

CLOSE QUARTERS

19 JUNE – 25 SEPTEMBER 2020

LONDON - ML Fine Art presents a group exhibition of Italian and international twentieth-century art. Complemented by a selection of modern design from Madrid, London and New York based gallery Portuondo, *Close Quarters* alludes to the household of an imagined collector.

The sensual encounter with this eclectic collection delineates an imperfect portrait, which the viewer is invited to complete. Simultaneously intimate and startlingly impersonal, the objects on view invite speculative incursions on the life of our unnamed protagonist: what did he buy, and what did he inherit? What has he already sold?

Visitors are encouraged to linger in the space – to formulate, entertain and reject their own preposterous suppositions. The collector is a yet-unwritten literary character, prone to inhabit the pages of different authors, trying them on for size like a silk shirt.

Walter Benjamin dreamt of authoring a book made up entirely of other people's words, intimating in the pages of *The Arcades Project*:

Method of this project: literary montage. I needn't say anything. Merely show. I shall purloin no valuables, appropriate no ingenious formulations. But the rags, the refuse—these I will not inventory but allow, in the only way possible, to come into their own: by making use of them. [N1a,8]

In this spirit, *Close Quarters* will be accompanied by a succession of texts that aim to enrich as much as confound our encounter with the unnamed collector. The first text in the series is an excerpt from the beginning of Christopher Isherwood's 1935 novel *Mr Norris Changes Trains*.

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Exhibition realized in collaboration with

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