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The Lungarno Collection Magazine

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My Florence

Felice Limosani

PHOTO DARIO GAROFALO

My Florence begins with the first light of morning when the city is empty and its beauty intact. I almost always walk or ride my bicycle to the studio in **Via Roma** and stop in the middle of **Ponte Santa Trinità (8, 11)** to take in the view of **Ponte Vecchio (1)**. It's never the same and it changes with the seasons and time of day, a thousand color variations that only the presence of water can create. Then there is **Via Tornabuoni with Palazzo Ferroni** on the right, airy and more elegant than ever. And then **Via Strozzi**, which leads to **Piazza della Repubblica (9)**.

Sometimes I will stop to look at the historical buildings, which intrigue me. They preserve wonders and amazement, beautiful rooms, breathtaking frescoes and small harmonious courtyards. Thanks to my local friends, I am often able to discover and visit private places that are inaccessible to the public. Others I can only imagine when skirting around the walls of the facades. For lunch I am meeting my partner Doris at **Coco Lezzone** to talk about everything that comes to mind. The atmosphere makes me feel at home, right in my kitchen. A tip for Fridays: they serve salt cod with chickpeas, the best in the world. Talking about food, the restaurant **Portofino**, going towards Campo di Marte, is a must-try. A little off the beaten track, but Leonardo's cooking and the quality of the seafood are

unmatched in Florence. When I need to escape even for just half an hour, I take a short walk through **San Lorenzo**. In Via de' Conti you find **Desii (5)**, two highly original vintage spaces with a thousand things carefully selected by Carlo. There are three seats on the sidewalk by the entrance, one white, one red and one green. Choosing our colored chair (me, the green one) we simply watch people stroll by. A delightful and necessary distraction, that allows me to completely detach and mentally rewind. Often, I will walk along Via Porta Rossa, to **Pampaloni**, a historical store that sells silverware and porcelain. It exhibits very nice items and the window

displays are brilliant! There is always an idea, a message or ironic reflection that goes beyond the exhibit of its creations. Recently I discovered that **Il Caffè Florian** enlarged its space to make way for a part of the family's contemporary art collection. Magnificent! From Plessi onwards, one seems to be in a different world... A unique and prodigious city, so rich in "universal" stories to make it a spontaneous stage for the upcoming Expo 2015. Recently I edited the exhibition *Nutrire il Pianeta* (Nourishing the Planet) for the Milan Triennale open day. The theme of the upcoming exhibition evolves around "il cibo" (food) and highlights



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ABOVE: THE GREENHOUSE
OF THE HORTICULTURAL GARDEN.
BELOW: A VIEW OF THE PALAZZO
SPINI-FERRONI (LEFT)
FROM VIA DE' TORNABUONI



Tuscany, especially Florence. This could be an historic opportunity to provoke new ways of thinking, about the Renaissance and about beauty. A couple of times a year I will visit the **Uffizi**, to honor its eternally vibrant riches, even if they belong to the past. It is a truly inspiring epicenter. Always different, the exhibits match my mood and present me with stimuli needed that moment. What a combination of stories and wonders. I also have a special bond with **Palazzo Strozzi (7)**, as about a year ago I was privileged to create a video mapping installation, commissioned by Sole24Ore: *Il Sole sui Tetti* (The Sun on the Roofs). I got to map and measure the architecture of its internal facades, centimeter by centimeter, a truly unique and physical experience. The **Florence of the Medici** is comprised of gardens and the **Cascine Park (2)** could not be left out of this personal little guide. It is a “generous” place that the city needs to re-appropriate. There is also the **Horticultural garden**, beautiful but hidden, with its nineteenth-century greenhouse in cast-iron and glass. Still, my preferred place is the **Salone dei Cinquecento**, filled



with spatiality, perspectives, stories and talent. On those walls man speaks about beauty, courage and hope for posterity. This brings me back to the project I mentioned earlier, *Il sole sui tetti*, Italian terraces with views and visions, where I detail to my talented and good friends the joy of experiencing the city from up high. Let me finish with a quote by **Lucio Dalla** for my publication, a dear friend from times when we talked about music, food and the Tremiti. His original words are: “... But perhaps my favorite place, after having moved so many times, the true doorstep of my heart, is Florence, a city

that, like Naples, I'll never stop loving. So when I'm tired and I imagine an ideal place to fall asleep, after sniffing around everything, absolutely everything that surrounds me (monuments, piazzas, open or half closed bars, foreign languages that resound from the street, masterpieces of art that seem gently asleep, immortal statues like the **Perseus by Benvenuto Cellini (4)** or the **David nearby (6)**), I imagine myself in **my room in the tower (10)** of the Hotel Lungarno in Florence: it is there that I have written so many things and again, it is there that this poor little man at times felt like he was of importance”.



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