

PER INGE BJØRLO / SHINICHIRO KANO / BENDIK RIIS / SIMONA RUNCAN / CALLY SPOONER
“THE FEELING OF FIVE O’CLOCK MOVING INTO FIVE THIRTY.”

08.10.2026-07.11.2026 / preview: Thursday 08.10.2026 / 18.00-20.00 /

After two days of running more than 100 kilometers, I climbed the stairs of Via Fondazza number 36 with equal amounts of agony and anticipation. From St Mark’s Square in Venice to St Peter’s Square in Rome, I would be covering almost 500 kilometres of backroads and trails. I would be seeing parts of Italy that I had never seen before, and I would be seeing parts of it that I should have long since seen. Up the stairs and through the door, I had finally arrived at Casa Morandi in Bologna.

The studio and the bedroom of Giorgio Morandi, was one and the same. It was a very modestly sized room that was tucked towards the back of a somewhat grand apartment, which he shared with three younger, unmarried sisters. His bed, his books, his brushes and his easel, were all where he had left them when he left the earth in 1964. Which is to say: everything was close, yet everything was in its place. Spread across the room, were the many vases, bowls and bottles that he kept on arranging and rearranging in his paintings, drawings and etchings. A double door opened to the balcony, which allowed a view of the courtyard and equally allowed for a generous amount of daylight to flow into the studio. With this as his only source of light, Morandi would be staging the various vessels on tabletops of different heights; turning them, studying them, and permitting the passing sunlight to articulate their sculptural volumes. The vast majority of his 1 350 paintings came into being in this studio. However, none of them were here to be seen. Rather, you realised, that you were looking at a lifetime of looking.

It was the Japanese-American painter Miyoko Ito, who described Morandi’s still life paintings as having “the feeling of five o’clock moving into five thirty”. The museum had closed. I was crossing Piazza Maggiore and witnessing the work day coming to an end and the evening - with all its ambitions and anticipations - starting to take shape. People were gathering around the square, making time for afternoon drinks with friends and making plans for dinner. The two tilting towers of Bologna were catching the sunset and echoing Morandi’s paintings’ rare sense of structure, tension and suspense. I was thinking of Ito’s phrase. I was thinking of how Morandi’s paintings are unmarked by change, yet charged by the passing of time. I was thinking of this one painting in particular from 1948, which was an arrangement of vases and jugs set on top of a light grey table and set against a pale yellow background. It was if the objects that were lined up, were trying to hold their pose for an endlessly long exposure. They were not moving, but you could swear that they were breathing! A low pulse in a pulsating shallow space, where the scale of the objects and their relationship to their surroundings remained uncertain. The artist Vilja Celmins made the observation when first encountering a Morandi painting in New York in the late 1950s: “On closer inspection, I discovered how strange the painting was, how the objects seemed to be fighting for each other’s space. One could not determine their size or location. They appeared both flat and dimensional, and were so tenderly painted that the paint itself seemed to be the subject”

The following morning I was on my way to Florence - taking the route of Via Degli Dei over the mountains. It had been raining throughout the night and the trail was muddy. I was being mindful of where I put my feet, and then noticed how my brightly coloured running shoes had been covered in a fine, light clay. Life was mimicking art. Like a pair of Morandi’s vases, my shoes were now subdued - soiled by a clay that probably was not so dissimilar to that which had made up the bricks that had built Bologna. I was grounded. “I have been fortunate enough to lead.... an uneventful life”, Morandi admitted, and fully accepted being bound to Bologna. He hardly ever left his hometown. He only twice left his country. His paintings, however, made it everywhere. They made me come here - and if I can make it for another 400 kilometres, I will make it to Rome.

Seeing Morandi’s studio has me looking at his still life paintings in an another way or looking for other things whenever I see them. And sometimes they make me look for other things in the works of other artists. Such as a bright summer day, which had me seeing the sculptures of Per-Inge Bjørlo in a giant hall in a former military camp. It was filled with furniture that he had completed for a commission. I sat down in each of the chairs that he had made,

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and then we drove to buy the sweetest strawberries that were in season. A day in April in Tokyo where I met Shinichiro Kano at an opening at Satoko OE Contemporary and spent the rest of the evening looking through the binder documenting all of his works. A day, being five years old and being on a beach by the Black Sea just a few kilometres north of Simona Runcan's summer house, and years thereafter realising that it most likely was the closest I ever got to meet her. A day in October in Milan, having lunch outside with Paolo Zani from Zero and returning to his gallery to the solo exhibition of Cally Spooner together - and, the following day, travelling to Turin and being treated to her sound installation that was filling the dark, helix access ramp to the Lingotto. And then, looking at the face in the shape of an hourglass in the drawing by Bendik Riis, imagining the day that dates the drawing - the 7th of July, 1943 - and imaging what Oslo looked like during wartime. The human bodies, herein, transformed to ornaments, machinery and shapes of geometry - searching for an essence, and settling for impermanence.

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Per Inge Bjørlo (b. 1952, Spjelkavik, Norway - lives and works in Hønefoss) graduated from the Bergen Academy of Art and Design in Bergen in 1977 and The National Academy of Fine Arts in Oslo in 1981. His works have been shown at the Sao Paulo Biennial (1985) and the Venice Biennale (1987), as well Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebæk (1989); Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen (1991) and will in 2030 be subject to a large survey exhibition at the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo.

Shinichiro Kano (b. 1982, Tokyo, Japan - lives and works in Tokyo) graduated with a B.F.A from Nagoy Zokei University of Art and Design in Aichi, Japan. His works have been subject to numerous solo exhibitions with Satoko OE Contemporary, Tokyo, as well as having been included in exhibitions at Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum, Tokyo; ShugoArts, Tokyo; Citizen's gallery of Fuchu Art Museum, Tokyo; and Tokyo Opera City Art Gallery, Tokyo. A solo exhibition of his works will take place at STANDARD (OSLO) during spring 2027.

Bendik Riis (b. 1911, Fredrikstad, Norway- d. 1988, Halden) was a Norwegian artist whose drawings and paintings merged his own biography with myths and fragments of Norwegian folklore. Despite spending his entire adult life in psychiatric treatment, Riis was a keen observer of contemporary life, offering comment and care for victims of war, torture and mistreatment.

Simona Runcan (b.1942, Bucharest, Romania- d. 2007, Bucharest) received her education from the Nicolae Grigorescu Fine Arts Institute in Bucharest, where she graduated from the Graphics Department in 1966. Throughout her practice as an artist, she was taking part in exhibitions in Romania and abroad, and in 2016 the "Palatele Brâncovenești" Cultural Centre in Mogoșoaia, Romania, hosted the very first retrospective exhibition dedicated to Simona Runcan's works.

Cally Spooner (b. Ascot, United Kingdom - lives and works in Turin, Italy and London, United Kingdom) is a British-Italian artist and writer, whose exhibitions, performances and various other projects have been presented at such museums as The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago; Castello di Rivoli Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin; Centre d'Art Contemporain Genève, Geneva; Whitechapel Gallery, London; and Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam.

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For further information please visit our webpage: www.standardoslo.no or contact Eivind Furnesvik at eivind@standardoslo.no or +47 917 07 429 / +47 22 60 13 10. STANDARD (OSLO) is open Wednesday-Friday: 12.00-17.00/ Saturday: 12.00-16.00. Sunday and Monday: Closed. Tuesday: Open by appointment.

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STANDARD (OSLO)

**/ Eilert Sundts gate 40
/ N-0355 Oslo**

**/ +47 22 60 13 10
/ +47 22 60 13 11**

**/ info@standardoslo.no
/ www.standardoslo.no**