

Giorgio de Chirico Letters to Paul and Gala Eluard

[Above]

*Please, remember me to Mr. Max Ernst, hoping to meet him some day
Dear Madame,*

Thank you for your lovely words. Poor unfortunate Ulysses is almost done and I will hold him for you. I am preparing the canvas of the Cerveau de l'enfant I promised you and the Trovatore Eluard purchased.

I hope to hear from you soon. With my respectful devotion,

G. de Chirico

My dearest friend,

To console myself from my moral emptiness after your departure, I have set myself to work like an African lorded over by a Belgian colonial officer. I am working on Battaglia, Ulysses, and soon I will begin work on Trovatore and other works. I am very pleased with your purchases in Florence; my friend wrote me an enthusiastic letter about you.. I will write more in the next few days, and don't forget me.

I clasp your hand with fraternal cordiality,

Your friend, G. de Chirico

Via Appennini, 25b

Dear Madame,

Thank you for your kind letter. I received the books; I have not yet received the colours. I will be extremely happy to receive the magazine in which, as you say, I am discussed. I am about to finish the Trovatore for your husband and the Cerveau de l'enfant for you. I do not hide the fact that I do not like this title; to me, this painting is entitled Le Revenant and that is what it is: le revenant. There is something disagreeably mad and surgical about the other title which has nothing to do with the essence of my art. I will send you the paintings when they are well dried, and packaged safely; rest assured. I have made progress since you left; I have made new discoveries. Here is my latest and best recipe:

- 1. Beat 2 egg whites until they froth*
- 2. Beat 2 egg yolks with three small spoonfuls of white vinegar*
- 3. 11 spoonfuls of cooked flax oil*

Rome, Thursday [1923]

*** Rome, February 10**

[1924]

* The two letters are connected to the personal copy of the romance *Hebdômeros* (1929) by de Chirico, which belonged to Paul Eluard.

4. One piece of Marseille soap (the size of 1/4 of a walnut) dissolved in half a finger of water
 5. A pinch (the amount you can pick up with the end of a pen-knife) of Venetian turpentine (pure pine resin) diluted in a few drops of ordinary turpentine or petroleum.
 Mix all of this together to form a perfect emulsion. One mixes the colors in this emulsion and paints with it. A beautiful matter emerges, precious and luminous; recommend it to Max Ernst. I am gratified (in the best sense of the word) by your consideration and interest, Madame. It inspires me to continue to paint better. You are the most intelligent and fascinating woman I have ever met and I beg you to believe me, I am your most humble and respectful servant,

G. de Chirico

My dearest friend,

I am very pained to hear that you are still unwell. Is it still the sprain from Chamonix? My brother often speaks to me of you and regrets not having met you during your time here. What is Breton doing and why have I not heard from him? I would like to know his decision regarding the paintings for the exhibit. I already wrote to tell you that one of them has been sold (L'après-midi d'automne). What are you doing and how is your work proceeding? Things are going quite well for me as you can see above: a German inscription on an early self-portrait by Dürer; a portrait which was recently bought by the Louvre. Write to me. I clasp your hand fraternally. Your portraits have been magnificently framed.

Yours, G. de Chirico
 Via Appennini, 25b