

# DOMUS GRIMANI

The collection of classical sculptures reassembled  
in its original setting after four centuries  
THE ROOM OF THE DOGE

19.5.2021  
— 27.II.2022  
Museo di  
Palazzo Grimani

## **DOMUS GRIMANI** *The Room of the Doge*

**Museum of Palazzo Grimani**  
**May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021 – November 27<sup>th</sup>, 2022**

The **Museum of Palazzo Grimani** in Santa Maria Formosa confirms its leading role in the Venetian cultural scene with a new project, the result of the collaboration between **Veneto's Regional Directorate for Museums (Direzione regionale Musei Veneto)** and the **Venetian Heritage Foundation**. The **new set-up of the Room of the Doge (Sala del Doge)**, one of the most spectacular and evocative rooms of the palace presented on **May 19<sup>th</sup>, 2021**, returns to its **Renaissance splendour** thanks to the **relocation of the Greek and Roman sculptures of the Grimani collection**.

The project is part of a wide strategy to enhance and promote Palazzo Grimani and its history, following the rearrangement of the **Tribuna of Patriarch Giovanni Grimani** with the exhibition **DOMUS GRIMANI 1594-2019**, opened in May 2019.

The **Room of the Doge** was created at the same time as the extension works of the palace completed in **1568** and commissioned by **Giovanni Grimani**, patriarch of Aquileia, after a first set of works realised together with his brother Vettore. This space, an ideal counterpart to the **Tribuna** and probably also designed by Giovanni himself, wanted to celebrate **Antonio Grimani**, skilled spice merchant and first doge of the family. Decorated with **ancient and precious marbles** such as yellow alabaster, green serpentine and red porphyry – all from the eastern Mediterranean where their grandfather acquired wealth and fame as spice merchant and military man – the room **creates a spectacular setting in which to exhibit part of the classical sculptures from the family collection**.

Through a thorough study of historical sources - including the inventory of Giovanni Grimani's possessions, historical descriptions of the time and late 19th century photographs recently discovered in the library of the National Gallery in Washington - the curators **Daniele Ferrara**, director of **Veneto's Regional Directorate for Museums**, and **Toto Bergamo Rossi**, director of **Venetian Heritage**, were able to relocate **twenty sculptures** inside the room, including the imperial Roman era *Dionysus leaning on a satyr* in the niche of the front wall. **Eleven more sculptures** are placed in the adjoining rooms: **six in the chapel's vestibule, one in the Camerino di Callisto and four in the Sala di Psiche**.

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The exhibition is accompanied by a **book published by Marsilio** which includes a wide range of images documenting the operation, completing the editorial research on the Museum started with the show *Domus Grimani 1594-2019*.

This new project — produced by **Civita Tre Venezia** and financed by **Venetian Heritage** and the **Ministry of Culture**, in collaboration with **Gagosian**, the **Cologni Foundation for the Métiers d'Art**, **Fondazione Violetta Caprotti**, **Helen Frankenthaler Foundation**, **Michelangelo Foundation** and with the **support of many donors**—confirms the virtuous collaboration between public and private sector in the safeguarding and enhancement of Venice's historical-artistic heritage. On the occasion of the set-up of the Doge's Room it has been also possible to carry out **important maintenance works** of the museum, in addition to the restoration of the Room of Psyche, the creation of a new heating system and a new lighting system for the entire noble floor.

Simultaneously with the rearrangement of the Doge's Room, the Museum of Palazzo Grimani will host an exhibition, curated by Mario Codognato, of **new and recent works by German artist Georg Baselitz**. Born in 1938, he is one of the most significant artists of his generation. Titled **Archinto**, the exhibition, produced by **Gagosian** in collaboration with **Venetian Heritage**, will be installed at the museum's piano nobile, and **twelve paintings made expressly for the Sala del Portego** will hang on eighteenth-century stucco-framed that, until the end of the nineteenth century, were occupied by portraits of members of the Grimani family. In a highly unusual commitment, **these works will remain on long-term loan to the museum from the artist. This is the first time that such an intervention by a contemporary artist has occurred in a State museum in Venice to date.**

In *Archinto*, Baselitz pays **homage to Venice and its rich artistic tradition**, re-establishing historical continuity while also signalling a rupture between the Renaissance portrait tradition and its contemporary equivalents. The title of the exhibition and its works allude to Titian's enigmatic 1558 portrait of a partially veiled Cardinal Filippo Archinto. Bringing the Old Master's sensibility into a present-day context, Baselitz's spectral paintings continue his exploration of printmaking techniques and allude to the perennial artistic theme of human mortality.

The comprehensive artistic program of the Museum of Palazzo Grimani, and its ability to attract important international partners, testify to its importance within the cultural life of the city; while the dialogue between ancient and contemporary is, once again, the highlight for the promotion of a unique place.

**DOMUS GRIMANI. The Room of the Doge** enjoys the **patronage of the Veneto Region** and it is part of **Venezia 1600**, the program which celebrates the anniversary of the foundation of the city.

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## *DIREZIONE REGIONALE MUSEI VENETO*

Direzione regionale Musei Veneto is a branch of the Italian Ministry of Culture, managing and coordinating twenty public museums and institutions in the Veneto region. The collections under the supervision of Direzione regionale Musei Veneto are extremely rich and diverse, ranging from prehistoric relics (Paleovenetians, Greeks, Etruscans and Romans) to 18<sup>th</sup> century villas, as well as paintings on wood, canvas and frescoes, sculptures, crafts and contemporary art. Besides the management, enhancement and preservation of the legacy entrusted to it, Direzione regionale Musei Veneto is the regional coordinator of the National Museums System, the institution recently created to promote the network of public and private museums and cultural sites.

<https://polomusealeveneto.beniculturali.it/>

## *VENETIAN HERITAGE*

Venetian Heritage, an international non-profit organization with offices in Venice and New York, supports cultural projects through conservation, exhibitions, publications, conferences, academic study and research. It aims to increase awareness of the immense legacy of Venetian art in Italy and in those areas that were once part of the Republic of Venice.

[www.venetianheritage.eu](http://www.venetianheritage.eu)

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