

Robert Morgan
FLEETING BEAUTY

curated by **Daniella Bacigalupo**

catalogue with texts by Daniella Bacigalupo, Marco Fazzini,
Marina Gelmi di Caporiacco, Robert Morgan

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EXTENDED THROUGH NOVEMBER 22

mon > fri 10.00-1.00pm 2.30 / 5.30 pm sat 10.00-1.00pm / 2.30-7.00pm sunday: closed

Chiostro Madonna dell'Orto, Cannaregio 3522 / 30121 Venice
[Boat stop Madonna dell'Orto (Orto) ACTV 4.1, 4.2, 5.1, 5.2]

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VENUE

The cloister of the church of Madonna dell'Orto dates from the late 1460s. The private property of the family Gelmi di Caporiacco it is rarely open to the public.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Robert Morgan, born in New York in 1943 has been a resident of Venice for more than 40 years.

He arrived in 1973 from New York where he had first studied Italian with Isabella Rossellini.

A graduate of Princeton University with a degree in English literature, he studied painting privately and at the Art Student's League under the painter and sculptor **Edward Melcarth** noted for his frescos at the Pierre Hotel in Manhattan. Melcarth was a close friend of Peggy Guggenheim, for whom he carved her famous glasses. He introduced Robert to Peggy and they were frequent guests at her house.

He frequented classes of Luigi Tito at the Accademia di Belle Arti and remains close to the family to this day. He taught plein-air painting classes at the Scuola Internazionale di Grafica. **Olga Rudge** commissioned him to paint a portrait of **Ezra Pound** (now in the collection of Mary de Rachewiltz) and was commissioned by Philp Rylands to paint a portrait of Olga, as well as one of himself at the time when he was appointed director of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection.

Friend of many poets and writers, most notably **Joseph Brodsky**, 1987 Nobel Laureate, who dedicated "Watermark" published by Farrar, Straus and Giroux to him. A limited edition illustrated by the artist can be found in the British Library, New York Public Library, The Beinecke Library at Yale, The Boston Atheneum, and The Stanford University Library. He painted the only portrait of Joseph Brodsky in his lifetime.

He was awarded the Ingram-Merrill grant in 1982. Acute observer, he was an eye witness to the assassination of **John Lennon** in New York which he recorded in a small oil sketch done on the spot rather than a photograph. An event which he described years later in a text "The Photograph Not Taken."

In 2004 he located his studio in the former house of **Filippo De Pisis**, the renowned Italian painter. In 2013 as a concession to the necessities of the electronic communication he created a website: www.robertmorganvenice.com. However, he prefers to rely on personal contact rather than computer or cellphone to relate his anecdotes and personal experiences.

A romantic landscapist, he sticks to a pictorial vision based on direct observation, memory, and a poetic reconstruction. He has had major shows in New York, San Francisco, London, Milan and Venice but has remained independent and is not represented by a gallery or dealer.

His paintings are found in numerous private collections in the United States, the UK, and abroad; from **Malcolm Forbes** and **Lawrence D. Lovett** to **Mark Strand** and **John Berendt** as well as many Venetian families.

QUOTATIONS

Robert C. Morgan:

„Morgan’s manner of perceiving the subtle effects of light deflected throughout Venice is in some ways indigenous to his manner of perceiving details in his immediate world. In viewing the rising pilaster arches of the Campanile (2008), one is taken by the structure of its completeness. In formal terms, the linear planes and surface space of this painting suggest the kind of light found in the chromatic abstract paintings of Mark Rothko or in the still-lives of Giorgio Morandi. (...) There is a certain meditative quality, an Eastern stillness that hovers over these architectural landscapes. Within the solitude of these paintings, one may awaken to being somewhere between the sea and sky. Here the everyday secular world emerges with the artist's ambient light suggesting an unremitting sanctity and wholeness.”

Joseph Brodsky:

„The Venice of Mr. Morgan's brush is more of a spatial idiom than an actual location with palette echoing the Siennese manner. Both as a colorist and a student of perspective, this painter is concerned with the universal application of the concrete. In my view, Mr. Morgan is one of the most serious realists of his generation (...) painting against the current.