Cooper

27th Jan.
McML

18, EGERTON TERRACE,
S.W.3.
KENSINGTON 1625.

Dear Jim

Many thanks for your letter, which I found waiting for me when I got in from Paris last night. I have been over to see Bill Lieberman who is working on Modigliani.

I don't believe that there is any other early Chirico in London other than those you mention. Moseus of Course is a beast & never gives any assistance. Peter Watson is probably in NY by now - he left Rio about a week ago heading north. Those at any rate are the only early paintings known to me. Do you by the way know

the Piazza which belongs to Gustav Zumstey, Römistrasse 4, Zürich? He also has a supposed 1917 metaphysical which I believe to be a later simulation. I have been over my list of collectors here quite carefully & have no more suggestions to offer.

Guttuso. Yes. Thirty new photographs came in 14 days ago: fishermen, mines, boys bathing at Scylla. I have a certain number here in the house & am preparing a London exhibition for 1951. I'm so glad you exchanged the horrors you first had at the museum for The Melon Eaters. He still seems to me more interesting than anyone else – French, English, Italian or German. But I wonder how far it will go. Politics are such a strong influence. My best to Nellie. Yours sincerely

A. Lowe

FROM
DOUGLAS COOPER, 18 EGERTON TERRACE, LONDON, S.W.3.
KENSINGTON 1625.

Do you know of the small Piazza by Chirico belonging to Arthur Jeffress of the Hanover Gallery? It is a poor thing but OK. Do you know the two belonging to Gustav Zumsteg, Rämistrasse 4, Zürich? I think the 1917 one is doubtful – probably of a later brand. Thought you might like the enclosed. W DC

List of de Chiricos chosen by Douglas Cooper for English show of Italian art (never held). Received Feb. 1948

Muse Inquietanti	Feroldi - Brescia
L'Enigma dell 'Ora	Feroldi - Brescia
Figura Metafisica	Pallini - Milano
Piazza d'Italia	Pallini - Milano
Natura morte Evangelica I	Frua de Angeli - Milano
Natura morte Evangelica II	Frua de Angeli - Milano
Trovatore	Frua de Angeli - Milano
Piazza d'Italia	Frua de Angeli - Milano
La Lavagna Magica	Orombelli - Milano
Piazza d'Italia	Marmont - Milano
Due mannicchini	Jesi - Milano
Piazza d'Italia	Gallerie del Milione, Milano
Meditazione	Tosi - Milano

CARRA

Donna al balcone	Carra - Milano
Penelope	Frua de Angeli - Milano
Il Gentiluomo Ubriaco	Frua de Angeli - Milano
Composizione (1920)	Galleria del Milione - Milano
Cavaliere Occidentale	Pallini - Milano
L'amante dell' ingegnere	Feroldi - Brescia
Camera Incantata	Jesi - Milano
Natura morta con squadra	Borroni - Milano
Il Pino sul mare	Signora Casella - Roma

Broad Town Farmhouse, Broad Town, Swindon, Wiltshire.

Broadhinton 259.

2nd March, 1948.

Dear Mr. Soby,

Thanks for your letter of the 27th February, and the pleasant thing you say in it.

The date which appears on the painting of "The Return of the Prodigal Son" is 1922, and it is reproduced in the Edizioni del Milioni's book on de Chirico published in 1944, with an introduction by Agnoldomenico Pica, who also reproduces a similar drawing dated 1917.

Yours sincerely,

Geoffrey Grigson

(Geoffrey Grigson)

Mr. James Thrall Soby,
29, Mountain Spring Road,
FARMINGTON,
Connecticut,
U.S.A.

James

West Dean Park,
Chichester.

27th April 1950.

My dear Jim,

Some months ago I had asked my friend, Robert Adams, who is staying here, to write you a letter about the self portrait of Chirico with his mother - because I have been so terribly busy trying to get this estate reorganised after ten years of absence - principally getting the gardens and woods in order. So I hoped to be able to delegate some letters to somebody else to do for me. However, it does seem in this world that it is very difficult to leave anything to anybody else and expect it to be done correctly.

The whole point of his writing to you was not to ask whether I could take the reproduction of this picture in black and white as a deduction from my income tax: but to ask you whether you would care to have it in colour, as the colour engravers here in England are so good. Naturally, I knew that reproduction in black and white was a negligible amount and not worth bothering my accountants with charging against my income tax. But last year I had Pavlik's "Head of Gold" reproduced* at Munroe's request by a London engravers and sent the blocks to the Museum and they seem to have done such a good job that I had thought it worth asking you whether you would care for a repetition.

* in colour

For the colours of this Chirico portrait are extremely beautiful and subtle; therefore it might still interest you to have this as one of the reproductions in colour for your book on this artist, seeing that it is a unique picture and important in the history of his early work.

I am leaving for Rome next week to join Pavlik Tchelitchew; but please reply to this address and my letter will be forwarded. I am sorry to have given you the trouble of answering two letters, when one would have been quite sufficient had Mr.

/Adams

Mr. James Thrall Soby,
29 Mountain Spring Road,
Farmington,
Connecticut.

Adams got the point the first time.

With my very best wishes to Nellie and hoping you are both well,

I remain,

Yours ever sincerely,

Edward

Edward F.W. James.

James

April 10, 1950

Mr. Monroe Wheeler,
Museum of Modern Art,
11 West 53rd St.,
New York 19, N.Y.

c. to Miss Pernas

Dear Monroe:

I have finally discovered that the ex-Gaffe de Chirico, Portrait of the Artist and His Mother, of 1919, now belongs to Edward James. I wrote asking Edward for a black-and-white photograph of the picture, which I had planned to reproduce as a small cut in with the text, simply to reinforce a point about the close relationship between de C and his domineering mama. Edward is away, but his secretary has written to say that they will send the photograph. He adds that Mr. James wants to know whether this would be tax-deductible, as in the case of the Tchelitchew color plate. I've written back to say that a plain black-and-white photograph probably wouldn't be worth declaring as a tax deduction. But I added that you might well feel we should reproduce the picture in color, and that I'd discuss the matter with you when you got back.

I begin to wonder now whether it might not be a good idea to use a color plate of this picture if we can get it as a gift. The one I wanted to use, as a 1919 indication of de Chirico change (collapse is the right word) in style is the Prodigal Son. But the latter belongs to the Sportornos in Milan, and I don't think there's any possibility of getting them to cough up a color plate; they refused even to lend it to our Italian exhibition, and they are obviously not too prosperous. Anyway, I'll bring a reproduction of the Portrait down after your return, and we can decide. The Portrait and the Prodigal are about the best-known of the 1919 de Chiricos, and one might do as well as the other.

Hope you approve the drastic changes in the size of the de Chirico book which Frances Pernas and I agreed upon. I really am certain the book will sell over the years if it's big and quite complete, and it would seem a pity to do the thing on a smaller scale after all these years of fussing with the problem. After all, de Chirico is the backbone of the whole surrealist-psychological direction which has been so important in twentieth century art, and his fame - especially abroad - is climbing rather than sinking. Alas, I haven't got $400 to plunk into a color plate of the Vaticinateur which is the most important of the mannequin pictures, but if you'll be willing to deduct its cost from royalties, let's go ahead and have it made.

Best,

Sincerely,

P.S. Many thanks for your letter from Switzerland re. the Bale de Chiricos. I can't imagine why Dr. Schmidt was so mysterious. His own museum long ago sent me photos of all the pictures in that lot which I didn't have (with the owner's full permission - I know him well), I studied the pictures at length in Europe, with the owner, etc., etc. Very strange, though it is true that the owner is afraid of being taxed. Many thanks anyway.

James

April 10,1950

Mr. Robert Adams,
c/o Mr. Edward James,
West Dean Park, Chichester,
England.

Dear Mr. Adams:

Thank you for your letter of April 3. I shall look forward to receiving the photograph of the de Chirico Portrait of the Artist and His Mother, and I hope it will be convenient for you to mark the dimensions of the picture on the back of the photograph.

As to your question about the possibility of a tax deduction, this is of course completely possible, since my book will be published by the Museum of Modern Art, which is a non-profit, educational institution. But I'm afraid that the deduction will not be worth using, since only the cost of a black-and-white photograph is involved. In the case of the Tchelitchew which Mr. James so generously allowed us to use, the plate was in color, and therefore cost a good deal, whereas the de Chirico makes its point perfectly well in black-and-white, I think, and I need not trouble him to send it to New York for the long and complicated color process. But naturally I will be glad to have the Museum declare the black-and-white plate, if Mr. James wants me to. Also, it may well be that Mr. Monroe Wheeler, who is abroad until late April, would very much like to use a color plate of the Portrait of the Artist and His Mother. I'll discuss this matter with him as soon as he returns, and he will write Mr. James about it. In any case, I'll be very grateful for the black-an-white photograph for my files.

With thanks and my kindest regards to Mr. James,

Sincerely,

James

West Dean Park,
Chichester.

3 April 1950

James Thrall Soby, Esq.
29 Mountain Spring Road
Farmington, Connecticut

Dear Mr. Soby:

In the absence of Mr. Edward James I am answering his correspondence for him. Before he went abroad, Mr. James asked me to answer your letter of March 15th and to say that he would be glad to have reproduced in your book the Portrait of the Artist and his Mother by Chirico.

Some time ago Mr. James had reproduced, for a similar purpose, an interior landscape by Tchelichew; he was told that he could deduct this expense, as a charitable contribution, from his income tax. Mr. James was wondering if the exemption would apply in the present case, as well.

As soon as he returns to England Mr. James will, I am sure, forward to you the photograph and the information which you need.

Very truly yours,
Robert Adams
Robert Adams

Mar. 15,1950

Mr. Edward James,
West Dean Park,
Chichester,
Sussex, England.

Dear Edward:

I'm preparing for the Museum of Modern Art in New York a new and greatly enlarged edition of my book, The Early Chirico. I'm especially eager to reproduce in it the Portrait of the Artist and his Mother of 1919, which Roland Penrose tells me he sold to you.

Would it be possible for me to get a photograph and the dimensions of this picture? It's such an important document of the fanatically close relationship between de Chirico and his apparently rather domineering mother, that it would make a very useful addition to my text. I'd be very grateful, I can assure you.

With kindest regards and thanks,

Sincerely,

J. T. SOBY
Brushy Ridge Road

ARTHUR JEFFRESS
(PICTURES)
28 DAVIES STREET LONDON W1 MAYFAIR 7836
SECRETARY: ROBERT MELVILLE

Mr James Thrall Soby,
Brushy Ridge Road,
New Canaan, Conn.
U.S.A.

26th September, 1957

Dear Mr Soby,

Your letter of 11th September reached me in Venice just an hour before I left, and the copy was awaiting me here when I returned two days ago. I must at once thank you very much indeed for taking such a great deal of trouble over my request for advice regarding 'Trovatore Stanco' by de Chirico. I have read your illuminating letter several times with the very greatest interest, with the result of course that I intend to be, as you advise, terribly wary about buying the picture. The dealer who offered it to me is due shortly in London I believe, and I have not of course seen him or communicated with him since receiving your letter, but I most certainly will not dream of paying a 1919 price for a picture that I now realise, thanks to your analysis, was painted at a later date.

Please by all means keep the photograph I sent you for your files.

Once again my very sincere thanks for your kind letter.

With very best wishes from Robert Melville and myself,

Yours sincerely,

Arthur Jeffress

Arthur Jeffress

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

Sept. 11,1957

Dear Mr. Jeffress:

I have your letter of Sept. 5th, and I will send this reply to both your Venice and London addresses, since I'm not sure it would reach you at Venice before you leave.

I have never seen the de Chirico of which you sent me a photograph, not do I know of any other version of it - except that it is clearly based on a marvelous 1917 drawing called Solitude (page 89 in my Giorgio de Chirico, published by the Museum of Modern Art).

I can't, of course, give you a precise opinion without seeing the picture itself. But I do want to tell you in all frankness that I am extremely dubious about the 1919 date. To begin with it seems odd that de Chirico would have inscribed the picture on the back "Paris 1919", since to the best of my knowledge, and I've done a great deal of work on the matter, de Chirico was not in Paris at all in 1919, but was living in Florence and Rome. In that year, too, he began to painting with heavy oil pigment in artificial light, as in the celebrated Sacred Fish still life. Over the years I've had a long correspondence about his technique during 1919 with the widow of Mario Broglio who, as publisher of Valori Plastici and also de Chirico's dealer, knew much about him and his work at that period. She tells me that de Chirico was then determined to break away from the deliberately thin technique he had used earlier.

What is perhaps more important is that if you will compare the picture with the 1917 drawing, Solitude, you will find many unmistakable traces of a more complicated modeling which de Chirico used later, during the 1920's - the handling of the mannequin's feet, for example, the sloppy treatment of the drapery at the right hanging from the mannequin figure, the definition of the architecture in the background, which is so different from the firm building in Solitude. The signature is in the slanting style which de Chirico adopted when he began to go to pot as a painter. Since de Chirico presumably has signed the picture, I suppose we must assume that he painted it, and I should add that I usually, though not invariably, find him reliable when claiming pictures as his own, while violent and usually right when he disclaims forgeries. His dishonesty consists in his manipulation of the dates of his pictures, and I would gravely doubt that this picture was done before the middle-1920's. If you compare the picture with certain works of the latter period, I think you discover marked technical similarities.

I want to repeat that I'm basing all this on a photograph (which I hope I may keep for my files). But I'd be terribly wary if I were you, and we should remember that soon after 1919 de Chirico offered by letters (which I have in photostat) to copy his earlier works for Andre Breton and Paul Eluard.

Anyway, I hope this information may be of some use to you.

My kindest regards to you and Robert Melville,

Sincerely,

SAN MARCO 2678
VENEZIA
TEL.50285

5 September. 1957.

Mr James Thrall Soby.
Bushy Hill Road.
New Canaan. CONN. U.S.A.

Dear Mr Soby,

I do trust that you will forgive my trespassing on your time but you have made the early de Chiricos so very much your province that there is clearly no one else whom I could consult. Briefly, I have been offered a painting by him a photograph of which I enclose. It is signed on the front, G de Chirico, and on the back of the canvas (a photo of which I also enclose), it is titled 'Trovatore Stanco', signed and dated, 1919. The size is, roughly, 2ft by 3ft. The paint is rather thin, and the canvas seemingly far from new. It comes, I think, from the hands of a Roman dealer, but it is not he that offers it to me now.

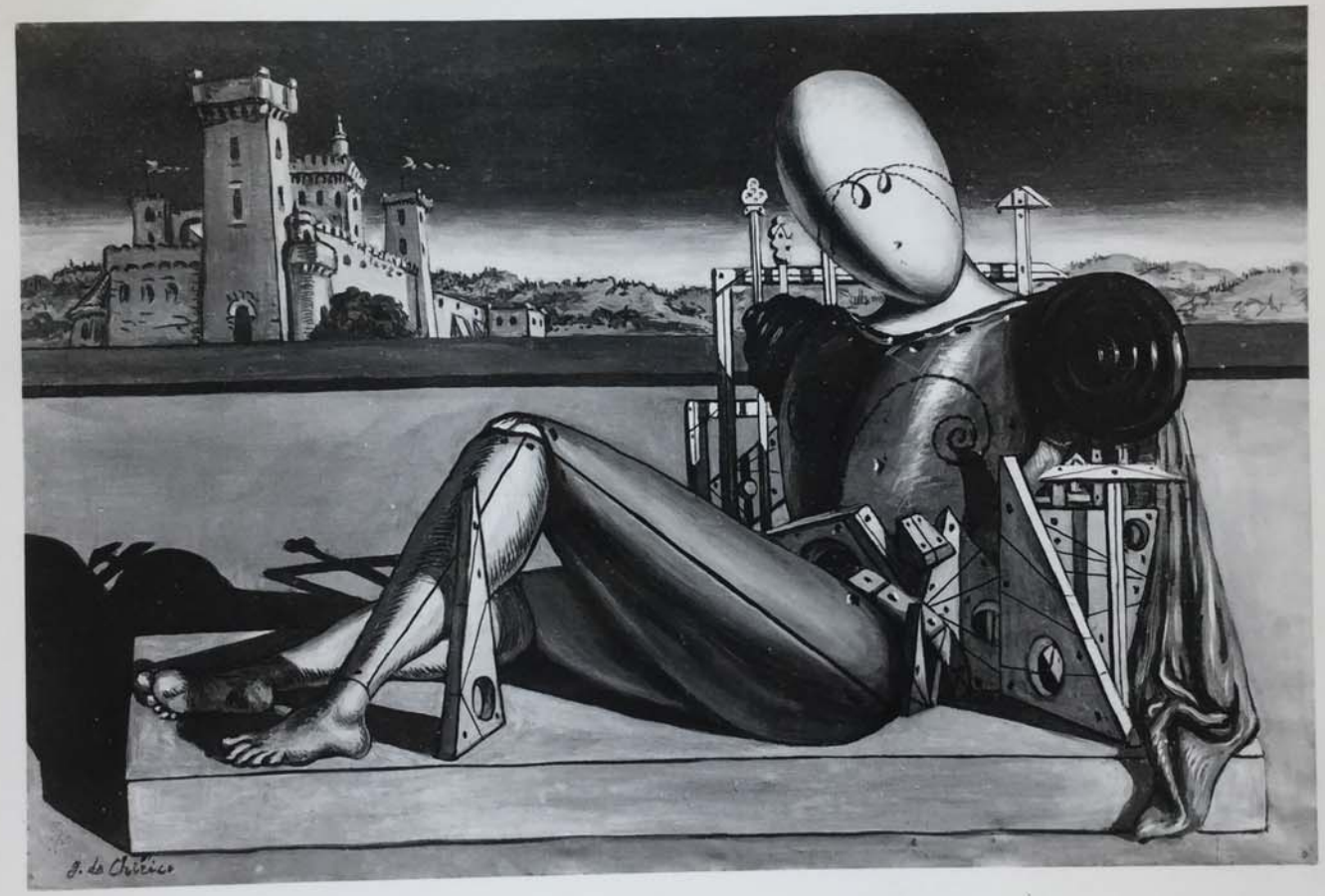
It is really a most beautiful picture and I am much tempted to buy it though it is not particularly cheap. I am, of course, held back from making a decision by the fear that it may be of much more recent date than 1919, having in mind the equivocal behaviour of the painter in question in the past. Naturally, I do not ask you to pass on the genuiness of this picture from a photograph only; I would, however, be most grateful for your comments, if any, and for your advice in the matter. Do you, I wonder, know of this picture at all, or of any copies or other versions of it? It would be a great kindness if you would drop me a line about it. I am at the above address until the morning of September 15th. After that I will be in London where I can be contacted at my gallery;- Arthur Jeffress (Pictures).
28 Davies Street. W.1.

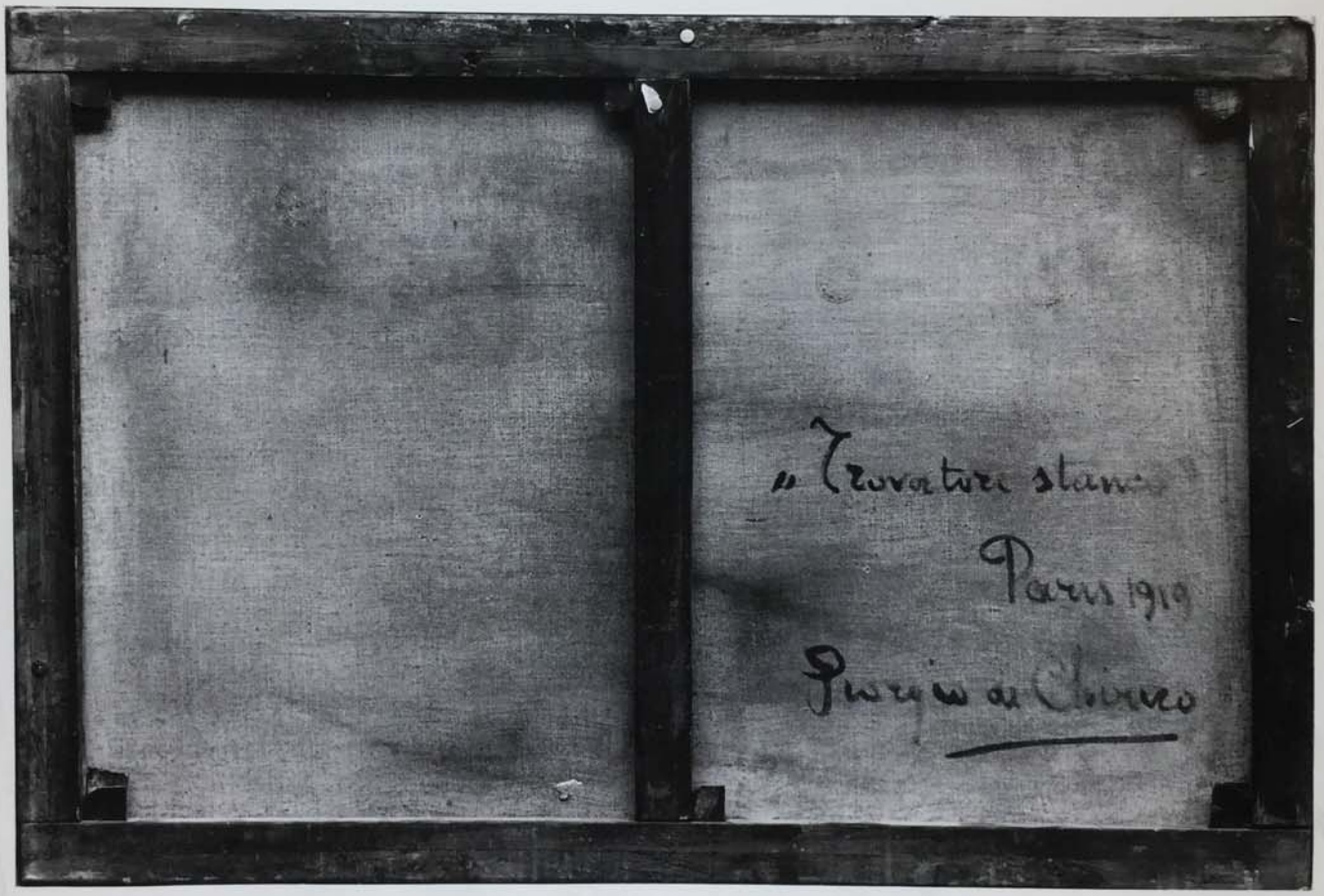
With kind regards, yours sincerely,

Arthur Jeffress

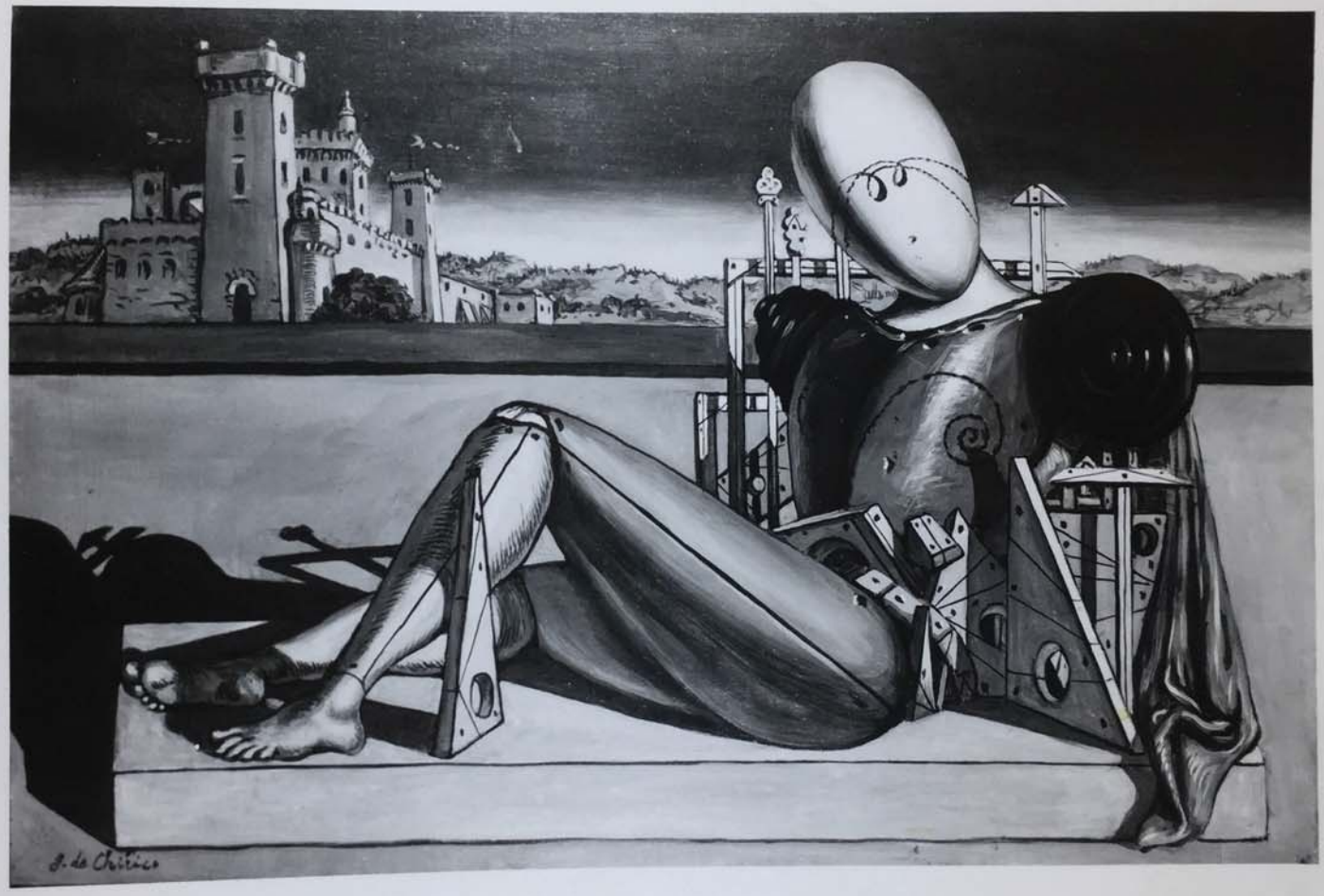
Arthur Jeffress.

PS. Needless to say I am pressing the man who has offered me the picture for details as to its past history, but so far he is evasive. He promises me some facts, however, within the week.





ARTHUR JEFFRESS (PICTURES)



Secretary
ARTHUR JEFFRESS (PICTURES)

SUNDAY PAINTING ✦ TROMPE L'OEIL ✦ MAGIC REALISM

ARTHUR JEFFRESS

(PICTURES)

28 DAVIES STREET LONDON W1 MAYFAIR 7836

SECRETARY: ROBERT MELVILLE

James Thrall Soby Esq.,
Farmington,
Conn, U.S.A.

29th December,1954

Dear Mr Soby,

I have been reading a fine extract from your forthcoming new study of Chirico, in the Museum of Modern Art's latest anthology of 20th-century masters, and I hasten to send you a photograph of a Chirico which may not be among your plates. It has just been acquired by Mr Jeffress for his private collection. It was previously in the collection of Geoffrey Gilmour of Paris, and at one time belonged to Julian Levy.

With all good wishes,

Yours sincerely,

Robert Melville

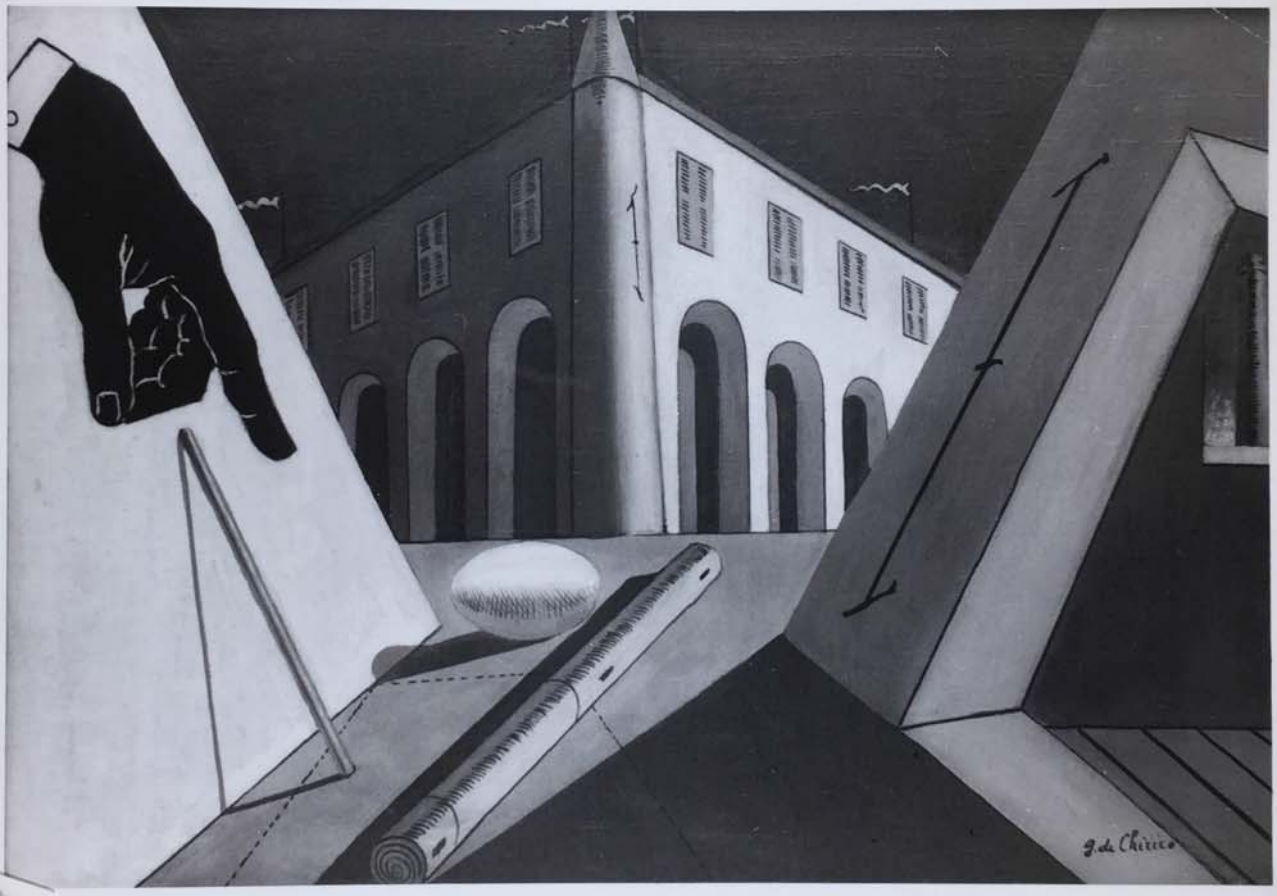
Secretary
ARTHUR JEFFRESS (PICTURES)

SUNDAY PAINTING ✦ TROMPE L'OEIL ✦ MAGIC REALISM

ARTHUR JEFFRESS, 10, PELHAM CRESCENT, S.W.7. KENSINGTON 3814.

11 Nov 1951.

Dear Mr. Soby



ARTHUR JEFFRESS, 10, PELHAM CRESCENT, S.W.7. KENSINGTON 3814.

11 Nov 1951.

Dear Mr Soby,

I thought perhaps that you would be interested in

D. 16

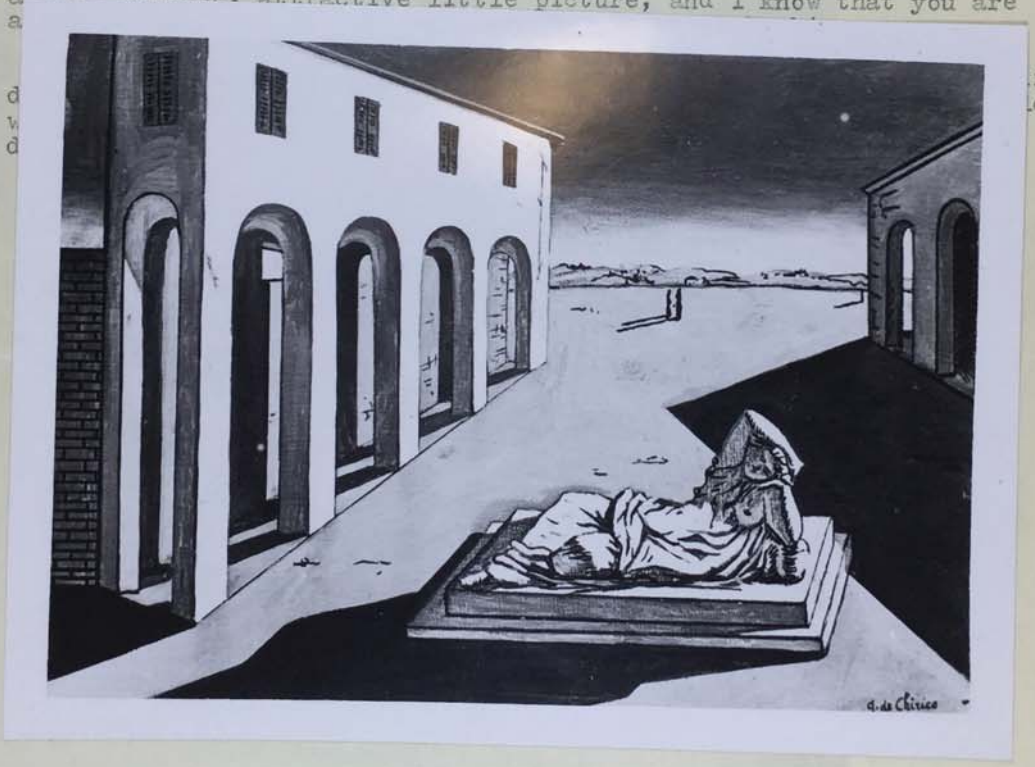
The Egg in the Street
by
Giorgio de Chirico
Oil on canvas.
Collection: Arthur Jeffress.

ARTHUR JEFFRESS, 10, PELHAM CRESCENT, S.W.7. KENSINGTON 3814.

11 Nov 1951.

Dear Mr Soby,

I thought perhaps that you would be interested in having a photograph of a small Chirico oil that I bought earlier this year in Paris, in case you did not already know of it. It is a very intense, attractive little picture, and I know that you are a



ARTHUR JEFFRESS, 10, PELHAM CRESCENT, S.W.7. KENSINGTON 3814.

11 Nov 1951.

Dear Mr Soby,

I thought perhaps that you would be interested in having a photograph of a small Chirico oil that I bought earlier this year in Paris, in case you did not already know of it. It is a very intense, attractive little picture, and I know that you are alwa

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DE CHIRICO

De Chirico, Giorgio
Solitude of an Autumn Afternoon
Oil 1914 18" High x 21"
40 Years of Mod. Art Cat No 12
Owner: Arthur Jeffress

ARTHUR JEFFRESS, 10, PELHAM CRESCENT, S.W.7. KENSINGTON 3814.

11 Nov 1951.

Dear Mr Soby,

I thought perhaps that you would be interested in having a photograph of a small Chirico oil that I bought earlier this year in Paris, in case you did not already know of it. It is a very intense, attractive little picture, and I know that you are always interested in knowing of early paintings by him.

I should also tell you that my Solitude d'un Apres-Midi d'Automne, also by de Chirico, was completely destroyed by fire, along with most of my best pictures, in March of this year. It is a dreadful loss, as you can imagine.

Sincerely yours,

Arthur Jeffress

THE Y

THE HANOVER GALLERY LTD 32A S E LONDON W1 · MAYFAIR 0296

DIRECTORS: ERICA FFRESS (USA)

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THE HANOVER GALLERY LTD 32A ST LONDON W1 · MAYFAIR 0296

DIRECTORS: ERICA BRAUSEN E. BARKER-MILL A. T. JEFFRESS (USA)

James
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Dear

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1951

Mannequins au Caniche

Oil on Canvas 16½" x 12¾"

Signed

G de Chirico '917

coll. Arthur Jeffress

THE HANOVER GALLERY

THE HANOVER GALLERY LTD 32A ST GEORGE STREET HANOVER SQUARE LONDON W1 · MAYFAIR 0296

DIRECTORS: ERICA BRAUSEN E. BARKER-MILL A. T. JEFFRESS (USA)

1 March 1951.

James Thrall Soby Esq.
29 Mountain Spring Road.
Farmington. Conn. U.S.A.

Dear Mr Soby,

You will remember our correspondence last summer with regard to the photograph of the de Chirico in my collection, which, incidentally I trust you have received.

I recall that at the time you thought that publication of the book should take place late in the autumn or during the winter and I am wondering if it has yet appeared as I am so anxious to buy a copy. It is not always easy to get information on publication of American Art books and I would very much appreciate it if you would let me know if it has yet appeared.

Yours very truly,

Arthur Jeffress

Arthur Jeffress.

ARTHUR JEFFRESS

San Marco 2678.
Venice.

8 August 1950.

James Thrall Soby Esq.
Farmington. CONN. U.S.A.

Dear Mr Soby,

Thank you for your letter of July 15th. I have heard from Robert Melville meanwhile to say that he managed to obtain a copy of the photograph of my De Chirico from the Institute of Contemporary Arts, and that he posted it on to you together with the dimensions of the picture.

I hope that you have by now received it safely, and that it will have been with you in good time.

With best wishes for the success of the new edition of your book, which I very much look forward to seeing,

Sincerely,

Arthur Jeffress

July 15, 1950

Mr. Arthur Jeffress,
San Marco 2678,
Venice, Italy.

Dear Mr. Jeffress:

Thank you for your kind letter. I'll hope that Mr. Melville will be able to send me a photograph and the dimensions of your De Chirico. But if not, I would appreciate it if you could send one when you return to London in October. My book is due to go to press in late October, but I rather think that I shall be late.

With thanks and kindest regards,

Sincerely,

THE HANOVER GALLERY

THE HANOVER GALLERY LTD 32A ST GEORGE STREET HANOVER SQUARE LONDON W1 · MAYFAIR 0296

DIRECTORS: ERICA BRAUSEN E. BARKER-MILL A. T. JEFFRESS (USA)

James Thrall Soby Esq.,
29 Mountain Spring Road,
Farmington,
Conn.U.S.A.

13th July,1950

Dear Mr Soby,

Mr Jeffress has written to me from Venice, asking me to obtain for you a photograph of the Chirico in his collection. I have just managed to trace one, and hasten to send it off to you. It is very good news that another edition of THE EARLY CHIRICO is to appear.

With very best wishes,

Yours Sincerely,

Robert Melville

Secretary,
THE HANOVER GALLERY

Arthur Jeffress.
San Marco 2678.
Venice.

7 July 1950.

Mr James Thrall Soby.
29 Mountain Spring Road.
Farmington. Conn. U.S.A.

Dear Mr Soby,

Thank you for your letter of June 30th with reference to my early Chirico painting. It was forwarded on to me here from the Hanover Gallery.

I was interested to learn that you were preparing a revised and enlarged edition of your book "The Early Chirico" and very much look forward to seeing it when it is published. I will of course be only too pleased to let you have a photograph of the picture in my collection and, if I were in London, would send you one right away. However, the matter is complicated by my absence from London until some time in October and by the fact that my flat there is rented and I do not remember where I have put all my photographs. The picture was exhibited in the Institute of Contemporary Arts exhibition in London two years or so ago and was used by them in their posters, so I am hopeful that they will have some photographs in their possession that I might obtain. I have written therefore to Mr Robert Melville, the secretary of the Hanover Gallery and also one of the committee of the I.C.A. asking him to use his influence to obtain the necessary photograph and then to send it on to you, together with dimensions, at the earliest possible moment. I hope therefore that you will soon hear from him about it.

If he is unable to obtain a photograph, will you let me know if it will be too late to be of any use to you if I send you one when I get back to London in October?

Sincerely yours,

Arthur Jeffress

June 20, 1950

Mr. Arthur Jeffres,
The Hanover Gallery,
32 A, St. George Street,
London, W.1, England.

Dear Mr. Jeffres:

My friend Douglas Cooper tells me that you have a painting by Giorgio de Chirico belonging to the "Italian squares" series of 1910-15.

Would it be possible for you to send me a photograph and the dimensions of this picture? I am preparing for the Museum of Modern Art in New York a revised and greatly enlarged edition of my book, The Early Chirico, which came out in 1941 and has long been out of print. I'm eager to include in this edition as many of the paintings and drawings of 1910-18 as possible, and I would deeply appreciate having a photograph of your picture.

In the hope of having a favorable reply,

Sincerely,

Lewis

Studio A,
Kensington Gardens Studios,
29 Notting Hill Gate,
London. W.II.

Nov. 29. 1947

Dear Mr. Soby. Excuse this seemingly dilatory answer but such energy as is left when I have finished with breadwinning for the day has been absorbed in writing letters of thanks to various people who send me parcels from America - discussing the respective merits of Crisco and Sunflowerseed Oil, delicately hinting that Weiners ~~(which I loathe) are a bad buy~~ etc etc. Then the climate has changed here. It was 10 above the other night which is cold for England, and the sun never stops shining - the moon too - instead of the perpetual rain which ~~is~~ was the rule. I have a new miniature furnace in my studio which wastes about 2½ hours out of the 24. It radiates heat for about 2 yards: 4 yards from it you are as cold as you are in the street. - Why these lunatics dont have central heating passes my understanding. I think it is to harden themselves for their ultimate reasting place.

Now that I have, as well as excusing myself, relieved my feelings a little, let me say how glad I was to hear that your book is coming out punctually after all, and that the chapter about English painting is to be retained. I shall look forward a great

deal to reading it: no doubt I shall be able to obtain a copy in an excellent art bookshop in Grosvenor Street - a part of the St. Georges Gallery. They have lots of American publications.

As to Chirico. The first ~~time~~ only occasion on which I met Chirico was in 1932 at the Reid Lefevre Gallery, when the Gal. Director introduced us: nor did I ever hold any communication with him. I do not think that pictures of mine were exhibited in Paris before 1914, the time was so short. It is quite possible on the other hand that Chirico saw "Blast", which was sold in Paris and I suppose in Italy, and made use of the "Plan of War" for the three pictures you mention. Or it may have been an accidental similarity. You tell me he is a difficult customer. That comes I think in part out of idological differences - not that I suppose for a moment that Chirico was a fascist. By the time I met him in '32 he had deteriorated in the most surprising way, however. Sugary nymphs in foam actually, for the British market. - Sorry Briton called Gibbings is giving trouble. Surely no one will join in his witch-hunt, addicted as we all are to that sport.

I do hope this little point about Chirico will have reached you in time. With my best wishes for your new book!

Wyndham Lewis

Nov. 3,1947

Dear Mr. Lewis:

Many thanks for your most helpful and informative letter. I'm glad to say that my book is being published by the Museum of Modern Art and Simon & Schuster, jointly, so that the chapter on Vorticism and the section on young English artists like Colquhoun and MacBryde will come out after all. I'm very glad to hear that you admire the latter. Colquhoun's pictures in the current exhibition of modern British art in this country, seemed to me very fine indeed.

I hope you will not find so many questions a burden. I have another, and for me most important one to ask. Five or six years ago my book on the early paintings of Giorgio de Chirico was published, containing reproductions of as many pictures as I could trace from the period 1910-17. The book has been out of print for some time, but next year will reappear with additional illustrations and material. I remember that in the January, 1927 issue of The Enemy, you published an article on Chirico by W. Gibson - one of the first to establish the special importance of his "metaphysical" pictures, and using as illustration perhaps the most significant of all his work, The Melancholy and Mystery of a Street (now in the collection of Mrs. Stanley Resor, who also owns a fine picture of yours).

This is an interest fact, but what fascinates me even more is the relationship between your own Plan of War and other pictures of c. 1914 and the still lifes which Chirico executed in 1917 when he was back in Italy. Possibly I exaggerate the connection. But late in 1915 Chirico painted The War, a still life of objects seen as from above, in an arrangement quite similar to that of your Plan of War and in 1916 he painted The Revolt of the Sage and Politics in a similar spirit. I can't help wondering whether he had seen your pictures or read Blast, whether you knew him at that time, and so on. I should be most grateful for any information you can give me.

It is, of course, hopeless to expect any help from Chirico himself. He hates all his early pictures, accuses everyone who likes them of being "surrealist pederasts" (I am neither), and in general does everything possible to make difficult the task of putting his great accomplishment in order. Recently, for example, he was quoted by Time Magazine as having denounced as fakes two pictures I reproduced in my book. Now he denies that he said any such thing, but even so much damage has been done. The Time account is quoted, for example, in Robsjohn-Gibbings new book, Mona Lisa's Moustache, possibly the most distorted and idiotic book on modern art that has appeared in years (the conclusion of the book is that all modern art is black magic, hence dangerous and subversive). So America has its assassins in art too, though it is a melancholy satisfaction to record that Gibbings is English, not American.

My best regards to you and my thanks for whatever light you can throw on the Chirico still-life problem.

Sincerely,

Watson

July 19,1950

Mr. Peter Watson,
10 Palace Gate,
London, W. 8, England.

Dear Peter:

Many thanks for sending the much better photograph and for permission to reprint the Leonid article in the Magazine of Art. They will,of course, use a credit line to Horizon. I'm very grateful, too, for your suggestion of an article by David Sylvester on the younger English sculptors; sounds most interesting, and I will write Sylvester.

I thought at first that I might have a clue as to your missing De Chirico. A picture was shown in New York in March, 1947, which was called "Melancholy," had the sculpture of Ariadne in the middle and arcades on both sides. But it was dated 1916, which is certainly the wrong date, and in the background had a triple-tiered tower instead of the chimney you mention. At the right of the tower was the sail of a boat. The dealer (between ourselves a not very reputable one) told me it had come from De Chirico himself; the dimensions were 19 3/4 x 24 inches high. I'm sure it couldn't be your picture, and moreover was rather suspicious of it for various reasons.

I'll keep looking for yours, since I do get photographs of De Chiricos from all over the place.

Best, and repeated thanks,

Sincerely,

10 Palace Gate
London W.8.
July 15th 1950.

Dear Jim

Here is a new photograph which should I think be satisfactory for making a block. The measurements are on the back.

In case I did not reply to your questions in my last letter. Of course do reprint the Leonid article. I would be grateful for the mention. Sylvia & he lunched with me yesterday just before sailing for New York in the afternoon.

As to the other version of my Chirico I do remember having seen a photograph before the war although I can't remember details but it was certainly inferior to the version I have.

If in your collection of material for the de Chirico book you acquire any photographs of a painting (1914 or thereabouts) same size & proportion about as Melancolia never before photographed showing a tall chimney (similar to plate 19 ~~at~~ in your book only with colonnades on both sides and no removal wagon) coming from any mysterious source in France or U.S.A I would be grateful for a photograph. It is a picture I bought from di Chirico in 1938 which was stolen during the war and I have not even

heard of trace since. Unfortunately I lost the only snapshot of it which I took the day it arrived at my apartment in Paris.

As concerns the Magazine of Art I feel that apart from Francis Bacon the new English sculptors (Paolozzi, Turnbull, Adams, Butler) are perhaps more interesting than the painters. A young critic David Sylvester would I think write something for you on these subjects. Another idea is the painting & sculpture commissioned for the 1951 Exhibition and as far as I have heard, most of the more interesting artists have been asked to submit work. However it is too early to think of that yet.

With all good wishes to you,

Peter.

July 5,1950

Mr. Peter Watson,
10 Palace Gate,
London W. 8, England.

Dear Peter:

I was relieved and happy to hear from you. I had written you twice at the address the Museum of Modern Art gave me - 6 Selwyn House, Lansdowne Terrace - and once at the Horizon office, and probably all these letters were lost.

It's very good of you to send the photograph of your De Chirico. But I would be enormously grateful if another photograph could be taken, at my expense, and sent to me after the picture has come back from the exhibition it is now in. My book will not go to press until late October or perhaps even a little later, so there is plenty of time really. And could someone put the dimensions of the painting on the back of the photograph? Mesens gave me the dimensions he used in a Picasso-Chirico show at Zwemmer's years ago, but he is not sure whether he measured the picture with or without frame. I'd like, of course, to use the right unframed dimensions. Many, many thanks.

Do you know anything about a picture of the same subject which was reproduced in Les feuilles libres for 1927 and listed as in the collection of Marcel Raval? I had Raval's De Chiricos photographed in Paris two years ago, and this picture was not among them. But I'm rather curious about it. It seems at first glance to be your picture, but then one notices certain differences. The word "Melanconia" does not appear on the pedestal, for example, and the shadows are not quite the same. Between ourselves, I tend to think that the other picture is a later copy of yours, probably made by De Chirico himself; there are several indications of a later handling, though of course I have never seen the picture itself, and I have not been able to persuade Raval, who knew De Chirico fairly early and has some very good early pictures by him, to tell me what he knows about it. I'd appreciate any information you can give me, and I plan now, with your permission, to reproduce only your picture.

One final question, if you'll forgive me. The Magazine of Art in New York has asked me whether they might reprint the article on Leonid which I did for Horizon. I told them I would ask you, but this request was in one of the lost letters. Do let me know at your convenience. And while I am on the subject, I am going to act as editor of this magazine next year, for a year only, while Robert Goldwater, the present editor, is in Europe. Any suggestions for articles on modern English painting or sculpture, by yourself or others, would be gratefully received, I can assure you.

Kindest regards to you; I hope we'll see you in this country one of these days.

Sincerely,

10 Palace Gate.
London. W.8.

June 30th

Dear Jim Soby,

Mesens only told me yesterday about your having tried twice to get hold of a photograph of my chirico 'Melancolia'. Your letters must have gone somehow astray as I certainly never received them here - Perhaps they went to our old office or were forwarded when I was away in South America as I know I did lose one package of forwarded mail.

Unfortunately this is a really bad photograph but it is all I have at the

Moment as my picture is on exhibition & will not be back till next week or so so I cannot get another at the moment.

Please use this if it is of any use to you.

Yours very sincerely,

Peter Watson.

Peter Watson

May 15,1950

Dear Peter:

I wrote you several months ago, but then later heard that you were abroad, so you probably never got my letter.

What I'm desperately anxious to get is a good photograph of your De Chirico, Melanconia, to reproduce in the new edition of my De Chirico book, which the Museum of Modern Art in New York is publishing. Could you possibly send me one, with the picture's dimensions on the back of the photo? Many, many thanks. It's a fine picture, and I'd hate to have to leave it out, and I have no photograph at all. And is there by any chance a title written on the back of the canvas? De Chirico sometimes did this, and I'm curious as to whether your picture may have been shown in one of the Salons of 1913 or 1914 under a different title.

I'm also puzzled to find reproduced in a 1926 issue of the magazine Feuilles Libres a picture which I had always thought was your Melanconia, but which I now find is quite different in certain details. The lettering does not appear on the base of the sculpture of Ariadne, for example, and the shadows are not the same. I tend to think that this picture is a later copy of yours; it was owned in 1926 by Marcel Raval, who still have several De Chiricos, one of them very fine. Any light you can throw on this matter would be immensely helpful, of course.

Finally, the Magazine of Art here has asked whether they may reprint the Leonid article I wrote for Horizon. Would that be all right? I'd appreciate hearing from you, since my letter to Horizon has not been answered, probably because the office is closed.

Very best regards to you - and thanks. I'll be most grateful for the De Chirico photograph and dimensions, and if you could send the photo airmail, that would be a vast help.

Sincerely,

Dec. 31,1949

Dear Peter Watson:

I'm sorry indeed to hear that Horizon is being given up, and I'd like to tell you how fine a job I think you've done with the art section. I've followed it closely almost from the beginning, and I've found it admirably informative and the artists extremely well chosen. You'll leave a great gap, and I hope that after the rest you all deserve, the magazine can start up again.

I hate to combine this heart-felt tribute with a favor to ask. But I am now working on a revised edition of my book on de Chirico's earlier pictures, which is to be published by the Museum of Modern Art. According to my records, the picture called Melanconia of 1912 is, or was, in your collection. Would it be possible to get a decent photograph of it and the dimensions? I reproduced it in "The Early Chirico," but from a half-tone and without the measurements, since the war was on and I couldn't reach you. I'd be immensely grateful.

I'd be grateful, too, if you'd let me know if there are other de Chiricos in England of the period 1910-20. I know and have photographs of Roland Penrose's pictures, but otherwise nothing. And I cannot seem to get from Mesens the list of early pictures in the show of de Chirico which he held last year, when de Chirico was in England making friends and peace with the Academy. So any information you can give me will be most welcome; I rather hope to make the new edition a fairly complete catalogue of the early works, though probably I shall either be shot or sued by the Master himself.

With thanks and best wishes and regrets over Horizon,

Sincerely,

The Museum of Modern Art Archives, NY	Collection:	Series.Folder:
	JTS	II.C.2.5

LETTERS ENGLAND

Farley Farm
Middles Green
~~Chet~~
Chaddingly
~~Suffol~~
Sussex