



## LO SCOPPIO DEL CARRO THE EXPLOSION OF THE CARRIAGE Easter Sunday

### SCOPPIO DEL CARRO



DOMENICA DI PASQUA

This famous Florentine ceremony dates back to the distant times of the First Crusade, launched to free the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the infidels. This ancient celebration has always attracted a huge crowd of tourists and citizens, as well as numerous peasants from the surrounding countryside who drew auspices of good harvest from the successful and unobstructed "flight" of the dove along the wire. On Easter Sunday morning, accompanied by a procession of 150 costumed figures of soldiers, musicians and flag-throwers of the Florentine Calcio Storico, the Easter carriage piled with fireworks, affectionately nicknamed the Brindellone by the Florentines, proceeds from Il Prato drawn by two white oxen garlanded with flowers to draw up in Piazza del Duomo between the Baptistery and the Cathedral. At eleven o' clock, at the point of the mass at which the *Gloria* is sung, the fuse of the mechanical dove is lit, and it shoots along the wire to ignite the fireworks and Catherine-wheels which have been skilfully arranged all over the Brindellone. The deafening explosion of

the fireworks begins, and with it, albeit in a symbolic manner, the distribution of the sacred fire throughout the city. The impressive pile of the ancient carriage is enveloped by clouds of smoke and the sound of explosions, and it seems as if the air itself is erupting in ever more luminous sparks of light. And all of a sudden these sparks no longer appear as small separate lights, but a veritable hail of violet, pink, red, green, white and blue. The contours of the carriage are completely lost in this kaleidoscopic play of colour which then gradually dissipates, along with the smoke and the deafening explosions, revealing once more the elegantly coloured marbles of the Baptistery, the Cathedral of Santa Maria del Fiore and the Campanile of Giotto.