

myVE Editorial

GETTING TO VENICE

The winning project designed by the architect Mauro Galantino on the urban renewal of the nautical station in Venice has been presented

Francesco Palazzo

Living on an island often implies isolation. Venice has always tried to oppose to the adverse effects that this situation can bring about. In fact, according to many, being so distant from the main commu-



nica- tion networks is inconvenient and detrimental for the city economy. Pierluigi Cervellati deals with this issue in "Per un piano della città antica" in a book published by Marsilio in 2007 ('Quale Venezia: trasformazioni urbane 1995-2005'). Cervellati states that Venice has been gradually moving towards mainland: "For centuries, the Arsenale has been the economic heart of the city. Later, the core moved to San Marco square, then to the market of Rialto. The last step towards the mainland is the

Tronchetto area. With its petrochemical plant, Mestre includes and becomes Venice". As Venice's old town centre is less and less populated by Venetians, more and more projects and studies are introduced in the attempt to regulate the growing flow of people that daily visit the city to work, to study or for tourism. Over the past decades, the centre of Venice increasingly stopped being a place in which to 'stay', turning into a 'crossing-area'. Therefore, it's vital to update and im- (continues to page 2)

myVE Tours

ONE OF VENICE'S EMBLEMATIC CHARACTER

Following an interview with Marino Folin, taken from My Local Guide Venezia, Light Box 2007

Architect (Venice, 1944). In 1968 he graduated with an architecture degree in Venice, he then became professor of "City and Territory Analysis" at the IUAV (Architecture University of Venice). He was Visiting Professor at the Institut Francais D'Urbanism - Paris VIII in 1988. From 1991 to 2006, he has been rector of the IUAV where he was elected president of the Conference of Rectors of the Architecture department. Commissioner of the VI Biennale of Venice between 1994 and 1996. He has been a member of the board of directors of the Triennale in Milan. Currently, he is a member of the board of directors of Fondazione Venezia.

What's your relationship with Venice?

MF: I was born in Venice, but I see myself as an adopted citizen since I have chosen to remain in this city because I deeply love it experiencing everyday the city in wonder, as someone who sees it for the first time. I love Venice's materials, the beauty of its stones and of the waters flowing through it; but I also adore its immaterial side: Venice is a feeling, a state of mind. (continues to page 2)

myVE Main Feature

THE LAST TITIAN

"L'ultimo Tiziano - la sensualità della pittura" Gallerie dell'Accademia until the 20th of April

Giovanna Dal Bon

The opening sees Pope Paul III grabbing look on the world, his hands-claws holding the chair on which he's seating; it's 1543. This is the date from which we start the 20 year journey in the oceanic activity of the greatest of painters. The last, the very last, Titian is enshrined in the atmosphere of the Pietà of the Accademia: an immense ex voto aiming at preventing the plague epidemic that was spreading in 1576, the year of the painter's death. Everything seems to collapse, to decompose, and then reappear in a new hallucinated vision of shattering light with 27 other pictures, perceived as 'final'. The exhibition "The last Titian, the sensuality in painting" comes from the (continues to page 3)

myVE Tours

LIFE IN THE LAGOON

Introduction the novel 'Maria della laguna' by Alda Monico, Corbaccio 2007

Adriana Longo

The underlying theme of the second novel of the Venetian writer Alda Monico is the lagoon. The lagoon is a kind of amniotic womb of Venice: its waters with the islands and the sandbanks, just like sand dikes consolidated by the work of man, defend Venice and are considered to be the city protective walls. In this novel, Venice is described in the exciting period of the boat-races, among sumptuous celebrations, with the introduction of a protagonist of humble origin: Maria Boscola, from Marina di Chioggia. Maria Boscola really existed, what's left about her is a few data and her portrait kept in the Correr museum. Maria has long been a champion of the oar: in 1740, when she was very young, she conquered the red flag of victory, then in 1764 and in 1767 she reached the second position, the blue flag. In 1784, she won two more races, including the last regatta in whi- (continues to page 4)

myVE Main Feature

ROME AND THE BARBARIANS

Palazzo Grassi until the 20th of July

Lidia Panzeri

Now managed by business tycoon François Pinault, the newly renovated Palazzo Grassi presents "Rome and the Barbarians" its first big exhibition focused on the ancient past. To best represent this theme two emblems were juxtaposed: extraordinarily survived through History's ravages the glorious bust of Emperor Marco Aurelio, dating 180 A.C, (1590 grams of pure gold 24 carats) and found in Avenches, Switzerland, is facing the bronze statue of a mysterious barbarian, dating I-II century A.C, found in Sweden about a century ago. The subtitle reads "the beginning of a new world". The operation is of extreme importance both for the great value of the pieces on show, coming from an extremely wide area, extending from North Africa to the whole European continent, and for the relevance of the concept developed by the curator and director of Palazzo Grassi, Jean-Jacques Aillagon. He is convinced that the Barbarian heri- (continues to page 4)

myve Editorial**GETTING TO VENICE***(continues from the first page)*

prove the access areas of the city crossed daily by the flow of visitors. In dealing with this issue, good intentions often outnumbered the accomplishments but, of course, some improvements have doubtlessly been made in Piazzale Roma, where an increased sensitivity and a greater aesthetic awareness can be perceived. Among the most recent fulfilments that re-outlined Venice access areas, we find the passengers terminal buildings in Marco Polo airport and the city harbour. New works are under construction: the People Mover will connect the Tronchetto area, Piazzale Roma and the Calatrava bridge, improving the passage between the square and the railway station. Among those projects which have never been carried out or are not completed yet, we find the water/land exchange junctions which are expected to be created in

some areas of the lagoon, for instance in the Fusina area. Another project to be implemented is the reclamation of the area surrounding the nautical station, including the creation of a multi-functional exchange junction. The nautical station area amounts to nearly 40,000 square metres, extending from the Tronchetto area to Piazzale Roma. This whole area is expected to become one of People Mover halfway stops with a wide range of features: a multi-level garage, commercial areas, information and reception points and open public spaces.

The creation of this area required the launch of a planning competition in 2007, won by architect Mauro Galantino. The participants were asked to find solutions able to satisfy various needs: transport re-arrangement and development concerning the access to the old town centre (especially a growing demand for car parks) and the creation of public services and spaces. According to the

jury, the winning project was the one that could better conjugate the quality of the architectural project, the employment of practical and eco-friendly procedures and materials, combined with a landscape planning activity that would take into account open spaces, their use and the perception they convey to their visitors. The Galantino project has been presented in the exhibition mounted in Chiesa di Santa Maria in February 2008 where it was displayed with the other finalist projects. Waiting for the development of the water links in the lagoon, in the old town centre and on the mainland, safeguarding the environment and the special beauty of a sea-city like Venice, new projects are carried out. According to the winners of the planning competition for the renewal of the nautical station area, these new projects will form "part of the infrastructures that are turning Venice into an appendix of the mainland".

Francesco Palazzo

myve Tours**ONE OF VENICE'S EMBLEMATIC CHARACTER***(continues from the first page)*

Avoiding commonplaces, what's so unique about this city?

MF: Venice is the only city in the world that can be walked through entirely on foot, or on boat, being constantly close to other people that walk through it just like you do, for reasons that you'll never know.

Of course, you walk through Venice to go somewhere to do something, but that 'walking' is an adventure in itself: it is very similar to an initiation journey, whose essence is to be found in its development rather than in its destination. This is why Venice is also the city of chance, walking through its calli, lucky encounters can take place, unexpected stories can begin, other stories can end and everything is constantly moving.

Venice itself is constantly renewed, still remaining the same: the light shining through it, its colours, its atmosphere are everchanging, hour after hour, day by day. Venice is a city that is constantly revealed, anew. Venice is also the ambiguous city. A perfect fusion of East and West, sea-city from which the sea can not be seen; water-city more than sea-city, it is crossed by a network of channels that rarely follow the road network with a few exceptions: Zattere, Riva degli Schiavoni, Fondamenta Nove. San Marco square with Palazzo Ducale dominates the basin and the lagoon but the biggest part of the city is projected towards its inside, never looking at the vast stretch of water in

which it is bathed.

Would you suggest someone to come live in Venice?

MF: This is a suggestion that cannot be given as the decision to live in Venice is never entirely due to rational reasons. Either you love Venice, and then you will have no choice but to live here, or you hate it, and no advise will ever convince you.

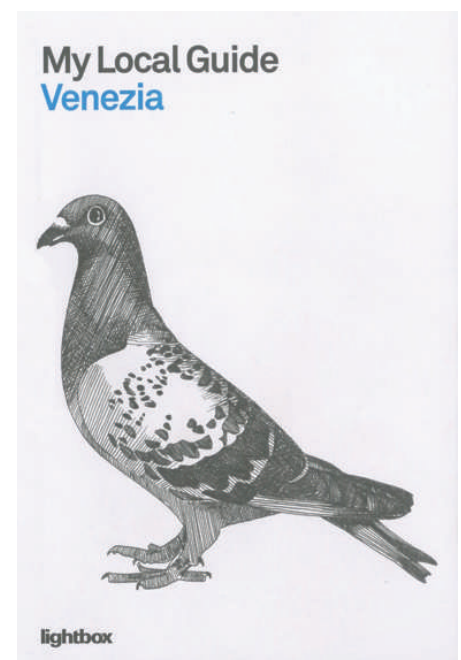
Personally, I couldn't live anywhere else, I'm perfectly aware of the fact that Venice is a city that you constantly have to leave behind and far away, so that you can then come back and live it fully. I couldn't live anywhere else for a long time, but I couldn't give any advise about this matter as Venice is a city in which one can live only attuning to it, to its time, its rules. In this sense Venice is a 'chosen' city, a city of chosen people. Not everybody is in tune with it.

Most of the millions of tourists that every year fleetingly pass through the city, living it just as a postcard, are people that don't attune with it, they're not meaningful for Venice just like Venice is meaningless for them.

People who choose to live in Venice, though the discomforts of a city that's losing its essential services, who doesn't allow you to have your car parked close to your house and that entails a life cost considerably higher than the one you find on the mainland, always do it under an emotional drive and not following reason.

If you had to give a tip to someone visiting Venice for the first time, what would you tell them?

MF: I would tell them to start by visiting the market of Rialto, obviously in the morning (possibly on Sa-



turday, excluding Mondays) to see a very 'lively' part of the city, also being sure not to miss the Bacari (typical Venetian bars) crowding the area. After crossing the Canal Grande at Santa Sofia with a special gondola connecting one side of the canal with the other, another stop at the Vedova to have something to eat and then a walk around the streets of Cannaregio, until the Ghetto area, or in the streets near Castello, down to the Arsenale. I would save San Marco square for last, it should be seen in the light of the early dawn or in the deep darkness of the late night: empty, with no one around, when even the pigeons are asleep. It's magnificent.

myVE Main Feature

THE LAST TITIAN

(continues from the first page)

Kunstistorische Museum in Vienna, it's curated by Sylvia Ferino-Pagden and Giovanna Nepi Scirè and will be open until the 20th of April. The show includes a variety of absolute and hard-to-see masterpieces as, for instance, the 'Marsia punishment' coming from Kromeriz, in the Check Republic.

Thanks to some exceptional borrowings, insured for nearly one billion euro, this exhibition is a unique opportunity to see the works belonging to this period of Titian's activity, here in Italy. An expositive itinerary consisting of three sections dedicated to the portraits, to the profane subjects and to the holy painting. The dressing is designed with great intuition by the architect Barbara Accordi, it's characterized by grey velvet-like panels that disorientate the visitor and amplify the homogeneous space of the huge hall-church enhancing the works on display. For Titian, the thirties mark a difficult key-stone in terms of language, of complex, complicated and mismanaged trading relations with Europe's most famous courts and papacies. Among these, the delicate and long relation with Philippe II of Spain that brought him many dislikes in Venice, after his return. Moreover, he had to face the aversion of his friend, the writer Aretino that bitterly criticizes his portrait of 1945 for being "more sketched than finished". In 1546, he delivers two fundamental works to the pontificate, namely the "Danae", ordered by the cardinal Alexander, and the great dialogue of "Paul and his nephews". After that, he promises to come back to Venice where, instead, he will never return, as Augusto Gentilini notes in his intervention in the catalogue: "In Rome, he had received board, lodging and many honours but apparently the pictures he had delivered were never paid for". Moreover, one should note that in Venice, in 1548, the great subversive charge of Tintoretto explodes with his extreme painting style. An other supreme artist of this period is Paolo Veronese. "Where was Titian? He was in Augsburg, of course, flattering Charles V, his family and the influential figures of the empire with portraits and devotions" as Gentilini sarcastically notes. One could hardly imagine the aversions that arose when he came back, that autumn. For the supreme painter that had been celebrated and glorified abroad, it must have been very hard to face the new generation of artists, even though he could still count on the support of the customs class. It's interesting to follow the development of the changing process in Titian's activity, starting from an acknowledgement of his situation, the need for a change and finally his last



works. In an essay published by Neri Pozza, in the book *Titian and Venice*, Rodolfo Pallucchini investigates the long transition process involving Titian's pictorial style after the Mannerism 'fracture'. In particular, Pallucchini analyses two pictures "The sacred love and the profane love" dating back to 1515 and "Tarquinius and Lucrezia" of 1570. From the fifties onwards, Titian avoids the Renaissance characterizing traits adopting a more immediate form of mark and spreading. His technique becomes exasperated, every naturalistic element is eliminated. In a passage of his book, "Mines of Venetian painting", Boschini is particularly explicit about this: "Titian creates a more immediate technique, characterized by a concrete pulse, in which every idea of space is eliminated, what's left is the hallucinated transfiguration of a single moment of human passion, of a power as great as the one evoked in Shakespeare's work. The "last fires" are years characterized by an extraordinary return to Titian's more intimate and dramatic production. The painter's ideology overcomes painting to hide

inside the darkest part of human spiritual affliction. In the final part of his intervention, Gentilini describes a forlorn Titian, alone in his empty shop, painting for himself or for a virtual public: "In the face of the others' works, filling schools and churches, he must have understood that the harmonic language he would use in his best times, though developed and updated, could not any longer hold (nearly) anybody's interest, most of all, his own; still, Philippe of Spain remains his one supporter. Every now and then, from Spain, Germany but never from Venice, suggestions about new stories or reproduction of old ones, reach his ears but he just doesn't consider them. He makes a try: prepares, sketches, starts then he turn the canvas against the wall and waits; he never concludes a work, though often he believes he has finished it, anyway. He's searching for an essential language that doesn't exist yet- that hasn't even been imagined yet- to maintain a program coherence and cognitive dignity to the last stories and poetries".

Giovanna Dal Bon

myve Tours**LIFE IN THE LAGOON***(continues from the first page)*

ch women were allowed to compete. Some popular poems, the 'gnàccare', celebrate her triumphs, they're transcribed in the text and in the scroll ornament of the portrait of Maria Boscola and include the dates of her victories. These are so distant one from the other, to lead the author of this article to formulate some narrative suppositions. The other image of Venice appearing in the novel is the market of Rialto: the vital, beating heart of trade, where Maria would go to sell vegetables, every morning. The market of Rialto, with its great profusion of fish and shellfish, would always amaze its visitors. Following the pages of the novel, we can vividly figure the place: its acrid smells and fragrances, the shore full of boats overloaded with cheerfully assembled baskets, the crowd, the shouts of the sellers of little squids and tripe. Maria's family, described over a period of three generations, has a clear and emblematic matriarchal structure: particularly embodied by her grandmother, Orsola. Every feminine figure has a positive connotation; this is mainly evident in the description of Maria, in the beginning of the novel, when she's portrayed standing straight on the flat end of the sculler. The same connotation also applies to the character of Garbina (a name that reminds us of a south-west wind), a friend of Maria, her first oar-mate. Historically speaking and also in the novel, the lagoon is a place of movement and exchange, in which the horticultural supply of Venice is produced, where the fish and the shellfish are caught, where one can find sticks and rushes to prepare the lobster-pots and even toys for children. In the lagoon, one can find salt to be used or exchanged with other

products, water and sand to wash the fish and the crockery. It's also a place of pleasure where to take refreshing baths in the hot summer or to go out with friends, where lovers meet or where one can enjoy some time dedicated to sport games, like the stroke. The sea-water penetrates this protected womb, four times a day, like regenerating water, flowing through the harbour in a delicate and extraordinary balance. The rhythm of tides regulates the days of Maria, her activities: she leaves for Venice, carrying the load of goods, only when the water level rises; then she



comes back when the level decreases, to ease her journey. When Maria is finally a woman with six sons, her healing from an incurable disease is only achieved after a long and complicated way through a place full of cane thickets, channels, marsh-herbs and a few log cabins in the Po Delta: that can be seen as an archetype of the lagoon before the construction of Venice. There, in that place of 'origin', Maria seeks for a difficult and tormented re-birth that will only be possible thanks to one of her grandmother's

friends: a woman, called Margarita that cures people with herbs, infusions but also with the bistoury. The lagoon is present in the varied names of the boats, we find a lexical abundance that shows the liveliness of the environment: in the vocabulary, with words like *velme*, *ghebi*, *andar a seconda*; in the sayings, like the one referring to the 'beginners' of the oar, exhorting them to oar a fast stroke: "ocio che i granci no te lo magna!" (Be careful, or the crabs will eat it!). We find many descriptions of the sandbanks with "i ciuffi di canne, gli aironi e le garzette che aspettavano appollaiati su una zampa sola, indistinguibile da un esile stelo di giunco, il guizzo argentato del cefalo". We find the colours of the sunset in the lagoon but most of all the sounds: a sweet, astonished silence, slightly interrupted by the gentle and rhythmic sound of the oars as they penetrate the water surface, forming concentric circles. The typical dishes celebrate the diverse convivial occasions: the polenta, which is nearly always present; the fish cooked in different ways, in particular the *sàor*, *el pesse rosto*, the *cape longhe*, the *peoci*, the *caparozzoli*, the *bogoleti agio e ogio* and fresh vegetables. In its entirety, the novel provides an historical and social approach, an overview of the daily life in the lagoon as it has gradually changed over the centuries. Venice, to be enjoyed in the most charming way, maybe has to be approached slowly, on a sculler: just like in a moving dance of the stroke, in direct contact with the water surface. And maybe, the journey to the city should start from the place of origin of Maria, in the extreme end of the southern part of the lagoon: the city of Chioggia and the humble village of Marina. This can be a way to enhance the entrance in the San Marco basin and in the Canal Grande.

*Adriana Longo***myve** Main Feature**ROME AND THE BARBARIANS***(continues from the first page)*

tage represents one of the major constituents of the European identity even if this hasn't been widely recognized yet; Aillagon tries to demonstrate how Romans and Barbarians were meant to integrate. Doubtlessly many ferocious and violent episodes marked the millennium taken into consideration, from Julius Caesar's occupation of Gallia in 58-51 A.C to King Steven of Hungary's conversion to Christianity in 1000 A.C. At first the Romans crush the Barbarians as witnessed by one of the marvelous statue in the show, portraying one of the prisoners dating back to the end of the first century A. C.; but then to the contrary when Alaric I sacks Rome in 410 A.C. as depicted by neo-romantic French painter Joseph-Noel Silvestre (1890). All of which took place before the integration process, thanks to a shared Latin linguistic background and the Christianization of the barbarian. Aillagon keenly

sees the Barbarian phenomenon as an asset suggesting a different European political framework. In fact he states that the same applies to the modern migratory movements involving different populations. It's amazing to notice the great amount of valuable pieces on display, amounting to nearly 2000. "These are beautiful objects that just speak for themselves and do not need much explanation" is Aillagon's answer to those who object the possibility to find a way out of such a fascinating but often ambiguous labyrinth. Yet, a sensational data underlines the one-time and extraordinary opportunity offered to the visitors: the exhibition includes 40 treasures emerged from tomb excavations. Among them, we find the tomb of queen Aregund who was married to the Frankish king Clothar I, in the VI century a.C. The exhibition has been mounted in collaboration with the Ecole Française de Rome and the Kunst und Ausstellungshalle der Bundesrepublik Deutschland in Bonn and it is divided up in 31 sections that are briefly described in a handy mini-

guide, available for only 8 euros. As expected, the first part of the exhibition focuses on the roman period, it must be noted that this is the section in which the beautiful sarcophagus of Portonaccio is displayed. Following, at the end of the first flight of stairs, the visitor finds The Extermination of the roman legions by the hand of Arminius in the 9th century a.C, painted by Lionel Royer, a French artist of the XIX century. At the end of the first floor, one can find the part referring to the Fall of the roman empire. The room dedicated to the varied - non Christian - religions followed under the empire ranks among the most interesting of the exhibition. It includes unique finds such as the three-horn bull connected to the god Mithras and the enigmatic portrait of the Nordic pagan god Freyer. The second floor is dedicated to the rise and fall of barbarian reigns, preceding Charlemagne and the rise of the Holy Roman Empire which was an ideal perpetuation of the initial Roman empire.

Lidia Panzeri