

# Get excited!

Andrea Palladio (1508 - 1580), Marco Polo (1254 - 1324), Paolo Veronese (1528 - 1588), Antonio Canova (1757 - 1822), Dante Alighieri (1265 - 1321), or Daniele Manin (1804 - 1857), and many other - fifty in total - outstanding representatives of the arts, politics, and science are assembled here in the entrance hall of the proud thirteenth century Palazzo Loredan. As history has irrevocably proven, all of these men (and there are only men) perpetuated in stone in this Pantheon of Science are true ambassadors of the spiritual life of Venice and the Veneto. It is impossible to elude the view of the stone busts resting side by side on their marble pedestals. Each of them is the embodiment of the fame and prestige of the unique lagoon city. Everything is as expected, every bust has its place, and with the help of these worthy portrayals the visitor can playfully immerse herself into the eventful history of this city, home of Veronese, Tizian, or Tintoretto, and also of Nono, Scarpa, or Vedova. But right here and now the visitor will discover a strange creature among the history laden busts, a projection of the future, cast in marble. It carries the name Fayoumi and shall be born in Venice on the occasion of the 54th International Art Biennale. Accordingly, the inscription "The Cosmopolitan Chicken 'Mechelese Fayoumi', 15th Generation. Crossbreeding between Mechelese Orloff (CCP) X Fayoumi (Egypt)" is chiseled into the stone pedestal.

"Nato a Venezia" (Born in Venice) is the name of the installation of the exceptional artist Koen Vanmechelen. A discrete, yet clearly articulated artistic intervention has been our common goal from the very beginning, the site of action, Venice and the Palazzo Loredan with its history and its scientific focus, being our particular challenge. Taking this into account while at the same time accentuating the artistic position of Koen Vanmechelen on the verge of science is the central concern of this project, which is exceptional in every respect.

Central to „Nato a Venezia“ is the open university of diversity, an open study center for the exploration of biological and cultural diversity. In a biological and intellectual breeding center, including an incubator where the active breeding of the Biennale Chicken, the 15th generation of the Cosmopolitan Chicken crossbreeding project - Mechelse Fayoumi - takes place, live research on cultural and biological diversity will be made accessible to the visitor for the entire period of the 54th Venice Biennale. Topping the intervention off by a live-stream "reality show" of the parent chickens of the Biennale Chicken, Koen Vanmechelen has turned the Palazzo Loredan into an art laboratory, into a contemporary manifestation on the borderline of art and science.

For the duration of the Venetian Art Show the old, dignified library on Campo S. Stefano is filled again with life. The interdisciplinary project „Open University of Diversity“ adds a momentum to the historic site that is committed to this space dedicated to science and research while conveying the utopia of man's union with nature in the broadest sense and creating a new approach to art. The starting point of this artistic intervention is a happy event: Nato a Venezia.

Peter Noever