

Venezia in Architecture and Art
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Syllabus

A fixed point in humanity's imagination, Venezia continues to cast its spell across generations. Its unique siting, cultural density, and artistic contributions make this a constant destination within the travel industry. Both the general public and the highly specialized scholar find Venezia a primary source of enjoyment and education. This course will dive into the mythology of this extraordinary city through its arts and architecture, in its past, present, and future manifestations.

Lesson 1. VENEZIA: A FLOATING CITY

The city of Venice and its lagoon are together UNESCO World Heritage property. Its urban configuration is inseparable from the unique topography where it emerged. Its unlikely coming into being in the 5th Century AD reflects the shifting political geography toward the East and the found of Constantinople (current Istanbul). The Orient was and is to this day part of the DNA of this extraordinary settlement. This talk gives a bird-eye view of the birth of this city and its rise to power in the Mediterranean at the basis of its immense material and artistic wealth over the coming century.

Lesson 2. VENEZIA IN THE RENAISSANCE AND THE BAROQUE

Tintoretto, Tiepolo, and Canaletto are some of the giants of Venetian painting. Patronage in Venezia sponsored the musical genius of Antonio Vivaldi, as well as the effort of scientific world. The city thrived and expanded the horizons of the artistic worlds and social milieu unrivaled. Many architects- Bartolomeo Ammannati, Jacopo Sansovino, Michele Sanmicheli, among others- have left deep traces of their creativity in the city. Many of the traditions that exist to this day, such as the Carnevale di Venezia have even older roots. The cultural richness of the City is the object of the third lecture.

Lesson 3. MODERN ARCHITECTURE IN VENEZIA: FRANK LLOYD WRIGHT, LE CORBUSIER, AND LOUIS KAHN.

Any architect committed to this architecture as an art form has Venezia in the Grand Tour of places to visit time and again. The city has had a complex relationship with its own modernity. Through invited commissions, three Masters of the Modern Movement delivered an architectural expression that remained on paper despite the collective support of the world community. This lesson covers these three unbuilt projects together with the work of renown architect Carlo Scarpa, a figure of significant influence on architectural discourse in the United State as well.

Lesson 4. VENEZIA TODAY: RECENT TRENDS IN ARCHITECTURE AND ART.

Venezia continues to renew its relevance as a city museum hosting current events of global impact on architecture and art. Since the first edition of the Architecture Biennale started in 1980, the city on the lagoon has been a much-anticipated venue to understand current and recent trends in the field. Together with the Art Biennale, these two events provide an overview of where the art world stands. This final lecture will present recent and semi recent, built, and forthcoming accomplishments by household names as well as the new generation of creatives.