



## Titian, Tintoretto & Veronese

Celebrating three Renaissance masters in Venice

**26 February–3 March 2024**

**(MK 179)**

**7 days • £3,230**

**Lecturer: Professor Antonio Mazzotta**

Based in Venice throughout, where all three painters were based for much of their lives.

An excursion to see Palladio's Villa Barbaro at Maser, with superb frescoes by Veronese.

Sets the artists in the context of a wider-ranging survey of Renaissance art.

The second half of the 16th century was a traumatic period for Venice. As an international centre of commerce and publishing it had become a hotbed of religious dissent, ferociously suppressed by the Inquisition. Two years after the Catholic naval victory at Lepanto in 1571, the Venetians lost Cyprus to Islamic expansion in the eastern Mediterranean. Their global dominance in maritime trade was furthermore undermined by the rise of the Atlantic economies. Major fires in 1574 and 1577 destroyed nearly all the paintings by the Bellini brothers, Carpaccio and others in the Doge's Palace. To cap it all, there was a catastrophic plague in 1576 in which about a third of the population died, including the aged Titian.

Titian had dominated Venetian painting for more than half a century. He had formed an unofficial triumvirate along with two Tuscans, the sculptor and architect Jacopo Sansovino and the writer and proto-journalist Pietro Aretino, both of whom had settled in Venice after the Sack of Rome in 1527. From the 1530s he was court painter to the Hapsburgs, but continued to live and work in Venice. Travelling to Rome for the first time in 1545, he remained responsive to central Italian artistic currents, especially the works of Raphael and Michelangelo. It is during this period that Mannerism became a major current in Venetian art, marked by Vasari's visit in 1541.

Jacopo Tintoretto is often considered a 'mannerist' painter. He rebelled against his master Titian and established a unique and forceful style with roots in Venetian popular culture. Profoundly affected by the religious crisis of his era, he unfurled his fiery genius on one of the greatest biblical cycles in western art, his sublime masterpiece at the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. He had to fight for recognition at first but became principal painter to the Venetian Republic following the death of Titian



*The Assumption, steel engraving c. 1870 after the painting by Titian in S. Maria Gloriosa dei Frari, Venice.*

and then in 1588 of his younger rival, Paolo Veronese.

Veronese, in contrast, was received as the successor to Titian from his arrival in town in 1551, and became the golden boy of Venetian painting. His brightly-coloured, festive compositions decorated the halls of state, the refectories of the major monasteries, private chapels, noble palaces on the Grand Canal and country villas of the Venetian establishment. It is therefore all the more surprising that it was he, and not the more subversive Tintoretto, who was questioned by the Inquisition for the potentially heretical content of one of his major works in 1573.

During this tour, we will examine Titian's transition to a darker mode of painting in his 'late style'; the emergence and triumph of Tintoretto, and his rivalry with Veronese; all set against the work of their 'Mannerist' contemporaries and in the wider context of the turbulent age in which they lived. We will see all their major masterpieces in Venice and additionally there will be a special excursion to Palladio's Villa Barbaro at Maser on the Venetian mainland, decorated by Veronese with one of the greatest of all allegorical fresco cycles. Paradoxically, this era of profound crisis witnessed the final great flourishing of Venetian Renaissance painting.

### Itinerary

**Day 1.** Fly at c. 1.00pm (British Airways) from London Heathrow to Venice. Cross the lagoon by *motoscafo* (water-taxi). Luggage is transported separately by porters.

**Day 2.** In the morning, visit the great medieval church of I Frari: Titian's spectacular *Assumption* and his Pesaro altarpiece are among the many paintings (including a superb triptych by Bellini) and sculptures with which it is endowed. Behind it, is the Scuola Grande di S. Rocco – the grandest of all confraternity premises, where the halls are decorated with a magnificent cycle of canvases by Tintoretto. See also the church of S. Polo, which houses one of Tintoretto's animated *Last Supper* paintings and a *Marriage of the Virgin* by Veronese, the church of S. Rocco, with more paintings by Tintoretto, and S. Pantalon, with Veronese's final work (*St Pantalon healing a Boy*).

**Day 3.** Spend the morning in the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice's major art gallery, where Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese are well represented. In the afternoon visit the church of S. Sebastiano, almost entirely decorated by Veronese (in fact, it is his burial place), and see another Tintoretto *Last Supper* in S. Trovaso. The church of S.ta Maria della Salute was built in 1631–81 by way of thanks for the deliverance of Venice from the plague, with several works

## Titian, Tintoretto, Veronese continued

by Titian, originally painted for the church and convent of the island of S. Spirito. View Tintoretto's *Marriage at Cana* in the sacristy.

**Day 4.** Travel to Tronchetto by *vaporetto* and from there drive to Maser to see Andrea Palladio's Villa Barbaro. Built for two highly cultivated Venetian brothers, Daniele and Marcantonio Barbaro, it contains Veronese's most important fresco cycle. Back in Venice, the Marciana library at the Museo Correr holds paintings by Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese.

**Day 5.** Visit the Palazzo Ducale, supremely beautiful with its 14th-century pink and white revetment outside, and late-Renaissance gilded halls and paintings by Titian, Tintoretto and Veronese inside. Tintoretto's *Il Paradiso*, housed here, is one of the world's largest paintings. Visit the church of S. Zaccaria, with Bellini's superb late altarpiece and, in the sacristy, Tintoretto's *Birth of the Baptist*. In the afternoon cross the bacino to Palladio's beautiful island church of S. Giorgio Maggiore, which contains the final Tintoretto *Last Supper* of the tour. Veronese's *Marriage at Cana* is now in the Louvre, but was originally commissioned for the refectory here, where there is now a full-scale copy.

**Day 6.** Today focuses on the church of the Madonna dell'Orto, the burial place of Tintoretto, which also contains two of his laterals, as well as the *Presentation of the Virgin Mary*. Also visit the flamboyant church of the Gesuiti, S.ta Maria Assunta, which houses Tintoretto's *Assumption* altarpiece and Titian's *Martyrdom of St. Lawrence*. See more Titian at S. Salvatore (his *Transfiguration* and late *Annunciation*). The church of San Francesco della Vigna was built in 1534, designed by Sansovino; altarpieces by Veronese and Bellini.

**Day 7.** Some free time. Travel by *motoscafo* to Venice airport. Fly to London Heathrow, arriving c. 6.30pm.

## Lecturer

**Professor Antonio Mazzotta.** Curator and scholar, Professor of Art History at the University of Milan, Antonio studied at the Courtauld Institute of Art, London. He previously worked as Curatorial Assistant at the National Gallery, where he curated the exhibition *Titian's First Masterpiece: The Flight into Egypt* (2012). In 2018-19 he curated an exhibition at the Castello Sforzesco (Milan)

exploring the origins of the iconography of Michelangelo's *Pietà* (*Vesperbild: Alle origini delle Pietà di Michelangelo*). In autumn 2023, he is curating an exhibition devoted to young Titian at the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice (*Tiziano 1508*). His main research topics are Venetian and Lombard art of the Renaissance, and the history of collecting.

## Practicalities

**Price, per person. Two sharing:** £3,230 or £3,080 without flights. **Single occupancy** £3,760 or £3,610 without flights.

*Suggested train route: London – Paris – Turin – Milan – Venice: c. 13 hours.*

**Included:** flights (Euro Traveller) with British Airways (Airbus 320); a *vaporetto* pass; travel between the hotel and Venice Airport by private water-taxi and coach; luggage portage between the hotel and Venice airport; hotel accommodation as described below; breakfasts; 1 lunch and 4 dinners with wine, water, coffee; all admissions; all tips; all taxes; the services of the lecturer.

**Accommodation. Hotel Splendid, Venice** (starhotels.com): delightful 4-star hotel situated halfway between Piazza San Marco and the Rialto bridge. *Single rooms are doubles for sole use.*

**How strenuous?** The nature of Venice means that the city is more often than not traversed on foot. Although part of her charm, there is a lot of walking along the flat and up and down bridges; standing around in museums and palaces is also unavoidable. The tour should not be attempted by anyone who has difficulty with everyday walking and stair-climbing. Fitness is essential.

**Group size:** between 8 and 18 participants.