

# DE CHIRICO

Magdalena Holzhey



TASCHEN

Taschen  
DE CHIRICO (I) #BASICART

Magdalena Holzhey

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### **Pittura metafisica**

Gli spazi cupi di Giorgio de Chirico

Tramite la sua pittura metafisica, **Giorgio de Chirico** (1888–1978), italiano di origine greca, **influenzò largamente l'avanguardia europea del periodo interbellico**, compresi artisti del calibro di Pablo Picasso e Paul Éluard.

Nei suoi dipinti De Chirico allestiva **statue o manichini** in spazi con un singolo punto di fuga prospettico, dove si ritrovavano piazze, arcate sfuggenti, pareti in lontananza o interni claustrofobici. Le prospettive rigide, le ombre marcate, i piani geometrici e gli spazi vuoti creavano una composizione teatrale e un'atmosfera carica di ansia e inquietudine. I dipinti erano volutamente concepiti per causare turbamento nell'osservatore, costringendolo a mettere in discussione la realtà della natura e a scrutare oltre le apparenze, in cerca di ricordi dimenticati o rivelazioni improvvise. Mentre i surrealisti della cerchia di Breton attingevano alle teorie dell'inconscio di Freud, De Chirico era affascinato da Nietzsche.

Questa imperdibile introduzione analizza tutte le ombre nefaste e gli angoli bui della pittura metafisica di De Chirico, nonché lo stile di impronta classica elaborato durante la sua tarda produzione, un cambiamento ampiamente criticato dai surrealisti che ne avevano celebrato i dipinti d'esordio.

“Vi sono più enigmi *nell'ombra di un uomo che cammina in pieno sole che* in tutte le religioni del passato, del presente o del futuro.”— *Giorgio de Chirico*

### **L'autrice:**

**Magdalena Holzhey** ha studiato storia dell'arte, lingua italiana e musicologia a Berlino e Pisa. Ha lavorato in ambito accademico e come curatrice in diverse gallerie e musei, tra cui la K20 Kunstsammlung Nordrhein-Westfalen di Düsseldorf, prima di diventare curatrice delle collezioni dei Kunstmuseen di Krefeld. È autrice di numerose pubblicazioni sul modernismo classico e sull'arte contemporanea.

### **La collana:**

Ciascun volume della collana Basic Art di TASCHEN comprende:

- Una sintesi dettagliata che ripercorre cronologicamente la vita e l'opera dell'artista, soffermandosi sulla sua importanza a livello storico e culturale
- Una biografia concisa
- Circa 100 illustrazioni a colori con didascalie esplicative

#BasicArt



## The Loneliness of Modern Man

In 1901 the de Chirico family moved to Paris, and on the way stopped for two days in Turin. On his mother's advice, Giorgio had previously attended a military medical examination and had been declared fit for service; when he received his draft papers in October 1901, however, he ignored them. In March 1902 de Chirico was once again commanded to present himself for military duty – this time in Turin, which lay closest to the French border. De Chirico spent ten days as a soldier before deserting; he was sentenced in his absence to a prison term that he would never have to complete, however.

His impressions of Turin, however brief his two stays may have been, were of profound significance for the development of his art. De Chirico later recorded: "It was Turin that inspired the entire series of paintings I created between 1902 and 1905. I must confess that they also owe much to Friedrich Nietzsche." That de Chirico decided to obey his call-up orders at all was undoubtedly due to his given posting: the artist, who always believed in signs and predetermined acts of providence, saw the hand of fate in the fact that he was to be stationed in the very city that Nietzsche had loved so much and where he spent his last, highly productive year with his mind at its most lucid. It was here that the philosopher wrote *Ecce Homo* and *The Case of Wagner*, and it was from here, after descending into madness, that he sent letters to his friends in which he identified himself variously with the god Dionysus, the Savoy kings Carlo Alberto and Victor Emmanuel II, and with Alessandro Antonelli, architect of the *Mole Antonelliana* (cf. ill. p. 29) in Turin.

Nietzsche's letters from this period, and his book *Ecce Homo* in particular, are full of imagery inspired by the singular atmosphere of Turin. Nietzsche describes the mood of autumnal afternoons, the spacious squares of the baroque city centre bordered by their shady arcades, and the long, straight avenues which go back to the rectilinear layout of Roman town planning and which, on clear days, offer a view all the way to the mountains on the horizon. De Chirico sought to express Nietzsche's meaning in words which simultaneously seem to describe his own pictorial world: "This new quality is a strange and profound poetry, endlessly enigmatic and incomparable, which is evoked by the atmosphere of an autumn afternoon, when the skies are clear and the shadows grow longer than in summer as the sun starts to lose height ... the Italian city par excellence in which this extraordinary phenomenon occurs is

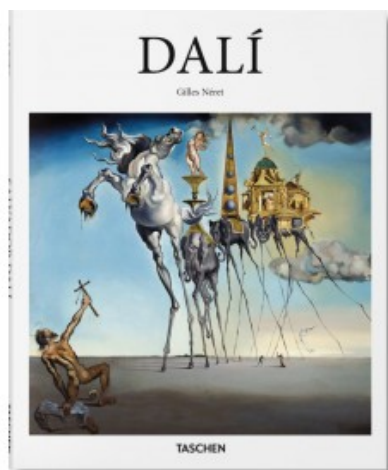


*Fit Be There ... The Glass Dog, 1914*  
Oil on canvas, 69 x 57.5 cm (27 1/4 x 22 5/8 in.)  
Private collection

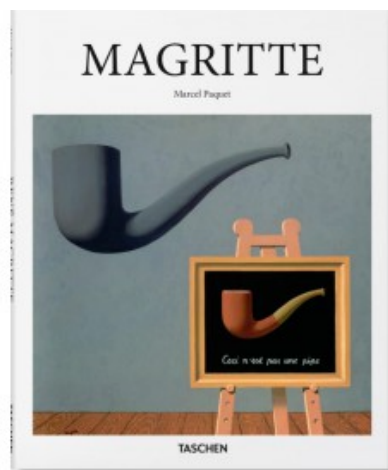
*Metaphysical Still-Life, 1914*  
Oil on canvas, 81 x 54.6 cm (32 x 21 5/8 in.)  
New York, The Metropolitan Museum of Art

De Chirico takes up the thoughts set out by Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Gay Science*. The new "dancing" art, whose birth is symbolized by the egg, is quickened by "the delight in an 'X,' the love of the enigma. Man should allow his thoughts to wander 'light-footed' in order to interpret the mysterious metaphors and signs of the world.

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