

# Giorgio Dal Canto, aka Babb

Pontedera has worn many masks throughout its history. First and foremost, that of trade, industry, work, innovation and, in the last twenty-five years, also that of contemporary art.

This path has led our town to play an important role within Tuscany, which has one of its greatest strengths in this field.

Although the town has not preserved any significant historical and artistic excellence in the urban fabric, despite being the birthplace of first-rate geniuses such as Andrea da Pontedera, we have been able to embark on a path in a well-defined direction: the transformation of our territory into an open-air museum.

This now well-known and uninterrupted path has always been characterised and accompanied by numerous events and exhibitions, during which we have welcomed many artists and experiences, and each time the effects have been significant and the marks left important.

During this journey, there have also been many moments of valorisation of our own artists and today we return to talk about one of the most important: Giorgio Dal Canto, aka Babb.

One of the sons of this land who has most closely linked his work to our city, born exactly ninety years ago on the banks of the Era River, he began exhibiting in the 1970s, completing an extraordinary evolution from work to work, exhibition to exhibition.

Reluctant to cross the 'invisible walls' of the city, in many of his creations he loved to use the buildings, churches, squares and streets of Pontedera as a natural setting, succeeding over the years in paying numerous homages to its people and the spaces they inhabited on a daily basis.

In 2012, the municipal administration presented Giorgio Dal Canto with a plaque to thank him 'for his commitment to art, his civic passion and his ability to poetically describe our city', an award that came after his participation in the Venice Biennale, his exhibition at the Centro Otello Cirri and the creation of 'his' Vespa. Babb left us in 2016 but his art is still with us, it is present in our eyes and I would say in many homes and offices of collectors, friends and admirers.

If we are still talking about him, it means that his extraordinary creations have been able to tell the story of his and our time. They are 'compasses' that can still be used today, and can still tell us a lot.



**Il mercato a Pontedera**  
(The market in Pontedera)  
pencil on paper 14×18.5 cm  
(Sauro Macelloni)



**Senza titolo** (Untitled)  
pencil on paper 13,8×12,8 cm  
(Sauro Macelloni)

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**Pontedera città della Vespa**  
(Pontedera city of the Vespa)  
author's proof 35×50 cm  
(Sauro Macelloni)



Here it is important to thank all those who have strived to preserve his art and history over the years, and those who have promoted him known beyond the regional borders. I am proud to present this publication that encompasses the life and works of a great Pontedera painter who, with his brushes, allowed us and still allows us to reflect on society, life, and also to see our city with different eyes.

*Matteo Franconi*  
Mayor of Pontedera



**Pontedera distrutta dalla guerra**  
(Pontedera destroyed by war)  
(Vivaldi family archive)

*The bell tower of the Misericordia Church and the Clock Tower are still standing, while the two 'sentinel' bell towers of the city cathedral were destroyed.*

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**Malinconia** (Melancholy), 1977  
indian ink and watercolor 50×70 cm

