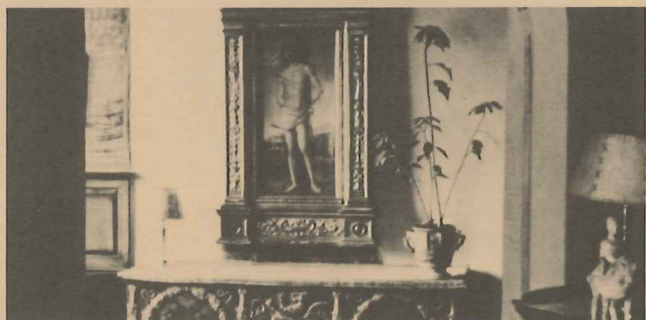


Villa I Tatti



The Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies
Via di Vincigliata 26/50135 Florence, Italy

Vol. 2, No. 2
Spring, 1980

Endowment Challenge Met

Through the generosity of I Tatti's loyal supporters, The Andrew W. Mellon Foundation's challenge grant was met on schedule in December, 1979. During the last days of the campaign many of I Tatti's friends, including a heartening number of Former Fellows, pledged the gifts which made this achievement possible. The five-year drive has more than doubled endowment funds and brought endowment income much closer to meeting the costs of the Center's programs.

With my profound thanks to all who helped Villa I Tatti,

Craig Hugh Smyth
Craig Hugh Smyth
Director

Professor Eugenio Garin Guest Lecturer

On May 8, Professor Eugenio Garin, the noted Italian Renaissance historian who is now Director of the Istituto Nazionale di Studi sul Rinascimento at the Palazzo Strozzi, delivered a talk at I Tatti entitled "Il Rinascimento: Discussioni Storio-grafiche d'Oggi." Dr. Garin, formerly a professor at the University of Florence, and then at the Scuola Normale di Pisa, spoke of the historiography of the Renaissance during the last fifty years, comparing his position with different trends in the discipline.

(Garin, continued, page 5)

The Villa I Tatti Gardens

I return to my conclusion of old that the greatest achievement of art is to teach us to enjoy nature - even human nature.

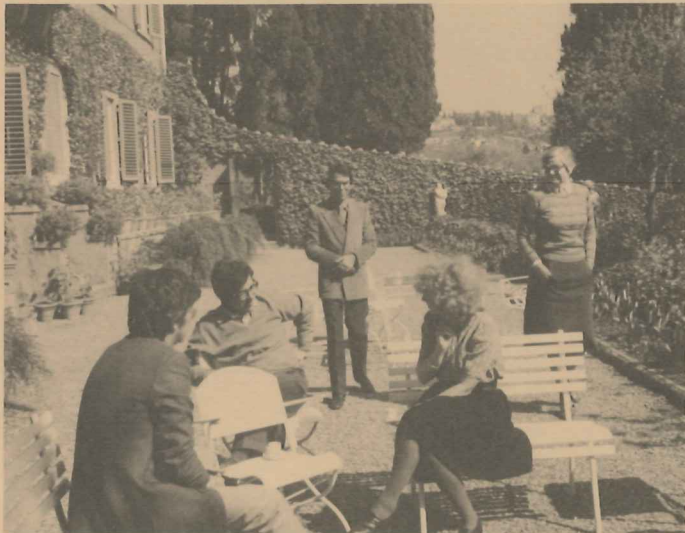
Bernard Berenson
January 29, 1951 I Tatti
[Sunset and Twilight,
Harcourt; Brace & World,
Inc., N.Y., 1963.]

For those who have worked, visited, and lived at I Tatti, the cypress allée, the groves of ilex, and the limonaia are
(continued next page)

I Tatti Gardens, continued

as much a part of the Harvard Center as the paintings in hallway and the books in the library. As the key resource for the Fellows, the library's holdings have almost doubled since the Center opened in 1961, while the art collection and gardens remain much the same as in Berenson's day.

During the nearly sixty years that Bernard Berenson lived at I Tatti the house was enlarged five times, mainly to make



An informal I Tatti discussion,
al fresco

room for the growing library; the gardens have been little changed since 1905, when they were first planned. During that year Berenson purchased I Tatti from the estate of the eccentric John Temple Leader, the builder of the Castello di Vincigliata on the hill above Maiano. Two young Englishmen, Cecil Pinsent and Geoffrey Scott, were immediately commissioned to transform the simple house and garden into more spacious and serviceable dimensions.

At the turn of the century it was common for foreigners living near Florence to entrust landscape architecture to trained Englishmen, who could produce elegant "neo-Renaissance" designs in the open European tradition, yet also provide the informal shady groves and retreats which the fierce heat and light of the Tuscan summer demand. In addition to his work at I Tatti, Pinsent designed the nearby gardens

of Le Balze in Fiesole, and of Il Sorgente on the Lucca-Via reggio road.

When Pinsent began at I Tatti, only a small walled garden to the south existed, bounded on one side by the original 16th century villa and on the other by the lemon house built into the hillside below. The steep slope of the hill which gives I Tatti its wonderful view also presented a classic landscaping problem: how to harmonize the the necessary terraces, with their sharp differences in height, into a graceful unity. Pinsent's patterned pavements, flights of steps, and promenades take dramatic advantage of the difficulties of the site and make I Tatti's garden an ordered, pleasing marriage of architecture and horticulture. The most striking example of this union is the formal lower garden, a series of box terraces, or parterres, which descend from the limonaia.



The cypress allée

windows of the house open onto views as carefully ordered as a quattrocento landscape.



The lower garden

The low hedges of each parterre are clipped in different designs; the clear axis of the central walkway, with its intricately patterned pebble mosaics, orders and enriches the geometric complexity. Below the twin oval pools and the high hedge of the lowest terrace, curving flights of steps lead down to a grove of ilex trees and the villa's final garden wall. Paths cut into the cypress hedges on either side of the lower garden's terraces offer more secluded ways to return to the limonaia, and to the east the steeply sloping allée of giant cypresses links the lower gate of I Tatti with the front courtyard of the villa. Delightfully, the gardens were designed to be appreciated from above as well, where the

When the "New Library" was built in 1915, the large terrace outside was redesigned as a hanging garden - the giardino pensile - where the wisteria blooms so profusely in the spring. A double row of ilex was planted down the hill to the west, leading to a basin surrounded by statues - the visual focal point obligatory in Renaissance garden design. To the south of this grove, informal English gardens of crocus, iris, and daffodils flower in spring beside the stream of the Mensola, which borders the garden and runs through the fields toward the village of Ponte a Mensola.

The gardens of I Tatti offer Renaissance plane geometry and baroque intricacies; open, ordered vista and shaded seclusion. Spring tulips, summer lilies, and fall dahlias in turn enliven the green of the hedges and cypresses. The greenhouse and cold frames built against the southern facade of the villa ensure a constant supply of fresh flowers to the rooms inside.

This year I Tatti's gardens celebrate their 75th anniversary - an age which lends charm, but brings weakness. Trees and shrubs increasingly need replacement, and a project to repoint the most endangered of the fragile pebble mosaics, a costly undertaking, will be started this summer. The most serious problem, however, is the cypress disease which has been destroying Tuscany's famous trees for the past several years. I Tatti has been battling the disease through systematic spraying and fertilization; seriously diseased trees have had to be removed. The most unsightly gaps in the hedges have been filled with young trees as the limited garden funds allow, so that visible damage, at least, is not great, although extensive replanting is necessary for proper reparation.

Geremia Gioffredi, the semi-retired estate manager who has been with I Tatti for over fifty years, still oversees the work of the two gardeners, Gigi Brandi and Bruno Ciullini, and the other members of the I Tatti work force who assist with heavier projects. Barbara Smyth, wife of the Director, directs the general planning for the gardens and approves the seasonal plantings. Visitors to
(continued next page)

Gardens, continued

I Tatti, admiring the well-kept condition of the gardens, are surprised by the modest size of the work force - which now, unfortunately, is matched by an equally modest annual budget. The necessary reductions in expenditures have begun to have an effect, since work is strictly limited to emergency repair and essential maintenance. More costly projects, such as replacement of aging plants and masonry reconstruction, have had to be deferred.

Yet the gardens entered their 75th year on a promising note. In 1979, The L.A.W. Fund of New York, long a supporter of historic buildings and gardens, granted endowment funds to I Tatti for the upkeep of the gardens. We hope that this generous recognition will encourage others to help preserve and protect the small part of Tuscany which is I Tatti's trust, as well as its ensurance of the "quiet place" for scholarly study which Berenson envisioned and the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies has become today.

On Saturday afternoons between April 1 and June 30, the I Tatti gardens are open to the public through the Azienda Autonomia di Turismo in Florence, which operates the Agriturismo garden tours.

-- Susan R. Mainwaring

Fellows of the Fogg Art Museum Visit

Fifty-eight Fellows of the Fogg Museum, members of the Harvard museum's special support organization, visited I Tatti twice during their recent six-day tour of Florence and the Medici exhibitions.

On the morning of Sunday, May 11, the group was welcomed to I Tatti by the directors of the two institutions, Professors Seymour Slive and Craig Hugh Smyth, and by the co-chairman of the Fellows, Mrs. Joseph Pulitzer, Jr. Their talks were followed by tours of the Berenson Library, guided by Father Salvatore Camporeale; of the art collection, given by Professors Sydney Freedburg and Craig Smyth; and of the gardens, led by Professor Elizabeth MacDougall and Susan Mainwaring. The groups then reconvened in the fototeca, where Lord Clark spoke on "Berenson and his Contributions to Art History." Afterward, lunch with the I Tatti Fellows was served in the dining room and the French library. The house and gardens were open for the Fogg Fellows' more leisurely enjoyment after lunch.



Members of the Fogg Fellows
on the terrace before lunch

On the final evening of the Fogg group's tour I Tatti again was host, this time for a farewell dinner. Chef Nello Nardi and the I Tatti house staff, directed by Mrs. Smyth, served dinner to the largest number of guests in the Center's history.
(continued next page)

Fogg Visit, continued

Their visit to I Tatti provided the Fellows of the Fogg Art Museum, a group with strong professional and avocational interests in art, history, and education, with an opportunity to learn about the broad spectrum of studies conducted at the Center - studies which range from the history of art and music, to the history of economics and science.

The rich program of tours and receptions which the Fellows enjoyed while in Florence was organized by Mrs. Mary Rose Maybank and her staff at the Fogg Museum. During the group's visit and the preceding preparations, I Tatti staff members Susan Arcamone, Jacqueline Darby, Nelda Ferace, Christine Schlapfer, Amanda George, and Fiorella and Giorgio Superbi gave special assistance. Heidi Boardman acted as translator for the group throughout the six days.

Also, the Center is deeply grateful to Sir Harold Acton, Mrs. Maria Fossi-Todorow, Director of the Palazzo Davanzati, Mr. and Mrs. Ferruccio Marchi, Mr. and Mrs. Marcello Marchi, and Countess Piccolomini-Bandini, friends of I Tatti who graciously opened their homes, gardens, and collections to the Fellows of the Fogg Museum.

Garin, continued

This was the first time Professor Garin has lectured at the Harvard Center, and I Tatti was honored by his acceptance of its invitation to speak. In his introductory remarks Professor Garin mentioned the collaborative efforts between the Istituto and Villa I Tatti, particularly the publication of the letters of Lorenzo de' Medici, and that he hoped this association between the American and Florentine academic communities would continue and grow closer. Dr. Garin's talk was received with great interest by the American and Italian scholars present; a reception afterward gave the guests further opportunity to exchange views with the I Tatti community.

I Tatti Community: Talks and Lectures

During the first week of October, 1979, the I Tatti Fellows and Associates gave introductory talks on their current fields of research. A listing of the lectures and informal talks held during the ensuing months follows:

- October 11, 1979: Lawrence and Emeline Richardson, Classicists in Residence, American Academy in Rome: "Topography of Ancient Rome"
- October 18, 1979: Eduardo Saccone, Fellow: "'Grazia,' 'Sprezzatura,' e 'affettazione' nel Cortegiano"
- November 8, 1979: Gene Brucker, Historian-in-Residence: "Italian Urban Experience, 1200 - 1500"
- November 23, 1979: Giovanni Cherubini, Università di Firenze: "Gli Inventari dei Beni come Fonti per la Storia Sociale della Firenze Quattrocentesca: un'esperienza di seminario"
- November 29, 1979: Pierluigi Petrobelli, King's College, University of London: "Music in the Veneto Society at the time of Giorgione"
- December 6, 1979: Charles Davis: "Cortigiano and Corte: Programs and Pictures about Life at Court"
- February 21, 1980: Gene Brucker, Historian-in-Residence: "A Civic Inquest into Florentine Higher Education: 1460"
- February 28, 1980: Dr. H. J. Hufschmidt, Neurochirurgische Universitätsklinik, Bonn: "Right and Left Profiles, Cross Section of Cultural History"
- March 6, 1980: Anita Moskowitz, Fellow: "Trecento Classicism and its Campanile Hexagons"
- March 13, 1980: Carlo Bertelli, Pinacoteca di Brera: "Brera: come si riapre una Pinacoteca"
- March 20, 1980: Joanna Woods-Marsden, Fellow: "The Iconography of Pisanello's Mantuan Frescoes"
- April 10, 1980: Brenda Preyer, Fellow: "Palace Building in Florence 1445-1465"
- April 15, 1980: Miles Chappell, Fellow: "Lodovico Cigoli Pittore: Some Problems (continued next page)"

and Proposals for a Catalogue"

April 17, 1980: Ralph Lieberman, Fellow:

"Fifteenth Century Architecture:
Differences and Similarities in the
Formation of a 'Renaissance' Style
in Florence and Venice"

May 2, 1980: Pellegrino D'Acierno, Fellow:

"The Evil Eye in Giotto's Arena Chapel
Frescoes, or Toward a Semiotics of the
Visible"

May 20, 1980: Tiziano Zanato, Fellow:

"Appunti sulla Tradizione Manoscritta
del Comento e delle Rime di Lorenzo
de' Medici"

and

Louis La Favia, Fellow:

"Pietro di Dante e la Controversia
Cronologica delle Due Ultime Redazioni
del suo Commento alla Commedia"

May 27, 1980: Elizabeth B. MacDougall,
Visiting Professor: "The Salone d'Onore
and the Representation of Power in the
Renaissance"

May 29, 1980: Jessie Ann Owens, Fellow:

"New Evidence Concerning the Process
of Musical Composition in the Sixteen-
th Century"

June 4, 1980: Humphrey Butters, Fellow: "A
View from a Commentary: Some Thoughts
on Late 15th Century Politics and
Diplomacy"

and

Loredana Puppi Olivato,
Fellow: "Appunti sulla Trattatistica
d'Architettura nel Rinascimento: da
Sebastiano Serlio a Giorgio Vasari il
Giovane"

June 19, 1980: Timothy McGee, University
of Toronto: "Isaac's 'Alla Battaglia':
Music for the Battle of Sarzanello,
1487"

June 26, 1980: Edward Cone, Princeton
University: "Schubert Tone Poem: The
Wanderer Fantasy"

I Tatti Council Being Formed

A formal advisory group, the I Tatti Council, is being organized to assist in providing continuing support for I Tatti's activities. The Executive Committee of the Council has met several times in New York City; Edmund P. Pillsbury, Director of the Yale Center for British Art, is Council Chairman. Other members of the Executive Committee include: Mrs. Charlotte Cabot; Mr. James R. Cherry; Miss Mary Davis; Mr. Paul E. Geier; Mr. W. Barnabus McHenry; Miss Agnes Mongan; Mr. F. Gordon Morrill; Mrs. Eleanor Murdock; Mr. Gerard Piel; Mr. James E. Robison; Mr. Melvin R. Seiden; Dr. and Mrs. James H. Semans; Baron Thyssen-Bornemisza de Kaszon (Honorary); and Mr. Edwin L. Weisl, Jr.

A plenary meeting of the I Tatti Council will be held in New York in the fall.

I Tatti in New York

As part of the effort to broaden I Tatti's base of support, a full-time development consultant, Susan Mainwaring, has been appointed to work with Professor Smyth's staff in Florence and with the I Tatti Council in the United States. Since a large number of the Council members are from the New York area, Miss Mainwaring will be located in New York City, and make monthly trips to Cambridge. Office space for I Tatti has been made available by Edwin Weisl, a Council member. The address is:

46 East 70th Street
New York, NY 10021
(212) 570 - 2425

Questions or suggestions concerning
I Tatti are welcome.

Announcement of Fellowships, 1981-82.

Support of the Fellows and their research is the central purpose of Villa I Tatti. Since its opening as the Harvard University Center for Italian Renaissance Studies in 1961, I Tatti has existed to provide the conditions for intensive study, reflection, and lively and productive interchanges among scholars. The new insight and fresh substance which I Tatti Fellows and Former Fellows have brought to the field of Italian Renaissance studies more than confirm the value of the Center at I Tatti.

The Harvard Center at Villa I Tatti awards stipendiary fellowships for independent study of any aspect of the Italian Renaissance for the academic year. Stipends are given according to individual needs and availability of funds. The maximum grant for 1980/81 will be no higher than \$17,000; most are considerably less. A limited number of non-stipendiary fellowships are also available for scholars working in Florence on Renaissance subjects with support from other sources; they are offered the same privileges at the Center as scholars with stipendiary fellowships.

The fellowship program at present is made possible by the Lawrence Berenson Fellowship Fund, the Francesco E. de Dombrowski Bequest, the Rush H. Kress Fellowship for Art History at I Tatti, the Robert Lehman Fellowship, a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities for fellowships to support advanced study in the humanities, the Hanna Kiel Fellowship given by friends of Hanna Kiel, and the fellowship fund from the Committee to Rescue Italian Art for American conservators and art historians.

Applications are encouraged from scholars of any nationality; normally scholars are postdoctoral and in the earlier stages of their careers. Persons interested in fellowships for the 1981/82 academic year (July 1, 1981 - June 30, 1982) should forward their curriculum vitae, project proposal, and recommendations from three senior scholars before November 1, 1980 to:

Professor Craig Hugh Smyth
Villa I Tatti
Via di Vincigliata 26
50135 Florence
Italy

A duplicate of all application materials should also be sent to:

Professor Walter Kaiser
401 Boylston Hall
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138
U.S.A.

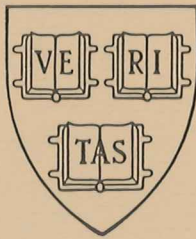
For further information regarding I Tatti fellowships, please get in touch with either source.

Florence and Venice Volume I Published

Volume I of "Florence and Venice: Comparisons and Relations," the acts of the first of the conferences on Florence and Venice held at I Tatti in the summers of 1976 and 1977, was published in November, 1979. Volume II is due to appear in June, 1980. These publications are supported by the Myron and Sheila Gilmore Publication Fund and by a grant from the Billy Rose Foundation. Contributors are: Angelo Baiocchi; James Beck; Howard Burns; Sergio Bertelli; David Brown; Howard Brown; Gene Brucker; Gaetano Cozzi; Giorgio Cracco; Elena Fasano Guarini; Sydney Freedburg; Felix Gilbert; Myron P. Gilmore; James Haar; John Hale; Isabelle Hyman; Michael Mallet; Michelangelo Muraro; Giuseppe

Pansini; Roslyn Pesman; Terisio Pignatti; Carlo Pinsin; John Pope-Hennessy; Lionello Puppi; Nicolai Rubinstein; Craig Hugh Smyth; Giorgio Spini; Francesco Tateo; Cesare Vasoli; Angelo Ventura; Zygmunt Wazbinski; and Paola Zambelli.

In the Foreword, authors Sergio Bertelli, Nicolai Rubenstein, and Craig Hugh Smyth note that: "It was hoped that contributions would try out hypotheses as well as suggest problems to be explored in the future."



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I Tatti Newsletter
Harvard University
7th Floor—Holyoke Center
Cambridge, MA 02138