



Giorgio De Chirico – Giulio Paolini / Giulio Paolini –
Giorgio De Chirico



This season the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) launches its fourth annual installation showcasing two major Italian artists: master of metaphysical painting Giorgio de Chirico and Giulio Paolini, a leading figure in conceptual art. Founder and President Laura Mattioli sat down to talk to us about the relationship between the two artists.

The exhibit that attempts to redefine the broader artistic output of de Chirico, not only his metaphysical period, to show him in a new light. In order to do so, explains Laura Mattioli, CIMA has

enlisted the perspective of another artist, Giulio Paolini. From the outset of his career, Paolini took a great interest in de Chirico, meditating on his work in a highly original fashion and producing not derivative work but works that, as Mattioli puts it, “amplify, deepen and radicalize the conversation.”

Giorgio De Chirico (1888-1978), a giant of metaphysical painting, developed “deafening silences” in paintings where humans are almost always absent, where time runs on vaguely, where the stage merges with both the natural world and architecture. Mystery and enigma, subjects dear to the artist, reign supreme in his oeuvre.

“De Chirico was, for the most part, viewed by critics as anticipating Surrealism. Appreciations of his work have more often than not concentrated on the first two decades of his career, after which he is held to be an awful painter with baroque tastes that verge on kitsch,” says Mattioli.

Giulio Paolini (1940) represents one of the greatest thinkers in contemporary art who got his start in the early 60s with the Arte Povera movement. A painter and sculptor, Paolini approached art conceptually. Interested in the publishing industry and language, the artist saw a work of art as a vision able to evoke an infinite number of other visions and embrace a sense of time that cannot be measured, which wavers between the art of the past and the art of the future. As the artist himself put it, “Ultimately I feel a bit like someone who roams around in a void yet can’t help but describe it.”

“The two artists have many themes in common,” says Mattioli, “such as 18th century art, the theater, the ambiguity of traditional perspective construction and its conventional aspect. The exhibit will focus on three that are particularly important to both artists: enigma, selfportrait as the artist’s double, and redefining classicism.

“Both artists’ work,” she goes on to explain, “will be displayed together to achieve a better understanding of each individual’s original approach toward and different language for the same subject. De Chirico, for example, always employs pictorial means of all forms, including drawing and graphic art, whereas Paolini never engages in traditional painting, like oil on canvas.”

The works on display concentrate on the first few decades of the 20th century, including emblematic works like *Hector and Andromache* (1917) and *The Disquieting Muses* (1918), as well as works dating from 1920-50, which shed light on other concepts and designs. Paolini, who uses different media – photos, sculptures, fabrics, molds, chalk – will show the series *Mis-en-scène Interno Meta sico*, 2009-16 (*Metaphysical Interior Mise-en-scène*) – a title inspired by a series of well-known works by de Chirico – as well as new works on paper.



De Chirico - L'Enigma dell' Ora 1910



Giorgio De Chirico - Le Muse Inquietanti 1917



Giulio Paolini - Anna-logia 1966



Giulio Paolini - Autoritratto