

LE STANZE DEL VETRO  
A project of Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Pentagram Stiftung

Venice, Island of San Giorgio Maggiore  
10 September 2018 – 6 January 2019

## THE M.V.M. CAPPELLIN GLASSWORKS AND THE YOUNG CARLO SCARPA 1925-1931

curated by Marino Barovier

**The autumn exhibition at LE STANZE DEL VETRO is dedicated to the M.V.M. Cappellin & C. glassworks founded by Giacomo Cappellin in 1925**

The exhibition, featuring over 200 works, intends highlighting the importance that the glassworks played in Murano between the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s, also thanks to the contribution of the young Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa

**The M.V.M. Cappellin Glassworks and the Young Carlo Scarpa 1925-1931**, curated by **Marino Barovier** and dedicated to the glassworks founded by Giacomo Cappellin in 1925, is the next exhibition at LE STANZE DEL VETRO, open to the public on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore from **10 September 2018** to **6 January 2019**.

The exhibition traces the overall history of the glassworks for the first time, highlighting the important role played by M.V.M. Cappellin & C. in Murano between the 1920s and the beginning of the 1930s. Animated by the enthusiasm and passion of Giacomo Cappellin, who with his strong personality directed production, the glassworks also saw the involvement of the young Venetian architect **Carlo Scarpa**, active there as of the end of 1926.

The exhibition **The M.V.M. Cappellin Glassworks and the Young Carlo Scarpa 1925-1931** focuses on the activity of the furnace during the years when the young architect collaborated with the glassworks, in particular after Vittorio Zecchin ended his collaboration as their artistic director in 1926. Although in some cases Scarpa acted as interpreter of Cappellin himself, he gradually took on a certain independence in the design of the models, which were distinguished mainly by the use of **geometrical forms**.

Scarpa collaborated with the glassworks until it closed down for bankruptcy at the beginning of 1932, due in part to the unfavourable economic situation following the American crash of 1929.

**M.V.M. Cappellin & C.** was described as the best over the years of its activity in Murano, on a par with V.S.M. Venini & C., with which it ideally contended, achieving a production of exceptional quality, both in the glass techniques used (from transparent glass to the extraordinary opaque glass) and the design of the objects, distinguished by an elegant modernity.

The exhibition illustrates the richness of the glass production, which always presented new series of glass pieces thanks to constant research into the glass material and form, resulting in works of exceptional quality, at times with original results, also reinterpreting antique production techniques such as the **filigrana a reticello** and the **decoro fenicio**.

Through the challenging use of opaque glass, textures with a remarkable chromatic impact were achieved, from the *lattimi aurati* pieces to the *pasta vitrea* and *incamiciati* glass in brilliant colours, that are still unique today, and of which a new and exciting selection is featured in the exhibition.



The exhibition also showcases the **magnificent table centrepiece in iridised crystal glass with twisted canes** that was exhibited at the 'Garden Exhibition' in Florence in 1931. Other works on display include joyful animals, such as fish and octopuses, together with two very colourful stained glass pieces. Stained glass was one of the main features of the Cappellin production, with which the M.V.M. Cappellin & C. excelled at the various decorative arts events of the time.

The documentation relating to the activity of the glassworks was dispersed after its bankruptcy, and its history is here told for the first time thanks to the reconstruction of **its complete production catalogue**, as yet unpublished, drawing from various archives. The catalogue of the exhibition is edited by Marino Barovier and Carla Sonogo, and is published by **Skira** for LE STANZE DEL VETRO.

Film director Gianluigi Calderone made the documentary film entitled *Ciàcoe* (Gossip) about the life and times of *Giacomo Cappellin* especially for this exhibition.

**The M.V.M. Glassworks and the Young Carlo Scarpa 1925-1931** is taking part in the second edition of **The Venice Glass Week**, the international festival dedicated to glass art, particularly that of Murano, from **9 to 16 September 2018**. The festival is promoted by the **City of Venice**, the **Fondazione Musei Civici**, the **Fondazione Cini**, the **Istituto Veneto di Scienze, Lettere ed Arti** and the **Consorzio Promovetro Murano**. Over 150 participants have registered, with a total of **180 events, conferences, workshops, educational activities and open days at furnaces** ([www.theveniceglassweek.com](http://www.theveniceglassweek.com)).

### CARLO SCARPA (1906-1978)

Carlo Scarpa (Venice, 2 June 1906 - Sendai, Japan, 28 November 1978) attended the Architecture courses at the Accademia di Belle Arti, gaining the qualification of Professor of Architectural Design in 1926.

He directed the Palazzo da Mula building site between 1925 and 1926, the premises of M.V.M. Cappellin & C., with which he worked as glass designer from 1926 to 1931. After the company went bankrupt he continued working with glass at the Venini glassworks, again conceiving extraordinary new series of glass pieces between 1932 and 1947. Between 1936 and 1937 he carried out the restoration of Ca' Foscari, the Gothic building housing Venice University. After the war he began a long association with the Venice Art Biennale (1948-72), designing high quality stagings. Although his work included interior architecture and residential works, he particularly excelled in the museum sector and in restoration. His museum works include the Gallerie dell'Accademia in Venice (1948-55), Palazzo Abatellis in Palermo (1953-54), extensions to the Gipsoteca Canoviana in Possagno (1956-57), the Museum of Castelvecchio in Verona (1958-74) and the Fondazione Querini Stampalia in Venice (1961-65). The Brion Tomb at San Vito di Altivole (1969-78) is notable among his major works.

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## USEFUL INFORMATION:

PRODUCTION: Fondazione Giorgio Cini and Pentagram Stiftung  
TITLE: ***The M.V.M. Glassworks and the Young Carlo Scarpa 1925-1931***  
CURATOR: Marino Barovier  
PRESS PREVIEW: Friday 7 September 2018 at 11.30am  
DATES: 10 September 2018 – 6 January 2019  
OPENING TIMES: 10.00am – 7.00pm, closed on Wednesday (open on Wednesday 12 September on occasion of *The Venice Glass Week*)  
VENUE: LE STANZE DEL VETRO, Fondazione Giorgio Cini  
ADDRESS: Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice  
TICKETS: Free entrance  
CATALOGUE: Skira, edited by Marino Barovier and Carla Sonogo  
INFO: info@lestanzedelvetro.org, info@cini.it  
WEB: www.lestanzedelvetro.org, www.cini.it

## HOW TO GET HERE:

To reach the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore take the Actv vaporetto line n. 2 departing from:

San Zaccaria (duration around 3 minutes)  
Ferrovia (duration around 45 minutes)  
Piazzale Roma (duration around 40 minutes)  
Tronchetto (duration around 35 minutes)

## FOR FURTHER INFORMATION:

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## FREE EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND GUIDED TOURS

Visitors of LE STANZE DEL VETRO can enjoy **free guided tours** of the exhibition *The M.V.M. Cappellin Glassworks and the Young Carlo Scarpa 1925-1931* **as of Saturday September 22**, every **Saturday** and **Sunday at 12 noon in English and at 4pm in Italian, without booking.**

Tailor-made itineraries for all ages are planned, alongside workshops, events for families and meetings with scholars and craftsmen.

## SUNglassDays, the Sunday outings and guided tours for families and young visitors

While the parents are accompanied on a guided tour of the exhibition, children and young visitors are offered a tailor-made workshop, which varies for each appointment. The **SUNglassDAYS** program is full of new features: workshops are scheduled on **Sunday 4, 11, 18 and 25 November** at 4pm, each will focus on a different theme.

Two more **special SUNglassDAYS**, focusing on the exhibition dedicated to the young Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa and the site-specific outdoor installation *Qwalala*, are scheduled on **Sunday 16 September** and **Sunday 14 October**.

**Befane in bottiglia!** is scheduled on **January 5, 2019**, a special event for kids to have fun at a workshop inspired by the 'Befana', while the parents are taken on a guided tour of the exhibition *The M.V.M. Cappellin Glassworks and the Young Carlo Scarpa 1925-1931*.

## Workshops and Fuso-Fuso!!

Two **workshops for adults**, entitled *Qwalala Flussi, transparencies and thresholds*, are scheduled on Sunday 14 and on Saturday 20 October, at 3pm.

The new edition of **Fuso-Fuso!!** takes off with three meetings with experts in the history and glassmaking techniques as special guests: on **October 26, November 16 and 30 at 5pm**.

## Educational activities for schools

Classes are welcomed at LE STANZE DEL VETRO with a guided tour to discover the works on show, followed by a practical workshop with the aid of visual and multimedia support, adapted to the various age groups.

The educational programme for schools of all levels will be available through the website [www.lestanzedelvetro.org](http://www.lestanzedelvetro.org) **as of mid October**.

All the educational activities are free of charge. Booking is necessary through the **toll-free number 800-662477** (Monday-Friday 10am-5pm) or **artssystem@artssystem.it**  
Curated by Artsystem.

For updates and more details about the educational activities of LE STANZE DEL VETRO please visit the Education page of the website [www.lestanzedelvetro.org](http://www.lestanzedelvetro.org) and follow us on **Facebook** and **Instagram**.

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## PRODIGALITY AND REFINEMENT

Pasquale Gagliardi

Secretary General of the *Fondazione Giorgio Cini*

(extract from the catalogue)

The exhibition documented by this catalogue illustrates the essential role played by Giacomo Cappellin in the renaissance of Murano art glass and in the launching of the 'Venini era'. This, together with other exhibitions presented in 'Le Stanze del Vetro' leads one to reflect on the notion of the 'authorship' or 'paternity' of a work and to pose this problem. When admiring the products of the Maestri Vetrai Muranesi Cappellin & C. we ask ourselves if it is possible — and if so how — to identify and weigh up the respective roles of Cappellin, the tenacious, inspired and spendthrift entrepreneur (who encouraged the glassblower — as Marino Barovier reminds us in his essay — to 'waste' all the time necessary to try out a technical innovation), the personal ability of the glassblower, the pictorial sensitivity of the artistic director, the creative contribution of the young Carlo Scarpa (a gifted student of architecture in the Accademia di Belle Arti of Venice, whose name is not even mentioned in the various exhibitions as a designer of glass pieces but only of the layout of the events).

And yet, looking at these objects, we can only be struck by a kind of 'fingerprint', a trademark which fully reflects the artistic personality of the entrepreneur, an extraordinary combination of formal refinement and executive precision, 'an example not so much rare as unique of an artist who expresses himself exclusively through interpreters whose thought and will he moulds just as his workers mould the liquid sand with their breath' (Bernardi, quoted by Barovier). On the altar of the excellence of the results, the prodigal Cappellin was prepared to sacrifice all the time and money needed. This cultural approach created a financially unsustainable situation: the company closed after only a few years.

Cappellin passed like a meteor through the 1920s but the traces of his whirlwind passage are deep and visible: he brought Murano glass to the United States and to all the important European exhibitions and demonstrated the importance of experimentation and the revolutionary value of excellence, contributing in a decisive way to the renewal process of the decorative arts in Italy. He sensed the creative potential of the young Carlo Scarpa: introducing him to the world of art glass, he initiated a fruitful dialogue with him, transmitted his love for glass to him and progressively led him to establish himself both as a designer of glass pieces and a planner of interiors and furnishing. This is probably the biggest gift that he has left to us: without Cappellin, Carlo Scarpa would never have said, as is recalled by Carla Sonogo in her essay, 'After the Academy I found work in a Murano glassworks. I learned to work with a marvellous material [...]. I know glass and I know what can be done with it'.

I hope that this exhibition will have the success it deserves and would like to express — also in the name of the Chairman of the Management Committee of the Fondazione Cini — my most sincere gratitude to all those who have contributed to bringing it about, in particular Marino Barovier, who has curated it with such attention and passion. Special recognition is due once again to David Landau, Marie-Rose Kahane and all the colleagues of the Pentagram Stiftung, the loyal partner of the Fondazione Giorgio Cini in the project 'Le Stanze del Vetro', which Xavier Salomon has described in *Apollo* as being 'the most successful cultural institution created in Italy in the past decade'.

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## PREFACE

Marino Barovier

*Curator of the exhibition*

(extract from the catalogue essay)

After his departure from the company V.S.M. Cappellin Venini e C., Giacomo Cappellin (1887-1968) founded the Maestri Vetrai Muranesi Cappellin & C. in June 1925, a new glassworks company which affirmed itself as one of the best through the modernity and quality of its production, constituting an ideal rival for that of his ex-partner, Venini.

Animated by the enthusiasm and passion of its founder who, with his strong personality, guided the production, from the end of 1926 the furnace also benefited from the contribution of the young Venetian architect, Carlo Scarpa (1906-1978).

Having come into contact with M.V.M. in 1925 on the occasion of the restoration of Palazzo da Mula, headquarters of the firm, where he had supervised the works, Scarpa began to work with M.V.M. as a designer during the period of the artistic direction of Vittorio Zecchin (1925-26) but, very soon, also as a creator of glass pieces. In some cases he acted as an interpreter for Cappellin himself and progressively acquired a certain autonomy in the planning of models characterised by the clean lines of the design and the use of geometric shapes.

M.V.M. Cappellin & C., often in advance of the times, was able to propose new series, the fruit of research on glass techniques and forms, producing artefacts of great technical perfection aimed at an élite market. Ancient working techniques, such as the filigrana a reticello and the decoro fenicio were also revisited and, taking up the challenge of opaque glass, compositions with a notable chromatic impact were achieved: from the lattimo aurato and pasta vitrea pieces to objects in brilliantly coloured cased glass, where the contribution of Scarpa, who worked with the glassworks up to its closure (1931), is evident.

With these glass pieces M.V.M. Cappellin & C. was repeatedly present at the major decorative art exhibitions in Italy and abroad and achieved a significant success. In the extraordinary production exhibited, there were also some stained-glass pieces produced after cartoons by Scarpa and important artists such as Casorati, Sironi etc., works which bore further witness to the excellent level achieved by the furnace.

In January 1932, however, the company went bankrupt, possibly because of imprudent management aggravated by the economic crash of 1929.

So came to an end a period marked by the passionate direction of Giacomo Cappellin and the fertile creativity of Carlo Scarpa, leading to very considerable results with an important impact also on subsequent Murano production. Reconstructing the history of the glassworks required long, demanding and wide-ranging research in public and private archives because, after the failure of the firm, all its material, including the documentation, was first acquired by the Pauly glassworks (1933) and subsequently split up, sold and dispersed in Italy and abroad.

Up to now, in order to recognise the glass pieces produced by M.V.M. Cappellin & C., only partial and incomplete documentation had been available. Thanks to this research and the re-discovery of many drawings and period photographs, it has been possible to reconstruct the catalogue of the glassworks in its entirety, identifying their production areas (vases, figurines, plants, animals, lighting, stained glass etc.), a production in many cases conditioned by the presence of the young Scarpa. The consultation of the archive material kept in the Carlo Moretti and Giovanni Moretti Fund, Centro Studi del Vetro, Giorgio Cini Foundation, Venice, in the Carlo Scarpa Archive, Museo di Castelvecchio, Verona, in the Museo del Vetro Archive, Murano and in numerous private archives, has been of fundamental importance.

Recourse was also had to other sources (catalogues, magazines, daily newspapers of the time etc.), and such information was collated with the objects made available by museums, public and private institutions and Italian and foreign collectors.

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## ROOM 1

**Introduction to the exhibition, spherical vase with truncated-cone-shaped foot**

## ROOM 2

**Transparent pieces 1926-31**

Following the departure from M.V.M. Cappellin of Vittorio Zecchin e C., where he had worked as Artistic Director from 1925 to October 1926, the glassworks proposed new transparent blown-glass pieces, which in some cases followed the example of those designed by Zecchin himself. In addition to these, there were also items marked by a more essential design, the result of the use of geometrical forms and a truncated-cone-shaped foot, attributable to the presence of the young Carlo Scarpa at the furnace. An outstanding example of this is the spherical vase with truncated-cone-shaped foot that was exhibited at the *Salon d'automne* in Paris and which, accompanied by a glass flower, became the symbol of the Cappellin firm. New models in transparent glass appeared particularly in the period up to late 1928 approximately, from which time the more modern-style production was directed towards opaque glass. Between 1930 and 1931, however, another small blown-glass series was realised with softer lines and applied decoration. Some transparent glass pieces were executed in a monochrome as elegant as it was 'classical', with preference given to purple and Savoy blue. A greater number, however, was in a two-colour version, whether varying the tones of the same colour (e.g. purple and amethyst) or associating 'contrasting' colours, such as yellow and green, white (crystal glass) and purple etc. Moreover, in some cases there were finishings in coral-red *pasta vitrea* combined with green or *pagliesco*-glass surfaces. All the transparent pieces had an iridised finish.

## ROOM 3

**Filigrane (netted filigree) 1927-1930**

Among the novelties of 1927 was the series of *filigrana a reticello* (netted filigree) glass pieces using the characteristic glass technique of crossed canes. The technique, going back to the 16th century and enjoying a wide revival in the 19th, required the use of transparent glass canes containing an opaque white (*lattimo*) or coloured rectilinear thread inside. These canes are placed one beside the other on a metallic plate that is introduced into the furnace at a temperature of about 700°C, so obtaining a unified glass material when the heat has fused the canes. The glass material is then collected and closed to form a cylinder which, before being blown, is rotated in such a way that the threads take on a spiral pattern. To obtain the netted filigree, two cylinders are prepared with opposite spirals which, blown and appropriately opened, are inserted one inside the other, welding the walls together. In this way a characteristic diamond design is achieved, at the centre of whose lozenges a small bubble of air remains trapped. The series was generally proposed combining *pagliesco* glass with coral-red or black or dark-blue filigree. One variant is constituted by artefacts where the filigree was replaced or associated with monochrome canes in bright colours, the patterns of which, as documented by a series of drawings, were carefully studied by Carlo Scarpa. He was also involved with the 'twisted canes' series, which subsequently was also proposed in opaque glass.

**Balloton c. 1929**

Among the prized glass techniques used by Cappellin to characterise its production is that which in Murano is called 'oro spacà' (*oro spaccato* – broken gold), with which a number of artefacts were produced towards the end of the 1920s, using the *balloton* technique and the application of gold leaf. The processing included the application of gold leaf on the 'péa' (globe in the shape of a pear constituting the initial state of the object being made) which is then blown in a special open metallic mould, called a

*balloton*, which contains little pyramid-shaped points with a square base. These, pushed into the wall of the semi-finished piece, provide the surface with a unique decorative motif, generally in relief, amplified by the use of gold, which, at the end of processing, appears to form a characteristic honeycomb network. This procedure was used to produce several models, whether in transparent or opaque glass, the gold leaf sometimes being replaced by silver leaf.

#### ROOM 4

##### **Lattimo glass pieces 1928-30**

*Lattimo* glass pieces are white and opaque and are obtained using tin dioxide. The Cappellin firm used this type of material starting from 1928, creating precious, extraordinary items, generally of small dimensions, which were proposed with various finishes: from simple iridisation associated with a foot and/or little side handles in *pasta vitrea*, to the application of gold leaf combined, in some cases, with the coral-red *pasta vitrea* at the mouth and/or foot. Other *lattimo* pieces, often characterised by a disk-shaped foot, were decorated with undulating bands of varying colours applied on the body. Sometimes these models contained somewhat fussy details but in the majority of cases they were marked by very rigorous forms, some of classical inspiration, others influenced by oriental art, and others again characterised by the accentuated geometric nature of their design.

##### **A palmette [palm-leaf motif ornamentation] 1927-29**

This is a small series of transparent glass pieces which are characterised by an *a palmette* (palm-leaf motif) ornamentation, applied as a relief on the surface of the vase or partially incorporated into its wall. The technique for executing the ornamentation is similar to that of the *decoro fenicio*, and was obtained by applying to the glass, during production, three or more horizontal threads which were 'combed' downwards in the middle with an appropriate instrument, so changing the rectilinear pattern and obtaining a design suggesting a palm leaf. The series includes a certain number of large vases, together with bowls and vases of smaller size and a fairly simplified design. Exhibited at the 3rd Biennale of Monza in 1927, it was proposed in *pagliesco* transparent glass with ornamentation and finishing in coral-red *pasta vitrea*, but other variants are also documented (e.g. with dark-blue decoration and finishing). Around 1929, with the increasing dominance of opaque glass, some models were produced in *pasta vitrea* and/or in black glass.

#### ROOM 5

##### **Decoro fenicio 1928-29**

The pieces with *decoro fenicio*, an ancient glass-making technique referred to in Scarpa's notes as 'graffito', is distinguished by polychrome glass with a typical festoon decoration. The glass is obtained by the application under heat around the wall of the object of a glass thread wound in a spiral, which is subsequently 'combed' with a specific hooked instrument. For this series, colour combinations with a strong impact were chosen (e.g. coral-red – *lattimo*), often embellished by applications of gold leaf, but also more delicate associations with the use of lighter colours or playing with the shades of white (*lattimo*) and *pagliesco* or of grey or amethyst. A particular variant is constituted by twisted *decoro fenicio* with its evocative glass composition, which is obtained by rotating the already decorated semi-finished product on its axis in the blowing phase. Generally proposed in opaque glass, the series of pieces with *decoro fenicio* also includes examples in transparent glass.

#### ROOM 6

##### **Pasta vitrea 1929-31**

These are opaque glass pieces which owe their particular colour and material consistency to the notable quantity of opacifiers and pigments added to the transparent glass base. This type of material was repeatedly adopted by the Cappellin firm to produce



highly refined artefacts, mostly of somewhat small dimensions, which were characterised by their intense colours (red, dark blue, green, yellow), often embellished by applications of gold leaf or oxidised silver leaf. The series is marked by the accentuated stylisation of the forms, clearly to be seen in the 'geometric' pieces exhibited with great success in 1930 at the 4th Triennale of Monza and in 1931 at the Exhibition of modern Italian art glass, ceramics and lace held in Amsterdam. This production is particular in the general context of Murano glass also because M.V.M. Cappellin was one of the few furnaces to use *pasta vitrea* given the technical difficulties it entailed, because of the long cooling times which made the final outcome difficult to control.

### Vertical-band series 1928-31

The first examples of the vertical-band 'series' (1928-29) are the artefacts, documented by period photographs, produced using a glass technique consisting of the union under heat of polychrome transparent glass canes arranged in alternating colours to form a precise decorative motif. Artefacts were also produced in opaque glass and executed in two different ways: one that required the use of coloured canes on the wall of the object, generally in *lattimo*, the other where the same wall was obtained by juxtaposing and fusing under heat polychrome canes of contrasting colours. In the first case the *lattimo* was combined with canes in delicate shades, while in the second the juxtapositions were more striking, such as red and yellow, but more particularly *lattimo* and dark amethyst. In this technique very linear vases with a small foot were generally produced, sometimes built up in height, playing also on the differences in flaring of the object.

### Murrine 1929-31

In Monza in 1930 (4th Triennale) and Amsterdam in 1931 (*Mostra di vetri, ceramiche e merletti d'arte moderna italiana*) among the most recent novelties in the Cappellin production there were also highly refined glass pieces decorated by *murrine*. This was a series of objects in *lattimo* glass with slight 'casing' of coloured glass in light shades (*pagliesco*, light blue, light green etc.) which are characterised by the presence of delicate *murrine* in concentric circles, produced in the same colour, irregularly distributed and included in the wall of the piece. The greater part of these vases and bowls were finished at the mouth and/or at the foot with transparent glass in the same shade. In the final production of the glassworks, before it closed down, the theme was further developed using new *murrine* with an abstract design and new shapes. In a presumably experimental way, around 1929, the *murrine* were also used in producing the glass composition of certain objects (of which a vase and a bowl survive) characterised by a floral and star-like design.

### Neri iridati, neri argentati 1929-31

#### (iridised black glass pieces, black glass pieces with oxidized silver leaf)

Among the opaque pieces the Cappellin firm proposed there was also a varied series of artefacts produced in black glass with different finishings. Some of these are characterised by pronounced iridisation obtained by exposing the object to tin or titanium vapours which, having been deposited on the wall, form a thin iridescent metallic patina. Others are decorated with applied oxidised silver leaf, which creates evocative effects in the glass material. Others again are marked by the refined coral-red *pasta vitrea*, used in details such as the thread at the mouth or foot or for the foot itself. For this last series the recent models designed by Carlo Scarpa were used in some cases, in others the old transparent glass models designed by Zecchin were proposed again, having been transformed to achieve new effects through the use of opaque glass.

## ROOM 7

### Centrepiece 1931

On the occasion of the Italian Garden exhibition at Palazzo Vecchio in Florence in 1931, the M.V.M. Cappellin firm presented, together with five small table centrepieces with flowers in glass, a centrepiece of monumental dimensions in iridised crystal glass with a base consisting of variously juxtaposed twisted canes. The composition was inspired by

18th-century centrepieces, known as 'deseri' (from the French *dessert*), which ornamented the Doges' banquet tables on solemn feast days. In particular, it seems to be inspired by the Italian glass centrepiece garden preserved at the Museo del Vetro of Murano.

### Stained glass

The production of decorative panels in Murano glass was one of the distinctive sectors, and an excellent one, of M.V.M. Cappellin & C. Beginning with the works of Vittorio Zecchin exhibited at the Biennale of Venice in 1926, this production was an important part of the activity of the glassworks up to its closure. In these years extraordinary stained-glass works were produced after the cartoons of various authors, such as Casorati, Ortona, Sironi etc., many of which could be enjoyed on the occasion of the important decorative art exhibitions of the time.

-Two stained glass pieces: one after a cartoon by Ugo Ortona, c.1927, the other after a cartoon by Thayat, 1927-28

## ROOM 8 - CORRIDOR

### *Incamiciati* 1929-31

These are opaque glass pieces generally produced by superimposing one or more layers of coloured glass or *pasta vitrea* on a *lattimo* base. Some variants were executed by superimposing several layers of colour or *pasta vitrea* divided by a layer of *lattimo*, in such a way that the inside of the vase was different from the outside (e.g. green on the inside, coral-red on the outside). The technique was increasingly preferred to that of *pasta vitrea* because it provided greater guarantees for the outcome of the working process.

Extraordinary examples of this series — also characterised by the recourse to geometric and essential forms — were exhibited at the 4th Triennale of Monza in 1930, where they were appreciated also for their 'lucid, compact, vivid colours' (C.A. Felice, *Arti decorative* 1930, Milan, 1930, p. 38). In Monza in 1930 and in Amsterdam in 1931 (*Mostra di vetri, ceramiche e merletti d'arte moderna italiana*), elegant cased-glass pieces with softer lines and applied decorations (shells, leaves, animal heads) were also shown.

### Animals 1928-31

Like V.S.M. Venini e C. and the Vetreria Artistica Barovier, the Cappellin firm also included in its repertoire some models of animals, treating the then fashionable theme in a personal way. These artefacts, due to the contribution of Carlo Scarpa, were marked by a light and playful design and the refined quality of the material in which they were executed. A small number of animals were produced in *pulegoso* glass (fish and elephants), but the majority were in *pasta vitrea*, often refined by gold or silver leaf, in *decoro fenicio* glass or glass decorated with circular *murrine*. Fish were a recurrent subject, proposed in differing variants of form, dimension and material. There was no lack of subjects taken from the repertoire of aquatic fauna, such as the octopus, or of an exotic kind, like the tiger. Aquarium with fish and octopuses.

### Flowers and plants 1927-30

In the catalogue of the glassworks different models are also documented for the traditional glass flowers, either entirely in transparent glass or with a corolla in opaque glass. It should be noted that a glass flower combined with a spherical vase with a truncated-cone-shaped foot is to be found in the emblem of the glassworks. Generally, these artefacts are designed to represent in a more or less realistic way certain kinds of flower (chrysanthemum, rose, calla, lily etc.), the shape of which has been simplified in some cases. The reference to the vegetable kingdom can be found again in some elements for a centrepiece that the Cappellin firm proposed in response to a fashion of the time.

### Figurines 1929-30

On the occasion of the American travelling exhibition *Contemporary Glass and Rugs*, in 1929, a series of musicians presented as a jazz band was shown, and met with particular success with the public.

Beginning with this subject, the repertoire was extended to include a series of dancers, male and female, which were also used to decorate ashtrays. These artefacts were usually proposed in transparent glass but there are documented variants in *lattimo* with finishings in polychrome glass, among them a dancing *Harlequin*. Other new models belonging to the series of the *Turks* were exhibited in 1930 at the 4th Triennale of Monza.

### **Fruit 1928-30**

Among the products of the late 1920s there were also new models of fruit, which differed from those designed earlier by Zecchin in 1922 for V.S.M. Cappellin Venini e C. by a greater freedom in the design and the material in which they were executed (*lattimo* glass and polychrome opaque glass). In various cases their unrealistically 'large' dimensions contributed to the originality of the pieces, designed with a certain playfulness and often finished with ribbing. As could also be appreciated on the occasion of the American travelling exhibition *Contemporary Glass and Rugs* (1929-30), these pieces were quite often characterised by a self-confident use of intense colours, allowing for unusual associations of colour, for example black and red.

### **Neri iridati, neri argentati 1929-1931 (iridised black glass pieces, black glass pieces with oxidized silver leaf)**

Among the opaque pieces the Cappellin firm proposed there was also a varied series of artefacts produced in black glass with different finishings. Some of these are characterised by pronounced iridisation obtained by exposing the object to tin or titanium vapours which, having been deposited on the wall, form a thin iridescent metallic patina. Others are decorated with applied oxidised silver leaf, which creates evocative effects in the glass material. Others again are marked by the refined coral-red *pasta vitrea*, used in details such as the thread at the mouth or foot or for the foot itself. For this last series the recent models designed by Carlo Scarpa were used in some cases, in others the old transparent glass models designed by Zecchin were proposed again, having been transformed to achieve new effects through the use of opaque glass.

## LE STANZE DEL VETRO

**A cultural project and exhibition space dedicated to the study and promotion of modern and contemporary glassmaking**

LE STANZE DEL VETRO is a joint venture involving **Fondazione Giorgio Cini** and **Pentagram Stiftung**, a Swiss-based, non-profit foundation and it is both a cultural project and an exhibition space, designed by **New York-based architect Annabelle Selldorf**. The purpose of LE STANZE DEL VETRO is to focus on the history and the use of glass in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Art in order to bring this medium back into the center of the attention and discussion within the international Art scene.

The cultural initiatives of LE STANZE DEL VETRO focus not only on contemporary artists who have used glass as their artistic medium, but also on the main producers and on the major glass collections in the world. Thus two exhibitions are staged each year on the Island of San Giorgio Maggiore. One in the spring, dedicated to the use of glass in 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> century Art and Design, and the second in the autumn, dedicated to the talented people who designed objects for the Venini glassware company in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Each annual exhibition on Venini glass is accompanied by a *Catalogue Raisonné* published by Skira, available at the bookshop of LE STANZE DEL VETRO.

Alongside these initiatives, a series of special, often site-specific projects are organized, involving contemporary artists (Swiss artist **Not Vital** in 2013, Japanese artist **Hiroshi Sugimoto** in 2014 and American artist **Pae White** in 2017), who are invited to work with glass, either prefabricated or specially produced by craftsmen in Venice. The result is a site-specific installation, coupled with the design of a small limited-edition object produced in Murano and sold at the bookshop to support the activities organized and promoted by LE STANZE DEL VETRO.

In addition to this, LE STANZE DEL VETRO has set up a Study Center dedicated to research in the field of artistic glass, together with a general archive of Venetian glass, and scholarships specifically addressed to researchers interested in the topic are granted annually. Furthermore, conferences and workshops on the history, technology and development of the art of glassmaking are organized regularly.

LE STANZE DEL VETRO has adopted a model often found in English-speaking countries of free access to museums based on the idea that cultural heritage belongs to the community. Admission to the exhibitions, the tours and all the educational activities of LE STANZE DEL VETRO are **free of charge**.

LE STANZE DEL VETRO



## THE GLASS STUDY CENTRE

The Glass Study Centre was established in 2012 within the Institute of Art History at the Giorgio Cini Foundation, as part of the activities promoted by LE STANZE DEL VETRO. The aim of the Glass Study Centre is to progressively create a **general archive of Venetian Glass**, consisting mainly of drawings, designs, correspondence, catalogues, press releases and photographs from the Murano glassworks. The documentation of this rare and unique heritage provides an historical, artistic and scientific reference source not only for scholars and glass lovers but also for schools and universities through the educational programmes offered.

In 2015 the Glass Study Centre granted its first **residential scholarship** for post-docs, for the study of the art of glassmaking in Venice in the 20th Century. The scholarship was won by **Guillaume Serraille** (University of Lyons) with the research project *The Murano Glass Ornamental Repertory: Uses and Transformations of Filigree and Murrine*. In 2016 the scholarship was granted to **Elena Trevisan** (Università Iuav di Venezia) for her research project *Inverse Design for the Reconstruction of the Creative Process in Glass Design: the Peter Shire Archive*; in 2017 **Patricia Lezcano Rull** (University of Florence) was awarded the scholarship for her research on the Seguso glassworks archive and in 2018 **Magda Michalska** (University of Saint Andrews, Scotland) for her research entitled *Spirals, pyramids and the Leonardo da Vinci liner: the Transatlantic Travels of Vinicio Vianello's Design*.

The Glass Study Centre organises **seminars** and **conferences**, as well as guided visits to its archive, tailored not only to scholars, researchers and lovers of artistic glass but also to **students from secondary schools, Venetian universities, Fine Arts Academies and Doctorate Schools**, offering educational credits. This new approach to educational research has in the last years brought many secondary-school and university groups to visit the Glass Study Centre, as well as Italian and foreign glass scholars.

The archives of artists currently active on Murano, such as **Ginny Ruffner**, **Peter Shire** and **Emmanuel Babled** (approximately 150 drawings in total) have recently been digitised for consultation, together with the substantial archive of **Dino Martens** for the glass company **Aureliano Toso** (345 drawings).

The important work of cataloguing and on-line dissemination of these materials began in 2014. The significant archive of **Vinicio Vianello** was acquired more recently (bringing together 1,100 projects, approximately 800 photographs and many documents connected with his work) and will be available for online consultation in due course, together with the **Seguso Vetri d'Arte** archive of approximately 21,000 drawings and more than 25,000 period photographs.

Among the materials recently acquired and soon available for public use are also the documentary films produced by LE STANZE DEL VETRO which are shown at the exhibitions, plus recordings and audiovisual materials from conferences and numerous interviews with artists and personalities who contributed significant personal accounts. The creation of a **General Archive of Venetian Glass**, with its ongoing archival acquisitions, also envisages the exchange of publications, in addition to purchases and donations for the creation of a **specialised library**.

**The Glass Study Centre archive and library are open to the public by appointment, from Monday to Friday: 9.30am – 1.00pm / 2.00 – 5.00pm**

### For further information:

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LE STANZE DEL VETRO



**EXHIBITIONS ORGANIZED BY LE STANZE DEL VETRO  
AND IN COOPERATION WITH OTHER MUSEUMS SINCE 2012:**

**Carlo Scarpa. Venini 1932 – 1947**

Curated by Marino Barovier  
(26.08.2012 / 06.01.2013)

**FRAGILE?**

Curated by Mario Codognato  
(08.04.2013 / 28.07.2013)

**Napoleone Martinuzzi. Venini 1925 - 1931**

Curated by Marino Barovier  
(06.09.2013 / 06.01.2014)

**Venetian Glass by Carlo Scarpa. The Venini Company, 1932 – 1947**

Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York  
(05.11.2013 / 02.03.2014)

**I SANTILLANA**

Works by Laura de Santillana and Alessandro Diaz de Santillana  
(05.04.2014 / 03.08.2014)

**Tomaso Buzzi at Venini**

Curated by Marino Barovier  
(12.09.2014 / 11.01.2015)

**I Santillana**

MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna  
(19.11.2014 / 29.03.2015)

**Glass from Finland in the Bischofberger Collection**

Curated by Kaisa Koivisto and Pekka Korvenmaa  
(12.04.2015 / 02.08.2015)

**Fulvio Bianconi at Venini**

Curated by Marino Barovier  
(11.09.2015 / 10.01.2016)

**Laura de Santillana and Alessandro Diaz de Santillana**

Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Wakefield, Inghilterra  
(02.05.2015 / 06.09.2015)

**Glass Tea House Mondrian**

By Hiroshi Sugimoto  
(04.06.2014 / 29.11.2016)

**The Glass of the Architects. Vienna 1900-1937**

Curated by Rainald Franz, MAK Glass and Ceramics Collection, Vienna  
(18.04.2016 / 31.07.2016)

**Paolo Venini and His Furnace**

Curated by Marino Barovier  
(11.09.2016 / 08.01.2017)

LE STANZE DEL VETRO



## **The Glass of the Architects: Vienna 1900-1937**

Curated by Rainald Franz, MAK Glass and Ceramics Collection  
MAK – Austrian Museum of Applied Arts / Contemporary Art, Vienna  
(18.01.2017 / 17.04.2017)

## **Ettore Sottsass: The Glass**

Curated by Luca Massimo Barbero  
(10.04.2017 / 30.07.2017)

## **Qwalala**

By Pae White  
(12.05.2017 / 30.11.2018)

## **Vittorio Zecchin: Transparent Glass for Cappellin and Venini**

Curated by Marino Barovier  
(11.09.2017 / 07.01.2018)

## **A Furnace in Marseille. Cirva - Centre international de recherche sur le verre et les arts plastiques**

Curated by Isabelle Reiher and Chiara Bertola  
(09.04.2018 / 29.07.2018)

## **Venini & C. 1934-1959. Le génie verrier à Murano**

Vitro Centre, Romont, Switzerland  
Curated by Elisa D'Ambrosio and Astrid Kaiser  
(09.06.2018 / 04.12.2018)

## **Glass of the Architects. Vienna 1900 – 1937. A cooperation of the MAK and LE STANZE DEL VETRO**

Corning Museum of Glass, NY (USA)  
Curated by Alexandra Ruggiero  
(23.06.2018 / 7.01.2019)

LE STANZE DEL VETRO

