



## Venice: Scarpa & Others

20th-century modern and *La Biennale*

**19–24 May 2026 (MM 960)**

£3,760 • 6 days

Speaker: Professor Harry Charrington

An exciting encounter with the beauty of *La Serenissima* through the lens of modernism.

Venice's greatest 20th-century architect Carlo Scarpa is the protagonist; see his most acclaimed work alongside lesser-known projects, many visited by special arrangement.

Venture into the Venetian hinterland and to Verona, plus a day dedicated to the Biennale.

Once considered as poetic but on the periphery of modern architecture, the work and methods of the great Venetian architect, Carlo Scarpa (1906–1978), have in recent years come to be widely recognised as visionary and pioneering, inspiring architects and designers across the world.

Scarpa's work is rooted in the *genius loci* of Venice and a Byzantine sensitivity to craft and material, along with a fascination with Japan and admiration for modern masters from Frank Lloyd Wright to Paul Klee. He began his career at the forefront of the revival of glassmaking in Murano, working as a designer for Cappelletti and Venini between 1926 and 1947. Subsequently, he collaborated with a select number of highly-skilled craftsmen in timber, plaster, concrete and metalwork, on a series of astonishingly beautiful projects across Venice and the Veneto.

Unlike so much of modernism, Scarpa's unfailingly finely-judged architecture views the existing building as the starting point to creativity, not an impediment. He meticulously scrapes away obscuring encrustations and interjects new uses and contemporary designs, in particular in a series of ground-breaking museum projects.

In his wake, other architects have grafted fascinating new schemes onto the city's fabric. These include workshops and much-needed housing that has revitalised neighbourhoods on La Giudecca and Murano, as well as David Chipperfield's extension of the San Michele Cemetery Island, and Tadao Ando at the Palazzo Grassi. Venice also possesses, in *La Biennale*, a showcase for the new, housed in the Arsenale and the national pavilions designed by Aalto, Fehn, Hoffman, Rietveld, Stirling and, of course, Scarpa.

It is not unusual for visitors to assign their enjoyment of Venice to nostalgia, sensing

*Palazzina Masieri, photo by Harry Charrington*



what John Ruskin, in *The Stones of Venice*, called "the impotent feeling of romance". This tour, in contrast, introduces a very different perspective: a Venice with a future. A magical city with an affirming sense of place and possibility, in which change takes place through conservation, adaptive reuse and critical interventions.

### Itinerary

*A number of the visits are by special arrangement. It may not be possible to visit everything listed, and there may need to be changes to the order.*

**Day 1: London to Venice.** Fly at c. 8.30am from London Heathrow to Venice (British Airways). Travel by motoscafo (water-taxi) across the lagoon to our hotel on the Grand Canal. Our first visit is to the Querini Stampalia Foundation. Here, Scarpa redesigned the 16th-century spaces between 1949–61. Later

additions by Valeriano Pastor (1997) and Mario Botta (2003–13), who studied under Scarpa.

**Day 2: Murano, San Michele, Cannaregio.** We trace Scarpa's roots as glassmaker on the island of Murano, returning via the cemetery island of San Michele with Scarpa's tomb for the Capovilla family (1943) and David Chipperfield's contemplative sequence of courtyards (1998–2007). The family of blacksmiths who worked closely with Scarpa are still active today; visit their workshop in a backstreet of Cannaregio. End at the Museo Correr, focusing on the Italian Renaissance collection with Scarpa's original interventions (1957–60).

**Day 3: Dorsoduro, La Giudecca, San Marco.** Across the Grand Canal see Scarpa's lecture theatre at Ca' Foscari university (1956). Continue to his remodelled Palazzina Masieri (1970–83). In the afternoon we venture to the islands of Sacca Fisola and La Giudecca for

Venice: Scarpa & Others, continued  
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a walk through residential projects. Tucked in between are workshops and art studios, including the Fortuny factory and showroom. Back in San Marco, visit Scarpa's exquisite Olivetti showroom (1957–58).

**Day 4: Verona.** Drive into the Veneto stopping at the Villa Girasole (Angelo Invernizzi and Ettore Fagioli, 1930s); an extraordinarily futuristic house built to track the sun – and now in need of extensive restoration. In Verona visit the Banco Popolare (1973–81), designed by Scarpa and completed after his death. We spend the afternoon at his culminating restoration project, the Castelvecchio Art Museum (1958–74).

**Day 5: La Biennale di Venezia.** Today is reserved for the 2026 Art Biennale. Visit the national pavilions in the Giardini Biennale. Time to see some of the art installations independently, here and in the Arsenale – including the Torre Nueva by Map Studio. Further suggestions in the city include the Pinault Collection at the Punta della Dogana (Tadao Ando) or the Peggy Guggenheim Collection (multiple architects).

**Day 6: San Vito D'Altivole.** The final visit is to the sublime and profoundly moving Memoriale Brion (1968–78), Scarpa's tomb and chapel for the Brion-Vega family, framed with pools, pavilions, planting, walkways. Scarpa is also buried here. Drive to Venice Airport for the flight to London Heathrow, arriving c. 6.00pm.

## Lecturer

### Professor Harry Charrington

Architect and Professor of Architecture at the University of Westminster. He read Architecture at Cambridge, where he was the founding editor of *Scroope: Cambridge Architectural Journal*, and subsequently combined academia and practice in both England and Finland. He has a particular interest in the history of modernism and obtained his PhD from the LSE on Alvar Aalto. His books include the award-winning *Alvar Aalto: the Mark of the Hand* and contributions to *Artek and the Aaltos: Creating a Modern World* (Yale University Press).

## Practicalities

**Price. Two sharing:** £3,760 or £3,380 without flights. **Single occupancy:** £4,470 or £4,090 without flights

**Included:** Flights (Euro Traveller) with British Airways (Airbus 320); a vaporetto (water-bus) pass; travel by water-taxi on a number of occasions including from and to the airport; luggage portage between the hotel and Venice airport; hotel accommodation as described below; breakfasts; 3 dinners and 1 light lunch with wine, water, coffee; all admissions; all tips; all taxes; the services of the lecturer and tour manager; a donation to the Venice in Peril Fund.

**Accommodation. Hotel Palazzo Sant'Angelo** ([sinahotels.com/en/h/sina-palazzo-santangelo-venice/](http://sinahotels.com/en/h/sina-palazzo-santangelo-venice/)): 4-star hotel in an excellent location on the Grand Canal near Campo Sant'Angelo and the Rialto Bridge. *Single occupancy rooms are doubles for sole use.*

**How strenuous?** Walking is often the best way to cross Venice, and participants need to be able to easily manage walks of up to an hour, as well as cope with steps up and down bridges. We use public water-buses and private water-taxis, both which require balance and surefootedness to get off and on. The tour should not be attempted by anyone who has difficulty with walking distances at a reasonable pace; fitness is essential.

**Group size:** between 10 and 20 participants.

**Venice in Peril.** The Venice in Peril Fund is a British charity dedicated to preserving the art and architecture of the city. Your donation (included in the price of the tour) will go directly to supporting the restoration of Carlo Scarpa's watergate at the Querini Stampalia Foundation. [www.veniceinperil.org](http://www.veniceinperil.org)

### Combine this tour with:

*Footpaths of Umbria*, 26 May–2 June 2026. We are happy to advise on linking accommodation and transport.

