

DOMENICO GNOLI

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LUXEMBOURG & DAYAN

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DOMENICO
GNOLI

D. Gnoli

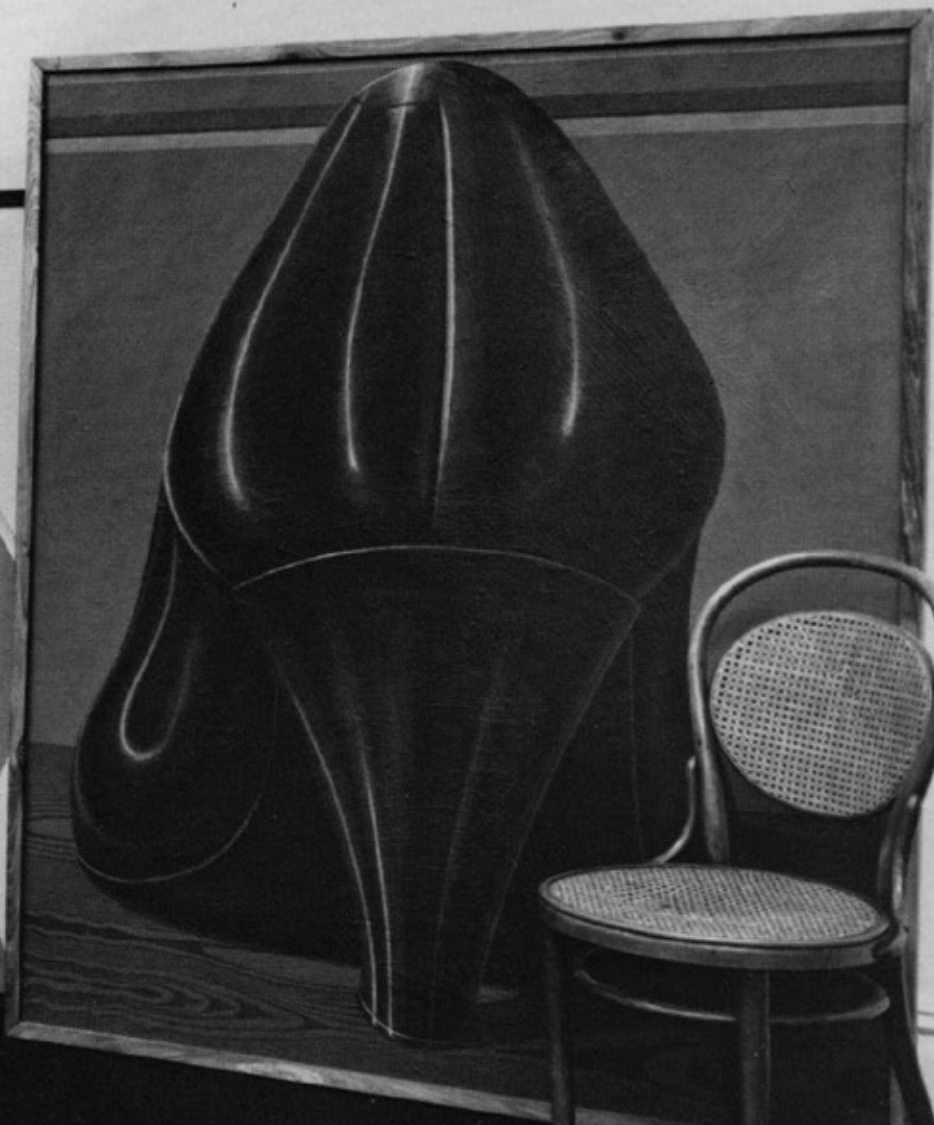
*“Odi come silento cola il tempo
con l’acqua delle fonti, nei giardini?
Guarda come leggera, posa l’ombra
sul bianco asfalto della piazza muta”*

*Listen how silenty time flows
With the fountains’ water
Look how light casts the shadow
On the white asphalt of the mute square*

DOMENICO
GNOLI

Paintings
1964-1969

LUXEMBOURG & DAYAN



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PREFACE

In all its considerable scope and depth, Gnoli's vision has long fascinated us. In works that are at once humorous and lonely, personal and remote, obsessive and distant, Gnoli investigated the multitude of meanings to be found in the seemingly mundane details of everyday objects. His meditations on the material trappings of bourgeois Italian life directly challenged the discourse proffered by artists of the burgeoning *Arte Povera* movement by suggesting that identity can be constructed around consumerism and commercial choices. Most explicitly, these artworks consider the way in which subjectivity can be expressed through the turn of a curl or the width of a pinstripe, how a leather handbag can become the metonym of a woman.

We are honored to present a group of late paintings by Domenico Gnoli in the artist's first New York solo exhibition since his 1969 show at the Sidney Janis Gallery. Gnoli's vision feels as vital and revolutionary today as it did nearly five decades ago.

We would like to thank all the lenders to the exhibition, private and public — in particular Yannick and Ben Jakober, who were kind enough to share with us their archive and generous enough to take us into the world that they shared with Gnoli. Francesco Bonami and Maurizio Cattelan were crucial in helping us look at Gnoli's oeuvre from today's perspective. Gnoli's ability to focus on a detail in such a way as to allude to the general is so subtle and charming. It has captured our hearts.

Daniella Luxembourg, Amalia Dayan
& Alma Luxembourg



Domenico Gnoli, *Chemise verte*, 1967 (detail)

FLEAS ON MARS

Francesco
Bonami

*I don't know yet if the present exists.
That's why I am documenting myself.*
Domenico Gnoli



Domenico Gnoli with Black Hair, s'Estaca, Valdemassa, Majorca, Spain, Summer 1969.

Domenico Gnoli (1933–70) has always been compared to Italo Calvino, who liked his work and wrote about it several times. Gnoli was even commissioned to illustrate one of Calvino's novels, *The Baron in the Trees*. But I believe that Gnoli is closer to Franz Kafka than to the Italian writer. Calvino's writing is about lightness, while Gnoli's art is about a hallucinatory yet harmless state of mind. Gnoli is a sunnier, Mediterranean Kafka capable of mutating fantasy into the fantastic. There are traces of Magritte, too, but tempered by a light anguish; the absurdist humor is replaced by a serene melancholia. Gnoli journeys across the cosmos and visits imaginary societies. He invented his own planet and traveled there like Antoine de Saint-Exupéry's Little Prince. As an artist, Gnoli was truly an aristocrat, ruling his imagination like a kingdom. He observed his planet from both ends of the telescope: From one end he was able to see a faraway world, with many little characters on many different stages; from the other end, as if looking into a microscope, he was able to get very close, like a flea.

Gnoli's brief life, like that of his two unfortunate contemporaries Piero Manzoni (1933–63) and Pino Pascali (1936–68), poses unanswerable questions about which road his art would have taken during the extreme political and social transformations that shattered the Western world in the late '60s. Would Gnoli have abandoned painting, like Michelangelo Pistoletto or Mario Merz did, to join the conceptual and politically engaged movements of that turbulent age, or would he have retreated into the lan-

guage of his own mythology, watching the rise of Arte Povera and Minimalism with dismay?



Michelangelo Pistoletto
Sacra Conversazione, 1963

His precocious genius was pruned too soon for us to know for sure, but the latter is probably the most likely scenario. Gnoli was a born painter. His father endorsed his talent early on, and at seventeen he was already having exhibitions. His appearance at Documenta IV, curated by Arnold Bode in 1968, was perhaps telling. The exhibition is a good example of the climate of the times: it was riddled with debates and controversy, and the chasm between painting and the new languages was evident and traumatic. In this context Gnoli's art appeared more connected with a conservative tradition than in sync with the revolutionary spirit of artists like Bruce Nauman and Joseph Beuys. In fact, Gnoli

was more in tune with the painting strategies of Jasper Johns, who was also included in Documenta that year. But questioning an impossible future is a dangerous game, and in any case we would rather not get an answer that would lift the incredible aura surrounding the very rare and deeply touching poetry of Gnoli's etchings, drawings, illustrations, and paintings, which remain unmatched examples of a vision that escapes any classification.



Felice Casorati
Still Life, 1922

Italian art from the late '40s to the early '60s was quite insular. Two decades of fascist dictatorship had clipped the wings of a dynamic vanguard, curbing a truly international dialogue and exchange. It isn't surprising that Gnoli's early works are predictably influenced by the work of Italian artists from that period:

Felice Casorati, Massimo Campigli, Franco Gentilini. In Gnoli's later work, made after the young painter had started traveling abroad, we can immediately sense the impact on his language of artists like Ben Shahn and Eugene Berman, as well as a flirtation with metaphysics and Surrealism, with a brief incursion into



Franco Gentilini
Cattedrale con venditrice di frutta, 1962-66

material abstraction. Material in and of itself has been the eternal curse of Italian art from the Renaissance to the present, and what prevented Gnoli from embracing Pop language more was his utterly Italian fascination with the material of the surface. In his paintings, his use of marble dust mixed with oil paint results in a very specific texture on the canvas that is the unmistakable signature of his work; it pushes the subjects out from a cartoonish feeling into an almost

archaic dimension, suggesting a unique and very sophisticated way of looking at reality—not through the mechanical eye of Pop art but through the spirit of a skilled craftsman. The result is a series of imaginary fragments from esoteric frescoes arriving from a lost civilization.



Apollo of Kassel (attributed), *Phidias* (detail), Roman copy after Greek original, ca. 100 CE

When I am asked about the difference between British, American, and Italian artists, I answer, “British artists look at the wall of their reality very, very, closely for quite a while, until they begin to bang their head against that wall, splashing it with blood, simultaneously producing spectacle and scandal. American artists look at their glass of water obsessively for an enormous amount of time, sometimes forever, but eventually they will be able to transform that common glass of water into a universal glass of

water, the archetype of a glass of water that everybody can recognize. Italian artists also look at their wall very, very closely for a little while. Then at a certain point they start to get fascinated by the texture, the small cracks in the plaster, the tiny stain of mold, until they let themselves drift into this ocean of details, enamored with the beauty of that material, the craft, the details, the imperfections.” Most Italian artists, even the most radical ones, eventually drown in that ocean. The material more than the medium becomes the message, the art a support for the craft. Gnoli was no exception, but he was saved from drowning by his imagination, which was that of a writer more than a painter. He succeeded in using the sexiness of the material simply as a vessel in which to reach the shore of a mysterious island where he began his dialogue with his monsters and his giants. Having landed in his own world, Gnoli turned himself into a flea exploring reality—not unlike Kafka’s Gregor Samsa, or in a similar way as the French writer Georges Perec has done in his novels. Gnoli’s later paintings—or, better, the paintings of the last part of his life—refer to what Perec in his book *Species of Spaces and Other Pieces* called the “infra-ordinary”: those spaces and things that we cross and see every day without giving them a moment’s thought.

Gnoli was never tempted by the reality of objects. He believed in their representation, in their theatrical aspect. All of his works are like characters on a stage. He was, after all, a brilliant stage designer. He shared a certain artistic sympathy with his friend the set designer and paint-

er Fabrizio Clerici. But in the theater, the details escape the viewer. That’s when Gnoli turns the telescope around, and what we were used to seeing from far away becomes very close. The proscenium itself becomes a magnifying lens. The viewer becomes a tailor, a hairstylist, a barber, a seamstress, a maid, a flea.



Philip Guston
In Bed, 1977

Everything in Gnoli’s art is perfectly in order, groomed, combed, pressed, clean. Yet it is a parody of order. The artist talks about the fictional order before the play begins, the camera rolls, the curtain opens. Gnoli paints life before problems, before drama, before stress and fatigue. When he needs to deal with his fantasies, his demons and hallucinations, he does it more freely with his drawings and etchings. All the paintings are in a kind of prenatal state, before reality cracks, revealing the illusory and delusory aspect of an orderly world. Gnoli’s paintings are not frozen, they are suspended, waiting for something to go wrong: the hand ruffling

the hair, the sweat wrinkling the shirt, the spot staining the pants, the thread fraying, the button falling, the sex messing up the bed. Chaos and calm alternate in the space of the images. In the mid-’70s Philip Guston took on some of Gnoli’s subjects—two people in bed, the back of a canvas—in a much more seedy and sloppy way. In the mid-’80s, in a much more eerie manner, Robert Gober addressed the hidden violence under a seemingly proper appearance, with his beds, sheets, legs, and hair. Gnoli does not load his work with such meanings. He is an aesthete. For him, a pressed shirt is an act of love and a demonstration of care, not a premise for violence. A well-prepared bed is an act of duty and devotion. Gnoli was a beautiful dandy whose fate spared him from being dragged into the brutal ideologies of the ’70s.



Robert Gober
Untitled, 1986

Gnoli is the ghost of that Hamlet that Italian art has become since the end of the ’60s: “To be or not to be a painter—that is the question.”

Gnoli stood on the edge of conceptual art, and had only a moment to glance into its abyss. He died allowing all the artists that came after him to see him always as a possible reference but never as a father to be killed. That's why it has



Pino Pascali
Close-up Lips, 1965

not been stressed enough how many similarities there are between the early works of Pascali and those of Gnoli. Pascali was Gnoli's junior by only two years. He too studied scene painting and set design, and his drawings for advertising call to mind Gnoli's illustrations; not only the animal parts but also the big red lips have some resonance in Gnoli's work. Both artists belong to something that we could call "Homemade Pop" or "Craft Pop"—the everyday domesticated, the adventurous made into a folk tale. Pascali soon rejected painting but not the painterly feeling in most of his work. To revisit our early question, if Gnoli had lived, he very likely would have been ostracized by the theoretical and ideologi-

cal mood that ruled the Italian art world in the '70s, in which painting, particularly the kind of painting that Gnoli was doing, was a bourgeois indulgence, if not a forbidden practice. Only in the '80s, with the return to order and a new celebration of painting, was Gnoli's art rescued and transformed, justly, into an object of almost religious devotion. Its scarcity definitely contributed to this new status, but not more than its unique grammar and his absolutely peculiar quality.



Gerhard Richter
Betty, 1988

Like Pollock, Richter, and Fontana, Gnoli opened a door and then locked it for good behind himself. It is not possible to paint "à la Gnoli"; only he could do such a thing. Who would be crazy enough to paint and enlarge a buttonhole today? Yet in the work of many contemporary artists today we can discover many (probably accidental)

coincidences with and references to Gnoli's body of work: James Welling's fabric photographs, Rudolf Stingel's paintings with fabric's pattern, Kai Althoff's drawings, David Hammons's hair on stone, Gerhard Richter's *Betty*.

Yet to judge and define Gnoli as a truly contemporary artist would be an artificial act. He could just as well have been a contemporary of



Vittore Carpaccio
Saint Ursula's Dream: Legend of Saint Ursula, 1495

Carpaccio, Goya, an Assyrian artist, Dalí, Bosch, the veiled Christ of San Severo, and many others. Yes, he was like Calvino's baron in the trees, living above the forest of history, documenting himself for his own statement about the existence of the present. He looked for the present in the most unlikely spaces, as if it were hiding in order not to be devoured by the past or the future. He did not have time to accumulate enough evidence to reach a conclusion. Maybe that's why we are so fascinated by his art. Each work is,

with all its charged mystery, an opportunity to keep looking for the existence of our own present. Though I suspect that Gnoli, like any great artist, looked for the present simply to find the best way to get rid of it.

PAINTINGS

Domenico Ghali, *Red Dress Collar*, 1969 (detail)



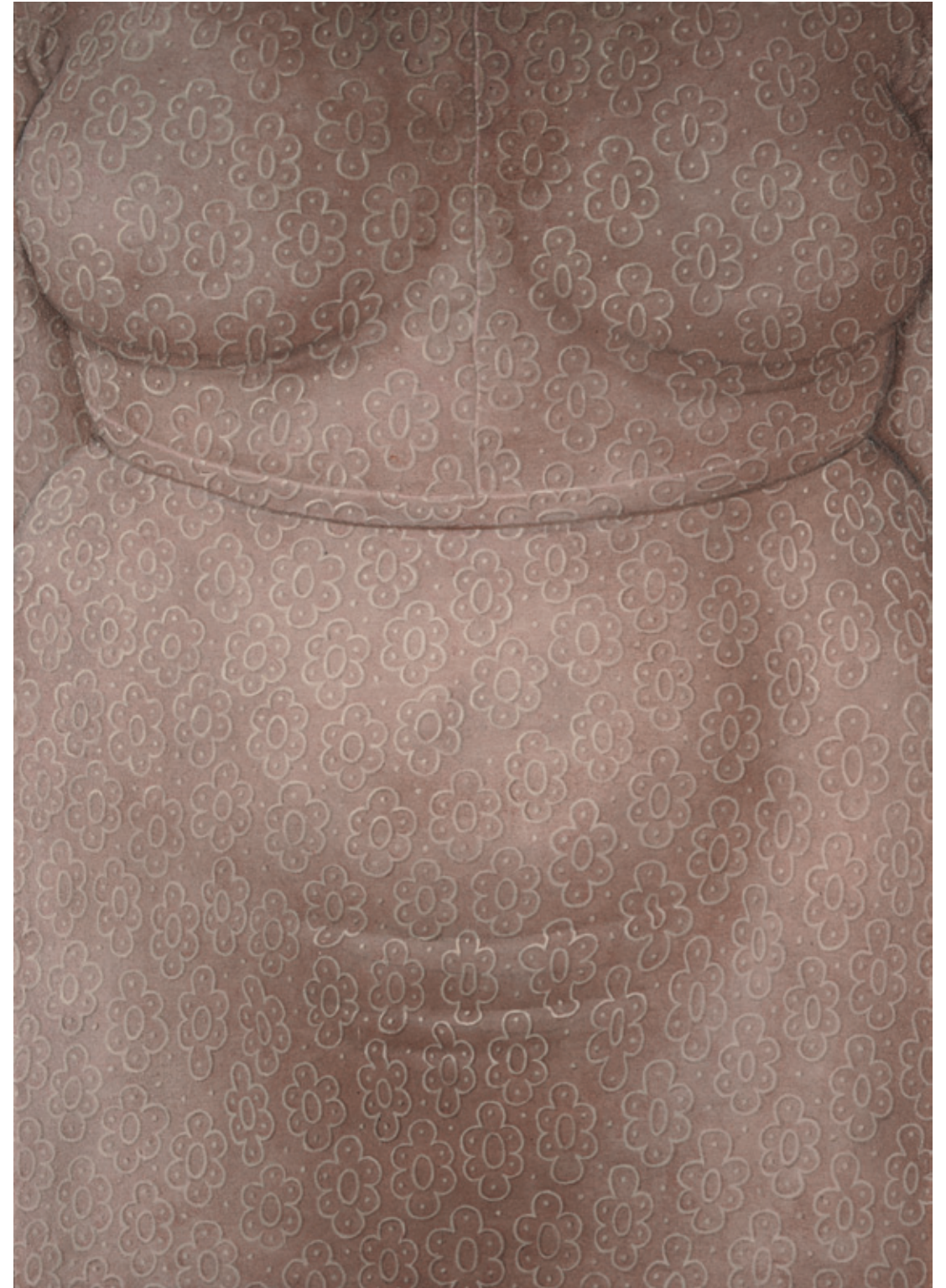
Coupe au Rasoir (No. 1), 1964



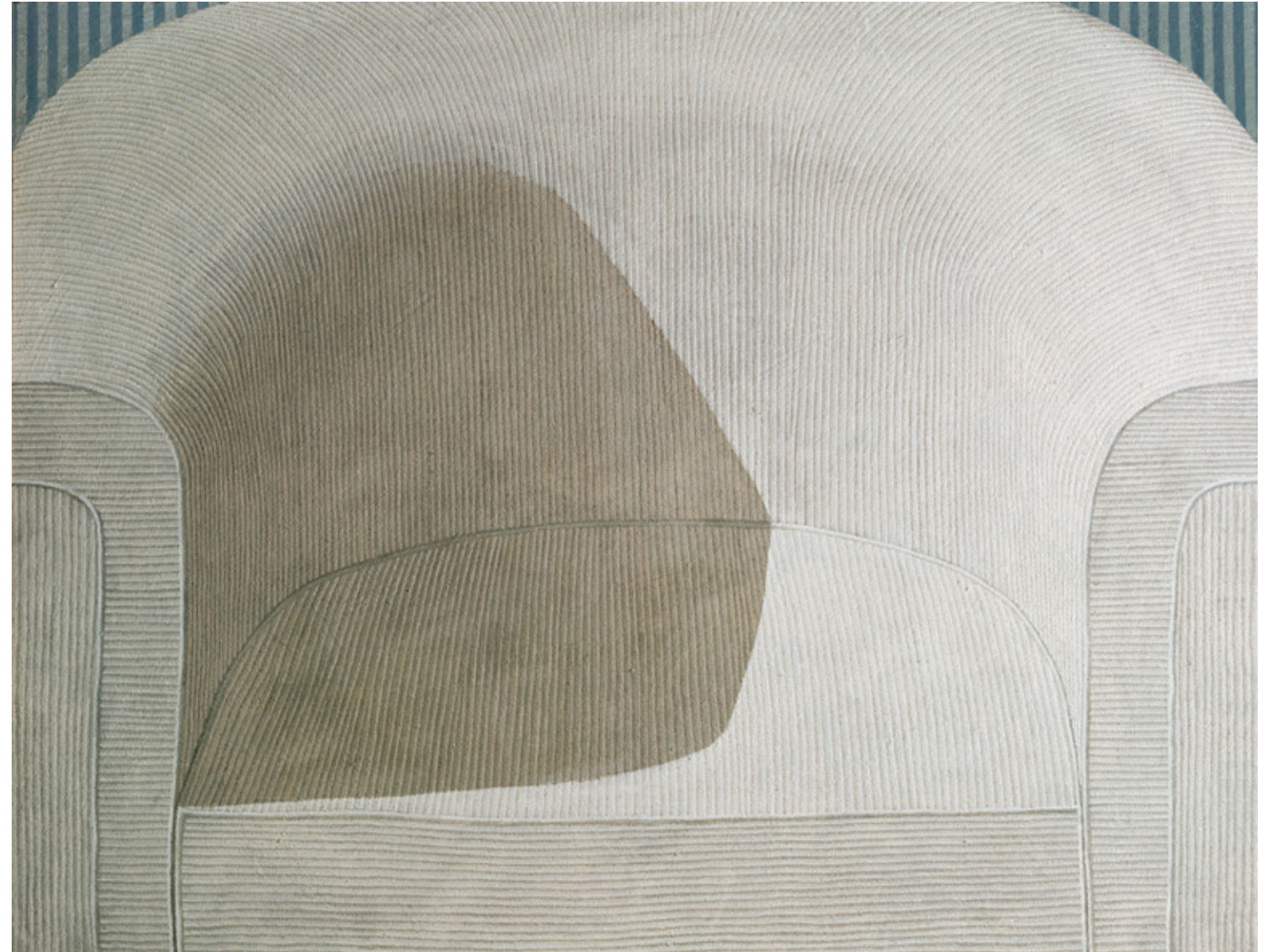
Capigliatura, 1965



Busto di Donna in Rosa, 1966



Poltrona, 1966



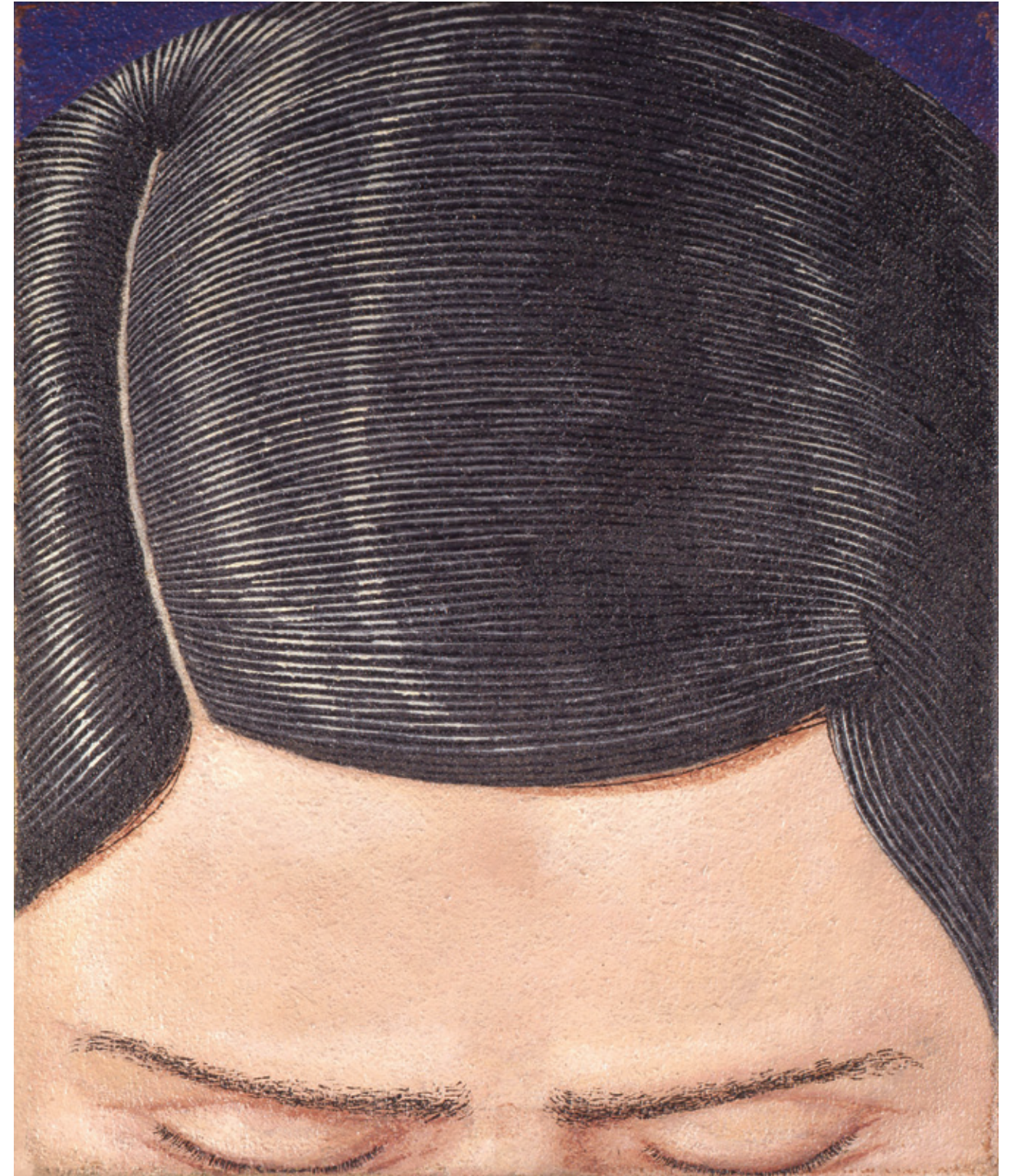
Due Dormienti, 1966



Chemisette Verte, 1967



Ritratto di Luis T, 1967



White Bed, 1968



Corner, 1968



Back View, 1968



Braid, 1969



Striped Shirt Lapel, 1969



Black Hair, 1969



Borsetta da Donna, 1969



Red Dress Collar, 1969



Striped Trousers, 1969



Curly Red Hair, 1969



Green Bed, 1969



DOMENICO
GNOLI

MAURIZIO
CATTELAN

An Interview
with the Artists

March 2012



Domenico Gnoli, Due Dormienti, 1966 (detail)

Maurizio Cattelan: *We're doing this on the occasion of your exhibition in New York. I understand the last time you had a show here was in 1969. Do you like America?*

Domenico Gnoli: I love America. I lived here too, but my links are exclusively Italian.

MC: *You mean the background that informs your work?*

DG: Yes.

MC: *You were born in Rome. Does this mean that your paintings are still "Roman" despite their acquiring international status?*

DG: Well, just like me, they are Roman by nature, not by vocation. A sort of inventory of the Rome in which I grew up, possibly more a Rome I remember than a Rome I know. An inventory of umbrellas, chairs, crates, the tables of the sidewalk cafés, fish and vegetables stocked in the shady intimacy of small markets, the solemn and dark laundries — everything, in short, that moves on the cobblestones of the narrow, unpredictable streets of the old Rome. And the smell, the noise, and then at last the night... the empty wine shops — the "osterie" with the odds and ends remaining from some informal gathering, some ready to close with the chairs on the tables so the floor can be swept, only one table still set with the chairs around it for the tired waiters' dinners... and then the noise ceases, but the voices go

on — the mocking wise voices of the Romans, the wise voices of a wise city.

MC: *How was your childhood in Rome?*

DG: There isn't much to say about my childhood. I remember explosions of intense happiness, followed shortly afterwards by profound melancholy that always prompted remarks and comments from those around me on how remote my life was from my age. Therefore I rapidly lost all my respect for age. From then on, I always lived without any age, given that every year I used to repudiate it, choosing another one for the sole good reason that I liked it better.

MC: *That's great. You were changing your age every year?*

DG: Yes. Why not? Life can be considered as a huge wardrobe, with so many dominos hung in its cupboards, one domino per year. Now I don't see why I couldn't change my mask in this wardrobe even twice a day.

MC: *How did you start painting?*

DG: Well, I was born knowing that I had to be a painter, because my father, an art historian, always presented painting as the only acceptable thing in life.

MC: *If he was an art historian, I'm sure he was into traditional painting.*

DG: Yes, he directed me towards classical Italian painting, against which I soon rebelled, but I never lost the taste and craft of the Renaissance.

MC: *I can tell. It's actually interesting because I always felt that you were somehow in the middle between the Art Informel generation and the one of Arte Povera.*

DG: I know. For many years it was difficult for me to paint because I didn't feel the informal painting that was then tyrannically dominating painters and art collectors.

MC: *I can see that. Your work seems rather more indebted to Italian surrealism rather than Art Informel.*

DG: Really? Would you call it surrealist?

MC: *Well, in a Giorgio de Chirico kind of way, yes. Your objects are a little metaphysical, wouldn't you agree?*

DG: I am metaphysical inasmuch as I am looking for a non-eloquent painting, immobile and of atmosphere, which feeds on static situations.

MC: *Right. But not in a stagy way.*

DG: No, I never tried to stage, to fabricate an image. I always use given and simple elements, I don't want to add or subtract anything. I haven't even ever wanted to distort. I isolate and represent. My themes are derived from

current events, from familiar situations, from daily life, because I never actively intervene against the object, I can feel the magic of its presence.

MC: *You had a spell as stage designer, though. Do you think it affected the way you paint or perceive ordinary objects?*

DG: I don't know. I was passionately involved with the theater and created stage design for Barrault, the Old Vic, and the Schauspielhaus in Zurich... However I couldn't get used to the community and social life of a theatrical set designer.

MC: *Yes. Painting is a much more private experience. And you don't have to worry about your audience every night. Well, you actually do, but in a different way.*

DG: An audience is perhaps unnecessary to the soul-searching mystic, but it is vital to the magician, the maker of prodigies. This is so because prodigy only feeds on prodigy, fantasy on fantasy. The performance on the stage has its reasons in the performance induced in thousands of separate minds and this second performance is no less prodigious than the first. Coming back to my work, let me state that I call prodigy all that is invented, all that begins to exist from the second it is conceived, it is the process not the results, the principle and not the fruits.

MC: *So what's your principle? Why are you doing this?*

DG: Why am I doing this? But that's the whole point. I am doing this because this is what really happens deep inside you. You begin looking at things and they look just fine, as normal as ever, but then you look for a while longer and your feelings get involved and they begin changing things for you and they go on and on till you only see your feelings, and that's why you see this mess.

MC: *But back in the 1960s there was the advent of the new media. Weren't you tempted to explore these formats in relation to ordinary objects rather than rely on a traditional medium like painting?*

DG: Oh, I know how pathetically inadequate my medium is, but unfortunately I dispose of no other.

MC: *No, no, I didn't mean it like that. What I was trying to say was, if you were interested in ordinary objects, why not work on them directly rather than just try to paint them?*

DG: I don't know. All I know is that mine was a completely new theory about art, a new approach that made the pictures appear just like life does. But I don't want to think that I am going to believe that I am a hell of a genius, or anything like that. The idea is formed spontaneously in the antechamber of my consciousness

and I just have to give it pictorial presence. My life provides me with these images that become expressions of my daily experience.

MC: *That is something that Pop artists were doing too. Did you like Pop art?*

DG: Oh, yes. Only thanks to Pop Art, my painting has become understandable.

MC: *Where do you think Pop art's fascination for common objects comes from?*

DG: I can only speak for myself, but for me imagination and invention cannot generate something more important, more beautiful and more terrifying than the common object, amplified by the attention that we give it. An object alone, in front of me who is alone, exactly in front of me just as I would like to have in front of me someone who really interests me, in a good light to better observe it.

MC: *So the object is ordinary, but not impersonal.*

DG: No. It says more about myself than anything else, it fills me with fear, disgust, and enchantment.

MC: *I hear you. I actually feel the same way about the magazine I'm doing now, Toilet Paper. I think there is a lot of me in there, but many people perceive it just as a smart move to reach a wider audience.*

DG: If an artist has the possibility to contact an infinitely larger public through the pages of a publication, he should try to invest more rather than less and go as far in his effort to communicate his inner image as he can.

MC: *Thank you. That really settles the issue for me.*

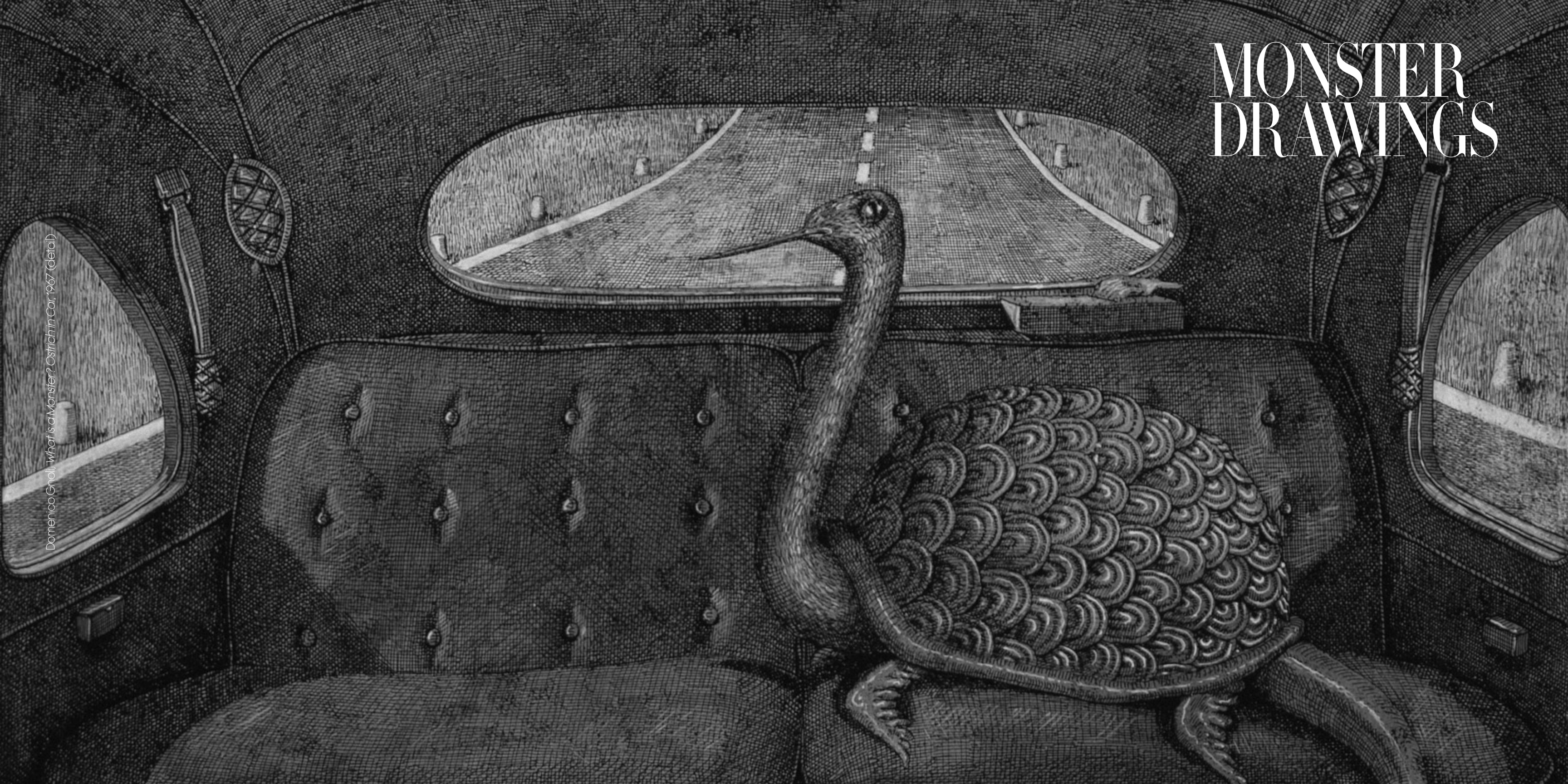
DG: This is good.

MC: *What questions would remain to be asked?*

DG: For me certainly none.

MONSTER DRAWINGS

Domenico Gnoli, *What is a Monster? Ostrich in Car*, 1967 (detail)

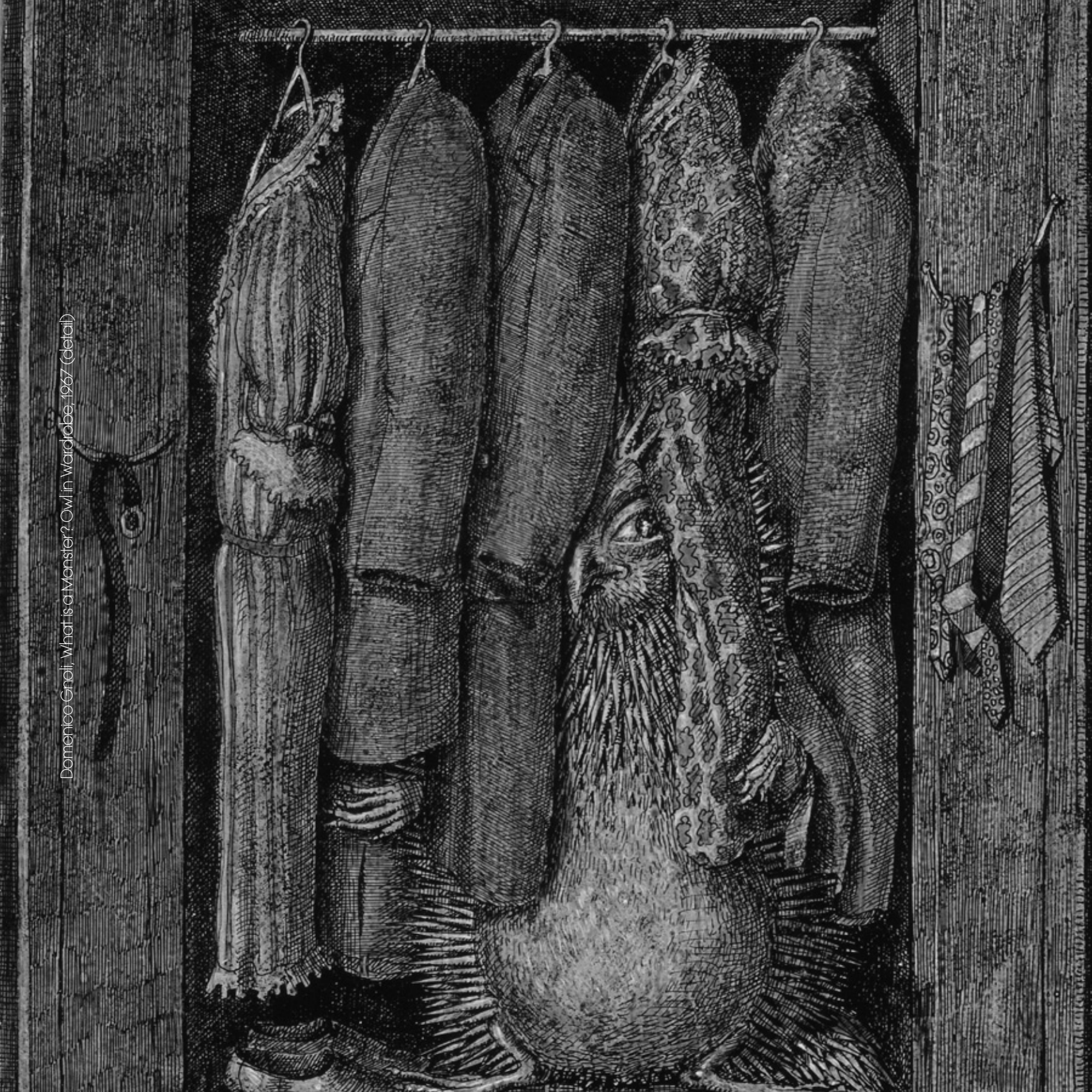


WHAT IS A MONSTER?

Robert Graves

Excerpted from *Horizon*, Summer 1968, Volume X, no. 3, pp. 50-59.

Domenico Ghali, *What is a Monster? Owl in wardrobe*, 1967 (detail)



What is a monster? In modern English the word can be used in two very different senses. As a rule, it means something of remarkable size, such as a monster pumpkin or a monster wedding cake or else a creature of remarkable savagery: as most husbands, if not worms, tend to be monsters; and most children, if not little angels, tend to be little monsters. Millions of years ago, of course, huge natural monsters roamed the earth, among them the harmless vegetarian diplodocus, whose skeleton dominates an immense hall in the Natural History Museum in London; also the flying pterodactyl, the ichthyosaurus, the brontosaurus, the fearsome saber-toothed tiger and mammoth — some of these coeval with man. . . .



Domenico Gnoli
Taureau-escargot-poisson No. 1, 1964
 Inscriptions: SALUT LE COPAIN! D'accord pour demain. P.S. ne nous réveille pas.

Whether or not we inherit dream-memories of these beasts is arguable, but they can at any rate be distinguished from the equally zoological but grossly enhanced monsters of legend. Legendary cats, for example, such as the Irish Irusan, who lived on the banks of the river Boyne: he could carry off a plow-ox in his claws and is said to have once run off with Seanchan Torpest, the master poet who claimed the faculty, mentioned by Shakespeare in *As You Like It*, of rhyming rats to death. . . .

Yet a monster cat remains more or less a cat; so also a hundred-foot giant is no more than a man blown up by unrestrained fancy. Such enhanced, though otherwise normal, zoological monsters seem to have been born from psychotic visions or under the influence of drugs, mostly fungal hallucinogens. The predicament of Alice, who, in *Wonderland*, nibbled a piece of mushroom and found herself shooting up to monstrous height and then diminishing to so small a size that a mouse became a monster for her, has recently been explained. Lewis Carroll had been reading M. C. Cooke's *A Plain and Easy Account of British Fungi*, which relates that when the Koryak of Siberia eat fly agaric (a red toadstool with white spots that grows under birch trees and is associated with dwarfs and Santa Claus), "erroneous impressions of size and distance are of common occurrence, a straw lying in the road becomes a formidable object, to overcome which a leap is taken sufficient to clear a barrel of ale or the prostrate trunk of a British oak." . . .

As far as I know, the only new mythological monsters that have been invented in Europe since Christianity displaced the old Greco — Roman religion are the products of heraldry. Most of them are based on the medieval bestiaries — fanciful zoological compendiums that drew morals from the natural, or unnatural, histories of ani-



Domenico Gnoli
Sauterelle Mélancolique ou aussi grande sauterelle italienne, 1965

mals. For instance, the lion, as king of beasts, was credited with kingliness, courage, honor, generosity, and the other royal virtues; the fox was a shrewd, sly politician or bandit; the bear was a fierce, stupid, blustering soldier with a sweet tooth and a sore head. A proud prince might choose his crest by combining the eagle, as king of birds — with its sharp eye, remorseless swoop, and inaccessible eyrie — with the lion, as king of beasts, naming the combined animal a "gryphon." The same Alice, it will be recalled, met an unusually somnolent gryphon in *Wonderland*. . . .

Uneducated men-at-arms believed in the actual existence of gryphons; also of allerions, which were beakless, clawless, heraldic eagles — symbols of pacific royalty; and of warlike wiverns,



Domenico Gnoli
Taureau-escargot-poisson No. 2, 1964,
 Inscriptions: pour Ben D.

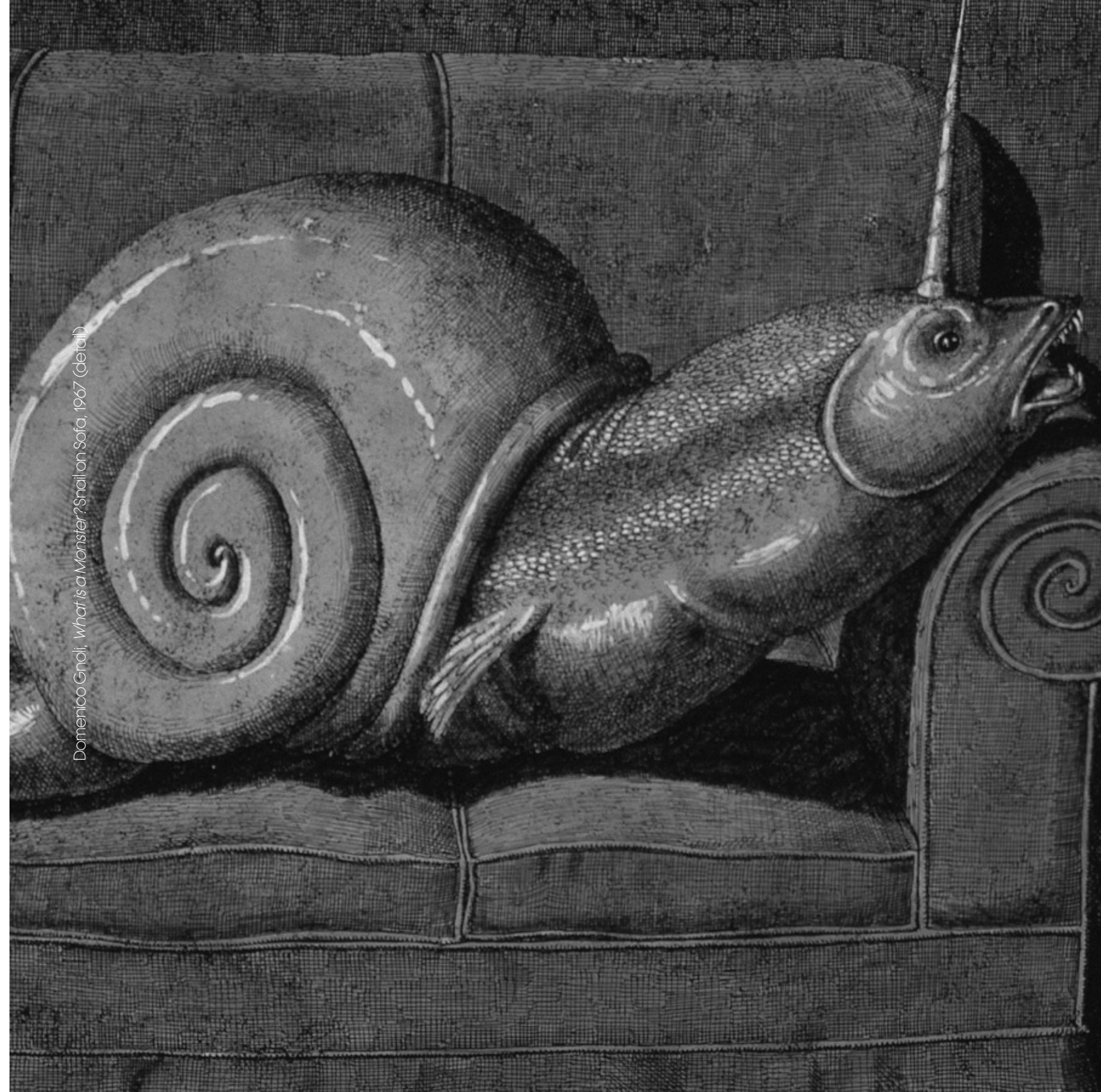
which were winged dragons with eagles' legs and barbed tails.

Domenico Gnoli, an Italian of old family, remains true to the European heraldic tradition. His monsters develop naturally and without conscious thought when the old language of bestiaries is applied to modern circumstances. Most Americans, though laughing at the quaint result, are unlikely to be interested in the significance of his terrifying monsters, an attitude satirized by Hilaire Belloc some seventy years

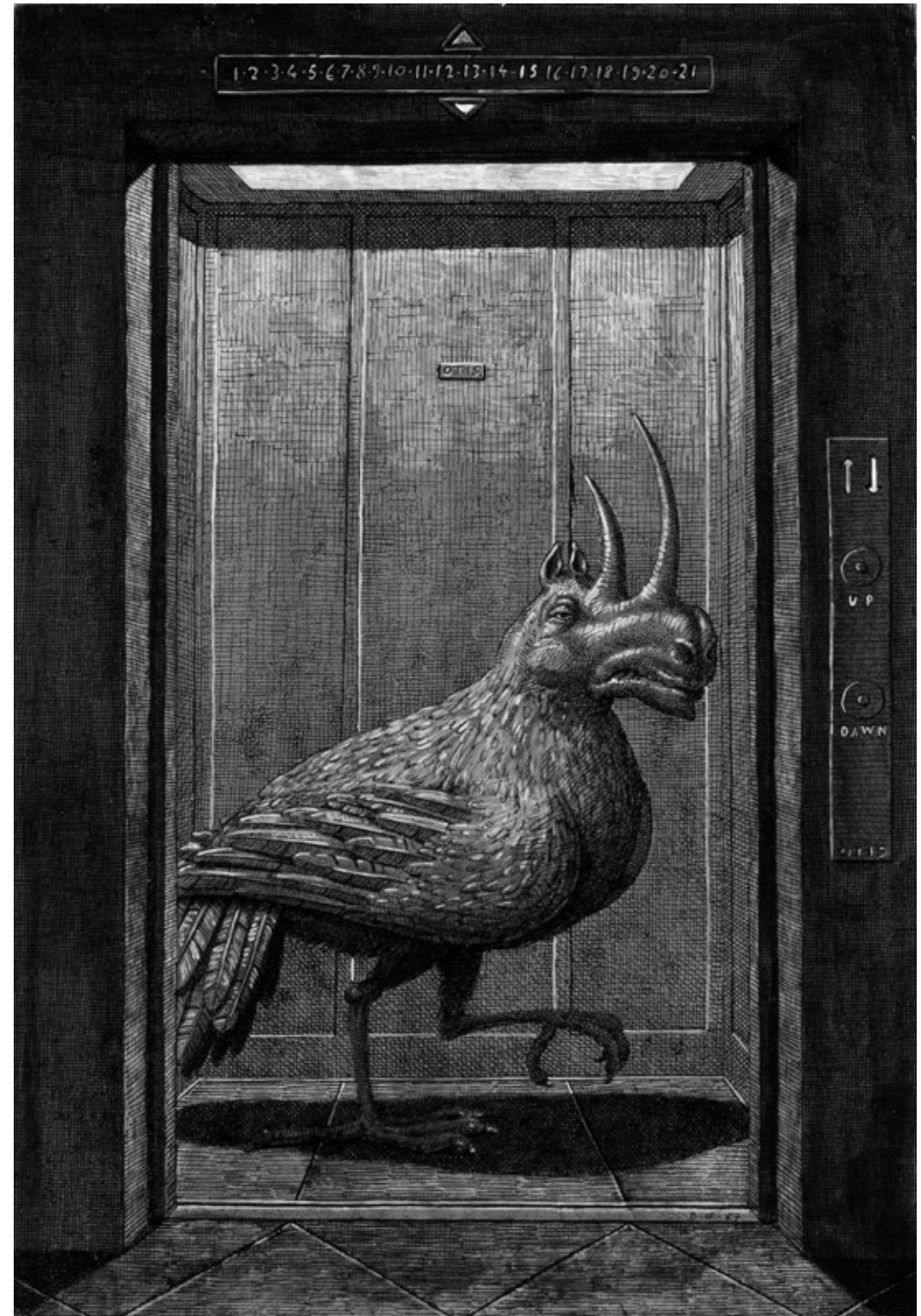
ago in *The Modern Traveller*:

Just north, I find, of Cape de Verd
We caught a very curious bird
With horns upon its head;
And not, as one might suppose,
Web-footed or with jointed toes
But having hoofs instead.
As no one present seemed to know
Its use or name, I let it go.

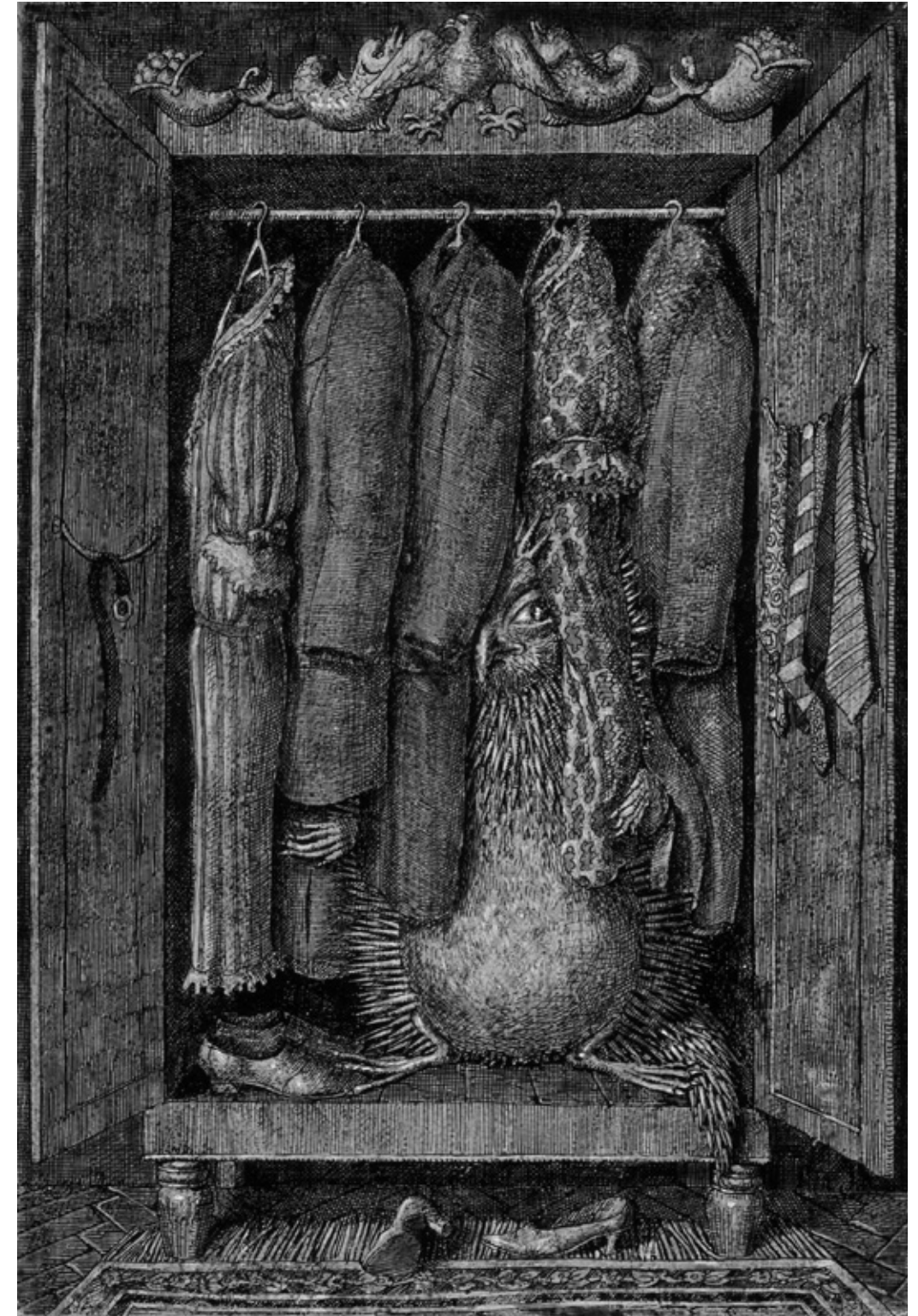
The Romans, who invented the word *monstrum*, put monsters in the same class as portents and prodigies, being, according to Cicero, signs pointing out that something sinister was afoot, just as a portent portended, and a prodigy foretold, a usually evil event. The birth of a two-headed calf, a typical monster, demanded from its owner a ritual sacrifice to avert disaster; so did Siamese twins, or a cock with hen's plumage. The colt foaled on Julius Caesar's farm with each of its hooves divided into five toes was a monster; but, by breaking it in and riding it to victory after victory, Caesar determined to make it an evil sign for the enemies of Rome rather than for himself. Yet its monstrosity in fact portended fresh civil war and the Roman republic's eventual extinction. The Old English word for any monster of this sort was *baeddel*, something that boded ill, from which the word "bad" comes.



What is a Monster? Winged Rhino at 15th Floor, 1967



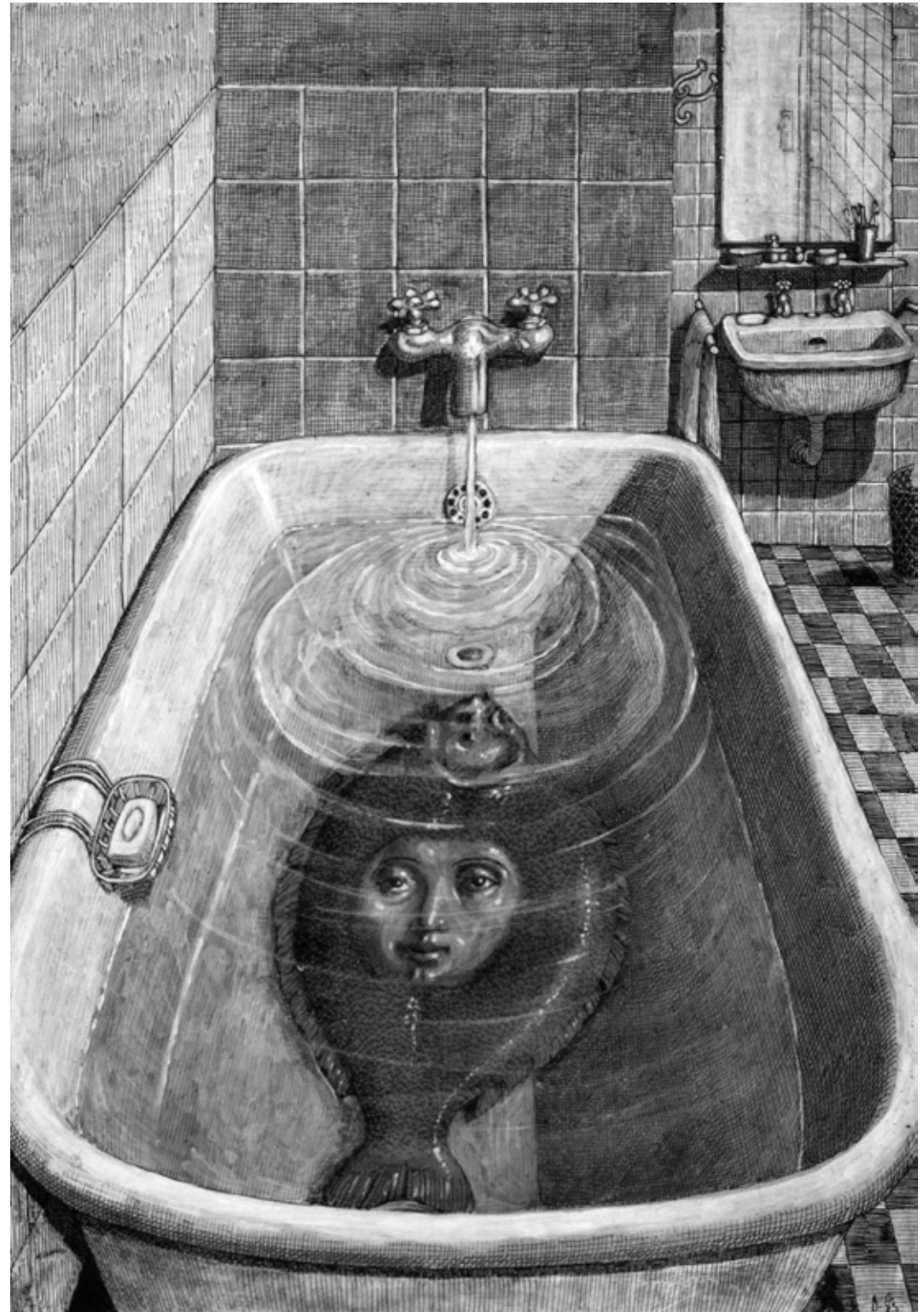
What is a Monster? Owl in Wardrobe, 1967



What is a Monster? Snail on Sofa, 1967



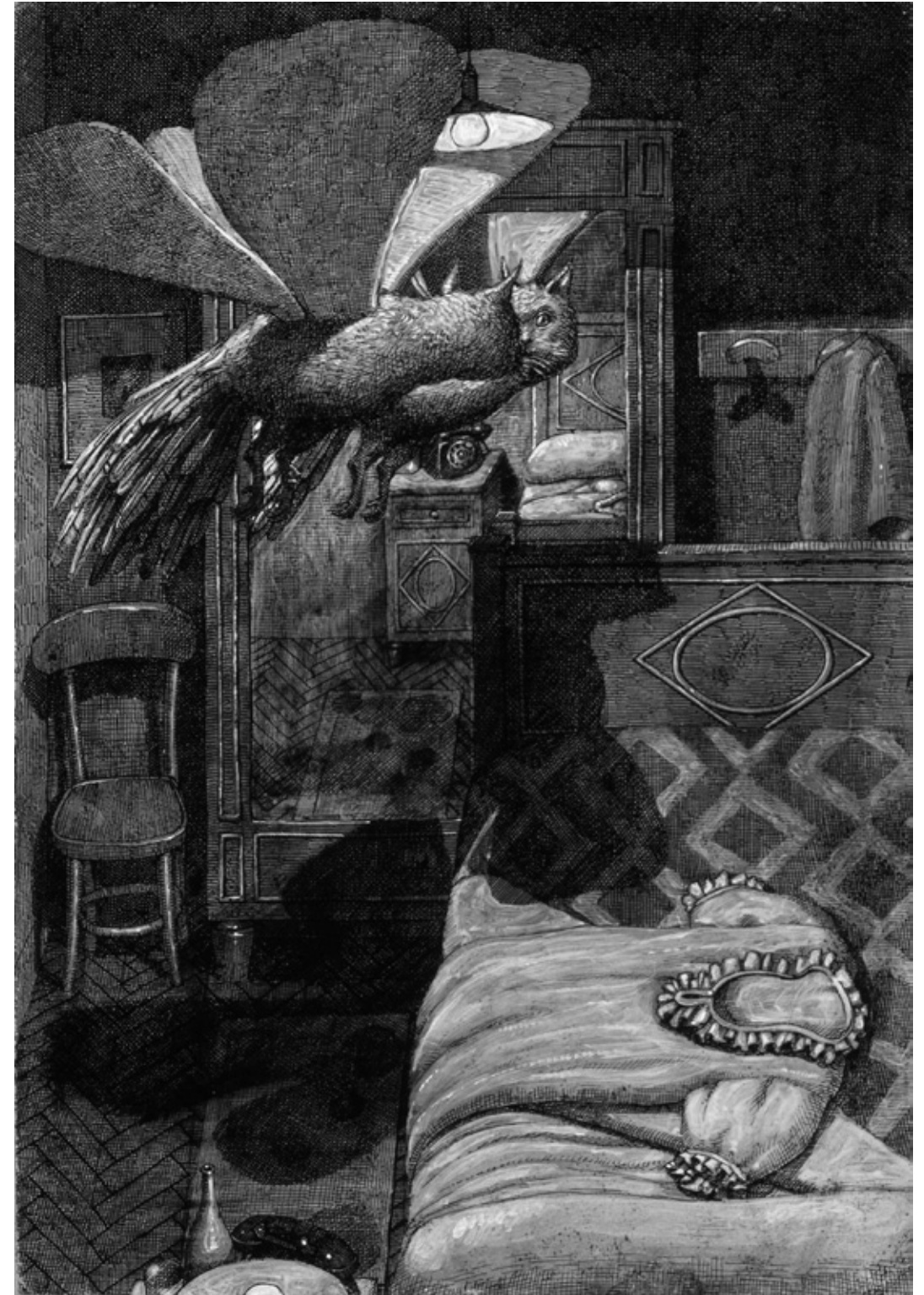
What is a Monster? Woman Sole in Bath Tub, 1967



What is a Monster? Ostrich in Car, 1967



What is a Monster? The Bat Cat, 1967

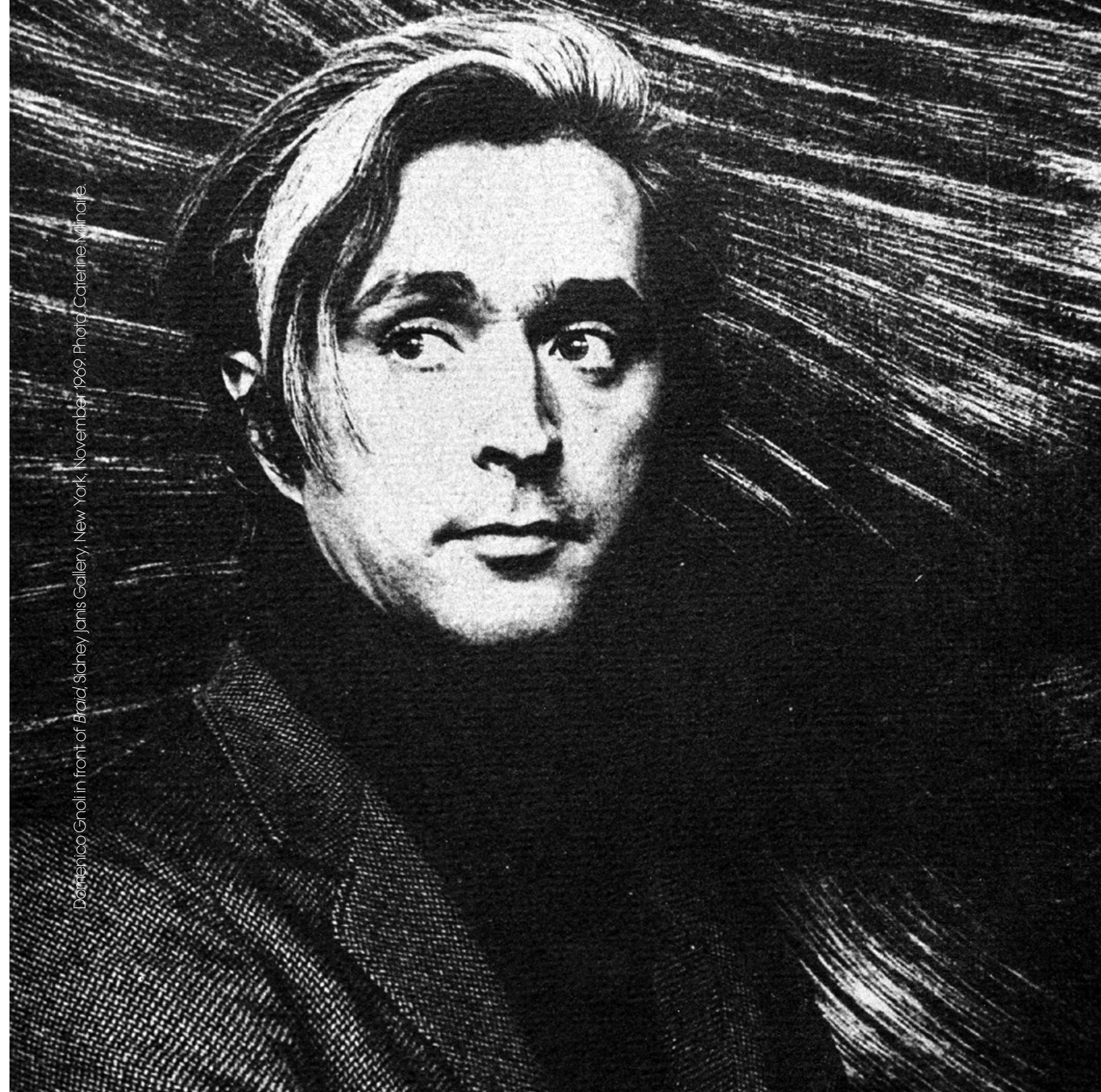


Domenico Gnoli, Poltrona, 1969 (detail)



BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1933 to an art historian father and an artist mother, Domenico Gnoli displayed a precocious interest in art and an exceptional talent for drawing. He grew up between Rome and Spoleto, and at the age of 16 began studying engraving under the tutelage of painter and printmaker Carlo Alberto Petrucci. By the age of 18, Gnoli had already exhibited his work alongside established artists such as Giacomo Manzù and Giorgio Morandi. At 19, Gnoli enrolled in the Academy of Fine Arts in Rome, but left soon afterward to begin traveling in Europe. In the early 1950s, Gnoli traveled first to Paris and then to London, where he enjoyed much success in his work as a set designer, particularly at the Old Vic. In the mid-1950s Gnoli went to New York, where his work was exhibited and favorably received; he traveled frequently and continued to exhibit in both America and Europe. In 1963, Gnoli went to Majorca and settled in Deyá, where he met and married fellow artist Yannick Vu; the two divided their time between Rome and Majorca. In 1968, Gnoli exhibited at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels, the Kestner-Gesellschaft in Hannover, Documenta in Kassel, and the Venice Biennale. Sidney Janis, who had seen Gnoli's work at Documenta, offered Gnoli a solo show at his gallery the following year, and in November 1969, Gnoli traveled to New York for the Janis exhibition. He spent Christmas of 1969 in New York with friends, but by January 1970 he was already gravely ill. Gnoli died in April of 1970 at the age of 36.



Domenico Gnoli in front of *Brava*, Sidney Janis Gallery, New York, November 1969. Photo: Catherine Milinaire.

EXHIBITION HISTORY

(Selected)

New York, Sagittarius Gallery, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1956.

London, Arthur Jeffress Gallery, *Paintings & Drawings by Domenico Gnoli*, 1957.

New York, Bianchini Gallery, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1959.

Dallas, The Art Gallery, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1960.

London, Hazlitt Gallery, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1962.

New York, Gallery 14, *Domenico Gnoli: Orestes Drawings*, 1963.

Paris, Galerie André Schoeller, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1964.

Turin, Galleria Galatea, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1966.

Darmstadt, Mathildenhöhe, *Internationale der Zeichnung*, 1967.

Kassel, *Documenta IV*, 1968.

Hannover, Kestner-Gesellschaft, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1968.

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1968.

New York, Sidney Janis Gallery, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1969.

Düsseldorf, Galerie Schmela, *Gnoli*, 1970.

Geneva, Galerie Krugier, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1970.

Rome, Palazzo delle Esposizioni, *X Quadriennale Nazionale d'Arte, Aspetti dell'Arte figurativa contemporanea. Nuove ricerche d'immagine*, 1972.

Eindhoven, Van Abbemuseum, *Realisme Relativiste*, 1972.

Darmstadt, Kunsthalle, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1973.

Rotterdam, Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1973.

Paris, Centre International d'Art Contemporain, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1973–1974.

Paris, Galerie Arts-Contacts, *Gnoli, dessins, sculptures*, 1974.

Brussels, Palais des Beaux-Arts, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1974.

Paris, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1978.

Venice, VXXXIX Biennale Internazionale dell'Arte, *Dalla natura all'arte – Dall'arte alla natura*, 1978.

Rome, Galleria Giulia, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1981.

Verona, Palazzo Forti, *Domenico Gnoli: Antologica*, 1982–1983.

Lausanne, Musée Cantonal des Beaux-Arts, *Retrospective Domenico Gnoli*, 1983.

Spoletto, Palazzo Racani-Arroni, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1985.

Paris, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Domenico Gnoli 1933–1970*, 1986–1987. This exhibition later traveled to Brussels, Galerie Isy Brachot, 1987.

Saint-Paul de Vence, Fondation Maeght, *Domenico Gnoli*, 1987.

Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, *Domenico Gnoli 1933–1970*, 1987.

Madrid, Fundacion Pensions, *Domenico Gnoli, Ultimas Obras*, 1990.

Brussels, Galerie Isy Brachot, *Bijl, Cragg, Gilbert and George, Gnoli, Lang, Panamarenko, Schnabel, Xiao Xia*, 1992.

Palma, Majorca, Centre de Cultura “Sa Nostra,” *Domenico Gnoli*, 1997.

Modena, Galleria Civica di Modena, Palazzina dei Giardini, *Domenico Gnoli*, 2001.

Prato, Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, *Domenico Gnoli*, 2004.

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Private Collection
Photo: Adam Reich

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1966
Acrylic and sand on canvas
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Private Collection

Poltrona

1966
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Due Dormienti

1966
Acrylic and sand on canvas
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Courtesy Fondazione Orsi

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MAXXI - Museo Nazionale delle
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Courtesy Fondazione MAXXI
Photo: Patrizia Tocci

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Fundación Yannicky Ben Jakober
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Stiftung Museum Kunstpalast
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Photo: Alessandro Vasari

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Private Collection
Photo: Alessandro Vasari

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Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna e
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Fundación Yannicky Ben Jakober
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1967
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Fundación Yannicky Ben Jakober
Collection, Majorca, Spain

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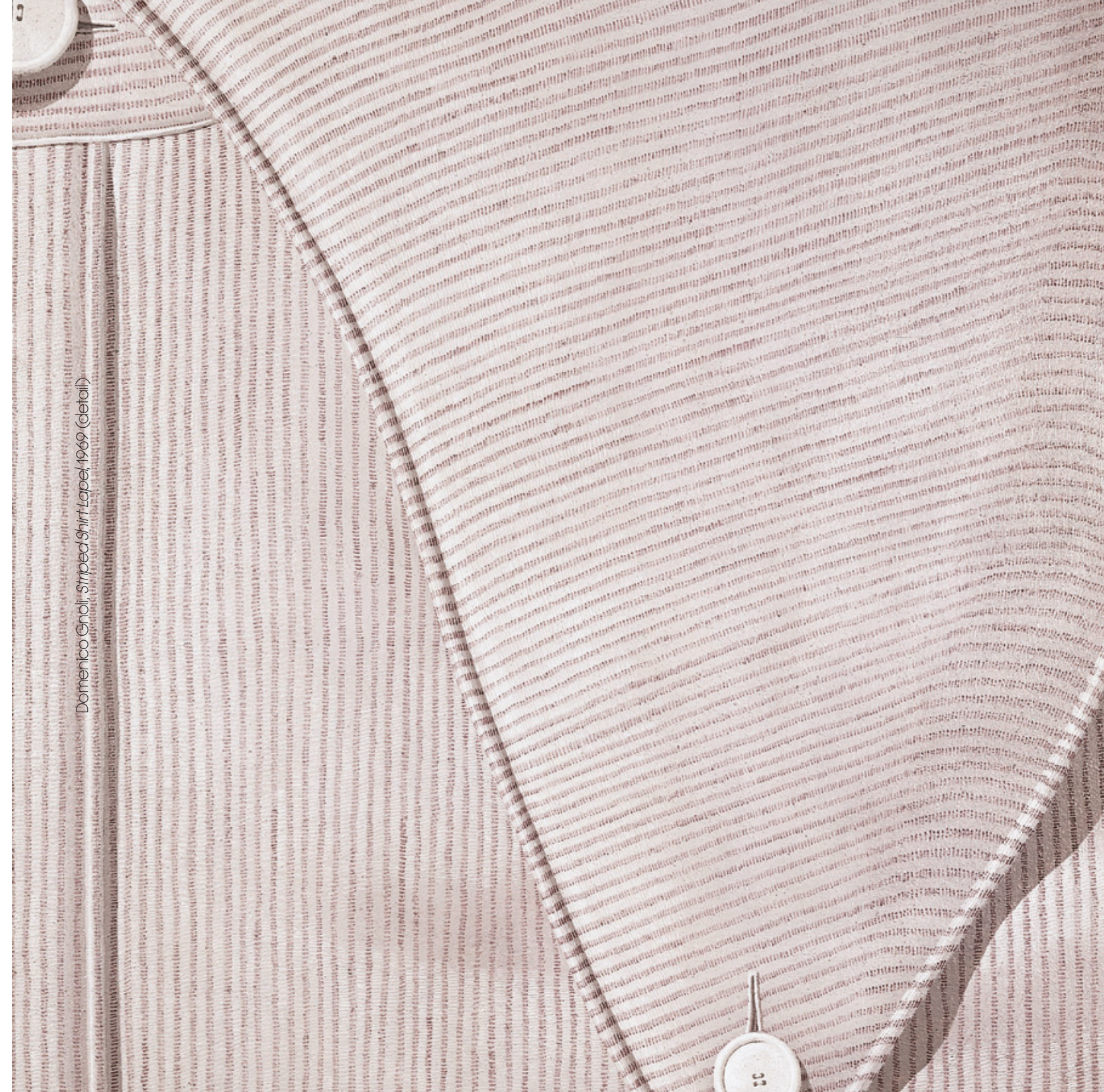


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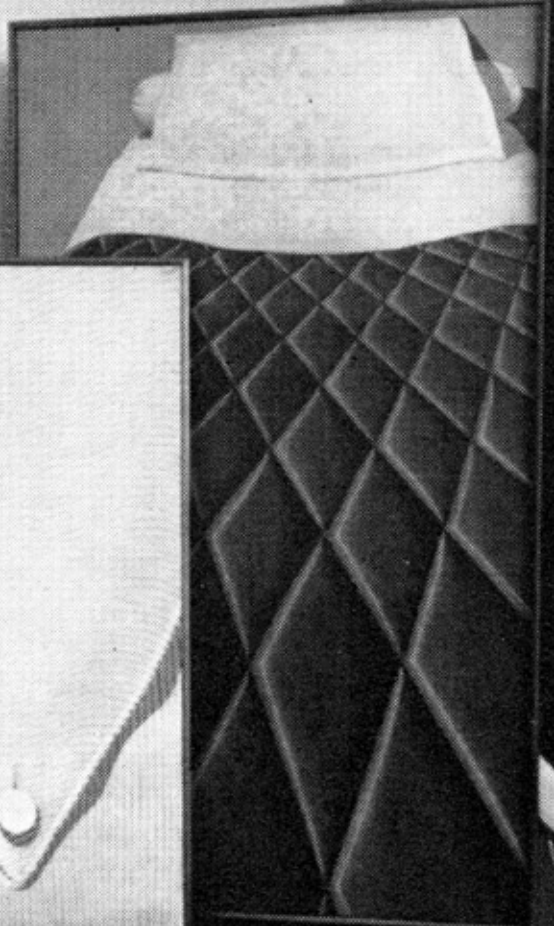
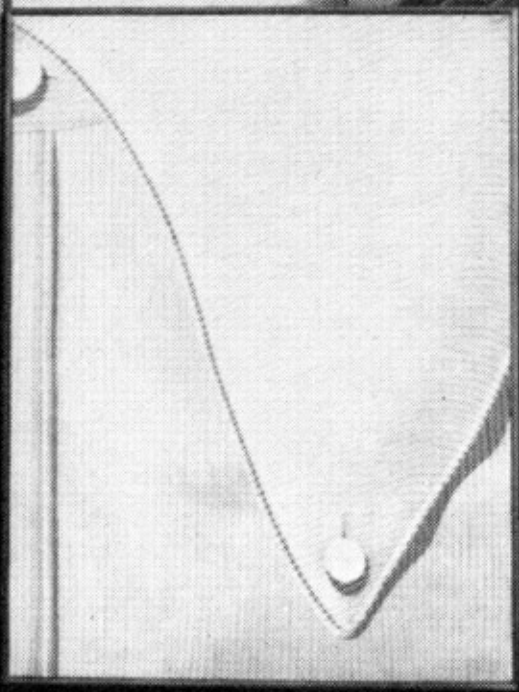
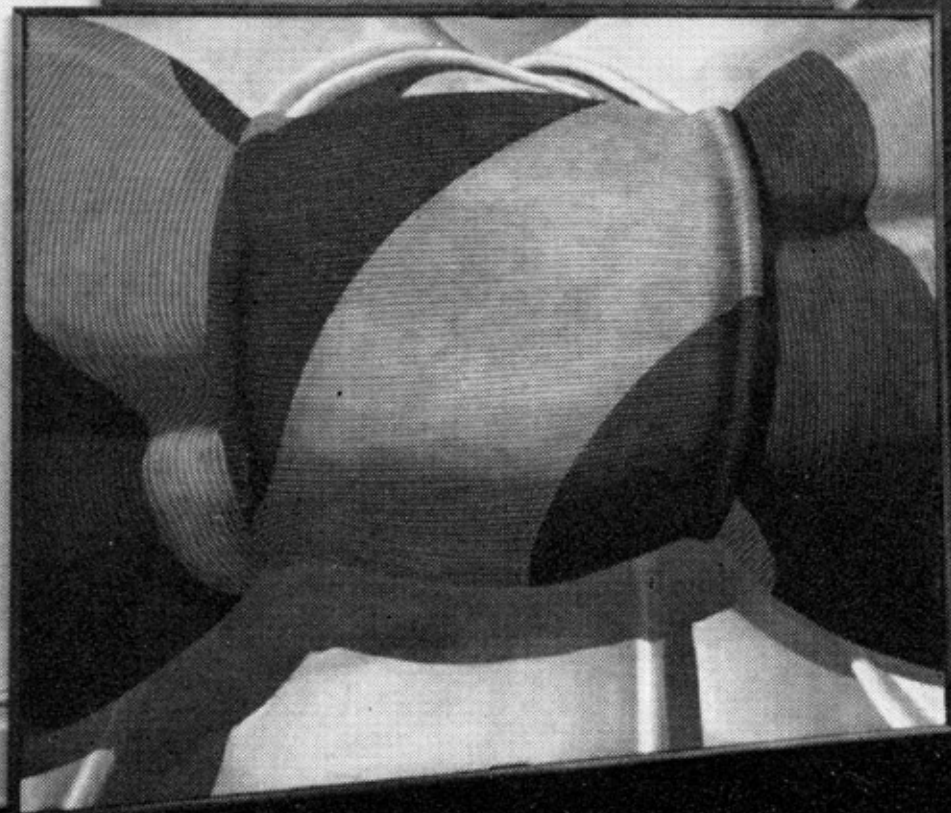
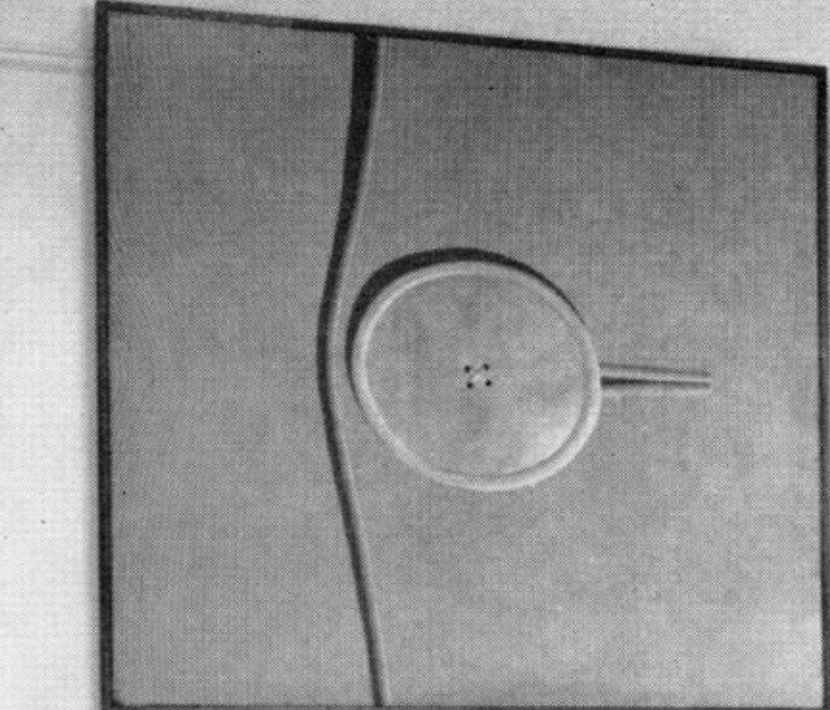
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Domenico Gnoli, *Capigliatura*, 1965 (detail)

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