

Frozen Light / Light casts shadow

Casa Museo di Giorgio Morandi, Grizzana Morandi / Museo Morandi, Bologna

Evgeny Antufiev presents two parallel exhibitions in sites dedicated to Giorgio Morandi — the Casa Museo di Giorgio Morandi in Grizzana and the Museo Morandi in Bologna. These two hand-in-hand exhibitions focus on contradictory themes of light and shadow, positioning themselves as two poles of the same sphere. As Antufiev writes, they are “opposed, yet no less disconnected.”

Best known for his subtly muted still-life paintings of everyday objects, Giorgio Morandi (1890–1964) is among the most celebrated and influential Italian artists of the twentieth century. Morandi kept a summer home in Grizzana, where he retreated from his hometown Bologna with his sisters. Built in the late 1950s, this house became the setting for many of the everyday objects and landscapes he rendered in his most famous paintings.

Since 2009, the house has served as a small museum: Casa Museo Morandi. At the request of his sister, Maria Teresa Morandi, Morandi's rooms have been carefully preserved and left intact, offering visitors a direct glimpse into the world that shaped his art. Installed within these rooms, *Frozen Light* disperses Antufiev's aluminium sculptures across the painter's untouched domestic space. “The house is full of sadness, frozen light and frozen time,” Antufiev notes, finding in aluminium a kindred material capable of returning a subdued luminosity.

In *Frozen Light*, Antufiev takes close historical and archival research as his point of departure, responding directly to Morandi's personal life and working environment with sculptural interventions. Staging a fictitious encounter between two artists who never met, the exhibition sets the light, humility, and truth of Morandi's paintings against the shadow, ritual, and secrecy of Antufiev's aluminium sculptures. Within this intimate home setting, the two bodies of work are in tension between these opposing themes while placed in utmost proximity.

Although Morandi spent nearly his entire life in his hometown of Bologna and rarely travelled outside Italy, his work was exhibited internationally and admired both during and after his lifetime. The Museo Morandi in Bologna presents the artist's studio, capturing the reclusive lifestyle that lent itself to close looking at banal household objects. In *Light casts shadow*, Antufiev stages bronze sculptures within Morandi's working spaces. Taking the vase — one of Morandi's most famous painted subjects — as his starting point, Antufiev offers a counterpoint to the diffuse light that Morandi's oeuvre is known for. Instead, his works carry heaviness, “a weight that is destructive to light.”

In *Light casts shadow* at the Museo Morandi in Bologna, Antufiev shifts focus from Morandi's paintings to his works on paper, describing them as “clear, unsettling, at times sharp and angular.” In response to these works, he presents bronze sculptures and mosaics where weight and shadow become the decisive quality of light.

Antufiev responds to Morandi's works on paper with mosaics made in collaboration with his wife, Lyubov Nalogina. The sharp, angular lines of Morandi's engravings find a natural echo in the fragmentary nature of mosaic itself. Antufiev describes the resulting works as born from the tension between Morandi's shadowy engraved line and the ancient, methodical craft of tessellation.

Image Captions

1. Installation view: *Luce congelata / Frozen Light*, Casa Museo di Giorgio Morandi, Grizzana Morandi, IT, 23 May – 13 September 2026. Courtesy the artist, Emalin, London, and z2o Sara Zanin, Rome. Photo: Ela Bialkowska/OKNOstudio.

2. Installation view: *Luce congelata / Frozen Light*, Casa Museo di Giorgio Morandi, Grizzana Morandi, IT, 23 May – 13 September 2026. Courtesy the artist, Emalin, London, and z2o Sara Zanin, Rome. Photo: Ela Bialkowska/OKNOstudio.

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11. Installation view: *Luce che proietta ombra / Light casts shadow*, Museo Morandi, Bologna, IT, 23 May – 13 September 2026. Courtesy the artist, Emalin, London, and z2o Sara Zanin, Rome. Photo: Ela Bialkowska/OKNOstudio.

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14. Evgeny Antufiev, *Untitled* (detail), 2026. Bronze, patina. 70.5 × 33.5 × 33.5 cm. Courtesy the artist, Emalin, London, and z2o Sara Zanin, Rome. Photo: Ela Bialkowska/OKNOstudio.

15. Evgeny Antufiev and Lyubov Nalogina, *Untitled*, 2026. Marble, travertine, cement, steel. Two parts, each: 195.2 x 79.6 x 4 cm. Courtesy the artist, Emalin, London, and z2o Sara Zanin, Rome. Photo: Ela Bialkowska/OKNOstudio.

16. Evgeny Antufiev and Lyubov Nalogina, *Untitled* (detail), 2026. Marble, travertine, cement, steel. Two parts, each: 195.2 x 79.6 x 4 cm. Courtesy the artist, Emalin, London, and z2o Sara Zanin, Rome. Photo: Ela Bialkowska/OKNOstudio.