

## International Aerial Archaeology Conference AARG 2018

12- 14<sup>th</sup> September 2018

### Venice lagoon and the islands tour, 14<sup>th</sup> September 2018



#### San Francesco del Deserto

In 1220 St. Francis of Assisi founded a Franciscan convent on the island that took its name after him. The convent is still inhabited and chosen as destination of pilgrimages. During the '90, in the island archaeological excavations were undertaken there: they revealed a former Late antiquity and Early Medieval settlement.

#### Lazzaretto Nuovo

Known in the Medieval times as *Vigna Murada* (walled vineyard), the island was chosen in 1468 by the Senate of the Republic of Venice as the quarantine site to prevent the spread of the plague. The island is now housing different cultural activities like summer camps, exhibitions and events.

## Torcello

### The island:

The island of Torcello, today almost deserted with very few inhabitants, preserves relevant Early Medieval and Medieval architectural remains and is surrounded by a beautiful naturalistic environment. The historical core of the island is the Basilica of Santa Maria Assunta, with its famous mosaics.



### The site:

During the Late Antiquity a stable settlement was created on the northern part of the island, moving there the port infrastructure of the nearby Roman town of Altinum. The commercial role of this early lagoon settlement grew and became so significant that by the Early Medieval Ages it was a remarkable harbour, known as "*emporion mega*" (great port). After the 11<sup>th</sup> cent., the island was progressively abandoned in favour of Venice, but its fame didn't vanish as it became an iconic place, chosen by historians to set the mythical birth of Venice.



### The "Torcello Abitata" project:

The traditional history of the island is full of myths, such as the idea of Torcello as a pre-Venice, founded by people escaping from the barbarians to a place of freedom, somehow independent from any political control. Since 2012, an archaeological team from Ca' Foscari University has been working to shed lights on the actual development of the settlement, focusing on communicating with the public by means of public archaeology and live excavation events. With these initiatives, the archaeological team is aiming to revise the traditional interpretations and to bring as many people as possible to rediscover the meaningful history of this place.

