

NEW SERIES / ISSUE 6 / APRIL 2015

ALTE VITRIE

L'ARTE DEL VETRO E DINTORNI

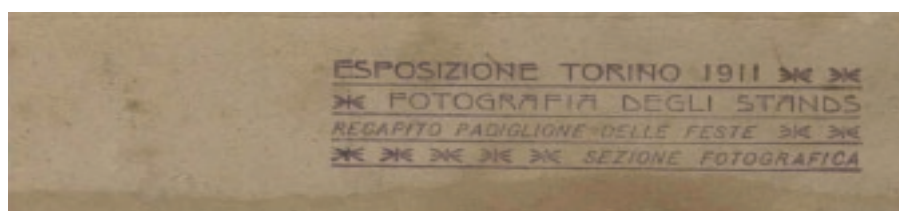


In the same year Italy hosts the "Expo Milano 2015" we devote the cover page to a recent photograph found in the Specialised Library of the Museo dell'Arte Vetraria Altarese showing what the Società Artistico-Vetraria di Altare decided to display at the International Exposition in Turin in 1911. The Exposition hosted the Società Artistico-Vetraria di Altare in the "Glass and Ceramic factories of everyday and luxurious items" section. On that occasion, the glass masters from Altare, besides participating in the section devoted to "Cooperation and Social Security", also displayed several items, ranging from kitchen to chemistry tools, and especially "gigantic" vases meant for shops. The Società was awarded the Grand Prix thanks to a large white vase blown in a wooden mould that was produced by Pietro Negri, Oreste Saroldi e Vico Bormioli and was cold cut by Angelo Tortarolo. It had the typical shape of those produced in Altare but its oversize dimensions made it special, i.e. more than one meter high and a



weight of nearly thirteen kilos. Its base rests on a stand in the shape of an upside down cup and the lid sports a large knob with a starry brim. It is an imposing and refined article also found in the catalogue of 1913, which tells us that it used to be industrially produced. The large glass and wood case especially manufactured for its display has remarkable inlaid friezes reminiscent of the Liberty Style. The name of the Coop is in gilded letters and the coat of arms of the Savoy family is inlaid in the four top corners. This case was previously placed in the factory offices until the business went bankrupt and the case was then purchased by the Comune of Altare together with the collection that was going to become the core of the Museum of the Glass Art of Altare. Nowadays, after a hundred years from the manufacturing days, the museum collection still displays the "Glass Giants".

Giulia Musso





opposite page:
Big show vase, called the
"giant", winner of the Grand
Prix at the International
Exposition of Turin in 1911,
MAV

opposite page, below:
backside of the photograph of
the items displayed by S.A.V.
at the International Exposition
of Turin in 1911, Specialised
Library MAV

side:
"A mount for Lorens", drawing
by Simone Bagnati, produced
by Pino Signoretto for "Il vetro
nella scuola" (glass in schools)

below:
"Norwegian house", drawing
by Giovanni Del Moro, produced
by Silvia Levenson for "Il vetro
nella scuola" (glass in schools)

last page:
Museo del Cristallo,
Colle Val d'Elsa (SI)

last page, below:
crystal engraved glass,
Museo del Cristallo,
Colle Val d'Elsa (SI)

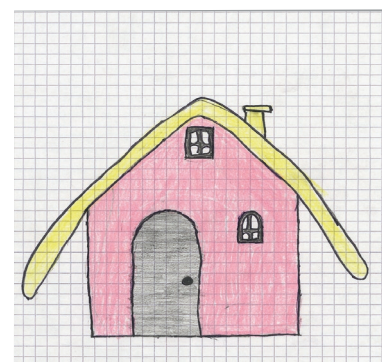
THE "GLASS IN SCHOOLS" PROJECT

A passion for glass is a subject that can be taught. The project "Glass in Schools", for the first section of the secondary school, and the exhibition "Drawings of Glass" hosted in the Museum of Glass in Murano from June to August 2014 under the patronage and with the help of the Italian Committee of the Association Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre (A.I.H.V.), were organised to introduce young people to the art of glass. The exhibition saw the participation of artists of international level. It was the result of the activities carried out by the Italian Committee of A.I.H.V. meant to bridge the gap between Italian schools and the world of glass. From the point of view of didactics, the exhibition represented the outcome of the work carried out by a middle school, II year Sec. A of the 'Istituto Comprensivo "G. degli Sforza"

of Corinaldo (AN) in the school year 2013-2014. The tutor, Mr Andrea Zepponi, achieved the aim of having great artists reproducing students' drawings while pursuing traditional educational goals. All this resulted in a real and proper teaching format requiring the interdisciplinary collaboration and involvement of several teachers from within and without the school who explained the art of glass, its history and techniques to the students. At the end of such an experience, students visited Murano glass workshops. By getting their own creative juices flowing in view of putting together a glass collection, students produced drawings by following a common theme, i.e. a picture or the transfiguration of a literary work. In the case of the Corinaldo School, it was Babette's Feast by K. Blixen. In doing so, they also inspired the glass masters who, in turn, had approved of the project. The works of famous masters found their place in the exhibition, e.g. Lino Tagliapietra, Mauro Bonaventura, Michele Buratto, Silvia Levenson,



Pino Signoretto, Massimo Nordio, together with new talents such as Vittoria Parinello and Camillo Triulzi. This represented the first achievement of the exhibition "Drawings of Glass", first opened in Corinaldo in the local Art Gallery and then moved to Murano in the Museum of Glass in May. The Catalogue is also another achievement. "Disegni di vetro – Corinaldo incontra Murano", Marsilio, Venice 2014, reports the unfolding of the format as carried out by the curators Andrea Zepponi e Sandro Pezzoli.



Sandro Pezzoli
Andrea Zepponi



MUSEUMS

COLLABORATING

The Museum of Crystal

Colle Val d'Elsa (SI)

The modern history of the glass industry in Colle Val D'Elsa started in 1820 with the French master Francesco Mathis who started a factory of "crystals" in the lower part of Colle Val D'Elsa in the premises of the old Convent of the Augustinian friars next to Saint Augustin's church.

Back then, the Colle Val D'Elsa "crystals" did not contain lead oxide, i.e. the ingredient that gives to the glass mixture its magical brightness and complete achromaticity and that was already being used in English and French crystals. After Mathis's death in 1932, Giovan Battista Schmid, from Bavaria, became the manager of the furnace and later on its sole owner. G.B. Schmid had previously worked in the furnace of San Vivaldo, near Montañone, and earlier on in Altare.

Under the guidance of the determined Schmid, the furnace achieved several successes starting with the many participations in Expositions. First and foremost, the gold medal it was awarded at the Universal Exposition of Paris in 1855. In 1921, the manufacturer Modesto Boschi, sensitive to the requests of the inhabitants of Colle, made jobless after the closure of the Nardi crystal factory, rented the premises and reopened the furnaces. Soon after the end of the war, Vetriere Boschi saw the attempts at manufacturing lead crystal, carried out in the



"Fabbrichina" plant.

In 1946, a mixture containing 15-16% of lead was successfully produced.

In 1963, further to investments and several attempts, in Colle Val D'Elsa at the Cristalleria "La Piana" plant, they successfully produced a type of glass containing lead oxide, i.e. a product able to compete in terms of brightness and achromaticity with those from England, France and Belgium where lead glass had been produced for centuries.

The Museum tells this story. Visitors can admire many items and pieces from public and private collections right in the very place where the Vetriere Boschi once stood.

Its two parts, a division made in terms of chronology and types of glass produced, tell the story of the glass production in Colle Val D'Elsa throughout the time.

In fact, it contains more than one hundred items divided according to working and production techniques.

It is a museum intending to highlight the technical processes and the research on glass. The different items are filed in accordance with their time of production and model.

Many pieces are still in the hands of private collectors or in the archives of the industries still active in the area.

Angelo Minisci

Per maggiori informazioni
www.cristallo.org



On 16th and 17th May in Pavia, at the Broletto, the XVIII Giornate Nazionali di Studio sul Vetro (National Days of Study on Glass) are going to take place.

They are organised by the Comitato Nazionale italiano dell'A.I.H.V. – Association Internationale pour l'Histoire du Verre, together with the Comune di Pavia, Culture Sector and the Soprintendenza Archeologia Lombardia (Archeological Superintendency of Lombardy). The Theme characterising the event that takes place at the same time as the Expo is going to be "Glass and Food".

A part of the activities will be devoted to updating the history of glass in general and the corpus of seals on glass in Italy. First, Luciano Piergiovanni of the Dipartimento di Scienze e Tecnologie Alimentari e Microbiologiche (Department of Food Microbiological Sciences and Technologies), University of Milan, will talk on the characteristics of glass applied to quality conservation of food.

Other ten reports will follow. Nine will deal with the most recent researches on glass. About twenty posters will contribute to clarify the three main lines of discussions.

A new book, published by the Committee, i.e. *Atti delle XVII Giornate Nazionali di Studio di Massa Martana e Perugia (2013)*, on "Glass in Central Italy from antiquity to date" by Luciana Mandruzzato, Teresa Medici and Marina Ubaldi, is going to be presented. Among the collateral activities and events, worth mentioning are: the lampworking session of beads with Murial Balensi, a visit to the workshop of glass windows of the Fondazione Frate Sole and an exhibition of glass at the Musei Civici in Pavia.

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Cover:
photograph of the S.A.V.'s showcase at the International Exposition of Turin in 1911, Specialised Library, MAV