



**CICERONI**  
T R A V E L

## TURNING DARKNESS INTO LIGHT THE LIFE & TIMES OF TINTORETTO

MONDAY 3 – FRIDAY 7 DECEMBER 2018 (5 DAYS)

LECTURER: TOM DUNCAN

£1735

- **Discover one of the great artists of renaissance Venice – Tintoretto**
- **Three major exhibitions to mark the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his birth in 1518**
- **A comprehensive introduction to his work and that of his contemporaries, Titian and Veronese**
- **Excellent 4\* hotel overlooking the Grand Canal**



Tintoretto, *The Last Supper*, Chiesa di San Polo, Venice

### OVERVIEW

One of the greatest of all Venetian sixteenth century painters, Jacopo Robusti, known as ‘Tintoretto’, was born in Venice in 1518. To mark this date, later this year Venice will host three related exhibitions on the artist and his milieu. Divided between the Doge’s Palace, the Accademia Art Gallery and the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, this will be an ideal opportunity to explore the life and work of this amazing late renaissance master: ‘I never was so utterly crushed to earth before any human intellect as I was today before Tintoret’ - John Ruskin’s response after visiting the Scuola Grande di San Rocco, its interiors full of magnificent paintings by this exceptional artist.

Too exciting an event to miss, we have decided to offer our clients the opportunity to join us in Venice as we explore not only all three exhibitions, but many other sites where he worked, especially the peerless Scuola Grande di San Rocco. Of course we shall also place him within the broader context of artistic developments in mid to late sixteenth century Venice, not least the work of Titian and Veronese.

The dominant force in Venetian painting during much of the sixteenth century was Titian (c.1487/90 – 1576) and all artists, major and minor, worked under his influence. Indeed one tongue-in-cheek art historian remarked of Tintoretto that ‘Titian was his model, and he aimed at a synthesis of Michelangelo’s drawing with Titian’s colour, which in his case succeeded, chiefly because his drawing is nothing like Michelangelo’s and his colour is nothing like Titian’s’! We assure you that the reality is both more intriguing and inspiring.

Tintoretto’s early life is obscure and though he claimed to have trained with Titian, this is not easy to prove. His early work is indeed typical of a young man influenced by Titian, yet there are also aspects of the prevailing style of ‘mannerism’: elegant elongated forms with dramatically lit narratives set deep within often darker picture spaces. His early maturity is announced with a *St Mark Rescuing a Slave*, which will be in the Accademia exhibition along with other rarely seen works, all demonstrating his daring foreshortening, brilliant colour and a concentration on a single narrative incident.

The great commission of his maturity were the Scuola di San Rocco, an association which lasted from 1564 to 1588, when he finished the decoration of this charitable confraternity’s elaborately decorated building. Even more magnificent were the interiors in the Doge’s Palace which he and Veronese were commissioned to paint after the great fire of 1577. These will be complemented with visits to other fine schemes by Titian and Veronese.

Tintoretto became so successful that he had to create a large studio full of assistants, some of them family members, such as his sons, Domenico and Marco, and daughter, Marietta. Consequently, many so-called ‘Tintoretos’ are essays painted in his style, rather than from his hand. So, if you too have been put off by some of these less than encouraging paintings, the combination of three exhibitions full of genuine masterpieces borrowed from all over the world, and the opportunity to study at first hand his major narrative paintings in their original Venetian settings, this is the chance to give him a deserved ‘second’ look.

Led by Tom Duncan, we stay at the 4\* **Hotel Palazzo Sant’ Angelo**, ideally situated overlooking the Grand Canal between the Accademia and Ponte Rialto. It is within easy distance of all we shall visit, using the reliable vaporetto service while excellent restaurants are close to hand.

## ITINERARY OUTLINE

**Day 1:** Monday 3 December - We fly from Gatwick to **Venice**, arriving mid-afternoon and transfer by private Water Taxi to the **4\* Hotel Palazzo Sant'Angelo** mid-way along the Grand Canal – ideal for our explorations. We have our first dinner in a local restaurant - wine, water and coffee are included with both our group lunch and two dinners.

**Day 2:** Tuesday 4 December – We leave by vaporetto for **Cannaregio**, the area where much of Tintoretto's early working life was concentrated. Our first visit will be to the church of **Madonna del Orto** which contains a number of early works from the 1550s such as *The Presentation of the Virgin*, much indebted to Titian. There are also more mature examples from later decades. We continue to the **San Polo** district and the **Church of San Cassiano** where there are three paintings from the mid 1560s and then the **Church of San Polo** which has a fine *Last Supper* noted for its daring perspective. We break for lunch (not included) and the afternoon will be spent in the **Accademia Gallery** where there will be the opportunity to see not only the first of the three special exhibitions on the artist, but also the remainder of the collection, allowing us to see him against the backdrop of the very best of sixteenth century Venetian painting. We return to the hotel and the evening will be free.

**Day 3:** Wednesday 5 December – Taking the vaporetto we visit the **Church of San Zaccaria** where paintings by Bellini, Titian and Tintoretto make this one of the most visually rewarding of Venetian churches. We continue across the Lagoon to Palladio's **San Giorgio Maggiore** where there are two works of exceptional quality, probably Tintoretto's last, in the presbytery, a *Last Supper* and *The Collection of Manna in the Desert*. We have also arranged to have a private visit to the former **Cloisters and Refectory of San Giorgio**, now the home of the CINI Foundation where we shall see a full scale, magnificent, copy of Veronese's enormous *Wedding Feast at Cana*, an important counterpoint to the artistic language of Tintoretto. We cross over to Dorsoduro for our group lunch after which we end today with a visit to the magical **San Sebastiano**, a church full of works by Veronese ranging in date across his entire Venetian career and where he is buried. We return to the hotel and a free evening.

**Day 4:** Thursday 6 December – We begin at the magnificent **Santa Maria della Salute** where there are paintings by Titian, Tintoretto and many others. We cross over to **San Marco** and spend the rest of the morning in the magical **Palazzo Ducale** where we shall see the second of the two exhibitions, plus the amazing interiors decorated by Tintoretto and Veronese after the fires of 1574 and 1577. The remainder of the afternoon will be free for private explorations. We meet in the early evening and our final dinner will be in a local restaurant.

**Day 5:** Friday 7 December – Our final morning will take us over to visit one of Venice's most important churches, the **Basilica di Santa Maria Gloriosa dei Frari** which has some of Giovanni Bellini's and Titian's most important altarpieces, particularly the latter's ground-breaking *Assumption of the Virgin*, one of the most influential paintings of the Renaissance. Our final visit of this tour will indeed be a 'tour-de force' – the **Scuola Grande di San Rocco** which not only hosts the third of our three special exhibitions, but it unquestionably has the finest collection of works by Tintoretto in existence. San Rocco was the patron saint of plague victims and given the ubiquitous nature of this pestilence in sixteenth century Venice, the Confraternity dedicated to his cult was not only important but also very rich. Tintoretto first worked for them in 1564, becoming a member the following year. Awarded an annual stipend by them in 1576 on the understanding he would complete the decoration of the entire building, a task accomplished in 1588. It is an astonishing achievement and the appropriate place to bring this tour to a formal conclusion. There will be some free time for lunch after which we return to Venice Airport by private Water Taxi for the return flight to the UK.

## PRACTICALITIES

**Price** £1735      **Without Flights** £1610      **Deposit** £250

**Single Supplement** £245 (Double/Twin Room for Sole Use)

**Upgrade** Junior Suite Canal View £595 (per room) subject to availability

**Hotels** 4 nights with breakfast at the 4\* Palazzo Sant'Angelo

**Flights** British Airways

Outward: **BA2584** Depart London Gatwick (South Terminal) **1235**, arrive Venice **1540**

Return: **BA2585** Depart Venice **1630**, arrive London Gatwick (South Terminal) **1735**

**Price includes** 2 dinners & 1 lunch with wine, water & coffee, all local transfers, three-day vaporetto pass, City Tax, entry fees & gratuities, services of Tom Duncan and James Hill

**Not included** Travel to/from Gatwick, 2 dinners & 3 lunches



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