



ITINERARIO LIBERTY



Villino Chini

Chino Chini had the house built towards 1923, as a residence for himself and his family in Borgo San Lorenzo. In those years it was, above all, Chini who took care of the workmanship and therefore felt the need to be always present. It is an original construction in stone and bricks, with a layout roughly in the shape of an "L" with a sloping roof, with the protruding part higher than the rest and dominated by a small balcony, quite liberally inspired by the Gothic Revival models which were becoming widespread from the beginning of the century.

The outside is decorated with numerous tiles derived from the production of the Furnaces, above all from the repertoire created for the recent monumental decorative undertaking of the **Berziere Thermal Baths in Salsomaggiore** (1920 - 1923), with the proceeds of which the house itself was able to be built. On the façade looking out onto the avenue, repeated straight lines of ceramics are conspicuous, curved just next to the archivolt of the windows with coloured or gold motifs with broken lines, rhombs, small triangles, small squares and plaiting. On the balconies and in the attic, quadrangular and round tiles are applied, with figurative particulars from various decorations and of various periods, almost a permanent exhibition of their own samples.

The banister and the covering of the small balcony stand on small columns in Grès stonework with a metallic shine, while around the base of it runs a series of lion's heads in natural Grès. Under the roofing, a Madonna with Child of imitation madder is hung between two festoons of fruit. The façade which looks out upon the garden also conserves, at some windows, polychromatic glass (again of their "own" production), and high up it is decorated by a frieze of illustrated tiles.

The two gates and the boundary walls are also adorned by various minute ceramic pieces, as well as a relief in natural terracotta portraying a Putto holding a moray; the name-plate and the plaque of the old bell are also in ceramics, with a green lizard which bites its tail. The inside provides examples of covering, particularly interesting also for the fact that they are perfectly preserved, above all the majolicas of the **Bathroom**, in those which cover the fireplace, and in the spectacular floor with the Birth of Venus, designed by Galileo Chini inspired by the Florentine Renaissance painting and realized by the Furnaces in polychromatic Grès.

The totality, although heterogeneous, is however of positive aesthetic effect and in line with the decorative intention which animated the activity of the Chinis; besides this it constitutes a unique example of applications of singular elements, even far from the context for which they were born.