

NOTE

This collection of short pieces was begun some years ago, and should perhaps be regarded as a work in progress, or repository, to which other items will almost certainly be added in time. This matches the life-work of the Italian artist Giorgio Morandi - 'the man who painted jugs' - who first turned his attention to the austere, modest forms of still-life around 1918, and who continued to remain constantly and unswervingly absorbed in his vision even in the last months of his life in 1964.

His subject is the classic paraphernalia, the domestic lumber found in the still-lives of the Dutch and French masters of the 17th and 18th centuries, and developed in the paintings of Cezanne, Braque, and many other later artists. Flowers and fruits, however, engaged him less than receptacles; and he soon assembled around himself a family or community of bottles, phials, jugs, to which he remained tenaciously loyal throughout a long and productive career. Some of these articles (*oggetti*) are indeed curious in shape and function; others are commonplace, 'vernacular': all are rendered compatible through Morandi's vision and powers of organization. Indeed, these works could be described as 'transcendental', in so far as such modest material objects could be invested on the one hand with an almost architectural grandeur - (some of the large etchings take on the aspects of nocturnal street-scenes) - and yet elsewhere could be dissolved in ambiguity - a kind of timeless evanescence. The technique is always under review; the vision alert and devoted: the *things* remain luminous/resonant. Are we talking of obsession or love? (Some of Morandi's still - lifes are posed like group-photographs; there is something almost anthropomorphic in the appearance and attitude of some of his jugs...).

It is a hermetic, withdrawn world - - the dusty, rather decrepit house he shared with his two spinster sisters. And if the door were suddenly to burst open...? Italian Futurism, the Art of Noise, Fascism, Fellini?

These pieces may be performed either in the sequence published, or, if preferred, other selections may be drawn.

Throughout – depending upon the acoustics, the condition of the piano, and of course mood – unmeasured pauses should be as long as is felt appropriate: still but charged. Appreciate and consider the silences, 'taste' the resonances.

Oggetti – omaggio á Morandi were first performed by Hiroaki Takenouchi at a Park Lane Group concert in January 2004.

JEREMY DALE ROBERTS

