



CASA MUSEO ANTONIO MELI LUPI DI SORAGNA

THE ROOMS

VILLA MELI LUPI (FORMERLY VILLA TOCCOLI)

Villa Toccoli, originally dating from the 16th century, was acquired in 1582 by **ARCIPRETE GIULIO ZILLI**, in redemption of a fixed annual rent owed by **Sig. Giacomo Bergonzi**. In the same year, the Arciprete granted the property in fee to **MARCHESE FRANCESCO SFORZA**. The estate later passed to **CONTE GIOVANNI TOCCOLI**, who redeemed the fixed annual rent in 1599. The property remained with the Toccoli family for approximately 250 years.

By hereditary succession, around 1840 the estate passed to the **Conti Politi** and was sold by **Conte GIAMBATTISTA POLITI** in 1866, for £54,000, to **Marchese LUIGI LUPO MELI LUPI DI SORAGNA TARASCONI** - great-grandfather of the current owners - who, in 1882, completed the project to expand the residential complex with the purchase of **Villa Cerati-Magawly**, or **Casa Magawly**, from the elderly **Contessa CALISTA PALMIA**, widow of **Conte Valerio Magawly-Cerati**.

The original building underwent extensive renovation and expansion according to a project by the Milanese architect **Marchese Antonio Citterio**. The current building is in **neo-Barocchetto** style, featuring simple lines with only a first floor and an attic.

The three-arch portico on columns, known as **La Veranda**, facing east, is perhaps the only remnant of the previous construction. The pre-existing building was completely restructured and its volume doubled. It currently consists of two distinct sections: the “**VILLA**” and the “**ANNÈXE**”.

THE BOCCIRALE

The painted theme of the **Bocchirale** is that of **views and landscapes**.

The four paintings above the stuccoes date from the mid-18th century and are attributed to **ANTONIO JOLI**, the renowned Modenese painter of cityscapes and architectural ruins, who died in Naples in 1777. They depict **mythological subjects set within architectural landscapes**.

The four stucco panels, decorated in white on a black background, bear the **Meli Lupi di Soragna coat of arms**. They are of **Emilian origin**, circa 1650, and are mounted on **wooden supports from the early 18th century**.

On the stucco panels are displayed **Oriental porcelains**: vases and covered potiches, fireplace garnitures, and Japanese and Chinese bottles from the 18th century.

THE BILLIARD ROOM

The painted theme of the **Billiard Room** is dedicated to the **Meli Lupi family** and is dominated by the enormous **Family Tree**, created by the Milanese architect **Achille Majnoni** in 1899.



The two silk banners, mounted on a red fabric background and embroidered with silver threads, date from the 18th century. They display the **Meli Lupi di Soragna coat of arms** quartered with that of another noble family, created to commemorate a marriage.

THE LIBRARY

The painted theme of the room is **historical/mythological**, dedicated to **Alexander the Great**, as can be seen in the large late 17th-century **Emilian School** canvas depicting the **Triumph of Alexander the Great**.

The books on the shelves are what remains of the **Biblioteca Melziana** from Via Manzoni, which was entirely destroyed during the **English bombing of Milan** on the night of August 12, 1944.

Don Gaetano of the Conti Melzi (1783–1851) was educated at the end of the 18th and the beginning of the 19th century at the **Collegio dei Nobili di Parma**. He amassed a library of approximately **30,000 volumes**, including precious incunabula. These included first editions of Greek and Latin classics, collections of local histories, English and French editions, works on numismatics, and Italian literature.

He was the **paternal grandfather of Marchesa Luisa Meli Lupi**.

THE SALON

The painted theme of the **salon** features **battles and portraits of gentlemen and noblewomen**. The **overdoor panels (sopraporte)**, on the other hand, depict **pastoral or mythological scenes**.

The low central table, with a **square marble top**, stands on a **wood base stained to imitate green marble**, with **pierced panels featuring shields alternating with the Meli Lupi coat of arms**. The shaped legs end in scrolls. **Venice, early 18th century** (provenance: **Rocca di Soragna**).

THE DINING ROOM

Here, the painted theme features **still lifes of vegetables and game** as well as **pastoral scenes**.

The two large ovals are **still lifes by FELICE BOSELLI**. They are part of a series of six commissioned from the artist in 1701 by the **Prince of Soragna**. The other four are displayed in the dining room of the **Rocca di Soragna**.

The plates displayed along the edge of the **boiserie** are part of a **Famille Rose** porcelain service from 18th-century China, decorated with **peony motifs**.

Inside the cabinet is a collection of **white and blue maiolica from Lodi** dating to the first half of the 18th century, signed by **GIACINTO ROSSETTI**.