



The word **STRESA** with the lake and the Regina Palace Hôtel in the background, in a refined interpretation by the illustrator Fortunato Tami (1875–1942)



STRESA
from the lake,
engraving by F.
Tami, creator of
all the exquisite
decorative
elements in
the magazine
“Verbania”
(1909–
1912)



A new way to speak to the world

Graphic arts during the Art Nouveau years reached the highest forms of expression: the sinuous, flowing line—at once dynamic and elegant—became the true emblem of the style, ideally suited to rendering on paper all manner of scrolls and decorations, flowers and leaves, bird feathers and butterfly wings, flowing hair and soft feminine garments, as well as a great variety of typographic characters with refined ornamental impact, in perfect harmony with vibrant compositions. Colours, also due to the mechanical reproduction techniques of the time, tended to be compact, with limited shading. Illustrators ranged from celebrated artists to humble printers, just as the range of printed material varied, reflecting how deeply the style had permeated contemporary taste.

In publishing—then undergoing a complete transformation—books featured artistic, eye-catching covers, elegant borders, and illustrations fully integrated into the text according to a precise graphic plan, as seen in the novel *Le Parfum des Iles Borromées* by René Boylesve.

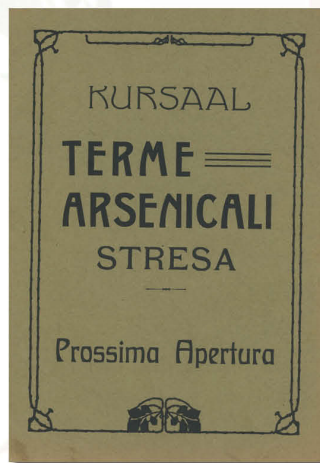
Musical scores, too, reveal this aesthetic sophistication, evident in the many specimens from the villa of Maestro Giovanni Anfossi in Alpino. With their colourful covers and graceful curved lines, they were also elegant objects to be displayed in libraries and salons where music was part of everyday life. Graphic arts also found expression in newspapers, magazines, and travel guides, in posters, playbills, and postcards promoting events, advertising hotels, restaurants, cafés, and businesses, or providing practical information to tourists (timetables, transport), and even in luggage labels and menus. This abundant material offers, for Stresa, a vivid cross-section of the culture, society, and economy of the time.

In 1910, the First Art Exhibition of Stresa was held in the new—now lost—complex of the “Kursaal” and “Thermes” (located between “La Palazzola” and the Roddo stream), a space devoted to music, culture, sport, leisure, and wellness. The poster, created by the Stresa-born painter Luigi Bolongaro (1874–1915), depicts two young women’s faces in a classical style, in front of a pergola that opens onto the lake.

The work, in the strength of its drawing and its use of lines and contours, clearly reflects the graphic vocabulary of Art Nouveau.



The 1st Art Exhibition in Stresa (1910), promoted with a “poster” by the painter Luigi Bolongaro



The countless means of communication through which the graphic arts express themselves with the elegance and imagination of the Art Nouveau style



L'inaugurazione del Kursaal.
Stresa oggi è festante inaugurandosi il grandioso Kursaal.
Il banchetto al quale sono invitati il Prefetto, le autorità e la stampa, avrà luogo all'Hotel des Iles Borromées.
La Vedetta è pure rappresentata.

7 May 1910: inauguration of the Kursaal of Stresa in an article from *La Vedetta*

