



THE GALLERY OF **EVERYTHING** PRESENTS

# THE EVERLASTING FAITH MISSION OF SISTER GERTRUDE MORGAN

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Press:

Rebecca Ward  
+44 7977 071 450 // [rebecca@rebeccaward.co.uk](mailto:rebecca@rebeccaward.co.uk)

Press Office  
+44 20 7957 5323 // [pr@musevery.com](mailto:pr@musevery.com)

THE GALLERY OF **EVERYTHING**  
4 CHILTERN STREET LONDON, W1  
020 7486 8908 // [GE@GALLEVERY.COM](mailto:GE@GALLEVERY.COM)

[WWW.GALLEVERY.COM](http://WWW.GALLEVERY.COM)



Sister Gertrude Morgan (1900-1980)

*I am a missionary of Christ before I'm an artist.*  
Sister Gertrude Morgan (1973)

Photographed by [Lee Friedlander](#), lionised by [Andy Warhol](#), remixed by [King Britt](#) ... the remarkable [Sister Gertrude Morgan](#) (née Gertrude Williams) was a rare and rarified figure in the aesthetic history of 20th century America: a confident female artist whose visceral image-making went hand-in-hand with the saving of souls.

Born in 1900 in Lafayette, Alabama, [Morgan](#) was as modest as she was larger-than-life. Her New Orleans Faith Mission was a spiritual home for believers and non-believers alike. It was here that she proselytised and painted and rattled her tambourine - when she was not out singing, preaching or teaching Bible to neighbourhood strays.

Indeed, the moments of her life soon became the stuff of her paintings. She was a confirmed **Bride of Christ**, outputting her message on any surface she could find. This ambitious repertoire evoked a divine semi-autobiographical hybrid, where **New Jerusalem** bore an uncanny resemblance to New Orleans, and where the Sister depicted her marriage to Jesus, God or both, surrounded by heavenly bodies or swirling elliptical text.

[Morgan](#) grew to become more than a local celebrity. She was a shining star, a successful African-American lady, painting and exhibiting at a time when few of her peers dared even expose their material - let alone in the racist, mysogonist South. For while the Black Arts Movement was peaking in New York and Chicago, [Morgan](#) remained remote from those communities, separated by not only by geographical distance but by her artistic intent.

The strength came from within and [Morgan](#) was nothing less than a barometer for truth. Often to be seen on the streets in her signature white uniform, it was the performative nature of her practice which brought her to the attention of [Larry Borenstein](#) and [Allen Jaffe](#). Working together, these two high-octane stalwarts of the city brought [Morgan's](#) work into dialogue with the wider arts community via Borenstein's art gallery at Preservation Hall.

[Morgan's](#) prolific output led to a fast uptake amongst the local artistic community of the 1960s and 1970s. Major exhibitions were to follow, including the Corcoran Gallery's barrier-breaking **Black Folk Art in America, 1930 - 1980** (1982), which toured to major institutions across the United States and a major retrospective (2014), curated by [William A. Fagaly](#). In recent years, [Sister Gertrude Morgan](#) has been included in such high-profile exhibitions as **Outliers and the American Vanguard Art** (2019) at LACMA, curated by [Lynn Cooke](#). Her emblematic song **I Got a New World in My View** (1970) was featured in the [Martin Luther King Jr](#) biopic, **Selma** (2014) and her classic Let's Make a Record was re-worked by DJ and producer King Britt in 2005.

At a time when so much is uncertain, when communities across America and beyond demand equality for all, this pioneering artist's message of harmony and justice remains as pertinent and cherished as ever.

*The first time I heard her voice it just pierced my whole spirit.*  
King Britt, music producer (2005)

**She was terrific.**  
Lee Friedlander, photographer (1970)



THE GALLERY OF **EVERYTHING**  
[www.gallevery.com](http://www.gallevery.com) // [@gallevery](https://twitter.com/gallevery)

The Gallery of **Everything** is a commercial space for non-academic artists, private art-makers and other alternative creators.

An initiative of The Museum of **Everything**, the gallery engages with a wide network of institutions, artists and curators to place material into major private and public collections. The gallery's roster includes known historical master artists, as well as newly discovered authors. Events include group and solo exhibitions, talks, readings and happenings.

The gallery has been exhibiting at Frieze Masters since 2012 and opened its London space in 2016. Exhibitions to date include: *Journeys into the Outside*, an installation of environmental art-making with performer Jarvis Cocker; *Le Foyer de l'Art Brut*, an in-depth study of artist Jean Dubuffet's legendary 1947 project in Paris; and *Art + Revolution in Haiti*, an investigation into how self-taught Haitian art influenced the trajectory of Surrealism.

Proceeds from The Gallery of **Everything** help support The Museum of **Everything**, a registered UK charity and non-profit organisation, dedicated to the advancement, integration and celebration of artists and makers beyond the cultural mainstream.

THE MUSEUM OF **EVERYTHING**  
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The Museum of **Everything** opened in London in 2009 and has welcomed over a million visitors to its large-scale installations in Britain, Europe, Russia, America and Australia.

As the UK's leading advocate for non-academic and private art-making, the museum functions as an international exhibitor, archive and activist, collaborating with artists, curators, writers and institutions. These include Tate Modern (UK), Hayward Gallery (UK), Pinacoteca Agnelli (Italy), Kunsthal Rotterdam (Holland), Garage (Russia) and Mona (Australia).

The Museum of **Everything** is a lobbyist for the inclusion and display of all forms of non-canonical art. As such, it was closely involved with the 55th Venice Biennale in 2013, during which it was also profiled in the BBC documentary, *Turning the Art World Inside Out*. It is known for its immersive and highly distinctive installations, most recently seen at Mona in Australia in 2017/18.

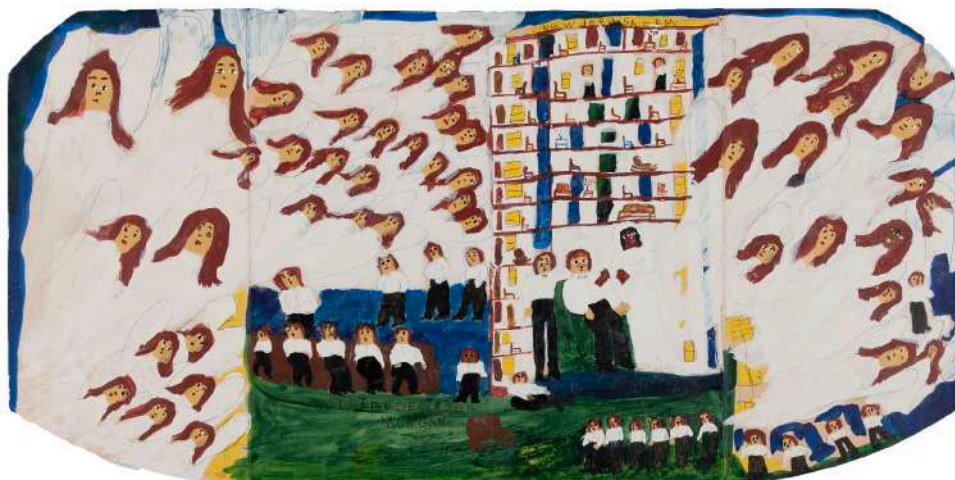
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EVERLASTING GOSPEL  
14:6. MISSION. REVELATION

Sister Gertrude Morgan  
*untitled (THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL MISSION)* (c 1970)  
acrylic on board  
18.8 x 122 x 1.8 cm, 7 $\frac{3}{8}$  x 48 $\frac{1}{8}$  x  $\frac{3}{4}$  "



Sister Gertrude Morgan  
*My Marriage to Jesus* (c 1970)  
acrylic, pencil, pen on paper  
17.6 x 26.4 cm, 6  $\frac{7}{8}$  x 10  $\frac{3}{8}$  "



Sister Gertrude Morgan  
*New Jerusalem* (c 1955)  
acrylic, pen, pencil on paper  
30 x 61 cm, 11 $\frac{3}{4}$  x 24 $\frac{1}{8}$  "



Sister Gertrude Morgan  
*Revelations 4th Chapter* (c 1969)  
 acrylic, pen, pencil on cardboard  
 25.2 x 52.9 cm, 9 7/8 x 20 7/8 "



Sister Gertrude Morgan  
*Lord I am Doing All the Good I can* (c 1967)  
 crayon, pen, acrylic on paper  
 12.3 x 10.2 cm, 4 7/8 x 4 1/8 "



Sister Gertrude Morgan  
*untitled* (c 1970)  
 acrylic, watercolour, ink on card  
 10.2 x 13 cm, 4 x 5 "