



John Hall Venice

2016

Newsletter



Dear John and Charlie

Thank you for the experience of a lifetime. From rock n rolling in Geoffrey Humphries' studio to lying along the sunlight edge of the canal recovering from ice cream overdose and dreaming of Verdi, we have had a fabulous two months. What makes this course unique is the bond between father and son extrapolating to bonds between pupils too. Thank you for letting us into your family; we have made so many brothers and sisters these past few weeks. Not only have we grown our alcohol tolerances, but also our food babies! Charlie your moral guidance and John your charming wit have been indispensable to all of us. If you were to establish a John Hall University, you'd be guaranteed at least us lot ! However, we imagine the thought of us for 3 years inspires you both with joy! Thank you for putting up with us.

To our adopted father and grandfather,

Lots of Love,



Looking for the perfect Prosecco – Helena Irvine

Whether it's the eucharist service at St George's or, as its fondly referred to, the 'clever wine shop' a glass of grape juice is decidedly cheap in Venice.

Duchamp –

Free shots with Marco make this decidedly un-Venetian bar magnetic to students but in terms of a glass of prosecco (at three euros a glass) its your standard, sometimes lukewarm, job in an underwhelming setting. Mates rates do, however, apply here.

Osteria alla Bifora –

Location wise, Bifora is a stones throw away from Duchamp but the chasm in terms of style is wider than that between Charlie Hall in 1981 and 2016. Complimentary charcuterie and a generous glass of tasty prosecco at the usual three euros a glass puts Bifora close to the top spot.

The Corner Bar –

Head from the Peggy Guggenheim towards the Accademia and hidden on your left is this pocket sized bar. Conveniently close to church, generous with crisps and prosecco alike.

The 'clever wine shop' –

The alcoholics wildcard, the 'clever wine shop' has been such a feature of John Hall Venice 2016 it deserved a mention. Wine really is cheaper than water here at four euros per 1.5 litre of prosecco.

Sophia Adams – The ‘Pub’ quiz

The most intense concentration and competition in the course occurred in a small pizzeria near the Arsenale. It was the John Hall Pub Quiz, the infamous intellectual clash between teams - Charlie's Angels, the Scuola degli Winners, The Doge Wears Prada, and others. Tension was rife throughout the room, as cunning participants shouted out wrong answers in the hope to distract the others. Louisa and Susan were the stern quizmistresses, and led us all through the quiz to the end. It transpired that the Scuola degli Winners had chosen an apt name, as they were the champions with seventeen correct answers out of twenty. Charlie of course was disappointed that his angels had failed him.



Wandering & Watching – by Eleanor Garthwaite

When you begin wandering around Venice you may wonder, where can I draw, paint and take wonderful photos? Or perhaps simply, where can I go and people watch. If you walk down the Zattere you will wander past the Calcina, a bright orange hotel offering comfortable chairs where you can sit for hours and write a diary. Continue walking and on your left you'll find a floating pontoon, on a sunny day this is a popular stop. Just nab a table and sit with a coffee, painting people or the lagoon, for here there is a wonderful view of the Giudecca. Wandering from here down San Trovaso, you can stop and take an iconic photo of the boatyard (squero), before stumbling upon a particularly lovely wine bar. The thing to remember about Italy (and Venice in particular) is that it is never too early for a prosecco. In fact, it would be more Venezia appropriate to order a spritz at 11 than a café latte. However, if it's coffee that your heart desires there is nothing better than Florians, a cafe – or rather an exquisite gem where one can luxuriate amongst marble tables and velvet sofas. Here is a perfect place for sketching and taking photos, the constant flow of people and views across St Marks mean you are never short of a subject. If you want to find the authentic side to Venice, the photographer Mark Smith knows all the right places. He took us to the student area near the church of San Sebastiano, where you hardly see any tourists. He also, rather excitingly, took us to the Giudecca. There we had access to a boatyard and were able to move around amongst the framework of gondolas, watching as they were made. A final suggestion for the evening is to sit and draw from the Santa Maria della Salute, whose steps look out to St Marks.



Drew Semler - The Messner poem

Let's discuss the Mess...ner
Tanky's room was a mess...near-ly
Anything could be found in that cess,
pool...clearly
The cleaning crew didn't love us dearly
But this Venetian palace was far from merely
A lousy home, says Emily Peers, she
Would chant, "Messner we revere thee!"

Room 16 housed Amell and Ben. Alex didn't
believe in love, but for Cecily he fell again.
16 was always smelly. If only Ben did more
bathing and less FaceTiming Ellie!

17: Tanky, Hubie, and Mr. Smart. Words couldn't
do justice to this 3D Pollack-esque work of art.

Number 18 belonged to Jules. Theo looked down on
the Georges like fools. A bromance continues
between the Georges, who live in fear of
Charlie's scourges.

Up the stairs, 19 was for Doge Charles the ****.
Come to dinner or he'll have a fit...quite the
player back in the day, when the wondrous Jacky
Klein was his bae.

Room 21 radiated fun. Lucy and Alice reigned in
their palace. Lucy really kissed Butt!

Looking for Sophie and Em the Gem? 22 was where
to find them. If you need something at night,
give them a shout 'cause Room 22 rarely went
out.

Room 23 was all for me. But Ben made sure I wasn't lonely. The girls came in and out in flocks--but all they wanted was my Xbox.

25 was always alive with Bella, Beth, and Sophie. They loved to go to cookery, where Sophie found her trophy.

Now we arrive at 26--home to three more John Hall chicks, and my favorite place to watch fun flicks.

Up we go to 27. Allie kept it a neat-freak's heaven. But Allie left Honor and Emma, who gave the maids a cleaning dilemma.

Around the bend was 28. These girls never fancied going to sleep late. But they had a blast at Arsenale with dancing, Red Bull and music by Walé.

Room 29 was quite chill, I'd opine. Sophia didn't do cookery with Nicolo, and Helena kept her distance from Piccolo.

While Venice turned her into a whale, Lexie blessed Room 31 with her scale. Liv and Sug took ages to get ready, but it was worth waiting for the stunted yeti.

THE GRAND FINALE: Room 33 was low on pence after Howard spent all their cash on incense. Emily and Barham never let us down with the dazzling costumes they'd wear into town.

With heavy hearts, we bid farewell to the one and only Messner Hotel

Helena Barham

As the youngest of all my siblings to be fortunate enough to come on this course, I felt slightly pressured to live up to expectations. I had heard a mixture of stories - the serenity of the water, the beauty of the art and architecture, and civilised dinners with friends and their visiting parents, starkly contrasted to the accounts (or lack thereof) of the clever wine that came in 1 euro cartons, being in Piccolo Mondo until kicked out at 4 in the morning, and the notorious Arsenale carnival raves. With these two very different pictures in mind, I went, not really knowing what to expect. One thing both sides of the story had in common was the great friends they came away with.



I saw both sides of Venice; highlights being the Guggenheim collection, the gorgeous mosaics in San Marco and Ravenna, and to an extent the long evenings spent in Campo Santa Margherita followed inevitably by a trip to Piccolo Mondo. I remember being terrified entering the national gallery on my first day, seeing so many new faces, scanning over them and wondering (hoping) who I might end up being friends with. Looking back, it seems trivial now, having got to know so many new people, as well as some great friends who I know I will be in contact with for life. I feel I have definitely lived up to the family expectations and will be coming away with hundreds of memories to relish forever

Julian Potter

London – my experience as an alien

I flew into London on a red eye flight. The airline food gave me indigestion the entire way. I went to Church soon after I arrived at my host family's house. My room-mate thought I was a drug addict when I came back. If they drugged the airline food, they must have used some pretty low quality drugs.

London, like most big cities, has a pleasant energy to it. Everyone moves around busily and with purpose. The whole world around me was in perpetual motion. But I was still feeling the effects of jet lag four days into the course. The only motion I was thinking about involved walking to my bed.

Constant interaction with people my age was new to me, because I had never attended anything like a boarding school. So I began the task of meeting some of the people I would become friends with in the next nine weeks. London was the easiest week to deal with. We had fun times ahead but at that time I had no idea of what was coming my way!

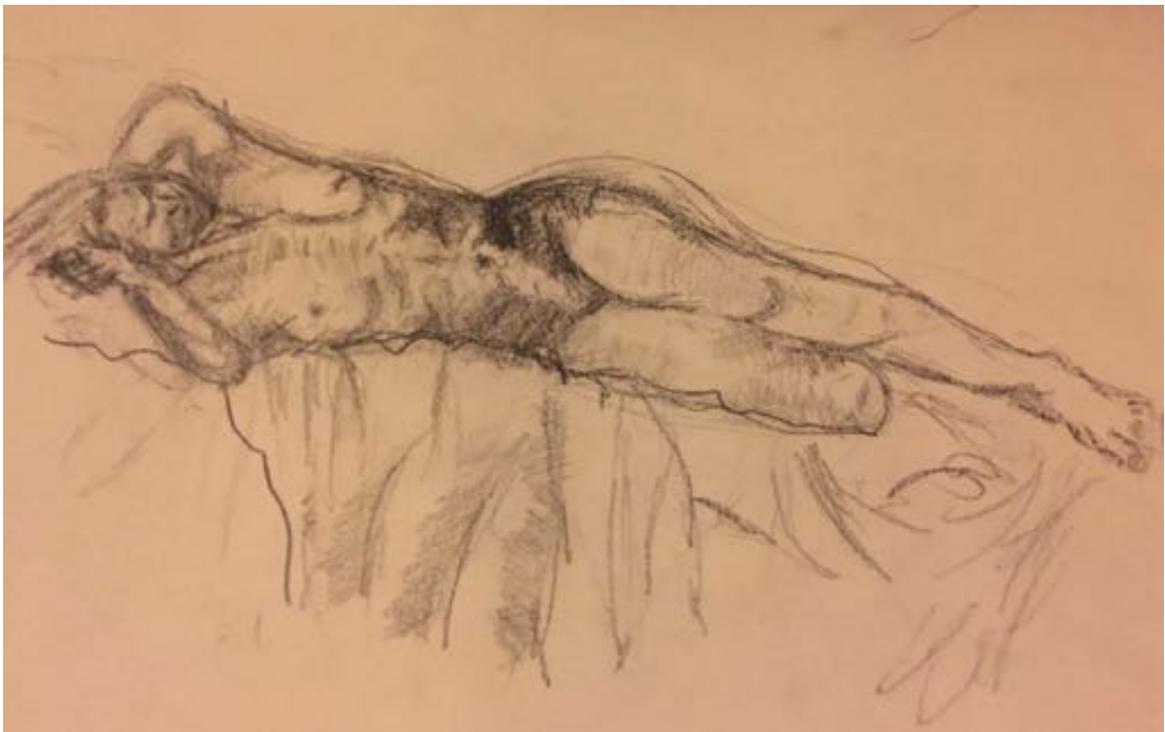


Theo Simmons

Painting above Palanca

“Take your time”, Geoffrey advises as I attempt to lasso the semblance of a foreshortened elbow onto the paper with loose pencil rings. “Search for it”. We are perched, in a semi-circle, around the standing model at the center of our life-drawing class. To the mostly amateur ensemble her elegant professionalism feels like a dropped gauntlet and so we scratch away in contemplative silence. Around us lean canvases in various stages of completion and stacks of frames. Everything appears paint-splattered apart from the mirrors covering the back wall and a skeleton in jaunty military headgear observing our progress from the corner. From the open windows drift in sounds of launch engines and street bustle that mingle with the blues crooning through the studio. Across the water, lit with an evening glow worthy of Canaletto, can be glimpsed the facades of Dorsoduro and the tangled roofscapes of Venice behind.

For those interested in art or atmosphere sessions at NO. 22 Giudecca, the studio of Geoffrey Humphries, is a highlight of the course. Geoffrey is patient, knowledgeable and like the best teachers seems always to advise or enlighten rather than instruct. As a critic of our output he was honest but encouraging and inspiring as he erases work with the same intensity with which he creates it. Wishing to spare friends mutilations at my hand I attempted a self-portrait and found him primed to oversee painful but necessary surgical removals. It is one of the enjoyable privileges of the course to have Venice transformed from a picture postcard into somewhere fleshed-out and familiar. Dressed in a cassock-like bohemian overall, when prompted, Geoffrey held forth as high priest of his studio- mumbling the rites of artist’s lives and times or relating international webs of Venetian gossip. His evening drinks and art sessions ensured that, although the view from the windows might have evoked Canaletto, we had some entry into the Venice reflected in his studio mirrors.



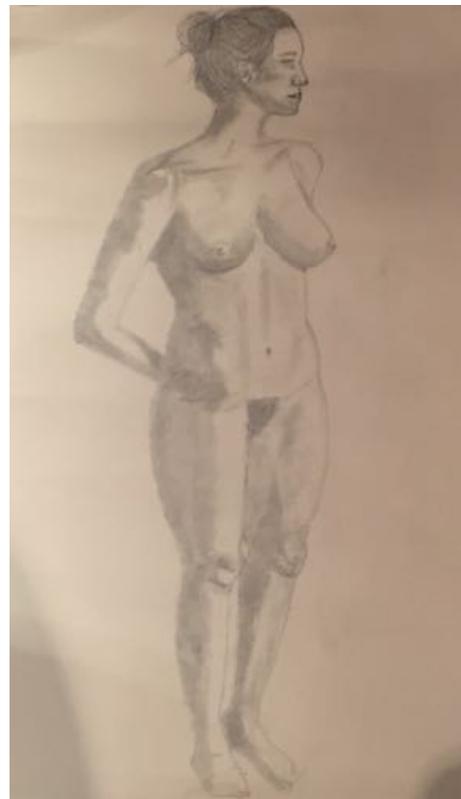
Theo Simmons – Nude – drawn at Geoffrey Humphries studio class



Emily Peers



Em Playne



Alice McMorran



Lexie Turner



Lucy Browne-Swinburne

On becoming a Grand Tourist

Only having been to Venice once before, my knowledge of the ancient city was almost non-existent. I came to Venice as a tourist, attracted by the carnival masks, pizza and “murano” glass. This didn’t really change until our private visit to the Basilica of San Marco on our fourth full day in Venice. Having seen the impressive Basilica on my previous trip to Venice I had looked forward to this visit, but I didn’t realize how much this site would affect me. Our group arrived in San Marco at night, but the square was just as crowded as ever. As we were led through the entrance of the San Marco Basilica by our guide, Nicholas True, I first noticed something that is usually quite rare near the energetic San Marco: silence. We were the only people inside the entire Basilica. After regarding the gilded mosaics we were led into the main part of the Basilica. Taken aback by the grandness of the space, everyone fell quiet, even Nicholas True. The main lights were off and the low glow of the emergency lights made it just possible to safely find a seat. No one said a word, and although we may not all be religious, I’m sure we can all agree it was a awe-inspiring and divine experience. I got the feeling of finally being a traveller. Once the lights were turned on we were fully able to gape at the beauty that actually surrounded us. Between the unique start of our visit to San Marco and then exploring it with Nicholas True, this was one of my favorite visits of the trip. I’ll never forget this experience and I’m so fortunate I was able to enjoy it with all my John Hall Venice friends.



Sophie Ritt

Things we will miss- and things we will not miss about Venice

Lexie

- 1 The Duchamp and people shouting "Ravenna"
- 2 Not being able to eat English food

Maria

- 1 Joy riding the vaporetto to catch the sunset
- 2 Dog turd minefields that are the streets

Alice

- 1 Communal wardrobes
- 2 The mouldy smiling pig shaped ham in the protein fridge (windowsill)

Willa

- 1 Prosecco at all hours
- 2 Her incomprehensible conversations with the maintenance man

Sophie Ritt

- 1 Pasta every night
- 2 Pasta every night

Ben

- 1 Mates
- 2 Having to sleep in other people's rooms

Sophia

- 1 Charlie's hat, Jaques the Piccolo bouncer, solo breakfasts with Helena
- 2 The unreliable temperature of the lecture room, the duomo bells at 7am exactly (when in Florence), unsalted butter

Sophie Peck

- 1 Pizza al Vollo, Daniele Messner the astrophysicist, canals, getting on any vap and just yoloing about cos it is all beaut anyway
- 2 Being on the verge of chundering at Piccolo but never actually committing to do it, weird bread, pasta as a starter

Lucy

- 1 All the money that is no longer in her bank
- 2 Experiencing an aqua alta without wellies

Beth

- 1 Grenades
- 2 Piccolo toilets

George Butt

- 1 Ravenna, Peter Luitzen and other people's parents picking up the tab for my boozing, losing weight due to thrush diet
- 2 No baths, Italians who have no idea how to brew beer, thrush and being cut off from steak and ale pies and Grimsby town FC

Theo

- 1 Zattere sunsets
- 2 Dodging the tourists

Helena Barham

- 1 Clever prosecco and strawberries in plastic take away cups from Campo Sant Margherita
- 2 The lack of Aga and Labradors

THE JOHN HALL VENICE COURSE
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Lexie Turner: The South face of Basilica San Marco (homage to John Ruskin!)

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