary ‘bon ton’ and feeling of luxury in the rooms. It is not considered elegant to shout for ‘Donna Cristina’ so electric bells are necessary. Everything is the result of the new ‘necessities’ and the new appliances: the gas cooker, (...) the electric lighting (...)”
(Oreste Lo Valvo, *L’ultimo Ottocento Palermitano*, [The end of the 19th century in Palermo])

PALAZZO UTVEGGIO (1899)

Via XX Settembre
(corner Via Carducci)

Designed by Ernesto Basile, it is the prototype of the condominium with units for rent. There are four floors above ground with a smooth ashlar outer wall at ground level and random relief ashlar on the other floors, together with elegant floral mouldings.

PALAZZO DATO (1893-1903)

Via XX Settembre, 36

Designed by Vincenzo Alagna (see the photo below), who converted a single-storey house (in Southern Italy called '*casa terrana*') into a Neo-Renaissance style building by adding a floor, transforming its façades with a decorative scheme composed of cornices, brackets (corbels), architectural elements, wrought iron and marble, all plastically united on a background of pounced plaster, in yellow ochre and red. There is a clear Franco-Belgian influence, probably due to the fact that the architect was cognizant of the Parisian works of Hector Guimard and Henri Sauvage.

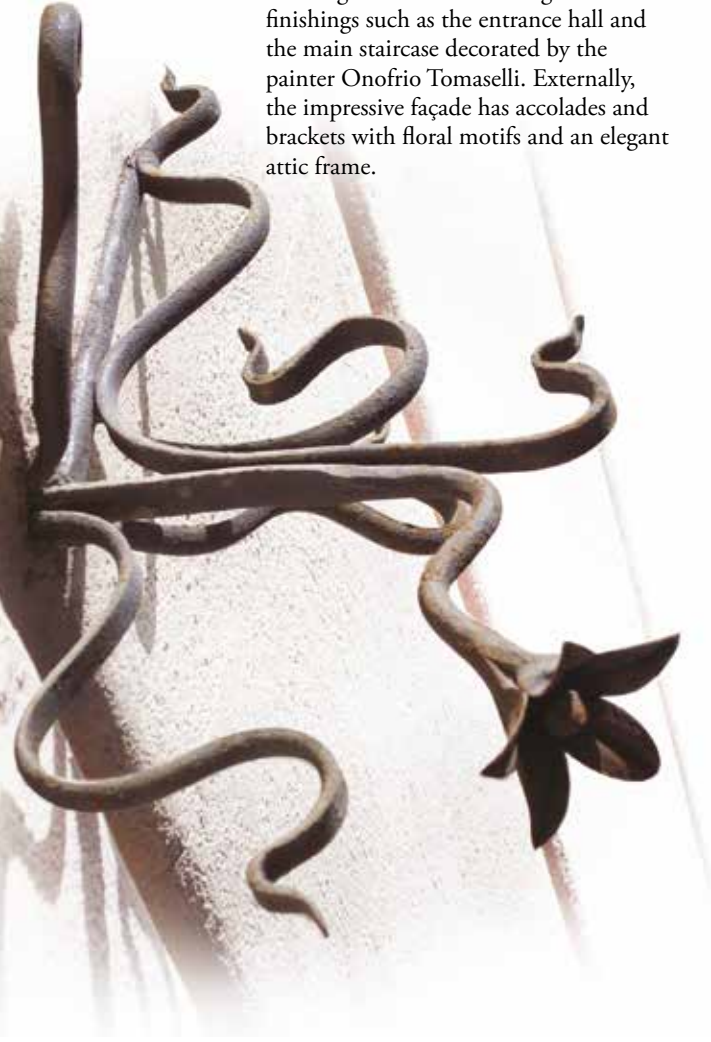


**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR
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**PALAZZO LANDOLINA
DI TORREBRUNA (1901)**

.....
Via Agrigento, 5
.....

Designed by Giovanni Tamburello, the building has some interesting internal finishings such as the entrance hall and the main staircase decorated by the painter Onofrio Tomaselli. Externally, the impressive façade has accolades and brackets with floral motifs and an elegant attic frame.



PALAZZO DI PISA (1902)

Via Nicolò Garzilli, 26

Designed by Antonio Zanca, the façade is covered with imitation ashlar (ashlar effect rendering) ashlar interspersed by bands and horizontal moulding as well as decorations around the openings embellished with floral motifs. As one goes upwards the décor becomes richer, and includes interwoven vines and ribbons. The decorative lexicon is completed by the openwork balcony balustrades. The main door, made of wood with cast-iron floral motifs, is very interesting.



CASA GREGORIETTI (1902)

Via Nicolò Garzilli, 30

The residence of the glassware artist and painter Salvatore Gregorietti, the house has an elegant corner loggia, sky blue glazed tiles with floral motifs and stylish cast-iron railings with Stile Liberty motifs. There are leaded polychrome glass windows decorated with geometric and floral motifs.



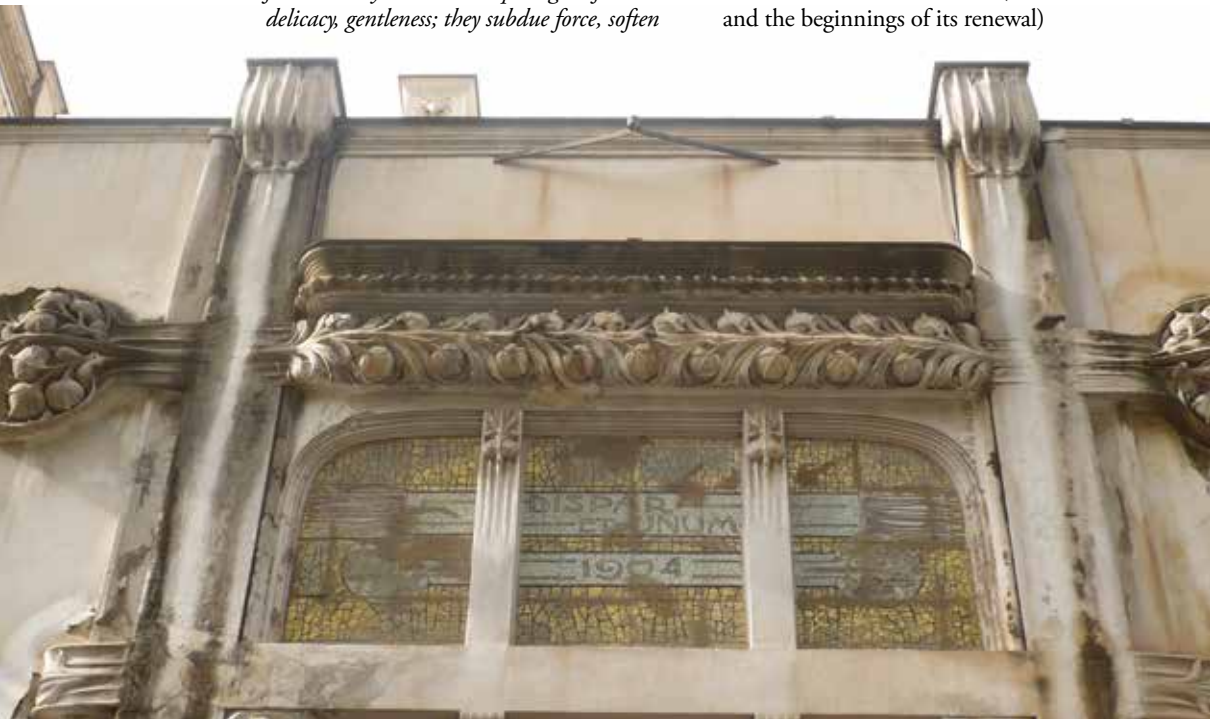
**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR
OF THE BELLE ÉPOQUE**

CASA BASILE (1903)

.....
Via Siracusa, 15
.....

“Now in architecture and in the limited field of expression that it is allowed, everything is enclosed and summarised and originates from the lines; from which first the surfaces and then successively the volumes are generated. The straight line, with its indefinite continuity, always identical to itself, ... horizontal, in the rows of stones, in the plinths, in the architraves, in the cornices expresses tranquility and rest; vertical as a support, it awakens the feeling of strength against which the various parts resist and of the objective they achieve; if stretched over long distances it can create something grandiose and sublime... The curved lines, for their very nature, ... express gracefulness, delicacy, gentleness; they subdue force, soften

whatever is hard, temper whatever is rigid ... The totality of the straight lines and the curves, of the flat surfaces and the rounded surfaces, ... according to the reciprocal relationship, the predominance of one set of lines on another, constitutes the architecture content in art. It is in this that, above all things, one recognises the artist, and everyone can, in fact everyone does, reveal their personality. Some forms are directly derived from the system of construction, others whilst helping to define them, are permitted and sanctioned by daily use and convenience, but in the profiles, the usage and the disposition of the lines of these forms, the feelings of each artist inevitably come to the fore and the result is a vast number of different expressions.”
Ernesto Basile, *Architettura: dei suoi principi e del suo rinnovamento*, 1882 (Architecture and the beginnings of its renewal)



Casa Basile was designed by Ernesto Basile himself and named Villino Ida in honour of his wife Ida Negrini. It occupied the entire block between Via Siracusa and Via Villafranca, with its own garden, no longer in existence. Nowadays it belongs to the Regione Sicilia, Assessorato dei Beni Culturali e dell'Identità Siciliana, and houses the offices of the Soprintendenza per i Beni Culturali di Palermo. Based on the concept of 'rationality', for the distribution of the internal rooms and on that of 'simplicity' for the outside, it is built in the Stile Liberty. A simple white intonaco (plaster) on the stereometric façades allows the polychrome decorations to stand out: green shutters with red squares, 'Florio' ceramic tiles with floral motifs, plastic phytomorphic elements and a mosaic panel with the inscription 'dispar et unum' and the date 1904, on the accolade over the front door. The small villa [known locally as a *Villino*] is built according to the dictates of early modernism as expounded by the Arts and Crafts movement in England. But although it was a 'prototype' [manifesto] building, openly adhering to the middle European Modernism, a project

which embodied the ideal combination of home and work place, its internal layout, the minimalistic concept of the furniture with its linear forms and the 'understated' décor will only sporadically be reposed by Basile in some of his others projects, perhaps because he was aware of the lack of comprehension of this type of style by his Island patrons, even those most culturally advanced.



**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR
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PALAZZO FAILLA ZITO (1912)

.....
Via XII Gennaio, 32
.....

The building is characterised by decorative floral reliefs on the façade, elegant female heads [on the corbels] and elements that reproduce the entire range of Stile Liberty motifs. It is in many ways similar to the Palazzo in Via Villafranca, 35.

PALAZZO MAZZARELLA (1914-1915)

.....
Via Caltanissetta, 2
.....

Designed by Engineer Salvatore Mazzarella (photo on the right), this apartment building has five floors above ground plus a basement. The façade has a lateral 'tower', with loggias, some of which are closed with glass windows, simple geometrical graffiti on the 'intonaco' [plaster-work] and ceramic tiles with floral motifs in between the corbels of the balconies.







VILLINO FAVALORO DI STEFANO

(1889-1914)

.....
 Piazza Virgilio (corner Via Dante)

The *'palazzina'* (literally in Italian small palace) with its small garden belongs to the Regione Siciliana and is in need of restoration, after which it will become the seat of the Photographic Museum. The last building designed by Filippo Basile in 1888, it is considered the first building in the style of the Art Nouveau [Stile Liberty] in Sicily, thanks to its lack of architectural orders on the façade, its white marble cladding and the size of the internal rooms.

Filippo's son Ernesto, takes over in 1903, overseeing the pictorial decoration of the inside of the loggia, with floral elements and undulating ribbon motifs, carried out by Salvatore Gregorietti. The building becomes an expression of the new Stile Liberty, notwithstanding some eclectic elements, drawing together decorative openwork elements, the loggias with their neogothic inspired slim columns in the openings and the Pompeiiian drawing room inside decorated by Carmelo Giarrizzo. Ernesto Basile also enlarges the west wing with the addition of an octagonal turret, overlooking Via Dante as well as a wintergarden of wrought iron and glass with Stile Liberty motifs. He maintains, however, a sober and restrained overall space, the reconfigured façades rigorously white, here as well as in Villa Ida. The stylistic elements of the octagonal turret are a perfect balance between what was designed by his father and the new language of the Art Nouveau, of which the above-mentioned Villa Favalaro was a precursor.



THE ARCHITECTURE OF THE FLORIOS

"Everything in Ignazio Florio [Senior] revealed the natural simplicity of his being; one read it in his face, noble yet open, with its incisive yet not austere features, regular and expressive, a masculinity both handsome and intelligent. He was affable, mild-mannered and gentle and his demeanour affectionate and serene. For his workers, his sailors, his employees, he was neither the senator, nor the captain of industry, but the 'boss', title of which he was extremely proud".

(Vittorio Emanuele Orlando, *Commemoration of Senator Ignazio Florio*, 24th June 1891 by Paola D'Amore Lo Bue, Gaetano Corselli d'Ondes, 'Sulle orme dei Florio' in Italian language)

Between 1898 and 1903, Ernesto Basile is employed in the design and realisation of important constructions for the latest generation of the Florio family, captains of industry of the era, upper class but also related to the local aristocracy. Initially small tradesmen from Calabria, in the space of two generations they had amassed a fortune and had started up successful businesses in shipping, chemicals, the production of marsala wine, materials and furnishings, tiles as well as the exploitation of sulphur caves and the tuna fish industry. They were also owners of the 'Banco Florio' and the daily newspaper 'L'Orni', founded in the year 1900. Ignazio Senior had been a pillar of the Sicilian entrepreneurs, both nationally and internationally as well as being a public figure. He had married the Baroness Giovanna d'Ondes Trigona, who had opened many of the doors to the gilded world of the Sicilian and International aristocracy for him.

His children, Ignazio Junior, Vincenzo and Giulia, further consolidated the union between the Florio and the aristocracy by marrying into it; respectively, Ignazio: the Countess Francesca Paola Jacona Notarbartolo di San Giuliano, Vincenzo:

Annina Alliata di Montereale and Giulia: Pietro Lanza Branciforti, Prince of Trabia. On the death of Ignazio Senior, it was his eldest son, Ignazio Junior who took over the reins of the immense family empire, becoming, together with his wife Franca, the most influential people of the economic and social scene of the period. Between the end of the 19th and the first decades of the 20th century, Crowned Heads such as Leopold II of Belgium, Victor Emanuel III and Helen of Montenegro, Philip of Saxony and international celebrities like the Rothschilds, the Vanderbilts and Theodore Roosevelt were all entertained by the Florio in the gardens and the splendid Drawing Rooms of Villa Olivuzza and Villa Igiea or on board their private yacht, built in the Palermitan boatyard and luxuriously fitted out. But behind this ostentatious and dizzy life-style, which perfectly represented the spirit of the Belle Époque, the economic decline of the Florio Empire had already started. They lost, one by one, all their possessions, including the famous jewels of Donna Franca, made especially for her by Lalique and Cartier and sold at auction to cover their debts. And so it is with the decline of the Florio that the long season of the Stile Liberty ends.

VILLINO FLORIO ALL'OLIVUZZA

Via Regina Margherita

“The carriages entered the Villa from the side gate from Via Lolli [...] Ignazio, Franca and Vincenzo Florio, with Count Mazzarino, are waiting at the foot of the stairs of the Stile Liberty Villino, in the centre of the garden. Donna Franca is dressed in white, wearing

a widebrimmed straw hat and holding a bunch of orchids to offer to their illustrious guest. [...] Wilhelm [the German Kaiser], accepts a glass of champagne, which he raises in salute to the City hosting him, then arm in arm with his hostess, he returns to the garden in order to admire the exotic plants and the luxuriant flowerbeds.”
(Anna Pomar, *Donna Franca Florio*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1985).



ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE *BELLE ÉPOQUE*



In 1899 the Florio family commissioned Ernesto Basile to design a small house ('*Villino*') inside the Olivuzza Park, for Vincenzo Florio Junior.

Begun between 1900 and 1901, this eclectic construction became a residential prototype to be 'exported' abroad, as published in German magazines of that time.

Illustrious guests such as Kaiser Wilhelm II and the King of England, Edward VII with Queen Alexandra, were received in this umpteenth marvellous Florio building, a magnificent example, both inside and out, of the new elegant Floral Style.

Inside, Ernesto Basile designed everything down to the last detail, including the wooden furniture, both fixed and movable, made by Mucoli and Golia-Ducrot of Palermo. Each floor in the small house serves a specific function. There is the *entertainment floor* with the billiard room on a level with the park; *the reception level* with a large drawing room accessed directly from the external staircase; *the bedroom floor*, on the third floor with another living room and the bedrooms, accessed once again from the main staircase. On the top floor, there is an attic room like the hull of a boat. In 1962 arson, for speculative purposes, destroyed almost the entire interior of the Villino Florio. The latest restorations have cleaned the walls of the façade and repaired the structural damage created by the fire outside and renovated the paneling, the upholstery, some of the furniture and the polychrome windows of the drawing room on the inside. The materials used to cover the interior walls, woven specifically to match the trimmings, are identical to the original,

having been copied from the originals thanks to the documentation and photographs in existence, as well as a cross match with the colours, naturalistic subjects and forms utilised in other materials of the time, some of which were based on designs by Vincenzo Florio himself.

The horse chestnut motif of the material in the drawing room, together with the others present in Villino Florio, such as the lily, the poppy, pomegranate and iris, are amongst the most seductive themes of the Italian Stile Liberty. They appear in the picture by Ettore De Maria Bergler as well as in other projects by Basile. But there is also a clear reference to other artists such as Alphonse Mucha [Czech Art Nouveau Painter], whose publications on decorative elements were to be found in Ducrot's archives.

Outside, the area around the villino is organised as a large courtyard, with the house at the centre. The entrance was connected to the main road, nowadays Via Oberdan, whilst a network of paths wound their way through the park of the Princess of Butera, which nowadays no longer exists.



GRAND HOTEL VILLA IGIEA

.....
Via Papa Sergio, 1
.....

“It was reported in the local papers that not only was the ‘tout Palermo’, both socially and intellectually, invited to the opening, but also the representatives of the foreign press, who had every right to verify this generous audacity of Palermitan private initiative and patriotism. And there is more: the tour of the hotel makes an excellent impression on everyone, both for the overall magnificence and the exquisite artistic taste. Not just the adaptation, the layout and the décor of the rooms are attributable to Prof. Basile, but everything that is in the hotel reception rooms. He designed

the furniture, chose the furnishings, which are real works of art in the modern style, or ‘Art Nouveau’ as the French called it”.

(Anna Pomar, *Donna Franca Florio*, Firenze, Vallecchi, 1985).

“I exited the Hotel, the Villa Igiea, the most luxurious in Palermo, which can quite easily be compared to some of the most famous hotels in the world. It is a delightful place, and resembles an old enchanted castle with elegant marble columns, full of light and mystery, set on green lawns whilst on one side the sea comes up and laps the lower steps of the magnificent and grandiose terrace.”

(Adrienne De Saint-Louis, “La passeggiata delle Signore” taken from *Palermo d’allora*, edited by Santi Correnti).



L'ufficio Moscovi di Pietroburgo comincia la sua divulgazione dei giornali italiani, in quali vorrebbe attribuire al governo italiano e Berlino dell'Esposizione Franco-italiana le sue di negare contro certi preconcetti di angli politici della Russia.

At the end of the 19th century the Florio family bought, in the seaside village of Acquasanta, a neogothic villa with the intention of turning it into a sanatorium, with the help of Ernesto Basile, for those affected with tuberculosis. The building, officially opened on the 19th December 1900, had been inserted into the programme for the 'International Congress against Tuberculosis', held in Naples in April of the same year. Newly remodelled and decorated in Stile Liberty, it must have appeared as a 'sophisticated sublimation' of the sanitary complexes of the time, and was amply described in the well-known specialised magazine 'Igea' as well as in the National Hygiene Exhibition, organised in Naples between April and October of that year. Naturally



NOTIZIE VARIE

ITALIA
Telegrammi di S. S. il Re. — L'Agencia Re/land ha da Parigi, 14:
« Il telegramma speditogli dall'on. Villa, in nome del Comandante e degli espositori italiani, mostra vera mente la bandiera del palligione italiano, S. M. Il Re ripose sul seguente dispaccio:
« Lo esprime la Mia vivissima soddisfazione per le notizie da lei datemi sulla serena e languida dell'Esposizione mondiale di Parigi. Sono lieto di sapere che l'Italia partecipi alla grande e florida gara delle scienze, delle arti e delle lettere, in sede degna della sua gloriosa tradizione; e porgo i Mia ringraziamenti al Commisariato ed agli espositori ».

Formale: « UMBERTO ».
La LL. AA. la Gran'Arciduca di Moltenberg ed il Granduca Sibile, giunsero ieri in Roma.
Furono ricevuti alla stazione da S. A. L. il Granduca, Michele di Russia.
La LL. AA. Vaglieri: in langone a discendere al Grand Hotel.

Congresso internazionale di archeologia cristiana. — Oggi, nel sera che la Camera va in assemblea, nel palazzo del Senato venne, in pieno della Cavallotti, verso langone: il 1° Congresso internazionale di archeologia cristiana.

Il 2° Congresso, presieduto da tutti i paesi d'Europa e di America, saranno a 64, dei quali si ritiene che sono 50 siano gli italiani in Roma.

Al Congresso sono aderite tutti i esordi della scienza archeologica, come il l'arceve di religione e di parte politici.

Congresso internazionale di stonografia. — Il giorno 14, nel Teatro Argentina, si aprì l'inaugurazione del Congresso con l'intervento della autorità locale.

Esposizione d'umbra. — Il sito esposto la maglia d'espero di bene-essere di Conati. Si parlano a Roma, anche si aprono: Sarti Umana e Calabria Italia e al con. Luigi Nigro, da dove il sito di Ubra, ai numeri 100 e 101: e Sita M. del il Roma; ai numeri Vincenzo Fede e Teresa Villa; e VI strada e al Assale Gabiani, maestro di Roma.

Esposizione d'umbra. — Anche ieri il concorso dei visitatori d'Esposizione fu numeroso. Cose due mila

persone, la chiusura dell'Esposizione è stata prorogata, nell'interesse degli espositori e di coloro che non hanno potuto ancora ricevere la Mostra, e tutte il prossimo (domenica) il biglietto d'ingresso è ancora di 50 centesimi.

Industria tessile. — Per, nel mattino del 14 di Livorno, sono felicemente venute il panno di Firenze, avanzato dal rena. Florio.

Il vero, che presenta grandissima difficoltà tecnica per la costruzione del basto, sono lungo tra gli applicati dei meccanici italiani e della autorità.

L'isola di Pianosa aveva m. MILIO di lunghezza tra la perpendicolare m. 1412 di larghezza. Essi avevano, m. 8,28 di altezza di costruzione e m. 5,40 di lunghezza. Ha un piano di terra di 1010 ton. Tra il loro l'ammontare era di m. 3,20 e poggia e di m. 1,20 a prova. Almeno dalla sede, influenza prova m. 4,0.

Congresso internazionale contro la tubercolosi a Napoli. — Ecco il programma dei lavori del Congresso: e dei festeggiamenti in onore del Congresso:

Mercoledì 24 aprile — ore 10 — Ricorrenza prima del Congresso nella sede del Congresso al palazzo Malibonoli.

Mercoledì 25 aprile — ore 11 — Inizia langone del Congresso nel Teatro San Carlo, alla presenza della LL. RR. il Re, e la Regina e della LL. AA. RR. i Principi, Duchi: langone di S. M. il Molitore, Umanita del Sidone di Napoli, del Principe della B. Duca, dal Principe del Principe del Principe, prof. E. de Ricci, e dei delegati esteri.

ore 14 — Lavori della 1° Sezione (Geologia e Profondità).
— ore 16 — Ricorrenza offerta nel Palazzo Municipale dal Sindaco della Città di Napoli.

Giovedì 26 aprile — ore 9 — Lavori della 1° Sezione (GEOLOGIA e Profondità).
— ore 11 — Lavori della 1° Sezione (Fisiologia e Chimica).

ore 12 — Ore di lavoro del Municipio di Napoli.
Venerdì 27 aprile — ore 9 — Lavori della 1° Sezione (Fisiologia e Chimica).
— ore 11 — Lavori della 2° Sezione (Terapia).

Sabato 28 aprile — ore 9 — Lavori della 2° Sezione (Terapia).
— ore 11 — Lavori della 2° Sezione (Terapia).

ore 12 — Chiusura del Congresso.
— ore 15 — Ricorrenza per commemorazione.
Domestico 29 aprile — ore 9 — Sita nel galle di Napoli, a tutto il suo sera della B. Roma, del Principe del Principe.

Giovedì 30 aprile — ore 8 — Sita a relazione a Parigi, offerta dal Municipio.

Ti nota sostanzialmente una gita a Palermo, per langone e visitare il Santuario Igea del rena. Florio. Essi in corso la iniziativa per espone la difficoltà tecnica del trasporto ed all'inghi del Santuario.

MARINA SPANZOLINA. — Nel il gennaio scorso, del S. L. parte da New-York per Genova, si il giacimento Nord-Americano, della Valona, da Venezia, prorogò per il Italia.

TELEGRAMMI

(SERENA STEFANO)

MANROFFI (Chappa Isola), 15. — Il condottiero storico di Milano Roberto, giorno Annunzio, era il Re e la nobiltà del grande Indaco molino.

LORNA, 16. — I giornali pubblicano il seguente dispaccio: « Capr Torre, 15. — Il condottiero Indaco avrebbe stabilito i Re e i Wapari, impadronendosi del loro campo ».

PARISI, 15. — In occasione dell'inaugurazione dell'Esposizione, la Amministrazione del segretario e ministri del Re ha

ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE *BELLE ÉPOQUE*

the philanthropic aspect of the affair was just as important to the Florios as was the economic side of it as they also possessed a manufacturing activity in medicinal products.

But very soon, economic problems meant that the Sanatorium had to be transformed into a luxury hotel, known as The Grand International Hotel. Basile added to the existing building a large and well-structured body, composed of parallel rectangles or squares which follow each other in a regular sequence. In the last, right hand lateral body, Basile added an octagonal corner turret, similar to the one in Villa Favalaro. The garden surrounds the structure and slopes down the cliff face to the sea. Also designed by Basile, it unites the formality of the Italian garden

with the more 'modish' 'English' garden, complete with all the necessary exotic plants, open spaces and panoramic terraces, connected by stairs carved out of the rockface, winding paths and small bridges. The garden is perfected with the addition of a fake circular temple and the statue of Hygeia, daughter of Asclepius, made by Hector Ximenes.

Decorations in wrought iron and cast iron, in pure Stile Liberty, designed by Basile between 1899 and 1900 are scattered throughout the garden. The most mature version of this new language, the Stile Liberty, is also very visible internally: in the hall, the coffee room, the reading room, the restaurant and the '*buvette*'. The Mirrored Drawing Room is spectacular and is still, today, unique in the marriage between



its decorative, pictorial and architectural aspects. The paintings, which refer to the original destination of the building as a Sanatorium, were done by Ettore De Maria Bergler with the collaboration of Michele Cortegiani. On the two smaller walls there are seven feminine figures depicted, dancing under the effect of opiates blown out by the hookahs. On the left side of the main wall are girls holding a garland of roses, going towards the pomegranate tree, known as the tree of science. The artist intended that a symbolic value should permeate all the figurative elements, so that the iris and the lilies symbolise birth and purity, poppies symbolise sleep and death, the rose garland signifies the rosary and the peacock, with its tail spread-out, symbolises rebirth after an illness.

Also all the furniture in the Drawing Room, made by the company Golia & C. later Ducrot, fits harmoniously into the painted decor, in a symphony of sinuous and uncluttered shapes, the sublime representation of what has been called “the last felicitous season of the *société du plaisir*”.





VITTORIO DUCROT (1867-1942)

Vittorio Ducrot, born in Palermo of a French father, studied in Switzerland and on returning to Sicily, started working for his stepfather, Carlo Golia, as a director of his furniture company. In 1902 he was made a partner, his name being added to the company's name, Ducrot enlarges the company to the point where it employs 200 people and has 20 machines, occupying a large space in the Zisa area of Palermo. The factory of Via Gili has now been transformed into the '*Cantieri Culturali della Zisa*' and it is used to host cultural events. Golia-Ducrot has specialised divisions: cabinet-making, carving, wood inlay work, chandeliers, wallpaper and upholstery, glasswork, leatherwork, metalwork, which allows it to create complete and complex room furnishings. In 1899, the Florio family commission from Golia-Ducrot the modernistic furnishings of the Grand Hotel Villa Igjea, designed by Ernesto Basile. In 1902, Basile becomes the artistic director of the company, at the request of Vittorio Ducrot. The architect does not limit himself simply to designing and creating new

furnishings and furniture, but completely restyles the company's image, restructuring the show rooms, sales rooms as well as the graphics used in their advertising. The new line of furnishings are presented at all the great exhibitions such as the First International Exhibition of the Modern Decorative Arts held in Turin in 1902, the International Exhibition of Art in Venice in 1903 and 1905 and the International Exhibition at the Sempione of Milan in 1906. The duo Basile-Ducrot create a wide ranging activity that encompasses architecture, the applied arts and design and results in one of the most fruitful and rich collaborations of the early 1900's in Italy. Up until the mid-20's the Ducrot company enjoys an uninterrupted run of success, establishing itself as one of the most important furniture makers in Italy and one of the principal international suppliers of luxury home furnishings, with commissions for luxury hotels and transatlantic steamers. Changes in taste and in society as well as the competition of less expensive producers leads to the decline of the company and its eventual sale in 1939.

VIA ROMA

The opening of the new road, Via Roma, towards the north part of the city, opened up the opportunity for new buildings in the style in vogue at the time, even if the zoning was for the most part destined for commercial and office blocks. Thus the application of the decorative richness and the attention to detail was applied to only a few of the new buildings, unlike what was happening in other parts of the city.

PALAZZO AMMIRATA (1901-1911)

Via Roma, 391

An apartment block for rent, designed by the architect Rivas and constructed between 1901 and 1911, as shops and apartments. There are diverse references to the architecture favoured by Basile in the polygonal corner turret, the sloping roof supported by corbels, the lower level of the façade decorated with imitation ashlar, the deep basement plinth. There are also numerous decorative elements of the Stile Liberty language, by now consolidated: the wrought-iron corbels, with their sinuous

[*coup de fouet*] whiplash form, the balcony railings, the cement and plaster décor carried out by Li Vigni, the delicately coloured ceramic tiles with floral and geometric motifs and the painted imitation floral mosaics, by Rosario Spagnolo, on the band under the sloping roof. The oddly shaped window frames and the corresponding outlines of the wooden shutters are also interesting. The complexity and the richness of the exterior can be connected to Belgian architecture and the influence of the *Jugendstil*. However, there are also references to the polychrome architecture of the maestro Damiani Almeyda, as for example, in the choice of red plaster for the first floor.



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**PALAZZO ABBATE - DE CASTRO
(1910)**

.....
entrance from Via Gagini, 70

.....
This building, designed by the architect Antonio Zanca for shops and apartments, in 1910, actually overlooks Via Roma, on the corner of Via Bara all'Olivella. There are various references, as there are in the Palazzo of the Assicurazioni Generali Venezia, to the luxurious architecture of Basile: the imitation ashlar of the first floor

of the façade as well as the vertical pilasters that frame the façade, the long first floor balcony and the projecting summital cornices, the wrought-iron work of the graceful, rounded balconies, the tiles with Stile Liberty designs in green on white, which decorate the ornamental panel over the doors, the band running all round under the cornice. Amongst the garlands, festoons, and ribbons, up above, on the tiles, is the owner's monogramme 'DC' written in Stile Liberty characters.



**PALAZZO OF THE SOCIETÀ DELLE
ASSICURAZIONI GENERALI DI VENEZIA
(1912)**

.....
Via Roma, 405
.....

Designed by Ernesto Basile as offices for the Assicurazioni Generali di Venezia, and also, in part as apartments. The principal façade, overlooking Via Roma, has spacious halls, symmetrically placed around the entrance on the ground floor. There is a long balcony that runs along all of the first floor with elegant railings and other Stile Liberty elements in wrought-iron, which are repeated in all the balconies of the upper floors and the other façades. A wide mosaic band with golden tesserae, in Stile Liberty, connects the windows of the top floor on all three sides.

The building is covered by a denticular cornice roof. The outside corner walls are rounded and covered in imitation ashlar, whilst two bas reliefs that represent the winged lion of San Marco, symbol of the insurance Company, are placed over the entrance.



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PALAZZO COFFARO (1919-1920)

Via Roma (corner Via Genova)

The Palazzo, consisting of five floors, is decorated in a classical eclectic style with the insertion of a few elements taken from the new floral language, as for example, in the band around the entrance. Inside the atrium there is a polychrome window by Bevilacqua.



MONDELLO

"The main summer pastime, however, was not the vacation but the sea bathing. One went to the establishments in Romagnolo, Acquisanta and o' Sammuzzu: Mondello was the beach for the wealthy, because the tram ticket and the rent of a cabin in the establishment cost a few cents more than in the other places. [...] Whoever was wearing a swimming costume had to remain in the sea, and everyone implicitly obeyed this rule, and in the corridors leading to the cabins there were always people dressed, waiting to undress and take a dip 'a scinnuta nn'all'acqua', first the father, then the daughter then the mother, because the fathers were always the first to throw themselves into the fray and the last to come back out, rather like an old sea dog."

[Roberto Volpes, *Quando un secolo durava cent'anni: Palermo alla fine della Belle Époque*, Palermo, Edizioni e ristampe siciliane, 1976].



In 1910, the reclaiming of vast areas of the swamplands of Mondello resulted in the 'special concession' to the Italo-Belgian company 'Les Tramways de Palermé', who promised to build 300 small, single unit houses, a bathing establishment, a Kursaal, a church, a large hotel, a power plant and a public park, as well as a tramline.

Starting in 1912, a series of small holiday homes begin to appear, designed by the Belgian architect Lucien François and other Palermitan architects, even though Ernesto Basile had already drawn up, in 1894, a plan for a 'artstudio' for the painter Rocco Lentini, in this area of Mondello, destined to become a holiday resort.

The leitmotif of 'entertainment and leisure' of this resort is expressed in the eclectic mix of diverse architectural styles employed, from Helvetic to Moorish and, from the Neogothic to Neopompeian. But above all there is a complete 'modernist catalogue' of the new Stile Liberty architecture to be found here.

**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR
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VILLINO LENTINI (1910)

.....
Via Alvise Ca' da Mosto, 7
.....

This simple building, designed by Ernesto Basile, has a double sloping roof and a single balcony on the front. The decorations of painted floral motifs by Rocco Lentini, divide up the façade.



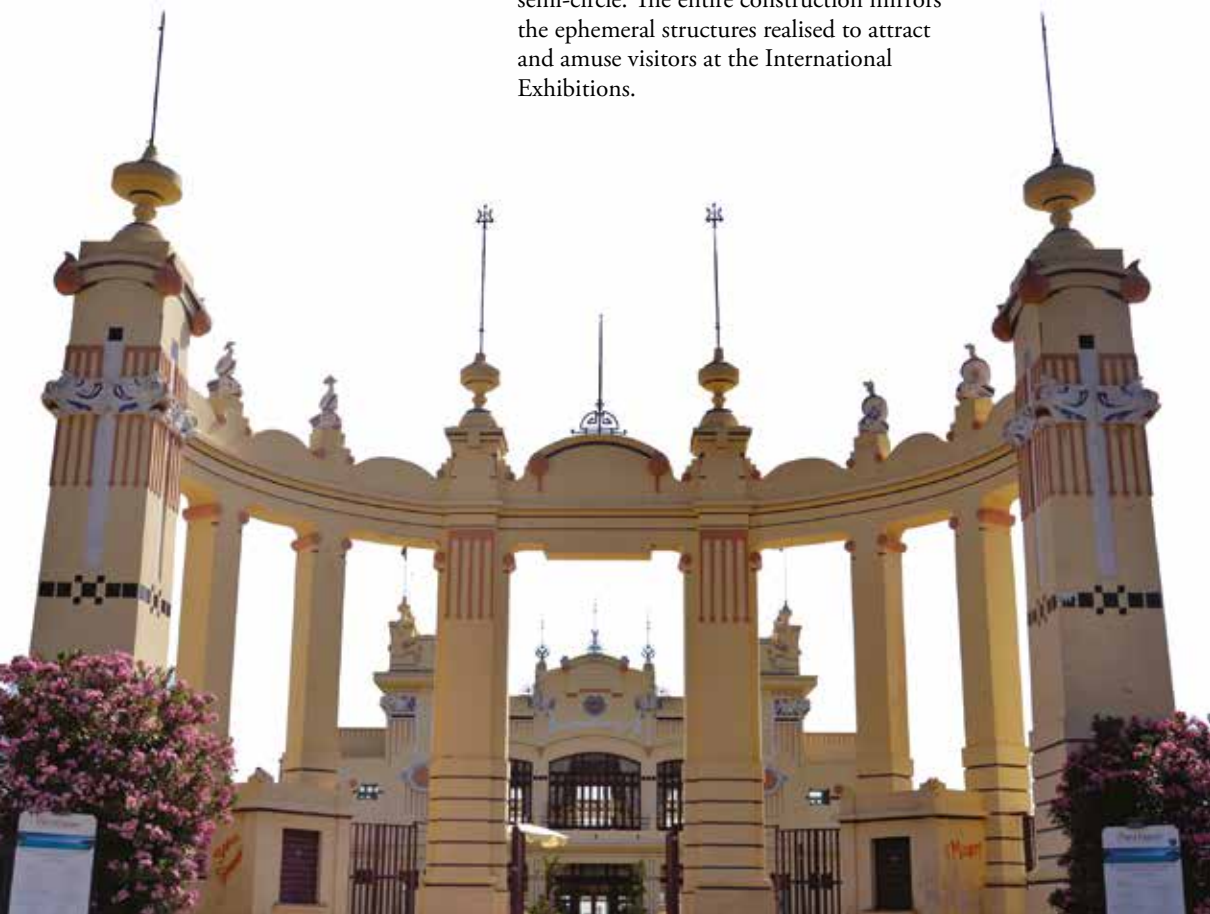
BATHING ESTABLISHMENT (1911)

Viale Regina Elena

The Establishment, designed by Rudolph Staulker, technical director of the Italo-Belgian company, and built directly over the sea, has a semi-circular colonnade and a majestic entrance from the road. A short pier leads to the central structure, built on reinforced concrete and masonry

pillars, with the cabins all in a row, also on platforms. The central building is reserved for group activities and social functions.

The entire complex appears to mirror, on a smaller scale, the Casino of Scheveningen (Holland 1820) and the Palais de la Jetée—on the Promenade in Nice (1875-1891), both built for the recreational enjoyment of sea bathing. The décor of the Mondello Establishment consists of marine elements such as large dolphins on the pylons of the semi-circle. The entire construction mirrors the ephemeral structures realised to attract and amuse visitors at the International Exhibitions.







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VILLINO FERNANDA (1912)

Viale Regina Margherita di Savoia, 38

Inspired by the Vienna Secession it is one of the many villas designed by Caronia Roberti and built by the Rutelli construction company. There are the usual architectural elements that are present in all the 'villini' of Caronia: the building with a central turret, a hipped roof, plastered façade, friezes, decorated ceramic tiles, wrought-iron elements such as the lightning conductors, decorative railings and lattice work.



VILLINO MARIA
.....

Viale Regina Margherita, 32
.....

Designed by Salvatore Rutelli, it runs the entire gamut of modernist decoration, albeit in a modified version. The corner balcony overlooking the beach is borrowed from Basile's repertoire.



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VILLINO SOFIA (1912)

Viale Regina Margherita, 29/31

The villino, designed by Salvatore Caronia Roberti, is identical to the prototype of the buildings constructed in the 'beach area'. It has a belvedere turret and other stylistic elements borrowed from Basile.

VILLINO MARIA ASSUNTA

Viale Regina Margherita, 10

The eclectic building style of the villino, with a corner balcony on the first floor, also has decorative floral motifs on the capitals. See photos below.



VILLINO FRANCA (1912)

Viale Regina Margherita, 6

The building, designed by Salvatore Caronia Roberti, has an outer wall with fake brick courses, decorative stuccowork in the entrance portico and a majolica floral band in blue and white, under the cornice.

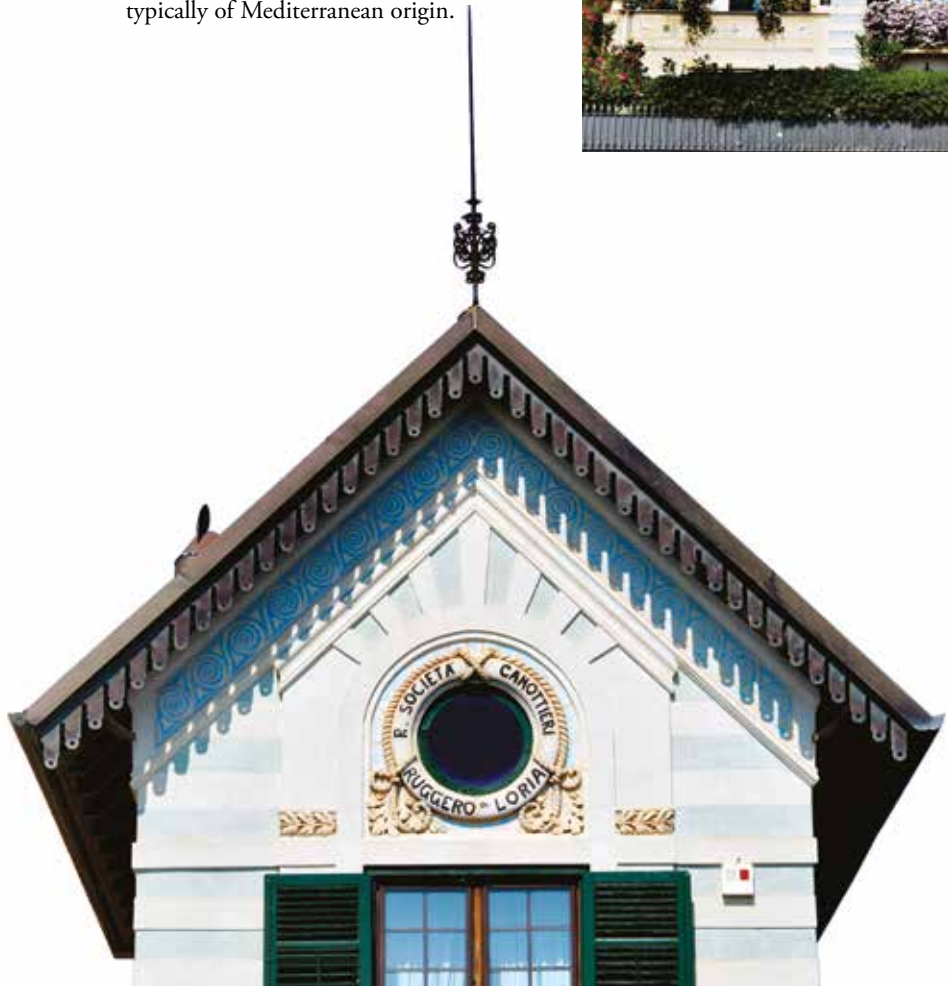


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**VILLINO SOCIETÀ CANOTTIERI
ROGGERO DI LORIA (1915 CA.)**

Viale Regina Elena, 21

The villa, designed by Salvatore Caronia Roberti, mixes elements of English Domestic Revival with others, for example the bichrome bands on the façade that are typically of Mediterranean origin.





VILLINO GREGORIETTI (1924)

Viale Regina Elena, 83

Designed by Ernesto Basile for the painter Salvatore Gregoriotti, extensive use is made of mosaic in all the various decorative elements. It recalls all the previous constructions designed by Basile, but would appear to be almost his 'swan song'.



THE MONDELLO BATHING ESTABLISHMENT

Bathing in the sea is one of the most widely spread means of relaxation of our way of life, but it is, in fact, historically a relatively recent phenomenon.

Although Palermo was a city by the sea, these establishments only became fashionable around the end of the 19th century. It was not until the 1920's that a tanned skin became acceptable (it is said that it was the French fashion designer Coco Chanel who decreed tanning was '*chic*'): before then a milk white skin was the epitome of refinement, as a tanned skin was the prerogative of the working class, who spent their day outdoors. Thus, at the end of the 19th century, Palermitans discovered the joys of sea bathing. All along the seashore, from the suburbs of Arenella to those of Romagnolo, a proliferation of 'bathing establishments' sprang up, consisting of wooden cabins on stilts, in direct contact with the sea via a kind of trapdoor, so that it was possible to take a dip away from prying eyes. The cabins reserved for the ladies were completely separate from those for the men. Exceptions were made for married couples, who used specially made cabins. Only faded photos remain of all the establishments along the seashore. Built to last only a season, they gradually became less and less, due mainly to an ever-increasing level of pollution, so that by the 1960's they had almost all closed down. In the meantime the delightful seaside town of Mondello became a popular

tourist resort. It established itself as the Palermitans' beach, initially for the wealthy, later for the middle-class and eventually for everyone.

It is in Mondello that of all the short-lived establishments of pre-war Palermo, only one survives, the most prestigious and the grandest, also built on stilts, but of cement. The Great Bathing Establishment of '*Les Tramwais de Palermo*' Company, inaugurated in 1913, surrounded by cabins organised in courtyards, is still today an icon of the long, hot Palermitan summers, and every year the social rites of holidaying are renewed. The structure is at the centre of life in Mondello, which has transformed itself from a poor fisherman's village, subjected for centuries to pirate incursions, and above all plagued by malaria, into one of the most important resorts in Sicily. This is mainly due to the massive clearance of the swampland, which used to cover most of its territory.

It should be remembered that this operation was made possible by the Palermitan nobleman, Francesco Lanza, Prince of Scalea, who fought to reclaim the land and develop the area and after whom one of the main roads of this tourist resort is named.

ANTONINO AURELIO PIAZZA

STROLLING AROUND THE CITY

“Out of the sensations and memories from long ago, when I came here for the first time in circa 1930, I can often manage to extract from that beautiful chaos that is Palermo, a city that is essentially Stile Liberty, almost a small capital of the Art Nouveau”

[Leonardo Sciascia, from the foreword to an exhibition of the works of Raffaello Piraino in 1967]

An artistic and architectural phenomenon, as well as a ‘manifestation of the habits of the new bourgeoisie of the Island’, the Stile Liberty thoroughly spread throughout Palermo and Sicily, to the extent that it was to be seen in a more or less evident and complex manner in much of the architecture and streets of the city.

The city becomes a real ‘open air museum’ of a Stile Liberty that is innovative and international, appreciated not only by the captains of industry such as the Florio and Whitaker families, or by the aristocracy like the Lanza and the Alliata, but also by the emerging middle-class, which were becoming an integral part of the Island economy. Strolling through the city, the works of the cement masons, the mosaic and glass workers, the stone cutters, decorators, wrought iron and cast iron workers, stucco artisans and ébénistes are all visible to the careful eye of the visitor, ready to seize the elements of this artistic language so ‘in vogue’.



**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR
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THE CHIOSCHI 'RIBAUDO' AND 'VICARI'

.....
in Piazza Giuseppe Verdi
.....

Both designed by Ernesto Basile, the first in 1894 and the second in 1897, they were intended to be elements of point-like urban décor, which were supposed to requalify the city. In the Ribaudò chiosco, the use of L shaped and double T shaped struts, metal sheets painted red, bolts and connectors in plain view, the virtuoso work of the Oretèa Foundry is manifestly obvious. The Vicari chiosco (the bottom photo), is on the other hand, built completely of wood, with references to the '*turquerie*' patterns of the German 'artistic carpentry'.



GIARDINO INGLESE

Via della Libertà

A romantic garden designed by Giovan Battista Filippo Basile, father of Ernesto, is full of works of art both in bronze and marble by artists such as Mario Rutelli, Domenico De Lisi and Cesare Ximenes. There are wrought-iron greenhouses and an aviary as well as some small architectural pieces such as the Saracen castle tending to the Arabian style with a wrought-iron gate, designed by Ernesto Basile.

TEATRO MASSIMO VITTORIO EMANUELE

Piazza Giuseppe Verdi

The largest city opera house [and third largest in the world] was designed and overseen by Giovan Battista Filippo Basile between 1875 and 1891 and by Ernesto Basile from 1891 to 1897 who completed his father's design. He also designed all the fixtures, (stage, boxes, etc.), the furnishings and all the decorative sculptures and paintings. Ernesto himself defined it as being 'the epitome of perfection both as a monumental building and in its Stage Machinery'.



**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR
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PANIFICIO MORELLO (BAKERY)
(probably dating from 1905-1908)

.....
Via Cappuccinelle, 6
.....

Together with the reorganisation of the urban structure of the city, the 'shops' were also redesigned, turning them into what was considered 'artistic and elegant'. This was the case of the Morello Bakery and today there is still a plaque framed in red marble, at the entrance, which bears the inscription in Stile Liberty letters, 'Panificio S. Morello' [S. Morello Bakery]. In the side panel there is a female figure holding up a large festoon of ears of wheat and flowers, a Demeter from Antiquity, popularly known in Sicilian dialect as '*a pupa ru Capu*' and represented in Stile Liberty, which connects with the mid-European style of Gustav Klimt and the compositions in *trencadís* [mosaics made of broken tile-work] of Catalan modernism.



ARCHITECTS, PAINTERS AND SCULPTORS OF THE STILE LIBERTY PERIOD

curated by Francesca Buffa and Marina Mancino

ARCHITECTS

Giovanni Battista Filippo Basile
(Palermo 1825-1891)

Giovanni Battista Filippo Basile, together with Giuseppe Damiani Almeyda (1834-1911), was the greatest Palermitan architect of the 19th century. He won the International tender for the realisation of the Teatro Massimo for the City of Palermo and

started construction work in 1875. He also designed the urban sistemisation of Piazza Marina and the Garibaldi Garden, of the Piazzetta Santo Spirito and the Giardino Inglese. In his last work, Villa Favalaro (1889), later modified by his son Ernesto, he started to use the new artistic language known as '*Stile Liberty*' in Italy [and called Art Nouveau in most of Europe].



ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE *BELLE ÉPOQUE*

Ernesto Basile

(Palermo 1857-1932)

Ernesto Basile, son of Giovanni Battista Filippo and principal exponent in Sicily of the Stile Liberty, was professor of Technical Architecture at the '*Regia Scuola di Applicazione per Ingegneri e Architetti*' (Royal School of Engineering and Architecture) and directed the '*Regio Istituto di Belle Arti of Palermo*' (College of Fine Arts of Palermo).

After the death of his father, he was appointed Supervising Architect at the Teatro Massimo. He lived in Rome for a few years, winning some of the more prestigious competitions: the Houses of Parliament, the Courts of Justice and the monument to Victor Emanuel II. The Palazzo Montecitorio, seat of the Italian Parliament, built between 1902 and 1918, brings Basile international recognition.

After returning to live in Palermo, he carries out the most interesting expressions of the Art Nouveau/Stile Liberty style. After having overseen the building of Palazzo Francavilla and Villa Bordonaro alle Croci (1893), he designs Palazzo Utveglio (1899), the Grand Hotel of Villa Igiea (1901), the Villino Florio all'Olivuzza, the Villino Ida Basile and Villa Fassino, all finished in 1903, Villa Deliella and the Florio Stand for the Pigeon Shooting competition (1906), the seat of the Cassa di Risparmio and Villino Ugo (1907), the seat of the Istituto Pignatelli ai Colli (1908), the Palazzo of the Assicurazioni Generali (1912), the Kursaal Biondo, the National Theatre (1913-1914) and the octagonal turret of Villa Favalaro (1914). He also designs many other

works in other Sicilian provinces.

He launches a sustained collaboration with the entrepreneur Vittorio Ducrot, and together they furnish houses and villas in Palermo, the Florio Yacht, the reception rooms of the Hotel des Palmes in Palermo (1907) and the Café Faraglia (1906) in Rome. Lesser projects include the Chioschi Ribaudò (1894) and Vicari (1897) in Piazza Massimo and those of the Politeama (1916). In the area around Mondello he designed Ville Monroy (1903), Lentini (1910) and Gregoriotti (1924). At lastly Basile also designed some funeral monuments that replicate the new style: they are those for the Raccuglia and Guarnaschelli (1899) family in the Cemetery of Santo Spirito, and the chapels of the Lanza di Scalea family (1900), Nicosia and Pecoraino in the Cemetery of Santa Maria Di Gesù.





ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE *BELLE ÉPOQUE*

Vincenzo Alagna

[Palermo 1866-1931]

Vincenzo Alagna, in the course of numerous trips abroad, acquires the taste for modernism that he places in his design in Palermo, of Palazzo Dato (1901) in Via XX Settembre and of Palazzo Alagna (1907) in Via Brunetto Latini. He also designs in Via Mariano Stabile, the façade of the Palazzo del Barone F. P. Atenasio. Between 1922 and 1925 he was Councillor for Public Works in Palermo.

Ernesto Armò

[Palermo 1867-1924]

Ernesto Armò, graduated from Turin, collaborated with Ernesto Basile in the design of the Pavilion for the International Exhibition in Palermo in 1891. He also became a University assistant professor. Amongst his projects are the Villino Riccobono (1903) and Palazzo Cirrincione (1907).



Salvatore Caronia Roberti

(Palermo 1887 – 1971)

Salvatore Caronia Roberti, engineer and architect, assistant to Ernesto Basile, teaches for many years at the University of Palermo. His first projects are heavily influenced by the language of Basile and represent his Modernism experience. Later, after a parenthesis of Classicism and Art Decò he arrives at Rationalism. His works in Palermo, all of which replicate the European Secession style are: the Cinema Theatre Excelsior in Via M. Stabile (1914), the Palazzo Napolitano (1921), the Palazzo Caronia Fernandez in via Pacini and the Supercinema in via Cavour (1923), as

well as Palazzo Pantaleo Caltagirone in via Ruggero Settimo (1931). In the time that he works with the building company of the Rutelli Brothers he designs and realises in the seaside resort of Mondello numerous buildings, including: the Villini Barresi (1910) and De Lisi (1911), the Villino La Manna and the Villini Savazzini and Pepe (1912), the Villino Pepe (1913). In Via Margherita di Savoia he designs the Villini Fernanda, Franca e Sofia (1912). In 1914 he finishes Villino De Luca, whilst in Viale Regina Elena he designs and realises the Villino of the Rowing Club Roggero di Loria (1915). During 1915 he also finishes the Villini Pojero e Dagnino.



**ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR
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Salvatore Mazarella

(b. 1859)

Salvatore Mazarella, engineer and Palermitan entrepreneur, designs and realises a building in Palermo, in Via Caltanissetta 1, which reflects the Modernism style.

Francesco Paolo Rivas

(Palermo 1854-1918)

Francesco Paolo Rivas, architect. The only remaining example of his work is the Palazzo Ammirata in Via Roma (1908-1911), where the language of Modernism expresses itself in the architectural solution of the corner turret and the design of the majolica and the wrought iron.



Giovanni Tamburello

He designed Palazzo Landolina of Torrebruna in Via Agrigento, 5 (1901) and the Palazzo Bonanno in Via Siracusa (1909).

Antonio Zanca

[Palermo 1861-1958]

Antonio Zanca, engineer, was assistant to Giuseppe Damiani Almeyda and then Professor of Descriptive Geometry in Palermo. Amongst his works in the Stile Liberty/Art Nouveau style are the Palazzo Di Pisa in Via Nicolò Garzilli and the Palazzo Paternò.



PAINTERS AND DECORATORS

Ettore De Maria Bergler

[Napoli 1850–Palermo 1938]

Bergler created the frescoes in the Sala d'Estato in Villa Whitaker at Malfitano, the prelude to the birth of the life cycle of the Stile Liberty in Palermo. This work brought him notoriety, to the extent that the architect Ernesto Basile entrusted him with the decoration of the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, where De Maria painted the Royal Box and some of the frescoes of the ceiling of the 'Sala degli Spettacoli' and the 'Sala Pompeiana'. His collaboration with Basile continued with the frescoes in the dining room of the Grand Hotel Villa Igiea, a rich decoration of floral and symbolic motifs.

Rocco Lentini

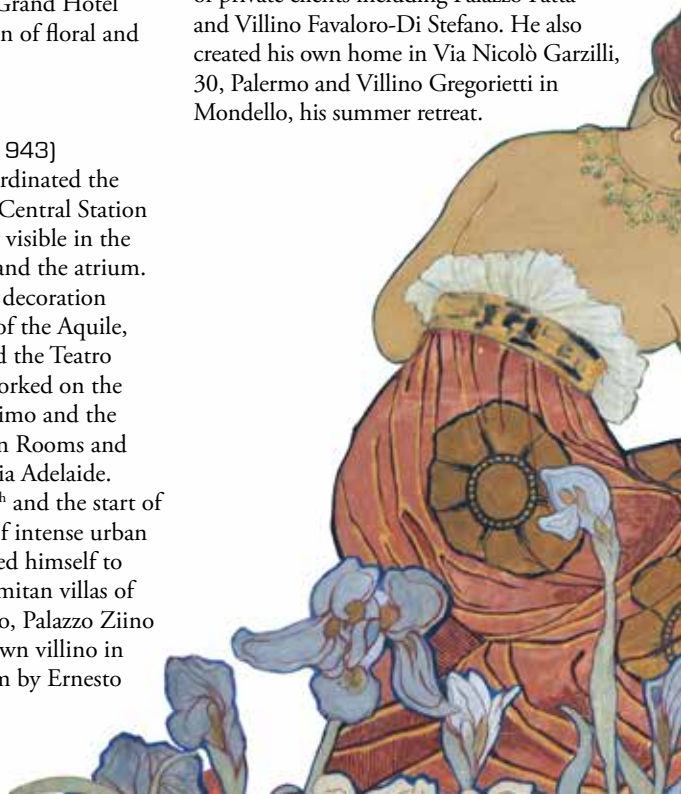
[Palermo 1858–Venezia 1943]

Rocco Lentini in 1886 coordinated the pictorial decoration of the Central Station of Palermo, nowadays only visible in the First Class Waiting Room and the atrium. He also participated in the decoration of the walls of the Palazzo of the Aquile, the Palermo Town Hall and the Teatro Politeama Garibaldi. He worked on the frescoes of the Teatro Massimo and the decoration of the Reception Rooms and the Reale Educandato Maria Adelaide. Between the end of the 19th and the start of the 20th century, a period of intense urban expansion, Lentini dedicated himself to the decoration of the Palermitan villas of the wealthy: Villa Malfitano, Palazzo Ziino and the decoration of his own villino in Mondello, designed for him by Ernesto Basile.

Salvatore Gregorietti

[Palermo 1870–1952]

Salvatore Gregorietti, a really eclectic figure, was a painter, decorator, glassmaker and graphic designer. He participated in the decoration of the *foyer* and the corridors of the Politeama Theatre and the 'Sala dei Gonfalonari' in the Palazzo delle Aquile. He decorated the interior of the Circolo Artistico of Palermo and frescoed the 'Sala dei Viceré' in the Palazzo dei Normanni. He also worked on the decoration of the Teatro Biondo and collaborated with Ernesto Basile on the decoration of many villas and Palazzi of private clients including Palazzo Fatta and Villino Favalaro-Di Stefano. He also created his own home in Via Nicolò Garzilli, 30, Palermo and Villino Gregorietti in Mondello, his summer retreat.





ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE *BELLE ÉPOQUE*

Luigi Di Giovanni

(Palermo 1856-1938)

Luigi Di Giovanni received his early training from his father, a well-known engraver and decorator. He participated in the decorative cycle of the Politeama Theatre, where he frescoed, together with his father and Michele Cortegiani, the sides of the stage and the Reception Rooms. He also painted the central figure and a lateral one as well 'La suonatrice di violino' (The Violin Player) on the vault of the Teatro Massimo.

Giuseppe Enea

(Palermo 1870-1952)

Giuseppe Enea frescoed, together with Enrico Cavallaro and Rocco Lentini, some of the rooms in the Politeama Garibaldi and also helped to decorate the Teatro Massimo. He worked on the decoration of some of the most important homes of the rich and famous in Palermo at the end of the 19th century: Villa Whitaker, Palazzo Francavilla, Villino Florio. In Villa Igjea he painted floral ornates, grotesques and grisailles.



Michele Cortegiani

(Napoli 1857 - Tunis 1919)

Michele Cortegiani was a pupil of De Maria Bergler, and worked together with him at the decoration of Villa Igiea and the ceiling of the Teatro Massimo in Palermo, in collaboration with Rocco Lentini and Luigi Di Giovanni. In 1902 he was called to Tunisia by the Italian community and frescoed the 'Casinò' and the 'Théâtre Municipal'.



ARCHITECTURE AND DÉCOR OF THE *BELLE ÉPOQUE*

Carmelo Giarrizzo

(Piazza Armerina 1850–Palermo 1917)
Carmelo Giarrizzo carried out some of the frescoes of the Politeama Garibaldi, decorating in the Pompeiian style the upper portico on the north side. He frescoed the Palazzo Geraci, depicting the *Trinacria*. He also executed some of the frescoes in Villino Favalaro-Di Stefano.

Nicolò Giannone

(Palermo 1848–1915)
Nicolò Giannone painted the Aula Magna of the Musical Academy of Palermo, known as '*La Musica*' and collaborated with Carmelo Giarrizzo and Francesco Padovani in decorating the Politeama Theatre. He frescoed the Villino Florio, Palazzo Laganà and the villa of Cav. Napoli.

Enrico Cavallaro

(Palermo 1858–1895)
Enrico Cavallaro was a painter, decorator and scenographer. He frescoed in Pompeiian style the Café of the Teatro Massimo and the main staircase of the Theatre. He carried out some decorations in Palazzo Tasca, Palazzo Mazzarino and the Palazzo of the Prince of Ganci, all in Palermo.

Onofrio Tomaselli

(Bagheria 1866–Palermo 1956)
Onofrio Tomaselli carried out the frescoes for the hall and the main staircase of Palazzo Landolina di Torrebruna in Via Agrigento, 5, creating three panels, frescoed as if they were pictures on the walls, depicting Music, Poetry and Dance.



SCULPTORS

Mario Rutelli

[Palermo 1859–1941]

Mario Rutelli received his early schooling in Palermo then finished in Rome, where he lived and worked for long periods. However, the sculptor's creativity was best expressed in his native town [Palermo] and he was instrumental in shaping the modern new neighbourhoods springing up along the Viale della Libertà. Amongst his most important works are *'The Quadriga'* [chariot drawn by four horses], surmounting the Politeama Theatre, a bronze group depicting *'The Lyric'*, a female figure lying against a lion, placed to the left of the main staircase in the Teatro Massimo, the monument to *Francesco Crispi* in the square named after him, the

central statue and the *Winged Victory* for the Cenotaph created by Ernesto Basile at the end of Via della Libertà as well as the Dante monument in the atrium of the National Library (nowadays the Regional Library). Of lesser importance were the bronze group of figures entitled *'Children playing on the rocks'* in the Giardino Inglese and directly opposite, crossing over the Via della Libertà, in the Villa Falcone-Morvillo (once Villa Garibaldi), at the foot of the statue of Garibaldi, the statue of *'The Lion breaking his chains'*, an allegory of the liberation from tyranny, and at the base of this monument, two bas-reliefs in bronze *'The Landing at Marsala'* and *'The Battle on the Admiral's Bridge'* [references to Garibaldi's victories]. In Monreale Rutelli sculpted the Triton Fountain.





Benedetto Civiletti

[Palermo 1845-1899]

Amongst his earliest works is the group of '*I Canaris a Scio*' (The Canaris Brothers at Scio) created to celebrate Greek Independence and nowadays in the Giardino Inglese in Palermo. He also created the '*Monument to Victor Emanuel II*', in Palazzo Giulio Cesare and the statue of the '*Pastorello*' (Little Shepherd Boy) in Villa Giulia. His last commission was the '*Tragedy*', depicting a female figure lying on a lion and placed on the right of the main staircase of the Teatro Massimo.

Domenico De Lisi

[Palermo 1870-1946]

He sculpted the statue known as the '*Pescatore*' (Fisherman), part of a group of sculptures in a fountain in the Giardino Inglese as well as the '*Monument to Garibaldi*' in the homonymous Garden situated in Piazza Marina, Palermo.

Antonino Ugo

[Palermo 1870-1950]

Antonino Ugo created the bas-relief in bronze for the *Cenotaph* in Palermo, the *bust of Pirandello* in the Giardino Inglese, the *bust of Carducci* in the University, the *bust of Giuseppe Verdi* in the gardens of the Teatro Massimo and the '*Falciatore*' (Little Reaper) in Piazza Castelnuovo.

Archimede Campini

[Forlì 1884 - Palermo 1950]

Archimede Campini, a decorator who worked in plaster, created the *Two Dancers* for the façade of the Kursaal Biondo Theatre in Via E. Amari, the *Pietà*, placed in the Church of the Magione and the *Figure of a Woman* symbolising Sicily on the façade of the Bank of Sicily in Via Roma.



CHRONOLOGY

1882

The German composer Richard Wagner (1813-1883) comes to Palermo, staying at the Grand Hotel et Des Palmes. Here he finishes the Opera *Parsifal*.

The French Impressionist painter Augustus Renoir (1841-1919) comes to Palermo, specifically to paint his portrait.

1891

The architect Giovan Battista Filippo Basile dies. His son Ernesto, takes over the supervision of the completion of the Teatro Massimo.

Between the 15th November, 1891 and 5th June 1892 the National Exhibition of Palermo takes place.

The Senator Ignazio Florio, one of the richest and most powerful entrepreneurs of Italy, dies.

1892

Rosario Garibaldi Bosco founds the Fasci dei Lavoratori [Sicilian League] in Palermo, along the lines of those created in Messina (1889) and Catania (1892). It is an organisation for the defence of the working class along socialist lines. Between 1892 and 1893, the Movement of the Sicilian League expands greatly.

1893

The Mafia kills Emanuele Notarbartolo, president of the Bank of Sicily and ex Mayor of Palermo.

The Sicilian League organises a series of protest marches. The armed repression causes almost 100 deaths between 1893 and 1894.

1894

The cutting of Via Roma entails the demolition of numerous buildings in the historical centre of Palermo. The work is completed in 1936.

The Italian Government decrees the dissolution of the 'Fasci dei Lavoratori'.

1895

Opening of the Palermo-Messina railway.

1896

The Emperor of Germany, Wilhelm II and the composer Giacomo Puccini, visit Palermo. The Emperor returns in 1904 and again in 1908.

1897

The first cinema opens in Palermo.

The Teatro Massimo is inaugurated. Its construction had begun in 1875.

The Empress Eugenie, wife of Napoleon III is amongst the celebrities who visit Palermo.

1898

Prince Victor Emanuel, future King of Italy, is one of Palermo's illustrious guests this year.

He returns as King in 1900. The King of Belgium also visits.

The tramway transport service replaces the horsedrawn tram with electric ones.

1900

The newspaper *L'Ora*, sponsored by Ignazio Florio, is founded.

The shipyard workers go on strike.

The Grand Hotel Villa Igia is opened.

1901

Francesco Crispi (1818-1901), ex Garibaldi's follower, who then became a politician and leader of the conservative government, is given a ceremonial funeral by the city of Palermo.

1902

The Ducrot manufacturers send furniture designed by Ernest Basile to the Turin Exhibition.

1904

La Sicilie Illustrée commences publication. Graphically influenced by the new *Art Nouveau* [Stile Liberty in Italy] style, the magazine reflects the tastes and the fashions of the High Society of the *Belle Époque*.

The trial in Florence of the assassination of Notarbartolo ends. The Sicilian parliamentarian Raffaele Palizzolo, accused of having been the instigator, is cleared on the basis of insufficient proof.

1906

The first edition of the Targa Florio, a car rally round the Madonie Circuit, which is held until 1977.

1907

The cigar makers go on strike and the Tobacco Manufacturer of Palermo closes down.

The Sovereigns of England visit Palermo.

1908

Earthquake in Messina.

The economic crisis of the Florios is full-blown. They are obliged to cede, after the Florio Bank, the shares in the Navigazione Generale Italiana, the company that was at the heart of their empire.

1909

The Italo-American policeman Joe Petrosino is assassinated by the Mafia in Piazza Marina, Palermo.

1910

In Mondello the architect Salvatore Caronia Roberti starts building the first '*Villini*'. King Victor Emanuel III is present at the inauguration of the Civic Modern Art Gallery '*Empedocle Restivo*' of Palermo. Inauguration of the Ethnographical Museum of Palermo, founded by Giuseppe Pitrè.

1912

Inauguration of the bathing Establishment of Mondello by the Italo-Belgian Company '*Les Tramways de Palermé*'.

1913

In this year the record for the quantity of lemons exported from Sicily is broken.

1901-1915

Emigration: It has been calculated that between 1876 and 1915 around 14 million people emigrated from Italy. 226,449 Sicilians leave between 1876-1900 and 1,126,513 between 1901-1915.

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