

*From tradition to innovation*  
**ArtGlass, Production&Design**

The heir to an ancient glassmaking institution - the School of Design for Glassmakers founded as far back as 1862 by abbot Vincenzo Zanetti - the Abate Zanetti School of Glass of Murano is now more than ever the meeting place between past and future in the art of glassmaking. A strong desire to aggregate the multiple realities of the contemporary glassmaking landscape, looking to the world of design, culture, art, is combined with the preservation of a thousand year-long tradition and technical expertise typical of the island of Murano. The structure is equipped to deal with all the typical Murano production techniques: furnace, lampworking, fusing and grinding.

The School has two souls. The first is education, which draws inspiration from its origins, and is achieved through the implementation, coordination and promotion of highly innovative training activities. Our courses provide training in both traditional and contemporary techniques and methods of artistic glassmaking, as well as on general topics related to technology, design and marketing. In addition to collaborating with Italian and foreign universities and institutes of higher learning, the Abate Zanetti School is a place of reference where cultural events are organized on a regular basis and the art of glass is deservedly celebrated, enhancing the international vocation of the city of Venice.

Our premises are sited in a characteristic 1930's industrial building in the heart of the island of Murano, which has been completely refurbished while maintaining its original style. It is a unique location, ideal for hosting exclusive private or corporate events like meetings, conferences, conventions and exhibitions. But above all, it is a place providing an opportunity to express one's ability and creativity working with glass, a material which for its intrinsic characteristics dictates the pace to all those wishing to master the art. A new, emotional experience for managers used to dealing with constantly evolving situations on a daily basis, and one which, not surprisingly, is being chosen by big names in the fashion industry for their initiatives.

Our second soul, in keeping with the first, is that of production, a natural progression tending towards the opening up of new opportunities in a market that requires innovative solutions. Indeed Abate Zanetti is now also a centre of excellence in the manufacturing, research and experimentation in state-of-the-art glassmaking design and artistic production, and is able to realize works of art in glass to order, starting from a project by the customer (with the ensuing elaboration of the design and prototype) or following a designer's instructions. In addition to the creation of unique artworks, Abate Zanetti's master glassmakers are able to replicate production on a large scale: an activity that responds to the needs of all professionals, such as architects and designers, seeking to provide their customers with new and, above all, personalized solutions.

The Abate Zanetti School, in collaboration with the Association for the study and development of Murano culture, is once again fostering this year's Premio Murano award, a historic Venetian event that rewards the art of Murano glass. Revived in the edition of 2012 after a gap of 21 years, the award aims to increase and enhance the artistic tradition of Murano glass and its continuous experimentations, providing a meeting point for contemporary art, the wide world of design and Murano glass masters.

The initiative also has an important focus on the future, by involving all of the island's schools

with the award Premio Murano Junior, so to encourage young generations to experience the multiple possibilities and that special brand of creative magic that only Murano glass can offer.

The Abate Zanetti School will thus offer an opportunity for national and international exposure open to young designers, successful artists, local businesses and glassmakers at what is certainly a particular time for Murano and its glass sector.

"Glass is immensely valuable, because it combines the talent and creativity of art making with craftsmanship. Our school's plan for the future is to continue to invest heavily on training and design, and to promote what is undoubtedly an art recognized throughout the world for its excellence, through initiatives such as the well-established Premio Murano award."

A total of 500 projects for the Premio Murano and 640 projects for the junior section were submitted during the previous editions of the prize. Murano master glassmakers submitted 100 works characterized by an unprecedented interaction of glassmaking techniques: glass fusing and grinding combined with glassblowing.

In addition to the pieces submitted for the award, 33 works designed by celebrities have been included in an out of competition section, an initiative that will be repeated in 2014. Participation in this particular section has doubled from one edition to another, witnessing the level of appreciation that this award and Murano glass receives all over the world. These amazing masterpieces were created on site based on designs by prestigious, internationally renowned personalities in their respective fields, including the London-based designer Vivienne Westwood, actor Alessandro Gassman, Dj Albertino, eclectic designer Larisa Katz, Italian rugby player Martin Castrogiovanni, the Foundation Resonance pianist Elizabeth Sombart and Nobel laureate Dario Fo, to name but a few.

The two past editions have witnessed the attendance of over 5,000 visitors to the exhibition connected with the Prize.

The award has been sponsored by Venice's major institutions.

The collaboration with the Art Biennale and the Venice Pavilion in 2013 was also born in this context, and represents a return to past tradition, since the exhibition space was originally created to accommodate decorative art exhibitions devoted in particular to Venetian artistic production.

Aptly described by Ugo Nebbia as an "exedra full of light", Abate Zanetti exhibited in the Pavilion a piece made up of lighting hooks entitled *Caena*, a typically Venetian name. Here technique meets light. Design, art and culture are enshrined in a single element: lighting.

The union of art, expressive research and modern design continues thanks to the established collaboration with the Chiaramonte e Marin Studio, initiated in 2014 when the Water Glass Collection was first launched: a Collection of vases and jugs inspired by the typical animals that live in the Venetian Lagoon. A successful example of functional design, where experimentation merges with tradition to furnish the house in a unique way.

In 2015 the collaboration with Chiaramonte e Marin results in a new "Illumination" line, with seven new chandeliers designed to highlight the glass working technique through forms that stand out even in their simplicity; minimalism of excellence that enhances both form and light, transforming the chandelier into a furnishing item.

Representing the international pulsing vein of Abate Zanettis' "Illumination" sector in 2015 is none other than "Ballerino", the suspended chandelier designed by Nigel Coates, inspired by dance in motion and the composed but engaging whirling of a continuous pirouette. Made of mirrored glass, this chandelier is a dynamic object that projects lights and overlapping reflections, pondering its' dynamism in the room that houses it.

MURANO VENEZIA  
ABATEZANETTI

In the year of Expo2015 in Milan, Abate Zanetti's contribution could not lack. Therefore, through a collaboration with Birra Poretti for the "The art of Knowing How To" initiative, Abate Zanetti brought 12 goblets, each handmade and decorated with unique designs drawn by Muranos' schools children, to the Italian Pavilion.

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