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JAMES THRALL SOBY

Brushy Ridge Road  
New Canaan, Conn.

Dec. 28, 1956

Dear Mrs. Chanin:

I have seen the picture which appears in the photograph of de Chirico himself several times, I think in Milan, though I am not sure at this late point. It is not a very good picture and I would guess was painted by de Chirico much later than the early period (1911-19).

The only authentic early works related to the Nostalgia of the Infinite I have ever seen are the ones reproduced on 172 and 173 in my book. I doubt very much that there are other true works from the tower series. But of course I don't know the picture you refer to.

The Hector and Andromache is more puzzling, since this is the subject which has been copied by de Chirico and others endless times, at various dates. From the evidence of the photograph, this seems a much better picture of this subject than the one, also dated 1918 (which I doubt is the right date), reproduced on page 143 of my book. I can't tell you more about this picture without actually seeing it. If Abe could take it to Alfred Barr's office in the Museum, I could have a look at it on January 3rd, when I will be there for a meeting.

Meanwhile, I would be extremely wary about all three de Chiricos. We are nearing the numerical limit for pictures created during so short a span of time (during a good part of this period de Chirico was ill and/or in the Italian Army). I am always suspicious of pictures dated 1918. As I tried to say in my book, de Chirico seems to have settled on the 1918 date as one about which little is known. He had just been released from the Army, I think he produced very little, and I have seen less than half a dozen paintings which I really think belong to that year.

One final point: is the picture dated 1921 in tempera or oil? During that year de Chirico used tempera almost exclusively, having been converted temporarily by his copies of Michelangelo & Co., and by his studies with Locksff (see page 159 in my book).

Anyway, let's have a look at the Hector and Andromache if Abe can bring it in before January 3rd. And do be careful. The market for de Chirico's early works is soaring, as you probably know (I have just been offered a straight Bocklin job of c. 1909 for \$7,500, a small and unimportant picture). I suspect all pictures by de Chirico coming from Italy, where they know less about his early work than anywhere else, the best pictures having nearly all been sold in Paris or elsewhere long before the Italians understood how important he was at that early point.

Regards, Happy New Year to you and Abe,

Hurriedly,

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■ margit ■ 34 west 65th street ■ new york, n. y. ■ trafalgar 3-0339 ■

New York, Dec. 26, 56

Dear Mr. Soby;

Forgive me for troubling you with some more Chirico puzzles. I hope, at least, they will have some value for your files.

Last week some one brought me two Chirico's; one is shown behind the artist in the enclosed photo of Chirico. The other is an almost exact transcription of the Museum's *Nostalgia of the Infinite*, of 1913-14. In this new one, there is a somewhat larger landscape unit to the left. It is dated on the canvas, 1921, is 51 1/4 X 86 cm, and comes with an affidavit signed by Chirico in 1956. Are they variants by the artist, or the work of some skilled assistant? In any case, am I wrong in assuming that they have hardly any collector value?

I am also enclosing the photo of a Hector and Andromache, which arrived from Europe. I do not know if it is truly a 1918 version, or a later variant, and would appreciate your comment. I am told the original colors are not as bluish as the transparency. Has it any genuine collectors' value?

Again, forgive me troubling you in this knotty area. And I would appreciate the return of the photos, since they do not belong to me. Would you be interested in photostats?

Cordially,  
*Margit Winter Chanin*  
Margit Winter Chanin

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MRS. a. l. chanin ■ 34 west 65th street ■ new york, n. y. ■ trafalgar 3-0339 ■

New York, Dec. 10th, 56

Dear Mr. Soby;

Enclosed are photostats of the two dubious Chirico's. Incidentally, they were offered to me from a usually reliable source in Switzerland. I think it would be fun if you duplicated de la Faille's "The False Van Gogh" with "The False Chirico".

Also, I have a fine Brancusi gouache, acquired from the artist himself past summer. Should you be interested, I would be happy to mail you a color transparency.

Cordially  
*Margit Winter Chanin*  
Margit Winter Chanin

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■ margit ■ 34 west 65th street ■ new york, n. y. ■ trafalgar 3-0339 ■

Dec. 1st, 1956

J. T. Soby  
Brushy Ridge Road  
New Canaan, Conn.

Dear Mr. Soby;

Thank you very much for your comment on the Chirico's.

I must return the photographs, but I will have photostats made and send them to you for your records.

It was very kind of you to take the trouble to reply - thanks again - and regards from my husband, the docent.

Sincerely,  
*Margit Winter Chanin*  
Margit Winter Chanin

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MARGIE W. CHAMIN  
34 W. 65th St.  
NEW YORK CITY  
N.Y.



Mr. Y. T. Soley  
Brushy Ridge Road  
West Canaan, Conn.

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J. T. SOBY  
Brushy Ridge Road  
New Canaan, Conn.

Nov. 28, 1956

Miss Margit Winter Chanin,  
34 West 65th St.,  
New York, N.Y.

Dear Miss Chanin:

I have the photographs of the two paintings with de Chirico's name inscribed on them which you sent me on November 21st.

I cannot, of course, give you a real opinion without seeing the paintings themselves. But frankly I am extremely dubious, from the evidence of the photographs, as to their being works of de Chirico's early period. They differ from the true works of 1911-19 in many important respects, and I think you would be wise not to handle them.

May I keep the photographs for my records? If not, perhaps you will let me have photostats made before returning the photographs.

Sincerely,

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■ margit ■ 34 west 65th street ■ new york, n. y. ■ trafalgar 3-0339 ■

Nov. 21, 1956

Dear Mr. Soby;

Recently, I recieved these two photographs from Europe. I am skeptical as to their authenticity, and I would deeply appreciate your off-the-record opinion. Moreover, perhaps you would be interested in noting them for your own records.

By way of explanation, perhaps I should mention that my interest in this matter is, to a large extent, that of a private dealer. I have been lucky enough to find and place some important oils - Kandinsky, Klee, Degas, Modigliani, Picasso, Shahn, etc. - and I'd hate to burn my fingers on a dubious Chirico.

Thanks in advance,

Cordially,  
*Margit Winter Chanin*  
Margit Winter Chanin.

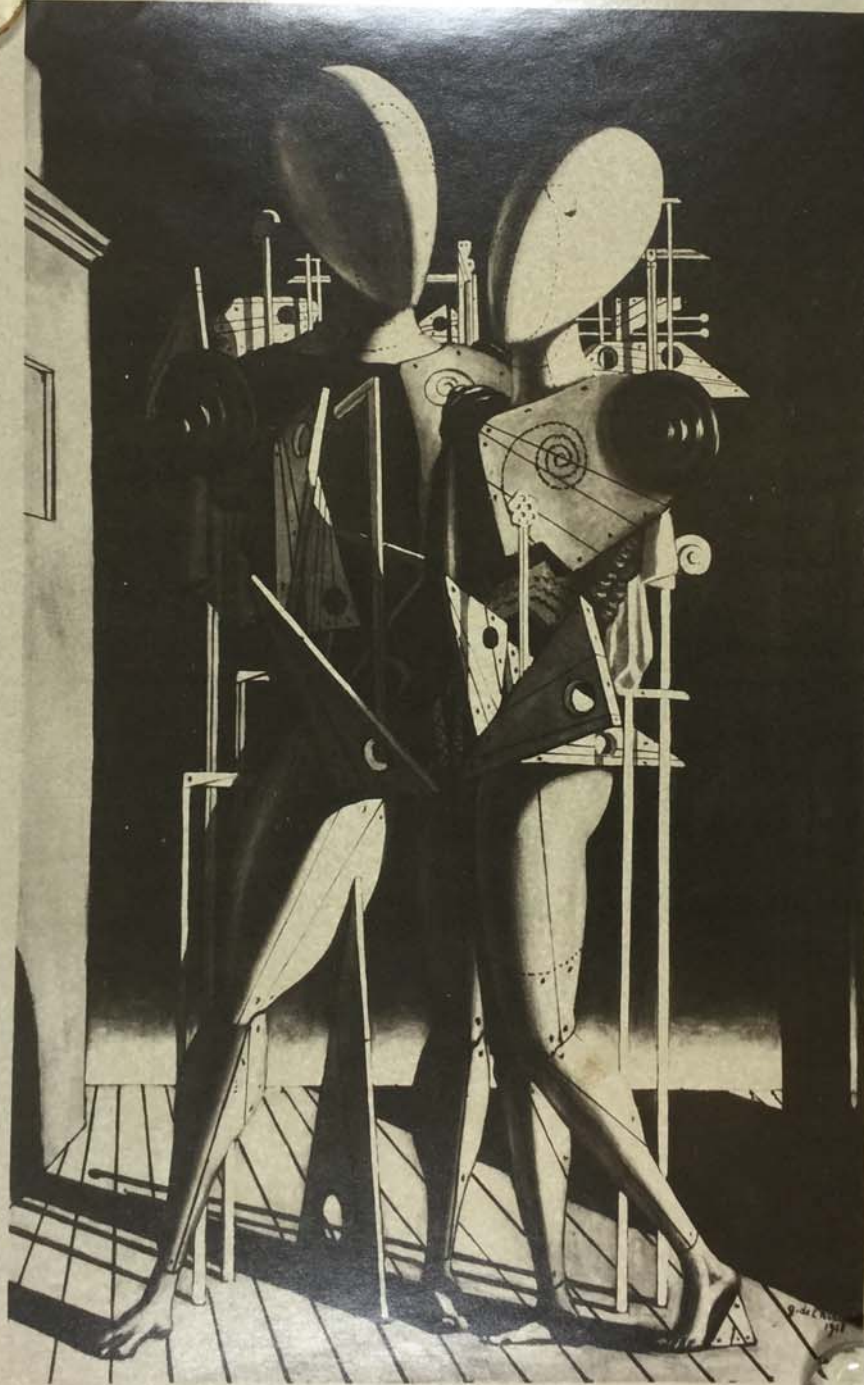
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G. de CHIRICO - PIAZZA d'ITALIA 1925  
OLIO SU TELA MISURA CM. 50 x 60

Lichias che questa <sup>è Piazza</sup>  
"Italia" che si vede alle mie  
spalle è opera autentica, da  
me eseguita e firmata.

Giorgio de Chirico

Roma 9 ottobre 1956



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*M. M. Chomsky  
Jan, 1957*