

# Matthew Wong

## *Interiors*

Curated by John Cheim  
Palazzo Tiepolo Passi, Venice  
May 6-November 1, 2026



Matthew Wong, *UNTITLED*, 2018

The Matthew Wong Foundation's major exhibition *Matthew Wong: Interiors* marks a poignant return of the late artist's work to Venice, a city that deeply inspired him. On view from May 6 to November 1, 2026 at the historic Palazzo Tiepolo Passi, the exhibition features 38 rarely seen and never-before-exhibited paintings by Wong, curated by his mentor John Cheim. The first exhibition dedicated to Wong's domestic and psychological spaces, *Interiors* explores the "chambers of the mind" as a recurring motif in Wong's art, seen as a place of both sanctuary and solitude.

In 2011, while serving as a docent for the Hong Kong Pavilion at the 54th International Art Exhibition in Venice, Wong experienced "epiphanic" encounters with the works of Christopher Wool and Julian Schnabel. A trained photographer, Wong set aside his camera for brushes, beginning a self-taught journey into painting and experimentations that would lead to international acclaim. Yet Wong did not leave his training as a photographer behind; he translated it onto the canvas. The paintings on view in *Matthew Wong: Interiors* capture the haunting moods as his photos, prioritizing the emotional aura of a place over the details of the people within it.

The exhibition also foregrounds Wong's recurring "tunnel and aperture" motifs—found in works such as *Beautiful Morning* (2016) and *Origin* (2019)—which serve as liminal symbols for transition, birth, and the "womblike" places of the mind. The works also synthesize a range of modernist influences, from the intimist environments of Edouard Vuillard and the psychologically charged rooms of Vincent van Gogh to the radical experimentation of Henri Matisse's *Red Studio*.



Matthew Wong, *END OF THE DAY*, 2018

Accompanying this landmark solo exhibition is the Foundation's publication, *Matthew Wong: Interiors*. The 63-page, fully illustrated monograph, distributed by D.A.P., is anchored by an essay by the renowned art historian Nancy Spector, who draws upon new archival material to provide fresh insights into Wong's practice and the "uncanny" atmosphere of these paintings, in which the familiar shifts into a state of dread or anxiety.

As noted in Spector's essay, "Wong's interiors, saturated as they are with rich, nonrepresentational color, are chambers of the mind and, ultimately, the soul. While many include windows open onto receding landscapes, glimpses of the natural world, they inhabit a realm of pure invention. These paintings within paintings possess an 'inner light which is not a reflection of a light from the outside world'."

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### **About Matthew Wong**

Matthew Wong (1984–2019) was a self-taught Chinese-Canadian painter whose emotionally charged works earned him international recognition during a career that lasted only seven years. Born in Toronto and raised between Canada and Hong Kong, Wong earned a Bachelor of Arts in cultural anthropology from the University of Michigan and a Master of Fine Arts in photography from the School of Creative Media at City University of Hong Kong. The artist, who lived with autism, Tourette's syndrome, and depression, died by suicide in Edmonton at the age of thirty-five.

Wong began painting seriously in 2012, initially exploring abstraction before opting for figuration in 2015. He developed a distinctive visual language that blended Chinese, European, and American artistic traditions. Working primarily in oils, gouache, and ink, Wong created luminous imaginary landscapes and introspective interiors that are characterized by a striking sense of color and dynamic mark-making. His compositions, often drawn from memory, evoke solitude and longing.

Wong's work is held in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York; the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum; the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; the Morgan Library, New York; the Art Gallery of Ontario, Toronto; the Dallas Museum of Art; and The York School, Toronto. The first comprehensive retrospective of his work was presented at the Art Gallery of Ontario in 2021, followed by the Dallas Museum of Art in 2022 and the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston in 2023. In 2024, the Van Gogh Museum staged a major exhibition pairing Wong's paintings with those of Van Gogh, one of his greatest influences. The exhibition subsequently traveled to the Kunsthaus Zürich and the Albertina Museum in Vienna.

### **About the Matthew Wong Foundation**

The Matthew Wong Foundation was established in 2020 in commemoration of Chinese-Canadian artist Matthew Wong (1984–2019). The Foundation is dedicated to preserving Wong's art and legacy and to fostering its study and appreciation.

In Matthew's honor, the Foundation also provides grants to support emerging artists and organizations dedicated to mental health, including those focused on autism and Tourette's syndrome. The Matthew Wong Foundation was founded by Monita Wong and Raymond KP Wong, the artist's mother and father. More information about the Foundation is available at [matthewwongfoundation.org](http://matthewwongfoundation.org).

### **Visitor Information**

Palazzo Tiepolo Passi, Venice, Italy

6 May – 1 November 2026

Open Wednesday – Monday. Closed on Tuesday.

Until 30 September: 11am – 7pm

From 1 October: 10am – 6pm

Free admission.