



PALAZZO DI VARIGNANA

HERITAGE OF ITALIAN LIFESTYLE

1705

*The Art Collection
of Palazzo di Varignana*

The Art Collection of Palazzo di Varignana takes shape from the experience of its founder, inspired by impressions gathered during numerous travels, encounters with diverse cultures, and a deep passion for history, art, beauty, and landscape.

Spanning over two thousand years of history, this eclectic collection includes precious antiquities, contemporary creations of symbolic and technological value, as well as extraordinary artistic expressions, rare and valuable artifacts, symbolic sculptures, and immersive experiences. Some of these treasures are displayed in the Wunderkammer – the Chamber of Wonders – a place where past and present intertwine in a play of suggestions and unexpected discoveries.

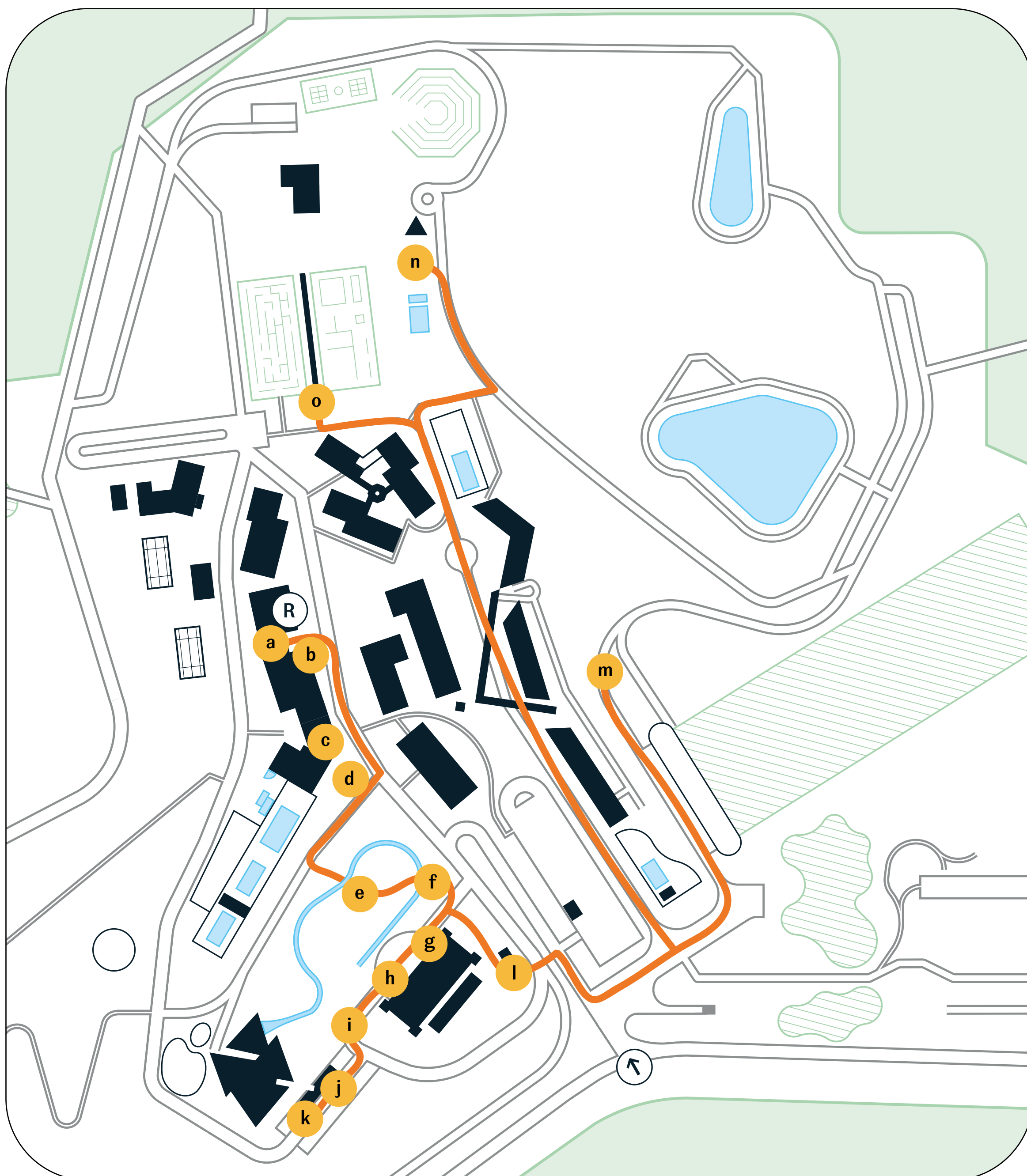
An integral part of this vision is the Ornamental Garden at Villa Amagioia, included in the prestigious Grandi Giardini Italiani circuit, together with the Landscape Art installations that enrich the resort's landscape in perfect harmony between nature and art.

Lastly, the Griffin, the emblem of Palazzo di Varignana: a mythical creature born from the union of the eagle and the lion, it embodies the balance between complementary forces – sky and earth, intellect and strength, vision and roots. A symbol of protection and prestige since ancient times, it represents the very essence of the resort, where tradition and innovation come together.

All of this—ranging from the artworks to the botanical heritage, from the centuries-old olive groves to the experiences offered to visitors—translates into an act of contribution to the Community, expressed in our Legacy to the Future.

A commitment that guides us: to enhance the past, cultivate the present, and make the future better.

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Quinto Ghermandi | h. Mosaico Claternate |
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Igor Mitoraj

SULLA RIVA II



Bronze and marble, 2009

WHERE TO FIND IT

Reception

This significant work depicts a powerful yet incomplete face, evoking a sense of decay and the passage of time that transforms everything. Mitoraj's creations often portray fragmented bodies or faces, symbols of a broken classical beauty infused with reflections on human complexity and fragility, also symbolized here by the square void within the face. The works of the renowned Polish sculptor are often crafted in bronze or marble, and this sculpture belongs to that tradition. The smooth finishes and the interplay of solids and voids create a strong visual impact. His style blends Greco-Roman tradition with a contemporary language. The fragmented figures explore themes such as vulnerability, memory, and identity. Sulla Riva II may represent the relationship between man and nature, or between past and present, inviting viewers to reflect on the human condition.

Quinto Ghermandi

LARGO GESTO

PER UN MASSIMO SPAZIO



Bronze and marble, 1967

WHERE TO FIND IT

At the reception entrance

“Largo gesto per un massimo spazio” is an abstract sculpture created by the Bolognese artist Quinto Ghermandi, a prominent figure of the Informal Art Movement. It is a complete work—one of those rare creations that an artist achieves only a few times in a lifetime. “Largo gesto per un massimo spazio” is a sculpture that the Master always wished to place in a living, authentic environment, not confined within the closed spaces of galleries, expressing his desire to reconnect with the land to which he always felt deeply bound. Through this work, the artist seeks to convey a sense of “imperfection” that lies at the heart of all “grand gestures”—even when these gestures are set within social or personal contexts aimed at helping others. Always with the premise that the idea of the gesture should be understood in a constructive and optimistic light.

Richard MacDonalð

ORFEO



Lucite, 1991

WHERE TO FIND IT

Inside the Aurevo restaurant

A sculpture that blends masterful technique with emotional expressiveness, embodying the legend of the mythical Greek poet and musician. The artwork, crafted in lucite—a material reminiscent of crystal—stands out for its ability to play with light, creating reflections and nuances that enhance its dramatic impact and sense of movement. The figure of Orpheus emerges partially from a raw sculptural mass, almost symbolizing his struggle to break free and transcend human limitations. A distinctive trait of the American figurative artist is the precise anatomical detailing, combined with the ethereal, light quality of the material, conveying a sense of grace and power. The expression on the face and the dynamic posture reveal an intense emotional tension, evoking Orpheus's descent into the Underworld and his desperate attempt to bring his beloved Eurydice back to life—an effort tragically conditioned by the prohibition of looking back.

Bluer

DEEP BLUE

Plexiglass and resin, 2014

WHERE TO FIND IT

At the garden adjacent to the Aurevo Restaurant

The “Deep Blue” monolith by Maestro Bluer is a significant work that merges contemporary art and spirituality. Dominated by a deep blue hue that evokes the infinite vastness of the oceans and the universe, the totem invites introspection and conveys a sense of mystery. The artwork draws inspiration from the iconic “Deep Blue” monolith featured in the film *2001: A Space Odyssey*, which appears at crucial moments in the history and evolution of mankind. The film unfolds from a space mission to investigate a mysterious monolith on the moon, eventually transforming into a cosmic odyssey that transcends time and space, exploring themes such as human evolution, artificial intelligence, and the meaning of human existence. In this work, the Founder of Palazzo di Varignana wished to link a mythological symbol of humanity’s progress to the influence of the genes within us, inherited from our ancestors, wherever they may be—thus inviting reflection on the relationship between humankind and the cosmos.



Eros Mariani

MARCO EMILIO LEPIDO



Bronze, resin and metal, 2009

WHERE TO FIND IT

At the park below Palazzo Bentivoglio

The artwork “Marco Emilio Lepido” by Ozzanese artist Eros Mariani is a sculpture that blends Roman history with a contemporary artistic language. It is inspired by the Roman consul Marco Emilio Lepido, from whom the name of the Emilia region originates. Historically, during his first consulship in 187 BC, Marco Emilio Lepido was tasked with expanding Roman territories in the Po Valley against the Boii Gauls. He later ordered the construction of the Via Aemilia, starting from the Via Flaminia, which already reached Rimini (the sculpture points westward), and connecting it to the Via Postumia in Piacenza. The sculpture combines classical and contemporary elements, exploring themes of power, history, and identity. The face of Lepidus conveys introspection and mystery, inviting viewers to reflect on this historical figure. Among the primary materials used, Mariani chose bronze, a traditional medium for sculpture, which allows for expressive detail and dynamism. The artwork offers an innovative and powerful reinterpretation of a key historical personality.

Eros Mariani

CONTINUATION!



Bronze, resin and metal

WHERE TO FIND IT

At the park below Palazzo Bentivoglio

This sculpture represents a fascinating synthesis of dynamism, lightness, and harmony. Crafted in metal, the artwork is distinguished by its fluid, slender lines that convey a sense of perpetual motion. The stylized figure, suspended in space, appears to reach toward infinity, transcending physical and spiritual boundaries. It evokes a sense of parental legacy, symbolizing the effort of launching one's children into the world so they may soar and carry forward values across generations. The sculpture's elegant curves and minimalist details evoke the idea of continuity. The choice of metal—a material symbolic of both strength and lightness—enhances the contrast between solidity and movement, making the sculpture a perfect representation of the balance between matter and spirit. Positioned in a natural setting, the sculpture seems to interact with the sky and the surrounding landscape.

CAPPELLA PRIVATA



1725

WHERE TO FIND IT

Inside Palazzo Bentivoglio

The Private Chapel of Palazzo Bentivoglio is a true jewel of art and history, encapsulating centuries of tradition and spirituality. Located within the historic complex of the palace, this chapel is an extraordinary example of elegance and refinement, designed to celebrate worship and preserve precious memories. Inside the chapel are two other highly valuable pieces: a representation of the Gregorian Calendar, inspired by the calendar of the Cathedral of Lübeck, which also allowed the identification of Sundays, and an oil painting on canvas depicting Pope Gregory XIII in conversation with the committee of eminent scholars who developed the new calendar based on the discoveries and measurements of Nicolaus Copernicus. The representation of the Gregorian Calendar—created to correct the previous Julian Calendar from Roman times—makes it possible to calculate Sundays and other celestial events through a combination of letters and years across the centuries. The Chapel, with its architectural details and the historical value of the artworks it houses, is not only a place of spiritual contemplation but also a testament to the rich cultural heritage that defines Palazzo di Varignana and its surrounding territory.

OROLOGIO GREGORIANO

Oil on canvas, 2016

WHERE TO FIND IT

Inside Bentivoglio chapel

In 45 BC, Julius Caesar introduced the Julian calendar, which, however, did not account for an additional 11 minutes and 12 seconds in the length of a year. This imprecision resulted in an accumulated delay of one day every 128 years. It was only Pope Gregory XIII—born Ugo Buoncompagni in Bologna in 1502 and elected Pope in 1572—who succeeded in aligning the calendar used throughout the Catholic world with the actual progression of the seasons, and in particular, with the spring equinox. In the revised calendar, March 21 had to correspond with the first full moon observed after the spring equinox, making it easier to determine the following Easter Sunday. In this monumental undertaking, Gregory XIII relied on a committee of the leading scholars of the time, who based their work on the groundbreaking discoveries and measurements of Nicolaus Copernicus, published in 1543 in *De Revolutionibus Orbium Coelestium Libri Sex*. By 1582, the spring equinox had “slipped” by approximately ten days in relation to the calendar. Without corrective action, the equinox would eventually have fallen in August. To restore this alignment, a new calendar was compiled, taking into account the Earth’s orbit around the Sun, calculated at 365 days, 6 hours, 11 minutes, and 12 seconds. Gregory XIII introduced the Gregorian Calendar and made its adoption official with the papal bull *Inter Gravissimas*, issued on February 24, 1582, which also decreed the removal of the ten surplus days from the calendar—so that the date jumped directly from October 5 to October 14. Inside the Chapel of Palazzo Bargellini Bentivoglio, this historic achievement is celebrated through a depiction of Pope Gregory XIII in conversation with the scholars who created the new calendar: the German Jesuit mathematician Christopher Clavius, the Calabrian astronomer and physician Luigi Lilio (known as Aloysius Lilius), the Sicilian mathematician and astronomer Giuseppe Scala, and the Perugian mathematician Ignazio Danti. Also featured are images of the covers of Nicolaus Copernicus’ publications, the papal bull, the translation by Bartholomeo Dionigi, the explanatory treatise by Christopher Clavius, and a photograph of the sculpture of Gregory XIII located on the façade of the Palazzo Comunale in Bologna.



CLATERNA MOSAIC



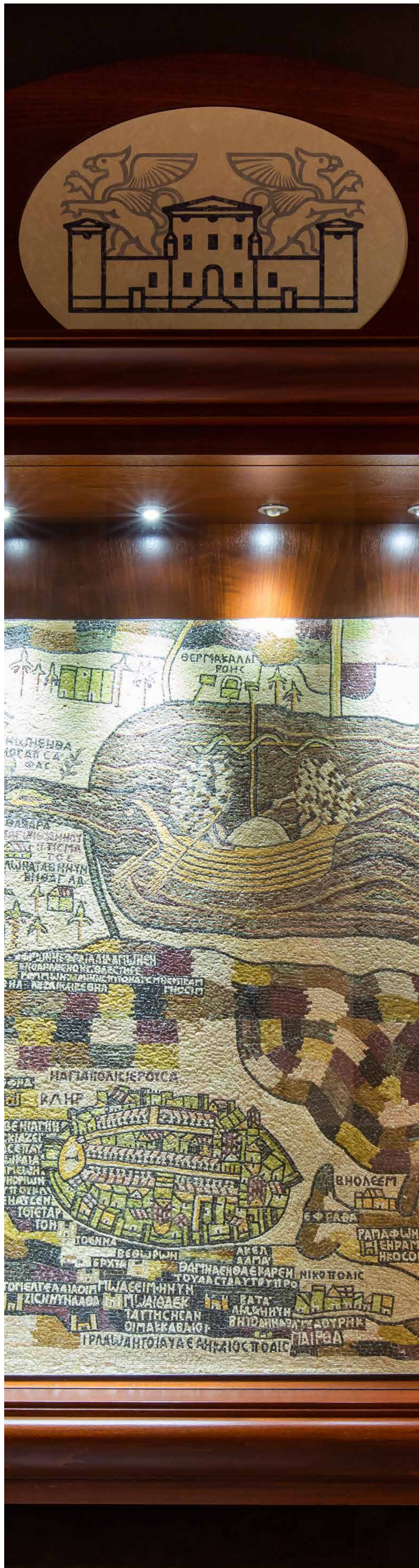
Stone, 1 century b.C.

WHERE TO FIND IT

Inside the congress center foyer

The Claterna Mosaic, on display as a loan from the Superintendency of Fine Arts, dates back to the second half of the 1st century BC. The refined composition of this floor mosaic, discovered in 1898 and partially removed in 1933, remains today the most striking testament to the high standard of living achieved by Claterna during the Augustan age. Claterna, a “buried” city located between Bologna and Imola, in the territory of Ozzano dell’Emilia, was founded in the 2nd century BC. Its initial role was twofold: the city served both as an important road junction and as a hub for trade and services. In the 1st century BC, like many other Italic cities, Claterna became a municipium, with jurisdiction over the vast territory between the Idice and Sillaro streams. The mosaic, crafted with tesserae of white Istrian stone, black Pistoia stone, and various colored marbles, is of exquisite workmanship. On the large mosaic band, featuring a white background bordered in black, unfolds a rich polychrome decoration with a central acanthus tuft and two pairs of flowered volutes on either side.

WUNDERKAMMIER



WHERE TO FIND IT

Inside the congress center foyer

A sense of wonder is undoubtedly the first feeling that greets visitors to the Wunderkammer of Palazzo Bentivoglio—a true “chamber of wonders”, as its name suggests. It was created as a tribute to the historical period in which the Palazzo was built: the Wunderkammern were, in fact, unusual and surprising artistic spaces that, between the 16th and 18th centuries, noble families loved to create within their residences. These rooms were filled with precious and curious objects, designed to astonish and captivate their guests. Along a path that spans various eras and corners of the world, visitors are enchanted by a miscellany of extraordinary works—such as a hand-painted Temple of the Emerald Buddha on a single grain of rice, authentic artifacts from a Roman Domus of the 1st century AD from the nearby archaeological site of Claterna, and finely decorated historical books dating back to the years immediately following the invention of the printing press.

THE CARRIAGE CLASS 1921



Steel, 1921

WHERE TO FIND IT

Adjacent to Palazzo Bentivoglio

An authentic period carriage dated 1921, this is the prototype of the Royal Carriage. The Royal Carriage was inaugurated on the occasion of the wedding of Umberto II, son of King Victor Emmanuel III, and Princess Maria José of Belgium. The reconstruction of its interiors and ceilings reflects the Art Nouveau style of the time, featuring stuccoes, tapestries, and brass decorations. The ceiling is adorned with the coats of arms of the cities crossed by the Royal Carriage during its historic journey. Subsequently, this prototype was used as a first-class railway carriage, part of the FS Az 10,000 series, and was assigned to the most important trains serving the Italian peninsula. Considered one of the most beautiful and functional railway carriages in Europe at the time, this coach embodies a remarkable era of transformation that began in the aftermath of the First World War, when luxury trains reached their peak of elegance and refinement.

LOCOMOTIVE 740.329



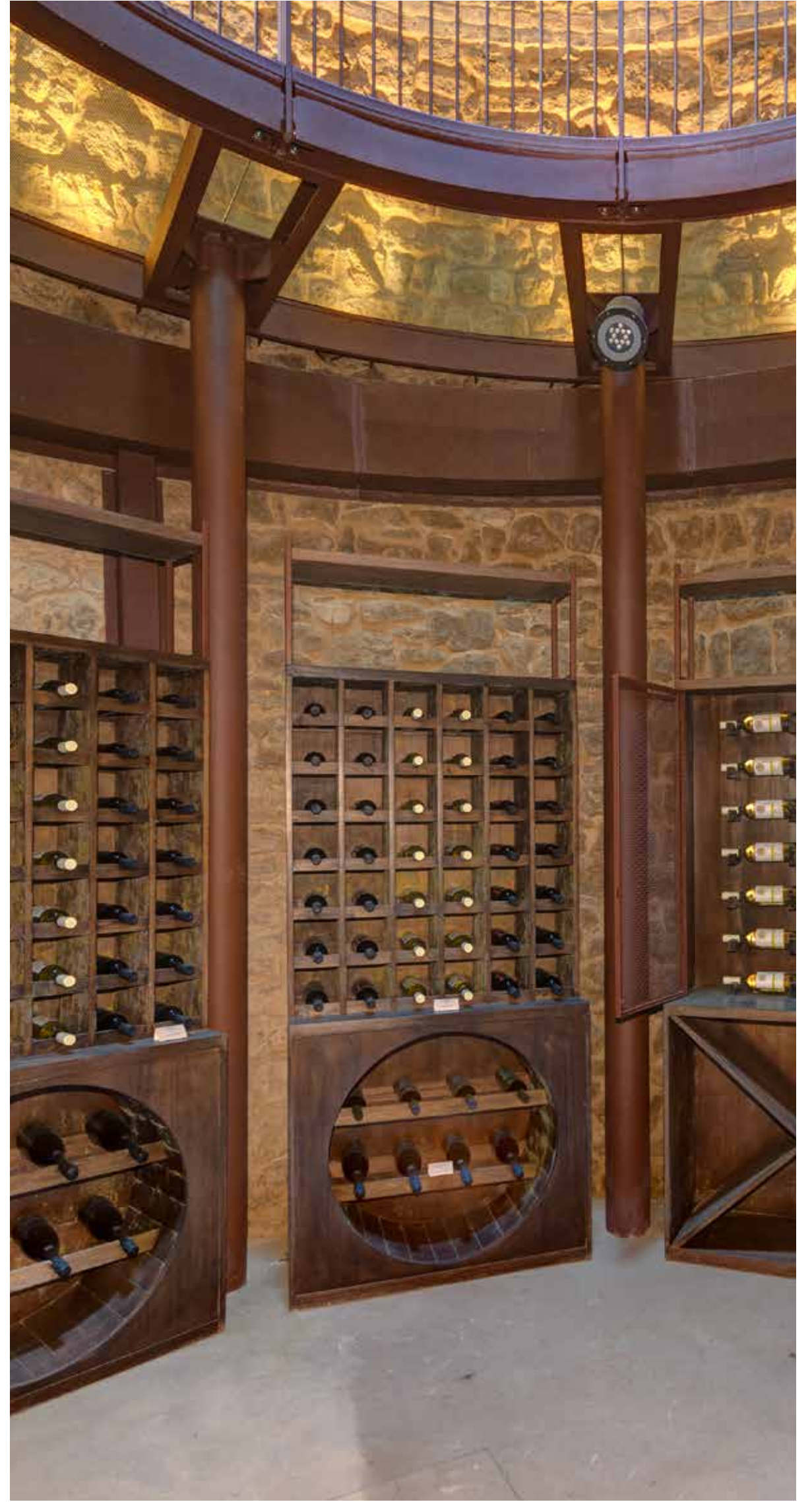
Steel, 1921

WHERE TO FIND IT

Adjacent to Palazzo Bentivoglio

La locomotiva 740.329 con le sue consorelle trainò il Treno Reale e altri convogli di prestigio che avevano al loro interno carrozze speciali riservate ai principi di casa reale. Costruita dalle Officine Meccaniche di Milano, entrò in servizio il 24 Marzo 1921 e viaggiò fino allo scoppio della Seconda Guerra Mondiale soprattutto tra Firenze, la Romagna e il Beneventano, lungo le difficili linee di valico tra la Toscana e l'Adriatico, strategiche per le comunicazioni fra il Nord e il Sud della Penisola e dove altre locomotive a vapore più veloci non riuscivano a salire.

HISTORIC ICEHOUSE



WHERE TO FIND IT

In the underground passageway adjacent to Palazzo Bentivoglio

Historic icehouses, also known as snow pits, were structures used to store packed snow or ice collected during the winter, allowing it to be used in the following seasons to keep food and beverages cool. Their origins date back to the ancient Sumerians, with the first documented evidence recorded in 1780 BC in Terqa. In Italy, as early as Roman times, ice preserved in designated spaces was considered a luxury and used to chill drinks. The earliest documented icehouses in Bologna date back to the 13th century, and some of them are still intact. A significant example is the icehouse at Palazzo di Varignana, where snow was stored through an opening at the top and preserved in a deep pit to keep food fresh.

Davide Dall'Osso

L'ATTESA



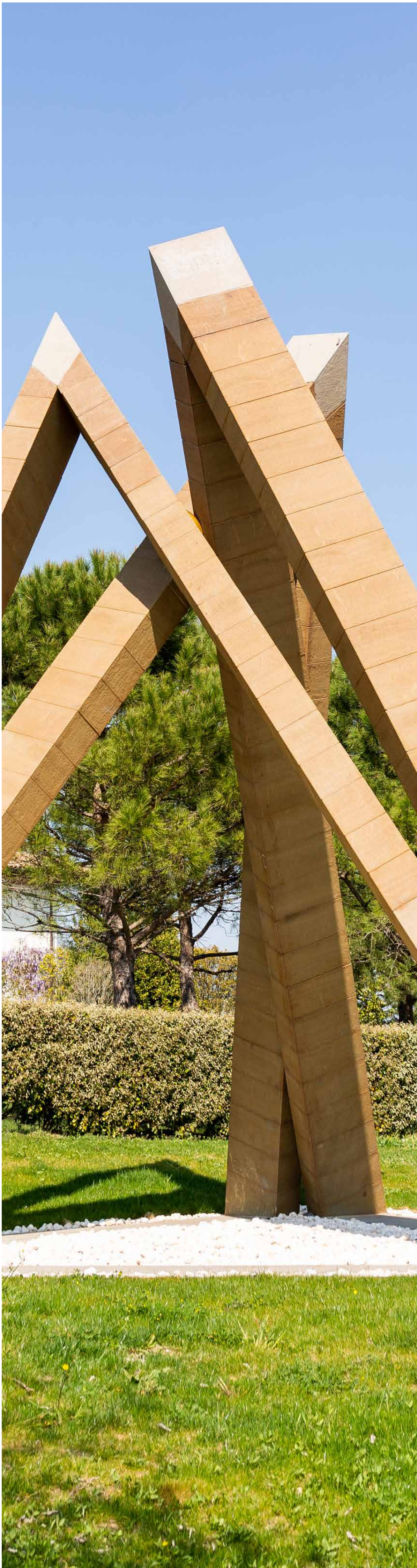
Painted polycarbonate, 2023

WHERE TO FIND IT

Next to the driving range

“L’Attesa” (The Wait) by Davide Dall’Osso is a sculpture that explores the human condition, symbolizing hope, desire, and solitude through the theme of waiting. In his sculptural practice, Dall’Osso works with materials such as polycarbonate and plexiglass, fused into light and dynamic compositions. The artist follows the principles of the circular economy, viewing discarded materials as a resource capable of embarking on a new journey.

TRITTICO



Stone, 2020

WHERE TO FIND IT

Next to the Villa Amagioia entrance

This sculpture was conceived and designed by Carlo Gherardi, the founder of Palazzo di Varignana, and subsequently commissioned for execution to architect Saura Sermenghi. It is not widely known how much we inherit from the past—even the most distant past—and how deeply this influences our thoughts and actions. The number three, regarded as a perfect number, and the triangle are important esoteric symbols in human history and act as symbolic catalysts of evolution. The intersection of the three triangles, all pointing towards the sky, amplifies the idea of transmitting our earthly heritage—of thoughts and deeds—toward the mystery of the universe to which we are intrinsically connected. The three triptychs in Varignana, aligned one after the other in an ascending progression toward the sky, expand this vision. They are clearly visible from the Triptych of Villa Amagioia up to the summit of the hill where Villa Santa Maria Maddalena stands.

LANDSCAPE ART



WHERE TO FIND IT

Around Villa Amagioia

The Garden of Palazzo di Varignana, part of the prestigious Grandi Giardini Italiani Collection, is distinguished by its Italian-style garden layout, featuring themed plant “rooms,” low walls, terraces, stairways, and fountains. It also includes a remarkable oak collection, composed of 100 trees belonging to 76 different oak species, and a collection of 30 fig varieties. This botanical treasure—one of Italy’s most significant specific tree collections—invites guests to immerse themselves in the beauty and harmony of nature and to experience the beneficial power of the five senses, essential to psychophysical well-being. Beyond a pergola of ornamental apple trees and roses, visitors reach the plant labyrinth, designed by landscape architect Sandro Ricci, who in 2015 envisioned the harmonious integration of the garden with the existing 20-hectare park. Not to be missed are the Amphitheatre on the Lake, a natural stage nestled among the vineyards and a splendid example of land restoration, and the Avenue of Ancient Olive Trees, where centuries-old olive trees—silent witnesses of time—accompany visitors along a path that offers a sense of peace and a deep connection to the land.

