

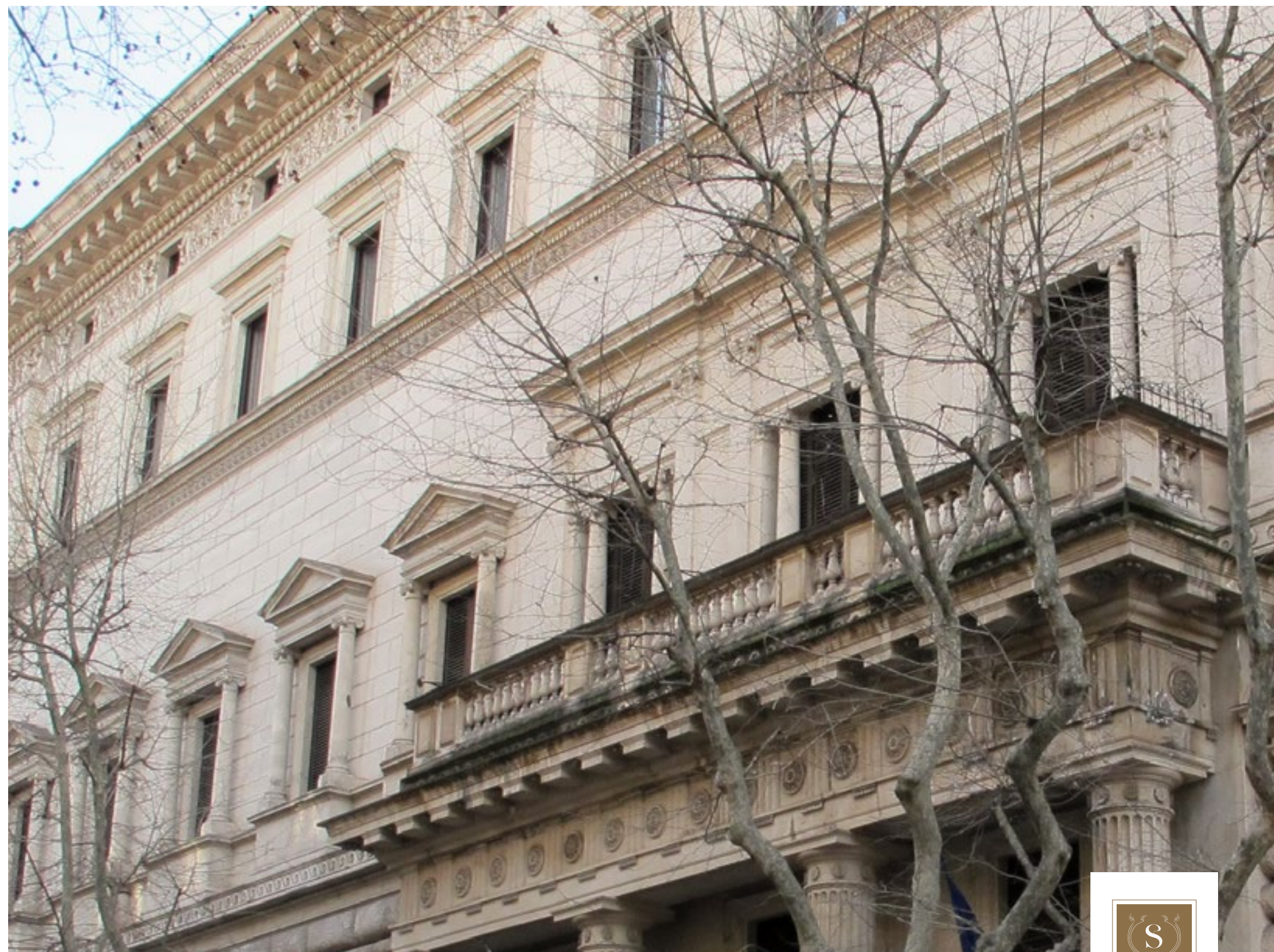


THE PRINCESS SALONS

THE PALACE

The immense Palazzo Brancaccio was the last princely residence built in Rome. It was constructed at the end of the 19th century by Mary Elizabeth Bradhurst Field, a very wealthy woman from New York, whose daughter Elizabeth had married Prince Don Salvatore Brancaccio, scion of an ancient noble family who transferred from Naples to Rome to join the Royal Court after the Unification of Italy (1870).

Architects Gaetano Koch and Luca Carimini, two of the primary creators of the new, modern face Rome took on at the end of the nineteenth century, were entrusted with the construction of the palace, which took decades to complete. Of classical and solemn forms, harmonious and at the same time imposing, the building extends along Via Merulana, the broad tree-lined avenue that connects the papal basilicas of Santa Maria Maggiore and San Giovanni in Laterano.



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA



NINFEO



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA

THE PARK

Set atop the Oppian Hill, which is part of the Esquiline (one of the Seven Hills of Rome), the park of Palazzo Brancaccio is a welcome green swath in the city center. The nymphaeum, with its fountain full of fish and adorned with statues of Hercules and David, is an architectural gem that acts as a theatrical backdrop to the majestic palace entrance. Tradition has it that the “Tower of Maecenas” once stood here, from which, according to Suetonius, Nero watched the city burn while plucking at his lyre. Walking along the pathways amongst the centuries-old holm oaks, laurels and palm trees and discovering statuary fragments peeping out amongst the acanthus, one has the sensation of entering a world outside of time, steeped in silence and inaccessible to the surrounding urban hubbub.



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THE SALONS

The Princess Salons are laid out on the *piano nobile*, the impressive main floor, once inhabited by the last Brancaccio prince, son of Prince Salvatore and Elizabeth, Don Marcantonio (1879-1961), and his wife, Donna Fernanda (1907-2014). Situated at the end of a monumental staircase, the salons consist of a series of magnificent rooms covering a total area of over 1000 square metres (nearly 11,000 square feet).



Princess Fernanda, who lived here for many years after the death of her prince, was a woman of talent and determination. Knowingly invested with the task of carrying forward the memory of her husband and of the Brancaccio family, she carefully preserved the apartments in which she lived. Thanks to her, these salons remain in optimal condition today. Here you can still breathe the intimate air of home, all the furnishings

being original, and yet here, too, as in the fairy tale of Sleeping Beauty, time seems to have been suspended.

The current owners, Brancaccio descendants through the female line, passionately sense their role in preserving in the best possible ways this place of deep memory and stunning beauty.



BALDAQUIN HALL



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA



BALDAQUIN HALL

The baldaquin (canopy) is a lofty structure covered in red cloth and enclosed by a balustrade, on which the family's crest is emblazoned. It is located in the first room of the residence and stands as a prerogative of the highest ranking Roman families, those who bear the title of prince or duke. The baldaquin of the Brancaccio princes depicts their coat of arms, composed of four devices of golden lion paws on a blue field rising from the sides and divided by a silver band with double-headed eagles, surrounded by the collar of the Order of the Golden Fleece with an ermine mantle.

This is the largest room and symbolically the palace's most important, being graced by portraits of the main personages of the lineage, lords and commanders, ladies and prelates, all depicted on canvas or in marble. On the cornice that runs around the ceiling, views of the family's properties are shown in frescoes, including the castles of Roviano and San Gregorio, as well as the newly completed Palazzo Brancaccio itself.



SALON OF THE LIONS

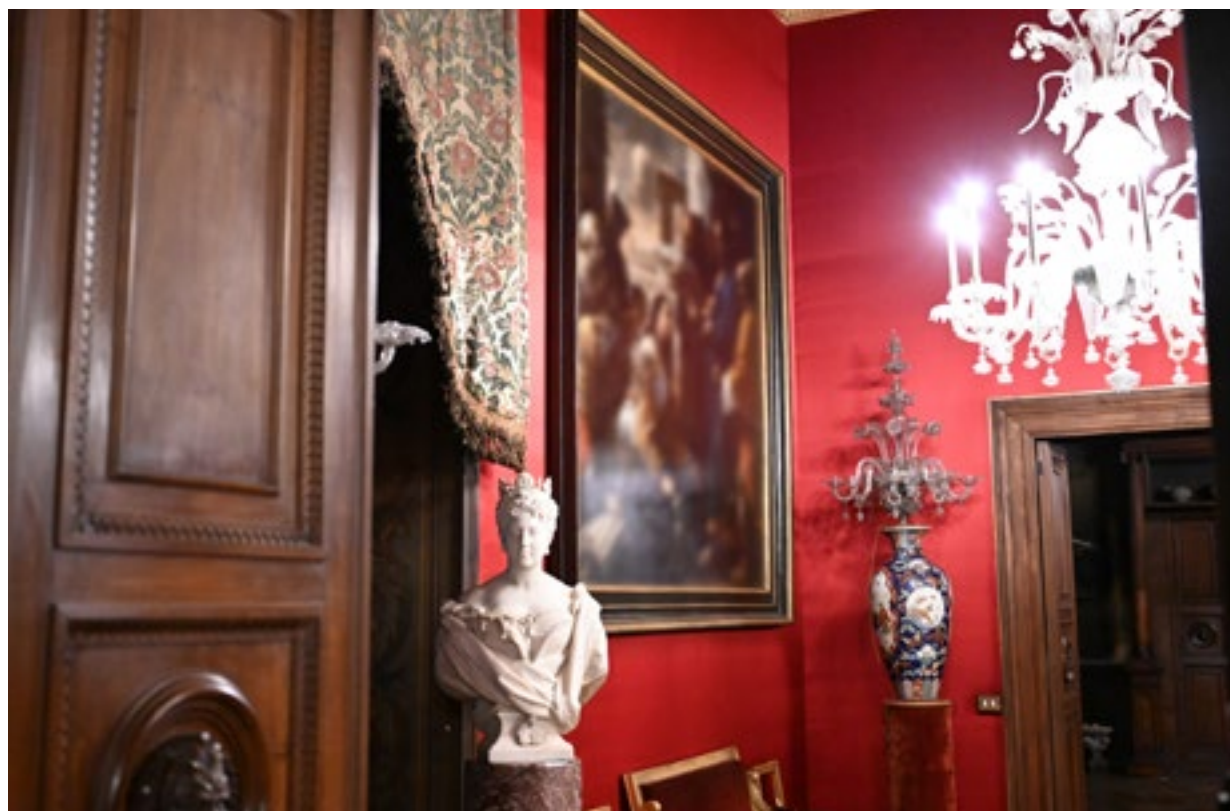


Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA



SALON OF THE LIONS

Lined entirely with red satin, this room takes its name from the lion heads carved on the armchairs, sofas and golden consoles that furnish it. There is also a bust of Princess Elizabeth, sculpted by Francesco Gai (1835-1917). Married in Paris on 30 March 1870 to Prince Salvatore, the beautiful princess, whom the family called Bessie, was Queen Margherita's lady of honor and a leading light in Roman society. The chronicles of the time recall that the Brancaccio princes regularly received guests each Monday in their sumptuous palace, while in May 1886 the entire Royal Court was fêted at a large reception held in the garden. Invitations received from the princes, newspaper articles about them, letters they wrote, and many photographs are still preserved in the palace. In her portrait, sculpted in light-colored stone, Princess Brancaccio is shown wearing her crown, as she seems to be looking out the window, evincing a hint of a smile and a dreamy air.



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA



DRAWING ROOM (BOUDOIR) OF THE MIRRORS



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA



DRAWING ROOM (BOUDOIR) OF THE MIRRORS

This small room, resplendent with mirrors and gilding, contains miniature portraits of members of the Brancaccio family from the Middle Ages to the twentieth century. It resembles the eighteenth-century Cabinet of Miniatures in the Royal Palace in Turin and was created by Princess Elizabeth, who entrusted its execution to the painter, sculptor and architect Francesco Gai, a great family friend and creator of numerous other works and decorations for the palace, including the spectacular carved sedan chair that can be admired here.



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA



LIBRARY



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA

LIBRARY

With soaring ceilings, full of systematically-arranged books on handsome, dark-panelled shelves, and with long tables and a stone fireplace, the library of Palazzo Brancaccio is a place of repose and meditation.

It contains numerous books in English, read by Princess Elizabeth and her parents Mary Elizabeth Bradhurst and Hickson Woolman Field. The Fields belonged to an old New York family who had emigrated from England in the 17th century and who in the 19th century had amassed a great fortune in the iron industry and by investing in the development of Manhattan. In Rome, in addition to building Palazzo Brancaccio, the Field contributed to the construction of Saint Paul's Within the Walls on Via Nazionale, which was the first Protestant church in Rome after the popes' temporal dominion came to an end.

The library also contains numerous studies and original documents recording the history of the Brancaccio family. The family, one of Italy's most important, had its origins in the Middle Ages. Powerful feudal lords of the Kingdom of Naples, where Brancaccios numbered leaders, prelates and great lords among their members. Among the men, we must mention Cardinal Rinaldo (ca. 1360 – 1427), protagonist of the stormy historical period called "the Great

Western Schism". His funerary monument, which is preserved in the Neapolitan church of Sant'Angelo a Nilo, was sculpted by Donatello. Among the noblewomen, there are the beautiful ladies celebrated by Giovanni Boccaccio in his 1334 poem *Diana's Hunt*: Maria, Berita, Serella and Vannella Brancaccio, all part of the Court of King Robert of Anjou.



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HALL OF TAPESTRIES



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HALL OF TAPESTRIES

The gilded walls of this large space frame three seventeenth-century French tapestries. The legends of Cyrus the Great, King of Persia, as related by Herodotus, are shown: the infant Cyrus nursed by a bitch after being abandoned by order of his grandfather Astyages; Cyrus rewarding the shepherd Mithridates for saving his life; and the same sovereign defeating his grandfather and uniting the kingdoms of the Medes and Persians. An eclectic confluence of different styles, the hall is adorned with oriental vases and illuminated by a spectacular central chandelier. The sumptuousness and forms of the furnishings closely evoke the Royal Palace of the Savoy court on the Quirinale, while the choice of ancient tapestries depicting Persian tales echoes a similar series in Boston, part of the collection of Isabella Stewart Gardner (1840-1924): in effect, it can be said that in this hall the Orientalist dream, the magnificence of the Italian princes, and the artistic taste of the American patrons of the late nineteenth century all blend brilliantly together.



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA



DINING ROOM



Saloni
DELLA PRINCIPESSA

THE BRIDGE PARLOR

This most intimate room of the palace is where the princely family used to spend their private time, listening to and making music on the piano – overlooked by the portrait of the beloved composer Richard Wagner – warming themselves in the glow of a corner fireplace, nestled amongst the photographs of loved ones. The parlor is cozy and secluded, adorned with the flickering bronze bust of Princess Fernanda as a young woman. From here it is possible to access the park via a twenty-five-meter-long iron bridge. Serving as a secret passage between the boiserie sitting room and the shady garden, the bridge is one of the palace's most evocative spots.



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THE BRIDGE



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Via Merulana 248
00185 ROMA



salonidellaprincessa@gmail.com



+39 366 303 9476