



Venezia, Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore

## The new Glass Study Centre of the Fondazione Cini – Sala Messina

*On 15 May, on the occasion of the symposium on Bohemian glass, the most important General Venetian Glass Archive opens to the public in the new spaces of the Sala Messina, restored thanks to the contribution of the Ex Magistrato alle Acque and the Pentagram Foundation.*

Venice, 12 May 2023: The Fondazione Giorgio Cini's **Glass Study Centre** – which, with its **more than two hundred thousand** original drawings, sketches and working designs, represents the most important and complete **General Archive of Venetian Glass** and a key hub for all research in the field of glass – is moving its collections to the prestigious **Sala Messina**. The sixteenth-century space is located on the ground floor of the Chiostro dei Cipressi on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore and is named after the Sicilian sculptor Francesco Messina. The room was restored by the Fondazione Giorgio Cini with the contribution of the **Interregional Superintendency for Public Works for Veneto, Trentino Alto Adige and Friuli Venezia Giulia** and the support of the **Pentagram Stiftung Foundation**.

On **15 May 2023**, the Messina Room and the Glass Study Centre will open to the public and scholars with a one-day symposium on the history of glass art in Bohemia, on the occasion of the opening of the **exhibition Bohemian Glass: the Great Masters** at LE STANZE DEL VETRO, and will then be accessible by appointment ([centrostudivetro@cini.it](mailto:centrostudivetro@cini.it)).

*“In the monumental spaces of the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, the Cini Foundation is carrying out a wide-ranging and innovative restoration project, with the creation of the new headquarters of the Glass Study Centre,” says Renata Codello, Secretary General of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini. “The work carried out provides rooms specifically dedicated to the conservation of the archives and to welcoming scholars and enthusiasts of the art of glassmaking in Venice. I would like to thank the Superintendent’s Office and the Pentagram Stiftung Foundation for their commitment in carrying out this major restoration project.”*

Founded in 2012 as part of the Institute of Art History, on the joint initiative of the **Fondazione Cini** and the **Pentagram Stiftung Foundation** as part of the project *LE STANZE DEL VETRO* (‘THE GLASS ROOMS’) with the aim of **studying and promoting the art of Venetian glassmaking** in all its modern and contemporary forms, in just over ten years the Glass Study Centre has grown both in importance and in the volume of documents conserved, becoming the leading archive dedicated to Venetian glass from the late-nineteenth century to the present day. In 2018, the **Sala Messina** – a space overlooking the enchanting Chiostro dei Cipressi and the Borges Labyrinth, only a few steps away from the *LE STANZE DEL VETRO* exhibition venue – was chosen as its new home, thus establishing an ideal



symbolic continuity between the place dedicated to exhibition design and its cultural and scientific hub.

The **restoration project** of the Sala Messina, which was implemented thanks to the contribution and direction of the Interregional Superintendency for Public Works for Veneto, Trentino Alto Adige and Friuli Venezia Giulia, required intervention on several aspects. First of all, the cement plasters and the tar layer were removed thanks to a painstaking process to restore the breathability of the walls. Using stratigraphy and diagnostic analyses, the marmorino plasterwork still found on the vaults was renovated and integrated; the stone surfaces were desalinated and the stone and terracotta capitals decorating the side cells and the large central hall were restored. The brick and wooden vaults, as well as the ancient masonry, had been damaged by the passage of cables and piping. Consolidation work was carried out while the installations were designed to integrate with the furnishings in the hall without affecting the masonry and flooring. A new passageway makes the staircase leading to the Manica Lunga Library now directly accessible.

Among the treasures being transferred to the Sala Messina – laid out according to a design by architect **Fabrizio Cattaruzza** – are the **Antonio Salviati Glassworks Archive**, detailing the company's activity from 1901 to 1992, as well as those of **Pauly & C. – C.V.M** and **Seguso Vetri d'Arte**, the historic Murano glassworks. The collections also contain drawings and projects by major **artists and designers** who represented the arts scene at large-scale exhibitions, from the Venice Art Biennale to the Milan Triennale and other key international events. The best known are: Carlo Scarpa, Ettore Sottsass, Dino Martens, Flavio Poli, Sergio Asti, Vinicio Vianello, Fulvio Bianconi, Ginny Ruffner, Emmanuel Babled, Peter Shire, Pino Signoretto, Cristiano Bianchin, Silvano Rubino and Giorgio Vigna. Prominent among the **glass furnace archives** are names such as: Barovier Seguso and Ferro, M.V.M. Cappellin & C., Vetreria Artistica Rag. Aureliano Toso and S.A.L.I.R.

All the collections of the Glass Study Centre – both graphic and photographic – may be consulted in person at the Centre and online. Multimedia series of conferences, interviews with master glassmakers, art historians, artists and the digital archives of the historic Venini furnace may also be consulted. The Glass Study Centre is accessible in person by appointment ([centrostudivetro@cini.it](mailto:centrostudivetro@cini.it)).

**Info for the press:**

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