



Reflections on De Chirico and Arte Metafisica

Author(s): Marianne W. Martin

Source: *The Art Bulletin*, Vol. 60, No. 2 (Jun., 1978), pp. 342-353

Published by: College Art Association

Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/3049787>

Accessed: 15/09/2008 03:09

Your use of the JSTOR archive indicates your acceptance of JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use, available at <http://www.jstor.org/page/info/about/policies/terms.jsp>. JSTOR's Terms and Conditions of Use provides, in part, that unless you have obtained prior permission, you may not download an entire issue of a journal or multiple copies of articles, and you may use content in the JSTOR archive only for your personal, non-commercial use.

Please contact the publisher regarding any further use of this work. Publisher contact information may be obtained at <http://www.jstor.org/action/showPublisher?publisherCode=caa>.

Each copy of any part of a JSTOR transmission must contain the same copyright notice that appears on the screen or printed page of such transmission.

JSTOR is a not-for-profit organization founded in 1995 to build trusted digital archives for scholarship. We work with the scholarly community to preserve their work and the materials they rely upon, and to build a common research platform that promotes the discovery and use of these resources. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.



College Art Association is collaborating with JSTOR to digitize, preserve and extend access to *The Art Bulletin*.

<http://www.jstor.org>

Reflections on De Chirico and *Arte Metafisica**

Marianne W. Martin

I

That De Chirico occupies an important place in the history of twentieth-century art is indisputable. Yet it is astonishing how little is known about his work. "Even those who love me really do not understand me," De Chirico has stated.¹ Although the enigma that surrounds him is partly of his own making, it is also due to unadventurous reflection upon his work.

Rather than dwell on the primacy of German sources in the formation of his unique vision, as is usually done, this paper examines some hitherto neglected, but possibly equally significant factors that may have helped to shape the artist's early mature work, the *Arte Metafisica* of ca. 1912–ca.1919. As J. C. Sloane suggested in 1958, the years 1909–1911 which he spent in Italy (Milan and Florence) seem to have provided another set of catalytic experiences.² Their effects manifested themselves only from 1912 onwards when De Chirico was strongly challenged by the competitive vitality of Parisian artistic life.

De Chirico records little of artistic significance about his first extended Italian sojourn in his *Memorie della mia vita* of 1945. Nonetheless, it seems unlikely that the young painter in his early twenties, exceptionally observant and intransigent by nature, and used to the lively artistic milieu of Munich, could have failed to take note of the seething cultural and political life in Milan and Florence. In Milan, for instance, the emergence in 1909 of Futurism could scarcely have escaped him. In Florence too, De Chirico must have become aware of the contiguous and overlapping milieus of vigorous new magazines such as *La voce*, *Il regno*, *Hermes*, and *The Mask*. The excited voices of their respective participants were heard not only in print but also in cafés like the *Giubbe rosse*. Attendance at these gathering places was at one time almost as natural as breathing to European intellectuals, and De Chirico seems not to have been an exception.³ The young men in charge of the Florentine journals just cited, like the Milanese Futurists, sought to bring Italy in line with dominant

European cultural and political trends. *The Mask*, on the other hand, headed by the English actor-artist-scenographer Gordon Craig, was totally committed to the theater and its spiritual and even utopian possibilities.

De Chirico, a native of Volo, Greece, listed Florence as his place of birth in the Paris Salon d'Automne catalogue of 1912, and continued to do so for several years thereafter.⁴ Professional and political reasons may have prompted this change of fact, but the stay in Florence seems to have been an artistic awakening of sorts for him as well. J. T. Soby, De Chirico, and others have pointed out how deeply the physical environment of Florence, its *piazze*, courtyards, light, and its quattrocento painting affected the form and content of his art. I should like to add the contemporary activities of the *La voce* group and of Gordon Craig to this list of Florentine sources.

The ardent sponsorship by *La voce* of French Impressionism and Medardo Rosso was climaxed in April 1910 by the first large Italian exhibition of both. It was held in Florence and organized largely by Ardengo Soffici, the art critic of *La voce*. De Chirico undoubtedly saw it. In one of his earliest critical pieces, entitled significantly, "What Impressionism Should Be," De Chirico recasts Soffici's critique of Impressionism in his own, highly individual mold. Soffici had granted the virtues of Impressionism, its novelty, concern with light, but maintained that the innate Italian sense for "equilibrium, occult logic of form, reality and firmness of subject," and above all, Leonardo's "concetto . . . della mente" had been neglected.⁵ De Chirico likewise chastises Impressionism for remaining only a "sensationalism," lacking profundity, and he stresses its failure to produce something "new," or a revelation of something which "previously did not exist."⁶

The sculpture of Medardo Rosso, and Soffici's perceptive discussion of it, may have been even more suggestive to De Chirico. For instance, Rosso's emphasis on the almost magical

* A shorter version of this paper was read at the 64th Annual Meeting of the College Art Association of America, February 1, 1976, Chicago, Ill. The kind assistance of Mrs. M. S. Barr, Messrs. J. T. Soby, and Giorgio de Chirico is gratefully acknowledged.

¹ Quoted in *De Chirico*, exh. cat., Palazzo Reale, Milan, 1970, 3.

² "Giorgio de Chirico and Italy," *Art Quarterly*, spring 1958, 3–22. A number of other authors have hinted at connections between Italian artistic events and De Chirico's own development; eg., I. Faldi, *Il primo de Chirico*, Venice, 1944, 20; M. Jean, *The History of Surrealist Painting*, New York, 1967, 55; W. Rubin, "Toward a Critical Framework, II," *Artforum*, Sept. 1966, 43f. De Chirico appears to have lived in Milan from the summer of 1909 until around spring 1910, when he and his family moved to Florence "for a little more than a year." He arrived in Paris on July 14, 1911. (G. de Chirico, *Memorie della mia vita*, Milan, 1962, 64–70.)

³ De Chirico, *Memorie*, 63; G. Apollinaire, *Chroniques d'art*, Paris, 1960, 400.

⁴ In 1914 and 1916, respectively, Ardengo Soffici and Filippo de Pisis refer to De Chirico as a native Florentine (*Lacerba*, II, 4, 1914, 207; *Gazzetta ferrarese*, LXIXI, 292, Oct. 11, 1916). De Chirico's father, a native of Palermo, completed his studies in Florence, to which the family had moved. The painter seems to have had several "mad" Florentine uncles and aunts (L. Spagnoli, *Lunga vita de Giorgio de Chirico*, Milan, 1971, 35f.).

⁵ See M. Martin, *Futurist Art and Theory 1909–1915*, Oxford, 1968, 55–56; A. Soffici, *Il caso Medardo Rosso*, Florence, 1909, 46, 47. Soffici's astute writings had helped to orient the Futurist artists during these years.

⁶ Translated and published in J. T. Soby, *Giorgio de Chirico*, New York, 1955, 244, 245.

union between the figure and its cast shadow expresses his conviction that neither one is more or less tangible than the other. This startling insight came to Rosso while looking down at figures walking in the sunlight in the courtyard of the Brera palace.⁷ It anticipates De Chirico's own brilliant exploitation of potent, dramatic shadows and his view that "there are more enigmas in the shadow of a man who walks in the sun than in all the religions of the past, present and future," as he put it in "What Impressionism Should Be."⁸

The basically architectonic and dynamic conception of artistic form upheld by Soffici also underlies the work of Gordon Craig, which visually and theoretically provides some thought-provoking parallels to the art of De Chirico. Craig, who had been a celebrity in Germany since 1905, was very much in evidence in Florence after December 1906, when he designed a production of *Rosmersholm* for Eleonora Duse, given at the Teatro della Pergola.⁹ In the four-page explanatory English-Italian pamphlet that he wrote for the play, Craig declared that "Realism is only Exposure, whereas Art is Revelation,"¹⁰ a view wholeheartedly embraced by De Chirico, as just noted. Exhibitions and publications of Craig's designs in Florence in 1906, 1908, 1910, an enthusiastic article by Enrico Corradini in the new *Vita d'arte*, and, above all, *The Mask*, further helped to spread Craig's fame throughout Europe.¹¹ Finally, in May 1913, the Barinese writer, Riciotto Canudo, gave Craig front-page billing in the issue of his Parisian magazine *Montjoie!* that was devoted to "la crise du théâtre Français."¹²

The inescapably scenographic aspect of much of De Chirico's Metaphysical Art, frequently noted, but never discussed,¹³ naturally raises the question of possible suggestions from the theater that may have come to him. The deep and enduring concern with opera and theater of both De Chirico brothers is well attested. Giorgio tells us that while in Munich "ero molto Wagneriano," and he never failed to attend performances of the composer's work.¹⁴ The attempts of his brother, Alberto Savinio, to create a kind of Wagnerian *Gesamkunstwerk* date back at least to his Munich days.

Savinio's efforts achieved their first spectacular success in Paris in May 1914, when he gave the celebrated piano reading of the scores of a number of "drame-ballets" and for the "scènes dramatiques," *Les Chants de la mi-mort*, in the offices of *Les Soirées de Paris*, a magazine edited by Apollinaire. Through Apollinaire's vivid accounts of this performance, Savinio's musical prowess has entered the annals of modern art.¹⁵ Less well known are the following facts, still in need of further study: Savinio collaborated in a number of his *drame-ballets* with M. D. Calvocoressi, the noted music critic and music correspondent for several London newspapers, who also had been a close associate of Diaghilev. Fokine is credited in the program with the choreography of one of the *drame-ballets*, and Savinio designed decors and costumes for *Les Chants de la mi-mort*.¹⁶ It should be mentioned that Calvocoressi helped De Chirico to exhibit in the Salon d'Automne of 1912, and in 1913 owned the painter's important *Melancholy of a Beautiful Day*.¹⁷

Ties to the theatrical and dance world such as these throw some new light on the genesis of De Chirico's forms and figures. They suggest, furthermore, that both brothers were familiar with the widespread European theatrical reform movement that early in the century drew radicals like Appia and Craig to its German centers. As suggested earlier, there seems to be a striking kinship between the art of Craig and De Chirico. It resides chiefly in two closely related aspects: (1) their use of simple architectural forms, of space, and of dramatic side or back illumination to create a sense of mysterious continuum, and (2) their de-individualization or de-personalization of the actor—or man—in order to express a more comprehensive spirituality through ideal, abstract constructions.

Craig achieved his kinetic stage by means of "moving screens," and in 1907–08 he designed his first so-called "movements" and "scenes."¹⁸ Shortly thereafter, large model stages filled his studio in the Neoclassic Arena Goldoni in Florence (Fig. 1).¹⁹ His widely published sets of 1911 for *Hamlet* (Figs. 2a, 2b), based on his "movements," and

⁷ M. S. Barr, *Medardo Rosso*, New York, 1963, 43.

⁸ Soby, 245.

⁹ E. Craig, *Gordon Craig*, New York, 1968, 216ff; E. G. Craig, *Index to the Story of My Days*, London, 1957, 292. In 1905, with the help of Count Harry Kessler, Craig published *Die Kunst des Theaters*, and his drawings and prints were exhibited in Dresden, Vienna, Weimar, and Munich.

¹⁰ Quoted in E. Craig, *Gordon Craig*, 219, see also *Gordon Craig*, exh. cat., Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris, 1962, 58, No. 147.

¹¹ "L'Arte della scena: E. Gordon Craig," *Vita d'arte*, 1, 3, 1908, 183–86. *The Mask* was started in March 1908. For Craig's Florentine exhibitions and publications, see I. K. Fletcher and A. Rood, *Edward Gordon Craig: A Bibliography*, London, 1967, 98, G 18, G 20, and Paris, *Gordon Craig*, 25–26 (there seems to be a discrepancy about the 1906 exhibition, which I was not able to resolve).

¹² *Montjoie!* 1, 7, May 16, 1913, 1–2; this included Craig's article "Vers un théâtre nouveau" and reproductions of several "Projets de décor."

¹³ See, e.g., W. Rubin, "Toward a Critical Framework, II," 41; Soby, 32, 156.

¹⁴ De Chirico, *Memorie*, 64; see also 86.

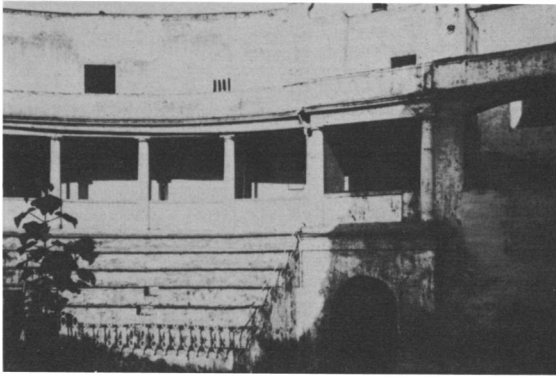
¹⁵ Apollinaire, *Chroniques*, Paris, 1960, 382–84; *Anecdotes*, Paris, 1955, 181, 306, note 4.

¹⁶ *Les Soirées de Paris*, No. 24, May 15, 1914, 244, 245–46; No. 25, June 15, 1914, 301; Nos. 26–27, July–Aug. 1914, 413; Apollinaire, *Chroniques*, 383.

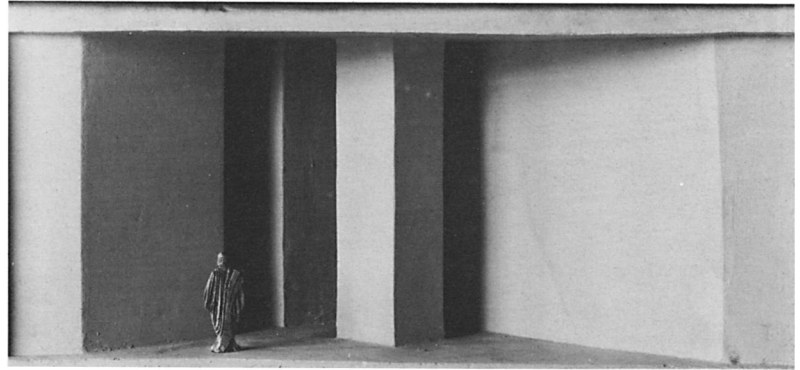
¹⁷ De Chirico, *Memorie*, 71; at the Salon d'Automne of 1913, this painting, No. 400, is listed as belonging to M. D. Calvocoressi.

¹⁸ Craig always acknowledged his debt to Sebastiano Serlio and even credited one of the perspective designs from *Il secondo libro di prospettiva* as the inspiration for his "screens" (E. Craig, *Gordon Craig*, 233; Paris, *Gordon Craig*, 52, No. 107). The first issue of *The Mask* reproduces Serlio's plates for the three scenic types, and in the same issue Craig declares his abiding allegiance to "Geometry . . . the dear Heaven of Science." Not only does De Chirico share such an emotional dedication to geometry, but a number of his pictures reveal an apparent dependence upon the Classical and Renaissance scenic types. Craig's stark architectural sets also suggest recollections of American skyscrapers that he must have seen on his visit of 1885 to New York and Chicago, as well as Brangwyn's urban scenes.

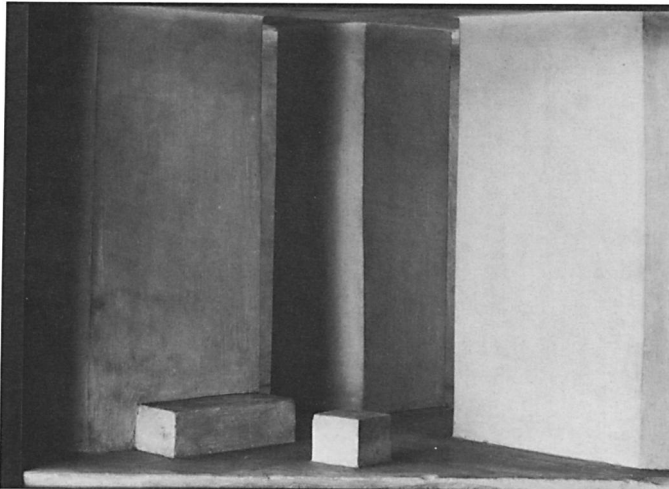
¹⁹ It is not known whether either one of the De Chirico brothers set foot in this still extant theater on the Via de' Seragli, but it is nonetheless tempting to relate its architecture to paintings such as *The Enigma of the Hour* of 1912.



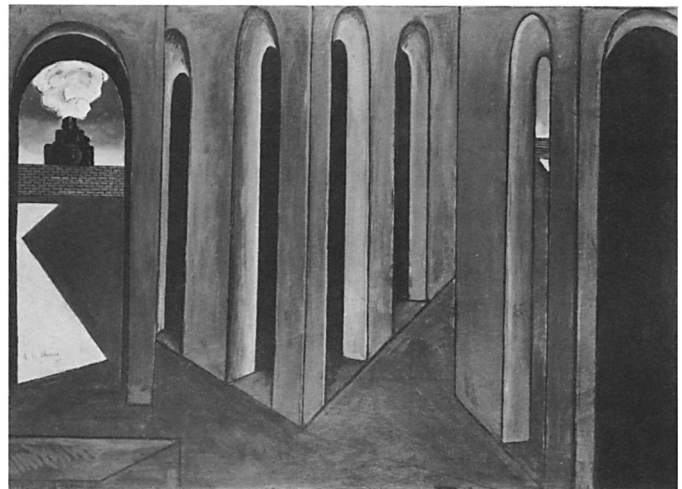
1 Arena Goldoni, Florence (from *The Mask*, July 1909, unpagged)



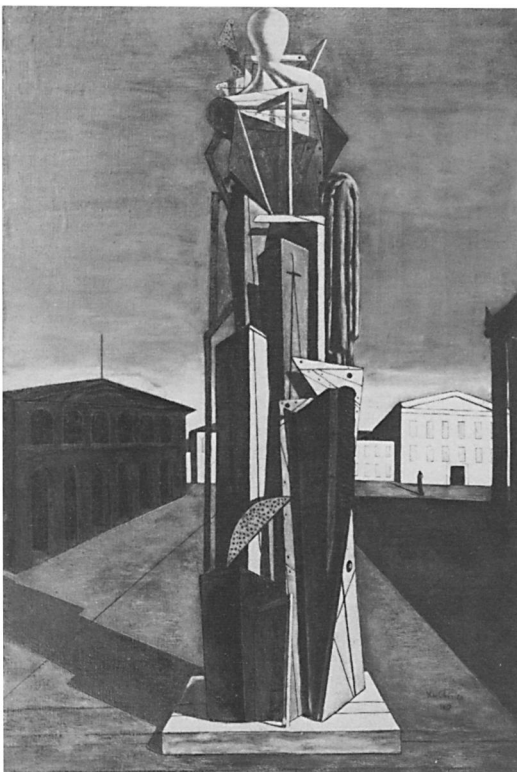
2a Craig, model set for *Hamlet*, ca. 1911, London, Victoria and Albert Museum (photo: Museum)



2b Craig, model set for *Hamlet*, ca. 1911. London, Victoria and Albert Museum (photo: Museum)



3 De Chirico, *The Anxious Journey*, 1913. New York, Museum of Modern Art, Lillie P. Bliss Bequest (photo: Museum)



4 De Chirico, *The Grand Metaphysician*, 1917. New York, Museum of Modern Art, Philip L. Goodwin Collection (photo: Museum)

commissioned by Stanislavski, have much in common with De Chirico's *Anxious Journey* of 1913 (Fig. 3), for example, especially if one imagines Craig's forms in motion, a quality disquietingly suggested in De Chirico's painting.²⁰

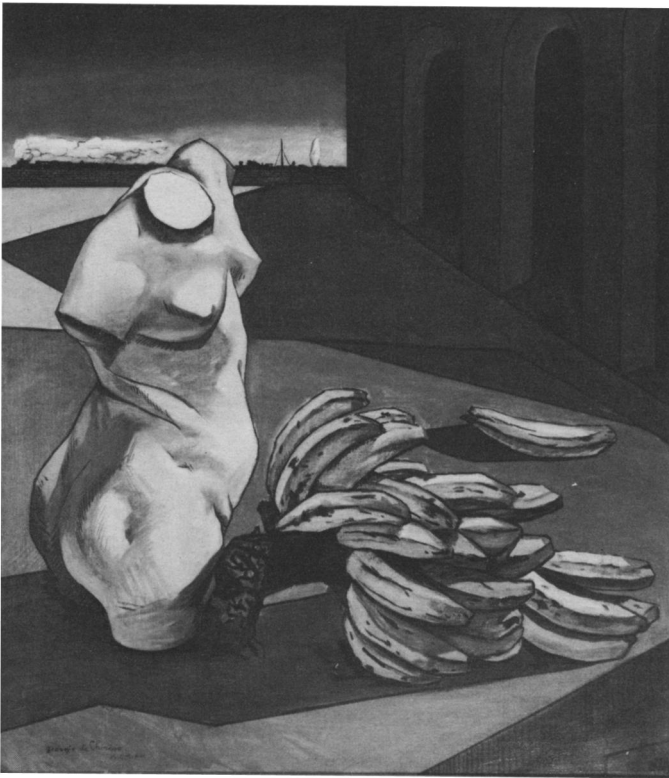
Craig conceived of his "movements" as scenographic dramas without plots or players, hence without words.²¹ These, like De Chirico's comparably intense, yet inaudible dramas, deny the verbalization of uncodifiable experience. Years later De Chirico categorically asserted that "toute création se fait dans le silence."²²

Both Craig and De Chirico introduce actors—or human beings—into their sets to give a sense of scale or emphasis, as Craig worded it. At first these beings are shown as anonymous silhouettes that both men seem to have derived from Böcklin.

²⁰ See below p. 346. De Chirico has spoken of the importance of "giv[ing] the impression . . . that something new must happen amidst . . . [the picture's seeming] serenity . . . and that other signs . . . are about to enter the rectangle of canvas." (M. Carrà, ed., *Metaphysical Art*, trans. of Italian texts Caroline Tisdall, New York, 1971, 90.)

²¹ Craig recalled in 1911 that the sign over the stage door of the Münchner Künstler Theater, "Sprechen streng verboten," became the clue to his theatrical reforms (*On the Art of the Theatre*, New York, 1957, 131, originally published in 1911).

²² "Sur le silence," *Minotaure*, No. 5, May 1934, 32.

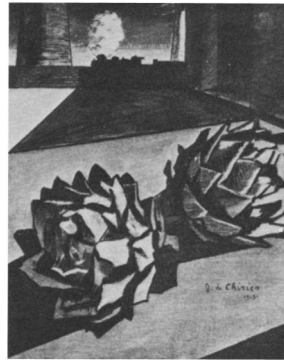


5 De Chirico, *The Uncertainty of the Poet*, 1913. London, Sir Roland Penrose (photo: Ellen Tweedy, London)

They are simplified forms, clad in togas, and, with few exceptions, they are momentarily arrested and memorable like statues. Craig's "Black Figures," as he later called them, are the initial step toward the ideal actor, the *Über-marionette*, with which he, quoting Napoleon, aimed to embody the general's famous concept of the hero, "a being like a statue in which the weakness and tremors of the flesh are no longer perceptible."²³ De Chirico similarly subjugates the human form to his own creative will, until, as in *The Grand Metaphysician* of 1917 (Fig. 4), it becomes, like Craig's *Über-marionette*, an integral part of the total artistic construct. But more of this later.

Such a super-puppet concept of "creative man" comes very close to Heinrich von Kleist's notion of the artist as a divine puppet, as explained in his essay of 1810, "Über das Marionettentheater."²⁴ The Romantic writer conceived of the true artist as a puppet-like dancer who transcends the limits of his conscious mind and his ego and achieves harmonious identity with God. Kleist's ideas had re-entered German artistic consciousness with the Symbolist movement, and may very well have been known to the highly literate De Chirico and Craig. It is significant that Oskar Schlemmer in evolving his *Triadic Ballet* during 1916–1922 drew not only upon Kleist but upon the art of Craig and De Chirico as well.

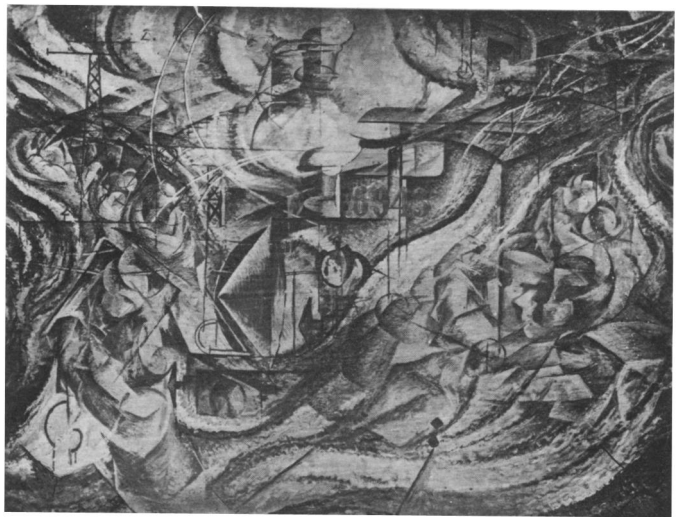
Speculations such as these lead one to wonder further whether De Chirico did not conceive of his architectonic



6 De Chirico, *The Square*, 1913, whereabouts unknown (from Soby, 185)



7 Boccioni, *Simultaneous Visions*, 1911, whereabouts unknown (from Martin, *Futurist Art and Theory*, pl. 80)



8 Boccioni, *States of Mind: The Farewells*, 1911. New York, Collection of Nelson A. Rockefeller (photo: Charles Uht)

scenes as distant metaphoric descendants in the complex lineage of the *theatrum mundi*. De Chirico induces the spectator to rediscover like a Ciceronian actor in his hypothetical perambulations an order that reaches toward universal truth.²⁵ The notion of the theater as a cosmic mirror had again been taken up by several writers at the end of the nineteenth century (e.g., Schuré, Maeterlinck, Hofmannsthal) after having been prefaced by the rediscovery of Calderón's "world-theatrical" dramas. Hofmannsthal's *Das kleine Welttheater* was published in 1897–98. It is a plotless, rhymed puppet play inspired by Calderón and informed by a strong Heraclitan point of view.²⁶ The play's hero, the madman, desperately seeks to fathom what is beneath the many "wrappings" (*Schalen*) so as to identify with the essential: "I in the whirlpool's midst/Tear all along with me, yet all remains,/All hovers yet, as hover it may and must!"²⁷

²³ "The Actor and the *Über-marionette*," *The Mask*, April 1908, 10. Craig cites Pater as the source for this reputed statement by Napoleon.

²⁴ *Sämtliche Werke*, Leipzig, 1910, v, 215–226.

²⁵ See R. Bernheimer, "Theatrum Mundi," *Art Bulletin*, xxxviii, 4, 1956, 228–29, *passim*.

²⁶ E. Schwarz, *Hofmannsthal und Calderón*, Cambridge, Mass., 1962, 14; J.

Sofer, *Die Welttheater Hugo von Hofmannsthals und ihre Voraussetzungen bei Heraklit und Calderón*, Vienna, 1934, 5–6, 13.

²⁷ *Poems and Verse Plays*, London, 1961, 263; see also 253; "Mit trunknen Gliedern, ich, im Wirbel mitten,/Reiss alles hinter mir, doch alles bleibt/Und alles schwebt, so wie es muss und darf!/Hinab, hinein, es verlangt sie alle nach mir!"

Until the De Chirico files are made available, reflections such as these may at least help to remove interpretations of his Metaphysical Art from the Freudian and proto-Surrealist mire. How could one indeed seriously doubt the world-theatrical intentions of an artist who speaks of Greek architecture as having been "guided by a philosophic aesthetic; porticoes, shadowed walks and terraces were erected like theatre seats in front of the great spectacles of nature (Homer, Aeschylus): the tragedy of serenity." Or one who discovers in Klinger's *Crucifixion* "a theatrical aspect [which] is *desired* and *conscious* because only the metaphysical side has been used . . . augmenting . . . the spiritual power of the work."²⁸

II

The relationship of De Chirico's Metaphysical Art to Futurism can be visually and to some extent verbally substantiated. There is no question that Futurist views and works provided some of the most viable aesthetic issues both before and after De Chirico's arrival in Paris, and particularly after he joined Apollinaire's circle.²⁹ De Chirico visited the raucous Futurist exhibition of 1912 at Bernheim Jeune's in Paris, and recently even professed admiration for Marinetti and especially for Boccioni.³⁰ In retrospect, it appears not only as if the Futurists had indirectly assisted De Chirico to reach his own artistic maturity during 1912–13, but that his Metaphysical Art and Futurism represent two sides of the same coin. This is not the occasion to review the shared, narrowly Italian bases of Futurism and *Pittura Metafisica*, nor to spell out the efforts of both to come to grips with the accelerated collision of past and present. I should like to point out only that Marinetti's over-quoted and half-comprehended battle cry, "a racing car . . . is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*" is a *mise au point* comparable in desperation, urgency, and determination to De Chirico's checkmate-like confrontations, as found, for instance, in *The Uncertainty of the Poet* of 1913 (Fig. 5). Beneath both startling *aperçus* resides a passionate desire to penetrate to the ineluctable processes of change, regarded as the ultimate reality by both artists. Whereas the manically inclined Futurists were, however, fired by a Bergsonian faith in creative evolution, the ironic, brooding De Chirico was more in sympathy with the notion of perpetual becoming as enunciated by Heraclitus, whom he called "the most profound Greek philosopher I know."³¹ For Heraclitus everything changes while appearing to remain the same.

Suggestions from the Futurists and possibly Craig seem to

have enabled De Chirico to visualize his dynamic world view.³² Thus De Chirico's seemingly irrational juxtaposition of objects separated widely in space and time can be seen as counterparts to what Boccioni termed "pittura degli stati d'animo," or works that depict analogues of Bergson's spiritual flux or duration.³³ Indeed, in pictures such as *The Square* and *The Anxious Journey* of 1913 (Figs. 6, 3), De Chirico begins a part serious, part ironic discourse with Futurism, and especially with Boccioni, that lasts at least through 1917. *The Square* can be read as a witty rejoinder to Boccioni's *Simultaneous Visions* (Fig. 7), and *The Anxious Journey* to *The Farewells* (Fig. 8). (Both Futurist works were included in the Paris show of 1912.) In the first pair, dominant still-life objects act as seemingly incongruous foils for the deep space behind or below them, which is dominated by a purportedly moving vehicle. Although De Chirico introduces products of nature into his "montage" of science and art, the effects are comparable. Both evoke the unpredictable and fluctuating admixture of memories, or a state of mind. *The Anxious Journey* is dark and lugubriously hued like Boccioni's *Farewells* and both pictures appear to be set in motion by a frontally depicted locomotive. This seems to be the only time that De Chirico showed the engine in this way, thus giving it a less toy-like quality than usual. The powerful gust of smoke that De Chirico's engine emits pretends to some of the energy and breath that engulfs Boccioni's scene. Boccioni's expressive exploitation of Cubist usages, such as the simultaneous representation of the frontal and pointed profile views, as well as his emphasis on the engine's enduring presence as an emblem, are subtly paraphrased by De Chirico. In *The Anxious Journey* the ambiguous coupling of the wedge-shaped shadow with the locomotive and the wedge-shaped architecture likewise alerts the spectator to the complete physical form of the engine and to its emblematic aspect as a threatening force that is taken over by the buildings themselves. The wedge, one of the chief Futurist conceptualizations of thrust and motion, occurs with astonishing frequency in De Chirico's works of 1913–14. The triangle, which De Chirico believes to evoke "a sense of uneasiness and . . . fear," is thus joined with the "precise, geometric shadow . . . enigma of fatality, symbol of the intransigent will."³⁴ Because of the deliberately ambiguous associations given to these triangles, a continuum between matter and time is suggested that is comparable to the function of the Futurist wedge.

The theme of voyaging dominates De Chirico's art after his

²⁸ M. Carrà, 90; 134.

²⁹ The celebrated Florentine skirmish between the Futurists and Soffici and his *La voce* friends of late June 1911 must have come to the attention of De Chirico. It was reported in *La voce* and later in Apollinaire's *Mercure de France* column (see Martin, 80–81).

³⁰ Conversation with the artist, June 26, 1974.

³¹ M. Carrà, 88.

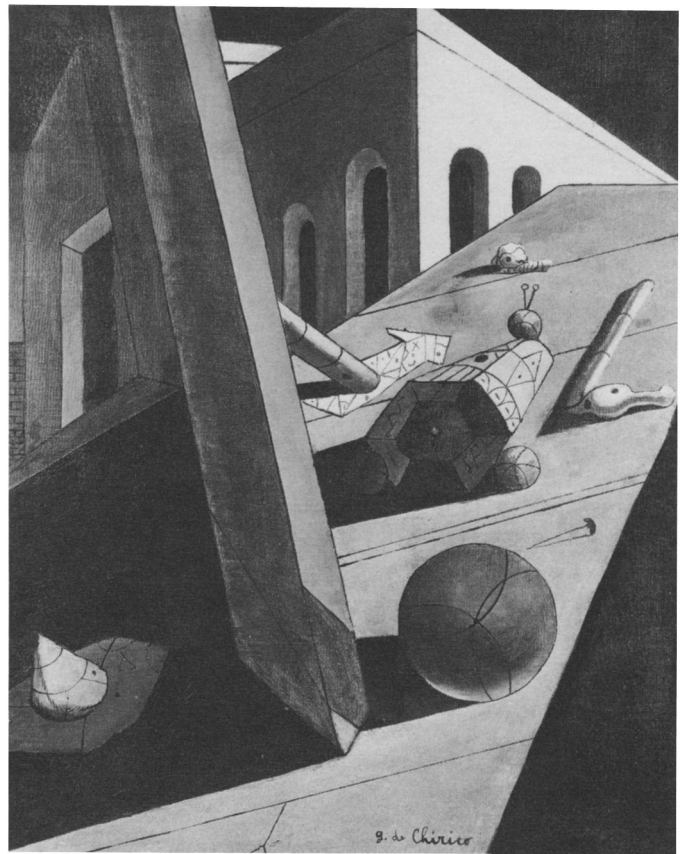
³² The kinship between Craig and the Futurists is obvious, and it is very likely that Marinetti, at least, was familiar with Craig's work and *The Mask*. Aside from possible effects on Sant'Elia, Craig definitely provided an inspiration for Futurist scenography during 1915 and thereafter, as M. Kirby has pointed out in *Futurist Performance*, New York, 1971, 76.

³³ Martin, 89ff.

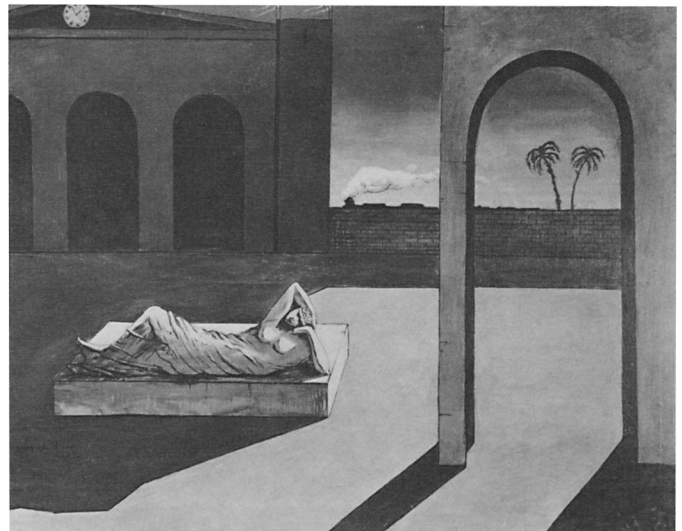
³⁴ M. Carrà, 91; Soby, 252.

arrival in Paris, as is always pointed out. Undoubtedly, this well-worn Romantic-Symbolist metaphor for the artistic-spiritual quest appealed as much to him as to the Futurists. On the surface, however, De Chirico seems to stress the terminal moments of voyaging, arrivals and departures. Yet De Chirico by no means contradicts the Bergsonian implications of the Futurist voyages. On the contrary, by focusing on the terminals, De Chirico, with customary irony, underlines the futility of conventional human reasoning, which, in Bergson's words, is "bent on making real or virtual stations . . . noting departures and arrivals . . . in the living mobility of things."³⁵ De Chirico thus seemingly warns the viewer not to read the terminals literally as terminals, for, as he says, "art must go completely beyond the human: good sense and logic will be missing from it" so as to reach "windows open to Homeric sunrises and sunsets pregnant with tomorrows."³⁶ In the prose poem of ca. 1914, "The Song of the Station," he puts it even more succinctly: "Little station, little station, what happiness I owe you. You look all around, to left and right, also behind you . . . Let us go in . . . you are a divine toy . . . Beyond [your] walls life proceeds like a catastrophe. What does it all matter to you?/Little station, little station, what happiness I owe you."³⁷ Small wonder that chronological time appears to have stopped on the clocks of De Chirico's terminals and buildings, for in his pictures the infinitely elastic, intuitive sense of eternity, of duration, is evoked.

The widespread European tendency of the mid-teens toward conventionally less legible images is found also in the art of De Chirico. For example, in *The Evil Genius of a King* (1914–15; Fig. 9), the seemingly arbitrary, additive, still-life-like assortment of representationally almost meaningless objects establishes what De Chirico calls a "new astronomy."³⁸ Visually this picture appears to be in perpetual motion and it performs like a devious image of Galilean mobility. Indeed, one is reminded of Bergson's comment that Galileo, "by setting a ball rolling down an inclined plane," was the first to give a scientific sounding to "the living mobility of things."³⁹ The kinship between this picture and Futurist still lifes, or better, *nature vivente*, scarcely needs to be pointed out.⁴⁰ It is also not surprising that De Chirico, in his elliptical explication of *Metaphysical Art* of 1919, adapts Boccioni's Bergsonian notion of "relative" and "absolute motion" as attributes of his own art.⁴¹ He rebaptizes them more fittingly the "two solitudes," but suggests, like Boccioni, that they are



9 De Chirico, *The Evil Genius of a King*, 1914–15. New York, Museum of Modern Art (photo: Museum)



10 De Chirico, *The Soothsayer's Recompense*, 1913. Philadelphia, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection (photo: A. J. Wyatt)

³⁵ H. Bergson, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, London, 1913, 85. This little book, so widely read and admired ever since its publication in 1903, had considerable effect, especially on Boccioni, as B. Petrie, "Boccioni and Bergson," *Burlington Magazine*, CXVI, 852, 1975, 140–47, and others, have pointed out. G. Papini, an editor of *La voce*, prepared an Italian edition in 1909 (J. Golding, *Boccioni's Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, Newcastle upon Tyne, 1972, 7; Martin, 89, n. 3). It thus seems extremely likely that De Chirico was familiar with this and other writings by Bergson and that at least one of the verbal stimuli for the name "Arte Metafisica" came from the French philosopher. De Chirico acknowledges only his debt to Nietzsche, Schopenhauer, and Weininger. The Austrian thinker wrote an especially provocative fragment called "Metaphysik," published in *Über die letzten Dinge*, Vienna, 1912, 139f. Savinio's important "Le Drame et la musique," *Les Soirées de Paris*, 23, Apr. 15, 1914, 240–44, appears to be the first

published summary of what his brother was to call "Metaphysical Art." Here Savinio repeatedly speaks of "modern metaphysics" and clearly reveals his dependence upon Bergson and Futurism.

³⁶ Soby, 245; Milan, *De Chirico*, 63.

³⁷ Soby, 252.

³⁸ M. Carrà, 91.

³⁹ Bergson, *Metaphysics*, 64, 65.

⁴⁰ See, e.g., Carrà, *Ritmi di oggetti* (1912), Boccioni, *Sviluppo di una bottiglia nello spazio (natura morta)*; Martin, 154–55, 168–69.

⁴¹ U. Boccioni, *Estetica e arte futuriste*, Milan, 1946, 105–13, originally published in 1914; Petrie, "Boccioni and Bergson," 144ff.

inseparable. For both artists these attributes consist of an external, relational quality, the "plastic solitude," or "the second life of the *natura morte*," to use De Chirico's words. The second attribute, called the "solitude of signs or dreams" by De Chirico, indicates for him and Boccioni an intuitive, empathetic leap into the object, which, according to De Chirico, is possible only in "rare moments of clairvoyance."⁴² Savinio describes his brother in 1914 as a "modern magus" who "bares the metaphysical anatomy of the drama . . . of the object."⁴³

The progressive "de-personalization" of man found in De Chirico's pictures also illustrates the implied interchangeability of the so-called human and non-human that informs his mature aesthetics. The artist was of course working in accord with a widespread European tendency which Craig and the Futurists had followed as well. Indeed, echoes of various Futurist manifestos are perceptible in De Chirico's "Meditations of a Painter; What the Painting of the Future Might Be," composed in Paris some time prior to his return to Italy in 1915. One of "the aim[s] of future painting," we read, will be "to suppress man as guide, or as a means to express symbol, sensation or thought, once and for all to free itself from the anthropomorphism that shackles sculpture: to see everything, even man, in its quality of *thing*. This is the Nietzschean method. Applied to painting, it might produce extraordinary results. This is what I try to demonstrate in my pictures."⁴⁴

With few exceptions, De Chirico represents humanity by means of some kind of sculptural image or monument. This seems revealing not only because it reflects the interest of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche in the sculptured human effigy, but because it confirms De Chirico's early preoccupation with sculpture, which may have been furthered by Hildebrand's influential *Das Problem der Form in der Malerei und Skulptur* of 1893.⁴⁵ By representing sculpture through the medium of painting, De Chirico, on one level at least, seems to do lip service to his brother's Baudelairean prejudice against sculpture: "A stumpy art, fettered by . . . its natural defects that maim it," hence incapable of "evolution," writes Savinio in 1916.⁴⁶ At the same time, De Chirico's painted intellectualizations of sculpture reveal some of the perceptual and

⁴² M. Carrà, 89.

⁴³ "Arte-idee moderne," *Valori plastici*, 1, 1, Nov. 15, 1918, 4.

⁴⁴ Soby, 251. Cf. *Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto*, 1910: "The suffering of a man is of the same interest to us as the suffering of an electric lamp"; "We fight against the nude in painting, as nauseous and as tedious as adultery in literature." *Technical Manifesto of Literature*, 1912: "We must drive . . . [man] from literature and finally put matter in his place . . . To substitute for human psychology, now exhausted, the lyric obsession with matter." *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture*, 1912: "A valve opening and closing creates as a rhythm as beautiful but infinitely newer than that of an animal eyelid . . . In the intersection of the planes of a book and the angles of a table . . . , in the straight lines of a match, in the frame of a window, there is more truth than in . . . the breasts and thighs of heroes and Venuses which enrapture the incurable stupidity of contemporary sculptures." Neither the Futurists nor De Chirico banned the human figure as a suitable subject; De Chirico states this explicitly: "We can still attempt . . . the appearance of the human figure, since through working and meditating upon [it] . . . facile and deceitful illusions are no longer possible." (M. Carrà, 91.)

⁴⁵ The effect of Hildebrand's ideas on non-German artists has just begun to be studied, e.g., A. E. Elsen, *Origins of Modern Sculpture: Pioneers and Premises*, New York, 1974, *passim*.

⁴⁶ "La realtà dorata," *La voce*, II, Feb. 29, 1916, 77.



11 De Chirico, *The Astronomer (L'Inquiétude de la mie)*, 1915, whereabouts unknown (from Soby, 209)



12 Epstein, *Rock Drill*, 1913–16. New York, Museum of Modern Art, Mrs. Simon Guggenheim Fund (photo: Museum)

conceptual ideas of Hildebrand and, even more, some of the diverse adaptations of these ideas found in the works of Boccioni and the Cubists.

The so-called Ariadne series of 1913 contains De Chirico's first sculptural representation of man. These extremely unsculptural images, as seen, for instance, in *The Soothsayer's Recompense* (Fig. 10), exhibit what appears to be a deliberate four- or five-fold removal from the phenomenal human presence. The artist probably has based himself on Reinach's well-known engravings⁴⁷ and painted a sketchy, drawing-like interpretation of a Roman copy of an Hellenistic marble, which personifies an abstract human ideal or paradox or both. De Chirico's interpretation of this ancient myth is comparable to that of Nietzsche and Hofmannsthal. The latter's *Ariadne auf Naxos* had its premiere with the music of Strauss in 1912.⁴⁸ De Chirico's spatially and contextually isolated Ariadne, although allegedly of stone and asleep, transmits an uncanny sense of "spectral" aliveness, to use the painter's own word. She thus suggests the eternally recurrent tragedy of hope and consequent suffering, which to both German writers was synonymous with the female principle and even with the human soul.⁴⁹

The heavy literary and historical residue present in the Ariadne series is less obtrusive in *The Uncertainty of the Poet* (Fig. 5), also of 1913. Here a headless, armless fragment announces greater distance from an individual personification and functions primarily on a sensory plane. The voluptuous torso, again recognizable as a distant link in the multiple remove from the Praxitelean *Aphrodite*, is paired in a bold Marinettian analogy with ripe bananas. In the *Technical Manifesto of Literature* of 1912, Marinetti had defined an analogy as the "deep love that assembles distant, [even] hostile things." The meaning of this "state of mind painting," insofar as it can be verbalized, seems to allude to the unabated and tormenting counterthrusts of the illusory here and now and the mythic past and future. These interacting forces are permeated by attendant conflicts of matter and spirit, and of nature and art or artifice.

The stuffed dressmaker dummies that appear in 1914 indicate the artist's desire to create his own modern human symbol. It is noteworthy that in a defense of Boccioni's multi-material sculpture published in *L'Action d'art* of July 1913, Severini asserted that "the dressed mannequins of couturiers and hairdressers are closer to nature than the statues of Rodin."⁵⁰ In his first exegesis of *Metaphysical Art* of 1918, De Chirico naturally repeats this point in his own way.⁵¹

Severini's comment may serve to introduce the much more radical, and, to my mind, strongly Futurist-inspired transformation of man that occurs in De Chirico's work during ca. 1915–17. In 1915 the painter introduces an armless and armored skeletal torso either in place of or in company with the dummy (Fig. 11). These armored beings bring the warrior-like robots painted by Carrà and Boccioni, and, even more, Epstein's terrifying proto-Futurist *Rock Drill* (Fig. 12) to mind.⁵² More significant than such external similarities is the fact that in these torsos De Chirico has begun to explore Boccioni's notion of "open[ing] up the figure like a window," as it was phrased in the French version of his *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* of 1912. As a result, the environment, albeit much more selective than Boccioni's, is literally enclosed in De Chirico's torsos and heads, and these, in turn, are accommodated, at least metaphorically, to the environment. Although the images of De Chirico are much more grim than the Futurist ones, a similar point appears to be made: De Chirico's metal skeletons seem to have transcended death; like Boccioni's beings they have become invulnerable configurations of man-devised geometry and order, which in past epochs transformed untamed nature into the planned architectural spaces that De Chirico's figures still inhabit. De Chirico has crowned his torsos with a Brancusiesque ovoid,⁵³ a form that symbolized to him, as to Brancusi and many ancients, primordial potentiality. As if to underline this meaning, De Chirico has adorned some of these eye-less eggheads with linear bands that can be read as the overlapping ends of a horizontal eight, the infinity symbol, which form a pupil-like circle in the center of the forehead.⁵⁴

⁴⁷ E.g., ills. in S. Reinach, *Répertoire de la statuaire grecque et romane*, Paris, 1897, II, 408, 409, 643–44, 661f.; I, 436–37. These illustrations may have reinforced recollections of the Florentine copy of the Hellenistic *Ariadne*. De Chirico mentions Reinach's work in 1919 (Milan, *De Chirico*, 61). A small plaster *Ariadne* by De Chirico is frequently dated ca. 1913; if this date is correct, the piece may have served as an additional model for his series (Soby, 52, 55, 61).

⁴⁸ *Grove's Dictionary of Music and Musicians*, New York, 1948, v, 166, 167; C. Reid, *Thomas Beecham*, New York, 1962, 132. The first Continental performance was given in Stuttgart; the following year Sir Thomas Beecham conducted it in London.

⁴⁹ See W. Kaufmann, *Nietzsche*, New York, 1968, 32–34.

⁵⁰ Reprinted in Zeno Birolli, ed., *Umberto Boccioni: Gli scritti editi e inediti*, Milan, 1971, 440. Boccioni's sculpture, exhibited in Paris in June 1913, impressed Apollinaire very much, and De Chirico undoubtedly visited the show as well.

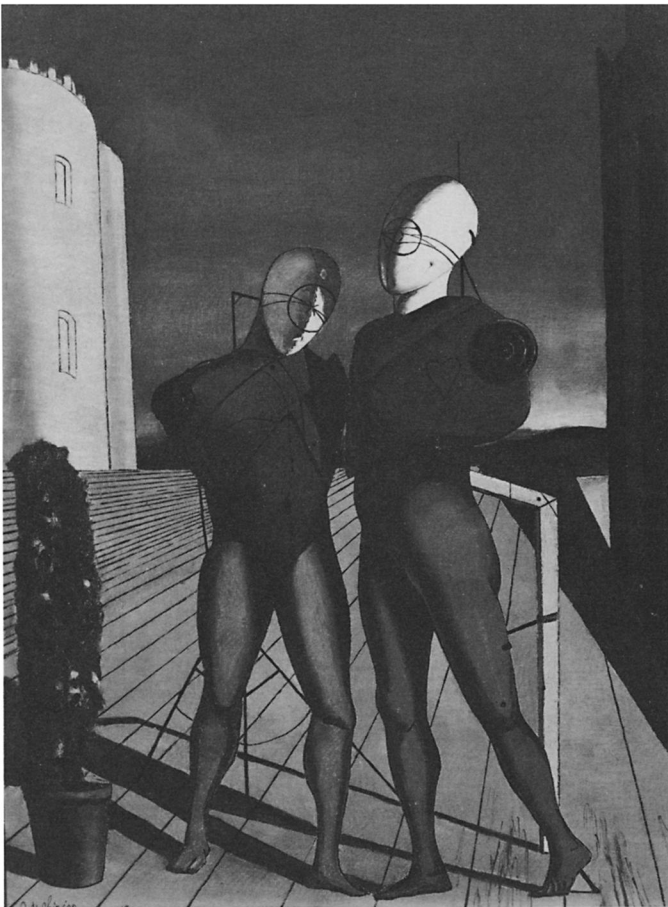
⁵¹ He writes: "Il cranio cartapesta in mezzo la vetrina del parucchiere, tagliato nell'eroismo stridente della preistoria tenebrose, mi bruciava il cuore e il cervello come un canto ritornante." (Milan, *De Chirico*, 57.)

⁵² E.g., Carrà, *Velocità scompone il cavallo* (1912); Boccioni, *Elasticità* (1912).

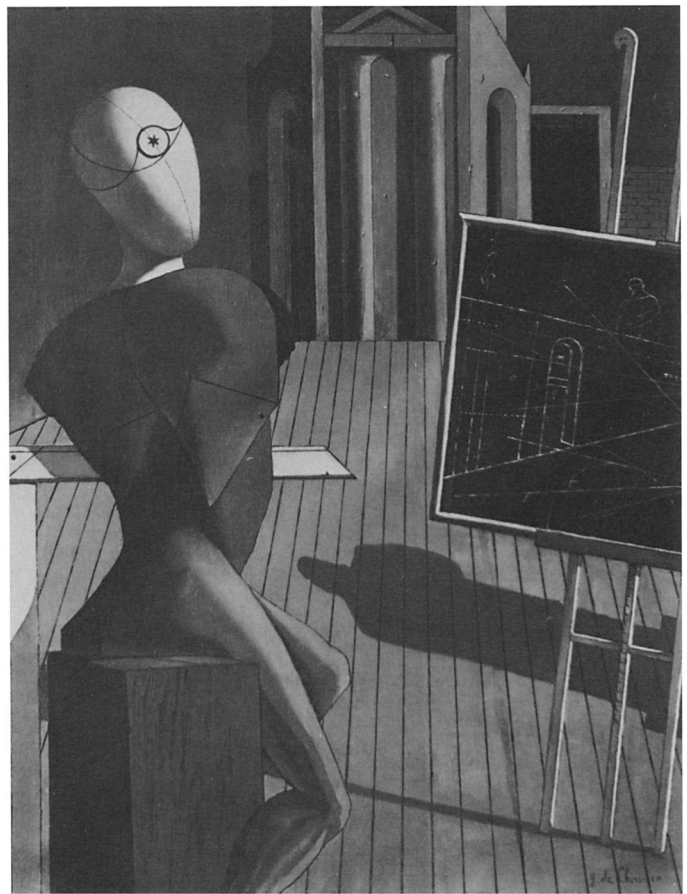
The Rock Drill in its original form was exhibited in March 1915 in the London Group Exhibition at the Goupil Gallery and reproduced in the *Daily Graphic*, May 5, 1915, as "War as the Futurist Sees It." Soon after the exhibition, Epstein dismantled the figure and gave it its present shape; it was shown at the London Group Exhibition of 1916 as "Torso in Metal from the 'Rock Drill'" (*Vorticism and Its Allies*, exh. cat., Hayward Gallery, London, 1974, 73–74, Nos. 243–45). De Chirico undoubtedly was aware of English vanguard activities if through no other source than *Les Soirées de Paris*, which in the July–August 1914 issue carried Flint's long article on "Imagism."

⁵³ See below, pp. 351–52. De Chirico recalls meeting Brancusi at Apollinaire's house and adds that "la sua scultura consisteva in certe forme ovoidali che poliva e ripoliva a forza di roda di Berlino" (De Chirico, *Memorie*, 72). J.T. Soby recently mentioned in conversation that De Chirico admired Brancusi's sculpture very much.

⁵⁴ The complete circle is rarely found in De Chirico's works, for it represented to him, as to his mentor Weininger, "perfect completion, which no longer lends itself to criticism, the pathos of law, the dignity of humorlessness" (Weininger, *Über die letzten Dinge*, 97; M. Carrà, 91.)



13 De Chirico, *The Duo*, 1915. Farmington, Conn., collection in the hands of James Thrall Soby (photo: Soichi Sunami)



14 De Chirico, *The Seer*, 1915. Farmington, Conn., collection in the hands of James Thrall Soby (photo: Sunami)

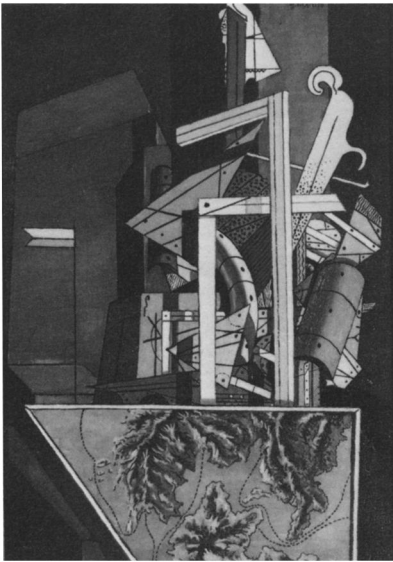


15 Boccioni, *Male Figure in Motion*, 1913. Milan, Civica Raccolta delle Stampe e dei Disegni A. Bertarelli (photo: Civica Raccolta)

The bust of *The Astronomer* (Fig. 11) is framed by a window, most of which, like the “windows” in his head and thorax, opens onto the sky. In the lower left side of the large windows there appears the corner of a yellow *palazzo*, a nostalgic evocation of the multi-windowed or multi-eyed constructs of past human imagination. The sunlit building outside is paired with the black picture on the easel within. Its nighttime celestial image functions as yet another “window,” one which partly reveals the infinite and eternally incomplete chartings of space and time, or creation.



16 Boccioni, *Synthesis of Human Dynamism*, 1912, destroyed (from Martin, pl. 147)



17 De Chirico, *The Melancholy of Departure*, 1916, whereabouts unknown (photo: Ellen Tweedy)



18 De Chirico, *Metaphysical Interior I*, 1916, whereabouts unknown (from Soby, 228)



19 De Chirico, *Portrait of Apollinaire*, 1914. Paris, Musée National d'Art Moderne (photo: Beatrice Hatala)

The Astronomer brings to mind Weininger's dualistic concept of the artist as "Sucher-Priester" (Seeker-Priest) outlined in his posthumous *Über die letzten Dinge*, which De Chirico profoundly admired. For the partly confined ascetic astronomer seems both "blind," antisocial, secretive, and rejecting the flesh, like Weininger's seeker, and at the same time a "seer," surrounded by light, as befits the blessing priest.⁵⁵ Although the parallel between Weininger and De Chirico must not be overstressed, the painter, in speaking about Giotto a few years later, remarks: "All the openings (doors, arcades, windows) that accompany his figures portend the cosmic mystery."⁵⁶

The Duo and *The Seer*, also of 1915 (Figs. 13, 14), represent less terrifying "metaphysical reconstructions" of man. In both, the smooth, dancer-like lower limbs carry a torso that is clad in riveted metal plates. These "protective" shields are remarkably similar in form to the flowing flame- or wave-like shapes of Boccioni's large sculptured, painted, and drawn figures of 1912/13 (Fig. 15). Although De Chirico has retained the arm knobs of the skeletal dummies, *The Seer* sports a wing-like shoulder blade that is especially close to Boccioni's substitute arms.

For Boccioni, these dramatic transformations of the human musculature, bones, and clothing hypothetically enable the new Futurist savage to soar through space. In De Chirico's beings, meditative abstraction and removal seemingly result in disarming instability so that a scaffold is apparently needed to keep them upright. Here also, however, a precedent set by Boccioni seems to have been utilized, perhaps ironically.

Boccioni demonstrates in practice and theory that environmental elements can and should form an integral part of the human figure. For instance, in *Synthesis of Human Dynamism* (Fig. 16), triangles literally form the architectonic framework of the head and shoulders.⁵⁷

After De Chirico returned to Italy in mid-1915, he painted relatively few, albeit memorable pictures in which full-length human configurations appear.⁵⁸ Instead he produced a large number of still lifes to which he gave a significant, new meaning (Figs. 17, 18). These exceptionally dynamic pictures, with their dramatically askew spaces, strange attic-window illumination, and extraordinary collage-like assortment of objects, are a development of the mystifying *Portrait of Apollinaire* of 1914 (?) (Fig. 19). Here the artist painted an evocation of poetry and metaphysical knowledge by means of an archetypal Proustian *madeleine*, an alchemical fish, and other transcendental signs. In my opinion, still lifes such as *The Melancholy of Departure* (1916; Fig. 17) represent yet another stage in De Chirico's search for a new human image. (This painting may even be a self-portrait.) It seems extremely likely that in his scaffoldings De Chirico has utilized suggestions coming not only from Boccioni's multi-material portrait assemblages of 1912, but also from Marinetti's 1914 *Self-Portrait* as a stringed, stick-puppet, and from interpretations of Futurism found in De Zayas's mathematical caricatures of his friends and in Picabia's "machinist portraits" of ca. 1914 and 1915 (Figs. 20–22).⁵⁹

The unstable scaffolding found in paintings like *The Melancholy of Departure* can be seen as a likeness of the

⁵⁵ Weininger, 80–81.

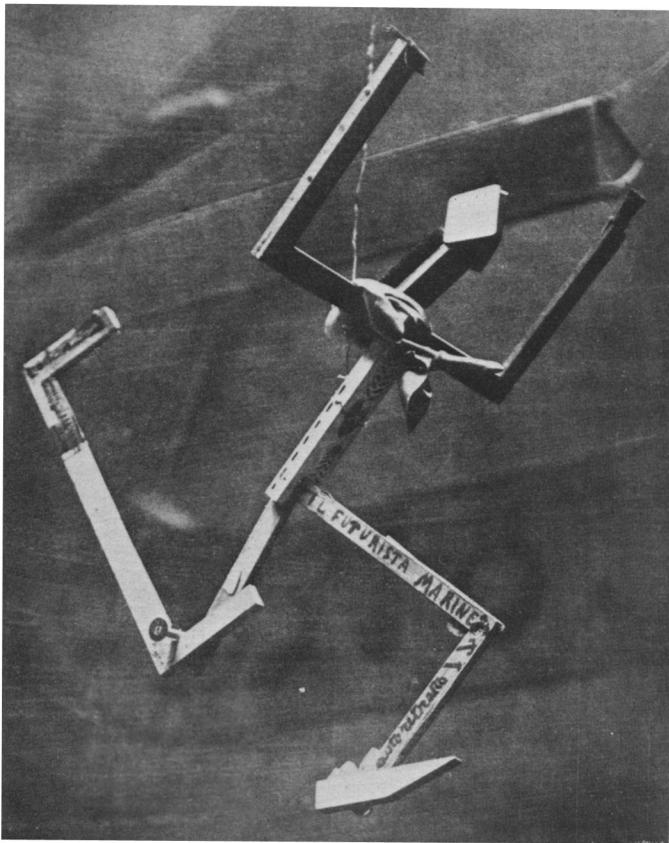
⁵⁶ M. Carrà, 95.

⁵⁷ In the *Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* one reads: "We will see . . . the wheel of a motor projecting from the armpit of a machinist, or the line of a table cutting through the head of a man . . . his book in turn subdividing his stomach with the spread of a fan of its sharp-edged pages." De Chirico borrowed this last image for his 1917 drawing and 1922 painting of *The Prodigal Son*. Studio scaffolding used to hold up unfinished sculpture may

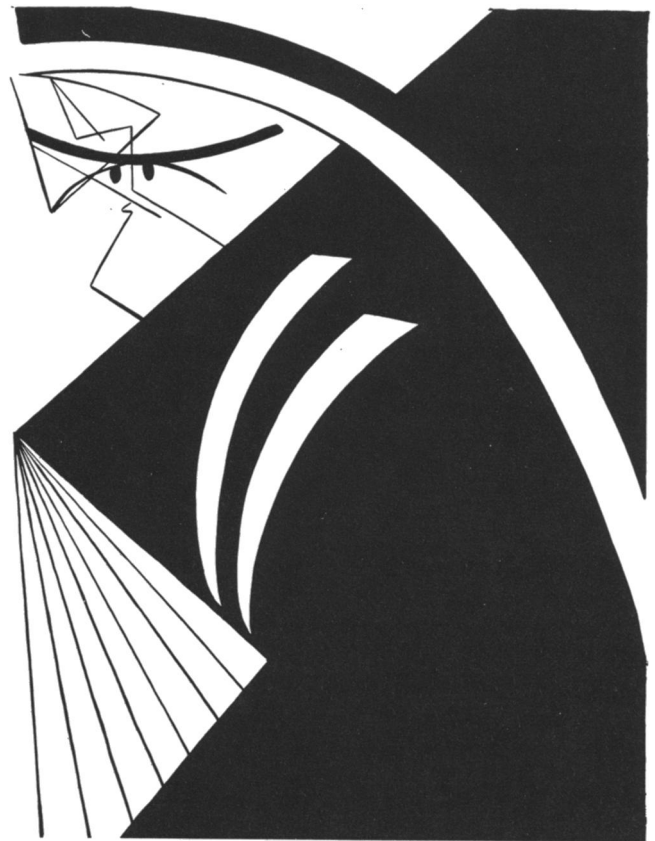
also have been suggestive to the witty De Chirico.

⁵⁸ *The Disquieting Muses*, 1917, *Hector and Andromache*, 1917, *Troubadour*, 1917.

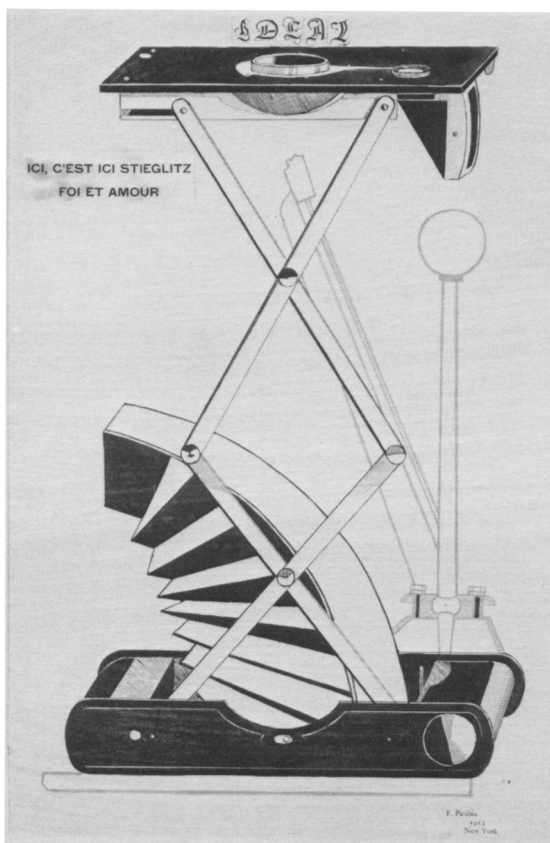
⁵⁹ The portraits by De Zayas and Picabia must have been familiar to De Chirico through Apollinaire and through reproductions in *Les Soirées de Paris* (De Zayas) and 291 (Picabia and De Zayas). Savinio contributed to 291 in 1915, and in 1916 he mentions De Zayas in *La voce*, VIII, Dec. 31, 439.



20 Marinetti, *Self Portrait (Dynamic Combination of Objects)*, 1914, whereabouts unknown (from *Sketch*, London, May 13, 1914)



21 De Zayas, *Guillaume Apollinaire*, ca. 1914 (from *Les Soirées de Paris*, July–Aug. 1914, 378)



22 Picabia, *Ici, c'est ici Stieglitz*, 1915. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, 1949 (photo: Museum)

“thinking and perceiving man.”⁶⁰ Indeed, the entire picture is literally crowded with “all the *constructions* of your mind that will praise you together,” as De Chirico writes in the roughly contemporary prose piece, “The Man with the Anguished Look.”⁶¹ De Chirico has portrayed the enduring, but ever-changing “skeletal” essence of man.

The illusionistically painted representations of sensuously perceived time and space, such as the nautical maps, biscuits, breads, grained wood panels, etc., used in this series, hold spatial planes of their own as in Cubist collages. As objects, they indeed provide starting points for voyages, functioning like Proustian *moments bienheureux* that break the limits of the here and now. Particularly, the nautical maps allude to the image of the artist as mariner-pilot so frequently used in the writings of both De Chiricos. Like the metaphorical stage of De Chirico, the notion of the mariner-pilot-artist underscores the endless odyssey of consciousness, which not only forms the basic content of the “still life portraits” just discussed, but naturally of his *Metaphysical Art* as a whole.

The Grand Metaphysician of 1917 (Fig. 4) represents a noble, if pictorially less daring climax and synthesis of De Chirico’s efforts at arriving at a new, universal and heroic image of man.

⁶⁰ Savinio, “Le Drame et la musique,” 241.

⁶¹ Soby, 253.

The artist has returned to an urban, outdoor monument, which at the same time appears to stand on an apron stage that juts into the spectator's space. The effect of horizontal spatial enclosure is relieved by the unusually tall canvas with its large expanse of sky. The monument, a multi-material, multicolored assemblage, topped by a pale Brancusiesque ovoid head, literally towers over the reposeful, banal Neoclassic buildings, of which it reiterates the principal geometric forms. As Hildebrand advocated, the monument is harmoniously integrated into the architectural setting, and, at the same time, communicates with the Heavens like Craig's *Über-marionette*. Although the monument appears as serene and poised as its environment, the painting evokes a strange sense of motion. When the picture was first exhibited in 1918, the poet-painter Filippo de Pisis noted that "to tired eyes . . . the flat picture . . . starts to turn slowly 'like a roulette wheel that is about to stop.'"⁶²

This rotational effect is not only the result of the linear and light-dark patterns of the picture, but of the design of the monument itself. For De Chirico's scaffold-assemblage is now completely three-dimensional and gives the impression of slowly revolving and evolving spirally from the base, becoming more open, lighter, and dynamic with each rise. Finally, at its peak, there emerges what in 1918 De Chirico designated as the Heraclitan "daemon," the primeval life force, which the artist holds to be synonymous with the egg and the eye.⁶³ Like a beacon, this eyeless seer illuminates the ever modulating stretches of human and cosmic space around it.

It seems likely that the quiet assurance expressed in *The Grand Metaphysician* and in the slightly later "Zeuxis the Explorer," a manifesto-like prose poem on Metaphysical Art, assert De Chirico's tacit readiness to assume the leadership of Italian art. Such an attitude may well have been brought about by the recent death of Boccioni and the precarious state of Futurism. Also De Chirico's competitive relationship with Carrà and the opinions and urgings of various ex-, post-, anti-,

and pseudo-Futurists also seem to lie behind his exclamation: "We must not grow complacent in the happiness of our new creations./we are explorers ready for new departures . . ./All aboard, gentlemen, *please!*"⁶⁴ *The Grand Metaphysician* may thus be regarded as a response to Boccioni's own climactic artistic statement and "spiral architecture," *The Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*. In keeping with De Chirico's resolute, if erratic historicism, his metaphysical monument to man represents a new link in the chain of national victory monuments that extends from the Column of Trajan to the Place Vendôme Column and beyond. Rather than commemorating political victories, De Chirico, like Boccioni, acclaims the continuing conquests of the human spirit by the artist-seer. Nonetheless, De Chirico is not exempt from his own, strange chauvinistic pride. For he asserts in 1919 that as a result of

GEOGRAPHIC DESTINY . . . it was fated that a first conscious manifestation of metaphysical painting should be born in Italy. In France this could not have happened . . . Our soil . . . is more propitious to the birth and development of such animals. Our inveterate *gaucherie*, and the continual effort we have to make to get used to a concept of spiritual lightness, bring with them . . . the weight of our chronic sadness. And yet the result would be that great shepherds can only appear among very similar flocks, just as the most monumental prophets throughout history have sprung from tribes and races whose destinies are the most miserable.⁶⁵

Whatever one may think about De Chirico's law of "geographic destiny," the fact remains that two deeply searching modern metaphysical quests, Futurism and *Arte Metafisica*, did spring from Italian soil and ancient Mediterranean civilization.

Boston College

⁶² *Pittura moderna*, reprinted in *La città dalle cento meraviglie ed altri scritti*, Florence, 1965, 139.

⁶³ M. Carrà, 154. (In this translation "daemon" is mistakenly repeated in the second exhortation instead of alternating with "eye.")

⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, 154.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 88.