
MATTEO GROTTA - ARCHITECT

HERITAGE
2002-2024

CASTELLO DI MONTEMAGNO

The first mention of a sturdy keep with walls and a moat built on the foundations of a Roman fortress dates back to 972 d.C.

Due to its strategic position, it was chosen as a temporary residence by Emperor Frederick I, known as Barbarossa, who administered justice there for over ten years before assigning the castle to the Marquises of Monferrato.

Around the year 1300, during the wars with Asti, the castle was razed to the ground and soon rebuilt. From the late 15th century, the Paleologi of Monferrato family re-established control over the territory, part of the Monferrato duchy under the Gonzaga domination.

At the beginning of the 17th century, after a long period under the rule of the Dukes of Mantua, the castle passed to its current owners, the Counts Calvi di Bergolo, who are still its custodians today.

The architecture is that of an austere, irregular shaped, medieval fortress framed by Ghibelline battlements. The stylistic contrast with the subsequent decorative repertoire of the Asti castles is striking: the decorated bands crowning the towers, the sequence of blind arches under the battlements of the curtain walls, the windows with alternating sandstone and the terracotta voussoirs.

In the 18th century, harmonious rectangular windows and an internal elliptical courtyard were added, with an oval colonnade of refined beauty.

1200 square meters of restored area
700 meters of roofs completely reconstructed

Location: Montemagno, Asti, Italy
Client: Counts Calvi di Bergolo
Year: 2005-2006
Works: restorations of roofs and ancient stables
Activity:

- **architecture**
- **construction management**
- **safety coordination**

in collaboration with Studio Calvi di Bergolo, Milan



PALAZZO ROCCA SAPORITI

Palazzo Rocca Saporiti stands as an exquisite neoclassical residence nestled along Corso Venezia in the heart of Milan. Conceived in the late 18th century by the visionary architect Giovanni Perego (1776-1817), its captivating facade is hailed as one of the city's most splendid vistas, earning notable recognition in Alessandro Manzoni's literary masterpiece, "I Promessi Sposi."

Embarking on the ground level, a rosy granite rustication, emblematic of the courtly and celebratory classicism prevalent in the Napoleonic era, lays the foundation for an imposing Ionic colonnade gracefully spanning the two upper floors. This colonnade gracefully interrupts a rear loggia adorned with a precious bas-relief frieze from the school of Pompeo Marchesi, accompanied by sculptures depicting the Consenting Gods. Above, a balustrade proudly hosts nine stone statues, meticulously crafted by Marchesi and Grazioso Rusca, portraying illustrious mythological figures such as Mercury, Venus, Juno, Jupiter, Apollo, Diana, Bacchus, Ceres, and Janus.

The primary courtyard, boasting a square layout, presents a continuous portico of Doric columns supporting an entablature, while at the rear, two smaller courtyards and a serene garden create an oasis of tranquility.

Mirroring the splendor of its exterior, the interiors exude opulence, with the noble floor featuring a grand assembly room that stretches the entire length of the facade.

Over 500 square meters of restored facade, six ionic columns, ten stone statues on the roof.

Location: Corso Venezia, Milan, Italy
Client: Rocca Saporiti Heirs
Year: 2005-2006
Works: restoration of the monumental facade
Activity:

- **architecture**
- **safety coordination**

in collaboration with Studio Calvi di Bergolo, Milan





COMPLESSO CAVOURIANO

In the early 18th century, the Benso family replaced their 16th-century family castle in Santena with the current villa, designed by Francesco Gallo (1672-1750), the architect for Vittorio Amedeo II, and constructed between 1712 and 1722.

The new residence featured a scarp base and a three-story structure. Internally, the garden floor housed spaces utilized as a kitchen, cellar, icehouse, and warehouses; the noble floor occupied the first level; a mezzanine accommodated servants; the second floor housed the master bedrooms, and the third floor, in the wings, contained rooms for guests. In the 19th century, it became a place of leisure and strategy for the prominent Italian politician and patriot Camillo Benso, Count of Cavour (1810-1861).



In 1947, Marquess Giovanni Visconti Venosta donated the property to the city of Turin. In 1955, Marchesa Margherita established the Camillo Cavour Foundation to fulfill her husband's testamentary wishes, aiming to preserve, enhance, and manage the "house-museum" that had hosted the daily life of the Cavour family for many generations.

The Santena complex includes the Castle with the Diplomatic Room, the Benso Tower, the Tomb of Cavour, the stables transformed into a museum, and a monumental park designed by the landscape architect Xavier Kurten in the mid-19th century.



Over 7000 square meters of intervention of general recovery of the great historical center.

Location: Santena, Turin, Italy
Client: Fondazione Camillo Cavour
Year: 2002-2008
Works: Restoration and refunctionalization of the Cavour complex
Activity:

- general architecture
- construction management *

(* monumental staircase and the chinese salon)

in collaboration with Studio Calvi di Bergolo, Milan



PALAZZO DEL PRINCIPE

The "Palazzo del Principe" was the great residence constructed by Sebastiano Ferrero (1438-1519) modifying and elevating an entire block of existing buildings, referred as "*domuncolae*" (literally small houses) within the Ricetto.

The "Palazzo del Principe" distinguished itself from other constructions not only in terms of size. Its stout and elevated form, more reminiscent of a defensive tower than a noble residence, evokes the functions typically associated with keeps in castles. Conversely, the interior spaces exhibited decorative elements befitting a noble environment.

Over the centuries, this beautiful palace endured numerous transformations and continuous alterations; the most detrimental occurred during the last century, imposing absurd uses on the building that were far removed from the times when it housed one of the most illustrious figures in the history of Biella.

In recent years, the Cassa di Risparmio di Biella Foundation, through a lengthy and complex operation, achieved a small miracle by almost entirely regaining ownership and commencing extensive restoration work. To date, the exterior restorations have been completed: the monumental facades have been freed from the multiple superimpositions accumulated over the centuries, and the magnificent chestnut coverings have been reconstructed, reclaiming many original elements. The tower has undergone a significant structural consolidation intervention in its towering section. The project will proceed in successive stages until the complete refunctionalization of the Palace is achieved.

Approved general project,
two out of five executive lots completed.



- Location:** Ricetto di Candelo, Biella, Italy
Client: Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Biella
Year: 2010 and on
Works: Restoration and refunctionalization of the Palazzo del Principe
Activity:
- **general project**
 - **construction management**
 - **safety coordination**



VILLA POMA

Villa Poma, formerly known as Palazzina Vaciago, stands as a magnificent Liberty-style building and serves as the headquarters of the Casa di Risparmio di Biella Foundation.

Constructed in the early twenties and subsequently renovated multiple times, often in a manner inconsistent with its nature as a historic and prestigious residence, the villa presented numerous challenges across various facets. The deteriorating condition of the roofing necessitated a complete overhaul of both the covering and structure. Seizing this opportunity, the attic was reclaimed and enhanced, now hosting the Foundation's archive.

The splendid facades adorned with stone decorations and rustic cement paste rustication underwent a more conservative intervention aimed at restoring the refined late-nineteenth-century aesthetic of the elevations.

The extraordinary larch windows, dating back to the early twentieth century, underwent a highly complex restoration, involving the faithful reconstruction of brass mechanisms and the integration of irrecoverable portions with wooden inserts sourced from ancient wood planks.

Equally innovative was the intervention in the basement-level auditorium, where rising dampness and poorly controlled humidity conditions were causing discomfort to guests. All external wall surfaces were removed and replaced with special materials. The auditorium and conference rooms were equipped with a sophisticated controlled mechanical ventilation system, discreetly integrated without the need for visible ducts.

Restoration of 700 square meters of facades, reconstruction of 400 square meters of roofs, renovation of the installations without interfering with the institutional activities of the Foundation, which has always remained operational.



- Location:** via Garibaldi, Biella, Italy
Client: Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Biella
Year: 2011
Works: Restoration and refunctionalization of the headquarters of Fondazione
Activity:
- **architectural project**
 - **works management**
 - **safety coordination**





CASA DELLE COMUNITA'

The significant void in the center of Biella left by the ancient hospital is now begun to be addressed, starting with one of its symbolic buildings, the former "Monte di Pietà" (the local pawnbroker), later transformed into a Blood Collection Center for the old healthcare institution.

Today, thanks to the collaborative efforts of the Cassa di Risparmio di Biella Foundation, I.R.I.S. Consortium, and A.S.L. BI, a strategic intervention is unfolding to breathe new life into one of the most challenged locations in the city of Biella.

Introducing the "Communities House," a name that encapsulates the intention to foster unity and collaboration, establishing a focal point for individuals facing vulnerability in our community. It serves as a socio-health hub, bringing together the Family Services Centers, the Obstetric-Gynecological and Psychosocial Consultancy of A.S.L. BI, the Anti-Violence Center, and the I.R.I.S. Consortium.

The services offered to the accommodated citizens are crucial, including the "Il Patio" Family Center, GE.-CO. Family Mediation, the House of Mutual Aid, SPAF "Space for listening" to families and problematic adolescents, the Anti-Violence Center, the Gynecological and Psychosocial Consultancy of A.S.L. BI, the Office of the IRIS Consortium, and a new documentation room.

This project aims to revitalize and enhance the well-being of the local community.



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- Location:** via Repubblica, Biella, Italy
Client: Fondazione Cassa di Risparmio di Biella
Year: 2018
Works: Restoration and refunctionalization of the former "Monte di Pietà".
- Activity:**
- **architecture**
 - **construction management**
 - **safety coordination**



ORATORIO DI SAN GRATO

The Oratory of San Grato is a hidden gem in the valleys of Biellese, with roots traced back to a record from 1614 mentioning "ex voto" festivities in Pettinengo dedicated to San Grato.

The history of this sacred place is thus intricately linked to a public vow, leading to the creation of an initially modest structure. Less than a century after its establishment, in 1724, the rebuilding of the choir became necessary; in that year, the bishop authorized significant works, giving life to the oratory as it stands today.

This sacred edifice, featuring a single nave and no apse, also houses a side chapel dedicated to the Madonna del Buon Consiglio, a two-story sacristy, and a bell tower.

The structure was in a precarious state of disrepair, on the brink of structural collapse, with several sections of the roof already caved in. An emergency intervention was imperative to restore and preserve this marvelous building, returning it to the community in its ancient splendor.

Today, the Oratory of San Grato stands as a majestic construction, despite its incomplete facade. With solemnity, it is situated in the Gurgo hamlet, bearing witness to the long history of strong devotion within the local community.



Location:	Frazione Gurgo di Pettinengo, Italy
Client:	Parrocchia dei Santi Stefano e Giacomo
Year:	2005 - 2011
Works:	Restoration of the old church
Activity:	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• architectural project• works managent• safety coordination



VILLA TRABALDO TOGNA

Villa Trabaldo Togna is a splendid historic residence dating back to the early years of the last century. Nestled in the picturesque setting of a large, landscaped park with rare plant species in the Cereje locality in Trivero, it overlooks the underlying Ponzone Valley. The liberty-style architecture takes inspiration from the natural world, incorporating floral motifs, baroque evocations with specific references to elements of flora and fauna, and unpredictable picturesque decorations that animate the spaces of this prestigious villa. Despite being inhabited until a few years ago, the building has remained virtually unchanged since its construction until the recent renovation, carried out while respecting the typical characteristics of the early 20th century.

The intervention encompassed the entire building, involving a complete refurbishment of the roofs and interior spaces, with a partial typological revision of the rooms. The attic was converted into a "double-suite" for guests, and a wellness center was added, featuring a sauna and leisure room. Furthermore, the prestigious liberty facades underwent conservative restoration. In addition, obsolete systems were entirely replaced with modern, energy-efficient, and home automation-controlled systems.

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- Location:** Frazione Cereje, Valdilana, Italy
Client: Private
Year: 2011
Works: Complete restoration of the villa
Activity:
- **architectural project**
 - **works management**
 - **safety coordination**



CASTELLO DI VALDENGO

The Castle of Valdengo, located in the heart of the Biella region, stands as one of the most significant testimonies to medieval Piedmontese history.

Its origins date back to the 11th-12th centuries and are closely linked to the powerful Avogadro family, an influential feudal dynasty that ruled the surrounding territory for centuries.

Over the centuries, the castle of Valdengo has undergone numerous interventions and functional transformations that have radically altered its identity, evolving from a military defensive structure into an elegant noble residence, reflecting the changing needs and tastes of successive eras.

Today, the complex represents a precious historical and cultural heritage site set within a highly evocative landscape, safeguarding important artistic and architectural testimonies.



The Bishop's Palace

The **Bishop's Palace**, one of the fundamental component of the castle, has been the focus of a complex restoration and repurposing project designed to preserve its historical identity and breathe new functional life into the building. Following an extensive structural consolidation carried out in previous years to ensure the building's stability and safety, the current phase of the project aims at the conservation and enhancement of original architectural elements such as vaults, flooring, and stone decorations, alongside the introduction of functions compatible with the historical value of the context. These include exhibition spaces, cultural event halls, and reception areas that facilitate the complex's use, fostering a dialogue between past and present.

The Chapel of Saint Catherine of Alexandria

Adjacent to the Bishop's Palace is the **Chapel of Saint Catherine of Alexandria**, a refined example of a noble private place of worship dedicated to Saints Eusebius, Anthony the Abbot, and Catherine of Alexandria.

The chapel houses a cycle of frescoes dating back to the first half of the 14th century, attributed to the Master of Oropa, one of the leading exponents of Piedmontese Gothic painting. The scenes depict key episodes from the life of Saint Catherine, including the Annunciation and the Flagellation, characterized by extraordinary attention to iconographic detail and a powerful expressive intensity that endows the space with profound spiritual and artistic significance.

The restoration work has been aimed at safeguarding these unique fresco cycles through meticulous cleaning, consolidation, and protection of the painted surfaces, preserving their integrity for future generations. At the same time, the chapel's accessibility has been ensured for guided tours and liturgical celebrations, thus maintaining a careful balance between conservation and public use.

Location: Valdengo, Piedmont, Italy
Client: Private
Year: 2025 and on
Works: Restoration
Activity: "Casa del vescovo"
"Cappella di Santa Caterina".

- architectural project
- works management
- safety coordination



RICETTO DI CANDELO

The Ricetto is a collective fortification born from the initiative of the population of Candelo between 1200 and 1300. The term "Ricetto" derives from the Latin "receptum" (shelter, refuge) and denotes a defended place, surrounded by fortifications, used as a storage for agricultural products, especially wheat and wine, in times of peace and as a refuge in times of war or danger.

With an irregular pentagonal layout, the Ricetto has a perimeter of approximately 500 meters and a surface area of 13,000 square meters, accommodating around 200 cells, almost all privately owned. The defensive walls follow the entire perimeter, except for the southern side, now occupied by the neoclassical-style municipal building, sharply contrasting with the medieval architecture.

The Ricetto di Candelo stands as one of the best-preserved medieval villages in Europe: the urban layout and original structure have remained virtually unchanged to this day, making it a unique masterpiece in its kind.



- Location:** Ricetto di Candelo, Biella, Italy
Client: Private
Year: From 2010 and on
Works: Complete restoration on various cellulas
Activity:
- architectural project
 - works management
 - safety coordination

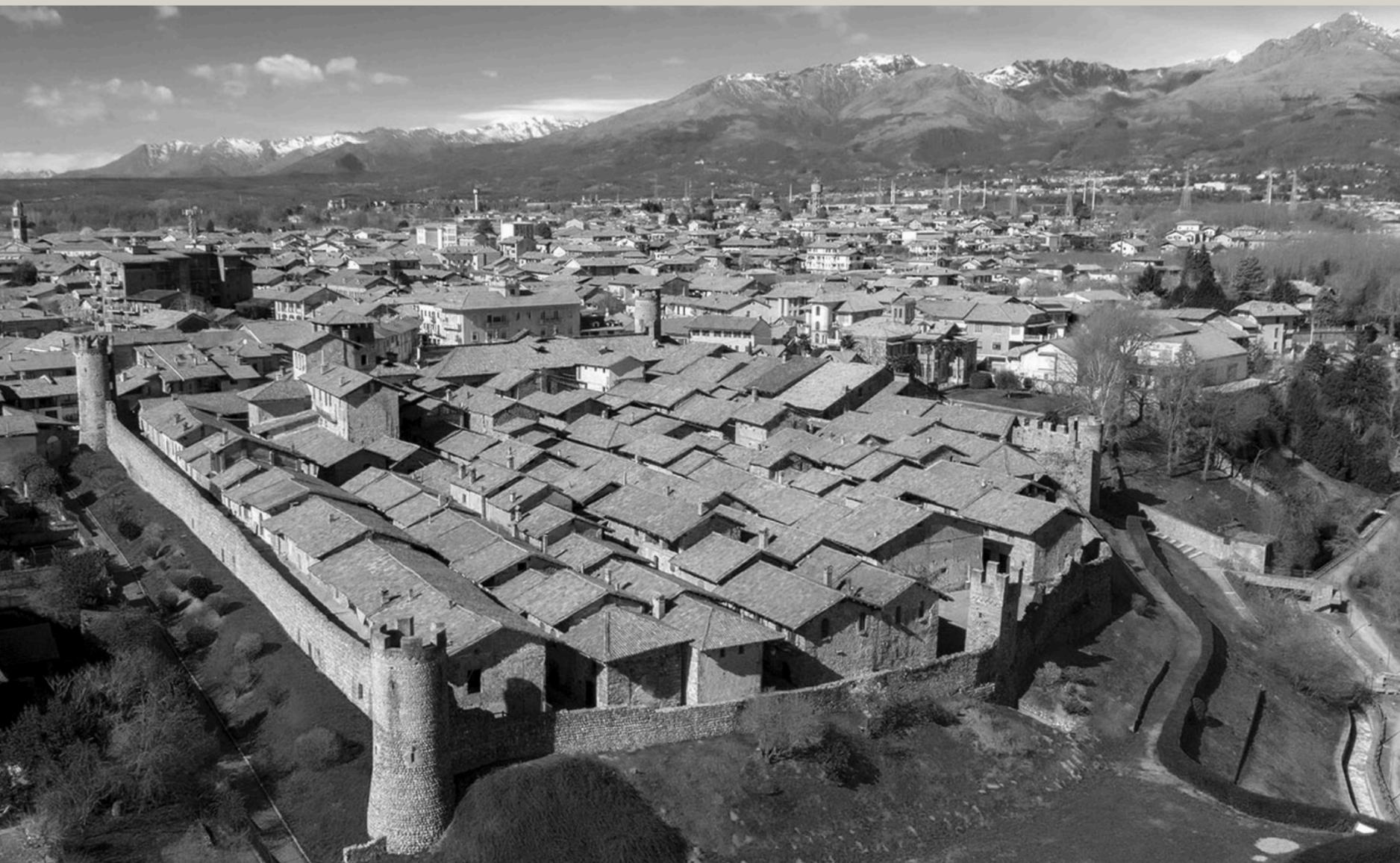
THE GUIDELINES OF "RICETTO DI CANDELO" 2019

The Ricetto di Candelo is a precious asset; a virtually unique example of a medieval village still intact, visited every year by tens of thousands of people. Its protection and preservation are of fundamental importance.

The Municipal Administration of Candelo and the Superintendence of Archaeology, Fine Arts, and Landscape strongly desired a shared unified document that crystallizes the main rules for restoration, recovery, and ordinary and extraordinary maintenance interventions on the buildings of the historic complex.

Our studio has therefore developed the document, drafted with the full support and contribution of the Superintendence, which guided us through all phases of writing. The final work identifies the main construction activities to be regulated, providing new prescriptive guidelines to integrate existing urban planning tools.

The "**Guidelines**" are a tool to provide methodological support for the correct planning of conservation and restoration interventions at the Ricetto di Candelo. It is an instrument born to facilitate understanding, encourage a correct approach, and identify the fundamental criteria on which to base the design of interventions in the medieval village. The Guidelines were approved by the Municipal Council of Candelo in 2019 and are currently in force.





The project anticipated the concept of a thematic internet portal by about ten years, creating a network to connect and provide visibility to the vast heritage of historic residences, parks, and gardens in Europe that, being private, were not visible and accessible through the traditional tourism distribution channels of that time.

The system paid particular attention to the surrounding area, considering other monuments, historic centers, and the environment. It also offered necessary information for tourist hospitality and highlighted major cultural events in the area.

For over a decade, with over 500 historic houses published, predating the advent of various impactful social platforms, the portal served as a privileged tool for information, cultural enhancement, economic valorization, and tourist development. It presented internationally a qualified offer of private historical, cultural, and natural assets.

UEHHA, the *Union of European Historic Houses*, now *EHH European Historic Houses*, is an international foundation dedicated to preserving the artistic and architectural heritage of historic houses in Europe, along with their parks and monumental gardens.

The Union represents thirteen national associations of historic houses (Germany, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Spain, France, Italy, Ireland, Netherlands, Portugal, England, and Switzerland). Its goal is to support and coordinate the efforts of its members to preserve and transmit the vast historical and cultural heritage it represents, consisting of over 20 thousand historic houses with 200 thousand hectares of parks and gardens, and approximately 5 million hectares of protected private areas.

This cultural complex on a European scale is visited by over 30 million visitors each year.

My role: I have been the technical director of the Committee for five years.

The COMDIS "**Comitato Dimore Storiche Europee**" in Milan was a non-profit organization for the cultural, touristic, commercial, and technical organizational management of private and public real estate, museum structures, with the aim of enhancing the European cultural heritage.

Founded by Count Calvi di Bergolo, Vice President of ADSI, *Italian Association of Historic Houses* and co-directed by PhD Piera Rosso, it conceived, promoted, and managed the project "Europe of Private Historic Houses", the first digitized European system for the promotion and management of private historic residences, parks, and gardens, operational from 2002 to 2010.

CULTURAL ACTIVITIES

THE BUILDING CARE PROGRAMME

The **Building Care Program** (BCP) was a very sophisticated technical-economic system designed for the in-depth analysis of buildings with significant historical, artistic, and social value. It was created to address their maintenance, protection, enhancement, and sustainable management.

Supported by the European Commission within the framework of the "Culture 2000" program, it was promoted in Europe by UEHHA (*Union of European Historic Houses Associations*), now EHH, in collaboration with ELO (*European Landowner's Organization*). The program was also endorsed by BYFO Denmark (*Bygnings Frednings Foreningen*) in partnership with ADSI Italia (*Associazione delle Dimore Storiche Italiane*), DH – France (*Demeure Historique*), and HHA Great Britain (*Historic Houses Association*).

The BCP originated from the extensive experience and know-how of the Danish Historic Houses Association, potentially extending its reach to the entire historical and artistic heritage of Europe.

It represented a natural evolution of numerous cultural projects undertaken by its affiliated national associations, with a particular focus on the protection, recovery, and enhancement of private historic residences.

The program's goal was to encourage scheduled maintenance interventions, contributing to the definition of a European standard for the management of historic and artistic buildings.



BCP Meeting in Brussels, march 23, 2005

My role: as project manager, for ADSI *Associazione Dimore Storiche Italiane*, I had the honor of representing Italy both in Brussels and Copenhagen during the program's development stages.

Additionally, I provided full support to the Governor of UEHHA, Count Ippolito Calvi di Bergolo, during the implementation of the two pilot projects in Italy (in Milan and Turin).

Architect, landscape designer, and conservator, Matteo graduated with a Master's degree in Architecture from the Polytechnic University of Turin, with a specialization in the preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage

His professional journey led him to Milan, where he apprenticed under Count Ippolito Calvi di Bergolo, Vice President of the Italian Historic Houses Association. During this formative period, he actively engaged in innovative international projects, including "UEHHA - The Europe of Private Historic Residences" within UEHHA and "The Building Care Program" sponsored by the European Commission under the Culture 2000 program. Serving as Technical Director at the Comitato Dimore Storiche in Milan for five years, Matteo collaborated closely with his mentor on the restoration and repurposing of numerous masterpieces of Italian architecture.

In 2005, Matteo established his private studio in Biella, focusing on contemporary themes while embracing a commitment to sustainability in construction. Inspired by the principles of organic architecture, he turned his focus toward the future of urban environments, exploring their creation and rejuvenation. Through his designs, Matteo aimed to create highly efficient buildings that foster harmonious relationships between human settlements and the natural world.

In 2015, Matteo founded DIREZIONE CARAIBI with the goal of promoting innovative investments in the Dominican Republic, renowned as the jewel of the Caribbean, thereby extending his impact even beyond the realm of architecture.

Since 2022, Matteo has been Executive Director Americas at Spatialconnection(s), an Italian multidisciplinary architecture and design firm with a global presence, primarily in the Middle East and Asia.

The firm's vision is deeply aligned with the contemporary digital and technological culture applied to the design, construction, and management of complex, large-scale buildings. With an interdisciplinary approach, Spatialconnection(s) develops innovative, sustainable, functional, and efficient solutions tailored to meet the expectations of investors in the world's most prestigious real estate markets.

Its international team is committed to pushing the boundaries of creativity through generative design, data analysis, artificial intelligence, and robotics. The firm's core objective is to maximize efficiency across every phase of the process—from early design to construction and long-term building management.



Matteo Grotto, Architect & Conservator

Viale G. Matteotti 8 – 13900 Biella

Member of the Order of Architects, Planners, Landscapers and Conservators of Biella, No. 271

Court-Appointed Technical Consultant (CTU) at the Judicial Authority of Biella, No. 667

Tel.: +39.015.2520938 – Mob: +39.333.4543124

Email: studio@grotto.it

Certified Email (PEC): matteo.grotto@archiworldpec.it

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/matteogrotto

Website: www.grotto.it