



Legance

A BRIEF HISTORY OF
PALAZZO LEGANCE



Edited by
Legance - Avvocati Associati

Bibliography
F. Reggiori, Palazzo Aliverti a Milano, Milano 1967

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On the cover and next page: View of Palazzo Legance
from inside the main courtyard, as it appears today.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF **PALAZZO LEGANCE**

Our Milanese offices are situated at **Via Broletto 20, 22**, in a building dating back to the second half of the sixteenth century, which, before becoming Palazzo Legance, was historically known as **Palazzo Aliverti**. It was a typical "nobleman's house" which Castopolimio Aliverti da Como, a wealthy cloth merchant, wanted to build in Milan. The history of the building can be summarised in a few fundamental stages that have modified and characterised the structure and architecture over the centuries.



Page 4 and 5: The "buildings" in Milan at numbers 20 and 22, that already constituted the ancient Palazzo Aliverti, as they appeared in 1961.



1560

In **1560**, **messer Aliverti** bought the building from the previous owners, the Massonerii brothers, after having lived there for thirteen years. Aliverti's aim was to rebuild, decorate, and embellish the building with artistic and architectural elements that can still be seen today, not only at the premises on Via Broletto, 20, but also at the adjacent ones on Via Broletto, 22. At that time the building already featured late fifteenth-century themes and structures, with fine decorations in marble and terracotta which became an integral part of the rebuilding project supported by Aliverti.

During these years, the building started to take on the appearance we see today: a façade with ashlar-framed windows on the ground floor, the main courtyard with a Doric columned portico, a first-floor colonnaded loggia surrounded by Ionic columns and windows, and the garden at the back.

The reception rooms, our current meeting rooms located on the ground floor, underwent major artistic renovation following Aliverti's intervention. Firstly, carved wooden ceilings were added in the three frescoed rooms – the rooms we have named *Affreschi* (Frescoes), *Cavaliere* (Knight), and *Fenice* (Phoenix). These ceilings survived up to 1890. Then, the three sides of the main courtyard were covered with coffered ceiling, which is the only part that has come to us in its original form. Subsequently, the walls of the reception rooms were embellished with frescoes which are believed to be the work of the Campi brothers, who were very active in Milan in the second half of the sixteenth century. The frescoes feature mainly architectural decorations in all of the rooms, in keeping with the external architecture of the building, and particularly in the *Affreschi* Room, which is divided perfectly into two, a lower and an upper section, where panels alternate with forward-facing caryatids. The images inside the panels are of the most

~1660

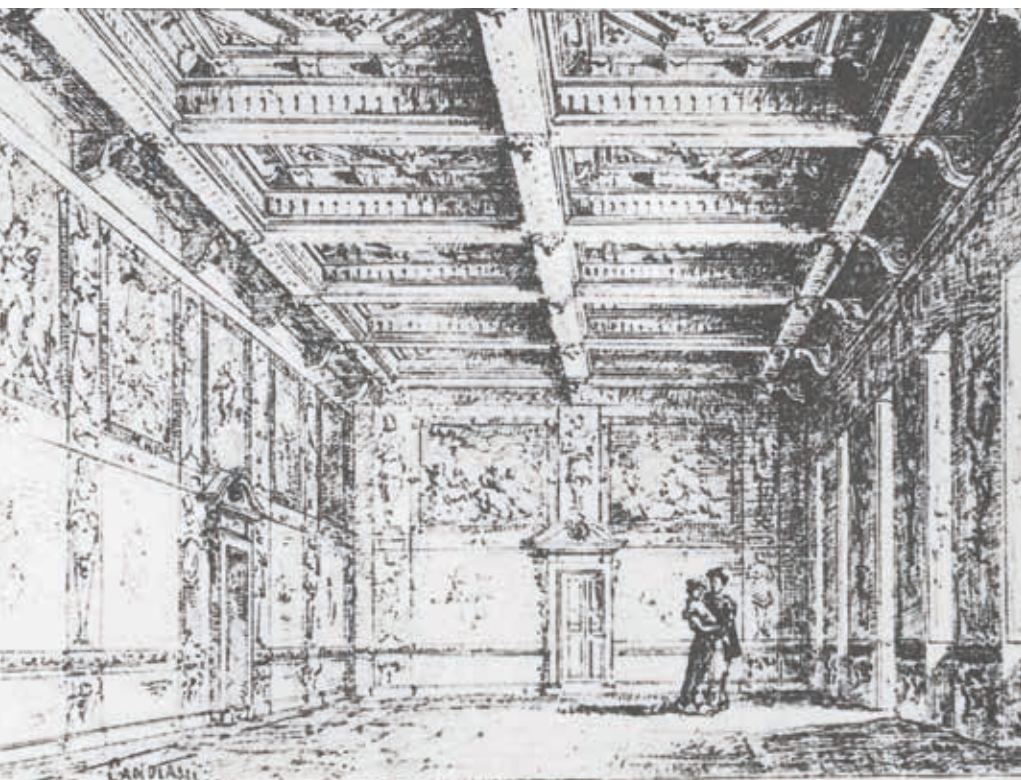
varied, ranging from sacred to mythological, including scenes, in the upper section, of the owner and his family.

In the *Cavaliere* Room the walls are finely decorated with architectural motifs. This room is divided perfectly into three sections; the lower section features caryatids showing real people, probably portraits of the Aliverti family (the frame of the portrait can still be seen today). The upper section is decorated with real life scenes representing the owner, and in particular, his textile business. Lastly, all the walls of the room feature figurative elements with recurrent themes. The frescoes in both rooms date back to the second half of the sixteenth century and were part of an artistic project where Aliverti was the patron and the inspiration behind it.

Roughly a century later, the heirs of Aliverti sold the building to the **Colombo family who came from Segrate** (Genoese bankers who bought the title of Marquesses of Segrate), and who remained the owners of the building until the end of the **eighteenth century**. During these years, the building did not undergo any major architectural change, except for a few Baroque decorations which have now been lost. The only element that remains with us is the family crest, which is currently displayed under the central window in the main courtyard.

1857

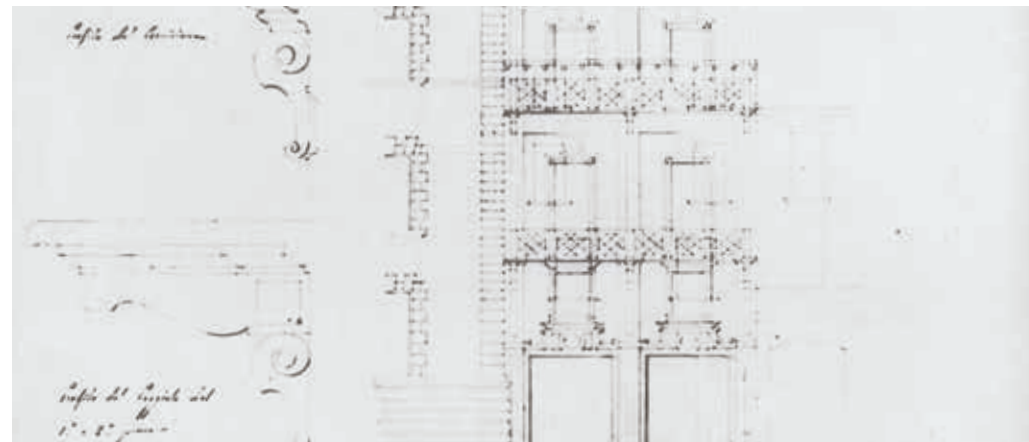
In **1857**, the building was inherited by **Beltramoli**, a Milanese grain merchant who promoted new structural changes to the premises located at Via Broletto, 22. The project promoted by Beltramoli gave rise to a brand-new complex, a new stately three-storey building, adjacent to the Via Broletto, 20 premises, that became an integral part of the existing building. During these years, the building located in the courtyard at no. 22 started to take shape; it was probably a "workshop" used as a warehouse.



Page 8: Graphical reconstruction of the largest hall on the ground floor of Palazzo Aliverti, presented at the Esposizione Nazionale di Milano in 1881 by the artist Giuseppe Candiani.

The decorations on the walls feature imaginary themes.

Page 9: An initial project by the architect Zuccari to improve the front right hand section of the sixteenth-century Palazzo Aliverti; 1856, which was not approved.



1880

In **1880**, when Beltramoli died, the building was taken over by the Congregation of the Sisters of Charity, who sold it in the same year to **Giuseppe Carones**, a wealthy individual of the Milanese bourgeoisie, who remained the owner of the building for the following twenty years. During these years, most of the treasures of the building were transferred to the Museo d'Arte Municipale di Milano or sold to antique dealers and collectors, including, for example, the coffered ceilings of the three frescoed rooms. The only coffered ceiling that has survived to the present day is the one which was located in the *Affreschi* Room that was originally sold to a German collector and then later sold to the Museum of the Castello Sforzesco, where you can still admire it today.



The main courtyard with its Doric columned portico and carved coffered ceiling.
In the centre, the sculpture *"La ruota del tempo"*, 2006, by the artist Giovanna Bolognini.
Above, the loggia with Ionic columns.

1961

When Giuseppe Carones died, the building passed to his heirs, the Tomegno family, who ran a successful textile business, and who sold it to **Mediocredito Regionale Lombardo** in **1961**. Mediocredito Regionale Lombardo bought the building without knowing its importance for Milanese history and art. At that time, many of the sixteenth-century paintings were hidden underneath the walls, and the building was not subject to any cultural heritage restraints. The building then underwent major restoration which was carried out by an archaeologist and architect named **Ferdinando Reggiori**; albeit radical, the restoration was at the same time respectful. The restoration, which began in the spring of 1963, brought all the artistic and architectural sixteenth-century elements to light. With the desire to enhance these assets, the promoters of the restoration aimed to preserve the original project as much as possible, bringing together the two portions of Palazzo Aliverti - the premises at no. 20 and those at no. 22 -, maintaining the original architecture with the double colonnades and the internal courtyard, and also recovering all the artistic material contained in the frescoed rooms that had survived through the years. This was achieved in the *Affreschi* Room and in the *Cavaliere* Room. Unfortunately with regards

2018

to the *Fenice* Room, the original frescoes could not be recovered, so a series of fresco paintings were bought and relocated from their original location in Varese by the heirs of Luigi Conconi, a Milanese artist, who was a member of the Scapigliatura, an artistic and literary movement that developed in northern Italy in the 1860s.

During these years, the building located in the courtyard on Via Broletto, 22 was demolished and entirely rebuilt, thus giving rise to a five-storey building connected directly through the external courtyard to the main building. Apart from the lowering of the garden level, the actual appearance of the building is mainly the result of these works, which were completed in 1966.

Today the building houses the Milanese offices of Legance. In addition to the offices which occupy both buildings on Via Broletto, 20 and 22, it also has eleven meeting rooms and an auditorium to host special events. The auditorium is located on the *Piano Giardino* (Garden Floor) and is dedicated to the memory of Rosella Antonucci, one of our valued partners who unfortunately passed away a few years ago.



View of the *Piano Giardino* (Garden Floor) overlooking some of the meeting rooms.

Details of the *Affreschi* Room, as it appears today.



The meeting rooms are located between the *Piano Giardino* (Garden Floor), the *Piano Broletto* (Broletto Floor), and the fourth floor. The names of the rooms have been chosen with the aim of recalling the history of the building, paying homage to its historical context and the people who lived there, while respecting the identity of the building. In particular, the rooms located on the *Piano Broletto* (Broletto Floor), called *Aliverti*, *Colombo* and *Massoneri*, and the *Campi* Room on the *Piano Giardino* (Garden Floor) are all named after the people who lived in the building and somehow left an indelible mark of their presence.

The *San Tomaso* Room on the *Piano Broletto* (Broletto Floor), the *Clerici* Room and the *Bossi* Room on the *Piano Giardino* (Garden Floor), and finally, the *Altana* Room on the fourth floor recall the urban context to which Via Broletto belongs, a historical and central street in the heart of Milan. The building is situated between San Tomaso Church, on the other side of Via Broletto, and Via dei Bossi, Via Clerici, and Palazzo Clerici on the south-west side. The *Altana* Room overlooks the south-west side, with a view of the eighteenth-century tower (*Altana*) of Palazzo Clerici.

Finally, the names of the frescoed rooms have reference to the images contained in the relevant frescoes: the knight on the right wall of the *Cavaliere* Room, the magnificent phoenix painted on the vault ceiling of the room with the same name, and all of the magnificent frescoes that cover all the walls of the *Affreschi* Room.

View of the *Affreschi* Room, as it appears today.



1560

Aliverti bought the building from the previous owners, the Massonerii brothers

1961

Mediocredito Regionale Lombardo renovated the building

1857

Beltramoli promoted new structural changes to the premises on Via Broletto, 22

1880

Giuseppe Carones sold the treasures of the building

~1660

The Colombo Family from Segrate were the owners up to the end of the 18th century

2018

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