

# THOSE MERCHANTS OF VENICE



ST. MARKS SQUARE

VENICE IS KNOWN FOR ITS VAPORETTOS, SIDEWALKS THAT END WITHOUT WARNING, 117 SMALL ISLANDS, 150 CANALS AND 409 BRIDGES.  
— RON SHIPMON

In June boatloads of Vuitton-wearing, Goyard bag-carrying media and artworld cognoscenti will descend upon Venice for the widely anticipated grand dame of all contemporary art and multimedia events, La Biennale di Venezia, or, more commonly, the 52nd Venice Biennale.

This international exhibition, which takes place once every two years, makes art accessible by providing it as theater and entertainment.

Established in 1895 to celebrate the silver anniversary of King Umberto and Queen Margherita of La Casa di Savola (the House of Savoy), the Biennale has been in the avant-garde, promoting new artistic trends and international events in contemporary arts with a multi-disciplinary focus.

For 150 days from June 10 through November 21, 2007, 70 countries will take up

residence in 30 international pavilions at the Giardini, an area of parkland created by Napoleon Bonaparte. Napoleon drained an area of marshland in order to create this public garden on



GAGGIANDRE, ARSENALE

Top photo courtesy of John Jewell; bottom photo courtesy of Fondazione La Biennale di Venezia.



A LIGHT INSTALLATION BY FELIX GONZALEZ-TORRES, 1994

the banks of the Bacino di San Marco from St. Mark's Square and the Doge's Palace.

Representing the United States Pavilion at the 52nd Venice Biennale is an exhibition of the work by Felix Gonzalez-Torres, the Cuban-born American artist, who died of AIDS-related complications in 1996. Gonzalez-Torres is one of only two artists

ing. The US Pavilion will feature a new work based on the artist's drawings but not completed during his lifetime.

In addition to the world-class visual art, the Biennale includes, music, dance, dramatic arts, as well as an ultra-elite celebrity-driven film festival which makes Sundance seem like a Saturday night at Loews Cineplex. ♦

ever chosen posthumously to represent the United States at the Biennale.

Gonzalez-Torres was known for his quiet, minimal installations and sculptures. Using materials such as strings of lightbulbs, clocks, stacks of paper and hard candies, he allowed the viewer to enter his work and become a participant in the art. These compelling works encourage reflection on change and experience of life and are meditations on love and loss.

Many of his installations invite the viewer to take a piece of the work with them: A series of works allow viewers to take wrapped candies from a pile, while another series is comprised of endless copies of offset print on paper, also free for the viewer to take. These installations may or may not be replenished by the exhibitor as they diminish, thereby creating a work which is ever chang-

Photos courtesy of The estate of Gonzalez-Torres

## CALENDAR OF EVENTS 2007

### ART

52nd International Art Exhibition  
(Venice Biennale)  
*June 10 – November 21, 2007*

### CINEMA

64th Venice International Film  
Festival  
*August 29 – September 8, 2007*

### DANCE

5th International Festival of  
Contemporary Dance  
*June 14 – 30, 2007*

### MUSIC

51st International Festival of  
Contemporary Music  
*October 4 – 13, 2007*

### THEATER

39th International Theatre  
Festival  
*July 18 – 29, 2007*

For ticket information to all events  
contact <http://www.labiennale.org>