

Voices and Colors of Murano, Italy

By Stefano G. Padoan

Venetian Lagoon

(Haiku)

Thick, foggy morning:
the lagoon's glassy surface
reflects time gone by.

The Fading of the Artisan

(Rispetto Poetic Form)

Glass maestros gone by at the century's turn.
The roar of bright furnace flames as they did greet.
Blowing incandescent globes of amber burn.
etched with a generation's secrets and heat.

Factories empty and hollowed, once dear.
An industry ghosted; an artisan's fear.
Time ago luxury knocked upon the door,
But it will not soon return, nor enter more.

A Walk Around Murano

(An Acrostic Poem)

Musty and damp dwellings, infused with the lagoon's salted sea air
Under bridges and across tables, friendships made, families strengthened

Right after sundown, the island quiets and locals selfishly fill her streets

Across the piazza, the stone church Ss. Maria e Donato, gleams, the matron of the island

Near the docks, all variety of boats carry her history via the lagoon

Overhead, white socks hanging next to sheets, billowing in the wind

Nonnas in the Windows

(Limerick)

There once were some nonnas who knew,

If they stared out the windows at two,

They'd see innocent mischief occurred,

And be the town's "little birds,"

To say, "I'll tell your mamma on you!"

Coexisting

(Free Form poetry)

A chorus of salutations echo amongst the weathered palaces and cobblestones,

Half the buildings are empty now, a younger generation driven away,

Murano still has life to share as she explores how to survive.

A young visiting couple, sitting on the steps of the bridge, share a loaf of bread and packaged cheese.

A mother and daughter, walk home from the beach.

"Don't tourists know it's rude to just sit in the middle of our bridges, mama?" a child pipes up.

All are called by an invisible dinner whistle

Bread and cheese on the bridge, or carrots, onions and celery being sautéed in olive oil,

All adds perfumed humidity to the air,

The steam of whistles of pressure cookers, humming on stovetops announces the paradox

Of the visiting and the rooted, finding ways to co-exist

“Vien’ Vicin...”

(Dialect for “Vieni Piu’ Vicino” - Come Closer)

(Found poem)

Pizza

Pasta

Bruschetta

Vino

Gelato

Beyond the shiny, shaded havens at the front of the island, we have so much more to share.

Pizza Capricciosa

Spaghetti al Nero di Seppie

Gnocchi con Capesante

Sarde In Saor

Panna Cotta con Mirtilli e Lamponi

San Nicolo’, Patron Saint of Murano

(Ottava Rima)

San Nicolo’, the patron saint of the town,

By dark of night on December six, he comes,

Carrying gifts to eliminate childrens’ frown,

Protector of glassblowers and their sons.

A tradition centuries ago, passed down,

Promoting the secrets of glass, blessed by the nuns.

From lab to museum, behold the treasure,

Of glassworks that bring to all such pleasure.

Il Faro (The Lighthouse)

(Cinquain)

Spotlight.

Land's guardian,

Showing ships home from sea,

Waves crash against the monolith

And fall.