

ARTS IN VENICE SUMMER SCHOOL 'THE SHAPE OF WATER'

July 3rd-14th, 2023

		Monday July 3rd	Tuesday July 4th	Wednesday July 5th	Thursday July 6th	Friday July 7th
WEEK 1	9.00 - 13.00	Welcome Meeting Ice-breaking Experience: the Venetian Lagoon by Dragon Boat	The Archaeology of the Venice Origins: Water and its Material Narratives	Venice on Top	Artificial Intelligence	Workshop: Souvenise Lab
	14.30 - 18.30	Anthropocene Water City: A Geo-Anthropological History	The Choice of Water. Venice from S. Ilario to S. Marco: Growth and Development of the Medieval City.	A Bridge between Past and Future: the Museum of Ancient Instruments and the Digitization of the Conservatory Music Library	Workshop: Souvenise Lab	Workshop: Souvenise Lab
		Monday July 10th	Tuesday July 11th	Wednesday July 12th	Thursday July 13th	Friday July 14th
WEEK 2	9.00 - 13.00	Tintoretto and the Water	The Venetian Organ Art: building organs and their sounds in the churches of the Serenissima.	Contemporary Art	Workshop: Souvenise Lab	Workshop: Souvenise Lab
	14.30 - 18.30	Between Land and Water. The "Lagoon Eaves" as an Interface.	Venice's Waters Experience: SOUNDOAR	Contemporary Art		Final Event

ARTS IN VENICE SUMMER SCHOOL - THE SHAPE OF WATER

2023 SYLLABUS

(last updated on April 17th, 2023)

Workshop: Souvenise Laboratory

Giorgio Andreotta Calò (artistic director)

Venice Academy of Fine Arts

The first edition of the Study in Venice Summer School will be curated by artist Giorgio Andreotta Calò (Venice, 1979), who brings together international experience with a deep knowledge of the city. The "Souvenise" workshop conceived by Andreotta Calò considers the city of Venice as a unique observatory for understanding the ongoing changes on a macroscopic scale. The focus will be water, the element that most characterizes the Venetian territory. The practice of walking, an important aspect of his artistic research, will become a tool for exploring the city and its surroundings. During the collective walks, students will be invited to actively collaborate through visual, tactile and sound practices and exercises. These practices will be useful in developing a new vision of the city beyond the trajectories defined by mass tourism. In the final part of the workshop, participants will combine their practical and theoretical experiences in an intensive workshop to create a "souvenir" based on their personal view of the city and its ecosystem.

Strolling through the music history of Venice; the Opera world at La Fenice and the Venetian Organ Art - building organs and their sounds in the churches of the Serenissima B. Marcello Music Conservatory

Alvise Mason, titular organist of St. Mark's Basilica, will accompany us to explore the art of Venetian organ building and the various organ manufacturers we can discover in some of the most beautiful churches in Venice, starting from St. Mark's Basilica. How the sound of each organ develops in the history of its church and resonates in the architecture and how organ music affects the liturgy and the life of the community. The specific Venetian organ repertoire will be presented with practical demonstration and guest organists will be welcomed to play the instruments, also together with other guest musicians.

A guided tour through La Fenice Theater will make us discover the fascinating opera music world embedded in centuries of history and the regenerative power of the phoenix myth.

A bridge between Past and Future: the museum of ancient instruments and the digitization of the Conservatory music library

B. Marcello Music Conservatory

How can an event as disastrous as the 2019 “Acqua Granda” be a trigger for innovation and research? Paolo Da Col, librarian, will guide us through the Conservatory Library's collections, including scores that have close connections with water and specifically with the Venetian lagoon: from the popular “canzoni da bateo”, preserved in the mss. of the Venetian Funds, to the mysterious Liszt's *Lugubre gondola*, to the iconographic elements present in the music and in the historical collection of opera librettos. Reference will be made to the high-water event “Acqua Granda”, which in 2019 damaged ancient manuscripts and musical prints. The response to that disaster was a struggle for revitalisation and enhancement of the library materials through physical restoration and digitisation. A restoration intended both as a traditional physical recovery by drying, dusting and restoring the papers and bindings, and as a digital restoration, carried out in the context of the collaboration with Ca' Foscari University. The first recovery results of the waterlogged music will be illustrated, part of which has been digitized and made available in the Digital Library. The course includes a visit to the Museum of Musical Instruments.

Venice's Waters Experience: SOUNDOAR

B. Marcello Music Conservatory

The relationship between Venice and electronic music is well known, and is historically intertwined with the acoustic peculiarities of its mainly aquatic soundscape. While the culture of the urban soundscape has been extensively explored by artists, and is now being reframed in view of the complex needs of the city, with respect to the reduction of the urban social fabric, the rebalancing of the tourists flow and the proximity of industrial and port facilities (among others), the aesthetic and cultural impact of the non-urban soundscape, i.e. the smaller islands in the lagoon and the watery areas that cannot be navigated, but can be travelled on with the boats of the Venetian rowing tradition, is also of great importance.

On the basis of an inventory work of unpublished sound documents related to the relationship with the water of the above-mentioned boats, which will be included in the platform www.venicesoundmap.eu, and of the recording of further materials, this workshop proposes a first creative approach aimed at a concentrated and collective activity of electroacoustic composition.

Venice On Top

B. Marcello Music Conservatory

What was life like in Venice in the 1700s? A visit to the Conservatory of Music will open the doors of one of the most incredible palaces in Venice: Palazzo Pisani. This lavish palace, once

home to one of the most powerful Venetian dynasties, has become the seat of the Conservatory of Music since the 1800s. There will be the opportunity to explore the monumental Palace and its hidden treasures and experience the everyday life of a Music Institution of Higher Education. The ancient residence of the Pisani family and the magic that envelopes the Conservatory, will be the perfect setting to listen to water-inspired music compositions from Haendel “Watermusic” to Takemitsu “Between Tides”, played by our music students. An open debate will be offered to deepen the experience of “The Music of Water” Virtual Exchange, involving students, players and composers in a workshop that could possibly lead to the creation of water music soundscapes.

On top of the experience we will be led to enjoy the spectacular view of Venice from the highest panoramic terrace in the city.

Anthropocene Water City: A Geo-Anthropological History

Ca’ Foscari University of Venice

Venice and its lagoon can be regarded as a paradigm of the Anthropocene, the new geological conceptualization of human agency as a geological force of world transformation. Indeed, the material-cum-cultural reality of Venice is an archive of historical interactions between the geosphere and the anthroposphere. We will explore it together, from the viewpoint of an epistemic history of technological landscape transformation, through the exploration of early modern sources and contemporary sites.

Tintoretto and the water

Ca’ Foscari University of Venice

In Tintoretto's work, the presence of water is a determining element. The course intends to investigate this feature, which has no equal in Venetian Renaissance painting, in order to understand its significance beyond its eminently narrative function. Some of the artist's most important masterpieces will be examined: from the *Creation of the Animals* for the Scuola della Trinità, to the *Last Judgement* of the Madonna dell'Orto, to the *Stories of St. Mark* for the Scuola Grande of the same name, and again the two “Marys” in the ground-floor hall of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. The course includes visits to the Gallerie dell'Accademia and the Scuola grande di San Rocco.

The choice of water. Venice from S. Ilario to S. Marco: growth and development of the medieval city

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

On may 819, Agnello Partecipazio and his son Giustiniano decided to donate the ducal chapel of S. Ilario and its possessions to the Benedictines of S. Servolo, in so doing they also decided to transfer the ducal power from Malamocco to Rivoalto, in the middle of the lagoon. They built the Ducal Palace and the chapel of S. Marco, the primitive nucleus of the urban expansion of the Civitas Rivoalti. The course will investigate the works of art related to S. Ilario, S. Marco and S. Mark's Square (until the 13th century) not only as expressions of the rise of Venice's power over the Adriatic but also as the result of a fluid/liquid culture that was the result of commercial and cultural exchanges.

The archaeology of the Venice origins: water and its material narratives

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

How did Venice come into being? For the Venetians themselves, it's a familiar story: try and ask the locals, and you will be regaled with anecdotes, the difficulties, and the heroism in the tales of the deeds of the Roman and Byzantine nobles who are said to have sought refuge in the lagoon. They had fled from the barbarian hordes who had occupied cities rich in monuments, fine squares and civil institutions in the neighbouring plain. They escaped to an inhospitable lagoon environment with marshes, flooding and mosquitoes. The waters, however, would also keep the barbarians out, the men in the armies of Attila, Alboin and Charlemagne. The first act of these fugitive people on the newfound islands would be celebrating their saints and giving thanks for their narrow escape. But this is only legend, and in all likelihood, the explanation of the flight from the conquering barbarians as being at the origins of Venice is a historiographical invention. So how then was Venice first formed?

The course will narrate a different and arguably more topical story of slow environmental changes and capital investments in fairly large port structures. The origins of the settlements in the lagoon are linked to a gradual series of movements of people due to climatic and economic phenomena. In late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages, the changes in the fluvial and lagoon landscape with a gradual shifting of the coastline out to sea created new conditions for widespread port structures. The low mudflats and tides offered the ideal environment for commercial growth based on being well connected to the principal long-distance transport highways of the time, that is, the sea routes. The mudflats, over the centuries, would gradually become the sites of warehouses, ports and places for craft production. For all this to happen required the presence and (and therefore control and movement) of large masses of both generic and skilled workers. Those masses, in Torcello for example, formed the vital nucleus that gave

rise to one of the more enduring, prosperous urban and cultural phenomena in the post-Classical age: Venice.

Contemporary Art

Iuav University of Venice

The course invites us to consider the history of Venice from the perspective of contemporary art, emphasizing how the emergence of leading institutions such as, above all, La Biennale, but also the Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa, the Fondazione Cini, the Fine Arts Academy, and Iuav University (within the 1930s) led in the following century to a flourishing of foundations, temporary initiatives, and exhibition areas for the contemporary in areas that once did not foresee it (e.g. Ca' Foscari, VIU, Fondazione Querini Stampalia), giving rise to a virtuous circle of cultural presences in the city. However, it is noticeable that this flourishing is more from the point of view of Venice as a cultural embassy than as an aid to the city's vitality: while investments in culture are growing, especially by the private sector, the number of inhabitants continues to decrease. Those who exhibit in Venice hardly have a Venetian audience or urban dynamics of activating the inhabitants in mind, while the city is used as an international showcase. A phenomenon with its pros and cons, which deserves reflection and examination. All of the above will be discussed during a one-day visit to the Biennale, the most symbolic place for contemporary art in Venice and the best Italian institution for the reflection on present creative phenomena in many art fields.

Between land and water. The “lagoon eaves” as an interface

Iuav University of Venice

Observing the relationships between the Lagoon and the Mainland (I use capital letters because both terms here denote specific area and becoming proper names), i.e. that area commonly defined as “lagoon eaves” is culturally intriguing and fascinating activity because it allows (and obliges) to reflect on some aspects and concepts that are both general and current.

1) The Lagoon and the Mainland are not uniquely delimitable areas, here there is no single clear border, definable by a line, but rather an area, a moving space, which over the centuries has been shaped by the forces of nature and invented by man. An area where, more than elsewhere, it clearly emerges that the border is a project and that the landscape is in motion.

2) This is a space where various subjects endowed with “agency” interact, where not only man but also the rivers and the sea, the flora and fauna confront each other and collide, they vie for space in the present but above all they outline different ideas of the future: solid ground (on

which to build one of the largest industrial areas in the country) or mobile landscape (characterized by the salt marshes, with the poet Andrea Zanzotto brilliantly defined “clods of sucking vegetable strength)?

So, observing this space traversing history (the stories of the various subjects endowed with agency), recognizing its delicate role as an interface between landscapes and population, there allows us to develop reflections that intertwine different fields of knowledge, obliges us to put various “devices” to work to observe and describe this palimpsest in motion. Perhaps an emblematic place to reflect not only on how we have lived in the past, but on how we intend to inhabit the Earth in the future.

New and old Artificial Intelligence

Iuav University of Venice

Talking, writing, drawing without thinking: the new Artificial Intelligence.

The ‘old’ A.I., i.e. the calculating machine: the birth of A.I. and the Cognitivist paradigm: an intelligent system which executes logical rules. Is the brain a Turing Machine? The Cognitivist approach to language learning and computer vision: a history of failure. The problem of reasoning under uncertainty and its solution: Bayesian Networks.

The Neural Networks: from the neuron model (1943) to the first learning machine (1962). Death and resurrection of Neural Networks: Machine Learning. The Neural Network approach to language learning and computer vision: a success story.

The ‘new’ AI, i.e. the learning machine. Deep Learning: the machine does not execute logical rules, it rather accumulates statistical data. The Big Data empire. The machine does not have a mind, but pretends very well to have one (in some cases). What kind of intelligence is such an ‘intelligence’? Should we be afraid of it? To what extent is the human brain a statistical machine? How will it affect our use of the cities? Will it be helpful in protecting our heritage, and Venice in particular?