



ANTONIO CANOVA PROJECT

financed by

THE VENICE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION
FRIENDS OF VENICE ITALY INC.



The project dedicated to ANTONIO CANOVA started in 2012. It is fully financed by The Venice International Foundation and its American “sister” Friends of Venice Italy Inc., both non-profit organizations that operate to raise funds for the safeguard of the Venetian cultural and historical heritage. Friends of Venice Italy Inc. is exempt from federal income tax under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.



ANTONIO CANOVA (Possagno 1757 – Venice 1822) is the greatest European artist of the neoclassical period, universally admired and honored by his contemporaries for the aesthetic, poetic and emotional qualities of his art. Venice was where he trained and worked; here he found ideas for his new art and the first clients and promoters of his successful career.

He was also admired in the United States. In 1816 he was commissioned to design the George Washington monument in Raleigh, the capital of North Carolina (this work was lost in the fire that destroyed the Raleigh State House in 1831).

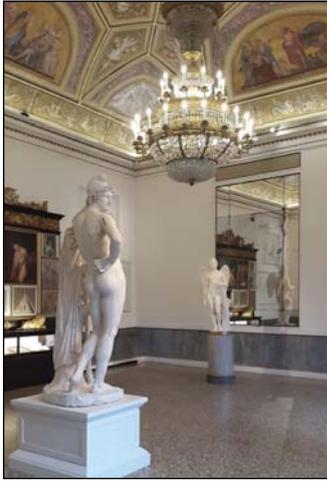
The Antonio Canova project involves three museums:

- the **CORRER MUSEUM** in Venice
- the **ACCADEMIA GALLERIES** in Venice
- the **MUSEUM AND GIPSOTECA ANTONIO CANOVA** in Possagno



The **CORRER MUSEUM**, situated in the Saint Mark's Square, is the museum of the City of Venice. It illustrates the life and culture of the Venetian Republic over the centuries of its political grandeur and independence. Its art collections include small bronzes from the late 15th century to the beginning of 17th century, maiolica-works and carved ivory; the extraordinary picture gallery shows primarily Venetian painting up to the 16th century such as Giovanni Bellini, Vittore Carpaccio, Cima da

Conegliano, Lorenzo Lotto and many others. In the Correr Museum there is also an itinerary along the Imperial Apartments where the Empress Elizabeth of Austria resided during her visit in Venice.



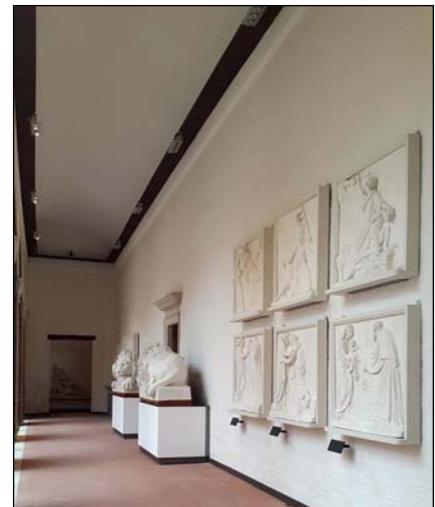
Thanks to Venice International Foundation and Friends of Venice Italy Inc. support, the Correr Museum includes from late November 2015 five Neoclassical rooms fully dedicated to Antonio Canova. The Canova project has involved the restoration, cleaning and reordering of the Correr's holdings of Canova's sculptures, plaster models, bozzetti, clay sketches, paintings and drawings. Apart from illustrating the role of Venetian patronage for Canova, the gallery also contains a remarkable piece of furniture, the *Mobile Canova*, a cabinet conceived as a commemorative shrine containing mementoes of the artist, dedicated by Venetians, who saw him as the last great artist of the Republic but also as the first great artist of a still to be unified Italy and, more widely, of Europe itself.

The ACCADEMIA GALLERIES is a museum of pre-19th-century art in Venice. It is housed in the Scuola della Carità on the bank of the Grand Canal, near the Accademia bridge. It was originally the gallery of the Art Academy of Venice and it was founded in 1750. The Accademia Galleries contain masterpieces of Venetian painting up to the 18th century including artists like Giovanni Bellini, Canaletto, Carpaccio, Giorgione, Longhi, Lotto, Tiepolo, Veronese. The cabinet of drawings of the Accademia Galleries includes also the worldwide famous *Vitruvian Man* by Leonardo da Vinci.



Thanks to the support of Venice International Foundation, Friends of Venice Italy Inc. and of the British committee Venice in Peril Fund, seven new rooms in the Palladio wing of the Accademia Galleries opened in late January 2016. Now, visitors will

be able to see the casts and original models from Canova's studio in Rome, a number of which have not been accessible to the public before, together with works by other artists, such as Francesco Hayez and Giovanni De Min. Their work present the history of Venice and its contribution to the arts at a particularly significant period when the influential and energetic Leopoldo Cicognara, biographer of Canova, was the president of the Art Academy.



The MUSEUM AND GIPSOTECA ANTONIO CANOVA in Possagno is one of the few museums in the world where visitors can see Canova's birth house and the full collection of his sculptures. It is hard to describe the astonishment the visitors feel entering the Gallery when they are surrounded by hundreds of sculptures: gods, heroes, muses and lovers from Greek mythology and portraits of princes, kings, emperors and statesmen like, for example, George Washington. Today this museum constitutes a necessary reference point for all the museums in the world that jealously preserve the marble masterpieces, expressions of Canova's great talent.



Antonio Canova, Model of George Washington monument, plaster, 1817.

Through the Antonio Canova project Venice International Foundation and Friends of Venice Italy Inc. have financed the *Venus in the lands of Antonio Canova* exhibition (September 2015-June 2016) organized in Possagno, Asolo and Crespano del Grappa, villages close related with Canova's life and family.

The Canova project will continue with the funding of two important masterpieces: the restoration of a series of tempera paintings and the fixing of the roof of the so called "New building gallery" designed by the well famous architect Carlo Scarpa in the fifties.



Antonio Canova, Tersicore and Euterpe, tempera painting, 1799.

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For further information please contact

THE VENICE INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

Fondamenta Rezzonico
Dorsoduro 3144
30123 Venice, Italy
ph. & fax +39 041 277 4840
info@venicefoundation.org
www.venicefoundation.org

FRIENDS OF VENICE ITALY INC.

c/o Franca Coin
Palazzo Barbaro
San Marco 2820
30124 Venice, Italy
info@friendsofvenice.us
www.friendsofvenice.us