

**E**ven without the title, your photograph in *Dream of Venice and Black and White* is

instantly reminiscent of Paolo Sorrentino's devotion to the sacred and profane. Can you share with us the circumstances of this evocative image and why you chose, *The Great Beauty*, for its title?

I liked the contrast between the concepts of beauty and death within the photograph. Venice is like a beautiful old lady; the more and more frequent high water, the less and less Venetian inhabitants, the large cruise ships in the Giudecca canal, these and more are symptoms of a dying town.

I took the photograph after midnight in San Marco. It is only late at night you have Venice all for yourself and the atmosphere is magic.



You decided at the tender young age of 16 to become a photographer. What is the reality of the profession compared to what you imagined it to be at 16?

Well, the main evolution in my profession has been the digital camera and social media. Today I have very little to do with handicraft and much more with social media and what they call “conversational photography”.



The educational systems are so different between Europe and America. Why did you decide to finish your studies at The Academy of Art in San Francisco, and what do you learn that was quintessentially American?

The main reason was that at that time Italy had not developed yet a deep photography culture like in other European countries or the USA, where I had the chance to study the Ansel Adams zone system.



You have a commitment to the “transfer of knowledge” and teach in several different capacities. You’ve led photography tours in places such as Burma, Cambodia, and Vietnam always integrating Viaggi Solidali. Can you please explain this concept and why it is important for photographers to support it?

Well, when I teach photography I try always not to be too technical and focus also on the style and aesthetics of photography because nowadays too many photographs look alike.

The photography travels I organize with Viaggi Solidali are special in the sense that they are real responsible tourism. Each journey is born from the desire to discover and to know, from curiosity and respect for diversity and cultural and environmental variety, countries and locations are often far from mass tourism. The comparison with diversity goes through the dimension of the meeting, of dialogue, of the relationship with the host communities. For this reason, the guides are mainly cultural mediators, the groups of travelers are medium-small and travel programs privilege wherever possible the services managed by local organizations.

We are aware of the important cultural, social, political and economic role of tourism. Responsible tourism means contributing to the fair development of the local economy and with a solidarity fund, we bring concrete help to non-governmental associations and organizations that work for

environmental sustainability and social justice. This way it becomes a photographing behind the “surface” and contributing to a local environmental or social project.



A more local photography experience is your workshop on Giudecca, where you share the secrets of street photography in the context of *spinalonga*. What does Giudecca offer to your students different from the historical center of Venice? Can you please explain the concept of *spinalonga* as it relates to photography? Do you have a Venice workshop scheduled for 2019?

For centuries the Giudecca island has been a holiday resort for noble Venetian families until the first industrialization. It was then transformed into the industrial and manufacturing heart of Venice, one of the most populated islands full of architectural experiments; from the imposing Stucky Mill, the city’s former brewery, to the shipyards to the important Jungmans complex. Giudecca island is also related to my family because of my grandmother.

It is less crowded in comparison with the historical center but full of history and it looks like you are in a village where everybody knows each other, definitively a special place.

Yes, there will be a new photography workshop on April 20, 2019.





Eugenio Novajra

Dream of Venice in Black and White

JoAnn Locktov

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