



2019 VENICE BIENNALE — NEWS

## Frank Auerbach Draws Again in Venice

BY *Andrew Russett* POSTED 05/06/19 1:36 PM

Who doesn't love a good Venice homecoming story? Frank Auerbach, who won a Golden Lion while representing Great Britain at the 1986 Venice Biennale, is back in town with a small but potent exhibition at the shoebox-sized Alma Zevi gallery. As its proprietors note, this is Auerbach's first solo outing in La Serenissima since that victory, and the show (running through August 3) features 10 recent drawings by the 88-year-old artist of a cityscape near his London studio—all quick scribbles and arrays of lines in crayon, felt-tip pen, graphite, and ink.

Seen alone, each is a thrilling near-abstract, a tangle of color; together, though, they evince an artist gamely experimenting, trying to make sense of the space in front of him. A gorgeous 2007–08 painting, a cityscape with a teal sky and patches of peach, yellow, and green (they're buildings, probably), is the cherry on top. A road sign is legible in it, containing a message that could be Auerbach's motto: NO STOPPING.

Frank Auerbach, *Study for 'From the Studio'*, 2018.

COURTESY THE ARTIST AND MARLBOROUGH GALLERY

TRAVEL | OFF DUTY TRAVEL

## The Modern Side of Ancient Venice: A Traveler's Guide

For those who think they've 'done' Venice, think again. As the Venice Biennale—the world's biggest art fair—kicks off this weekend, we highlight the city's newer, must-see attractions



Le Stanze del Vetro, a modern glass museum. PHOTO: ENRICO FIORESE

*By Gisela Williams*

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**STARTING THIS WEEKEND**, Italy's most magnetic tourist town plays host to the Venice Biennale, the vast international art show that runs through November. Unsuspecting vacationers expecting to binge primarily on Renaissance painters and gothic palaces are in for a surprise.

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*What are you some of your favorite places in Venice—old or new? Join the conversation below.*

They may, for example, find themselves at an artificial beach, serenaded by opera singers crooning about sunburns (an art installation/performance piece from this year's Lithuanian representatives). Or, they may stumble across faux pine trees with speakers transmitting the names of extinct birds and defunct countries, compliments of New Zealand artist Dane Mitchell. As it has in years past, the art festival galvanizes this ancient city, sparking several recent projects with a distinctly modern edge. A few new attractions with staying power:



The 'Ouvrez-Moi' exhibit by Adam Charlap Hyman and Andre Herrero recently installed in a former Venetian mirror workshop and organized by Alma Zevi Projects. PHOTO: ENRICO FIORESE

## What to See

After a two-year renovation, the 9th-century Church of San Lorenzo has been reborn as **Ocean Space**, a cultural center focused on marine preservation. Initiated by art world powerhouse Francesca Thyssen- Bornemisza, Ocean Space debuted in March with a multimedia show by artist Joan Jonas ([ocean-space.org](http://ocean-space.org)). In 2016, the young gallerist **Alma Zevi** opened a tiny but impressive art gallery close to the Palazzo Grassi, one of the city's major contemporary art spaces. Ms. Zevi's gallery is kicking off the Biennale season with works by British painter Frank Auerbach ([almazevi.com](http://almazevi.com)). Meanwhile, Ms. Zevi's mother Marie-Rose Kahane and her husband David Landau helped to establish the modern glass museum **Le Stanze del Vetro** set within a historic school complex on San Giorgio Maggiore island ([lestanzedelvetro.org](http://lestanzedelvetro.org)).

[Visit the exhibition](#)

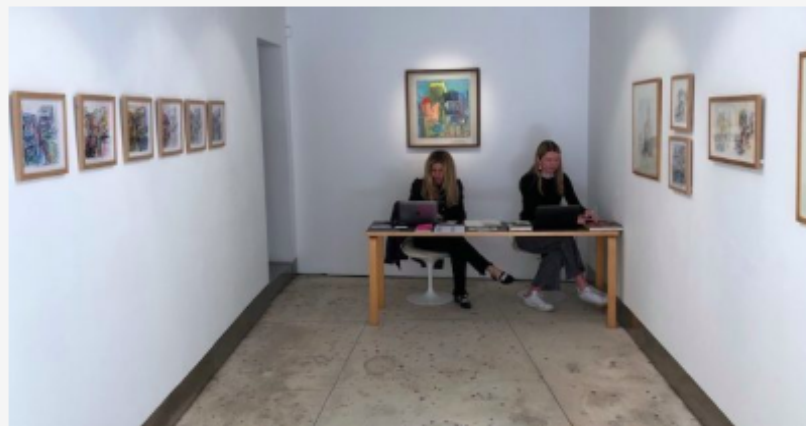
## Venice Biennale Collateral Exhibitions Provide Calm and Quality

14 May 2019 / Art Categories Feature, Features, Photo Feature, Photo Features / Art Tags 58th Venice Biennale, Arshile Gorky, Collateral exhibitions venice, Edmund de Waal, George Baselitz, Helen Frankenthaler, Jean Dubuffet, Luc Tuymans, Sean Scully / [Twitter](#) / [Facebook](#) / [LinkedIn](#) / [Instagram](#) / [Email](#)

It was a relief to step away from the hustle and bustle of the Giardini and Arsenale, the main venues for the 58th Venice Biennale, to visit exhibitions elsewhere. There is less urgency to view everything, and you can take your time to look at the art properly. However, there are an enormous amount of collateral exhibitions, both official and unofficial to see. The joy is always visiting Palazzos and buildings not usually on the main tourist lists. This represents a mere fraction of the exhibitions in and around Venice during the Biennale.

Helen Frankenthaler: Pittura/Panorama at Palazzo Grimani is the first presentation of Helen Frankenthaler's work in Venice since its appearance in 1966 at the American Pavilion of the 33rd Venice Biennale. Organized by the Helen Frankenthaler Foundation and Venetian Heritage, in association with Gagolian, the exhibition covers a forty-year span of Frankenthaler's career from the early 1950s to her richly atmospheric canvases of the early 1990s. It features fourteen panoramic paintings, all from the collection of the Foundation. Frankenthaler was influenced in her use of colour by the great Venetian artists of the 1500s, making the venue particularly appropriate for this exhibition.

Other small exhibitions worth a mention that continue the feeling of calm away from the Biennale's main venues are Martin Brown's unpopulated paintings of Venetian views at the Sculoa Internazionale di Grafica; Frank Auerbach drawings at Alma Zevi Gallery and Miniscule at Fondamenta Sant'Anna.



Frank Auerbach, Alma Zevi Gallery

Frank Auerbach at Alma Zevi is his first show in Venice since representing Great Britain and winning the Golden Lion at the 1986 Venice Biennale. It features 10 small recent drawings by the 88-year-old artist of the area near his studio in Mornington Crescent, London with his characteristic scribbles in crayon, felt-tip pen, graphite and ink.

Venice Biennale 58: From Climate Change To Automatonics – Paul Carter Robinson [Read More](#)

Words: Sara Faith / Photos: P C Robinson ©Artlyst 2019



### Il rapper Peligro al Festival Show

Giovedì 8 agosto il rapper milanese Peligro si esibirà in Piazzale Zenith a Bibione in occasione della 20a edizione di Festival Show. Peligro porterà sul palco "Gemelli", il nuovo brano pop-rap che descrive le peculiarità di chi è nato sotto il segno dei Gemelli, in costante rapporto con il proprio dualismo.

### Hotel Carlton Federica Capra in concerto

Oggi, mercoledì 31 luglio alle 21, per la maratona di musica e solidarietà "Women for Freedom in Jazz", sulla terrazza dell'Hotel Carlton On The Grand Canal di Venezia arriva Federica Capra. Federica, sensibile cantante e violinista, si presenta con il suo Dialogo-Duo, completato dal pluripremiato contrabbassista e compositore Mattia Magatelli, formazione nata nel 2013 con il desiderio di esprimersi attraverso un repertorio che abbracci generi diversi, ricercando spazi e melodie, ritmo e sintassi, tramite il dialogo di voce e

basso, proponendo canzoni originali e brani internazionali riarrangiati in chiave moderna e in modo personale. Per l'occasione, il duo avrà un ospite speciale: il talentoso sassofonista Federico Missio, già strumentista e di co-arrangiatore di Marco Mengoni. Ingresso libero (consumazione obbligatoria).

### San Trovaso Concerto d'organo

Venerdì 2 agosto alle 21, l'organista tedesco Heinrich Wimmer proporrà un concerto alle tastiere del famoso organo costruito nel 1765 da Gaetano Callido e custodito nella chiesa di San Trovaso a Venezia. Il

concerto è proposto nell'ambito del IX Festival organistico internazionale, che accompagnerà l'estate veneziana con 16 concerti ad ingresso libero toccando diverse chiese cittadine.

### Jesolo Annullato il concerto della PFM

Il concerto previsto per il 3 agosto a Jesolo della Premiata Fornaia Marconi, relativa al tour "TVB - The Very Best Tour" è stato annullato. Per il rimborso dei biglietti già acquistati ci si dovrà rivolgere presso lo stesso punto rivendita dove è stato acquistato il biglietto per l'evento o contattando il circuito online presso cui è avvenuto

l'acquisto.

### Marghera Cinema sotto le stelle

Al via le proiezioni di "Cinema sotto le stelle", la rassegna che animerà Piazza Mercato a Marghera da venerdì 2 agosto all'8 settembre: tredici film in cartellone, di cui undici italiani, tra commedie, suspense e film d'azione. S'incomincia venerdì 2 agosto si inizia con il musical "Mamma mia - ci risiamo!", regia di Ol Parker con Lily James, Amanda Seyfried, Christine Baranski, Pierce Brosnan, Dominic Cooper, Colin Firth, Andy Garcia, Meryl Streep, Cher.



La mostra di Frank Auerbach alla Galleria Zevi

GALLERIA ALMA ZEVI

## Dal disegno alla pittura Tutta l'energia di Frank Auerbach

Dipinge tutti i giorni, con meticolosità, attento alle trasformazioni del paesaggio urbano di Londra. Nei suoi disegni c'è energia e tensione espressiva, sovrapposizione di linee e colori brillanti che rendono le opere su carta singolarmente efficaci. Frank Auerbach, classe 1931, Leone d'Oro alla Biennale di Venezia del 1986, è uno dei più grandi artisti inglesi contemporanei. Fino al 3 agosto la Galleria Alma Zevi di

San Samuele gli dedica la mostra "From Drawing to Painting", dal disegno alla pittura, un percorso concettuale che Auerbach mette in atto da anni realizzando moltissimi disegni, la maggior parte dei quali poi elimina. Un procedimento che è esemplificato in maniera significativa in una serie di dieci piccoli disegni realizzati nel 2018 e intitolata "Study for 'From the Studio'". —

S.M.

MUSILE DI PIAVE

## Francofabrica Cabaret e musica in piazza



I Francofabrica

Una serata di divertimento, giovedì 1 agosto, a Musile di Piave. In piazza XVIII giugno è in programma l'esibizione dei Francofabrica e degli Sformato Cosmico, per un appuntamento all'insegna del cabaret e della musica veneta. I Francofabrica è un duo comico della Marca trevigiana formato da Franco Benincà e Fabrizio De Poi. Agli inizi del 2002, dopo aver unito due diverse esperienze artistiche, sono diventati i Francofabrica. La serata inizia alle ore 21. L'ingresso sarà libero. —

BELMOND HOTEL CIPRIANI

## Cocktail (e libro) con Clooney Lo storico barman si racconta



Walter Bolzonella

Per le nozze di George Clooney e Amal ha inventato "Nina's passion", dedicata alla madre dell'attore. Per esaltare la tequila Casamigos, arrivata dentro le casse dal Messico, il cocktail "Buonanotte Amigos". Ma prima c'era stato l'aperitivo per Tom Cruise, e ancora prima il cocktail per Ronald Reagan, Tom Cruise, Lady Diana, fino al bicchiere di Murano riempito di acqua per il cagnolino assetato di Liz Taylor.



Il cocktail "Buonanotte Amigos" in onore di George Clooney

C'è una vita intera, e un mondo favoloso, dietro il banco del bar del Belmond Hotel Cipriani e nelle mani svelte dell'head barman Walter Bolzonella, autore del volumetto "Cocktails in Venice, Tales of a barman" (edito da lineadacqua) con le illustrazioni di Matteo Bertelli e la quarta di copertina scritta da George Clooney nella quale racconta di quando, insieme, hanno servito drink agli ospiti dell'albergo.

Pagina dopo pagina, Bolzonella svela le ricette dei Bellini, del Canaletto, del Gincomber Frizz, dell'Hidden Liquid, del Lucky Spritz, del Mexican Revolution. Ma la frutta, i liquori, il prosecco, gli shaker, i pestelli, i bar spoon non dicono quello che Bolzonella ha visto in «quarant'anni di emozioni», sul ponte della barca che è il bar, «vissute in quella che considero la nostra casa». —

M.P.

EXHIBITIONS  
Interview

# Frank Auerbach: 'Drawing seems independent of time'

In this interview relating to an exhibition in Venice last year, Frank

For seven decades, Frank Auerbach has been among the greatest of British painters. Last year, I staged a small exhibition of his work at my gallery in Venice, his first in Italy since he had represented Great Britain in the 42nd Venice Biennale in 1986, where he was awarded the Golden Lion. The exhibition was a selected survey of his distinctive drawings of London from the mid-1970s to the end of 2018, including ten of Auerbach's drawings exhibited for the first time since they left the artist's Camden Town studio and an important painting from 2007-08. This interview was conducted at Auerbach's studio, where he has worked since 1954, in April 2019, in the week before the opening of the Venice exhibition.

**THE ART NEWSPAPER:** I think you downplay the importance of your preparatory drawings a little.

**FRANK AUERBACH:** I hardly know that I'm doing them. I throw away 95% of them. I let them pile up and then I go through them. If some seem a bit interesting, I keep them. I sometimes have Ernst Ludwig Kirchner in mind, who has left thousands of perfunctory drawings. You see them everywhere. If he had thrown away 95% of them, we would have had some extremely intense drawings. Done as adventurously or as accidentally as all the others, they were drawings for paintings and ideas for paintings – and some very good drawings were made as a result. I've tried not to leave thousands of perfunctory drawings. It wasn't that at the time I thought: "Oh, this is good drawing." At the time I thought: "Well, this is an idea – I think it will help me with my painting."

On the other hand, very often the coloured ones are not made in one go. I often start on a pencil drawing, and then perhaps add ink and colour over the top. As I move on to the painting, which takes ages and ages, and as I learn a little bit more about the subject – and when I say the subject, I mean the subject in plastic terms – the drawings get better as I go along. If I've done 70 drawings and I do the 71st, it may sometimes have a little more profundity than the drawings at the beginning. Sometimes a perfunctory scribble can be much more helpful than a "good" drawing. What tends to happen to me is that I go to a drawing because I need an idea for the painting. And an idea that I haven't already got, because the whole process of painting is, for me, surprising myself.

It's not a routine thing. I've done



It isn't a question of recording, it's a question of invention

many more drawings for some paintings than for others. I don't do them in a sequence. Sometimes one keeps being pinned up, because it's more helpful, for a month, and others are changed all the time. It's very much a working process, and these drawings are the evidence of a working process.

Can you tell me about the drawings in the *All Too Human* exhibition [that toured the Picasso Museum in Malaga, Tate Britain and the Hungarian National Gallery in Budapest in 2017-19]? They seemed to me to be interesting

drawings. And they seemed to me to be interesting also in their relationship to the painting they were studies for. I can only hope that that has happened more often than not. Because all my paintings, even from the beginning, have been photographed; I've been aware of where they are, and I know every single one of them. The drawings were mostly thrown away and a few scattered, or I've given them away.

Are you saying that the drawings are always studies for the paintings? Those little drawings are, yes. One of the greatest joys in the world is

## Biography

**Born:** Berlin, 1931, lives in London  
**Training:** St Martin's School of Art, London, 1952, Royal College of Art, London, 1955

**Key shows:** 2015: Tate Britain, London; 2007: Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge, UK; 2001: Royal Academy of Arts, London; 2000: Kunsthal Charlottenborg, Copenhagen, Denmark; 1995: National Gallery, London; 1989: Vincent Van Gogh Museum, Amsterdam; 1986: Kunstverein, Hamburg, Germany; British Pavilion, Venice Biennale, 1978: Hayward Gallery, London

*Sleeping Girl* [1654] by Rembrandt at the British Museum, which I know people think can't have taken more than ten minutes to do. The fact that something is a quick drawing doesn't necessarily mean that it's slighter for it. *Sleeping Girl* is one of the greatest drawings in the world. If you made the list of the 100 greatest drawings – and there are many great drawings in the world – that would be one of them.

You said that sometimes you start with pencil?

Yes, and the next day I might go and add some ink. And then the day after that work on it in colour, so there are several sessions.

Do each of those sessions take place outside? Or just the pencil?

The process is, basically, I go outside and do a scribble. It feels as though I'm drawing for five minutes, but if I look at my watch, I find that I've been out for 35 or 45 minutes. And then what happens is that I look at the drawing, and I remember what it was that I reacted to. I haven't got much of a visual memory. I realise, with the passage of time, and as I'm coming up to 88, I think it's likely that that is the case. I also think that's one of the reasons why I find it so fascinating to record and to draw. If I've done a hundred drawings and been working on the thing for months, then as I stand in here [the studio], I begin to have specific memories of the relationships of the forms. And of course, it isn't a question of recording, it's a question of invention. The only reason that I look at things is to give more quality to the image I'm making.

An arbitrary image, made simply on the basis of art history and geometry and so on, is a relatively dead thing.

An image that's made with the contradictions of life, where everything is not where you expect it to be, where things are irrational, where the light changes, where things are in awkward places that don't fit in with the coherence of the whole, is much more likely to have an individual living character. That is why I like to have people there when I'm painting them, and that is why I like to look at real things when I'm working on other subjects.

It has even been the case when I've made one or two paintings from paintings. I made the large painting from the small Rembrandt *Deposition* [1632-33] and, even then, I went and

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drew the Rembrandt and came back and worked from the drawings of the Rembrandt. I didn't sit in front and copy. I tried to dramatisise my personal understanding of the forms that lie behind the surface.

I think I'm getting close to saying something that's true of everything that I do. It's not a visual thing—we get visual information, you identify yourself or information it refers to, and then you try and find some way of dramatising this corporeal, solid reality. That's what the drawings are there to feed into. I don't copy the drawings; they remind me of what I saw, so that I can re-imagine it as sculpture, as architecture, and make an image out of that re-imagination on the flat surface. Which is a complicated way of putting

it, but that's why a painting works sometimes. Some great paintings we never get fed up of, and that's because there's a very complicated process behind them, whether slow or quick.

**Do you still draw from Old Master paintings or in the National Gallery?**

Now I don't do anything except my painting and practical things. I became well-off too late to adjust. I've never been able to employ anybody to do anything. So all I do is work and a little bit of shopping. Going to the National Gallery—it would take up all my day and all my energy. I used to get up at about five o'clock in the morning and do drawings. I haven't got the energy to do that anymore. In the last few years, I've only dealt with subjects that are 20 steps away from the studio.

So I'm painting very close to my

surroundings, and I'm enormously lucky to have people to sit for me. Once every five years, I think: "Well, perhaps I should have fewer friends sitting for me," and then even if they go away for a week, I realise there's something missing. What one hopes feeds into the painting is the varying living, changing matter of life, and one hopes to catch some little corner that one hasn't seen before. After all, what is portraiture, except finding new deviations from the norm? You know, there's a "classic head" and then you look—nothing about the person's head is "classic"—and it gives you a whole new geometry and a whole new expression. And that's the sort of painting I like. Because even Mondrian has that for me. It's got nothing to do with abstract design. It has to do with sensation.

I heard Bridget Riley talking on the radio yesterday morning. She said that the sensations which feed into her paintings are not so different from a walk in the country where there's light and shadow. We're almost the same age, we were born within a week of each other, and we worked in the same room at the [Royal College of Art].

**Did you ever draw from reproductions of paintings?**  
I think a little bit—I must have done at various points, but not very often.

**Perhaps as a student and a young man? Or intermittently?**

Yes, I did a bit. I think I was lucky in the art school experience I had. Many of the teachers were limited, but there were intelligent painters teaching in art school, and in my second year as an art student at St Martin's, Freddie Gore, the son of Spencer Gore, gave some lectures about Old Masters—very good, intelligent lectures—and then sent us to the National Gallery and said we should do our own version of a painting there. And for some reason, as a young, ambitious show-off student, I did a version of El Greco. It was a picture of birds caught in barbed wire. I think I may have done that

from a reproduction.

But the more I went to the National Gallery, the more I realised that drawing from reproductions just doesn't work. Reproductions are so misleading that you simply can't get from them the moment you get from the picture. And even when I did one or two pictures and got a photograph to help me in addition to the drawing, I found myself doing pencil scribbles all over the photograph to get it a little bit more like the picture. You used to just walk up and buy a picture over the counter, a photograph.

I thought it was one of the great miracles of life, that you could just walk into the British Museum Print Room and ask to see a case of Rubens's drawings or Rembrandt's drawings, and you didn't have to have a certificate or a letter or a qualification or anything. The same is true of the V&A.

**The Courtauld Gallery also has an amazing collection of drawings. When I was a student at the Institute, we were lucky enough to have seminars in the Prints and Drawings Room and it was really fantastic.**

Also, the Queen hasn't got a bad collection. The Royal Drawing School goes to Windsor Castle and are able to handle the Leonardo things once a year. Yes, there are lot of good drawings in the world... The actual idiom of paintings is definitely changed.

After all, what is portraiture except finding new deviations from the norm?

Drawing seems independent of time. Nobody could mistake a 21st-century painting for a 19th-century painting. There was a very intelligent exhibition of drawings at the Whitechapel Art Gallery, curated by Michael Craig-Martin. And it made it absolutely plain what I think I had known before and that he had known before: that a drawing is a drawing. It hasn't changed. They've got hundreds of Dürer drawings at the British Museum. There are some which have obviously been done by the artist in half an hour—the way you might see a brilliant drawing by Hockney done in a restaurant or something of a person sitting opposite him. And although it says, "AD" in the corner, it could have been done by Picasso. Drawing is drawing. It is remarkably timeless, at least in the Western traditions, since Giotto.

**Do you think there is more freedom in drawing or more spontaneity. Or is it something else?**

It is more private. If you look at Titoretto's drawings, he drew very quickly these marvellous compositions of people reaching down and dragging children over the walls, of sieges and battles, because he wanted a particular figure. These quick, brilliant drawings, of figures turning—some of which El Greco pitched and took to Spain to use the same poses—were done, I think, to feed into his painting. For no other reason, they're marvellous drawings. And, in fact, for me, some of the elaborate presentation drawings of Michelangelo don't work all that well—the ones that he gave to his friend which are tidied up and over-elaborated—whereas the sketches of architectural details and backs turning and so on, done urgently, in order to compose a figure on the Sistine Chapel, they're done by the greatest genius and greatest draughtsman that ever lived.

\* Alma Zevi has a gallery in Venice, a showroom in London, and a project space in Celerina, Switzerland

