

Le Stanze  
della Fotografia

**Le Stanze della Fotografia announces  
the exhibitions to be held in 2025**

***Robert Mapplethorpe. Le forme del classico***  
**From 10 April to 23 November 2025**

***Maurizio Galimberti tra Polaroid/Ready Made  
e le lezioni americane di Italo Calvino***  
**From 10 April to 27 July 2025**

**Open call for photographers under the age of 30**

**Island of San Giorgio Maggiore, Venice**

**Press conference  
9 April 2025**

Venice, 12 December 2024. Le Stanze della Fotografia in Venice announces their next major exhibition, devoted to a true, and still in many ways controversial, star of international photography: Robert Mapplethorpe (New York, 1946 – Boston, 1989).

Curated by Le Stanze della Fotografia's artistic director, Denis Curti, the show *Robert Mapplethorpe. Le forme del classico* is organised and promoted by Marsilio Arte and Fondazione Giorgio Cini in collaboration with the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation in New York.

The exhibition will be staged in Venice, at the photography centre Le Stanze della Fotografia, on the island of San Giorgio Maggiore, from 10 April to 23 November 2025.

*Robert Mapplethorpe. Le forme del classico* has been conceived as the first act of a larger trilogy, part of a path of study and research aimed at deepening and broadly investigating the figure of Mapplethorpe, which includes two other exhibition events in 2026. *Robert Mapplethorpe. Le forme del desiderio* will be the second chapter in this wide-ranging examination of Mapplethorpe's oeuvre, and will be staged at Palazzo Reale in Milan, displaying a retrospective of his work, with a selection of his most iconic, powerful and daring images, focusing on the more intense and provocative aspects of his artistic output. *Robert Mapplethorpe. Le forme della bellezza* will be held at the Museo dell'Ara Pacis in Rome and will focus on his studies of beauty understood as classical harmony, with detailed

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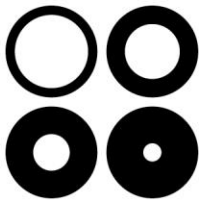


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comparisons between images and a selection of significant pictures taken in Italy that have not been previously shown.

«The Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation is excited to collaborate with Marsilio Arte, Denis Curti, and his colleagues on these Mapplethorpe exhibitions, which will be beautifully presented at prestigious venues. Denis Curti's thoughtful curation will provide a unique experience for viewers by transforming the basic approach in each venue, highlighting different facets of Mapplethorpe's oeuvre. While there will be some overlap, each installation will employ a different approach to the artist's works. Venice has not hosted a comprehensive solo Mapplethorpe exhibition since 1992 when Germano Celant's iconic international retrospective was shown at Palazzo Fortuny. We eagerly await Mapplethorpe's return to Venice after 33 years, as well as those versions planned for Rome and Milan», declares Michael Ward Stout, president of the Robert Mapplethorpe Foundation.

**With over 200 images, some of them on view in Italy for the first time**, the retrospective *Robert Mapplethorpe. Le forme del classico* at Le Stanze della Fotografia pays tribute to the great American artist. It continues the groundwork laid down by curator Germano Celant in his exhibition *Tra antico e moderno. Un'antologia* (Turin, 2005), by reinserting his work in the context of the art and culture of the United States in the mid-20th century.

It is precisely the classical dimension of Mapplethorpe's photography, strongly underlined in Venice through meticulous comparisons with images of ancient statuary, that renders timeless the bodies he portrays, captured in all their plasticity and beauty: ancient and contemporary representations of an irrepressible and knowing desire, moulded by the geometry of light and transfigured into eternal, almost divine icons, though still very human.

Thus, the exhibition puts the focus back onto Mapplethorpe's quest for a perfect sinuosity, a sensual and sacred rotundity that can be seen in the photographs of the flawless male and female bodies on display in Venice, as well as in the magnificent images of flowers, revealed in their naked, truly poetic compositions that are at once ambiguous and delicate.

As Denis Curti points out, «Mapplethorpe uses photography to reinterpret and renew the classical aesthetic, accentuating the dialogue between the living body and its ideal in sculpture. The comparison highlights his ability to transpose the perfection and grace of classical sculpture into contemporary photography through an attention to detail and to light, building a bridge between past and present. The statues, with their incomplete sexuality, make us aware of the importance of flesh in the language of seduction. Mapplethorpe unshackles their marble limbs to bring out a sensual beauty that pulsates beneath tons of rigidity, giving them new life».

Presented in the exhibition are his **very early collages**, ready-mades created towards the end of the 1960s. **Many of them never shown before**, they were made by combining his original drawings, clippings from gay pornographic magazines, and found objects. These works reflect Mapplethorpe's search for identity and exploration of his interests, right from the beginning of his career, using the superimposition of elements.

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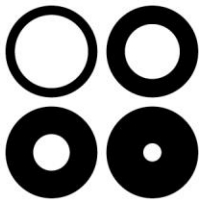
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The retrospective comprises **many male nudes** that celebrate the body in a paean to classical perfection, emphasising its power, sensuality and symmetry through a refined use of light and composition, exploring desire and eroticism and challenging traditional social norms. In similar fashion, **in the female nudes** shown in Venice, Mapplethorpe plays with forms, folds, and lines, to create an elegant and minimalist aesthetic intended to represent, as the American art historian Arthur C. Danto has put it, «conscious women, of almost regal power».

Many of his **portraits** are presented at Le Stanze della Fotografia: from the celebrated series devoted to his partner and friend **Patti Smith**, immortalised in intimate and iconic poses that reveal her androgynous figure and vulnerability, to those of **Lisa Lyon**, bodybuilder and the artist's muse, which explore her vigour, strength and femininity, transcending conventions of gender. Mapplethorpe captures her sculpted body, celebrating its power and beauty through classical aesthetic parameters.

Also on display are **portraits** of **Truman Capote, Glenn Close, Richard Gere, Keith Haring, David Hockney, Annie Leibovitz, Yoko Ono, Robert Rauschenberg, Isabella Rossellini, Susan Sarandon, Susan Sontag, Andy Warhol** and many others. For Mapplethorpe the photographic portrait was not just an intimate encounter between two personalities, but a sort of visual altar on which the corporeity of the subject is transfigured, made to play a part in a game of desire and possession.

The photographer's **self-portraits** can be unsettling, reflecting his exploration of identity as something always fluid and mutable. Through studied poses and provocative symbols, Mapplethorpe presents himself as artist and subject, probing the boundaries between himself and his public image.

On the occasion of the trilogy, a substantial **catalogue** is published by Marsilio Arte. The volume, which accompanies the three exhibitions, vast body of work and the evolution of Mapplethorpe's language through 257 works.

## **Open call for male and female photographers under the age of 30**

**On the occasion of this prestigious anthology of exhibitions, Le Stanze della Fotografia Foundation presents, following the success of the first competition, an open call for young photographers aged 18 to 30.** This initiative is made possible with the support of the Fondazione di Venezia. Participation in the initiative is free of charge and provides for the selection of nine pictures, three for each photographer, each of which is related to one of the three themes of the trilogy – the forms of the classical, of desire and of beauty – and takes its inspiration from this statement of Robert Mapplethorpe's: «I entered the world of photography because I thought it was the perfect vehicle to comment on the madness of today's existence» (*Robert Mapplethorpe. Tra antico e moderno*, by Germano Celant, 2005).

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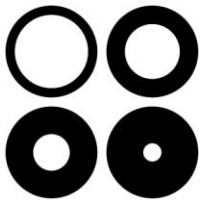
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The shortlisted works, carefully selected by a jury made up of the gallerist Pierpaolo Falone, the curator Denis Curti, the gallerist Gió Marconi, the managing director of the Mapplethorpe Foundation, Joree Adilman, and the artistic director of MIA Photo Fair, Francesca Malgara, will be put on display in the booth of Le Stanze della Fotografia at one of the most important of photographic events, the **MIA Photo Fair**, which will be held in Milan from 20 to 23 March 2025.

**The three winners will be declared at the press conference for Robert Mapplethorpe's exhibition at Le Stanze della Fotografia, on 10 April. Their works will be on display for the entire duration of the exhibition.**

The deadline for submission of proposals is 2 March 2025.

The rules and methods of participation can be consulted on Le Stanze della Fotografia's website: [www.lestanzedellafotografia.it](http://www.lestanzedellafotografia.it)

### ***Maurizio Galimberti tra Polaroid/Ready Made e le lezioni americane di Italo Calvino***

**Le Stanze della Fotografia presents, from 10 April to 27 July, 2025, on the first floor, the exhibition *Maurizio Galimberti tra Polaroid/Ready Made e le lezioni americane di Italo Calvino*, curated by Denis Curti.**

Internationally known for his portraits of celebrities like Lady Gaga, Robert De Niro, Johnny Depp and Umberto Eco, and for having published books and staged site-specific exhibitions on New York, Paris, Milan, Rome and Venice, Maurizio Galimberti presents some of his most iconic Polaroid mosaics in Venice, including those of *Johnny Depp*, *Barbara Bouchet* and *Angelica Huston*, in a show that is divided into six sections: Cenacolo, History, Sport, Portraits, Taylor Swift and Places.

His creations, characterised by a multifaceted and fragmented vision of reality, are taken apart and put back together as in a mosaic, offering a profound reflection on perception and on the multiplicity of viewpoints. The images are almost always manipulated at the development stage, exerting pressure with simple tools – like pens and wooden sticks – directly onto the surface of the support, or assembled into mosaic-like compositions, in which each photograph contributes to the formation of an end result able to create a spectacular overall vision.

As Denis Curti observes, «his works do not set out to reproduce reality faithfully, but are the product of an investigation of the visible, an operation of breaking down the world that finds its ideal instrument in photography. Galimberti takes inspiration from David Hockney's photographic collages and is guided in his research by such illustrious models as the Futurist works of Umberto Boccioni or Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase, No. 2*,

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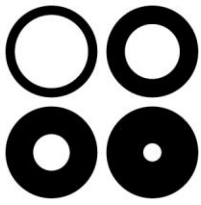
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inspired in turn by Etienne-Jules Marey breakdown of movement» (D. Curti, *Capire la fotografia contemporanea*, Marsilio 2020).

**Le Stanze della Fotografia is a joint initiative by Marsilio Arte and the Giorgio Cini Foundation, created in partnership with Fondazione di Venezia, San Marco Group, and Fontana Gruppo, and with the support of Distilleria Nardini, Grafica Veneta, iGuzzini, NeoTech.**

### **Press materials and images**

<http://bit.ly/4il88C3>

### **Press offices**

Marsilio Arte | Giovanna Ambrosano: [g.ambrosano@marsilioarte.it](mailto:g.ambrosano@marsilioarte.it); +39 3384546387

Fondazione Giorgio Cini | Fabio Bozzato: [stampa@cini.it](mailto:stampa@cini.it)

### **Le Stanze della Fotografia**

San Giorgio Maggiore Island, Venice

#### ***Robert Mapplethorpe. Le forme del classico***

From 10 April to 23 November 2025

#### ***Maurizio Galimberti tra Polaroid/Ready Made e le lezioni americane di Italo Calvino***

From 10 April to 27 July 2025

### **Information**

Website: [www.lestanzedellafotografia.it](http://www.lestanzedellafotografia.it) | Phone: +39 041 2412330

Email: [lestanzedellafotografia@gmail.com](mailto:lestanzedellafotografia@gmail.com)

Instagram and Facebook: LeStanzedellafotografia

### **Opening hours**

Open daily from 11 AM to 7 PM (last entry at 6:20 PM). Closed on Wednesdays.

### **Boat stop**

San Giorgio, Line 2

### **Online Tickets**

<https://stanzedellafotografia.vivaticket.it/>

### **Ticket Prices**

Full Ticket: €14.00

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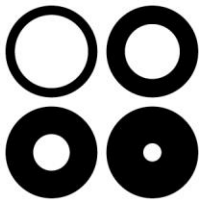


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### **Reduced Tickets**

€12.00 for students under 26, seniors over 65, groups (minimum 10, maximum 25 people), holders of specific agreements (please check the official website: <https://www.lestanzedellafotografia.it/it/contatti/info>).

### **Special Reduced Ticket**

€9.00 for residents or born in the Municipality of Venice (every Tuesday); holders of CartaEffe laFeltrinelli and IBS cards (every Thursday); ticket holders for exhibitions at the Gallerie d'Italia; MyPass Venice (+ €1 for presale); €7.00 for students with valid identification from Ca' Foscari University, Iuav, Venice Academy of Fine Arts, IUSVE; members of Ca' Foscari Alumni (discount for students from all universities on Fridays).

€28.00 for family tickets (2 adults + 2 children under 14).

€6.00 for school groups.

€4.00 for school groups participating in educational activities.

2-for-1 entry for Trenitalia CartaFRECCIA members presenting their card along with a Frecciarossa ticket to Venice dated up to 3 days prior to the exhibition visit.

### **Free Admission**

Children up to 6 years old, one accompanying adult for each group (two accompanying adults for each school class), persons with disabilities and their accompanying person, certified tour guides, Cini Ambassadors.

### **Journalist Accreditation**

Hold a valid press card for free entry by presenting it at the ticket office. For requests or to obtain accreditation, please contact within two days of the visit: [ufficio.stampa@marsilioarte.it](mailto:ufficio.stampa@marsilioarte.it)

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