



&



PRESENT



From the
Mississippi
to the
Grand Canal

NEW ORLEANS ARTISTS IN VENICE



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There are moments that change the course of someone's trajectory, but it is a rare opportunity to be able to document those moments. Watching in real time, culture, struggle, lived experience, and resilience come together as 9 artists and Culture Bearers of New Orleans, and their artwork, travel from the Mississippi to the Grand Canal, half a world away. The film is the story of that convergence— a cinematic journey tracing how the creative spirit of one of America's most culturally significant cities arrives on the global stage in Venice, Italy.

At the heart of this documentary is a profoundly human narrative about transformation, identity, and the power of art to alter the course of a life. The film follows constellation of artists whose journeys illuminate the diversity of pathways that lead from the streets of New Orleans to the canals of Venice. Internationally renowned and New York Times-acclaimed painter Andrew LaMar Hopkins brings his singular vision of Creole history and contemporary Southern identity into dialogue with European audiences.

Also featured is Adam Trest, New York Times bestselling illustrator and celebrated Southern contemporary painter, whose work regularly appears on HGTV's *Hometown* and whose distinctive visual language bridges storytelling and fine art.

Joe Mustachia's and Tony Bernard's stories are equally compelling. Mustachia is a man who once cut grass for a living, but is now boarding an airplane for the first time, passport in hand, to witness his expressive, splatter-painted canvases exhibited on the world stage. Tony Bernard, the Cajun painter and longtime studio assistant to the legendary George Rodrigue, experiences Europe for the first time as an exhibiting artist, his deeply rooted Louisiana imagery traveling far beyond the bayou.

Karen Ocker, a respected and deeply connected figure within the New Orleans arts community, represents the city's collaborative heartbeat — the artists who build and sustain cultural ecosystems from within. And at just twenty-five years old, self-taught artist Kloé Donley embodies the future: a new generation carrying forward the city's creative lineage with instinct, urgency, and fearless originality.

Together, their stories form a portrait of a city whose artistic voice refuses containment. Also featured are artists Michie Cooper, Morgan Gray, and Jen Morgan, all making their international debut! This documentary is about the courage of boarding a first international flight, the pride of carrying one's culture abroad, and the realization that art born along the Mississippi can resonate just as powerfully beside the Grand Canal.

From the Mississippi to the Grand Canal presents a historic moment when an unlikely group of artists, united in their love for New Orleans and their craft and bringing the DNA of a city with them, are elevated to one of the biggest stages in art for the entire world to see.



Executive Producers Jim Dotson and Ron Yager are the power team responsible for dozens of award-winning film and series for WLAE. Their individual and collaborative careers include extensive experience and expertise producing entertaining and informative content for television audiences.

Their film, ***Blue: The Life and Art of George Rodrigue***, won a 2025 Emmy award and more than a half-dozen Best Documentary awards at film festivals worldwide. ***Michalopoulos: The Art of Celebration*** was honored to be selected as the opening night film for the 2025 New Orleans Film Festival. ***Blue, Michalopoulos,*** and WLAE's Telly and Emmy award-winning films celebrating ***Fats Domino, Leah Chase, Allen Toussaint,*** and ***Irma Thomas*** have enjoyed national distributions through American Public Television and NETA (National Educational

Telecommunications Association). Many of their films and series are also available worldwide on WLAE's YouTube Channel, @WLAETV.

Other highly acclaimed releases include ***Fitz!: The Life and Political Legacy of Jimmy Fitzmorris*** and ***Let's Talk With Keith Spera.*** ***Let's Talk*** and the multi-Emmy Award-winning travel series ***Go Coast: Louisiana*** both celebrate Louisiana music, food, and culture, and air statewide on LPB.



Executive Producer Cayman Clevenger is a Louisiana-based attorney, producer, writer, and art dealer, and the founder and director of Orleans Gallery in New Orleans' Arts District. Known for his dynamic, artist-first approach, Clevenger has built Orleans Gallery into a vibrant cultural hub that champions both established and emerging voices while making contemporary art accessible to a new generation of collectors.

With a background in law and a deep commitment to storytelling, Clevenger is committed to amplifying artists and preserving their stories in publications across the globe as an art journalist. As a producer, he was instrumental in the creation and fundraising for the documentary ***Michalopoulos: The Art of Celebration,*** furthering his mission to elevate and preserve the voices shaping the cultural landscape of the American South.

Through exhibitions, original content, and public art initiatives, Clevenger continues to position Orleans Gallery at the forefront of a new movement—one rooted in community, creativity, and the enduring power of art.



Director Sean O'Malley established O'Malley Productions in 2005 in Los Angeles, California. He has written, directed, and produced series and specials for Food Network, Cooking Channel, Animal Planet, Travel Channel, Univision's streaming platform ViX, and Discovery+, including over 175 hours of Food Paradise, one of Discovery's longest running food series. Sean served as Executive Producer and Producer for 6th Street Studios' nationally distributed, award-winning, PBS documentary, ***Fats Domino: Walkin' Back to New Orleans, Blue: The Life and Art of George Rodrigue,*** and ***Michalopoulos: The Art of Celebration.***



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**For more information,
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