



By Diana Galstyan

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The opportunity to come back to Venice to work sparked my mind immediately. I knew it could have a big impact on my life changing it for good and helping me to grow both as a person and as an artist. Though **Vela** wasn't my first choice, I learned to shift my perspective, and now, when my internship is over, I wouldn't trade it for more practical domestic experience if I could.

I started my internship August 10th. My first impression was wonderful, I entered the office from the wrong side but the workers on the front desk knew my name and took me all the way to my department, I understood that they were waiting for me, and I felt much more relaxed and confident.

On my first day I met my boss Giovanna and few other members of staff. Giovanna spent whole day with me, though she had a lot of tasks to do. She explained me everything, about the company, about our department, her role there and what she is expecting from me. She showed me some videos and pictures so I could understand better. On the same day I received my personal card which allowed me to use the public transport for free and also to have a free lunch in local dining room. I went to the lunch with other workers, they all were very nice and friendly to me trying to help with everything even though most of them spoke little English. The warm environment at **Vela** is one of the main things I loved about my internship. They became my second family.

During my first two weeks at Vela I was doing different kind of tasks not connected directly to *Regata Storica* (the main purpose of my internship), simply because the preparation of *Regata Storica* had not started yet. My first mission was to edit a short video of last *Festa del Redentore*. It was uploaded to official YouTube channel of **Venezia Unica** and shared on all social media accounts of the organization. Here is the link to the video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wm9p-w9P7nE&feature=youtu.be>. That period I spent mostly in the office, working with official Instagram, Facebook and Twitter of the company, uploading pictures, videos and news.

Our first day out was a week later, we had a photo trip to Mazzorbo, Burano and Torcello islands, when our final destination was **Casa Andrich**, a museum-house with educational garden that overlooks the Rose lagoon, adorable place. Giovanna interviewed the artist and I was responsible of photo-video part.

My second day out of the office was when Giovanna gave me the cameras and sent me to walk around Venice by myself, to film some interesting places so we could have fresh points of view on Venice. I spent that day on Lido, then walked through the narrow streets of Castello and finished my day on S.Giorgio's bell tower. One of the photos I made there is used now as a cover picture of **Venezia Unica**'s official Facebook page.

Two weeks before the *Regata Storica* the preparation had started. First of all, the preparation of *Voga in Arsenale*, the prologue of *Regata*. I made a promotion video for the website, here is the link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1XKIWQv3S_U. And also two short teaser videos for some TV channel. *Voga in Arsenale* took place on Saturday, 29th of August. I had my own pass that allowed me to enter the main spot where the jury and the commentators were sitting, I made a lot of videos and pictures of the race, teams and staff, and also during the awarding ceremony.

Next week (my fourth week there) was the busiest one, Giovanna and I barely spent time in office, because we had appointments every single day. In **Remiera Burano** we were sitting in motor boat in the middle of the Lagoon and taking pictures and videos during the training of *Regatanti*; in **Canottieri Bucintoro** in Zattere the gondoliers took us for a ride around Giudecca on a real gondola; in **Canottieri Querini** we got a guided tour about the place, and in **Canottieri Cannaregio** we saw a training of two women-participants of the *Regata* and followed their *gondolino* with our motor boat. Later I filmed an interview with one of them, when the interviewer was Marco, a member of **Rugagiuffa** team. Thursday 3th of September was a day of the blessings of *gondolini* in Salute. It was very beautiful event - a chorus of the elderly singing traditional Venetian songs, colorful *gondolini* in front of the magnificent Salute Church, the blessings of the Priest and laying flowers for Virgin Mary in the end. I was really touched and enjoyed that day.

The big event of *Regata Storica* took place on 6th of September, Sunday. I had luck and honor to be on a boat whole day along with official photographers and to follow the beautiful historical parade that made me feel like I'm back in time or on a set of some historical movie. The boats, the costumes, the live orchestra – it was unbelievably beautiful. And then the culmination of *Regata Storica* began - the race of gondoliers all along the Grand Canal. It was both super entertaining and exciting. I will definitely remember this amazing day for long long time!

Next and last week I worked with all the materials we got during the previous week. Being a photographer for such an important company as **Vela** is a big responsibility but also an enjoyment. I improved and developed new set of skills during this internship, I believe it's going to help me a lot in my future career.

Five weeks of internship passed so fast, I wish I can stay more. My goodbye party was very emotional, everyone came to bid farewell to me. I got an amazing gift – a book with pictures of whole Venice and a big bouquet of flowers. It's hard to say goodbye to such wonderful people, but I know that every end is a new beginning.



I want to say a great thanks to everyone at **VIU** and **Vela**, who gave me an opportunity to come back to beautiful Venice and discover it from another side. My special thanks to Prof. Luca Pes - my internship tutor; to amazing Cristina Di Gioia, who worked so hard to find a proper internship option for me; and of course to my lovely boss Giovanna Cicogna, who believed in me and let me express myself. I can't express in words how much grateful I am to all of you for your kindness and care! Thank you for the memories!