

Matthew Wong Foundation

Galerie

The Must-See Exhibitions in Venice

Galerie

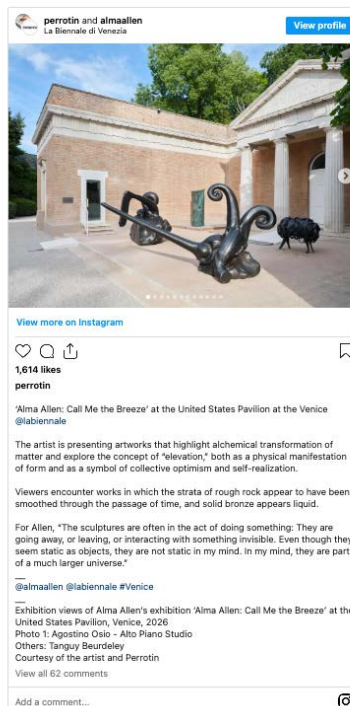
May 8, 2026

From the 61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia to the inaugural exhibition at the Matthew Wong Foundation



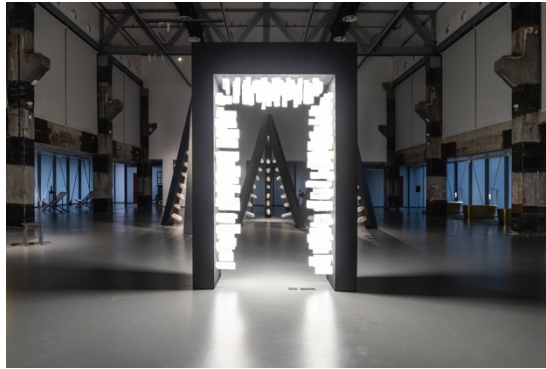
Installation view, "Matthew Wong: Interiors" at the Matthew Wong Foundation. Photo: Courtesy of The Matthew Wong Foundation

Venice is buzzing with creativity this season as the **61st International Art Exhibition of La Biennale di Venezia** gets underway, but the excitement doesn't stop there. Below, find some of the most stunning exhibitions and installations to see around the city.



1. Venice Biennale

Opening May 9, the 61st International Art Exhibition of **La Biennale di Venezia**, titled “In Minor Keys,” is a poignant tribute to its curator, Koyo Kouoh, following her sudden death last year, and the central pavilion honors her theoretical framework. Must-see national pavilions include installations by Khaled Sabsabi for Australia, Yto Barrada for France, and **Alma Allen** for the U.S.



Installation view, “Marina Abramović’s Transforming Energy” at the Gallerie dell’Accademia. Photo: © Yu Jieyu

2. Gallerie dell’Accademia

This spring, **Marina Abramović** becomes the only living female artist to receive a dedicated major exhibition at the **Gallerie dell’Accademia**. Debuting May 6, “Transforming Energy” weaves work by **Abramović** throughout the museum’s permanent collection, marking the first time the institution has integrated a temporary show within its historic galleries.



Installation view, “Matthew Wong: Interiors” at the Matthew Wong Foundation. Photo: Courtesy of the Matthew Wong Foundation

3. Matthew Wong Foundation

Set within the magnificent Palazzo Tiepolo Passi, the **foundation’s inaugural exhibition**, premiering May 6, will unveil 35 previously unseen or rarely viewed works produced by the late Chinese Canadian artist from 2015 to 2019. Curated by influential gallerist John Cheim, “Interiors” focuses on Wong’s physical and psychological interior paintings, highlighting themes of social struggle, longing, and isolation.



Installation view, “Matthew Wong: Interiors” at the Matthew Wong Foundation.
Photo: Courtesy of The Matthew Wong Foundation



Installation view, “Matthew Wong: Interiors” at the Matthew Wong Foundation. Photo: Courtesy of The Matthew Wong Foundation



Installation view, “Michael Armitage. The Promise of Change, 2026,” at Palazzo Grassi, Venezia. Photo: Marco Cappelletti Studio © Palazzo Grassi, Pinault Collection

4. Palazzo Grassi and Punta della Dogana

Beginning March 29, a sweeping retrospective of Michael Armitage, whose paintings bridge East African life and Western art history, animates the grand **Palazzo Grassi**. The show spotlights his exploration of sensitive political narratives, migration, and sexuality. Concurrently, at the Punta della Dogana, a retrospective of **Lorna Simpson’s** prolific practice will fill the sprawling galleries with 50 works spanning video, sculpture, and painting.



Installation view, "Hernan Bas: The Visitors." Photo: Andrea Rossetti

5. Ca' Pesaro

Celebrated **Miami**-based figurative painter **Hernan Bas** will transform **Ca' Pesaro** on May 7 with a new series of contemporary paintings that depict tourists in scenarios both imagined and real, drawing inspiration from Venice.



Installation view, "Lu Yang: DOKU The Illusion" at Espaces Louis Vuitton Venezia. Photo: © Ludovica Arcero. Courtesy of Louis Vuitton

6. Espaces Louis Vuitton Venezia

Chinese-born artist Lu Yang presents "DOKU The Illusion" at **Espaces Louis Vuitton Venezia** as part of the Hors-les-murs program. The artist has transformed the space into a cybernetic sanctuary with original sculptures and a video work centered on his new film, *DOKU The Illusion*, the fourth chapter in the *DOKU* series.



Frank Stella *Scramble: Green Double/ Left N, Right 8*, (1977). Photo: © Alberto Sinigaglia

7. Vincenzo de Cotiis Foundation

Timed to the 61st **Venice Biennale**, “**Minimal Legends**” occupies the palazzo’s richly layered interiors with an installation that bridges generations and artistic movements. Rather than mounting a straightforward historical survey, **the show stages a conversation** between nearly 20 works by seminal Minimalist artists and their contemporaries. **John Chamberlain, Sol LeWitt, Larry Bell, Agnes Martin, Mark Rothko, Frank Stella, Richard Serra, Dan Flavin**, and Bridget Riley appear alongside two works by De Cotiis himself, whose salvaged-material compositions often carry the weathered patina of objects unearthed from centuries-old Venetian architecture.



Christian Lacroix Haute Couture Fall/Winter 1997 Photo: MATTEO DE MAYDA

8. Fondazione Dries Van Noten

At **Palazzo Pisani Moretta**, **Dries Van Noten** presents “**The Only Protest is Beauty**,” which considers craftsmanship as a language of expression and a conduit for emotion. The exhibition features unexpected moments of fashion, design, glass, material experimentation, jewels, and art placed in dialogue with one another to challenge assumptions and produce new responses.

<https://galeriemagazine.com/the-must-see-exhibitions-in-venice-biennale-art/>