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Domenico Gnoli, *La Flotta Napoletana*, c. 1957

**ARTIST**

Domenico Gnoli (1933-1970)

**TITLE**

La Flotta Napoletana

**MEDIUM**

Watercolour and ink on paper

**DATE**

c. 1957

**SIZE**

27 ½ x 39 in : 69.5 x 99.0 cm

**FRAME SIZE**

39 ¼ x 50 ¾ in : 100.0 x 129.0 cm

**PROVENANCE**

Collection of Gioia Marconi Braga  
and George Braga  
Private Collection

**LITERATURE**

Niccolò Tucci (article), Domenico Gnoli's World of Fantasy: A Young Italian Draws 'Characters From Uninvented Fairy Tales, Dramas and Comedies', *Horizon*, vol 1, no.6, July 1959, p. 140 (illus.)

Germano Celant, Domenico Gnoli, *Fondazione Prada*, 2021, p.59, fig.340 (illus.)

**REFERENCE**

AC24-18



## Domenico Gnoli

Domenico Gnoli, born in 1933 in Rome, Italy, was an innovative artist whose work bridged the realms of painting, illustration, and theatre design. Known for his meticulous attention to detail and unique visual style, Gnoli's career, though tragically short, left a lasting impact on the art world. He studied at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Rome and further honed his skills in Paris and London, where he was exposed to a wide array of artistic influences.

Gnoli's work is characterised by its hyper-realistic depiction of mundane objects and close-up views of everyday scenes. His paintings often focus on fragments of clothing, furniture, and interiors, rendered with extraordinary precision and a keen sense of texture and light. This approach creates a sense of intimacy and magnification, transforming the ordinary into something extraordinary and contemplative. His style is often associated with Pop Art and Photorealism, yet it maintains a distinctive surreal quality that sets it apart.

Before fully dedicating himself to painting, Gnoli enjoyed a successful career in theatre design, working for prominent directors such as Luchino Visconti and Orson Welles. His experience in theatre is evident in the dramatic composition and lighting of his paintings, which often resemble stage sets in their attention to detail and narrative potential.

Gnoli gained international recognition in the 1960s, with solo exhibitions in New York, London, and Paris.

His work was well-received for its unique perspective and technical prowess. Notable exhibitions include his 1964 show at the Sidney Janis Gallery in New York and his 1969 exhibition at the Galerie Claude Bernard in Paris. These exhibitions helped cement his reputation as a significant contemporary artist.

Despite his rising fame, Gnoli's career was cut short when he died of cancer in 1970 at the age of 36. His legacy, however, endures through his distinctive body of work, which continues to be celebrated for its originality and meticulous craftsmanship. Gnoli's paintings are held in major collections, including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, and the Tate in London.

Gnoli's work is often seen as a meditation on the material world, elevating the ordinary to the level of fine art. His ability to capture the essence of everyday objects with such clarity and depth has left a lasting influence on contemporary art, inspiring subsequent generations of artists to explore the beauty and complexity of the mundane.

Domenico Gnoli's contribution to the art world, though brief, remains significant. His hyper-realistic style, combined with a surreal sensibility, creates a unique and compelling visual experience. Gnoli's work invites viewers to look closer, to appreciate the intricate details of the everyday, and to find wonder in the seemingly insignificant.



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