

Italian Realisms

- Touring Exhibition -





Ubaldo Oppi, *La giovane sposa*, 1922-1924
Oil on canvas, 99 x 69,8 cm
Museo degli Eremitani, Padua

ITALIAN REALISMS - AN ENCHANTED VISION OF REALITY

The exhibition *Italian Realisms* explores one of the most distinctive and internationally underrepresented chapters of twentieth-century European art. **Bringing together approximately 70 masterpieces from the 1920s to the 1960s**, the exhibition traces the evolution of Italian realism from the interwar years to the post-war period, revealing a visual language in which precision, silence and mystery coexist.

Following the trauma of the First World War, **a generation of Italian artists sought alternatives to both avant-garde experimentation and academic tradition**. Their response was not a return to the past, but the creation of a new realism: lucid yet enigmatic, rooted in observation yet charged with psychological intensity. Artists such as Giorgio de Chirico, Felice Casorati, Antonio Donghi, Cagnaccio di San Pietro, Ubaldo Oppi and Edita Broglio transformed ordinary subjects into timeless presences, suspending figures, objects and landscapes in a state between reality and dream.

The exhibition introduces international audiences to a uniquely Italian interpretation of realism - one that pursued not the mere appearance of things, but what contemporary critics described as a deeper, “mystical truth”.

Organized by 24 ORE Cultura, the exhibition was first presented at Museum MORE (Gorssel, The Netherlands) from February to June 2026, where it achieved remarkable critical and public success, and is now available for international touring.



Carlo Levi, *Il fratello e la sorella*, 1925
Tempera and wax on panel, 119 x 99 x 1 cm
Museo Nazionale d'Arte Medievale e Moderna della Basilicata

BETWEEN ORDER, MYSTERY AND MODERNITY

While often associated with the broader European “return to order,” **Italian realism developed a distinctive character**. Unlike the social critique and harsh objectivity of German Neue Sachlichkeit, Italian artists approached reality through **contemplation, balance and metaphysical tension**. Their works reveal a world rendered with extraordinary technical clarity, yet infused with ambiguity and emotional resonance.

The exhibition highlights **how artists drew inspiration from the legacy of the Italian Renaissance**, from Piero della Francesca to Giotto, **while simultaneously engaging with the challenges of modern life**. Portraits, still lifes, interiors and everyday scenes become vehicles for exploring identity, time, memory and perception.

The narrative culminates in the post-war innovations of Domenico Gnoli, whose monumental enlargements of ordinary objects demonstrate how the spirit of Magical Realism continued to evolve long after its interwar origins.

Through this journey, ***Italian Realisms*** presents this stylistic movement as **an enduring way of seeing: an “enchanted gaze” capable of revealing the extraordinary hidden within the familiar**.

EXHIBITION PATH

FROM SUSPENDED REALITY TO HUMAN PRESENCE

The exhibition unfolds through **seven thematic sections that reveal the many faces of Italian realism**. It begins with *Reality and Suspended Time*, where artists redefine painting after the First World War through clarity, order and metaphysical stillness. Here, reality appears intensely present yet strangely detached from time.

The following sections focus on the human figure. *Portraits and Self-Portraits* examines how artists revisited one of Europe's oldest genres, balancing Renaissance ideals with modern psychological depth. *The Popular World* turns to workers, families and ordinary citizens, transforming everyday life into images of dignity, concentration and silent drama.

In *The Empty Playroom*, childhood becomes a space of ambiguity rather than innocence. Children appear within carefully structured compositions where precision and stillness create a subtle sense of unease. Together, these galleries reveal how Italian artists used realism not simply to record the visible world, but to uncover its emotional and symbolic dimensions.



Giorgio De Chirico, *Piazza d'Italia con piscina*, 1938
Oil on canvas, 51,3 x 82 cm
Palazzo Maffei - Casa Museo

EXHIBITION PATH - Portraits & Self-portraits, Popular World, The empty Playroom



Pietro Annigoni, *Autoritratto con amici*, 1936
Oil on canvas, 80 x 65 cm
Museo del Novecento, Milan



Cagnaccio di San Pietro, *L'alzana*, 1926
Oil on canvas, 200 x 173 cm
Fondazione di Venezia, Venice



Ugo Celada da Virgilio, *Ritratto di una bambina*, 1969
Oil on panel, 82 x 69 cm
Private collection



Antonio Donghi, *Il giocoliere*, 1936
Oil on canvas, 116 x 86,5 cm
Unicredit Art Collection

EXHIBITION PATH

FIGURES, BODIES AND THINGS

The second part of the exhibition expands this exploration through **group compositions, the representation of the body and the evocative power of objects**. *Figures in an Interior* investigates the modern reinvention of the group portrait, where relationships remain open-ended and narratives deliberately unresolved.

The Eternal Feminine presents a wide spectrum of approaches to the nude, from classical harmony and technical virtuosity to psychological complexity and social critique. Across these works, the body becomes a site where beauty, desire, power and vulnerability intersect.

The exhibition concludes with *The Mysterious Life of Things*, devoted to still life and the poetic potential of ordinary objects. Bottles, fruit, flowers, garments and everyday possessions are transformed into enigmatic presences through meticulous observation and refined composition. The section culminates with Domenico Gnoli's iconic enlargements of details—shoes, fabrics and garments elevated to monumental scale—demonstrating how the legacy of Italian realism remained vital in the post-war era.

Together, the seven sections offer **a compelling journey through fifty years of Italian art, revealing a realism that is at once rigorous and poetic, grounded in observation yet open to mystery.**

EXHIBITION PATH – The Eternal Feminine, The Mysterious Life of Things

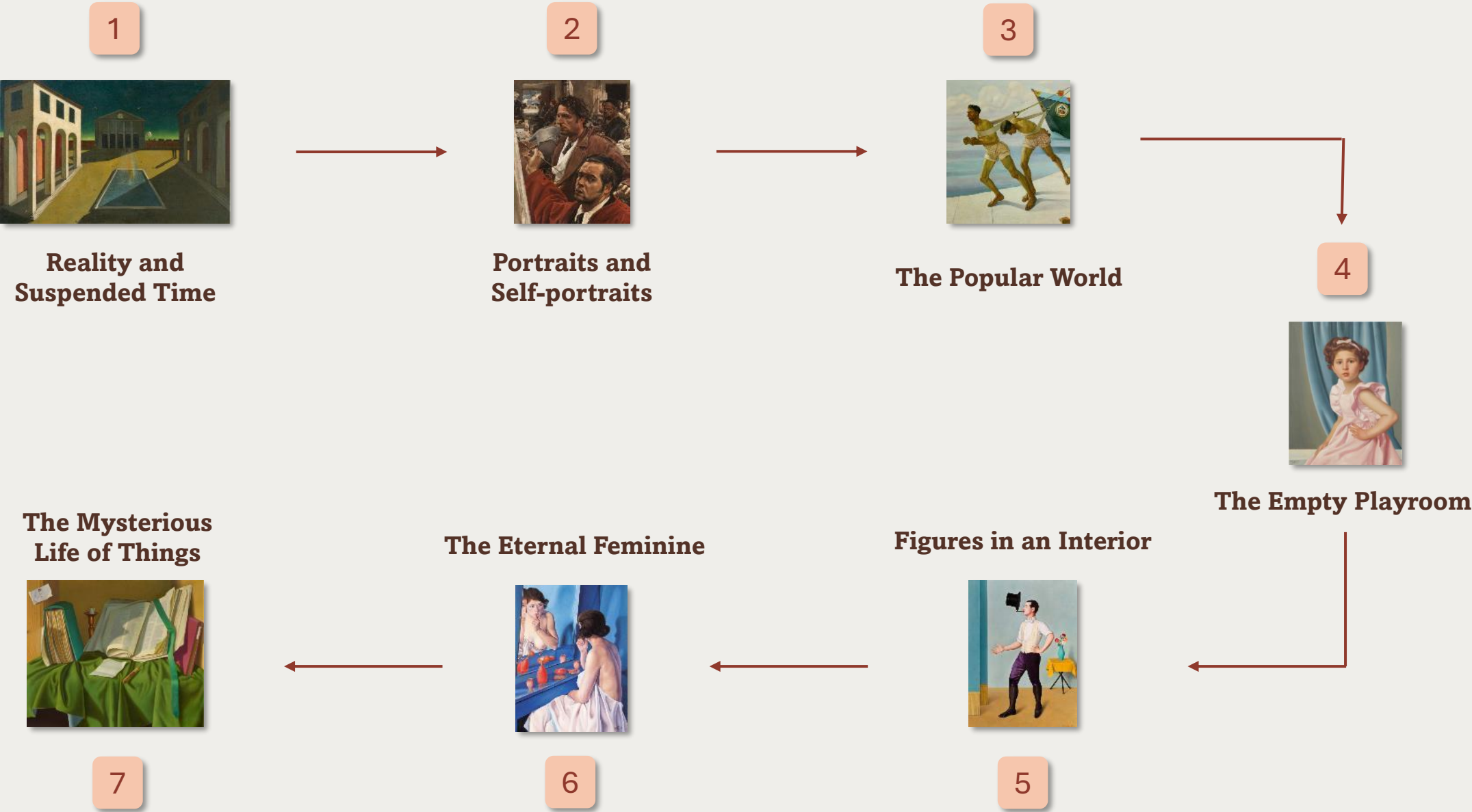


Cagnaccio di San Pietro, *Donna allo specchio*, 1927
Oil on panel, 80 x 59,5 cm
Fondazione Cariverona



Alfredo Serri, *Natura morta con libri*, 1961
Oil on canvas, 50 x 60 cm
Galleria Open Art, Prato

EXHIBITION PATH – ITALIAN REALISMS



EXHIBITION VIEWS – Museum MORE, Gorssel, The Netherlands



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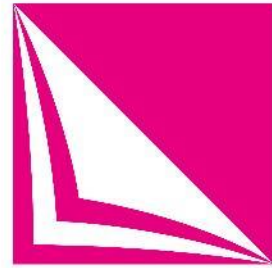


EXHIBITION VIEWS – Museum MORE, Gorssel, The Netherlands



ITALIAN REALISMS – FACT SHEET

Artworks & Multimedia	The exhibition features a selection of more than 70 works. The images in this proposal are indicative. The precise checklist will be confirmed once exhibition dates and scale of venue are confirmed.
Size	400-700 m²
Availability	From 2027
Rental period	12-16 weeks
Producer	24 ORE Cultura
Curator	Valerio Terraroli



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