

AWAKENING THE SENSES IN AN ITALIAN CITY: VENICE

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Columbia in Venice Program



Course Description

In this course we will consider the different ways we can learn to use and express our senses while exploring Italy's most sensational city – Venice.

We will read Italian authors, listen to different kinds of music, as well as contemplate the sounds of specific sites within Venice; we'll look at paintings, frescoes, architecture and landscapes to refine our appreciation of visual beauty; taste different typical Venetian and Italian food preparations; we will explore the link between smells and memories; we will also use our hands to experience various textures and tactile sensations around the city.

We will become more aware of the way we perceive the world around us; and find the Italian words we need for these tasks; expressing ourselves also through images (photos and drawings) and recorded materials.

Venice is the ideal place to appreciate sensorial experiences. Each class will have a component of exploring outside of the class our reaction to different stimuli.

Materials and assignments will be designed and gauged to respect the inclinations and linguistic ability of each of the students who will enrolled.

TEXTS

Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia è un pesce: Una guida*. Milano: Feltrinelli 2013 (2000).

Other materials will be provided by the instructor and will be assigned depending on the level of Italian proficiency and interest of each student.

Each week we will visit places mentioned directly or evoked by the various authors, listen to music from different eras, read poetry and eat good food.

Written work: Weekly blogs with observations inspired by the different activities.

Oral work: Students will give presentations on selected topics of their choice.

Midterm Project: Recorded Interview of an Italian friend. Transcript of salient passages and comment.

Final Project: A poem, a song, an essay in Italian containing at least two sensorial experiences.
A collection of images with introduction, comments and conclusion in Italian.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK ONE June 10-14

Introduction on Venice

Let's get familiar with Venice and become aware of our reactions to it, thinking about our own thinking

Prose:

Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia è un pesce*: Intro, Piedi, Gambe, Cuore

Music: Rapper veneziani

Video: *Stanotte a Venezia*

Poetry: Andrea Zanzotto

Field Trip: Colonnato di Palazzo Ducale
Madonna della Salute

WEEK TWO June 17-21

TOUCH / SYNESTESIA

Prose:

Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia è un pesce*: Mani, Volto
Marinetti, *Il Tattilismo, manifesto futurista*, 1921

Poetry: Giorgio Manganelli, Attilio Bertolucci

Music: Intonarumori futurista by Luigi Russolo (1910-30)

Field Trip: Laboratorio di maschere

Shop of *forcole* (typical Venetian wooden oar locks for gondolas)

WEEK THREE June 24-28

HEARING

Prose:

Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia è un pesce*: Orecchie
Italo Calvino, *Sotto il sole giaguaro*, *Un re in ascolto* (selected passages)
And its musical interpretation by Luciano Berio, *Un re in ascolto*

Poetry: Petrarch: *Zefiro torna* (*Rerum Vulgarium Fragmenta*, #310)

Music: Musical interpretations of a sonnet by Petrarch by composers of different epochs.

Field Trip: Vivaldi's concert or Opera in Verona

Scala Contarini del Bovolo

Presentations of the midterm Projects

WEEK FOUR July 1-5

TASTE

Prose:

Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia è un pesce*: Bocca
Tomasi di Lampedusa, *La sirena*

Poetry: Guido Gozzano, Anna Toscano

Music: Fred Buongusto, *Spaghetti a Detroit*

Field Trip: Street food: Trip to a typical Venetian *bacaro*, one of the city's historic standing restaurants and to a *friggitoria* (little restaurant selling fish or fried vegetables)

WEEK FIVE July 8-12

SMELL

Prose:

Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia è un pesce* Naso

Italo Calvino, *Sotto il sole giaguaro*: Il nome, il naso (selected passages)

Gianrico Carofiglio, *Passeggeri notturni*

Poetry: Angelo Poliziano, Salvatore Quasimodo

Music: Gianna Nannini, *Profumo*

Field Trip: Mercati di Rialto
Campo Santo Stefano

WEEK SIX July 15-19

SIGHT

Prose: Tiziano Scarpa, *Venezia è un pesce*: pp.43-48; Occhi pp.71-84

Poetry: Pier Paolo Pasolini

Music: Francesco Guccini, *Venezia*

Field Trip: Scuola Grande di San Rocco
Museo di Storia Naturale

Presentations of the final Projects

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Participation (attendance, preparation and discussion contributions) 20%

Assignments: reading responses, art and environment responses 30%

Oral Presentations 10%

Midterm Project 20%

Final Project 20%