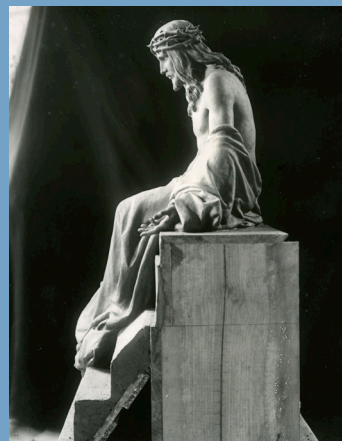
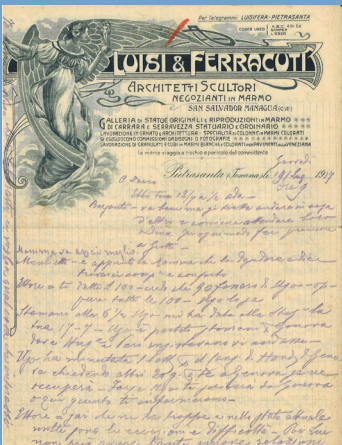


THE MUSEUM AND THE HISTORIC GYPSOTHEQUES OF PIETRASANTA

The Museo di Bozzetti (Museum of Maquettes) today is a true anthology of a precious union between international artists and local artisans, to which in the recent years has been added a section of repertoire plasters from the local historic gypsotheques.

On the first half of the 20th Century, these latter represented the working basis and productive availability of every marble workshop, also because the orders from Italy and abroad were repeated with uniformity. Often, the plaster models have been purchased by ancient Florentine and Carrara marble workshops; in the case of classical models, they have been reproduced as faithfully as possible to the original. When needed, the artisans exchanged or lent models. For the workshops, to own the best models meant receiving the most prestigious commissions.

Over the time, repertoire plasters have been donated to the Museo di Bozzetti by Anat Golandsky of Lapis Studio, Luciano Laboratory's heirs, the Cervietti Laboratory, and by other historic gypsotheques in Pietrasanta. The recent and substantial donation of over 400 maquettes and models by the Luisi Laboratory's heirs has stimulated the birth of a new section of the collection. The layout of the Room partly replicates the structure of the Luisi Gypsotheque (later Cervietti): a multitude of small and large plasters are placed side by side on long shelves and are accompanied by the projection of photos of the historic Versilia workshops. The new section, inaugurated on the 40th Anniversary of the Museum, shows as an opportunity to recover the memory of the community, to share contents, and to circulate innovative ideas.



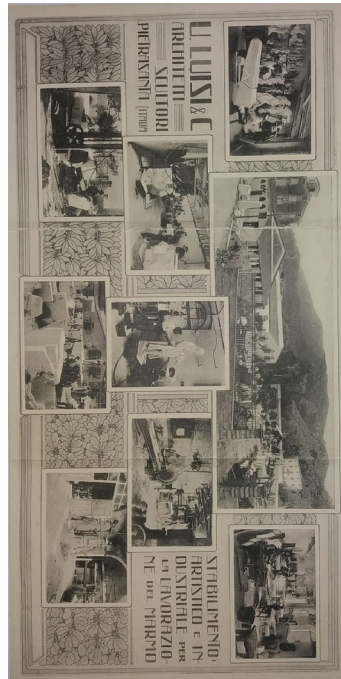
THE LUISI LABORATORY

The Luisi Laboratory has three founders: the brothers Ugo and Dario Luisi, sons of Tito (who, in addition to having been appointed Consul of Nicaragua, had already dealt with the marble trade), and Alberto Ferracuti, a drawing professor. After finishing his High School studies, Ugo emigrated to San Salvador, America, and worked for a commercial company, while Dario enrolled at the Academy of Fine Arts and began attending Ferdinando Palla's workshop.

It was precisely in San Salvador that Ugo Luisi met the Italian Alberto Ferracuti. Here, in 1901, they decided to found a company to export Italian sculpture, architecture and ornamental works to Central America. Following this decision, Ferracuti and Luisi opened a Gallery in San Salvador with the intention of receiving commissions for works to be realized at Ferdinando Palla's workshop in Pietrasanta. Business went well and just after two years, the two partners opened another gallery in Managua, capital of Nicaragua, followed by a third in Tegucigalpa, Honduras.

While initially this company's works have been entrusted to various workshops in Pietrasanta, Carrara and Seravezza, later, in 1906, they decided to open a workshop in Pietrasanta for the realization of the works, giving its direction to Dario, who already had the General Power of Attorney of the Company for Italy. The workshop was located in the Porta a Lucca area and was very extensive. Luisi's work has been very relevant, in terms of numbers and quality, both for the high production capacity and for having been able to interpret the clients' needs.

At the same time, Luisi and Ferracuti opened a branch in Paris and other ones in Central and South America (Argentina, Cuba, Mexico, Costa Rica, Peru, and Colombia). The legacy of what has been accomplished abroad is still testified in 2005 by the creation of the "Ugo Luisi" Workshop School in Santiago de Cuba, dedicated to the preservation of the heritage of its historic center. Over the time, the ownership of the various workshops passed on entirely to the Luisi family, and the one in Pietrasanta ceased its activity in the 1970s. Its rich and evocative gypsotheque, partly merged into the collection of the Museo dei Bozzetti, is now a matter of study, so that it could tell the story of thousands of works translated into marble that have been found all over the world.



THE CITY OF PIETRASANTA
Pietrasanta, the historical capital of Versilia, on the Tuscan coast, has a deep connection with the Art Culture thanks to the easy availability of the precious raw material, the marble, extracted from the Apuan Alps, and to the illustrious sculptural tradition that has consequently developed from it. It's a rich heritage of experiences that is passed down from generation to generation. Attracted by the technical skills of the local artisans, artists from all over the world come to this city to work, enriching a climate of absolute creative freedom. From Michelangelo to Botero, Pietrasanta is a unique art space, suspended between history and ancient and contemporary languages.

THE "MUSEO DEI BOZZETTI" (Museum of Maquettes)
The Collection of the Museo dei Bozzetti, preserved in the Complex of Saint Augustine in Pietrasanta, with its more than a thousand pieces, is peculiar in its kind for the variety of internationally renowned sculptors represented and for the aim to convey Sculpture as the result of a process that goes from the artist's idea to the choice of the materials, to the processing techniques of the artisans, to the work's final placement. The Museum, born in a climate of great creative ferment that had characterized the City of Pietrasanta since the 1970s, was officially inaugurated on February 1st, 1984. From its first steps, it reveals the vocation of a living and inclusive museum, in continuous extension,

ready to exchange information, to participate in research projects, to present exhibitions in Italy and abroad, in order to interact with other institutions. Among the latest, the exhibition of the Uffizi Diffusi (2022) in Pietrasanta, at the European Parliament in Brussels (2023), and within the "Design Weekend" event in Courmayeur (2024).

LUISI ROOM - SECTION OF HISTORICAL GYPSOTHEQUES
At the beginning of the 20th Century, the gypsotheques of the laboratories in Pietrasanta and in the Versilia area were the working basis to receive commissions for the creation of marble works. Their rich repertoires of plaster casts of classical, sacred, funerary, and figurative art have been translated into a sculptural, marble heritage spread throughout the world. The Luisi heirs' donation and their previous bequests to the Museo dei Bozzetti gives life to this new and significant section, which tells a past that explains the present.

GYPSOTHEQUES:



LUISI



STUDIO LAPIS



CERVIETTI



OTHER ONES

Photo credits Gabriele Ancillotti



Comune di Pietrasanta
Città d'Arte - Città Nobile dal 1841



Pietrasanta

Via S. Agostino nr 1

Complesso di S. Agostino

Museo dei Bozzetti "P. Gherardi"

Instagram: Museo dei Bozzetti, pietrasantaexperience

Facebook: Museo dei Bozzetti, Comune di Pietrasanta

Website: www.museodeibozzetti.it, www.comune.pietrasanta.lu.it



Luisi Room
Section of Historical Gypsotheques
 Comune di Pietrasanta
 Museo dei Bozzetti "P. Gherardi"

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PLASTER STORIES

"My life in Pietrasanta was truly beautiful! For years I have lived in large and hardworking workshops and have been the genesis of noble marble works."

Dressed in white and plaster, I accompanied young minds to approach the craft of Sculpture.

As in a small army, I stood in line waiting for my turn. Sacred, funerary and classical, the more and more beautiful we were, the more the workshop created.

The points, nails and marks on me were the compass of skilled hands that gradually made my likeness bloom in the marble block.

The "bozzetti" (maquettes) and I inhabited the workshop, we were the daily bread. The marble sculptures, on the other hand, traveled.

With carts and ships they arrived to a church, a cemetery, a square, a museum... the world seemed at our feet!

Then a series of inexorable events pushed me aside, no one caressed me, not even a glance, tastes had changed.

Covered in dust, I gave way to new and different forms of modern Sculpture.

But this is not a sad story, we are what we have given.

Our legacy, the ancient wisdom, has been passed on in the craft of the artisans, intimate work companions of artists from every place and time."



Video
 Plaster Stories
 Chiara Celli

PIETRASANTA AND SCULPTURE IN THE FIRST HALF OF THE 20TH CENTURY

The birth of artistic manufacture in Versilia happened as a direct consequence of the ancient use of the Apuan Alps' marble quarries.

In 1842 in Pietrasanta, the establishment of the School of Fine Arts responded to the need of training sculptor craftsmen in order to integrate the marble trade chain with the artistic processing. The spread of studies and workshops went hand in hand with the number of modelers, sculptors, and ornamentists who graduated from the school.

At the beginning of the 20th Century, large marble workshops, active between Pietrasanta and Seravezza, employed hundreds of workers and represented an important economic and productive reality.

Noteworthy has been the opening of workshops and branches in Europe as well as in the Americas and the phenomenon of marble workers employed abroad.

The market concerned the production of statuary, furnishings, and ornamentation. Each workshop tried to advertise its work by printing brochures translated into various languages, which illustrated the variety of sculptures that could have been chosen also by mail.

The workshops were well organized and the marble arrived from the quarries in the form of blocks, transported by ox-drawn carts.

The maquette and the plaster model were the starting point for the translation of the works into marble, which have been realized passing through many hands, because each craftsman played a specific role in the various stages of roughing out, modeling and finishing.



THE USE OF SCULPTURE AND ITS TYPOLOGIES

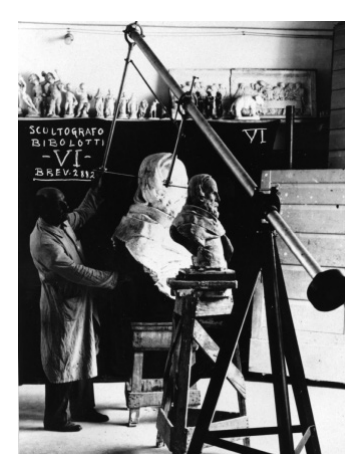
The workshops of artistic marble manufacture nourish various genres of sculptural patronage.

The sculptor craftsmen are aware of their professional specificity, which makes any realization unique, whether it is just the translation from the plaster model or the request for creative production. The sculpture market offers different kind of works:

CLASSICAL ART. Between the 19th and 20th Centuries, were in vogue the reproduction of sculptures of ancient art and of works of the great Masters from the Renaissance to Neoclassicism, because of the renewed interest in the aesthetic contents, culture, and civil virtues that they represented. The main patrons were the European and American collectors, museums and galleries.

PORTRAITS AND CELEBRATORY MONUMENTS. The success and spread of the portrait is linked to the desire of representing the memory of the living person, captured in his/her splendor and opulence through the bust or full-length representation. In the public gardens, the busts of illustrious men become the memory of the history of a city or of a nation.

The larger and more organized workshops are able to carry out monumental and celebratory works commissioned by public institutions, committees, heads of state, destined to every part of the world for the realization of monuments to the wars' fallen, or dedicated to poets, writers, and characters of the past.



GENRE WORKS. This is a well-established market. Genre works means in feature works, often with a strong narrative element, generally in dimensions that allow a "living room" placement for the bourgeois clients. The subjects are groups with animals or people taken from the bucolic and domestic life and literature, Orientalist figures, costume pieces, boys and girls, young half-dressed girls, all kinds of boys, reduced-size copies of ancient statues, portraits of artists and musicians.

FURNISHINGS, ORNAMENTS AND FOUNTAINS. The workshops propose maquettes or drawings of furnishing elements, architecture, sculpture, and ornaments for religious and civil buildings as well as gardens. These include holy water stoups, altars, columns, capitals, shelves, coats of arms, fireplaces, decorative panels, and fountains. If the maquette is accepted, the project is scaled up, executed and installed.

SACRED ART. Sculpture and sacred furnishings represent the most substantial production of the artistic manufacture of the local workshops of the time. The workshops provide an impressive repertoire of possible subjects - Christs, Saints and Madonnas of every kind - which are advertised remotely through photographs of the works and on site with plaster maquettes.

FUNERARY ART. Between the 19th and 20th Centuries, the cemeteries reflected the desire of the bourgeois class of expressing the ideals of a society that found in Sculpture the most solid and lasting recognition. The funerary monument has in feature with portraits, allegorical or religious figures, angels and putti.

SIGNATURE SCULPTURE. During the same period, it has been documented the presence of non-local sculptors who created their own works in the Versilia workshops and have been assisted by the craftsmen up to the final placement of the work.

