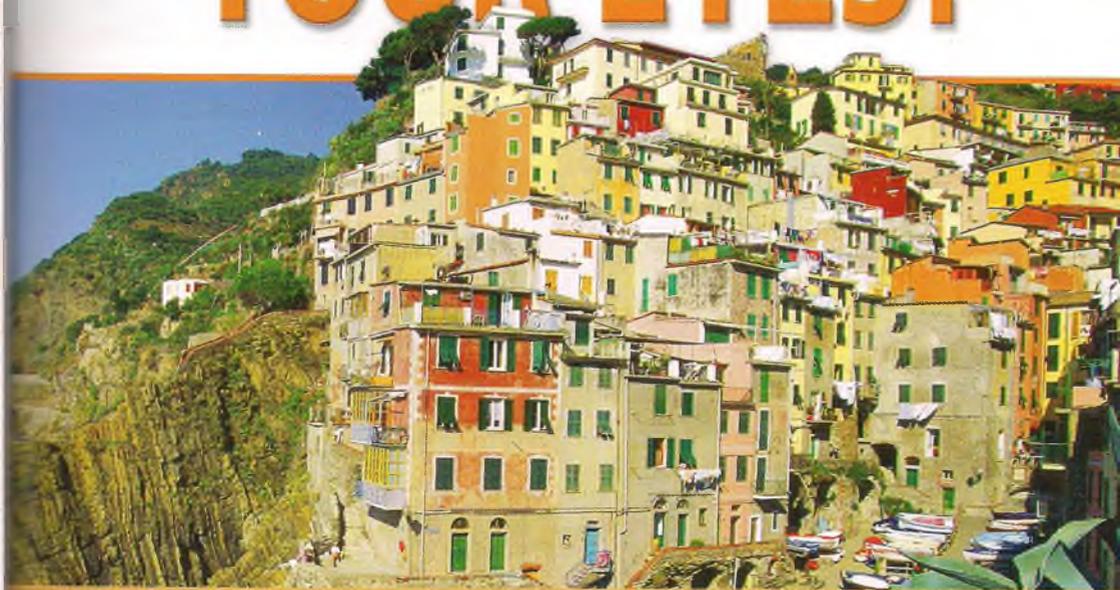


Don't Believe **YOUR EYES!**



Rob Waring, *Series Editor*

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Words to Know

This story is set in Italy, near Genoa [dʒenouə]. It happens in the small town of Camogli [kamɔːlji] in the Liguria [liɡjuəriə] area.



A Is it real? Complete the paragraph with the words in the box.

art	coast	technique
artists	fishermen	village

Camogli is a small town, or (1) _____, in northern Italy. Camogli is on the (2) _____. It's next to the Mediterranean Sea. Many people who live in the town are (3) _____. Their job is catching fish and seafood. However, there are also several (4) _____ in the town. They create beautiful paintings and other pieces of (5) _____. They're famous for a special realistic way of painting. The (6) _____ is called *trompe l'oeil* [trɒmp lɔɪ]. Viewers often think these paintings are real things, but they're not. Look at the pictures. Which one is the photo? Which one is *trompe l'oeil*?



A Painting and a Photograph

B

Italian Homes. Read the definitions. Label the items in the picture with the underlined words.

A balcony is a small area outside a higher-level room that you can stand or sit on.

A façade is the front of a large building.

A terrace is a flat area outside a building where you can sit.

A wall is one of the sides of a room or building.

A window is a space that has glass in it to let light and air inside.

An Italian Home

1. _____

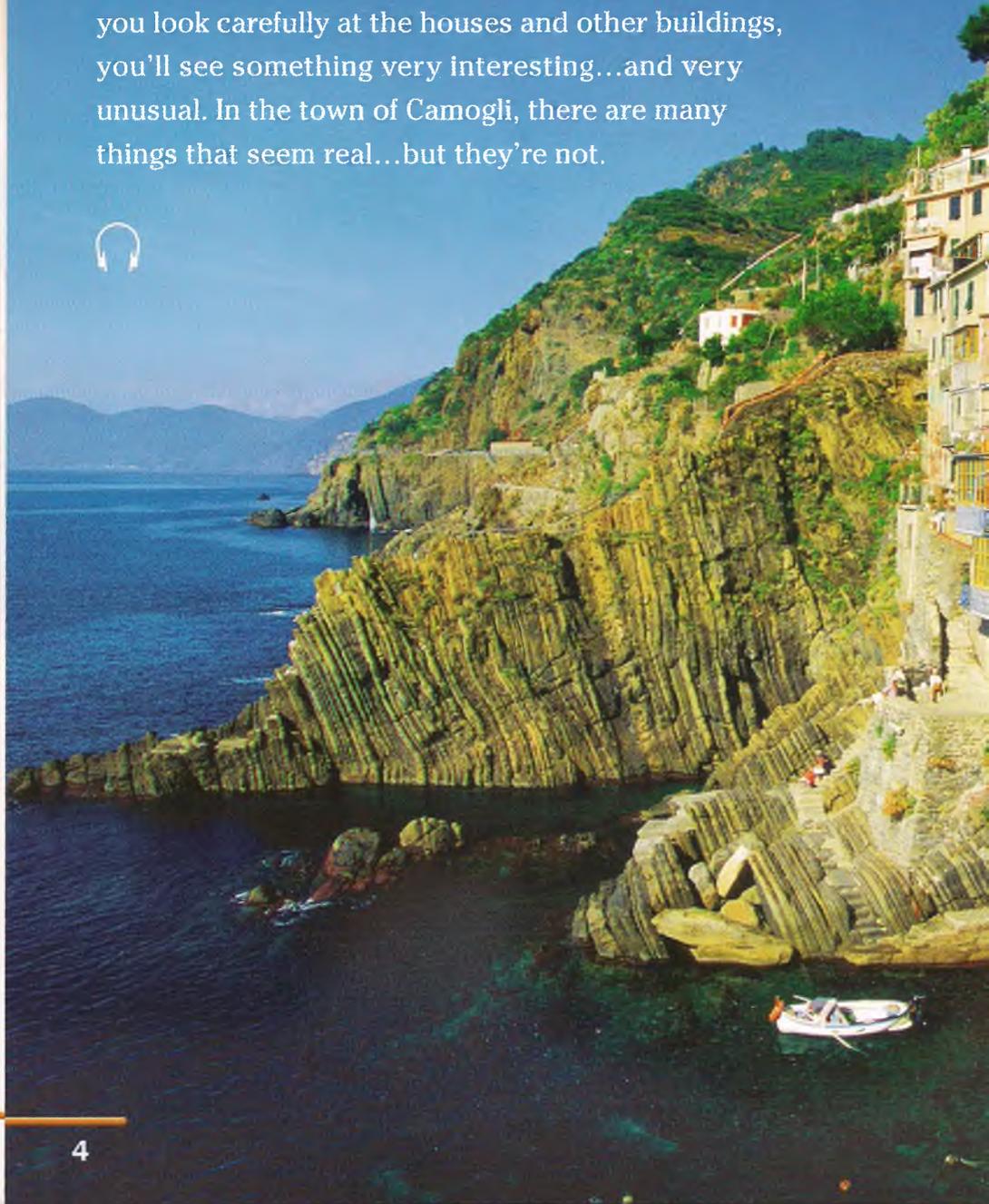
3. _____

5. _____

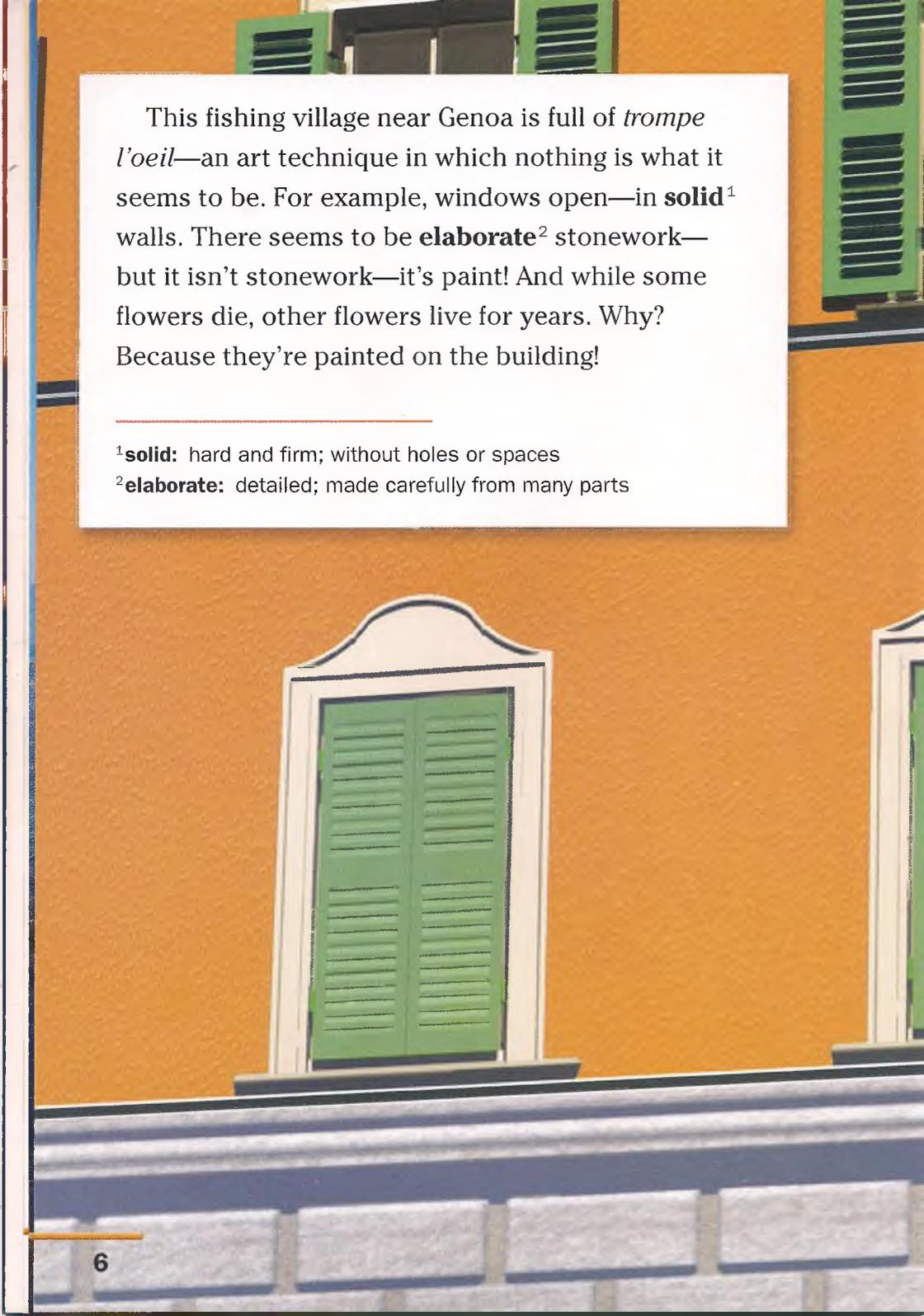
2. _____

4. _____

Camogli looks just like any other small town on the Italian coast. The little coloured houses face the sea. The sunlight warms their beauty. But, if you look carefully at the houses and other buildings, you'll see something very interesting...and very unusual. In the town of Camogli, there are many things that seem real...but they're not.







This fishing village near Genoa is full of *trompe l'oeil*—an art technique in which nothing is what it seems to be. For example, windows open—in **solid**¹ walls. There seems to be **elaborate**² stonework—but it isn't stonework—it's paint! And while some flowers die, other flowers live for years. Why? Because they're painted on the building!

¹**solid:** hard and firm; without holes or spaces

²**elaborate:** detailed; made carefully from many parts

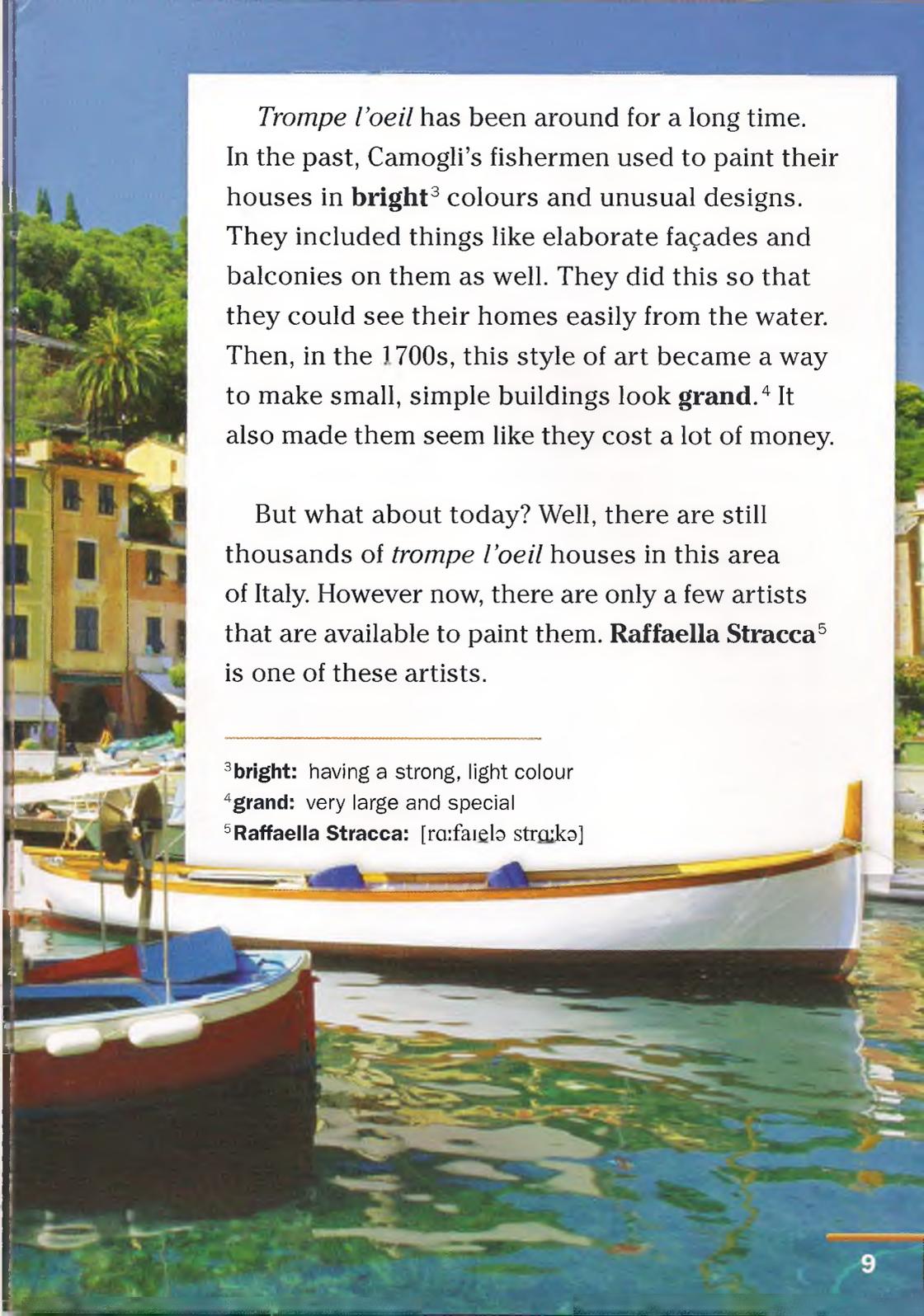


Predict

Answer the question. Then, scan page 9 to check your answers.

What are two reasons that people painted their houses with *trompe l'oeil* in the past?





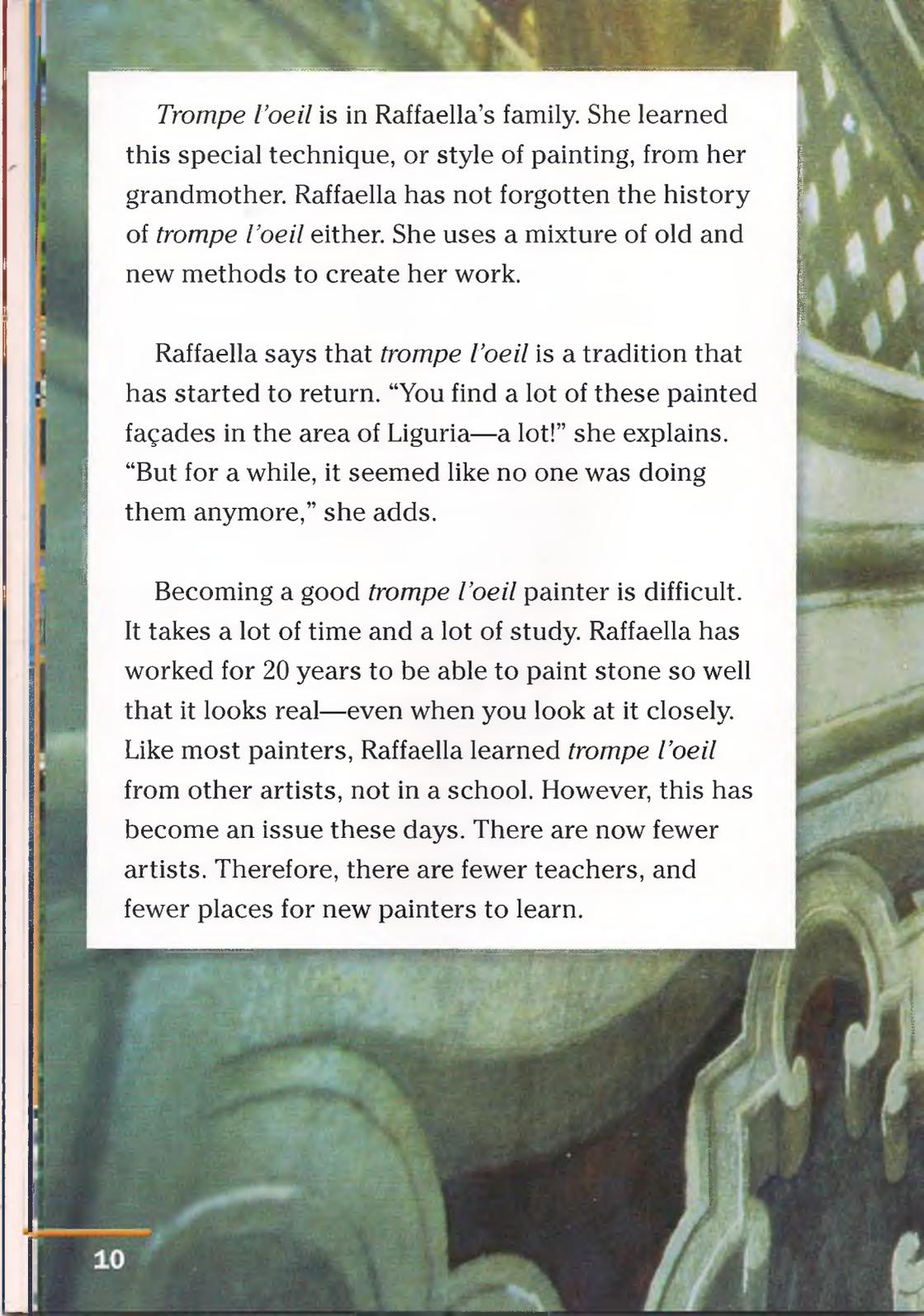
Trompe l'oeil has been around for a long time. In the past, Camogli's fishermen used to paint their houses in **bright**³ colours and unusual designs. They included things like elaborate façades and balconies on them as well. They did this so that they could see their homes easily from the water. Then, in the 1700s, this style of art became a way to make small, simple buildings look **grand**.⁴ It also made them seem like they cost a lot of money.

But what about today? Well, there are still thousands of *trompe l'oeil* houses in this area of Italy. However now, there are only a few artists that are available to paint them. **Raffaella Stracca**⁵ is one of these artists.

³**bright:** having a strong, light colour

⁴**grand:** very large and special

⁵**Raffaella Stracca:** [rɑ:fæɪlə strɑ:kə]

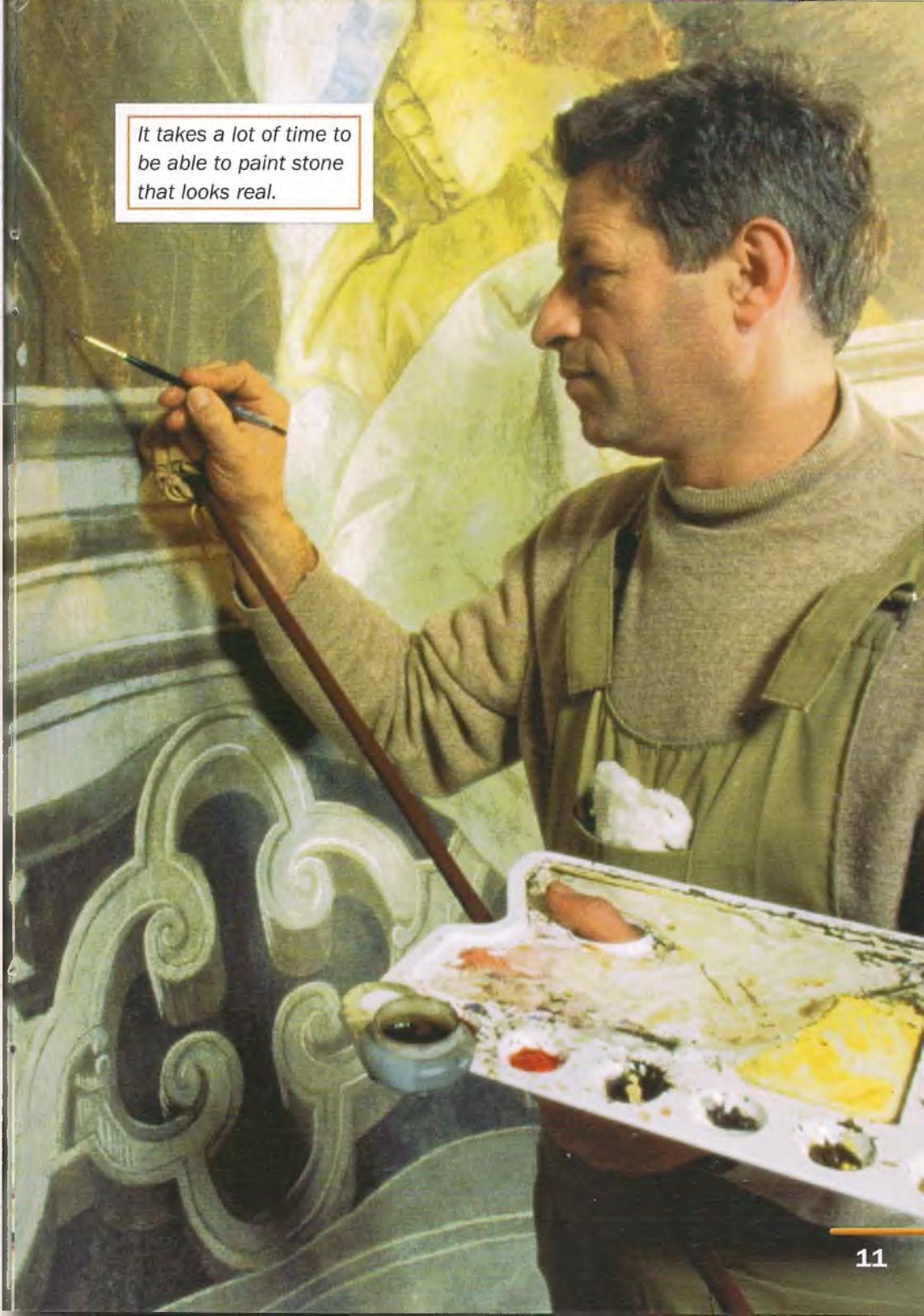


Trompe l'oeil is in Raffaella's family. She learned this special technique, or style of painting, from her grandmother. Raffaella has not forgotten the history of *trompe l'oeil* either. She uses a mixture of old and new methods to create her work.

Raffaella says that *trompe l'oeil* is a tradition that has started to return. "You find a lot of these painted façades in the area of Liguria—a lot!" she explains. "But for a while, it seemed like no one was doing them anymore," she adds.

Becoming a good *trompe l'oeil* painter is difficult. It takes a lot of time and a lot of study. Raffaella has worked for 20 years to be able to paint stone so well that it looks real—even when you look at it closely. Like most painters, Raffaella learned *trompe l'oeil* from other artists, not in a school. However, this has become an issue these days. There are now fewer artists. Therefore, there are fewer teachers, and fewer places for new painters to learn.

It takes a lot of time to be able to paint stone that looks real.



In the city of Florence, the **Palazzo Spinelli**⁶ Art School has one of the few *trompe l'oeil* courses available. There, painters study for a full year to learn how to create everything from *trompe l'oeil* stonework to **fake**⁷ doors.

Most students at this school are international; they have come from other countries to learn the technique. However, they do understand that the technique is a very 'Italian' tradition. One visiting student explains, "I haven't seen anywhere else in the world [with] as much *trompe l'oeil* and **mural**⁸ painting as [I've seen] here in Italy."

⁶**Palazzo Spinelli:** [pəˈlɑːtsoʊ spɪnɛli]

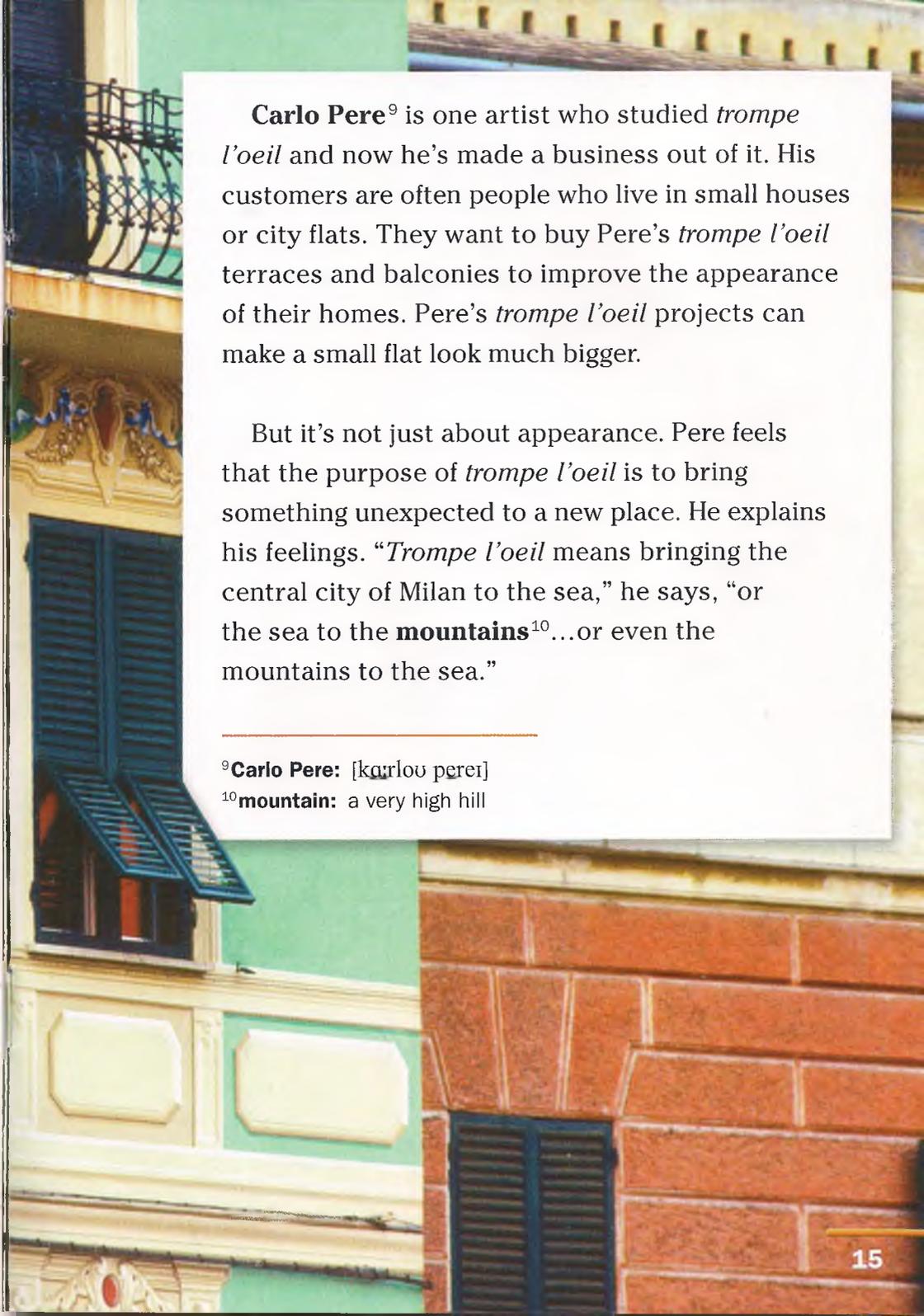
⁷**fake:** not real

⁸**mural:** a painting that covers a wall of a building







A photograph of a building facade. On the left, there is a balcony with a black wrought-iron railing. Below the balcony is a window with dark blue shutters. The wall is painted a light green color. To the right, there is a brick wall with a dark blue shutter. The text is overlaid on a white rectangular background.

Carlo Pere⁹ is one artist who studied *trompe l'oeil* and now he's made a business out of it. His customers are often people who live in small houses or city flats. They want to buy Pere's *trompe l'oeil* terraces and balconies to improve the appearance of their homes. Pere's *trompe l'oeil* projects can make a small flat look much bigger.

But it's not just about appearance. Pere feels that the purpose of *trompe l'oeil* is to bring something unexpected to a new place. He explains his feelings. "*Trompe l'oeil* means bringing the central city of Milan to the sea," he says, "or the sea to the **mountains**¹⁰...or even the mountains to the sea."

⁹**Carlo Pere:** [kɑːrlou pɛrɛ]

¹⁰**mountain:** a very high hill



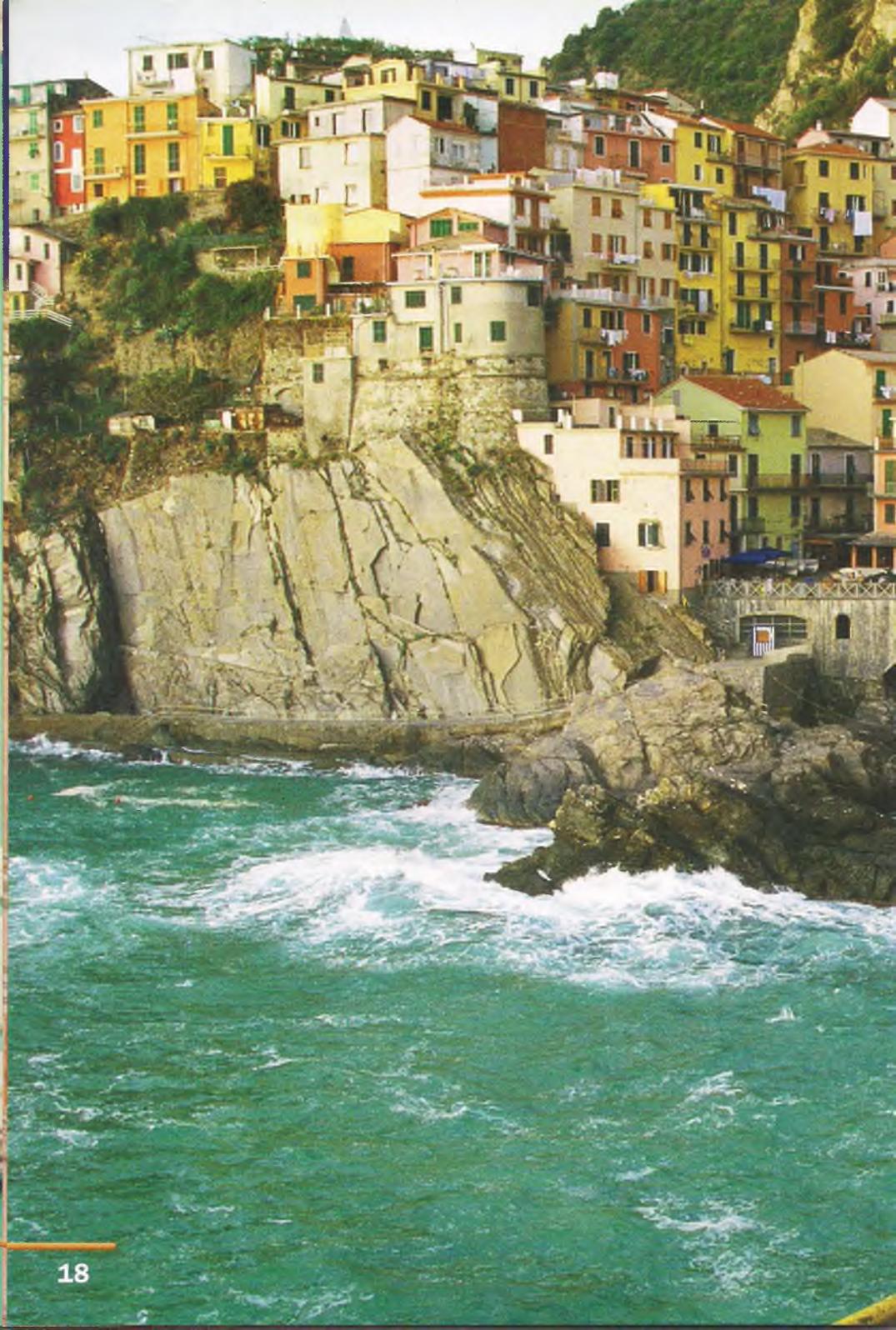
Pere's painting style comes from history and the past. He uses an art book from the 1300s to study the theory of the technique. He only uses traditional-style paints and mixes them by hand.

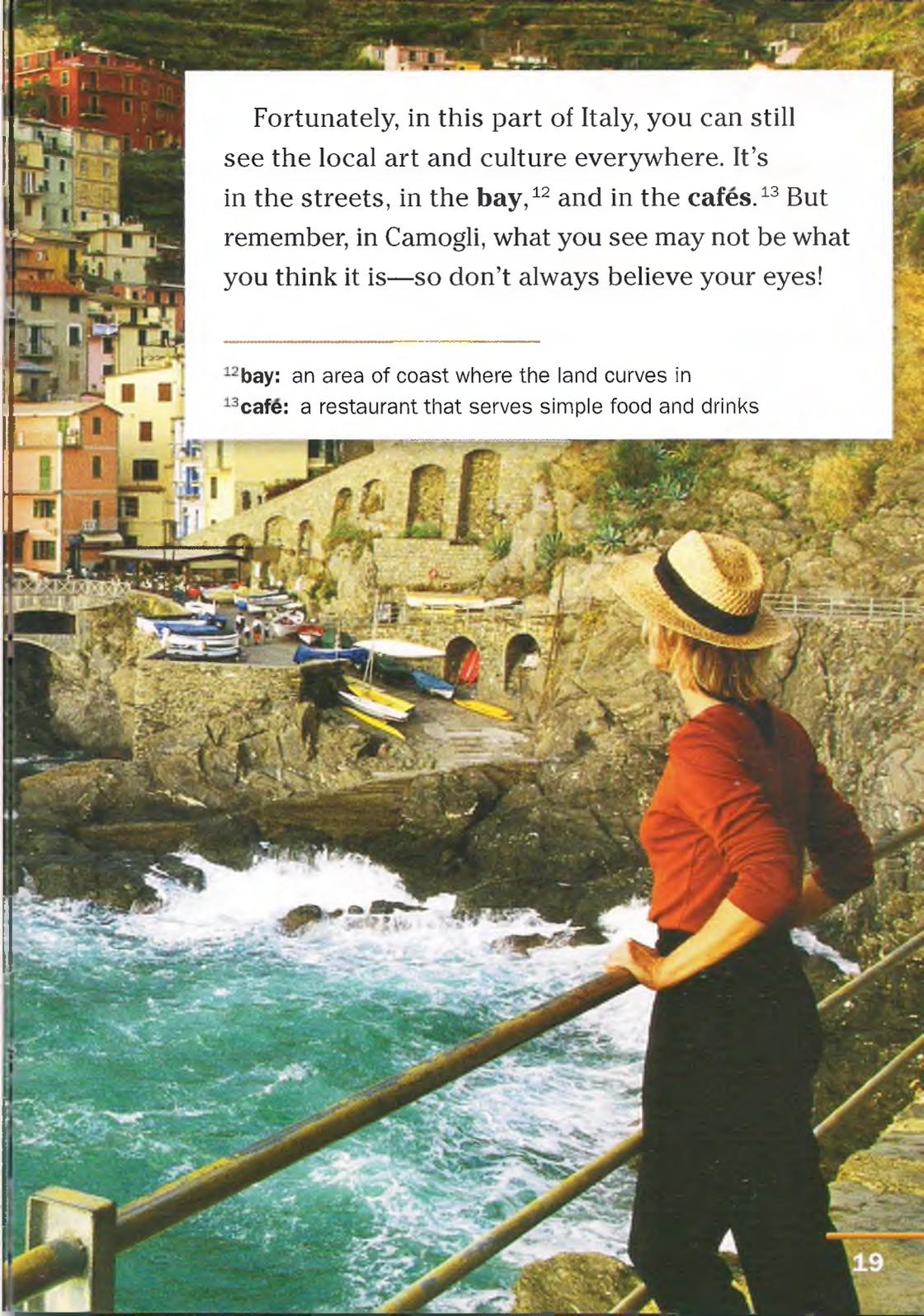
He does all of this for one reason: to protect the *trompe l'oeil* traditions. He also believes that art should be for everyone. "It's easy to see," he says. "If we lose the *trompe l'oeil* tradition, then very little of Camogli's culture will remain. We'll have **museums**,¹¹ but that's not much." According to Pere, "Culture should be seen, everyone should enjoy it."

¹¹**museum:** a building where people can look at things related to art, history, or science

Fact Check:

1. What type of homes do Carlo Pere's customers have?
2. What types of things does he paint?
3. How does Pere define *trompe l'oeil*?
4. Why does Pere use traditional-style paints?





Fortunately, in this part of Italy, you can still see the local art and culture everywhere. It's in the streets, in the **bay**,¹² and in the **cafés**.¹³ But remember, in Camogli, what you see may not be what you think it is—so don't always believe your eyes!

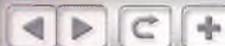
¹²**bay:** an area of coast where the land curves in

¹³**café:** a restaurant that serves simple food and drinks

After You Read

1. What is the purpose of the trompe l'oeil examples on page 6?
 - A. To describe the art in detail.
 - B. To show that flowers can die quickly.
 - C. To explain about Italian stonework.
 - D. To describe an artist painting.
2. Trompe l'oeil originally began because fishermen liked bright colours in the 1700s.
 - A. True
 - B. False
 - C. Does not say
3. In the area of Liguria, there are _____ painted façades.
 - A. some
 - B. too many
 - C. only a few
 - D. many~
4. On page 9, 'them' in 'it also made them seem...' refers to:
 - A. the sea
 - B. the town of Camogli
 - C. small buildings
 - D. the Italian coast
5. A good heading for page 10 is:
 - A. Raffaella Learned the Techniques Quickly
 - B. Fewer Teachers Equals Fewer Painters
 - C. Raffaella Teaches Façade Painting
 - D. Many Places to Learn Italian Art
6. The art student believes that mural painting is:
 - A. traditionally Italian
 - B. not from Italy
 - C. only for Italians
 - D. easy to learn

- 7.** What sort of buildings does Carlo Pere improve?
A. big office buildings
B. houses with large terraces
C. homes with lots of art
D. flats without balconies
- 8.** On page 15, who are 'they'?
A. artists
B. people with terraces
C. customers
D. businesses
- 9.** On page 17, the word 'reason' in paragraph two means:
A. technique
B. purpose
C. situation
D. tradition
- 10.** What does Carlo Pere believe about culture?
A. Everyone should see and enjoy it.
B. Museums are the best place for it.
C. It is hard to teach everyone about it.
D. Books are the best place to experience it.
- 11.** The writer probably thinks that Camogli is:
A. a beautiful village on the coast
B. a special fishing town
C. a town with too many artists
D. a place without culture

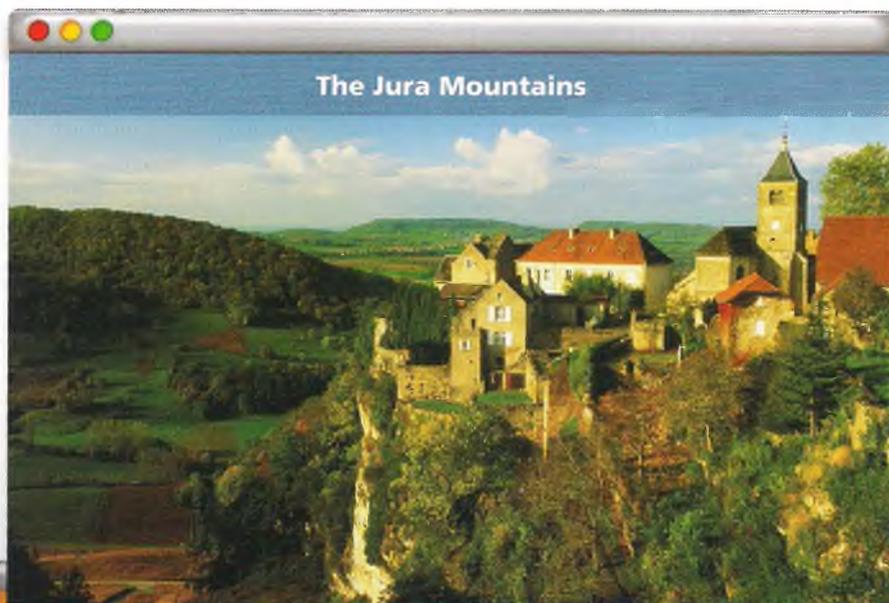


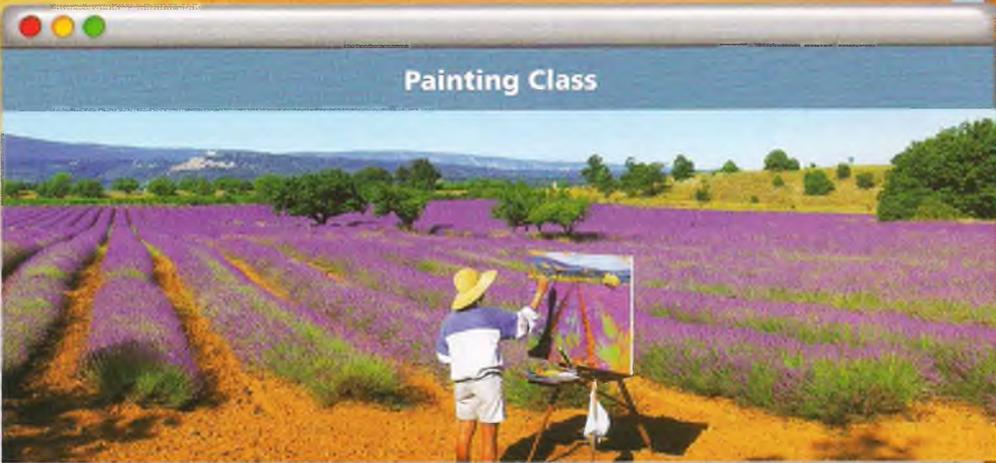
http://www.thomson_learning.com//studentpage

MY NEW ART SCHOOL

Hi Everyone!

I can't believe that I'm actually here in France learning how to paint! It's really beautiful here. I've always loved art, but this is the first time I've ever had painting lessons. There are six students in my class. We're staying in the home of a French couple in the Jura Mountains. Mr. and Mrs. Gautier are artists and they teach an art class just for us every morning. I'm learning some wonderful painting techniques. Later in the day, we visit local villages in the area. We spend hours enjoying the views while we paint what we see. Yesterday, I painted a beautiful village picture. I think it's quite nice!





Painting Class

Oh, and the house we are staying in is so lovely! Mrs. Gautier's family built it in the eighteenth century. I've never seen anything like it. It looks like something from a film! It's very large and the façade has a lot of elaborate stonework. Instead of windows, all of the rooms have glass doors. The best part is that each set of doors opens onto a balcony. It's just wonderful! You know me. I always sleep for a long time in the morning. But here, I get up early and sit on my balcony, just so I can watch the sun rise.

We spend a lot of our time on the private terrace in front of the house. It has become my favourite place because it's so quiet. We often eat out there and it's where we have our painting classes. Sometimes we just sit on the terrace in the evening talking and enjoying the moment. I've never had an experience quite like this, but I plan to come back again. Maybe you can join me next time. I've included a couple of pictures that I took. I hope you enjoy them.

See you soon!
Carol

.....



Word Count: 307
Time: _____



Vocabulary List

art (2, 6, 9, 12, 17, 19)
artist (2, 9, 10, 15)
balcony (3, 9, 15)
bay (19)
bright (9)
café (19)
coast (2, 4)
elaborate (6, 9)
façade (3, 9, 10)
fake (12)
fishermen (2, 9)
grand (9)
mountain (15)
mural (12)
museum (17)
solid (6)
technique (2, 10, 12, 17)
terrace (3, 15)
village (2, 6)
wall (3, 6)
window (3, 6)