



## THE XIXTH CENTURY GARDENS

The second half of the XIXth century inherits the classic and landscape facilities from previous centuries; their re-elaboration and assimilation in an eclectic style then follows. Geometrical elements typical of the formal garden remain, but get combined with scenically free forms; to this gets added a renewed interest in botanical sciences with, above all, particular attention being paid to new imported trees. The result is that in the gardens, topiary art - with plants being pruned into geometric shapes - cohabits with colourful exotic plants, often used in apparently casual arrangements. And so, formal and informal meet and draw close. This is the expression of a society that is experiencing profound change and is searching for a style in which to identify itself.

Eclecticism therefore remains the prevalent expression in the gardens of both the XIXth and XXth century. Romantic impetus, patriotic ideals, the influence of English gardens and, to a certain extent, the imperial style introduced by Napoleon, are all woven together in the inspiration of the XIXth century Italian designers, making up a landscape which is, under many aspects, unique in the European scenario. In the Veneto region, great landscapers distinguish themselves, among which mention must be made of **Giuseppe Jappelli** and **Francesco Bagnara** who, in their gardens, translate the erudition of engineering and the artistic delicacy of the Venetian Academy, where Antonio Caregaro Negrin also studied, worthy disciple of the two prestigious masters.

Disciple of this gift for combining different styling experiences and traditions, within a span of twenty years, the architect finalises the design of the Jacquard Garden: perfectly matching the area's particular orography, well set in the neighbouring industrially developed zone and - an appreciable aspect - with recreational facilities for the newly formed community of city textile workers.

## THE DESIGNER AND HIS GARDEN ESTABLISHMENT

Antonio Caregaro Negrin was born in Vicenza on June 13, 1821, the son of Domenico Caregaro and Maddalena Negrin, descendants of master mason families. Orphaned at an early age, he was barely twenty when he opened and managed his own workshop. The same year he married Veronica Zanetti, with whom he was to have numerous children, who became his most valuable collaborators. He attended a technical design and mathematics course where, impressed by his talent, several of his teachers introduced him to the Fine Arts Academy. In 1848, he graduated in civil engineering and in architecture in 1853. Starting from 1848, his first projects were commissioned by illustrious Vicenza families of the time.

Always driven by a desire for innovation and experimentation, he gained great satisfaction in designing and creating new garden architectures. His was an all-round professional and human commitment: **town planner, lecturer, Olympic academic, member or chairman of a number of cultural institutions in Vicenza and member of the "Commissione dell'Ornato" (Town Planning Commission)**. A patriot as well, he was committed to the defence of Vicenza (1848) and Venice (1849) as an officer of military engineering and designer of several defence constructions. With the annexing of the Veneto region to the Kingdom of Italy in 1866, he was appointed as "Commendatore" to the Crown.

As early as 1846, Antonio Caregaro Negrin had met industrialist Alessandro Rossi at the performance of Sophocles' Oedipus the King at Vicenza's Olympic Theatre, whose stage had been restored by the architect. The year before, in 1845, Alessandro Rossi had become the director of the Wool Mill, founded by his father, Francesco. Not only did the industrial expansion phase

begin in this way, but also a systematic plan to restructure the area surrounding the factory and to expand and enhance the city of Schio.

From the very start of their acquaintance, these two personages shared a profound intellectual and professional affinity. For industrialist Rossi, the architect was the "ideal man": expert in new artistic languages, experimenter with a vast repertoire of solutions, landscaping architect, expert in the new construction technologies which he used with confidence and originality. This all led to Negrin working with Rossi for over 40 years, starting with the Jacquard Garden and climaxing with the Working-Class Neighbourhood in 1872 and the redesigning of the Cathedral and the square in front of it in 1877-79. **The Rossi Garden eventually takes its name from the annexed theatre, dedicated to Joseph-Marie Jacquard, the French artisan who perfected the loom that allows complex designs to be woven into the fabrics.** This was the first punched card application and because of this, the Jacquard loom is considered the forefather of the computer.



## VISITING THE GARDEN

The Jacquard Garden entrance opens in front of the monumental Tuscan portal of the Francesco Rossi wool mill, to emphasize the location's link with the factory. The elegant railings, flanked by four octagonal pillars surmounted by lanterns, is embellished with floral decorations repeated in the bars replacing the original high wall, lowered by almost 2 m to make the garden visible from the outside as well. A long stone bench runs along the base, used by the workers while waiting to enter the various departments of the factory.

The other boundaries of the property still have the high, geometrically decorated brick and stone wall typical of gardens designed by architect Caregaro Negrin.

To the left of the gate is the **workers canopy (no.1)**, built by Eng. E. L. Pergameni in 1878, on a portion of the site already occupied by the Jacquard Textile Mill. The building has three equal sides and, in a Lombard style aedicule, hosts the marble bust of Francesco Rossi (by F. Groggia), dedicated to him by his son Alessandro in 1861.

In front of the entrance, visitors are welcomed by the **bronze statue of Alessandro Rossi (no.2)**. More to the right was a pond with fountain, nowadays a rose bed. Near the fencing, a **Saucer Magnolia (no.1)** and a **Western red cedar** can be admired in amongst the rock-garden beds. Further along, on the left of the avenue, is a palm tree surrounded by roses, while other specimens dot the lawn of the central mound. This is fringed by a winding box hedge and is surrounded by flowering shrubs (*forsythias, lilacs, calycanthus,*



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## ALESSANDRO ROSSI: THE FACTORY AND THE TERRITORY

The complexity of the industrial, social and town planning activities conducted by the Schio entrepreneur Alessandro Rossi during the XIXth century has left manifold testimonies of undisputed value in the town's historical centre as well as in the provincial territory at large. **Alessandro Rossi (Schio 1819 - Santorso 1898)** is the most significant and explosive representative of the Italian industrialists in the second half of the XIXth century: **Member of Parliament, senator of the Kingdom, expert in agrarian problems and publicist, he was a stimulating interlocutor on the national political and economic scenario.** His frequenting the avant-garde cultural circles of the time, his business and work acumen in the various sectors of his father's textile industry, the experimentation and comparison with the most advanced productive technologies of countries such as England, Belgium and Germany, enabled him to evolve and transform his industry into a capitalistic enterprise of European standing. The album of lithographic prints Rossi commissioned from Carlo Matscheg in 1864, clearly proves his will to represent the "greatness" of the **Fabbrica Alta** factory (1862). Through modern machinery, the fabrics produced and the staff employed, he highlighted the way in which industry could merge harmoniously with the original landscape and within a social context. This vision of his was also at the core of the "Fabbrica Alta" achievement and was the driving force through which in 1872 he began planning the **Nuovo Quartiere Operaio** (New Working-



Class Neighbourhood). In its final version, this creation was rational, modern and perfectly blended in the existing context. The importance vested in the new generations is proven by the numerous school buildings planned and financed by the industrialist himself, somehow recalling similar European and American experiences. Among the public services, the remarkable wash-house and baths building that once stood on the current Via XX Settembre.

The construction in 1876 of the **railway line** connecting the industrial Town to the provincial capital was of great importance: it continued to develop through to the end of the century, finally connecting Schio to the nearby municipalities, where other Rossi factories had been established. The interventions promoted by Alessandro Rossi throughout the whole recently industrialised territory were continuous and demanding, with water works and various infrastructures being constructed and electrical power, for civil use as well, being diffused. Furthermore, the industrialist also promoted the application of innovative production systems in the agricultural sector, as clearly transpires from the numerous documents he left. *A "model farm" completed the house he built as his residence in Santorso: industrial greenhouses, a preserves factory and a horticulture and pomology school, the whole project designed and attended to by his friend and architect, Antonio Caregaro Negrin.*

The considerable number of new workers massed in the City and the transformation of the landscape - all natural consequences of the strong industrial development triggered by Rossi - made it possible for the City and the whole territory to enjoy an extensive economic, social and cultural development. **A farsighted and diligent man, the vision the industrialist Alessandro Rossi had for the entire City was global, non-fragmented, a vision that still nowadays is there for all to see.**



GUIDE MAP - GIARDINO JACQUARD

INFORMATION  
Ufficio Promozione del Territorio  
[www.visitschio.it](http://www.visitschio.it)

**visitschio**

The Jacquard Garden is at 148, Via Pasubio - Schio  
VISITE GUIDATE a pagamento e su prenotazione.  
*Aperture domenicali durante il periodo estivo.*  
PARKING: underground parking in Piazza Falcone e Borsellino and open parking next to the "Fabbrica Alta" - 149, Via Pasubio

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GUIDE MAP  
GIARDINO  
JACQUARD



Comune di Schio

Japanese quince) and young yew trees. At the edge, a water chute is still visible, the remainder of the original water play that used to splash over the upstream rocks.

On the right-hand side, towards south-east, the garden is closed by the spectacular façade of the **Jacquard Theatre (no.3)**, next to it, on a pedestal shaped like the trunk of a palm tree, is the stone bust of **Sebastiano Bologna (no.4)**, founder partner with Francesco Rossi of the wool mill. Nearby, on the uphill side, a massive **evergreen Sequoia (no.2)** and the great **cypress tree from Portugal (no.3)** can be admired.

Continuing towards the left, the winding, **humid greenhouse (no.5)** appears in all its beauty, representing the pivot point of the garden, a first scenic wing for those entering and doorway leading to the world of **nymphaeum (no.6)**, grottos and paths at the back. In the middle of a semi-circular construction stretching out in front of the greenhouse, originally stood a statue of Flora (?), and later on, until the 1990 restoration, was an iron and zinc aviary dating back to the end of the XIXth century.

The most surprising part of the garden opens out at the back of the greenhouse, with a maze of paths winding among rocky outgrowths, grottos and neo-gothic constructions that culminate with the reconstruction of the Schio castle ruins, extending to the top of the hill and with the bridge and lookout overlooking the Rossi wool mill and the XIXth century town. The garden's farthest background hosts the small XIXth century church of St. Rocco, outside the fencing, to which Caregaro Negrin added the neo-gothic bell tower to heighten the garden's upward development. Furthermore, this constitutes the perspective focus of St. Rocco's scenographic flight of steps, with the castle's park.

Descending from the hanging gardens towards the north western side, next to a grotto, appears a **crocodile head (no.7)**, while on the other side rises the **octagonal turret (no.8)** flanked by two large **photinias (no.6)**. From this point two paths branch off: one starts from an **evergreen redwood tree** and runs along the fencing; the other, more central, is marked by a **yew tree grove (no.7)**. The paths then unwind side-by-side among **privets, hackberries** and **magnolias (no.8)**, accompanying visitors towards the exit.



## THE BOTANICAL WEALTH

### 1 Magnolia x soulangiana

(MAGNOLIACEAE FAMILY)

Also known as Saucer Magnolia, it is a hybrid of the Denuded Magnolia and the Magnolia Lilyflora of Chinese origin. Has deciduous leaves and flaunts a glory of white and pink tulip-shaped flowers that bloom in March-April on stripped or "denuded" branches, before the leaves appear.



### 2 Sequoia sempervirens

(TAXODIACEAE FAMILY)

Tree with columnar foliage and long hanging branches; it can reach 110 m in height. Relict of prehistoric vegetation, it now grows spontaneously only on the west coast of North America. Some Californian sequoia trees are more than 2,500 years old.



### 4 Sequoiadendron giganteum

(TAXODIACEAE FAMILY)

Tree with a symmetrical conical shape, branches have a downwards inclination and a solid tawny trunk. In native California, some specimens have reached 4,000 years of age. The thick and spongy bark withstands fire, contains no resin but is rich in tannin.



### 5 Taxus baccata

(TAXACEAE FAMILY)

An evergreen, the red-berried European Yew tree also growing in the shade of taller trees. It has been estimated that these trees can live up to 2,000 years. The bright red ripe fruits are harmless, but the seed they contain is poisonous. Owing to this peculiarity it has also been called the "tree of death".



### 7 Magnolia grandiflora

(MAGNOLIACEAE FAMILY)

A pyramidal shape, with luxuriant foliage, evergreen with scented flowers; it rarely exceeds 30 m in height. The origins of these plants, thought by botanists to be the earth's first Angiosperms, go back to antiquity. Indigenous to the southern part of the United States, they were introduced to Europe in 1837.



### 2 Statue of Alessandro Rossi

The monument stands on a tall stone pedestal decorated with garlands and is located in the middle of a round flowerbed with crushed rock edgings, originally a water pond. It was erected in 1899 (the year after Rossi's death) by Milanese artist Achille Alberti who portrayed the entrepreneur in his old age, in a familiar posture, walking stick in hand and a hat, as if ready to take a stroll in the garden.



### 3 Jacquard Theatre

The Lombard façade of the building, formerly the wool storehouse, alternates with windows framed by red bands, 12 terracotta medallions by Milanese sculptor G.B. Boni, depicting illustrious personages from Schio's history: Friar Giovanni da Schio (1200-1600), F. Gualtieri, artist (XIIIth century), Giampaolo and Giulio Manfron, military leaders (XVth- XVIth centuries), G. Bancucci, bishop and diplomat (1481-1533), B. Trinagio, literary man (1512-1577); Niccolò Tron, wool industrialist (1685-1772); Giano Reghellini, doctor (1710-1772); F. Grisellini, literary man (1717-1783); G. Bologna, literary man (1765-1842), Pietro Maraschin, geologist (1774-1825) and Ambrogio Fusinieri, scientist (1775-1853). Originally, the building hosted a warehouse and a small dwelling for the caretaker. In 1869, the upper floor was turned into an 800-seat theatre, used for shows staged by the workers. The lower floor became a fully fledged cultural centre; in fact, besides the ticket office and the cafeteria, it also hosted a library, a music hall and night school.

### 5 Greenhouse

The humid greenhouse, with its curved front, embraces the upper part of the garden. One enters through the sides via a few steps in local stone. The terracotta putti (now removed) and the floral decorations, underline the use made of the building which, thanks to the majolica stove, the aeration system and the position protected from the north winds, afforded protection to the most delicate plants. In particular, the greenhouse was intended for orchids, Rossi's great passion and gifts destined to his more valued clients.



### 6 Nymphaeum

It serves as the entrance to a romantic and mythological path, made of covered passages, grottos, flights of stairs and water plays (now disappeared), in which various sculptures were placed, ranging from exotic to classical styles, depending on the eclectic taste of the time (the crocodile, Flora, Atlas, the dwarfs, science) and elements evocative of the ancient Schio castle, destroyed in 1413.



### 7 Crocodile

Evocatively, the animal seems to have been caught in the act of emerging from the rock. The ancient Egyptians considered it to be sacred and it was placed here to recall their prowess in the craft of weaving. Besides linen they also worked with raffia and wool and used different weaving techniques and numerous types of weaves. They were fully conversant with dyeing and used vegetable colouring: madder, catamo and henna for reds, sumach to obtain blue, pomegranate bark for yellow and ochre derived from minerals.



### 8 Turret

Re-interpreted by the architect as a dovecote tower and belvedere, it originally hosted the Jacquard textile mill cloakrooms, demolished in 1878. Ever since olden times until the advent of industrial chemistry, urine was used in textile processing by virtue of its high ammonia content, useful for degreasing and bleaching greasy wool.

