

THE PALAZZO

The Historic Rubelli Collection is housed at Palazzo Corner Spinelli, a prime example of a Venetian Renaissance house. It was the home of the Corner family (who were related to Caterina, Queen of Cyprus) which was taken over in 1718 by the Spinelli family, silk merchants from Castelfranco who had only acceded to the aristocracy that year.

Building of the palazzo was begun by Mauro Codussi in 1490 and completed by 1521, the year in which sources remind us that great celebrations were held there. In the large double lancet windows of the two *piani nobili*, the high rustication of the ground floor and the mezzanine and the invention of the portal flanked by two lowered windows, the architecture anticipates the style features of Ca' Loredan Vendramin Calergi. The façade, framed by pilasters and enlivened by whimsical trilobate balconies, has not undergone substantial changes over the years and retains the original Renaissance lack of flamboyance.

The elegant external structure is matched by the airy *portego* entrance of the first *piano nobile* and the refined sophistication of the corner room facing the Grand Canal, dated 1543, which is embellished by an elaborate gilded and coffered wood ceiling and dominated by a monumental fireplace signed OPVS IACOBI SANSOVINI.

Palazzo Corner Spinelli has been the Rubelli headquarters since 1966.



Soprarizzo velvet created for Queen Margherita di Savoia, Rubelli, 1902



Soprarizzo velvet inspired by Baroque *giardino* fabrics, Rubelli, end of the 19th century



Velvet with laminated background, design by Umberto Bellotto, Rubelli, 1928

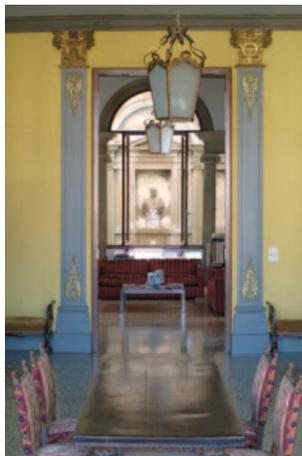
 RUBELLI®



THE HISTORIC COLLECTION
PALAZZO CORNER SPINELLI
VENEZIA



The fireplace in the corner room



The *portego* of the first noble floor

 RUBELLI®

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RUBELLI, THE ORIGINS

“Of the varied and interesting production range of this factory we will first mention, from among the fabrics, the *soprarizzo*, that incomparable silk fabric, celebrated as a true speciality of the age of the Venetian Republic”.

With these words, in the *Rivista industriale e commerciale di Venezia* from 1897, Trevisani described the production of the firm “Gio. Battista Trapolin successore Lorenzo Rubelli e C.”, defining it as “undoubtedly the oldest and the most renowned of the Veneto region”.

Rubelli in fact carried on the business of the firm Trapolin, founded in 1835 and which in 1858 had bought the 18th century silk weaving factory of Giacomo Panciera. In 1889 the business was sold to Lorenzo

Rubelli and “Gio. Battista Trapolin successore Lorenzo Rubelli e C.” was set up. It made its name on the Italian textiles scene straightaway due to the broad and typically eclectic iconographic selection, in line with the taste of the age. The decorative motifs of the age-old Venetian textile production, from the *ad inferriata* Renaissance velvet to the Byzantine iconographic themes, the *giardino* baroque velvet to the 18th century



Lorenzo Rubelli

caprices of the *bizarre* versions, were, and still are, restyled on the basis of the original documents held in the Historic Collection, without forgetting the significant move towards creative teamwork with famous artists such as Vittorio Zecchin, Bruno Cadorin and Giò Ponti, who contributed to enriching traditional Venetian textile themes with contemporary features.

By combining creative ideas gleaned from the archives of the historic collection with the most innovative trends, five Rubelli generations have created fabrics that are a fusion of past and present, and of craft and industry, with total respect for the company’s history.



Sample of *soprarizzo* velvet with an *a mazze* pattern, Rubelli, end of the 19th century



Soprarizzo velvet design by Giò Ponti, Rubelli, 1934



Lampas design by Vittorio Zecchin, Rubelli, 1934



Altobasso velvet, Venice, 16th century



Chasuble made in brocaded *taffetas*, around 1760



Waistcoat made in embroidered *taffetas*, around 1780

THE HISTORIC COLLECTION

Over 5000 textile records that can be dated between the end of the 15th century and the first half of the 20th century make up the historic Rubelli collection, created in the second half of the 19th century at a time when the recovery of traditional craft activities was widespread. Among the oldest documents housed there mention should be made of the fragments of silk velvet with a raised pattern and richly glacéed in gold, that can be dated from the end of the 15th century, and a precious fragment of 16th century *altobasso* or two-pile velvet, decorated by the rosette motif topped by a crown, a fabric used exclusively for the stoles worn by the *procuratori* of the Serenissima.

The severity of the Renaissance fabrics is toned down in the sumptuous baroque textile production represented in the collection by brocattelle, damask and velvet with exuberant decorations in which elaborate weavings of vegetable and flower sprigs triumph.

An extensive collection of liturgical vestments, fabrics and clothes illustrates the course of development of various 18th century types of textile decorations, from the exuberant *bizarre* to the exotic *chinoiserie*, from the luxurious *a meandro* fabrics to the simplicity of the stripes that were typical of the last part of the century.

The 19th and 20th century fabrics in the Collection include an interesting selection of textiles with an Empire style and carefully kept evidence of the early Rubelli production, including the velvet made for the royal family and the fabrics created to designs by artists such as Umberto Bellotto and Alfredo Carnelutti.

In over a century the collection has expanded considerably with the arrival of important textile records, and nowadays includes documents from the East, Africa and the Americas.

Finally the collection also includes the set of drawings and point paper designs that can be dated from the end of the 19th century to modern times.