

A stylized illustration of a church at night. The church is a small, square building with a tall, pointed steeple. It is illuminated from within, with light spilling out of the windows and the entrance. The church is surrounded by dark, silhouetted trees. In the upper left corner, a large, bright full moon hangs in the dark sky, casting a long, horizontal beam of light across the scene. The beam of light is a gradient of colors, from dark blue to bright yellow. The overall style is minimalist and artistic, with a focus on light and shadow.

the illumination of churches

Mario Frau & Marco Palandella



studio di architettura
e di illuminazione

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Key Qualifications

Mario Frau is an independent architect and lighting designer, APIL, AIDI.

He was born at Genoa in 1968 and was graduated at the faculty of Architecture of the Milan Polytechnic, continuing at a Master in Landscape Design, Protection and realization of gardens.

Through all these experiences together with his teaching activity at the Faculty of Architecture and Industrial Design of the Milan Polytechnic and various collaborations with Lighting Designers and foreign architects, commences his career in the field of architecture, landscape and light design.

He has been active for more of a decade not only in architectural planning, Interior and Industrial Design, but in systems planning for lighting in interior or exterior spaces as well. The basic idea of architecture, interior design, light and space seen as indivisible components of project development, guide him at the creation of a interdisciplinary group of professionals and at the foundation of the **Studio FRAU18-08 PARTNERS**.

Competence, passion and intuition are the elements that characterize in total his activity and made him being a fondant associate in December 1998 of APIL, Associazione Professionisti dell'illuminazione (the Italian name for the Professional Association of Lighting).

Our work is that of revealing space that surround us when the night grows weak. Returning the city to its panoramic pattern in a harmonious way, above all vision and space, house and monument foundations with an eye on greenery and efficiently, carefully or artistically lit public or private gardens if the place needs it. All these above come as the result of sensitive consultancy requested by our clients...

Mario Frau



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Key Qualifications

Marco Palandella is an independent lighting designer, APIL, IESNA, PLDA.

He started to work as a lighting designer on several project for the illumination of sites of historic and artistic interest and public venues, which were awarded with important prizes and gained national recognition.

He is highly motivated, creative with strong interpersonal and technical communication skills, always worked in a team of architects and electrical engineers ensuring an excellent collaborative and supportive environment.

He is fully committed to his profession providing the best problem solving solutions and coordinating efficiently each project. His long experience with the *Soprintendenza* - government organisations devoted to the preservation of the artistic, architectural and archaeological heritage - has enabled him to further develop his skills and to handle effectively multiple projects within overlapping deadlines.

A professional lighting designers dedicate their careers exclusively to the art and science of lighting. There is no substitute for their level of expertise and professionalism.

With a Lighting Designer member on the team, architects, interior designers, builders and a owners will see their vision realized. A professional lighting designer:

- meets the needs of the people who use the space;
- selects cost-effective and energy-efficient products most appropriate for the project;
- creates an innovative lighting solution that achieves the perfect balance of function and aesthetics;
- solves the unique lighting challenges of a wide range of interior and exterior environments.

Strengthens and enhances any space through creative, yet functional, lighting plans.

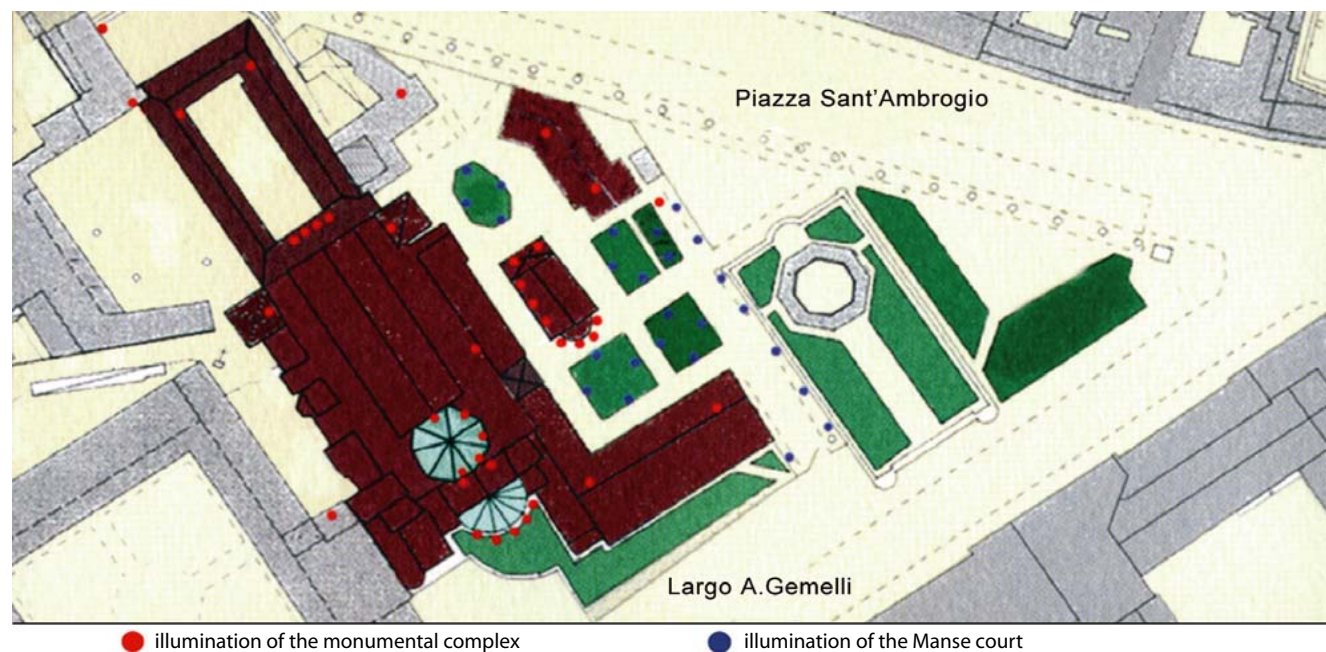
Lighting designers are tremendous resource for innovative, practical and economically viable lighting solutions. They understand the role of lighting in architecture and interior design and rely on their extensive experience and knowledge of lighting equipment and systems to enhance and strengthen design.



Basilica of St. Ambrogio

Milan, Italy

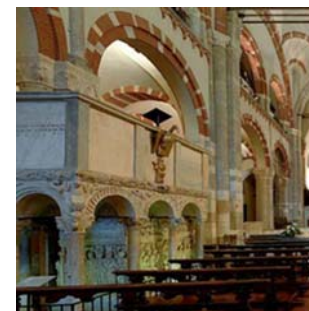
1999



The Basilica of St. Ambrogio is part of a particular urban context, as the church is a body in itself, isolated from the architecture that surrounds it, but perfectly integrated.

The study of environment and architecture made it possible to identify the guidelines to follow: the bell towers, the façade and the narthex, the lantern, the portico of Bramante, the atrium of the Ansperto and the apse were the architectural elements where we focused our attention

The use of the fewest possible devices, together with the context of light pollution and the best colour rendering were our guiding philosophy of design

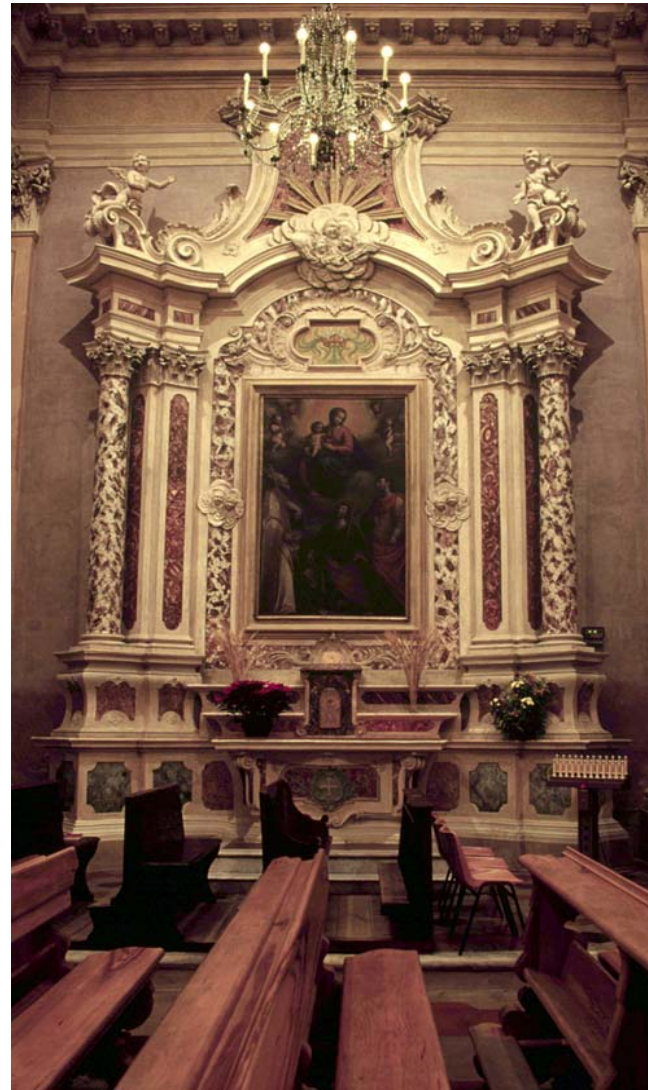




Church of the Assumption of Maria Vergine

Balzola, Alessandria_ Italia

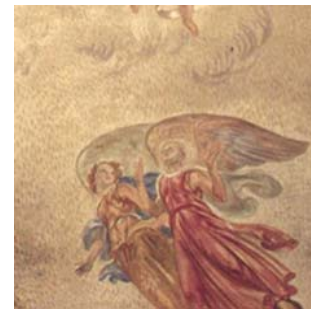
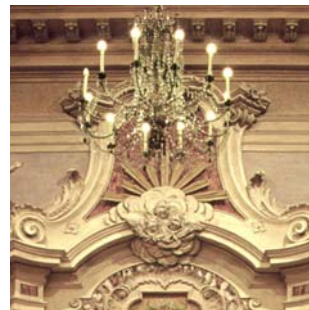
2002



The project of the light, realized for the church of the assumption of Maria Vergine, received the IIDA 2005 "Award of Merit."

The project philosophy finds its bases upon the recommendations of the Italian Episcopal Lecture, which require that the lighting should satisfy the demands of the celebration, avoiding to bring damage to the building and the artistic works in it, and allowing the tourist function.

The lighting plant must integrate itself the more possible into the architectural structure, so we decided to place the lighting equipments on the wide ledge and choosing the most discreet ones.





Church of St. Germano

Ottiglio, Alessandria_ Italy

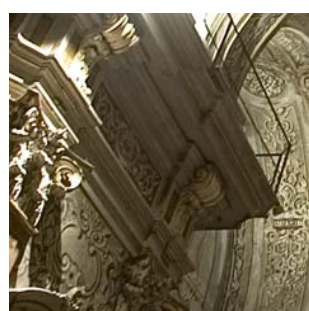
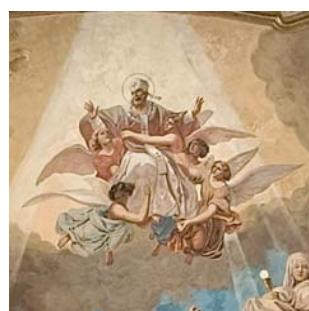
2005



The project of the light realized for the church of St. Germano achieved the "International Section Award" within the IIDA 2006 of IESNA.

The project is preset to take care of with a lot of attention the insertion of the instruments of illumination inside the environment, with the purpose to avoid an excessive visibility and presence of the same, also when switched off, as well as to avoid annoying dazzles for the visitors.

Other important aspect is to certainly furnish a dynamic system of command of the plant that allows them to effect different lightings according to the necessities succeeding in achieving a real energetic saving to the managers.





THE ILLUMINATION OF CHURCHES

The importance of the project

The project must be seen as a moment of intense reflection with the purpose of examining in detail the intervention that is about to be realized.

In fact, the most delicate but fundamental phase, is that which requires the lighting technician to appreciate all the historical and artistic characteristics of the valuable building. In this context, the necessity to work in teams with those people that will deal with the architectural restoration is introduced.

The philosophy of the project.

The concept of inserting a modern technological lighting system inside a place of worship could almost seem, at first sight, to be a sacrilegious violation.

Nevertheless, it can certainly be noted that the Churches have been transformed, restored and innovated during their long existence.

The longer these places of worship live the more they become subject to frequent restorations: the technical electrical systems and lighting systems are the representatives of the third millennium.

The lighting designer's first objective is to satisfy the demands of the celebration of the Holy Mass: Even the monumental churches ie. Those famous from an architectural or artistic point of view must never be considered by the same standards of mere museums.

This therefore means that profound changes or excessive contrasts between presbytery and aisle be avoided instead there should be a feeling of unification of the whole.

Another factor to absolutely be avoided is to compare the church to a theatre or a cinema, realizing "Hollywood" type stage effects.

The choice of the main lights must be taken considering:

- the visual impact of the light fittings
- the sources of light naturally contained within them
- the lighting effect that is trying to be achieved.

Different producers produce fittings specifically for churches and other buildings dedicated to art and history.

It is also very important to try to hide, and to camouflage, as much as possible, the light fittings: even when turned off they can be considered to be invasive or to disturb the atmosphere in such places of worship.

Certain colours are very often adopted keeping with the tonality of the building.

It is best to keep to simple shapes, and not complex, as they allow greater possibility of camouflage. Certain points have to be taken into consideration when deciding the type of light source required:

- Energy saving
- Elevated duration
- Chromatic output

Consideration must be given to general maintenance, even the simple substitution of a light bulb, involves a not indifferent burden of expense for the managers of such places. For these reasons one tends to have a preference for a certain product and in circa 90% of these cases, one decides on a light source which has a middle to long life.