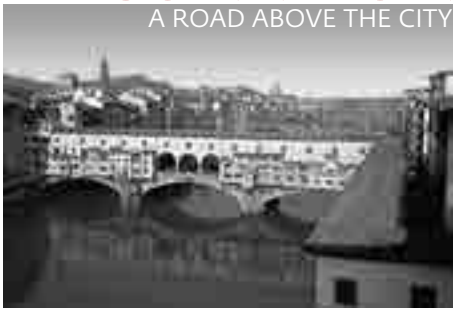
THE VASARI CORRIDOR

A ROAD ABOVE THE CITY



Cover: Vasari Corridor at Lungarno degli Archibusieri and Ponte Vecchio

p. 4: Aerial view of the Vasari Corridor

p. 10: Vasari Corridor at Lungarno degli Archibusieri and Ponte Vecchio

p. 13: Head of Uffizi loggia at Lungarno Anna Maria Luisa de' Medici. Photo: Francesca Funis

Abbreviations

ACMF	Archivio Storico del Comune di Montelupo Fiorentino, sezione Preunitaria
ACSR	Archivio Centrale dello Stato di Roma
AMFCE	Archivio Museo Firenze com'era
ASCFi	Archivio Storico del Comune di Firenze
ASFi	Archivio di Stato di Firenze
ASPi	Archivio di Stato di Pisa
BNCF	Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze
GDSR	Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe di Roma
GDSU	Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe degli Uffizi
GU	Gallerie degli Uffizi
ICCD	Istituto Centrale per il Catalogo e la Documentazione
MFCE	Museo Firenze Com'era
MNB	Museo Nazionale del Bargello
OSMF	Archivio dell'Opera di Santa Maria del Fiore
SABAP-CmFiPtPo	Soprintendenza Archeologia Belle Arti e Paesaggio per la Città Metropolitana di Firenze e per le province di Pistoia e Prato

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LE GALLERIE DEGLI UFFIZI

Francesca Funis

THE VASARI CORRIDOR
A ROAD ABOVE THE CITY

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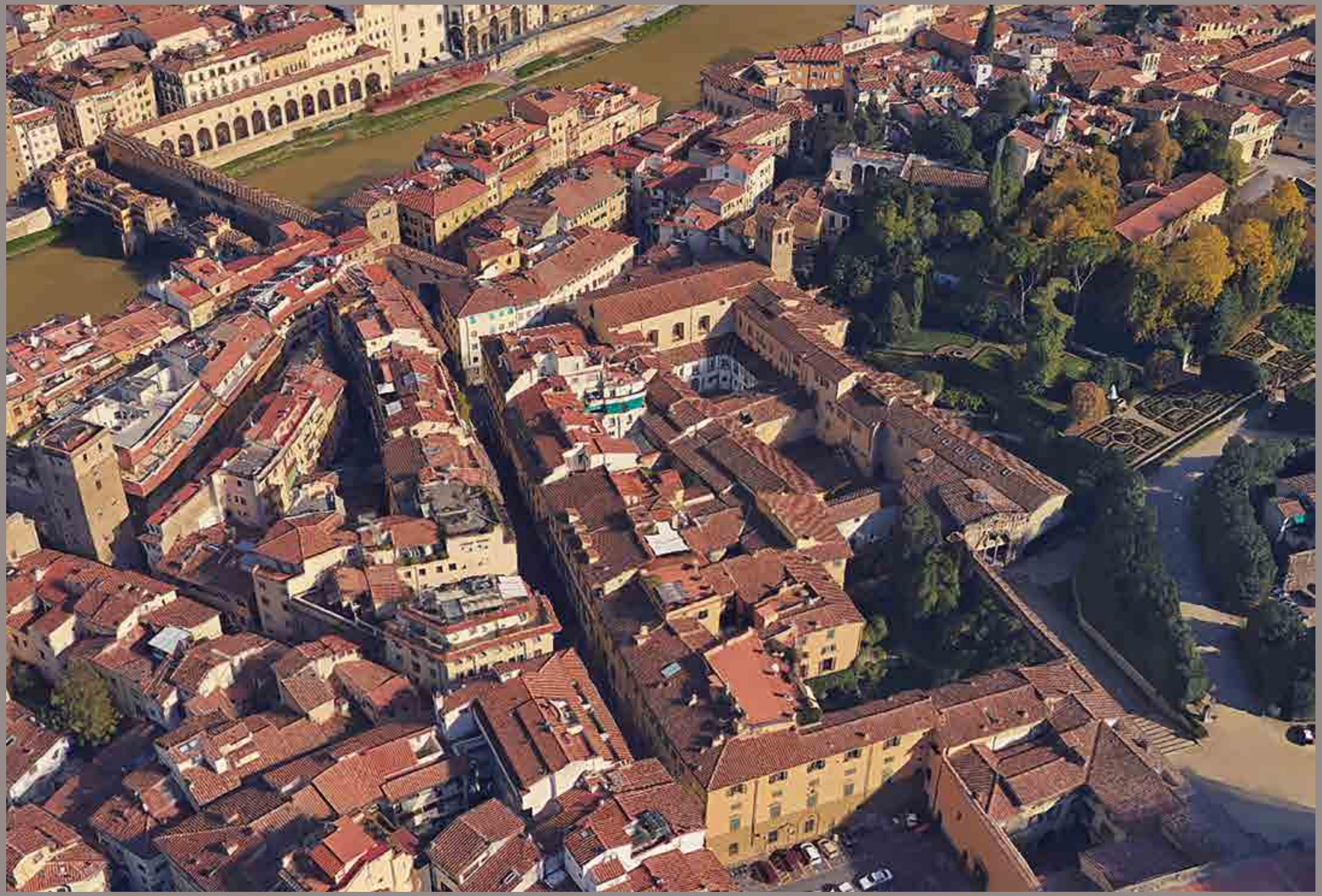

Dedication

At 9:30pm on 10 March 1836, a woman walked up the staircase of the Ospedale degli Innocenti. At the end of the loggia, she slipped a new-born baby through the iron railing and placed it carefully in the compartment, along with an amulet and a coin wrapped in raw yarn – a few humble objects for identification that would serve in the unlikely case of a future reunion. After ringing the bell, she retreated hastily. A moment later, a woman came out, took the child in her arms and went back inside the Institute. After the circumstances and condition of the baby were recorded, he was assigned clothes and some bedding – and the name Niccolò Funis.[1]

I dedicate this book to the Funis family, to their spouses and children, and especially to the most recently born – Arianna, Irene, Vasco and Vittorio.

[1] Archivio Storico Istituto degli Innocenti, Serie XVI, *Balie e bambini*, 1836, first part, c. 126, no. 252. See Merciai, Binazzi 1996

Acknowledgements

This book is the result of research begun during my Doctorate in History of Architecture and Urban Planning (15th Cycle, 2000-2003). First of all, I would like to thank my supervisors.
My heartfelt thanks go to Claudia Conforti, who, first as a thoughtful reader of my thesis and later as a tireless reader of my writings, has shared with me almost twenty years of these Vasarian adventures; Amedeo Belluzzi, assistant supervisor, always generous with his advice, thoughtful observations, suggestions and precious documentary recommendations.
Recently, I had the opportunity to expand this research thanks to work being done on the Vasari Corridor to increase safety, guarantee easy access along the entire route and improve thermo-hygrometric comfort. As part of this project, the Uffizi co-financed, along with the Department of Architecture, funds for historical-architectural research on the Vasari edifice, focusing on the construction of the Corridor and its transformations since the 16th century.
I would also like to extend my profound gratitude to the Director of the Uffizi, Eike D. Schmidt, who enthusiastically supported the research and its publication; the architect Francesco Fortino, Sole Director of the Project, who coordinates the multi-disciplinary team of experts drawing up the Corridor Project Execution Plan; and the scientific advisor for the research in the Department of Architecture, Mario Bevilacqua, for his constant help.
Crucial to the success of my research has been the willing collaboration and expertise of Superintendents Paola Grifoni, Alessandra Marino and Andrea Pessina, of Regional Director Mario Lolli Ghetti and of the directors of the New Uffizi project, architects Laura Baldini, Marinella Del Buono and Chiara Laura Tettamanti.
I thank all the experts involved in the Vasari Corridor Executive Project, and, in particular, the architects of the Superintendency for Monuments Mauro Linari, Marco Pellegrini, and Giulia Manca, and the freelance architect Pietro Petullà; further thanks go to Gianni Bartoli, Claudio Belardoni, Vito Cecchi, Maurizio Coggiola, Mario Fei, Claudia Gerola, Gianna Giachi, Antonio Godoli, Fabio Miniati, Emanuela Mollica, Pasquino Pallecchi, Antonio Russo, Giuseppe Russo, Nicola Santini, Leandro Verdiani, Andrea Vignoli and Tiziano Volpi.
Thanks to a project in 2007 by the Ministry of Cultural Heritage and Activities to evaluate and reduce the exposure of cultural heritage to damage from seismic activity, this research was able to gain additional information for the Uffizi. That project was launched by the architect General-Director Roberto Cecchi and followed with great enthusiasm and skill by the architect Laura Moro.
The Corridor was documented in a visual section of the 2011 exhibition 'Vasari, gli Uffizi e il Duca', promoted by Cristina Acidini, Director of the Polo Museale of Florence, and supported by Antonio Natali, Director of the Uffizi. I thank them both for their support and for the magnificent opportunity.
I remember fondly and thank Francesca de Luca and the architect Antonio Godoli for their help and encouragement.
So many people have been by my side in these years of study. It gives me great pleasure to recall them here and thank them heartily: my friend and colleague Professor Emanuela Ferretti, who was so generous with her help, information and suggestions, including extremely useful information on mayoral funds and the Archives of the Ospedale di Santa Maria Nuova; Veronica Vestri and Nicoletta Baldini for assistance with the trickiest palaeographic interpretations; the personnel of the State Archives in Florence, many of whom are now retired, Vanna Arrighi, Paola Conti, Francesca Klein, Claudio Lamioni, Piero Marchi, Francesco Martelli and all the staff there, who always helped me so generously; the Director of the State Archives of Arezzo Claudio Saviotti; Jan Kahuda, the genteel Director of Department II of the National Archives of Prague; Antonio Russo of the Technical Services of the Uffizi, Matteo Tosi and Pietro Copani for their technical support in the survey (2000-2003); the entire staff of the Uffizi, who helped enormously whenever they could; and Domenico Fabbro of the Agenzia delle Entrate and Beppe Petruzzellis of the Conservatoria Registri Immobiliari.
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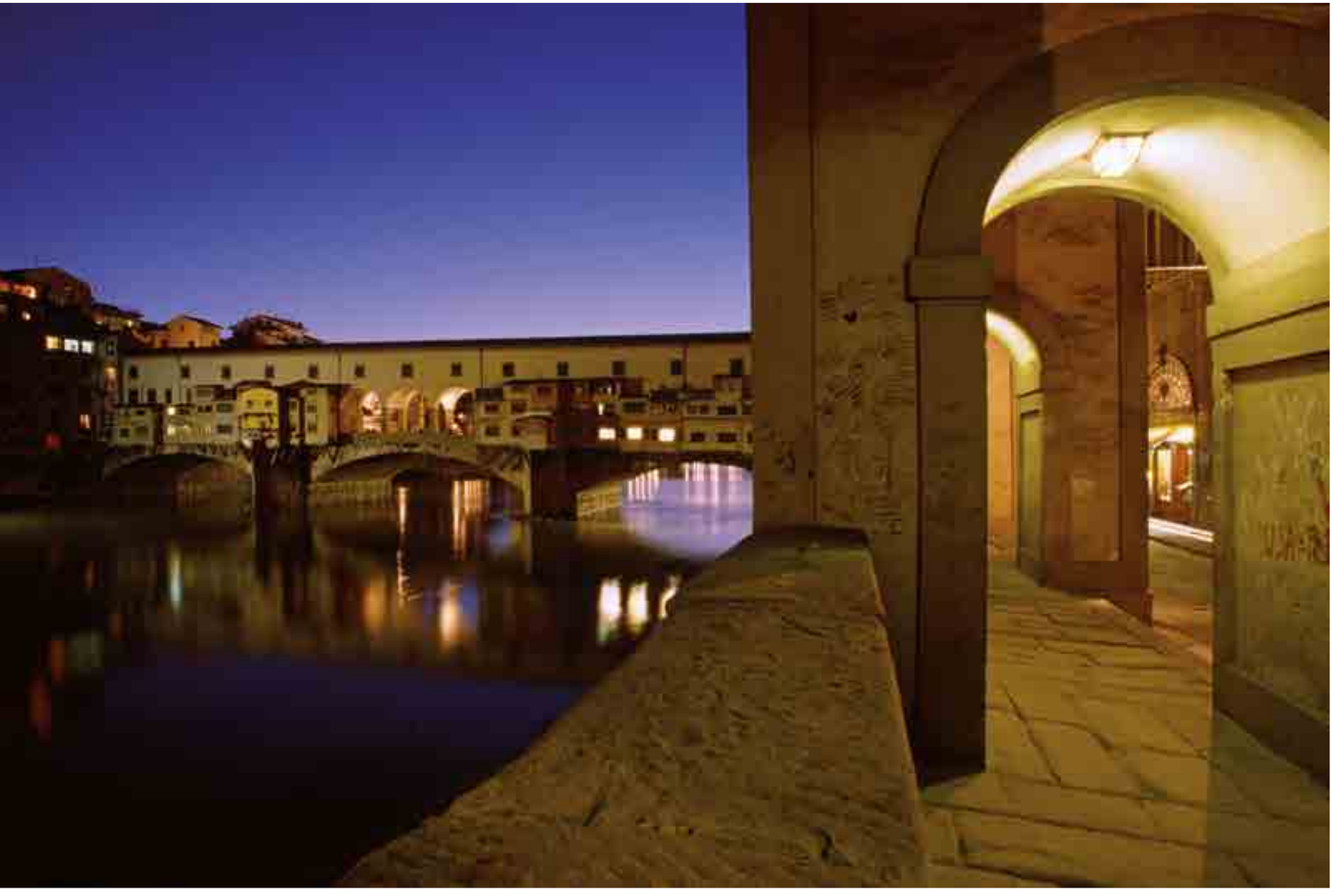
A special thank-you goes to my beloved family – Massimo, Arianna, Irene, Maurizio and Angela.

Contents

An Incomparable Methodological Experience



The Vasari Corridor is a spectacular road infrastructure named after its creator, the architect, painter and historiographer Giorgio Vasari. Prepared in time for the wedding (1565) of Crown Prince Francesco de' Medici and Joanna of Austria, daughter and sister of emperors, the Corridor winds along for approximately eight hundred metres, passing through the Uffizi and connecting the two ducal residences of Palazzo Vecchio and Palazzo Pitti. Camouflaged within the urban architecture, the elevated passageway, for the exclusive use of the court, straddles the river and passes over streets, houses, towers, buildings and gardens, materializing in a discontinuous presence with a strangely elusive morphology.

The Corridor is a faceless architecture. It cannot be measured by the elegance of its orders; it has no façade, no doors; the windows are round like eyes when they open towards the city and rectangular when they open towards the river, from where there is no danger of indiscrete gazes. The entire edifice is chameleon-like and mercurial, like certain primordial creatures that blend invisibly into the surrounding forest or desert. To describe the Corridor, one must revert to its function as a passageway and to the urban topography through which it meanders and blends, along both sides of its dazzling linear extension. This curious architecture is the subject of a vividly documented book by Francesca Funis, an in-depth study that expertly communicates the elusive polymorphism of this architectural configuration. Dividing the route into distinct morphological segments, the book elucidates the background, ways and customs of each, along with their functional rationale, topographic justifications and construction techniques.

Much has been written about Vasari's unique creation – first of all by the architect himself, with well-deserved pride. In the autobiography added to the Giuntina edition (1568) of *The Lives of the Artists*, Vasari describes his extraordinary building endeavour as "the great corridor which crosses the river and goes from the Ducal Palace to the Palace and Garden of the Pitti; which corridor was built under my direction and after my design in five months, although it is a work that one might think would be impossible to finish in less than five years." Even the verbose Vasari is forced to abstain from an ekphrastic description of architecture of such an elusive nature.

Prior to this book, which expands upon Funis' doctoral thesis, the history and material construction of the Corridor remained indistinct, just like its architectural configuration; likewise ill-defined were the multiple functional variants of the Corridor, which was no simple passageway at all, incorporating, for instance, a decorated bathroom, a liturgical station inside the church of Santa Felicita, and a spiral staircase for intermediate exits. Funis has a profound knowledge of Florence in the Cinquecento, which is revealed with impressive versatility in the book. Featuring surprising new information and exceptional iconographic material, her monograph

brings new life and penetrating critical scrutiny to the historiography of the Corridor.

For example, Funis' research – some parts of which were previously published in 2002 – disproves the urban legend that the three large western windows in the Corridor above Ponte Vecchio were opened for Adolf Hitler's visit in 1938. In fact, they were opened for a different official visit, in 1860, when the king of Italy, Victor Emmanuel II, came to Florence, where he was born, to celebrate the city's recent entrance into the Kingdom of Sardinia. On the other hand, in honour of Hitler, in 1938, the stone archivolt of the Corridor's at the small piazza on Ponte Vecchio was removed, for unknown reasons. Apparently, the memory of this removal became confused over time with the inopportune opening of the trifora in the previous century. Walled up in the intervening years, the two lateral openings of the trifora were reopened some time between 1945 and 1954, as confirmed by photographs.

One of the book's particularly original contributions, also as regards methodology, relates to the material construction of this eccentric edifice. Funis masterfully analyzes the stages and methods of Vasari's legendary construction site, most importantly revealing its true duration, which was in fact weeks longer than the five months boasted by Vasari. She skilfully recounts the collective spirit of the building site, regulated as precisely as a military manoeuvre, along with the construction techniques and materials – common ones like bricks, which were officially removed from previous structures or confiscated from small country kilns, as well as backup materials, like pebbles dug up from the riverbed with special trebuchets with which walls could be built quickly, though at the expense of good engineering practices.

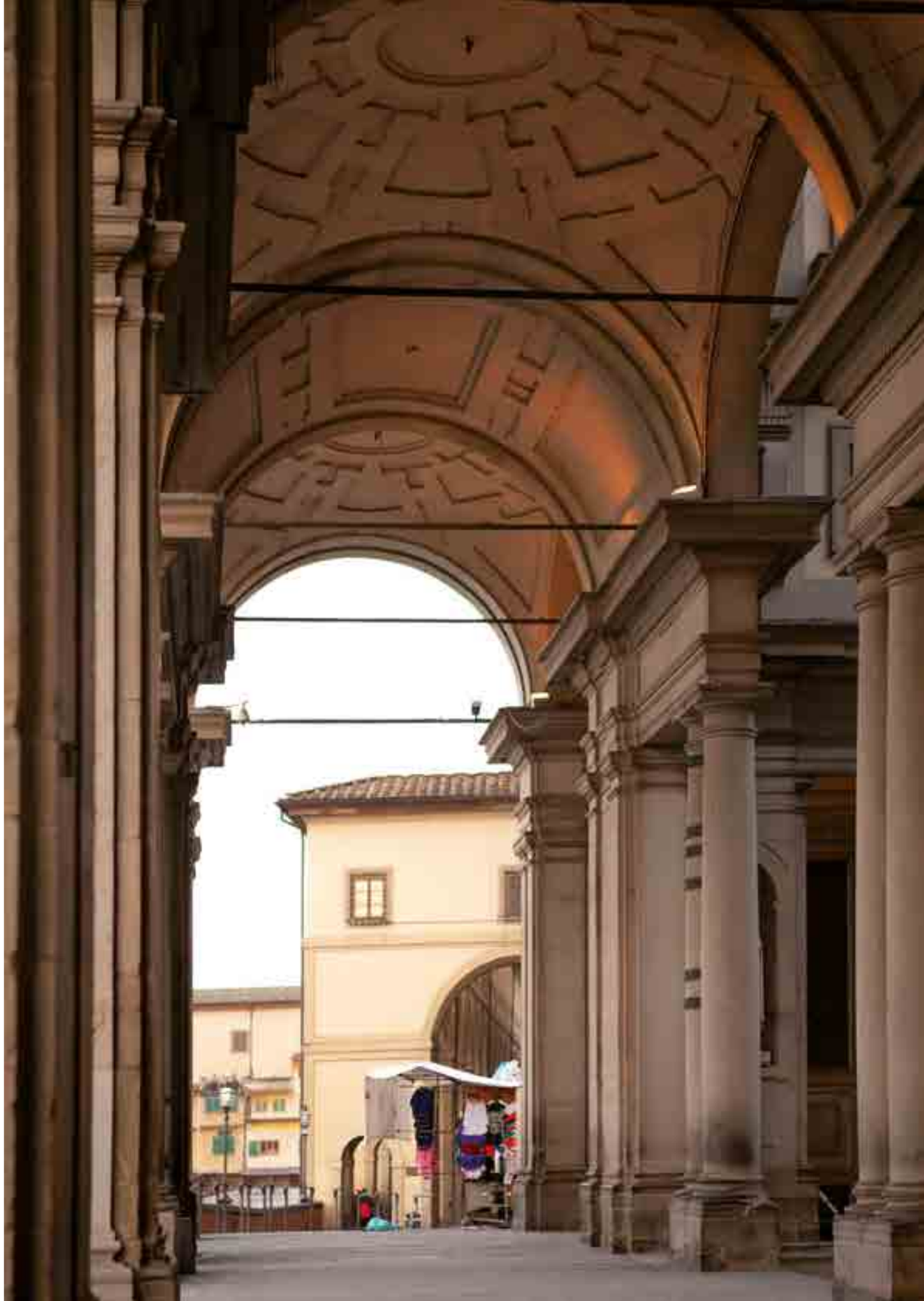
Vasari's hardworking construction site is brought to life in Funis' impassioned description of the workers and their dynamic supervisor, the extraordinary master builder Bernardo di Monna Mattea. Though he was impatient with bureaucratic authorities and insubordinate with *Provveditori della Fabbrica* (building site superintendents), Monna Mattea's expertise in building techniques was unequalled. For this, Vasari chose to celebrate him on the ceiling of the Salone dei Cinquecento in Palazzo Vecchio, positioning his portrait within the pantheon of the brilliant artists and humanists of the court of Duke Cosimo I de' Medici.

Funis' analysis stands out for the exceptional method she employed, as well as for the vastness and novelty of the factual results, the incisive critical observations and her capacity to position the Corridor and its construction within the relatively un-examined territory of the culture of construction in Italy during the Cinquecento. The author intertwines the requisite bibliographic and archival research with metric surveys conducted by her personally as well as the results of her regular on-site visual checks on information acquired from archival papers about techniques and construction, and the critical hypotheses she drew from them.

With enthusiasm, humility and admirable expertise, Funis has understood how to take best advantage of the unusually favourable circumstances that presented themselves when the Corridor was being studied to reduce its vulnerability to seismic activity. Recently, as well, a conservation emergency was converted by the administration of the Uffizi into a timely opportunity to learn more about the history and materials of the structure, which also benefitted from the generous availability of the personnel of the institutions involved. At that time, the Uffizi administration invited Funis to take part in the survey and fact-finding required before the interventions could begin.

As a result, the author participated fully in the diagnosis of the edifice and gained the utmost familiarity with it – its spaces, its masonry and lights and temperatures. By comparing on an almost daily basis the results of research conducted in archives and libraries with the physical reality of the Corridor, and discussing it with the Director of the Uffizi, the Superintendent and architect colleagues from the Superintendency, Funis enjoyed the ideal method for in-depth learning about a structure – and it is from this method that the book's many original contributions emerged. Her direct on-site experience provided a strategic opportunity to acquire comprehensive knowledge of the entire edifice, which grew even deeper through constant interchange with the formidable experience of the experts of the Superintendency of Florence, whom we gladly take this opportunity to name: architects Francesco Fortino, Marinella Del Buono, Antonio Godoli, Chiara Laura Tettamanti, Marco Pellegrini, Giulia Manca and Pietro Petullà, co-authors in spirit of this book.

Claudia Conforti, Andrea Pessina, Eike D. Schmidt



Background

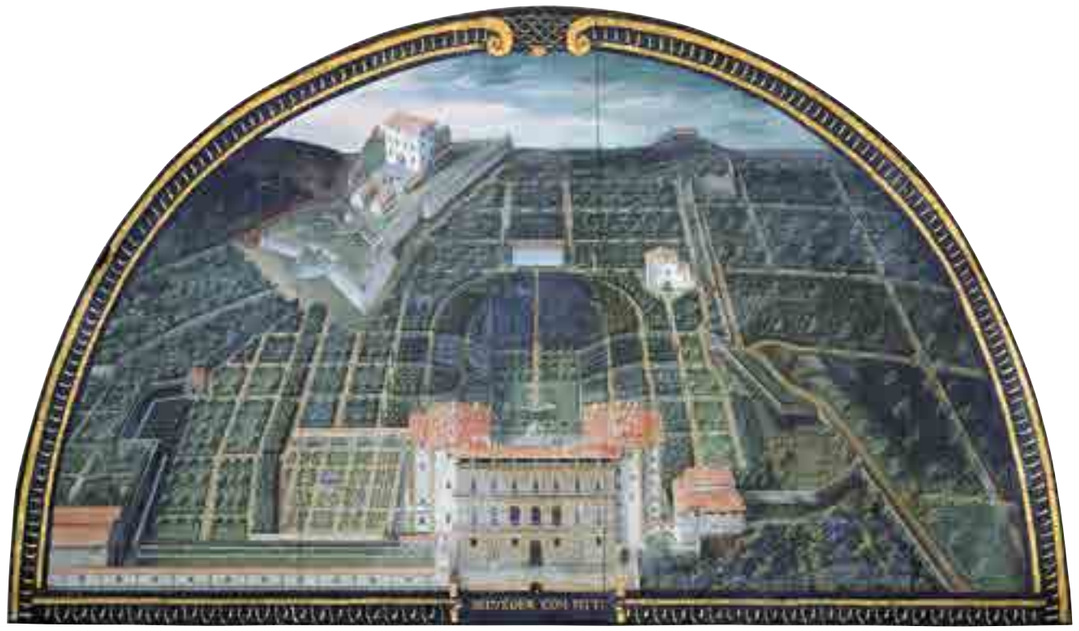
2. Palazzo Vecchio

3. Giusto Utens (1599), *Palazzo Pitti and the Forte Belvedere*, Villa Medicea della Petraia, inv. 1890, no. 6314

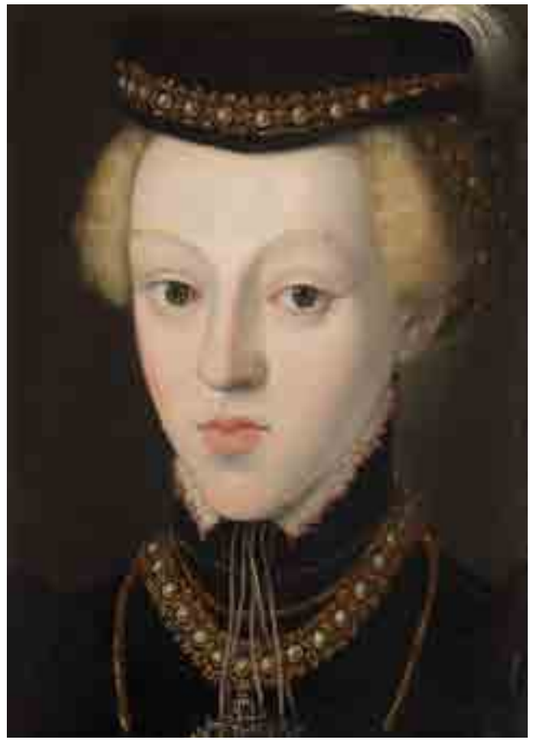
The Vasari Corridor (fig. 1) is a spectacular elevated passageway, 760 metres long. Built by Giorgio Vasari over just a few months in 1565, the Corridor connects Palazzo della Signoria (fig. 2) and Palazzo Pitti. Palazzo della Signoria had been transformed by Duke Cosimo I (1519-1574) into a family residence and renamed Palazzo Vecchio to distinguish it from Palazzo Pitti (fig. 3), which had been acquired by the Duke from Duchess Eleonora of Toledo (1522-1562) and converted into a residence as well. Lush gardens filled the area on the hill behind the palace, from where the stone had been quarried to build the grand 15th-century home of Luca Pitti. Embellished with water features, grottoes, statues, pools and fountains designed by Nicolò Tribolo (1497-1550), the gardens gave the palace the delightful atmosphere of a country villa. The two ducal residences were complementary in the daily life of the family with its many children as well as in its ceremonial and institutional life. Here, it was possible to achieve a sort of two-pronged balance between *negotium e otium* – founding principles of the humanist doctrine advanced by Leon Battista Alberti in *Libri della Famiglia*.

The two residences were about a kilometre apart, however, and the Arno River flowed in between. Indeed, Florence had recently suffered a catastrophic flood, in 1557, which destroyed all the bridges except Ponte Vecchio, and traumatized the city, splitting it into two isolated sectors. Meanwhile, the mutual functioning of the Duke's two residences was entirely dependent on their interconnection. Given that a land route, even if protected, would be at the mercy of the unpredictable river, Cosimo needed a different, more reliable option. He called for a route that would be protected from both the eyes of his subjects and the fury of the river – an elevated passageway that would rise above the streets, the buildings and the river, one with a commanding but hermetic presence. And thus Vasari created the Corridor that takes his name.

My study is dedicated to this remarkable work of urban architecture.



The Wedding: Grand Occasion and Pretext



4. Santi di Tito (attr.), *Portrait of Francesco I de' Medici (1541-1587), c.* 1567, Florence, Uffizi, Galleria delle Statue e delle Pitture

5. Giuseppe Arcimboldo, *Portrait of Joanna of Austria (1547-1578)*, 1562-1565, Vienna, Kunsthistorisches Museum

The winter of 1565 came early to Trento, blanketing the city with snow in October. At that time, two months before the date agreed upon for his wedding, Crown Prince Francesco de' Medici (1541-1587), regent of the duchy for the past year, was en route to Innsbruck, site of the imperial court of his future bride, Archduchess Joanna of Austria (1547-1578) (fig. 4, 5). The journey and the encounter were described by an ideal witness, the Duke's secretary Bartolomeo Concini. His detailed, insightful report, sent on 17 October to Cosimo I (1519-1574), Duke of Florence, noted the differences in customs and mentality separating the future spouses and their two courts. He cautioned that these differences, further aggravated by the language barrier, could jeopardize the harmony of the marriage – which in fact they did over time.[1]

The potential danger of this cultural divide was soon manifested during a festive event that turned awkward. The Prince had brought the precious gift of a "pearl necklace and diamonds for the ears", which the Princess particularly liked. Joanna's ears were not pierced, however, which meant she could not put the earrings on immediately, as called for by Tuscan tradition; the pleasure of the gift was undermined by the awkwardness of the etiquette. Similarly, while the bride claimed to adore the Tuscan garments that had been provided for her, she was unable to put them on herself, soliciting the aid of a Florentine maid, who "taught her to put on the shoes and bedroom-slippers".[2]

Also interfering was the disparity in their lineage, dividing the Habsburg noblewoman, daughter and sister of emperors (Ferdinand I and Maximilian II), and the saturnine prince, scion of merchants, bankers and soldiers of fortune. Joanna was still quite a young woman, full of high expectations for her new role and adoptive city; in her eagerness, "the trip to Florence seemed to take a thousand years". By the same token, she was unsophisticated, never raising "her eyes to My Lord the Prince except with the utmost modesty and earnestness, though well aware of her birth from such noble progenitors," as Concini noted. Francesco, on the other hand, adhered to a more Spanish-style etiquette, and his behaviour was somewhat affected: dressed "in boots with spurs", he kissed "the hands of Her Highnesses and ladies", lingered with the "gentlemen" playing cards and improvised late-night Latin-style serenades to his wife, sung from the courtyard of the imperial residence under the ladies' rooms.[3]

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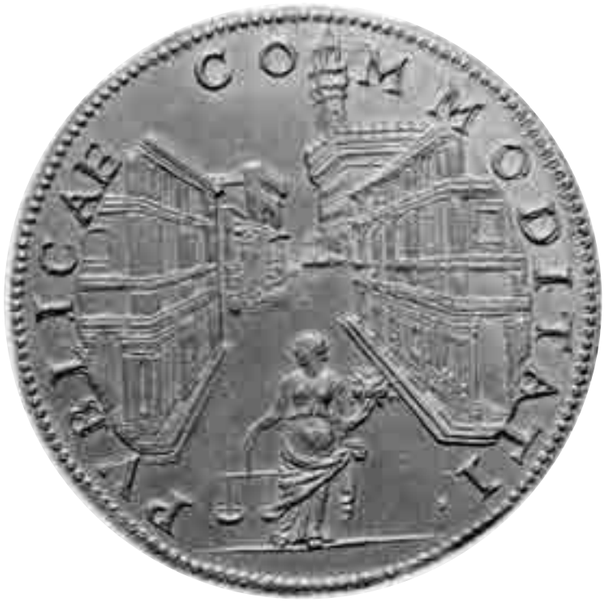
1 The Crown Prince had left Florence on 6 October 1565 in the company of Bartolomeo Concini, his niece, Count Sigismondo Pandolfo, Paolo (Orsini?), a certain Gianpietro, Jacopo Piccolomini and Cavalier Rosso, who served as interpreter. See Ginori Conti 1936, p. 69. The snow caused a delay in the group's progress. "From Trento […], from where we departed in excellent weather, much snow having fallen during the night, through which we rode on horseback much of the route," wrote Concini to Duke Cosimo on 17 October 1565, the day after arriving in Innsbruck at the end of ten days of travel. ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, 623a, cc. 1177r-1178v, a document transcribed in part in Del Badia 1886 [1902], p. 3 and displayed in the exhibition *Vasari, gli Uffizi e il Duca* 2011, Cat. XV.2, p. 366.

2 Ibid.

3 The evening of their arrival in Innsbruck, Francesco "lingered with them until the dinner hour, which was at our 22 hours after the sunset"; "When Their Highnesses had dined, [Francesco] went to entertain them with a card game, while the gentlemen passed the time in another room playing and conversing with the ladies." At the fifth hour after sunset, despite the time Prince Francesco, Bartolomeo Concini, Count Sigismondo Pandolfo and Gianpietro set themselves up in a "certain small courtyard under the rooms wherein slept Their Highnesses" and improvised "a bit of a serenade, which brought their Highnesses to the window, moving the lamps in their room in such a way that they might be recognized." After lunch the next day, they danced all afternoon, Francesco with his future consort and Signor Paolo (Orsini?) with Barbara of Habsburg (?-1572), Joanna's older sister, who would soon thereafter be taken as wife by Alfonso II d'Este. In the letter to the Duke, Cosimo's secretary described the appearance of the two young women in less than gentlemanly terms, saying, "Should Your Excellency from afar wish to know Barbara, as il Rosso says in all truth, look upon the face of the Bishop of Pistoia, which is virtually identical." Joanna, on



6. Domenico Poggini, Commemorative medal for the foundation of the Uffizi (1561). On verso, view of Piazza degli Uffizi with figure of Justice encircled by the words "Publicae Commoditati", Florence, Bargello, Medagliere Mediceo, no. 447-448

The linguistic barrier was particularly problematic. In the end, Sigismondo de' Rossi, Cosimo's envoy to the emperor to arrange the marriage, served as interpreter at the first encounter. Confident of the final outcome, Concini did not place particular importance on these divisive aspects, optimistically declaring, "the mortar has already set" between Francesco and his future bride.[4]

In retrospect, the secretary's unlikely construction metaphor resounds almost as a prophesy. In fact, the pact between the two courts, like that between the two young fiancés, would be sealed in the universal language of architecture, made manifest in the unified Uffizi-Corridor system. Constructed at the time of and (in part) for the ducal wedding, the architectural system acquires added significance as a symbolic liaison, joining not only several buildings and places but two worlds divided by language and habits.

Not by chance Francesco had the unusual gift in store for his wife of a magnificent bronze medal, rather than the customary jewels or silk dresses. Struck by Domenico Poggini in 1561 (fig. 6), the medal featured a profile of Francesco's father Duke Cosimo I on the front and a view of the ongoing Uffizi building project on the reverse, accompanied by an allegorical figure based on Augustan imperial iconography, bearing the attributes of Justice and Abundance. The episode and its meaning are recounted explicitly in the letter as follows:[5]

> Today His Excellency the Prince offered her the medal with the Uffizi Palace on the reverse so that she may appreciate the Corridor going from the Palazzo Vecchio to Pitti, which Your Excellency built at her bequest.[6]

His final words indicate unambiguously that, from the beginning, the elevated passage between the two ducal residences of Palazzo Vecchio and Palazzo Pitti was intended as an extraordinary wedding homage to Cosimo's imperial daughter-in-law, at whose "bequest" the Duke had it built.

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the other hand, "manages much better than her portrait suggests", in Ibid. On Joanna of Austria, see Österreichische Erzherzoginnen 2016; Kaborycha 2011. About the encounter, see Funis 2016b.

4 "Cavalier Rosso appeared so grandly, it seems he had never conversed with the Theatines, and Their Highnesses take marvellous pleasure as they understand what he says, though they dare not speak the new language." ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, 623a, cc. 1177r-1178v, a document transcribed in part in Del Badia 1886 [1902], p. 3 and displayed in the exhibition *Vasari, gli Uffizi e il Duca* 2011, Cat. XV.2, p. 366. During the wedding ceremony in Florence, the role of translator was assumed by a certain Lorenzo Rutz: see Funis 2016b, p. 24.

5 On the construction of the Uffizi, see Conforti, Funis 2016.

6 The quotation is taken from Bartolomeo Concini's letter to Cosimo I. See ASFi, *Mediceo del Principato*, 623a, cc. 1177r-1178v. The document is transcribed in part in Del Badia 1886 [1902], p. 3 and was displayed in the exhibition *Vasari, gli Uffizi e il Duca* 2011, Cat. XV.2, p. 366, along with the foundation medal: *Vasari, gli Uffizi e il Duca* 2011, Cat. VIII.1 and 2, pp. 260-261.

It was a truly remarkable enterprise, worthy of an imperial princess, and Cosimo was clearly conscious of this, for he knew the role played by art and technical exploits in the competition for prestige among Italian and European courts. Within the charged diplomatic conditions accompanying the marriage, the Duke assigned a powerful symbolic role to this daring endeavour, which was further reinforced by its uniqueness. Just how important the Corridor was for Cosimo is clarified by his will, drawn up on 12 July 1568. Among the bequests to his heir and firstborn Francesco, the Duke expressly mentions "the corridor recently built by us by which one passes from the palace of the Piazza to the aforementioned palace of the Pitti with all that pertains to it."[7]

Not least for this stunning architectural feat, the "imperial" Florentine wedding doubled as a formidable political and diplomatic affirmation of the Duke, who thereby gained the legitimation of the European powers.

The elevated Corridor was the jewel of the architectural and urban redevelopment prompted by the wedding, enthusiastically lauded by printed descriptions of the ceremony: "To the infinite entertainment of all beholders, were seen many streets redecorated both within and without, the Ducal Palace (as will be described) embellished with extraordinary rapidity, the building of the long Corridor (which leads from that Palace to that of the Pitti) proceeding apace." The new passageway was immediately perceived as a single unit, an infrastructure on a grand scale, strategic, and permanent, but also as an architecture for a particular event, built with the speed generally reserved for ephemeral architectural displays. It is surely meaningful that the Corridor can be counted among the most spectacular settings realized for the wedding of Francesco and Joanna, looming large even compared to the monumental Neptune Fountain by Bartolomeo Ammannati, erected at the corner of Piazza della Signoria to grace the wedding ceremony with the exhilarating play of water. Indeed, the Corridor seemed to outshine all else – the Roman-style arch erected at the entrance to the ducal palace and even the 15th-century courtyard of the palace designed by Arnolfo di Cambio, adorned with celebrative stuccoes and paintings throughout, and the Sala Grande, sumptuously decked out to receive the bride, who made her solemn entrance on 16 December 1565.[8]

Like the various temporary displays made of wood, fabric, stucco and papier-mâché, the Corridor was begun shortly before the wedding was officially announced and only ready for use on the day before the ceremony. Although the date of the wedding was communicated to the European chancelleries on 21 March 1565, there had been rumours floating for months, and in fact, preparations had begun as early as January. On 20 January, for instance, Don Vincenzo Borghini, erudite Prior of the Ospedale degli Innocenti, was put in charge of the invention of the wedding displays. The construction of the Corridor, on the other hand, began in earnest only nine days before the official announcement, on 12 March. On 17 December, the eve of the ceremony, the elevated passageway was ready for use, although without its window frames, which were only added in December 1568.[9]

Palazzo Pitti was not officially included in the ceremonial route of the wedding, but, thanks to the Corridor, it became an attraction for the guests nonetheless, as evidenced by descriptions in print: "Inside the Pitti, marvels have been and are still being made that exceed the grandeur of all the ancients, not to mention the garden already made there, which may be unsurpassed."[10]

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7 ASFi, *Pratica segreta*, 187, cc. 130v-131r.

8 "While the festivities for the nuptials were being prepared and after they were finished, for the reason that in the city, to the infinite entertainment of all beholders, were seen many streets redecorated both within and without, the Ducal Palace (as will be described) embellished with extraordinary rapidity, the building of the long corridor (which leads from that Palace to that of the Pitti) proceeding apace with wings, the column, the fountain, and all the arches described above springing in a certain sense out of the ground, and all the other festive preparations in progress, but in particular the comedy, which was to appear first, and the two grand masquerades, which had need of most labour." *Descrizione dell'apparato* 1566 [1906], VIII, pp. 568-571. For descriptions of the displays, see also Ginori Conti 1936, p. 69; *Apparato per le nozze* 1870, pp. 10 and 11; Mellini 1566, pp. 111-112. On the displays, see Petrioli Tofani 2015; Lepri 2017; Carrara 2018. On the Neptune Fountain, see Mellini 1566, p. 99; Ferretti 2016, pp. 118-119; Else 2019.

9 For the rapid construction of the displays, see Ginori Conti 1936, p. 69. Vasari writes in the *Ricordanze* that work proceeded at a feverish pace to finish the wood frames and ceiling of the Grand Hall in Palazzo Vecchio "so it could be used during the wedding ceremony of Her Highness, who came the Day of Saint Thomas the Apostle [12 December] and the selfsame day the work was uncovered." See Arezzo, Museo di Casa Vasari, carte Vasari, Cod. 30 (64), c. 26v. Vasari, Del Vita 1929, pp. 91-92; Frey 1930, p. 878. For the timing of the construction of the Corridor, see the chapter on the building site.

10 *Apparato per le nozze* 1870, pp. 10 and 11.