

Paesaggi italiani
Giovanni Copelli

Texts by Giorgio di Domenico and Jo Rigo
(available in the publication *Ondo Agenda*)

21st September – 9th Nov 2024
Opening 21st Settembre 2024
12 am - 12 pm

Visits by appointment.
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Ondo presents *Paesaggi Italiani*, Giovanni Copelli's first solo show in Tuscany. The exhibition marks the beginning of Ondo's program, a project space dedicated to emerging artists, with a particular focus on the Italian art scene. New synthesis of Copelli's artistic research, *Paesaggi Italiani* is the result of an ongoing dialogue with the artist, taking the form of notes, images and atmospheres, that convey an image of contemporary Italy. The exhibition showcases a collection of paintings that have organically developed over months of work, beginning from a pre-existing nucleus. The works will be on view at Ondo from September 21st to November 9th, 2024.

Sandwiches, cityscapes, church interiors, stolen portraits, and food leftovers crop and bring into focus some of the elements of Copelli's Italian landscapes, guiding us from Caserta to Reggio Emilia in an exploration of the Italian provinces. Like photographs, these images capture moments and fragments of everyday life which, though rooted in specific contexts, echo a shared cultural identity. *Via Imbriani sotto la pioggia* in Naples is not much different from *Via Imbriani* in Milan, in Florence, or in Bologna; the lavish details of *Santa Caterina a Formello* and the tired visitors of *Santa Felicita* are sights one might expect to encounter in other churches across the peninsula; the Peroni beer on Matteotti bridge (*Peroni (Ponte Matteotti; Bologna)*) could just as well be found on the bridge crossing the scrapyards of *Via Cesare Battisti* in Pistoia; and like the Neapolitan diners in *La cena* or the scene in *L'ultima luce*, it is difficult to pinpoint exactly where the artist encountered them. Even when faced with clearer references, such as archaeological sites or monuments (*Cerveteri; La nostra fine*), the familiarity and geographical specificity blur together.

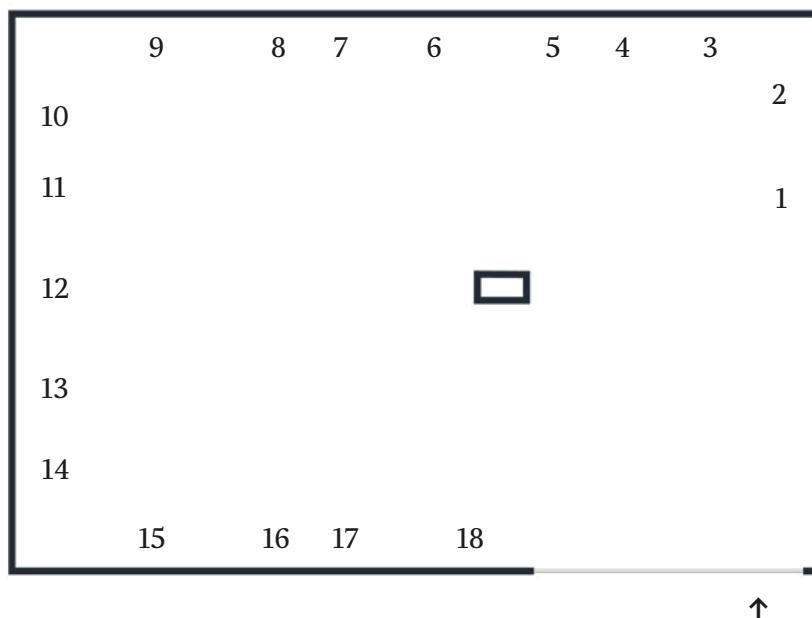
The works on display, like all Copelli's recent artistic production, respond to a documentary impulse that drives the artist to select subjects, scenes, and situations that exude reality, even from a painterly perspective. His painting style draws back to a Dutch tradition of optical painting, that prioritises observation and represen-

tation: the sincerity of the subjects — like sandwiches, pastries at the bar, or the deli woman (*Panino; Pasticci; Il banco dei salumi*) — is reflected in a democratic painting style that portrays what it sees while embracing compositional freedom. Copelli depicts domestic scenes (*Festa; Righe*), portrays street subjects (*Silvio*), uses empty bottles as vanishing points (*Peroni (Ponte Matteotti; Bologna)*), and turns miniature-souvenirs into architectures (*Cattedrale*). In this way, he seems to revive genre scenes — intended as representations of everyday social and private activities — and reinterpret (or perhaps just update?) the traditional genres of still life, portrait, and landscape painting.

Paesaggi Italiani narrates a fragmented yet unified Italy through the familiarity of its settings. The exhibition invites us to reflect on the construction of a shared imagination, based not only on the peculiarities of each individual place, view, or subject, but also on their universal nature, capable of evoking shared feelings.

Giovanni Copelli (Correggio, 1989) lives in Reggio Emilia. He earned a Master's degree in Contemporary Art Theory from Goldsmiths University in London in 2015. His most recent solo exhibitions include *Mille Miglia*, Gelateria Sogni di Ghiaccio, Bologna, 2022; *Amor Sacro*, Union Pacific, London, 2020; *A Cavallo Monumenti Equestri e Altre Pitture*, Operativa Arte Contemporanea, Rome, 2020.

Ondo is a project space that hosts exhibitions of contemporary emerging artists, founded by Arianna Iandelli and Costanza Nizzi. The project was born from the need to establish a space and an exhibition context dedicated to the work of emerging artists, with a particular focus on the Italian art scene. Exhibitions are developed from discussions with invited artists and with the intention of providing a vibrant and critical research environment. Ondo is a portion of the ground-floor spaces of a former textile warehouse.



1) Panino

2024, Oil canvas, 13 x 18 cm

2) Via Imbriani dopo la pioggia

2024, Oil canvas, 40 x 35 cm

3) Peroni (Ponte Matteotti; Bologna)

2024, Oil canvas, 50 x 70 cm

4) Andrea del Sarto e il suo pubblico

2024, Oil canvas, 30 x 20 cm

5) Paste

2024, Oil canvas, 25 x 30 cm

6) La nostra fine

2024, Oil canvas, 15 x 15 cm

7) Righe

2024, Oil canvas, 25 x 30 cm

8) Santa Felicita

2024, Oil canvas, 25 x 40 cm

9) Cattedrale

2024, Oil canvas, 18 x 13 cm

10) L'ultima luce

2024, Oil canvas, 35 x 25 cm

11) Silvio

2024, Oil canvas, 70 x 50 cm

12) Il banco dei salumi

2023, Oil canvas, 30 x 25 cm

13) Salse

2024, Oil canvas, 30 x 30 cm

14) Cerveteri

2024, Oil canvas, 40 x 30 cm

15) Santa Caterina a Formiello

2024, Oil canvas, 30 x 25 cm

16) Panino

2024, Oil canvas, 13 x 18 cm

17) La cena

2024, Oil canvas, 40 x 35 cm

18) Festa

2024, Oil canvas, 20 x 15 cm