

BRUCE YARDLEY





Grand Canal from Dorsoduro 46 x 81cm, Oil on Canvas

Front Cover: Pink Umbrella, Basilica San Marco, Oil on Canvas, 102 x 122cm

Bruce Yardley

27th June – 16th July 2018

CATTO GALLERY

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Bruce Yardley has said that whenever he visits a big civic art gallery, he heads straight for the rooms representing the half-century from 1860. What he's hoping to find are the works that best reflect the seismic change that occurred in those 50 years – paintings by Monet, Sickert, Degas, Pissarro and the other Impressionist greats.

In their own time, of course, the Impressionists caused outrage and

sensation. They were outsiders, whose work existed outside of the mainstream. They could certainly not be found in any civic art gallery. But ultimately, the authenticity of their approach won out. 150 years later, art lovers and painters alike treasure their work.

Bruce Yardley is both a fan and a practitioner. He is, as his museum habits show, a devotee of its pioneering greats. But he is also one of the UK's foremost painters of modern Impressionistic works. In his new collection for the Catto, Bruce proves again that this beloved school of painting is in safe hands.

Like his heroes, Bruce is interested primarily in the magical effects of light, colour and spatial harmony. Typically, he travels to some of Europe's most beautiful cities in pursuit of them. Interestingly, what inspires him most are the very structures that define mid 19th century life: the cathedrals, the town houses, the bridges, the squares. Obviously, there's a mathematical harmony in these edifices. These objects also tend to reflect the prevailing light conditions in unexpected ways, all of which is inspiring for a painter.

In his new collection for the Catto, Bruce brings us the remarkable tokens of his most recent expeditions. Of particular interest are the paintings of Lisbon and Oporto. Bruce rarely travels to Portugal, but he's glad he did this time. He describes his two destinations as "beautiful, hilly cities of grand, slightly faded 18th century architecture". And he was drawn to their iconic landmarks: Oporto's quayside with its striking late 19C iron bridge designed by a pupil of Gustav Eiffel, and Lisbon's Torre de Belém fortification.

Bruce's paintings are always meticulously composed. Though Impressionists can be 'loose' in their approach to colour and brushwork, this is not true of their arrangements. Bruce certainly thinks hard about composition, and looks for lines and shapes that direct the eye as he intends.

This can take him in unexpected directions. In his Portuguese works, he found what he needed in the tram system. "To my painter's eye, the tramlines and overhead wires are especially helpful in tying compositions together," he says. "I hope this comes across in my painting of Bairro Alto, a smart neighbourhood of shops, restaurants and cafes just behind the waterfront."

Elsewhere in the new show, the principal subject – not for the first time – is Venice. Bruce has painted the City of Light numerous times. He never tires of it. He says: "No painter – certainly no Impressionist painter – should apologise for painting this city. Its picturesque qualities are unique, and will never be replicated elsewhere."

He is similarly unrepentant about focusing on what he calls Venice's 'set-piece views': Piazza San Marco, the Grand Canal and so on. "These are views that have entranced painters for centuries," he says. "There is a special thrill to be had from painting views that Canaletto painted nearly 300 years ago."

Another reason for returning is that Venice has a restoration programme, and many buildings that have been hidden behind pictorial boards are suddenly on view once more.

Of course, there is a more contemplative side to Bruce's painting: his still lives/interiors. This show reveals a set of beautiful new works painted inside his own home and also in destinations such as Browns Restaurant in Bristol, and Cliveden. Clearly, these are 'quieter' works than the landscapes, but they share the same attention to light and composition.

Travelling to the west country to paint these canvases was a kind of homecoming for Bruce. Though born into an artistic family (his father is John Yardley the watercolourist) he had studied history at Bristol and Oxford, before becoming a full time painter in 1996.

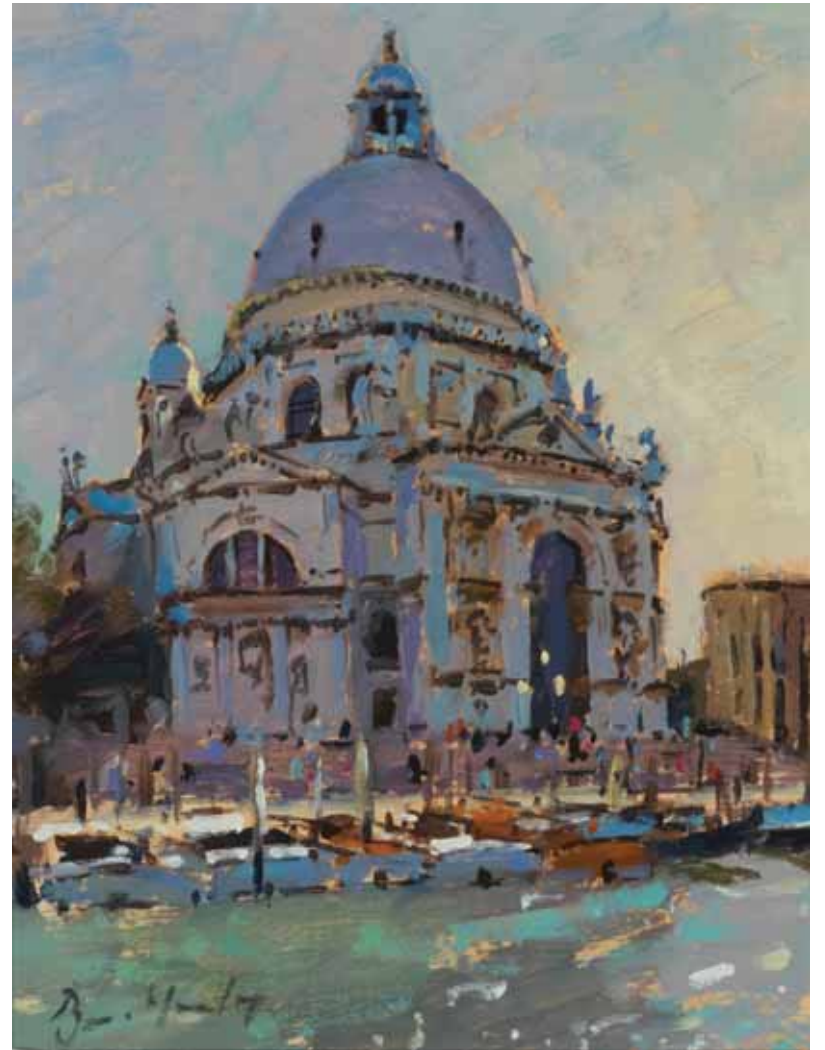
Over 30 years later, Bruce remains an immensely popular and successful artist. Also, a hungry one. Bruce is simply consumed by the craft of painting. His commitment is total – and admirable. As a viewer, it is impossible to resist.



B. Hardy



Sunrise over the Salute
122 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas



Venice: La Salute
25 x 20cm, Oil on Board



Grand Canal from Sant' Angelo 30 x 51cm, Oil on Canvas



Salute: Afternoon Sparkle 41 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Westminster Palace from Hungerford Bridge 102 x 122cm, Oil on Canvas



From Tower Bridge, Departing Clouds 30 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Covent Garden: Café and Museum 30 x 25cm, Oil on Board



St Paul's from Bankside 25 x 20cm, Oil on Board



Campo Santo Stefano: Night 30 x 51cm, Oil on Canvas



Campo St Stefano Giovanni e Paolo 51 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Afternoon Drinks, Paternoster Row 41 x 30cm, Oil on Canvas

Browns Restaurant, Bristol
102 x 76cm, oil on Canvas





Peonies and Closed Shutters 76 x 51cm, Oil on Canvas



Contre-Jour Orchid 56 x 26cm, Oil on Canvas



Autumn Flowers 51 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas



Flowers on the Sofa Table 76 x 51cm, Oil on Canvas



From Accademia Bridge: Morning 76 x 51cm, Oil on Canvas



San Giorgio Maggiore and the Lagoon 76 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Aqua Alta: Copper and Turquoise 61 x 122cm, Oil on Canvas



Evening Sun, Casa da Ribeira, Oporto 41 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Torre de Belém, Lisbon 30 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas



Bairro Alto, Lisbon 51 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Private Dining Room, Syon House 51 x 30cm, Oil on Canvas



The Waiter, Cliveden Great Hall 51 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas

Abbey Reflections, Bath
76 x 76cm, Oil on Canvas





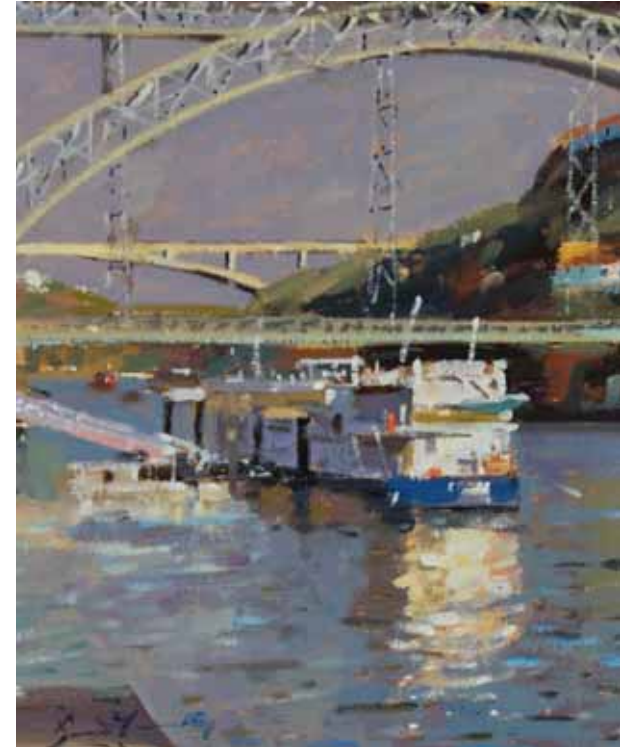
Quayside, Oporto 41 x 30cm, Oil on Canvas



Rabelos, Vila Nova de Gaia 30 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas



The Douro at Pinhao 30 x 51cm, Oil on Canvas



Ponte de Dom Luis I, Afternoon
30 x 25cm, Oil on Canvas





Campo Santo Stefano: Morning 30 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Piazza San Marco 15 x 30cm, Oil on Board



Rialto Markets Vaporetto Stop 20 x 25cm, Oil on Board

Opposite: From Accademia Bridge, Looking East 102 x 122cm, Oil on Canvas



Peonies in the Drawing Room 51 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas



Flowers on the Coffee Table 41 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas



Great Hall, Cliveden 51 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



Peonies and 'Crown' Cushion 61 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas



Sant' Angelo: Castle and Bridge 20 x 25cm, Oil on Board



Sant' Agnese in Agone, Piazza Navona 20 x 25cm, Oil on Board



Via di Conciliazione, Rome 20 x 30cm, Oil on Board



Twin Churches, Piazza del Popolo 20 x 25cm, Oil on Board



Chiesa San Vidal, Venice 20 x 30cm, Oil on Board



Colleoni Statue, Venice 51 x 41cm, Oil on Canvas

Back Cover: Sezincote House, South Front 51 x 61cm, Oil on Canvas



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Opening times: 10am - 6pm Mon - Sat • 12.30pm - 6pm Sunday • and by appointment

Exhibition dates: 27th June – 16th July 2018