

# ● BROOKLYN MUSEUM ●

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## The Brooklyn Museum and Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco Announce *Monet and Venice*

Experience the first exhibition dedicated to Monet's Venetian cityscapes in over a century, featuring more than 100 paintings, prints, watercolors, photographs, and ephemera.

On view in Brooklyn October 11, 2025–February 1, 2026

On view in San Francisco March 21–July 26, 2026



(L) Claude Monet. *The Doge's Palace*, 1908. Oil on canvas. Brooklyn Museum, Gift of A. Augustus Healy, 20.634. (Photo: Brooklyn Museum). (R) Claude Monet, *The Grand Canal, Venice*, 1908. Oil on canvas. Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, Gift of Osgood Hooker, 1960.29

The Brooklyn Museum and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco are pleased to announce *Monet and Venice*, a co-organized exhibition that will reunite Claude Monet's extraordinary group of Venetian paintings. The exhibition will bring together more than twenty of Monet's Venetian views from public and private collections around the world, including two masterpieces from the collections of the Brooklyn Museum and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco—*The Doge's Palace* and *The Grand Canal, Venice*. It will mark the first dedicated exploration of Monet's luminous Venetian works since their debut in 1912, placing them in context with select paintings from key moments throughout his career, and in dialogue with portrayals of the city by artists such as Canaletto, John Singer Sargent, J. M. W. Turner, and Pierre-Auguste Renoir.

Cocurated by Lisa Small, Senior Curator of European Art at the Brooklyn Museum, and Melissa Buron, former Director of Curatorial Affairs at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco and current Director of Collections and Chief Curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, the exhibition offers a rare opportunity for visitors to experience Monet's unique vision of the fabled city.

"It's thrilling to reunite so many of Monet's radiant paintings of Venice, including Brooklyn's own *The Doge's Palace*, which was acquired in 1920 and is emblematic of the Museum's trailblazing commitment to modern French art," said Lisa Small. "Monet found the lagoon city an ideal environment for capturing the evanescent, interconnected effects of colored light and air that define his radical style. In his Venice paintings, magnificent churches and mysterious palaces, all conjured in prismatic touches of paint, dissolve in the shimmering atmosphere like floating apparitions. We are eager for our visitors to 'travel' to Venice and immerse themselves in the unfolding beauty of these dazzling paintings."

"We are delighted to present this groundbreaking exhibition alongside the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, offering a fresh opportunity for visitors to engage with one of the world's most celebrated artists in a bold new way," said Anne Pasternak, Shelby White and Leon Levy Director at the Brooklyn Museum. "Through thoughtful interpretation and design, we are inviting our audiences to see Venice through Monet's eyes and feel inspired by his vision."

"In 10 weeks in 1908, Monet captured Venice's ethereal cityscape in shimmering canvases, creating works unlike anything produced by the centuries of artists who painted the city before him," said Thomas P. Campbell, Director and CEO of the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. "Exploring Monet's alongside other artists' paintings of Venice deepens our understanding of his innovations in capturing atmospheric effects on canvas and the enduring inspiration of the Venetian lagoon. We are grateful to the Brooklyn Museum for their collaboration in bringing this exhibition to life."

"Our exhibition partnership was inspired by two outstanding paintings of Venice by Monet in the collections of Brooklyn and San Francisco, respectively," said Melissa Buron. "FAMSF's collections offer abundant sources for original exhibitions and Monet's Grand Canal, Venice is one such inspiration. Moreover, FAMSF's magnificent and recently acquired Canaletto, which features the same architectural subject, Venice's sublime Santa Maria della Salute, provides a rich aesthetic dialogue between artists across several centuries. Brooklyn's depiction of the nearby Palazzo Ducale by Monet anchors the collaboration, along with highlights from each museum's rich collections. The fact that half of Monet's Venice paintings are in private collections today makes this project a once-in-a-lifetime experience of the majestic city that inspired one of the most famous artists in the history of Western art."

Monet himself once remarked that Venice was "too beautiful to be painted," and it is perhaps this very beauty, and the city's fame, that has obscured the significance and daring nature of the works he produced there. Often overshadowed by his iconic depictions of the French landscape, Monet's Venetian works are among the most luminous yet underexplored of his career.

Although Monet visited Venice only once, the city had a profound impact on him. With its fragile beauty and delicate interplay of land and sea, Venice became a site of both formal experimentation and symbolic resonance for the artist. Key examples of Venetian imagery by artists who preceded or were contemporaneous with Monet, including Renoir, Singer Sargent, Turner, and others, will also be showcased, situating Monet's works within a rich tradition of Venice as a subject of artistic inquiry. Unlike the bustling, populated scenes painted by artists like Canaletto, Monet's Venice is almost uncannily devoid of human presence. His focus was instead on rendering the city's architecture and canals emerging through and dissolving in the encompassing and unifying color and light that he described as the *enveloppe*. Monet's hazy, depopulated images of Venice, a city already grappling with the effects of pollution and over-tourism when he visited, can also be considered through an ecological lens—both his, and our own.

In addition to Monet's paintings of Venice, the exhibition will present over a dozen other works created throughout his career that show his lifelong fascination with water and reflections. Paintings from Monet's time in Normandy, London, and his home at Giverny—including some of his famed water lily canvases—will be on view, drawing connections between the artist's Venetian experiments and his broader oeuvre. Monet's trip to Venice was his last major international journey, and it served as both an interruption and a replenishment of his artistic focus. He returned invigorated, with a new perspective on the water lily paintings he was creating in Giverny. As Monet himself asserted, "My trip to Venice has had the advantage of making me see my canvases with a better eye."

At the Brooklyn Museum, *Monet and Venice* will further engage audiences through immersive elements, including an original symphonic score inspired by the artist's Venice paintings by the Brooklyn Museum's Composer in Residence, Niles Luther. Upon entering the Museum's fifth-floor rotunda, visitors will be enveloped by a large scale visual immersive that conjures Venice's unique atmosphere and features an ethereal soundscape Luther created using field recordings that he captured in Venice and fragments of melodic themes drawn from his symphony. This visual and aural experience sets the stage for the visitor's journey through Venice in the subsequent exhibition galleries. In the culminating space, Luther's full symphony enters into dialogue with Monet's paintings of Venice. Just as Monet sought to render Venice's unique atmospheric *enveloppe*—where light, water, and architecture merge into unified sensory impressions—Luther translates these visually dissolving effects into an immersive sonic experience, deepening and enriching the visitor's journey to Venice with Monet.

A fully illustrated exhibition catalogue will accompany *Monet and Venice*, featuring essays by leading scholars of Impressionism and 19th-century art, including André Dombrowski, Donato Esposito, Elena Marchetti, Félicie Faizand de Maupeou, Jonathan Ribner, and Richard Thomson. These contributions will explore Monet's Venice works from sociohistorical and ecocritical perspectives, enriching our understanding of this pivotal moment in the artist's career.

## CREDITS

*Monet and Venice* is organized by the Brooklyn Museum and the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. The exhibition is curated by Lisa Small, Senior Curator of European Art at the Brooklyn Museum, and Melissa Buron, Director of Collections and Chief Curator at the Victoria & Albert Museum. The de Young presentation will be coordinated by Isabella Lores-Chavez, Associate Curator of European Paintings at the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco. Original symphonic installation by Niles Luther, Composer in Residence at the Brooklyn Museum.

Lead Sponsor



Significant support is provided by the Ford Foundation, Constance Christensen, and Mr. and Mrs. Alan Howard.

## ABOUT THE BROOKLYN MUSEUM

For 200 years, the Brooklyn Museum has been recognized as a trailblazer. Through a vast array of exhibitions, public programs, and community-centered initiatives, it continues to broaden the narratives of art, uplift a multitude of voices, and center creative expression within important dialogues of the day. Housed in a landmark building in the heart of Brooklyn, the Museum is home to an astounding encyclopedic collection of more than 140,000 objects representing cultures worldwide and over 6,000 years of history—from ancient Egyptian masterpieces to significant American works, to groundbreaking

installations presented in the only feminist art center of its kind. As one of the oldest and largest art museums in the country, the Brooklyn Museum remains committed to innovation, creating compelling experiences for its communities and celebrating the power of art to inspire awe, conversation, and joy.

#### ABOUT THE FINE ARTS MUSEUMS OF SAN FRANCISCO

Together, the de Young in Golden Gate Park and the Legion of Honor in Lincoln Park make up the Fine Arts Museums of San Francisco, the largest public arts institution in the city and one of the largest in the United States. Both are located on the land of the Ramaytush Ohlone, the original inhabitants of the San Francisco Peninsula. Opened in 1895, the de Young is home to American art from the 17th century through today; textile arts and costumes; African art; Oceanic art; arts of the Americas, and international contemporary art. Celebrating its 100th anniversary in 2024 and 2025, the Legion of Honor displays European painting; sculpture; and decorative arts; ancient art; works on paper; and contemporary art.