

Fondazione Musei Civici di Venezia

—
Palazzo Mocenigo



The Palace.

HISTORY

Palazzo Mocenigo is a large building of gothic origin extensively rebuilt at the beginning of the 17th century, when it attained its present appearance. From 17th century, the palazzo was the residence of the San Stae branch of the Mocenigo family, one of the most important families of the Venetian patriciate, seven members of which became doges between 1414 and 1778.

The external façades looking on to the street (salizàda) and San Stae canal are characterised by their large Serlian windows, a common feature in Venetian architecture during the 17th and 18th centuries; these are three-light windows with a central opening and a semi-circular arch above and two lower windows at the sides with entablature that also make it possible to alternate the piano nobile with mezzanines.

The street façade, today the entrance to the palazzo, highlights its extension on the left side, which was the result of the acquisition of adjacent buildings. With a large central hall (pòrtego) that was used for official functions and goes right through the building, flanked by the other rooms, its interior is typical of all Venetian patrician homes.

Until recently the Mocenigo family still lived in the palazzo and on the first piano nobile one can see Rococo or Neo-classic style frescoes and furnishing that mostly go back to the second half of the 18th century. Many of the rooms are decorated with paintings celebrating the family's glories, the climax of which was when Alvise IV was doge, (1763-1778).

Of considerable interest are the ceiling frescoes, completed in 1787 for the marriage of Alvise IV's nephew to Laura Corner, for that occasion are realized the frescoes by Jacopo Guarana (Verona, 1720 – Venezia, 1808), Giambattista Canal (Venezia, 1745 – 1825) e Giovanni Scajaro (around second half of 18th cent.). Of particular note are also the root wood doors and engraved, gilded cornices.

The Mocenigo Family

For centuries, the Palazzo Mocenigo at San Stae (the name is a Venetian dialect version of Sant'Eustachio) was home to the Mocenigo family, one of the most important amongst the Venetian nobility. According to some, the family originally came from Lombardy, according to others from Aquileia; but whatever the truth is, the Mocenigo would provide Venice with a total of 7 doges:

Tommaso (1414-23),

Pietro (1474-76),

Giovanni (1478-85),

Alvise I (1570-77: doge at the time of the victorious Battle of Lepanto),

Alvise II (1700-1709),

Alvise III (1722-32),

Alvise IV (1763-78).

The family also supplied the State with numerous procuratori (administrators),

ambassadors, sea and land captains, clergymen, and men of letters.

The main branch of the family used to live in the palace at San Samuele, whilst the branch descended from Nicolò Mocenigo, brother of Doge Alvise I, settled in the San Stae palace at the beginning of the 17th century.

The Museum of Palazzo Mocenigo

The family's last descendent, in 1945 Alvise Nicolò bequeathed the palazzo to the city on the condition it became an "Art Gallery to complete the Correr Museum"; thirty years later, following his wife's death, it was then left to the city.

Opened to the public in 1985, it became the seat of the Study Centre of the History of Fabrics and Costumes, housing the vast collections of ancient fabrics and clothes belonging to the Venice Civic Museums – most of which came from the Correr, Guggenheim, Cini and Grassi collections. Palazzo Mocenigo also contains a well-stocked library specialising in the history of fabrics, costumes, and fashion. The library is situated in the rooms on the first-floor piano nobile that have not conserved their original furnishings; the stocks of fabrics and costumes are situated on the first mezzanine and on the top-floor.

Completely renewed and expanded at the end of 2013, the itinerary winds its way through twenty rooms on the first piano nobile, therefore doubling the amount of exhibition area compared to when it opened in 1985. As a whole, the rooms skilfully evoke the different aspects of the life and activities of a Venetian nobleman between the 17th and 18th century, and on display are mannequins wearing valuable ancient garments and accessories that belong to the Study Centre connected to the Museum.

Paying particular attention to the history of the city, fashion and costumes have therefore always played a key role in the studies and exhibitions of the museums in the aristocratic setting of the Palazzo Mocenigo.



Entrance of Palazzo Mocenigo

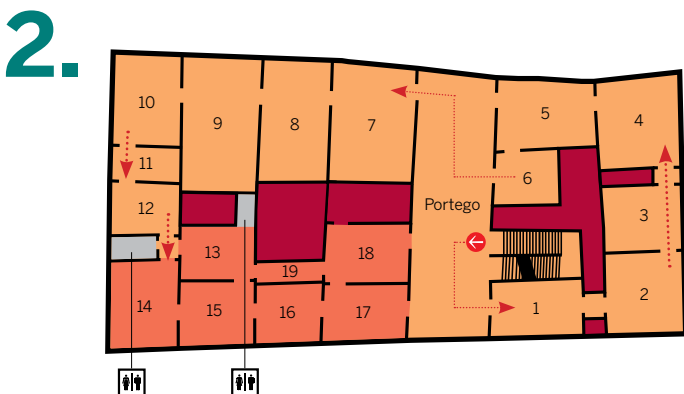
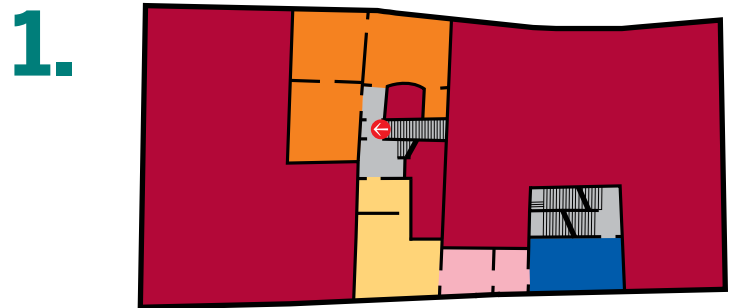
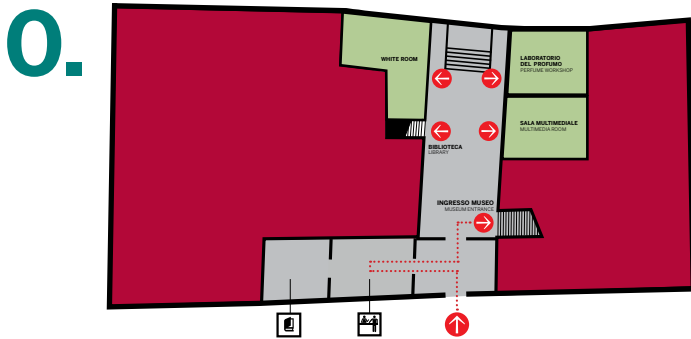
Museum Itinerary

Completely renewed and expanded at the end of 2013, the itinerary winds its way through twenty rooms on the first piano nobile, therefore doubling the amount of exhibition area compared to when it opened in 1985. The layout was designed by Pier Luigi Pizzi, an internationally renowned set designer, whilst palazzo furnishings and paintings were integrated with a large number of works from different sectors and deposits of the Venice Civic Museums, thanks to the painstaking, intelligent process of restoring and valorising canvases and pastels, furnishings and glass that had never been on display before.

As a whole, the rooms skilfully evoke the different aspects of the life and activities of a Venetian nobleman between the 17th and 18th century, and on display are mannequins wearing valuable ancient garments and accessories that belong to the Study Centre connected to the Museum. Made of patterned fabrics embellished with embroidery and lace, they are testimony to the astounding expertise of scores of craftsmen and the refined, luxurious elegance for which the Venetians were famous.

This was the inspiration for the creation of a new section dedicated to a particular aspect of the history of Venetian tradition: perfume, which, up until now, has not

been studied in depth, highlighting the key role the city played in the origins of this aesthetical, cosmetic and entrepreneurial custom. In the five rooms that are dedicated to perfume and are perfectly integrated with the attraction of the displays throughout the museum, multi-media instruments and experiences using the senses alternate along an itinerary of information, emotion and closer study.



- 0.
 - Entrance and Facilities to the public
Ticket office, Bookshop, Shop Mavive
 - Teaching Rooms
- 1.
 - Library
 - Associazione Amici dei Musei e dei Monumenti Veneziani
 - Management and offices
 - Mocenigo Archive
- 2.
 - Section of the 'Museum'
 - Section of the 'Perfume'

1.

SECTION OF THE MUSEUM/ EXHIBITION ROOMS

Portego

The paintings on display here are either nearly all portraits of the Mocenigo family or depict events in which they were involved. Four of the large portraits of the walls are of the sovereigns under whom the Mocenigo family were ambassadors, while two of the seven doges from the family are portrayed above the door and the others in the long frieze below the ceiling – inspired by the one in the Sala del Maggior Consiglio in the Doge's Palace –, together with numerous illustrious members of the family.

Room 1

The paintings in this room all belong to the museum and are of famous members of the branch of the Mocenigo family that lived here. The two paintings by Antonio Joli (Modena, 1700 – Naples, 1777) are set in Rome and refer to Piero Mocenigo (1632-1678), first ambassador to London and then in the city of the Pope pastels by Francesco Pavona (Udine, 1695 – Venice, 1777) portray the Doge Alvise IV, his wife Pisa Corner and a brother (?).

Room 2

In this room the 18th-century carved, lacquered furniture belonging to the palazzo is on display with contemporary blown glass from Murano and the paintings on the walls are from the Correr Museum collections. The valuable silk fabrics belong to the Study Centre of the History of Fabrics and Costumes – as do all the fabrics on display in the museum –, while all the Chinese porcelains come from the Treasury of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco. The ceiling fresco goes back to the period of the extensive decorations carried out in the palazzo on the occasion of Doge Alvise IV's grandson's wedding to Laura Corner. Here we can see the allegorical figures of Fame, Glory, and Hymen, god of marriages.

Room 3

On the table, decorated with a handmade lace tablecloth from Burano, and on the consoles is 18th-century Murano glass blown and worked by hand, while the Venetian made bottles and glasses are in 'Bohemian' style. The furniture belongs to the palazzo and is all from the eighteenth century, except the screen which is dated later; the paintings on the walls come from the Correr Museum and Ca'Rezzonico

Section of the museum





Room 3



Room 11

collections. The allegorical fresco on the ceiling alludes to military value, guarantor of peace, prosperity and good government.

Room 4

The carved, lacquered, and gilded 19th-century furniture belongs to the palazzo; the glass pieces decorating it – from the Murano Museum – go back to the 18th century with the exception of the multicoloured filigree candleholder on the table, which is dated later. Of the paintings, the Virgin by the Bellini school belongs to the palazzo's collections, as do the chandelier and multi-coloured wall lights in the shape of bouquets of flowers ('a cioca') from the eighteenth century. The Mocenigo coat-of-arms stands out on the Venetian stucco floor, while once again the ceiling fresco alludes to marriage, with Hymen coming down from heaven, the bride with the pierced heart, Cupid, Poetry and the fertility of Spring.

Room 5

The paintings in this room depict war scenes or family events related to the Mocenigo family. The naval battle is, for instance, a fight near the Island of Sapienza in Greece between pirates and Venetians led by Zaccaria Mocenigo (1634 – 1665), who preferred to set fire to his ship and die rather than fall into enemy hands. The ceiling fresco is surrounded by extensive perspective tromp l'oeil and depicts pairs of allegorical figures that are the apotheosis of the family. Of particular value the chandelier – originally part of this room's furnishings – in blown glass and hand worked into bouquets of flowers ('a cioca'), attributed to the most important Venetian glassmaker in the 18th century, Giuseppe Briati (Murano 1686 – Venice 1772).

Room 6

In this small room with its multicoloured stuccoes and a series of paintings from the Correr Museum, it is the magnificent 18th dresses that stand out. In women's clothing light fabrics, of clear tints, were preferred; skirts were puffed out at the waist by paniers; the tight-fitting bodices presented ample décolletés and cascades of lace hung from the sleeves. In the early decades of the century a new model of dress affirmed itself, in response to a desire for greater freedom of movement: the andrienne, known as the andrié in Venice, with pleated tail that descended from the shoulders, widening out to a broad train.

Room 7

Once again many of the paintings in this room depict stories of the Mocenigo family. Particularly striking is the large table that has been laid and is covered with valuable ancient 13th/14th-century fabrics. Of different kinds, these items have

silver and gold thread, as can be seen in the extremely rare piece of alluciolato brocade reflecting the light and producing a sparkling effect. From the same period are the glass objects (chalices, fruit stands, plates), all of which are slightly fumè, mould blown and worked freely by hand. They are from Murano, as are some of the other pieces on display here that go back to the 18th century: the candleholders and mirror with frame (soaza) decorated with glass plates, enamel amorinos and racemes.

Room 8

All the portraits on display here are of Venetian patricians, some of which belong to the palazzo – as does the furniture. Others come from the Correr collections, such as the two original paintings on fabric dedicated to Doges of another important Venetian family, the Morosini. The 17th century glass on the consoles is from Murano. Men's clothes, like most of the garments in this room, abandoning the severe models of the 16th and 17th centuries of military inspiration, assumed looser and more refined forms, adopting many of the features present in female fashion, such as copious lacework and embroidery. The gown was the official form of dress for patricians. Made of black fabric with large sleeves, for the Savi, Avogadori and heads of the Quarantia it had red lining while for the ducal Senators and Advisors it was completely red.

Room 9

The paintings in this room, of which only some belong to the palazzo, evoke marine settings whilst continuing the series of famous portraits. On the left of a 19th century portrait of one of the Mocenigo doges, there is a meditative portrait of Gregorio XII, pope at the beginning of the fifteenth century, coming from the noble Venetian Correr family and one of the few to abdicate as pope. On the right is a portrait of the noble scholar Marcantonio Michiel. On the table are 16th-century ciselè soprarizzo velvets and contemporary glass pieces, mould blown or worked freely by hand. The 18th century pieces of furniture belong to the palazzo.

Room 10

The paintings by Antonio Stom on display here belong to the series of the "Splendours of the Mocenigo Family". They refer to the visit of Princess Violante Beatrice of Bavaria (1673/1731), wife of Ferdinando de' Medici, in the territory of the Republic of Venice, being received by a member of the Mocenigo family. The charcoal on the bureau depicts Costanza, wife of the last Mocenigo, who lived in the palazzo, bequeathing it to the city last century. The 20th century photographs depict members of the Aosta branch of the Savoia family. On the table at the back



Jacopo Guarana, *Apotheosis of the Mocenigo Family*, Ceiling Fresco

of the room are eight valuable ancient fabrics and glass from different periods: the filigree plate and the three fumé buckets go back to the 16th century, the fruit stands and candleholders to the 18th, the chalcedony chalice to the 19th and the goblet to the 20th century. The furniture is from the 18th/19th centuries and only some pieces belong to the palazzo.

Room 11

The room is dedicated to this classical male garment with more than fifty samples on display, from the Cini deposits in the collections of the Study Centre of Textile and Costume annexed to the museum. Knee long, completely buttoned up in the front and made of a valuable fabric, the waistcoat became common at the end of the 17th century. It was worn under the jacket; the front was usually made of silk and the back of linen or cotton. In that period it still had sleeves and was mainly meant as protection against the cold. It later changed form: in the 18th century – the period the models on display here were made – it was shortened and reached just below the waist, ending with two 'tails'. At the end of the century it no longer had sleeves, but sometimes had a collar instead.

Room 12

The Mocenigo legacy also included a complex of noble archives of outstanding importance. It includes collections covering a period from the 11th to the 12th century, offering a selection of 205 archive bundles. This is a collection of outstanding historical and documentary importance that has not yet been studied in depth.

2.

ITINERARY OF THE 'PERFUME'

In the five rooms that are dedicated to perfume and are perfectly integrated with the attraction of the displays throughout the museum, multi-media instruments and experiences using the senses alternate along an itinerary of information, emotion and closer study.

A video illustrates the role of Venice in the history of perfume, a room evokes the lab of a perfumer of the 16th century (muschiere). Raw materials and processes are displayed and illustrated, while an olfactory map describes the "Streets of Spices" crossed by the ancient Venetians. Is then presented an extraordinary collection of perfume bottles of the German company Drom, covering a number of materials dating from the Middle Ages to the present day, in a long-term loan to the museum. Finally, the tour ends with the opportunity to experience, through some olfactory stations the "fragrance families" from which come all the fragrances.

Room 13

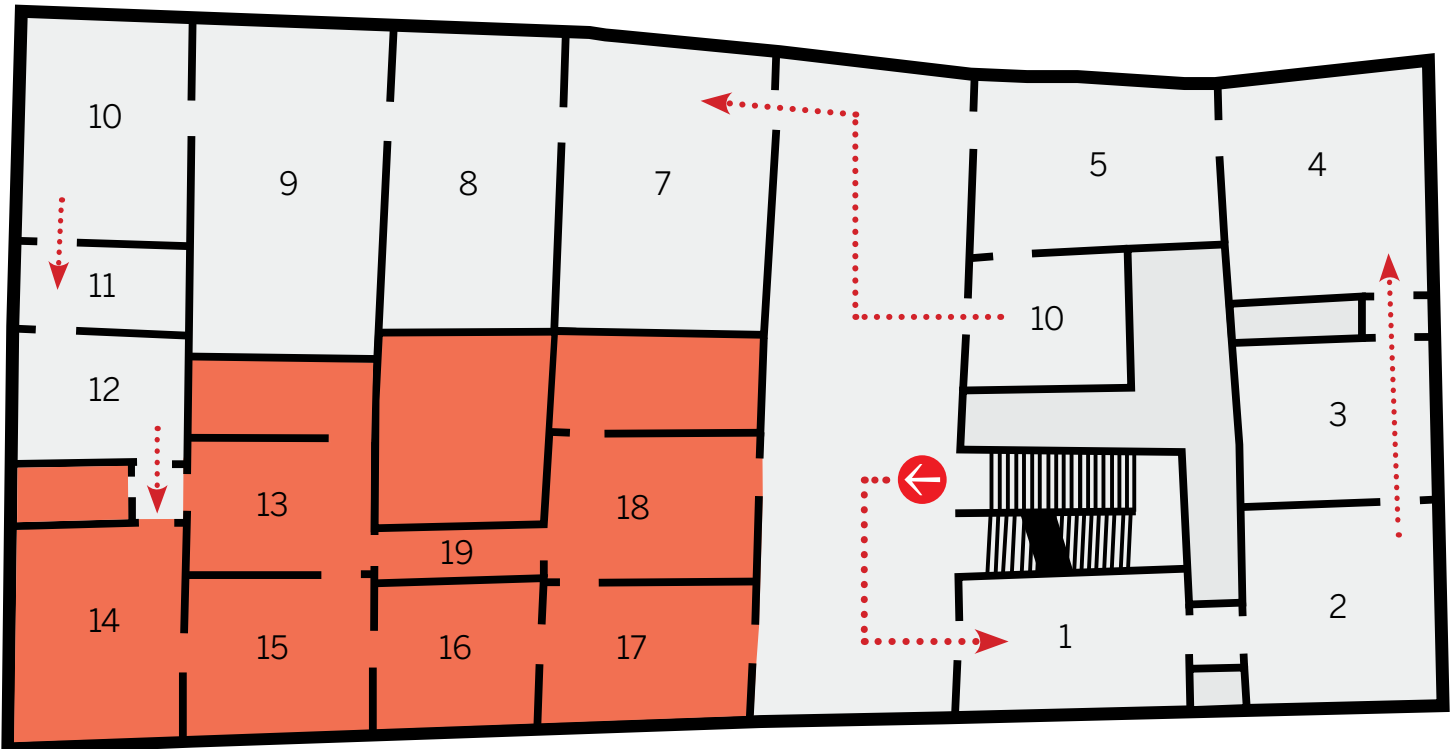
Decorated with paintings from the Correr Museum and Ca' Rezzonico collections, this room is the beginning of the museum section that is devoted to a particular aspect of the history of Venetian costumes, that of perfume, not yet studied in depth

until now, and highlighting the fundamental role the city played in the origins of this aesthetical, cosmetic and commercial tradition. Here a video – in three different languages one after the other – offers a light introduction to the Venetian history of perfume up to the Middle Ages, the secrets of ancient production, the whims of the wealthy clients, the trend changes over the centuries.

Room 14

Although not a perfect reconstruction, this room evokes what was an almost alchemical laboratory of the perfume maker or muschiere, who, from the sixteenth century on in Venice was the keeper of the techniques and recipes to make soap, oils, pastes, powders and liquids to perfume things, people, clothes, gloves and rooms. Expensive and much sought-after, perfume required raw materials that were often very rare and exotic, coming either from the plant kingdom, such as the benjamin tree, cinnamon, or from the animal kingdom, such as the zibet and grey amber. This room has an interactive wall panel with a scented map that demonstrates the fascinating, impenetrable routes that Venetians had to cover to obtain these raw materials. Original nineteenth-twentieth

Itinerary of the 'Perfume'





Room 14



Room 17

century instruments or reconstructions – such as the loom to extract essential oils from flowers (enfleurage) or the chest full of white cold paste Venetian soap, filtered using an ancient process – give the visitor a glimpse of the partially magical and partially industrial atmosphere of this great tradition. Of particular note is Pietro Andrea Mattioli's sixteenth-century herbarium that illustrates, amongst other things, the technique of distillation.

Room 15

This room is also dedicated to raw materials and production techniques. The books on display – one of which can be used virtually in the interactive totem next to the bookcase – were printed for the first time in Venice in the middle of the sixteenth century, revealing the "secrets" of an art of perfume – that also comprises cosmetics, medicine, science and magic. Some of the 'real' raw materials are on display here, such as musk from animal glands or valuable grey amber – the intestinal secretion of the sperm whale – and, on the table, many of those mentioned in the ancient recipes exhibited here.

Room 16

Founder of the Drom Fragrances in Munich, Bavaria in 1911, with great skill and passion the Storp family collected a rare and extremely important collection of perfume phials and containers with a total of more than 3,000 pieces and spanning 6,000 years' history. On display here is a significant selection, on show for the first time in Venice, thanks to a generous long-term loan to the museum.

Room 17

The 'Fragrance families' are a sort of classification of perfumes on the basis of the elements they are made up of. On the large table there are 24 containers with the same number of essences, forming six of the main families, all of which have fascinating names: citrus, floral, oriental ... Visitors may experiment with the fragrances or study this intoxicating but rigorously scientific world in more depth, using the iPad on the table.

Rooms 18 and 19

The paintings in room 18 are both intimate and private; of particular note is the rare Perfume Maker's Organ, an extraordinary instrument used to invent perfumes using the more than two hundred essential oils in the phials arranged in the shape of an amphitheatre. In the small room 19 we can see two paintings with religious motifs that belong to the palazzo, as to the eighteenth-century furnishings, while the female portrait comes from the Correr Museum collections.

In collaboration with

