

Antonio Canal - Kościoły II Redentore i San Giacomo



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Antonio Canal - *Churches of Il Redentore and San Giacomo*

painting exhibition

16 December 2022 – 5 March 2023

Canaletto Room

The exhibition is available as part of the Royal Route ticket. [Book tickets>](#)

One of the two most significant artists-painters associated with the Royal Castle in Warsaw, apart from Marcello Bacciarelli, is undoubtedly Bernardo Bellotto, also known as Canaletto, Stanislaus Augustus's court painter and one of the most prominent *vedutisti* of his time. His representations of 18th-century Warsaw are exhibited in a special room dedicated to him along the visiting route. Since 16 December, however, while in the Canaletto Room one may also admire as part of a special exhibition a piece painted by his uncle and teacher, Antonio Canal,

depicting one of the most characteristic areas of the Venetian urban landscape.

The Renaissance structure designed by Andrea Palladio rises above on the Giudecca Island located south of St Mark's Square and the Doge's Palace. It is a temple that holds special significance for the Venetians, as its erection is associated with the outbreak of the plague that struck Venice between 1575 and 1577. Following the epidemic, the Venetian Senate decided to build a church as a sign of gratitude to the Saviour (Italian: *Il Redentore*) and committed itself to organising an annual solemn procession to the very church. This event has been celebrated to this day, on the third Sunday of July. Each year, a temporary bridge stretching over the Canale della Giudecca is constructed, thus connecting the Giudecca Island with other city districts, and making it possible for the procession to attend Mass in the church.

Shining in reflected sunlight, the façade of *Il Redentore* is the focal point of the very painting. Painted from almost a straight-on perspective, it delights the recipient with its precise depiction of a calm and classicising architecture, full of symmetry and harmony. This particular calmness seems to permeate the entire composition: the buildings next to the church, the passers-by and the gondolas flowing by. No sudden movement or haste may be seen here. Nothing that would disturb the atmosphere of a sunny day.

Only such a talented artist as Canal himself could in one painting combine two seemingly contradictory tendencies – an emotional one and a documentary one. Owing to the very *Churches of Il Redentore and San Giacomo* painting, in turn, we may learn not only what the everyday life in Venice looked like during Canal's time, but also how have the areas depicted by the artist changed themselves. The Church of San Giacomo, seen on the right-hand side, no longer stands in Venice – it was demolished in the 19th century.

Alicja Jakubowska

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Free admission on Wednesdays – current passes available at the Castle ticket office

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