

Grand Canal

DIRECTION

Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti

TEXT

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MUSIC

Bruno Nicolai

PHOTOGRAPHY

Carlo Ventimiglia

YEAR

1963

PRODUCTION

Romor Film, Milano (for Direzione Pubblicità e Stampa Olivetti).

FORMAT

35 mm, 16 mm

LANGUAGE

Italian, English and Russian

DURATION

18'30''

FILM

Colour

SERIES

seleARTE Cinematografica, Critofilm 16

DESCRIPTION

The documentary focuses on the purpose of the Grand Canal in the urban context of Venice. The reading tool of the city is once again the overhead shot, highlighting how Venice is a group of islands and canals connected by this river route interrupted by the Rialto Bridge. The film starts with a series of aerial views and then changes its point of view and frames the sky from below above the opening of a "stream". "The sky is a constant reference in Venice. Then suddenly one descends along the decorated facades of the palazzos, over the water of the canals". The whole film is based on these passages between an aerial and a terrestrial view, between a monumental and lavish Venice and a Venice "of equal structure, but no longer marmoreal and Most Serene, a poor sister, with wooden bridges, corroded walls, squalid streams". The Grand Canal is completely covered and its most important buildings are framed (San Trovaso, l'Accademia, Riva degli Schiavoni), up to Piazza San Marco (St Mark's Square) where the camera pauses to the Basilica, the Campanile, The Doge's Palace, the Salute and the Punta della Dogana. The aerial views highlight the road network structure of the canals and the streets, the system of the pedestrian – nautical traffic, which determined the Venetian urban structure. At the end of the film, the camera goes back to the Grand Canal up to the outskirts of the city, where there are those channels that played a defensive function in the past, to end up with a "long shot" over the now distant city.

