



A great interpreter of Italian Liberty

Villa Galimberti, the Liberty mansion par excellence of Stresa, is a work by Giuseppe Sommaruga (Milan, 1867-1917), one of the protagonists of Italian Liberty. A student of the architect Camillo Boito at the Brera Academy in Milan, he participated in exhibitions and competitions, putting himself in the spotlight and satisfying the taste of the rich bourgeoisie - especially the Milanese and Lombard one - which was indeed his main client.

Moving away from the nineteenth-century historicist school, Sommaruga looked at modern international architectural currents and interpreted their spirit with a personal style. He preferred imposing shapes, built on a play of volumes, and animated the surfaces with various materials (stone, cement, brick, ceramic, glass) and with decorative features rich in plastic and chiaroscuro effects, harmoniously inserted into the architecture; there, it is possible to recognize the motifs of Liberty and that tendency to eclecticism typical of the era.

His work portfolio includes palaces, villas and city flats, holiday villas, funerary monuments, tourist complexes and pavilions for exhibitions.

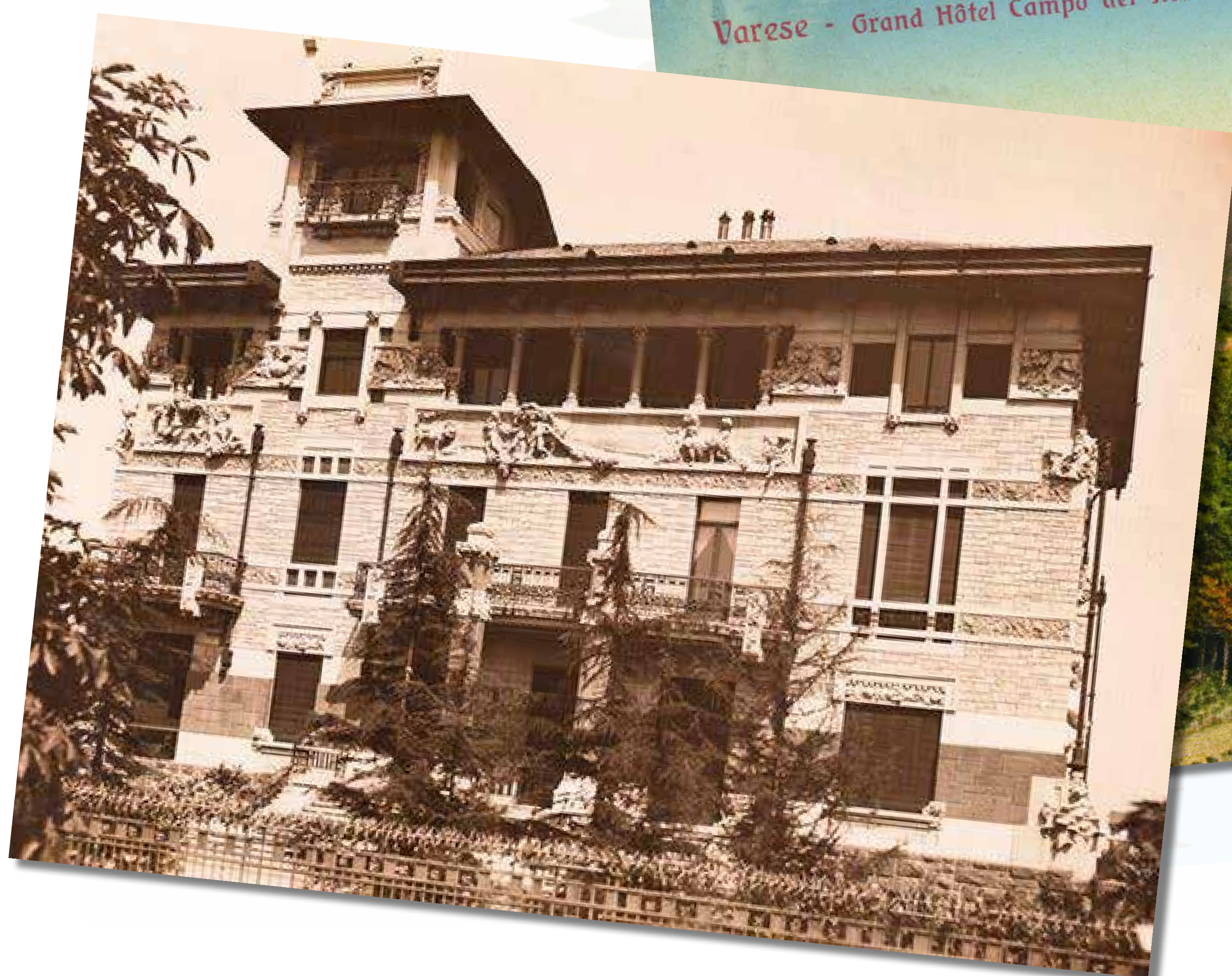
The 'Manifesto' of the Milanese Liberty is Palazzo Castiglioni (1900-1903), with its sumptuous and fanciful facade, in which the brilliant combination of hewn stone, stone slabs and figures of putti, flowers, leaves and relief ribbons creates an effect of vigorous, dynamic plasticity. At the entrance of the building there were two female statues by Ernesto Bazzaro which, judged scandalous, were removed and then placed in Villa Faccanoni, another unmistakable creation of the architect (1911-1913) later purchased by Romeo (owner of the famous automaker); the building today is the 'Columbus' nursing home. The architect Sommaruga worked, between 1907 and 1912, for the Faccanoni family in Sarnico on Lake Iseo, one of the places of Italian Liberty.

Another masterpiece on Lake Maggiore, in addition to Villa Galimberti, is Villa Carosio, built in Baveno in 1908-1909, an example of balance between invention, sumptuousness and elegance.

Between 1908 and 1913 Sommaruga built hotel complexes near Varese (Colle Campigli and Campo dei Fiori), reachable by funicular railway.



Varese - Grand Hôtel Campo dei Fiori e panorama

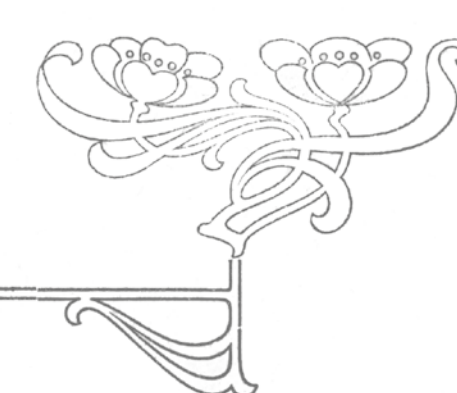
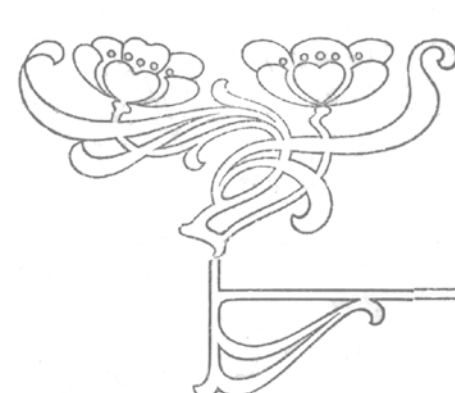


A sinistra: Villa Faccanoni-Romeo, oggi clinica Columbus, Milano.

Sopra: Palazzo Castiglioni a Milano.

Al centro: Villa Carosio a Baveno.

Sotto: il Grand Hôtel Campo dei Fiori, sovrastante Varese.



English

