



PRESS RELEASE

THE GALLERIE DI PIAZZA SCALA OF INTESA SANPAOLO HOST THE PHOTOGRAPHY EXHIBITION “ITALIAN STYLE”. LUCA BELTRAMI FOR BANCA COMMERCIALE ITALIANA. HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHIC JOURNEY THROUGH A “CITY SET TO BECOME A METROPOLIS”

- **Open to the public on free admission from 16 January to 13 April at the Gallerie d'Italia.**
- **A photographic journey in the transformation of Piazza Scala, unwinding through historic evidence and the interpretation of a work of architecture.**

Milan, 16 January 2014 – “Italian style”. Luca Beltrami for Banca Commerciale Italiana. Historic photographic journey through a “city set to become a metropolis” is the title of the photography exhibition running from **16 January to 13 April 2014 at the Gallerie di Piazza Scala of Intesa Sanpaolo.**

The show will enable the public to view for the first time photographs of the premises of what was then Banca Commerciale Italiana, conserved and catalogued at the Historical Archive of Intesa Sanpaolo.

The display itinerary unfurls around shots by prestigious photographers who, over the course of time, have explored the work of Luca Beltrami (1854-1933), the architect who was assigned the task of planning the new premises of one of the most dynamic of the city's emerging economic institutions.

This is **largely unpublished photographic documentation**, enhanced by the design drawings that demonstrate Beltrami's attention to even the tiniest details. Thus we discover the innovative use of metal in the balustrades and the lamps, as well as the architect's constant focus on creating furnishings and objects functional to the business activity, introducing solutions that were at once new and attuned to the aesthetic demands. The show reveals how every single particular, from the door handles to the basement areas, was the result of reflection and study.

Founded in 1894, the **Banca Commerciale Italiana** enjoyed rapid success, and soon the building appointed as its **headquarters** – a red-brick palazzo designed by architect Giuseppe Pestagalli and located in **Piazza della Scala** next to the entrance to the Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II – was

no longer adequate for its expanding business. A new, larger and more functional head office was required: a building that – right from the facade – would communicate the trust and solidity of an Institute generated by a consortium of foreign banks that was to launch the reform of the articles of association for “Italianisation” of the governance. After shelving an initial proposal to move to Piazza Cordusio – the nascent economic hub of Milan – the Bank decided to construct the new premises opposite the building already occupied, on the northern side of Piazza della Scala, between Palazzo Marino and the Teatro alla Scala. It was an ambitious project that affected the road network and entailed the demolition of the church of San Giovanni Decollato alle Case Rotte, a Baroque edifice used to house the municipal archives. For a headquarters fitting to the performance of operations in the service sector, it was not sufficient to demonstrate efficiency; an urban scenario with homogeneous features had to be conceived, at once modern and capable of providing historical continuity.

Completing the exhibition-dossier, on sale in the bookshop of the Gallerie is the second volume in the series of the *Quaderni fotografici* of the Intesa Sanpaolo’s Historical Archive, *Il palazzo Comit di Luca Beltrami. Fotografie tra testimonianza e interpretazione (1905-1990)*, by Serena Berno and Francesca Pino (Milan, Hoepli, 2014) and, in the *Guida Intesa Sanpaolo* series, the volume *Il palazzo e la città. Progettare Piazza della Scala* in which Fulvio Irace and Michele De Lucchi describe the transformation of Piazza della Scala and its evolution from historic headquarters of the Bank to a display venue.

Another exhibition, to be held at Castello Sforzesco in March 2014, will be devoted to the intriguing figure of architect Luca Beltrami. Alongside the study materials belonging to Beltrami conserved at Castello Sforzesco (photos, drawings, engravings, manuscripts and books), a number of itineraries through the city will be explored, following the lines of Beltrami’s work in Milan and including designs for the Castello Sforzesco, the facade of Palazzo Marino, Piazza Cordusio, the Synagogue, the Palazzo della Permanente and the offices of the Banca Commerciale Italiana.

Like the entire display itinerary of the Gallerie di Piazza Scala, the photographic exhibition “**Italian style**”. **Luca Beltrami for Banca Commerciale Italiana. Historic photographic journey through a “city set to become a metropolis”** is admission free.

The **Gallerie di Piazza Scala** are open Tuesday to Sunday from 9.30 am to 7.30 pm, Thursday up to 10.30 pm.

The museum, which is part of the Intesa Sanpaolo network of exhibition and cultural centres known as the “**Gallerie d’Italia**” – comprising the Gallerie di Palazzo Leoni Montanari in Vicenza and the Gallerie di Palazzo Zevallos Stigliano in Naples –, offers a services area with **bookshop** and **cafeteria** overlooking Piazza della Scala, open every day from 8.00 am to 10.00 pm.

For information:

INTESA SANPAOLO PRESS OFFICE
+39 0287962641
stampa@intesasanpaolo.com
www.gallerieditalia.it