

A MEMORABLE TRIP TO VENICE

On Friday 20th September our class (4N) went on a school trip to Venice with our teachers Mrs Germano and Mr Ivancich.

In the morning we went to Ca' d'Oro and to Palazzo Grimani.

Ca' d'Oro is an interesting museum, also known as "Galleria Giorgio Franchetti", that hosts a rich collection of Renaissance art, like "San Sebastiano" by Andrea Mantegna and "The Annunciation" by Carpaccio, sculptures and tapestries. The museum also offers breathtaking views of the Grand Canal from its loggia.

Palazzo Grimani is famous for its architectural beauty, in fact it has a beautiful courtyard surrounded by loggias, reminiscent of Roman palaces, and rooms adorned with frescoes and stucco decorations. In Palazzo Grimani we could appreciate a very rich collection of classical sculptures and Renaissance artworks. This museum also displays two exhibitions of contemporary art by the artists Rick Lowe and Georg Baselitz, whose works, created through action painting, are reminiscent of those by Jackson Pollock.

After that, we speeded to Campo Santa Margherita, where we had lunch all together on benches among crowds of tourists and passers-by. Unfortunately, the presence of seagulls and pigeons bothered us constantly while eating as we were afraid they could steal our food, leaving us to starve(!!!).

In the afternoon, our guide, Mr Pasotto, met us there under the pole in Campo Santa Margherita and led us through Venice's famous "calli" (streets) and "campielli" (squares), telling us about the lives and works of famous English artists and writers who spent some time in this gorgeous city. In fact, this specific school trip was meant to improve our knowledge of English authors in Venice. In particular, Mr Pasotto entertained us masterfully with interactive activities on the exciting love story between the two poets Elizabeth Barrett Browning and Robert Browning. The guide read us a poem by Elizabeth Barrett called "*If Thou Must Love Me*", in which the poetess prompts her beloved to love her simply and clear for love's sake and not for her physical features, such as her smile or her eyes, as they might change over time. This very touching poem made us think deeply on the meaning of love, so we would like to share it with you:

*"If thou must love me, let it be for nought
Except for love's sake only. Do not say,
"I love her for her smile—her look—her way
Of speaking gently,—for a trick of thought
That falls in well with mine, and certes brought
A sense of pleasant ease on such a day"—
For these things in themselves, Belovèd, may
Be changed, or change for thee—and love, so wrought,
Maybe unwrought so. Neither love me for
Thine own dear pity's wiping my cheeks dry:
A creature might forget to weep, who bore
Thy comfort long, and lose thy love thereby!
But love me for love's sake, that evermore
Thou mayst love on, through love's eternity."*

Robert Junior Browning, aka Penn Browning, was their son. He was famous for being Wallis Simpson's first husband. As we all know, the wealthy American heiress was at the center of a huge scandal: in fact Edward VIII, King of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, abdicated the throne to marry her.

The next story we heard was about a dramatic relationship in which one of the lovers died, condemned to death to protect the dignity of his beloved. He was Antonio Foscarini, accused of frequently meeting with foreign diplomats when, on the contrary, he was visiting his lover: the Countess of Arundel, wife of the English Ambassador in Venice. It is important to remember Antonio Foscarini because even today he is often mentioned in courts as a symbol of judicial injustice.

Last but not least, it was Lord Byron's turn, the prominent Romantic poet, who after living a dissolute life, died from a fever in Greece, where he was fighting to gain the country's independence from the Ottoman Empire. And because of his dissolute style of life, no one attended his tragic funeral.

We greatly enjoyed this trip to Venice, thanks to our guide's skills in engaging us and the wonderful exhibitions we visited.

Our suggestion for other classes to enjoy this trip is to buy a pair of gumboots in advance just in case of high water in Venice. As a matter of fact, we could avoid it thanks to Mr Ivancich' help in consulting Venice's weather forecast and monitoring (!).

Authors: Arianna Nicolini, Antonio Chiarandini, Francesco Germino (4N)