

THE QUAGLIA FAMILY HOUSE

16TH CENTURY

The decoration of this frescoed façade with a variety of symbolic, heraldic, chivalric and courtly motifs, proves that the clients were open to an allegorical and profane culture which went beyond the regional borders.

The vast frescoed surface was painted in 1508 maybe by Gio Marti, a Tuscan artist, as suggested by the cartouche, even though the intervention of an apprentice of Hans Clemer, an exponent of the Gothic-Flemish painting who was very active in Saluzzo, can't be excluded.

The pictorial framework develops around the remains of two large Renaissance windows which are flanked by sinuous and iconic figures of sibyls. Above one of the first floor openings there is a frescoed family coat of arms depicting a white unicorn on a red background, which is the emblem of the rich and powerful Brizio family. The heraldic shield, held by refined angels, is crowned by the family motto. Beside one of the second floor windows there is a fresco depicting a group of armigers bearing halberds led by an armoured man and, on the background, some views of Rome.

The situation on the left side of the façade is quite different: here only few remains of feigned architecture depict frescoed rosettes in the lower part and the outline of an opening in the upper part.

The fitting in of new openings entailed the loss of important parts of the original pictorial framework, thus making it difficult to be read.



THE FAÇADE PRIOR TO THE RESTORATION



THE FAÇADE AFTER THE RESTORATION



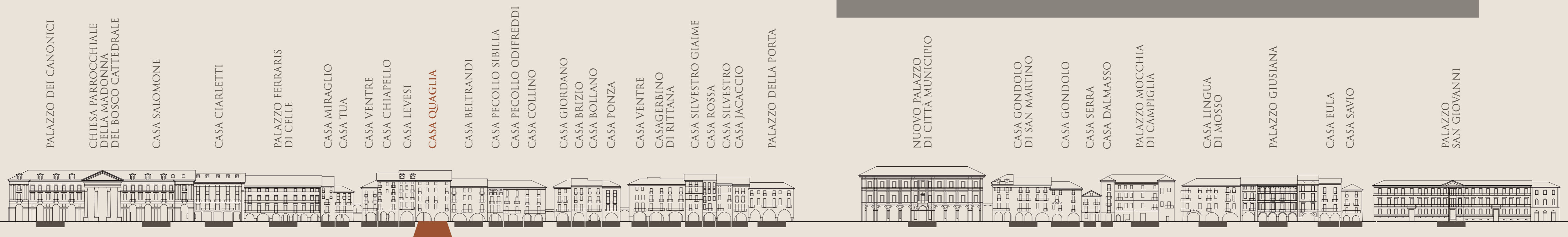
Detail of the Brizio family coat of arms. The blazon reads: "Red, a gold unicorn rampant, silver armed".



Detail of the cartouche reading: "...IO. MARTI. PP/FACIEBAT/1508" depicting a signature and a date.



This fresco is full of symbolic cross-references, in particular for the presence of the Sibyls, pagan figures here depicted in a refined, harmonious and lyric style. Their importance in the Renaissance iconography is proved by their keen use in the Cappella Sistina frescoes by Michelangelo.



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