

Giorgio de Chirico

Opening: Wednesday, December 6, h 4-8 pm

Open to public: 6 December 2023 – 24 February 2024

Rome, Via Bocca di Leone 88

They say that Rome is the centre of the world and that Piazza di Spagna is the centre of Rome, so my wife and I would live in the centre of the centre of the world. G.de Chirico

On Wednesday 6, December 2023 Tornabuoni Art Rome opens a retrospective dedicated to Giorgio de Chirico, one of the most emblematic figures in the artistic and cultural debate of the 20th century.

Rome was dear to the *Pictor Optimus* (Latin for “the best painter”): here he studied ancient ruins, he was fascinated by Raphael's *School of Athens* in the Vatican Rooms and he deepened aspects of his metaphysical painting. He moved there permanently in 1944 and from 1948 settled with his wife in the house-studio in Piazza di Spagna – which now hosts the Giorgio and Isa de Chirico Foundation - a strategic position in the artistic heart of the city, with the ateliers on Via Margutta and Via del Babuino, the Caffè Greco on Via Condotti and the Caffè Aragno on Via del Corso.

On display is a selection of more than thirty works - including painting, sculpture, drawing and arras-, from the early 20th century to the 1970s, which gives an almost complete idea of the artist's production phases.

The exhibition opens with a work from the *Böcklinesque* period, *La Passeggiata* of 1909, from the Roberto Casamonti Collection in Florence. The influence of Böcklin's and Klinger's symbolism, which matured in Munich at the same time as reading Nietzsche and Schopenhauer, would return on several occasions over the years and in de Chirico's work, in his iconographic solutions, irrational visions and inventions in staging.

Two paintings investigate the theme of the female nude: the first dated 1923, already in Alberto Savinio's collection and exhibited at the XIII Quadriennale of Rome in 1998. The other, from 1930, portrays Cornelia Silbermann, a woman met in Paris in August 1929 and who later became de Chirico's muse. De Chirico had a long relationship with her, testified by a correspondence of twenty-three letters from 1929 to June 1951.

To the production of the 1930s belong *Combattimento di gladiatori* (1932), also part of the Roberto Casamonti Collection in Florence, and *Cavalli in riva al mare* (1935), formerly in the

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collection of Margherita Sarfatti, the first woman in Europe to deal with art criticism at the beginning of the 20th century.

Realized in 1940, *...Ed ecco un gran drago...* is a drawing from the cycle for the edition of the Apocalypse of John edited by Raffaele Carrieri - *In that great and strange house that is the Apocalypse [...] I dream, intrigued and happy, like a child, among his toys, on Christmas night* (G. de Chirico).

On show there are also two self-portraits: *Autoritratto delle nuvole* of 1948 and *Autoritratto come pittore in costume del Settecento* of 1957, where de Chirico used the *escamotage* of the antique dress, thus heightening the fascination of the composition: *the modern dress is not interesting to paint [...] the antique dress offers many more possibilities to do some painting and demonstrate what one can do* (G. de Chirico).

In a more mature phase of his artistic production, de Chirico re-elaborated the subjects of the 1910s, 1920s and 1930s in a new light, with bright colours and more serene atmospheres compared to the severe and gloomy ones of early Metaphysical Art, as seen in *Ettore e Andromaca* of 1950, *Piazza d'Italia con piedistallo vuoto* of 1955 and *Bagni Misteriosi* of 1968.

About these one in 1973 the painter wrote: *'The idea for the "Bagni Misteriosi" came to me once when I was in a house where the floor had been highly polished with wax. I looked at a gentleman who was walking in front of me and whose legs reflected in the floor. I had the impression that he could sink into that floor, like into a pool, that he could move and even swim there. So I imagined strange pools with men immersed in that kind of water-parquet, who stood still, and moved, and sometimes stopped to converse with other men who stood outside the pool floor* (G. de Chirico).

OPENING HOURS

Tuesday - Saturday
h 10 am – 1 pm / 2 – 7 pm

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