

## what

- o small domed chapel
- o commissioned by the **Pazzi** family to serve as a Franciscan chapel and meeting space.
- o **Italian Renaissance** style, with its expressive interplay of solids and voids, was the first step toward an architecture that led eventually to the baroque
- o The building has a central dome plan and a narthex or porch, recalling early *Christian configurations*



## who

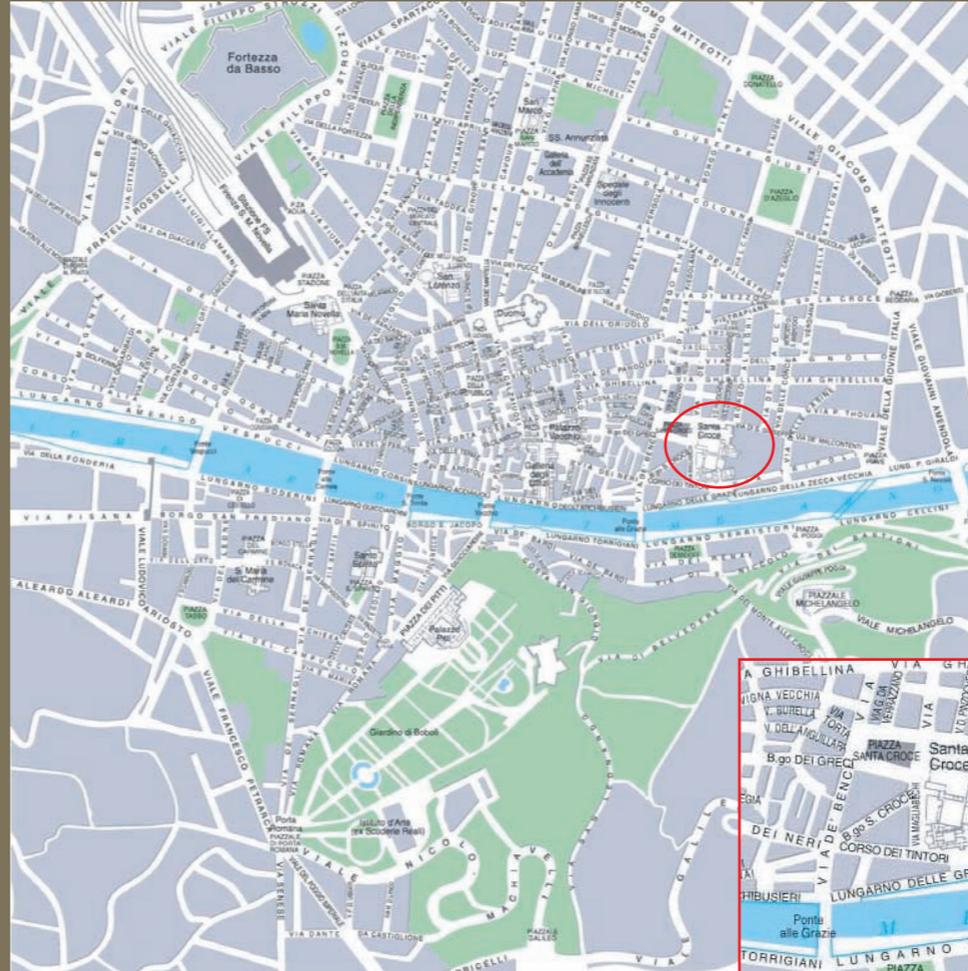
- o **Andrea Pazzi**, of the notorious Pazzi family, promised the monks that he would build a chapter-house with an adjoining chapel, where he reserved the right to have his family buried
- o appointed architect **Filippo Brunelleschi** to design and construct the chapel
  - Florentine architect, one of the initiators of the Italian Renaissance
  - Born in Florence in 1377
  - Trained as artisan in silver and gold
  - He worked here from 1442 until his death four years later

# overview

# Cappella dei Pazzi the Pazzi Chapel

## when

- o 1429 to 1461
- o Design commenced in 1429
- o Chapel was begun after 1442 although an agreement with Brunelleschi was made more than a decade earlier
- o Brunelleschi died four years later in 1448
- o Final dome completed the construction in 1461



## where

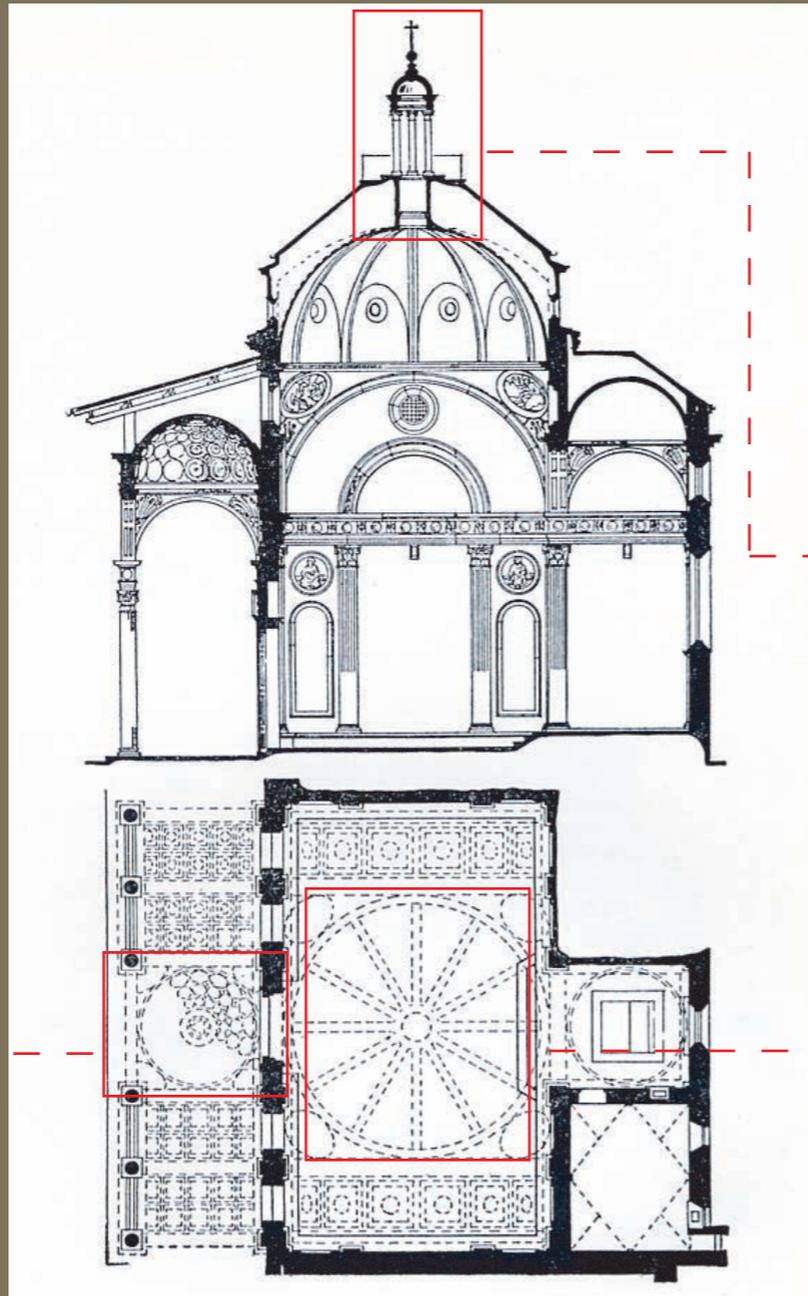
- o **Florence** Italy
- o in the grounds of the Florentine Church of **Santa Croce**

## significance

*"This small, brilliant structure represented a high point in early Renaissance style. Cerebral, rational, and serene, it was a marked contrast to the dynamics of Gothic architecture."*

*Main Structure:*

- A **hemispherical dome** covers a **central square**, which is extended on either side so that the square forms the centre of a rectangle
- The minor spatial compartment, opening off a third side of the main square, is a corresponding square **apse** covered by a dome and containing the altar.

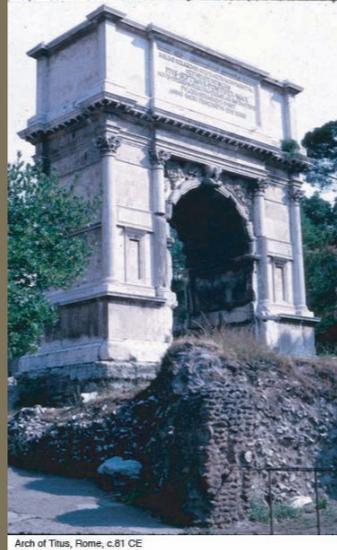


*Dome:*

- completed after Brunelleschi's death following his plans
- cylindrical cupola with its delicate **lantern** was added to the top of the chapel only in 1461.
- **twelve-ribbed** hemispherical dome on pendentives above a square

**Apse:** a semicircular projecting part of a building, especially the east end of a church that contains the altar.

**Pendentives:** A triangular section of vaulting between the rim of a dome and each adjacent pair of the arches that support it.



Arch of Titus, Rome, c.81 CE

Arch:

- The central round arch of the porch *frames* the main door of the chapel, set deeply into the shadows
- added dimension of the recessed *niches* on each side.
- references the Roman framed arch motif - a round arch flanked by columns that support an *entablature* - in a rational, clear spatial arrangement.

Façade:

- slender Corinthian columns support an *entablature* that is regularly divided into squares

**Niche:** a recess in a wall, especially one made to hold a statue

**Entablature:** in classical architecture, the section that lies between the columns and the roof.

Portico:

- The portico was built after Brunelleschi's death corresponds to his design.
- The portico serves to "filter" the light coming in from the outside, which merges with the light from the dome (the light from the heaven), creating a uniform illumination.
- The enamel terracottas surrounding the dome are by Luca della Robbia



## materials

## Materials:

- severely restrained, made of the gray stone called **pietra serena** and white plaster, unrelieved by color
- The harmonious pietra serena grey stone pilasters, oculi, dome ribs and corbels **contrast** coolly with the white stuccoed walls

## Interior:

- a **low bench** runs along the walls of the room; opposite the entrance a smaller altar chapel, square and domed, opens from the eastern wall
- wall surfaces are divided into **panels** based on the module of the square
- Corinthian **pilasters** serve to unite the four walls to the side bays
- The **floorplan** is in the form of a rectangle surmounted by a central cupola
- **ratio** of length to width is 1:2, the altar recess is 1:1

**Pilaster:** a vertical structural part of a building that projects partway from a wall and is made to resemble an ornamental column by adding a base and capital

