

A detailed section of Titian's painting 'The Fall of Man'. It depicts Eve in the center, her back to the viewer, wearing a dark, draped garment. She is reaching out with her right hand towards Adam, who is on the left, also seen from the back. To the right, a cherub is seated on a ledge, looking towards the figures. The background features ornate, classical architectural moldings with intricate scrollwork and golden accents.

NEWSLETTER  
Summer 2018



VENICE IN  
PERIL

## DEAR FRIEND AND SUPPORTER

With the sad news of John Julius Norwich's death it is inevitable that we reflect on what exactly Venice in Peril is for? Why are we here? I pondered these questions during this April's annual meeting of the Association of Private Committees, and again some weeks later, when leading a group of friends through the city. By then the tourist high season had started, the narrow *calli* around the Rialto were almost impassable and crowds choked the Piazza and Riva degli Schiavoni. By contrast, the churches, *scuole* and museums were almost empty, with only the occasional wanderer poking a bemused face around the door.

There's an obvious irony underlying our work and those of the other international bodies dedicated to safeguarding the art and architecture of Venice. After all, it can seem that many of the thousands of daily visitors to Venice appear wholly unconnected with, or uninterested by, the creative impulses which shaped its beauty or the unique historical experience that gave them a context. The realm of

To celebrate Tintoretto's 500th Anniversary, Venice in Peril is supporting 'Young Tintoretto' at the Accademia Galleries (7 Sept-6 Jan). Our front cover shows a detail from Tintoretto's Presentation of the Virgin in the Temple, 1552-53 at the church of Madonna dell' Orto, VIP's first project. As it was the artist's parish church, it will be visited with renewed interest this year. The Fund has also contributed to the survey of Tintoretto's ceiling in the main Sala at San Rocco (p.10). For Frederick Ilchman's talk on Tintoretto see back page.

Photo: Curia Patriarcale di Venezia/  
Camera Foto

gondola serenades, ice-creams and pizza slices 'to go' is, it seems, a planetary distance away from Titian, Palladio and Veronese. The majority of tourists, what is more, seem unaware that Venice is still, by the skin of its teeth, a living city, though one whose short-term opportunism and lack of vision consistently undermine its best interests.

Our mission nevertheless, in the words of our founding trust deed, to 're-create and revitalize Venice as a centre of cultural importance for the whole world' remains unaltered. We've been proud to share in the 2018 Europa Nostra prize for EU Cultural Heritage given to the Association of Private Committees and we're busier than ever with the Canova Monument due to start shortly, the Caffi Sketchbooks and Maiolica, both from the Museo Correr, undergoing conservation treatment, as well as new collaborations. The recently launched GeM Award and the 15c Booktrade project feature in this newsletter.

It can be argued that none of this is relevant to Venice's current crisis as a community suffocating under mass tourism. Yet to allow the artistic heritage of the city to decay exponentially with the rising human tide and continuing ecological damage to the surrounding lagoon would be a criminal act, vandalism through neglect. Hence, with your help and trust, we carry on. I can do no better than quote John Julius Norwich. 'What is Venice in Peril for? The physical conservation of the stones of Venice. There will always be work for us to do in this regard. It should always be our most important function'. That, in the end, is why we're here.

Jonathan Keates  
Chairman

## JOHN JULIUS NORWICH

15 SEPTEMBER 1929 – 1 JUNE 2018

### Obituary



Photo: Martin Pope

As founding chairman of Venice in Peril, John Julius Norwich brought an ideal conviction and dedication to his role. His presence at the head of our enterprise, eloquent, knowledgeable and supremely engaging, guaranteed its success in that crucial first phase during which the Fund mapped out a route along which other international committees soon sprang up to join us. A favourite with Venice in Peril's British supporters, he was, more significantly, a popular figure among Venetians themselves, who both respected his knowledge of their city and sounded the true depth of his personal attachment to it.

Under John Julius's leadership, we embarked on our most memorable projects, including the conservation of the Porta della Carta in the Doge's Palace and Jacopo Sansovino's graceful *loggetta* to the Campanile. His presentation of achievements like these on their completion added panache to

the moment, since he thoroughly enjoyed public speaking, always managed with an effortless avoidance of notes and the help of an astounding memory. The abiding passion for Venice, meanwhile, produced some of his best books, the great two-part history of the Serene Republic, a delightfully rich and varied anthology in the 'Traveller's Companion' series and the vividly enjoyable 'Venice: Paradise of Travellers'.

His understanding was that Venice represented so much more than a species of open-air museum or, still worse, the kind of seaside resort with palaces and churches attached that today's saturation tourism has been allowed to spawn. Perceiving the experience of visiting Venice as something fundamentally redemptive, through which humanity could recover a sense of its best impulses, he always emphasized the importance of sustaining the city as a living and working community.

Early training as a diplomat made John Julius an exceptionally able chairman of the Fund, maintaining harmony among the trustees and keeping them properly focused on the great cause. After retiring as chairman and then as a valued trustee, he continued to support and encourage our work to the end of his life. For so many of our Friends and donors, John Julius was both the public face of Venice in Peril and its continuing inspiration. As such, he remains inseparable from our achievement, a numinous figure in his love for Venice and his dedication to her survival.

Jonathan Keates

*Plans for a memorial project will be announced shortly*

## NEW PROJECT

*Exploring Italian and UK approaches to conservation – the GeM Award*

I am writing this piece as the anniversary of the Grenfell Tower fire approaches and revives again the grief and horror of that event. I remember driving to the office with my wife, listening to the news of the fire, when she remembered this was where Gloria Trevisan, who had recently joined our practice, lived with her fiancé, Marco Gottardi. Fruitlessly we called her phone and the horrible suspicion that she had lost her life became increasingly probable, though not finally confirmed till weeks later.

Gloria had hugely impressed us at her interview and produced an exceptional portfolio. We had no hesitation in offering her a job in our architectural and building conservation practice. She had started working on the John Soane Stable block at the Royal Hospital Chelsea, for which we had been appointed to undertake works of repair and alteration – a really exciting project – and one which Gloria took to with delight. Her abilities were quickly confirmed, but for far too brief a time.

Her loss shook the office and we all felt we should try to think of something we could do in her and Marco's memory which would suitably commemorate their names and talents. We came up with the idea of establishing an annual award for a graduate from IUAV, their university in Venice, and one of the oldest architecture schools in Italy. This would provide a scholarship for a selected graduate to come to the UK for 2-3 months in the autumn each year. We explored this idea with Prof. Armando del Fabbro and Asst. Prof. Sara di Resta

at IUAV and they were keen to support it. We have also had the support of their families as well as encouragement and support from Historic England, the National Trust, the Landmark Trust and the SPAB, who are hosting the Award and its fund. These bodies, and others, have all agreed to the GeM Scholar spending time with them exploring and contrasting the Italian and UK approaches to conservation.

Although we have some way to go, the fund is growing well and we have had generous donations from many private individuals as well as from other charities which include a very generous one from Venice in Peril. Venice in Peril feel, as we do, that there is scope for our working together as the GeM project proceeds.

We were determined that the Award should start this year and have selected Giulia Pannocchia from a IUAV shortlist as the first GeM Scholar. Originally from Livorno, she took a Masters in Venice, writing her thesis on the conservation and adaptive re-use of the historically significant Marconi Radiotelegraphic Station at Coltano. We look forward to welcoming her to London in September.

Peregrine Bryant

[To contribute to the GeM Award  
www.peregrine-bryant.co.uk](http://www.peregrine-bryant.co.uk)



*Veneto Farm Building, 1930s – drawing by Gloria Trevisan*

## NEW PROJECT

*Exhibition support for Printing R-Evolution: Fifty years that Changed Europe*  
Museo Correr, 1 September – 7 January 2019

A tendency to think of Venetian early printed books as the exclusive preserve of specialists is turned on its head by the findings of the ground-breaking 15c Booktrade Project that will be the subject of an exhibition at the Museo Correr.

Funded, since 2014, by the European Research Council, a team of 15 scholars based between Oxford, London and Venice has been supported by a network of 360 libraries and 130 researchers to bring over 50,000 books into a database which can, for example, map the path of individual books from Venice through a succession of different owners across Europe and beyond, to build up a detailed picture of the use of books and the spread of knowledge.

The exhibition will use innovative digital tools and displays, developed with Oxford University's Engineering department, to present the many findings of the project and offer insights into the life of books and their readers.

By analysing one surviving book of accounts belonging to a successful Venetian bookseller, Cristina Dondi, Principal Investigator of the 15c Booktrade Project, has been able to show that just 15 years after printing technology was introduced in the city, Francesco de Madiis was able to sell over 25,000 books in four years to a network of European buyers. Cost comparisons show that a copy of Cicero could be bought for the price of a haircut, or one third of a labourer's daily wage, so books were within most people's budget.

Venice was uniquely equipped, as a centre of entrepreneurial and intellectual activity and investment, with an established network of trade routes for the production

and distribution of books throughout Europe. The most popular of these was not the Bible, as might be expected, but rather books of prayer for daily observance and calendars of saints' days and church feasts. The church itself recognised the power of printing because it could ensure standardised editions of liturgy to support its clergy. Education was a priority among the book-buying public, as the number of grammars, or *psalterioli da puti*, clearly shows. Knowledge as power is illustrated by the fact that they disseminated the Italian method of teaching Latin right across Europe making local variations less popular.

Venice in Peril Fund is supporting this exhibition which shares academic research with the wider public. Join the curators for our London talk on the 15c Booktrade as part of the European Year of Cultural Heritage programme. *See back page for details.*



*Juan Pastrana, Compendium grammaticae, the sole surviving copy of a grammar book printed in Lisbon, 1497, National Library, Lisbon*

## CURRENT PROJECT

*Renaissance Maiolica in the conservation studio*

The Museo Internazionale delle Ceramiche at Faenza, about an hour from Venice, is a centre of excellence for its collections, conservation studio and teaching programmes. The eighteen pieces of Renaissance maiolica, which would have been acquired by Venetian families from centres like Faenza itself, Urbino and Casteldurante, are now undergoing

conservation treatment funded by Venice in Peril. They will feature in an exhibition in early 2019 which will illustrate the conservation methods used at the MIC, but will then be returned to the new permanent display at the Museo Correr.

[You can still donate to this project](#)



### THANK YOU TO ALL OUR DONORS LISTED BELOW AND THOSE WHO WISH TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS

Alan Gibbins, Marina Morrisson Atwater, Awareness Fund, Lady Clarke, Clarke-Molyneux Trust, Cyril Shack Trust, Anne Dewe, George and Margaret Trotter Charitable Trust, Alan and Mary Gibbins, Gavin Graham, Gair Greene, Judith and Nicholas Goodison, Greys Charitable Trust, Vicky Guedalla, Estate of Terence Kelly, Headley Trust, JAT Caulfeild Trust, Kirker Holidays, Estate of Margaret Lowrie, Estate of Roger Pattison, Estate of Donald Pearse, Pizza Express and Veneziana Fund, Jon and Carol Rayman, Jonathan Radford, Lord True, Martin Randall Travel, Musick Fyne, Franco and Sally Nogara, Sanderson Foundation, TOIA

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## FAITHFUL TIES WITH VENICE IN PERIL

*How one family has chosen projects to fund over 40 years*

Our family has had a relationship with Venice in Peril that goes back to the 1970s when we first met Ashley and Frances Clarke. We quickly became friends as we were drawn into the absorbing work of conservation in Venice. I remember the excitement of following Ashley on to the scaffolding of the Porta della Carta – the richly ornamented entrance to the Ducal Palace – where the stonework was conserved between 1976-9.

In 1980 my parents, Monique and Gérard Velay, who lived part of each year in Venice, funded, through their Jean-Barthélemy Foundation, the complex conservation of a wooden crucifix c. 1469 in San Giorgio Maggiore. The work was carried out by Max Leuthenmayr and Benito Ghezzi, who we remember vividly, ‘during long and rewarding years, his penetrating gaze focussed on works of art evaluating their spirit in order to decide on the appropriate technique to enhance their sense of beauty.’\*

This conservation was followed in 2001 by another crucifix from the church of San Fantin, which was later rehung in a church on the mainland.

Following this my mother and I preferred to focus on conservation work of architectural art to avoid this happening again. That is how we came to choose the 13th-century side portico of the Carmini Church, Santa Maria del Carmelo, Dorsoduro with its beautiful 13th-century low relief Greek marble roundels showing animals and birds.

In 2012, we looked around for a new architectural project and were shown one

of the doorways leading from the State Archives to the cloister of the basilica of the Frari. Working with Venice in Peril enabled us to conserve the doorway and the remarkable relief above it showing Christ flanked by angels.

We would like to continue this theme with another doorway project also at the Frari, and it is hoped that this can be undertaken in 2018 in memory of my mother Monique Velay.

Philippe Velay



*Portal of S. Maria dei Carmini  
Photo: Sarah Quill, 2013*

**If you would like to fund a project please contact us on 020 7736 6891 or [info@veniceinperil.org](mailto:info@veniceinperil.org)**

\*VELAY (Lydia and Philippe), *Omaggio a Benito Ghezzi*, Venice, 2011, p. 5, 10, 18, 22 and 23.

## CURRENT PROJECT

*Wooden Crucifix, San Zaccaria*

This long-planned, joint project is being financed by Venice in Peril, the America-Italy Society of Philadelphia, Save Venice, the Dutch Committee, the Comitato Italiano per Venezia and the Austrian Committee.

Firstly, the crucifix has had to be harnessed and lowered by climbers from its position high up in Codussi's Renaissance church. There are no surviving documents relating to this crucifix, but it is possible that it is older than the Gothic church begun in 1458 by Antonio Gambello. The first church here was built in the 9th century.

The crucifix will now undergo treatment to eliminate woodworm, x-rays and a chemical analysis. A full condition report and conservation project will be drafted and a call for bids launched to find a firm to carry out the work.

Carla Toffolo,  
*Association of International Private Committees*



*Photo: Carla Toffolo*

## VENICE BURSARY

*City and Guilds of London Art School at San Giorgio Maggiore*

Each year two or three conservation graduates from the City and Guilds of London Art School are selected to spend three months gaining conservation work experience at the Abbey of San Giorgio as guests of the Abbot and community. A bursary to help meet living expenses is funded through Venice in Peril Fund. The internship gave us the opportunity to organise a conservation project in the Abbey church as well as the opportunity to experience life in Venice.

We spent our spare time exploring the city, creating our own walking tours, marvelling at the views of the mountains, finding the

settings described in novels and histories and discovering our favourite spot to grab some *cicchetti* and a glass of prosecco. We met so many people both at the Abbey and in other institutions around the city who showed us the projects they worked on and places we could never have found on our own.

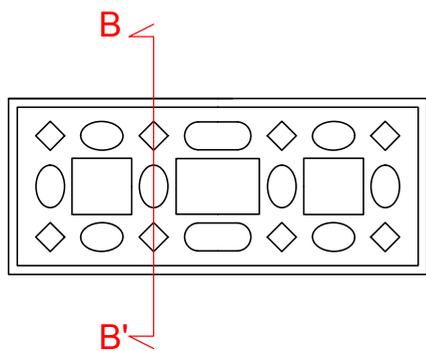
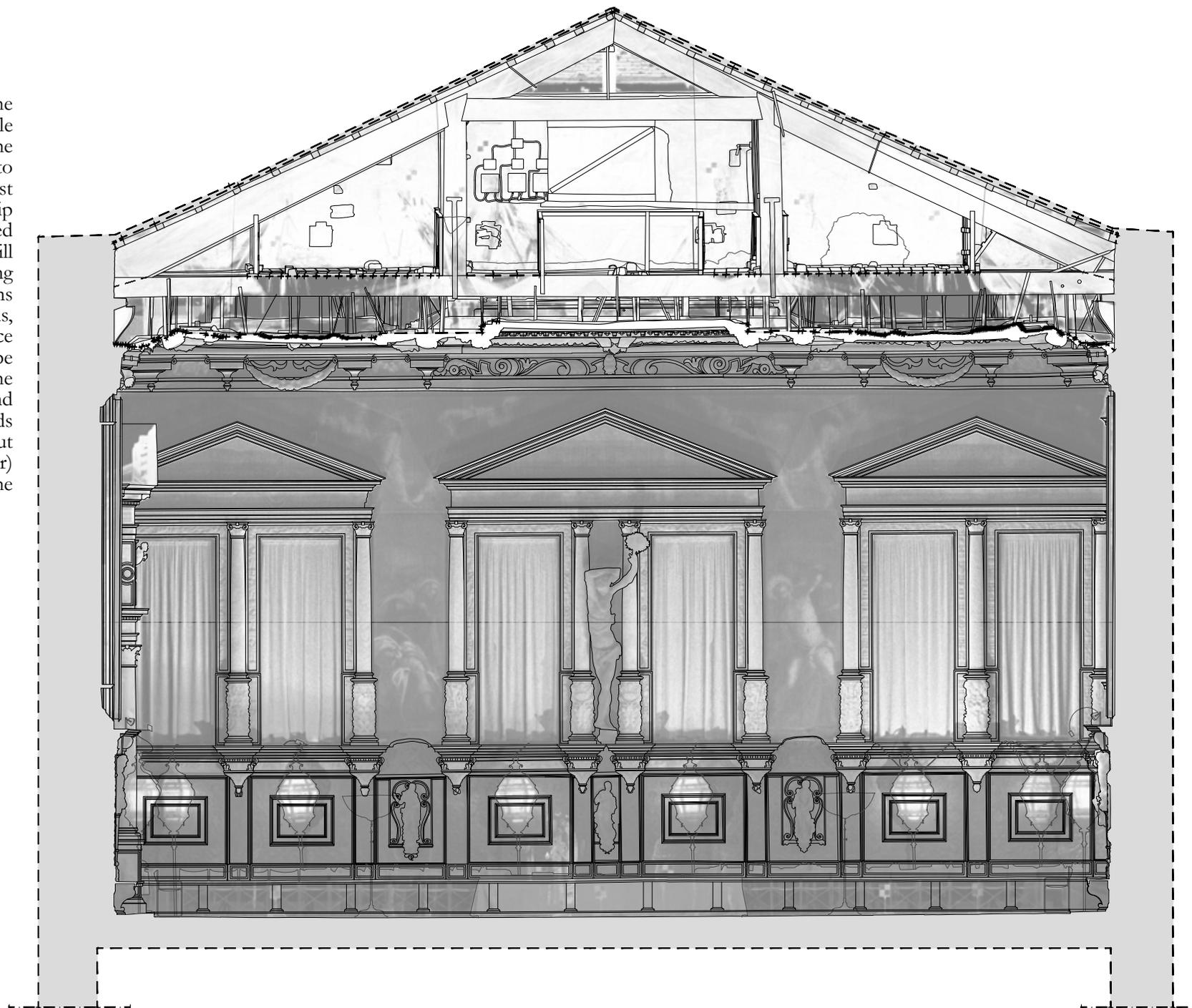
With so much happening in such a short time, it is hard to sum up our experiences. We will not forget the hectic energy and wild costumes of Carnevale or the events hosted by the Abbey - a musical performance played on a glass cello was a highlight. We feel so fortunate to have been among those selected as San Giorgio interns and hope the scheme continues for years to come.

Jasmin Mackenzie, Rebecca Davidson and Anais Vlahakis

## RECENT PROJECT

*Completion of Photogrammetric and Laser Scan Survey of the main Hall of the Scuola Grande di San Rocco*

The Scuola Grande di San Rocco is the site of Tintoretto's most celebrated cycle of paintings. The vast ceiling of the Upper Hall will undergo conservation to mark the 500th anniversary of the artist in 2019. Venice in Peril, in partnership with the Scuola Grande Council, funded surveys and condition reports that will inform the main project. Integrating photogrammetric images and laser scans produces section images such as this, where every batten in the roof space that anchors the great ceiling can be located with minute precision. The condition report on the canvases and frames reveals similar painting methods and materials (small canvases of about one square metre sewn together) as those used for his work at the Madonna dell'Orto.



AUTUMN 2018

*Event series*

1 OCTOBER

**Tintoretto: the Artist of Venice at 500**

*Frederick Ilchman*

Frederick Ilchman is Chair of the Art of Europe department at the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Chairman of SAVE Venice Inc., the American counterpart to Venice in Peril.

22 OCTOBER

**The 15c Booktrade Project – Printing R-Evolution**

*Cristina Dondi & Geri della Rocca de Candal*

Cristina Dondi, Lincoln College, Oxford is Principal Investigator of the 15c Booktrade Project and Geri della Rocca de Candal is Postdoctoral Research Fellow and President of the Society for the Preservation of Rare Books.

12 NOVEMBER

**Giuseppe Verdi at La Fenice, Ashley Clarke Memorial Lecture**

*Sir Mark Elder*

Sir Mark Elder has been Music Director of the Hallé since September 2000. He was previously Music Director of English National Opera and has appeared in many of the great opera theatres.

At the Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly W1J 0BE.

Tickets and timings for 1 October and 22 October: Doors open 6.30 for 6.45pm

£18 Friends, £20 Others - to include a glass of wine

Tickets and timings for 12 November: Ashley Clarke Memorial Lecture - Doors open

7 for 7.15pm £40 Friends, £45 Others - to include reception afterwards.

From [www.veniceinperil.org](http://www.veniceinperil.org) or 020 7736 6891

*To find out more about our projects and how you can donate please contact  
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