

PALAZZO DONN'ANNA

It was built at the end of the 15th century on a pre-existing building called La Serena, owned by Dragonetto Bonifacio, named Marquis by Emperor Charles. Subsequently, in 1571, it became the property of the Ravaschieri, who then sold it for 800 ducats to Prince Luigi Carafa of Stigliano, grandfather of the famous **Donna Anna Carafa**, considered at the time "the first dow of Europe" for her fabulous riches. The palace was rebuilt in 1642 by the architect Cosimo Fanzago and took the name of Palazzo Donn'Anna, who at that time became the consort of Viceroy Ramiro Núñez de Guzmán, Duke of Medina de las Torres.

In popular beliefs Donna Anna is often confused with the famous and discussed Queen Giovanna d'Angiò.

It was rumored that the queen had many lovers and was used to choosing them among the fishermen in the area, with whom he spent passion nights in the secret rooms of the palace and then killed them at dawn by disfiguring their bodies by throwing them out of the windows. According to popular beliefs, the souls of these unfortunate young men are still get around in the basements of the ancient dwelling.

There are those who swear to have seen them look out of those dark windows from which they emit frightful laments; others, on the other hand, say that the queen left go away her lovers of the moment with a rowing boat from the entrance on the sea, entrance can now be seen from the beach that is still used by tenants to access the boats.

According to legend written by writer **Matilde Serao**, Donna Anna Carafa, wife of Duke of Medina Coeli, loved to organize magnificent parties to which all the Spanish and Neapolitan nobility participated. During one of those festivals the palace shone with lights more than ever, with numerous servants and butlers who were getting ready to moor the guests' boats, while the rich, powerful and dreaded Donna Anna in her precious red sheet dress silver, welcomed his guests scornful and proud.

That night had been set up at the end of the hall, a theater for the represent a comedy, whose actors, according to French fashion in vogue at the time, were all noble. Among them were the beautiful and young woman **Mercedes de las Torres**, nephew of the duchess, who recited the role of the slave in love with her master played by Gaetano of Casapesenna.

The two recited with such passion that in the final scene of the kiss all applauded with enthusiasm, all except Donna Anna who instead pallid worn out with jealousy to see her lover kissing passionately the young Mercedes. In the following days, the two women clashed violently and then suddenly Donna Mercedes disappeared mysteriously.

There was a rumor that she had taken refuge in a convent following a sudden religious vocation, but poor Gaetano desperately sought her without stopping in Italy, France, Spain and Hungary, prayed, begged and wept all the tears he had until when he died in battle. Donna Anna's jealousy had poisoned his soul, and that lust never left him until the end of her days.

According to this legend in the building, from time to time, appear the ghosts of the cruel Donna Anna and the two unlucky lovers Mercedes and Gaetano that looking for the other desperately forever.



Isabella Moccia / Giuseppe Di Santo