Il Giardino di Armida

Geoff Pavitt (left), Claudio Zeppi (right). Painting: Tchaikovsky

On the weekend of the Festa della Repubblica, 2/3 June, gardens, parks, villas and historic homes throughout Italy will be open to the public at no cost from 10am to 8pm. The Association of Parks and Gardens in Italy (APGI) organizes this event each year.

Villa Annamaria de' Lanfranchi at Molina di Quosa, situated on the bus route between Lucca and Pisa, offers a special invitation for *Grapevine* readers to come and see *Il Giardino di Armida*, a magical place whose name derives from Tasso's *Gerusalemme Liberata* (Books XV, 53-66; XVI, 1-16). In this untamed paradise of auditory, visual and olfactory stimulations you will encounter peacocks and a royal owl, a tepee imported from America, a century-old kiosk from Pisa's Piazza dei Cavalieri, and trees and plants in lush abundance: camellias, peonies, gardenias, roses, hydrangea, jasmine, passionflower, mimosa, lemons, kiwis, magnolias, araucaria, ginkgo, oaks, junipers, laurel, sequoia, lime, chestnut, acacias, yew, Holm-oak, Lebanon cedars, palms, bamboo, cactus, bananas…. The garden was planned in the mid-nineteenth century by Cesare Studiati. Some of its plants were directly imported from China and Japan.

On this weekend, artist Geoff Pavitt (see his webpage *Lucca Curated*) will be exhibiting his paintings either in the garden or inside the villa itself. There will be medieval musicians performing under the artistic direction of Anna Ulivieri. Adding to the appeal of this weekend, host Claudio Zeppi will exhibit his ten-volume set of Leonardo Da Vinci's *Codice Atlantico*, a precious facsimile edition that exists in only 2000 copies worldwide.
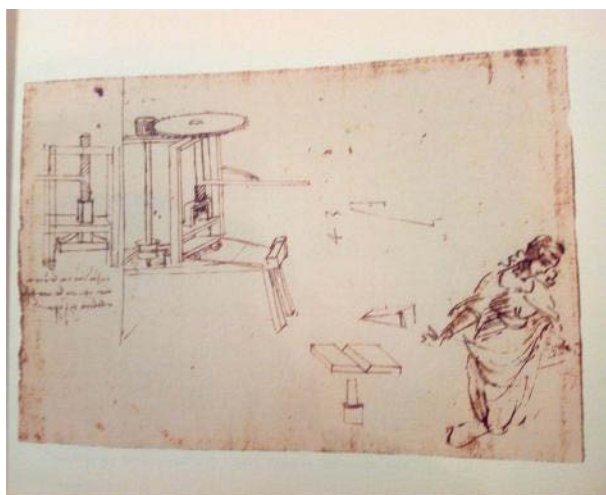
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