

## MASI Lugano

Museo d'arte  
della Svizzera italiana,  
Lugano

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## Sentiment and Observation Art in Ticino 1850-1950

### The MASI Collections

From 09.05.2021

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano

MASI | LAC

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#### PRESS RELEASE

The collections of MASI Lugano reflect the very special history of visual art in Ticino. Since the end of the 19th century, this history has been shaped not only by regional artists, but also by international artists, collectors, art dealers and art scholars who have found their adopted home in Ticino. The collections particularly reflect the special nature of the Canton of Ticino with its Italian cultural identity on the one hand and its political affiliation with the Swiss federal state on the other. The presentation of the collection, enriched by a number of high-calibre loans, intends to convey a picture of how art in Ticino moved and developed dynamically in its unique cultural field of tension from the years after the founding of the Swiss federal state until the end of the Second World War, and which influences from the south and the north asserted themselves here. The exhibition follows the historical traces of late Romanticism, Realism, Impressionism and Post-Impressionism, to Symbolism, Expressionism, New Objectivity and Magic Realism, right up to the first blossoms of Surrealism.

The immigration of many artists from German-speaking Switzerland and from other nations north of the Alps began in the 19th century. Initially episodic or temporary, from the early 20th century it became increasingly permanent and enhanced the pressure on regional artists in the struggle to position themselves within the field of tension between their traditional Italian orientation and the increasingly incommensurable modern influences from the north. Thus, in the years between 1850 and 1950, in relation to the political and cultural climate of the time, the Ticino art world reveals either a dynamic mixture of commitment to the Italian tradition, a pointed Ticino regionalism, or finally a slow but inexorable opening towards the modern movements arriving from the North of the Alps. In the late 1950s, the progressive integration of the Italian art scene into the context of the international avant-garde, increasingly resolved these contrasts; while the question of the belonging of Ticino artists has since been posed in a completely different way.

The presentation of the MASI collections is structured chronologically in five sections. The first chapter, "Landscape and history", shows the way in which, from the establishment of the Confederation, a National awareness arises also in the Swiss landscape paintings and how for the first time the landscape of Ticino became an interesting subject for the artists coming from both sides of the Alps. The following section, "Landscape as a symbol", highlights how in the pan-European movement of Symbolism, the works of Ticinese artists naturally merged with the ones of Italian and Swiss-German artists. Also the next chapter, "Sentiment and atmosphere", is dedicated to the landscape painting. Post-Impressionism and Divisionism constitute the common stylistic horizon for a Northern and Southern vision of landscape. The section, "Observation of everyday life" unites the different conceptions of genre painting that are characteristic of the 19<sup>th</sup> and the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, from the painters of Realism, of the everyday poetry, until Magic Realism and New Objectivity. Ultimately, the final section, "The modern gaze", shows how the traditional representation of form and color is broken up by Cubo-Futurism and Expressionism through the immigration of numerous artist that chose Ticino as their adopted home.

More of a propaedeutic sketch than a scientific thesis, deliberately conceived as aphoristic rather than analytical or even encyclopedic, our presentation follows the broadest possible conception of the art history of Ticino: it integrates both what has been received and collected here and what has been discussed and created in Ticino by local and foreign artists. Thus, it is not meant to be the conclusion but rather the beginning of an investigation of the manifold questions related to these topics.

## **Press contacts**

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## **Exhibition venues**

### **MASI | LAC**

Piazza Bernardino Luini 6

CH – 6900 Lugano

### **MASI | Palazzo Reali**

Via Canova 10

CH – 6900 Lugano

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## Main Partner



## Scientific Partner



## Founders



Repubblica e Cantone  
Ticino



Città  
di Lugano

## Institutional Partner



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
Confederazione Svizzera  
Confederaziun svizra

Dipartimento federale dell'interno DFI  
Ufficio federale della cultura UFC

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## Press images

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01.

**Paul Camenisch**

*The Man in the Vineyard*

1926

Oil on canvas

115 x 80.5 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano

Collezione Cantone Ticino



02.

**Achille Funi**

*The architect Mario Chiattono*

1924

Oil on canvas

103.5 x 103 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano

Collezione Città di Lugano. Gift Chiattono



03.

**Augusto Giacometti**

*Saint Peter in Venice*

1935

113 x 150 cm

Oil on canvas

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano

Collezione Città di Lugano



04.

**Giacometti Giovanni**

*Evening on the Alp*

1906

Oil on canvas

115 x 160 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano  
Deposit of the Swiss Confederation, Federal  
Office of Culture, Bern



05.

**Ferdinand Hodler**

*Anbetung II (Adoration II)*

1893-1894

Oil on canvas

81.5 x 101 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano  
Deposit of the Kunsthaus Zürich, Gottfried Keller  
Foundation, Federal Office of Culture, Bern



06.

**Luigi Rossi**

*Il canto dell'aurora (The Song of Dawn)*

1910-1912

Oil on canvas

125.7 x 187.5 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano  
Collezione Città di Lugano



07.

**Henri Rousseau**

*View of Grenelle bridge, Trocadero*

1891 ca.

Oil on canvas

32.8 x 40.1 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano  
Collezione Città di Lugano. Gift Milich-Fassbind



08.

**Richard Seewald**

*Turtle with chervil*

1923

Oil on canvas

74 x 60 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano

Collezione Cantone Ticino. Gift Richard Seewald

Foundation



09.

**Hermann Scherer**

*Selfportrait in ticinese landscape*

1926

Oil on canvas

120 x 150 cm

Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano

Collezione Cantone Ticino



10.

**Marianne von Werefkin**

*Ticino*

1927

Oil and tempera on cardboard

44.3 x 58 cm

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Collezione Cantone Ticino



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11.

**Cuno Amiet**

*Selfportrait with his wife*

1899

Tempera on canvas

76 x 52 cm

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Collezione Città di Lugano





## **Current exhibitions**

**Masterworks of modern photography 1900-1940. The Thomas Walther Collection at The Museum of Modern Art, New York**

25 April – 01 August 2021

MASI | LAC

**Luigi Pericle. Ad astra**

18 April – 05 September 2021

MASI | Palazzo Reali

**"Terre" dalla Collezione Olgiati**

Until 06 June 2021

Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati

## **Upcoming exhibitions**

**Bally Artist of the Year Award 2020**

06 June – 04 July 2021

MASI | Palazzo Reali

**Nicolas Party**

*Rovine*

27 June 2021 – 09 January 2022

MASI | LAC

**Plattform21**

22 August – 05 September 2021

MASI | Palazzo Reali

**Albert Oehlen – "big paintings by me with small paintings by others"**

05 September 2021 – 20 February 2022

MASI | LAC

**Pietro Consagra**

11 September 2021 – 09 January 2022

Collezione Giancarlo e Danna Olgiati

**Antonio Ciseri**

03 October 2021 – 27 February 2022

MASI | Palazzo Reali