



# HEROES & GODS

in VENETIAN BAROQUE PAINTING

WORKING TITLE

**CP**  
CONTEMPORANEA  
PROGETTI



Fondazione  
Querini Stampalia  
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**Organized by**

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**In collaboration with**

Museo Querini Stampalia, Venice, Italy





## ABOUT THE

# EXHIBITION IN BRIEF

It can be said that beginning in the 17th century, the sun began to set on the ‘Serenissima.’ The mighty Republic of Venice that had once dominated the seas and trade routes of the Eastern Mediterranean and beyond, now faced decline. A new rich world to the west had been discovered. Yet the myths of Venice – complex, compelling and pervasive - continued to influence the artistic currents of Venice. This is the Venice of artists such as Padovanino, Federico Cervelli, Pietro Liberi, Giulio Carpioni, Luca Giordano and Sebastiano Ricci to name but a few.

In this transitional period, through a repertoire of classical mythology, Venetian painting expresses ethical and philosophical messages that exalt Venice as the ideal republic. Through myth and allegory, Venice had always identified itself with high ideals, as a place where justice prevailed, and had elected to present itself as such to the wider world. It is an artistic season defined by a stylistic revival in Venetian painting which was stalled in a phase of creative fatigue. The artists of the first half of the 17th century rediscovered the traditions of color and atmosphere that so distinguished their predecessors of the 16th century.

In this exhibition starring ca. 30 paintings, many of which are grand canvasses, belonging to the Fondazione Querini Stampalia of Venice, the reflection of Venice, as expressed in the masterful, mythological and allegorical Baroque language of these painters, is explored and beautifully illustrated. These interpretations of Venice are accompanied and enriched by an exquisite selection of objets d’arte, porcelain and precious works on paper from the extraordinary library of the Querini Stampalia.

### Structure of the Exhibition, in brief

Introduction: Myths of Venice  
Olympian Gods  
The Twelve Sybils  
Allegories  
Classical Myths  
Fondazione Querini Stampalia

## ABOUT THE

# MUSEO QUERINI STAMPALIA

*“... After my death, my Library, Gallery, Collection of Medals and all the Art Objects found in my Palace in San Zaccaria will become of public use.”*

(From the last will and testament of Count Giovanni Querini Stampalia, December 11, 1868)

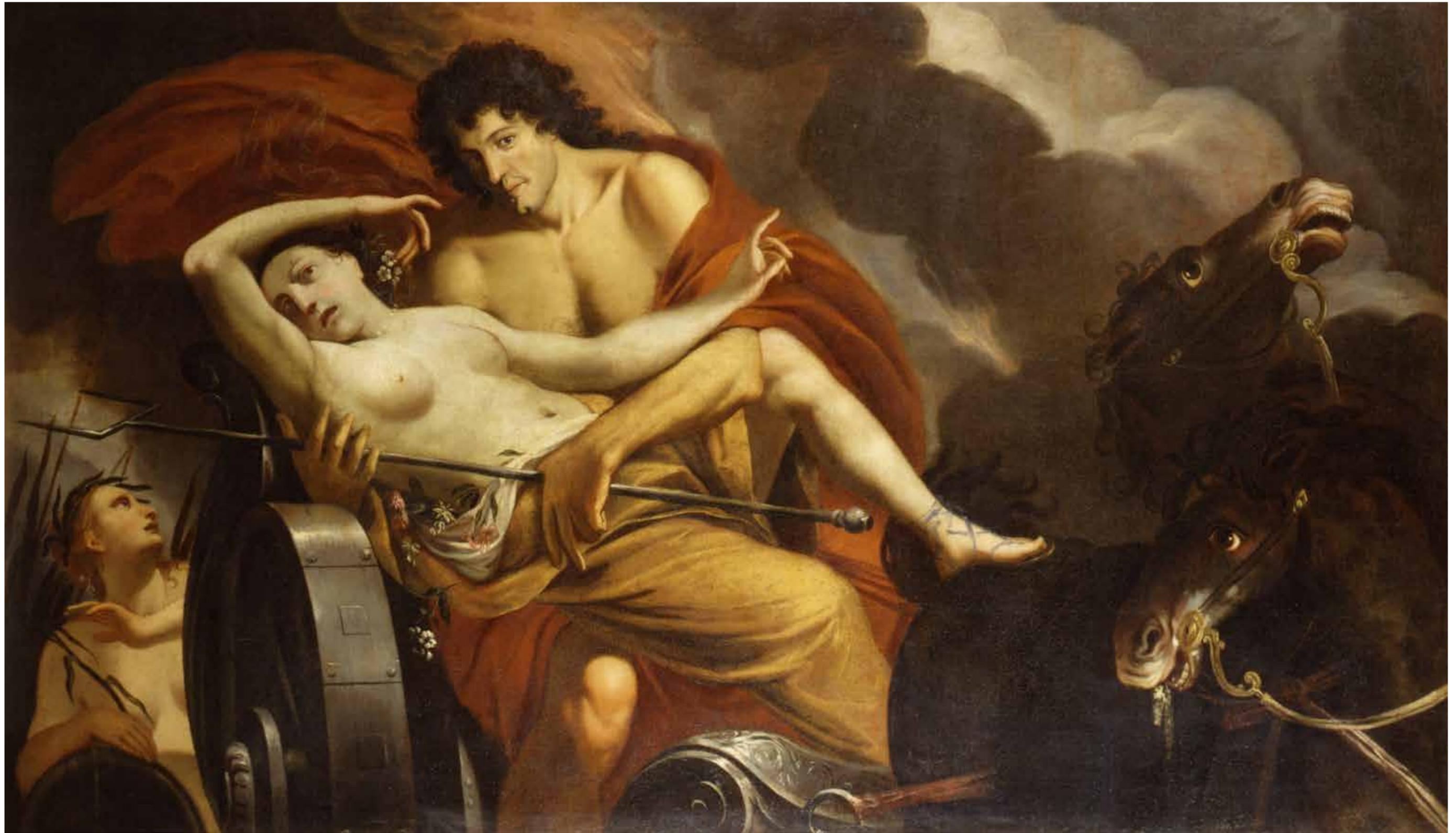
**Giovanni Querini Stampalia** (1799 - 1869) was the last descendant of one of the oldest Venetian families. Of reserved temperament and a good steward of the family assets, he devoted his entire life to study. He graduated in law, but preferred botany, chemistry, and anatomy. After the death of Count Giovanni on May 25, 1869, his foresight in leaving his Venetian palace, his lands, other residences, as well as furnishings, paintings, archives, books, coins, tapestries and sculpture to a foundation dedicated to his family allowed for the continuation, albeit in new ways and forms, of the preservation of a large fortune that transitioned from private family use to public access.

The **Fondazione Querini Stampalia** was thus established. On the first floor of the palace in Giovanni's apartment, the library was opened. A few years later, on the second floor, the museum of the historical house was established. Amidst decoration in stucco, frescoes and terraces in the Venetian style, the museum today documents the collecting tastes of the family and conserves a variety of 18th-century and neoclassical furniture, porcelain, porcelain-bisque, sculpture, chandeliers of Murano glass, globes and many paintings from the 14th to the 20th centuries, mostly of the Venetian school. Among the paintings, several collections stand out; intimate portrayals of 18th-century society by Pietro Longhi, along with sixty-seven “Venetian event” paintings by Gabriel Bella provide a curious and unique look at the city on the lagoon in the 1700s. Also of special note are the magnificent canvases of 17th-century Venetian Baroque mythological paintings distributed throughout the museum and library which is world-renowned for its priceless volumes of engravings and etchings by the many of the most illustrious Venetian and Veneto designers, engravers and cartographers of the 17th and 18th-centuries. From the illustrated Aeneid of Virgil to the globes of Vincenzo Coronelli iconographic testimony is offered of the heroes and gods of classical antiquity to the central myths of the Republic of Venice.



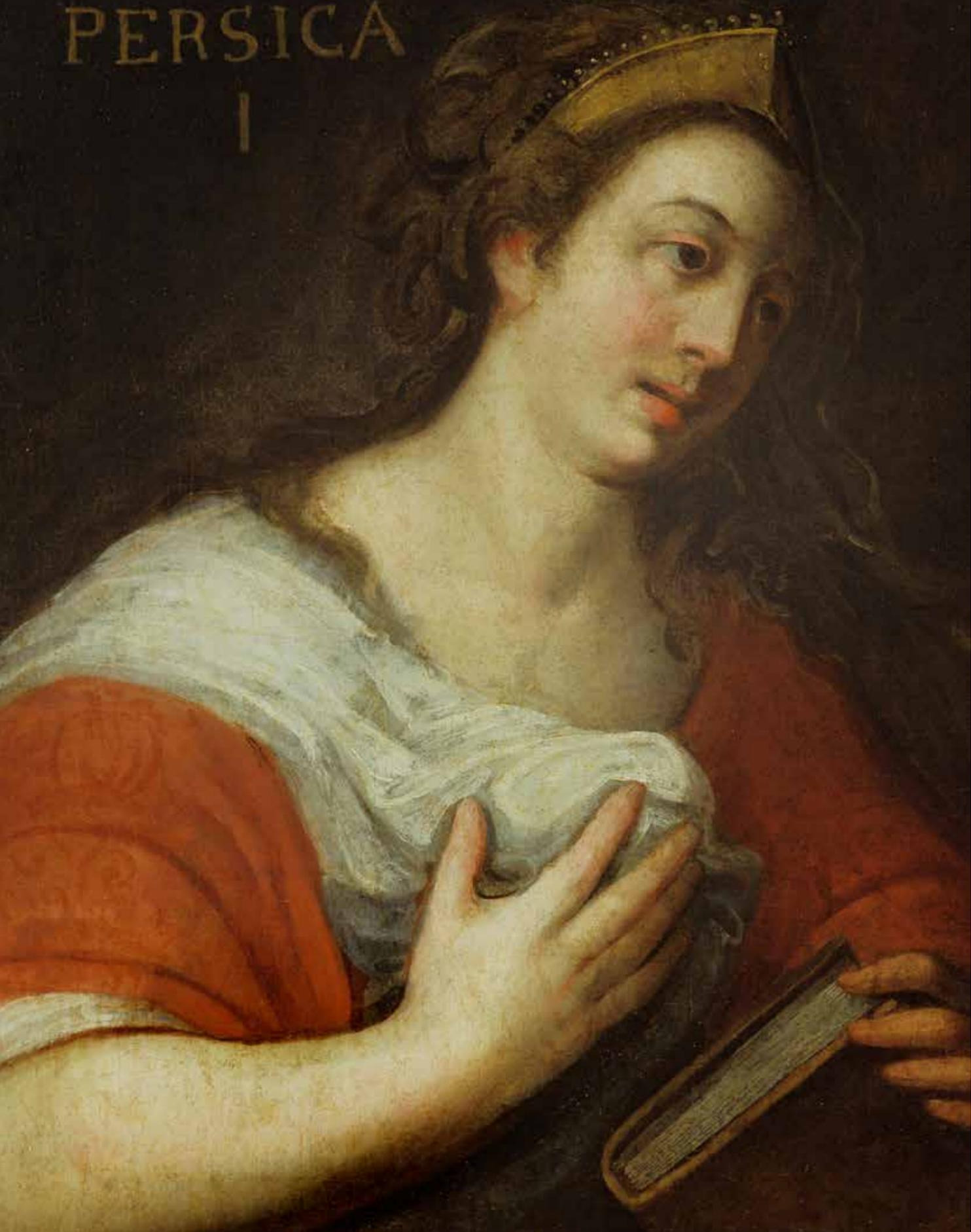


*Banquet of the Gods*  
Giulio Carpioni, style of, (Venice 1613 – Vicenza 1678)  
Oil on canvas, h.146 x 226 cm



*Pluto Abducts Proserpina*  
Giulio Carpioni, style of, (Venice 1613 – Vicenza 1678)  
Oil on canvas, (h.130 x 226 cm)

SIB.  
PERSICA  
I



## SECTION

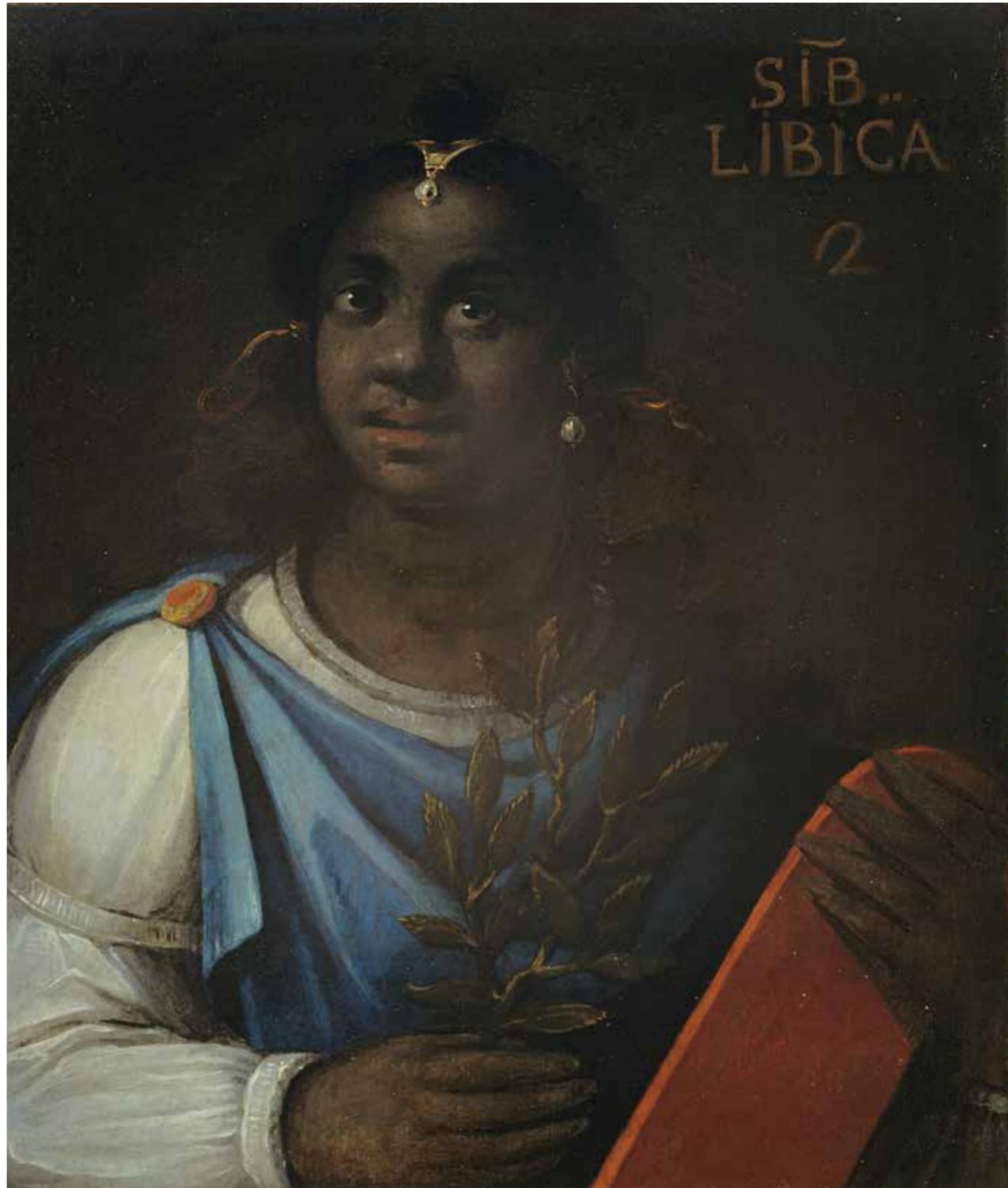
# THE TWELVE SIBYLS

According to the most-ancient Greek myths, sibyls were female oracles who prophesied at holy sites, and their prophecies were inspired by messages from the infernal deities of the underworld. The first known Greek writer to mention a sibyl was Heraclitus in the 5th century BCE, but by Late Antiquity, writers attested to the existence of sibyls in Greece, the Italian peninsula, the Levant and Asia Minor. They were not identified by a personal name, but by names that referred to the location of their shrine. Although Heraclitus and then Plato spoke of only one sibyl, over the course of time, the number grew to twelve, and by Medieval times, the term was somewhat synonymous with prophetess:

Persian Sibyl, Libyan Sibyl, Delphic Sibyl, Cimmerian Sibyl, Erthraean Sibyl, Samian Sibyl, Cumaean Sibyl, Hellespontine Sibyl, Phrygian Sibyl, Tiburtine Sibyl, European Sibyl, Egyptian Sibyl.

In art, particularly Italian Renaissance art, probably the most famous depiction of sibyls can be found in Michelangelo's frescoes for the Sistine Chapel. The set of depictions of all the twelve sibyls, by an anonymous Venetian painter of the 1600s, is a rare and unique oeuvre in itself. Rarely did artists attempt to portray all twelve of the known sibyls, and this cycle belonging to the Querini Stampalia is one of the few known to exist. Perhaps the artist's implication is that even Venice was subject to the spell of the mysterious seers; perhaps their meditative and melancholic poses are harbingers of the decline of Venice witnessed in the 17th century.

THE TWELVE SIBYLS



*The Libyan Sibyl*  
Anonymous Venetian Painter, (17th century)  
Oil on canvas, h. 64 x 54 cm.



*The European Sibyl*  
Anonymous Venetian Painter, (17th century)  
Oil on canvas, h. 64 x 54 cm.

THE TWELVE SIBYLS



*The Cumaean Sibyl*  
Anonymous Venetian Painter, (17th century)  
OIL on canvas, h. 66 x 55 cm.

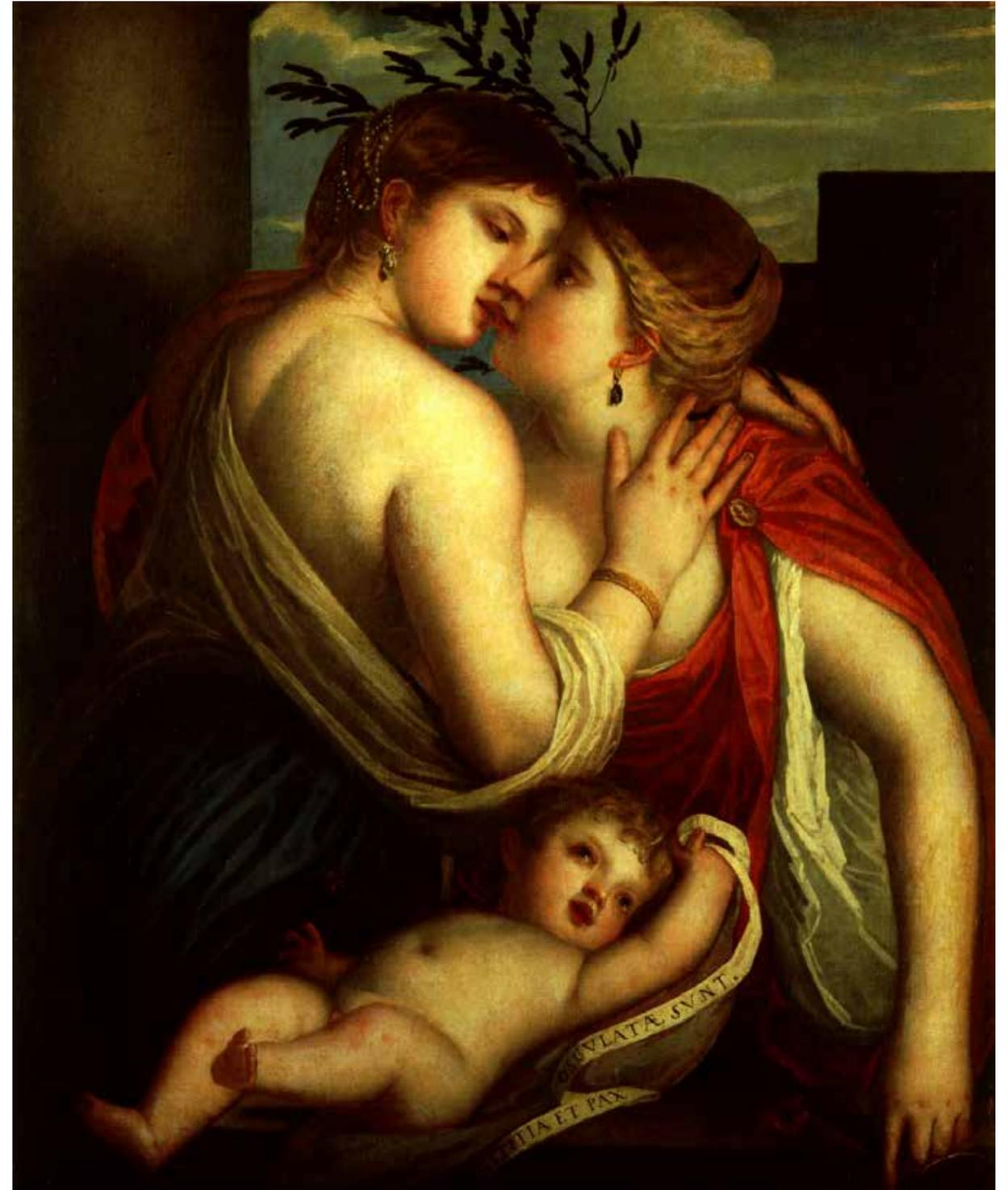


*The Tiburtine Sibyl*  
Anonymous Venetian Painter, (17th century)  
Oil on canvas, h. 65 x 55 cm.



*Mercy and Truth*

Alessandro Varotari, called Padovanino (Padua 1588 – Venice 1649)  
Oil on canvas, h.122 x 105 cm.



*Justice and Peace*

Alessandro Varotari, called Padovanino (Padua 1588 – Venice 1649)  
Oil on canvas, h.122 x 104 cm.



*Man Overcome by Vice*  
Pietro Liberi, (Padua 1605 – Venice 1687)  
Oil on canvas, h. 154 x 188

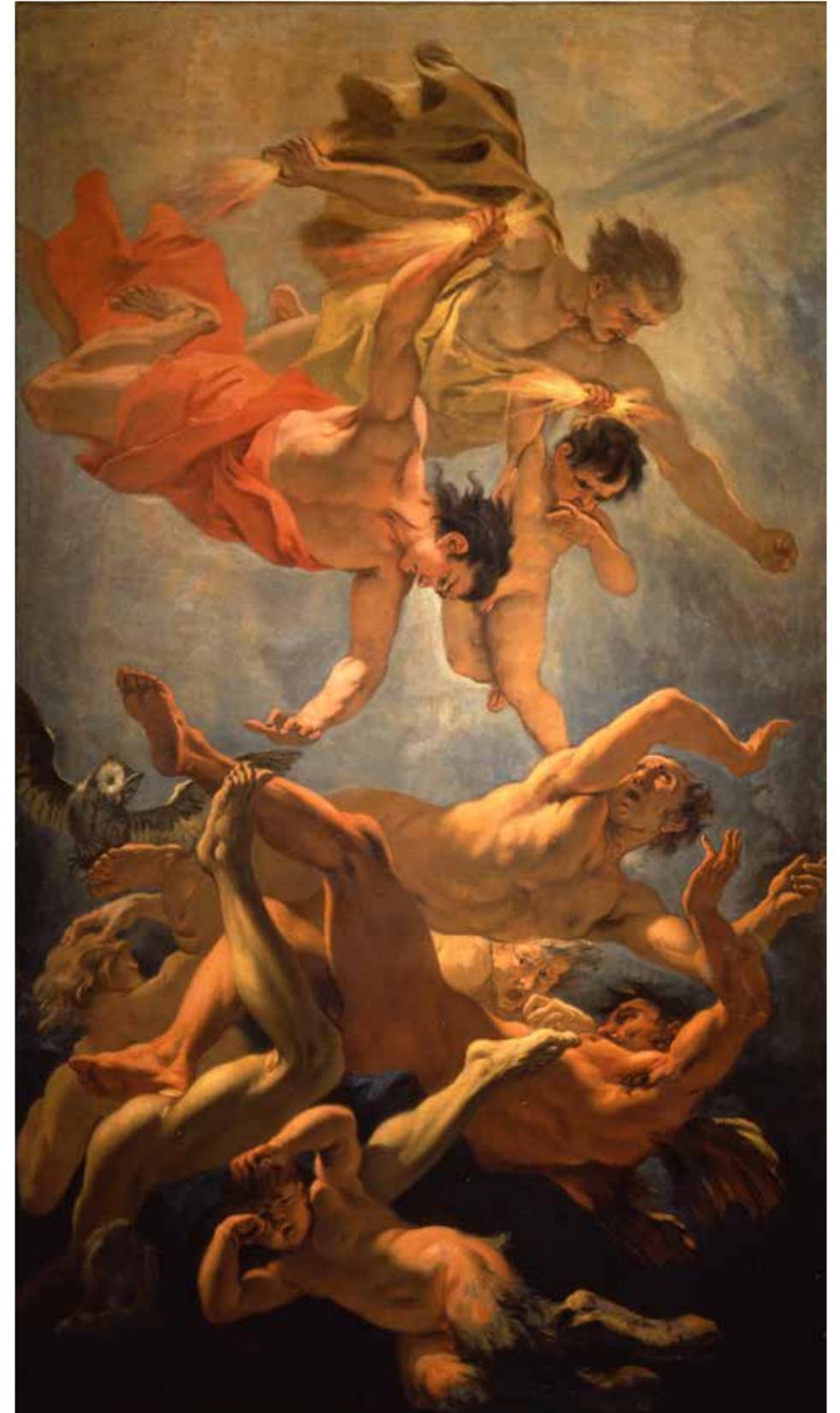


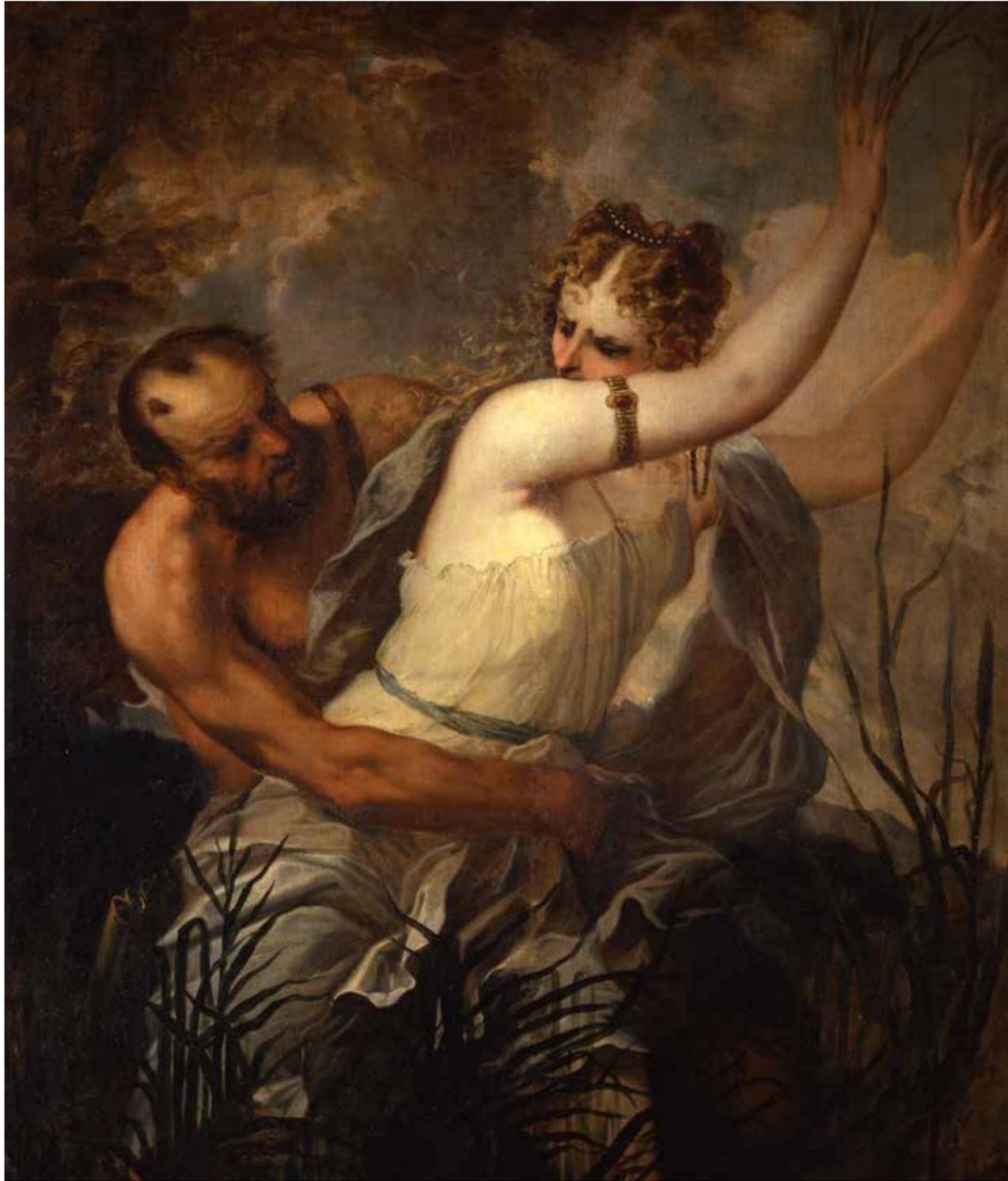
*Dawn*  
Sebastiano Ricci, (Belluno 1659 – Venice 1734)  
Oil on canvas, h. 220 x 92



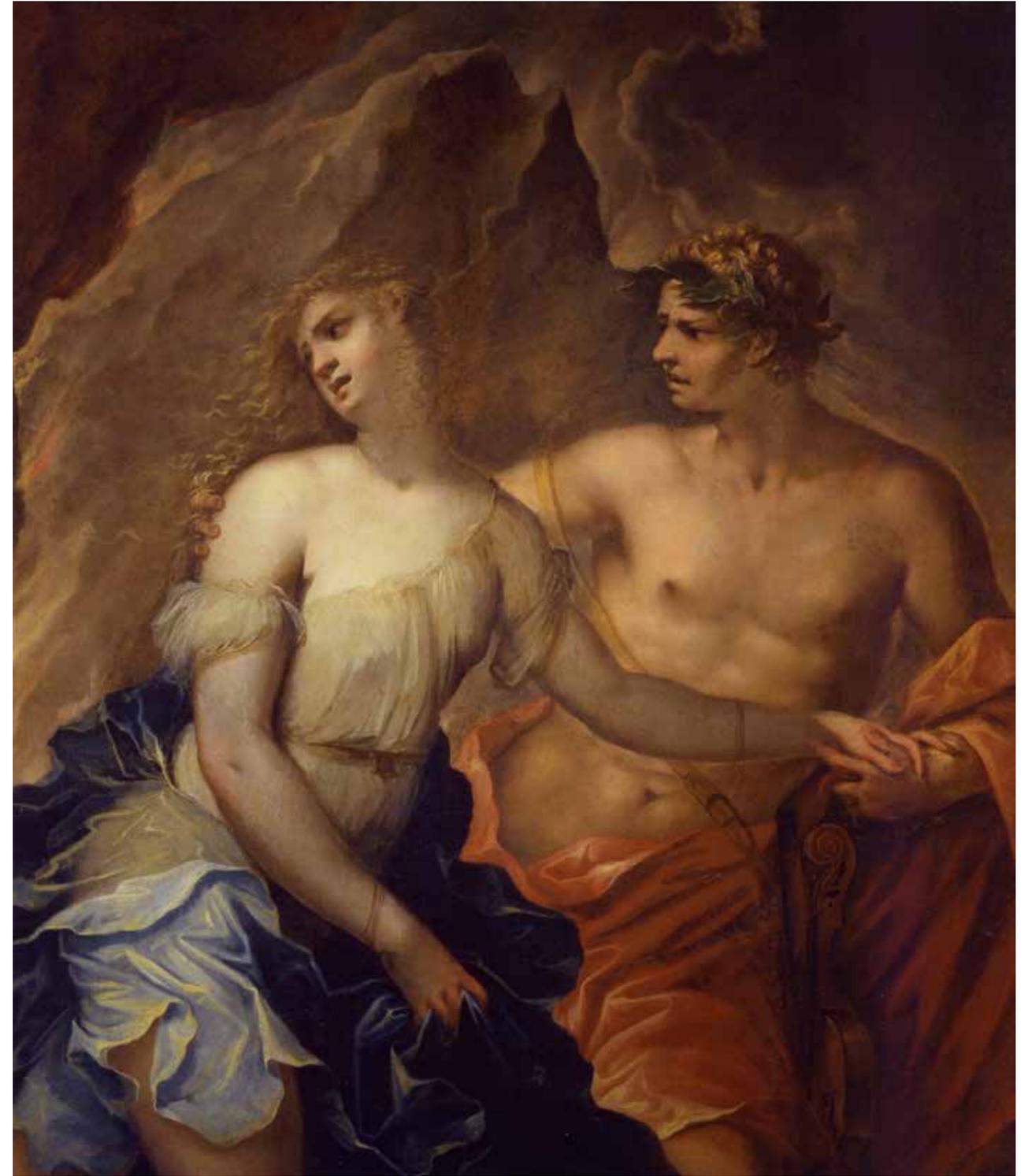
*Dusk*  
Sebastiano Ricci, (Belluno 1659 – Venice 1734)  
Oil on canvas, h. 220 x 91

*Noon*  
Sebastiano Ricci,  
(Belluno 1659 – Venice 1734)  
Oil on canvas,  
h. 285 x 162

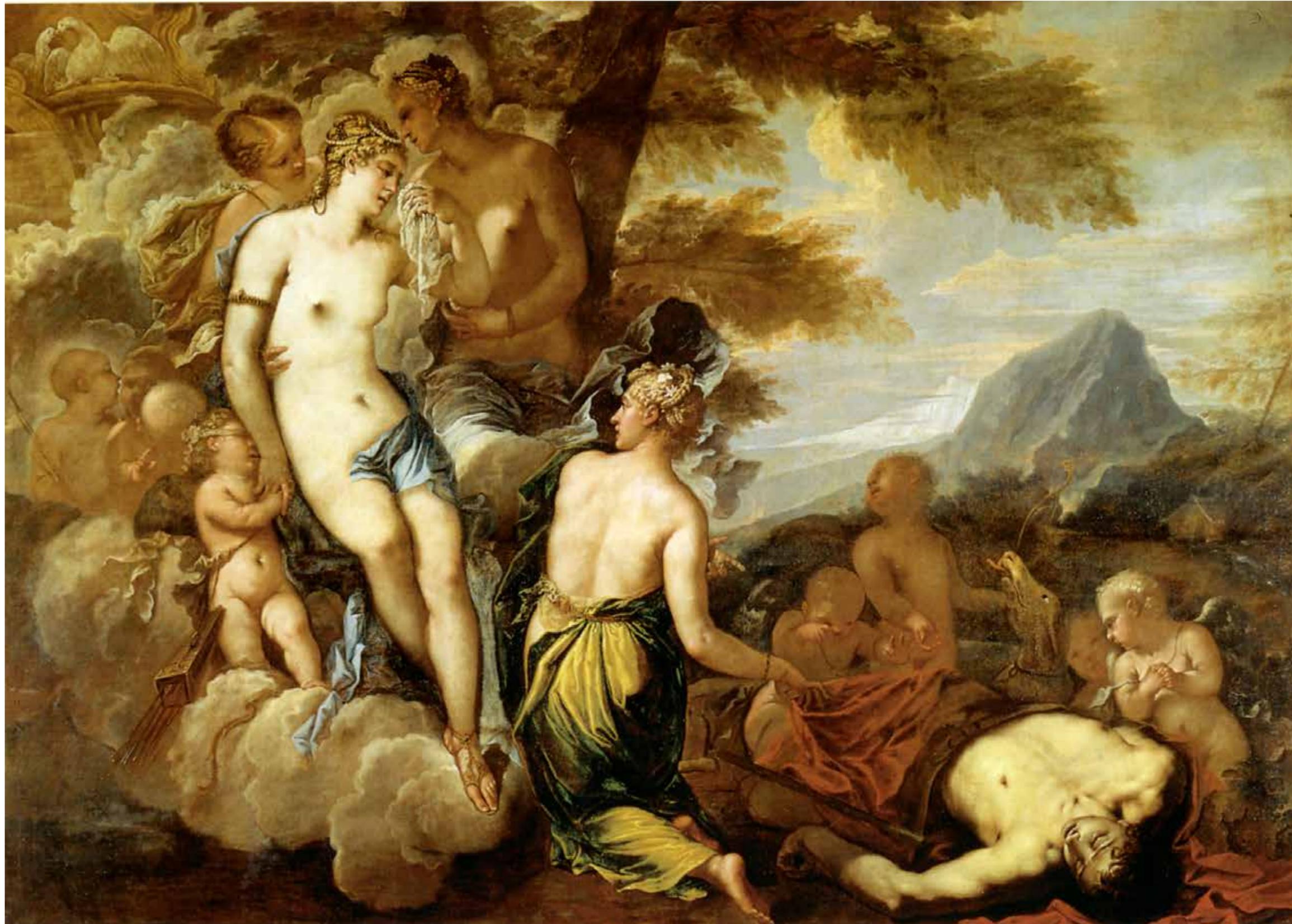




*Pan and Syrinx*  
Federico Cervelli, (Milan 1625 or 1638 – Venice ca. 1700)  
Oil on canvas, h. 161 x 137



*Orpheus and Eurydice*  
Federico Cervelli, (Milan 1625 or 1638 – Venice ca. 1700)  
Oil on canvas, h. 158 x 133



*The Death of Adonis*  
Federico Cervelli,  
(Milan 1625 or 1638 –  
Venice ca. 1700)  
Oil on canvas, h. 240 x 233



EXHIBITION

# RENDERINGS



EXHIBITION

# MULTIMEDIA

## Cameranebbia

Senses of Venice 2019

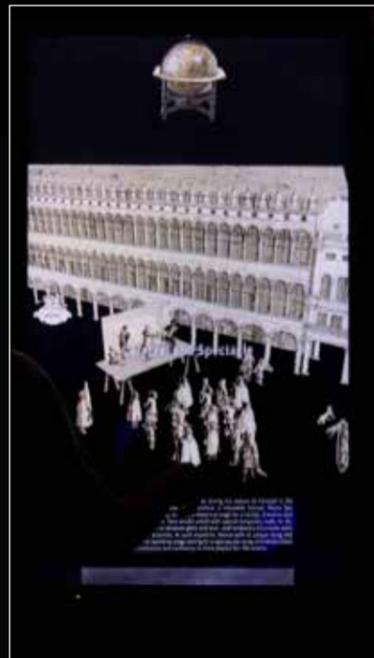
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## A Day in the Life

Interactive display

<https://vimeo.com/353244029>



## Gran Tour of Venice

Touchscreen - <https://vimeo.com/353256367>



## 150th Anniversary of Fondazione Querini Stampalia (2019)

Videomapping

<https://vimeo.com/347387200>





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