

Carlo Carrà

Metaphysical Spaces

Curated by Ester Coen

Blain|Southern
4 Hanover Square
London W1S 1BP

8 July – 20 August 2016
Private View: 7 July, 6 – 8pm



Carlo Carrà, *Il Pino sul Mare*, 1921
Private Collection

'Simplicity in tonal and linear relations - that is all that really concerns me now.'
Carlo Carrà in a letter to Ardengo Soffici, 1916

Blain|Southern presents an exhibition of paintings and drawings by Carlo Carrà, curated by Ester Coen. The Italian avant-garde artist is renowned for his integral role in both Futurist and Metaphysical painting. At the centre of the exhibition are Carrà's paintings, many from public and private collections and rarely shown publicly.

Shown in the UK for the first time *Il Pino Sul Mare* (1921) is a work that was considered so important by influential German art historian Wilhelm Worringer that he wrote to Carrà and described it as 'my spiritual property'. A dozen other works, including *Mio Figlio* (1916) and *Penelope* (1917), comprise a group of Carrà's key paintings that have not been presented together in over fifty years. Each is a significant work in its own right, and together they illuminate Carrà's intellectual journey and artistic achievements.

Typified by dream-like views and unexpected juxtapositions of elements, such as mannequins in eerie arcaded piazzas, the Metaphysical style of painting was led by Carrà and Giorgio de Chirico. Although their investigations initially developed independently from one another, their discourse began in 1917 when together they formally established the principles of *Pittura Metafisica*. The artists strived to connect with the soul by focussing on quotidian objects and the built environment. Where multiple vanishing points and clashing perspectives gave de Chirico's paintings an unsettling, dream-like quality, Carrà's environments were more harmonious and rooted in the reality of a single perspective. The stillness he conveyed seemed to go beyond surface appearance in search of a more spiritual, yet natural, dimension.

Carrà's Metaphysical painting developed from his study of the Italian Renaissance painters Giotto and Uccello. It was in their works, with few focal points and horizontals, that Carrà felt the artist's soul could be seen. The archetypal compositional techniques Carrà admired in

these works led to his break with the dynamism of Futurism and to his creation of paintings with a stillness and form, which he termed a '*condensation of expression*'. Carrà aimed to guide Italian painting to its '*essential purpose*' and in doing so, redefine Italian painting and challenge the dominant French vanguard of painters. Although the movement was short-lived, Carrà and a great many other artists drew from its tenets even after its dissolution.

In addition to Carrà's paintings, a number of rarely seen works on paper are presented. The exhibition is curated by Ester Coen, an expert on Futurism, Metaphysical art and Italian and International avant-gardes, Coen is the Professor of Contemporary Art History at the University of L'Aquila. Coen was assisted by Elena Bonanno di Linguaglossa, Director, Blain|Southern in close collaboration with Archivio Carlo Carrà.

For further information on the exhibition, please contact Laura Callendar at Blain|Southern

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Notes to Editors:

Blain|Southern is a contemporary and modern art gallery based in London and Berlin. The gallery represents an international roster of contemporary artists and is the world-wide representative of The Estate of Lynn Chadwick.

The gallery's recent exhibitions include: Francesco Clemente, François Morellet, Wim Wenders, Kishio Suga, Bill Viola, Michael Joo and Bosco Sodi.

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Saturday: 10am - 5pm
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www.blainsouthern.com



Carlo Carrà with *Mio Figlio*,
Courtesy Archivio Carlo Carrà



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