



Faithful to its mission to promote Italian heritage and to spread the knowledge and appreciation of art, culture, and science throughout the world, the Bracco Foundation has deep roots in the values built up over eighty years by the Bracco family and the Bracco Group. These values place corporate social responsibility at the forefront in an effort to improve the quality of life and to promote social cohesion.

The Bracco Foundation, therefore, is honored to support the National Gallery of Art in Washington as official sponsor of the exhibition *Venice: Canaletto and His Rivals*, in which the city is portrayed by Canaletto, Bellotto, Guardi, and their contemporaries in a series of *vedute*, or view paintings, that are unrivalled in the history of art. This cultural project reinforces the bond that brought Bracco and the National Gallery of Art together five years ago, in 2006, when Bracco supported a magnificent exhibition devoted to the great Renaissance masters Bellini, Giorgione, and Titian.

The present exhibition, combining art and science as two related facets of seeing and understanding the world, will give ample consideration to the optical device known as the camera obscura, which may well have been used by the *vedutisti*, Marieschi and Canaletto in particular, to construct their views. In this way the colorful, light-filled canvases in the exhibition, showing la Serenissima in all her changing aspects and moods, appear to have a scientific perspective as well.

In Venice, as Joseph Brodsky wrote, "*Depict, Depict! the light cries to you, mistaking you for some Canaletto or Carpaccio or Guardi.*"

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