



## **ITALIAN MODERN MASTER GIORGIO MORANDI SUBJECT OF CIMA'S THIRD ANNUAL SEASON OF INSTALLATIONS, FELLOWSHIPS, AND PUBLIC PROGRAMS**

**CIMA Installation Showcases Rarely Seen Early Works from the 1930s,  
Formative to Morandi's Artistic Development**

### **CIMA Awards Five Fellowships to Support New Scholarship and Research on Morandi**

**New York, NY** (April 16, 2015) – This October, the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) will present a major installation of over 50 paintings, etchings, and drawings by acclaimed Italian modernist Giorgio Morandi (1890 – 1964). The presentation will focus on the artist's rarely seen works from the 1930s—the decade when Morandi reached full artistic maturity and developed his distinct pictorial language—as well as select works from the very beginning and the end of his career in the 1910s and 1960s respectively. Drawing from more than a dozen major international public and private collections, including the Mattioli Collection; MART Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto; Fondo Ambiente Italiano; and MAMBO, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna; among others, the installation marks the first time in decades that a majority of these works will be on view in the U.S.

On view October 9, 2015 through June 25, 2016, *Giorgio Morandi* will be the third presentation mounted by the foundation, which promotes public appreciation for, and new scholarship in, Italian 20<sup>th</sup>-century art through annual installations, public programming, and its fellowship program. In addition to the rarely seen works from the 1930s, the inclusion of works from the 1960s will shed light on the influence the Italian modern artist's late work had on American Minimalists of that era.

“While Morandi is one of the more well-known Italian modern artists internationally, there's been very little attention paid to his work during the critical decade of the 1930s,” said CIMA Founder and President Laura Mattioli. “It was during these years when Morandi experimented with dark colors and thick, dramatic brushstrokes, that he truly discovered his own style, focusing increasingly on the material over the representational characteristics of painting—a critical precursor to the work of the 1970s Minimalists.”

In tandem with the opening of the installation, CIMA will launch its third annual fellowship program in support of new scholarship on Italian modern art in the U.S. and abroad. Four pre- and post-doctoral scholars have been awarded fellowships to research and explore various aspects of Morandi's career and legacy during their residency in New York. In addition, as part of CIMA's international fellowship program launched last year, one post-doctoral scholar will receive support to travel and conduct research in Italy.

Added Executive Director Heather Ewing, “We're very excited to be presenting a new perspective on this celebrated Italian artist for our third season at CIMA. Our installations are unique because they act as a springboard for careful and extended re-examinations of modern Italian art, and, as with our previous

installations of works by Fortunato Depero and Medardo Rosso, we look forward to the new discoveries and scholarship that the Morandi installation and the dedicated work of our fellows will generate.”

### **About Giorgio Morandi and the Installation**

Among the best known Italian artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Morandi was a celebrated painter, draughtsman, and printmaker who spent much of his life working in his hometown of Bologna and trained in the city’s Accademia di Belle Arti. While during his lifetime he most closely associated with his hometown’s heritage of the Carracci brothers and Classicism, the artistic connections he developed were precociously international and he consistently explored the boundaries of the art of the avant-garde. Morandi tirelessly repainted the same subjects—mainly still-lives in the studio—with intellectual rigor, to convey a personal sense of time and memory and to bring out the unique qualities of an object and of the practice of painting itself.

This artistic strategy crystallized for Morandi during the 1930s—the primary focus of CIMA’s upcoming installation. Morandi resisted external influences and spent these years pursuing and solidifying his autonomous pictorial language. As demonstrated by the more than 50 works that CIMA’s presentation encompasses, throughout the 1930s, Morandi embraced a surprisingly expressionistic and dramatic energy in his works, developing a dense, highly elaborated matter in his paintings and etchings.

Particular highlights from this period will include:

- A rare oil-on-canvas self-portrait, *Self-Portrait (Autoritratto)*, 1930. This work has not been presented in the U.S. in 40 years, and highlights the artist’s increasingly abstract emphasis on materiality over representation.
- Four still-life etchings from 1931 – 34. A self-taught printmaker, Morandi developed a distinctive technique of very fine lines and subtle gradations of shadow, evidenced clearly in this series.
- Three still-life paintings from the early 1930s, all of which represent the subject for which Morandi is best known—bottles of varying shapes, sizes, and colors positioned on a table. Morandi returned repeatedly to this same subject matter because it allowed him to paint in a way that explored the nature and power of painting itself. The focus is not on the subject, but on the medium’s ability to express the different feelings and senses of perception and imagination that characterized the artist’s experience of the world. Although these still-lives appear nearly identical at first glance, with careful and close examination, the brush strokes and the application of the paint across the canvas differ.

CIMA’s installation will also examine Morandi’s later works from the 60s—a period in which the artist embraced a diaphanous, nearly liquid gesture, marking a clear shift away from three-dimensionality to a progressively abstract mode of representation—later an important point of reference for the American Minimalists. In a series of three still-lives and a landscape from 1963, Morandi again tackled the same subjects that defined his early practice. Yet, the subject matter continued to play a secondary role in his practice and, during these later years, Morandi approached his investigation of perception with a thin, soft palette—a departure from the darkness of the 1930s works.

### **The 2015 – 16 CIMA Fellows**

Each academic year, CIMA awards fellowships to students pursuing pre-doctoral and post-doctoral study of Italian 20<sup>th</sup>-century art history and related fields. The program aims to support scholars in overcoming the cultural, academic, and political impediments that have hindered a broader understanding and appreciation of Italian modern art and its impact on contemporary art history. This year, the program will support a total of five fellows—four New York-based fellowships, two in the fall and two in the spring; and one travel fellowship in Italy:

- **Matilde Guidelli-Guidi** (Fall Fellow): A Ph.D. Candidate in Modern Art History at The Graduate Center, CUNY, Guidelli-Guidi's current research focuses on the built environments and architectural visualizations of the Milanese architectural firm B.B.P.R. (est. 1932). For her CIMA fellowship, Matilde positions World House Galleries, the New York commercial gallery that gave Giorgio Morandi his first North-American monographic exhibitions (1957, 1960), at the center of an extensive study of the reception of the Bolognese artist in New York's artistic circles, in the period 1953 – 68.
- **Lucia Piccioni** (Fall Fellow): Piccioni is an Italian art historian with a Ph.D. in Art History from the École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (Paris) and the Scuola Normale Superiore (Pisa), where she completed her dissertation *Painting and Politics during the Italian Fascism: "Italianities" in Conflict (1922 – 1943)*. Her research at CIMA will address the deeply human and anti-technological dimension of Morandi's still-lives, focusing on writings about the relations between man and the technique of German philosophers Oswald Spengler and Walter Benjamin, two primary and antagonistic figures of the 1930s.
- **Nicola Lucchi** (Spring Fellow): A doctoral candidate in Italian Studies at New York University, Lucchi is completing a dissertation examining an understudied case of Italian industrial architecture, the Fiat Lingotto car assembly plant. For his CIMA fellowship, Lucchi will investigate the network of institutions, exhibitions, and personal and professional rapports that favored the diffusion of Morandi's art in the United States during the interwar years.
- **Nicol Maria Mocchi** (Spring Fellow): Mocchi is an Italian art historian specializing in 19<sup>th</sup>- and 20<sup>th</sup>-century art. She obtained her Ph.D. in 2014 at the University of Udine with a thesis on *International Visual Sources of Italian Art during the Symbolist Period*. During her fellowship at CIMA, she will be working on the reception, visual success, and critical fortunes of Giorgio Morandi's œuvre in the United States, concentrating in particular on the impact that his work had on American artists of the 1930s and 40s.
- **Teresa Kittler** (Travel Fellow): Kittler received her Ph.D. in 2014 at University College London. Her dissertation focused on the social, material, and aesthetic engagement with the image of home on the site of sculptural production by artists in Italy in the 1960s. For her CIMA travel fellowship, Teresa will consider collaborations between architects and artists for industrial trade fairs such as the Milan Triennale and Eurodomus, when debates around the meaning of habitat and the spatial-political turn in the writings of critics brought the disciplines of sculpture and architecture into dialogue. This research forms part of a wider project that examines sculptural production in Italy in the postwar period through the lens of habitat.

The new fellows will join the ranks of their 2013 – 14 and 2014 – 15 predecessors: **Raffaele Bedarida**, a Ph.D. candidate at The Graduate Center, CUNY, whose fellowship studies focused on Fortunato Depero's activity in the United States; **Fabio Belloni**, a post-doctoral University of Udine graduate who explored Depero's reputation after his death in 1960; **Chiara Fabi**, an Italian art historian with a Ph.D. from the University of Udine, who studied visual representations of Medardo Rosso's work in the U.S. between the 1940s and the 1960s; **Francesco Guzzetti**, a Ph.D. candidate in the history of modern and contemporary art at the Scuola Normale Superiore in Pisa whose fellowship examined Rosso's legacy and critical reception after World War II; **Ilaria Barzaghi**, an Italian art historian with a Ph.D. in Contemporary History from the Università degli Studi di Milan, who is exploring Rosso's photographic practices; and **Ilaria Cicali**, an art historian with a Ph.D. in Contemporary Art History from a joint program between the Università di Firenze and the Université de Paris Ouest Nanterre La Défense, who is

investigating the reception of Rosso's work within the milieu of avant-garde sculpture at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **About CIMA**

The Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) is a nonprofit foundation established to promote scholarly research and advance public appreciation of modern and contemporary Italian art in the U.S. and internationally. Through research fellowships, annual installations, and ongoing sponsorship of cultural programming, CIMA advocates for a deeper awareness of 20<sup>th</sup>-century Italian art and its enduring legacy and serves as an incubator for new discourse and scholarly debate. Founded in 2013 and based in New York City, CIMA is overseen by Executive Director Heather Ewing, with guidance by the CIMA Advisory Committee, including President Laura Mattioli, Emily Braun, Flavio Fergonzi, Vivien Greene, and Valentina Pero. CIMA's second installation, which focuses on Medardo Rosso and features for the first time in the United States a large body of the artist's drawings and experimental photography, in addition to his better-known sculptural work, will close on June 27.

### **Location, Hours, and Admissions**

CIMA is located in New York City's SoHo neighborhood, on the fourth floor of 421 Broome Street.

The foundation is open to the public on Fridays and Saturdays for guided visits at 11 a.m., 1 p.m., and 3 p.m. Tours last approximately one hour and are led by CIMA's fellows. Admission is \$10 (entry for students is free with valid ID). Group tours can be arranged by appointment on other days. For more information and to book a visit, go to [italianmodernart.org](http://italianmodernart.org).

### **Media Contacts:**

Juliet Sorce, Resnicow + Associates, 212-671-5158 / [jsorce@resnicow.com](mailto:jsorce@resnicow.com)

Hanna Gisel, Resnicow + Associates, 212-671-5162 / [hgisel@resnicow.com](mailto:hgisel@resnicow.com)

Emily Viemeister, Resnicow + Associates, 212-671-5177 / [eviemeister@resnicow.com](mailto:eviemeister@resnicow.com)