



Venice
Scuola Grande di San Rocco

JAN FABRE - THE QUIET SOURCE

Venice, Scuola Grande di San Rocco (campo san Rocco 3052)

9 May – 22 November, 2026

Presented during the 61st Venice Art Biennale, the Scuola Grande di San Rocco presents “The Quiet Source”, an exhibition by Jan Fabre that brings three new silicon bronze sculptures into dialogue with Tintoretto’s celebrated pictorial cycle.

Curated by Giacinto Di Pietrantonio (Italy) and Katerina Koskina (Greece), the exhibition establishes a reflective encounter between Renaissance painting and contemporary sculpture. Jan Fabre is the first living artist invited to exhibit within one of Venice’s most historically significant artistic spaces.

The **Scuola Grande di San Rocco**, home to Tintoretto’s monumental cycle of paintings, one of the masterpieces of the Venetian Renaissance, will host one of the most compelling exhibitions of the upcoming cultural season.

From **9 May to 22 November 2026**, Jan Fabre’s “The Quiet Source” stages a dialogue between past and present through three sculptures created by the Flemish artist. Installed along the central axis of the building, the works interact conceptually and spatially with Tintoretto’s paintings, generating a layered encounter between two artistic languages separated by centuries, yet united by a shared exploration of light, spirituality and human experience.

The project coincides with the **61st International Art Exhibition of the Venice Biennale** and is organized by **Galleria Gaburro** together with **Linda and Guy Pieters Foundation**.

A leading figure in contemporary artistic practice, **Jan Fabre** (Antwerp, 1958) has developed an interdisciplinary body of work encompassing drawing, sculpture, installation, film and performance. For this exhibition, Fabre envisions the legacy of Tintoretto through the language of sculpture, adopting **silicon bronze** as his chosen medium, a material whose luminous surface amplifies light and lends the works a striking sense of presence and immateriality.

Light, after all, lies at the heart of Venetian painting. Through its dramatic and expressive use, artists such as **Giorgione, Titian, Paolo Veronese and Tintoretto** transformed pictorial space into something dynamic, fluid and vibrant.



Curator **Katerina Koskina** states: “Jan Fabre is a revolutionary, iconoclastic and subversive artist.” She continues: ... “In this context, his installations in major museums (Uffizi, Louvre, Hermitage) or former palaces and theological schools (Nuova Grande Scuola di Santa Maria della Misericordia and now the Grande Scuola di San Rocco), monasteries and churches (Abbazia di San Gregorio, Capella del Pio Monte della Misericordia) are anything but accidental. These are ideal settings for an aesthetic, physical and existential experience activated by history, 'staging' and memory, cultivating the dialectic relationship of past and present and underscoring the timelessness of art”.

As curator **Giacinto Di Pietrantonio** observes, “This light is the very same through which Fabre creates connections between different worlds, reflecting on the logic of origin through a profound sense of poignancy. The exhibition stages a direct dialogue with Tintoretto, in no way antithetical but rather cooperative; it establishes a threshold that allows two epochs—remarkably similar, though inevitably heterogeneous—to be observed and compared.”

The exhibition presents **three sculptures**, “The Man Who Holds the Sword (Oath of My Father)”, “The Artist as a Stray Dog in His Basket” and “The Man Who Cuts the Grass” developed over the course of five years. Positioned at the center of the rooms across the building’s ground and first floors, the works form a **symbolic spine** running through the architecture, like a metaphorical **Tree of Life**.

Together, the sculptures constitute a **trilogy** centered on the themes of family, memory and personal mythology. Each incorporates the body of the artist; however, two bear the faces of Fabre’s father, **Edmond**, and his brother **Emiel**, who died at a very young age before the artist was born.

The exhibition begins on the **ground floor** with “The Man Who Holds the Sword (Oath of My Father)”, depicting Fabre with the face of his father as he raises a sword toward the sky in a solemn gesture of oath-taking. The posture evokes the archetype of the **knight**, recalling the medieval chivalric tradition and the historical mission of the **Scuola Grande di San Rocco**, devoted to the protection of the vulnerable.

Installed in the **Sala Capitolare**, “The Artist as a Stray Dog in His Basket” portrays the artist as a stray dog curled inside a basket, with a **marmot** resting on his back, an affectionate reference to Fabre’s wife, **Joanna**. The marmot becomes a symbol of **love, blessing and good fortune**. The dog simultaneously evokes the iconography of **Saint Roch**, the patron saint associated with the Scuola, traditionally depicted accompanied by the dog that fed him during his illness.

The final sculpture, “The Man Who Cuts the Grass”, is installed in the **Sala dell’Albergo** beneath Tintoretto’s “Glory of Saint Roch”. Here Fabre appears on all fours with the face of his brother **Emiel**, metaphorically cutting blades of grass with a small pair of scissors. The gesture recalls a popular ritual intended to **ward off malevolent spirits along the path leading home**.

Conceived so that visitors may sit upon it, the sculpture introduces a **performative dimension** that transforms the viewer’s relationship with the artwork, inviting reflection on participation, freedom and the shifting boundaries between contemplation and interaction.



More broadly, Fabre's work, much like Tintoretto's, addresses the tension between **life and death, good and evil**, integrating mourning and memory into a broader meditation on human existence. The posture of the figure, bent low to the ground, evokes an act of **humility, reverence and existential vulnerability**.

Catalogue: Forma Edizioni, Florence

BIOGRAPHY

Jan Fabre (1958, Antwerp), visual and performance artist, theatre artist and author, is widely recognized as one of the most versatile and compelling figures in contemporary artistic practice. Since the late 1970s, while still a student at the **Institute of Decorative Arts** and subsequently at the **Royal Academy of Fine Arts** in Antwerp, Fabre embarked upon an interdisciplinary trajectory aimed at exploring the **human body and its expressive potential** through continuously evolving techniques, materials and artistic languages.

Drawing extensively on performative practice, Fabre has developed a distinct artistic language shaped by recurring forms and motifs, through which a highly personal and coherent universe unfolds in continuous dialogue between artist and audience. Raised by a Catholic mother, Fabre has frequently engaged with both **sacred and secular spaces**, demonstrating how spirituality and theological reflection occupy a central position within his artistic poetics, alongside a profound familiarity with **biblical narratives and symbolism**.

Among his major exhibitions are the **Belgian Pavilion at the Venice Biennale (1984)** and other Biennials (Sao Paulo, Valencia, Istanbul, etc.), **"documenta VIII and IX" in Kassel**, "Gaude Succurrere Vitae" (SMAK Ghent; GAMeC Bergamo; Musée d'Art Contemporain Lyon; Fundación Miró Barcelona), "Homo Faber" (KMSKA Antwerp, 2006), "From the Cellar to the Attic – From the Feet to the Brain" (Kunsthaus Bregenz, 2008; Arsenale Novissimo Venice, 2009), "PIETAS" (Venice, 2011; Antwerp, 2012), "Hortus/Corpus" (Kröller-Müller Museum, 2011), and "Stigmata: Actions and Performances 1976–2013" (MAXXI, Rome, 2013; M HKA Antwerp, 2015; MAC Lyon, 2016; Leopold Museum, Vienna, 2017 etc).

Fabre was also **the first living artist to present a large-scale solo exhibition at the Louvre** with "L'Ange de la Métamorphose" (2008) and at the **State Hermitage Museum, St Petersburg**, with "Knight of Despair / Warrior of Beauty" (2017).

Venice, March 2026



JAN FABRE - THE QUIET SOURCE

Venice, Scuola Grande di san Rocco (Campo san Rocco 3052)

9 May – 22 November, 2026

Opening hours: 9:30 - 17:30 (last entrance 17:00)

Entrance 12,00 €, Reduced 10,00 / 8,00

<https://www.scuolagrandesanrocco.org/home/informazioni/>

www.scuolagrandesanrocco.org

Facebook: SRoccoVeneziaSG

Instagram: @scuolagrandesanrocco

Press Office

CLP Relazioni Pubbliche

T. + 39 02 36755700 | www.clp1968.it

Supported by

GALLERIA GABURRO

Linda and Guy Pieters Foundation