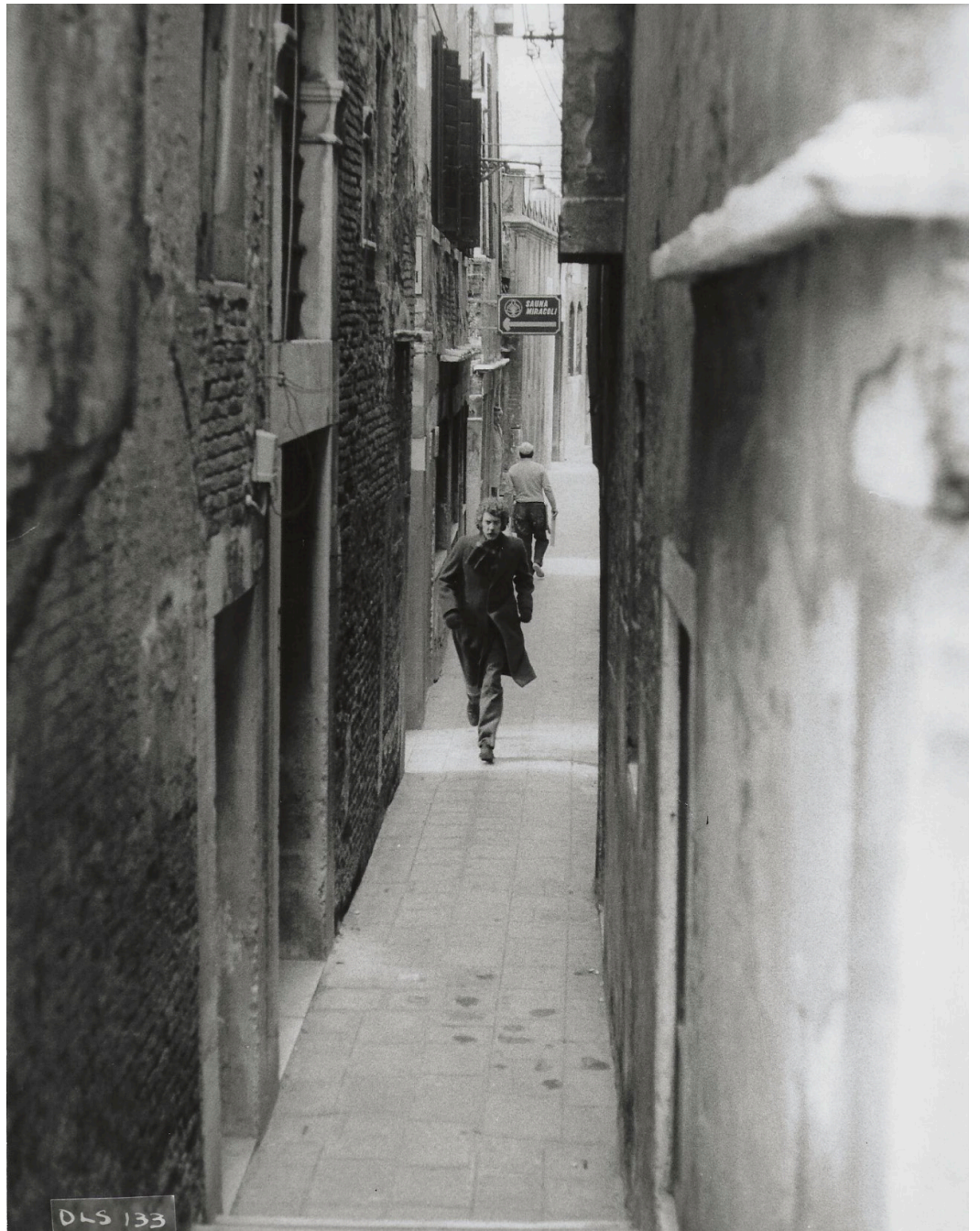


Film Still, 'Don't Look Now', San Nicolo dei Mendicoli, 1973



Wed 22 Apr – Fri 19 Jun 2026

ESTO PERPETUA:

Opening reception: Tue 21 Apr, 6–8pm

Artists: Carolyn Barker-Mill, Toby Christian, Coco Crampton, Leonardo Frigo, Domitilla Harding, Tiina Itkonen, Massimo Nordio

Esto Perpetua is a group exhibition that takes a photograph of a wall in the cemetery of San Michele in the Venetian Lagoon as its conceptual starting point for a visual investigation of this emblematic city. Developed in collaboration with the Venice in Peril Fund and curated by its director, Lavinia Filippi, the exhibition frames preservation not as the maintenance of a fixed status quo but as careful negotiation between traditions and transformations.

The title draws on the Latin invocation *Esto Perpetua*, meaning 'let it be perpetual' or 'may it last forever', a phrase historically associated with the endurance of civic life and the idea of collective survival. In Venice, however, perpetuity has never implied immobility. The city's longevity has always relied on adaptation and on the capacity to absorb change without compromising its identity.

Within this context, the participating artists explore Venice's fragility and resilience through materiality, gesture and craft, as well as through collective imagination and memory.

Tiina Itkonen establishes the exhibition's conceptual and visual framework with her 2011 photograph of San Michele Island. From this image, Venice emerges as a city where endings generate continuity, a singular place shaped not only by its fragile material fabric but also by layers of memory and immaterial heritage. **Carolyn Barker-Mill** engages with an archival image, a still of Donald Sutherland from the iconic film *Don't Look Now*, set against the atmospheric backdrop of Venice. **Toby Christian** wakes chalk and marble on painted board, setting residual marks that recall eroded hollows and the desiccated surfaces of the evanesced. **Coco Crampton** explores permanence and vulnerability through abstract yet recognisable ceramic forms that recall the elegance and stratified structures of certain Venetian architectures. **Leonardo Frigo** reactivates the mapping methods of the seventeenth-century Venetian cartographer Vincenzo Coronelli, treating craftsmanship as knowledge carried through gesture and as a way of thinking and storytelling. Finally, **Domitilla Harding** and **Massimo Nordio** demonstrate how traditional Murano glass techniques can remain rigorous while evolving through experimentation, embodying continuity as adaptation rather than repetition.

Together, the artists approach Venice as a site of resistance and renewal. Water, salt, time and presences continually reshape its surfaces. Stone bears the marks of erosion and pigment fades; stories turn into legends, yet the city persists through traditions, craftsmanship, collective rituals and continual adaptation. These works do not monumentalise Venice. Instead, they inhabit its instability, transforming exposure into structure and vulnerability into layered meaning.

Carolyn Barker-Mill (b. Dunfermline, Scotland) was born into an Aberdeen fishing family. She studied Art History at the University of Edinburgh and Painting at Edinburgh College of Art. Carolyn continues to live and work in London, her studio within a portacabin on a pontoon on the River Thames.

Toby Christian (b. Boston, Lincolnshire, UK) is an artist and writer working in London. After studying at Wimbledon College of Art, he completed his postgraduate training at the Royal Academy Schools in 2012, where he was awarded the Gold Medal. Toby's artistic practice is wide ranging and multifaceted, incorporating installation and sculpture with drawing, animation and written word. He is a Senior Lecturer in Fine Art at Central Saint Martins, University of the Arts, London.

Coco Crampton (b. London, UK) studied at Norwich School of Art and Design before graduating from the Royal Academy Schools in 2014. Often working sculpturally, her artworks breathe new life into historical forms, ranging from Victorian furniture to 20th century design icons. She currently lives and works in Devon.

Leonardo Frigo (b. Asiago, Italy) is an Italian-born artist and artisan based in London. His foundation in art restoration and printmaking has led him from detailed illustrations of musical instruments to the revival of the nearly lost tradition of globe-making. Leonardo takes inspiration from Renaissance traditions of cartography and blends it with contemporary artistic vision. His work is collected privately and commissioned by patrons, designers and institutions who value craftsmanship that honours legacy while shaping the future of material culture.

Domitilla Harding (b. New York, USA) is an Italian artist and designer specialising in glass and ceramics. Pushing glass beyond its limits by stressing the medium to achieve a weathered grain that at times mimics the substance of ceramics or stone, she is drawn to the void and a touch of theatrical peril, staging a sense of balance in objects intentionally constructed to be perceived as precarious and exploring the tension of vulnerable forms suspended while in movement. Domitilla lives and works between Venice, Siena and London.

Tiina Itkonen (b. Helsinki, Finland) graduated from Turku School of Art and Communication (Finland) in 1995 and the University of Art and Design in Helsinki in 2002. Since 1995, Tiina's photographic lens has been directed at Greenland, documenting its vast landscapes through panorama. In 2011, she was invited to participate in the Real Venice project, in collaboration with Venice in Peril, which commissioned fourteen photographers to capture the essence of Venice in original images. Tina continues to live and work in Helsinki.

Massimo Nordio (b. Venice, Italy) is a Murano-trained artist and glassmaker living and working in his city of Venice. First operating in cinema and photography, in the 1980s Massimo began experimenting with glass, eventually devoting himself to mastering the colours and techniques of glasswork. Massimo specialises in mosaic, murrine and avventurina glass.