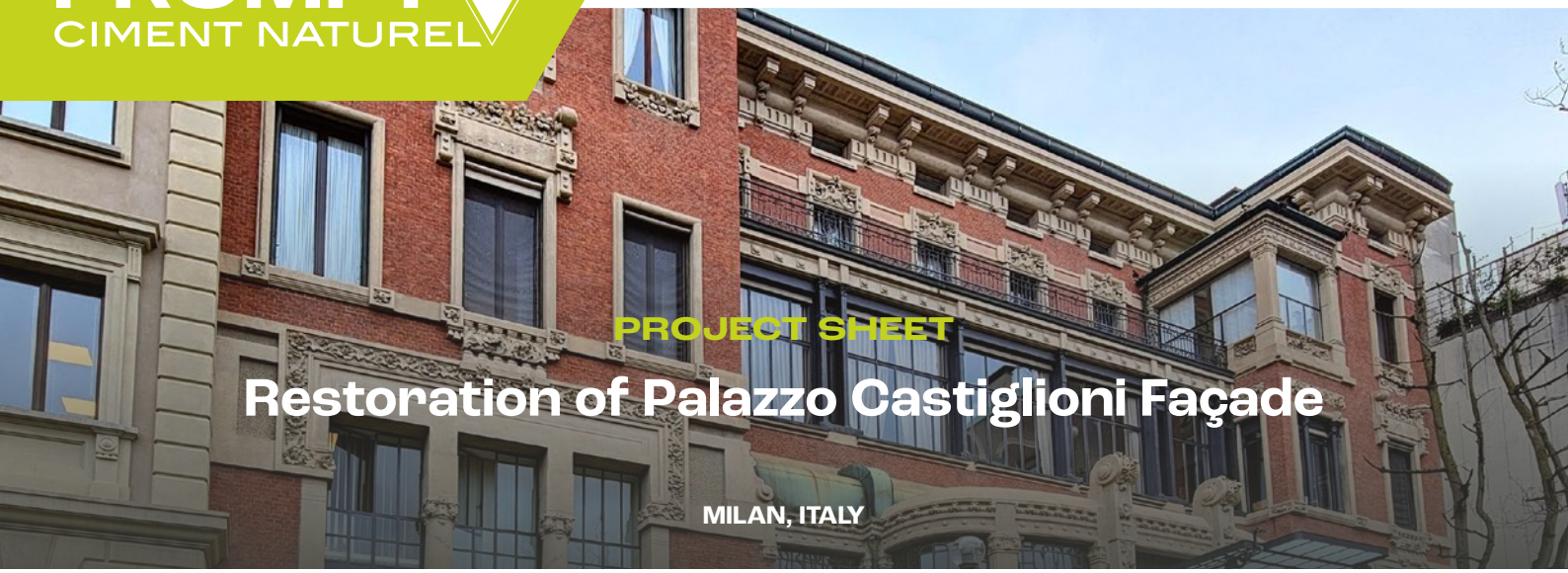
PROMPT VICAT
CIMENT NATUREL



PROJECT SHEET

Restoration of Palazzo Castiglioni Façade

MILAN, ITALY

THE PROJECT

The conservative restoration project of the garden-facing façade of Palazzo Castiglioni is part of the rehabilitation of the entire Unione Confcommercio complex. This complex includes the palace built between 1901 and 1904 for Ermenegildo Castiglioni, designed by architect Giuseppe Sommaruga, a masterpiece of Milanese Liberty (Art Nouveau) architecture, and the Palazzo Bovara Busca Benni, constructed between 1785 and 1787 in a neoclassical style by Carlo Felice Soave.

The project focused on the brick cladding, the refined decorative cements—featuring fine veins with medium to coarse aggregates imitating the local “ceppo d’Adda” stone—and the ironwork.

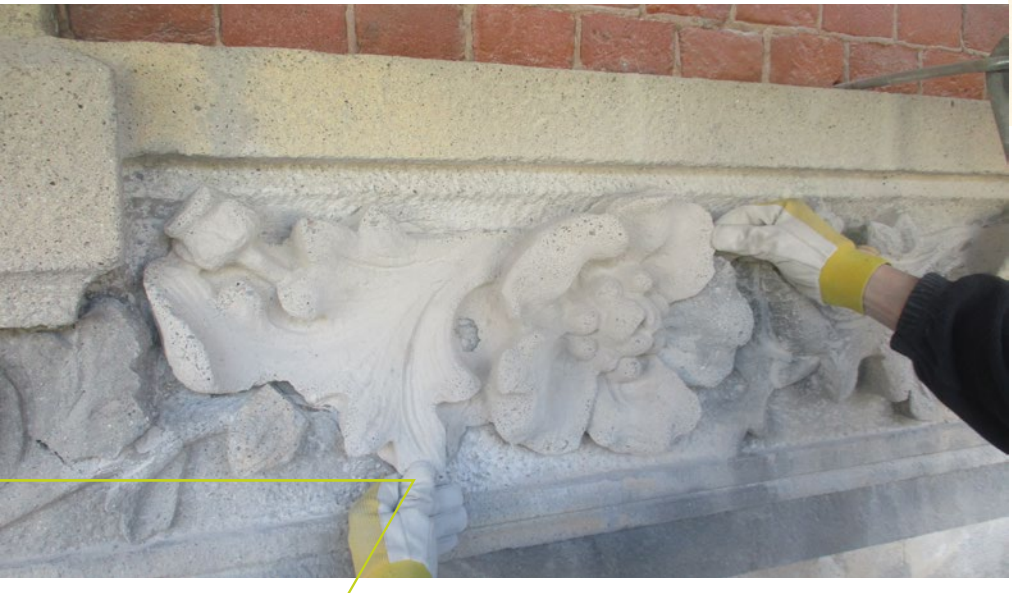
Owner
Unione Confcommercio

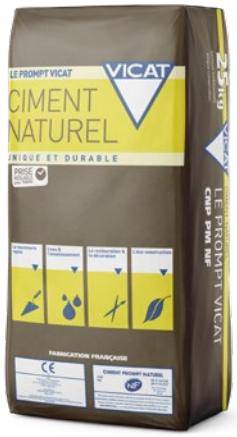
Architect
Mariacristina Sironi

Contractor
Studio Restauri Formica S.r.l.

Duration
18 months

Delivery date
December 2023





CNP = Prompt Natural Cement

VICAT

TECHNICAL APPROACH

Current state

The ornate decorative elements, inspired by naturalistic motifs and made from a mix of cement binder and heterogeneous aggregates, both carbonate and silicate-based, were severely deteriorated. Some parts were detached or missing due to water infiltration, which had corroded the iron reinforcements and lintels, causing fractures and cracks in the mortar and creating a risk of falling.

Restoration

After mapping the deterioration, restorers carefully removed and cataloged detached fragments of the decorative reliefs, mainly concentrated in the floral cornice above the large window on the Palazzo Bovara side. The cement and brick façade was cleaned using biocidal treatment, manual washing with aqueous surfactant solutions, and controlled mechanical cleaning with 120-mesh garnet or calcium carbonate to remove hardened deposits and thick black crusts. Cleaning methods were adapted case by case to best preserve the original surfaces and the ochre finish, which remained well preserved in some areas.

Exposed iron reinforcements were then passivated, cracks consolidated with controlled injections of fluid mortar based on natural hydraulic lime or epoxy resin, and gaps filled with a mix of natural Prompt cement, hydraulic lime, and aggregates of varying sizes.

Missing parts of the cornice were restored by repositioning salvaged fragments and recreating lost sections with natural Prompt cement, using silicone molds of the original based on the repeatable decorative modules. Repositioning was carried out with precision using adhesive and pinning, carefully sealing connection points to prevent water and moisture ingress.

The decorative ochre finish, including the pink marcapiano band, was applied with lime-based pigments in glazes; lime colors were consolidated by applying lime nanoparticles in ethanol (5 g/L). The brick façade was protected with polysiloxane.

+ VICAT ADVANTAGES

→ Physico-chemical compatibility with the original materials, good mechanical strength, control over setting times, and recognition of the historical importance of the material in late 19th- and early 20th-century architecture.

PERFORMANCE REQUIREMENTS

Reconstruction of decorative elements using silicone molds, filling of cracks, and restoration of degraded areas of the decorative cement.

For more information, contact Jean-Philippe Bruasse, Technical Trainer & Advisor PROMPT:

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