



## Ca' Dolfin

Dorsoduro 3825/e - 30123 (VE)

In the **XVI century** the building belonged to the **Secco** family and was used as a casa di stazio, that is, as the residence of the nobility and mercantile bourgeoisie. In **1621** the building was sold to **Cardinal Giovanni Dolfin** (1545-1622) of the San Pantalon branch. The Dolfin family was one of the most important in Venice and lived there until 1814, the year in which it ceased to exist. Different owners followed one another in the following years: **Giovanni Querini Stampalia** in 1854, **Michelangelo Guggenheim** in **1871**, the Milanese architect **Giovanni Battista Brusa** and **Paolo Labia** in 1925. During these changes of ownership, the palace was stripped of most of its artworks. The state of deterioration of the building in the mid-nineteenth century reached its historic peak and in 1848 an Austrian bomb ripped open the ceiling. In **1955** the palace was purchased by the Ca' Foscari University of Venice.

### Restorations

At the behest of the Rector Italo Siciliano, the University began a complete renovation of the building between 1958 and 1960, during which numerous changes were made. The third floor of the building was assigned to the **Ca' Foscari University College**, active from 1961 and 1973, and aimed at deserving students from all over Italy. The University recently carried out a major new restoration that was concluded on **September 19, 2014**, after about two years of work.

### Aula Magna Silvio Trentin

The Aula Magna is named after **Silvio Trentin** (1885-1944), an important figure of Italian antifascism, committed to defending the freedom of the individual and to teaching. Trentin taught administrative law at Ca' Foscari between **1923** and **1926**.

The central ceiling fresco by **Niccolò Bambini** and the architectural cornice of **Antonio Felice Ferrari** represent the allegorical contextualization of the decoration of the hall. The dating of the frescoes is uncertain, and probably falls between 1709 and 1720. The second decorative element consists of the ten allegorical medallions placed above the ten paintings by Tiepolo (now replaced by mirrors), which depict personifications of the intellectual and moral qualities attributed to the Dolfin family.

The third central element of the decorative apparatus were the ten paintings commissioned from **Giam-battista Tiepolo** which exemplified, through famous episodes of Roman history, the virtues of the medallions. Today the works are no longer present in the room: when the building passed to the Querini Stampalia Foundation, Tiepolo's paintings were sold to Michelangelo Guggenheim who later sold the paintings abroad (some of them are now kept in important museums). The canvases were replaced with mirrors during the restoration of the fifties.