

PRESS RELEASE

Morandi e l'antico: Vitale da Bologna, Barocci, Rembrandt e Crespi

Museo Morandi
November 7, 2014 – May 3, 2015

From 7th November, in the year in which we commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Giorgio Morandi's death, alongside his own work the museum has chosen to show some masterpieces by Old Masters that the Bolognese artist' loved and studied. The intention is in part to show to what extent the modernity of Morandi's painting is based on Old Master painting.

The new set-up is moving in step with loans of major works for the upcoming opening of the *Giorgio Morandi in Korea* (19 November 2014 – 25 February 2015) at the Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Deoksugung, Seoul. Curated by the Museo Morandi, it will be the first solo exhibition of the Bolognese master in Korea and one of the principal events in the cultural exchange program between the cities of Bologna and Seoul to celebrate the 130th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Italy and Korea.

The *Morandi e l'antico* exhibition features works by **Federico Barocci, Giuseppe Maria Crespi, Rembrandt van Rijn** and **Vitale da Bologna** (14th – 17th century) in dialogue with the Morandi collection. The works are on loan from other museums in the Istituzione Bologna Musei – **Collezioni Comunali d'Arte, Museo Davia Bargellini, Casa Morandi** – and from the **Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna**.

For Morandi, looking at Old Masters was not merely an academic study, an integral part of every young artist's education: for him, it was above all a means to link up with that virtual chain running from Piero della Francesca to Cézanne via Chardin and Corot. Even though Cézanne was a model for Morandi, a true revolutionary who opened the doors to the modern painting of the new century, the great Italian masters like Giotto, Masaccio, Piero della Francesca and Giovanni Bellini bequeathed him an important legacy. The artist was a frequent visitor to the town's Pinacoteca, where he would repeatedly examine pictures by Guido Reni and Guercino and the paintings of Giuseppe Maria Crespi, some of whose works he had in his private collection. Morandi he also loved pre-Renaissance painters and was a connoisseur of early Bolognese painting, owning three fragments attributed by the famous art historian Roberto Longhi to the Pseudo Jacopino di Francesco. He might be found

visiting a church in Bologna to admire its altarpieces, but also those of Florence, Padua, Rome and Venice, together with exhibitions and the Biennale, where he had occasion to study French artists: Renoir, Monet, Courbet. But the artist's eye and his exceptional perceptive skills become apparent even sooner in his profound understanding of artists even through black and white reproductions. In this way he discovered Cézanne, the slow brushwork of Chardin, the clear precision of Vermeer, the immense landscapes of Corot, to which are added the essential examples of Seurat and Rousseau. It is important also not to overlook the fundamental lesson in etching offered by such a genius as Rembrandt. He was the model used by Morandi to become one of the greatest etchers of all time.

The new exhibition at the Museo Morandi dedicates special attention precisely to **etchings** in a room juxtaposing 19 etchings by the Bolognese master with works by Rembrandt and Barocci.

Morandi e l'antico: Vitale da Bologna, Barocci, Rembrandt and Crespi is open until 3 May 2015. It is a project produced by the **Istituzione Bologna Musei** in collaboration with the **Soprintendenza per i Beni Storici, Artistici ed Etnoantropologici per le Province di Bologna, Ferrara, Forlì/Cesena, Ravenna e Rimini** and **Pinacoteca Nazionale di Bologna**.

LIST OF ANCIENT WORKS

Federico Barocci (Urbino, 1535 – 1612)
Annunciazione / *The Annunciation*, 1584 – 1588
***etching and engraving*, 438 x 313 mm**

Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe della Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna

This work is one of four prints made by Federico Barocci between 1584 and 1588. It represents a fundamental milestone in the development of etching technique, a work "as important as a treatise" according to Carlo A. Petrucci, director of the Calcografia Nazionale di Roma from 1933 to 1956 and Morandi's trustee for the printing of his etchings. It is well-known how the Bolognese artist overlaid the first unconventional graphic experiments in hatching and cross-hatching on a 16th-century tradition. In this superb masterpiece, he reveals the incredible expressive potential of etching. Here, for the first time, Barocci made use of repeated acid baths, protecting part of the plate with wax, in order to create a sense of perspective depth and different tones of chiaroscuro. The use of different techniques on a single plate – including hatching, lines of different thickness and stippling – enabled the artist to achieve excellent results

and to resolve the problem of the relationship between form, light and space, graduating the intensity of the line, thus obtaining new tonal values.

Giuseppe Maria Crespi (Bologna, 1665 – 1747)

Giocatori di dadi / *Dice players*, 1740 ca.

oil on canvas, 58 x 46,5 cm

Museo Davia Bargellini, Bologna

This painting, not documented in sources, is mentioned for the first time in 1920 as being one "of Crespi's noteworthy works" by critic Matteo Marangoni. Later, another critic and art historian, Francesco Arcangeli, in appreciating its indisputable "high quality", wrote: "Almost nothing is left of the old 'painterly freedom': the brushwork is thin, necessary, calm, but the bulky form undergoes distortions in which Crespi's fiery mood is converted into a heartfelt expressiveness typical of his last autograph works". A close look reveals the profound character of the picture, in which the colour, limited to that of the canvas itself, plus the essential execution and vibration of light tones on dark albeit coloured tones, made him worthy of Morandi's admiration, as recalled by his cultured friend Giuseppe Raimondi, and by Arcangeli himself.

Rembrandt van Rijn (Leiden, 1606 – Amsterdam, 1669)

Nudo femminile disteso (La negra sdraiata) / *Reclining female nude (Negress lying down)*, 1658

etching with drypoint and engraving on copper, 80 x 157 mm

Casa Morandi, Bologna

The present example of *Negress lying down* belonged to Morandi and used to be in a room of his house in via Fondazza, where the artist was able to have it constantly before him in order to study and analyse its masterly technique. It was with this etching in mind that in 1957, in his introduction to the general catalogue of Morandi's graphic work, critic Lamberto Vitali noted the aspects of a model which certainly did not leave the Bolognese artist indifferent: "[...] the relationship of the almost bare white of the sheet, the greys of the torso and thighs and animated black of the background is assured by an extremely tight area of cross-hatching, which creates the miracle of the slow shift from the shadows to the gleam of the foreground; an example of which we find as an echo and as something more than an echo in the tiny perfection of *Still life with bread and lemon* [V.inc.13], a microcosm bathed by a soft, diffuse light attenuating the outlines of the objects". Without a doubt, this print is technically one of Rembrandt's most successful as an etcher; with an astonishing virtuosity, he succeeds in making the dark figure

emerge from the background, carefully modulating the various volumes of the body in tones and half-tones.

Vitale da Bologna (notizie dal / known from 1330 al 1359)
Sant'Antonio Abate e San Giacomo Maggiore / *Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint James the Greater*, 1345-50 ca. San Pietro benedice un pellegrino / *Saint Peter blessing a pilgrim*, 1345-50 ca. *tempera on panel - laid on canvas*, 119 x 60 cm
Collezioni Comunali d'Arte, Bologna

"[...] Today I went to the Town Hall to see the two wings of Vitale's triptych. They are really splendid; as far as I'm concerned, far finer than the central panel at the Galleria Bargellini...". So wrote Morandi to Cesare Brandi, a friend and critic, on March 8th 1939. The artist was referring to the two panels displayed here, which originally came from the small oratory of Sant'Apollonia near the church of Mezzaratta on the colle dell'Osservanza just outside Bologna. Until not very long ago, the panels were mistakenly thought to be part of a polyptych with, at its centre, a Madonna and Child called the *Madonna dei Denti*, now at the Museo Davia Bargellini. But this hypothesis is contradicted from a stylistic point of view: while the Madonna reveals a Gothic elegance and a lively, springing sense of motion, the saints – and Saint Peter in particular – are instead more archaic and rigid. It should also be noted that these panels have had the lower part cut, which has caused their original effect to be lost. The iconography of the figures suggests a putative date for the two panels of circa 1350, the year of the Compostela Jubilee, also called the "Jacobean Jubilee". And indeed, the pilgrim bears a staff and scallop shell (*Pecten jacobaeus*), while next to Saint Anthony Abbot can be seen the figure of Saint James the Greater.

FULL LIST OF WORKS DIVIDED BY SECTION (if not otherwise indicated, the author is Giorgio Morandi and the works are part of the collection of the Museo Morandi)

OLTRE IL GENERE

Il ponte sul Savena a Bologna, 1912 (V.inc.1)
etching on zinc

Paesaggio. Grizzana, 1913 (V.inc. 2)
etching on zinc

Paesaggio, 1910 (V.1)
oil on canvas coated card

Paesaggio, 1913 (V.7)
oil on card

Paesaggio, 1935-36 (V.211)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1934 (V.180)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1936 (V.215)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1959 (P. A 1959/6)
watercolour on paper
Private collection

Paesaggio, 1959 (P.1959/48)
watercolour on paper

Paesaggio, 1960 (P. 1960/34)
watercolour on paper

Paesaggio, 1960 (P. 1960/35)
watercolour on paper
Private collection

Paesaggio, 1921 (V.66)
oil on canvas

Cortile di via Fondazza, 1954 (V.928)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1954 (T.P. 1954/ 7)
pencil on paper

Paesaggio, 1963 (V.1332)
oil on canvas

TEMPO E COMPOSIZIONE

Paesaggio, 1942 (V.399)
oil on canvas

Bologna, Zanichelli Editore S.p.a.

Cortile di via Fondazza, 1956 (V.1016)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1961 (V.1251)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1958 (P. 1958/31)
watercolour on paper
Pavarotti collection

Fiori, 1951(V.801)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Fiori, 1924 (V.88)
oil on canvas

Fiori, 1957 (V.1021)
oil on canvas

Fiori, 1946 (V.499)
oil on canvas

Fiori, 1950 (V.724)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Vaso a strisce con fiori, 1924 (V.inc.23)
etching on zinc

Paesaggio, 1940 (V.280)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1962 (V.1287)
oil on canvas

Paesaggio, 1960 (V.1210)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Natura morta, 1942 (V.371)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1947 (V.521)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1947 (V.563)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1957 (V.1025)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Vitale da Bologna (known from 1330 to 1359)
Sant'Antonio Abate e San Giacomo Maggiore / Saint Anthony Abbot and Saint James the Greater, 1345-50 ca.
San Pietro benedice un pellegrino / Saint Peter blessing a pilgrim, 1345-50 ca.
tempera on panel - laid on canvas, 119 x 60 cm
Collezioni Comunali d'Arte, Bologna

Manica lunga (continua)

Fiori, 1949 (V.661)
oil on canvas

Fiori, 1950 (V.708)
oil on canvas

Fiori, 1946 (V.495)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Natura morta, 1958 (V.1082)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Natura morta, 1958 (V.1055)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1957 (V.1049)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1959 (V.1156)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Natura morta, 1956 (V.984)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1955 (V.1056)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1956 (V.985)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1952 (T.P. 1952/9)
pencil on paper

Natura morta, 1952 (V.823)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1951 (n.c.)
pencil on paper
Private collection

Natura morta, 1952 (V.833)
oil on canvas
Private collection

Natura morta, 1953 (T.P. 1953/6)
pencil on paper

Giuseppe Maria Crespi (Bologna, 1665 - 1747)
Giocatori di dadi /Dice players, 1740 ca.
oil on canvas, 58 x 46,5 cm
Museo Davia Bargellini, Bologna

Natura morta, 1963 (V.1323)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1963 (T.P. 1963/ 64)
pencil on paper

Natura morta, 1958 (V.1107)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1959 (P. 1959/28)
watercolour on paper

Natura morta, 1955 (V.971)
oil on canvas
Pavarotti collection

L'INCISIONE

Natura morta con vaso, conchiglie e chitarra, 1921 (V.inc.7)
etching on copper

Natura morta con zuccheriera, limone e pane, 1921 (V.inc.9)
etching on copper

Rembrandt van Rijn (Leiden, 1606 – Amsterdam, 1669)
Reclining female nude (Negress lying down), 1658
etching with drypoint and engraving on copper
80 x 157 mm
Casa Morandi, Bologna

Natura morta con pane e limone, 1921 (V.inc.13)
etching on copper

Fiori di crisantemo sul tavolo, 1928 (V.inc.41)
etching on copper

Grande natura morta scura, 1934 (V.inc.107)
etching on copper

Paesaggio (I camini dell'Arsenale nei dintorni di Bologna), 1921 (V.inc.12)
etching on copper

Natura morta con la statua, 1922 (V.inc.17)
etching on copper

Paesaggio con la ciminiera (Sobborghi di Bologna), 1926 (V.inc.27)
etching on zinc

Natura morta con l'alzata e due lampade, 1930 (V.inc.68)
etching on copper

Natura morta con compostiera, bottiglia lunga e bottiglia scannellata, 1928
(V.inc.50)
etching on zinc

Natura morta, 1933 (V.inc.101)
etching on copper

Grande natura morta con undici oggetti in un tondo, 1942 (V.inc.110)
etching on copper

Natura morta con sette oggetti in un tondo, 1945 (V.inc.111)
etching on copper

Natura morta a tratti sottilissimi, 1933 (V.inc.105)
etching on copper

Natura morta, 1933 (V.inc.102)
etching on copper

Federico Barocci (Urbino, 1535 – 1612)
Annunciazione / Annunciation, 1584 – 1588
etching and engraving
438 x 313 mm
Gabinetto dei Disegni e delle Stampe della Pinacoteca Nazionale, Bologna

Natura morta con pannello a sinistra, 1927 (V.inc.31)
etching on zinc
Private collection

Paesaggio (Pianura di Bologna), 1929 (V.inc.54)
etching on zinc

Il giardino di via Fondazza, 1924 (V.inc.25)
etching on zinc

Natura morta con zuccheriere, conchiglie e frutto, 1921 (V.inc.8)
etching on copper

LA POETICA DELL'OGGETTO

Natura morta, 1964 (V.1342)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1964 (T.P. 1964/ 3)
pencil on paper

Natura morta, 1948 (V.630)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1947 (T.P. 1947/ 1)
pencil on paper

Natura morta, 1950 (V.733)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1949 (V.664)
oil on canvas

Natura morta, 1948 (T.P. 1948/16)
pencil on paper
Bologna, Azienda U.S.L. Città di Bologna

Natura morta, 1960 (T.P. 1960/ 16)
pencil on paper

Tony Cragg
Eroded Landscape, 1999
sand glass

IN-DEPTH SECTION

Jean-Michel Folon
Nello studio di via Fondazza (cavalletto), 1979
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
Nello studio di via Fondazza, 1979
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
Nello studio di via Fondazza, 1979
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
Nello studio di via Fondazza, 1979
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
Nello studio di via Fondazza, 1979
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
Nello studio di via Fondazza (oggetti sul pavimento), 1979
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
I pennelli nello studio di Grizzana, 1984
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
Sul tavolo di Grizzana, 1984
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon
Sul tavolo di Grizzana, 1984
b/w photograph

Jean-Michel Folon

I colori di Grizzana, 1984
b/w photograph

Mike Bidlo

Not Morandi (Natura morta, 1943), 1985
oil on canvas

Roberto Longhi

Exit Morandi, 1964
7' 20"

Riccardo Bacchelli

Bacchelli e... il "Paesaggio, 1913" di Morandi, 1972
directed by Luciano Emmer
13' 80"

Maggiori informazioni

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