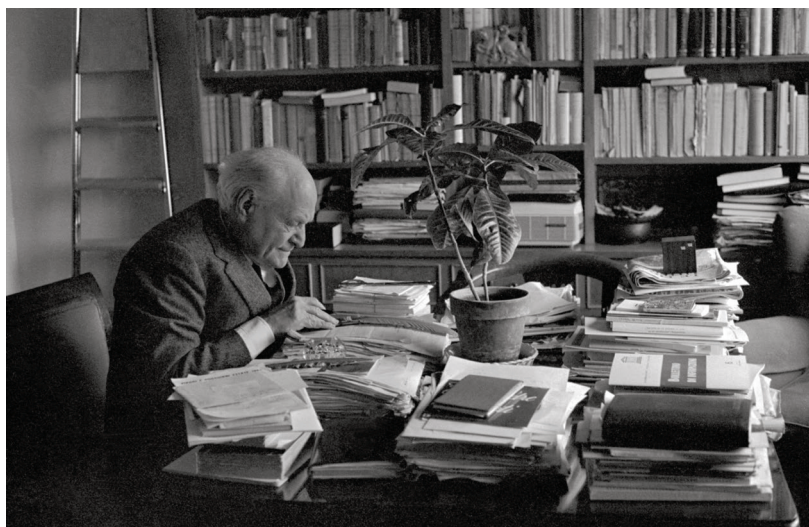


Pittura e poesia. Ungaretti e l'arte del vedere

curated by Alexandra Zingone

17 May - 12 July 2024

Opening, Thursday 16 May, 5 pm
FLORENCE, Lungarno Benvenuto Cellini 3



Tornabuoni Arte inaugurates on Thursday 16 May, at 5 pm, in its headquarters in Florence, *Pittura e Poesia. Ungaretti e l'arte del vedere*, an exhibition that celebrates the convergence between literature and visual arts, in the figure of the poet Giuseppe Ungaretti (Alexandria, 1888 – Milan, 1970), paying homage to him with a selection of works by artists he knew, attended and wrote about. For this occasion, two unpublished works by Piero Dorazio, dedicated to Ungaretti, will be presented for the first time.

Curated by the essayist and literary critic Alexandra Zingone, a profound expert on Ungaretti's poetry and the artists of his time, the exhibition traces a panorama of Italian and European art between the 1910s and the 1970s, through the words of the poet, presenting alongside archive materials, writings, correspondence and poems, a selection of works by Giacomo Balla, Ardengo Soffici, Carlo Carrà, Gino Severini, Amedeo Modigliani, Giorgio de Chirico, Pablo Picasso, Enrico Prampolini, Ottone Rosai, Jean Fautrier, Franco Gentilini, Giuseppe Capogrossi, Alberto Burri and Piero Dorazio.

Giuseppe Ungaretti arrived in Paris in 1912, at a time when the European capital was at the height of artistic and cultural effervescence. The meeting with the international avant-gardes profoundly marked his existential itinerary, fascinated by experimentations and artistic trends. A crucial stay, which influenced his gaze on the arts, in particular on painting, which for him was simply a different expression of poetry: "I call any artist a poet". His visits to Paris on the eve of the war were extremely significant for him, as he underlines in *Life of a Man*. "Of the meetings I had in Paris in that period or after the war, those with Soffici and Palazzeschi and the other futurists, with Boccioni, with Carrà, with Marinetti were notable; those with Braque and Picasso, already cubists, or with Delaunay, who called himself an Orphic painter; those with Péguy, with Sorel, with Bédier, with Bergson. Everyone had a lot of undeserved fun when they met me, which I was always very surprised by.

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They were encounters with a type of art and with a type of morality that had a decisive importance in my general education, and, naturally, in my poetry.” Many years later, in Rome, he confronted Italian artists such as Dorazio, Capogrossi and Burri. The intensity of these meetings, from Paris to Rome, made him much more than a simple privileged witness of an unparalleled artistic era: Ungaretti developed his own poetics in the continuity of languages, fueling a profound fascination for painting and thus making it possible a real meeting between the arts.

Pittura e Poesia. Ungaretti e l'arte del vedere was presented for the first time in the Paris venue in April 2023. In Florence, compared to the first stage, we find here, exhibited for the first time, two unpublished works by Piero Dorazio, respectively from 1968, created for the poet's eightieth birthday, and from 1969, coming from Casa Ungaretti, with a dedication to the master and friend, testifying to the intellectual and emotional partnership that linked them throughout their lives, and which, between '66 and '69, gave birth to the artist's book *La Luce. Poems 1914-1961*. With XIII lithographs by Piero Dorazio, St. Gallen, Erker, 1971, where literature and art, poetry and painting dialogue perfectly.

The two paintings by Dorazio are placed within a pictorial journey which, after overcoming the reticular structure of the previous period with the “weaves” phase, gives way to new research, and moves towards new directions, where color is the protagonist of form and space. As Alexandra Zingone underlines “There is the declared imprint of Ungaretti in Dorazio's visual language”. In a Letter to Bruna, from 1968, Ungaretti writes of Dorazio “he is the purest painter today. No one knows how to break down the light into its thousand colors in infinite ways so that it becomes more light in our eyes, recomposing itself; become again the greatest miracle of the universe.”

In the exhibition, from the Parisian period, the choice falls on works such as *Tasse et paquet de tabac*, 1922 by Picasso, which Ungaretti frequented as a young man and who he defines as “the most extraordinary designer, the most inexhaustible of resources there has ever been.” There are figurative works such as *Giovane seduta* (1905) by Amedeo Modigliani, *Luce nella luce* (1928) by Giacomo Balla, *Il balcone (la fenetre)*, from around 1930. by Gino Severini. “I met De Chirico after the war, but I was perhaps the first Italian to directly know his Squares discovered with amazement by Apollinaire at the Salon des Indépendants, who took them to the seven heavens” says Ungaretti in a biographical memoir and, in here, we find *Piazza d'Italia* from 1955. Jean Fautrier, one of the poet's closest friends, “the last of the great European painters i”, is present, however, with *Tableau à 4 côtés* (1957).

The exhibition itinerary continues with some paintings by Carlo Carrà and Ottone Rosai, in which we capture that “intensity in seeing” which distinguishes the characteristics of modern art and which Ungaretti will never stop exploring in his investigations into the figurative arts, in line with his poetics.

To document the relationship that was established with some artists in Rome, as well as with Dorazio, we have some examples of *Superficie*, from the mid-1950s to the early 1960s by Giuseppe Capogrossi, “the most varied, so furiously the same as if himself, the most varied painter there is in the world”, according to the poet. More or less from the same years are also a *Catrame* (1950) and a *Combustione* (1960) by Alberto Burri which Ungaretti says he loves “because he is not only the greatest painter of today but is also the main cause of envy for me: he is the first poet of today”.

The exhibition, open until 12 July 2024, is accompanied by a catalog published by Forma Edizioni, together with a specially created plaque with an essay by Alexandra Zingone entitled “*Model and source of many horizons*” *Dorazio for Ungaretti*.

Info:

Tornabuoni Arte

Florence, Lungarno Benvenuto Cellini, 3

opening hours: Monday - Friday, 9 am - 1 pm / 3 pm - 7 pm; free entrance

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