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Erasmus+ BIP 2024

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# Over-Time Glass 2024

edited by MariaAntonia Barucco

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Glass is a material that spans centuries and cultures, but it is also language and knowledge. Its evolution is based on the ability to observe, transmit and transform knowledge. This applies as much to the gestures of master glassmakers as to experimentation, new production and design processes, even industrial ones.

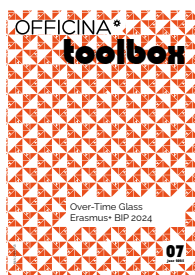
No breakthrough, no true innovation, can take place without knowledge sharing. Designing with glass (in the design, craft, architectural, industrial or artistic fields) means first and foremost learning from those who have gone before us, but it also means valuing those who bring new ideas and outlooks, and engaging in dialogue with those who are involved in research.

OVER-TIME GLASS, is the first Venetian Erasmus+BIP project entirely dedicated to glass. OVER-TIME GLASS is a challenge: we are in Venice to make innovation, to create a confrontation between students, teachers, researchers, craftsmen and professionals. OVER-TIME GLASS is a bridge between the history of glass and the future of glass design, it is interdisciplinary and is dedicated to the designers and glassmakers of the future.

This publication is, in fact, a collection. It brings together the lectures held during OVER-TIME GLASS by passionate and knowledgeable international faculty, is illustrated with photographs taken during the intensive week in Venice, and features selected pages from the students' notebooks – project journals where sketches, notes, ideas, and visions converge. A living document of the exchange between generations, cultures, and practices, all united by the material of glass.

*MariaAntonia Barucco*

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# Like the Lion

MARIA ANTONIA BARUCCO

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While this Erasmus+ BIP was taking place, news arrived of an important discovery. It helps us better understand and interpret Venice. In my opinion, it also helps us reflect on the role of those who approach glass with curiosity, whether professionally or, even better, as students.

Through the comparison of chemical data describing lead isotopes, and thanks to increasingly extensive and detailed archives, it has been confirmed without doubt that the Lion of Venice, standing on one of the two columns in St. Mark's Square, is in fact a *zhènmùshòu*. It is a Chinese lion, made between 609 and 907 AD. Between 1260 and 1270, after the loss of Constantinople, Venice adopted the winged lion as a political and state symbol. Considering Venetian travels, trade, and diplomatic skills, it is plausible that the Venetians were aware of the distant origin of their Lion. During the Tang Dynasty, *zhènmùshòu* guarded the most important Chinese tombs. They were monstrous creatures resembling lions and dragons. It is unclear when the Lion arrived in Venice. But it was certainly in Venice by 1295, during the period of Nicolò and Maffeo Polo's travels to China, the father and uncle of the famous Marco Polo. Few *zhènmùshòu* still exist. Many

were destroyed after the Tang period. Probably, when the Lion began its journey to the Venetian lagoon, it was already a prestigious, rare object full of meaning. Venice could neither ignore nor diminish its significance.

Perhaps, by choosing this Eastern lion as their symbol, transforming a *zhènmùshòu* into a symbol of Saint Mark and the Serenissima itself, the Venetians created what is, in every respect, the most beautiful symbolism of the Lion of Venice.

Venice is like its Lion.

It does not stand still; it moves, it travels. The Lion on the column in St. Mark's Square seems ready to take flight. The "marching Lion" is depicted by Carpaccio and in many other sculptures, fabrics, and paintings.

The Lion's back paws rest on the lagoon, while the front paws touch the mainland. In this way, it represents Venice's essence. A place from which to depart towards distant paths. A meeting point between land and water. Venice connects distant places and people.

Venice does this not only through careful governance and economic strategy, but by connecting cultures and knowledge, arts and crafts, techniques and technologies, innovations and traditions. And, from my point of view, also very different



types of glass: the artistic and artisanal glass is related to the more industrial glass and the most advanced technical innovations.

This logic of connection and multiplication of perspectives lies at the heart of the Erasmus+ project and its vision for Europe. A continent that grows not by closing knowledge within borders, but by building new knowledge through a network of cultures, schools, disciplines, and generations. *Venezia Città Campus* is a great project. This Erasmus+ BIP contributes to it, showing how relevant it is to dedicate education and research to glass. Studying glass today does not mean attending a single laboratory, however specialized. It means crossing a network of knowledge. No single furnace can contain all the knowledge required. Instead, there are many artisanal and scientific laboratories in Murano, Venice, and its territory. The strength of the GLASS cluster of Università Iuav di Venezia lies in this plurality of approaches and skills. It is a network that brings together researchers, professors, companies, artisans, designers, architects, and students. An ecosystem of study and design that allows glass to grow, not only as an excellent product but as an international cultural and scientific platform.

The news of the Lion's origins, and its coincidence in time with OVER-TIME GLASS, reminds us of the role of Erasmus+ BIPs in European Union

programs and in the Venezia Città Campus project.

*Venezia Città Campus* moves precisely in this direction. It makes Venice a place to stop, to study, to meet, to debate, and to generate innovation. A hub of collaboration between universities, institutions, companies, and communities. A city without gates, without borders, without pause, in constant movement of welcome and departure. A city of citizens who are never still, citizens of the world who recognize themselves and meet in Venice, working on future projects and building new connections between ancient and new.

Glass is like the Lion.

Venetian glass is not just a symbol of all this. It is a true material for study and for design in architecture, art, design, fashion, and above all, cultures. Venice is a center of excellence where knowledge about glass grows. But also a place for experimentation, hybridization, and contamination.

**Studying glass today does not mean attending a single laboratory, however specialized. It means crossing a network of knowledge**

Studying glass means studying light, transparency, resistance, and form.

It means studying the relationship between artisanal tradition and industrial advanced production, between heritage and the future.

This is why *Venezia Città Campus* can become an international hub for the study and design of glass. A place where students and researchers from all over the world meet to deepen technologies, languages, and materials. A place where glass returns to the center as a cultural and environmental resource.



In the previous page, Venetian windows in Campo San Bartolomeo and the flag with the Lion of Venice. *S. Tikhonova*

Above, A window of Fondaco dei Turchi on the Grand Canal, now Venice's Natural History Museum. *M.A. Barucco*

Below, Products by rehub, a startup converting non-recyclable glass into revero, an innovative recycled glass. *E. Marconato*