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STUDIA





Sandra Berresford

The Laboratory-Studio of Antonio Caniparoli & Sons in Carrara (c. 1850-1935): the Marble Craft Industry emerges from the Shadows

Abstract ITA

Il saggio descrive il patrimonio di uno dei laboratori più conosciuti a Carrara, quello di Antonio Caniparoli & Figli, che ha prodotto scultura e architettura ornamentale in marmo nel periodo compreso tra il 1850 e il 1935. Dopo una breve storia della vicenda familiare, del palazzo di residenza e del laboratorio, esamina i gessi, i disegni, i cataloghi, le fotografie, i registri finanziari e la corrispondenza, proponendo nuovi percorsi di ricerca che permetteranno di documentare in modo analitico l'attività produttiva di un'impresa, seppur *ante litteram*, veramente "globale".

Abstract ENG

This essay intends to outline what remains of the patrimony of one of the leading marble studios in Carrara, that of Antonio Caniparoli and Sons, who produced sculpture and ornamental architecture over the period ca 1850 to 1935. While examining the different categories of the remains (the family home and representative HQ, works in plaster, drawings, catalogues, photographs, financial records and correspondence), it aims to propose paths of research along which future research will be able to fully explore and document the productive activity of an *ante litteram* though truly "global" enterprise.

Parole chiave

Laboratori del marmo a Carrara, laboratorio di Antonio Caniparoli e Figli, scultura e architettura ornamentale in marmo 1850-1935

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The beginnings and the creation of a family business

The Laboratory-Studio of Antonio Caniparoli [fig. 1] was first noted in Carlo Lazzoni's Guide to Carrara of 1880¹. Here we have references to Caniparoli's early career: a prize from the Carrara Academy of Fine Arts for a Neo-Gothic baptismal font, executed for John Gooddy² (1873); an ornate chimney piece for Prince Scaleo in Palermo (1874); a Gothic monument in marble for a Rumanian noble (1878 sic 1879). Caniparoli did, indeed, establish relations with John and Charles Gooddy and was later to work in close contact with William Walton (York 1796-1873), the English entrepreneur and industrialist who was to modernise the Carrara marble industry³. Caniparoli is also known to have emigrated to Rumania in 1879⁴ where he worked as "an ornamental architect" (rather than "modeller" or "mason")⁵ and where he executed a Monument for a nobleman, in the Neo-Gothic style, evidenced in his drawings from that period but also much in favour at the court of King Charles I of Rumania, at his Castle of Peles, near Sinaia, inaugurated in 1883, where Italian artisans and builders were known to have been employed.

The author wishes to express her thanks to Riccardo, Grazia and Alessandro Caniparoli for having given her access to the precious family collection and Archives and for their enthusiasm in following her research. She would also like to thank Paolo Bertolozzi for his generous loan of fundamental documentation regarding the Caniparoli accounts and correspondence; the Laboratorio Pesetti Alvaro & Figli snc, Pietrasanta; the Studio Cave Michelangelo di Franco Barattini in Carrara and to Professoressa Micheli Pellegrini for access to the works and documents conserved from the Caniparoli Studio. Thanks, too, to photographer Luigi Biagini for permission to use his photographs of Palazzo Caniparoli and to Robert Freidus for access to his photographs of the New Orleans cemeteries. Not forgetting the precious assistance of Laura Benedetti in the Archives of the Accademia di Belle Arti di Carrara.

¹ C. Lazzoni, *Carrara e le sue Ville*, Carrara, Tipografia Iginio Drovandi, 1880, pp. 216-217; anastatic re-edition, Bologna, E. Atesa, 1978.

² William Walton's nephew John Gooddy died in 1879; he was succeeded in the Company of William Walton & Nepote by his brother Charles Gooddy who died in 1899.

³ For the formation and success of Walton, Gooddy & Cripps Ltd., see *Sognando il Marmo. Cultura e commercio del Marmo tra Carrara, Gran Bretagna e Impero (1820-1920 circa)*, a cura di S. Berresford, Pisa, Pacini editore, 2009, pp. 28-33.

⁴ N. Guerra, *Partir Bisogna Storie e momenti dell'emigrazione apuana e lunigianese*, Provincia di Massa-Carrara, Comunità montana della Lunigiana, 2001, p. 259.

⁵ This is important because Antonio Caniparoli's vocation was that of ornamental architect; it is believed that the majority of the statuary work of the Firm was done by others and often subcontracted out to Carrara sculptors and masons.

Although the Caniparoli visiting card and their advertisements claim that the firm was founded in 1850, they do not say where [fig. 2]. Antonio Caniparoli was born in Seravezza in 1828 and may, indeed, have benefitted from the marble working training established in Versilia from the second part of the 1820s by Marco Borrini (born Seravezza 1787) in Seravezza or with sculptor Vincenzo Santini (Lucca 1807-1876) in Pietrasanta⁶. Giuseppe Tomagnini⁷, the first to establish an artistic studio in Pietrasanta (active c. 1842 to at least the beginning of the 20th century) is another possibility, especially since the studio of “Caniparoli and Tomagnini” exhibited alongside that of “Antonio Caniparoli & Figli” in Antwerp in 1885⁸. The family’s ties with Seravezza continued throughout the firm’s activities, particularly with the sawmill of Cesare Caniparoli, probably a relative but not Antonio’s homonymous eldest son. Antonio Caniparoli almost certainly got to know William Walton who was active in Seravezza before moving to Carrara in the late 1850s, and may, indeed, have followed the Englishman’s move there. Drawings dating from the 1870s and 1880s in the Caniparoli Archives often bear the initials “WW”, indicating that they may have been commissioned by Walton⁹. Certainly, deposits and studio space were let and/or shared between the two over several years, as the financial records show.

Antonio’s association with Thomas Pate († Leghorn 1875), a merchant trader of

⁶ For the importance of these marble craft and sculpture training schools, see A. Bertelli, *Il Laboratorio Palla Cavalier Ferdinando*, in *I Laboratori Ferdinando Palla e Martino Barsanti di Pietrasanta alle origini della “Piccola Atene”*, Fossdinovo, Associazione Percorsi d’Arte, 2016, vol. I, pp. 44-45, and C. Paolicchi, *Per una storia della scultura in Versilia*, in *I Laboratori Ferdinando Palla e Martino Barsanti*, cit., vol. II, pp. 27-29. For Jean-Baptiste Henraux and Marco Borrini and their role in reviving the exploitation of quarries in Versilia in the first half of the 19th century, see *Laboratorio Henraux* in <<http://www.museodeibozzetti.it/assets/files/mdb/collezione/laboratori/s000019.php>>.

⁷ A. Bertelli, *Il Laboratorio Palla*, cit., pp. 44-49 and *Laboratorio Tomagnini Giuseppe* in <<http://www.museodeibozzetti.it/assets/files/mdb/collezione/laboratori/s001239.php>>.

⁸ *Catalogue des Echantillons de Marbre des Alpes Apuennes présentés à l’Exposition Universelle d’Anvers par le Royal corps du Mines*, Rome, Botta, 1885 in the Fondo Zaccagna, Accademia di Belle Arti di Carrara. Antonio Caniparoli is listed among the “Trading Companies” from Carrara. Also listed were the Anglo-Italian companies of: Thomas Pate Carrara; W. Walton & Nephew; W.C. Townsend; Franklin Torrey; Robson Tommaso & Figlio, but also the Ditta Caniparoli e Tomagnini di Seravezza, as well as the Tomagnini Fratelli from Pietrasanta.

⁹ For the early years of Walton’s entrepreneurship and his importance for Carrara, see M. Bernieri, *William Walton e il suo Tempo: l’avventura di un Inglese del XIX Secolo*, Massa, SEA, 1993, pp. 17-24 *et passim*.

English lineage, long resident in Leghorn and active in the marble trade between Carrara and Great Britain, may also date from these early years. In the 1890s, Thomas Pate Jnr. was to commission the family chapel in Leghorn from the Caniparoli¹⁰. Not only did they proudly illustrate the Chapel on their advertising material [fig. 4] but it also provided the opportunity for a young sculptor from Carrara, Carlo Fontana (1865–1956), to prove his worth¹¹.

The first mention of Antonio Caniparoli in Carrara is registered in the payment of taxes to the local Chamber of Commerce in 1864. He was listed again in 1866, as Antonio “son of Domenico” and in 1868 as “Head of Studio”¹². He did not exhibit alongside several well known Carrara sculptors and studios at the Paris Universal Exhibition in 1867, nor in Vienna in 1873, which may indicate that his reputation was not yet fully established. In 1873, he applied for permission to take part in the *Concorso Bernardo Fabbricotti* with a “baptismal font in Gothic style”, executed in “marmo bianco chiaro”¹³. This was in all likelihood the above-mentioned award-winning font commissioned by John Gooddy. Since the font was delicate, Antonio requested the Jury Committee to come to assess it in his studio «situated in the Fabbricotti building opposite the gate of Colombarotto, along the station road». It is unlikely that he trained at the Carrara Academy and his name does not occur in the Academy records for years regarding a probable apprenticeship¹⁴. We cannot but remark, too, how strange it was that Antonio Caniparoli figures nowhere amongst the donors from the principal studios in Carrara for those afflicted

¹⁰ G. Piombanti, *Guida Storica della Città e dei Dintorni di Livorno*, Livorno, Tip. Gius. Fabbreschi, 1903.

¹¹ *Carrara e il Mercato della Scultura II*, a cura di S. Berresford, Milan, 24 Ore Motta Cultura, 2007, pp. 144-147, 196.

¹² *Camera di Commercio Carrara Registri Tasse Camerali* for the years in question. The Chamber of Commerce was founded in Carrara in 1862 and taxes were recorded only from that year onwards.

¹³ Protocol N°180 letter dated 14th August 1873, *Accademia di Belle Arti di Carrara*. Given the fragility of his font, Antonio Caniparoli requested the Jury to come to see it in «di lui studio situato nello stabile Fabbricotti dirimpetto al cancello del Colombarotto lungo la via della stazione». In a letter dated the 31st of August 1873, addressed to the Academy Director, two witnesses (Gaetano Mercanti and Davide - or “Adelino”? - Rusca?) testified that the font was Caniparoli’s own work (Protocol N°193, *Accademia di Belle Arti di Carrara*).

¹⁴ We can safely say that Antonio Caniparoli’s name does not occur in Academy records from 1843 to 1853 (i.e. from the age of 15 to 25). Although there are lacunae in the subsequent records, the first time Antonio Caniparoli’s name occurs appears to be in the aforementioned request of 1873. Checks made so far over numerous pertinent years have similarly not yet revealed the names of Caniparoli’s three sons in the Academy records.

by floods, on a subscription organised by the “*Società di Mutuo Soccorso fra gli Artigiani di Carrara e Ville*” in October 1873¹⁵.

By 1905, however, his studio and gallery, housed in the family home and representative HQ in Palazzo Caniparoli at San Martino, was described by Malagoli in his Guide to Carrara as «one of the oldest and most grandiose» of the town and an absolute “must” for tourists. There they would find a vast collection of «monuments, altars, statues, chimney pieces, fountains etc...»¹⁶.

By that year, the Studio had accumulated a series of prestigious national and international awards at exhibitions, indicative of its international vocation. The firm was awarded a Diploma of Honour at the International Exhibition in Melbourne (1881-82) and his *Summer* was purchased by the Vittoria Government¹⁷. This success probably led to the commission of the Neo-Gothic styled *Anne Amelia McQuade Funeral Monument* in Windsor, South-East of Sydney in 1882¹⁸. In 1881, the Firm won an Honorary mention at the National Exhibition in Milan for an ornate chimney piece in 16th century style¹⁹, [fig. 5] followed, in 1892, by a Silver Medal from the Columbian Exhibition in Genoa [fig. 6]. The Firm exhibited at the National Exhibition in Turin in 1884 and the International Exhibition in Antwerp, as noted, in 1885. In 1904, it was awarded a Grand Prix at the Universal Exhibition in St. Louis.

¹⁵ This important document provides us with an invaluable x-ray of the main marble studios in Carrara and their employees that year. William Walton's name is also curiously absent (Protocol N°80 dated 12 October 1873, *Accademia di Belle Arti Carrara*).

¹⁶ A. Nino Malagoli (edit.), *Guida illustrata amministrativa commerciale industriale di Carrara e dintorni 1905-1906*, Carrara, Tip. Coop. Lunense, 1905, p. 288.

¹⁷ *The Italian Statues selected for Victoria*, in «Bendigo Advertiser», 11.05.1881, in <<https://trove.nla.gov.au/newspaper/article/88633491?searchTerm=Caniparoli&searchLimits=sortby=-dateAS>>, Melbourne International Exhibition, 1880 Opened 1st October; The Official Catalogue of the Exhibits in *The Pamphlet Collection of Sir Robert Stout*, vol. 41, Victoria University of Wellington Library, Wellington. Other exhibitors from Carrara included: Class 3 Sculpture and Die-sinking: Caniparoli, Antonio, Carrara, 373 - Marble statue *Summer*; Casoni, Tacca Ariodante, Carrara, 374 - Marble group *Leda, and Jupiter (as a swan)*; Fiaschi, Gerolamo Carrara, 415 - marble statue; 416 - marble plate with fruits *Ambition*; 417 - Fruits &c; Fontana Achille, 418 - *Venus de Medici* copy of Canova; Lazzerini Pietro, Carrara, 461 - *Two Children*; Mariotti, Francesco, Carrara, 468 - statuette *The little smoker*; John Udney, Carrara, 531 - marble statue *Shepherd crossing*.

¹⁸ S. Berresford, *Sognando il Marmo: Cultura e commercio del marmo tra Carrara, Gran Bretagna e Impero (1820-1920 circa)*, Fondazione e Cassa di Risparmio di Carrara, Pisa, Pacini, 2009, p. 269.

¹⁹ Giunta Locale di Carrara per l'Esposizione industriale italiana a Milano nel 1881, 1: elenco degli oggetti spediti, Carrara 3 marzo 1881, Camera di Commercio Carrara.

Caniparoli's association with William Walton has yet to be fully investigated but the two certainly had a close working relationship and shared studios and deposits in Carrara which lay opposite one another, each to one side of the Carrione Torrent and linked by the Walton bridge. Antonio Caniparoli's home, studio, exhibition gallery and deposits lay conveniently just beyond the station of San Martino, as did one of Walton's two sawmills and deposits, just below the bridge to the right [fig. 3]. Like Walton, Caniparoli had been one of the first to promote and use the new Marmifera Railway, inaugurated in 1876, linking the quarries to San Martino, then Avenza and down to the port at Marina di Carrara²⁰. In 1886, he signed a convention to use the loading station at Monterosso²¹.

Like so many 19th century entrepreneurial patriarchs, Antonio Caniparoli involved his sons in his business: they owned and leased quarries in the Apuan mountains (Boccanaglia, Canal D'Abbia, Conca, Ronco, Torano), traded in raw and worked marble and processed it for over eighty years. He trained his sons Cesare (1860-1937), Vincenzo (1874-1941) and Alessandro (1876-1938) and then later his eponymous grandson, son of Vincenzo, Antonio (1905-1957) and remained actively involved in the business until his death in 1914. Cesare Caniparoli, the eldest, was involved in the firm from at least 1878, since signed and dated drawings in the Archives exist from that time onwards. After Antonio's death, the firm was run by Cesare and Alessandro, with Vincenzo taking a lesser role. It participated in the important Celebratory Marble Exhibition in Carrara in 1934²², but officially closed in 1938 after the deaths of both Cesare and Alessandro.

Palazzo Caniparoli at San Martino in Carrara

These latter lived with their father in Palazzo Caniparoli [figg. 7-9] which had been enlarged around 1890 by the then leading architect in Carrara, Leandro Caselli (1854-1906), designer not only of several important private and public buildings but also of the new town plan. With its elegant façade, marble balconies and griffin corbels, it proudly boasts the Caniparoli coat of arms over the centre balcony and

²⁰ The history of the "Marble Railway" was documented in the recent exhibition, curated by C. Barandoni, *La Ferrovia Marmifera privata di Carrara* (1.12.2018-31.05.2019), Carrara, Centro Arti Plastiche, 2019.

²¹ Convention n. 5 October 14th, 1886 in *Inventario dell'Archivio della Ferrovia Marmifera*, a cura di P. Bianchi, L. Ricci, Carrara, Biblioteca Civica, 2001, vol. I, p. 140.

²² C.V.Lodovici, *I Padiglioni della Mostra celebrativa del Marmo*, in «Apuania», I, n. 2 (8/1934), p. 48.

the main entrance. This is repeated in one of the many ceilings decorated also with still lifes, flowers and Apuan landscapes. A large atrium, still housing plaster casts and models from the collection, opens onto two elegant marble staircases, one on each side, with stained glass window and *trompe l'oeil* portraits in the fake marble painted in tempera, featuring Garibaldi, Vittorio Emanuele II and Antonio Caniparoli, plus cheeky little angels. The 360° panoramic view from the turreted terrace on the third floor is breathtaking and stretches from the quarries to the port. When Caselli was called to the Ufficio Tecnico of Messina, the *crème* of Carrara hailed him with a dinner at the Albergo La Posta in Carrara on October 30th 1890 and Cesare Caniparoli featured amongst the diners²³.

A far more detailed analysis of the Caniparoli patrimony is underway. Here we can only outline what remains and give some examples as to how it can illuminate us as to the social, historical and artistic importance of this once renowned studio whose activities extended from quarrying itself to processing, to ornamental architecture and sculpture and their sale throughout the world²⁴.

The collection of plaster models and casts

Of the original collection of plaster models and casts, the family still has several important examples although the body of works was dismantled some twenty years ago [fig. 10]. Some went to the Laboratorio Alvaro Pesetti & Figli in Pietrasanta [fig. 11], others went to the Studio Cave Michelangelo di Franco Barattini in Carrara and a few to Professoressa Micheli Pellegrini. There may well be others and any information regarding their whereabouts would be most welcome. Although proportionally few works remain, there are examples from each sector of Caniparoli's activities: portraiture, genre, fountains, religious and allegorical works, celebratory and funeral monuments, garden and architectural ornament. There are even some floral details modelled in clay, so important for the wreaths and swags that were part of the studio's vast funerary repertoire.

²³ «L'Eco del Carrione», supplemento al N° 44 del giornale, 6 November 1890.

²⁴ For reflexions on the importance of this marble craft heritage in general, see S. Berresford, *Un Patrimonio sociale ed artistico ancora da scoprire e conservare/ A Social and Artistic Patrimony still to be discovered and preserved*, in *I laboratori Ferdinando Palla e Martino Barsanti di Pietrasanta alle origini della Piccola Atene*, Fosdinovo, Associazione Artistico Culturale Percorsi d'Arte, 2016, vol. I (A. Bertelli, *Il laboratorio Palla Cavalier Ferdinando*), pp. 35-38.

Alexander Doyle and the Caniparoli Studio

One of two 1:3 scale plaster models representing Confederate soldiers, still in the atrium of Palazzo Caniparoli [fig. 12], has been the subject of a detailed study, to be published shortly. This has enabled the author not only to investigate the relationship between its author, Alexander Doyle (Steubenville, Ohio 1857 – Boston 1922)²⁵ and the Caniparoli Studio but also to expand that study into trade relations between the Carrara studio and the Southern States of the U.S.A.

One soldier, in fact, over two metres high and carved in marble, appears on the *Monument to commemorate Confederate fallen in the American Civil War*, inaugurated in 1874 at the entrance of Greenwood Cemetery in New Orleans²⁶ [fig. 13]. Around the base of the column are the marble busts of the four leading Confederate Generals: Stonewall Jackson, Robert E. Lee, Leonidas Polk and Albert Sidney Johnson. Photographs of these busts, together with a photograph of a clay model of the soldier are in the family Archives [fig. 14].

Doyle, in his time, was considered the leading sculptor of public monuments and one of the main reasons for this success, at a time when art education was just getting underway in the States, was his Italian training in sculpting marble or so said fellow American sculptor Robert Cushing (c. 1841-1896) who reported meeting Doyle in Carrara²⁷. Born in the U.S.A. to a family of quarry owners and stone traders, Doyle was schooled in Leghorn (1869-1871) and returned to Italy in 1874 where he studied at the Academies of Carrara and Florence and claimed Nicoli, Dupré and Pelliccia as his masters²⁸. His association with the Caniparoli and Nicoli studios probably dates to this period. In 1885, he was commissioned a large marble statue to commemorate President James A. Garfield, assassinated in 1881, in

²⁵ Information on Doyle is from his family papers, left by his granddaughter, Mrs. Gloria Watkins Closs to the Smithsonian Institute in Washington which kindly allowed me to consult them.

²⁶ For this and other information regarding cemeteries, funeral sculpture and leading entrepreneurs in the funerary business in New Orleans, see L.V. Huber, *New Orleans Cemeteries: A Brief History*, in *New Orleans Architecture*, vol. III, *The Cemeteries*, Gretna, Pelican Publishing Company, 2001, pp. 37-39 *et passim*.

²⁷ Cushing was in Carrara in 1869 to purchase marble and to supervise the execution in marble of a group by John Quincy Adams Ward (1830-1910). Correspondence between Cushing and Ward, illuminating as to the marble trade at that time, was kindly made available by the American Archives of Art at the Smithsonian Institution, through the international loan system services of the Biblioteca Comunale Carrara, and will shortly be published.

²⁸ Sculptors Carlo Nicoli (Carrara 1843-1915); Ferdinando Pelliccia (Carrara 1808-1892); Giovanni Dupré (Siena 1817-Florence 1882).

the Garfield Mausoleum, Cleveland Ohio, and a plaster model probably relating to this is still conserved in the Nicoli Studio in Carrara²⁹. Doyle collaborated with Nicoli on the *Monument to Firemen* in Greenwood Cemetery (inaugurated in 1887). A further important commission for Doyle, namely 8 large allegorical figures for the Rotonda of the Indiana State House in Indianapolis, Indiana (1887)³⁰, were carved in Carrara: by Nicoli, Caniparoli or possibly, given the size of the commission, both?

Cross connected research: Caniparoli expands his market in the Southern States of the U.S.A.

Several paths of research confirm that the Caniparoli: Doyle association was to be proficuous in the years following their initial collaboration on the early 1870s. Company address books list several companies in Louisville Kentucky (where the Doyle family had business interests) and others in New Orleans. Of the latter, three figures emerge as particularly important: Charles Orleans, Lorenzo Orsini and Albert Weiblen.

Canadian Charles A. Orleans (1839-1923) emigrated from Chicago (via New York and Paris) to New Orleans towards the end of the 1870s and was to become the leading designer and constructor of monuments, statuary and buildings in the South. Like Doyle, with whom he collaborated on the aforementioned Firemen's Monument in Greenwood, he is said to have preferred the Neo-Gothic style in his architecture. The Caniparoli accounts ledgers register several sales of processed stone to Orleans. The latter was superseded by Albert Weiblen (1868-1967), a German emigrè who moved to New Orleans in 1887, and who was to build up an empire in the construction industry and that of funeral monuments in particular. Again, the Caniparoli accounts register several sales of both raw and processed marble (including statuary), starting from around 1906.

Weiblen's name is often associated, in the Caniparoli ledgers, with that of Lorenzo Orsini (with two companies registered in the address books, one in Iowa and one in New York) and Orsini seems to have acted as agent for the Caniparoli on more than one occasion. He may even have been a relative because Cesare Caniparoli had married Carolina Orsini, herself a descendent of the Anarchist Felice Orsini

²⁹ The statue of Garfield is published in *Carrara e il mercato della scultura*, cit., p. 154, where it was correctly identified. It is almost identical in dress and posture to a photograph of Garfield in the print collection of the United States Congress Library which was to serve for several memorial statues, and is clearly not, as has previously been suggested, a statue of Gladstone.

³⁰ For illustrations, consult <[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Values_of_Civilization_\(Doyle\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Values_of_Civilization_(Doyle))>.

(1819-1858), who had attempted the life of Napoleon III. The participation of the Caniparoli in the Universal Exhibition of St. Louis in 1904 could be connected to their desire to expand their already existing trade in this area³¹. A rare signed monument, to Louise Porter († 1888) in the Laurel Grove Cemetery in Savannah (GA), also testifies to such specific territorial interests **[fig. 15]**³².

Surviving documentary evidence

Address books and visiting cards

The family still conserves two address books with handwritten comments as to the kind of work or professional qualification of the addressees, dates and updates as to who was manager at the time or when the firm had closed. Although the precise dates the address books were started are not known, they span several decades, to close with the last chronological annotation of 1931. Several geographical areas have already been studied (the Netherlands, the U.S.A., Great Britain) but a complete location and study of the firms and individuals listed would give us a true map of the extent of the Caniparoli's global enterprise. Cross reference with local trade directories (such as Kelly's Trade Directories for London) provides valuable ratification of data. Even a single addressee, like that of the "Société belge des Travaux publics de Caire", can lead to interesting hypotheses for this company was responsible for building the garden city of Heliopolis, just outside Cairo, in the first decade of the 20th century and several drawings for "Egyptian-inspired" chimney pieces, dating to around 1904, might have been done for one or several of the villas constructed there. Caniparoli employed a referencing service such that the financial soundness of several companies with which he worked, such as Dubay Grosjean at Saint Martin in Belgium, was duly investigated and recorded in his card index reference system.

Of particular interest, and under present investigation, is the relationship between the Caniparoli Studios and leading Sculptors (with a capital "S" !) of the times. In Italy, these included: Donato Barcaglia (Pavia 1849 - Roma 1930); Enrico Butti (Viggiù 1847-1932); Luigi Legnani (Ferrara 1851-1910)³³; Alessandro Massarenti

³¹ Although it should be noted that several other Carrara-based studios and individuals participated through the Carrara Chamber of Commerce with Carlo Fontana acting as Organisational Secretary.

³² Cfr. <<https://adventuresincemeteryhopping.com/2014/11/07/a-beautiful-decay-visting-laurel-grove-north-cemetery>>.

³³ Cfr. L. Scardino, *Trine di Marmo. Le Sculture di Luigi Legani (Ferrara 1851-1910)*, Ferrara, Liberty House, 2005.

(Minerbi Bo. 1846 - Ravenna 1923); Raffaello Romanelli (Florence 1856-1928) and Mario Sarto (Codigoro 1885 - Bologna 1955) to name but a few; among foreign sculptors, apart from Alessandro Doyle, we can find the Spaniard Augustin Querol (Tortosa 1860-1909) and the Pole Bolesław Syrewicz (1835-1899). Of particular interest, is the relationship of the studio with sculptors from Carrara and the Apuan area, Antonio Bozzano (Genova 1858- Viareggio 1939); Carlo Fontana (1871-1923); Adriatico Froli (1858-post 1925); Giuseppe Garibaldi and Adolfo Mazzei (both active in the first part of the 20th century); Carlo Nicoli (Carrara 1848-1915); Leopoldo Sanguinetti (active 1870 c. - ante 1929)³⁴ [fig. 16]; Giovanni (or John) Udny (Leghorn 1850 - Genova 1927) and Frediano Vannucci (whose studio was founded c. 1878). The exact relationship between this last group and the Caniparoli Studio, concerning the commissioning and execution of sculptural work, is under investigation. Since the Caniparoli were themselves architectural and ornamental sculptors, the majority of the statuary work seems to have been subcontracted.

The financial records

Despite several gaps, we are able from such financial records as have survived, to gain some idea of the Studio's economic situation over the years 1882 to 1923 (business registered according to customers) and from 1902 to 1931 (registers of daily activity). Two Accounts Registers (1902-1908 and 1911 to 1931) and a Cash Register (1921-1923) supplement our knowledge while another ledger records the procurement and sales of blocks of marble from 1904 to 1909. Not only can we appreciate the extent of the Studio's commercial network and financial success, but this can be broken down into categories: the financial years 1908-1909 and 1910-1911, for example, unusually registered higher profits for "processed marble" (this included statuary) than for raw marble.

Precious information as to suppliers, customers, conditions of sale, methods and cost of shipment can be painstakingly gleaned from these sources. So too, can the relationship with those local artists to whom the Studio contracted work, such as the previously mentioned Bozzano and Sanguinetti as well as with Andrea Frediani, reported to be Caniparoli's Head of Studio³⁵. Since no records survive as to the workforce employed (apart from Antonio himself and his three sons and generic references to insurance paid for the workforce), the list of payments made

³⁴ For Sanguinetti see P. Saporiti, *L'Arte del Marmo a Carrara*, Carrara, Istituto Editoriale Fascista Apuano, 1928 pp. 49-50. Curiously the Caniparoli Studio is not mentioned in this X-ray of leading artistic studios in Carrara, perhaps an indication that it was already in decline.

³⁵ P. Vigo, *Livorno*, Bergamo, Istituto italiano d'Arti grafiche, 1915, pp. 86-90.

to sculptors and artisans for drawings, modelling, roughing out blocks, carving, polishing, finishing, lettering etc. is extremely valuable and will help the ornamental craft industry and the people who were involved in it, so vital for Carrara's economy over five decades at least (1870 to 1920), to emerge to some degree from the shadows of neglect.

Copies of correspondence

Unfortunately, only three of the no doubt many volumes of copies of correspondence have survived

(the Barsanti Archive in Pietrasanta, for example can claim 155 bound volumes). Nevertheless, the period they cover dates to a particularly formative and successful period of the Studio's activities: 19th September 1885 to 13th September 1886; 22nd May 1890 to January 1st 1891; 15th July 1897 to 28th February 1898.

The second and third volumes are indexed and names can be cross referenced with the address books. In the early years, the majority of trade was on the domestic market followed by Europe, but Vittoria (N.S.W.), Campinas and S.Paolo in Brazil and Detroit in the U.S.A. denote that their intercontinental trade was expanding. By 1890, they were supplying also to Buenos Ayres, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro in South America and to Melbourne Australia.

While study is still underway, a few examples may be illuminating as to the paths to pursue in present and future research: for example, the supply of funeral sculpture to many of the leading mason importers in London (Percy C. Webb; the Art Memorial Company, The London Necropolis Company at Brookwood); correspondence with leading architect Giulio Podesti (Rome 1857-1909) and the prestigious supply of cut-to-size architectural marble elements for his Palazzo Baracchini in Rome (now the Ministry of Defence) 1885-1887; the relationship with the successful stone entrepreneur Jules Cantini (1826-1916) in Marseilles; with the Polish sculptor Prof. Cyprian Godebscki (Méry-sur-Cher, France, 1835 - Paris 1909) then in Carrara; the relationship with the important Romanelli Studio in Florence; the execution of the Pate Chapel in Leghorn which may be reconstructed from correspondence over 1897-1898 and so on.

Drawing albums and loose drawings

The Caniparoli Archive is particularly rich in its collection of surviving drawings, spanning the Studio's entire period of activity [figg. 17-19]. Some of these, like an early printed volume of funerary designs, must have been produced as sales catalogues, for both retailers and perhaps direct customers, as well as serving for artisans to copy. Others are drawings that have been annotated by both those commissioning the work and artisans, containing comments (several in English),

measurements (rigorously in feet and inches), sometimes dates, materials, calculations for the volumes of marble required, destinations and signatures, and nearly always numbers (although the reference system has not survived along with them, some may refer to photographic plates (see below). These are working drawings and quite a few contain sheets of tracing paper, placeable over the original drawings, showing alternative designs for part of the monument (a portrait to replace a funerary urn or vice versa, alternative statues or angels, and so on).

Some of the drawings, particularly for religious furnishings (ornate Neo-Gothic altarpieces, for example, with many different kinds of coloured marbles) and fountains are watercoloured and are particularly precious and attractive. As witness to the “working” nature of some of the drawings, two tiny caricatures, sketched by artisans of their anonymous fellow workers, have been discovered [fig. 21].

Photographs and photographic plates

Photography became vital to the ornamental marble craft industry: clay models were photographed (the clay would, of course, be lost during the casting in plaster); plaster models and then the finished works in marble would be photographed, as, indeed, would be the trial assembly of complicated religious furniture to be used for its reassembly *in loco*. Photographs would be used for portraiture, especially when death masks were not available. Photographs were used for artisans to copy or to take inspiration and develop other but similar models (especially angels, in which there was a thriving trade)³⁶ and, of course, given to retailers to show their clients (sometimes as their own work although Antonio Caniparoli often had his works photographed with his name alongside) [fig. 20]. Since nearly all the Apuan Studios used the same series of photographers, (C. Bianchi & Sons, Guglielmo Della Nave (active c. 1890-1920), and V.Valenti (whose studio in Carrara was taken over by Ilario Bessi in 1929), it was very hard to maintain copyright on one’s works.

Photographic plates (many still extant) were numbered and could be reproduced to provide retailers with a selection of works in whatever category (usually funerary, religious or genre) they required. Caniparoli’s agents abroad would have been furnished with these.

³⁶ S. Berresford, *Selling Angels: the Apuan trade in London’s funerary marble from 1850 to 1930* in *Sculpting Art History Essays in Memory of Benedict Read* ed. K. Eustace, M. Stocker, J.Barnes, PMSA London and Leeds, 2018, pp. 138-135.

A special case: "Album N"

Album N consists of a collection of photographs of various kinds of work which were probably available at any one time (or at least which could be ordered) from the Caniparoli exhibition gallery, a two-storey building, attached to the house and flanking the left bank of the Carrione Torrent. This document, already valuable in its own right, has become fundamental to the historian after the discovery in the Family Archive of five sheets of handwritten lists, identifying the works, type of marble, dimensions and prices according to whether they were executed by "AC" (i.e. in the Caniparoli studio, in which case the price was marked up, or "Oliv." (presumably Carlo Olivieri, sculptor and ornamental sculptor, with a studio in Via Cavour in Carrara, mentioned in the Malagoli Guide of 1905-1906. It would appear that Caniparoli sold on behalf of Pietro Lazzerini [fig. 22], Aristide Fontana and Andrea Frediani while we believe we may also add Raffaello Romanelli of Florence to the list. Although not yet complete, identification of works with their titles has proved particularly fortuitous in the case of genre statues and groups, several of which have passed through the auction houses of London over the past two decades untitled or with mistaken identities.

Conclusions

This essay intends to outline the importance of the Caniparoli Archive and Collection and to highlight the role that this family played in the economic and artistic history of Carrara for well over fifty years. It is hoped to publish a fuller version, rich in documentation and illustrations, shortly. While some evidence has been destroyed or lost, it is important to evaluate the very considerable part that we have left and which documents a truly, though perhaps *ante litteram*, global industry. After decades of lying hidden in the shadows of progress in the name of technology, the history of the ornamental marble craft, and those who practised it, in Carrara and the Apuan area at large, is beginning to emerge from the shadows [fig. 23].



Fig. 1. Photo of Antonio Caniparoli, c. 1914, Caniparoli Family, Carrara



Fig. 2. Visiting card showing the Caniparoli home and studio (post 1890), Caniparoli Archives, Carrara



Fig. 3. Photo showing Palazzo Caniparoli, the surrounding marble deposits and the S.Martino Station of the Marmifera Railway ca 1900. Caniparoli Archives, Carrara

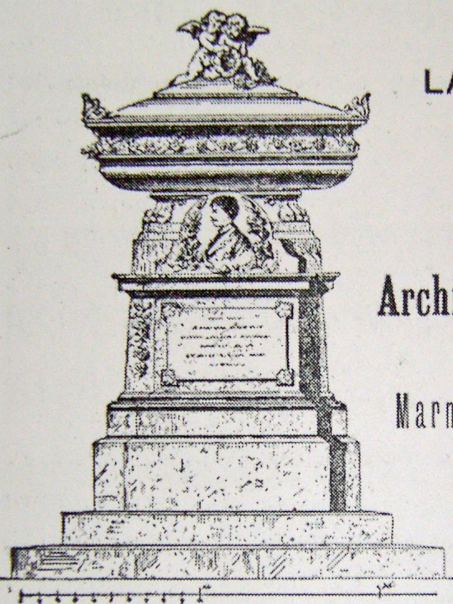


Fig. 4. Contemporary photo of the Pate Chapel Leghorn, Cimitero della Misericordia, Leghorn, c.1896, with the *Crucifixion* by Carlo Fontana. Caniparoli Archives, Carrara



Fig. 5. Photo presumably of the prize-winning chimney piece at the National Exhibition in Milan, 1881. Caniparoli Archives, Carrara

A. CANIPAROLI & FIGLI
CASA FONDATA NEL 1850.



LABORATORIO

DI

Architettura e Scultura

Marmi greggi e lavorati

CARRARA

GRAND PRIX

all' Esposizione Universale

di Saint Louis 1904.

Menzione Onorevole, Milano 1881. - Diploma d' onore, Accademia di Carrara 1876. - Diploma d' onore, Melbourne 1873. - Medaglia d' argento, Genova 1892.

Fig. 6. Advertisement for the Caniparoli Studio, listing their Awards, published in *Guida illustrata amministrativa commerciale industriale di Carrara e dintorni 1905-1906*, A. Nino Malagoli edit., Carrara, 1905



Fig. 7. Palazzo Caniparoli at San Martino, designed by Leandro Caselli ca 1890

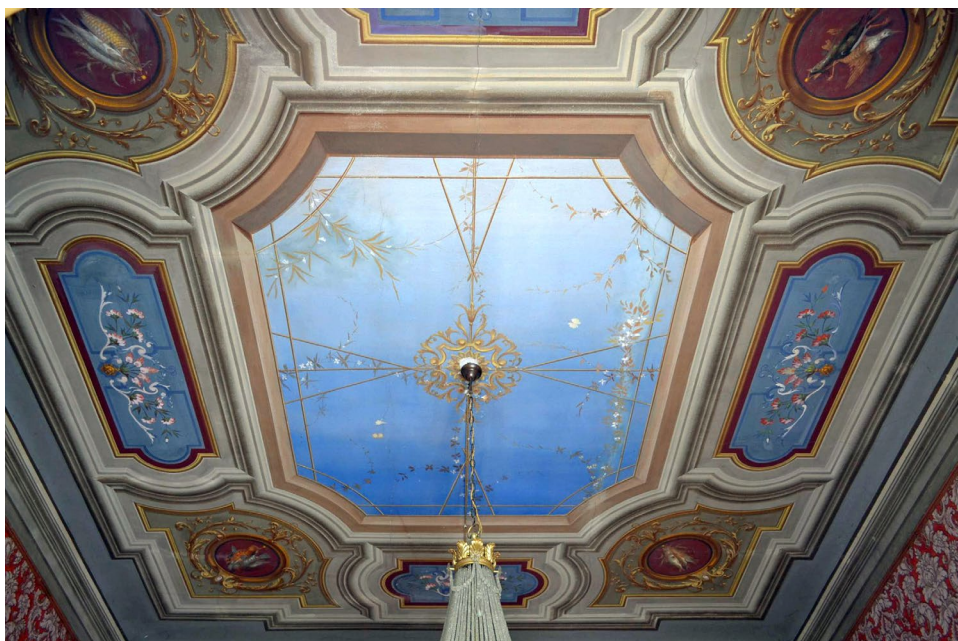


Fig. 8. One of the many decorated Ceilings of Palazzo Caniparoli



Fig. 9. The Atrium of Palazzo Caniparoli with some of the surviving plaster Models and Casts



Fig. 10. Some of the plaster Models and Casts when still at Palazzo Caniparoli. Caniparoli Family Archives



Fig. 11. Some of the plaster Models and Casts from the Caniparoli Studio, now at the Laboratorio Aldo Pesetti in Pietrasanta



Fig. 12. Alexander Doyle and the Studio Caniparoli: 1:3 scaled model in plaster of the *Confederate soldier on the Monument to Confederate Fallen*, Greenwood Cemetery, New Orleans. Palazzo Caniparoli



Fig. 13. Alexander Doyle and the Studio Caniparoli, detail of the *Monument to the Soldiers of the Confederation who fell in the American Civil War*, Greenwood Cemetery, New Orleans, 1874



Fig. 14. Photo of the clay Model for Doyle's *Confederate soldier*. Caniparoli Archives, Carrara



Fig. 15. "A. Caniparoli Carrara" (signed), *Funerary Monument to Louise Porter* († 1888), Laurel Grove Cemetery, Savannah U.S.A.



Fig. 16. Leopoldo Sanguinetti, "flower-throwing angel type", ca 1925, photo from the Archives of the Laboratorio Poletti & Ghio, Carrara

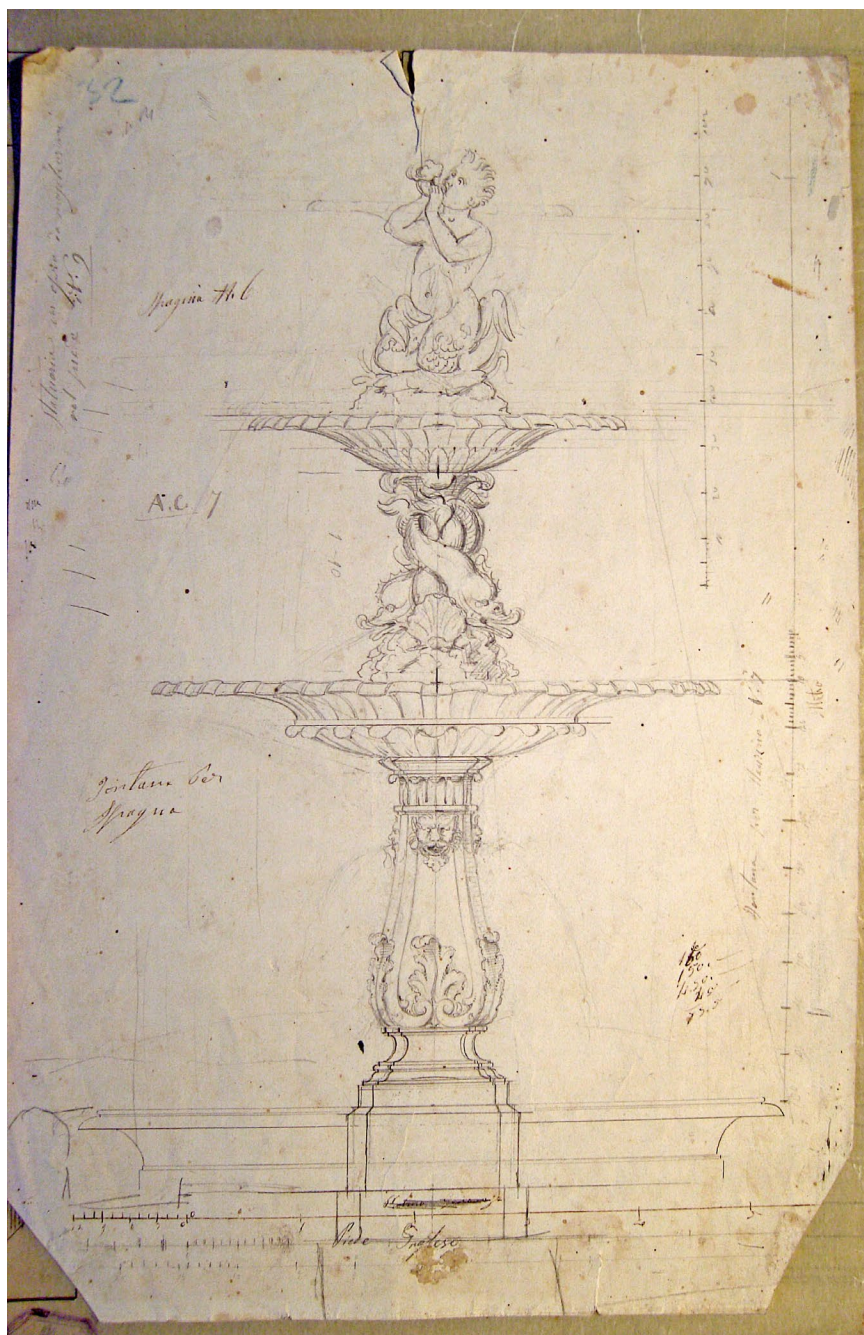


Fig. 17. "A. Caniparoli" (monogrammed), *Drawing for a Fountain*. Caniparoli Archives, Carrara



Fig. 18. "Antonio Caniparoli Carrara" (signed), drawing for a complex Neo-Gothic funeral Monument. Caniparoli Archives Carrara

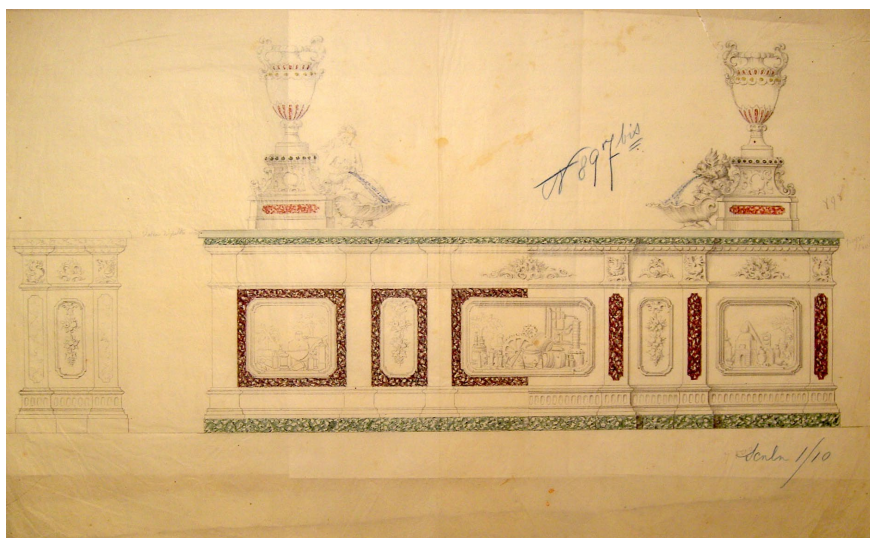


Fig. 19. Laboratorio Antonio Caniparoli, watercoloured Drawing for a piece of Furniture decorated with bas-reliefs. Caniparoli Archives Carrara



Fig. 20. Antonio Caniparoli & Figli Carrara, *Funerary monument in the form of a double bench with floral cross and mourning putto*, Caniparoli Archives, Carrara



Fig. 21. Caricature/Portrait drawing presumably of one of the sculptor/ masons in the Caniparoli Studio. Caniparoli Archives Carrara



Fig. 22. Pietro Lazzerini, *L'Armonia*, N84/N Album N. Caniparoli Archives, Carrara



Fig. 23. Studio A. Caniparoli, *Cross draped with ornamental marble floral Swag*.
Note the Arm of the anonymous Mason to the left of the Viewer, pulling back the Drapes.
Caniparoli Archives, Carrara



PROFILO

Sandra Berresford

Dopo aver studiato Storia dell'Arte presso l'Università dell'East Anglia e l'Istituto Courtauld di Londra, ha proseguito gli studi di Storia della Critica d'Arte presso l'Università Internazionale dell'Arte di Firenze e la Scuola Normale di Pisa. Ha focalizzato i propri interessi di ricerca sull'arte simbolista in Italia nel periodo 1850-1930. Ha condotto specifiche ricerche sul Divisionismo e i rapporti fra artisti italiani e britannici in quel periodo, in particolare su Giovanni Costa, "In Arte Libertas" e il circolo di artisti e letterati simbolisti a Roma. Dall'inizio degli anni 1980 si è concentrata principalmente sulla scultura funeraria del periodo sopracitato in Italia e sullo scultore piemontese Leonardo Bistolfi. Essendosi stabilita nella zona apuana, ha inoltre rivolto la sua ricerca ai laboratori artistici e artigianali di Carrara e ai loro rapporti con l'America del Nord, la Gran Bretagna e il Commonwealth.

Having studied Art History at the University of East Anglia and at the Courtauld Institute in London, she later studied the History of Art Criticism at the Università Internazionale dell'Arte in Florence and the Scuola Normale in Pisa. Her interests focused on Symbolist Art in Italy over the period 1850-1930. Specific research regarded Divisionism and the relations between Italian and British artists over that period especially through Giovanni Costa, "In Arte Libertas" and Symbolist artists and literary figures in Rome. From the early 1980s she has concentrated her research principally on Italian funerary sculpture from the aforesaid period and the leading Symbolist sculptor, piemontese Leonardo Bistolfi. Furthermore, having moved to the Apuan area, she turned her attention to the art and craft studios in Carrara, especially their relations with North America, Britain and Commonwealth.



REFERENZE FOTOGRAFICHE

1-5, 14, 17-23: Caniparoli Archives, Carrara; 6: Published in *Guida illustrata amministrativa commerciale industriale di Carrara e dintorni 1905-1906*, A. Nino Malagoli edit., Carrara, 1905; 7-9, 12: by courtesy of Luigi Biagini; 10, 11: Sandra Berresford; 13: by courtesy of Robert Freidus; 15 Adventures in Cemetery Hopping, by Traci Rylands, <<https://adventuresincemeteryhopping.com>>; 16: Archives of the Laboratorio Poletti & Ghio, Carrara





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