

Common Areas

Stairway and Entry Hall on the Via Santo Spirito side

This marvelous red Verona marble staircase, the second of two areas of significant architectural intervention by the Bagatti Valsecchi brothers in this building, was an afterthought. As they finished the refurbishing of their fine home in the princely Neo-Renaissance style around 1883, they decided to build a monumental principal entrance reflecting the new importance of the home and their family. In order to construct the staircase, finished around 1885, they purchased the small adjacent house—in this ever chic, but normal, neighborhood—of the Adami widow, Marietta Zucchi. Facing the stairs is a 1493 **altarpiece**, an intriguing mixture of sculpture and painting by Giovanni, Bernardo and Antonio Marinoni from Desenzano on the Lombard side of Lake Garda. The fine Lombard sideboard underneath it is topped with three eighteenth century vases from Pavia.

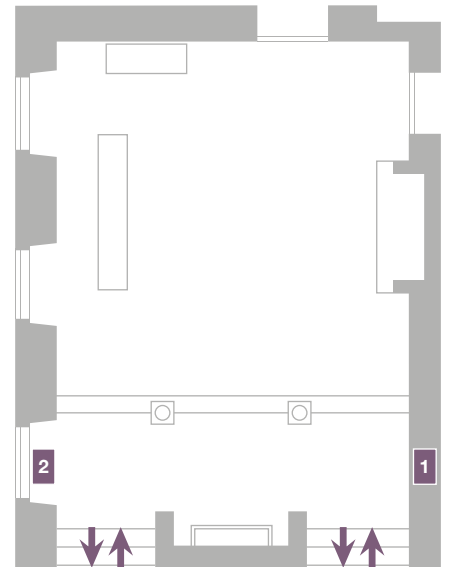
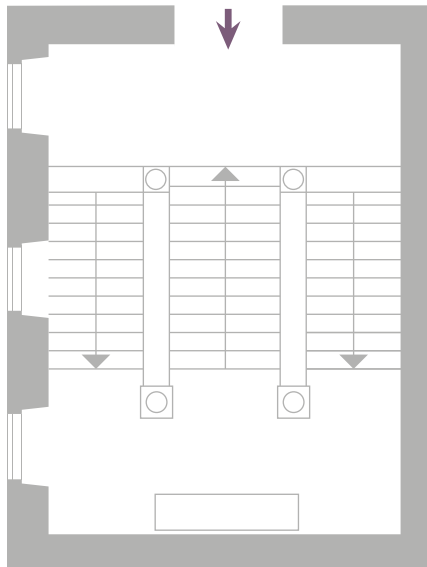
The entrance hall on the ground floor, like the one on the via Gesù side, was heated only for effect by a large **fireplace**. In actual fact, the brothers had hot air central heating installed in the whole house. Renaissance fragments, such as spirals and putti, were assembled by the brothers to create the fireplace. Similarly, the precious **stained glass window** dated 1511 that portrays S. Stephen was created by a master glass craftsman based on designs attributed to a Lombard painter, but the surrounding areas were added in the late nineteenth century to make it fit the pre-existing niche. Opposite the stained glass window is a marble statue of the **Madonna and Child**, a product of sixteenth century Sicily that adheres to the iconography of Our Lady of Trapani. The **ceiling** of the portico is painted with frescoes recalling those in the “Grotto” of Isabella d’Este in Mantua, in which she met with friends to view her art collection, and talk about cultural topics, a subtle signal to the brothers’ erudite guests of the delights that were awaiting them.

On climbing upstairs again towards the museum entrance, the visitor is met by an inscription over the door leading back into the Study:

“AMICIS SEMPER LIBENS PATEBO”

/ always will open with joy to friends

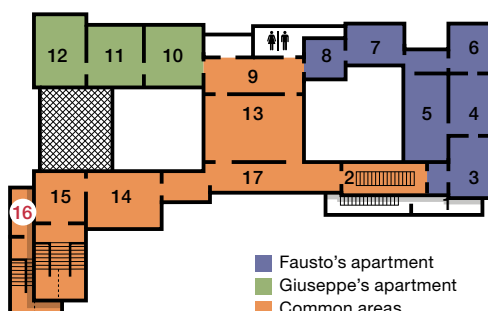
a welcome that recalls the one over the door leading into Fausto’s quarters. Such was the reception with which the Bagatti Valsecchi brothers met their friends, and with which the museum greets its visitors, today.



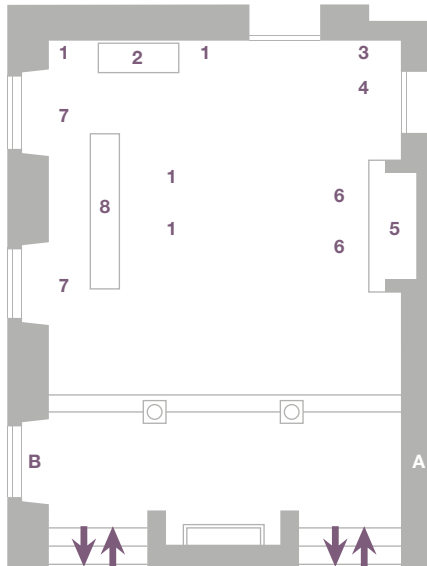
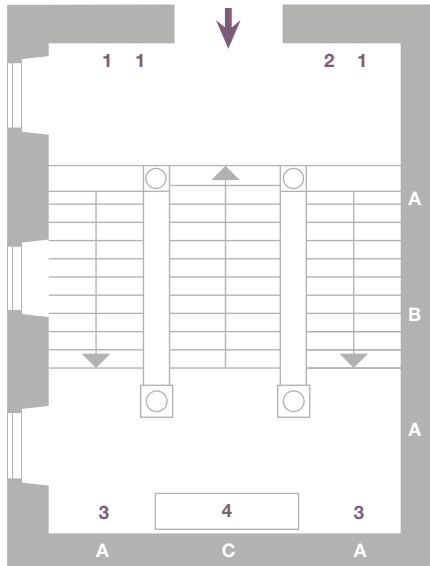
HIGHLIGHTS

ENTRY HALL

- 1 **Madonna and Child**, marble statue, Sicily, late 15th C
- 2 **S. Stephen**, stained glass, master Lombard craftsman based on a drawing by a Lombard painter (perhaps Bernardo Zenale), dated 1511. The lunette and edges were added in 1885 by Pompeo Bertini (1829-1899)



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on the Via Santo Spirito side

ON THE VIA SANTO SPIRITO - STAIRWAY

- 1 Three walnut and leather seats, Liguria, 16th-17th C (n.120,121,122)
- 2 Leather and walnut seat, with flower-shaped studs, northern Italy (?), early 17th C (n.123)
- 3 Two wooden seats in walnut and maple with scroll backs, northern Italy, late 19th C with 16th C fragments (n.116,117)
- 4 Walnut sideboard in two parts with daisy decorations, northern Italy, late 16th- and late 19th centuries (n.95)
On top of the sideboard:
· three majolica vases with narrative scenes, Pavia 1st half of the 18th C (n.443,456,454)

On the walls:

- A SS. John the Baptist, Bartholomew, Anthony Abbot, and Ambrose, panel paintings, Master of the S. Anthony Abbot Triptych at Maggianico (?), first half of the 16th C (n.1034,1035,1036,1037)
- B Polyptych:
in the center: **Madonna and Child**,
at the sides: **SS. Lawrence and Stephen**,
in the pinnacle: **The Holy Father**,
at the sides: **The Annunciation**,
in the predella: **Apostles and Saints**, panel paintings, Lombardy, first half of the 16th C (n.1032)
- C Polyptych:
in the center: **S. John the Baptist**, wooden statue;
above: **The Virgin Mary**, wooden statue;
at the sides, below: **SS. Peter and George, Sebastian and Paul**,
above: **SS. Bernardino of Siena and Anthony Abbot, Mary Magdalene and Catherine of Siena**;
in the predella: **The Twelve Apostles**;
in the pilasters: **Four Saints**, panel paintings by Giovanni, Bernardo and Antonio Marinoni of Desenzano al Serio, dated 1493 and signed (n.1031)

ENTRY HALL

- 1 Four walnut chairs with scroll-motif backs, Lombardy or Venice (?), mid 17th C (n.110, 111, 112, 113)
- 2 Walnut chest with a coat-of-arms carved into the center of the front, Italy, early 18th-late 19th C (n.99)
- 3 Walnut clothes hook (n.96)
- 4 Walnut chair with double strip back (n.107)

On the walls:

- A **Madonna and Child**, marble statue, Sicily, late 15th C (n.966)
- B **S. Stephen**, stained glass, master Lombard craftsman based on a drawing by a Lombard painter (perhaps Bernardo Zenale), dated 1511. The lunette and edges were added in 1885 by Pompeo Bertini (1829-1899) (n.1054)

5 Fireplace

- pair of iron firedogs, Italy, 18th C (n.401,402)
 - a set of four fire irons (n.575,576,577,342)
- 6 Two "Savonarola" chairs, Italy, late 19th C with 16th C fragments (n.114,115)
 - 7 Two richly carved walnut chairs, Lombardy or north-western Italy, mid 17th C (n.118, 119)
 - 8 Walnut bench with turned and carved baluster back, Italy, late 19th C with 16th C fragments (n.98)