



Medicean Great Vase

Realized in 1851 from the Manufacture of Doccia, on the occasion of the first "Great Exhibition of the Works of Industry of all Nations" in London in 1851. The exhibition took place in the greenhouse made of iron and glass of the Crystal Palace, built in the same year.

The shape of the vase and the name "crater" originated from a neo-attic crater of the I century BC, bought in an antique market from the Cardinal Ferdinando De' Medici.

RICHARD-GINORI MUSEUM OF THE MANUFACTURE OF DOCCIA

The museum is officially inaugurated in 1965 but its origins as a collection, date back to 1754, when Carlo Ginori plans to build a gallery to display the best manufactured products of the factory. For this project Carlo Ginori uses a room of the villa Buondelmonti, bought in 1737 to be used by the factory. This exhibition of the collections, then enlarged by the samples and the polychromatic earth used for the production and the decoration of the porcelain, was the first nucleus of the museum. In 1896 Augusto Richard realizes the fusion between the Ginori and the Richard of Milan, but the Ginoris continued to be the owners of the collection. The old one remains in the rooms where it was exhibited from the beginning, but it is enlarged and enriched by new objects belonging to Richard - Ginori. During World War II, the collection is packed and put in a safe place.

In 1950 the entire collection is reported; the Ginori Lisci family regains possession of a third of its collection, leaving two thirds to the Porcelain Society Richard - Ginori.

The reporting of the collection in its real state dates back to 1962.

The present museum, designed by Pier Niccolò Berardi in 1965 is 31, viale Pratese. It has got around 7000 works. The historical-artistic material shown in the exhibition is arranged in chronological order enhancing the richness and the variety of the different meaning of the collection and its highest legibility. The exhibition starts from the production of the eighteenth century up to the section of the Industrial Design which goes from Gio Ponti (1923-1930) to the 1990s.

name **fiorentino** was added to Sesto to be distinguished from other municipal districts with the same name in the Kingdom. On the 24th of August 1869 the town council approves unanimously the project for the building of the new Town Hall. The design is realized by the engineer Adolfo Mariani who made use of the technical guidance of the architect Enrico Presenti. The new town hall is built in a place in the quarter of San Martino, Municipality and District of Sesto, place denominated the **Tonietta**. Survey and expense specifications: 99.477 liras and 78 cents. During the execution the survey has a further rise of price, due to the need of deepening the foundations of the building and to make aesthetic improvements.

On the 7th of November 1869, during a solemn ceremony, the foundation stone is laid together with a china box inside which there is a parchment, some coins and the medal of the municipality. On the 25th of June 1871 the Mayor Francesco Daddi inaugurates the Town Hall. On the 17th of May the town council approves the work of the committee of inspection and allocates the sum of 152.275 liras and 91 cents to settle the building expenses.

The Town Hall is a two-storey building and it remains the most expressive public work which was built in that period. Next to the Town Hall, along the side of the via V Maggio it can be seen the monument to Giuseppe Pescetti, a work realized by the sculptor Antonio Berti, and the monument in remembrance of the four inhabitants of Sesto, killed in this place on the 5th of May 1898 because they were demanding bread and work.

In the piazza Vittorio Veneto, the square in front of the main entrance of the Town Hall, there is the monument in remembrance of the fallen during World War I, a work realized by the sculptor Odo Franceschi.



Croceffisso attributed to Agnolo Gaddi 1390

Parish Church of SAN MARTINO (Saint Martin) in Sesto Fiorentino

Mentioned in a document of the year 868, together with the word "Sesto". The parish church is mentioned with its small village in a map dating back to a period shortly after the year 1000; precisely in a document of 1025. The remains of the original building do not exist any longer, so if we should attribute an epoch to the building we could, with all due reservation, date it around the XIII century. After the restoration of 1881 and 1950, a pictorial cycle of frescoes were found, some of rough workmanship, dating back to a period before Giotto now kept in the parish gallery.

The crucifix of 1390, attributed to Agnolo Gaddi, bears testimony of the Giottesque period. In the parsonage it can be seen a painting realized by Cenni di Francesco di Ser Cenni, illustrating "The Pentecost" 1385 - 1390, (tempera painting). Other frescoes are attributed to the school of the Ghirlandaio, with an influence of the Verrocchio. Works of the XIV century can be seen on the pillar of the Main Chapel.

The church, restored more than once, today has a XVI century mark, as testified by the scenery of the parish complex, showing on an oil painting by Santi di Tito (1579) kept in the parish gallery, where the painter half-reveals the front of the church with the same characteristics still visible, while the parsonage shows many differences.

In the **lunette** on the inner portal, in the central aisle, there is a mosaic representing the face of the Christ, by Venturino Venturi.



THE VILLA SAN LORENZO AL PRATO

South of the parish of San Martino, in the **piana** (flat land) of Sesto, in via degli Scardassieri, an ancient palace with a tower is part of a medieval complex where one can still recognize five tower-houses, even though slightly changed. Such structures show an ancientness which is not documentable with exactness but, analysing the existing buildings, it is datable around the XII - XIII century. The villa is imposing and preserves many parts of its solid and impressive building, among which a porticoed courtyard and columns with ionic capitals. Over the doors and windows, one can see frescoes of the XVI century, attributed to the Poccetti. In the rooms of the tower, frescoes of the XII and XIV centuries appear. After the restoration of the XX century, the architectural complex of **San Lorenzo al Prato** comprises:

- The Renaissance courtyard of the villa
 - The reception hall
 - A main tower, of the medieval period
 - A tower leaning against the medieval one
 - A tower, which is private property, in via Battilana
 - A tower, which is private property, in via della Torre
 - The chapel of **San Lorenzo al Prato**, with its external walls 'at filaretto' of **alberese** stone, already parish church of the fortification having the same name until the end of the XIV century
 - The great fountain basin of the XVI century, which can be seen from the Renaissance porticoes
 - The courtyard in front of the entrance of the villa
 - A prefabricated school in place of the nineteenth-century buildings
- The rooms of the Villa are now the premises of various associations and of the Sesto School of Music.



IPERCOOP SHOPPING CENTER

In the **piana** (flat land) of Sesto, in Via Petrosa, just a few metres as the crow flies from the airport Amerigo Vespucci of Peretola, it is situated the **Ipercoop** shopping centre, from the 5th of November 2003. The design of the building was made by the architects of the London studio Chapman-Taylor, European leaders in the field of commercial architecture.

Before the construction of the building, the **Soprintendenza Archeologica della Toscana** (Tuscan Regional Archaeology Office) carried out some preliminary digging in the area. These excavations have unearthed prehistoric human settlements dating from the Copper Age to the Roman period.

In the underground car park of the centre, remains of a part of the Roman structure are visible. The archaeological evidence belongs to a farm inhabited for a long period between the end of the I century BC and the end of the III century AD. This building of the Roman period comprises two functional structures, in other words, the residential part "pars urbana" where the owner lived, and the "pars rustica" where all the farm activities took place.



A detail of the park of Villa Guicciardini Corsi Salviati

THE VILLA GUICCIARDINI

Along the actual **via Gramsci**, the road connecting Sesto Fiorentino to Florence, you can see the wide front of a grand and interesting villa belonging to the family of the family Guicciardini Corsi Salviati.

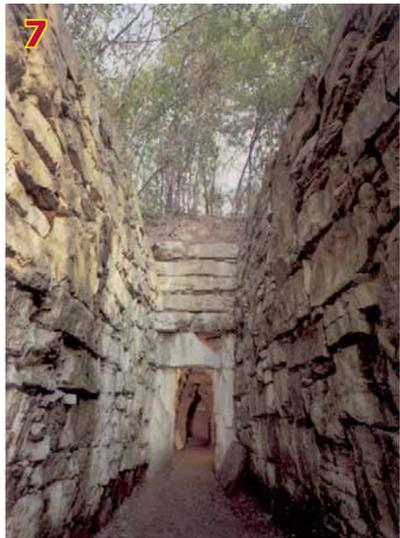
On the 7th of January 1502, Simone di Jacopo Corsi buys from Luca Carneseccchi: "a lordly house with a walled-in garden and a dovecote". This description, together with the fresco of the Poccetti, painted in the vault of the ground passageway of the villa, makes you understand how the villa looked at that time. Between 1593 and 1603 all the construction undergoes works of extension and transformation, giving to the architectural complex the taste and elegance of the period. Gherardo Silvani is in charge of the architectural part of the building. Baccio del Bianco decorates the various rooms with his frescoes between 1640 and 1641. Elegant loggias reach towards a garden in the

style of the Renaissance. The park extends south of the villa, embellished by small lakes and fountain basins, thick groves adorned by plants, statues, pots, grottoes, flower beds and glasshouses where rare plants and ornamental flowers are cultivated.

The monumental complex undergoes various restorations in the course of time. The greatest alteration in the villa and garden was done in the XVIII century. Other important changes are the works done by the marchese Francesco Antonio Corsi Salviati to the structure of the park, in which is brought, with considerable scientific results, the cultivation of exotic plants. The botanical mark given to the garden by the marchese Francesco is taken up again by his son Bardo (1844 – 1907) who dedicates great attention to the ornamental plants among which citruses, rare orchids, palms and the little roses of Florence.

The last changes are due to his grandson, the count Giulio Guicciardini Corsi Salviati (1887 – 1958), who gives up the cultivation of the exotic species, restores the garden bringing it back to its eighteenth-century guise, based on the documents he owned in his archive, respecting the former artistic heritage.

The villa, typically Tuscan, is illustrated in various publications both in Italy and abroad, as on the **Gardening illustrated**, which magnificently describes it.



Etruscan tomb Montagnola - Dromos external and portale

Etruscan Tomb "LA MONTAGNOLA" of Quinto Fiorentino

The diggers entered the Tholos chamber of the Etruscan tomb on the 3rd of July of 1959. "The vault without mortar, with huge large slabs that from one side to the other go up to the centre and meet there". These words indicate the construction of the monument done with big stones of limestone, filled with clay, similar to the cyclopean method of building, used in the Aegean. An open dromos (elongated entrance) leads to an entrance door, delimited by two shutters and an architrave, with four monolithic large slabs on top and a fifth last one in two blocks; this order of large slabs overhung the architrave with a sense of impressiveness. You enter a covered dromos with a pseudo-vault; in its walls two chambers are opened, with a rectangular base limited by side shutters built with slabs laid down flat, on which some graffiti are visible and also traces of ochre and deep blue. At the end of the passage there is the entrance to the Tholos by means of long ashlar of sandstone,

with a single slab acting as an architrave on top. When you are beyond this structure you notice, stuck to the ground, a stone similar to a step and on every side two slabs of sandstone inserted down flat; these are the remains of a former building. These slabs are partitions between two structures built with pseudo-vaulted sandstone ashlar, like a bracket, which help to control the passage and the exit from the Tholos with a radical static closing device. The inner front of the Tholos is a big pitch in the shape of a trapezium, realized by a curvilinear ring made of small and thick blocks rising from the ground almost vertically, to then begin the closing gradation of the space. At the centre of this circular chamber there is a pillar realized with hard blocks of limestone, coated with three centimetres of plaster. On the monument there rises a tumulus of clay and soil, which helped to protect the dead person and his rich funerary equipment from the infiltration of dampness. The embankment at the base is covered with slabs of limestone. The Tholos tomb is part of the Orientalizing period, between 659 and 600 BC.



Church of Saint Romolo to Colonnata - Altar in china policroma

CHURCH OF SAN ROMOLO in Colonnata

At the slopes of Monte Morello, near to the old porcelain factory named **Doccia**, it is situated the parish church of Colonnata. The flat land of Sesto below, was originally denominated **Colonnata**, where it was also comprised the **Pieve** (parish church) of **San Martino**, up to the year 1000.

The church of San Romolo in Colonnata, as a parish community, appears in an act of sale in the year 1234.

Inside the church you can find a wooden crucifix of the sixteenth century, canvasses of B. Salvestrini (1625), G. Romei (1751) and other works of the XVII century.

In 1737 the birth of the **Doccia** manufacture of porcelain in the parish area, gave the church a new appearance. It was furnished with precious ceramics, like the crucifix in white porcelain, the entire set of candelabra, the crucifix in polychromatic porcelain with the medallions of the patron saints of 1753 for the "Society of St John Decollate". The altar of 1783 was realized in porcelain plaques and frames, painted by Giuseppe Ettel, working in Doccia between 1768 and 1804. At the centre of the altar stands out the precious ciborium

with the small door painted by Giovan Battista Fanciullacci working in Doccia between the 1759 and the 1825. The five angels where the Holy Sacrament is kept, were realized by G. Bruschi. Also made of porcelain are the two lamps for the Holy Sacrament, the **secchioline** (basins for the holy water) and the font.



Palace prethorium

THE PALAZZO PRETORIO (MAGISTRATE'S PALACE)

The **Palazzo Pretorio** can be seen on the south side of the piazza Ginori, a two-storey palace with the architectural features of the XIV century. On the small bell tower there is a sterling bell on which it is carved an inscription with the date and the names of the makers: **Charlo Dichecco, Simone Di Macero, Checco Andrea Herardini workmen MCCCXXI** and three blazons, a pair of compasses which stands for Sesto, a crescent and two crossed **battenti** (kind of clubs) with four six-pointed stars in the corner, representing Fiesole. In 1424 Sesto is joined to the jurisdiction of the podestà of Brozzi and Fiesole. The podestà sent to Sesto from the Florentine Republic stayed in this palace and his task was to administer the law and his appointment lasted from six months to one year. Every podestà was to set his own blazon on the front of the building.

Nowadays we can still see the big frescoed blazon of the De' Medici together with the insignia, elegant and beautifully crafted like those in glazed terracotta in a Della Robbia style of Giovanni Gucci (1497), Benedetto Bati (1510), Giovanni Mori (1511), Filippo Sapiti (1512), Simone Gazzetti (1528), Andrea Petriani (1549) and many others.

On the architrave of the entrance door it is carved a date, 1477, and in one of the rooms you can see a fresco of the beginning of 1500 portraying a nativity with a charming village in the background. In another room one recognises parts of frescoes and a well-shaped cornice of the XIV century.

In 1932 the palace was restored by the architect Zunkeller of Florence, when it was an office of the Fascist Party.