PRESS RELEASE

FROM FEBRUARY 18 ‘MASTERPIECES OF FUTURISM AT THE PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION’. A RARE OPPORTUNITY TO SEE GREAT WORKS BY THE MASTERS OF ITALIAN FUTURISM.

One hundred years after the publication in Le Figaro on February 20 1909 of the Futurist Manifesto, signed by the ‘jeune poète italien’ Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, the Peggy Guggenheim Collection celebrates this revolutionary avant-garde movement with the exhibition Masterpieces of Futurism at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, curated by Philip Rylands, director of the Venetian museum (from February 18 through 2009). The exhibition also serves as an homage to the foresight of Gianni Mattioli, one of the great collectors of 20th century art, who accumulated a comprehensive presence of Futurism in his collection. This includes works by Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Gino Severini, Ottone Rosai, Mario Sironi and Ardengo Soffici.

Masterpieces of Futurism at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection presents key paintings of the movement such as Materia and Dynamism of a Cyclist by Boccioni, Mercury Passing Before the Sun by Balla, The Galleria of Milan by Carrà, Blue Dancer by Severini, three works from Peggy Guggenheim’s collection (Severini’s Sea = Dancer, Balla’s Abstract Speed + Sound, and Boccioni’s sculpture Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses), as well as loans from private collections by Balla, Boccioni, Carrà and Sironi. This will also be the debut of a recent gift to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, Sironi’s early masterpiece The Cyclist (1916). The exhibition includes three of Boccioni’s four extant sculptures: in addition to the mixed media Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses, bronze cast of his celebrated Development of a Bottle in Space and Unique Forms of Continuity in Space.

An introductory section of paintings, sculptures and drawings contextualizes the Futurist movement with works of other historical avant-gardes, such as Divisionism, Cubism, Orphism and Vorticism. Jean Metzinger and Raymond Duchamp-Villon explored notions of movement and the mechanical dynamism of modern life, while the London Vorticist Edward Wadsworth, who was inspired by the rhetoric of Marinetti, is represented with two woodcuts, Street Singers and Top of the Town, each of them recent gifts to the Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, and now on exhibition for the first time.

Marinetti’s incendiary manifesto of 1909, which concluded “From the summit of the world we hurl once more our insolent challenge to the stars,” was literary in its focus (“the essential elements of our poetry shall be courage, daring and rebellion”), but it made a general appeal for the sweeping renewal of all aspects of Italian culture, predicated on dynamism, speed and technology. A year later five artists signed manifestoes of Futurist painting, on February 11 and April 11, 1910. They were Balla, Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, and Severini, all of them represented with masterpieces in the Mattioli collection, which has been hosted by the Peggy Guggenheim Collection since 1997 on long-term loan.

Flavio Fergonzi’s major work of scholarship, The Gianni Mattioli Collection, published in 2003 by Skira, documents the treasures of this special collection of 20th century art in a broad and comprehensive way.
The programs of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection are made possible thanks to the support of the Advisory Board of the Peggy Guggenheim Collection and:

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FACT SHEET

TITLE
MASTER PIECES OF FUTURISM AT THE PEGGY GUGGENHEIM COLLECTION

CURATOR
Philip Rylands

VENUE
Peggy Guggenheim Collection
Palazzo Venier dei Leoni, 701 Dorsoduro
30123 Venice

DATES
February 18 – December 31, 2009

PRESS CONFERENCE
February 19, 12 noon
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

WORKS EXHIBITED
24 paintings, 4 sculptures, 5 drawings, 2 woodcuts

ENTRANCE TICKET TO THE COLLECTION
regular euro 12; seniors euro 10 (over 65); students euro 7 (under 26 or with a student ID card); children 0-10 yrs and members free entrance (further information on membership: membership@guggenheim-venice.it)

Entrance tickets allow the public to visit the permanent collection, the Gianni Mattioli Collection, the Nasher Sculpture Garden, the exhibition. Free guided visits of the temporary exhibitions, daily at 3:30pm. Reservation is not requested.

OPENING HOURS
daily from 10 am to 6 pm, closed on Tuesday

INFORMATION
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From Piazzale Roma - Ferrovia (train station): vaporetto no. 2 towards Lido, get off at the Accademia stop (25 minutes); vaporetto no. 1 towards Lido, get off at the Accademia stop (30 minutes). From St. Mark's Square: vaporetto no. 1, 2, or 3 (for Venetians only) towards Piazzale Roma-Ferrovia, get off at Accademia stop (5 minutes).

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MASTERPIECES OF FUTURISM at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection
19.02-31.12 2009

Giacomo Balla
Paths of Movement + Dynamic Sequences
(Linee andamentali + successioni dinamiche)
1913
Tempera on paper laid on canvas
49 x 68 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Giacomo Balla
Dynamic depths (Profondità dinamiche)
cia. 1913
Tempera on paper
35 x 50 cm
Private collection

Giacomo Balla
Abstract Speed + Sound (Velocità astratta + rumore)
1913–14
Oil on board
54.5 x 76.5 cm including artist’s frame
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

Giacomo Balla
Mercury Passing Before the Sun
(Mercurio transita davanti al sole)
1914
Tempera on paper lined
120 x 100 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Umberto Boccioni
Paduan Landscape (Campagna padovana)
1903
Oil on canvas
36 x 70 cm
Private collection, Bergamo

Umberto Boccioni
Counterlight (Contre-jour)
1910
Pencil on paper
36 x 49 cm
Private collection
Umberto Boccioni
Study for The City Rises (Studio per La città che sale)
1910
Oil on cardboard
33 x 47 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Umberto Boccioni
Three studies for States of Mind (Those Who Stay, Those Who Stay, Those Who Go)
1911
Ink on paper
15.5 x 9; 8 x 11; 16 x 10 cm
Private collection

Umberto Boccioni
Materia
1912
Oil on canvas
226 x 150 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Umberto Boccioni
Development of a Bottle in Space
(Sviluppo di una bottiglia nello spazio)
1913 (cast 2004–5)
Bronze
ca. 38 x 59.5 x 32 cm
Private collection

Umberto Boccioni
Unique Forms of Continuity in Space
(Forme uniche della continuità nello spazio)
1913 (cast 2004–5)
Bronze
112 x 40 x 90 cm
Private collection

Umberto Boccioni
Dynamism of a Cyclist (Dinamismo di un ciclista)
1913
Oil on canvas
70 x 95 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection
Umberto Boccioni

*Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses*  
(*Dinamismo di un cavallo in corsa + case*)  
1915  
Gouache, oil, wood, cardboard, copper, and coated iron  
112.9 x 115 cm  
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

Carlo Carrà

*Form in Circular Motion*  
ca. 1912–13  
Charcoal and black ink with brush on paper  
52 x 43.5 cm  
Private collection

Carlo Carrà

*The Galleria in Milan (La Galleria di Milano)*  
1912  
Oil on canvas  
91 x 51.5 cm  
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Carlo Carrà

*Pursuit (Inseguimento)*  
1915  
Tempera, charcoal and collage on cardboard  
39 x 68 cm  
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Carlo Carrà

*Interventionist Demonstration (Patriotic Holiday-Freeword Painting) (Manifestazione interventista [Festa patriottica-dipinto parolibero])*  
1914  
Tempera, pen, mica powder, paper glued on cardboard,  
38.5 x 30 cm  
Gianni Mattioli Collection
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Artist</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Medium</th>
<th>Dimensions</th>
<th>Collection</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Robert Delaunay</td>
<td>Windows Open Simultaneously 1st Part, 3rd Motif (Fenêtres ouvertes simultanément 1ère partie, 3e motif)</td>
<td>1912</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>57 x 123 cm</td>
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<td>Marcel Duchamp</td>
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<td>Study for Amorpha, Warm Chromatism (Amorpha, Chromatique chaude) and for Fugue in Two Colors (Fugue à deux couleurs)</td>
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<td>46.8 x 48.3 cm</td>
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<td>Jean Metzinger</td>
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<td>Oil and collage on canvas</td>
<td>130.4 x 97.1 cm</td>
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<td>Artist</td>
<td>Title</td>
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<td>Ottone Rosai</td>
<td>Dynamism Bar San Marco (Dinamismo Bar San Marco)</td>
<td>1913</td>
<td>Oil on cardboard laid on canvas</td>
<td>55 x 51 cm</td>
<td>Gianni Mattioli Collection</td>
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<td>Ottone Rosai</td>
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<td>1914</td>
<td>Oil on canvas with collage</td>
<td>63 x 53 cm</td>
<td>Gianni Mattioli Collection</td>
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<td>Luigi Russolo</td>
<td>Solidity of Fog (Solidità nella nebbia)</td>
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<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>100 x 65 cm</td>
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<td>Gino Severini</td>
<td>Sea=Dancer (Mare=Ballerina)</td>
<td>1914</td>
<td>Oil on canvas</td>
<td>105.3 x 85.9 cm, including artist’s painted frame</td>
<td>Peggy Guggenheim Collection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Mario Sironi
*The Cyclist (Il ciclista)*
1916
Oil on canvas
96 x 71 cm
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, Venice
Gift, Giovanni and Lilian Pandini, Bergamo, 2008

Mario Sironi
*The Dancer (La ballerina)*
1916
Tempera and collage on cardboard
47.5 x 37 cm
Private collection

Mario Sironi
*Composition with Propeller (Composizione con elica)*
1919
Tempera and collage on cardboard
74.5 x 61.5 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Ardengo Soffici
*Small Trophy (Trofeino)*
1914–1915
Oil on canvas
46.5 x 38.5 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Ardengo Soffici
*Fruit and Liqueurs (Frutta e liquori)*
1915
Oil on canvas
65 x 54 cm
Gianni Mattioli Collection
Edward Wadsworth

Street Singers
ca. 1914
Woodcut
14.7 x 11.2 cm
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, Venice
Gift, Erina Siciliani 2007

Edward Wadsworth

Top of the Town
ca. 1916
Woodcut
7 x 7.2 cm
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation, Venice
Promised Gift, Erina Siciliani 2009
Giacomo Balla (1871–1958)
Paths of Movement + Dynamic Sequences
(Linee andamentali + successioni dinamiche)
1913
Tempera on paper laid on canvas
Gianni Mattioli Collection

This study is the closest to Giacomo Balla’s masterpiece, Swifts: Paths of Movement + Dynamic Sequences of 1913 (The Museum of Modern Art, New York). Balla was influenced by the chronophotography of the physiologist Etienne-Jules Marey who studied the flight of birds through the rapid succession of photographs. The “paths of movement” may refer to the flight paths of the swifts, while “dynamic sequences” refers to the repeated images of the birds beating their wings. Balla was interested in the analysis of movement, breaking it down into sequences of distinct images in linear rhythms.

Giacomo Balla (1871–1958)
Dynamic Depths (Profondità dinamiche)
c.a. 1913
Tempera on paper
Private Collection

In 1913, Balla began a period of intense experimentation, fully aligning himself at last with the Futurist movement, and taking as his theme the impact on light and the ambience of speeding automobiles. According to the artist’s daughters he began by making direct observations of passing cars on the Via Veneto, Rome. The April 1910 Manifesto of Futurist Painting, which Balla had signed, declared “…moving objects constantly multiply themselves; their form changes like rapid vibrations, in their mad career.” Spinning tires, the rectangular chassis and the urban setting are dramatized by the lines that radiate from the steering wheel. The pyramids may be concretions of the atmosphere through which the car is rushing, and relate to Balla’s ‘iridescent compenetrations’— experimental abstract drawings he was making at this time.

Giacomo Balla (1871–1958)
Abstract Speed + Sound (Velocità astratta + rumore)
1913–1914
Oil on board
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

This painting represents an advanced stage of Balla’s studies of the dynamic impact of automobiles on their surroundings, in which he attempts the representation of sound, in addition to speed and light. The zig-zags and crosses embody the roar of the motor car, while the swirling lines are Balla’s ‘sign’ for speed. The color scheme does the rest: the grey road, white light, green landscape and blue sky all convulsed by the passage of the red automobile. It has been proposed (but not proven) that Abstract Speed + Sound was the central and climactic section of a triptych, in which a car approaches, passes and recedes.
**Giacomo Balla (1871–1958)**

*Mercury Passing Before the Sun (Mercurio transita davanti al sole)*

1914

Tempera on paper lined with canvas

Gianni Mattioli Collection

This painting represents the definitive outcome of numerous studies Balla made following his observation, on November 7, 1914, of the transit of the planet Mercury across the face of the sun. The event takes place in the upper central region of the painting, where a small dot, Mercury, is located near the circumference of a larger circle, the Sun. The dazzle of white triangles nearby can be explained as the impact on the naked eye as Balla looked away from his lens. The green cone, which terminates on Mercury, may correspond to the telescope and the tanned arcs and triangles to its smoked lenses.

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**Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)**

*Paduan Landscape (Campagna padovana)*

1903

Oil on canvas

Private Collection, Bergamo

Divisionism in Italian painting refers to a technique of deploying unmixed oil colors to intensify hues which, from a distance, merge in optical (rather than actual) mixing of the colour. Boccioni learned this from his older contemporary Giacomo Balla and was an admirer of the great Symbolist master (and theorist) of Divisionism Gaetano Previati. The technique was comparable to French Neo-Impressionism, though it differs in its linear brushstrokes, as opposed to the speckled effect of Seurat and Signac’s *pointilisme*. This January landscape, years before the Futurist movement, shows Boccioni’s mastery of this technique. The steeply receding furrows may be premonitory of his interest in swift movement. The Divisionist ‘mark’ is still apparent in Boccioni’s works of 1910 on view here, and indeed survives throughout his short career, even after his discovery of French Cubism.

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**Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)**

*Counterlight (Contre-jour)*

1910

Pencil on paper

Private collection

In the early stages of his work with the Futurists, Boccioni was concerned with light, and its effect on the perception of volume. Several studies of light depict women, often his own mother, seated with back lighting (*Contre-jour*, the title of this highly finished drawing) from a window. In this portrait of his sister Amelia, motif of the oblique incidence of beams of light on the sitter’s face recurs two years later in *Materia* nearby.
Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Study for The City Rises (La città che sale)
1910
Oil on cardboard
Gianni Mattioli Collection

This is the only extant study in oils for the much larger The City Rises (1910, The Museum of Modern Art, New York). A consciously modern subject—depicting the building site of Milan’s first electricity generating plant in Piazza Trento—is combined with a passéiste notion of rendering heroic manual labor and virile energy. The vibrant depiction of physical exertion evokes Marinetti’s declaration that “beauty exists only in struggle.” With long filaments of pure color, in the Divisionist style, Boccioni dissolves forms in a strong early morning (long shadows) sunlight.

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Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Three studies for States of Mind (Those who Stay, Those who Stay, Those who Go) (Stati d’animo [Quelli che restano, Quelli che restano, Quelli che vanno])
1911
Ink on paper
Private Collection

Assembled here are studies for two paintings of the first version of Boccioni’s triptych States of Mind, now in the Civiche Raccolte d’Arte, Museo del Novecento, Milan. Both the triptych format, and the conviction that art could represent a psychological state through color and form, were inheritances from European Symbolism. The scene is set amidst the steam, smoke, noise and confusion of a train station. Boccioni said he wished to convey “loneliness, anguish, and dazed confusion”. Later in the year, in November, Boccioni visited Paris, where he became aware of Cubism. He subsequently painted a second version of States of Mind (The Museum of Modern Art, New York).

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Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Materia
1912
Oil on canvas
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Materia (matter), grandly symbolic in its title, represents the artist’s mother (mater) full length, her outsize hands plumb center of the composition. She is seated in a wrought iron chair, on a balcony (the railing is visible), of an evening, with a view of Piazza Trento beyond. In obedience to Futurist theory, the outdoors invade the scene: factory chimneys in the upper left, a pedestrian strutting beneath the acute-angled balconies to the right, and a tan-colored horse cantering out of the picture on the left. Though the intersecting planes (and the diagrammatic depiction of the mother’s head in front view and profile simultaneously) clearly benefit from Boccioni’s knowledge of Parisian Cubism, the weight of symbolism, the density of theory, and the splintering of form with light are peculiar to this phase of Futurism, of which this is one of the great masterpieces.
Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Development of a Bottle in Space
(Sviluppo di una bottiglia nello spazio)
1913 (cast 2004–5)
Bronze
Private Collection

The still life is an unlikely motif for rendering Futurist dynamism. Yet Boccioni has merged outside and inside and given the bottle and dish on which it stands a spiral form that provokes the movement of the spectator around the table. It has been plausibly argued that this sculpture, and other now-lost works depicting a bottle, was an intentional riposte to the Parisian avant-garde: in April 1913, Apollinaire publicly announced a new tendency of Cubism, Orphism, which was predicated like Futurism on the depiction of movement.

Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Dynamism of a Cyclist
(Dinamismo di un ciclista)
1913
Oil on canvas
Gianni Mattioli Collection

The modern cycle, with its roller-chain drive, sprung saddle and pneumatic tires, was developed in the 1890s. Boccioni was himself a fan of the sport of cycle-racing. The lone figure in this highly abstracted composition of cones, fins and spirals, moves from right to left, his head down, his backside raised from the saddle and the blue number 15 on his tabard (upper center of the image). Boccioni’s ambition was to create a ‘unique sign’ for the cyclist’s dynamic passage, representing simultaneously the sportsman’s body deformed by swift movement and the space around him convulsed by his passage.

Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Unique Forms of Continuity in Space
(Forme uniche della continuità nello spazio)
1913 (cast 2004–5)
Bronze
Private Collection

Boccioni considered this the climactic figure in a series of four walking (or running) men that he created in plaster prior to the exhibition of his sculpture at the Galerie La Boëtie, Paris, in June-July 1913. The forward and striding motion of Boccioni’s armless figure recalls Rodin’s Walking Man, which he had seen in Rome in 1911. Boccioni’s intention was to visualize the merging of the figure with the space through which it moves, in a finite, absolute and ‘unique’ form. Disappointed by the negative reception of his exhibition in Paris, Boccioni returned to painting. The first bronze cast of Boccioni’s plaster was made in 1931, long after his death.
Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)
*Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses*  
* (Dinamismo di un cavallo in corsa + case)  
1915  
Gouache, oil, wood, cardboard, copper, and coated iron  
**Peggy Guggenheim Collection**

This mixed media assemblage was Boccioni’s last sculpture, approximately 18 months before his accidental death falling from a horse. It represents speed, almost literally represented in the arrow-like head of the horse, which causes the optical deformation of the houses behind (the sheet of cardboard) and of the horse in front. None of the horse’s hooves are identifiable, and can be assumed to have vanished in the blur of the horse’s passage. This has been mistakenly considered to answer Boccioni’s own call for mixed-media sculpture in his 1912 *Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture*, whereas it more plausibly responds to similar ‘assembled’, collaged work in the recent art of Picasso and the Russian avant-garde. Much damaged in the 1930s, *Dynamism of a Speeding Horse + Houses* was erratically reconstructed after 1944.

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Carlo Carrà (1881–1966)
*Form in Circular Motion*  
* (Forma in moto circolare)  
ca. 1912–13  
Charcoal and black ink with brush on paper  
**Private Collection**

Carrà visited Paris in November 1911 on the invitation of Severini, and became aware of the first time of Cubism. This painting, dateable to 1912–13 despite the date 1910 inscribed in the lower left, perhaps depicts a subject popular with his friend Severini (a dancer in motion) and is rendered with the dabbed brushstrokes, monochrome palette and architectonic black lines characteristic of Picasso and Braque’s painting the previous year.

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Carlo Carrà (1881–1966)
*La Galleria di Milano*  
* (The Galleria in Milan)  
1912  
Oil on canvas  
**Gianni Mattioli Collection**

This painting of Milan’s Galleria Vittorio Emanuele II has long been considered one of Carrà most accomplished Futurist works. It is strongly influenced by Cubism, with which he was freshly re-acquainted after a recent trip to Paris (February) for the opening of the Futurist exhibition at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune. Ardengo Soffici praised it as a “plastic symphony in browns and silvery whites” and ranked it among the greatest Futurist paintings. Carrà himself considered it “a culminating point of my artistic activity in that period.”
Raymond Duchamp-Villon (1876–1918)
*The Horse (Le Cheval)*
1914 (cast ca. 1930)
Bronze
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

Duchamp-Villon closely observed the movement of horses during his experience in the cavalry; he also studied the subject in the late 19th century photographic experiments of Eadweard Muybridge and Etienne-Jules Marey. The original conception of *The Horse* was naturalistic, but Duchamp-Villon then developed a dynamic, smooth-surfaced synthesis of horse and machine. The animal appears to be gathering its hooves, summoning strength to jump. The sensation of pistons, wheels and shafts turns a creature of nature into a poised mechanical dynamo. The fusion of horse, traditional symbol of power, and the machine that was replacing it, reflects the emerging awareness of the new technological age in a way comparable to that of the Futurists.

František Kupka (1871–1957)
*Study for Amorpha, Warm Chromatism (Amorpha, Chromatique chaude) and for Fugue in Two Colors (Fugue à deux couleurs)*
c. 1910–11
Pastel on paper
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

This study coincides with Kupka’s introduction to the Puteaux group in Paris. This circle of artists, which included Duchamp, Delaunay and Metzinger, discussed the representation of movement in Cubist and Futurist painting, as well as relations between music and art. Kupka took as his starting point a series of studies of his stepdaughter playing with a blue ball. Moving away from naturalistic depiction, he isolated movement in a rhythmic series of colored patterns which follow an almost musical structure. The image is subjected to a process of abstraction: the pale green is the residual depiction of sunlight on the grass on which the child played. Otherwise the expulsion of natural light, of a sense of gravity and of spatial depth is almost complete. The two paintings for which this is a study were shown at the Salon d’Automne in 1912, and were the first fully abstract, or ‘pure paintings’, to be exhibited in Paris.

Jean Metzinger (1883–1956)
*At the Cycle-Race Track (Au Vélodrome)*
c. 1912
Oil and collage on canvas
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

Reflecting the growing interest in Futurism of Metzinger’s theoretical writings, this work marks an essential transition in his painting: elements of Impressionism—the Pointillist depiction of the crowd—and a Cubist emphasis on the simultaneous nature of rapid movement, find their ultimate expression in the Futurist theme of the cycle race. The quasi-cinematic representation of the cyclist’s progress between Paris and Roubaix (celebrated for the cobblestones of Northern French towns) echoes Marinetti’s great call the unification of man and machine: “We want to sing the man at the wheel, the ideal axis of which crosses the earth, itself hurled along its orbit.”
**Ottone Rosai (1895–1957)**  
*Dynamism Bar San Marco (Dinamismo Bar San Marco)*  
1913  
Oil on cardboard laid on canvas  
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Between visits to the 1913 *Mostra della Pittura Futurista* in Florence, Rosai frequented the Bar San Marco, a setting which allowed him to represent in paint his state of mind at the time. Although the ambitious attempt to inject Cubist forms with raw futurist impulsiveness sees Rosai almost lapse into illustration, his bold touches and thick feathery outlines remain expressive for their sheer lack of elegance. Clumsy attempts at simultaneity (central forms fused along vertical axes amid busy arrangements of overlapping sheaths of light) are soothed by sensuously painted, richly varied colors that would later be critically hailed as “characteristically Italian deformations” independent of prevailing Cubist trends.

**Ottone Rosai (1895–1957)**  
*Fragmentation of a Street (Scomposizione di una strada)*  
1914  
Oil on canvas with collage insert  
Gianni Mattioli Collection

This crowded visual impression of a working class Florentine neighbourhood anticipates the suspended mood and simple treatment of rural forms in Rosai’s later work. In a highly personal approach Rosai’s impulse to distort by means of Cubo-Futurist devices (dismantling of solids and contours generating dense overlapping of angled forms) is anchored by a reluctance to abandon realistic observation. Recognizable motifs (a horse-drawn carriage, a red-tiled kiosk, a hanging street light) are isolated and emphasised within a texture of angular and broken forms allowing for a fusion of representation and abstraction that extends as a visual pattern across the entire canvas.

**Luigi Russolo (1885–1947)**  
*Solidity of Fog (Solidità della nebbia)*  
1912  
Oil on canvas  
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Under the cover of fog, Russolo merges a night in Milan with a Futurist reverie of revolt in Northern Africa. His subject matter was influenced by Marinetti’s article, *La Bataille de Tripoli* recounting his experiences in Tripolitania ( Libya). Marinetti’s narrative was divided into segments: sunset in the desert, the night vigil, and preparations for the attack at dawn, which Russolo combines into a single vision. The figures serve simultaneously as soldiers in the desert and modern man on Milan’s cobblestone streets. The nocturnal palette directs attention to the techniques of color refraction and the rhythmic relation between subject and atmospheric light.
Gino Severini (1883–1966)

Blue Dancer (Danseuse bleu)
1912
Oil on canvas with sequins
Gianni Mattioli Collection

Painted in 1912, this work depicts the bourgeois café scene of pre-war Paris. The dancer is performing a flamenco to the sound of a violin (upper right): her hair draped in a mantilla, her fingers clicking and her eyelids lowered as she concentrates on her moves. The control required in executing this dance is conveyed by the dominant calming blue tones, which lend an emotional intensity to the work. Severini depicts rapid movement by multiplying the forms in a Cubist manner, as Balla did in the same period, and by applying real sequins to the canvas, which flicker as they catch the light, in the areas corresponding with the dancer’s dress.

Gino Severini (1883–1966)

Sea = Dancer (Mare=Ballerina)
January 1914
Oil on canvas
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

In 1913 Severini went to the coastal town of Anzio to convalesce, it was here that he was inspired to paint Sea = Dancer. The pure colors in choppy brushstrokes derive from Neo-Impressionism which was still fashionable when Severini first arrived in Paris in 1906. The technique gives fluidity and vibrancy to this joyous subject in which the dancer and the sea are fused—the dancer’s costume likened to the crashing of the waves. The sea cannot be contained within a frame, and the waves thus lick the edge of the picture frame, moving into the viewer’s space. Soon after this Severini painted pure color abstractions.

Carlo Carrà (1881–1966)

Pursuit (Inseguimento)
1915
Tempera, charcoal and collage on cardboard
Gianni Mattioli Collection

This collage depicts a galloping cavalry officer, with knee-length boots, red trousers and a cylindrical helmet. The word “JOFFRE” below the horse’s muzzle refers to Joseph Joffre, commander-in-chief of the French troops in the Great War, while “Balcan...” alludes to the political troubles across the Adriatic. The clarity and solidity of the horse’s form anticipates Carrà’s imminent renunciation of Futurism and involvement instead with ‘metaphysical painting’.
**Carlo Carrà (1881–1966)**

*Interventionist Demonstration (Manifestazione interventista)*  
1914  
Tempera, pen, mica powder, paper glued on cardboard  
Gianni Mattioli Collection

This work was first titled *Freeword Painting (Patriotic Holiday).* The now traditional title of the collage refers to a movement, strongly supported by the pro-war Futurists, urging the Italian government to intervene in the Great War in order to retrieve from Austria Italian-speaking territory such as Trieste. Words-in-Freedom were a literary form favored by Marinetti, founder of Futurism, which was exempt from rules of punctuation, grammar and conventional typographical layout. Almost all of the paper cuttings are from the Florentine periodical *Lacerba*; the word 'Odol' instead is cut from a toothpaste advertisement in the *Corriere della Sera.*

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**Mario Sironi (1885–1961)**

*The Cyclist (Il ciclista)*  
1916  
Oil on canvas  
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation  
Gift, Giovanni and Lilian Pandini, Bergamo, 2008

Mario Sironi joined the Futurist movement in 1915, approximately a year before painting this racing cyclist. The Futurist component of the painting consists in the sporting subject of modern life and in the partial view of the back wheel, declaring the cyclist's forward motion into the painting and evoking photographic illustrations from *La Gazzetta dello Sport.* Conspicuous in this painting is the vehemence with which Sironi applied oil paint—in vigorous choppy strokes on the grass to the right, with flicks of white to suggest the spokes of the wheel, streaks for the fast approaching camber, broad planes for the tense left leg and feathery touches for the slack right leg.

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**Edward Wadsworth (1889–1949)**

*Street Singers,* ca. 1914  
*Top of the Town,* ca. 1916  
Woodcuts  
Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation  
Gifts, Erina Siciliani 2007 and 2009

Marinetti, founder of Futurism, was a frequent visitor to London, and several exhibitions of Futurist painting and sculpture were held there between 1912 and 1914, causing shock and amusement in the tabloid press. Futurist calls for sweeping cultural renewal were inspirational to young British artists. So strong was the identification of Futurism with new, rebel art, that Vorticism, when it was founded in the Spring of 1914 by Ezra Pound, Wyndham Lewis and others, was at pains to differentiate itself from Marinetti’s movement. Vorticism has been called ‘figurative abstraction’, and how this paradox works is apparent in these typical Vorticist images of three street artists, dehumanized by mechanistic forms, and of a town seen from above.
Mario Sironi (1885–1961)

The dancer (La ballerina)

1916
Tempera and collage on cardboard

Private Collection

The dancer depicted here epitomizes the early Futurists’ conception of women. The traditional woman was considered to be a menace for men, a threat to their virility and their creativity. Sensual, feminine women, especially the nude, were to be banned as subject matter for at least ten years. In this painting, high heeled boots and an exposed breast signify that the figure is female, but Futurist theories of a new, Nietzschean species encroach upon her form. The result is a hybrid human-machine, a hygienic form with sleek, metallic appendages. In 1913, Valentine de Saint-Point published the Futurist Manifesto of Lust.

Mario Sironi (1885–1961)

Composition with Propeller (Composizione con elica)

1919
Tempera and collage on board

Gianni Mattioli Collection

This crowded image has a propeller-like form in the vertical brown pasted paper. This is a clue to the recognition of a partial view of a bi-plane—with a round fuselage, its wings separated by a vertical strut and a wheel below. The plane is flying in a night sky with a moon above. Yet this collage painting is hardly an illustration of early aviation. Its strengths, like of those of the nearby Cyclist are pictorial: clashing shapes and hues, a drama of lights and darks, comprehensible space confounded in a Cubist manner, and an inexplicable triangular clipping from a Spanish bulletin of pasta makers.

Ardengo Soffici (1879–1964)

Small Trophy (Trofeino)

1914–15
Oil on canvas

Gianni Mattioli Collection

The cosmopolitan Florentine critic and painter Ardengo Soffici was perhaps the closest of the Futurists to Cubism and the Cubists, together with Severini. As early as August 1911 he had written on Picasso and Braque in La Voce (the first printed discussion of Cubism in Italian). This elegantly colored still life (painted apparently over a collage) has more in common with Synthetic Cubism than with Futurist concepts and iconography. The ‘trophy’ of the title is a Tuscan colloquialism for an inn sign, with assembled objects (Chianti wine, a goblet, a lemon and a pipe).
Ardengo Soffici (1879–1964)
_Fruit and Liqueurs (Frutta e liquori)_
1915
Oil on canvas
Gianni Mattioli Collection

This whirling café still life has more of the Futurist spirit in its design than the same artist’s earlier _Small Trophy_. The watermelon slices and shallow fruit bowl set the composition in motion. F.C.B. stands for Ferro-China Bisleri, a digestif still in production today. The five shining cherries (or grapes) in the upper left corner herald Soffici’s subsequent shift towards more compact form, realistic drawing and atmospheric painting. The thickly encrusted paint may derive from Soffici’s knowledge of avant-garde Russian art, which had this characteristic. Indeed the Russian Alexandra Exter, a close friend, had painted a similar composition, with watermelon and cherries, a year earlier.

Marcel Duchamp (1887–1968)
_Nude (Study), Sad Young Man on a Train (Nu [esquisse], Jeune homme triste dans un train)_
1911–12
Oil on cardboard
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

According to Duchamp himself, this is a self-portrait—a full-length nude figure in motion, emerging from the left and fading to the right. The brown and black palette may be Duchamp’s response to the Analytical Cubism of Braque and Picasso at this time, or alternatively may be an attempt to create mood (tristesse). Duchamp may have been aware of sketches by Boccioni for the first version of his _States of Mind_ triptych (such as those on display here), which also had the intention of evoking melancholy. Boccioni and other Futurists had very recently visited Paris, in November 1911, on the invitation of Severini.

Robert Delaunay (1885–1941)
_Windows Open Simultaneously 1st Part, 3rd Motif (Fenêtres ouvertes simultanément 1ère partie, 3e motif)_
1912
Oil on oval canvas
Peggy Guggenheim Collection

In 1912 Delaunay shifted from the representation of movement by the use of repeated forms, such as he had seen in the Futurist paintings shown at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in February of that year, in favor of the representation of movement by causing the eye to move around the image in a vain attempt to find a point of repose in the composition. He does this in a series of _Windows_, of which this painting is one, that take as their motif the Eiffel Tower (the tapering green form in the centre).
Giacomo Balla (1871–1958)

Giacomo Balla was born in Turin in 1871. He began his studies in 1891 at the Accademia Albertina di Belle Arti, later attending the Liceo Artistico in Turin and, in 1892 the University of Turin. In 1895 he moved to Rome. In 1899, already an established painter regularly participating in shows, Balla’s work was exhibited for the first time in the Venice Biennale. In 1903 Balla taught Boccioni and Severini to paint using Italian Divisionist techniques. In 1910 he signed the second Futurist manifesto along with Boccioni, Severini, Carrà and Russolo, though he did not begin to exhibit with the Futurists until 1913. As the Futurists aspired to depict modernity through dynamic sensation itself, Balla’s major contribution was his focus on capturing simultaneous experiences on canvas, a “style of motion” that merged instincts with mechanical rhythms and forms. While Boccioni, Severini and Carrà had adopted Cubism and were interested in interpenetrating objects and dislocated spaces, Balla looked towards the chrono-photography of Etienne-Jules Marey, which made visible in diagrammatic form the trajectory of movement over time and space.

Umberto Boccioni (1882–1916)

Born in Reggio Calabria in 1882, Umberto Boccioni moved to Rome when he was nineteen and enrolled in the Accademia di Belle Arti. He learned the techniques of Divisionist painting from Balla, and took part in several exhibitions around Europe before settling briefly in Venice (1906–7), where he attended the Accademia di Belle Arti. In 1909, he moved to Milan where he met Carrà, Russolo and, most significantly, Marinetti who had published the first Futurist Manifesto that year. In 1910 Boccioni allied himself with the Futurist movement and contributed to the writing of two subsequent painting manifestoes. His work sought to embody the spirit of the manifestoes and explored modern subject matter and the effects of light on form. In the fall of 1911 he traveled to Paris with Carrà, Russolo and Marinetti and became acquainted with Cubism. After participating in the Futurist exhibition at the Galerie Bernheim Jeune, Paris, in 1912, he became fascinated by sculpture. In 1912 he published the Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture, exhibited his sculpture at the Galerie La Boëtie in 1913, and began writing for the Futurist publication Lacerba. In 1914 he published Pittura e scultura futuriste. Two years later, aged 33, he accidentally died when thrown from his horse.
Carlo Carrà (1881–1966)

Born in Quargnento, near Alessandria, in 1881, Carrà left home at an early age to work as a mural decorator. He continued to travel, visiting Paris and London before enrolling at the Accademia di Brera in Milan in 1906. He was trained in the Italian Divisionist style, but his early work displayed the distinctive clarity of nineteenth-century Lombard Naturalism. Inspired by Marinetti’s provocative Futurist Manifesto, Carrà became one of the first painters to join the group, signing the *Manifesto of Futurist Painters* in 1910. Moved by anarchist beliefs and a revolutionary spirit, Carrà actively supported the Futurist program and his art at this time sought to give plastic form to his radical political interests. Carrà also wrote for the Futurist periodical *Lacerba* and supported the Interventionist movement. During World War I, however, Carrà’s attitude shifted and he began to promote an anti-Futurist return to order and stability. Carrà had always favored the painterly analysis of objects and figures and he pursued this rational investigation in still lives. Along with Giorgio de Chirico, Carrà developed Metaphysical Painting, an examination of the transcendent properties of pure form and commonplace objects. Carrà’s artistic practice continued to evolve until his death in 1966.

Ottone Rosai (1895–1957)

Born to a working class Florentine family, Ottone Rosai was an atypical Futurist whose adherence to the movement was motivated more by a desire to strengthen his innate expressive faculties than by any inclination towards theoretical speculation. Belonging to the generation after Boccioni and Soffici, he joined the Futurists in November 1913 after seeing works by Soffici, Carrà and other Futurist artists at the *Esposizione di Pittura Futurista* (November 1913–January 1914) in Florence. In 1914 he abandoned the emphatically symbolist mood of his earlier works and began painting in an unmistakably Futurist manner, combining lessons learned from Soffici with the dissonant hues of German Expressionist painting. During World War I, Rosai volunteered in the Arditi, the daring assault troops, and was wounded several times. In the post-war years he participated in the activities of the local Fascist squads but became disillusioned with Fascism in 1924 at the time of Matteotti’s murder. Having long abandoned Futurist painting, his art now combined the simple forms and suspended mood of Metaphysical painting with a strong sense of realism, solidly grounded in Tuscan folk tradition.
Luigi Russolo (1885–1947)

Luigi Russolo co-signed the two Futurist painting manifestoes of 1910, and contributed to the periodical, *Lacerba*. Although Francesco Balilla Patella is recognized as the official Futurist composer, Russolo also composed for and invented *intonarumori*, noise intoners. In his manifesto *Art of Noises* (*L’arte dei Rumori*) of 1913 he wrote, “Ancient life was all silence. In the nineteenth century, with the invention of the machine, Noise was born”. Russolo was the first to conceptualize electronic music and theorize that music could be composed solely of noises and not harmonics. Marinetti and Russolo produced the first concert of Futurist music in 1914. Russolo studied Jules Romains’ writings of Unanimism and believed his painting could display ideals of collective consciousness. He was passionate about Symbolism and adamantly rejected Cubist theory of fragmenting forms, instead developing his own style of rhythmic lines and defined tones. In his painting, he embraced speed, noise, the machine and the visual atmosphere of modernity, incorporating his experience as a musician to reinterpret his visions pictorially.

Gino Severini (1883–1966)

Born in Cortona in 1883, Severini attended art school in Rome and later moved to Paris, where he would spend much of his working life. He was ergo the most cosmopolitan and isolated of the Futurists, and acted as their foreign correspondent, keeping them abreast of developments within the Parisian avant-grade. It was through Severini that the Futurists learned of the Cubist technique of fragmentation, which they utilized to express dynamism in art. In his own work, Severini adopted Neo-Impressionist techniques. Less drawn to the subjects of machinery and industrialization than other Futurists, he preferred to paint the buzzing cafés and dance halls that he frequented. For him, dance best encapsulated Futurist ideals of speed and dynamism. Rather than objectively depicting speeding objects he strove to show speed itself, emanating from the bodies of dancers. Severini abandoned the theme of dancers during the World War I and took up a Synthetic Cubist style. He returned to the subject of dance again in the 1950s, but it is for his work during the Futurist era that he is chiefly remembered as a great painter of dancers.
Mario Sironi (1885–1961)

Born 1885 in Sassari, Sironi lived in Rome from 1886 on. He spent a year studying engineering at the University of Rome before deciding in 1903 to devote himself to painting. At the Scuola Libera del Nudo, he met Balla, Boccioni and Severini. Like other early Futurists, he adopted Divisionist techniques, breaking light and colour down into a field of stippled dots. He later destroyed these works. By 1914 he had moved to Milan, the centre of the Futurist movement, and was formally invited by Marinetti to join the group. After World War I, he participated in the Grande Mostra Futurista in Milan, organized by Marinetti as a display of the movement’s strength. At this point, Sironi was already moving away from Futurist abstraction towards the metaphysical forms inspired by Giorgio de Chirico. Like many artists in the period following the war, Sironi looked to the art of the past for inspiration and his work began to embrace geometric forms. He became the leading artist in the Novecento movement. Inspired by the sprawling industrial quarters of Milan, from 1919-1921, he painted his famous urban landscapes and continued to develop this theme throughout his career.

Ardengo Soffici (1879–1964)

Born in Florence in 1879, Ardengo Soffici played a complex and integral role in the story of Italian Futurism. His move to Paris in 1900 marked the beginning of his wide-ranging artistic career. It was here that he became acquainted with some seminal figures in the modern art scene. He returned to Italy in 1907 where he worked as art critic for the independent newspaper La Voce. Soffici gained notoriety for his virulent attack of Futurism in La Voce, openly preferring more traditional Italian art and French Impressionism. Soon after the rift caused by his criticism, however, Soffici’s attitude towards the movement changed and he co-founded Lacerba, the journal that served as the Florentine mouthpiece of Futurism. After serving in World War I his commitment to the movement waned, and Soffici began once again to advocate a more traditional attitude towards Italian art. He later became affiliated with the Fascist party and was a leading theoretist in Fascist art. His own artistic production runs closely along the lines of his changing political commitment, beginning with more Cubist-influenced Futurist still lives and ending with bucolic portrayals of Italian life and landscapes.