

The Venice Charter Revisited

Modernism and Conservation in the Post-War World

2 - 5 November 2006, Venice, Italy

International Network
for Traditional Building, Architecture & Urbanism



The Venice Charter is a document from 1964 that sets out to define the responsibility of nations to safeguard cultural heritage for future generations. Adopted by most of the countries in the world, in the US appearing as the Secretary of State for the Interior's Standards, the Venice Charter has a large influence on traditional architecture and urbanism world wide. But is it still relevant in the 21st century?

INTBAU's 2006 conference will examine philosophies of conservation, scrutinise the Venice Charter in the context of its times, and hear case studies of the Charter as it has applied in the 42 years since its adoption.

The post-war period has in recent years been subject to extensive historical research. We now know, for instance, that during the 1950s the West covertly funded cultural institutions with the aim of promoting modernism and creating a clear contrast with the Soviet Union's preference for social realism and traditional architecture.

The aim was to present Modernism as democratic and free, in contrast to traditional art which was portrayed as repressive and totalitarian. The effect was to polarise public taste for a generation or more. This was the milieu that produced the Venice Charter.

INTBAU believes that the Charter's insistence that buildings and settings be seen as historical documents that must not be 'falsified' perhaps reflects a common post-war modernist belief in the 'end of history'. Since its inception, particular clauses of the Venice Charter have been used to justify and to require modernist interventions in traditional buildings and places. In recent years, these clauses have become a crucial regulatory block used in development control against any form of traditional design. INTBAU sees this as an undesirable situation that privileges the views of transnational modernist architects over those of local peoples and traditional cultures.

INTBAU seeks to advance a pluralist view that would allow considerations of cultural continuity, tradition and collective memory to over-ride the Venice Charter's requirement that buildings be treated as historic documents. We are in contact with ICOMOS about our proposals, and they are sending official representatives. The conference will conclude by proposing a new charter for traditional architecture and urbanism in historic contexts, including reconstruction of destroyed buildings.



Photo: Victor Deupi



Photo: Victor Deupi

Further information

The conference starts with a reception on the evening of Thursday 2 November and closes with tours on Sunday morning 5 November 2006.

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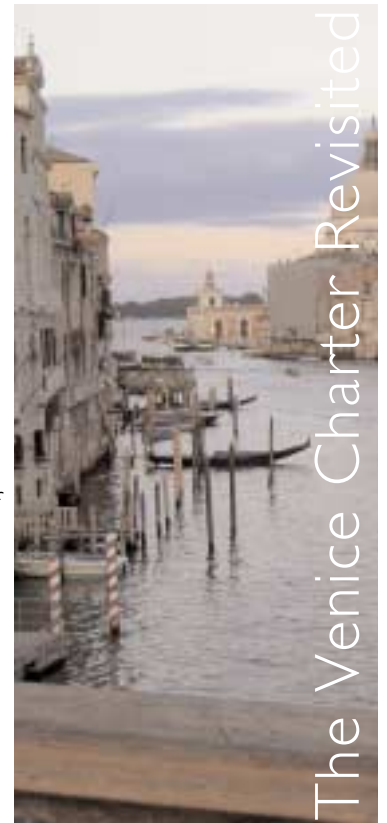
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W: www.intbau.org/venicecharter.htm

Speakers

The Venice Charter Revisited conference features leading speakers on conservation from around the globe, including:

- Prof. A. G. K. Menon - India's leading conservation expert and author of the innovative "INTACH Charter for the Conservation of Unprotected Architectural Heritage and Sites in India", 2004
- Prof. Paolo Marconi - Italy's most controversial conservation theorist and author of "Il recupero della bellezza", 2005
- Prof. W. Brown Morton III, USA - Co-author of the seminal "Secretary for the Interior's Guidelines for Rehabilitating Historic Buildings," 1977
- Prof. Dr Hab Boguslaw Szmygin, Poland - Secretary of the International Committee of ICOMOS on conservation theory and philosophy, and member of ICOMOS International Executive Committee
- Robert Adam, UK - Architect, Chair of INTBAU, author of "Classical Architecture: A Complete Handbook" 1990, "Tradition and the Modern City" 1995, and "Does Heritage Dogma Destroy Living Tradition?" 2003
- Amund Sinding-Larsen, Norway - President of ICOMOS Norway
- Steven Bee, UK - Director of Planning & Development, English Heritage
- Eusebio Leal Spengler, Cuba - Historiador of the City of Havana and many others.



Venues

The conference venue is the Teatro Piccolo Arsenale, located in Campo de la Tana, Castello, Venice. Teatro Piccolo Arsenale is a comfortable modern theatre converted from one of the great 17th century warehouses of the Venetian Navy. It is 5 minutes walk away from the linked exhibition Cities of Stone and next door to the Architecture Biennale exhibition with its cafe, bar and bookshop. The venue for breakout sessions on Friday is just 50m across the square from Teatro Piccolo Arsenale. The two venues are just behind the Museo Storico Navale (navy historical museum) and close to the Arsenale vaporetto (water bus) stop.

INTBAU

The International Network for Traditional Building, Architecture & Urbanism is a rapidly-growing international Charity (registered in the UK No. 1103068) that supports research and education in, and understanding of, traditional building, architecture and urbanism. We have over 1,000 members worldwide, with chapters in India, Germany, Romania, Scandinavia and Nigeria, and others in formation in North America and Oceania. You can read more about INTBAU on the website www.intbau.org

Event supporters

INTBAU gratefully acknowledges the support of Politecnico di Bari Department of Architecture, Biennale di Venezia, The Prince's Foundation, and English Heritage.

Register online now at www.intbau.org/venicecharter.htm



REGISTER NOW!

Conference fees are as follows:

- £ 199 Earlybird - before 30 October
- £ 229 Standard - at the conference
- £ 139 Student - for tertiary students with ID.

One day and Two day tickets available, see website.
Ask us for details of group discounts.
Register and pay online or by fax or phone at www.intbau.org/venicecharter.htm