

Presents the first edition of

**LITERARY PRIZE**

**"LA CALCINA - JOHN RUSKIN"**

**WRITE ARCHITECTURE**



**On the initiative of the Hotel-Ristorante La Calcina and the RO.SA AM association. Has been announced the first edition of the award La Calcina – John Ruskin: "Write of Architecture"**

**THE ORIGIN OF THE PRIZE**

You do not learn to write, at least if you start from a certain idiosyncrasy with the medium. You can improve by working on it, but a little "vocation" is needed. How to write a text? How long must it be? How do you attract the reader's attention? It is even more difficult to write about architecture. Write about Architecture and do not write Architecture. A seemingly rhetorical phrase? Absolutely not. Not all good historians, critics, can design. They have the ability to read the architecture of others, but they cannot express themselves with one of their own. On the other hand, not all good architects can write, theorize. John Ruskin was not an architect but who better than him told us about the gothic architecture, up to start a new trend in England, the "Neo-Gothic" in fact. Writing is broadcast a message with charm and at the same time with clarity. But explaining the "forms" in writing is not easy, as it is not simple to show an object and its relative spatial concept only with



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words. Even more difficult is to convey the "feeling" of the architect by using only sentences in a book. Writing and talking about architecture is an art; and with the La Calcina-John Ruskin Prize, absolutely unique, we want to give international merit every two years, in conjunction with the Venice Architecture Biennale, to those who know it very well, with traditional or innovative ways, who with his words can give the reader that "forward shot" very useful and fundamental for the critical understanding of a complex architecture project.



## JOHN RUSKIN IN VENICE

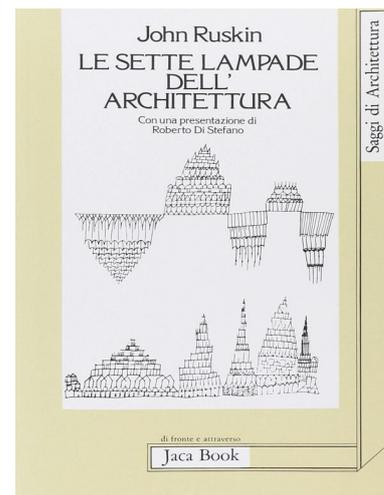
John Ruskin (London, 8 February 1819-Brantwood, 20 January 1900) was an English writer, painter and art critic.

His interpretation of art and architecture strongly influenced Victorian and Edwardian aesthetics. His first trip to Italy in 1840, which along the classic Grand Tour stages, led him with his parents through France and Italy to Paestum, and this is also the occasion for the discovery of

Venice, where he will return several times for long periods.

During these stays Ruskin dwelt at La Calcina on the Fondamenta delle Zattere. In the first part of his early career (in 1837 his articles on architecture already appeared) until about 1860, his interests gravitated around the history of art and the nature of artistic creation. "Modern painters" (Modern Painters, 1843-60) in six volumes, initially written in defense and exaltation of the great English landscape painter Joseph Turner, is a veritable aesthetic treatise on the art of painting.

In "Seven lamps of architecture" (The seven lamps of architecture, 1849) he illustrated the fundamental principles of architecture, magnifying the Gothic style and trying to relate art with morals. In "The Stones of Venice" (Three Stones of Venice, 1851-53) of three volumes, he celebrated the origins and meaning of Gothic art by relating it with the moral virtues of the society that had produced it and attributed its decadence to the disappearance of these virtues.



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The essay "Pre-Raphaelitism" (Pre-Raphaeliteism, 1851) is of considerable historical interest, given the success of the pre-Raphaelite movement.

## "THE ARCHITECTURE IS THE ADAPTING OF FORMS TO CONTRARY FORCES"

**JOHN RUSKIN**

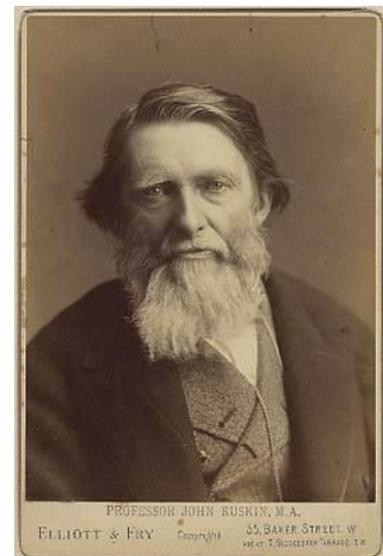


So in addition to resurrecting the fate of a Turner now on the avenue of sunset, unleash the trend for the Neogothic style and make the fortune of the Pre-Raphaelites, John Ruskin invented the art critic as we understand it today. Consider that with the publication of fundamental essays such as "The Stones of Venice" he promoted a "Gothic Revival" that became the dominant style of Victorian public buildings. John Ruskin is also known for his very particular position towards architectural restoration. His concept of restoration defined as "romantic restoration", considers the conservation intervention to be immoral, commonly practiced in his era, intended as a replacement of

the original with his copy.

He therefore supports the need first of all to preserve the existing, admitting those interventions of common maintenance (replacement of a damaged tile, replacement of a single stone), but also of shoring, useful to prolong the life of ancient architecture as much as possible, to which the right must also be recognized, when the time has come, to die. John Ruskin recognized three indivisible phases in the life of the monument: the project or the beginning, the function and the moment of conservation. For Ruskin there was only one creation, when the author "gives life" to the work, keeping in mind the "behavior", the effects of time and the duration of the latter,

designing it for example with durable materials. The value of antiquity and authenticity of a work was given according to Ruskin through the patina that covered it, a sign of time that testified to his life and



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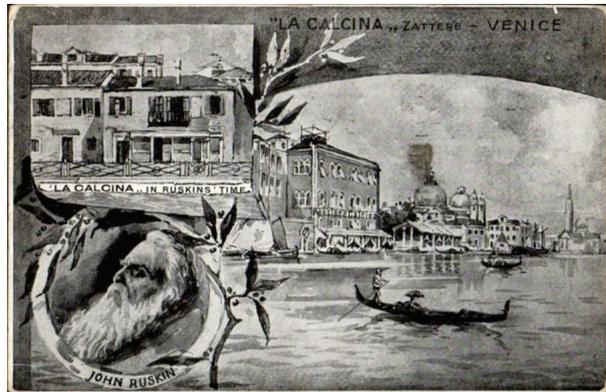
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his material individuality. Ruskin claimed that the ruin of a monument was inexorable, the end of a building was certain: it was born, lived and died and conservation was only a way to delay  
The fight against eternity, according to the critic, was a cause already lost, it was a biological process like his birth and his life. With the conservation it could only prolong the natural life of the monument this implied an inevitable transformation of it. Ruskin took as an example the beauty of a ruin immersed completely in a forest, among nature.

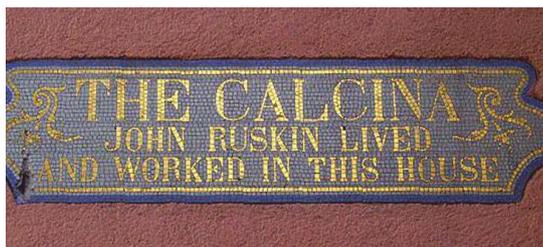
Almost all these theories took its cue from his long Venetian days and months walking in the city that he loved so much and that he saw by now inexorably decay. Many of these pages were written in his chamber of La Ccalcina, with a view of the island of Giudecca. This is the first reason for this literary award and its title.

## JOHN RUSKIN AND THE HOTEL – RISTORANTE LA CALCINA

The Hotel La Calcina owes its name to the warehouse of 'calcineri' - lime sellers - that in the seventeenth century found space within its walls and caused the frequent passage of boats loaded with stones and lime under the nearby bridge, today called precisely Ponte della Calcina.



With the passing of time, the old warehouse became accommodation, inn, guesthouse and finally



hotel, recognized today among the Historic Places of Italy and the Historic Cafes of Europe, appreciated by travelers from all over the world for at least a couple of centuries and by writers such as the French André Suarés and Philippe Sollers and John Ruskin, who made it his home

in the spring of 1877.

Here he began to write the memorable *The Stones of Venice*.

The centuries have left their mark everywhere and every building is mentioned in some way in the pages of the history of the city. Just in front of the Giudecca island and the church of the Redeemer, there is a walk of the Venetians, the Zattere, one of the most luminous and evocative places.

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## REASONS OF THE EWARD

The award is aimed at those who have written about the city, especially that of Venice, not only in its complexity and historical-artistic density, but also in light of contemporary themes: among these, the coexistence between the new and the ancient, the possibility of coexisting the need to "preserve" with the needs of a modern city and / or with the developments and challenges of the future.

The award ceremony will take place on the occasion of the inauguration of the Venice Architecture Biennale 2018 (23th-26th May 2018)



## PRESS CONFERENCE 07TH MARCH 2018



### FOR MORE INFORMATIONS:

<http://premioletterario-lacalcina-johnruskin.com/>

<https://www.facebook.com/Premio-Letterario-La-Calcina-John-Ruskin-379187879192653/>

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