

BO ZAR EX PO



Giorgio Morandi (1890 - 1964)
Natura morta, 1936
Mamiano di Traversetolo (Parma)
Fondazione Magnani Rocca

Press Release

Giorgio Morandi: Retrospective

Dates: 7 June to 22 September 2013

The Centre for Fine Arts presents a major retrospective of the work of the Italian modernist master Giorgio Morandi. Guest artist Luc Tuymans presents work of his own in a dialogue with Morandi's oeuvre.

BOZAR is paying a tribute to the Italian modernist artist Giorgio Morandi (who was born in Bologna in 1890 and died in 1964). His delicate still lifes, always reduced to their bare essence, are **iconic works of modern art**. His sense of colour, tone, and composition are still a **source of inspiration for many artists, writers, and film-makers** today.

Curator Maria Cristina Bandera, *the* Morandi specialist par excellence, provides visitors with a comprehensive overview of the master's oeuvre. The exhibition is arranged **chronologically and thematically** and shows Morandi's **artistic development** from his early years to the end of his career as it presents his **major themes** (landscapes and still lifes of vases, shells and flowers) and the **varied techniques** (oil on canvas, drawing, engraving, and watercolour) that he explored in his work.

The retrospective brings together, for the first time in any of the Benelux countries, **100 works** by Morandi, including a unique self-portrait, on loan from **more than 40 prestigious private and public collections**, including the Museo Morandi, the Mart museum, the Galleria degli Uffizi, the Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Torino, the Pinacoteca di Brera, and the Fondazione Longhi.

Influences and stylistic development

Morandi is one of the **most recognisable and, at the same time, most enigmatic artists** of the 20th century. Despite the international recognition that came his way in his own lifetime, he led a secluded life with his three sisters in Bologna.

As a student at the Academy of Fine Arts in Bologna, he took a particular interest in **French Impressionists** and painters such as Paul Cézanne, Georges Seurat, Henri Rousseau and Pierre-Auguste Renoir and **early Italian artists** such as Giotto, Masaccio, Paolo Uccello, and Piero della Francesca. Although he hardly ever travelled, he was well aware of contemporary avant-garde trends such as **cubism, futurism, and pittura metafisica**. Around 1920, drawing on all those influences, Morandi created his own individual style, which he would continue to refine throughout his career.

Morandi worked obsessively on two key themes: the **landscapes** of his environs (the Apennines around Bologna and the Cortile di Via Fondazza) and **still lifes of vases, shells, and flowers**. In these he painted the same objects again and again in similar settings, but with minimal variations in composition, viewpoint,

and colour. He was also a master of the use of **different techniques**: a subject painted in oil on canvas creates a different atmosphere when it is depicted in a drawing, an engraving, or a watercolour. For him, each technique was of equal value and he made full use of them all as vehicles for experimentation.

Morandi's artistic trajectory can be seen as one of consistent development, without major changes of style. His whole oeuvre is a constant **search for the essence** and **purity of forms**: his later works come close to abstraction.

An artist's artist

Morandi is a true "**artist's artist**" and his work continues to fascinate other artists today. His paintings feature in **films** by Michelangelo Antonioni (*La Notte*, 1961), Federico Fellini (*La Dolce Vita*, 1960), Robert Aldrich (*Kiss Me Deadly*, 1955), and Luca Guadagnino (*Io sono l'Amore*, 2009), as well as in the **writings** of Pierpaolo Pasolini, Paul Auster, Don De Lillo, and Siri Hustvedt. The works of **contemporary artists** – including Lawrence Carrol, Tacita Dean, and Tony Cragg – also include references to him.

To illustrate the extent of Morandi's influence on other artists, BOZAR has also turned to the other arts. The curator, Maria Cristina Bandera, selected **Luc Tuymans** as a guest artist; in the final room of the exhibition, Tuymans will present works of his own – including *Intolerance* (1993), *Church* (1990), and *Plates* (2002) – in a dialogue with Morandi.

The contemporary artist **Claudio Parmiggiani**, who, like Morandi, is from the region of Emilia-Romagna, will present an installation in the Horta Hall.

BOZAR LITERATURE will present a conversation about Giorgio Morandi between **Luc Tuymans and Joost Zwagerman** (11 June) and a literary visitor's guide, *Poetry for Giorgio Morandi*, for which six poets (Charles Juliet, Jan Lauwereyns, Maud Vanhauwaert, Nicole Malinconi, Charles Wright, and Adam Zagajewski) have drawn inspiration from Morandi's paintings.

Short biography of Giorgio Morandi (1890–1964)

Giorgio Morandi was born on 20 July 1890 in **Bologna**. After his father's death in 1909, the family moved to a house in the Via Fondazza, where he continued to live with his mother and three sisters until his death in 1964.

From 1907 to 1913 he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts of his home town, where he would later teach. He gradually made a name for himself in the art world. In 1928 he took part in the **Venice Biennale** with a series of engravings. Two years later, his growing reputation led to his appointment to the chair of Engraving at the Bologna Academy. In 1934 the great art historian Roberto Longhi called him "one of the best living painters in Italy". His big international breakthrough came at the Venice Biennale of 1948, where he won the first prize for painting, which straight away made him one of Italy's most respected artists. Morandi's career coincided with **a turbulent period** in Italy, under the Mussolini regime (1922–1945) and during the two world wars. In 1915 he was called up to serve during the First World War, but suffered a breakdown and was soon released from the front.

Although Morandi enjoyed international recognition during his own lifetime, he continued to live a simple life. He lived and worked in a single plain room, surrounded by the objects he depicted in his works of art.

Curator

Maria Cristina Bandera. Bandera is the director of the Fondazione di Studi di Storia dell'Arte Roberto Longhi in Florence. She has curated several exhibitions devoted to Morandi, including "Giorgio Morandi 1890–1964" (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2008), and has published numerous essays about the artist.

Catalogue

In conjunction with the exhibition, an extensive **catalogue** is being published, containing a scholarly essay on the artist and his work by the curator, Maria Cristina Bandera, detailed descriptions of almost all the works, and contributions by Joost Zwagerman, Yves Bonnefoy, Nicole Malinconi, Francesco Galluzzi, Roland Jooris, Jean-Michel Folon, and Luc Tuymans. Available in three languages (Flemish, French and English), it will be published by BOZAR BOOKS + Silvana Editoriale. (35 euros)

Michelangelo Antonioni: Il maestro del cinema moderno

In parallel with the Giorgio Morandi retrospective, BOZAR is joining forces with CINEMATEK to present a multidisciplinary exhibition entitled **Michelangelo Antonioni: Il maestro del cinema moderno** (22 June - 8 September 2013). Antonioni, a pioneer of modern cinema, was one of the legendary Italian directors of the 1960s. Morandi and Antonioni, who came from the same region, were favourably disposed towards each other. Letters from Morandi have been found in Antonioni's archives and a painting by Morandi is clearly visible in his film *La Notte*. Their work clearly shows them to have had a similar sense of aesthetics, composition, photography, and architecture.

Visitor information

Giorgio Morandi. Retrospective

Where

Centre for Fine Arts
rue Ravensteinstraat 23
1000 Brussels

When

7 June > 22 September 2013

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday, 10 am > 6 pm
Thursday, 10 am > 9 pm (> 6 pm from July 21 to August 15)
Closed on Mondays

Tickets

€ 10-8-6-4
€ 8 for BOZAR*friends*

Combitickets

€ 15: Morandi + Antonioni + b0b Van Reeth (€14 for BOZAR*friends*)
€ 11: Morandi + Antonioni

BOZAR info & tickets

0032 2 507 82 00 – info@bozar.be – www.bozar.be

Press contact

Ms Leen DAEMS

leen.daems@bozar.be

+32 (0)2 507 83 89

Production : BOZAR EXPO