

«*A living encyclopaedia*».  
*The Kingdom of Italy to  
 the International Exhibition  
 of 1862*

by Matilde Casati

The Kingdom of Italy, shortly after his political-territorial unification, participated at the *International Exhibition* held in London in 1862 and so made its debut on the international stage. The first Italian national exhibition, held in Florence in 1861, was for the Kingdom of Italy a sort of 'dress rehearsal' to strengthen the image of the new Nation in view of the Londoner event. As the *Great Exhibition* (London, 1851), the first universal exhibition, the *International Exhibition* of 1862 was organized as «a living encyclopaedia», but compared with the previous one, the belief in progress was not so unconditional. In the article the author examines the contribution of the Italian kingdom to the English exhibition of 1862 through contemporary sources, and highlights the expectations of the Italian government and the results obtained, especially considering the applied and figurative arts.

*The National Italian Exhibition  
 in Florence, 1861: purchases  
 of Vittorio Emanuele II between  
 Fine Arts and Applied Arts*

by Linda Coppi

Visiting the first, held in Florence in 1861, Vittorio

Emanuele II purchased several objects, furniture, paintings, works of art. He didn't follow a precise line but decided not to create a clear separation with tradition both in the Palace of Turin and in that of Florence, giving continuity to the taste of his predecessors. All these elements come together in a strange *mélange* of opulence and splendor. Archival documents have given the possibility to know what and how many items were bought by the King and to identify those still preserved in many different places.

*Artists and critics at the  
 florentine Exhibitions, 1861*

by Valentina Gensini

The essay examines the role of the National Exhibition inaugurated in the Stazione Leopolda in Florence, on 14th September 1861, related to the contemporary Guastalla Exhibition for Applied Arts. The upgrade of the event from regional to national perspective confirmed the image of Florence, dear to the eighteenth-century travellers, as the Athens of Italy, anticipating the age in which Florence would become the political capital. The Unitary State seized the cosmopolitan image of Florence, using its Mediaeval and Renaissance identity: new cultural and aesthetic references (Dante's iconography for the works of Giuseppe Bezzuoli, Enrico Pollastrini, and Della

Valle brothers) and appropriate moral paradigms (manifest in the work of Luigi Mussini) revived the humanistic myth and build the identity of the new Nation-State. The essay undertakes an analysis of the three generations of artists who faced up at the Exhibition: the neoclassical academics, the purists and the young Macchiaioli, open to reality.

*Giovanni Panti, painter  
 in the years of Florence capital*

by Laura Hamad

At the end of the 19th century, the painter Giovanni Panti played an important role in the diffusion of exotic decoration in Tuscany. After many important commissions in Perugia, his hometown, such as the decoration of the Provincia Palace, where he experimented many different styles according to his eclectic education, he became a specialist in moorish decoration, thanks to the careful study of Owen Jones, *Grammar of Ornament*. The decoration of the Great Synagogue of Florence can be considered one of the most representative examples of interest in oriental style widespread in Italy and in Europe.

*The glasses of Vittorio Emanuele II  
 of Savoy, King of Italy between  
 tradition and innovation*

by Silvia Ciappi

The Exposition of National

Agricultural Products and Industrial and Fine Arts held in Florence in 1861 gathered together countless glass objects, both Venetian and Tuscan. Some were purchased by King Vittorio Emanuele II to decorate the Royal apartments in Palazzo Pitti. The publication of Medieval and Renaissance treaties has been central to rediscovery of ancient and forgotten techniques. Through publication of ancient treaties it was possible to bring to light ancient techniques and to proceed with restoration of churches' windows. Savoy family renewed Italian cultural and economic policy and attracted interest in the art of glassmaking, which combined technical and stylistic tradition with modern innovation introduced by industrial machinery and chemical science.

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*An old Lyonnais fabric for the new apartments of Vittorio*

*Emanuele II in the palazzina della Meridiana, in Florence*

by Gioele Tinnirello

Thanks to the discovery in the of a few swatches (Archivio di Stato in Florence) of French fabric intended for the furnishing of the Palazzo della Meridiana in the early 1830s, a new episode in the history of the Palazzo Pitti has unfolded. This research investigates both the manufacture and purchase of the fabric by *Maison Peyron Frères* in Lyon, completed in 1833, and the subsequent reuse of just one of those textiles to decorate the palazzina della Meridiana, where King Vittorio Emanuele II was going to live.

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*Imitations and replicas in armors and weapons in the nineteenth century*

by Eleonora Tozzi

In the nineteenth century, gentlemen, poets, writers and

artists were attracted by the literary image of Florence and by its historical past. In this context, armor and weapons had an important role to make interiors of the palaces and castles similar to those of a dreamed image. In another case, the sword, made by Gaetano Guidi in 1865 and exhibited in *Esposizione dantesca*, was an opportunity to communicate political and patriotic concepts.

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*The Three Graces Group between Republic and Roman Empire*

by Daniele Manacorda

The debate about nature, author and chronology of the famous *Three Graces Group* is still open. One possible creation of the sculpture in relationship to the restoration of the *Nymphae Temple* in Rome after the fire in the years of Caesar is discussed. That marble Group could have inspired Aphrodite's cult statue of in *Aphrodisias*.