

La Serenissima in NYC

Joelle Grosso (October 25, 2016)



On Friday, October 28, the Consul General of Italy in New York, Francesco Genuardi, hosted an event that illustrated the program for the Carnegie Hall festival "La Serenissima: Music and Arts from the Venetian Republic," with the company of Ambassador Armando Varricchio and Carnegie Hall's Executive and Artistic Director, Clive Gillinson.

From February 3rd to February 21st 2017, [Carnegie Hall](#) [2] and other major cultural institutions throughout NYC will be featuring tons of events in honor of [La Serenissima](#) [3]'s legacy. However, the presentation of this schedule was held this Friday at the [Italian Consulate](#) [4] and included special guests, Armando Varricchio, the Ambassador of Italy to the United States, and [Clive Gillinson](#) [5], Carnegie Hall's Executive and Artistic Director.

After offering his thanks, the Italian Consul General in New York, Francesco Genuardi, warmly welcomed Varricchio to say a few words.

"My role today is to stress the importance of this event, not just of the exclusive musical events, but also the importance of the city. Who doesn't love the city of Venice? It is a tourist location, a spot for families, and for honeymoons," he said. "However, I would like to draw your attention to that for 1,000 years Venice has been a real cultural capital. Merchants of Venice were not just bringing in



their finest garments and textiles, but they were also trading culture and connections," he continued. "With La Serenissima, that Carnegie Hall will host, we will have the opportunity to follow musical events and exchanges of cultural experiences," he concluded.

Following the Ambassador, Gillinson introduced the details of the event to be held in February at Carnegie Hall, taking the time to honor the city of Venice.

"Anyone who has traveled to Venice knows that there is nowhere like it in the world. As beautiful as it is today, it is also a reflection of a bygone era, a remarkable product of its historic geographic connection between East and West, shaped by the many cultural, social, and political influences that have moved through the city over the centuries," he said.

'**La Serenissima**', or 'the most serene,' was a title bestowed upon the ancient Republic of [Venice](#) [6] as an indicator of their sovereignty. Over time, it has proven to be the perfect term to describe the city given that Venice for the most part has always been a peaceful place. Despite all the turmoil that affected other cities on the peninsula, Venice always managed to avoid conflict on their tiny island located far off the mainland. It flourished in every way possible until the arrival of Napoleon in 1797 which is what ultimately caused the fall of the Republic.

At their peak, Venice not only reached maritime supremacy, democratic progressiveness, mercantile power, and financial prosperity but it was also a huge center of cultural achievement and innovation. Carnegie Hall wanted to pay tribute to the extraordinary creativity of Venetians by holding a citywide festival honoring their art and music.

Their achievements in painting are strongly connected with their organized expeditions to the East, the most famous Venetian explorer being [Marco Polo](#) [7]. Thanks to their travels, the explorers were able to bring back certain pigments that were not available in other parts of Europe. This is why much of northern Italian art is characterized by color while the paintings in central Italy focus more on design and lines. Venice also has a rich history of music because it is the birthplace of opera. [Antonio Vivaldi](#) [8] is the epitome of Venetian excellence and is still recognized as one of the best Baroque composers of all time. His influence is still felt today, his most famous work being a series of violin concertos called "The Four Seasons."

The amount of artistic masterpieces that Venice has gifted the world is remarkable given the physically constrictive nature of the city. It is important that institutes, such as the Italian Consulate and Carnegie Hall, take the time to celebrate these accomplishments to keep the Venetian tradition alive!

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Links

[1] <http://www.iitaly.org/files/venicejpg-3>

[2] <https://www.carnegiehall.org/>

[3] <https://www.carnegiehall.org/venice/>

[4] http://www.consnewyork.esteri.it/consolato_newyork/en/

[5] <https://www.carnegiehall.org/Press/Clive-Gillinson-Biography/>

[6] <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Venice>

[7] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marco_Polo

[8] https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Antonio_Vivaldi