



The VENICE BIENNALE, The Veneto and Verona

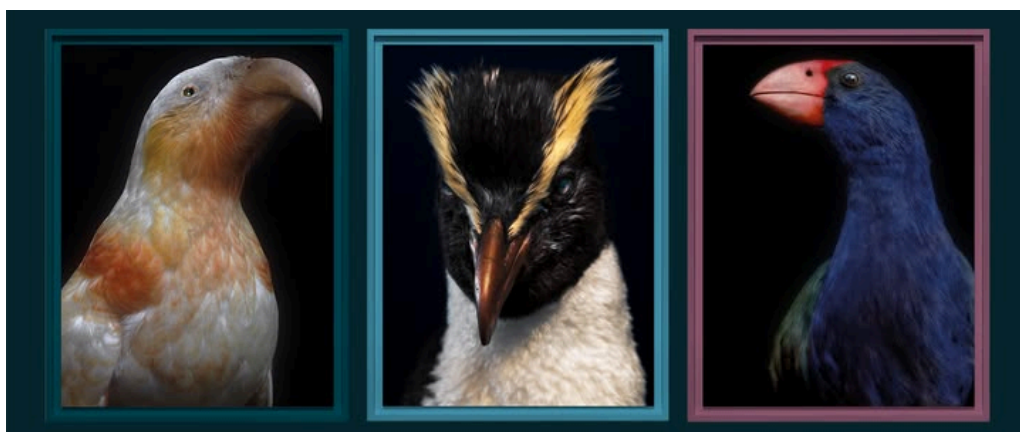
WITH CLAIRE CHAMBERLAIN

Journey with Claire Chamberlain to the 61st International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale La Biennale d'Arte di Venezia and beyond in September 2026.

Explore Dr Fiona Pardington's **Taharaki Skyside** at the Aotearoa New Zealand pavilion at La Biennale di Venezia. Experience much more from around the world in Biennale Arte across the Giardini and the Arsenale and find collateral exhibitions throughout Venice and her lagoon.

This tour will include time at La Biennale as well as other historical sites around Venice. Contemporary galleries are also on the list, along with a visit to the global craft and object exhibition by Homo Faber.

Expect day trips to Verona to the **Basilica San Zeno** and **Palazzo Maffei Casa Museo** and into the Veneto to Carlo Scarpa's **Brion Tomb**, **Museum Gypsotheca Antonio Canova** and **Villa di Maser** with its Veronese fresco cycle.



Images from Taharaki Skyside, Fiona Pardington

**Art
Travel**

SUGGESTED ITINERARY

DAY 01

TUESDAY 22 SEPTEMBER

ARRIVAL VENICE

Check in to our hotel and meet at 2pm.

Our first visit will be to **Dr Fiona Pardington's** (Kāi Tahu, Kāti Mamoe, Ngāti Kahungunu, Clan Cameron of Erracht) presentation. Entitled **Taharaki Skyside**, and located in Istituto Santa Maria della Pietà. It is presented by the Arts Council of New Zealand Toi Aotearoa, Creative New Zealand, Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu and Starkwhite.

This major new work for Venice consists of photographs of Aotearoa New Zealand birds preserved as taxidermy specimens in museum collections across Aotearoa New Zealand and Australia: specimens shaped by the intertwined histories of colonial collecting, scientific classification and cultural loss. These portraits honour the deep spiritual and cultural significance of these manu (birds) to Māori and trace the legacies that led to either their extinction or critical vulnerability.

A welcome drink and an orientation walk is included.

DAY 02

WEDNESDAY 23 SEPTEMBER

VENICE

Please be ready to depart at 9.45am today.

We will take the short walk to our first central Biennale visit after first stopping at a local café for coffee and cornetto (pastry) before the exhibition opens at 11.00am.

La Biennale Giardini - We will visit the central pavilion where the Biennale's central theme, *In Minor Keys*, is showcased in the International Exhibition.

We will also meet the work of Venetian architect Carlo Scarpa (1906-1978) who redesigned the central pavilion and created the sculpture garden within the same buildings.

Next up, we will stop in the street which divides the two sides of La Biennale, Via Giuseppe Garibaldi so you can find lunch in one of the many restaurants, café or bakeries which line the street.

La Biennale Arsenale International exhibition. In the afternoon, we'll experience the second half of the curated international exhibition in the Corderie of the Arsenale. We will exit back through the entrance bookstore and return to our hotel after viewing any significant collateral exhibitions en route. (B)

B = Breakfast included
L = Lunch
D = Dinner





DAY 03

THURSDAY 24 SEPTEMBER BRION TOMB AND THE VENETO

Please be ready to depart at 8.15am.

Today we'll leave Venice by water taxi and then travel by private coach to **Possagno** and the **Museo Gypsotheca**. The museum houses the models of the work of the Neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova with a Carlo Scarpa architectural intervention.

We will stop nearby for lunch before making the short trip to Carlo Scarpa's **Brion Tomb** and Sanctuary, widely considered the Venetian architect's masterpiece.

Then we will make our way to **Villa di Maser**, a UNESCO World Heritage site, designed by Andrea Palladio in the mid 16th century and frescoed by **Paolo Veronese** in 1560. The villa is set amongst a working vineyard and we hope to enjoy a wine tasting experience as well as a visit to a tempietto, also designed by Palladio in the neighbouring village of Maser.

We will arrive back in Venice in the late afternoon. (B)



DAY 04

FRIDAY 25 SEPTEMBER VENICE

Please be ready to depart at 9.20am today.

We depart by vaporetto to the Dorsoduro side of the Grand Canal for the day.

We start our day at **Punta Della Dogana**. On arrival take coffee in the museum cafe before spending time visiting two exhibitions.

Firstly the work of American artist **Lorna Simpson**. Followed by Brazilian artist **Paulo Nazareth**.

We make a visit to nearby **Casa San Lorenzo** which is participating in the global craft exhibition, Homo Faber and then pick up some lunch from a local spot before meandering toward the Accademia.

Our main stop for the afternoon is the **Accademia**. Here we take in both the Renaissance and Venetian art featured here as well as the contemporary exhibition by **Marina Abramovic**.

After visiting the Accademia, we'll stop for a quick refresher before heading across to Giudecca and a visit to the relaxing **Redentore Garden**. You can remain on Giudecca, head back across to Zattere for the sunset, or continue all the way back to St Elena on the Vaporetto.

If you are after sunsets Zattere is a great area for a spritz to finish your day and catch the golden hour between 6 and 7pm.

Water taxis end by 9pm tonight.

(B)





DAY 05 SATURDAY 26 SEPTEMBER VENICE

Please meet at 9.30am.

This morning we'll return to the **Giardini** and **La Biennale** and concentrate on the highlights amongst the national Pavilions.

We'll walk around as a group, but then break for lunch within the Giardini after which you can return to those Pavilions we've missed. You're welcome to meet your guides for a return to our hotel for a rest or explore further.

In the late afternoon, we'll re-group and return to the **Arsenale** to view the national Pavilions there.

We'll stop for a recuperative drink near the famous crane and enjoy the setting sun before continuing to the close of the Arsenale exhibition and exiting through Giardino delle Vergini all'Arsenale to make a local stop for dinner or a return to the hotel. Alternatively, you can jump in a buggy and make a return to the beginning of the Arsenale and exit through the gift store.

Please note the Arsenale is open until 7 pm if you'd like to stay later. (B)

DAY 06 SUNDAY 27 SEPTEMBER VENICE

Please meet at 9.20am.

Today we explore on either side of the Grand Canal before an early finish in St Marks Square.

Our stop for the morning is the new **Dries van Noten Foundation** along the Grand Canal. The foundation "*celebrates craftsmanship as a fundamental expression of cultural identity. The Fondazione will bring together established voices and emerging talents across art, design, fashion, architecture, gastronomy, and beyond. By fostering dialogue between disciplines, the Fondazione aims to generate new perspectives and connect the past with the present.*"

We find lunch before crossing the Grand Canal to the last stop for the day, **Palazzo Grassi**, the second part of the Pinault Collection. Experience the work of artist **Michael Armitage**.

From here Claire will wander you through the Campo Santo Stefano and on to Piazza San Marco.

Your afternoon is yours to relax, take that gondola ride you always wanted to, drink coffee at the famous Cafe Florian or spend a small fortune on a Bellini at Harrys Bar.

(B)



DAY 07 MONDAY 28 SEPTEMBER VERONA

Please be ready to depart at 8.15am.

Today we are hopping back on our private coach for a relaxing day trip to **Verona**.

Verona is renowned for its rich history, captivating architecture, and association with the love story of Romeo and Juliet. It's a UNESCO World Heritage site, famed for its well-preserved Roman ruins, particularly the Arena di Verona, the third-largest surviving Roman amphitheatre. Beyond the Roman past, Verona boasts stunning Romanesque and Gothic churches, picturesque piazzas, and the charming Adige River.

We will first make a stop in the periphery of the city and, after coffee, visit the majestic Romanesque church of **San Zeno** with its vast bronze doors and a frescoed interior rich in religious art, including Andrea Mantegna's extraordinary 1460 altarpiece still located at the high altar.

It's then a short trip into the historic centre where we will walk from Piazza Bra around the Arena, Verona's famed Roman amphitheatre to the beautiful Piazza Delle Erbe. After free time for lunch around the Piazza, we will re-group and visit **Palazzo Maffei Casa Museo**.

"an eclectic path between masterpieces and curiosities that go through more than four thousand years. A Wunderkammer with thematic nuclei of ancient art in which the dialogue with modernity and the charm of a private dwelling breaks out."|

We will arrive back in Venice late afternoon. (B)



DAY 08 TUESDAY 29 SEPTEMBER VENICE

Please be ready to depart at 9.20am this morning.

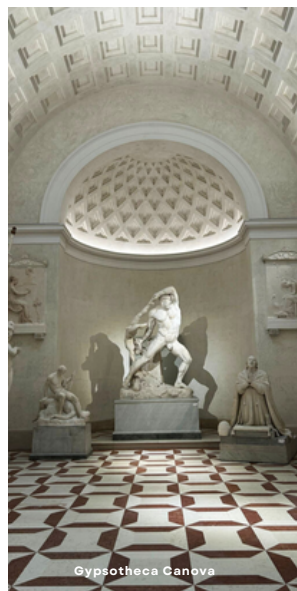
We are heading to the island of San Giorgio Maggiore this morning. Here we will spend a few hours visiting **Homo Faber: An Island of Light**, an event dedicated to art of exceptional craftsmanship from around the world with artistic direction by British artist and designer Es Devlin.

We spend time in the Church and those who wish can visit the Campanile for great views across the island and Venice lagoon.

We cross two stops on the vaporetto back to Dorsoduro and visit the **San Trovaso Art Space** and finish our day with some uplifting Veronese work at **Chiesa di San Sebastiano**.

At completion of our day we are near the vaporetto stop of San Basilio - which is an easy ride back to Sant Elena.

(B)





DAY 09

WEDNESDAY 30 SEPTEMBER

VENICE

Please be ready to depart at 10.15am.

Today is our last day in Venice and we'll be exploring the Castello district.

We start with an enjoyable journey along the Grand Canal to visit the small but excellent **AMA Venezia Foundation**.

"AURA brings works and presences into relation, where art emerges as intensity, perception, and shared experience.

Drawn entirely from the AMA Collection, the exhibition unfolds through shifting tensions between material and immaterial, between what is seen and what is sensed."

We walk from here to **Campo S.S. Giovanni e Paolo** where Claire will introduce us to The Equestrian statue of Bartolomeo Colleoni sculpted by Andrea del Verrocchio in the late 15th century.

Take lunch nearby before the short walk to the **Foundation Querini Stampalia**. Our focus is the renowned Carlo Scarpa watergate and garden. Along the way we'll pass the famous **Libreria Acqua Alta**.

We later arrive at the home of **OCEAN SPACE**, in the deconsecrated church of San Lorenzo. This is a foundation geared towards art and science. Our last stop on tour is where we began, at the New Zealand pavilion to revisit **Taharaki Skyside**.

Here we share some of our insights from our time in Venice together before heading back to the hotel.

Our last night includes a dinner out at **Nevodi** tonight to share memories and a fond farewell.
(B,D)

DAY 10

THURSDAY 1 OCTOBER

DEPART VENICE

This morning we say farewell to Venice and to each other before departing for home or further travels.

Our Itinerary is always subject to change

YOUR ART TOUR LEADER

Claire Chamberlain (MA Art History, PGDipEd) is an art historian and educator with over 25 years' experience. She leads the Art Today programme at Te Tuhi Contemporary Art space and has formerly co-chaired the Patrons of NZ at the Venice Biennale. Claire has previous international art tours to Venice, Milan, London and Paris.

A passionate advocate for Aotearoa artists, she makes art history engaging and accessible.



Art Travel