



The audience, the almost infinite gallery and the three floors of boxes adorned by golden cornices and vermilion drapes are distributed harmoniously in front of the orchestra and the stage. All together they characterize the space of the theatre and they transform it in a unique pearl.

The stage, made of fir wood, keeps the central platform in poplar, one of the few remaining platforms of this type in Italy.

The front part of the stage and the curtain divide the scene by the public and they present it as an animated picture, framed by the rich architecture of the scenic arch.

The orchestra pit increases the apparent distance between the audience and the stage, applying the theory of the "mystical gulf" of Wagner that was used to separate the real from the unreal.

Thanks to these particularly valuable characteristics, the theatre "Francesco Stabile" is the protagonist of many leading cultural initiatives in town and it is a place for important exhibitions and theatrical performances. For its cultural role, in December 2014, according to the regional law on the "live show", the theatre "Francesco Stabile" was appointed as "historic Lucanian theatre" and it is the only one expressly born for the opera in the region.

... It happened on 26th January 1881.

The then King of Italy Umberto I and the Queen Marguerite participated to the inauguration of the theatre in Potenza, named after the illustrious local musician Francesco Stabile.

The memorable day was thus described in "Cronache Potentine" by R. Riviello.

"... Later there was a gala at the theatre, where a company of the San Carlo in Naples came for the happy occasion and sung "The Traviata" of Verdi. Despite the so high prices for the boxes of 200, 180, 150 lire and 25 lire for the seats in the stall areas, it was not easy to get a ticket... that night the hall of the theatre had an aristocratic appearance. It was splendid and beautiful thanks to the glitter of thousand electric flames representing on the arch of the proscenium the star of Italy and the initials of the monarchs for a large and superior group of ladies, that challenged from their boxes the pride of the elegance, of the beauty and of the diamonds and for the turnout of gentlemen, of knights and of all aristocratic people and it seemed to be in a big and charming town. And then, when the sovereigns entered on the stage, people stood up and broke into applause to whom the King and Prince Amedeo answered standing for several minutes with their usual martial dignity while the Queen, wearing a pink dress with fine and rich laces and nice rows of precious pearls on his neck, replied with her charms and her smiles...".

After the show "[...] the Queen went from the prefecture to the theatre in the carriage and the King and Prince Amedeo went on foot. Having put some boards on the moist and muddy ground to make it easier to pass, the King, walking and jumping at the same time, said to those people who were around him: "it doesn't matter, we made our best!".



*Theatre
Francesco
Stabile*

Potenza

This theatre was named after the local musician, Francesco Stabile (1801-1860), and it is one of the most interesting works of the nineteenth-century that it is possible to admire in Potenza. This monumental complex is located in the central square "Francesco Mario Pagano", the heart of the historical center, and it was originated by the request of having a real theatre in Potenza that could also be worthy and respectable in according to the new status of capital city of the Basilicata region conferred to the town by the French Government in 1806.

The construction of the theatre began in 1856 thanks to the funds provided by a wealthy society of shareholders. However, the works directed by the architects Alvino and Pisanti resumed only in 1865, after a long interruption due to the earthquake in 1857.

The theatre was inaugurated on 26th January 1881 with the performance of "La Traviata" by Giuseppe Verdi, in the presence of the King Umberto I and the Queen Marguerite of Savoy.

The typological structure of the Theatre was planned looking at two major models: "La Scala" in Milan and the prestigious "San Carlo" in Naples that inspired it enormously. The constructors paid attention to the positioning of the side rooms and to the monumental façade of the building which is, also today, characterized by a front divided in two registers with full-centre arches overtopped by lunettes that refine the entire rosy façade.



The structure is neoclassical and the interior is full of typical stuccoes and appliques of the late nineteenth century, original decorations that make of it a unique jewel also thanks to the harmonious internal structures adorned by refined paintings.



Well-known artists of the Milanese and Neapolitan schools took part to the implementation of the decoration of the theatre.

The ornaments in filler that are present mainly at the atrium and at the entrance of the theatre were realized by Luigi Cangiano and there are so many similarities between the bas-reliefs of the theatre of Potenza and those performed by Angelo Viva on the façade of the "San Carlo" in Naples.



To the painter Luigi De Luise it is attributed the ceiling that dominates the entertainment room, where it is represented the Apotheosis of Pythagoras.

The subject of the fresco was designed by Vincenzo Marinelli (born in San Martino d'Agri - Potenza), a prestigious Italian artist of the nineteenth century that, drawing "from the treasury of Lucanian personalities", set its research during the era of the Magna Graecia and in particular he turns the Pythagorean and Eleatic schools.

According to him, "starting from the same Pythagoras, up to more recent times, there is a splendid phalanx of philosophers, men of letters, glorious characters for their virtues of wisdom and arm" and for this reason he proposed to collect them all in a big fresco, "as in a pantheon" to represent "the living and speaking history of their native land".



Also many other decorative items were inspired by the school of Metaponto.

Corridors, balconies and passageways are arranged in a ring shape that creates an organic connection with the curve line of the room. This last one has a horseshoe-shape which is considered as the most advanced profile for the Italian opera.

The theatre is formed by a semicircle that is linked to the proscenium by two bends conveniently studied to better sound and view effects.

Vertically it has a honeycomb structure due to the development of the three floors of boxes that divided by radial partitions and the gallery above. The theatre roof is made of wooden trusses. It is possible to notice and appreciate immediately the perfect spatial balance of the parties and of their sizes.