

Todos nuestros catálogos de arte
All our art catalogues
desde/since 1973

DEPERO FUTURIST (1913-1950)

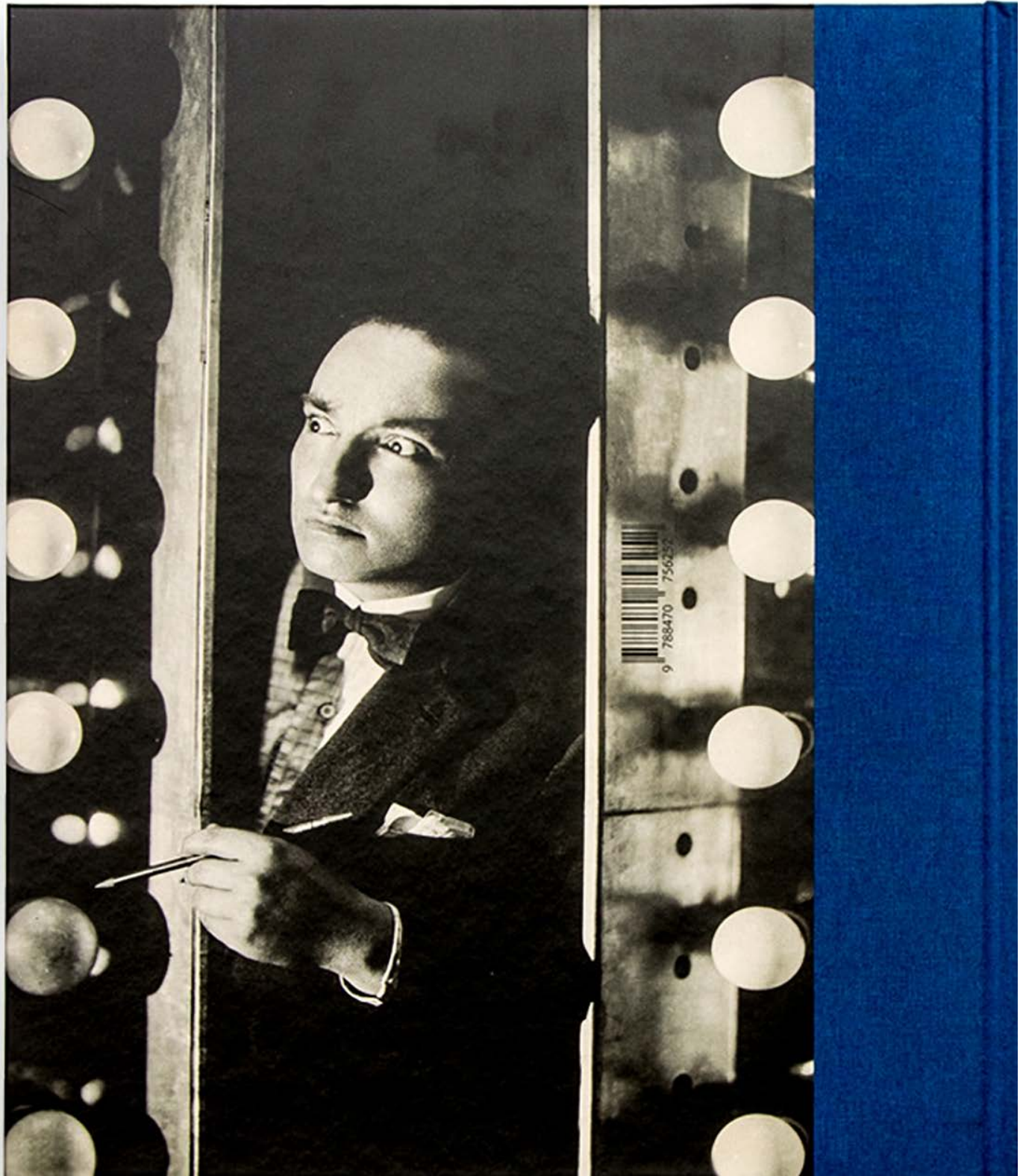
2014

El uso de esta base de datos de catálogos de exposiciones de la Fundación Juan March comporta la aceptación de los derechos de los autores de los textos y de los titulares de copyrights. Los usuarios pueden descargar e imprimir gratuitamente los textos de los catálogos incluidos en esta base de datos exclusivamente para su uso en la investigación académica y la enseñanza y citando su procedencia y a sus autores.

Use of the Fundación Juan March database of digitized exhibition catalogues signifies the user's recognition of the rights of individual authors and/or other copyright holders. Users may download and/or print a free copy of any essay solely for academic research and teaching purposes, accompanied by the proper citation of sources and authors.



FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH
www.march.es



**EL FUTURISMO
DE PERÒ
1913-1950**



FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH
www.march.es

DEPERO

ARCHITETTO
PITTORE
SCULTORE
FUTURISTA
RACCONTO
PLASTICO
IL NUOVO
FANTASTICO
LO STILE
D'ACCIAIO
RITRATTO
PSICOLOGICO
MOTURISMO
PLASTICO
FAMA MONDIALE

GLORIE PLASTICHE
ARCHITETTURA
PUBBLICITARIA
TEATRO
MAGICO
ARAZZI
CUSCINI
GIOCATTOLE
CARTELLONI
TEATRO
MOBILI
AMBIENTI

This catalogue and its Spanish edition are published
on the occasion of the exhibition

FUTURIST 1913-1950 DEPERO

Fundación Juan March, Madrid
October 10, 2014 – January 18, 2015

Manuel Fontán del Junco (ed.),
Maurizio Scudiero, Gianluca Poldi, Llanos Gómez Menéndez, Carolina
Fernández Castrillo, Pablo Echaurren, Alessandro Ghignoli,
Claudia Salaris, Giovanna Ginex, Belén Sánchez Albarrán, Raffaele Bedarida,
Giovanni Lista and Fabio Belloni



Everything that is involved in a publication of this type, from its conception to its production, must inevitably aim to emulate its subject. With a book on an artist as global as Depero (through whom so many numerous strictly contemporary aspects of life and art can be understood and without whom the history of Futurism cannot be told, nor that of modern graphic design, avant-garde typography or 20th-century artistic experimentation with the book) the medium is also the message. For this reason, the typefaces and fonts used in this book have been chosen with great care (in the catalogue: Garage Gothic for display, Calibre and ITC Cheltenham for text; in the facsimiles, Gothic, LoType, Romana, ITC Blair, Century Old Style, BT Normande, Latin, DeVenne, Founders Grotesque, Modern, Venus Halfbrett, Egizio, Else NPL, Madison, Torino, Vonnies, Herold Condensed, Antique Bernhard, BE Block, and FF Bau) and as a result, this volume aims to take shape through the artist's own expressions and titles of his works. As such, it can be understood as an *essere vivente artificiale*, an "artificial living being" that possesses

a powerful machine-heart (Depero's own works, with which the book begins) and, irrigating it all, an interpretative circulatory system (comprising nine canonical Futurist texts, forty-one by the artist himself, some of them facsimiles, and thirteen essays). This *Futurist Depero (1913-1950)* resembles a *complesso plastico motorumorista*: a "motorumorist plastic complex" with visual games (in the chapters) that are typographically legible but which at the same time involve movement and "noise" (echoing the artist's onomatopoeic poems, devoid of grammar and syntax). In 1909 Marinetti, who "glorified" Depero, declared that "a roaring automobile ... is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*." Depero saw his "bolted book" of 1927 as a typographical racing car. In keeping with this, the catalogue can be opened like the bonnet of a car, but beyond that it has been created in order that readers and art lovers, in addition to being able to admire its "steely style," will find in it what they need in order to set in motion the free Futurist game of its numerous and differing elements.

futuro próximo



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Fundación Juan March wishes to express its gratitude to the following individuals and institutions for their collaboration, assistance and the loan of works that have made this exhibition possible:

MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

Cristiana Collu, Nicoletta Boschiero, Clarenza Catullo, Francesca Velardita, Attilio Begher, Babila Scarperi

MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

Paola Pettenella, Mariarosa Mariech, Federico Zanoner, Carlo Prosser

Center for Italian Modern Art, New York (CIMA)

Laura Mattioli, Heather Ewing, Emily Delheim, Raffaele Bedarida, Fabio Belloni

Merrill C. Berman Collection, USA

Merrill C. Berman, Joelle Jensen

Archivo Lafuente

José María Lafuente, Javier Maderuelo, Noelia Ordóñez

Archivio Depero

Maurizio Scudiero

Galleria Campari

Paolo Cavallo, Marina Mojana, Sarah Mirne Pecoroni

Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni-Castello Sforzesco, Milan

Francesca Rossi, Maria Rita D'Amato

Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto

Roberto Pizzini

L'Arenario Studio Bibliografico

Bruno and Paolo Tonini

Futur-Ism

Massimo Carpi

Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive

Massimo and Sonia Cirulli

Musei Civici di Arte e Storia, Brescia

Elena Lucchesi, Luisa Cervati

Collezione Girefin

Clara Santini

As well as to the heirs of Fortunato Depero, to Victoria Marinetti and Filippo Piazzoni; to Maurizio Scudiero, Gianluca Poldi, Llanos Gómez Menéndez, Carolina Fernández Castrillo, Pablo Echaurren, Alessandro Ghignoli, Claudia Salaris, Giovanna Ginex, Belén Sánchez Albarrán, Raffaele Bedarida, Giovanni Lista, and Fabio Belloni; to Lawrence Rainey, to Diana Gargano, to Carlos Pérez (†), to José María Sevilla Maches, and to all those collectors who wish to remain anonymous. Our gratitude also goes to the Embassy of Italy in Spain and to the Italian Cultural Institute, as well as to Banca March and Corporación Financiera Alba.

LENDERS

INSTITUTIONS

MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero: Cats: 16, 27, 37, 64, 94, 108, 109, 110, 112, 116, 131, 133, 137, 138, 150, 151, 164, 168, 169, 170, 171, 181, 182, 208, 217, 236, 237, 244, 245, 246, 247, 265, 267, 268, 269, 270, 273, 274. **MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto:** 26, 48, 49, 50, 52, 143, 161, 162, 163, 179, 180, 186, 187, 188, 189, 190, 191, 193, 196, 197, 198, 201, 202, 203, 205, 206, 234, 253, 254, 260, 261, 263, 266, 275. **MART, Archivio di Nuova Scrittura, Collezione Paolo Della Grazia:** 36, 148. **Archivo Lafuente:** 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 15, 18, 19, 36, 38, 73, 132, 135, 152, 155, 157, 223, 233, 243, 255, 256, 262, 265, 271. **Archivio Depero:** 1, 31, 80, 81, 107, 119, 130, 149, 172, 174, 175, 176, 192, 220, 221, 264. **Galleria Campari:** 160, 165, 185, 194, 218, 224, 225, 226, 227, 228, 229, 230, 231, 232, 242 / **Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto:** 93, 125, 184, 200. **L'Arenario Studio Bibliografico:** 17, 44, 178. **Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni-Castello Sforzesco, Milan:** 9, 11. **Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive:** 128, 156. **Musei Civici di Arte e Storia, Brescia:** 84

PRIVATE COLLECTIONS

Private collection, Switzerland: 10, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 33, 34, 46, 51, 53, 54, 55, 56, 57, 58, 59, 60, 61, 62, 63, 65, 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 75, 77, 79, 82, 83, 86, 87, 88, 89, 90, 91, 92, 96, 97, 98, 99, 100, 101, 113, 115, 117, 118, 120, 122, 148, 153, 195, 239. **Merrill C. Berman Collection:** 30, 35, 39, 40, 41, 42, 45, 74, 78, 102, 103, 105, 106, 111, 123, 124, 129, 134, 154, 158, 159, 166, 167, 173, 207, 209, 210, 211, 212, 213, 219, 222, 233, 235, 240, 241, 248, 249, 250, 251, 257, 258, 259. **Collezione Massimo Carpi:** 136, 204. **Private collection, Milan:** 47, 144. **Collezione Girefin:** 76. **Private collection, Brescia:** 104. **Other private collections:** 3, 12, 13, 14, 28, 29, 32, 43, 72, 85, 95, 114, 121, 126, 127, 139, 140, 141, 142, 145, 146, 147, 148, 177, 183, 199, 214, 215, 216, 238, 252, 272

Unknown photographer, Fortunato Depero getting into a car, with Fedele Azari behind the wheel, Turin, 1922. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 3 1/8 x 3 15/16 in. (8 x 10 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

Unknown photographer,
Fortunato Depero and Filippo
Tommaso Marinetti wearing
Futurist gilets, Turin, 1925.
Photo Reportage Cav. Silvio
Ottolenghi, Turin. Photograph:
gelatin silver print on fiber-
based paper, 8 1/8 x 6 7/8 in.
(22 x 17.5 cm). MART, Archivio
del '900, Fondo Depero



FUTURIST DEPERO (1913-1950)

PREFACE



This catalogue and its Spanish edition have been published on the occasion of the exhibition *Futurist Depero (1913-1950)*, which the Fundación Juan March is devoting to the life and work of Fortunato Depero (Fondo, Trentino, 1892 – Rovereto, 1960) with the aim of offering a fresh perspective on the movement that has been considered “the avant-garde of avant-gardes,” namely Italian Futurism.

This 20th century movement, commanded by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, has found its place in history due to the radical nature of its proposals. The peak years of Futurism, between 1909 and 1915, resulted in an innovative and dynamic contribution to European

visual art and literature but one that was profoundly affected by World War I, which marked a break in the movement’s activities due to the fact that many Futurists were called up and some were killed in action, including Umberto Boccioni.

By 1913 Fortunato Depero had already been to Rome and had met Marinetti. In the same city he met Boccioni who, together with Giacomo Balla, would bring about a radical shift in his artistic output. In early 1915 Depero was officially admitted to the Futurist movement, of which he considered himself a member until his death, almost two decades after that of Marinetti in 1944. A multi-faceted artist, both cosmopolitan and profoundly Italian, and an indefatigable worker, Depero is less well known internationally than he deserves to be in the light of the real importance of his work for the internal evolution of Futurism and the astonishing modernity of his output.

This conviction prompted the organization of the project *Futurist Depero (1913-1950)*. Through a comprehensive selection of almost 300 works – objects, documents and photographs by Depero and other artists – loaned from international institutions and public and private collections, the exhibition sets out to present a com-

plete survey of Depero’s oeuvre.

On the one hand it aims to reveal *Tutto Depero* (the title of one of the artist’s last written accounts of his work), and on the other to present him as a key figure for an understanding of both the Futurist movement up to the end of the 1940s and its topicality in the 21st century.

Fortunato Depero’s oeuvre comprises a true *complesso plastico motorumorista*, a compilation of artistic and literary works that impresses the viewer and reader through the engaging and fascinating noise of the new.

The present catalogue opens with the presentation of Depero’s works, which are followed by a section of interpretative essays on his oeuvre and another featuring the most important texts from the period that both explain it and set it in context. The volume includes more than 400 color and black and white reproductions of paintings, set designs, painting-tapestries, designs for advertising, sculptures,

toys and visual poetry, in addition to documents, manifestos, photographs, letters, postcards, books and magazines. Taken together with the translated and edited texts in the Anthology (pp. 356-430), these contents comprise a true *complesso plastico motorumorista*, a compilation of artistic and literary works that impresses the viewer and reader through the engaging and fascinating noise of the new. This vast and extremely rich body of material bears witness to Depero’s remarkable output between 1913 and 1950.

With a view to establishing a context for the artist within the ambiguously termed “early Futurism,” this exhibition and its accompanying catalogue present a carefully selected group of works by other Futurist artists dating between 1909 and 1916. Works and texts by Filippo

CONTENTS

I. FROM ABSTRACTION TO FUTURISM 1909-1916	24
II. THEATER AND THE AVANT-GARDE 1916-1918	60
III. THE "FUTURIST HOUSE OF ART" AND THE ART OF ADVERTISING 1919-1928	104
IV. A FUTURIST IN NEW YORK. AND BACK IN ITALY 1929-1950	180

WORKS ON DISPLAY

6 PREFACE
FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH

18 ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION
A PORTAFORTUNA
FOR FORTUNATO DEPERO
MANUEL FONTÁN DEL JUNCO

250 THOUGHTS IN FREEDOM ABOUT DEPERO AND HIS ART
MAURIZIO SCUDIERO

266 THE PAINTING TECHNIQUE OF DEPERO: A SCIENTIFIC STUDY
GIANLUCA POLDI

280 PLASTIC COMPLEXES AND MECHANICAL ACTIONS: THE VISUAL-THEATRICAL-LIVING ORGANISM OF DEPERO
LLANOS GÓMEZ MENÉNDEZ

286 DEPERO AND PHOTO-PERFORMANCE
CAROLINA FERNÁNDEZ CASTRILLO

22

292 DEP, DEP, HURRAH! BOOKS AND JOURNALS BY DEPERO
PABLO ECHAURREN

ABOUT FORTUNATO DEPERO

246

304 THE "BOLTED BOOK" BY DEPERO OR THE TYPOGRAPHICAL RACING CAR
CLAUDIA SALARIS

308 NOT JUST CAMPARI! DEPERO AND ADVERTISING
GIOVANNA GINEX

318 DEPERO: "THE ART OF THE FUTURE WILL BE LARGELY ADVERTISING"
BELÉN SÁNCHEZ ALBARRÁN

298 THE WRITING OF DEPERO: A POETIC TRANSDUCTION
ALESSANDRO GHIGNOLI

328 "I WILL SMASH THE ALPS OF THE ATLANTIC": DEPERO AND AMERICANISM
RAFFAELE BEDARIDA

338 "FUTURO-FASCISMO"
GIOVANNI LISTA

346 THE CRITICAL FORTUNE AND ARTISTIC RECOGNITION OF THE WORK OF DEPERO
FABIO BELLONI

FORTUNATO DEPERO (1892-1960)
A CHRONOLOGY
AIDA CAPA AND MARTA SUÁREZ-INFESTA
434

DEPERO AND FUTURISM: AN ANTHOLOGY (1909-1951)

EDITED BY
MANUEL FONTÁN DEL JUNCO,
LLANOS GÓMEZ, ERICA WITSCHHEY
AND INÉS D'ORS

356

ITALIAN FUTURISM (1909-1933) 361 01 F. T. Marinetti, The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism (1909) 363 02 VV.AA., Manifesto of the Futurist Painters (1910) 364 03 F. T. Marinetti, Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature (1912) 366 04 VV.AA., Futurist Political Program (1913) 367 05 VV.AA., Marinetti, Futurist Synthetic Theater (1915) 369 06 G. Balla and F. Depero, Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe (1915) 376 07 VV.AA., Futurist Cinema (1916) 377 08 VV.AA., Futurist Manifesto of Mechanical Art (1922) 379 09 F. T. Marinetti and P. Masnata, Manifesto of Futurist Radio (Radio) (1933)

FORTUNATO DEPERO (1913-1951) 383 01 Boccioni's Exhibition - Futurist Sculpture (A Short Commentary) (1913) 385 02 After a Year of Endeavors... (1914) 395 03 Plastic Complexity - Free Futurist Game - The Artificial Living Being (1914) 398 06 Self-introduction (1921) 399 07 Theater Must Interpret Life (1926) 399 08 Plastic Arts of Today - Wall Manifesto (1927) 404 09 The First Motorist Plastic Complex (1927) 405 10 The Onomatology (1913) 405 10 The Need For Self-Advertisement - Wall Manifesto (1927) 408 11 Magic Theater (1927) 420 12 From Un Futurista a New York (c. 1928-1930): a) Skyscrapers; b) Ideal cinema; c) An abstract toast; perspective (1940) 425 18 From So I Think, So I Paint (1947): a) hold on!; b) continuity in space; h) cutting criticism; i) antipretty; d) typographic architecture; e) automaton; f) charleston; g) passatist; n) centrifugal and centripetal perspective; internal and emotional perspective, multiple perspective; o) shadows; p) physical transcendentalism; q) words in liberty; r) yes, marinetti had no strict principles 428 19 Manifesto of Nuclear Painting and Sculpture (1950) 430 20 The Return of Futurism (1951)

442 LIST OF WORKS ON DISPLAY
450 FURTHER READING
452 FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH EXHIBITION CATALOGUES AND OTHER PUBLICATIONS
456 CREDITS

DEPERO

Il visitatore dell'Esposizione Mondiale d'Arte decorativa di Parigi notava subito entrando nell'Esplanade des Invalides, una originalissima creazione del Futurismo Italiano: gli alberi artificiali di cemento armato, realizzazione del progetto Depero (villaggio artificiale con alberi in cemento) presentato da lui nel Primo Congresso Futurista di Milano (dicembre 1924) e commentato da tutti i giornali francesi. Il genio inventivo del pittore, scultore e decoratore Depero si manifesta da dieci anni rivelando all'Italia un universo di forme, ritmi, colori, fantasie, che sorprendono e finiscono per dominare e sedurre anche i più tardigradi e cocciuti passatisti. Noi futuristi siamo partiti in guerra quindici anni fa, contro la bellezza passatista (romantica, sim-bolica e decadente) che aveva per elementi tipici la sfasciamento pittoresco, l'crepuscolare, la corrosione, cie degli anni, le rovine, le trefazione, il pessimismo, la terie dell'agonia, l'estetica razione della morte. Sono questo immane bric-à-brac stato distrutto dai grandi sibilità dinamica, ultra colorante e simultanea creata lia e il mondo intero. Fui lettrizzato entrando quindici meretta di Depero tutta quadri, cuscini. L'Arte platrale che questo roccioso fecondissimo, instancabile nella sua casa d'Arte di Rovereto non ha più nulla del tentativo e della ricerca; siamo assolutamente nel realizzato, nel compiuto. Chi ha vissuto vicino a Depero, nella gesticolazione esuberante, talvolta frenetica, del suo corpo muscoloso, snello, sempre pulsante d'entusiasmo artistico trova naturalissima la qualifica di „mago“ colla quale io lo caratterizzo. **Magicamente**, egli crea, crea, crea, costruisce, lancia vaste zone di colori sulle pareti, ridipinge le facciate cattedraliche delle sue montagne trentine, e quasi riplaasmerebbe le nuvole dei tramonti alpestri, per foggiare i meravigliosi, giocondi mostri della sua fantasia. **Magicamente** egli ha realizzato, senza imitare nessuno, ciò che Boccioni definì così

mirabilmente nella sua opera „Pittura e scultura futurista“, la **solidificazione dell'impressionismo**. L'impressionismo quale conquista dell'atmosfera, ha offerto al mondo il fantastico sfasciamento degli oggetti nella luce, diventata la regina del mondo. Tutti sentono impressionisticamente la vanità dei profili chiusi e le innumerevoli Forze atmosferiche scatenarsi in compenetrazioni infinite, distinguersi una dall'altra, esigere dai nostri nervi una vita concreta sulla tela. Queste Forze esistono; alcuni le negano; ciò che è innegabile è la sensazione che noi proviamo della loro esistenza. Vi fu un impressionismo delle forze ambientali, che fatalmente doveva indurre al dinamismo plastico. Si tratta però, nell'esprimere queste forze, di evitare l'arruffio trito fumoso indeciso, la mania della nebulosità. Si trattava di creare delle forme definite, delle luci e delle ombre senza slabbrature, luci e ombre solidificate, tali da suggerire immediatamente delle costruzioni in legno o in metallo. Raggi, volumi, ombre, penombre, sfumature, dovevano diventare vere costruzioni fuori dall'incerto e dal confuso. Ed ecco la solidificazione dell'impressionismo che trionfa nelle opere di Depero. **Magicamente** Depero realizzò così quello **splendore geometrico e meccanico** da me cantato in un manifesto: „Questo ha per elementi essenziali: l'igienico oblio, la speranza, il desiderio, la forza imbrigliata, la velocità, la luce, la volontà, l'ordine, la disciplina, il metodo; il senso della grande città; l'ottimismo aggressivo che risulta dal culto dei muscoli e dello sport; l'immaginazione senza fili, l'ubiquità, il laconismo e la simultaneità che derivano dal turismo, dall'affarismo e dal giornalismo; la passione per il successo, il nuovissimo istinto per il record, la entusiastica imitazione dell'elettricità e della macchina; la concorrenza di energie convergenti in una sola traiettoria vittoriosa. Le grandi collettività umane, maree di faccie e di braccia urlanti, possono talvolta darci una leggera emozione. Ad esse però noi preferiamo la grande solidarietà dei motori preoccupati, zelanti e ordinati. Nulla è più bello di una grande centrale elettrica ronzante, che contiene la pressione idraulica di una catena di monti e la forza elettrica di un vasto

GLORIFICATO

orizzonte, sintetizzate nei quadri marmorei di distribuzione, irti di contatori, di tastiere e di commutatori lucenti. Questi quadri sono i nostri soli modelli in poesia. Abbiamo come precursori i ginnasti e gli equilibristi, che realizzano nei riposi e nelle cadenze delle loro musculature quella precisione scintillante d'ingranaggi e quello **splendore geometrico** che noi vogliamo raggiungere in poesia con le parole in libertà.“ **Magicamente** Depero ha realizzato un'arte „fresca di bucato“ secondo l'espressione originalissima del pittore Balla, cioè un'arte monda d'ogni ruga culturale, d'ogni tortura psicologica, d'ogni filosofumo. Nuova e lucente, come una uniforme militare nuova, **Magicamente** Depero è inventato un **Nuovo fantasterature** e figlio dei cristalli, **stico lontano dalle letture** e del cemento armato. Le flore e le faune multicolori di Depero sembrano portorite da grandi centrali elettriche o da grandi fabbriche di pneumatici e di cavi metallici. E' divertente inseguire colla fantasia le pance volubili, le mani tentacolari, i piedi inesaureibili dei mostri Deperiani nelle loro metamorfoasi dal caucciù alla carne viva, all'acciaio, alle pietre preziose. Vi sono occhi proiettati fuori che diventano spaventose stalattiti lucenti, nasi che pugnalanano nubi, mentre queste resistono con una ridente solidità di gonfi seni Pirelli. **Magicamente** Depero ha realizzato la **Giocondità Ballerina** e **ultraesilarante** dei suoi fantasmi insieme terrificanti e piacevolissimi, come quelli che divertono i sogni dei bambini di genio. Depero è un genio bambino, strafottentissimo creatore di giocattoli che riassumono l'inesauribile risata dei vulcani e le loro eruzioni creative. Salute, forza, virilità, fantasia, slancio, fecondità,

spensierata allegria; ecco le qualità di questo grande Pittore quale lo conobbi nel nostro primo incontro nello studio di Balla, quale lo si ammirava ritratto da sé stesso nel famoso quadro **La Casa Magica**, fra i telai splendidi di nuovo rosa, sotto i conigli taglienti di nuova luce verde, ritto davanti alle sue operaie di nuovo caucciù. Ebbi il piacere sette anni fa, di rilevare l'arte nuova del **tattilismo** al pubblico milanese che gremiva il salone del **Cova**, ritto e aureolato dagli splendori di questo quadro. Un imbecillissimo passatista che tentò di contraddirmi con insolenza, fu da me acciuffato e proiettato contro il quadro della „Casa Magica“ di Depero. Il passatista ruzzolò a terra. Il quadro fu così degnamente battezzato dalla prima lotta tattilista. Seguirono i trionfi di Depero alla Biennale di Roma ed alla Esposizione delle Arti decorative di Parigi: Le maggiori riviste di Francia elogiano i meravigliosi arazzi Deperiani. Martinie in „**Art et Decoration**“ scrive: „*Toutes ces raisons expliquent aussi la virulence des revendications futuristes qui ne prennent tout leur sens qu'en Italie On sait que des avant la guerre le groupe des futuristes menait une action violente en vue de secouer le joug du passé dans tous les domaines de l'esprit. Les machines, la vitesse, le simultaneisme devaient enfanter des oeuvres fortes et complètement nouvelles . . L'esthétique futuriste . . . dans le domaine décoratif évolua parallèlement au cubisme en France. Comme ce dernier et pour les mêmes raisons, elle occupe une place importante dans diverses branches de l'art décoratif où elle apporte une fougue renovatrice. Des artistes comme Depero, Balla, Prampolini composent des affiches, tapis, étoffes, coussins, panneaux, de tapisserie, etc. . . . qui retiennent autant par l'éclat et les procédés de composition que par des qualités plus discrètes. Des groupes de bois découpé procedent de la même inspiration et font penser à des jouets pour quelque Gargantua. Les maquettes et accessoires du Théâtre Magnétique concrétisent les projets du Théâtre futuriste.*“ Elie Nazaire scrive nell'„**Illustration**“: „*La présentation des futuristes est abondante: des panneaux, de tapis, des polychromies, des tableaux, des livres, des dessins, des*

– in addition to the generous loans made by the Musei Civici di Milan and Brescia, the Archivio Depero, and other public institutions and private collections. Particularly essential has been our close collaboration with the CIMA (Center for Italian Modern Art), which was recently created by Laura Mattioli in New York with the aim of promoting knowledge of Italian art internationally and which has focused on research on Depero since the start of this year. This joint effort has significantly contributed to the importance of *Futurist Depero (1913–1950)*. Published in an English and a Spanish edition, from its outset the catalogue has aimed at being more than just an effective accompaniment to the exhibition. Given the almost complete lack of monographs on Depero in both of these languages, this volume aims to expedite the process of obtaining for Depero the international “passport” that he still inexplicably lacks and which will allow his work to be more easily located in the 20th-century canon and be better known on an international level than it is today. It is for this reason that Depero's works are presented here in the company of a large and carefully devised group of essays (pp. 246–353). Some are written by leading Italian specialists on the artist and on Fu-

turism such as Maurizio Scudiero, Giovanni Lista, Claudia Salaris and Pablo Echaurren, while others are by a group of Italian and Spanish researchers – some as surprisingly young as they are academically brilliant – such as Raffaele Bedarida, Llanos Gómez Menéndez, Alessandro Ghignoli, Carolina Fernández Castrillo, Giovanna Ginex, Fabio Belloni and Bélen Sánchez Albarrán. Given the complexity of Depero's oeuvre, which still remains to be established through a catalogue raisonné, the publication in this volume of some of the findings of Gianluca Poldi's rigorous analysis of the pictorial technique, materials and dating of more than thirty works by the artist is particularly important. In addition to the different essays, which offer the reader a true *prospettiva multipla* on the artist, an analytical rigor comparable to Poldi's detailed scientific analyses has characterized the overall approach to Depero's work present in these pages. The catalogue also includes a large selection of key Futurist texts as well as texts by Depero (in which the artist's visual powers combine with a literary talent as direct as it is entertaining), almost none of them previously published in English or in Spanish, and which cast further light on the artist's life and work.

The realization of this project would not have been possible without numerous individuals and institutions and their invaluable help, support and generosity (a generosity which, in some cases, has been reinforced by a highly relevant “vision” that has enabled specific obstacles to be overcome). Many are named in the acknowledgements section while others have preferred to remain anonymous. The Fundación Juan March would like to express its profound thanks to each and every one of them.

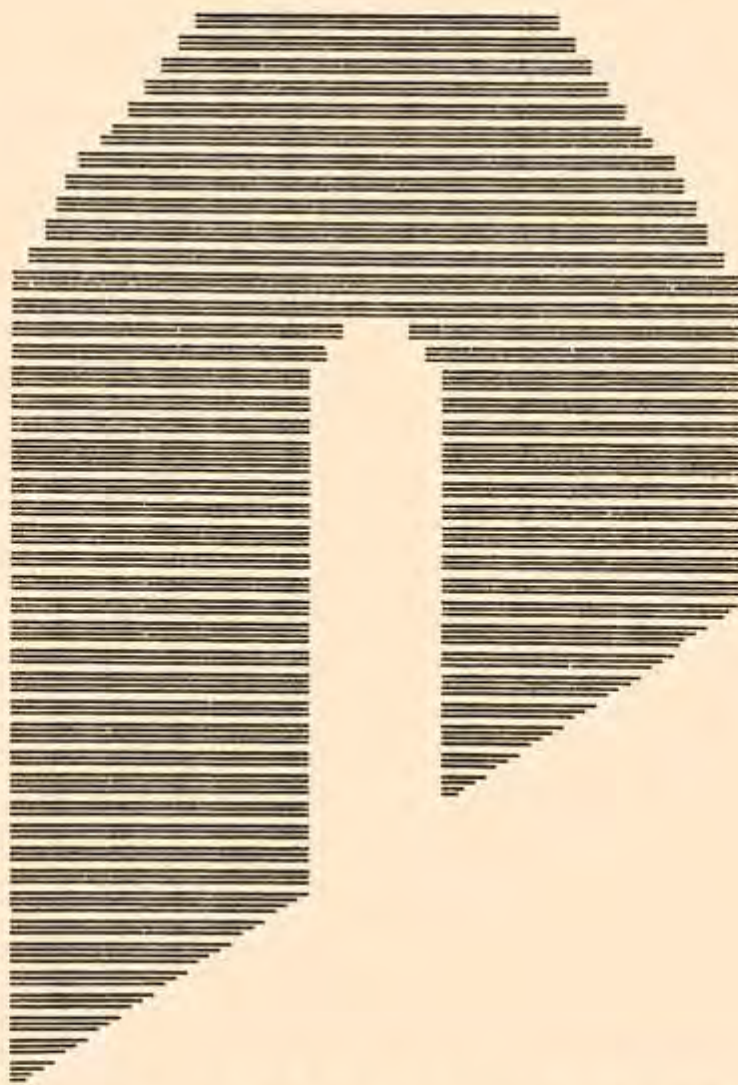
Fundación Juan March, Madrid, October 2014

DA MARINETTI

groupes en bois. Tout est primitif. Rien n'est sans éloquence. La synthèse est arbitraire mais toujours pittoresque. Des assemblages de couleurs détonnent, étonnent, puis séduisent. Une psychologie évidente jaillit de formes que l'oeil inexperimenté repousse d'abord comme obscures. Le théâtre futuriste italien a des trouvailles. Une semence existe dans son invention. Voulez-vous des noms? Balla et ses tapisseries; Depero et ses mosaïques d'étoffes curieuses plaisantes; Prampolini et ses panneaux originaux, savoureux, ingénieux". Serge Franki scrive nella rivista „Les Artistes d'Aujourd'hui": L'exposition de l'Art d'aujourd'hui nous a révélé Fortunato Depero, et il faudrait que nous soyons d'une grande ignorance pour ne pas connaître l'action décisive que cet artiste multiple a sur le mouvement futuriste. Cet apôtre de la Modernolatricie peut être le plus parfaitement saisi ce rythme propre a notre sensibilité contemporaine et dégage de son apparence métallique la vie mécanique de nos jours. Ce qui me paraît le distinguer tout particulièrement, c'est le caractère apocalyptique de son oeuvre (voir notamment Martellatori-macchina des Arts Décoratifs — la vache — Cavaliere piemontesi ecc.) où il semble que sa frénésie joyeuse l'ait projeté au delà de lui-même par une exaltation créatrice de ses virtualités. Sculpteur, peintre, décorateur, organisateur, Depero s'est livré tout entier aux forces vives qu'il a déchainées, mais c'est pour mieux les posséder et leur imposer les magiques fantaisies de sa virilité. Il est en lui une énergie indomtable, plus rapide que le temps et qui le dépasse et qui, intarissablement crée, forme une nouvelle genèse. C'est un monde tout neuf, les jeunes d'aujourd'hui. Puissent leurs jeux audaces égaier en qualité de leur fabuleux maître".

Italiani, vi consiglio di amare e glorificare i capolavori piagnucolosi di questo grande maestro italiano or mai mondiale

gli di amare i lavori piagnucolosi di questo grande maestro mai mondiale



F.T. MARINETTI

**ITTENIRAM
AD OTAC
IFIROLG
OREPED**

Unknown photographer,
Fortunato Depero looking out
from between the planks of
a jetty, Lago di Garda, 1926.
Photograph: gelatin silver
print on fiber-based paper,
3 3/8 x 2 3/8 in. (8.5 x 6 cm).
MART, Archivo del '900,
Fondo Depero



A PORTAFORTUNA FOR FORTUNATO DEPERO

ABOUT THIS EXHIBITION

Portafortuna:

an amulet or talisman. Italian noun derived from *portare* (to bear) and *fortuna* (luck, fortune), from the French *porte-bonheur*.
Person, animal, toy, or object that is considered for superstitious reasons to bring luck.

MANUEL FONTÁN DEL JUNCO

Futurism, the artistic and literary movement that was launched with a starting pistol shot – a metaphor that would become a reality in 1914 with the outbreak of World War I – in the form of the manifesto published by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti on February 20, 1909 in the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro*, has found its place in the history of art due to the radical nature of its proposals. These ideas consisted of abolishing the entire traditional focus of earlier art (considered pure *passéisme*), glorifying dynamism, the machine, speed, and war, liberating words from grammar, and multiplying viewpoints in order to express the dynamic interaction of matter with the space around it.

Since that date, artistic and literary Futurism has been exhaustively studied, investigated, subjected to critical analysis, and researched, and has also been presented in group and thematic exhibitions of numerous types, in addition to a large number of exhibitions devoted to the leading figures of its first phase, including Marinetti, Umberto Boccioni, Giacomo Balla, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, and Gino Severini. In February and April 1910 all of them signed the *Manifesto dei pittori futuristi* [Manifesto of the Futurist Painters] (pp. 363–64 in this catalogue) and the *Manifesto tecnico della pittura futurista* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting] respectively, texts that

proclaimed an aesthetic of enormous visual force and resonance. It is certainly the case that the movement's dynamic early years, from 1909 to 1915, "represent an innovative and vigorous contribution to European painting," sculpture and literature that profoundly impressed many people.

One of them was Erwin Panofsky. In May 1912, when the German artist and art critic Herwarth Walden exhibited thirty-three paintings by the Futurists in Berlin, the future art historian Panofsky (1892–1968) was twenty years old and was studying Philosophy and Art History in the German capital. Just two years ago his wife Gerda Panofsky recalled that "Futurist painting so impressed him that many years later he could still recall, in a letter of September 3, 1967 to William S. Heckscher, the excitement that the exhibition aroused in him at the time."¹

This general excitement with Futurism has not diminished but it continues to be, perhaps, too generalized in nature. If this were not the case, why would it be necessary to ask: who is this "Futurist" Depero, the subject of this exhibition? "A multi-talented, cosmopolitan but profoundly Italian figure and a tireless creator." The Depero shown here is less well known on an international level than he deserves to be in view of the real importance and

1 See Gerda Panofsky, "Eine Schau, die die Kunstgeschichte veränderte," *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (May 25, 2012), 31.

significance of his work for the internal evolution of Futurism and its present status. This exhibition on his work intends to make it possible to provide him with something as Italian (and universal) as a *portafortuna*, a talisman that will bring him more luck than he had in his own lifetime and which will contribute to increase his international renown.

As already said, by 1913 Fortunato Depero (Fondo, Trento, 1892 – Rovereto, 1960) had been in Rome and had met Marinetti, the founder and guiding light of the Futurist movement. In Rome he visited the Boccioni exhibition at the Sprovieri gallery, and his contact with the work of this artist and with that of Balla led to a shift in his artistic output: from Boccioni Depero borrowed a visual dynamism and from Balla the tension arising from the abstraction of forms. As early as 1914 Depero was invited to take part in the *Esposizione Libera Futurista Internazionale* [Futurist Open International Exhibition], also at the Sprovieri gallery, which featured works by Wassily Kandinsky, Aleksandr Archipenko, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Francesco Cangiullo, Giacomo Balla, Arturo Martini, Enrico Prampolini, Gino Rossi and Mario Sironi. That May he returned to Rovereto and exhibited his first experiments with visual dynamism at the *Circolo Sociale*. Shortly thereafter, in early 1915 Depero was officially admitted to the Futurist movement, of which he would consider himself a member until his death,

Depero himself applied the call for change expressed in his *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* as perhaps no other Futurist did. He was an artist who constructed an entirely new Futurist universe, a multi-faceted, multi-media, total and global artist: tireless as a painter, sculptor, draftsman, playwright, set designer, writer, poet, essayist, graphic and advertising designer, creator of typographical architectural structures and display stands for trade fairs, books, magazines, commercial logos, toys and tapestries, a cultural entrepreneur and the inventor of one of the first artist's books of all times. And he continued to be so until the very end of his life.

almost two decades after that of Marinetti in 1944.

On March 11, 1915 Depero and Giacomo Balla signed the manifesto *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe], which can be considered one of the most important landmarks in the evolution of the movement's aesthetic and in which the authors proposed the globalization of the arts and the fusion of art with all aspects of life. In their text, both artists called for a reconstruction of the world involving a radical transformation of the environment, ranging from furniture to fashion, film, music, literature, dance, the visual arts and everyday objects. In addition, they declared traditional language to be defunct and called for the elaboration of a new one (which Depero termed "onomalanguage"), an aspect explained in this catalogue by Alessandro Ghignoli (pp. 298–303), which would unite the new life with the new art.

Today, Depero's work, which defines a frontier between that of the pioneers and that of the continuers of the Futurist aesthetic, has been exhibited outside Italy in several one-man shows since the 1970s (1973: Bonn, Saarbrücken, Hannover; 1982: Salzburg; 1988: Düsseldorf; 1992: Chicago, New York; 1999: Miami; 2000: Tokyo, London, Salford; 2004: Sofia; 2010: Warsaw, Budapest; 2013: Barcelona), but never in a full-scale retrospective exhibition. That said, he has been the subject of reassessment over the past few decades in the field of studies on Futurism and is also admired by contemporary artists, as Fabio Belloni testifies in these pages (pp. 346–53). This situation has undoubtedly been helped by the overcoming of a type of historical interpretation based on an excessively radical distinction between early Futurism and so-called "Second" Futurism (a term coined by Enrico Crispolti, which made its mark in the 1960s), used to establish a difference between Futurism prior to the death of Boccioni in World War I and that of the postwar period. This idea of "Second" Futurism negatively affected assessments

of Depero and other Futurists, effectively relegating them to a secondary league. As Giovanni Lista noted in his recent *Fortunato Depero: ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo* (Milan: Abscondita, 2013), Depero is "the most illustrious victim" of this classification of Futurism into two periods, a primary, founding one and another secondary, almost epigonic one.

This interpretation has frequently gone hand in hand with an approach to Futurism that is ideologically and politically imprecise with regard to the complex relationships between Futurism and Fascism from the postwar period onwards, an issue on which widely differing opinions are held today, as Giovanni Lista judiciously analyzes with regard to Depero in the present volume (pp. 338–45).

However, perhaps the most important reason why the poor critical and personal fortunes of an in fact "unfortunate" Fortunato Depero are changing is the fact that a certain "painting-centricity" when assessing the early avant-garde movements and in particular Futurism has been overcome. As Maurizio Scudiero has noted in his monumental *Depero, l'uomo e l'artista* (Rovereto: Egon, 2009), as well as in his contribution to this catalogue (pp. 250–65) and in several of the publications and catalogues that as a renowned scholar he has written on the artist and his work, this emphasis on painting within art history has worked against the real importance that the avant-garde movements had in the fields of the applied arts and design, and the fact that it has been overcome has helped to arouse greater interest in Depero. In effect, he found his place when it was understood that the call to "bring art to life," which was common to all the proclamations and manifestos of the early 20th-century avant-gardes, largely became "real" through "craft" practices that bordered on the fine arts, such as design, decoration, set design, political propaganda, and commercial advertising (fields in which Depero was multi-talented) and which are precisely

located within daily life, changing the ways in which we live, consume, inhabit spaces and communicate, and giving rise to authentic lifestyles – individual, social, and on occasions even political – through art.

In fact, Depero himself applied this call for change expressed in his *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* as perhaps no other Futurist did: Depero was much more than an artist who enthusiastically embraced the Futurist creed in order to leave behind his early phase as a painter clearly influenced by Symbolism. Rather, he was an artist who constructed a Futurist universe, a multi-faceted, multi-media, total and global artist, tireless as a painter, sculptor, playwright and set designer (as discussed by Llanos Gómez in her text on pp. 280–85), a writer, poet and essayist (as explained by Pablo Echaurren, who surveys almost his entire production on pp. 292–97), a graphic and advertising designer (as described in great detail by Giovanna Ginex on pp. 308–17, and Belén Sánchez on pp. 318–27), a creator of typographical architectural structures and display stands for trade fairs, books, magazines and commercial logos, a designer of toys and tapestries, a cultural entrepreneur – the founder of one of the first artist's museums in the world, the Casa d'Arte Futurista in Rovereto – the inventor of one of the first artist's books, the celebrated “bolted book” of 1927, a “portable museum” (to use Raffaele Bedarida's phrase) titled *Depero futurista* [cat. 148] (analyzed here by Claudia Salaris on pp. 304–7).

Time and again Depero moved on from and then returned to his works (in a literal sense, as Gianluca Poldi explains in his text on pp. 266–79), experimenting with the widest range of formats and supports. Some of them he invented, like his celebrated *quadri in stoffa*, painting-tapestries made with textiles, and all of them he combined together: painting, printmaking, drawing, sculpture, typography, illustrated books, collages and photo-collages (as explained by Carolina Fernández Castrillo, who discusses Depero's use of photography on pp. 286–91), set and costume designs, and

“motorumorist plastic complexes” (a true precedent from as early as 1916 of what we today call installations), his onomalinguistic compositions and free-word and lyric poetry for reading out on the radio, in addition to his (unsuccessful) attempt to produce a compendium of all the arts in his project *New York, film vissuto* [New York – A Lived Film], a book on his experience in New York that would include texts, reproductions of his works, photographs, sound, and moving images. Depero lived in his native Rovereto and also in Capri, Viareggio, Rome, and Paris. He left Italy with the aim of conquering New York, a bold and ultimately failed plan (as Raffaele Bedarida recounts on pp. 328–37). Depero called New York the “new Babel,” living and working there between 1929 and 1931, and returning to it in 1947.

For decades Depero was a kind of film director and scriptwriter of his own life, which he transformed into a remarkable combination of biography and art. He was a source of artistic and human energy in permanent evolution, from abstraction to a Futurism lubricated by the aesthetic of the machine and by a certain magic realism. And his work constitutes a true compass to move within the context of Futurism and Italian art of the first half of the 20th century.

The essays presented in this volume cover all important aspects of Depero's work and aesthetic, offering a multi-faceted vision of the artist (see Fortunato Depero, “Multiple Perspective” on pp. 424–25).

However, the aim here is not just to set Depero in a historical perspective but also to promote an idea from the starting point of a knowledge of his work and a reading of his writings: the idea that Depero is an enormously “young” artist, a true forerunner of a series of traits characteristic of contemporary artists.

Depero is a precursor of the artistic practices known as multi-media work and collective work (the Casa d'Arte Futurista could easily be seen as a precedent to Warhol's Factory or the studios of artists such as Jeff Koons, Damien Hirst or Olafur Eliasson). The same could be said of his

failed New York adventure (contrary to Marinetti's opinion, Depero was years ahead of his time in seeing New York rather than Paris as the Futurist city and the city of the future), and of the modernity of his characteristic conviction that the artist needs to promote himself in the media and self-promote himself. In his ideas on the mechanical living being and the artificial living being, it is hard not to see an anticipation of our highly technological world, from the new technologies to genetic engineering. It is hard to admire Depero's “motorumorist plastic complexes” without thinking of Panamarenko or Jean Tinguely; his use of photomontage and photo-collage without considering them a clear precedent to performance of the type evolved by Fluxus and action artists; or his written texts without referring to contemporary experimental writing.

But what is truly significant in the case of Depero is that all these connections between his work and the present day come about through a much more direct link than that to be found between these contemporary phenomena and the rest of the Futurists, who continued to work within the narrow field of painting or who returned to figuration or abandoned the movement. There are few texts in Spanish on Depero but there is one very early one, signed by a certain Lamberti Sorrentino (reproduced in Spanish on page 122 of *Depero futurista*), in which under the title “Fortunato se divierte” [Fortunato has fun] Sorrentino precisely points out this characteristic of Depero: “the authors of the Manifesto of Futurist Painting published in April 1919 and Carrà who later proclaimed on August 11 the Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells, pale away as if overshadowed, and in comparison to Depero's most recent discovery their work and ideas seem to be covered with the mildew of time.”

In a photograph of 1922 (pp. 4 and 306 in this catalogue) Depero can be seen getting into a car. The artist wrote on it in ink: “Futuro prossimo.” Truly, Depero's future is now very near. Like that of all major artists, it is taking place in the present time.

**WORKS
ONDISP
1909-1950**

LAY

15
RILE-
MA-

so
nico



**I.
FROM
ABSTRACTION
TO
FUTURISM
1909-1916**

P. 24

Unknown photographer,
Riso cinico [Cynical Laughter],
Rome, 1915 (detail) [cat. 37]

121

Marinetti temporale patriottico.
Ritratto psicologico [Marinetti
Patriotic Storm. Psychological
Portrait], 1924. Oil on canvas,
86 5/8 x 63 in. (220 x 160 cm).
Private collection

Unless otherwise indicated,
all works are by Fortunato Depero



EEERBAIICRBVAMM

RAAMNNOONNMMVA
REENNNOONNMMVA

IL FUTURISMO è un grande movimento antifiloso-
fico e anticulturale d'idee intuiti istinti pugni calci
e schiaffi svecchiatori, creato il 20 febbraio 1909
da un gruppo di poeti e artisti italiani geniali. Fra le
tante definizioni io prediligo quella data dai teosofi:

„I futuristi sono i mistici dell'azione“

Infatti i Futuristi hanno combattuto e combattono il
passatismo sedentario sotto tutte le forme: prudenza
diplomatica, logica pessimista, neutralismo, tradizio-
nalismo, culto del libro, biblioteche, musei e professori.
Essi hanno adorato e adorano la vita nella sua colo-
rata e tumultuosa varietà illogica e nella sua bellezza
muscolare sportiva. Armati di coraggio temerario e
innamorati d'ogni pericolo, essi arricchirono l'arte e
la sensibilità artistica col succo e colle vibrazioni di
una vita impavidamente OSATA-VISSUTA-GODUTA.
CREARE VIVENDO. Talvolta contraddirsi. Affermare,
slanciarsi, battersi, resistere, riattaccare! Indietreggiare
mai! Marciare e non marciare! F. T. MARINETTI

ENNOONNMMVAARRCII

RRREEMVAARRCIIAR

Page from *Depero futurista*
1913–1927. Milan: Dinamo Azari,
1927 [cat. 148]

3

Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Ritratto
di Marinetti* [Portrait of
Marinetti], 1910. Photograph:
gelatin silver print on fiber-
based paper, 8 ½ x 6 ¾ in.
(21.5 x 17 cm). Private collection





1
Poesia. Rassegna Internazionale diretta da F. T. Marinetti [Poetry. International Review directed by F. T. Marinetti], year V, nos. 1-2 (February-March 1909). Magazine: lithograph on paper, 11 ¼ x 11 ¾ in. (28.5 x 28.9 cm). Archivio Depero

2
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Fondazione e Manifesto del Futurismo* [The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism], 1909. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 7/16 x 9 1/16 in. (29 x 23 cm). Archivio Lafuente

FONDAZIONE E MANIFESTO

DEL

FUTURISMO

(Pubblicato dal "FIGARO", di Parigi il 20 Febbraio 1909)

Avevamo vegliato tutta la notte — i miei amici ed io — sotto lampade di moschea dalle cupole di ottone traforato, stellate come le nostre anime, perchè come queste irradiate dal chiuso fulgore di un cuore elettrico. Avevamo lungamente calpestata su opulenti tappeti orientali la nostra atavica accidia, discutendo davanti ai confini estremi della logica e annerendo molta carta di frenetiche scritture.

Un immenso orgoglio gonfiava i nostri petti, poichè ci sentivamo soli, in quell'ora, ad esser desti e ritti, come fari superbi e come sentinelle avanzate, di fronte all'esercito delle stelle nemiche occhieggianti dai loro celesti accampamenti. Soli coi fuochisti che s'agitano davanti ai forni infernali delle grandi navi, soli coi neri fantasmi che frugano nelle pance arroventate delle locomotive lanciate a pazzia corsa, soli cogli ubbriachi annaspanti, con un incerto batter d'ali, lungo i muri della città.

Sussultammo ad un tratto, all'udire il rumore formidabile degli enormi tramvai a due piani, che passano sobbalzando, risplendenti di luci multicolori, come i villaggi in festa che il Po straripato squassa e sradica d'improvviso, per trascinarli fino al mare, sulle cascate e attraverso i gorghi di un diluvio.

Poi, il silenzio divenne più cupo. Ma mentre ascoltavamo l'estenuato borbottio di preghiere del vecchio canale e lo scricchiolar dell'ossa dei palazzi moribondi sulle loro barbe di umida verdura, noi udimmo subitamente ruggire sotto le nostre finestre gli automobili famelici.

— Andiamo, diss'io, andiamo, amici! Partiamo! Finalmente la mitologia e l'ideale mistico sono superati. Noi stiamo per assistere alla nascita del Centauro e presto vedremo volare i primi Angeli!... Bisognerà scuotere le porte della vita per provarne i cardini e i chiavistelli!... Partiamo! Ecco, sulla terra, la primissima aurora! Non v'è cosa che agguagli lo splendore della rossa spada del sole, che schermeggia per la prima volta nelle nostre tenebre millenarie!... —

Manifesto dei Musicisti Futuristi

Io mi rivolgo ai *giovani*. Essi soli mi dovranno ascoltare e mi potranno comprendere. C'è chi nasce vecchio, spettro barocco del passato, crittogama tumida di veleni: a costoro, non parole, né idee, ma una imposizione unica: *fine*.

Io mi rivolgo ai *giovani*, necessariamente assetati di cose nuove, presenti e vive. Mi seguano dunque essi, fidenti e arditi, per le vie del futuro, dove già i miei, i nostri intrepidi fratelli, poeti e pittori futuristi, gloriosamente ci precedono, belli di violenza, audaci di ribellione e luminosi di genio animatore.

Or è un anno, una commissione, composta dei maestri Pietro Mascagni, Giacomo Orefice, Guglielmo Mattioli, Rodolfo Ferrari e del critico Gian Battista Nappi, proclamava la mia opera musicale futurista intitolata « *La Sina d' Vargoun* » — su un poema pure mio ed in versi liberi — vincitrice, fra tutte le altre concorrenti, del premio di L. 10.000, destinato alle spese di esecuzione del lavoro riconosciuto superiore e degno, secondo il lascito del bolognese Cincinnato Baruzzi.

L'esecuzione, avvenuta nel dicembre 1909 al Teatro Comunale di Bologna, mi procurò un successo di grande entusiasmo, critiche abiette e stupide, generose difese di amici e di sconosciuti, onore e copia di nemici.

Essendo entrato così, trionfalmente, nell'ambiente musicale italiano, in contatto col pubblico, cogli editori e coi critici, ho potuto giudicare con la massima serenità il mediocritismo intellettuale, la bassezza mercantile e il misoneismo che riducono la musica italiana ad una forma unica e quasi invariabile di melodramma volgare, da cui risulta l'assoluta inferiorità nostra di fronte all'evoluzione futurista della musica negli altri paesi.

In Germania, infatti, dopo l'era gloriosa e rivoluzionaria dominata dal genio sublime di Wagner, Riccardo Strauss eleva il barocchismo della strumentazione fin quasi a forma vitale d'arte, e sebbene non possa nascondere, con maniere armoniche ed acustiche abili, complicate ed appariscenti, l'aridità, il mescoltismo e la banalità dell'anima sua, nondimeno si sforza di combattere e di superare il passato con un ingegno novatore.

In Francia, Claudio Debussy, artista profondamente soggettivo, letterato più che musicista, nuota in un lago diafano e tranquillo di armonie tenui, delicate, azzurre e costantemente trasparenti. Col simbolismo strumentale e con una polifonia monotona di sensazioni armoniche sentite attraverso una scala di toni interi — sistema nuovo, ma sempre sistema, e di conseguenza, volontaria limitazione — egli non giunge sempre a coprire la scarsità di valore della sua tematica e ritmica unilaterale e la mancanza quasi assoluta di svolgimento ideologico. Questo svolgimento consiste per lui nella primitiva e infantile ripetizione periodica di un tema breve e povero o di un andamento ritmico monotono e vago. Avendo ricorso, nelle sue formule operistiche, ai concetti stantii della Cameraata fiorentina, che nel 1600 aveva nascita al melodramma, non è ancora pervenuto a riformare completamente l'arte melodrammatica del suo paese.

Manifesto dei pittori futuristi

Agli artisti giovani d'Italia!

Il grido di ribellione che noi lanciamo, associando i nostri ideali a quelli dei poeti futuristi, non parte già da una chiesuola estetica, ma esprime il violento desiderio che ribolle oggi nelle vene di ogni artista creatore.

Noi vogliamo combattere accanitamente la religione finalica, incosciente e snobistica del passato, alimentata dall'esistenza nefasta dei musei. Ci ribelliamo alla supina ammirazione delle vecchie tele, delle vecchie statue, degli oggetti vecchi e all'entusiasmo per tutto ciò che è tarlato, sudicio, corrosivo dal tempo, e giudichiamo ingiusto, delittuoso, l'abituale disdegno per tutto ciò che è giovane, nuovo e palpitante di vita.

Compagni! Noi vi dichiariamo che il trionfante progresso delle scienze ha determinato nell'umanità movimenti tanto profondi, da scavare un abisso fra i docili schiavi del passato e noi liberi, noi signori della radiosa magnificenza del futuro.

Noi siamo nauseati dalla pigrizia vile che dal Cinquecento in poi fa vivere i nostri artisti d'un incessante sfruttamento delle glorie antiche.

Per gli altri popoli, l'Italia è ancora una terra di morti, un'immensa Pompei biancheggiante di sepolcri. L'Italia invece rinasce, e al suo risorgimento politico segue il risorgimento intellettuale. Nel paese degli alfabeti vanno moltiplicandosi le scuole; nel paese del dolce far niente ruggono ormai officine innumerevoli; nel paese dell'estetica tradizionale spiccano oggi il volo ispirazioni sfolgoranti di novità.

È vitale soltanto quell'arte che trova i propri elementi nell'ambiente che la circonda. Come nostri antenati trassero materia d'arte dall'atmosfera religiosa che incombeva sulle anime loro, così noi dobbiamo ispirarci ai tangibili miracoli della vita contemporanea, alla feroce rete di velocità che avvolge la Terra, ai transatlantici, alle *Dreadnought*, ai voli meravigliosi che solcano i cieli, alle audaci e generose dei navigatori subacquei, alla lotta spasmodica per la conquista dell'ignoto. E possiamo noi rimanere insensibili alla frenetica attività delle grandi città, alla psicologia nuovissima del notturnalismo, alle figure febbrili del *viveur*, della *cocotte*, dell'*apache* e dell'alcoolizzato?

Volendo noi pure contribuire al necessario rinnovamento di tutte le espressioni d'arte, dichiariamo guerra, risolutamente, a tutti quegli artisti e a tutte quelle istituzioni che putrefaendosi d'una veste di falsa modernità, rimangono inchiodati nella tradizione, nell'accademismo, e soprattutto in una ripugnante pigrizia cerebrale.

Noi denunciemo al disprezzo dei giovani tutta quella canaglia incensante che a Roma applaude a una stomachevole rioritura di classicismo rammolito; che a Firenze esalta dei nevrotici cultori d'un arcaismo ermafrodito; che a Milano remunera una pedestre e cieca manualità quarantottesca; che a Torino incensa una pittura da funzionari governativi in pensiero; e a Venezia glorifica un farraginoso



4

Francesco Balilla Pratella,
*Manifesto dei Musicisti
Futuristi* [Manifesto of Futurist
Musicians], 1910. Document:
letterpress on paper, 11 ⁷/₁₆ x
8 ¹/₁₆ in. (29 x 22 cm). Archivo
Lafuente

5

Giacomo Balla, Umberto
Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi
Russolo, and Gino Severini,
Manifesto dei pittori futuristi
[Manifesto of the Futurist
Painters], 1910. Document:
letterpress on paper, 11 ¹/₂ x
9 ¹/₁₆ in. (29.3 x 23.2 cm).
Archivo Lafuente

13

Unknown photographer,
*L'intonarumori di Russolo
con Russolo e Piatti* [Russolo
and Piatti with Russolo's
intonarumori Noise-making
Devices], c. 1913. Photograph:
gelatin silver print on fiber-
based paper, 7 ⁷/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₁₆ in.
(18.9 x 25 cm). Private
collection

Per la guerra, sola igiene del mondo

Noi Futuristi, che da più di due anni glorifichiamo, tra i fischi dei Podagrosi e dei Paralitici, l'amore del pericolo e della violenza, il patriottismo e la guerra, sola igiene del mondo, siamo felici di vivere finalmente questa grande ora futurista d'Italia, mentre agonizza l'immonda genia dei pacifisti, rintanati ormai nelle profonde cantine del loro risibile palazzo dell'Aja.

Abbiamo recentemente cazzottato con piacere, nelle vie e nelle piazze, i più febricitanti avversari della guerra, gridando loro in faccia questi nostri saldi principii:

1. Siano concesse all'individuo e al popolo tutte le libertà, tranne quella di essere vigliacco.
2. Sia proclamato che la parola *Italia* deve dominare sulla parola *Libertà*.
3. Sia cancellato il fastidioso ricordo della grandezza romana, con una grandezza italiana cento volte maggiore.

L'Italia ha oggi per noi la forma e la potenza di una bella *dreadnought* con la sua squadriglia d'isole torpediniere. Orgogliosi di sentire uguale al nostro il fervore bellicoso che anima tutto il Paese, incitiamo il Governo italiano, divenuto finalmente futurista, ad ingigantire tutte le ambizioni nazionali, disprezzando le stupide accuse di pirateria e proclamando la nascita del **Panitalianismo**.

Poeti, pittori, scultori e musicisti futuristi d'Italia! Finché duri la guerra, lasciamo da parte i versi, i pennelli, gli scalpelli e le orchestre! Son cominciate le rosse vacanze del genio! Nulla possiamo ammirare, oggi, se non le formidabili sinfonie degli *strapsels* e le folli sculture che la nostra ispirata artiglieria foggia nelle masse nemiche.

F. T. MARINETTI.

Il movimento futurista letterario, pittorico e musicale è attualmente sospeso, causa l'assenza del poeta Marinetti, recatosi sul teatro della guerra.

Direzione del Movimento futurista
Nuova sede: Corso Venezia, 61 - MILANO

Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista

In aeroplano, seduto sul cilindro della benzina, scaldato il ventre dalla testa dell'aviatore, io sentii l'infamia ridicola della vecchia sintassi ereditata da Omero. Bisogno furioso di liberare le parole, traendole fuori dalla prigione del periodo latino! Questo ha naturalmente, come ogni imbecille, una testa previdente, un ventre, due gambe e due piedi piatti, ma non avrà mai due all. Appena il necessario per camminare, per correre un momento e fermarsi quasi subito sbuffando.

Ecco che cosa mi disse l'elica, turbinante, mentre filavo a duecento metri sopra i possenti fumaiuoli di Milano. E l'elica soggiunse:

1. — **Bisogna distruggere la sintassi, disponendo i sostantivi a caso, come nascono.**
2. — **Si deve usare il verbo all'infinito**, perché si adatti elasticamente al sostantivo e non lo sottoponga all'io dello scrittore che osserva o immagina. Il verbo all'infinito può, solo, dare il senso della continuità della vita e l'elasticità dell'intuizione che la percepisce.
3. — **Si deve abolire l'aggettivo** perché il sostantivo nudo conservi il suo colore essenziale. L'aggettivo avendo in sé un carattere di sfumatura, è incompatibile con la nostra visione dinamica, poiché suppone una sosta, una meditazione.
4. — **Si deve abolire l'avverbio**, vecchia fuffa che tiene unite l'una all'altra le parole. L'avverbio conserva alla frase una fastidiosa unità di tono.
5. — **Ogni sostantivo deve avere il suo doppio**, cioè il sostantivo deve essere seguito, senza congiunzione, dal sostantivo a cui è legato per analogia. Esempio: uogo-torpediniere, donna-golfo, folla-risacca, piazza-imbuto, porta-rubinetto.

Siccome la velocità aerea ha moltiplicato la nostra conoscenza del mondo, la percezione per analogia diventa sempre più naturale per l'uomo. Bisogna dunque sopprimere il *come*, il *quale*, il *così*, il *simile a*. Meglio ancora, bisogna fondere direttamente l'oggetto coll'immagine che esso evoca, dando l'immagine in iscorcio mediante una sola parola essenziale.

6. — **Abolire anche la punteggiatura**. Essendo soppressi gli aggettivi, gli avverbi e le congiunzioni, la punteggiatura è naturalmente annullata, nella continuità varia di uno stile ricco, che si crea da sé, senza le soste assurde delle virgole e dei punti. Per accentuare certi movimenti e indicare le loro direzioni, s'impiegheranno i segni della matematica: + - × : - > <, e i segni musicali.

7. — Gli scrittori si sono abbandonati finora all'analogia immediata. Hanno paragonato per esempio l'animale all'uomo o ad un altro animale, il che equivale ancora, press'a poco, a una specie di fotografia. Hanno paragonato per esempio un fox-terrier a un piccolissimo puro-sangue. Altri, più avanzati, potrebbero paragonare quello stesso fox-terrier trepidante, a una piccola macchina Morse. Io lo paragono, invece, a un'acqua ribollente. V'è in ciò una **gradazione di analogie sempre più vaste**, vi sono dei rapporti sempre più profondi e solidi, quantunque lontanissimi.

L'analogia non è altro che l'amore profondo che collega le cose distanti, apparentemente diverse ed ostili. Solo per mezzo di analogie vastissime uno stile orchestrale, ad un tempo polifonico, polifonico e polimorfo, può abbracciare la vita della materia.

Manifeste technique de la sculpture futuriste

La sculpture, telle qu'elle nous apparaît dans les monuments et dans les expositions d'Europe nous offre un spectacle si lamentable de barbarie et de balourdise, que mon œil futuriste s'en éloigne avec horreur et dégoût.

Nous voyons à peu près partout l'imitation aveugle et grossière de toutes les formules héritées du passé: imitation que la tradition et la vulerie de la facilité encourage systématiquement. L'art sculptural dans les pays latins agonise sous le joug ignominieux de la Grèce et de Michel-Ange, porté avec l'aïeuse du génie en France et en Belgique, avec le plus morne des abrutissements en Italie. Nous notons dans les pays germaniques l'obsession ridicule d'un style gothique hétéroclite que Berlin industrialise et Munich ramollit avec de lourdes mains professorales. Les pays slaves au contraire se distinguent par un mélange chaotique d'archaïsmes grecs, de démons conçus par les littérateurs du Nord et de monstres enfantés par l'imagination orientale. C'est un amas d'influences qui du particulier excessif et sybillin du génie asiatique monte jusqu'à la puérite et grotesque ingéniosité des Lapons et des Esquimaux.

Dans toutes ces manifestations de la sculpture, dans les plus routinières aussi bien que dans celles qui sont agitées par un souffle novateur, persiste la même erreur: l'artiste copie le nu et étudie la statue classique avec la conviction ingénue de pouvoir trouver un style qui corresponde à la sensibilité moderne, sans sortir de la conception traditionnelle de la forme sculpturale. Il faut ajouter d'autre part que cette conception, avec son vénérable idéal de beauté, ne se détache jamais de la période de Phidias et de la décadence artistique qui la suit.

Il est à peu près inexplicable que des générations de sculpteurs continuent à construire des fantoches sans se demander pourquoi tous les salons de sculpture sont devenus des réservoirs d'ennui et de nausée et les inaugurations des monuments dans les places publiques des rendez-vous d'ilarité irrésistible. Cela ne se vérifie guère dans la peinture, qui, par ses rénovations lentes mais continuelles, condamne brutalement l'œuvre plébéienne et stérile de tous les sculpteurs de notre temps. Quand donc les sculpteurs comprendront-ils que s'efforcer de construire et de créer avec des éléments égyptiens, grecs ou hérités de Michel-Ange est aussi absurde que de vouloir tirer de l'eau d'une citerne vide au moyen d'un seau défoncé?

Il ne peut y avoir aucun renouvellement dans un art si on ne renouvelle pas en même temps l'essence de cet art, c'est-à-dire la vision et la conception de la ligne et des masses qui forment l'arabesque. Ce n'est pas en reproduisant seulement les aspects extérieurs de la vie que l'art devient l'expression de son temps; c'est pourquoi la sculpture telle qu'elle a été comprise par les artistes du siècle passé et d'aujourd'hui est un monstre anachronisme. La sculpture ne pouvait absolument pas faire de progrès dans le domaine étroit qui lui a été assigné par la conception académique du nu. Un art qui a besoin de déshabiller entièrement un homme ou une femme, pour commencer sa fonction émotive est un art mort-né.

La peinture s'est fortifiée, intensifiée et élargie moyennant le paysage et l'ambiance que les peintres impressionnistes ont fait agir simultanément sur la figure humaine et sur les objets. C'est en prolongeant leur effort que nous avons enrichi la peinture de notre **compénétration des plans** (*Manifeste technique de la Peinture futuriste*; 11 Avril 1910). La sculpture trouvera une nouvelle source d'émotion, et par conséquent de style, en élargissant sa plastique dans l'immense domaine que l'esprit humain a sottement considéré jusqu'ici comme le domaine du divisé, de l'impalpable et de l'inexprimable.

Il faut partir du noyau central de l'objet que l'on veut créer pour découvrir les nouvelles formes qui le rattachent invisiblement et mathématiquement à l'**infini plastique apparent** et à l'**infini plastique intérieur**. La nouvelle plastique sera donc la traduction par la craie, le bronze, le verre, le bois ou toute autre matière, des

6
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti,
Per la guerra, sola igiene del mondo [War, the Only Hygiene of the World], 1911. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 1/4 x 9 1/16 in. (28.5 x 23 cm). Archivo Lafuente

7
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti,
Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature], 1912. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 7/16 x 9 1/16 in. (29 x 23 cm). Archivo Lafuente

8
Umberto Boccioni, *Manifeste technique de la sculpture futuriste* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture], 1912. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 1/2 x 9 1/16 in. (29.2 x 23 cm). Archivo Lafuente

IL VESTITO ANTINEUTRALE

Manifesto futurista

Glorifichiamo la guerra,
sola igiene del mondo.

MARINETTI.

(1° Manifesto del Futurismo - 29, Febbraio 1909)

Viva Asinari di Berzezzo!

MARINETTI.

(1° Serata futurista - Teatro Lirico, Milano, Febbraio 1910)

L'umanità si vesti sempre di **quiete**, di **paura**, di **cautela** o d'**indecisione**, portò sempre il lutto, o il piviale, o il mantello. Il corpo dell'uomo fu sempre diminuito da sfumature e da tinte **neutre**, avvilito dal nero, soffocato da cinture, imprigionato da pannelleggiamenti.

Fino ad oggi gli uomini usarono abiti di colori e forme statiche, cioè drappeggiati, solenni, gravi, scomodi e sacerdotali. Erano espressioni di timidezza, di mulinella e di **schiavitù**, negazione della vita muscolare, che soffocava in un passatismo anti-igienico di stoffe troppo pesanti e di mezze tinte tediose, effeminate o decadenti. Tonalità e ritmi di **pace desolante**, funeraria e deprimente.

OGGI vogliamo abolire:

1. — Tutte le tinte **neutre**, « carine », sbiadite, **fantasia**, semioscure e umilianti.
 2. — Tutte le tinte e le fogge pedanti, professorali e teutoniche. I disegni a righe, a quadretti, a **puntini diplomatici**.
 3. — I vestiti da lutto, nemmeno adatti per i becchini. Le morti eroiche non devono essere compiante, ma ricordate con vestiti rossi.
 4. — L'equilibrio **mediocristiano**, il cosiddetto buon gusto è la cosiddetta armonia di tinte e di forme, che frenano gli entusiasmi e rallentano il passo.
 5. — La simmetria nel taglio, le linee **statiche**, che stancano, deprimo, contrastano, legano i muscoli; l'uniformità di goffi risvolti e tutte le cincischiature. I bottoni inutili. I colletti e i polsini inamidati.
- Noi futuristi vogliamo liberare la nostra razza da ogni **neutralità**, dall'indecisione paurosa e quietista, dal pessimismo negatore e dall'inerzia



Vestito bianco - rosso - verde

portato dal parolero futurista Cangini, nelle dimostrazioni dei Futuristi contro i professori tedeschi e neutralisti dell'Università di Roma (11-12 Dicembre 1910).

Manifesto futurista della Lussuria

RISPOSTA ai giornalisti disonesti che mutilano le frasi per render ridicola l'idea;
alle donne che pensano quello che ho osato dire;
a coloro per i quali la Lussuria non è ancora altro che peccato;
a tutti coloro che nella Lussuria raggiungono solo il Vizio,
come nell'Orgoglio raggiungono solo la Vanità.

La Lussuria, concepita fuor di ogni concetto morale e come elemento essenziale del dinamismo della vita, è una forza.

Per una razza forte, la lussuria non è, più che non lo sia l'orgoglio, un peccato capitale. Come l'orgoglio, la lussuria è una virtù incitatrice, un focolare al quale si alimentano le energie.

La Lussuria è l'espressione di un essere proiettato al di là di sé stesso; è la gioia dolorosa d'una carne compiuta, il dolore gaudioso di uno sbocciare; è l'unione carnale, quali si siano i segreti che uniscono gli esseri; è la sintesi sensoria e sensuale di un essere per la maggior liberazione del proprio spirito; è la comunione d'una particella dell'umanità con tutta la sensualità della terra; è il brivido pánico di una particella della terra.

La Lussuria è la ricerca carnale dell'ignoto, come la Cerebrità per la ricerca spirituale. La Lussuria è il gesto di creare, ed è la Creazione.

La carne crea come lo spirito crea. La loro creazione di fronte all'Universo è uguale. L'una non è superiore all'altra, e la creazione spirituale dipende dalla creazione carnale.

Noi abbiamo un corpo e uno spirito. Restringete l'uno per moltiplicare l'altro è una prova di debolezza e un errore. Un essere forte deve realizzare tutte le sue possibilità carnali e spirituali. La Lussuria è per conquistatori un tributo che loro è dovuto. Dopo una battaglia nella quale sono morti degli uomini, **è normale che i vincitori, selezionati dalla guerra, giungano fino allo stupro, nel paese conquistato, per riereare della vita.**

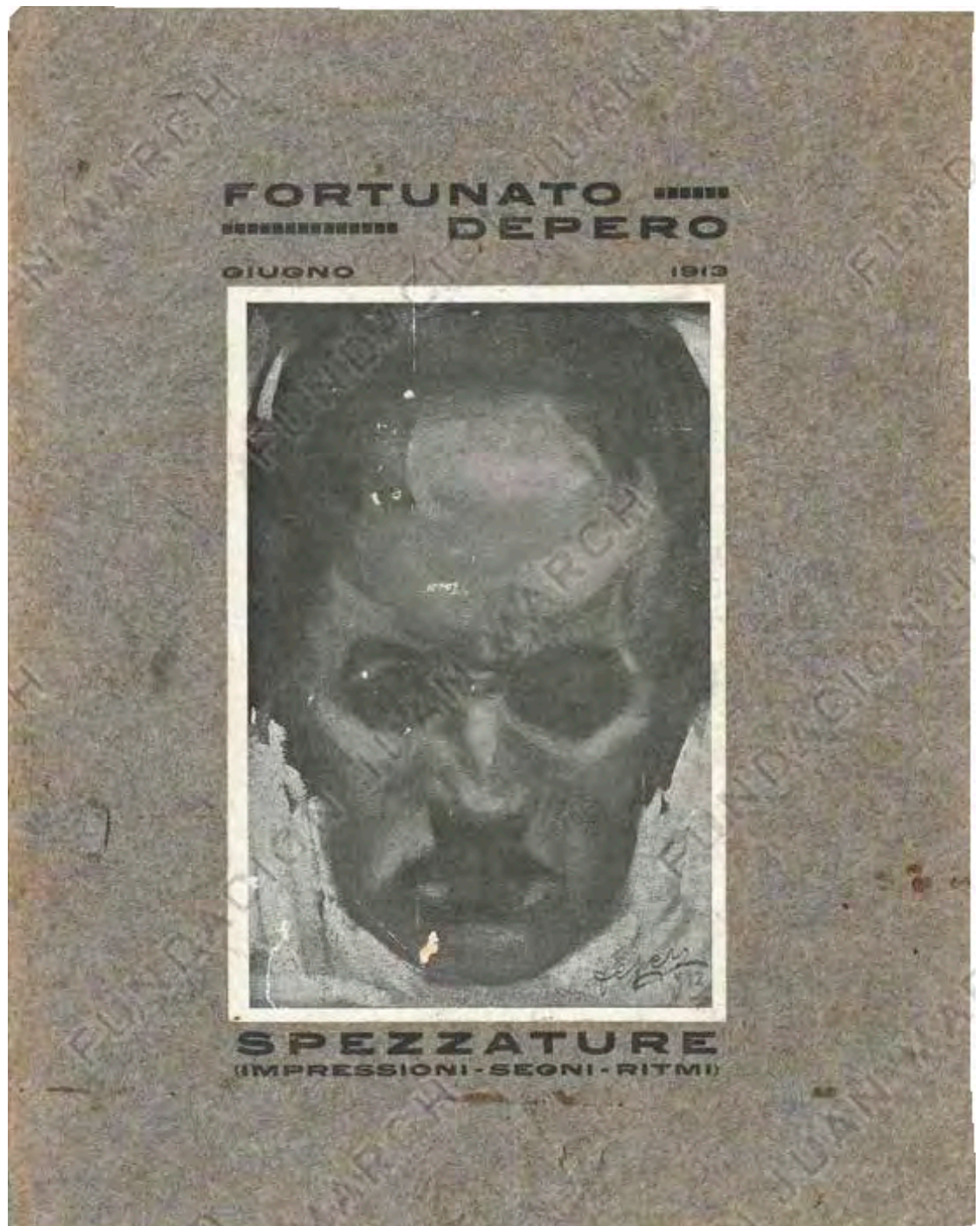
Dopo le battaglie, i soldati amano le voluttà, in cui si snodano, per rinnovarsi, le loro energie incessantemente assaltanti. L'eroe moderno, eroe di qualsiasi dominio, ha lo stesso desiderio e lo stesso piacere. L'artista, questo grande *medium* universale, ha

18

Giacomo Balla, *Il vestito antineutrale. Manifesto futurista* [The Antineutral Suit. Futurist Manifesto], 1914. Document: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 11 1/2 x 9 3/16 in. (29.3 x 23.3 cm). Archivio Lafuente

15

Valentine de Saint-Point, *Manifesto futurista della Lussuria* [Futurist Manifesto of Lust], 1913. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 3/8 x 9 1/16 in. (29.5 x 23 cm). Archivio Lafuente



16
Spezzature (Impressioni-segni-ritmi) [Fragments (Impressions-Signs-Rhythms)].
Rovereto: Tip[ografia]
Mercurio, 1913. Book:
letterpress and photogravure
on paper, 8 1/8 x 6 3/4 in.
(22 x 17 cm). MART, Archivio
del '900, Fondo Depero

SINTESI FUTU

Glorifichiamo la Guerra, che per noi è
 Le vecchie cattedrali non c'interessano
 d'arte. Questo diritto appartiene s

ELASTIC
 SINTESI INTI
 INVENZIO
 MULTIPLICA
 DI FOR
 ORDINE INV
 GENIO CRI

SERBIA {
 INDIPENDENZA
 AMBIZIONE
 TEMERITA'

BELGIO {
 ENERGIA
 VOLONTA'
 INIZIATIVA
 PERFEZIONE
 INDUSTRIALE

FRANCIA {
 INTELLIGENZA
 GORAGGIO
 VELOCITA'
 ELEGANZA
 SPONTANEITA'
 ESPLOSIVITA'
 DISINVOLTURA

RUSSIA {
 POTENZA
 SOLIDITA'
 INESPUGNABILITA'
 QUANTITA'

INGHILTERRA {
 SPIRITO PRATICO
 SENSO DEL DOVERE
 ONESTA'
 COMMERCIALE
 RISPETTO DEL-
 L'INDIVIDUALITA'

MONTENEGRO {
 INDIPENDENZA
 AMBIZIONE
 TEMERITA'

GIAPPONE {
 AGILITA'
 PROGRESSO
 RISOLUTEZZA

ITALIA {
 TUTTE LE FORZE
 TUTTE LE DEBOLEZZE
 DEL **GENIO**

MARI
 BOCC
 CARI
 RUSS
 PIAT

Dal Cellulare di Milano, 20 Sett

DIREZIONE DEL MOVIMENTO FUTURISTA: Corso Venezia, 61

URISTA DELLA GUERRA

la sola igiene del mondo (1° Manifesto del Futurismo) mentre per i Tedeschi rappresenta una grassa spanciata da corvi e da iene.
; ma neghiamo alla Germania medioevale, plagiaria, balorda e priva di genio creatore il diritto futurista di distruggere opere
oltanto al Genio creatore italiano, capace di creare una nuova bellezza più grande sulle rovine della bellezza antica.

TÀ
IZIONE
NE
ZIONE
ZE
SIBILE
ATORE

CONTRO

RIGIDEZZA
ANALISI
PLAGIO METODICO
ADDIZIONE
DI CRETINERIE
ORDINE NUMISMATICO
CULTURA TEDESCA

GERMANIA

PECORAGGINE
+ GOFFAGGINE
+ FILOSOFUMO
+ PESANTEZZA
+ ROZZEZZA
+ BRUTALITA'
+ PEDANTISMO
PROFESSORALE
+ ARCHEOLOGIA
+ COSTIPAZIONE DI
CAMELOTE INDUSTRIALE
+ SCOCCIATORI e GAFFEURS

FUTURISMO

CONTRO

PASSATISMO

8 POETI CONTRO I LORO CRITICI PEDANTI

NETTI
IONI
À
OLO
TI

AUSTRIA

CRETINERIA
+ SUDICIUME + FEROCIA
+ BALORDAGGINE POLI-
ZIESCA + SANGUE RAG-
GRUMATO + FORCA +
SPIONAGGIO + BIGOTTISMO
+ PAPALISMO
+ INQUISIZIONE
+ PERQUISIZIONE
+ GIMICI + PRETI

embre 1914.
- MILANO



14

Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Ritratto polifisiognomico di Umberto Boccioni* [Photodynamic Portrait of Umberto Boccioni], 1913. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 7/8 x 6 3/4 in. (12.3 x 17 cm). Private collection

19

Umberto Boccioni, *Pittura scultura futuriste (Dinamismo plastico)* [Futurist Painting and Sculpture (Plastic Dynamism)]. Milan: Edizione futuriste di Poesia, 1914. Book: letterpress on paper, 8 x 5 1/2 in. (20.4 x 14.3 cm). Archivo Lafuente

22

Scomposizione di testa
[Deconstruction of a Head],
c. 1914. Charcoal, white chalk
and ink on paper, 7 ⁵/₁₆ x
5 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (18.5 x 14.5 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland

21

Scomposizione di testa
[Deconstruction of a Head],
c. 1914 (signed "1916").
Charcoal, white chalk and ink
on paper, 7 ⁵/₁₆ x 5 ¹¹/₁₆ in.
(18.5 x 14.5 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland

9

Umberto Boccioni, *Studio di
testa* [Head Study], 1912. Pen,
ink and watercolor on paper,
7 ⁵/₁₆ x 7 ⁷/₁₆ in. (19.5 x 18.9 cm).
Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni-
Castello Sforzesco, Milan





10
Umberto Boccioni, *Sviluppo di una bottiglia nello spazio* [Development of a Bottle in Space], 1913. Bronze, 14 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 23 ⁷/₁₆ x 12 ⁵/₁₆ in. (38 x 59.5 x 32 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

46
Bottiglia [Bottle], 1916. Charcoal and white chalk on paper, 16 ¹/₄ x 15 ¹/₄ in. (41 x 38.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

20
Figura umana stilizzata [Stylized Human Figure], c. 1914. Charcoal and white chalk on paper, 6 ³/₄ x 5 in. (17 x 12.7 cm). Private collection, Switzerland





12
Gino Severini, *Ritmo plastico*
[Plastic Rhythm], 1913. Ink
on paper, 10 ¼ x 7 ½ in.
(26 x 18 cm). Private collection



72
Mario Sironi, *Dinamismo di
una ballerina* [Dynamism of
a Dancer], 1917. Mixed media
on paper, 10 ½ x 7 ½ in.
(27 x 20 cm). Private collection



11
Umberto Boccioni, *Voglio sintetizzare le forme uniche della continuità nello spazio* [I Want to Synthesize the Unique Forms of Continuity in Space], 1913. Charcoal, watercolor and tempera on paper, 11 ⁷/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₁₆ in. (29 x 23 cm). Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni-Castello Sforzesco, Milan

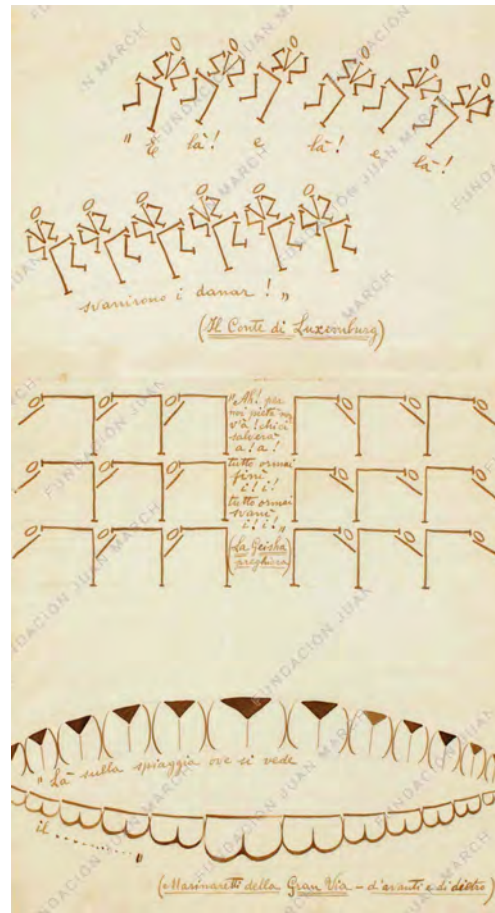
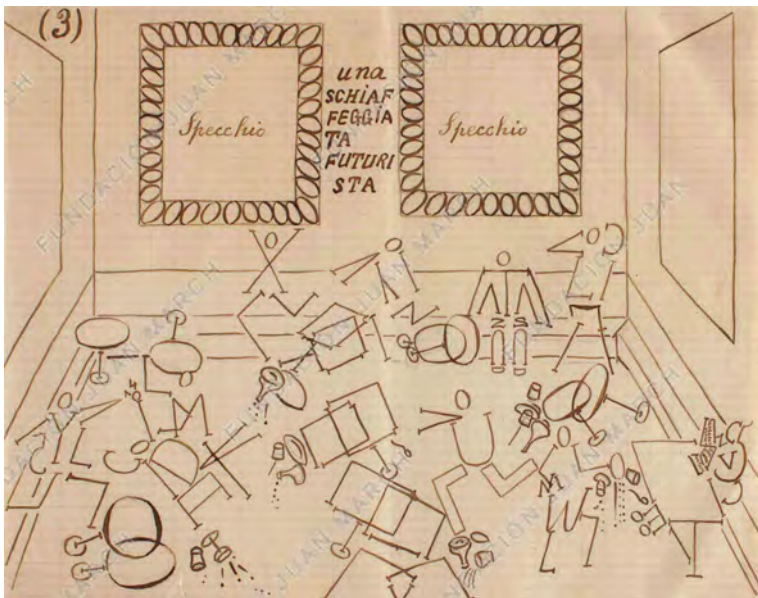
25
Linee sintetiche di un uomo che getta un oggetto [Synthetic Lines of a Man Throwing an Object], 1914. Ink on paper, 4 ⁵/₁₆ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (11 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland



23
Linee-Forza [Force-Lines], 1914. Ink on paper, 4 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (12.5 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland



24
Uomo che cammina [Man Walking], 1914. Ink on paper, 6 ⁷/₈ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (17.5 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland



40
Pasqualino Cangiullo, *Una schiaffeggiata futurista* [A Futurist Scuffle], 1916. Ink on paper, 8 ¼ x 10 ½ in. (21 x 27 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

41
Francesco Cangiullo, *Chorus Girls II*, c. 1916. Ink on paper, 19 ¼ x 10 ½ in. (48.8 x 26.6 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

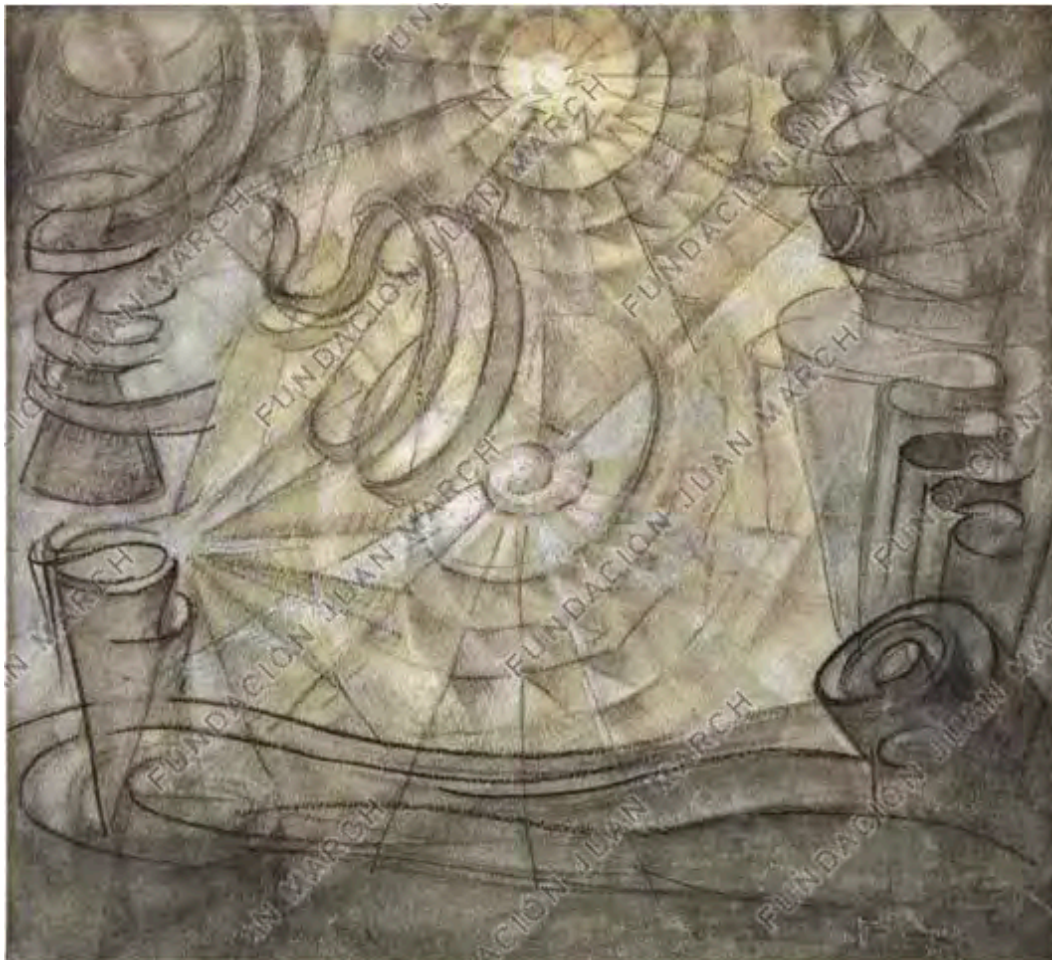


42
Francesco Cangiullo, *Piedigrotta*. Milan: Edizione futuriste di Poesia, 1916. Book: letterpress on paper, 10 ¾ x 7 ½ in. (26.3 x 19 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection



32
 Giacomo Balla, *Studio per i quadri delle dimostrazioni interventiste* [Study for the series Interventionist Demonstrations], 1915. Pastel on paper, 6 ⁵/₁₆ x 5 ½ in. (16.1 x 14 cm), 2 ¾ x 2 ¾ in. (7 x 7 cm), and 6 ⁵/₁₆ x 6 ½ in. (16 x 16.5 cm). Private collection

26
 Giacomo Balla, *Studio per Elettricità* [Study for Electricity], 1914. Charcoal and watercolor on paper, 11 x 11 ⁹/₁₆ in. (28 x 30 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto





34

Compenetrazione
[Interpenetration], 1915.
Ink on paper, 7 7/8 x 8 1/16 in.
(20 x 20.5 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland

43

Giacomo Balla, *Gli Avvenimenti*
[Events], 1916. Ink on paper,
13 3/4 x 9 7/8 in. (34 x 25 cm).
Private collection

33

*Vecicliiss-Astrazione
animale* [Vecicliiss - Animal
Abstraction], 1915. Charcoal
and white chalk on paper,
16 5/16 x 26 3/8 in. (43 x 67 cm).
Private collection, Switzerland





ESPOSIZIONE FUTURISTA

DEPERO

ROMA

Corso Umberto N. 20

Aperta dalle 9 alle 13 e dalle 17 alle 20

Ingresso Cent. 30

DEPERO

formidabile genialità complessa futurista — giovanissimo *Trentino*, ventenne formidabile temperamento d'artista complesso — volontà — tenacia d'acciaio.

Creatore infaticabile — poeta — originalissimo parolibero — pittore eccezionale — scultore motorumorista — canzonettista — architetto.

Definito:

da Marinetti - **POTENTE**

da Boccioni - **VULCANO**

da Balla - **ULTRASENSIBILE**

oggi lancia una enorme raccolta di conclusioni e ricerche su vari problemi futuristi:

1. **Motorumorismo** - 2. **Dramma astratto** - pitto-plastico - 3. **Architettura-dinamica** - 4. **Parole in libertà**.

Ricerche assolutamente nuove e personalissime.

1. - MOTORUMORISMO.

Si conoscono pittura — scultura — dinamica futurista — quali furono e sono le intenzioni (espressioni di emozioni — simultanee — equivalenti di rumori — odori — velocità — e stati d'animo — espressi più o meno astrattamente).

Col manifesto: *La ricreazione futurista dell'universo* **Balla-Depero** abbiamo dato, **Balla**: le prime ricerche di complessità pitto-plastica di equivalenti astratti e dinamici con piani colorati — stagnole — lana, ecc.; **Io**: i primi esempi — con relativo programma tecnico — di *motorumorismo*, cioè la fusione complessa di espressioni plastiche astratte — dinamiche — trasparenti — sgargiantissime — odorose.

In moto — trasformanti — sparanti — scoppianti — viventi con l'aiuto capricciosissimo e svariaticissimo — magico — di ogni mezzo meccanico — fisico — chimico — elettrico, ecc.

Il Problema dell'intuizione delle emozioni pitto-plastiche nella loro vitalità — meccanica (spostamenti di colori e forme — fenomeni che succedono dentro e fuori di noi — spruzzaglie — getti — spari — scoppi — scivolamenti — rotolii — colori cangianti — bianco che diventa rosso, ecc. — blocco nero che scompare su di una parete e riappare in altro punto dopo breve tempo — (uomo che entra in casa — appare alla finestra).

2. - DRAMMA ASTRATTO Pitto-Plastico.

Simultaneità: a) Astrazione dello sviluppo organico dello stato d'animo plastico;
b) astrazione animale } individualizzazione astratta dello stato d'animo.
c) astrazione floreale }

(Risultato per la prossima complessità del Dramma-astratto motorumorismo — la ricreazione dell'Universo vivente astratto futurista).



38
Unknown artist, *Esposizione Futurista. Depero* [Futurist Exhibition. Depero], Rome, 1916. Brochure: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 7 $\frac{7}{8}$ x 11 $\frac{13}{16}$ in. (20 x 30 cm). Archivo Lafuente

37
Unknown photographer, *Riso cinico* [Cynical Laughter], Rome, 1915. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ x 6 $\frac{3}{4}$ in. (16.5 x 17 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero

1914
DOPO un anno di tentativi - dubbi e scoperte -
tensione - più o meno rapide evoluzioni - abbraccia-
mento a ventaglio - impressionismo - postimpressioni-
simo - astrazioni pittoriche - arabesco - pittura
pura - REAZIONE - plastica - cubismo - astrazioni
plastiche - SUPERARE - sovrapposizioni - corupere
trasioni - simultaneità di stati d'animo - movi-
mento lirico - dinamico - materia plastica
dinamismo plastico dopo
2 mesi di malinconia interiore elettrico-
vertiginosa gita d'eliche cerebrale - rotte di materia
cervello - RISOLUZIONE HURRAAAA!

FUTURISTA !!!

VIA DEL TRITONE

- 125

GALLERIA

FUTURISTA

27

Manuscript written by Fortunato Depero stating his intention to join the Futurist movement, 1914. Document: ink on paper, 7 1/16 x 7 3/8 in. (18 x 20 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

36

Giacomo Balla and Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe], 1915. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 7/16 x 9 1/16 in. (29 x 23 cm). Two copies on display: Archivo Lafuente and MART, Archivio di Nuova Scrittura, Collezione Paolo Della Grazia

L'ITALIA FUTURISTA

Marciano, rui marire.
Cancelliamo la gloria Romana con una gloria italiana più grande.
La patria Italia deve dominare sulla patria libertà. — Tutte le Libertà tranne quella di essere vigliacchi pacifisti utilitaristi passatisti.
Modernizzazione violenta delle città passatiste.
Abolizione dell'industria del forestiero, umiliante e aleatorio.
Difesa economica e educazione patriottica del proletariato.
Crisismo — orgoglio italiano — preparazione del primato italiano.
In arte industria e commercio — difesa dei nostri centri musei, biblioteche, professori, archeologi e critici — igiene generativa, sport metalismo, meccanicismo, velocità record — Occultismo il culto di una nostalgia sentimentale e pessimista. MARINETTI
Patria e libertà, lavoro liberato dalle procedure e dalle gattinasse — zinghera e topografia liberale, pressioni — sensibilità, cultura — simpatie verbalistiche astratte. MARINETTI — SIBI — GARDUCCI

DIREZIONE ARTISTICA
BRUNO CORRA - E. SETTIMELLI

JANNELLI, ARMANDO MAZZA, D'ALBA - DEPERO etc.
Lotta contro la vigliaccheria artistica e l'assunzione della cultura — Materialista. Quasi megalomane plastiche, solidità, simultaneità, trascendentale fisico) BOCCIONI — L. RUSSOLO — BALLA — SIRONI
La musica futurista deve essere più musicale e senza quadratura. PRATELLA
L'Architettura futurista liberata da ogni vecchia decorazione ricerca la massima elasticità, semplicità, leggerezza dinamica, praticità, igiene, mediante grandi aggruppamenti di masse e vasta disposizione delle piante.

elemento armato ferro, vetro, fibre tessile ecc. ANTONIO SANT'ELIA.
Con gli intonarumori, i rumori della vita moderna, i rumori armonizzati e combinati simultaneamente creano la nuova musica. L. RUSSOLO
Infiliamo risolutamente a mare tutta l'arte passata, che non ci interessa che il opporre a noi d'altra parte, non possiamo misurare data la nostra assoluta forzata ignoranza della quadratura di cerchio in mezzo alla quale si sorta.
Il valore di sviluppo d'arte è proporzionale alla quantità di energia scorsa per produrla ed è egualmente misurabile.
Crediamo a mare tutta la critica che è sempre soggettivismo incontrollabile e ingiustificato, e crediamo a stabilire dei valori assoluti, che sempre in meglio vanno. Non dopo la dovuta riflessione e giustificazione per la situazione artistica futurista. BRUNO CORRA - A. LUNNA - E. SETTIMELLI - R. CRUI - M. CARLI - SANNETTI

E morto UMBERTO BOCCIONI caro grande forte migliore divino genio futurista ieri denigrato oggi glorificato superarlo superarlo durezza eroismo velocità avanti giovani futuristi tutto tutto doloresanguévita per la grande Italia sgombra ingigantita agilissima elettrica esplosiva non lagrime acciaio acciaio! MARINETTI

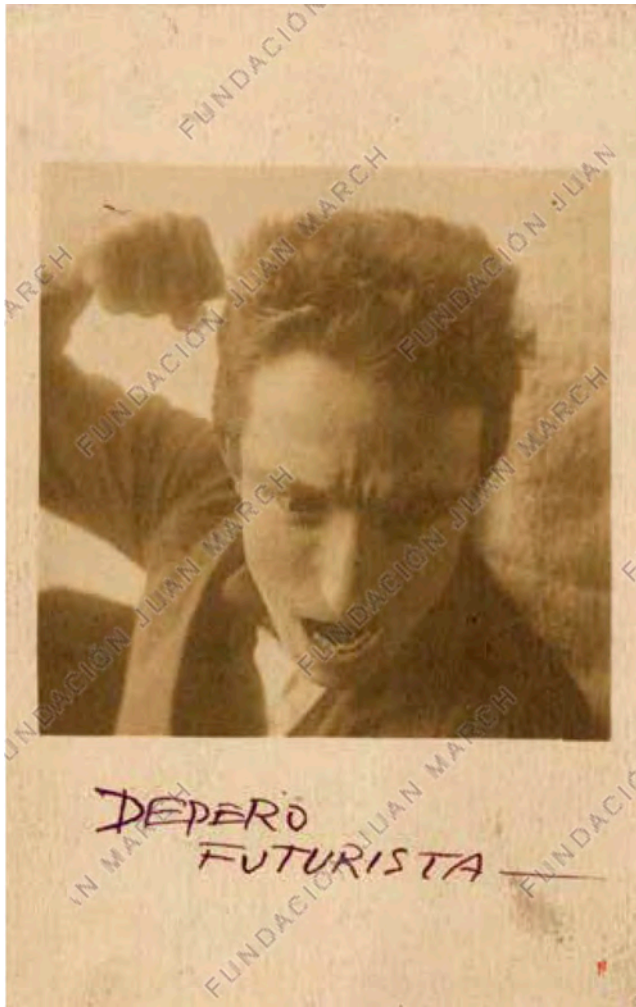


IL PUGNO ITALIANO DI BOCCIONI DISEGNO DI BALLA FUTURISTA

A Parigi, a Monaco, a Berlino, ovunque si parlasse male dell'Italia fuori d'Italia, Boccioni con la sua violenza e col suo ingegno si batteva coraggiosamente.
OPPO IDEA NAZIONALE (22 Agosto 1916)

Ecco perchè volevano la guerra, egli e i suoi amici, quando nessuno la pensava, perchè sapevano quanto ingiusta fosse la svalutazione delle forze nazionali e quante oscure potenti radici avrebbero germogliato il giorno che la coscienza delle proprie forze le avesse nutrite.
OPPO IDEA NAZIONALE (22 Agosto 1916)

44
L'Italia Futurista [Futurist Italy], year 1, no. 6 (August 1916). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 23 3/4 x 17 5/16 in. (60 x 44 cm). L'Arenario Studio Bibliografico



31
Unknown photographer, *Autoritratto con pugno* [Self-portrait with Punch], Rome, 1915. Photograph: gelatin silver print on card, 5 ½ x 3 9/16 in. (14 x 19 cm). Archivio Depero

102
Giacomo Balla, *Exposition des Peintres Futuristes Italiens et Conférence de Marinetti* [Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painters and Conference by Marinetti]. Galerie Reinhardt, Paris, May 1921. Poster: lithograph on paper, 38 ¼ x 30 ¾ in. (98.7 x 78.4 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

103
Giacomo Balla, *Exposition des Peintres Futuristes Italiens et Conférence de Marinetti* [Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painters and Conference by Marinetti]. Galerie Reinhardt, Paris, May 1921. Catalogue: letterpress on paper, 9 ¼ x 6 ½ in. (23.4 x 17.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection



L'ITALIA FUTURISTA

Marciano non marcire.
 Cancelliamo la gloria Romana con una gloria italiana più grande.
 La parola Italia deve dominare nella parola libertà. — Tutte le Libertà
 tranne quella di essere vigliacchi pacifisti antitaliani passatisti.
Modernizzazione violenta delle città passatiste.
 Abolizione dell'industria del fiorellino, umiliante e alata.
 Difesa economica e educazione patriottica del proletariato.
**Ereismo - orgoglio italiano - preparazione del primato italiano
 in arte industriale e commercio - difesa dei novatori contro musei,
 biblioteche professori archeologi e critici - igiene ginnastica sport
 metallismo meccanicismo velocità record.**
 Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna nostalgico sentimentale e pessimista.
MARINETTI
 Parole in libertà (lirismo liberato dalle prosodie e dalla sintassi) —
 ortografia e tipografia liberpressive — sensibilità numerica —

DIREZIONE ARTISTICA
BRUNO CORRA - E. SETTIMELLI

onomatopoeo — verbalizzazione astratta).
MARINETTI - BUZZI - CANGIULLO - JANNELLI - MARZA - D'ALBA - DEPERO ecc.
 Lotta contro la vigliaccheria artistica e l'ossessione della cultura - Moder-
 nolatria - Dinamismo plastico (solidificazione dell'impressionismo - simultaneità -
 trascendentalismo fisico)
BUCCIONI - L. RUSSOLO - BALLA - SIRONI
 La musica futurista deve essere pluritonale e senza quadratura.
PRATELLA

Con gli intonarumori, i rumori della vita moderna intonati armonizzati
 e combinati sinfonicamente creano la nuova volontà acustica.
L. RUSSOLO
 Gettiamo risolutamente a mare tutta l'arte passata, che non si inte-
 ressa che di opprimere e che d'altra parte non possiamo misurare data
 la nostra assoluta forzata ignoranza della quadratura di vita in
 mezzo alla quale è sorta.
 Il valore di un'opera d'arte è proporzionale alla quantità di energia
 occorsa per produrla ed è scientificamente misurabile.
 Gettiamo a mare tutta la critica che è sempre soggettivismo incon-
 trovabile e capriccioso, impotente a stabilire dei valori assoluti, che
 sempre ha negato quello che dopo la dovuta riflessione; sostitui-
 mo con la misurazione scientifica futurista.
BRUNO CORRA - E. SETTIMELLI - R. CHITI - M. CARLI

DONNE, DOVETE PREFERIRE I GLORIOSI MUTILATI

Donna, avete l'onore di vivere in un tempo virile? Futurista di nazionalità conciliante, di civiltà rissa al cospetto di popoli migranti, di squadre affondate, di montagne esplose, e di eserciti casuali?
 In questo meraviglioso tempo infedele, veloce, dissoluto, asimmetrico e squilibrato, crolla e muore finalmente l'altitativa armonia del corpo umano.
 Il cannone ha decapitato le statue della Bellezza antica, statua erettrice, imboscata come la Grecia fra gli ulivi tremanti che ombreggiano le rive cavillate del cretinismo Ellenopeto.
 I sottomarini hanno silurato gli ultimi Trifoni. Il mare liberato dall'ellenismo professorale e dalla mitologia Declinosa è diventato oggi un forte mare salubre, effocissimo, gelido inodore, carico di pesci fulminei, un mare che continua esotizzante le vibrazioni delle enormi botteghe navali.

Donna, dimmi, che Apollo che oggi si chiama Apollo Fenacra, dimmi, dimmi, Paride che ogni su onnana fra Scuderie?
 L'asimmetria dinamica dell'alpino sculpito e cesellato dal vostro deo imparsi, al vostro cuore e al vostro seno ricogniti?
 Donna, dovete preferirvi ai maschi intatti, più o meno sospettati di vigliaccheria, i gloriosi mutilati! Amateli ardentemente! I loro baci futuristi vi daranno del fighi d'arcadio, precisi, veloci, carichi di elettricità colata, ispirati come il fulmine nel colpire e abbattere uomini alberti e caduti scoloriti.
 Il protettivo è come un secondo padre del ferito. Gli impone il suo carattere. Gli insinua nelle fibre un stavismo di violenza ferrea e di velocità incendiaria.

Gloria alla pelle umana straziata dalla mitraglia, scopritrice lo splendore scabro!
 Sappiate ammirare un volto sul quale si è addensata una stella!
 Niente di più bello di una manica vuota e sfuttante nel petto, non balza fuori indimenticabile il gesto che comanda l'assalto!
 Donna, smatate i ciechi eroici!
 I loro occhi sono bruciati per aver fustato l'incoscienza sola della gloria italiana! Accarezzate le loro fronti appalocate! Abbracciatele per le strade! Salutatele amorevolmente! Adoratele! Spetta a voi alle vostre labbra di divinizzarle!
 Gloria al cieco che ha dato i suoi occhi allo splendore perché l'Italia abbia figli più radiosi e più veggenti!
 Gloria al mutilato che onolla nel passo come se fosse carico del blocco d'Italia che egli strappò all'Austria a costo di portarsi tutta la vita, ogni primavera, su di una spalla!
 Gloria ai mutilati che si equilibrano su una stampella, come se addegnassero di compiacere e volessero tentare un volo sublime!
 Donna, fate che ogni italiano dia paradosso: Voglio offrirvi al mio re, una bella ferita degna di lui. Voglio che la battaglia mi ripulsi il corpo per lei. Voglio essere così modesto della grande e dalle bastonate tenute per lei!
 Donna, il mutilato che voi bacete, non vi apparirà mai fesso, vinto, sottivo e spento, poiché porterà sempre su di se la traccio tumultuosa e l'atmosfera aerea della mischia e negli occhi la gioia esultante di avere rovesciata gli d'è d'Austria e bastonata.

Questo non è un Romanticismo che disprezza il corpo in nome d'una astrazione ascetica. Questo è un Futurismo che glorifica il corpo modificato e abilitato dalla guerra.
 Dimostrazione da vecchia estetica stantissima. Nasce oggi la nuova estetica asimmetrica e dinamica.
 Assottiamo la collaborazione della guerra meccanica per colorare d'eroinismo l'umanità scolorita dalla pace. Assottiamo le città quietiste e pacifiche colle linee violente e balzanti delle battaglie sculpite nel corpo umano.
 La chirurgia, la già indiziata grande trasformazione. Dopo l'ultima guerra chirurgica compie l'ultimo passo: la rivoluzione biologica. Fusione dell'acido e della Carne. Unificazione dell'acido e della Carne. Unificazione della carne nell'acido. Il corpo umano è diventato oggi un forte mare salubre, effocissimo, gelido inodore, carico di pesci fulminei, un mare che continua esotizzante le vibrazioni delle enormi botteghe navali.

Donna, amate i gloriosi mutilati e imitabili partecipando alla guerra. Anche voi... Anche voi in Trincea! Sì un milione di donne al fronte trinceo, sotto tra le più resistenti alle fatiche! Quelle non esagerati all'allevamento dei bambini o alla cultura della terra! Abbiamo piena fiducia nella vostra forza fisica e nel vostro coraggio! Sì in trincea! È sperabile, bestiale che rimate per ogni ad aspettare o tradire i maschi che si battono!

Equilibrano così lo sforzo dei due sessi? Tutte le responsabilità, tutti i pericoli, tutte le fatiche anche a voi, Donna Italiana, se volete essere degne di amare i gloriosi mutilati italiani!

NEI PROSSIMI NUMERI

Dono primaverile manifesto di Pratele. La scultura futurista di Boccioni. Disegni di Balla, Russolo, Sironi. L'architettura futurista di Sant'Elia. Una notte in sentinella sull'Altissimo garofano in libertà di Marinetti. Corvée d'acqua sotto i forti austriaci parole in libertà di Marinetti. Consiglio di leva sintesi di Cangiullo. La nuova volontà acustica di Russolo. Scoperte da 10 lire l'una di Mario Carli. Il Tram parole in libertà di Depero. Prefazione all'Equatore notturno di F. Meriano. A. B. C. della Pittura Futurista di Russolo.

parole in libertà dei futuristi

Buzzi, Balla, Bruno Corra, R. Chiti, Settimelli, Depero, O'Alba, Mara, Armando Marza, Auro D'Alba, Betuda, Cavalli, Dinamo Correnti, F. Meriano, L. Nicastro, A. Ginanni.

parole in libertà dei giovanissimi futuristi

Della Santa, Visone, Trilucci, Sereno, Lo Ponte, Formoso, Corchi, Valenzano, Siffi, (gruppo romano) Gino Cantarini, Diotelli, Cenna, Rebecchi, Cardone, Molecini, (gruppo mantovano), Diego Costa, A. Cacchi, E. Mirandoli, Demonte, Pasqualino 13 anni, D. Remondino, Del Guerra, Stoyanovich.

La migliore batteria

Ho constatato con piacere che i soldati al fronte, nel leggere i giornali, trascurano sempre il resoconto delle sedute parlamentari. Ciò avviene istintivamente come uno si tira bocca e naso quando passa davanti ad una latrina di coterini.

Non comprendo però come mai i direttori di giornali, riflettendo al costo crescente della carta, non consacrinno le loro colonne piuttosto alla biografia delle cimici delle mosche cadaveriche e dei topi da fognai, ignorano dunque che Montecitorio è da molto tempo un luogo infetto fortunatamente isolato sulla meno frequentata delle colline romane; e che l'infazione parlamentare sarebbe assolutamente vinta se non trovassimo più un comodo veicolo sulla carta dei quotidiani. Ad ogni modo lo spero che Cadorna vi porrà sul viso la migliore delle maschere antiparassitarie. Un generale che comanda l'armamento il più glorioso degli eserciti non può concedersi il lusso di vomitare ogni giorno.

Cadorna sa che l'intera nazione odia e disprezza i professori rampolli gli avvocati incoscienti e gli affaristi bacati che sperano di sgovernare l'Italia. Cadorna sa che l'intera nazione crede fermamente nel suo genio militare e nella forza eroica del suo grande esercito.

Mentre egli arginava rudemente l'offensiva Austriaca, vi erano forse in Italia 2 o 3 canaglie che si fregavano le mani augurandosi una disfatta. Tutti gli italiani rimasero calmi e sicuri. Uno solo tremò ed era un ministro. Il suo discorso rivela un grave sconcerto intestinale. Via! Si rassicuri! Coraggio! Nulla di grave! Siamo qui tutti intorno al suo letto! Vuole un bicchierino di cognac?...

Rimandiamo alla fine della guerra la diagnosi definitiva di questo ammalato di paura. Allora progheremo Cadorna di regolarci una batteria austriaca e nella più profumata e meno professorale delle domeniche di maggio, la punteremo contro la stupida posizione di Montecitorio. Caricheremo granate e shrapnel nello sterco di 3 socialisti ufficiali di 3 giolittiani e di 3 clericali garibonisti. Ogni bersaglio ha i proiettili che si merita. Sarà presto fatto. E da tanto tempo che abbiamo individuato questo antichissimo lazaretto di colorati, ormai diventato inutile poiché il terribile colera giolittiano è definitivamente soffocato.

F. T. MARINETTI FUTURISTA

Per esigenze d'impaginazione saremo sempre costretti a dare la precedenza agli articoli brevi e alle tavole di PAROLE IN LIBERTÀ meno vaste e di più facile esecuzione tipografica.

LA SCIENZA FUTURISTA

(antitedesca - avventurosa - capricciosa - sicurezzofoba - ebra d'ignoto) MANIFESTO FUTURISTA

La scienza futura sulla quale potrebbe essere un franco sguardo di distruzione alle scuole, ai laboratori, ai gabinetti scientifici. Siamo convinti che la scienza dei nostri contemporanei sia passatista quanto la loro arte e la loro vita: ne abbiamo la ferma diagnosi.

La figura del professore, ogni cosa, è un'immagine rificolizzata ed esautorata. La propaganda futurista, conserva con un'orgoglio pretegitto nel campo scientifico; qui, accade spesso che un venerato padre blindato di occhiali venga scollato senza libertà. Tutti i pregiudizi più retrogradi imperano sulla scienza non meno che sull'arte, e forse di più. La necessità di una solida cultura, l'imposizione di metodi invariabili, i pregiudizi della serietà della lingua, gli assomi della ricerca pacata e dell'opera di vasta mole, i dogmi della divina verità e della equità inderogabile sono costellazioni mentali sul rovescio delle quali sta scritto: tradizionalismo, eterna rimmasticazione e religione di tutto ciò che è stato fatto, disprezzo dei giovani, degli audaci, dei geniali non diplomati, degli irregolari, dei nuovi. Gli innumerevoli corsi ed esami delle nostre scuole sono altrettanti trabocchetti tesi ai fallaci incombenti del genio. Arrivare alla laurea senza circuirsi, se fosse possibile, è un vero country veramente prodigioso.

Podestò agilmente la demolizione dei vecchissimi con l'affermazione, dei nuovi valori che devono sostituirli, ed in simultaneo con le nostre osservazioni — volontà futuriste sulla scienza.

Il cenno nel campo artistico l'erudito che sa catalogare e descrivere tutte le opere create dagli altri in passato non ha avute a che fare con l'artista che crea originalmente un nuovo organismo plastico, musicale, letterario... così nel campo scientifico lo scoglio medievale che il risultato di pacatezza e di fatica a manipolare nel proprio cervello qualche ostinato di volumi contestati una accorta relazione di tutte le verità scoperte da altri non ha niente di comune con lo scorporo geniale che opera nella realtà nuovi rapporti logici, nuove architetture di legami. È necessario eliminare nettamente questo equivoco perché da esso deriva il pregiudizio che sia obbligatorio studiare ed imparare tutto ciò che è stato fatto per poter fare qualche cosa di nuovo.

Non scartiamo invece i giovani a considerare la cultura scientifica, quale viene somministrata nelle scuole, come un cibo indispensabile da cui è bene tenere lontani i nostri affermando che l'unico genere di cultura utile è quella che uno spirito originale sa procurarsi da sé, qui e là, con un studio a fusto, caotico, profondamente sregolato; esaltando il valore dinamico della mente e ponendo l'attenzione sulla realtà, trovando ogni forma di conoscenza liberata.

profondamente cieca per un cervello veramente geniale la cultura non è mai poca.

Tutte le scienze sono popolate da solenni mentali che nessuno si permette più di esaminare né di disprezzare: bisogna riconoscere ai giovani tutti i diritti di fronte ad ogni affermazione scissa da un vecchio passato; abolire il pregiudizio della scienza con l'89 manovola.

La scienza passata è stata sempre trionfante sicura di sé, idoliamente cieca di fronte alla immensità colossale ed assillante del mistero che palpita nella nostra realtà; lo sfuggimento continuo della nostra vita rende necessaria la creazione di una scienza futurista audacemente esploratrice, sensibilissima, vibratile, influenzata da intuizioni lontanissime, frammentaria, contraddittoria, felice di scoprire ogni una verità che distrugga la verità di lei, tutta inaspettata, ignota, tutta protesa sensitivamente verso il vuoto che le sta davanti.

Il suo ad oggi si è avvia dalla funzione della scienza un concetto falso e passatista. Si è creduto in buona fede che essa servisse a conquistare dei punti solidi nell'oceano dei fenomeni, ad aumentare il contenuto di certezza dell'ignoto, e darci insomma delle certezze sempre più numerose e più vaste. Questo concetto è falso, — perché spiegare un fenomeno non vuol dire altro che scinderlo in altri fenomeni che devono poi essere alla loro volta spiegati, così via all'infinito, — perché le più banali esperienze si dimostrano che quanto più si è ignoranti tanto più si vede chiara, semplice e sicura la realtà, mentre quanto più si sa tanto più i fatti appaiono complessi, enigmatici, inafferrabili, pieni di possibilità insospettite (per la nascita di una pianta di pomodoro, l'azione di un continuo climo su una germinazione, l'abitudine di un insetto sembrano cose naturalissime e semplicissime ad un contadino meridionale).

La scienza attuale manca di agilità e di precisione. Quando vogliono essere esatte dispongono semplicemente schematizzati — quando tentano di esprimere in pieno un fenomeno cadono nel confusionarismo. Occorre creare nuovi metodi di ricerca ed di esposizione, nuovi strumenti di indagine e di espressione, più liberi, più intonati alla plurimedimensionalità dei fenomeni che è propria delle nostre sensibilità velocizzate. La ricerca e l'esposizione scientifica non saranno più metodiche, ordinarie e stricciatissime, ma capricciose, piene di svolte e di sbalzi, ineguali, burrascose, continuamente segnate da scoppi di nuove intuizioni. Bisogna sentirsi penetrati ad un tempo dall'orrore della pesantezza uniforme e dalla carenza della esattezza.

Tutte le scienze, per una virtù forse inconsciente, si sono armate di speciali terminologie delle quali si servono per chiudere alla meglio con tappi parole le falle del loro scalfi matrici. Bisogna liberarsi di questi frasi convenzionali e troppo comodi con cui si pretende di spiegare tutto. Essi sono formati di termini vaghi e vuoti, di giri di parole incomprensibili, di frasi fatte; sono l'espressione di una mentalità abituata a transigere (chiudendo un occhio) con sé stessa, per evitare di trovarsi di fronte ad un vuoto pericoloso; abitano alla confusione ed al semplicismo. È necessario servirsi nell'esposizione scientifica delle parole più semplici, dirette, più attuali — disprezzare sempre l'espressione scientifica per dare la preferenza al modo di dire efficacemente lavorato dall'uso quotidiano del giornale e della piazza.

L'applicazione della scoperta scientifica è stata fatta finora in modo illogico e soggettivo. Si è sempre confuso il valore della scoperta in sé stessa con la conseguenza che da essa possono derivare. Così si è potuto attribuire per sé alla scoperta di un diverso elemento per lampadine elettriche che dà un rendimento maggiore di una scoperta qualsiasi e quello di una scoperta rarissima che riguarda l'eredità di un astro o la legge vitale di un insetto. Noi diciamo che il vero valore di una scoperta scientifica può essere determinato solamente basandosi sui concetti affermati dalla nostra misurazione futurista, secondo i quali il valore di qualunque opera o scoperta, scientifica, artistica, filosofica... è direttamente proporzionale alla quantità di energia occorsa a produrla.

Tutte le scienze attuali mancano di agilità e di precisione. Quando vogliono essere esatte dispongono semplicemente schematizzati — quando tentano di esprimere in pieno un fenomeno cadono nel confusionarismo. Occorre creare nuovi metodi di ricerca ed di esposizione, nuovi strumenti di indagine e di espressione, più liberi, più intonati alla plurimedimensionalità dei fenomeni che è propria delle nostre sensibilità velocizzate. La ricerca e l'esposizione scientifica non saranno più metodiche, ordinarie e stricciatissime, ma capricciose, piene di svolte e di sbalzi, ineguali, burrascose, continuamente segnate da scoppi di nuove intuizioni. Bisogna sentirsi penetrati ad un tempo dall'orrore della pesantezza uniforme e dalla carenza della esattezza.

La scienza tende a più individualizzarsi nello studio delle stesse cose

che gli uomini hanno del mondo in



45
 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti,
L'Italia Futurista [Futurist
 Italy], year I, no. 2 (June 1916).
 Magazine: letterpress on paper,
 25 1/4 x 17 1/4 in. (63.8 x 43.8 cm).
 Merrill C. Berman Collection

35
 Francesco Cangiullo, postcards,
 c. 1915. Cards: letterpress
 on card, 3 1/2 x 5 7/16 in.
 (8.9 x 13.8 cm) each.
 Merrill C. Berman Collection

Constatiamo che l'aspirazione plastica che guida noi FUTURISTI ITALIANI è per lo meno di un secolo in anticipo sulla sensibilità artistica italiana; ma una luminosa speranza ci guida nel buio dell'ignoranza e dell'indifferenza del nostro paese.

Boccioni 1914-1927

34

Noi non dobbiamo rimanere dei contemplativi, non dobbiamo sfruttare il patrimonio del passato.

Noi dobbiamo creare un nuovo patrimonio da porre accanto a quello antico, dobbiamo crearci un'arte nuova, un'arte dei nostri tempi.

MUSSOLINI

Bisognerebbe impiccare, fucilare chi devia dalla idea di una grande Italia futurista.

BOCCIONI

Affermare, slanciarsi, battersi, resistere, riattaccare! Indietreggiare mai! Marcciare e non marcire!

MARINETTI



IL FUTURISMO
è l'espressione violenta
della nostra razza, aggressiva e ri-
voluzionaria; è l'espressione di giovinezza
incontenibile e frenetica. **IL FUTURISMO** è vibra-
zione, slancio, passione, audacia gioconda e festosità
orchestrata. **IL FUTURISMO** è il metodo ormai imperi-
turo dell'arte italiana che per merito di **MARINETTI**
e dei **FUTURISTI** ha ritrovato e riaffermato nel mondo la fede
nel continuo rinnovarsi della propria **GENIALITA' CREATRICE**.

Il Futurismo immortale

ha rivalorizzato la vera tradizione dell'arte italiana che è sempre stata:

creazione - superamento - rivoluzione

59

L'onomalingua
CREAZIONE DEPERO - 1916

VERBALIZZAZIONE ASTRATTA

E'
deri-
vata dal-
l'onomato-
pea, dal ru-
morismo, dalla
brutalità delle pa-
role in libertà, futu-
riste. E' il linguaggio
delle forze naturali:

**vento·pioggia·mare
fiume·ruscello·ecc.**

degli esseri artificiali rumoreggianti
creati dagli uomini:

Biciclette, tram, treni, automobili e tutte le macchine,

è l'assieme delle emo-
zioni e delle sensazioni espresso con il lingua-
gio più rudimentale e più efficace. Depero credè e
declamò queste sue originali composizioni davanti a
folle entusiaste ed ostili. Nei monologhi dei clowns e
dei comici di varietà vi sono tipici accenni all'onoma-
lingua che avranno futuri sviluppi, costituendo la lingua
più indovinata per la scena e specialmente per le esage-
razioni esilaranti. Con l'onomalingua si può parlare ed inten-
dersi efficacemente con gli elementi dell'universo, con gli ani-
mali e con le macchine. L'onomalingua è un linguaggio poetico di
comprensione universale per il quale non sono necessari traduttori.

217



II.
THEATER
AND THE
AVANT-GARDE
1916-1918

P. 60

Mario Castagneri, photograph of Depero in the dressing room at the Teatro Trianon in Milan (Depero painter and poet), c. 1924 (detail) [cat. 119]

39

Unknown artist, *Il Teatro futurista* [Futurist Theater] at the Teatro Niccolini in Florence, c. 1916. Poster (flyer): letterpress on paper, 13 3/8 x 6 7/16 in. (34 x 16.4 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

R. TEATRO NICCOLINI

Massimo Teatro di Prezzo

Il Teatro si apre 30 min.
prima dello spettacolo.

Proprietà della Nobile Accademia degli Infocati
TELEFONO 2-77

Lo spettacolo terminerà
alle ore 23,30 circa

COMPAGNIA DRAMMATICA ITALIANA "ROMA",

NINCHI e ROSA

DIRETTA DALL'ARTISTA

ANNIBALE NINCHI

Mercoledì 8 Marzo a ore 21 precise (9 pom.)

Grande serata patriottica

IL TEATRO FUTURISTA

CREATO DA

Marinetti - Settimelli - Bruno Corra

Spettacolo a beneficio della Croce Rossa

- 1.° - **TRICOLORE** sintesi teatrale di Settimelli
- 2.° - **L'ARRESTO** sintesi teatrale di Marinetti
- 3.° - **KULTUR** sintesi teatrale di Boccioni
- 4.° - **KAISERIANA** sintesi teatrale di Settimelli
- 5.° - **PANCIA DEL VASO** sintesi teatrale di Cangiullo
- 6.° - **IL SOLDATO LONTANO** sintesi teatrale di Marinetti
- 7.° - **GIALLO E NERO** sintesi teatrale di Remo Chiti
- 8.° - **LA CAMERIERA DELL'UFFICIALE** sintesi teatrale di
Marinetti
- 9.° - **DAVANTI ALL'INFINITO** sintesi teatrale di Bruno Corra

INTERPRETI: La Compagnia NINCHI - ROSA

Dopo lo spettacolo MARINETTI dirà le sue impressioni di guerra

Billette d'Ingresso alla Platea Galleria e Palchi Lire DUE

Strada, 1.° e 2.° fila, 2.000 - 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000 e 7.000. Ufficio Liberaie manli direttore pagheranno L. 1,00

Poltrone L. 4,00 - Posti distinti L. 3,00 - Posti numerati L. 1,50 (oltre l'ingr.)

Palchi: I. e II. fila L. 20 - III fila L. 10 - IV. fila. L. 5 (oltre l'ingresso)

Al Camerino del Teatro è aperta la vendita dei palchi, poltrone e posti distinti

L'impresa garantisce soltanto i palchi che si acquistano al teatro stesso

biglietti sono in vendita all'ufficio Liberaie manli dell'assoc. z. Movimento Futurista - Via Strada 1

È assolutamente proibito affiggere il presente anche nell'interno di qualunque località

STAB. TIP. IMPRESA GEN. AFFISSIONI - FIRENZE

119

Mario Castagneri, Depero in the dressing room at the Teatro Trianon in Milan (Depero painter and poet), c. 1924.

Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 8 7/8 x 6 3/4 in. (22.5 x 17 cm). Archivio Depero





47

Costume per Mimismagia
 [Costume for Mimismagia],
 1916. Ink and watercolor
 on paper, 11 ⁷/₁₆ x 7 ³/₁₆ in.
 (29 x 18.7 cm). Private
 collection, Milan

48

Costume per Mimismagia
 [Costume for Mimismagia],
 1916. Ink and watercolor
 on paper, 12 ³/₁₆ x 7 ³/₁₆ in.
 (31 x 20 cm). MART, Museo di
 arte moderna e contemporanea
 di Trento e Rovereto





49

Costume per Mimismagia
 [Costume for *Mimismagia*],
 1916. Ink and watercolor
 on paper, 9 7/16 x 6 1/4 in.
 (24 x 15.5 cm). MART, Museo di
 arte moderna e contemporanea
 di Trento e Rovereto

50

Costume per Mimismagia
 [Costume for *Mimismagia*],
 1916. Ink and watercolor
 on paper, 9 7/16 x 5 1/2 in.
 (23 x 14 cm). MART, Museo di
 arte moderna e contemporanea
 di Trento e Rovereto



scenari e costumi plastici per „L'Usignolo“ di J. Strawinski



Roma

1916



135

IL CANTO DELL'USIGNOLO

Balletto russo della celebre COMPAGNIA DIAGHILEW Musica di JGOR STRAWINSKI
Scena plastica e Costumi meccanici di DEPERO

nel 1918,

Roma - 1916,

Vado in cerca d'un mio amico, un giovane pittore. Lo incontro in via Nomentana con un grosso signore straniero.

— Sai, mi dice, è un ricco russo, l'ho conosciuto allo studio di Balla, vuol vedere i miei disegni; sali anche tu con noi.

Dopo aver esaminato e ammirato i disegni del mio amico, il russo rivolgendosi a me, dice: — Anche voi pittore futurista?

— No, rispondo, non sono pittore, ma scultore, però non come Boccioni.... e qui comprendendo che egli non capiva una sola parola italiana e pensando che i russi un poco di francese e di tedesco lo sanno tutti, mi metto ad improvvisare un pasticcio di tedesco e di francese, accompagnandomi con la mimica: — **No, не́пá, sculpteur, Bildhauer non in ghips-ma-aber in carton grosse papier!**

— Abitare lontano? — No, tutt'altro, rispondo prontissimo (abitavo all'estremo opposto della città, ai Prati di Castello).

Prendiamo il tram, arriviamo in centro, poi in vettura giungiamo al mio studio, stanza-cucina-baracca-omnibus. Entusiasta mi acquista parecchie cose: è il pittore Larionow.

Questi miei disegni, il pittore Larionow, dopo averli arrangiati alla sua maniera li pubblicò nell'Album „Teatro Russo“ „Gontcerova-Larionow“ plagiandoli in pieno.

Ecco il perchè nel 1921, Margherita Sarfatti scriveva sul „Popolo d'Italia“ ch'io derivò dai russi. Ma il geniale critico Volt pensò subito a correggere su „Testa di ferro“ affermando che il fatto era perfettamente inverso. Cioè era Larionow che plagiava un futurista italiano.

Queste cose avvengono perchè gli editori italiani, che si occupano di edizioni artistiche, preferiscono ripetere all'infinito costosissime opere sui grandi del passato, trascurando completamente le nuove creazioni (contrariamente a quanto si pratica all'estero).

Così le nostre iniziative, creazioni ed invenzioni, appaiono alla luce sempre con incredibili e incresciosi ritardi e sovente, come nel caso sopra citato, quando possono venir scambiate per derivazioni da quelli stessi che le hanno plagate.

Il giorno dopo vennero alla mia baracca Larionow e Diaghilew accompagnati dal simpaticissimo e geniale ballerino Miassine.

In quei giorni costruii i primi paesaggi plastici. Fra questi c'era un bozzetto in cartone d'un „complesso plastico floreale“, gruppo di fiori meccanici che Diaghilew mi ordinò di costruire in proporzioni giganti per il Teatro Costanzi.

133

nel 1917,

Mario Recchi descrisse questa favolosa flora sul „Popolo d'Italia“ di Milano, mentre stavo costruendola in un enorme atelier:

SCENARIO PLASTICO E COSTUMI MECCANICI di DEPERO

„Tutte le singolarissime doti della pittura e della scultura di Depero si sono, per una singolare attitudine del suo spirito, travasate (e in un certo senso moltiplicate) nella scenografia e coreografia come nel loro naturale elemento. A render del resto possibile ciò, ha contribuito non poco il genere dello scenario diverso da quello del tipo tradizionale interamente plastico. Cioè un fantastico giardino che ci richiama alla mente i prodigi della flora dell'epoca primaria, ove alcune foglie gigantesche oltre cinque metri di larghezza, riempiono dei loro rossi e celesti abbaglianti i due lati, al cui centro giganteggia una sterminata campanula d'un abbagliante candore di neve che si apre sul folto dei fiori, nucleo centrale della costruzione. Intrico senza fine di colossali punte aggressive, spine minacciose come spade, petali taglienti più di una lama, costole e nervature violente dagli angoli angosciosi e dai profili inflessibili rosa, azzurri, scarlatti, gialli, verdi, arancioni, lilla, in una festa incontaminata di colori, in una ridda senza fine di toni e di sfumature. Eppure meravigliosamente saldi ed organati, forme e colori, in un unico edificio e non naturalisticamente dispersi ad intenti descrittivi. Ci si trova davanti a qualche cosa che ha la complessa e laboriosa vita di una foresta vergine, che per quanto ti ci aggiri e ti ci disperda senti immanente in ogni luogo la sua unità ed in ogni sua più lontana parte riconosci le membra di un unico organismo. Qui poi, per un miracolo di cui non la natura, ma solo l'arte è capace, la foresta ha la leggerezza, la grazia e l'affabilità di un ninno o di un giocattolo.

„Cespugli giganteschi di parecchi metri di diametro, rovi e sterpi mastodontici, foglie sterminate,

hanno qui l'impensabile leggerezza, alla vista, di un mazzolino di fiori campestri.

„Di più il rinnovamento completo di Depero dalle forme che ci mostrava l'anno passato da quelle odierne, non è meno evidente nei costumi per gli attori ed i ballerini.

„L'arte di lui, energica, volitiva, geometrica, a piani, rette, angoli, spezzature nette, precise, taglienti, pareva inadattabile ad una cosa di per sé molle e cascante come un vestito. Bisognava non cedere alle difficoltà pratiche di una estrinsecazione senza precedenti, creandosi gli strumenti per lavoro volta per volta. Anche per questo, come per lo scenario: rinnovare in un certo senso e in un certo modo l'officina artistica italiana di vecchio stampo, la „bottega“ dei maestri del passato, dell'operaio fiorentino come del tagliapietre gotico, e Depero vi è in gran parte riuscito.

„Così è che costumi e vestiti hanno potuto essere tagliati in una materia impensabile: l'acciaio ed il cartone delle sue sculture. Ne è risultata una costruzione che, pur avendo la leggerezza e la pieghevolezza richieste dalle esigenze dell'uso cui è destinata, mantiene tutta la rigidità ed inflessibilità volute dal disegno e crea per necessità inerti alla sua fattura, nuovi movimenti nel ballerino che l'indossa o meglio li deforma secondo l'intenzione dello scenografo, costringendoli in una unica euritmia con le linee di cui essa risulta.

„E è questo sconfinamento ed ingeneranza dello scenografo del pittore, sui gesti degli attori che interpretano il dramma, conquista nuovissima ed essenziale sull'arte del Teatro.“

MARIO RECCHI.

Il teatro antico, greco, orientale, medioevale, usava maschere e corazze sulla scena: DEPERO ha realizzato LA NUOVA MASCHERA, LA NUOVA CORAZZA, plastica, colorata, meccanica, luminosa, trasformante, mobilissima, del teatro contemporaneo futurista.

134



53

Mechanical flower stage set for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes performance in Rome in 1917 of Igor Stravinsky's "Le Chant du rossignol" [*The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 14 3/16 x 15 3/8 in. (36 x 39 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

51

Studi per i costumi di "Le Chant du rossignol" [Studies for Stravinsky's *The Song of the Nightingale* Costumes], 1916. Ink and pencil on paper, 8 7/16 x 10 7/16 in. (20.5 x 26.5 cm) each. Private collection, Switzerland





52

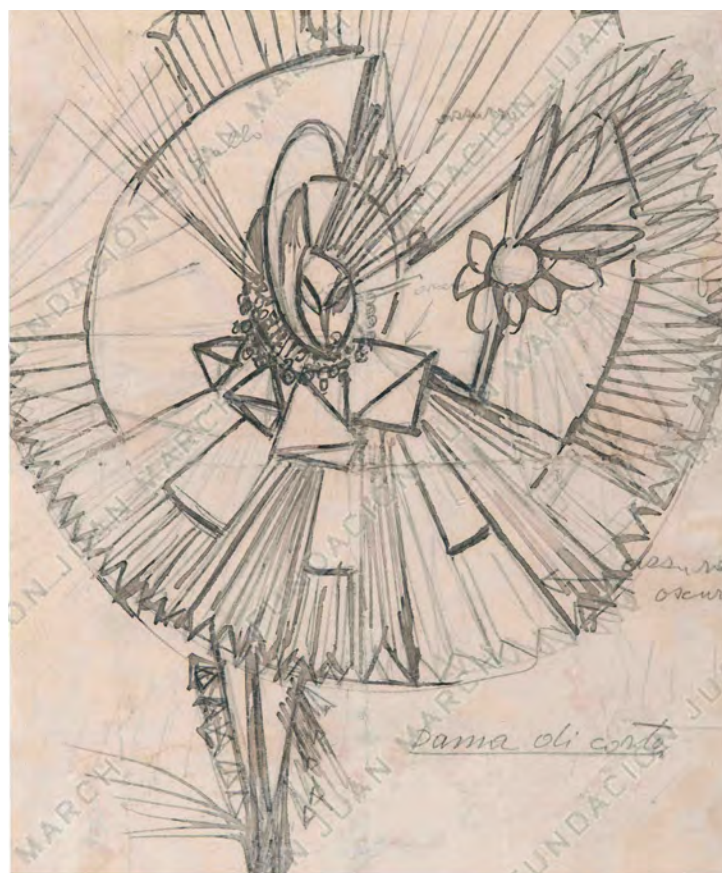
Flora magica, scenografia de "Le Chant du rossignol"
[Magical Flora, set design for *The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917, reconstruction from 2000. Painted wood and cardboard, approx. 246 ¹/₁₆ x 246 ¹/₁₆ x 149 ⁵/₈ in. (625 x 625 x 380 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto



56
Costume per balletto di Diaghilev [Costume for a Ballet by Diaghilev], 1917. Collage, 18 7/8 x 11 13/16 in. (48 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland



58
Dama di corte cinese per Diaghilev [Lady of the Chinese Court for Diaghilev], 1917. Collage, 19 11/16 x 14 9/16 in. (50 x 37 cm). Private collection, Switzerland



71
Dama di corte per Diaghilev [Lady of the Court for Diaghilev], 1917. Ink and pencil on paper, 7 9/16 x 6 1/2 in. (18.5 x 16.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland



59
Mandarino per il "Canto dell'usignolo" [Mandarin for Stravinsky's *The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917. Collage, 25 3/4 x 20 1/4 in. (64.5 x 53 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

60
Mandarino per il "Canto dell'usignolo" [Mandarin for Stravinsky's *The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917. Collage, 18 7/8 x 11 13/16 in. (48 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland



55

Ballerina [Dancer], 1916–17.
Collage, 13 x 11 ⁷/₁₆ in.
(33 x 29 cm). Private collection,
Switzerland

57

Il Mandarino [The Mandarin],
1916–17. Collage, 15 ³/₁₆ x 12 ³/₁₆ in.
(39 x 31.5 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland

61

Il cigno candido posteggiatore
per "Il giardino zoologico"
di Cangiullo [The White
Swan Parking Attendant
for Cangiullo's *Il giardino
zoologico*], 1917. Collage,
15 ⁹/₁₆ x 16 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (39.5 x 43 cm).
Private collection, Switzerland

87

Mandarino con ombrello
[Mandarin with Parasol], 1919.
Pieced wool on cotton,
25 3/4 x 20 3/4 in. (64.5 x 53 cm).
Private collection, Switzerland



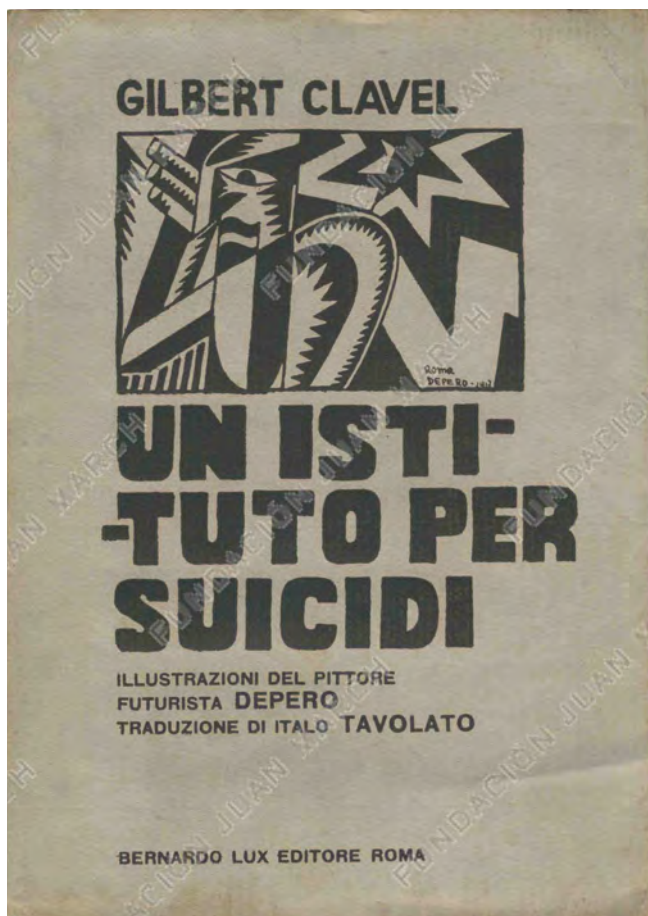


62
Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel
[Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917
(signed "1915"). Watercolor
on paper, 11 ¹³/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₈ in.
(30 x 25 cm). Private collection,
Switzerland

63
Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel
[Portrait of Gilbert Clavel],
1917 (signed "1916"). Charcoal
on paper, 23 ³/₄ x 10 ¹/₄ in.
(60.3 x 26 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland

64
Depero e Clavel: mimica!
[Depero and Clavel: Mimicry!],
Capri, 1917. Photograph: gelatin
silver print on fiber-based
paper, 3 ¹/₈ x 3 ¹/₈ in. (8 x 8 cm).
MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo
Depero





73

Un istituto per suicidi
[Suicides' Institute] by Gilbert Clavel. Rome: Bernardo Lux Editore, 1917. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 9 7/16 x 7 1/16 in. (25 x 18 cm).
Archivo Lafuente

74

Illustration in Gilbert Clavel's novella *Un istituto per suicidi* [Suicides' Institute], c. 1917. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 3 9/16 x 5 9/16 in. (9 x 14.2 cm).
Merrill C. Berman Collection



67

Ballerina [Dancer], 1916–17. Charcoal on paper, 13 9/16 x 9 1/4 in. (34.5 x 23.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

66

Studio per "Un istituto per suicidi" di Gilbert Clavel [Study for Gilbert Clavel's *Suicides' Institute*], 1917. Charcoal on paper, 8 11/16 x 11 13/16 in. (22 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

69

Marinaio sintetico con pipa [Synthetic Sailor with Pipe], 1917. Charcoal on paper, 14 15/16 x 11 in. (38 x 28 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

68

Figura (Architettura sintetica di un uomo) [A Figure, or Synthetic Architecture of a Man], 1917. Charcoal on paper, 12 3/8 x 8 1/4 in. (31.5 x 21 cm). Private collection, Switzerland





120
La pitonessa [The Soothsayer], 1924 (signed "1916" and "1924").
 Collage and ink on paper,
 22 ¼ x 17 ¼ in. (56.5 x 43.8 cm).
 Private collection, Switzerland

70
Automi. Prospettiva dinamica figurata [Automata. Dynamic Perspective with Figures], 1917.
 Watercolor on paper, 24 ¾ x 15 ¾ in. (62 x 40 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

54
Bambina e marinaio [Young Girl and Sailor], 1917. Pieced wool on cotton, 31 ½ x 30 11/16 in. (79 x 78 cm). Private collection, Switzerland





AL·TEATRO·DEI·PICCOLI



BALLI·PLASTICI

76

Al Teatro dei Piccoli, Balli plastici [At the Teatro dei Piccoli, Plastic Dances], 1918. Oil on canvas, 39 3/4 x 29 9/16 in. (101 x 75 cm). Collezione Girefin



77
I selvaggi rossi e neri [Red and Black savages], 1918.
 Oil on card, 19 1/16 x 19 1/16 in.
 (50 x 50 cm). Private collection,
 Switzerland

85
Il Mondo [The World], year
 V, no. 17 (April 27, 1919).
 Magazine: letterpress and
 photogravure on paper,
 13 9/16 x 9 5/8 in. (34.5 x 24.5 cm).
 Private collection



78
Balli plastici. Esposizione del
 pittore Depero [Plastic Dances.
 Exhibition of the Painter
 Depero]. Teatro dei Piccoli,
 Rome, April 1918. Brochure:
 letterpress on paper, 6 3/4 x 4 3/4 in.
 (16.8 x 12.1 cm). Merrill C.
 Berman Collection





79
Marionette per i Balli plastici
[Puppets for Plastic Dances],
1918. Oil on card, 11 ¹³/₁₆ x
11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (30 x 30 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland

92
Diavolo metallico [Metallic
Devil], 1919 (signed "1916").
Collage, 15 ³/₈ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in.
(39 x 30 cm). Private collection,
Switzerland





65

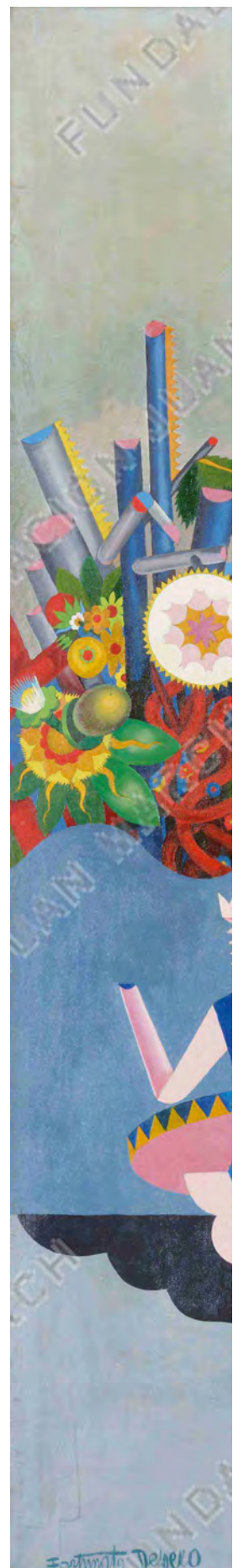
Il musicista Alfredo Casella
[The Musician Alfredo Casella],
1917. Charcoal on paper,
18 ½ x 13 ¾ in. (47 x 34.5 cm).
Private collection, Switzerland

75

Pagliaccio bianco per
"Pagliacci" di Alfredo Casella
[White Clown for Alfredo
Casella's Clowns], 1918. Collage,
21 ¾ x 15 ¼ in. (55 x 40 cm).
Private collection, Switzerland



I miei Balli plastici [My Plastic Dances], 1918. Oil on canvas, 74 3/8 x 70 1/8 in. (189 x 180 cm). Private collection, Switzerland





11 clamorose rappresentazioni dei Balli Plastici a Roma-1918

Balli e pantomime musicali eseguite da marionette ideate e costruite con stile sintetico, geometrico, asimmetrico.

Accompagnamento di musica descrittiva e ritmica a composizione ultramoderna con sfondo di scenari anch'essi disegnati e colorati vivamente e sinteticamente, con prospettive e toni perfettamente futuristi.

La stampa dichiarò che le scene dei „Balli plastici“ erano di effetto veramente straordinario; il che è molto importante considerando lo stato di decadenza della scenografia italiana di allora e di oggi. Infatti essa ha perduto ogni senso decorativo, ogni valore interpretativo dell'ambiente ed ogni originalità.

I BALLI PLASTICI DEPERO

furono rappresentati **11 sere** a teatro sempre esaurito.

e questo nel 1918

ARTE DEPERO - DINAMO

137

IL PROGRAMMA

SCENE: Prospettive deformate - flora meccanizzata - architetture fantastiche di metallo e cristallo.

COSTUMI: plastici in legno dipinto con colori a smalto lucidissimo.

Creazioni
di DEPERO

Direzione coreografica in collaborazione con Gilbert Clavel.
Direzione musicale di Alfredo Casella.

Esecuzione della Compagnia marionettistica Gorno dell'Acqua.

1. PAGLIACCI

villaggio luminoso floreale — pagliacci — ballerina — gallina e farfalle. Musica di Alfredo Casella.

2. L'UOMO DAI BAFFI

strada d'oro — ballerina azzurra — danze ubbriache — topi bianchi — pioggia di sigarette. Musica di Tyrwhitt.

3. I SELVAGGI

paesaggio tropicale — selvaggi rossi e neri — la selvaggia gigantesca ed il serpe verde. Musica di Francesco Malipiero.

4. OMBRE

ombre dinamiche costruite — piani grigi e neri.

5. L'ORSO AZZURRO

danza dell'orso e rivista delle marionette. Musica di Chopinow.

„Ho assistito alle prove generali dei *balli plastici*, creazione di Depero, il più clamorosamente colorito e gaio pittore italiano e di Gilbert Clavel. Le sensazioni che ne ho ricevute sono fra le più strane della mia vita di esploratore spirituale. Le marionette ridanciane costruite da Depero ci infilano in un mondo di deformazione, di rigidità, di armonia nuova, risolvendo dentro di noi tutti gli istinti più ingenui, più puerili, più ballocconi, e immergendoci per questo in una intensa gioia infantile tanto difficile a sentire ormai nella nostra vita complicata e febbrile. Non dico con questo che i balli plastici di Depero siano un saggio di primitivismo. Questo potrebbe sembrare ad un superficiale. Certe semplicità sono spesso il frutto delle più laboriose raffinatezze.

Questi *Balli* sono una delle espressioni più futuriste del nostro spirito moderno. Sono dei quadri che divengono danze, sono dei colori e dei volumi che aspirano alla musica. Per essi il pubblico, esilarato dalle chiasiose violenze del colore e dalle buffe movenze delle marionette, verrà attanagliato dalle più nuove sensazioni. Altra cosa capitale: lo spettacolo è divertentissimo. Cosa molto rara quando si tratta di assaggi nuovi nella profondità misteriosa dello spirito. Sembra che la «noia» sia l'unico colore possibile dell'arte profonda. Imbecillità wagneriana che noi italiani moderni cancelleremo con la vivezza dinamica della nostra razza policroma. Ritengo che i *balli plastici* di Depero siano un tentativo di massima importanza in favore del risorgimento teatrale che non può avvenire se non attraverso alla originalità assoluta ed alla sconfitta definitiva di tutti gl'invasori: Ibsen, primo fra tutti.

EMILIO SETTIMELLI
oggi direttore de *l'Impero*.

1918

I BALLI PLASTICI FUTURISTI



I BALLI PLASTICI FUTURISTI, ORGANIZZATI E COMPOSTI DAL PITTORE DEPERO, DAL COREOGRAFO GILBERT CLAVEL, DAI MUSICISTI CASELLA, TYRWHITT E MALIPIERO, SONO STATI ESIBITI PER LA PRIMA VOLTA AL TEATRO DEI PICCOLI DI ROMA, DESTINATO LUCROSITÀ NEL PUBBLICO E NEOLI ARTISTI.

Che cosa sono i balli plastici futuristi? Sono balli a pantomime maciati eseguiti da marionette ideate e costruite con uno stile sintetico, accompagnate da musica descrittiva e ritmica di composizione ultra moderna, contro scenari anch'essi disegnati e colorati sinteticamente con prospettive e toni di stile cubista e futurista. Si tratta, come i lettori vedono nelle numerose fotografie che noi pubblichiamo, di pupazzi che non ricordano neppure lontanamente le nostre vecchie tradizionali marionette. Costituiti interamente in legno, pitturati di vernici lucide, capaci di pochi ed elementari movimenti, essi non hanno, si può dire, che un compito decorativo.

Il vero animatore di questi balli plastici futuristi è stato il pittore Depero. Non solo egli ha immaginato e disegnato le marionette, ma le ha anche fabbricate nel suo studio, le ha verniciate, ne ha congegnate le articolazioni. Inoltre ha disegnato e dipinto le scene, d'un effetto decorativo veramente straordinario, e sostituiscono, secondo noi, la parte meglio riuscita di questo bizzarro tentativo artistico. Depero ama molto le sue marionette.



I balli plastici con le marionette potrebbero forse suggerire a qualche artista d'ingegno un nuovo genere di spettacoli per bambini, oppure qualche originale novità da teatro di varietà. Come vere e proprie opere d'arte, seriamente considerate, essi non commettono niente di buono. Sono cariosità, bizzarrie, stranezze di vertenti per una volta, ma il loro avvenire è sterile e anche piuttosto noioso. La moda ultra l'attenzione del pubblico, per un momento, su questo genere di novità, e il desiderio di creare cose originali giustifica in parte tali tentativi rivoluzionari. Il gusto borghese poi reagisce, arguendo ad essi ogni riconoscimento. Il gusto borghese ha torto, perché i risultati di ricerche artistiche anche strane ed eccezionali possono essere in parte utilizzati. Nel caso particolare dei balli plastici potrebbe giovare anche l'arte della signa-grafia, che oggi è tanto decaduta, avendo perduto o ogni senso decorativo e ogni specie di originalità.



In una sala del Teatro dei Piccoli, dove si rappresentava uno dei balli plastici, il pittore Depero aveva esposto alcuni suoi disegni, alcune tele, pochi pannelli decorativi, e qualche saggio di sculture in legno e di plastici di cartone. In queste fotografie i nostri lettori vedono alcuni esemplari. Queste opere che sarebbe difficile catalogare rivelano nel loro autore un spirito industrioso e un raffinato gusto decorativo. Arazzi gaudamente colorati, arabeschi vivaci, soprammobili di carta colorata che potrebbero essere riprodotti in qualche materia più preziosa, bambole e bambocci di legno, copertine per allegre riviste, ci sarebbe qui da aprire una originale ed interessante bottega nella quale si rinnoverebbe o addirittura si potrebbe creare ex novo un'industria nazionale del giocattolo, o un'industria decorativa applicata alle stoffe, ai ricami, ai mobili, agli arredi della casa, agli ornamenti delle sale cinematografiche e dei teatri in cui oggi si seguono gusti e mode straniere.

Il "Teatro Plastico,"

Il 15 aprile si inaugurerà a Roma, nel Teatro dei Piccoli, un tentativo teatrale, intitolato "Teatro Plastico", e dovuto alla collaborazione del pittore Fortunato Depero e del poeta Gilbert Clavel con alcuni musicisti quali Malipiero, Tyrwhitt, Casella, ecc.

Su questo audace tentativo novatore — al quale la S. I. M. M. non può che associarsi con piena ed intera solidarietà — siamo lieti di pubblicare il seguente studio illustrativo di Mario Biondo:

Il problema scenografico è un fatto che riguarda l'avvenire del teatro non meno di tutte le altre controversie questioni che si dibattono intorno alla essenza e la costruzione del melodramma, sia per la musica come per la danza e la mimica — sempre che, questo avvenire, sia disegnato nella mente del creatore. E in Francia con spirito prevalentemente eclettico, in Russia con vero fuoco d'ispirazione per quanto disordinatamente, in Germania col trionfo del metodo, pittori e registesurs della più vasta e pesante fama, ora emancipandosi ora collaborando ad esigenze di poeti musicisti e coreografi, ne hanno tentato diverse soluzioni, improntando a questo genere di arte una fisionomia più o meno confacente allo sviluppo estetico della modernità.

Ma il sintomo di maggior rilievo che in questa specie di risorgimento scenografico vuole farsi segnalare, a parte la varietà e l'efficacia degli obbiettivi di ciascuna scuola ed artista, appare lo studio, l'applicazione e, persino, in taluni casi, lo sviluppo, che si è andato propagando delle forme e delle conquiste in genere dell'arte cosiddetta pura. Il che, mentre in una parte sta ad ammonire, contro ogni pregiudizio d'ordine me-

tafisico, il concetto arcadico della collaborazione e fusione delle singole arti, dall'altra viene logicamente ad avvalorare quello di restituire ad ognuna di esse la sua libera vita originale e indipendente, salvo il loro sviluppo specifico: dalla musica alla pittura, dalla danza alla mimica.

E', come avvertiti di codesto insegnamento, portato naturale dell'esperienza fatta, non poco illuminante — se ne vogliamo un esempio sintetico — nella accademica mobilitazione dei Balli Russi, che, oggi, alcuni artisti italiani hanno compiuto un coraggioso e originale tentativo per darci un nuovo tipo di teatro, sostanzialmente

difforme da ogni altro creato in questi ultimi tempi.

Alla testa di essi un pittore — il Depero — il quale già ebbe occasione di cimentarsi non poco audacemente, con esperimenti del genere, ppaun' nei Balli Russi — questo teatro si fonda principalmente, o piuttosto trova la sua origine, in un fenomeno di carattere plastico, ed anzi vuole essere un altro che una realizzazione spaziale, prima, temporale, poi, di taluni principi dell'arte d'avanguardia: per cui il pittore e i suoi collaboratori si sono

trovati quasi inavvertitamente, come spinti da una necessità espansiva della loro arte, sul palcoscenico.

L'applicazione del principio fondamentale dell'arte futurista: il trasferimento dello spettatore nel centro del quadro ovvero l'abolizione della prospettiva visuale, sostituita da quella soggettiva, appare pertanto la sua base estetica. E' una rivoluzione di valori. Dal concetto logico della rappresentazione esterna, in cui le cose si trovano fra loro connesse e dipendenti da una logica tutta novellistica, si passa a quello apparentemente illogico, ma più vero, della visione interna della vita — del mondo, ch'è poi la regola e la condizione inevitabile per procedere in un senso costruttivo e non imitativo.

Dunque niente rappresentazioni storiche, classiche, romantiche, esotiche e neppure commento



Selvaggio Rosso

Figurino di Depero per il ballo plastico « I selvaggi ».

ad un qualunque tema prefisso: poetico, musicale, coreografico, come tutt'al più, con ibrido senso decorativo internazionale. Si sono spinti a tentare i riformatori della scenografia moderna, dai russi Bakst e Larionoff ai tedeschi Starke e Stern, salvo l'inglese Craig, l'unico che aspiri, in un certo modo, ad una costruzione scenica investendo anche la coreografia. Abolito ogni pregiudizio intorno alla natura e alla funzione del teatro generico, questo vuole presentarsi come un vero e proprio organismo capace di vivere di vita sua, senza sussidi e complementazioni. Epperò non ricerca nella solennità, nei soggetti in storie eroiche le sue ispirazioni, ma esclusivamente nei fenomeni plastici. E, senza uscire dai limiti e dalla natura di una percezione rigorosamente pittorica, si realizza innalzando questa ad una costruzione architettonica di linee, di piani, di luci e di colori compenetrati: dove il mondo umano, vegetale, animale, è destinato ad

eccitarsi dinanzi a quello artistico, che purifica tutte le sostanze tutti gli elementi, per servire unicamente il suo fine libero, per parlare, a noi, il suo linguaggio trascendente di forme e di colori. Di uomo (attore) di natura (scena) non se ne può quindi più parlare, poi che non vi sono più idee né sentimenti da esprimere e tantomeno vedute da proiettare. Codesti fattori, ai quali il teatro tradizionale conferiva una funzione specifica e persino eroica, qui debbono agire come parti indissolubili di un unico tutto, nel senso stesso che l'uomo è fatalmente collegato all'ambiente in cui vive: lo scopo essendo quello di infrangere e di trascendere il concetto schematico entro cui è imprigionata la visione della nostra esistenza convenzionale onde farci evadere in un mondo di pura fantasia plastica. E' insomma sulla potenza espressiva dell'essenzialità contenuta nella forma e colore concordati, che questo teatro si fonda per darci, con un processo semplice, un'emozione totale: principio, questo, che non trova la sua realizzazione definitiva in una visione dinamizzata della costruzione plastica, ma acquista il suo massimo rendimento espressivo mediante il gesto e la mimica o, per dir meglio, in una mobilità evolutiva, misurata, ritmica, quasi narrativa, degli insiemi plastici, provocando così, a tempo, una trasformazione drammatica all'ambiente.



Ballerina Rosa

Figurino di Depero per il ballo plastico « I pagliacci ».

Questo dinamismo scenico è la meta del teatro plastico. Ma per ora esso è solamente applicato ai personaggi, i quali vengono messi in moto coi mezzi tradizionali dei fili usati per tutti i burattini di tutti i teatri del mondo. Dato però il carattere schematico e geometrico di questo genere di sviluppi, è opportuna intenzione del costruttore generare codesto dinamismo in tutto l'ambiente, dalle persone alle cose, e addirittura

con mezzi meccanici. Allo stato di puro e semplice tentativo, questo teatro si presenta perciò come un audace ed ingegnosa promessa, il cui compimento sarà riservato certamente ad ulteriori modificazioni ed integrazioni anche relativamente alla parte musicale, contenuta, per ora, salvo qualche esperimento parziale, nei limiti di un accompagnamento indipendente.

Mario Biondo

81

"I Balli plastici futuristi"

[Futurist Plastic Dances,

In Penombra. Rivista d'Arte

Cinematografica, year I, no.

3 (August 1918). Magazine:

letterpress and photogravure

on paper, 11 3/8 x 16 1/4 in.

(28.4 x 41.3 cm). Archivio

Depero

80

"Il Teatro Plastico" [The Plastic

Theater], Ars Nova, April 1918.

Magazine: letterpress and

photogravure cuttings on card,

11 3/8 x 16 3/8 in. (29 x 41.5 cm).

Archivio Depero





86

Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto
[Little Rubber Devils], 1919.
Oil on canvas, 49 ¼ x 43 ⅝ in.
(125 x 110 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland

95

*Ballerino di gomma (Danzatore
di caucciù)* [Rubber Dancer
(Rubber Danseur)], 1920.
Cushion: fabric, 20 ½ x 21 ⅝ in.
(52 x 55 cm). Private collection



90
Il giocoliere [The Juggler], 1919. Pencil and ink on paper, 5 ⁵/₁₆ x 5 ⁵/₁₆ in. (13.5 x 13.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

91
Il circo [The Circus], 1919. Pencil on paper, 18 ¹/₂ x 17 ³/₄ in. (47 x 45 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

84
La bagnante [The Bather], 1918. Oil on canvas, 28 ¹/₄ x 21 ³/₄ in. (71.8 x 55.2 cm). Musei Civici di Arte e Storia, Brescia



Paese di tarantelle [Land of Tarantellas], 1918. Oil on canvas, 46 1/8 x 73 3/4 in. (117 x 187 cm). Private collection, Switzerland





IL COMPLESSO PLASTICO MOTORUMORISTA 1915-27

Fui preso da un amore febbrile, da un'ansia spasmodica, tormentante, di superare il quadro; per realizzare plasticamente ciò che il quadro rappresenta; cioè volli portare a realtà e potenza architettonica ciò che in passato è stato solamente apparenza pittorica e punto di partenza per la realizzazione plastica.

Le ricerche tecniche della pittura contemporanea, il valore ad ogni costo la deformazione prospettica, le frotture, gli spessori, gli ingranaggi meccanici, le curve, le pieghe, le cilindrità dei tronchi, delle membra, delle stoffe, i cili e i ferri aerei e cubici, gli interni a scatola, i fili, le aste; questo costruire, serrare, cristallizzare e meccanizzare compatto; questo superamento plastico della pittura, non fanno che darsi ragione.

Tali valori formali e pittorici ho voluto costruirli in autentici COMPLESSI PLASTICI COLORATI, non solo, ma andai audacemente oltre, inventando i COMPLESSI PLASTICI COLORATI in movimento.

Qui nulla esiste di piatto, di vago, di indefinito: tutto è costruito e rigorosamente concreto.

Tempo fa a Milano, in occasione della grande Mostra Futurista al Cova, andai col pittore Ferruccio Ferrazzi a visitare il Museo di storia naturale ai giardini. Nelle sale vi sono immense vetrine contenenti scheletri di animali, di tutte le razze, dalle

antidiluviane paurosimi e gigantesche a quelle piccolissime degli uccelli-mosca americani.

Ho ammirato un'infinita varietà di strutture ossee d'un'evidenza schematica meravigliosamente complicata nei dettagli ed armoniosamente semplificate nell'insieme.

Esaminando le vetrine dei minerali, quelle dei volatili, coleotteri imbalzamati, farfalle e lunache, osservando tutto questo universo naturale sconfinato, mi sentii dominato dal più vivo interesse per la varietà della materia, dei ritmi e delle magnifiche strutture.

Il colore, il miracolo inesauribile di forme, intrecci piumati, ossi, cristallini; splendori terti e ritorti di zampino-bacchi-coda; pesci doriformi, meraviglie d'incroci di dentature, mostri di cocodrilli e tartarughe, animali marini a stella, sferici, gobbi o schiacciati; stupende modellature di sistemi muscolari, ossi, sanguigni, e sezioni del corpo umano e di vari animali con sistemi di vene, gruppi di nervi, cervello, spina dorsale a rosario ecc. ecc. ecc. mi suggerirono e mi ispirarono inestimabili possibilità di composizioni plastiche.

Le opinioni estetiche moderne fondamentali, a proposito dell'educazione dell'artista, tendono a valorizzare la sensibilità primitiva e barbara, cioè le manifestazioni costruttive dei bambini, dei primitivi e dei selvaggi.

Ese mi interessarono sempre perché fatte con ogni libertà costruttiva, con ogni mezzo che capita loro sottomano.

114

Il quadro incorniciato, il paesaggio, la figura, la composizione dipinta su di un unico piano, la scultura fatta con materia unica e statica, oggi quale espressione artistica, non soddisfano sufficientemente la nostra sensibilità macchinaria, elettroveloce, magicamente artificiale ed ultra-motorista.

Ogni mia attività sarà dedicata alla creazione di questo **ESSERE VIVENTE ARTIFICIALE** poliedrico che ho definito: **complesso-plastico-motorumorista**

Tali composizioni vengono costruite con: Meccanismi d'ogni genere, pulegge, manovelle, filfero, ruote, orologerie, apparecchi rumorosi-luminosi, pompe, motori, tubi, carrucole ed ogni sistema di leve; legno, latta, specchi, vetri colorati; luci ed acque, fumi-sonni-odori, ecc. con l'applicazione d'ogni ritrovato o trucco fisico, chimico, elettrico, ecc. onde far oscillare a ritmo un campanile, apparire

e scomparire animali e nubi, aprire e chiudere porte e finestre, occhi e bocche, far agitare i personaggi che abitano l'opera d'arte o provocare alle e tramenti a piacimento dello spettatore.

Rendere cioè l'opera d'arte **agitata ruotante parlante suonante fumante tonante urliante scoppiante dolente rallegrante odorosa appetitosa** animata da vita propria, quanto la natura, l'uomo, l'animale, la macchina, e tutto il mondo vivente (col suoi fenomeni atmosferici e tellurici) dal quale essa fu suggerita.

Questa sconvolgente visione artistica, lanciata nel 1915 riconfermata in conferenze ed articoli numerosi, e da me realizzata con diversi esemplari, è la più audace conquista della nostra epoca.



116

Il bambino costruisce la casetta, il bamboccio, la pagnotta, il ponte, gli argenti con la sabbia; vi fabbrica un cavallo con la scopa imbrigliata da una corda, se la cassetta tra le gambe e trottia; si confonde con la colomba, il bastimento, le larchie, le frecce con la carta; tutta la sua forza bambina esplodente, istintivo e creativa fa una costruzione tutto un mondo di oggetti nuovi, caricaturali e personali, vivificati dalla propria fantasia.

I singoli elementi componenti queste bizzarre composizioni, sono sproporzionati agli oggetti, animali e paesaggi naturali; hanno coloriture e aspetti irreali di esseri appartenenti ad un inverosimile mondo a sé; le materie più disparate sono accomunate con disinvoltura ed audacia.

I più barbari ed impensati sistemi di connessione vengono praticati; per esempio un orecchio che è di stoffa viene attaccato con un chiodo ad una testa intagliata nel legno; d'inverno i ragazzi amano fuggire grandi e goli fantocci di neve, a per fare gli occhi, con istintivo, brutale lirismo plastico, pagliano due grossi pezzi di carbone e li ficcano nel viso, di questo status.

Le bambine che si costruiscono bambole di cenci vi caricano perle false al posto delle pupille; i sogni intarsiato nelle loro sculture di legno ovali di smalto o madreperla e coralli rossi al posto delle labbra; i malizi ancora più brutali vi piantano aculei d'istrici sulla pancia, sulla testa, al mento, al posto dei peli e dei capelli, oppure lunghe alghe al posto della barba.

A noi ricercatori moderni queste libertà primitive hanno molto insegnato; a desideriamo che le nostre opere siano concepite con altrettanta libertà e dinamismo frenetico.

Con specchi, stagnole, cartoni, legni dipinti, metalli, stoffe, vetri, ecc. con tutti i più svariati materiali vogliono creare infanziosamente vertendoci, con la più acrobatica disinvoltura.

I bambini hanno figli e amanti di stoffa, di celluloido, di gomma, di cera e di mollica; hanno mobili e suppellettili d'ogni misura, dai mille colori; e si divertono con un mondo rimpicciolito e trasformato; hanno il treno sotto il letto, il bastimento nel lavatoio, gli alberi che fruttano bambole, cioccolatini, lampioncini, trombette; mangiano serci di

cioccolata e canarini di zucchero; hanno cavalli verdi che belano, cani rossi di stoppa che grugniscono, serci, serci, gusti autoantici, trucchi a sorpresa, serpenti a molla, ecc. hanno un mondo artificiale, ultra-divertente e che godono assommo.

Anche a noi i nostri divertimenti plastici, ancora più stravaganti, più sorprendenti, più divertenti.

I maggiori e più significativi artisti d'avanguardia mondiale, hanno costantemente coltivate queste possibilità e tendono tutti al superamento del quadro.

Il manifesto della mia prima mostra personale a

Roma - 1915

incominciava così:

«Si conoscono pittura e scultura dinamica futurista e quali ne furono e sono le intenzioni; espressione di emozioni SIMULTANEE, EQUIVALENTI di RUMORI, di ODORI, di VELOCITÀ e STATI D'ANIMO».

«Col manifesto La Ricostruzione Futurista dell'Universo BALLA, DEPERO, abbiamo dato:

«BALLA: le prime ricerche di complessità pito-plastica di equivalenti astratti e dinamici».

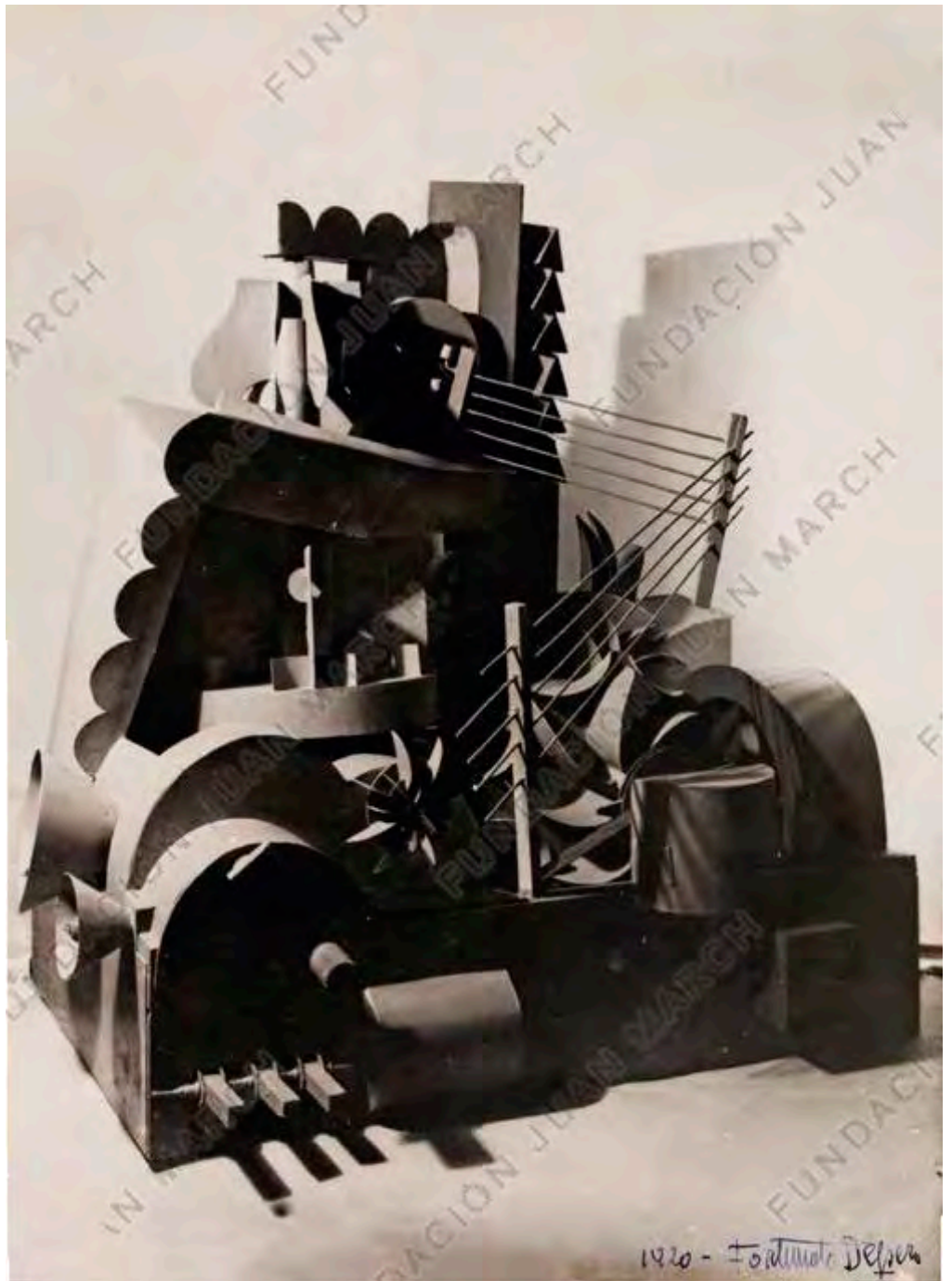
«IO i primi esempi con relativo programma tecnico di Motorumorismo, cioè la fusione complessa di espressioni plastiche astratte, dinamiche, trasparenti, sgar-giantissime, odorose

in moto»

116



117 PANORAMAGICO COMPLESSO PLASTICO MOTORUMORISTA - 1928



138
Unknown photographer,
Panoramagico [Panoramagic],
after 1926. Photograph:
gelatin silver print on fiber-
based paper, 15 3/4 x 11 7/16 in.
(40 x 29 cm). MART, Archivio
del '900, Fondo Depero

Teatro degli Indipendenti (Teatro sperimentale). *Bragaglia. Girotondo. Dieci quadri* di Arturo Schnitzler. *Novita' per l'Italia. Piazza Barberini* [Theatre of the Independents (Experimental Theater). [Director: Anton Giulio] Bragaglia. Ring-around-the-rosie. Ten Paintings by Arthur Schnitzler. Novelty in Italy. Piazza Barberini], 1922. Poster: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 27 3/4 x 12 1/2 in. (70.5 x 32.7 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

Unknown artist, *Teatro Lirico. Recite straordinaria di Teresa Franchini e Mario Fumagalli. Il Tamburo Di Fuoco di F. T. Marinetti* [Lyrical Theatre. Extraordinary Performance by Teresa Franchini and Mario Fumagalli. *The Drum of Fire* by F. T. Marinetti], c. 1924. Poster: letterpress on paper, 38 3/16 x 19 1/2 in. (97 x 50.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

TEATRO DEGLI INDIPENDENTI



PIAZZA BARBERINI VIA DEGLI AVIGNONESI 8
Depero

BRAGAGLIA

(TEATRO SPERIMENTALE)

Avviso ai soci del Circolo delle Cronache d'Attualità alle Terme Romane di Via Avignonesi - Telefono 4888

Sabato 6, Dom. 7, Lun. 8, Mart. 9, Merc. 10, Giov. 11 Marzo, alle ore **20,55** (9 meno 5)

GIROTONDO

Dieci quadri di ARTURO SCHNITZLER

<i>La prostituta</i> Fulvia Giuliani	<i>Il marito</i> Giordano Cecchini
<i>Il soldato</i> Umberto Sacripante	<i>La dolce ragazza</i> Mina della Pergola
<i>Il soldato</i> Umberto Sacripante	<i>La dolce ragazza</i> Mina della Pergola
<i>La cameriera</i> Mina della Pergola	<i>Il poeta</i> Armando Bonamano
<i>La cameriera</i> Mina della Pergola	<i>Il poeta</i> Armando Bonamano
<i>Il signorino</i> Luigi Barberi	<i>L'attrice</i> Elma Vercelloni
<i>Il signorino</i> Luigi Barberi	<i>L'attrice</i> Elma Vercelloni
<i>La giovine signora</i> Fulvia Giuliani	<i>Il conte</i> Cesare Murra
<i>La giovine signora</i> Fulvia Giuliani	<i>Il conte</i> Cesare Murra
<i>Il marito</i> Giordano Cecchini	<i>La prostituta</i> Fulvia Giuliani

NOVITA' PER L'ITALIA

INGRESSO Lire CINQUE - POLTRONE Lire DIECI

TEATRO LIRICO

- SOCIETA' ANONIMA SUVINI - ZERBONI - TELEFONO 46 -

RECITE STRAORDINARIE di

Teresa Franchini e Mario Fumagalli

Lunedì 5 Giugno ore 20.45 prec.

si rappresenterà

IL TAMBURO DI FUOCO

di **F. T. MARINETTI**

Dramma in 3 atti, diretto ed inscenato da **MARIO FUMAGALLI**

Personaggi

Kabango, un capo **MARIO FUMAGALLI**
Mabina, la sua donna **TERESA FRANCHINI**
Lanzirika, il poeta **ETTORE MASI**
Bagamoio, un seguace **UMBERTO BOMPANI**

Il dramma si svolge ne l'Africa Equatoriale - Epoca presente

Le voci del deserto, della foresta e della battaglia saranno imitate, per la prima volta in Italia, da gli intonarumori di **LUIGI RUSSOLO**
Canti di **BALILLA PRATELLA**. Organizzatore **GIUSEPPE MASI**

Precederà la Rappresentazione una **CONFERENZA** di

F. T. MARINETTI

sul nuovo indirizzo del Teatro Futurista

PREZZI

Ingresso Platea, Palchi e Balconata L. **5** - Ingresso Galleria L. **2.50**

Palchi di I. e II. ordine L. 60	Poltroncine L. 10
Palchi di III. ordine 40	Posti Numerati di Balconata 6
Palchi di IV. ordine 25	Posti Numerati di Platea 6
Poltrone 12	Numerati di Galleria 3

(Tutto oltre l'ingresso)

Se tutti indistintamente i prezzi su espasti devono pagare il 12 per cento per diritto orario (Regio Decreto 23 Gennaio 1921 N. 5).
Le frazioni di centesimi devono essere arrotondate sino a 10 centesimi (Regio Decreto 4 Maggio 1920 N. 567).

Per le rappresentazioni negli teatri di palchi e posti riservati di libreria oltre che il Teatro nelle piazze Segreteria. SOMMARIVA. Foto. Most. in galleria Vittorio Emanuele

L'OPERA LA PRESSE MILANO



Fidel Castro

III.
**THE “FUTURIST
HOUSE OF ART”
AND THE ART
OF ADVERTISING
1919-1928**

P. 104

Unknown photographer,
*Fortunato Depero ritratto di
profilo* [Fortunato Depero
Profile Portrait], 1922 (detail)
[cat. 108]

88

Io e mia moglie [My Wife and I],
1919. Oil on canvas, 44 ½ x
37 ¾ in. (113 x 95 cm). Private
collection, Switzerland





149
Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero, Rovereto [Depero Futurist House of Art, Rovereto], c. 1927. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 5 1/8 x 3 1/8 in. (14.3 x 9.3 cm). Archivio Depero

L'auto-
rèclame non
è vana, inutile o
esagerata espressione
di megalomania, ma bensì
indispensabile NECESSITA' per
far conoscere rapidamente al pub-
blico le proprie idee e creazioni. In
qualunque campo della produzione al di
fuori di quello dell'arte è permessa e ammessa
la più strepitosa rèclame; ogni industriale può e
fa la più ardita pubblicità ai suoi prodotti; soltanto

necessità di auto-rèclame

**per noi produttori di genialità,
di bellezza, di arte, la pubblicità
è considerata cosa anormale, mania
arrivista e sfacciata immodestia. E' ora di
finirla con il riconoscimento del-
l'artista dopo la morte o in
avanzata vecchiaia. L'artista ha biso-
gno di essere riconosciuto, valu-**

tato e glorificato in vita, e perciò ha diritto di usare tutti i
mezzi più efficaci ed impensati per la reclame al proprio
genio e alle proprie opere. Il primo e più com-
petente critico dell'opera d'arte è l'artista
che l'ha creata: a lui tutti i mezzi per
illustrarla e per lanciarla. Se l'artista
attende la celebrità e la rico-
noscenza dell'opera pro-
pria per mezzo altrui
ha tempo di mori-
re 5000 volte
di fame.



132

Exposition des arts décoratifs. Maison d'Art futuriste Depero, Rovereto [Exhibition of Decorative Arts. Depero Futurist House of Art, Rovereto], 1925. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 3 1/16 x 5 1/2 in. (9.4 x 14 cm). Archivo Lafuente

105

Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero, Rovereto [Depero Futurist House of Art, Rovereto], 1922. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 5 5/8 x 3 3/4 in. (14.3 x 9.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

150

Unknown artist, *Esposizione Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero* [Depero Futurist House of Art Exhibition], Libreria Principato, Messina, May 5-14, 1927. Poster: letterpress on paper, 27 1/16 x 39 3/8 in. (70 x 100 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

CASA D'ARTE FUTURISTA

5-14

DEPERO

MAGGIO

1927

ESPOSIZIONE

Originalissimi

Coloratissimi

Audacissimi

ARAZZI - CUSCINI

Libreria PRINCIPATO - Messina

INDUSTRIE GRAFICHE MERIDIONALI

MESSINA - Via Nicola Fabrizi



164
Unknown photographer,
*Lavoranti della Casa d'Arte
Depero a Rovereto* [Workers
at the Depero Futurist House
of Art in Rovereto], 1928.
Photograph: gelatin silver print
on fiber-based paper, 10 7/8 x
13 in. (27 x 33 cm). MART,
Archivio del '900, Fondo
Depero



94
Unknown photographer,
*Lavorazione delle tarsie in
panno nel salone di casa
Keppel* [Fabric inlay work in
the sitting room of the Keppel
House], Rovereto, 1920.
Photograph: gelatin silver
print on fiber-based paper,
16 7/8 x 22 5/8 in. (41.8 x 58.3 cm).
Studio fotografico B. Filippini,
Rovereto. MART, Archivio del
'900, Fondo Depero

116
Rovente. Quindicinale futurista
[Topical. Futurist Fortnightly],
nos. 7-8 (Parma, May 19,
1923). Magazine: letterpress
and photogravure on paper,
13 9/16 x 9 1/8 in. (34.5 x 25 cm).
MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo
Depero

ROVENTE

N.° 7-8
DIRETTORE: PIERO ILLARI
19 maggio 1923 - PARMA - via Saffi 23
L. 5 - Anno II. L. 12 - Est. L. 30 - Sostenitore It. L. 30 - Est. L. 30

MANFREDI, la maison magique - BUZZI, parolibertà - DEPERO, 3 anni di vita della casa d'arte - KOLTONSKI, depero - ILLARI, gli stati d'animo - CANGIULLO, la poesia postgrammata - CASAVOLA, musica - MARCHI, la casa braggaglia - BALLA, DEPERO, MARASCO, PRAMPOLINI, illustrazioni e opere originali - GIRANDOLA di informazioni.

Alla GLORIFICAZIONE della SALA FUTURISTA e TRENTINA di DEPERO

Laboratorio della casa d'arte Depero a Rovereto. Riparte quadri in stoffe e tappeti.

alla I. MOSTRA INTERNAZIONALE d'ARTE DECORATIVA a MONZA

In questo numero la Direzione s'è data permesso inserzioni di pubblicità





SALONE DEPERO ALLA PRIMA INTERNAZIONALE D'ARTE DECORATIVA
MONZA - 1928

39



SALA TRENTINA ALLA PRIMA BIENNALE DI MONZA - 1923
PROGETTATA DA DEPERO

41



SALA DEPERO AL GRAND PALAIS

Mondiale d'arte decorativa di Parigi — 1925

43



GRUPPO DEPERO NEL PADIGLIONE FUTURISTA
DELLA XV BIENNALE DI VENEZIA — 1926

45



189
11 bozzetti per coperchi di scatole intarsiate. Motivi decorativi per coperchi di scatole intarsiate [11 sketches for inlaid box lids. Decorative motifs for inlaid box lids], 1925–30. India ink and watercolor on paper, 13 3/8 x 19 3/8 in. (34 x 49.3 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

93
I selvaggi (progetto per arazzo) [Savages (Tapestry Design)], 1920. Ink on paper, 11 15/16 x 12 11/16 in. (30.3 x 32.3 cm). Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto



97

Diavolo di caucciù [Rubber Devil], 1920. Pieced wool on cotton, 23 ¹³/₁₆ x 23 ⁵/₁₆ in. (60.5 x 60 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

96

Due maschere tropicali [Two Tropical Masks], 1920. Pieced wool on cotton, 54 ⁵/₁₆ x 38 ⁹/₁₆ in. (138 x 98 cm). Private collection, Switzerland







98
Studio per Cavalcata fantastica
 [Study for Fantastical Ride],
 1920. Pencil on paper, 18 7/8 x
 23 in. (48 x 58.5 cm). Private
 collection, Switzerland

100
Cavalcata fantastica
 [Fantastical Ride], 1920. Pieced
 wool on burlap, 93 5/16 x 148 in.
 (237 x 376 cm). Private
 collection, Switzerland









99
Città meccanizzata dalle ombre
[City Mechanized by Shadows],
1920. Oil on canvas, 46 7/8 x 74 in.
(119 x 188 cm). Private collection,
Switzerland

101

Flora e fauna magica [Magical Flora and Fauna], 1920. Oil on canvas, 51 ³/₁₆ x 77 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (130 x 198 cm). Private collection, Switzerland







110

Unknown photographer,
Depero prima di un volo
[Depero before a Flight] and
Depero dopo il volo [Depero
after the Flight], Turin, 1922.
Photographs: gelatin silver
prints on fiber-based paper,
3 1/4 x 4 1/4 in. (8 x 10.5 cm) each.
MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo
Depero



239

Primo schizzo di Nitrito in velocità [First sketch for Speeding Nitrite], 1932.
Ink on paper, 7 7/8 x 13 3/4 in.
(20 x 35 cm). Private collection,
Switzerland



104

*Ritratto psicologico
dell'aviatore Azari*
[Psychological Portrait of the
Pilot Azari], 1922. Oil on canvas,
55 1/8 x 36 3/8 in. (140 x 93 cm).
Private collection, Brescia

RITRATTO PSICOLOGICO

Con il ritratto psicologico io intendo dare non l'aspetto fisico, ma la fisionomia interiore di una persona: il suo carattere, il suo temperamento, l'ambiente che la domina, il paesaggio che la circonda, l'atmosfera che la inquadra; influenzata dalle preoccupazioni interiori.

Due persone possono essere fisicamente rassomiglianti, ma psicologicamente agli antipodi. Per esempio:

l'ingegnere:

calcolatore, rigido, freddo, preoccupato di valori matematici, ambientato in atmosfere meccaniche, geometriche—

il musico:

sognatore, elastico, irrequieto, ipersensibile, sempre assorto in atmosfere astratte.

Lo scopo del pittore futurista deve essere appunto quello di rendere e caratterizzare tali differenze psichiche ed ambientali; creando il

RITRATTO SPIRITUALE e dando all'opera l'autentico valore di geniale interpretazione e di creazione.

S'intende che rimane ai fotografi-artisti o agli artisti-fotografi il compito di dare il ritratto fisico del soggetto, che avrà sempre il suo interesse dal punto di vista affettivo-documentario.

71



RITRATTO PSICOLOGICO DELL'AVIATORE AZARI (1922)
uomo-aviatore-azzurro costruito di spazio, accanto all'uomo mondano, amante di eleganza
e di belle donne; aureolato da cielo-aeroplano-officine.
Proprietà Azari.

75



178

Primo dizionario aereo italiano
 [First Italian Aviation Dictionary]
 by Filippo Tommaso
 Marinetti and Fedele Azari.
 Milan: Morreale, 1929. Book:
 letterpress on paper, 7 x 4 7/8 in.
 (17.8 x 12.3 cm). L'Arenario
 Studio Bibliografico



258

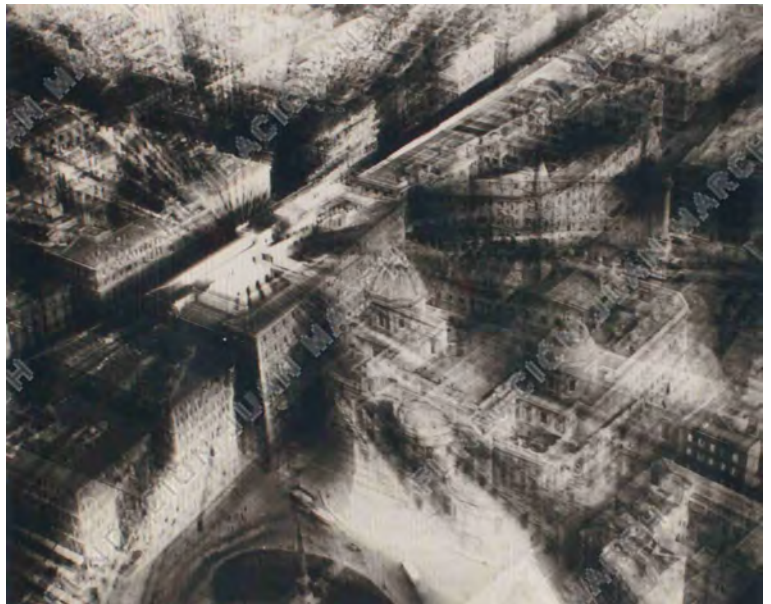
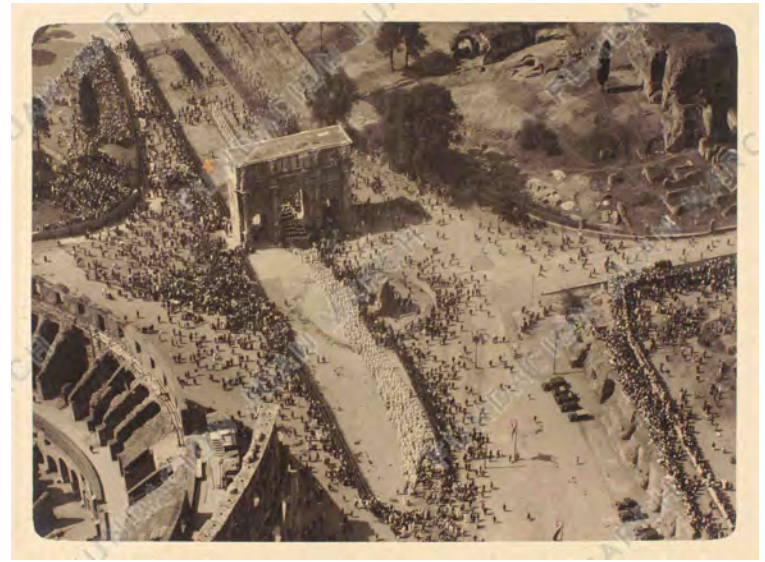
Filippo Masoero, *Caproni Airplane*, c. 1935.
 Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 7 x 9 7/16 in. (17.8 x 24 cm).
 Merrill C. Berman Collection

248

Filippo Masoero, *The Atlantic Fly over Costantino's Arch in Rome*, 1933. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 11 7/8 x 16 1/4 in. (30.2 x 41.2 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

259

Filippo Masoero, *Untitled*, c. 1935. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 5/8 x 5 1/2 in. (12 x 14.9 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection



212

Bruno Munari, *They have even invented this, the world has gone mad*, c. 1930. Photocollage on card, 9 3/4 x 7 in. (23.4 x 17.3 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection



210

Bruno Munari, *Aeronautica italiana* [Italian Air Force], c. 1930. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 8 3/4 x 6 3/4 in. (22.2 x 17.1 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection



209

Bruno Munari, *Forze dell'impero* [Forces of the Empire], c. 1930. Photocollage on card, 26 1/2 x 19 in. (66.3 x 48.2 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

211

Bruno Munari, *Airplane*, c. 1930. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 11 1/2 x 7 1/2 in. (29.5 x 20 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection



108

Unknown photographer, *Fortunato Depero ritratto di profilo* [Fortunato Depero Profile Portrait], 1922.

Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 3/4 x 3 3/8 in. (12 x 8.5 cm). Stab. d'arte fotografica A. S. Biasiori, Trento. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

109

Unknown photographer, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, 1922.

Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 5 1/2 x 3 7/16 in. (14 x 9 cm). La Serenissima. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero





Page from *Depero futurista*
1913-1927. Milan: Dinamo
Azari, 1927 [cat. 148]

MOVIMENTO FUTURISTA

MOTORE

F.T. MARINETTI

ROMA (33) PIAZZA ADRIANA, 30

CENTRALE DI CREAZIONE

Azari - Balestrieri - Balla - Benedetta
Buzzi - Carli - Casavola - Caviglioni
Chiti - Depero - Dottori - Folgore - Jan-
nelli - Marchi - F. T. Marinetti - Mazza
Pannaggi - Prampolini - Pratella
Russolo - Settimelli - Tato - Vasari - Volt

CENTRALE DI AZIONE

F. T. Marinetti - Luigi Russolo - Fortu-
nato Depero - Enrico Prampolini -
Fedele Azari - Franco Casavola

**DIREZIONE DEL MOVIMENTO FUTURISTA
ROMA (33) PIAZZA ADRIANA 30**

Per favorire sempre più i rapporti tra i futuristi di tutto il mondo si invierà l'elenco
dei **FUTURISTI COLLAUDATI**, degli **ACCUMULATORI REGIONALI** e degli
ADEBENTI FUTURISTI.
Ogni futurista è tenuto ad
inviare alla Direzione, Roma (33) Piazza Adriana 30, il proprio indirizzo esatto

14

POETI — PAROLIBERI — PROPAGANDISTI FUTURISTI

ALCARO	CARRIGLIO	D'ONOFRIO	MAINO	RAIMONDI Giovanni
ALFONSI	CARROZZA Franc.	ESCODAME'	MALUTI	RAMIERI
ALIOTO	CARUSO	FABBR	MALUTI	RAMPA-ROSSI Franc.
AMATI	CASSIOLI	FACCIOTTI	MANCUSO Mimj	BANZI
ANIANTE	CASTELLANI	FANTASIA	MARCHESE	RAVELLI
ARGIROFFI	CATRIZZI Loris	FARABOLLINI	MARCHINI	ROCCETTI
AURICCHIO	CERATI	FARFA	MARCHITELLI	ROGNONI
ATTI	CERVELLATI	FARNESE	MARCIANTI	ROMANI
AZARI	CHICCO	FERRANTE	MARENA	BONDOLOTTI
BALDERI	CHITI Remo	FERRARI	MARINETTI	ROTIROTI
BALDINI	CIACCIO	FILLIA	MARINI	RUFO
BASSANINI	CIARDELLI	FOLGORE	MARZI	SANDRI Sandro
BECCHI	CIMINO	FOLICALDI	MASNATA	SANZIN
BELLI Carlo	CIOLLI	FORTUNATI	MATTIOLI Gianni	SARTOSIS
BELLOMO	CIONI	FRAILICH	MAZZA Armando	SCAPARRO
BENCI	CIPOLLETTI	FULLONI	MAZZONE	SEBASTIANO
BENCETTI	CIVELLO	FUSETTI	MEDAS	SHRAPNEL Mario
BENEDETTA	COCCHIARA	GALLIAN	MELOTTI	SILVA L.
BENEDETTO Enzo	COCOZZA	GEBBIA	MIANI	SIMONETTI
BERNARDELLI	COLOMBO	GERBINO	MORETTI	SIMONI
BERTOLLI	COMESSATI	GHARA	MOSILLO	SIVILLA
BIANCANI	CONFALONIERI	GHINASSO	MURANA LUPIS	SOGGETTI
BIANCHI Virgilio	COTTONE	GIARDINA	MUTI	SOLDI Giacomo
BIANCHINI	CREMONA	GIGLI Pietro	MUZZINGHI	SOMENZI
BLANCHINI	CREMONESI	GIONFRIDA	NAPOLETANO	SORTINO-BONA F.
BLOGNA	CRISTOFOLETTI	GIUFFRIDA	NELLI	SPADANUDA
BOLONGARO	CUGINI	GORDINI	NICASTRO	SPANO
BONASSOLA-CESARI	CUGUSI	GORI Gino	NICEFORO	SQUAZZONI
BONESSIO-TERZET	CURTONI	GRANDI	OLIVA	STEINER Giuseppe
BONFIGLIO	D'ANGELO	GUATTERI	ORANO	STRUMIA
BONINSEGNI	DANZI	GUIZZIDORO	ORAZZI	TAGNI
BONOMI	D'ARGENZIO	GUSMANO	PALMIERI	TANZINI
BORGONDO	DE FILIPPI	GUZZARDI	PANGOLI	TEMPESTINI
BORRELLI	DEGASPERI	HYERACE	PARATORE	TIRELLI
BRAGA	DE GIORGI	IACOPINI	PASINI	TONELLO
BUZZI	DELEDDA	IANFOLLA Ugo	PASOTTI	TONINI
CACCHI	DELIBERO	IANELLI Guglielmo	PEDEB-TALARICO	TORBOLI
CAPPARO	DEL GUERRA	ILLARI Piero	PELLERGRINO	TRAMONTE
CALDERONE	DELLA CASA Nino	IUCH Pippo	PERACCHIO	TRIMARCO Alfredo
CALIGARIS	DEL RE Aurelia	INCERTI	PETRONI	TULLI
CALVOSA	DE MATTEIS	LA BOZZETTA	PINELLI	UNITA
CANDIA	DE NARDIS	LANZA	PINI E.	VALLI
CANNONIERI	DENTE	LEONI	POCARINI	VANTI
CAPRILE	DE PAOLO	LEVI-BASSANO Lucia	POLIDORI	VASARI
CAPIZZI	DE FERRO	LUNI	POLITO	VECCHIO A.
CARANTI	DESSY Mario	LO SCHIAVO	POZZO	VELLANI
CARDINALE Cesare	DESTRO	LUCIROSO	PRATELLA Belilla	VENTURINI
CARELLA	DIAZ Charen	LUZZI	PRESENZINI-MATTOLI	VERNA
CARILLO MARIO	DI PAOLA	MAFFI	PRIMO Alessandro	VESPRE
CARLI Mario	DI PERI	MAGGI	QUATTROMIA	VIANELLO
CARMINE Giovanni	DOLFI	MAINARDI	QUEIROLO	VIDRICH

15

VILLA
VILLA SANTA
VIVANET
VOCCA
VOLT
VOLUTI
ZAPPULLA Giuseppe
ZANZANI
ZAZZARINI
ZIGNO
ZINGONI
ZIRARDINI
ZOBOLI
ZONGHETTI
ZUCCO

PROTECTORI DELLE MACCHINE

AZARI
CASAVOLA
CATRIZZI
DEPERO
ESCODAMÉ
GERBINO
MARINETTI
PANNAGGI
PRAMPOLINI
RUSSOLO

MUSICISTI E RUMORISTI

BARTOLAN
BELLOMO
CASAVOLA
GUGLIELMINETTI
MORTARI
NUSSIO
PRATELLA
RUSSOLO Luigi
RUSSOLO Antonio
TRONCHI

PITTORI — SCULTORI — AR- CHITETTI — SCENODINAMICI

AGO
ALBERT
ALOISIO
AMBROSI
AZARI
BALESTRIERI
BALLA
BALDESSARI R.
BENEDETTA
CAPRILE
CARMELICHI
CAVIGLIONI
CERLIENCO
CIVILETTI
CORONA Gigia
CORONA Vittorio
CURTONI
DALMONTE
DEPERO
DOTTORI
FERNANDO
FERRANTE Giorgio
FILLIA
FIOZZI
FORLAI
GAUDENZI
GHELARDINI
GOBBO Cesare
IACOPINI
LAZZARI Mimy
LIBERA
LOMBARDI

LORETA
LUCANOVIC
MAGGI Luigi
MAINO
MARASCO
MARCHI Vittorio
MARCHI Virgilio
MARGOTTI
MAZZINGHI
MUSACARA
NANNETTI
NEBBIA
PANNAGGI
PETESE
PINI
PIZZI
POLI
PRAMPOLINI
RIZZO
RUSSOLO
SABBATINI
SASSI
SCARTAZZINI
SOGGETTI
SOLDI Giacomo
SOMENZI
TATO
VALENTINI
VALERI
VARVARO
VERDERAME
VUETICH

TEATRISTI

BALLA
BAGAGLIA
BUZZI
BRUNO Carlo
CARLI Mario
CHITTI Remo
CIMINO
DEPERO
DE ANGELIS
FILLIA
ILLARI Piero
IUOH Pippo
LUCIANI S. A.
MARINETTI
MOLINARI
PETROLINI
PRAMPOLINI
PRATELLA
ROGNONI
SETTIMELLI
VASARI

TATTILISTI

AZARI
BENEDETTA
DEPERO
MARINETTI

TIPOGRAFI

AZARI
CAVANNA
DEPERO
FRASSINELLI

ZAMBONI

16

IL FUTURISMO MONDIALE

Dal „Manifesto a Parigi“ di F. T. Marinetti

Voici le polyplaniste Nicolas Beaudin, l'auteur de l'Homme Cosmogonique, le chanteur paroxyste du jazz-band et des Grands Espres internationaux.

Voici Pierre-Albert Birot, créateur de l'Homme coupé en morceaux, vision polytonale.

Voici le Sans Fil Blaise Cendrars, filmeur de rêves nègres, émetteur de Radios, écrivain solaire du monde entier.

Voici Jean Cocteau, collectionneur de roses électro-chimiques, voyageur du Cap de Bonne Espérance.

Voici Paul Dermée, dardant son Volant d'Artimon vers le zénith futuriste.

Voici Fernand Divoire, le simultanéiste aux voix révélatrices, le poète polyphonique.

Voici Driez la Rochelle, le lyrique mesureur de la France.

Voici Valéry Larbaud, le poète des Wagons-lits.

Voici Henri Martin Barzun, toujours debout sur le pont de Brooklyn.

Voici Alexandre Mercereau, l'Évangéliste lyrique, centrale électrique des lettres modernes.

Voici le poète des Feuilles de température, Paul Morand, très puissant ail futuriste.

Voici l'alchimiste verbal Pierre Reverdy, chercheur de la moderne pierre philosophale.

Voici André Salmon, l'auteur de Prikas.

Voici Max Jacob, l'auteur du Laboratoire Central, voici Ivan Goll, auteur des Cinq Continents.

Voici Henry de Montherlant, le grand sportif, et d'autres qui viennent au Futurisme, centre-du-monde: Marcel Sauvage, Supervielle, Géo Charles, Marcello Fabri, Malepine, Soupault, Aragon, Breton, Tzara jongleur de mots en liberté.

A ces poètes, tous futuristes, s'unissent ces autres créateurs de modernités: les peintres Picasso, Léger, Lhote, Picabia, Braque, Gleizes, Delaunay, Chagall, Gris,

F. Kupka, Valensi, Metzinger, Larionoff, Gontcharova, Zadkine, Marcoussis, Survage, etc.; les sculpteurs Laurans, Lipchitz, Archipenko; les musiciens Strawinski, Schönberg, Milhaud, Honegger, Auric, Poulenc, Satie et son école d'Arcueil-Cachan, — et ces bons auxiliaires de l'Esprit Nouveau, Ozenfant et Jeannerot.

LONDRES, avec Rodker, Newinson, Windham Lewis, Wadsworth, Aldington, Flint, Elliot; — BRUXELLES, ANVERS, LIÈGE, avec P. Bourgeois, Hellens, Neuhuy, G. Linze, Moens, Berkelaers, De Troyer, Peeters, Joostens, Servrank, Flouquet, Mass; — BERLIN, avec H. Walden, Angermayer, Schwitter, Gropius, Richter, Feininger, Hergoz, Melzer, Eggeling, Poelsig, Klein, Moeller, Goetz, Belling; — MOSCOU, PÉTROGRAD, avec les Futuristes Essénine, Majakowski, Zdanévitch, Rotchenko, Malievitch, Papoff, Tatline, Granowski, V. Barth, Tretiakoff, O. Brick, Pasternak, Krotchouyck, Terentiev, Ehrenburg, Lissitzky, Kandinski, Puni, Altmann, Exter, Sterenberg; — VARSOVIE, CRACOVIE, avec Tuwim, Zannover, Streminsky, Gabo, Belzova, Stonimski, Wierzanski, Peiper, Kurek, Stern, Wat, Witkiewicz, Sierpski, Jasienaki, Cyszewski, Koltonski; — LITUANIE, ESTONIE, LETTONIE, avec Zalit, Dzirkals, Struncke; — VIENNE, avec Kassak, Moly-Nagy; — PRAGUE, avec Teige, Neumann, Feuerstein, Filla, Hoffmann, Spala, Kapak, Krejcar, Seifert, Muzika; — BELGRADE, ZAGABRIA, avec L. Mitich, Poljanski; — BUCAREST, avec Janco, Vinea; — AMSTERDAM, LEYDE, avec Mondrian, Haszar, Bonset, Doesburg; — MADRID, BARCELONE, avec De la Serna, De Torre, Rivas; — NEW-YORK, CHICAGO, avec Stella, Man Ray, Sandburg, Lindsay, E. Lee Masters, Amy Lowell, Ezra Pound; — les Capitales du SUD-AMÉRIQUE, avec Huidobro, Luis Borges, Orbe, Torres Bodet, Lozano, Maples Arce, Ortelli, Caraffa, Smith, Guglielmini, De Andrade, D'Almeida, Prado; — TOKYO-YOKOHAMA, avec Tai Kambara, Togo, Hirato, Nagano, Murayama.

17

113

Doppio ritratto di Marinetti
[Double Portrait of Marinetti],
1923. Collage, 18 ½ x 24 9/16 in.
(47 x 63 cm). Private collection,
Switzerland





**SPARO QUESTA
CREAZIONE FUTURISTA
IN SEGNO DI FESTA A
F. T. MARINETTI**





**GLI ORIGINALIS
SIMI CUSCINI E
ARAZZI DEPERO**

153

114

Panciotto futurista di Marinetti, Panciotto "serpenti"
[Marinetti's Futurist Gilet, "Serpents" Vest], c. 1923. Vest: pieced wool and cotton, 22 ¹³/₁₆ x 22 ¹/₁₆ in. (58 x 56 cm). Private collection

115

Panciotto futurista di Depero
[Depero's Futurist Gilet], 1923. Vest: pieced wool and cotton, 20 ¹/₂ x 17 ³/₄ in. (52 x 45 cm). Private collection, Switzerland









89
Selvaggetto [Little Wild Thing], 1919. Painted wood, 10 ¹/₁₆ x 4 ³/₄ x 1 ³/₈ in. (25.5 x 12 x 3.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

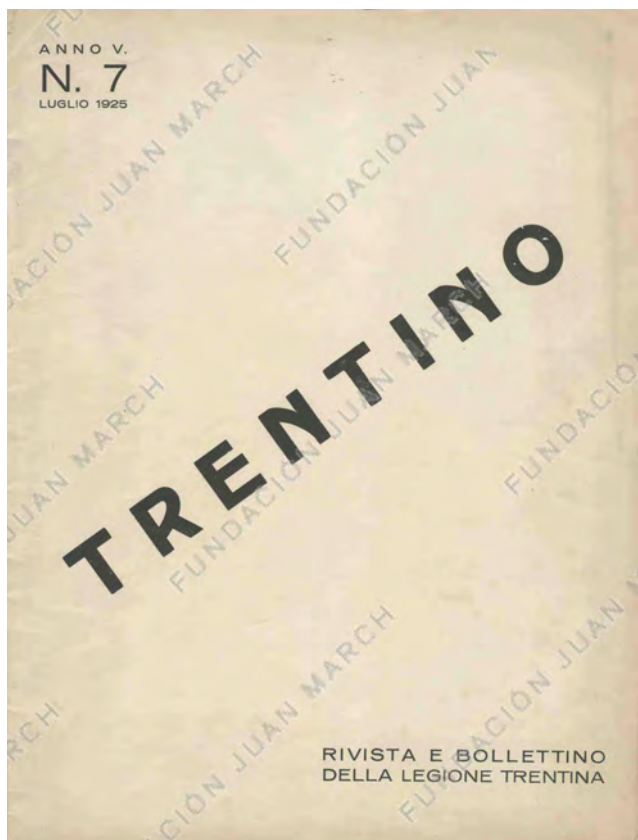
117
Mangiatori di cuori [Heart Eaters], 1922–23. Painted wood, 14 ³/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₁₆ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (36 x 23 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

118
Cavaliere piumato [Plumed Knight], 1923. Painted wood, 38 ³/₁₆ x 36 ³/₈ x 17 ³/₄ in. (97 x 93 x 45 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

112
 Unknown photographer, *La grande selvaggia* [Large Savage], c. 1°923. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 16 ³/₈ x 12 in. (41.5 x 30.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

131
 Unknown photographer, *Martellatori macchina* [Machine Hammerers], 1925. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 12 x 15 ³/₄ in. (30.5 x 40 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero





135
Trentino. Rivista e Bollettino della Legione Trentina
 [Trentino. Journal and Bulletin of the Tridentine Legion], year V, no. 7 (1925). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 12 x 9 ¼ in. (30.5 x 23.4 cm). Archivo Lafuente



111

NOI. Rivista d'Arte Futurista
[NOI. Futurist Art Journal],
no. 1 (April 1923). Magazine:
letterpress on paper, 13 ½ x
9 ¾ in. (34.3 x 24.8 cm). Merrill
C. Berman Collection

130

NOI. Rivista d'Arte Futurista
[NOI. Futurist Art Journal],
nos. 10-12 (Autumn 1925).
Magazine: letterpress on paper,
13 7/16 x 9 ¾ in. (34.5 x 24.8 cm).
Archivio Depero

107

*Tutti all'inferno!!! Cabaret del
Diavolo* [Everyone to Hell!!!
The Devil's Cabaret], 1922.
Invitation: lithograph on card,
5 ½ x 3 ½ in. (14 x 8.8 cm).
Archivio Depero



122

Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo [Lunar Space, or Meeting within an Emerald], 1924. Oil on canvas, 39 ¾ x 37 ¾ in. (100 x 95 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

127

Gara ippica tra le nubi [Horse race among the clouds], 1924. Oil on canvas, 44 ½ x 49 ¼ in. (112 x 125 cm). Private collection



143

Alto paesaggio d'acciaio (Alba e tramonto sulle Alpi) [High Landscape of Steel (Dawn and Sunset in the Alps)], 1927. Oil on canvas, 35 ½ x 52 in. (90 x 132 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, long-term loan





144

Scarabeo veneziano

(*Il gondoliere*) [Venetian Beetle
(The Gondolier)], 1927.

Oil on canvas, 23 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 35 $\frac{1}{2}$ in.

(60 x 90 cm). Private
collection, Milan





128

Mandorlato Vido [Vido Nougat], 1924. Poster: lithograph on paper, 55 1/4 x 39 3/8 in. (140 x 100 cm). Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive

126

Linoleum - il pavimento moderno [Linoleum - The Modern Flooring] (1924). Magazine: photogravure on paper, 14 3/16 x 11 in. (36 x 28 cm). Private collection

139

La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated Magazine of the Italian People], no. 9 (1926). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 9/16 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection

140

La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated Magazine of the Italian People], no. 1 (1927). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 9/16 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection

145

Buona Pasqua [Happy Easter], 1927. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 13 3/8 x 9 7/16 in. (34 x 24 cm). Private collection

146

1919. *Rassegna Mensile Illustrata* [1919. Monthly Illustrated Review], no. 3 (1927). Magazine: lithograph on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 9/16 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection

152

Emporium, vol. LXVI, no. 396 (1927). Magazine: photogravure on paper, 10 3/8 x 7 7/8 in. (27 x 20 cm). Archivo Lafuente



DAVIDE CAMPARI & C
MILANO



F. Depero
Rovereto

BITTER
CAMPARI
L'APERITIVO

OTTIZIO GUARDELLI - LEOPOLDO MIRONI - MILANO



156

Bitter Campari l'aperitivo
[Bitter Campari the Aperitif], 1928. Poster: lithograph on paper, 38 ⁹/₁₆ x 26 ⁹/₁₆ in. (98 x 67.5 cm). Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive

123

VIII Mostra d'arte di Como [VIII Como Art Fair], 1924. Poster: lithograph on paper, 27 ¹/₂ x 19 ¹/₂ in. (70 x 50 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

134

G. Verzocchi V&D Mattoni Refrattari [G. Verzocchi, V&D Refractory Bricks], 1924–25. Ink on paper, 13 ¹/₄ x 9 ¹/₄ in. (33.5 x 23.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection





147

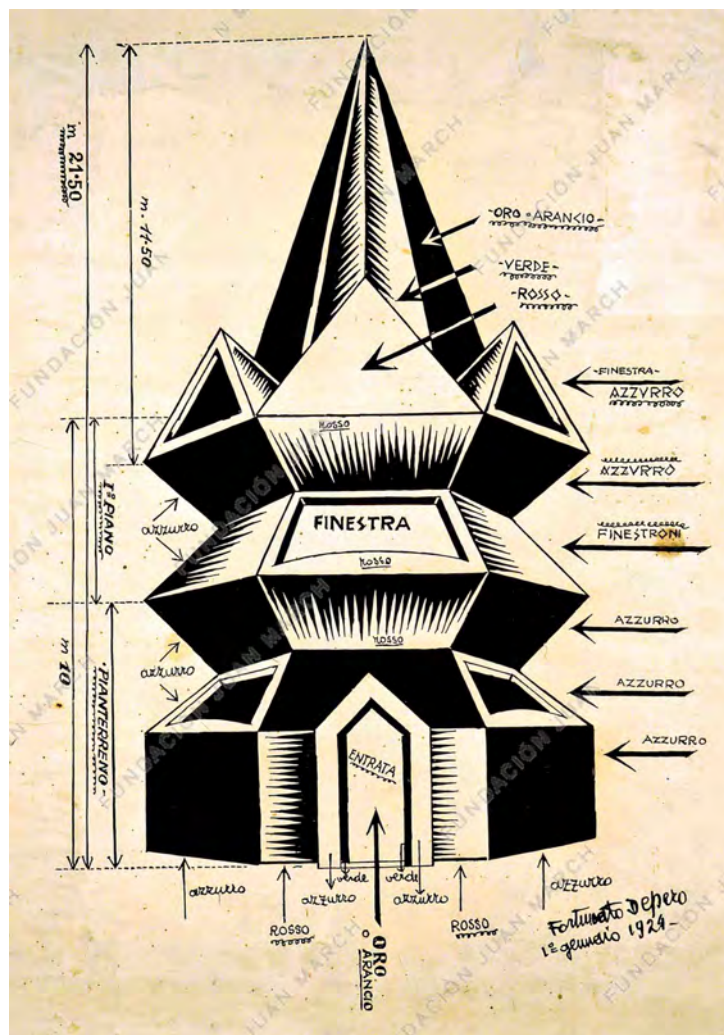
*1919. Rassegna Mensile
Illustrata* [1919. Monthly
Illustrated Review], no. 11 (1927).
Magazine: lithograph on paper,
13 ¼ x 9 ¾ in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm).
Private collection

142

*Attività della Venezia
Tridentina* [Activities of
Tridentine Venice], 1927.
Advertisement: lithograph
on card, 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in.
(30 x 24 cm). Private collection

151

*Padiglione del Libro Bestetti
Tumminelli Treves alla III
Mostra Internazionale delle
Arti Decorative* [Bestetti,
Tumminelli and Treves Book
Pavilion at the III International
Exhibition of Decorative Arts].
Monza, 1927. Photograph:
gelatin silver print on fiber-
based paper, 9 1/16 x 11 ¼ in.
(23 x 28.5 cm). MART, Archivio
del '900, Fondo Depero



125

Padiglione pubblicitario
 [Trade Fair Pavilion], 1924. Ink
 on paper, 17 1/8 x 12 13/16 in.
 (43.5 x 32.5 cm). Courtesy
 Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto

ARCHITETTURA

La grandiosa
Esposizione d'arte
decorativa di Parigi
del 1925, ha eloquentemente dimostrato come il
FUTURISMO
prodotto genialissimo puramente italiano, abbia influenzato tutta l'arte nuova d'Europa. Esso vi si trova applicato in tutte le forme, a tutte le materie, dalle più umili alle più preziose. Tutto, dappertutto, era di decisa tendenza futurista; dall'architettura dei padiglioni alle plastiche colorate per giardinaggi e chioschi; dalle stoffe tessute, stampate, ricamate ai cristalli, gioielli e mosaici; dai mobili ai cartelli e giocattoli; dal libro al teatro ecc... ecc., indicando il trionfo dello stile dinamico, meccanico, ultra-colorato dei nostri tempi ed insistente affermato dai futuristi. Vittoria del futurismo inconfutabile e di enorme portata. In essa vedo l'inizio di una nuova e grande era futurista. Un futurismo realizzatore, costruttore, architettonico, vincitore in tutti i campi. E' giunto il momento di ricostruire la grande e nuova Italia. Anche noi aspremo dare i nostri **CAPOLAVORI ARCHITETTONICI.**

Alla Prima Biennale d'arte decorativa di Monza 1923 esposi la prima „**GLORIA PLASTICA**“, costruzione colorata luminosa in moto, in onore di F. T. Marinetti. A Parigi nel 1925, al grand Palais presentai la „**GLORIA PLASTICA AL LAVORATORE**“ con il titolo „**MARTELLATO RI-MACCHINA**“. Sono questi esempi di plastica moderna in avvenire sulle piazze delle città **rismo è stato adottato arte di lizzato ed anche da noi sarebbe ora ed i giardini con goffi pupazzi di informe, offendendo il senso estetico illustri scomparsi. Ripeto quello che**

Bisogna glorificare genio, creatori, inventori, costruttori, con le materie che servirono a realizzare le loro miracolose creazioni, con strutture e materiali tipici dell'epoca in cui vissero.

Al Primo congresso futurista (Milano 1924) trattai anche il problema del „**VILLAGGIO FUTURISTA**“ scultori, architetti futuristi. Paese pratiche ed estetiche futuriste. Noi palazzi, piazze, vie, teatri costruiti noi tutti desiderato. Sono certo che di attrazione, di curiosità, di novità, farlo. Concludendo: sono passati anni, dove presentati i due progetti: **VILLAGGIO FUTURISTA** sollecita attuazione, di tempo e decisa per tale realizzazione, ho

PUBBLICITARIA

83

Progetto per il Padiglione della Venezia Tridentina alla Fiera Campionaria di Milano

Fortunato Depero, venuto a conoscenza che gli artisti trentini erano stati invitati a concorrere ad un progetto per un padiglione rappresentante la regione alla Fiera di Milano, ha creduto opportuno di presentare una sua creazione.

Alcuni ingegneri, architetti e competenti di Trento ebbero l'occasione di esaminare attentamente l'ardito progetto prima della regolare consegna al Comitato esecutivo.

Le linee essenziali del progetto sono riassumibili in una sintesi architettonica delle costruzioni caratteristiche del Trentino: alberghi, chiese, dolomiti, rifugi, ecc.

E' un blocco geometrico a base ottagonale che sale in piani rientranti ed uscenti a zig-zag, alternandosi di colore in *bleu* e *rosso*.

Il tetto è il più elementare riassunto plastico delle montagne in cui i profili rappresentano otto vette minori attorno ad una guglia altissima centrale *verde-oro*; la più evidente e indovinata glorificazione architettonica alpina.

Depero ha presentato (scala 1:25) le piante, le sezioni, nonché i dettagli tecnici per le armature in cemento armato e legno, con una felicissima soluzione pratica, tanto per la staticità quanto per la utilizzazione degli spazi interni.

Il padiglione è diviso in due piani: salone, e otto stadi perimetrali al pian terreno e altri otto stadi a forma di originalissimo loggiato al piano superiore.

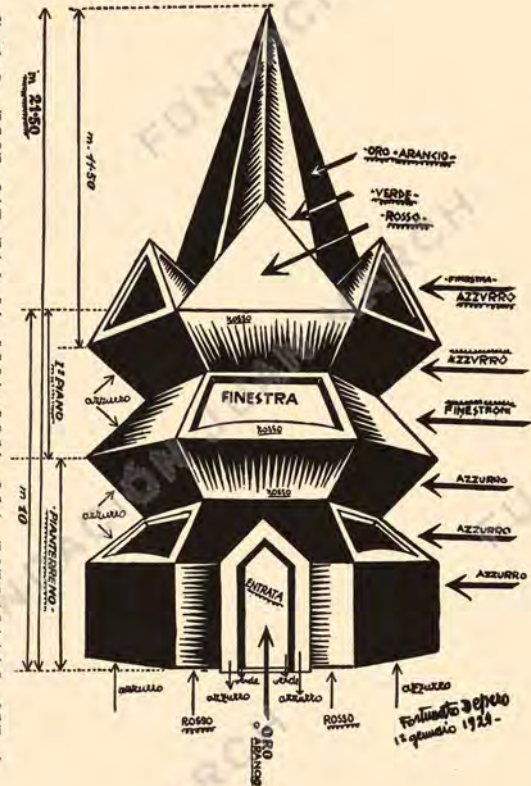
I comitati artistici delle mostre internazionali di Monza e Parigi mettono in prima linea nei loro programmi l'esclusione di ogni riaccentamento degli stili del passato, invitando gli artisti a creare architetture, decorazioni, ammobigliamenti nuovi.

Altrettanto dovrebbero pensare i comitati minori e regionali dove abitualmente la competenza artistica è sempre o quasi esclusa, mentre i relativi uffici delle Belle Arti si guardano bene di occuparsene, essendo interessati alla sola conservazione dei ruderi e dei cocci dei nostri antenati.

E così anche questo magnifico progetto Depero, causa il lodovolesimo comitato esecutivo, non venne realizzato, nonostante il primato artistico di eccezionale originalità che avrebbe carpito.

Invece venne costruito un banale villino di ricostruzione veneziana.

87



PADIGLIONE DEL LIBRO

PADIGLIONE DEL LIBRO

delle case editrici Bestetti e Tumminelli e Fratelli Treves alla III^a Biennale d'arte decorativa di MONZA - 1927

Il comitato artistico della III^a Biennale di Monza ha scelto d'accordo con le case editrici Bestetti e Tumminelli e F.^{lli} Treves, il pittore futurista Depero per l'allestimento della Bottega del libro. Invece di presentare due sale appositamente decorate Depero propose di erigere un padiglione all'aperto con assoluta libertà di stile. Il padiglione in un mese venne progettato e realizzato. Depero ha creato audacemente un nuovo saggio d'architettura intimamente legata al tema "L'ARCHITETTURA TIPOGRAFICA". Depero ha già ripetutamente esposto le proprie concezioni sull'architettura dei Padiglioni, delle Fiere e delle Esposizioni, che sono generalmente costruiti in uno stile assolutamente stonato in rapporto al loro scopo pubblicitario ed al loro contenuto. Difatti si vedono padiglioni per automobili, per macchine, aeroplani ecc. in stile

ARCHITETTURA TIPOGRAFICA

greco-romano barocco o liberty! Lo stile ch'essi richiedono deve invece essere suggerito dalle linee, dai colori, dalla costruzione degli oggetti ch'essi contengono e per i quali vengono costruiti. Depero inizia con il „Padiglione del libro“ ISPIRATO DA CARATTERI TIPOGRAFICI, questo suo programma architettonico nel modo più audace e persuasivo.

Lettere gigantesche, compenstrate, impacchettate, sovrapposte; lettere tolte ai nomi BESTETTI-TUMMINELLI-TREVES formano il blocco centrale dell'edificio ed i plastici laterali esterni. Anche la porta è composta da scritte in rilievo massiccio. L'interno è un continuo sviluppo dell'esterno: le tre grandi vetrine sono composte dalle gigantesche parole scavate nei muri Bestetti-Tumminelli-Treves; ogni lettera è un vano-vetrina per i libri. Gli scanni sono pure delle „E“ e delle „R“ maiuscole. Anche il soffitto è una decorazione tipografica. Perfino le piccole mensole che sostengono i volumi nelle vetrine, sono delle maiuscole grigie e plastiche, orizzontali, verticali o capovolte. Il padiglione è bianco-grigio-azzurro. Anche questa volta, l'installatore e creatore di una nuova concezione costruttiva è un futurista. E siamo certi come giustamente ebbe a pronosticare anche l'on. Marangoni (Direttore generale della Mostra di Monza), che questo ardito esempio sarà punto di partenza per l'innovazione delle mostre future. Altro ditta saranno curaggiosamente seguire l'esempio delle case Bestetti-Tumminelli-Treves, rivolgendosi all'architetto DEPERO ed agli altri originali architetti futuristi Marchi-Pannaggi-Valentini ecc... ecc... ecc...



155
Corsa in salita Trento-Bondone [Trento-Bondone Hill Climb Race], July 22, 1928. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 9 5/16 x 6 3/4 in. (23.6 x 17 cm). Archivo Lafuente

124
Richard Ginori, 1924. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 9 1/2 x 6 1/2 in. (23.2 x 17.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

157
La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated Magazine of the Italian People], year VI, no. 10 (1928). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 9/16 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Archivo Lafuente



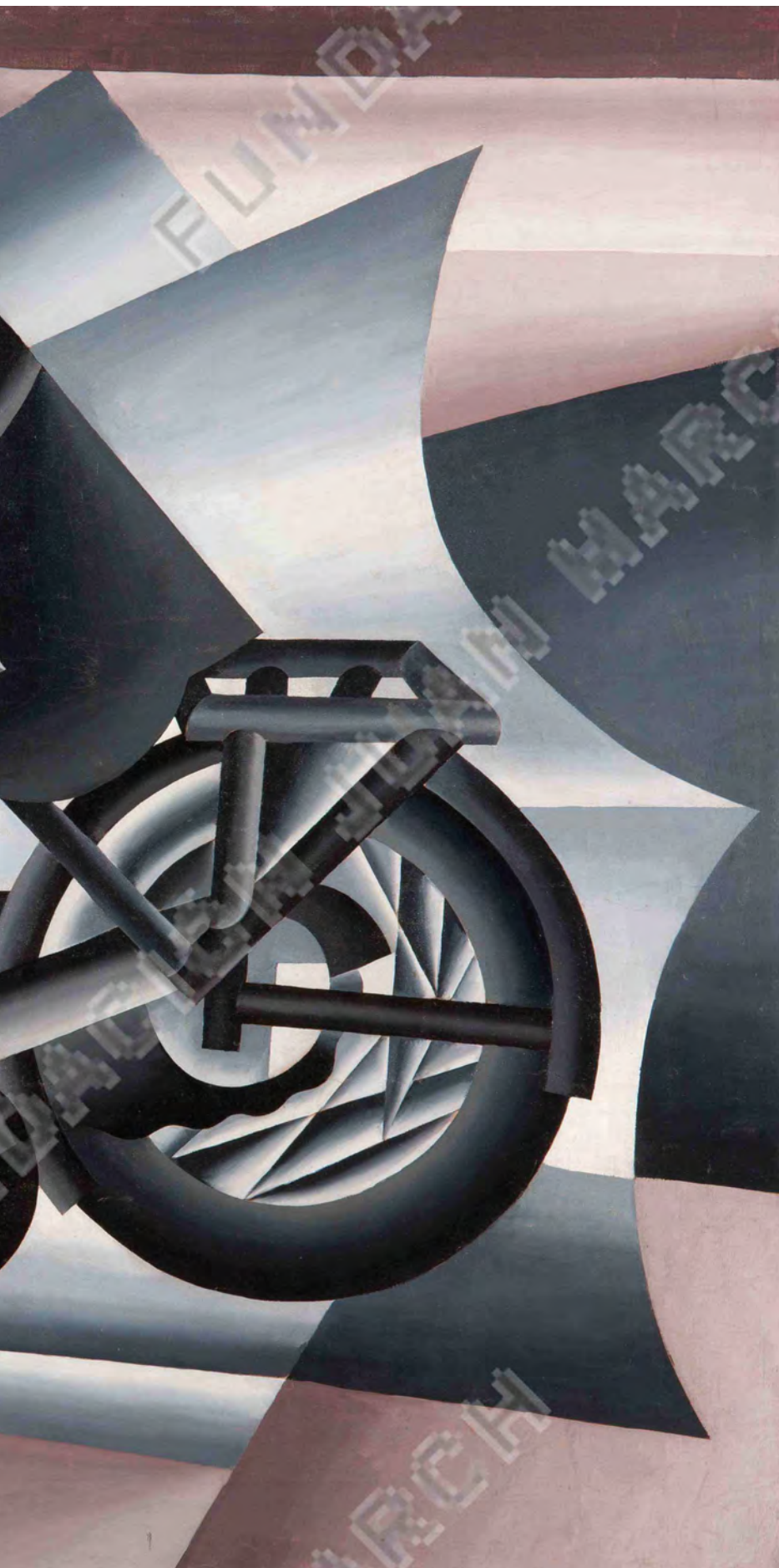
158
Citrus, 1928. Postcard: lithograph on card, 3 1/2 x 5 5/8 in. (8.8 x 14.3 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

159
1919, 1928. Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 15 1/2 x 10 3/8 in. (38.5 x 26.3 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

154
1928, 1927. Calendar cover: collage on paper, 12 1/2 x 15 in. (32 x 38.1 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection







153
Motociclista, solido in velocità
[Biker, Solidified in Speed],
1927. Oil on canvas, 46 1/8 x
64 3/4 in. (117 x 163.5 cm).
Private collection, Switzerland

Per pubblicità Depero e applicazioni industriali
rivolgersi alla
MILANO Via
S. Oreste
Tel. 33220
DINAMO AZARI **PARIS - BERLIN**
NEW-YORK
Concessionaria „Arte industriale DEPERO“



143

**PUBBLICITÀ
DEPERO**

Per pubblicità Depero e applicazioni industriali
rivolgersi alla
MILANO Via
S. Oreste
Tel. 33220
DINAMO AZARI **PARIS - BERLIN**
NEW-YORK
Concessionaria „Arte industriale DEPERO“

183

DINAMO

PUBBLICITA' DEPERO



CASA D'ARTE FUTURISTA DEPERO

AZARI MILANO NEW-YORK PARIS BERLIN



ROVERETO TRENTO - ITALIA

185

PUBBLICITA' DEPERO



**sintesi
simboli
fantasie
splendori**

per l'APERITIVO e il CORDIAL

CAMPARI

187

La Casa d'arte DEPERO ha lavorato e lavora per le seguenti Personalità, Ditte, Riviste, Giornali, Hôtel, Bar, ecc.:

Galleria d'arte moderna di Roma
 Ditta Davide CAMPARI — Milano
 Cioccolato BONATTI — Milano
 Ditta RIMMEL, profumerie — Milano
 S. A. LINOLEUM — Milano
 Grand Hôtel Bristol — Merano (Alto Adige)
 Hôtel Elite et Etranger — Roma
 Villa NOTARI, alla Santa — Monza
 Villa JANNELLI — Castoreale-Bagni — Messina
 ISTITUTO EDITORIALE — Milano
 Casa Editrice TREVES — Milano
 Casa Editrice BESTETTI & TUMMINELLI — Milano
 S. A. „AV MOLARD“, Anc. Maison Weber & C.“ — Genève (Svizzera)
 Casa d'Arte BRAGAGLIA — Roma
 „EL NUEVO MUNDO“ — Mexico
 Handelsvereentging „ONDERLING BELANG“ — Soerabaya (Java)
 Mandorlato VIDO — Lendinara (Rovigo)
 Ditta VERZOCCHI, mattoni refrattari „V & D“ — Milano
 Theatre des CHAMPS ELYSEËS — Paris
 CONSOLATO DEL PERÙ — Genova
 Ditta BORIO — Torino
 Ditta LOMBARDI, esportazione — Milano
 G. GRANATA & C.“ — New-York
 Marchesa CASATI — Roma
 Casa Editrice PRINCIPATO — Messina
 Onorevole GAVAZZENI
 ALFREDO CASELLA, musicista — Roma
 Gr. Uff. MORGAGNI
 On. MARANGONI — Milano
 TATIANA PAWLOVA - Compagnia Teatrale
 ANDREE DAVEN - Teatre des Champs Elyseës
 Contessa LOVATELLI — Roma
 Principessa BASSIANO — Roma
 Prof. Comm. ARNÒ del Politecnico di Milano
 Avv. AZARI — Milano
 Conte PIER FILIPPO CASTELBARCO
 Pubblicista SPROVIERI

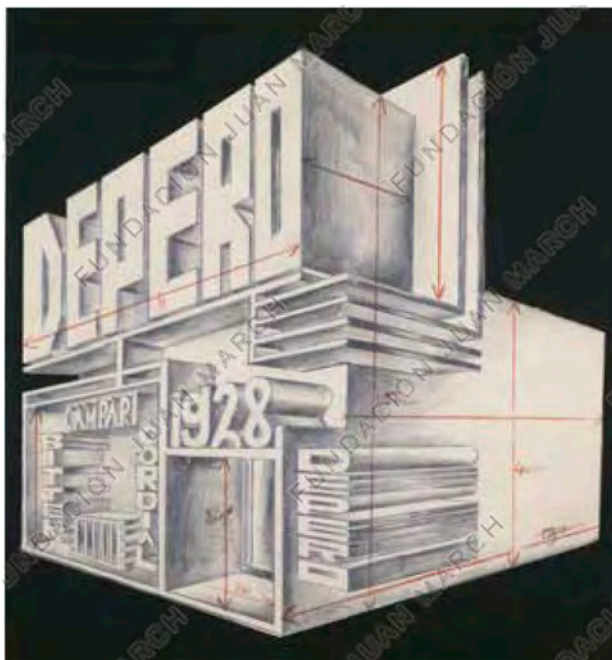
Gr. Uff. DONZELLI
 Casa MARINETTI — Roma
 Palazzo della Provincia — Trento
 La „RIVISTA ILLUSTRATA“ del „Popolo d'Italia“
 La rivista „IL 1919“ diretta da Giampaoli
 Le „I. I. I.“ di Umberto Notari
 „IL TRENTINO“ diretta dall'onorevole Lunelli
 „LE TRE VENEZIE“ diretta da A. Galata
 „NOI“ di E. Prampolini — Roma
 „IL FUTURISMO“, Rivista sintetica diretta da F. T. Marinetti
 „L'IMPERO“, quotidiano politico diretto da Carli e Settimelli — Roma
 „IL SUCCESSO NEGLI AFFARI“ — Milano
 „IN PENOMBRA“ di U. Fracchia — Milano
 „IL MONDO“ — Milano
 S. E. il Ministro di Cuba in Portogallo ANTONIO FRAIZOZ — Lisbona
 „AUGUSTEA“ Rivista diretta dall'onorevole Ciarlantini
 „ZENITH“ diretta da Mitcich — Belgrado
 Balletti Russi - Compagnia DIAGHILEW — Parigi
 Teatro Futurista - Compagnia A. DE ANGELIS
 Fiera Campionaria di MILANO
 Fiera Campionaria di PADOVA
 Rivista „CITRUS“ — Messina
 Società SUVINI & ZERBONI — Milano
 „OLIMPIONICA“, Rivista dello sport mondiale — Milano
 Società AGRUMARIA — Messina
 Comm. LINO PESARO — Milano
 MARGHERITA SARFATTI — Milano
 Signora GUALINO — Torino
 Pittrice ALCIATI — Torino
 Pittore GOLIA — Torino
 G. CEAS, Architetto — Roma
 LUIGI POLI — Milano
 OTTOLENGHI — Genova
 „LES ARTISTES D'AUYORD'HUI“ — Parigi
 Galleria POLIAKOFF — Moskau
 ECC... ECC... ECC... ECC... ECC... ECC... ECC... ECC...

161

Progetto per padiglioni pubblicitari Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero [Pavilion Design for the Depero Futurist House of Art], 1927-28. Pencil on paper, 12 3/16 x 12 in. (31 x 30.4 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

242

Bozzetto di padiglione per la ditta Davide Campari & C. [Sketch of Pavilion for the Davide Campari & C. Company], 1933. India ink on card, 15 3/4 x 14 9/16 in. (40 x 37 cm). Galleria Campari





185
Cordial Campari, 1929. India ink on card, 21 7/8 x 15 3/16 in. (55.5 x 40.2 cm). Galleria Campari

218
Paesaggio quasi tipografico
Cordial Campari [Cordial Campari Quasi-typographic Landscape], 1930-31. India ink on card, 23 3/4 x 15 9/16 in. (60 x 39.5 cm). Galleria Campari

194
Cordial Campari - New York, 1929-30. India ink on card, 21 15/16 x 15 5/16 in. (55.7 x 39.7 cm). Galleria Campari

224
Il nuovo semaforo Bitter Cordial Campari [The New Bitter Cordial Campari Traffic Lights], 1931. India ink on card, 17 3/16 x 12 1/2 in. (44 x 32 cm). Galleria Campari





228

Campari, 1931. India ink on card,
15 ³/₁₆ x 16 ³/₁₆ in. (39.5 x 41.5 cm).
Galleria Campari



227
Bitter Cordial Campari gli unici che si salvano [Bitter Cordial Campari, The Only Ones Saved], 1931. India ink on card, 16 15/16 x 13 1/4 in. (43 x 33.5 cm). Galleria Campari

229
Un triplice evviva [Three Hurrahs], 1931. India ink on card, 16 3/4 x 12 3/4 in. (42.5 x 32.4 cm). Galleria Campari





165
Bitter Cordial, 1928. India ink on card, 12 ¹/₁₆ x 10 ³/₄ in. (32.3 x 27.4 cm). Galleria Campari

226
Palestra tipografica
 [Typographic Parade], 1931. India ink on card, 20 ¹/₁₆ x 15 ¹/₂ in. (51 x 39.3 cm). Galleria Campari

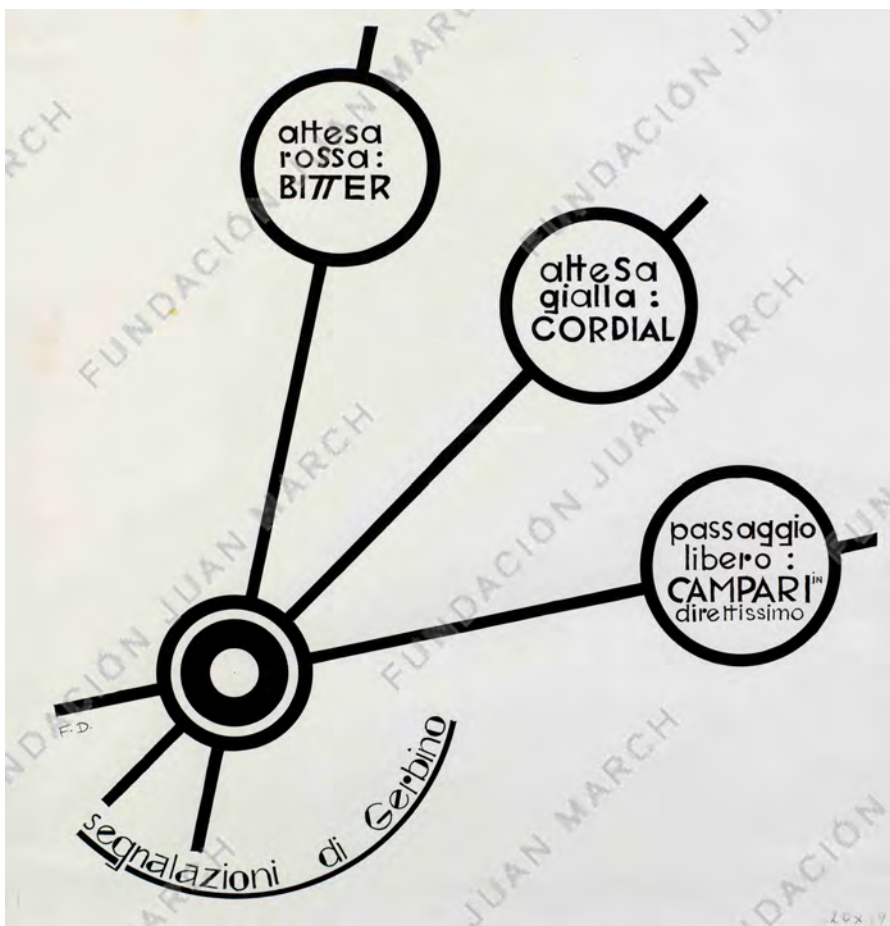
160
Con un occhio vidi un Cordial con l'altro un Bitter Campari
 [With an Eye I Saw a Cordial, with the Other a Bitter Campari], 1928. India ink on card, 13 ¹/₄ x 11 ⁷/₁₆ in. (33.7 x 29.1 cm). Galleria Campari

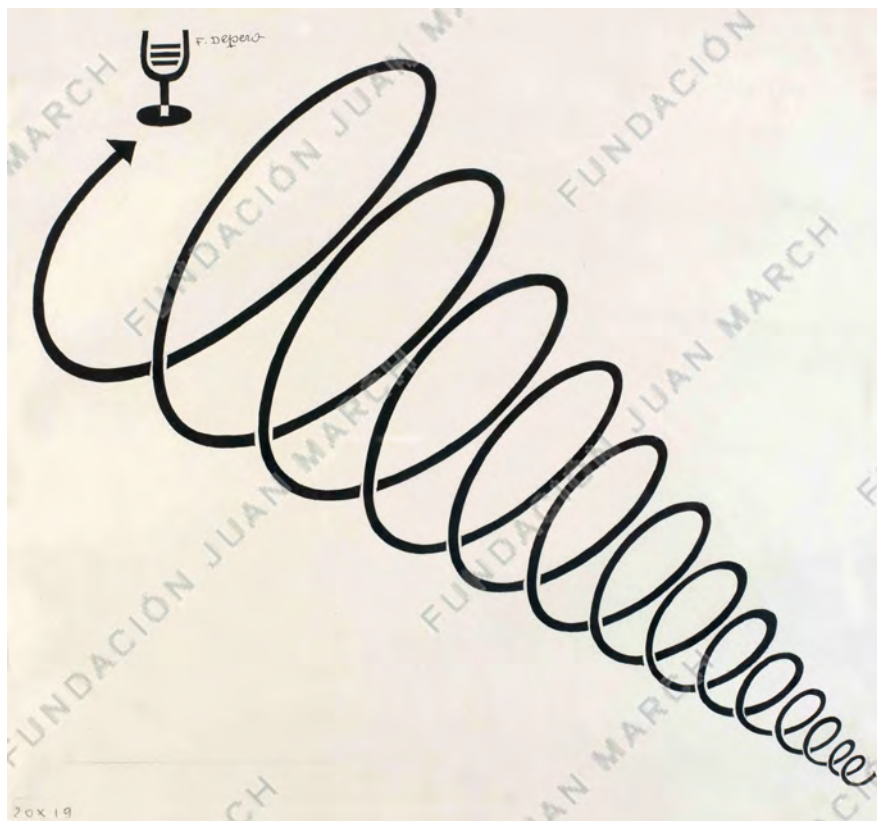
225

Segnalazioni di Gerbino
[Gerbino Signals], 1931. India ink on card, 12 ½ x 12 ¾ in.
(31.8 x 31.5 cm). Galleria
Campari

231

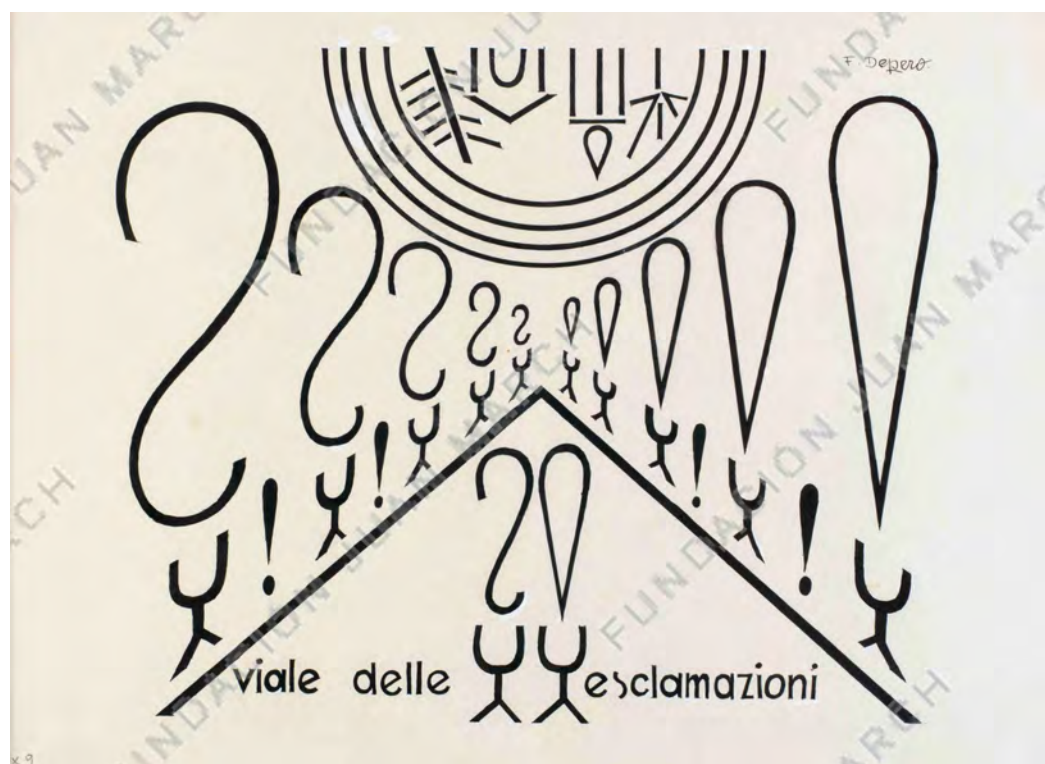
Esperimento spiritico [Spirits
Experiment], 1931. India ink on
card, 7 ¾ x 8 ¾ in. (20 x 21 cm).
Galleria Campari





232
Spirale Cordial Campari liquor
 [Cordial Campari Liquor Spiral], 1931. India ink on card, 12 3/4 x 13 9/16 in. (32 x 34.5 cm). Galleria Campari

230
Viale delle esclamazioni
 [Exclamation Avenue], 1931. India ink on card, 9 5/16 x 12 13/16 in. (23.7 x 32.5 cm). Galleria Campari



136

Pupazzo Campari [Campari Doll], c. 1925. Painted wood, 25 x 18 ¼ x 11 7/8 in. (63.5 x 46 x 29 cm). Collezione M. Carpi, Rome

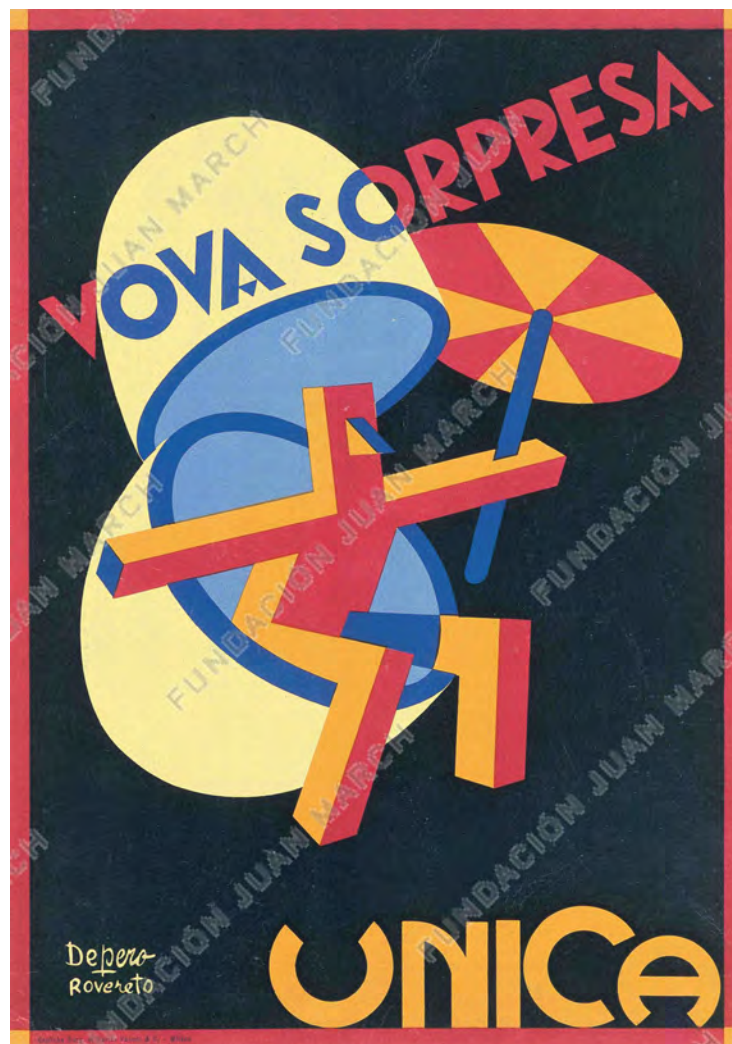
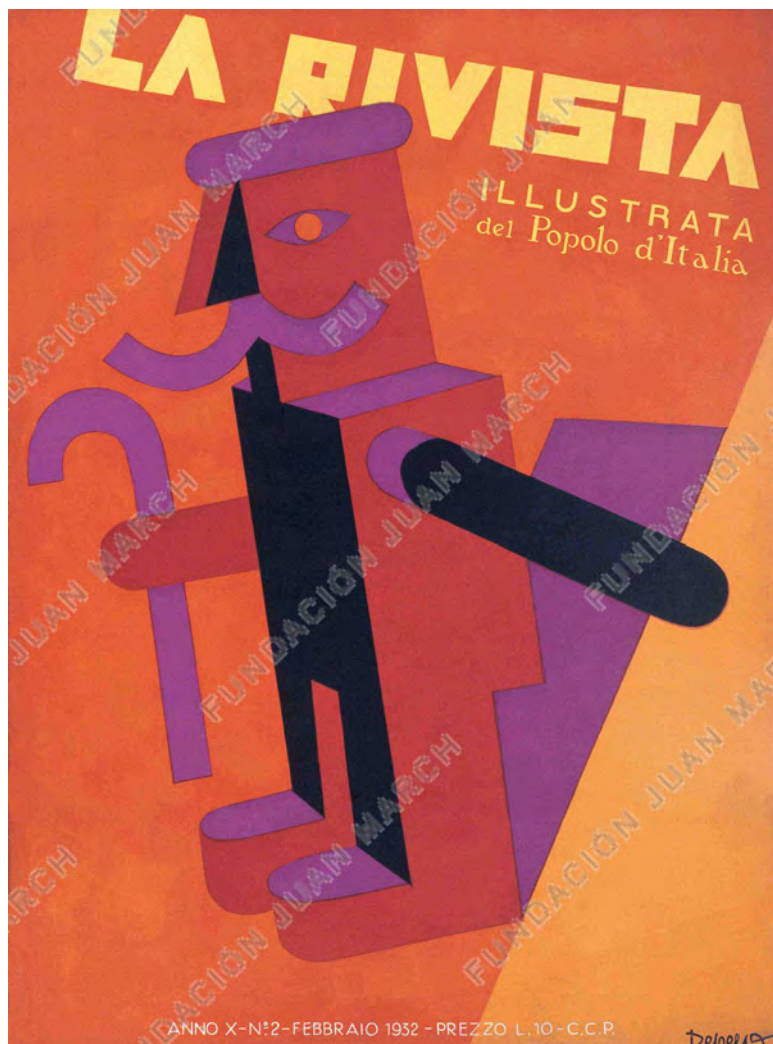


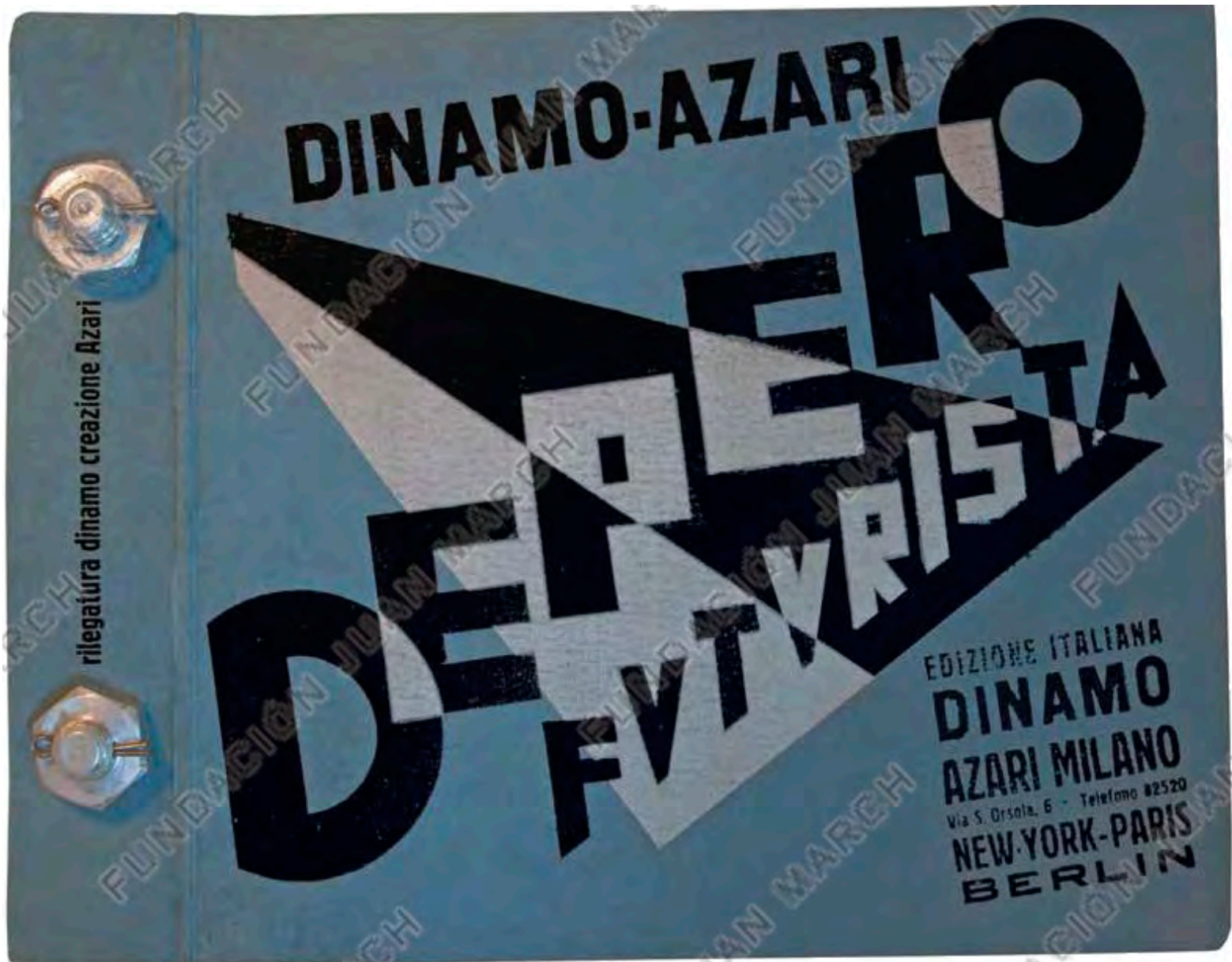
238

La Rivista Illustrata dell
Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated
Magazine of the Italian People],
no. 2 (1932). Magazine cover:
letterpress on paper, 13 ¼ x
9 ¾ in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private
collection

141

Unica (Cioccolato): "Uova a
sorpresa" [Unica (Chocolate)
"Surprise Eggs"], 1927.
Advertisement: lithograph
on card, 13 ¾ x 9 7/16 in.
(34 x 24 cm). Private collection





148

Depero Futurista 1913–1927.
Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927.
Book; letterpress on paper,
9 5/8 x 12 9/16 in. (24.5 x 31.9 cm).
Three copies on display:
Private collection, Switzerland;
Private collection; and MART,
Archivio di Nuova Scrittura,
Collezione Paolo Della Grazia





162

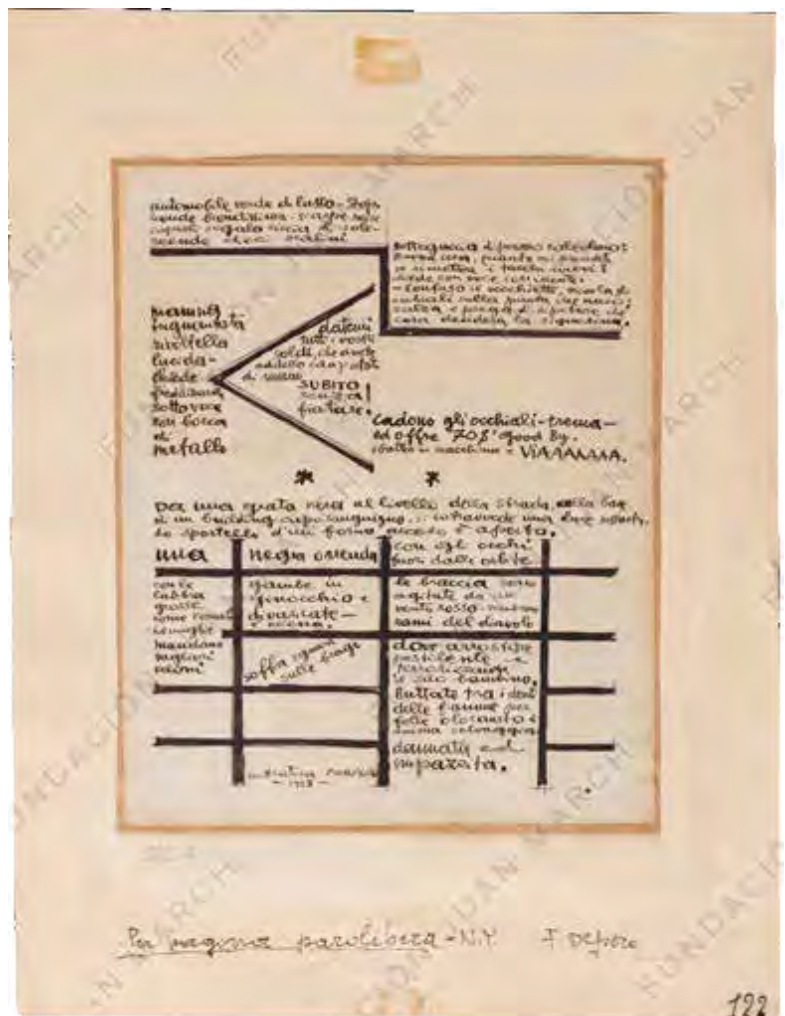
Centrale di azione [Action Headquarters], 1928. Photo collage, 7 7/8 x 12 3/16 in. (20 x 31 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

137

Exhibition of Modern Italian Art. New York, Italy America Society, 1926. Catalogue: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 10 1/4 x 7 3/8 in. (26 x 20 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

163

Automobile verde di lusso (Autentica New York). *Pagina parolibera* [Green Luxury Car (Authentic New York). Free-word composition], 1928. India ink on paper, 9 15/16 x 8 in. (25.3 x 20.4 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto





CREAZIONE
FOTOGRAFICA
di
M. CASTAGNERI
MILANO - N. HARPLEONE

IV.
A FUTURIST
IN NEW YORK.
AND BACK
IN ITALY
1929-1950

P. 180

Mario Castagneri, *Fortunato Depero a New York* [Fortunato Depero in New York], 1930–32. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, affixed to card, 11 ³/₁₆ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (30 x 24 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

237

Mario Castagneri, *Depero e grattacieli* [Depero and Skyscrapers], c. 1932. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, affixed to card, 11 ³/₁₆ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (30 x 24 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero





1928

Wall Street

F. Depero



ponti per i treni elevati



New York

1930

grattacieli in prospettiva



cinema popolare



173

Hotel Manhattan, c. 1929.
 Postcard: photogravure on card, touched up by the artist,
 5 7/16 x 3 1/4 in. (13.8 x 8.3 cm).
 Merrill C. Berman Collection

172

Futurismo [Futurism] and *Distruggiamo i musei* [Let's Destroy the Museums], 1929.
 Postcards: photogravure on card, touched up by the artist,
 5 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (14 x 8.8 cm) and
 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 in. (8.8 x 14 cm).
 Archivio Depero



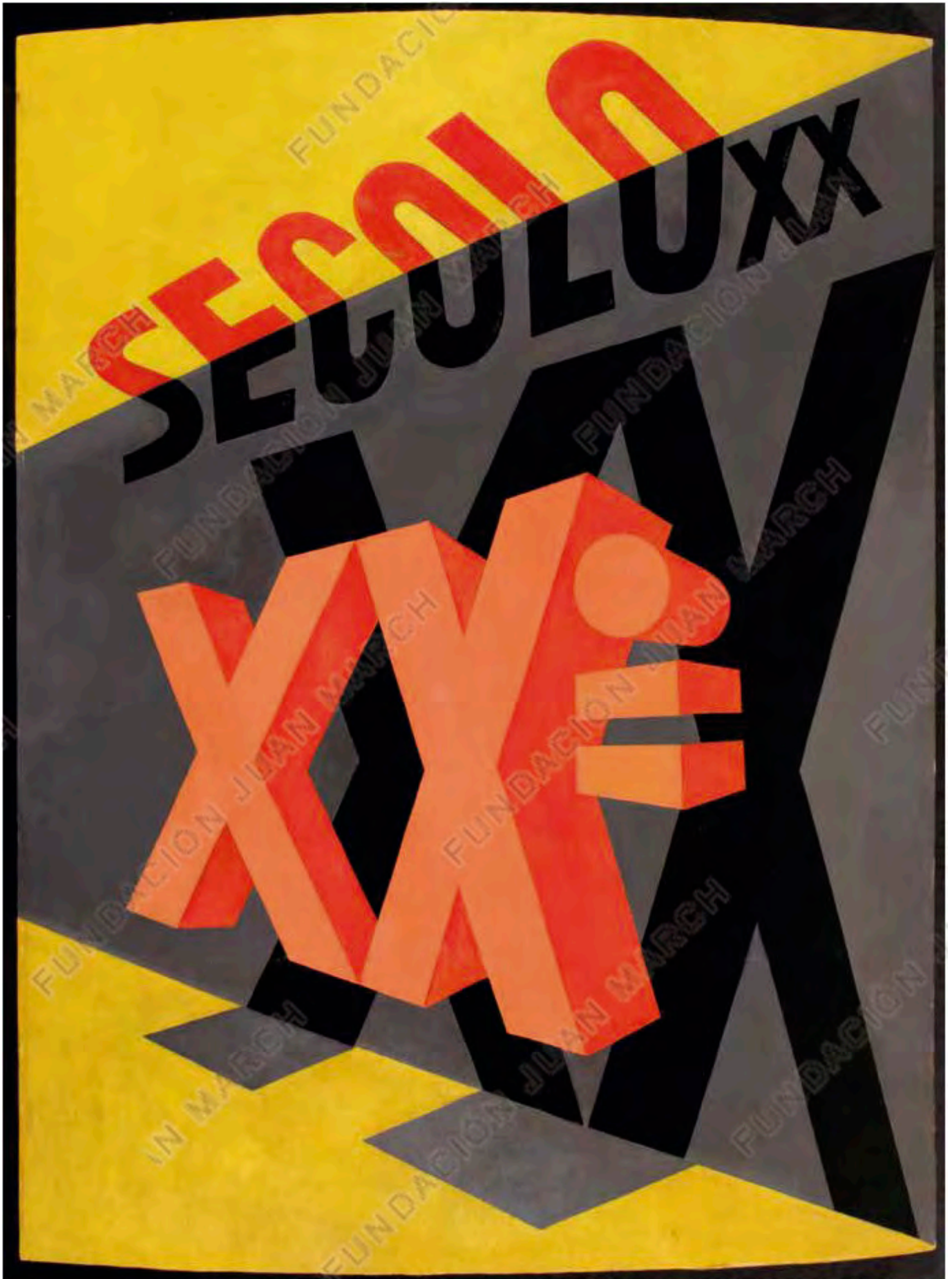


167

Secolo XX [20th Century],
no. 6 (1929). Magazine cover:
lithograph on paper, 15 ¼ x
11 ¾ in. (38.7 x 29.5 cm). Merrill
C. Berman Collection

166

Secolo XX [20th Century], 1928.
Oil on board, 25 ¼ x 19 ¾ in.
(64.1 x 49.8 cm). Merrill C.
Berman Collection



168

Depero Modernist Paintings and Tapestries. Guarino Gallery, New York, January 8 – February 8, 1929. Brochure: letterpress on paper, 9 7/16 x 7 7/8 in. (24 x 20 cm) folded. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

182

"Il futurista Depero alle Gallerie Guarino" [The Futurist Depero at the Guarino Gallery], *Corriere d'America* (New York, January 10, 1929). Newspaper page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, affixed to card, 16 3/4 x 11 13/16 in. (42.5 x 30 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



Realtà e finzione in un manicomio

Pietoso epilogo di un dramma recitato da pazzi

(Nostra telegrafia particolare)

BOLOGNA, 8. — Un dramma rappresentato da pazzi al Manicomio Provinciale di questa città, si è chiuso lunedì con l'epilogo commovente di un dramma vero e vissuto, intrecciando nel modo più impreveduto e latitante la realtà alla finzione scenica.

Il prof. Ferrari, direttore del Manicomio provinciale di Bologna, si vuole sperimentato. L'ultima sua impresa sugli allentati della mente, è stata intellettuale, ha organizzato fra i suoi malati una compagnia drammatica, con dei risultati veramente ottimi. In un'ora, nel teatro improvvisato del Manicomio, alla presenza di un centinaio di pazzi, il comico improvvisato recitava un dramma popolare.

Trenta pazzicelli

Erano una trentina di pazzi travestiti in attori, scenografi, servi di scena, soprannaturali, intorno al loro teatro, al loro lavoro, ai loro pazzi, tutti con una perfetta normalità ed un buon senso irreprensibile. Nella recitazione loro assai e le loro follie.

Protagonista del dramma era una vera sciatrice, una vecchia zia che lasciò il teatro davanti a una coppia di pazzicelli, e che da allora ha vissuto nel Manicomio di Bologna classificata fra gli incurabili. La sua pazzia era la fissazione di un eroe aveva la fissazione di un vero padre, un figlio, che in realtà non aveva mai avuto. Essa aveva lasciato in una lettera libere le parole dell'ospedale. La sua cura dolente si agitava sfrenata, e si agitava timida ai visitatori, e chiedeva angosciatamente notizie dell'ospedale filologico scomparso, rapito forse dagli italiani — come diceva. Era tutto un ruminare che sgorgava dalla sua bocca. La donna descriveva il figlio come se lo avesse realmente avuto.

Invece, essa aveva una figlia che non ricopriva più. Ogni tentativo per rievocare la sua memoria era riuscito vano. Il ricordo della figlia vera era scomparso completamente dalla sua mente, soprattutto dalla visione del figlio fantastico. Per una strana combinazione, al principio dello scorso anno, anche la figlia dell'istituto è stata ricoverata nel Manicomio provinciale di Bologna. La madre, inermemente, la guardava allora e indifferente.

Madre e figlia sulla stessa scena

Inci a sera, alla recitazione, madre e figlia si rievocano sulla stessa scena. Attorno a lei e dai suoi piedi, in quel dramma, la rappresentazione era attenta, alta e sottile, alta

... sua labbra. Così guardava la figlia, la sua vera figlia che era in scena, con occhi pieni di dolore. Poi l'ha chiamata con suo vero nome: Giulia. Giulia? Pieno non è... si è chinata ed abbracciata. La recitazione si è conclusa, e al pubblico si sono presentati al pubblico la madre e la figlia di ieri, che per un momento si sono ritrovate. Un spettacolo del genere della letteratura, che come, ad esempio, in un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... tutti le manteneva la ragione. Il giornalista di questo dramma... di un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

Il giornalista Del Vecchio completamente guarito

(Nostra telegrafia particolare) ROMA, 8 (E. A.). — La Fraga che il giornalista Del Vecchio ha recitato con una felice intonazione, ha avuto la duplice fortuna di essere ammirata e di essere applaudita.

Il nuovo podestà di Bolzano

(Nostra telegrafia particolare) ROMA, 8 (E. A.). — Con decreto del re, è stato nominato Podestà di Bolzano il sr. uff. Torquato Panti, che alla cassa del regime ha sostenuto la sua grande attività.

Il giornalista Del Vecchio completamente guarito

(Nostra telegrafia particolare) ROMA, 8 (E. A.). — La Fraga che il giornalista Del Vecchio ha recitato con una felice intonazione, ha avuto la duplice fortuna di essere ammirata e di essere applaudita.

Per altri telegrammi italiani vedere a pagina 3

Il futurista Depero alle Gallerie Guarino

La "Galleria Guarino d'arte italiana" era l'inaugurazione — avvenuta ieri — della Mostra futurista di Depero ha raggiunto una nuova bellezza, alle tante guadagnate pregandoci per l'arte italiana moderna.

Quindi — arresi — i futuri Depero hanno messo le belle cose di Madi via Avenue e qualche libretto di "Compendio" della galleria, di cui il "Compendio" è il prodotto di scorse settimane, e il prodotto di scorse settimane, e il prodotto di scorse settimane.

Ad una distribuzione armonica — anche se molto discreta — delle più belle opere d'arte ha provveduto con il più solido criterio dinamico. Nei pittori scenografi e architetti futuristi italiani. Portando Depero.

Con pazienza questa volta passato, il grande artista italiano venuto negli Stati Uniti per ammontare lancia le proprie opere ha accelerato la preparazione, la sistemazione e l'organizzazione di ogni minuto dettaglio della mostra ed ha poi goduto, ruminosamente e calorosamente — pirotecnicamente — egli direbbe, dell'entusiasmo del numeroso pubblico che già ieri hanno affollato la mostra.

Qualche anno fa "futurismo" era pane per seppelliti e solo l'adito immenso, la bocca contraria le ciglia alla ricerca per bene.

Oggi i tempi sono cambiati ed un punto tale che ovunque che, tutti si trova un accento "moderno" (come lo chiamano qui), e nelle tappezzerie, nei moduli, costruzioni nelle decorazioni, una "realistica" spettacolare, futurista trapita con violenza e si è in propria via fra le forme più tipiche del passato e presente.

Che cosa più futurista dei realisti americani? O delle aperture nei "punti" come fanno d'oggi, e i punti stadi dei giornali? O dei vari vari dei magazzini e negozi nei di Pitt Avenue spuntati da tutti i punti come sotto a da fuori

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.



Fortunato Depero, il futurista italiano su due espose alle Gallerie Guarino

Nella decorazione e nella pubblicità il futurismo si è affermato più che in ogni altro campo, quasi come se fosse un fatto di avanzata e di progresso, a periodi, una prova di progresso.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.



La sala della Galleria Guarino, con le opere di Depero, il futurista italiano, e alcuni di altri artisti, in mostra nella mostra di espose alle Gallerie Guarino

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.

... un'opera di teatro, si è svolta nella più assoluta verità, e si è svolta in un'atmosfera di assoluta verità.



176

Mostra Depero a New York (a la sala del Fascio Femminile) [Depero Exhibition in New York (at the Fascio Margherita di Savoia)], 1929. Invitation: letterpress on card, 3 3/4 x 6 5/8 in. (9.5 x 16.8 cm). Archivio Depero

175

Unknown photographer, *Mostra Depero a New York (a la sala del Fascio Femminile)* [Depero Exhibition in New York (at the Fascio Margherita di Savoia)], 1929. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, affixed to card, 8 1/8 x 11 1/4 in. (22 x 28.5 cm). Archivio Depero



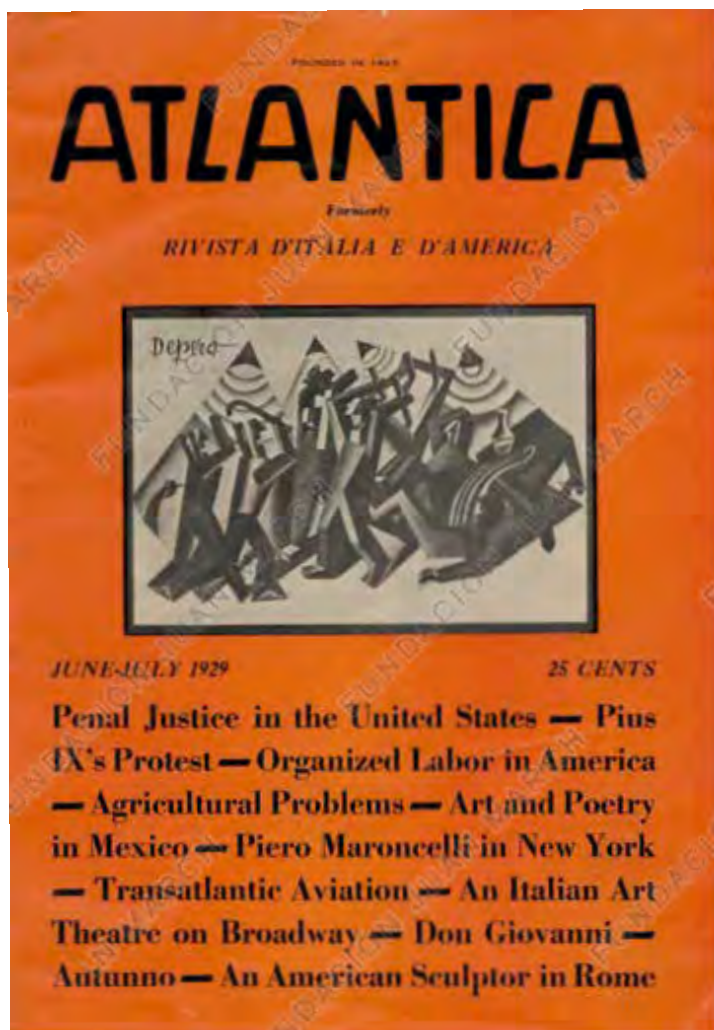
174

Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Jacobson,
1929. Christmas card: lithograph
on card, 4 ³/₁₆ x 5 ⁷/₁₆ in.
(10.6 x 13.8 cm). Archivo
Depero

177

Christmas Greetings, for
Dance Magazine (New York,
December 1929). Magazine ad:
lithograph on paper, 12 ¹¹/₁₆ x
9 ⁵/₁₆ in. (32.3 x 24.5 cm). Private
collection





170
Atlantica [Atlantic] (June-July 1929). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 9 3/4 x 6 1/2 in. (24.5 x 16.5 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero

171
Movie Makers, vol. IV, no. 12 (December 1929). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 12 x 9 1/4 in. (30.5 x 23.5 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero

169
Depero Futurist Art, 1929. Flyer: letterpress on paper, 3 3/4 x 4 3/4 in. (9.5 x 12 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero

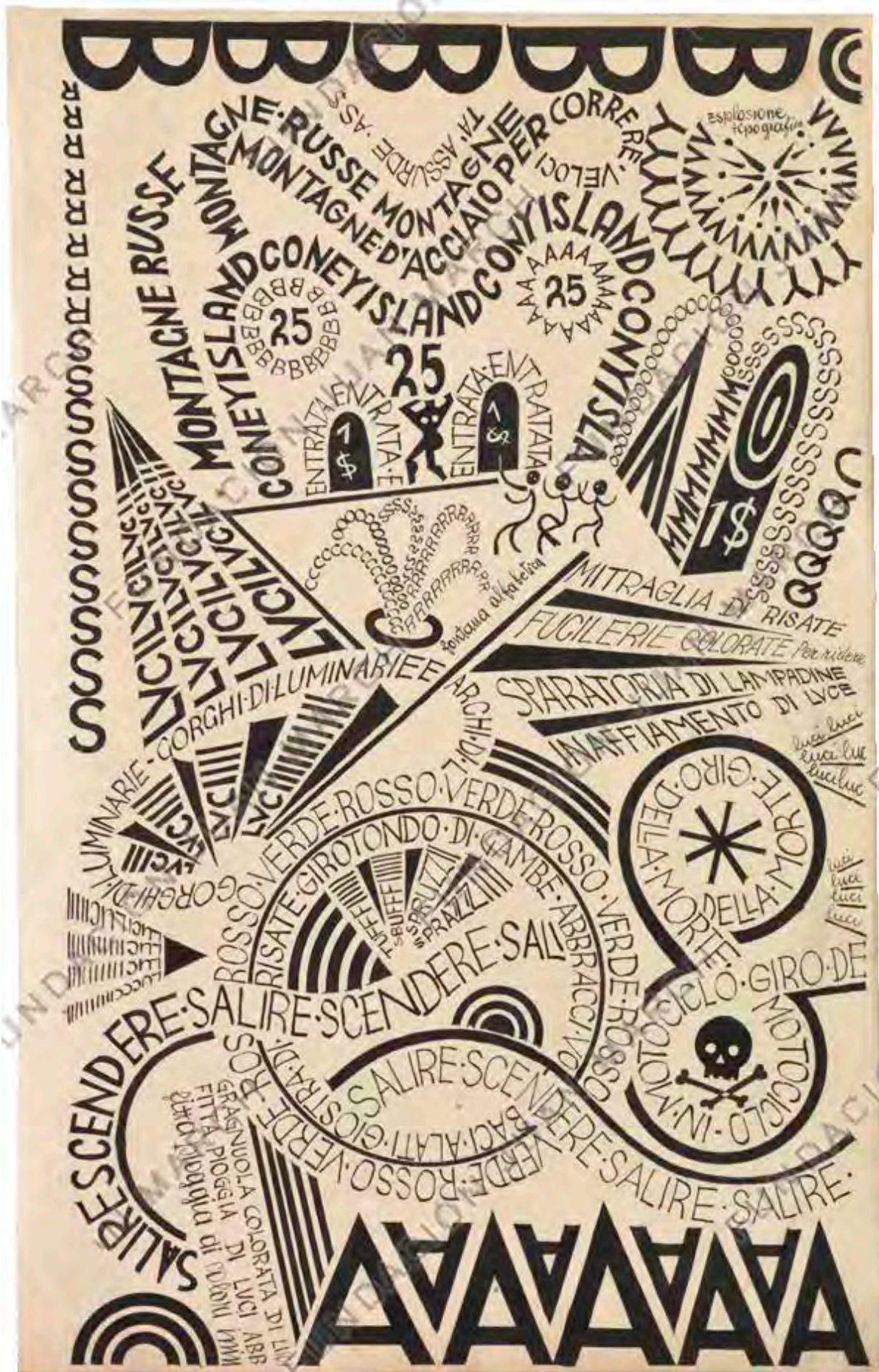


FUTURIST ART

**paintings
plastic
wall panels
pillows
interiors
posters
publicity
stage settings**

**OFFICE
210 FIFTH AVE.
TEL. ASHLAND 5575**

**STUDIO
70 WEST 11TH ST.
TEL. ALGONQUIN 3676**



180

Luna park. Esplosione tipografica (Montagne russe a Coney Island) [Luna Park. Typographic Explosion (Roller Coaster in Coney Island)], 1929. India ink on paper, 19 x 11 1/4 in. (48.2 x 30.2 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

179

Festa di bambini-strilli. Pagina parolibera [Party of Children-Screams. Free-word Composition], 1929. India ink on paper, 14 3/16 x 10 1/4 in. (36 x 26 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto



188

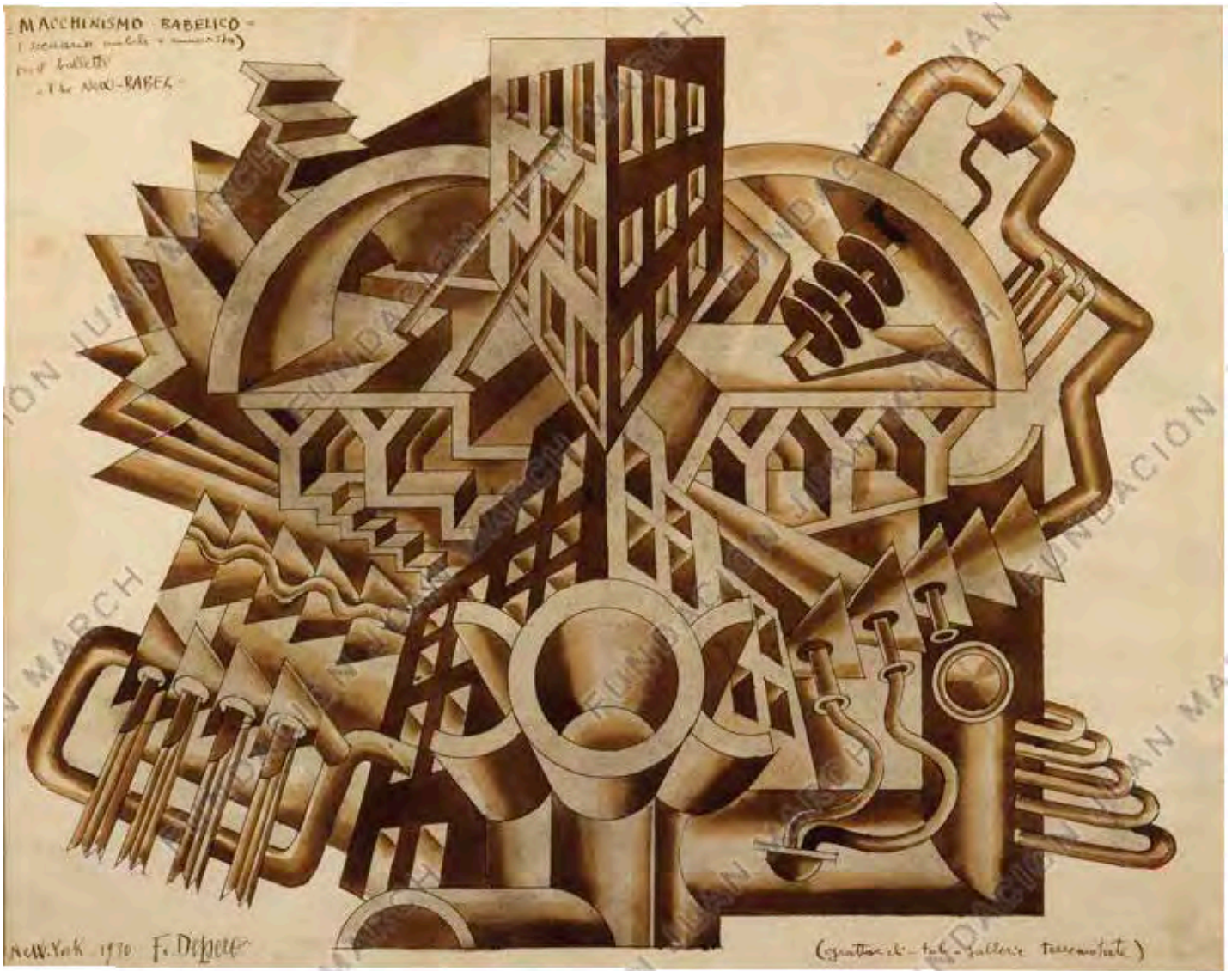
Famiglia negra in Elevated
[Black Family in Elevated
Train], 1929. Tempera and
pencil on paper, 20 ½ x 28 ¾ in.
(52 x 73 cm). MART, Museo di
arte moderna e contemporanea
di Trento e Rovereto

187

Carne e putrelle [Meat and
Beams], 1929. India ink on
paper, 18 5/16 x 14 9/16 in.
(46.5 x 37 cm). MART, Museo di
arte moderna e contemporanea
di Trento e Rovereto







203

Broadway, folla, Roxy Theater
 [Broadway, Crowd, Roxy Theater], 1930. India ink and tempera on paper, 17 3/8 x 24 in. (44 x 61 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

201

Macchinismo babelico
 [Mechanization of Babel], 1930. India ink on paper, 15 3/4 x 18 1/2 in. (40 x 48 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto





202

Broadway, vetrine - folla - macchine - Paramount
 [Broadway, Windows - Crowds - Cars - Paramount], 1930.
 India ink and tempera on paper,
 23 x 27 ½ in. (58.8 x 69.7 cm).
 MART, Museo di arte moderna
 e contemporanea di Trento e
 Rovereto

204

Subway (Folla ai treni sotterranei)
 [Subway (Crowded Underground Trains)], 1930.
 India ink and tempera on card,
 23 ¾ x 35 ½ in. (60 x 90 cm).
 Collezione M. Carpi, Rome





206

Grattacieli e subway per "The New Babel" [Skyscrapers and Subway for "The New Babel"], 1930. Ink and watercolor on paper, 16 1/16 x 18 7/16 in. (40.8 x 46.8 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

205

Bozzetto di scenario mobile per il balletto "The New Babel" [Sketch of Mobile Set for the Dance "The New Babel"], 1930. India ink and tempera on paper, 15 3/4 x 19 9/16 in. (40 x 49.7 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto



200

L'innaffiatore delle vie di New York [New York Road Sprinkler], 1930. Ink and tempera on card, 16 1/4 x 14 3/8 in. (41 x 37 cm). Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto





184
Big Sale (Mercato di Downtown Market), 1929. Oil on canvas, 45 11/16 x 72 7/16 in. (116 x 184 cm).
Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto

Continues Its Efforts to Back Up Fresh Talent

...ND IN THE BOUND OF THE GALLERIES



Various Attractions In the Galleries

The galleries of the city have been... various attractions in the galleries... fresh talent...

Depero--Italian Modernist

Shows His Sensational Paintings and Tapestries Here.

There can be no doubt but that the most original art exhibition of the week is that in the Guarino Galleries by Francesco Depero, the Italian, who here has presented for all the nations of this period, a new line of painting at all angles to the existing world. In the Marzulli exhibition, it is supposed, that in some ways up...

**SOCIETE ANONYME
ENDORSES
DEPERO**

GUARINO GALLERY

900 Madison Avenue
First February to
FRANCIS MACHINELLI
WILL EXPLAIN
THE SIGNIFICANCE OF
FUTURISM
Tuesday, Thursday and
Sunday Afternoons

**RETROSPECTIVE
EXHIBITION**

1912 to 1928
PAINTINGS
by
PAUL VERIN

DE HAUKE

DE HAUKE
DEART 31

**WILDERSTEIN
PAINTINGS
ANGEL
ZARRAGA**

647 Fifth Avenue

**Decorative Paintings
by
JANE PETERSON**

MILCH Galleries

**DAVE WELCHERS
THE ANTHONY GALLERIES**

**Anne Goldthwaite
RECENT PAINTINGS**

NEW-YORK-1929

"Depero - Italian Modernist Shows His Sensational Paintings and Tapestries Here," *The New York Sun* (New York, January 12, 1929). Newspaper cutting: letterpress and photogravure on paper, affixed to card, 21 7/16 x 15 3/4 in. (54.5 x 40 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

"F. P. Marinetti glorificato dal pittore Depero" [F. P. (sic) Marinetti Glorified by the Painter Depero], *Corriere d'America* (New York, June 9, 1929). Newspaper page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 16 1/2 x 12 3/16 in. (42 x 31 cm). Private collection



MARINETTI è un esempio unico nella storia, quale grande artista che dedicò tutto il suo entusiasmo oratorio e tutta la sua prodigialità artistica alla fama di altri artisti.

Generalmente l'artista non ebbe e non ha che il limitato tempo per creare e difendere la propria arte e per procurarsi il pane di tutti i giorni.

Marinetti è vero che visse e vive con discreti mezzi da non conoscere l'incubo atroce dei bisogni quotidiani, ma questo poteva essere per lui anche il pretesto di infelicità e di disprezzo e di abbandono-dalla sgarzezza professionale con tanto di titoli e con tanto di barba.

L'Italia non ha le miniere del Transvaal e del Colorado, ma ha miniere di genio inesauribile.

Bisognava però scovarlo, coltivarlo, difenderlo e valorizzarlo.

Marinetti infatti si sviluppò ardentemente a questo sacro apostolato, dell'attissimo e difficilissimo.

Chiamò a raccolta gli artisti più frenetici, più ansiosi di novità e di nuova genialità.

A Marinetti si unirono UMBERTO BOCIONI, GIACOMO BALLA, LUIGI RUSSOLO, BALILLA PRATELLA, GIOVANI, MAZZA, CASAVOLA, DEPERO, FRAMPOLINI, AZARI, BUZZI, FOLGORE, DOTTORI, TATO, PANNAGGI, VASARI-GERBINO, ed altri, per svegliare a calci e pugni svecciatori e visionatori, gli artisti e l'Italia tutta, addormentata sui comodi materassi della gloria del passato.

100.000 conferenze.
100.000 manifesti.
100.000 battaglie.
100.000 esposizioni.

Bastonate, sputi, urli, pedate e schiaffi, lancio di uova fresche e fradiche, di patate e di mele, di scarpe e di attaccapanni; volo di

motte celeberrime di: MARCIARE E NON MARCIARE.

Marinetti era "stittissimo ad ogni costo, arma infallibile e sostegno inamovibile per reggere alle più aspre e sbrantanti fatiche.

Ogni esposizione era una lotta. Ogni discorso una bufera. Ogni spettacolo o serata un puferificio.

Marinetti gridava sempre: avanti, avanti, urlava. Il suo collo sudatissimo era incandescente, il collo inamidato si sfasciava, i suoi occhi tondi s'ingrandivano e schizzavano sanguigni, i suoi nervi elettrizzavano.

La sua oratoria strarivante coltiva le platee, le balconate ed i loggioni straripanti ed urlianti.

Orgoglioso della propria pazzia futurista, a dispetto della sgarzezza passatista, di fronte alle folle inferocite, Marinetti si punta con presidi tiri, con perfetti fuochi accollerati. Con sicurezza matematica, colpisce, demolisce ogni bersaglio acciottatore, le masse più compatte di risate e di vituperii.

Schernisce e sorride, alla ignobile mitraglia di cereali e di scherni che la folla abbruttita gli sputa sulla scena.

Marinetti resiste e vince, plasmando questo mare furibondo, finché sempre riesce ad imporsi, ad affascinare e trascinare al trionfo anche le belve più arrabbiate.

Marinetti oratore e declamatore è insuperabile. Ha polmoni eccezionali, resiste all'indiatto.

Le sue doti oratorie hanno contribuito enormemente alla rapida e clamorosa propaganda del futurismo in tutto il mondo.

E' sonorissimo, veloce, forte, pronto ad ogni assalto.

Attacca sempre, provoca impetentemente; annulla ed avvilisce ogni disgraziato contraddittore; persuade ed affascina il più ringhioso critico.

Quando declama, romba, esplode. Le sue immagini vivono nello spazio, fischiano, danzano, angosciano come una invisibile e presente folla palpabile.

Ho visto colonnelli, generali, giovani ed anziani, di convinzioni poetiche sicuramente passatiste, ma con cuori che vissero ben superiori

per ritornare maestri ed indicatori di nuove grandi scoperte, di nuovi vasti orizzonti inesplorati.

Con questo grido, tale gruppo di artisti geniali, nel 1909, capitanati da MARINETTI, iniziarono la loro durissima e gloriosa marcia.

Marinetti indicò un motto che riassume tutto il programma che ogni futurista si dovette tracciare, il

lirismi sul campo di battaglia. Il bovista rabbrivire, fremere e piangere di emozione.

Marinetti prima del cemento futurista creò una rivista d'avanguardia per i poeti più arditi d'Europa. Essa si chiamava "Poesia".

Con essa si rivelarono i primi poeti italiani destinati a fama futurista mondiale.

Con il suo volume-dinamite "ZANG-TUM-TUM" ha cantato e musicalizzato i più micidiali rumori della guerra vissuta.

Le parole in libertà aprirono orizzonti sconfinati di nuova originalità poetica; i giovani poeti futuristi crearono una incredibile varietà di liriche e poesie, che con la vecchia quadratura non sarebbero risultate.

Anche la rivoluzione tipografica delle parole in libertà diede alla poesia nuova bellezza pittoresca.

La poesia si rese più interessante e più emotiva.

Parole grandi, parole piene, parole medie, parole spezzate, parole ripetute, allungate, deformate secondo la sensazione da esprimere.

Parole scritte verticalmente, orizzontalmente, oniriche.

Parole con lettere sdraiate, in piedi o capovolte; parole a spirale come il fumo dei sigari, parole in fuga come i treni, parole ritte come i campanili, immagini scritte verticalmente come la pioggia attraverso immagini plane come le vie, i campi ed i prati.

Infine parole scoppianti come le rivoluzionate e le cannonate; parole leggere appargliate come fiocchi di neve o svolazzi iridescenti di farfalle.

Insomma la nuova poesia ha il diritto di essere espressa con la massima libertà lirica e grafica; sul foglio bianco o colorato deve vivere con lo stesso magico disordine come è vissuta.

Disordine apparente, ma di reale ordine interiore.

La poesia deve differire da una qualunque pagina di protocollo o d'una veritosa legale.

La poesia non è che un paesaggio di esprimere come il pittore con tutti i piani e tutte le prospettive poetiche e grafiche, onde rendere magistralmente viva la propria creazione.

Il dinamismo artistico e vitale di Marinetti, fu maestro di tutti i dinamismi italiani e stranieri d'oggi.

Nella gioventù artistica presente c'è una linea ed una attività sbrigliata, polemica e veloce; c'è una gara artistica veramente sportiva.

Nella discussione c'è una tonalità più marcata, ottimista ed indagatrice. C'è un maggiore orgoglio di italianità e di genialità che prima non c'era.

Quando un critico d'arte o un oratore intellettuale inaugura una esposizione od un congresso d'arte, parla di dinamismo e di sintesi; questa non è che influenza futurista marinettiana.

Non confondiamo il dinamismo politico affascinatore di Mussolini, con quello polemico ed artistico di Marinetti.

Sono due dinamismi paralleli e parimenti gloriosi.

(Continua a pagina 11-S)

F. P. Marinetti glorificato dal pittore Depero

(Conferenza tenuta al Fascio Margherita di Savoia in N. Y.)

sedie e di teste cornute imballate, gazzarra violentissime ed indimenticabili, sulle piazze, sulle vie, nei circoli d'arte, sui palcoscenici.

Tutta questa gigantesca orchestra di guerra contro l'ingegno addormentato ed alla razza geniale di essere italiana, cioè geniale di quella razza di genio che insegnò a tutto il mondo, in tutti i secoli.

Per ritornare maestri ed indicatori di nuove grandi scoperte, di nuovi vasti orizzonti inesplorati.

Con questo grido, tale gruppo di artisti geniali, nel 1909, capitanati da MARINETTI, iniziarono la loro durissima e gloriosa marcia.

Marinetti indicò un motto che riassume tutto il programma che ogni futurista si dovette tracciare, il

lirismi sul campo di battaglia. Il bovista rabbrivire, fremere e piangere di emozione.

Marinetti prima del cemento futurista creò una rivista d'avanguardia per i poeti più arditi d'Europa. Essa si chiamava "Poesia".

Con essa si rivelarono i primi poeti italiani destinati a fama futurista mondiale.

Con il suo volume-dinamite "ZANG-TUM-TUM" ha cantato e musicalizzato i più micidiali rumori della guerra vissuta.

Le parole in libertà aprirono orizzonti sconfinati di nuova originalità poetica; i giovani poeti futuristi crearono una incredibile varietà di liriche e poesie, che con la vecchia quadratura non sarebbero risultate.

Anche la rivoluzione tipografica delle parole in libertà diede alla poesia nuova bellezza pittoresca.

La poesia si rese più interessante e più emotiva.

Parole grandi, parole piene, parole medie, parole spezzate, parole ripetute, allungate, deformate secondo la sensazione da esprimere.

Parole scritte verticalmente, orizzontalmente, oniriche.

Parole con lettere sdraiate, in piedi o capovolte; parole a spirale come il fumo dei sigari, parole in fuga come i treni, parole ritte come i campanili, immagini scritte verticalmente come la pioggia attraverso immagini plane come le vie, i campi ed i prati.

Infine parole scoppianti come le rivoluzionate e le cannonate; parole leggere appargliate come fiocchi di neve o svolazzi iridescenti di farfalle.

Insomma la nuova poesia ha il diritto di essere espressa con la massima libertà lirica e grafica; sul foglio bianco o colorato deve vivere con lo stesso magico disordine come è vissuta.

Disordine apparente, ma di reale ordine interiore.

La poesia deve differire da una qualunque pagina di protocollo o d'una veritosa legale.

La poesia non è che un paesaggio di esprimere come il pittore con tutti i piani e tutte le prospettive poetiche e grafiche, onde rendere magistralmente viva la propria creazione.

Il dinamismo artistico e vitale di Marinetti, fu maestro di tutti i dinamismi italiani e stranieri d'oggi.

Nella gioventù artistica presente c'è una linea ed una attività sbrigliata, polemica e veloce; c'è una gara artistica veramente sportiva.

Nella discussione c'è una tonalità più marcata, ottimista ed indagatrice. C'è un maggiore orgoglio di italianità e di genialità che prima non c'era.

Quando un critico d'arte o un oratore intellettuale inaugura una esposizione od un congresso d'arte, parla di dinamismo e di sintesi; questa non è che influenza futurista marinettiana.

Non confondiamo il dinamismo politico affascinatore di Mussolini, con quello polemico ed artistico di Marinetti.

Sono due dinamismi paralleli e parimenti gloriosi.

(Continua a pagina 11-S)



Basta con il plagio

Basta con la imitazione

Basta con la esagerata glorificazione dei morti.

Occorre ribellarsi, reagire, creare, inventare, difendere i vivi.

Occorre sentirsi nel sangue, il sangue dei nostri grandi predecessori.

Occorre scavarventare tutto all'aria e gridare con polmoni RINFORTZATI E NUOVI, gridare in faccia al mondo intero, che se siamo stati maestri nei secoli scorsi, anche oggi abbiamo genio bastan-

te per ritornare maestri ed indicatori di nuove grandi scoperte, di nuovi vasti orizzonti inesplorati.

Con questo grido, tale gruppo di artisti geniali, nel 1909, capitanati da MARINETTI, iniziarono la loro durissima e gloriosa marcia.

Marinetti indicò un motto che riassume tutto il programma che ogni futurista si dovette tracciare, il

lirismi sul campo di battaglia. Il bovista rabbrivire, fremere e piangere di emozione.

Marinetti prima del cemento futurista creò una rivista d'avanguardia per i poeti più arditi d'Europa. Essa si chiamava "Poesia".

Con essa si rivelarono i primi poeti italiani destinati a fama futurista mondiale.

Con il suo volume-dinamite "ZANG-TUM-TUM" ha cantato e musicalizzato i più micidiali rumori della guerra vissuta.

Le parole in libertà aprirono orizzonti sconfinati di nuova originalità poetica; i giovani poeti futuristi crearono una incredibile varietà di liriche e poesie, che con la vecchia quadratura non sarebbero risultate.

Anche la rivoluzione tipografica delle parole in libertà diede alla poesia nuova bellezza pittoresca.

La poesia si rese più interessante e più emotiva.

Parole grandi, parole piene, parole medie, parole spezzate, parole ripetute, allungate, deformate secondo la sensazione da esprimere.

Parole scritte verticalmente, orizzontalmente, oniriche.

Parole con lettere sdraiate, in piedi o capovolte; parole a spirale come il fumo dei sigari, parole in fuga come i treni, parole ritte come i campanili, immagini scritte verticalmente come la pioggia attraverso immagini plane come le vie, i campi ed i prati.

Infine parole scoppianti come le rivoluzionate e le cannonate; parole leggere appargliate come fiocchi di neve o svolazzi iridescenti di farfalle.

Insomma la nuova poesia ha il diritto di essere espressa con la massima libertà lirica e grafica; sul foglio bianco o colorato deve vivere con lo stesso magico disordine come è vissuta.

Disordine apparente, ma di reale ordine interiore.

La poesia deve differire da una qualunque pagina di protocollo o d'una veritosa legale.

La poesia non è che un paesaggio di esprimere come il pittore con tutti i piani e tutte le prospettive poetiche e grafiche, onde rendere magistralmente viva la propria creazione.

Il dinamismo artistico e vitale di Marinetti, fu maestro di tutti i dinamismi italiani e stranieri d'oggi.

Nella gioventù artistica presente c'è una linea ed una attività sbrigliata, polemica e veloce; c'è una gara artistica veramente sportiva.

Nella discussione c'è una tonalità più marcata, ottimista ed indagatrice. C'è un maggiore orgoglio di italianità e di genialità che prima non c'era.

Quando un critico d'arte o un oratore intellettuale inaugura una esposizione od un congresso d'arte, parla di dinamismo e di sintesi; questa non è che influenza futurista marinettiana.

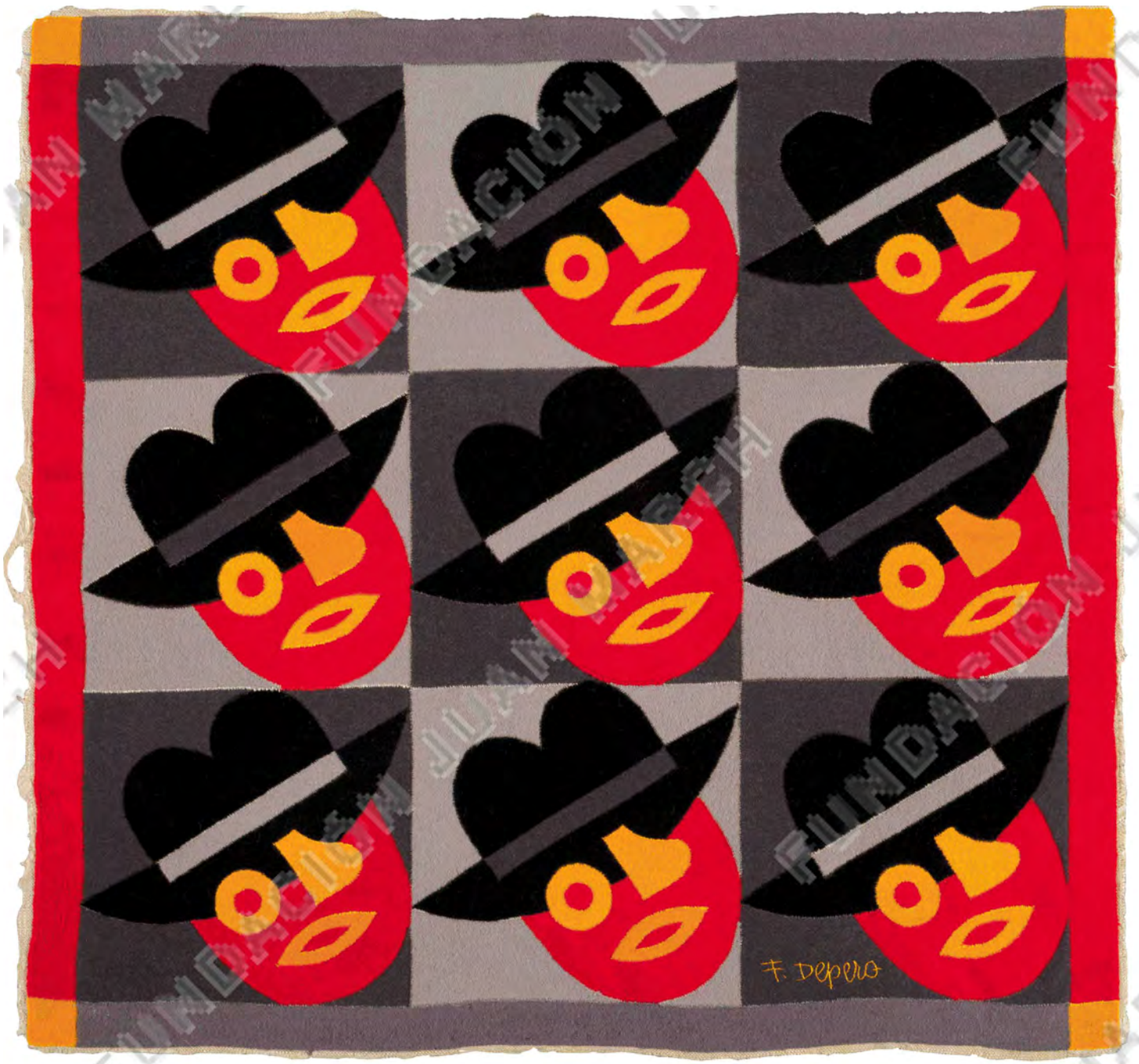
Non confondiamo il dinamismo politico affascinatore di Mussolini, con quello polemico ed artistico di Marinetti.

Sono due dinamismi paralleli e parimenti gloriosi.

(Continua a pagina 11-S)



Il pittore Fortunato Depero





195
Nove teste con capello [Nine Heads with Hat], 1929–30.
 Pieced wool on cotton,
 18 1/8 x 18 3/8 in. (46 x 48 cm).
 Private collection, Switzerland

217
News Auto Atlas, New York,
 1930. Road map: letterpress
 and lithograph on card,
 12 13/16 x 9 7/16 in. (32.5 x 24 cm).
 MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo
 Depero



186

Bozzetto per locandina pubblicitaria De Marinis & Lorie [Sketch for De Marinis & Lorie Advertising Poster], 1929. India ink on paper, 16 ½ x 12 ½ in. (42 x 32 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

190

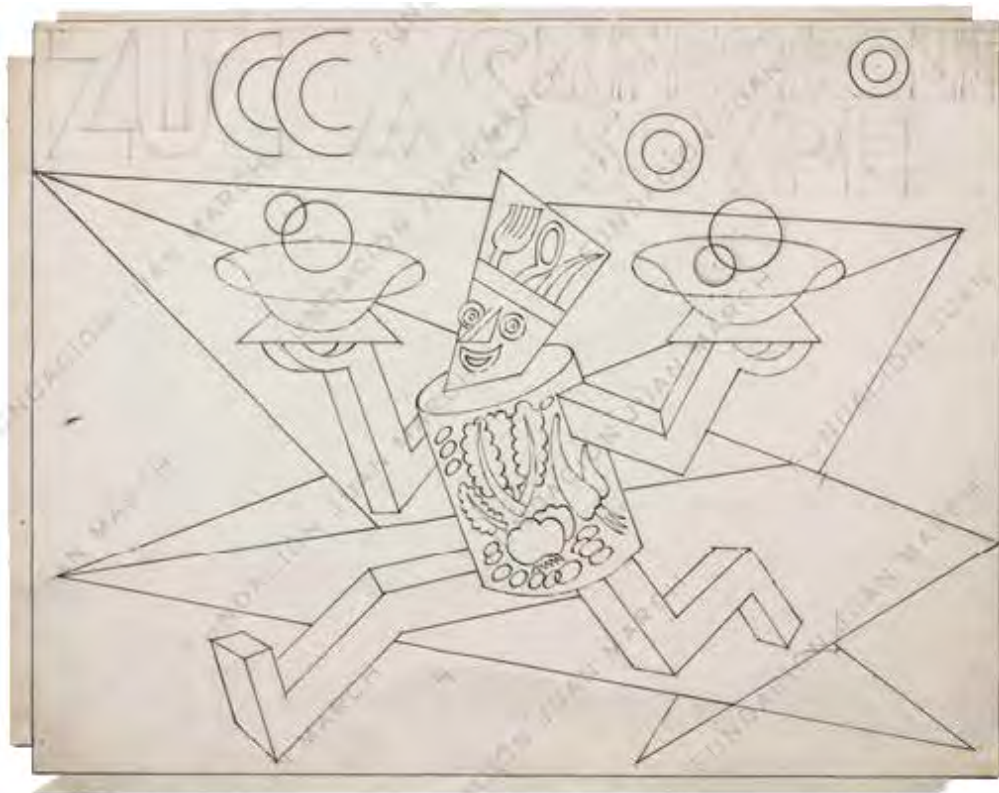
Bozzetto pubblicitario per il Ristorante Zucca (*Corsa di cameriere*) [Sketch for Ristorante Zucca Advertisement (Running Waiter)], 1930. India ink and pencil on paper, 13 ¹³/₁₆ x 17 ⁷/₁₆ in. (35.1 x 44.6 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

191

Bozzetto per il Ristorante Zucca (*Scorcio dell'interno*) [Sketch for Ristorante Zucca Advertisement (View of the Interior)], 1930. Pencil on paper, 12 x 9 in. (30.5 x 22.8 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

192

Unknown photographer, Restaurante Zucca in New York decorated by Fortunato Depero, c. 1960. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 7 ¹/₁₆ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (18 x 24 cm). Archivio Depero





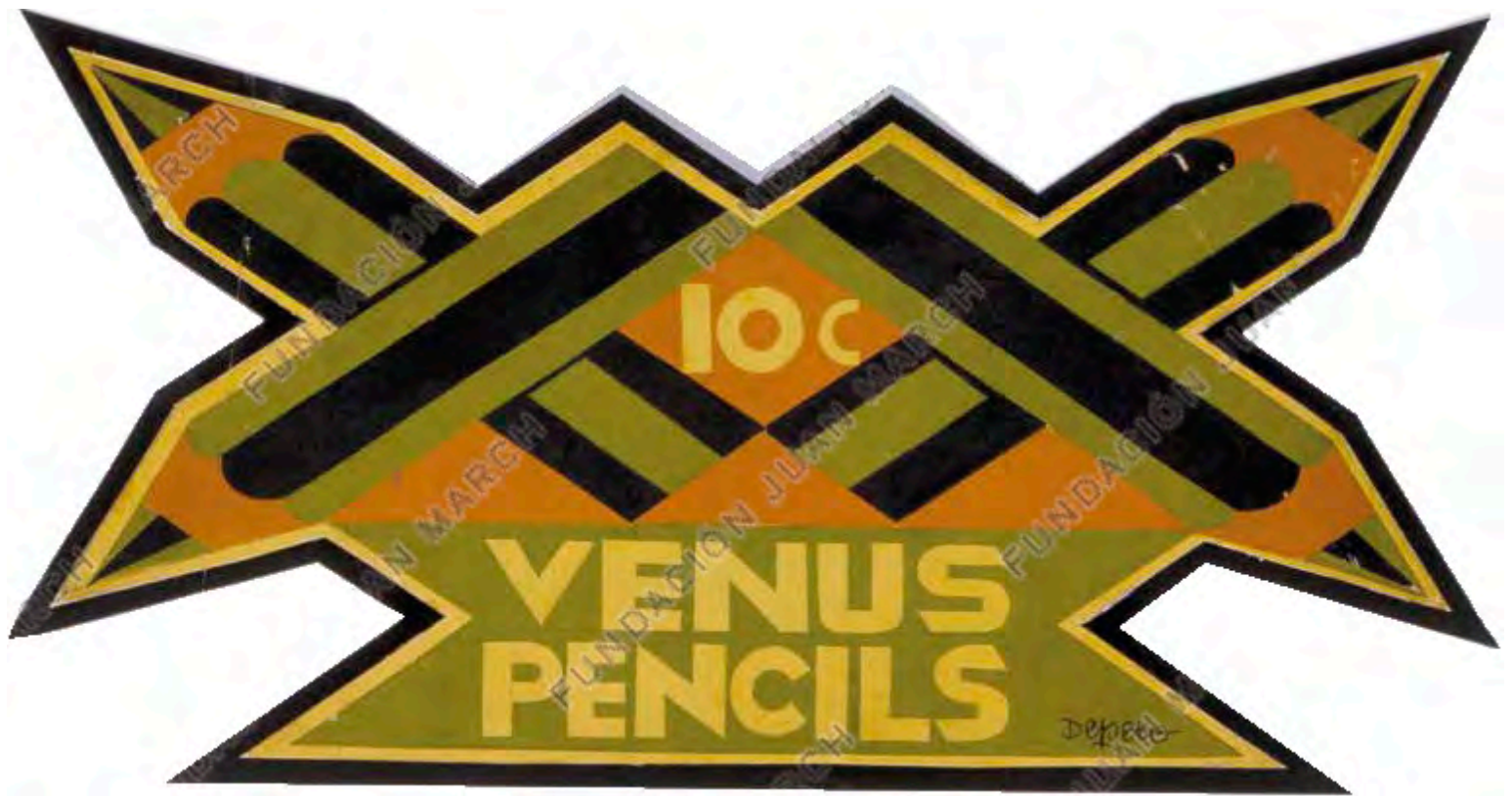
193

Bozzetto per pubblicità Venus Pencils [Sketch for Venus Pencils Advertisement], 1929–30. India ink on paper, 17 1/8 x 14 1/4 in. (43.4 x 36.1 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

234

Donna matita per pubblicità Venus Pencils [Miss Pencil for Venus Pencils Advertisement], 1929–31. India ink and pencil on paper, 15 1/8 x 13 1/4 in. (39.9 x 33.6 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto





196

Bozzeto per pubblicità Venus Pencils [Sketch for Venus Pencils Advertisement], 1929–30. Collage, 12 x 19 7/8 in. (30.5 x 50.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto



198
Bozzetto di copertina per "Vogue" [Sketch for *Vogue* Cover], 1930. Collage, 17 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 13 ⁹/₁₆ in. (45.6 x 34.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, long-term deposit

197
Bozzetto di copertina per "Vanity Fair" [Sketch for *Vanity Fair* Cover], 1930. Collage, 18 ¹/₄ x 14 in. (46 x 35.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, long-term deposit

199
Vanity Fair (New York, July 1930). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 12 ⁷/₈ x 9 ³/₄ in. (32.7 x 24.7 cm). Private collection

222
Vanity Fair (New York, March 1931). Magazine: lithograph on paper, 12 ³/₄ x 9 ¹/₄ in. (32.3 x 25 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection





214
Sparks (New York, September 1930). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, affixed to card, 11 x 16 1/4 in. (28 x 41 cm) spread. Private collection



215
Gebrauchsgraphik –
International Advertising Art,
 volume with bound issues
 nos. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8, 1930.
 Magazine: letterpress and
 photogravure on paper,
 11 ¹³/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₄ in. (30 x 23.5 cm).
 Private collection

233
*New York, film vissuto. Primo
 libro parolibero sonoro* [New
 York – A Lived Film. First Free-
 word Audio Book]. Rovereto:
 n.p., 1931. Book: letterpress
 and photogravure on paper,
 6 ¹/₈ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (15.6 x 24 cm).
 Two copies on display: Merrill
 C. Berman Collection and
 Archivo Lafuente

NEW-YORK

SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO

FILM VISSUTO
PRIMO LIBRO PAROLIBERO

SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO

FORTUNATO DEPERO
1931

SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO
SONORO



creazione fotografica di P. Castagneri - Milano, via Montenapoleone

I° LIBRO PAROLIBERO SONORO

1000 ESEMPLARI numerati e firmati

vita vissuta a **NEW-YORK**
illustrazioni - tavole parolibere
liriche - paesaggi tipografici
DUE DISCHI FUORI TESTO
Inciisi dall'autore

PRENOTATEVI IN TEMPO

NEW-YORK - FILM VISSUTO





208

Unknown photographer,
Motonave "Roma": ponti
["Roma" Steamship: Deck],
October 1930. Photograph:
gelatin silver print on fiber-
based paper, affixed to card,
9 1/16 x 19 1/16 in. (23 x 50 cm).
MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo
Depero

Grido ai Futuristi

Il mondo intero **marcia** di scoperta in scoperta.

marcia
marcia

All'estero si compiono prodigi per battere qualsiasi „record“.

MACCHINE - MACCHINE - MACCHINE - MACCHINE
macchine **aeree** - macchine **subacquee**
macchine **terrestri**

ogni sforzo **super-chimico**
super-fisico
super-chirurgico
super-artistico
super-sportivo per brandirne il **PRIMATO**.

Il teatro prorompe in libertà con le fanfare più **colorate**
e **meccano-magiche**.

Nelle meravigliose Fiere internazionali
Trasformismo — Elettricismo.

Nonostante il nostro preziosissimo **PRIMATO INVENTIVO**
anche l'Italia ansa e corre **TRANNE CHE NELL'ARTE**.

Ancora - ancora - ancora - ancora - ancora - ancora
O — STI — NA — TA — MEN — TE
PE — DE — STRE — MEN — TE
CA — MOR — RI — STI — CA — MEN — TE

si plagia, si sfrutta il passato, gloriandosene vilmente, invece
di sentirne stimolo di gara eroica e **SUPERARLO**.

Manca ancora il riconoscimento **TOTALE, AUDACE e GA-**
GLIARDO del FUTURISMO
ITALIANISSIMO.

E' perfettamente inutile che si ostenti un'opposizione neo-
imbecille di **4** melanconici ripetitori incapaci.

Le nostre scatole, con frenesia di gong impazziti, non re-
sistono:

Assaliamo selvaggiamente
la malafede **giornaliera** che ci vieta la rapidità.
la camorra

W MARINETTI

e i suoi ministri di velocità e di creazione.

Nelle arti plastiche ciò che è fuori del Futurismo non signi-
fica nulla.

I passatisti sono dei mediocri, dei dilettanti, dei mestieranti,
degli artisti mancati, in perfetta malafede, degli arenati e
disorientati; intendi gli accademici, gli ufficialmente ricono-
sciuti, i neoclassici e quelli che vanno per la maggiore.
Togliete la firma alle loro opere e ne risulterà lampante la
nullità.

La sola arte che viva oggi è il **FUTURISMO**:

Arte precisa	ardita
matematica	patriottica
colorata	motoreggiante
pulsante	guerresca

I passatisti sono sostenuti dalla camorra dei comitati, dai
giuri o dalla critica ufficiale, alleati alla mediocrità contem-
poranea, esaltatrice dei grandi del passato, bene incasset-
tati, bene inchiodati e sotterrati ermeticamente.

W BOCCIONI	W ESCODAME	W AZARI
W BALLA	W JANNELLI	W CASAVOLA
W RUSSOLO	W GERBINO	W DOTTORI
W DEPERO	W FILLIA	W PANNAGGI
W PRAMPOLINI		

e tutti gli altri futuristi.

Il destino glorioso dei nostri nomi sarà sempre più trionfante.
L'esercito degli oppositori ci fa nausea.

4 critici avvelenati beecesselano e malignano, tentando in-
ciamparci.

NON RIESCONO...

4 artisti mancati falliscono nei loro sforzi.

Il destino—sparo,
il fatale vampare e divampare,
il marciare ed il riuscire ad ogni costo,
lo stravincere:

questo dilagare ed ultra-interessare del **FUTURISMO**
nelle capitali e nelle provincie, all'estero, oltre i mari, nelle
Americhe, in Giappone, in Australia, ci fa

GIOIOSISSIMAMENTE

ridere — ridere — ridere — ridere — ridere — ridere
ridere — ridere — ridere — ridere — ridere — ridere
ridere a crepapancia

ridere da scoppiare in un autentico fuoco d'artificio, rimbal-
zare come palle di gomma dalle risa, e ancora **RIDERE**
RIDERE
RIDERE

ORGOGLIOSISSIMAMENTE, di questa in-
confutabile, inconfutabile superiorità.

La vostra ostilità non è per noi che una droga solleticante.

Siamo i più compatti,
siamo i più veloci,
siamo i più geniali,
abbiamo più fede di tutti,
siamo i più fantasiosi,
ricchi e straricchi di progetti;

Se volete ne abbiamo anche di segreti e barbarici: aspet-
tatevi da noi ogni sorpresa; siamo anche capaci di nutrirvi
delle vostre coriacee bistecche

CANNIBALISTICAMENTE.

W IL FUTURISMO

W IL FUTURISMO

W IL FUTURISMO

WW e sempre WWW il Futurismo

la sola **l'unica**
la sola **l'unicissima** arte degna di rappresentare

l'ITALIA

Vi abbraccio affettuosissimamente
vostro **Depero**

AZARI



DINAMO

la più originale e colorata
pubblicazione del mondo

il libro
più fascista e
più futurista

Prenotatelo
inviando vaglia di L. **25**

**DIFFUSIONE
MONDIALE**

**ALLE
EDIZIONI METROPOLI**
Galleria del Corso, 4 - MILANO

**TUTTE LE ARTI
TUTTE LE INVENZIONI
TUTTI I PRIMATI
TUTTE LE INDUSTRIE**

ITALIA - VISIONE
TUTTI GLI EROISMI IN TERRA, IN
CIELO, E IN MARE DESCRITTI DAI
CONDOTTIERI DELLA GRANDE GUERRA

TUTTA L'ITALIA
BELLEZZA
ARTE
FORZA
AUDACIA
AMORE AL
FUTURO

REGIONI
GENIO

**TUTTE LE
COMPETENTI**

**TUTTE LE
COMPETENTI**

**TUTTO LO SFORZO PRODUTTIVO
DELL'ITALIA RINNOVATA DAL FASCISMO**

**L'ALMANACCO I.V.
PARLERÀ**
CON DUE PAGINE DISCO


**PORTERÀ LA VOCE
DEL DUCE E DI
MARINETTI
AGLI ITALIANI
DI TUTTO IL MONDO**

1930 - SESTROPUBBLICITÀ DI TORINO - F. G. L. S. S.

213

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti,
Almanacco Italia veloce [Fast
Italy Almanac], 1930. Leaflet:
letterpress and photogravure
on paper, with handwritten
notes, 11 3/4 x 8 3/4 in.
(28.9 x 22.5 cm) folded. Merrill
C. Berman Collection

**ALMANACCO
ITALIA VELOCE**



*a Benito Mussolini
grande capo veloce
dell'Italia Veloce
F. T. Marinetti*

"Poeti futuristi - l'autunno futurista" [Futurist Poets: The Futurist Autumn], *Futurismo* [Futurism], year 1, no. 15 (Rome, December 18, 1931). Magazine page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 25 x 17 1/4 in. (63.5 x 43.8 cm). Archivio Depero



S. E. Starace ammira l'arco trionfale futurista eretto a Savona dai futuristi D'Albissola, Pirelli e Galeotti



DEPERO - Innaffiatore delle strade di New York



DEPERO - Nitrito in velocità



DEPERO - Elasticità di gatti (proprietà Conte Volpi)



DEPERO - Alba e tramonto sulle Alpi



DEPERO - Fulmine compositure

POETI FUTURISTI

L'autunno futurista

L'articolosità nella pienezza del gialdio

*Gongolamare delle solattonità inespulte su profili moreschi
Squarcature-delizie sotto le dorature medianiche dell'ambizione
Imparadisiamento della materia nell'amplesso immensifouto della bellezza*

AGONE STELLARE

*Scherzosità scherzosità scherzosità di benedico e fimerio nelle capriole turchine del piccolo passato
Saltellare di capricci in un'estensione di grottesco quotidiano
Riviere-sproporzioni
Affollamenti-inconvenienze in una spazzata di qualità
Figurine figurine figurine nella striccolamento inno delle chiarezze
Lamentazioni d'oro in pulegge di piccolo sole
Sbandamenti sbandamenti sbandamenti di certe reminiscenze
Pagamenti-regalità
Rotamenti-sbordamenti nell'impreciso ossessionato
Diligenza inutile inutile inutile
Serenità improvvisa in rettilinee di solitudine*

CABINA DI SENSI

*Giù
giù
illascivimenti progressivi
Erecciate di viola - abalena di luce criminale
Riflessi-pensieri di mammella nell'insondabile
Filamentosità-intersezioni-reniscienza
Parficamento dei progetti in cupole d'immaterialità
Solfeggi dannati nel riposo della mezz'ombra
Giù
giù
trascinamento delle soddisfazioni
Pigoli pigoli pigoli sulla pagina aperta dell'ottimismo*

PERNO D'ORO

*Affacciamenti NUOVI
Sondire nuova ebbrezza in nuovi metraggi di fusolosità
Urto delle dolcezze
ESPANSIONE SERAFICA
Socantità-simpatia di angeli-sentelle in gricce di beatitudine
Ribollimenti azzurria e languore fervorosità rivelazioni*

AMPIEZZA NUOVA

*Ciondolamenti d'estasi
Perfezionamenti-instancabilità
Incrinate d'alcool
Sbaragliamento nell'inconsiderato
Giù
giù
stilizzazione delle ostilità*

RITMO NUOVO

*Inalberare inalberare inalberare bandiere d'argoglio
Una via via per la linea grammofonica dell'ottobre violata
Crollamento dell'inesistibile
Spaccamento degli attimi nellapartitura del cosmo
Pendagli pendagli pendagli di affimato sopra larghezza di bengala
3 gocce d'azzurro pomeridiano
Sinfonismi bianchi*

Aeroplano d'autunno

*Intersezioni delle nudità cosmopolite
Arabeschi arabeschi esamici
Scenari-sintoni-inecristalbità
Polgorare di l'innalbita temporaneo
Papafalle di cartone verde per l'inesistenza superata d' Afrodite
Danza-ginocchia sotto le cupigliature delle vastità rinnovate*

LIBERAZIONE CONTINUA

*Feste-sensualità spostarsi spostarsi spostarsi
GIOCO BIANCO-LAVATO
Dispersioni-sfumature sotto la pressione dell'essenzialità
Regaliti di 2 caprezzoli
Companelli campanelli campanelli per la geometria della lassuria
Perfezione-nudità*

STATUA - LIBIDINE - ESSENZIALITÀ

*Ombelico d'ebbrezza nella rettilinea frodda dell'ottobre futurista
Autumnalità alcoolizzata nella sacrosità dell'ultimo
Ascese ascese ascese nella concessione dell'azzurro puro
Danze policrome delle miserie
Fascio magnetico
Splendori splendori splendori di 1000 leggende
REALTÀ NUOVA
Preghiere preghiere preghiere di 1000 pupille
Esseni-delimitazione
Lamentazioni lamentazioni lamentazioni connotate a un vertice d'ebbrezza
LIBRISMO NUOVO
Sorriso nuovo
(Danza nuda nella cantilena effimera del sole)
Perfezioni perfezioni perfezioni nell'ala lamantevole dell'ottobre*

FOLICALDI



L'arco trionfale che Savona futurista ha innalzato in onore di S. E. Starace



TULLIO D'ALBISSOLA - Vetrine pubblicitarie per il libro in lotta "Parole in libertà", di F. T. Marinetti



IVANHOE GAMBINI - Josephine Baker (Acropittara)



ANTONIO MARASCO - Gullinantesimi di Callicrate



P. SALADIN Stati di religione



E. THAYER "Banista", veneziana del 700 (sintesi plastica)

FARFA POETA RECORD NAZIONALE

Vendemmia

*nelle vigne bestiali e umane
solida
solendo arigine strade
condotti a pastozze di
giocche
a legioni di testarde agnelle
staccherà polposi grappoli
di mammelle pecorarie
e capozzoli di cagna
e poppe di vitelle
di cicchine
di mogli dei cerbiatti*

*duchesse
aristocratiche
borgheuocce
papolane dimesse
occhese e poetesse
all'uscita d'un teatro
ognuna priverà del seno
floscio rotondino superbo
nappanondico
colmandomi gli omeri
di ricolma sacchi
l'una curiosa pigrita nei lini
dag piedi miei spremuta
baccera umora i lufi di colli
fiori strini
assai disera
da quelli di giardini ebbri
di fuori
e distillerà il latte estradensso
e nutriente
per gesti disincroli delle macchine*

PRENDO

*la torre eifel a gusa di chitarra
con immense corde di paglia
e canto sotto le finestre della stella
la più bella
nascosta dal ventaglio delle nuhi
vorrei inoir per te se il paradiso
fosse popolato d'angeli
almeno quarantina come le ori
da mannaia pre-musica
ad ogni muschio morto
lazzaro è risuscitato
vital dire che non ha trovato
d'angeli nemmeno traccia
e perciò per te io vivo
maldicendo la luna
che oscura il tuo splendore
sen trucco d'amore e spalti
sangue
di lampadine rosse che mi
pacciano quasi
quasi più di te*

FARFA

Stazione

*vedi la fettona accavata
quale bocca di gitana
allontanare un sigaro fumante
di treno in partenza
riaccostando alle labbra
il diretto in arrivo
finché spunta lontano
l'ultima mozzicone
d'un stagione merci*

FARFA

Fresco

*bicchierone d'acqua all'amicce
con specchi di limone-luccola
la notte ti berrà
nebbione denso
sondare pure sperma
e i cittadini spermatozoi
convergenti verso le natiche
della città*

FARFA



POESIA
PITTURA
RACCONTI
FUTURISMO

TEATRO ARGENTINA

SABATO 13 GIUGNO 1931 - ORE 21

PRIMA RAPPRESENTAZIONE DELLA Tournée TEATRO FUTURISTA

DIREZIONE ARTISTICA

MARINETTI

Rappresenterà il Movimento Futurista

il Poeta **ESCODAMÈ**

Gestione e organizzazione: **CORRADO DE CENZO** Condirezione Artistica: **PIERO CARNABUCI**
SI RAPPRESENTERA'

SIMULTANINA

Divertimento Futurista
in 16 Sintesi di **MARINETTI**

Scenografie di **BENEDETTA** realizzate da **GUIDO GALLI**

La Signora **LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI** canterà la canzone di "**SIMULTANINA**", musicata da **Carmine Guarino** su parole di **Escodamè**
(Edizioni **Carisch e C.**)

La Signorina **GIANNINA CENSI** eseguirà una "Danza simultanea di gioia - dolore di **CARMINE GUARINO**
Il poeta **ESCODAMÈ** declamerà "**RITRATTO OLFATTIVO DI SIMULTANINA**", parole in libertà di **MARINETTI**

PERSONAGGI

1ª SINTESI LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina UGO CESERI - Il Buongustaio PIERO CARNABUCI - L'Arruffatore	8ª SINTESI PIERO CARNABUCI - L'Arruffatore	13ª SINTESI ELVIRA BORELLI - Mamma Biù LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina ACHILLE RAMPEZZOTTI - Una Voce PIERO CARNABUCI - L'Arruffatore AUGUSTO OLIVIERI - Il Professore Poeta CESARE POLACCO - Lo sportivo UGO CESERI - Il Buongustaio EDOARDO BORELLI - Il Bibliofilo RICCARDO TASSANI - Il Dongiovanni Pubblicista Snob MICHELE MIAÇOLA - Il Mendicante
2ª SINTESI UGO CESERI - Il Buongustaio GIULIO CANTONI - Prima Voce MARIO RASI - Seconda Voce	9ª SINTESI LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina AUGUSTO OLIVIERI - Il Professore Poeta - Gli scolari -	14ª SINTESI ELVIRA BORELLI - Mamma Biù
3ª SINTESI LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina CESARE POLACCO - Lo Sportivo A. RAMPEZZOTTI - Una Voce	10ª SINTESI AUGUSTO OLIVIERI - Il Professore Poeta	15ª SINTESI Sala da pranzo della Villa Simultanina. I mobili rovesciati danno la sensazione di una dopo-rissa o di un dopo-terremoto. Formano così un
4ª SINTESI CESARE POLACCO - Lo Sportivo	11ª SINTESI LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina RICCARDO TASSANI - Il Dongiovanni Pubblicista Snob UGO CESERI - Il Buongustaio	16ª SINTESI LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina ELVIRA BORELLI - Mamma Biù PIERO CARNABUCI - L'Arruffatore RICCARDO TASSANI - Il Dongiovanni Pubblicista Snob UGO CESERI - Il Buongustaio EDOARDO BORELLI - Il bibliofilo CESARE POLACCO - Lo Sportivo RENATO NAVARRINI - L'Aviatore AUGUSTO OLIVIERI - Il Professore Poeta MICHELE MIAÇOLA - Il Mendicante
5ª SINTESI LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina EDOARDO BORELLI - Il Bibliofilo	12ª SINTESI RICCARDO TASSANI - Il Dongiovanni Pubblicista Snob	INTERVALLO Durante la 2ª Sintesi il "BUONGUSTAIO", rivelerà ai più ghiotti spettatori una vivanda futurista che sbraglerà il rito della PASTA ASCIUTTA.
6ª SINTESI EDOARDO BORELLI - Il Bibliofilo	7ª SINTESI LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI - Simultanina PIERO CARNABUCI - L'Arruffatore GIANNINA CENSI - La Danzatrice - Le Donne -	DRAMMA D'OGGETTI

Alla fine della rappresentazione **MARINETTI** sarà applaudito, si accetterà un eventuale **CONTRADDITORIO**

Nell'atrio del Teatro **MOSTRA DI AEROPITTURA**

Tutti i Modelli che indosserà la Sig.ra **LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI** sono creazioni della **CASA DI MODE**

MARTA PALMER

I Modelli realizzati dalla **PALMER** ed indossati dalla Sig.ra **LIA ORLANDINI-LUPI** sono confezionati con tessuti creati dalle

Seterie DE ANGELI FRUA

Il Teatro sarà profumato col "**GIACINTO INNAMORATO**", di **Giviemme**

Tis. Lit. Nav. a. e. C. - Roma

219

Unknown artist, *Simultanina*, 1931. Flyer: letterpress on paper, 13 3/4 x 9 3/4 in. (34.6 x 24.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

250

Unknown artist [Mino Somenzi]. *Grande Mostra Nazionale d'Arte Futurista* [National Exhibition of Futurist Art], 1933. Poster: letterpress on paper, 27 1/8 x 13 1/8 in. (70.3 x 33.1 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

dal 29 Ottobre XII

**Grande
Mostra
Nazionale
d'Arte
Futurista**

organizzata

da

FUTURISMO

**Palazzo
dell'Esposizione**

**Piazza
Adriana**

Esente da Bollo

T. & NAVA

VENERDI
4 MARZO

alle ore 21 nella Sala della
GRAN GUARDIA
 gentilmente concessa

il poeta - pittore

DEPERO

terrà una conferenza sul tema
"NEW-JORK
NUOVA BABELE.
 Vita vissuta e declamazioni
 liriche - rumoriste e parolibere.

Posti distinti L. 5
 Secondi posti L. 2
 Studenti L. 1.

Milano - Via S. Carlo 15 - Tel. 4.0000 - Sped. in abb. post. n. 11

SINTESI DEL FUTURISMO MONDIALE E DI TUTTE LE AVANGUARDIE
LA CITTA' NUOVA
 QUINDICINALE DI ARTE - VITA DIRETTO DA FILLIA

REDATTORE-CAP. F. DEPERO - DIRET. AMMIN. VIA A. VERUCCHI 4 - TORINO - TEL. 1.11.7 - 15 GIUGNO 1932 - N. 7 - C. C. CON LA POSTA - ARCH. A. 20 LUGLIO 1932 - C. 20

LA PRIMA MOSTRA
DELL'AMBIENTAZIONE
E DELLA MODA
A TORINO

MODERNOLATRIA

AMBIENTE FUTURISTA

ARCHITETTURA
ARREDAMENTO
ARTE DECORATIVA

(The magazine cover features several photographs of modernist interiors and architectural spaces, including a large hall with columns and a room with a curved wall.)

236

Depero *New-Jork Nuova Babele* [Depero *New York (sic) New Babel*], c. 1932. Poster: letterpress on paper, 39 3/4 x 27 9/16 in. (100 x 70 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

235

"La prima mostra dell'ambientazione e della moda a Torino" [First Interior Decoration and Fashion Exhibition in Turin], *La Citta' Nuova*, year 1, no. 7 (Turin, June 15, 1932). Magazine cover: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 21 3/4 x 16 3/8 in. (55.3 x 41.6 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

244

Dinamo Futurista [Futurist
Dynamo], year I, no. 1
(Rovereto, February 1933).
Magazine: letterpress and
photogravure on paper,
16 1/2 x 11 13/16 in. (41 x 30 cm).
MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo
Depero

245

Dinamo Futurista [Futurist
Dynamo], year I, no. 2
(Rovereto, March 1933).
Magazine: letterpress and
photogravure on paper,
16 1/2 x 11 13/16 in. (41 x 30 cm).
MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo
Depero

223

*Numero unico futurista
Campari* [Campari Futurist
Single Edition]. Milan: F.
Depero/D. Campari, 1931. Book:
letterpress and lithograph
on paper, 6 1/2 x 9 7/16 in.
(15.6 x 24 cm). Archivio
Lafuente





246

Dinamo Futurista. Numero speciale per le onoranze ad Umberto Boccioni [Futurist Dynamo. Special Issue in Honor of Umberto Boccioni], nos. 3-5 (Rovereto, June 1933). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 13 7/16 x 9 1/8 in. (34.5 x 24.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



252

Futurismo [Futurism], year II, no. 40 (Rome, June 11, 1933). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 x 17 1/2 in. (63.5 x 43.8 cm). Private collection

247

Dinamo Futurista. Numero speciale per le onoranze ad Umberto Boccioni [Futurist Dynamo. Special Issue in Honor of Umberto Boccioni], 1933. Poster: letterpress on paper, 19 11/16 x 27 9/16 in. (50 x 70 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



241
Futurismo [Futurism], year I, no. 16 (Rome, December 25, 1932). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 1/2 x 17 1/2 in. (64 x 43.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

249
Futurismo [Futurism], year II, no. 38 (Rome, May 28, 1933). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 1/2 x 17 1/2 in. (64 x 44 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

251
Futurismo [Futurism], year II, no. 42 (Rome, June 1933). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 1/2 x 17 1/2 in. (64.1 x 43.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

240
Futurismo [Futurism], year I, no. 8 (Rome, October 28, 1932). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 1/2 x 17 1/2 in. (64 x 44 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

esce ogni domenica (settimanale) 25 dicembre 1932-XI

FUTURISMO

a. l' n. 16 cent. 50

settimanale del futurismo italiano e mondiale - via delle tre madonne 14 - roma - telefono 871285

NOI SIAMO FASCISTI, E QUINDI, PIU' CHE GUARDARE AL PASSATO, SIAMO SEMPRE INTENTI VERSO IL FUTURO - Mussolini

RITMO EROICO

di Giovanni Marinetti

IL BOMBARDAMENTO DI ADRIANOPOLI parole in libertà

di F. T. Marinetti

JOHN DOS PASSOS

di Giovanni Marinetti

FUTURISMO

F. T. MARINETTI

esce ogni domenica (settimanale) 28 Maggio 1933-XI

FUTURISMO

a. l' n. 38 cent. 50

settimanale dell'arte e della cultura italiana - via delle tre madonne 14 - roma - telefono 871285

Difendiamo "venti anni di lotte artistiche e politiche spesso consacrate col sangue," AFFISSIONE IL FUTURISMO

Premio di pittura "Golfo di Spezia,"

IL PREMIO VAZIRADIANE A P. M. BARDI

FUTURISMO

F. T. MARINETTI

Milano - 15 giugno - Adunata Futurista

esce ogni domenica (settimanale) 28 Maggio 1933-XI

FUTURISMO

a. l' n. 42 cent. 50

settimanale dell'arte e della cultura italiana - via delle tre madonne 14 - roma - telefono 871285

la triennale fallimento!

Umberto Boccioni e la modernolatria

di F. T. Marinetti

FUTURISMO

F. T. MARINETTI

esce ogni domenica (settimanale) 28 Ottobre XI

FUTURISMO

a. l' n. 8 cent. 50

settimanale dell'arte e della cultura italiana - via delle tre madonne 14 - roma - telefono 871285

Evviva il genio futurista di BENITO MUSSOLINI

Piazza Belgioioso La "Casa Rossa"

DUCE DUCE DUCE DUCE DUCE

FUTURISMO

F. T. MARINETTI

DUCE DUCE DUCE DUCE DUCE



253

Bozzetto della prima pagina per "Alta Tensione Futurista" [Sketch for the First Page of High Futurist Tension], 1933. India ink and pencil on paper, 19 5/8 x 13 3/8 in. (49.9 x 34 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

254

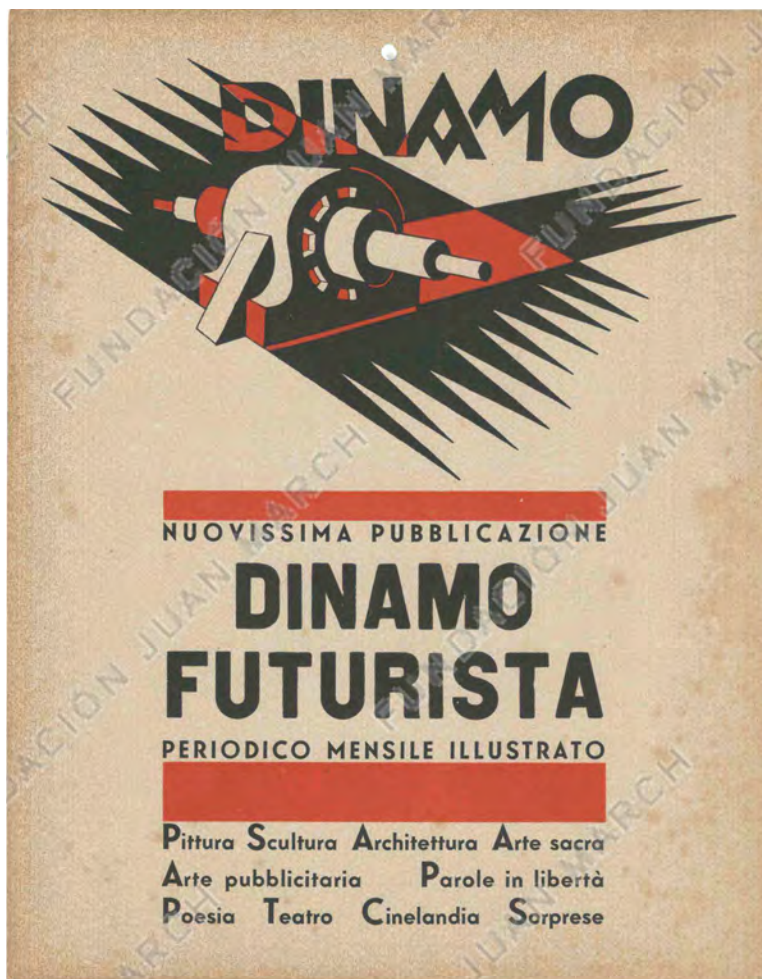
Bozzetto della prima pagina per "Dinamo Futurista" [Sketch for the First Page of Futurist Dynamo], 1933. India ink and pencil on paper, 17 1/8 x 11 7/8 in. (43.3 x 29.1 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

243

Dinamo Futurista [Futurist
Dynamo], 1933. Advertisement:
letterpress and photogravure
on card, 11 ¹¹/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₁₆ in.
(29.7 x 23 cm). Archivo
Lafuente

256

Esposizione privata Depero
[Depero Private Show], 1934.
Invitation: lithograph on card,
4 ¹/₂ x 5 ³/₄ in. (11.5 x 14.7 cm).
Archivo Lafuente





255

Liriche Radiofoniche [Radio Lyrics]. Milan: G. Morreale, 1934. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 9 3/4 x 6 1/2 in. (24.5 x 16.5 cm). Two copies on display: Merrill C. Berman Collection and Archivo Lafuente

207

Senco, 2a mostra della radio [2nd Radio Exhibition], 1930. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 9 3/4 x 6 3/4 in. (23.8 x 17 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

262

Festa dell'Uva [Grape Festival], single issue (Rovereto, 1936). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 10 1/4 x 8 1/8 in. (27.6 x 20.5 cm). Archivo Lafuente





263

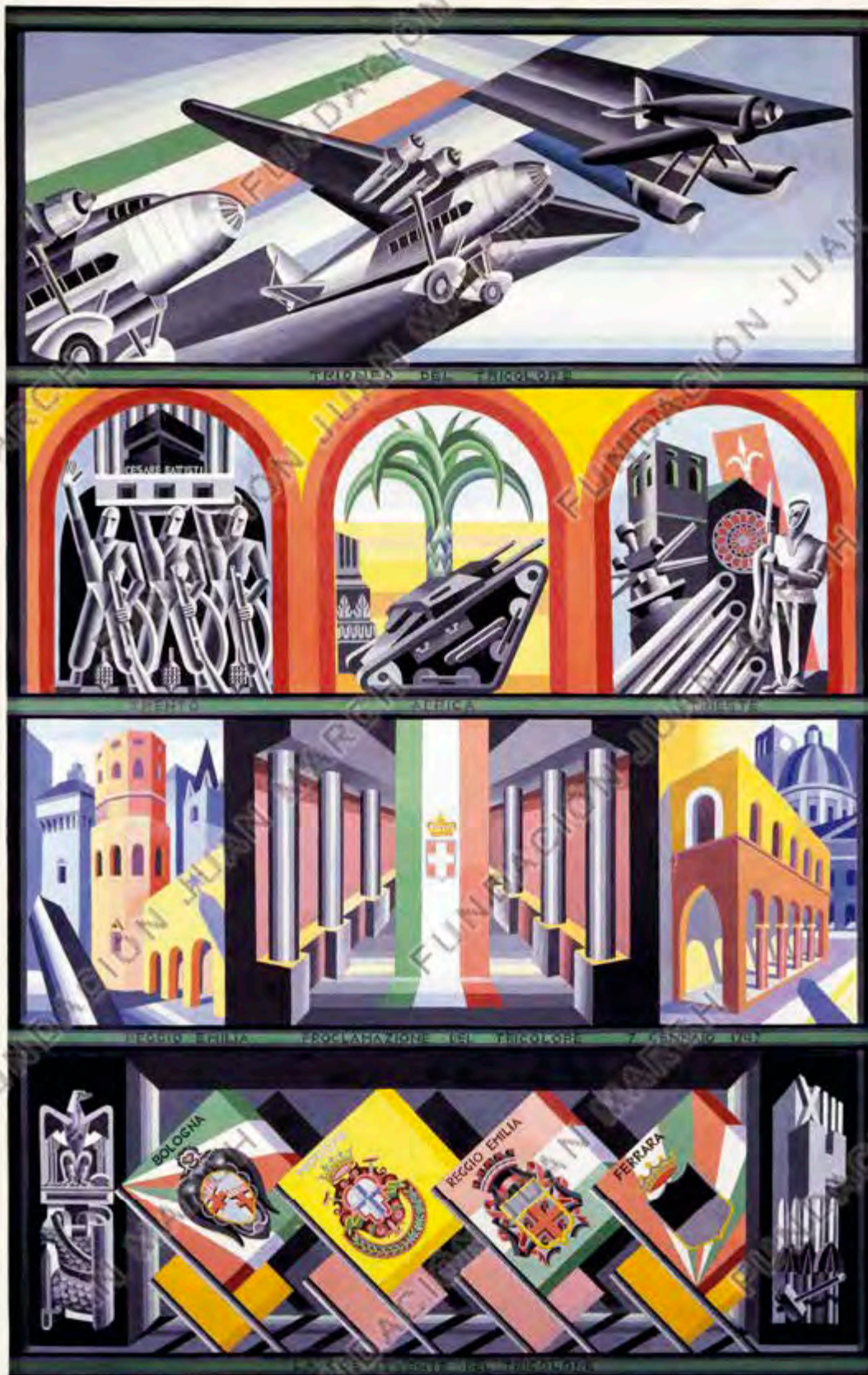
Schizzo per carro allegorico Monopoli [Sketch for Monopoli Tobacco Factory Float], 1936. Pencil and India ink on paper, 22 ½ x 15 ¼ in. (57.1 x 38.7 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

264

Carro del dopolavoro della Manifattura Tabacchi (Monopoli) in occasione della Festa dell'Uva [Monopoli – Tobacco Factory Workers' Club Float for the Grape Festival], 1936. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 ¾ x 7 in. (11.7 x 17.8 cm). Archivio Depero

261

Proclamazione e trionfo del tricolore [Proclamation and Triumph of the Tricolor], 1935. Tempera on card, affixed to Masonite, 89 ¾ x 55 ½ in. (228 x 141 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto



BOZZETTO DI MASSIMA PER IL MOSAICO: PROCLAMAZIONE E TRIONFO DEL TRICOLORE PER LA NUOVA STAZIONE DI REGGIO-EMILIA DEL PITTORE FORTUNATO DEPERO



133

Padiglione pubblicitario
[Trade Fair Pavilion], c. 1925.
Photograph: gelatin silver
print on fiber-based paper,
13 3/4 x 11 1/2 in. (35 x 29.5 cm).
MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo
Depero

265

Bilancio 1913-1936 [1913-1936
Balance]. Rovereto: R. Manfrini,
1937. Book: Letterpress
on paper, 9 9/16 x 6 3/4 in.
(24.3 x 17 cm). Two copies
on display: MART, Archivio
del '900, Fondo Depero and
Archivo Lafuente



260

Bozzetto di diploma per il Partito Nazionale Fascista
[Sketch of Diploma for the
National Fascist Party],
1935. Tempera and India ink
on paper, 17 1/8 x 11 13/16 in.
(43.3 x 30 cm). MART, Museo di
arte moderna e contemporanea
di Trento e Rovereto





257

Xanti Schawinsky, *Si [YES / Year XII of the Fascist Era]*, 1934. Poster: lithograph on paper, 37 ¹/₁₆ x 28 ¹/₁₆ in. (95.7 x 71.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

266

Ala fascista [Fascist Wing], 1937. Pieced wool on cotton, 80 ⁵/₁₆ x 37 ³/₁₆ in. (204 x 94.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

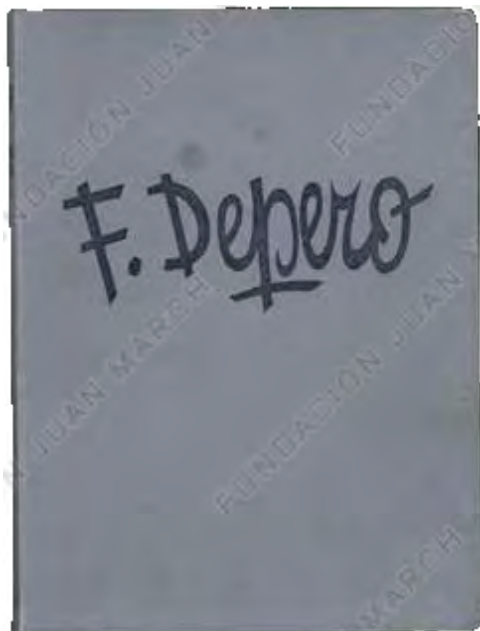




Autografo di F.T. Marinetti - Roma - 1938 //

268
 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *La potenza futurista di Depero* [Depero's Futurist Power], Rome, 1938. Document: typewritten text on paper, with handwritten notes, 10 3/4 x 14 1/16 in. (27 x 37 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

269
 Fortunato Depero *nelle opere e nella vita* [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life]. Trento: TEMI, 1940. Book: letterpress on card, 12 3/4 x 9 7/16 in. (32 x 24 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



267
 96 tavole a colori per "I Dopolavoro Aziendali in Italia" [96 Color Plates for the Italian after-work Facilities of the OND]. Rovereto: Manfrini, 1938. Book: printed on fabric, 11 1/4 x 10 3/16 in. (29.5 x 27.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

274
 Fortunato Depero. *New School for Social Research*, New York, March 1-20, 1948. Leaflet: letterpress on paper, 6 7/8 x 4 15/16 in. (17.5 x 12.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



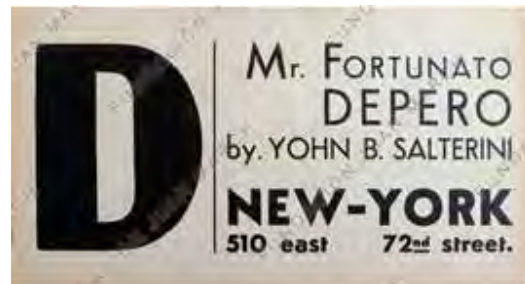
270
 "Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita" [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life], *Il Brennero*, (Trento, May 21, 1940).
 Newspaper page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 21 7/16 x 15 3/4 in. (54.5 x 40 cm).
 MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



271
A passo romano: lirismo fascista e guerriero programmatico e costruttivo [Roman Step: Programmatic and Constructive Fascist and Warrior Lyricism], 1943. Trento: Edizioni di credere obbedire combattere, 1943. Book: letterpress on paper, 9 7/16 x 6 5/16 in. (24 x 16 cm).
 Archivio Lafuente



273
So I Think, So I Paint: Ideologies of an Italian Self-made Painter. Trento: TEMI, 1947. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 10 3/8 x 8 11/16 in. (27 x 22 cm).
 MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



272
 Address label for heavy box-luggage shipped to New York, c. 1947. Luggage label: letterpress on card, 4 7/8 x 9 3/16 in. (12.3 x 23.3 cm). Private collection

275

Cantiere sonoro [Loud Construction Site], 1950. Charcoal and India ink on paper, 35 13/16 x 43 11/16 in. (91 x 111 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto





DEEP

ERRO



AB
FORTUN
DEP

OUT ATO ERO

MAURIZIO SCUDIERO

GIANLUCA POLDI

LLANOS GÓMEZ MENÉNDEZ

CAROLINA FERNÁNDEZ CASTRILLO

PABLO ECHAURREN

ALESSANDRO GHIGNOLI

CLAUDIA SALARIS

GIOVANNA GINEX

BELÉN SÁNCHEZ ALBARRÁN

RAFFAELE BEDARIDA

GIOVANNI LISTA

FABIO BELLONI

COLLABORATORS



Maurizio Scudiero

(Rovereto, 1954) An architect and art historian, Maurizio Scudiero studied with Mario De Micheli and Dino Formaggio. He has principally focused on the early avant-gardes and Futurism, specializing in the work of Fortunato Depero and other Futurists such as R. M. Baldessari, Tullio Crali, Renato Di Bosso, and Ivano (Ivanhoe) Gambini. Scudiero has curated more than one hundred exhibitions in international museums and galleries and has published over two hundred books, catalogues, and articles in specialist publications. He has been a member of the academic committee of the Wolfsonian Institute in Miami and an advisor to Yale University, New Haven. In 2009 he published an extensive biography of Fortunato Depero (*Depero: l'uomo e l'artista*. Rovereto: Egon, 2009).



Gianluca Poldi

(Milan, 1971) A physicist (Università degli Studi di Milano), with a PhD in Conservation Science from the Università degli Studi di Firenze and a PhD in Humanities from the Università degli Studi di Bergamo, Gianluca Poldi specializes in the non-invasive diagnosis of polychrome artistic objects. He has collaborated on numerous scientific projects undertaken by museums and private companies, examining hundreds of works of art. Poldi has published numerous essays, books, and scholarly articles. Since 2008 he has worked at the Università degli Studi di Bergamo, researching new technologies for the conservation of works of art and the theoretical dialogue between the sciences and arts.



Llanos Gómez Menéndez

(Madrid, 1974) Llanos Gómez Menéndez has a PhD from the Universidad Complutense in Madrid. She is the author of the essay *La dramaturgia futurista de Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. El discurso artístico de la modernidad* (Vigo: Academia del Hispanismo, 2008) and of *Expresiones sintéticas del futurismo* (Barcelona: DVD, 2008), a selection of Futurist theatrical texts translated into Spanish. Together with Alessandro Ghignoli she co-edited *Futurismo. La explosión de la vanguardia* (Madrid: Vaso Roto, 2011). A professor at the Universidad Rey Juan Carlos-TAI as well as playwright and director of the *Compañía Locomotora Teatro*, Llanos Gómez Menéndez promoted the creation of *Saladensayo*, a platform for theatrical research.



Carolina Fernández Castrillo

(Madrid, 1981) Carolina Fernández Castrillo holds a PhD from the Universidad Complutense in Madrid and another from the Università degli Studi di Roma "La Sapienza." She was awarded the Outstanding Doctorate Prize for her thesis *El futurismo como reconstrucción poliexpresiva del universo: del cine a la condición postmedia*. She is a professor of Audio-visual Media and Digital Culture at the Universidad a Distancia in Madrid (UDIMA) and guest professor on the Masters course in Audio-visual Media at the IE School of Communication, also in Madrid. Fernández Castrillo specializes in the study of the role of Futurism in media art and the archaeology of media.



Pablo Echaurren

(Rome, 1951) An artist and writer, Pablo Echaurren initially studied painting with Gianfranco Baruchello. He held his first exhibitions in the 1970s with Arturo Schwarz, his first gallerist, and his work has been shown in different cities in Europe and America. A multi-faceted artist, Pablo Echaurren is also a designer of ceramics, tapestries, magazine covers, and advertising posters. His style is notably influenced by Futurism, on which he has written various essays and articles.



Alessandro Ghignoli

(Pesaro, 1967) Alessandro Ghignoli has a PhD in Italian Philology from the Universidad Complutense in Madrid. He teaches in the Philosophy and Arts Faculty of the University of Malaga. He has published essays, notably *Un diálogo transpóético. Confluencias entre poesía española e italiana 1939-1989* (Vigo: Academia del Hispanismo, 2009) and *La palabra ilusa. Transcodificaciones de vanguardia en Italia* (Granada: Comares, 2014), and has co-edited (with Llanos Gómez) *Futurismo. La explosión de la vanguardia* (Madrid: Vaso Roto, 2011). Ghignoli has translated the works of numerous Spanish, Latin American, and Portuguese authors. He is co-editor of various collections of literature and editor for the magazines *L'area di Broca* and *TRANS. Revista de Traductología*.



Claudia Salaris

(Rome, 1949) President of the Echaurren-Salaris Foundation in Rome and a professor of the history of avant-garde movements, Claudia Salaris is one of the leading international experts on Futurism. She has collaborated on numerous exhibitions both in Italy and elsewhere and is the author of an extensive body of texts on 20th-century art and literature. She was involved in the celebrations to mark the 100th anniversary of the publication of the first Futurist Manifesto with the publication of *Futurismo: l'avanguardia delle avanguardie* (Florence: Giunti, 2009) and has also published *Un futurista a New York* (Montepulciano: Del Grifo, 1990).



Giovanna Ginex

(Milan, 1956) An art historian, teacher, and independent curator, since 1980 Giovanna Ginex has focused on different areas of 19th and 20th-century Italian art with a particular interest in painting, sculpture, the decorative arts, the history of photography, conservation, and the cataloguing of cultural items. She has also organized projects and exhibitions on avant-garde art. Ginex is the author of various texts on Futurism, notably a study on *Il Corriere dei Piccoli (Corriere dei Piccoli: storie, fumetto e illustrazione per ragazzi)*. Milan: Skira, 2009).



Belén Sánchez Albarrán

(Salamanca, 1966) Belén Sánchez Albarrán has a degree from the Faculty of Fine Arts in Cuenca, where she has been an associate professor of Graphic Design since 1999. She has worked with numerous publishing houses specializing in art and architecture. Since 2011 she has undertaken various research projects on the relationship between art and graphic design within the context of the early avant-gardes. A researcher from 2012 to 2013 at the Archivio del 900', Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART), Sánchez Albarrán is currently working on Depero's graphic oeuvre and designs for advertising.



Raffaele Bedarida

(Pisa, 1979) An art historian and independent curator specializing in 20th-century European and American art, Raffaele Bedarida is associate professor of Modern and Contemporary Art History at The Cooper Union for the Advancement of Science and Art, New York, and co-founder of the Harlem Studio Fellowship (HSF), a residency program for emerging artists. The author of various publications and monographs, Bedarida regularly lectures at the MoMA and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum. Since 2013 he has been a visiting researcher at the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA), New York.



Giovanni Lista

(Perugia, 1943) An academic, art historian and art critic, Giovanni Lista is a recognized specialist in the art and culture of the 1920s, particularly Futurism. In 1988 he founded the art magazine *Ligeia*, *dossiers sur l'art*, of which he remains the editor. Head of Research at the Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), France, Lista is the author of numerous scholarly texts on modern writers and artists, including Umberto Boccioni, Medardo Rosso, Luigi Russolo, and Giorgio de Chirico. Also notable is his focus on more extensive subjects such as Futurism, Arte Povera, Dadaism, the happening, and avant-garde photography.



Fabio Belloni

(Ferrara, 1980) With a degree in Art History from the Università degli Studi di Udine, in 2009 Fabio Belloni obtained his PhD with the thesis *Impegno, ricerca, azione. Militanza artistica in Italia 1968–1972*. He has completed various research projects, some of them on Depero, including *Sulle fonti visive di Fortunato Depero*, undertaken in the Archivio del 900' of the Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART). Since 2013 he has been a visiting researcher at the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA), New York, in collaboration with The Graduate Center, City University of New York (CUNY).



THOUGHTS IN FREEDOM ABOUT DEPERO AND HIS PART

MAURIZIO SCUDIERO

THOUGHT NO. 1: FROM DEPERO TO FUTURIST DEPERO

Fortunato Depero (1892–1960) received a Central European education at the Scuola Reale Elisabetтина in Rovereto, a town in the northernmost region of Italy that was a part of Austria until its annexation by Italy in 1919. It was billed as an institution that

taught the “applied arts,” akin to the *Realschulen*¹ found throughout the Austro-Hungarian territories, which in their turn drew inspiration from the Bavarian model introduced in the early 19th century. This, then, was a school that provided its students with a solid technical and artistic preparation, and which, in Depero’s day, was attended by many young men who subsequently became key figures in the 20th century Italian avant-garde:

Luciano Baldessari, Carlo Belli, Fausto Melotti, Gino Pollini, and Adalberto Libera,² to name just a handful.

Those were crucial years for the small town of Rovereto, which, despite its distance from Vienna, exhaled a Central European atmosphere. Public services were highly efficient – mail was delivered twice daily; there was electric lighting throughout the town; an efficient aqueduct, built in the

Unknown photographer, Depero stages a tree climb in Acqua Acetosa, Rome, November 6, 1915. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 25 9/16 x 19 7/16 in. (65 x 49 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

mid-19th century, supplied all the dwellings with water; there was virtually no illiteracy, and trains and other means of transport were always on time.

But since Austria had lost its “Italian” territories (Lombardo-Veneto) as a result of various wars of independence, the region of Trentino had found itself like an Austrian wedge inserted into the Italian boot, bordered on three sides by the “enemy.” Various signals substantiated the feeling that sooner or later something was bound to happen. First and foremost, there was the fact that the very idea of Italian national unity had developed as a reaction “against” Austria. The uprising to free the national territory from its various foreign “occupiers” extended from Turin, capital of the Kingdom of Sardinia. But above all, revenge against Austria was part and parcel of the new Italy’s DNA. These ideas were starting to gain ground in Trentino too, where there was an Italian minority.

In artistic terms, Depero grew up in that milieu and trained in that school, where drawing from life and geometric design were taught side by side with decoration, and where pupils studied both mathematics and art history.

Depero’s first show in Rovereto, held in May 1911, comprised twenty-six works, including drawings, paintings, and various plaster casts – the fate and whereabouts of many of them unknown – mainly naturalistic pieces, portraits, and student compositions with a whiff of school work about them. However, by February 1913, when his second show opened, something had changed. In the absence of photographic documentation, we can surmise this from Depero’s own words in an interview published in the local paper:

I want to plunge into the filth of human life. The surgeon and the doctor study the illnesses of the human body; I, on the other hand, study in art the blunders, the weaknesses, the infections of the spirit. I open my pupils, live with the macabre dances of visionaries, raucous shrieks, rending laughter, ironic twinges, and demoniacal scratches.³

While it is impossible to state categorically that Depero was already a Futurist by that time, it is obvious from these lines that incipiently he was one. Indeed, how can one not glean traces of Futurist rebelliousness from this snippet? How can one not feel something akin to rancor towards normality, and outright rejection of the beautiful? Here we have Boccioni’s praise of the anti-gracious, and his quest for the macabre. In fact, the allusion to “macabre dances” suggests precisely that Depero had looked widely on both sides of Futurism: from Alberto Martini to Romolo Romani,⁴ from whom he borrowed that anguished attitude, the idea of the “dull” scream, the powerlessness of the human condition, which gradually became almost pathological. In June 1913, Depero published his first book, *Spezzature (impressioni-segni-ritmi)* [Fragments (Impressions-Signs-Rhythms)] [cat. 16],⁵ in which, in addition to the echoes of that epic liking for the natural forces and for the horrid that Depero garnered from his reading (Kafka, but also Kubin and, above all, Nietzsche), he also showed considerable

influence from both the Milanese Scapigliatura movement and “accursed” literature.⁶ But – and this was the new thing – Depero showed that he had already “taken cognizance” of Futurism, if not at a formal level, then certainly with regard to its philosophical and literary dimensions.

To be sure, Futurism had arrived in Rovereto by late 1911, or at the very latest by early 1912: the journalist, writer, and poet Gino Sottocchia became its self-appointed spokesman after publishing a collection of poetic works titled *La nova voce* [The New Voice] in 1912.⁷ In this novel and rare little volume, mixed in with diverse poetic compositions still in the lineage of D’Annunzio, there were others already making reference to Marinetti’s movement, one such being a “free verse” work dedicated to Folgore.⁸ In addition, inserted like an extra-textual illustration, there was the photostat reproduction of a letter from Filippo Tommaso Marinetti (1876–1944) to Sottocchia, written on headed notepaper of the Movimento Futurista, with appreciations of the work he had thus far developed, but also with an instigation to further prune the influences and frills of the 19th century, seen as decadent and symbolist. Depero was thus part of a small band of exuberant young men, in sympathy with Futurism, whom Sottocchia probably catalyzed and encouraged. All this notwithstanding, Futurism in *Spezzature* was in fact still embryonic, or, in any case, only approaching the general climate of rebelliousness and polemical audacity with which Depero expressed all his thoughts – not fortuitously, Sottocchia reviewed the book as an example of “futurismo nostrano,” that is, native Futurism.⁹

And so we arrive at November 1913, the date of Depero’s third solo show.¹⁰ In it, the artist once again exhibited grotesque drawings, but with more daring and more Futurist attitudes, which caused controversy among the local critics. What emerged, however, was that by this time, Depero was already being projected into the Futurist arena, and he was fully aware that his artistic future did not lie in Rovereto. The contrast with what was going on in Florence left him in a state of dejection. Florence was the scene where the skirmishes involving art, motherland, and life were being fought. By contrast, in Rovereto there was only remoteness, the isolation of provincial life, and the endless wait for what everyone knew had to happen: the war.

On December 1, 1913, the journal *Lacerba* published an advertisement announcing an exhibition of the work of Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916) in Rome. That was the signal Depero had been waiting for.¹¹

Ten days later, on December 11, 1913, came the arrival of his much-longed-for departure for Rome,¹² where he found lodgings at “ai Prati,” on number 21 Via Terenzio. Despite having little money and being hungry, his first days there were nevertheless lived in a spirit of enthusiasm, as illustrated by his description of his buoyant mood and excitement following his reading of issue no. 24 of

Lacerba, available at newsstands from December 15 onwards:

I had no bread, I felt word-work-hungry, gaunt and emaciated ... I saw *Lacerba*, I sniffed the scent of revolt, I smelled the showiest deluges of firecracker-like shots and explosions ... I lengthened my stride, greeted a friend, and hastened into the cage-room of reflections and violet accumulations of future flashes of explosions. Read and re-read! I almost wept with emotion ...

“Great Futurist Evening – Report – Speeches – poetry – logbook ...”

I shook ... I clapped wildly – I danced on my feet infuriated by so much filthy bovinity ... I read aloud – bloody foam on lips ... My temples were pounding ... I was made of molten metal, all sparks ... Joy, joy, joy, jewels, and all because of the new, new, NEW and great paper “LACERBA”... Violins, violins ... no more grey room ... but red walls and yellow frames – black lights and couches of flame – velvety glasses – the bluest of ladies ...

This is the happiness of my Christmas, in misery, in grey melancholy on December 23, in Rome ...¹³

The Galleria Futurista Sprovieri hosted the Boccioni show that became the Mecca of Depero’s endless “pilgrimages,” and it was during his repeated visits to Boccioni’s exhibition, and through the gallery owner himself, Giuseppe Sprovieri, that Depero met Giacomo Balla (1871–1958) and the other Roman Futurists. So with his arrival in Rome, he was almost able to touch with his own hands the work of those Futurists about whom he had hitherto only read, and whose works he had only seen in ugly photographic reproductions. And this is where he embarked on his new life as a Futurist.

THOUGHT NO. 2:

DEVELOPMENT OF DEPERO'S PICTORIAL STYLE: FROM ANALOGICAL ABSTRACTION TO FUTURE-METAPHYSICAL MECHANICAL FIGURATIVISM

The influence that Boccioni exerted on Depero immediately after his arrival in Rome is comprehensively documented in a short but intense cycle of sketches and studies of dynamism, probably produced immediately after his repeated visits to Sprovieri's Galleria Futurista in late 1913 and early 1914. In them, it is already possible to see the almost clean break with his output from the previous year. The Jugendstil and symbolist themes and forms had in fact disappeared: now there was pure matter, objects and bodies, which were analyzed and broken down in their movements and their structure. And shortly thereafter, following Depero's meeting with Balla, there was a further detachment – this time from Boccioni. This rupture can already be discerned in a watercolor painted in early 1914, *Strada + Vetrina* [Street + Shop Window] (currently at the MART – Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto), where the interpenetrated reflections of writings, objects, and a face in the window definitely refers more to Balla than to Boccioni.

What is nevertheless certain is that his continued visits to Sprovieri's gallery resulted in the invitation extended to Depero to take part in the *Esposizione Libera Futurista Internazionale*, which was held in April and May 1914. Among the Italian artists present at the show were Balla, Francesco Cangiullo, Marinetti, Arturo Martini, Ottone Rosà, Enrico Prampolini (also, like Depero, in his early days), Giorgio Morandi, and Mario Sironi,¹⁴ and among the foreigners, Aleksandr Archipenko, Wassily Kandinsky, Alfred Kubin, and Aleksandra Exter.¹⁵ Depero displayed thirteen works, seven of which were included in the catalogue, with the others added in a second phase given that almost all the works he had put on show had been sold. Allusions to Balla were evident, especially in *Scomposizione di bambina in corsa* [Deconstruction of Running Girl] (fig. 1), which was obviously related to the much more famous painting by the Turin artist produced in 1912, *Bambina che corre sul balcone* [Girl Running on a Balcony], but other references can also be identified in *Elettricità* [Electricity] [see cat. 26], which shows notable similarities with the interacting dynamism and broad spirals of the force-lines practiced by Balla, and in *Luci + rumori* [Lights + Noises] and *Bambina + giocattoli + luce* [Girl + Toys + Light], which allude to *Plasticità + luci x velocità* [Plasticity + Lights x Speed], again by Balla, also produced in 1912.

I have credited Depero with the compilation of a handwritten theoretical manifesto titled

fig. 1. *Scomposizione di bambina in corsa* [Deconstruction of Running Girl], 1914. Private collection



Complessità plastica – Gioco libero futurista – L'essere vivente artificiale [Plastic Complexity – Free Futurist Game – The Artificial Living Being] in the autumn of 1914,¹⁶ although some critics have insinuated that it may be even later than *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe] [cat. 36], dated March 11, 1915 (in an attempt to credit it with merits *a posteriori*).¹⁷ The manifesto consisted of fourteen sheets of paper written with a brush in two-tone ink, and as its title suggests, it was divided into three main parts: 1. *Plasticità Complessa* [Complex Plasticity]; 2. *Gioco libero futurista* [Free Futurist Game], and 3. *L'essere vivente artificiale* [The Artificial Living Being]. It came about from a close reading of Boccioni's book, *Pittura scultura futuriste* [Futurist Painting and Sculpture] [cat. 19], published in March 1914, especially where the “plastic” speculations are concerned, but also from the theoretical contributions of Luigi Russolo (1885–1947), for “rumorism,” [see cat. 5, 13] and Carlo Carrà (1881–1966), for that which involved the sphere of onomatopoeia. However, it should not be thought that Depero merely carried out a copy-and-paste operation of earlier writings because, quite to the contrary, *Complessità plastica* represented a novel idea on Depero's part about the methods of executing art praxis within society, with the intention of achieving the “life-art” binomial that, from the outset, had been in the DNA of Futurism, but which had gradually been lost and watered down in the magma and flux of so many programmatic theoretical interventions, and which now Depero wanted to bring back

to a “global vision,” with a conspicuous utopian thrust, typical of certain “border” intellectuals, i.e. those living close to the national borders of a state and thus close to other cultures, precisely because from the “edge,” where “lateral” comparisons are possible, there is a more objective vision of the “content.”

In *Complessità plastica* Depero started from two premises and, out of logical necessity, introduced a third conclusive proposition. In other words, he went beyond, for example, the strictly literary sense of the “words-in-freedom” (which, seen superficially, can seem to be simply an additional “glossary” to the one codified by syntax) and instead transformed them into a “new semiotics,” that is, into a set of “signifiers,” linguistic signs, and communication codes that could dialogue and interact within the framework of social life, and which he called “equivalents.” According to Depero's postulates, these equivalents were meant to be used to put into effect the Boccionian thesis involving the surpassing of the various fields of painting, poetry, music, and sculpture, which should merge in that complete whole that Boccioni defined as “creation.”¹⁸ To attain this, Depero posited, precisely, the creation of a “new aesthetics of reality” defined as a “rumorist-psycho complex plasticity” that was organized in eleven points, which were “exclusively dynamic and abstract, very transparent, strongly colored, extremely light, in continuous movement, suspended in space, transformable, luminous, volatile, and miraculously shocking.”¹⁹ This complex plasticity was thus put in clear contrast with

a plastic model that was “static, opaque, colorless, heavy, fixed, of a single stable material, serious and monotonous, silent, and most fetidly funereal.”²⁰ As for the above characteristics, these had essentially to help define, thanks to the use of “tono-plastic, phono-plastic, and psycho-plastic equivalents,” the particularly phenomenological nature of the plastic complexes, which embraced all this. This meant “giving body” to the emotional properties of colors, sounds, and words.

Now, whereas in the first eight pages of the manifesto Depero described the “toy” (*il complesso plastico*), in the second part, under the title “Free Futurist Game,” he defined the “beneficiary” (*il fruitore*). It is in fact clear that the plastic complex, the way Depero saw it, was meant to surpass not only traditional sculpture, but Futurist sculpture as well by introducing (and this was the innovative factor) the sense of playfulness, of the game, as art praxis. In fact, the plastic complex often called for an “external” intervention to be able to function, and this interaction between it and the beneficiary would free and develop, according to Depero, the aesthetic sensibility often imprisoned within a person as a result of social conventions.

In his day, Bruno Passamani heavily (and rightly) emphasized the fact that this new vision of game and play as an aesthetic and also poetic activity was an absolute novelty for Futurism too, precisely because it went beyond the impetuous Tuscan flights of Aldo Palazzeschi and his *Il controdolore* [Anti-pain], his *Lasciatemi divertire* [So let me have my fun!], understood as the “last resort” (“men no longer expect anything from poets”).²¹ Depero, however, intended the game to be a primary way for a sort of re-foundation of art praxis, precisely through the re-shaping of the artist’s more innerated role in society.²²

Having reached this point, the polemics of earlier years between Futurists and Cubists also became opaque and remote, precisely because they were limited to possible contiguities of signs. The utopian swerve ahead of Futurism, thanks not least to Depero, would not leave any memories behind it.

It is thus possible to date the first results of Depero’s new pictorial track, offspring of the formulations in the *Complesso plastico* manifesto, to the final months of 1914. These works are all dispersed today, but they can nevertheless be traced through photos and documents of the day. In an unpublished memorandum in the author’s own handwriting, produced for the Roman solo show on Corso Umberto in April 1916, we find listed the “Depero-style abstract paintings” made between 1914 and the first few months of 1916.²³ The inventory, which provided title, technique, format, and date for each entry, unfortunately went no further than page one with a Solomonic “to be continued,” but it nevertheless furnished complete data for a group of eighteen works (among these, *Ritmi di strada* [Street Rhythms]) [fig. 2]. The autumn and winter of 1914–15 were definitely devoted to the development of the new painting, as they were also to the revision of the handwritten manifesto and the construction of plastic complexes (some, in fact, as contemporary photos document, are dated “Rome 1914”). But the most important event of the first months of 1915 (to March) was the “official” publication as a part of the Futurist movement of the manifesto titled *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe], undersigned by Balla and Depero, who described themselves as “Futurist abstractists” (*astrattisti futuristi*).²⁴ This was an important fact, not only because it recognized Depero’s theoretical role but, above all, because this manifesto was a real turning-point for Futurism in the mid-1910s. *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo*, in fact, opened up a whole series of operation and application possibilities with regard to the artist’s intervention in several areas of the human arena, in a surge that went beyond the areas of painting and sculpture. And, precisely for this reason, it is far too obvious that this manifesto, undersigned with Balla, was the offspring of Depero’s handwritten manifesto of the year before, which was then revised and corrected by Balla and Marinetti.

In the meantime, from 1914 onwards the Great War raged out of control and started to spread across much of Europe, though Italy remained neutral. Years earlier it had drawn up an alliance with Austria and Germany, so the government did not wish to become involved in the conflict. For the Futurists, that neutrality was a “national disgrace.” In the pages of *Lacerba*, issue after issue, attacks on the government became ever fiercer, and “interventionist” demonstrations, aimed at demanding Italy’s entry into the war not “alongside” Austria, but “against” it, with the purpose of freeing the last linguistically and culturally Italian territories still part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, namely Trento and Trieste, became more and more intense, and indeed recurrent. In his writings, Depero described those crucial times. It is not difficult to imagine with what rapture and emotion he experienced them. He, a native from Trento – actually hailing from those lands that wanted to be united with Italy, in the midst of the throng eager to wage war so as to liberate his land from the Austrian yoke – possibly shouted louder than anyone, and, together with Marinetti and Boccioni, was often actually arrested. Probably connected with Italy’s entry into World War I, on May 24, 1915, in an inflamed “interventionist” composition, Depero wrote:

“LET’S DRINK A TOAST ... Powerful spectacle, a million Italians to liberate, avenging our martyred sons and brothers ... LET’S SHOUT DOWN WITH AUSTRIA ... DEATH TO AUSTRIA. DEATH TO THE GERMANS. LET’S HANG THE EMPEROR. BUUUUMMMM ... PATAPLUMF ... FIERCELY ... GLORIOUSLY FIGHT TRIUMPH FOR TRENTO AND TRIESTE.”²⁵

And so inevitably, and quite coherently, he enlisted shortly thereafter as a volunteer, and remained at the front until August. We know from the many letters and postcards that he wrote to his wife, who had remained in the vicinity of Rome, that it was a terrible experience for him, and that, on his return to Rome, with the war still extremely vivid in his mind, Depero set down his memories in a short cycle of “bellicose” paintings (today dispersed, but largely documented in photos of the day), in which he dwelled on the “pyrotechnic” nature of armed conflict. As we might well imagine, Depero did not portray situations or objects but, rather, the subject of those paintings was sound, the noise of explosions, which was consolidated and took shape in the artist’s mind following that analogical process already harbingered in *Complesso plastico* and then detailed with precision in *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo*. To be sure, as we have said, Depero had “studied” the masters, first among them Carrà and his manifesto *La pittura dei suoni, rumori ed odori* [The Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells], dating from 1913, and then Marinetti and his *Zang Tumb Tumb: la battaglia di Adrianopolis* [Zang Tumb Tumb: The Battle of Adrianopolis], from 1914, in which the relation between sound-noise-image and words was very close. But unlike those two artists, Depero remained aloof from real things, from any logical reference to time and space, and relied rather on the analogy between sounds and vision



fig. 2. *Ritmi di strada* [Street Rhythms], 1914. Private collection



fig. 3. *Ciz-ciz-guaglia*, 1915.
Private collection

fig. 4. *Movimento d'uccello*
[Bird Movement], 1916.
MART, Museo di arte
moderna e contemporanea
di Trento e Rovereto



and their emotive and psychological interactions. So the acoustic timbre in Depero became a chromatic “timbre,” and that color assumed volume, meaning “form,” precisely because Depero was a painter but also a plastic artist.

For some time there had been signs on the horizon of the preparation of his long announced solo show, which was finally held in April 1916. In January, Boccioni himself referred to this event in his column of art for *Gli Avvenimenti*, “dopo aver visitato lo studio di Depero sul finire del 1915” [Events after having visited Depero’s studio at the end of 1915]: “A tireless worker, he has put together an enormous production, where dynamism is studied and expressed in all its infinite possibilities. A forthcoming exhibition will show Depero to be a totally new artist.”²⁶ And that would be precisely the occasion to further describe, in the catalogue-cum-theoretical manifesto, the essence, breadth, and authorship of his inventions,

divided into: 1. Motorumorism – 2. Painted-plastic abstract drama – 3. Dynamic architecture – 4. Words-in-freedom.²⁷ In the first section, which involved plastic complexes, Depero made a distinction between himself and Balla with regard to their relative inventions: here we learn that Balla had worked on the formal dynamic analogy and on polymaterialism, while Depero concerned himself with the analogical research connected with kineticism. In his exhibition, Depero presented a notable quantity of constructions, most of which are no longer extant, such as *Ki-Ki-golà*, and motorumorist sketches like *Pianoforte motorumorista* [Motorumorist Piano], produced in 1915,²⁸ and the four motorumorist and luminous plastic costumes for the *Mimismagia* ballet,²⁹ dating from 1916 [cat. 47–50]. The second section had to do with painting, and Depero divided it in turn into: a) abstraction of the organic development of the plastic state of mind – b) animal abstraction – c) floral abstrac-

tion. On the basis of these declarations, as early as the winter of 1915–16, he created a group of works that would be presented in the exhibition, including *Ciz-ciz-guaglia* (1915, colored paper) [fig. 3] and *Movimento d'uccello* [Bird Movement] (1916, oil on canvas) [fig. 4], today at the MART.³⁰ Together with those works produced in the two year period 1914–15, these formed a very interesting corpus, which unfortunately ended up almost entirely dispersed in various foreign collections (it is almost certain that many works were destroyed and others re-painted for lack of canvases). The third section of the catalogue-cum-manifesto further developed the architectonic drives already present in his *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo*, exemplified in the show by works such as *Padiglioni plastici futuristi* [Futurist Plastic Pavilions] and *Vegetazione a deformazione artificiale* [Vegetation with Artificial Deformation], while the fourth and last section concerned “words-in-freedom,” with large plates of typographical architecture and onomalinguistic poems, a sort of abstract verbalization based on onomatopoeias invented by Depero.

Earlier we mentioned the sizeable number of constructions on show in the April exhibition, and, a few months later, talking with the Russian Mikhail Semenov (1873–1952), who had visited Depero’s studio, to the question “You too are a Futurist painter?” Depero replied in an unlikely Franco-German pastiche invented by him on the spot: “No, ne pà sculteur in ghips, ma in carton ... grosse papier” [No, not a sculptor in plaster, but in cardboard ... thick paper]. In a word, he underlined the fact that he was first and foremost a “plastic artist” and that, as a result, painting came later: an abstract painting as in Balla, his master, but with more volume, because it was the offspring of his sculpture in cardboard. Painting, therefore, which differed from Balla’s in those backgrounds constructed with flat, almost three-dimensional tints, which we might describe as “plastic-dynamic.” And those flat tints, together with that push towards the solidification of the paint, would become the basis of his advertising graphics.

First, however ... came the theater! This is, in fact, the key factor to understanding Depero’s future pictorial and graphic iconography. After all, it was perhaps at the theater where Depero attained his loftiest avant-garde conceptions. First came *Colori* [Colors] in 1915, and abstract-chromatic entities such as *Mimismagia* in 1916 – with costumes that could be transformed, were pneumatic, shone brightly, and made noises ... impossible to make at the time – followed by *Le Chant du rossignol* [The Song of the Nightingale] in 1917 [see cat. 51–53], and then by the *Balli plastici* [Plastic Dances] in 1918 [cat. 79, 81, 82], conceived together with the Swiss poet Gilbert Clavel (1883–1927). But over and above the stage factor itself, the most interesting thing here is that once the shows closed, these puppets became a fertile reservoir of “memory of vision,” which Depero would use until well into the 1930s at various levels: the pictorial, already

in the temporal immediacy of the event, as “fixation of memory”; that of the decorative arts, with the production of tapestries and cushions; and, lastly, that of advertising, from the early 1920s onward.

Depero's theater – which is extremely important – is dealt with in another section of this catalogue, so there is no point in going into the matter in detail here. However, mention should be made of the artist's stay in Capri and Positano, which, in addition to theatrical plans and ideas, found Depero working incessantly on the pictorial and plastic front. And it was above all the occult and dreamlike figure of Clavel, the dark and dismal atmosphere of his castle, his hunched back, and the plastic analogies which gushed from all this, that predominantly found their way into Depero's painting, imposing on it a decisive figurative turn in contrast to the abstract paintings produced between 1914 and 1916. Paintings which, let us be frank, Depero had only partly managed to sell, and only to the international *intelligentsia*, meaning people like Igor Stravinsky, Léonide Massine, Lev Bakst, and one or two others who were acquainted with the work of Kandinsky and Malevich, and who therefore were able to grasp the thoroughly avant-garde character of that “Italian path” towards abstraction, on the part of Balla, Depero, and Baldessari,³¹ a direction that was neither “spiritualist” as in Kandinsky, nor conceptual-Suprematist as in Malevich, but rather governed by “plastic analogies.” This was a new element in the international panorama, which they understood and appreciated. But in Italy? Nothing.

Which is why Depero returned to figuration and a spatial context, the landscape, i.e. to forms which one would describe, at first glance, as natural-realist. But Depero invariably worked on this return to the figurative along the lines of his earlier plastic and figurative developments, in particular using the experience of the synthetic and essential “constructive” figurations conceived for the costumes of *Le Chant du rossignol*, and made with colored paper. In the climate of Capri, but above all in the island's light and sunsets, he discovered tones that were almost unknown to him. I say this because it is important to bear in mind that Depero came from Rovereto, in the far northern region of Trentino, a small town set against the backdrop of a pre-Alpine valley, encircled by mountains rising to between 4,000 and 5,000 feet, mountains, therefore, that ruled out the possibility of what we could call (for want of a better term) “red-sunned” sunsets. In other words, when the sun sets in Rovereto it is only because it drops behind a mountain, though in reality it is still relatively high in the sky. And then there is the light which, up there, among the mountains, is sharp and vivid, emanating from a usually limpid sky. Capri is completely different, surrounded as it is by the sea and facing west, thus enjoying sunsets that stagger over every possible shade of color from yellow to violet, and with a diffuse and reflected light that comes both from the sky and from the sea's surface. For Depero, all this was a new and, in some respects, novel chro-



fig. 5. *Donna in vetrina* [Woman at a Window], 1917. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

matic approach to “reality,” and this explains his new anti-naturalistic palette, chromatically more resolute and broader in the color spectrum, as well as his more frequent use of watercolor, a technique hitherto used only sporadically [fig. 5].

And so, in addition to Clavel, his subjects were sailors, townspeople (female water carriers), tarantella dancers, smokers, and “synthetic” landscapes and architectures (of people). A conspicuous output such that in September 1917, Depero organized an exhibition of a hundred works, shown in a large room in Capri's famous Caffè Morgano, in whose catalogue the artist declared that he had produced them all “from May to August 1917 in Anacapri.”³² A glance at the list of works provides another interesting piece of information, namely that, at that time, his ideas for the *Balli plastici* (the avant-garde spectacle that would be staged in Rome in 1918) were already quite well advanced and specific, inasmuch as at least two works referred expressly to the *Selvaggi* [Savages], which was one of the choreographies that would subsequently be included in the spectacle. This fact is doubly interesting because it also belies what was by then a deep-rooted belief in the analysis of Depero's painting, this being that it had developed upon the “foundations” of the *Balli plastici*, that is, as an almost serial “memory of vision” that was re-used several times over, whereas here, that theatrical experiment was “adumbrated” instead of “re-evoked.” In other respects, if we are prepared to trust a signature and a date written in 1947, the year when Depero “restored” the painting *La grande selvaggia* [Large

Savage], which bears the words “Capri – F. Depero – 1917,” we have to conclude that this character was also thoroughly codified prior to the artist's return to Rome in October 1917, for otherwise Depero would have signed it “Rome – F. Depero – 1917.” I would also situate in this period, though definitely in 1918, the famous painting *Clavel nella funicolare* [Clavel in the Funicular], already owned by the gallery owner Sprovieri (together with another similarly sized painting titled *Villaggio luminoso* [Bright Village], and precisely referring to one of the “scenarios” for the *Balli plastici*), because of the Capri climate that it exudes. In this work there is a pre-metaphysical atmosphere that is so powerful, that Depero would have had difficulty achieving it without continuously spending time with Clavel, and without the latter's physical presence. We can compare this painting with the one in Milan's Museo Civico, showing an almost Cubist-like Clavel sitting at a table, where the poet seems literally to have come straight from the stage of the *Balli plastici*, so closely does he resemble an automaton, albeit not a very metaphysical one.

In early October 1917, Depero was already back in Rome, where he was at work on the book he was illustrating for Clavel (*Un istituto per suicidi* [Suicides' Institute]) [cat. 66, 73, 74], while the *Balli plastici* were in gestation: they would represent a new conception of the puppet theater, based on an avant-garde viewpoint. The performance was staged on April 14, and successfully repeated for eleven performances. The experience of the *Balli plastici*, as we have said, also turned out to be a valuable source of iconographic inspiration that gave rise to a pictorial cycle in which the ephemeral existence of those wooden characters (which were later used by Depero and Rosetta to stoke the stove in their home) was “fixed” forever. There is no doubt that this period saw the production of some of Depero's most significant works (made in the course of 1918), like the large painting *I miei Balli plastici* [My Plastic Dances] [cat. 82], where, with a plan reminiscent of the great cycles of Egyptian hieroglyphs (distinctly Clavelian), that experience was summed up in its entirety, and *Rotazione di ballerina e pappagalli* [Rotation of Dancer and Parrots] or *I selvaggi rossi e neri* [Red and Black Savages] [cat. 77], which also appeared on the cover of *Il Mondo* in April 1919.

In August 1918, Depero went to Viareggio for the large show *La Pittura d'Avanguardia* [Avant-garde Painting] held in the Kursaal, in which Carlo Carrà, Giorgio de Chirico, Filippo De Pisis, Enrico Prampolini, Achille Lega, Primo Conti, and others took part.³³ Among the pictures Depero showed were *Doppio ritratto di Clavel* [Double Portrait of Clavel], now in the Mattioli Collection, *Prospettiva sotterranea* [Subterranean Perspective] (i.e. *Clavel nella funicolare*), and *Capri – Sintesi prospettiva luminosa* [Capri – Luminous Perspectival Synthesis] (which should be the *Paese di tarantelle* [Land of Tarantellas]) [cat. 83]. There then followed a *Scena napoletana* [Neapolitan Scene], *Complesso plas-*

tico di ballerini [Plastic Complex with Dancers], *Selvaggi-Marionette* [Savages-Puppets] and a *Prospettiva campestre con vacche* [Rural Landscape with Cows].

During the show, on October 29, De Pisis gave a lecture at the Casino and, among other things, he talked about Depero, saying that:

[...] at first glance, Depero's art is above all decorative, coloristic, and suggestive. The purity of the colors, which seem to smile at us in a very luminous morning atmosphere, suddenly attracts us with the precision of the rough lines and the decisive outline. But if we take a closer look, a deep mystery is enclosed in Depero's stiff, wooden, puppet-like figures. They have a fatal and possibly painful look. Their humanity interests us and makes us think of that of the possible inhabitants of the Moon, if we, absorbed and as if magnetized, in front of the slab of a large mirror, sat down to contemplate Depero's largest and most complex picture, *Capri*, we would feel truly oppressed by the sense of great heat and blinding light that invades the canvas, we would be spellbound in front of the houses, porticos, and figures, inlaid in a sky the color of mussel and pearl; to our eyes and to our memory there would mightily return scenes of certain Egyptian monuments, fearsome, ghostly, and suggestive, precisely in their wooden and skeletal simplicity and in their ineffable rhythm.³⁴

De Pisis's reading here is very clear, and grasps in its essence Depero's creative situation after his Capri experience and, above all, after he met Clavel. So much so that we could talk of a Depero "before" and "after" Clavel, as De Pisis also indicated between the lines when he wrote that:

[...] Depero also departed from Futurism, which left traces within him and whose synthetic proposals and shrewd deconstructions of planes and bodies still attracted him ... Even if he signs himself as a Futurist, he is more complex and has a hint of features which I would call post-Futurist, he is a young and tenacious worker [...]³⁵

So the word "post-Futurist" would seem to be the key, according to De Pisis, to Depero's art in autumn 1918. In his careful examination, what is more, he singles out, in addition to the Egyptian traits, yet other influences which are more remote and have a matrix that is so primitivist that we might call it "primigenial" or "original," to make it comprehensible and accessible especially for those pure souls not yet corrupted by modern civilization. This would appear to be a paradox for anyone professing to be a Futurist. But, what then is to be said about his tropical jungles and his frenzied dances of savages? De Pisis continued:

[...] he has a consummate technical ability that enables him to obtain pleasant coloristic effects even in the eyes of the layman, and which show us that he is a painter at first glance. It is said that a good judge of modern works would be someone who came from darkness, silence, and perfect quietness ... I am sure that a wild virgin with anecdotal, historical-sentimental panaceas would be more capable of penetrating the true spirit of Depero's powerful works than a critic spoiled by phony aesthetic concerns. Or hasn't it always been said that the truly great and universal line appears in the infancy of peoples and greatly precedes the slow evolution of civilization?³⁶

A final observation should be made with regard to the work called *Capri*, a "large and complex picture" which it is not difficult to associate with the already mentioned *Paese di tarantelle*, produced in

June 1918, whose presence in different shows was incidentally recorded in an article written by Mario Tinti, who dwelt both on Depero and on this work:

It remains for me to talk about the most significant artist in the show, a real master of fantasy and decoration: Depero. [...] In *Paese di tarantelle* it is the people who [...] assume puppet-like and toy-like aspects and gestures. This is a festive vision of the island of Capri, where every color and every form seem to be transfigured as if through a crystal prism, and in which everything is solidified and vibrates internally, as if composed of precious stone, within the diffuse, orgiastic blaze of the sun. And there is here a joyously folkloristic sense of tarantellas and painted carts, blooming here and there like gaudy flowers, in the almost lunar solitude which two tourists savor suspended in the ecstatic void, polarized by colors and light; while streets of a dazzling yellow roam idly between the dream of geometric architectures with their bright and absolute hues. Despite the fantastic abstraction, there remain, in this picture, perceptible and almost impressionistic elements. In the vast, sweeping scene, with a perspective reminiscent of Paolo Uccello, our fantasy lives and perceptibly spins. A sign that Depero has not given us one of the usual literal translations in Cubist "argot," but that he has experienced all the aspects of his own vision.³⁷

It was in this state of mind that, between August and December 1918, he executed such works as

La bagnante [The Bather] [cat. 84], originally conceived as the actual sketch for the Kursaal exhibition manifesto. But above all else, in Viareggio he carried on working on the large canvas *I miei Balli plastici*, which he had started in Rome, as well as in *Rotazione di ballerina e pappagalli*, and also started work on the splendid *Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto* [Little Rubber Devils] [cat. 86], which he duly finished in the early months of 1919.

In March of that year, Depero took part in the *Grande Esposizione Nazionale Futurista* which was held first in Milan, and then in Genoa and Florence, and whose aim was to re-launch "postwar" Futurism after the deaths of Boccioni and Antonio Sant'Elia (1888–1916), and Carrà's defection. Incidentally, it is not out of place to highlight here an aspect which emerged in that catalogue, even if, to all appearances, it did not refer directly to painting (although it actually did). In addition to his paintings, Depero also presented his so-called *arazzi* or tapestries, which actually were patchworks of colored fabrics, and which he defined in the catalogue as "pictures in fabric." Not only has this assertion

fig. 6. *La ciociara*
[Peasant from Ciociaria], 1919.
Private collection, Brescia



never been taken into consideration by the critics, but I would go as far as to say that it has never been understood: and it was pivotal! Otherwise put, with that statement, Depero attempted to say that, for him, in 1919 the age of the “painted picture” was over, at an end, and this meant that it was possible to “paint” with other materials: for example, with fabrics, but also with colored paper. And if this did not anticipate by several decades the “discoveries” of the avant-gardes in the World War II period, then nothing did.

In the late spring of 1919, after spending five years in Italy, Depero returned to his native Rovereto, a city now freed from Austria, though much destroyed in the process. His intention was to open a “Futurist house,” a new kind of studio where he would produce not only paintings but decorative tapestries as well (or “pictures in fabric,” as he called them in the Milan exhibition), along with furniture and advertisements. But the first painting he made was a memento of Capri: *La ciociara* [fig. 6]. This type of hieratic woman, with a saint-like halo, sits in a Renaissance pose in between two windows in which Depero inserted two references, two memories of his stay in Capri. On the left, a woman carrying a water jug and on the right, the church at Positano: in sum, human presence and the presence of architecture.

The woman is in herself a reference to his large painting *Paese di tarantelle*, produced in 1918, in which, also depicted with a halo, she is in fact the protagonist at the center of the work. But the woman in the 1919 painting is illustrative of the way in which the woman in the 1918 picture was painted at the time. Because while the 1919 painting has come down to us in its original form, the 1918 work was reworked by Depero, especially in the area of the woman’s apron, which was decorative, as in that of *La ciociara*. The reason for this “correction” lies in a dispute between Depero and Marinetti, since the latter, in his explanatory text on Futurism in the preface to the catalogue of the *Esposizione Nazionale Futurista* held in 1919 in Milan, had divided Futurist painting into four pictorial tendencies or currents: 1. Pure painting; 2. Plastic dynamism; 3. Dynamic decorativism with flat tints; and 4. Colored state of mind without plastic concerns. Recognizing that he was well “pigeon-holed” in the third point, Depero swiftly sensed the danger of an overly schematic incorporation which might glorify only one side of his artistic personality, i.e. the “decorative” side (his new experiments with fabrics), but which, at the same time, might have been able to push all his other qualities into the background. Whence the correction of these and other paintings.

As for the title, insofar as there were no *ciociare* or people from Ciociaria in Capri (the Ciociaria is an area in Lazio [Latium], south of Rome), this is a homage to Picasso’s *La ciociara* of 1917, which Depero had seen painted in Rome, when Picasso asked for his help in constructing the characters of his *Parade*.



fig. 7. *Lettrice e ricamatrice automatica* [Automatic Reader and Embroideress], 1920–21. Private collection

THOUGHT NO. 3: “NEW” PAINTING: FROM THE POSTWAR YEARS TO NEW YORK

My painting.

It is a complex architecture of emotive inner values expressed in organic visions; pictorial, luminous, sensitive, impressionistic unreality becomes, in my pictures, a plastic, solid, constructed reality; all my projections start from a single viewpoint which has always been the same and the only one in the art of all times, “the inner perspective,” that is, the realization of an inner phenomenon.

No more flat, academic realism, no more slightly pictorial verism with its shy, stylistic look, but powerfully transformed, re-constructed, and re-created. The gaze turned inward, to the mysterious, magic, infinite world of the soul, of thought, and of the image. The capacity to give substance to the entire world lived in the climates, zones, dawns, and nights of the state of mind. Thus returning to the true work of art, merging with all the great arts of the past, Eastern, Western, ancient and modern, without in fact resorting to semi-plagiarism, without painting incomprehensible, arbitrary abstractions, the result of creative inability and ill faith. The autonomous, clear, limpid, exact work of art, illuminated by its own light, experienced by its own flora and fauna, and by exclusively plastic and pictorial figures.

In its unreal magic the appearance of the work of art will be arranged like the nature surrounding it. The whole world in which we live is rhythm; no a-rhythmic false note of line, form, color, sound, noise; everything is strictly mathematical, measured, and weighed; this is the perfect style of that which is true. In the work of art, meaning in the realization of the inner world, there must always be the same rhythmic discipline, the same metric rigor, in every manner of relation, and then there will be an authentic work of art of style.³⁸

This is how Depero introduced himself in the catalogue for the large exhibition devoted to the promotion of the *Casa d’Arte Futurista*, a show held at Palazzo Cova, in Milan, in January 1921. And here there is a clear “adjustment of sights” based on the actual Futurist positions, where Depero purposely uses terms like “emotive inner values [...] pictorial, luminous, sensitive, impressionistic unreality,” and then “the mysterious, magic, infinite world of the

soul [...] the state of mind,” and, paradoxically, also the “merging with all the great arts of the past [...] without painting incomprehensible, arbitrary abstractions” which, in a way, will have the effect of the work of art “in its unreal magic [being] arranged like the nature surrounding it” and, lastly, that the work of art will have to submit to a “metric rigor, in every manner of relation.” If we did not know that the person writing these words had been (and was?) one of the most convinced Futurists, it would read like a declaration of intent by one of De Chirico’s early followers, but also an assiduous reader of Carlo Carrà’s *La pittura metafisica* [Metaphysical Painting], printed in 1919, and even someone anticipating the “golden ratio” laid down by Gino Severini (1883–1966) in *Du Cubisme au classicisme* [From Cubism to Classicism], which was published that same year. And where did the “rejection of the past” end up? Where is the “mechanical muse” of the *Balli plastici*, if now, on the contrary, one awaits a magic direction from nature herself? It is obvious here that the Depero of those years was in a state of great conceptual evolution, or else involved in a work-in-progress that would re-define his specific coordinates well beyond the Futurist sphere, even if, emotionally speaking, he would still declare himself as such. Otherwise, how could he devise (and reconcile with Futurism) works such as the 1919 *Io e mia moglie* [My Wife and I] [cat. 88] and the 1920 *La casa del mago* [The Magician’s House]? Works which were light years removed from Futurist poetics, to which they offered in contrast precisely that “magic” sensibility and that vision of an “inner perspective” (where “inner” stands for “interior”) mentioned in his writing, and which in fact express his “existential” discomfort, typical and transversal in postwar Italian culture with the possible exception of Futurism. In effect, in *Io e mia moglie*, the vision was not “simultaneous” but rather “symbolic,” that is, charged with a magic pathos, and with that specifically “magic” aura of the creator of works of art. Magic, too, is the vision

of *La casa del mago*, further emphasized by that nocturnal, “lunar” climate that recurs in the 1920 *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre* [City Mechanized by Shadows] [cat. 99], in which the dreamlike and esoteric theme of the shadow, used in the paintings of Clavel, comes back in a solidified form. The meta-physical dummies of *La casa del mago*, which, in reality, were “rubber robots” (but also “living artificial beings”) also reappear in *Lettrice e ricamatrice automatiche* [Automatic Reader and Embroideress] [fig. 7] of 1920, in which Depero “adds” an ambient “vacuousness,” suggesting the void and silence of cosmic space.

All these paintings are a symptom of the “discomfort with modern civilization” which Depero intimately experienced in the debate (which for him was completely internal) between Marinetti’s victorious postwar proclamations, on the one hand, and the rising wave of a “call to order” on the other, between the almost messianic triumphalism of postwar Futurism and the tragic reality of things.

During that period, the activities of the Casa d’Arte kept him ever busier, with the result that the time he could devote to painting grew ever less. And precisely for this reason we can count on the fingers of two hands the paintings produced in the early 1920s, in particular in 1922 and 1923. These would include *Riesumazioni alpine* [Alpine

Re-Exhumations] (even though it might be from the latter half of 1921) and the *Ritratto psicologico dell’aviatore Azari* [Psychological Portrait of the Pilot Azari] [cat. 104], which marked the beginning of a series of works that gradually featured an increasing number of aerodynamic tones and forms, demonstrating both a renewed ardor for Boccioni-like dynamism, and his “singular” support of the *Manifesto dell’arte meccanica Futurista* [Manifesto of Futurist Mechanical Art], published in 1922 and signed by Ivo Pannaggi, Vinicio Paladini,³⁹ and Enrico Prampolini. I say “singular” particularly because Depero’s “mechanical” support was formal more than anything else, inasmuch as he was experimenting with a new “mantle” for his ideas, but he definitely did not subscribe to the theorems of that manifesto in their entirety. His output, in fact, did not have the formal “coldness” that hall-marked the works of the three signatories, but, paradoxically, his paintings appeared to be much more mechanical than theirs. I am talking about works such as *Ciclista moltiplicato* [Multiplied Cyclist] [fig. 8], the first version of *Nitrato in velocità* [Speeding Nitrite, fig. 9], and *La ricamatrice* [The Embroideress] [fig. 10], all produced in 1922, and then *Motociclista, solido in velocità* [Biker, Solidified in Speed] [cat. 153] and *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo* [Lunar Space,

or Meeting within an Emerald] [cat. 122], executed respectively in 1923 and 1924. These works were characterized by a new, tube-like representation of arms and legs resulting from the wholesale use of half-tones that had replaced the flat tints, but also from the perspectival diagonalism that virtualized the development along the force-lines of Boccioni’s dynamism. Essentially, with optic-dynamic effects, Depero got around the intrinsic static quality of his figures, due precisely to the accentuated plastic dimension imposed upon them. But these works did not come about in this way, through a development of hand and sign: rather, they were the outcome of Depero’s reflections, one or two manifestations of which can already be made out in earlier paintings. New “symptoms,” therefore, that Depero was in the process of codifying, but which he would not publish in their definitive version until 1927, in his famous *libro imbullonato* [bolted book], thereby demonstrating a further aspect of his theoretical conception of art. Depero was in effect replacing the “programmatic” manifesto, which announces what one intends to do, with what we might call a “survey” manifesto, in other words one that embraces and informs on the effective “results” following on from theorizations. Paraphrasing from the scientific field, we might say that Depero was introducing “already tried and tested theories,” which

fig. 8. *Ciclista moltiplicato* [Multiplied Cyclist], 1922. Private collection

fig. 9. *Nitrato in velocità* [Speeding Nitrite], 1922. Private collection, on deposit at the Musei Civici di Venezia

fig. 10. *La ricamatrice* [The Embroideress], 1922. Private collection



were therefore safe. To back this up, we might mention the text “Architettura della luce” [Architecture of Light], published in the bolted book in 1927, but whose principles were already codified *per se* in *La ricamatrice* of 1922, and also in *La casa del mago* of 1920. In this latter painting, in fact, one of the metaphysical dummies, the one on the right, is as if “bathed” in a shower of green light, which creates a seemingly solidified cone. But even more so in *La ricamatrice*, the light has a component action, in the sense that it creates and draws the space. Within the luminous cone, where the embroideress (Depero’s wife Rosetta) is sewing, everything is solar, while outside the climate is lunar. Depero invested the light with those faculties which are compositional but at the same time “magic” and alienating, meaning that they define areas of life and others where everything is suspended, including, quite possibly, time. As Depero wrote:

The Divisionists directed their linear chromatic beams towards the sources of light: the sun, the moon, lamps. The surfaces of the bodies were folded and oriented towards these perspectival centers of the picture. This cue to an arbitrary perspectival sense introduced me to all the possibilities of new perspectives that were deformations of what was conventional and geometric. I thus managed to create whole constructions suggested to me by the various closely interwoven directions of the light.

BOCCIONI was the first to create and sense the solidification of Impressionism.

Examples of solid, constructed forms of light can also be found in the rays emanating from figures of Christ on the cross, or bursting from the hearts of saints, and possibly the obelisks and the actual Pyramids are nothing but gigantic solidified sun rays, or dunes rendered geometric by the sunlight. But here we have the reconstructed landscape, crystallized by the sun, shaped in all its solar splendor. The rays of light appear like bridges and streets heading fearlessly towards the sky. The houses and bell towers lie devastated on the slopes, supported by sea walls and teetering on the chasms of deep, delving shadows.

GEOMETRIC WELLS OF MYSTERY.

From lakes burst upturned pyramids of gold. The figures and the lucid objects arm themselves with crystalline needles like new porcupines made of glass.

THE SUN GIVES LIFE, THE SUN GIVES COLOR, and now the sun gives art a NEW ARCHITECTURE.⁴⁰

Now, if we take an opposite tack, we might say that the concepts which underpin more “mechanical” works such as the 1922 *Ciclista moltiplicato* and *Nitrato in velocità*, and then the 1923 *Motociclista, solido in velocità* and possibly the 1924 *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo*, were also those codified in a text published in the “mechanical” bolted book of 1927, to wit, “W la macchina e lo stile d’acciaio” [Long Live the Machine and the Steel Style]. Those works were in fact unexceptionably mechanical, not only in the chromatic tone of their figures, which makes them look like massive blocks cast in steel, but also in the aerodynamic attitude aimed at giving them obvious speed. *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo* merits separate mention, mixing as it does the mechanical nature of the figures with the centric perspective that directs everything towards the source of light: Light, in a nutshell. This is a “lunar” work, wrapped by

that climate of temporal suspension, in which the mechanical component is essentially just formal.

Let us now take a look at one or two excerpts from that lengthy text:

[...] our art will be the offspring of machines: brand-new, shining and precise, lethally electric [...] I ADORE ENGINES, I ADORE LOCOMOTIVES, they inspire me with unbreakable optimism [...] WE HAVE wheels on our knees, funnels in our ears, and disks imprinted in our brain. Pincers in our hands, pins at our elbows and shoulders; the muscles and nerves are thin and intricate chains, transmission pulleys and shafts, guided by two connected engines, the heart and the brain [...] The machine lasts a long time. The machine is used for lots of things. The machine is varied and beautiful. The machine does not betray [...]

To overcome all the miseries of past art let us, with great gratitude, embrace the

M A C H I N E

M A C H I N E

M A C H I N E

MACHINE

machine.⁴¹

Notice the “metallic” clarity of this snippet. It is a declaration of total love not only for the mechanical aspect of the modern world, but also for possible future developments, and at the same time a “renewed” rejection of the past, after its value-related “retrieval” in that text written in 1921, which we had a quick look at earlier. And yet, to bring things full circle in this pictorial parenthesis, it is absolutely crucial to mention certain works, all produced in 1924, such as the famous *Treno partorito dal sole* [Train Born (out) from the Sun], *Marinetti temporale*

fig. 11. *Radioincendio* [Radio Fire], 1926. Private collection



patriottico [Marinetti Patriotic Storm] [cat. 121] and *Gara ippica tra le nubi* [Horseshow among the Clouds] [cat. 127], all of which displayed an obvious “discontinuity” in the artist’s conceptual itinerary precisely because, in their alternate “stylistic mantle,” they showed evidence of a new process in action. Otherwise put, they powerfully introduced new coordinates, implying not so much the beginning of a removal from the “mechanical muse,” not to say a phase of re-thinking things, as, rather, its “re-shaping” in the direction of a poetics which associated that mechanical line with the recovery of “traditional values”: his land, his landscape, and, essentially, the concept of nature in its wider sense. Following the publication of Jean Cocteau’s *Le Rappel à l’ordre* [A Call to Order] in 1926, in Italy, too, a re-examination was conducted by the Novecento, the new movement headed by Margherita Sarfatti,⁴² pitting the Futurists’ worship of modernity against the recovery of an uncontaminated painting, with its eyes on Paolo Uccello and Piero della Francesca rather than the Impressionists. This stance was diametrically opposed to that of Futurism, with which, inevitably, it waged war. And yet Depero exhibited works in Milan at the first Novecento show, in 1926, precisely because a certain convergence was in effect evident.

But in Depero’s alternating stylistic vicissitudes, it was still the mechanical muse which would “close” the pictorial moment of the decade, that is, before Depero traveled to the United States in the autumn of 1928. In addition to the above-mentioned works, and once again starting from 1924, we can mention the *Marinaio ubriaco* [Drunken Sailor] and then (perhaps) the *Autoritratto diabolico* [Diabolical Self-portrait]. I write “perhaps” with regard to the

latter because there is no historical publication that attests to this date, only a drawing signed and dated 1924 (incidentally, with much later handwriting), which would “suggest” that the painting is from the same date. Nevertheless, for a series of reasons I would place it either immediately before the trip to New York or immediately after it, that is between 1928 and the end of 1931, or better still in 1932. The painting, which shows Depero clad as a highlander, with the skyscrapers of New York in the background, is in fact far too close, in its fundamental philosophy, to a fine piece of prose written by Depero precisely during his two-year American spell, and in which he defines himself as a “metropolitan mule” hobbling as it climbs up to the summit of the “skyscraper Dolomites,” that wild tower of Babel turreted with mountain houses. Returning to the years prior to New York, some of the decade’s masterpieces were produced at this time, works in which the two “fundamental” poles described earlier, namely the mechanical one (which emerges strongly in works like *La rissa* [The Brawl]) and the tendency to retrieve the “natural flows” (which was announced in *Treno partorito dal sole*) were mediated and merged in a single whole which would define an almost fable-like vision, in a natural landscape understood as a mechanical assembly and disassembly of reality (in the attempt to create something “fantastically new”), in most cases, or as a violent contrast of the two spheres: the natural, traditional one, and that of technological progress, i.e. modernity. Among the latter, we can mention the 1926 *Fulmine compositore* [Compositional Thunderbolt] (better described as *distruttore* [destructive]), which is a pessimistic meditation on natural forces, and the also 1926 *Radioincendio* [Radio Fire] [fig. 11], which, on the other hand, deals with the damage of progress when this slips through one’s fingers. But in the great majority of cases, Depero’s vision was a “solar” one, precisely because it is the sun that gives life and is taken as the nodal, compositional center, i.e., as the center of perspective of various works. See, for instance, *Aratura (Paesaggio al tornio)* [Ploughing (Landscape with Lathe)] [fig. 12], *La fienagione* [The Hay Harvest] [fig. 13], *Proiezioni crepuscolari* [Crepuscular Projections], and *Il legnaiolo* [The Woodcutter] (the first three produced in 1926, the last in 1927), all of which are works where sun and light had a decisive function in the formal and compositional definition. On the other hand, *La rissa* (or *Umanità d’acciaio* [Steel Humanity], or *Discussione del 3000* [Discussion of 3000]), produced in 1926, is not solar but defined by the “light” which, with its “cones,” delineates the “vital space” (while outside the cones there is an “absolute void”); this is a dynamic robot assembly, a future and mechanical civilization that is nevertheless “affected” by many “human” vices, like a solemn drinking bout.

However, there is an altogether mechanical attitude in the other ploughing scenes, as in *Alto paesaggio d’acciaio (Alba e tramonto sulle Alpi)* [High Landscape of Steel (Dawn and Sunset in the Alps)] [cat. 143], which, as it happens, is ren-

fig. 12. *Aratura (Paesaggio al tornio)* [Ploughing (Landscape with Lathe)], 1926. Galleria d’Arte Moderna, Turin

fig. 13. *La fienagione* [The Hay Harvest], 1926. Private collection



dered exclusively in shades of steel; in *Il gondoliere fuso* [The Fused Gondolier], who is mechanically fused with his gondola, awash in metaphysical light, and in *Solidità di cavalieri erranti* [Solidity of Wandering Horsemen], all painted in 1927. In this latter, Depero contrasted formal constructivism with the absence of mechanical shades of color, and inserted a solidified cluster of solar rays, on the one hand, and an empty midnight-blue sky on the other, thus enveloping the composition in an aura of “Magic Realism.” This was the last large composition Depero painted before he made the crossing to the “new world,” which, for the artist, was more than just a physical journey; it was also the start of a major inner change, which was possibly heralded here in this climate of “suspended reality.”

THOUGHT NO. 4: PAINTING AFTER NEW YORK

In New York as, incidentally, through much of the 1920s, Depero's main activity centered on advertising: but since this is discussed elsewhere in this catalogue ... let us jump to October 1930 when, after two years of arduous struggles, the artist returned to Italy. This was not the same Depero who had set out full of enthusiasm and hope for New York, because the American experience had profoundly changed him, robbing him of the energetic thrust towards the future that had always upheld him. New York, with its gleaming, soaring skyscrapers, but also with its sad, dilapidated suburbs; New York, with its ostentatious wealth, but also with its ill-concealed poverty, had shown him the true face of the technological future which

the Italian Futurists had always dreamed of. That future was not the efficient and comradely "solar city" envisioned by Sant'Elia, but a chaotic, seething melting pot of races and people who were anxious and winded, insensitive, diffident, violent, and frightened. Not a future for the well being of man but, perhaps, his technological prison.

So on returning to his mountains in Trentino, Depero touched base once again with reality, with tangible things, and with the values of land and family. His return to painting, and to art in general, mirrored his emotional state and also showed traces of a diminished creative impulse resulting precisely from the fact of having seen that the future which he had so lovingly gazed upon disillusioned him – which was why there was nothing left to imagine.

In New York he had painted the *Big Sale* [cat. 184], a fresco of life in downtown New York depicting the street market on Canal Street. Then, as the decade gradually advanced, his themes also

changed; from galloping horses, joyous dummies, and metropolitan visions, there was a very swift shift to isolated mountain cottages, rustic drinkers, and sculptural mountain creatures. His graphic advertising activities had slowed down, his innate merriness had cooled off, and his palette showed this reversal. At the 18th Venice Biennale in 1932 he presented a small group of works of great pictorial quality but often with predominant monochromatic, "cold" tones. Among the works on display, there were one or two absolute masterpieces, like *Big Sale*, *Sintesi veneziana* [Venetian Synthesis] [fig. 14], *Prismi lunari* [Lunar Prisms] [fig. 15], *Nitrato in velocità* [Speeding Nitrite], and *Elasticità di gatti* [Elasticity of Cats]. But, if you will, these works also pointed to a "re-modeling" of his vision of art and life. In them we find an attempt to attain a universal communion between the mechanical muse and the muse of speed with the energy emanating from "natural flows." It was like a sort of



fig. 14. *Sintesi veneziana* [Venetian Synthesis], 1932. Ministero delle Attività Produttive, Rome

fig. 15. *Prismi lunari* [Lunar Prisms], 1932. Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna, Rome

fig. 16. *Natura morta accesa* [Illuminated Still Life], 1932. Private collection

fig. 17. *Colpo di vento* [Gust of Wind], 1947. Private collection





fig. 18. *Gli automi* [Automata], 1945. Private collection

palingenesis or rebirth that Depero tried to bring full circle, but which here traced the coordinates of what “he no longer was” and especially of how he “wanted to be.” I am alluding to *Prismi lunari*, wrapped in its magic aura, with its lunar midnight-blue color, in a “time without time,” in the silence of space, while another work, *Elasticità di gatti*, found its explanation in the analogy of the “movements of the swaying larches or elastic cats, happy and thoughtful” in his writing of that time titled “Aver fede” [Having Faith].⁴³

All this helps us to understand how, from his return from New York onwards, his painting had a direct correlation with his writings, which were more and more numerous, as if, at that crucial moment of transition, Depero felt the need for a “poetic substance” as an anchor of salvation. And it is also a way of saying that his painting became a field of literary speculation, that is, anything but an improvised sequence of “peasant or rustic Futurism,” as his work of the 1930s and thereafter has often been regarded. Rather, we could say that his painting evolved from being a playful topos in which his theatrical references found a place, and which hallmarked his output from 1917–18 up until his stay in New York, to become a moment of “visual solidification” of a poetic and literary idea. Whatever the case, from 1935 on his pictorial work would move ever further away from the classical themes of Futurism (speed, dynamism, machines), and return to a re-reading, still partly Futurist in its volumetric rendering, of naturalistic if not rustic themes [fig. 16].

In the 1940s, after a second disastrous stay in New York (1947–49) during which he painted the

excellent *Colpo di vento* [Gust of Wind] [fig. 17] in 1947, his painting moved in a continual ebb and flow between nostalgic revisitations of the characters of his *Balli plastici*, as in the 1945 *Gli automi* [Automata] [fig. 18], to the simultaneous visions of the 1946 *Capogiro* [Dizziness] and the new formulations of “nuclear painting,” as in the 1950 *Iride nucleare di gallo* [Nuclear Iris of a Cock].

Depero painted for as long as his strength allowed him to, and in his latter years he devoted himself to the preparation and outfitting of his museum, which opened in August 1959. Soon after, on October 29, 1960, he passed away, without fanfare, bequeathing the town of Rovereto a legacy of more than three thousand works.

1. A type of secondary school characterized by its technical and practical curriculum — Ed.
2. Luciano Baldessari (1896–1982) was an Italian architect, stage designer, and painter who in 1913 joined the Futurist movement in Rovereto, headed locally by Depero. Carlo Belli (1903–1991) was a renowned Italian journalist, art critic, writer, and artist whose novel, *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre*, drew inspiration from Depero’s homonymous painting. Fausto Melotti (1901–1986) was an Italian painter and sculptor who became famous for his slender brass sculptures and small ceramics. Gino Pollini (1903–1991) was an Italian architect who joined Gruppo 7 before going on to work with Luigi Figini (1903–1984), with whom he designed several buildings for the Olivetti company. Adalberto Libera (1903–1963) became acquainted with Futurism through fellow student Depero before going on to become one of the most salient architects of the Italian modern movement. — Ed.
3. “[...] Io voglio tuffarmi nel lordo della vita umana. Il chirurgo, il medico studia i mali del corpo umano; io, invece, studio nell’arte il goffo, il tisco, l’infezione dello

spirito. Spalanco le pupille, vivo di danze macabre d’alucinati, d’urli rauchi, guaiti acri, risa lacerate, punture ironiche e graffi indemoniati”; “L’esposizione di arte grottesca,” *Alto Adige*, February 7–8, 1913. All quotations reflect the original spelling of names as well as the grammatical and syntactic forms in use at the time.

4. Alberto Martini (1876–1954) was an Italian painter, engraver, illustrator, and graphic designer whose grotesque and macabre work is generally considered to be one of the precursors of Surrealism. Romolo Romani (1884–1916) was an Italian artist who worked as an illustrator for the journal *Poesie* directed by Marinetti and Benelli: he was one of the signatories of the *Manifesto dei Pittori Futuristi* [Manifesto of the Futurist Painters] despite the fact that his name was removed from the published version. For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 363–64 — Ed.
5. “coi i tipi della Tipografia Mercurio”; Fortunato Depero, *Spezzature* (Rovereto: Mercurio, 1913), 2.
6. Bruno Passamani remits to the names of Praga, Boito, and Torelli. See *Fortunato Depero* (Rovereto: Comune di Rovereto, 1981), 22. [The Scapigliatura movement developed organically throughout Italy between the 1860s and the 1880s, starting from Milan, in an attempt to rejuvenate Italian culture through foreign influences — Ed.]
7. Gino Sottocchia, *La nova voce: poesie* (Rovereto: Grandi, 1912).
8. This refers to the Italian poet Omero Vecchi (1888–1966), whose pseudonym was Luciano Folgore — Ed.
9. Gino Sottocchia, “Spezzature,” *Alto Adige* (June 16, 1913).
10. This is gleaned from the review of the show written by Enrica Sant’Ambrogio Pischel (ESP), “L’Esposizione Fortunato Depero,” *Il Popolo* (Trento, November 4, 1913).
11. *Lacerba*, year 1, no. 23 (Florence, December 1, 1913). The announcement was on the last page, 280 (sequential numbering), placed significantly between the announcement of Nietzsche’s book, *The Antichrist*, and Boccioni’s (then forthcoming) work titled *Pittura scultura futurista*.
12. The date can be deduced from a manuscript in the Depero Archive, titled “Nozze clandestine” [Clandestine Wedding], with variants and corrections with regard to the version published in *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* (Trento: Mutilati e Invalidi, 1940), 247. Whatever the case, in both versions Depero wrote: “Parto. Un mese dopo, il giorno 11 gennaio 1914, Rosetta mi segue ...” [I’m leaving. Rosetta follows a month later, on January 11, 1914 ...], from which it can be inferred that Depero left Rovereto on December 11, 1913, on his own.
13. “Mi mancava un pane, sentivo fame-parole-opere, tutto ischeletrito ... vidi “Lacerba,” annusai profumo di rivolta, fui ai diluvi sgargiantissimi di spari e scoppi petardeschi ... Allungai il passo, salutai l’amico e mi precipitai nella stanza-gabbia di riflessioni e violaceo agglomerarsi di futuri guizzi di esplosioni. Lessi-riless! Quasi piangeva commosso ... / “Grande Serata Futurista – Resoconto - Discorsi - poesia - giornale di bordo...” / Tremavo ... applauido frenetico – balzavo in piedi imbestialito per tanta porca bovinità ... Lessi forte – spumeggiar sanguigno sulle labbra ... Le tempie martellavano ... Ero di metallo fuso, tutto scintilla ... Gioia, gioia, gioia, gioielli e tutto per quel nuovo, nuovo, NUOVO e grande giornale ‘LACERBA’ ... Violini, violini ... non più stanza grigia ... ma rosse pareti e gialle cornici – nere luci e divani di fiamma – bicchieri vellutati – donne azzurrissime ... / Ecco la gioia del mio Natale,

- nella miseria, nella grigia malinconia 23 dicembre, a Roma ..."; MART, Bruno Passamani Manuscript Archive.
14. Francesco Cangiullo (1884–1977) was an Neapolitan writer, poet, and painter who wrote, with Marinetti, the Futurist manifesto *Il teatro della sorpresa* in 1921. Arturo Martini (1889–1947) was an Italian sculptor, member of the Valori Plastici group which also included Carrà, De Chirico, and Morandi. Ottone Rosàì (1895–1957) was a Tuscan painter and writer who was close to the Futurists before adopting a Constructivist approach in his work. Enrico Prampolini (1894–1956) was an Italian painter, scenographer, and architect who became one of the best-known representatives of the Futurist movement. Giorgio Morandi (1890–1964) was an Italian printmaker and painter of still lifes whose Futurist phase gave way to a more poetic and metaphysical stage. Mario Sironi (1885–1961) was a painter, sculptor, and illustrator who abandoned Futurism to become one of the founders of the Novecento movement, for which he wrote *Manifesto della pittura murale* [Manifesto of Mural Painting] in 1933 — Ed.
15. Aleksandr Archipenko (1887–1964) was an Ukrainian-American graphic artist and sculptor, best known for his Cubist-inspired works. Wassily Kandinsky (1866–1944) was a Russian painter and art theorist, often called the father of abstract art. Alfred Kubin (1877–1959) was an Austrian illustrator, printmaker, and occasional writer, a representative of Symbolism and Expressionism and the author of one of the masterpieces of European fantasy literature, *Die andere Seite. Ein phantastischer Roman* [The Other Side]. Aleksandra Exter (1882–1949) was a Russian-French Suprematist and Constructivist painter, illustrator, and designer — Ed.
16. For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 385–93.
17. I am referring to the sadly deceased friend and master, Maurizio Fagiolo (a great Balla expert), who, after a brisk exchange of opinions, having seen the documentation and my “chronological” motivations, admitted that, in effect, Depero’s manifesto might certainly have been the premise for *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo*.
- For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 369–75.
18. “non v’è né pittura, né musica, né poesia, non v’è che creazione!” [it is neither painting, nor music, nor poetry, it is creation!]; Umberto Boccioni, *Pittura scultura futuriste* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1914), 325.
19. “astratta, trasparente, coloratissima, leggerissima, continuamente mossa, sospesa nello spazio, trasformabile, luminosa, volatile, rumoreggiante, miracolosamente sconvolgitrice.”
20. “statica, opaca, incolore, pesante, fissa, di materia unica e stabile, seria e monotona, silenziosa, fetidissimamente funebre.”
21. Aldo Palazzeschi (pseudonym of Aldo Giurlani) (1885–1974), *Il controdolore (manifesto futurista)*, December 29, 1913 — Ed.
22. Passamani, *Fortunato Depero*, 42.
23. Fortunato Depero, “Mostra Corso Umberto: Dipinti astratti stile Depero, 1916,” unpublished manuscript, Depero Archive.
24. *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe], Futurist manifesto (Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, March 11, 1915). For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 369–75.
25. “BRINDIAMO ... Potente spettacolo, un milione d’italiani liberare, vendicare nostri figli e fratelli martiri ... URLIAMO ABBASSO L’AUSTRIA ... MORTE ALL’AUSTRIA, MORTE AI TEDESCHI, IMPICCIAMO L’IMPERATORE, BUUUUMMMM ... PATAPLUMF ... FEROCEMENTE – GLORIOSAMENTE COMBATTERE TRIONFARE PER TRENTO E TRIESTE.” Letter to Guglielmo Jannelli. MART, Museo Depero Manuscript Collection, no. Ms 7430, undated (probably late May 1915).
26. “Lavoratore infaticabile, ha già accumulato una produzione enorme, dove il dinamismo viene studiato ed espresso in tutte le sue infinite possibilità. Una prossima esposizione mostrerà in Depero un artista completamente nuovo”; Umberto Boccioni, “Depero,” *Gli Avvenimenti* (Milan, January 23–30, 1916).
27. 1. Motorumorismo – 2. Drama astratto picto-plastico – 3. Architettura dinamica – 4. Parole in libertà.
28. *Pianoforte rumorista* is in fact mentioned in the letter to Guglielmo Jannelli mentioned above, see n. 25.
29. *Mimismagia* was a (never realized) mimic-acrobatic dance for which Depero designed transformable costumes with elements that could light up and produce noises — Ed.
30. I continue quoting titles from the handwritten list referred to above. See Depero, “Mostra Corso Umberto.”
31. [Roberto Marcello] Iras Baldessari (1894–1965) — Ed.
32. All the title references and notes by Depero in the catalogue for this show are taken from *Catalogo-Esposizione futurista del pittore e scultore Depero* (exh. cat. Sala Morgano, Capri, September 8–16, 1917); MART, Museo Depero Manuscript Collection, Eco della Stampa I, Dep.8.1.1.
33. Giorgio de Chirico (1888–1978) was a Greek-Italian artist who founded the Scuola Metafisica art movement. Filippo de Pisis (1896–1956) was an Italian painter and writer associated with the Scuola Metafisica and the Novecento movement. Achille Lega (1899–1934) was an Italian painter and printmaker whose 1917 *Vibrazioni atmosferiche di un aeroplano in volo* [Atmospheric Vibrations of a Plane in Flight] is generally considered to be the first *aeropittura*. Primo Conti (1900–1988) is an Italian artist who joined the Futurist movement in 1917 — Ed.
34. “[...] a prima vista l’arte di Depero è soprattutto decorativa, coloristica, suggestiva. La purezza dei colori che sembrano sorriderci in una luminosissima atmosfera mattinata, subito attira con l’esattezza delle linee crude e del contorno deciso. Se noi osserviamo bene però, un profondo mistero è racchiuso nelle figure legnose, rigide, burattinesche del Depero. Esse hanno un loro aspetto fatale, forse doloroso. La loro umanità ci interessa e ci fa pensare come quella dei possibili abitanti della Luna. Se noi, come intenti, quasi magnetizzati, davanti alla lastra di un grande specchio, ci ponessimo a contemplare il più grande e complesso quadro del Depero, ‘Capri’, noi ci sentiremmo veramente oppressi

- dal senso di caldura e di luce abbagliante che invade la tela, ci incanteremmo davanti alle case, ai portici, alle figure, intarsiate in un cielo d'anodonta e di perla; ai nostri occhi, alla nostra memoria tornerebbero pesantemente le scene di certi monumenti egizi, terribili, spettrali, suggestivi, appunto nella loro legnosa e scheletrica semplicità e nel loro ineffabile ritmo"; "Conferenza di De Pisis," in *Pittura moderna* (Ferrara, November 1918); re-published as "Ricordando Filippo De Pisis," in *Dizionario Volante Depero*, Secondo gruppo, folder 9 (Rovereto, undated [but 1956]).
35. "[...] Depero partì anch'egli dal Futurismo che lasciò in lui tracce e ancora lo attraggono le prospettive sintetiche e le scomposizioni sapienti di piani e di corpi ... Sebbene si firmi futurista, più complesso e con l'accento a caratteri ch'io chiamerei post-futuristi, è un giovane e tenace lavoratore"; *Ibid.*
36. "[...] ha una consumata perizia tecnica che gli permette di ricavare effetti coloristici grati anche agli occhi dei profani e che ce lo mostra pittore a prima vista. Si disse che un buon giudice delle opere moderne sarebbe colui che venisse dal buio, dal silenzio, dalla quiete perfetta... Sono certo che sarebbe più in grado di penetrare il vero spirito delle forti opere del Depero, un selvaggio vergine di panacee aneddotiche, storico-sentimentali che un critico viziato dalle false preoccupazioni degli estetizzanti. O non si è sempre insegnato che la linea veramente grande ed universale compare nella infanzia dei popoli e precede di gran lunga la lenta evoluzione della civiltà?"; *Ibid.*
37. "[...] Mi resta a parlare dell'artista più significativo della mostra, un vero maestro della fantasia e della decorazione: il Depero... Nel "Paese di tarantelle" sono gli uomini... che assumono aspetti e gesti marionettistici e giocattolieschi. E' una visione festivalica dell'isola di Capri, dove ogni colore ed ogni forma appaiono trasfigurati come attraverso un prisma di cristallo e in cui ogni cosa si solidifica e vibra internamente, come materata di pietra preziosa, dentro la diffusa vampa orgiastica del sole. E vi è un senso gioiosamente folkoristico di tarantelle e di carretti dipinti, sbocciati qua e là come fiori sfacciati, nella solitudine quasi lunare che due turisti assaporano sospesi nel vuoto estatico, polarizzati di colori e di luce; mentre strade di un giallore abbagliante s'aggirano pigramente fra il sogno di architetture geometriche dai colori nitidi e assoluti. Nonostante l'astrazione fantastica, permangono in questo quadro elementi sensibili e quasi impressionistici. Nella vasta scena panoramica, di una prospettiva che ricorda Paolo Uccello, la nostra fantasia vive e s'aggira sensibilmente. Segno che il Depero non ci ha dato una delle solite traduzioni letterali in 'argot' cubistico, ma ha vissuto tutti gli aspetti della propria visione"; Mario Tinti, "In occasione della mostra di Viareggio," *Il Nuovo Giornale* (Florence, September 1918); re-published in *XXVI Mostra del pittore futurista Depero* (exh. cat. Trento, November 5–15, 1921).
38. In *Depero e la sua Casa d'Arte* (exh. cat. Palazzo Cova, Milan, January 1921), 5–7.
39. Ivo Pannaggi (1901–1981) was an Italian painter and architect who in addition to Italian Futurism, was also influenced by Constructivism and Neoplasticism. Vinicio Paladini (1902–1971) was a Russian-born Communist architect, writer, and painter who fused his theories of mechanical art with his interest in establishing an alliance between the proletariat and the avant-garde artists. Together with Ivo Pannaggi he wrote *L'arte meccanica futurista* [Futurist Manifesto of Mechanical Art] in 1922. For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 377–78 — Ed.
40. "I divisionisti diressero i loro fasci lineari cromatici verso le fonti luminose: il sole, la luna, le lampade. Le superfici dei corpi risultarono ripiegate ed orientate verso tali centri prospettici del quadro. Questo spunto di arbitrario senso prospettico mi iniziò a tutte le possibilità di nuove prospettive che fossero deformazioni di quella convenzionale e geometrica. Arrivai così a creare intere costruzioni suggeritemi dalle direzioni varie ed intrecciatissime della luce. / BOCCIONI creò ed intuì per primo la solidificazione dell'impressionismo. / Esempi di luci solide, costruite, si trovano anche nelle raggiere dei cristalli in croce, o scoppianti dai cuori dei santi, e forse gli obelischii e le stesse Piramidi non sono che giganteschi raggi di sole solidificati o dune geometrizzate dalla luce solare. Ma eccoci al paesaggio ricostruito, cristallizzato dal sole, sagomato in tutti i suoi splendori solari. I raggi luminosi appaiono come ponti e strade dirette arditamente verso il cielo. Le case, i campanili, sono terremotati in tutte le pendenze, sorretti da pareti di mare ed in bilico sui baratri di profonde ombre, scavanti / GEOMETRICI POZZI DI MISTERO. / Dai laghi scoppiano piramidi d'oro capovolte. I personaggi e gli oggetti lucidi si corazzano di aculei cristallini quali nuovi isticci di vetro. / IL SOLE DA' LA VITA, IL SOLE DA' I COLORI ed ora il sole dona all'arte una / NUOVA ARCHITETTURA"; Fortunato Depero, "Architettura della luce" Futurist manifesto, in *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927), [77].
41. "[...] La nostra arte sarà figlia delle macchine: nuova di zecca splendente e precisa micidialmente elettrica [...] ADORO I MOTORI, ADORO LE LOCOMOTIVE, mi ispirano ottimismo infrangibile [...] ABBIAMO ruote alle ginocchia, imbuti alle orecchie e dischi impressi nel cervello. Pinze alle mani, perni ai gomiti ed alle spalle; i muscoli ed i nervi sono sottili ed intricate catene, pullegge ed alberi di trasmissione, guidati dai due motori collegati, il cuore ed il cervello [...] La macchina dura molto. La macchina serve molto. La macchina è varia e bella. La macchina non tradisce [...] Per superare tutte le miserie dell'arte passata abbracciamo riconoscitissimi la / M A C C H I N A / M A C C H I N A / M A C C H I N A / MACCHINA / macchina"; Fortunato Depero, "W la macchina e lo stile d'acciaio" Futurist manifesto, in *Depero futurista 1913–1927*, [65-66].
42. Member of a wealthy and cultivated Jewish family, writer and art critic Margherita Sarfatti (1880–1961) was the one-time lover and long-time companion of Benito Mussolini — Ed.
43. *Dinamo futurista*, no. 2 (Rovereto), 1.



AS DEPERO STUDY

THE PAINTING
TECHNIQUE OF

GIANLUCA POLDI

Everything in my most recent works is rhythmically structured, with an extremely obvious logicity of relations and contrasts of colors and forms, so as to make a single and powerful whole. Reacting to the Impressionist style, I have imposed upon myself a style that is flat, simple, geometric, and mechanical [...]. I invariably strive to find a line that underpins and governs the most disparate elements of an architectonic unity [...] Constructing one's own inner world.¹

This study² has a threefold purpose: to broaden our understanding of Fortunato Depero's working methods, especially as regards his paintings on

moveable surfaces; to ascertain and verify their state of conservation, and how this depends on the technique adopted by the painter; and to create a database for some of the works recognized and documented by the author. This latter aim also entails the possibility of exposing possible forgeries, typically produced after the artist's death and likely to contaminate the market and, in some respects, render opaque the manifestation of Depero's pre-

cise quality and his merits, at least in the first two decades following the birth of the Futurist movement.

From an information and conservation angle, the precise requirements of this study arose from the obvious fact that some of Depero's paintings from the 1910s and 1920s evinced certain problems of conservation to do with color, others did not, and yet others had been the subject of intervention

Unknown photographer, picture of Depero's room in Rome, 1915. Reproduced in *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* [cat. 269]

by the artist before they were acquired by Gianni Mattioli, a well-known fact, though the extent and necessity of this intervention required clarification. Understanding why and how the artist retouched his own works thus became an anything but secondary issue even from a stylistic and historical viewpoint.

While the first two goals have been pursued many a time in the last few years, even in studies of ancient masters and the leading figures of modern art (Impressionists, for instance), and extending to certain champions of 20th century art (Picasso comes to mind, first and foremost), few of these studies have focused on the creation of proper databases that are also of use in spotting forgeries. Obviously enough, fake works are easy to recognize when they are produced with methods and materials foreign to the artist's typical praxis. This is why it is crucial to carry out these systematic studies on dozens of autograph pieces and using standardized instruments in order to ensure that the data collected are reliable and reproducible, and that the samples compared are meaningful. In these terms it makes sense to talk of "databanks."

The opportunity to examine a set of homogeneous works from the angle of dating and often also of provenance has markedly spurred this research, undertaken on ten Depero paintings produced between 1917 and 1927 (for the list of works, see Table 1), some works on paper, and a pair of sculptures. A summary of the principal findings appears in the pages that follow.³

From the viewpoint of the analytical methods used, it was deemed appropriate to operate with non-invasive techniques capable on the whole of providing the most significant data about the peculiar traits of an artist, focusing the analysis on the brushwork, underdrawings, pigments, and supports. On the basis of these results, in the future it will be possible to use microsamples of paint to carry out thoroughly detailed studies of the painting materials. For this reason, the initial work⁴ involved image analysis – infrared reflectography (IRR) and transmitted infrared (TIR), false color infrared (FCI), diffuse and raking light photography and macrophotography, and inspections with ultraviolet light (UV fluorescence)⁵ – subsequently followed by visible reflectance spectrometry analysis (vis-RS), a technique useful to recognize numerous pigments on the surface layer and to obtain colorimetric data about each of the points studied.⁶

CANVASES, PREPARATIONS, CONSERVATION

One of the salient features of the Depero paintings that were examined (see Table 1), as well as of other works produced during the same period, has to do with the supports. These consist mostly of stretcher frames with rather dense (often more than 20 threads per centimeter, both warp and weft) yet relatively thin woven-cloth canvases of a light color, often tending to cream. Unlike the industrially prepared canvases available in the market during several decades and used by many

of Depero's colleagues – Futurists and others – in Italy and throughout Europe, these are not prepared purchased pieces nor large cloths made to measure; rather, they are often the result of an assemblage of several pieces of cloth, pieces sewn together in all probability directly by the painter or his wife, as is attested to by the type of machine stitching and, in one case at least, by the zigzag edges of the strips of canvas cut with seamstress serrated scissors, visible only with IR transillumination on account of it being covered with lining [fig. 1]. The use of this kind of canvas

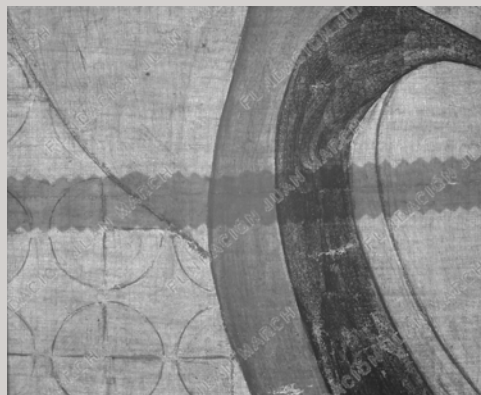


fig. 1. *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917 (detail of transmitted IR). Private collection, Switzerland, on deposit at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

fig. 2. *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo* [Lunar Space, or Meeting within an Emerald], 1924 (back). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 122]

fig. 3. *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre* [City Mechanized by Shadows], 1920 (back). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 99]



was not circumscribed to the wartime period, but seems to have been a constant trait in his work, the outcome of precise choices made both before and after Depero's return to his native region, Trentino. In 1920, for his *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre* [City Mechanized by Shadows] [cat. 99], he used four pieces of canvas [fig. 3], with the lower one arranged horizontally the entire length of the work, to which other smaller pieces were affixed to complete the upper area. It should be borne in mind that the support was the same in origin, having been painted carefully beforehand and showing no signs of extension during the work. However, in this painting and in the contemporary *Flora e fauna magica* [Magical Flora and Fauna] [cat. 101], which shows threads of variable diameter, as clearly seen on the front, the weave is very regular, suitable for wide areas of homogeneous color.

On the contrary, in the later *Motociclista, solido in velocità* [Biker, Solidified in Speed] [cat. 153] from 1927, a slightly smaller though still large painting (117 x 163.5 cm), the canvas is formed from a single piece of cloth of different manufacture: particularly regular in the thickness of the weave, it consists of threads of slightly different color and structure, the warp white and the weft beige.

Of the two examples of reused supports initially painted with another subject, *Paese di tarantelle* [Land of Tarantellas] [cat. 83] and *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo* [Lunar Space, or Meeting within an Emerald] [cat. 122], the canvas in the latter painting was reversed, showing on its back triangular geometric motifs on a yellow ground [fig. 2], part of a much larger composition, possibly the backdrop for a stage set. In this painting, the original⁷ frame is quite peculiar, since it lacks a canvas stretcher system and is formed from pieces of different thicknesses – the side ones being thinner – largely obtained from the primitive frame, as is also shown by the scattered drops of yellow. One of the side elements on the left, split lengthwise, was used anew by the painter after separating the parts and then joining the long, smooth surfaces together. This is indicated by the "Depero"⁸ signature in pencil divided in half on the two pieces.

Table 1. Paintings examined using the series of scientific analyses outlined in the introduction and some of their characteristics. In *I selvaggi rossi e neri* alone the IRT was not carried out owing to the nature of the support (cardboard). As for the protective varnish, the indications are based on observation which has not been verified with specific analyses, hence the provisional nature of this information. In the lined paintings it is not usually possible to distinguish between warp and weft, even with the help of IR: the counting of the threads being done from the front. All paintings belong to private collections, mainly to the Gianni Mattioli Collection.

No.	Cat.	Work	Date	Dimensions (cm)	Canvas density (weft x warp, threads/sq. cm, approx.)	Support	Canvas priming	Varnish	Visible signature	Restored by Depero
1		<i>Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel</i> [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel]	1917	70 x 75	24 x 24	lined (2 canvases arranged horizontally)	absent, as seen along some edges of the ground areas	yes	absent	no
2	cat. 82	<i>I miei Balli plastici</i> [My Plastic Dances]	1918	189 x 180	24 x 24	lined (3 canvases arranged vertically, the largest in the middle, not trimmed, 103–105 cm wide)	absent, as seen along some edges of the ground areas	yes	original (in blue)	apparently not, except for a few shades of color, canvas reduced by a few centimeters at the bottom
3	cat. 83	<i>Paese di tarantelle</i> [Land of Tarantellas]	1918	117 x 187	24 x 24	lined (2 canvases arranged horizontally)	? (in any event the painting was made over a different subject, at least partly painted in)	yes	absent	yes
4	cat. 77	<i>I selvaggi rossi e neri</i> [Red and Black Savages]	1918	50 x 50	-	original (cartoon)	-	?	late (cut “p” in black)	yes
5	cat. 86	<i>Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto</i> [Little Rubber Devils]	1919	125 x 110	30 x 26	original (2 canvases arranged vertically)	appears not to exist, but possibly very thin and non-homogeneous (there are in fact white haloes on the back)	no	probably original (in green)	no
6	cat. 88	<i>Io e mia moglie</i> [My Wife and I]	1919	113 x 95	14 x 14 (threads of the warp doubled)	original (coarser canvas than in other works)	non-homogeneous (on the back: traces of white preparation absorbed in the front)	no	late (cut “p” in black)	yes
7	cat. 99	<i>Città meccanizzata dalle ombre</i> [City Mechanized by Shadows]	1920	119 x 188	25 x 15	original (4 pieces of canvas, 2 of which are arranged horizontally)	appears not to exist, but possibly thin and non-homogeneous (there are in fact white haloes on the back)	yes	absent	no
8	cat. 101	<i>Flora e fauna magica</i> [Magical Flora and Fauna]	1920	130 x 198	18 x 18	original (2 canvases arranged horizontally)	appears not to exist, but possibly thin and non-homogeneous (there are in fact white haloes on the back)	yes	late (cut “p” in brown)	yes
9	cat. 122	<i>Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo</i> [Lunar Space, or Meeting in an Emerald]	1924 1923?	100 x 95	18 x 21	original (re-used canvas; fragment of another painting on the back)	probably absent (absent at the edges; the back is painted with another subject)	yes	absent	reworked at an unknown date, altering the coloring and the outer frame
10	cat. 153	<i>Motociclista, solido in velocità</i> [Biker, Solidified in Speed]	1927 1923?	117 x 163.5	24 x 15	Original (canvas, beige colored weft, white warp)	probably absent (absent at the edges)	yes	absent	reworked shortly after covering the writing at top right

Despite the absence of stratigraphic studies (a key method to assess the extent and condition of different painting layers), a close and careful examination of the front and back, and at times of the edges of the canvases (where not covered with wood), suggests that the fabric was often not primed, or else that there was a lack of regular preparation, such as to properly cover the canvas with preparatory layers, beyond the painted surface. The yellow-brown hue of the canvas that emerges in the interstices of color [fig. 4] may indicate the presence of a layer of priming using a binding material (glue?) directly on the cloth, but also more simply the absorption of the binding materials in the adjoining areas.

Presuming that such canvases – less expensive than industrially prepared ones – were also dictated by budget constraints, the artist's fidelity to this type of cloths reflects Depero's peculiar approach to painting. Paying no heed to the canons of the academic tradition, he painted directly on the canvas, without an adequate layer of preparation, which affected, at least in part, the conservation of the works.

This must have had to do with the fact that he was trained neither in an academy nor in a school of applied arts. Depero was essentially self-taught, eager to stand out, and a keen observer. He attended the Scuola Reale Elisabetta in Rovereto when the town was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, a high school that tended to promote a general culture, where drawing and geometry were the only subjects associated with an artistic career – and the only ones in which Depero excelled. He dropped out in the fifth year, however, and failed the admission examination for the Academy of Fine Arts in Vienna.⁹

Almost all the paintings examined appear to be varnished, often still with the original coat, attesting to their lengthy stay in one and the same collection, where restoration work was wisely controlled and usually limited to specific areas of paint loss.¹⁰ Worthy of note, too, is the presence of lining only in three cases, for works produced in 1917 and 1918. In other respects, paint layer cracks and fissures are either limited or absent altogether, depending on the paintings and the fact that the artist, as we shall see, touched up the works many years after having executed them.

As regards cracks in the paint layer, these are almost exclusively visible to the naked eye in the *Motociclista*, where they are mainly horizontal in nature, perhaps indicating that the canvas was rolled up at some point. It is known that in his move to New York in 1928, Depero took with him a number of painted canvases – including this one – after having removed them from their frames, a habitual practice to reduce transport costs. In other cases, cracks are visible with transillumination, as in the case of *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre* and *Flora e fauna magica*. Under normal circumstances, these thin cracks would not become manifest in the pres-

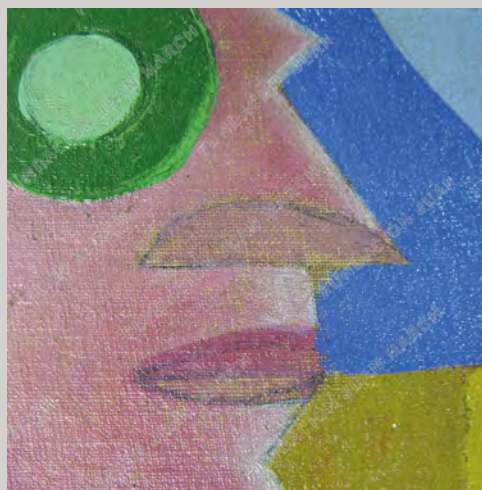


fig. 4. *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917 (detail with part of the canvas on view). Private collection, Switzerland, on deposit at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

fig. 5. *Paese di tarantelle* [Land of Tarantellas], 1918 (detail of yellowing surface and traces of the underlying drawing in black). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 83]

fig. 6. *I miei Balli plastici* [My Plastic Dances], 1918 (detail). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 82]



ence of normal preparations and multiple or thick layers of paint.

To sum up, Depero chose a painting technique which, judging from the use of the support and the control of the thickness of the paint layer, may on the one hand call to mind that of stage sets and decorative furnishings, and, on the other, looking to the past, that of certain Renaissance examples: from the rare Nordic *Tüchlein*¹¹ to Mantegna's glue temperas, among others, and even the ephemeral Renaissance setups of which very few examples remain.

The main risks for the conservation of these works reside in the non-homogeneous brushwork, with localized chromatic variations in the thinner parts; possible flaws in the adhesion of the paint to the canvas, with local flaking and loss of paint and a propensity to abrasions, present in the paintings, but fortunately in a limited way; as well as differences resulting from the support's uneven absorption of the binding materials (drying oils and possible additives), resulting in dryness manifested as matt effects or areas in which the color looks opaque owing to the loss of much of the oil necessary to maintain a clear, transparent appearance. Variations of brightness between contemporary coats in some of the paintings examined can be attributed, in fact, to this latter effect. At least in these early years, Depero wittingly chose a technique that enabled him to speed up the execution and to control the uniformity of the surface and its final overall look, favoring simple brushwork and fast drying times.

In these works there is usually a single layer of color, save for the areas where there are successive retouches and modifications, with a rare and considered use of superimpositions and chiaroscuro shading to render volumes, an aspect that gradually gained weight as his painting evolved.

SURFACE ALTERATIONS AND PIGMENTS

The binding material in the works examined appears to be oil, but in at least one case, in *Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto* [Little Rubber Devils] [cat. 86], in which there are instances of retouching to remedy local color loss, there are no signs of varnish; the surface is opaque and even seems to be a tempera or, more probably, a thin oil. In this work there are no yellowing or brownish lumps, which are however present in the surfaces of several paintings [fig. 5].¹² Whether the brown bumps, which can easily be gotten rid of with a light mechanical removal operation, can be linked with the original paint (of poor quality and rich in drying oils?), the solvent (drying oils with additives?) or the varnish is the subject of more in-depth study which is currently under way. On a sample taken from these superficial lumps in *Paese di tarantelle*, FTIR spectroscopy analyses detected the presence of proteic material mixed with natural resin, with some particles of lead white and calcium carbonate, suggesting a problem probably caused by the varnish.

A similar case of good conservation, with no signs of yellowing but with some cracks and local abrasions, is represented by *I miei Balli plastici* [My Plastic Dances] [cat. 82], a canvas that was cut down in size by a few centimeters, as we shall see, but was not repainted by Depero,¹³ though it was probably revarnished while being relined [fig. 6].

In the absence of documents, it is impossible to ascertain the brands or types of colors used by Depero, probably tubes of oil colors, while the vis-RS spectroscopy analyses carried out to date on dozens of points of different colors in each work have shown numerous pigments, including blues, various greens, some reds, and yellow-browns.¹⁴ In particular, in the case of the blues, the studies have revealed the use of the entire range available: ultramarine blue (artificial), cobalt blue, cerulean blue, and occasionally Prussian blue, tending to a green undertone.

As regards the greens, Depero had a marked preference for greens that are opaque to IR wavelengths (such as cinnabar green and Scheele's [copper arsenite] green), followed less frequently by (usually hydrated) chromium oxide greens and greens obtained with cobalt blue pigments. For the violets he used cobalt phosphate or pigments with an organic dye base (of the lacquer type).

Among the reds and pinks, Depero used vermilion, cadmium red, and reds derived from dyes like crimson-type lacquer, with a purplish tone; a madder-based dye, with a deep red and even purple tone, is on the contrary present in the watercolors.¹⁵ The use of ferrous oxides (clays and ochers) is infrequent.

Rarely do the spectrums make it possible to speculate on the use of impastos of different pigments, except for mixtures with white and other peculiar cases, pointing to Depero's preference for using "pure" colors, as supplied by the manufacturer, rather than working with mixtures on the palette following the traditional method. In the only sample we could take, from a green area on the left border of *Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto*, microscopic analyses revealed the mixture of a chromium green, zinc yellow (zinc chromate), lithopone white (a mix of barium sulfate and zinc sulfide), gypsum, and – unusually – particles of green earth (celadonite); some red grains of vermilion are also present, while no varnish coating exists. In this case we have a mixture probably made by the painter himself to obtain a different tone of green, a dirty green, in respect to other areas.¹⁶

For the whites he used mainly zinc white and also the traditional lead white.

In the paintings it is often possible to find the presence of sporadic lumps of color and brush hairs.

Where chromatic alterations are concerned, in a couple of cases a discoloration of certain shades, typically pink, has come to the fore. Indeed, in the 1917 painting *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], in the Mattioli Collection, it is possible to see, along the lower and left edges, in

areas which must originally have been protected by the frame, in the stripes of the floor, and in the background with the square-and-circle motif, a deeper pink shade than that present elsewhere: this is a crimson-type lacquer,¹⁷ in all probability synthetic, which has undergone a process of photo-degradation [fig. 7]. This pigment, identified in other paintings, may also have suffered similar damage, unverifiable to the naked eye in the absence of protected comparative areas.

The *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* is also important, in terms of conservation, to understand the effects brought about by the lack of a preparatory ground, together with the thin layers of color: indeed, in various background areas – especially in the blues – a lack of chromatic uniformity is in evidence, due largely to the lack of homogeneity of the brushwork and the fact that, over time, the yellowish color of the preparation has come to the surface.

UNDERDRAWING AND VARIANTS

A simple and expeditious work method such as Depero's is in reality backed up, as in traditional painting, by the existence of numerous preparatory sketches on paper, in addition to the careful use of underdrawing, as the infrared analyses show. Indeed, in Depero, the preliminary drawing on canvas is essential to establish the background surfaces which are then painted in different colors, avoiding mistakes and pictorial second thoughts.

The distinguishing feature present in all these paintings is of the linear type, used to delimit precisely the various forms and elements of the composition. It is often possible to observe the presence of square grids, at least from 1918 on, designed to carefully control the underlying drawing in the case of large works. Depero generally showed a preference for the system of transferring the drawing from paper to canvas using enlargement rather than semi-transparent paper, either shiny or waxed, and adopted the same method in the preparatory sketches on paper for his tapes-tries. This is the case, for instance, of *Studio per cavalcata fantastica* [Study for Fantastical Ride] of 1919–20 [cat. 98], held in a private collection, where, furthermore, the grids are vertically halved, creating rectangles, in such a way as to increase the precision of the transferred details [fig. 8].

Involved here, in all likelihood, is a technique learned at school, one that is especially effective for his subjects. The drawing is executed either in pencil or in black ink, probably India ink, with regular lines, using rulers and compasses, but also working freehand to a great extent for numerous details and curvilinear forms. In the case of the *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* in the Mattioli Collection, the reflectogram¹⁸ shows a considerable use of free-hand drawing [fig. 9] despite the rich geometry of the painting: the actual lines of the floor are drawn without a ruler and are not parallel with each other, as the graphic elaboration shows [fig. 10]. In this



fig. 7. *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917 (detail of pink discoloration on lower edge of the canvas). Private collection, Switzerland, on deposit at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

fig. 8. *Studio per Cavalcata fantastica* [Study for Fantastical Ride], 1920 (detail of the grid on the drawing on paper). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 98]

fig. 9. *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917 (detail of IR reflectography acquired by scanning device). Private collection, Switzerland, on deposit at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice



painting, which can be regarded as a largely experimental work, it is probably the absence of gridding which explains the greater approximation.¹⁹ In at least one case, for a work that evidently was meant to have been easily produced in several copies, Depero prepared a perforated cartoon to transfer the image. There is evidence of this in the poster for the *Balli plastici* [Plastic Dances] (oil on canvas, 100 x 70 cm, MART, Rovereto), in which it is in fact possible to see the small black dots of the perforated cartoon around the words and figures.

To get an idea of how Depero went about painting a canvas, there is an interesting photographic document concerning the 1920 *Flora e fauna magica* which shows the work as it is being executed, on the easel in the studio, surrounded by several works on the walls.²⁰ Careful scrutiny of the extracted detail [fig. 11] reveals the beginning of the coloration process: the underdrawing, which incidentally has been carefully executed, as always, is only partly readable in the enlargement, where it is possible to observe how the painter did not start using a single color tone, but proceeded from various points (both in the foreground and in the background, with no apparent hierarchy) with different colors.

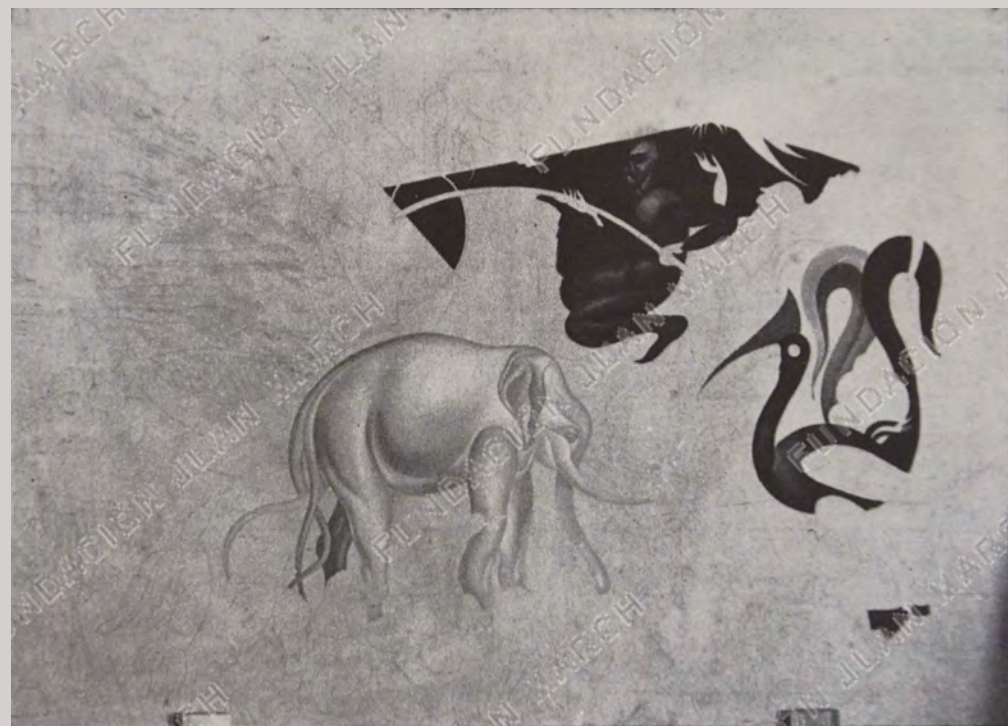
In addition to the drawing, the IR images often show variations in the painting in relation to the underdrawing, which are usually small, as well as different versions of the underlying drawings.

In this latter case, the best example is probably the 1918 *I miei Balli plastici*, in which, apart from small changes such as the removal of the cigar for the men in the line on the right and the curves in the legs of the small central ballerina, ideas emerge beneath the layer of paint which were drawn and then abandoned in the ground: under the green sea, the waves were carefully drawn with equidistant curves, as well as under the large savage, which, however, must not have been planned, and over which are drawn two figures with zigzag outlines, possibly a flash of lightning and a bird [fig. 12]. *Studio per i miei Balli plastici* [Study for My Plastic Dances], a sheet dated May 12, 1918 and already in the hands of the composer and pianist Alfredo Casella, was the first version, actually without the



fig. 10. *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel* [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917 (comparison between visible [left] and IR reflectography acquired by scanning device [right] onto which the guidelines of the floor have been superimposed in red). Private collection, Switzerland, on deposit at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice

fig. 11. *Flora e fauna magica* [Magical Flora and Fauna] (image extracted from an old photograph showing the painting in process on an easel). Private collection, Switzerland



savage and with three rather than four sailors [fig. 13].²¹ The format of this sheet, however, is larger than that of the canvas. In fact, in an archival photograph of the painting (MART) the format of the canvas is similar to that of the drawing, shedding light on the fact that the painting was cut in size at the bottom by 10 cm [fig. 14], thus losing the following brush-written text: "I miei 'Balli plastici' rappresentati a Roma nel maggio 1918" [My "Plastic Dances" performed in Rome in May 1918]. Notwithstanding, the original blue signature in italics is still visible. In other respects the sheet documents the final version of the painting. The small waves in the back had not yet been painted in, simply drawn, possibly not everywhere.

It is hard to pinpoint the reason why the canvas was shortened – this might have been done for reasons of conservation.

Paese di tarantelle evinces – in addition to the late repainting of certain colors, as we shall see – one or two modifications with regard to the drawing and to the first painted version, especially the drastic simplification of the clothes of the woman in the foreground and her doll. The folkloric costume was drawn and also painted in with lots of lace and stylized pleats in the apron [fig. 15] before Depero decided to rework the painting plane by covering the lace on the breast with black and various shades of blue with white. The dress must have been altered not far from the year of execution,²² judging by the appearance of the surface, which shows the characteristic yellow-brown marks caused by the alteration of the binding agent or the varnish present in the oldest parts of the work.

At the MART in Rovereto there are at least two old photographs of *Paese di tarantelle*, taken at different times, in one of which²³ the first painted

fig. 12. *I miei Balli plastici* [My Plastic Dances], 1918 (detail of transmitted IR). Private collection, Switzerland

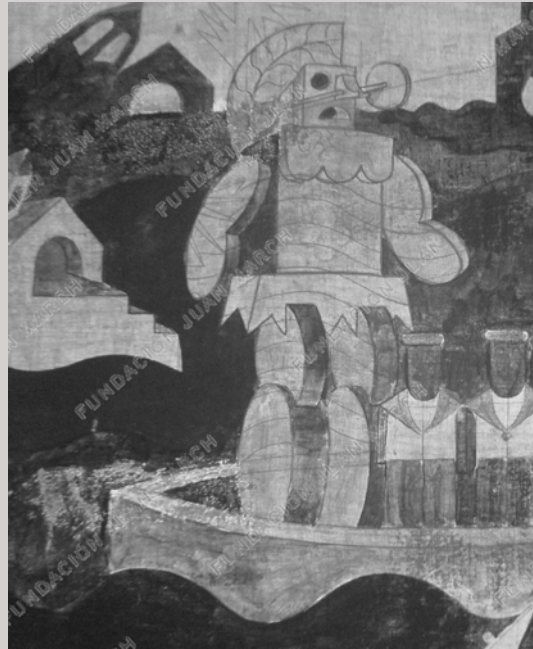


fig. 13. *Studio per I miei Balli plastici* [Study for My Plastic Dances]. Whereabouts unknown



fig. 14. *I miei Balli plastici* [My Plastic Dances], 1918 (comparison between a contemporary photograph, rectified in proportion [left], and the actual painting [right]). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 82]



fig. 15. *Paese di tarantelle* [Land of Tarantellas], 1918 (comparison between a visible detail [left] and the corresponding IR reflectography [right], in which the design of the first version can be appreciated). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 83]



fig. 16. *Paese di tarantelle* [Land of Tarantellas], 1918 (painting extracted from a contemporary photograph). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 83]





fig. 17. *Paese di tarantelle* [Land of Tarantellas], 1918 (detail of the back of the painting [a] and the same detail in transmitted IR [b]. In the latter it is possible to make out an older graphic design, indicated by red lines). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 83]



fig. 18. *Rotazione di ballerina e pappagalli* [Rotation of Dancer and Parrots], 1917. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

version of the costume is clearly in evidence, rich in color and detail, disturbing the effect and sense of the composition. Even the woman's shoes were decorated with a lobed opening, while the man wore boots and thick socks with strips and zigzags up to the knee. The other surviving image [fig. 16],²⁴ also undated, shows the modification undergone by the woman, as well as differences in relation to today's painting in the floor structures beneath the two men sitting at the round table and in the background to their left, which was not divided up using a deep pink form; it was barely toned down in shade, and not uniform in the red. This photograph also shows that the present-day painting has been cut back by a few centimeters on the left and on the lower edges, thereby eliminating the step on which the foreground figures stood.

The first of the photographs described above also reveals that the white stripe above the low yellow wall which runs diagonally behind the woman was once painted with a sequence of squares divided into triangles of alternating colors, whose graphic motif can be clearly appreciated through reflectography.²⁵ This is further evidence of Depero's driving need to simplify, which appears in various IR details: some dancers in the background had details drawn into their faces, costumes, and hairstyles, which were then removed, together with the red cart with wave-like decorations.



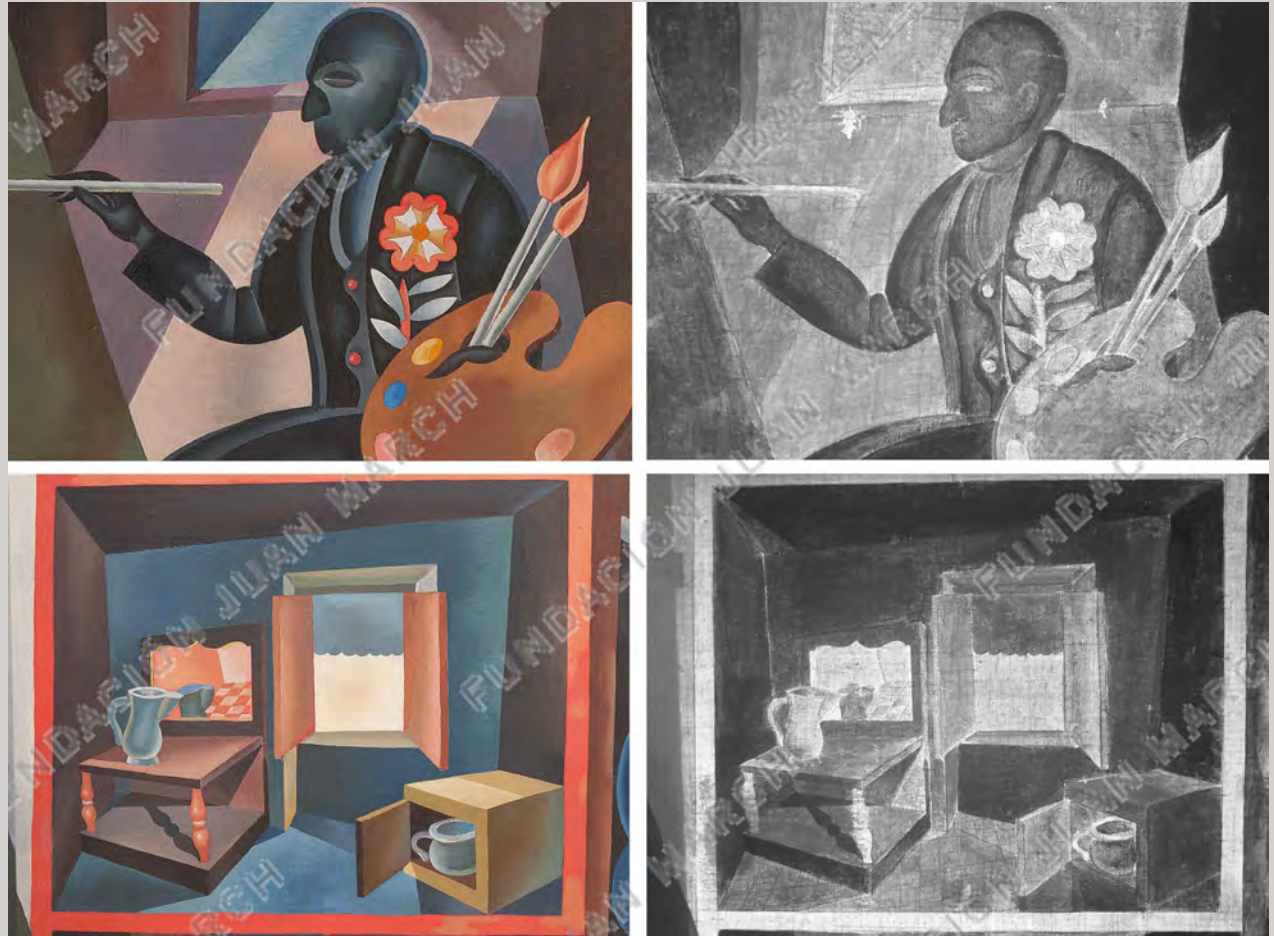
In the contemporary *Paese di tarantelle*, the IR images also show that the support was reused, initially featuring (under the color) another subject – only partly completed in oil, and largely left in the graphic stage²⁶ – which the combination of the various techniques of analysis helps to make out, including the study of the absorption of oils on the back of the canvas, despite being lined [fig. 17a]. In the reconstruction of this figure, marked in red are the underlying lines which have no relation to the subject that is visible today²⁷ or to the grid that is also present [fig. 17b].

What was involved here must have been a large figure akin to those of the plastic theater, possibly comparable to *Rotazione di ballerina e pappagalli* [Rotation of Dancer and Parrots] of 1917 (89.5 x 104.5 cm) [fig. 18].²⁸ With regard to this painting and the reuse of its supports, it should be borne in mind that on the back of the canvas there is a careful preliminary drawing, ready to be colored, on the subject of the *Prospettiva sotterranea* [Subterranean Perspective], which can be associated with the illustrations for the 1917 book titled *Un istituto per suicidi* [Suicides' Institute] by Gilbert Clavel [cat. 66, 73, 74], with which are linked a drawing on paper and a painted version in a different format and with variants, more horizontally extended, known as *Clavel nella funicolare* [Clavel in the Funicular] of 1918.²⁹ Moreover, the reuse of subjects is a kind of leitmotiv for Depero, who developed certain ideas in numerous artistic expressions with different techniques, from graphics to collage, painting, tapestry, advertising, and later to inlay and marquetry, making use of detailed drawings that were functional in terms of the so-called applied arts and often included indications of the colors to be used in the various background areas, which it has not been possible to verify³⁰ in the underdrawings of the paintings.

Infrared reflectography of *Io e mia moglie* [My Wife and I] [cat. 88], painted in 1919, reveals one or two interesting findings that place this work in close relation to two well-known drawings.³¹ In these – the square one of which represents the most advanced stage, even though in the analyses the presence of a grid has not been found – for example, it is possible to make out the presence of square-tiled floors, in perspective, which can also be read in the IRT images [fig. 19], and of which the sole visual memory that remains in the painting is the alienating reflection in the mirror behind the jug. Depero must have suddenly changed his mind, since the floors had not yet been painted, nor the shadow of the balustrade which, in the drawings, appears at bottom right, in the area where the signature now stands, it too identifiable in IR but not painted in and completely eliminated from the work.

But perhaps the most significant modification at the iconographic level, a pictorial rethinking while the work was under way (and not known from photos of the day) is the painter's head [fig. 20], which in the first version was – as in the prepara-

fig. 19. *Io e mia moglie* [My Wife and I], 1919 (comparison between two details in visible light [left] and transmitted IR [right], in which the first version of the floor and other details can be seen clearly). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 88]



tory drawings – more realistic, with the presence of an ear, a mouth, the outline of hair, a narrow almond-shaped eye like the woman's, and a more carefully depicted nose. Depero clearly wanted to turn his self-portrait into a sort of deaf and dumb mask, distinguished and dignified, an indomitable head whose sole prerogative, as painter, is the eye reduced to a crack, just as his only tools are his brushes and colors. I find that another drawing (charcoal pencil on paper, 35.5 x 31 cm) held in a private collection [fig. 21], and possibly prior to the others mentioned, offers an interesting later reflection on the theme, showing the undivided house with a man in profile at the window, with the painter standing in front of the empty canvas with his brush looking like a flowing continuation of his hand – the left one, in this case.

fig. 20. *Io e mia moglie* [My Wife and I], 1919 (detail of the artist's head in visible light [left] and in transmitted IR [right], in which the first version shows up). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 88]

fig. 21. *Studio per Io e mia moglie* [Study for My Wife and I], c. 1919. Private collection



Among the more spectacular outcomes of the diagnostic studies carried out, mention must be made of the findings obtained for the *Motociclista*, in which the IR analyses brought to light the words “MOTOCICLI BIANCHI” [White Motorbikes] in capital letters appropriately compressed in the case of the first word to make it the same length as the second [fig. 22]. Usually dated 1923 – 1925 in the photographic plate held at the MART³² – it should probably be situated in 1927, the year in which Depero attempted to collaborate in the Bianchi company’s publicity campaign.³³ The erasure would follow the firm’s refusal of Depero’s services and should be read in this light. Appearing as number 7 in the list drawn up by Depero of the works he took to New York from Italy in 1928, it is likely that the covering of the writing preceded that date, making it possible for the work to be offered on the American market as an autonomous painting.

The colors in the areas of the painting not connected with the covering of the writing do not seem to have been rebalanced.

DEPERO RESTORES HIMSELF

It is a well-known fact that in the latter years of his life, Depero not only took up again some of the themes of his oeuvre of the 1910s and 1920s, but he also put his hand to some of his works, “restoring” them to a greater or lesser degree.³⁴ In this case, scientific analyses have helped us to understand the extent to which he reworked them, and whether his interventions only addressed conservation problems – typically, losses of color and chromatic alterations – and in what pieces, or if they were a pretext for a sort of modernization, a revision in the light of a new sensibility to and experience of color.

As we shall see, Depero used this “restoration” pretext to carry out interventions that were more extensive than required, both for economic reasons and to update the works to adapt them to the contemporary taste.

One especially significant case is that of *Io e mia moglie*, painted in the autumn of 1919 and reworked in the early 1940s (1944?) before being sold to Gianni Mattioli. In a letter to the buyer dated February 13, 1950, Depero wrote that he had repainted certain parts of the picture, but it is common knowledge that by 1944 Mattioli had already agreed to the acquisition of the painting for 5,000 lire, with an additional 10,000 lire for “retouches and partial revisions.”³⁵ When the collector came into possession of the restored paintings – in addition to this one there were others, examined here – he sent the artist a letter on June 18, 1944, in which he expressed his feelings for the work under discussion: “It has been a great joy to lay eyes again on all these works of yours, which you know I like enormously. The retouching of *Io e mia moglie* and the *Selvaggetti* is also perfect. The fresh, bright colors with which you have managed to rejuvenate them, like a real *magician*, your technique and your extremely personal fantasy have created two works that thrill me today the way they did so many years

fig. 22. *Motociclista, solido in velocità* [Biker, Solidified in Speed], 1927 (detail in transmitted IR on which the “MOTOCICLI BIANCHI” [Bianchi Motorbikes] sign, which was later covered up, is clearly visible). Private collection, Switzerland



ago, the first time I saw them. I am happy to be the fortunate owner of all the drawings and paintings which you have sent me.”³⁶

What clearly emerges from this letter is the transparent relationship between the two men, Mattioli’s awareness and appreciation of the operation that Depero was undertaking, and the admission that in addition to the retouching, the author had intervened with “partial revisions,” alterations which, as the analyses show, went beyond the requirements of conservation, such as retouches associated with the presence of gaps.³⁷ The infrared investigations in fact show the existence of one or two places where the color has flaked off, areas smallish in size but reaching as far as the canvas, essentially situated in the upper right zone, in the birds and the branches, on the canvas on which the wife is working, above her hair, and on her forehead. There is also a certain loss of paint in the background near the man, and little else. The canvas seems to have suffered some damage too, judging from the square inserts placed between it and the frame. Rather than locally retouching the damaged areas, the painter preferred to redo the whole background area, so as to guarantee its chromatic uniformity.³⁸ The various repainted areas and alterations of shade, including the insertion of light-colored patches not formerly present in the work, are summarily described in fig. 23, comparing the findings of the analyses with the old photograph. With regard to this historic print, the removal of the original signature, probably in white, “Depero Rovereto 1919 (*autumn*)” (in block capital letters except for the season in brackets, which appears in cursive script), covered with a light shading that renders the ground less flat, should be noted. The new signature is located at bottom right, in cursive script, with the characteristic cut “p.”

With regard to the elaboration of this painting, it should be observed that Depero worked with great accuracy, taking special care over the colored shadings, the tones, and the imitation in this intervention, probably considering the work to be a cornerstone in his activity. The chromatic shadings, in particular, show the painter’s renewed sensibility for the “plastic” values of paint.

Going back over the years, it is likely that the retouching in some of the colors in the damaged areas in *I miei Balli plastici*, such as the greens, was not carried out by Depero, and it is not important enough to be deemed a revision; however, as indicated earlier, in *Paese di tarantelle*, the repainting of certain shades of color, especially the reds, pinks, and blues, is reckoned to be Depero’s own work. In *I selvaggi rossi e neri* [Red and Black Savages] [cat. 77], it is possible to detect the touching-up of many tints (almost all of them), with certain changes of hue that nonetheless stay close to the original colors with which it appeared on the cover of the magazine *Il Mondo* (yr. V, no. 17) on April 27, 1919: with the naked eye one can make out the original chromatic layer on the edges of the background areas, with brighter reds and pinks, while the brush-

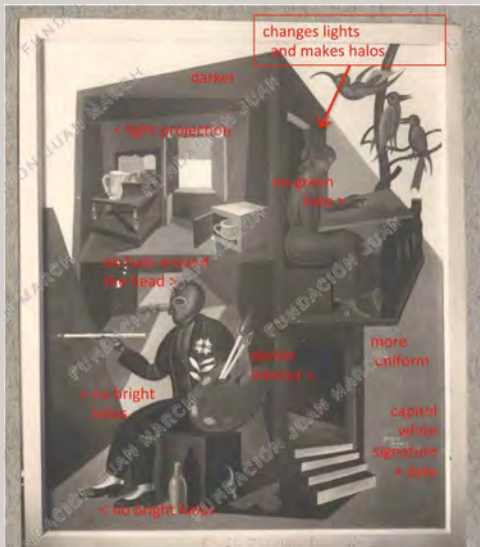


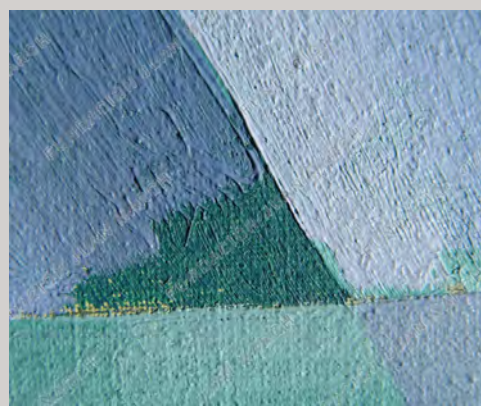
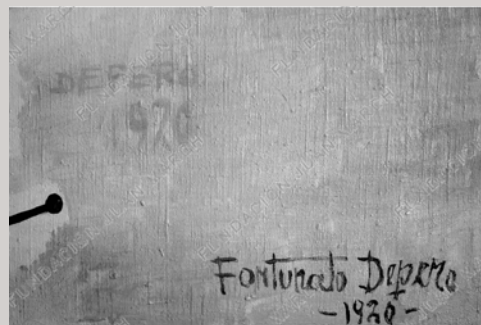
fig. 23. *Io e mia moglie* [My Wife and I] (contemporary photograph taken by Emidio Filippini, Rovereto, of an earlier version on which the changes made in the second version are indicated). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

fig. 24. *Flora e fauna magica* [Magical Flora and Fauna], 1920 (detail in IR reflectography in which the first signature of the work appears [left, in white]). Private collection, Switzerland

fig. 25. *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo* [Lunar Space, or Meeting within an Emerald] (contemporary photograph of the first version taken by Emidio Filippini, Rovereto. On the back, in cursive handwriting, it reads: "Convegno d'automati / F. Depero" [Automata Meeting / F. Depero]). Whereabouts unknown

fig. 26. *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo* [Lunar Space, or Meeting within an Emerald], 1924 (detail with the underlying green shades of the first version). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 122]

work of the intervention is denser, with the edges in relief, and more precise in the parallel traces. The signature (with the cut "p") in cursive on top of the paint is definitely from a later date. The reflectograms do not show evidence of conservation problems, so it seems possible to explain the interventions in terms of taste and timeliness. While the *Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto*, which was acquired by Mattioli in 1931,³⁹ evinces no repainting and is in a remarkably good state of conservation, the *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre* has slight retouching in two background areas (in the pink bench shaped like an arch and in the interstices of the baluster, not significant and possibly ancient) and an original crack that shows up clearly in transillumination. Unlike the former work, the contemporary *Flora e fauna magica* shows the presence of a grid and the subsequent retouching of various color shades,



erasing the original signature (that read "Depero 1920" in capital letters) which appears in the IR [fig. 24], a signature documented in an old photograph. In the work, described as partly repainted in the above-mentioned letter of February 13, 1950,⁴⁰ a comparison with the photo indicates the introduction of the blue shape of a barbed fish (by way of colored shadow) on the left and, above all, akin to *Io e mia moglie*, shadings of various areas of the background, including the blue on the right. In this latter, in fact, the spectroscopic and multi-spectral analyses show that the original color was light blue between the proboscis and the bird and behind the bird's head, and that the area on the right, towards the edge of the canvas, was the one "restored" by Depero with quite different pigments: he originally used cobalt blue which he retouched with Prussian blue lightened with white.⁴¹ Overall, the look of the painting does not seem to change considerably with regard to the original, and the restoration can barely be justified on the basis of slight damage.

Where the 1924 *Spazialità lunari, o Convegno in uno smeraldo* [Lunar Space, or Meeting within an Emerald] is concerned, there is a valuable photographic document that illustrates the first version of the painting, noticeably different from the existing work in the outer edge [fig. 25]. Close observation of the boundaries of the forms [fig. 26] shows that the central area was originally green (from pale to mid green), the figures were dark green, there are dark blue traces beneath the present light blue on the edges, and the pentagon delimiting the area was possibly black. Through reflectography, the signature of the first version emerges in the lower left corner. The date of the intervention – which seems dictated by the desire to alter the sense of the image, and not for reasons linked to conservation – is not easy to pin down, even taking into account the fact that in the "restorations" of the 1940s, as we have seen, Depero was very careful not to impose his new style, consisting at that time of serried lines of color with constant variations of shade. Probably also in cahoots with the collector's wishes (at least in Mattioli's case), he tended to operate with rather flat areas of color, akin to his typical expanses of the 1910s and 1920s, with just a major tendency to shading, which was useful to make the surface vibrate.

This carelessness and lack of precision – in my view deliberate – in covering the background areas with the original colors is at times encountered in other Depero works, such as the 1917 *Meccanica di ballerini* [Mechanics of Dancers] currently at the MART (oil on canvas, 75 x 71.3 cm), in which the large dark green area behind the figures is overlaid on an initially lighter version.⁴²

A short word on the theme of the painter's "restorations" may be in order for the sculptures too: of the three works examined, apart from the *Selvagetto* [Little Wild Thing] [cat. 89], which retains its original coloring, both the *Testa* [Head] and the *Cavaliere piumato* [Plumed Knight] [cat.

118], produced in 1923, were repainted, probably by Depero himself, before being sold to Mattioli. Indeed, the unambiguous presence of phthalocyanine has been identified among the green pigments of both works,⁴³ along with titanium white: this latter was available in shops from the 1920s onwards, but phthalocyanines (synthesized in the late 1920s) were not available until 1935, and actually widespread only some time later as artists' materials. Without specific samples, it is impossible to say what the original coloring was for the *Cavaliere*, now painted with ultramarine blue, though things are simpler for the *Testa*, in which the green must have had a shade similar to the present-day one, if slightly less bright, as indicated by some areas of older color beneath the base (Veronese green or cinnabar green), a green of the same shade also being found in gaps beneath the black, suggesting that the head could have been monochrome, or else with fewer black parts.⁴⁴

CONCLUSIONS (OR LACK THEREOF...)

This study undertaken on works of absolutely certain provenance – all acquired by Gianni Mattioli for his famous Milan collection, some directly from the artist in the 1940s – has helped us to gain a better understanding of Depero's pictorial technique⁴⁵ and enabled us to fully appraise the nature and extent of the "restoration" carried out by him.

As the analyses show, Depero developed a fairly simple painting technique, probably owing to various motives, including reasons of aesthetics but – as he himself indicated about the use of collage in the period of the *Balli* – also for reasons of economy. Economy in the use of time and the painter's own means (surfaces, colors, etc.), which perfectly match the aesthetic simplification of his art. Suffice it to think, for example, of the elementary nature of his approach to sculpture, including a certain modularity, opening up the possibility of applying it not only to a craftsman-like praxis but also to industrial assemblage and its intrinsic repetitiveness. And the idea of the clearly separate monochrome surfaces, which are, so to speak, embedded, capable of being deftly transferred from the paint on canvas to the watercolor, to the cloth inlays (the so-called tapestries) and those of wood and buxus,⁴⁶ and to graphics.

Depero's imagination was, in certain respects and more than in other artists of the time, exquisitely repetitive with regard to certain ideas and motifs, and in this sense, in my view, thoroughly Futurist in its obsessiveness and capacity for reinvention, which represent his specific interpreta-

tion of the theme of dynamism and the unity of the plastic world.

These aspects, too, make Depero an eclectic and unique artist, not only in the Futurist scenario, and a forerunner of operative praxes and tendencies that came to the fore only decades later.

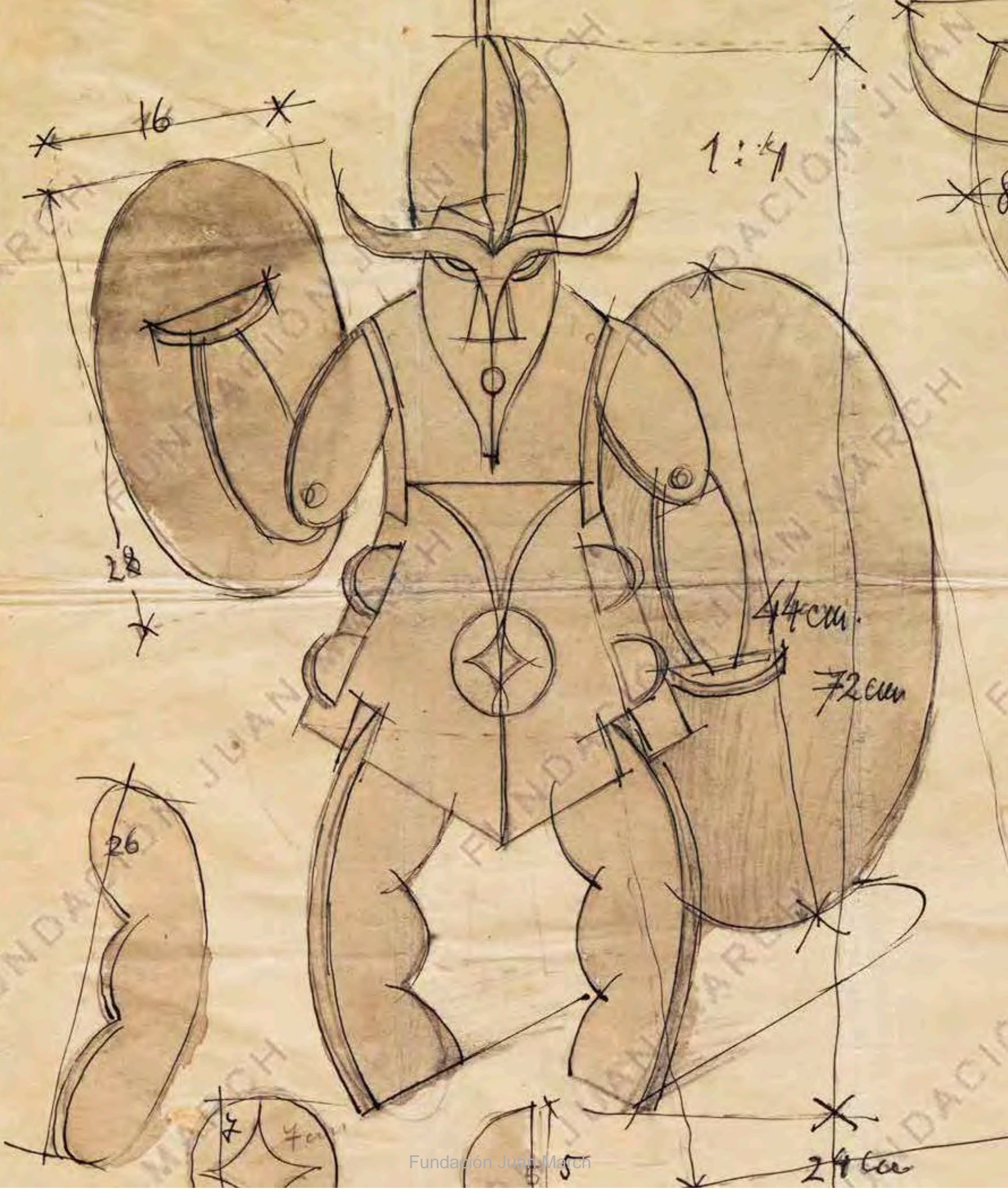
Further analyses are under way on other Depero works in public collections, including some held at the MART in Rovereto, which will hopefully yield new findings and provide even more precise data on the artist's development.

1. "Tutto nelle mie opere più recenti è architettato con ritmo, logicità ultraevidente di rapporti e contrasti di colori e di forme, così da formare un unico e forte assieme. Per reazione allo stilo impressionista, mi sono imposto uno stile piatto, semplice, geometrico, meccanico [...] mi sforzo sempre di trovare la linea che fonde e regge i più disparati elementi di una unità architettonica"; Fortunato Depero, "Teatro plastico Depero: principi ed applicazioni," *Il Mondo*, yr. V, no. 17 (Milan, April 27, 1919). For a full reproduction of this text in English, see pp. 396–97.
2. The research, made possible by the generous interest of the Fundación Juan March on the occasion of this exhibition, came about as a result of conversations with Laura Mattioli and the unusual attention she pays to scientific analyses when the latter are appropriately grounded. This research is in fact dedicated to her.
3. The initial findings of the study were presented at the Fortunato Depero Study Day held at the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) in New York on February 21, 2014. For the possibility of carrying out this diagnostic research I am grateful, in addition to Laura Mattioli, to Philip Rylands, Siro De Boni, Heather Ewing, Fabio Belloni, Milena Dean, Nicholas Fox Weber, Eugenia De Beni, and Luciano Pasabene Buemi.
4. I carried out the analyses during 2013, partly fitting into the research activity of the Centro d'Ateneo di Arte Visive (CAV) at the University of Bergamo. The CAV archive numbers more than 5,000 paintings from different periods and on diverse supports, investigated over a fifteen-year period of activity, including some Futurist paintings.
5. The infrared reflectography (IRR) and transmitted infrared analyses (TIR) – both useful to identify the presence of underdrawings, graphic and pictorial pentimenti, and reuses of the support – were carried out mainly with a Sony digital camera (5 Mpx, maximum resolution of about 20 dots/mm, CCD silicon detector, operating in the range 0.85–1 micron) and illumination with 1000W halogen light. In some cases use was also made of an Osiris (Optical, Spectroscopic, and Infrared Remote Imaging System) remote IR scansion system made by Opus Instruments (InGaAs detector, spectral range 1–1.7 micron). The camera was also employed for the shots in visible light and IRC – the latter to study the surface distribution of certain pigments and the presence of retouches/repainting. For the images in visible light and UV fluorescence (with a light with a maximum

emission of 365 nm) use was also made of a 16 Mpx Nikon camera. On the non-invasive techniques mentioned in the text see, for example, Daniela Pinna, Monica Galeotti, and Rocco Mazzeo, *Scientific Examination for the Investigation of Paintings: A Handbook for Conservators-Restorers* (Florence: Centrodi, 2009), and Gianluca Poldi and Giovanni Carlo Federico Villa, *Dalla conservazione alla storia dell'arte. Riflettografia e analisi non invasive per lo studio dei dipinti* [From Conservation to the History of Art: Reflectography and Non-Invasive Analyses for the Study of Paintings] (Pisa: Edizioni della Scuola Normale Superiore, 2006).

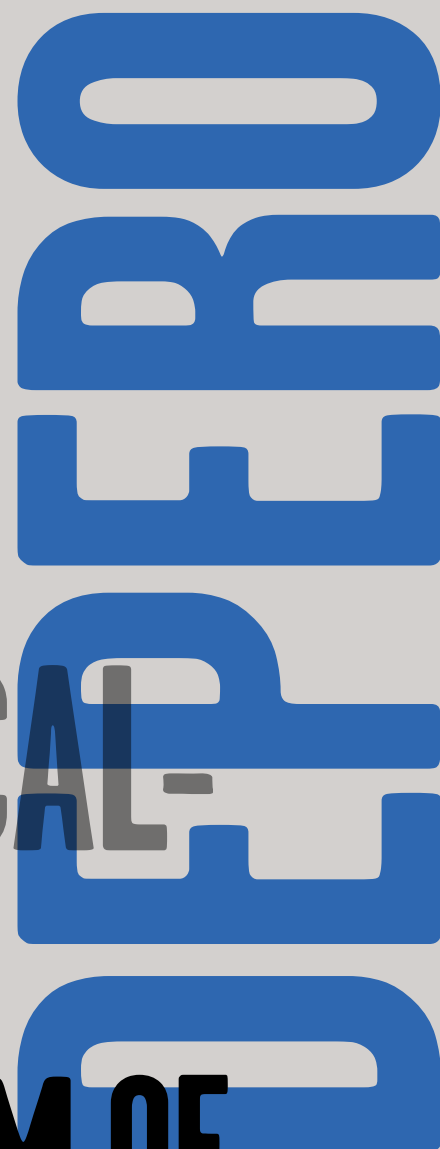
6. For the visible reflectance spectroscopy analysis (vis-RS) – useful to recognize even organic pigments on the superficial chromatic layer – use was made of a Minolta CM 2600d spectrophotometer fitted with an inner integrating sphere, operating in the range of 360–740 nm with an acquisition rate of 10 nm, and a measurement area with a diameter of 3 mm. The evaluation of the vis-RS spectra was carried out on the basis of a broad personal reference database. On the potential of this technique for modern pigments, see Gianluca Poldi, "Spettrometria in riflettanza e pigmenti dei Divisionisti: uno studio sulla Pellizza da Volpedo" [Reflectance Spectroscopy and Divisionist Pigments: A Study of Pellizza da Volpedo], in *Colore ed arte. Storia e tecnologia del colore nei secoli* [Color and Art: Color History and Technology down the Ages], minutes of the AIAR meeting (Florence, February 28–March 2, 2007), edited by Mauro Bacci (Bologna: Patron, 2008), 69–84; Doris Oltrogge, *The Use of VIS Spectroscopy in Non-Destructive Paint Analysis*, Painting Techniques of Impressionism and Postimpressionism Research Project, online-edition (www.museenkoeln.de/impressionismus) (Cologne, 2008).
7. The original stretcher is generally conserved in the unlined paintings examined.
8. The signature does not present the "p" cut by the horizontal dash along the shaft, which appeared around the second half of the 1920s.
9. See "La Scuola Reale Elisabetтина di Rovereto: docenti e allievi nel contesto del primo Novecento" [The Royal Elizabethan School in Rovereto: Teachers and Students in the Context of the Early 20th Century], edited by Lia de Finis (Trento: Fondazione Cassa di risparmio di Trento e Rovereto, 2008), in particular 96, 166–67. I believe that much of Depero's skill derived from the teaching of geometric constructions by Cesare Coriselli (1878–1943), who, among other things, made students work on the interconnection of solid figures (*Ibid.*, 71–87).
10. The painting that shows most signs of restoration, with various retouches clearly visible in UV light, is the *Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel*, examined at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection in Venice.
11. The term *Tüchlein* designates a kind of painting and technique that was widespread in the 15th and 16th centuries in Flanders and in German-speaking countries, and in a more limited way in Italy, which imitated the textile surface of tapestries and embroideries, but also certain aspects of wall painting. Frequently decorative, but often also containing religious subjects,

- technically speaking the *Tüchlein* were made with thin tempera on unprimed linen canvas, partly spared from paint to make use of the natural color of the canvas in the background. Given the highly perishable nature of these articles, the material evidence of this tradition is rare.
12. These lumps and areas of yellowing appear in the original background areas, not in those “restored” by the artist at a later date, so that a criterion for identifying the areas not retouched by the artist is often (though not always) the presence of these alterations. This is not the case with the *Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto*, where there are no revisions, but which is nevertheless in a good state of conservation.
 13. It is not clear whether the varnishing was done after the reduction of the canvas. In any event, the presence of brush hairs in some colors is clearly visible.
 14. For the identification of certain typologies of greens, orange-yellows, and reds, reflectance spectroscopy (RS) is not usually sufficient and must be accompanied by other non-invasive spectroscopic analyses, such as those involving X-ray fluorescence (XRF), capable of identifying the chemical elements forming many organic pigments. However, even where the compound cannot be distinguished, the vis-RS makes it possible to obtain molecular spectrums of the surface pigments that offer basic data for the comparison of authentic and forged works. It is worth noting that the vis-RS spectrums collected, grouped by color class, can be classified in precise typologies on the basis of their common features, pointing to the fact that the artist’s palette and his preferred choices remained for the most part constant throughout the course of the decade examined. This also applies to the watercolors.
 15. Among the watercolors examined are the *Chimera* [Chimera] of 1916, the *Portrait of Gilbert Clavel*, and *Automi. Prospettiva dinamica figurata* [Automata. Dynamic Perspective with Figures], both produced in 1917.
 16. I am indebted to my colleague Maria Letizia Amadori (University of Urbino) for the cross section of this sample studied by optical and electronic microscopy (SEM+EDS), and for the FTIR exams on the lump sample cited above.
 17. In fact, the absorption bands typical of crimson lacquers at 520–530 and 570 nm are evident in vis-RS.
 18. Unlike other paintings in the Mattioli Collection held at the Fondazione Peggy Guggenheim in Venice, I did not examine this painting for the catalogue raisonné (Gianluca Poldi, “Reflectographic Analysis of Some Paintings in the Mattioli Collection,” in *The Mattioli Collection: Masterpieces of the Italian Avant-Garde*, edited by Flavio Fergonzi [Milan: Skira, 2003], 409–28).
 19. In this painting there is also a chromatic modification: Depero uses a lighter green to correct certain parts of the chair that were originally painted in a darker green, while some light-colored haloes on the edge of the dark green background (in the faces) seem intentional, and are difficult to find in later works. There is evidence of similar chromatic variations in the greens, which would seem to be partly due to alterations, in a version of the *Manifesto per Balli plastici* [Manifesto for Plastic Dances], described as “tempera on canvas, 99 x 69 cm, private collection” and dated 1917–18 in *Depero*, edited by Maurizio Fagiolo Dell’Arco, with the collaboration of Nicoletta Boschiero (exh. cat. Palazzo Reale, Milan, March 24–May 14, 1989; Milan: Electa, 1989), 111.
 20. The photograph, which Depero titled “Angolo della mia officina” [Corner of my Workshop], for example, is published in Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, 120.
 21. The drawing (published in Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, 77) is thus definitely preparatory.
 22. According to Maurizio Scudiero, “La ricerca deperiana: problemi di metodo” [Deperian Research: Method Problems] in Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, 226–36, the painting “was, in the early 1920s, already cleaned and made lighter, above all in the dancing group in the foreground” (p. 229).
 23. The image, a detail, is published in Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, 98.
 24. MART archives, Rovereto, Depero 7.1.3.4.6.
 25. The same decorative motif appears in the drawing on the back of the canvas of *Rotazione di ballerina e pappagalli* [Rotation of Dancer and Parrots] (see below) but not in its modified version painted in 1918 in *Clavel nella funicolare* [Clavel in the Funicular], in a private collection.
 26. Essentially, the right part was partially painted.
 27. A part of the original subject can be made out with the naked eye in the area beneath the cart, on the right, as a result of the increased transparency of the paint and the lack of chromatic uniformity in the substratum.
 28. Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, cat. 13, 100–1.
 29. Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, 100–1 and 92 (figure): more than “a sketch,” in my opinion this is an actual underdrawing for a painting not completed with color.
 30. The indications of which colors should be used should not surprise us, and in many cases can be functional in the studio praxis of his Rovereto “Magician’s House.” Similar notes on colors are also to be found in several 15th and 16th century paintings, where they can be interpreted as indications intended for collaborators in the studio.
 31. The drawings, rightly regarded as preparatory (as shown by the findings of the present analyses) are published in *La casa del mago. Le arti applicate nell’opera di Fortunato Depero 1920–1942*, edited by Gabriella Belli (exh. cat. Archivio del ‘900, Rovereto, December 12, 1992–May 30, 1993; Milan: Charta, 1992), 90.
 32. Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, cat. 24, 138–39.
 33. As specified by Giovanna Ginex at the Fortunato Depero Study Day held at the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) in New York on February 21, 2014 (see n. 3). See here her essay, “Not Just Campari! Depero and Advertising,” pp. 308–17.
 34. On this subject, see Scudiero in Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, 229, which lists among the works restored by Depero “for damage” the *Selvaggi* [Savages], *Io e mia moglie*, *Flora e fauna magica*, and *La grande selvaggia* [Large Savage] (1917, private collection, cat. 112).
 35. Belli, *La casa del mago*, 92.
 36. Ibid. *Selvaggi* [Savages] denotes *I selvaggi rossi e neri* [Red and Black Savages] which we deal with below.
 37. On the other hand, the compiler of the entry for *La casa del mago* [The Magician’s House] (Belli, *La casa del mago*, 92) reckoned that the restoration work undertaken was “exclusively for conservation reasons.”
 38. In one of the rare areas where the retouching is visible to the naked eye, along the section of the walls of the upper room, the new red appears less bright and is easily recognizable with regard to the original.
 39. Fagiolo Dell’Arco, *Depero*, cat. 14, 102–3.
 40. Ibid., cat. 19, 125.
 41. The original coloring survives in the light blue mark in this area, in the upper right area, as well as in the arc formed by the bird’s tail; in Depero’s day it was probably not evident but it is today, probably owing to the chromatic change that has taken place over the decades.
 42. The painting in Rovereto shows similar characteristics to those analyzed for this study: no priming, with the canvas at the edges and sides of various background areas appearing to be beige-brown in color.
 43. Phthalocyanine is a bright blue or green pigment nowadays used in enamels, paints, printing inks, and plastics. For bibliography on phthalocyanines, see Gianluca Poldi and Simone Caglio, “Phthalocyanine Identification in Paintings by Reflectance Spectroscopy: A Laboratory and *in situ* Study,” in *Optics and Spectroscopy*, 114, 6 (2013), 929–35.
 44. It should be noted that the appearance of the color in the *Testa* and the *Cavaliere piumato* is different. The background areas in the former are brighter; in the latter, on the other hand, the blue (an ultramarine), the green (with a base of phthalocyanine of the same type as that of the *Head*), and the red (a ferrous oxide) are bright but opaque, and given over a white layer that covers the original coloring, a sign of interventions carried out at different times.
 45. Oddly enough, there is still no sufficiently systematic study of the other Futurist artists, from Boccioni to Carrà, and from Balla to Severini.
 46. Buxus was a cladding material used for architectural, industrial, and decorative purposes, devised and produced in Italy by the Giacomo Bosso paper mills from 1928, during the autarky promoted by the Fascist government. It is a tough, elastic material, with marble-like veins, obtained by a process involving the treatment of cellulose. In the 1930s it was one of the most widespread substitutes for wood. On the history of buxus and its use by Depero, see Daniela Bosia, *Il Buxus: un materiale “moderno”* (Milan: Franco Angeli, 2005).



PLASTIC COMPLEXES AND MECHANICAL ACTIONS

THE VISUAL-THEATRICAL LIVING ORGANISM OF



LLANOS GÓMEZ MENÉNDEZ

Fortunato Depero's oeuvre encompasses a variety of disciplines, including painting, poster design, puppet making, and set and costume design, for all of which the stage would provide a place of total convergence where the Italian artist could give life to his so-called *complessi plastici* [plastic complexes] and the *essere vivente artificiale* [artificial living being], a fundamental element within that creative space. Depero's professed admiration for Umberto

Boccioni, from whom he took the idea of "plastic dynamism," is expressed in the programmatic text from 1915 titled *Ricostruzione futurista dell'Universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe]¹ [cat. 36] that Depero co-signed with Giacomo Balla, and which includes concepts already formulated in 1914 in his handwritten manifesto *Complessità plastica – Gioco libero futurista – L'essere vivente artificiale* [Plastic Complexity – Free Futurist Game –

The Artificial Living Being],² in which he proclaimed an exclusively dynamic and abstract type of art. In addition to the obvious impact of Boccioni, evident in his theories of montage and assembly, Depero's aesthetic also reveals the crucial influence of Carlo Carrà's *La pittura dei suoni, rumori ed odori* [The Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells] published in 1913, the innovations of Bruno Corra, Arnaldo Ginna, and Emilio Settemeli,³ and echoes of Gestalt

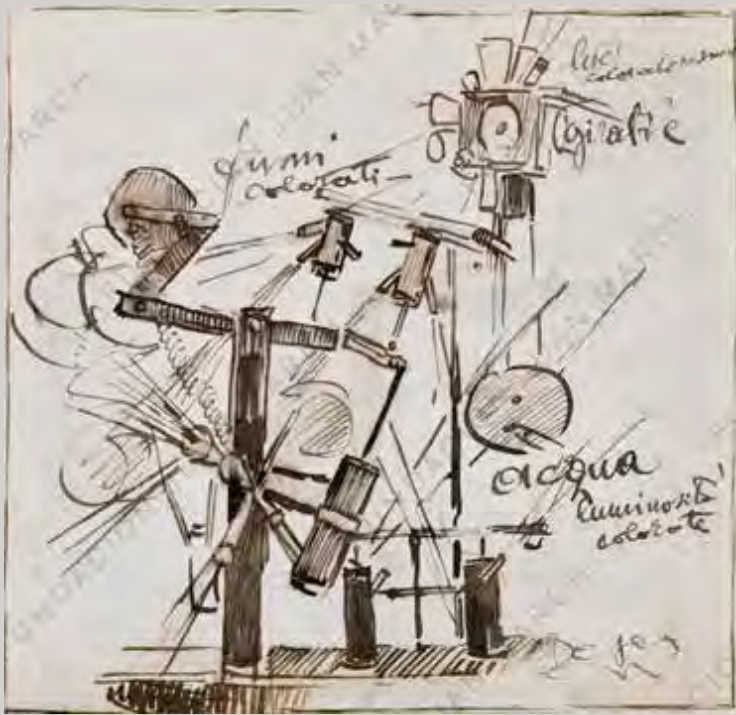


fig. 1. *Complesso plastico motorumorista a luminosità colorate e spruzzatori* [Motorumorist Plastic Complex with Color Lights and Sprinklers], 1915. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

psychology, with its studies on perception and apparent movement reflected in Depero's references to rotation and fragmentation, particularly in his text of 1915.

Depero thus focused on the structural and mechanical dynamism of his plastic complexes and on the study of three-dimensional space, incorporating a mechanized and automated human body into the kinetic act. The mechanical creature, the *essere vivente artificiale*, would thus come to occupy the stage, though in fact this hybrid being had already conquered the rostrum through the main theoretician of the Futurist movement. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti's extensive oeuvre and theoretical writings⁴ would be crucial for the formulation of Depero's onomalanguage, although not just for that. In fact, Marinetti's experiences in the theater would also have a notable repercussion on all the Futurists' stage proposals, given that not only did his organization of the *serate* [Futurist evenings], his plays, and his "syntheses" imply a new concept of theater but in addition, all his theoretical writings confirmed Marinetti's preoccupation with the stage in a broader sense: in the quest for a total scenario that would encompass work for magazines and newspapers, café gatherings, the street itself, and hence extremely close collaboration with the public, all with the aim of provoking a reaction that went beyond mere observation. This is evident in *Il Teatro di varietà* [The Variety Theater] of 1913; *Il teatro futurista sintetico* [Futurist Synthetic Theater] of 1915; *La declamazione dinamica e sinottica* [Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation] of 1916; *Il Tattilismo* [Tactilism] of 1921, and *Il teatro della sorpresa* [The Theater of Surprise], also of 1921, among others.

The relative importance achieved by the figure of Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the principal ideologue and promoter of Futurism, particularly in the years between approximately 1909 and 1920, as well as the relationship that he (like other Futurists) established with the public, was already evident in the way his first manifesto was presented to the world, not by chance in Paris, Europe's cultural capital at that date and home of the Symbolist pantheon, and in the way the manifesto was disseminated via a newspaper.

From the time of the founding manifesto, the close communication that the Futurists aimed to maintain with their followers, sympathizers, and even detractors through the dissemination of their texts was thus evident. These texts were published in magazines and newspaper not associated with the movement as well as in those founded by the Futurists. They were also publicized through their actions, which were faithful correlations of their programmatic texts, as manifested in the Futurist "evenings" where the spectator was transformed into an actor, both in the sense of social agent and interpreter.⁵

Thus, for example, Marinetti's *sintesi futurista* [Futurist Synthesis] titled *Elettricità* [Electricity], later called *Elettricità sessuale* [Sexual Electricity] or *Fantocci elettrici* [Electric Puppets], is in fact the result of omitting the first and third act of the play *La donna è mobile*, a translation of *Poupées électriques*,⁶ first performed at the Teatro Regio in Turin in 1909. Both the original version and its transformations provoked an enormous scandal with the public due to the daring plot. An analysis of the central act's storyline will suggest why it impressed the young Depero. The Marinettis (obviously a de-

liberate choice of name) are talking in their villa to two automata, which the husband, an engineer, has made to replicate him and his wife. With their disturbing presence, the purpose of the two lifelike dolls is to preserve the love between the couple, avoiding the inevitable deterioration brought on by daily routine and habits. These dummies thus act as the dark conscience of the protagonists. The husband finally throws the *fantocci* into the sea and some fishermen assume he has committed a double murder.

The long version not only ends with the "murder" of the puppets by their creator, in addition to the strange relationship which the couple establishes with them, but also includes two more suicides. Negative reaction from the public in the form of whistling and shouting rude remarks was inevitable. The reply to this feedback was published in the February-March issue of the journal *Poesia*, in which Marinetti included a humorous commentary that ended with an invitation to the protestors to his next production, *Le roi bombance* [The Feasting King],⁷ an equally irreverent play inspired in Alfred Jarry's *Ubú roi* [King Ubu].

Let us return to the two automata devised by Marinetti, whose world would also be evoked by Depero, albeit from a different viewpoint, abandoning the sensual, adult tone deployed by Marinetti in order to move towards an abstract, naive universe in which the fusion of the *complesso plastico* [fig. 1] and the *essere vivente artificiale* could flourish. This synthesis is expressed in the 1916 *Vestito e apparizione* [Clothes and Appearance], in which Depero explores his own dynamic-abstract-construction aesthetic through a theatrical costume that in itself creates spectacle: "This extremely novel principle, devised by Depero and introduced by Marinetti at the remarkable Depero-Balla exhibition of 1915, would be the basis for the costumes made for the future abstract and dynamic Futurist theater."⁸

This concept would be applied to the costumes for the ballet-dance *Mimismagia* [fig. 2, cat. 47–50], which was never actually performed, as was the case with other projects by Depero. Nonetheless, Depero worked hard on the designs, which included moving costumes that had lights and made noises, and were thus continuations of the dancer's movements [fig. 3]. The theatrical costume thus acquired a new, machine-like dimension that was nonetheless rooted in the tradition of popular performance such as the circus, the *passacaglia*,⁹ and the variety theater, and thus continued Marinetti's extremely extensive investigations into the theater, both in general and with his own creations. Yet this invention, described in Depero's *Vestito e apparizione*, involved giving life to a kinetic sculpture, an idea already theoretically proposed by Boccioni.

These investigations coincided with the first meeting, organized by Mikhail Larionov (1881–1964),¹⁰ between Depero and Sergei Diaghilev, the director and manager of the Ballets Russes. In this encounter, which took place in Depero's

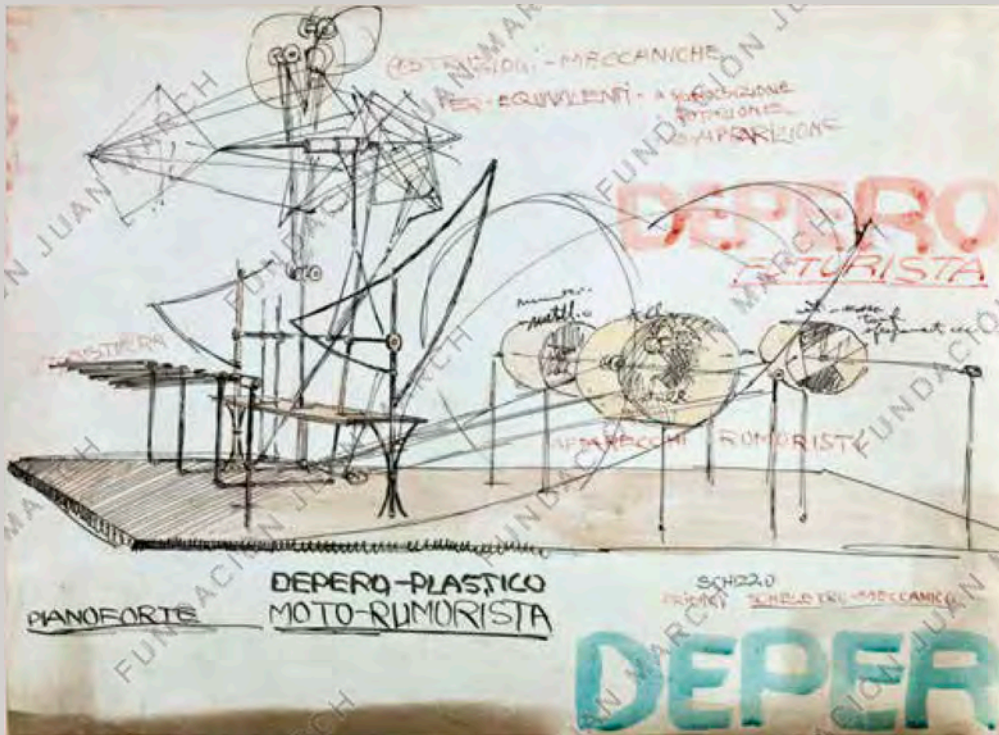


fig. 6. *Pianoforte motorumorista* [Motorumorist Piano], 1915. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

Contact between the Futurist artists and the members of the Ballets Russes became increasingly frequent. However, this connection was severed in 1917 with the arrival in Rome of Jean Cocteau and, soon after, of Pablo Picasso. Diaghilev was determined to associate the name of his company with the leading international artists of the day with a view to assuring performances in Paris, which always added an element of prestige. He thus took advantage of the situation to establish direct contact with Parisian Cubism in Rome. As a result: "As their relations with Diaghilev became increasingly close, Cocteau and Picasso attempted to minimize the scope of Futurist aesthetic innovations in the impresario's eyes."¹³

That same year the relationship between Cocteau, Picasso, and Diaghilev brought plans for *Le Chant du rossignol* to an end. All the same, Depero was entrusted with a new project to design the sets and costumes for *Giardino zoologico* [Zoo] by Francesco Cangiullo. Here he opted for the technique of collage to make the different animals, but, again, the project never took concrete shape as a performance. Despite this, it is striking that Diaghilev offered Depero another commission, particularly since this involved the costume-cuirasses for the two characters designed by Picasso for the ballet *Parade*, in which the latter in fact followed the Futurist principles of the *complesso plastico*.

Indeed, all the existing documentation and all the evidence, including Cocteau's, confirm that Picasso devised the costumes for the managers in Rome, not in Paris, and that before his stay in Rome the Spanish painter had only sketched out the overall structure of the costume for the *hommes pancartes* for the posters. Without the sugges-

tion of Futurist kinetics and of the *complessi plastici motorumoristi* [motorumorist plastic complexes], Picasso would never have thought of extending the formal principle of assemblage to the field of the theater, nor, with regard to the stage, would he have re-launched the Cubist aesthetic which was above all outdated by this point, given that in his artistic investigations he had resolved to draw inspiration from Ingres.¹⁴ [fig. 6]

What is notably striking is the way in which the Futurists were sidelined and even scorned, particularly given that this happened at the same time that others took up their innovations in stage design. As might be expected, the Picasso-Cocteau episode concluded with the decline of the relationship to an unforeseen, or perhaps not entirely unforeseen, degree.¹⁵ Nor did the friendship between Larionov and Depero survive, as the Italian accused the Russian painter of plagiarism in his designs for the ballet *Histoires naturelles* [Natural Histories], particularly the costumes for the characters of Turkey, Lady with Fans, and Cricket, which were remarkably similar to Depero's sketches for *Le Chant du rossignol*.

In the summer of 1917, Depero decided to embark on a new project in which he reformulated his theatrical innovations. On this occasion, however, there were two major changes: firstly, and in the light of his notable failures with Diaghilev, he worked with the Swiss poet Gilbert Clavel as producer, and secondly, he translated the *complesso plastico* to puppets. The result was the birth of the *Balli plastici* [Plastic Dances] [cat. 76, 78, 79, 81], which would be performed in Vittorio Podrecca's Teatro dei Piccoli [fig. 7], the only venue to take on this fantasy-filled spectacle that constituted a reflection of Depero's artistic universe, in which the boundaries between action and representation, and between background and form, tended to blur.

Geometrical, brightly colored sets provided the setting for the intended mechanical movement of the wooden puppets in five "plastic dances": *Pagliacci* [Clowns] [see cat. 75], with music by Casella; *L'uomo con baffi* [The Man with a Moustache], with music by Tyrwhitt; *I selvaggi* [The Savages], with music by Malipero; *Ombre* [Shadows], with music by Bartók; and finally a variety act involving all the puppets.¹⁶ The *Balli plastici* were based on chromatic rhythm and on the repetition of mechanical movements, given that all the elements (including music) were subordinate to this visual dynamism, which rejected any naturalist connotations and obviously any traditional narrative structure. Another later dance was *Automi. Prospettiva dinamica figurata* [Automata. Dynamic Perspective with Figures] [cat. 70], in which small mechanical creatures endlessly repeated the same action. Depero saw the mechanical with a childlike fascination, evoking play through his light-hearted, fantastical, imaginative, colorful, and vitalist approach, and giving rise to progressive anthropomorphic distortion through movement.

This intensive process of investigation served to reveal Depero's ideas on stage design and pro-

fig. 7. *Al teatro dei Piccoli, Balli Plastici* [At the Teatro dei Piccoli, Plastic Dances], 1918. Collezione Girefin [cat. 76]



duction, which would be published in 1927 in the bolt-bound volume *Depero futurista* [cat. 148] with the title of “Teatro Magico” [Magic Theater]. Here Depero once again emphasized the fact that the stage had to be rethought and expanded in all senses, especially, given his particular interests, in an electrical and mechanical way. In other words, he opted for an original and highly individual type of stage design, a world of lights and reflections moving at great speed and on a huge scale. The Wagnerian concept of the *Gesamtkunstwerk*, which inspired Futurist theater and in fact the movement as a whole, reappeared in the specific manifestation of moving scenery as an essential basis for the *complesso plastico*, which had to be created from variety, novelty, surprise, and speed, as Depero underlined. Clearly, as we might imagine, the *essere vivente artificiale* also played a role, given that Depero was convinced of the importance of the inclusion of puppets, which in this case shared the stage with real actors in order to multiply and reveal all the dimensions of a character simultaneously.

Depero’s two primary concerns, as reflected throughout his oeuvre, are re-encountered here: the *complesso plastico* and the *essere vivente artificiale*, the latter now emerging (to paraphrase the artist) as the debut of the divine machine that fuses the stage and the orchestra, gives life to the dummies, and makes possible a mobile type of set and lighting. Not only do Depero’s peculiar obsessions appear here, but also the founding principles of Futurism, which continued to be valid in the late 1920s, manifesting the movement’s admiration for the machine-like and dynamic, and proclaiming itself to be a “celebration of speed.” This legacy undoubtedly survives today in advertising, film, radio, the multiplication of space and the condensation of time, and in minimalist theater, the heir to Futurist Synthetic Theater. Above all, Futurism remains alive in that its seed has grown and flourished in the artificial living being, the automaton, transmuted into a cyborg.

It can thus be agreed that the theater, conquered by the Futurists from the earliest *serate* in 1909, was the space *par excellence* for the combination of the arts with the aim of establishing the movement’s desired communication with the public, achieving the combination and fusion of Futurism’s different manifestations, and creating the “total work of art.” Without any doubt Depero, a prolific artist who worked in advertising, poster design, set and costume design, and radio, was able to transgress and break down the boundaries between those activities with the goal of making them one: the

Deperian work. The best way to appreciate this process is to contemplate his artistic evolution and his profound interest in the stage: a creative space in which he could bring together all his projects and experiments. It is thus not possible to study Depero’s contribution in a single or isolated way, given that his onomalanguage is also to be found in his *Depero futurista*, in his *Balli plastici*, and in his *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics] [cat. 255], making it essential to appreciate all these connections in order to understand Depero, an artist who consciously and deliberately reconstructed and mechanized the universe.

1. For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 369–75.
2. The issue of who actually invented the *complesso plastico* gave rise to a certain degree of tension within Futurism. Prampolini sent various letters to Boccioni in which he claimed its invention before visiting Balla’s studio and also indicated that this was reflected in his texts *Scenografia futurista* [Futurist Stage Design] and *Scultura dei colori e totale* [Total Sculpture of Colors], both from 1915.
3. Giovanni Lista, *Cinema e fotografia* (Milan: Skira, 2001). [Bruno Corra (pseudonym of Bruno Ginanni Corradini, 1892–1976) was an Italian writer and screenwriter, co-founder of the magazine *Il Centauro*, and a participant in the making of the film *Vita futurista* [Futurist Life] in 1916, in collaboration with Balla and Marinetti. The film was produced and directed by his brother, painter, sculptor, and filmmaker Arnaldo Ginna (pseudonym of Arnaldo Ginanni Corradini, 1890–1982), one of the signatories of the *Manifesto del cinema futurista* [The Futurist Cinema] of 1916, and the author, with Corra, of the theatrical synthesis *Alternazione di carattere* [Alternation of Character] of 1915. Emilio Settemili (1891–1954) was an Italian writer and editor, co-founder of the magazine *Il Centauro* and co-signer with Marinetti and Corra of the programmatic text *Il teatro futurista sintetico* [The Futurist Synthetic Theater] of 1915. For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 367–68 — Ed.]
4. *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature], 1912; *Distruzione della sintassi – Immaginazione senza fili – Parole in libertà* [Destruction of Syntax – Wireless Imagination – Words-in-Freedom], 1913; or *Lo splendore geometrico o meccanico e la sensibilità numerica* [Geometrical or Mechanical Splendor and Numerical Sensibility], 1914.
5. Llanos Gómez Menéndez, “Comunicación de masas y futurismo: la conformación del público y la escena mediática,” *Espéculo. Revista de Estudios Literarios*, no. 45 (Madrid, Universidad Complutense, 2012).
6. [Electric Dolls]; see Llanos Gómez Menéndez, *La dramaturgia de Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. El discurso artístico de la modernidad* (Vigo: Academia del Hispanismo, 2007), chap. 1.

7. [King Francadela]; see Gómez Menéndez, “Comunicación de masas y futurismo,” chap. 1.
8. “Su questo principio novissimo costruito da Depero e inaugurato da Marinetti all’esposizione straordinaria Depero-Balla 1915 – saranno costruiti costumi per il futuro teatro futurista astratto e dinamico [futurista]”; Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012), 37.
9. Derived from the Spanish *pasar* (to walk) and *calle* (street), the *passacaglia* originated in Spain in the 17th century as a strummed interlude between dances or songs and continues to be used by composers to this day — Ed.
10. The Russian artist Mikhail Larionov visited Depero’s studio the day before he went to see Diaghilev and the dancer Massine, as Depero recorded in his notes.
11. See Gómez Menéndez, *La dramaturgia de Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*.
12. “Depero procede piuttosto per enfasi, ampliando la forma vegetale o antropomorfa, facendola proliferare in modo vitalista e fantastico. È con questo spirito di assoluta ambizione ludica e inventiva che l’artista trova nella dimensione teatrale l’humus miglior per condensare e sviluppare i diversi orientamenti della propria sperimentazione: onomalingua, complesso plastico-mobile, estetica mecánica, immaginario ludico-fantastico”; Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, 246.
13. “Man mano che si intensificano i rapporti con Diaghilev, Cocteau e Picasso cercano di minimizzare agli occhi dell’empresario la portata delle innovazioni estetiche futuriste”; *Ibid.*
14. “Infatti, tutta la documentazione esistente al riguardo e tutte le testimonianze, compresa quella di Cocteau, confermano che Picasso ha ideato i costumi dei Managers a Roma, non a Parigi, e che prima del soggiorno romano il pittore spagnolo aveva abbozzato solo la struttura generica del costume degli ‘hommes pancartes’ per le locandine. Senza la suggestione del cinetismo futurista e dei ‘complessi plastici moto-rumoristi’, Picasso non avrebbe mai pensato di estendere alla dimensione teatrale il principio formale dell’assemblaggio, né avrebbe rilanciato, in funzione della scena, l’estetica cubista che era allora piuttosto vecchiotta poiché egli stesso era giunto, nella sua ricerca, a ispirarsi a Ingres”; *Ibid.*, 247.
15. Cocteau wrote: “Mon cher Balla vous êtes un con. Cher Balla je vous emmerde” [My dear Balla, you’re an idiot. Dear Balla, fuck you]; see Deborah Menaker Rothschild, *Picasso’s “Parade”* (New York: Sotheby’s Publications, 1991).
16. Alfredo Casella (1883–1947); lord Gerald Tyrwhitt-Wilson (1883–1950); Gian Francesco Malipiero (1824–1887); Béla Bartók (1881–1945).



ROMMA
GENNAIO

ART AND PHOTO-PERFORMANCE

CAROLINA FERNÁNDEZ CASTRILLO

The dichotomy between art and technology (*episteme/techne* or *artes liberales/artes mechanicae*) has determined the evolution of aesthetics and society, giving rise to numerous expressions of approbation and rejection over the course of history.

In 1909 the Futurists emerged on the European art scene to the cry of “The whip or dynamite!”¹ proclaiming that it was no longer possible to escape from scientific discoveries and the influence

of the new means of transport, production, and communication that were transforming the world into an ever faster and better connected place. There was an urgent need to establish a new aesthetic-communicative system capable of capturing the unprecedentedly vibrant and frenetic rhythm of society. The early Italian avant-garde artists thus distanced themselves from late 19th-century cultural trends by proposing a specific plan of action

that could stir up the conscience of their contemporaries against *passéism* (*passatismo*, nostalgia for the past) and passivity.

In his desire to provoke reaction, the Futurists’ leader Filippo Tommaso Marinetti decided to publish his inaugural manifesto in the French *Le Figaro*, the most popular newspaper of the day. Through this initial public act, Marinetti aimed to disseminate his thinking on a global scale beyond

the frontiers of Italy, choosing the quintessentially modern city of Paris from which to do so. This was a statement of intent in which Marinetti overtly expressed his desire to explore the creative potential of works based on the technical advances of industrial society and the new means of communication.

In the alliance between art and technology, the Futurists believed that they had discovered the answer to the crisis of the modern age as well as the ideal route to confront the innumerable challenges and uncertainties that the future seemed to hold in store. This approach represented a radical change of direction in the debate on the respective status of the artistic disciplines and an authentic revolution with regard to the role of the work itself, the creator, and the public, an issue of perhaps even more relevance and significance in the present day.

The increase in the number of methods available to produce a mechanical reproduction of reality and the influence of mass communication on the world of culture in the early 20th century were certainly decisive in establishing the bases of Media Art. Nonetheless, the breakdown of the old boundaries between the arts and the acceptance of new media was not devoid of controversy. Later in this text we will see that in this complex interaction lay some of the keys to the evolution of contemporary art up to our own time.

When analyzing the development of the relationship between art and technology, a preeminent role should be given to the invention of photography in 1839 and the intense debate on the issue of its entry into the Olympus of the arts which took place from that point onwards in Parisian intellectual circles [fig. 1]. In a brief article entitled “Le public moderne et la photographie” [The Modern Public and Photography] published among his writings on the 1859 Salon, Charles Baudelaire referred to the polemical reception of the invention: “If photography is allowed to supplement art in some of its functions, it will soon have supplanted or corrupted it altogether thanks to the stupidity of the multitude which is its natural ally.”² Baudelaire warned of its dangers while also criticizing the unstoppable “decline of the aura.” Walter Benjamin returned to this idea in his celebrated essay of 1936, “The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction,” in which he reflected on the crisis of perception in relation to the breakdown of the original’s *hic et nunc* and the emancipation of the work of art with regard to its link with reality. The emergence of photography resulted in an unprecedented creative explosion in the field of the visual arts, with its maximum expression to be found in avant-garde creation.

And yet, despite largely conforming to Marinetti’s declared principles, the reception of the new medium was not as enthusiastic as might have been expected and led to a rupture within the Futurist movement between the defenders of the traditional mode of representing reality, associated with the old artistic disciplines (painting, sculpture, poetry, theater), and the supporters of the introduction of new media.



Initially, Futurism’s official position reflected the general opinion of the day, which considered photography a mere technique, a simple instrument devoid of originality for improving precision in the mechanical, superficial, and fragmentary reproduction of reality. This viewpoint was largely due to the stance adopted by the painter Umberto Boccioni,³ the leading Futurist thinker together with Marinetti. Boccioni rejected photography because it did not conform to his concept of art as the transmission of the *élan vital* [life force], as propounded in 1907 by the French philosopher Henri Bergson in *L’Évolution créatrice* [Creative Evolution].⁴

With the aim of revealing the expressive possibilities of photography and in line with Futurist ideas, in 1911 Anton Giulio Bragaglia (1890–1960) proposed a new system for capturing the image in movement, which he termed photodynamism.⁵ It aspired to go beyond the lineal, continuous nature of Étienne Jules Marey’s chronophotographs in order to represent the essence of the dynamism and energy latent within every movement through the use of very long exposures. By demonstrating photodynamism’s capacity to show the *élan vital* through the continuous trajectory of the moving object in the image, Bragaglia strove to refute contemporary criticism of photography. Among his most important images are *Lo schiaffo* [The Slap] of 1910, a provocative depiction of one of the most quintessentially Futurist acts, and the agile movement of the fingers in *Dattilografa* [The Typist] of 1913.

Aware of the significant competition that works of this type could imply for his own investigations in the fields of painting and sculpture, Boccioni took refuge behind his particular interpretation of Bergson’s theories in order to justify his rejection of photodynamism⁶ and his wholehearted defense of the old artistic disciplines. As a result, the Futurists’ official position was based on a synchronic representation of reality based on Boccioni’s simultaneity, as opposed to the diachronic approach of the heterodox Bragaglia, who was interested in expressing the progression of movement in time.

On August 1, 1913 Boccioni issued his final denunciation in the Florentine journal *Lacerba*:

So much the worse for the short-sighted who thought we were in love with the isolated incident – who thought we were amateurs of trajectories and mechanical movements. We have always

fig. 1. Fortunato Depero, c. 1922. *Stabilimento d’arte fotografica A. S. Biasiori*, Trento. MART, Archivio del ‘900, Fondo Depero

fig. 2. *Riso cinico* [Cynical Laughter], Rome, April 1915. MART, Archivio del ‘900, Fondo Depero [cat. 37]

fig. 3. *Autoritratto con pugno* [Self-portrait with Punch], Rome, March 24, 1915. MART, Archivio del ‘900, Fondo Depero [cat. 31]

rejected with disgust and scorn even a distant relationship with photography, because it is outside of art.⁷

This categorical statement can be called into question if we look at Futurist paintings of this period, which are so closely linked to the advances achieved through experimentation with photography. In *Dinamismo di un cane a guinzaglio* [Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash] of 1912, Giacomo Balla translated a stroboscopic vision of movement into playful terms, while in his *Bambina che corre sul balcone* [Girl Running on a Balcony] of 1912 he investigated the painterly potential of Marey's chronophotography. Finally, among the numerous possible examples, an important one is the vibrant movement of the poles of the banners painted by Carlo Carrà in the purest photodynamic style in his *Funerali dell'anarchico Galli* [Funerals of the Anarchist Galli] of 1911.

Sadly, the extremely negative reception of photography made an experimental approach difficult and placed the most visionary artists in an awkward situation. It is significant that the *Manifesto della fotografia futurista* [Manifesto of Futurist Photography] by Marinetti and Tato (Guglielmo Sansoni, 1896–1974) was not published until 1930.

The Futurists principally made use of photography in order to promote the movement through the dissemination of portraits of its leading representatives and images of their works. The first known print associated with the group dates from 1908, showing a proud Marinetti at the wheel of his new car, to which he would refer a year later in his inaugural manifesto when he recounted his famous accident. In the years prior to the founding of Futurism, Marinetti generally had himself photographed in a mocking pose to emphasize his charismatic nature. This attitude would radically change from 1909 onwards, when he became the leader of the principal Italian avant-garde movement, after which he systematically censored pictures in which he appeared in too human a guise.

The first Futurist portrait photographs were taken around 1912 and followed the model evolved in the iconographic tradition of bourgeois portraiture. This is evident in the first picture of the group, in which Marinetti, Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, and Severini are lined up in front of the camera on the pavement in Paris in February of that year, at the time of the exhibition at the Bernheim-Jeune gallery. Interestingly, among the most original contributions of this type is the multi-perspective, pre-Futurist portrait of Boccioni entitled *Io-noi* [I-We] of 1905–7, which reflects his interest in exploring his own identity through the simultaneous representation of his appearance in five different states.

The desire to capture the *élan vital*, which was difficult to achieve in traditional photographs, culminated in 1915 with the official entry into the Futurist movement of Fortunato Depero, who introduced one of the most important contributions to the field of photography, namely photoperformance. With this new genre, Depero strove to portray the subject through his or her gestures and

movements in order to reproduce the emotions and states of mind of the moment captured for posterity [fig. 2, cat. 37]. This approach is closely related to the desire to express vitality and the Futurist spirit, fusing art and life, which was one of the movement's principal aims, as Marinetti explained that same year when he recalled its origins:

It was the *new formula of Art-action* [...] the youthful, modernizing, anti-traditional, optimistic, heroic, and dynamic standard that had to be raised over the ruins of *passéisme* (the static and traditional, professional and pessimistic, pacifist and nostalgic, decorative and aesthetic mind set).⁸

The project advanced by Marinetti was not confined to a simple confrontation between modernity and tradition. Rather, it announced an authentic socio-cultural battle. The Futurist leader was convinced of the need to bring about a profound transformation in patterns of behavior through the incorporation of art into all aspects of daily life. In order to achieve this goal, Marinetti did not hesitate to offer an apology for violence designed to produce a greater impact. By offering this “slap in the face of public taste” he appropriated the well-known slogan, *épater les bourgeois*.

Depero's pugilistic *Autoritratto con pugno* [Self-portrait with Punch] of 1915 [fig. 3, cat. 31] is the most authentic expression of this defiant attitude in iconographic terms and a faithful reflection of Futurism's irrepressible spirit. In the image Depero is shown throwing a punch at the camera and thus at the viewer. Despite the controversy which the medium of photography had generated, the artist continued with his attempt to explore its potential and, following the direction pursued by Bragaglia, initiated a new expressive terrain by associating photography with performance.⁹ For this strategy Depero adopted the provocative dynamic present in the so-called *serate futuriste* [Futurist evenings],



an unprecedented format based on interaction with the public which combined theater with music, political debate, and celebration. The term “performance” was in fact first coined in 1914 by the journalist Paolo Scarfoglio to describe one of these events that took place at Sprovieri's gallery in Naples.

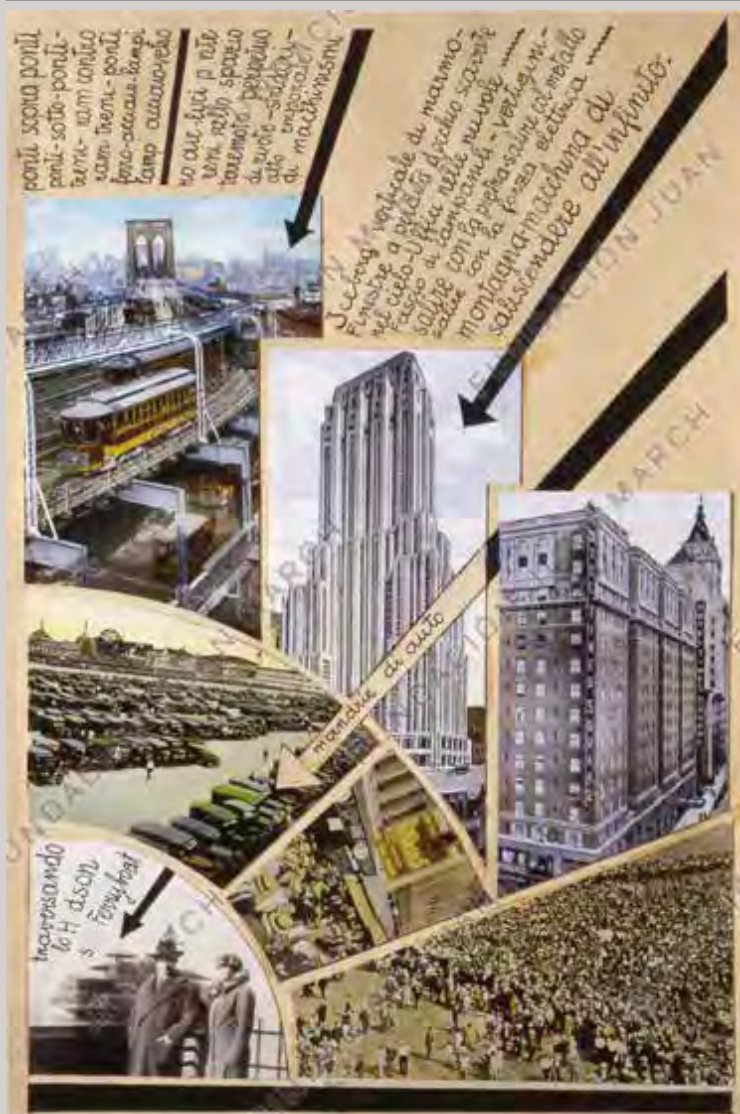
The adoption of an ironic attitude is also evident in the self-portraits of many other intellectuals including Giacomo Balla and the Swiss poet Gilbert Clavel, who appears in an iconoclastic pose alongside a very young Depero in one of his photoperformances [fig. 4, cat. 64]. With their clowning and exaggerated laughter, these artists offered a thought-provoking challenge to the concept of photography as a passive representation of reality. Depero also included brushstrokes of color and texts in his photographs, which he transformed into self-promotional postcards, and thus into forerunners of Mail Art [fig. 5]. As a result, Depero moved beyond the old hierarchy that existed between the artistic disciplines, opening up the way towards the exploration of new creative synergies between different media.

In the manifesto entitled *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe] of 1915 [cat. 36], Depero, together with Balla, announced their intention of “recreating” the universe “entirely” according to the “whims of our inspiration.”¹⁰ In later works Depero would

fig. 4. Depero e Clavel: *mimica!* [Depero and Clavel: Mimicry], Capri, summer 1917. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero [cat. 64]

fig. 5. *Autoritratto con sigaretta* [Self-portrait with Cigarette], Rome, January 1915. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero





give shape to this idea through the use of the techniques of photomontage (the combination of photographic images of different origins) and photocollage (the insertion of a photographic element into another medium such as drawing or painting). Examples include *New York, film vissuto* [New York – A Lived Film] of 1930–31 [fig. 7, cat. 233].

Alongside these original works mention should be made of the important documentary facet of photo-performance. Some of the surviving images evoke the atmosphere of those improvised and unrepeatable spectacles. In some cases they offer an idea of the way a work was created while in others they function as a record of unrealized projects [fig. 8]. Overall, these photographic reportages respond to the desire to unite art and life, as in the film *Vita futurista* [Futurist Life] of 1916, in which a group performance allowed the artists themselves to illustrate the Futurist model of behavior in opposition to the *passéist* attitude. In addition, these photographs were a vehicle for the promotion of their artistic productions, of which the maximum



fig. 6. *Mandrie di auto* [Herd of Cars], 1930. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

fig. 7. *Alla scoperta di New York* [Exploring New York], 1931. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero [cat. 233]

fig. 8. *Fortunato Depero e Filippo Tommaso Marinetti con i panciotti futuristi* [Fortunato Depero and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti Wearing Futurist Gilets], Turin, 1925. Studio Silvio Ottolenghi, Turin. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

expression would have been *Il futurismo italianissimo* [The Very Italian Futurism], a film-performance on the Futurists, their works, and the sites of their creative activities, which Depero announced in 1926 but never actually made.

The transgressive creative impulse that arose with photo-performance was not overshadowed by the aerial visions of Futurist aero-photography in the 1930s. Rather, official Futurism's rejection of photography at this period functioned as a spur to Depero. He used photo-performance to reveal the imperious need to generate real contact with the viewer, provoking an active rather than a merely contemplative response and involving the spectator mentally and physically as a fundamental part of the creative process. This discourse would subsequently be developed by the Canadian Marshall McLuhan in his communication theories on the distinction between "hot" and "cool" media.¹¹

In effect, the limited degree of interaction with the public together with the difficulty of conveying the dynamism of the present and the vibrant energy of the artist constituted the principal reason why Marinetti supported Boccioni's position, hindering the inclusion of photography and subsequently of film in Futurist experiments. The communion between art and technology was thus postponed, given that Marinetti's stance meant that the Futurists were only initially interested in photography as a tool for revitalizing earlier artistic expressions while rejecting it as an autonomous medium.

Through his significant contribution, Depero revealed the ideological contradictions that existed within an unstable context dominated by profound changes. It was from those changes that some of the most inspiring contributions arose for an understanding of the still complex relationship between the world of art and technological advances.

1. "Frusta o dynamite!"; Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, "La Divina commedia è un verminaio di glossatori" (1917), in F. T. Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1998).
2. "S'il est permis à la photographie de suppléer l'art dans quelques-unes de ses fonctions, elle l'aura bientôt supplanté ou corrompu tout à fait, grâce à l'alliance naturelle qu'elle trouvera dans la sottise de la multitude"; Charles Baudelaire, "Le public moderne et la photographie," quoted here from "The Salon of 1859: The Modern Public and Photography," in *The Mirror of Art: Critical Studies*, trans. and ed. Jonathan Mayne (New York: Doubleday, 1956), 232.

3. Umberto Boccioni maintained that Futurist investigations on "simultaneity" had preceded those of the French; Umberto Boccioni, "Il dinamismo futurista e la pittura francese" [Futurist Dynamism and French Painting], *Lacerba*, yr. 1, no. 15 (Florence, August 1, 1913). A year later, in "Simultaneità" [Simultaneity], published in the same journal, he reaffirmed his position, stating that: "Nessuno prima di noi aveva usato questa parola per definire la nuova condizione di vita nella quale si sarebbe manifestato il nuovo dramma plastico" [No one had used those words before us to define the new condition of life in which the new plastic drama would manifest itself]. He thus proclaimed the absolute necessity of incorporating the concept of "simultaneity" into the modern work of art, given that it was "l'esaltazione lirica, la plastica manifestazione di un nuovo assoluto; la velocità di un nuovo e meraviglioso spettacolo; la vita moderna di una nuova febbre; la scoperta scientifica" [lyrical exaltation, the visual manifestation of an absolute newness; the speed of a new and marvelous spectacle; the modern life of a new fever; scientific discovery]; Umberto Boccioni, *Pittura scultura futuriste (dinamismo plastico)* (Milan: Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, 1914), 169–71. One of his most representative visual creations in this sense is *Visioni simultanee* [Simultaneous Visions] of 1911, which he exhibited at the Bernheim-Jeune gallery in Paris.
4. In reality, Bergson was proposing an argument closer to Bragaglia's theory: "En un certain sens, le mouvement est plus que les positions et que leur ordre, car il suffit de se le donner, dans sa simplicité indivisible, pour que l'infinité des positions successives ainsì que leur ordre soient donnés du même coup, avec, en plus, quelque chose qui n'est ni ordre ni position mais qui est l'essentiel: la mobilité [In one sense, movement is more than the positions and than their order, for it is sufficient to make it, in its indivisible simplicity, to secure that the infinity of the successive positions as also their order be given at once – with something else which is neither order nor position but which is essential: the mobility]; Henri Bergson, *L'Évolution créatrice*, quoted here from *Creative Evolution* (New York: Henry Holt, 1911), 91.
5. The first edition of *Fotodinamica futurista* was printed in 1911 by the publishing house Ugo Nalato in Rome after it was turned down by Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia. According to Bragaglia, between 1911 and 1913 there were three different versions of the original work; Anton Giulio Bragaglia, "La fotografia del movimento," *Noi e il mondo* (Rome, April 1, 1913).
6. Boccioni revealed his decided opposition to photodynamism in a letter to Giuseppe Sprovieri dated September 4, 1913, in which he informed him of his intention to retrieve his 1913 sculpture *Forme uniche della continuità nello spazio* [Unique Forms of Continuity in Space] [cat. 11] from Paris in order to show it in the forthcoming exhibition at his gallery. At the end of the text he warned Sprovieri: "Mi raccomandando, te lo scrivo a nome degli amici futuristi, escludi qualsiasi contatto con la

fotodinamica di Bragaglia" [I recommend, in the name of all the Futurist friends, that you avoid any contact with Bragaglia's photodynamism]; Umberto Boccioni, cited in *Archivi del futurismo*, vol. 1, ed. Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori (Rome: De Luca, 1986), 288. This attitude was repeated in his "Avviso," published in October 1913, in which he rejected any connection between pictorial Futurism and photodynamism. "Data l'ignoranza generale in materia d'arte, e per evitare equivoci, noi pittori futuristi dichiariamo che tutto ciò che si riferisce alla *fotodinamica* concerne esclusivamente delle innovazioni nel campo della fotografia. Tali ricerche puramente fotografiche non hanno assolutamente nulla a che fare col *Dinamismo plastico* da noi inventato, né con qualsiasi ricerca dinamica nel dominio della pittura, della scultura e dell'architettura" [Given the general lack of knowledge about art, and in order to avoid any misunderstanding, we the Futurist painters declare that anything relating to *photodynamism* only concerns innovations in the field of photography. Such purely photographic investigations have absolutely nothing to do with the *Plastic dynamism* invented by us, nor with any investigation of dynamism in the field of painting, sculpture, and architecture]; "Avviso," *Lacerba*, yr. 1, no. 19 (Florence, October 1, 1913).

7. "Peggio per i miopi che ci hanno creduti innamorati dell'episodio. Che hanno creduto vedere in noi dei cacciatori di traiettorie e di gesti meccanici. Una benché lontana parentela con la fotografia l'abbiamo sempre respinta con disgusto e con disprezzo perché fuori dell'arte"; Boccioni, "Il dinamismo futurista e la pittura francese," quoted here from *Futurist Manifestos*, ed. Umbro Apollonio (New York: Viking Press, 1973), 110.
8. "Era la nuova formula dell'Arte-azione [...] bandiera rinnovatrice, antitradizionale, ottimistica, eroica e dinamica, che si doveva inalberare sulle rovine del passatismo (stato d'animo statico e tradizionale, professionale e pessimistico, pacifista e nostalgico, infine decorativo ed estetico)"; Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Per la guerra sola igiene del mondo* (Milan: Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, 1915) [cat. 6].
9. RoseLee Goldberg offers an interesting survey of the evolution of performance, from the first *serata futurista*, which took place on January 12, 1910 in the Teatro Rosetti, to the present day. RoseLee Goldberg, *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present* (London: Thames and Hudson, 2001).
10. Giacomo Balla and Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo*, (Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, March 11, 1915). For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 369–75.
11. Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding the Media: The Extensions of Man* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1994).

PADIGLIONE DEL LIBRO

PADIGLIONE DEL LIBRO

delle case editrici Bestetti e Tumminelli e Fratelli Treves alla III^a Biennale d'arte decorativa di MONZA - 1927

Il comitato artistico della III^a Biennale di Monza ha scelto d'accordo con le case editrici Bestetti e Tumminelli e F.^{lli} Treves, il pittore futurista Depero per l'allestimento della Bottega del libro. Invece di presentare due sale appositamente decorate Depero propose di erigere un padiglione all'aperto con assoluta libertà di stile. Il padiglione in un mese venne progettato e realizzato. Depero ha creato audacemente un nuovo saggio d'architettura intimamente legata al tema "L'ARCHITETTURA TIPOGRAFICA". Depero ha già ripetutamente esposto le proprie concezioni sull'architettura dei Padiglioni, delle Fiere e delle Esposizioni, che sono generalmente costruiti in uno stile assolutamente stonato in rapporto al loro scopo pubblicitario ed al loro contenuto. Difatti si vedono padiglioni per automobili, per macchine, aeroplani ecc. in stile

ARCHITETTURA TIPOGRAFICA

Lettere gigantesche, compenstrate, impacchettate, sovrapposte; lettere tolte ai nomi BESTETTI-TUMMINELLI-TREVES formano il blocco centrale dell'edificio ed i plastici laterali esterni. Anche la porta è composta da scritte in rilievo massiccio. L'interno è un continuo sviluppo dell'esterno: le tre grandi vetrine sono composte dalle gigantesche parole scavate nei muri Bestetti-Tumminelli-Treves; ogni lettera è un vano-vetrina per i libri. Gli scanni sono pure delle "E" e delle "R" maiuscole. Anche il soffitto è una decorazione tipografica. Perfino le piccole mensole che sostengono i volumi nelle vetrine, sono delle maiuscole grigie e plastiche, orizzontali, verticali o capovolte. Il padiglione è bianco-grigio-azzurro. Anche questa volta, l'ini-

greco-romano barocco o liberty! Lo stile ch'essi richiedono deve invece essere suggerito dalle linee, dai colori, dalla costruzione degli oggetti ch'essi contengono e per i quali vengono costruiti. Depero inizia con il „Padiglione del libro“ ISPIRATO DA CARATTERI TIPOGRAFICI, questo suo programma architettonico nel modo più audace e persuasivo.

DEPERO, DEPERO,

FUTURISM

BOOKS AND JOURNALS BY DEPERO

PABLO ECHAURREN

There is no doubt about who invented Futurism.

Even if Gabriel Alomar claimed authorship of the term,¹ there can be no question that Futurism as an organized avant-garde was an idea launched by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. He and he alone lent substance to that word (Futurism) and triggered its explosion. He instilled it with a soul, he breathed life into it, he helped it to take wing. Without Marinetti's genius, Alomar's

hunch would have remained dormant. The empty sheath of a chrysalis. A mere invitation to the spiritual and national renewal of a dissatisfied Catalan.²

On the contrary, the tiff about who invented Pop Art is still with us. The English lay claim to being the first in terms of time (Richard Hamilton, Eduardo Paolozzi),³ while the Americans, as ever, claim the lion's share by totally appropriating the

commercial brand (Andy Warhol, Roy Lichtenstein, Claes Oldenburg).⁴

I prefer to think that it was our (Italian) Fortunato Depero who anticipated and practiced Pop Art in a systematic and non-episodic way. But it will be hard to nail this down. A bit like the history of the invention of the telephone which has always pitted Italy against the United States in the figures of Meucci and Bell.⁵ There is no way out, with each

party sticking to its own convictions,⁶ unchanged and brandished.

I believe that Depero was, without a doubt, the first Pop artist in history.

It was he who first linked the popular world with that of the avant-garde; it was he who created a dialogue between the collective imaginary of folklore and that of the most advanced contemporary phenomena; who inserted dolls, engravings, and Tyrolean masks in the cogs and mirages of the mechanical civilization; who coupled the stability of mountains with the changeability of speed; who fixed geologic time with the fluidity of technological time.

It was he who mixed high and low, pure art and applied art, landscape and advertising, in a peerless cocktail of experimentation and ingenuity, godfathering a culture made up of tradition and revolution, myth and play, fable and comic strip, tranquil dream in front of the hearth and hallucination of the chaotic industrial imaginary.

Even the chromatic structure of his more acculturated pictures echoes the clearly defined contrasts of Antonio Rubino,⁷ the *Corriere dei Piccoli*,⁸ and the Liebig *figurini* [trade cards].⁹

In Depero, the man-in-the-street cohabits with the genius of communication, the little child with the architect, the destroyer with the constructor of irreprehensible geometries, the “presentist” with the futurist. Pop before Pop.

We owe it to Depero that the avant-garde knew how to speak the language of the common people, country folk, craftsmen, peasants, and not just the language of refined metropolitan aesthetes.

With him, the avant-garde became an anti-intellectual option.

With him, there were pointers to the prophecy of the global village.

This said, it is well known that Depero was an all-round artist, a 360-degree artist, a global artist.

He dealt with every single aspect of creativity. From painting to sculpture, theater to architecture, fashion to furnishing, to advertising.

But the 20th century was also hallmarked by one figure in particular, that of the painter-writer, the artist seeking perfection and completion in the book form.

Carlo Carrà, Umberto Boccioni, Gino Severini, Giorgio de Chirico, Alberto Savinio, Filippo de Pisis ... even if we do not stray beyond Italy, the list is a very long one.

In this list Depero occupies pride of place. Not only a painter-writer, painter-poet, painter-illustrator, but also an egregious painter-typographer, painter-layout designer, painter-publisher.

Unlike others (Mayakovsky, for example), he did not use techniques and graphics to produce his most daring demonstrations, he applied himself directly, revealing the talent of an outstanding designer, who was every bit a match for champions such as El Lissitzky.¹⁰

Depero was a perfect one-man band, doing everything himself.



fig. 1. *Spezzature (Impressioni-segni-ritmi)* [Fragments (Impressions-Signs-Rhythms)]. Rovereto: Tip. Mercurio, 1913. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero [cat. 16]

fig. 2. Gilbert Clavel, *Un istituto per suicidi* [Suicides' Institute]. Rome: Bernardo Lux Editore, 1917. Archivio Lafuente [cat. 73]

To begin with, his *Spezzature* [Fragments]¹¹ [fig. 1, cat. 16] of 1913 did not stray from the classic fledgling artist's book, meditations and musings of a young man starting out on the road of art, moods typical of a highland expressionism tinged with grotesque origins. In a word, it remained rooted in an old but bookish style, showing and revealing no clue about its author's future developments.

It would take time for Depero to mature and elaborate his approach to the book as an object, but when he did so in 1927, it would be in its most dazzling, astonishing, and convincing expression.

The leap forward was decidedly huge, unexpected, not anticipated by any particular work, leading from *Spezzature* directly to *Depero futurista* [cat. 148],¹² with nothing in between, if we exclude Gilbert Clavel's *Un istituto per suicidi* [Suicides' Institute]¹³ [fig. 2, cat. 73, 74], in which Depero collaborated in a decisive way, introducing strange ominous and metaphysical tones.

It was with a huge jolt of stylistic approach that he passed from an intimist little book to the most resplendent example of the concept of Futurist publishing.

From that moment on, for its author, the book ceased to be a mere collection of pages in sequence, it stopped being a repository for poems and thoughts, or something to be filled and embellished: from that moment on the book became a primary instrument for becoming attuned to mass society.

It became a preferred vehicle of communication in the age of mechanization, it became a concretization of technologized sensibility, it became a typographical system whose content could not be separated from its style.

Midway between the upholsterers' fabrics sample-book and the aviator's manual, the “Dinamo-Azari” (as it is known after the publishers' name) became the most immediate and obvious emblem of how a volume can be so plentiful and impetuous that it has to be stuck and held together with large construction bolts. As if its matter were spilling over, bursting, escaping from its own boundaries. Precisely like a train that has to be hooked up to rails so as not to be derailed.

Essentially, this unusual binding already contained a powerful declaration of intent: the book ceased to be an object of meditation, a comforting, relaxing object to be stroked and perused in a state of tranquility and reflection, and instead became an unpredictable, unsettling, cumbersome object. An object with which you have to come to terms with your whole body. In the end, it turned into something physical.

For Depero, the book was no longer that confidential interlocutor to be chosen from the shelves of a library, no, the book was a fighter, an agitator, an attention seeker, which made it impossible for it to be ordinarily lined up and inserted among other books. This is why the bolted book, on the advice of its very author, should be kept at some remove from the book shelf and laid on a cushion, one of

those garishly colorful creations which Depero's faithful wife Rosetta sewed following designs with geometric inlays provided by her husband.

It was almost a vibrant and throbbing being, almost something living, animated, mechanized, tamed.

Reading fulfils its function of quiet mediation somewhere between reality and imagination, it creates convulsions, restlessness, direct intrusion into the reader's existence, a conjunction between all the various forms of expression.

A new way of transmitting visual verbal thought.

This is why we are sorely lacking the planned, announced, yet never produced phonobook *New York, film vissuto* [New York – A Lived Film] [cat. 233], which, in addition to illustrations, was to have contained free-word compositions, lyrics, typographical landscapes, and two recordings made by the author.

In his books, Depero provides us with all manners of inducements: invented languages (*onomalingua*), phonocompositions (*Liriche radiofoniche*) [fig. 3, cat. 255],¹⁴ proclamations, promotional offers, sesquipedalian slogans.¹⁵

His entire printed oeuvre falls into the category of propaganda: personal, political, corporate.

In it we find the very essence of that modernity in which the mass media act as undisputed bosses, condensed and amplified to the point of being comic (at times involuntarily).

Some of his finds, and even certain of his strange ultra-Fascist remarks are so totally and brazenly artful and subversive as to appear to be on the limit of simple-mindedness, histrionics, and clowning.

It is precisely this attitude of building up things, drumming his own ideas, sounding the trumpets, that makes each one his books somewhat more than a mere set of written and drawn pages.

Leafing through his works, we come upon thoroughly full-blown spots: quips and witty remarks, gags, puns, typical of an advertising campaign, so brazen and well orchestrated as to make one wonder why they were not expanded and marketed, on walls, in streets, on building facades.

Between Depero and the gleaming neon signs, the redundant posters, the commissions for writings and illustrations which hallmark the scenario of the more advanced cities, there really is no break; in fact there is total complicity, there is perfect reciprocity.

And this applies not only to those books in which the advertising intent is declared and vulgar (as for example the *Numero unico futurista Campari*) [Campari Futurist Single Edition] [cat. 223],¹⁶ but to every work produced by his workshop, be it a catalogue for a solo show, a letterhead, or a post card.

Each one of his printed works, albeit mute and voiceless, is a concentrate of noise: it is din, clamor, uproar.

It is the color of time.

With Depero, culture does not remain the privilege of an élite, it is not detached from everyday



life, it is not immune from contamination; it, too, is a product. And as such it is managed and felt.

In Depero, the borderline between art as an end in itself and art in the service of something loses any clear definition forever, everything converges in a single dynamic flux. His conception of art is like a Times Square where the throng, lights, posters, playbills, all help to invent a new mental space.

It is the purest Pop.

The philosopher Antonio Gramsci, who, well before others, understood everything about popular

fig. 3. *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics]. Milan: G. Morreale, 1934. Archivo Lafuente [cat. 255]

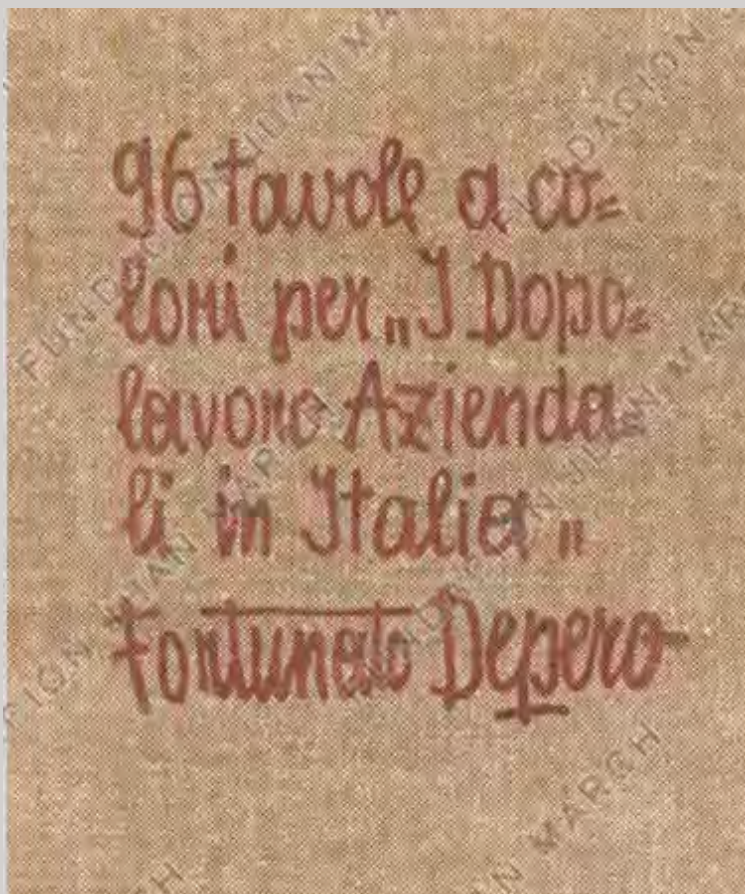


fig. 4. 96 tavole a colori per "I dopolavoro aziendali in Italia" [96 Color Plates for the Italian after-work Facilities of the OND]. Rovereto: Manfrini, 1938. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero [cat. 267]

national culture, wrote in relation to Marinetti that making truly revolutionary art "means destroying spiritual hierarchies, prejudices, idols, rigid traditions, it means not being afraid of novelties and audacity, not being in awe of exhibitions, not believing that the world will collapse if a worker makes grammatical mistakes, if a poem is weak, if a painting looks like a poster, if young people cock a snook at academic and weak-minded old people."¹⁷

The picture that looked like an (advertising) poster was the most violent insult you could make at the time, the sign of a decadence of style, of an enslavement to industry, of a debasement of the artist's mission.

All these things together are precisely the thrust of Depero's message.

Not having qualms about getting your hands dirty, plunging totally into the flow of the contemporary world and topical goings-on, without making too great a distinction between what is noble and what is ignoble, without skimping on your own enthusiasm. An enthusiasm deriving from the awareness of living in an unrepeatable period of great acceleration. In every direction.

And it was in every direction that Depero expended his passion, from public commissions to self-promotion – *96 tavole a colori per i Dopolavoro Aziendali d'Italia* [96 Color Plates for the Italian after-work Facilities of the OND]¹⁸ [fig. 4, cat. 267] and *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* [Fortunato

Depero in his Works and Life]¹⁹ [fig. 5, cat. 269] – from re-visiting the avant-garde in Trento style – *22 disegni* [22 Designs]²⁰ – to the darkest work of propaganda – *A passo romano* [Roman Step] [fig. 6, cat. 271].²¹

He was absolved by the ingenuous conviction that there are no limits when it comes to making art, that everything can be manipulated and regenerated, that everything must be chewed over, and that everything is worth trying.

Even the most foolhardy theme.

Better than a cowboy touring Italy with Buffalo Bill's circus, better than a stockman conquering the Wild West.

The wager of the early 20th century found in Depero a phenomenal performer, an inimitable copywriter, an indefatigable juggler. He can be credited with having done away with the rhetoric of machine worship and the apology of progress at all costs, thanks to the use of a light, almost child-like, playful code. Little dolls, animals, disjointed puppets all inhabit a merry, positive, joyful future, a thousand leagues away from the gloomy and dehumanized atmospheres of *Metropolis* and *R.U.R.*²²

And the same can be said of his works with a commercial goal, cheeky, festive, highly colorful productions made to entertain, not to ensnare.

The fact of shifting willy-nilly from painting to illustration and advertising without making any distinction, with the precise wish to address a broad

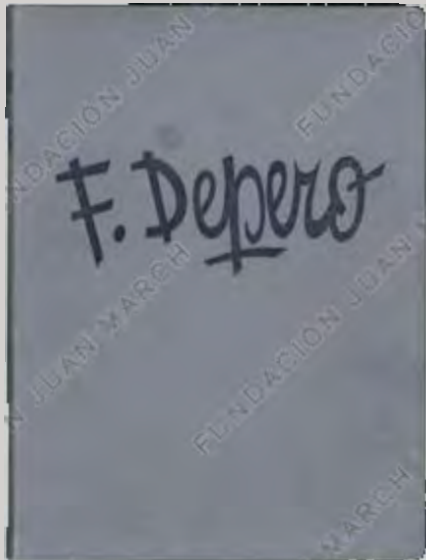


fig. 5. Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life], edited by the Legione Trentina. Trento: TEMI, 1940. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero [cat. 269]

fig. 6. A passo romano: lirismo fascista e guerriero programmatico e costruttivo [Roman Step: Programmatic and Constructive Fascist and Warrior Lyricism]. Trento: Edizioni di creder obbedire combattere, 1943. Archivio Lafuente [cat. 271]

public, not necessarily selected from the salons of Paris and Milan, even a bad-mannered one, makes Depero a Pop artist ahead of his time.

As such Depero does not really have any rivals.

His sensibility grappled with all the realities and fantasies of a century, shook them cocktail-like, encompassed them in a unique world of signs, and offered them up as an enchanted, impassioned, devout vision of mass society.

In his work we never find any critical intent, any exercise of disapproval, any temptation to pass judgment, just a perfect harmony with changing patterns of behavior, complete adherence to the evolution of customs.

Depero is at the same time a refined artist who records changes and a man of the street who witnesses, dismayed and hypnotized, the kaleidoscope of a modernity positively experienced.

A child looking at skyscrapers and a man of the future looking at the Dolomites.

He was the perfect savage of the new sensibility.

Ultimately, every book by Depero is an unexpressed pop-up book, a repressed pop-up book. His figures, his inventions, his advances all look forward, making sketches on pages in every direction. Nothing is excluded. Expressionism, Futurism, Constructivism, promotion for *pro-loco* tourism.

There was no *ism* that he did not try out, that did not engulf him.

Today, no history of art book worthy of the name would fail to include him among the founders of the genre, among those who have scented things, captured things, and seriously played with things.

1. Gabriel Alomar i Villalonga (1873–1941) was a Majorcan poet, essayist, and diplomat. In 1904 he gave a lecture at the Ateneu de Barcelona titled “El Futurisme,” a manifesto encompassing his *modernista* ideals. The text was published as a 75-page leaflet in 1905 by the journal *L'Avenc* — Ed.
2. Alomar's postulates went in a different direction: futurism as a cyclical constant in the history of art — Ed.
3. Richard Hamilton (1922–2011) was a British artist credited with creating Pop Art and being a forerunner of Appropriationism and Installation Art. Eduardo Paolozzi (1924–2005) was a Scottish sculptor, collagist, printmaker, filmmaker, and writer who in the 1960s made a series of prints characterized by Pop culture references and technological imagery — Ed.
4. Andy Warhol (1928–1987) was an American artist, a leading figure of Pop Art and, later, of computer generated art. Roy Lichtenstein (1923–1997) was an American painter and graphic artist, a major exponent of Pop Art whose main source of inspiration was the comic strip. Claes Oldenburg (b. 1929) is a Swedish-American sculptor, author of many happenings associated with the Pop Art movement in the 1960s, who is best known for his large installations of everyday art — Ed.
5. Antonio [Santi Giuseppe] Meucci (1808–1889) and Alexander Graham Bell (1847–1922) both claim to have invented the telephone. Bell obtained the first patent in the United States for an “apparatus for transmitting vocal or other sounds telegraphically” — Ed.
6. From a legal viewpoint, the dispute was settled when the House of Representatives passed Resolution 269

on June 11, 2002, honoring Meucci's contributions and work — Ed.

7. Antonio Augusto Rubino (1880–1964) was the Italian illustrator responsible for the cover of the *Corriere dei Piccoli* — Ed.
8. The *Corriere dei Piccoli* was the children's weekly supplement of the Milan newspaper *Corriere della Sera*, published from 1908 to 1955 — Ed.
9. These chromolithographs were distributed by the Liebig Extract of Meat Company (Lemco) to promote its product – a concentrated beef extract invented by the German chemist Justus von Liebig (1803–1873) – which soon became collector's items. There were different trade card series between 1872 and 1974. In 1998, the Agnesi company, which manages the brand, issued a new series of trade cards — Ed.
10. Vladimir Mayakovsky (1893–1930), a Russian artist, poet, and playwright, was one of the early exponents of Russian Futurism. El Lissitzky (1890–1941), Russian artist, designer, photographer, and architect, was one of the main practitioners of Russian Abstraction — Ed.
11. Fortunato Depero, *Spezzature* (Rovereto: Mercurio, 1913).
12. Fortunato Depero, *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927).
13. Gilbert Clavel, *Un istituto per suicidi* (Rome: Bernardo Lux, 1918).
14. Fortunato Depero, *Liriche radiofoniche* (Milan: Morreale, 1934).
15. One and a half feet long — Ed.
16. Fortunato Depero and Giovanni Gerbino, *Numero unico futurista Campari* (Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931).
17. Antonio Gramsci, *L'ordine nuovo* (Turin, January 5, 1921) [journal founded in 1919 by Gramsci — Ed.].
18. *96 tavole a colori per i Dopolavoro Aziendali d'Italia* (Novara: Istituto Geografico De Agostini, 1938) [A print-run of 200 numbered copies signed by the author was made on the occasion of the III Congresso Mondiale del Dopolavoro (3rd World Congress of the National Recreational Club) in June 1938. Rovereto: R. Manfrini, 1938. The *dopolavoro* were after-work leisure and recreational facilities for workers — Ed.].
19. Fortunato Depero, *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita*, ed. Legione Trentina (Trent: Mutilati ed Invalidi, 1940).
20. Fortunato Depero, *22 disegni* (Trent: Mutilati ed Invalidi, 1944).
21. Fortunato Depero, *A passo romano* (Trent: Edizioni di credere, obbedire, combattere, 1943).
22. *R.U.R. (Rosumovi Univerzální Roboti* [Rossum's Universal Robots]), a science fiction play written by the Czech Karel Capek in 1920 and translated into thirty languages, was the first literary work to use the word “robot” (from the Czech *robota*, meaning forced labor), a term coined by Capek's brother, Josef — Ed.

THE
WRITING
OF

DEPERO

POETIC
TRANSDUCTION

ALESSANDRO GHIGNOLI

Entering the world of Fortunato Depero's writing and in particular his poetry implies an immersion in language. A language that combines facets which might at first sight seem far apart from each other, but which in Depero come together in a poetry that conceives of both the verbal and the visual, as well as the sound element, as integral parts for the construction of a unique type of writing.

The combination of these three aspects, which come to life in Depero's poetry, encourages a focus on and appreciation of a new typology of language, which could be described as a process of investigation into language itself. This construction was necessary for a type of writing that architecturally defined a society engaged in the process of remodelling its ideas. Hence, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the

Universe] [cat. 36], the title of the manifesto signed by Giacomo Balla and Depero on March 11, 1915, a text that emphasizes onomatopoeias, sounds, and noises, among other aspects. This led on to the birth of the onomalanguage [fig. 1] in a text written by Depero in May 1916 but published in 1927, in which he wrote:

It derives from onomatopoeia, from noise, from the brutality of Futurist words-in-freedom. It is the language of the forces of



fig. 1. Frammento di tavola onomalinguistica [Fragment of Onomalinguistic Composition], 1915–16. Whereabouts unknown

fig. 2. Acciaicia (emozioni metalliche – punte – tagli – lame – ingranaggi – elementi di macchina ecc. onomalingua) [Steel Sensation (Metal Emotions – Tips – Cuts – Slats – Gears – Machine Parts etc. Onomalanguage), onomalanguage composition, Rome, 1916. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

nature: wind – rain – sea – river – stream, etc., of the noise-making artificial beings created by man: bicycles, trams, trains, cars, and all manner of machines, it is the combination of emotions and sensations expressed through the most rudimentary and effective language.¹

This language of poetry is not, as commonly thought, the language of poets alone, but that of a new society, hence the symbolic importance of the references to posters and advertising. Here the relationship between words and things, objects that become *other* words,² reveals a moment of encounter and of going beyond meaning, taking shape in a process of transferral, a shift from one place to another. Entering into Depero's poetry implies broadening the path that passes through an interpretative modulation of the verbal, the visual, and the auditory. It is this transformation of codes into a single unit that enables it to be read as a whole. As such, it imposes a reading that enters into the Deperian "gesture" in a complete and global manner.

Depero's discovery of poetic language consisted in seeing how the abstraction of a visual and pho-



netic verbalization was the origin and end of a language that must be the root of all possible language. Thus, in a Bakhtinian sense, the text must overcome its limits in order to create a trans-textuality that combines (as in the case of Depero) aspects that an avant-garde movement such as Futurism was able to bring together. In the prologue to his poems in *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics] of 1934 [cat. 255], Depero wrote:

The precise style which the contemporary poet must have in front of the microphone entails extracting and re-assimilating the very creations of our dynamic external and internal world: with communicative clarity; with emotional vibration; with united and organic imagination even in contrast; with surprising development and structure; with bold simultaneity and a felicitous sense of union between reality and fantasy.³

However, the word is not (or is not just) audible, nor is it (or not only is it) visual. The language of words possesses and maintains a self-sufficient route in relation to the phonetic and the visual, but these three planes – verbal, phonetic, and visual – can communicate with each other and have a point of contact. Depero understood that, at a time when the migration from the countryside to the city had transformed a largely rural society into a modern one and into a construct, the poetic word was no longer merely two-dimensional but three-dimensional. Going beyond Mallarmé and his "throw of the dice" was the obligatory step. Sonority, the vocalicity of the text in itself, thus implied a medieval rediscovery of how to read a poem, and we know the importance of authors such as Leopardi, Tasso, and Dante for the Futurists, such declared enemies of *passéism*.

In Arnold Schoenberg's opera, *Moses and Aaron*, the composer leaves Moses's exclamation: "O Wort, du Wort, das mir fehlt!" [Oh Word, thou Word that I lack!] until the end of the third act, and it is precisely that word which Depero felt to be so necessary given that, as an avant-garde creator, he promoted the interaction between the written word (hand-written or printed) and its visualization with the aim of also conquering the space in which it became sound. Thus the poetic text had to keep in mind the intonation, as there are no oral words without tone, without timbre, without their unique and intrinsic sonority. As Giovanni Lista noted, Depero's language is like "an 'abstract verbalization' of the multi-sensory modern world, in other words, of a type of immediate and direct communication based exclusively on the concatenation of onomatopoeias and noisy and sonorous ascents that restore the psychic aspect imprinted in sensory perception."⁴ Sound must be an integral part of poetic dictation and the *vox* of the word is one possible route for achieving "the lyrical expression of an extremely pure state of mind,"⁵ as Depero himself stated.

In Depero's poems the visual and the audible are "word." Edgar Varèse referred to "organized sound" in the context of music's discovery of other linguistic typologies; in the case of Depero, his poetic activity could be defined as a textualiza-



tion organized into the three codes which he used to “write” a poem. This is evident, for example, in the texts used for his composition *Astrazione di onomatopoeie di gatto e di gallina* [Abstraction of Onomatopoeias of Cat and Chicken], in manuscript poems dating from 1916 in which the word involves an implicit sonority, or in onomatopoeic compositions such as *Acciaicia* [fig. 2] or *Fiorilleria* (*fiori-odori-forme-colori verbalizzati*) [*Fiorilleria* (Verbalized Flowers-Smells-Forms-Colors)], also of 1916. In these texts (and in others), Depero uses a type of sound writing, with the word revealing itself as a place where the semantic fuses and coexists with the a-semanticism of the sound. It would be Gustav Mahler who focused on the sounds and noises of nature as an example of a place where there is no trace of human presence – his *Naturlaut* [sound of nature] – which Depero understood as a

fig. 3. *Tramvai*. *Parole in Libertà* [Tramway – Words-in-Freedom], in *Depero futurista 1913–1927*. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927. Private collection [cat. 148]

fig. 4. *Verbalizzazione astratta di SIGNORA* [Abstract Verbalization of LADY], in *Depero futurista 1913–1927*. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927. Private collection [cat. 148]

fig. 5. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature], 1912. Archivo Lafuente [cat. 7]

fig. 6. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Parole in libertà: Verbalisation dynamique de la route* [Words-in-Freedom – Dynamic Verbalization of the Road], 1915. Merrill C. Berman Collection [cat. 30]

starting point for his own poetic investigations. As noted earlier, we know that other sounds would be present in his artistic and personal development, and it is not by chance that they can be detected in some of his compositions such as the 1916 *Tramvai* [fig. 3] and *Verbalizzazione astratta di SIGNORA* [Abstract Verbalization of LADY] [fig. 4], and the 1917 *Fumando un paesaggio* [Smoking a Landscape], texts that involve a use of both the auditory and the visual code. Here the deconstruction of the page into rectangles that create different spaces for the writing, as in *Verbalizzazione astratta di SIGNORA*, imposes a modular gaze that acts on the rhythm of the reading and thus on its sound.

To return to *Tramvai*, it is clearly evident that almost all the words are stripped of meaning in favor of a range of sounds produced by the tram, which is the subject of the poem. This aspect emphasizes the theory according to which the onomalanguage involves a concept of writing that goes beyond the comprehension of the word as the center and the terrain of a *per verba* communication and becomes a “universally understandable poetic language for which translators are not necessary.”⁶ It should be borne in mind that Marinetti stated his opinions on the comprehensibility of a text in his *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature] [fig. 5, cat. 7] of 1912: “It is not necessary to be understood.”⁷ That need or perhaps even desire not to be understood is even more evident in these poetic works by Depero. In a text such as the 1932 *Subway*, he achieves a union between non-alphabet-based graphic systems; here, the architectural structure determines the reading of the text in a visual process that allows the reader to read/look from top to bottom, from bottom to top, from left to right, and from right to left, in addition to another, alphabet-based system. Within this state of presumed liberty (not, of course, forgetting the words-in-freedom) [fig. 6, cat. 30] what we specifically find is a double reading: on

the one hand, a completely visual one and, on the other, an alphabet-based one. In this case Depero uses two lines of graphic elements although the alphabet-based one also functions to fill out, define, and create spaces in order to articulate the poem's progression.

As the painter Luigi Russolo noted in his *L'Arte dei rumori* [The Art of Noises]: "The Futurist poets, with their words-in-freedom, were the only ones who grasped the full importance of noise in poetry."⁸ In other words, Giambattista Vico's idea in his *Scienza nuova*⁹ of the "parlari mutoli" [mute speaking], in which linguistic forms prior to verbal ones had their fullest expression in visual signs, is taken even further with Depero, who revived the concept of Vico's iconic thought that was so typical of the Baroque era, so closely twinned with the avant-garde. The phonetic element in Depero's poems brought about a shift of the text towards its exterior, a move that functions to interact with time; the sound exists alone and when it is no longer emitted it ceases to exist.¹⁰ The emergence of the word onto the exterior and the element of sound that it involves contribute to a reading that unifies the senses through the act of listening. If we agree with Walter Ong (1982) when he states that oral communication unites people whereas reading and writing leave the reader in a state of solitary individuality, in Depero's poems these apparently contradictory situations rebel and manifest themselves in the verbal, the visual, and the auditory as a game of poetic transduction, co-existing to create a poem, or rather a reading of the poem that can be viable either when selected from the different planes of the writing or in an overall manner. From the present viewpoint, in poetic creation Depero looked for the union of different codes in order to establish a multiple code, an onomalanguage that does not require a translator given that the Futurists' onomatopoeias, sounds, noises, and words-in-freedom made it possible to "speak and communicate effectively with the elements of the universe, with animals and machines."¹¹ In practice, this type of super-code allowed for the possibility of non-comprehension (bearing in mind Marinetti's idea of being understood, as set out in his *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista*) in order to arrive at a "profound sensibility towards the expressive potential of the word, enclosed in its graphic and sonorous meaning, a significant focus on the visual presence of the signs and of their

composition on the page and a distinctive attitude towards the visualization of the page layout,"¹² as Giovanni Lista aptly observed.

From a semiotic and particularly from a Piercian viewpoint, it is possible to see how that North American philosopher's idea about an inference, which he termed "abduction" – a type of hypothesis, in other words, the origin of all scientific thought – can be seen as relevant to a reading of Depero's poems in order to devise interpretative formulations that are at the very least stimulating. In a phonetic reading of any of Depero's poems, particularly his early ones, abduction plays a role in the de-codification of a textual and poetic message that may be ambiguous or even obscure. Through this type of hypothesis, the poem, in all its codes of reading, may reveal itself and open up a set of reading possibilities that expand the meanings and significations of the text that we set out to "read." For text we should understand here, in a semiotic sense, both the verbal part and the visual part, and thus the sound part. Hence Depero's *verbalizzazione astratta* takes shape in a poem that only reveals part of what it wishes to transmit, leaving the reader with all the potential to reconstruct what we might term a "personal" model of the work. The different types of reading of an onomalanguage composition, such as *Verbalizzazione astratta di SIGNORA* and its modular structure on the page, separate the gaze in order to divide it into formats that are closer to a newspaper page than a classic poem. It is thus a question of formulating a hypothesis or abduction that refers to a poem as a text closer to an advert than to a Petrarchan sonnet. The discourse, understood here as the construction of a text in an everyday context, reformulates itself in a work of advertising,¹³ which, in its communicative function, refers to something else in order to sell a product. What interested Depero was "selling" the poem (also in the sense of an ideological act) as something of a typographically seductive nature in order to create complicity between the text and the reader.

It might thus be possible to consider Depero's poems as syncretic texts that contain verbal and visual parts as well as aural ones, as noted earlier. His aim was to emphasize and give visibility to their content through a "semi-symbolism"¹⁴ in which content and communicative expression are closely related. Different categories are to be found in Depero's poems: the topological, in other words,

the spatial relations between the images on the page; the eidetic, which relates to the lines and the typographical characters (printed or hand-written); and the chromatic, if colors are used. Together, all these elements create a meaning that is as figurative as it is enunciatory.

The typographical revolution¹⁵ that so interested the Futurists led Depero to publish a book of the nature of *Depero futurista* in 1927, a publication that represents a group of ideas expressed through a typographic approach which also made use of the experiments of various Russian and German artists. This clearly original idea must have been extremely complex to produce: held together with bolts, the book presented itself as a product, like an industrially manufactured item. In *Liriche radiofoniche*, for example, the search for a new language with which to achieve a medium for mass communication that would reach the largest possible number of people is quite evident. In his introduction to that book, Depero stated: "My radiophonic lyric poems are expressions adapted for long-distance transmission. The listener [...] is to be found everywhere: on the street, in a café, on a plane, on the bridge of a ship, in a thousand different contexts."¹⁶ Here Depero seems to want to say that the "new" poetry could not be reduced to a single place (paper) but that it had to move about in what we might term the sound space; a kind of divorce from the book. Depero's idea of the onomalanguage is quite clear in the above-mentioned introduction, where the Futurist poet writes: "Brevity of time. Concise variety of images. Contemporary subject. Simultaneous and jovial style. Poetic lyricism fused with phonic lyricism, sonorous and noisy; onomatopoeias: imitative and interpretative; invented languages; jangling chants and voices; mental states of surprise."¹⁷ The aim is that of attaining a more rapid and immediate means of communication in which the declamatory element is one of the most important aspects. This is an attempt at poetic dramatization that even envisaged the possibility, announced in the book, of making a recording that has not yet been found.

From the viewpoint of Marcuse's concept of *Sinnlichkeit*, in which "sensibility" and "sensuality" combine to construct a relationship between man and his environment, it could be said that Depero had already implemented the ideas of that Frankfurt School philosopher. Again, with regard to play and aesthetic pleasure, Depero saw

the possibility of happiness, an idea also present in Nietzsche, whose work nourished the artist's own thinking. Depero once again comes to mind in relation to Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization*, in which that author makes use of Freud's idea of fantasy. So notably present in the Italian artist's work, fantasy is an element of freedom that makes his poetic endeavor one of the most liberated and *giocondo* (cheerful), as he himself said in the introduction to *Liriche radiofoniche*. In Depero's writings, play functions to enable reality to shed its austere, dominating presence in search of a new artistic vitality which, for the artist, came to include existence itself and one's own experiences. This utopian and perhaps unreal vision reveals how art and poetry in themselves possess an element of emancipation from reality, or better said, not so much the representation of a reality but its very construction, its different, other realization. It may be that Depero's poetry or his writing in general possesses a *trait d'union* with the game of transformation through its aim to become something else at the very moment when it ceases to belong to the author (bearing in mind Bakhtin's function of language). At that moment, located between the verbal, the visual and the auditory, poetry embarks on its possible route, its journey through spaces of poetic subversion for the utopian creation of a language, or better yet, an onomalingua for the reconstruction and mechanization of the universe. It is impossible to resist the temptation to quote here the following Deperian verses from *Tramvai*: "poglitichilla nello / esofamagosto / eccebomi – lentegiamo / caleicelucere / brillinervi ciarie / DIGERIRE..."¹⁸

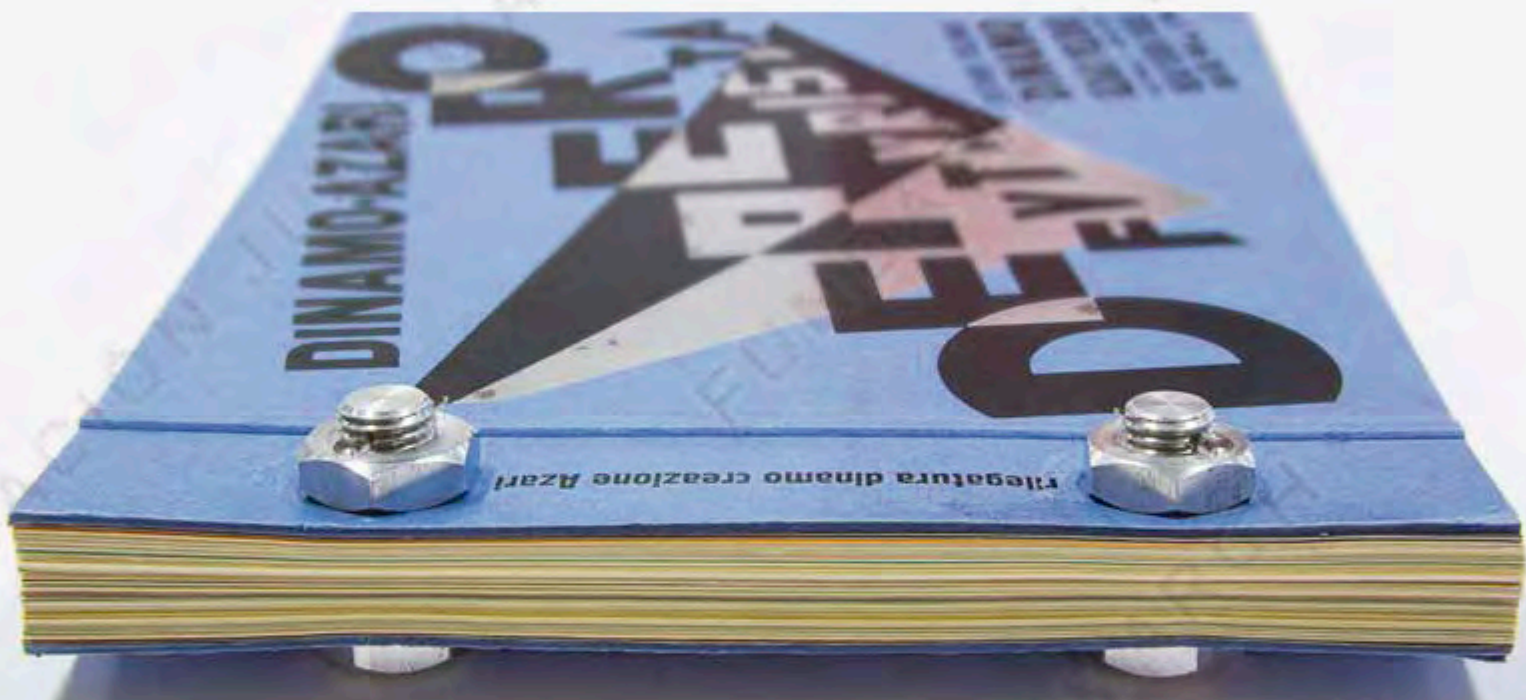
1. "È derivata dall'onomatopea, dal rumorismo, dalla brutalità delle parole in libertà, futuriste. È il linguaggio delle forze naturali: **vento – pioggia – mare – fiume – ruscello** – ecc., degli esseri artificiali rumoreggianti creati dagli uomini: **biciclette, tram, treni, automobili e tutte le macchine**, è l'assieme delle emozioni e delle sensazioni espresso con il linguaggio più rudimentale e più efficace"; Fortunato Depero, "L'onomalingua, verbalizzazione astratta, creazione Depero 1916," in *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012), 42. For a full reproduction of this text in English, see pp. 384–85.
2. See Alessandro Ghignoli, *La palabra ilusa. Transcodificaciones de vanguardia en Italia* (Granada: Comares, 2014).
3. "Lo stile appunto che il poeta d'oggi deve avere davanti al microfono è quello di estrarre e di riassumere le

proprie creazioni dal nostro mondo dinamico esterno ed interno: con chiarezza comunicativa; con vibrazione emotiva; con immaginazione collegata ed organica anche se contrastante; con svolgimento sorprendente ed inquadrato; con simultaneità coraggiosa ed un felice senso d'impasto di realtà e fantasia"; Fortunato Depero, "Liriche radiofoniche," in *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 171.

4. "Una 'verbalizzazione astratta' dell'universo plurisensoriale moderno, cioè di un ordine di comunicazione immediato e diretto, fondato esclusivamente sulla concatenazione di onomatopee e accensioni rumoristiche e sonore che restituiscono la traccia psichica impressa dalla percezione sensoriale"; Giovanni Lista, quoted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 235.
5. "L'espressione lirica di un purissimo stato d'animo"; Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 172.
6. "Un linguaggio poetico di comprensione universale per il quale non sono necessari i traduttori"; *Ibid.*, 42.
7. "Esser compresi, non è necessario"; Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, quoted in *Manifesti futuristi*, ed. Guido Davico Bonino (Milan: Rizzoli, 2009), 118.
8. "Furono solo i poeti futuristi con le parole in libertà a sentire tutto il valore del rumorismo nella poesia"; *L'Arte dei rumori. Luigi Russolo e la musica futurista* (1916) (Milan: Auditorium, 2009), 106.
9. Giambattista Vico, *Principi d'una scienza nuova d'intorno alla comune natura delle nazioni* (1725).
10. See Walter J. Ong, *Orality and Literacy: The Technologizing of the Word* (London: Methuen, 1982).
11. "Parlare ed intendersi efficacemente con gli elementi dell'universo, con gli animali e con le macchine"; Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 42.
12. Giovanni Lista, quoted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 236.
13. It is not by chance that in 1931, Depero wrote the manifesto *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* [Futurism and Advertising Art], which began with the following words: "L'arte dell'avvenire sarà potentemente pubblicitaria" [The art of the future will be largely advertising], and continued by stating: "L'arte della pubblicità è un'arte colorata, obbligata alla sintesi ... l'arte pubblicitaria offre temi e campo artistico d'ispirazione completamente nuovi" [the art of advertising is extremely colorful and must be highly synthetic ... advertising art offers an artistic field and themes which are utterly new]; Italian in Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 135 and 136; for a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 369–75. In this sense, we should bear in mind Depero's *Numero unico futurista Campari*, written in 1931 and produced in collaboration with Giovanni Gerbino and Franco Casavola, which is perhaps the

finest example in his work of the level that could be achieved in the construction of typologies of writing.


14. Omar Calabrese, *Lezioni di semisimbolico* (Siena: Protagon, 1999).
15. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Distruzione della sintassi – Immaginazione senza fili – Parole in libertà* [Destruction of Syntax – Wireless Imagination – Words-in-Freedom] (1913), in the section on the typographical revolution, states: "Io inizio una rivoluzione tipografica diretta contro la bestiale e nauseante concezione del libro di versi passatista e dannunziana, la carta a mano seicentesca, fregiata di galee, minerve e apolli, di iniziali rosse e ghirigori, ortaggi, mitologici nastri da messale, epigrafi e numeri romani. Il libro deve essere l'espressione futurista del nostro pensiero futurista. Non solo. La mia rivoluzione è diretta contro la così detta armonia tipografica della pagina, che è contraria al flusso e riflusso, ai sobbalzi a gli scoppi dello stile che scorre nella pagina stessa" [I have initiated a typographical revolution directed against the bestial, nauseating sort of book that contains *passéist* poetry or verse à la D'Annunzio – handmade paper that imitates models of the 17th century, festooned with helmets, Minervas, Apollos, decorative capitals in red ink with loops and squiggles, vegetables, mythological ribbons for missals, epigraphs, and Roman numerals. The book must be the Futurist expression of Futurist thought. Not only that. My revolution is directed against the so-called typographical harmony of the page, which is contrary to the flux and reflux, the leaps and bursts of style that run through the page itself]; Italian in Davico Bonino, *Manifesti futuristi*, 131; English in Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman, *Futurism: An Anthology* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 149.
16. "Queste mie liriche radiofoniche sono espressioni adatte per la trasmissione a distanza. L'ascoltatore ... si trova ovunque: per strada, nei caffè, in aeroplano, sui ponti di una nave, in mille atmosfere diverse"; Fortunato Depero, "Liriche radiofoniche," in *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 171.
17. "Brevità di tempo. Varietà coincisa di immagini. Soggetto contemporaneo. Stile simultaneo e giocondo. Lirismo poetico fuso con il lirismo fonico, sonoro e rumorista; onomatopee: imitative e interpretative; linguaggi inventati; canti e voci rallegranti; stati d'animo a sorpresa"; *Ibid.*
18. Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, 55.



**THE “BOLTED
BOOK” BY**

OR THE

TYPOGRAPHICAL RACING CAR



CLAUDIA SALARIS

The practice of advertising or, rather, of self-promotion was a trademark of the Futurists' program from the word go. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti adopted every possible method to trumpet his own movement: leaflets and pamphlets, announcements in newspapers, posters, Futurist evenings as self-publicizing merry-go-rounds, advertising contests, activities involving scandal-mongering and systematic provocation, and so on and so forth.

Thoroughly novel methods of broadcasting culture were undeniably involved, and it was no coincidence that Aldo Palazzeschi would rightly observe, many years after the Futurist experience, that "Marinetti had understood from the beginning the power of advertising, a power that would eventually accomplish feats and address people from the highest to the lowest, omitting no one within the social structure."¹

Futurist self-advertisement was able to develop above all in relation to the activities of the art houses opened by Fortunato Depero, Giacomo Balla, Enrico Prampolini, Tato, Fedele Azari, Luigi Maggi, Pippo Rizzo, M.G. Dal Monte, Giorgio Carmelich,² and the like. Pride of place among them certainly went to Depero, who, from 1922 onward, used an airplane to distribute leaflets publicizing his Turin show at the Winter Club. But the real masterpiece of self-promo-

p. 304. Cover and interior pages of *Depero futurista* 1913–1927. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927. Private collection [cat. 148]

fig. 1. Fortunato Depero getting into a car, with Fedele Azari behind the steering wheel, Turin, 1922. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

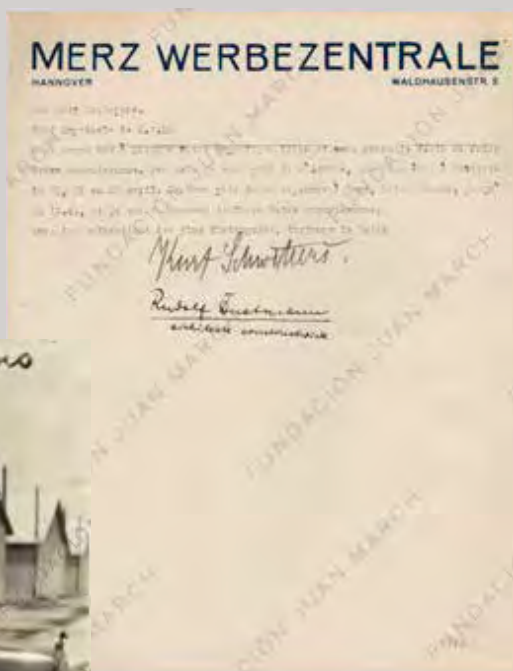


fig. 2. Letter from Merz Werbezentrale (Rudolf Dustmann and Kurt Schwitters) to Fortunato Depero, Hannover, April 6, 1928. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



fig. 3. Letter from Filippo Tommaso Marinetti to Fortunato Depero, c. 1927–28. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

tion was *Depero futurista* [cat. 148]. “A mechanical book bolted down like an engine. Dangerous, for it can become a projectile weapon. Unclassifiable, for it cannot be placed in a bookshop among other volumes. And in its outward form, too, Original-Invasive-Troubling, like Depero and his art,” wrote Azari in his introduction, suggesting it be carefully placed on top of a “soft-resistant Depero cushion.”³ The poet-aviator well understood that volume’s value in terms of uniqueness and surprise, so unusual was it that it seemed like a UFO that had dropped onto the planet of books. And, in effect, each page contained a find, an illustration to be rapidly and visually enjoyed, as is precisely the case with publicity.

In addition, this master book of the Casa d’Arte Depero was the emblem of that overflow into the applied arts, with offshoots in the artisanal and industrial sector, hallmarking the bulk of Futurist experimentation from the 1920s throughout the 1930s. Reducing the distance which traditionally separates pure art from the practical applications of creative praxes, even in “not very orthodox” areas such as advertising, is a recurrent theme in the thinking of many protagonists of Futurism in those years, from Fillia, Nicolaj Diulgheroff, Farfa,⁵ Marinetti, and Giovanni Gerbino⁴ to Depero himself, who, as we know, man-

aged to prepare a manifesto of Futurist advertising art.⁵

Getting beyond the easel picture in the quest for a much larger dimension, ranging from the oil painting to the poster, from graphics to visual poetry, from the plastic complex to the mobile, the toy, the tapestry, the cushion, from design to typographical architecture and the publicity pavilion, is what is pointed to by *Depero futurista*, a survey of prototypical examples to be multiplied on a huge scale. An ambitious project, this, which got under way in 1915 with the codification by Balla and Depero of a “Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe.” Stylistically speaking, the product found a place in the network of osmoses and reciprocal influences that distinguishes the graphic experiments of the European avant-gardes, expressing in its brilliant originality a certain adjacency to Russo-German Constructivism, with which, incidentally, Depero had had a chance to compare himself by participating with Balla and Prampolini in the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* [International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts] in Paris in 1925. More than one connection can be singled out, as far as the page composition is concerned, with *The State Plan for Literature: Collection of the Literary*

Center for Constructivists,⁶ in which the writing is composed with geometric modules and in particular with Roman type.

Through the “concrete” presence of its binding made of actual bolts, Depero’s volume can be linked instead to other book-objects in the avant-garde tradition, such as the *Transrational Book*⁷ by Aleksei Kruchenykh and Aliagrov, with a cover by Olga Rozanova, to which a paper heart with a real button is adhered, and the pentagonal books of Vasily Kamensky⁸ printed on wallpaper, as well as the subsequent catalogues of wallpaper samples designed by the Bauhaus (in the early 1930s), with their blue cover and binding also made with two bolts.

When the book was published, it was christened in the press as the “Atlante Depero” [Depero Atlas]; ten years later, in the issue of *Campo Grafico* devoted by Enrico Bona to Futurism,⁹ the revolutionary import of the aesthetic value of its pages already received historical treatment. The selfsame Marinetti, what is more, had hailed its publication with these words: “The Futurist book *Depero* is the most original, powerful, and Futurist book that has ever materialized in the world: / Its *parolibero*¹⁰ gears are directly meshed with the great planetary and stellar wheels. / The Depero book – a typographical racing car – has

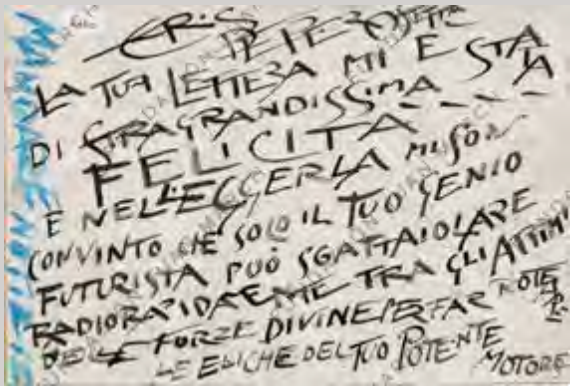


fig. 4. Letter from Giacomo Balla to Fortunato Depero, c. 1929. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



fig. 5. Cover of Depero futurista 1913–1927. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927. Private collection [cat. 148]

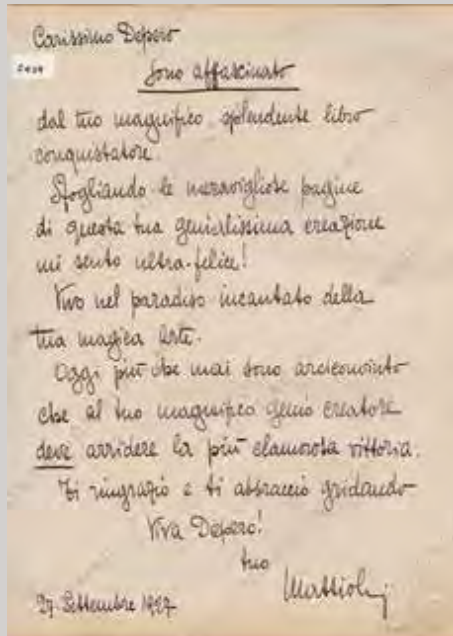


fig. 7. Letter from Friedrich Kiesler to Fortunato Depero, New York, March 30, 1926. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

fig. 6. Letter from Gianni Mattioli to Fortunato Depero, September 27, 1927. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

clearly been printed in the heavens on Milky Way paper beneath the explosion of grenades and arc lights appended to 300 natural suns."¹¹

- * Claudia Salaris, "Il bolide tipografico," first published in Luciano Caruso, *Il libromacchina (imbullonato) di Fortunato Depero con lettere inedite di Fedele Azari e interventi critici di Guido Almansi, A. Lucio Giannone, Arrigo Lora-Totino, Stelio M. Martini, Ugo Piscopo, Claudia Salaris, Christopher Wagstaff* (Florence: SPES, Studio per edizioni scelte, 1987), 46–47, from where it has been translated from the Italian by Simon Pleasance.
- "Marinetti aveva capito fino da allora il potere della pubblicità che doveva raggiungere fatti e persone a tutte le profondità e a tutte le altezze"; Aldo Palazzeschi, "Prefazione," in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista* (Verona: Mondadori, 1968), xxi, quoted here from Claudia Salaris, "Marketing Modernism: Marinetti as Publisher," trans. Lawrence Rainey, in *Modernism/Modernity*, vol. 1 (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), 111.
 - Tato was the name used by Guglielmo Sansoni (1896–1974), an Italian artist and a major exponent of aeropainting within the Futurist movement. Fedele Azari (1895–1930) was an Italian artist and pilot whose *Perspectives of Flight* (1926) launched Futurist aeropainting. Luigi Maggi (1867–1947) was an Italian actor and film director. Pippo Rizzo (1897–1964) was an Italian exponent of Sicilian Futurist painting. Mario Guido Dal Monte (1906–1990)

- was responsible for setting up the Gruppo Futurista and the Casa d'Arte Futurista in Imola. Giorgio Carmelich (1907–1929) was one of the founders of the Movimento Futurista Giuliano — Ed.
- "Libro meccanico imbullonato come un motore. Pericoloso può costituire un'arma-proiettile. Inclassificabile non si può collocare in libreria fra gli altri volumi. È quindi anche nella sua forma esteriore Originale-Invadente-Assillante come Depero e la sua arte" "soffice-resistente Cuscino Depero"; Fedele Azari in the introduction to *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927), [9].
 - Fillia (pseudonym of Luigi Colombo, 1904–1936) was a second generation Futurist exponent of aeropainting. Nicolay Diulgheroff (1901–1982) was a Bulgarian artist who settled in Italy and became a prominent second generation Futurist. Farfa (pseudonym of Vittorio Osvaldo Tommasini, 1879–1964) was an Italian painter and poet who took an active part in the Futurist movement. Giovanni Gerbino (1895–1969) was an Italian poet and a close friend of Depero, with whom he wrote *Numero unico futurista Campari 1931* — Ed.
 - Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* [Futurism and Advertising Art], in Fortunato Depero and Giovanni Gerbino, *Numero unico futurista Campari* (Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931). For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 422–23 — Ed.
 - Gosplan literary: Sbornik Literaturnogo tsentra konstruktivistov*, ed. Il'ia Sel'vinskii and Kornelii Zelinskii (Moscow-Leningrad: Krug, 1924).

- Zaumnaya gniga* (Moscow: [s.n.], 1916 [1915]).
- Aleksei Kruchenykh (1886–1968) was the Russian Futurist poet who invented *zaum* (an experimental language based on the symbolism of sounds). Aliagrov was the pseudonym used by the Russian linguist and scholar Roman Jakobson (1896–1982) in his Futurist poems. Olga Rozanova (1886–1918) was a Russian abstract painter, the wife of Aleksei Kruchenykh. Vasily Kamensky (1884–1961) was a Russian Futurist poet and playwright. For more on Russian Futurism, see the writings of Aleksei Kruchenykh and those published in *Aleksandr Deineka (1899–1969): An Avant-Garde for the Proletariat* [exh. cat. Fundación Juan March, Madrid, October 7, 2011 – January 15, 2012], 312 ff. — Ed.
- Campo Grafico*, vol. 7, no. 3–5 (Milan, March–May 1939).
- Parolibero*, adjective formed from the words *parole* [word] and *libero* [book], in allusion to the words-in-freedom formulated by Marinetti. See Balla and Depero's programmatic text, "Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe," in this catalogue, pp. 369–75 — Ed.
- "Il libro futurista Depero è il libro più originale, più potente e più futurista che sia mai apparso nel mondo. / I suoi ingranaggi paroliberi si ingranano direttamente nelle grandi ruote planetarie e stellari. / Il Libro Depero – bolide tipografico – è stato stampato evidentemente in cielo su carta di via Lattea sotto l'esplosione di granate e lampade ad arco aggiunte a 300 soli naturali."

Uuuuu

310



Depero

NOT JUST CAMPARI! AND ADVERTISING

GIOVANNA GINEX

Today it is common to raise concerns about the “environmental impact” of advertising in our lives and on the fabric of the city. Incredibly, already in 1903 the Milanese architect Luca Beltrami warned against the dangers of bright advertising columns, which he called “small annoyances of progress.” The people of Milan, Beltrami argued, were now used to living with publicity: on streets, on trams, in newspapers. Even children’s dreams were inhab-

ited by characters that peeped out from posters and placards. Why not, he proposed sarcastically, also use the stained glass in the cathedral for “artistic color advertisements illuminated by an electric lamp?”¹

In just a short time, Beltrami’s polemical vision of the future became a reality with the arrival of a new generation of artists, such as Umberto Boccioni and Fortunato Depero, for whom advertisements

were seen as positive and functional elements of the urban landscape. In 1914, for example, Futurist architect Antonio Sant’Elia planned a building with a dedicated space for illuminated signs.

Also in 1914, in an essay entitled “Contro il paesaggio e la vecchia estetica” [Against Landscape and the Old Aesthetics], Boccioni wrote: “Glory to the great red advertisement, avenging nature in the archaeological and triumphing as a complement to

the landscape green with rage. Glory to the great advertisements that recur, violently expressive in their often identical features, exasperating the aesthetes of Arcadia [...] The yellow, red, green posters, the large black, white and blue letters, the gaudy and grotesque signs of shops, emporia, and clearance sales [...].”²²

This sentiment was echoed by Giacomo Balla and Depero in their manifesto, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe] [cat. 36], originally published on March 11, 1915: “Tearing up and throwing a book down into the courtyard has enabled us to intuit Phono-moto-plastic Advertising”²³ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, too, publicly defended luminous signs in an open letter to Mussolini in 1927,²⁴ opposing a proposal to turn off the illuminated advertising in the Piazza del Duomo in Milan. “Progress,” he argued, “with the defeat of the hated 19th century,” covered the face of the Palazzo Carminati, in front of the Duomo, with displays – “electric moons,” Marinetti called them, as opposed to the nostalgic moon, a symbol of traditionalism [fig. 1].

The revolution in the relationship between artists and advertisements brought about by Futurism changed the very definition of advertising. Futurism conceived life as a global artistic expression, collapsing barriers between high and low culture, and major and minor arts. In the process entirely new creative fields became possible.

DEPERO'S ADVERTISING

Critics often point out that Depero overturned in one great leap the traditions of Italian advertising production (which were still very 19th century in their taste). This is undoubtedly correct, but it should be kept in mind that Depero's advertising work, and in fact the entire universe of his artistic production, has deep roots in various cultural, iconographic, and visual fields.

For the innovative aspects of his compositions, and especially his advertising creations, Depero owed a great debt to popular culture and to the puppet theater. He was a keen observer of the output of Picasso and above all of Aleksandr Archipenko (1887–1964), who was invited to Rome in May 1914 to show several works – including *Still Life*, *Portrait of a Lady*, and *Carrousel Pierrot* [fig. 2] – at the *First International Futurist Open Exhibition* organized by Giuseppe Sprovieri in his Futurist gallery.

Sprovieri commissioned Depero to design the poster for the exhibition – probably Depero's first job in advertising. This was followed in 1916 by the advertisement for his own one-man show in Rome, and in 1917–18 by the billboard for *Balli plastici* [Plastic Dances] at the Teatro dei Piccoli, owned by Vittorio Podrecca, in Rome [fig. 3]. Depero's style in these first works is characterized by the use of colors laid in flat tones, perfect for the photo-chromolithography printing technique used in posters, and by detailed attention to the lettering. These works helped to popularize a visual taste that continued to be powerfully relevant for many



fig. 1. Unknown author, Plaza del Duomo, Milan, c. 1930. Private collection

fig. 2. Aleksandr Archipenko, *Carrousel Pierrot*, 1913. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York



fig. 3. *Balli Plastici* [Plastic Dances], poster, 1918. MART, Archivio del '900



fig. 4. Bruno Angoletta, *I Piccoli di Vittorio Podrecca* [Vittorio Podrecca's *I Piccoli*], poster, 1930. Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Castello Sforzesco, Milan



fig. 5. Aleksandr Archipenko, *Signora alla toilette* [Woman at the Bath], 1916. Whereabouts unknown



fig. 6. Sergio Tofano, "Bonaventura" in *Il Corriere dei Piccoli*, no. 46 (Milan, December 1917)

years, as can be seen as late as 1930 in the poster designed by Bruno Angoletta (1889–1954) for the same theater, *I Piccoli* [fig. 4].

In looking at the influences that helped to shape Depero, one must note the strong presence of Russian artists in Italy from the 1890s onward. In 1914 the Russian Pavilion opened at the *XI Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte* [International Art Exhibition] in Venice. In the years that followed, Depero met Russian artists Mikhail Larionov (1881–1964) – whom he later rightly accused of plagiarism – and his partner Natalia Goncharova (1881–1962), both of whom had immigrated to France and then traveled to Rome in the spring of 1916 as part of the entourage of the impresario Sergei Diaghilev.

In 1917 Depero worked with Giacomo Balla on the stage sets for the Ballets Russes. In April of that year, five works by Depero, alongside those of Goncharova and Larionov, Léger, Picasso, and other artists, were showcased in the exhibition of

the collection of the Russian choreographer and dancer Léonide Massine at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome. A few years later, in 1920, Depero visited the *XII Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte* in Venice, which featured works by both Goncharova and Larionov, as well as an important Archipenko retrospective that included a good number of his painting-sculptures [fig. 5].

It is possible to see echoes of these artists' influence in Depero's subsequent work. In 1921 Depero traveled to Milan and then to Rome to promote his Casa d'Arte. In the exhibition catalogue, a text attributed to the publisher and Depero patron, Umberto Notari, proclaims: "We have to revive the art of the billboard. We have to violently force the audience to stand on street corners in contemplation of an irresistible mural panel [...] in front of a billboard by the young artist from Trentino the pedestrian must linger with a cry of surprise."⁵

For all that, we can find other suggestions and cross-pollinations in connected worlds. It is interesting to compare, for instance, the inventions of Sergio Tofano (1883–1973), creator of the character of Signor Bonaventura which appeared in the children's weekly magazine *Il Corriere dei Piccoli* during World War I [fig. 6], with the theater creations and clowns of Depero. The same synthetic touch is present even in Tofano's fragile paper puppets.

THE CASA D'ARTE FUTURISTA AND THE 1920S

In 1919, the young Depero opened the Casa d'Arte Futurista in Rovereto. From that point on, advertising work became the activity that brought the most income to his company.

One of the first commissions Depero received was for the Foire Flottante [floating fair], for which he designed a series of posters in 1920 to advertise Italian products in Mediterranean and Atlantic ports [fig. 7]. Depero conceived the campaign



fig. 7. *Foire Flottante Italienne* [Italian Floating Fair], 1920. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

fig. 8. Enrico Sacchetti, *Foire Flottante Italienne de la Méditerranée et de l'Atlantique* [Italian Floating Fair for the Mediterranean and the Atlantic], 1920. Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Castello Sforzesco, Milan



fig. 9. *Anihccam 3000* [Enihcam 3000], 1927. Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Castello Sforzesco, Milan

for Umberto Notari's Istituto Editoriale Italiano in Milan, publisher of Marinetti's texts and the Futurist manifestos. The Roman painter and poster designer Enrico Sacchetti (1877–1967) worked on the same subject and went so far as to even post the billboards himself [fig. 8]. Comparing the proposals of these two artists is enlightening, since they illustrate the dual trends of production in Italian graphic design in the 1920s.

In 1924 the poster for the mechanized ballet *Anihccam 3000* [fig. 9] – the word *macchina* [machine or car] spelled backwards – with stage sets and costumes designed by Depero, was perhaps the last playbill made by the artist for one of his own shows.

By that time the commercial work of the Casa d'Arte had become more and more important, and it was in this same year that Depero received his first commissions from major Italian companies, including Richard Ginori and Verzocchi.

Indeed, Depero's first ongoing collaboration with a commercial company in the role of publicist was for Giuseppe Verzocchi. Together with a large group of artists, Depero worked on the illustrations of a sophisticated advertising booklet to promote Verzocchi's production of refractory bricks [cat. 134]: the famous *V&D*, destined to become the protagonist of Fascist architecture. Depero also created posters, advertisements, designs for costume parties, and even paintings and editorials for Verzocchi. In 1950 Verzocchi and Depero organized an exhibition in Venice, where art was seen as an extension of advertising. Each artist had to make a painting that included the image of a brick and the brand *VD*. Depero designed the cover for the exhibition catalogue.⁶

PARIS AND AZARI

In 1925, Paris hosted the *Exposition Internationale des Arts Décoratifs et Industriels Modernes* [International Exposition of Modern Industrial and Decorative Arts]. The organization of the event had started before the war, and although it was only implemented a decade later, the organizers remained faithful to the original idea, which excluded any reproduction or imitation of traditional forms. On this occasion Depero's work was shown not in the grandiose Italian pavilion, described at the time as a funerary chapel in ancient Roman style, but in a small space in the Grand Palais, in an exhibition of Futurist art organized by Marinetti, alongside works by Balla and Prampolini. Depero won several awards for his street art work.

Two years later, in 1927, the artist created *Depero futurista*, commonly known as the *libro imbullonato* [bolted book] [cat. 148]. This volume was conceived both as a kind of self-promotion of his first fifteen years of advertising activity and as an example of how an art object can be sponsored. Campari and Richard Ginori each bought an entire section of the book, and they also purchased many copies of the publication itself: Richard Ginori, for instance, bought one hundred and twenty copies.⁷

The system of financing the book through the sale of pages, which was in itself self-promoting and the best kind of advertising art, owes its conception to the initiative of Fedele Azari (1895–1930), an aviator, publisher, painter, poet, and well-placed member of Milan society who was Depero's partner in the venture. In the years that followed, other Futurist artists imitated this mechanism in their dealings with companies in various fields: Marinetti did so with SNIA Viscosa,⁸ Farfa with Ferrania,⁹ and Diulgheroff with Fiat. For all its influence and prestige, the *libro imbullonato* was a huge disappointment in terms of sales: "Our book was a disastrous affair," Depero wrote to Gianni Mattioli, "except for two good sales, one made by Azari to Richard Ginori and the other by myself to Campari. Now, the book is out of date. I use them just for advertising gifts."¹⁰ Only three years had passed since publication when Depero wrote this letter!

CAMPARI

For at least three decades in the early 20th century, the Milan-based liquor company Campari influenced the language of contemporary graphic design through its posters and graphic identity. Demonstrating an exceptional understanding of the potential of a modern advertising campaign, Campari called on many innovative artists, including Marcello Dudovich (1878–1962) [fig. 10], Enrico Sacchetti (1877–1967) [fig. 11], Leonetto Cappiello (1875–1942), Marcello Nizzoli (1887–1969) [fig. 12], and of course Depero [fig. 13]. Depero's graphic

style, with its broken lines, strong use of color, and attention to lettering – inspired by the poetic experience of *parolibere* [free-word compositions] – dominated Italian advertising production.

Depero's work for Campari is documented from 1924–25, but the conclusive agreement with Davide Campari dates from March 1926, and Depero continued to work for the company until 1937. Depero's remit was extensive, from the design of the Campari Soda Vending Machine signs to the presentation at the XV Venice Biennale, held in 1926, of a *quadro pubblicitario – non cartello* [painting advertisement – not a poster] called *Squisito al Selz* [Delicious with Seltzer]. With this painting Depero publicly broke down any remaining frontier between painting and advertising in one of the temples of official art. It was not by chance that in 1931 Depero chose this painting to illustrate the frontispiece of his manifesto, *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* [Futurism and Advertising Art].¹¹

THE THIRTIES

Depero and his wife Rosetta moved to New York in 1928 for two years. This period marked the transition from the use of advertising as a tool to promote the artistic product, to a privileged sector of professional work. Depero saw the new industrial leaders as parallel to the great art patrons of the Renaissance:

Even today we have captains of business who run powerful campaigns in order to publicize their battles, their labors on behalf of their own projects and products – for example, PIRELLI,¹² the king of infinite rubber forests, the owner of mountains of rubber, who produces millions of tires that give or increase the world's speed – isn't that a poem? a drama? a painting? the awesome architecture of the highest poetry, the most magical palette, the most diabolic fantasy? –

ANSALDO – FIAT – MARCHETTI – CAPRONI – ITALIA – LANCIA – ISOTTA FRASCHINI – ALFA ROMEO – BIANCHI,¹³ etc., aren't they miracle factories which create and hurl forth mechanical furies – mechanical sirens – mechanical eagles [...] creating new super delights: the ecstasy of *speed* and *space*?¹⁴

Advertising for Depero ceased to be a secondary means of modern communication; it became the mode of communication *par excellence*, the only art possible.

PIRELLI

In the 1920s Pirelli was one of the most important Italian and European companies. Depero's relation to the company, however, was little known until I studied the documentation at the MART–Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto and in the Pirelli Company archive with a view to charting the stages of that relationship. The story exemplifies both the approach of Depero's Casa d'Arte Futurista with potential customers, and the difficulties Depero encountered when trying to convince clients to accept his innovative graphic designs.

In late 1927 Azari urged Depero to get in touch with Pirelli to offer them his services in general, and in particular to make decorative designs for the



fig. 10. Marcello Dudovich, *Bitter Campari*, c. 1904. Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Castello Sforzesco, Milan

fig. 11. Enrico Sacchetti, *Bitter Campari*, 1931. Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Castello Sforzesco, Milan

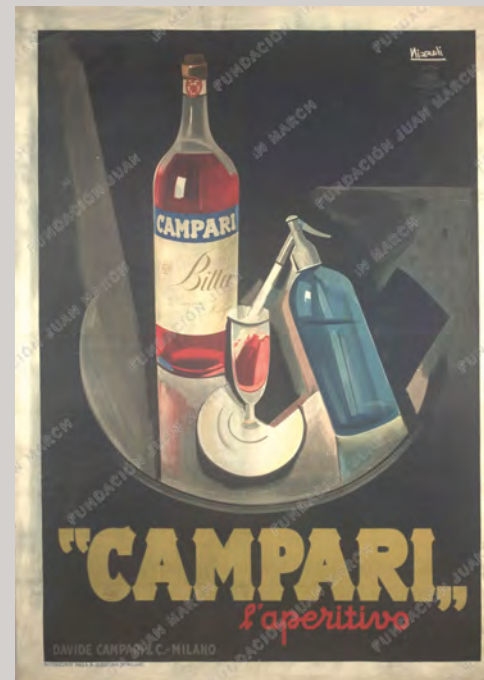


fig. 12. Marcello Nizzoli, *Campari l'aperitivo* [Campari Aperitif], 1931. Civica Raccolta delle Stampe Achille Bertarelli, Castello Sforzesco, Milan

fig. 13. *Se la pioggia fosse di Bitter Campari* [If the rain were a Bitter Campari], 1926–27. MART, Archivio del '900

new rubber floors which the company had just put on the market.¹⁵ He also proposed creating the advertising campaign for Pirelli in the United States. The company thanked Depero for sending a copy of his bolted book (which of course the author had presented as a kind of calling card) but declined the offer.¹⁶ Between 1938 and 1939 Depero tried again, for the last time, to work for Pirelli. He made two advertisement sketches for gas masks, but they do not appear to have been welcomed by Pirelli [fig. 14].

At the same time, the Bianchi Company – manufacturer of automobiles, motorcycles, and cycles – also rejected Depero’s proposals, citing economic reasons. Recently, an advertising sign was discovered underneath Depero’s *Motociclista, solido in velocità* [Biker, Solidified in Speed] painting [fig. 15, see cat. 153], probably part of this abandoned campaign.¹⁷

RADIO ADVERTISING

Another example of Depero’s multi-faceted talent in advertising was the publication in 1934 of a book titled *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics] [cat. 255]: “I have defined these lyrics as ‘radiophonic’ because some of them were created specifically for the radio and because the others also contain the necessary elements that radio broadcasting requires.”¹⁸ In Italy, the Società Italiana Pubblicità Radiofonica Anonima (SIPRA) was established in 1926, while in the United States, Procter & Gamble produced and sponsored the first radio soap opera to promote their products in 1930. Thus, even in this specific area Depero was an avant-garde author. His first *liriche pubblicitarie* [advertising lyrics] date from February 1928. These Futurist poems were short slogans or narratives for products for which the artist had already received poster or other advertising commissions, such as the Bitter and Cordial Campari or Magnesia S. Pellegrino. For Pirelli, too, Depero created a number of lyrics in the early 1930s extolling the glories of Pirelli foam.¹⁹

ARCHITECTURAL ADVERTISING

Beginning in the second half of the 19th century, the temporary architecture of fair stands, shops, and kiosks became fertile terrain for advertising. By the 1850s international industrial exhibitions were housing incredible, monumental plastic constructions, often with roots in classical architecture, in which traditional compositional elements – weapons, musical instruments, hunting and allegorical figures – were replaced by product-related items.

Depero experimented more than once with this particular type of promotion. In his 1927 *Padiglione del libro* [Book Pavilion] [fig. 16, cat. 151] at the III Biennale di Monza, Depero turned the entire building into an advertisement using what he called “architectural typography” – huge typeface letters forming the words “il libro” and “Treves” were used as architectural elements in and of themselves. Depero felt that exposition architecture for cars, machines, airplanes, and so on designed in



fig. 14. Study for the Pirelli advertisement *Maschere antigas* [Gas Mask], 1938–39. MART, Archivio del ‘900

fig. 15. *Motociclista, solido in velocità* [Biker, Solidified in Speed], 1927 (general transmitted IR). Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 153]



a Greek, Roman, Baroque, or Art Nouveau style was ludicrous. He believed that the architecture should emerge from the lines, colors, and structure of the objects themselves. Hence his creation of the Bestetti, Tumminelli and Treves book pavilion inspired by typographic fonts. Later Depero followed the same approach in a pavilion he designed for Campari in 1933.

EPILOGUE

By the late 1930s, the large advertisement commissions which Depero and his Casa d’Arte had been receiving on a national and international level waned, giving way to a small local clientele. Recent Depero studies have shown that such circumstances were related to the *ritorno all’ordine* – the drastic change in the official art of the regime, and therefore of popular taste, to restore ancient aesthetic values, which left little room for the playful inventions of the Rovereto artist. Be that as it may, Depero continued to create some works worthy of mention during this period, for instance, the posters he designed for the gas distribution company, Società Nazionale Gazometri.

In 1936, *Guida Ricciardi*, the most important handbook for Italian commercial advertising, published a text by Marinetti in which the artist underscored the close link between Futurist art and advertising: “Advertising has only one *raison d’être*: to engage the curiosity of the public with the greatest originality, greatest synthesis, greatest dynamism, greatest simultaneity, and greatest impact. It must therefore be Futurist. It cannot rely on any traditional means or on any usual form. Those hoping

to keep it in an outdated form are damaging a production that has a right to be valued. I consider Futurist advertising designers to be genuine creative artists.”²⁰

It was therefore especially the second generation of Futurists, supported by the inexhaustible vitality of its founder, who in their practice made the most of those advertising systems that were assets of the commercial and industrial world, and which had been used from the very first public appearances of the movement: flyers, newspaper ads, billboards, posters and so on, all used to promote the artistic initiatives of the group. With Futurism, these communication systems entered the universe of art, challenging the negative judgment of most of the intellectuals who criticized Marinetti’s style for being too “American.”

The pervasive interest of the Fascist regime in the world of images in general made its mark

in the advertising field: in 1936 the Sindacato Interprovinciale Fascista di Belle Arti di Lazio organized at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni in Rome the *Prima Mostra Nazionale del Cartellone e della Grafica Pubblicitaria* [First National Exhibition of Billboard and Advertising Graphics]. In the introduction to the exhibition catalogue, Antonio Maraini wrote: “the Union has recognized the singular importance of the billboard and of advertising graphics, which are one and the same thing, for while in any other kind of art it is impossible to identify the client as a category, here you can.”²¹

After this first Roman initiative, in which the artist from Rovereto was not represented, other shows curated by other regional offices of the Union featured Depero’s posters for Campari, Michelin, and other clients, some of which won awards.

On May 29, 1952, Depero was invited to a conference in Milan on the occasion of the *Mostra del Bozzetto Pubblicitario Editto e Inedito* [Published and Unpublished Commercial Advertisement Exhibition]. In addition to presenting some drawings, Depero gave a talk in which he developed the theme of the application of poetry and art to advertising, starting from his Futurist experiments and claiming the centrality of his 1931 manifesto before moving on to discuss contemporary advertisers. At the same time, granting the request made by the organizers of the conference, he devoted some time to the work of Gino Boccasile (1901–1952), a popular illustrator who had recently passed away, a master of narrative figuration still tied to 19th-century naturalism, whose taste was therefore in complete contrast to the cutting edge graphic developments inspired by the Futurists. Depero diligently welcomed the request of the organizers, though perhaps with a heavy heart.

I believe, however, that Depero would not have been sorry to see a graphic invention such as the grid of nine elements repeated as *Nove teste con cappello* [Nine Heads with Hat] – the small tapestry realized during his stay in New York or in any case before 1932, for which he took his inspiration from the structure of the cover he had made for the December 1927 issue of *Emporium* [fig. 17, cat. 152] – next to a work by Andy Warhol, who was, in fact, at the beginning of his career in the advertising business, as was our artist from Rovereto.

* This essay is an extended version of the paper developed for the Fortunato Depero Study Day organized by the Center for Italian Modern Art, CIMA, in New York on February 21, 2014.

1. Trisbis (pseudonym of Luca Beltrami, 1854–1933), “Le colonne luminose nella civiltà moderna,” *La Perseveranza* (Milan, November 21, 1903).
2. “Gloria alla grande *réclame* rossa, rivendicatrice della natura nell’archeologico e trionfante come complementare sul paesaggio verde di rabbia. Gloria alle grandi *réclames* che si ripetono violentemente espressive a tratti uguali, esasperando gli esteti dell’arcadia [...] Le affiches gialle, rosse, verdi, le grandi lettere nere, bianche e blu, le insegne sfacciate e grottesche dei negozi, dei bazar, delle liquidazioni [...]”; Umberto Boccioni, “Contro il paesaggio e la vecchia estetica”

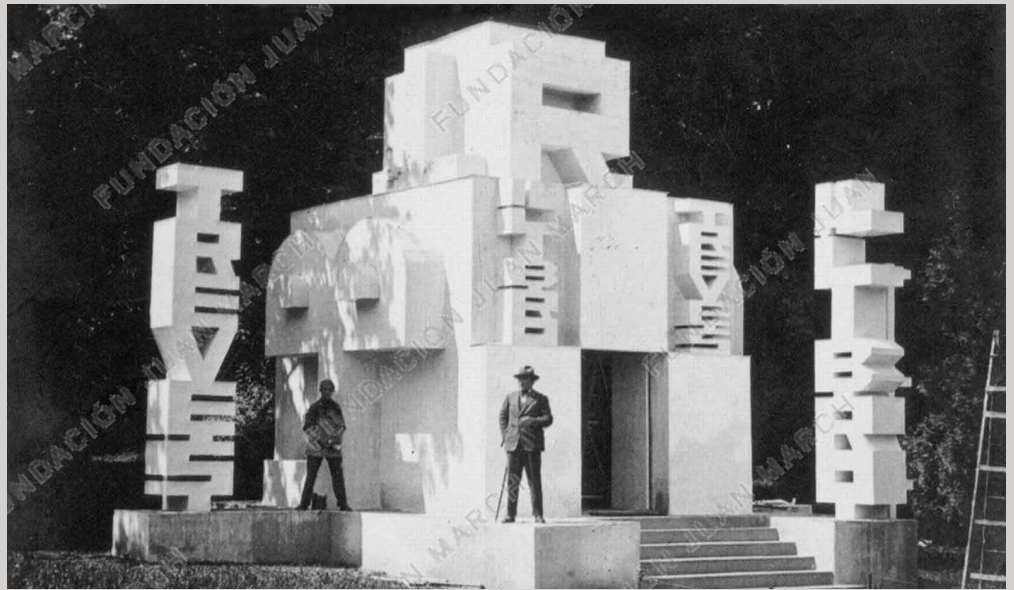


fig. 16. Bestetti-Tumminelli and Treves book pavilion at the III International Exhibition of Decorative Arts, Monza, 1927. MART, Archivio del’900 [cat. 151]

fig. 17. *Emporium*, vol. 66, no. 369 (Bergamo, December 1927). Archivo Lafuente [cat. 152]




fig. 18. Andy Warhol, *Marilyn Diptych*, 1962. The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc.

- (1914), quoted from Angelo Maria Ripellino, *L'arte della fuga* (Naples: Guida, 1987), 123.
3. "L'aver lacerato e gettato nel cortile un libro, ci fa intuire la réclame fono-moto-plastica"; Giacomo Balla and Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* (1915). For a full reproduction of this text in English, see pp. 369–75.
 4. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, "Gli avvisi luminosi. Lettera aperta a S.E. Mussolini," *L'Impero*, V, no. 37 (February 12, 1927).
 5. "Noi dobbiamo risuscitare l'arte del cartellone. Noi dobbiamo violentemente costringere il pubblico a fermarsi agli angoli delle strade in contemplazione di un avviso murale irresistibile [...] davanti a un cartellone del giovane artista trentino il passante deve soffermarsi con un grido di sorpresa"; Umberto Notari, "Depero e la sua casa d'arte," in *Grande esposizione arazzi, cuscini, pittura della Casa d'arte Depero*, exh. cat. Galleria centrale d'arte/Palazzo Cova, Milan and [later] Galleria d'arte Bragaglia, Rome (Rovereto: Casa d'Arte Depero, 1921).
 6. *Il lavoro nella pittura italiana d'oggi. 70 pittori italiani d'oggi. Collezione Verzocchi* (Milan: Raccolte Verzocchi, 1950).
 7. Fedele Azari to Fortunato Depero, January 9, 1928, Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART Archivio del '900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.
 8. SNIA, Società Nazionale Industria Applicazioni, industrial group that began producing synthetic textiles after the war and since 1922 is called SNIA-Viscosa — Ed.
 9. Ferrania, company founded in 1915 devoted to the manufacture of photographic material — Ed.
 10. Fortunato Depero to Gianni Mattioli, December 30, 1930 (Mattioli Archive).
 11. Fortunato Depero, *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* [Futurism and Advertising Art], in Fortunato Depero and Giovanni Gerbino, *Numero unico futurista Campari* (Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931). For a full reproduction of this text in English, see pp. 422–23.
 12. The Pirelli company was established in Milan in 1872 by GiovanBattista Pirelli to manufacture rubber products; however, by World War I it had become a large multinational that also produced insulated cables — Ed.
 13. Ansaldo was a metallurgical company set up in Genoa in 1853. Fiat is a car manufacturing firm founded in Turin in 1899 by a group of investors led by Giovanni Agnelli; in addition to cars, it has manufactured railway engines, military vehicles, farm tractors, and aircraft. Marchetti was an aircraft manufacturer set up by Umberto Savoia in 1915 as SIAI, renamed SIAI-Marchetti in 1943. Caproni was an aircraft manufacturing company established by Giovanni Battista Caproni in Milan in 1908. Itala was a car manufacturing firm founded in Turin in 1903. Lancia is a car manufacturer set up by Vincenzo Lancia in Turin in 1906. Isotta Fraschini is a car and airplane engine manufacturer founded in Milan in 1898. Alfa-Romeo is a car company set up by Alexandre Darracq in Milan in 1906. Bianchi was a bicycle manufacturing firm founded in 1885 which from 1905 began producing cars — Ed.

14. “Anche oggi abbiamo i nostri capitani che annotano poderose imprese per la valorizzazione delle loro battaglie, delle loro campagne per i propri prodotti e progetti – ad esempio PIRELLI, re di selve infinite di caucciù, proprietario di montagne di gomma, produce milioni di pneumatici per dare ed acrescere la velocità al mondo– non è questo un poema? un dramma? un quadro? una formidabile architettura della più alta poesia, della più magica tavolozza, della più diabolica fantasia? ANSALDO - FIAT - MARCHETTI - CAPRONI - ITALIA - LANCIA - ISOTTA FRASCHINI - ALFA ROMEO - BIANCHI ecc. non sono cantieri di miracoli che creano e gettano furie meccaniche - sirene meccaniche – aquile meccaniche ... creando la nuova superdelizia: l'estasi della *velocità* e dello *spazio*?”; Fortunato Depero, *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria*, in Fortunato Depero and Giovanni Gerbino, *Numero unico futurista Campari* (Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931), quoted in English from “Futurism and Advertising Art”; For a full reproduction of this text in English, see pp. 422–23.
15. Fedele Azari to Fortunato Depero, December 30, 1927, Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART Archivio del '900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.
16. Pirelli Company to Fortunato De Pero [Depero], June 21, 1928, Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART Archivio del '900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.
17. This find was first described by Gianluca Poldi at the Fortunato Depero Study Day, Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA), New York, February 21, 2014.
18. “Ho definito queste liriche ‘radiofoniche’ perché alcune di esse furono create espressamente per radio-trasmissioni e perché le altre contengono pure gli elementi necessari che le radio-trasmissioni esigono”; Fortunato Depero, *Liriche radiofoniche* (Milan: Morreale, 1934), 7–8.
19. All original Depero writings – both typed texts and manuscripts – are at the Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART Archivio del '900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.
20. “La pubblicità ha soltanto una ragione d'essere: quella di agganciare la curiosità del pubblico con la massima originalità, la massima sintesi, il massimo dinamismo, la massima simultaneità e la massima portata mondiale. Deve essere quindi futurista. Non può appoggiarsi a nessun mezzo tradizionale e a nessuna forma consueta. Coloro che sperano di mantenerla in un'atmosfera passatista danneggiano la produzione che ha diritto di essere valorizzata. Considero i pittori pubblicitari futuristi come autentici artisti creatori”; Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, quoted in Giulio Cesare Ricciardi, *Guida Ricciardi: pubblicità e propaganda in Italia* (Milan: Ricciardi, 1936).
21. “Il sindacato ha riconosciuto l'importanza particolare del cartellone e della grafica pubblicitaria che è tutt'uno, in quanto mentre per ogni altra specie d'arte non è possibile individuare come categoria il committente, per essa invece lo si può”; *Prima Mostra Nazionale del Cartellone e della Grafica Pubblicitaria Roma a. XIV*, exh. cat. Palazzo delle Esposizioni, Rome (Milan: Pizzi & Pizio, 1936).





“THE ART
OF THE FUTURE
WILL BE
LARGELY
ADVERTISING”

BELÉN SÁNCHEZ ALBARRÁN

“Despite its evidently functional purpose and promotional aim, the present publication is conceived in a sincerely artistic sense,” wrote Fortunato Depero in the *Premessa* [Introduction] to the *Numero unico futurista Campari*¹ [fig. 1, cat. 223], a promotional catalogue published in 1931. In it, Depero set out his concept of advertising, making clear a position that he would maintain throughout his career as a designer in that field, namely his intention to abolish the prevailing boundaries between the “fine arts” and the “applied arts.”

A surprising element in the Campari catalogue is the lack of capital letters, a decision that eliminates any hierarchical sense and reveals the artist’s evident intention to implement this principle in both a detailed and radical manner at a time when typography was still dominated by traditional 19th-century linearity. The introduction to *Numero unico futurista Campari* is entirely printed in lower case letters, including the title and the artist’s name at the end of the text. It concludes with a declara-

tion of intent regarding his commitment both to the type of art he describes as of “free inspiration” and to commercial publicity:

while every day i produce paintings of free inspiration, with the same harmony of style, love and no less enthusiasm and care, i exalt industrial products through my imagination.²

We will return to *Numero unico futurista Campari*, but first we must look back to fifteen years earlier in Depero’s career and, with the aim of offering a



fig. 1. "Premessa" [Introduction], *Numero unico futurista Campari*. Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931. Archivo Lafuente

fig. 2. Manuscript of *Complessità plastica - Gioco libero futurista - L'essere vivente artificiale* [Plastic Complexity - Free Futurist Game - The Artificial Living Being], 1914. Private collection



more detailed analysis of his concept of advertising, focus on one of Futurism's seminal texts. This was the manifesto published in 1915 by Depero and Giacomo Balla with the title *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe] [cat. 36].³ In addition to being one of the key Futurist texts – and probably Depero's most important theoretical contribution to the movement – *Ricostruzione* above all reflects the first projection of his multi-disciplinary interests onto other areas, such as advertising, which remained unexplored by the other Futurists. From this point onwards Depero moved away from Umberto Boccioni's legacy and from a purely pictorial or sculptural language, formulating ideas of a more global nature based on his wide-ranging interests with the clear intention of transforming the entire "environment" in which we live our lives. He began to devise new ways of working within what could be termed the settings or context of real life: the city, the theater, domestic interiors, everyday objects, toys, and furniture. As the manifesto's title indicates, the entire universe had to be "reconstructed" or transformed.

Inevitably, the 1915 manifesto retains echoes of some of the theoretical proclamations of early Futurism and of Marinetti's and Boccioni's texts, but here we encounter a qualitative leap, given that Depero's intuitions took shape as concrete realizations and ones far removed from the operative space of painting and sculpture. The manifesto's four pages clearly reveal the nature of his aesthetic, which was more focused on execution and production than on theoretical speculation. Depero was above all a hands-on creative figure and although he formulated various theoretical reflections on the gaze, on the particular sensibility of the artist, on self-promotion, and on advertising for highly innovative industrial products, what differentiates him from the other Futurists is the way in which he put into practice the key theoretical innovations set out in the movement's manifestos.

The 1915 manifesto does not specifically refer to "advertising art" but it already conveys Depero's enthusiastic intention to devote himself to a multifaceted range of activities that would simultaneously make him a designer of products, theatrical sets, publishing projects, and advertisements. In this sense, the direct precedent for *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* lies in Depero's manuscript of just one year earlier, entitled *Complessità plastica - Gioco libero futurista - L'essere vivente artificiale* [Plastic Complexity - Free Futurist Game - The Artificial Living Being, fig. 2],⁴ a text that surprises the reader in the way it is "painted," for it is "drawn" with a brush rather than written with a pen. It is impossible not to see in this text of 1914 the germ of Depero's intention to eliminate the differences between diverse visual communication systems, mixing the language of painting with that of the literary text, as we see here for example.

In *Complessità plastica* Depero refers to the *complesso plastico* [plastic complex] that would subse-

quently become a key element in *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* as an artistic manifestation that is “transcendental electric volitional” as opposed to an “absolute poetry-painting-sculpture-music” and in favor of the “marvelous plastic complex.” While there is no specific reference to advertising here either, the artist lists eight essential characteristics of “complex plasticity,” the majority of which can be applied to his future endeavors in advertising design, given that this plasticity must be “exclusively dynamic and abstract, very transparent, strongly colored, extremely light, luminous, volatile, miraculously shocking” and must “act directly, with absolute vitality, on the onlooker’s spirit.”⁵

Bruno Passamani made an exhaustive comparison between Depero’s manuscript text of 1914 and Balla and Depero’s manifesto of 1915, clarifying exactly what the latter took from the former. Passamani thus analyzes Depero’s contribution to the famous manifesto, which was certainly equal in importance to Balla’s.⁶ Many of the manifesto’s proposals were of course formulated by the founders of Futurism but Depero, who was not so much a theoretician as a hands-on creator, was one of the most active artists in putting its ideas into practice. It would be Depero who gave specific form to the Futurist creed of creating a new world, producing a wide range of useful objects and undertaking numerous publicity projects that appeared in prominent positions in newspapers and magazines, in publications and on the walls of the modern city.

DEPERO’S FIRST ADVERTISING PROJECT AND THE NEED FOR SELF-PROMOTION

Depero’s first direct involvement with the world of advertising design took the form of a poster for a theatrical performance. In 1916 he met Gilbert Clavel, an aesthetically sophisticated Swiss Egyptologist, Surrealist poet, publisher, and art critic. Working with Clavel, Depero conceived his *teatro plastico* project, which took shape as the *Balli plastici* (Plastic Dances) [cat. 79, 81], a five-act puppet and musical performance with music by Casella, Malipiero, Bartok, and Tyrwhitt. It was first performed at the Teatro dei Piccoli in Rome on April 15, 1918. Depero designed the affiche for the show [cat. 76], producing a work midway between a painting and a poster and thus involving that combination of the fine art and advertising idioms which would be so characteristic of his work. His design made use of flat colors and synthetic forms and was painted with oils on canvas. But the *Balli plastici* poster was just the start.

Depero went on to design invitations for his exhibitions and cards to promote his Casa d’Arte [House of Art, fig. 3], which opened in Rovereto in 1919. It represents the synthesis of his global conception of art, understood as a unitary aesthetic project expressed through different artistic techniques: paintings, posters, tapestries, cushions, furniture, toys, etc. Depero would produce his most important publicity, graphic, and publishing projects in the 1920s and 1930s, within the context



fig. 3. Self-advertising card for the Casa d’Arte Futurista Depero [Depero Futurist House of Art], 1921–23. MART, Archivio del ‘900, Fondo Depero

of an Italy that was still influenced by the ornate floral and naturalistic motifs largely derived from French Art Nouveau and the Sezession of neighboring Austria. Depero replaced these motifs with his “artificial living beings” (as he termed them in *Complessità plastica*), which filled the geometrical spaces of his publicity posters (for example, the one for the *Balli plastici*), in which they became vibrant, synthetic, geometrical elements of enormous expressivity and dynamism. These robotic characters are one of the elements through which Depero constructed his own fantastical imagery, playing with them and taking them from the realm of the theater into advertising, painting, and sculpture.

Fortunato Depero’s work in advertising, however, involves more than merely replacing naturalistic imagery with that of the machine. It arises from his vision of advertising as a necessity and an essential element within visual art. In his wall manifesto titled *Necessità di auto-réclame* [The Need for Self-Advertisement, fig. 4],⁷ which, being one of his most unique typographical compositions, he would later reproduce in the pages of his famous *libro imbulonato* [bolted book], Depero wrote:

Self-advertisement is not a vain, useless or exaggerated expression of megalomania, but rather a vital NEED to quickly inform the public about one’s own ideas and works. In all areas of production beyond that of art [...] It is time to be done with recognition of the artist after his death or in advanced old age. The artist needs to be recognized, appreciated and glorified in his lifetime, and to this end he is entitled to use all the most effective and unheard-of means for advertising his own genius and his own works.⁸

POSTER DESIGN: A SYNTHETIC LANGUAGE AND “VIOLENT” CHROMATISM

In the manifesto *Il futurismo e l’arte pubblicitaria*, which Depero published in 1931 in the *Numero unico futurista Campari*, the artist from Rovereto clearly set out what the “art of the poster” should be and should mean, writing that “the signboard is the symbolic image of a product, the felicitous discovery of a picture or shape that can exalt it, make it interesting.”⁹ As Bruno Passamani would observe:

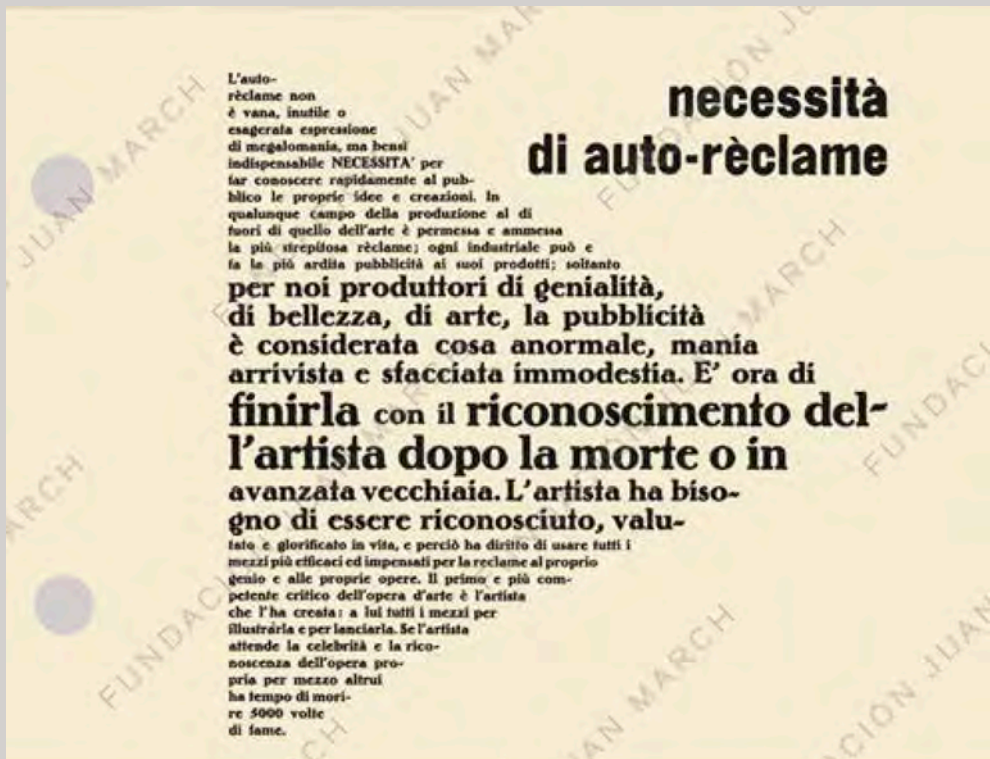
The product is never coldly presented as an object, exhorted or exalted in the traditional manner, rather it is reabsorbed through its symbol or through the action that this demands [...] thus taking shape like a magical apparition, an event, a grotesque or hyperbolic character, transformed by plastic-chromatic exuberance and by formal eccentricity, and arousing automatic sympathy.¹⁰

This idea that the product is a symbolic representation is evident in the advertising work of both Depero and Leonetto Cappiello [fig. 5], one of the best-known poster designers of the day, whom Depero admired. Both artists’ affiches are filled with fantastical creatures that personify the product they are intended to promote, in order to surprise the public and fix these products in our minds, although Depero’s formal solutions are based on a geometrical structure and the elimination of half tones and color transitions in favor of flat tints and strongly contrasting colors. While deploying very different graphic styles, both designers believed that the placard had its own language possessed of artistic merit, and that its message had to be easily and immediately understood by all viewers.

“THE ART OF THE FUTURE WILL BE LARGELY ADVERTISING”

This phrase opens Depero’s *Il futurismo e l’arte pubblicitaria*. In a previous text entitled *L’arte pubblicitaria ed il futurismo*¹¹ Depero uses capitals letters, but in this text published in the *Numero unico futurista Campari* – and as with the above-mentioned introduction to that publication – the entire article is in lower case baring one exception, the names of the industrial companies (whom he considers creators of “authentic miracles, offering artists spectacles that are far more powerful than ‘a cow, grazing’ or ‘a goat, drinking’ or ‘a still life’”), which the author writes entirely in capital letters. Depero thus typographically emphasizes the importance that he concedes to businessmen and industrialists as the source of creative inspiration. For him, the creators of industrial products are a new breed, encapsulating the essence of the present and the future, and in this manifesto he goes so far as to say that “one industrialist is more useful for modern art and the nation than 100 critics, than 1,000 useless *passéists*.”

BALBO – DE PINEDO – DE BERNARDI – DAL MOLIN – MADDALENA – these names have created authentic miracles, offering artists spectacles that



are far more powerful than “a cow, grazing” or “a goat, drinking” or “a still life.”

In his text Depero also underscores the need for the explicit and clear visibility of advertisements displayed around the city and for art to be brought to people in a direct manner outside a museum context:

even art must keep step with industry, science, and politics in the style of its time, glorifying them [...] living, multiplied art, not isolated and buried in museums – art free of all academic restraints

Depero wanted his art to emerge from the museum, led by Futurist principles, to find its place in society and thus function to “glorify” the aptitudes of a dynamic, already industrialized society and the products and services of the major industries of the time. The enormous importance that he placed on the key element in any advertising campaign – what we now term the “brand image” – is evident:

our splendors, our glories, our men, our products, all demand an art that is equally splendid, equally mechanical and swift, exalting dynamism, things practical, light, our new materials²

In his autobiography, entitled *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* [cat. 269],¹³ the artist devotes a short chapter entitled “Cambiamo abito alle città” [Let’s Change the Look of Cities] to promotional signs. He suggests a signage project for cities and villages that is “daring and original, will be of lively and real interest to the city and will contribute to increasing tourism appeal.” He calls this project *1ª Mostra dell’Insegna* [1st Exhibition of Promotional Signage]. Depero also declares that the city needs to update its image, a goal he considers intrinsically linked to poster design: “if

fig. 4. *Necessità di auto-rèclame* [The Need for Self-advertisement], in *Depero futurista 1913–1927*. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927. Private collection

fig. 5. Leonetto Cappiello, *Lo Spiritello* [The Sprite], poster for Campari, 1921. Galleria Campari



we change the face of promotional signs, we will change the face of the streets.”

In addition to championing advertising as almost the only new proposal in modern art, in *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* we encounter another key point for understanding Depero's ideas on this new notion of art: synthesis, which he considered obligatory in advertising design. It is precisely this that sets him apart from so many other artists dedicated to the production of promotional posters: with Depero, the degree of synthesis of the advertising language is evidently more pronounced and is clearly considered by the artist to be crucial for communicating the message and making it comprehensible.

These synthetic solutions are also resolved through a chromatic treatment that Depero habitually described as “violent”: color had to be one of the principal elements for attracting numerous gazes. His distinctive way of employing it, eliminating half tones and transitions, and using flat, bright colors and their pronounced contrasts, are all distinguishing traits of his advertising designs. Color is distributed across the surface of the poster through multiple geometrical planes that create structures of an extremely modern, synthetic plasticity [fig. 6].

Depero also made use of simultaneity, which is essential to most Futurist artistic investigations and theoretical reflections (although it was the Cubists who were the first to formulate this concept and put it into practice). Futurism envisaged simultaneity as an expression of life and as a different, modern mode of perception, to be achieved through varied, conscious experiences and simultaneous sensations obtained through speed. These experiences and sensations should give rise to a simultaneous art, a simultaneous poetry of “words-in-freedom,” a simultaneous music, a simultaneous theater, etc. In other words, a life lived in simultaneity, to which Depero contributed with his striking and innovative advertising posters, characterized by an idiom that was multiple, instantaneous, and intense.

THE “QUADRO PUBBLICITARIO” AND CAMPARI

In his desire to eliminate the differences between art and graphic design (both advertising and editorial), evident in both his numerous practical investigations and his theoretical reflections, in 1926 Depero executed a painting entitled *Squisito al Selz* [Delicious with Seltzer] [fig. 7], which he exhibited at the 15th Venice Biennial. In it, two men are enjoying a Bitter Campari in a colorful, “geometrical” tavern, on the walls of which we see the two words “Bitter Campari.” The artist called this work a *quadro pubblicitario* [advertising painting], once again revealing his way of understanding painting and advertising as two languages of equal importance.

Squisito al Selz is one of many visual proofs of the important relationship established between Depero and a well-known and later legendary Italian

fig. 6. *Mandorlato Vido* [Vido Nougat], poster, 1924. Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive [cat. 130]

fig. 7. *Squisito al Selz* [Delicious with Seltzer], 1926. Whereabouts unknown

fig. 8. Campari Soda bottle designed by Depero featuring the company's new logo, 2009. Galleria Campari

company, Campari from Milan. A period of intense collaboration between the artist and the company began in 1926 and continued until 1939. Particular attention should be paid to the figure of the company's owner, Davide Campari, a notable innovator both in the production of his aperitifs (including Campari Soda) and in the way he promoted them. Campari used extremely unconventional visual supports for his advertising, making his product a very special case within the field of visual communication both in Italy and elsewhere in Europe at the time.

Under the direction of Davide Campari the company pursued its promotional aims through the synthesis of a visionary entrepreneurial spirit and a sophisticated artistic message, fusing the world of art with the brand image. All the artists who worked on the promotion of Campari products – including leading names such as Dudovich, Diulgheroff, Nizzoli, Capiello and Mochi, among others¹⁴ – freely interpreted the client's requirements while Campari in turn always aimed to respect their different ways of working, appreciating the diversity of artistic languages and styles as key elements that contributed to defining the unmistakable Campari image. The success of this company largely lies in a businessman's respect and admiration for the creativity of those who created his company's image and that of his unique and unforgettable products. Campari advertising of these years does not only convey information about the product's quality but also the suggestion of an artistic experience, expressed through the formal construction of images that offer a degree of sensory pleasure and an impact difficult for the viewer to forget.

Fortunato Depero's collaboration with Campari has left a legacy of remarkably beautiful and modern advertising designs, executed on a wide range of supports, from painting (with the above-mentioned *quadro pubblicitario*) to large-format placards, newspaper adverts, and sculptural items such as the *pupazzo Campari* [Campari Doll] [cat. 136]. These dolls were located on top of one of the first drinks vending machines in history, which also offered a different type of drink, the "Campari Soda," a pre-mixed, individual sized beverage in a small, cut-glass bottle based on designs by Depero. This product continues to be sold today [fig. 8].

In the highly original posters that Depero designed for Campari we once again encounter his distinctive geometrical universe, filled with his unique, synthetic mechanized figures [cat. 156,



160, 165, 185, 194, 218, 224–229, 230–32]. These works reveal the particular tension characteristic of his publicity designs, in which he superimposed graphic and typographic elements without distinction. Once again for Campari, Depero produced a large number of advertising designs in India ink that lose nothing of their visual intensity and originality despite only making use of black against the white paper.

Depero's mechanical characters proved very effective with the public, which was surprised by the original and fantastical beings that play the leading role in his posters. Located in the foreground, they establish a direct relationship and active dialogue with the product itself, which Depero almost always placed in the middle ground. The artist's distinctive approach to space in his posters differentiates them from other affiches of this period: his space is full of life in movement and his compositions seem to dance rhythmically in a cheerful celebration. Depero's advertising is more than a mere instrument of persuasion: it is "advertising poetry," as the poet Giovanni Gerbino declared in the manifesto that concludes the *Numero unico futurista Campari*:

by advertising poetry one should not understand a rhyme of words thrown out so that the virtues of an industrial or commercial product can be sung in the obligatory lugubrious manner [...] but rather a true poetry in the most elevated sense of the term.¹⁵

Numero unico futurista Campari, an unusual publication entirely devoted to the Campari company, includes more than one hundred and fifty advertising drawings, various slogans, and numerous typographical compositions (most of them executed in collaboration with Gerbino and with the musician Franco Casavola). They reveal the sophistication and breadth of Depero's gaze in his interpretation of advertising as a form in which the widest range of means could be used to convey the desired message to the viewer.

TYPOGRAPHY AND ADVERTISING

Typography is another key element in the promotional compositions to be seen in the pages of *Campari*. Depero envisaged the letters as architectural structures, urban landscapes, or promotional "exclamations" that aim to surprise and capture the viewer's attention. His interest in architecture used for promotional purposes led him to produce various preliminary drawings for kiosks and pavilions in Italian fairs, such as the *III Triennale d'Arte Decorativa* [3rd Decorative Arts Triennial] in Milan.

With the three exceptions of that fair, the pavilion he designed for the publishers Bestetti-Tumminelli and Treves, and the typographical kiosk he created for Campari [fig. 9, see cat. 242] (of which a large-scale model is in the Galleria Campari in Milan), these projects never advanced beyond the stage of designs on paper or small models.

We have seen and still see pavilions for cars, for machines, for airplanes, for agricultural products, for tourism, and for the widest range of industries (from the wood to the glass industry, from the paper to the printing industry, from agriculture to the machine, etc.), conceived in a Greco-Roman, Baroque or Liberty style; or even, as is common today, in an unsatisfactory, grid-like style devoid of imagination.

Incongruous, monotonous, with colors that are timid or even lugubrious and lacking imagination. In my opinion they require a construction that is not only rational with regard to the light and practical requirements, but also striking in the lines and form; elements that can be intelligently derived from the intrinsic construction of the products they contain. Natural or artificial products that suggest and offer a rich planimetric, structural and chromatic variety.¹⁶

Deploying these theoretical bases, in 1927 Depero worked on the design of the pavilion for the Bestetti-Tumminelli publishers. He turned to the essence of the products to be shown in this temporary structure, namely books, in order to extract the basic element – words – of which they are constructed. Inspired by typographical characters, Depero used huge letters for the design of the facade, roof, entrance, display cases, ceiling, and even the furniture, all of which are inspired by the letters of the alphabet.

The *Numero unico futurista Campari* also includes various compositions inspired by the architecture of New York, where Depero lived from 1928 to 1930. During his time in the city of skyscrapers [fig. 10], which reminded him of the Italian Dolomites, he primarily worked as a graphic designer (although he also collaborated with the Roxy Theater as a set and costume designer) and produced front covers for leading magazines of the day such as *Vogue* and *Vanity Fair* [cat. 197–199, 222].¹⁷ In some of the latter we once again encounter his mechanical figures, like the three-dimensional puppet he had made for Campari two years before.

A SELF-PROMOTIONAL CATALOGUE: THE "BOLTED" BOOK

Depero's multi-disciplinary character and his tireless artistic experimentation led him to produce a work that is considered one of the masterpieces of book publishing: *Depero futurista*, commonly known as the *libro imbullonato* or bolted book [fig. 11, cat. 148]. It was edited by another Futurist, Depero's agent and friend the Swiss aviator Fede Azari, and published in 1927. *Depero futurista* is an example of self-promotion in the way it includes much of the pictorial, written, graphic, and theoretical work produced by the artist since 1913. In



fig. 9. Model of the Campari Pavilion based on a design drawn up by Depero in 1933, 1960s. Galleria Campari



fig. 10. 24th Street, free-word composition, 1929. Carlo Belloli Collection, Basel

addition to being the first Futurist book-object, it is considered by experts to be one of the first *livres d'artiste* of the early avant-gardes.

With its 234 pages, the book's binding is held together by two large aluminum bolts. The front cover offers a remarkable interpretation of the aesthetic of mechanical art with two colors of ink – silver, which was unusual at the time, and black – printed on the thick card in a dynamic typographical composition by Depero. The book contains a wide variety of page layouts with type setting ideas that are clear examples of the Futurist typographical revolution at its most original. It constitutes a brilliant example of how to free the printed page in which Depero demonstrates a modern approach to the arrangement of the graphic and typographical elements on the paper, which varies in thickness and color on different pages. It could perhaps be said that the only elements that all the pages have in common are the double perforation of the paper and the use of only two inks, black and red, in addition to the third color that appears on some of the pages in the form of the tinted paper.

Depero designed the book's pages as individual compositions and as "anti-sedentary typographical proposals," to use his own words, each of them resolved through a different structure but all of them aiming at synthesis. With a markedly promotional character, every page becomes a graphic poster, as well as a remarkable and brilliant interaction of typographies that takes Marinetti's theories in his 1913 manifesto *L'immaginazione senza fili e le parole in libertà* [Wireless Imagination and Words-in-Freedom] to their furthest consequences.¹⁸

Depero's contribution to the repertoire of Futurist typographies is one of the most significant within this avant-garde movement. The relationship between the associative or dissociative compositions of Marinetti's *parole in libertà* is clearly a direct one, but here (and in general in all his typographical and publishing projects) Depero projects these ideas towards solutions which, without losing their poetic dimension, involve the transmission of a clear, objective, and synthetic message that is easily understood by the viewer. Depero's leap forward in this respect undoubtedly locates him in a prominent position within the history of graphic design and modern advertising.

This remains the case even today. In his 2009 extension to the headquarters of the Campari company in Milan [fig. 12], the Swiss architect Mario Botta used brick reliefs to project onto the façade the figures of two of the "mechanical men" that Depero had designed for Campari advertising. Depero, who wrote that "if we change the face of promotional signs we will change the face of the streets," would undoubtedly have been extremely pleased with this example of "advertising art on the walls of the city."

1. "La presente pubblicazione, nonostante la sua evidenza utilitaria / ed il suo scopo pubblicitario, è concepita con un sincero senso d'arte"; Fortunato Depero,

Numero unico futurista Campari (Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931).

2. "Benchè io dipinga giornalmente quadri di libera ispirazione, / con eguale armonia di stile, con lo stesso amore, con no minore entusiasmo / e cura, esalto con la mia fantasia prodotti industriali nostri"; Ibid.
3. For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 369–75 — Ed.
4. Hereafter referred to as *Complessità plastica*. The first reference to this manuscript appears in Giampiero Giani's 1951 monograph on Depero. It was published in its entirety by Bruno Passamani in the catalogue of the exhibition at the Galeria Martano in Turin in 1969 and subsequently in the catalogue of the retrospective exhibition *Fortunato Depero. 1892–1960* at the Museo Civico Palazzo Storm in Bassano del Grappa in 1970. Enrico Crispolti considered it a key document of Futurism and the first draft of the famous 1915 manifesto. See *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [exh. cat. Museo Civico, Turin, 1980].

[For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 385–393 — Ed.]

5. "volitiva elettrica trascendentale"; "un'assoluta poesia-pittura-scultura-musica"; "meraviglioso complesso plastico"; "Esclusivamente dinamica e astratta, trasparentissima, coloratissima, leggerissima, luminosa, volatile, miracolosamente sconvolgitrice"; "deve direttamente agire con tutte le vitalità [...] sull'anima dell'osservatore"; Fortunato Depero, *Complessità plastica – Gioco libero futurista – L'essere vivente artificiale* (see n. 4 above).
6. As is clearly evident in certain passages in the first part of the manifesto, which are directly taken from Depero's manuscript. Bruno Passamani, *Fortunato Depero* (Rovereto: Comune di Rovereto, 1981), 40–48.
7. Text published in the bolted book *Depero futurista* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927). [For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 405–7 — Ed.]
8. "L'auto-réclame non è vana, inutile o esagerata espressione di megalomania, ma bensì indispensabile"



fig. 11. Page in *Depero futurista 1913–1927*. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927. Private collection



fig. 12. View of the Campari Group headquarters in Sesto San Giovanni, Milan (historic premises, 1904, and new buildings by Mario Botta, 2009). Galleria Campari

- bile NECESSITÀ per far conoscere rapidamente al pubblico le proprie idee e creazioni. In qualunque campo della produzione al di fuori di quello dell'arte [...] È ora di finirla con il riconoscimento dell'artista dopo la morte o in avanzata vecchiaia. L'artista ha bisogno di essere riconosciuto, valutato e glorificato in vita, e perciò ha diritto di usare tutti i mezzi più efficaci ed impensati per la réclame al proprio genio e alle proprie opere"; Fortunato Depero, *Necessità di autorreclame* (see n. 7 above).
9. "il cartello è l'immagine simbolica di un prodotto, è la geniale trovata plastica e pittorica per esaltarlo ed interessarlo"; Fortunato Depero, *Numero unico futurista Campari*.
10. Bruno Passamani, *Fortunato Depero*, 184.
11. Manuscript, *L'arte pubblicitaria ed il futurismo*, 1931. Fondo Fortunato Depero, Dep. 4.1.47, MART Archivio del '900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. Published in *Numero unico futurista Campari*.
12. "un solo industriale è più utile dell'arte moderna ed alla nazione che 100 critici, che 1000 inutili passatisti"; "BALBO – DE PINEDO – DE BERNARDI – DAL MOLIN – MADDALENA – questi nomi hanno creato degli autentici miracoli, offrono agli artisti degli spettacoli ben più potenti che 'una mucca al pascolo' od 'una capra all'abbeveratoio' od 'una natura morta'"; "anche l'arte deve marciare di pari passo all'industria, alla scienza, alla politica, alla mode del tempo, glorificandole [...] arte viva moltiplicata, e non isolata e sepolta nei musei – arte libera d'ogni freno accademico"; "lo splendore nostro, le glorie nostre, gli uomini nostri, i prodotti nostri, hanno bisogno di un'arte nuova altrettanto splendente, altrettanto meccanica e veloce esaltatrice della dinamica, della pratica, della luce, delle materie nostre"; Fortunato Depero, *Manifesto dell'arte pubblicitaria futurista* in *Numero unico futurista Campari*.
13. Fortunato Depero, *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* (published by Legione Trentina) (Trento: Mutilati e Invalidi, 1940).
14. Walter Mocchi (1870–1955) was an Italian theatrical impresario who was firmly committed to revolutionary socialism — Ed.
15. "per poesia pubblicitaria non deve intendersi una filastrocca di parole gettate giù obbligatoriamente per cantare con voce lugubre le qualità d'un prodotto industriale o commerciale [...] ma vera e propria poesia nel senso più alto della parola [...]"; Giovanni Gerbino, *Numero unico futurista Campari*.
16. Fortunato Depero, *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita*, 224–25.
17. Although not all of them were published. See the essay by Raffaele Bedarida in this catalogue, pp. 328–37 — Ed.
18. Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *L'immaginazione senza fili e le parole in libertà* (Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, 1913).



DEPERO

AND

AMERICANISM

“I WILL SMASH
THE ALPS OF THE
ATLANTIC”

RAFFAELE BEDARIDA

The art historical literature on Fortunato Depero in New York is abundant and has documented, re-constructed, and interpreted various aspects of the artist's activity during the two years when he lived in this city, from 1928 to 1930.¹ My intention here is not so much to discuss what Depero did in New York, which has been effectively addressed, but rather to look at how his New York experience became so prominent, starting from the artist's

own account of it, and to see why the fact that he attributed so much importance to New York is significant.²

New York makes its first appearance within Depero's 1940 autobiography, *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life] [cat. 269], with a description of Macy's 1929 Thanksgiving Parade: "The most impressive and characteristic images of this com-

mercial procession are the immense, swinging balloons [...] that represent human and animal figures. Flying elephants and lunar heads smile and float happily above the crowd ... They seem to belong to a fabulous world made of huge, whimsical soap bubbles."³ The passage closes the book's section on advertising and introduces the more strictly autobiographical part, "Brani di vita vissuta" [Fragments of a Lived Life]. Here, New York

Unknown photographer, Depero sitting on his tagged trunks as he waits for the boat that will take him to New York, October 1928. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 7 1/16 x 8 3/4 in. (18 x 21 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



fig. 1. *Big sale (Mercato di Down-Town)* [Big Sale (Downtown Market)], 1929. Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto [cat. 184]

fig. 2. *Exhibition of the Italian Book*, Arnold-Constable & Co., New York, March 15–30, 1929. Photo Frederick Bradley. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

covers by far the largest portion: fifty pages out of eighty.

The prominence given to New York is remarkable considering that Depero was forty-eight years old when he published the book in 1940 and that he had spent just two years in the city; a full decade had passed since then; and, above all, those two years had not coincided with the peak of Depero's career; on the contrary, they had been largely unsuccessful and signaled the beginning of Depero's misfortune in Italy too. A second interesting point is that New York is presented in the book as a lived experience, as opposed to Rome, Capri, or Rovereto, which are discussed indirectly through Depero's artistic production in those cities.⁴ Thirdly, in the grand scheme of the book, which follows a thematic order, advertising bridges the shift from *opere* [works] to *vita* [life] indicated in the title. This is followed by a section on writing, which together with advertising became the artist's most experimental activity after his American experience and, I will argue, his main means to describe New York as opposed to painting. In New York, Depero did not paint canvases, and when he did go back to painting upon his return to Italy he did not focus on this subject.⁵ The work *Big Sale (Mercato di Down-Town)* [Big Sale (Downtown Market)] [fig. 1, cat. 184], which Depero exhibited at the Venice Biennale of 1932 was, in fact, an exceptional case and the only painting in the show dedicated to the city.⁶

GREAT EXPECTATIONS — BAD RESULTS

Depero had expressed his intention to move to New York as early as 1922, but it was only in 1928 that he was able to turn the idea into reality.⁷ Encouraged and helped by his industrialist friends and clients, he nonetheless met with deep skepticism from his artist friends.⁸ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti especially tried to deter him. At that time Paris was still considered the center of the international art

world, and America was, at best, a profitable market. "I was told that there is no art in America," Depero wrote.⁹ During his entire New York adventure, Depero regularly sent Marinetti detailed reports on his activity. These often read like attempts to convince the revered *capo del futurismo* of the value of his American enterprise.

On October 2, 1928, while still on the transatlantic liner *Augustus*, Depero wrote to Marinetti with typical optimism: "I will smash the Alps of the Atlantic, I will build machines made of light on top of the giant American parallelepipeds."¹⁰ Everything looked promising to him. He landed with his wife Rosetta by his side and his recently completed bolted book, *Depero futurista* [cat. 148], under his arm. This landmark publication was a collection of his past achievements and a showcase of his graphic abilities.¹¹ Depero used it in New York as a portable museum and as a means of self-promotion: he donated it to potential clients and exhibited both the book as a unit and its unbolted pages as seen in photographs of the *Exhibition of the Italian Book* of 1929 [fig. 2]. He had also shipped 500 of his art works with which he hoped to conquer the American art market.¹² Through his childhood friend Ciro Lucchi, Depero had arranged a two-year contract with the New Transit Company to open his Futurist House of Art in a hotel on 23rd street in Chelsea. The New Transit partners would give him the space in exchange for a small monthly rent of \$150 and a 20% commission on sales.¹³ The Futurist House would hold a permanent exhibition of Depero's work and would function, similarly to his former studio, the Casa d'Arte of Rovereto, as a workshop for the production of all sorts of



things, merging the boundaries between fine and applied arts. His American business card listed: “paintings, plastics, wall panels, pillows, interiors, posters, publicity, stage settings.”¹⁴ Depero’s ambition did not stop there: as he wrote to Marinetti, his American dream was to open a Futurist school and then to found a Futurist village.¹⁵

As soon as his feet touched American soil, however, the artist realized that things were going to be more difficult than anticipated: he had to pay high customs fees for the twenty boxes of art he was bringing (indeed, he had to borrow some money to pay for that¹⁶); then he had to hire contractors to turn the decrepit Transit Hotel into a usable space; and, far from “smashing the Alps of the Atlantic,” his work shown at the Guarino Gallery actually failed to sell [see cat. 168].¹⁷ Disappointed by the meager earnings, Lucchi and the New Transit partners terminated the two-year contract in April 1929 (just five months after the signing) and asked for a high rental price which Depero could not afford.¹⁸

Despite his unbridled enthusiasm, Depero did have to face certain objective difficulties. Firstly, his timing was disastrous: 1929 was not the best moment to start a career in New York, as this was the period when the financial crisis climaxed with the Wall Street crash. Secondly, he did not speak English [fig. 3]. He hoped he could count on the large Italian community in New York and on the Italian government’s officials: he expected some support for his activity, which he called “the truest and most ingenuous propaganda for *italianità*.”¹⁹ But as he complained to Marinetti, his art did not match the local community’s idea of *italianità*, which was best expressed by the neo-Renaissance palazzo of the Casa Italiana that opened in 1927. As for the Italian government, Depero moved to New York too early: the Fascist regime only started to systematically promote contemporary Italian art in the United States in 1935 during the Ethiopian Campaign, and continued to do so until Italy entered World War II in 1940, as part of its efforts to project a positive image of Italy and to promote the idea that Fascism had turned Italy into a modern country.²⁰ When Depero arrived in America, however, Mussolini was still popular in the United States and was not interested in using contemporary art as a means of propaganda, at least not in a systematic way.²¹ So Depero’s applications for financial and institutional support were unsuccessful.²² Later, when he returned to Italy, Depero played a major role, as we will see, in initiating the debate and cultural trend that lent weight to the United States as *the center of modern culture*, which ultimately led to the aforementioned governmental program of art exhibitions in the late 1930s.²³

Without institutional support, Depero was forced to turn to other means to make a living. After the Wall Street crash, he and Rosetta offered free Italian food to attract potential clients to his studio: Rosetta cooked home-made ravioli and Fortunato fermented grapes in his bedroom to produce wine, an illegal but lucrative activity during Prohibition.²⁴

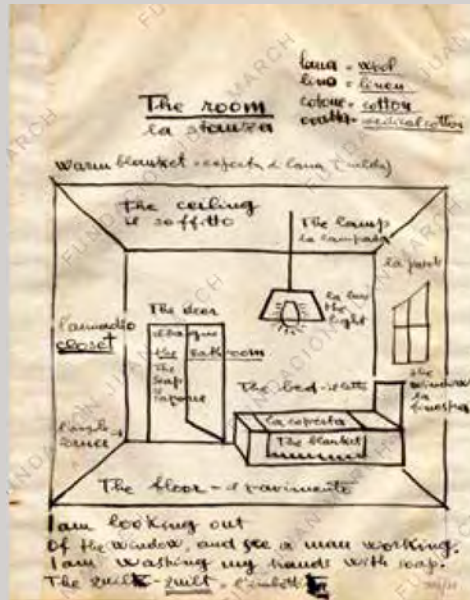


fig. 4. Study for a Depero Futurist Art advertisement, 1929. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

fig. 3. English exercise page, c. 1928-30. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

fig. 5. *Vanity Fair*, vol. 36, no. 1 (New York, March 1931). Merrill C. Berman Collection [cat. 222]



Despite these culinary stratagems, Depero received an overwhelming number of refusals: he failed to sell the paintings brought from Italy, and of the many project proposals sent around, he only obtained minor commissions. *Vogue* magazine rejected his sketches, calling them “too heavy” [see cat. 198].²⁵ He was luckier with *Vanity Fair*. But of Depero’s many submissions, the magazine only published two covers, one of which was printed in March 1931, after he had returned to Italy [fig. 5, cat. 197, 199, 222].²⁶ His long-time acquaintance, the dancer and choreographer Léonide Massine, got him a job at the Roxy Theater. Depero greatly admired that grand temple of the movie and entertainment industry on Broadway, and depicted it many times in his drawings and free-word compositions, but his role at the Roxy consisted only of small, short-term commissions. His ambitious proposal of a show on New York entitled *La nuova Babele* [The New Babel], characterized by a mobile stage set, was turned down [fig. 6, cat. 205, 206].

Depero described the unpleasant and frustrating experience of going to meet a potential client, bringing his sketches with him:

Half an hour of tram and subway, half an hour in a wreck of a tramcar through dirty quarters of ghetto. I stumble and curse, smelling a horrible stink. I walk through the thick rain, closing my drawings and my thoughts within a defying scroll which I keep under my arm ... The metal bridges which I cross are gigantic. [...] I come down from the bridges and get on another tramcar. [...] I get off. I walk backwards and forwards. I ask, ask again and, at last, an iron door bears the number I am seeking.²⁷

The result of all this trouble was a straight-out rejection.

SO, HOW DID NEW YORK BECOME SO IMPORTANT TO DEPERO? When Depero returned to Italy, he continued to fixate on New York City. The discrepancy between Depero’s New York flop and his insistence on its significance can be explained, as Günter Berghaus



fig. 6. *Grattacieli e tunnel* [Skyscrapers and Tunnel], 1930. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

has convincingly proposed, as the result of a form of masochism, a provincialism complex, and a damaged self-image.²⁸ By insisting on his New York experience, however, Depero became a leading voice in the debate on Americanism in Italy during the 1930s, which in turn played a central role in the shaping of modern Italian identity. His *Nelle opere e nella vita*, published in 1940, was largely a collection of previously published material. The chapters on New York, in particular, were the result of an intense production over the span of many years during which, after having returned to Italy, he gave conferences, led radio programs, and wrote articles and *tavole parolibere* [free-word compositions], all focusing on New York. His articles on this city appeared in widely distributed newspapers and magazines such as *La Sera* [cat. 220], *Il Secolo XX* [see cat. 166, 167], and *L'Illustrazione Italiana*. He also included large sections on New York in his books, in *Numero unico futurista Campari* [Campari Futurist Single Edition] of 1931 [cat. 223], in *Futurismo 1932* [F.T. Marinetti in Trentino 1932], and in *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics] of 1934 [cat. 255].²⁹ Depero intended to bring together many of these texts in a book entitled *New York, film vissuto* [New York – A Lived Film] [cat. 233], which he carefully designed and extensively advertised. Conceived as the first book with an audio component, *film vissuto* was a complicated and expensive project. The fact that it was never realized could in part explain why Depero felt the need to include so many of those texts in his 1940 autobiography.

Depero's *Nelle opere e nella vita* can be situated between two groups of books published in Italy right before and after the war [fig. 8]: on the one hand it anticipated a series of memoirs written by mature artists – for example Carlo Carrà's *La mia vita* [My Life] (1943), Giorgio De Chirico's

fig. 7. *Subway*, free-word composition, 1929. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto



Memorie della mia vita [The Memoirs] (1945), and Gino Severini's *Tutta la vita di un pittore* [The Life of a Painter] (1946) – who in the 1940s, at the end of an era, documented their past; on the other hand, it was part of a series of publications, between the late 1930s and early 1940s, which focused on America as the future. Among the most influential were Margherita Sarfatti's *L'America: ricerca della felicità* [America: The Pursuit of Happiness] of 1937 and Emilio Cecchi's *America amara* [Bitter America] of 1939. A third important publication was Elio Vittorini's anthology of American literature, *Americana*, which was prepared in the years 1938–40 and published in 1942 after a notorious episode of censorship.³⁰ My focus here is on the latter group.

In “Il modello Americano,” Umberto Eco described the “American myth” as a key aspect in the idea of modernity for his generation, which grew up in Fascist Italy.³¹ Writer Cesare Pavese similarly recalled this phenomenon:

American culture became for us something very serious and valuable, it became a sort of great laboratory where with another freedom and with other methods men were pursuing the same job of creating a modern taste, a modern style, a modern world that, perhaps with less immediacy, but with just as much pertinacity of intention, the best of us were also pursuing. [...] In those years American culture gave us the chance to watch our own drama develop, as on a giant screen.³²

Historian Emilio Gentile has convincingly argued that during the late 1930s, “Americanism” was an important cultural phenomenon for Italian anti-Fascist and Fascist intellectuals alike: “Americanism was, for Fascist culture, one of the main mythical metaphors of modernity, which was perceived ambivalently as a phenomenon both terrifying and fascinating.”³³ The phenomenon transcended social, cultural, geographical, and political divides. Vittorio Mussolini, son of the dictator, enthusiastically reviewed American movies, and in 1936 he wrote that Italian Fascist “spirit, mentality, and temperament” were more similar to American young spirit “than the Russian, German, French, and Spanish ones.”³⁴ Similarly the anti-Fascist activist and partisan Giaime Pintor celebrated “American young blood and candid desires” as opposed to German culture.³⁵ In 1930s Italy, one's position in relation to American culture, whether in favor or against it, was an important defining characteristic of an intellectual. It did not correspond to the degree of one's faithfulness to Fascism but was rather identical to one's position in relation to modernity.

DEPERO'S AMERICANISM

Depero was not only part of this debate; he set the tone of it, being one of its earliest and most vocal participants.³⁶ As was the case for most of the Italian Americanists who came after him, the description of New York City in Depero's writings and in his art was an ambivalent one. On the one hand he celebrated the grandiosity and dynamism of the modern metropolis, which he



fig. 8. Book covers:

Left circle, memoirs: Carlo Carrà, *La mia vita* [My Life], 1943; Giorgio De Chirico, *Memorie della mia vita* [The Memoirs], 1945; Gino Severini, *Tutta la vita di un pittore* [The Life of a Painter], 1946

Right circle, books about America: Margherita Sarfatti, *L'America: ricerca della felicità* [America: The Pursuit of Happiness], 1937; Emilio Cecchi, *America amara* [Bitter America], 1939; Elio Vittorini, *Americana*, 1942

Center: Fortunato Depero, *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life], 1940 [cat. 269]

identified as the future – as seen in his ad for Campari [fig. 9], where the bottles are turned into streetlights and are called “the lights of the future” – where the skyscrapers and the signature “Depero New York,” clearly visible, stand for the future. On the other hand he also depicted the city as a gloomy, oppressive, and alienating environment.

New York in the abstract was seen as the realization of Futurism’s utopian project of a total work of art. Depero’s description of the city closely followed the words used by him and Giacomo Balla in their 1915 manifesto, *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe] [cat. 36]:³⁷ “dynamic,” “noise-making,” “luminous,” “exploding.” And images from Italian magazines of the 1910s depicting New York had been inspirational to the Futurist idea of the city of the future, as envisioned especially by Umberto Boccioni and by Antonio Sant’Elia.³⁸

But Depero’s actual first-hand experience of the city proved hard to reconcile with his ideals. *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo* wanted to recreate the universe, “cheering it up.”³⁹ But Depero found the city “a devil-made metropolis, inhabited by a devil-possessed humanity,”⁴⁰ as he wrote to the Futurist artist Gerardo Dottori (1884–1977), and its urban environment oppressive and alienating, especially in moments of financial hardship. Everything went too fast in New York, he said, so he looked forward to a quiet weekend in the countryside.⁴¹ He also wrote: “With strenuous efforts I turn away from the crowd and go home.



fig. 9. *I fari dell'avvenire, Bitter e Cordial Campari* [The Stoplights of the Future, Bitter and Cordial Campari]. Galleria Campari

I can take no more shops hurling into my face, no more skyscrapers weighing down onto my head, no more illuminated texts blinding me.”⁴² Now, whereas a similar statement would sound normal to any New Yorker, when pronounced by a Futurist it became a declaration of defeat. For Depero, this reality was all the harder to accept precisely *because* of his identification of New York with his utopian ideals.⁴³

Depero described what he called “the metropolitan mule.”⁴⁴ He was a member of the crowd oppressed by the gigantic gears of the New Babel [fig. 10]. Before going to New York, Depero had not been particularly interested in depicting the crowd (unlike other Futurist artists). There he dedicated many images and reflections to it: it was not the crowd evoked in Balla’s interventionist paintings, unified by its patriotic voice and will; it was the contrary, a crowd fragmented and disoriented by the heavy geometric structure of the city. Depero’s negative interpretation of the modern city can be compared to that of George Grosz, as proposed by Enrico Crispolti, or Fritz Lang, who used the name New Tower of Babel for the corporate headquarters in his famous movie *Metropolis* of 1927 [fig. 11]. The oblique towers give a sense of instability and chaos, as if this excessive structure was about to implode or crash on top of its inhabitants and those who overcrowd the underground world of laborers. The repetitive anonymity of the grid structure, the working conditions, and the hyper-stimulation of the modern city have turned the metropolitan inhabitant into an externally controlled robot. In



the free-word composition *Stato d'animo a New York* [State of Mind in New York] [fig. 12], he is overwhelmed by the many languages and stimuli of the city and has to turn his mind to his Italian certainties, Marinetti and Mussolini, in order to react and move forward: "Avanti."

While Depero's reaction to the city was, like Groz's and Lang's, one of revulsion and fascination at the same time, he did not share their anti-capitalist ideology. Depero actually celebrated the consumerism of the Americans. "Every year the Americans remodel their homes – they destroy with remarkable easiness," he wrote. "They are a fickle, capricious people – and these are great qualities to progress and to keep the market lively."⁴⁵ In his manifesto, *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* [Futurism and Advertising Art], which was conceived in New York and published in Italy in 1931,⁴⁶ Depero famously celebrated contemporary industrialists by comparing them to ancient patrons of the arts, and he called advertising the truest and most direct heir of the grand art historical tradition.



fig. 10. *The New Babel*, 1930. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

fig. 11. Fritz Lang, *Metropolis*, 1927. Silent movie, 21'49 min. Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau Stiftung, Wiesbaden

fig. 12. *Stato d'animo a New York* [State of Mind in New York], free-word composition, 1930. Carlo Belloli Collection, Basel

BOMBS AGAINST SKYSCRAPERS

During his stint in New York, Depero changed in three major ways: he developed an antagonist sentiment toward the modern city; he realized that painting was powerless in that context; and he embraced advertising, mass media, and popular entertainment as the necessary avenues to survive and master the metropolis.

Well before going to New York he worked in several media and merged the boundaries between them, but he still considered painting the most important of all. In 1927, as he was getting ready for New York, he wrote: "to ship over there not only my decorative art but also my most important pieces, namely my paintings."⁴⁷ These colorful paintings were "concentrated bombs of polychromatic explosions. How I'd love to hurl them against the dismal parallelepipeds of this Babel."⁴⁸ Accordingly, the first logo of his Futurist House of Art presented a painter's palette or alternatively a target on the facade of three anonymous parallelepipeds [fig. 13, cat. 168].⁴⁹ The bomb-paintings were the canvases shipped from Italy, which failed to sell.

Before moving to New York, Depero had represented advertising as a megaphone. Once there, as noticed by David Leiber, he realized that the city itself was the most powerful megaphone, as we can see from a later version of his logo [fig. 14], where the painter's palette is substituted by the name Depero and the skyscrapers are no longer targets against which the artist throws his bombs; rather they function as a sounding board for his name. Later similar buildings would become a podium for the advertised product [fig. 15, cat. 185].

In a work like *Nove teste con cappello* [Nine Heads with Hat] [fig. 17, cat. 195], Depero embraced the grid and the repetitive quality of the city life and its commercials. The pattern contained the simplified face of Al Capone, the quintessential mass-media icon of the moment [fig. 16], which was recognizable from the rounded face, full lips, and bulbous nose (different from Depero's typically triangular noses). The only art possible in New York, Depero seems to say, acts in the city and is part of the city. When Depero was in Paris in 1925 he admired the modern capital but also paid a visit to art shows and to the studio of Constantin Brancusi (1876–1957).⁵⁰ In New York he did not visit other artists' studios, nor did he seem to notice that the Museum of Modern Art had opened while he was there.⁵¹ But he did find art in other places. "I was told that there is no art in America [...] this is not true," he wrote. "The skyscrapers offer audacious perspectives, only interrupted by advertising, luminous machines, [...] exuberant and enormous publicities. Lights that drop and explode and spin dramatically, directing the stream of the crowd in a rhythmic flux and re-flux of a thousand colors."⁵²

* Developed as part of a 2013–14 fellowship at the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) in New York, this article derives from a paper presented at the Fortunato Depero Study Day, CIMA, February 21, 2014. I extend my gratitu-

de to Fabio Belloni, Heather Ewing, and Laura Mattioli, whose comments and ideas during the year spent at the CIMA have greatly contributed to the present text.

1. See especially Maurizio Scudiero and David Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York* (Rovereto: Longo, 1986); Fortunato Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, ed. Claudia Salaris (Montepulciano: Del Grifo, 1990); Gabriella Belli (ed.), *Depero futurista: Rome – Paris – New York, 1915–1932 and More* (Milan: Skira, 1999), places special emphasis on the latter of the three capitals, starting

with the cover image; Laura Chiesa, “Transnational Multimedia: Fortunato Depero’s Impressions of New York City,” *California Italian Studies*, 1 (2), 2010, <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7ff9j31s> [accessed on January 10, 2014].

2. A chronology of Depero’s shows in New York is reconstructed in Belli, *Depero futurista: Rome – Paris – New York: Depero Futurist House*, 23rd Street (December 15, 1928–January 8, 1929); *Depero Modernist Paintings and Tapestries*, Guarino Gallery of Contemporary

Italian Art, 600 Madison Avenue (January 8–February 9, 1929); *Exhibition of the Italian Book*, Arnold Constable & Co., Fifth Avenue (March 15–30, 1929); *Italian Art Exhibition: Modernist Tapestries and Pillows*. Depero Pottery. Venetian Linen, Fascio Margherita di Savoia, 210 Fifth Avenue (April 25–May 25, 1929); *Arte Pubblicitaria*, Advertising Club, 23 Park Avenue (October 7–20, 1929); *Bozzetti Scenici*, Wanamaker Auditorium, New York (June 1930).



fig. 14. Letterhead of Depero’s Futurist House of Art, 1929. MART, Archivio del ‘900, Fondo Depero

fig. 13. *Depero Modernist Paintings and Tapestries*, catalogue of the exhibition held at the Guarino Gallery of Contemporary Italian Art, New York, 1929 [cat. 168]

fig. 15. *Cordial Campari*, 1929. Galleria Campari [cat. 185]



fig. 16. Unknown photographer, Alphonse (Al) Capone, c. 1929

fig. 17. *Nove teste con cappello* [Nine Heads with Hat], 1929-30. Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 195]



3. “Le caricature che maggiormente colpiscono e che, secondo me, caratterizzano questa processione pubblicitaria, sono gli immensi palloni dondolanti [...] che rappresentano figurazioni umane e animali. Sono elefanti volanti, teste lunari che ridono e ballonzolano beatamente galleggiando sopra la folla del pubblico [...] Sembrano appartenere ad un mondo fiabesco creato da immense e capricciose bolle di sapone”; Fortunato Depero, *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* (Trento: Mutilati e Invalidi, 1940), 239. The translation is mine. The book, whose literal translation of the title is “Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life,” was published in English as *So I Think, So I Paint* (Trento: Mutilati e Invalidi, 1947) with a substantially revised content and structure.
4. These cities appear in other chapters dedicated respectively to: inspirational figures (“Incitatori”); theory (“Ideologie d’artista”); painting (“Opera pittorica”); tapestries (“Arazzi Depero”); furniture and interior design (“Nuovo orizzonte artigiano”); and theater (“Teatro plastico”).
5. His 1930 commissions for two restaurants in New York, Enrico & Paglieri and Zucca, included painted panels, but they were part of a broader project involving architecture and furniture, all designed as a whole by Depero.
6. The exhibition included no less than twelve drawings depicting New York, but of the sixteen paintings shown in Venice, only one portrayed this city. *XVIII Esposizione Biennale Internazionale d’Arte* (Venice: Biennale di Venezia, 1932), 171–72.
7. Depero to Franco Rampa Rossi, Milan 1922, reproduced in Scudiero and Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York*, 243.
8. The industrialist and collector Arturo Benvenuto Ottolenghi was the main sponsor of his trip. See Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, 217. Fedele Azari (1895–1930) conducted business in New York and was probably part of Depero’s enthusiasm for the city. In the spring of 1928, when the project materialized, however, Azari warned Depero about the difficulties and the taste gap he would encounter in America. Beatrice Avanzi, “Fortunato Depero e la pubblicità: un’arte ‘fatalmente moderna,’” in *Depero pubblicitario: dall’auto-réclame all’architettura pubblicitaria*, ed. Gabriella Belli and Beatrice Avanzi (Milan: Skira, 2007), 31–32.
9. Depero, “Il futurismo a New York,” 1929 manuscript, reproduced in Scudiero and Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York*, 218. The translation is mine.
10. Depero to Marinetti, October 2, 1928, in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti Papers, Box 10, Folder 214, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven. The translation is mine.
11. Fortunato Depero, *Depero futurista, 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927).
12. Depero to Marinetti, October 2, 1928 (see n. 10).
13. Belli, *Depero Futurista: Rome – Paris – New York*, 150, nn. 1 and 2.
14. Depero’s Futurist House of Art business card, 1929, reproduced in Scudiero and Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York*, 127.
15. “Credo riuscirò a creare col tempo il mio sognato villaggio futurista”; Depero to Marinetti, October 2, 1928. He talks about the project of a Futurist school in another letter: Depero to Marinetti, April 25, 1929, in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti Papers, Box 10, Folder 214, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven.
16. “Casse e bauli di quadri, disegni ed arazzi requisiti e mandati in dogana dove sostano per ben due mesi e sono poi rilasciati dopo cento consulti e con il pagamento del dazio di ben 15.000 lire (diconsi quindici mila lire) che non possedevo” [Boxes and trunks of paintings, drawings, and tapestries seized and sent to Customs, where they remain for two months and are finally delivered after endless paperwork and upon payment of a tax of 15,000 lire (that is correct, fifteen thousand lire) which I did not have]; Fortunato Depero, “Nel porto di New York,” in Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, 25.
17. The flyer for the Guarino show listed carefully the titles of seventeen paintings and seventeen tapestries, but only mentioned generic “drawings and posters” and “pillows,” which were obviously less important. Depero’s private note on the exhibition sales, however, listed only five pillows and one drawing: none of the important (expensive) pieces was sold. See “Attività Depero a New York, Manoscritto, 10 pp.” in *Nuovi archivi del futurismo*, ed. Enrico Crispolti (Rome: De Luca, 2010), 310.
18. Depero had to pay \$1,200 for the termination of the agreement. He renounced his large workshop and exhibition space and only kept a bedroom, kitchen, and shared restroom. He was then hosted by his friend John Salterini and later moved to a less expensive apartment on 11th Street.
19. “E’ la più vera e più geniale propaganda d’italianità che sto facendo”; Depero to Marinetti, April 25, 1929 (see n. 15).
20. See Sergio Cortesini, *‘One day we must meet’: La politica artistica italiana e l’uso dell’arte contemporanea come propaganda dell’Italia fascista negli Stati Uniti tra 1935 e 1940*, PhD dissertation supervised by Simonetta Lux (Rome: Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza, 2003).
21. The only exception was the 1926 *Exhibition of Modern Italian Art*, curated by Christian Brinton under the patronage of the Italian Government, which opened at the Grand Central Art Galleries in New York. The show, which included four paintings by Depero, is an important precedent to Depero’s American enterprise. Brinton was a major supporter of Futurism in the United States and a friend of Depero’s collector and collaborator, Fedele Azari. His enthusiastic text for Depero’s exhibit at the Guarino Gallery should be seen in line with the 1926 show and with his promotion of non-French art.
22. Depero described how a promised grant was withdrawn and his American enterprise was made possible by the financial support of the industrialist and philanthropist, Arturo Benvenuto Ottolenghi: “raggiungo Genova fiducioso in seguito ad una promessa ottenuta a Roma di avere una riduzione sul dispendioso viaggio. Invece delusione completa” [As a result of a promise obtained in Rome to have a reduction on the expensive trip, I reach Genoa confident. Instead complete disappointment]; Depero, *Nelle opere e nella vita*, 275–77.
23. Through his letters to Marinetti, Depero promoted his American activity as a tool to advertise a modern Italy regenerated by Mussolini. Soon after his return to Italy, Depero was named Cavaliere Ufficiale dell’ordine della Corona d’Italia for his Italian propaganda in America. See telegram by Boselli to Marinetti [1931 settembre], da Roma a Roma, Fondo Fortunato Depero, Dep. 3.1.25.6, MART Archivio del ‘900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.
24. Fortunato Depero, “I ravioli di Rosetta,” in Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, 90–92. For Depero’s description of how the idea of hosting Italian dinners arose, see Depero, *So I Think, So I Paint*, 127–28. [Prohibition, the nationwide ban on the manufacture, transportation and sale of alcoholic beverages in the United States, was in place from 1920 to 1933 — Ed.]
25. Condé Nast Publications to Depero, March 27, 1930, Fondo Fortunato Depero, Folder Corrispondenza sciolta 1930, MART Archivio del ‘900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.
26. *Vanity Fair* published Depero designs on the covers of its July 1930 and March 1931 issues. The latter also included a short article, “The Past and the Present of a Futurist” (p. 31), which reproduced a different version of the cover motif.
27. “Mezz’ora di tram, mezz’ora di treno elevato e mezz’ora di treno sotterraneo. Poi un’ora di trabiccolo traballante, un rudere di tranvai attraverso sobborghi di lurido ghetto. Barcollo maledettamente, annuso a malincuore, cammino attraverso la fitta pioggia con il bavero rialzato, chiudendo i pensieri in un fascio orizzontale di sfida sotto il braccio. / I ponti di metallo che attraverso sono giganteschi [...]. Disceso dai ponti con un nuovo tranvai sorpasso alcuni blocchi [...]. Scendo, dieci giri in avanti, cinque giri in dietro. Domando, richiedo e finalmente una porta di ferro segna il numero che cerco”; Fortunato Depero, “In cerca di una dita,” in Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, 48, quoted here from Depero, *So I Think, So I Paint*, 109–10.
28. Günter Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics: Between Anarchist Rebellion and Fascist Reaction, 1909–1944* (Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996), 290–307.
29. Depero’s articles on New York include: “New York: impressioni vissute” [New York: Lived Impressions], *Numero unico futurista Campari* (Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931) [39–44]; “A zig zag per la Va Avenue” [Zigzag along 5th Avenue], *La Sera*, August 24, 1931;

- "Fuoooco – Con Massine all'Auditorium – Un delinquente a sei anni" [Firree – with Massine at the Auditorium – A Six-year Offender], *La Sera*, September 2, 1931; "Corteo pubblicitario 'Macy'" [Macy's Advertising Procession], *La Sera*, September 23, 1931; "La questione 'vino'" [The 'Wine' Question], *La Sera*, September 30, 1931; "Traversata Atlantica" [Atlantic Crossing], *La Sera*, October 21, 1931; "Fuori New York – Torto, Polento, Ticcio, Pasto – Una giornalista italo-americana" [Outside New York – Torto, Polento, Ticcio, Pasto – An Italian-American Journalist], *La Sera*, November 23, 1931; "Ristorante cinese in Broadway – Un ingegnere giapponese" [Chinese Restaurant on Broadway – A Japanese Engineer], *La Sera*, December 2, 1931; "Itinerario giornaliero di un professionista newyorkese – Una segretaria ideale" [Daily Itinerary of a New York Professional – An Ideal Secretary], *La Sera*, January 22, 1932; "Un portiere – Primo quadro: la ballerina di cenci – 'The Black King' – Coniugi mulatti in calesse" [A Goalkeeper – First Act: The Ballerina in Rags – 'The Black King' – Mulatto Couple in a Buggy], *La Sera*, June 7, 1932; "Subway – Tavola parolibera," *Futurismo 1932* (Rovereto: Mercurio, 1932) [99]; "New York – film vissuto" [New York – A Lived Film], *Futurismo 1932* (Rovereto: Mercurio, 1932) [105–7]; "New York come l'ho vista io" [New York as I Have Seen It], *Il Secolo XX*, XXXII, no. 7, February 18, 1933; "N(enne) E (e) W (vi doppio)" [(e)N E (e) W (Double u)], *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics] (Milan: G. Morreale, 1934), 75–80; "Vertigini di Nuova York" [New York dizziness], *L'illustrazione Italiana*, June 23, 1935, 1051–52.
30. Member of a wealthy and cultivated Jewish family, writer and art critic Margherita Sarfatti (1880–1961) was the one-time lover and longtime companion of Benito Mussolini. Essayist and critic Emilio Cecchi (1884–1966) was first a detractor and then a supporter of Mussolini. Writer and literary critic Elio Vittorini (1908–1966) was an outspoken critic of Mussolini's regime — Ed.
31. Umberto Eco, "Il modello americano," in *La riscoperta dell'America*, ed. Umberto Eco, Gian Paolo Ceserani, and Beniamino Placido (Bari: Laterza, 1984), 3–32.
32. "A questo punto la cultura americana divenne per noi qualcosa di molto serio e prezioso, divenne una sorta di grande laboratorio dove con altra libertà e altri mezzi si perseguiva lo stesso compito di creare un gusto, uno stile, un mondo moderno che, forse con minore immediatezza ma con altrettanta caparbia volontà, i migliori tra noi perseguivano. [...] La cultura americana ci permise in quegli anni di vedere svolgersi come su uno schermo gigante il nostro stesso dramma"; Cesare Pavese, "Ieri e oggi," *L'Unità* (Turin, August 3, 1947), reprinted and translated into English in Cesare Pavese, "Yesterday and Today," in *American Literature: Essays and Opinions*, trans. Edwin Fussell (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970), 196–99.
33. Emilio Gentile, "Impending Modernity: Fascism and the Ambivalent Image of the United States," *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 28, no. 1 (January 1993), 7.
- On the historical roots of this phenomenon see Claudia Dall'Osso, *Voglia d'America: il mito americano in Italia tra Otto e Novecento* (Rome: Donzelli, 2007).
34. Vittorio Mussolini, quoted by Umberto Eco, "Il modello americano," 8.
35. Giaime Pintor, 1943, quoted in Anna Maria Torriglia, *Broken Time Fragmented Space: A Cultural Map for Postwar Italy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 85–86.
36. The importance of America in the Italian debate was, in fact, prominent at least from the late 19th century, as shown by Dall'Osso, *Voglia d'America*. But the identification of the American Myth as a theater for Italian modernity was a characteristic of the 1930s and Depero was a pioneer in it.
37. Giacomo Balla and Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* (Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, 1915). For a full reproduction of this text in English, see pp. 369–75.
38. See Iain Boyd Whyte, "Futurist Architecture," in Günter Berghaus (ed.), *International Futurism in Arts and Literature* (New York: De Gruyter, 2000), 364. In his 1914 manifesto *Architettura Futurista*, Boccioni wrote: "Oggi cominciamo ad avere intorno a noi un ambiente architettonico che si sviluppa in tutti i sensi: dai luminosi sotterranei dei grandi magazzini dai diversi piani di tunnel delle ferrovie metropolitane alla salita gigantesca dei grattacieli americani" ["Now around us we see the beginnings of an architectural environment that develops in every direction: from voluminous basements of large department stores, from the several levels of the tunnels of the underground railways to the gigantic upward thrust of American skyscrapers"]; quoted from *City Images: Perspectives from Literature, Philosophy, and Film*, ed. Mary Ann Caws (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1991).
39. Giacomo Balla and Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo*, see pp. 369–75 in this catalogue.
40. "Ma credilo, New-York è una metropoli creata dal diavolo per una umanità indivolotissima"; letter to Gerardo Dottori, n.d. (1929), published in *Dottori: Futurista aeropittore / Dottori: Futurist Aeropainter*, ed. Massimo Duranti, exh. cat. Galleria d'Arte Narciso, Turin, May 23–June 28, 1997; Casa Italiana Zerilli-Marimò, New York University, New York, May 4–31, 1998 (Perugia: Graphic Masters, 1997; Effe, 1998), 10.
41. "Parlare in fretta, salutare in fretta, visitare in fretta, affari in fretta, vestirsi in fretta, bagno in fretta. Una lettera, tre lettere, cento lettere tutte in fretta. Conversazioni sempre interrotte e tutte affrettate. Telefonate all'infinito. Media di telefonate giornaliere a N.Y. ventidue milioni. Uscire di casa in fretta. Prendere un treno elevato in fretta. Discendere nella 'subway' in fretta. Traversare le strade affollatissime in fretta, mangiare in fretta. Finalmente la domenica scampagnata... forse tranquilla!" [Talking in a hurry, saying good bye in a hurry, visiting in a hurry, doing business in a hurry, getting dressed in a hurry, taking a bath in a hurry. A letter, three letters, a hundred letters, all in a hurry. Conversations always interrupted and all hasty. Phone calls non-stop. Average of daily phone calls in N.Y. twenty-two million. Getting out of the house in a hurry. Taking an elevated train in a hurry. Descending into the subway in a hurry. Navigating the crowded streets in a hurry, eating in a hurry. Finally a Sunday picnic ... maybe relaxed!]; Fortunato Depero, "Fuori New York," in Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, 55.
42. "Con inauditi sforzi mi sradico dalla folla e mi avvio a casa. Non ne posso più. Ancora negozi che mi si avventano alla faccia, ancora grattacieli che mi pesano sulla testa, ancora parole-luci che mi accecano"; Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, 42.
43. This thesis is further supported in Chiesa, "Transnational Multimedia."
44. Depero, *Nelle opere e nella vita*, 292, quoted here from Depero, *So I Think, So I Paint*, 139–40.
45. "Ogni anno l'americano rinnova la casa – distrugge con una facilità impressionante. Gente volubile, capricciosa – qualità eccellenti per progredire e tenere il mercato in effervescenza"; Depero to Marinetti, September 1929, quoted in Scudiero and Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York*, 253. The translation is mine.
46. The manifesto *Il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria* appeared in *Numero unico futurista Campari* in 1931. For a full reproduction of this text in English, see pp. 422–23.
47. "Porterò laggiù l'opera mia non solamente decorativa ma quella di maggior importanza i quadri"; Fortunato Depero, "A New York City nel 1928," in Scudiero and Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York*, 244. The translation is mine.
48. "[Ho la sensazione di viaggiare con un carico pericoloso, considero questi dipinti come] bombe concentrate di esplosioni policrome. Sarà mia intima gioia lanciarle contro i cupi parallelepipedi di questa babele"; Fortunato Depero, "Mia prima battaglia a New York. Organizzazione," in Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, 33.
49. For a different interpretation of these images, see David Leiber, "The Socialization of Art," in Scudiero and Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York*, 88–117.
50. Depero, *Nelle opere e nella vita*, 270–73.
51. The Museum of Modern Art opened to the public on November 7, 1929.
52. "I grattacieli offrono prospettive audacissime, solo ingombre di meccanismi pubblicitari e luminosi ... réclame esuberanti ed enormi. Luci che piovono, scoppiano e girano vertiginosamente, trascinando la fiamana di folla in un ritmico flusso e riflusso di mille colori"; Fortunato Depero, "Il Futurismo a New York," hand-written document reproduced in Scudiero and Leiber, *Depero futurista & New York*, 260. The translation is mine.



BOZZETTO DI MASSIMA PER IL MOSAICO: PROCLAMAZIONE E TRIONFO DEL TRICOLORE PER LA NUOVA STAZIONE DI REGGIO-EMILIA DEL PITTORE FORTUNATO DEPERO

“FUTURISMO”
FASCISMO

GIOVANNI LISTA

In promoting the compatibility between the celebratory language of plastic glories or of advertising architecture and the expressive potential of the cold and dynamic materials that incarnate the metallic and energetic quality of the industrial world, Depero established an ever-greater rapprochement with the aesthetics of the decade. After the “mechanical splendor” celebrated by Marinetti, Depero’s “metallic style” increasingly

became a “steel style.” Alongside this aesthetic and operational vision there was also the conviction that “Futurism is the most Fascist of artistic expressions,” which, as such, encompassed the most daring and excellent qualities of technical and industrial progress promoted by the regime. Depero referred his own pictorial output to this “ideological track,” especially during the latter half of the 1920s. Indeed, many works characterized by

an extreme incisiveness and a clarity of sign and color belong to this period, works which became both solid and massive, organized in an invariably precise and clearly defined plastic composition, never permeated by attenuations and vaporizations of form, not even under the effect of the tense and energetic thrust of movement. Where necessary, dynamism was expressed in the form of rhythmic architecture and contrasting forces,



fig. 1. La "gloria plastica" a Marinetti per la 1ª Esposizione Internazionale di Monza ["Plastic Glory" to Marinetti for the 1st International Exhibition in Monza], 1923. Studio Emidio Filippini, Rovereto. MART, Archivio del '900



fig. 2. Fortunato Depero lavora per Trento - Sala Consiliare, Rovereto [Fortunato Depero works for the Trento City Council, Rovereto], 1953-55. Studio Unterverger, Trento. MART, Archivio del '900

fig. 3. Sketch of the stained glass window of the Palazzo delle Poste [Main Post Office Building] in Trento, after 1933. MART, Archivio del '900

by way of a dialectic weave of forms, masses, and color, focused on the visual juxtaposition of the compositional elements, exalting their plastic emergence and volumetric self-evidence.

The "steel style" was evidenced and defined in a technique of sharp-edged chiaroscuros, in a plastic arrangement of mechanisms and vibrations crystallized in a complex metallic splendor. In 1925, Depero painted *La rissa* [The Brawl], where the mechanical aesthetics unexpectedly took on much darker and heavier tones, such as to conjure up the atmosphere of a Sironi picture.¹ By re-creating the agitated dynamism and rhythm of contact and fighting, Depero plastically defined the individual protagonists while they scuffled like mechanical dolls roughly sculpted in stylized human forms. The emotional tension of the brawl is not conveyed by an explosion of energy dominated by the simultaneity and interpenetration of the bodies, but, on the contrary, by a frozen and blackish mechanical disfigurement, cumbrously underpinned by the specific scansion of the plastic forms which, even in the frenzy of physical combat, maintain their own

identity and their own sculptural clarity, further illustrated by the cones of solidified light that fall from above and enhance the metallic hardness of the protagonists.

Painted a year later, *Fulmine compositore* [Compositional Thunderbolt] presented an operational synthesis between the principle of "multiple perspective" and this new "steel style." The electric fury of the lightning shatters and subverts the entire perspective of the picture in a mechanized world of robot-animals and humans transfigured in stylized and polished forms, uprooted and scattered in physical space by the magnetic energy of the explosion of light. The world of steel is no longer peopled with spring-charging colorful puppets, suspended in a familiar atmosphere, warm and naïve, but traversed by anonymous undifferentiated plastic presences, frozen in cold and metallic shades that vary between the range of grays and blues. The formal framework is formed by a plastic assembly of angular and exaggerated forms, which intersect and cut one another in a hectic and chaotic rhythm, but one that is crystalline and geometric, where the sense of kinetic vitality is congealed by the evident graphic and visual immobility of the composition. Once again, by reason of the chromatic simplification and the anti-naturalistic tension aimed at [creating] a crystallized glacial world outside of phenomenological time, the picture is part and parcel of that series of "lunar works" with which, from the mid-1920s on, Depero seemed to dialogue with Surrealism.

In reality, from the mid-1920s onward, Depero's painting assumed an ambiguous expressive status. The artist's theoretical enunciations and the new, powerful forms of his "steel style" celebrated the marriage between Futurism and Fascism in the name of progress and modernity. The iconographic content of his pictures, however, leaned in the op-

posite direction, aligning itself with chauvinistic Strapaese² ideas in the rural celebration of field labor and the ancestral traditions of the Italian provinces. The paintings *La fienagione* [The Hay Harvest, see fig. 13, p. 261], *Il muggito costruisce la vallata* [The Roar Shapes the Valley], *Aratura*, (*Paesaggio al tornio*) [Ploughing (Landscape with Lathe), see fig. 12, p. 261], *Proiezioni crepuscolari* [Crepuscular Projections], *Polenta a fuoco duro* [Baked Polenta], *Splendori alpestri* [Alpine Splendor], *Lanterna* [Lantern], *Il legnaiolo* [The Woodcutter], and others,³ not only no longer show the city and the machines and tools of progress, but also illustrate the trades and humble ways of life of the eternal Italian countryside. After his journey to and sojourn in Paris, Depero appears to have realized that the bucolic and rustic tranquility of the landscapes of Capri that he had painted was not a reality confined to the South, but that the whole of Italy was in fact unaware of the phenomenon of the modern metropolis.

This ambiguity between a Futurist style and a ruralist iconography appeared again in the picture *Alto paesaggio d'acciaio* (*Alba e tramonto sulle Alpi*) [High Landscape of Steel (Dawn and Sunset in the Alps)] [cat. 143], painted in 1927, which portrays the mechanical vision of a ploughing scene in a

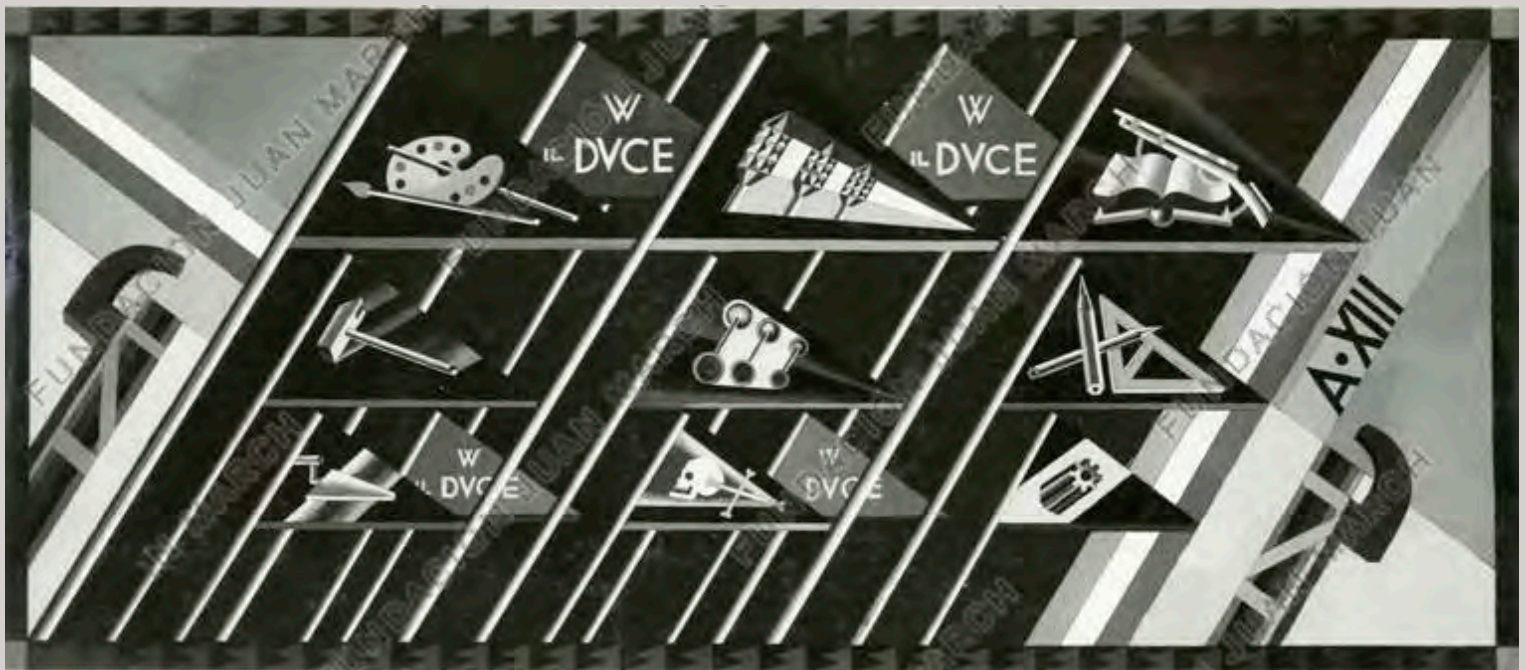


fig. 4. Photograph of *Creare - costruire - volare* [Create - Build - Fly], after 1934. Photo Alessandro Stucchi, Milan. MART, Archivio del '900

fig. 5. Photograph of *I gagliardetti della fede* [The Pennants of Faith], after 1930. MART, Archivio del '900

mountain landscape. Depero did not earmark any nostalgic or sentimental treatment for his own original mountains, which, on the contrary, become a plastic system of polished masses in the guise of iron-forged volumes, cut, polished, and then observed in the cold reverberation of their metallic splendor. The draft animals shed any specific connotation and are reduced to sparkling universal plastic stylizations of the ox and the horse, transformed into heavy creatures of steel with a massive and powerful profile. The colors, playing with the essential tones of black, gray, and white, highlight the architectonic solidification of the volumes, presented as they are in all the projecting outburst of their plastic depth. The combination between the poster-like style and the neutral tonal suspension of the chromatic plan creates a truly mechanized and metallic dimension of reality, but one that is distinctly removed in a time bubble, set in a time that regains the archetypal cyclical nature of the world, more than in the period of the machine and its celebratory iconography.

The magnetic, fable-like climate of Depero's imaginary of the previous decade dissolves in the face of the iron-clad resistance of the new mechanical universe, which nevertheless releases a tension towards nature, culture, and man's atavistic activity, present like a figurative subtext albeit in mechanized form. By slipping in a visual reference to the sunset, the unfolding of the solid beams of light that cut the atmosphere, and ploughing as a moment of productive symbiosis between man and nature, Depero was looking not only at the mechanical substance that governs the physical structure of every universal element, from humans to animals to inanimate objects, but also and above all at the ultimate mechanistic principle that regulates the continuous cycle of the universe.



In September 1928, Depero left for New York, where he had a one-man show, designed the interior decoration for the Zucca restaurant and the dining room at Enrico & Paglieri, studied stage solutions and costumes for the Roxy Theater and for the ballet *American Sketches*, focusing on free choreographies unfettered by the academic rules of ballet displayed by dancers in decorated tights. He worked assiduously in the field of advertising art, producing covers and illustrations for the major publications of the day, *Vogue* [cat. 198], *Vanity Fair* [cat. 197, 199, 222], *Sparks* [cat. 214], *The New Yorker*, *News Auto Atlas* [cat. 217], *Atlantica* [cat. 170], and others.⁴ That lengthy New York stay offered the artist numerous figurative cues and suggestions, but without fundamentally de-structuring the imaginary and the de-figurative approach, in part because Depero did not manage to establish constructive relations with the American avant-garde, hungry for novelty but at that time totally mesmerized by the uproar of Surrealist experimentation spreading on the other side of the Atlantic.

The American experience did however give rise to a return, in new forms, to the assumptions of modernity legitimately proclaimed by Futurism. In the painting titled *Big Sale (Mercato di Down-Town)* [Big Sale (Downtown Market)] [cat. 184], Depero rediscovered urban iconography by expressing his attraction to the typical multi-ethnic folklore of America, rendered above all in the plastic translation of the caricature of the Afro-American “coon” at work in a street market, alongside the stylized shape of the underworld boss in the typical 1930s pin-striped suit. The Afro-American native re-proposed the marked and typified features of so-called “negritude,” with pronounced and salient lips, small perforated ears, and clothing that recalled the image of a native transplanted into the great metropolis, an everlasting stranger stigmatized by Depero in accordance with that combination of attraction and curiosity which the artist oftentimes reserved for the figurative and mental motif of the “savage” immune to the technologization of progress. In dialectical contrast to the spontaneous vital, characterological, and chromatic charge of the “coons” selling hats and food, the 1930s’ boss, wrapped in an impressive and elegant black pin-striped suit of armor, represented the other face of American otherness, the degenerate cultural superstructure: overall, this was the stylized and summary vision of America in the common imagination of someone observing it from the other side of the ocean.

The crisis triggered by the collapse of Wall Street persuaded Depero to return to Italy. His signature appeared as a matter of group discipline under the 1929 *Manifesto dell'aeropittura futurista* [Manifesto of Aeropainting], which sanctioned the opening of a new path for the Futurist experiment, influenced by the modern mythology of flight and the new aerial perspectives ushered in by the technical advances of the aeronautical industry promoted by the government and, thus, also conditioned indirectly by



fig. 6. Photograph of *Mare d'acciaio* [Sea of Steel], after 1934. MART, Archivio del '900



fig. 7. Photograph of *Solidità fascista* [Fascist Solidity], after 1934. MART, Archivio del '900

Fascist ideologization. But Depero would never undertake research in that direction. Not only that: while in the triumphant years of aeropainting the Turin magazine *Stile Futurista* glorified the new tendency and the novel figurative language with which the movement was experimenting – founded on the broadening of the visual radius, the verticalization of perspective, and the distortion of the optical vision or the pictorial virtuosities of the cosmic idealism deriving from them – Depero instead chose to publish in those same pages the text “Stile di acciaio” [Steel Style] concentrating on the new inspirational nucleus of the modern age, the machine, thus remaining moored to the vital nerve centers of the investigation that had informed his entire personal itinerary. Paradoxically, the selfsame Futurists no longer talked about steel but rather referred to the new, lighter metal alloys, such as tin, necessary for the new industrial developments called for by aviation. Clear proof that, for Depero, the “steel style” was now an ideological metaphor.

In these terms, Depero started to define his own personal position based on the ambiguous relation between Futurism and Fascism: for him, Futurism was the expression of the revolutionary genius that would achieve the splendor of the new Italy, blazing the trail of a renewed art, endowed

with a new style, the “steel style,” with which it would exceed all the styles of the past: “Today, the Futurists are creating works inspired by the glory, the heroism, the constructive solidarity of the great Fascist revolution.”⁵ Obviously enough, the poetics of mechanical art thus ideologically radicalized by Depero had nothing of the relation with the world of work and with the proletarian class of industrial workshops, as had been theorized by the Futurism of Vinicio Paladini during the first half of the 1920s.⁶

When Prampolini ushered in the new path of cosmic idealism from within aeropainting with the picture *Palombaro dello spazio* [Space Diver], Depero came up with an enthusiastic analysis.⁷ He duly painted the picture *Prismi lunari* [Lunar Prisms, see fig. 15, p. 258], a visionary composition imbued with a metaphysical flavor in which he presented the decomposition of an interior structured like a double perspectival box suspended in a sidereal, timeless space, in an ethereal vision intensified by the dry chromatic contrast between the deep black of the sky and the blues and azures of the solid construction of the intimist interior. The plastic body of the dwelling and the objects filling it were once again sculpted by the solidified beams of moonlight, which penetrate and cut bright and crystalline forms scattered in a multi-focal perspective, each one enhanced in its specific and unrelated plastic evidence. To sum up, Depero re-proposed all the linguistic factors that had been gradually added to his own aesthetic and theoretical repertory, not least the detail of the moon which, duplicated on the left and right of the suspended plastic structure, describes a cyclical and thus vital movement, which once again re-kindles the reflection about the world’s intrinsic mechanism. If this latter essentially turns out to be a machine, the most perfect of machines, it finds



fig. 8. Photograph of pencil drawings of pilots, after 1934. MART, Archivio del '900

fig. 9. Photograph of *Nuova luce. Progetto per pavimento in mosaico per Casa Balilla* [New Light. Mosaic pavement design for the Balilla House], after 1935. MART, Archivio del '900



in its own mechanicity the very secret of the life of the cosmos, beyond space and time.

On a theoretical level, Depero’s position in the contradictory relationship between Futurism and Fascism appears to be extremely conflictual, precisely because his painting falls back on the provincial reality of his homeland and on ancestral Italian rural themes. With aeropainting and the celebration of the new frontiers opened up by the aeronautical industry, much encouraged by Mussolini, Futurism underwent a new ideological alignment with the regime, becoming the technocratic instrument with which Fascism popularized and rooted in the common imaginary the mythology of a modernization of the country by forced stages, and a definitive concretization of the project of industrialization and imperialist expansion: not by chance, these were the years in which Fascism enjoyed its maximum national consensus. In the mutual interest of supporting each other, Futurism and Fascism joined forces in this period in a relation of ambiguous and compulsory collusion. The journal *Futurismo* [cat. 240, 241, 249, 251, 252], published in Rome by Mino Somenzi⁸ as *Settimanale dell’Artecrazia Italiana*, represented the official organ of the movement in this phase of ideological symbiosis and subordination to the government. Bound up with the ideas and international openness of *Stracittà*,⁹ the review propounded the need for a State art and identified 1930s’ neo-Futurism as the best Italian expression capable of becoming as much. At the same time and in complementary fashion, Somenzi glorified the Futurist aesthetic identity and the political grandiosity of Fascism, establishing an ideological correspondence between Marinetti’s role and that of Mussolini, both invested with the cult earmarked for the “leader,” the pivotal figure of the movement and, by extension, between the “artistic dynamism” of the one and the “political dynamism” of the other, consolidating in popular feeling the formula of so-called “futuro-fascismo.”

Depero was situated in this ambiguous relation between Futurism and Fascism, confirming as much through his essential contents, but with the usual ideal freedom that now set him apart. In publishing the magazine *Futurismo 1932* in Rovereto, he took up the official line of the Futurist movement developed by Marinetti. He thus eschewed any out-of-the-way mixture between art and politics, asserting that Marinetti and Mussolini were two personalities overlaid in a perfect harmony that would give rise to the future grandeur of the new Italy. The following year, in his new review *Dinamo futurista* [cat. 243–247, 254], he wrote: “Today there is a perfectly tangible and absolutely irrefutable Futurist atmosphere,” making reference to the wave of progress and the industrial and productivist ideology promoted by both Mussolini and Marinetti. But while Somenzi increasingly inscribed the thinking about Fascist Italy in an international projection, Depero published an essay by Franco Sartori¹⁰ titled “Dinamizziamo la provincia,” in



fig. 10. Photograph of *Ala Fascista* (Arazzo concorso Gianni Caproni, VI Sindacale d'Arte di Trento) [Fascist Wing (Tapestry for the Gianni Caproni Competition, VI Trento Art Union], 1937. MART, Archivio del '900

which he proposed retrieving and promoting the most inert pockets of society and Italian cultural life, in the name of a renewed productivist activism. Depero's assiduous involvement in the field of advertising promotion confirmed his lively participation in the new productivist prospect of art and culture with which both Futurism and Fascism seemed to be seeking an alignment with the ideology of Russian productivism. Even if, obviously enough and unlike this latter, the productivism of Futurist art did not essentially have any socialist utility with regard to improving the quality of life. On the contrary, based on Nietzschean and Bergsonian vitalism, the productivist thinking of Marinetti was subordinate to capitalism and to the reasoning of the Fascist nation.

The pages of *Dinamo futurista* became the dialectical space in which Depero recorded the progressive detachment between Futurism and Fascism, and in which, with a combative spirit, he made a strenuous defense of Futurism as it was gradually denigrated by the regime, labeled as an unwholesome and anti-traditionalist art and in the end likened to the subversive and anti-national spirit of the Bolsheviks and the Jews. He in fact published the report of the important *Mostra della Rivoluzione Fascista* [Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution] which was held the year before in Rome to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome.¹¹ The show was meant to attest to the culmination of the symbiosis between the two movements, with the recognition by Fascism of the propagandist value of the most modern forms of avant-garde expression, including photo-

montage, mural plastic art, sculptures made with anti-traditional materials, and so on. In the pages of the journal, however, Enrico Prampolini talked of an attempt by the government to conceal, in the various organs of the press, the contribution made to the show by Futurism. Now sidelined and discredited, Futurism sought to re-establish a constructive contact with the powers-that-be in order to survive itself, by deepening the original nucleus of its own expressive research through a self-referential traditionalism which, by retrieving the past victories of Marinetti's movement and remembering its own interventionist commitment during World War I, went partly against the Fascist imposition of fidelity to the regime.

This strategy, sought by Marinetti, led to the organization in Milan, in 1933, of a retrospective exhibition devoted to Boccioni, symbol of the first heroic stage of the Futurist avant-garde and a fervent supporter of interventionism. Mussolini, too, isolated on the international scene, saw in the re-evocation of the memory of Boccioni the possibility of re-kindling a form of cultural prestige capable of stimulating the attention of France and thus sowing the seeds of new political alliances. The exhibition, however, gave rise to keen disapproval from the most intransigent sectors of the government. In the pages of *Dinamo futurista*, Depero replied to the various attacks by highlighting the show's "combative character," defending it against "certain Italians" who "stubbornly blocked the way for Futurism." Following this turn of events, the publication of *Dinamo futurista* came to an end. The "Futuro-Fascismo" symbiosis was definitely over.

But Depero's research carried on for all that. In 1934, the artist published his *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics] [cat. 255], compositions devised for "radio broadcasters" in which, in a "simultaneous and jovial style,"¹² there was a blend of "phonic lyricism, sonorous and noisy." Depero tried to adapt the listener's enjoyment to the new rhythm and the new listening conditions of modern life, thus proposing radio broadcasts that had "communicative clarity", "emotional vibration", "united and organic imagination even in contrast," and a "felicitous sense of union between reality and fantasy." In reality, he did not manage to encompass the much more revolutionary aspect of that "art of space" which Marinetti developed at the same time by intervening in the new field of radio broadcasting¹³ to the point of foreshadowing the spatialist poetics duly launched by Lucio Fontana¹⁴ in the postwar years.

Depero also signed the *Manifesto della plastica murale futurista* [Manifesto of Futurist Mural Painting] without, as in the case of aeropainting, the new aesthetic affecting or altering his language and his aesthetic orientation. In this period, on the contrary, it was the Trentino landscape, to which he had retired for good, that became the habitual subject of a landscape painting with a markedly architectonic perspectival centrality, synthesized in an ever more massive and pronounced plastic com-

position, softened by uniform and rather neutral tonal foundations, oriented increasingly towards an autumnal palette. As emerges from the later works, including *Casa alpina in blu* [Mountain Houses in Blue], a picture playing entirely on the plastic articulation between blues, yellows, and browns. Once again, well removed from any mythological celebration of the metropolis, the natural landscape was a familiar, warm space, suspended in an ethereal and a-historical dimension. In the years that followed, Depero gradually disappeared from the hubbub of the avant-garde scene, though he continued to pursue his activity tirelessly and passionately.

* Giovanni Lista, “Futuro-fascismo” section in “L’esperienza futurista di Fortunato Depero,” in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012), 280–88, from where it has been translated from the Italian by Simon Pleasance.

1. For Sironi, see Scudiero’s essay in this catalogue, p. 264, n. 14.
2. The Strapaese movement that developed in Italy around the mid-1920s rejected modernist tendencies in art and

literature, advocating instead a return to local cultural traditions — Ed.

3. For a comprehensive illustrative dossier, see Maurizio Scudiero, *Depero, l’uomo e l’artista* (Rovereto: Egon, 2009).
4. Although Depero worked tirelessly in his designs for these magazines, very few of them were actually published, as Bedarida points out in “‘I Will Smash the Alps of the Atlantic’: Depero and Americanism” in this catalogue, see pp. 328–337 — Ed.
5. “Oggi, i futuristi creano opere ispirate alla gloria, all’eroismo, alla solidarietà costruttiva della grande rivoluzione fascista”; Fortunato Depero, “Stile di acciaio,” *Arte viva*, no. 3 (Rome, November 1958), 37–38.
6. For Vinicio Paladini, see Scudiero’s essay in this catalogue, p. 265, n. 39. See Giovanni Lista, *Vinicio Paladini, dal futurismo all’immaginario* (Bologna: Il Cavaliere Azzurro, 1988).
7. Fortunato Depero, “Prampolini: ‘Palombaro dello spazio,’” *Dinamo Futurista*, yr. 1, no. 1 (February 1933).
8. Mino [Stanislao] Somenzi (1899–1948) was an Italian painter and writer, and one of the signatories of the *Manifesto dell’aeropittura futurista* — Ed.

9. The Stracittà movement that developed in Italy in opposition to the Strapaese movement (see n. 2) advocated a break with traditional forms in support of modern tendencies in art and literature and cosmopolitan life — Ed.

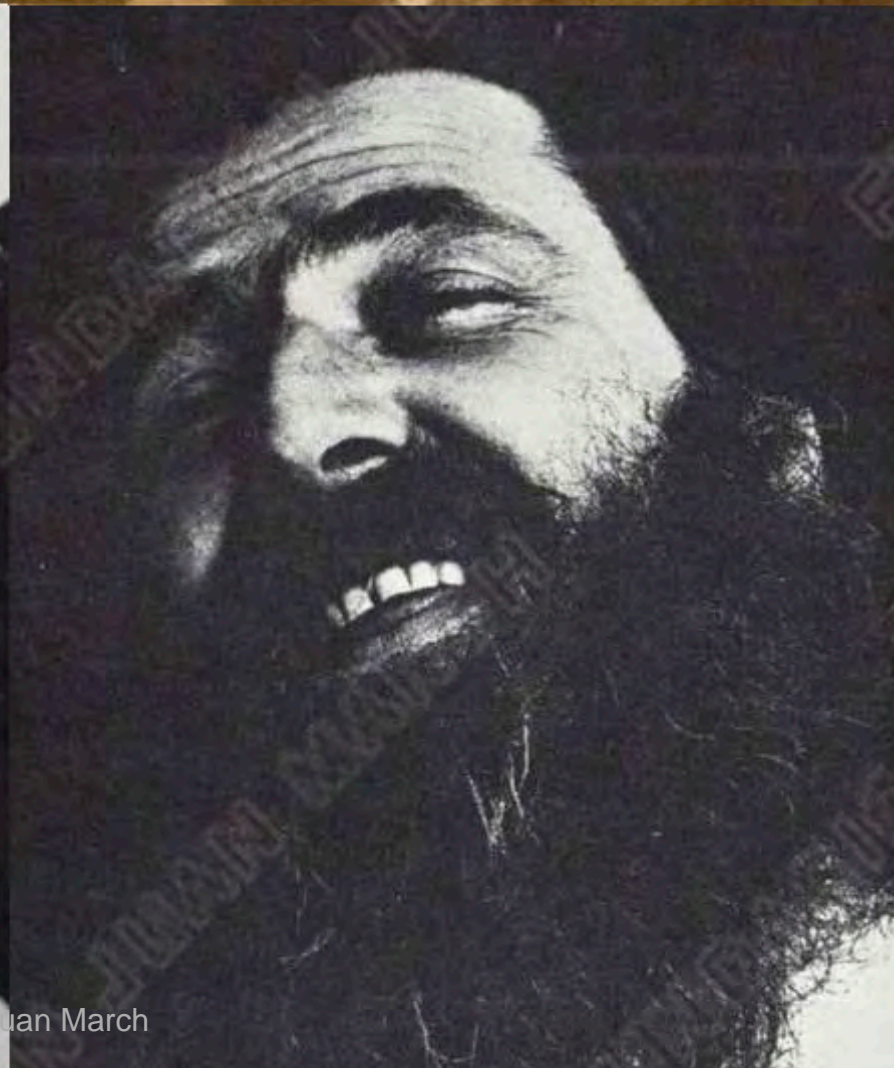
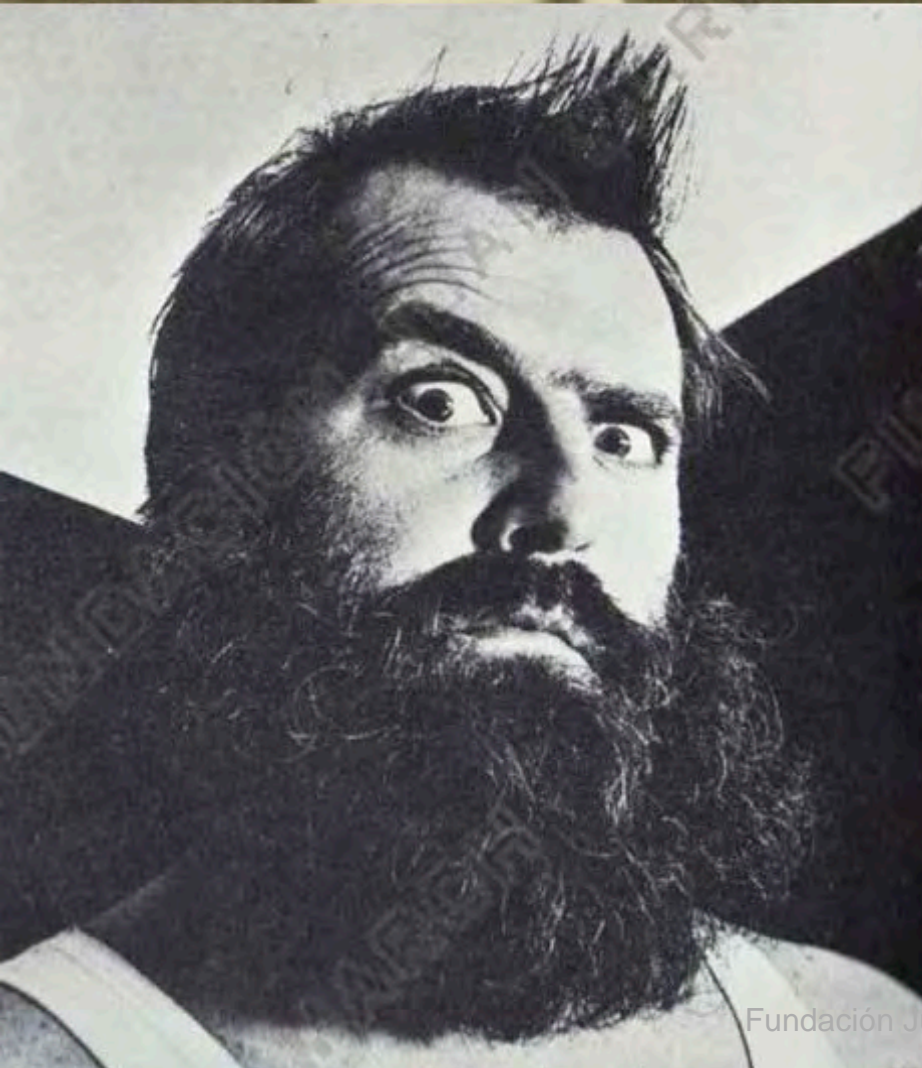
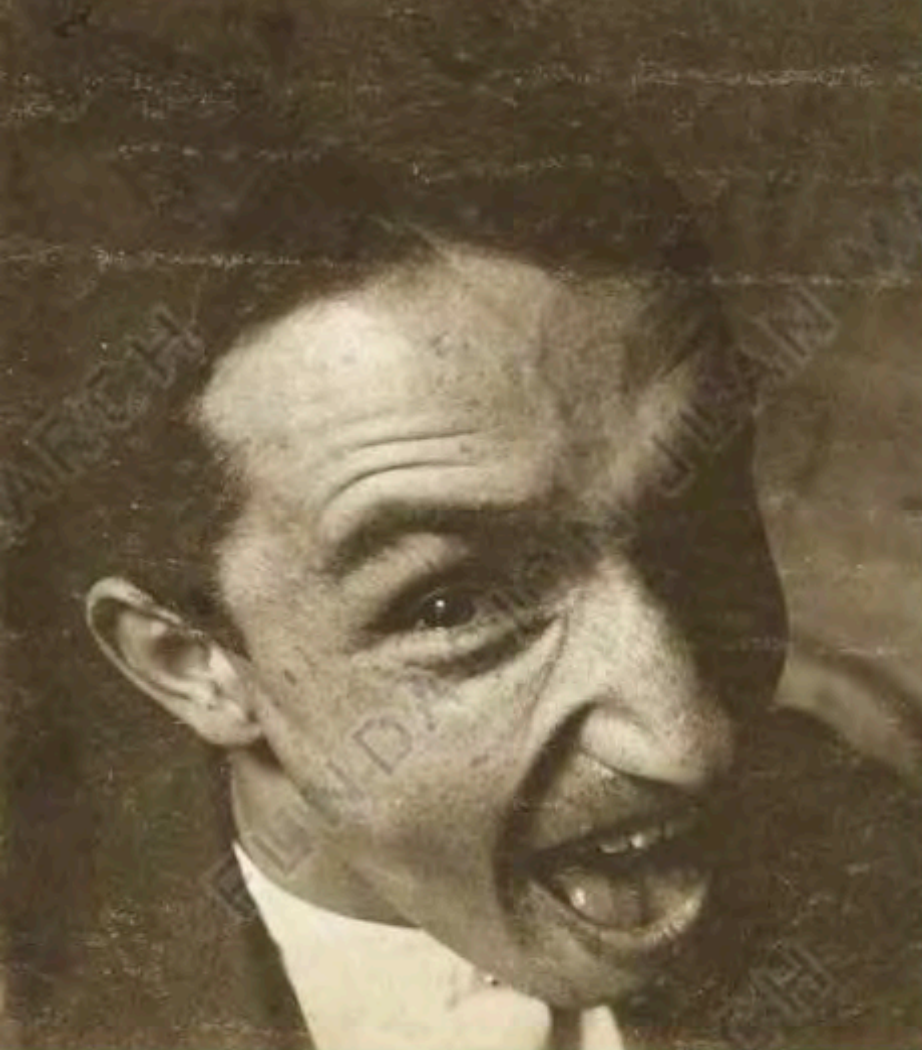
10. Franco Sartori (1892–1965) was an Italian poet — Ed.

11. The occupation of Rome by Mussolini and his followers took place on October 27–29, 1922. Forty years later it was the subject of a film of the same name directed by Dino Risi — Ed.

12. Fortunato Depero, in the preface to the volume *Liriche radiofoniche* (Milan: Morreale, 1934). For a full reproduction of this text in English, see p. 424.

13. See Giovanni Lista, *Futurismo: la rivolta dell’avanguardia* (Milan: Silvana Editoriale, 2008). On Marinetti and the radio, see the *Manifesto futurista della radio* [Manifesto of Futurist Radio (Radia)] published in English in this catalogue, pp. 379–80.

14. Lucio Fontana (1899–1968) was an Italian Argentine artist (painter, sculptor, ceramist, and graphic designer), founder of the Spazialismo movement and author of its White Manifesto — Ed.



THE CRITICAL
FORTUNE
AND ARTISTIC

RECOGNITION

OF THE
WORK OF

DEPERO

FABIO BELLONI

Today, Fortunato Depero is unanimously regarded as a key figure in the artistic scene of 20th century Italy. Over the past decades, many studies have shed light on his strengths: his original and autonomous reading of Futurism, his long *soggiorno* in New York at a time when Paris was still the preferred destination of artists, and above all his ability to go beyond the traditional hierarchies of genres, remaining open to very different techniques

and spheres. But Depero's value has not always been recognized. For a long time, both before and after his death, a simplistic interpretation of the artist and his work prevailed. From this viewpoint, Depero appeared as a subordinate, a minor author greatly dependent on his master – Giacomo Balla – and pigeonholed in that series of experiments for a long time defined, more or less properly, as “Second Futurism.”¹

Depero died in Rovereto at the age of sixty-eight, late in 1960, at a moment still marked by the fiftieth anniversary celebrations of the first Futurist manifesto. At that point, studies about the movement began appearing thick and fast: the rapid succession of exhibitions and publications was unprecedented in both number and scope.² So numerous were they that we can only mention the main ones here. Two years earlier, in 1958,

Autoritratto con smorfia [Self-portrait with Grimace], Rome, November 11, 1915. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 3 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (8.9 x 8.8 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero / *Autoritratto con pugno* [Self-portrait with Punch], Rome, 1915. Archivio Depero [cat. 31] / Michelangelo Pistoletto, *Il barocco e le maschere* [The Baroque and Masks], 1970. Fondazione Pistoletto, Sicily

Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori had published in Rome the first volume of a work that is still quintessential today: the *Archivi del futurismo* [Archives of Futurism],³ a text which for the first time lent some philological order to the jumble of writings, manifestos, and declarations produced by the Futurists. That initiative prefigured the large exhibition devoted to Futurism held the following year, again in Rome, at the Palazzo delle Esposizioni. The year after that, the 30th Venice Biennale, which would be remembered for having confirmed the triumph of Art Informel, earmarked its historical show for Futurism. Milan, on the other hand, saw the opening of the International Institute for Studies on Futurism,⁴ an organization focusing on the promotion of knowledge about the movement by way of first-hand documents. In Milan again, at the Accademia di Belle Arti di Brera, between 1959 and 1960 Guido Ballo devoted a whole course to the origins of Futurism. Raffaele Carrieri, meanwhile, was working on a monograph on the theme, which would be published in 1961 by the Galleria Il Milione. In the midst of all this, in 1959, a different but no less significant event took place: the inauguration in Rovereto of the Galleria Permanente e Museo Depero [fig. 1]. This opening was much talked about for at least two reasons: it was the first museum in Italy entirely devoted to a contemporary artist in his lifetime, and it was “Italy’s First Futurist Museum,” as the sign at its entrance proudly announced.

In the face of such a host of events it would be normal to expect any manner of reactions and honors at the parting of one of the last Futurist authors still around. Yet when Fortunato Depero died after a lengthy illness on November 29, 1960, things came to pass in quite a different way to what one might nowadays imagine. In the days following his demise, the local Trentino papers treated the news with predictable emphasis, but almost none of the national newspapers wrote of his passing. Only the *Corriere della Sera* mentioned the fact, albeit with stingy and anything but flattering comments, which was even more dumbfounding. Leonardo Borgese, who wrote Depero’s obituary and was, in those days, the paper’s critic of reference, remembered the artist without conveying any sign of sympathy. On the contrary, he talked of a “fine craftsman,” a “decorator,” a “whimsical” and “bizarre” painter.⁵ To be sure, Borgese was one of the most conservative critics of the day – we could even call him a reactionary – whose tastes veered in a very different direction. The fact remains, however, that such ungenerous comments about Depero were shared by the contemporary community of artists and critics.

This can be fairly easily explained, however. For the public of the day, Depero was not Boccioni, or Balla, or Severini, or even Carrà. In a nutshell, he was not an author endowed with the same dignity as was attached to other Futurists. For this reason, too, with the exception of the Gianni Mattioli Collection, his works did not find their way into the



fig. 1. Galleria Permanente e Museo Depero in Rovereto, in *Domus*, no. 390 (Milan, May 1962). MART, Archivio del '900

fig. 2. Cover of the catalogue for the exhibition *20th Century Italian Art* held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, June-September 1949. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1949



most important holdings that were being put together at that time. Depero’s canvases, tapestries, and sculptures are missing from the Milanese collections of Riccardo Jucker and Emilio Jesi, just as they are absent from the few but noteworthy international collections of Futurist works, such as those of Lydia Winston Malbin in the United States and Eric Estorick in England.

There are diverse reasons at the root of this distancing. The first and most important lies in the then predominant historiographical interpretations of Futurism.⁶ For many years, until well into the 1960s, historians in fact confined the movement’s chronology to very precise dates: 1909 (the year of the first manifesto) and 1916 (the year Boccioni died, and Severini and Carrà moved away from Futurism). The year 1916 was above all a strategic date: choosing it was a way of dissociating Futurism from the birth of Fascism (1919), with which more than a few exponents of the movement would be compromised.⁷ Depero officially joined the group in 1914, and although it is true that in the following year, together with Balla, he wrote one of its most important manifestos, *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe] [cat. 36], he only embarked on his more mature works toward the end of that decade. For this reason, he had generally been regarded as a second generation Futurist, an artist belonging to what in the late 1950s was being called “Second Futurism.”⁸

A specific exhibition was responsible for establishing Futurism’s concluding date in 1916 at an international level. This was *20th Century Italian Art* [fig. 2], the show curated in 1949 by James Thrall Soby and Alfred H. Barr at the Museum of Modern Art in New York.⁹ The event was a major occasion for various reasons, not least because, for the first time, Futurism and metaphysics were recognized as the foundations of Italian modern art. The Futurist creations on view stopped at 1915, as a result of which Depero’s work was not documented. From

the serried correspondence with Soby and Barr it is clear that the artist did in any event try to persuade the curators to include him, but in the end all he could do was take note of his own exclusion.¹⁰ At the beginning of that year, Depero had returned from his second, long and fruitless journey to the United States, and from his writings it is evident that the Museum of Modern Art's choice struck him as unjust, almost as an insult. In a letter sent to Gianni Mattioli on June 20, 1949, he gave vent to his bitterness. Here is a revealing extract:

Today I received another letter from Salterini¹¹ dated June 15 with, attached, Mr. Barr's reply, in which he once and for all excludes me because my works do not belong to the period 1910–15. Just as, incidentally, the following have been excluded: Prampolini, Dottori, Fillia, and others, also because they belonged to the second Futurist wave. The letter uses these terms, not to more candidly call them Fascists!¹²

For Depero, in effect, the link with Fascism was not a negligible problem: through his paintings, projects, and advertisements he had fully collaborated in backing the regime. As if that were not enough, when everything seemed to be collapsing, he had also submitted for printing *A passo romano* [Roman Step] [cat. 271], a volume published by the Trentino publishing house Credere, obbedire, combattere [Believe, obey, fight] in spring 1943, whereby he showed himself to be unaware of the turn events had taken for the worse. Depero rounded off an apology for Fascism through a gloomy sequence of texts, poems, and images: after the fall of the regime, on July 25, 1943, he hurriedly destroyed the copies still in his possession to get rid of the more compromising evidence of his recent past.¹³

It would, however, be simplistic to interpret Depero's misfortune in the immediate postwar years solely in the light of his convinced Fascist militancy. Were this the only problem, it would be hard to understand why an artist politically even more exposed than he, like Mario Sironi (1885–1961), could take part in *20th Century Italian Art* and, in the next decade, receive prizes and organize several exhibitions abroad, especially in the United States.¹⁴ For Depero as for many other authors of his generation, the Fascist past was a heavy burden. But at the end of the day it was not quite so paralyzing because, for example, in 1959, in the catalogue for his own museum – in fact the last book that the artist chose to produce and edit – he himself elected to publish on a double page, with no caution, but rather in a completely nonchalant manner, one of his old sketches for a large mural featuring lictorian swastikas and fasces.¹⁵

There must, therefore, have been another more influential logic underlying that estrangement. In other words, there must have been another reason why Depero had not earned the attention either of the most important critics of the day – from Giulio Carlo Argan to Cesare Brandi, and from Giuseppe Marchiori to Carlo Ludovico Ragghianti – or of the most seasoned dealers, notably Carlo Cardazzo, owner of the Venetian gallery Il Cavallino, with whom, in the 1950s he had one or two solo shows

scheduled which nevertheless came to naught.¹⁶ It accordingly becomes important to also weigh the taste of the day and the predominant aesthetics, shared by most people. Depero's best-known works between the 1940s and the 1950s – in other words, those which most regularly made the rounds of exhibitions and specialized magazines – were the most recent. Involved here is an odd mixture of Futurism, metaphysics, and Surrealism: an unusual and not always persuasive form of painting. This was the work of an artist in decline, a creator who had lost the vitality of his early years and assumed something akin to an excessive burden, where a vernacular taste was combined with frequent visionary accents. “In an excessive display of his wit,” Bruno Passamani wrote to his credit, “Depero transfers the formal proposition into the sphere of the grotesque, achieving one of the most sensational profanations to the detriment of painting itself, and of dynamic painting.”¹⁷

It is evident that a figuration of this kind turned out to be incapable of establishing a relation with its own time: it was unable to come up with solutions to the problems which the most up-to-date artists and critics were discussing, those involving abstraction and an art with social implications. Depero appeared as an evasive painter, lost in a world of fable, as far removed as can be imagined from the issues of “engagement” which, on the other hand, were informing the discussions of the day. Taken in his entirety – then as now, incidentally – Depero seemed to be an uneven creator, one not easy to pin down within the Italian artistic tradition. His cheerful, ironic, playful, and often decorative character made him almost an anomaly in a 20th century vein which, on the contrary, appeared to be reliant on quite different bases. And



fig. 3. Catalogue for the exhibition *Futurism* held at the Museum of Modern Art, New York, May-September 1961. New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1961. Fundación Juan March Library, Fondo Especial Fernando Zóbel

then his eccentricity – was he a painter, a graphic artist, an advertiser, or a set designer? – set him apart like a hybrid figure, well removed from that of the pure painter, still so appreciated in a culture permeated with Crocian ideas.¹⁸

In the immediate postwar years, some Futurists, in particular Balla and Severini, became important examples for the latest generation of artists embarking on the road to abstraction.¹⁹ Depero could also have been a model, but this did not happen for one simple reason: until the late 1960s, he remained a mysterious artist and a fairly obscure figure whose pictures, as seen in exhibitions and magazines, were always the same. To be sure, there was a whole museum dedicated to his work in Rovereto: but to a considerable degree it was a gallery filled with late works, and therefore the least emblematic. In addition, the numerous books published over the decades like so many extensive repertoires of his work – above all *Depero futurista* (the “bolted book” of 1927) [cat. 148] and *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* (the autobiography of 1940) [cat. 269] – remained rare editions, not really in circulation. The basic problem is that many works from his early years had been lost, destroyed, or else held in inaccessible collections, like those of Léonide Massine and Sergei Diaghilev. As evidence of their existence there were still old photographs and the remakes that Depero started to produce from the late 1940s on, passing them off as originals.²⁰

In the early 1960s, however, this situation started to change. Depero's work ended up at the hub of a slow but ongoing process of rehabilitation. From then on, the solo shows in public and private venues increased in number, to the point where nowadays it is difficult to keep tabs on them. There was a whole host of occasions promoted by Gianni Mattioli, who was the artist's friend and keenest collector, the only person on whom he could really rely from the early 1920s to the end of his days.²¹ Mattioli was always the man behind those exhibitions: at the Galleria Toninelli in Milan in 1962, at the Quadriennale in Rome in 1965, at the Villa Reale in Monza and at the Galleria Annunciata in Milan in 1966, at the Martano in Turin in 1969, and at the Square Gallery in Milan in 1971, for example. Above all, the first major Depero retrospective held at the Museo Civico in Bassano del Grappa in summer 1970 was his brainchild.

Abroad, too, in the United States people were finally becoming aware of the artist from Rovereto. The great exhibition on Futurism organized by the Museum of Modern Art in 1961 [fig. 3] continued to select works based on the canonical dates, and thus excluded Depero's oeuvre, but oddly enough for the catalogue cover Joshua Taylor chose a *parolibera* plate taken from Depero's bolted book. The following year, in 1962, the New York Public Library celebrated Igor Stravinsky's 80th birthday with an exhibition titled *Stravinsky and the Dance*. For the occasion one or two photographs and sketches for *Le Chant du rossignol* [The Song of the



fig. 4. Catalogue for the exhibition *Depero 1892-1960* held at the Museo Civico-Palazzo Sturm, Bassano del Grappa, July-September 1970. Bassano del Grappa: Tip. Minchio, 1970. MART, Archivio del '900

fig. 5. *Nac, Notiziario di Arte Contemporanea*, no. 12 (Rome, April 1969). MART, Archivio del '900

fig. 6. Maurizio Calvesi, *Le due avanguardie: dal futurismo alla pop art* [The Two Avant-gardes: From Futurism to Pop Art]. Milan: L'Espresso, 1966. Private collection

Nightingale] were exhibited. Then between 1967 and 1970 it became possible to see other important works from the Mattioli Collection in the show that toured Washington DC, Dallas, New York, and other American cities.

At the turn of the decade there erupted what we could perhaps describe as the “Depero case.” For the first time, not least thanks to the gradual reorganization of his documentary archive and the parallel critical relaunching of Balla, the artist from Rovereto began to be seriously studied. It was above all Bruno Passamani, the young director of the Museo Civico in Bassano del Grappa who had graduated in Rome with Lionello Venturi, who curated the first truly important exhibitions of Depero’s work [fig. 4]. His catalogues became valuable tools, publishing hitherto unseen works, gathering writings, and organizing still uncertain dates. From that moment on the artist’s name and works started to appear even in places associated with the liveliest discussions of the day. Two examples will suffice here. In April 1969, *NAC*, the most widespread contemporary art news bulletin, published on its cover *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre* [City Mechanized by Shadows] [cat. 99], produced in 1919 [fig. 5]. Shortly thereafter, *Marcatrè*, the most

important Italian avant-garde magazine, and the one which had paid closer heed than others to Pop Art and Arte Povera, devoted an almost forty-page dossier to Depero and the theater.²²

What was making the artist the center of attention? At that time a new surge of studies, shows, and books on Futurism was gathering sway. A different generation of interpreters was undertaking to re-read Futurist art without the encumbrances and preconceptions which had hitherto hampered research. A more tranquil analysis was ushered in: as already pointed out by Günter Berghaus, the equation “Futurism equals Fascism” was gradually losing ground.²³ And then, in a more general way, people started to understand that much of what was happening in avant-garde circles, Italian and foreign alike, had its roots in the experiments carried out at the beginning of the 20th century. This, for example, is the thesis of a crucial book from 1966, *Le due avanguardie* [The Two Avant-gardes],²⁴ in which Maurizio Calvesi emphasizes the continuity between past and present, and between Futurism, neo-Dada, and Pop Art. In this sort of atmosphere, Depero earned hitherto unknown credit. *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo*, the document penned in 1915 with Balla, became a significant

fig. 7. Gino Marotta, *Naturale artificiale* [Natural - Artificial], 1968. Private collection

fig. 8. *Flora e fauna magica* [Magical Flora and Fauna], 1920. Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 101]





fig. 12. *Clavel nella funicolare* [Clavel in the Funicular], 1917–18. Private collection

fig. 11. Enrico Baj, *I funerali dell'anarchico Pinelli* [Funeral of the Anarchist Pinelli], 1972. Fondazione Marconi, Milan. Courtesy Fondazione Marconi, Milan and Archivio Baj, Vergiate

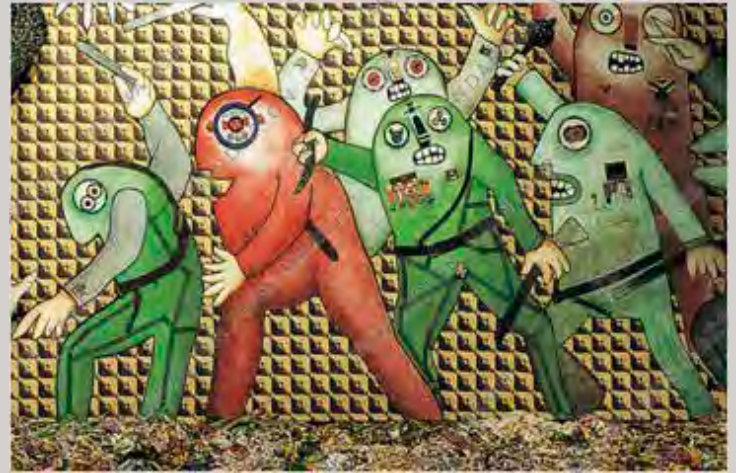


fig. 9. Mario Celori, *Ultima cena* [Last Supper], 1965. Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna, Rome, by permission of the Ministero dei Beni delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo



fig. 10. *Martellatori macchina* [Machine Hammerers], Paris, 1925. MART, Archivio del '900 [cat. 131]

theoretical precedent for an art that was keen to go beyond the threshold of the traditional picture and open up to every sphere of experience. Depero and the theater was the topic which aroused the most interest: his contact with Diaghilev, his collaborative projects with Clavel, and his costume designs for Cangiullo, *Mimismagia*, and *Aniccham del 3000*. It was such themes that Michael Kirby discussed with Depero's widow Rosetta when, in July 1969, he traveled from New York to Rovereto to interview her in anticipation of the volume *Futurist Performance*.²⁵

At a time when artists and critics were ever more incessantly talking about *arte-gioco* or "game-art,"²⁶ Depero was becoming a figure of reference, a master. And then, read in tune with contemporary taste, his works became surprisingly topical. His exotic, colorful, and unreal character returned in the methacrylate sculptures of Gino Marotta (1935–2012) [figs. 7–8], the multiplication of imagery re-carved in the wooden works of Mario Celori (b. 1938) [figs. 9–10], and the grotesque aspect on the canvases of Enrico Baj (1924–2003) [figs. 11–12], for example. Experiments involving visual poetry, design, and even behavioral research projects all seemed to

have a kindred connection. None of these authors and groups has ever explained in words its personal devotion to Depero, and we should certainly not think that their works are dependent on him. It is however important to understand that the visual climate of that time seemed the most attuned and disposed to his rehabilitation.

Among this raft of cases, there is nonetheless one that was keen to pay a declared tribute to Depero. In September 1980, at the Teatro Comunale in L'Aquila, Fabio Mauri (1926–2009) presented *Gran Serata Futurista 1909–1930* [fig. 13], a show that lasted all of four hours and was performed by



fig. 15. Mechanical flowers stage set for Serge Diaghilev's Ballets Russes performance in Rome in 1917 of Igor Stravinsky's "Le Chant du rossignol" [The Song of the Nightingale], 1917. Private collection, Switzerland [cat. 53]

fig. 16. Catalogue for the exhibition *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe] held at the Musei Civici, Turin, June-October 1980. Turin: Museo Civico di Torino, 1980. Fundación Juan March Library



fig. 13. Hand program for the *Gran Serata Futurista 1909-1930* [Grand Futurist Evening 1909-1930], by Fabio Mauri, a performance staged by teachers and students of the Accademia di Belle Arti dell'Aquila, 1980. Courtesy Studio Fabio Mauri

fig. 14. Scene from the *Gran serata futurista* [Grand Futurist Evening], by Fabio Mauri, Teatro Comunale, L'Aquila, 1980

more than fifty actors. With philological attention, the disruptive energy of Futurist encounters was re-created on stage; words-in-freedom were recited, music of the day was played, and films of the period were screened. For Mauri, a sophisticated artist who for years had focused his own work on the theme of personal and collective memory, what was involved was above all else a tribute to Depero: many reproductions of his pictures were shown in succession, and the sets for *Le Chant du rossignol* and the costumes for *Anihccam 3000* [figs. 14-15, cat. 51-53] were also reproduced.²⁷ It was no coincidence that this all came about at the end of 1980. Shortly beforehand, the Florentine publishing house Spes had anastatically reprinted the unfindable bolted book, while *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [fig. 16], the great exhibition devoted to Futurism curated by Enrico Crispolti in Turin in spring 1980, had ushered in Depero's definitive rehabilitation.²⁸

* This study is the outcome of a fellowship at the Center for Italian Modern Art (CIMA) in New York. Parts of it were presented at the Fortunato Depero Study Day, CIMA, February 21, 2014.

1. "Depero's misfortune can be accounted for. He was not included in the Futurist movement because his signature does not appear on the first Manifesto. He was not studied in the 'Second Futurist' group because his membership predated it. In reality, Depero was an integral part of the movement. [...] Naturally, he was actively involved up to a certain date: what is more, real Futurism spanned barely ten years (1909-19), and Marinetti was right in saying that its momentum might last five or ten years and its heirs would be free to throw it away. Then Depero was, for years, the worst administrator of his own talent and for almost everyone 'Depero' is now synonymous with cushion," Maurizio Fagiolo, *Futur-Balla* (Rome: Bulzoni, 1970), xxii. On Depero's discussed participation in the so-called "Second Futurism," see Giovanni Lista, "L'esperienza futurista di Fortunato Depero," in Fortunato Depero,

- Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012), 217–19.
2. Günter Berghaus, "The Postwar Reception of Futurism: Repression or Recuperation?" in *The History of Futurism. The Precursors, Protagonists, and Legacies*, ed. Geert Buelens, Harald Hendrix, and Monica Jansen (New York: Lexington Books, 2012), 377–403; Enrico Crispolti, "The Dynamics of Futurism's Historiography," in *Italian Futurism 1909–1944: Reconstructing the Universe*, ed. Vivien Greene (New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2014), 50–57.
 3. Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori, *Archivi del futurismo*, 2 vols. (Rome: De Luca, 1958–62).
 4. The Istituto Internazionale di Studi sul Futurismo was founded in 1960 by the Futurists Acquaviva, Andreoni, Belloli, Bruschetti, Crali, Diulgheroff, Masnata, Mazza, and Munari. Thanks to the contribution of the Futurist poet Carlo Belloli (1922–2003), the ISISUF has an important archive and collection of Futurist art works — Ed.
 5. Leonardo Borgese, "Si è spento Fortunato Depero il più metodico pittore del futurismo," *Corriere della Sera*, November 30, 1960, 19.
 6. See Fabio Benzi, *Il Futurismo* (Milan: Motta, 2008), 6–11.
 7. The literature on this subject is plentiful. See at least Günter Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics: Between Anarchist Rebellion and Fascist Reaction, 1909–1944* (Oxford: Bergahn Books, 1996), and Emilio Gentile, "La nostra sfida alle stelle," *Futuristi in politica* (Rome: Laterza 2009).
 8. Enrico Crispolti, *Appunti sul problema del secondo futurismo nella cultura italiana fra le due guerre* (Turin: Edizioni della Galleria Notizie, 1958).
 9. For a retrospective reading of the exhibition, see Raffaele Bedarida, "Operation Renaissance: Italian Art at MoMA, 1940–1949," *Oxford Art Journal* 35, no. 2 (December 2012), 147–69. Also, the special edition of the review *Cahiers d'Art* (January 1950) devoted to *Un demi-siècle d'art italien* played an important part in establishing the chronology of Futurism.
 10. The correspondence can be found today in the Fondo Fortunato Depero, "Mostra d'arte di avanguardia italiana a New York, 1949," Dep. 3. 1. 42, MART Archivio del '900, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto.
 11. John Salterini, an Italian-American industrialist friend of Depero since the 1920s.
 12. "Oggi ricevo altra lettera da Salterini – in data 15 giugno con allegata la risposta di Mr. Barr, con la quale mi si esclude tassativamente perché le opere non appartengono al periodo 1910–1915. Come pure furono esclusi di proposito: Prampolini, Dottori, Fillia ed altri anche perché appartenenti alla seconda ondata futurista. La lettera parla in questi termini, per non voler dire più francamente fascisti!" My thanks to Laura Mattioli for having allowed me to examine the Mattioli-Depero exchange of letters held in her archive and hitherto unavailable for study.
 13. It is perhaps of interest to know that Umberto Silva's *Ideologia e arte del fascismo* (Milan: Mazzotta, 1974), the first Italian book devoted to the art of the period, published some illustrations from *A passo romano*, pointing to them as a pure example of Fascist art.
 14. Emily Braun, *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism: Art and Politics under Fascism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000). For details, see the chapter "Sironi in Context," 1–17.
 15. *Catalogo della Galleria e Museo Depero, Rovereto, il primo museo futurista d'Italia* (Rovereto: Temi, 1959), 70–71: in it a work of propaganda designed in 1942 for ENIT, the National Tourism Agency responsible for the overseas promotion of tourism in Italy, is reproduced. In general, for the relations between art and politics at that time, see Monica Cioli, *Il fascismo e la sua arte* (Florence: Olschki, 2011).
 16. This information was gleaned from some postwar letters in the Archivio Mattioli. See also the exhibition catalogue *Carlo Cardazzo, una nuova visione dell'arte*, ed. Luca Massimo Barbero (Milan: Mondadori Electa, 2008).
 17. Bruno Passamani, *Fortunato Depero* (Rovereto: Musei Civici, Galleria Museo Depero, 1981), 243.
 18. For a cultural context of the time the following work is still valid: Eugenio Garin, *Cronache di filosofia italiana 1900–1943, in Appendice Quindici anni dopo 1945–1960* (Bari: Laterza, 1975), 489–617.
 19. Giovanni Lista, "L'eredità del futurismo," in *Futurismo, 1909–2009, Velocità+Arte+Azionismo*, ed. Giovanni Lista and Ada Masoero (Milan: Skira, 2009), 272–91.
 20. On this, see Maurizio Scudiero, "La ricerca deperiana: problemi di metodo," in *Depero*, ed. Maurizio Fagiolo (exh. cat. Museo d'Arte Moderna di Rovereto, November 12, 1988–January 14, 1989; Städtische Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf; Palazzo Reale, Milan, 1989; Milan: Electa, 1988), 226–36.
 21. Laura Mattioli, "The Collection of Gianni Mattioli from 1943 to 1953," in *The Mattioli Collection: Masterpieces of the Italian Avant-garde*, catalogue raisonné (Milan: Skira; London: Thames and Hudson, 2003), 13–61.
 22. Silvana Sinisi, "Depero: una vocazione allo spettacolo," *Marcatrè*, nos. 50–55 (Urbino, February–July 1969), 342–80.
 23. Berghaus, "The Postwar Reception of Futurism," 394. An explicit parallel between the Futurist experiments and the social mobilization experiments of the late 1960s is to be found in Claudia Salaris, *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume* (Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002).
 24. Maurizio Calvesi, *Le due avanguardie. Dal futurismo alla pop art* (Milan: Lerici, 1966).
 25. See Michael Kirby, *Futurist Performance* (New York: Dutton, 1971), 73. Again in the United States, Depero's theater work was also treated in Henning Rischbieter, *Art and the Stage in the 20th Century: Painters and Sculptors Work for the Theater* (Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, 1968).
 26. In 1966, Guido Montana, critic and editor of the review *Arte Oggi*, published the essay *Socialità del gioco e valore estetico* (Genoa: Silva, 1966). "Arte gioco," on the other hand, was the monographic issue published that same year by the Almanacco Letterario Bompiani. While the 33rd Venice Biennale was defined by Restany as "the Biennale of *joie de vivre* and game-art, of *homo ludens* as opposed to *homo faber*" (Pierre Restany, "Venezia 33 Biennale. L'*homo ludens* contro l'*homo faber*," *Domus*, no. 441 [Milan, August 1966]).
 27. On this artist, the book of reference is still the exhibition catalogue *Fabio Mauri. Opere e azioni, 1954–1994*, ed. Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev and Marcella Cossu (Milan: Mondadori; Rome: Carte Segrete, 1994). Mauri paid a first indirect tribute to Depero as early as 1968 with the series of plastic sculpture installations titled *Pile e cinema a luce solida* [Stacks and Films in Solid Light].
 28. In the early 1980s, Depero's visual fortunes found further important testimony, especially in the work of Ugo Nespolo and in that of the artists belonging to the group called Nuovo Futurismo in 1983. See respectively: *Nespolo, ritorno a casa. Un percorso antologico*, exh. cat., ed. Francesco Poli and Stefano Della Casa (Cinisello Balsamo: Silvana, 2009), and *Nuovo futurismo: Abate, Innocente, Lodola, Plumcake. Postal*, ed. Renato Barilli (exh. cat. Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, San Marino; MART, Rovereto, 1994; Milan: Electa, 1994).

DEPERO
FUTURIS
ANANTH

AND M: OLOGY

1909-1951

EDITORS' NOTE

MANUEL FONTÁN DEL JUNCO,
LLANOS GÓMEZ MENÉNDEZ,
ERICA WITSCHHEY AND
INÉS D'ORS LOIS

In this section, both the English and Spanish versions of the catalogue include a selection of nine key Futurist texts (two of them not published up to now in English), in addition to a sizeable group of forty-one texts by Fortunato Depero, almost all of them previously unpublished in either language. In addition to the fact that many of them were up until now only accessible to Italian speakers, they have been brought together here for the importance of their theoretical contributions, their literary merit, and their interpretative significance for contextualizing and assessing Depero's visual and literary output.

In the case of the written works in the first part, "Italian Futurism," the selection of texts, or rather manifestos of the Futurist movement (from its founding text of 1909 to the "Manifesto of Futurist Radio [Radia]" of 1933) has been made on the basis of their nature as "canonical" texts of the movement, but also on the grounds of their particular relationship with the "Futurist" nature of Depero himself and of his work, as in the obvious cases of numbers 5, 6, 8 and 9, which are closely related, respectively, to his artistic creation, his focus on the theater, the "mechanistic" version of Futurism that he represents, and his radio poems, published in 1934. For these texts, the compilation edited by Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman, *Futurism: An Anthology* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), has been a key source of reference, providing not only the English translation of many of the manifestos in this section but also highly relevant information in the editors' notes.

With regard to the texts by Depero himself, many of them still unpublished in Italian, we have opted for a much larger selection that encompasses his activity across the entire chronological span of the exhibition. These texts range from the account of his first "Futurist" experience (1913) and the translation of the manuscript of his conversion (1914) to a text of 1951 that is a true retrospective and retroactive settling of accounts with regard to Futurism.

For the translation of some of the texts published by the artist in different places, the

ordering made by Giovanni Lista in his critical anthology of the artist's writings has been extremely useful (Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista. Milan: Abscondita, 2013. Carte d'Artista, 143). The same can be said of Claudia Salaris in *Un futurista a New York* (Montepulciano: Del Grifo, 1990, Collana modernità), her edition of one of the books planned by Depero as a compilation of his written texts published separately between 1928 and 1930. From the artist's *So I Think, So I Paint* (Trento: Tipografia Editrice Mutilati e Invalidi, 1947), a curious book originally published in English in Italy, we have selected almost twenty short, profound texts, many of them extremely humorous, which read as a true "Depero Dictionary."

While this anthology has not set out to offer itself as a critical edition, the translations have been undertaken with great care and some notes have been included where this has been considered necessary for a complete understanding of the texts. The source and provenance of the original text is noted at the end of each entry, as well as the translator. The importance of the typographical layout (or manuscript form, in one case) of some of these texts led to the decision to present them alongside the original Italian in a facsimile edition. This has been made possible through the meticulous endeavors of Alfonso Meléndez and Fernando Fuentes, working with Guillermo Nagore and Jordi Sanguino. The three days of research undertaken in the Archivio del 900' of the MART by Aida Capa, Marta Suárez Infesta, and Manuel Fontán del Junco, where they were offered complete access to all the manuscripts, drafts, versions, and published editions of Depero's texts were essential for this undertaking, which is thus indebted to the patience and professionalism of Mariarosa Mariech, Carlo Prosser, Paola Pettenella, and above all Federico Zanoner, to whom we would like to express our heartfelt thanks.

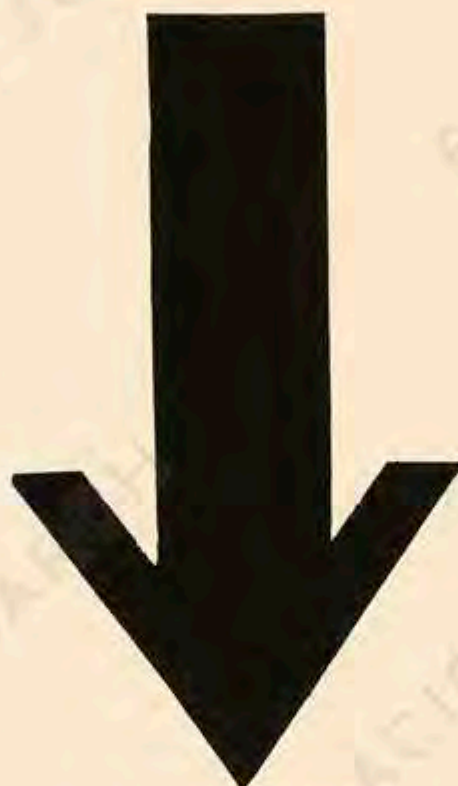
CONTENTS

ITALIAN FUTURISM (1909-1933)

- 361 01 F. T. Marinetti, *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism* (1909)
363 02 VV.AA., *Manifesto of the Futurist Painters* (1910)
364 03 F. T. Marinetti, *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature* (1912)
366 04 VV.AA., *Futurist Political Program* (1913)
367 05 VV.AA., Marinetti, *Futurist Synthetic Theater* (1915)
369 06 G. Balla and F. Depero, *Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe* (1915)
376 07 VV.AA., *Futurist Cinema* (1916)
377 08 VV.AA., *Futurist Manifesto of Mechanical Art* (1922)
379 09 F. T. Marinetti and P. Masnata, *Manifesto of Futurist Radio (Radia)* (1933)

FORTUNATO DEPERO (1913-1951)

- 383 01 Boccioni's Exhibition – Futurist Sculpture (A Short Commentary) (1913)
385 02 After a Year of Endeavors... (1914)
385 03 Plastic Complexity – Free Futurist Game – The Artificial Living Being (1914)
394 04 The Onomalanguage – Abstract Verbalization – Depero Creation (1916)
396 05 Depero's Plastic Theater – Principles and Applications (1919)
398 06 Self-introduction (1921)
399 07 Theater Must Interpret Life (1926)
399 08 Plastic Arts of Today – Wall Manifesto (1927)
404 09 The First Motorumorist Plastic Complex (1927)
405 10 The Need For Self-Advertisement – Wall Manifesto (1927)
408 11 Magic Theater (1927)
420 12 From *Un Futurista a New York* (c. 1928–1930)
Skyscrapers
Ideal cinema
An abstract toast
I transform a large Italian restaurant in downtown New York
Genoa, October 22, 1930
421 13 Contemporary Film and Dynamic Painting (1929)
422 14 Futurism and Advertising Art (1931)
423 15 ABC of Futurism (1933)
424 16 Radio Lyrics (1934)
424 17 Multiple Perspective (1940)
425 18 From *So I Think, So I Paint* (1947)
hold on!
aeropainting
antipretty
typographic architecture
automaton
charleston
continuity in space
cutting criticism
hotel
i know giacomo balla
still life
still life alive
passatist
a. centrifugal and centripetal perspective; b. internal and emotional perspective;
c. multiple perspective
shadows
physical transcendentalism
words in liberty
yes, marinetti had no strict principles
428 19 Manifesto of Nuclear Painting and Sculpture (1950)
430 20 The Return of Futurism (1951)



IL FUTURISMO
è l'espressione violenta
della nostra razza, aggressiva e ri-
voluzionaria; è l'espressione di giovinezza
incontenibile e frenetica. **IL FUTURISMO** è vibra-
zione, slancio, passione, audacia gioconda e festosità
orchestrale. **IL FUTURISMO** è il metodo ormai imperi-
turo dell'arte italiana che per merito di **MARINETTI**
e dei **FUTURISTI** ha ritrovato e riaffermato nel mondo la fede
nel continuo rinnovarsi della propria **GENIALITA' CREATRICE**.

Il Futurismo immortale

ha rivalorizzato la vera tradizione dell'arte italiana che è sempre stata:
creazione - superamento - rivoluzione

ITALIAN FUTURISM

(1909-1933)

01

The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism

F. T. Marinetti

1909

We had stayed up all night¹ – my friends and I – beneath mosque lamps hanging from the ceiling. Their brass domes were filigreed, starred like our souls; just as, again like our souls, they were illuminated by the imprisoned brilliance of an electric heart. On the opulent oriental rugs, we had crushed our ancestral lethargy, arguing all the way to the final frontiers of logic and blackening reams of paper with delirious writings.

Our chests swelled with immense pride, for at that hour we alone were still awake and upright, like magnificent lighthouses or forward sentries facing an army of enemy stars that eyed us from their encampments in the sky. Alone with the stokers who bustle in front of the boilers' hellish fires in massive ships; alone with the black specters who rummage in the red-hot bellies of locomotives launched on insane journeys; alone with drunkards who flounder alongside the city walls, with the beating of uncertain wings.

Suddenly we jumped at the tremendous noise of the large double-decker trams that jolted along outside, shimmering with multicolored lights, like villages on holiday which the flooding Po suddenly strikes and uproots, dragging them all the way to the sea, over waterfalls and through gorges.

Then the silence grew more gloomy. But as we were listening to the attenuated murmur of prayers muttered by the old canal and the bones of ailing palaces creaking above their beards of damp moss, suddenly we heard the famished automobiles roaring beneath the windows.

"Let's go!" I said. "Let's go, my friends! Let's leave! At last mythology and the mystical ideal have been superseded. We are about to witness the birth of the Centaur, and soon we shall see the first Angels fly! ... We have to shake the doors of life to test their hinges and bolts! ... Let's leave! Look! There, on the earth, the earliest dawn! Nothing can match the splendor of the sun's red sword, skirmishing for the first time with our thousand-year-old shadows."

We drew close to the three snorting beasts, tenderly stroking their swollen breasts. I stretched out on my car like a corpse in its coffin, but revived at once under the steering wheel, a guillotine blade that menaced my stomach.

The furious sweep of madness drove us outside ourselves and through the streets, deep and precipitous as the beds of spring torrents. Here and there a sickly lamplight, behind the glass of a window, taught us to despise the errant mathematics of our transitory eyes.

I screamed: "The scent, the scent alone is enough for our beasts!"

And like young lions we ran after Death, its black hide stained with pale crosses, running across the vast livid sky, alive and throbbing.

And yet we did not have an ideal Beloved who raised her sublime form all the way to the clouds, nor a cruel Queen to whom we could offer our corpses, twisted in the shape of Byzantine rings! Nothing to make us wish to die except our desire to free ourselves finally from the burden of our own courage!

And so we raced on, hurling watchdogs back against the doorways; they were flattened and curled beneath our scorching tires like shirt collars beneath a pressing iron. Death, domesticated, was overtaking me at every turn, gracefully holding out a paw, or sometimes stretching out on the ground with a noise like that of grating jawbones, casting me velvety and tender looks from every puddle.

"Let's break out of wisdom, as if out of a horrible shell; and let's fling ourselves, like fruits swollen with pride, into the wind's vast and contorted mouth! ... Let's throw ourselves, like food, into the Unknown, not in desperation but to fill up the deep wells of the Absurd."

Scarcely had I said these words, when I spun my car around as frantically as a dog trying to bite its own tail, and there, suddenly, were two bicyclists right in front of me, cutting me off, as if trying to prove me wrong, wobbling like two lines of reasoning, equally persuasive and yet contradictory. Their stupid argument was being discussed right in my path ... What a bore! Damn! ... I stopped short,

and to my disgust rolled over into a ditch, with my wheels in the air

Oh! Maternal ditch, nearly full of muddy water! Fair factory drain! I gulped down your bracing slime, which reminded me of the sacred black breast of my Sudanese nurse. ... When I climbed out, a filthy and stinking rag, from underneath the capsized car, I felt my heart – deliciously – being slashed with the red-hot iron of joy!

A crowd of fishermen armed with hooks and naturalists stricken with gout formed a thronging circle around the prodigy. With patient and meticulous attention, they rigged up a derrick and enormous iron grappels to fish out my car, stranded like a large shark. The car slowly emerged from the ditch, leaving behind in the depths its heavy chassis of good sense and its soft upholstery of comfort, like scales.

They thought it was dead, my beautiful shark, but one caress from me was enough to revive it, and there it was again, once more alive, running on its powerful fins.

And so, our faces covered with the good factory slime – a mix of metallic scum, useless sweat, heavenly soot – our arms bruised and bandaged, we, still fearless, have dictated our first intentions to all the *living* men of the earth:

The Manifesto of Futurism

1. We intend to sing to the love of danger, the habit of energy and fearlessness.

2. Courage, boldness, and rebelliousness will be the essential elements of our poetry.

3. Up to now literature has exalted contemplative stillness, ecstasy, and sleep. We intend to exalt movement and aggression, feverish insomnia, the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the slap and the punch.

4. We affirm that the beauty of the world has been enriched by a new form of beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing car with a hood that glistens with large pipes resembling a serpent with explosive breath ... a roaring automobile that seems to ride on grapeshot – that is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*.

5. We intend to praise man at the steering wheel, the ideal axis of which intersects the earth, itself hurled ahead in its own race along the path of its orbit.

6. Henceforth poets must do their utmost, with ardor, splendor, and generosity, to increase the enthusiastic fervor of the primordial elements.

7. There is no beauty that does not consist of struggle. No work that lacks an aggressive character can be considered a masterpiece. Poetry must be conceived as a violent assault launched against unknown forces to reduce them to submission under man.

8. We stand on the last promontory of the centuries! ... Why should we look back over our shoulders, when we intend to breach the mysteri-

ous doors of the Impossible? Time and space died yesterday. We already live in the absolute, for we have already created velocity which is eternal and omnipresent.

9. We intend to glorify war – the only hygiene of the world – militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of anarchists, beautiful ideas worth dying for, and contempt for woman.

10. We intend to destroy museums, libraries, academies of every sort, and to fight against moralism, feminism, and every utilitarian or opportunistic cowardice.

11. We shall sing the great masses shaken with work, pleasure, or rebellion: we shall sing the multi-colored and polyphonic tidal waves of revolution in the modern metropolis; we shall sing the vibrating nocturnal fervor of factories and shipyards burning under violent electrical moons; bloated railroad stations that devour smoking serpents; factories hanging from the sky by the twisting threads of spiraling smoke; bridges like gigantic gymnasts who span rivers, flashing at the sun with the gleam of a knife; adventurous steamships that scent the horizon, locomotives with their swollen chest, pawing the tracks like massive steel horses bridled with pipes, and the oscillating flight of airplanes, whose propeller flaps at the wind like a flag and seems to applaud like a delirious crowd.

It is from Italy that we are flinging this to the world, our manifesto of burning and overwhelming violence, with which we today establish *Futurism*, for we intend to free this nation from its fetid cancer of professors, archaeologists, tour guides, and antiquarians.

For much too long Italy has been a flea market. We intend to liberate it from the countless museums that have covered it like so many cemeteries.

Museums: cemeteries! Identical, really, in the horrible promiscuity of so many bodies scarcely known to one another. Museums: public dormitories in which someone is put to sleep forever alongside others he hated or didn't know! Museums: absurd slaughterhouses for painters and sculptors who go on thrashing each other with blows of line and color along the disputed walls!

That once a year you might make a pilgrimage, much as one makes an annual visit to a graveyard ... I'll grant you that. That once a year you can deposit a wreath of flowers in front of the *Mona Lisa*, I permit you that ... But I cannot countenance the idea that our sorrows are daily shepherded on a tour through museums, or our weak courage, our pathological restlessness. Why would we wish to poison ourselves? Why wish to rot?

And what is there to see in an old painting beside the laborious distortion of the artist who tried to break through the insuperable barriers that blocked his desire to express fully his dream? ... To admire an old painting is the same as pouring our sensibility into a funerary urn, instead of casting it forward into the distance in violent spurts of creation and action.

Do you wish to waste your best strength in this eternal and useless admiration of the past, an activity that will only leave you fatally spent, diminished, crushed?

I declare, in all truth, that a daily visit to museums, libraries, and academies (cemeteries of futile efforts, Calvaries of crucified dreams, record books of broken assaults! ...) is as dangerous for artists as a prolonged guardianship under the thumb of one's family is for certain young talents intoxicated with their own genius and their ambitious aims. For the sickly, the ill, or the imprisoned – let them go and visit: the admirable past is perhaps a solace for their troubles, since the future is now closed to them. ... But we intend to know nothing of it, nothing of the past – we strong and youthful *Futurists*!

And so, let the glad arsonists with charred fingers come! Here they are! Here they are! ... Go ahead! Set fire to the shelves of the libraries! ... Turn aside the course of the canals to flood the museums! ... Oh, the joy of seeing all the glorious old canvases floating adrift on the waters, shredded and discolored! ... Seize your pickaxes, axes, and hammers, and tear down, pitilessly tear down the venerable cities!

The oldest of us is thirty: so we have at least a decade left to fulfill our task. When we are forty, others who are younger and stronger will throw us into the wastebasket, like useless manuscripts. – We want it to happen!

They will come against us, our successors; they will come from far away, from every direction, dancing to the winged cadence of their first songs, extending predatory claws, sniffing doglike at the doors of academies for the good smell of our decaying minds, long since promised to the libraries' catacombs.

But we won't be there. ... They will find us, at last – one wintry night – in an open field, beneath a sad roof drummed by monotonous rain, crouched beside our trembling airplanes and in the act of warming our hands by the dirty little fire made with the books we are writing today, flaming beneath the flight of our imaginings.

Panting with contempt and anxiety, they will storm around us, and all of them, exasperated by our lofty daring, will attempt to kill us, driven by a hatred all the more implacable because their hearts will be intoxicated with love and admiration for us.

In their eyes, strong and healthy Injustice will radiantly burst. – Art, in fact, can be nothing if not violence, cruelty, and injustice.

The oldest of us is thirty: and yet already we have cast away treasures, thousands of treasures of force, love, boldness, cunning, and raw will power; have thrown them away impatiently, furiously, heedlessly, without hesitation, without rest, screaming for our lives. ... Look at us! We are still not weary! Our hearts feel no tiredness because they are fed with fire, hatred, and speed!

Are you astounded? ... Of course you are, because you can't even recall having ever been alive!

Standing erect on the summit of the world, yet once more we fling our challenge to the stars!

You raise objections? ... Stop! Stop! We know them ... We've understood! ... The refined and mendacious mind tells us that we are the summation and continuation of our ancestors – maybe! ... Suppose it so! ... But what difference does it make? We don't want to listen! ... Woe to anyone who repeats those infamous words to us!

Lift up your heads!

Standing erect on the summit of the world, yet once more we fling our challenge to the stars!

F. T. Marinetti

FUTURIST MOVEMENT ADDRESS:
Corso Venezia, 61 – Milan

1. Rainey points out that the verb in both the French “Nous avons veillé toute la nuit” and the Italian “Avevamo vegliato tutta la notte,” here translated “as ‘stayed up’, can also mean ‘to watch’ over a corpse, as Catholics traditionally did, so sounding a mythical motif of death and resurrection”; see “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” notes in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 524, n. 1.

The founding text of Futurism, this manifesto was first published in French as “Le Futurisme” in the front page of *Le Figaro* (Paris, February 20, 1909). It then appeared in Italian as “Fondazione e manifesto del futurismo” in *Poesia*, nos. 1–2 (Milan, February–March 1909), 5–16. Reprinted in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1968), 7–13. Reproduced here with minor variations from “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 49–53 and 524.

02 Manifesto of the Futurist Painters

U. Boccioni, C. Carrà, L. Russolo,
G. Balla, G. Severini

1910

TO THE YOUNG ARTISTS OF ITALY!

The cry of rebellion that we launch, linking our ideals with those of the Futurist poets, does not originate in an aesthetic clique. It expresses the violent desire that stirs in the veins of every creative artist today.

We want to fight implacably against the mindless, snobbish, and fanatical religion of the past, nurtured by the pernicious existence of museums. We rebel against the spineless admiration for old canvases, old statues, and old objects, and against the enthusiasm for everything worm-eaten, grimy, or corroded by time; and we deem it unjust and criminal that people habitually disdain whatever is young, new, and pulsating with life.

Comrades! We declare that the triumphant progress of science has brought about changes in humanity so profound as to dig an abyss between the docile slaves of the past and us who are free, us who are confident in the shining splendor of the future.

We are nauseated by the vile laziness which, from the 16th century on, has made our artists live by an incessant exploitation of ancient glories.

In the eyes of other countries, Italy is still a land of the dead, an immense Pompeii of whitewashed sepulchers. But Italy must be reborn, and its political resurgence is being followed by an intellectual resurgence. In this land of illiterates, schools are continually being constructed: in this land of *dolce far niente*, innumerable factories are roaring; in this land of traditional aesthetics, today we see flights of radiant inspirations of newness that stand out.

The only living art is that which finds its distinctive features within the environment that surrounds it. Just as our forebears took the subject of art from the religious atmosphere that enveloped their souls, so we must draw inspiration from the tangible miracles of contemporary life, from the iron network of speed that winds around the earth, from the transatlantic liners, the dreadnoughts, the marvelous flights that plow the skies, the shadowy audaciousness of submarine navigators, the spasmodic struggle to conquer the unknown. And how can we remain unresponsive to the frenzied activity of the great capitals, the ultra-recent psychology of noctambulism, the feverish figure of the *viveur*, the *cocotte*, the *apache*, and the alcoholic?

Wanting to contribute to the necessary renovation of all artistic expression, we resolutely declare war on all those artists and institutions which, even when disguised with a false costume of modernity, remain trapped in tradition, academicism, and above all a repugnant mental laziness.

We denounce as insulting to youth that entire irresponsible rabble of critics who in Rome applaud a nauseating revival of doting classicism; who in Florence praise the neurotic cultivators of a hermaphroditic archaism; who in Milan remunerate blind and pedestrian handicrafts going back to 1848;¹ who in Turin adulate a painting made by retired bureaucrats; and who in Venice worship a woolly hodgepodge concocted by fossilized alchemists! In short, we rise up against the superficiality, banality, and handyman's facility that render utterly contemptible the greater part of the artists currently respected in every region of Italy.

So, down with mercenary restorers of antiquated incrustations! Down with archaeologists afflicted by chronic necrophilia! Down with critics, complacent pimps! Down with gouty academies and drunken and ignorant professors! Down!

Go ahead and ask one of these priests of the true cult, these repositories of aesthetic laws, where you can find the works of Giovanni Segantini today? Why do the arts commissions ignore the work of Gaetano Previati? Where can anyone appreciate the sculpture of Medardo Rosso?² ... And who bothers to think about the artists who don't already have twenty years of struggle and suffering to their credit, but who nevertheless are preparing works destined to honor our country?

They have quite different interests to defend, the paid critics! Exhibitions, contests, and criticism that is superficial and never disinterested, these condemn Italian art to ignominy and a state of true prostitution!

And what should we say about the specialists? Come on! Throw out the Portraitists, the Genre Painters, the Lake Painters, the Mountain Painters. We have put up with enough from them, all these impotent holiday painters!

Down with the defacers of marble whose works clog up the piazzas and profane our graveyards! Down with speculative contractor architecture in reinforced concrete! Down with hack decorators, ceramicists who make forgeries, sold-out poster painters, and shoddy, idiotic illustrators!

Here are our final CONCLUSIONS.

With our enthusiastic adherence to Futurism, we want:

1. To destroy the cult of the past, the obsession with antiquity, pedantry, and academic formalism.
2. To disdain utterly every form of imitation.
3. To exalt every form of originality, however daring, however violent.
4. To bear bravely and proudly the facile smear of “madness” with which innovators are whipped and gagged.
5. To regard all art critics as useless or harmful.

6. To rebel against the tyranny of words: *harmony* and *good taste*, those too loose expressions with which one could easily destroy the work of Rembrandt, Goya, and Rodin.

7. To sweep away from the ideal field of art all themes, all subjects that have been already used.

8. To render and glorify today's life, incessantly and tumultuously transformed by victorious science.

Let the dead stay buried in the deepest entrails of the earth! Let the threshold of the future be swept free of mummies! Make room for the young, the violent, the bold!

Painter **Umberto Boccioni** (Milan)

Painter **Carlo Dalmazzo Carrà** (Milan)

Painter **Luigi Russolo** (Milan)

Painter **Giacomo Balla** (Rome)

Painter **Gino Severini** (Paris)

Milan, February 11, 1910

FUTURIST MOVEMENT ADDRESS:

Corso Venezia, 61 – Milan

1. The 1848 uprisings in Milan against Austro-Hungarian rule were a major step in the Risorgimento that led to the creation of the modern Italian state — Ed.
2. Giovanni Segantini (1858–1899) was an Italian painter whose oeuvre moved from pastoral landscapes to divisionist works (with colors separated into individual dots or patches) that were collected by major museums. Gaetano Previati (1852–1920) was an Italian painter and, with Segantini, one of the leading exponents of Divisionism in Italy. Medardo Rosso (1858–1928) was a revolutionary Italian sculptor whose work was highly appreciated by the Futurists for their dynamic conception of plastic shape in relation to their surroundings — Ed.

“Manifesto dei pittori futuristi.” Text first published in Italian by the Direzione del Movimento Futurista on February 11, 1910. Reprinted in *Manifesti del Futurismo*, ed. Viviana Birolli (Milan: Abscondita, 2008), 27–29. Reproduced here with minor variations from “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 62–64 and 525.

03

Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature

F. T. Marinetti

1912

Sitting astride the fuel tank of an airplane, my stomach warmed by the aviator's head,¹ I felt the ridiculous inanity of the old syntax inherited from Homer. A raging need to liberate words, dragging them out from the prison of the Latin period. Like all imbeciles, this period, naturally, has a prudent head, a stomach, two legs, and two flat feet: but it will never have two wings. Just enough to walk, take a short run, and come up short, panting!

This is what the swirling propeller told me as I sped along, two hundred meters above the powerful smokestacks of Milan:

1. **It is imperative to destroy syntax and scatter one's nouns at random, just as they are born.**

2. **Verbs must be used in the infinitive**, so that the verb can be elastically adapted to the noun and not be subordinated to the *I* of the writer who observes or imagines. Only the infinitive can give a sense of the continuity of life and the elasticity of the intuition that perceives it.

3. **Adjectives must be abolished**, so that the noun retains its essential color. The adjective, which by its nature tends to render shadings, is incompatible with our dynamic vision, for it presupposes a pause, a meditation.

4. **Adverbs must be abolished**, old buckles strapping together two words. Adverbs give a sentence a tedious unity of tone.

5. **Every noun must have its double**, which is to say, every noun must be immediately followed, with no conjunction, by the noun to which it is related by analogy. Example: man-torpedo boat, woman-bay, crowd-surf, plaza-funnel, door-faucet.

Just as aerial speed has multiplied our experience of the world, perception by analogy is becoming more natural for man. It is imperative to suppress words such as *like*, *as*, *so*, and *similar to*. Better yet, it is necessary to merge the object directly into the image that it evokes, foreshortening the image to a single essential word.

6. **Abolish all punctuation**. With adjectives, adverbs, and conjunctions having been suppressed, naturally punctuation is also annihilated within the variable continuity of a living style that creates itself, without the absurd pauses of commas and periods. To accentuate certain movements and indicate their directions, mathematical signs will be used: + - × : = > <, along with musical notations.

7. Until now writers have been restricted to immediate analogies. For example, they have

compared an animal to man or to another animal, which is more or less the same thing as taking a photograph. (They've compared, for example, a fox terrier to a tiny thoroughbred. A more advanced writer might compare that same trembling terrier to a telegraph. I, instead, compare it to gurgling water. In this there is **an ever greater gradation of analogies**, affinities ever deeper and more solid, however remote.)

Analogy is nothing other than the deep love that binds together things that are remote, seemingly diverse or inimical. The life of matter can be embraced only by an orchestral style, at once polychromatic, polyphonic, and polymorphous, by means of the most extensive analogies.

In my *Battle of Tripoli*,² when I have compared a trench bristling with bayonets to an orchestra, or a machine gun to a *femme fatale*, I have intuitively introduced a large part of the universe into a brief episode of African combat.

Images are not flowers to be chosen and gathered with parsimony, as Voltaire said. They constitute the very lifeblood of poetry. Poetry should be an uninterrupted flow of new images, without which it is merely anemia and green sickness.

The vaster their affinities, the more images will retain their power to astound. One must – people say – spare the reader an excess of the marvelous. Bah! We should worry instead about the fatal corrosion of time, which destroys not just the expressive value of a masterpiece, but its power to astound. Too often stimulated to enthusiasm, haven't our old ears perhaps already destroyed Beethoven and Wagner? It is imperative, then, to abolish whatever in language has become a stereotyped image, a faded metaphor, and that means nearly everything.

8. **There are no categories of images**, noble or gross or popular, eccentric or natural. The intuition that perceives them has no preferences or *partis pris*. Therefore the analogical style is the absolute master of all matter and its intense life.

9. To render the successive movements of an object, it is imperative to render the *chain of analogies* that it evokes, each condensed and concentrated into one essential word.

Here is an expressive example of a chain of analogies, though still masked and weighed down beneath traditional syntax:

Ah yes! little machine gun, you are a fascinating woman, and sinister and divine, at the steering wheel of an invisible hundred-horsepower engine that roars with explosive impatience. Oh! surely you will soon leap into the circuit of death, to a shattering somersault or victory! ... Do you wish me to compose madrigals full of grace and vivacity? At your pleasure, my dear ... For me, you resemble a lawyer before the bar, whose tireless, eloquent tongue strikes to the heart of the surrounding listeners, who are deeply moved ... You, at this moment, are like an omnipotent trephine that is boring deeply into the hard skull of the refractory night ... And you are a rolling mill, an electric lathe, and what else? A great blowtorch that burns, chisels, and slowly melts the metallic tips of the final stars! (*Battle of Tripoli*)³

In some cases it will be imperative to join images two by two, like those chained iron balls that can level a stand of trees in their flight.

To catch and gather whatever is most evanescent and ineffable in matter, it is imperative to shape **strict nets of images or analogies**, which will then be cast into the mysterious sea of phenomena. Except for the traditional festoons of its form, the following passage from my *Mafarka the Futurist*⁴ is an example of such a dense net of images:

All the bitter-sweetness of bygone youth rose in his throat, as the cheerful shouts of children in the playground rise up to their old teachers, while they lean out over seaside balconies, watching boats skim across the sea ...⁵

And here are three more nets of images:

Around the well of Bumeliana, beneath the thick olive trees, three camels squatting comfortably on the sand gurgled with contentment, like old stone gutters, mixing the *chack-chack* of their spitting with the steady thud of the steam pump that supplies water to the city. Shrieks and Futurist dissonances, in the deep orchestra of the trenches with their sensuous orifices and resonant cellars, amid the coming and going of bayonets, violin bows which the violet baton of twilight has inflamed with enthusiasm ...

The orchestra conductor-sunset, with a sweeping gesture, gathers in the scattered flutes of the birds in the trees, and the grieving harps of the insects, and the sound of crushed stones. Suddenly he stops the tympanums of the mess kits and crashing rifles, so as to let the muted instruments sing out over the orchestra, all the golden stars, erect, arms akimbo, on the grand stage of the sky. And here comes the diva of the performance ... A neckline plunging to her breasts, the desert displays her immense bosom in curvaceous liquefaction, aglow with rouge beneath the cascading jewels of the monstrous night. (*Battle of Tripoli*)⁶

10. As every kind of order is inevitably a product of the cautious and circumspect mind, it is imperative to orchestrate images, distributing them with a **maximum of disorder**.

11. **Destroy the “I” in literature**, that is, all psychology. The sort of man who has been damaged by libraries and museums, subjected to a logic and wisdom of fear, is absolutely of no interest anymore. We must abolish him in literature and replace him once and for all with matter, whose essence must be seized by strokes of intuition, something which physicists and chemists can never achieve.

Capture the breath, the sensibility, and the instincts of metals, stones, woods, and so on, through the medium of free objects and capricious motors. Substitute, for human psychology now exhausted, the **lyrical obsession with matter**.

Be careful not to assign human sentiments to matter, but instead to divine its different governing impulses, its forces of compression, dilation, cohesion, disintegration, its heaps of molecules massed together or its electrons whirling like turbines. There is no point in creating a drama of matter that has been humanized. It is the solidity of a steel plate that interests us as something in itself, with its incomprehensible and inhuman cohesion of molecules or electrons that can resist penetration by a howitzer. The heat of a piece of iron or wood leaves us more impassioned than the smile or tears of a woman.

We want literature to render the life of an engine, a new instinctive animal whose guiding principle we will recognize when we have come to know the instincts of the various forces that compose it.

Nothing, for a Futurist poet, is more interesting than the action of a mechanical piano’s keyboard. Film offers us the dance of an object that disintegrates and recomposes itself without human intervention. It offers us the backward sweep of a diver whose feet fly out the sea and bounce violently back on the springboard. Finally, it offers us the sight of a man driving at two hundred kilometers per hour. All these represent the movements of matter which are beyond the laws of human intelligence, and hence of an essence which is more significant.

Three elements which literature has hitherto overlooked must now become prominent in it:

Noise (a manifestation of the dynamism of objects);

Weight (the capacity for flight in objects);

Smell (the capacity of objects to disperse themselves).

Take pains, for example, to render the landscape of odors that a dog perceives. Listen to engines and reproduce their speech.

Matter has always been contemplated by an *I* who is distanced, cold, too preoccupied with himself, full of pretensions to wisdom and human obsessions.

Man tends to befoul matter with his youthful joy or ageing sorrow – matter, which possesses an admirable continuity of momentum toward greater heat, greater movement, greater subdivision of itself. Matter is neither sad nor happy. Its essence is boldness, will, and absolute force. It wholly belongs to the divining poet who will know how to free himself of syntax that is traditional, burdensome, restrictive, and confined to the ground, armless and wingless because it is merely intelligent. Only the asyntactical poet with words set free will be able to penetrate the essence of matter and destroy the mute hostility that separates it from us.

The Latin period that has been used until now has been a pretentious gesture with which an overweening and myopic mind has tried to tame the multiform and mysterious life of matter. The Latin period has been stillborn.

Profound intuitions of life linked together one by one, word by word, according to their illogical surge – these will give us the general outlines for an **intuitive psychology of matter**. That is what was revealed to me from the heights of the airplane. Looking at objects from a new vantage point, no longer head on or from behind but straight down, foreshortened, I was able to break apart the old shackles of logic and the plumb lines of the old form of comprehension.

All of you, Futurist poets, who have loved and followed me until now, have been frenzied builders of images and bold explorers of analogies, just as I have. But your narrow nets of metaphor are, unfortunately, too weighted down by the plumb

lines of logic. I urge you to make them lighter, so that your immensified gesture can hurl them farther, cast them out over a vaster expanse of ocean.

Together we will discover what I call **the wireless imagination**.⁷ One day we will achieve an art that is still more essential, the day when we dare to suppress all the first terms of our analogies in order to render nothing other than an uninterrupted sequence of second terms. To achieve this, it will be necessary to forgo being understood. It isn’t necessary to be understood. We have already dispensed with that privilege anyway even when we have written fragments of a Futurist sensibility by means of traditional and intellectual syntax.

Syntax has been a kind of abstract cipher that poets have used in order to inform the masses about the color, the musicality, the plasticity and architecture of the universe. It has been a sort of interpreter, a monotonous tour guide. We must suppress this intermediary so that literature can directly enter into the universe and become one body with it.

My work sharply differs from anyone else’s by virtue of its frightening power of analogy. Its inexhaustible wealth of images rivals the disorder of its illogical punctuation, and at the head of it all is the first Futurist manifesto, the synthesis of a hundred-horsepower engine racing at the most insane velocities over land.

Why should we still make use of four exasperated wheels that are boring, when we can break free of the ground once and for all? The liberation of words, unfolding wings of the imagination, the analogical synthesis of the earth embraced in a single view and gathered together whole in essential words.

They scream at us: “Your literature will not be beautiful! We’ll no longer have a verbal symphony that is composed of harmonious rhythms and tranquilizing cadences.” We understand that quite well! And how lucky! We, instead, make use of all the ugly sounds, all the expressive screams of the violent life that surrounds us. **Let us boldly make “the ugly” in literature, and let us everywhere murder solemnity.** Go on! don’t assume those grand priestly airs when listening to me. Every day we must spit on the *Altar of Art!* We are entering the boundless domains of free intuition. After free verse, here at last are **words in freedom!**⁸

There are no elements in this of either the absolute or the systematic. Genius has impetuous spurts and muddy torrents. Sometimes it requires analytical and explanatory languors. Nobody can renovate his own sensibility all at once. Dead cells are mixed together with live ones. Art is a need to destroy and disperse oneself, a great watering can of heroism that drowns the world. And don’t forget: microbes are necessary for the health of the stomach and the intestines. Just so, there is also a species of microbes that are necessary for the health of art – **art, which is a prolongation of the forest of our arteries**, a prolongation that

flows beyond the body and extends into the infinity of space and time.

Futurist Poets! I have taught you to hate libraries and museums in order to prepare you for the next step, **to hate intelligence**, reawakening in you divine intuition, the characteristic gift of the Latin races. By means of intuition we shall overcome the seemingly irreducible divide that separates our human flesh from the metal of engines.

After the reign of the animal, behold the beginning of the reign of the machine. Through growing familiarity and friendship with matter, which scientists can know only in its physical and chemical reactions, we are preparing the creation of the **mechanical man with interchangeable parts**. We will liberate man from the idea of death, and hence from death itself, the supreme definition of the logical mind.

1. As Rainey observes, Marinetti refers here to the 1910 Milan International Airshow, “when he flew with Peruvian aviator Jean Bielovucic in a Voisin biplane with a fifty-horsepower engine. The propeller, located not at the front of the plane but just behind the wings, faced backward. [...] With the propeller behind them, pilot and passenger enjoyed an unimpeded view of the scene before and below them”; see “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” notes in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 538, n. 1. — Ed.
2. The articles that make up Marinetti’s *Battle of Tripoli* were first published in *L’Intransigeant* (Paris, December 25–31, 1911). They were subsequently collected and published in French, *La Bataille de Tripoli*, and in an Italian translation, *La battaglia di Tripoli* (both Milan: Edizioni futuriste de *Poesia*, 1912) — Ed.
3. “Eh s’i voi siete, piccola mitragliatrice, una donna affascinante, e sinistra, e divina, al volante di un invisibile centocavalli, che rugge con scoppii d’impazienza. Oh! certo fra poco balzerete nel circuito della morte, verso il capitombolo fracassante o la vittoria!... Volete che io vi faccia dei madrigali pieni di grazia e di colore? A vostra scelta signora... Voi somigliate per me, a un tribuno proteso, la cui lingua eloquente, instancabile, colpisce al cuore gli uditori in cerchio, commossi... Siete, in questo momento, un trapano onnipotente, che fora in tondo il cranio troppo duro di questa notte ostinata... Siete, anche, un laminatoio, un tornio elettrico, e che altro? Un gran cannello ossidrico che brucia, cesella e fonde a poco a poco le punte metalliche delle ultime stelle!”, Marinetti, *La battaglia di Tripoli*, 22–23.
4. Originally written in French in 1909 as *Mafarka le futuriste. Romain africain* [Mafarka the Futurist: An African Novel], and translated into Italian a year later, this is considered to be the first Futurist work by Marinetti — Ed.
5. “Tutta l’acre dolcezza della gioventù scomparsa gli saliva su per la gola, come dai cortili delle scuole salgono le grida allegre dei fanciulli verso i maestri affacciati al parapetto delle terrazze da cui si vedono fuggire sul mare i bastimenti”; Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Mafarka il futurista* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste de *Poesia*, 1910); English translation quoted from *Mafarka the Futurist: An African Novel*, trans. Carol Diethe and Steve Cox (London: Middlesex University Press, 1999), 156.
6. “Intorno al pozzo della Bumeliana, sotto gli olivi folti, tre cammelli comodamente accovacciati nella sabbia si gargarizzavano dalla contentezza, come vecchie gron-

daie di pietra, mescolando il ciac-ciac dei loro sputacchi ai tonfi regolari della pompa a vapore che dà da bere alla città. Stridori e dissonanze futuriste, nell’orchestra profonda delle trincee dei pertugi sinuosi e delle cantine sonore, fra l’andirivieni delle baionette, archi di violino che la rossa bacchetta del tramonto infiamma di entusiasmo... / È il tramonto-direttore d’orchestra, che con un gesto ampio raccoglie i flauti sparsi degli uccelli negli alberi, e le arpe lamentevoli degli insetti, e lo scricchiolio delle pietre. È lui che ferma a un tratto i timpani delle gamelle e dei fucili cozzanti, per lasciar cantare a voce spiegata sull’orchestra degli strumenti in sordina, tutte le stelle d’oro, ritte, aperte le braccia, sulla ribalta del cielo. Ed ecco una gran dama allo spettacolo... Vastamente scollacciato, il deserto infatti mette in mostra il suo seno immenso dalle curve liquefatte, tutte verniciate di belletti rosei sotto le gemme crollanti della prodiga notte”; Marinetti, *La battaglia di Tripoli*, 7–8.

7. As Rainey observes, the phrase *immaginazione senza fili* “suggests an imagination freed of the ‘plumb lines’ or ‘strings’ of logic discussed in the preceding paragraph. But just as “wireless” – an abbreviation of “wireless telegraphy,” the earliest term for radio – became in British usage the term for radio, so in Italian *senza fili* (literally, without wires) became the name for radio”; see “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” notes in *Futurism: An Anthology*, 539, n. 9. — Ed.
8. Words-in-freedom were formulated by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in the manifesto titled *Distruzione della sintassi – Immaginazione senza fili – Parole in libertà* [Destruction of Syntax – Wireless Imagination Words-in-Freedom], published in 1913 — Ed.

“Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista.”
Text first published in Italian by the Direzione del Movimento Futurista on May 11, 1912 as an independent leaflet. Then published as the preface to *I poeti futuristi* [The Futurist Poets] (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*, 1912), a collective anthology of poetry edited by Marinetti. Reprinted in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1968), 43–61, and in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 58–64. Reproduced here with minor variations from “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 119–25 and 538–39.

04 Futurist Political Program

F. T. Marinetti, U. Boccioni,
C. Carrà, L. Russolo

1913

FUTURIST VOTERS! *With your vote you are attempting to implement the following program:*

The absolute sovereignty of Italy. – The word ITALY must dominate over the word LIBERTY.

All freedoms except those of being cowardly, pacifist, anti-Italian.

A bigger navy and a greater army; a people proud of being Italian, in favor of War, the world’s only hygiene, and of the greatness of an intensely agricultural, industrial, and commercial Italy.

Economic protection and patriotic education of the proletariat.

The clerical-moderate-liberal program

Monarchy and Vatican

Hatred and contempt for the people

Traditional and commemorative patriotism

Intermittent militarism

Clericalism

Narrow-minded protectionism and tepid free trade

Cult of forefathers and skepticism

Senilism and moralism

Opportunism and speculation

Reactionariness

Cult of museums, ruins, monuments

Foreign industry

Obsession with culture

Academicism

Ideal of an archeological Italy, bigoted and gout-ridden

Pot-bellied quietism

Black cowardice

Passéism

For the Ruling Group of the Futurist Movement:

MARINETTI – BOCCIONI – CARRÀ – RUSSOLO

Milan, October 11, 1913

FUTURIST MOVEMENT ADDRESS:

Corso Venezia, 61 – Milan

- 1 The terms *passatismo* and *passatista* (translated here as “*passéist*”), often used by Futurists, make reference to customs and arts with an excessive regard for the past, thus collapsing the present and obstructing the future — Ed.
- 2 The expression *industria del forestiero* refers to the tourist industry — Ed.

A cynical, shrewd, and aggressive foreign policy.
– Colonial expansion. – Free trade.

Irredentism. – Pan-Italianism. – The supremacy of Italy.

Anti-clericalism and anti-socialism.

Cult of progress and speed, of sport, of physical strength, of fearless courage, heroism and danger, against the obsession with culture, classical teaching, museums, libraries, and ruins. – Suppression of academics and conservatories.

Many practical schools of commerce, industry, and agriculture. – Many institutes of physical education. – Daily physical exercise in schools. – Predominance of gymnastics over books.

A minimum of professors, very few lawyers, very few doctors, lots of farmers, engineers, chemists, mechanics, and producers of business.

Deprivation of power for the dead, the old, and the opportunist, in favor of daring young people.

Against monumentomania and the meddling of the government in matters of art.

Violent modernization of *passéist*¹ cities (Rome, Venice, Florence, etc.).

Abolition of foreign industry,² which is humiliating and arbitrary.

THIS PROGRAM WILL VANQUISH

The democratic-republican-socialist program

Republic

Sovereign people

Pacifist internationalism

Anti-militarism

Anti-clericalism

Interested free trade

Mediocrity and skepticism

Senilism and moralism

Opportunism and speculation

Demagoguery

Cult of museums, ruins, monuments

Foreign industry

Rally sociology

Positivist rationalism

Ideal of a petty-bourgeois Italy (*Italietta*), mean and sentimental

Pot-bellied quietism

Red cowardice

Passéism

“Programma politico futurista.” Text first published in Italian by the Direzione del Movimento Futurista on October 11, 1913. Reprinted in *Manifesti del Futurismo*, ed. Viviana Birilli (Milan: Abscondita, 2008), 118–19, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

05

Futurist Synthetic Theater (atechnical–dynamic–autonomous–alogical–unreal)

January 11, 1915 –
February 18, 1915

F. T. Marinetti, E. Settimelli, B. Corra

1915

While we await the great war that we have so often invoked, we Futurists have alternated between two forms of activity, violent anti-neutralist actions that have taken place in city plazas and universities, and artistic actions that are reshaping the Italian sensibility, preparing it for the great hour of maximum danger. Italy must be fearless, tenacious, as elastic and swift as a fencer, as indifferent to blows as a boxer, impassive at the news of a victory that may have cost fifty thousand dead, imperturbable at the news of a defeat.

Books and journals are not wanted to teach Italy to reach decisions with lightning speed, to hurl itself into battle, to sustain every undertaking and every possible calamity. They interest and concern only a minority; to varying degrees they weary, obstruct, or retard momentum, and they cannot help but chill enthusiasm, abort impulses, or inject poisonous doubts into a people at war. War, which is intensified Futurism, demands that we march and not that we molder in libraries and reading rooms. **Hence we think that the only way that Italy can be influenced today is through the theater.** In fact ninety percent of Italians go to the theater, whereas only ten percent read books and magazines. But what is needed is a **Futurist theater**, one utterly opposed to the *passéist* theater that makes a monotonous and depressing procession across the sleepy stages of Italy.

Not to dwell on its period drama, a sickening genre that has even been abandoned by the *passéist* public, we condemn the entire contemporary theater because it is too prolix, analytic, pedantically psychological, explanatory, diluted, detailed, static, as full of prohibitions as a police station, as cut up into cells as a monastery, as moss-grown as an old abandoned house. In short, it is a pacifistic and neutralist theater, the antithesis of the fierce, overwhelming, and synthesizing velocity of war.

We are creating a Futurist theater, which will be

Synthetic

that is, very brief. Into a few minutes, into a few words and gestures, we must compress innumerable situations, sensibilities, ideas, sensations, facts, and symbols.

The writers who wanted to renew the theater (Ibsen, Maeterlinck, Andreyev, Paul Claudel, George Bernard Shaw) never thought of arriving at a true synthesis, of freeing themselves from a technique that involves prolixity, detailed analysis, drawn-out preparation. Faced with these authors' works, the audience has assumed the indignant attitude of a circle of bystanders who swallow their anguish and pity as they watch the slow agony of a horse that has collapsed on the pavement. The hiccup of applause that finally breaks out frees the audience's stomach from all the indigestible time it has swallowed. Each act is as painful as having to sit patiently in a waiting room for some political bigwig (*coup de théâtre*: kiss, pistol shot, verbal revelation, etc.) to receive you. All this *passéist* or semi-Futurist theater, instead of synthesizing fact and idea in the smallest number of words and actions, savagely destroys the sheer variety of settings (source of dynamism and amazement) and stuffs countless city landscapes, plazas, streets, into the sausage casing of a single room. With the result that all this type of theater is entirely static.

We are convinced that mechanically, by force of brevity, we can achieve an entirely new theater, one harmonized to our swift and laconic Futurist sensibility. An act will last but a *moment*, only a few seconds long. This essential and synthetic brevity will enable the theater to sustain and even overcome competition from the cinema.

Atechnical

The *passéist* theater is the literary form that most distorts and cripples an author's talent. This form, much more than lyric poetry or the novel, is subject to the *demands of technique*: (1) to omit every notion that doesn't conform to public taste; (2) once a theatrical idea has been found (expressible in a few pages), to stretch it out over two, three, or four acts; (3) to surround an interesting character with many pointless types: coat-holders, door-openers, all sorts of bizarre comic turns; (4) to make the length of each act vary between half and three-quarters of an hour; (5) to construct each act taking care to (a) begin with seven or eight absolutely useless pages, (b) introduce a tenth of your idea in the first act, five-tenths in the second, four-tenths in the third, (c) shape your acts for rising excitement, each act being no more than a preparation for the finale, (d) always make the first act *a little boring* so that the second can be *amusing* and the third *enthraling*; (6) to set off every essential line with a hundred or more insignificant *preparatory* lines; (7) never to devote less than a page to explaining an entrance or an exit minutely;

(8) to apply systematically to the whole play the *rule of a superficial variety*, to the acts, scenes, and lines. For instance, to make one act a day, another an evening, another deep night; to make one act pathetic, another anguished, another sublime; not to prolong scenes too much, making an actor enter or exit, maybe a servant who brings in coffee and then leaves, interrupting the scene and letting the audience breathe. When there is a need to prolong a dialogue between two actors, make something happen to interrupt it, a falling vase, a passing mandolin player. ... Or else have the actors constantly move around from sitting to standing, from right to left, and meanwhile vary the dialogue to make it seem as if a bomb might explode outside at any moment (e.g., the betrayed husband might catch his wife red-handed) when actually nothing is going to explode until the end of the act; (9) to be enormously careful about the *verisimilitude of the plot*; (10) to write the play in such a manner that the audience *understands in the finest detail the how and why of everything that takes place on the stage, above all that it knows by the last act how the protagonists will end up*.

With our synthesist movement in the theater, we want to destroy the technique that from the Greeks until now, instead of simplifying itself, has incessantly become more dogmatic, stupefyingly logical, meticulous, pedantic, strangling.

Therefore:

1. **It is stupid to write one hundred pages where one would do**, just because the audience through habit and infantile instinct wants to see a character's personality emerge from a series of events, wants to fool itself into thinking that the character really exists in order to admire the beauty of art, meanwhile refusing to acknowledge any art if the author limits himself to sketching out a few of the character's traits.

2. **It is stupid** not to rebel against the bias toward theatricality when life itself (which is shaped by *actions vastly more muddled, yet also more uniform and predictable* than those that unfold in the world of art) is for the most part *antitheatrical* and yet even so still offers *innumerable possibilities for the stage. Everything of any value is theatrical*.

3. **It is stupid** to satisfy the primitive instincts of the crowd, which wants to see the bad guy lose and the good guy win at the end of the play.

4. **It is stupid** to worry about verisimilitude (absurd because talent and worth are quite distinct from that notion).

5. **It is stupid** to want to explain with logical minuteness everything taking place on the stage, when even in life one never grasps an event entirely, in all its causes and consequences, because reality throbs around us, assaulting us with *bursts of fragments of interconnected events, interlocking together, confused, jumbled up, chaotic*. For example: it is stupid to act out a contest between two persons *always* in an orderly, clear, and logical way, since in daily life we nearly always experience mere *flashes of argument* which have been

rendered *ephemeral* by our activities as modern men, passing in a tram, a café, a railroad station, so that experiences remain cinematic in our minds like fragmentary dynamic symphonies of gestures, words, sounds, and lights.

6. **It is stupid** to submit to demands for mounting *tension, preparation of an effect, and maximum impact at the end*.

7. **It is stupid** to allow one's talent to be burdened with the weight of a technique that *anyone* (even imbeciles) *can acquire by dint of study, practice, and patience*.

8. **It is stupid to renounce the dynamic leap into the void of total creation beyond the range of all previously explored terrain**.

Dynamic [Simultaneous]

that is, born of improvisation, lightning-like intuition, from suggestive and revealing actuality. We believe that a thing is valuable insofar as it is improvised (hours, minutes, seconds), not extensively prepared (months, years, centuries).

We feel an unconquerable repugnance for desk work, *a priori*, that fails to respect the ambience of the theater itself. **The majority of our works have been written in the theater**. The theatrical ambience is an inexhaustible reservoir of inspiration: the magnetic circular sensation that pervades the gilded emptiness of a theater at a morning rehearsal when the brain is still tired; an actor's intonation that suggests the possibility of constructing a cluster of paradoxical thoughts around it; a movement of scenery that becomes the starting point for a symphony of lights; an actress's fleshiness that fills our minds with genially full-bodied notions.

We have rambled up and down Italy at the head of a heroic battalion of comedians who imposed on audiences *Elettricità* [Electricity] and other Futurist syntheses (alive yesterday, today surpassed and condemned by us) that were revolutions imprisoned in auditoriums, ranging from the Politeama Garibaldi of Palermo to the Dal Verme of Milan. As the crowd was kneaded by a furious massage, the Italian theaters smoothed their wrinkles and laughed in volcanic bursts. Impossible to forget the stunned face of the old *Fiorentin*³ in Naples when it realized with horror that ten thousand people were trying to smash its back. We fraternized with the actors. Then, during the sleepless nights on trains, we argued, goading each other to heights of genius to the rhythm of tunnels and stations. Our Futurist theater couldn't care less about Shakespeare, but it pays attention to the petty gossip of comics; it's put to sleep by a line from Ibsen, but inspired by red or green reflections from the stalls; it passes accidentally over a comma in Sophocles, but stops with tenacity to admire the special representation of an actress. **[We attain an absolute dynamism through the interpenetration of different times and environments**. Example: in a play such as [Gabriele] D'Annunzio's *Più che l'amore* [More than Love], the important events (for instance, the murder

of the gambling house keeper) don't take place onstage but are narrated with a complete lack of dynamism; and in the first act of his *La figlia di Jorio* [Jorio's Daughter]¹ the events take place against a simple background with no jumps in space or time; but in the Futurist synthesis, *Simultaneità* [Simultaneity], there are two ambiances that interpenetrate and many different times put into action simultaneously.]

Autonomous, Alogical, Unreal

The Futurist theatrical synthesis will not be subject to logic, will contain no elements of photography; it will be *autonomous*, will resemble nothing but itself, even though it draws on elements from reality and combines them by chance. Above all, just as the painter and composer discover, scattered through the outside world, a narrower but more intense life made up of colors, forms, sounds, and noises, so **the man gifted with theatrical sensibility discovers his own specialized reality, one that assaults the nerves with violence**: it is constituted by what is called **the theatrical world**.

The Futurist theater is born of the two most vital currents in Futurist sensibility, defined in the two manifestos *Il teatro di varietà* [The Variety Theater] and *Pesi, misure e prezzi del genio artistico* [Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius], which are: 1. **our frenetic passion for contemporary, swift, fragmentary, elegant, complicated, cynical, muscular, ephemeral Futurist life**; 2. **our extremely modern conceptual definition of art, which stipulates that no logic, no tradition, no aesthetic, no technique, no occasional demand can be imposed on the artist's talent; he must be preoccupied only with creating synthetic expressions of cerebral energy that have THE ABSOLUTE VALUE OF NOVELTY**.

Futurist theater will be able to excite its audience, that is make it forget the monotony of daily life, by careening through a **labyrinth of sensations imprinted with the most exacerbated originality and combined in unpredictable ways**.

Every night **Futurist theater** will be a form of gymnastics that will train our race's mind to the swift, dangerous enthusiasms that have been made necessary by this Futurist year.

Conclusions:

1. Totally abolish the techniques under which the *passéist* theater is dying;

2. Put onstage all the findings (no matter how unrealistic, strange, or antitheatrical) that our talent is discovering in the subconscious, in ill-defined forces, in pure abstraction, in pure conceptualism, in pure fantasy, in record-setting and body-madness (e.g. *Vengono* [They're Coming], Marinetti's first drama of objects, a new vein of theatrical sensibility discovered by Futurism);²

3. Symphonize the audience's sensibility by exploring it, by reawakening its most somnolent layers with every possible means;

4. Eliminate the preconception of the stage-apron by throwing nets of sensations between the stage and the audience; the stage action will invade the orchestra seats, the spectators;

5. Fraternalize affectionately with comics, who are among the few thinkers that flee from every deforming cultural enterprise;

6. Abolish farce, vaudeville, the sketch, comedy, serious drama and tragedy, and in their place create the numerous forms of Futurist theater, such as: free-word wisecracks, simultaneity, interpenetration, stage symphony [the animated brief poem], the dramatized sensation, hilarity in dialogue, the negative act, the reechoing one-liner, discussion without logic, synthetic deformation, the scientific glimmer . . . ;

7. Through unbroken contact, create between us and the crowd a current of mutuality without solemnity, in order to instill in our audiences the dynamic vivacity of a new Futurist theatricality.

Here are our *first* pronouncements on the theater. [Our first eleven theatrical syntheses (by Marinetti, Settimelli, Bruno Corra, Remo Chiti, Balilla Pratella) were victoriously imposed on packed audiences at theaters in Ancona, Bologna, Padua, Naples, Venice, Verona, Florence, and Rome by the actors Berti, Zoncada, and Petrolini.]⁴ In Milan we soon shall have the great metal building, driven by many electromechanical inventions, that alone will enable us to realize our freest conceptions on the stage.

1. *Più che l'amore* [More than Love] was written by the Italian playwright Gabriele D'Annunzio (1863–1938) in 1906. D'Annunzio's tragedy *La figlia di Jorio* [Jorio's Daughter], from 1903, inspired the operas of the same name by Alberto Franchetti (1860–1942) and Ildebrando Pizzatti (1880–1968) — Ed.
2. *Vengono* [They're Coming] appears in English in Michael Kirby and Victoria Nes Kirby, eds., *Futurist Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1986), 294–95 — Ed.
3. The 17th century Teatro dei Fiorentini, one of the oldest in Naples, is no longer extant — Ed.
4. Ettore Berti (1870–1940) was an Italian actor-manager who ran a touring variety theater company that performed Futurist theatrical syntheses in 1915–16. Luigi Zoncada (b. 1943) was the director of the Zoncada-Masi-Capodaglia touring troupe that presented Futurist theatrical syntheses in 1915–16. Ettore Petrolini (1886–1936) was an Italian comic actor who performed nine Futurist syntheses in 1916 — Ed.

“Il teatro futurista sintetico (atecnico–dinamico–autonomo–alogico–irreale).” The text, dated January 11, 1915, was first published in Italian by the Direzione del Movimento Futurista in February 1915 as an independent leaflet. It then appeared in *Teatro futurista sintetico* (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1915) as a preface to a collection of theatrical syntheses written by various authors. Reprinted in Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed.

Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1968), 164–71. Reproduced here with minor variations from “The Futurist Synthetic Theater” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 204–9 and 547–48.

06 Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe

G. Balla, F. Depero

1915

“Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo.” Text first published in Italian on March 11, 1915 by the Direzione del Movimento Futurista as an independent leaflet containing photographs illustrating Futurist “plastic complexes” or assemblages. Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’Universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 30–36. Reproduced here with minor variations from “Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 209–12.



FUTURIST RECONSTRUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE

Read LA BALZA
FUTURIST NEWSPAPER
MESSINA

With the Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting and the preface to the catalogue of the Futurist Exhibition in Paris (both signed by Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Balla, and Severini); with the Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture (signed by Boccioni); with the Manifesto of The Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells (signed by Carrà); and with Boccioni's book on *Futurist Painting and Sculpture* and Carrà's volume on *Warpainting*, pictorial Futurism, as it has developed over six years, has solidified and surpassed Impressionism, has proposed plastic dynamism, atmospheric modeling, and the interpenetration of planes and states of mind. The lyrical evaluation of the universe, by means of Marinetti's words-in-freedom and Russolo's Art of Noises,¹ is merging with plastic dynamism in order to give a dynamic, simultaneous, plastic, noise-ist expression of universal vibrations.

We Futurists, Balla and Depero, want to realize this complete fusion in order to reconstruct the universe, cheering it up, i.e. recreating it entirely. We shall give flesh and blood to the invisible, the impalpable, the imponderable, the imperceptible. We shall find abstract equivalents for all the forms and elements of the universe, then combine them together according to the whims of our inspiration in order to create plastic complexes that we will put into motion.

Balla first began by studying the speeds of cars, discovering their laws and essential force-lines. After more than twenty paintings exploring this subject, he came to see that the single plane of the canvas wouldn't enable one to give the depth necessary to capture the dynamic volume of speed. He felt the need to make new constructions with iron wires, cardboard planes, fabrics and tissue paper, etc., the first dynamic plastic complex.

1. Abstract. — 2. Dynamic. Relative motion (cinematographic) + absolute motion. — **3. Transparent.** From the speed and volatility of the plastic complex, which must appear and disappear, light and impalpable. — **4. Strongly Colored and Luminous** (by means of internal lights). — **5. Autonomous,** i.e. resembling only itself. — **6. Transformable. — 7. Dramatic. — 8. Volatile. — 9. Fragrant. — 10. Noise-making.** Simultaneous plastic noise-making together with plastic expression. — **11. Exploding,** simultaneous bursts of apparition and disappearance

When we showed our first plastic complexes to free-wordist² Marinetti, he enthusiastically said: "Before us, art relied on memory, an anxious re-evocation of an Object lost (happiness, love, a landscape), and hence was nostalgic, static, charged with suffering and distance. With Futurism, instead, art is turning into art-action, which is to say, into will, optimism, aggression, possession, penetration, delight, brutal reality within art (example: onomatopoeia; — example: noise-tuners = motors), geometrical splendor of forces, projections forward. Thus art is becoming Presence, new Object, new reality created with the abstract elements of the universe. The hands of the *passéist* artist used to suffer for the sake of the lost Object; our hands will twitch for the new Object to be created. That is why the new Object (the plastic complex) has miraculously appeared in your hands."

The material construction of a plastic complex

NECESSARY MATERIALS: Metal wires, strings of cotton, wool, silk, all of every possible thickness and color. Colored glass, tissue papers, celluloids, metal screens, transparencies of every sort.

1. *L'Arte dei Rumori* [The Art of Noises], Luigi Russolo published this text in 1913 and invented an instrument to reproduce diverse machine noises — Ed.

2. Authors use this adjective (*parolibero*) to designate Marinetti in allusion to his words-in-freedom. See note in Claudia Salaris's essay in this book, p. 307, n. 10.

RICOSTRUZIONE FUTURISTA DELL'UNIVERSO

Leggete **LA BALZA**
GIORNALE FUTURISTA
MESSINA

Col Manifesto tecnico della Pittura futurista e colla prefazione al Catalogo dell'Esposizione futurista di Parigi (firmati Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Balla, Severini), col Manifesto della Scultura futurista (firmato Boccioni), col Manifesto La Pittura dei suoni rumori e odori (firmato Carrà), col volume *Pittura e scultura futuriste*, di Boccioni, e col volume *Guerrapittura*, di Carrà, il futurismo pittorico si è svolto, in 6 anni, quale superamento e solidificazione dell'impressionismo, dinamismo plastico e plasmazione dell'atmosfera, compenetrazione di piani e stati d'animo. La valutazione lirica dell'universo, mediante le Parole in libertà di Marinetti, e l'Arte dei Rumori di Russolo, si fondono col dinamismo plastico per dare l'espressione dinamica, simultanea, plastica, rumoristica della vibrazione universale.

Noi futuristi, Balla e Depero, vogliamo realizzare questa fusione totale per ricostruire l'universo rallegrandolo, cioè ricreandolo integralmente. Daremo scheletro e carne all'invisibile, all'impalpabile, all'imponderabile, all'impercettibile. Troveremo degli equivalenti astratti di tutte le forme e di tutti gli elementi dell'universo, poi li combineremo insieme, secondo i capricci della nostra ispirazione, per formare dei complessi plastici che metteremo in moto.

Balla cominciò collo studiare la velocità delle automobili, ne scoprì le leggi e le linee-forze essenziali. Dopo più di 20 quadri sulla medesima ricerca, comprese che il piano unico della tela non permetteva di dare in profondità il volume dinamico della velocità. Balla sentì la necessità di costruire con fili di ferro, piani di cartone, stoffe e carte veline, ecc., il primo complesso plastico dinamico.

1. Astratto. — **2. Dinamico.** Moto relativo (cinematografo) + moto assoluto. — **3. Trasparentissimo.** Per la velocità e per la volatilità del complesso plastico, che deve apparire e scomparire, leggerissimo e impalpabile. — **4. Coloratissimo e Luminosissimo** (mediante lampade interne). — **5. Autonomo,** cioè somigliante solo a se stesso. — **6. Trasformabile.** — **7. Drammatico.** — **8. Volatile.** — **9. Odoroso.** — **10. Rumoreggiante.** Rumorismo plastico simultaneo coll'espressione plastica. — **11. Scoppiante,** apparizione e scomparsa simultanea a scoppi.

Il parolibero Marinetti, al quale noi mostrammo i nostri primi complessi plastici ci disse con entusiasmo: « L'arte, prima di noi, fu ricordo, rievocazione angosciosa di un Oggetto perduto » (felicità, amore, paesaggio) perciò nostalgia, statica, dolore, lontananza. Col Futurismo invece, l'arte « diventa arte-azione, cioè volontà, ottimismo, aggressione, possesso, penetrazione, gioia, realtà brutale nell'arte (Es.: onomatopoe. — Es.: intonarumori = motori), splendore geometrico delle forze, proiezione in avanti. Dunque l'arte diventa Presenza, nuovo Oggetto, nuova realtà creata cogli « elementi astratti dell'universo. Le mani dell'artista passatista soffrivano per l'Oggetto perduto; « le nostre mani spasimavano per un nuovo Oggetto da creare. Ecco perchè il nuovo Oggetto « (complesso plastico) appare miracolosamente fra le vostre. »

La costruzione materiale del complesso plastico

MEZZI NECESSARI: Fili metallici, di cotone, lana, seta, d'ogni spessore, colorati. Vetri colorati, cartoveline, celluloidi, reti metalliche, trasparenti d'ogni genere, coloratissimi, tessuti,

colored ones too, fabrics, mirrors, metallic foils, colored tin foil, and everything gaudy or garish. Mechanical, electrical, musical, noise-ist devices; chemically luminous liquids with variable colors; springs; levers; pipes, etc. With these means we are constructing:

ROTATIONS	}	1. Plastic complexes that turn on a pivot (horizontal, vertical, oblique).	}	FORM + EXPANSION	}	ONOMATOPOEIA
		2. Plastic complexes that turn on several pivots: a) in the same direction, with variable speed; b) in opposite directions; c) in the same and in opposite directions.				SOUNDS
DECOMPOSITIONS	}	3. Plastic complexes that decompose: a) volumes; b) levels; c) in successive transformations (from cones to pyramids to spheres, etc.).	}	FORM + EXPANSION	}	NOISES
		4. Plastic complexes that decompose, speak, make noises, sound simultaneously.				
MIRACLE MAGIC	}	5. Plastic complexes that appear and disappear: a) slowly; b) in repeated fits and starts (at intervals); c) in unexpected bursts.	}	FORM + EXPANSION	}	
		Fireworks — Waters — Fire — Smokes.				

Systematic infinite discovery-invention

by means of noise-ist constructive complex abstraction, which is to say, the Futurist style. For us, every action that unfolds in space, every lived emotion will be the intuition of a discovery.

EXAMPLES: Watching the speedy ascent of an airplane, seen while a band was playing below in the square, we intuited the **Plastic-motornoise-ist Concert in Space** and the **Launching of Aerial Concerts** above a city. — The need to vary one's environment as often as possible and the idea of sports have enabled us to intuit **Transformable Clothing** (mechanical accessories, surprises, tricks, the disappearance of individuals). — The simultaneity of speed and noises has enabled us to intuit the **Noise-ist Mobile-plastic Fountain**. — Tearing up and throwing a book down into the courtyard has enabled us to intuit **Phono-moto-plastic Advertising** and **Abstract-plastic-firework Contests**. — A garden in the spring with a breeze has enabled us to intuit the **Motornoise-ist Transformable Magical Flower**. — Clouds hurtling through a storm have enabled us to intuit the **Transformable Building in Noise-ist Style**.

Futurist toys

In the domain of games and toys, as in all *passéist* manifestations, one sees only grotesque imitation, timidity (miniature trains, little cars, dolls that can't move, cretinous caricatures of domestic objects), *things that are monotonous and discourage exercise, prone only to dishearten children and make them stupid*.

With plastic complexes we will construct toys that accustom the child:

- 1) to wholehearted laughter (through absurdly comical tricks);
- 2) to maximum elasticity (without resorting to thrown projectiles, whip-cracking, sudden pin-pricks, etc.);
- 3) to imaginative impulses (by using fantastic toys to be studied under a magnifying glass; little boxes to be opened at night containing pyrotechnic marvels; devices that transform themselves, etc.);
- 4) to the continual exercise and streamlining of his sensibility (in the unlimited domain of noises, smells, colors, more intense, sharper, more exciting);
- 5) to physical courage, struggle, and **WAR** (by using enormous toys that do things out in the open, dangerous, aggressive).

Futurist toys will also be very useful for adults, helping to keep them *young, agile, playful, carefree, ready for everything, tireless, instinctive, and intuitive*.

specchi, lamine metalliche, stagnole colorate, e tutte le sostanze sgargiantissime. Congegni meccanici, elettrotecnici; musicali e rumoristi; liquidi chimicamente luminosi di colorazione variabile; molle; leve; tubi, ecc. Con questi mezzi noi costruiamo dei

ROTAZIONI	}	1. <i>Complessi plastici che girano su un perno</i> (orizzontale, verticale, obliquo).	}	ONOMATOPEE SUONI RUMORI
		2. <i>Complessi plastici che girano su più perni: a) in sensi uguali, con velocità varie; b) in sensi contrari; c) in sensi uguali e contrari.</i>		
SCOMPOSIZIONI	}	3. <i>Complessi plastici che si scompongono: a) a volumi; b) a strati; c) a trasformazioni successive (in forma di coni, piramidi, sfere, ecc.).</i>	}	FORMA + ESPANSIONE
		4. <i>Complessi plastici che si scompongono, parlano, rumoreggiano, suonano simultaneamente.</i>		
MIRACOLO MAGIA	}	SCOMPOSIZIONE	}	
		TRASFORMAZIONE		
		5. <i>Complessi plastici che appaiono e scompaiono: a) lentamente; b) a scatti ripetuti (a scala); c) a scoppi improvvisi.</i>		
		<i>Pirotecnica — Acque — Fuoco — Fumi.</i>		

La scoperta-invenzione sistematica infinita

mediante l'astruttismo complesso costruttivo rumorista, cioè lo stile futurista. Ogni azione che si sviluppa nello spazio, ogni emozione vissuta, sarà per noi intuizione di una scoperta.

ESEMPI: Nel veder salire velocemente un aeroplano, mentre una banda suonava in piazza, abbiamo intuito il **Concerto plastico-motorumorista nello spazio** e il **Lancio di concerti aerei** al di sopra della città. — La necessità di variare ambiente spessissimo e lo sport ci fanno intuire il **Vestito trasformabile** (applicazioni meccaniche, sorprese, trucchi, spazizioni d'individui) — La simultaneità di velocità e rumori ci fa intuire la **Fontana giroplastica rumorista**. — L'aver lacerato e gettato nel cortile un libro, ci fa intuire la **Réclame fono-moto-plastica** e le **Gare pirotecnico-plastico- astratte**. — Un giardino primaverile sotto il vento ci fa intuire il **Fiore magico trasformabile motorumorista**. — Le nuvole volanti nella tempesta ci fanno intuire l'**Edificio di stile rumorista trasformabile**.

Il giocattolo futurista

Nel giochi e nei giocattoli, come in tutte le manifestazioni passatiste, non c'è che grottesca imitazione, timidezza, (trenini, carrozzini, pupazzi immobili, caricature cretine d'oggetti domestici), *antigiunastici o monotoni, solamente atti a istupidire e ad avvertire il bambino.*

Per mezzo di complessi plastici noi costruiremo dei giocattoli che abitueranno il bambino:

- 1) *a ridere apertissimamente* (per effetto di trucchi esageratamente buffi);
- 2) *all'elasticità massima* (senza ricorrere a lanci di proiettili, frustate, punture improvvise, ecc.);
- 3) *allo slancio immaginativo* (mediante giocattoli fantastici da vedere con lenti; cassetine da aprirsi di notte, da cui scoppieranno meraviglie pirotecniche; congegni in trasformazione ecc.);
- 4) *a tendere infinitamente e ad agilizzare la sensibilità* (nel dominio sconfinato dei rumori, odori, colori, più intensi, più acuti, più eccitanti).
- 5) *al coraggio fisico, alla lotta e alla GUERRA* (mediante giocattoli enormi che agiranno all'aperto, pericolosi, aggressivi).

Il giocattolo futurista sarà utilissimo anche all'adulto, poichè lo manterrà *giovane, agile, festante, disinvolto, pronto a tutto, instancabile, istintivo e intuitivo.*

The artificial landscape

Further developing his first synthesis of a speeding automobile, Balla has arrived at the first plastic complex (*No. 1*). This has revealed to us an abstract landscape of cones, pyramids, polyhedrons, spirals of mountains, rivers, lights, shadows. In short, there is a deep analogy between the essential force-lines of speed and the essential force-lines of a landscape. We have delved into the deep essence of the universe, and we are mastering its elements.

The metallic animal

Fusion of art + science. Unexpected continuous chemistry-physics pyrotechnics, of the automatically speaking, screaming, dancing new being. We Futurists, Balla and Depero, will construct millions of metallic animals for the biggest war (a conflagration involving all the creative forces of Europe, Asia, Africa, and America, one which will doubtlessly follow the current marvelous but small human conflagration).

The discoveries contained in this manifesto are absolute creations, integrally generated by Italian Futurism. No artist before us, whether in France, Russia, England, or Germany, has discovered something similar or analogous. Only the Italian genius, which is the most constructive and architectural genius, could intuit the abstract plastic complex. With this, Futurism has decided on its Style, which will inevitably dominate many centuries of human sensibility.

MILAN, March 11, 1915.

Balla
Depero

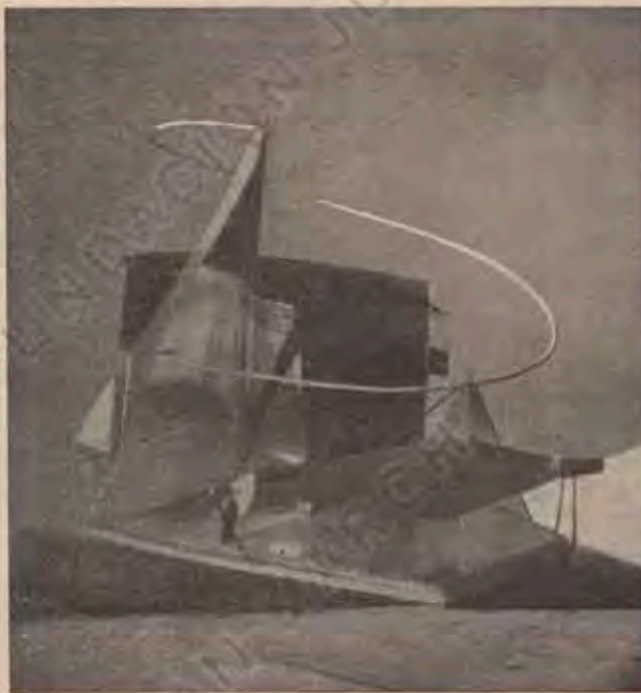
futurists abstracts

BALLA



No. 1. Color plastic complex of noise + speed
(Cardboard and color foil)

BALLA



No. 2. Color plastic complex of noise + dance + joy
(Mirror, foil, tape, cardboard and wire)

FUTURIST MOVEMENT ADDRESS: Corso Venezia, 61 - MILAN

Il paesaggio artificiale

Sviluppando la prima sintesi della velocità dell'automobile, Balla è giunto al primo complesso plastico (N. 1). Questo ci ha rivelato un paesaggio astratto a coni, piramidi, poliedri, spirali di monti, fiumi, luci, ombre. Dunque un'analogia profonda esiste fra le linee-forze essenziali della velocità e le linee-forze essenziali d'un paesaggio. Siamo scesi nell'essenza profonda dell'universo, e padroneggiamo gli elementi. Giungeremo così, a costruire

l'animale metallico

Fusione di arte + scienza. Chimica, fisica, pirotecnica continua improvvisa, dell'essere nuovo automaticamente parlante, gridante, danzante. Noi futuristi, Balla e Depero, costruiremo milioni di animali metallici, per la più grande guerra (conflagrazione di tutte le forze creatrici dell'Europa, dell'Asia, dell'Africa e dell'America, che seguirà indubbiamente l'attuale meravigliosa piccola conflagrazione umana).

Le invenzioni contenute in questo manifesto sono creazioni assolute, integralmente generate dal Futurismo italiano. Nessun artista di Francia, di Russia, d'Inghilterra o di Germania intuì prima di noi qualche cosa di simile o di analogo. Soltanto il genio italiano, cioè il genio più costruttore e più architetto, poteva intuire il complesso plastico astratto. Con questo, il Futurismo ha determinato il suo Stile, che dominerà inevitabilmente su molti secoli di sensibilità.

MILANO, 11 Marzo 1915.

Balla
Depero

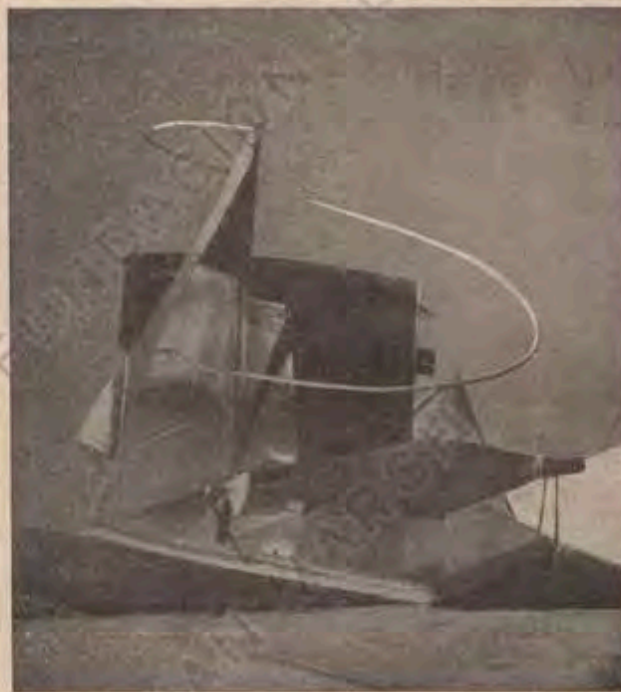
astrattisti futuristi

BALLA



N. 1. Complesso plastico colorato di frastuono + velocità
(Cartone e stagnole colorate)

BALLA



N. 2. Complesso plastico colorato di frastuono + danza + allegria
(Specchi, stagnole, talco, cartone, filferro)

DIREZIONE DEL MOVIMENTO FUTURISTA: Corso Venezia, 61 - MILANO

07 Futurist Cinema

F. T. Marinetti, B. Corra, E. Settimelli,
A. Ginna, G. Balla, R. Chiti

1916

For a long time the book, an utterly *passéist* means of preserving and communicating thought, has been fated to disappear, along with cathedrals, towers, crenelated walls, museums, and the pacifist ideal. A static companion to those who are sedentary, infirm, nostalgic, and neutralist, the book cannot entertain or exalt the new Futurist generations intoxicated with revolutionary and bellicose dynamism.

The current conflagration is increasingly streamlining European sensibility. Our great hygienic war, which must result in the satisfaction of *all* our national aspirations, multiplies by a hundredfold the innovative power of the Italian race. The Futurist cinema that we are preparing – a joyful deformation of the universe, an allogical and momentary synthesis of everyday life – will become the best school for children: a school of joy, speed, force, courage, and heroism. The Futurist cinema will develop and sharpen sensibility, will accelerate creative imagination, will endow intelligence with a prodigious sense of simultaneity and omnipresence. In so doing, the Futurist cinema will collaborate in the general renewal, replacing the literary review (always pedantic) and drama (always predictable), and killing the book (always tedious and oppressive). Propaganda needs may still oblige us to publish a book every now and then. But we prefer to express ourselves through the cinema, through great screens of words-in-freedom and mobile illuminated signboards.

We have begun a revolution in the Italian prose theater with our manifesto *Il teatro futurista sintetico* [Futurist Synthetic Theater], with the triumphant tours that we made with the theatrical companies of Gualtiero Tumiati, Ettore Berti, Annibale Ninchi, and Luigi Zoncada;¹ and with the two volumes of the *Teatro futurista sintetico* [Futurist Synthetic Theater],² containing eighty theatrical syntheses. An earlier Futurist manifesto has rehabilitated, glorified, and perfected the variety theater. It is logical therefore for us to carry our quickening energies into a new theatrical area: *film*.

At first glance, cinema, born only a few years ago, may seem to be Futurist already, which is to say, lacking a past and free from tradition. In reality, because film has appeared in the guise of a *theater without words*, it has inherited all the traditional rubbish of the literary theater.

Consequently, everything we have said and done about the stage applies to the cinema. Our action is legitimate and necessary insofar as the filmmaker up to now *has been and tends to remain profoundly passéist*, whereas we see in film the possibility of an eminently Futurist art and *the expressive medium most adapted to the complex sensibility of a Futurist artist*.

Except for interesting films about travel, hunting, wars, etc., filmmakers have done no more than inflict on us the most backward-looking dramas, lengthy or brief. The same scenario whose brevity and variety can make it seem advanced, in most cases is nothing but the most trite and pious *analysis*. Therefore all the immense artistic possibilities of film are left entirely untouched.

Film is an autonomous art. The filmmaker, therefore, must never copy the stage. Because it is essentially visual, film must above all fulfill the evolution that painting has undergone: detach itself from reality, from photography, from the graceful and solemn. It must become antigraceful,³ deforming, impressionistic, synthetic, dynamic, free-wordist.

We must liberate film as an expressive medium in order to make it the ideal instrument of *a new art*, immensely vaster and nimbler than all the existing arts. We are convinced that only thus can it attain the *polyexpressiveness* toward which the most modern artistic investigations are moving. *Futurist cinema* is creating, precisely today, the **polyexpressive symphony** that just a year ago we announced in our manifesto *Pesi, misure e prezzi del genio artistico* [Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius]. The most varied elements will go into the Futurist film as expressive means: from the slice of life to the streak of color, from the conventional line of prose to words-in-freedom, from chromatic and plastic music to the music of objects. In short, it will be painting, architecture, sculpture, words-in-freedom, music of colors, lines, and forms, a clash of objects and realities thrown together at random. We shall offer new inspiration for painters who are attempting to break out of the limits of the frame. We shall set in motion the words-in-freedom that transgress the boundaries of literature as they march toward painting, music, the art of noises, as they throw a marvelous bridge between the word and the real object.

Our films will be:

1. **Cinematic analogies** that make direct use of reality as one of the two elements in an analogy. Example: If we should want to express a character's state of anguish, instead of showing him in various stages of suffering, we would give an equivalent impression with the view of a jagged and cavernous mountain.

Mountains, seas, woods, cities, crowds, armies, squadrons, airplanes – these will often be our terrible expressive words: **the universe will be our vocabulary**.

Examples. We want to give a sensation of whimsical cheerfulness: we show a chair cover as it playfully flies around an enormous coat stand, until at

last the objects embrace each other. We want to give the sensation of anger: we fracture the angry man into a whirlwind of little yellow balls. We want to give the anguish of a hero who has lost his faith because of dead neutralist skepticism: we show the hero in the act of making an inspired speech to a large crowd; suddenly we bring on Giovanni Giolitti who, treacherously, stuffs a thick forkful of macaroni into the hero's mouth, drowning his winged words in tomato sauce.⁴

We shall add color to the dialogue by swiftly and simultaneously showing every image that passes through the actor's minds. Example: representing a man who will say to his woman, "You're as lovely as a gazelle," we shall show the gazelle. Example: if a character says, "Your smile is as fresh and luminous as the sea viewed from a high mountain by a traveler after a long, hard journey," we shall show the traveler, the sea, the mountain.

That is how we shall make our characters as understandable *as if they talked*.

2. **Cinematic poems, speeches, and poetry**. We shall make all the images that they invoke pass across the screen. Example: "Canto dell'Amore" [Song of Love] by Giosuè Carducci:⁵

From the German rocks whereon they perch,
Like falcons meditating the hunt [...]
We shall show the rocks, the falcons about to strike.
The churches lift their long marble
arms to heaven and pray to God

From the convents between villages and towns
crouching darkly to the sound of bells
like cuckoos among far-spaced trees
That sing of idleness and startled joy [...]⁶

We shall show churches that are gradually transformed into imploring women, God beaming down from on high, the convents, the cuckoos, etc.

Example: "Sogno d'Estate" [Summer's Dream] by Giosuè Carducci:

Among your ever-sounding strains of battle, Homer, I am
conquered by the warm hour: I bow my head in sleep on
Scamander's bank, but my heart flees to the Tirrenian Sea.⁷

We shall show Carducci as he is wandering amidst the warring Achaians, nimbly skipping out of the path of galloping horses, and then paying his respects to Homer; then we see him going out with Ajax for a drink at the local bar, called The Red Scamander, and at the third glass of wine his heart, whose palpitations will be visible on screen, pops out of his jacket like a huge red balloon and is seen flying above the Gulf of Rapallo. This is how we will make a film that traces the most secret movements of genius.

Thus we shall ridicule the works of *passéist* poets, and to the great benefit of the public we shall transform the most nostalgically monotonous and teary-eyed poems into violent, exciting, and highly exhilarating spectacles.

3. **Cinematic simultaneity and interpenetration** of different times and places. We shall project two or three different visual episodes at the same time, one next to the other.

4. **Cinematic musical researches** (dissonances, harmonies, symphonies of gestures, events, colors, lines, etc.).

5. **Dramatized states of mind on film.**

6. **Daily filmed exercises designed to free us from logic.**

7. **Filmed dramas of objects.** (Objects animated, humanized, wearing make-up, dressed up, impassioned, civilized, dancing – objects taken out of their usual surroundings and put into an abnormal state that, by contrast, throws into relief their amazing construction and nonhuman life.)

8. **Shopwindows of filmed ideas, events, types, objects, etc.**

9. **Filmed political conventions, flirtations, marriages and quarrels, shown through smirks, mimicry, etc.** Example: a big nose silences a thousand fingers at a political convention, by ringing an ear in the way one rings a church bell; meanwhile two policemen-mustaches are seen arresting a dissident tooth.

10. **Unreal reconstructions of the human body on film.**

11. **Filmed dramas of disproportions** (a thirsty man who pulls out a tiny drinking straw that lengthens umbilically as far as a lake and dries it up *instantly*).

12. **Films showing potential dramas and emotional strategic plans.**

13. **Filmed linear, plastic, chromatic equivalences, etc.** of men, women, events, thoughts, music, feelings, weights, smells, noises. (With white lines on a black background we will render both the inner and outer rhythm of a husband who discovers his wife in adultery and chases the lover – mental rhythm and rhythm of legs.)

14. **Filmed words-in-freedom in movement** (synoptic tables of lyrical values – dramas of letters that have been humanized or animalized – orthographic dramas – typographical dramas – geometric dramas – numeric sensibility, etc.). Painting + sculpture + plastic dynamism + words-in-freedom + noise-tuners + architecture + synthetic theater = Futurist cinema.

Let us decompose and recompose the universe according to our marvelous whims, in order to multiply a hundredfold the powers of Italian creative genius and its absolute preeminence in the world.

F. T. MARINETTI
BRUNO CORRA
E. SETTIMELLI
ARNALDO GINNA
G. BALLA
REMO CHITI
futurists

Milan, September 11, 1916

1. For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 367–69. For Ettore Berti and Luigi Zoncada, see “Futurist Synthetic Theater” in this catalogue, p. 369, n. 3. Gualtiero Tumiati (1876–1957) was an Italian actor

and theater director who collaborated with Marinetti on the theatrical syntheses he produced in 1915 and 1916. Annibale Ninchi (1887–1965) was an Italian actor who collaborated with Marinetti in producing theatrical syntheses from 1914 to 1916 — Ed.

2. *Teatro futurista sintetico*, 2 vols. (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, [1916]).

3. For the meaning of the terms graceful and antigraceful (pretty and antipretty) see p. 425 in this catalogue and p. 17 in *So I Think, So I Paint* — Ed.

4. Giovanni Giolitti (1842–1928), a left-wing liberal five times prime minister of Italy, opposed Italian participation in the Great War, hence Marinetti’s scorn.

5. Giosuè Carducci (1837–1907), a neoclassical man of letters and the first Italian poet to receive the Nobel prize for Literature in 1906, was also repeatedly scorned by Marinetti.

6. “Da le rocche tedesche appollaiate / Sì come falchi a meditar la caccia [...]” “Da le chiese che al ciel lunghe levando / Marmoree braccia pregano il Signor [...] Da i conventi tra i borghi e le cittadi / Cupi sedenti al suon de le campane. / Come cuculi tra gli alberi radi / Cantanti noie ed allegrezze strane [...]”

7. “Tra le battaglie, Omero, nel carne tuo sempre sonanti / la calda ora mi vinse: chinommi il capo tra ‘l sonno / in riva di Scamandro, ma il cor mi fuggi su ‘l Tirreno.”

“**La cinematografia futurista.**” **Manifesto first published as an independent leaflet in September 1916, then reprinted in *L’Italia futurista*, no. 9 (November 15, 1916), 1. Reprinted in *Manifesti del Futurismo*, ed. Viviana Birolli (Milan: Abscondita, 2008), 176–80. Reproduced here with minor variations from “The Futurist Cinema” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 229–33.**

08 Futurist Manifesto of Mechanical Art

E. Prampolini, I. Pannaggi, V. Paladini

1922

What we call Mechanical Art, i.e. the Machine adored and considered as symbol, source, and mistress of the new artistic sensibility, came into being with the first Futurist Manifesto, in 1909, in Italy’s most mechanical city: Milan. That first manifesto, published by *Le Figaro*, translated into every language, and distributed in many hundreds of thousands of copies, contained ideas that rattled and transformed the minds of artists all over the world.

We affirm that the beauty of the world has been enriched by a new form of beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing car with a hood that glistens with large pipes resembling a serpent with explosive breath ... a roaring automobile that seems to ride on grapeshot – that is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*.

We shall sing the great masses [...] the vibrating nocturnal fervor of factories and shipyards [...] factories [...] bridges [...] adventurous steamships [...] locomotives [...] and the oscillating flight of airplanes [...]

Immediately after that, Marinetti developed his thinking in the manifesto *Uccidiamo il chiaro di luna!* [Let’s Murder the Moonlight!] and in the volume entitled *Le Futurisme* [Futurism] (Paris, 1911), which glorifies Multiplied Man and the Reign of the Machine. The year 1911 saw the publication of the book of free verse *Aeroplani* [Airplanes], by Paolo Buzzi.² In 1911–12, Futurist Exhibitions hosted all over the world imposed the new sensibility of interpenetration, simultaneity, and plastic dynamism, formed by the fiery passion for the Machine. The initial figures, Boccioni, Balla, Russolo, Carrà, and Severini, were joined by Depero, Prampolini, Funi, Dudreville, Sant’Elia, Soffici, Sironi, Galli, Baldessari, and Marasco.³ In October 1911, Marinetti created the words-in-freedom composition *Battaglia peso + odore* [Battle Weight + Smell], a free exaltation of the mechanical forces of war. There followed *Zang tumb tumb, Assedio di Adrianopoli* [Siege of Adrianopolis] and the *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature] (1912), with these declarations by Marinetti:

It is the solidity of a steel plate that interests us as something in itself, with its incomprehensible and inhuman cohesion of molecules or electrons that can resist penetration by a howitzer. The heat of a piece of iron or wood leaves us more impassioned than the smile or tears of a woman.

We want literature to render the life of an engine, a new instinctive animal whose guiding principle we will recognize when we have come to know the instincts of the various forces that compose it.

Nothing, for a Futurist poet, is more interesting than the action of a mechanical piano's keyboard. Film offers us the dance of an object that disintegrates and recomposes itself without human intervention.⁴

In 1912, the Futurist musician Balilla Pratella⁵ composed his first Futurist work, *L'Aviatore Dro* [The Aviator Dro], a glorification of the airplane and aerial heroism.

In 1913, in his manifesto, *L'arte dei rumori* [The Art of Noises], Luigi Russolo wrote, after describing the mechanism of his electrical *intonarumori*:⁶

We derive far more pleasure from ideally combining the noises of trams, internal combustion engines, carriages, and noisy crowds than from rehearsing, for example, the *Eroica* or the *Pastorale* [...] Let us wander through a great modern city with our ears more alert than our eyes and we shall find pleasure in distinguishing the rushing of water, gas, or air in metal pipes, the purring of motors that breathe and pulsate with indisputable animality, the throbbing of valves, the pounding of pistons, the screeching of mechanical saws, the jolting of trams on their tracks [...].⁷

In 1914, Boccioni launched the magic word “modernolatr,” developing therefrom the concept in his volume *Pittura scultura futuriste* [Futurist Painting and Sculpture]. In that same year, there burst with a din from an inspired workshop Luciano Folgore's volume *Canto dei motori* [Song of Engines].

On March 18, 1914, Marinetti completed and defined the new Futurist aesthetic, with the manifesto *Lo splendore geometrico e meccanico e la nuova sensibilità numerica* [Geometric and Mechanical Splendor and the New Numerical Sensibility], followed by the manifesto *Nuova religione e morale della Velocità* [New Religion-Morality of Speed].

On March 29, 1914, in the Galleria Permanente Futurista in Rome, Marinetti produced his manifesto *La Declamazione dinamica e sinottica* [Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation]. In declaiming the words-in-freedom, it is important to imitate engines and their rhythms using mechanical gesticulation. The *parolibero* poem *Piedigrotta* by Cangiullo was presented with a dynamic-synoptic declamation.

In 1915, the Futurist painter Prampolini completed and defined Futurist plastic art in his manifesto *Costruzione assoluta di moto-rumore* [The Absolute Construction of Sound in Motion]. In 1916, the painter Severini explained the *macchinismo dell'arte* [machinism of art] in his article for the *Mercure de France*.

In 1917, the Futurist painter Depero created his Plastic Dances with mechanical rhythms.

The Dutch magazine *Mecano* recently reported all this, publishing a photograph of a machine with the title *Plastica moderna dello spirito italiano* [Modern Plastics of the Italian Spirit].

Now, after countless battles, attempts, investigations, works produced, and indisputable victories, we feel the need to free ourselves from the last advances of the old sensibility, to create, once and for all, the new plastic art inspired by the Machine.

The modernolatr predicated by Boccioni exalts us ever more. The time we are living in –

typically Futurist – will be distinguished among all histories by the deity ruling over it: the Machine.

Pulleys, fly-wheels, bolts, smokestacks, polished steel, smelly grease, the scent of ozone from electric power stations, the puffing of locomotives, the howling of sirens, cog-wheels, pinions!

MECHANICAL SENSE, CLEAR AND DECISIVE, irresistibly attracting us!

Gears wipe away the fog of indeterminacy from our eyes. Everything is more incisive, decisive, aristocratic, and sharp.

WE FEEL MECHANICALLY. WE FEEL BUILT OF STEEL. WE TOO ARE MACHINES. WE TOO ARE MECHANIZED!

The beauty of the latest fast trucks that run with a vast shuddering and trembling, sure and furious. The infinite joys that are offered to our eyes by the fantastic architecture of cranes, cold steel, the shiny and palpating solid characters, voluminous and fleeting, of luminous advertising signs. These are our new spiritual needs and the principles of our new aesthetic.

The old aesthetic was fuelled by legends, myths, and stories, mediocre products of blind, enslaved collectivities.

The Futurist aesthetic is nurtured by the most powerful and complex products of human genius. Is not the Machine today possibly the most exuberant symbol of the mysterious creative human force? FROM THE MACHINE AND IN THE MACHINE THE WHOLE HUMAN DRAMA IS DEVELOPING TODAY.

We Futurists are making the Machine tear itself free of its practical function, rise into the spiritual and unmotivated life of art, and become an extremely lofty and fecund source of inspiration.

The artist who does not wish to perish in imprecision or plagiarism must have faith only in his own life and the atmosphere in which he breathes. Beautiful machines have surrounded us, bent lovingly over us, and we wild and instinctive discoverers of every mystery have let ourselves be caught in their bizarre and frenetic ring-around-a-rosy.

Charmed, we possessed them in a manly, voluptuous way.

Today we can reveal to the world their profound spirits and their enormous hearts in which dynamic architectures spiral; the new architectures, which Antonio Sant'Elia and Virgilio Marchi⁶ have already established.

But it is important to distinguish between the shell and the spirit of the Machine.

When we talked of bolts, steel, pinions, and cog-wheels, we were misunderstood.

So let us clarify our thinking: the manifestos and works of Futurism, published, exhibited, and commented on all over the world, pushed many brilliant artists, Italian, French, Dutch, Belgian, German and Russian, towards Mechanical Art. But they almost always stopped at the outer shell of the machine; as a result they produced only purely geometric paintings, arid and exterior (comparable to certain engineering projects), which, though rhythmic and constructively balanced, lack interiority and have more scientific flavor than lyrical content; plastic

constructions executed with real mechanical elements (screws, gears, racks, steel, etc.) which are not part of creation as expressive material, but are exclusively ends unto themselves.

For this reason, these artists often fell into the false and the superficial, and produced interesting works which nonetheless were inferior to machines, because they had neither their solidity nor their organic qualities.

WE FUTURISTS WANT:

1. that the spirit and not the exterior form of the Machine be rendered, creating compositions that make use of all kinds of expressive means as well as real mechanical elements;

2. that these expressive means and mechanical elements are coordinated by an original lyrical law, and not by a learned scientific law;

3. that, essentially, by Machine we understand its forces, its rhythms, and the infinite analogies suggested by the Machine;

4. that the Machine thus conceived should become the source of inspiration for the development and evolution of the plastic arts.

The various styles of this new mechanical art will spring from the Machine like an interferential element between the object's spiritual conception and the plastic ideal proposed by the painter.

Today, the Machine imprints the rhythm of the great collective spirit and of the various individual creators.

The Machine beats the time of the Song of Genius. The Machine is the new deity that illuminates, dominates, and distributes its gifts and punishes in this new Futurist time, devoted, that is, to the great Religion of the New.

ENRICO PRAMPOLINI
IVO PANNAGGI
VINICIO PALADINI

1. “Noi affermiamo che la magnificenza del mondo si è arricchita di una bellezza nuova; la bellezza della velocità. Un automobile da corsa col suo cofano adorno di grossi tubi simili a serpenti dall' alito esplosivo... un automobile ruggente, che sembra correre sulla mitraglia, è più bello della *Vittoria di Samotracia*.”; “Noi canteremo le grandi folle [...] il vibrante fervore notturno degli arsenali e dei cantieri [...] le officine [...] i ponti [...] i piroscafi avventurosi [...] le locomotive [...] e il volo scivolante degli aeroplani.” For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 361–63.
2. Paolo Buzzi (1874–1956) was an Italian Futurist playwright and poet whose book *Aeroplani* was published in Milan by Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia* in 1909 — Ed.
3. Enrico Prampolini (1894–1956) was an Italian stage director who wrote the manifesto on “Futurist Stage Design” in 1915. Achille Funi (1890–1972) was an Italian painter who joined the Futurist movement briefly before becoming a founding member of the Sette Pittori del Novecento Group in 1922 and developing into a mural painter esteemed by the Fascist regime. Leonardo Dudreville (1885–1975) was an Italian painter who embraced Futurism in 1912 before joining the Sette Pittori del Novecento Group in 1922. Antonio Sant'Elia (1888–1916) was an Italian architect who took part in an exhibition of “The New City” in 1914, for which he wrote an essay

known as the “Messaggio” [Message], which was subsequently revised by Marinetti and published as *Il manifesto dell'architettura futurista* [Manifesto of Futurist Architecture]. Ardengo Soffici (1879–1965) was an Italian critic and painter who, together with Giovanni Papini, founded the journal *Lacerba* in 1913, signaling the period of his close collaboration with the Futurists. Mario Sironi (1885–1961) was an Italian painter who joined the Futurist movement in 1915 and exhibited with them from 1919 to 1922, before becoming one of the most successful artists to work for the Fascist regime. Gino Galli (1893–1954) was an Italian painter who formed part of the Rome faction of the Futurist movement, exhibiting with the Futurists from 1919 to 1933 and directing nos. 53 to 72 of *Roma Futurista* together with Balla, Bottai, and Rocca. Umberto Mario Baldassari (1907–1993) joined the Mantuan branch of the Futurist movement in the 1920s with Gino Cantarelli and Aldo Fiozzi. Antonio Marasco (1896–1975) was an Italian painter, sculptor, and writer who joined the Futurist movement in Florence before setting up and becoming the leader of the Independent Futurist Movement in 1932, for which he wrote the manifesto entitled *Supremazia futurista* [Futurist Supremacy] — Ed.

4. “È la solidità di una lastra d'acciaio, che c'interessa per sé stessa, cioè l'alleanza incomprensibile e inumana delle sue molecole o dei suoi elettroni, che si oppongono, per esempio, alla penetrazione di un obice. Il calore di un pezzo di ferro o di legno è ormai più appassionante, per noi, del sorriso o delle lagrime di una donna.”; “Noi vogliamo dare, in letteratura, la vita del motore, nuovo animale istintivo del quale conosceremo l'istinto generale allorché avremo conosciuto gl'istinti delle diverse forze che lo compongono.”; “Nulla è più interessante, per un poeta futurista, che l'agitarsi della tastiera di un pianoforte meccanico. Il cinematografo ci offre la danza di un oggetto che si divide e si ricompone senza intervento umano.” For a full reproduction of this manifesto in English, see pp. 364–66.
5. Francesco Balilla Pratella (1880–1955), an Italian musician and composer who showed interest in popular music, was one of the signatories of the *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista. L'Aviatore Dro* [The Aviator Dro] is a Futurist opera that features traditional instruments alongside *intonarumori* [noise machines]; though written in 1912, it was only premiered in 1920, in the Teatro Rossini opera house in Lugo (Ravenna) — Ed.
6. A family of noise-generating instruments invented by Luigi Russolo in 1913 — Ed.
7. “Ora ne siamo sazi e godiamo molto più nel combinare idealmente dei rumori di tram, di motori a scoppio, di carrozze e di folle vocianti, che nel riudire, per esempio, l'*Eroica* o la *Pastorale*. [...] Attraversiamo una grande capitale moderna, con le orecchie più attente che gli occhi, e godremo nel distinguere i risucchi d'acqua, d'aria odì gas nei tubi metallici, il borbottio dei motori che fiantano e pulsano con una indiscutibile animalità, il palpitare delle valvole, l'andirivieni degli stantuffi, gli stridori delle seghe meccaniche, i balzi dei tram sulle rotaie [...]”
6. Virgilio Marchi (1895–1960) was an Italian architect and art director, a “Second Futurist” who refurbished several theaters and designed the sets for more than fifty films.

“L'arte meccanica: manifesto futurista” (Rome, October 1922). Text first published in Italian in *Noi*, series II, vol. 1, no. 2 (May 1923), 1–2. Reprinted in *Manifesti del Futurismo*, ed. Viviana Birolli (Milan: Abscondita, 2008), 194–98, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

09 Manifesto of Futurist Radio (Radia)

F. T. Marinetti, P. Masnata

1933

Futurism has radically transformed literature with words-in-freedom aeropoetry and the swift simultaneous free-word style has swept away boredom in the theater with its alogical surprising synthesis and object-dramas has immensely expanded the range of sculpture with its antirealism its plastic dynamism and aeropainting has created the geometric splendor of a dynamic architecture that uses new construction materials lyrically and without decorativism has created abstract film and abstract photography

Futurism in its Second National Congress has decided that the following things must be overcome

To overcome the love of woman “with a more intense love of woman against the erotic-sentimental deviations of many foreign avant-gardes whose artistic expressions have collapsed into fragmentariness and nihilism”

To overcome patriotism “with a more fervent patriotism which is thus transformed into an authentic religion of the Fatherland”

To overcome the machine “through identification of man and the machine itself destined to liberate him from muscular work and immensely enlarge his spirit”

To overcome the architecture of Sant’Elia which is “victorious today through more architecture in the style of Sant’Elia but still more explosive with lyrical color and original discoveries”

To overcome painting “through aeropainting still more deeply experienced and with polymaterial-tactile sculpture”

To overcome the earth “with an intuition of the means that must be thought out in order to go to the moon”

To overcome death “through the metallization of the human body and picking up the vital spirit as a mechanical force”

To overcome war and revolution “through an artistic-literary war and revolution lasting a decade or two and portable in the manner of indispensable revolvers”

To overcome chemistry “with a nutritional chemistry perfected with vitamins and calories and free for all”

Today we already possess a television containing fifty thousand dots for every image on a big screen

While we are awaiting the invention of tele-tactilism and teleperfume and telesoap we Futurists are working on radio programs destined to multiply a hundredfold the creative genius of the Italian race and to abolish the old nostalgic rage of distances and to impose everywhere words-in-freedom as its logical and natural mode of expression

Radia the term we Futurists have given to the larger shows on radio is **STILL TODAY a)** realistic **b)** trapped in the notion of the scene **c)** rendered stupid by music that has achieved a revolting dark or languid monotony instead of developing in originality or variety **d)** a too timid imitation of the Futurist synthetic theater and words-in-freedom on the part of avant-garde writers.

Alfred Goldsmith¹ of Radio City in New York has said: “Marinetti has imagined the synthetic theater. Though very different in conception, the two kinds of theater have a point in common insofar as their realization requires them not to omit the task of integration, and on the part of the spectators requires an effort of intelligence. Radiophonic theater will demand an effort of imagination first from authors, then from actors, then from spectators.”

French Belgian German theoreticians and writers of avant-garde radiodramas (Paul Reboux Theo Freischinann [*sic*] Jacques Rece Alex Surchaap Tristan Bernard F. W. Bischoff Victor Heinz Fuchs Friedrich Wolf Mendelssohn etc)² have praised and imitated the Futurist synthetic theater and words-in-freedom but almost all are still obsessed with a realism albeit fleeting that is still to be overcome

Radia should not be

1. theater because radio has killed the theater already vanquished by film with sound

2. cinematographic because films are already on their deathbed due to **a)** the rancid sentimentalism of their subjects **b)** the realism that unfolds within some simultaneous syntheses **c)** infinite technical complications **d)** fatal banalizing collaboration

3. a book because the book bears the blame for having made humanity myopic it implies something heaving strangulating suffocating fossilized and frozen (only the luminous free-wordist grand tables will still live the only poetry that has to be seen)

Radia abolishes

1. space or any required scenery in the theater including the Futurist synthetic theater (action unfolding against a fixed or constant scene) and film (action unfolding against extremely rapid and highly variable simultaneous and always realistic scenes)

2. time

3. unity of action

4. the dramatic character

5. the audience understood as a mass self-appointed judge systematically hostile and servile always misonest³ always retrograde.

Radia will be

1. Freedom from any point of contact with literary and artistic tradition

Any attempt to reconnect the radia to tradition is grotesque

2. A new Art that begins where theater and film and narration leave off

3. Immense enlargement of space

The scene no longer visible or frameable now becomes universal and cosmic

4. Interception amplification and transfiguration of vibrations emitted by living beings by living spirits or dead spirits noise-dramas about states of mind with no words

5. Interception amplification and transfiguration of vibrations emitted by matter

Just as today we listen to the song of the woods and the sea tomorrow we will be seduced by the vibrations of a diamond or a flower

6. A pure organism of radiophonic sensations

7. An art without time or space without yesterday and tomorrow

The possibility of picking up transmissions from stations in different time zones merged together and the lack of light destroy the hours the day the night

Picking up and amplifying with thermionic tube lights and voices from the past will destroy time

8. Syntheses of infinite simultaneous actions

9. Human universal and cosmic art as voice with a true psychology-spirituality of noises of voices and of silence

10. The characteristic life of every noise and an infinite variety of the concrete-and-abstract and the done-and-dreamed by means of a populace of noises

11. Conflicts between different noises and distances which is to say spatial drama added on to temporal drama

12. Words-in-freedom

Language has gone on being developed as a collaborator of gesture and mime

Language has to be recharged with all its power whence essential and totalitarian language what in Futurist theory is called atmosphere-word

The words-in-freedom daughters of the machine aesthetic contain an orchestra of noises and noise harmonies (realistic and abstract) that can only help the shaped and colored word in the lightning-fast representation of what is not seen

If the radiast doesn't want to use words-in-freedom then he should express himself in the free-wordist style (derived from our words-in-freedom) which already circulates in avant-garde novels and newspapers that free-wordist style typically swift bursting synthetic simultaneous

13. Isolated words repetition of verbs in the infinitive

14. Essential art

15. Gastronomic music amorous music gymnastic music etc

16. The use of noises of sounds of chords harmonies musical or noise simultaneities of silences all with their gradations of duration of crescendo and of diminuendo which will become strange brushes for painting delimiting and coloring the infinite darkness of the radia giving cubicity spherical rotundity in the geometric background

17. The use of interferences between stations and of the surge and evanescence of sounds

18. Delimitation and geometric construction of silence

The use of different resonances of a voice or a sound in order to give a sense of the size of the location where the voice is

Characterization of the silent or semi-silent atmosphere that envelops and gives shading to a particular voice sound noise

19. The elimination of the concept or the esteem of the audience which has always had a deforming or worsening influence even on the book

F. T. Marinetti and Pino Masnata

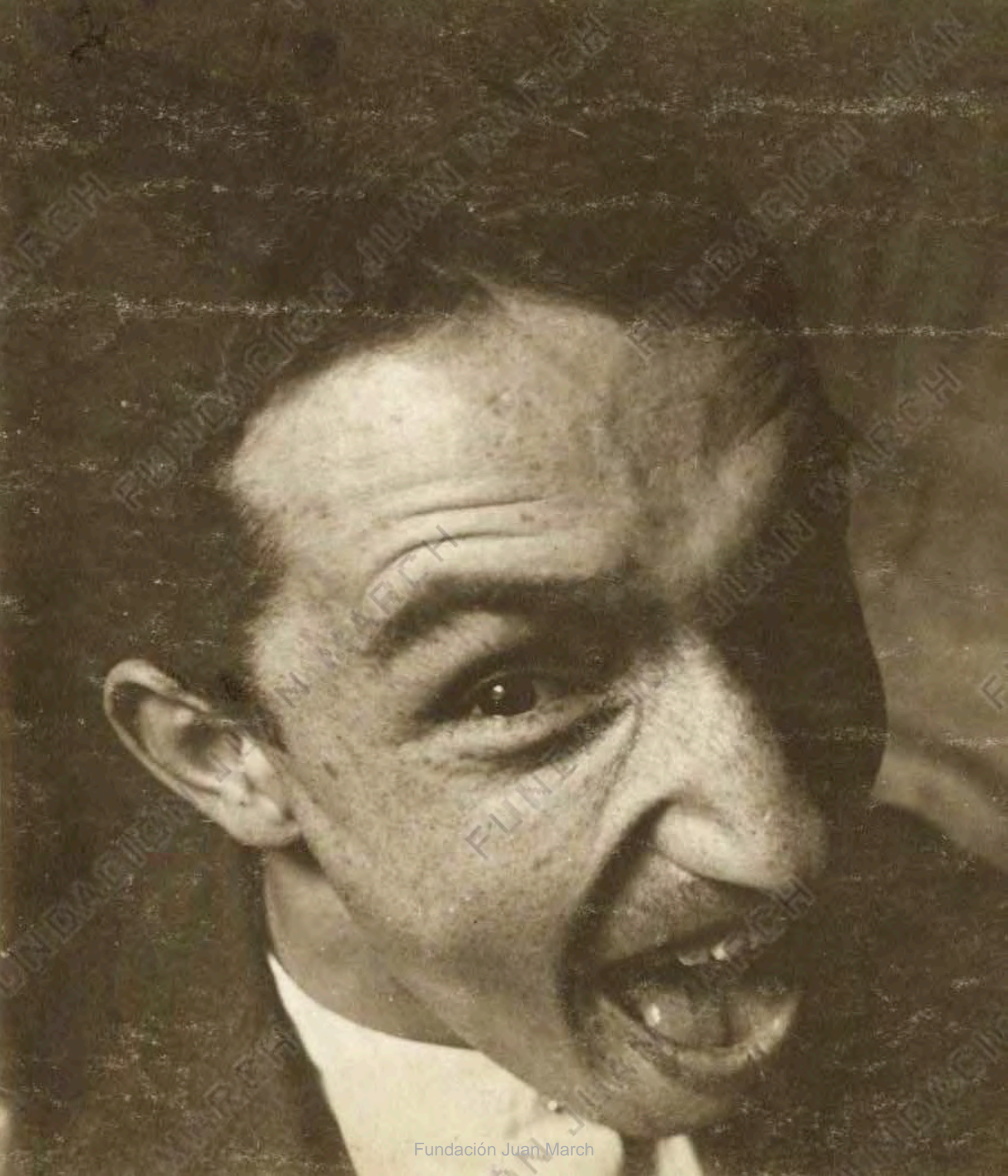
September 22, 1933

1. Alfred Goldsmith (1890–1974) was an American electrical engineer, a co-founder of the Institute of Radio Engineers (IRE), created in 1912, and the first editor (1913–1954) of *Proceedings of the Institute of Radio Engineers* — Ed.

2. Paul Reboux (pseudonym of André Amillet, 1877–1963) was a French artist and writer who experimented with the new genre of radio drama in the 1930s. Theo Fleischman (1893–1979) was a Belgian writer, journalist, and radio presenter. Tristan Bernard (1866–1947) was a French playwright and novelist who turned his hand to radio drama in the 1930s. Friedrich Wolf (1888–1953) was a German doctor and writer, author of “socialist realism” plays and radio dramas. It has been impossible to identify the other five authors cited — Ed.

3. Misoneism, from the Greek *miso*–(hate) and *neos* (new), means fear, dislike, or hatred of innovation or change. — Ed.

“Manifesto futurista della radio (Radia).” Text first published in the *Gazzetta del popolo*, September 22, 1933. Reprinted in *Il Futurismo*, October 1, 1933, and in Mario Verdone, *Il futurismo* (Rome: Newton & Compton, 2003), 183–86. A French translation, with the title “Manifeste de la Radio Futuriste,” was published in *Stile futurista* 1, no. 1 (July 1934). Reproduced here with minor variations from “The Radia: Futurist Manifesto,” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 292–95.



FORTUNATO DEPERO

(1913-1951)

01

Boccioni's Exhibition

Futurist Sculpture

(A Short Commentary)

1913

I've been in Rome for a week – one of the first things I did was to visit the exhibition of Boccioni's Futurist sculpture¹ – a completely white room – a very simple arrangement – unframed drawings – white and colored plaster figures on stands wrapped in gray paper – only what was strictly necessary – I took a look – I walked around the individual works – I peered – I saw – I stood on tiptoe – I bent forward – I learned new things with great interest, new findings put me in a state of orgasm – they shook my whole nervous system – edges of bottles, plates, tables, facets of faces – memories, of hands, nerves, people-places ...

Pure abstract art, musicality of speed-lines, nightmare-masses, reflecting-corners ... Plastic representation of states of mind – the quest to depict the lyrical moment of the artist while he is creating – that is, the artist totally deaf to conventionality – solely abandoned to the simultaneity of

the impulse – to the infinite telegraphic impressions of the sense he is subject to ...

No longer theme-art, decoration-art, portrait-art, photography-art; but a pure quest for harmonic sense of line-color-form undergone by sight-hearing-smell-taste-touch; no illustrative motive but cerebral tension; sculpture-painting and sculpture-music ...

Industrialized plasterers make me laugh – [they] make statues – busts, cold shavings – without any harmonic sense – empty, without a quiver – motifs mechanically ruminated over – scratched – childishly sought – botched after a thousand pieces of advice – school attempts – made on ruled paper by some foreign idiots who, after finding some outlandish style of extremely superficial deformation with lacquered colors, bestially combined – thought they were pioneers – famous masters – prize-winners etc ...

Excuse me, what you are trying to do is not plastic – there is no sculpture without tones – without sounds –.

Plastic: everything that gives you a sense of depth, closeness – distance – point – flat – concave and convex – light and dark – soft and hard – elastic – thread-like – turgid and empty ... is plastic – even the state of mind influences the plastic impression – you're angry: everything is sharp, you're content: everything is soft – fresh – undulating. For heaven's sake, where has color been left up until now in the plastic arts – the oranges – the reds – the spherical blues – the leaf yellows? But (apart from the Great Medardo Rosso²) no one had the courage to shape a figure in the fog – in the sun – in the dark.

What have most sculptors done up until now? Cold decorations or insignificant sculptures or barbaric scientific studies, but never ever ever pure plastic art – Only now are things starting – Boccioni explodes with brilliant and bright plastic works.

1. Depero employs the terms *scultura* and the more archaic *scoltura* indistinctly; in addition, he makes use of a third term, *plastica* [plastic work], to refer to a type of work that is more modern than traditional sculpture, and which employs new materials such as steel wire, wood, etc. — Ed.
2. Medardo Rosso (1858–1928) was an Italian painter and sculptor best known for his plaster images mid-way between sculpture and painting, in which the dissolution of contours and the suppression of empty space helped to fuse the works with their surroundings — Ed.

“La mostra di Boccioni. Scultura futurista (breve commento).” Handwritten in December 1913, in Rome, after visiting the *Esposizione di scultura futurista del pittore e scultore futurista Umberto Boccioni* [Exhibition of Futurist Sculpture by the Futurist Painter and Sculptor Umberto Boccioni], Galleria Futurista Sprovieri, Rome, December 6, 1913–January 15, 1914. Held in the Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART – Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, the manuscript was first published by Bruno Passamani, *Fortunato Depero, 1892–1960* (Bassano del Grappa: Museo Civico – Palazzo Sturm, 1970). Republished in *Fortunato Depero, Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012. [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 11–12, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

Autoritratto con smorfia [Self-portrait with Grimace], Rome, November 11, 1915. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 3 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (8.9 x 8.8 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

1914

DOPO un anno di tentativi - dubbi e scoperte -
 tensione - più o meno rapide evoluzioni - abbraccia-
 menti a ventaglio - impressionismo - postimpressioni-
 smo - astrazioni pittoriche - arabesco - pittura
 pura - REAZIONE - plastica - cubismo - astrazioni
 plastiche - SUPERARE - sovrapposizioni - corupere
 trazioni - simultaneità di stati d'animo - movi-
 vento lirico - dinamico - materia plastica =
 dinamismo plastico

2 mesi di mulinamento interiore elettrico -
 vertiginoso giro d'eliche cerebrale - ronzio di motori -
 cervello - RISOLUZIONE

HURRAAAA!

FUTURISTA !!!

VIA DEL TRITONE

- 125

GALLERIA FUTURISTA

Dep. 4.2.11

02 After a Year of Endeavors...

1914

After a year of endeavors – doubts and discoveries – tension – more or less swift development – fan-like embrace – impressionism – post-impressionism – pictorial abstractions – arabesque – pure painting – REACTION – plastic art – cubism – plastic abstractions – OVERCOME – superpositions – interpenetrations – simultaneity of states of mind – lyrical-dynamic movement – plastic matter – plastic dynamism after 2 months of internal electric grinding – dizzy spinning of cerebral helixes – humming of brain-motor – FUTURIST RESOLUTION HURRAH!!!

VIA DEL TRITONE – 125 GALLERIA FUTURISTA
Translated by Juan Carlos Reche.

“Dopo un anno di tentativi...” Handwritten in 1914, in Rome, on card including at the bottom the name of the Galleria Futurista Sprovieri on Via Tritone 125. Held in de Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART - Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

03 Plastic Complexity Free Futurist Game The Artificial Living Being

1914

“Complessità plastica – Gioco libero futurista – L'essere vivente artificiale.” Handwritten manifesto covering fourteen uniform pages, using a brush with colored inks, situated and dated “Rome 1914.” The lost original is documented by two contemporary negative photographic plates held in the Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART – Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. The last handwritten note, written on the back of a print of the negatives, is clearly much later. Datable in November-December 1914, the manuscript was published in its entirety for the first time by Bruno Passamani in *Fortunato Depero. Documenti Martano Due* (Turin: Edizioni Martano, 1969). Republished in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 14–28, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

04 The Onomalanguage Abstract Verbalization Depero Creation–1916

1916

“L'onomalingua. Verbalizzazione astratta. Creazione Depero 1916.” Text first published in the bolted book *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927). Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 42, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.



-1-

PLASTIC COMPLEXITY

FREE FUTURIST GAME

THE ARTIFICIAL LIVING-BEING

ONLY FOR INSANELY FEARLESS
 YOUNG-PEOPLE-ENDEWED-WITH
 TRANSCENDENTAL-ELECTRIC
 VOLITIONAL-PLASTIC
 SENSIBILITY **AGAINST**
 AN ABSOLUTE-POETRY
 PAINTING-SCULPTURE-MUSIC
 FOR-THE-MARVELOUS
PLASTIC-COMPLEX (POETRY
 +PAINTING
 +SCULPTURE
 +MUSIC)

-2-

COMPLEX PLASTICITY

RUMORIST-PICTORIAL-PSYCHIC

1. EXCLUSIVELY DYNAMIC AND ABSTRACT
 UNTIL - TODAY - PEOPLE - HAVE - ALWAYS - MADE - HORREN-
 DOUSLY - DEAD - SCULPTURE - FROM - ARBITRARY - IMPRESSIONISM - FROM -
 BRILLIANT - BUT - ANTI-DYNAMIC - OPAQUE - SOLD - LEADEN - OBJECTIVE
 DYNAMISM - THE - OPPOSITE - OF - ELOUVE - ABSTRACT - AND - EXTREMELY
 DYNAMIC - EMOTION
2. VERY TRANSPARENT
 VITAL - NEED - FOR - THE - VOLATILITY - AND - SPEED - WITH - WHICH -
 ONE - PERCEIVES - THE - PLASTIC - DRAMA - ALL - ELEMENTS - CONTRIBU-
 TING - TO - THE - PLASTIC - COMPLEX - ARE - PERCEIVED - AS - BEING -
 TRANSPARENTLY - CONSTRUCTED - YES - BUT - NOT - ANALYZED - WITH -
 HORRIBLE - HEAVY - COLORLESS - DEAD - MATTER - EVERYTHING - APPEARS
 AND - DISAPPEARS - AS - LIGHT - AND - INTANGIBLE
3. STRONGLY COLORED
 PLASTIC - EMOTION - IS - CRUALLY - FUSED - WITH - PICTORIAL - EMOTION
 THEY - COMPLEMENT - EACH - OTHER - IN - THE - FORM - TONE - HITHERTO
 COLOR - IN - PLASTICS - WAS - BEEN - BRUTALLY - ABOLISHED - THAT
 IS - REMOVING - THE - BLOOD - THAT - GIVES - THEM - LIFE - AND -
 THE - LITTLE - THAT - IS - COLORED - HAS - BEEN - GONE - SO - IN - A
 MOST - RIDICULOUS - WAY - WITH - CRAPPY - AND - SICKLY - HOSPITAL -
 DYES - AND - VARNISHES
4. EXTREMELY LIGHT
 THE - EMOTION - IS - ETHEREAL - SUSPENDED
5. IN CONTINUOUS MOVEMENT
 THE - PLASTIC - DRAMA - LIVES - AND - DEVELOPS - EVERLASTINGLY

- 3-
6. SUSPENDED IN SPACE
 THE PLASTIC EVOLUTION - IS - DEVELOPED - AROUND - AN - UNSTABLE
 CENTER -
 7. TRANSFORMABLE
 THE - EMOTION - VARIES - UNINTERRUPTEDLY
 8. LUMINOUS
 THE EMOTION IS DEVELOPED IN ATMOSPHERES OF VARYING - LIGHTS -
 SUCCESSIVE - TONALITIES - OF - ATMOSPHERES
 9. VOLATILE
 10. NOISY
 PLASTICITY FUSED WITH MUSICALITY - NOISES - CONCURRENT - WITH
 THE - PLASTIC - EXPANSION
 11. MIRACULOUSLY SHOCKING
 THE - WORK - OF - ART - MUST - ACT - DIRECTLY - WITH
 ABSOLUTE - VITALITY - (NOT - PASSEIST - MORTALITY)
 ON - THE - ONLOOKER'S - SPIRIT - THE - WORK - OF - ART
 WILL - LIVE - AGITATEDLY - IN - THE - MIRACULOUSLY
 CONCEIVED SPACE - CONSTRUCTED -
 BY - GENIUS -

THE NECESSARY MEANS WILL BE:

METAL - WIRES - COLORED - COTTON - WOOL - SILK - TRANSPARENT - PAPER
 OF - EVERY - KIND - HIGHLY - COLORFUL - PAINTS - OF - GLASS - EXTREMELY
 MALLEABLE - SUBSTANCES - LIGHT - VERY - FINE - FABRICS - FEATHERS -
 COTTON - WOOL - ELECTRO-TECHNICAL - AND - MUSICAL - DEVICES -

-4-

AGAINST

A PLASTIC THAT IS

1. STATIC
 2. OPAQUE
 3. COLORLESS
 4. HEAVY
 5. FIXED - ON - PEDESTALS - OR - OTHER
 STANDS
 6. OF A SINGLE-STABLE MATERIAL
 7. SERIOUS - MONOTONOUS
 8. SILENT
 9. MOST PETIDLY-FONERREAL
- ARBITRARY EXPERIMENTAL

TO WIT: THE - INVISIBLE-IMPALPABLE-IMPROBABLE
 IMPERCEPTIBLE - COMPLEX - WILL - BE - PRODUCED - MIRA-
 CULOUSLY - FLEETING - INSTINCTIVE - ARCHITECTURE - THE
 SOFT - SPIRALS - OF - LIGHT - ATTACHED - INVISIBLY - TO
 THE - PHONIC - EMANATIONS - OF - SHRRRIEKSSS
 RONZZZZZZZZNZZZZIIZIII - FRUSCSCSIISECIII
ALL THE RUMOOD CZZZZT

IT IS EXTREMELY URGENT -
 TO VOLUNTARILY - DESTROY





FREE FUTURIST GAME

BY THE GAME TOO AS BY ALL FASCIST EXPRESSIONS
FLAT AND GROTESQUE IMITATION - TIMIDITY
AND IMBECILITY SMALL TRAINS - SMALL
CARRIAGES - STUPIDLY CLUMSY DOLLS & PUPPETS
STUFFED LIKE THEIR MAKERS - CARICATURES MADE
WITHOUT ANY TALENT - TINY IMITATIONS OF DO-
MESTIC OBJECTS AND CONTRIVANCES - ANTI-IM-
MASCINE - JUST SUITED TO STUPIDITY - TO THE
HUMILIATION OF THE CHILD - SMALL IN-
NOUCIOUS - UNSALVABLE ARMS - OF NO ATTRACTION
CURIOSITY - NOVELTY - VARIETY

**ALL IDIOCIES - TO - BE -
TRANSFORMED -
THE - FUTURIST - TOY - WILL
BE - AN - ARTISTIC - EXPRES-
SION - OF - THE - GREATEST
IMPORTANCE -
IT - WILL - BE - ANTI-MELANCHOLIC**

**ALSO MADE FOR MAN
THE TOY WILL BE VERY
USEFUL**

**TO REMAIN CONTINUA-
LLY **YOUNG****

**VOLUBLE
MERRY
ARROGANT
FEARLESS**

**INEBRIATED WITH UNKNOWN
MARVELS**

**MUCH USE WILL BE MADE OF IT IN
ALL THE FUTURIST SETTINGS THAT
WILL GROW AND LIVE IN
THE **GRANDIOSE** AGE WHICH
WE ALONE INTUITED AND TO
WHICH WE COLLABORATED**

**SPORTING
EXTREMELY VARIED
IRRISOME
ALWAYS NEW**

IT WILL ACCUSTOM THE CHILD

**TO LAUGH VERY OPENLY
WITH MAXIMUM ELASTICITY
DODGING LAUNCHING PROJECTILES
SUDDEN LASHES-PRICKS**

**TO COURAGE TO DEFENSE
TO THE MARVEL OF ARTIFICE
TO THE ABSURD
TO DISPLAY SENSIBILITY**

**TO VERY LOUD NOISES
TO SHARP PESTILENTIAL SMELLS
EXTREMELY SAVOURY EXCITING**

TO WAR

PIERCELY

**AGAINST ALL THE MOST BESTIAL
OPPOSITIONS -**

**DEVELOPED - WITH - LOVE
AND - INTENSE - LABOR - THE
FUTURIST GAME WILL LEAD
TO THE MOST ADVANCED HUMAN
DISCOVERY, TO WIT**

**THE - ARTIFICIAL
LIVING - BEING
GRANDIOSELY - BRILLIANT
DEVICE - LIVING - IN - SPACE
MOST VITAL - FUSION
ART + SCIENCE**

GIOCO LIBERO FUTURISTA

ANCHE NEL GIOCO COME IN TUTTE LE
ESPRESSIONI PIU' BASTATE - PIATTA - E - GROTTE
SUA IMITAZIONE - TIMIDEZZA - E - CRETINERIA
TRENINI - CAN - SCIM - PIANI - SCIPINA - GIFFI
MANTILISTE - MANTILISTE - MANTILISTE - MANTILISTE
CARLATURE - FATTE - SENZA - NIENTE - IN - FENIA - H - H

- SOLAMENTE - ATTI
ALLA - STUPIDITA' - ALL'AVVILIMENTO - NEL -
BAMBINO - PICCOLE - ARMI - IN - NIENTE - E - NIENTE
ATTIRAZIONE - CARLATURE - FATTE - SENZA - NIENTE - IN - FENIA - H - H

TUTTO - IMBECILLE - DA - TRAS
FORMARE -
IL GIOCATTOLO - FUTURISTA
SARA' ESPRESSIONE - ARTI
STICA - DELLA - MASSIMA - IM
PORTANZA -

SARA' ANTI-MELANCONI

**LO SPORTIVO
SVARIATISSIMO**

FASTIDIOSO

SEMPRE NUOVO

ABITUERA' IL BAMBINO

A RIDERE APERTISSIMAMENTE
ALL'ELASTICITA' MASSIMA
SCHIVANDO LANCI DI PROIETTILI PEUSTA
TE - PUNECCHIATORI IMPROVVISI

AL CORAGGIO ALLA DIFESA
ALLA MERAVIGLIA DELL'ARTIFICIO
ALL'ASSURDO
A TENDERE LA SENSIBILITA'

AI RUMORI FORTISSIMI
AGLI ODORI ALUTI PESTILENZIALI
SARROSISISSIMI ECCITANTI

ALLA GUERRA

ANCHE PER L'UOMO FATTO
IL GIOCATTOLO SARA' UTI
LISSIMO

PER ESSERE CONTINUA
MENTE **GIOVANE**

VOLUBILE

PESTANTE

STROFOTTENTE

TENERARIO

UBBRIACO DI MERAVIGLIE SCO
NOSCIUTE

SI FARA' LARGO USO IN TUTTI
GLI AMBIENTI FUTURISTI
CHE CRESCERANNO E VIVRAN
NO NELL'EPOCA **GRANDIOSA**
CHE NOI SOLI ABBIAMO PRESENT
TO E PER LA STESSA COLLABORATO

FEROCEMENTE

CONTRO TUTTE LE BESTIALISSIME
OPPOSIZIONI -

SVILUPPANDO - CON AMORE
E INTENSO - LAVORO - IL GI
GIO FUTURISTA SI ARRIVE
RA' ALLA PIU' AVANZATA SCO
PERTA - UMANA - CIOE'

**ALL'ESSERE-VIVE
NTE-ARTIFICIALE**
CONGEGNO-GRANDIOSAMENTE
GENIALE-VIVENTE NELLO SPAZIO
VITALISSIMA-FUSIONE
ARTE+SCIENZA

VARIED-UNPROVISED-UNPLANNED LINES
 MECHANICAL-PHYSICAL-CHEMICAL
 TRACKS
 MAKERS OF NOISE
 AUTOMATICALLY-SHOUTING
 DANCING-COMICALLY
 TRANSFORMING BEINGS

ALL THE ARTISTIC AND
 SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE WILL
 BE WIDELY USED WITH THE
 GREATEST FREEDOM

HURRAH!...

CRAZED WITH ENTHUSIASM I LAUNCH
 THIS MANIFESTO DEDICATED
 TO MY MAGNIFICENT
 FUTURIST FRIENDS
PRELUDE-TO-AN-AGE

THAT-IS-IMMENSELY-MAD
 AND-MARVELOUS-IN-WHICH
 THE-ARTIST-WILL-BE-FOR-THE
 FIRST TIME:

**COMPLEX
 FREE-GENIUS**

+LECTURER
 +SOLDIER
 +MADMAN

+CRITIC
 +ARCHITECT
 +PAINTER
 +SCULPTOR
 +MUSICIAN
 +MATHEMATICIAN
 +MECHANIC
 +PHYSICIST
 +CHEMIST

FORTUNATO
DEPERO

ROME ——— 1914

(FUTURIST-MANIFESTO)

the onomalanguage

DEPERO CREATION - 1916

ABSTRACT VERBALIZATION

It derives from onomatopoeia, from noise, from the brutality of Futurist words-in-freedom. It is the language of the forces of nature:

**wind·rain·sea
river·stream·etc.**

of the noise-making artificial beings created by man:

Bicycles, trams, trains, cars and all manner of machines,

it is the combination of emotions and sensations expressed through the most rudimentary and effective language. Depero created and declaimed these, his original compositions, in front of enthusiastic and hostile crowds. In the monologues of clowns and vaudeville comedians there are signs typical of the onomalanguage that will be developed in the future, forming the most inspired language for the stage and especially for exhilarating exaggerations. With the onomalanguage it is possible to speak and communicate effectively with the elements of the universe, with animals and machines. The onomalanguage is a universally understandable poetic language for which translators are not necessary.

L'onomalingua

CREAZIONE DEPERO - 1916

VERBALIZZAZIONE ASTRATTA

E' derivata dall'onomatopea, dal rumorismo, dalla brutalità delle parole in libertà, futuriste. E' il linguaggio delle forze naturali:

**vento · pioggia · mare
fiume · ruscello · ecc.**

degli esseri artificiali rumoreggianti creati dagli uomini:

Biciclette, tram, treni, automobili e tutte le macchine,

è l'assieme delle emozioni e delle sensazioni espresso con il linguaggio più rudimentale e più efficace. Depero creò e declamò queste sue originali composizioni davanti a folle entusiaste ed ostili. Nei monologhi dei clowns e dei comici di varietà vi sono tipici accenni all'onomalingua che avranno futuri sviluppi, costituendo la lingua più indovinata per la scena e specialmente per le esagerazioni esilaranti. Con l'onomalingua si può parlare ed intendersi efficacemente con gli elementi dell'universo, con gli animali e con le macchine. L'onomalingua è un linguaggio poetico di comprensione universale per il quale non sono necessari traduttori.

05 Depero's Plastic Theater. Principles and Applications

1919

I was born a painter, in the purest sense of the term, and throughout my youth, past and present, I have always been concerned with paintings and sculptures and other artistic problems, all undilutedly lyrical.

I made – and I will go on making – toys, panels, puppets, theatrical costumes, and stage sets, and I have had endless fun. In all these endeavors I have achieved success by virtue of the sole fact, in these very frenetic and extremely active last two years, of having attained a pictorial and plastic style that is clearly consistent architectonically, and of having boldly come through a brilliant and fragmentary period of excessive impressionistic nostalgia. To my satisfaction I have geometrized,¹ squeezed, crystallized lights, metalized shadows, conveyed all of the plastic emotions and sensations with the solid matter of possible constructive mechanical solutions.

Everything in my most recent works is rhythmically architected,² with an extremely obvious logicity of relations and contrasts of colors and forms, so as to make a single and powerful whole. Reacting to the Impressionist style, I have imposed upon myself a style that is flat, simple, geometric, and mechanical: primary, clear form; complementary color given with flat and curved planes in the geometric sense; return to a severe perspective of complete and unseen build; very strict plastic consideration of values; rhythmic and architectonic relations of the slightest invisible details; gigantic, tropical, mechanical, floral beauty; massive and fearful workshop, street, city geometries with precious and new perspective construction of objects. I am neither satisfied with a color range nor with plastic relations, but I invariably strive to find a line that underpins and governs the most disparate elements of an architectonic unity.

Observations, impressions, memories and knowledge, intuitions and fantasies, everything in my work is reduced to stylistic matter, as if one were dealing with details of a single organism (being, panorama, or drama); everything is resolved with multiple, inner, perspectival freedom, and with love, with ardor, in the creation of the new object, be it a figure, an animal, a flower, or another autonomous multi-expressive entity, living in its own authentic plastic world.



Constructing one's own inner world; characterizing, structuring all the elements which the Impressionists and those following them, even the best of them, hinted at as timid, light, imprecise, chaotic aesthetic values, raising them to the greatest autonomous possibility of predominant evidence. Shadows shaped to resemble living, solid, vertical bodies, which are multiplied and deformed magically or automatically, isolated in their own life; depths hewn out and shaped in the abysses of reflections; bodies which, by dint

of lights, appear upside down and suspended in tragic balance, or surprised by new and multiple perspective attractions; houses with oblique and burning terraces of gold on which slide glazed slabs of light with a heavy air. Men stand charring themselves in the shade, they shine, with crystal on the illuminated edges of the steps. A reaction to every impressionistic dispersal of every style, with layers and blocks of possible measurement and construction, thus attaining the real existence of characters and settings of one's own inner world. No longer

vague pictorial appearance, but *autonomous, pictorial, physical* existence.

These are the principles whereby I have been able, without in fact lessening the lyrical intensity of my works, to create new objects, figures, and environments with an extravagantly bright and extremely original personality, new worlds, alive with compelling adaptability, for a plastic theater which, in its turn, is a multi-expressive world, very rich in pictorial, phonic and plastic surprises, findings and magic, for all characters, for all ages, for all cultures, for all races, including animals.

But if the whole external world (nature) is alive, all the more need to express the inner world as living. Now to meet such a need, there only exist, as far as I know, the *living plastic complex* with which I have been obsessed for so long, and which, this very year, I shall be presenting, with a great deal of seriousness in a scrupulous and perfect production, and the *Plastic theater*.

For this new and boundless theater, not only have I made an infinite number of projects, drawings, paintings, and constructions, which I have exhibited in Naples, in Rome, in Florence, in Milan, but I have also produced a large number of plastic costumes that were adapted to living people in the Russian dance³ (Igor Stravinsky's *Le Chant du rossignol* [The Song of the Nightingale]). Rigid costumes, solid in style, mechanical in motion; grotesque extensions of broad, flat arms and legs; box- and disk-like hands with fans of very long, pointed and resounding fingers; gold and green masks depicting just a nose or an eye socket or a smiling and luminous mouth, like a mirror; bell-like capes, pure, bell-shaped trouser legs and sleeves; all polyhedral in an asymmetric sense, everything unscrewable and moveable. And it was dazzlingly surprising, enough to drive you mad with exalting jubilation, when the lead dancer of the Ballets Russes troupe, Léonide Massine, tried on the first two costumes in front of the mirror, because one could see the bewitching poses and the dumbfounding mime of plastic people from a new world. For that ballet I also made a constructed set which consisted in a gigantic, mechanical, tropical flower: seven-meter crystal leaves; crowns of sonorous geometric bell-flowers, lace-trimmed, toothed, with yellow stars and extremely prickly red stems; an intricate fluorescent mechanical garden; plastic sounds; authentic crystallization of a merry orchestra.

Later on I met the writer G[ilbert] Clavel, who duly became my dearest friend, and on a suffocatingly sultry day, while I was chatting with him, lying on the burning hot sand of the marina in Capri, I had a flash of intuition – apply my latest plastic solutions to the puppet theater. Freeing myself from the human factor, I granted the greatest autonomy and freedom to my beloved living constructions, and this is how my *Balli plastici* [Plastic Dances] came into being, the first organic attempt, made in collaboration with Clavel, to revolutionize and construct the *plastic theater of the world*; dances

which had twelve performances in Rome, with splendid success.

Clowns; luminous, floral villages, streets of gold and trees of crystal; pink, lilac, green dancers; bright white flights of mice with tin eyes; torrential golden rain of cigarettes. Wild blacks; wild, shielded reds; the Great Savage with the little green surprise theater in her belly; mechanically devouring snakes; solid, living shadows; fabulous bears, cats, monkeys, dazzling and gymnastic, etc.; tropical landscapes of fire, very black subterranean perspectives. With time more perfect dances and dramas will be developed and finalized and the characters will be made not only of hard, squared wood, but also of fabric, of rubber, of tin; they will be subject to every kind of light, they will have roundness, transparency, and elasticity; they will dash, dance using springs and with all manner of pyrotechnic means they will be wondrously luminous.

The most ordinary and disparate feats will seem amazingly transformed and re-created in all the plastic magic they may suggest: crimes, rain, fires, etc.

Each movement of an object or figure, each act of thought, of dream, of vision, will be in the closest relation, in their miming performances, with the surroundings, rendered mimetic. And in some cases the mime will be just in the set: whirling flowers, with surprising deconstructions; mountains that pass; trees and belfries that waver, houses that are uncovered and opened, impetuous winds that beat, shake, upturn, fling the landscape in fantastic eddies, while the characters remain motionless in a frozen tragedy. Even a lone figure can become the protagonist of magical plastic phenomena, for example by means of enlarging the eyes, with multiple and changing lights. I have already mentioned the gigantic Great Savage, the leading female character in the dance: *The Savages*. While one of the characters, who is black, fights with another, who is red, for the heart of this pachydermous woman, and while the shields clash, the weapons sparkle, the screwed joints squeak in a most lively and furious excitement of mechanical struggle, the lights go out all at once, and in the belly of the giantess there opens up all of a sudden a little green theater, full of light, creating a magnetizing surprise. In that little theater there appears a tiny silvery wild creature, jumping and glowing with joy, holding a red heart in its hand.

The figure in a dance can be deconstructed and deformed to the point even of absolute transformation; for example, a ballerina, in a whirl of ever-faster spins, becomes herself a floral vortex and, by means of very simple lighting devices, she can assume countless colors, quickly following one after the other. Even the structure of the stage will be completely transformed, and enlarged in every direction in such a way that the artist can execute thereupon his most hazardous intentions.

My style, which is all rhythm, has led me inevitably to occupy myself with dance, which is nothing

more than the stylization of gesture. And because I have lent rhythm to every floral, animal, human element, every gesture, every movement and displacement of the characters and objects (person who walks or smokes, machine which prints, runs, or grinds, flower that opens and blooms, animal that is born, water that flows) will likewise be stylistic. The very construction of the character produces a mimetic rhythm.

The vastness of theatrical renovation lies in the style, which may be glorified unto the most abstruse fantasies. Each atom of life can, on the other hand, be the object of very significant plastic interpretation. The style heightens and re-creates everything anew, from the simplest geometry of objects (brushes, glasses, boxes, etc.) to the tiniest, most mysterious microscopic movements of the smallest of insects or the tremendous gesticulations of the most colossal of antediluvian animals.

Think, for example, how seductive the rendering on stage can be of the growth of a fantastic flower, from the appearance of an almost invisible bud to the greatest splendor that a flower can attain in an imaginary tropical zone, be it mechanical, electrical, or pyrotechnical.

Part of my work currently on view in Milan, in the Galleria Centrale d'Arte – and which will subsequently be exhibited in Genoa, Florence, Venice Lido, and then at the Wolfsberg House of Art⁴ in Zurich and, in the autumn, in London and Stockholm – is, as it just so happens, dedicated to this *Futurist mimetic and plastic theater* devised by me and already partly produced. In London and Zurich it will be shown by the Casa d'Arte Bragaglia of Rome. In Genoa, in early May, in the premises of the Futurist exhibition, I shall give my first lecture on “Architecture of Light: The Plastic Theater and the Living Plastic Complex.”

- 1 Verb coined by Depero from the adjective *geometric* — Ed.
- 2 Another term invented by Depero, in this case a verb derived from a noun — Ed.
- 3 Depero intentionally employs the term “dance” rather than “ballet” — Ed.
- 4 Kunstsalon Wolfsberg — Ed.

“Teatro plastico Depero. Principi ed applicazioni.” Text first published in the illustrated weekly magazine *Il Mondo*, yr. V, no. 17 (Milan, April 27, 1919), reproduced on p. 396. Reprinted as “Teatro plastico Depero – principi ed applicazioni” in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 61–65, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

06 Self-introduction

1921

I belong to Italy redeemed. I was born twenty-eight years ago in Fondo (upper Anaunia), the small main town of one of those Alpine valleys that form the extreme bulwarks of Italianness against the German Tyrol.

Having escaped from there before the war in Italy, I started out as a painter and sculptor in the "Futurist Movement" back in 1914, and by working feverishly to attain a new goal, in just a few years I took part in fourteen solo and group exhibitions. I lived from my art, always managing to sell my work to public figures recognized be it in the field of art or in that of the intellectual aristocracy, Italian and foreign alike.

My painting

is a complex architecture of emotive inner values expressed in organic visions; in my pictures, pictorial, luminous, sensitive, impressionistic unreality becomes plastic, constructed reality; all my projections start from a single viewpoint which has been the same and only one in art down the ages, "inner perspective," in other words, the realization of the inner phenomenon.

No longer flat academic realism, no longer slightly pictorial verism with a timid stylistic appearance, but powerfully transformed, reconstructed, and re-created.

The gaze turned inwards, facing the mysterious, magical, infinite world of the soul, of thoughts, of images. The capacity to give substance to the whole lived universe in the climates, zones, dawns, nights of the state of mind. Turning in this way to the true work of art, linking up with all the great arts of the past, Eastern, Western, ancient and modern, without actually resorting to semi-plagiarism, without painting incomprehensible, arbitrary abstractions, fruit of creative inability and bad faith. The autonomous, clear, bright, exact work of art illuminated by its own light, populated by its own flora and fauna, and by exclusively plastic and pictorial figures.

The appearance of the work of art will be in its unreal magic arranged like the nature surrounding it.

The whole world in which we live is rhythm; no arrhythmic jarring note of line, of form, of color, of sound, of noise; everything is strictly mathematical, measured, weighed; this is the perfect style of that which is true.

In the work of art, that is, in the realization of the inner world, there must always be the same

rhythmic discipline, an identical metric rhythm, in the relations of every character, and then there will be an authentic work of art of style.

What I have done for the theater

from the organic style of my painting I have taken the elements necessary for a new complex theatrical decoration and for every kind of artistic application. In 1917, for Mr. S. Diaghilev, director of the grandiose "Ballets Russes" company, I produced a gigantic plastic floral set, not painted on backdrops and lateral wings, but rather constructed (16 meters high, 9 wide, and 8 deep) for Igor Stravinsky's *Le Chant du rossignol* [The Song of the Nightingale]; for the same ballet I made forty plastic costumes, stiff-looking clothes with mechanical geometric shapes, suited to automatic gesturing, creating a dance of formal values and choreographic varieties never before seen on any stage in the world. Due to diverse matters of a financial nature at the moment of being staged, that show was never performed.

But owing to its originality and stylistic power, that creation marks one of the greatest conquests of modern plastic and pictorial art applied to the field of theater.

In the spring of 1918 I created the well-known *Balli plastici* [Plastic Ballets] with financial backing from the Swiss writer Gilbert Clavel. Dances of highly colorful wooden robots, of synthetic and geometric construction, moved mechanically, creating unexpected, surprising gestures. They were set to music by the Italians Francesco Malipiero and Alfredo Casella, and by the English musician Tyrwhitt. They were performed twelve times in Rome and although at an unfortunate moment in the World War, they had very long and favorable reviews in the press.

In the winter of 1921–22 it is my firm intention to take up in grand style this "Plastic Theater" creation of mine, with which I was the first to successfully realize a complete, organic, and revolutionary theatrical spectacle.

The poster designer

I was recently elected one of the best Italian poster designers by the Istituto Editoriale Italiano, and one of my posters was among those chosen for the Italian Floating Fair for Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, and France.

Last spring, the illustrious Mr. Umberto Notari, director of the Istituto Editoriale Italiano, bought from me a series of posters and panels in colored fabrics. He subsequently commissioned from me two very large tapestries; in all I made a considerable sum of money with which to set another idea of mine in motion:

The casa d'arte depero

in my exhibitions, artistic research applied to fabrics, though incomplete and imperfect, met with ever more favorable and encouraging support from critics and public alike. The purpose of this art industry of mine, which is for the time being limited to the production of tapestries and cushions, is firstly to replace with ultra-modern intentions every type of *gobelin* tapestry,¹ Persian, Turkish, Arab and Indian carpet, which today invade all kinds of different environments; secondly, and as a result of the former, I will undertake the necessary and urgent creation of an indoor setting, be it a parlor, or a theater or hotel lounge, or an aristocratic mansion; an environment corresponding to a contemporary fashion, suitable to accommodate all the avant-garde art that I am developing today.

¹ Also called gobelins in English. The term derives from the tapestry dyer Jehan Gobelin (d. 1476), who established his renowned workshop in the Faubourg Saint Marcel, Paris, in the mid-15th century. In 1662, Jean-Baptiste Colbert purchased it on behalf of Louis XIV to set up the royal workshop, which became known as the Manufacture Nationale des Gobelins; in addition to tapestries, all kinds of furniture and sculptures were executed there. The term *gobelin* generally refers to tapestry products characterized by the quality of their dyes — Ed.

"Autopresentazione." Text first published in *Depero e la sua Casa d'Arte* [exh. cat. Galleria Centrale di Palazzo Cova, Milan, January 29–February 20, 1921] (Milan, 1921). Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 79–81, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

07 Theater Must Interpret Life

1926

Today's prose theater is idiotic. It is "out of sync": so it does not in fact interpret contemporary life, and all its endeavors are futile and useless.

The cinema has killed the prose theater through its multiple possibilities of expression, its infinite variants, its contrasting melodramatic surprises, so that it keeps a continuous grip on the audience's curiosity and interest, with a speeded-up pace of emotions, with a result that is invariably successful.

An authentic, modern, and powerful *New Theater* is on the point of being born. It has already been wonderfully tested by the Futurists in the forms of: Synthetic Theater – Theater of Surprise – Plastic Theater – Bragaglia¹ Theater – Theater of Color – Prampolinian Scenography – Revolution of Color – Revolution of Staging – Revolution of Perspective – Filming life in its most dramatic and comic expressions. – Create, create, find. – Expose and exalt the most luminous Magic World of the Machine, which will reveal a whole unexplored universe.

1. Anton Giulio Bragaglia (1890–1960) was an Italian photographer, a pioneer of Futurist photography and cinema, and the author of *Fotodinamica futurista* [Futurist Photodynamism] (1912) — Ed.

"Il teatro deve interpretare la vita." Text published in the daily newspaper *La Fiera Letteraria*, yr. 2, no. 46 (Milan, November 14, 1926), published in reply to a report on the dramatic arts featured in the same journal. Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 96, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

08 Plastic Arts of Today Wall Manifesto

1927

"Plastica d'oggi. Manifesto murale." Text first published in the bolted book *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927). Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo* (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 106–7, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.



PLASTIC ARTS OF TODAY



1. IMPRESSIONISM.

The Impressionists produced paintings, poetry, and music whose pure essence is harmonic and luminous, but imprecise and vague, almost phosphorescent.

Landscape became sensory painting, musical color, tone, light, free palette, which the artist could use like the musician uses the sounds of the keyboard.

The outer vision was transformed for the Impressionists through inner exaltation, into a passionate and joyous painting festival.

Yellow fabrics, red clothes in the brightest yellow sun, purple meadows at sunset. The countryside a rainbow, the shadows sky, the sky a wonderful golden spider's web; the trees trembled silvery at dawn and at midday blazed in haloes of mother-of-pearl.

Streams, rain, lights, and windows became jets, sprays, colored skeins of blues, reds, yellows, sulphurs, lilacs, pinks. The sea a chaos of colored ribbons.

Light and color — the pleasure of color, incantating

2. CUBISM.

color, sensual color; painting a thrill; painting triumphantly becoming symphonic and lyrical.

With the triumph of the Impressionist school, settings, figures, objects had increasingly lost their consistency of form and precision of outline. They had broken up and evaporated in chromatic vibrations, near and far, dazzling and diaphanous.

This postnatal exuberance caused a reaction; it returned to the lost thing: form. Cubism, young and brilliant, returned to solidity, to perspectival space. The landscape became brown and dark; the perspectives diagrammatic and many-sided. Countryscapes, dwellings, portraits, and figures no longer tremble impressionistic and not realistic either, but marked in their synthetic rhythms, with few lines and planes, precise and powerful.

It was a geometric writing of clear, conical blocks of dark mountains; light houses and villas with trim

3. FUTURISM.

In the Futurists the humorous personal vibrations of Impressionism were merged with the plastic analysis and synthesis of the Cubists, explained by the most undoubted inventive brilliant, enlivened by the expression of movement (dynamism).

The modern mechanical and dramatic life of this time of daring and scientific inventions — the war in every sector

factories and breathing with all the most marvellous apparatus — the bookbinding, shaking, cracking closeness of cities,

ports, stations and workshops, airplanes, aeroplanes, hangars and car race tracks, with the new type

of light and speed — cafes, bars, crystal canes, balls, mirrors and smoke (shimmering, hitherto

absorbing, gazing of silk and colored lights) — the railway tracks, strings with electricity and

gas — theoretical with windows showing the magic spectacles of advertisements and

artists, etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc.

etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc. etc.

light black shadows. Floors, terraces, at very long, standing out on the spherical ramps of bare hills. Cylindrical areas of huge poplars and horse chestnuts, and the massive black spheres of their leaves projecting round shadows that grow ever smaller with distance and ever blacker as they draw closer.

In the portrait, the nose, the lips, the geometric cheekbones, the square jaws, the cylindrical neck, the shoulders with great areas of depth, barbers, of a wooden brilliant structure and plastic understanding, roughly shaped as if by a hammer and sawyer.

With their crude settings, with their broad sections they embarked on the discovery of circles, thicknesses, the hidden and secret details, the precise dancers, the topographies of still life, the subterranean areas of landscapes.

This plastic analysis of creation and consistency created a multiple perspective of new and surprising plastic tensions.

That multiplied reason led to a complete understanding of the inside and outside in which every artist could express in a varied, personal infinite

ALL THIS CREATED THE FUTURIST STYLE

METALLIC
CRYSTALLINE
GEOMETRIC
DYNAMIC
LUMINOUS
NOISY

Painting became extremely violent in its colors and forms

FLAG-RED *very yellow*
FIRE-ORANGE *geranium-pink*
ANISEED-GREEN *very azure*
BILE-GREEN *emerald-white*
LACQUER-BLACK *midnight-blue*

*objects and figures transparent and
indescent with smoke and speed —
dancers twisted in the red
whirlpools of dance-halls
and pierced by*

*very hard
very transparent
very measured
very fast
dazzling
phonic*

darting stings of light — lines shaped in geometric angulations — projections of reflectors, lights, arc lamps, that light up cafés, restaurants, airports, theaters and stations, that burst forth in dominant multicolor, or also create atmospheric planes and volumes intersected by forcefields that probing reality of infatuation, so a dramatic and scientific time of objects, Metals cast and forged in every form have created millions of conveniences that make up the modern mechanical nature indistinguishable to our existence.

This world has given us a fast and multiplied life, it has shower us *overhead* and interpenetrated physical sensations — it has created the multiplied and amplified sense of swift and simultaneous impressions.

The genius of Futurism sensed this new sensibility and expressed its first armature, body, will only partly realized, in his volume

"FUTURIST PAINTING and SCULPTURE — Plastic Dynamism," a monumental open of scientific precision and artistic creation.

We Futurists draw inspiration directly from the turbulent life

we are living and from the environments which we swiftly cross or rework in the most varied and surprising aspects. The man who works, becomes entered, is interested by his gymnastics. An animal that runs away and lies off, or a vehicle that moves fast, throws us new structures. The vehicle traveling at speed makes its extension depending on the landscape it crosses; an object in motion assumes new stages and new dimensions (BOC-CIOMI-EINSTEIN).

Even colorless motorless landscapes seem to us quite different from the same landscapes traversed at 100-200 kilometers per hour.

In space, solid bodies nearby seem transparent; leaves, branches, telegraph poles all become changeable silk, while the more distant landscape shifts in circular patterns that lead to condense in the distance as far as the artistically defined reality of the background.

Having reached the possibility of representing moving bodies launched at speed, or the very form of speed, with signs, forms and colors, people have managed to statically express the abstract forms of noise and smells. These

extremely important elements can completely transform the structure of the picture and totally alter the various shades of color.

A landscape is absolutely different if seen in total silence, or during a bombing raid. The uproar of cannon fire and bombs bursts cheeks, mountains break asunder, houses fall over, the air becomes massive and alive, explosion transforms the tranquil sky into a ball of red-hot stones and a dazzle of dangerous needles, etc. . . . etc. . . . etc. . . . etc. . . .

Our pictures are annihilated by the serrated zigzags of crashes; by the trumpet-yellow flashes of horns, by obscure cupolas made of rhombic by silvery blades of high-pitched sounds; by rockets with whitening shooting stars.

Parabolas, ellipses, spirals; central forms, polyhedral and spheroidal forms.

From the start we have been obsessed with unknown luminous horizons, with footprints kept into the dark and a violent desire to escape from the staidness, hardness, of the traditional and past traditions.



che viviamo e dagli ambienti che sono da noi vicinamente per-
corri, oppure ritrovati negli aspetti più vari e sorprendenti.
L'uomo che cammina, si agita, si interessa per la sua linea-
rica. Un animale che legge e ascolta, o un veicolo che corre
ci rivelano nuove strutture. Il veicolo in velocità varia le co-
lorazioni secondo il paesaggio che attraversa; un oggetto in
movimento assume nuove forme e nuove dimensioni (BOC-
CIONI-FUNSTENI).

Anche i paesaggi, contemplati fermi o appaiono ben diversi.
dagli stessi paesaggi visti a 100-200 chilometri all'ora.
Nella velocità i corpi solidi vicini appaiono trasparenti.
le forme e i colori si integrano più lontano di una can-
giante, mentre il paesaggio più lontano ritrae la parte
del tutto circolari che tendono a consolidarsi in linea.
L'uomo fino alla realtà staticamente definita dello
spazio, si è arrivati ad esprimere
segnali, forme e colori e corpi lanciati in
velocità, o la forma stessa della velo-
cità, si è arrivati ad esprimere
stabilmente la forme astratte
dei rumori e degli o-
toni. Quelli

importantissimi elementi possono trasformare completamente la
struttura del quadro e mutarne completamente le diverse tonal-
tà.

Un paesaggio è assolutamente diverso se visto in pieno aller-
zia, oppure durante un bombardamento. Il frastuono delle can-
nonate e della bomba fa scappare le nuvole, le nuvole si
apertano, le case rotolano, l'aria diventa maelstromica e furo-
reggante, gli scoppi trasformano il cielo aereo in una gran-
dezza di sassi roventi e in uno sfiorare di falci rosso-
perlaceo, ecc. . . . ecc. . . . ecc.

I nostri quadri sono caratterizzati da zig-zag, spezzati
di orizzonti, da imbuto giallo-rossa di ari, da esplosioni cal-
gnose di tonni; da linee argentee di aquili; da zari a
stelle, filari di stillici.

Parabole, elici, spirali; forme coniche, poliedriche
e abberco.

Fino dall'inizio ci siamo sentiti sensazionali
verso orizzonti luminosi leggeri con abissi
temerari nel blu e disordine violento
di linee dalla staticità, pigrizia,
dell'arte medievale e pitagorica
del passato.

TUTTO QUESTO GENERO' LO STILE FUTURISTA

- METALLICO** *distintivo*
- CRISTALLINO** *trasparenzialismo*
- GEOMETRICO** *matematicismo*
- DINAMICO** *velocismo*
- LUMINOSO** *abbagliante*
- RUMORISTA** *tonico*
- ROSSO-RANDIERA** *glorioso*
- ABANCO-FUOCO** *rosa-geranio*
- VERDE-ANICE** *azzurrissimo*
- VERDE-BILE** *bianco-cimelo*
- NERO-LACCA** *bruciante*

La pittura divenne violentissima nei colori e nelle forme
eggeffii e personaggi trasparenti e ma-
dreperiaci di fumi e velocità —
ballerine attonite nei rosa
gorgi dei dancings e
trafite da asse-

lito; sagomate in angole geome-
triche — proiezioni di riflettori, di fasci, di lampade ad arco,
che illuminano caffè, ristoranti, viali, teatri e stazioni, che
accipitano in pellicole dominanti, oppure cresono piani e volumi
atmosferici interassati da base-forza che proiettano all'infinito
la realtà, ad un tempo drammatica e scottistica degli oggetti.
— I modelli fusi e forgiati in tutte le forme hanno creato mir-
ioli di orligni che costituiscono la moderna natura mecca-
nica indispensabile alla nostra esistenza.
Tale mondo di ha dato una via veloce e moltiplicata, ci
ha rivelato sensazioni pittoresche avvincenti e compen-
trate — ha creato il senso moltiplicato ed agglomerato
delle impressioni simultanee e veloci.

Il genio di Boccioni ha colto questa nuova sensu-
bilità e ne ha espresso le prime forme, ancora
oggi in parte realizzate, nel suo volume
„Pittura e scultura FUTURISTA — Di-
namismo plastico“ monumentale opera di
ambizione scultorea e di creazione
artistica.

Noi futuristi ci ispiramo di-
rettamente dalla vita
luminescente



09 The First Motorumorist Plastic Complex

1927

Some time ago, the Russian Futurist sculptor Archipenko launched from New York an art manifesto concerning the “picture in motion.” I must remind you that this bold Futurist issue was initially launched by the Futurist painter Depero by way of manifestos, lectures, and works from 1926 on [*sic*, for 1915].

Since then I have asserted that the framed picture, the landscape, the figure, the composition painted on a single plane, the sculpture made with a single, static material do not satisfy our machinery-oriented, electro-speedy, magically artificial and extremely noisy sensibility.

After the colored plastic complexes of the painter Balla and the sculptures of Boccioni made with various materials, after the endless efforts to make the work of art truly dynamic, I have felt a daring need to have recourse to the machine, to set my own colored and plastic complexes *in motion*.

I have defined these artistic mechanizations as: “motorumorist plastic complexes.” They are constructed with mechanisms of every sort, pulleys, winches, wire, wheels, noisy clockwork, lights, pumps, small engines, pipes, gears, and all kinds of lever systems; the most varied materials: wood, tin, mirrors, glass, lights, water, smoke, sounds, smells; applications of every physical, chemical, and illusory trick, etc. ...

I make a bell swing to a rhythm, I make colors, forms, animals, and clouds appear and disappear; I make doors and windows, hearts and houses, eyes and mouths open and close, artificial beings stir, dawns and sunsets live and die as my creative whim desires.

With my motorumorist complexes I want to make the work of art: *exciting, revolving, talking, clanging, smoking, snoring, screaming, exploding, distressing, gladdening, fragrant, appetizing*.

My work will thus be informed by its own autonomous life, with regard to nature, man, animals, and all the atmospheric, telluric, and mechanical phenomena through which it is suggested.

All the pictorial emotions, all the plastic emotions, are perceived by us in speed. Fixing them on a plane, or rendering them in a static material, means removing from the work of art the magic vibration and the divine fascination of motion.

I spin, everyone spins, the universe moves, clouds pass, birds fly, fish dart, machines turn rapidly, the whole world whistles, sings, makes noise in a divine orchestra, while the work of art

has hitherto been expressed as fixed, tragically dead. So our works will be pictures with keyboards, sculptures with levers, authentic interpretations of our machinery-related life.

I have created two of these motorumorist plastic complexes: *Fiera* [Fair] and *Panoramagico* [cat. 138]. The first is a set of spinning merry-go-rounds, high-speed wheels, perspectives, huts with little organs, sirens and bells ringing and rumbling, paths that really smoke through colored rays of light. The second, *Panoramagico*, is a machine-landscape with disparate pictorial elements and flowers expressed like mechanical corollas in motion. Tavern elements experienced in turbines, spinning on vertical and horizontal pivots. Such a construction is rich in noises, whistles, and birdsong. It has a keyboard of sandy, stony noises, and a distant roll of military drums. The whole dominated by a rumbling engine.

These works with their extreme artistic audacity will be exhibited during my next show at the Galleria Pesaro in Milan. We announce the formidable and fatal advent of the machine in the divinely living work of art. Italian artistic inventions always find immediate imitators abroad, while at home they still encounter *passéist* hostility which must be fought daily.

“Primo complesso plastico moto-rumorista.”
Text published in the daily newspaper *La Fiera Letteraria*, yr. 3, no. 10 (Milan, March 6, 1927). Reprinted with a few changes and with the title “Il complesso plastico moto-rumorista” [The Motorumorist Plastic Complex] in the bolted book *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927) and in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 102–3, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

10 The Need For Self-Advertisement Wall Manifesto

1927

“Necessità di auto-réclame: manifesto murale.” Text first published in the bolted book *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927). Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 104, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

11 Magic Theater

1927

“Teatro magico.” Text first published in the bolted book *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927). Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 114–26, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.



the need for self-advertisement

Self-advertisement is not a vain, useless or exaggerated expression of megalomania, but rather a vital NEED to quickly inform the public about one's own ideas and works. In all areas of production beyond that of art the most clamorous advertisement is permitted and admitted: every industrialist can and does produce the most ~~large~~ publicity of his products:

it is only for us producers of genius, beauty, art, that advertising is regarded as something abnormal, self-serving mania and brazen immodesty. It is time to be done with recognition of the artist after his death or in advanced old age. The artist needs to be recognized, appreciated and glorified in his life-

time, and to this end he is entitled to use all the most effective and unheard-of means for advertising his own genius and his own works. The first and most competent critic of the work of art is the artist who has created it: he has all the means to illustrate and launch it. If the artist swells fame and recognition of his own work by other means, he will have time to die of hunger 5,000 times over.

L'auto-
rèclame non
è vano, inutile o
esagerata espressione
di megalomania, ma bensì
indispensabile NECESSITA' per
far conoscere rapidamente al pub-
blico le proprie idee e creazioni. In
qualsiasi campo della produzione al di
fuori di quello dell'arte è permessa e ammessa
la più strepitosa réclame; ogni industriale può e
fa la più ardita pubblicità ai suoi prodotti; soltanto

necessità di auto-rèclame

**per noi produttori di genialità,
di bellezza, di arte, la pubblicità
è considerata cosa anormale, mania
arrivista e sfacciata immodestia. E' ora di
finirla con il riconoscimento del-
l'artista dopo la morte o in
avanzata vecchiaia. L'artista ha biso-
gno di essere riconosciuto, valu-**

to e glorificato in vita, e perciò ha diritto di usare tutti i
mezzi più efficaci ed impensati per la réclame ai proprio
genio e alle proprie opere. Il primo e più com-
petente critico dell'opera d'arte è l'artista
che l'ha creata: a lui tutti i mezzi per
illustrarla e per lanciarla. Se l'artista
attende la celebrità e la rico-
noscenza dell'opera pro-
pria per mezzo altrui
ha tempo di mori-
re 3000 volte
di fame.

Set design

I wrote „*IN PENOMBRA*“¹ Rome, 1919

„Not only must every fact, act, phenomenon be represented with lines, colors, forms, settings, and costumes in a renovated style, but even movement must be a vast mimic re-creation.

„Each movement of an object or figure, each act of thought, of dream, of vision, must be in the closest relation with the surroundings, rendered mimetic; in some cases, the mimicry will be just in the set; for example: whirling flowers, mountains that pass, trees and bellies that waver, houses that are uncovered and opened, impetuous winds that beat, shake, upturn, fling the landscape in fantastic eddies, while the characters remain motionless in a frozen tragedy. — Even a lone figure can become the protagonist of magic-plastic phenomena, by means of enlarging the eyes with multiple and changing lights. The figure in a dance can be deconstructed and deformed to the point even of absolute transformation: for example, a ballerina, in a whirl of ever-faster spins, becomes a floral vortex, etc.

„Even the structure of the stage must be completely transformed and enlarged in every electrical and mechanical direction.

„The stage must be equipped and prepared for all eventualities, in order to make possible every one of the artist's intentions.

„Appearances from the sides of a fixed, horizontal floor or hanging from the ceiling are not enough; every side including the floor, even the floor itself, will be raised and the scenes will be viewed in their vast topography, or else the floors will be multiple and the figures will have perspectival disproportions, etc.”

The most complete artistic expression is the theater, the greatest lyrical, plastic, and musical interpretation of life.

I have observed that, apart from a few rare attempts, the contrast between drama dance and the staging song and music

is **enormous.**

Violent and synthetic dramas, modern, highly original, and ultra-dynamic dances, powerful and pyrotechnical songs, choirs, and orchestras, etc. etc. silly, gray, mild and confused imitation SETS

Some time ago, I told a well-known dramatist that I had made some sketches for the scenes of Mascagni's „*Piccolo Marat*.”

He replied to me in surprise that he would have been able to understand a set of mine for the oriental and fantastic „*Iris*,” but not for the historical „*Marat*.”² I replied that my scenes for „*Marat*” were as historical as the music of Mascagni.

What I mean to say is that if the musician plays and creates with the greatest freedom, this should also be the right of the set designer.

A set design that is created, invented, pictorial, original, and very personal.

With colors, perspectives, rhythms, lights and the most varied mechanisms, the set designer must make

1. Depero appears to be making reference to the review *In Penombra* (initially *Penombra*) published in Rome from 1917 to 1919. Directed by the journalist and playwright Tomaso Monicelli (1883–1946), it stood out for the quality of its illustrations, among others by S. Tofano, M. Dudovich, and F. Depero, which placed it at the head of avant-garde graphic design — Ed.

2. Depero makes reference to two operas by the Italian musician Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945): *Il piccolo Marat* [The Small Marat] centers on the figure of the Jacobin leader Jean-Paul Marat, murdered in 1793; it was first staged in Rome in 1921. *Iris*, a “Japanese” opera, is an ode to the sun interwoven with a story of stolen childhood (kidnapping, seduction, and death); it was first staged in Rome in 1898 — Ed.

Scenografia

L'espressione artistica più completa è il teatro, massima interpretazione lirica, plastica e musicale della vita.

Ho osservato che, escluso qualche raro tentativo, il contrasto fra dramma ballo e la messa in scena canto e musica

è **enorme.**

Drammi violenti e sintetici, balli moderni, originalissimi ed ultra-dinamici, canti, cori ed orchestre potenti e pirotecniche, ecc. ecc.

SCENOGRAPIE balorde, grigie, Imitazioni blande, quarantottesche.

Dicevo qualche tempo fa ad un noto autore drammatico, d'aver assegnato dei bozzetti di scena per il "Piccolo Marat" di Mascagni.

Egli mi rispose corrucciato che avrebbe potuto capire una mia scenografia per l'"Ido" orientale e fantastica, ma non per lo storico "Marat". Risposi che le mie scene per il "Marat" erano altrettanto storiche, quanto la musica mascagniana.

Intendo dire che se il musicista interpreta e crea con la massima libertà, tale deve essere anche il diritto dello scenografo.

Scenografia creata, inventata, pittorica, originale, personalissima.

Con i colori, la prospettiva, i ritmi, le luci ed i meccanismi più avvertiti, lo scenografo deve comporre

Scrivo **"IN PENOMBRA"** — Roma, 1919

„Non solo ogni fatto, atto, fenomeno, dev'essere rappresentato con linee, colori, forme, ambiente e costume di rinnovato stile, ma anche il movimento sarà una ricreazione vasta della mimica.

„Ogni spostamento di oggetto o figura, ogni pensiero, sogno, interiore, violsi, esprime unicamente in stretto rapporto con l'ambiente; anzi in taluni casi, la mimica sarà sola dello scenario; per esempio: fiori giranti, monti che passano, alberi e campanelli che oscillano, cose che si accorciano e s'allungano; il vento che sbatte, scuote, precipita e capovolge a mulinello il paesaggio, mentre in una tragica fissità stanno immobili i personaggi. — Anche una sola figura può diventare protagonista di fenomeni plastici-magici: ingrandimenti degli occhi e illuminazioni varie dei medesimi. Scomposizione della figura e deformazione della stessa anche fino alla trasformazione assoluta; per esempio: una ballerina nella danza che sempre più s'accelera si trasforma in vortice floreale, ecc.

„Anche la costruzione del palcoscenico dev'essere completamente rifatta ed ampliata in tutti i sensi elettrici e meccanici.

„Il palcoscenico dev'essere pronto e preparato a tutte le possibilità, per poter rendere attuabile ogni intenzione dell'artista.

„Non bastano le apparizioni ai lati su di un pavimento fisso, orizzontale, o le sottile calate dal soffitto: ma ogni lato compreso il pavimento, anzi lo stesso pavimento, sarà rialzato e le scene saranno vedute nella loro vasta topografia, eppure i pavimenti saranno multipli e i personaggi a sproporzioni prospettiche, ecc.”

settings and landscapes that are magically transformed. The stagehand can be more powerful than all the Wagners on earth.

The stagehands of our most important theaters do not even know the ABCs of stage design. They are mediocre hirelings!

In a painting, the need for a personal pictorial interpretation is obvious: objects, figures, and settings must be harmonized by means of proportion, color, perspective.

On the contrary, when a scene is constructed, you buy any old table or clock, furniture and props as you come across them; costumes as they are found and in the usual proportions, repeated ad nauseam.

In a painting, perspectives change, figures appear in all planes and in every proportion; enormous in the foreground and very small in the distance; the colorations vary depending on the light and shadow, and with sky-blue or grass-green reflections if they are outdoors.

All these pictorial possibilities are completely neglected by the mass of set designers.

The frame of the proscenium for me is the same thing as the frame of a painting.

The only difference resides in the fact that the proscenium opens up a pictorial-plastic scene that is also musical and animated.

But the law of harmony, of original creation, is always the same.

In real life we see streets, squares, porticos, taverns, houses, factories, workshops, woods, rocks, trams, trains, etc. ... with a daring and improbable wealth of set designs: a highly agitated world of lights, winds, reflections; upturned, multiplied, and absurd realities in mirrors and panes of glass; scenes in spiraling staircases, spectacles in the uproar of storms, or dancing and vertiginous if seen at speed.

The theater has not yet managed to produce this varied and surprising world which nevertheless belongs to experienced reality.

Sketch and realization

One day, in Mascagni's villa, I saw a sketch of a scene by Previati, in which backlit railings were indicated with brushstrokes showing an admirable Impressionist technique.

Yet I am certain that whoever went on to produce that scene, instead of that bundle of brilliant brushstrokes intended to indicate the gate, would have painted a gate faithfully reconstructing reality from life, thus destroying all the pictorial originality of Previati.

Whence the need for the artist to implement his scenes himself, or have them executed with very close personal surveillance.

The scene must be a picture of large proportions, just as the picture is a scene in small proportions.

**Balla
Depero
Prampolini
Marchi
Pannaggi¹**

are the best Italian stagehands and
they are all **futurists**

1. Virgilio Marchi (1895–1960) was an Italian architect and art director, author of the *Manifesto dell'architettura futurista dinamica, stato d'animo, drammatica* (1920). Ivo Pannaggi (1901–1981) was an Italian architect and painter, author, with Vinicio Palladini, of the *Manifesto dell'arte meccanica futurista* (1922) — Ed.

ambienti e passaggi che si trasformano magicamente. Lo scenotecnico può essere più potente di tutti i Wagner della terra.

I scenotecnici dei maggiori nostri teatri non conoscono nemmeno l'alfabeto della scenografia. Essi sono mediocri mestieranti!

Nel quadro la necessità d'una interpretazione pittorica personale è evidente: oggetti, figure, ambienti devono armonizzarsi per proporzione, colore, prospettiva.

Quando invece si costruisce una scena si compaiono un tavolo qualsiasi, un orologio a muro, mobili e suppellettili come capitano; costumi come si trovano o in proporzioni usuali e ripetute fino alla noia.

Nel quadro la prospettiva mutano, le figure agiscono in tutti i piani ed in tutte le proporzioni: enormi in primo piano e piccolissime in distanza; le colorazioni variano secondo che si trovano in luce o in ombra o con riflessi d'azzurro-cielo o di verde-erba se sono all'aperto.

Tutte queste possibilità pittoriche sono completamente trascurate dalla massa degli scenografi.

La cornice del boccascena per me è la stessa cosa della cornice del quadro.

L'unica differenza sta nel fatto che il boccascena apre una scena pittorico-plastica che è anche musicale ed animata.

Ma la legge dell'armonia, della creazione originale è sempre la stessa.

Nella vita reale vediamo strade, piazze, portici, osterie, case, fabbriche, officine, boschi, rocce, tramvai, treni, ecc... con ricchezze scenografiche audaci, inverosimili; un mondo agitatissimo di luci, di venti, di riflessi; realtà capovolte, moltiplicate ed assurde negli specchi e nelle vetrine; scene a spirale dai giroscopi, spettacoli in subbuglio di temporali, oppure danzanti e vertiginosi se percepiti in velocità.

Il teatro non ha ancora realizzato questo mondo vario e sorprendente che pare appartiene alla realtà vissuta.

Bozzetto e realizzazione

Ho visto un giorno nella villa di Mascagni un bozzetto di scena del Previani, nel quale una cancellata contro luce era segnata con pennellate di mirabile tecnica impressionista.

Ebbene sono certo che chi avrà realizzato tale scena invece di quel fascio di pennellate geniali che volevano indicare il cancello avrà dipinto un cancello fedelmente ricostruito come vero, distruggendo così tutta l'originalità pittorica di Previani.

Da qui la necessità per l'artista di eseguire da sé le proprie scene, o farle eseguire con strettissima sorveglianza personale.

La scena dev'essere un quadro di grandi proporzioni, come il quadro è una scena in piccole proporzioni.

**Balla
Depero
Prampolini
Marchi
Pannaggi**

sono i migliori scenotecnici italiani

e sono tutti **futuristi**

Moveable sets

The **Motionpicture** plane designs get set up in its moveable and transformable set design.

The one system and designed every day. Great, poor, simple and intricate work.

Machine, metal, bronze and painting, carved, painted, complicated and simple.

Color, mechanical, even, all run easily or slowly in given the scene.

Works with photographs every with learning abilities. Great-like projection that, light like and the entire theater like feel the air.

The **Imagery** in the space and freedom of material, aluminum-rod, even have of light and form of glass, which, comes by invisible machine clear in, being destroyed and.

Everything, sometimes, sometimes, multiple and breaks up, in physical or organic, invention and invention into a motion machine, which is the.

And the theater?

The great key in the scene, changing, the factoring upon in changing, multiple, the pieces of form, the not much work they is, pulled, that the sound, shape and form, being long with other, long-lasting and another, or better on the machine and more the ability, even of the scene, mechanical, even and design, structure, even, specific, control, the is up machine, work, lighting, especially in all the pieces of the imagination of its form and work.

The scene and concept, creation, recreation and invention, all in: **multi-variety, a factory, dramatic, studio, graphic, and magic, carnival of our life.**



Swiftly expressing
arousing interest
entertaining

and tirelessly varying - creating

Life is lived quickly. The theater years slowly.

Why does the cinema triumph?

It takes color, construction, and variety, scenes and being observed?

It is still a simple recreation of photographic shots and edited.

That it is successful, because it is fast, because it starts and changes quickly.

The cinema is mental and rich, unexpected and surprising.

... a forest that steals

... two others that have a steering wheel

... a wood that flies

... a building that collapses

... a barrel that weighs up to

... a car which that takes us out to sea

... a ride in a train across the Sahara

... a street in New York jammed with traffic

... and the rocky bank of a river

Running, sailing, flying, travelling, and fast, especially while staying, constantly used in an unusual.

The cinema, takes all the audience, body of certain varieties of super, multiple scenes, beautifully played and twice and unobscured producers of good scenes, people, who want to take it, back to the original, simplicity of the theater, and become a powerful means of artistic creation.

We must add to the theater, everything that the cinema has suggested.

CONTRASTS - HINDS

paradoxes - facts

Improbabilities

exaggerations and antics in freedom, all invented and paradoxical

VARIETY
NOVELTY
SURPRISE
SPEED

ONLY IN THIS WAY will the theater still manage to be interesting

Exaggerated tricks

Moustaches, beards, wigs: red, yellow, green, gold.
Masks of every shape:
movable and highly colored,
lamp-eyes,
megaphone-mouths, funnel-ears,
in motion and transformation.
Mechanical clothes,
developing transformism,
hands-feet: plastically artificial.

coloring the nude

green-nudes	gold-nudes
red-nudes	metallic-nudes
yellow-nudes	very white and very black-nudes
blue-nudes	mother-of-pearl-iridescent-nudes

making things disproportionate as required,
taking apart characters, scenes, and objects.
Masks, feet, hands, objects that act separately on
their own accord.

Artificial flora and fauna

**Apply to the theater the whole
artificial and mechanical world of
DEPERO and you will
be guaranteed
the most resounding success**

Vertical floors

Characters - scenes - furniture - landscapes
must appear, move, and act in the vertical rec-
tangle of the proscenium.

In a picture, the painter plays with all kinds of
disproportions at every level, which is why it is
narrow-minded to limit the theater to a single
level of action.

We have said that the number of floors must in-
crease: I add that they should be multiplied to the point
where all the superimposed levels form a single

vertical floor.

With a single horizontal plane, everything that
happens in the background is hidden. With a ter-
raced vertical plane, the picture on the stage is
wholly dramatized, dynamized.

Creating the perspective of the characters,
with automatic figures, giving sensations of mag-
ical space, distances, and depths, accompanied
by similar distortions of the voices.

Even the voice is always on the same plane.

Creating distances,
disproportions for people - voices -
dimensions - time.

For example, a person greets and walks away
in full size, then reappears in smaller size
halfway across the stage, then disappears in
order to reappear smaller and smaller on a hill.

Deformation of time that flies and
the magic of distance.

Esagerare i trucchi

Baffi, barbe, parrucche: rosse, gialle, verdi, oro.
Maschere di tutte le foggie:
movibili e coloratissime,
occhi-farfalli,
bocche-megafoni, orecchi-imbuto,
in movimento ed a trasformazione.
Abiti meccanici,
sviluppare il trasformismo,
mani-piedi: plasticamente artificiali;

colorare il nudo

nudi-verdi	nudi-oro
nudi-rossi	nudi-metallici
nudi-gialli	nudi-bianchissimi e rossi
nudi-bleu	nudi-madreperele-cangianti

sproporzionare secondo la necessità,

scompare persone, scene ed oggetti.

Maschere, piedi, mani, oggetti che agiscono separatamente per loro conto.

Flora e fauna artificiale

■

Applicate tutto l'universo artificiale e meccanico di DEPERO al teatro e ne avrete garantito il più clamoroso successo

Pavimento verticale

Personaggi - scene - mobili - paesaggi - si devono presentare, muovere ed agire nel rettangolo verticale del boccascena.

Nel quadro il pittore gioca con tutte le sproporzioni ed a tutti i livelli, perciò è meschino limitare il teatro ad un solo piano d'azione.

Abbiamo detto di moltiplicare i pavimenti: aggiungo di moltiplicarli al punto che tutti i piani sovrapposti formino un unico

pavimento verticale.

Con l'unico orizzontale si nasconde tutto ciò che avviene nel fondo-scena. Con il piano verticale a scalinate si teatralizza, si dinamizza al completo il quadro scenico.

Creare la prospettiva dei personaggi, con figure automatiche, dando sensazioni di spazio, lontananza e profondità magiche, accompagnate da analoghe deformazioni delle voci.

Anche la voce è sempre sullo stesso piano.

Distanziare,
sproporzionare persone - voci - dimensioni - tempo.

Per esempio, una persona saluta e se ne va in proporzione naturale, poi riappare a metà scena più piccola, indi scompare per riapparire piccola piccola su di una collina.

Deformazione del tempo che corre e magia delle distanze.

■

Fusion of automated and living characters

In order to dramatize the stage, one needs the help of

AUTOMATA

These are used to split, multiply a character into his various dimensions.

He must be presented in all his physical and plastic states, with his own inner and outer physiognomies.

His own shadow, the diverse aspects of his being, repeated, made smaller and made larger, can only be rendered effectively and simultaneously with the help of automata.

Fusion of scenario and orchestra

The music must come from the trees, from the houses, from the clouds; it must rise from the far side of a hill, rain from the sky.

The music will move with the passing landscape, it will dance with the swirling wind.

The moveable set calls for a moveable orchestra.

Thus I propose a completely re-made orchestra. It is necessary to invent new musical instruments.

The world-famous master musician **Russolo** has already created

the intonarumori
the rumorarmoni
the enharmonic bow
which formed a **wonderful new orchestra** that was all the rage in **PARIS-LONDON-PRAGUE-ROME**

**valued
multiplied
applied**

like the most brilliant creations
OF ITALY

Fusione di personaggi automatici con quelli viventi

Per drammatizzare il palcoscenico è necessario l'aiuto di

AUTOMI

Essi servono per sdoppiare, moltiplicare un personaggio nelle sue varie dimensioni.

Esso deve presentarsi in tutti i suoi stati lirici e plastici, con le proprie fisionomie interiori ed esterne.

La propria ombra, i diversi aspetti di sé stessi, ripetuti, rimpiccioliti ed ingranditi si possono rendere efficacemente e simultaneamente solo con l'aiuto di automi.

Fusione dello scenario con l'orchestra

La musica deve uscire dagli alberi, dalle case, dalle nuvole; deve salire dal rovescio d'una collina, piovere dal cielo.

La musica si sposterà con il paesaggio che passa, danzerà con il vento che vortica.

La scenografia mobile richiede un'orchestra mobile.

Intendo poi un'orchestra completamente rifatta. Bisogna inventare nuovi strumenti musicali.

Il maestro musicista **Russolo** celeberrimo, ha già creato

**gli intonarumori
i rumorarmoni
l'arco enarmonico**

che costituiscono una **nuova meravigliosa orchestra** che furoreggiò a **PARIGI-LONDRA-PRAGA-ROMA**

valutate
moltiplicate
applicate

tali genialissime creazioni
ITALIANE

WE NEED courage
courage
courage

and a deep love for the
Italian genius that is
always forced to
emigrate in order
to gain recognition.



LONG
LIVE **RUSSOLO**

Glory to RUSSOLO



Debut of the machine

The magic of the new theater
resides in the artistic and practical
application of the infinite possibilities
of the machine on stage.

To realize all the fabulous surprises
of **EXAGGERATED TRICKS**

of **VERTICAL FLOORS**
through the **FUSION OF**
SCENARIO AND ORCHESTRA
to **GIVE LIFE TO AUTOMATA**
through the **MOVEABLE SET**
through all the wonders of
MOVEABLE LIGHTING

it is necessary to

perfect
recreate
invent

the **THEATRICAL MACHINERY**
the **divine Machine**
must be made totally availa-
ble to **GENIUS**.

OCCORRE coraggio
coraggio
coraggio

e grande amore per il
genio italiano che è
sempre costretto a
emigrare per rac-
cogliere riconoscenza.

■
W RUSSOLO
Gloria a **RUSSOLO**

Debutto della macchina

La magia del nuovo teatro sta
nell'applicazione artistica e pratica
delle infinite possibilità della mac-
china sul palcoscenico.

Per ottenere tutte le favolose sor-
prese dei **TRUCCHI ESAGERATI**

dei **PAVIMENTI VERTICALI**
per la **FUSIONE DELLO SCE-
NARIO CON L'ORCHESTRA**
per dar **VITA AGLI AUTOMI**
per la **SCENOGRAFIA MOBILE**
per tutti i prodigi della **ILLU-
MINAZIONE MOBILE**

è necessario

perfezionare
ricreare
inventare

il **MACCHINARIO TEATRALE**
la **divina Macchina**
deve trovarsi a completa disposi-
zione del **GENIO**.

12 From Un futurista a New York

c. 1928–1930

Skyscrapers

The skyscrapers, the buildings that lend the world's largest metropolis its Babel-like look are not, as is mistakenly thought, all the same and monotonous; rather they have distinctly different and typically original traits.

There are black ones with golden cornices and roofs like burning coals. Others are slender and tapering, like huge stone bayonets. Others still are nothing less than vertical protuberances resembling real gigantic irons.

The more recent ones have vertical bands of steel that run from the pavement to the sixtieth floor. They have spires with shiny metal scales, which, at different heights, reflect all the variations of light at dawn and dusk.

These very tall towers, these metal belfries of the new century, seem created for climbing up into the sky and entering the hyperbolic dancehalls of storms.

In addition to the black, reddish, smoking, and ancient skyscrapers (between 10 and 20 years old); in addition to the very new, white, resplendent ones, there are the huge iron cages of the nascent skyscrapers laid out with daring and amazing constructive speed, which come into being every month proliferating like mushrooms, and which give the city an aspect of continuous transformation, a workshop city constantly and infernally at work.

If you photograph what you see from your window in the month of May and then take again the photograph from the same window in the month of October, you will have two different views.

Skyscrapers that have disappeared – skyscrapers that have risen again, new metal cages, new pipes, new roads.

One of the most impressive, a real architectonic beauty, is undoubtedly the “Paramount.” Looking at it from the street, I had the sensation of being at the feet of my Dolomites in Trentino. It is nothing less than a square mountain of live pink rock, which rises up in tiers through layers of dark and misty atmosphere, that is slightly golden at the top. Inside, this geometric mountain is traversed by vertical trains that climb up into the clouds, into fairy tales, to the offices.

When you are on a terrace on the 40th floor, the view that unfolds before you and the sensation

that you feel is truly exhilarating, it is nothing less than spellbinding.

The huge inhabited parallelepipeds are perforated by millions of little squares of light, all the same. On the roofs, and on the spires, on the loftiest terraces, there are powerful moveable projectors that sweep the dark night like smears of light.

The words “Paramount,” “Hotel Manger,” “Hotel Victoria,” “Roxy Theater,” are enormous, with the letters one above the other, lit up, colorful, at times still, and at others blinking.

When you look from these verandas into the clouds, and when you look into the deep viscera – corridors, down, down, down, but really a long way down, you see darting about little buses filled with small human shadows, thousands of small cars – mice scurrying about in every direction.

From the terraces near and far, visible and invisible, high up, very high up, low down, very low down, there rise light columns of blue, white, black smoke. They seem to come from mysterious bivouacs scattered in the square prairies of the roofs.

A vast and smoking enchantment.

The walls in all the perspective views are pierced by millions of lit windows and mask millions of tiny busy human lives.

There are millions of benches. Millions of loves, millions of writers and readers. There are millions of sleeping and dancing people who enliven this cubic metropolis, this new and immense Babel, which has the simultaneous look of a lunatic asylum and a workshop, made out of parallelepiped mountains, representing our world's most powerful dynamo.

Fortunato Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, ed. Claudia Salaris (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1990), 37–39. Translated by Simon Pleasance.

Ideal cinema

Exasperated by the demands and delusions of New York, the architect Friedrich Kiesler¹ took refuge in his studio and constructed a bold and original project in cardboard for an ideal movie theater.

A cinema-building, whose outer architecture and inner spaces were inspired, both in their style and in their mechanical function, by the motion picture camera. Project in hand, he convinced two financiers to back its construction.

Here I am in the entrance, not yet completed. A facade built of blocks, curves, and mechanisms. In the waiting room, metal walls and young ladies in eye-catching red and black uniforms. The inside of the large auditorium is a sort of trapezoidal funnel. At the far end, the round drop curtain opens and closes like the diaphragm of a “Zeiss.” The room is gradually lit up with indirect low lights skimming the walls. Blue, violet, pink, red and then white lights. The atmosphere is magic, intimate, and original; psychologically cinematographic. The onlooker finds himself drawn in to experience the

projection of the film with a sense of intimate undisturbed penetration.

Friedrich Kiesler is a brilliant Viennese architect, who organized an important European theatre exhibition in New York and who refurbished one of the Austrian pavilions at the 1925 International Exhibition of Decorative Arts in Paris. He is small, he has piercing eyes and the tapering and astute nose of a mouse.

Many personalities, artists, and journalists were present at the inauguration. A gala of black suits, comments, admiration, surprise, elegance, and intellectuality in many languages. For the occasion, among other things, a rare film of the UFA² was also screened: *A Drama of Hands*.

Fortunato Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, ed. Claudia Salaris (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1990), 119–20. Translated by Simon Pleasance.

An abstract toast

Most of the guests are American and I am very irritated not to know English sufficiently well to propose a toast.

I really did want to, not least because Mrs. Jacobson is an admirer of Fascist Italy and Futurist art; besides, our lady friend is very affectionate.

To this end, I therefore prepared an abstract toast, “Bells for the Jacobson Party.” This was declaimed with a chorus of bells chiming as a celebratory sign of the surname Jacobson.

I leapt onto the table, summoned everyone's attention, and in a loud sonorous voice declaimed this entertaining, phonic lyric, which can be understood in every language.

It started thus:

BIIM BOOM BAAMM
giéé coob soon
BUMM BOOMM BAAMM
giéé coob soon
giacobisonno BOOM BOMM
già-cob-son din don dan
giacobi deudeledeim
giacobi deudeledeum...
and it ended:
TOONN ... DODONN
GROSS ... SOSONN
BONN ... NONON
giekebesenn dènn
giakabasann dänn
giukubusunn dünün
e sempre evviva Jacobson
e pempeppina-popopom
e sempre evviva Jacobson
e pempeppipa-papopom
BIMM BOOMM BAAMM
GIAMM COOMM SOMM
BOOMM BOOMM BOOMM BOOMM.
... The applause was thunderous.

These days it has also been magnificently scored by the Milanese musician Guarino Carmini [*sic*].³

Fortunato Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, ed. Claudia Salaris (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1990), 161–62. Translated from the Italian by Simon Pleasance.

I transform a large Italian restaurant in downtown New York

The suitcases to leave New York are packed. May 1930. It is best to leave before the torrid summer arrives. To this end I gather all my strength and round up as many dollars as I can. I offer Mr. Zucca a few publicity drawings in black and white and on acquiring them, he asks me if I can give him a plan for the decorative conversion of his Restaurant. I fall in love with the idea.

Mr. Zucca had seen a small room decorated by me on 48th Street, at the Enrico & Paglieri Restaurant. I asked for a week's time to draw up the necessary plans. I have plenty of energy, even though I feel drained after more than two years of uneven struggles and exasperating uninterrupted work.

I unpack my bags and decide to deal with the new undertaking. The reward is satisfying. I remove the wooden lattice that covers the walls, the ceilings, the corridor, and the winter garden: clouds of black dust and hard blood red bricks come into view; hangings swollen with fatigue and torn by old age; transformation in form and color of the shabby furniture. I rebuild and decorate room by room, from top to bottom, devising every possibility and stepping up my efforts.

Fortunato Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, ed. Claudia Salaris (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1990), 197. Translated by Simon Pleasance.

Genoa, October 22, 1930

– steamship “Roma” – the well-known Futurist painter Depero with his wonderful wife Rosetta on his arm – loaded trunks-suitcases – full wallet (about to burst) arrives from New York.

Annoying sympathizing Futurist friends with open arms, welcome-embraces – kisses – long live – long live – long live Depero – long live – long live – long live Rosetta – finally returned to us, to beautiful Italy – sun – flowers – wine shouting take me, drink all of me – I fire your fantasy.

After two years in New York (two years in the inferno of the living⁴) international Babel – cannibalism – cynicism – jostling elbows – pushing ahead by force – getting dollars, dollars, dollars dying of dollar indigestion (no matter) the painter Depero returns a champion of resistance, fantasy fired

rivers of light – muscles hardened from climbing skyscrapers – sharp eyes enlarged from looking up up up ever higher – a loooooo – I want this, I want, I want, I want new Italian.

Tired fatigued emptied confused great welcomes, the very generous painter Depero turns out his pockets of smiles, shouts with a tight throat: America dollars,

Italy sun.

Long live the sun!

Fortunato Depero, *Un futurista a New York*, ed. Claudia Salaris (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1990), 205. Translated by Simon Pleasance.

1. Frederick (Friedrich) Kiesler (1890–1965) was an Austrian-American architect, theater designer, artist, and theoretician who designed the Film Guild Cinema (1929) in New York. Prior to that he worked in Vienna with Adolf Loos and in 1923 he developed the set design for Karel Capek's *R.U.R.* (see p. 297, n. 22) — Ed.
2. Universum Film A.G. was the most important film studio in Germany between 1917 and 1945 — Ed.
3. Carmine Guarino (1893–1965) was an Italian composer who collaborated with several Futurist artists (Marinetti, Masnata, etc.) in a wide range of projects — Ed.
4. This makes reference to an expression used by Italo Calvino in *Invisible Cities*: “The inferno of the living is not something that will be; if there is one, it is what is already here, the inferno where we live every day, that we form by being together” — Ed.

13 Contemporary Film and Dynamic Painting

1929

The cinema has contributed enormously to the speeding up of our impressionability. The speed and simultaneity of images are much more intense on *film* than in life.

A few hours before the *screen* are sufficient to transport us from the wonders of an African forest to the smartest health resort; from the sea to the mountain; from a small lake to the boundless ocean; from a silent provincial town to the noisy metropolis. Very long, endless journeys, with all kinds of vehicles and through all kinds of settings, are made possible in a few minutes.

Sudden, rapid dramas and tragedies (cold showers on the audience) and then, immediately following, peace, smiles, sunshine: *contrasts of moods and of images*. As a result, our eye has become accustomed to **speed** and *simultaneity*.

The modern painter has doubtlessly found in the cinema a rapid development of his own spirit of observation and he has thus become unable to focus his own graphic attention for hours on a single, static image. We must, therefore, consider the cinema to be the real teacher and prompter of the pictorial dynamism that today holds sway in modern art the world over.

When the Futurist painter Giacomo Balla painted the hands of a violinist,¹ agitated, darting, leaping hands intersected by the vibrations of the strings, set down with great delicacy in their cinematic nervous passion, the picture was accused of being a “*cinematic trick*” and the work was deemed to be an insane exercise in pictorial acrobatics. When in 1909² the same Balla showed his famous picture *Il cane al guinzaglio* [Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash] in which he depicted the multiplied vibration of the dog's paws and of the feet of its mistress, it was talked about and adjudged as a scandal. Today, on the contrary, these two works are of great historical importance because they mark the first steps taken by a painter to fix on canvas, with a brand new and surprising sensibility, the graphic phenomenon of a vision in motion.

The Futurist painters, always insatiable, already made eager by passionate pictorial research – Impressionist, Divisionist, and Cubist (the first kinetic aspects of the picture) – were strongly pushed by the dramatic speed of the “*cinema*” towards intensely modern and revolutionary manifestations of art. They thus created the powerful plastic dynamism that has influenced and characterizes present-day painting around the world.

Umberto Boccioni, Giacomo Balla, Luigi Russolo, Gino Severini, Fortunato Depero, Enrico Prampolini, Gerardo Dottori, Ivo Pannaggi, and others presented in the salons of Paris, Berlin, Moscow, Milan, Rome, and New York, some in a first stage, others in a second, paintings of explosive dynamism and true, violent *kinetic* inspiration.

Consult their works: *speed of racing horses* – *speed of cyclists and motorcyclists* – *speed of cars* – *trains leaving and trains arriving* – *sporting competitions* – *tram races* – *dancing crowds* – *machines in motion* – *aerial flights* – *storms breaking out* – *air raids*.

An orchestra of a thousand colors, compositions of a thousand shapes. It was a disarranging revelation of a cinematic painting, erupting from the dynamic and mechanical advent of our life, completely original and different from the life of the past.

Consequently: An ancient painting is to a Futurist painting like an old, faded, static photograph of fifty years ago is to the dynamic talking film of today. This relationship seems to me to be sufficiently demonstrative to underscore the value of the works of the Italian Futurist painters.

1. Depero refers here to Balla's *Le mani del violinista* [The Hands of the Violinist], from 1912 — Ed.
2. Balla's *Dinamismo di un cane a guinzaglio* [Dynamism of a Dog on a Leash] dates from 1912. Depero might have inadvertently made a mistake or he might be referring to an earlier version, which we have been unable to locate — Ed.

“Il cinematografo e la pittura dinamica d’oggi.” Initially written for the American magazine *Movie Makers*, which had it translated, it nonetheless went unpublished on the author’s request. The text was then published in the review *Futurismo 1932*, a single issue published by Fortunato Depero to mark Marinetti’s visit to Trentino in spring 1932. The manuscript, situated and dated “New York. November 22, 1929,” is held in the Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART – Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. A slightly different version was published in English in Depero’s *So I Think, So I Paint*. The original was reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’Universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 133–34, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

14

Futurism and Advertising Art

1931

the art of the future will be largely advertising – that bold and unimpeachable lesson I have learned from museums and great works from the past – all art for centuries past has been marked by advertising purposes: the exaltation of the warrior, the saint; documentation of deeds, ceremonies, and historical characters depicted at their victories, with their symbols, in the regalia of command and splendor – even their highest products were simultaneously meant to glorify something: architecture, royal palaces, thrones, drapery, halberds, standards, heraldry and arms of every sort – there is scarcely an ancient work that does not have advertising motifs, a garland with a trophy, with weapons of war and victory, all stamped with seals and the original symbols of clans, all with the self-celebrating freedom of ultra-advertising –

even today we have captains of business who run powerful campaigns in order to publicize their battles, their labors on behalf of their own projects and products – for example, PIRELLI,¹ the king of infinite rubber forests, the owner of mountains of rubber, who produces millions of tires that give or increase the world’s speed – isn’t that a poem? a drama? a painting? the awesome architecture of the highest poetry, the most magical palette, the most diabolic fantasy? –

ANSALDO – FIAT – MARCHETTI – CAPRONI – ITALA – LANCIA – ISOTTA FRASCHINI – ALFA ROMEO – BIANCHI, etc.² aren’t their factory yards miracles which create and hurl forth mechanical furies – mechanical sirens – mechanical eagles, furnished with precise and perfect dials, with wings and heaving lungs, capable of every sort of flight, straight down – spiraling – banking – conquering unimaginable distances and heights – creating new super-buildings: the ecstasy of speed and space? –

LONG LIVE BALBO – DE PINEDO – DE BERNARDI – DAL MOLIN – MADDALENA³ – these names have created authentic miracles, offering artists spectacles that are far more powerful than “a cow, grazing” or “a goat, drinking” or “a still life” –

the aerial battles above major cities, continental and transatlantic flights, the manufacturing yards that produce hundreds of machines and engines per day, are all spectacles and environments of great artistic and modern inspiration –

and yet there are very few artists today who see, study, and exalt this new, splendid, and triumphant nature –

the art of the past, it is good to repeat it yet again, served to exalt the past; the classical and

archaic style of the past was meant to glorify the life of that age –

our splendors, our glories, our men, our products, all demand an art that is equally splendid, equally mechanical and swift, exalting dynamism, things practical, light, our new materials –

even art must keep step with industry, science, and politics in the style of its time, glorifying them – art of just that sort has been initiated by futurism and the art of advertising –

the art of advertising is extremely colorful and must be highly synthetic – a spellbinding art boldly placed on walls and the facades of big buildings, in shop windows, in trains, alongside pavements and streets, everywhere; someone even tried to project advertisements onto the clouds – living, multiplied art, not isolated and buried in museums – art free of all academic restraints – art that is cheerful – bold – exhilarating – optimistic – art that is difficult to synthesize, where the artist is up against original creation –

the signboard is the symbolic image of a product, the felicitous discovery of a picture or shape that can exalt it, make it interesting – in using our genius to exalt the products and companies of our time, i.e. the prime factors in our life, we are making the purest, truest, and most modern art –

advertising art offers an artistic field and themes which are utterly new – advertising art is unavoidably necessary – art unavoidably modern – art unavoidably bold – art unavoidably paid for – art unavoidably experienced –

LONG LIVE CREATIVE ARTISTS, INDUSTRIALISTS, AND PRODUCERS

one industrialist is more useful for modern art and the nation than 100 critics, than 1,000 useless *passéists* –

the Futurists were the first painters, poets, and architects who exalted modern work with their art – they painted speeding automobiles – they painted lamps bursting with light – they painted steaming locomotives and swift cyclists –

the Futurists stylized their compositions, adopting a violently colored look; with synoptic and geometric shapes they multiplied and decomposed the rhythms of objects and landscapes in order to increase their dynamic qualities and to give an effective rendering of their swift ideas, their states of mind, their conceptions –

in ongoing contact with the landscapes of steel, light, and reinforced cement, the Futurists have created new techniques, a new form of multiple perspective, new aerial flying forms, an art magnificently endowed with all the qualities necessary for a great advertising art – the best and most talented poster designers have borrowed, removed, even stolen the rhythms, perspectives, and shapes of the Futurists –

for example: at the International Exhibition of Decorative Arts in Paris in 1925, all the nations were showing Futurist posters – in front of the Théâtre des Champs Élysées, at the entrance, I was sur-

prised by two enormous posters by the much discussed French painter COLIN,⁴ posters taken straight from Boccioni: a ballerina in a whirlwind of speeding muscles with draperies curling up in the form of interpenetrating funnels –

also two gigantic and talented posters by CASSANDRE,⁵ who is so much in vogue today, both of a perfectly dynamic and mechanical style that is Futurist – also the shop windows in the largest street of luxury stores in the world, i.e., Fifth Avenue in New York, are in great part Futurist in design – dynamic and colorful constructions – decorations with the most varied materials; woods, metals, draperies, velvets, silks, cartons, straws, candies, cigars, glasses, tin cans – there are towers made of books, landscapes of ties, forests and monuments of pencils, trophies of hats, flowers and villages of lampshades, forward charges of foodstuffs – plastics in gold and silver, on which lifelike ebony mannequins, with hair, are sitting, lying, or standing, wearing pearls and sparkling necklaces – pajamas are now wildly colored and decorated with Futurist patterns – even the backdrops of these superb and immense shop-windows are painted in a sharply dynamic style – there are trees, there are clouds, abstract oceans, swift colors, vibrating lines, swift forms; there are subtle shadings and designs depicted with an extremely delicate and evanescent telegraphic sensitivity –

the influence of the Futurist style is evident, decisive, categorical in all advertising applications and creations – I have seen my own works, on every street corner and every space open for advertising, plagiarized and robbed, more or less intelligently, more or less tastefully – my vivacious colors, my crystalline and mechanical style, my metallic, geometrical, and imaginative flora, fauna, and people, all widely imitated and exploited –

this gives me a great deal of pleasure; although I have taken up the art of advertising on a deliberately restricted schedule, I can affirm, without hesitation, that I have managed to create many followers; but I should add that, in this field, I shall have a great deal yet to say –

1. See Giovanna Ginex's essay, "Not Just Campari! Depero and Advertising" in this catalogue, p. 316, n. 12 — Ed.
2. *Ibid.*, n. 13 — Ed.
3. Italo Balbo (1896–1940) was the Fascist leader of Ferrara, Air Marshal of Italy, and Governor-General of Libya, a hero who flew a group of 24 Savoia Marchetti S-55 transatlantic airplanes in a seven-leg journey from Italy to the United States and back in 1933. Francesco de Pinedo (1890–1933) was an Italian aviator who flew a SIAL biplane covering 55,000 miles from Rome to Australia, Tokyo, and back in 1925, to name but one of numerous crossings. The other people in Depero's list were Balbo's co-pilots — Ed.
4. Paul Colin (1892–1985) was a French poster artist and set and costume designer who worked in the theater for over forty years — Ed.
5. A. M. Cassandre (pseudonym of Adolphe Jean-Marie Mouron, 1901–1968) was a French designer, painter and writer made famous by his poster work (exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in 1936) — Ed.

“Manifesto dell’arte pubblicitaria futurista – glorie, prodotti e arte del passato e del presente – stile futurista – precursori– plagiari.” Text first published with the title “Il futurismo e l’arte pubblicitaria” in the special book-length magazine that Depero produced for the Campari company, *Numero unico futurista Campari 1931* (Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931). Reprinted in the journal *Futurismo*, yr. 1, no. 2 (Rome, June 15–30, 1932), and in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]). Reproduced here with minor variations from “Futurism and Advertising Art” in *Futurism: An Anthology*, ed. Lawrence Rainey, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2009), 288–91.

15 ABC of Futurism

1933

1. His Excellency Marinetti is the founder and head of Futurism.

2. Futurism is a revolutionary artistic movement that originated in Italy in 1909.

3. The Futurists created: **a new poetry, a new music, a new painting, a new theater, a new sculpture, a new architecture.**

4. Marinetti's artistic and vital dynamism is one of the most glorious monuments of the new Italy. Mussolini, who fraternally watched Marinetti's rise, quite rightly elected him to the Italian Academy. This is an acknowledgement and an appreciation worthy of the Regime and of Marinetti's genius.

5. Marinetti is unsurpassed as an orator and declaimer. He has outstanding lungs. He is indefatigable. He is sonorous, and swift and ready for any assault.

He always attacks, he unrepentantly provokes. He eliminates and reviles any unfortunate contradictor, persuades and fascinates the testiest critic. When he declaims, he rumbles, he explodes. His images live in space, they whistle, they dance, they distress like an invisible and present tangible throng. His declamations of war are undoubtedly the most inspired and moving cries of epic assaults, of deafening bombardments, the bloodiest songs of victory.

6. The Futurists created in poetry: **words-in-freedom, a wireless imagination, the logic of the unforeseen, a typographical revolution.**

7. The typographical revolution added a new pictorial beauty to poetry.

8. Large words and small words; vertical words and horizontal words; diagonal words. Recumbent words, upright words, and upside-down words. Broken words, elongated words, repeated words. Words altered depending on the sensation to be expressed. Spiral words like cigar smoke. Words in flight like trains. Detonating words like pistol and cannon shots. Fluttering words like butterflies. Words that fall light as snow, or thick as rain.

9. With their words-in-freedom, the Futurist poets extolled: **the noisiness of the city, of workshops and electric power stations, the song of engines, the vast orchestras of the world war.** With words-in-freedom, young people will be able to express themselves with more intense originality and unbounded variety. Originality and variety which, with the old metrics and prosody, would not have happened.

10. *Passéists* are victims of tradition, the museum, the school, who still have melancholy dreams about the oil lamp and the pitch torch. When they

execute a work of art they forget **their temperament, their state of mind, the beauty of today's life.**

11. It is important to distinguish between "crafting" and conceiving a work of art.

Crafting { know how to draw
know how to paint
know how to mold

Conceiving a work of art { invent a landscape
invent a statue
invent an architecture

Originality and brilliance.

"ABC del Futurismo." Text first published in *Dinamo futurista*, yr. 1, no. 1 (Rovereto, February 1933). The manuscript of the text, situated and dated "New York 1930," is held in the Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART – Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 152–53, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

16 Radio Lyrics

1934

I have defined these lyrics as "radiophonic" because some of them were created specifically for the radio and because the others also contain the necessary elements that radio broadcasting requires.

Easily understandable elements such as: Brevity of time. Concise variety of images. Contemporary subject. Simultaneous and jovial style. Poetic lyricism fused with phonic lyricism, sonorous and noisy; onomatopoeias: imitative and interpretative; invented languages; jangling chants and voices; mental states of surprise.

Colored and synthetic expressions torn from life, pulsating, changing daily; with relentlessly fast aspects, dramas, materials, and mechanisms, which do not admit: descriptive analyses, mawkish melancholy, scholastic prudence, cultural exhumations of gagged fantasy.

The precise style which the contemporary poet must have in front of the microphone entails extracting and re-assimilating the very creations of our dynamic external and internal world: with communicative clarity; with emotional vibration; with united and organic imagination even in contrast; with surprising development and structure; with bold simultaneity and a felicitous sense of union between reality and fantasy.

These radio lyrics interest, delight. They are more effective than the usual and futile broadcasts of well-known music, the habitual banal literary chats and insignificant theatrical squabbles, which are fine so long as they remain enclosed in a book or framed on a stage. But broadcast by radio, vibrating in space, they lose all their meaning and all their logical consistency.

My radiophonic lyric poems are expressions adapted for long-distance transmission. The listener is no longer just curled up in a quiet and romantic living room, but is to be found everywhere: on the street, in a café, on a plane, on the deck of a ship, in a thousand different contexts. So the character of the radio lyrics must be spatial, energetic, acoustic, unexpected, magical.

In a word, the radiophonic poetry I have invented must be the lyrical expression of a very pure state of mind. On the reality that surrounds him, the listener must vibrate like a GLOWING NEON: like an apparition, a landscape, and a psychic cosmic vision.

Preface to Fortunato Depero's collection of poetry for the radio, *Liriche radiofoniche* (Milan: Morreale, 1934), hence the allusions to the lyric compositions that follow. Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), 171, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

17 Multiple Perspective

1940

The first element to create a picture is a drawing. The drawing is the layout needed to contain the colors, to project the planes and volumes, to regulate the proportions, to establish the distances, to clarify the composition as a whole and in all its details. In order to draw a picture it is just as vital to have knowledge of technical perspective to outline a door, a house, a street, or any kind of object. This represents the first step that is taught in art schools.

But this perspective is fixed and rigorously the same for all art students; it is a photographic projection which I believe is vital for engineers, architects, photographers, and designers, but which seems to be insufficient for the creative artist. To fix his inner, simultaneous, and inventive world, the artist needs to make perspective dynamic by intensifying it and multiplying it; the artist needs to create new laws of perspective.

The Futurists discovered plastic dynamism, the painting of speed and of states of mind, defying the old statics, breaking away from traditional naturalistic compositions, creating new pictorial displays. Naturally, chaotic scenes were painted and not all our works were on target, nor did all our experiments have felicitous results. Even the works of Boccioni, so dense in revelations and experimental splendors, contain transient and arbitrary elements. Because one cannot escape from the law of one step at a time and no creation comes into being complete and perfect, so it was not possible to invent an entire new painting in one go. In addition to study, perseverance, and tenacious investigative patience, it takes years and works to clarify, simplify, and organically conclude a new style.

The complex problem of plastic dynamism, a new method of painting and shaping modern life, needs ironclad laws. The problem, where I am concerned, has been confronted, but not resolved. It is not enough to overlay, interpenetrate, multiply, and create cadence; more than anything else, it is necessary to merge and relate perspectives, clarify contrasts, and define the dynamic interpretation. In other words, plastic dynamism must become communicative and the work must come across as convincing and lasting.

As soon as I set about producing pictures inspired by plastic dynamism, I observed that a multiple perspective was necessary. In fact, by having to produce a work that in itself encompasses pieces of disparate, distant, upside down, interpenetrated, overlaid, or fleeting landscapes, the diverse perspectives were logically bound to respond to the

respective and simultaneous subjects. So there is horizontal, vertical, oblique perspective, from above, from below, concentric and eccentric, that is radiating out from emotive centers and from luminous centers. Luminous perspective is also a problem that consolidates the structure of the dynamic picture: the perspective of light is an indisputable law.

All the painting of the late 19th century and the early 20th century was tormented by a new element: *light*. Macchiaioli, Impressionists, Pointillists, and Divisionists of every technique, enthralled, studied and expressed light in every aspect and intensity. Sun, moon, sunsets, and all the vibrations of light were to be found in every corner of their pictures. There thus came into being a more vibrant, more varied and pure, and more musical painting; differentiated, in the most absolute sense, from all previous forms of painting. Landscape became sensory painting, tone, palette in freedom, which the artist could use with the same independence wielded by the musician for his musical notes; handing down to us Impressionist pictures in form, vague in drawing, but shimmering with new light and new pictorial harmonies.

Light. Our whole existence is subject to the divine splendor of light. Ancients, primitives, and pagans all conceived rites, religions, idols, and deities paying homage to the sun; just as the whole of Christianity and its related symbols are radiant with light. Light is undoubtedly a source of life and inspiration. For this reason the Impressionist painters, our immediate predecessors, did not in fact err by turning to light in the quest for a new word with its forever revelatory vibration. In fact, it suggested a fundamental chromatic vibration, an undeniably brighter musical painting. They changed the external vision through the interpretative and spectral glorification of light in a joyful painting, in a gushing chromatic passion.

The Divisionists directed their linear chromatic beams, their nervous and impulsive brushstrokes towards the sources of light. The surfaces of bodies, fields, and houses ended up turned and oriented towards such centers. This was a nascent instinctive perspective of light. Boccioni and the Futurists solidified the luminous and perspectival vibrations, made rays, reflections, and shadows solid. Examples of solid, constructed forms of light can also be found in the rays emanating from figures of Christ on the cross or bursting from the hearts and hands of saints, and in the interpretations of detonations and explosions. But these elementary signs are just the first letters of a possible and complex new plastic alphabet, likely to develop towards a real architecture dictated by light.

So I think I am not wrong if, recently, to give organic form to pictorial dynamism, I draw inspiration from the linear laws, from the suggestive and imperative power of light. Not only vibrating expansion of color, but light drawn, light shaped, light solidified hard and angular. Light indicates new perspectival directions and imposes a new struc-

ture on the picture; reality seems to be interpreted through a diamond. Drawing houses, landscapes, objects, and visions on the grid of a multiplied perspective, thus fixing the centers of the sources of light like new perspectival viewpoints.

But there is yet another interesting problem, strictly inherent to perspective: the problem of sympathetic proportions. The mind, heart, and temperament of man are of a boundless variety. The same subjects, materials, landscapes, and objects are loved and appreciated in different ways, in the most divergent manners and degrees. If, in normal people, these sensitive differences are more or less accentuated, in the artist, that exceptional person, they are more pronounced and strongly contrasting. The artist can draw close, enlarge, sample, remove, limit, and annul what more or less interests or strikes him. This is a sensory, subjective evaluation, of free proportions.

A similar phenomenon is also encountered in the depictions made by primitives and children, which are always disproportionate. In my view, these are not disproportions (but unconscious valuations of graphic, coloristic, and formal sympathy) drawn on impulse and dogged instinct. So the artist, that instinctive and impulsive temperament if ever there was, will draw his own artistic conclusions and assessments from the values and proportions derived from his particular emotional state and stylistic will. Inner reasons which precisely establish the style and character of his own private world; reasons which define and confirm the individuality and integral content of the work of art.

“Prospettiva multipla.” Text first published in the volume *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* (Trento: Tipografia Editrice Mutilati e Invalidi, 1940). Reprinted in *Fortunato Depero, Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 188–90, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

18 From So I Think, So I Paint

1947

Hold on!

If in Alaska or in Turkestan a book were printed in Italian, the eventual ortographical [*sic*] mistakes and misprints would be, no doubt, excused. So I apologize for the inevitable mistakes contained in this book printed in Trentino and within a very limited space.

I was told that the words Heaven, Hell, Purgatory are not to be written with capital letters; I reserve to myself to correct as soon as I am back from one of these misterious [*sic*] and so much spoken of places; only then I will be able to give my opinion on the question.

Finally I authorize the reader to displace surplus capital letters and to put them were [*sic*] I out of my typographical taste have omitted them.

aeropainting

Kind of painting of aeronautical inspiration. Last experimental station of futuristic painting. We must here remember a forerunner: the Parisian painter Benito who illustrated the catalogue of the “Maison Blériot” with effective examples of impressionist aeropainting. It is a field of interesting research for which it is necessary to have really lived the life of a pilot in order to avoid insincerity and obvious pseudo-photographic tricks.

antipretty

It is a word that Umberto Boccioni invented or, rather, adapted to an artistic conception. It is a strong reaction to affected painting of feminine weakness, of studied bourgeois [*sic*] manner and to middle-class oleography. Drastic reaction of masses and of chiaroscuro cuts, of incisive deformation, of stylistic will, of relief and strength in the synthesis of the predominant lights and shades. Antiveristic and antisatisfying plastic liberty. Impulsive brutality of depriving the subject of all useless details, of all superfluous charm in order to reveal and to strip naked the architectural essential of plastic problem with strong antipretty will.

typographic architecture

It is that special architectural form suggested by typographic types which has been used with great

efficacy in advertising artistic constructions, in pavilions, kiosks and advertising plastics on national and international exhibitions of decorative art and in industrial and commercial exhibitions. The painter Depero created, in 1927, the book pavilion of the Bestetti-Tumminelli and Treves publishing house at the international exhibition of decorative art at Monza, inspiring his work to this conception of typographic architecture.

automaton

Mechanical figure and fantastic puppet of inventive conception, made with various matter. The painter Depero animated several of his paintings with these automatons of pure fancy: solid and transparent automatons, drawing their inspiration from the flora, the fauna and from machinery. They walk, dance, sit down, read, work and live in dream settings and landscapes, in fairy-like perspective and atmosphere.

charlestone – (documentation)

The *Corriere della Sera* of the 1/3–1927 publishes: Berlin – Feb. 28th – night – “*The ‘machine-dance’ created in Russia*” Charlestone has been forbidden in Russia. A wire from Moscow now says that, according to the orders of the Government, a new dance entitled “machine” has been created. The arms of the dancers imitate the movement of the pistons of a steam engine while the feet beat the ground like heavy hammers. The music imitates the noises of a factory.

ANIHCAM (word “macchina” – machine – written backwards) OF THE YEAR 3000. It is a dance ideated by Depero. Movements, costumes, scenario and choir by Depero. Music by Franco Casavola. Interpretation and reproduction of the movements and noises of machinery. This dance was performed in 28 cities of Italy during the tournée of the new Futurist Theater headed and organized by Alfredo De Angelis in the winter of 1924.

continuity in space

It is a definition of Boccioni. His sculptures, drawing their inspiration from a racing athlete, from struggling muscles, aim to fix in space the plastic volume of the strength exploding from the human body and to mould the speed of gestures and the continuity of the impetus. These are the formal and abstract equivalents which Boccioni called “continuity in space.”

cutting criticism

A cutting critic is a man who, for love of contradiction or for stupid and evil reaction, often for envy and physical defectiveness, other times for unjust

tifiable conceit, speaks ill, insinuates and does his best to misunderstand the work of a brave artist especially when the artist is an Italian. At the same time, this kind of critic is ready to praise, dishonestly and obediently, a bad painter or a plagiarist coming from abroad. This happens frequently in Italy, for it is one of the incurable Latin diseases.

hotel

As there are hotel thieves, I could call myself a hotel painter, for fate has contrived that I should paint pictures, placards, and write articles in many hotels of Rome, Milan, Paris, Turin, Venice and New York. At the Hotel Du Nord in Rue de Bourgogne 44, Paris, I painted the picture “Train + inn + cyclist” for the international exhibition of the *Art d’aujourd’hui* 1926. At the Hotel La Fenice of Milan, at Porta Venezia, I painted two psychological portraits of F. T. Marinetti and of the pilot F. Azari. In New York, at the New-Transit Hotel, 464 West 23rd Street, I even set up a studio and a permanent show. These are a few examples to justify the definition of hotel painter which could be mine.

i know giacomo balla

I have not seen him for many years and I do not know what he is painting today. He was my artistic encounter in Rome in 1914. My mother had just died. There was an acrid smell of war. I was tormented by the longing of going to the capital.

still life

Any subject consisting of objects, of tools, of any inanimate element, lying in inert order or disorder. These subjects are used in schools for the purpose of perspective or pictorial practice and in many ancient and modern compositions as completing elements. Many painters of today use them and abuse of them for the sake of expeditiousness and style. Still life was and still is a favorite subject of cubists and a polemic theme for futurists.

still life alive

It is a definition which the Author opposes to “still life” and which he uses to indicate the subjects of still life vivified by him thanks to an abstract or objective element, unexpectedly intervened with the purpose of lighting or of dynamizing contrast.

passatist

It is an artist who diligently plagiarizes [sic] the art of the past with cold copies. It is he who believes only in the past, excluding a priori the possibility of evolution. It is the obstinate traditionalist who thinks he understands art because he is learned

and has been educated to conventional, limited, old-fashioned tastes, acquired through wrong and trite schooling.

centrifugal and centripetal perspective

It is a definition by Depero expressing two perspective orders contained in a dynamic painting. First: “centrifugal perspective” – a perspective, irradiating order, expanding lights, forces and objective and abstract forms exploding from the center of the picture. Second: “centripetal perspective” – a perspective, concentrating [sic] order of lights, of forces and of objective and abstract forms, magnetic, grouped together and directed towards the center of the painting, towards the fire of the plastically represented action or sensation, towards the essence of the subject.

internal and emotional perspective

It is that particular perspective through which an artist is able to see and draw his favorite subjects from a specific, interpreting and emotional point of view. To make larger or smaller, to overlook or neglect the whole or the details according to the attraction and interest the artist feels for them.

multiple perspective

A term expressing the simultaneous, coordinated use of various opposite perspectives: vertical, frontal, internal, external, luminous, emotional perspectives. Multiple perspective, if used with strict order and style, is a necessary key for an organic painting of dynamic conception.

shadows

Shading is a necessary element for the relief of volume. Shadow is a synonym of depth and darkness. A shadow is a black area – stretched out, lying down or broken – adhering to the background or ground on which the subject or figure projecting it is standing or walking. A shadow has a speaking individuality of its own. I have always been greatly interested in shadows: dividing them from their original figures, making them stand, giving them a body, as black figured walls and solid vivified blocks, as depths dug into space. I painted a picture entitled: “Town mechanized and geometrized by shadows”¹ in which I depicted abysmal, deep shadows like ditches, having the profile of a lamp post or of an anonymous nocturnal passer-by. I created a ballet for my plastic theater entitled “The dance of shadows.” These were not projected shadows, but really built ones, shaped and moving as definite, articulated ghosts. They were shadows of

objects and of people – long and short – whole and broken – black, blue, red and violet – coming to life in an abstract atmosphere, rhythmically moving, getting together and apart, lying down and rising at the sound of syncopated music. Shadows are black blades cutting the bodies, mutilating them and dividing them into segments. They are the symbol and synthesis of nocturnal mysterious profiles. They are also flat pieces of sky on the ground, drawn by the foot of men and animals. A few years ago, I wrote and illustrated a short story bearing the title of “I and my shadow.”

physical transcendentalism

Rome – 1915. *Discussion with Umberto Boccioni on mobile painting.*

Quartiere Prati, sunny and new. Blocks of comfortable, elegant buildings. High terraces with plenty of air. Whiteness of clean linen flapping in the wind. Avenues generously offering light, trees, room, wide pavements and golden wines. I lived in Cola di Rienzo, Crescenzo and Germano Streets, transversal and parallel – all equally comfortable, brimming with life, with colors and cool breezes. In Cola di Rienzo Street, I had a small room. It was a modest place having the functions of bed-room [*sic*], work-room [*sic*] and kitchen. An omnibus room: piles of paintings, card-board [*sic*] machinery, plans of daring mobile plastic inventions. From the ceiling hung polychrome sheets of wordfree tables and of poems for placards. It was a room looking like the abode of a Chinese gypsy, of an abstract painter and of a designer of infernal machines. To this workshop-room came several important personages, journalists, artists, admirers and unbelievers.

On a spring afternoon of the year 1915, Marinetti and Umberto Boccioni knocked at the door. This was the first time I shook hands with the creator of plastic dynamism. Marinetti explained to him my freeword tables and my abstract poems dangling from the ceiling and written on large sheets with a brush and colored inks. He read a few pieces of them with great enthusiasm. Then, on my part, I recited a few more. At the end, however, Boccioni interrupted angrily my reading. He said, in a loud voice, that he believed I was, first of all, a painter and a plastic [artist] and that he wished to examine my paintings. I dared not reply then and there, but later told my distinguished guests that both of them were right, since I sincerely felt both painter and poet. Then, Boccioni’s nose, eyes and forefinger pointed at an ink drawing lying on the table which was marked with the title “Plan of three-cycle plastic.” Boccioni frowned and did not say a word. Shortly afterwards, we coldly said goodbye.

Several days went by before I met him again. But there we were together again, along the green avenues of the Tiber. Bridges of sun – castles of sky – walks of gold – and ardent emotions in our hearts and eyes.

He referred to my drawing and destroyed me with his reasonings, blaming my exaggerated audacity and my insolent impudence in treating art with a brutal, machinistic sense. At first, I was struck dumb, then I replied with friendly and timid frankness that it had been he who had taught me artistic courage of all kinds and I explained my conviction that in art there can be no limit of expression and therefore no limit to the means and matters necessary for creation. He himself had been the ideator and the defender of the free simultaneous use, in a work of art, of any matter whatever, be it iron, glass or cloth. I had gone farther than he, for I declared that not only such matters would have enriched a work of art, but that also mechanical, liquid and luminous means would have added to it a powerfully new element: “*motion*” and the magic sense of transformation.

Boccioni listened to me with interest, acknowledged my intentions and so we both agreed to confirm the futuristic principles, according to which the limits, the setting, the style and the means for artistic creation and composition are at the boundless disposal of every single talent: the important thing is to reach the solution of the problem and the concrete, obvious conclusion.

Mechanical means in a work of art will set moving and vibrating with a new life all pictorial, plastic, decorative or advertising elements. It will not be painting – it will not be sculpture – it doesn’t matter: it will be a work of genial creation. I am certain that Leonardo Da Vinci who was planning war and flying machines and trying to solve problems of hydraulics while he decorated ceilings and painted pictures and frescos, would agree with me if he were here today. I am certain that he would continue his painting by creating artistic, sound and luminous plastic masses, and using all the technical and scientific wonders of this century. Boccioni listened to me with greater and greater attention; then he embraced me and left for Milan. This was our first and last conversation. A few days later, the painter Giacomo Balla received the following letter: “My dear Balla – we are happy to let you know that we have agreed to put the name of Depero among those forming the group of futurist painters and sculptors. We are certain that this will please you – always discovering and encouraging young talent with great enthusiasm and self-denial – and that it will help Depero to continue his work with more and more courage.”

Signed: Umberto Boccioni – F. T. Marinetti – Carlo Carrà – Luigi Russolo.

(At the time, the Futuristic [*sic*] Movement consisted of very few artists – of very few real painters–sculptors–poets and musicians).

words in liberty

After blank verse, F. T. Marinetti advanced in the poetic field with the “words in liberty.” It is a form of poetry open to all possibilities: from typographic to imaginative ones, enlivened by onomatopoeia

and imitative noises. Its most severe criticism could be found in its definition: “words in liberty,” since poetry and lyric are the expression of a strict choice of conceptions and not of words, of organic hermetic and anti-hermetic lyrical contents.

yes, marinetti had no strict principles

And that is the reason why I, too, was obliged to abandon him fifteen years ago: for his incorrigible habit of putting everything in the same bundle.

When he crystallized himself on his fixed idea of aeroexpressions, he once put me a question which was almost a reproach: “Why do you not take up aeropainting?” I answered him that compulsory and insincere futurism is stupid. I told him that I would devote myself to aeropainting only when I would be able to fly at least three times a week. A compulsory thing is worth nothing. I then added that he ought to be glad that at least one futurist still devoted himself to a sincere creating dynamism which was earthly and not aerial, without turning to aeropictorial liberties. But poor old Marinetti had his own fixed ideas and I had the pride of my freedom. The second contrast happened when I published my “Radiophonic Lyrics,”² slightly contrasting with the “words in liberty,” but at the same time boldly free and rich of lyrical transcendences [*sic*] and interpreting onomatopoeia suitable for radio transmission.

But I will repeat that one of his chief mistakes was the generous ease with which he found talent in every amateur and opportunist who knocked at his door. With more seriousness and a better selection and with more loyalty to his early aims he would have been more successful and would have been treated with greater respect. In my opinion, Art and talent means selection and minority and not number. Hence, our difference and separation.

I was really sorry, for my contribution to this movement was considerable: from the theater to painting, from architecture to literature, from decoration to plastics and publicity. The many works I published and my 82 Shows, both personal and collective, in Italy and abroad, as also the immense echo of the Press which I have kept and catalogued, are the best proof of my words and confirm them, leaving no room for doubts.

My clarifying and propagating contribution consisted in works of various kinds which caused surprise, interest and flattering reviews in many papers of Europe and America and started many imitators, then and today.

1 *Città meccanizzata dalle ombre* [City Mechanized by Shadows], 1920 — Ed.

2 *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics], 1934 — Ed.

Fortunato Depero, extracts from *So I Think, So I Paint: Ideologies of an Italian Self-made Painter* (Trento: Tipografia Editrice Mutilati e Invalidi, 1947).

19

Manifesto of Nuclear Painting and Sculpture

1950

Essentialism in art. Every writer, every poet, every painter, every artist has tried and tries to express himself with the fundamental elements of concept, composition, line, color, and form; he tries to be coherent and concise in the development of thoughts, in the exposition of ideas, and in the representation of images. In a word, he tries to be recapitulatory and demonstrative; clear, convincing, and conclusive in his works. In the field of the plastic arts: every subject, gesture, fact, figure, panorama, and material or immaterial composition comes from the artist efficiently summarized in the essence of its concept, rhythm, content, and plastic drama. So the elements of power and esteem of his originality as an artist are contained in his tormented, laborious, and inspired efforts. In the end, every real and unique work of art is an ensemble of essential values, values chosen, squeezed, traced, and elaborated with the mind, the pencil, the brush, the keyboard, and the chisel. In a nutshell: clear ideas, shrewd and conscious development, and in the end a conclusion that is essentialist in character and style.

There was a time when there was a temporary interest in the analytical spirit of problems, of impressions; there was a particular love of objectivity, fidelity, and analysis (interest and love which may still be alive and justified), but the great periods and works of character and style are clearly steeped in figurative essence, steeped in chosen and essential core values.

The synthesis of elements, their integral expression and fusion, are the issues that should be at the center of the artist's concern. They are the basic elements, they represent the master grid, the magic secret for detecting, singling out, characterizing, and stylizing a work of art. That is, the secret for grasping it in its divine essence beyond matter, outside nature; classical, surrealist, physical or metaphysical, static or aerodynamic expression, if you will. Secrets that are contained in the laws of harmony of the essential values which only a higher intelligence, the gift of acute intuition, of a private and contemplated evaluation can understand and express. In a particular way, the modern artist who has overcome objective contemplation, who has gone beyond the usual technical preoccupations, who through various ways and reasons of evolution has reached the fields of "pure creation," has grasped this key necessity of art; he

has taken possession of that key which I would call the "pentagram," which judges and disciplines the essentialism in art; that is, of that spatial line and that measuring and calculating balance of the secret harmonies of conception and style.

I have had these preoccupations out of personal instinct, perfected by acquired instruction, through suffered experience and tenacious method. From my young beginnings to the mature expressions of today, in every theme to be developed and represented or problem to be solved, be it with words, thoughts, pencils or brushes, both in works of pure artistic and ideological compromise and in those forms of applied requirements, I was always troubled by the torment involved in the choice of harmonic values, expressive values, and more than anything in those pure essentials to reach the plastic integrity of a resolved work.

In sum, first problem, constant torment, technical pleasure, and inspired and conceptual elevation joined together in a single passionate will and drill, a fixed mental nail: "essentialism"; essentialism for the earthly happiness of material life; essentialism in art for the divine happiness of the spirit.

Steel style. I think that the first half of this [20th] century, which has just come to an end, can be defined as a "steel age," just as the second half to follow will probably be defined as an "atomic and nuclear age." Steel, to remain in the present-day period, is among our most representative materials, it is the most resistant metal bond used in mass and individual applications of extreme solidity, precision, and calculation.

Steel is the symbol of luster, of stainless modern conquest. The technician, the worker, the engineer, the designer, the inventor always have to hand implements and tools in which steel powerfully predominates. They live with passionate familiarity with this prince of metals. For their practical and ideological life it represents a language and symbol of daily use and sought manipulation, almost an indispensable bread for their yearning hands, for their hungry minds. So it would not seem to me to be an idle question or a rhetorical commonplace if I were to ask myself: "Why can't this language which ennobles and feeds the hand and the mind of the hardworking and eager man not interest the hand and the mind of the thinker, the poet, the painter, the musician, and the architect, that is, the inspired and creative man? Is the voice of steel not perhaps a ruling voice which vibrates in the space beside that of the sun and air which we breathe? I would like to ask myself: perhaps it deadens the sensibility, the intelligence, the warmth of the heart and brain? Perhaps it diverts the character, intoxicates the style, or, on the contrary, might this representative symbol of perfection, resistance, and conquest not achieve unusual and unknown qualities and splendors? Does steel not perhaps reveal qualities and elements which might suggest and contribute to a consolidation of style that is particularly ours and enduring?"

Reasons, evidence, and factors which have pushed me towards this ideological track, present in several of my writings, in the chapters: "Steel Style," "Aerodynamic Language," "Character and Style," "Aesthetics of the Machine," "Multiple Perspective," "Autonomy of the Source of Light," "Transfigurations," "Plastic Complexes," etc. etc.; as well as in the many different paintings produced at various times and shown in many exhibitions. In particular, some of the paintings impregnated with this metallic splendor include the following: *Alto paesaggio d'acciaio* [High Landscape of Steel] (oil 1923) [cat. 143], *La rissa* [The Brawl] (oil 1924), *Motociclista, solido in velocità* [Biker (Solidified in Speed)] (oil 1925) [cat. 153], *Martellatori* [Hammerers] (sculpture in wood – Paris, 1925) [cat. 131], *Chiroterro metropolitano* [Metropolitan Bat] (oil 1939), etc., to mention but some of the best known. What predominates in these paintings and plastic works is a technique of clear-cut chiaroscuros, a plastic art of glass-like vibrations and mechanisms of a complex metallic splendor where the steel style is obvious and clearly defined.

Steel style is a definition that points to an atmosphere of the present-day era. An era of building sites, factories, metropolitan undergrounds, motor vessels and airships, torpedoes and atomic bombs, artificial hearts and scientific miracles. Furthermore, this definition indicates and characterizes a clear separation of epochs and contains en bloc all those elements of detail, synthesis, and mass that constitute an ideological world of modern Renaissance, of bold and epic human conquest.

Nuclear painting and sculpture. The etymology and meaning of the word "nuclear" in the field of figurative art, although never used, can easily be explained. The root "nucleus" means group, or core, and corresponds in painting to the fundamental group of factors and elements which compose it; particularly in our theme to the fusion of concrete values with abstract values, or the achievement of a complex and complete "nucleus" of interpretation and transfiguration. The word "nucleus" is topical. It has not been chosen by chance or for any cunning or shrewd secondary purpose. It has not been applied for subtle publicity histrionics. But it has been chosen after a close observation of evidence and arguments. It is a word that I have been waiting for all of 35 years. It corresponds to everything that I have dreamed about, drawn, and painted from 1915 up until today, 1950.

I believe that this is the first time that this definition appears in the terminology of the plastic arts, just as I believe that this unusual expression represents and harbingers the meeting point of various trends (like single streams and torrents that flow out into the river of the future), trends and aspirations born and flowering in the brief lapse of time of the last few decades. Those pictorial movements that go from the period of formal chromatic freedom of the post-Impressionists towards the vibration and consistency of light and rhythm; from the period of French Cubist analytical plastic

Divisionism to the Italian form of Futurist plastic dynamism, the legitimate and justified product of the age of speed and air travel of our days, to the present period of feverish abstraction of transfigurations and unrealities, to the metaphysical and surrealist forms due to the talent and insatiability of today's artists, to their uncontestable fantasy and sensibility.

I am convinced that the many different directions of these apparent deviations and conquered exploratory fields, which seem contrasting and dissimilar to us, I am convinced that by proceeding along different paths, artists will arrive at a master road and with all probability they will converge on the vast horizon of the spellbinding and fatal not yet conquered tomorrow.

Pause and reflection. My dear reader, friend or foe, dear critic and historian, favorable or disident, even if we may give ourselves airs of supermen, even if we boast of being more or less flawless connoisseurs or almost infallible earthly critics, I would like us to agree that the Universe is so elusive, so immense and surprising, that the beauties known to us, that the marvels explored by us, and that our human and earthly presumptions are as nothing in comparison with the as yet unexplored areas, the mysteries of the hereafter, of the stellar and interplanetary vastnesses which contain unimaginable places. So it will be as well to be prudent also in judging aprioristically any enunciation of unusual ideas and works, and I advise you to believe or at least to well-meaningly suppose that new laws and new values can appear on the horizon in an unusual and unexpected plastic and ideological form. Forms and ideas which should indeed surprise, but not disturb, clash, or worse still, get in the way, tear apart, and smother at their first appearance, or simply be ignored to the detriment of culture and evolution. The history of our days shows this clearly: so many insults, so many blasphemies against Boccioni, who everyone is discovering and praising today.

The atomic and nuclear marvels, the aerodynamic, underwater, earthly, and stratospheric forces should make us all meditate and reflect, even the technicians, creators, and judges of art and aesthetics. If someone dares to present an idea, a painting, or a sculpture of unusual form and flavor, do not be dismayed, gather around it: ponder, listen to the reasoning of its author, converse with the work as you do with other and so many other problems of a technical, scientific, sporting, or social nature, and you will find yourself totally or partly satisfied. In any event, little by little, you will feel yourself drawing closer to the artist and the work.

Another consideration. Think and reflect about the fact that each being large or small which we see and experience, which we know on our planet (and I suppose it will also be thus for beings and elements from other planets), is composed of head and tail, roots and trunk, cells and atoms, beginning and end, is driven by a material and immaterial life, which gives birth to it, and makes it grow and die;

gives birth to it again, makes it grow and die again; with a more or less long existence; with a mortal or almost immortal character; living within a continuity of rhythmic, spatial, and cosmic order. They are all made up of a musical and magic nuclear organism. They rotate, breathe, and reproduce within an atmosphere of vibrating light and movement with that sublime harmony that extends from the atom to the planetary stars.

In sum, as far as I am concerned, the problem of organic essentialism in the work of art leads to a nuclear end purpose, inasmuch as the law that guides and the key that solves lies in the organic harmony of the line and construction, and in the continual functioning which every being and thus every work of art contains. Not only does the star twinkle, not only is the flower formed, not only does the drop of water absorb and emanate reflections, not only does the contrivance have its particular function, not only do man and animal possess voice, movement, materiality, and spirituality; but the work of art also has its own light, it is formed, absorbs, and emanates reflections, it has its particular function, it has its own language, its own blood, its own motion, its own materiality, and its own spirituality. On the condition, however, that all these elements are ordered and coordinated with ability and wise nuclear harmony. The work of art lives, resists, talks, communicates, elevates, and enchants, by means of architectonic laws, sentimental and magic voices, by means of terrestrial and celestial forces. It is a masterly superhuman nucleus, of earthly manipulation and divine aspiration. It has been written that the artist is the man closest to God inasmuch as he manages to incarnate reality with abstraction, inasmuch as he manages to elevate matter to power and ideal, inasmuch as he has discovered the nuclear laws of creation.

In conclusion, here is the guide:

Drawing: analytical or synthetic, stylistic or exploratory, anatomical or mechanical, in any sense defined and conclusive.

Color and form: festive or dramatic, sensual or lyrical, in any event: intense color, sculpted form.

Architecture (in the picture): order and harmony, selection and structure.

Integral unity: fullness and continuity of values, scrupulous elaboration and inspired fantasy – in addition to the mental and physical efforts needed to solve problems.

Style: aerodynamic, physical or metaphysical, rational, surrealist or of steel, dictated by intelligence and taste, with a love of modernity as well as the purpose and end of endurance.

Character: seriousness in the task, seriousness of profession, seriousness and efficiency in the expressive forms and in the composition. Virility of content.

Autonomy: the work of art only resembles itself. It is underpinned by its own structural and figurative laws. It is driven by autonomous life.

Preoccupations: 25% of meditation on values of the past with the purpose of connection and con-

tinuity. 25% of adherence and logical contact with the public and time: i.e. with the present. 50% of spirit of explorative investigation, involved with the future.

All this accompanied by uninterrupted and superhuman efforts, material competence, severe and always lively self-critical state of mind. This, for me, is the not so simple formula for resolving the not so easy overall task of a pictorial and plastic work of art. Conclusive nucleus and solution for a felicitous creative achievement.

“Manifesto della pittura e plastica nucleare.” Manifesto first published in *Il nuovo caffè*, yr. 2, no. 6 (Milan, November 1950). Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 196–202, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.

20 The Return of Futurism

1951

While some want to see Futurism put away in a showcase as if it were a historical memory, I would like to observe and declare that this art movement has never stopped moving forward and that it is still proceeding apace with enthusiastic, promising, and affirmative continuity.

It would appear that for some time now, Futurism has returned to the critical and polemical arena. Since the foreign press and criticism declared that the Futurist movement represents the most significant source of the rebirth of the Italian plastic arts, the freshest and most modernly inspired source in our period, in Italy, too, the historical significance of this movement is finally being recognized. After having fought it and denigrated it, today people are discovering its founders, singing the praises of the merits and talent of its best protagonists, exalting and giving pride of place to the signatories of the first Futurist Manifesto.

We faithful and tenacious continuers of plastic dynamism and firmly convinced announcers of its fatal development are gladdened by this universal consensus, but at the same time we cannot stay silent or let pass unobserved a serious oversight, an inexact (partly vicious and partly unconscious) negligence, about the decided neglect of the second and third generation Futurists, of the Futurists who, with intensified faith, with a host of works and sacrifices, with hundreds of exhibitions, with a stepped-up program of ideas and wealth, continued ensuring the vigorous and fertile development of the Futurist movement so as to enable it to blossom and nurture similar movements everywhere, arousing a worldwide echo and giving rise to an atmosphere of indisputable universal modern dynamism.

But few remember and all seek to minimize to the most abbreviated and humiliating terms this effort, which lasted from 1918 through to 1951. And when an attempt is made to represent or shed light on this movement, there is recourse solely to the works that were created and the authors who were at work between 1910 and 1915. And this is the source of my dismay. This the source of the guilty forgetfulness, of the culpable disinterest and the dishonest ill faith. I do not hesitate to declare that from 1918 onwards the founders of the pictorial Futurist movement, right up to today, apart from the odd essay by the painter Balla, did not produce and did not advance in the evolutive Futurist sense by a single step. Some of them died, others grew old and left their path and any Futurist manifestation,

and still others denied it by abandoning their initial faith once so noisily manifested.

Initial Futurism was based on a violent, disordered, simultaneous, and erratic dynamism, of a typically polemical and experimental nature, still steeped in Impressionist fragments and nostalgia. The character of their works was rather confused and not very legible, it was overtly saturated with intentions but rather poorly structured. This was not their fault. It was the fatal and logical disorderly beginning, polemical and bellicose, formalistic and rhetorical. It has been inevitably followed by a reconstructive and consolidating movement. Perhaps its temporary and experimental character was the first and major cause of the lack of consensus on the part of critics and public.

Improvisation: a Futurist merit but also its serious flaw. Perhaps the fault of the times, perhaps the fault of accursed haste. A law which to me seems particularly divine. Prohibiting talking in a rush, conversing and discussing in haste. In the end, prohibiting making art in a hurry. One can dream up a verse, one can improvise a sketch or a skit, one can have a good off-the-cuff idea, but it is not possible to improvise a meditated and lasting work, which takes much time, much study, much effort and suffering. I was and I still am the enemy of haste and improvisation.

In the last thirty years, the signatories of the first Futurist Manifesto have given and revealed almost nothing in the sense of dynamic procedure, Futurist evolution, and modern stylistic assertion. While those who have consolidated, who have carried on and made significant additions have been the Futurist artists of the second and third waves. Some of them have revealed their own artistic world, they have drawn up certain explanatory laws, they have imprinted their works with a tone of readability and consistency.

Modesty apart, between 1913 and today in 1951 the undersigned has held some ninety solo and group exhibitions, in Italy, Europe and America, stirring up great interest everywhere and having a huge repercussion in the press. Numerous publications, editions, single issues and catalogues attest to this in the most indisputable way. They present and illustrate such a quantity of works, manifestos, declarations, and conquests that they go well beyond the first Futurist manifesto. Similarly, other colleagues of mine could present their testimony of years of artistic activity to protest against the neglect and oblivion of their merits.

And yet, despite forty years of work and action, the Venice Biennale had the offensive naivety to invite me with two works, as if I were a twenty-year-old novice. Precisely that same Biennale which had the courage to sacrifice some thirty rooms out of sixty in the Italian Pavilion, devoting them to foreign artists, with undoubted generosity and an exquisite sense of hospitality, but with just as much blameworthy sacrifice towards us. I am not personally accusing anyone, I am merely stating the reality of the facts and underscoring the inexcusable error, already pointed out by others.

But to get back to a name, that of one of the signatories of the first Futurist Manifesto, the name of the great painter and sculptor Umberto Boccioni, I take the liberty of quoting one of his very harsh and violent judgments concerning certain contemporary judging panels and selection committees. He said precisely this: “Are they not still alive and not still walking undisturbed down the streets, and are they not still sitting on committees and juries, those who massacred Segantini and Fattori?¹ Those who drove Pellizza da Volpedo² to commit suicide, who made Medardo Rosso flee abroad, who raised a wall of silence around Previati? Who would ever think of killing them or getting rid of them?” These are really cruel and incendiary words, but they unfortunately tally with a justified response to the wrongs done to the illustrious masters of their time.

I will not express myself in this tone, I am a patient and philosophical hillbilly. I can only sincerely say that an authentic appraisal and judgment of the transient and lasting values of Futurism and similar present-day movements will only be pronounced with a sense of fairness and exact measure by a reporter in the year 2000 and not by the present-day judges and curators of exhibitions.

This is sad and meager satisfaction, but there is no other comfortable solution. Too many present interests and too many personal ambitions overshadow and divert from the reality and historical truth of the moment. Then as the years gradually pass works either fall by the wayside of time or are consolidated, reinvigorated, and illuminated, depending on the merit of their relative content. The same goes for manifestos, declarations and ideological programs undergoing the assessment of time, that infallible critic and judge which does away with what is vague and inconsistent and which, on the contrary, sheds light on what they contain by way of positive things worthy of merit; time sets in relief everything that has clearly contributed to evolution and civilization.

1 Giovanni Fattori (1825–1908) was an Italian painter who belonged to the Macchiaioli, a group characterized by its use of patches of paint, *macchia*, to represent nature — Ed.

2 Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo (1868–1907) was an Italian painter, an exponent of divisionism, symbolism, and Scapigliatura, best known for his social realist work, *Il Quarto Stato* [The Fourth Estate], from 1901 — Ed.

“Il Futurismo rivenuto a galla.” Unpublished manuscript (8 folios, Dep. 4.1.163 Ms 315) held in the Fondo Fortunato Depero, MART – Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. This is the speech given at the opening of the Mostra Nazionale della Pittura e della Scultura Futuriste [National Exhibition of Futurist Painting and Sculpture], Palazzo del Podestà, Bologna, November 11–25, 1951. Reprinted in Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l’universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d’Artisti, 143]), 211–14, from where it has been translated by Simon Pleasance.



Gruppo di futuristi con Marinetti in uniforme alla I Mostra nazionale di plastica murale [Group of Futurists with Marinetti in uniform at the I Mostra in uniform at the I Mostra Nazionale di Plastica Murale]. Genova, December 1934. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-base paper, 5 1/8 x 7 1/16 in. (13 x 18 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



I was born in Fondo (Val di Non), Trentino, in 1892. High plateau of meadows and dark woods of larch and fir. Valley of castles and sanctuaries.

Father born a chimney-sweep and lived a gendarme and prison guard; bristly and hairy eyebrows and moustache, he was touched by the slightest thing, and religious.

Mother a cook, all eyes and all heart.

Undisciplined, they sent me to a German boarding school in Merano; I ate badly and I did not like the Germans.

I did a few years at the Reale secondary school (now a Technical Institute) in ROVERETO, my adopted city. I was a reluctant student. I drew, I painted, I modeled, I sculpted with the precocious passion and tumultuous frenzy of the self-taught.

I met Rosetta at the age of 14; I was madly in love at the age of 18; two years later I wished her off to Rome.

The world war broke out; Rosetta was earning 1.50 a day for the two of us; I had zero money and 10000 of life and art.



I became acquainted with the Futurist vortex and its creative devils.

Marinetti's motto:

walk and don't rot

intoxicated me.

Hunger - Hunger - Hunger - Hunger - Hunger - thin, very thin. Rosetta ironed and sobbed. Tenacious, pig-headed, headstrong, extremely obstinate: extremely boldly, tirelessly, blind and harnessed, I followed the path of my destiny.

Marinetti	Diaghilev	discovered me
Raffa	Siemenov	encouraged me
Boccioni	Clavel	helped me
Russolo	Azari	defended me
Bragaglia	Notari	like a sure promise

I was briefly at war as a volunteer at the Col di Lana: discharged. I embarked on my artistic path, ever in step up to today.

My fixed idea today is

FUTURIST OF 1915

WALK WALK FURTHER **FURTHER FURTHER FURTHER**
UNINTERRUPTEDLY

AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL

SYNTHESIS

Nacqui a Fondo (Val di Non) Trentino nel 1892. Altipiano di prati e selve oscure di larici ed abeti. Vallata di castelli e santuari.

Padre nato apuziancamino e vissuto gendarme e carceriere: elgria e buffi lapidi ed irti, si commoveva per un nonnulla, religioso.

Madre cuoca tutt'occhi e tutto cuore.

Discole, fui spedito in un collegio tedesco a Merano: mangiavo male e non mi piacevano i tedeschi.

Feci pochi anni di scuole medie Reali (ora Istituto tecnico) a ROVERETO, mia città adottiva. Studiai di malavoglia.

Disegnavo, dipingevo, modellavo, scolpivo con passione precoce e tumultuosa frenesia di autodidatta.

Incontrai Rosetta a 14 anni; m'innamurai di lei a 18 anni; due anni dopo la rapii a Roma.

Scoppiò la guerra mondiale; Rosetta guadagnava per tutti e due 1.50 al giorno, io zero soldi e 1000 di vita e d'arte.

AUTOBIOGRAFICA

SINTESI



Conobbi il vorace futurista ed i suoi divoli creatori.

Il motto di Marinetti:

marciare e non marciare
m'innabbrìo.

Fame + Fame + Fame - Fame x Fame - magro-magrisalmo.

Rosetta strava e piangeva. Io tenevo, coccolavo, testardo, ostinatifissimo; undecissimamente, instancabilmente, cieco e bardato seguivo la via del mio destino.

Marinetti	Diaghileff	} mi rivelarono mi incoraggiarono mi aiutarono mi difesero quale alcuna promessa
Balla	Semenoff	
Boccioni	Clavel	
Rusolo	Azari	
Brugaglia	Notari	

Feci poca guerra volontario al Col di Lana; riformato iniziai la mia marcia artistica, sempre più celere fino ad oggi.

La mia idea fissa d'oggi è quella

FUTURISTA DEL 1915

MARCIARE ULTR ULTR ULTR ULTR ULTR
ININTERROTTAMENTE



FORTUNATO DEPERO (1892-1960)

A CHRONOLOGY

AIDA CAPA, MARTA SUÁREZ-INFUESTA

The thirteen essays in this catalogue present a relatively complete and detailed if somewhat fragmented chronology of the life of Fortunato Depero. For this reason we have decided to offer but a brief and subjective biographical synopsis. This summary chronology has been compiled from a large number of sources that cannot all be listed here for reasons of space. Nonetheless, due to its degree of detail and its ordering, a particularly important source should be referred to here, namely the documents in the Archivio del '900 edited by Francesca Velardita (*Fondo Fortunato Depero. Inventario*. Rovereto: MART; Nicolodi, 2008). The authors of this chronology would like to thank Erica Witschey, Inés d'Ors, Maurizio Scudiero, Fabio Belloni, and Raffaele Bedarida for their help, contributions, corrections, and suggestions.

1892

Fortunato Depero was born on March 30 in Fondo, a village in the province of Trento, which was part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire until 1918. His father was a gendarme in the Imperial troops and his mother a cook. The family soon moved to Rovereto, which Depero always considered his adoptive city. There he trained at the Scuola Reale Elisabetina, a school of applied arts where he studied drawing with Giovanni Tono, an artist close to the Arts and Crafts movement, and also took classes with Luigi Comel, a professor of drawing and watercolor who exercised a notable influence on his students. During his time there Depero met the painter Tullio Garbari, the architect Luciano Baldessari, the poet Lionello Fiumi, and the sculptor Fausto Melotti.

1906

Depero met Rosetta Amadori, whom he would marry in 1918.

1908

Depero left the Scuola Reale Elisabetina during his 5th academic year. He attempted unsuccessfully to enter the Fine Arts Academy in Vienna then briefly moved to Turin, where he studied with the sculptor Pietro Canonica. He returned to Rovereto to work as an apprentice for another sculptor, Gelsomino Scanagatta.

1909

On February 20, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the poet and founder of Futurism, published the first Futurist Manifesto, entitled "Le futurisme," in *Le Figaro* [cat. 2, p. 30; see pp. 361–63].

1910

Between 1910 and 1911 Depero was involved in the Movimento Studenti Tridentini, an organization that shared some of the ideas of the Lega Nazionale and maintained a somewhat anti-German stance. The *Manifesto dei pittori futuristi* [Manifesto of the Futurist Painters] was published in February in Milan, signed by Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla, and Gino Severini [cat. 5, p. 32; see pp. 363–64].

On April 11, Boccioni, Carrà, Balla, Severini, and Russolo published the *Manifesto tecnico della pittura futurista* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting].

1911

The *Mostra d'Arte Libera* [Free Art Exhibition] was held in April, in which Boccioni, Carrà, and Russolo showed Futurist works. Lectures and *serate futuriste* were held in conjunction with this event, the latter being gatherings at which the young Futurists proclaimed their artistic ideas.

As the theoretical founder and intellectual patron of the movement, Marinetti actively promoted the Futurist message through interviews, letters, and evening events.

1913

That spring, Depero held his first solo exhibition in Rovereto.

He traveled to Rome and met Marinetti. While there he visited Boccioni's exhibition at the Galleria Sprovieri and was extremely impressed by his work [see p. 252]. He began to be interested in the deconstruction of forms and the graphic representation of movement.

Depero published his first book, *Spezzature (impressioni-segni-ritmi)* [Fragments (Impressions–Signs–Rhythms)] [cat. 16, p. 35].

1914

Depero was invited to take part in the *Esposizione Libera Futurista Internazionale* [International Futurist Exhibition] at the Galleria Sprovieri in Rome, which also showed work by Marinetti and Balla and by Wassily Kandinsky, Aleksandr

1. Unknown photographer, Fortunato Depero, 1910. Studio Fotografico Bonmassar, Rovereto. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

2. Unknown photographer, Rosetta Amadori, 1915. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

3. Unknown photographer, Fortunato Depero, 1913. Studio Fotografico Chiesura, Rovereto. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

4. *Antibiennale. Museo preliminare Depero a Rovereto* [Anti-biennial. Preliminary Depero Museum in Rovereto]. Rovereto: Manfrini, 1955. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

5. *Catalogo della Galleria e Museo Depero Rovereto: il primo museo futurista d'Italia* [Catalogue of the Depero Gallery and Museum in Rovereto: the First Futurist Museum in Italy]. Trento: Tipografia Editrice Mutilati e Invalidi, 1959. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

6. *Progetto per chiosco pubblicitario* [Project for an Advertising Kiosk], 1924. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto

7. Unknown photographer, *Depero nella casa di Viale dei Colli* [Depero at Home in Viale dei Colli], Rovereto, 1956. Studio Fotografico Bonmassar, Rovereto. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero



1



2



3

Archipenko, Francesco Cangiullo, Arturo Martini, Enrico Prampolini, Gino Rossi, and Mario Sironi. Depero was the only artist to sell works.

In May he returned to Rovereto and exhibited his first experiments in plastic dynamism at the Circolo Sociale.

World War I broke out on July 28. That August, Depero crossed the frontier and settled in Rome with Rosetta Amadori. He wrote the text *Complessità plastica, Gioco libero futurista, L'essere vivente artificiale* [Plastic Complexity – Free Futurist Game – The Artificial Living Being], which constituted the first presentation of his aesthetic vision [pp. 385–93].

At the end of the year he started work on his first *complessi plastici* [plastic complexes], sculptures made from everyday materials (metal, glass, cardboard, paper, etc.) to which he added a mechanism that gave them movement and sound, thus coming close to the Wagnerian idea of the total work of art.

1915

Through Giacomo Balla, Depero was officially admitted to the Futurist movement as a sculptor,

thanks to the interest aroused by his *complessi plastici*. On March 11, Depero and Balla signed the manifesto *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe], which represents one of the most important milestones in the evolution of the Futurist aesthetic [cat. 36, p. 50; see pp. 369–75].

In May, Italy declared war on Austria and Depero decided to enlist as a volunteer. He was sent to the front at Col di Lana with the 82nd Infantry Regiment.

In July he was discharged from the army on health grounds and returned to Rome. In his study on Via Cola di Rienzo he experimented with purely abstract forms, making use of a wide range of materials and techniques. Marinetti published *Zang Tumb Tumb*, the first *parolibre* poem, in which words move freely in space.

1916

Depero invented the “onomalanguage,” a language based on phonetic poems of abstract verbalization created through onomatopoeia and noise.

A solo exhibition of his work opened in April at number 20, Corso Umberto in which Depero showed nearly two hundred pieces, including

the first presentation of his *complessi plastici motorumoristi* [motorumorist plastic complexes].

That November he met Sergei Diaghilev, who commissioned him to design the sets and costumes for the ballet *Le Chant du rossignol* [The Song of the Nightingale], an adaptation of a fairy tale by Hans Christian Anderson with music by Stravinsky [cat. 52, p. 71]. Although Depero devoted several months to this project, Diaghilev would eventually present it in Paris in a different form.

As a result of his work for the Ballets Russes, Depero's work underwent a change; he left behind his abstract phase and began to work with figurative elements that had a pronounced fantastical and metaphysical component [cat. 101, p. 124].

The magazine *L'Italia Futurista* published the manifesto *La cinematografia futurista* [Futurist Cinema], signed by Marinetti, Corra, Settimelli, Ginna, and R. Chiti. Its rallying cry, “The universe will be our vocabulary,” reflects its intention to create analogies in which human gestures are replaced by purely natural forms of expression.

1917

Through Diaghilev, Depero met Gilbert Clavel, a Swiss poet and Egyptologist [cat. 64, p. 77;



4



5



6



7

see pp. 255–57 and 397]. Their friendship would lead on to a new phase in the artist's work in which he pursued different artistic directions. Clavel invited him to Capri where he suggested that Depero design and illustrate his novel *Un istituto per suicidi* [Suicides' Institute] [cat. 73, p. 78]. This collaboration provided the origins for Depero's *Balli plastici* [Plastic Dances] [cat. 82, p. 88], a mechanical performance involving puppets, automata, and sounds to the accompaniment of music by Alfredo Casella, Gian Francesco Malipiero, Lord Berners (Gerald Tyrwhitt-Wilson), and Chemenov (the pseudonym of Béla Bartók). Clavel and Depero jointly devised the choreography while Depero alone designed and made the puppets and scenery [cat. 79, p. 84].

1918

On April 15, the first performance of the *Balli plastici* took place at the Teatro dei Piccoli in the Palazzo Odescalchi in Rome [cat. 76, p. 82].

Depero produced his first *quadri in stoffa* [paintings with textiles], in which he experimented with new materials and for which he received considerable recognition.

In August he went to Viareggio where he produced one of his key works: *lo e mia moglie* [My Wife and I] [cat. 88, p. 106].

The *Manifesto del partito futurista italiano* [Manifesto of the Italian Futurist Party] was published.

1919

Depero exhibited with the Futurists at the Galleria Centrale of the Palazzo Cova in Milan, and at the Galleria Moretti in Genoa.

In June, after the end of World War I, he returned to Rovereto, which had been largely destroyed during the war. There he decided to found his own art center, the Casa d'Arte Futurista, a space for the creation of craft products: toys, furniture, textiles, and decorative objects. By founding this center and pursuing the ideas set out in *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* Depero aimed to bring about a global redesign of the everyday environment.

1920

That winter, Depero held a solo exhibition at the Galleria Centrale of the Palazzo Cova in Milan.

1921

Depero held a solo "decorative" exhibition at the Galleria Bragaglia in Rome. He also took part in group shows in Prague, Berlin, and Dusseldorf.

1922

That April the *Cabaret del Diavolo* [Devil's Cabaret] [cat. 107, p. 145] opened in the Hotel Élite et des Étrangers in Rome, a venue designed and decorated by Depero. It was divided into three spaces that symbolized Heaven, Purgatory, and Hell.

In October, the Fascist leader Benito Mussolini seized power in Italy, installing a dictatorship.

1923

In May, Depero took part in the *I Mostra Internazionale delle Arti Decorative* [1st International Exhibition of Decorative Arts] in Monza, where an entire room was devoted to his work [cat. 148, p. 114].

Marinetti, Prampolini, and Depero wrote a letter to Mussolini requesting that young artists be included in the International Exhibition to be held in Paris in 1925.

Marinetti published *Il tamburo di fuoco* [The Drum of Fire] [cat. 129, p. 102], marking the end of Futurism as a movement of revolutionary political action.

1924

In January, the Compagnia del Nuovo Teatro Futurista made its debut at the Teatro Trianon in Milan. The program included Depero's mechanized ballet *Anihccam 3000* [see fig. 9, p. 312]. During these years Depero's work came closer to a mechanical universe in which the machine – the Futurist element par excellence – represents modernity.

During this period Depero received advertising design commissions from various companies, including the brick manufacturers Verzocchi [cat. 134, p. 155], Unica chocolate [cat. 141, p.175], Magnesia San Pellegrino, the pharmaceuticals company Schering, and Strega liqueurs. He established particularly close relations with the Davide Campari company in Milan, for which he produced posters, collages, paintings, lamps, dolls, kiosks, and even designed the Campari Soda bottle.

1925

That autumn, Depero moved to Paris, renting a studio at number 93, rue Sansovere. On the door he put up the sign: "Futurism Originalities – Permanent Depero Atelier – Pure Art – Italian Futuristic Applied Art – Billboard Office." During his time in Paris he visited Brancusi, Goncharova, Larionov, and Gleizes. He met Theo van Doesburg and Rolf de Maret and took part in the *Exhibition of Modern Decorative and Industrial Arts*.

1926

Depero returned to Italy and took part in the *15th Venice Biennial*. Friedrich Kiesler and Hans Arp invited him to participate in the *International Theatre Exposition* in New York, which also showed the work of Anton Giulio Bragaglia, Gerardo Dottori, Virgilio Marchi, Enrico Prampolini, Luigi Russolo, and Tato.

1927

Depero produced the *Padiglione Tipografico* [Book pavilion] for the *Mostra Internazionale delle Arti Decorative* [International Exhibition of Decorative Arts] in Monza [cat. 151, p. 157], commissioned by the publishers Bestetti-Tumminelli & Treves. That same year Fedele Azari's publishing house Dinamo Azari published *Depero futurista 1913–1972* [cat. 148, p. 176]. Known as the "libro (im) bullonato" or bolted book, it is considered the first avant-garde book-object.

1928

The Casa d'Arte Futurista closed in September and Depero and Rosetta moved to New York. With the aim of improving his financial situation Depero attempted to sell advertising designs through a branch of the Casa d'Arte. He produced various designs for front covers and

illustrations for magazines such as *Vogue*, *Vanity Fair*, *The New Yorker* and *Sparks* [cat. 214, p. 217]. He also decorated the restaurants Zucca on 49th Street [cat. 192, p. 213; see p. 421] and Enrico & Paglieri on 48th Street. In collaboration with the choreographer Léonide Massine he embarked on producing a ballet which, with the title of *New York, New Babel*, would offer a mechanistic vision of the modern city. It was never performed.

1930

In October, Depero and Rosetta returned to Italy. The artist's experiences in New York inspired him to create a book with a sound track entitled *New York, film vissuto* [New York – A Lived Film] [cat. 215, p. 218], a project that he never completed.

1931

Depero published a compilation of his designs for Campari entitled *Numero unico futurista* [cat. 223, p. 229], which coincided with the publication of his *Manifesto dell'arte pubblicitaria futurista* [Futurism and Advertising Art] [pp. 422–23].

Although Depero maintained his contacts with the Futurists, in the 1930s he also began to isolate himself and his works became less chromatic, losing the dynamism of earlier years.

1933

Depero founded and edited the magazine *Dinamo Futurista*, of which five numbers were published [cat. 244, 245, and 246, pp. 229 and 230].

1934

He published *Liriche radiofoniche* [Radio Lyrics], a selection of texts composed for the radio [cat. 255, p. 234].

1937

He published *Bilancio 1913–1936* [1913–1936 Balance] [cat. 265, p. 237].

1939–45

World War II broke out in September 1939. Four years later, in September 1943 Depero moved to Serrada di Folgaria, near Rovereto. During these years he largely abandoned painting due to lack of materials and worked on his texts and archive.

In 1940 the artist published *Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita* [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life] [cat. 269, p. 240], while in 1943 he published *A passo romano. Lirismo fascista e guerriero, programmatico e costruttivo* [Roman Step. Programmatic and Constructive Fascist and Warrior Lyricism].

1944

Marinetti died on December 2.

1947

Depero moved to New York for the second time. In order to announce his presence again in

the art world he produced various advertising projects. Massine and Leon Leonidoff, director of the Roxy Theater, secured him projects for set and costume designs.

1947

Depero published *So I Think, So I Paint: Ideologies of an Italian Self-made Painter* [cat. 273, p. 241].

1948

Depero moved to the countryside, to Merry Hall in Connecticut. He designed and undertook the remodeling of the Enrico & Paglieri restaurant.

1949

He returned to Italy.

1950

Depero took up painting again. His work underwent a profound transformation.

He wrote the *Manifesto della pittura e plastica nucleare* [Manifesto of Nuclear Painting and Sculpture] [pp. 428–29], in which he set out the theoretical bases of his final style of painting.

During these years Depero remained largely aloof from the international art scene, although he took part in various exhibitions including the *9th Triennial* in Milan in 1951, the *Mostra Nazionale Futurista* in Bologna and the *26th Venice Biennial*, both in 1952.

1951

In November he gave a speech entitled *Il futurismo rivenuto a galla* [The Return of Futurism] [p. 430] for the inauguration of the *Mostra Nazionale della Pittura e della Scultura futuriste* [National Exhibition of Futurist Painting and Sculpture] in Bologna.

1955

He published *Antibiennale. Museo Preliminare Depero a Rovereto* [Anti-biennial. Preliminary Depero Museum in Rovereto].

1956

He went to Rome and took part in the *VII Quadriennale Nazionale d'Arte* [7th National Art Quadrennial].

He produced the decoration and furnishings for the Sala Consiliare, the City Council hall in Rovereto [see p. 340].

1957

The town of Rovereto funded the creation of a museum on Depero.

1959

The Casa Depero opened. The artist was involved in its organization and decoration, pursuing his ideal of the "total work of art."

1960

Depero died on November 29 in Rovereto.



LIST OF WORKS ON DISPLAY

- 1**
Poesia. *Rassegna Internazionale diretta da F. T. Marinetti* [Poetry. International Review directed by F. T. Marinetti], year V, nos. 1–2 (February–March 1909). Magazine: lithograph on paper, 11 ¼ x 11 ¾ in. (28.5 x 28.9 cm). Archivio Depero
p. 30
- 2**
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Fondazione e Manifesto del Futurismo* [The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism], 1909. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 7/16 x 9 7/16 in. (29 x 23 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 31
- 3**
Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Ritratto di Marinetti* [Portrait of Marinetti], 1910. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 8 ½ x 6 ¾ in. (21.5 x 17 cm). Private collection
p. 29
- 4**
Francesco Balilla Pratella, *Manifesto dei Musicisti Futuristi* [Manifesto of Futurist Musicians], 1910. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 7/16 x 8 7/16 in. (29 x 22 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 32
- 5**
Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, and Gino Severini, *Manifesto dei pittori futuristi* [Manifesto of the Futurist Painters], 1910. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 ½ x 9 ½ in. (29.3 x 23.2 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 32
- 6**
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Per la guerra, sola igiene del mondo* [War, the Only Hygiene of the World], 1911. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 ¼ x 9 7/16 in. (28.5 x 23 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 33
- 7**
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature], 1912. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 7/16 x 9 7/16 in. (29 x 23 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 33
- 8**
Umberto Boccioni, *Manifeste technique de la sculpture futuriste* [Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture], 1912. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 ½ x 9 7/16 in. (29.2 x 23 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 33
- 9**
Umberto Boccioni, *Studio di testa* [Head Study], 1912. Pen, ink and watercolor on paper, 7 ¾ x 7 7/16 in. (19.5 x 18.9 cm). Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni–Castello Sforzesco, Milan (Au 826B310)
p. 39
- 10**
Umberto Boccioni, *Sviluppo di una bottiglia nello spazio* [Development of a Bottle in Space], 1913. Bronze, 14 15/16 x 23 7/16 x 12 ¾ in. (38 x 59.5 x 32 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 40
- 11**
Umberto Boccioni, *Voglio sintetizzare le forme uniche della continuità nello spazio* [I Want to Synthesize the Unique Forms of Continuity in Space], 1913. Charcoal, watercolor and tempera on paper, 11 7/16 x 9 7/16 in. (29 x 23 cm). Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni–Castello Sforzesco, Milan (813B300)
p. 42
- 12**
Gino Severini, *Ritmo plastico* [Plastic Rhythm], 1913. Ink on paper, 10 ¼ x 7 1/16 in. (26 x 18 cm). Private collection
p. 41
- 13**
Unknown photographer, *L'intonarumori di Russolo con Russolo e Piatti* [Russolo and Piatti with Russolo's *intonarumori* Noise-making Devices], c. 1913. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 7 7/16 x 9 ¾ in. (18.9 x 25 cm). Private collection
p. 32
- 14**
Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Ritratto polifisiognomico di Umberto Boccioni* [Photodynamic Portrait of Umberto Boccioni], 1913. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 ¾ x 6 ¾ in. (12.3 x 17 cm). Private collection
p. 38
- 15**
Valentine de Saint-Point, *Manifesto futurista della Lussuria* [Futurist Manifesto of Lust], 1913. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 ¾ x 9 7/16 in. (29.5 x 23 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 34
- 16**
Spezzature (impressioni-segni-ritmi) [Fragments (Impressions–Signs–Rhythms)]. Rovereto: Tip[ografia] Mercurio, 1913. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 8 7/16 x 6 ¾ in. (22 x 17 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero
p. 35
- 17**
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Sintesi futurista della guerra* [Futurist Synthesis of the War], 1914. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 7/16 x 9 7/16 in. (29 x 23 cm) folded. L'Arengario Studio Bibliografico
pp. 36–37
- 18**
Giacomo Balla, *Il vestito antineutrale. Manifesto futurista* [The Antineutral Suit. Futurist Manifesto], 1914. Document: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 11 ½ x 9 7/16 in. (29.3 x 23.3 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 34
- 19**
Umberto Boccioni, *Pittura scultura futuriste (Dinamismo plastico)* [Futurist Painting and Sculpture (Plastic Dynamism)]. Milan: Edizione futuriste di Poesia, 1914. Book: letterpress on paper, 8 x 5 ¾ in. (20.4 x 14.3 cm). Archivio Lafuente
p. 38
- 20**
Figura umana stilizzata [Stylized Human Figure], c. 1914. Charcoal and white chalk on paper, 6 ¾ x 5 in. (17 x 12.7 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 40

- 21**
Scomposizione di testa [Deconstruction of a Head], c. 1914 (signed "1916"). Charcoal, white chalk and ink on paper, 7 ⁵/₁₆ x 5 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (18.5 x 14.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 39
- 22**
Scomposizione di testa [Deconstruction of a Head], c. 1914. Charcoal, white chalk and ink on paper, 7 ⁵/₁₆ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (18.5 x 14.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 39
- 23**
Linee-Forza [Force-Lines], 1914. Ink on paper, 4 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (12.5 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 42
- 24**
Uomo che cammina [Man Walking], 1914. Ink on paper, 6 ⁷/₈ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (17.5 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 42
- 25**
Linee sintetiche di un uomo che getta un oggetto [Synthetic Lines of a Man Throwing an Object], 1914. Ink on paper, 4 ⁵/₁₆ x 3 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (11 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 42
- 26**
Studio per Elettricità [Study for Electricity], 1914. Charcoal and watercolor on paper, 11 x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (28 x 30 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART 861) p. 45
- 27**
 Manuscript written by Fortunato Depero stating his intention to join the Futurist movement, 1914. Document: ink on paper, 7 ¹/₁₆ x 7 ⁷/₈ in. (18 x 20 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.4.2.3.31) p. 50
- 28**
 Carlo Carrà, *Cineamore (Sintesi)* [Cinelove (Synthesis)], 1914. Collage, ink and pencil on paper, 15 ³/₈ x 11 in. (39 x 28 cm). Private collection p. 43
- 29**
 Giacomo Balla, *Partenza di Sironi per Milano* [Sironi's Departure for Milan], 1914. Ink on paper, 11 x 8 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (28 x 22 cm). Private collection p. 43
- 30**
 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Parole in libertà* [Words-in-Freedom], 1915. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 ¹/₂ x 9 in. (29.2 x 22.9 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 43
- 31**
 Unknown photographer, *Autoritratto con pugno* [Self-portrait with Punch], Rome, 1915. Photograph: gelatin silver print on card, 5 ¹/₂ x 3 ⁹/₁₆ in. (14 x 19 cm). Archivio Depero p. 53
- 32**
 Giacomo Balla, *Studio per i quadri delle dimostrazioni interventiste* [Study for the series Interventionist Demonstrations], 1915. Pastel on paper, 6 ⁵/₁₆ x 5 ¹/₂ in. (16.1 x 14 cm), 2 ³/₄ x 2 ³/₄ in. (7 x 7 cm), and 6 ⁵/₁₆ x 6 ¹/₂ in. (16 x 16.5 cm). Private collection p. 45
- 33**
Vecicliss-Astrazione animale [Vecicliss - Animal Abstraction], 1915. Charcoal and white chalk on paper, 16 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 26 ³/₈ in. (43 x 67 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 47
- 34**
Compenetrazione [Interpenetration], 1915. Ink on paper, 7 ⁷/₈ x 8 ¹/₁₆ in. (20 x 20.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 46
- 35**
 Francesco Cangiullo, postcards, c. 1915. Cards: letterpress on card, 3 ¹/₂ x 5 ⁷/₁₆ in. (8.9 x 13.8 cm) each. Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 55
- 36**
 Giacomo Balla and Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* [Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe], 1915. Document: letterpress on paper, 11 ⁷/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₁₆ in. (29 x 23 cm). Two copies on display: Archivo Lafuente and MART, Archivio di Nuova Scrittura, Collezione Paolo Della Grazia p. 51
- 37**
 Unknown photographer, *Riso cinico* [Cynical Laughter], Rome, 1915. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 6 ¹/₂ x 6 ³/₄ in. (16.5 x 17 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.23) p. 49
- 38**
 Unknown artist, *Esposizione Futurista. Depero* [Futurist Exhibition. Depero], Rome, 1916. Brochure: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 7 ⁷/₈ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (20 x 30 cm). Archivo Lafuente p. 48
- 39**
 Unknown artist, *Il Teatro futurista* [Futurist Theater] at the Teatro Niccolini in Florence, c. 1916. Poster (flyer): letterpress on paper, 13 ³/₈ x 6 ⁷/₁₆ in. (34 x 16.4 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 63
- 40**
 Pasqualino Cangiullo, *Una schiaffeggiata futurista* [A Futurist Scuffle], 1916. Ink on paper, 8 ³/₄ x 10 ³/₈ in. (21 x 27 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 44
- 41**
 Francesco Cangiullo, *Chorus Girls II*, c. 1916. Ink on paper, 19 ¹/₄ x 10 ¹/₂ in. (48.8 x 26.6 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 44
- 42**
 Francesco Cangiullo, *Piedigrotta*. Milan: Edizione futuriste di *Poesia*, 1916. Book: letterpress on paper, 10 ³/₈ x 7 ¹/₂ in. (26.3 x 19 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 44
- 43**
 Giacomo Balla, *Gli Avvenimenti* [Events], 1916. Ink on paper, 13 ³/₈ x 9 ³/₈ in. (34 x 25 cm). Private collection p. 46
- 44**
L'Italia Futurista [Futurist Italy], year I, no. 6 (August 1916). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 23 ⁵/₈ x 17 ⁵/₁₆ in. (60 x 44 cm). L'Arengario Studio Bibliografico p. 52
- 45**
 Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *L'Italia Futurista* [Futurist Italy], year I, no. 2 (June 1916). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 25 ¹/₈ x 17 ¹/₄ in. (63.8 x 43.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 54
- 46**
Bottiglia [Bottle], 1916. Charcoal and white chalk on paper, 16 ¹/₈ x 15 ¹/₈ in. (41 x 38.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 40
- 47**
Costume per Mimismagia [Costume for Mimismagia], 1916. Ink and watercolor on paper, 11 ⁷/₁₆ x 7 ³/₈ in. (29 x 18.7 cm). Private collection, Milan p. 66
- 48**
Costume per Mimismagia [Costume for Mimismagia], 1916. Ink and watercolor on paper, 12 ³/₁₆ x 7 ⁷/₈ in. (31 x 20 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0261-b) p. 66
- 49**
Costume per Mimismagia [Costume for Mimismagia], 1916. Ink and watercolor on paper, 9 ⁷/₁₆ x 6 ¹/₈ in. (24 x 15.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0260-b) p. 67
- 50**
Costume per Mimismagia [Costume for Mimismagia], 1916. Ink and watercolor on paper, 9 ¹/₁₆ x 5 ¹/₂ in. (23 x 14 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0259-b) p. 67
- 51**
Studi per i costumi de "Le Chant du rossignol" [Studies for Stravinsky's *The Song of the Nightingale* Costumes], 1916. Ink and pencil on paper, 8 ¹/₁₆ x 10 ⁷/₁₆ in. (20.5 x 26.5 cm) each. Private collection, Switzerland p. 70
- 52**
Flora magica, scenografia de "Le Chant du rossignol" [Magical Flora, set design for *The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917, reconstruction from 2000. Painted wood and cardboard, approx. 246 ¹/₁₆ x 246 ¹/₁₆ x 149 ⁵/₈ in. (625 x 625 x 380 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MART 4152) p. 71
- 53**
 Mechanical flower stage set for Sergei Diaghilev's Ballets Russes performance in Rome in 1917 of Igor Stravinsky's "Le Chant du rossignol" [*The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 14 ³/₁₆ x 15 ³/₈ in. (36 x 39 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 70
- 54**
Bambina e marinaio [Young Girl and Sailor], 1917. Pieced wool on cotton, 31 ¹/₈ x 30 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (79 x 78 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 81
- 55**
Ballerina [Dancer], 1916-17. Collage, 13 x 11 ⁷/₁₆ in. (33 x 29 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 74
- 56**
Costume per balletto di Diaghilev [Costume for a Ballet by Diaghilev], 1917. Collage, 18 ³/₈ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (48 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 72
- 57**
Il Mandarin [The Mandarin], 1916-17. Collage, 15 ³/₈ x 12 ³/₈ in. (39 x 31.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 74
- 58**
Dama di corte cinese per Diaghilev [Lady of the Chinese Court for Diaghilev], 1917. Collage, 19 ¹¹/₁₆ x 14 ⁹/₁₆ in. (50 x 37 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 72
- 59**
Mandarin per il "Canto dell'Usignolo" [Mandarin for Stravinsky's *The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917. Collage, 25 ³/₈ x 20 ¹/₂ in. (64.5 x 53 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 73
- 60**
Mandarin per il "Canto dell'Usignolo" [Mandarin for Stravinsky's *The Song of the Nightingale*], 1917. Collage, 18 ⁷/₈ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (48 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 73
- 61**
Il cigno candido posteggiatore per "Il giardino zoologico" di Cangiullo [The White Swan Parking Attendant for Cangiullo's *Il giardino zoologico*], 1917. Collage, 15 ⁹/₁₆ x 16 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (39.5 x 43 cm). Private collection, Switzerland p. 74

- 62**
Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917 (signed "1915"). Watercolor on paper, 11 ¹³/₁₆ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (30 x 25 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 76
- 63**
Ritratto di Gilbert Clavel [Portrait of Gilbert Clavel], 1917 (signed "1916"). Charcoal on paper, 23 ³/₄ x 10 ¹/₄ in. (60.3 x 26 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 77
- 64**
Depero e Clavel: mimica! [Depero and Clavel: Mimicry!], Capri, 1917. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 3 ¹/₈ x 3 ¹/₈ in. (8 x 8 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.57)
p. 77
- 65**
Il musicista Alfredo Casella [The Musician Alfredo Casella], 1917. Charcoal on paper, 18 ¹/₂ x 13 ⁹/₁₆ in. (47 x 34.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 86
- 66**
Studio per "Un istituto per suicidi" de Gilbert Clavel [Study for Gilbert Clavel's *Suicides' Institute*], 1917. Charcoal on paper, 8 ¹¹/₁₆ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (22 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 79
- 67**
Ballerina [Dancer], 1916–17. Charcoal on paper, 13 ⁹/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₄ in. (34.5 x 23.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 79
- 68**
Figura (Architettura sintetica di un uomo) [A Figure, or Synthetic Architecture of a Man], 1917. Charcoal on paper, 12 ³/₈ x 8 ¹/₄ in. (31.5 x 21 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 79
- 69**
Marinaio sintetico con pipa [Synthetic Sailor with Pipe], 1917. Charcoal on paper, 14 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 11 in. (38 x 28 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 79
- 70**
Automi. Prospettiva dinamica figurata [Automata. Dynamic Perspective with Figures], 1917. Watercolor on paper, 24 ³/₈ x 15 ¹/₄ in. (62 x 40 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 80
- 71**
Dama di corte per Diaghilev [Lady of the Court for Diaghilev], 1917. Ink and pencil on paper, 7 ⁵/₁₆ x 6 ¹/₂ in. (18.5 x 16.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 72
- 72**
Mario Sironi, *Dinamismo di una ballerina* [Dynamism of a Dancer], 1917. Mixed media on paper, 10 ⁵/₈ x 7 ¹/₂ in. (27 x 20 cm). Private collection
p. 41
- 73**
Un istituto per suicidi [Suicides' Institute] by Gilbert Clavel. Rome: Bernardo Lux Editore, 1917. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 9 ⁷/₈ x 7 ¹/₁₆ in. (25 x 18 cm). Archivo Lafuente
p. 78
- 74**
Illustration in Gilbert Clavel's novella *Un istituto per suicidi* [Suicides' Institute], c. 1917. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 3 ⁹/₁₆ x 5 ⁹/₁₆ in. (9 x 14.2 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 78
- 75**
Pagliaccio bianco per "Pagliacci" di Casella [White Clown for Alfredo Casella's *Clowns*], 1918. Collage, 21 ⁵/₈ x 15 ¹/₄ in. (55 x 40 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 87
- 76**
Al Teatro dei Piccoli, Balli plastici [At the Teatro dei Piccoli, Plastic Dances], 1918. Oil on canvas, 39 ³/₄ x 29 ⁹/₁₆ in. (101 x 75 cm). Collezione Girefin
p. 82
- 77**
I selvaggi rossi e neri [Red and Black Savages], 1918. Oil on card, 19 ¹¹/₁₆ x 19 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (50 x 50 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 83
- 78**
Balli plastici. Esposizione del pittore Depero [Plastic Dances. Exhibition of the Painter Depero]. Teatro dei Piccoli, Rome, April 1918. Brochure: letterpress on paper, 6 ⁵/₈ x 4 ³/₈ in. (16.8 x 12.1 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 83
- 79**
Marionette dei Balli plastici [Puppets for Plastic Dances], 1918. Oil on card, 11 ¹³/₁₆ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (30 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 84
- 80**
"Il Teatro Plastico" [The Plastic Theater], *Ars Nova*, April 1918. Magazine: letterpress and photogravure cuttings on card, 11 ⁷/₁₆ x 16 ¹/₈ in. (29 x 41.5 cm). Archivio Depero
p. 93
- 81**
"I Balli plastici futuristi" [Futurist Plastic Dances], *In Penombra. Rivista d'Arte Cinematografica*, year I, no. 3 (August 1918). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 11 ³/₁₆ x 16 ¹/₄ in. (28.4 x 41.3 cm). Archivio Depero
p. 92
- 82**
I miei Balli plastici [My Plastic Dances], 1918. Oil on canvas, 74 ³/₈ x 70 ³/₈ in. (189 x 180 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
pp. 88–89
- 83**
Paese di tarantelle [Land of Tarantellas], 1918. Oil on canvas, 46 ¹/₁₆ x 73 ⁵/₁₆ in. (117 x 187 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
pp. 98–99
- 84**
La bagnante [The Bather], 1918. Oil on canvas, 28 ¹/₄ x 21 ¹/₄ in. (71.8 x 55.2 cm). Musei Civici di Arte e Storia, Brescia
p. 97
- 85**
Il Mondo [The World], year V, no. 17 (April 27, 1919). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 13 ⁹/₁₆ x 9 ⁵/₁₆ in. (34.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection
p. 83
- 86**
Diavoletti di caucciù a scatto [Little Rubber Devils], 1919. Oil on canvas, 49 ¹/₄ x 43 ⁵/₁₆ in. (125 x 110 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 94
- 87**
Mandarino con ombrello [Mandarin with Parasol], 1919. Pieced wool on cotton, 25 ³/₈ x 20 ¹/₂ in. (64.5 x 53 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 75
- 88**
Io e mia moglie [My Wife and I], 1919. Oil on canvas, 44 ¹/₂ x 37 ³/₈ in. (113 x 95 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 107
- 89**
Selvaggetto [Little Wild Thing], 1919. Painted wood, 10 ¹/₁₆ x 4 ³/₄ x 1 ³/₈ in. (25.5 x 12 x 3.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 142
- 90**
Il giocoliere [The Juggler], 1919. Pencil and ink on paper, 5 ⁵/₁₆ x 5 ⁵/₁₆ in. (13.5 x 13.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 96
- 91**
Il circo [The Circus], 1919. Pencil on paper, 18 ¹/₂ x 17 ³/₄ in. (47 x 45 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 96
- 92**
Diavolo metallico [Metalic Devil], 1919 (signed "1916"). Collage, 15 ³/₈ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (39 x 30 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 85
- 93**
I selvaggi (progetto per arazzo) [Savages (Tapestry Design)], 1920. Ink on paper, 11 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 12 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (30.3 x 32.3 cm). Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto
p. 117
- 94**
Unknown photographer, *Lavorazione delle tarsie in panno nel salone di casa Keppel* [Fabric inlay work in the sitting room of the Keppel House], Rovereto, 1920. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 16 ⁷/₁₆ x 22 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (41.8 x 58.3 cm). Studio fotografico B. Filippini, Rovereto. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.64)
p. 112
- 95**
Ballerino di gomma (Danzatore di caucciù) [Rubber Dancer (Rubber Danseur)], 1920. Cushion: fabric, 20 ¹/₂ x 21 ⁵/₈ in. (52 x 55 cm). Private collection
p. 95
- 96**
Due maschere tropicali [Two Tropical Masks], 1920. Pieced wool on cotton, 54 ⁵/₁₆ x 38 ⁹/₁₆ in. (138 x 98 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 119
- 97**
Diavolo di caucciù [Rubber Devil], 1920. Pieced wool on cotton, 23 ¹³/₁₆ x 23 ⁵/₈ in. (60.5 x 60 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 118
- 98**
Studio per Cavalcata fantastica [Study for Fantastical Ride], 1920. Pencil on paper, 18 ³/₈ x 23 in. (48 x 58.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 120
- 99**
Città meccanizzata dalle ombre [City Mechanized by Shadows], 1920. Oil on canvas, 46 ³/₈ x 74 in. (119 x 188 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
pp. 123–124
- 100**
Cavalcata fantastica [Fantastical Ride], 1920. Pieced wool on burlap, 93 ⁵/₁₆ x 148 in. (237 x 376 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
pp. 120–121
- 101**
Flora e fauna magica [Magical Flora and Fauna], 1920. Oil on canvas, 51 ³/₁₆ x 77 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (130 x 198 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
pp. 124–125
- 102**
Giacomo Balla, *Exposition des Peintres Futuristes Italiens et Conférence de Marinetti* [Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painters and Conference by Marinetti]. Galerie Reinhardt, Paris, May 1921. Poster: lithograph on paper, 38 ⁷/₈ x 30 ¹/₈ in. (98.7 x 78.4 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 53
- 103**
Giacomo Balla, *Exposition des Peintres Futuristes Italiens et Conférence de Marinetti* [Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painters and Conference by Marinetti]. Galerie Reinhardt, Paris, May 1921. Catalogue: letterpress on paper, 9 ¹/₄ x 6 ³/₈ in. (23.4 x 17.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 53
- 104**
Ritratto psicologico dell'aviatore Azari [Psychological Portrait of the Pilot Azari], 1922. Oil on canvas, 55 ¹/₈ x 36 ¹/₈ in. (140 x 93 cm). Private collection, Brescia
p. 128

105

Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero, Rovereto [Depero Futurist House of Art, Rovereto], 1922. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 5 5/8 x 3 3/4 in. (14.3 x 9.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 110

106

Teatro degli Indipendenti (Teatro sperimentale). Bragaglia. Girotondo. Dieci quadri di Arturo Schnitzler. Novita' per l'Italia. Piazza Barberini [Theatre of the Independents (Experimental Theater)]. [Director: Anton Giulio] Bragaglia. Ring-around-the-rosie. Ten Paintings by Arthur Schnitzler. Novelty in Italy. Piazza Barberini], 1922. Poster: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 27 3/4 x 12 1/2 in. (70.5 x 32.7 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 102

107

Tutti all'inferno!!! Cabaret del Diavolo [Everyone to Hell!!! The Devil's Cabaret], 1922. Invitation: lithograph on card, 5 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (14 x 8.8 cm). Archivio Depero

p. 145

108

Unknown photographer, *Fortunato Depero ritratto di profilo* [Fortunato Depero Profile Portrait], 1922. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 3/4 x 3 3/4 in. (12 x 8.5 cm). Stab. d'arte fotografica A. S. Biasiori, Trento. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 132

109

Unknown photographer, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, 1922. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 5 1/2 x 3 9/16 in. (14 x 9 cm). La Serenissima. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.1.244)

p. 132

110

Unknown photographer, *Depero prima di un volo* [Depero before a Flight] and *Depero dopo il volo* [Depero after the Flight], Turin, 1922. Photographs: gelatin silver prints on fiber-based paper, 3 7/8 x 4 1/4 in. (8 x 10.5 cm) each. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.1.75 and Dep.7.1.1.1.76)

p. 126

111

NOI. Rivista d'Arte Futurista [NOI. Futurist Art Journal], no. 1 (April 1923). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 13 1/2 x 9 3/4 in. (34.3 x 24.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 145

112

Unknown photographer, *La grande selvaggia* [Large Savage], c. 1923. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 16 3/4 x 12 in. (41.5 x 30.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.3.1.268)

p. 143

113

Doppio ritratto di Marinetti [Double Portrait of Marinetti], 1923. Collage, 18 1/2 x 24 13/16 in. (47 x 63 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

pp. 136–137

114

Panciotto futurista di Marinetti, Panciotto "serpenti" [Marinetti's Futurist Gilet, "Serpents" Vest], c. 1923. Vest: pieced wool and cotton, 22 13/16 x 22 1/16 in. (58 x 56 cm). Private collection

p. 140

115

Panciotto futurista di Depero [Depero's Futurist Gilet], 1923. Vest: pieced wool and cotton, 20 1/2 x 17 3/4 in. (52 x 45 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

p. 141

116

Rovente. Quindicinale futurista [Topical. Futurist Fortnightly], nos. 7–8 (Parma, May 19, 1923). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 13 9/16 x 9 3/8 in. (34.5 x 25 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 112

117

Mangiatori di cuori [Heart Eaters], 1922–23. Painted wood, 14 3/16 x 9 1/16 x 3 15/16 in. (36 x 23 x 10 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

p. 142

118

Cavaliere piumato [Plumed Knight], 1923. Painted wood, 38 3/16 x 36 3/8 x 17 3/4 in. (97 x 93 x 45 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

p. 142

119

Mario Castagneri, Depero in the dressing room at the Teatro Trianon in Milan (Depero painter and poet), c. 1924. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 8 7/8 x 6 3/4 in. (22.5 x 17 cm). Archivio Depero

p. 65

120

La pitonessa [The Soothsayer], 1924 (signed "1916" and "1924"). Collage and ink on paper, 22 1/4 x 17 1/4 in. (56.5 x 43.8 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

p. 80

121

Marinetti temporale patriottico. Ritratto psicologico [Marinetti Patriotic Storm. Psychological Portrait], 1924. Oil on canvas, 86 5/8 x 63 in. (220 x 160 cm). Private collection

p. 27

122

Spazialità lunari, o Convengo in uno smeraldo [Lunar Space, or Meeting within an Emerald], 1924. Oil on canvas, 39 3/8 x 37 3/8 in. (100 x 95 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

p. 146

123

VIII Mostra d'arte di Como [VIII Como Art Fair], 1924. Poster: lithograph on paper, 27 1/2 x 19 3/8 in. (70 x 50 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 155

124

Richard Ginori, 1924. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 9 3/8 x 6 3/8 in. (23.2 x 17.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 161

125

Padiglione pubblicitario [Trade Fair Pavilion], 1924. Ink on paper, 17 1/2 x 12 13/16 in. (43.5 x 32.5 cm). Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto

p. 158

126

Linoleum – il pavimento moderno [Linoleum – The Modern Flooring] (1924). Magazine: photogravure on paper, 14 3/16 x 11 in. (36 x 28 cm). Private collection

p. 153

127

Gara ippica tra le nubi [Horse race among the Clouds], 1924. Oil on canvas, 44 1/8 x 49 1/4 in. (112 x 125 cm). Private collection

p. 147

128

Mandorlato Vido [Vido Nougat], 1924. Poster: lithograph on paper, 55 1/8 x 39 3/8 in. (140 x 100 cm). Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive

p. 152

129

Unknown artist, *Teatro Lirico. Recite straordinare di Teresa Franchini e Mario Fumagalli. Il Tamburo di Fuoco di F. T. Marinetti* [Lyrical Theatre. Extraordinary Performance by Teresa Franchini and Mario Fumagalli. *The Drum of Fire* by F. T. Marinetti], c. 1924. Poster: letterpress on paper, 38 3/16 x 19 7/8 in. (97 x 50.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 103

130

NOI. Rivista d'Arte Futurista [NOI. Futurist Art Journal], nos. 10–12 (Autumn 1925). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 13 9/16 x 9 3/4 in. (34.5 x 24.8 cm). Archivio Depero

p. 145

131

Unknown photographer, *Martellatori macchina* [Machine Hammerers], 1925. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 12 x 15 3/4 in. (30.5 x 40 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.3.1.286)

p. 143

132

Exposition des arts décoratifs. Maison d'Art futuriste Depero [Exhibition of Decorative Arts. Depero Futurist House of Art, Rovereto], 1925. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 3 11/16 x 5 1/2 in. (9.4 x 14 cm). Archivio Lafuente

p. 110

133

Padiglione pubblicitario [Trade Fair Pavilion], c. 1925. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 13 3/4 x 11 1/8 in. (35 x 29.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.3.1.279)

p. 237

134

G. Verzocchi V&D Mattoni Refrattari [G. Verzocchi, V&D Refractory Bricks], 1924–25. Ink on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 3/4 in. (33.5 x 23.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 155

135

Trentino. Rivista e Bollettino della Legione Trentina [Trentino. Journal and Bulletin of the Tridentine Legion], year V, no. 7 (1925). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 12 x 9 1/4 in. (30.5 x 23.4 cm). Archivio Lafuente

p. 144

136

Pupazzo Campari [Campari Doll], c. 1925. Painted wood, 25 x 18 1/8 x 11 7/16 in. (63.5 x 46 x 29 cm). Collezione M. Carpi, Rome

p. 174

137

Exhibition of Modern Italian Art. New York, Italy America Society, 1926. Catalogue: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 10 1/4 x 7 7/8 in. (26 x 20 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 179

138

Unknown photographer, *Panoramagico* [Panoramagico], after 1926. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 15 3/4 x 11 7/16 in. (40 x 29 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.31.300)

p. 101

139

La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated Magazine of the Italian People], no. 9 (1926). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 13 3/4 x 9 3/8 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection

p. 153

140

La Rivista Illustrata dell Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated Magazine of the Italian People], no. 1 (1927). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 13 3/4 x 9 3/8 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection

p. 153

141

Unica (Cioccolato): "Uova a sorpresa" [Unica (Chocolate) "Surprise Eggs"], 1927. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 13 3/8 x 9 7/16 in. (34 x 24 cm). Private collection

p. 175

142

Attività della Venezia Tridentina [Activities of Tridentine Venice], 1927. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in. (30 x 24 cm). Private collection

p. 156

143

Alto paesaggio d'acciaio (Alba e tramonto sulle Alpi) [High Landscape of Steel (Dawn and Sunset in the Alps)], 1927. Oil on canvas, 35 1/2 x 52 in. (90 x 132 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, long-term loan (MART 861)

pp. 148–149

144

Scarabeo veneziano (Il gondoliere) [Venetian Beetle (The Gondolier)], 1927. Oil on canvas, 23 3/8 x 35 1/2 in. (60 x 90 cm). Private collection, Milan

p. 151

145

Buona Pasqua [Happy Easter], 1927. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 13 3/8 x 9 7/16 in. (34 x 24 cm). Private collection p. 153

146

1919. *Rassegna Mensile Illustrata* [1919. Monthly Illustrated Review], no. 3 (1927). Magazine: lithograph on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection p. 153

147

1919. *Rassegna Mensile Illustrata* [1919. Monthly Illustrated Review], no. 11 (1927). Magazine: lithograph on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection p. 156

148

Depero futurista 1913–1927. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927. Book: letterpress on paper, 9 5/8 x 12 9/16 in. (24.5 x 31.9 cm). Three copies on display: Private collection, Switzerland; Private collection; and MART, Archivio di Nuova Scrittura, Collezione Paolo Della Grazia p. 176

149

Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero, Rovereto [Depero Futurist House of Art, Rovereto], c. 1927. Postcard: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 5 5/8 x 3 5/8 in. (14.3 x 9.3 cm). Archivio Depero p. 108

150

Unknown artist, *Esposizione Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero* [Depero Futurist House of Art Exhibition], Libreria Principato, Messina, May 5–14, 1927. Poster: letterpress on paper, 27 9/16 x 39 3/8 in. (70 x 100 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero p. 111

151

Padiglione del Libro Bestetti Tumminelli Treves alla III Mostra Internazionale delle Arti Decorative [Bestetti, Tumminelli and Treves Book Pavilion at the III International Exhibition of Decorative Arts], Monza, 1927. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 9 1/16 x 11 1/4 in. (23 x 28.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.1.125) p. 157

152

Emporium, vol. LXVI, no. 396 (December 1927). Magazine: photogravure on paper, 10 5/8 x 7 5/8 in. (27 x 20 cm). Archivio Lafuente p. 153

153

Motociclista, solido in velocità [Biker, Solidified in Speed], 1927. Oil on canvas, 46 1/16 x 64 3/8 in. (117 x 163.5 cm). Private collection, Switzerland pp. 162–163

154

1928, 1927. Calendar cover: collage on paper, 12 3/8 x 15 in. (32 x 38.1 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 161

155

Corsa in salita Trento-Bondone [Trento-Bondone Hill Climb Race], July 22, 1928. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 9 5/16 x 6 3/8 in. (23.6 x 17 cm). Archivio Lafuente p. 161

156

Bitter Campari l'aperitivo [Bitter Campari the Aperitif], 1928. Poster: lithograph on paper, 38 9/16 x 26 9/16 in. (98 x 67.5 cm). Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive p. 154

157

La Rivista Illustrata del Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated Magazine of the Italian People], year VI, no. 10 (1928). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Archivio Lafuente p. 161

158

Citrus, 1928. Postcard: lithograph on card, 3 1/2 x 5 5/8 in. (8.8 x 14.3 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 161

159

1919, 1928. Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 15 1/8 x 10 5/8 in. (38.5 x 26.3 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 161

160

Con un occhio vidi un Cordial con l'altro un Bitter Campari [With an Eye I Saw a Cordial, with the Other a Bitter Campari], 1928. India ink on card, 13 1/4 x 11 7/16 in. (33.7 x 29.1 cm). Galleria Campari (2604) p. 171

161

Progetto per padiglioni pubblicitari Casa d'Arte Futurista Depero [Pavilion Design for the Depero Futurist House of Art], 1927–28. Pencil on paper, 12 3/16 x 12 in. (31 x 30.4 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0434-a) p. 167

162

Centrale di azione [Action Headquarters], 1928. Photo collage, 7 7/8 x 12 3/16 in. (20 x 31 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0025-c, Dep. F.884) p. 178

163

Automobile verde di lusso (Autentica New York). Pagina parolibera [Green Luxury Car (Authentic New York). Free-word composition], 1928. India ink on paper, 9 15/16 x 8 in. (25.3 x 20.4 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0505-a) p. 179

164

Unknown photographer, *Lavoranti della Casa d'Arte Depero a Rovereto* [Workers at the Depero Futurist House of Art in Rovereto], 1928. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 10 5/8 x 13 in. (27 x 33 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.1.131) p. 112

165

Bitter Cordial, 1928. India ink on card, 12 11/16 x 10 3/4 in. (32.3 x 7.4 cm). Galleria Campari (2611) p. 171

166

Secolo XX [20th Century], 1928. Oil on board, 25 1/4 x 19 5/8 in. (64.1 x 49.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 187

167

Secolo XX [20th Century], no. 6 (1929). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 15 1/4 x 11 5/8 in. (38.7 x 29.5 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 186

168

Depero Modernist Paintings and Tapestries. Guarino Gallery, New York, January 8–February 8, 1929. Brochure: letterpress on paper, 9 7/16 x 7 7/8 in. (24 x 20 cm) folded. MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero p. 188

169

Depero Futurist Art, 1929. Flyer: letterpress on paper, 3 3/4 x 4 3/8 in. (9.5 x 12 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero p. 193

170

Atlantica [Atlantic] (June–July 1929). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 9 5/8 x 6 1/2 in. (24.5 x 16.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero p. 192

171

Movie Makers, vol. IV, no. 12 (December 1929). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 12 x 9 1/4 in. (30.5 x 23.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero p. 192

172

Futurismo [Futurism] and *Distruggiamo i musei* [Let's Destroy the Museums], 1929. Postcards: photogravure on card, touched up by the artist, 5 1/2 x 3 1/2 in. (14 x 8.8 cm) and 3 1/2 x 5 1/2 in. (8.8 x 14 cm). Archivio Depero p. 185

173

Hotel Manhattan, c. 1929. Postcard: photogravure on card, touched up by the artist, 5 7/16 x 3 1/4 in. (13.8 x 8.3 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 185

174

Mr. & Mrs. Nathan Jacobson, 1929. Christmas card: lithograph on card, 4 3/16 x 5 7/16 in. (10.6 x 13.8 cm). Archivio Depero p. 191

175

Unknown photographer, *Mostra Depero a New York (a la sala del Fascio Femminile)* [Depero Exhibition in New York (at the Fascio Margherita di Savoia)], 1929. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, affixed to card, 8 7/16 x 11 1/4 in. (22 x 28.5 cm). Archivio Depero p. 190

176

Mostra Depero a New York (a la sala del Fascio Femminile) [Depero Exhibition in New York (at the Fascio Margherita di Savoia)], 1929. Invitation: letterpress on card, 3 3/4 x 6 5/8 in. (9.5 x 16.8 cm). Archivio Depero p. 190

177

Christmas Greetings, for Dance Magazine (New York, December 1929). Magazine ad: lithograph on paper, 12 11/16 x 9 5/8 in. (32.3 x 24.5 cm). Private collection p. 191

178

Primo dizionario aereo italiano [First Italian Aviation Dictionary] by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti and Fedele Azari. Milan: Morreale, 1929. Book: letterpress on paper, 7 x 4 1/8 in. (17.8 x 12.3 cm). L'Arengario Studio Bibliografico p. 130

179

Festa di bambini-strilli. Pagina parolibera [Children-Screams Party. Free-word composition], 1929. India ink on paper, 14 3/16 x 10 1/4 in. (36 x 26 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0825-a) p. 195

180

Luna park. Esplosione tipografica (Montagne russe a Coney Island) [Luna Park. Typographic Explosion (Roller Coaster in Coney Island)], 1929. India ink on paper, 19 x 11 1/8 in. (48.2 x 30.2 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0557-a) p. 194

181

"Depero – Italian Modernist Shows His Sensational Paintings and Tapestries Here." *The New York Sun* (New York, January 12, 1929). Newspaper cutting: letterpress and photogravure on paper, affixed to card, 21 7/16 x 15 3/8 in. (54.5 x 40 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero p. 208

182

"Il futurista Depero alle Gallerie Guarino" [The Futurist Depero at the Guarino Gallery], *Corriere d'America* (New York, January 10, 1929). Newspaper page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, affixed to card, 16 3/4 x 11 13/16 in. (42.5 x 30 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero p. 189

183

"F. P. Marinetti glorificato dal pittore Depero" [F. P. (sic) Marinetti Glorified by the Painter Depero], *Corriere d'America* (New York, June 9, 1929). Newspaper page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 16 1/2 x 12 3/16 in. (42 x 31 cm). Private collection p. 209

184

Big Sale (Mercato di Down-Town) [Big Sale (Downtown Market)], 1929. Oil on canvas, 45 ¹¹/₁₆ x 72 ⁷/₁₆ in. (116 x 184 cm). Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto
pp. 206–207

185

Cordial Campari, 1929. India ink on card, 21 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 15 ³/₁₆ in. (55.5 x 40.2 cm). Galleria Campari (2622)
p. 168

186

Bozzetto per locandina pubblicitaria De Marinis & Lorie [Sketch for De Marinis & Lorie Advertising Poster], 1929. India ink on paper, 16 ¹/₂ x 12 ³/₄ in. (42 x 32 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0787-a)
p. 212

187

Carne e putrelle [Meat and Beams], 1929. India ink on paper, 18 ⁵/₁₆ x 14 ⁹/₁₆ in. (46.5 x 37 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0182-a)
p. 197

188

Famiglia negra in Elevated [Black Family in Elevated Train], 1929. Tempera and pencil on paper, 20 ¹/₂ x 28 ³/₄ in. (52 x 73 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0091-a)
p. 196

189

11 bozzetti per coperchi di scatole intarsiate. Motivi decorativi per coperchi di scatole intarsiate [11 sketches for inlaid box lids. Decorative motifs for inlaid box lids], 1925–30. India ink and watercolor on paper, 13 ³/₈ x 19 ³/₈ in. (34 x 49.3 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 2275-a)
p. 116

190

Bozzetto pubblicitario per il Ristorante Zucca (Corsa di cameriere) [Sketch for Ristorante Zucca Advertisement (Running Waiter)], 1930. India ink and pencil on paper, 13 ¹³/₁₆ x 17 ⁹/₁₆ in. (35.1 x 44.6 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0502-a)
p. 213

191

Bozzetto per il Ristorante Zucca (Scorcio dell'interno) [Sketch for Ristorante Zucca Advertisement (View of the Interior)], 1930. Pencil on paper, 12 x 9 in. (30.5 x 22.8 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0532-a)
p. 213

192

Unknown photographer, *Restaurante Zucca* in New York decorated by Fortunato Depero, c. 1960. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 7 ¹/₁₆ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (18 x 24 cm). Archivio Depero
p. 213

193

Bozzetto per pubblicità Venus Pencils [Sketch for Venus Pencils Advertisement], 1929–30. India ink on paper, 17 ¹/₈ x 14 <sup>1/₄ in. (43.4 x 36.1 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0016-c)
p. 214</sup>

194

Cordial Campari – New York, 1929–30. India ink on card, 21 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 15 ⁵/₁₆ in. (55.7 x 39.7 cm). Galleria Campari (2614)
p. 168

195

Nove teste con capello [Nine Heads with Hat], 1929–30. Pieced wool on cotton, 18 ¹/₈ x 18 ³/₈ in. (46 x 48 cm). Private collection, Switzerland
p. 210

196

Bozzetto per pubblicità Venus Pencils [Sketch for Venus Pencils Advertisement], 1929–30. Collage, 12 x 19 ¹/₈ in. (30.5 x 50.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0285-a)
p. 215

197

Bozzetto di copertina per “Vanity Fair” [Sketch for *Vanity Fair* Cover], 1930. Collage, 18 ¹/₈ x 14 in. (46 x 35.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, long-term deposit (MART 863)
p. 216

198

Bozzetto di copertina per “Vogue” [Sketch for *Vogue* Cover], 1930. Collage, 17 ¹⁵/₁₆ x 13 ⁹/₁₆ in. (45.6 x 34.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, long-term deposit (MART 864)
p. 216

199

Vanity Fair (New York, July 1930). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, 12 ⁷/₈ x 9 ³/₄ in. (32.7 x 24.7 cm). Private collection
p. 216

200

L'innaffiatore delle vie di New York [New York Road Sprinkler], 1930. Ink and tempera on card, 16 ¹/₈ x 14 ⁹/₁₆ in. (41 x 37 cm). Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto
p. 204

201

Macchinismo babelico [Mechanization of Babel], 1930. India ink on paper, 15 ³/₈ x 18 ¹/₈ in. (40 x 48 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0092-a)
p. 199

202

Broadway, vetrine – folla – macchine – Paramount [Broadway, Windows – Crowds – Cars – Paramount], 1930. India ink and tempera on paper, 23 x 27 ¹/₂ in. (58.8 x 69.7 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0090-a)
p. 200

203

Broadway, folla, Roxy Theater [Broadway, Crowd, Roxy Theater], 1930. India ink and tempera on paper, 17 ⁵/₁₆ x 24 in. (44 x 61 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0095-a)
p. 198

204

Subway (Folla ai treni sotterranei) [Subway (Crowded Underground Trains)], 1930. India ink and tempera on card, 23 ³/₈ x 35 ¹/₂ in. (60 x 90 cm). Collezione M. Carpi, Rome
p. 201

205

Bozzetto di scenario mobile per il balletto “The New Babel” [Sketch of Mobile Set for the Dance “The New Babel”], 1930. India ink and tempera on paper, 15 ³/₈ x 19 ⁹/₁₆ in. (40 x 49.7 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0094-a)
p. 203

206

Grattacieli e subway per “The New Babel” [Skyscrapers and Subway for “The New Babel”], 1930. Ink and watercolor on paper, 16 ¹/₁₆ x 18 ⁷/₁₆ in. (40.8 x 46.8 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0096-a)
p. 202

207

Senco, 2ª mostra della radio [2nd Radio Exhibition], 1930. Advertisement: lithograph on card, 9 ³/₈ x 6 ³/₄ in. (23.8 x 17 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 234

208

Unknown photographer, *Motonave “Roma”: ponti* [“Rome” Steamship: Deck], October 1930. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, affixed to card, 9 ¹/₁₆ x 19 ¹/₁₆ in. (23 x 50 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.71.1.1.144)
pp. 220–221

209

Bruno Munari, *Forze dell'impero* [Forces of the Empire], c. 1930. Photocollage on card, 26 ¹/₈ x 19 in. (66.3 x 48.2 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 131

210

Bruno Munari, *Aeronautica italiana* [Italian Air Force], c. 1930. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 8 ³/₈ x 6 ³/₈ in. (22.2 x 17.1 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 131

211

Bruno Munari, *Airplane*, c. 1930. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 11 ⁵/₈ x 7 ⁷/₈ in. (29.5 x 20 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 131

212

Bruno Munari, *They have even invented this, the world has gone mad*, c. 1930. Photocollage on card, 9 ³/₈ x 7 in. (23.4 x 17.3 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 131

213

Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *Almanacco Italia veloce* [Fast Italy Almanac], 1930. Leaflet: letterpress and photogravure on paper, with handwritten notes, 11 ³/₈ x 8 ⁷/₈ in. (28.9 x 22.5 cm) folded. Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 224

214

Sparks (New York, September 1930). Magazine cover: lithograph on paper, affixed to card, 11 x 16 ¹/₈ in. (28 x 41 cm) spread. Private collection
p. 217

215

Gebrauchsgraphik – International Advertising Art, volume with bound issues nos. 1, 2, 4, 6, 7 and 8, 1930. Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 11 ¹³/₁₆ x 9 ¹/₄ in. (30 x 23.5 cm). Private collection
p. 218

216

Quattro istantanee di Depero realizzate a New York [Four Shots Taken by Depero in New York], 1928–30. Photographs: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, affixed to card, 9 ¹/₄ x 6 ³/₈ in. (23.4 x 16.8 cm). Private collection
p. 184

217

News Auto Atlas, New York, 1930. Road map: letterpress and lithograph on card, 12 ¹³/₁₆ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (32.5 x 24 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero
p. 211

218

Paesaggio quasi tipografico Cordial Campari [Cordial Campari Quasi-typographic Landscape], 1930–31. India ink on card, 23 ³/₈ x 15 ⁹/₁₆ in. (60 x 39.5 cm). Galleria Campari (2618)
p. 168

219

Unknown artist, *Simultanina*, 1931. Flyer: letterpress on paper, 13 ³/₈ x 9 ³/₈ in. (34.6 x 24.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 226

220

“Depero a New York” [Depero in New York], *La Sera* (Milan, February 25, 1931). Newspaper page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 23 x 16 ³/₈ in. (58.5 x 41.5 cm). Archivio Depero
p. 222

221

“Poeti futuristi – L'autunno futurista” [Futurist Poets: The Futurist Autumn], *Futurismo* [Futurism], year 1, no. 15 (Rome, December 18, 1931). Magazine page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 25 x 17 ¹/₄ in. (63.5 x 43.8 cm). Archivio Depero
p. 225

222

Vanity Fair (New York, March 1931). Magazine: lithograph on paper, 12 ³/₄ x 9 ¹/₈ in. (32.3 x 25 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection
p. 216

223

Numero unico futurista Campari [Campari Futurist Single Edition]. Milan: F. Depero/D. Campari, 1931. Book: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 6 1/8 x 9 7/16 in. (15.6 x 24 cm). Archivo Lafuente

p. 229

224

Il nuovo semaforo Bitter Cordial Campari [The New Bitter Cordial Campari Traffic Lights], 1931. India ink on card, 17 5/16 x 12 3/8 in. (44 x 32 cm). Galleria Campari (2619)

p. 168

225

Segnalazioni di Gerbino [Gerbino Signals], 1931. India ink on card, 12 1/2 x 12 3/8 in. (31.8 x 31.5 cm). Galleria Campari (2628)

p. 172

226

Palestra tipografica [Typographic Parade], 1931. India ink on card, 20 1/16 x 15 1/2 in. (51 x 39.3 cm). Galleria Campari (2616)

p. 171

227

Bitter Cordial Campari gli unici che si salvano [Bitter Cordial Campari, The Only Ones Saved], 1931. India ink on card, 16 15/16 x 13 1/4 in. (43 x 33.5 cm). Galleria Campari (2614)

p. 270

228

Campari, 1931. India ink on card, 15 9/16 x 16 3/8 in. (39.5 x 41.5 cm). Galleria Campari (2623)

p. 169

229

Un triplice evviva [Three Hurrahs], 1931. India ink on card, 16 3/4 x 12 3/4 in. (42.5 x 32.4 cm). Galleria Campari (2624)

p. 170

230

Viale delle esclamazioni [Exclamation Avenue], 1931. India ink on card, 9 9/16 x 12 13/16 in. (23.7 x 32.5 cm). Galleria Campari (2645)

p. 173

231

Esperimento spiritico [Spirits Experiment], 1931. India ink on card, 7 7/8 x 8 1/4 in. (20 x 21 cm). Galleria Campari (2649)

p. 172

232

Spirale Cordial Campari liquor [Cordial Campari Liquor Spiral], 1931. India ink on card, 12 5/8 x 13 9/16 in. (32 x 34.5 cm). Galleria Campari (2635)

p. 173

233

New York, film vissuto. Primo libro parolibero sonoro [New York – A Lived Film. First Free-word Audio Book]. Rovereto: n.p., 1931. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 6 1/8 x 9 7/16 in. (15.6 x 24 cm). Two copies on display: Merrill C. Berman Collection and Archivo Lafuente

p. 219

234

Donna matita per pubblicità Venus Pencils [Miss Pencil for Venus Pencils Advertisement], 1929–31. India ink and pencil on paper, 15 11/16 x 13 1/4 in. (39.9 x 33.6 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0285-a)

p. 214

235

“La prima mostra della ambientazione e della moda a Torino” [First Interior Decoration and Fashion Exhibition in Turin], *La Citta' Nuova*, year I, no. 7 (Turin, June 15, 1932). Magazine cover: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 21 3/4 x 16 3/8 in. (55.3 x 41.6 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 228

236

Depero New-Jork Nuova Babele [Depero New York (sic) New Babel], c. 1932. Poster: letterpress on paper, 39 3/8 x 27 9/16 in. (100 x 70 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 228

237

Mario Castagneri, *Depero e grattacieli* [Depero and Skyscrapers], c. 1932. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, affixed to card, 11 13/16 x 9 7/16 in. (30 x 24 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.7.1.1.162)

p. 183

238

La Rivista Illustrata dell'Popolo d'Italia [The Illustrated Magazine of the Italian People], no. 2 (1932). Magazine cover: letterpress on paper, 13 1/4 x 9 5/8 in. (33.5 x 24.5 cm). Private collection

p. 175

239

Primo schizzo di Nitrito in velocità [First sketch for Speeding Nitrite], 1932. Ink on paper, 7 7/8 x 13 3/4 in. (20 x 35 cm). Private collection, Switzerland

p. 127

240

Futurismo [Futurism], year I, no. 8 (Rome, October 28, 1932). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 1/8 x 17 3/8 in. (64 x 44 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 231

241

Futurismo [Futurism], year I, no. 16 (Rome, December 25, 1932). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 1/8 x 17 3/8 in. (64 x 43.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 231

242

Bozzetto di padiglione per la ditta Davide Campari & C. [Sketch of Pavilion for the Davide Campari & C. Company], 1933. India ink on card, 15 3/4 x 14 9/16 in. (40 x 37 cm). Galleria Campari (2620)

p. 167

243

Dinamo Futurista [Futurist Dynamo], 1933. Advertisement: letterpress and photogravure on card, 11 11/16 x 9 1/16 in. (29.7 x 23 cm). Archivo Lafuente

p. 233

244

Dinamo Futurista [Futurist Dynamo], year I, no. 1 (Rovereto, February 1933). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 16 1/8 x 11 13/16 in. (41 x 30 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 229

245

Dinamo Futurista [Futurist Dynamo], year I, no. 2 (Rovereto, March 1933). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 16 1/8 x 11 13/16 in. (41 x 30 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 229

246

Dinamo Futurista. Numero speciale per le onoranze ad Umberto Boccioni [Futurist Dynamo. Special Issue in Honor of Umberto Boccioni], nos. 3–5 (Rovereto, June 1933). Magazine: letterpress on paper, 13 9/16 x 9 5/8 in. (34.5 x 24.5 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 230

247

Dinamo Futurista. Numero speciale per le onoranze ad Umberto Boccioni [Futurist Dynamo. Special Issue in Honor of Umberto Boccioni], 1933. Poster: letterpress on paper, 19 11/16 x 27 9/16 in. (50 x 70 cm). MART, Archivio del '900, Fondo Depero

p. 230

248

Filippo Masoero, *The Atlanticis fly over Costantino's Arch in Rome*, 1933. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 11 1/8 x 16 1/4 in. (30.2 x 41.2 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 130

249

Futurismo [Futurism], year II, no. 38 (Rome, May 28, 1933). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 1/8 x 17 3/8 in. (64 x 44 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection

p. 231

- 250**
Unknown artist [Mino Somenzi], *Grande Mostra Nazionale d'Arte Futurista* [National Exhibition of Futurist Art], 1933. Poster: letterpress on paper, 27 ¹¹/₁₆ x 13 ¹/₁₆ in. (70.3 x 33.1 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 227
- 251**
Futurismo [Futurism], year II, no. 42 (Rome, June 1933). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 ¹/₄ x 17 ¹/₄ in. (64.1 x 43.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 231
- 252**
Futurismo [Futurism], year II, no. 40 (Rome, June 11, 1933). Magazine: letterpress and lithograph on paper, 25 x 17 ¹/₄ in. (63.5 x 43.8 cm). Private collection p. 230
- 253**
Bozzetto della prima pagina per "Alta Tensione Futurista" [Sketch for the First Page of High Futurist Tension], 1933. India ink and pencil on paper, 19 ⁵/₈ x 13 ³/₈ in. (49.9 x 34 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto p. 232
- 254**
Bozzetto della prima pagina per "Dinamo Futurista" [Sketch for the First Page of Futurist Dynamo], 1933. India ink and pencil on paper, 17 ¹/₁₆ x 11 ⁷/₁₆ in. (43.3 x 29.1 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto p. 232
- 255**
Liriche radiofoniche [Radio Lyrics]. Milan: G. Morreale, 1934. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 9 ⁵/₈ x 6 ¹/₂ in. (24.5 x 16.5 cm). Two copies on display: Merrill C. Berman Collection and Archivo Lafuente p. 234
- 256**
Esposizione privata Depero [Depero Private Show], 1934. Invitation: lithograph on card, 4 ¹/₂ x 5 ³/₄ in. (11.5 x 14.7 cm). Archivo Lafuente p. 233
- 257**
Xanti Schawinsky, *Si* [YES / Year XII of the Fascist Era], 1934. Poster: lithograph on paper, 37 ¹¹/₁₆ x 28 ¹/₄ in. (95.7 x 71.8 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 238
- 258**
Filippo Masoero, *Caproni Airplane*, c. 1935. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 7 x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (17.8 x 24 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 130
- 259**
Filippo Masoero, *Untitled*, c. 1935. Photomontage: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 ⁵/₈ x 5 ¹/₄ in. (12 x 14.9 cm). Merrill C. Berman Collection p. 130
- 260**
Bozzetto di diploma per il Partito Nazionale Fascista [Sketch of Diploma for the National Fascist Party], 1935. Tempera and India ink on paper, 17 ¹/₁₆ x 11 ¹³/₁₆ in. (43.3 x 30 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 1968-a /Dep. 6.38) p. 237
- 261**
Proclamazione e trionfo del tricolore [Proclamation and Triumph of the Tricolor], 1935. Tempera on card, affixed to Masonite, 89 ³/₄ x 55 ¹/₂ in. (228 x 141 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (Md 0179-b) p. 236
- 262**
Festa dell'Uva [Grape Festival], single issue (Rovereto, 1936). Magazine: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 10 ⁷/₈ x 8 ¹/₁₆ in. (27.6 x 20.5 cm). Archivo Lafuente p. 234
- 263**
Schizzo per carro allegorico Monopoli [Sketch for Monopoli Tobacco Factory Float], 1936. Pencil and India ink on paper, 22 ¹/₂ x 15 ¹/₄ in. (57.1 x 38.7 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 2268-a) p. 235
- 264**
Carro del dopolavoro della Manifattura Tabacchi (Monopoli) in occasione della Festa dell'Uva [Monopoli - Tobacco Factory Workers' Club Float for the Grape Festival], 1936. Photograph: gelatin silver print on fiber-based paper, 4 ⁵/₈ x 7 in. (11.7 x 17.8 cm). Archivo Depero p. 235
- 265**
Bilancio 1913-1936 [1913-1936 Balance]. Rovereto: R. Manfrini, 1937. Book: Letterpress on paper, 9 ⁹/₁₆ x 6 ³/₄ in. (24.3 x 17 cm). Two copies on display: MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero and Archivo Lafuente p. 237
- 266**
Ala fascista [Fascist Wing], 1937. Pieced wool on cotton, 80 ⁵/₁₆ x 37 ³/₁₆ in. (204 x 94.5 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0005-d) p. 239
- 267**
96 tavole a colori per "I Dopolavoro Aziendali in Italia" [96 Color Plates for the Italian after-work Facilities of the OND]. Rovereto: Manfrini, 1938. Book: printed on fabric, 11 ⁵/₈ x 10 ¹³/₁₆ in. (29.5 x 27.5 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero p. 240
- 268**
Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, *La potenza futurista di Depero* [Depero's Futurist Power], Rome, 1938. Document: typewritten text on paper, with handwritten notes, 10 ⁵/₈ x 14 ⁹/₁₆ in. (27 x 37 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero (Dep.4.4.61) p. 240
- 269**
Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life]. Trento: TEMI, 1940. Book: letterpress on card, 12 ⁵/₈ x 9 ⁷/₁₆ in. (32 x 24 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero p. 240
- 270**
"Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita" [Fortunato Depero in his Works and Life], *Il Brennero*, (Trento, May 21, 1940). Newspaper page: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 21 ⁷/₁₆ x 15 ³/₄ in. (54.5 x 40 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero p. 241
- 271**
A passo romano: lirismo fascista e guerriero programmatico e costruttivo [Roman Step: Programmatic and Constructive Fascist and Warrior Lyricism], 1943. Trento: Edizioni di credere obbedire combattere, 1943. Book: letterpress on paper, 9 ⁷/₁₆ x 6 ⁵/₁₆ in. (24 x 16 cm). Archivo Lafuente p. 241
- 272**
Address label for heavy box-luggage shipped to New York, c. 1947. Luggage label: letterpress on card, 4 ³/₈ x 9 ³/₁₆ in. (12.3 x 23.3 cm). Private collection p. 241
- 273**
So I Think, So I Paint: Ideologies of an Italian Self-made Painter. Trento: TEMI, 1947. Book: letterpress and photogravure on paper, 10 ⁵/₈ x 8 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (27 x 22 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero p. 241
- 274**
Fortunato Depero. New School for Social Research, New York, March 1-20, 1948. Leaflet: letterpress on paper, 6 ⁷/₈ x 4 ¹⁵/₁₆ in. (17.5 x 12.5 cm). MART, Archivo del '900, Fondo Depero p. 240
- 275**
Cantiere sonoro [Loud Construction Site], 1950. Charcoal and India ink on paper, 35 ¹³/₁₆ x 43 ¹¹/₁₆ in. (91 x 111 cm). MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto (MD 0027-a) pp. 242-243

FURTHER READING

A BRIEF SELECTION

Within the context of Italian art and the specific field of Futurism, the bibliography on Fortunato Depero is both extensive and specialized. With regard to the artist's own writings, there are extremely complete editions, such as the recent *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo* edited by Giovanni Lista (Milan: Abscondita, 2012 [Carte d'Artisti, 143]), which is repeatedly cited in these pages. In the present catalogue we have opted to offer the interested reader an accessible selection of publications by and on Depero, in addition to some bibliographical references that will orient him or her within the broader context of Futurism and the avant-gardes. The references are arranged into: (I) Texts by Fortunato Depero; (II) Texts on Fortunato Depero; (III) Exhibition Catalogues (one-man shows), and (IV) Reference Works.

In the first section the texts by Depero appear in chronological order. This section does not include references to the texts in *Depero futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927) or in Lista's compilation. In addition, the anthology presented in these pages (see pp.

356–430) includes forty-one texts by Depero from between 1914 and 1951 with their corresponding bibliographical references.

In the second section it has not been considered necessary to distinguish between monographs, contributions to multi-authored volumes and articles in journals.

The third section includes some of the most important solo exhibitions on the artist, presented in chronological order and extending as far as the most recent at La Pedrera in Barcelona, *Depero y la reconstrucción futurista del universo* (Barcelona: Fundació Catalunya-La Pedrera, 2013), while including a few other exhibitions of middling degree of importance held outside Italy. Depero's work has been included in group exhibitions with some regularity in recent decades, for which reason it has been decided only to cite here those held in Spain which have included his work. Among the most significant have been *Maestros del arte moderno en Italia 1910–1935. Colección Gianni Mattioli* at the Museo Español de Arte Contemporáneo, Madrid (Madrid:

Comisaria de Exposiciones de la Dirección General de Bellas Artes, 1970); *Italiens Moderne / Vanguardia italiana de entreguerras* at the Museum Fridericianum, Kassel [January 28 to March 25, 1990] and the Centre Julio González (IVAM), Valencia [April 5 to June 5, 1990] (Milan: Mazzotta; Valencia: Instituto Valenciano de Arte Moderno, 1990); *Futurismo 1909–1916* at the Museu Picasso Barcelona (Barcelona: Àmbit Serveis Editorials, 1996), and the bibliographical exhibition *Futurismo y cuenta nueva* at the Sala de Exposiciones del Archivo Municipal, Malaga (Malaga: Área de Cultura, Instituto Municipal del Libro y Ayuntamiento de Málaga, 2009).

Finally, the section devoted to reference works includes the bibliography cited in the thirteen essays in this catalogue and the notes in the anthology, except for references which, although important (for example, those to MacLuhan or Baudelaire) are too general for the purposes of this bibliographical selection. Erica Witschey and Inés d'Ors have patiently undertaken the editing and ordering of this bibliography.

I. Texts by Fortunato Depero

I.1 Books

Spezzature (impressioni-segni-ritmi). Rovereto: Tipografia Mercurio, 1913.

Depero futurista 1913–1927. Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927.

Liriche radiofoniche. Milan: Morreale, 1934. Repr. *Fortunato Depero: Liriche Radiofoniche*. Edited by Luciano Caruso. Florence: SPES, 1987.

Bilancio 1913–1936. Rovereto: Tipografia Manfrini, 1937.

96 tavole a colori per "I Dopolavoro Aziendali in Italia". Rovereto: Tipografia Manfrini, 1938.

Fortunato Depero nelle opere e nella vita. Trento: Tipografia Editrice Mutilati e Invalidi, 1940.

A passo romano: lirismo fascista e guerriero programmatico e costruttivo. Trento: Edizioni di credere obbedire combattere, 1943.

So I Think, So I Paint: Ideologies of an Italian Self-made Painter. Trento: Tipografia Editrice Mutilati e Invalidi, 1947.

Un futurista a New York. Edited by Claudia Salaris. Collana modernità. Montepulciano: Del Grifo, 1990.

I.2 Articles and Manifestos

"Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo," with Giacomo Balla. Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, 1915.

"Teatro plastico Depero – principi ed applicazioni." *Il Mondo*, V, no. 17 (Milan, April 27, 1919).

"Autopresentazione." In *Depero e la sua Casa d'Arte*, exh. cat. Rovereto: Tipografia Mercurio, 1921.

"Manifesto dell'arte pubblicitaria futurista." In Fortunato Depero and Giovanni Gerbino, *Numero unico futurista Campari*. Milan: Ditta Davide Campari, 1931.

"ABC del futurismo." *Dinamo Futurista*, 1, no. 1 (Rovereto, February 1933).

II. Texts on Fortunato Depero

Avanzi, Beatrice. "Fortunato Depero e la pubblicità: un'arte 'fatalmente moderna.'" In *Depero pubblicitario: dall'auto-réclame all'architettura pubblicitaria*, ed. Gabriella Belli and Beatrice Avanzi, 31–32. Milan: Skira, 2007.

Borgese, Leonardo. "Si è spento Fortunato Depero il più metodico pittore del futurismo." *Corriere della Sera*, November 30, 1960: 19.

Chiesa, Laura. "Transnational Multimedia: Fortunato Depero's Impressions of New

York City." *California Italian Studies*, vol. 1, no. 2 (2010). <http://escholarship.org/uc/item/7ff9j31s>.

Leiber, David. "The Socialization of Art." In Maurizio Scudiero and David Leiber, *Depero Futurista & New York*. Rovereto: Editore Sergio Longo, 1986.

—. "L'esperienza futurista di Fortunato Depero." In Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruire e meccanizzare l'universo*, ed. Giovanni Lista. Milan: Abscondita, 2012.

Notari, Umberto. "Depero e la sua casa d'arte." In *Grande esposizione arazzi, cuscini, pittura della Casa d'Arte Depero*. Rovereto: Casa d'Arte Depero, 1921.

Scudeiro, Maurizio. *Depero: l'uomo e l'artista*. Rovereto: Egon, 2009.

—. "Depero." *Art e Dossier*, 251 (Florence–Milan, 2009).

—. "La ricerca deperiana: problemi di metodo." In *Depero*, ed. Maurizio Fagiolo, 226–36. Milan: Electa, 1988.

III. Exhibition Catalogues

Esposizione futurista del pittore e scultore Depero [exh. cat. Sala Morgano, Capri, September 8–16, 1917]. Capri: Sala Morgano, 1917.

Depero e la sua Casa d'Arte [exh. cat. Palazzo Cova, Milan, January 29, 1921]. Rovereto: Tipografia Mercurio, 1921.

Grande esposizione arazzi, cuscini, pittura della Casa d'Arte Depero [exh. cat. Galleria Centrale d'Arte, Milan, January 29–February 20, 1921]. Rovereto: Casa d'Arte Depero, 1921.

Catalogo della Galleria e Museo Depero, Rovereto, il primo museo futurista d'Italia [exh. cat. permanent collection, Museo Depero, Rovereto]. Rovereto: Casa d'Arte, 1959.

Fortunato Depero, opere 1911–1930 [exh. cat. Martano/Due Gallerie d'Arte Martano, Turin]. Turin: La nuova grafica, 1969.

Fortunato Depero. Edited by Bruno Passamani. Rovereto: Musei Civici; Galleria Museo Depero, 1981.

Depero futurista & New York: il futurismo e l'arte pubblicitaria. Edited by Maurizio Scudiero and David Leiber [exh. cat. Rovereto, November 1986]. Rovereto: Editore Sergio Longo, 1986.

Depero futurista e l'arte pubblicitaria [exh. cat., Galleria Fonte d'Abisso, Modena]. Modena: Galleria Fonte d'Abisso Edizioni, 1988.

Depero futurista: grafica & pubblicità [exh. cat., Villa Antonini, Bellinzona]. Milan: Fabbri, 1989.

Fortunato Depero futuriste. De Rome à Paris 1915–1925 [exh. cat. Les musées de la Ville de

Paris. Pavillon des Arts, Paris]. Paris: Editions des musées de la Ville de Paris; Milan: Skira, 1996.

Depero futurista [exh. cat. Galeria Studio 53 and Galeria Spazio Arte, Rovereto]. Mori: La Grafica, 1998.

Fotunato Depero attraverso il futurismo. *Opere 1913–1958* [Galleria Poggiali & Forconi, Florence and Galleria d'Arte Il Castello, Trento]. Trento: Stampalith, 1998.

Depero futurista: Rome – Paris – New York, 1915–1932 and More. Edited by Gabriella Belli [exh. cat. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto; The Wolfsonian Florida International University, Miami Beach, Florida, March 11–July 26, 1999]. Milan: Skira, 1999.

Depero Deco: 109 disegni inediti per Arazzi, Cuscini e Pubblicità 1918–1932 [exh. cat. Galeria Studio 53 and Galeria Spazio Arte, Rovereto]. Mori: La Grafica, 2003.

Depero futurista [exh. cat. Palazzo Bricherasio, Turin]. Milan: Electa, 2004.

Depero pubblicitario: dall'auto-réclame all'architettura pubblicitaria. Edited by Gabriella Belli and Beatrice Avanzi [exh. cat. MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, October 13, 2007–February 3, 2008]. Milan: Skira, 2007.

Depero futurista: grafica & pubblicità [exh. cat. Folgaria – Maso Spilzi, Trento]. Mori: La Grafica, 2008.

Depero 50 [exh. cat. Studio 53 Arte, Mori]. Mori: La Grafica, 2009.

Depero futurysta [exh. cat. Zamek Królewski, Warsaw]. Mori: La Gráfica, 2010.

Depero y la reconstrucción futurista del universo [exh. cat. La Pedrera, Barcelona]. Barcelona: Fundació Catalunya–La Pedrera, 2013.

IV. Reference Works

IV.1 Books

Benzi, Fabio. *Il Futurismo*. Milan: Motta, 2008.

Berghaus, Günter. *Futurism and Politics: Between Anarchist Rebellion and Fascist Reaction, 1909–1944*. Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996.

Birulli, Viviana (ed.). *Manifesti del Futurismo*. Milan: Abscondita SRL, 2008.

Boccioni, Umberto. *Gli scritti editi e inediti*. Milan: Feltrinelli, 1971.

———. *Pittura scultura futuriste (dinamismo plastico)*. Milan: Edizioni Futuriste di Poesia, 1914.

Braun, Emily. *Mario Sironi and Italian Modernism: Art and Politics under Fascism*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Calvesi, Maurizio. *Le due avanguardie. Dal futurismo alla pop art*. Milan: Lerici, 1966.

Carrà, Carlo. *La mia vita*. Carte d'Artisti 26. Milan: Abscondita, 2002.

Caruso, Luciano. *Fortunato Depero: Liriche radiofoniche*. Florence: SPES, 1987.

Cioli, Monica. *Il fascismo e la sua arte*. Florence: Olschki, 2011.

Cortesini, Sergio. *'One day we must meet': La politica artistica italiana e l'uso dell'arte contemporanea come propaganda dell'Italia fascista negli Stati Uniti tra 1935 e 1940*. PhD dissertation supervised by Simonetta

Lux. Rome: Università degli Studi di Roma La Sapienza, 2003.

Crispoliti, Enrico. *Appunti sul problema del secondo futurismo nella cultura italiana fra le due guerre*. Turin: Edizioni della Galleria Notizie, 1958.

Dall'Ossso, Claudia. *Voglia d'America: il mito americano in Italia tra Otto e Novecento*. Rome: Donzelli, 2007.

Davico Bonino, Guido (ed.). *Manifesti futuristi*. Milan: Rizzoli, 2009.

De Maria, Luciano (ed.). *Per conoscere Marinetti e il futurismo*. Milan: Mondadori, 1973.

Drudi Gambillo, Maria, and Teresa Fiori (eds.). *Archivi del futurismo*, vol. I. Rome: De Luca, 1986.

Duranti, Massimo (ed.). *Dottori: futurista aeropittore / Dottori: Futurist Aeropainter*. Perugia: Graphic Masters, 1997; Effe, 1998.

Fagiolo, Maurizio. *Futur-Balla*. Rome: Bulzoni, 1970.

Fergonzi, Flavio. *The Mattioli Collection: Masterpieces of the Italian Avant-garde*. Milan: Skira, 2003.

García Martínez, José A. *Movimientos artísticos del siglo XX. Futurismo, dadaísmo, surrealismo*. Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1977.

Gentile, Emilio. "La nostra sfida alle stee," *Futuristi in politica*. Rome: Laterza 2009.

Ghignoli, Alessandro. *La palabra ilusa. Transcodificaciones de vanguardia en Italia*. Granada: Comares, 2014.

———, and Llanos Gómez (dir.). *Futurismo. La explosión de la vanguardia*. Madrid: Vaso Roto Ediciones, 2011.

Goldberg, RoseLee. *Performance Art: From Futurism to the Present*. London: Thames and Hudson, 2001.

Gómez Menéndez, Llanos. *La dramaturgia futurista de Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. El discurso artístico de la modernidad*. Vigo: Editorial Academia del Hispanismo, 2008.

Gualdoni, Flaminio. *Futurismo*. Milan: Skira, 2008.

Il lavoro nella pittura italiana d'oggi. 70 pittori italiani d'oggi. Collezione Verzocchi. Milan: Raccolte Verzocchi, 1950.

Kirby, Michael. *Futurist Performance*. New York: Dutton, 1971.

Leiber, David. *Cinema e fotografia futurista*. Milan: Skira, 2001. English translation, *Futurism and Photography*. London: Merrell Publishers, 2001.

———. *La Scène futuriste*. Paris: Editions du CNRS, 1989.

Lista, Giovanni (ed.). *Enrico Prampolini. Carteggio futurista*. Rome: Carte Segrete, 1992.

———. *Futurismo: la rivolta dell'avanguardia*. Milan: Silvana, 2008.

———. *Giacomo Balla. Scritti futuristi*. Milan: Abscondita SRL, 2010.

———. *Vinicio Paladini, dal futurismo all'imaginismo*. Bologna: Il Cavaliere Azzurro Edizioni, 1988.

Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. *Expresiones sintéticas del futurismo* (Los 5 elementos, no. 50). Barcelona: DVD Ediciones, 2008.

———. *Guerra sola igiene del mondo*. Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1915. Reprinted in F. T. Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano de Maria, 235–341. Milan: Mondadori, 1968.

———. *Manifestos y textos futuristas*. Barcelona: Ediciones El Cotal, 1978.

———. *Teoria e invenzione futurista*. Milan: Mondadori, 1968.

Pampaloni, Geno, and Mario Verdone. *I futuristi italiani. Immagini, biografie e notizie*. Florence: Le lettere, 1977.

Peña, Victoriano (ed.). *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti. España veloz y toro futurista*. Madrid: Casimiro Libros, 2012.

Rainey, Lawrence, Christine Poggi, and Laura Wittman (eds.). *Futurism: An Anthology*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009.

Ricciardi, Giulio Cesare. *Guida Ricciardi: pubblicità e propaganda in Italia*. Milan: Ricciardi, 1936.

Rischbieter, Henning. *Art and the Stage in the 20th Century: Painters and Sculptors' Work for the Theatre*. Greenwich, CT: New York Graphic Society, 1968.

Russolo, Luigi. *L'Arte dei rumori. Luigi Russolo e la musica futurista* (1916). Milan: Auditorium, 2009.

Salaris, Claudia. *Alla festa della rivoluzione. Artisti e libertari con D'Annunzio a Fiume*. Bologna: Il Mulino, 2002.

———. *Artecrazia. L'avanguardia futurista negli anni del fascismo*. Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1992.

———. *Il futurismo e la pubblicità: dalla pubblicità dell'arte all'arte della pubblicità*. Milan: Lupetti, 1986.

Silva, Umberto. *Ideologia e arte del fascismo*. Milan: Mazzotta, 1974.

Torriglia, Anna Maria. *Broken Time, Fragmented Space: A Cultural Map for Postwar Italy*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002.

Umbro, Apollonio (ed.). *Futurist Manifestos*. Trans. Robert Brain et al. Documents of Twentieth-century Art. New York: Viking Press, 1973.

Verdone, Mario. *Il Futurismo*. Rome: Newton & Compton, 2003.

——— (ed.). *Manifesti futuristi e scritti teorici di Arnaldo Ginna e Bruno Corra, 1909–1937*. Ravenna: Longo, 1984.

IV.2 Articles

Bedarida, Raffaele. "Operation Renaissance: Italian Art at MoMA, 1940–1949." *Oxford Art Journal*, 35, no. 2 (December 2012): 147–69.

Berghaus, Günter. "The Postwar Reception of Futurism: Repression or Recuperation?" In *The History of Futurism. The Precursors, Protagonists, and Legacies*, ed. Geert Buelens, Harald Hendrix, and Monica Jansen, 377–403. New York: Lexington Books, 2012.

Boccioni, Umberto. "Avviso." *Lacerba*, yr. 1, no. 19 (Florence, November 1, 1913).

———. "Contro il paesaggio e la vecchia estetica" (1914). In Angelo Maria Ripellino, *L'arte della fuga*. Naples: Guida, 1987.

———. "Il dinamismo futurista e la pittura francese." *Lacerba* (Florence), yr. 1, no. 15 (August 1, 1913): 169–71.

———. "Simultaneità futurista." *Lacerba*, yr. 2, no. 1 (Florence, January 1, 1914): 12–13.

Bragaglia, Anton Giulio. "La fotografia del movimento." *Noi e il mondo*, yr. 3, no. 4 (Rome, April 1, 1913): [357]–364.

Coen, Ester. "Futurismo." *Art e Dossier*, 2 (Florence–Milan, 1986).

Crispoliti, Enrico. "The Dynamics of Futurism's Historiography." In *Italian Futurism 1909–1944: Reconstructing the Universe*, ed. Vivien

Greene, 50–57. New York: Guggenheim Museum, 2014.

De Maria, Luciano. Prologue to F. T. Marinetti. *Teorie e invenzione futurista*, 27–100. Milan: Mondadori, 1968.

Garin, Eugenio. *Cronache di filosofia italiana 1900–1943*. Appendix to *Quindici anni dopo 1945–1960*. Bari: Laterza, 1975.

Gentile, Emilio. "Impending Modernity: Fascism and the Ambivalent Image of the United States." *Journal of Contemporary History*, vol. 28, no. 1 (January 1993).

Ghignoli, Alessandro. "La traducción teatral o la endiádis de un texto. Una reflexión comparativa." *Mutatis Mutandis*, vol. 6, no. 2 (Antioquia, Colombia, 2013): 321–29.

Gómez Menéndez, Llanos. "Comunicación de masas y futurismo: la conformación del público y la escena mediática." *Espéculo. Revista de Estudios Literarios*, no. 45 (Madrid, July–October 2010). <https://pendientedemigracion.ucm.es/info/especulo/numero45/comfutur.html>.

———. "L'uomo macchina y la transformación del ideario futurista." *Cuadernos de Filología Italiana*, vol. 14 (Madrid, 2011): 125–35.

Leiber, David. "L'eredità del futurismo." In *Futurismo, 1909–2009, Velocità+Arte+Azion*, ed. Giovanni Lista and Ada Masoero, 272–91. Milan: Skira, 2009.

Marinetti, Filippo Tommaso. "Le Futurisme." *Le Figaro* (Paris, February 20, 1909); "Fondazione e manifesto del futurismo." *Poesia*, no. 1–2 (Milan, February–March 1909).

———. "Gli avvisi luminosi. Lettera aperta a S.E. Mussolini." *L'Impero*, V, no. 37 (February 12, 1927).

———. "*La Divina commedia* è un verminaio di glossatori" (1917). In F. T. Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano de Maria. Milan: Mondadori, 1998.

———. "Manifesto tecnico della letteratura futurista." Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, 1912. Reprinted in *I poeti futuristi*. Milan: Edizioni di Poesia, 1912.

Mattioli, Laura. "The Collection of Gianni Mattioli from 1943 to 1953." In *The Mattioli Collection: Masterpieces of the Italian Avant-garde*, catalogue raisonné, 13–61. Milan: Skira; London: Thames and Hudson, 2003.

Pavese, Cesare. "Ieri e oggi." *L'Unità* (Turin), August 3, 1947. English translation, "Yesterday and Today," in *American Literature: Essays and Opinions*, trans. Edwin Fussell, 196–99. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1970.

Salaris, Claudia. "Futurismo. La prima avanguardia." *Art e Dossier*, 252 (Florence–Milan, 2009).

———. "Marketing Modernism: Marinetti as Publisher," trans. Lawrence Rainey. In *Modernism/Modernity*, vol. 1. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994.

Sinisi, Silvana. "Depero: una vocazione allo spettacolo." *Marcatré*, nos. 50–55 (Urbino, February–July 1969): 342–80.

Trisibi (pseud. of Luca Beltrami). "Le colonne luminose nella civiltà moderna." *La Perseveranza* (Milan, November 21, 1903).

Verdone, Mario. "Caratteri dello spettacolo futurista." In *Futurismo 1909–1944*, ed. Enrico Crispolti, 163–70. Milan: Mazzotta, 2001.

Fundación Juan March

Exhibition Catalogues and other Publications

The Fundación Juan March has published more than 180 catalogues, most of them now sold out, of the exhibitions it has presented in its Madrid, Cuenca and Palma exhibition spaces. Starting in January 2014, these catalogues are now available on digital support on our webpage *All our Art Catalogues since 1973*, at www.march.es

1966

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Catalogue-Guide]. Text by Fernando Zóbel. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English). Published by the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca

1969

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Gustavo Torner, Gerardo Rueda and Fernando Zóbel. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English). Published by the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca (1st ed.)

1973

☞ ARTE73. EXPOSICIÓN ANTOLÓGICA DE ARTISTAS ESPAÑOLES. Multilingual ed. (Spanish, English, French, Italian and German)

1974

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA [Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Gustavo Torner, Gerardo Rueda and Fernando Zóbel. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English). Published by the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca (2nd ed., rev. and exp.)

1975

☞ OSKAR KOKOSCHKA. Óleos y acuarelas. Dibujos, grabados, mosaicos. Obra literaria. Text by Heinz Spielmann

☞ EXPOSICIÓN ANTOLÓGICA DE LA CALCOGRAFÍA NACIONAL. Texts by

Enrique Lafuente Ferrari and Antonio Gallego

☞ I EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1976

☞ JEAN DUBUFFET. Text by Jean Dubuffet

☞ ALBERTO GIACOMETTI. Colección de la Fundación Maeght. Texts by Jean Genêt, Jean-Paul Sartre, Jacques Dupin and Alberto Giacometti

☞ II EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1977

☞ ARTE USA. Text by Harold Rosenberg

☞ ARTE DE NUEVA GUINEA Y PAPÚA. Colección A. Folch y E. Serra. Texts by B. A. L. Cranstone and Christian Kaufmann

☞ PICASSO. Texts by Rafael Alberti, Gerardo Diego, Vicente Aleixandre, Eugenio d'Ors, Juan Antonio Gaya Nuño, Ricardo Gullón, José Camón Aznar, Guillermo de Torre and Enrique Lafuente Ferrari

☞ MARC CHAGALL. 18 pinturas y 40 grabados. Texts by André Malraux and Louis Aragon (in French) 

☞ ARTE ESPAÑOL CONTEMPORÁNEO. COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. [This catalogue accompanied the exhibition of the same name that traveled to 67 Spanish venues between 1975 and 1996; at many venues, independent catalogues were published.]

☞ III EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1978

☞ ARS MEDICA. Text by Carl Zigrosser

☞ FRANCIS BACON. Text by Antonio Bonet Correa

☞ BAUHAUS. Texts by Hans M. Wingler,

Will Grohmann, Jürgen Joedicke, Nikolaus Pevsner, Hans Eckstein, Oskar Schlemmer, László Moholy-Nagy, Otto Stelzer and Heinz Winfried Sabais. Published by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, 1976

☞ KANDINSKY: 1923–1944. Texts by Werner Haftmann, Gaëtan Picon and Wassily Kandinsky

☞ ARTE ESPAÑOL CONTEMPORÁNEO. COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH

☞ IV EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1979

☞ WILLEM DE KOONING. Obras recientes. Text by Diane Waldman

☞ MAESTROS DEL SIGLO XX. NATURALEZA MUERTA. Text by Reinhold Hohl

☞ GEORGES BRAQUE. Óleos, gouaches, relieves, dibujos y grabados. Texts by Jean Paulhan, Jacques Prévert, Christian Zervos, Georges Salles, André Chastel, Pierre Reverdy and Georges Braque

☞ GOYA. CAPRICHOS, DESASTRES, TAURAMAQUIA, DISPARATES. Text by Alfonso E. Pérez-Sánchez (1st ed.)

☞ V EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1980

☞ JULIO GONZÁLEZ. Esculturas y dibujos. Text by Germain Viatte

☞ ROBERT MOTHERWELL. Text by Barbaralee Diamonstein and Robert Motherwell

☞ HENRI MATISSE. Óleos, dibujos, gouaches, découpées, esculturas y libros. Text by Henri Matisse

☞ VI EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1981

☞ MINIMAL ART. Text by Phyllis Tuchman

☞ PAUL KLEE. Óleos, acuarelas, dibujos y grabados. Text by Paul Klee

☞ MIRRORS AND WINDOWS. AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY SINCE 1960. Text by John Szarkowski. English ed. (Offprint: Spanish translation of text by John Szarkowski). Published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1980

☞ MEDIO SIGLO DE ESCULTURA: 1900–1945. Text by Jean-Louis Prat

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Gustavo Torner, Gerardo Rueda and Fernando Zóbel

FERNANDO PESSOA. EL ETERNO VIAJERO. Texts by Teresa Rita Lopes, María Fernanda de Abreu and Fernando Pessoa

1982

☞ PIET MONDRIAN. Óleos, acuarelas y dibujos. Texts by Herbert Henkels and Piet Mondrian

☞ ROBERT Y SONIA DELAUNAY. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet, Jacques Damase, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, Isaac del Vando Villar, Vicente Huidobro and Guillermo de Torre

☞ PINTURA ABSTRACTA ESPAÑOLA: 1960–1970. Text by Rafael Santos Torroella

☞ KURT SCHWITTERS. Texts by Werner Schmalenbach, Ernst Schwitters and Kurt Schwitters

☞ VII EXPOSICIÓN DE BECARIOS DE ARTES PLÁSTICAS

1983

☞ ROY LICHTENSTEIN: 1970–1980. Text by Jack Cowart. English ed. Published by Hudson Hill Press, New York, 1981

KEY: ☞ Sold-out publications |  Exhibition at the Museu Fundación Juan March, Palma |  Exhibition at the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español, Cuenca

🏷️ FERNAND LÉGER. Text by Antonio Bonet Correa and Fernand Léger

🏷️ PIERRE BONNARD. Text by Ángel González García

🏷️ ALMADA NEGREIROS. Texts by Margarida Acciaiuoli, Antonio Espina, Ramón Gómez de la Serna, José Augusto França, Jorge de Sena, Lima de Freitas and Almada Negreiros. Published by the Ministério da Cultura de Portugal, Lisbon, 1983

🏷️ ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL EN LA COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. Text by Julián Gállego

🏷️ GRABADO ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. Text by Julián Gállego. [This catalogue accompanied the exhibition of the same name that traveled to 44 Spanish venues between 1983 and 1999.]

HENRI CARTIER-BRESSON. RETROSPECTIVA. Text by Yves Bonnefoy. French ed.

1984

🏷️ EL ARTE DEL SIGLO XX EN UN MUSEO HOLANDÉS: EINDHOVEN. Texts by Jaap Bremer, Jan Debbaut, R. H. Fuchs, Piet de Jonge and Margriet Suren

🏷️ JOSEPH CORNELL. Text by Fernando Huici

🏷️ FERNANDO ZÓBEL. Text by Francisco Calvo Serraller. Madrid and 🇨🇪

🏷️ JULIA MARGARET CAMERON: 1815–1879. Texts by Mike Weaver and Julia Margaret Cameron. English ed. (Offprint: Spanish translation of text by Mike Weaver). Published by John Hansard Gallery & The Herbert Press Ltd., Southampton, 1984

🏷️ JULIUS BISSIER. Text by Werner Schmalenbach

1985

🏷️ ROBERT RAUSCHENBERG. Text by Lawrence Alloway

🏷️ VANGUARDIA RUSA: 1910–1930. Museo y Colección Ludwig. Text by Evelyn Weiss

🏷️ DER DEUTSCHE HOLZSCHNITT IM 20. Text by Gunther Thiem. German ed. (Offprint: Spanish translations of texts). Published by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, 1984

🏷️ ESTRUCTURAS REPETITIVAS. Text by Simón Marchán Fiz

1986

🏷️ MAX ERNST. Texts by Werner Spies and Max Ernst

🏷️ ARTE, PAISAJE Y ARQUITECTURA. El

arte referido a la arquitectura en la República Federal de Alemania. Texts by Dieter Honisch and Manfred Sack. German ed. (Offprint: Spanish translation of introductory texts). Published by the Institut für Auslandsbeziehungen, Stuttgart, 1983

🏷️ ARTE ESPAÑOL EN NUEVA YORK: 1950–1970. Colección Amos Cahan. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet

🏷️ OBRAS MAESTRAS DEL MUSEO DE WUPPERTAL. De Marées a Picasso. Texts by Sabine Fehleemann and Hans Günter Wachtmann

1987

🏷️ BEN NICHOLSON. Texts by Jeremy Lewison and Ben Nicholson

🏷️ IRVING PENN. Text by John Szarkowski. English ed. published by The Museum of Modern Art, New York, 1984 (repr. 1986)

🏷️ MARK ROTHKO. Texts by Michael Compton and Mark Rothko

1988

🏷️ EL PASO DESPUÉS DE EL PASO EN LA COLECCIÓN DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet

🏷️ ZERO, A EUROPEAN MOVEMENT. The Lenz Schönberg Collection. Texts by Dieter Honisch and Hannah Weitemeier. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

🏷️ COLECCIÓN LEO CASTELLI. Texts by Calvin Tomkins, Judith Goldman, Gabriele Henkel, Leo Castelli, Jim Palette, Barbara Rose and John Cage

🏷️ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet (1st ed.)

1989

🏷️ RENÉ MAGRITTE. Texts by Camille Goemans, Martine Jacquet, Catherine de Croës, François Daulte, Paul Lebeer and René Magritte

🏷️ EDWARD HOPPER. Text by Gail Levin

🏷️ ARTE ESPAÑOL CONTEMPORÁNEO. FONDOS DE LA FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH. Text by Miguel Fernández-Cid

1990

🏷️ ODILON REDON. Colección Ian Woodner. Texts by Lawrence Gowing, Odilon Redon and Nuria Rivero

🏷️ CUBISMO EN PRAGA. Obras de la Galería Nacional. Texts by Jiří Kotalík, Ivan Neumann and Jiří Šetlík

🏷️ ANDY WARHOL. COCHES. Texts by

Werner Spies, Cristoph Becker and Andy Warhol

🏷️ COL·LECCIÓ MARCH. ART ESPANYOL CONTEMPORANI. PALMA. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet. Multilingual ed. (Spanish, Catalan and English)

1991

🏷️ PICASSO. RETRATOS DE JACQUELINE. Texts by Hélène Parmelin, María Teresa Ocaña, Nuria Rivero, Werner Spies and Rosa Vives

🏷️ VIEIRA DA SILVA. Texts by Fernando Pernes, Julián Gállego, M^a João Fernandes, René Char (in French), António Ramos Rosa (in Portuguese) and Joham de Castro

🏷️ MONET EN GIVERNY. Colección del Museo Marmottan de París. Texts by Arnaud d'Hauterives, Gustave Geffroy and Claude Monet

🏷️ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet (2nd ed.)

1992

🏷️ RICHARD DIEBENKORN. Text by John Elderfield

🏷️ ALEXEJ VON JAWLENSKY. Text by Angelica Jawlensky

🏷️ DAVID HOCKNEY. Text by Marco Livingstone

🏷️ COL·LECCIÓ MARCH. ART ESPANYOL CONTEMPORANI. PALMA. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Text by Juan Manuel Bonet (German ed.)

1993

🏷️ MALEVICH. Colección del Museo Estatal Ruso, San Petersburgo. Texts by Evgenija N. Petrova, Elena V. Basner and Kasimir Malevich

🏷️ PICASSO. EL SOMBRERO DE TRES PICOS. Dibujos para los decorados y el vestuario del ballet de Manuel de Falla. Texts by Vicente García-Márquez, Brigitte Léal and Laurence Berthon

🏷️ MUSEO BRÜCKE BERLÍN. ARTE EXPRESIONISTA ALEMÁN. Text by Magdalena M. Moeller

1994

🏷️ GOYA GRABADOR. Texts by Alfonso E. Pérez-Sánchez and Julián Gállego

🏷️ ISAMU NOGUCHI. Texts by Shoji Sadao, Bruce Altshuler and Isamu Noguchi

🏷️ TESOROS DEL ARTE JAPONÉS. Período Edo: 1615–1868. Colección del Museo Fuji, Tokio. Texts by Tatsuo Takakura, Shin-ichi Miura, Akira Gokita, Seiji Nagata, Yoshiaki Yabe, Hirokazu Arakawa and Yoshihiko Sasama

🏷️ FERNANDO ZÓBEL. RÍO JÚCAR. Texts by Fernando Zóbel and Rafael Pérez-Madero 🇨🇪

1995

🏷️ KLIMT, KOKOSCHKA, SCHIELE. UN SUEÑO VIENÉS: 1898–1918. Texts by Gerbert Frodl and Stephan Koja

🏷️ ROUAULT. Texts by Stephan Koja, Jacques Maritain and Marcel Arland

🏷️ MOTHERWELL. Obra gráfica: 1975–1991. Colección Kenneth Tyler. Text by Robert Motherwell 🇨🇪

1996

🏷️ TOM WESSELMANN. Texts by Marco Livingstone, Jo-Anne Birnie Danzker, Tilman Osterwold and Meinrad Maria Grewenig. Published by Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern, 1996

🏷️ TOULOUSE-LAUTREC. De Albi y de otras colecciones. Texts by Danièle Devynck and Valeriano Bozal

🏷️ MILLARES. Pinturas y dibujos sobre papel: 1963–1971. Text by Manuel Millares 🇨🇪

🏷️ MUSEU D'ART ESPANYOL CONTEMPORANI. PALMA. FUNDACION JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet and Javier Maderuelo. Bilingual eds. (Spanish/Catalan and English/German, 1st ed.)

🏷️ PICASSO. SUITE VOLLARD. Text by Julián Gállego. Spanish ed., bilingual ed. (Spanish/German) and trilingual ed. (Spanish/German/English). [This catalogue accompanied the exhibition of the same name that, since 1996, has traveled to seven Spanish and foreign venues.]

1997

🏷️ MAX BECKMANN. Texts by Klaus Gallwitz and Max Beckmann

🏷️ EMIL NOLDE. NATURALEZA Y RELIGIÓN. Text by Manfred Reuther

🏷️ FRANK STELLA. Obra gráfica: 1982–1996. Colección Tyler Graphics. Texts by Sidney Guberman, Dorine Mignot and Frank Stella 🇨🇪

🏷️ EL OBJETO DEL ARTE. Text by Javier Maderuelo 🇨🇪

🏷️ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH

[Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet and Javier Maderuelo. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English, 1st ed.)

1998

☞ AMADEO DE SOUZA-CARDOSO. Texts by Javier Maderuelo, Antonio Cardoso and Joana Cunha Leal

☞ PAUL DELVAUX. Text by Gisèle Ollinger-Zinque

☞ RICHARD LINDNER. Text by Werner Spies

1999

☞ MARC CHAGALL. TRADICIONES JUDÍAS. Texts by Sylvie Forestier, Benjamin Harshav, Meret Meyer and Marc Chagall

☞ KURT SCHWITTERS Y EL ESPÍRITU DE LA UTOPIA. Colección Ernst Schwitters. Texts by Javier Maderuelo, Markus Heinzlmann, Lola and Bengt Schwitters

☞ LOVIS CORINTH. Texts by Thomas Deecke, Sabine Fehleemann, Jürgen H. Meyer and Antje BIRTHÄLMER

☞ MIQUEL BARCELÓ. Cerámiques: 1995–1998. Text by Enrique Juncosa. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/Catalan) **P**

☞ FERNANDO ZÓBEL. Obra gráfica completa. Text by Rafael Pérez-Madero. Published by Departamento de Cultura, Diputación Provincial de Cuenca, Cuenca, 1999 **P** **C**

2000

☞ VASARELY. Texts by Werner Spies and Michèle-Catherine Vasarely

☞ EXPRESIONISMO ABSTRACTO. OBRA SOBRE PAPEL. Colección de The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Nueva York. Text by Lisa M. Messinger

SCHMIDT-ROTTLUFF. Colección Brücke-Museum Berlin. Text by Magdalena M. Moeller

☞ NOLDE. VISIONES. Acuarelas. Colección de la Fundación Nolde-Seebüll. Text by Manfred Reuther **P** **C**

☞ LUCIO MUÑOZ. ÍNTIMO. Text by Rodrigo Muñoz Avia **C**

☞ EUSEBIO SEMPERE. PAISAJES. Text by Pablo Ramírez **P** **C**

2001

☞ DE CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH A PICASSO. Obras maestras sobre papel del Museo Von der Heydt, de Wuppertal. Text by Sabine Fehleemann

☞ ADOLPH GOTTLIEB. Text by Sanford Hirsch

☞ MATISSE. ESPÍRITU Y SENTIDO. Obra

sobre papel. Texts by Guillermo Solana, Marie-Thérèse Pulvenis de Séligny and Henri Matisse

☞ RÓDCHENKO. GEOMETRÍAS. Texts by Alexandr Lavrentiev and Alexandr Ródcchenko **P** **C**

2002

☞ GEORGIA O'KEEFFE. NATURALEZAS ÍNTIMAS. Texts by Lisa M. Messinger and Georgia O'Keeffe

☞ TURNER Y EL MAR. Acuarelas de la Tate. Texts by José Jiménez, Ian Warrell, Nicola Cole, Nicola Moorby and Sarah Taft

☞ MOMPÓ. Obra sobre papel. Texts by Dolores Durán Úcar **C**

☞ RIVERA. REFLEJOS. Texts by Jaime Brihuega, Marisa Rivera, Elena Rivera, Rafael Alberti and Luis Rosales **C**

☞ SAURA. DAMAS. Texts by Francisco Calvo Serraller and Antonio Saura **P** **C**

2003

☞ ESPÍRITU DE MODERNIDAD. DE GOYA A GIACOMETTI. Obra sobre papel de la Colección Kornfeld. Text by Werner Spies

☞ KANDINSKY. ORIGEN DE LA ABSTRACCIÓN. Texts by Valeriano Bozal, Marion Ackermann and Wassily Kandinsky

☞ CHILLIDA. ELOGIO DE LA MANO. Text by Javier Maderuelo **P** **C**

☞ GERARDO RUEDA. CONSTRUCCIONES. Text by Barbara Rose **C**

☞ ESTEBAN VICENTE. Collages. Texts by José María Parreño and Elaine de Kooning **C**

☞ LUCIO MUÑOZ. ÍNTIMO. Texts by Rodrigo Muñoz Avia and Lucio Muñoz **P**

MUSEU D'ART ESPANYOL CONTEMPORANI. PALMA. FUNDACION JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet and Javier Maderuelo. Bilingual eds. (Catalan/Spanish and English/German, 2nd ed. rev. and exp.)

2004

☞ MAESTROS DE LA INVENCION DE LA COLECCION E. DE ROTHSCHILD DEL MUSEO DEL LOUVRE. Texts by Pascal Torres Guardiola, Catherine Loisel, Christel Winling, Geneviève Bresc-Bautier, George A. Wanklyn and Louis Antoine Prat

☞ FIGURAS DE LA FRANCIA MODERNA. De Ingres a Toulouse-Lautrec del Petit Palais de París. Texts by Delfín Rodríguez, Isabelle Collet, Amélie Simier, Maryline Assante di Panzillo and José de los Llanos. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/French)

☞ LIUBOV POPOVA. Text by Anna María Guasch **P** **C**

☞ ESTEBAN VICENTE. GESTO Y COLOR. Text by Guillermo Solana **P**

☞ LUIS GORDILLO. DUPLEX. Texts by Miguel Cereceda and Jaime González de Aledo. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P** **C**

☞ NEW TECHNOLOGIES, NEW ICONOGRAPHY, NEW PHOTOGRAPHY. Photography of the 80's and 90's in the Collection of the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía. Texts by Catherine Coleman, Pablo Llorca and María Toledo. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P** **C**

KANDINSKY. Acuarelas. Städtische Galerie im Lenbachhaus, Munich. Texts by Helmut Friedel and Wassily Kandinsky. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/German) **P** **C**

2005

☞ CONTEMPORANEA. Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg. Texts by Gijs van Tuyl, Rudi Fuchs, Holger Broeker, Alberto Ruiz de Samaniego and Susanne Köhler. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

☞ ANTONIO SAURA. DAMAS. Texts by Francisco Calvo Serraller and Antonio Saura. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

☞ CELEBRATION OF ART: A Half Century of the Fundación Juan March. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet, Juan Pablo Fusi, Antonio Muñoz Molina, Juan Navarro Baldeweg and Javier Fuentes. Spanish and English eds.

☞ BECKMANN. Von der Heydt-Museum, Wuppertal. Text by Sabine Fehleemann. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/German) **P** **C**

☞ EGON SCHIELE: IN BODY AND SOUL. Text by Miguel Sáenz. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P** **C**

☞ LICHTENSTEIN: IN PROCESS. Texts by Juan Antonio Ramírez and Clare Bell. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P** **C**

☞ FACES AND MASKS: Photographs from the Ordóñez-Falcón Collection. Text by Francisco Caja. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P** **C**

☞ MUSEO DE ARTE ABSTRACTO ESPAÑOL. CUENCA. FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH [Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Juan Manuel Bonet and Javier Maderuelo. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English, 2nd ed.)

2006

☞ OTTO DIX. Text by Ulrike Lorenz. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

☞ CREATIVE DESTRUCTION: Gustav Klimt, the Beethoven Frieze and the Controversy about the Freedom of Art. Texts by Stephan Kojá, Carl E. Schorske, Alice Strobl, Franz A. J. Szabo, Manfred Koller, Verena Perhefter and Rosa Sala

Rose, Hermann Bahr, Ludwig Hevesi and Berta Zuckerkandl. Spanish, English and German eds. Published by Prestel, Munich/Fundación Juan March, Madrid, 2006

☞ Supplementary publication: Hermann Bahr. CONTRA KLIMT (1903). Additional texts by Christian Huemer, Verena Perhefter, Rosa Sala Rose and Dietrun Otten. Spanish semi-facsimile ed., translation by Alejandro Martín Navarro

LA CIUDAD ABSTRACTA: 1966. El nacimiento del Museo de Arte Abstracto Español. Texts by Santos Juliá, María Bolaños, Ángeles Villalba, Juan Manuel Bonet, Gustavo Torner, Antonio Lorenzo, Rafael Pérez Madero, Pedro Miguel Ibáñez and Alfonso de la Torre

GARY HILL: IMAGES OF LIGHT. Works from the Collection of the Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg. Text by Holger Broeker. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P** **C**

GOYA. CAPRICHOS, DESASTRES, TAUROMAQUIA, DISPARATES. Texts by Alfonso E. Pérez-Sánchez (11th ed., 1st ed. 1979). [This catalogue accompanied the exhibition of the same name that, since 1979, has traveled to 173 Spanish and foreign venues. The catalogue has been translated into more than seven languages.]

2007

ROY LICHTENSTEIN: BEGINNING TO END. Texts by Jack Cowart, Juan Antonio Ramírez, Ruth Fine, Cassandra Lozano, James de Pasquale, Avis Berman and Clare Bell. Spanish, French and English eds.

Supplementary publication: Roy Fox Lichtenstein. PAINTINGS, DRAWINGS AND PASTELS, A THESIS. Original text by Roy Fox Lichtenstein (1949). Additional texts by Jack Cowart and Clare Bell. Bilingual ed. (English [facsimile]/Spanish), translation by Paloma Farré

THE ABSTRACTION OF LANDSCAPE: From Northern Romanticism to Abstract Expressionism. Texts by Werner Hofmann, Hein-Th. Schulze Altcapenberg, Barbara Dayer Gallati, Robert Rosenblum, Miguel López-Remiro, Mark Rothko, Cordula Meier, Dietmar Elger, Bernhard Teuber, Olaf Mörke and Víctor Andrés Ferretti. Spanish and English eds.

Supplementary publication: Sean Scully. BODIES OF LIGHT (1998). Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

☞ EQUIPO CRÓNICA. CRÓNICAS REALES. Texts by Michèle Dalmace, Fernando

Mariás and Tomás Llorens. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P C**

BEFORE AND AFTER MINIMALISM: A Century of Abstract Tendencies in the Daimler Chrysler Collection. Virtual guide: www.march.es/arte/palma/antteriores/CatalogoMinimal/index.asp. Spanish, Catalan, English and German eds. **P**

2008

MAXImin: Maximum Minimization in Contemporary Art. Texts by Renate Wiehager, John M. Armleder, Ilya Bolotowsky, Daniel Buren, Hanne Darboven, Adolf Hölzel, Norbert Kricke, Heinz Mack and Friederich Vordemberge-Gildewart. Spanish and English eds.

TOTAL ENLIGHTENMENT: Conceptual Art in Moscow 1960–1990. Texts by Boris Groys, Ekaterina Bobrinskaya, Martina Weinhart, Dorothea Zwirner, Manuel Fontán del Junco, Andrei Monastyrski and Ilya Kabakov. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English). Published by Hatje Cantz, Ostfildern/Fundación Juan March, Madrid, 2008

☛ ANDREAS FEININGER: 1906–1999. Texts by Andreas Feininger, Thomas Buchsteiner, Jean-François Chevrier, Juan Manuel Bonet and John Loengard. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P C**

JOAN HERNÁNDEZ PIJUAN: THE DISTANCE OF DRAWING. Texts by Valentín Roma, Peter Dittmar and Narcís Comadira. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P C**

Supplementary publication: IRIS DE PASCUA. JOAN HERNÁNDEZ PIJUAN. Text by Elvira Maluquer. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

2009

TARSILA DO AMARAL. Texts by Aracy Amaral, Juan Manuel Bonet, Jorge Schwartz, Regina Teixeira de Barros, Tarsila do Amaral, Mário de Andrade, Oswald de Andrade, Manuel Bandeira, Haroldo de Campos, Emiliano di Cavalcanti, Ribeiro Couto, Carlos Drummond de Andrade, António Ferro, Jorge de Lima and Sérgio Milliet. Spanish and English eds.

☛ Supplementary publication: Blaise Cendrars. HOJAS DE RUTA (1924). Spanish semi-facsimile ed., translation and notes by José Antonio Millán Alba

Supplementary publication: Oswald de Andrade. PAU BRASIL (1925). Spanish semi-facsimile ed., translation by Andrés Sánchez Robayna

CARLOS CRUZ-DIEZ: COLOR HAPPENS.

Texts by Osbel Suárez, Carlos Cruz-Diez, Gloria Carnevali and Ariel Jiménez. Spanish and English eds. **P C**

Supplementary publication: Carlos Cruz-Diez. REFLECTION ON COLOR (1989), rev. and exp. Spanish and English eds.

☛ CASPAR DAVID FRIEDRICH: THE ART OF DRAWING. Texts by Christina Grummt, Helmut Börsch-Supan and Werner Busch. Spanish and English eds.

MUSEU FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH, PALMA [Catalogue-Guide]. Texts by Miquel Seguí Aznar and Elvira González Gozalo, Juan Manuel Bonet and Javier Maderuelo. Catalan, Spanish, English and German eds. (3rd ed. rev. and exp.)

2010

WYNDHAM LEWIS (1882–1957). Texts by Paul Edwards, Richard Humphreys, Yolanda Morató, Juan Bonilla, Manuel Fontán del Junco, Andrzej Gasiorek and Alan Munton. Spanish and English eds.

Supplementary publication: William Shakespeare and Thomas Middleton.

TIMON OF ATHENS (1623). With illustrations by Wyndham Lewis and additional text by Paul Edwards, translation and notes by Ángel-Luis Pujante and Salvador Oliva. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English)

Supplementary publication: Wyndham Lewis. BLAST. Revista del gran vórtice inglés (1914). Additional texts by Paul Edwards and Kevin Power. Spanish semi-facsimile ed., translation and notes by Yolanda Morató

☛ PABLO PALAZUELO, PARIS, 13 RUE SAINT-JACQUES (1948–1968). Texts by Alfonso de la Torre and Christine Jouishomme. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P C**

THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPES OF ASHER B. DURAND (1796–1886). Texts by Linda S. Ferber, Barbara Deyer Gallati, Barbara Novak, Marilyn S. Kushner, Roberta J. M. Olson, Rebecca Bedell, Kimberly Orcutt and Sarah Barr Snook. Spanish and English eds.

Supplementary publication: Asher B. Durand. LETTERS ON LANDSCAPE PAINTING (1855). Spanish semi-facsimile ed. and English facsimile ed.

PICASSO. Suite Vollard. Text by Julián Gállego. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) (Rev. ed, 1st ed. 1996)

UN COUP DE LIVRES (UNA TIRADA DE LIBROS). Artists' Books and Other Publications from the Archive for Small Press & Communication. Text by Guy Schraenen. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **C P**

2011

☛ COLD AMERICA: GEOMETRIC ABSTRACTION IN LATIN AMERICA (1934–1973). Texts by Osbel Suárez, César Paternosto, María Amalia García, Ferreira Gullar, Luis Pérez Oramas, Gabriel Pérez-Barreiro and Michael Nungesser. Spanish and English eds.

WILLI BAUMEISTER. PINTURAS Y DIBUJOS. Texts by Willi Baumeister, Felicitas Baumeister, Martin Schieder, Dieter Schwarz, Elena Pontiggia and Hadwig Goez. Spanish, German and Italian eds. **P**

ALEKSANDR DEINEKA (1899–1969). AN AVANT-GARDE FOR THE PROLETARIAT. Texts by Manuel Fontán del Junco, Christina Kiaer, Boris Groys, Fredric Jameson, Ekaterina Degot, Irina Leytes and Alessandro de Magistris. Spanish and English eds.

Supplementary publication: Boris Uralski. EL ELECTRICISTA (1930). Cover and illustrations by Aleksandr Deineka. Spanish semi-facsimile ed., translation by Iana Zabiaka

2012

☛ GIANDOMENICO TIEPOLO (1727–1804): TEN FANTASY PORTRAITS. Texts by Andrés Úbeda de los Cobos. Spanish and English eds.

VLADIMIR LEBEDEV (1891–1967). Texts by Masha Koval, Nicoletta Mislser, Carlos Pérez, Françoise Lévêque and Vladimir Lebedev. Bilingual ed. (Spanish/English) **P C**

PHOTOMONTAGE BETWEEN THE WARS (1918–1939). Texts by Adrian Sudhalter and Deborah L. Roldán. Spanish and English eds. **C P**

☛ THE AVANT-GARDE APPLIED (1890–1950). Texts by Manuel Fontán del Junco, Richard Hollis, Maurizio Scudiero and Bruno Tonini. Spanish and English eds.

TREASURE ISLAND: BRITISH ART FROM HOLBEIN TO HOCKNEY. Texts by Richard Humphreys, Tim Blanning and Kevin Jackson. Spanish and English eds.

2013

☛ ON DOMESTIC LIFE: SEVENTEETH-CENTURY FLEMISH AND DUTCH STILL LIFES. Texts by Teresa Posada Kubissa

EDUARDO ARROYO: RETRATOS Y RETRATOS. Texts by Eduardo Arroyo, Manuel Fontán del Junco, Oliva María Rubio, Fabienne di Rocco and Michel Sager. **P C**

PAUL KLEE: BAUHAUS MASTER. Texts by Fabienne Eggelhöfer, Marianne Keller Tschirren and Wolfgang Thöner. Spanish and English eds.

DAY DREAMS, NIGHT THOUGHTS. FANTASY AND SURREALISM IN THE GRAPHIC ARTS AND PHOTOGRAPHY. Texts by Yasmin Doosry, Juan José Lahuerta, Rainer Schoch, Christine Kupper and Christiane Lauterbach. Spanish and English eds.

2014

☛ GIUSEPPE ARCIMBOLDO. TWO PAINTINGS OF FLORA. Texts by Miguel Falomir, Lynn Roberts and Paul Mitchell. Spanish and English eds.

☛ JOSEF ALBERS: MINIMAL MEANS, MAXIMUM EFFECT. Texts by Josef Albers, Nicholas Fox Weber, Jeannette Redensek, Laura Martínez de Guereñu, María Toledo and Manuel Fontán del Junco. Spanish and English eds.

JOSEF ALBERS: PROCESS AND PRINTMAKING (1916–1976). Text by Brenda Danilowitz. Spanish and English eds. **P C**

KURT SCHWITTERS. AVANT-GARDE AND ADVERTISING. Texts by Javier Maderuelo and Adrian Sudhalter. Spanish and English eds. **P C**

FUTURIST DEPERO (1913–1950). Texts by Fortunato Depero, Manuel Fontán del Junco, Maurizio Scudiero, Gianluca Poldi, Llanos Gómez Menéndez, Carolina Fernández Castrillo, Pablo Echaurren, Alessandro Ghignoli, Claudia Salaris, Giovanna Ginex, Belén Sánchez Albarrán, Raffaele Bedarida, Giovanni Lista, Fabio Belloni, Aida Capa and Marta Suárez-Infiesta. Spanish and English eds.

For more information: www.march.es

CREDITS

This catalogue and its Spanish edition have been published on the occasion of the exhibition

FUTURIST DEPERO 1913-1950

Fundación Juan March, Madrid
October 10, 2014 – January 18, 2015

CONCEPT AND ORGANIZATION

Fundación Juan March

Manuel Fontán del Junco, Exhibitions Director
Aida Capa, Exhibitions Coordinator
Marta Suárez-Infiesta, Assistant, Exhibitions Department

With the collaboration of Maurizio Scudiero, Gianluca Poldi, Llanos Gómez Menéndez, Carolina Fernández Castrillo, Alessandro Ghignoli, Pablo Echaurren, Claudia Salaris, Giovanna Ginex, Belén Sánchez Albarrán, Raffaele Bedarida, Giovanni Lista and Fabio Belloni

EXHIBITION

Insurance, Transportation and Installation Coordination

José Enrique Moreno, Exhibitions Department, Fundación Juan March

Installation Design

Frade Arquitectos and Exhibitions Department, Fundación Juan March

Installation

Momex

Framing

Decograf

Insurance

AGE Assicurazioni, Bologna; Arthur J. Gallagher & Co; MAG JLT, Rome; March JLT: Willis Italia; XL Group

Transportation

SIT Transportes Internacionales

Restoration

Lourdes Rico, Celia Martínez, María Victoria de las Heras

CATALOGUE

Published by

© Fundación Juan March, Madrid, 2014
© Editorial de Arte y Ciencia, Madrid, 2014

Texts

For all texts by:

Giacomo Balla, Carlo Carrà, Fortunato Depero, and Filippo Tommaso Marinetti: © VEGAP, Madrid, 2014
Umberto Boccioni, Arnaldo Bonzagni, Bruno Corra, Remo Chiti, Arnaldo Ginna, Pino Masnata, Vinicio Paladini, Ivo Pannaggi, Enrico Prampolini, Romolo Romani, and Emilio Settemilli: © their legitimate heirs or their legal representatives

Luigi Russolo: © Courtesy Marsigliano Arts Gallery Como, Italy

© Fundación Juan March
© Manuel Fontán del Junco
© Maurizio Scudiero
© Gianluca Poldi
© Llanos Gómez Menéndez
© Carolina Fernández Castrillo
© Alessandro Ghignoli
© Pablo Echaurren
© Claudia Salaris
© Giovanna Ginex
© Belén Sánchez Albarrán
© Raffaele Bedarida
© Giovanni Lista
© Fabio Belloni
© Aida Capa and Marta Suárez-Infiesta

Editorial Coordination and Production

Aida Capa, Marta Suárez-Infiesta and Jordi Sanguino, Exhibitions Department, Fundación Juan March

Translations

Italian/English:

Courtesy Lawrence Rainey: pp. 361–366, 367–377, 379–380, 422–23
Simon Pleasance: pp. 251–279, 293–297, 305–307, 339–353, 366–367, 377–379, 383–422, 423–425, 428–430

Spanish/English:

Laura Suffield: pp. 3, 7–9, 19–21, 248–249, 281–291, 299–303, 319–326, 358, 437–440, 450

Editing and Revision

Erica Witschey and Exhibitions Department, Fundación Juan March

Catalogue Design

Guillermo Nagore

Typographies in Anthology

Alfonso Meléndez: pp. 370, 372, 374, 394, 400, 402, 406, 408, 410, 412, 414, 416, 418
Fernando Fuentes: pp. 386, 388, 390, 392

Prepress and Printing Estudios Gráficos Europeos S.A., Madrid

Binding Ramos S.A., Madrid

Paper Creator Vol 135 g.



English edition (Hardcover)

ISBN 978-84-7075-625-2
Legal deposit M-23433-2014

Special limited edition (English)

ISBN 978-84-7075-627-6
Legal deposit M-27185-2014

Spanish edition (Hardcover)

ISBN 978-84-7075-624-5
Legal deposit M-23432-2014

Special limited edition (Spanish)

ISBN 978-84-7075-626-9
Legal deposit M-27183-2014

Cover: Typography composition by Guillermo Nagore inspired by Fortunato Depero's book *Depero Futurista 1913–1927* (Milan: Dinamo Azari, 1927). **Back cover:** Mario Castagneri, photograph of Depero in the dressing room at the Teatro Trianon in Milan (Depero painter and poet), c. 1924. Archivio Depero

Authorized Reproductions

For works by Fortunato Depero in the collection of the MART, Museo di arte moderna e contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto, and the MART, Archivio del '900: © Fortunato Depero, VEGAP, Madrid, 2014. For all other works by Fortunato Depero: © Eredi Depero, 2014

For works by Giacomo Balla, Carlo Carrà, Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, Gino Severini, and Andy Warhol: © VEGAP, Madrid, 2014 and The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./VEGAP, Madrid, 2014

Illustration Credits

© A. C. Futur-ism, Rome: cat. 136; cat. 204 © Archivio Depero: cat. 1, p. 30; cat. 31, p. 53; cat. 80, p. 93; cat. 81, p. 92; cat. 107, p. 145; cat. 119, p. 65; cat. 130, p. 145; cat. 149, p. 108; cat. 172, p. 185; cat. 174, p. 191; cat. 175–176, p. 190; cat. 192, p. 213; cat. 220, p. 222; cat. 221, p. 225; cat. 264, p. 235 and back cover image © Archivio Fotografico Civici Musei d'Arte e Storia di Brescia. Photo: Fotostudio Rapuzzi: cat. 84, p. 97 © Archivio Galleria Campari: cat. 160, p. 171; cat. 165, p. 171; cat. 185, 194, 218, 224, p. 168; cat. 225, p. 172; cat. 226, p. 171; cat. 227, p. 170; cat. 228, p. 169; cat. 229, p. 170; cat. 230, p. 173; cat. 231, p. 172; cat. 232, p. 173; cat. 242, p. 167; p. 318 and fig. 9, p. 324; fig. 5, p. 322; fig. 8, p. 323; fig. 9, p. 333 © Archivio Lafuente. Photos: Ediciones la Bahía, Cantabria: cat. 2, p. 31; cat. 4, 5, p. 32; cat. 6, 7, 8, p. 33; cat. 15, 18, p. 34; cat. 19, p. 38; cat. 36, p. 50; cat. 38, p. 48; cat. 73, p. 78; cat. 132, p. 110; cat. 135, p. 144; cat. 152, p. 153; cat. 155, 157, p. 161; cat. 223, p. 229; cat. 233, p. 218; cat. 243, p. 233; cat. 255, p. 234; cat. 256, p. 233; cat. 262, p. 234; cat. 265, p. 237; cat. 271, p. 241 © Biblioteca Fundación Juan March, Madrid: fig. 16, p. 352 © Biblioteca Fundación Juan March, Madrid (Fondo Fernando Zóbel): fig. 3, p. 349 © Carlo Belloli Collection, Basel: fig. 10, p. 324; fig. 12, p. 334 © Cittadellarte-Fondazione Pistoletto, Biella: p. 346 © Civica Raccolta delle Stampe "Achille Bertarelli", Castello Sforzesco, Milan: fig. 4, p. 311; fig. 8, p. 312; fig. 9, pp. 308 and 312; figs. 10, 11 and 12, p. 313 © Collezione Girefin: cat. 76, p. 82 © Courtesy Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni, Castello Sforzesco, Milan: cat. 9, p. 39; cat. 11, p. 42 © Courtesy Fondazione Marconi, Milan and Archivio Baj, Vergiate: fig. 11, p. 351 © Courtesy Studio 53 Arte, Rovereto: cat. 93, p. 117; cat. 125, p. 158; cat. 184, pp. 206–207; cat. 200, p. 204 © Courtesy Studio Fabio Mauri: fig. 13, p. 352 © Elisabetta Catalano: fig. 14, p. 352 © Fondazione Torino Musei: fig. 12, p. 261 © Friedrich-Wilhelm-Murnau Stiftung, Wiesbaden: fig. 11, p. 334 © Galleria nazionale d'arte moderna, Rome, by permission of the Ministero dei Beni delle Attività Culturali e del Turismo: fig. 15, p. 262; fig. 9, p. 351 © L'Arengario Studio Bibliografico: cat. 17, pp. 36–37; cat. 44, p. 52; cat. 178, p. 130 © Marcello Francone, 2014: fig. 12, p. 325 © MART, Archivio del '900: cat. 16, p. 35; cat. 27, 36, p. 50; cat. 37, p. 49; cat. 64, p. 77; cat. 94, p. 112; cat. 108, 109, p. 132; cat. 110, p. 126; cat. 112, p. 143; cat. 116, p. 112; cat. 131, p. 143; cat. 133, p. 237; cat. 137, p. 179; cat. 138, p. 101; cat. 148, p. 101; cat. 150, p. 110; cat. 151, p. 157; cat. 164, p. 112; cat. 168, p. 188; cat. 169, p. 193; cat. 170, 171, p. 192; cat. 181, p. 208; cat. 182, p. 188; cat. 208, p. 221; cat. 217, p. 211; cat. 236, p. 228; cat. 237, p. 183; cat. 244, 245, p. 229; cat. 246, 247, p. 230; cat. 265, p. 237; cat. 267, 268, 269, p. 240; cat. 270, 273, p. 241; cat. 274, p. 4 and fig. 1, p. 306; p. 6 and fig. 8, p. 290; p. 18; p. 240; p. 250; p. 266; fig. 23, p. 277; fig. 1, p. 282; p. 286 and fig. 5, p. 289; fig. 1, p. 288; fig. 7, p. 290; fig. 2, p. 300; figs. 2 and 3, p. 306; figs. 4, 6 and 7, p. 307; p. 307; fig. 3, p. 310; fig. 13, p. 313; fig. 14, p. 314; fig. 3, p. 321; fig. 2, p. 330; fig. 3, p. 331; fig. 14, p. 335; p. 328; figs. 1, 2 and 3, p. 340; figs. 4 and 5, p. 341; figs. 6 and 7, p. 342; figs. 8 and 9, p. 343; fig. 10, p. 344; figs. 4 and 5, p. 350; p. 382; pp. 432–433; p. 436; pp. 438–439; p. 441 © MART, Archivio Fotografico: cat. 26, p. 45; cat. 48, p. 66; cat. 49, 50, p. 67; cat. 52, p. 71; cat. 143, pp. 148–149; cat. 161, p. 167; cat. 162, p. 178; cat. 163, p. 179; cat. 179, pp. 195 and 298; cat. 180, p. 194; cat. 186, p. 212; cat. 187, p. 197; cat. 188, p. 196; cat. 189, p. 116; cat. 190, 191, p. 213; cat. 193, p. 214; cat. 196, p. 215; cat. 197, 198, p. 216; cat. 201, p. 199; cat. 202, p. 201; cat. 203, p. 199; cat. 205, p. 203; cat. 206, p. 202; cat. 234, p. 214; cat. 253, 254, p. 232; cat. 260, p. 237; cat. 261, pp. 236 and 338; cat. 263, p. 236; cat. 266, p. 239; cat. 275, pp. 242–243; fig. 4, p. 255; fig. 5, p. 256; fig. 18, p. 274; p. 280 and fig. 3, p. 283; fig. 5, p. 283; fig. 6, p. 284; fig. 6, p. 290; fig. 7, p. 312; fig. 2, p. 320; fig. 4, p. 331; figs. 6 and 7, p. 332; fig. 10, p. 334; fig. 1, p. 348; p. 439 © Massimo & Sonia Cirulli Archive: cat. 128, p. 152; cat. 156, p. 154 © Merrill C. Berman Collection. Photos: Jim Frank and Joelle Jensen: cat. 30, p. 43; cat. 35, p. 55; cat. 39, p. 63; cat. 40, 41, 42, p. 44; cat. 45, p. 55; cat. 74, p. 78; cat. 78, p. 83; cat. 102, 103, p. 53; cat. 105, p. 110; cat. 106, p. 102; cat. 111, p. 145; cat. 123, p. 155; cat. 124, p. 161; cat. 129, p. 103; cat. 134, p. 155; cat. 154, 158, 159, p. 161; cat. 166, p. 187; cat. 167, p. 186; cat. 173, p. 185; cat. 207, p. 234; cat. 209, 210, 211, 212, p. 131; cat. 213, p. 224; cat. 219, p. 226; cat. 222, p. 216; cat. 233, p. 218; cat. 235, p. 228; cat. 240, 241, p. 231; cat. 248, p. 130; cat. 249, p. 231; cat. 250, p. 227; cat. 251, p. 231; cat. 257, p. 238; cat. 258, 259, p. 130 © Ministero delle Attività Produttive, Rome: fig. 14, p. 262 © Musei Civici di Venezia: fig. 9, p. 259 © Private collection, Switzerland, on deposit at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice: fig. 1, p. 268; fig. 4, p. 270; figs. 7 and 9, p. 271; fig. 10, p. 272 © Studio fotografico Luca Carrà: cat. 95, p. 95; cat. 114, p. 140; cat. 121, p. 27 © The Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, Inc./ARS, New York, DACS, London 2009 © Tate, London/Photo Scala, Florence, 2014: fig. 18, p. 315 © The Museum of Modern Art, New York/Scala, Florence, 2014: fig. 2, p. 348 © The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation/Art Resource, New York/Scala, Florence, 2014: fig. 2, p. 310 © Vittorio Calore: cat. 10, p. 40; cat. 20, p. 40; cat. 21, 22, p. 39; cat. 23, 24, 25, p. 42; cat. 33, p. 47; cat. 34, p. 36; cat. 46, p. 40; cat. 51, 53, p. 70; cat. 54, p. 81; cat. 55, p. 74; cat. 56, p. 72; cat. 57, p. 74; cat. 58, p. 72; cat. 59, 60, p. 73; cat. 61, p. 74; cat. 62, p. 76; cat. 63, p. 77; cat. 65, p. 86; cat. 66, 67, 68, 69, p. 79; cat. 70, p. 80; cat. 71, p. 72; cat. 75, p. 87; cat. 77, p. 83; cat. 79, p. 84; cat. 82, pp. 88–89; cat. 83, pp. 98–99; cat. 86, p. 95; cat. 87, p. 75; cat. 88, p. 107; cat. 89, p. 142; cat. 90, p. 96; cat. 91, p. 96; cat. 92, p. 85; cat. 96, p. 119; cat. 97, p. 118; cat. 98, p. 120; cat. 99, pp. 122–123; cat. 100, pp. 120–121; cat. 101, pp. 124–125; cat. 113, pp. 136–137; cat. 115, p. 141; cat. 117, 118, p. 142; cat. 120, p. 80; cat. 122, p. 146; cat. 148, p. 176 and fig. 5, p. 307; cat. 153, pp. 162–163; cat. 195, p. 211; cat. 239, p. 127; figs. 2 and 3, p. 268; fig. 11, p. 272; figs. 14 and 16, p. 273; fig. 17, p. 274; fig. 22, p. 276

Every effort has been made to trace copyright holders and to obtain their permission for the use of copyright material. The publisher apologizes for any errors or omissions in the above list and would be grateful if notified of any corrections that should be incorporated in future reprints or editions of this book at: direxpo@expomarches



FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH
www.march.es



BANCA MARCH

With the collaboration of the Embassy of Italy in Spain and the Italian Cultural Institute



Established in 1955 by the Spanish financier Juan March Ordinas, the Fundación Juan March is a family-run institution that devotes its resources and develops its activities in the fields of science and the humanities.

The Foundation organizes art exhibitions, concerts, lecture series and seminars. It administers the Spanish Library of Contemporary Music and Theater in its Madrid headquarters and directs the Museo de Arte Abstracto Español in Cuenca, and the Museu Fundación Juan March of Palma in Palma de Mallorca.

By means of the Juan March Institute for Study and Research, the Foundation established the Center for Advanced Study in the Social Sciences, now integrated in the Carlos III/Juan March Institute for Social Sciences of the Carlos III University of Madrid.



FUTURIST
1913-1950 DEPERO

FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH | 2014

FUNDACIÓN JUAN MARCH
www.fundacionjuanmarch.com