

IN DEFENCE OF HISTORICAL TRUTH IN SAFEGUARDING GIORGIO DE CHIRICO'S INTELLECTUAL AND ARTISTIC IDENTITY

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES OF "METAPHYSICAL ART" IN THE JOURNAL'S SECOND DECADE OF PUBLICATION

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As outlined in its Statute, the aim of Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico is to "safeguard and promote Giorgio de Chirico's art and intellectual work".

In exercising the tutelage and institutional responsibility for an artist and his work, it stands to reason that choosing a productive line of research is preferable to opting, rather, for an antagonistic attitude towards the artist and his oeuvre. Over the course of the last several years, the Foundation has alarmingly observed the work of those who have, instead, embarked upon what appears to be *a cultural programme of systematic detraction and distortion regarding the historical truth of the life and work of Giorgio de Chirico*. It has become increasingly clear, in fact, that the activity of Paolo Baldacci and Gerd Roos is aimed at acquiring authority through acts of defamation against de Chirico. The pair has constructed a gnarled frame around the artist's figure, altering his personality and moral integrity through a deflagration of vehement writings, regularly culminating in full-out insults. In light of this, amateurs of the artist's work will have noticed that there is not a single theoretical essay or article written by Baldacci or Roos – from 1997 to date – that does not promote the theory of Giorgio de Chirico as a liar or failure, a parasite feeding off the ideas of others or as a psychologically incapable and distressed individual. The image they have artificially constructed is so far from reality that it can only be viewed as an act of autobiographical redemption towards the greatest Italian artist of the 20th century and, at the same time, towards the Foundation that safeguards his legacy.

In the name of Giorgio de Chirico, the Foundation cannot and will not tolerate the manipulation of truth concerning the artist's personal and professional identity. Much time and effort has been dedicated to re-establishing the historical truth regarding the invention of Metaphysical Art in Florence in the autumn of 1910, a fundamental event altered by means of an invented theory based on the erroneous reading of a number of historical documents that do not allow for the interpretation derived by Baldacci and Roos. The correct historical reconstruction of the invention of Metaphysical Art, (published in issue n. 9/10)¹, met with the consensus of the academic community.

In the current and future issues, a similar programme aimed at restoring the history and theoretical content of de Chirico's art will be carried out, which will also concern the artist's family history

¹ P. Picozza, *Betraying de Chirico: the Falsification of Giorgio de Chirico's Life History over the Last Fifteen Years*, in "Metaphysical Art – The de Chirico Journals", n. 9/10, 2011, pp. 28-60.

recently subject to manipulation as well. The Foundation's intention is directed at *re-establishing the pure and simple truth regarding Giorgio de Chirico*, and not, as has been inferred, at idealising the artist, whose strength of character is such that it fears not criticism, if and when substantiated. Such clarification is also aimed at preventing the additional danger of a manipulated version of events regarding de Chirico's history being passed on to future scholars, through the risk of non-critical repetition.

A brief recap of events is required at this time. Firstly, it is necessary to acknowledge Isabella Pakszwer Far, de Chirico's widow, and her farsighted vision in founding Fondazione Giorgio e Isa de Chirico back on 24 June 1986. Isabella knew only too well about the unrelenting attacks her husband suffered during the course of his life. Leaving aside Carrà's 1919 attempt to claim the exclusive invention of Metaphysical Art for himself, it suffices to look at the war that was engaged on the artist by the surrealists that culminated in Breton's physical attack on de Chirico and, in the mid-1920s, the emission of forgeries onto the art market, a problem that reached an industrial level in the 1960s and 1970s.

Over the years, marring de Chirico's credibility has functioned as an efficient strategy for forgers and more specifically, the sellers of fake works, thus acquiring undeserved authority in managing his artwork on the market. Gossip, commonplace assumptions, the distinction of de Chirico's work as "authentic", "fake", "almost-authentic" and "almost-fake", and of late, "paintings that have indisputable dechirichian elements", as well as the accusation of the artist "forging his own work" – a ridiculous contradiction in terms that still persists today – are all mechanisms that have built up a false image of de Chirico as someone incapable of recognising his own work. By proclaiming "we'll sort this out", unscrupulous art dealers and "scholars" have become very rich by means of a subtle strategy that succeeded in depriving de Chirico of his credibility and encroached upon his fundamental rights.

In case some have forgotten, it is dutiful to recall that in the mid-1970s, the tenacious investigative ability of the Nucleo dei Carabinieri per la Tutela del Patrimonio Artistico (Italian Police for the Protection of Cultural Heritage), guided by Marshal Antonio Vastano, resulted in the identification of forgers and previously unsuspected gallery owners and art dealers, in an operation in which 12 people were arrested, 300 forgeries were seized and 24 people were indicted. The successful police operation should also be praised for having restored de Chirico's credibility and dignity, which he had been deprived of in a clever and insistent campaign of negative publicity.

In light of this, it is astonishing just how farsighted Isabella's decision was in creating a foundation to safeguard de Chirico's artwork. Whilst remaining a problem of great proportion, the difference between then and now is that today even the artist's early period work is being forged. This poses the risk of his early metaphysical period iconography becoming contaminated. The Foundation's constitutional aim was and is to fight forgery of de Chirico's artwork. At the time, it seemed unimaginable that one day the artist's life story would also be manipulated.

The Foundation acts as a bulwark against forgers and art dealers handling forged works, as well as those intent on altering the historical truth of the artist's life-story. The blatant verbal attacks the

Foundation and those who represent it have been subject to in the media, both in print and on the web, as well as in the form of paid advertising, is a sign of the effectiveness of such action.

At the risk of seeming to exaggerate, it must be said that had it not been for the Foundation's counteraction against falsification, forgeries capable of contaminating scholarship to an even greater extent of those of the 1960s and 1970s, would exist today. Furthermore, the historical truth of the invention of Metaphysical Art in Florence in 1910 would be permanently altered, a problem, indeed, that is not a mere question of "geography".

Prior to presenting the contents of the Journal's current issue, it is with great pleasure that we inform readers of the second issue of *Il Signor Dudron*, a novel by de Chirico published posthumously by the Foundation in 1998 (in Italian, *Abscondita*, SE collection). We are also pleased to announce a new edition of *Piccolo trattato di tecnica pittorica* (Small Treatise on Painting Technique, 1928; in Italian, *Abscondita*, Miniature collection 2013).

I. In the editorial of the Journal's first issue (2002), *Giorgio de Chirico Today: a Discipline of Research*, we outlined a programme of analysis and new study, that stemmed from the consideration that de Chirico's Metaphysical Art constitutes an entirety from 1910 to 1978, and that "its keys of interpretation are multiple, all of which are to be explored and revealed".

Today, 35 years on from the artist's passing and over ten years since the publication of the first issue of "Metaphysical Art" in 2002, we can say (and with a certain degree of satisfaction), that a great deal of what we originally set out to achieve has been accomplished. There is, of course, still much more to be done, in light of new avenues of research that are constantly opening up to dechirichan scholars. Some of the great themes such as the Metaphysical Interiors, the Mysterious Baths, as well as the Neometaphysical period – an area full of surprisingly poetic visions – are currently generating particular interest amongst scholars. Moreover, it is important to recognise the influence that the artist exerted upon a large number of artists, both peers and contemporary. In other words, "in the future we will not only discuss de Chirico, but also his influences, whom he followed and those whom he influenced".

An interesting echo of de Chirico's view on art resounded in a recent newspaper article by Jean Clair, *L'arte è un falso* (Art is fake)² that deals with the substantial inconsistency found within contemporary art, which the art historian recognises as a false activity that produces fake objects. Over 60 years ago, de Chirico expressed his views on the very same issues that Clair raises: the modern invention of the art critic, the increasing intermingling between dealer and art historian, and the material decadence of art objects that are produced without any trace of the use of artist's hands.

² J. Clair *L'arte è un falso. L'opera contemporanea tra tecniche seriali e mercato impazzito*, "La Repubblica", 23 October 2013, pp. 52-53.

According to Clair: “Nothing remains of the body of painting, of that body once adored, venerated, admired, reproduced and restored with love. Nothing remains. In the products proposed by contemporary art not even a remnant, fragment or relic can be found. There remains nothing else in its absence, in the emptiness of those ridiculous fetishes [...]”. A perfect synthesis of that which de Chirico termed “quality” can be found within this quote. De Chirico’s warning about the decadence of Art and his substantial effort aimed at safeguarding painting’s traditional splendour arguably constituted, in his eyes, his most important legacy.

Reference to the Foundation’s work conducted over recent years is touched upon in various sections of this issue, whilst an indexed table of contents listing academic contributions and documents published in the first five double volumes, classified by authors and topics, is also included. In addition to essays by various collaborators, the material published to date comprises of much primary source documentation by the artist, including theoretical essays, poems, a theatrical drama, correspondence and painting formulas, most of which had never been previously published. This table of contents provides a clear and easily accessible overview of the academic work undertaken thus far by the Foundation and its numerous collaborators.

The novelty of publishing the English version as a separate volume, which debuted with the last edition, has resulted in broader international recognition, thanks to its anglicised title. The current edition also enjoys a new style, not in its physical structure, but rather in its temporal span. The delay accrued on the biennial cadence of the Journals (n. 9/10 of 2009-2010 was published at the end of 2011) – has urged us to update the numbering. As such, the present volume constitutes a triple issue this time (n. 11/13) that deals with research undertaken during 2011-2013.

We also wish to remind readers that it is possible to consult part of the Foundation’s collection of artwork as well as the complete Journals published to date (downloadable in pdf format) on our website www.fondazionede chirico.org. The website also offers a wide overview of material and documents useful for the study of de Chirico’s work and life, providing research tools for academics and enthusiasts alike, information on the Foundation’s activities, amongst which exhibitions, conferences and publications, as well as up-to-date news regarding events of cultural-historical importance.

II. Amongst the most significant recent events, one recalls the conference *Giorgio de Chirico – Metaphysician. Alberto Savinio – Multifaceted Artist* held at Rome’s Palazzo Barberini on 5 March 2012. The conference saw the participation of professors from three major Roman universities, together with other specialists. The brainchild of Riccardo Dottori, the event provided the opportunity of examining the fundamental contribution that both of these artists made to present day and 20th century culture. It also intentionally broke away from the definition of the brothers as “Dioscuri”, a reductive and simplistic label often used in an automatic way when discussing de Chirico and Savinio. The day of study drew to a close on the impetuous musical notes of *Les chants de la mi-mort* by Savinio (1914), played by Maestro Monaldo Braconi on the piano. Various and interesting results emerged

from the conference, two of which we are delighted to include in the current issue: *Mannequins and Vaticinators* by Ester Coen and *Through Metaphysical Art* by Claudio Strinati.

Throughout 2012, the exhibition *D'après Giorgio* was held at the de Chirico House-museum. Curated by Luca Lo Pinto, it involved 28 contemporary artists invited to display works, many of which had been specially created for the occasion. The event is discussed in the Exhibition Critique section. The exhibition catalogue-artwork, *A Metaphysical Interior*, will be published shortly.

III. The current issue boasts contributions from various authors dealing with different areas of research: historical, philosophical and technical. In his article, Willard Bohn puts forth an unusual view regarding the execution of the artist's iconic 1914 *Portrait de Guillaume Apollinaire* for which he suggests an element of causality in its making. Riccardo Dottori, who, having recently noted a strong affinity between de Chirico's essay *La realtà profanata* (Desecrated Reality, 1945) and the concurrent philosophy of Martin Heidegger and Hans-Georg Gadamer, has written an essay about the interpretation of reality, an argument that represents one of the fundamental questions of 20th century philosophy. As Dottori demonstrates, the point of convergence found between the two philosophers and the painter regards the *ethical* relationship with reality, or rather *wisdom*. In parallel to Dottori's study, de Chirico's essay *Desecrated Reality* has been published in English translation for the first time in the present volume.

Interesting developments regarding the relationship between reality and imagination can be found in Lorenzo Canova's contribution regarding the multifaceted influence that dechirichan imagery exerted upon the work of science fiction writers and set designers from the second half of the 20th century until the present day in which he notes: "de Chirico has left traces of his long metaphysical shadow in different genres and visions."

In order to provide a fuller idea of the history and culture of de Chirico's ancestors, this issue presents a musical score and a series of drawings by the artist's uncle Albert (the elder brother of his father Evaristo) that he conserved throughout his life: "souvenirs" of landscapes and places the family visited or lived in, including Constantinople, Ithaca and Corfu, together with a number of playful caricatures of everyday life. Theoretical and technical aspects regarding the composition and material execution of de Chirico's paintings are approached in a number of ways in this issue. Of particular interest is the contribution by Davide Spagnoletto, a young architecture undergraduate student, who has picked up the reins of Jole de Sanna's work and her revolutionary research regarding mathematics found in early period metaphysical works (*Metaphysical Mathematics*, n. 3/4, 2004), through which he unveils new discoveries regarding the geometric structure and harmony of the metaphysical image. [Published in the Italian edition only, *ed.*]

Following on from Lycia and Alessandro Pavia's contribution concerning de Chirico's painting formulas which appeared in the previous edition, this triple number includes Simona Rinaldi's examination of ancient and modern technical manuals. Rinaldi notes, as de Chirico himself had in his 1928 preface to *Piccolo trattato di tecnica pittorica* (Small Treatise on Painting Technique), that there exists

a scarcity of practical information to aid the artist “in the delicate and serious endeavour of guiding a brush over canvas”. In her analysis of literary sources, Rinaldi favours the artist’s voice and underlines just how important the *Piccolo trattato* is today in understanding methods of execution and the use of materials. In his essay, Salvatore Vacanti delves into de Chirico’s consideration of encaustic painting and his renewed interest in this ancient technique during the 1930s.

Ars Mensurae’s Stefano Ridolfi offers the reader a technological eye of modern diagnosis which aids the Foundation’s work in the process of attributing and archiving authentic works by de Chirico. In his description of the various scientific methods used, the painting is understood as a “geological” territory, revealing layers of execution and materials used by the artist in the completion of a work. In his essay, Ridolfi describes part of the technical process involved in attributing the painting *Le revenant* to de Chirico (signed and dated 1918), a work recently acquired by Musée Nationale d’Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris.

Several unpublished documents discovered by Elisabetta Cristallini bring to the fore an interesting topic of study: the relationship between de Chirico and Fascism, which will be the subject of a further in-depth study. A letter dated 1940 sent to de Chirico by C.E. Oppo sheds light on an event that took place during a particular historical moment: the competition announcement for the decoration of Palazzo dei Congressi, a building located in Rome’s EUR quarter. Indeed, Oppo invited de Chirico to participate, but received neither answer nor collaboration for the project. A letter dated 18 January 1938 – written just 10 days after de Chirico’s return from New York - pays witness to his serious concern about suffering reprisal from the Regime, so much so that he felt obliged to deny rumours of anti-Italianism and anti-Fascism which had been attributed to him by hostile artistic circles during his absence from Italy. In 1975, de Chirico ironically laid claim to his influence upon the architecture of the EUR quarter in the painting *Gladiator in the Arena*.

IV. It is thanks to such various areas of study that “Metaphysical Art” endeavours upon discovering and explaining the wider creative aims and means of the Great Metaphysician, whilst continuing to publish articles and documents dealing with the historical reconstruction of his life story, a study requiring in-depth archival research. The current issue includes an introduction to the wide-reaching and fruitful research conducted in archives in Greece by Nikolaos Velissiotis, whose discovery of various documents has enabled the artist’s family tree to re-flower, as it were. As can be seen, the genealogical trail is linear and clear, lacking the twists and cruxes of endogamy as diagnosed by Baldacci who, in order to justify incoherent theories based on imprecise historical reconstructions, has referred to “hereditary traits of a family in which mental illness was rather frequent”.

Due to the scope and importance of the historical documentation uncovered, an agreement was signed in Thessaloniki on 13 January 2014 with the Institute of Modern Greek Studies (Manolis Triandaphyllidis Foundation) dell’Aristotle University of Thessaloniki for the publication of a volume dedicated to the history of the de Chirico family, curated by the Foundation in collaboration with the Institute.

A brief note by my hand deals with the artist's father Evaristo de Chirico, a grand and noble Italian figure and railway engineer who completed his studies in Italy (specifically in Florence and Turin), and worked on the construction of railway lines first in Italy and later in Turkey and Greece. The documents that have surfaced bear witness to both Giorgio's and Alberto's written memories and document their father's deep Italian roots and profound sense of Italianism, as well as his love for the *Belpaese* which he transmitted to his sons. The material will be published in a forthcoming in-depth study.

V. In the Journal's last issue, my article *Betraying de Chirico: the Falsification of Giorgio de Chirico's Life History over the Last Fifteen years* closely analysed Paolo Baldacci and Gerd Roos's theory that claims that Metaphysical Art was invented by Savinio in Milan in 1909 (instead of de Chirico in Florence in 1910) and subsequently made famous by de Chirico. According to the two authors, de Chirico omitted to acknowledge his "theoretic debt" to his brother, forcing him to live a life of lies in order to hide such a "truth". In this regard, de Chirico's autobiography, *The Memoirs of Giorgio de Chirico* has been described as a "monument of mystification". Having laid out all the various phases regarding the development and advancement of this erroneous theory as well as analysing the epistolary documentation upon which it is based, the historical truth was finally re-established: Metaphysical Art was conceived by Giorgio de Chirico during the second half of 1910 in Florence and the painter was in no way indebted to his brother with regard to this invention. The article had the positive result of prompting Baldacci to admit his erroneous interpretation of the date of a letter de Chirico sent to his friend Fritz Gartz upon which he and Roos had based their theory (26 January 1910, as erroneously written in the letter, instead of the real date 26 December 1910). With regard to this, we must thank Maria Grazia Messina and Flavio Fergonzi for having successfully managed the arduous task of changing Baldacci's mind (at least partially). Having obstinately defended his dating of the letter, he then went on to accredit his own association, *L'Archivio dell'arte metafisica*, with having made the discovery. Indeed, *the plain and simple truth* is all that matters to the Foundation.

Unfortunately, 15 years of promoting this fallacious theory has caused significant damage, infecting the artist's historiography like a virus through the superficial repetition of erroneous dates assigned to two key paintings linked to the birth of Metaphysical Art, *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon* and *The Enigma of the Oracle*, both executed in Florence in 1910 and signed and dated "Georgio de Chirico 1910".

It is reassuring, however, that to date no scholar has taken up the offensive accusations made against de Chirico or the erroneous theoretical content upon which the historical reconstruction is based.

Deprived of the only primary source document upon which Baldacci and Roos founded their "Metaphysical Art, Milan 1909" theory on, one now bears witness to a new method of historical research that does not require documental evidence to base revolutionary theories on. In fact, in the absence of what Baldacci had previously labelled the "key document" (the letter, and in particular, assuming the date was January 1910), the critic continues to maintain that Metaphysical Art was

discovered in Milan in 1909. This is indeed a strange development for an association founded on the “fundamental principle lying at the heart of academic activity [that] dictates the absolute respect of documental evidence”.

For further commentary and a concise reconstruction about this matter, see Katherine Robinson's contribution. As Robinson makes clear, the problem at hand no longer deals with the date of the letter (an issue that has been overcome), but rather, the inadmissible and ongoing manipulation that Giorgio de Chirico's art and biography is subjected to.

To this end, the publication of recent research undertaken by Victoria Noel-Johnson in this current issue significantly substantiates that which has been hitherto maintained regarding de Chirico's Florentine period (March 1910 – July 1911). Having put together a detailed table of books and journals consulted by de Chirico at the Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze (National Central Library of Florence), dating from April 1910 until de Chirico's departure for Paris in July 1911, Noel-Johnson advances a debate, previously based upon dates, to one of rich theoretical discussion. To this end, she provides the academic world with references to theoretic research conducted by the artist parallel to his discovery of Metaphysical Art, identifying individual texts and authors that he read. Having verified the frequency with which he visited the library, one is presented with an image of a young de Chirico regularly passing through Piazza Santa Croce *en route* to Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale di Firenze. Such a vision is of no small importance when one recalls how he specified the extraordinary event surrounding his discovery of Metaphysical Art just two years later in his Parisian manuscript *Méditations d'un peintre* (Meditations of a Painter): “I will explain how I had the revelation of a painting which I exhibited this year at the Salon d'Automne entitled: *The Enigma of an Autumn Afternoon*. On a clear autumn afternoon, I was sitting on a bench in the middle of Piazza Santa Croce in Florence. *Indeed, it was not the first time I had seen this square*” [italics, *ed.*].

An important stance adopted by de Chirico *vis à vis* the narration of his life and work comes to light through the spirit and intent expressed in three extraordinary interviews conducted in 1970, 1971 and 1977 (transcribed in the current issue). The New York exhibition held in the same period, *De Chirico by de Chirico* (1972), further cemented the idea that only the artist can act as a direct eyewitness of and authentic source about his own art. The content of both encounters is transversal regarding a great number of fundamental issues such as the birth of Metaphysical Art, the artist's Parisian relationships – Picasso, Apollinaire and Breton –, the lack of influence exerted upon his art by his brother Savinio (and vice versa), his considerations about ancient and modern painting, etc. We are witness to de Chirico as an open, conscientious and precise interlocutor, who expressed himself with a profound sense of humour.

VI. In line with the Foundation's continuous fight to protect the integrity of de Chirico's historical and artistic legacy, the resolution of a few recent forgery cases are presented in the current issue.

In the last issue, the editorial contribution *The Constants of History - Old and Recent Falsification of Giorgio de Chirico's Artwork* dealt with the persisting phenomenon that seemingly passes from era to era via new protagonists and new means. It is due to the persistence of this illegal activity that we have dedicated editorial space to the problem, with the hope that the identification of certain methods involved in the commercialisation of forged works, may help prevent future fraud, unmask the perpetrators and preserve the historical truth of what *is* and what *is not* a work by Giorgio de Chirico.

To this end, the last issue contained the publication of the first degree Judgement by the Court of Milan (7th Criminal Section n. 2946 of 9 March-3 June 2009) (n. 9/10, pp. 417-437) concerning the recent event of a number of fakes being attributed to de Chirico and later sold.

In this issue, the final results of these legal proceedings are published in the form of the recent sentence issued by Milan's Court of Appeal. The sentence confirms the guilty charges made against the accused as well as the non-authenticity of seven paintings, all dated within ten years of one another, from 1922 to 1932 (4th Criminal Section n. 3539 of 20 May -19 July 2013).

Through a clear and analytical presentation of the facts and the methods used in promoting the fakes in question, the sentence confirms that the accused knowingly placed the forged works onto the art market. The judgement has applied the Statute of Limitations, which all of the accused – as per their right – did not refuse, perhaps because they were not entirely convinced of their own innocence. The seizure of the forged paintings, which constitutes the most important result for the Foundation, as well as part of the auxiliary sanctions were confirmed. The criminal act, as is well known, dates back to the beginning of this century when a number of new “early period” forgeries were introduced onto the art market – paintings never seen before and of uncertified provenance. This occurred during a period when the Foundation had ceased, albeit briefly, issuing archival certifications. The Foundation is justly satisfied with the contribution it made in assisting the magistrate's investigation, which has helped to block the introduction of a number of fakes onto the art market, even though the effective scope and the total number of fakes remains unknown. For an in-depth analysis on the topic, see *The Constants of History: Old and Recent Falsification of Giorgio de Chirico's Artwork – Paolo Baldacci: A Case Study*, in the current issue.

VII. Looking to the future after years during which the Expertise Committee has quietly carried out its activity of archiving works held to be authentic artwork by de Chirico, energy is currently being dedicated to the publication of the artist's *Catalogue of Works*, which will appear in a new format. The Foundation holds that the *Catalogo Generale di Giorgio de Chirico* edited by Claudio Bruni Sakraischik (1971-1987), with its 2638 published works, constitutes a steadfast point of reference for de Chirico's artwork (despite a few errors, as can be said for any large catalogue).

The first catalogue of the current series has just been released (June 2014). The volume includes 450 works dating from 1912 to 1976, offering an ample overview of the artist's work and various iconographic, stylistic and technical research. The selection of works, many of which are little-known or

totally unknown, makes a substantial contribution to knowledge on de Chirico's oeuvre. As precious tools of study, the publications will also act as a bulwark against forgery and in helping to understand what *is* and what *is not* an authentic work by de Chirico (see Publications 2011-2014, p. 414).

VIII. The recent acquisition of Antonio Vastano's private library constitutes a noteworthy addition to the Foundation's collection of documents. The Foundation is particularly grateful to Vastano for his generosity in transferring his large collection of circa 1000 books, exhibition catalogues, brochures, publications, photographs and manuscripts on Giorgio de Chirico's art, many of which are extremely rare, to the archive. The collection, compiled over a period of 40 years, also includes 300 publications regarding Savinio, de Pisis and Carrà, is a significant addition to the Foundation's archive dedicated to the artist's activities and will constitute an important source for research.

The Foundation has further enriched its collection with a number of recent acquisitions, such as Apollinaire's *Calligrammes* including three sets of de Chirico's 66 lithographs (Gallimard, Paris 1930) and Raffaele Carrieri's *L'Apocalisse*, a publication illustrated with 20 hand-coloured lithographs by the artist (Edizioni della Chimera, Milan 1941). Furthermore, it has acquired Jean Cocteau's *Le mystère laïc* (Editions des Quatre Chemins, Parigi 1928), which includes two etchings entitled *Combat of Gladiators and Gladiator School*, as well as Waldemar George's monograph (Editions des chroniques du jour, Parigi 1928) with the rare engraving *The Archaeologists*.

And finally, this issue includes a short manuscript in which de Chirico evokes Rubens' mastery as being part "mystery" and part "miracle". He comments on the old master's art as such: "The conception of the picture, the composition, the execution are of such perfection, such certainty and freedom (this is true artistic freedom), that anyone who truly understand painting cannot but think of wonder, that mysterious wonder which is true art, great art that a man, granted such grace, was able to create with his works".

31 January 2014, Rome