



Glass in Venice Project

Agreement between the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti and the Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia in relation to glass and the Muranese glass production

Glass in Venice Prize, Study Days on Venetian Glass, Website, Exhibitions

Glass in Venice is the important convention between the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti and the Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia presented last November on the occasion of the first edition of the Glass in Venice Prize. The pact is the expression of the two Venetian institutions' decision to launch a close collaboration for a series of events promoting the legacy of glass art on an international level. The aim is to sustain the lagoon city in its own intrinsic role as a cosmopolitan laboratory of culture and a meeting place for the masters of the exquisite Muranese art, artists, and institutions.

The agreement, signed by Gian Antonio Danieli, President of the Istituto Veneto, and Walter Hartsarish, President of the Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia, entails joint action regarding the Prize, the Study Days and the creation of a website that should become an authoritative source of information and documentation on Venetian glass and international glass production, up-to-date on the most important exhibitions and events.

For the Istituto Veneto today, Glass in Venice is the natural outgrowth of its commitment to the art and technique of glass ever since the 19th Century. Among the Istituto's cultural activities, especially in the past ten years, exhibitions, lectures, and since last year seminars for specialists have focused on the glass arts. The Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia, directed by Gabriella Belli, and the Glass Museum of Murano play an essential role in promoting the preserved art heritage and diffusing knowledge about this ancient artistic expression.

Founded in 1861, first as an archive, and now recognised as one of the most interesting exhibition venues of the international circuit, the Murano museum will soon benefit by an important extension and consequently a new museological design.



The Glass in Venice Prize

The first edition of the Glass in Venice Prize was awarded on 22 November 2012 by the Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti to the Muranese master **Pino Signoretto**, whose expertise and technical refinement are renowned worldwide, and **Bertil Vallien**, the Swedish artist whose glass works are shown in the leading international contemporary art museums and presently on exhibit at Palazzo Franchetti, the institution venue.

The Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia shared in awarding the Prize. The Prize is a highly regarded tribute awarded to the glass artists or masters who outstandingly distinguished themselves with their work proceeding in the wake of the Muranese tradition or else, abroad, in different schools and techniques. With this event we wish to show that Venice, thanks to Murano, is not only the famed and noble centre of a refined art and a prodigious glass technique which still lives in the work of outstanding masters and artists, but is also the city regarded with admiration and respect by many internationally acclaimed masters, even if their own works are executed in techniques other than Muranese.

The personal experiences of many world-famous artists and important contemporary art exhibitions held in the greatest capitals attest that the glass art world, infinitely variegated and different in its multiple forms and techniques, considers Venice and Murano an indispensable point of reference, a prestigious and challenging presence to confront and with which they can vie, even experimenting with the most specific and intrinsic techniques of the Muranese tradition. The Prize, awarded every year, is an essential part of Glass in Venice, the project arisen from the collaboration between the Istituto Veneto and the Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia.



The Istituto Veneto and Glass

The sequence of events

Already in the 19th Century a great many Murano glassworks, with their capacity to innovate processing techniques, won the Industry Prizes the Istituto Veneto awarded to the leading manufacturers in the Veneto. Glass came back to the fore in 2004 when the Istituto Veneto opened its new premises in Palazzo Franchetti with the great exhibition "Vetri. Nel mondo. Oggi" (Glass in the World. Today): a vast survey of art glass from all over the world with works by contemporary artists from Murano, America, Australia, Belgium, Bohemia, Finland, France, Germany, the Netherlands, Sweden. In 2010 for the first time the Istituto opened the new ground floor rooms of Palazzo Loredan with the exhibition "Galanterie di Vetro" (Glass Galantries). The Murano glass revival in the De Boos-Smith collection: 250 exquisite items, selected and arranged according to the different glass techniques attesting the ancient 19th Century 'working process' at Murano. In 2011 the Istituto held a solo show in Palazzo Franchetti dedicated to the great artist Lino Tagliapietra: a large selection of one-offs of the past ten years including several impressive installations. In 2012 the Istituto presented the exhibition "Miniature di vetro" (Glass Miniatures) in Palazzo Loredan. Art bonbonnières: 400 small glass articles from private collections revealing great artists' technical prowess in the art of glass. In Palazzo Franchetti from September to November 2012 the Bertil Vallien exhibition: "Nine Rooms" produced and organised by Berengo Studio displayed to the Venetian public sixty glass works crafted by the Swedish master during his career in the Swedish Kosta Boda studios.

The Istituto Veneto is one of the partners of Glasstress, presented at Palazzo Franchetti in 2009 and 2011 by Berengo Studio during the International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale. 2013 schedules the third edition of this outstanding art exhibition which explores developments in international design with sculptures and installations specially created by leading international artists and designers vying with their use of glass.

As a commentary on the various exhibitions the Istituto Veneto organised for the general public many occasions for reflection, with lectures and conversations with the artists by scholars and collectors.

In 2012 the Istituto Veneto introduced and organised Study Days on Venetian Glass to gather each year scholars of Venetian glass but also glass of the most varied traditions: an occasion for further discussion and encounters, with broad exchanges of information and experience, making this event one of the most important of its kind held on an international level.

Last, in 2012 the Glass in Venice Prize was created, awarded by the Istituto Veneto and the Musei Civici Veneziani in recognition of the glass artists and masters particularly outstanding for their work in the great Murano tradition, or else, all over the world, through different techniques and schools. The first Prize was awarded on 22 November 2012 to the master Pino Signoretto and the artist Bertil Vallien.



The Website

In the ambit of the *Glass in Venice Project* a website devoted to Venetian glass is forthcoming. The website intends to become an authoritative hub of documentation on Venetian glass and glass art production worldwide: a functional, accessible, updated tool available to the broadest international public.

To achieve our project we formed alliances and partnerships with museums, research centres, industries and businesses reputed for their commitment to the promotion of glass.

The site is organised in several sections, enriched with material produced in the course of the activities of the Istituto and the Murano Glass Museum, as well as texts, documents, interviews, announcements of exhibitions and events the world over. In addition a section will be created featuring the curriculums of glass artists from all over the world and recordings of the courses and lessons held by specialists during the Venetian Glass *Study Days*.

The contents of the site are supervised by a scientific committee whose members are: Rosa Barovier, Sandro Pezzoli, Chiara Squarcina, Lino Tagliapietra, Cristina Tonini, Marco Verita.