

THE FAMOUS ENGLISH PAINTER WILLIAM TURNER IN BELLINZONA

Turner, Joseph Mallord William (London, 23 April 1775 - Chelsea, 19 December 1851) **was the greatest and most prolific English painter and engraver.**

La Corsa più Medievale della Terra!



William Turner, *Self-Portrait* (c. 1799), © [Tate Gallery](https://www.tate.org.uk), [Tate London](https://www.tate.org.uk)

A member of the Romantic movement, Turner began painting at the age of ten. In 1789, he entered the Royal Academy of Arts School. **His style laid the foundations for the birth of Impressionism and was a forerunner of Abstractionism.**

Although in his time he was considered a controversial figure in painting (he was even mocked by his fellow contemporaries), **Turner is today regarded as the artist who elevated landscape painting to a level where it could compete with the more emblazoned history painting.**

Famous for his oil paintings, **Turner was also one of Britain's greatest masters of watercolour landscapes, earning him the nickname "painter of light".**

At the beginning of the 19th century, in the wake of the English fashion of the *Grand Tour*, which - also triggered by the new interest in the Alpine landscape - gave rise to tourism in Switzerland, Turner, as was also the case for other artists who travelled to Italy to visit ancient ruins by crossing the St. Gotthard Pass, often passed through Ticino.

In 1819, but above all between 1842 and 1843, he was one of the first English artists to make Ticino the favourite destination of his travels, dedicating various sketches to our region. Turner was particularly fascinated by Bellinzona, of which he produced innumerable watercolour views (among the best known and most reproduced images of Bellinzona itself): the paintings bear witness to the interest the artist had in our landscape and its artistic and picturesque potential.

Over the course of his career, William Turner created more than 32'000 works, most of which are now held by Tate Britain, a complex of four British art galleries: two of them are based in London (Tate Gallery and Tate Modern), while the other two are located in Liverpool (Tate Liverpool), respectively in St. Ives in Cornwall (Tate St. Ives).

Most of Turner's works dedicated to Bellinzona are deposited at the Tate London, but there are also, for example, works at the British Museum of London, the Oldham Gallery in Manchester, the Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums in Scotland or the Indianapolis Museum of Art in the United States.

(sources: [Wikipedia: William Turner](#), [International celebrities in Ticino](#), [Encyclopedia Treccani](#) e [An Englishman in Bellinzona di Laura Pedrioli](#)).

In the context of the first edition of BELLINZONA CASTLES & GO (Sunday 29th May 2022), a cultural banner dedicated to Turner was placed at approx. KM 4.5 of the RUNNING RACE route - which is also part of the WALKING/NORDIC WALKING RACE route - at a point where the direct (frontal) view of the castles of Sasso Corbaro, Montebello and Castel Grande and the historic centre of Bellinzona recalls that immortalised in 1842 (or 1841) by William Turner himself in his watercolour *Bellinzona from the North*. Purpose: to inform and make race participants aware of the historical presence, on several occasions, of William Turner in Bellinzona and the great interest that one of the most important and celebrated painters of all time took in Bellinzona itself.

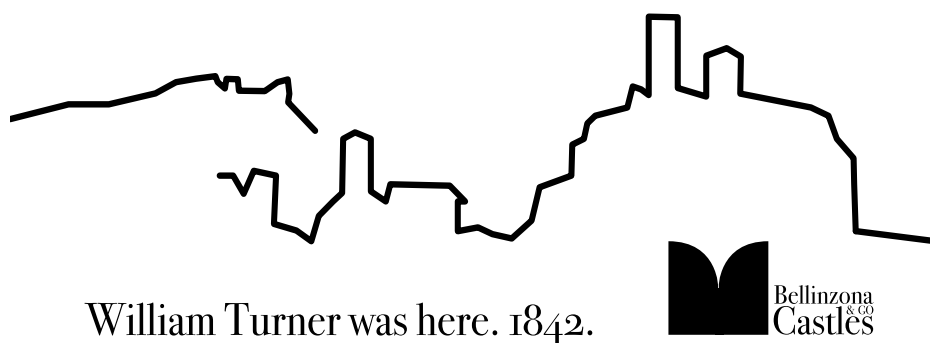


William Turner, *Bellinzona from the North* (1842 or 1841), © [Tate Gallery](#), [Tate London](#)



Cultural banner dedicated to William Turner placed at approx. KM 4.5 of the running race route
(«William Turner was here! Light colour energy...»)

The T-shirt as a cultural souvenir of the first edition of BELLINZONA CASTLES & GO offered to its participants bears, at heart height, the outline of the urban skyline of Bellinzona from the north, just as William Turner immortalised it in 1842 (or 1841).



Sketch of the urban horizon (skyline) from the north of Bellinzona as William Turner immortalised it in 1842 (or 1841) imprinted on **the T-shirt-cultural souvenir** of the first edition of BELLINZONA CASTLES & GO (29th May 2022)



T-shirt-cultural souvenir of the first edition of BELLINZONA CASTLES & GO (29th May 2022)

INSIGHTS:

- [Tate Britain website](#)
- [Tate Gallery London website dedicated to the Turner collection](#)
- [Tate Britain website dedicated to Turner's Bellinzona watercolours](#)
- [TURNER'S MODERN WORLD exhibition organised by Tate Britain in collaboration with Kimbell Art Museum Texas and Museum of fine Arts, Boston \(20.10.2020-12.09.2021\)](#)
- [To better understand the artist \(from the Tate Britain website\): *Genius of Turner* \(in English\)](#)
- [To better understand the artist \(from the Tate Britain website\): *Olafur Eliasson on J.M.W. Turner* \(in English\)](#)
- [Website dedicated to Turner's complete works and prints](#)