

# MARTIN BROWN

## VENEZIA/VEDUTA/CONTEMPORANEA

29th April—15th May 2019



(Detail) *Isola di San Michele, Venice 2016, oil on canvas*

Martin Brown's paintings deal primarily with the built environment, especially urban spaces. Brown draws on the history of painting in the Western tradition to explore ideas of memory and perception as they relate to the architecture and topography of modern cities. "I am interested in the layering of time, how different periods in history are visually present within the built environment and how different modes of painting can represent and comment on these different periods."

**Venezia/Veduta/Contemporanea**, presents a series of paintings that are a contemporary commentary on the historical painting style 'veduta', through depictions of Venice that comment directly on the history of painting. Referencing styles and techniques as practised by the 'vedutisti', these works also incorporate modern 'interruptions' that describe a contemporary view. Representational scenes arrive post abstraction, incorporating many compositional ideas from modernism as well as from historical painting. They attempt to eschew the traditional or clichéd. There is no hierarchy at play here - no privileging of the past over the present, or vice versa; they do not seek to make a virtue of tradition at the expense of modernity. Rather, Brown's work reveals the traces of the past in the present moment, forming visual 'timelines' within a single picture.

After an early encounter with John Ruskin's drawings and paintings, in which Ruskin attempted to record the historical architectural features of Venice, Brown discerned a method by which the deployment of different painterly styles could be used to signal a multitude of historical perceptions. This in part led to the formulation of broader ideas around time, perception and layered visual experience, establishing an aesthetic principle which has become fundamental to the artist's practice. **Venezia/Veduta/Contemporanea** sees Brown engage with the history of Venetian landscape painting, 'veduta', and consider its particular relationship to his own aesthetic journey.

Martin Brown is an Australian-born, London-based artist who graduated with a BA in Fine Arts from the National Art School, Sydney, Australia. He exhibited extensively in Australia for ten years, before relocating to London in 2003. Since then Martin has exhibited in China, France, Ireland, Russia, Switzerland and the UK as well as Australia. His work is held in numerous private and public collections internationally. In 2016 he was awarded the ING Discerning Eye Founders' Prize.

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SGallery exhibitions curated by **Déirdre Kelly**



Exhibition Opening Hours:  
Tue-Sat, 11:00-13:00 / 14:00-18:00  
Sunday, 14:00-18:00  
Monday, by appointment  
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Opening Hours:  
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