

**Artist Melissa McGill Launches Large-Scale Public Art Project on Venice's Lagoon and Canals
Choreographing Fleet of Historic Sailboats in Series of Regattas from May through November**

**Created with the Associazione Vela al Terzo Venezia and Magazzino Italian Art Foundation,
Red Regatta Celebrates Local Maritime History and Calls Attention to the Fragile Balance Between City of
Venice and the Sea**

*Project Commences with Artist Talk and Community Open House (May 8) and Preview Regatta (May 11),
with Additional Performances Coinciding with Annual Regata Storica and Regata di Burano*

Venice, Italy – May 6, 2019 – From May through November, artist [Melissa McGill](#) is choreographing a series of large-scale regattas across Venice's lagoon and canals in a major public art project that celebrates the city's maritime history and calls attention to the forces of climate change and mass tourism that threaten its future. Unfolding in multiple parts, *Red Regatta* fills Venice's waterways with 52 traditional *vela al terzo* sailboats, hoisted with hand-painted red sails. Bringing together over 250 local partners, *Red Regatta* is co-organized by [Magazzino Italian Art Foundation](#), presented in collaboration with [Associazione Vela al Terzo Venezia](#), and curated by Chiara Spangaro and project manager Marcella Ferrari.

Red Regatta commences on May 8 with an artist talk and community open house at Ocean Space and a preview regatta on May 11 on the northern lagoon at Fondamente Nove. Additional regattas will sail at various points throughout the duration of Venice's Biennale until November, including during the annual Regata Storica in the Bacino di San Marco and the Regata di Burano in September. *Red Regatta* will be visible through vistas across the city and ideal viewing locations can be accessed in [an interactive map on the artist's website](#).

In conjunction with the regattas, artist-led workshops and public programs developed in collaboration with partners, such as [Ocean Space](#) and [No Longer Empty](#), explore the project's themes in relation to the traditions that have shaped Venetian life for a millennium. *Red Regatta* is the first artwork to be registered as a [Clean Regatta](#), a program of Sailors for the Sea that mobilizes sailors to protect the ocean through education and activism.

Venice's *vela al terzo* were designed with a flat bottom and removable mast to navigate the city's waterways and have been sailed for more than a thousand years. As the boats glide through the lagoon in unison against the sky, sea, and cityscape, the reds reference forces of life and passion, alarm and urgency, and Venice itself—from its bricks and terra cotta rooftops, to its flag and history of trade in red pigment, to paintings by Titian, Tintoretto, and other Venetian masters.

Details on *Red Regatta* programming confirmed to date follows below, with additional programs through November to be announced in the coming months.

***Red Regatta* Artist Talk and Open House**

May 8, 2019, 10:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Ocean Space, Chiesa di San Lorenzo (Castello 5069, 30122 Venezia)

The first official program of *Red Regatta* invites local Venetians and visitors alike to an Open House, organized with mission-aligned Ocean Space, that includes an artist talk, community reception, and the opportunity to see several participating sailboats up-close, moored in the canal in front of Campo di San Lorenzo.

Artist Melissa McGill, president of the Associazione Vela al Terzo Venezia Giorgio Righetti, and the director of TBA21–Academy Markus Reymann present a short program that will spur conversations on *Red Regatta* and

the project's core themes: the environment and maritime traditions that have shaped life in Venice for a millennium.

The Open House is presented in collaboration with Ocean Space, a new platform for oceanic research and artistic innovation in the recently revitalized Church of San Lorenzo. Additional *Red Regatta* programming developed with Ocean Space will be announced this summer.

Red Regatta Preview

May 11, 2019, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Route: Bacini - Fondamente Nove

Viewing locations: Fondamente Nove, from Fondamente Nove vaporetto stop to Ospedale vaporetto stop; Calle Giazzo, from Celestia vaporetto stop to Associazione Vela al Terzo headquarters

On May 11, the first public day of the Biennale, a preview performance of *Red Regatta* including more than 50 traditional *vela al terzo* sailboats, embarks on Venice's northern lagoon between Fondamente Nove and Isola di San Michele. Audiences are encouraged to join the artist and sailors at a reception following the event at the Associazione Vela al Terzo headquarters.

Red Regatta

June 30, 2019, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Route: San Servolo – Poveglia

Viewing locations: Riva dei Sette Martiri; Viale Giardini Pubblici; San Servolo Island; Lido's Lagoon waterfront

Navigating the waters between the islands of San Servolo and Poveglia, *Red Regatta* will weave through the historic landscape and activate the architecture with the choreographed flotilla. Starting between San Servolo and Venice, *Red Regatta* will move towards Poveglia, in parallel to the Lagoon coast of Lido.

Red Regatta, coinciding with Venice's Regata Storica

September 1, 2019, 12:00 – 2:00 p.m.

Route: Canale della Giudecca – Bacino San Marco – Canal Grande

Viewing locations: Fondamenta Zattere; Punta della Dogana; Isola di San Giorgio Maggiore; Piazza San Marco and Riva degli Schiavoni; Fondamenta della Giudecca, side of Canale della Giudecca Canal Grande

Joining the annual Regata Storica, a celebration of Venetian maritime culture dating back to the 13th century, *Red Regatta* will stage an evanescent performance on the Canale della Giudecca and Bacino San Marco. Starting between Sacca Fisola and San Basilio, navigating the Canale della Giudecca, the performance will reach the Bacino San Marco between Punta della Dogana, Piazza San Marco and San Giorgio Maggiore Island.

Red Regatta

September 15, 2019, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Route: Burano – Torcello

Viewing locations: Burano waterfront; Torcello waterfront

Concurrently with the historic Regata di Burano, which features the centuries old tradition of the *voga alla veneta*, *Red Regatta* will move through the Northern lagoon between Burano and Torcello. Engaging with the landscape of this unique section of Venice with its ancient Roman ruins and distinctive architecture, the *vela al terzo* fleet will weave through the islands and call attention to the location's history and traditions.

About the Artist

McGill is an interdisciplinary artist based in New York who creates ambitious, large-scale, site-specific art projects, and works in a variety of media, including photography, painting, drawing, sculpture, sound, light, and immersive installation. Her work connects viewers to overlooked histories and traditions, explores the conversation between the visible and the invisible, and heightens awareness of our surroundings.

Melissa McGill lived in Venice from 1991-93, and returns regularly for inspiration, for work, and for friendship. *Red Regatta* was inspired by her observations over more than two decades of the challenges Venice is facing given the impact of climate change and intense tourism. Melissa's intimate knowledge of Venice and her deep personal and professional relationships in the city have made it possible for her to develop this ambitious project. She is particularly passionate about the collaborative aspect and the fact that *Red Regatta* will involve many members of the local community. The project has been intentionally designed to welcome the participation and enjoyment of local citizens and to honor their abiding love for their city.

Her previous sculptural sound work, *The Campi*, May 2017, invoked daily life in the Venetian Campo and was presented at Carlo Scarpa's Casa/Studio Scatturin, Università Iuav di Venezia and Giorgio Mastinu Fine Art in Venice, Italy. *Constellation*, 2015-2017, installed on an island in the Hudson River, New York, lit each night creating a new constellation transforming Bannerman castle ruin. McGill has been exhibiting her artwork nationally and internationally since 1991, including solo exhibitions at The Permanent Mission of Italy at the United Nations, New York; TOTAH, New York; Francesco Pantaleone Arte Contemporanea, Milan; White Cube, London; Power House, Memphis; Palazzo Capello, Venice; and CRG Gallery, New York.

Project Team

Magazzino Italian Art Foundation, Co-Organizer

Magazzino Italian Art Foundation is a museum in Cold Spring, New York, devoted to Italian Postwar and Contemporary art. Under the guidance of Director Vittorio Calabrese and his team through its curatorial programs, Magazzino Italian Art Foundation bridges collaborations with American and Italian organizations not only to support contemporary Italian artists but also to foster discussions on Italian Postwar and Contemporary art in the United States and beyond. Additionally, Magazzino sponsors international artist projects whose work is strongly tied to the Italian artistic heritage and to advancing Italian culture, such as *Red Regatta*. Magazzino, which means warehouse in Italian, was co-founded by Nancy Olnick and Giorgio Spanu. Designed by Spanish architect Miguel Quismondo, the 20,000 square-foot structure was completed in June 2017. Magazzino serves as a resource for scholars and students and offers an extensive library and archive of Italian Art. In addition, Magazzino has become a cultural hub for the vibrant Hudson Valley community thanks to joint programs with local organizations. For more info: www.magazzino.art

Chiara Spangaro, Curator

Chiara Spangaro is an art historian and independent curator based in Milan. Operating in the fields of contemporary art, architecture, and design, she is curator of Fondazione Aldo Rossi. In collaboration with Germano Celant, she served as the curatorial associate for Triennale di Milano, 2009-2012, as well as: *Arts & Foods*, 2015; *Christo and Jeanne-Claude: Water Projects* and *Giovanni Gastel*, 2016; *Arman 1954-2005*, 2017; *Post Zang Tumb Tuuum. Art Life Politics: 1918-1943*, 2018; and more. Chiara curated in 2017 *Aldo Rossi e Milano* and McGill's previous Venice-based project, *The Campi*. She co-curated in 2018, *Gio Ponti – Archi-Designer* at the MAD – Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris.

Marcella Ferrari, Project Manager

Marcella is a public art and land art project manager and producer. In 2004, she began working as a production assistant for Germano Celant and she continues to be General Manager of Studio Celant. In 2014, she was appointed the CEO of The Floating Piers Srl, the Italian company that organized the event and the construction

of Christo and Jeanne-Claude's work of art at Lake Iseo, Italy. She currently collaborates with Eight Art Project, as project manager, for the construction of Alberto Garutti's works of art at Ca' Corniani – Terra d'Avanguardia, Caorle, Italia, curated by Elena Tettamanti and Antonella Soldaini, commissioned by Generali Italia Spa.

Partners and Collaborators

Associazione Vela al Terzo Venezia

The Association brings together 120 members to support and spread the knowledge about Venice's lagoon and its millennial maritime tradition. The association's members own their own traditional vela al terzo vessels and operate them. The expertise of Associazione Vela al Terzo is essential to the plotting of the regatta's courses and overall organization of the project. For more information: www.velaalterzo.it.

Mazzoleni

A supporter of *Red Regatta*, Mazzoleni was founded in Turin in 1986 by Giovanni and Anna Pia Mazzoleni, as a natural evolution of their private collection started in the 1950s. The historic Turin space, which occupies three floors of Palazzo Panizza, overlooking the city-centre Piazza Solferino, has since 2014 been flanked by the London gallery in the Mayfair art district. Over the past three decades Mazzoleni has organised solo and group exhibitions of more than 200 prominent Italian and international artists from across the 20th century with an exhibition programme focused on museum-calibre Italian art from the post war period and recently the contemporary panorama, working in close collaboration with artists' estates and foundation. For more information visit www.mazzoleniart.com

Ocean Space

Opened in the spring of 2019, Ocean Space is a new embassy for the oceans that catalyzes transdisciplinary research and fosters collective action—encouraging audiences to radically reimagine how we see and treat the defining feature of our blue planet. Initiated by TBA21–Academy and located in the newly revitalized Church of San Lorenzo in Venice, Ocean Space provides facilities for installations, performances, workshops, archives, and research for TBA21–Academy and the organizations across the globe with which it collaborates.

No Longer Empty

No Longer Empty is *Red Regatta's* collaborator in the development of related public programming, with Manon Slome, co-founder and curator in an advisory role. Based in New York City, No Longer Empty (NLE) is a nonprofit organization committed to bringing bold, site-responsive exhibitions and public programming to unconventional locations, foregrounding art as a catalyst for community-led conversations about place. For more information: www.nolongerempty.com

Sailors for the Sea

Sailors for the Sea is the world's only ocean conservation organization that engages, educates, inspires, and activates the sailing and boating community toward healing the ocean. Since its start in 2004, Sailors for the Sea has worked towards building a community of ocean stewards by offering tools, education, and inspiration so that sailors may become change agents and harness the power of their passion to heal the ocean. Sailors for the Sea is headquartered in Newport, Rhode Island and has three affiliates; [Sailors for the Sea Japan](#); [Sailors for the Sea Portugal](#); and [Sailors for the Sea Chile](#).

Clean Regattas

Clean Regattas is the world's only sustainability certification for water-based events. The program enables sailors to protect their local waters by empowering them with tips and resources to implement sustainability initiatives. Since 2006, more than 1,350 Clean Regattas have been run in 36 countries and in over half of all the United States. To learn more contact Robyn Albritton (robyn@sailorsforthesea.org) or visit sailorsforthesea.org.

Golden Artist Colors, Inc.

Golden Artist Colors, Inc. has donated the paint used in creating *Red Regatta*. Golden Artist Colors, Inc. is a manufacturer of artist quality materials including colors and mediums for painting in acrylics, oils, and most recently, watercolor. With two locations, a 100,000-square-foot facility in rural Columbus, N.Y., and a 45,000-square-foot commercial warehouse and distribution center in Norwich, N.Y., the company's over 220 full-time employees are committed to producing materials that encourage exploration of form and concept, while assuring archival integrity. For information, call 1-800-959-6543 or visit www.goldenpaints.com, www.williamsburgoils.com or www.qorcolors.com.

Spazio Thetis

Spazio Thetis generously gave *Red Regatta* access to the historic interior of the Venetian Arsenale to paint the sails. Since its founding, Spazio Thetis supports and promotes contemporary art, exhibitions, and meetings at its headquarters located in the ancient Venetian Arsenale. Thetis began its activity 25 years ago as "Consortium Thetis" with the ambition to create a hub for maritime technologies and activities inside the Arsenale of Venice. Since 1996, Thetis has developed specific expertise in sustainable development and environmental engineering, working in the lagoon of Venice, a premiere socio-economic and environmental system in the world that has kept its identity as the built and natural environment changes. For more information visit www.thetis.it

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