

Description

At the corner of St. Francesco and St. Margherita street, you will find a small church called St. Margherita. It is a small jewel that is not very well known, but very important for the history of the XVIII Century architecture of the Veneto Region.

Built on the same grounds which was formerly an ancient oratory, the Venetian Architect Thomas Temanza built the harmonious front stone facade of Istria structure that foretells neoclassic elements. But this prelude to the new style wasn't immediately appreciated, when the church was completed.



The facade of oratory

In fact, at that time, this style must have seemed very cold, compared to other churches of the same period, all of which are in the late Baroque style.

Four ionic columns, without fluting, rise on the same base, carry a simple pediment which supports a high attic. Upon this stand four statues of Francesco Bonazza and represent the Cardinal Virtues.

There is only one door which is very big compared to the building.

The first and original work of Temanza, is the front facade, which shows his need to change the Tradition of Palladio in a rational, and, also, scientific way. It is expressed in the same way in Padova by Morgagni and Poleni who were his teachers in the science of construction.



Martyrdom of St. Margherita (detail)
A. Urbani

Also of great interest is the internal part, which is set up by only one nave and major chapel: inside the space is balanced and in harmony with the painting and sculpture decorations.

The ionic pilasters scan the nave, planned on a high base and risen by the pediment. On the two side altars you can find two altar pieces, which represent the Flight to Egypt of the Sacred Family painted by F. Polazzo and St. Francesco of Paola and have in common many techniques of G. Nogari.

In the Flight to Egypt, the evangelic episode is presented in a dimension close to everyday life; in the center, Mary and her child seem to stop at Joseph's call asking her to hurry.

In the painting St. Francesco, a very popular saint in the XVIII century, is shown giving sight to a blind man.

The niches on the side of the altar have four statues representing the four evangelists with their symbols: Mark and the Lion; Luca and the Taurus; John and the Eagle; Matthew and the Angel.



A. Bonazza
Statue of St. Matteo

Expressive figures denote the style of the Bonazza in the soft drapery.

In the area between the high pilaster-strips are represented with the monochromatic, chiaroscuro technique, sixteen winged puttos inside rectangular frames placed like open pages of a book in front of a faithful man in order to lead him to meditation. In fact they represent symbolically the theological and cardinal virtues, the seven gifts of the Holy Spirit, purity, and humbleness.

At the center of the vault is represented the apotheosis of St. Margherita painted by

Giorgio Anselmi (from Verona).

The Saint is represented together with her two executioners, the soldiers, the angels and in the lower part at the right, the monster who swallowed the saint, according to the tradition.



G. Anselmi
Apotheosis of St. Margherita

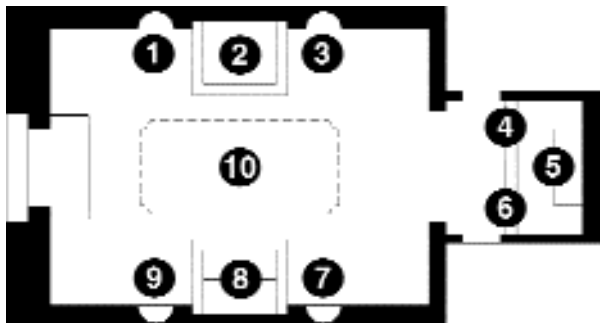
In the presbytery the altar-piece represents the glory of St. Margherita while she crushes the monster under her feet and has her eyes looking up to the sky. The style of this painting recalls the Venetian painter: Francesco Zugno who was a pupil of G.B. Tiepolo.

To note the simple but elegant drapery, the sober lyricism of the face in ecstasy, the anatomic precision of the limbs and the graceful prolongation of the figure.

At the side of the presbytery you can find the paintings of the sentence and martyrdom of St. Margherita attributed respectively to F. Fontebasso and Urbani.

In the sentence other minor scenes are presented while the main characters are represented with vivacity inside the horizontal structure of the painting. The brushstroke seems nervous and the cromatism is very rich.

The paintings represent two of the members of the Gradenigo family: the old man, the first abbot of St. Margherita buried in the oratory and also the witness as the saint's condemnation, is probably Vincenzo Gradenigo (1550-1623) The other person present at the martyrdom is probably Vincenzo VI Gradenigo, said Gerolamo (1711-1782). He is perhaps the one who commissioned the work.



Legenda

1. Statue of St. Luca (F. Bonazza)
2. St. Francesco of Paola (G. Nogari)
3. Statue of St. Matteo (A. Bonazza)
4. Martyrdom of St. Margherita (A. Urbani)
5. Glory of St. Margherita (F. Zugno)
6. Sentence of St. Margherita (F. Fontebasso)
7. Statue of St. Marco (A. Bonazza?)
8. Flight to Egypt (F. Polazzo)
9. Statue of St. Giovanni (F. Bonazza)
10. Apotheosis of St. Margherita (G.



G. Nogari - St. Francesco of Paola (detail)

Information

Legambiente is Italy's most widespread association in favour of the environment, counting about 1,000 local clubs and 10,000 members and supporters. For years Legambiente has waged a strenuous campaign on behalf of sustainable economic development and of the defence and enhancement of the environment and the artistic resources with which Italy is so richly endowed.

Salvalarte is a project organized on a voluntary basis by the Paduan branch of Legambiente, which aims at the rediscovery and enhancement of little known Paduan monuments. The idea is to focus attention on the artistic wealth of our town, which is often neglected and forgotten.

You can join our association through Internet (www.legambientepadova.it) or by sending a "conto corrente postale 36037091" (specifying "iscrizione anno 2006" for example).

If you are enthusiastic about art and culture and have two hours a week to spare, you can volunteer to work on behalf of Salvalarte. At present our volunteers are helping to keep the following monuments open for visitors:

The Bridge of S. Lorenzo, Via S. Francesco
 The Scuola della Carità, Via S. Francesco, 61
 The Oratory of S. Margherita, Via S. Francesco, 51
 For further information and for illustrations see our website (above)

Opening Times (Only working days)

Ponte S. Lorenzo (via S. Francesco)

Is at present closed for restoration

Scuola della Carità (via S. Francesco 63)

Thur., Fri., Sat. 10.00 - 12.00 and 16.00 - 18.00

Oratorio di St. Margherita (via S. Francesco 51)

From Tuesday to Saturday 10.00 - 12.00

Mon., Thur., Fri., Sat. 16.00 - 18.00

The Volunteers wish to specify that these times are subject to sudden variations.

For further information, and in order to arrange visits, you should contact Legambiente (tel. 049 8561212)



LEGAMBIENTE Padova

Salvalarte

English

Oratory of St. Margherita from Pisidia



Via S. Francesco, 51 - Padova