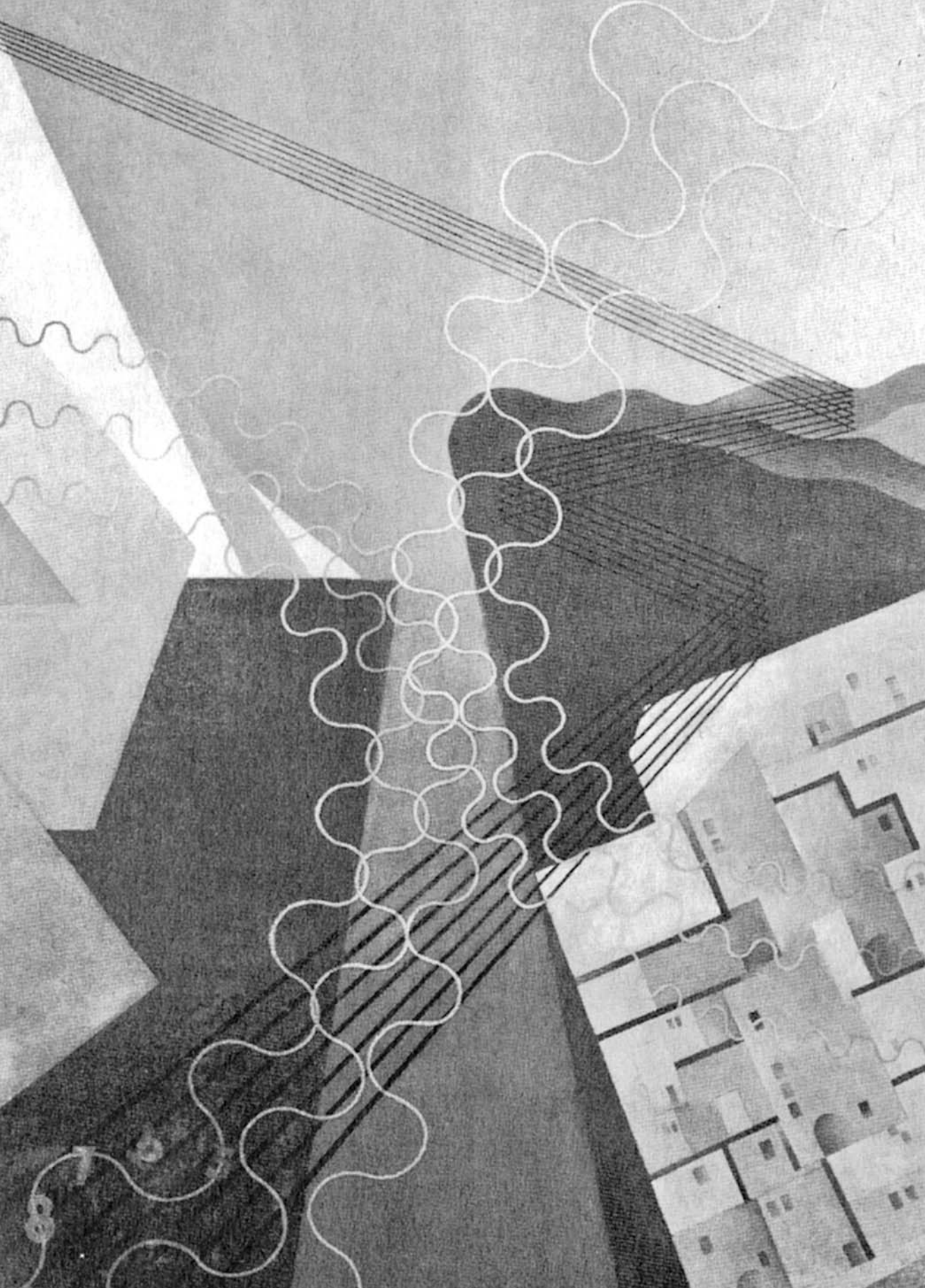


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FUTURISM
{ AN ANTHOLOGY

EDITED BY
LAWRENCE RAINEY
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LAURA WITTMAN

FUTURISM





FUTURISM AN ANTHOLOGY

Edited by Lawrence Rainey
Christine Poggi
Laura Wittman

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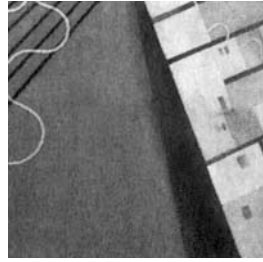
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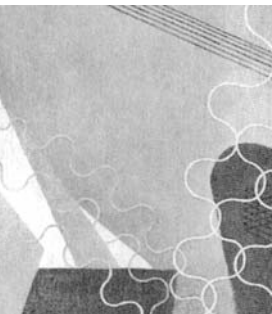
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INTRODUCTION: F. T. MARINETTI AND THE DEVELOPMENT OF FUTURISM LAWRENCE RAINEY

TO GET DOWN INTO THE STREETS (1876–1909)

The concept of the “avant-garde” drove the history of twentieth-century art and culture. Nothing did more to shape that concept than Futurism, the strange phenomenon—cultural historians, groping for words, have typically labeled it a “movement”—that was unleashed by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti on 20 February 1909 when he published “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” on the front page of the Paris newspaper *Le Figaro*. In subsequent decades Futurism became a paradigm for countless movements that followed, some embodying the most vital currents among the twentieth-century arts (Vorticism, Dadaism, and Surrealism are only a few of them). Already in the aftermath of the first manifesto’s publication, especially in the years from 1912 to 1914, Futurism became the focal point for a vast debate that stretched across Europe, spanned the spectrum of the arts, and encompassed the gamut of forums for critical discussion. In England alone, more than five hundred articles about Futurism were published in these years.¹ The range grew not just in numbers but in breadth as Futurism expanded into all the arts: literature, music, the visual arts, architecture, drama, photography, film, dance, fashion, advertising—even cooking.

Futurism had done something startling. It had revealed the power of a new type of intellectual formation: a small collectivity, buttressed by publicity and spectacle, that could produce cultural artifacts that spanned the spectrum of the arts and were constructed in accordance with a coherent body of theoretical precepts grounded in not just arbitrary aesthetic preferences, but a systematic reading of contemporary society. Futurism had irreversibly forged that fateful link between a theory of modernity and the project of the avant-garde, setting a precedent followed by all the avant-gardes to come. Still more, because Futurism later became deeply involved with the genesis of Fascism, it would become the focal point of an immense, ongoing debate. In twentieth-century culture, Futurism is the litmus test

for probing the relationship between art and power, aesthetics and politics—the birth scene of aesthetic modernity.

While the consequences of the Futurist project were enormous, the trajectory that took Marinetti to Futurism was hardly predictable. His father was a lawyer from Voghera, a small town in Piedmont (northwestern Italy), who in 1873 had decided to try his luck in the bustling city of Alexandria, Egypt. The opening of the Suez Canal in 1869 had turned it into a thriving center of trade, perfect for a specialist in commercial contracts. In 1874, his first son, Leone, was born; two years later (on 22 December) came Emilio Angelo Carlo. Within the family Emilio was always called Tommaso or Tom, and from his earliest attempts at verse he signed his work as Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, or simply F. T. Marinetti.

In 1884 Marinetti began his education at a French *collège* established in Alexandria, a Jesuit institution. Fluent in French, thanks to a governess, Marinetti would receive all his primary and secondary education in that language. (Until 1912 Marinetti preferred to write in French, and as late as 1918 his diaries would lapse into French.) He was a provocative student: his essays in literary criticism, damning and lauding authors with abandon, received caustic comments from his teachers.² In February 1894, when seventeen, he created his first literary magazine, *Le Papyrus*, an adolescent production. It folded after only a few issues when Marinetti left for Paris, where he had to pass further exams to have his baccalaureate fully certified.

In the autumn of 1894 Marinetti took up studies at the University of Pavia where, at his father's behest, he enrolled in the faculty of law. His father, meanwhile, had become a man of substantial wealth. He now retired and moved back to Milan in order to be near the two children and tend his investments. A year later Marinetti's older brother Leone died of a heart ailment, leaving their mother inconsolable. Marinetti's studies also suffered; he transferred to the University of Genoa and duly received his degree in July 1899. But it was already clear that his interests were not in law. In March 1898 he had published his first poem, "The Cup-Bearer" ("L'Échanson"), in the *Anthologie Revue*, a bilingual journal published in Milan. Marinetti had immediately volunteered to become the journal's "general secretary," a position that enabled him to take up correspondence with the French poet Gustave Kahn. In late 1898 another poem by him, "The Old Sailors" ("Les Vieux marins"), was deemed the winner of a contest judged by Kahn and Catulle Mendès. His reluctant father gave Marinetti money for the journey to Paris, where he received his prize, listened as his poem was declaimed by the great actress of the day, Sarah Bernhardt, and stayed for a month of literary socializing.

The fruits of these efforts were soon apparent. His contributions to other journals multiplied at a prodigious rate. Poems, reviews, and reportage appeared in *La Plume*, *La Revue blanche*, *La Rénovation Esthétique*, *Vers et prose*, *L'Hermitage*, *Gil*

Blas, *La Renaissance latine*, *La Rassegna latina*, *Esperia*, *Fortunio*, *Iride*—to name only a few. Three years later he published his first book, *The Conquest of the Stars* (*La Conquête des étoiles*), a long poem subdivided into nineteen cantos which recount an apocalyptic war between the sea and the sky.³ Led by a fantastic knight named Flash of Gold, the sea's breakers swell and surge to launch an attack against the stars that loiter in the balconies of the sky, images of languid femininity and decrepit sentimentalism. The tempest becomes a lurid, grotesque spectacle, while the demise of the stars dramatizes a withering of illusory ideals which the poet has long cherished. Overtly allegorical, its symbols sometimes careen beyond the bounds of its author's intentions. Consider only the sea, the masculine element that defeats the feminine stars. Marinetti never tired of pointing out the link between the Italian word for sea, *mare*, and the beginning of his own name, *Marinetti*. But because the poem is written in French and explicitly fraught with issues of gender, who can fail to note that the French word for "sea" (*mer*) rhymes with the French word for "mother" (*mère*)? Already Marinetti was groping toward one of his signature strategies, pushing the terms of a polarity to such extremes that they would collapse back into their antitheses, a maneuver that casts the nature of individuation, or how we draw basic distinctions between figure and ground, self and world, into a perennial crisis.

Marinetti published two other books of poetry in the years before the creation of Futurism, as well as two plays. One verse collection of shorter poems, entitled *Destruction*, returned to images of the sea and dreams of "the Ideal," but also explored new subject matter.⁴ A section dedicated "To the Demon of Speed" took up train journeys and metropolitan perambulations. Another collection, *The Carnal City* (*La Ville charnelle*), took up metropolitan experience still more explicitly, a theme popularized by Émile Verhaeren's book *Tentacular Cities* (*Les Villes tentaculaires*)—the city as a gigantic and menacing feminine space, opulent and carnal, filthy yet alluring.⁵ It even contained two poems about racing cars, "Death at the Steering Wheel" and "To My Pegasus" (425–427), harbingers of Futurist themes to come.

Many of Marinetti's early works are fraught with a rhetoric of extraordinary violence, charged with elements of the grotesque, the macabre, the lurid—trappings of literary decadence, yet so strained, so overworked that they deliberately cross over into the comic, producing an uncanny effect. This oscillation between elation and horror would be the keynote for much of his best writing. But at other times it could be simply bewildering. When a friend of his married in 1904, Marinetti turned up at the wedding party to present the bride and groom with a special present in person: a sonorous declamation of the new poem he had composed just for the occasion, "The Bleeding Mummy" ("La Momie sanglante").⁶ It recounts the story of Iläi, daughter of an Egyptian pharaoh, who reawakens every night inside her crypt and offers prayers to the moon, begging it to restore the body of

her former lover. The wedding guests were stupefied. They would not be the last to experience such sensations at Marinetti's hands. Years later when the composer Francesco Pratella joined the Futurist movement, Marinetti proffered advice on how to succeed: "In order to win over Paris and appear, in the eyes of all Europe, an absolute innovator, the most advanced of all, I urge you to get to work with all your heart, resolute on being bolder, crazier, more advanced, surprising, eccentric, incomprehensible, and grotesque than anybody else in music. I urge you to be a madman."⁷ It was advice he didn't need to give himself.

Marinetti also wrote two plays in these years, *King Hoot (Roi Bombance)* and *Electrical Dolls (Poupées électriques)*.⁸ The first, characterized as a "satirical epic," was a farcical romp in the style of Alfred Jarry's famous *Ubu Roi*. It depicts a fantastic Castle of Abundance which becomes the site for a revolution by "the hungry ones," the destitute masses who proceed to devour the king, but then bring him back to life when, glutted by an orgy of eating and drinking, they vomit up his dismembered parts. Cannibalism and reincarnation will be two of Marinetti's enduring motifs, signs of his interest in anthropology and the history of religion. Here they are mustered for satirical ends: sociology and socialism are reduced to "sauce-ology," fatuous recipes for egalitarian politics that overlook humanity's deeper nature and the irrevocable destiny of death. Marinetti's other play, *Electrical Dolls*, takes a scathing look at the institution of marriage. John and Mary, the two main characters, are recapitulated in two electrical automata, Monsieur Prudent and Mother Prunelle, silent presences who observe the couple's erotic effusions and prefigure their grim destiny. The two finally rebel and throw the automata out the window.

In 1905 Marinetti founded a journal named *Poesia (Poetry)* a venture that would last until 1909. When it was still in planning, a friend told him that a review devoted to poetry was simply "crazy . . . in these times of rampant commercialism." Marinetti retorted that he was perfectly content to make "an insane gesture." Nothing would please him more: "I want to shock the driveling Italy that still reads a poet such as Carducci."⁹ The result was much tamer than such tough talk suggested. The journal presented an eclectic mix of mainstream Italian and French poets working in a vein of late symbolism. Even Carducci, the voice of "driveling Italy," appeared in its pages, as did Gabriele D'Annunzio and Giovanni Pascoli, then the period's most highly regarded poets. Still, by taking a distinctively international approach, the journal effectively brought Italian literature into contact with outside developments. More important were the lessons that Marinetti learned in the art of publicity. Eager to attract attention, he concocted an elaborate series of "inquests," surveys that invited prominent authors to comment on topics ranging from the status of free verse to the beauty of Italian women. He also promoted competitions for new poets, two of which were won by Paolo Buzzi and Enrico Cavacchioli, soon

to be recruited into Futurism. He took up as well the use of press releases, often a letter trumpeting the most newsworthy item in the journal's current or forthcoming issue—a godsend to a newspaper editor on a drowsy day.

By 1908 Marinetti had become a minor celebrity, a fixture in the drawing rooms of Milanese high society and a figure of note among the city's aspiring writers. Because nearly all his writing was in French, however, his status within the larger Italian literary world was inevitably less grand. Approaching the age of thirty-two, he found himself single, independently wealthy (his mother had died in 1902, his father in 1907), and driven by ambitions still far from satisfied. One incident from this year stands out, however, one that Marinetti himself soon endowed with mythical proportions. It was a minor traffic accident, duly recorded in the city's newspaper, *Il Corriere della sera*, for 15 October 1908:

This morning, a little before midday, F. T. Marinetti was driving down via Dormodossola in his automobile. The proprietor himself was at the wheel, accompanied by a mechanic, Ettore Angelini, 23 years of age. Precisely what occurred is unclear, but it appears that an evasive action was required by the sudden appearance of a bicyclist, and resulted in the vehicle being flipped into a ditch. Marinetti and his mechanic were promptly removed from the wreckage. Two race-car drivers from the nearby Isotta and Fraschini factory, Trucco and Giovanzani, arrived on the scene with their cars. Trucco took Marinetti back to his house: it seems he escaped with little more than a good scare. The mechanic was taken by Giovanzani to the medical institute on Via Paolo Sarpi, where it was found that he had suffered only minor bruises.¹⁰

Did the accident on via Dormodossola constitute “a deep trauma,” as Marinetti's biographer has urged? Was it a life-changing moment when he experienced the shock “of having been a step away from death”?¹¹ And was it this experience that impelled him, under the name of Futurism, to adopt the medical notion of trauma and transform it into an aesthetics of shock? Marinetti recalled the creation of Futurism differently: “On 11 October, 1908, after having worked for six years at my international review, *Poesia*, in order to liberate the Italian lyrical genius, which was threatened with extinction from traditional and commercial obstacles, I suddenly felt that all the poems, articles, and debates were no longer sufficient. A change of method was absolutely imperative: to get down into the streets, to attack the theaters, and to bring the fist into the midst of the artistic struggle.”¹² Whatever it was that drove him, Marinetti now set out to rework a modest traffic accident into an event of mythic stature, the birth-scene of a traumatic yet emancipating modernity.

A little is known about the composition of the first manifesto. Marinetti began writing its programmatic portion, the list of eleven demands (51–52), sometime in

late October or November 1908, completing it near Christmas. Already in January 1909 he published the programmatic section as an independent, two-page leaflet titled, "Manifesto of Futurism." By mid-month he was sending it out to friends, intellectuals, writers who had contributed to *Poesia*, and editors of literary reviews and newspapers, both in Italy and France, often with a brief form letter which read:

Dear Friend and Colleague,

I would be extremely grateful if you could send in your views on our "Manifesto of Futurism," indicating also your partial or total adherence.

Awaiting your reply, which will be published in *Poesia*, I beg you accept my thanks in advance, along with the expression of my highest regard,

F. T. Marinetti

But Marinetti hadn't finished with his manifesto yet. In mid-February he traveled from Milan to Paris, where he took a room at the Grand Hôtel and wrote the narrative preamble that would accompany the manifesto forever. The vignette turned a bare list of demands into a powerful allegory of death, reincarnation, and modernity, a conversion narrative in which trauma gives way to revelation, accident to significance. Horror is transformed into elation, but elation so extreme that it suggests horror. Here was a text of vertiginous circularity. With help from an old crony of his father from the days in Alexandria, "the Pashah Mohammed el Rachi, an Egyptian ex-minister and seventy-year-old Epicurean who resided in Paris and owned a large number of shares in *Le Figaro*," Marinetti managed to get "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" onto the newspaper's front page.¹³ It appeared on 20 February 1909, and Marinetti instantly became an international celebrity.

SPEECHES PUNCTUATED BY RESOUNDING SLAPS (1909–1911)

The notoriety achieved by "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" found Marinetti ill-prepared to advance the fortunes of Futurism, distracted by the press of too many previous commitments. On 3 April 1909, the debut performance of *King Hoot* took place at the Théâtre Marigny in Paris. It proved a dismal failure, and the play's planned tour of Belgium and Germany was swiftly canceled. When one critic, Charles-Henry Hirsch, charged it with vulgarity and attributed it to Marinetti's Italian origins, Marinetti sought him out at a public event, slapped him across the face, and challenged him to a duel. Two days later, he left the field with Hirsch bleeding profusely from a wound in the forearm.

The same month Marinetti penned a reply to criticisms leveled at "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism." It took the form of a fictional fable, "Let's Murder the Moonlight!" (54–61). Its ornate style and overt allegorizing have not worn well

with some readers, to whom it has seemed a step backward from the more rigorous modernism seemingly called for in the first manifesto. Not that it lacks modernist trappings: in the concluding scene Marinetti and the Futurists acquire a fleet of airplanes which they use to machine-gun their enemies. Images of coitus, death, and rebirth are mixed together promiscuously. Yet the most revealing detail may be the brief list it provides of bona fide Futurists: they numbered only five, all former contributors to *Poesia*. A month later they were joined by Aldo Palazzeschi, also a contributor. It hardly changed the result: Futurism was at a standstill.

Marinetti was completing a novel, *Mafarka the Futurist*, a complex work that blends the elements of a colonial adventure novel with an assault against the conventions of romantic love and monogamy, both mixed with a celebration of the liberating powers of aviation. Mafarka, after conquering several kingdoms in northern Africa, renounces them to “become a builder of mechanical birds!” and so “give birth to my son without the help of the vulva!”¹⁴ Some have found its style strained and its symbolism heavy-handed; for others, its mixture of genres and camp exaggeration create a rich, polyphonic texture.

The years 1910 and 1911 would witness Futurism’s lavish expansion, culminating in the spectacular exhibition of Futurist painting that would open in Paris in February 1912. Three developments contributed to this. One was the extension of Futurism to the visual arts, music, and photography. Another was the development of the Futurist *serata*, or evening performance. A third was a sharp acceleration in the production of manifestos. Each gave a fillip to the others, so that the growth of Futurism became a whole vastly greater than the sum of its parts.

Nothing was more unexpected than Marinetti’s encounter with three painters, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, and Luigi Russolo, all residing in Milan. They were from diverse backgrounds. Boccioni (1882–1916) was the son of a civil servant whose various positions had required the family to move from place to place. Carlo Carrà (1881–1966), instead, came from a family of artisans and craftsmen in Piedmont and worked as a house decorator first in Piedmont and then in Milan before turning to art. Luigi Russolo (1885–1947), by contrast, came from a more traditional background: his father was the cathedral organist in the town of Portogruaro, and his own interest in painting came relatively late, in 1907. It was Boccioni who first suggested in January 1910 that the three meet with Marinetti. Carrà later recalled the occasion:

We were directed into a parlor that was luxuriously adorned with rich Persian rugs, and we found Marinetti to be cordial and effusive. After a long discussion about the situation of art in our country, we decided to launch a manifesto directed to younger Italian artists. . . . The next morning Boccioni, Russolo, and I gathered in a café by the Porta Vittoria, near to all our houses, and we enthusiastically sketched a draft of our appeal. Getting a final draft was rather labori-

ous; all three of us worked at it the whole day. In the late afternoon we went to Marinetti's house and continued to work on it with him and his secretary, Decio Cinti.¹⁵

It was this second meeting that was later recalled by the poet Aldo Palazzeschi, who happened to be at Marinetti's house when it transpired:

It was another afternoon in January of 1910, at about the same hour as I often went to his house. We were alone in the parlor when I began to realize that Marinetti was more agitated than usual, a bit impatient, restless, like a person expecting someone who has failed to arrive. Every now and then he would look at me and smile a little beneath his moustache, as if on the point of telling me something. Then the doorbell rang. . . . In the darkness, I could hear the housekeeper Nina open the door, and then, one by one, four men entered the house, as silent as shadows and all dressed mysteriously in black, as if wearing some sort of uniform, with the appearance of participating in a conspiracy. Nina directed them into the bigger parlor, the music room on the other side of the hallway. As soon as they entered, Marinetti touched my arm and said: "Wait here. I'll be back in a moment."

For the next four hours, from the nearby parlor, I could hear what can only be described as an orchestra of voices. Loud voices of every imaginable tone started, stopped, cut into one another, spoke over one another, exploded, forming a real concert with high notes and lows and never a moment's pause: tambourines and violins, trumpets and a clarinet, and every now and then the sudden noise of plates breaking, as Marinetti would burst into laughter.

By now it was 7:00, and . . . I got ready to leave and asked Nina to tell Marinetti to meet me as usual, at the Café Savini at midnight.

I later learned that the discussion had gone on still longer, till 9:00. When Marinetti finally arrived at the Café Savini later that evening, he had a look that I had never seen before. Usually his face seemed to reflect the world around him; but that night it seemed as though it were aglow with a vivid light from within. He kept looking at me with the air of someone about to say something, and finally he touched my hand and said: "Futurism in painting was born today." He seemed more surprised than I would have expected. The truth was that he himself had never imagined such an event, nor had he ever done anything to bring it about. It was a gift that had unexpectedly fallen from heaven, and at one blow it enlarged his horizons to an incalculable degree.¹⁶

Palazzeschi was right. Marinetti's encounter with the visual arts was a paradox: he plainly seized on it as an unexpected opportunity, but the event also seized him, forcing him to reconsider Futurism's potential scope.

After Marinetti had assisted Carrà, Boccioni, and Russolo in revising their manifesto, it was sent off to two other artists, Gino Severini, then residing in Paris, and Giacomo Balla, then in Rome, for their signatures to be added. The manifesto was dated 11 February and promptly published. Two months later, in April, Umberto Boccioni drafted “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (64–67), an attempt to give a more substantial account of the painters’ aims. They disavowed the separation of art and life which had been created in the course of the nineteenth century (“We desperately want to re-enter into life”). More radically, they disavowed the notion of a recoverable human content as the aim of painting (it was no longer possible “to look upon man as the center of universal life”). Instead it was matter, or even materialism, that interested them: “The suffering of a man is of the same interest to us as the suffering of an electric lamp, which can feel pain, suffer tremors, and shriek with the most heartrending expressions of torment.” A gauche formulation it may be, but it points to a vision of the nonhuman world as the pre-eminent site of art’s activity, a way of imagining the world as a machine of infinite productivity. The “Technical Manifesto” also posited a way of probing that world: Divisionism, or the use of threadlike brush strokes, with the colors accurately separated according to their precise tone and luminosity, and often placed perpendicularly to one another. The uniform application of strokes across the canvas surface, regardless of the different objects depicted, eroded the very ground of individuation, the principle of distinction between objects and environments, bodies and space, matter and atmosphere. The “Technical Manifesto” was a loose sketch; but it voiced concerns that would recur in Futurist painting, and it initiated that long, never resolved dialogue between theoretical speculation and practice.

The second development of 1910 was the Futurist *serata* (the plural is *serate*), a word often translated as *soirée* or “evening performance.” Often deemed the progenitor of the entire tradition of performance art, the *serata* is worth dwelling on.¹⁷ The first five *serate* took place in 1910: 12 January in Trieste at the Politeama Rossetti; 15 February in Milan at the Teatro Lirico; 8 March in Turin at the Politeama Chiarelli; 20 April in Naples at the Teatro Mercadante; and 1 August in Venice at the Teatro La Fenice.

Trieste, the setting for the first *serata*, was then part of the Austro-Hungarian empire. The city’s population was more than 60 percent Italian, with many increasingly gripped by the fever of *irredentismo* (literally, “unredeemed-ism,” the belief that those lands which had been left “unredeemed” or not integrated into modern Italy when the nation was formally created in 1860 were to be made a part of Italy now, whether by force or diplomacy). Marinetti began with a speech that explained the principles of Futurism, then turned to politics: “In politics, we are as far from internationalist and anti-patriotic socialism—an ignoble exaltation of the rights of the stomach—as we are from timid and clerical conservatism, symbolized by a

pair of slippers and a hot-water bottle. All freedom and all progress occurs within the circle of the Nation!”¹⁸ Nobody had any doubts about *which* nation was meant here. These remarks were followed by a reading of “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” given by Armando Mazza, a barrel-chested poet whom Marinetti brought along in the event of fisticuffs. Finally, poems were read by various writers. At one point toward the end of the *serata*, several Austrians stood up to leave: “But powerful youth triumphed over them,” Marinetti later recalled. “All the young men rose to their feet, shouting and shaking their fists. The Austrians sank back into their sepulchral seats.”¹⁹ It was intimidation, pure and simple. Marinetti had effectively conflated Futurism with irredentism, and both with the threat of violence.

A similar sequence unfolded in Milan. Marinetti again gave a general account of Futurism, followed by Mazza’s reading of “The Founding and Manifesto,” this time punctuated with a fist in the air. Then came readings of poems, one of which turned out to be an ode that was dedicated to General di Bernezzo, a controversial figure who had recently been dismissed from his post for delivering anti-Austrian harangues to his officers. The *serata* was instantly changed into an irredentist demonstration, with people shouting “Down with Austria!” throughout the hall. Security agents moved in to remove the Futurists from the stage, but the unruly action spilled out to the streets. “Slaps, fists, and beatings were soon flying about,” one writer recalled.²⁰ The Futurists were finally hauled off to the local prefect, who released them after perfunctory questioning and a paternal warning.

The third *serata*, in Turin, went off smoothly. For the first time the newly enlisted artists were incorporated: Carlo Carrà gave an improvised speech about Futurism’s importance for art and Boccioni read the “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters” to loud cheers from students at the local art academy. But media coverage of the *serate* was turning them into a byword for violence. When the Futurists arrived for their next *serata* in Naples, they found 160 members of the national police awaiting them on stage. The performance went off with much the same repertoire, though later ones would encompass two additional features: the artists began to bring paintings to the *serate*, effectively turning them into a traveling and ever-changing exhibition, and various works of music were performed. But these additions scarcely altered the performance’s basic appeal: a spectacle of provocation and the allure of violence that was choreographed to the cadences of culture.

The fifth *serata* was tied up with another event. In July Marinetti went with a small group of Futurists to Venice; they climbed to the top of the clock tower that overlooks the piazza San Marco and proceeded to hurl thousands of leaflets down on the city’s residents, damning the city as “a market for counterfeiting antiquarians” and urging them to “fill in little reeking canals with the ruins from its leprous and crumbling palaces,” all to be replaced with “the imposing geometry of metal bridges and factories plumed with smoke” (67–68). On 1 August they returned

to Venice for a *serata* to be held in the city's famous opera house, La Fenice. The Venetians, said Marinetti, were "seedy custodians of the greatest brothel in history." Long ago they had been "audacious navigators" and merchants; but "now you have become hotel waiters, tour guides, pimps, antiquaries, forgers, fakers of old pictures, plagiarists and copyists" (68–70). The speech, Marinetti proudly recalled, "provoked a terrible battle. . . . The passéists were beaten up. The Futurist painters Boccioni, Russolo, and Carrà punctuated the speech with resounding slaps. The fists of Armando Mazza, a Futurist poet who is also an athlete, left an unforgettable impression." Violence, once again. Nobody understood its media appeal and power better than Marinetti.

In December 1910, Marinetti significantly expanded the scope of Futurist activity: he traveled to London to give his first lecture there (70–74), followed by another a month later in Paris. Meanwhile, having produced a torrent of essays and manifestos, he now assembled them in a collection called *Futurism (Le Futurisme 1911)*, a volume in French that would be the movement's calling card (86–104).²¹ The new writings provided a coherent, electrifying vision of the contemporary world, one dominated by communications and transportation technologies having incalculable effects. Marinetti ordered an enormous press run, more than 20,000 copies, sending out copies to anyone who expressed interest—and to many who did not.

Marinetti's substantial wealth meant that he was effectively a patron to the movement's artists and writers. His correspondence with the painter Gino Severini and others show that he lent or advanced them money on many occasions, seldom worrying about whether he was repaid, and that he actively sought out buyers or patrons for their works.²² The same was true for the writers and poets. After closing down his journal *Poesia* in 1909, he had started his own publishing firm, called Futurist Editions of *Poesia*. Yet turning a profit did not interest him greatly. Aldo Palazzeschi, whose *Arsonist* was published by Marinetti in 1910, recalled his experience with Marinetti's business practices:

No sooner had the book been printed in a press run of a thousand copies than the question arose of what do about the number of copies that are customarily sent out gratis to members of the press and perhaps a few friends. At this point Marinetti handed me a fat notebook. I began leafing through it with a growing sense of fear and dismay. It contained some seven hundred names, together with their addresses and a model of the sort of dedication that each was to receive. The few remaining copies of my book, he informed me, would be sent out to some booksellers in the larger cities, though without any hurry, and as if the matter were much less important than the announcement that the book was already sold out, which he had also prepared in advance. The list included the

wildest variety of people: men from the world of politics and culture; prominent industrialists and professionals; men and women from high society, among whom were several who were famous or notorious for their implacable hostility to Futurism, people who would surely throw the book away with a curse, or even burn it. But it was exactly those who didn't want it, according to Marinetti, who had to receive it. . . . I was resolutely opposed to a project of this sort. . . . I also announced firmly that I was not prepared to write hundreds of dedications to people whom I didn't know. . . . "Don't worry," replied Marinetti, "I'll dictate the inscriptions myself, and you can copy them down."²³

The publicity generated by these activities — the *serate*, the leaflets, lectures, and books — attracted ever more recruits. In December 1910 the composer Francesco Balilla Pratella agreed to join the movement, and within months he had produced two manifestos (75–80, 80–85). In early 1911 he was joined by Anton Giulio Bragaglia, a photographer.

Together with the critic Félix Fénéon, who was also the artistic director of the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in Paris, Marinetti had arranged for an exhibition of Futurist painters to take place in October 1911. But over the summer the changing political situation in Italy forced a postponement. The Italian government was lurching toward a decision to invade what is now Libya. Ostensibly acting to protect Italian citizens resident in Tripoli, in reality Italy was trying to gain an African colony by exploiting the deepening weakness of Turkey, which held sovereignty over the two provinces of Tripolitana and Cyrenaica. On 29 September 1911 Italy declared war, and in October Italian forces rushed to invade Tripoli. Marinetti celebrated with a truculent manifesto (217). The Futurists were "happy to experience at long last this great Futurist hour of Italy, even as the filthy brood of pacifists is caught in its death throes," and it was "with pleasure" that they had "recently administered some beatings to the most feverish opponents of the war."²⁴ Tellingly, the document was signed by Marinetti alone: in 1911 Carrà's political leanings were anarchist, while Boccioni thought himself a socialist. None of that deterred Marinetti, who soon set off for Tripoli as a journalist. Landing on 12 October, he observed several battles with fascination, especially delighted by the exploits of Captain Carlo Piazza, the first man to use airplanes in combat. With two wings "slicing brutally" through the halo of sunset, Piazza sang joyfully as he directed "rounds of lead into the torrential sea of the enemy army."²⁵ Marinetti stayed for two months to write up his adventures in lyrical prose that appeared in installments in the Parisian newspaper *L'Intransigeant*. He found it hard to leave: "I left Tripoli with deep sorrow," he wrote to one correspondent, "for I have passed the two most beautiful months of my life there. I took part in all the most violent, most virile, and most heroic actions." He went on to describe the thrill of killing three Arab soldiers with his own hands.²⁶

While Marinetti was in Tripoli, the Futurists from Milan (Boccioni, Carrà, and Russolo) traveled to Paris. Severini, well connected with the city's major artists, led them through various studios. Picasso had returned in September from a month in Céret, where he had stayed with Braque (who stayed on till mid-November), a productive time when he had completed *Still Life with Fan*, *The Accordionist*, *Man with a Pipe*, and *The Poet*, some of his greatest works. It was the moment of "high analytic Cubism" or even "hermetic Cubism" (as older art histories termed it). In these magnificent paintings, bits of objects or scenes shimmered in dappled grounds of silver and brown, offering the promise of an elusive whole that somehow remains stubbornly beyond the viewer's grasp. Did the painters from Milan see these works? Were they taken to Kahnweiler's gallery, where most of Braque's and Picasso's works were in storage? We cannot be sure. But the effects of the Futurists' visit were apparent, for example, in the revised version of *States of Mind* which Boccioni produced over the next few months (figs. 39–41), which flaunted such Cubist devices as the famous stenciled letters. In other respects their stay in Paris probably had little effect on them. It was too late: their grand debut in Paris was only three months away. Futurism was on the verge of international notoriety.

FUTURISM — THE LATEST ART SENSATION (1912–1914)

From the first Exhibition of Futurist Painting, which opened in Paris on 5 February 1912, to Marinetti's final appearance in London at the largest music hall in the world, the Coliseum, in June 1914, Futurist activities prompted discussion that extended through every level of metropolitan culture, from elite literary reviews to mass circulation newspapers, in France, England, Germany, and Russia. The catalyst was the Exhibition of Futurist Painting, which opened to an avalanche of press coverage. Three manifestos were included in the exhibition catalogue, and for journalists their provocative claims proved irresistible.²⁷ Even before the show had left Paris, Futurist paintings were being reproduced in London newspapers with extensive commentary. "Futurism—The Latest Art Sensation," shouted the *Illustrated London News*. When it finally arrived in March, there was more controversy. After London came Berlin and Brussels. At each stop, Marinetti himself provided a striking lecture that stirred more debate.

The thirty-six paintings which appeared in the exhibition were a heterogeneous lot. Some dated back to 1910 and, in the context of the artists' current work, were snapshots of a bygone age. Their quality also varied. At the low end were paintings by Russolo, dabs that were literal attempts to find pictorial counterparts to Futurist theory. At the high end there were any number of works: the three *States of Mind II* and *The City Rises* by Boccioni (figs. 41–43, 38); *Funeral of the Anarchist Galli* or

Leaving the Theater by Carrà (figs. 56, 57), the latter a piercing work in which the paint, laid on in ribbons of eerie greens and yellows, shivers through ghostly figures who cross a desolate cityscape; and *The Pan-Pan Dance at the Monico* and *The Boulevard* by Severini, the latter a delicate play of gold lozenges that slip across a stylized street scene. None of them truly challenges the contemporary paintings of Picasso, but the same might be said for nearly the whole of twentieth-century painting. Even the works of each artist showed considerable variation: Russolo, for example, managed a remarkable performance with *The Revolt*, while Boccioni could display the literalism more typical of Russolo in *The Street Enters the House*. Contemporary reviewers often fastened not on the works, but their relation to the catalogue's manifestos and the brief commentary included for each painting—a ready key for assessing the pictures. Yet they also complained that the manifestos were too theoretical or difficult to understand.

For the artists themselves, the experience of the exhibition was mixed. Boccioni, Carrà, and Russolo journeyed to Paris, where Severini and Marinetti showed them the town. The publicity could be intoxicating, as Severini recalled:

For example, *Excelsior* published our portraits, a fact that sent Carrà into spasms of joy. Russolo was more reserved; Boccioni, hungry for publicity to the point of being manic, was driven absolutely delirious with pleasure. At roughly eight every evening, working men and women, employees from the department stores and high-fashion houses, all spilled out of their places of employment onto the crowded streets of Paris. Graceful, elegant young girls, known as “midinettes,” were on the streets by the hundreds at that time of day. Boccioni would run after them, first one, then another and another, to show them his portrait published in *Excelsior*.²⁸

Severini introduced them to Picasso, but when Boccioni started babbling about dynamism and Divisionism, the air grew cold: “Picasso detested these discussions. ‘What’s the point of all that talk? One paints, and that’s all. Painting is painting, and doesn’t need all those explanations.’ That was Picasso’s answer to all these arguments.”²⁹ On one occasion they were taken to Gertrude Stein’s house, as Alice B. Toklas later recalled: “It was about this time that the futurists, the Italian futurists, had their big show in Paris and it made a great deal of noise. . . . The futurists led by Severini thronged around Picasso. He brought them all to the house. Marinetti came by himself later as I remember. In any case everybody found the futurists very dull.”³⁰ It was a clever putdown, and clearly intended as such. But Gertrude Stein, alias “everybody,” was notorious for finding herself the only interesting topic of conversation.

The Paris exhibition also brought a new recruit to Futurism, Valentine de Saint-Point, an anticonformist who in March 1912 published the “Manifesto of the Futur-

ist Woman,” a provocative work that created a scandal (109–113). In response to the criticisms, she replied with the “Futurist Manifesto of Lust” (130–133), whose advocacy of free love aroused still more controversy. When she read it aloud at a lecture in Paris, Rachilde, a woman writer prominent in contemporary French fiction, stood up in her loggia and shouted aloud: “Your Futurism sounds very nice, my dear, but tell us what you think about syphilis!”³¹

Marinetti, impressed by the success of the Futurist painters, returned to his own field of interest, literature. “I’m searching furiously,” he wrote to one correspondent, “and at the same time abandoning myself to the maddest inspirations of the unconscious.”³² The outcome was the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (119–125), a work which some critics view as a landmark in modern aesthetics.³² It demanded an unprecedented transformation of literary syntax, enjoining the elimination of adjectives, the abolition of adverbs, the removal of all connecting conjunctions (such as *like*), and the suppression of the first terms of a comparison in favor of a continuous image-flow, a language composed of pure metaphors. Instead, it urged the use of onomatopoeia and dynamic typography based on the latest advertising graphics. Verbs, above all, were to be used only in the infinitive form, a practice that would dis sever the logical connection between subject and predicate (e.g., “he to fly”). The result would be words-in-freedom, a new idiom synchronized to the radios, telephones, phonographs, airplanes, and cinemas inundating the new century. But it was not the bare precepts that endowed the “Technical Manifesto” with such power, but the way they complemented the narrative vignette that opens the work, a sketch depicting the narrator as he sits in a biplane flying five hundred meters above Milan. His vertiginous vision of the city below vanishes in an ecstatic trance, his speech yielding to the voice of the machine itself: “And this is what the propeller told me.” (This loss of selfhood, in turn, finds its counterpart among the later injunctions: “We must destroy the ‘I.’”)

Here was an assault against the notion of a unitary subject, that coherent self which had presided over the scene of writing in the long tradition which runs from Cartesian speculation through nineteenth-century liberalism. No less provocatively, it was juxtaposed with an attack against the notion of aesthetic autonomy, the idea that art produces a special form of knowledge because it is removed from the rule of interests that otherwise governs practical, as opposed to aesthetic reason. “Every day we must spit on the altar of Art. We must destroy art with a capital A.” True, such claims could be found in earlier writers. But now they were enveloped in an atmosphere of nervous menace. The talking airplane, at first glance only an updated muse, could be viewed through the prism of that other, much darker scene of writing so common in the period, the seance—no longer a reassuring muse, but a haunted specter of the dead. While the manifesto urges that its new idiom promises “words-in-freedom,” its speaker is enthralled to compulsive

dictation. Vertiginous freedom and passive subjection, ecstatic trance and inescapable nightmare—polarities that are invoked and then collapse into their antitheses. Words will be free—if, and only if they follow the new rules. Even Marinetti's urging to use verbs in the infinitive form was fraught with implications, for in Italian a verb in the infinitive can also be used as a mass imperative, so that a verb such as *combattere* ("to fight") can also be translated as: "Fight!" Words-in-freedom entailed an imperative of subjection.

The "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature" sparked an outpouring of experimental poetry that made a genuine contribution to the avant-garde legacy. But without a journal in which to appear, their status as a public idiom remained tenuous. While debate about Futurism was raging elsewhere, no forum in Italy was tracking its development. The creation of the Florentine journal *Lacerba*, in January 1913, was all but providential. *Lacerba* was the product of two men, Giovanni Papini and Ardengo Soffici. Papini was a self-taught intellectual with a penchant for philosophy and a gift for journalism; Soffici was a talented painter and a probing critic with a sober, pungent style. Both had been contributing for years to Giuseppe Prezzolini's review, *La Voce* (*The Voice*), the distinguished journal of its day, and both now wanted to create something less austere. Soffici, moreover, had already had dealings with the Futurists. Reviewing an early Futurist exhibition in Milan, he had dismissed one painting by Boccioni as "the filthiest, most obscene, and most lamentable trumpery" that had been seen in years. In response, Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, and Marinetti had taken the train from Milan to Florence, where they soon headed for *le Giubbe Rosse* (the Red Tail-Coats), the café frequented by Soffici and other writers for *La Voce*. When they got there, Carrà recalled:

Somebody in the café pointed out Soffici to us, and Boccioni went over and addressed him: "Sir, are you Ardengo Soffici?" As soon as he said "yes" a slap whizzed through the air. Soffici reacted energetically, raining blows to right and left with his cane. Before long it was hellish pandemonium: tables were being overturned, trays were sent flying, coffee-cups and glasses were breaking, and people ran out the door screaming. Waiters intervened to restore order; and at last a policeman came by and broke up the fight.³⁴

The Futurists were ordered to return to Milan by the next train. But when they arrived at the station they found Soffici there, ominously waiting with some friends, all armed with canes. Sensing trouble, the *carabinieri* intervened and locked up the two groups in a waiting room till a police commissioner could arrive. When he finally came, he found them chatting amiably, delighted by all that they had in common.

Lacerba, which was a nonce-word created by dropping the apostrophe from

l'acerba (something sour or bitter), struck up a brief, tense alliance with the Futurists. From 1913 to early 1915 the fortnightly would be the preeminent venue of Futurist writing. Contemporaries estimated its press runs differently, some citing figures as low as 8,000–10,000 copies, others 18,000–20,000. Antonio Gramsci, a Marxist intellectual, reported that “four out of five copies had circulated among workers.” His estimate may have been guesswork, but it pointed to a genuinely broad readership. Marinetti himself had a standing order for 3,000 copies which he distributed on his own.³⁵

Among the Futurist works to appear in *Lacerba* was one by Marinetti, “The Variety Theater” (159–164), an essay that vindicates an otherwise despised cultural form. The manifesto pivots on an extended contrast between traditional theater that plays to middle-class audiences and offers realistic representations, and the variety theater or music hall, a new form in which performance replaces representation and an aesthetics of astonishment supplants contemplation. Music hall spoke to a new, deracinated audience of the working and lower-middle classes, its origins residing in the modern metropolis, “born as we are,” said Marinetti, “from electricity.” Marinetti extolled its hybrid status, its capacity to incorporate the newest media such as film into the sequence of numbers or “turns” that made up a show. He lauded its satirical dimensions, “weighty terms made ridiculous by comic gestures,” and its corrosive irony that decomposed “all the outworn prototypes of the Beautiful, the Grand, the Solemn, the Religious.” Above all, it offered an exemplary mode of cultural production: “The Variety Theater is . . . helping along the Futurist destruction of immortal masterpieces by plagiarizing and parodying them, by making them seem commonplace in stripping them of their solemnity and presenting them as if they were just another turn or attraction.” Classical works are now to be stripped of that “aura” which the Marxist critic Walter Benjamin would later identify as their defining trait.³⁶ They are turned into replaceable and interchangeable parts, modular units that form part of an assembly line of cultural production—all of which indicates how decisive was the change occurring in Marinetti’s thinking. Earlier, the machine had been merely subject matter, a motif to be celebrated by writers using free verse, or by artists adopting “force-lines” and “simultaneity.” Now it becomes a model of cultural production, a system of exchange and distribution that produces not narratives building up to a climax, but an impassive sequence of numbers that succeed and replace one another. Auratic ritual gives way to mechanical histrionics—“body-madness” is the word that Marinetti uses. The new spectacle is a grisly puppet show that fabricates shock—alternately benumbing and inebriating.

Marinetti was not alone in changing his interests in the feverish atmosphere of these years. The painter Boccioni soon wrote “Futurist Sculpture” (113–119), a sign

of his new fascination with three-dimensional works. Luigi Russolo shifted his field of activity from painting to music, a change of heart that would yield real theoretical innovations. In “The Art of Noises” (133–139), Russolo modestly termed his ideas “a logical consequence” of earlier writings by the composer Pratella, but they were far more original. Pratella had urged only minor modifications to the twelve-tone chromatic scale, and a more complex sense of rhythm that would encompass all possible meters. Russolo proposed that pitched sounds be eliminated entirely, that music open itself up to embrace the whole world of possible sounds. Here was the step that would lead to a tradition of twentieth-century music by composers such as Arthur Honegger, Edgard Varèse, John Cage, and Georgy Ligeti. Moreover, Russolo built a series of “noise-tuners” meant to execute the new “art of noises,” and gave concerts with them in 1913 and 1914, culminating in twelve performances held in London in June 1914.³⁷ Sadly, Russolo’s noise-tuners were destroyed during World War II.

Despite its many hymns to the modern metropolis, by 1914 Futurism had still done nothing to reshape urban space. “We often lamented this lacuna among ourselves, but we could not see any architect willing to step forth,” the Futurist painter Carrà remembered.³⁸ That changed in July 1914, when twenty-six-year-old architect Antonio Sant’Elia published the manifesto of “Futurist Architecture,” a document that has justly acquired legendary status (198–202). Accompanied by six pen-and-ink drawings that showed views of “the Futurist city” (fig. 103), it rejected all historicism and every use of decorative ornament. Instead it demanded “an architecture that finds its *raison d’être* solely in the special conditions of modern living, and in its corresponding aesthetic values in our sensibilities.” Reinforced concrete would be a favored material, and a building’s mechanics would no longer be concealed, but exposed. “The elevators must no longer hide away like solitary worms in the bottom of stairwells—but the stairs—now useless, must be abolished, and the elevators must swarm up the facades like serpents of glass and iron.” The house itself would now “be like a gigantic machine.” Above all, the new city would be an interconnected network of traffic streams: “The street . . . will no longer lie like a doormat at the level of the thresholds, but plunge several stories deep into the earth, gathering up the traffic of the metropolis, connected for necessary transfers to metal catwalks and high-speed conveyor belts.” Renewal would be constant. “Our houses will last less time than we do. Every generation will have to make its own city anew.” Such claims were accompanied by pen-and-ink renderings made from an especially low point of view, creating an effect of soaring lightness, an almost fragile quality at odds with the nakedly monumental scale and ambition. Futurism had always evoked a sense of the sublime, the marvelous; but seldom were those qualities given greater expressive force than in the works of Sant’Elia.

DOWN WITH AUSTRIA! (1914–1918)

The manifesto “Futurist Architecture” was issued as a leaflet in late July, then reprinted in *Lacerba* on 1 August. It went virtually unnoticed, drowned out by debate over the outbreak of the Great War. For Italy, the war posed severe dilemmas. By secret treaty Italy was a member of the Triple Alliance, bound to act in concert with the Austro-Hungarian Empire and Germany. But the irredentist goal of annexing the Italian-speaking territories around Trieste and Trent, then subject to Austria-Hungary, made it more plausible for Italy to join France and England and seize those territories from a defeated Austria. Other factors, however, militated against that idea: many Italian Catholics might be reluctant to take up arms against Catholic Austria, while the intransigent Socialist Party adamantly refused to support joining either side (war could only advance the cause of militarism and capitalism). No prime minister could alienate both these blocks of public opinion. The army itself was also opposed to war, painfully aware of its own weakness. To procrastinate was plainly the most prudent course. It would enable the government to see what concessions the Austrians might offer; perhaps Italy could achieve its goals simply by doing nothing.

“Interventionists,” those who advocated that Italy intervene on the side of France and England, were numerically a small group, though they made up in activism and belligerence what they lacked in numbers. They comprised members of the incipient Nationalist Party, small but well financed and organized, who thought the conflict presented Italy with a chance to become a great power. The Futurists were the smallest group numerically, but the most inventive in creating a politics of theatricality that could resonate through the contemporary media.

Marinetti threw his energies into interventionist cause, and no detail escaped his attention. In May 1914, the Futurist painter Giacomo Balla had published “Futurist Men’s Clothing: A Manifesto” (194–195). Marinetti now published a new version of it titled “The Antineutral Suit,” adding passages that took verbal slaps at the neutralists and boosted interventionism (202–204). On 15 September he attended a performance of Puccini’s opera *La Fanciulla del West* at the Teatro dal Verme in Milan. As the first act drew to a close, he unfurled a gigantic Italian flag from the balcony, screaming “Down with Austria!” at the top of his lungs. Boccioni, from another spot in the theater, unfurled an Austrian flag which he promptly set aflame, its remnants falling on the spectators below. The next day Marinetti, Boccioni, and a group of interventionist students went to the Galleria of Vittorio Emanuele, a glass-roofed shopping arcade; once again they started a demonstration, burned Austrian flags, and prompted a scuffle which led to their arrest and several days in jail. On 20 September Marinetti launched another manifesto

titled “Futurist Synthesis of the War,” signed by himself, Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, and his assistant Ugo Piatti. Carrà gave the “synthesis” a distinctive layout, while the Futurist musician Pratella soon composed a “Hymn to War.” In December the Futurists took part in interventionist demonstrations at the University of Rome, these against “Germano-phile” professors, with Cangiullo donning the only example of an “antineutralist suit” ever to have existed.

Interventionist sentiment soon engulfed the Socialist Party as well. On 20 October, the editor of the party’s newspaper, Benito Mussolini, unexpectedly asked the party to abandon its position of neutrality. His motion was rejected, and on 24 November he was expelled from the party. A sizable minority broke away to follow him. The next month, buttressed with money from the French government (which wanted Italy to join the war), Mussolini started his own newspaper, *Il Popolo d’Italia* (*The People of Italy*).

In March 1915, the Italian prime minister Antonio Salandra reached a secret agreement with England and France to enter the war. Formally concluded on 26 April, it required Italy to begin military operations in thirty days; it also pledged that after the war Italy would receive the areas around Trent and Trieste, all of the cisalpine Tyrol, and some of Dalmatia—but not the city of Fiume. Salandra had deceived his own cabinet and not consulted military leaders or parliamentary representatives. Cynically, he now contrived to have Gabriele D’Annunzio and others mount interventionist demonstrations; he needed “popular support” in order to overcome the parliamentary opposition led by his fellow liberal and chief rival, the former prime minister Giovanni Giolitti. D’Annunzio, in speeches delivered on 5 May in Genoa and from 10 May to 13 May in Rome, vilified Giolitti. Riots ensued and parliamentary deputies who advocated neutrality were manhandled in the streets, with police and government connivance. In this atmosphere of intimidation, Giolitti left Rome rather than appear unpatriotic. On 20 May, when Parliament finally met, war was approved by 407 votes to 74, a decision greeted by applause. Government conniving with terror—it was a precedent for the path to fascism.³⁹

Despite his interventionist activities, Marinetti did not reduce his engagement with the arts. Increasingly his attention turned to drama. The subject was familiar terrain for him: in 1905 he had written his first play, *King Hoot*, and as early as 1906–1907 he had drafted his second, *Electrical Dolls*. In late 1913, he had reduced the latter to a single act and retitled it *Electricity* (*Elettricità*), under which name it went on tour with the Futurist *serate*, performed alongside the Futurist words-in-freedom poems. By the time it arrived in Bologna, in February 1914, it was being advertised as a “Futurist Synthesis” that would appear together with a “comic synthesis” called *Infant* by Emilio Settimelli. These experiences were complemented by another, much more decisive one that took place a month later, when Marinetti

participated in a performance of Francesco Cangiullo's free-word poem "Piedigrotta" (Rome; 29 March, 1914). Cangiullo's poem was named after an annual festival in his native city of Naples, in which skits and songs that satirized plebeian social life were improvised on moving stages, accompanied by bizarre instruments that might almost have been made to epitomize Russolo's "art of noises." Songs from the Piedigrotta performances, in turn, were often elaborated by singers in the city's café-chantants and variety theaters, who turned them into popular numbers. Performing Cangiullo's free-word poem became an attempt to create a Futurist version of this delirious spectacle, doing so by amplifying its theatricality, heightening the carnivalesque space that blurred the boundaries between stage and street, art and life, intensifying its psychic, visual, and auditory dimensions. For the occasion, the painter Balla even painted Futurist designs over the Neapolitan instruments, one of which has been preserved (fig. 27), and Marinetti served as one of the evening's performers.

Prompted by these experiences and his reflections on music hall, Marinetti set out to write theatrical syntheses, short and plotless works that lasted as little as a minute, capturing a moment's revelation. The project was undertaken with Bruno Corra and Emilio Settimelli, younger Futurists from Florence who were now prominent in Marinetti's circle. Unlike other manifestos, where theory preceded practice, Marinetti wrote the manifesto "Futurist Synthetic Theater" (204–209) *after* having written several "syntheses." It called for a drama of pure theatricality, emphasizing the elements of brevity and visual spectacle and downgrading narrative, exposition, and development. The first syntheses premiered in Ancona on 1 February 1915, and comprised six works by Marinetti and four by other authors. (For six syntheses in this collection, see 487–495.)⁴⁰

The creation of a Futurist drama, in turn, prompted the young artist Enrico Prampolini to ponder the question of "Futurist Stage Design" (212–215). Around the same time, the painter Balla and another new Futurist recruit, Fortunato Depero, began to create what they called "plastic complexes"—assemblages, in modern parlance. But with the outbreak of the war in Italy in mid-1915, energies were soon diverted to the conflict. The Futurists who were in Milan volunteered together: Marinetti, Boccioni, Russolo with his assistant Piatti, and Sant'Elia, as did others who were on the fringes of the Futurist group (Mario Sironi, Achille Funi). Enrolled in the Lombard Battalion of Volunteer Cyclists, they went to Peschiera, on the shores of Lake Garda, to receive training as *alpini* (mountain troops). Eventually they were posted to the front and even managed to take a minor Austrian position at Dosso Casina in October. But by November military authorities had recognized the limitations of volunteer bicyclists waging war with antiquated weapons; the unit was disbanded and its members told to await further orders.

Unoccupied with military duties in early 1916, Marinetti launched a new peri-

odical, *L'Italia futurista* (*Futurist Italy*; fig. 12), together with Emilio Settemelli and Bruno Corra, the young Florentines who had collaborated in writing theatrical "syntheses." Intended to replace *Lacerba*, which had ceased publishing in 1915, it was a four-page broadsheet that was issued weekly. Meanwhile, Marinetti's interests in theater and performance continued to develop: in March 1916 he published "Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation" (219–224), a work that spelled out a distinctive Futurist performance style. He also worked on a Futurist film, *Futurist Life*; known today only through stills and a sketch of its chief episodes, it premiered at the Teatro Niccolini in Florence on 28 January 1917, inevitably preceded by a manifesto on film (229–233).

Marinetti, appointed an underlieutenant (*sottotenente*) in the Third Artillery Regiment, returned to military service in September 1916. The war was taking its toll among the ranks of the Futurists. On 17 August, 1916, the artist Umberto Boccioni was killed when a horse that he was riding had an accident. He was thirty-two. On 10 October the architect Antonio Sant'Elia was mortally wounded in combat outside Monfalcone, near Trieste. He was twenty-eight. Neither event dampened Marinetti's enthusiasm for the war. After taking a course in artillery bombardment in early 1917, he was ordered to the front, not far from Trieste. Badly wounded by a grenade explosion in May, he was treated for his injuries and given leave for the summer. He wrote "Manifesto of Futurist Dance" (234–239), which proposed highly geometrical, mechanized forms of dance and offered examples of works that might be performed, including a dance of shrapnel.

Interventionists had hoped that the advent of war would have a cathartic effect on the Italian consciousness, creating a new people. Though these utopian prospects were never realized, the war did effect changes in Italian social life. As elsewhere, many women entered the workforce for the first time and experienced a new sense of independence. It was in response to these changes that Marinetti published *How to Seduce Women* (*Come si seducono le donne*, 1917), a facetious look at how the war between the nations was reshaping the war between the sexes.⁴¹ Love was being demystified and stripped of sentimentalism, he urged, while women were becoming very different from the feminine figures depicted even in quite recent literature. The new Futurist woman would soon be found in the trenches; she would fall in love with the handicapped veteran who prefigured the "motor body" of the future, replete with "interchangeable and replaceable parts." As a result, women should be given the right to vote; there should be freedom from any parental authority in the choice of a marriage partner; divorce was to be made easy and rapid, marriage devalued, and eventually free love would become the norm. The book sparked a lively debate about the status of contemporary women, one that revealed the existence of a surprising number of Futurist women whose essays and poems became increasingly prominent in the pages of *L'Italia futurista* (233–234, 242–246).

As an institution, Futurism provided more opportunities for women to publish than were available in the society at large; and after the consolidation of Fascism in 1924–1925, when any role except that of mother became unorthodox, women continued to publish a great deal in Futurist venues, though there was a perceptible shift away from social questions and toward poetry, a genre perhaps “more appropriate” for women. Not that Futurist men were remarkably enlightened. One response to “the woman debate,” by the otherwise unknown Futurist Giovanni Fiorentino (240–241), suggests how low the status of women could be among many Futurist men.

The war, grisly and monstrous, continued to churn up new questions, new myths. One was the legend of the *Arditi* (the ardent ones; in the singular, the *Ardito*), members of special shock troops and guerilla-type forces deployed along the most dangerous fronts. The press described their exploits with relish: they were “the alligators of the Piave,” the river which for so long divided Italian and Austro-Hungarian troops. Made up of “ardent” young volunteers and convicts whom the government had released in exchange for enlistment, they were identifiable by the daggers lodged in the belts of their black uniforms and the flames sewn to their sleeves as an escutcheon. Exempted from many ordinary duties, they were endowed with almost mythical status by the war’s end.

The conclusion of the war marked a turning point for Futurism. Boccioni and Sant’Elia were dead; Carrà had suffered a nervous breakdown and had largely abandoned Futurism; Russolo, still pursuing his art of noises, had withdrawn into private researches. In Paris, Gino Severini had turned away from Futurism and taken an independent direction. Of the five artists who had signed the first “Manifesto of Futurist Painters” in 1910, only Giacomo Balla in Rome, whose age had made him ineligible for military service, was still an active Futurist. The poet Aldo Palazzeschi and the painter/critic Ardengo Soffici had also abandoned Futurism. New and younger artists had arrived in the interim, such as Enrico Prampolini and Fortunato Depero, as had younger writers, such as Emilio Settimelli and Mario Carli. But whether these possessed the power or originality of the earlier nucleus has been much debated. As for Marinetti himself, he was plainly taking less interest in the arts. His experiences in the interventionist cause had whetted his appetite for politics. Anticipating the end of the war, he published “The Manifesto of the Italian Futurist Party” in February 1918 (247–251). The next two years would see the high-water mark of his political activism.

THE BATTLE OF VIA DEI MERCANTI (1918–1925)

As the end of the Great War approached, the political situation in Italy grew increasingly troubled. The Liberals, a broad coalition of middle-class interests which

had governed Italy since unification in 1860, were divided by the struggles between two men: Giovanni Giolitti, the elder statesman who had been four times prime minister and who in 1914 had urged Italy to remain neutral, and Antonio Salandra, the more conservative leader who had connived to pilot the nation into war. The Socialists, instead, were divided among the party's leadership (which controlled its main newspaper *Avanti!*), reformers, and various more militant groups. After the Russian Revolution, the leadership had demanded immediate revolution and a dictatorship of the proletariat, a call averse to older trade union leaders and more experienced parliamentary hands, for it meant that other parties, such as the Liberals, could no longer absorb the Socialists into the system with public works projects or concessions on labor legislation. It also alienated the middle classes, who had no desire for a Soviet revolution. The Popular Party, a group founded in 1919, was overtly Catholic with humanitarian concern for the less fortunate, but unstable insofar as it tried to weld together positions from the left, center, and right. In addition, there was a small but well-financed group of Nationalists; another party known as the Radicals; and a small Republican Party (i.e., advocating the abolition of the monarchy).

In February 1918, Marinetti had published the "Manifesto of the Italian Futurist Party" in the final issue of *L'Italia futurista* (247–251). Seven months later, he republished it in the first issue of a new journal that he founded, *Roma futurista*. (Like its predecessor, it was a four-page weekly broadsheet, co-edited by Mario Carli and Emilio Settimelli.) Espousing anticlericalism, it urged expulsion of the Vatican from Italy and advocated "revolutionary nationalism," nationalism that would be forward-looking and modernizing rather than backward-looking and classicizing. It also proposed a reform of parliament. Instead of elected representatives in the lower house, whose laws were moderated by an appointed upper house (the Italian parliament of the time), it would have twenty technocrats elected by universal suffrage and a "Check-Up Assembly" composed of twenty young men, all under thirty years of age and also elected by universal suffrage. Their task would be not to moderate, but to spur on or "excite" the lower house. It also urged radical social changes (civil marriage, easy divorce, eventual free love, etc.)—a program with little chance of winning wide support.

In the same issue that hosted the manifesto, Mario Carli launched his "First Appeal to the *Arditi*." Carli himself had been one of these elite shock troops during the war, and his goal was twofold: to bring Futurism out of isolation by linking it with the *Arditi* and to give the latter a voice. The *Arditi*, said Carli, were "the Futurists of war, the disheveled avant-garde that was ready for anything, the nimble and joyful force for the 1920s, young men who threw a grenade while whistling their favorite music-hall numbers." They were the ones who were destined to construct "the new values in politics, the arts, and national wealth." On 10 December, in the same

newspaper, Carli announced the formation of the Association of Italian Arditi, and six months later he joined Ferruccio Vecchi in editing its newspaper, *L'Ardito*.⁴²

Carli was not the only one courting the *Arditi*. When Marinetti visited Mussolini in early 1919 at the offices of his newspaper, he found him “seated at his desk against the dramatic background of a large black flag, decorated with the white skull and crossbones of the Arditi, spread out across the wall.” Marinetti thought he had the measure of Mussolini:

I can perceive the reactionary who is being born within this violent and excited temperament, full of a Napoleonic authoritarianism and a nascent aristocratic contempt for the masses.

He comes from the people, but he doesn't love them any more. He is tending toward an aristocracy of thought and heroic will. He is not a great *mind*. He didn't perceive the necessity of the war. He was an anti-militarist demagogue without a fatherland. Now, out of the inevitable conflagration against the autocratic empires, he discerns a need and will for discipline at all costs, for a reactionary order and militarism as an end in itself.

He doesn't see things very clearly. He's led along by his character, his propensity for heroic struggle, and a Napoleonic ideal, and I think that he also aspires to wealth.

He kept looking at my expensive raincoat with enormous eyes.⁴³

Fascism was formally founded at a meeting held on 23 March 1919 in a building on the piazza San Sepolcro, in Milan, one called by Mussolini and chaired by Ferruccio Vecchi of the *Arditi*. Marinetti was one among 130 participants.⁴⁴ Several *fasci* or associations of veterans had already been formed just after the Great War. This one would be a collective that merged their interests, to be called the Fasci di combattimento, or Associations of Combat. The group agreed on a few broad points, then appointed a committee to draft a fuller program that called for a steeply progressive tax structure, land for peasants, seizure of church property, and expropriation of wartime profits. But the written program may have communicated little of the meeting's tone, for it never mentioned an anti-Bolshevik or anti-Socialist stance. Marinetti, in his diaries, wrote that he had “spoken with energy against the group's tendency, which is a little too reactionary, to be so firmly against Socialism.”⁴⁵ Marinetti was asked to serve on the Central Committee and a press and propaganda committee.

Three weeks later, the “Chamber of Labor” for the Socialist Party in Milan declared a one-day general strike for 15 April. As the date drew closer, tensions mounted. The morning of the strike, bands of nationalists and *arditi* flowed into the city center. The strike was to begin with a rally in a lecture hall located in the via dei Mercanti (Street of the Merchants). When it ended and people filed out of

the hall, they found a cordon of Carabinieri stretched across the T junction where the dead-end street met another: on the other side were fascists and nationalists. Marinetti's diaries register the events in the present tense:

We are standing on the other side.

A truncheon flies out of the crowd and grazes my head. Then a rock is thrown, and then a revolver shot goes off. We're all charging forward and bursting through the ranks of the Carabinieri, who are parting to the left and to the right. We're scattering everywhere. Ex-officers, wearing their medals, seem indifferent to the hiss hiss hiss of the revolver shots: we shoot into the air, and then directly into the column of marchers who are seized with insane panic. Our enemies, nearly 2000 of them, are flinging themselves against the steps that go into the Loggia of the merchants.

Their shouts of "Down with Italy! Long live Lenin" have completely stopped.

They're lying on the ground, terrorized by our orderly advance, ex-officers all standing there, each holding a revolver and reloading it in a carefree way.

Then—charge!

The heaps of terrorized Bolsheviks are being beaten with sticks. I see blood running on the ground and feel a deep anxiety at seeing those mercenary but innocent young men have their brains bashed in. . . . In the piazza, a strong and heavy-set worker appears in front of me and tries to hit me twice with his fists. I slip away from his two swings and aim a blow at his head with a cudgel. But the blow lands on his back. He staggers a moment, then flees. I chase him at full speed and we both end up in a concierge's room—the glass breaks, we stumble into the arms of the concierge, who is frightened. She's screaming. But I stop a couple of *Arditi* from bashing out his brains. . . . My foot is wounded, evidently from a cudgel, and there's pain in my chest: must have been a fist or another cudgel.

I advance onwards with Mazza, Vecchi, and the rest of our group to the offices of *Avanti*.⁴⁶ (Ellipses added.)

Avanti! was the Socialist Party's newspaper, which Mussolini had edited until his dismissal in 1914. As the crowd of Fascists surged toward the building, a shot rang out from the inside. A policeman went down, part of a cordon protecting the building. The Fascists surged ahead. More shots went off from both sides. The Socialists fled out the back windows while the Fascists broke in from the front. Once inside the press rooms, they destroyed everything—the linotype machines, the offices, the furniture. Then they set it ablaze and left. The day's actions left three workers and one policeman dead. Investigations conducted by the authorities led to no arrests.

“A new era of history is opening,” wrote Mussolini only days before the famous meeting of 23 March, “a period that is characterized by a politics of the masses.”⁴⁷ In October the Fasci held their first convention in Milan, agreeing on a list of nineteen candidates for parliamentary elections in November. Of these, the best known were Mussolini, Marinetti, and Arturo Toscanini. The campaign was brief, and Marinetti spoke at only two rallies on 10 and 12 November. When the ballots were counted on 16 November, the Fascists had won 4,657 votes out of 270,000. (By December, its membership numbered only 870.)⁴⁸ Worse was to come. The next day the prefect for Milan ordered a search at the offices of the Fasci di combattimento and the Association of Italian Arditi. Revolvers, bombs, and ammunition were found. Marinetti was arrested along with Mussolini, Vecchi, and others. The prime minister immediately issued an order to release Mussolini; his arrest might make it seem that the government was favoring the Socialists, who had just won the elections. But Marinetti remained locked up until 9 December. While in jail he wrote *Beyond Communism* (254–264), a political credo putting his uneasy politics fully on display.

Italy, meanwhile, was spinning out of control. In September 1919, Gabriele D’Annunzio had led a band of ex-soldiers to take over the city of Fiume, in Dalmatia, a direct violation of the Versailles Treaty signed by the Italian government. The prime minister, Francesco Nitti, stood by powerless. Indeed, he secretly encouraged public opinion to solidify in favor of annexing Fiume and threatened the Yugoslavian government with military intervention if it should act to throw D’Annunzio out. D’Annunzio ruled for over a year. Every few days, from a balcony, he gave a theatrical speech to which a delirious crowd chanted its responses—a stage rehearsal for later Fascist rallies. When Giolitti was elected prime minister in 1920, he too sent food and money to D’Annunzio. Only when a clash occurred, one in which several soldiers died, did he finally draw the line and send in troops. But the precedent being set—legal authority turning a blind eye to illegal violence—was a step on the path to Fascism.

Fascism began to define itself as a political movement only at its second convention, held in May 1920. Marinetti attended this event, as he had the first, but his views were not warmly received. He was a staunch republican who firmly believed that the monarchy should be abolished. He urged that the Vatican be obliged to move out of Italy. His views were openly contested by Mussolini. “The Vatican represents 400 million men scattered around the world, and an intelligent politics would have to make use of that colossal force for its own expansion.” As for the idea of a republic, there was already a Republican Party for people of that stripe.⁴⁹ The party was taking a decidedly conservative turn. Marinetti was reelected to the Central Committee, but four days after the convention he sent in his resignation. It marked the end of his direct participation in politics.

Marinetti had withdrawn from the Fascist movement only months before its fortunes were about to soar. What sparked its sudden expansion was something neither Mussolini nor Marinetti had foreseen—the growth of *squadristo*, the use of paramilitary squads to beat and punish opponents. The squads, composed of ex-officers and students (ex-officers had entered university crash courses after demobilization), thrived above all in provincial cities in Tuscany and Emilia Romagna—cities such as Cremona, where the local fascio was headed by Roberto Farinacci, and Ferrara, headed by Italo Balbo. They were the ideal instrument for breaking up Socialist or Popular dominance in the countryside. Landowners and leaseholders furnished funds, while ordinary peasants added personnel. (If the closed shop of the local Socialist labor league were broken up, there'd be work available for themselves.) Truckloads of *squadristi* would descend on a small town at night, beat up local unionists and Socialist officials, “purge” them of their iniquities by making them drink castor-oil, then burn down the local party offices and depart. The attacks began in late 1920 and mounted throughout the months that followed, all heavily publicized by Mussolini's newspaper, *Il Popolo d'Italia*. Mussolini himself took no part in these actions. His role became profoundly ambivalent: he stood above the fray, a far-sighted statesman who would try his best to rein in the squads; yet he also acted as their organizer, financier, and propagandist, threatening to unleash them if not given concessions. The squads proved brutally effective, and their efficacy only highlighted the breakdown in governmental control of the nation: in September 1920, over 400,000 workers had gone on strike, occupying factories and shipyards. They stayed for four weeks. Nothing could have more deeply frightened the middle classes or made more apparent the government's helplessness.

By mid-1921, membership in the Fasci was approaching 200,000. What had once been a fringe movement was turning into a mass party. The government called for new elections in May. Surprisingly, prime minister Giolitti invited the Fascists to join the government's list of candidates. Mussolini seized the chance and proposed a “pact of pacification” with the Socialist unions, a device to allay middle-class fears that the Fascists were a band of criminals. The heads of the squads opposed the pact, but they lacked a leader with the national stature that Mussolini had acquired; further, he controlled the movement's newspaper and its national finances, and his behind-the-scenes deals ensured that police turned a blind eye to their actions. Reluctantly, they yielded. In October he took another step to put Fascism on a regular footing by creating the National Fascist Party (Partito Nazionale Fascista, PNF), and Fascism duly became part of a fragile coalition, with thirty-five members in Parliament.

The “pact of pacification” was promptly abandoned, and the violence of the squads continued unabated through the rest of 1921 and into 1922. Nearly every major newspaper at one point or another expressed approval. Membership in the

party continued to rise, reaching 300,000 by May 1922. The government, meanwhile, grew weaker. Giolitti resigned as prime minister in June 1921, to be followed by three more governments between that date and October 1922. By then it was deemed inevitable that the next coalition government would include several Fascists in the cabinet. On 24 October 1922, the Fascists staged a mass rally of 40,000 in Naples, which ended with the delirious crowd chanting, "To Rome! to Rome!" The threat of a Fascist coup was unmistakable.

On 28 October, faced with reports that Fascist squads were taking over post offices and telegraph offices in provincial cities, the government asked the king to sign a decree establishing martial law. He agreed. Famously, the next morning he refused to sign the order. Why he did so has been debated ever since. Though Fascist squads had seized police headquarters, and postal or telegraph offices in several towns, historians have long observed that the military threat they posed was negligible. Tellingly, however, Mussolini himself had taken no part in planning strategy or tactics for a coup. He was interested not in a military campaign, but in a media onslaught. When morning newspapers throughout the country suggested a state of imminent civil war, the king may have done no more than accept what the newspapers said. The next afternoon, 29 October, he invited Mussolini to form a new government. Mussolini took the overnight train from Milan to Rome and was duly appointed prime minister. At his order the squads, which military authorities had kept at bay at points well outside of Rome, were allowed to enter the city and stage a victory parade in front of the royal palace. As soon as they had given their salute to the king, a fleet of waiting taxis whisked them away to the train station. They had been told by Mussolini to clear out of the city before 8:00 P.M. Mussolini and the contemporary press dubbed this event "the March on Rome," suggesting a major insurrection that had miraculously been almost bloodless. It was, instead, a brilliant media operation, the creation of an electrifying myth.

Marinetti took no part in these events. After his resignation from the party's Central Committee in May 1920, he turned away from political activism. During the occupation of the factories in September 1920, far from fretting about politics, Marinetti had conceived of "Tactilism," exercises and activities that promised the "discovery of new senses" that would "carry the human spirit to unknown shores" (264–269). In January 1921, he went to Paris and lectured on Tactilism, an effort to relaunch Futurism on the international stage, where it had been absent since the outbreak of the Great War. But his reception from mainstream media was lukewarm, and from the avant-garde overtly hostile. "Futurism has died," stated a leaflet distributed at Marinetti's lecture by Tristan Tzara and Francis Picabia. "From what? From DADA." Futurism never regained its earlier international prestige.

Marinetti's waning political activism can be partly explained in biographical

terms. In late 1919 he had met Benedetta Cappa, a young woman from Rome who was taking painting lessons with Giacomo Balla and a relative of Innocenzo Cappa (a lawyer who had defended Marinetti when he faced obscenity charges over *Mafarka the Futurist* back in 1910). Benedetta Cappa was then twenty-two, Marinetti forty-three. Their extended courtship led in early 1924 to their taking up a common residence in Rome. (They married in 1926, fearing complications when they embarked together on a lecture tour of Brazil; eventually they had three daughters: Vittoria, Ala, and Luce.)⁵⁰ Observers detected a change. After visiting Marinetti in 1924, Giorgio Amendola recalled: "That day Marinetti, playing his new role as husband and upstanding bourgeois, struck me as different from the agitator of old, as if the passionate days of Futurist battles were now a thing of the past." Antonio Gramsci, in a report on Futurism, said much the same: "Since the end of the war, the Futurist movement in Italy has entirely abandoned its characteristic traits. Marinetti devotes very little time to the movement. He has married, and prefers to devote his energies to his wife."⁵¹

Though Marinetti had withdrawn from active politics, other Futurists had not. Consider Mario Carli and Emilio Settimelli, Marinetti's co-editors at the journal *Roma futurista*. Carli had joined Marinetti and Mussolini at the founding meeting of the Fasci di combattimento in March 1919. A year later he had withdrawn from party appointments together with Marinetti. (Neither had resigned from the party, however.) But in late 1921 Carli underwent a change of heart, and in the spring of 1922 he joined up with Settimelli to launch *Il principe: una settimanale dell'idea monarchica* (*The Prince: A Weekly of the Monarchic Idea*). Though funded by reactionary monarchic circles, the journal did not especially lend support to the monarchy; its title echoed Machiavelli's famous book, its ideal the Machiavellian prince who would restore order to Italy. The journal was of great use to Mussolini, helping Fascism to penetrate aristocratic and monarchic circles, and to its editor, laying the basis of his good fortune under the Fascist regime to come.

Less than four months after Mussolini had come to power, Carli and Settimelli launched another venture, *L'Impero* (*The Empire*), a daily newspaper published in Rome. Funded by Mussolini himself, its purpose was to furnish a vehicle for him to express ideas that he wished to disseminate, but not acknowledge as his own, ideas that might offend party members or leaders in the party hierarchy. The newspaper's title, for example, had been Mussolini's own suggestion, but he remained careful to make sure that all discussion of "empire" stemmed from Carli and Settimelli, not himself. All this is indispensable background to the text which Marinetti published there on 25 April 1923, entitled "The Italian Empire" and dedicated to Mussolini (273–275). It is patently sycophantic: Italy's destiny has been secured by "the fist of the best Italian," that is, Mussolini. And it anticipates the savage re-

pression to come. Mussolini should govern “without Parliament,” it urges, and “the right of criticism, verification, or opposition” should be denied “to antipatriots.” An open call to repression, it overtly flattered Mussolini’s dictatorial aspirations. Marinetti had abandoned political activism—not politics.

Mussolini’s first task as prime minister had been to make the party acceptable to the middle classes. He ostentatiously sponsored public works projects and a major reform of education, then called for elections in early 1924. The party’s “big list” of government-approved candidates (which included some from other parties) scored a stunning victory, winning 66.3 percent of the votes in April. Here was proof that the party was broadly popular, the voice of genuine consensus. Alas, on 30 May, Giacomo Matteotti spoke up in Parliament, denouncing the elections as a sham. (Many opposition candidates had been beaten up; still, the “big list” would probably have won a substantial majority even without these tactics.) Eleven days later, Matteotti disappeared; after several more days, his body was found. He had been beaten to death. The murderers were soon caught—a Fascist hit squad with close links to Mussolini’s circle. People recoiled in horror. Investigations were launched and four ministers resigned in protest. The opposition parties, foolishly, refused to enter Parliament. (Their decision left the Fascist rump free to do as it pleased.) By November the state of affairs was critical. It grew still tenser when a Socialist deputy failed in an attempt to assassinate Mussolini. Finally, on 27 December an investigator’s memorandum on the Matteotti affair was published, implicating Mussolini. Pressure mounted from within the party as well, and squad leaders met with Mussolini to demand that he repress the opposition.

The result was a speech that Mussolini delivered on 3 January 1925 to the Chamber of Deputies. “I now accept, I alone, full political and moral responsibility for what has happened. . . . If Fascism has been a criminal association, then I am the chief of this criminal association.” The government, reluctantly, would have to take stern measures. Contemporaries were bewildered. Would Mussolini rein in the squads, or would he crush every trace of opposition? He did both. Unflattering newspapers were now seized regularly, and by December 1925 a new press law provided that only registered journalists could write for the newspapers. (The Fascists, of course, ran the register.) In 1926, after three further attempts to assassinate Mussolini, all opposition parties were banned. A Special Tribunal for the Defense of the State was created to try terrorists and “political criminals.” But Mussolini also ordered that all squads be dissolved and squad members be expelled from the party. Even the staunchest of Fascist supporters were now closely watched by the police. Roberto Farinacci, a strident squad leader, had a lengthy police file. So did Marinetti, with a note at the beginning which read: “Political shading: anti-Fascist.”⁵²

“YOUR EXCELLENCY” (1925–1944)

The dictatorship of Benito Mussolini thrived for the next fifteen years. It was a perennially divided regime, torn between the increasingly frenzied cult of il Duce and efforts to conjure the ideological coherence that would transcend Mussolinism. New initiatives succeeded one another with breath-taking rapidity, often amounting to little more than a string of photo opportunities. The salvos of verbiage drowned out a complex reality: real terrorism, fitful attempts to modernize Italy, efforts to create a new mass citizen. Grand plans punctured by the complexity of real Italians whose identities remained stubbornly tied to regional, religious, and other affiliations.

Mussolini’s attitude toward intellectuals was wholly pragmatic. When one secretary of the treasury proposed a streamlined civil service in 1929, a reform considered crucial to balancing finances, Mussolini objected: “We have to adopt a policy of the maximum number of jobs in the state bureaucracy if we don’t want an insurrection on our hands—an insurrection caused by the hunger, I repeat hunger, of intellectuals.”⁵³ Intellectuals were tolerated and flattered—bought off, if possible, rather than persecuted. Few objected. In 1931, when the government required that university teachers take an oath of loyalty to the regime, only eleven out of 1,200 professors refused and were dismissed. Honors were another means. In 1926 Mussolini mandated the creation of an Italian Royal Academy, loosely modeled after the Académie française, and in 1929 it was formally inaugurated. The academics were selected by Mussolini himself, paid a generous salary, and addressed as “Your Excellency.” They received free first-class rail travel and were given a special uniform—replete with plumed hat and gilt sword. Pirandello, Marinetti, and Marconi were obvious choices as inaugural members. That Marinetti had once urged the closure of all arts academies was a contradiction every critic, ever since, has felt obliged to note.

More significant was the broad debate sparked in late 1926 when Mussolini spoke at the Academy of Fine Arts in Perugia. “We must not,” he said on this occasion, “remain solely contemplative. We must not simply exploit our cultural heritage. We must create a new heritage to place alongside that of antiquity. We must create a new art, an art of our times: a Fascist art.”⁵⁴ To some observers, this signaled a marked shift in policy. Giuseppe Bottai, who had briefly passed through the Futurist ranks in 1919 and 1920 and who was now the editor of a journal called *Fascist Criticism* (*Critica fascista*), solicited comments from leading Fascist cultural figures, including Marinetti. His contribution was a weak essay which charged that Benedetto Croce, the liberal philosopher and critic, had no right to speak about such matters: he had been “a Germanophile neutralist” during the war and had “devoted ineffectual, pompous articles to Goethe even as we fought the Germans

at the front.”⁵⁵ Intellectual and political censorship were not alien ideas to Marinetti.

A more telling discussion came from former Futurist Ardengo Soffici, raising the question of Futurism and Fascism:

We have already seen how this Futurist tendency has been followed and extolled, logically enough, by Russian Bolshevism; and this should be sufficient grounds to demonstrate that Futurism cannot be the best way of achieving the general goals of Fascism. Fascism, which is a revolutionary movement but not a subversive or extremist one, does not accept anarchy or whim, but rather desires that the law be stabilized and reinforced.⁵⁶

Soffici, quoting here from an earlier piece he had published already in 1922, was stressing the incompatibility of Futurism and Fascism. His argument sounded notes also struck by Giuseppe Prezolini in a contemporary essay (275–279), who urged that Futurism was more commensurate with Bolshevism: “The two revolutions, both antihistorical, have always been allies. Both want to destroy the past and remake everything on a new foundation of an industrial sort. The factory has been the wellspring of Bolshevik political ideas; and it has also been the inspiration for Futurist art. . . . Italian Fascism,” he concluded, “cannot accept the destructive program of Futurism; rather, in conformity with its *Italian* logic, it should restore the values that are opposed to Futurism.”

Both Soffici and Prezolini were urging that the anarchic dimensions of Futurism were incompatible with a Fascism that stressed discipline, authority, and hierarchy. But other observers thought the two had much in common. Piero Gobetti (1901–1926), a liberal and staunchly anti-Fascist author, thought Futurism was Fascism’s indispensable precursor.

The art of Marinetti is entirely a preparation for the March on Rome; it is the art of a traveling salesman for sporting goods, of a noisy squad member, of a subversive student.

Mussolini has succeeded because the experience of Marinetti opened up the path for him: it was Marinetti who first shaped the model of a Milanese movement, first showed how such a thing is created, improvised. He trained the elite which is found in the ministerial offices of today: Carli, Settimelli, Bottai, Bolzon, and the others.⁵⁷

The Italian philosopher Benedetto Croce agreed with Gobetti:

For someone who has a sense for historical connections, the ideal origin of Fascism will truly be found in Futurism: in the resoluteness it brought to the idea that one must get out into the streets, impose one’s viewpoint, shut up the voice of those who don’t agree, and not be afraid of riots or mass disorder; in that

search for the new, that passionate desire to break with every tradition; in that exaltation of youth which was so characteristic of Futurism and which spoke so directly to those who came back from the trenches, who felt contempt for the petty infighting of the older political parties and the lack of vigor they displayed toward the plots and acts of violence directed against both the nation and the state.⁵⁸

Such contradictory assessments suggest that identifying the elusive interplay between Futurism and Fascism will remain a subject of perennial debate. Nor were Soffici, Prezolini, Gobetti, and Croce the only ones to ponder the rapport between the two movements. In *Futurism and Fascism* (1924), Marinetti himself underscored their affinities. Futurism had been an important precursor to Fascism, while Fascism had subsequently satisfied the “minimal program” of Futurism: “Italian pride, unlimited faith in the future of Italians, destruction of the Austro-Hungarian empire, the love of danger, violence rehabilitated into decisive argument, the religion of speed, of newness, of optimism and originality, the arrival of young men in power against the parliamentarian, bureaucratic, academic, and pessimistic mind.”⁵⁹ But these remarks can also be dismissed as mere bluster: Marinetti had been conspicuous by his absence as a force in the party, and now he was compensating for it by inflating Futurism’s importance.

The debate in *Critica fascista* marked the beginning of a protracted discussion about art and Fascism which lasted throughout the regime’s existence. But genuine questions of ideology sometimes concealed more mundane matters. Who would receive the lion’s share of the substantial patronage which the state bestowed on the arts? Marinetti complained endlessly that Futurism wasn’t receiving sufficient recognition at state-sponsored exhibitions such as the Venice Biennale. But in fact the Futurists had an independent exhibition, a special room or rooms, assigned to them at every Biennale between 1932 and 1942, as well as at the Quadriennales of 1935, 1940, and 1943. Others grumbled that the Futurists received too much attention, too much consideration. At one meeting of the administrative council that planned the 1932 Biennale, the issue was raised by Margherita Sarfatti, Antonio Maraini, and Cipriano Oppo:

SARFATTI: But, must there always be a Futurist room?

MARAINI: Marinetti has asked me this year for no less than four or five rooms. [Laughter.] It would be good to decide, once and for all, that the Futurists must meet the same standards as all the others. . . .

OPPO: In Rome [at the Quadriennale] we were inspired by the same ideas just expressed by Maraini, and we limited the number of Futurists to three or four. But Marinetti wrote to [Mussolini], who called me and told me to add an additional eight. . . . It is blackmail.⁶⁰

One scholar who has studied state patronage under the regime concludes: “Futurism’s protected status continued throughout the Fascist era. Even after National Socialist antimodernism and the Nazi aesthetic purges [from 1937 on] had influenced Fascist cultural policy, the Futurists and Marinetti remained central players in state-sponsored culture.”⁶¹

Futurism’s chief competitor was Novecento (meaning “twentieth century”), a loose grouping of artists who advocated a fusion of modernity and tradition. It included figures such as Carlo Carrà and Mario Sironi, both former Futurists, and thrived during the period from 1924 to 1926 (meaning that the Italian state decided to purchase paintings for museum collections). But it was in architecture, the most public of the arts, that competition was the most intense. Futurism tried to make a case for itself, but with limited success. The key events concerned Como, the birthplace of Sant’Elia. Ever since the end of the Great War, city officials had been searching for a monument to commemorate the soldiers who had died. Marinetti, in 1930, suggested that they select a design from one of Sant’Elia’s many sketches. When that idea was taken up, Marinetti used his influence to have Enrico Prampolini appointed as the architect who would translate the sketch into finished plans and oversee its construction. Prampolini, however, was no architect, merely a stage designer, and his meager professional knowledge was soon sorely taxed. Officials from Como, eager to see the building finally constructed, agreed in 1931 that Prampolini and Marinetti should resign from the supervisory committee, to be replaced by Giuseppe Terragni, the chief representative of Rationalism. Terragni quickly executed detailed plans, and the building was duly inaugurated on 4 November 1933. The event became an immense Fascist pageant, with the Futurists conspicuous by their absence.⁶²

The poor record of Marinetti and Prampolini did not affect decision-making about the Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution (1932), the regime’s largest public spectacle held to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the March on Rome and furnish a history of Fascism. Prampolini was entrusted with one of the exhibition’s twenty-three rooms; Gerrardo Dottori, a younger Futurist, with another; and Prampolini’s and other Futurists’ works appeared on the ground floor. The new generation of Futurist artists was increasingly receptive to currents from abroad, including Le Corbusier’s purism and Russian constructivism, as were artists associated with other groups. Work by artists from ostensibly different groups could share so many aspects that ordinary viewers would find it difficult to distinguish them. A generic modernism, with Futuristic inflections, was the style that prevailed at the 1932 Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution. The exhibition proved so popular that it was made permanent.

Architecture and design were not the only contested fields. In 1933 the Triennale Exhibition in Milan hosted a number of artists who proposed both pictorial and

bas-relief murals, all accompanied by a “Manifesto of Mural Painting” by the artist Mario Sironi. The Futurist Fillia promptly replied with his own manifesto of “Bas-Relief Murals” and, together with other Futurists, organized the First National Exhibition of Bas-Relief Murals in Genoa, held in November and December 1934. A contribution by Prampolini (fig. 94) shows a stylized hand raised in a Fascist salute, accompanied by the so-called “three commandments” of Fascism, “To Believe, To Obey, To Fight,” all verbs in the infinitive, just as Marinetti had urged so long ago in the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (119–125).

Benedetta Cappa’s presence in the ranks of Futurism encouraged increasing emphasis on mystical motifs. Her “Futurist Sensibility” (279–281), published in 1927, urged the artist “to seize the mysterious thrill of unexpected attractions and repulsions,” to keep “straining with power toward the vast horizon of the future.” These notes were further accentuated after 1929, when Mussolini scored his most important diplomatic achievement, the concordat by which the Roman Catholic Church at last recognized the existence of Italy and the Italian occupation of Rome, while Italy recognized the Vatican as an independent state with sovereign territory. The new mood was epitomized in 1930 when the regime established the “School of Fascist Mysticism,” an institute located in Milan in the building that had formerly been the office of Mussolini’s newspaper, *Il popolo d’Italia*. A training ground for future propagandists, it sponsored classes, a monthly magazine, radio programs, and lectures (with one by Marinetti in 1939). Its task was to define the metaphysics of “reality,” an element “infinitely multiplex, flowing, imponderable . . . in which we feel . . . vague suggestions of mysterious forces that transcend us, obscure powers that remain explicable to our self or ego.”⁶³ It was in conformity with such impulses that Marinetti could join with Fillia, a younger Futurist artist, in writing “Manifesto of Futurist Sacred Art” in 1931 (286–288). Yet it was not entirely without precedent. As early as 1927, he had written an “Open Letter” to Mussolini (282) defended the electrical advertising signs surrounding the piazza del Duomo in Milan—conservative critics had wanted them torn down. He had called the signs “our passionate evening prayers to the sun, invoked so that it will return as soon as possible with the warmth which sustains the life of the world.”

By 1936, Mussolini’s popularity was probably at its height. The war against Ethiopia had been a success, and the sanctions of the League of Nations had proved ineffective. The regime’s campaign for “autarchy”—relying only on Italian products to mitigate the sanctions’ effects—found its counterpart in a chorus of calls for cultural autarchy. Marinetti joined these, too, harnessing them to his own ends by claiming that Futurism was genuinely Italian art. But others found it easy to reverse the argument, noting his or Futurism’s cosmopolitan origins. The question became more acute in 1937 when Hitler staged the infamous “Degenerate Art Exhibition” in Munich, one he counterpointed with a second “Great Exhibition of

German Art 1937,” which he himself would personally open. His speech, an assault against almost all of modern art, included comments damning “Cubism, Dadaism, [and] Futurism,” all of which had thrived because “Judaism had taken possession of those means and institutions of communication which form, and thus finally rule, over public opinion.”⁶⁴ Marinetti responded immediately (297–298), but his defense involved a brush with anti-Semitism. The German Futurists had been neither Jewish nor Communists:

These had some communists and some Jews, but if anything they were influenced by Italian Futurism, which is anti-communist by definition.

In modern art in general Jews have been and continue to be not innovators, but skillful merchants of Futurist or Cubist modern art, just as they were and still are skillful merchants of older art.

It was not the first such comment. In the spring of 1933, at the second Futurist convention in Bologna, a resolution had been passed which urged that Futurists should develop “a more fervent patriotism which is thus transformed into an authentic religion of the Fatherland,” a “warning to those Jews who may identify with different fatherlands if they don’t want to disappear.” Marinetti reprinted this statement in his manifesto “La Radia” a few months later, in September 1933 (292). Nor were these comments his last. In 1941 Marinetti wrote a preface to Gaetano Pattarozzi’s book *England Sewer of Passéism*, a virulently anti-Semitic work charging that England was “a sewer of Judaism.” And in 1942, in his own brief book of commemorative poems, *The Italian Army (L’esercito italiano)*, he asserted that “democracy communism judaism” were “equally depressing and traitorous dusty passéisms.”⁶⁵ Minor faults in comparison with what others wrote in those years—but still inexcusable. And between 1933 and 1942, they had acquired far more significance. For on 14 July 1938, “the Manifesto of Italian Racism” had been published, written by Mussolini himself, followed on 7 October the same year by the Charter of Race (La Carta della Razza), which forbade Italians to marry non-Aryans. One month later the racial laws were promulgated. Distinguished Jews, some holding positions of power within the regime, were dismissed and had their property confiscated.

On 10 June 1940, Mussolini declared war against Britain and France, announcing it with a speech from the balcony of Palazzo Venezia. A year later, Marinetti published one of his last manifestos, “Qualitative Imaginative Futurist Mathematics” (298–301). Like so many pieces written during the twenty-year period of Fascist rule, its meaning depends on familiarity with period jargon. “Qualitative” was one of the key terms in the Fascist political vocabulary. As Mussolini had written in his authoritative article on “Fascism” for the *Enciclopedia italiana*: “Fascism is the purest kind of democracy, so long as people are counted qualitatively and not

quantitatively.”⁶⁶ Qualitative mathematics, in short, was Fascist mathematics, a logic of will and inspiration over merely quantitative evaluation. Thus, one might have games of this sort:

Calculate the clear sum of revolutionary Victory obtained in Milan the 15th of April 1919 (the Battle of Via Mercanti) by means of 50 Futurist poets 100 Arditi 50 early Fascist *squadristi* and 300 students from the Polytechnical Institute + the political genius of Mussolini + bold aeropoetic imagination of Marinetti + Ferruccio Vecchi in order to defeat 100,000 socialists—communists routed because imbued with pacifism and hence frightened by pistols.

It was a saddening performance, given the grisly calculations that Italy would soon have to make.

In January 1940, Marinetti, who had been ill for some time with a duodenal ulcer, underwent surgery. Always a hefty man, he was now remarkably thin. In 1941 he had another operation, this time for a hernia. Having partly recovered, he volunteered for duty on the Russian front, at sixty-six years of age. He left in July 1942. He had no duties, serving simply as a journalist-observer attached to the troops. When the German forces were defeated outside Stalingrad, the Italians retreated and Marinetti returned home in December, suffering from pneumonia. A few weeks later he had his first heart attack, and for the next seven months he could do no more than move between his bed and a nearby chair.

On 10 July 1943, Allied forces invaded Sicily. Two weeks later, in the early morning hours of 25 July, the Great Council of the Fascist Party voted to limit Mussolini's authority and restore command of the armed forces to the king. Mussolini was arrested the same afternoon. The new government agreed to an armistice with the Allies on 3 September, shortly before troops landed in Calabria and just south of Naples. But with German occupation forces sweeping southward, the king and the government fled south six days later, abandoning the Italian people. (Italians never forgot their betrayal; in 1946 a national referendum ended the monarchy.) Three days after the government's flight, on 12 September, a dramatic rescue operation by German glider troops set Mussolini free. He was taken to Berlin, where he met with Hitler, and on 23 September, Mussolini spoke on the radio and announced that the Fascist Party was now republican. The war would go on.

Marinetti and his family left for Venice a few weeks later, in early October 1943. Allied troops, after being slowed down by winter weather, began their spring advance northward in 1944: Rome fell in June, Florence in August. By now there was also an increasingly active resistance movement, and Italy was descending into civil war. On 15 April 1944, Giovanni Gentile, the “Philosopher of Fascism,” was assassinated. Marinetti deemed it prudent to move closer to Switzerland and near the end of July took up residence in a modest villa on Lake Garda. He visited Mus-

solini once, on 23 August. Then, in September he moved northward to Cadenabbia, near Lake Como. He had already received an entry visa for Switzerland but was waiting for a residence permit from the canton of Lausanne when he died on 2 December, following a heart attack.

Marinetti was given a state funeral in Milan on 5 December. The day before, when his body was brought to the city, the procession had paused in piazza San Sepolcro, that fateful place where the founding meeting of Fascism had taken place so long ago in March 1919.

The embodiment of Futurism was dead. On 29 April 1945, the corpse of Benito Mussolini was brought to Milan and hung by the feet from the rafters of a garage in Piazza Loreto for everyone to see. The embodiment of Fascism was also dead.

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Part One Manifestos and Theoretical Writings



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INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE LAWRENCE RAINEY

In the autumn of 1913, the painter Gino Severini sent the rough draft of a projected manifesto to F. T. Marinetti, asking him to either approve or send suggestions for revision (“whether it is OK or requires modifications”).¹ Marinetti replied promptly:

I have read with great attention your manuscript, which contains extremely interesting things. But I must tell you that there is nothing of the *manifesto* in it.

First of all, the title absolutely won't do because it is too generic, too derivative of the titles of other manifestos. Secondly, you must take out the part in which you restate the *merde* and *rose* of Apollinaire, this being, in absolute contrast to our type of manifesto, a way of praising a single artist by repeating his own eulogies and insults. Moreover, you must not repeat what I have already said, in *Le Futurisme* and elsewhere, about the Futurist sensibility. The rest of the material is very good and important, but to publish it as is would be to publish an essay that is excellent but not yet a manifesto. I therefore advise you to take it back and reword it, removing all that I have already mentioned, intensifying and tightening it, and recasting the whole new part in the form of a Manifesto and not in that of the review article about futurist painting. . . .

I think I shall persuade you by all that I know about *the art of making manifestos*, which I possess, and by my desire to place, not in *half light*, but in full light your own remarkable genius as a futurist.

Marinetti's reply to Severini has long been a topos in critical writing about Futurism, routinely cited to show his relish for the manifesto, that distinctive genre that he inherited and elaborated to new levels of efficacy. Yet it is surprising to note how little Marinetti's letter really says about the manifesto as a form. While he firmly distinguishes between the manifesto and the essay, he never specifies the basis of the distinction or identifies the traits of either genre. The manifesto is defined only negatively: it is not an essay. The rest is left vague.

When Marinetti replied to Severini, the subgenre of the Futurist manifesto was more than four years old. Its prehistory was enormous, extending all the way back to the time of the English civil wars, when both royalist and antiroyalist forces issued many manifestos, public proclamations that explained recent actions or announced and justified actions about to take place. During the years of the French Revolution and its aftermath, the manifesto thrived again, ultimately crystallizing in the genre of the political manifesto, best known through *The Communist Manifesto* by Marx and Engels (1849). When the transition from the political manifesto to the literary manifesto took place has not been precisely identified, but it is generally agreed that the “Manifesto of Symbolism,” written and published by Jean Moréas in 1886, represents one of the earliest such works.³ Others soon followed. By the time that Marinetti took it up as a genre, in late 1908, the literary-cultural manifesto had acquired certain loose traits: after general reflections on the state of the arts or literature and society, it announced a new program that would address or resolve the problems specified before.

Marinetti’s first manifesto, “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” was a bipartite document, as the conjunction “and” in its title suggests. It narrated the founding of Futurism, then announced its program. Although this mixing of narrative and exposition was a novelty in the genre of the literary manifesto, it was hardly unheard of in other generic traditions, especially the essay. The secret of Marinetti’s manifesto, in other words, was only partially a matter of formal innovation. Far more distinctive was its peculiar tone—an uneasy note, a voice which urges that modernity has ushered in an age of ecstatic emancipation, yet advances that claim with a tone of compulsive desperation, a performance of histrionic agony.

“The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” established a prototype for one sort of manifesto: a narrative preamble that recounted an event assigned emblematic stature, then a more programmatic section of demands. Sometimes, as in “Let’s Murder the Moonlight!” (April 1909), the narrative took over and acquired an independent status, divorced from programmatic exposition, and so became a fictional fable. At other times, as in the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (May 1912), the narrative vignette became very brief, and after 1912 it largely disappeared.

A second sort of manifesto was established with the “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (April 1910). It began with a sweeping condemnation of the state of affairs in the art under discussion, then proceeded to survey its current condition on a nation-by-nation and artist-by-artist basis, and finally advanced innovations (“technical” solutions) that would resolve the crisis. This sort of manifesto appears in the “Manifesto of Futurist Musicians” and the various “technical manifestos” of painting and sculpture. Echoes of its generic opening can still be discerned in

the opening of “Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius: Futurist Manifesto.” More than other manifestos, these also tended to cite earlier and less “technical” manifestos as precedents for general principles. By the 1930s, this habit of self-citation became assimilated to Fascist culture’s obsessive recycling of its own allegedly heroic pedigree, leading to lists of predecessors and fallen martyrs so lengthy that they seem parodic in nature.

A third sort of manifesto, more difficult to identify, was largely indistinguishable from the essay. It appears especially in the writings that Marinetti published first in *Futurism* (1911) and then revised and translated into Italian in *War, the Only Hygiene of the World* (*Guerra, sola igiene del mondo*, 1915), many of which were never published as independent leaflets. Their tone of brash assertiveness may seem far removed from the more meditative notes of the essay, but their improvisational character is akin to the essay’s tentative fluidity.

The alterations that Marinetti made to these essays from the book *Futurism* can tell us much about their construction. Consider the essay “Electrical War” (“Guerre électrique,” 1911). For its 1915 translation into Italian, it was split into two parts, each of which was then modestly altered and republished, resulting in two independent works, “The Birth of a Futurist Aesthetic” and “Electrical War.” A similar fate befell two other essays from the 1911 collection, “Futurist Speech to the English” and “This Deplorable Ruskin” (“Un Discours futuriste aux Anglais” and “Ce déplorable Ruskin”). For the 1915 translation into Italian, half of the second essay was hived off and conjoined to the first to make a new and larger “Futurist Speech to the English,” while the remaining half was simply given a new title, “Against Passéist Rome.” Groupings of several paragraphs or more, in other words, were treated as modular units that could be moved from one essay to another without harming or altering them. They were not indispensable steps in an unfolding argument, but replaceable parts, elements within a verbal machine. The same held true at the local level. Adjectives and turns of phrase—dynamic, synoptic, synthetic—are endlessly recycled in Futurist writings, acquiring a hypnotic power that can leave readers feeling benumbed and make it difficult to tell (at least initially) which work one is reading or who is its author. The overlapping production of modular units, repeated at several discursive levels, creates an odd impression of anonymity, the sense that one is not so much reading an individual work as watching linguistic machinery in motion. Mechanical anonymity, in turn, stands in productive tension with the hyperbolic rhetoric and comic grotesquerie that lends the manifestos their histrionic power.

Many manifestos were originally published as independent leaflets of two to four pages in length, and from the beginning these had a marked preference for typographical display. Underlinings skip across the page, boldface characters thunder out commands, while italics writhe with urgency. These features became only

more pronounced as the years went by, especially after 1912. The manifestos were increasingly printed with multiple typefaces; headlines surged up the page in columns, or slanted at vertiginous diagonals. Visuality in general became more pronounced, and illustrations were increasingly included, such as Balla's drawings for "Futurist Men's Clothing: A Manifesto" or Sant'Elia's renderings for "Futurist Architecture." Such practices doubtless owed much to contemporary advertising, but the traffic went both ways.

Many of the manifestos are also recognizably imbued with a performative dimension. That is not surprising, especially as some of the earliest ones (e.g., the "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters") were routinely read aloud at the Futurist "evenings" or *serate*, performed onstage in halls and theaters. Perhaps it is no accident that many first-time readers of the manifestos find their tone to be "hysterical." Though "hysteria" has disappeared as a recognized diagnostic category in modern medicine, its symptoms having been redistributed into other categories, the term that has replaced it is "histrionic personality disorder." The manifestos, in other words, may have been performative and histrionic in a double sense: not only were they often declaimed, but they became a verbal restaging of modernity's deepest contradictions, the peculiar mixture of ecstasy and revulsion that it unleashes.

The later manifestos, written between the aftermath of Great War to the early years of World War II, often recur to the types and topoi of the earlier ones, but seldom with the same success. The manifesto announcing "Tactilism" (1921), for example, self-consciously revives the narrative preamble that introduced the "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" back in 1909—and yet the effect is wooden. Still, the later manifestos often cast an eerie, lurid glow back over their predecessors. If their literary value is slighter, their historical value is undeniable. Their reckless embrace of Fascist ideology is chilling.

Scholars and critics have long been preoccupied with establishing genealogies of modernism and the avant-garde. As early as 1936 Alfred Barr, founding director of the Museum of Modern Art, published a famous diagram which imperiously integrated every modern movement into a comprehensive schema, an evolutionary pedigree that recalled a chart tracing the House of Windsor or the Bourbon dynasty. Its brash confidence concealed its uneasy genealogies, a merging of Darwinian assumptions with a plebeian fascination for the tracing of blue blood. Yet the impulse that animated it has never wholly disappeared from scholarly discussion of the avant-garde, producing too many studies that first trumpet the pure originality of whichever movement is under discussion, then weigh its enormous (and undervalued) influence on its successors. Studies of Futurism have often succumbed to this habit, cataloguing the ways in which Futurism shaped German Expressionism or Anglo-American Vorticism, molded Dada or Surrealism—variants of that curious compulsion to establish what has so often been called "the modern

tradition.” But it may well be that there is no “tradition” to be either discerned or established. Modernism, together with its intense vehicle the historical avant-garde, was not a form of cultural production that could be sustained for more than evanescent moments. It offered not a history of beginnings and developments, but a protracted series of endings, innovations that swiftly exhausted themselves, corridors that always had “no exit” written irrevocably on the farthest wall. Futurism was just that. Alluring, vulgar, ludicrous, chilling, monstrous, farcical, grim—it remains one of the great dead ends of modernism.

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THE FOUNDING AND MANIFESTO OF FUTURISM

F. T. MARINETTI

Le Figaro (Paris), 20 February 1909

We had stayed up¹ all night—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 which jolt 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.² . . . 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 grapnels 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*.³
5. We intend to hymn 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 mysterious 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 multicolored and polyphonic tidal waves of revolution in the modern metropolis; 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 which 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.⁴ 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 doors of the 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 by 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!⁵

LET'S MURDER THE MOONLIGHT!

F. T. MARINETTI

11 April 1909

1.

Hail! great incendiary poets, you Futurist friends! . . . Hail! Paolo Buzzi, Federico de Maria, Enrico Cavacchioli, Corrado Govoni, Libero Altomare!¹ Let's flee the city of Paralysis, devastate Gout, and lay the great military Railroad along the flanks of Gorisankar,² summit of the world!

We left the city with firm and nimble strides, as if dancing in our desire to find everywhere obstacles to overcome. Around us, and within our hearts, the immense intoxication of the old European sun as it swayed between wine-colored clouds . . . That sun struck us in the face with its great torch of flaming purple, then flared out, vomiting itself into the infinite.

Whirlwinds of aggressive dust; blinding mixture of sulfur, potash, and silicates through the windows of the Ideal! . . . Fusion of a new solar orb that soon we shall see shining!

"Cowards," I cried, turning toward the inhabitants of Paralysis who were heaped below us, an enormous mass of angry howitzers awaiting our future cannons.

"Cowards! Cowards! Why all this howling like cats skinned alive? Are you afraid that we'll set fire to your hovels?—Not yet! . . . After all, we'll need something to keep warm with next winter! . . . For the moment we are content with blowing up all traditions, like rotten bridges! . . . War? Very well, yes: war is our only hope, our only reason for living, our only desire! . . . Yes, war! Against all of you who are dying too slowly, and against all the dead who are clogging the streets! . . .

"Yes, our nerves demand war and disdain women, because we fear that sup-plicating arms will entangle our knees on the morning of departure! . . . What do they want—women, sedentary people, invalids, the sick, and all counselors of prudence? To their vacillating lives, broken by dismal agonies, by fearful dreams and burdensome nightmares, we prefer a violent death and we exalt it as the only one worthy of man, that beast of prey.

"We want our children to follow their whims, to struggle brutally against the elderly, and to ridicule anything consecrated by time!

"Are you offended by this? Are you hissing at me? . . . Raise your voices! I can't hear your insults! Louder! What did you say? That we're ambitious? . . . By all means! Because we don't want to rub up against your stinking fleeces, you reeking and mud-colored flock driven down the old, decrepit streets of the Earth! . . . But 'ambitious' isn't the precise word! We're more like artillerymen on a spree! . . . And however much you hate it, you'll have to get used to the thunder of our cannons!

What did you say? . . . We're insane? . . . Hooray! Finally! The word I've been waiting for! Oh, oh what a trouvaille! . . . Carefully pick up that massively golden word, get back into line, and hide it deep in your little shop-rooms! Holding that word between your fingers and your lips, you'll be able to live another twenty centuries. . . . For my part, I tell you that the world is rotten with wisdom! . . .

"And that is why, today, we are advocating daily, methodical heroism, a taste for desperation, for which the heart gives everything it has, a habit of enthusiasm, abandonment to vertigo.

"We advocate a plunge into shadowy death beneath the white and staring eyes of the Ideal. . . . And we ourselves will furnish the example, abandoning ourselves to the furious Seamstress of battles who, having sewn us into a handsome scarlet uniform, garish in the sun, will anoint our hair with flames, our hair brushed back by bullets . . . Just as the heat of a summer night spreads the fields with the undulant shimmer of fireflies.

"Every day men must electrify their nerves to a fearless pride! . . . Men must stake their lives on a single cast, not watching for cheating croupiers or checking the balance of the roulettes, but bending over the vast green carpets of war, sheltered by the luck-bearing lamp of the sun. The soul must—must, do you understand?—launch the body into the flames against the enemy, like a fireship, against the eternal enemy that we would have to invent if it didn't exist.

"Look down there, those ears of grain aligned for battle by the millions . . . Those ears, agile soldiers with sharp bayonets, glorify the power of bread that is transformed into blood which shoots straight up to the Zenith. You must know that blood has no value or splendor unless it has been freed from the prison of the arteries by iron or fire! And we will teach all the *armed* soldiers of the world how blood should be shed . . . But first we have to clean out the great Barracks where you are teeming, insects that you are! . . . It'll be easy. . . . Meanwhile, you monkeys, you can still go home tonight to the filthy traditional pallets on which we will never sleep again!"

As I turned my back, I could sense from the pain in my spine that for too long, in the great black net of my speech, I'd been dragging along that moribund populace, like a heap of fish that are flapping ridiculously beneath the last flood of light thrown by the evening against the cliffs of my forehead.

2.

The city of Paralysis, with its henhouse cackle, its impotent prides of truncated columns, its puffed up cupolas that bring forth commonplace and petty statues, the whimsy of cigarette hazes that curl above childish bastions seemingly offered to a slap . . . it disappears behind us, dancing to the rhythm of our swift steps.

Ahead of me, still a few kilometers away, the Madhouse suddenly came into focus, high on the ridge of an elegant hill that seemed as frisky as a colt.

“Brothers,” I said, “let’s rest for the last time before we move out to construct the great Futurist Railroad.”

We lay down, all of us enwrapped in the immense madness of the Milky Way, in the shadow of the Palace of the living, and suddenly the clamor of the great square hammers of space and time went still . . . But Paolo Buzzi was unable to sleep, because his body kept giving a start, pricked by the poisonous stars that assailed us on every side.

“Brother!” he murmured, “drive away these bees that are buzzing around the purple rose of my will!”

Then he sank back to sleep in the visionary shadow of the Palace crowned with fantasy, from which wafted the soothing and ample melopoeia³ of eternal joy.

Enrico Cavacchioli was dozing and dreaming aloud:

“I feel my twenty-year-old body growing younger! . . . I’m returning, with ever more infantile footsteps, to the cradle . . . Soon I’ll reenter my mother’s womb! . . . Everything, then, is permitted! I want expensive playthings to smash . . . Cities that I can flatten, human anthills to kick over! . . . I want to tame the Winds and put them on a leash . . . I want a pack of winds, fluid grayhounds to hunt the flaccid, bearded cirrus clouds.”

The breathing of my sleeping brothers imitated the sleep of a powerful sea upon a beach. But the inexhaustible enthusiasm of dawn was already pouring down the mountain flanks, so copiously had the night spilled its heroic essences and perfumes everywhere. Paolo Buzzi, brusquely hoisted up on a tide of delirium, twisted as if in the uneasy grip of a nightmare.

“Do you hear the sobs of Earth? . . . The Earth is suffering in the horror of light! . . . Too many suns have bent over her bedside! We have to let her sleep! . . . Longer! Forever! . . . Give me some clouds, some cloud-masses, to cover her eyes and her weeping mouth!”

At these words, from the farthest horizon, the sun offered us its red and trembling steering wheel made of fire.

“Get up, Paolo!” I cried. “Grasp the wheel! . . . I proclaim you the driver of the world! . . . But alas, we won’t be equal to the great task of the Futurist Railroad! Our hearts are still full of filthy rubbish: peacocks’ tails, pompous weathercocks, fancy perfumed handkerchiefs! And we still haven’t emptied our brains of the lugubrious ants of wisdom . . . We need madmen! Let’s go and free them!”

We approached the walls flooded with solar joy, flanking a sinister valley where, with a cry, thirty metal cranes hoisted railroad cars full of smoking sheets, the useless linen of those Pure Ones already cleansed of every stain of logic.

Two psychiatrists appeared, categorically, on the threshold of the Palace. I held

nothing in my hand except a blinding automobile headlight, and it was with its polished brass handle that I dealt them both their death.

From the wide-opened doors, madmen and women poured out by the thousands, shirtless or half-naked, a torrent, enough to rejuvenate and give new color to the Earth's wrinkled face.

Some of them immediately wanted to brandish the shining bell towers like ivory batons; others began to sit in a circle and toss around the cupolas like balls . . . The women were combing their remote cloud-tresses with the sharp points of a constellation.

"O madmen, O our deeply beloved brothers, follow me! . . . We'll build the Railroad over the summits of all the mountains, all the way to the sea! How many are you? . . . Three thousand? . . . Not enough! For boredom and monotony will cut short your initial impetus . . . Let's go ask for advice from the beasts of the menageries clustered around the Capital gates. Of all beings they're the most alive, the most uprooted, the least vegetal! Charge! . . . To the city of Gout! To Gout!"

So we set off, a mighty discharge from an enormous sluice gate.

The army of madness advanced from plain to plain, descended the valleys, and swiftly climbed the peaks with the fatal yet easy rush of a liquid between two communicating vessels, finally machine-gunning the walls of the city with screams, foreheads, and fists, until they rang like a bell.

The gesticulating tide made the guardians drunk or else killed or trampled them; then it flooded the immense, muddy corridor of the seraglio whose cages, full of dancing tresses, swayed in the vapor of savage urines or were swung about in the hands of the madmen as lightly as canary cages.

The reign of the lions rejuvenated the Capital. Their manes' rebellion and the swelling arches of their backs sculpted out the facades. Their torrential force dug up the pavement and transformed the streets into so many tunnels with open vaults. All the phthisic vegetation of Gout's inhabitants was baked to a crisp in their houses, which, full of howling branches, trembled beneath the hailstorm of dismay that riddled their roofs.

With sudden leaps and the mien of clowns the madmen mounted the beautiful, indifferent lions, who hardly perceived them, and those bizarre horsemen exalted in the quiet swishing of the tails that continually threw them to the ground . . . Suddenly the animals pulled up short, the madmen fell silent before the walls that no longer moved . . .

"The old ones are dead! . . . The young have fled! . . . All the better! . . . Quick! Strip off the lightning rods and statues! Plunder the strongboxes brimming with gold! Ingots and coins! All the precious metals will be melted down for the great military Railroad! . . ."

We ran outside, with the gesticulating madmen and the disheveled madwomen,

with the lions, tigers, and panthers being ridden by naked horsemen who were rigid, contorted, or exhilarated by their inebriation.

The city of Gout was now nothing more than an immense vat full of red wine whirling and foaming, seeping out furiously from the gates whose drawbridges had become shuddering, roaring funnels . . .

We crossed the ruins of Europe and entered Asia, scattering the terrified hordes from Gout and Paralysis like a sower tossing his seeds with a huge sweeping gesture.

3.

At darkest night we were nearing the heavens, standing on the Persian plateau, sublime altar of the world, whose boundless steps bear populous cities. Endlessly aligned alongside the Railroad, we were panting over crucibles of barite, aluminum, and manganese, and from time to time they frightened the clouds with their dazzling explosions; while the majestic patrol of lions, prowling in circles, their tails erect, their manes flying with the wind, were carefully surveying us, piercing the black and deep skies with their reverberating white roars.

But little by little the faint and warm smile of the moon peeked over the tattered clouds. And when she finally appeared, dripping with the intoxicating milk of acacias, the madmen felt their hearts jump right out of their chests and ascend toward the upper surface of liquid night.

Suddenly, a loud cry pierced the air; a noise rang out, and everyone ran in its direction . . . It was a young madman with pure eyes, struck by lightning on the railroad tracks.

His corpse was immediately hoisted up. Between his hands he was holding a white and desirous flower, whose pistil quivered like the tongue of a woman. Some wanted to touch it, and it was evil, for then, with the motion of dawn stealing over the sea, a sobbing verdure rapidly rose from the earth which was curling now with surprising undulations.

From the fluctuating blue meadows, slowly emerging was the vaporous hair of countless women who were swimming, sighing, and opening the petals of their mouths and their moist eyes. Then, in the intoxicating flood of perfumes, we saw a fabulous forest growing and spreading around us, its foliage arching downward, as if fatigued by a lazy breeze. A bitter tenderness wavered there . . . nightingales were drinking the odorous shadows with deep gurgles of pleasure, and from time to time they broke out laughing in their nooks, playing hide and seek like lively, mischievous children. A soft sleep was slowly overcoming the army of the mad, who began to howl with terror.

The wild beasts impetuously hastened to help them. Three times the tigers,

curled as tight as balls, their claws poised with explosive rage, sprang on the invisible phantoms which bubbled up in the depths of that forest of delights . . . Finally a breach was forced: an enormous convulsion of stricken foliage whose drawn-out moans wakened the distant loquacious echoes hidden in the mountains. But as we insistently tore at the clinging affectionate lianas to free our arms and legs, all at once we felt the carnal Moon, the moon of warm beautiful thighs, languidly surrendering herself to our weary hearts.

A cry went up in the airy solitude of the upper plateau: "Let's murder the moonlight!"

Some of us ran to nearby waterfalls; gigantic wheels were hoisted, and turbines transformed the velocity of the waters into electromagnetic spasms that climbed up wires suspended on high poles, until they reached luminous, humming globes.

So it was that three hundred electric moons, with rays of blinding chalky whiteness, canceled the old green queen of love affairs. And the military Railroad was built. Extravagant railroad that followed the chain of higher mountains over which our vehement locomotives, plumed with sharp screams, hurtled from one summit to another, plunging into precipitous depths and climbing everywhere in search of famished abysses, absurd turns, and impossible zig-zags . . . All round, in the distance, unlimited hatred marked our jagged horizon of refugees. They were the hordes of Gout and Paralysis, whom we tossed head-over-heels into Hindustan.

4.

Hot pursuit . . . the Ganges has been crossed! Finally the impetuous heaving of our chests had routed the creeping clouds and their hostile entanglements, and on the horizon we discerned the dark-green throb of the Indian Ocean. Over which the sun was fitting a fantastic golden muzzle . . . Stretched out in the Gulfs of Oman and Bengal, it was perfidiously preparing an invasion of the land.

At the tip of the promontory of Cormorin,⁴ edged with slime containing whitish bones, behold the Ass, colossal and emaciated, whose graying parchment rump has been bowed down by the delicious weight of the Moon . . . Behold the learned Ass, its prolix member patched up with writings, that from time immemorial brays its asthmatic rancor against the mists of the horizon, where three great motionless vessels were advancing, their masts like the vertebral columns seen in X rays.

Suddenly, there appeared the immense herd of wild beasts ridden by the madmen, straining their countless snouts over the waves, beneath the vortex of manes that were calling out to the Ocean to join in a reconquest. And the Ocean answered their appeal, arching its enormous back and shaking the promontories before it would spring up. It tested its strength for a long time, moving its haunches and flexing its sonorous belly between its vast, elastic foundations. Then, with a great

heave of its loins, the Ocean lifted its own mass and surmounted the angular lines of its shores . . . Then the fearful invasion began.⁵

We were marching within the grand circle of the pawing waves, huge drops of white foam whirling and collapsing, showering the back of the lions. . . . They, arrayed in a semicircle around us, were all adding their fangs to those of the Ocean, to its hissing spray and roars. Sometimes, from the heights of the hills, we would watch the monstrous edges of the Ocean gradually swelling, like an immense whale that was driving ahead on a million fins. And it was we who led it all the way to the Himalayan chain, spreading out the swarming, fleeing hordes like a fan that we wanted to smash against the sides of Gorisankar.

“Hurry, my brothers! . . . Do you want the beasts to overtake us? We have to stay in the front ranks, despite our slow steps that keep getting bogged down. . . . The devil take these sticky hands and feet that seem to be dragging roots! . . . Oh! We’re just wandering trees! What we need is wings! . . . Yes, let’s make airplanes!”

“Let’s make them blue!” the madmen cried out, “blue, the better to conceal us from the enemy’s observation and merge with the blue of the sky, the wind-driven sky that flaps up on the mountain peaks like an immense banner.”

And so, to the glory of the Buddha, the madmen grabbed deep-blue mantles from the pagodas to construct their flying machines.

We cut out our Futurist airplanes from the ocher-colored cloth of sailboats. Some had wings that were balanced and carried their motors, and they were rising like a blood-spattered vulture that lifts a thrashing heifer into the sky.

Look: my own multicellular biplane with a tail that guides it: 100 HP, 8 cylinders, 80 kilograms . . . And between my feet I have a tiny machine gun that I can discharge by pressing a steel button . . .

And so we take off, in the inebriation of an agile spin-move, our flight proceeding with a lively chugging, yet as light and rhythmic as a song inviting us to dance and drink.

“Hurrah! At least we’re really worthy of commanding the great army of madmen and unchained beasts! . . . Hurrah! We can dominate our rearguard, the Ocean with its tangle of foaming cavalry! . . . Charge, you madmen and madwomen; charge, you lions, tigers, and panthers! Charge, you squadrons of waves! . . . Our airplanes will be on your side, sometimes as banners of war, sometimes as passionate lovers! Delicious lovers who swim with open arms above the waving foliage, or who softly linger in the oscillations of the breeze! . . . But look up there, to the right, those blue shuttles . . . it’s the madmen, swaying their airplanes in the hammock of the south wind! . . . Meanwhile I’m sitting like a weaver before his loom, weaving the silky blue of the sky! . . . Oh! How many fresh valleys and surly mountains beneath us! . . . How many herds of rosy sheep scattered on the flanks of the green hills

that are offering themselves to the sunset! . . . Oh, my soul, how you used to love them! . . . No! No! That's the end of it! You'll never enjoy such insipid things again, never! . . . The reeds that we once shaped to shepherd's pipes have now gone to form the framework of the plane! . . . Nostalgia! Triumphant inebriation! . . . Pretty soon we'll overtake the inhabitants of Gout and Paralysis, despite the headwinds gusting straight at us . . . what does the anemometer say? . . . The headwind is blowing at a hundred kilometers per hour! . . . So what? I'll go up to two hundred meters and fly right over it. . . . Look! Look at the hordes! . . . There, they're in front of us, and now they're already under our feet . . . Look down there, right below us, between the bunches of greenery, the violent madness of that human flood intent on fleeing! . . . That smashing sound? . . . It's the crashing of trees! Ah! Ah! The enemy hordes are already being crushed against the walls of Gorisankar! . . . And now we're battling them! . . . Do you hear? Do you hear our motors applauding? . . . Oh, great Indian Ocean, now is the time for you to reconquer the land!

The Ocean was solemnly following us, levelling the walls of the venerated cities and casting down the illustrious towers, old horsemen of sonorous armor who've already fallen from the marble arches of the temples.

At last! At last! Now we have you in front of us, the teeming populace of Gout and Paralysis, a disgusting leprosy that's devouring the mountainsides . . . We're flying swiftly against you, flanked by the galloping lions, our brothers, while at our backs we have the menacing friendship of the Ocean, following close on our heels to ensure that we don't hold back! . . . It's just a precaution, for in fact we're not afraid of you! . . . But you're numberless! . . . And we might run out of ammunition, or grow old during the course of the slaughter! . . . Let me direct our fire! . . . I'm raising my sights to eight hundred meters! Ready! Aim! . . . Fire! . . . Oh! The intoxication of playing marbles with Death! . . . And you can't take it away from us! . . . Are you still lagging behind? This plateau will soon be behind us! . . . My airplane is running on its wheels, skating along, and now it's rising again in flight!! . . . I'm flying against the headwind! . . . Bravo for the madmen! . . . Continue the massacre! . . . Look! I've cut off the motor and I'm gliding down quietly, with magnificent stability, to land where the fight is raging hottest!

Here is the furious copulation of battle, the gigantic vulva stirred by the friction of courage, monstrous vulva that spreads open the better to offer itself to the terrific spasm of our coming victory! It's ours, the victory is ours . . . I'm certain of it because the madmen are already tossing their hearts into the air, like bombs! . . . I'm raising my sights to a hundred meters! Ready! Aim! . . . Fire! . . . Our blood? . . . Yes! All of it, in big clots, to recolor the sickened dawns of the Earth! . . . Yes, we know how to warm you between our smoking-hot arms, oh impoverished sun, decrepit and chilled, shivering on the summit of Gorisankar! . . .”

MANIFESTO OF THE FUTURIST PAINTERS

UMBERTO BOCCIONI, CARLO CARRÀ, LUIGI RUSSOLO,
GIACOMO BALLA, AND GINO SEVERINI

11 February 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, religion 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 trembling 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 sixteenth century on,¹ 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.² In this land of illiterates, schools are being continually constructed: in this land of "dolce far niente,"³ innumerable factories are roaring; in this land of traditional aesthetics, today we see flights and lightning 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 them, so we must draw inspiration from the tangible miracles of contemporary life, from the iron network of speed which winds around the earth, from the transatlantic liners, the dreadnoughts,⁴ 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 that, even when dis-

guised with a false costume of modernity, remain trapped in tradition, academism, 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 reflowering of dotting classicism; who in Florence praise the neurotic cultivators of a hermaphroditic archaism; who in Milan remunerate blind and pedestrian handicrafts going back to 1848;⁵ 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 against⁶ the superficiality, banality, and handyman's facility which 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 can you find the works of Giovanni Segantini today? Why do the arts commissions ignore the work of Gaetano Previati? Where does anyone appreciate the sculpture of Medardo Rosso?⁷ . . . 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*? Let's do it! Throw out the Portraitists, the Genre Painters, the Lake Painters, the Mountain Painters. We have put up with enough from them, all these impotent painters of country vacations.

Down with the defacers of marble whose works clog up the piazzas and profane our graveyards. Down with speculative architecture of contractors 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 and Goya.

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!

FUTURIST PAINTING: TECHNICAL MANIFESTO

UMBERTO BOCCIONI, CARLO CARRÀ, LUIGI RUSSOLO,
GIACOMO BALLA, AND GINO SEVERINI

11 April 1910

In the first manifesto that we launched on the 8th of March, 1910, from the stage of the Chiarella Theater in Turin,¹ we expressed our deep-rooted disgust with, our proud contempt for, and our happy rebellion against vulgarity, mediocrity, the fanatical and snobbish worship of all that is old, attitudes which are suffocating Art in our Country.

On that occasion we were concerned with the relations between ourselves and society. Today, instead, with this second manifesto, we are resolutely abandoning contingent considerations and rising instead to higher expressions of the pictorial absolute.

Our growing desire for truth can no longer be satisfied with traditional Form and Color.

The gesture that we want to reproduce will no longer be a *moment* in the universal dynamism *which has been stopped*, but the *dynamic sensation* itself, perpetuated as such.

Indeed, all things move, all things run, all things are rapidly changing. A profile is never motionless before our eyes, but constantly appears and disappears. On account of the persistency of an image upon the retina, moving objects constantly multiply themselves, change shape, succeeding one another, like rapid vibrations, in the space which they traverse. Thus a running horse has not four legs, but twenty, and their movements are triangular.²

All is conventional in art, and what was the truth for the painters of yesterday is only a falsehood for us today.

We declare, for instance, that a portrait, in order to be a work of art, must not resemble the sitter, and that the painter carries in himself the landscapes which he would fix upon his canvas. To paint a human figure you must not paint it; you must render its surrounding atmosphere.

Space no longer exists: a street pavement that has been soaked by rain beneath the glare of electric lamps can be an abyss gaping into the very center of the earth. The sun is thousands of miles away from us; yet the house in front of us can seem to fit into the solar disk.

Who can still believe in the opacity of bodies, since our sharpened and multiplied sensibilities have already grasped the obscure manifestations of mediums?³ Why should we continue to create works that don't take into account our growing visual powers which can yield results analogous to those of X rays?⁴

Countless examples positively sanction our claims.

The sixteen people around you in a moving tram are in turn and at the same time one, ten, four, three; they are motionless and they change places; they are coming and going, they leap into the street, are suddenly swallowed up by a flood of sunlight, then come back and sit before you, persistent symbols of universal vibration. Or sometimes we look at the cheek of the person with whom we were talking in the street and can see the horse which is passing at the far corner. Again: Our bodies penetrate the sofas upon which we sit, and the sofas penetrate our bodies, just as the tram rushes into the houses which it passes, and in their turn the houses throw themselves upon the tram and are merged with it.

The construction of pictures has hitherto been stupidly traditional. Painters have shown us the objects and the people placed before us. We shall put the spectator in the center of the picture.

Just as clear-sighted individual research has cast its light on the unchanging obscurities of dogma in every field of human thought, so in painting the vivifying current of individual freedom has to replace the academic tradition.

We desperately want to reenter into life. Nowadays science has disowned its past in order the better to serve the material needs of our time; art, likewise disowning its past, must at last serve the intellectual needs of our time.

Our renewed consciousness does not permit us to look upon man as the center of universal life. The suffering of a man is of the same interest to us as the suffering of an electric lamp, which can feel pain, suffer tremors, and shriek with the most heartrending expressions of torment. The music discernible in the lines and folds of modern clothing works upon our sensibilities with the same emotional and symbolic power as the nude once possessed for the old masters.

In order to conceive and understand the new beauties of a modern picture, the soul must become pure; the eye must be freed from its veil of atavism and culture, so that it verifies its observations by recourse only to Nature, not to the Museum!

Then, when that has been done, it will be admitted that brown tints have never coursed beneath our skin; it will be discovered our flesh is shining with yellow, that its red blazes, and that green, blue, and violet dance upon it with untold charms, voluptuous and caressing.

How is it possible still to see the human face as pink, now that our life, redoubled by noctambulism, has multiplied our perceptions as colorists? The human face is yellow, red, green, blue, violet. The pallor of a woman gazing in a jeweler's window is more iridescent than the glistening prisms of the jewels that fascinate her.

The time has passed for our sensations in painting to be whispered. We will make them sing and shout on our canvases, which will sound forth deafening and triumphant flourishes.

Your eyes, accustomed to semidarkness, will soon open to more radiant visions of light. The shadows that we shall paint will be more luminous than the highlights of our predecessors, and our pictures, next to those of the museums, will shine like blinding daylight compared with deepest night.

This naturally leads us to conclude that painting cannot exist today without *divisionism*. This is not a technical *device* that can be methodically learned and applied at will. Divisionism, for the modern painter, must be an *innate complementariness*, which we deem essential and necessary.

In conclusion, we reject the charge that our art is too baroque. The ideas that we have explicated here derive wholly from our sharpened sensibility. While *baroque* suggests artifice, overheated and yet feeble displays of virtuosity, Art as we foresee it is wholly derived from spontaneity and power.

WE DECLARE:

1. That innate complementariness is an absolute necessity in painting, just as free meter in poetry or polyphony in music.
2. That universal dynamism must be rendered in painting as a dynamic sensation.
3. That in the manner of rendering Nature the first essential is sincerity and purity.
4. That movement and light destroy the materiality of bodies.

WE FIGHT:

1. Against the false patinas and varnishing by which it is attempted to give modern paintings the aura of older pictures.

2. Against the superficial and elementary archaism founded upon flat tints, which reduces a painting to a powerless synthesis, both childish and grotesque.
3. Against the false claims to belong to the future put forward by the secessionists and the independents, the new academics now to be found in every country.
4. Against the nude in painting, as nauseous and as tedious as adultery in literature.

You think that we are mad. Instead, we are the Primitives of a new sensibility that has been utterly transformed.

Beyond and outside the atmosphere in which we alone live, there is nothing but shadows. We Futurists are ascending to the highest and most radiant summits, and we proclaim ourselves the Lords of Light, for already we are drinking from the quickening sources of the Sun.

AGAINST PASSÉIST VENICE

F. T. MARINETTI, UMBERTO BOCCIONI,
CARLO CARRÀ, AND LUIGI RUSSOLO

27 April 1910

We repudiate the old Venice, enfeebled and undone by centuries of worldly pleasure, though we too once loved and possessed it in a great nostalgic dream.

We repudiate the Venice of foreigners, a market for counterfeiting antiquarians, a magnet of snobbery and universal imbecility, a bed whose bottom has been staved in by caravans of lovers, the bejeweled hip-bath of cosmopolitan courtesans, the *cloaca maxima* of passéism.

We want to cure and heal this putrefying city, this magnificent sore from the past. We want to reanimate and ennoble the Venetian people, fallen from their ancient grandeur, drugged by the morphine of nauseating cowardice and debased by the habit of shady business.

We want to prepare the birth of an industrial and military Venice that can dominate the Adriatic Sea, that great Italian lake.

Let us hasten to fill in its little reeking canals with the ruins from its leprous and crumbling palaces.

Let us burn the gondolas, rocking chairs for cretins, and raise to the heavens the imposing geometry of metal bridges and factories plumed with smoke, to abolish the cascading curves of the old architecture.

Let the reign of divine Electric Light finally come to liberate Venice from its venal moonlight for furnished rooms to let.

[On 8 July 1910, some 800,000 leaflets containing the above manifesto were launched by the Futurist poets and painters from the top of the Clock Tower onto the crowds that were returning from the Lido. So began the campaign that the Futurists have sustained for three years¹ against passéist Venice.

The following “Speech Against the Venetians” was improvised by Marinetti the poet at the Fenice Theater and provoked a terrible battle. The Futurists were hissed, the passéists were beaten up.

The Futurist painters Boccioni, Russolo, and Carrà punctuated the speech with resounding slaps. The fists of Armando Mazza, a Futurist poet who is also an athlete, left an unforgettable impression.]

MARINETTI’S FUTURIST SPEECH TO THE VENETIANS

Venetians!

When we cried, “Let’s murder the moonlight!”² we were thinking of you, old Venice grimy with romanticism!

But now our voice has grown louder, and we add with a roar: “Let’s free the world from the tyranny of love! We are sick of erotic adventures, lechery, sentimentalism and nostalgia!”

Why persist, Venice, in offering us veiled women at every twilight turn of your canals?

Enough! Enough! Stop whispering your obscene invitations to all the passersby of the earth, O Venice, you procuress, you who under your heavy mantilla of mosaics persist in preparing enfeebling romantic nights, querulous serenades, and frightful ambushes.

O Venice, I too once loved the sumptuous half-shadows of the Grand Canal steeped in exotic voluptuousness, the feverish pallor of your beautiful women who glide down from their balconies on stairways illuminated by lamplight, amid a slanting rain and rays of moonlight, to the tinkling of crossed swords . . .

But enough! All this absurd, abominable, and irritating stuff makes us sick. And now instead we want electric lamps with a thousand rays of light that can brutally stab and strangle the mysterious shadows—pestiferous, alluring shadows.

Your Grand Canal, dredged and widened, will inevitably become a great mercantile port. Trains and trams, launched on the broad roads that will be constructed over the former canals— at last they will be filled in— will bring you heaps of goods, and the streets will teem with crowds of shrewd, wealthy, busy businessmen and industrialists! . . .

Don’t howl against the so-called ugliness of the locomotives trams automobiles

and bicycles in which we discern the first outlines of the great Futurist aesthetic. Who knows? They may even serve a useful purpose—smashing some horrid and grotesque Nordic professor in a Tyrolean hat.³

But you want to prostrate yourselves before every foreigner, and your servility is repugnant!

Venetians! Venetians! Why do you continue to wish to be loyal slaves of the past? Seedy custodians of the greatest brothel in history? Nurses in the saddest hospital in the world, where mortally corrupted souls languish with the pestilence of sentimentalism?

Oh! There is no lack of images to describe your vainglorious and silly laziness: the son of a famous man, the husband of a celebrity diva—they behave like you. Your gondoliers might be compared to gravediggers, in a flooded cemetery, digging ditches in rhythm.

Yet nothing can offend you, because your abjection is boundless!

One knows, moreover, that you pursue the sage concern of enriching the Consortium of Grand Hotels, and that is why you stubbornly persist in putrefying immobility.

And yet once, a long time ago, you were invincible warriors and artists of genius, audacious navigators, efficient industrialists, and tireless merchants . . . And now you have become hotel waiters, tour guides, pimps, antiquaries, forgers, fakers of old pictures, plagiarists, and copyists. Have you forgotten that first of all you are Italians, and that in the language of history this word means: *builders of the future?*

Oh! Don't defend yourselves by citing the debilitating effects of the sirocco! For it was exactly this torrid and warlike wind that swelled the sails of the heroes who fought at Lepanto!⁴ And one day, some hellish noon, it will be the same African wind that suddenly hastens the mute labors of the eroding waters that are slowly undermining your venerable city.

Oh, how we shall dance for joy that day! Oh, how we shall applaud the lagoons, urge them on to destruction! And what a splendid roundel we shall dance around the famous ruins! We shall all be insanelly gay, we, the last student rebels in this too wise world!

So it was, O Venetians, that we sang, danced, and laughed when we learned about the island of Philae that perished like a little mouse behind the Aswan Dam,⁵ an immense trap with electric folding doors in which the Futurist genius of England imprisons the sacred fleeing waters of the Nile!

Shrug your shoulders and scream at me that I'm a barbarian, incapable of savoring the divine poetry that flows among your enchanting isles!

Go away! You've no reason to be proud of it! . . .

Free Torcello, Burano, and the Island of the Dead⁶ from all the sickly literature

and endless romantic nonsense that have been draped over them by poets poisoned with Venetian fever, and then, laughing with me, you will be able to see those islands as heaps of manure dropped at random by mammoths who were fording the prehistoric lagoons!

But you view them stupidly, content to decay in your filthy waters so as to enrich the Consortium of Grand Hotels, which is carefully preparing elegant evenings for all the beautiful people of the world.

Yes, it's no small thing to stimulate them to love. For even if your guest were an emperor, he too would have to navigate slowly through the filth of this vast sewer full of storied shards; his gondoliers would have to ply their oars through several kilometers of liquefied excrement, sniffing the divine odor of a latrine, passing alongside barges heaped with lovely garbage, escorted by suspicious, floating paper bags, until at last he would reach his goal in true imperial style, pleased with himself and his lordly scepter!

This, this has been your glory in recent days, O Venetians!

You should be ashamed of yourselves! Ashamed of yourselves! You should cast yourselves down, supine, one on top of another like sandbags in order to make an earthwork around the borders of the city, while we prepare a great and strong Venice, a military and commercial center for the Adriatic, that great Italian lake!

**FUTURIST SPEECH TO THE ENGLISH: GIVEN AT
THE LYCEUM CLUB OF LONDON F. T. MARINETTI**

December 1910



.....

And there, with a few picturesque abridgments, you have some of our more interesting ideas and actions.

I don't know whether this lively account has been able to give you a sense of what Futurism really is.

In any case, you have already grasped one part of our philosophical, political, and artistic conception — its method of adopting the cruelest form of sincerity and the boldest kind of violence.

I couldn't imagine a better way of giving you an exact idea of what we are than to tell you what we think of you.

I will express myself with complete candor, carefully refraining from paying you court in the style of cosmopolitan lecturers who crush their audiences with praise before cramming them full of banalities.

One of our young humorists has said that every good Futurist should be discourteous twenty times a day. So I will be discourteous with you, pluckily confessing to you all the ill that we think of the English, after having spoken much good of them. For as you well know, we love the indomitable and bellicose patriotism that sets you apart; we love the national pride that prompts your great muscularly courageous race; we love the generous and intelligent individualism that enables you to open your arms to individualists of every land, whether libertarians or anarchists.

But your broad love of liberty is not all that we admire. What most sets you apart is that, amid so much pacifist nonsense and evangelical cowardice, you cherish an unbridled passion for struggle in all its forms, from boxing—simple, brutal, and rapid—to the monstrous roaring necks of the cannon on the decks of your dreadnoughts,¹ crouched in their swiveling caves of steel, turning to scent the appetizing enemy squadrons in the distance.

You know perfectly well that there is nothing worse for a man's blood than forgiving offenses; you know that prolonged peace, which has been fatal to the Latin races, is no less poisonous for the Anglo-Saxon races. . . . But I promised you discourtesies, and here they are:

To a certain degree you are the victims of your traditionalism and its medieval trappings, in which there persists a whiff of archives and a rattling of chains that hinder your precise and carefree forward march.

You will admit the oddness of this in a people of explorers and colonizers whose enormous ocean liners have obviously shrunken the world.

Most of all I reproach you for your maddening cult of aristocracy. No one admits to being a *bourgeois* in England: everyone despises his neighbor and calls *him* a bourgeois. You have an obsessive mania for being always *chic*. For the love of being *chic* you renounce passionate action, violence of heart, exclamations, shouts, and even tears. The English want to be cold at any cost, everywhere, by the bedside of an adored person, in the face of death or at the prospect of happiness. For the love of *chic* you never discuss what you are doing, for one must always be light and airy in conversation. When the women leave after dinner, you chat a bit about politics, but not too much: it wouldn't be *chic*! . . .

Your writers have to be men of the world, for you can hardly imagine a novel whose action is not set in high society. Try as you might to be modern, you still preserve an essentially medieval distinction between master and servant, grounded in an absurd adoration of wealth. It's one of your proverbs that a rich man never

hangs in England. To that kind of thinking you add a no less absurd contempt for the poor. His intellectual efforts, even his genius, strike you as useless; and yet you have a great love for intelligence and culture, and no other people devours books the way that you do.

Still, it remains only a way of passing one's leisure hours.

You lack consuming intellectual passions, a sharp and adventurous taste for ideas, an impulse toward the unknowns of the imagination, a passion for the future, a thirst for revolution. You are horribly custom-bound. Isn't it true that you firmly believe that the Puritans saved England, and that chastity is a nation's most important virtue?

Do you remember the dismal, ridiculous condemnation of Oscar Wilde, which Europe has never forgiven you for? Didn't all your newspapers cry out then that it was time to throw open every window, because the plague was over? . . .

Naturally, in such an atmosphere of habitual and hypocritical formality, your young women are skilled in the use of their naïve elegance to carry on the most audaciously lascivious games, to prepare themselves well for marriage: the intangible domain of the conjugal police.

As for your twenty-year-old young men, almost all of them are homosexuals for a time, which, after all, is absolutely respectable. This taste of theirs evolves through a kind of intensification of the *camaraderie* and friendship found in athletic sports in the years before they turn thirty, the time for work and good order, when they show their heels to Sodom in order to marry a young woman whose gown is shamelessly décolleté. Then they hasten to condemn the born invert severely, the counterfeit man, the half-woman who fails to conform.

Isn't it excessively formalistic of you to declare, as you do, that in order to know someone you must break bread with him, that is, have studied the way he eats? But how could you judge us, the Italians, from our way of eating when we always eat sloppily, our epigastric regions strangled by love or ambition?

To that one must add your obsessive desire to keep up appearances in all things, and a fussy mania for etiquette, masks, and folding screens of every sort, invented by prudishness and a conventional morality.

Yet I won't insist, but hasten on to speak about your greatest defect: a defect that you yourselves have bequeathed to Europe and one that, in my opinion, is an obstacle to your marvelous practical instinct and your science of the rapid life.

I allude to your snobbery, whether it consists of a mad, exclusive cult of racial purity, seen in your aristocracy, or whether it creates a kind of religion out of fashion and transforms your illustrious tailors into so many high priests of lost religions.

I'm also referring to your dogmatic and imperious norms for good living and the Sacred Tables of *comme il faut*, in the light of which you neglect and abolish, with

an astonishing light-heartedness, the fundamental worth of the individual, just as soon as he falls short of the supreme laws of snobbery.

All of this renders your existence singularly artificial, and makes you the most contradictory people on the planet; hence, all your intellectual maturity cannot save you from sometimes seeming a people in the process of formation.

You invented the love of hygiene, the adoration of muscles, a harsh taste for effort, all of which triumph in your beautiful sporting life.

But, unfortunately, you push your exaggerated cult of the body to the point of scorning ideas, and you care seriously only for physical pleasures. Platonic love is virtually absent among you—which is a good thing—but your love of succulent meals is excessive. And it's in the brutalizing religion of the table that you appease all your anxieties and all your worries! . . .

From your sensuality you extract a formidable serenity in the face of moral suffering. Very well! . . . Then you should stop giving so much importance to physical suffering!

You think yourselves very religious. It's pure illusion. You pay no attention to your inner lives, and your race lacks true mystical feeling! I congratulate you on this! But unfortunately you prefer to take refuge in Protestantism, a *bonne-à-tout-faire* of your intelligence, which saves you the trouble of thinking freely, without fear and without hope, like a black banner among the shadows.

It's through intellectual laziness that you fall so often to your knees, and for the love of good, conventional, and puerile formalities.

No one loves the fleshly pleasures more than you, and yet you are the Europeans who pride themselves on their chastity! . . .

You love and generously welcome every revolutionary, but that doesn't hinder you from solemnly defending the principles of order! You adore the fine swift machines that skim the earth, sea, and clouds, yet you carefully preserve every last debris from the past!

Is this, after all, a defect? You shouldn't treat all my remarks as reproofs. . . . To contradict oneself is to live and you know how to contradict yourselves bravely.

But, besides, I know that you nurse a deep hatred for German clumsiness, and this is enough to absolve you completely.

.....

[Editor's note: text from here on is present only from the 1915 edition onward.]

I have told you, in a synoptic way, what we think of England and the English.

Must I now hear the courteous reply that I already suspect is on your lips?

You surely want to stop my discourtesies by telling me how highly you think of Italy and the Italians. . . . Well: no, I don't want to listen.

The compliments you are about to pay could only sadden me, because what you love in our dear peninsula is exactly the object of our hatreds. Indeed, you criss-

cross Italy only to meticulously sniff out the traces of our oppressive past, and you are happy, insanelly happy, if you have the good fortune to carry home some miserable stone that has been trodden by our ancestors.

When, when will you disembarass yourselves of the lymphatic ideology of that deplorable Ruskin, which I would like to cover with so much ridicule that you would never forget it?

With his morbid dream of primitive and rustic life, with his nostalgia for Homeric cheeses and legendary wool-spinners, with his hatred for the machine, steam power, and electricity, that maniac of antique simplicity is like a man who, after having reached full physical maturity, still wants to sleep in his cradle and feed himself at the breast of his decrepit old nurse in order to recover his thoughtless infancy.

Ruskin would certainly have applauded those passéist Venetians who wanted to rebuild the absurd belltower of San Marco,² as if a baby girl who had lost her grandmother were to be offered a little cloth and cardboard doll as a substitute.

FUTURISM AND WOMAN

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON

The Vote, 31 December 1910

Whether she be the subject of praise or censure, woman is now, as always, man's most interesting topic. Last year Dr. Emil Reich discoursed on her "sphere," with Plato for his authority.¹ And now it is Signor Marinetti, the Futurist leader in Italy, who is inspired by the same theme. Neither lecturer considered it necessary to choose the language of euphemism in which to clothe his utterances upon the sex to an audience of women. To Signor Marinetti, however, must be awarded the palm for superlatively vigorous language in his address the other day at the Lyceum Club. And woman, like *Mona Lisa* of old, smiled and smiled the while she listened to the "same old story."

Futurism, declared its brilliant exponent, is making rapid headway in Italy, and spreading also to some extent in America and England. The members of the society are young men in revolt at the worship of the past. They are determined to destroy it, and erect upon its ashes the Temple of the Future. If, indeed, anything so antediluvian as a temple is to survive in the good time coming predicted by the Futurists! War seems to be the chief tenet in the gospel of Futurism; war upon the classical in art, literature, music; war upon archaeology—upon all the "ologies" and antiquarianism of every kind. The god of this new religion is Industrial Greatness, and the second-in-command, Brute Force.

“Brute” is the right word. Signor Marinetti would be the first to admit it. In his raillery at women—the war against those whose “pernicious influence” is by no means the least unimportant part of the Futurist programme—in his denunciation of her “snake-like coils” which have ever “choked the noblest ideals of manhood,” Signor Marinetti still found time to extol the Suffragette!² (Had he an idea that among his Lyceum audience were more than one or two women who would answer proudly to that title?) But although it was not the Suffragette’s desire for liberty that aroused the Signor’s admiration, but merely her method of enforcing her demands; yet the Suffragettes and Signor Marinetti are at one in deploring the existence of the serpent-of-old-Nile type of woman. But while the Futurists hold women responsible for what they consider a degenerate type of man, the Suffragette maintains that the erotic woman is a product of man’s absolutism—a product that is declining rapidly along with man’s unlimited control of the things that matter.

The Futurist, like the man of the past (and present?), is still, to a practical woman, the illogical animal. Signor Marinetti declares that above and beyond everything else Futurism looks forward to a machine-governed and womanless world—a world in which even the human race may be generated by mechanism, and where everybody will be of masculine gender. But this, say the learned biologists, will be only a reversion to the very ancient past, of which Futurism is the sworn foe. And if there is to be but one sex to carry on the human race, that sex, by virtue of its office, must be the female!

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST MUSICIANS

FRANCESCO BALILLA PRATELLA

11 January 1911

I address myself to the *young*. They alone will have to listen to me, they alone will be able to understand me. Some people are born already old, drooling specters from the past, cryptograms tumid with poisons: to them, no words or ideas except a single injunction: *the end*.

I address myself to the young, who are necessarily athirst for things that are new, alive, and contemporary. Let them follow me on the paths of the future, trusting and ardent, where already my daring companions—*our* companions, the Futurist poets and painters—are preceding us, beautiful in their violence, audacious in their revolution, luminous with inspiring genius.

A year ago my Futurist musical work was proclaimed the winner, among a field of contestants, of a prize of 1000 lire that would go toward the costs of executing a

work deemed superior and worthy of performance, according to the bequest left by Cincinato Baruzzi,¹ from Bologna. The commission of judges comprised masters such as Pietro Mascagni,² Giacomo Orefice, Guglielmo Mattioli, Rodolfo Ferrari, and the critic Gian Battista Nappi.³ The work was entitled “La Sina d’Vargöun” and based on a poem in free verse which I had written.⁴

The performance, executed in December 1909 at the Municipal Theater in Bologna, earned me a success of enormous enthusiasm, some abject and stupid criticisms, generous defenses by friends and others personally unknown to me, honor, and an abundance of enemies.

This triumphal entrance into the world of Italian music, which placed me in contact with its public, publishers, and critics, has enabled me to assess with complete serenity the intellectual mediocrity, the mercantile meanness, and the misoneism⁵ that have reduced Italian music to a single and almost invariable form of vulgar melodrama, resulting in our absolute inferiority in the face of the futurist evolution of music in other countries.⁶

In Germany, in point of fact, after the glorious and revolutionary age that was dominated by the sublime genius of Wagner, Richard Strauss has almost elevated baroque instrumentation into a vital form of art. True, his harmonic and acoustic mannerisms, which are deft, complicated, and striking, cannot conceal the aridity, commercialism, and banality of his spirit; yet his innovative mind was struggling with and attempting to surpass the recent past.

In France, Claude Debussy, a profoundly subjective artist and perhaps more a man of letters than a musician, swims in a diaphanous and tranquil pool of harmonies that are tenuous, delicate, azure, and always transparent. With instrumental symbolism and a monotone polyphony of harmonic sensations heard through a scale of interior tones—a new system, but still a system, and hence a limitation willingly accepted—he doesn’t always manage to conceal the thinness of his one-sided themes and rhythms or the almost total lack of thematic development. For him development consists in the primitive and infantile repetition of a brief, poor theme or a monotonous and vague rhythmic moderation. His opera forms have looked back to the stale concepts of the Camerata Fiorentina,⁷ which in the sixteenth century gave birth to modern opera, and he has not managed to completely reform the contemporary opera of his own country. Still, more than any other, he is boldly struggling against the past and in many respects surpassing it. Intellectually stronger than him, but musically much weaker, is Gustave Charpentier.⁸

In England, Edward Elgar is contributing toward the destruction of the past. He seeks to amplify classical symphonic forms, attempting richer approaches to thematic development and multiform variations on a single subject, and seeking for effects that are calibrated to and consonant with our complex sensibility of today,

achieving that through sheer variety of instrumental combination, rather than the exuberant variety of instruments.

In Russia, Modest Moussorgsky, renewed by his contacts with the spirit of Nicholas Rimsky-Korsakoff, is also abandoning and helping people to forget tradition, doing so by grafting national and primitive elements within formulas inherited from others and by seeking dramatic fidelity and harmonic freedom. This is also the procedure of Alexander Glazunov,⁹ even though he remains primitive and far from a pure and more balanced conception of art.

In Finland and Sweden, once again through the national musical and poetic element, innovative tendencies are being nourished, as confirmed by the works of Sibelius.

And in Italy?

Vegetating musical lyceums, conservatories, and academies are snares for the young and for art. In these pools of impotence, masters and professors, illustrious idiocies, perpetuate traditionalism and struggle against any effort to enlarge the field of music.

From this stem a prudent repression and the constriction of any free or daring tendency; the continuous mortification of breakaway intelligence; unconditional support for the mediocrities who know how to copy and flatter; the prostitution of the great glories from the musical past, turned into insidious offensive weapons against budding talent; the restriction of study to empty acrobatics that are discussed in the perpetual agony of a culture hopelessly backward and already dead.

The young musical talents that stagnate in the conservatories have fixed their eyes on the fascinating mirage of grand opera under the aegis of the big publishers. It leads most of them to a bad end, and worse, by depriving them of technical and intellectual bases; only a handful ever see their works performed, and of those the majority have to pay money in order to acquire paid and ephemeral successes or courteous toleration.

Pure symphony, the last refuge, receives the failed composers of opera, who in self-defense advocate the demise of opera as an absurd and antimusical form. On the other hand, they confirm that traditional charge that Italians are inherently averse to the symphony, proving themselves to be also inept in this noble and vital genre of composition. The cause of their double failure is a single one, which is not to be sought in the innocent and yet never sufficiently calumniated operatic and symphonic forms, but in their own impotence.

In their rising careers, they avail themselves of that solemn swindle which is called *well made music*, a counterfeit of true and great music, a worthless copy sold to a public that allows itself to be cheated by its own will.

Yet the few fortunate ones who, after much self-sacrifice, succeed in obtaining

the patronage of the great publishers, to whom they are bound by a hangman's contract, illusory and humiliating, represent a class of slaves, cowardly, sold out.

The great merchant-publishers command; they assign commercial limits to operatic forms and proclaim that the low, rachitic, and vulgar operas of Giacomo Puccini and Umberto Giordano¹⁰ are models not to be trespassed or superseded.

They pay poets to waste time and intelligence in constructing and preparing a foetid confection which is called an opera libretto, one made according to the recipe of that grotesque pastry-cook named Luigi Illica.¹¹

Publishers reject any opera that by good luck surpasses mediocrity; by means of their monopoly they distribute and exploit their commodities and defend their field of action from any timid attempt at rebellion.

The publishers presume to defend and to reflect the tastes of the public, and with the complicity of the critics, amidst tears and general commotion, they re-invoke, as warning and example, our vaunted monopoly on melody and *bel canto* and the never sufficiently praised Italian opera, the thick and suffocating throat of the nation.

Pietro Mascagni, at one time a pet of the publishers, is alone in having had the spirit and power to rebel against the art's traditions, its publishers, and its deceived and depraved public. By his personal example, the first and only one in Italy, he has revealed the shameful publishing monopolies and the venality of the critics, and has hastened the day of our liberation from the commercial and dilettantish czarism that rules music. With real genius he has brought forward true attempts at innovation in the harmonic and lyrical dimensions of opera, even if he still hasn't freed himself from traditional forms.

The shame and filth that I have denounced in this synthetic overview faithfully represents Italy's past in its relations with the art and habits of today: an industry of the dead, a cult of graveyards, the dessication of vital sources.

Futurism, which is a rebellion of the life of intuition and feeling, a palpitating and impetuous spring-time, inevitably declares war against doctrines, individuals, or works that repeat, prolong, or praise the past at the expense of the future. It proclaims the conquest of an amoral freedom of action, conscience, and conceptualization; it proclaims that Art is *disinterestedness, heroism, disdain for easy successes*.

Under the open sun and free air I unfurl the red flag of Futurism, and beneath its flaming symbol I call upon all those young composers who have the heart to love and to struggle, the mind to conceive new works, and a brow immune to cowardice. And I scream with joy upon finding myself free of every chain of tradition, doubt, opportunism, and vanity.

I, who repudiate the title of *maestro* as a sign of equality in mediocrity and ignorance, confirm my enthusiastic adhesion to Futurism, offering to the young, the passionate, and the bold, these my irrevocable:

CONCLUSIONS

1. Convince young composers to desert musical lyceums, conservatories, and academies, and to consider free study as the only means of regeneration.
2. Fight with assiduous disdain against the critics, fatally venal and ignorant, and liberate the public from the malignant influence of their writings. To this end, found a new independent musical review resolutely opposed to the criteria of conservatory professors and the debased standards of the public.
3. Abstain from participating in any competition with the customary closed envelopes and related admission charges, publicly denouncing the mystifications and revealing the incompetence of juries that are generally composed of cretins and dotards.
4. Keep away from commercial and academic environments, disdaining them, and instead preferring a modest life over the large profits which mean that art has to sell out.
5. Free one's own musical sensibility from all influence or imitation of the past; feel and sing with the spirit facing toward the future, drawing one's inspiration and aesthetics from nature, in all its present human and extra-human phenomena; exalt the man-symbol perennially renewing itself in the various aspects of modern life and in its infinite, intimate relations with nature.
6. Destroy the bias in favor of "well made" music—rhetoric and impotence—and proclaim a unique concept of Futurist music, something absolutely different from what has been done until now. And in that way, in Italy, shape a Futurist musical taste and destroy academical, dogmatic, and soporific values, declaring odious, stupid, and vile a sentence such as "Let's go back to tradition."
7. Proclaim that the reign of the singer must end and that the singer is no more important to the opera than an instrument is to the orchestra.
8. Transform the term "opera libretto" and its meaning, changing both into "dramatic or tragic poem for music," and substituting free verse for traditional meters. Every opera composer, moreover, should necessarily and absolutely be the author of his own poem.
9. Categorically combat period pieces and traditional staging, and declare the contempt for modern costumes stupid.
10. To fight against the Tosti and Costa sort of ballads,¹² nauseating Neapolitan songs, and sacred music; the latter, having lost any reason whatever for its continued existence with the collapse of religious belief, has become an exclusive monopoly of impotent conservatory directors and a few thwarted priests.
11. Provoke among audiences an ever growing hostility against the exhumation of old works which impede the appearance of innovative composers, and instead support and praise everything in music that seems original and revolutionary,

considering it an honor to receive abuse and irony from opportunists and moribund people.

And now let the reaction of the passéists pour all their fury on me. I laugh serenely, and I don't give a damn; I've ascended beyond the past, and loudly I call young musicians to gather around the flag of Futurism which, launched by Marinetti in the Parisian newspaper *Le Figaro*, has in only a brief span of time conquered the greatest intellectual centers of the world.

FUTURIST MUSIC: TECHNICAL MANIFESTO

FRANCESCO BALILLA PRATELLA

29 March 1911

All innovators, logically speaking, have been Futurists in relation to their time. Palestrina would have thought that Bach was crazy, and Bach would have thought Beethoven the same, and Beethoven would have thought Wagner equally so.

Rossini liked to boast that he had finally understood the music of Wagner—by reading it backward; Verdi, after listening to the overture to *Tannhäuser*, wrote to a friend that Wagner was *mad*.

So we stand at the window of a glorious mental hospital, even while we unhesitatingly declare that counterpoint and the fugue, which even today are still considered the most important branches of musical instruction, represent no more than ruins belonging to a history of polyphony, one that would cover the period running from the Flemish composers to Bach. Harmonic polyphony, which replaces them with the rational fusion of harmony and counterpoint, will once and for all prevent the composer from dividing himself between two cultures, one dead for some centuries, the other contemporaneous; these two being irreconcilable with each other because their products are very different in manner of feeling and conception. The second culture, for logical reasons of progress and evolution, is already a remote and unattainable consequence of the first by having summarized, transformed, and surpassed it by a great distance.

Harmony, which historically was only implied in melody—sounds following one another according to the diverse modes of the scale—was born when each melodic note was considered in relationship to the combination of all the other sounds in the mode of the scale to which it belonged.

In that way it became understood that melody is the expressive synthesis of a harmonic succession. Today people cry and regret that young musicians no longer

know how to discover melodies, no doubt alluding to those of Rossini, Bellini, Verdi, or Ponchielli.¹ . . . Such musicians conceive of melody harmonically; they hear harmony through diverse and ever more complex combinations and successions of sounds, and thus they find new sources of melody.

But it is time to finish once and for all with being contemptible imitators of a past that no longer has a reason for existing, venal solicitors of the public's low taste.

We Futurists proclaim that the diverse modes of old scales, the various sensations of *major*, *minor*, *augmented*, *diminished*, and even the more recent modes of scales for whole tones are none other than simple details of a unique harmonic and atonal mode of a chromatic scale. Moreover, we declare that the values of consonance and dissonance are nonexistent.

Futurist melody will draw from the innumerable combinations and various relationships that derive from them. *This melody will be none other than a synthesis of harmony*, similar to the ideal line that is formed by the incessant surging of a thousand waves with unequal crests.

We Futurists proclaim that progress and the victory of the future will consist in researching and realizing the *enharmonic mode*. Whereas chromatism only lets us take advantage of all the sounds contained in a scale that is divided into minor and major semitones, enharmony contemplates still more minute subdivisions of a tone; and hence it not only furnishes our renewed sensibilities with a maximum number of specifiable and combinable sounds, but also new and more varied relations among chords and timbres.

But above all, *enharmony* makes possible enharmonic intervals that have natural and instinctive intonation and modulation, something unachievable within the present tempered system that we wish to overcome. We Futurists have long had a liking for these enharmonic intervals, which we hear in the false dissonance of an orchestra when the instruments play out of tune and in spontaneous popular songs that are sung without musical training.

The rhythm of dance: monotonous, limited, decrepit, and barbarous. Its domination of polyphony will have to give way to a free and polyrhythmic procession and be limited to remaining only a characteristic detail of it.

Even, uneven, and mixed tempos should be considered as relational among themselves, in the same way we now regard the relations among binary, ternary, ternary-binary, and binary-ternary. One or two bars in uneven time placed in the middle or at the end of a musical phrase which is in even or mixed tempo, or vice versa—these should no longer be condemned by the false and ridiculous law of continuous steady rhythm, a despicable umbrella used by all the impotent people who teach in conservatories.

The alternation and succession of all tempos and all possible rhythms will find their proper balance only within the genius and aesthetic sense of the creative artist.

Knowledge of instrumentation should be acquired through experience. Instrumental composition should be conceived instrumentally, *imagining and hearing a particular orchestra for each particular and diverse musical condition of the mind.*

All this will be possible when the conservatories, lyceums, and academies have been deserted and their closure agreed on. Then musical studies will acquire a character of absolute freedom and meet the necessity of experience. The masters of today, transformed into the experts of tomorrow, will be their students' guides and objective collaborators, no longer unconsciously corrupting their budding talents by suppressing them with their own personalities or imposing on them their own errors and criteria.

For man, absolute truth consists in what he feels as a human being. The artist humanizes nature by interpreting it purely.

Sky, waters, forests, rivers, mountains, criss-crossing ships, and swarming cities are transformed by the soul of the musician into marvelous and potent voices that sing with human tones the desires of man, his passions for joy and suffering, so revealing by the power of art the common and indissoluble chain that links him with all the rest of nature.

Musical forms are nothing more than aspects and fragments of a unique and complete whole. Every form exists in relation to the potential expression and development of the generative emotional motif and to the sensibility and intuition of the creative artist. Rhetoric and bombast issue from a disproportion between the emotional motif and its explicative form, produced in the majority of cases by the blinding influences of tradition, culture, environment, and often by intellectual limitations.

The emotional motif in itself imposes on the musician its own formal and synthetic explication, synthesis being the cardinal property of expression and musical aesthetics.

The symphony is constituted by the contrast between several emotional motifs and the relations among their expressive characters and their potentials for expansion and development.

The Futurist considers its maximum forms to be: *the symphonic poem, orchestral and vocal*, and the *opera*.

The pure symphonist, with free and ample imagination, derives his developments, contrasts, lines, and forms from his emotional motifs, paying attention to no criterion other than his artistic sense of balance and proportion, and reaching

his goal in the complex of expressive means and aesthetics proper to pure musical art. This sense of Futurist balance can be nothing other than the achievement of a maximum intensity of expression.

The opera composer, in contrast, draws all the reflexes of the other arts within the orbit of musical aesthetics and inspiration—a powerful concurrence tending to multiply the expressive and communicative efficacy of his work. The opera composer has to take into account these secondary elements in the wake of his aesthetic and musical inspiration.

Because the human voice is our own and comes from us, it is the maximum means of expression and should be circumfused with the orchestra in a sonorous atmosphere, full of all the voices of nature rendered through art.

The vision of the poem written as a scenario leaps to the imagination of the creative artist by virtue of a particular necessity, arising from the will to explicate the generative emotional and inspirational motifs. The dramatic or tragic poem cannot be conceived through music if it isn't the result of a musical state of mind or a single vision derived from musical aesthetics. The opera composer, simply in linking his words together, is creating rhythms, is already creating musically, and so becomes the only author of his own opera. If instead he sets someone else's words to music, he is stupidly renouncing his own wellspring of original inspiration and taking over from someone else the rhythmic part of his melodies.

Free verse is the only form suitable for a libretto, because it's free of limitations of rhythm and accented syllables repeated monotonously in restricted and inadequate forms. In free verse the polyphonic wave of human poetry finds all the rhythms, accents, and modes needed to express itself freely, a fascinating symphony of words. This freedom of rhythmic expression is characteristic of Futurist music.

Man and the multitudes of men on the stage must no longer imitate common speech, but should sing as we do when, unconscious of time or place and seized by a deep impulse to swell and dominate, we instinctively burst out in essential and riveting human language. Song that is natural and spontaneous, song without measured rhythms or intervals, those artificial limits to expression that almost make us regret the power of words.

1. **Melody must be conceived as a SYNTHESIS OF HARMONY, and the harmonic definitions of MAJOR, MINOR, AUGMENTED, and DIMINISHED should be considered simply as elements within a single atonal chromatic mode.**
2. **Enharmony should be considered as a magnificent conquest of Futurism.**
3. **We must break the domination of dance rhythms: they should be considered as possible elements within free rhythm, just as the rhythm of the hendecasyllable can be an element within the stanza in free verse.**

4. With the fusion of harmony and counterpoint, we must create polyphony in an absolute sense, something never in use until today.
5. We must make use of all the expressive and dynamic values of the orchestra and view instrumentation as part of incessantly mobile universal sonority constituting a unique whole through the effective fusion of all its parts.
6. We must regard musical forms as following from and dependent on the generative emotional motifs.
7. We must not confuse symphonic form with the usual traditional, dead, and buried schemes of the symphony.
8. We must conceive of the opera as a symphonic form.
9. We must make it an absolute requirement that the musician be the author of the dramatic or tragic poem for his music. The symbolic action of the poem should leap to the musician's imagination, impelled by his wish to explicate emotional motifs.
10. We must recognize free verse as the only means of attaining a criterion of poly-rhythmic freedom.
11. Music must contain all the new attitudes of nature, always tamed by man in different ways through incessant scientific discoveries. It must render the musical spirit of the masses, the grand industrial factories, trains, transatlantic steamers, battleships, automobiles, and airplanes. It must add the domination of the machine and the victorious reign of electricity to the great central motifs of the musical poem.

Selections from *Le Futurisme* (1911)

WAR, THE ONLY HYGIENE OF THE WORLD

F. T. MARINETTI

From *Le Futurisme* (1911)

And now I am obliged to tell you what it is that clearly distinguishes Futurism from anarchism.

The latter, denying the infinite principle of human evolution, brings its forward-looking viewpoint to a halt in the ideal of universal peace, a stupid paradise of people caressing in open fields or beneath billowing palm trees.

We, instead, affirm that one of Futurism's absolute principles is the continuous development and unending progress, both bodily and intellectual, of man.

We think that the hypothesis of a friendly merging of peoples is an outmoded

idea, or one that can be bettered, and we acknowledge only one form of hygiene for the world: war.

The distant goal of anarchism, a tender affectionateness, is a sister of cowardice and seems to us a filthy cancer that announces the death-throes of a people.

Anarchists, moreover, are content with attacking the political, legal, and economic branches of the social tree. We want a great deal more: we want to tear up and burn its deepest roots, those which are planted in the very mind of man, and which are called: a mania for order,^a desire for the least possible effort, fanatical adoration of the family, worry over fixed times for eating and sleeping, vile quietism, love for the old and the aged, for whatever is worn out or ill, horror in the face of the new, contempt for youth and rebellious minorities, the veneration of time and the years which have accumulated, of dead and moribund people, the instinct for laws, chains, and obstacles, a horror of violence, the unknown, and the new,^b a fear of total freedom.

Have you ever attended a meeting of young revolutionaries or anarchists? . . . Ah, well: there is^c no more disheartening spectacle.

There you detect an urgent, irresistible mania in all those red souls, a desire promptly to divest themselves of their violent independence in order to hand over the leadership of their meeting to the oldest man among them, which is to say to the most opportunistic among them, or to the most prudent—in short, to the man who, since he's already acquired a little power and a little authority, will be fatally interested in preserving the status quo, calming down violence, and opposing every desire for adventure, risk, and heroism.

This new president, while directing the general discussion with apparent impartiality, will slowly guide it sheeplike to his personal drinking trough.

Do you, revolutionary spirits, still believe in the usefulness of meetings?

In that case you should content yourselves with selecting a simple director or, better, a regulator of discussion. Elect the youngest one among you, the least known and least important, and ensure that his task is limited to that of allowing absolutely equal time to all speakers, equality checked with watch in hand.

But what creates a still deeper gulf between Futurism and anarchism is the great problem of love, the great tyranny of sentimentalism and lust, which we want to liberate humanity from.

It is this hatred for the tyranny of love that we have expressed with the laconic phrase: "contempt for woman."¹

We feel contempt for woman conceived as the reservoir of love, engine of lust,^a woman-poison, woman as a tragic bibelot, fragile woman, obsessing and fatal, whose voice, heavy with destiny, and whose dreamy tresses reach out and mingle with the foliage of forests bathed in moonlight.

We feel contempt for horrible and staid Love that encumbers the march of man and prevents him from transcending his own humanity, from redoubling himself, from going beyond himself and becoming what we call *multiplied man*.²

We feel contempt for horrible and staid Love, an immense tether with which the sun chains the courageous earth in its orbit, which would doubtless rather leap at random, run every starry risk.

We are convinced that Love—sentimentality and lust—is the least natural thing in the world. There is nothing natural except the perpetuation of the species.^b

Love—romantic, voluptuary obsession—is nothing but an invention of the poets, who gave it to humanity. And it will be the poets who will take it away from humanity.^c

The great tragicomic experience of love will soon be ended, having yielded no profit and inflicted incalculable harm. There has always been conflict and never collaboration between the two sexes, who have proved themselves unequal to the grand task. That it is why we Futurists are officially withdrawing love today,^d as one withdraws a manuscript from a publisher who has shown himself incapable of printing it decently.

In this campaign for liberation, our best allies are the suffragettes, because the more rights and powers they win for woman, the more will she be drained of love and cease to be a magnet for sentimental passion or an engine of lust. All the more so since the prodigious growth of expensive fashions has turned love into a slave unsuccessfully revolting beneath the heavy fists of Money.^e

Carnal life will be reduced to the preservation of the species, and that will be so much gain for the growing stature of man.

As for the supposed inferiority of woman, we think that if her body and spirit had, for many generations past, been subjected to the same physical and spiritual education as man's, it might be legitimate to speak of the equality of the sexes.

It is obvious, nevertheless, that in her actual state of intellectual and erotic

slavery, woman finds herself wholly inferior in respect to character and intelligence and therefore can be only a mediocre legislative instrument.

For just this reason we most enthusiastically defend the rights of the suffragettes, at the same time that we regret their infantile enthusiasm for the miserable, ridiculous right to vote.³ For we are convinced that they will seize the right to vote with fervor, and thus involuntarily help us to destroy that grand foolishness, made up of corruption and banality, to which parliamentarianism is now reduced.

Parliamentarianism is exhausted almost everywhere. It accomplished a few good things: it created the illusory participation of the majority in government. I say *illusory* because it is clear that the people cannot be and never will be represented by spokesmen whom they do not know how to choose.

Consequently, the people have always remained estranged from the government. On the other hand, it is precisely to parliamentarianism that the people owe their real existence. The pride of the masses has been inflated by the elective system. The stature of the individual has been heightened by the idea of representation. But this idea has completely undermined the value of intelligence by immeasurably exaggerating the worth of eloquence. This state of affairs worsens day by day. Which is why I welcome with pleasure the aggressive entrance of women beneath the garrulous cupolas.^f

Where else could we find a more explosive dynamite of disorder and corruption?

Nearly all the European parliaments are merely noisy chicken coops, cow stalls, or sewers.

Their essential principles are: 1) financial corruption and shrewdness in graft, used to win a seat in parliament; 2) empty eloquence, grandiose falsification of ideas, triumph of high-sounding phrases, tom-tom of Negroes, and windmill gestures.

These gross elements of parliamentarianism give an absolute power to hordes of lawyers.

You know perfectly well that lawyers are alike in every country. They are beings deeply attached to everything mean and futile . . . minds that see only the small daily fact, who are wholly unable to handle great general ideas, to imagine the collisions and fusions of races or the blazing flight of the ideal over individuals and peoples. They are argument-merchants, mental prostitutes, boutiques for subtle ideas and chiseled syllogisms.

It is because of parliamentarianism that a whole nation is at the mercy of these fabricators of justice who, given the ductile iron of the law, can scarcely manage to build a workable mousetrap.

Then let us hasten to give women the vote.

And this, furthermore, is the final and absolutely logical conclusion of the idea of democracy and universal suffrage as it was conceived by Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the other forebears of the French Revolution.

Let women, swift as lightning, hurry to make this great experiment in the total animalization of politics.

We who deeply despise politics^g are happy to abandon parliamentarianism to the spiteful claws of women; for it is precisely to them that the noble task of killing it for good has been reserved.

Oh! I'm not being in the least ironic; I'm speaking very seriously. Woman, as she has been shaped by our contemporary society, can only increase in splendor the principle of corruption which is intimately related to the principle of the vote.

Those who oppose the legitimate rights of the suffragettes do so for entirely personal reasons: they are tenaciously defending their own monopoly of harmful eloquence, which women won't hesitate to snatch away from them. Fundamentally, this bores us. We have very different mines to put under the ruins.

They tell us that a government composed of women or sustained by women would fatally drag us through the paths of pacifism and Tolstoyan cowardice into a definitive triumph of clericalism and moralistic hypocrisy . . .

Maybe! Probably! And I'm sorry! However, we will have the war of the sexes, inescapably prepared by the great agglomerations of the capital cities, by nightlife, and the stabilizing of workers' salaries.⁴

Maybe some misogynistic humorists are already dreaming of a Saint Bartholomew's Night for women.⁵

I know, you think that I am amusing myself by offering you more or less fantastic paradoxes. Yet I suspect^h there's little reason to believe in a logical development of history.

The history of peoples runs at random, in any and every direction, with extravagant speed and disorder, like a flighty young woman who can't remember what her parents taught her except on New Year's Day, or only when she's been abandoned by her lover.

But unfortunately she is still too wise and not disorderly enough, this young history of the world. So the sooner women mix into it, the better, because the men are putrescent with millenarian wisdom.

These aren't paradoxes, I assure you, but gropings into the night of the future.

You will admit, for example, that the victory of feminism and especially the influence of women on politics will end by destroying the principle of the family. It could easily be proved: but already you're bristling, terrified, and ready to oppose me with ingenious arguments because you do not want the family touched at all.

"Every right, every liberty should be given to women," you cry, "but the family must be preserved!"

Allow me to smile just a bit skeptically and say to you that if the family should disappear,¹ we could try to do without it.

“We,” I was just saying, but obviously I am mistaken: it will be our children—the children whom we will not have—they will know very well how to do without the family.

And I should add, parenthetically, that we Futurists are such fighters that we won’t have children, we who love the heroic instinct, we who sincerely want every masterpiece to be burned with the cadaver of its author, we who feel only repugnance at the idea of striving for immortality, for at bottom it’s no more than the dream of minds vitiated by usury.¹

Beyond doubt, if modern woman dreams of winning her political rights, it is because without knowing it she is intimately sure of being, as a mother, as a wife, and as a lover, a closed circle, purely animal and absolutely devoid of usefulness.

You will certainly have watched the takeoff of a Blériot⁶ plane, the moment when it’s still held back by its mechanics, amid the mighty buffets of air from the propeller’s first spins.

Ah well: before so intoxicating a spectacle, I confess, we male Futurists have felt ourselves abruptly detached from women, who have suddenly become too earthly or, better yet, have become a mere symbol of the earth that we ought to abandon.

We have even dreamed of one day being able to create a mechanical son, the fruit of pure will, synthesis of all the laws that science is on the brink of discovering.⁷

**MULTIPLIED MAN AND THE REIGN OF THE
MACHINE** F. T. MARINETTI

From Le Futurisme (1911)

All this¹ will have left you disposed to understand one of our principal Futurist efforts, which consists of abolishing in literature the apparently indissoluble fusion of the two concepts of *Woman* and *Beauty*. This ideological^a fusion has reduced all romance to a sort of heroic assault that a bellicose and lyrical male launches against a tower that bristles with enemies, a story which ends when the hero, now beneath starlight, carries the divine Beauty-Woman away to new heights.^b Novels such as *Toilers of the Sea* by Victor Hugo or *Salammbô* by Flaubert can clarify my point.² It is a matter of a dominant leitmotif, already worn out,^c of which we would like to disencumber literature and art in general.

That is why we are developing and proclaiming a great new idea that runs through modern life: the idea of mechanical beauty. Whence we exalt the love of

machines, of the kind we see kindling in the cheeks of mechanics, scorched and smeared with coal. Have you ever observed them washing the huge, powerful body of their locomotive? Theirs are the attentive, knowing endearments of a lover who is caressing a woman he adores.

It is a fact that in the recent strike of French railroad workers, organizers of sabotage could hardly persuade even a single machinist to sabotage his locomotive.³

That strikes me as perfectly natural. How could one of these men ever have wounded or murdered his great girlfriend, faithful and devoted, with her quick and ardent soul, this beautiful steel machine that had so often glowed with sensuous pleasure beneath his lubricating caress? This is not just a fanciful image, but an impending reality that within a few years we will be able to confirm.

No doubt you have heard the comments that automobile owners and factory directors routinely make: "Motors are truly mysterious . . . they have moods and unexpected whims; it seems they have a personality, a soul, will. You have to caress them, treat them with respect, never mistreat or overwork them. But if you do that, this machine of iron fused with steel, this motor constructed according to precise specifications, will not only give full performance, but double or triple, much more and much better than had ever been foreseen in the calculations of its builder—its father!" In short, I attribute great importance to the revelations contained in these comments which, for me, announce the impending discovery of the laws of a new sensibility of the machine!

Hence we must prepare for the imminent and inevitable identification of man and motor, facilitating and perfecting a continual interchange of intuitions, rhythms, instincts, and metallic disciplines that are absolutely unknown to the great majority of people today and are divined by only the most clear-sighted minds.

If we grant the transformational hypothesis of Lamarck,⁴ we have to recognize that we are aspiring to the creation of an inhuman type, one in which moral suffering, generosity, affect, and love will be abolished, poisonous corrosives that sap the inexhaustible supply of vital energy, interrupters of our powerful physiological electricity.

We believe in the possibility of an incalculable number of human transformations, and we declare without a smile that wings are waiting to be awakened within the flesh of man.

The day when it will be possible for man to externalize his will in such a way that it is prolonged beyond himself like an immense, invisible arm—on that day, Dream and Desire, which today are empty terms, will reign supreme over conquered space and time.

This inhuman and mechanical type, constructed for omnipresent velocity, will be naturally cruel, omniscient, and combative. He will be endowed with unexpected

organs: organs adapted to the exigencies of an environment made of continuous shocks. Already now we can foresee an organ that will resemble a prow developing from the outward swelling of the sternum, which will be the more pronounced the better an aviator the man of the future becomes, much like the analogous development discernible in the best fliers among birds. You'll be able to better understand these apparently paradoxical hypotheses by considering the phenomena of externalized will that are continually manifested at spiritualist seances.⁵

It is a matter of fact, and you can easily verify it, that already today we can increasingly find workers, utterly devoid of education and culture, who nevertheless possess what I would call great mechanical divination or metallic touch.

That is because such workers have already experienced the education of the machine and have, in some way or other, become related to the family of motors.

In order to prepare for the formation of the inhuman and mechanical type of *multiplied man*,^d it is necessary to drastically reduce the need for affection, a need which is not yet destructible and which man carries in his veins.

We need to reduce our need for affection to that low level already achieved by certain forty-year-old bachelors who assuage their foolish hearts' thirst with the energetic gambols of a frisky poodle.^e

Future man will reduce his heart to its purely distributive function. The heart has to become, in some way, a sort of stomach for the brain, which will methodically empty and fill so that the mind can go into action.

Already today you can meet men who go through life almost without love, in an atmosphere that is the color of steel. We must ensure that such exemplary men increase in number. These energetic beings have no sweet lover to visit at night; but in the morning they make sure that their garage or factory gets off to a perfect start, opening it with amatory scrupulousness.

To the more passionate among the young I would advise developing a love of pets—dogs, cats, horses—for such love offers regular satisfaction to that need for affection which a woman would only exasperate with her capricious whims and feline scent for curiosity.^f

We are also convinced that art and literature exercise a critical influence on all social classes, even the most ignorant, who drink it in through mysterious infiltrations. Literature can hasten or retard the movement of humanity toward this form of life liberated from sentimentalism and lust.^g

In defiance of skeptical determinism, which we must destroy every day, we believe in the usefulness of literary propaganda.^h It is active propaganda that we are conducting in the novel and in plays against the glorious conception of Don Juan and his comic counterpart, the cuckold.ⁱ

These two terms should lose all meaning in life, in art, and in the collective imagination.

Ridiculing the cuckold simply contributes to aggrandizing the Don Juan, while aggrandizing the Don Juan simply makes the cuckold more ridiculous.

Emancipating ourselves from these two themes, we shall free ourselves from the great morbid phenomenon of jealousy, which is nothing other than a product of Don Juanesque vanity.

Thus, we shall witness the disappearance not just of love for the woman-wife and the woman-lover, but also for the mother, the principal support of the family and, as such, in opposition to the bold creation of future man.

Once it has been freed of the family's suffocating grip, that constricting circle which represents not just traditional life par excellence, but animal life par excellence, humanity will remorselessly dispense with filial and maternal love, warming yet harmful trammels to be broken.

It is for this reason that we, while awaiting such changes, find propaganda in support of free love to be useful, since it breaks up the family and accelerates its destruction.

And yet, while we remain dead set against the divinity of love, we affirm within ourselves the existence of an intellectual solidarity which is an absolutely new discovery among the Latin peoples.

I am referring to the spiritual friendship that brings together rebellious and innovative minds.^j

Immense romantic love will thereby be reduced only to copulation for the preservation of the species,^k and the friction of the epidermis be freed from all provocative mystery, from all appetizing spiciness of sin^l and all Don Juanesque vanity: a simple bodily function, like eating or drinking.

The *multiplied man* of whom we dream will preserve his genital power until death, as one does one's stomach,^m and will never know the tragedy of old age and impotence!ⁿ

But to achieve this, young males of our time, at last nauseated by erotic books and the double alcohol of sentimentality and lust, finally immunized against the sickness of love, must learn to destroy all sorrows of the heart within themselves, every day lacerating their feelings and distracting their sexual organs and their minds.^o Thus our frank misogynist optimism^p is sharply opposed to the pessimism of Schopenhauer, that bitter philosopher who so often offers us the seductive revolver of philosophy in order to destroy in us our profound nausea for woman and love.^q

It is precisely with this revolver that we gaily take aim at the great romantic Moonlight.

**WE ABJURE OUR SYMBOLIST MASTERS, THE
LAST LOVERS OF THE MOON** F. T. MARINETTI

From *Le Futurisme* (1911)

93
We
Abjure
Our
Symbolist
Masters

We have sacrificed everything to the triumph of this Futurist conception of life. You will also easily understand why, after having loved them so much, today we hate our glorious intellectual fathers: the great Symbolist geniuses, Edgar Allan Poe, Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Verlaine.¹

We despise them now for having swum the river of time with their heads always turned back toward the far blue spring of the past, toward the "*ciel antérieur où fleurit la beauté*."²

For them,^a no poetry could exist without nostalgia, without the evocation of dead ages, without the fog of history and legend.

We hate the Symbolist masters, we who have dared to emerge naked from the river of time, our bodies skinned by stones during the craggy ascent, and to create, in spite of ourselves, new torrents^b that drape the mountain in scarlet.

We are red, and we love red: cheeks^c reddened by reflections from the fireboxes of locomotives, we both love and sing the ever-growing triumph of the machine, which they stupidly curse. Our Symbolist fathers had a passion that we consider ridiculous: a passion for eternal things, a desire for the immortal and imperishable masterwork. We, on the contrary, think that nothing is lower or meaner than to think of immortality while creating a work of art, an idea that is lower and meaner than the calculated, usurious idea of the Christian heaven which is supposed to reward our earthly virtues at a million percent profit.

One must simply create, because creation is useless, unrewarded, ignored, despised; in a word, heroic. To the poetry of nostalgic memory we oppose the poetry of feverish expectation.

To tears of beauty brooding tenderly over tombs, we oppose the keen, cutting profile of the pilot, the chauffeur, and the aviator.

To the conception of the imperishable and immortal, we oppose, in art, the concept of becoming, the perishable, the transitory and ephemeral.

Thus we will transform the *nevermore* of Edgar Allan Poe into a sharp joy,³ and we will teach people to love the beauty of an emotion or a sensation because it is *unique and destined irrevocably to vanish*.

History, in our eyes, is fatally a forger, or at least a miserable collector of stamps, medals, and counterfeit coins.

The past is necessarily inferior to the future. That is how we wish it to be. Be-

sides, how could we acknowledge any merit in our most dangerous enemy: the past, gloomy mentor, execrable tutor?

This is how we deny the obsessing splendor of the dead centuries and collaborate with victorious Mechanics, the force that grips the earth in its network of speed.

We are collaborating with mechanics in destroying the old poetry of distance and wild solitudes, the exquisite nostalgia of departure, and in its place we urge the tragic lyricism of ubiquity and omnipresent speed.

Our Futurist sensibility, in fact, is no longer moved by the dark mystery of an unexplored valley, of a mountain pass that we, in spite of ourselves, picture as crossed by the elegant (and almost Parisian)^d ribbon of a white road, where an automobile gleaming with progress and full of cultured voices abruptly pulls up, sputtering; a boulevard corner camped in the middle of solitude.

Every pine woods madly in love with the moon has a Futurist road that crosses it from end to end. The simple, doleful reign of endlessly soliloquizing vegetation is over.

With us begins the reign of the man whose roots are cut, the multiplied man who merges himself with iron, is fed by electricity, and no longer understands anything except the sensual delight of danger and quotidian heroism.

That should be enough to tell you how much we despise propaganda defending the aesthetics of landscape, a stupid anachronism.

Multicolored billboards on the green of the fields, iron bridges gripping the hills, surgical trains piercing the blue belly of mountains, enormous turbine pipes, new muscles of the earth, may you be praised by the Futurist poets, since you destroy the old, sickly, and cooing sentimentalism of earth!

Driven by such passions, such innovating rage, how can you expect us to accept the artistic philosophy of contemporary Italy? For too long Italy has submitted to the enfeebling influence of Gabriele D'Annunzio, the lesser brother of the great French Symbolists, nostalgic like them, and like them hovering above the naked female body.⁴

One must at all costs combat Gabriele D'Annunzio, because with all his great skill he has distilled the four intellectual poisons that we want to abolish forever: 1) the sickly, nostalgic poetry of distance and memory; 2) romantic sentimentality dripping with moonlight that is ascending toward an ideal and fatal Woman-Beauty; 3) obsession with lechery, with the adulterous triangle, the spice of incest and the seasoning of Christian sin; 4) the profound passion^e for the past and the mania for antiquity and collecting.

We likewise reject the stammering, kitchen-garden^f sentiment of Pascoli who, notwithstanding his unquestionable genius, is still guilty of having had a degrading and deleterious influence.⁵

Lastly, we are happy that we no longer have to drink the nauseous café au lait of the sacristy, concocted by our deplorable Fogazzaro.⁶

We accept only the illuminating work of the five or six^h great precursors of Futurism. I allude to Émile Zola and Walt Whitman; to Rosny aîné, author of *Le Bilatéral* and the *La Vague rouge*;⁷ to Paul Adam, author of *Le Trust*;⁸ to Octave Mirbeau, author of *Les Affaires sont les affaires*;⁹ to Gustave Kahn, creator of free verse, to Verhaeren, glorifier of machines and tentacular cities.¹⁰

Futurism, with the great poets Gian Pietro Lucini and Paolo Buzzi leading the way,¹¹ is launching free verse in Italy.^j The dynamism of free verse,^k essentially as mobile and changeable as the pictorial dynamism of the Futurist painters Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Balla, and Severini, with relentless velocity expresses our *I*, itself created with ceaseless inspiration.

Only Futurist free verse,^l a perpetual dynamism of thought, an uninterrupted flow of images and sounds, can express the ephemeral, unstable, and symphonic universe that is forging itself in us and with us.

It is the dynamism of our elastic consciousness fully realized. The whole “I” sung, painted, and sculpted indefinitely in perpetual becoming. A succession of lyrical states, excluding any Parnassian idea about the reciprocity of extension—such is the great strophe orchestrated by Futurist free verse.

To abstract, static, and formal art, we oppose an art of incessant movement, aggressive struggle, and speed.

To the imperious affirmations of dogmatic intellectualism, we reply, screaming: “We want to demolish Museums and Libraries! You raise objections? Stop! Stop! We know what your refined and mendacious mind wants to affirm. But we don’t want to listen!”¹²

We also like to repeat this profound and illuminating thought from Edgar Allan Poe, who described “the poetic mind, that faculty more sublime than any other, which, since truths of the greatest importance could not have been revealed to us except by means of that Analogy whose eloquence is irrefutable to the imagination, says nothing to weak and solitary reason” (“Colloquy of Monos and Una”).¹³

To skeptical and pessimistic determinism, therefore, we oppose the cult of creative intuition, freedom of inspiration, and artificial optimism.

To nostalgic moonlight, whether sentimental or lecherous, we oppose cruel and unjust heroism dominating the conquering fever of motors.

Among all literary forms, the one that has the most immediate significance for Futurism is certainly the theater.

Further, we don't want the art of drama to continue being what it is today: an impoverished industrial product subject to the market for cheap popular amusements.

We must therefore sweep away all the dirty prejudices that crush authors, actors, and the public.

1. That is why^a we Futurists teach authors contempt for the audience, and especially for first-night audiences, whose psychology we can synthesize as follows: rivalry of coiffures and feminine toilettes—vanity of the expensive seat, which transmutes itself into intellectual pride—boxes and orchestra seats occupied by rich and mature men whose brains are naturally contemptuous and whose digestions are very belabored, conditions incompatible with intellectual effort.

The audience varies in mood and intelligence according to the particular theater or from season to season. Its mood is subject to changing political and social events, the whims of fashion, spring showers, weather too hot or too cold, the last article read in the afternoon. It has no other desire but to enjoy a peaceful digestion at the theater. Hence it can neither judge, approve, or disapprove anything in a work of art. The author can force himself to drag the public out of its mediocrity, as one saves a shipwrecked man by dragging him out of the water. But woe to anyone who lets himself be grasped by those frightened hands, because he will go to the bottom along with the drowning man, to the sound of applause.

2. We also teach a horror of the immediate success that normally crowns dull and mediocre works. The theater pieces that immediately grip each member of the audience, with no intermediaries or explanations, are more or less well-made works that are absolutely devoid of originality or creative intelligence.
3. Authors should have no preoccupation except innovative originality.^b All the dramatic works that are built on commonplaces or that borrow their conception, plot, or part of their development from other works of art are absolutely contemptible.
4. The leitmotifs of love and the adulterous triangle, by now overworked, should be^c reduced to a minor role, accessory and episodic, to the same importance they now have in life itself, thanks to our great Futurist effort.

5. Dramatic art, like every art, can have no other purpose than to pull the soul of the audience out from everyday reality^d and to lift it into a blinding atmosphere of intellectual intoxication. We feel contempt for all those works that merely want to move people or make them weep, by means of the always pitiful spectacle of a mother whose child has died, or a girl who cannot marry her lover, or other such insipidities.
6. We despise in art, and especially in the theater, every kind of historical reconstruction, no matter whether it takes its interest from a famous hero or heroine, such as Nero, Julius Caesar, Napoleon, or Francesca da Rimini,¹ or whether it is founded on the appeal of pointlessly sumptuous costumes and scenery.

The modern drama should reflect some part of the great Futurist dream that arises from our daily lives, stimulated by terrestrial, marine, and aerial velocities, dominated by steam power and electricity.

One must introduce onto the stage the reign of the Machine, the great revolutionary^e shudders that move the crowd, the new currents of ideas and the great discoveries of science that have completely transformed our sensibility and our mentality as men of the twentieth century.

7. Dramatic art shouldn't be concerned with psychological photography, but rather with moving forward toward an intoxicating^f synthesis of life in its typical and significant lines.^g
8. Dramatic art without poetry cannot exist, that is, without intoxication and without synthesis. Regular prosodic forms must be excluded. The Futurist writer in the theater will employ free verse: a mobile orchestration of images and sounds that, passing from the simplest tone, which might signal the entry of a servant or the closing of a door, can slowly rise to the rhythm of the passions in strophes that are alternately cadenced or chaotic, such as might be used to announce the victory of a people or the glorious death of an aviator.
9. One must destroy the obsession for money among writers, because greed for gain has pushed into the theater writers gifted with qualities more suited to journalists or society columnists.
10. We want to subordinate the actors completely to the authority of writers, to free them from domination by the audience, a force that fatally moves them to search for easy effects and estranges them from any effort toward deeper interpretation.
For this reason we must abolish the grotesque habit of clapping and whistling, a good enough barometer of parliamentary eloquence, but certainly not of artistic worth.
11. While waiting for this abolition, we teach authors and actors the pleasure of being booed.

Not everything booed is beautiful or new. But everything immediately ap-

plauded is certainly no better than the average intelligence and therefore is something mediocre, dull, regurgitated, or too well digested.

I have the joy of knowing, as I affirm these Futurist convictions for you, that my talent, which has been several times booed by the audiences of France and Italy, will never be buried beneath too heavy applause.^h

ELECTRICAL WAR F. T. MARINETTI From *Le Futurisme* (1911)

[PART 1: THE BIRTH OF A FUTURIST AESTHETIC]

But it has already occurred to you, no doubt, that there are numerous objections that might be raised against our destructive, antitraditionalist principle.

Let me take one of them: “What,” you say to me, “are the works in stone, marble, or bronze that you can set against the inimitable works left to us by past centuries?”

I have this simple answer:

1. The masterpieces of the past are all that remain of a vast number of works of art that have disappeared because of their ugliness or fragility. So you really can't ask us to oppose the masterworks of a mere fifty years to a select ensemble gathered over the course of a millennium.
2. Furthermore, I say that modern phenomena such as cosmopolitan nomadism, the democratic spirit, and the decline of religions have reduced to uselessness the great, decorative, imperishable buildings that once expressed kingly authority, theocracy, and mysticism.

The contradictory forces of finance and revolutionary labor unions, new developments in metallurgy, electrical engineering, and aviation,^a the right to strike, equality before the law, the principle of majority rule, the revolutionary powers of the masses, the speed of international communications, recent habits of hygiene and domestic comfort which require large, popular, well-ventilated apartment blocks; absolutely comfortable trains, tunnels, iron bridges, huge and fast ocean liners, hillside villas shrewdly sited toward the cool sweep of horizons, immense meeting halls, and perfected *chambres de toilette* for the rapid daily care of the body.

A modern aesthetic, directly responsive to utility, has no need of royal palaces with domineering lines and granite foundations that loom massively out of the

past over their little medieval towns, confused heaps of impoverished hovels. What use would be it today to launch into the sky the pinnacles of those majestic cathedrals that used to mount to the clouds, joining the hands of their ogives to pray in defense of the little hamlets that cowered in their shadow?

To them we oppose the wholly mastered, definitive Futurist aesthetic of great locomotives, twisting tunnels, armored cars, torpedo boats, Antoinette^b monoplanes,¹ and racing cars.

We are creating the new aesthetics of speed. We have almost abolished the concept of space and notably diminished the concept of time.

— We are thus preparing the ubiquity of multiplied man.

— We will soon arrive at the abolition of the year, the day, and the hour.

Meteorological phenomena anticipate us, because the seasons are already merging together.

The tragic return of the traditional annual holidays is already losing its hold on our minds.

The noctambulism of work and pleasure in France, Italy, and Spain, has it not already melted together day and night? Naturally, the works in which we have expressed this whirlwind of intense life spinning toward an ideal future cannot be understood and appreciated by a public overwhelmed by our savage eruption and offended by our cruel violence.

Later the public will love these works. Meanwhile it is already beginning to feel disgust with what we struggle against.

Already we have provoked a growing nausea for things antique, decrepit, musty.

And that is an important and decisive gain.

In our first Manifesto you have read this affirmation, which raised a hurricane of disapproval: “A racing car is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*.”²

I will leave you an explosive gift, another image that best completes our thought: “Nothing is more beautiful than the steel frame of a house under construction.”

The frame, with girders that^c are the color of danger—landing platforms for airplanes—with its numberless arms that claw and comb out stars and comets, its aerial quarterdecks from which the eye embraces a vaster horizon.

The frame, with its rhythms of pulleys, hammers, and from time to time the harrowing cry and heavy thud of a fallen construction worker, great drop of blood on the pavement . . . the frame of a house in construction symbolizes our burning passion for things under development.

We sneer at things already built and finished, bivouacs of cowardice and sleep! We love only the immense, mobile, and impassioned framework that we can

consolidate, always differently, at every moment, according to the ever-changing moods of the winds, with the red concrete of our bodies set firm by our wills.

You ought to fear everything from the moss-grown Past. All your hope should be in the Future. Put your trust in Progress, which is always right even when it is wrong, because it is movement, life, struggle, hope.

And be sure to avoid quarreling with Progress. It may well be an imposter, a traitor, an assassin, a thief, an arsonist, but Progress is always right.

Yet it is from the Far East that the plainest and most violent of Futurist symbols comes. In Japan they carry on the strangest of trades: the sale of coal made from human bones. All their munitions factories are engaged in producing a new explosive substance, more lethal than any yet known.

This fearsome new mixture has as its principal element coal made from human bones, which has the property of violently absorbing gases and liquids. For this reason countless Japanese merchants are thoroughly exploring the corpse-stuffed Manchurian battlefields.³ In great excitement they make huge excavations, and enormous piles of skeletons multiply in every direction on those broad bellicose horizons. One hundred *tsin* (7 kilograms) of human bones bring in 92 *kopeks*, which isn't too expensive.^d

The Japanese merchants who direct this absolutely Futurist commerce buy no skulls, evidently because they lack the necessary qualities. I share their contempt for those poor caskets of traditional wisdom! . . .^e

Instead the merchants buy great mounds of other bones to send to Japan, and from a distance the Benikou station looks to travelers on the Trans-Siberian railroad⁴ like a gigantic gray and white pyramid: skeletons of heroes who do not hesitate to be crushed in mortars by their own sons, their relatives, or their fellow citizens, to be brutally vomited out by Japanese artillery against the pale faces of^f hostile armies.

Glory to the indomitable ashes of man, that comes to life in cannons! My friends, let us applaud this noble example of synthetic violence. Let us applaud this lovely slap in the face of all the stupid cultivators of sepulchral little kitchen gardens.

Quick! To free the roads, let's cram all our beloved corpses^g into the throats of cannon! . . . Or, better still, let them await the enemy, gently cradled in graceful speeding torpedoes, offering mouthfuls of detonating kisses^h . . .

There will always be more skeletons and so much the better! Then explosive materials will also increase, and this will be just what our flabby world needs!

Unfurl the Futurist banner! Ever higher, to exalt the aggressive, forgetful will of man, and to affirm once again the ridiculous nullity of nostalgic memory, of myopic history, and the dead past.

Do we seem too brutal? That is because we speak under dictation from a new sun, which is certainly not the sun that caressed the placid backs of our grand-

fathers, whose slow steps were sagely measured to the lazy hours of provincial cities and cobblestones mossy with silence.

We breathe an atmosphere that to them would have seemed unbreathable. We have no more time to lose in praying over tombs! And besides, how could we make their sluggish souls comprehend, souls more like Aristotle'sⁱ than our own?

In the inevitable conflicts of peoples soon to come, the conqueror will be the one with the deepest awareness of this difference.

The people that wins will be the one that is the most forgetful, the most Futurist, the most canny, the most mechanical, and hence the richest.

On the eve of this fearful conflict, we Italian Futurists have no desire to see Italy left in an inferior state. That is why we cast overboard the heavy burden of the past that weighs down our swift and warlike vessel.

[PART 2: ELECTRICAL WAR (A FUTURIST VISION-HYPOTHESIS)]

Oh! how I envy the men who will be born on my beautiful peninsula in a hundred years, when it will be wholly revived, shaken up, and bound together by the new electric forces! A haunting vision of the future carries my soul away in delicious gusts.

Look down the entire coastline and see how the immense gray-green sea, no longer evincing the idle and lazy charms of a beloved, prodigal, and faithless courtesan, now seems finally mastered, finally functional and productive. The immense gray-green sea, stupidly adored by the poets, now labors with its raging and furious waters to set in ceaseless motion the countless iron pontoons that energize two million dynamos sited along the beaches and in a thousand working gulfs.

Through a network of metal cables, the double force of the Mediterraneanⁱ and Adriatic seas climbs to the crest of the Apennines to be concentrated in great cages of iron and crystal, mighty accumulators, enormous nerve centers sited here and there along Italy's mountainous dorsal spine. Penetrating into every muscle, artery, and nerve of the peninsula, the energy of distant winds and the rebellions of the sea have been transformed by man's genius into many millions of kilowatts, spreading everywhere yet needing no wires, their fecundity governed by the control panels, like keyboards, throbbing under the fingers of the engineers. They live in high-tension rooms where 100,000 volts vibrate behind the plate-glass windows. They sit before switchboards, with dials to right and left, keyboards, regulators, and commutators, and everywhere the rich lucidity of polished levers. These men have finally won the joy of living behind walls of iron and glass. They have steel furniture, twenty times lighter and less expensive than ours. They have finally been emancipated from the paradigm of weakness and debilitating softness that comes with wood and fabrics, with their rustic ornaments. They write in books of

nickel no thicker than three centimeters, costing no more than eight francs, and still containing one hundred thousand pages.

Because heat and coolness and ventilation are regulated by a flick of the hand,^k they finally know the fullness and resistant solidity of their willpower. Their flesh, forgetful of the germinating roughness of trees, forces itself to resemble the surrounding steel. They launch out in their monoplanes, agile projectiles, to survey the entire irradiating circulation of electricity across the limitless checkerwork of the plains. They visit the centers of secondary activity, polyhedral garages from which motorized plows incessantly leap out to the fields, to till, plow, and irrigate land and crops, electrically.

Using wireless telephones, from high in their monoplanes they regulate the lightning speed of the seminating trains that cross the lowlands for frenetic seeding two or three times a year. Every car carries a gigantic steel arm on its roof that sweeps horizontally as it spreads the fecundating seed in all directions. And it is electricity that hastens its sprouting. All the atmospheric electricity hanging over us, all the incalculable electricity of the earth, has finally been harnessed. Numberless lightning rods and accumulating poles are scattered to infinity in rice fields and gardens, tickling the turgid underbellies of storm clouds and making them drop their stimulating powers down to the roots of the plants.

The miracle, the great miracle dreamed of by passéist poets, is coming to life around us. Everywhere the plants grow in abnormal fashion, from the effects of artificial electricity at high tension. Electric irrigation and drainage. By means of electrolysis and the multiple reactions it sets off, everywhere electricity stimulates vegetal cells in assimilating the nutritive properties of the soil and directly excites vegetative energy. . . . That is why, all around us, trees shoot up from the earth prodigiously and grow, stretching out branches with lightning speed, trees in clusters, small woods, in vast oases. . . . Great forests, immense woodlands spring up, mating the mountainsides, higher and higher, obeying our Futurist wills and scourging the cadaverous old face, pitted with tears, of the ancient Queen of loves.

In our monoplanes we follow the fantastic growth of the forests toward the moon.

Hurrah for those trains that run so fast down there! Freight trains, because only freight still creeps on the earth. Man, having become airborne, sets foot there only once in a while!

Finally the earth gives its full yield. Enclosed in the vast electrical hand of man, it squeezes out all its rich juices, a lovely orange so long promised to our thirst and finally won, finally won!

Hunger and poverty have disappeared. The bitter social question, annihilated. The financial question reduced to a simple matter of accounting for production. Freedom for all to make money and mint shiny coins.

The need for degrading^l labor has ended. Intelligence finally reigns everywhere.

Physical labor ceases to be servile, now having only three goals: hygiene, pleasure, and struggle.

No longer needing to strive for his daily bread, man finally conceives the pure idea of ascensional record-setting. His willpower and ambition grow immense. All surpluses are at play in every human mind. Rivalry strives for the impossible, purifying itself in an atmosphere of danger and speed.

Every intelligence has grown lucid, every instinct has been brought to its greatest splendor, and now they clash with each other for a surplus of pleasure. Because people easily find enough to eat, they can perfect their lives in numberless antagonistic exertions. An anarchy of perfections. No vibration of life is lost, no mental energy wasted.

Electrical energy is inexhaustibly obtained from heat or chemical energy. With the discovery of the wireless telegraph far in the past, the role of dielectrics has increased every day.⁵ All the laws of electricity in rarefied gases have been cataloged. With surprising ease, scientists govern masses of docile electrons. The earth, which we have long known to be entirely composed of tiny electrified particles, is now regulated like an enormous Ruhmkorff generator.⁶ Eyes and other human organs are no longer simple sensory receptors, but true accumulators of electric energy.

Free human intelligence reigns everywhere. It has been a long time since Russia, the last empire,^m ceased to exist. Some anarchists, disguised as coffin-bearers, solemnly carried a coffin full of bombs into the imperial palace, and the czar was blown up with all his obstinate medievalism, like the cork in a last bottle of over-aged champagne.

Twenty-five great syndicates govern the world, furiouslyⁿ fighting over the markets of a superabundant industrial production. And that is why we finally arrive at the first electric war.

No more of those explosives! Now we simply use the turbulent action of the captive gases that throb turbulently beneath the atmosphere's heavy knees.

On a border between two peoples, steel elephants advance from opposite directions, enormous pneumatic machines rolling down their tracks, bristling with shiny trunks trained on the enemy.

Those monstrous drinkers of air are easily driven by mechanics perched high up, like mahouts, in their glassed-in cabins. Their tiny silhouettes are rounded off by a kind of diving suit that lets them make all the oxygen they need for breathing.

Their power,^o refined and consciously directed, knows how to use the affinities and forces of thunderstorms to conquer weariness and sleep.

Suddenly the more mathematical^p of the two armies has thinned out its enemy's atmosphere through the violent suction of its thousand pneumatic machines.

These slip away soon afterward, to right and left along their tracks, making way

for locomotives armed with electric batteries. Now they are pointed toward the border like a cannon. Certain men, or rather masters of primordial forces, control the fire of those batteries, which are shooting great clusters of charged bolts through the gaps of a new sky, unbreathable and empty of all matter.

Can you see them rioting in the blue, those convulsive knots of thundering serpents? They are strangling the countless chimney pots that are brandished by the workers' cities; they snap the seaports' open jaws; they slap the white mountain peaks and sweep over the bile-colored sea, the howling sea that rears and then rises madly to inundate the seaboard cities. Twenty electric explosions in the sky, which is now a limitless glass chamber that has been pneumatically emptied, have summarized the courageous energies of the two rival peoples, with all the fullness and splendor of their awesome interplanetary electric discharges.

Between one battle and another, diseases are being attacked from every side, confined to the last two or three remaining hospitals, which have otherwise become all but useless. Those who are weak and sick, crushed, crumbled, pulverized by the relentless wheels of intense civilization. The green beards of moss-grown streets in the provinces will be shaved clean by the cruel razors of velocity.

Radiotherapists, their faces protected by india-rubber masks, their bodies encased in coveralls woven of lead, india rubber, and bismuth, will train their spectacles down through leaded windows on the piercing, healing danger of radium.

Ah, when will we finally invent masks and coveralls to protect ourselves from the deadly infection of imbecility, the imbecility that you passéists reveal when, naturally, you voice disapproval of the cruel sincerity that spurs my attacks against the old Italy?

You say that people should wash their dirty linen behind closed doors . . . Ah! Bah! We're not painstaking and delicate-handed washerwomen. And as for our infected, pestilential laundry, today we're making a joyful bonfire of it on the loftiest summit of human thought! . . . We spare no one. After having scoffed at every foreigner who despises us⁹ as singers of serenades, as tour guides or beggars, we have forced them to admire us as the most gifted race on earth.

Thanks to us, Italy will cease to be the love-room of the cosmopolitan world. To this end we have undertaken to propagate courage against the epidemic of cowardice, to fabricate artificial optimism against chronic pessimism. Our hatred of Austria; our feverish anticipation of war; our desire to strangle Pan-Germanism!—these are the corollary of our Futurist theorem! . . . And be quiet, you imbeciles! For we are aiming our hearts at you, like revolvers, our hearts gripped in our fingers and loaded with hatred and audacity.

The violent strike of the young gravediggers begins with us. Enough of tombs! Let the cadavers bury themselves, and we will enter into the great Futurist City that points its mighty battery of factory smokestacks against the enveloping army of the Dead, marching along the Milky Way.

THE EXHIBITORS TO THE PUBLIC

GIACOMO BALLA, UMBERTO BOCCIONI, CARLO CARRÀ,
LUIGI RUSSOLO, AND GINO SEVERINI

February 1912

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*The
Exhibitors
to the Public*

We may declare, without boasting, that the first Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painting, recently held in Paris and now brought to London,¹ is the most important exhibition of Italian painting which has hitherto been offered to the judgment of Europe.

For we are young and our art is violently revolutionary.

What we have attempted and accomplished, while attracting around us a large number of skillful imitators and as many plagiarists without talent, has placed us at the head of the European movement in painting by a road different from, yet, in a way, parallel with that followed by the Post-impressionists, Synthetists and Cubists of France, led by their masters, Picasso, Braque, Derain, Metzinger, Le Fauconnier, Gleizes, Léger, Lhote, etc.²

While we admire the heroism of these painters of great worth, who have displayed a laudable contempt for artistic commercialism and a powerful hatred of academicism, we feel ourselves and we declare our art to be absolutely opposed to their art.

They obstinately continue to paint objects motionless, frozen, and all the static aspects of Nature; they worship the traditionalism of Poussin, of Ingres, of Corot, ageing and petrifying their art with an obstinate attachment to the past, which to our eyes remains totally incomprehensible. We, on the contrary, with points of view pertaining essentially to the future, seek for a style of motion, a thing which has never been attempted before us.

Far from resting upon the examples of the Greeks and the Old Masters, we constantly extol individual intuition; our object is to determine completely new laws which may deliver painting from the wavering uncertainty in which it lingers.

Our desire, to give as far as possible to our pictures a solid construction, can never bear us back to any tradition whatsoever. Of that we are firmly convinced.

All the truths learnt in the schools or in the studios are abolished for us. Our hands are free enough and pure enough to start everything afresh.

It is indisputable that several of the aesthetic declarations of our French comrades display a sort of masked academicism.

Is it not, indeed, a return to the Academy to declare that the subject, in painting, is of perfectly insignificant value?

We declare, on the contrary, that there can be no modern painting without the starting point of an absolutely modern sensation, and no one can contradict us when we state that *painting* and *sensation* are two inseparable words.

If our pictures are futurist, it is because they are the result of absolutely Futurist conceptions, ethical, aesthetic, political, and social.

To paint from the posing model is an absurdity, an act of mental cowardice, even if the model be translated upon the picture in linear, spherical, or cubic forms.

To lend an allegorical significance to an ordinary nude figure, deriving the meaning of the picture from the objects held by the model or from those which are arranged about him, is to our mind the evidence of a traditional and academic mentality.

This method, very similar to that employed by the Greeks, by Raphael, by Titian, by Veronese, must necessarily displease us.

While we repudiate impressionism, we emphatically condemn the present reaction which, in order to kill impressionism, brings back painting to old academic forms.

It is only possible to react against impressionism, by surpassing it.

Nothing is more absurd than to fight it by adopting the pictural laws which preceded it.

The points of contact which the quest of style may have with the so-called *classic art* do not concern us.

Others will seek, and will, no doubt, discover, these analogies which in any case cannot be looked upon as a return to methods, conceptions and values transmitted by classical painting.

A few examples will illustrate our theory.

We see no difference between one of those nude figures commonly called *artistic* and an anatomical plate. There is, on the other hand, an enormous difference between one of these nude figures and our futurist conception of the human body.

Perspective, such as it is understood by the majority of painters, has for us the very same value which they lend to an engineer's design.

The simultaneousness of states of mind in the work of art: that is the intoxicating aim of our art.³

Let us explain again by examples. In painting a person on a balcony, seen from inside the room, we do not limit the scene to what the square frame of the window renders visible; but we try to render the sum total of visual sensations which the person on the balcony has experienced; the sun-bathed throng in the street, the double row of houses which stretch to right and left, the beflowered balconies, etc.⁴ This implies the simultaneousness of the ambient, and, therefore, the dislocation and dismemberment of objects, the scattering and fusion of details, freed from accepted logic, and independent from one another.

In order to make the spectator live in the center of the picture, as we express it in our manifesto,⁵ the picture must be the synthesis of *what one remembers* and of *what one sees*.

You must render the invisible which stirs and lives beyond intervening obstacles, what we have on the right, on the left, and behind us, and not merely the small square of life artificially compressed, as it were, by the wings of a stage.

We have declared in our manifesto that what must be rendered is the *dynamic sensation*,⁶ that is to say, the particular rhythm of each object, its inclination, its movement, or, to put it more exactly, its interior force.

It is usual to consider the human being in its different aspects of motion or stillness, of joyous excitement or grave melancholy.

What is overlooked is that all inanimate objects display, by their lines, calmness or frenzy, sadness or gaiety. These various tendencies lend to the lines of which they are formed a sense and character of weighty stability or of aerial lightness.

Every object reveals by its lines how it would resolve itself were it to follow the tendencies of its forces.

This decomposition is not governed by fixed laws but varies according to the characteristic personality of the object and the emotions of the onlooker.

Furthermore, every object influences its neighbor, not by reflections of light (the foundation of *impressionistic primitivism*), but by a real competition of lines and by real conflicts of planes, following the emotional law which governs the picture (the foundation of *Futurist primitivism*).

With the desire to intensify the aesthetic emotions by blending, so to speak, the painted canvas with the soul of the spectator, we have declared that the latter "*must in future be placed in the center of the picture.*"⁷

He shall not be present at, but participate in the action. If we paint the phases of a riot, the crowd bustling with uplifted fists and the noisy onslaughts of cavalry are translated upon the canvas in sheaves of lines corresponding with all the conflicting forces following the general law of violence of the picture.⁸

These *force-lines* must encircle and involve the spectator so that he will in a manner be forced to struggle himself with the persons in the picture.

All objects, in accordance with what the painter Boccioni happily terms *physical transcendentalism*,⁹ tend to the infinite by their *force-lines*, the continuity of which is measured by our intuition.

It is these *force-lines* that we must draw in order to lead back the work of art to true painting. We interpret nature by rendering these objects upon the canvas as the beginnings or the prolongations of the rhythms impressed upon our sensibility by these very objects.

After having, for instance, reproduced in a picture the right shoulder or the right ear of a figure, we deem it totally vain and useless to reproduce the left shoulder or the left ear. We do not draw sounds, but their vibrating intervals. We do not paint diseases, but their symptoms and their consequences.

We may further explain our idea by a comparison drawn from the evolution of music.

Not only have we radically abandoned the motif fully developed according to its determined and, therefore, artificial equilibrium, but we suddenly and purposely intersect each motif with one or more other motifs of which we never give the full development but merely the initial, central, or final notes.

As you see, there is with us not merely variety, but chaos and clashing of rhythms, totally opposed to one another, which we nevertheless assemble into a new harmony.

We thus arrive at what we call the *painting of states of mind*.¹⁰

In the pictural description of the various states of mind of a leave-taking, perpendicular lines, undulating and as it were worn out, clinging here and there to silhouettes of empty bodies, may well express languidness and discouragement.

Confused and trepidating lines, either straight or curved, mingled with the outlined hurried gestures of people calling one another, will express a sensation of chaotic excitement.

On the other hand, horizontal lines, fleeting, rapid, and jerky, brutally cutting into half lost profiles of faces or crumbling and rebounding fragments of landscape, will give the tumultuous feelings of the persons going away.

It is practically impossible to express in words the essential values of painting.

The public must also be convinced that in order to understand aesthetic sensations to which one is not accustomed, it is necessary to forget entirely one's intellectual culture, not in order to *assimilate* the work of art, but to *deliver one's self up* to it heart and soul.

We are beginning a new epoch of painting.

We are sure henceforward of realizing conceptions of the highest importance and the most unquestionable originality. Others will follow who, with equal daring and determination, will conquer those summits of which we can only catch a glimpse. That is why we have proclaimed ourselves to be the *primitives of a completely renovated sensitiveness*.¹¹

In several of the pictures which we are presenting to the public, vibration and motion endlessly multiply each object. We have thus justified our famous statement regarding the "*running horse which has not four legs, but twenty*."¹²

One may remark, also, in our pictures, spots, lines, zones of color which do not correspond to any reality, but which in accordance with a law of our interior mathematics, musically prepare and enhance the emotion of the spectator.

We thus create a sort of emotive ambience, seeking by intuition the affinities and the links which exist between the exterior (concrete) scene and the interior (ab-

stract) emotion. Those lines, those spots, those zones of color, apparently illogical and meaningless, are the mysterious keys to our pictures.

We shall no doubt be taxed with an excessive desire to define and express in tangible form the subtleties which unite our abstract interior with the concrete exterior.

Yet, could we leave an unfettered liberty of understanding to the public which always sees as it has been taught to see, through eyes warped by routine?

We go our way, destroying each day in ourselves and in our pictures the realistic forms and the obvious details which have served us to construct a bridge of understanding between ourselves and the public. In order that the crowd may enjoy our marvelous spiritual world, of which it is ignorant, we give it the material sensation of that world.

We thus reply to the coarse and simplistic curiosity which surrounds us by the brutally realistic aspects of our primitivism.

Conclusion: Our Futurist painting embodies three new conceptions of painting:

1. That which solves the question of volumes in a picture, as opposed to the liquefaction of objects favored by the vision of the impressionists.
2. That which leads us to translate objects according to the *force lines* which distinguish them, and by which is obtained an absolutely new power of objective poetry.
3. That (the natural consequence of the other two) which would give the emotional ambience of a picture, the synthesis of the various abstract rhythms of very object, from which there springs a fount of pictural lyricism hitherto unknown.

MANIFESTO OF THE FUTURIST WOMAN (RESPONSE TO F. T. MARINETTI)

VALENTINE DE SAINT-POINT

25 March 1912

We intend to glorify war — the only hygiene of the world — militarism, patriotism, the destructive gesture of emancipators, beautiful ideas worth dying for, and contempt for woman.

— First Manifesto of Futurism¹

Humanity is mediocre. The majority of women are neither superior nor inferior to the majority of men. They are equal. Both merit the same disdain.

The mass of humanity was never anything other than the cultivated field from which the geniuses and heroes of both sexes have sprung. But in humanity, as in nature, there are certain moments that are more propitious to their flourishing. In the summer of humanity, when the earth is warmed by the sun, geniuses and heroes abound. We are standing on the verge of springtime: we need an outpouring of sunlight, which is to say an outpouring of blood.

Women, like men, are not responsible for that sense of blockage that the truly young, rich in blood and energy, are suffering from.

IT'S ABSURD TO DIVIDE HUMANITY INTO WOMEN AND MEN; it is composed only of FEMININITY and MASCULINITY.

Every superman, every hero to the extent that he has epic value, every genius to the extent that he is powerful, is the prodigious expression of a race and an era precisely because he is simultaneously composed of feminine and masculine elements, femininity and masculinity: which is to say, a complete being.

An individual exclusively male is nothing more than a brute; an individual exclusively feminine is nothing more than a girl. There are moments in the life of humanity, collectivities, just as there are in individuals. Fecund periods, in which a greater number of geniuses and heroes spring forth from a cultural terrain in ferment, are periods rich in masculinity and femininity.

Periods which had wars that produced only a few representative heroes, because its epic blast annihilated them, were periods exclusively virile in character; periods that have denied the heroic instinct, looked back toward the past, and annihilated themselves in dreams of peace, were ones in which femininity dominated.

We live at the end of one such period. WHAT WE MOST NEED, WHETHER MEN OR WOMEN, IS VIRILITY.

That is why Futurism, with all its exaggerations, is right. To restore a certain virility to our races benumbed with femininity, we have to compel them to virility, even to brutality.

On women and men equally we must impose a new doctrine of energy in order to arrive at a period of superior humanity.

Every woman must possess not only feminine virtues, but also masculine ones; otherwise she is a girl. And the man who has only male force, without intuition, is just a brute. But in the period of femininity in which we live, only the opposite exaggeration will be healthy. AND IT IS THE BRUTE THAT MUST BE PROPOSED AS A MODEL.

No more women who come with arms full of flowers and cling to soldiers' knees on the morning of departure; nurses who perpetuate weaknesses and senectitude, domesticating men for their personal pleasures or material needs! No more women

who make children only for themselves, shielding them from every danger, every adventure, all joy; who quarrel with their daughters over love or with their sons over war! No more women, octopuses of the hearth, with tentacles that drain the blood from men and turn children into anemics; WOMEN BESTIALLY AMOROUS, WHO DESTROY THEIR POWER OF RENEWAL IN DESIRE!

Women are the Erinyes, Amazons, Semiramides, Joan of Arcs, Jeanne Hachettes; the Judiths and Charlotte Cordays, the Cleopatras and the Messalinas,² the warriors who fight more ferociously than men, the lovers who incite, the destroyers who contribute to racial selection by smashing the fragile, acting through pride or desperation, "the desperation that gives the heart all its power."³

May the coming wars elicit heroines similar to the magnificent Caterina Sforza who, while her city was under siege, looked down from the heights of the walls at the enemy forces threatening to kill her son in order to force her to surrender and showed them her sex, screaming: "Go ahead and kill him! I still have the mold for making more of them!"⁴

Yes, "the world is rotten with wisdom,"⁵ but by instinct, woman is not wise, is not pacifist, is not good. Because she lacks a sense of measure, in somnolent periods of humanity she becomes too wise, too pacifist, too good. Her intuition and imagination are at the same time her strength and her weakness.

She is the individuality of the crowd: she makes up a procession for heroes, or, if heroes are lacking, gives support to imbeciles.

According to the Apostle, that kindler of the spiritual realm, it is woman, the kindler of the carnal realm, who immolates or cures, causes blood to flow or stops it, is warrior or nurse. The same woman in the same era, depending on the ideas that surround her or cluster around the events of the day, will lay down on railroad tracks to prevent soldiers from departing for war, or will throw herself around the neck of a victorious sporting champion.

That is why no revolution should leave her untouched; that is why we must address her, rather than hold her in contempt. This is the most fecund conquest that we might achieve; it's the most enthusiastic and, in its turn, will multiply into other recruits.

But let us leave Feminism aside. Feminism is a political error. Feminism is an intellectual error on the part of women, an error which their instinct will eventually recognize.

IT ISN'T NECESSARY TO GIVE WOMEN ANY OF THE RIGHTS DEMANDED BY FEMINISM. TO ACCORD THEM THESE RIGHTS WOULDN'T PRODUCE ANY OF THE DISORDERS SOUGHT BY THE FUTURISTS, BUT ON THE CONTRARY WOULD BRING ABOUT AN EXCESS OF ORDER.

Giving duties to women is equivalent to making them lose all their fecund potency. Feminism's reasoning and logic will not make her lose her primordial fatality; it can only falsify and force her to manifest herself by means of deviations that lead to still worse errors.

For centuries people have been tilting against woman's instinct, and nothing is more esteemed in her than grace and tenderness. Anemic man, eager to preserve his own blood, doesn't ask her to do more than be a nurse. Woman has allowed herself to be tamed. But cry out a new slogan, launch a shout of war, and woman, once again riding upon her instincts with joy, will proceed to unexpected conquests.

When you take up your weapons, women will furbish them. Once again she will contribute to the selection of the race. If women have not always known how to discern genius, since they have judged by passing renown, they have always known how to reward the strongest, the victor, he who triumphs with his own muscles and courage. Woman cannot err concerning this superiority, which imposes itself brutally.

LET WOMAN REACQUIRE THE CRUELTY AND VIOLENCE THAT LETS HER FLY INTO A RAGE OVER THE DEFEATED, PRECISELY BECAUSE THEY ARE DEFEATED, up to the point of mutilating them. Stop preaching spiritual justice to women, who have tried to acquire it in vain. WOMEN, ONCE AGAIN YOU SHOULD BECOME SUBLIMELY UNJUST, LIKE ALL THE FORCES OF NATURE.

Freed from every constraint, with your instincts rediscovered, you will retake your place alongside the Elements, setting fatality in opposition to the conscious will of man. Be the ferocious and egoist mother, WHO JEALOUSLY GUARDS HER CHILDREN, possessing what are called rights and duties over them, AS LONG AS THEY HAVE NEED OF HER PROTECTION.

Liberated from the family, let man live his own life of audacity and conquest as soon as he possesses physical strength, whether a son or a father. The man who sows does not stop at the first furrow that he fructifies.

In my *Poems of Pride*, as in *Thirst and Mirages*,⁶ I have dismissed sentimentalism as a despicable weakness, because it hamstring forces and energies and immobilizes them.

LUST IS A FORCE, for it destroys the weak, excites the strong to disperse energy, and hence contributes to their renewal. Every heroic people is sensual: for them woman is the most exalting trophy.

Woman must be either mother or lover. True mothers will always be mediocre lovers, and lovers will be insufficient mothers by virtue of excess. Equal in their rapport with life, these two women complete each another. With the son of the past, the mother who receives a boy makes the son of the future. The lover dispenses desire that transports us into the future.

WE CONCLUDE:

The woman who keeps a man at her feet with tears and sentimentalism is inferior to the prostitute who impels a man, by prompting him to boast, to preserve his domination over the depths of the city with a revolver in his hand. This woman, at least, cultivates energy that could eventually serve better causes.

WOMEN, TOO LONG CORRUPTED BY MORALS AND CONVENTIONS, RETURN TO YOUR SUBLIME INSTINCT; TO VIOLENCE AND CRUELTY.

For the fatal enhancement of the race, while men are warring and struggling, you must make children; it is among them, in an act of sacrifice to the cause of Heroism, that you must play the part of Destiny.

Don't raise them for yourself, which is tantamount to diminishing them, but let them grow in ample freedom, through complete development.

Instead of crushing man into bondage to EXECRABLE SENTIMENTAL NEEDS, impel your children and your men to surpass themselves. It is you who make them. You have complete power over them.

YOU OWE HUMANITY SOME HEROES. NOW MAKE THEM!

Paris, 25 March 1912
Avenue de Tourville, 19

FUTURIST SCULPTURE UMBERTO BOCCIONI

11 April 1912

The sculpture to be seen on monuments and in exhibitions in all the cities of Europe offers such a pitiable spectacle of barbarity, ineptitude, and monotonous imitation that my Futurist eyes recoil from it with the deepest disgust!

Sculpture in every country is dominated by the blind and bovine imitation of formulas inherited from the past, imitation that is encouraged by the double cowardice of tradition and facility. Latin countries are bowed down under the opprobrious burden of the Greeks and Michelangelo, a burden borne in Belgium and France with a certain seriousness and talent, in Italy with grotesque imbecility. In the Germanic countries we find nothing but a kind of gothicky, Hellenophilic fatuity which is mass-produced in Berlin or feebly reproduced with effeminate fuss by the German academics of Munich. In Slavic countries, on the other hand, we have a confused clash between an Archaic Greek and Nordic and Oriental monstrosities. There is an unformed mass of accumulated influences, from the excesses of abstruse Asiatic details to the infantile and grotesque ingeniousness of Lapps and Eskimos.¹

In all these sculptures, even in those which have a breath of bold innovation, we see the perpetuation of the same old kind of misapprehension: an artist copies a nude or studies classical statues with the naive conviction that here he will find a style that corresponds to modern sensibility without stepping outside the traditional conception of sculptural form. That conception, along with its famous “ideal of beauty” which everyone speaks of while genuflecting piously, is never separated from the period of Phidias and its later decadence.²

It is almost inexplicable that thousands of sculptors can go on, generation after generation, constructing puppet figures without ever asking themselves why the sculpture halls arouse only boredom or horror—that is, when they are not absolutely deserted; or why monuments are unveiled in squares all over the world to the accompaniment of general mirth or incomprehension. The same situation doesn’t exist in painting, since painting is continually undergoing renewal, a process which, however slow, still provides the clearest condemnation of all the plagiarized and sterile work being turned out by all the sculptors of our time.

Sculpture must learn one absolute truth: to construct and try to create, now, with elements that have been stolen from the Egyptians, the Greeks, or Michelangelo, is like trying to draw water from a dry well with a bottomless bucket.

No art can renew itself unless it renews its essence, which lies in the vision and the conception of the lines and masses which form its arabesque. Art does not become an expression of our own times merely by reproducing the external aspects of contemporary life; and hence sculpture as it has been understood by artists of the last and present centuries is a monstrous anachronism.

Sculpture has not progressed because of the limits which have been imposed on it by the academic concept of the nude. An art that must undress a man or woman in order to produce any emotive effect is a dead art! Painting has renewed itself, has broadened and deepened its scope, by studying how landscape and the environment simultaneously play on the human figure and on objects, thereby achieving our Futurist **interpenetration of planes** (“Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” 11 April 1910).³ Sculpture may also be able to find new sources of inspiration along these lines and hence renew its style and extend its plastic capacities to the kind of objects, which up till now a kind of barbaric crudeness has persuaded us to believe were divided up or intangible—and therefore, inexpressible in plastic form.

We must take the object which we wish to create and begin with its central core in order to uncover the new laws and new forms which link it invisibly but mathematically to **external plastic infinity** and to **internal plastic infinity**. This new plastic art will then be a translation, whether in plaster, bronze, glass, wood, or any other material, of those atmospheric planes which bind and intersect things. This vision, which I have called **physical transcendentalism** (“Lecture on Futurist Painting,”

delivered to the Artistic Circle in Rome; May 1911),⁴ will provide the plastic arts with those sympathetic effects and mysterious affinities which create formal and reciprocal influences between the different planes of an object.

Sculpture, therefore, must make objects live by showing their extensions in space as perceptible, systematic, and plastic. No one still believes that one object finishes off where another begins or that there is anything that surrounds us—a bottle, a car, a house, a hotel, a street—which doesn't cut into and sectionalize us with its arabesque of curves and straight lines.

Two attempts have been made to renew modern sculpture: one was concerned with the decorative side of style; the other merely with the plastic side—materials. The former has remained a nameless and disorganized movement, has lacked coordinating technical skill, and, since it has been too much tied up with the economic necessities of the building trade, it has produced only pieces of traditional sculpture, which were more or less decoratively synthesized and framed by architectural decorative motifs or moldings. All houses and blocks of flats with a claim to modernity incorporate essays of this kind in marble, cement, or beaten metal.

The second attempt has been more attractive, more disinterested and poetic, but too isolated and fragmentary. It has lacked any synthesis of thought which might have resulted in the formulation of a law. To make new art it is not enough to believe in it fervently; you must identify normative claims that point toward the path to be taken and then be prepared to advocate them. Here I am referring to the genius of Medardo Rosso, an Italian, the only great modern sculptor who has tried to open up the field of sculpture by giving a plastic representation to the forces of the environment and the atmospheric links that bind them to the subject.⁵

Of the other three great contemporary sculptors, Constantin Meunier has contributed nothing in the way of fresh approaches to sculpture.⁶ His statues are nearly always a clever fusion of Greek heroism and the humble athleticism of the docker, the sailor, the miner. His sense of the construction and plasticity of a statue or bas-relief still belongs to the world of the Parthenon and the classical hero, in spite of the fact that he was the first artist who tried to create and elevate subjects previously disdained or given only mediocre, realistic interpretation.

Bourdelle's sculpture—a mass of abstract architectonic forms—shows a severity which is almost fury.⁷ His temperament is that of the grimly passionate and sincere experimenter, but unfortunately he does not know how to free himself from certain archaic influences and the examples of all those unnamed masons who made our Gothic cathedrals.

Rodin's mental agility is much greater,⁸ and it enables him to move on from the Impressionism of his Balzac portrait to the uncertainty of his *Burghers of Calais* and all his other Michelangelesque sins. He brings to his sculpture a restless inspira-

tion, a grandiose lyrical impetus, which would have been truly modern if Michelangelo and Donatello had not already possessed them in almost the identical form four hundred years ago, or if his gifts had been deployed to animate an utterly new reality of sculpture.

So, in the works of these great geniuses we find influences from different periods: Greek for Meunier; Gothic for Bourdelle; and the Italian Renaissance for Rodin.

The work of Medardo Rosso, on the other hand, is profound, revolutionary, yet deliberately limited in range. It depicts no heroes or symbols; but the planes in the forehead of a woman or child, which betray a hint of spatial liberation, will have far greater importance in cultural history than that with which he has been credited in our times. Unfortunately the impressionistic imperatives of his experiment have limited his researches to a species of high and low relief, and he still conceives the figure as something of a world in itself, with a traditional foundation and imbued with narrative aims.

Medardo Rosso's revolution, then, although very important, springs from extrinsic, pictorial concepts, and neglects the problem of constructing planes. The sensitive touch of his thumb, imitating the lightness of Impressionist brushwork, gives a sense of vibrant immediacy to his works, but also necessitates a rapid execution from life which deprives a work of art of universality. Consequently he has the same merits and defects as the Impressionist painters; and though it is from their experiments that our own aesthetic revolution springs, we shall move away to a diametrically opposed position.

In sculpture as in painting, renewal is impossible without looking for a **style of movement**, that is, giving a systematic and definitive synthesis to what remained fragmentary, accidental, and hence analytical in the approach of the Impressionists. Systematizing lights' vibrations and the interpenetrations of planes will produce a Futurist sculpture, whose basis will be architectural, and not just as a construction of masses but in the way that the sculptural block itself will contain the architectonic elements of the **sculptural environment** in which the object exists.

In this way we shall be producing a sculpture of **environment**.

A piece of Futurist sculpture will contain all the marvelous mathematical and geometrical elements that constitute the objects of our age. And these objects will not be merely placed near or alongside a statue, like explanatory attributes or detached decorative elements, but, following the laws of a new conception of harmony they will be inserted inside the muscular lines of a body. In this way, the cogs of a machine might easily emerge from the armpits of a mechanic, or the lines of a table could cut a reader's head in two, or a book with its fanned-out pages could intersect the reader's stomach.

Traditionally, a statue cuts into, and stands out from, the atmospheric background of the place where it is on view; Futurist painting has gone beyond this antiquated concept which emphasizes the figure's rhythmic continuity of lines, its isolation from its background and the **invisible enveloping space**. "Futurist Poetry," according to the poet Marinetti, "having already destroyed traditional metrics and created free verse, now destroys the Latin period and its syntax. Futurist poetry is a spontaneous uninterrupted flow of analogies, each synthesized in an essential noun." Ergo: "the wireless imagination and words-in-freedom."⁹ The Futurist music of Balilla Pratella is also smashing the chronometric tyranny of rhythm.

Why should sculpture lag behind, restricted by laws which no one has the right to impose? Let's turn everything upside down and proclaim the **absolute and complete abolition of finite lines and the self-contained statue. Let's open up the figure and let it enclose the environment**. We declare that the environment must form part of the plastic whole, a world of its own, with its own laws: so that the pavement can jump up to your table, so that your head might be crossing the street while your lamp is twining a web of plaster rays from one house to the next.

We want the entire visible world to tumble down on top of us, merging and creating a harmony on purely intuitive grounds; a leg, an arm or an object has no importance except as an element in the plastic rhythm of the whole, and can be eliminated, not because we are trying to imitate a Greek or Roman fragment, but in obedience to the harmonious whole the artist wants to create. A sculptural whole, like a painting, should not resemble anything but itself, since figures and objects exist in art without regard to the logic of their appearance in the world.

Thus a figure may have one arm clothed and the other unclothed, or the different lines of a vase of flowers can course around freely between the lines of a hat and those of a neck.

Thus transparent planes, glass, strips of metal sheeting, wire, streetlamps or house lights may all indicate planes, motions, tones, and semitones of a new reality.

In the same way, a new intuitive shading of white, gray, black, can add to the emotive power of surfaces, while the hue of a colored plane will violently accentuate the abstract meaning of a plastic fact.

What we have said about **force-lines** in painting ("The Exhibitors to the Public," catalogue of the first Futurist Exhibition, Paris, February 1912)¹⁰ can also be applied to sculpture—bringing the static muscular line to life in the dynamic force-line. In the muscular line, the straight line must be given pride of place since it is the only one which corresponds to the internal simplicity of the synthesis which we value, in opposition to the external and baroque character of analysis.

Yet the straight line will not lead us to imitate the Egyptians, primitives, or savages, as it has some sculptors desperately trying to free themselves from the holds of the Greeks. Our straight line will be living and trembling; it will lend itself to the demands made by the limitless expressiveness of matter, and its bare, fundamental severity will be the symbol of the severity of steel in the lines of modern machinery.

Finally, we can affirm that in sculpture the artist must not be afraid of any new method of achieving REALITY. No fear is more stupid than one which makes the artist nervous about departing from the art in which he works. There is neither painting nor sculpture, neither music nor poetry: there is only creation! Hence if a composition requires a particular rhythmic movement to add to or contrast with the circumscribed rhythms of the SCULPTURAL WHOLE (the basic requirement of any work of art), you may use any kind of contraption to give an adequate sense of rhythmic movement to its planes or lines.

We cannot forget that the swing of a pendulum or the moving hands of a clock, the in-and-out motion of a piston inside a cylinder, the engaging and disengaging of two cogwheels, the fury of a flywheel or the whirling of a propeller, are all plastic and pictorial elements which any Futurist work of sculpture should take advantage of. The opening and closing of a valve creates a rhythm which is just as beautiful to look at as the movements of an eyelid, but is also infinitely more modern.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Sculpture must seek an abstract reconstruction of planes and volumes in order to determine its forms, not representational value.
2. **Abolish in sculpture** as in all other art **the traditional "sublime" in subject matter.**
3. Sculpture must suppress any attempt at realistic, narrational structures; it must affirm the absolute necessity of using all elements of reality in order to rediscover the basic elements of plastic sensitivity. By perceiving bodies and their parts as **plastic zones**, our Futurist sculptural composition will contain planes of wood or metal, either still or in mechanical motion, to stand for an object; spherical fibrous forms for hair, semicircles of glass for a vase, iron wires and netting for an atmospheric plane, etc.
4. Destroy the literary and traditional dignity of marble and bronze. Reject the idea that one material must be used exclusively in the construction of a sculptural whole. Insist that even twenty different types of material can be used in a single work of art in order to achieve its plastic feeling. To mention a few examples: glass, wood, cardboard, iron, cement, hair, leather, cloth, mirrors, electric lights, and so on.

5. Maintain that, in the intersecting planes of a book and the corner of a table, in the straight lines of a match, in a window frame there is more truth than in all the knotted muscles, all the breasts and buttocks of heroes and Venuses who still inspire so much of modern sculptural idiocy.
6. Only use very modern subjects in order to arrive at the discovery of new **plastic ideas**.
7. Only the straight line can lead to the primitive purity of a new architectonic structure of masses or sculptural zones.
8. There can be no renewal unless it is through **environmental sculpture**, for that means that plastic form can develop and extend into space in order to **model the atmosphere** which surrounds our objects.
9. The thing we are creating is only a bridge between an **external plastic infinity** and an **internal plastic infinity**; hence objects really never come to an end, but intersect each other with infinite combinations of attraction or repulsion.
10. We must destroy the systematic nude and the traditional concept behind statuary and monuments.
11. We must courageously refuse to accept commissions for any work, no matter how high a price is offered, which does not, in itself, involve a pure construction of plastic elements which have been completely renewed.

TECHNICAL MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST

LITERATURE F. T. MARINETTI

11 May 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 at 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. **It is imperative to use verbs 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 inconceivable within 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 by another noun, with no conjunction between them, to which it is related by analogy. Example: man—torpedo boat, woman—bay, crowd—surf, piazza—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, to merge the object directly into the image which 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 machinegun 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.³ 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.⁴ 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.⁵ 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* which 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*)⁶

In some cases it will be imperative to join images two by two, like those chained iron balls which 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* 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 . . .⁷

And here are three more nets of images:

Around the well of Bumeliana, beneath the thick olive trees, three camels squatting comfortably in the sand gurgled with contentment, like rain pipes, 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*)⁸

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 which interests us as something in itself, with its incomprehensible and inhuman cohesion of molecules or electrons which 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 a motor, 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 mechanical piano's keyboard. Film offers us the dance of an object that disintegrates and re-composes 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:

1. **Noise** (a manifestation of the dynamism of objects);
2. **Weight** (the capacity for flight in objects);
3. **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 which 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 which 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 the 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**.⁹ 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 which 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, 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!**

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**, prolongation which 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 seeming irreducible divide that separates our human flesh from the metal of motors.

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.

A RESPONSE TO OBJECTIONS F. T. MARINETTI

11 August 1912

I shall not reply to the jokes and countless ironic comments, but to the skeptical questions and important objections which have been directed by the European press against my “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature.”

1. Those who have correctly understood what I meant by “to hate intelligence” have wished to discern in that expression some influence from the philosophy of Bergson.¹ But evidently they are not aware that my first epic poem, “The Conquest of the Stars” (published in 1902), contained these three verses from Dante on the first page, serving as an epigraph:

O insane labor of mortals,
How defective are *sylogisms*
Which *make men fold down their wings*. (*Paradiso*, Canto 11)²

Or this thought from Edgar Allan Poe, who describes:

“. . . the poetic spirit—that faculty more sublime than any other, as we already know,—which, since truths of the greatest importance could not have been revealed to us except by means of that Analogy whose eloquence is irrefutable to the imagination, says nothing to weak and solitary reason.” (Edgar Allan Poe, “Colloquy of Monos and Una”)³

Long before Bergson, these two creative geniuses coincided with my own temperament in distinctly affirming their hate for creeping, weak, and solitary intelligence, and according all powers to the intuitive and divining imagination.

2. When I speak of intuition and intelligence, I do not intend to speak of two domains that are distinct and wholly separate. Every creative mind has experienced how, during the labor of creation, the intuitive and intellectual dimensions have been fused together.

It is impossible, therefore, to specify exactly the point where unconscious inspiration leaves off and lucid will begins. Sometimes the latter suddenly gen-

erates inspiration, and sometimes instead it accompanies it. After several hours of unremitting and painful work, the creative mind is suddenly freed from the weight of all obstacles and becomes, in some way, the prey of a strange spontaneity of conception and execution. The hand that writes seems to separate from the body and freely leaves far behind the brain, which, having itself in some way become detached from the body and airborne, looks down from on high with terrible lucidity upon the unforeseen phrases emitted by the pen.

Does this domineering brain look passively on, or does it instead direct the leaps of fantasy that excite the hand? It is impossible to know. In such moments I have observed, from a physiological standpoint, little more than a great void in the stomach.

By *intuition*, I mean a state of mind almost entirely intuitive and unconscious. By *intelligence*, I mean a state of mind which is almost entirely intellective and a product of will.

3. The ideal kind of poetry which I dream of, which would be none other than the uninterrupted flow of the second terms of analogies, has nothing whatever to do with allegory. Allegory, in fact, is the succession of the second terms of several analogies that are all connected together *logically*. Sometimes, too, allegory can be the second term of an analogy which has been minutely developed and described.

On the contrary, I aspire to render the illogical succession, no longer explanatory but intuitive, of the second terms of many different analogies which are all disconnected and quite often opposed to one another.

4. All purebred stylists have easily been able to affirm that the adverb is not just a word that modifies a verb, adjective, or other adverb, but also a musical ligament that unites the different sounds of a sentence or period.
5. I believe it necessary to suppress the adjective and the adverb because they are simultaneously, and also on different occasions, many-colored festoons, draperies of subtle shading, pedestals, parapets, and balustrades of the traditional period.

It is precisely through the deliberate use of the adjective and the adverb that writers give that melodious and monotonous rocking effect to the sentence, its moving and interrogative rise and its calming and gradual fall, like a wave on the beach. With an emotion that is always identical, the reader's spirit must momentarily hold its breath and tremble, beg to be calmed, until at last it can breathe freely again when the wave of words falls back, with a final punctuation of gravel and a last little echo.

The adjective and the adverb have a triple function, which is at once explanatory, decorative, and musical, by means of which they indicate the pace—light

or heavy, slow or rapid—of the noun which is moving in the sentence. By turns, they are the noun's cudgel or its crutch. Their length and their weight govern the rhythm of a style which, necessarily, is always under guard, and they prevent it from reproducing the imagination's flight.

For example: "A young and beautiful woman walks rapidly over the marble floor." The traditional mind hastens to explain that the woman is young and beautiful, even though the intuition always gives simply a beautiful movement. Later, the traditional mind announces that the woman is walking rapidly, and at last it adds that she is walking on a marble floor.

This purely explanatory procedure, devoid of surprise and imposed in advance of any arabesques, zigzags, or leaps of thought, no longer has any reason to exist. Whoever proceeds in just the opposite manner is almost certain not to deceive himself.

Further, it is undeniable that abolishing the adjective and the adverb will give back to the noun its value as something essential, total, and typical.

In addition, I have absolute faith in the feeling of horror that I experience when faced with a noun that strides forward yet is followed by its adjective, as if by some rag or puppy. Yes, sometimes the dog is held back on the leash of an elegant adverb. Sometimes the noun has an adjective in front and an adverb in back, like the two signboards of a sandwich man. But these too are unbearable spectacles.

6. For these reasons I have recourse to the abstract aridity of mathematical signs, which are used to render quantitative relations by epitomizing a longer explanation, without any fillers, and avoiding the dangerous mania for wasting time in all the crannies of the sentence, in the minute labors of the mosaic maker, the jeweler, or the shoeshine boy.
7. Words freed from punctuation will irradiate one another, magnetic waves intersecting one another according to the ceaseless dynamism of thought. A shorter or longer blank space will tell the reader what are the pauses or the brief naps of intuition. Capital letters will tell the reader which nouns synthesize a dominant analogy.
8. The destruction of the traditional period, the abolition of the adjective, the adverb, and punctuation, will necessarily bring about the collapse of that well-known type of harmonious style, with the result that the Futurist poet will finally use all the onomatopoeias, including the most cacophonous ones, that reproduce the countless noises of matter in motion.

All these elastic intuitions, with which I am supplementing my "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," sprang to mind while I was creating my new Futurist work. Here is one of the more significant fragments from it:

Battle
Weight + Smell

Afternoon 3/4 flutes groans dog-days **boomboom** alarm Gargaresch bursting
trembling march Tinkling backpacks rifles hooves nails cannons manes wheels
cartridge-boxes Jews pancakes bread-with-olive-oil sing-song shops whiffs clean-
ing eye-rheum stink cinnamon mold flux and reflux pepper quarrel
filth turbine orange-trees-in-blossom filigree poverty dice chess cards jasmine
+ ground-nutmeg + rose arabesque mosaic carcass stings tapping ma-
chine guns = gravel + undertow + frogs Tinkling backpacks rifles cannons scrap-
iron atmosphere = lead + lava + 300 stench + 50 perfumes pavement mat-
tress debris horse-dung carcasses flick-flack to crowd together camels donkeys
boom-booom sewer Souk-of-the-silversmiths maze silk azure galabieh purple
oranges moucharabieh arches to dismount crossroads piazzetta teeming

tannery shoeshine-boy gandouras burnous swarming to sift to sweat poly-
chromia envelopment excrescences wounds foxholes debris demolition phe-
nol lime lice-swarm Tinkling backpacks **tatatata** hooves nails can-
nons cartridge-boxes whippings uniform-cloth sheep-stench no-exit left-turn
funnel right-turn crossroads chiaroscuro Turkish-bath fryings moss jonquils
orange-blossoms nausea essence-of-rose trap ammonia claws excrements bites
meat + 1000 flies dried-fruits carobs chickpeas pistachios nectarines banana-
governments figs **boomboom**

billy-goat couscous-moldy aromas saffron tar egg-soaked dog-drenched jas-
mine opopanax sandal carnation to ripen intensity boiling to ferment tuberose To
rot to scatter rage to die to dissolve pieces crumbs dust heroism **tatata**
rifle-fire **pic pac pun pan pan** orange wool-fulvous machine-gun rattle leper-
shelter sores forward meat-soaked dirty smoothness hetarae Tin-
kling backpacks rifles cartridge-boxes wheels gasoline tobacco incense anise
village ruins burnt amber jasmine houses guttings abandonment terracotta-
jar **boom-boom** violets shadow-zone wells donkey ass cadaver collapse sex ex-
hibition garlic bromines anise breeze fish fir-tree-new rosemary dashes
palms sand cinnamon Sun gold scales plates lead sky silk heat padding purple
azure heat Sun = volcano + 3000 flags atmosphere precision corrida fury sur-
gery lamps Scalpel-rays sparkle sheets desert clinic X 20000 arms
20000 feet 10000 eyes gun-sights scintillation wait operation sands ship-
ovens Italians Arabs 4000 meters battalions heats orders pistons sweat mouths
ovens

bygod forward-march oil **tatatata** ammonia > opopanax violets dung
roses sands dazzle-of-mirrors everything to walk arithmetic footprints to obey
irony enthusiasm buzzing to sew dunes pillows zigzags to mend

feet heap screeching sand pointlessness machine-guns = gravel + undertow
+ frogs Scouting parties: 200 meters loaded-to-the-brim forward-
march Arteries swelling heat fermentation hair armpits drums tawniness
blondness breaths + backpack 18 kilos forethought = sing-sing scrap-iron
money-box softness: 3 shudders orders rocks anger enemy magnet lightness
glory heroism Scouting-parties: 100 meters machine-guns rifle-fire
eruption violins brass **pim pum pak pak tim tum** machine-guns **tataratara-**
ta Scouting-parties: 20 meters battalions-ants cavalry-frogs streets-
puddles general-islet courier-little-mare sands-revolutions howitzers-platforms
clouds-gridirons rifles-martyrs shrapnel-halos multiplication addition divi-
sion howitzer-subtraction grenade-erasure to drip to drain landslide roadblock
heap Scouting parties: 3 meters mix-up to-fro to stick to un-
stick wound fire to uproot yards heap deposits flames panic blinding to smash to
enter to exit to run sugars Lives-rockets hearts-gluttonies bayonets-
forks to bite to chop to stink to dance to leap anger dogs-explosion howitzers-
gymnasts flashes-trapeze explosion rose joy stomachs-watering-cans heads-
footballs scattering Cannon 149-elephant artillerymen-mahouts
issa-oh anger levies slowness heaviness center load infantry method monotony
trainers distance grand-prize arc \times light **pang-boom-boom** sprig infinite Sea =
laces-emeralds-freshness-elasticity-abandonment-softness dreadnought-steel-
concision-order Combat-flag⁴ (fields skies-white-hot blood) = Italy force Italian-
pride brothers wives mother insomnia newsboys-scream glory domination coffee
war-stories Towers cannons-virility-muzzles erection range-finder
ecstasy **boom-boom** 3 seconds **boomboom** waves smiles laughter chik chack plaff
gloogloogloogloo play-hide-and-peek crystals virgins flesh jewels pearls iodine
salts bromides skirts gas liqueurs bubbles 3 seconds boom-boom offi-
cer whiteness range-finder cross fire ring-ring megaphone height-4-thousand-
meters left-face stop everybody halt troops-dismissed 7-degrees erection splendor
pumping piercing immensity blue-woman deflowering dogged-
ness hallways scream labyrinth mattresses sobs smashing down desert bed pre-
cision range-finder monoplane gallery applause monoplane = balcony-
rose-wheel-drum buzzing-fly > defeat-Arab ox bloodiness slaughter wounds
refuge oasis humidity fan coolness siesta stripes germination
effort dilation-vegetal I'll-be-more-green-tomorrow let's-stop-soaked save-this-
drop-of-water you-have-to-left-yourself-3-centimeters-to-overcome-20-grams-
of-sand-and-3000-grams-of-shadows milky-way-coconut-tree stars-coconuts
milk to gush juice pleasure.

A reply to dishonest journalists who twist phrases in order to ridicule the Idea;
to women who only think what I have dared to say;
to those who think Lust is nothing other than sin;
to those who can detect only Vice in Lust, just as in Pride they see only Vanity.

Lust, viewed without moral prejudices and as an essential element within life's dynamism, is a force.

For a strong race, lust is not a mortal sin, no more than pride. Like pride, it is an activating virtue, a hearth that nourishes energies.

Lust is the expression of a being projected beyond oneself; it is the painful joy of flesh fulfilled, the joyful pain of blossoming; a fleshly union, whatever the secrets that may unite two beings; an individual's sensory and sensual synthesis for the greater liberation of his or her own mind; the communion of a particle of humanity with all of the earth's sensuality; the panicky shudder of a particle of earth.

LUST IS A CARNAL SEARCH INTO THE UNKNOWN, just as thought is the mind's search into the unknown. Lust is the act of creating, and is creation.

Flesh creates, just as mind creates. In the eyes of the universe, their creations are equal. One is not superior to the other. And mental creation depends on fleshly creation.

We possess body and mind. To restrict one in order to enhance the other is a sign of weakness and error. A strong person must actualize all of his or her fleshly and mental possibilities. For conquerors, lust is a tribute that is owed to them. After a battle in which some men have died, IT'S NORMAL FOR THE VICTORS, HAVING BEEN SELECTED THROUGH WAR, TO TURN TO RAPE IN THE CONQUERED LAND, IN ORDER FOR LIFE TO BE RE-CREATED.

After a battle, soldiers seek sensual pleasures to relax and to renew their energies ever ready for attack. The modern hero in any field experiences the same desires and pleasures. The artist, too, that great universal medium, has the same need. And the exaltation of the initiates of religions that are sufficiently new as to contain a tempting element of the unknown, is no more than sensuality which has been spiritually diverted toward a sacred female image.

ART AND WAR ARE THE GREAT MANIFESTATIONS OF SENSUALITY; LUST IS THEIR FLOWER. An exclusively intellectual people or an exclusively carnal people are condemned to the same decadence: sterility.

LUST EXCITES ENERGIES AND UNLEASHES FORCES. In more primitive times it was

pitiless in driving man to victory, for the honor of bringing back to a woman the spoils of the defeated. Today it impels the great businessmen who direct finance, the press, and international trade, to increase wealth through centralization, harnessing energies and exalting the masses in order to increase, to multiply, to embellish with such means the object of their lust. These men, burdened with their task and yet strong, find time for lust, the force that drives their actions and the reactions of others, repercussions affecting multitudes and worlds.

Even among newer peoples, where sensuality has not yet been unleashed or acknowledged, people who are neither primitive brutes nor sophisticated representatives of older cultures, woman is also the galvanizing force to which all is offered. The secret cult of woman that man nurtures is the unconscious drive of lust that is still half-asleep. Among such peoples, as also among Nordic nations (though for different reasons), lust is almost exclusively channeled into procreation. But lust, no matter how many ways it shows itself, whether deemed normal or abnormal, is always the supreme drive.

Animal life, energetic life, intellectual life sometimes require a pause. And effort for the sake of effort inevitably calls up effort for the sake of pleasure. These different kinds of effort do no harm to one another, but complete and fully realize a total being.

Lust is for heroes, for creative intellectuals, for those who dominate their field, a magnificent exaltation of all their forces; for every person it provides a reason to surpass oneself for the simple goal of standing out, being noticed, selected, chosen, the elect.

Christian morality, in following on from pagan morality, was unique in its fatal error of viewing lust as a weakness. That healthy joy which accompanies the expansive feelings of a powerful body was turned into a source of shame to be hidden, a vice to be repressed. It was covered with hypocrisy, a fact which made a sin of it.

WE MUST STOP DESPISING DESIRE, this attraction, at once delicate and brutal, which draws together two bodies of whatever sex, two bodies that want each other, that are straining toward unity. We must stop despising desire, camouflaging it in the pitiful clothes of old and sterile sentimentality.

It is not lust that dissevers, dissolves, and annihilates, but the mesmerizing complications of sentimentality, the artificial jealousies, the phrases that intoxicate and deceive, the pathetic staging of separation and eternal fidelity, literary nostalgia: all the histrionics of love.

WE MUST DESTROY THE FATAL RAGS AND TATTERS OF ROMANTICISM, counting daisy petals, moonlight duets, a false and hypocritical sense of shame. Let people who have been drawn together by physical attraction dare to express their desires, the allure of their bodies, their presentiments of joy or disappointment at the prospect of fleshly union, instead of talking solely about the delicacy of their hearts.

The sense of physical modesty, which varies according to the age and the nation, is a transient social virtue.

WE MUST FACE UP TO LUST IN FULL CONSCIOUSNESS. We must make of lust what sophisticated and intelligent people make of themselves and their own lives; WE MUST MAKE LUST INTO A WORK OF ART. To pretend that one didn't know what one was doing, to feign swooning in order to carry out an act of love, this is hypocrisy, weakness, and nonsense.

We should desire a body as consciously as we desire anything else.

Instead of surrendering ourselves or conquering others (love at first sight, a moment of passionate weakness, or a slip of the guard), with the inevitable disappointments which come with unpredictable tomorrows, we should choose wisely. Guided by will and intuition, we should evaluate our feelings and desires, and avoid bringing things to a head or coupling unless we know we can complement and enhance each other.

With equal self-awareness and firm will, the joys of such coupling should lead to ecstasy, should develop all the potential and should make blossom all the flowers contained in the seeds of united flesh. Lust should become a work of art, formed, like every work of art, both instinctively and consciously.

WE MUST STRIP LUST OF ALL THE SENTIMENTAL VEILS THAT DISFIGURE IT. It has only been through cowardice that these veils have been cast over lust, for sentimentalism is a satisfying, static form of being. Sentimentalism is comfortable, and therefore it diminishes us.

In one who is young and healthy, every time that lust is opposed to sentimentality, it is lust that wins. Sentimentality follows fashions, lust is eternal. Lust triumphs because it's a joyous exaltation that impels a person beyond the individual self, the joy of possession and domination, the perpetual victory from which is reborn the perpetual battle, the inebriation of still more inebriating and surer conquest.

Lust is a force, since it refines the mind by kindling the turbulence of the flesh. From a strong, healthy body, one purified by an embrace, the mind leaps out lucid and clear. Only the weak and the ill are diminished, sink into the mire.

Lust is a force, since it kills the weak and raises the strong, aiding natural selection.

Lust is a force, finally, because it never leads to the insipid certainty or security dispensed by soothing sentimentalism. Lust is a perpetual battle that is never won. After the transient triumph, in the ephemeral triumph itself, there is already a nascent dissatisfaction that spurs a person, driven by orgiastic will, to expand and surpass himself.

Lust is for the body what an ideal purpose is for the mind: the magnificent chi-

mera always grasped at, never seized, the goal that is incessantly sought after by the young and eager, intoxicated with vision.

LUST IS A FORCE.

THE ART OF NOISES: A FUTURIST MANIFESTO

LUIGI RUSSOLO

11 March 1913

Dear Balilla Pratella, great Futurist composer,

At the crowded Costanzi Theater in Rome, while I was listening to the orchestral performance of your overwhelming **Futurist music**,¹ together with my Futurist friends Marinetti, Boccioni, Carrà, Balla, Soffici, Papini, and Cavacchioli, there came to my mind the idea of a new art, one that only you can create: the Art of Noises, a logical consequence of your marvelous innovations.

In older times life was completely silent. In the nineteenth century, with the invention of machines, Noise was born. Today, Noise is triumphant and reigns supreme over the sensibility of men. For many centuries life went by in silence, or at most with muted sound. The loudest noises that interrupted this silence were neither intense, extended, nor varied. For if we set aside exceptional movements across the earth's surface, such as hurricanes, storms, avalanches, and waterfalls, nature is silent.

Amidst this scarcity of *noises*, the first *sounds* that men were able to extract from a hollow reed or a taut string were stupefying, something new and marvelous. Primitive peoples ascribed *sound* to the gods, deemed it sacred, and reserved it to priests, who used it to enrich their rites with mystery. Thus was born the concept of sound as a thing in itself, distinct from life and independent of it, and from that resulted music, a fantastic world superimposed on the real one, an inviolable and sacred world. It is easy to understand how such a concept of music must have inevitably hindered its progress in comparison with the other arts. The Greeks themselves, adopting a musical theory which was mathematically systematized by Pythagoras and which permitted only a few consonant intervals, limited the field of music considerably and rendered harmony, of which they remained ignorant, impossible.

The Middle Ages, with developments and modifications of the Greek tetrachord system,² with Gregorian chants and popular songs, enriched the art of music, but continued to consider sound only *in its unfolding in time*, a restricted concept that

lasted for several centuries and can still be found in the extremely complicated polyphonies of Flemish contrapuntists. The *chord* did not exist; development of the different parts was not subordinated to the chord that these parts produced in their ensemble; and the conception of these parts was horizontal, not vertical. The desire, the search, and the taste for a simultaneous union of different sounds, i.e. for *the chord* (complex sound), arose only gradually, passing from perfect consonance with a few incidental dissonances to the complicated and persistent dissonances which characterize contemporary music.

At first the art of music sought and achieved purity, limpidity, and sweetness of sound; later it incorporated more diverse sounds, though it still took care to caress the ear with gentle harmonies. Today, growing ever more complicated, it is seeking those combinations of sounds that fall most dissonantly, strangely, and harshly on the ear. We are drawing ever closer to *noise-sound*.

This evolution of music is parallel to the multiplication of machines, which everywhere are collaborating with man. Not only amid the clamor of the metropolis, but also in the countryside, which until yesterday was normally silent, in our time the machine has created such a variety and such combinations of noises that pure sound, in its slightness and monotony, no longer arouses any feeling.

To excite and exalt our sensibilities, music has been developing toward extremely complex polyphony and the greatest possible variety of orchestral timbres, or colors, seeking out the most complex successions of dissonant chords, and preparing in a general way for the creation of **musical noise**. This evolution toward "noise-sound" was not possible before now. The ear of an eighteenth-century man could never have supported the dissonant intensity of certain chords produced by our orchestras (with three times as many performers as those of his day). Our ear instead takes pleasure in it, since it has already been trained by modern life, so teeming in different noises. Not, however, that it is fully satisfied: instead it demands an ever greater range of acoustical emotions.

Musical sound, on the other hand, is too limited in its qualitative variety of timbres. The most complicated orchestras are reduced to four or five classes of instruments, differing in timbre: instruments played with the bow, plucked instruments, brass winds, wood winds, and percussion instruments. So that modern music founders within this tiny circle as it vainly attempts to create new kinds of timbre.

We must break out of this restricted circle of pure sounds and conquer the infinite variety of noise-sounds.

Further, everyone will recognize that every sound carries with it a cluster of already familiar and stale associations which predispose the hearer to boredom, despite all the efforts of innovative musicians. We Futurists have all deeply loved and enjoyed the harmonies of the great masters. Beethoven and Wagner have stirred

our hearts and nerves for many years. But now we are satiated with them, and we derive far more pleasure from ideally combining the noises of trams, internal-combustion engines, carriages, and noisy crowds than from rehearing, for example, the “Eroica” or the “Pastorale.”³

We can hardly observe that enormous apparatus of forces represented by the modern orchestra without feeling the deepest disappointment at its petty acoustic achievements. Is anything more ridiculous than the sight of twenty men furiously bent on redoubling the meowing of a violin? Naturally all this will make the musico-maniacs scream and perhaps disturb the somnolent atmosphere of our concert-halls. But let us go together, as Futurists, into one of these hospitals for anaemic sounds. Listen to it: the first bar wafts to your ear the boredom of the already-heard and gives you a foretaste of the boredom to follow in the next. Let us savor, from one bar to the next, two or three species of pure boredom, forever waiting for the extraordinary sensation that never comes. Meanwhile, one is struck by that repugnant mixture which is created by emotional monotony and the cretinous religious excitement of the listeners, Bhuddhistically intoxicated by the thousandth repetition of their spurious and snobbish ecstasy. Away! Let’s be gone, since it won’t be long before we can’t restrain our desire to create at least one new musical reality by generously handing out sonorous slaps, stamping with both feet on violins, pianos, contrabasses, and groaning organs. Away!

It’s no good objecting that noise is simply loud and disagreeable to the ear. It seems to me pointless to enumerate all the graceful and delicate noises that afford pleasant acoustic sensations.

To be convinced of their astonishing variety one need only think of the rumbling of thunder, the whistling of the wind, the roaring of a waterfall, the gurgling of a brook, the rustling of leaves, the clatter of a horse trotting into the distance, the rattling jolt of a cart over cobblestones, or the deep, solemn, and white breath of a city at night, or all the noises made by wild and domestic animals, or all those that can be made by the mouth of man, apart from speech or song.

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, the cracking of whips, the flapping of curtains and flags. We shall amuse ourselves by creating mental orchestrations of the crashing down of metal shop shutters, the slamming of doors, the bustle and shuffling of crowds, the varied racket of railroad stations, iron foundries, spinning mills, printing plants, subways, and electrical power stations.

Nor should the latest noises of modern warfare be forgotten. Recently the poet

Marinetti, in a letter written from the Bulgarian trenches surrounding Adrianople, described for me the orchestration of a large battle, rendered in marvelous words-in-freedom:

every 5 seconds siege-cannons to disembowel space with a chord Bam-Boooooomb
 mutiny of 500 echoes in order to snap to break up to scatter to the infinite
 In the middle of those smashed Bam-Booombs range 50 square kilometers to
 bounce sweepings cuttings fists batteries in rapid fire Violence fierceness regu-
 larity this low weighty surging the strange madmen agitated taut from the battle
 Fury torment ears eyes nostrils open! straining! force! What pleasure to see to
 hear to smell everything everything taratatata of the machine guns to squeal
 breathless under bites slaps track-track lashes pic-pac-pum-boom oddities
 leaps height 200 meters of the rifle-fire Down down in the pit of the orchestra
 puddles to splash oxen buffalos goadings carts pliff plaff horses getting stuck
 flick flack zing zang riiiiinse playing neighing ayingayingaying . . . pawing ping-
 ing 3 Bulgarian battalions marching krook-kraaaak (*lento double time*) Sciumi
 Maritza or Karvavena krook-kraaaak shout of officers to bang like brass plates
 pan over here paack over there chinck BOOOM chinck chack (*presto*) cha-cha-
 cha cha-chack up down there there around arms up attention on the head chack
 very nice! Blasts blasts blasts blasts blasts blasts stage of the forts down
 there behind that smoke Sheurkree Pasha communicates by telephone with 27
 forts in Turkish in German hello! Ibrahim! Rudolph! hello! hello! actors roles
 echoes prompters stagehands of smoke forests applause smell of hay mud dung
 I no longer feel my frozen feet odor of potassium nitrate smell of decay Tym-
 panums flutes bass clarinets everywhere high low birds to twitter beatitude
 shadows chirp-chirp-chirp breeze green flocks don-dan-don-din-bèèè Orches-
 tra madmen beat the orchestra musicians these badly beaten up to
 play to play Grand clangings not to cancel to be precise reshaping them noises
 smaller minute-ute-ute wrecks of echoes in the theater size 300 square kilo-
 meters Maritza Tungia Rivers spread out Rodopi Mountains straight up heights
 box-seats gallery 2000 shrapnel to saw the air to explode white kerchiefs full of
 gold Boom-Boomb 2000 grenades straining to rip out with tearing shocks of
 dark hair ZANG-BOOM-BOOM-ZANG-BOOM-BOOOOMB orchestra of the war
 noises to swell beneath a note of silence held in the high sky spherical balloon
 golden that surveys cannon-fire.⁴

We want to give pitches to these extraordinarily diverse sounds, regulating them harmonically and rhythmically. Giving pitches to noises doesn't mean depriving them of all the irregularity of tempo and intensity that characterize their movements and vibrations, but giving gradation or pitch to the strongest and predomi-

nant vibrations. Indeed, noise differs from sound only insofar as the vibrations that produce it are irregular and confused, both in tempo and intensity. **Every noise has a note, sometimes even a chord, that predominates in the ensemble of irregular vibrations.** Now, because of the predominating characteristic note, it is possible to “attune” it, or to assign a certain noise not just a single pitch but a variety of pitches, without losing its characteristic quality, but which I mean its timbre. Thus certain noises produced by rotary motion can offer an entire ascending or descending chromatic scale if the speed of the motion is increased or decreased.

Every manifestation of life is accompanied by noise. Noise is therefore familiar to our ears and has the power of immediately reminding us of life itself. But sound is alien to life, is always musical and a thing unto itself, an occasional and not an essential element, and it has become for our ears what a too familiar face is to our eyes. Noise, instead, comes to us in a confused and irregular way from the irregular confusion of life; it never reveals itself entirely to us and keeps innumerable surprises in reserve. We are convinced that by selecting, coordinating, and controlling noises we shall enrich mankind with a new and unexpected pleasure of the senses. Even though it is characteristic of noise to remind us brutally of life, **the art of noises must not be limited to an imitative reproduction.** It will achieve its greatest emotional power in acoustic pleasure in itself, which the artist’s inspiration will evoke from combined noises.

These are the *6 families of noises* in the Futurist orchestra, noises which we shall soon produce mechanically:

| 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 |
|------------|----------|-----------|-----------|----------------|-----------------------|
| Rumbles | Whistles | Whispers | Screeches | Noises made by | Voices of animals |
| Thundering | Hisses | Murmurs | Creaking | percussion on | and people: Shouts, |
| Explosions | Snorts | Mutters | Rustles | metals, woods, | Screams, Groans, |
| Crashes | | Buzzes | Throbs | skins, stones, | Howls, Wails, Laughs, |
| Splashes | | Gurgles | Crackles | terracotta | Wheezes, Sobs |
| Booms | | Scuffles, | Scuffles | | |
| | | etc. | | | |

In this we have included the most characteristic of the fundamental noises; the others are simply associations and combinations of these. **The rhythmic movements of a noise are infinite. There is always, as with a note, a predominant rhythm,** but around this there are many other secondary rhythms that can be perceived.

CONCLUSIONS

1. Futurist musicians must constantly enlarge and enrich the field of sound. This responds to a need in our sensibility. Indeed, we note that the most talented composers of today are tending to adopt the most complicated dissonances. As

they move ever farther away from pure sound, they almost achieve *noise-sound*. This need and this tendency can be satisfied only *by adding and substituting noises for sounds*.

2. Futurist musicians must replace the limited variety of timbres offered by contemporary orchestral instruments with the infinite variety of the timbres of noises, reproduced by suitable mechanisms.
3. The sensibility of the musician, liberated from facile and traditional rhythm, must find the way to enhance and renew itself in noises, for every noise offers a union of the most diverse rhythms, aside from its predominant one.
4. Since every noise has a **general predominating tone** among its irregular vibrations, a sufficiently wide variety of tones, semitones, and quarter-tones will be easily attained in constructing the instruments that imitate it.
5. The practical difficulties facing the construction of these instruments are not serious. Once the mechanical principle for producing a certain noise has been found, its pitch can be varied applying the general laws of acoustics. If the instrument has a rotary movement, for example, its speed will be increased or decreased; if it doesn't have a rotary movement, the size or tension of the parts will be varied.
6. It will not be through a succession of noises imitating those of life, but through a fantastic combination of the various timbres and rhythms that the new orchestra will achieve the newest and most complicated aural emotions. For that purpose every instrument will have to offer the possibility of varying its pitch, or will need a more or less extended range.
7. The variety of noises is infinite. If today when we have perhaps a thousand different machines, we can distinguish a thousand different noises, then tomorrow, as new machines multiply we shall be able to distinguish ten, twenty, or **thirty thousand different noises, not merely to be imitated, but to be combined as imagination dictates**.
8. We therefore invite young musicians of talent and audacity to listen continually and carefully to all noises in order to understand the various rhythms that go into their making, their principal tone, and their secondary ones. Then, by comparing their various timbres with those of sounds, they'll be persuaded how much more numerous are the former than the latter. This will not only give us an understanding of noises, but also a taste and a passion for them. Our multiplied sensibility, having already been conquered by the eyes of the Futurists, will at last have Futurist ears. In this way the motors and the machines of our industrial cities will one day be able to be consciously attuned, so that every factory will be made into an intoxicating orchestra of noises.

Dear Pratella, I submit these propositions to your Futurist genius and invite

you to discuss them with me. I am not a musician, and therefore I don't have acoustical predilections or works that I have to defend. I am a Futurist painter who is using a much loved art to project my determination to renew everything. Which is why, more daring than any professional musician could be, not worrying myself about my apparent incompetence and convinced that boldness possesses all rights and seizes all possibilities, I have been able to intuit the great renovation of music through the Art of noises.

**THE PLASTIC FOUNDATIONS OF FUTURIST
SCULPTURE AND PAINTING UMBERTO BOCCIONI**

Lacerba, 15 March 1913

Our constructive idealism has taken its laws from the new certainties given us by science.

Its life derives from pure plastic elements, and is illuminated by intuitions of a very recent mentality that has arisen from the new conditions of life created by scientific discoveries.

Our task is to destroy four centuries of Italian tradition. Into the resulting void we must plant all the seeds of potential which are to be found in the examples furnished by the primitives, the barbarians of every nation, and in the raw elements of a new sensibility which are apparent in all the *anti-artistic* manifestations of our epoch: the café singer, the gramophone, the cinema, electrical advertisements, mechanical architecture, nightlife, the life of stones and crystals, occultism, magnetism, velocity, etc. We must overcome the ongoing crisis of the rudimentary, the grotesque or monstrous, a sign of energy, but energy unregulated. We must discover the laws which are currently shaping themselves in our renewed sensibility and enter into a new world of definitive values.

Our adversaries urge a cultural outlook which always reaches back to more or less recent eras to find examples which are averse to our Futurist pictorial conception.

But the farther back one goes to earlier eras, the less one encounters that impoverished obsession with optical illusionism,¹ one of the stronger weapons most frequently invoked against us.

Painting and sculpture in their earliest eras are concerned with suggesting or evoking and they use every possible means to do so, without the slightest hint of

the stupid notion of *artistic finish*. In those felicitous ages, there is no such thing as the word “art” and there are none of the artificial distinctions between painting, sculpture, music, literature, philosophy, poetry. . . . Everything, instead, is architecture, for everything in art should be the creation of autonomous organisms constructed with abstract values of reality. That is why we are firmly and violently anti-artistic, antipictorial, antisculptural, antipoetic, antimusical. The artworks of savages which have fatally entered into the process of modern renewal are proof of the truth that I’m affirming.

Gauguin’s journey to Tahiti, the appearance of statues and fetishes from Central Africa in the studio of our friends in Montmartre,² mark a historically fatal moment in the field of the European sensibility, much like the invasion of a barbarous race in the organism of a decadent nation.

We Italians have need of the barbaric for our self-renewal. Our race has always dominated and has always renewed itself through barbaric contacts. We have to shatter, level, and destroy our traditional harmony, a habit of falling into the “gracious” note that is produced by shameful sentimental pimping. We deny the past because we want to forget, and in art to forget means to renew.

We have initiated this violent attempt at renewal within only a few years, whereas in France the labors of entire generations have gone into it. What we want to announce and to impose in Italy is a new sensibility that will give painting and sculpture and all the arts new material for creating new relations of form and color. All this expressive material is absolutely objective and the only path to renewal is by liberating it from the super-values that art and culture have traditionally draped over it.

We have to forget the tasks that until now have been demanded of the painting or the statue. We must consider works of art (in sculpture or painting) as structures of a new inner reality, which the elements of external reality are helping to construct through a law of plastic analogy almost completely unknown before us. It is through this kind of analogy, the very essence of poetry, that we shall achieve the plastic state of mind.

When I say that sculpture must try and model the atmosphere, I mean that I want to suppress, i.e., FORGET, all the traditional and sentimental values concerning atmosphere, the recent naturalism which veils objects, making them diaphanous or distant like a dream, etc., etc. For me atmosphere is a materiality that exists between objects, distorting plastic values. Instead of making it float overhead like a puff of air (because culture has taught me that atmosphere is intangible or made of gas, etc.), I feel it, seek it, seize hold of it and emphasize it by using all the various effects which light, shadows, and streams of energy have on it. Hence, I create the atmosphere!

When we begin to grasp this truth in Futurist sculpture, we shall see the shape of the atmosphere where before there was only emptiness or, as with the Impressionists, mist. This mist was already a step toward an atmospheric plasticity, toward a *physical transcendentalism* which, in turn, is another step toward the perception of analogous phenomena that have hitherto remained hidden from our obtuse sensibilities. These phenomena include perceiving the luminous emanations of our bodies, of the kind I spoke of in my first lecture in Rome, and which are reproduced in photographic plates.³

Now this *tangible measuring* of what formerly appeared to be empty space, this clear superimposition of new strata on what we call real objects and the shapes that determine them—this new aspect of reality is one of the foundations of our painting and sculpture. It should now be clear, then, why endless lines and currents emanate from our objects, making them live in the environment which has been created by their vibrations.

The *distances* between one object and another are not just empty spaces, but are occupied by material continuities made up of varying intensities, continuities we reveal with perceptible lines that do not correspond to any photographic truth. That is why our paintings do not have just objects and empty spaces, but only a greater or lesser intensity and solidity of space.

With this, what I meant by referring to the *solidification* of Impressionism becomes absolutely clear.

This measuring of objects, and of the atmospheric forms which they create and which envelop them, forms the QUANTITATIVE value of an object. If we then go deeper into our perceptive faculties and translate that other value, that is the QUALITATIVE value, we shall discover the object's MOTION. This motion is a quality, and, in our sculptural aesthetic, quality is the equivalent of feeling.

The charge that we are merely being "cinematographic" makes us laugh; it is vulgar idiocy. We are not trying to subdivide each individual image—we are looking for a sign, or better, a single form, to replace the old concepts of division with new concepts of continuity.

Any dividing up of an object's motion is an arbitrary action, and equally arbitrary is the subdivision of matter. As Henri Bergson has said: "All division of matter into independent bodies with absolutely determined outlines is an artificial division," and elsewhere: "Every movement, inasmuch as it is a passage from rest to rest, is absolutely indivisible."⁵

Have we discovered a formula which provides continuity in space? In art, real formulas are given by masterpieces; and with masterpieces a period of evolution always comes to an end; . . . what can we honestly say about our own paintings, which have only been around for a few months? We are still experimenting and

there is no better field for our researches than the intoxicating modernity of contemporary life.

Hence, in spite of our violent aspirations toward something definitive, we deny today, at this stage in our development, any possibility of an abstract solution, any kind of plastic conceptualization, which by a special determination might practically replace the individual's intuition.

It is dangerous to theorize too rigidly in a situation where there is a gap between external and internal realities, as the cold image-making of some of the Cubists proves.

So, those who believe, in theory, in some of our statements about a new plastic translation of reality, are wrong to try to experience emotions from our canvases by approaching them with old mental habits.

What needs to be remembered is this: in Futurist art, the viewpoint has completely changed.

Modern painting, however subjective, has hitherto always presented a spectacle of images which exist in front of our eyes. And though the Cubists showed objects in all their complexity—a painting constructed through a harmonious combination of one or more complexities within an environmental complexity—the spectacle itself did not change.

What we want to do is show the living object in its dynamic growth: i.e., provide a synthesis of those transformations undergone by an object due to its twin motions, one relative, the other absolute.

We want to give the style of movement. We don't want to observe, dissect, or transpose into pictorial terms. We identify ourselves with the thing itself, a profoundly different affair.

Hence, for us, the object has no form in itself; the only definable thing is the line which signifies the relationship between the object's weight (quantity) and its expansion (quality).

This has suggested to us the notion of *force-lines*, which characterize the object and enable us to see it as a whole—it is the essential interpretation of the object, the perception of life itself. Ours is a search for the definitive, through a succession of intuitive stages.

We reject any *a priori* reality; this is what divides us from the Cubists and places us Futurists on the extreme fringe of the painting world. In Italy today we are the only artists trying to give art the attributes that have always characterized Italian art in its best periods: style and reality.

**DESTRUCTION OF SYNTAX—RADIO
IMAGINATION—WORDS-IN-FREEDOM**

F. T. MARINETTI

11 May 1913

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Words-in-
Freedom

THE FUTURIST SENSIBILITY

My “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (11 May 1912), in which I first invented *synthetic and essential lyricism*, *wireless imagination*, and *words-in-freedom*, is concerned exclusively with poetic inspiration.¹

Philosophy, the exact sciences, politics, journalism, education, business, however much they may seek synthetic forms of expression, will still have to make use of syntax and punctuation. Indeed, I myself have to make use of them in order to advance the exposition of my concepts.

Futurism is based on the complete renewal of human sensibility that has occurred as an effect of science’s major discoveries. Those people who today make use of the telegraph, the telephone, the gramophone, the train, the bicycle, the motorcycle, the automobile, the ocean liner, the dirigible, the airplane, the cinema, the great newspaper (the synthesis of a day in the world’s life) are not aware of the decisive influence that these various forms of communication, transportation, and information have on their psyches.

An ordinary man, spending a day’s time in the train, can be transported from a small town, dead, with empty squares in which the sun, the dust, and the wind divert each other in silence, to a great capital bristling with lights, movement, and street cries. By means of the newspaper, the inhabitant of a mountain village can tremble with anxiety every day, following the Chinese in revolt, the suffragettes of London or New York, Doctor Carrel, or the heroic dogsleds of the polar explorers.² The pusillanimous and sedentary inhabitant of any provincial town can allow himself the inebriation of danger by going to the movies and watching a great hunt in the Congo. He can admire Japanese athletes, Negro boxers, endless American eccentrics, and very elegant Parisian women by spending a franc to go to the variety theater. Then, tucked up in his bourgeois bed, he can enjoy the distant and costly voice of a Caruso or a Burzio.³

Having becoming commonplace, such possibilities fail to arouse the curiosity of superficial minds which remain as incapable of grasping their deeper significance as *the Arabs who watched with indifference the first airplanes in the skies above Tripoli*. Yet to an acute observer these possibilities are so many modifiers of our sensibility, because they have caused the following significant phenomena:

1. Acceleration of life, which today has a rapid rhythm. Physical, intellectual, and emotional equilibrium on the cord of velocity stretched between contradictory magnetisms. Multiple and simultaneous states of mind within the same individual.
2. Dread of whatever is old and already known. Love of the new, the unexpected.
3. Dread of quiet living, love of danger and an attitude of daily heroism.
4. Destruction of a sense of *the beyond* and increased value assigned to the individual who wants to *vivre sa vie*, to use the phrase of Bonnot.⁴
5. Human desires and ambitions multiplying and going beyond all limits.
6. An exact knowledge of everything inaccessible and unrealizable in each person.
7. Semi-equality of man and woman, and less inequality in their social rights.
8. Contempt for love (sentimentalism or lechery) produced by greater freedom and erotic ease among women and by universal exaggeration of female luxury. Let me explain: today's women love luxury more than love. A visit to a great dressmaker's shop, escorted by a banker friend who is paunchy and gouty but will pay the bill, has taken the place of some hot rendezvous with an adored young man. The element of mystery once found in love now resides in the selection of an amazing outfit, latest model, preferably one which her friends don't yet have. Men no longer love a woman who is without *luxus*. The lover has lost all prestige, and Love has lost its absolute value. A complex question, one which I can only touch in passing.
9. Modification of patriotism, which nowadays has become the heroic idealization of a people's commercial, industrial, and artistic solidarity.
10. Modification of the conception of war, which has become the sanguinary and necessary test of the strength of a people.
11. The passion, art, idealism of Business. New financial sensibility.
12. Man multiplied by the machine.⁵ New mechanical sense, a fusion of instinct with the output of a motor and forces that have been mastered.
13. The passion, art, and idealism of Sport. Idea and love of "the record."
14. The new tourist sensibility of ocean liners and grand hotels (annual synthesis of various races). Passion for the city. Negation of distances and solitary nostalgia. Derision for "silence green and sacred" and the ineffable landscape.⁶
15. The earth shrunk by speed. New sense of the world. Let me explain: men have successively conquered a sense of the house, the neighborhood in which they live, the city, the region, the continent. Today man possesses a sense of the world; he has only a modest need to know what his forebears have done, but a burning need to know what his contemporaries are doing in every part of the globe. Whence the necessity, for the individual, of communicating with all the peoples of the earth. Whence the need to feel oneself at the center, to be judge

and motor of the infinite both explored and unexplored. A gigantic increase in the sense of humanity and an urgent need to coordinate at every moment our relations with all humanity.

16. Disgust for the curving line, the spiral, and the *tourniquet*. Love for the straight line and the tunnel. The habit of foreshortened views and visual syntheses created by the speed of trains and automobiles which look down over cities and country landscapes. Dread of slowness, minutiae, detailed analyses, and explanations. Love of speed, abbreviation, and synopsis. "Quick, tell me the whole story *in two words*."
17. Love of depth and essence in every mental activity.

So these are some of the elements of a new Futurist sensibility which have generated our pictorial dynamism, our antigraceful music devoid of steady continuous rhythm, our Art of noises and Futurist words-in-freedom.

WORDS-IN-FREEDOM

Casting aside all stupid definitions and confusing professorial verbalisms, I declare that *lyricism* is the rarely found *faculty of intoxicating oneself with life and with oneself*. The faculty of changing into wine the muddy waters of the life that surround us and flow through us. The faculty of coloring the world with the unique colors of our changeable "I."

Now imagine that a friend of yours, gifted with this kind of lyrical faculty, should find himself in a zone of intense life (revolution, war, shipwreck, earthquake, etc.), and should come, immediately afterward, to recount his impressions. Do you know what your lyrical friend will do while he is still shocked? . . .

He will begin by brutally destroying the syntax of his speech. He will not waste time in constructing periodic sentences. He could care less about punctuation or finding the right adjective. He disdains subtleties and shadings, and in haste he will assault your nerves with visual, auditory, olfactory sensations, just as their insistent pressure in him demands. The rush of steam-emotion will burst the steam-pipe of the sentence, the valves of punctuation, and the regular clamp of the adjective. Fistfuls of basic words without any conventional order. The narrator's only preoccupation: to render all the vibrations of his "I."

Moreover, if this same narrator gifted with lyricism has a mind stocked with general ideas, he will involuntarily link his sensations to the entire universe as he has known and intuited it. And in order to render the exact weight and proportion of the life he has experienced, he will hurl immense networks of analogies across the world. And thus he will render the analogical ground of life, telegraphically, which is to say with the same economical rapidity that the telegraph imposes on war correspondents and journalists for their synoptic accounts. This need for

laconicism not only responds to the laws of velocity that regulate us today, but also the age-old relations that the public and the poet have had. For between the poet and the public, in fact, the same kind of relations exist as between two old friends. They can speak to each other with a half-word, a gesture, a wink. That is why the imagination of the poet must weave together distant things *without connecting wires*, by means of essential words *in freedom*.

DEATH OF FREE VERSE

Free verse once had countless regions for existing, but it is now destined to be replaced by words-in-freedom.

The evolution of poetry and human sensibility have shown us the two irremediable defects of free verse.

1. Free verse fatally impels the poet toward facile effects of sonorousness, predictable mirror-games, monotonous cadences, absurd chiming, and inescapable echo-play, internal and external.
2. Free verse artificially channels the current of lyrical emotion between the banks of syntax and the weirs of grammar. The free intuitive inspiration that directly addresses the intuition of the ideal reader finds itself imprisoned, or redistributed into so many glasses of purified water for the alimentation of restless, fussy minds.

When I speak of destroying the canals of syntax, I am being neither peremptory nor systematic. In the words-in-freedom of my unchained lyricism, there will still be traces here and there of regular syntax and even of true, logical periods. This inequality in concision and freedom is inevitable and natural. Since poetry, in reality, is nothing more than a superior form of life, more concentrated and intense than the one we lead everyday, — it too is composed of elements that are hyperalive and moribund.

We need not, therefore, worry too much over the latter. But at all costs we must avoid rhetoric and commonplaces expressed telegraphically.

THE WIRELESS IMAGINATION

By wireless imagination, I mean the absolute freedom of images or analogies, expressed with disconnected words, and without the connecting syntactical wires and without punctuation.

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 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*, 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. (“Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature”)⁷

Wireless imagination and words-in-freedom will transport us into the essence of matter. With the discovery of new analogies between things remote and apparently contradictory, we shall value them ever more intimately. Instead of *humanizing* animals, vegetables, and minerals (a bygone system) we will be able to *animalize*, *vegetize*, *mineralize*, *electrify*, or *liquefy* our style, making it live the very life of matter. For example, to render the life of a blade of grass, we might say: “I will be greener tomorrow.” But with words-in-freedom we might have: **Condensed Metaphors. — Telegraphic images. — Sums of vibrations. — Knots of thought. — Closed or open fans of movement. — Foreshortened analogies. — Color Balances. — The dimensions, weights, sizes, and velocities of sensations. — The plunge of the essential word into the water of sensibility, without the concentric eddies produced by words. — Intuition’s moments of repose. — Movements in two, three, four, five different rhythms. — Analytical explanatory telegraph poles that sustain the cable of intuitive wires.**

DEATH OF THE LITERARY “I”

Matter and Molecular Life

My “Technical Manifesto” inveighed against the obsession with the “I” that poets have described, sung, analyzed, and vomited forth until today. To rid ourselves of this obsessive “I,” we must abandon the habit of humanizing nature, attributing human preoccupations and emotions to animals, plants, waters, stones, and clouds. Instead we should express the infinite smallness that surrounds us, the imperceptible, the invisible, the agitation of atoms, Brownian movements,⁸ all the

thrilling hypotheses and all the dominions explored by high-powered microscopes. Let me explain: I want to introduce infinite molecular life into poetry not as a scientific document, but as an intuitive element. It should be mixed in with art works, with spectacles and dramas of what is infinitely grand, since the fusion of both constitutes the integral synthesis of life.

To help a bit the intuition of my ideal reader, I use *italics* for words-in-freedom that express infinite smallness and molecular life.

SEMAPHORIC ADJECTIVE

Adjective-Lighthouse or Atmosphere-adjective

Everywhere we tend to suppress a qualifying adjective, since it presupposes a halt in intuition, an overly minute definition of the noun. That is not a categorical prohibition, but a tendency. What is necessary is to use the adjective as little as possible and to do so in a manner absolutely different from that which has prevailed until now. The adjective should be viewed as a railroad signal or a semaphore of style, serving to regulate the impetus, the slowing and pausing of advancing analogies. As many as twenty of these semaphoric adjectives might be accumulated in this way.

What I call a semaphoric adjective, adjective-lighthouse, or atmosphere-adjective is an adjective separated from its noun and instead isolated in parentheses, which turns it into a sort of absolute noun, vaster and more powerful than a noun proper.

The semaphoric adjective or adjective-lighthouse, suspended above the ground in the glassy cage of parentheses, casts its whirling light into the distance all around.

The profile of this adjective crumbles, spreads abroad, illuminating, impregnating, and enveloping a whole zone of words-in-freedom. For example, I might place the following adjectives between parenthesis amid a group of words-in-freedom describing a voyage by sea: (calm blue methodical habitual). It would not be just the sea that is *calm blue methodical habitual*, but the ship, its machinery, the passengers, whatever I might be doing, and my very mind.

THE VERB IN THE INFINITIVE

Here, too, my pronouncements are not categorical. I maintain, however, that the verb in the infinitive is indispensable to a violent and dynamic lyricism, for the infinitive is round like a wheel, and like a wheel it is adaptable to all the railroad cars that make up the train of analogies, so constituting the very speed of style.

The verb in the infinitive denies by its very existence the classical period and

prevents the style from slowing or sitting down at any specific point. While the **verb in the infinitive is round** and mobile as a wheel, the other moods and tenses of the verb are triangular, square, or oval.

ONOMATOPOEIA AND MATHEMATICAL SIGNS

When I said, “Every day we must spit on the *Altar of Art*,”⁹ I was inciting Futurists to liberate lyricism from the solemn atmosphere of compunction and incense that one usually calls Art with a capital A. Art with a capital A is a form of intellectual clericalism. That is why I incited Futurists to destroy and mock the garlands, palms, aureoles, exquisite frames, mantles, and stoles, the whole historical wardrobe of romantic bric-a-brac that has comprised so much of all poetry until now. I urged instead a swift, brutal, and immediate lyricism, one that would appear to all our predecessors as antipoetic, a telegraphic lyricism that would have nothing of the bookish about it, but as much as possible of the flavor of life. Whence the bold introduction of onomatopoeic harmonies to render all the sounds and noises of modern life, even the most cacophonous.

Onomatopoeia, which can help to vivify lyricism with raw and brutal elements of reality, has been used (from Aristophanes to Pascoli) rather timidly in poetry.¹⁰ But we Futurists call for an audacious and ongoing use of onomatopoeia. It need not be systematic. For example, my “Adrianople Siege—Orchestra” and my “Battle Weight + Smell” required many onomatopoeic harmonies.¹¹ Always for the purpose of rendering a maximum quantity of vibrations and a deeper synthesis of life, we abolish all stylistic connectors, all the shiny buckles with which traditional poets have linked images to the period. Instead we employ very brief or anonymous mathematical and musical signs, and between parentheses we place indications such as (fast) (faster) (slower) (two-beat time) to control the speed of the style. These parentheses can even cut into a word or an onomatopoeic harmony.

TYPOGRAPHICAL REVOLUTION

I have initiated a typographical revolution directed against the bestial, nauseating sort of book that contains passéist poetry or verse à la D’Annunzio¹²—handmade paper that imitates models of the seventeenth century, festooned with helmets, Minervas, Apollos, decorative capitals in red ink with loops and squiggles, vegetables, mythological ribbons from 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. For that reason we will use, in the very same page, *three or four different*

colors of ink, and as many as twenty different typographical fonts if necessary. For example: *italics* for a series of swift or similar sensations, *boldface* for violent onomatopoeias, etc. The typographical revolution and the multicolored variety in the letters will mean that I can double the expressive force of words.

I oppose the decorative and precious aesthetic of Mallarmé and his search for the exotic word, the unique and irreplaceable, elegant, suggestive, exquisite adjective. I have no wish to suggest an idea of sensation by means of passéist graces and affectations: I want to seize them brutally and fling them in the reader's face.

I also oppose Mallarmé's static ideal.¹³ The typographic revolution that I've proposed will enable me to imprint words (words already free, dynamic, torpedoing forward) every velocity of the stars, clouds, airplanes, trains, waves, explosives, drops of seafoam, molecules, and atoms.

And so I shall realize the fourth principle contained in my "First Manifesto of Futurism" (20 February 1909): "We affirm that the beauty of the world has been enriched by a new form of beauty: the beauty of speed."¹⁴

MULTILINEAL LYRICISM

In addition, I have also devised *multilineal lyricism*, with which I am able to obtain that lyrical simultaneity which has obsessed Futurist painters, and by means of which I am convinced that we can achieve the most complex lyrical simultaneities.

On several parallel lines, a poet will launch several chains of colors, sounds, odors, noises, weights, densities, analogies. One line, for example, might be olfactory, another musical, another pictorial.

Let us imagine that one chain of sensations and pictorial analogies dominates several other chains of sensations and analogies: in that case it will be printed in a heavier typeface than the one used in the second or third lines (the one containing, for example, a chain of sensations and musical analogies; the other, a chain of sensations and olfactory analogies).

Given a page containing many groups of sensations and analogies, with each group composed of, say, three or four lines, then the first line of each group might be formed of pictorial sensations and analogies (printed in heavier typeface) and the same sort of chain would continue (always in heavier typeface) in the first line of each of the other groups.

The chain of musical sensations and analogies (second line), though less important than visual sensations and analogies (first line), yet more important than the olfactory sensations and analogies (third line), might be printed in a typeface lighter than that of the first line, but heavier than that of the third.

The historical necessity of free expressive orthography is demonstrated by the successive revolutions that have continuously freed the lyrical powers of the human race from shackles and rules.

1. Poets, in fact, began by channeling their lyric intoxication in a series of equal breaths, with accents, echoes, assonances, or rhymes at preestablished intervals (**traditional metrics**), then varied these different breaths, measured by the lungs of preceding poets, with a certain freedom.
2. Later, poets came to feel that differing moments of their lyrical intoxication required commensurate breath of various and unexpected lengths, with absolute freedom of accentuation. Thus they arrived at **free verse**, yet still preserved the syntactic order of words so that their lyrical intoxication could flow down to the listeners by the logical channel of syntax.
3. Today we no longer want lyrical intoxication to order words in syntactic order before launching them forth with the breaths that we have invented, and hence we have **words-in-freedom**. Further, our lyrical intoxication must be free to deform and reshape words, cutting them, lengthening them, reinforcing their centers or their extremities, increasing or diminishing the number of vowels and consonants. Thus we will have the *new orthography* which I call *free expressive*. This instinctive deformation of words corresponds to our natural tendency to use onomatopoeia. It matters little if a word, having been deformed, becomes ambiguous. For it will be wedded with onomatopoeic harmonies, synopses of noises, and these will enable us to swiftly reach an *onomatopoetic psychic* harmony, the sonorous but abstract expression of an emotion of pure thought. It may be objected that **words-in-freedom** or the wireless imagination require a special declamation, or else they will remain incomprehensible. Though I am not greatly worried about being understood by the masses, I will reply by noting that Futurist declaimers are rapidly increasing and further, that any greatly admired traditional poem has also required a special declamation in order to be fully savored.

FUTURIST ANTITRADITION

Manifesto=synthesis

Down with THEPominir Alimine SSkorsusu
otalo EIScramble Menigma

**This motor for all tendencies impressionism fauvism cubism
expressionism pathetism dramatism orphism paroxysm PLASTIC
DYNAMISM WORDS IN FREEDOM INVENTION OF WORDS**

DESTRUCTION

| | | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|---|------------------------|
| | Suppression | of poetic suffering | |
| | <u>SUPPRESSION OF HISTORY</u> | of snobbish exoticism | |
| | | of copiousness in art | |
| | | of syntaxes (<i>already barred from usage in all languages</i>) | |
| | | of adjectives | |
| | | of punctuation | |
| No | | of typographical harmony | |
| Regrets | | of tenses and persons in verbs | |
| | | of orchestras | |
| | | of theatrical form | |
| | | of the pseudo-artistic sublime | |
| | | of verses and stanzas | |
| | | of houses | |
| | | of criticism and satire | |
| | of intricate plots | | |
| | of boredom | | |
| | | | <u>INFINITIVE MOOD</u> |

CONSTRUCTION

- i. Techniques continually renewed or rhythms
 Pure literature **Words in
 freedom Invention of words**
 Pure plasticism (5 senses)
 Prophetic invention creation

| | | | |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>Continuity Simultaneity in opposition to particularism and to division</p> | <p>Y T I R U P</p> | <p>Onomatopoeic description Total music and the Art of noises Universal mimicry and Light Shows Machinism the Eiffel Tower Brooklyn and skyscrapers Polyglottism Pure civilization Epic nomadism urban explorationism Art of journeys and of walks Anti-graceful Direct thrills by means of great spectacles for free circuses music-halls, etc. etc.</p> | <p>Y T I R U P</p> |
|---|--|--|--|

2. Intuition speed ubiquity

| | | |
|-----|---------------|--|
| | | Book or captive life or phonocinematography or Wireless imagination |
| | | Continuous tremolism or onomatopoeias more discovered than imitated |
| | | Dance work or pure choreography |
| | Blows | Swift pungent characteristic language sung whistled mimed walked or run |
| (I) | and | The right of peoples and of continuous war Militant feminism or innumerable differentia- tions of the sexes |
| | Wounds | Humanity and a call to the beyond-man Matter and physical transcendentalism Analogies and puns lyrical trampoline of languages calico Calicut Calcutta rubber parchment Agamemnon amenable abnormal animal animus Maruara aromatic |

uuh uuh uuh uuh flute toad birth of Apremine pearls



SHIT

to

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Critics | Orientalisms |
| Teachers | Dandyisms |
| Professors | Spiritualists or real- |
| Museums | ists (with no feel- |
| Quattrocento scholars | ing for reality or- |
| Seventeenth-century-ists | the spiritual life) |
| Ruins | Academicisms |
| Patinas | The Siamese twins |
| Historians | D'Annunzio and Rostand |
| Venice Versailles | Dante Shakespeare Tolstoy |
| Pompei Brussels Oxford | Goethe |
| Nurenberg Toledo | Beshitted dilettantisms |
| Bénarès etc. | Aeschylus and the theater in Orange |
| Ecologists | India Egypt Fiesole and theosophy |
| Philologists | Scientism |
| Essayists | Montaigne Wagner Beet- |
| <i>Neo</i> and <i>post</i> | hoven Edgar Allan Poe Walt |
| Bayreuth Florence Mont- | Whitman and Baudelaire |
| martre and Munich | Manzoni Carducci and Pascoli |
| Dictionaries | |
| Good-taste-isms | |

A R O S E

for

Marinetti Picasso Boccioni Apollinaire Paul Fort Mercereau Max Jacob Carrà Delaunay Henri-Matisse Braque Depaquit Séverine Severini Derain Russolo Archipenko Pratella Balla F. Divoire N. Beaduin T. Varlet Buzzi Palazzeschi Maquaire Papini Soffici Folgore Govoni Montfort R. Fry Cavacchioli D'Alba Altomare Tridon Metzinger Gleizes Jastrebzoff Royère Canudo Salmon Castiaux Laurencin Aurel Agero Léger Valentine de Saint-Point Delmarle Kandinsky Stravinsky Herbin A. Billy G. Sauvebois Picabia Marcel Duchamp B. Cendrars Jouve H. M. Barzun G. Polti Mac Orlan F. Fleuret Jaudon Mandin R. Dalize M. Brésil F. Carco Rubiner Bétuda Manzella-Frontini A. Mazza T. Derême Giannattasio Tavolato DeGonzagues-Friek C.Larronde etc.

Before the nineteenth century, painting was an art of silence. The painters of antiquity, the Renaissance, the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries never envisaged the possibility of rendering sounds, noises, and smells in painting, even when they chose fragrant flowers, raging seas, or stormy skies as their themes.

The Impressionists in their daring revolution made some confused and hesitant attempts at sounds and noises in their pictures. Before them—nothing, absolutely nothing!

But we should point out at once that there is an enormous difference between the Impressionist mumblings and our Futurist paintings of sounds, noises, and smells—as great as that between a misty winter morning and a scorching summer afternoon, or—better still—between the first breath of life and an adult man in full control of his powers. In their canvases, sounds and noises are expressed in such an attenuated and faded way that they seem to have been perceived by the eardrum of a deaf man. But this is not the occasion for a detailed account of the Impressionists' principles and experiments. Nor need we enquire minutely into all the reasons why the Impressionists never succeeded in painting sounds, noises, and smells. We shall only note the kind of thing which, had they had wanted to obtain genuine results, they would have had to destroy:

1. Their extremely vulgar, *trompe-l'oeil* perspectives, a game worthy of an academic of the Leonardo da Vinci sort, or of an idiotic set designer for *verismo* operas.¹
2. The concept of color harmony, a characteristic defect of the French which has given them a fatal attraction for the elegant ways of Watteau and his like, and, as a result, led to the abuse of light blues, pale greens, violets, and pinks.² Many times already we have said how much we disdain this tendency toward the soft, the effeminate, the gentle.
3. Contemplative idealism, which I have defined as a *sentimental mimicry of apparent nature*. This contemplative idealism contaminates the pictorial construction of the impressionists, just as it contaminated that of their predecessors Corot and Delacroix.
4. Anecdote and detail, which (although it is a reaction, an antidote, to false academic construction) has almost always dragged them into a form of photography. As for the *post-* and *neo-*impressionists, such as Matisse, Signac, and Seurat,³ we regretfully maintain that, far from envisaging the problem and facing up to the difficulties of getting sounds, noises, and smells in their paintings, they have preferred to withdraw into static representations in order to obtain

a greater synthesis of form and color (Matisse) and a systematic application of light (Signac, Seurat).

Hence we Futurists attest that we are opening fresh paths in bringing the elements of sound, noise, and smell into painting. As artists we have already created a love of modern life in its essential dynamism—full of sounds, noises, and smells—and have thereby destroyed the stupid mania for the solemn, for humans draped in togas, for the serene, the hieratic, and the mummified: in short, for everything purely intellectual.

The wireless imagination, words-in-freedom, the systematic use of onomatopoeia, antigraceful music without continuous steady rhythm, and the art of noises are all derived from the same Futurist sensibility which has generated the paintings of sounds, noises, and smells.

It is indisputably true that (1) silence is static and sounds, noises, and smells are dynamic; (2) sounds, noises, and smells are none other than different forms and intensities of vibration; and (3) any continued series of sounds, noises and smells imprints on the mind an arabesque of form and color. We, therefore, have to measure these intensities and envisage their arabesques.

THE PAINTING OF SOUNDS, NOISES, AND SMELLS REJECTS:

1. All subdued colors, even those obtained directly and without the help of tricks such as patinas and glazes.
2. The banality of velvets, silks, flesh tints which are too human, too fine, too soft, along with flowers which are excessively pale and drooping.
3. Greys, browns, and all muddy colors.
4. The use of pure horizontal, pure vertical lines, and all other dead lines.
5. The right angle which we consider passionless.
6. The cube, the pyramid, and all other static shapes.
7. The unities of time and place.

THE PAINTING OF SOUNDS, NOISES, AND SMELLS DEMANDS:

1. Reds, rrrreds, the rrrrreddest rrrrrreds that shouuuuuuuut.
2. Greens, that can never be greener, greeeeeeeeeeens, that screeeeeeeeam; yellows as explosive as possible; polenta yellows, saffron yellows, brass yellows.
3. All the colors of speed, joy, revelry, and fantastic carnivals, fireworks, cafés-chantants, and music-halls, all colors that are seen in movement, colors experienced in time and not in space.

4. The dynamic arabesque as the sole reality created by the artist in the depth of his sensibility.
5. The shock of all acute angles, which we have already called angles of the will.
6. Oblique lines which affect the soul of the observer like so many bolts from the blue, along with lines of depth.
7. The sphere, helixes that whirl, upside-down cones, spirals, and all the dynamic forms which the artist's infinite powers of genius can discover.
8. Perspective obtained not as a way of objectifying distances but as a subjective interpenetration of hard and soft, sharp and dull forms.
9. Signifying the painting's dynamic construction (its polyphonic architectural whole), conceived as every painting's universal subject and its sole reason for being. Though architecture is often thought of as something static, this is wrong. What we have in mind is an architecture similar to the dynamic, musical architecture achieved by the Futurist musician Pratella. Architecture as seen in the movement of clouds or smoke blown by the wind, or of metallic structures when they are experienced in states of mind that are violent and chaotic.
10. The inverted cone (the natural shape of an explosion), the slanting cylinder, and the slanting cone.
11. The collision of two cones at their apexes (the natural shape of a water spout), cones that are bending or are formed with curving lines (a clown jumping, dancers).
12. The zigzag and the wavy line.
13. Ellipsoidal curves seen like nets in movement.
14. Lines, volumes, and lights considered as part of a plastic transcendentalism, that is according to their special kind of curving or obliqueness, as shaped by the painter's state of mind.
15. The echoes of lines and volumes in movement.
16. Plastic complementarism (for both forms and colors), based on the law of equivalent contrast and on the clash of the most contrasting colors of the rainbow. This complementarism is constituted by the disequilibrium of forms (which, therefore, are forced to keep moving). What results is a destruction of the way volumes match or make pairs. We must reject these matchings which, like a pair of crutches, allow only a single movement forward and backward, not the total sort of movement which we have called "the spherical expansion of space."
17. Continuity and simultaneity in the plastic transcendences of the animal, mineral, vegetable, and mechanical kingdoms.
18. Abstract plastic wholes, that is, those which correspond not to sight, but to

sensations which are generated by sounds, noises, and smells, and all the unknown forces involved in these.

These plastic polyphonic, polyrhythmic, and abstract wholes correspond to the necessity for an internal enharmonic relation which we Futurist painters believe to be indispensable for pictorial sensibility. Because of their mysterious fascination, they are much more suggestive than those created by our visual and tactile senses, since they are so much closer to our pure plastic state of mind.

We Futurist painters maintain that sounds, noises, and smells are incorporated into the expression of lines, volumes, and colors just as lines, volumes, and colors are incorporated into the architecture of a musical work. Our canvases, in that event, will express the plastic equivalent of the sounds, noises, and smells found in theaters, music-halls, cinemas, brothels, railroad stations, ports, garages, hospitals, factories, etc., etc.

From the formal point of view: there are sounds, noises, and smells which are concave, convex, triangular, ellipsoidal, oblong, conical, spherical, spiral, etc.

From the color point of view: there are sounds, noises, and smells which are yellow, green, dark blue, violet.

In railroad stations and garages, and throughout the mechanical or sporting world, sounds, noises, and smells are predominantly red; in restaurants and cafés they are silver, yellow, and violet. While the sounds, noises, and smells of animals are yellow and blue, those of a woman are green, blue, and violet.

We are not exaggerating when we claim that smell alone is enough to determine in our minds arabesques of form and color which could be said to constitute the motif and justify the necessity of a painting. If we are shut up in a dark room (so that our sense of sight no longer works) with flowers, gasoline, or other things with a strong smell, our shaping imagination will gradually eliminate remembered sensations and construct a very special plastic whole which corresponds perfectly, in its quality of weight and movement, with the smells contained in the room.

These, through an obscure process, have become force-environments, determining that state of mind which for us Futurist painters constitutes a pure plastic whole.

Such bubbling and whirling of forms and light, both infused with and composed of sounds, noises, and smells, has been partially rendered by me in *Anarchical Funeral* and *Jolts of a Taxicab*; by Boccioni in *States of Mind* and *Forces of a Street*; by Russolo in *The Revolt* and Severini in *Pan-Pan*,⁴ all paintings which were violently debated in our first exhibition in Paris in 1912. This kind of bubbling over requires a great emotive effort, almost a delirium, on the part of the artist, who in order to render a vortex, must be a vortex of sensation himself, a pictorial force and not a cold, logical intellect.

Know, therefore! In order to achieve this *total painting*, which demands the active cooperation of all the senses, *a painting which is a plastic state of mind of the universal*, one must paint, as drunkards sing and vomit, sounds, noises, and smells!

THE VARIETY THEATER F. T. MARINETTI

29 September 1913

We have a deep distaste for the contemporary theater (verse, prose, and musical), because it oscillates stupidly between historical reconstruction (pastiche or plagiarism) and a photographic reproduction of everyday life; petty, slow, analytic, and diluted theater that is worthy, at best, of the age of the oil lamp.

FUTURISM EXALTS THE VARIETY THEATER because:

1. The Variety Theater, born as we are from electricity, is fortunate in having no traditions, no guiding lights, no dogmas, and in being nurtured by the swift pace of contemporary events.
2. The Variety Theater is absolutely practical, for it proposes to distract and amuse the public with comic effects, erotic stimulation, or imaginative astonishment.¹
3. The authors, actors, and stage technicians of the Variety Theater have only one reason for existing and succeeding: incessantly to invent new means of astonishment. Whence the absolute impossibility of standing still or repeating oneself; whence the persistent competition of minds and muscles in order to break the various records of agility, speed, force, complication, and elegance.
4. The Variety Theater is unique today in making use of film, which enriches it with an incalculable number of visions and spectacles that couldn't otherwise be performed (battles, riots, horse races, automobile and airplane meets, travels, transatlantic steamers, the recesses of the city, of the countryside, of the oceans and the skies).
5. The Variety Theater, being a profitable shopwindow for countless creative efforts, naturally generates what I call the *Futurist marvelous*, a product of modern machinism. Here are some of the elements of this *marvelous*: 1. powerful caricatures; 2. abysses of the ridiculous; 3. improbable and delightful ironies; 4. comprehensive, definitive symbols; 5. cascades of uncontrollable humor; 6. deep analogies between the human, animal, vegetable, and mechanical worlds; 7. flashes of revealing cynicism; 8. plots involving witticisms, puns, and

- conundrums that aerate the intelligence; 9. the entire gamut of laughter and smiles, to relax one's nerves; 10. the entire gamut of stupidity, imbecility, mindlessness, and absurdity, which imperceptibly push intelligence to the edge of insanity; 11. all the new productions of light, sound, noise, and language, with their mysterious and inexplicable extensions into the most unexplored regions of our sensibility; 12. a mass of current events dispatched within two minutes ("and now let's glance at the Balkans": King Nicholas, Enver Bey, Daneff, Venizelos, belly-slaps and fistfights between Serbs and Bulgarians, a chorus number, and everything vanishes);² 13. satirical educational pantomimes; 14. caricatures of suffering and nostalgia, deeply impressed into the spectators' sensibility by means of gestures that exasperate with their spasmodic, hesitant, and weary slowness; weighty terms made ridiculous by comic gestures, bizarre disguises, mutilated words, smirks, pratfalls.
6. The Variety Theater in our time is the crucible in which the elements of a new emerging sensibility are seething. In it one can trace the ironic decomposition of all the outworn prototypes of the Beautiful, the Grand, the Solemn, the Religious, the Ferocious, the Seductive, and the Frightful, and the abstract elaboration of the new prototypes that will succeed them.

The Variety Theater, therefore, is the synthesis of everything that humanity up till now has refined within its nervous system in order to amuse itself by laughing at material or moral suffering; and it is the seething fusion of all the laughter and all the smiles, all the guffaws, all the contortions, all the smirks of humanity to come. The joy that will shake men in the next century, their poetry, their painting, their philosophy, the leaps of their architecture—all can be tasted in the Variety Theater of today.

7. Among the forms of contemporary spectacle, the Variety Theater is the most hygienic by virtue of the dynamism of its forms and colors (simultaneous movements of the jugglers, ballerinas, gymnasts, colorful riding masters, spiraling cyclones of dancers spinning on the points of their feet). With its swift, overpowering dance rhythms, the Variety Theater forcibly drags the slowest souls out of their torpor and forces them to run and jump.
8. The Variety Theater is the only spectacle that makes use of audience collaboration. The public is not static like a stupid voyeur, but joins noisily in the action, singing along with songs, accompanying the orchestra, communicating with the actors by speaking up at will or engaging in bizarre dialogues. The actors even bicker clownishly with the musicians.

The Variety Theater uses the smoke of cigars and cigarettes to merge the atmosphere of the audience with that of the stage. And since the audience collaborates in this way with the actors' imaginations, the action develops simultaneously on the stage, in the boxes, and in the orchestra. And then it continues

beyond the performance, among the battalions of fans and the sugared dandies at the stage door fighting over the starring lady; a double victory at the end; a chic dinner and bed.

9. The Variety Theater is a school of sincerity for males because it exalts their rapacious instincts and snatches away from woman all the veils, all the phrases, all the sighs, all the romantic sobs that mask and deform her. Instead, it throws into relief all of woman's marvelous animal qualities, her power to prey, seduce, betray, and resist.
10. The Variety Theater is a school of heroism in its stress on winning various records for difficulty and overcoming previous efforts, which gives the stage a strong and healthy atmosphere of danger. (For example, somersaults, looping the loop on bicycles, in cars, on horseback.)
11. The Variety Theater is a school of subtlety, complication, and cerebral synthesis because of its clowns, magicians, mind readers, brilliant calculators, character actors, imitators and parodists, its musical jugglers and eccentric Americans, its fantastic pregnancies that give birth to unexpected objects and mechanisms.
12. The Variety Theater is the only school that can give advice to adolescents and talented young people, because it briefly and incisively explains the most abstruse problems and complicated political events. Example: a year ago, at the Folies-Bergère, two dancers acted out the meandering discussions between Cambon and Kiderlen-Wächter on the question of Morocco and the Congo,³ with a revealing symbolic dance that equaled at least three years of study in foreign policy. Facing the audience, their arms entwined, glued together, they kept making mutual territorial concessions, jumping back and forth, to the right and to the left, never separating, both of them keeping their sight fixed on their goal, which was to become ever more entangled. They gave an unrivaled rendering of diplomacy, of extreme courtesy, skillful vacillation, ferocity, diffidence, persistence, and pettiness.

In addition, the Variety Theater luminously explains the laws that dominate life:

- a) the necessity of complications and differing rhythms;
 - b) the inevitability of lies and contradictions (e.g., English *danseuses* with two faces: peaceful shepherd and terrible soldier);
 - c) the omnipotence of a methodical willpower that modifies human powers;
 - d) syntheses of speed + transformations (example: Fregoli).⁴
13. The Variety Theater systematically disparages ideal love and its romantic obsessions by endlessly repeating the nostalgic languors of passion with the mo-

monotonous and automatic regularity of a daily job. It strangely mechanizes feelings; it disparages and hygienically tramples down the obsession with carnal possession; and it reduces lust to the natural function of coitus, stripping it of all mystery, depressing anxiety, antihygienic idealism.

The Variety Theater, instead, communicates a sense of and a taste for facile, light, and ironic loves. Café-concert performances, given in the open air on casino terraces, offer an amusing war between the spasmodic moonlight, tormented with endless desperation, and the electric light that sparkles violently over the false jewelry, the painted flesh, the colorful petticoats, the spangles, and the blood-red color of lipstick. Naturally it is the energetic electric light that triumphs, the soft and decadent moonlight that is defeated.

14. The Variety Theater is naturally anti-academic, primitive, and ingenuous, and hence more significant for the improvised character of its experiments and the simplicity of its means. (Example: the systematic tour of the stage that the *chanteuses* make, like caged animals, at the end of every refrain.)
15. The Variety Theater is destroying the Solemn, the Sacred, the Serious, the Sublime of Art with a capital A. It is helping along the Futurist destruction of immortal masterpieces by plagiarizing and parodying them, by making them seem commonplace in stripping them of their solemnity and presenting them as if they were just another turn or attraction. Hence we give our unconditional approval to the performance of *Parsifal* in forty minutes, currently rehearsing at a major London music-hall.
16. The Variety Theater is destroying all our conceptions of perspective, proportion, time, and space. (Example: a little doorway and gate that are thirty centimeters in height, isolated in the middle of the stage, which eccentric American comedians open and close with solemnity as they repeatedly enter and exit it, as though they couldn't do otherwise.)
17. The Variety Theater offers us all the records achieved until now: the greatest speed and the finest gymnastics and acrobatics of the Japanese, the greatest muscular frenzy of the Negroes, the highest examples of animal intelligence (trained horses, elephants, seals, dogs, birds), the finest melodic inspiration of the Gulf of Naples and the Russian steppes, the keenest Parisian wit, the greatest competitive force of different races (wrestling and boxing), the greatest anatomical monstrosity, the greatest female beauty.
18. While contemporary theater exalts the inner life, professorial meditation, the library, the museum, monotonous crises of conscience, stupid analyses of feelings—and in short, that filthy thing and filthy word *psychology*; the Variety theater exalts action, heroism, life in the open air, dexterity, the authority of instinct and intuition. To psychology it opposes what I call *body-madness*.
19. Finally, the Variety Theater offers all nations that don't have a single great capi-

tal city (like Italy) a brilliant résumé of Paris, considered as the unique magnetic center of luxury and ultrarefined pleasure.

Futurism wants to transform the Variety Theater into a Theater of Astonishment, Record-Setting, and Body-madness.

1. Every trace of logic in Variety Theater performances must be destroyed, while their luxuriousness must be grotesquely exaggerated, their contrasts multiplied, and on the stage their improbable and absurd dimensions must reign supreme. (Example: require the *chanteuses* to dye their décolletage, their arms, and especially their hair, in all the colors hitherto neglected as means of seduction. Green hair, purple arms, blue décolletage, an orange chignon, etc. Interrupt a song and break into a revolutionary speech. Sprinkle over a romance some insults and profanity, etc.)
2. Prevent any set of traditions from being established in the Variety Theater. Therefore fight to abolish the stupid Parisian *Revue*s, as tedious as Greek tragedy with their *Compère* and *Commère* who play the part of the ancient chorus,⁵ and their parade of political personalities and events, punctuated by witticisms, which possess a tiresome logic and connectedness. The Variety Theater mustn't be a more or less humorous newspaper, as it is, unfortunately, today.
3. Introduce surprise and the need to move among the spectators of the orchestra, the boxes, and the balcony. Some random suggestions: spread a strong glue on some of the seats, so that the male or female spectator will remain stuck to the seat and make everyone laugh (the damaged dinner jacket or toilette will be paid for at the door). — Sell the same ticket to ten people: resulting in traffic jams, bickering, and wrangling. — Give free tickets to men and women who are notoriously unbalanced, irritable, or eccentric and likely to provoke an uproar with obscene gestures, pinching women, or other freakishness. Sprinkle the seats with dusts that provoke itching, sneezing, etc.
4. Systematically prostitute all of classical art on the stage, for example by performing all Greek, French, and Italian tragedies in a single evening, all highly condensed and mixed up. Put life into the works of Beethoven, Wagner, Bach, Bellini, and Chopin by inserting Neapolitan songs into them. — Put on stage, side by side, Zacconi, Eleonora Duse, Félix Mayol, Sarah Bernhardt, and Fregoli.⁶ — Perform a Beethoven symphony in reverse, starting from the last note — Condense all of Shakespeare into a single act. — Ditto for all the most venerated actors. — Have actors tied in sacks up to their necks recite Hugo's *Hernani*.⁷ Soap the floorboards of the stage to cause amusing pratfalls at the most tragic moments.
5. In every way encourage the *type* of the American eccentric, the effects of exciting grotesquerie which he achieves, the frightening dynamism, the crude jokes, the

acts of enormous brutality, the trick vest jackets and the trousers as deep as a ship's hold, out of which, along with a thousand different things, will come the great Futurist hilarity that must make the face of the world young again.

Because, and don't forget it, we Futurists are YOUNG ARTILLERYMEN ON A SPREE, as we proclaimed in our manifesto, "Let's Murder the Moonlight!"⁸ fire + fire + light against the moonlight and war every evening against the ageing firmaments great cities to blaze with electric signs Immense face of a Negro (30 meters high + 150 meters high atop the building = 180 meters) golden eye to open to close to open to close height 3 meters SMOKE SMOKE MANOLI SMOKE MANOLI CIGARETTES woman in blouse (50 meters high + 120 height of the house = 170 meters) bust to stretch to relax violet pink lilac blue foam made up of electric lights in a champagne glass (30 meters high) to sparkle to evaporate within a shadowy mouth electric signs to dim to die out beneath a dark tenacious hand to be reborn to continue to extend into night the effort of the day human courage + madness never to die to stop to fall asleep electric signs = formation and dissolution of minerals and vegetables center of the earth circulation of blood in the iron faces of the Futurist houses to pulse to turn purple (joy anger up up still more now stronger yet) the moment that pessimistic negative sentimental nostalgic shadows besiege the city a brilliant reawakening of the streets that channel the smoky swarm of workers during the day two horses (30 meters high) to roll a golden ball with their hooves MONA LISA PURGATIVE WATERS

cross cross of trrr trrrrr Elevated trrrr trrrr overhead trombboooobooboone whiiiiiiistles ambulance-sirens and fire-trucks transformation of the streets into splendid hallways to guide to push logical necessity the masses toward trepidation + laughter + uproar of Music-hall FOLIE-BERGERE EMPIRE CREAM-ECLIPSE red red red turquoise turquoise violet tubes of mercury huge eel-letters of gold purple diamond Futurist defiance to the weepy nights defeat of the stars warmth enthusiasm faith conviction will-power penetration of an electric sign in the house across the street yellow slaps for the gouty man dozing off in bibliophile slippers 3 mirrors watch him the sign sinks into 3 red-gooooolden abysses to open to close to open to close depths of 3-thousand kilometers horror to leave to leave soon hat stick staircase taximeter pushings zu zuoeu here we are dazzle of the promenade solemnity of the panther-cocottes in their tropics of light music fat and warm smell of music hall gaiety = tireless ventilator of the world's Futurist brain.

We want to enclose the universe in the work of art. Individual objects no longer exist for us.

We must forget exterior reality and our everyday knowledge of it in order to *create* new dimensions, and through our artistic sensibility we will discover their order and extent in relation to the world of plastic creation.

In this way we shall express artistic emotions which are not only related to a particular emotional environment, but connected to the whole universe; for matter, considered in its effects, encloses the universe in an enormously vast circle of analogies, which start with affinities or resemblances and end with specific contrasts and differences.

Thus the sensation aroused in us by a real object of which we know the volume and blue color can be expressed artistically through its formal and chromatic complementaries, i.e., round shapes and yellow colors.

For exterior reality and our knowledge of it no longer have any influence on our plastic conception, and, as for memory's effect on our sensitivity, it is only the memory of the emotion that remains, not the memory of the cause that produced it.

Memory, therefore, will act in the work of art as an *element of artistic intensification* and as a true emotive source that is independent of any unity of time or place, and as sole *raison d'être* of an artistic creation.

As early as 1911 in my painting *Memories of a Journey*—first Futurist exhibition in Paris, February 1912—I had realized the possibility of expanding *ad infinitum* the range of plastic expression, totally destroying the unities of time and place with a painting of memory which brought together, within a single plastic whole, things perceived in Tuscany, the Alps, Paris, etc.¹

Today, in this epoch of dynamism and simultaneity, one cannot separate any event or object from the memories, the plastic affinities or aversions, which its *expansive action* calls up *simultaneously* in us, and which are so many abstract realities—*points de repère*, for achieving the full effect of the event or object in question.

Furthermore, the spiraling shapes and beautiful contrasts of yellow and blue that were intuitively felt one evening while *experiencing the movements of a danseuse* may be found again *later*, through a process of plastic affinities or aversions, or through a combination of both, *in the concentric circling of an airplane or in the onrush of an express train*.

As a consequence, certain forms and colors expressing the sensations of noise, sound, smell, heat, speed, etc., which might be connected with the experience of an *ocean liner*, for example, can express by *plastic analogy* the same sensations evoked in us by a very different reality—the *Galleries Lafayette*.²

The experience *ocean liner* is thus linked to the experience *Galleries Lafayette* (and every experience is linked to its specific but distinct correlative) by its *qualitative continuities* which permeate the universe on the electrical waves of our sensibility.

This is a complex form of realism which *totally* destroys the integrity of matter—henceforth taken by us only *at its greatest vitality*, which can be expressed thus:

Galleries Lafayette = ocean liner

The abstract colors and forms that we portray belong to a Universe outside of time and space.

Before us, analogies had only been used to a greater or lesser extent in literature, and the poet Marinetti, who was the first to use them systematically and to achieve an intense and detailed realism, defines analogies in this way in his marvelous “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature”:

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. . . .

To render the successive movements of an object, it is imperative to render the *chain of analogies* which it evokes, each condensed and concentrated into one essential word. . . .

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.³

So, using analogies, we can penetrate the most expressive part of reality and *simultaneously* render *matter* and *will* in their most *intensive* and *expansive* action.

With the interpenetration of planes and the simultaneity of environment, we have been able to render the reciprocal influence of objects and the environmental vitality of matter (intensity and expansion of object + environment); with plastic analogies we can *infinitely* enlarge the range of these influences, continuities, desires, and contrasts, whose unique form is *created* by our artistic sensibility and expresses the *absolute vitality* of matter, or *universal dynamism* (intensity and expansion of the object + environment through the entire universe, as far as its specific but diverse correlative).

In addition we are taking *artistic emotion* back to its *physical* and *spontaneous source*—*nature*—from which anything philosophical or intellectual would tend to

alienate it. Therefore, although our creative works represent an inner life totally different from real life, the painting and sculpture that we base on artistic analogies can be called painting and sculpture after nature.

There are two kinds of analogy—*real analogies* and *apparent analogies*. For example:

Real analogies: the sea dancing, with its zigzag movements and sparkling contrasts of silver and emerald, within my plastic sensibility evokes the distant vision of a dancer covered in sparkling sequins in her world of light, noise, and sound.

Therefore: sea = dancer.⁴

Apparent analogies: the plastic expression of the same sea, which through real analogy has evoked a dancer for me, by a process of apparent analogy evokes for me a vision of a large bunch of flowers.

These evident and superficial analogies help to intensify the expressive power of the work of art. Thus one comes to this result:

sea = dancer + bunch of flowers.

It would be impossible to establish technical rules for such analogies which would be sufficiently malleable for the individuality of each artist. Nevertheless, we can state the foundations for our expressive devices, some already used by us, but now intensified and systematically developed in accordance with our now universal plastic sensibility.

FORM

1. Simultaneous contrast of lines, planes, and volumes, and of groups of analogous forms disposed in spherical expansion. — Constructive interpenetration.
2. Rhythmic construction resembling arabesques, intentionally ordered in a new *qualitative architecture*, formed exclusively of qualitative quantities. (*Matter, when it is in a state of action, loses its wholeness and uniqueness, and therefore its related quantities, in order to develop those qualitative continuities that extend into the infinite.*⁵ Therefore our Futuristic artistic expression will be purely qualitative.)
3. Dynamic composition open in all sense toward space, vertically rectangular, or square and spherical.
4. Suppression of straight lines which are as static and formless as a color without tonal gradations, and of parallel lines.

COLOR

1. Exclusive use of the pure colors of the prism for areas in simultaneous contrast or for groups of analogous and divided colors. (*Complementarity in general or a Divisionism of analogous colors*⁶ make up the technique of color analogies. Plastic

analogy is a real difference among objects, but one which has been destroyed by a real analogy; with color analogies one can attain the greatest luminous intensity, heat, musicality, and optical and constructional dynamism.)

2. Use of pure black, pure white, or the plain canvas for neutral areas in order to attain the greatest intensity from the colors.
3. To heighten the realism, use of onomatopoeic symbols, isolated words, and all possible types of material.
4. *Our need for absolute realism has impelled us, in our paintings, to model marks in relief and to color the plastic totality with all the colors of the prism disposed in a spherical expansion.*

All sensations, when they assume artistic form, become concrete in the sensation of *light*, and therefore can only be expressed with all the colors of the prism.

To paint or model forms differently, without using the entire spectrum of colors, would mean suppressing one of the sources of motion in the object, which is *irradiation*.

In accordance with our notion of *spherical expansion in space*, the colored expression of the sensation of *Light* can only be centrifugal or centripetal in relation to the work's organic structure. Thus, for example, the artistic ensemble *Dancer = sea* should preferably have luminous irradiations (forms and color-light) moving from the center towards space (centrifugal). While the exact form is dependent on the artistic sensibility of each artist, it is *essential* to do away with the principle of light, local tone, and shadows which painters before us have used to show the effect of light on bodies, a principle which is linked with the relativity of luminous, transient, and circumstantial phenomena.

We call this new artistic expression of light *spherical expansion of light in space*.

In this way, we will have a spherical expansion of color in perfect accord with the spherical expansion of forms.

For example: If the center of a group of forms is yellow, a series of colors will radiate toward space, from one color analogy to the next as far as blue, its complementary color, and if necessary as far as black, the absence of light, and vice versa.

It is clear that the same picture or work of art can contain more than one *centrifugal and centripetal* nucleus in simultaneous and dynamic interaction.

One of our most systematic Futurist characteristics, which can also be found among artists belonging to different races, is that of expressing *sensations of movement*.

Indeed, one of the effects of science that has transformed our sensibility and led to the majority of our Futurist discoveries is *speed*.

Speed has given us a new conception of space and time, and consequently of

life itself; and so it is perfectly reasonable for Futurist works to *characterize* the art of our epoch with the *stylization of movement* which is one of the most immediate manifestations of life.

Therefore we must *ban*, as we banned the *nude* in our first manifesto of Futurist painting, *the human body, still lifes, and rural landscapes considered as objects of feeling*.

Such objects, taken individually or separated from the *qualitative associations* which express their *total effect* in the universe, *even if considered in conjunction with an emotional background*, can only be of slight interest to our artistic genius, and would allow it to molder in pursuits unworthy of its creative power.

On the other hand a complex of dynamic elements, such as an airplane in flight + man + landscape; a tram or an automobile traveling quickly + boulevard + passengers; or carriages in the Métro + stations + posters + light + crowd, etc., etc., and all the artistic analogies which they arouse in us, offer us sources of feeling and lyricism which are much deeper and more complex.

Further, we must once and for all repress the time-honored and academic distinctions between *pictorial form* and *sculptural form*.

Plastic dynamism, the absolute vitality of matter, can be expressed only with *color-forms* at a *maximum* of relief from the ground, a maximum of intensity and luminous irradiation, which is to say, with painting and sculpture reunited in a single work of art.

I therefore foresee the *end of the painting and the statue*. These art forms, despite our innovative endeavors, limit our creative freedom and already contain their fates within themselves: museums, collectors' living rooms, each more *passéist* than the other.

Instead, *our plastic creations must live in the open air and fit into architectural schemes, with which they will share the active intervention of the outside world, the essence of which they represent*.

THE SUBJECT IN FUTURIST PAINTING

ARDENGO SOFFICI

1 January 1914

If we consider the matter from a conceptual viewpoint, we are obviously led to conclusions of the following sort: "Whatever art tries to represent, its object is always man. A landscape, a still-life . . . these are simply hieroglyphics into which someone's personality has been injected, and through which the artist presents

his own spiritual or intellectual being.” But if we set aside such aesthetic truisms, together with all the subtle claims that can be made concerning subjectivism and objectivism and their inevitable connection within the work of art, and if instead we focus only on the practice of pictorial art as it actually appears to those who are engaged in it, or those who wish to study its development in its concrete forms, then the problem of the subject immediately assumes very great importance.

I have repeatedly stated my views on what pictorial art should mean today; I think I may venture, therefore, to assume that no one will believe that I attach value to the subject in accordance with the old criteria of nobility, or grandeur, or in relation to any literary, dramatic, or sentimental qualities. Its importance for me resides entirely in the fact that each new subject demands from the painter a new plastic sense and hence a new style. I mean by this that an unaccustomed ensemble of forms, lines, and colors, in order to come to expression, requires a different treatment of the materials; and if it is also to attain unity, that essential quality of every work of art, then it further requires a different way of conceiving the arrangement and composition of the different parts.

It is a fact that the painting of the old masters, which is founded on the study of human and animal forms and to some degree on landscape, has imposed a meaning on the concepts of “style” and “plastic art” which is inadequate to the demands of modernity.

The virtually unexpected appearance of new forms has modified our sensibilities, and inevitably it will have to modify our means of expression as well. Anyone, for example, can understand that an airplane, a train, any machine, a café-concert, a circus scene, when used as elements in a painting, inevitably yield an absolutely new interpretation of the fusion of lines and the complementarity of colors and light, as opposed to the old one of persons seated round a table, a group of nude bathers, a pair of plow-oxen, or a collection of fruit and china on a table.

There is something more vibrant, more fragmentary, more shocking, more chaotic, and more nervous in these new subjects, something which the calm lines, harmonious colors, and balanced chiaroscuro suggested by older subjects could never render.

There is a profound and intimate difference in the lyrical stimulus; and therefore there must be a difference in the expressive plastic texture.

It is in this sense that the Futurist painter attaches importance to subject matter, insofar as it demands the imposition of appropriate plastic rhythms. That is why, as far as subject is concerned, modernity is now the indispensable precondition of all the arts.

A Futurist Letter Circulated Among Cosmopolitan
Women Friends Who Give Tango-teas and
Parsifalize Themselves

F. T. MARINETTI

11 January 1914

About a year ago I replied to a questionnaire sent out by *Gil Blas*, denouncing the enfeebling poisons of the tango.¹ Yet little by little this epidemic oscillation has been spreading throughout the entire world, threatening to putrefy all the races of man, agglutinizing them. Once again, therefore, we see that we have to hurl ourselves against the imbecility of fashion and deter the sheeplike movement of snobbery.

Monotony of romantic thighs, amid the flashing eyes and Spanish daggers of de Musset, Hugo, and Gautier.² Industrialization of Baudelaire, *Fleurs du mal* undulating amid the taverns of Jean Lorrain for impotent voyeurs *à la* Huysmans and inverts like Oscar Wilde.³ A sentimental, decadent, and paralytic romanticism's last maniacal striving for a cardboard *Femme fatale*.

Clumsiness of English and German tangos; mechanized desires, mechanized spasms of bones and evening-coats that are incapable of externalizing their sensibilities. Mimicry of Parisian and Italian tangos; mollusk-couples; the savage felinity of the Argentine race stupidly domesticated, morphinized, powdered over.

To possess a woman is not to rub against her but to penetrate her.

"Barbarian!"

A knee between the thighs? Come! they want two!

"Barbarian!"

Well then, yes, we are barbarians! Down with the tango and its rhythmic swoons. Do you think it's so amusing to look each other in the mouth and ecstatically examine each other's teeth, like two dentists having hallucinations? To yank? . . . To fill a tooth? . . . Is it so much fun to arch desperately over each other, then try to jerk each other back up, like uncorking two bottles and never succeeding? . . . Or to stare at the points of your shoes, like hypnotized shoemakers? Darling, do you really wear a size seven? . . . What lovely stockings, dreeeamboat! . . . You toooo! . . .

Tristan and Isolde who withhold their climax to excite King Mark.⁴ Medicine-dropper of love. Miniature of sexual anguish. Thin treacle of lust. Mere lechery out in the open. Delirium tremens. Alcoholized hands and feet. Pantomime coitus for the camera. A waltz being masturbated. Pouah! Down with diplomacies of the

skin! Up with the brutality of a violent possession and the fine fury of muscular dances that exalt and fortify.

Tango, roll and pitch of sailboats that have cast their anchors into the depths of cretinism. Tango, roll and pitch of sailboats drenched with tenderness and lunar stupidity. Tango, tango, a pitching to make one vomit. Tango, slow and patient funeral rites of dead genitals! Oh! it's certainly not a question of religion or morality or modesty! Those words mean nothing to us! We shout *Down with the tango!* in the name of Health, Force, Will, and Virility.

If the tango is bad, *Parsifal* is worse,⁵ because it inoculates the dancers swaying in languorous boredom with an incurable musical neurasthenia.

How shall we avoid *Parsifal* and its cloudbursts, puddles, and bogs of mystical tears? *Parsifal* is the systematic devaluation of life! Cooperative factory of sadness and desperation. Unmelodious protrusion of weak stomachs. Bad digestion and heavy breathing of virgins in their forties. Lamentations of fat old constipated priests. Wholesale and retail traffic in regrets and elegant cowardices for snobs. Insufficiency of blood, weakness of the loins, hysteria, anemia, and green sickness. Genuflection, brutalizing and crushing of Man. Silly scraping of wounded and defeated notes. Snoring of drunken organs that lie stretched out in the vomit of bitter leitmotifs. Tears and false pearls of Mary Magdalene in décolletage at Maxim's. Polyphonic suppuration of Amfortas's wound. Lachrymose sleepiness of the Knights of the Grail! Silly satanism of Kundry . . . Passéism! Passéism—enough!

King and Queens of snobbishness, do you know that you owe an absolute obedience to us, the Futurists, living innovators! Then leave the corpse of Wagner to the bestial lusts of the public, Wagner the innovator of fifty years ago, whose work, now surpassed by Debussy, by Strauss, and by our great Futurist Pratella, has lost all meaning! You helped us to defend him when he needed it. We will teach you to love and defend something alive, you dear slaves and sheep of snobbery.

Furthermore, you are forgetting *this final argument, the only one persuasive for you:* to love Wagner and *Parsifal* today, which is performed everywhere and especially in the provinces . . . to give tango-teas like all good bourgeois all over the world, come come, **it's no loonger chic!**

1

I think it's actually happening. The circle of the creative mind. That human addition—one characterized by will—to natural reality. Art was born as imitation, but it has made progress through distortion. Thought was originally born as interpretation, but in fields such as pure metaphysics it has become autonomous.

On one hand, there was concrete practice, and on the other hand imaginative lyricism; on one hand, an active sensibility, and on the other hand, art as a concept existing in disinterested freedom. The two worlds have skirted one another, yet always remained distinct. But today, in the most advanced experiments, I think we detect a negation (a self-suppression) of one of these two hemispheres, and that is the conceptual lyrical one. It is almost abdicating its role under pressure from the other sphere. Creation that remakes itself into simple action; art that becomes a form of gray nature.

2

Dark expressions, the ones I've used, at least for someone who hasn't been keeping up with the stranger and more dramatic examples of recent experimentation.

Consider painting. Picasso has utterly exhausted the field of chiaroscuro modeling. Now he takes wooden sticks, pieces of fabric, and tin, and applies them to a canvas in order to make a painting. Severini, in one portrait, has pasted on real moustaches and a collar of genuine velvet. Boccioni, in several recent sculptures, is using wood, iron, and glass in order to render values that cannot be attained with traditional materials.

Consider literature. Marinetti, with words-in-freedom, is crushing and destroying the logical articulations of discourse (syntax: the mind's slow victory over the exclamatory incoherence of primitive language). He draws on visual images (realistic, concrete ones) in the guise of words or phrases which have been typographically arranged to suggest, by means of an ideogram, a vision of the subject that he wants to talk about, and he makes great use of imitative sounds, raw pieces of vocal nature which have been transported in bulk into the lyrical frame.

Consider music: the noise-tuners of Luigi Russolo have boldly crossed the boundaries of attempts at descriptive music (Strauss) and introduced into music the very noises of life and labor in all their quotidian contemporaneity.

Consider philosophy: the more advanced theories (pragmatism) tend toward a growing elimination of pure thought (that intellectual work of art, a conceptual lyricism) in order to get us back into action, into life—which is to say, into reality itself, no longer transfigured. Philosophy, by its inherently dialectical and self-conscious nature, has preceded the other arts on this path of renunciation and suicide.

Those are the facts. Shall I err if I attempt to explain them?

3

The common character that links together these tendencies is clear enough.

It is the way in which the lyrical or rational transformation of things is being replaced by the things themselves.

For now we are talking about the level of theory. In practice the replacements are partial ones in which a part of the individual personality can still be discerned in the choice of the objects that are mixed in with those which have been elaborated. But if the method gains hold and should push forward to its logical consequences, it would turn out that the best painting of a still life would be a furnished room; the best concert would be the ensemble of noises in a metropolis; the best poetry would be a film of war produced with sound recording; and the most profound philosophy would be that of a peasant digging with a spade or a workman hammering away without a thought.

Absurd prospects, yet ones that are related, without too many leaps, to premises and practices already real.

In order to overcome the raw and unworked matter which first confronted it, the human mind has slowly and steadily distanced itself from matter, creating its very own, wholly intellectual form of matter, which goes by the name of art. Art originated in matter, but in the same way that the petals of flowers, by a sort of vegetable lyricism, originate in the mire of a field. By dint of going ever further in search of greater novelty, the possibilities of autonomous art now seem exhausted. The sea of discovery has been entirely explored, and now we are disembarking on the other coast of the terra firma from which we first set sail. We find ourselves again confronted with raw matter. The circle has been closed. Art returns to reality; thought abandons itself in action.

4

I have nothing against these experiments. I am not a conservative. Nor am I a coward. I like things that are new; boldness enthuses me; strangeness excites me; madness attracts me. These experiments have been made by friends of mine, men whom I admire and even envy. Their efforts interest me enormously. It would

never occur to me charge them with the kinds of idiotic accusations raised by passéists. I too am for moving forward, for discovery.

But it may not be pointless to take note, starting from right now, of the phenomenon that we might call “the naturalization of art.” A just and necessary love of the new should not blind us to the world around us. Have all the wells of personal creativity really dried up, and must we now learn that we have to forgo all those resources that are truly artistic, truly ours?

There is the risk that, for the love of art, which is our only genuine love, we may fall entirely outside of art’s domain altogether and return to the ultimate shame—of verisimilitude. There is the risk that, from a rage for the new at all costs, we may end up in something truly old-fashioned, older even than art itself—i.e., in a state of nature.

I doubt that we will. I certainly hope we won’t. It just happened to befall me—a visionary (Futurist) antiphilosopher who likes clear ideas—to call attention, today, to the humiliating endpoint that certain recent advances, parallel to one another, have been leading to.

As you see, dear friends, my logical, disorderly, nasty mind will just not let me rest. But who knows? Perhaps I’m writing quite deliberately to put a suggestion into your minds, one that might even make you break out in song. And if you were to fall for it, I would be right there to listen—and would be happy yet once more.

**GEOMETRICAL AND MECHANICAL SPLENDOR AND
THE NUMERICAL SENSIBILITY F. T. MARINETTI**

18 March 1914

We are briskly arranging the grotesque funeral of passéist Beauty (romantic, symbolist, and decadent) whose essential elements were memory, nostalgia, the mist of legend produced by distant times, the exotic fascination produced by distant places, the picturesque, the vague, the rustic, wild solitude, multicolored disorder, shadowy twilight, decay, weariness, the soiled traces of the years, the crumbling of ruins, mold, the taste for putrescence, pessimism, consumptive diseases, suicide, the blandishments of suffering, the aesthetics of failure, the adoration of death.

Today, from the chaos of contradictory new sensibilities a new beauty is being born, one that we Futurists will substitute for the old, and one that I call **geometrical and mechanical Splendor**.

Its essential elements are: hygienic forgetfulness, hope, desire, directed power, speed, light, will, order, discipline, method; a sense of the metropolis; an aggressive optimism that results from the cult of muscles and sport; the wireless imagination, the ubiquity, laconicism, and simultaneity that stem from the worlds of tourism, business, and journalism; the passion for success, the keenest instinct for setting a new record, the enthusiastic imitation of electricity and the machine; synthesis and essential concision; the happy precision of gearings and well-oiled thoughts; the concurrence of energies as they converge into a single victorious trajectory.

My Futurist senses first glimpsed this geometrical splendor on the bridge of a *dreadnought*.¹ Its speed, its trajectories of fire from the quarterdeck in the cool breeze of martial probabilities, the queer vitality of orders which are sent down by the admiral and suddenly become autonomous, no longer human, transformed by the whims, the impulsiveness, the infirmities of steel and brass: all this radiated mechanical and geometrical splendor. I heard the lyrical initiative of electricity running through the armor plating of the quadruple turret guns, descending through plated piping into the magazine, drawing the turret guns out to their breeches, out to their imminent flight. Up sights, aim, lift, fire, automatic recoil, the distinctively personal trajectory of the shell, hit, smash, smell of rotting eggs, mephitic gases, rust, ammonia, and so on. This new drama, full of Futurist surprise and geometric splendor—for us it's 100,000 times more interesting than the psychology of man, with its sharply limited combinations.

Vast human collectivities, tides of screaming faces and arms, sometimes give us a slight emotion. But to them we prefer the grand solidarity of nervous motors, eager and arrayed. Nothing is more beautiful than a central electric station, humming, containing the hydraulic pressure of a mountain chain and the electric power of a vast horizon, all synthesized in marble control panels that bristle with dials, keyboards, and shining commutators. These panels are our only models for writing poetry. For precursors we have gymnasts and high-wire artists who, in their performances, in the pauses and cadences of their musculature, realize the sparkling perfection of synchronized gears and the geometric splendor that we want to achieve in poetry with words-in-freedom.

1. We want to destroy systematically the literary "I" in order to scatter it into the universal vibration and reach the point of expressing infinitely minuscule entities and molecular movements. E.g.: the lightning agitation of molecules in the mouth of a howitzer (see the last part of "Fort Cheittam-Tépé" in my *Zang tumb tumb*).² Thus the poetry of cosmic forces supplants the poetry of the human.

Abolish all traditional narrative proportions (romantic, sentimental, and Christian), according to which a soldier wounded in battle would have an ex-

aggerated importance compared with the weapons of destruction, their strategic positions, and the atmospheric conditions. In my poem *Zang tumb tumb* I describe the execution of a Bulgarian traitor with a few words-in-freedom, but I prolong a discussion between two Turkish generals about lines of fire and enemy cannons. In fact I observed in the battery of Sidi-Messri, in October 1911,³ how the shining aggressive flight of a cannon-shot, red hot in the sun and accelerated by fire, renders almost negligible the sight of human flesh that is flayed and dying.

2. On more than one occasion I have demonstrated that the noun, worn down by its multiple connections or the weight of Parnassian and decadent adjectives, can regain its absolute value and expressive force when stripped bare and isolated. Among naked nouns I distinguish between *the elementary noun* and *the motion-synthesis noun* (or node of nouns). This distinction, which is not absolute, stems from ungraspable intuitions. To use a flexible and comprehensive analogy, every noun is like a railroad car or a fanbelt that has been put into motion by a verb in the infinitive.
3. Except for needed contrasts or changes in rhythm, the different moods and tenses of the verb should be abolished because they make the verb into a loose, ramshackle wheel on an old wagon, one that is adapted to rough country roads but can't turn swiftly on a smooth one. **Verbs in the infinitive, instead, are the very motion of the new lyricism**, having the fluency of train wheels or airplane propellers.

The different moods and tenses of the verb express a prudent and reassuring pessimism; a restricted, accidental, episodic egotism; a rise and fall of energy and exhaustion, desire and disillusionment, or pauses in the trajectory of hope and will. The verb in the infinitive expresses optimism itself, absolute generosity, and the sheer madness of Becoming. When I say, *to run*, what is the subject of this verb? Everybody and everything: here is a universal irradiation of flowing life, a movement of which we are a conscious particle. E.g.: the conclusion of "Hotel Salon" by the free-wordist Folgore.⁴ The verb in the infinitive is the passion of the *I* that surrenders itself to the becoming of *all*, the heroic and disinterested continuum of effort and joy in "to act." Infinitive verb = the divinity of action.

4. By using one or more adjectives isolated between parentheses or placed beside some words-in-freedom behind a perpendicular line (in clefts), we can render the various atmospheres and tones that govern a narrative. **These atmosphere-adjectives or tone-adjectives cannot be replaced with nouns.** They are intuitive convictions that resist explanation. I nevertheless believe, for example, that by isolating the noun *savagery* (or putting it in brackets, when describing a slaughter), I would create a mental state of savagery, firmly enclosed in a distinct pro-

file. Whereas, if I put the adjective *savage* between parentheses or brackets, I would change it into an atmosphere-adjective or tone-adjective that would envelop an entire description of slaughter without arresting the flow of words-in-freedom.

5. Despite the most skillful deformations, the syntactic sentence has always contained a scientific and photographic perspective which is absolutely contrary to the rights of emotion. **With words-in-freedom this perspective is destroyed** and one naturally achieves a multiform emotional perspective. (E.g.: “Man + mountain + valley” by the free-wordist Boccioni.)⁵
6. Sometimes we make **synoptic tables of lyric values** with words-in-freedom; these enable us, while reading, to follow many currents of intertwined or parallel sensations at the same time. These synoptic tables should not be an end in themselves, but a means of increasing the express force of lyricism. We must shun all concern with the pictorial, not indulging in a complacent play of lines or curious typographic disproportions.

Everything must be banned which doesn't contribute to expressing the evanescent and mysterious Futurist sensibility with all its new geometrical-mechanical splendor. The free-wordist Cangiullo, in “Smoking Car, Second Class,”⁶ had the felicitous idea of conveying the long, monotonous reveries and self-expansion of the smoke-boredom during a long train journey by means of this **designed analogy**:

TO SMOKE

Words-in-freedom, in their continuous effort to express things with maximum force and greatest depth, naturally transform themselves into **self-illustrations** by means of free, expressive orthography and typography, synoptic tables of lyrical values, and designed analogies.

7. **Free expressive typography and orthography also serve to express the narrator's facial mimicry and gesticulation.**

Words-in-freedom are able to make use of (and completely render) that dimension of communicative exuberance and epidermic geniality which is one of the characteristics of the southern races. This energy of accent, voice, and mimicry, until now revealed only in brilliant conversationalists and dramatic tenors, finds its natural expression in the disproportions of typographic characters that reproduce facial smirks and grimaces and the chiseling, sculptural power of gestures. Words-in-freedom thus become the prolongation, lyrical and transfigured, of our animal magnetism.

8. Our growing love for matter, the will to penetrate it and know its vibrations, the

physical sympathy that connects us with motors—these impel us to the **use of onomatopoeia**.

Noise is essentially the result of speeding solids, liquids, or gases that are in friction with or crash into one another. It follows that onomatopoeia, which reproduces noise, is one of the most dynamic elements of poetry. As such, onomatopoeia can substitute for the verb in the infinitive, especially when it is juxtaposed with one or more other uses of onomatopoeia. (E.g.: the onomatopoeia *rattatatatat* of the machine guns is set against the *Hooraaaah* of the Turks at the end of the chapter “Bridge” in my *Zang tumb tumb*.)

In this particular case the brevity of the onomatopoeias permits a nimble interweaving of different rhythms. They would lose some of their velocity if expressed more abstractly, with greater development, or in other words without the use of onomatopoeia. There are different kinds of onomatopoeia:

- a) **Direct imitative elementary realistic onomatopoeia**, which helps to enrich lyricism with a dose of brutal reality, which keeps it from becoming too abstract or too *artistic*. (E.g.: *ratta-tat-tat*, gunfire.) In the chapter “Contraband of War” in *Zang tumb tumb*, the strident onomatopoeia *ssiiiiii* renders the whistle of a towboat on the Meuse and is followed by the muffled *ffiiii fffiiiiii*, the echo from the other bank. The two onomatopoeias saved me from having to describe the width of the river, which instead is defined by the contrast between the two consonants *s* and *f*.
 - b) **Indirect complex and analogical onomatopoeia**. E.g.: in my poem “Dunes” the onomatopoeia *dum-dum-dum-dum* expresses the circling noise of the African sun and the orange weight of the sky, creating a rapport between sensations of weight, heat, color, smell, and noise.⁷ Another example: the onomatopoeia *screewove, screewove, screewovair*, which is repeated in the first canto of my epic poem *The Conquest of the Stars*,⁸ forms an analogy between the screeching or metallic sounds of swords and the furious action of waves just before a great battle of stormy waters.
 - c) **Abstract onomatopoeia**, the noisy and unconscious expression of the more complex and mysterious motions of our sensibility. (E.g.: in my poem “Dunes,” the abstract onomatopoeia *ran ran ran* doesn’t correspond to any noise found in the natural or mechanical worlds, but expresses a state of mind.)
 - d) **Psychic onomatopoetic harmony**, which is to say, the fusion of two or three abstract onomatopoeias.
9. Love of precision and essential brevity have given me a natural taste for numbers, ciphers that live and breathe upon the page like living beings within our new **numeric sensibility**. For example, a traditional writer might say, “a vast and

profound tolling of the bell” (imprecise and therefore not efficient phrasing); or an intelligent peasant might say, “this bell can be heard from such and such a village” (a more precise and efficient description). But with intuitive precision I would seize the power of the reverberations and determine its extent, saying: “Bell, boom, breadth 20 square kilometers.” That way I can render the vibrating horizon and all the distant people straining their ears to the same tolling sound. I escape from imprecision and banality, and I master reality with a volitional deed that subjugates and deforms, with originality, the very vibration of the metal.

The mathematical signs $+ - \times =$ can be used to obtain marvelous syntheses and, with the abstract simplicity of anonymous gear-works, they collaborate to give geometrical and mechanical splendor. For example, it would have required almost an entire page of description to render the enormous and complicated horizon of battle which I wanted to render, but instead I found this definitive lyrical equation: “*horizon = sharp bore of the sun + 5 triangular shadows (1 kilometer wide) + 3 lozenges of pink light + 5 fragments of hillocks + 30 columns of smoke + 23 flames.*”

I make use of the \times sign to indicate interrogative pauses of thought. That way I can eliminate the question mark, which too arbitrarily localizes its atmosphere of doubt on a single point of awareness. With the mathematical \times , the doubtful suspense is instantly spread across an entire agglomeration of words-in-freedom.

Always intuitively, I introduce numbers that have no direct significance or value into the words-in-freedom, but that (addressing themselves acoustically and optically to the numerical sensibility) express the various transcendental intensities of matter and the indestructible correspondences made by one’s sensibility.

I create true theorems or lyrical equations, introducing numbers which I’ve intuitively chosen and placed within the very center of a word; with a certain quantity of $+ - \times +$, I can give the thicknesses, the mass, the volumes of things which words otherwise have to express. The arrangement $+ - + - + + \times$, for example, serves to render the changes and accelerations in speed of an automobile. The arrangement $+ + + + +$ serves to render the clustering of equal sensations. (E.g.: *fecal odor of dysentery + the honeyed stench of plague sweats + smell of ammonia*, and so on in “Train Full of Sick Soldiers” in my *Zang tumb tumb*.)

Thus for Mallarmé’s “*ciel antérieur où fleurit la beauté*”⁹ we substitute geometrical and mechanical splendor and the numerical sensibility of words-in-freedom.

**WEIGHTS, MEASURES, AND PRICES OF ARTISTIC
GENIUS: FUTURIST MANIFESTO** BRUNO CORRA
AND EMILIO SETTIMELLI

11 March 1914

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*Weights,
Measures,
and Prices
of Artistic
Genius*

Criticism has never existed, and does not exist. The passéist pseudocriticism which has nauseated us until recently has been no more than a solitary vice of impotent individuals, bilious outbursts of failed artists, pointless chit-chat, conceited dogmatism in the name of nonexistent authorities. We Futurists have always denied that this amphibious, uterine, and imbecile activity had any right to issue judgements. Our era is witnessing the birth of the first real criticism in Italy, the achievement of Futurism. But since the words "critic" and "criticism" are already dishonored by the filthy use that has been made of them, we Futurists are abolishing them once and for all, and instead will use the terms MEASUREMENT and MEASURER.

Observation No. 1. Every human activity is a projection of nervous energy. This energy, which stems from a physical constitution and action, undergoes various transformations and assumes different aspects according to the material chosen to manifest it. A human being assumes greater or lesser importance according to the quantity of energy at his disposal and according to the power of his ability to modify his surroundings.

Observation No. 2. There is no essential difference between a human brain and a machine. It is mechanically more complicated, that is all. For example, a typewriter is a primitive organism governed by a logic that is imposed on it by its construction. Its reasonings, to call them that, go like this: if one key is pressed, it must write in lower case; if the shift and another key are pressed, it follows that it must write in upper case; when the space bar is pressed, it must advance; when the backspace is pressed, it must go back. For a typewriter to have its E pressed and to write x would be nonsensical. A broken key is an attack of violent insanity.

A human brain is a far more complicated apparatus. The logical relationships that govern it are numerous. They are imposed on it by the environment in which it has been formed. Reasoning is the habit of linking ideas in a particular way: useful because it coincides with the way in which the phenomena of our reality develop. But the two coincide because our reasoning has been drawn from the reality which surrounds us. If our world were different, we would reason differently: if chairs falling over typically led to deafness of the left ear in all cavalry officers, that relationship would be true for us. Thus, in every mind most notions are arranged in a definite order. For example, snow-white-cold-winter, fire-red-hot, dance-rhythm-joy. Everyone is capable of associating blue and sky. But there are other pieces of

knowledge between which it is difficult to establish a relationship, because they have never been associated together, because there are no obvious similarities between them.

Observation No. 3. Nervous energy, in the act of applying itself to a cerebral task, finds before itself an assemblage of elements arranged in a particular order. Some are united, close, similar, and analogous; others are disconnected, distant, dissimilar, or extraneous. The energy acting on these particles of knowledge can only discover affinities and establish relationships among them by juxtaposing them, separating them, forming combinations.

From this springs FUTURIST MEASUREMENT, which is based on the following incontrovertible principles:

1. Beauty has nothing to do with art. TO DISCUSS A PAINTING OR A POEM BY STARTING WITH THE EMOTION THAT IT GIVES ONE IS LIKE TRYING TO STUDY ASTRONOMY BY CHOOSING AS ONE'S POINT OF DEPARTURE THE SHAPE OF ONE'S NAVEL. Emotion is a nonessential factor in a work of art. It can be felt or not felt, can vary from individual to individual and from moment to moment: it cannot serve as the basis for establishing an objective value. "Beautiful" or "ugly," "I like it" or "I don't like it," these are all subjective, gratuitous, interesting but unverifiable.
2. THE SOLE UNIVERSAL CONCEPT: VALUE, DETERMINED BY INHERENT RARITY. For example, it is not true for everyone that the sea is beautiful, but everyone must recognize that a diamond has great value. Its value is determined by its rarity, which is not a matter of opinion.
3. In the intellectual field THE ESSENTIAL (not casual) RARITY OF A CREATION IS IN DIRECT PROPORTION TO THE QUALITY OR ENERGY NEEDED TO PRODUCE IT.
4. Combining elements (drawn from experience) that are more or less dissimilar is the necessary and sufficient raw material for any intellectual creation. The quantity of energy necessary to discover kinships and establish relationships between a given number of elements is greater when the elements to be combined are more distant, more unlike each other, and when the relationships discovered are more complex and more numerous. That is: THE QUANTITY OF CEREBRAL ENERGY NECESSARY TO PRODUCE A WORK IS DIRECTLY PROPORTIONAL TO THE RESISTANCE WHICH SEPARATES THE ELEMENTS BEFORE ITS ACTION HAS OCCURRED AND TO THE COHESION WHICH UNITES THEM AFTERWARD.
5. THE FUTURIST MEASUREMENT OF AN ARTWORK MEANS AN EXACT SCIENTIFIC SPECIFICATION EXPRESSED IN FORMULAE THAT STATE THE QUALITY OF CEREBRAL ENERGY REPRESENTED BY THE WORK ITSELF, INDEPENDENTLY OF THE IMPRESSIONS, WHETHER GOOD, BAD, OR NONEXISTENT, WHICH PEOPLE MAY HAVE OF THE WORK.

All this brings about a completely Futurist conception of art, that is to say, essentially modern, impartial, and brutal. This resolute surgery will end up by demol-

ishing the passéist view of Art with a capital A. In the meantime, here are some immediate consequences:

1. IMMEDIATE DISAPPEARANCE OF ALL INTELLECTUAL SENTIMENTALITY (corresponding to amorous sentimentality in the field of sensuality) WHICH GATHERS AROUND THE WORD "INSPIRATION." Since it has been amply shown how childish is the idea that a work of art should move us, it is more than justified to work lucidly, coldly, even with indifference and laughingly on a particular theme—e.g., given a sum of 43 nouns, 12 atmospheric adjectives, 9 verbs in the infinitive, 3 prepositions, 13 articles, and 25 mathematical or musical signs, we must create a masterpiece in words-in-freedom, using only these.
2. Logical abolition of all kinds of illusion about one's own value, of vainglory and modesty, which will no longer have any reason for their existence, given the possibility of an exact and unchallengeable evaluation. Right to proclaim and affirm one's own superiority and one's genius. The Futurist measurer will be able to issue certificates of imbecility, mediocrity, or genius to be appended to personal identity papers.
3. SINCE REAL VALUE RESIDES ONLY IN THE QUANTITY OF ENERGY THAT HAS BEEN EXTERNALIZED, THE ARTIST WILL BE PERMITTED ALL FORMS OF ECCENTRICITY, LUNACY, ILLOGICALITY.
4. For the same reason, the concept of art will have to be enormously expanded in another direction, too. There is no reason why every activity necessarily has to be confined to one or another of those ridiculous limitations which we call music, literature, painting, etc. . . . and why, for example, one shouldn't dedicate oneself to creating assemblages out of pieces of wood, canvas, paper, feathers, and nails, which, when dropped from a tower that measures 37 meters and 3 centimeters in height, as it fell to the ground would describe a line more or less complex, more or less difficult to attain, and more or less rare. Therefore EVERY ARTIST WILL BE ABLE TO INVENT A NEW FORM OF ART, which would be the free expression of the particular idiosyncrasies in his cerebral makeup, with all its modern insanity and complication, a new art form in which would be found the most diverse means of expression, combined in new ways and degrees—words, colors, notes, indications of shapes, scents, facts, noises, movements, physical sensations; I.E., A CHAOTIC, UNAESTHETIC, AND CAVALIER MIXING OF ALL THE ARTS ALREADY IN EXISTENCE AND OF ALL THOSE WHICH ARE AND WILL BE CREATED BY THE INEXHAUSTIBLE WILL FOR RENEWAL WHICH FUTURISM WILL BE ABLE TO INFUSE INTO HUMANITY.

From the new civilization, filled with novel "geometrical and mechanical splendor," Futurist measurement will sweep away that dung heap of long and dirty hair, romantic neckties, ascetic-cultural pride, and pointless poverty which delighted

former generations. The most immediate effect of the Futurist measurer's activities will be a definitive placement of the artist within society. The artist of genius has been and is still today a social outcast. Now genius has a social, economic, and financial value. Talent is a commodity in vigorous demand in all the markets of the world. As with every other product, its value is determined by its inherent rarity. Although a given quantity of a commodity which has long been known to be fungible acquires a fixed value within a particular market, it rarely happens that a certain quantity of artistic energy is assigned a fixed value, one determined by an objective state of affairs which can be verified by anyone. A piece of gold or a precious stone has, within the world at a given moment, a well-defined rarity value, and on that basis its selling price is determined. THE FUTURIST MEASURER THEREFORE WILL HAVE TO BREAK DOWN THE WORK OF ART INTO THE INDIVIDUAL DISCOVERIES OF RELATIONSHIPS WHICH HAVE GONE INTO ITS MAKING, DETERMINE BY MEANS OF CALCULATIONS THE RARITY OF EACH DISCOVERY, THAT IS, THE QUANTITY OF ENERGY NECESSARY TO PRODUCE THEM, AND ON THE BASIS OF THIS RARITY ESTABLISH A FIXED PRICE FOR EACH ONE OF THEM, THEN ADD UP THE INDIVIDUAL VALUES AND GIVE THE OVERALL PRICE OF THE WORK. Naturally the price must always be justified by a formula of measurement which indicates the quantity of artistic energy that the work represents and the quotation for artistic energy, be it higher or lower, which is on the market at that moment.

This will destroy the passéist snobbism of art-as-ideal, art-as-sublime-holy-inaccessible, or art-as-torment-purity-vow-solitude-disdain for reality, crushing the anemic melancholy of the spineless who have cut themselves off from real life because they are unable to face it. That done, the artist will finally find his place in life, along with the sausage-maker and the tire manufacturer, the gravedigger and the speculator, the engineer and the farmer. This is the basis of a new universal financial organization through which a whole series of activities will be integrated into modern civilization, activities which are formidable in their development, completeness, and importance, and which up until now have remained in the grip of barbarism. We Futurists affirm that making the locomotive's throb and the febrile, crowded pulsing of modern life pass through the bloodless body of art will have as their immediate effect the production and selection of works a thousand times better than we now have. It is, furthermore, a violent purgative and remedial cure which art needs to eliminate the last traces of passéist infection circulating within its body. Futurist measurement, on the one hand, will give the artist unchallengeable rights, while on the other it must impose on him precise duties and responsibilities. Consider, for example, a painter who has attributed to his painting formulae of value indicating, let us suppose, that it contains 10 first-rate discoveries (30 lire each), 20 second-rate (18 lire each), 8 third-rate (10 lire each), and fixes the price at 740 lire; if it should happen that this is checked and

that some of the discoveries have a lower value than indicated or indeed no value, he must be put on trial for fraud and fined or sent to prison. WE THEREFORE ASK THE STATE IMMEDIATELY TO CREATE A BODY OF LAW FOR THE PURPOSE OF GUARDING AND REGULATING THE SALE OF GENIUS. It is astonishing to see that in the field of intellectual activity fraud is still perfectly legal. It is really a zone of barbarism which has passéistically survived in the midst of modern progress. In this field, at least, the Futurist punch-up is both logical and necessary—it fulfills the same functions which in civil society are carried out by the law. Being absolutely confident that the laws we are calling for will be given to us in the very near future, we demand at once that D'ANNUNZIO, PUCCINI, AND LEONCAVALLO BE THE FIRST TO BE TRIED ON CHARGES OF PERSISTENT FRAUD CONTRARY TO THE PUBLIC GOOD.¹ These gentlemen in fact sell for thousands of lire works whose value varies from a minimum of thirty-five centimes to a maximum of forty francs.

As long as these laws are not enacted, we should regard ourselves as inhabitants of a barbarous country. And perhaps we are. But under the reign of barbarism, the fist and the bullet are the only arguments that count. You will not object, therefore, when we conduct our arguments by such means.

The Futurist evaluator, it is clear, will act very differently from the way that traditional critics act today. He will be a true and genuine professional, doctor, and psychologist, fulfilling an office made firm and practical by the law. The same for the artist. TOMORROW WE SHOULD FIX ON TO OUR FRONT DOORS SIGNS THAT READ: MENSURATOR, FANTASTICATOR, PHILOSOPHER, SPECIALIST IN ASTRONOMICAL POETRY, GENIUS, MADMAN . . . Yes, madman; because it is high time that madness (the upsetting of logical relationships) be made into a conscious and evolved art. An individual who is able to construct a complicated lunacy out of his own mind has real value. A GOOD MADMAN MAY BE WORTH THOUSANDS OF FRANCS. Another activity which will be purged and regulated by Futurist evaluation is prostitution. For here too there are often victims of deplorable frauds.

And now, let it stand affirmed: (1) that INTUITION IS NOTHING OTHER THAN FRAGMENTARY AND MORE RAPID REASONING; that between reasoning and intuition there is no essential difference: and hence that any product of the former can be assessed by the latter; (2) that reasoning and intuition are cerebral functions explicable and traceable down to their subtlest details, using a Futurist analysis of the contents of knowledge down to its mediumistic depths; (3) that Futurist measurement will be made in accordance with logic (together with the relationships which govern material reality, reflected in the human brain); in accordance with the physical laws of energy; and in accordance with the contemporary circumstances, independently of any subjective considerations (we have valued at 12,000 lire one picture by the painter Boccioni which gives us an unbearable stomachache; and we are forced to admit the enormous value of one onomatopoeia by the poet Marinetti which is hid-

eously ugly, anti-aesthetic, and repugnant). We formulate the following absolute and

FUTURIST CONCLUSIONS

1. ART IS A CEREBRAL SECRETION THAT CAN BE MEASURED EXACTLY;
2. THOUGHT MUST BE WEIGHED AND SOLD LIKE ANY OTHER COMMODITY;
3. THE WORK OF ART IS SIMPLY AN ACCUMULATOR OF CEREBRAL ENERGY; CREATING A SYMPHONY OR POEM MEANS TAKING A CERTAIN NUMBER OF SOUNDS OR WORDS, WIPING THEM WITH INTELLECTUAL FORCES, AND STICKING THEM TOGETHER;
4. A WORK'S GENRE HAS NO VALUE IN ITSELF; IT MAY ACQUIRE A VALUE THROUGH THE CONDITIONS IN WHICH IT IS PRODUCED — POLEMICAL VALUE, VALUE OF ABSTRACTIONS, ETC.;
5. THE PRODUCER OF CREATIVE ARTISTIC FORCES MUST JOIN THE COMMERCIAL STRUCTURE WHICH IS THE MUSCLE OF MODERN LIFE. MONEY IS ONE OF THE MOST FORMIDABLY AND BRUTALLY SOLID POINTS OF THE REALITY IN WHICH WE LIVE. TURNING TO IT WILL SUFFICE TO ELIMINATE ALL POSSIBILITY OF ERROR AND UNPUNISHED INJUSTICE. FURTHER, A GOOD INJECTION OF COMMERCIAL SERUM WILL DIRECTLY PRODUCE IN THE INTELLECTUAL CREATOR'S BLOODSTREAM AN EXACT AWARENESS OF HIS RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES.
6. IN ADDITION TO ABOLISHING THE WORDS "CRITICISM" AND "CRITIC" WE MUST ELIMINATE TERMS SUCH AS SOUL, SPIRIT, ARTIST, AND ANY OTHER WORD THAT IS IRREDEEMABLY INFECTED WITH PASSÉIST SNOBBERY SUCH AS THESE; THOSE TERMS MUST BE REPLACED BY EXACT DENOMINATIONS SUCH AS: BRAIN, DISCOVERY, ENERGY, CEREBRATOR, FANTASTICATOR, ETC.
7. ALL PAST ART MUST BE RESOLUTELY THROWN OVERBOARD, ART WHICH DOESN'T INTEREST US AND WHICH WE CAN'T MEASURE GIVEN OUR UTTER AND NECESSARY IGNORANCE OF ALL THE CIRCUMSTANTIAL DETAILS WHICH CONSTITUTE THE FRAMEWORK OF LIFE IN WHICH IT WAS AROSE.
8. WE MUST EXALT THE MARVELOUS SIGNIFICANCE OF OUR AFFIRMATIONS REGARDING THE WILL OF FUTURIST GENIUS AND RENEWAL.

It is genuinely cheering to see that Futurism, which was born in Milan, the industrial and commercial capital of Italy, and launched five years ago for the whole world by the poet Marinetti in the columns of *Le Figaro*, having triumphed in the field of art with WORDS-IN-FREEDOM, PLASTIC DYNAMISM, ANTIGRACEFUL, POLYTONAL, MUSIC WITHOUT CONTINUOUS STEADY RHYTHM, and the ART OF NOISES,² is about to erupt into the laboratories and schools of passéist science, the museums and cemeteries of mummified syllogisms, all the torture chambers that are used against free creative madness.

Absolute motion is a dynamic law that is inherent in an object. The plastic construction of the object, then, has to be concerned with the motion which an object has within itself, whether it be at rest or in movement. I've made this distinction between rest and movement so that I may make myself clear, although, in fact, there is no such thing as rest, only motion (rest being merely relative, a matter of appearance). This plastic construction obeys a law of motion which characterizes the body in question, a law that is the plastic potential which the object contains within itself, which in turn is strictly bound up with its own organic substance, as determined by its general characteristics (porosity, impermeability, rigidity, elasticity, and so on) and its particular characteristics, such as color, temperature, consistency, form (flat, concave, convex, angular, cubic, conic, spiral, elliptical, spherical, etc.). The plastic potential that resides in an object is its force, that is, its primordial psychology. This power, this primordial psychology, enables us to create in our paintings new subjects which do not aim at narrative or episodic representation; instead, it coordinates the plastic values of reality, a coordination which is purely architectural and remains free of all literary and sentimental influences.

In this initial state of motion, which I've explained as if it were a thing apart, although in fact it isn't, the object is not seen in its relative motion, but is conceived according to its living lines, which reveal how its motion would be broken down according to the tendencies of its forces. In this way we obtain a decomposition of the object, which is a method far removed from the intellectual schemas of the Cubists. Instead it presents an object's *apparition*, interpreting it through a sensation which is infinitely refined and superior to those of traditional art.

For us, this is absolute motion, what one might call the object's breathing or heartbeat. A hesitant, unconscious hint of this *breathing* can be discerned in Italian art from its beginnings. This is what plastic art is all about. When, rather recently, some of the Cubists began to concern themselves with these matters, they revealed what I have called their Gothicism, and, at the same time, again made obeisance to the plastic primacy of the Italians.

Therefore, it is clear that two objects, of different shapes, can influence each other and be characterized by the diverse potential of their absolute motions. The weaker, whether its temperament be static or dynamic, will always experience the force of the stronger, which can again be either static or dynamic.

For example, put a sphere and a cone next to each other; in the sphere you'll find a sensation of dynamic thrust, and in the cone one of static indifference. The sphere shows a tendency to move, while the cone tends to take root. Consider the

atmospheric zone found at the edge of the cone which is farthest from the sphere; it will be an *empty zone* and will give the cone a sharp outline. Now consider the other zone, by the edge that is closest to the sphere; it will be affected by the sphere's motion, will have a denser atmosphere, and will make the cone's edges acquire a shading of attraction, a melting of its outline toward the expanding curves and ellipses of the sphere. Moreover, while the sphere suggests expansive possibilities, the cone creates descending thrusts and angular limitations at its apex. The disposition of light and shade can vary or precipitate the currents of attraction, creating accidental variations that always exist as a reference point in a work of art; they humanize it and prevent an absolute attraction.

If we look at the sloping planes of a pyramid, they appear to attract a cylinder which is standing beside it in a vertical position. And while the cylinder reveals spiral dilations around itself, the pyramid has a tendency to take root along the lines of the angle of the sloping planes. In a pyramid the convergence of these planes overwhelms the spherical soaring dynamism of the cylinder. The cylinder has an effect upon itself, while the other has an effect of attraction or contact.

In the case of a cube observed alongside a sphere, the horizontal and perpendicular stasis of the cube does battle with the ideal global rotation (force-lines) of the sphere, since a cube and a sphere are equal as far as their potential is concerned.

I have limited myself in these remarks to observing simple bodies that are geometrically defined and have a primordial plastic structure. The reader should imagine this method of study applied to life, to the infinite combinations of light and forms found in the mineral, vegetable, animal, and mechanical worlds, and then he will begin to grasp the thrills, the visions of plastic poetry which have remained undiscovered till today, and which are the prerogative of Futurist painters and future generations.

Relative motion is a dynamic law that depends on the object's movement. It is quite incidental whether we are talking about moving objects or the relationship between moving objects and nonmoving objects. In fact, there is no such thing as a nonmoving object in our modern perception of life.

What I have said is based on the following truth: *a horse in movement is not a motionless horse which is moving, but a horse in movement, which makes it another sort of thing altogether, and it should be conceived and expressed as something completely different.*¹

It is a matter of conceiving objects in movement quite apart from the motion which they contain within themselves. That is to say, we must try to find a form which will be able to express a new absolute—*speed*, which any true modern spirit must recklessly enjoy. It is a matter of studying the different aspects that life has assumed in speed and in the resulting simultaneity.

Until now men have observed changes produced by the wind in the trees, the countryside, drapes, etc. But so far they haven't looked at the way that trains, cars, bicycles, and airplanes have upset the contemplative concept of landscape. Insofar as it has become normal to view objects from the vantage point of speed, it is now totally unnatural to restrict oneself to a perspectival and anatomical observation of a landscape, or any other natural element.

To depict a wheel in motion, it no longer occurs to anyone to observe it at rest, counting the number of spokes and measuring its curves, and then draw it in movement. It would be impossible. Nevertheless, the very same procedure, while obviously absurd for a wheel, is still used for the human body which lives through the movements of its arms and legs and the whole of its being. This state of affairs has come to pass because, according to ancient tradition, plants and objects interest us less, *psychologically*, than animals and men. That is why it is so much easier to apply to natural forms innovations suggested by the necessities of life which have transformed our sensibilities.

Everyone is prepared to try out a new kind of structure or technique in a landscape painting, but hardly to experiment at all when they draw a horse, much less when they draw a man, and even less with the figure of a woman, since here nobility, the sublime, and the poetic have all been given precedence over plastic values.

Today, in advertisements, newspaper sketches, and caricatures, modernity has used a new kind of basic dynamic form which is more responsive to truth. Yet even in these humble and barbarous forms less courage has been shown in the treatment of *living beings* than in that of so-called *inanimate* objects — bicycles, cars, moving trains, trams, etc. You may more easily find the dynamic approach in a comic newspaper, in the form of a thief escaping with a hen, than in the painting of a battle scene by an artist who is considered a credit to the nation. The reason is that in all the museums of the world we do not have a single painting or drawing by an old master which gives an *example* of a man running or a man in flight as he should look.

Our great national painters, as well as those of other countries, break into a cold sweat if they don't feel in accord with the past. At first, in the early days of Impressionism, violet was acceptable for fields, skies, and trees; but heaven help us if it appeared on the face, arms, or breasts of a beautiful woman. It was the same with the Pointillists: a face covered with dots or stripes would enrage the public, who, conversely, were quite happy to see a sky treated in this way, even a horse, possibly a peasant. But in the portrait of a gentleman or a lady, what a horror!

The concept of motion in the study and representation of life has always remained outside art proper, outside this odious temple which we would willingly set alight if only it were tangible.

To be sure, the wheels of a carriage, the propeller of an airplane, have much

swifter movements than those of the legs of a human being or a horse. But it is still a question of a simple variation of form and rhythm. It is a matter of gradations of movement, and above all a matter of tempo. When, one day, an *esteemed* and *widely quoted* critic writes in one of the principal daily papers, for the sake of his own self-preservation, and does us the honor of calling us geniuses, by saying that one of our masterpieces approaches a Michelangelo or a Rembrandt, etc., then Dynamism will have made its mark, will progress, and be applied. But if he really thinks that by doing this he'll make money and sleep tranquilly, lots of painters will soon be after him.

Dynamism is the simultaneous action brought about by the interplay between an object's specific, characteristic motion (absolute motion) and the transformation which the object undergoes in its changes in relation to the environment (relative motion), whether that be mobile or static.

Hence, it isn't true that dynamism consists in merely decomposing an object's shape. True, decomposition and deformation have *per se* an element of motion, insofar as they break the continuity of a line, interrupt a profile's rhythm, and increase the directions, possibilities, and interplay of movement in forms. But this is not yet Futurist plastic Dynamism, and neither is it the mere notation of a trajectory, or the oscillation of a pendulum, or the shifting of an object from one point A to another point B.

Dynamism is the lyrical conception of forms: forms as interpreted in their infinite self-appearance, in which their identity resides in the shifting relationship between absolute motion and relative motion, between object and environment, ultimately forming the apparition of a whole: *environment object*. It is the creation of a new form which renders that shifting relationship between weight and the expansiveness of motion. Life itself, grasped in the very form that life creates in its *infinite successiveness*, is located between the motion of rotation and the motion of revolution.

We will not, I think, be able to capture this successiveness by multiplying legs, arms, or figures, as many have thought; but we will achieve it by capturing *the unique form which renders continuity in space*. That is the form-type which makes the object live within the universal. The timeworn concept of a clear distinction between bodies has given way to the more modern and Impressionist concept of subdivision, repetition, or mere sketching of images. Against these we urge the *concept of dynamic continuity* as unique form. And it is not by chance that I say "form" and not "line," for the *dynamic* element is a sort of fourth dimension in painting and sculpture, which cannot thrive without a total affirmation of the three dimensions that determine volume: height, width, depth.

I recall having read somewhere that Cubism, with its faceting of the object and the placing of its various parts on the flat surface of the canvas, was drawing close

to a fourth dimension. . . . But such a procedure does no more than translate to the plane of the canvas those planes of the object which we can't see by virtue of its chance position and our everyday perspective. It is a rational procedure that consists in relativity, not in an intuitive absolute. In it, an integral notion of the object continues to survive, with its three concepts of height, width, and depth, and hence I repeat, in relativity, in the finite dimensions of measurement. But if it is at all possible to get close to the concept of a fourth dimension with artistic intuition, it is we Futurists who are getting there first. With our unique form which renders continuity in space, we are creating a form that is a summation of the potential developments of the familiar three dimensions. Which is why we do not render a fourth dimension that is *measured and finite*, but a continuous projection of the forces and forms intuited in their infinite unfolding. The unique dynamic form which we have proclaimed is no more than the suggestion of a form of motion that appears for an instant before vanishing into infinite and variable successiveness.

In conclusion, we Futurists are seeking a method to create a more abstract and symbolic conception of reality, but we are not defining a fixed and absolute measure that creates dynamism.

Dynamic form, which by its essence is mutable and evolving, is a sort of invisible halo between the object and action, between relative motion and absolute motion, between the object and the environment from which it is inseparable. It is a species of analogical synthesis that resides at the border between the real object and its ideal plastic potential, graspable only with strokes of intuition.

What I am claiming here is not an insane abstraction, as many have thought when deriding our experiments. On the contrary, it is the static character of traditional art that is a counternatural abstraction, a violation, a separation from the real, a conception that tries to stand outside universal motion's law of unity. Hence, it's not the case that we are AGAINST NATURE, as the naive and retardataire advocates of realism and naturalism have charged, but that we are AGAINST ART, i.e., against that static conception which has been dominant for centuries, with exception made for some extremely rare attempts to be found in the most vibrant eras and works. In reality, the static gesture of Egyptian and Greek art is far more arbitrary than our dynamic continuity. Futurist art, it must be remembered, marks another step in the larger process of interpenetration, simultaneity, and fusion which humanity has been achieving for thousands of years through speed.

In short, we are closer to nature, and we will conceive of the world according to what is true, shifting ourselves into things rather than reproducing them in a descriptive sequence. Only dynamism lets the object determine its own drama and inspire the measure of its own creation.

In Futurist painting and sculpture, therefore, we will not render an object in motion with a sketchy technique used out of fear that we might stop or kill it in the act of defining it (impressionism); nor will we restrict ourselves to devising ab-

stract or schematic formulas that are consistently limited to an external and static treatment of the object (Cubism); instead we shall be concerned with the motion of the object or, better said, with the form that is created by the succession of its states of motion, states that represent its potential. It is the space between one object and another which determines their plastic value, their reciprocal attractions, which is to say, their dramatic force.

With dynamism, then, art rises toward a higher ideal level; it creates a style and expresses our age of speed and simultaneity. When our critics urge that the world around us shows not just motion but also repose, we reply that in the new painting it is *conception* that must dominate the *visual*, for the visual catches only fragmentary appearance and therefore subdivides it. *Dynamism*, instead, is a general principle of simultaneity and interpenetration; it dominates everything that, in *movement*, is appearance, detail, or shading.

At one point we dubbed ourselves “the primitives of a new sensibility which has been completely transformed.”² This implicitly acknowledged a clear vision of our creative possibilities. Since we aim to *re-create everything*, we Futurists are obliged to make do as best we can. Others will come who will perhaps be better, perhaps more courageous than we, and they will discover new lands that our talents couldn’t reach. Let them come. We will leave the scene with the pleasure of having shown the way and created the means of getting there.

Only a brain that is weary or has fallen asleep can affirm that the static concept which has dominated art until today is proof that stillness is the essential element of a masterpiece. And here one sees just how foolish a marvelous line of poetry can be: “I hate a movement that displaces a line” (Baudelaire).³

It is not the stillness of a masterpiece that holds our fascination, but the serenity which it possesses as a result of *the certainty of the laws which went into its construction*. Others who come after us will simplify the definition of dynamism that we have offered, which at present might seem heavy and encumbered by argument. They will possess the joy of that certainty which our experiments and labors have prepared.

For the present, we should recall that when people talk about masterpieces, they often string together a lot of nonsense . . . especially so-called critics and connoisseurs. When we look at a masterpiece—and nobody really knows which works merit that name—we should recall that it is the lone survivor among thousands of masterpieces that have been aborted or have disappeared, and that even within the life of its creator, although it may represent a moment of completeness, it may also not be his best moment, at least not in this sense, that he is discovering or tracing out something new. The work called a masterpiece has remained alive for thousands of unknown or accidental reasons, alone among thousands of sketches,

drafts, and paintings which have vanished for reasons equally unknown and accidental. Each masterpiece, we should recall, is transmitted to us through many generations, each of which has added its own stratum of meaning to the work in the form of poetry or commentary, a poetic sediment that renders the work unrecognizable.

In addition, there is popularization through copies, prints, and photographs, so that a thousand sad or pleasant episodes in our life can become bound up with the work, falsifying the pure plastic value of the sculptural, pictorial, or architectural masterpiece. And we won't even mention the retouching or repainting which it may have undergone; presuming, of course, that it isn't just a copy or forgery made only a few years ago by some scoundrel, whether Italian or foreign-born.

Against this array of factors, by means of which the masterpiece appears shining in a halo of glory, applause, light, and solemnity, we can oppose only our fresh work made just a few months ago, work that nevertheless is nearly a century ahead of current Italian artistic sensibility. It is work that must struggle against the hostility of bad faith and ignorance. The public always denies that one can call something a masterpiece if its author is still living, a man who eats, drinks, and makes love just like the rest of us, one whom they can see and know. . . . To be alive and young is even deemed a disgrace.

But to return to the point, after all it is only just and inevitable that the public should retain a certain sense of incompleteness in the face of works by a contemporary, and as far as the Futurist painters and sculptors are concerned, some of their works are still in potential. If not, we would already be a *washed-up school* without any further hope than that of leaving behind us a sad trail of tepid imitators.

Some time ago an anonymous correspondent from Rome wrote me a letter full of insolent nonsense, asking me whether I had ever understood that art, creation, is a symbol of freedom from death, and that this aspiration toward the infinite is suggested to us by the masterpieces of the past with their mysterious silence and stillness. . . . Responding to that gentleman, I would say that if he has the patience to study and observe, he'll see that that aspiration to nothingness is rendered in dynamic masterpieces by plastic disintegration, by the violent desire to get out from ourselves in order to lose ourselves in space. Ours is an expansion into infinite speed, not a static concentration of the "I."

As for the rest, we are not concerned with knowing whether our works have elements of the mysterious, the tragic, the solemn, the lasting, the eternal . . . We are working feverishly and deliriously, we're well liked by beautiful women, and we travel a lot. All those other matters we leave to the analysis of philosophers, critics, and sedentary belle-lettrists.

To return to the question of the plastic essence of Futurist sculpture and painting we can affirm the following: the traditional characteristics of distinctness, still-

ness, and silence in a work of art are being replaced with characteristics of simultaneity, speed, and noise.

Dynamism in painting and sculpture is an evolving concept of plastic reality. It is the exponent of a sensibility that increasingly conceives the world as an infinite succession of variety in evolution. Interpreting the mobility of this evolution, which is life itself, we Futurists have been able to create the type-form, the form of forms, continuity!

FUTURIST MEN'S CLOTHING: A MANIFESTO

GIACOMO BALLA

20 May 1914

Humanity has always dressed itself in mourning clothes, or heavy armor, or the hieratic cape, or the trailing mantle. Man's body has always been saddened with black, or imprisoned with belts, or stifled with draperies.

During the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, clothing almost always had colors and shapes that were static, heavy, draped or puffed out, somber, priestly, uncomfortable, and cumbersome. They were expressions of melancholy, slavery, or terror. It was a negation of muscular life, suffocating under an antihygienic passéism of heavy fabrics and boring, effeminate, or decadent half-colors.

That is why today, just as long ago, the crowded streets, the theaters, and the private salons have a desolate, funereal, and depressing rhythm.

We want to abolish:

1. Mourning clothes that even an undertaker's assistant should refuse to wear.
2. All faded, cute, neutral, freakish, dark colors.
3. All striped, checkered, or dotted fabrics.
4. The so-called good taste and harmony of colors and forms which weaken our nerves and slow down our pace.
5. The symmetrical cut and static lines that tire, depress, sadden, and enchain muscles; the uniformity of the back side and ornamental *bizarreries*.
6. Useless buttons.
7. Starched collars and cuffs.

We want to free humanity from slow romantic nostalgia and the weight of life.

Through Futurism we want to color and rejuvenate the masses on our streets. We want to give men beautiful festive clothes.

Hence Futurist clothes will be:

1. — **Dynamic**, with fabrics of dynamic designs and colors (triangles, cones, ellipses, spirals, circles).
2. — **Assymetrical**. For example, the endings of sleeves will be rounded on the right arm and squared off on the left. The same for vest-jackets, trousers, and coats.
3. — **Agile-izing**, which is to say, prone to increase the suppleness of the body and to favor its impetus.
4. — **Simple and comfortable**, which is say easy to put on and take off. Only a few indispensable buttons.
5. — **Hygienic**, which is to say, cut in such a way that every pore of the skin can breathe easily. To that end avoid all closed belts or constricting features.
6. — **Joyful**. Fabrics with colors of thrilling iridescence. Fabrics with muscular colors, crazy violets, very very very very reds, green times 300,000, blue times 20,000, yellow, oraaaange, vermiillllion.
7. — **Illuminating**. Phosphorescent fabrics that can spread light all around when it rains, and correct the melancholy gloom of twilight.
8. — **Strong-willed**. Violent, aggressive, imperious, and impetuous colors. A sparing usage of skeletal tones: white, gray, black.
9. — **Floating** and aerial, which is to say, connected to the atmosphere by a gradation of tones and the spring of dynamic lines.
10. — **Short-lived**, so that we can perpetually renew the pleasure and animation of our bodies and in order to promote the textile industry.
11. — **Changeable**, by means of "*modifiers*." I use this name for incorporating fabrics (of varying size, thickness, and color) that you can dispose of when—and wherever—you want, from whatever part of the suit, by means of pneumatic buttons. That way anyone can not just modify, but at any moment invent a new suit that corresponds to his newest mood. Modifications can be imperious, amorous, caressing, persuasive, diplomatic, monotone, polychrome, shocking, discordant, decisive, perfumed, etc.

A dazzling variety of clothes will burst forth, which will continually brighten the streets with gaiety, even if their people are absolutely destitute of imagination and colorist sensibility.

This dynamic joy of clothing will circulate through the bustling streets amid soaring Futurist architecture, will multiply everywhere the prismatic sparkle of a gigantic jeweler's shopwindow. Among us and around us, we'll continually have voluminous acrobatics of colors that will awaken the expanding Futurist sensibility of countless new abstractions and dynamic rhythms.

FUTURISM AND ENGLISH ART
SIGNOR MARINETTI'S MANIFESTO.

NEW IDEALS FOR OLD.
"HURRAH FOR MOTORS!"

Signor Marinetti, who has acquired so much notoriety as the apostle of Futurism, has issued the following "manifesto" to the English public:—

VITAL ENGLISH ART

FUTURIST MANIFESTO

I am an Italian Futurist poet, and a passionate admirer of England. I wish, however, to cure English Art of that most grave of all maladies—passéism. I have the right to speak plainly and without compromise, and together with my friend Nevinson, an English Futurist painter, to give the signal for battle.

AGAINST:

1. —The worship of tradition and conservatism of Academies, the commercial acquiescence of English artists, the effeminacy of their art and their complete absorption towards a purely decorative sense.
2. —The pessimistic, sceptical and narrow views of the English public, who stupidly adore the pretty-pretty, the commonplace, the soft, sweet, and mediocre, the sickly revivals of mediaevalism, the Garden Cities with their curfews and artificial battlements, the Maypole Morris dances, Aestheticism, Oscar Wilde, the Pre-Raphaelites, Neo-primitives, and Paris.
3. —The perverted snob who ignores or despises all English daring, originality and invention, but welcomes eagerly all foreign originality and daring. After all, England can boast of Pioneers—in Poetry, such as Shakespeare and Swinburne; in Art, Turner and Constable (the original founders of the Impressionist and Barbizon School); in Science, Watt, Stephenson, Darwin, etc., etc.¹
4. —The sham revolutionaries of the New English Art Club² who, having destroyed the prestige of the Royal Academy, now show themselves grossly hostile to the later movements of the advance guard.
5. —The indifference of the King, the State, and politicians towards all arts.
6. —The English notion that Art is a useless pastime, only fit for women and schoolgirls, that artists are poor deluded fools to be pitied and protected, and Art a ridiculous complaint, a mere topic for table-talk.
7. —The universal right of the ignorant to discuss and decide upon all questions of Art.

8. — The old grotesque idea of genius—drunken, filthy, ragged, outcast; drunkenness the synonym of Art, Chelsea the Montmartre of London: the Post-Rossettis with long hair under the sombrero, and other passéist filth.
9. — The sentimentality with which you load your pictures—to compensate, perhaps, for your praiseworthy utter lack of sentimentality in life.
10. — Pioneers suffering from arrested development, from success or from despair, pioneers sitting snug on their tight little islands, or vegetating in their oases, refusing to resume the march, the pioneers who say: “We love Progress, but not yours;” the wearied pioneers who say: “Post-Impressionism is all right, but it must not go further than deliberate naïveté” (Gauguin). These pioneers show that not only has their development stopped, but that they have never really understood the evolution of Art. If it has been necessary in painting and sculpture to have naïveté, deformation and archaism, it was only because it was essential to break away violently from the academic and the graceful before going further towards the plastic dynamism of painting.
11. — The mania for immortality. A masterpiece must disappear with its author. Immortality in Art is a disgrace. The ancestors of our Italian Art, by their constructive power and their ideal of immortality, have built for us a prison of timidity, of imitation and of plagiarism. They sit there on grandfather chairs and for ever dominate our creative agonies with their marble frowns: “Take care, children, mind the motors, don’t go too quick, wrap yourselves up well, mind the draughts, be careful of the lightning.”

Forward! HURRAH for motors! HURRAH for speed! HURRAH for draughts! HURRAH for lightning!

WE WANT:

1. — To have an English Art that is strong, virile and anti-sentimental.
2. — That English artists strengthen their Art by a recuperative optimism, a fearless desire of adventure, a heroic instinct of discovery, a worship of strength and a physical and moral courage—all sturdy virtues of the English race.
3. — Sport to be considered an essential element in Art.
4. — To create a powerful advance guard, which alone can save English Art, now threatened by the traditional conservatism of Academies and the habitual indifference of the public. This will be an exciting stimulant, a violent incentive for creative genius, a constant inducement to keep alive the fires of invention and art, so as to obviate the monotonous labour and expense of perpetually raking out and relighting the furnace.
5. — A rich and powerful country like England ought without question to support,

defend and glorify its advance guard of artists, no matter how advanced or how extreme, if it intends to deliver its Art from inevitable death.

6. — So we call upon the English public to support, defend, and glorify the genius of the great Futurist painters or pioneers and advance forces of the vital English Art—ATKINSON, BOMBERG, EPSTEIN, ETCHELLS, HAMILTON, NEVINSON, ROBERTS, WADSWORTH, WYNDHAM LEWIS.³

F. T. MARINETTI

Italian Futurist Movement (Milan).

C. R. W. NEVINSON,

Art Rebel Centre (London).

FUTURIST ARCHITECTURE ANTONIO SANT'ELIA

11 July 1914

Architecture has not existed since the year 700. A foolish motley of the most heterogenous elements of style, used only to mask the skeleton of the modern house, goes under the name of modern architecture. The new beauty of cement and iron is profaned by the superimposition of carnivalesque decorative encrustations that are justified neither by structural necessity nor by our tastes, encrustations that take their origins from Egyptian, Byzantine, or Indian antiquities, or from that stupefying efflorescence of idiocy and impotence that has taken the name of *neo-classicism*.

Such architectural panderings are warmly received in Italy, and the rapacious ineptitude of foreign architects is passed off as inventive genius, as the newest architecture. Young Italian architects (those who attain their originality by the clandestine perusal of trade journals) flaunt their talents in the new quarters of our cities, where a happy salad of little ogival columns, sixteenth-century capitals, Gothic arches, Egyptian pilasters, rococo volutes, quattrocento putti, and swollen caryatids take the place of a style, presumptuously assuming monumental airs. The kaleidoscopic appearance and reappearance of new forms, the proliferation of machines, the daily expansion of novel needs imposed by the speed of communications, the agglomeration of people, the demands of hygiene, and a hundred other phenomena of modern life, are no cause for perplexity to these self-avowed renovators of architecture. They obstinately persevere, armed with rules laid down by Vitruvius, Vignola, and Sansovino¹ along with some little publication of German architecture that has come to hand, in restamping the centuries-old image of

foolishness over our cities, cities that should instead be the immediate and faithful projection of ourselves.

Thus, in their hands, this expressive and synthetic art has become a stylistic exercise, a rummaging through a hotchpotch of old formulas meant to disguise the usual passéist sleight-of-hand in brick and stone as a modern building. As if we, accumulators and generators of movement, with all our mechanical extensions of ourselves, with all the noise and speed of our lives, could ever live in the same houses and streets constructed to meet the needs of men who lived four, five, or six centuries ago.

This is the highest imbecility of modern architecture, which is perpetuated through the mercantile complicity of the academy, that forced residence for intelligence where the young are constrained to an onanistic recopying of classical models, instead of having their minds opened to research into the limits and into the solution of that demanding new problem: *the Futurist house and city*. The house and city that should be spiritually and materially ours, where our restless activities might unfold without seeming a grotesque anachronism.

The problem of Futurist architecture is not a problem of rearranging its lines. It is not a question of finding new moldings, new architraves for windows and doors; nor of replacing columns pilasters, and corbels with caryatids, hornets, and frogs; not a question of leaving a façade bare brick or facing it with plaster or stone; it has nothing to do with defining formalistic differences between new buildings and old ones; but with raising the Futurist house on a healthy plan, gleaned every benefit of science and technology, nobly settling every demand of our habits and minds, rejecting all that is grotesque, heavy, and antithetical to our being (tradition, style, aesthetics, proportion), establishing new forms, new lines, new harmonies for profiles and volumes, an architecture that finds its *raison d'être* solely in the special conditions of modern living and its corresponding aesthetic values in our sensibility. Such an architecture cannot be subject to any law of historical continuity. It must be as new as our state of mind is new.

The art of building has been able to evolve through time and pass from one style to another while maintaining the general character of architecture unchanged, because in history there have been numerous changes of taste brought on by shifts of religious conviction or the succession of political regimes, but few occasioned by profound changes in our conditions of life, changes that discard or overhaul the old conditions, as have the discovery of natural laws, the perfection of technical methods, the rational and scientific use of materials.

In modern life the process of consequential stylistic development comes to a halt. *Architecture becomes dissevered from tradition. One begins again, by necessity, from the ground up.*

Calculations of the resistance of materials, the use of reinforced concrete and

iron, exclude “architecture” as understood in the classical and traditional sense. Modern structural materials and our scientific concepts absolutely do not lend themselves to the disciplines of the historical styles, and are the chief cause of the grotesque aspect of modish constructions where we see the lightness and proud slenderness of girders, and the slightness of reinforced concrete, bent to the heavy curve of the arch, aping the stolidity of marble.

The formidable antithesis between the modern world and the old is determined by everything that was not previously there. Into our lives have entered elements whose very possibility the ancients could not have suspected; material contingencies have crystallized, mental attitudes have arisen, with thousandfold repercussions: first, the formation of a new ideal of beauty, embryonic still and obscure, but already stirring the masses with its fascination. We have lost the sense of the monumental, the massive, the static, and we have enriched our sensibility with a *taste for the light, the practical, the ephemeral, and the swift*. We feel that we are no longer the men of the cathedrals and ancient moot halls, but men of the Grand Hotels, railroad stations, giant roads, colossal harbors, covered markets, glittering arcades, reconstruction areas, and salutary slum clearances.

We must invent and rebuild our Futurist city like an immense and tumultuous shipyard, active, mobile, and everywhere dynamic, and the Futurist house like a gigantic machine. Elevators must no longer hide away like solitary worms in the stairwells, but the stairs—now useless—must be abolished, and the elevators must swarm up the façades like serpents of glass and iron. The house of cement, iron, and glass, without carved or painted ornament, rich only in the inherent beauty of its lines and modeling and yet extraordinarily *ugly* in its mechanical simplicity, as big as need dictates and not merely as municipal zoning rules permit, must rise on the brink of a tumultuous abyss: the street itself, which will no longer lie like a doormat at the level of the thresholds, but plunge several stories deep into the earth, gathering up the traffic of the metropolis, connected for necessary transfers to metal catwalks and high-speed conveyor belts.

We must abolish the decorative. We must resolve the problem of Futurist architecture without cribbing from photographs of China, Persia, or Japan, nor stultifying ourselves with Vitruvian rules, but with strokes of genius, equipped only with a scientific and technical culture. Everything must be revolutionized. We must exploit our roofs and put our basements to work, depreciate the importance of façades, transfer questions of taste out of the field of petty moldings, fiddling capitals, and insignificant porticos, into the broader field of the *grouping of masses on a grand scale and plans of vast disposition*. It is time to have done with monumental and funereal commemorative architecture. We should blow sky-high all those monuments, pavements, arcades, and flights of steps and we should dig out our streets and piazzas and raise the level of the city.

I OPPOSE AND DISDAIN:

1. The pseudo-architecture of the Austrian, Hungarian, German, and American avant-garde;
2. All classically solemn architecture, hieratic, theatrical, decorative, monumental, graceful, or pleasing;
3. The preservation, reconstruction, reproduction of ancient monuments and palaces;
4. Perpendicular and horizontal lines, cubic and pyramidal forms—static, grave, oppressive, and absolutely foreign to our newest sensibility;
5. Use of materials that are massive, bulky, durable, outdated, and expensive.

I AFFIRM

1. That Futurist architecture is the architecture of cold calculation, bold audacity, and simplicity; the architecture of reinforced concrete, iron, glass, textile fibers, and all those replacements for wood, stone, and brick that make for attaining the maximum of elasticity and lightness.
2. That Futurist architecture is not, for all that, an arid combination of practicality and utility, but remains art, that is, synthesis and expression.
3. That oblique and elliptical lines are dynamic, that by their very nature have an emotive power a thousand times superior to that of perpendiculars and horizontals, and that there can be no dynamically integrative architecture that does not make use of them.
4. That decoration, as something superimposed on architecture, is absurd and that *only from the use and disposition of raw, naked, or violently colored materials can the decorative value of Futurist architecture be derived.*
5. That just as the ancients drew their inspiration in art from the elements of the natural world, so we—materially and spiritually artificial—must find our inspiration in the new mechanical world we have created, of which architecture must be the most beautiful expression, the most complete synthesis, the most effective artistic integration.
6. That the idea of architecture as the art of organizing the forms of buildings according to preestablished criteria is dead.
7. That architecture must be understood as the attempt, to be pursued with freedom and boldness, to harmonize man and his environment, that is, to render the world of things into a direct projection of the world of the human mind.
8. That from an architecture so conceived we must not expect the birth of habitual lines and forms, because Futurist architecture will be fundamentally short-lived and transitory. *Our houses will last less time than we do. Every generation will have to make its own city anew.* This constant renewal of the architectural environment

will contribute to the victory of *Futurism*, which is already being affirmed in *Words-in-freedom*, *Plastic dynamism*, *Music without continuous steady rhythm*, and the *Art of Noises*²—Futurism, for which we fight with no holds barred against passéist cowardice.

THE ANTINEUTRAL SUIT: FUTURIST MANIFESTO

GIACOMO BALLA

11 September 1914

Humanity has always dressed itself with **modesty, fear, caution, or indecision**, forever wearing the mourning suit, the cape, or the cloak. The male body has been habitually diminished by **neutral** shades and colors, degraded by black, stifled by belts, and imprisoned by folds of fabric.

Until now men have worn suits of static colors and shapes, draped, solemn, heavy, uncomfortable, and priestly. They were expressions of timidity, melancholia, and **slavery**, a negation of the muscular life, which was suffocated by the antihygienic passéism of heavy fabrics and boring, effeminate, or decadent half-colors. The mood and rhythms of **saddening peace**, funereal and depressing.

TODAY we want to abolish:

1. All of the **neutral** “cute,” faded, *fanciful*, murky, and humiliating colors.
2. All pedantic, professorial, and Teutonic shapes and hues. Designs with stripes, checks, and **diplomatic little dots**.
3. Mourning suits, which are not even fitting for gravediggers. The heroic dead should not be lamented but rather commemorated by us in red clothes.
4. The **mediocrity** of moderation, the so-called good taste and harmony of colors and forms that curb our enthusiasm and slow down our pace.
5. The symmetrical cut and **static** lines that tire, depress, sadden, and bind the muscles; the uniformity of awkward lapels and all creases. Useless buttons. Starched collars and cuffs.

We Futurists want to liberate our race from every **neutrality**, from fearful and enervating indecision, from negating pessimism and nostalgic, romantic, and flaccid inertia. We want to color Italy with Futurist audacity and risk, and finally give Italians joyful and bellicose clothing.

Hence Futurist clothes will be:

- I. — **Aggressive**, in order to intensify the courage of the strong and overcome the sensitivity of the cowardly.
2. — **Streamlining**, which is to say, prone to increasing the suppleness of the body and to favor its impetus in struggle, stride, and the charge of battle.
3. — **Dynamic**, with fabrics of dynamic patterns and colors (triangles, cones, spirals, ellipses, circles) that inspire the love of danger, speed, and assault, and loathing of peace and immobility.
4. — **Simple and comfortable**, which is to say, easy to put on and take off, such that they lend themselves well to aiming guns, fording streams, and launching oneself into the water.
5. — **Hygienic**, which is to say, cut in such a way that every pore of the skin can breathe during long marches and steep climbs.
6. — **Joyful**. Colored fabrics of thrilling iridescence. The use of *muscular* colors: the most violent violet, the reddest red, the deepest of deep blues, the greenest of greens, the brilliant yellows, vermilions, and oooranges.
7. — **Illuminating**. Phosphorescent fabrics that can ignite temerity in a fearful crowd, spread light all around when it rains, and correct the gloom of twilight in the streets and in the nerves.
8. — **Strong-willed**. Designs and colors that are violent, imperious, and impetuous like commands on the field of battle.
9. — **Asymmetrical**. For example, the endings of sleeves and the fronts of jackets will be rounded on the left side, squared off on the right. Lines in ingenious counterattacks.
10. — **Short-lived**, so that we can perpetually renew the pleasure and impetuous animation of the body.
11. — **Changeable**, by means of **modifications** (the incorporation of materials, of enlargements and layers, varying colors and designs) that you can dispose of when- and wherever you want, from whatever part of the suit, by pneumatic buttons. That way anyone can invent a new suit, at any moment. He will become arrogant, shocking, unsettling, decisive, warlike, etc.

The Futurist hat will be asymmetrical and of exuberant, aggressive colors. Futurist shoes will be dynamic, different from one another in form and color, and happily adapted to kicking all the neutralists.

The pairing of yellow and black will be vehemently prohibited.¹

One thinks and acts as one dresses. Since **neutrality is the synthesis of all passésisms**, today we Futurists display these antineutral, that is, cheerfully bellicose clothes.

Only gouty people disapprove of us.

All of Italy's youth will recognize that we don our feisty Futurist banners for our URGENT and imperative great war.

If the government does not take off its passéist attire of fear and indecision, then we will **double, MULTIPLY A HUNDREDFOLD THE RED of the tricolor flag, in which we dress.**

THE FUTURIST SYNTHETIC THEATER

F. T. MARINETTI, EMILIO SETTIMELLI,
AND BRUNO CORRA

11 January 1915; 18 February 1915

While we await the great war that we have so often invoked, we Futurists have alternated between two forms of activity, violent antineutralist actions that have taken place in city piazzas 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 swift and elastic 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 chilling enthusiasm, aborting impulses, or injecting 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 90 percent of Italians go to the theater, whereas only 10 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 the war.

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)¹ 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 who has collapsed on the pavement. The sigh 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 piazzas, landscapes, streets, into the sausage 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 *devouring*; (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; when you have 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 your 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's 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's 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's 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's stupid** to worry about verisimilitude (absurd because talent and worth are quite distinct from that notion).
5. **It's 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's 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, lights, and sounds.

6. **It's stupid** to submit to demands for *mounting tension, preparation of an effect, and maximum impact at the end.*
7. **It's 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's 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, lightninglike 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 *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.² As the crowd was kneaded by a furious massage, the Italian theaters smoothed their wrinkles and laughed in volcanic bursts. 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. We **attain an absolute dynamism through the interpenetration of different times and environments.** Example: in a play such as D'Annunzio's *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 *Jorio's Daughter* the events take place against a simple background with no jumps in space or time; but in the Futurist synthesis, *Simultaneity*, there are two ambiances that interpenetrate and many different times put into action simultaneously.³

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 “The Variety Theater,” and “Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius,”⁴ which are:

1. our frenetic passion for contemporary, swift, 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 which 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 discoveries (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, the purely fantastic, in record-setting, and body-madness. (E.g. *They’re Coming*, F. T. Marinetti’s first drama of objects, a new vein of theatrical sensibility discovered by Futurism);⁵**
- 3. Symphonize the audience’s sensibility by exploring it, by reawakening its most somnolent layers with every possible means; 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;**
- 4. Fraternalize affectionately with comics, who are among the few thinkers who flee from every deforming cultural enterprise;**
- 5. 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, compenetration, 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 . . .;**

6. 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, Settemelli, 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 Ettore Berti, Zoncada, and Petrolini.⁶ 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.

**FUTURIST RECONSTRUCTION OF
THE UNIVERSE GIACOMO BALLA AND
FORTUNATO DEPERO**

11 March 1915

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, “The Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells,” signed by Boccioni; and with Boccioni’s book on *Futurist Painting and Sculpture* and Carrà’s volume on *Warpainting*,¹ 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, is merging with plastic dynamism in order to give a dynamic, simultaneous, plastic, noise-ist² 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 project, 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.

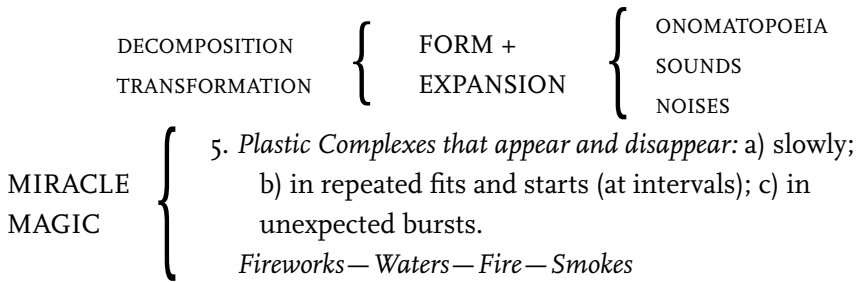
1. Abstract. — **2. Dynamic.** Relative motion (cinematographic) + absolute motion. — **3. Transparent.** From the speed and volatility of the plastic complex, which must appear and disappear, light and impalpable. — **4. Strongly Colored and Luminous** by means of internal lights. — **5. Autonomous**, 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-wordist 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 hand 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, 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 | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. <i>Plastic complexes that turn on a pivot</i> (horizontal, vertical, oblique).2. <i>Plastic complexes that turn one several pivots:</i> a) in the same direction, with variable speed; b) in opposite directions; c) in the same and in opposite directions. |
| DECOMPOSITIONS | { | <ol style="list-style-type: none">3. <i>Plastic complexes that decompose:</i> a) volumes; b) levels; c) in successive transformations (from cones to pyramids to spheres, etc.).4. <i>Plastic complexes that decompose, speak, make noises, sound simultaneously.</i> |



SYSTEMATIC INFINITE DISCOVERY-INVENTION

by means of noise-ist constructive complex abstraction, which is to say, 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-fireworks Contests**. —A garden in the spring with a breeze has enabled us to intuit the **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 which 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 and 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.*

THE ARTIFICIAL LANDSCAPE

Further developing his first synthesis of a speeding automobile, Balla has arrived at the first plastic complex. 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 gone down into the deep essence of the universe, and we are mastering its elements.

THE METALLIC ANIMAL

Fusion of art + science. Chemistry, physics, unexpected continuous fireworks, automatically speaking, screaming, dancing with new being. We Futurists, Balla and Depero, will construct millions of metallic animals for the bigger 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, completely generated by Italian Futurism. No artist before us, whether in England, France, Germany, or Russia, has discovered something similar or analogous. Only the Italian genius, which is the most constructive and architectural genius, could intuit the plastic abstract complex. With this, Futurism has decided on its Style, which will inevitably dominate many centuries of human sensibility.

FUTURIST STAGE DESIGN ENRICO PRAMPOLINI

May 1915

To admit, to believe that stage design exists in the present, or that it has ever existed up till now, would be equivalent to affirming the absolute artistic blindness of man.

The stage is not a photographic enlargement of a rectangle of reality, nor even a relative synthesis of it; it is the replacement of reality with a theoretical and ma-

terial system of subjective stage design, as distinct from the ostensibly objective scenography of today.

It is no longer a matter of reforming only the structural concept of stage design, but of creating an abstract entity that can be identifiable with the action taking place onstage in the theatrical work.

To conceive of the stage in itself, as a pictorial fact, is *wrong* — *a*) because it makes us depart from the genuine concept of stage design, instead retreating into that of mere painting; — *b*) because it makes us turn back to the past (a past which is still found in the present), when the set expressed one thing while the dramatic work expressed another.

These two forces that have diverged from one another (dramatic author and stage designer) must now converge so that the unfolding of a theatrical work results in a comprehensive synthesis.

In its dynamic synthesis, the stage design should live out the dramatic action, should become an integral part of it in the same way that the author becomes one with and comes alive in the intrinsic immediacy, the mind of the character imagined by the author.

To reform the stage, then, it will be necessary:

1. To abjure the exact reconstruction of what the dramatic author has imagined, and so resolutely to abandon any kind of realistic relation, any rapport between object and dramatic motif, or vice versa, a rapport which only lessens the direct emotion of mediated sensation.
2. To replace dramatic action with an emotive picture that awakens all the impressions necessary to the drama's development, so that it creates an atmosphere which renders the internal ambience of the work.
3. *Absolute synthesis* within the expressive materials of the stage: not a pictorial synthesis that encompasses every element, but one that excludes any elements which make up the stage's architecture when they cannot convey new impressions;
4. The set design must have a rapport with the audience's intuition, not create a collaboration that is strained and elaborate.
5. The set design and its colors should awaken within the spectator those emotional values which neither the poet's words nor the actor's gestures can quicken.

Contemporary drama is lacking in reformers; the attempts by Drésa or Rouché in France,¹ with ingenuous and infantile effects; or by Meyerhold and Stanislavsky in Russia,² with evocations of nauseating classicism (but not self-interested calculation, as we see in Bakst,³ whose plagiarisms Assyrian + Persian + Egyptian + Nordic = o); Adolphe Appia, Fritz Erler, Max Littman, Georg Fuchs, and Max

Reinhardt (director) in Germany have attempted reforms,⁴ more on the lines of a sumptuous elaboration that is enriched with frigid decorative motifs than on the lines of an essential concept of interpretive reform. Granville-Barker and Gordon Craig,⁵ in England, have brought about innovations, limited and realistic objective syntheses. All are ostentatious elaborations or material simplifications of, rather than rebellion against the past, the needed revolution, which is precisely what I will initiate, since nobody else has the artistic austerity to change the interpretive concept of what must be expressed.

It is monstrous to contemplate the state of stage design in Italy. Sterile daubers—the set designers of our time—are still stubbornly bustling around dusty, moldering corners of classical architecture, or around those urinals called sumptuous palaces, an escape for narrow minds (look at Bibiena, Gonzago, and other mindless imitators of Piranesi) which vomited out such stuff a hundred, two hundred years ago.⁶

We stage designers must rebel and impose our views, say to our friends the poets and musicians: this scene needs to be staged this way rather than that.

We too should act like artists, not restricting ourselves to be simple executants. We must *create* the scene, give life to a play with all the evocative power of our art.

It goes without saying that we need plays commensurate with our outlook, which have a more synthetic and intense conception of dramatic development in their treatment of subjects.

Let us renew the stage

What will be completely new in the theater as a result of our innovation will be the *banning of all painted scenery*. The stage will no longer have a colored backdrop, *but a colorless electromechanical architectural structure, enlivened by chromatic waves from a source of light*, produced by electric reflectors with colored filters arranged and coordinated in accordance with the mood demanded by every dramatic action.

The luminous radiance from these bands and planes of colored lights and the dynamic combinations of the fleeting colors will give marvelous effects of interpenetrating and intersecting light and shade, creating desolate voids or blocks of light that are corporeal, exultant. These additions, these clashes, this exuberance of impressions, together with the dynamic architectural forms on the stage which will move about, letting loose metallic arms and overturning the sculpted planes amid fundamentally new and modern noises—all these will heighten the vital intensity of the action onstage.

Lit in such a way, the stage and the actors will acquire the unpredictable dynamic effects that are neglected in contemporary theaters, or else rarely deployed, above

all because of the old and mistaken concept of imitation, of rendering reality. To what purpose? — Idiots: don't you understand that all your efforts, all your useless worries over realism do nothing but lessen its intensity, its emotional content; and that it is precisely by means of interpretive equivalents of that reality, that is to say, *abstractions*, that your goal can be achieved, attained?

Let us create the stage

In the preceding paragraph I have demonstrated, advocated a concept of a *dynamic stage*, in opposition to the *static stage* of the past. In the fundamental principles which I will now set out, not only do I take the stage to its highest point of expression, but I endow it with the living values that are proper to it, but now so sorely lacking, which nobody before now has thought of giving it.

Let us invert the role of illumination: instead of illuminated stages, let us create the stage that illuminates, expressive light, radiating with all its emotional power, calling by the colors demanded by the action onstage.

The material means for achieving this expressive, illuminating stage consist in the use of electrochemical colors, using fluorescent salts which have the chemical property of being sensitive to electrical currents and emitting luminous colors of every tonality, depending on how much fluorine is combined with other gases and salts. With the salts systematically arranged, according to an agreed-upon plan, on top of the immense dynamic-stage architectural structures, the desired effect will be achieved by stimulating the salts with electrical neon tubes (ultraviolet). But Futurist stage designs and choreographies should not be limited only to this. In a final synthesis that will surely occur, human actors will no longer seem bearable, like childish puppets or the supermarionettes of today, for they will no longer be thought adequate for expressing the richness of the modern playwright.

In the epoch that Futurism can bring about, we will see the dynamic and luminous architectural structures onstage emitting colorful gleams which, clawing upward with tragic power or shimmering lustfully, will ineluctably awaken new impressions, new emotive values in the spectator. Quivering and luminous forms (produced by electrical currents + colored gases) will be unleashed in dynamic writhings, genuine *gas-actors* will replace real actors in a theater of the unknown. *Gas-actors* rustling, hissing sharply, producing bizarre noises, will easily endow works with unprecedented interpretive meanings, express variegated emotive totalities far more efficiently than some celebrated actor. Thundering, exhilarating, etc. gases will fill the audience with laughter or terror, and perhaps the audience itself will become an actor, commenting aloud on some ironic quip that has been issued by a disembodied *gas-actor*. The *gas-actor*, perhaps vanishing into the void, or perhaps multiplying himself, will reply by emitting a highly disagreeable odor and an equivocal hiss.

The first Manifesto of Futurism was published by *Le Figaro* on 20 February 1909, which is to say, some two years before the Italian Nationalists' Association was founded and some three years before the Libyan War.¹ Already then we proclaimed ourselves Futurist Nationalists, which is to say, antitraditionalists. We glorified patriotism, the army, and war; we launched an anticlerical and antisocialist campaign in order to prepare a greater, stronger, more advanced, more innovative Italy, an Italy freed from its illustrious past and therefore ready to create an immense future.

To awaken sentiments against the Triple Alliance and in favor of irredentism, we began the Futurist movement in Trieste, in which city we had the honor of holding the first of our Futurist *serate*.

We ended our second Futurist *serata* (Milan, Teatro Lirico, 15 February 1910) by shouting: *Long live War, only hygiene of the world! Long live Asinari di Bernezzo! Down with Austria!*²

These shouts, hurled at four thousand spectators and repeated by masses of students, earned us a hurricane of boos, calumnies, and cutting comments from the *bien pensants* in that era of pacificism.

Already, however, we had launched the following manifesto:

Futurist voters!

We Futurists, whose only political program is pride, energy, and national expansion, denounce what would bring ineradicable shame to the country, a possible clerical victory.

We Futurists urge all the young talents of Italy to struggle to the last gasp against candidates who have reached agreements with traditionalists and priests.

We Futurists want a form of national representation in which all the mummies have been swept away, one free of all pacifist garbage, one ready to thwart any kind of plot, to respond to any outrage.

THE FUTURISTS

Our frankly martial and ferociously patriotic attitude was the principal cause of the hostility and the calumnies that were systematically hurled at us in abundance by the Italian press.

With millions of manifestos, books, and pamphlets in every language, with many fists and slaps, with more than eight hundred lectures, exhibitions, and concerts,

we imposed the predominance of our creative and innovative Italian genius over the creative genius of other races throughout the world and especially in Europe.

Thus, we have had the honor of taking Italian art to the leadership of art throughout the world, art which we have long since surpassed and left behind.

At the outbreak of the Libyan War in 1911 we published another manifesto:

We Futurists, who for more than two years have glorified war amidst the hoots of Paralytics and People with Gout, who have sung the love of danger and violence, patriotism and war, the only hygiene of the world, are happy to experience at long last this great Futurist hour of Italy, even as the filthy brood of pacifists is caught in its death throes, having crawled back into the lowest basements of their laughable palace of Ajax.³

With pleasure, in the streets and squares of cities, we have recently administered some beatings to the most feverish adversaries of the war, screaming in their faces these firm principles of ours:

1. All freedoms should be granted to the individual and the people, except the right of being a coward.
2. Let it be proclaimed that the word ITALY must predominate over the word FREEDOM.
3. The fastidious memory of Roman grandeur should be cancelled by an Italian grandeur that is a hundred times greater.

To our eyes, Italy has the shape and the power of a beautiful dreadnought⁴ accompanied by a little squadron of torpedo-boat islands. We are proud to learn that the bellicose spirit which is animating the entire country is equal to our own, and we urge the Italian government, which has finally become Futurist, to enhance enormously the scope of its national ambitions, expressing contempt for all those stupid accusations that we are merely pirates, and instead proclaiming the birth of PAN-ITALIANISM.

Futurist poets, painters, sculptors, and musicians of Italy! Leave aside your poems, paintbrushes, chisels, and orchestras for as long as the war lasts. The red vacations of genius have begun! We can admire nothing, today, except the formidable symphonies of shrapnel and the mad sculptures that our inspired artillery will pour down on the enemy masses.

F. T. Marinetti

And in October 1913 we publicized our political program among the voters, which was fervently welcomed by Italian youth.

Italy absolutely above all else. The word ITALY should predominate over the word FREEDOM.

All freedoms, except that of being cowards, pacifists, anti-Italians.

A larger naval fleet and a larger army; a people proud of being Italian, a people in favor of War, the only hygiene of the world, and of the grandeur of an Italy which is intensely agricultural, industrial, and commercial.

Economic defense and patriotic education of the proletariat.

A foreign policy that is cynical, astute, and aggressive. Colonial expansionism. Libertarianism.

Irredentism — Pan-Italianism — Primacy of Italy.

Anticlericalism and antisocialism.

The cult of progress and speed, of sport and physical force, of bold courage, heroism, and danger, against the obsession with culture, classical learning, museums, libraries, and ruins. — Suppression of all Academies and Conservatories.

The creation of many practical schools of commerce, industry, and agriculture. — Institutes of physical education. — Daily gymnastics in schools. — Gymnastics to predominate over books.

A minimum of professors, very few lawyers, very few doctors, many farmers, engineers, chemists, mechanics, and producers of business.

The dead, the old, and opportunists should be thrown out of office in favor of people who are young and bold.

Against the mania for monuments and governmental inference in matters of art.

Violent modernization of passéist cities (Rome, Venice, Florence), etc.

Abolition of the risky and humiliating tourist industry.

THIS PROGRAM WILL DEFEAT

the clerical-moderate-liberal program

the democratic-republican-socialist program

Monarchy and Vatican

Republic

Hatred and Contempt for the People

The people sovereign

Traditional and commemorative patriotism

Pacifist Internationalism

Intermittent militarism

Antimilitarism

Clericalism

Anticlericalism

Petty protectionism or flabby liberalism

Interested libertarianism

The cult of old people and skepticism

Rule by mediocracy and scepticism

Moralism and senility

Moralism and senility

Opportunism and shady dealing

Opportunism and shady dealing

Reactionary politics

Demagoguery

The cult of museums, ruins, and
monuments
The tourist industry
The obsession with culture
Academicism
The ideal of an Italy that is
archaeological, bigoted,
Navel-gazing quietism
Black cowardice
Passéism

The cult of museums, ruins, and
monuments
The tourist industry
Sociology by committee
Positivist rationalism
The Italy of little bourgeois Italy,
gouty, cheap, and sentimental
Navel-gazing quietism
Red cowardice
Passéism

Milan, 11 October 1913

**For the executive leadership of the Futurist Movement:
Marinetti — Boccioni — Carrà — Russolo**

From 20 August 1915 until today, as we await the joy of launching ourselves against the eastern front, we have organized two extremely violent antineutral demonstrations at Milan. In Rome and Milan, in universities and piazzas, we have led more than thirty demonstrations that were just as effective.

We have been arrested several times, and were the only ones to undergo five days in solitary confinement in prison for having violently demanded our great and hygienic war.

DYNAMIC AND SYNOPTIC DECLAMATION

F. T. MARINETTI

11 March 1916

While we wait the honor-pleasure of returning to the front, we Futurists are renewing, accelerating, and virilizing the genius of our race.

Our activity is continually expanding. A great Futurist exhibition of Balla at Rome.¹ A lecture by Boccioni on Futurist painting at the Institute of Fine Arts in Naples. The “Manifesto to Southern Painters” by Boccioni. Another lecture by Boccioni on Futurist painting at Mantua.² A lecture-declamation on words-in-freedom by Marinetti, Cangiullo, Janelli, and Bruno Corra again at the Institute of Fine Arts in Naples.³ The Futurist pages in the journal *Lateen Sail*, edited by Francesco Cangiullo.⁴ Eight Futurist evenings on “The Art of Noises” and the Noisemakers of Luigi Russolo and Ugo Piatti in Marinetti’s home.⁵

I have offered politicians the only solution to the state’s financial problem: a

gradual, informed sale of our artistic patrimony in order to multiply a hundredfold Italy's military, industrial, commercial, and agricultural power, and to smash Austria forever, our eternally hated enemy.

Only yesterday Settimelli, Bruno Corra, Remo Chiti, Francesco Cangiullo, Boccioni, and I excited the Florentine public to war, by means of our violently patriotic antineutral and anti-German synthetic theater. Today I want to liberate intellectual circles from the old static pacifist and nostalgic mode of declamation and to create a new dynamic synoptic and martial style of declamation.

My indisputable world primacy as a declaimer of free verse and words-in-freedom has enabled me to identify the defects of declamation as it has been understood up to now. Even when supported by the most marvelous vocal organs and the strongest temperaments, this passéist declamation always comes down to an inevitable monotony of highs and lows, to bustling gestures that repeatedly and boringly inundate the stony imbecility of lecture audiences.

For too long now I have amused myself with seducing and moving them better and more reliably than all the other declaimers of Europe, introducing into their obtuse brains the most astonishing images, caressing them with the most refined vocal changes, with velvety softness and brutality that leave them enthralled at my gaze or entranced by my smile, until at last they feel a feminine need to applaud something they neither understand nor like.

I have had enough experience of the femininity of crowds and the weakness of their collective virginity in the course of forcing Futurist free verse upon them.⁶ The most accomplished tricks of facial mimicry combined with gestures served admirably for the early forms of Futurist lyricism which, encapsulating every symbolist and decadent tendency, was in a certain sense the most complete, convulsive humanization of the universe.

What characterizes the passéist declaimer is the immobility of his legs, while the excessive agitation of the upper part of his body makes him look like a puppet in a Punch and Judy show, worked from under the stage by the puppeteer.

In the new Futurist lyricism, an expression of geometrical splendor, our literary *I* or ego consumes and obliterates itself in the grand cosmic vibration, so that the declaimer himself must also somehow disappear in the dynamic and synoptic manifestation of words-in-freedom.

The Futurist declaimer must declaim as much with his legs as with his arms. This lyrical sport will oblige poets to be less lachrymose, more active, more optimistic.

The declaimer's hands should wield his different noise-making instruments. We will no longer see them spasmodically flapping about into the audience's thick brain. We will no longer have them cadencing a phrase with the gestures of an orchestra conductor, or the more or less decorative gesticulations of a lawyer, or

the languid movements of a prostitute soothing her lover's weary body. Hands that caress or make lace, hands that beg, hands expressing nostalgia or sentimentality: all these will disappear in the dynamic totality of the speaker.

Therefore the Futurist declaimer must:

1. Dress anonymously (a dinner jacket or tuxedo in the evening if possible), avoiding any clothes that might suggest some special ambience. No flower in the buttonhole, no gloves.
2. Completely dehumanize his voice, systematically doing away with every modulation and nuance.
3. Completely dehumanize his face, avoid every facial expression, every trick of the eyes.
4. Metallize, liquefy, vegetalize, petrify, and electrify his voice, merging it with the vibrations of matter itself as expressed by words-in-freedom.
5. Gesticulate geometrically, so giving his arms the sharp rigidity of semaphore signals and lighthouse rays in order to indicate the direction of forces, or of pistons and wheels, to express the dynamism of words-in-freedom.
6. Gesticulate in a draftsmanlike, topographical manner that synthetically creates in midair cubes, cones, spirals, ellipses, and so on.
7. Make use of a certain number of elementary instruments such as hammers, little wooden tables, automobile horns, drums, tambourines, saws, electric bells, so as precisely and effortlessly to produce different simple or abstract onomatopoeias and a range of onomatopoetic harmonies.

In certain symphonic groupings of words-in-freedom works these instruments could function orchestrally, each handled by its own executor.

8. Make use of other declaimers, equal or subordinate, mixing or alternating their voices with his.
9. Move to different parts of the hall, running with greater or lesser speed or walking slowly, thus making his own body's movement collaborate in the scattering of words-in-freedom. Each part of the poem will thus appear in its own special light, and the audience, though magnetized as it follows the figure of the declaimer, will nevertheless not statically submit itself to the lyrical force but will, as it turns toward different parts of the room, converge with the dynamism of the Futurist poetry.
10. Complement his declamation with two, three, or four blackboards placed in different parts of the hall, where he should rapidly draw theorems, equations, and synoptic tables of lyrical values.
11. Must in his declamation be a tireless creator and inventor:
 - a) Instinctively deciding at every moment the point at which the tone-adjective and the atmosphere-adjective should be pronounced and repeated. Since

words-in-freedom contain no precise indications, he must follow his own instincts in this respect, taking care to achieve the greatest geometrical splendor and numerical sensibility. That way he will collaborate with the free-wordist author, intuitively casting out novel laws and creating unexpected new horizons in the words-in-freedom works that he interprets.

- b) As coldly as an engineer or a mechanic, clarifying and explaining the synoptic tables and equations of lyric values, which form zones of luminous, almost geographic simplicity (between the most obscure and complex parts of the words-in-freedom) as momentary concessions to the reader's understanding.
- c) In and through everything he does, imitating motors and their rhythms (without worrying about the audience's understanding) while declaiming these more obscure and complex parts, and especially all the onomatopoetic harmonies.

The *First Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation* took place on March 29 1914, in the hall of the permanent Futurist Exposition in Rome, Via del Tritone, 125.⁷

PIEDIGROTTA

WORDS-IN-FREEDOM by the Futurist free-wordist
FRANCESCO CANGIULLO

declaimed by { MARINETTI
CANGIULLO

with the assistance of

the very famous
dwarf artists { Miss TOFA (Sprovieri)
Mr. PUTIPÙ (Balla)
Mr. TRICCABBALLACCHE (Radiante)
Mr. SCETAVAIASSE (Depero)
Mr. FISCHIATORE (Sironi)

who will appear in their patented
onomatopoetic creations

FINAL CHORUS OF 6 VOICES

Before the performance MARINETTI will explain the artistic value of the onomatopoetic artists

Messieurs

TOFA—PUTIPÙ

TRICCABBALLACCHE

SCETAVAIASSE

I began by explaining to the audience the artistic and symbolic value of the different onomatopoetic instruments. In the *Tofa*, a large seashell on which Neapoli-

tan street boys blow and make a dark-blue, tragicomic melopoeia, I discovered a ferocious satire on mythology and all the sirens, tritons, and seashells that populate the passéist Gulf of Naples.

The **putipù** (orange-colored noise), also known as the *caccavella* or *pernacchiatore*, is a little bundle of tin or terracotta, covered with leather, into which a reed is fitted so that it vibrates comically when stroked by a wet hand; it offers the violent irony with which a young and sane race corrects and combats all the nostalgic poisons of Moonshine.

The **scetavaiasse** (red and green noise), whose bow is a wooden saw, covered with little bells and pieces of tin, is the genial parody of the violin in its expression of the inner life and sentimental anguish. It makes lively fun of musical virtuosity, Paganini, Kubelík, the angelic viola players of Benozzo Gozzoli,⁸ classical music, the halls of the Conservatory, full of boredom and enervating gloom.

The **triccabballacche** (red noise) is a sort of lyre whose strings are very thin strips of wood ending in square wooden hammers. You play it like the cymbals, opening and closing your raised hands, which grasp the frame. It is a satire on the Greco-Roman sacred processions and cithara players who fill the friezes of passéist architecture.

Then, dynamically, I declaimed *Piedigrotta*, **marvelous, overwhelming words-in-freedom sprung from the most original, exhilarating genius of Francesco Cangiullo, great free-wording Futurist, leading writer of Naples and foremost humorist of Italy**. Every so often the author leaped to the piano, in alternation with my declaiming of his words-in-freedom. The room was lit by red lamps that doubled the dynamism of the Piedigrottesque backdrop painted by Balla. The audience greeted the appearance of the procession of dwarfs with frenzied applause, this troupe who bristled with fantastic hairdos of vellum paper and who circled around me as I declaimed.

The varicolored vessel that the painter Balla wore on his head was much admired. Conspicuous in a corner was the bile-green still life of three Crocean philosophers, a tasty funereal dissonance in the ultra-dry atmosphere of Futurism. Those who believe in a joyful, optimistic, divinely careless art, captivate the indecisive ones. The audience, with voice and gesture, accompanied the marvelous uproar that burst out every so often during my declamation, which very successfully and powerfully blended in with the onomatopoeic instruments.

The second dynamic and synoptic declamation was performed by me in London on 28 April 1914, in the Doré Gallery.¹⁰

Dynamically and synoptically I declaimed several passages from my *Zang tumb tumb* (the *Siege of Adrianople*). On the table in front of me I had a telephone, some boards, and special hammers, all of which permitted me to imitate the Turkish general's orders and sounds of artillery and machinegun fire.

At three points in the room there had been set up blackboards, to which in succession I ran or walked to sketch rapidly an analogy with chalk. As my listeners

turned to follow me in my ambulatory convolutions, they were participating, their entire bodies inflamed with emotion, in the violent effects of the battle described by my words-in-freedom.

In another room a bit away, there were two big drums on which my collaborator, the painter [Christopher] Nevinson, produced the rumbling boom of cannon whenever I told him to do so over the telephone.

The growing interest of the English audience became frantic enthusiasm when I achieved the greatest dynamism by alternating the Bulgarian song “Sciumi Maritza” with the dazzle of my images and the roar of the onomatopoetic artillery.

THE NEW RELIGION-MORALITY OF SPEED

F. T. MARINETTI

May 1916

In my first manifesto (20 February 1909) I declared: “the beauty of the world has been enriched by a new form of beauty: the *beauty of speed*.”¹ Following the birth of dynamic art, now the new religion-morality of speed is being born in this Futurist year of our great liberating war. Christian morality served to develop the inner life of man. But today it has lost its reason for existing, since life has been completely emptied of the Divine.

Christian morality protected man’s physiological structure against the excesses of sensuality. It blunted and counterbalanced his instincts. *Futurist morality* will protect man against the inevitable decay produced by slowness, memory, analysis, rest, and habit. Human energy, multiplied a hundredfold by velocity, will dominate Space and Time.

Man began by disdaining the isochronal and cadenced rhythm of the great rivers, one which is identical with the rhythm produced by his own footsteps. Man envied the rhythm of spring torrents, which resemble the galloping of a horse. He tamed horses, elephants, and camels in order to manifest his divine authority by increasing his speed. He formed alliances with the most docile animals, captured the wild ones, and ate the domestic ones. He stole electricity and carbon-burning fuels in order to create new allies in the form of motors. He forged metals, defeated and rendered ductible by fire, to join with fuels and electricity, and thus he created an army of slaves, hostile and dangerous and yet sufficiently domesticated, who would transport him swiftly over the curves of the earth.

Tortuous paths, roads that follow the indolent curves of rivers, or that hug the irregular backs and stomachs of mountains — these are the laws of the earth. Never

a straight line; always zigzags and arabesques. Velocity has finally given human life one of the attributes of divinity: *the straight line*.

The dark Danube, cloaked by a soutane of mud, bowing its face downward toward an internal life full of fat, libidinous, and fecund fish, passes murmuring between the steep, implacable banks of its mountains, as if walking down some huge central hallway, a convent whose roof had been ripped away by the speeding wheels of the constellations. How long will this pedantic river continue to allow an automobile to go faster, barking like a crazy fox terrier. I hope that we'll soon see the Danube flowing in a straight line at three hundred kilometers per hour.

We have to persecute, whip, and torture all who sin against speed.

One of the great mistakes of passéist cities is to let the sun get established, idle about, or cease moving altogether. Who can believe that the sun will go down this evening? Come off it! Impossible! It has taken up residence here. Piazzas are lakes of stagnant fire. Streets, rivers of lazy fire. Unpassable, for now. You can't even step outside. An inundation of sun. It would take a refrigerated ship or an ice truck to get across the fire. Hunker down. Despotism, police-state repression by light, which incarcerates anyone rebelliously linked with coolness or speed. A state of solar siege. Woe to the body that goes outside. A blow on the head. Death. Solar guillotines at all the doors. Woe to the thought that wants to go outside the brain. 2, 3, 4 leaden notes will drop down on it from the local belltower. In the house, in the sultry heat, the fury of nostalgic flies. A stirring of thighs and sweaty memories.

Sinful slowness of the Sunday crowds and the Venetian lagoons.

Velocity, its essence being an intuitive synthesis of all forces in movement, is naturally *pure*. Slowness, its essence being the rational analysis of forms of exhaustion in repose, is naturally *unclean*. After destroying traditional good and evil, we are creating a new good, speed, and a new evil, slowness.

Velocity = synthesis of all forms of courage in action. Aggressive and martial.

Slowness = analysis of all forms of stagnant prudence. Passive and pacifist.

Velocity = disdain for obstacles, desire for the new and unexplored.

Slowness = arrest, ecstasy, immobile adoration of obstacles, nostalgia for the already seen, idealization of tiredness and repose, pessimism about the unexplored. Rancid romanticism of the wandering and wild poet and the long-haired, bespectacled, dirty philosopher.

If to pray means to communicate with divinity, then run with all speed to pray. Holiness of wheels and rails. We should kneel on the rails to pray to divine speed. We should kneel in adoration before the whirling speed of a gyroscope compass: 20,000 revolutions per minute, the highest mechanical velocity reached by man. We must seize the secret of the stars' stupefying, incomprehensible velocity. Let us take part in the great celestial battles; let's face the stellar missiles which have been launched by invisible cannons; let's vie with the star named 1830 Groom-

bridge, which flies at 241 km a second, with Arthur which flies at 413 a second. Invisible mathematical artillery men. Wars in which the stars, being both gunners and bullets, vie with one another to escape a greater star or to strike another that's smaller. Our male saints are the innumerable small bodies that are penetrating our atmosphere at an average velocity of 42,000 meters a second. Our female saints are light and electromagnetic waves at 3×10^{10} meters a second.

The Inebriation of great speeds in cars is simply the joy of feeling oneself merged with the only *divinity*. Sportsmen are the first catechumens of this religion. Imminent destruction of houses and cities, to make way for meeting places for cars and planes.

Places inhabited by the divine: trains, dining cars (eating while speeding). Railroad stations; especially those of the American West, where trains speeding at 140 km. an hour can take water and pick up mail sacks without stopping. Bridges and tunnels. The Place de l'Opéra in Paris. The Strand in London. Automobile races. Films. Radiotelegraphic stations. The great turbines turned by columns of mountain water to strip animating electricity from the air. The great Parisian couturiers who create a passion for the new and hate for the already seen through their rapid invention of new fashions. Very modern and active cities such as Milan, a city which Americans think has *punch* (the precise and direct hit that lets a boxer achieve a *knockout* against his opponent).² Battlefields. Machine guns, rifles, cannons, and bullets are divine. Mines and swift counter-mines: to blow up the enemy BEFORE he blows up us. The piston-engines and tires of cars are divine. Bicycles and motorcycles are divine. Gasoline is divine. Religious ecstasy that inspires a hundred horsepower. The joy of shifting from third to fourth gear. Joy of pressing the accelerator pedal, roaring with musical velocity. The disgust inspired by people sleeping deeply. The repugnance I feel at having to go to bed at night. Every night I pray to my electric lamp, since it harbors a velocity which is furiously stirring.

Heroism is velocity that has reached its own self, coursing over the vastest of circuits.

Patriotism is the direct velocity of a nation; war is the necessary trial run of an army, the central motor of a nation.

An airplane's or an automobile's great speed lets us embrace and rapidly compare different distant points on the earth, a mechanical form of the labor of analogy. Whoever travels a lot acquires intelligence mechanically, systematically bringing together things that are actually distant and comparing one with the other and discovering their deepest points in common. Great velocity is an artificial reproduction of the intuitive analogy of the artist. Omnipresence of the wireless imagination = speed. Creative genius = speed.

Active and passive speed; controlling velocity (the driver) and velocity controlled (the

automobile); *shaping velocity* (writing, sculpting) and *velocity shaped* (something written, sculpted); *velocity carried along by different velocities* (a train pushed and drawn by two locomotives in front and back) and *velocity carrying different velocities* (transatlantic steamer carrying motors of different speeds + various men in movement: sailors, mechanics, passengers, waiters, cooks, bathers in their tubs + water agitated by bathers + many running or barking dogs + many dancing fleas + the potential velocity of many racehorses).

Another example of *velocity carrying different velocities*: automobile carrying driver + velocity of his mind which anticipates the second part of the journey or the road that's still left to go when the automobile is still materially in the journey's first part. Upon arrival the driver will feel boredom with what he's already seen.

Our life should always be a velocity carrying other velocities: mental velocity + velocity of the body + velocity of the vehicle that carries the body + velocity of the element (water or air) that carries the vehicle (ship or airplane). We should dislocate thought from its mental road to put it into a material one. Like a pencil, we should leave on the paper road odors (a corporeal scattering), thoughts (intellectual scattering) = growth of speed. Velocity destroys the laws of gravity, renders the values of time and space subjective, hence enslaves them. Kilometers and hours are not universally the same; for the speeding man they vary in length and duration.

We should imitate the train and the automobile: they force everything that exists along the road on which they're traveling to make the same journey at the same speed in reverse, and in everything that's alongside the road they awaken the spirit of contradiction, which is life itself. The speed of the train forces the landscape it's crossing to split into two landscapes rolling in reverse in relation to its movement. Every train carries away with itself the nostalgic part of the soul of whoever has seen it pass by. Things a little distant from the train—trees, woods, hills, mountains—are frightened as they observe the way everything closer is hurled into reverse motion by the train, then they decide to follow them, but with regret and more slowly. Every body that is speeding along swings from right to left and tends to become a pendulum.

To hurry to hurry to hurry to fly to fly. Danger danger danger danger to left to right below above inside outside to scent to breathe to drink death. Militarized revolution of gears. Precise concise lyricism. Geometrical splendor. To enjoy more coolness and more life than you can find in rivers or the sea you have to fly into the coolest headwind at full speed. When I flew for the first time with the aviator Bielovucic,³ I felt my chest opening like a great hole through which all of the sky—smooth, fresh, and torrential—was deliciously plunging. Instead of the slow watered-down sensuality of walks under the sun and amidst flowers, you should prefer the ferocious and blood-tingling massage of the raging wind. Increasing lightness. An infinite sense of pleasure. You get out of the plane with an elas-

tic and springy bounce. You've gotten something heavy off your back. You've triumphed over the trap of the road. You've triumphed over the law which forces man to crawl.

We must continually vary our speed so that our mind is actively participating in it. In an s-shaped curve with double bends, velocity achieves its absolute beauty, for it is struggling against: (1) the resistance of the ground, (2) the various atmospheric pressures, (3) the pull of gravity formed by the empty space in the curves. Speed in a straight line is massive, crude, *unthinking*. Speed with and after a curve is velocity that has become agile, acquired *consciousness*.

The marvelous drama of automobiles side-spinning at car races. The car tends to cut itself into two parts. The back portion, as if growing heavier, becomes a frightened cannonball that is searching for slopes, a depression in the ground, the center of the earth—any place to escape from still more danger. *Better to die now than to continue this risk*. No! No! No! Glory to the Futurist driver who, with a twist of his shoulder and a turn of the steering wheel drags the back part of the vehicle out of the spin and puts it back on a straight line. *Close to us*, who are watching off-track, the cars are hurling out of control, spinning over, dancing from here to the curve of the horizon, fragile, threatened by the impediments which their own turns have raised. The double curve taken at high speed is the highest manifestation of life. Victory of the self over the perfidious plots woven by our Weight, which wants to ambush and treasonably assassinate our velocity dragging it down into an immobile hole. Velocity = scattering + condensation of the "I." All the space that a body has traversed is condensed into that body.

Terrestrial Velocity { love of earth-woman scattering over the world
(horizontal lust)
= driving amorously caressing the white and
feminine curving roads

Aerial Velocity { hatred of the earth (perpendicular mysticism)
spiraling ascension of the "I" toward Nothing-
God = Aviation, the cleansing agility
of castor oil

The rapid meshing of train wheels with the surging teeth of noises. The wheels extract from the ground all the noises that are sleeping within matter. Under the train's pressure, the tracks dance, quiver in the vibrating network, rendered elastic at the instant of the shock. Roads that cars have raced over offer a wake of whirling

noises and spiraling odors. This hundred horsepower is an extension of the caves of Mount Etna.

The roads scoured by cars and train tracks have a wavy, elastic impetus, as if ready to race around an ideal post that is surging on the distant horizon.

The desire to feel oneself alone in the darkness at the back of a limousine speeding among the leaping luminous icicles of a metropolis at night: the rarefied desire to feel oneself as a speeding body. I am a man who often eats at a train station in the interval between two through trains; my glance shuttles between the wall clock and the steaming food; the screw of anxiety-memory turns in the heart. It needs to be nourished with speed. One must believe only in the solidity-resistance that is created by velocity. The force and complication of thought, the refinement of desires and appetites, the insufficiency of the ground, the hunger for foreign honey, spices, meats, and fruits—everything imposes the Futurist morality-religion of Speed.

Speed detaches corpuscular man from corpuscular woman. Speed destroys love, vice of the sedentary heart, saddening coagulation, arteriosclerosis of humanity's blood. Speed hastens, precipitates the railroad-automobile-airplane blood circulation of the world.

Only speed will be able to murder the nostalgic, sentimental, pacifist, and neutralist moonlight. Italians! Be fast and you will be strong, optimistic, invincible, immortal!

THE FUTURIST CINEMA F. T. MARINETTI,
BRUNO CORRA, EMILIO SETTIMELLI, ARNALDO
GINNA, GICACOMO BALLA, REMO CHITI

11 September 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, 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 alogical and momentary synthesis of everyday life—will become the best school for children: a school of joy, speed, force, courage, and heroism. It will develop, sharpen sensibility, will accelerate creative imagination, 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, “The 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 *Futurist Synthetic Theater*,² containing eighty theatrical syntheses. An earlier Futurist manifesto had rehabilitated, glorified, and perfected *the Variety Theater*.³ It is logical therefore for us to carry our quickening energies into a new theatrical zone: *film*.

At first glance, the filmmaker, 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 most 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 essentially visual, cinema 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, 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 all the most modern artistic researches are moving. *Futurist cinema* is creating, precisely today, the **polyexpressive symphony** that just a year ago we announced in our

manifesto “Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius.”⁴ 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 wingèd words in tomato sauce.⁵

We shall add color to the dialogue by swiftly and simultaneously showing every image that passes through the actor’s brains. 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 sea, the mountain, the traveler.

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:

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 . . .

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:⁶

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.

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, 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. **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.

WOMEN OF THE NEAR FUTURE [1] ROSA ROSÀ

17 June 1917

People are writing about women. One will always write too much and never enough on this subject. On what she is for men, on what she is with respect to herself.

But perhaps nobody has thought about one aspect of her that is marvelous (you understand, I've deliberately chosen this slightly exaggerated predicate, for I myself am a woman)—nobody has thought to focus on her worldwide importance *after* the war.

The war has shaken us as much as it has men.

It's pointless to reiterate that at this moment millions of women have replaced men in jobs which it was previously thought that only men could do, drawing salaries that until now a woman's *honest* work would never have been able to attain. Women are useful now, very useful. The other day I heard someone tell a draft dodger: "If it weren't for women, by now the war would've ended."

Consider, then, how openly their importance has been recognized, far more

than even the most feminist of feminists could have hoped. And even if, after the war, they will have to give back to men many of the possibilities which they currently possess, like capital that's on loan, the field to which they're restricted has in all respects been enlarged and will never become as narrow as it was before.

But all these are old observations by now.

The new dimensions of the situation will kick in *after* the war.

After the war millions of men will return to the companions whom they left behind in tears, as weak as children at the prospect of the torment of separation, as fearful as little girls left at a boarding school and faced with a new life which they now had to confront alone. They will find women whom the war has shaken as much as it has them.

Those who return will be received with the passionate tenderness that no social transformation will ever be able to destroy in the heart of a woman who truly loves. But they will find in these women not the passion of conceited little dolls but that of *companions tempered by the greatness* of the times, people conscious that their present and future task is to keep alive the energy of the nation.

Those who have fought for years and return tired, too tired perhaps to want to make up for the lost time offered to the fatherland, will find their energies re-ignited by the firm will of their companions who have remained at home and also labored for years . . .

And those who before the war were idlers and chatterers, those who from caution or fear liked to stay at home and consume their earnings in peace, now having been dragged away despite themselves by the iron machinery of military duty, will return to find, together with the souls of their women *tempered by the greatness of the times*, that there is no longer room for resuming the old life, for dropping back into the sterility of pleasurable idleness.

They will learn that the rivers of Italy are awaiting bridges, the plains awaiting a forest of chimneys, and in the torrents of Italy there are sleeping infinite forces which await the arm of those who will return, in order to work alongside their *strong women*.

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST DANCE

F. T. MARINETTI

8 July 1917

Dance has always abstracted its rhythms and forms from life. The fear and amazement that stirred prehistoric man in the face of an incomprehensible and extraor-

dinarily complex universe found their counterpart in his earliest dances, which were inevitably sacred.

The earliest oriental dances, pervaded by religious terror, were rhythmic and symbolic pantomimes that naively reproduced the rotating movements of the stars. Whence, for example, the roundel. The various steps and movements of the Catholic priest who celebrates the mass derive from these earliest dances and have the same astronomical symbolism.

Cambodian and Javanese dances are distinguished by their architectural elegance and mathematical regularity. They are bas-reliefs in slow motion.

Arabic and Persian dances are sensual: imperceptible quivering of the hips to the monotonous clapping of hands or the beating of a tambourine; the spasmodic starts and hysterical convulsions of belly dancing; the furious, enormous leaps of Sudanese dancing. All these are variations on a single motif, that of a man sitting with his legs crossed in front of a half-naked woman who attempts, with canny motions, to persuade him to engage in the act of love.

Once the glorious Italian ballet was dead and buried, Europe witnessed the rise of stylizations of savage dances, elegant versions of exotic dances and modernized versions of ancient dances. Parisian red pepper + crest + shield + lance + ecstasy in front of idols that no longer mean a thing + undulations of Montmartre thighs = an erotic passéist anachronism for foreigners.

In prewar Paris, dances from South America were the rage: the furious spasmodic tango from Argentina, the *zamacueca* from Chile, the *maxixe* from Brazil, the *santafé* from Paraguay.¹ The last of these registers the gallant turnings of an ardent and audacious man in front of an attractive and seductive woman whom he finally seizes with a lightning leap and drags away into a whirling version of the waltz.

The Ballets Russes, organized by Diaghilev,² was extremely interesting from an artistic viewpoint. It modernized popular Russian dances with a marvelous fusion of dance and music which interpenetrated each other and gave the spectator an original and perfect expression of the race's essential force.

With Nijinsky, dance's pure geometry appears for the first time, free of imitation and without sexual stimulation. The muscular system elevated to divinity.

Isadora Duncan has created free dance, again without preparatory imitation, that ignores musculature and eurythmy in order to devote everything to emotional expression, to the aerial ardor of its steps.³ But fundamentally she merely proposes to intensify, enrich, and modulate in a thousand different ways the rhythm of a woman's body that languidly rejects, languidly invokes, languidly accepts, and languidly regrets the masculine giver of erotic happiness.

I often had the pleasure of admiring Isadora Duncan as she performed free improvisations among the smoky, mother-of-pearl veils that filled her studio. She

would dance freely, as without a thought as someone who is just talking, desiring, loving, weeping—to any sort of little tune, no matter how vulgar, such as “Mariette, ma petite Mariette” pounded out on the piano. But she never managed to project anything but the very complicated feelings of desperate nostalgia, spasmodic sensuality, and childishly feminine cheerfulness.

There are many points of contact between Isadora’s art and pictorial Impressionism, as there are between Nijinsky’s art and Cézanne’s constructions of volumes and forms.

So, naturally, under the influence of Cubist experimentation and especially of Picasso, a dance of geometricized volumes was created, almost independent of the music. Dance became an autonomous art, the music’s equal. It no longer submitted to the music, it replaced it.

Valentine de Saint-Point has conceived an abstract and metaphysical dance that was meant to embody pure thought, without sentimentality or sexual excitement.⁴ Her *métachorie* consists of poems that are mimed and danced. Unfortunately it is passéist poetry that navigates within the old Greek and medieval sensibility: abstractions danced but static, arid, cold, and emotionless. Why deprive oneself of the vivifying element of imitation? Why put on a Merovingian helmet and veil one’s eyes? The sensibility of these dances turns out to be elementary limited monotonous and tediously wrapped up in an outdated atmosphere of fearful myths that today no longer mean a thing. A frigid geometry of poses which have nothing to do with the great simultaneous dynamic sensibility of modern life.

With much more modern ambitions, Dalcroze has created a very interesting *rhythmic gymnastics*,⁵ which nevertheless limits its effects to muscular hygiene and describing agrarian field work.

We Futurists prefer Loie Fuller and the African American “cakewalk” (utilization of electric lights and mechanical movements).⁶

One must go beyond muscular possibilities and aim in the dance for that ideal *multiplied body* of the motor that we have so long dreamed of. Our gestures must imitate the movements of machines assiduously paying court to steering wheels, tires, pistons, and so preparing for the fusion of man with the machine, achieving the metallism of Futurist dance.

Music is fundamentally and incurably passéist, and hence hard to deploy in Futurist dance. Noise, because it results from the friction or the collision of solids, liquids, or gases that are in rapid motion, has become by means of onomatopoeia, one of the most dynamic elements of Futurist poetry. Noise is the language of the new human-mechanical life. Futurist dance, therefore, will be accompanied by *organized noises* and by the orchestra of noise-tuners which Luigi Russolo has invented.

Futurist dance will be:

anti-harmonic
ill-mannered anti-gracious
asymmetrical
synthetic
dynamic
free-wordist.

In the Futurist epoch that we live in today, when more than twenty million men have formed battle lines that make a fantastic Milky Way of exploding shrapnel-stars that bind together the earth; when the Machine and Great Explosives, co-operating with the war, have multiplied a hundredfold the force of races, obliging them to give all they have of boldness, instinct, and muscular resistance, Futurist dance can have no other purpose than to immensify heroism, that master of metals which has been fused with the divine machines of speed and war.

I therefore extract the first three Futurist dances from the three mechanisms of war: shrapnel, the machine gun, and the airplane.

THE SHRAPNEL DANCE

Part One

I want to render the fusion of a mountain with the parabola of shrapnel. The fusion of carnal human song with the mechanical noise of shrapnel. To render an ideal synthesis of the war: a soldier in the mountains⁷ who carelessly sings beneath an uninterrupted vault of shrapnel.

Movement 1: With feet, mark the *boom-boom* of the projectile coming from the canon's mouth.

Movement 2: With arms outspread, describe at moderate speed the long whistling parabola of the shrapnel as it passes over the soldier's head and explodes too high or behind him. The danseuse will hold up a sign printed in blue: *Short to the right.*

Movement 3: With the hands (wearing very long silver thimbles) raised and open, as high as possible, give the proud, blessed, silvery explosion of the shrapnel in its *paaaaak*. The danseuse will hold up a sign printed in blue: *Long to the left.* Then she will hold up another printed in silver: *Don't slip on the ice. Synovitis.*

Movement 4: With the whole body vibrating, hips weaving, and arms making swimming motions, give the waves and flux and reflux and concentric or eccentric motions of echoes in ravines, in open fields, and up the slopes of mountains. The danseuse will hold up a sign printed in black: *Mess duty*; still another in black: *The mules, the mail.*

Movement 5: With little leaping handclaps and a bodily pose suggesting ecstatic longing, express the indifferent and always idyllic calm of nature and the *cheep-cheep-cheep* of birds. The danseuse will hold up a sign printed in disordered letters: *300 meters to camp*. Then another in red: *15 degrees below zero. 800 meters red ferocious suave*.

Part Two

Movement 6: The slow, casual, thoughtless gait of soldiers in the mountains who are marching and singing under successive furious parabolas of shrapnel. The danseuse will light a cigarette while hidden voices sing one of the many war songs:

the commander of the Sixth Alpines
begins the bombardment. . . .

Movement 7: The undulation with which the danseuse continues to express this war song will be interrupted by Movement 2 (whistling parabola of shrapnel).

Movement 8: The undulation with which the danseuse continues to express the war song will be interrupted by Movement 3 (explosion of the shrapnel high up).

Movement 9: The undulation will be interrupted by Movement 4 (waves of echoes).

Movement 10: The undulation will be interrupted by Movement 5 (*cheep-cheep-cheep* of the birds in the placidity of nature).

THE MACHINE-GUN DANCE

I want to give the Italian carnality of the shout *Savoia!*⁸ that tears itself apart and dies heroically in shreds against the mechanical geometrical inexorable rolling-mill of a firing machine gun.

Movement 1: With the feet (arms stretched forward), give the machine gun's mechanical hammering *tap-tap-tap-tap-tap*. With a rapid gesture the danseuse will show a sign printed in red: *Enemy at 700 meters*.

Movement 2: With hands rounded like cups (one full of white roses, the other red roses), imitate fire as it pours steadily and violently out of the machine-gun barrels. The danseuse will have a large white orchid between her lips and show a sign printed in red: *Enemy at 500 meters*.

Movement 3: With arms wide open describe the circling, sprinkling fan of bullets.

Movement 4: A slow turning of the body, while the feet hammer on the wooden floor of the stage.

Movement 5: With violent forward thrusts of the body, accompany the cry *Savoiaaaaaa!*

Movement 6: The danseuse, on hands and knees, will imitate the form of a machine gun, silver-black under its ribbon-belt of cartridges. Stretching her arms forward, she will feverishly shake the white and red orchid like a gun barrel in the act of firing.

DANCE OF THE AVIATRIX

The danseuse will dance on top of a large, violently colored geographical map (four meters square); on the map, in large and highly visible characters, are drawn the mountains, woods, rivers, geometries of the countryside, the major traffic centers around cities, the sea.

The danseuse must create a continual palpitation of blue veils. On her chest, like a flower, a large celluloid propeller constructed so that it vibrates with every bodily movement. Her face dead white under a white hat shaped like a monoplane.

Movement 1: Lying on her stomach on the carpet-map, the danseuse will simulate with jerks and weavings of her body the successive efforts of a plane trying to take off. Then she will come forward on hands and knees and suddenly jump to her feet, her arms wide, her body straight but shivering all over.

Movement 2: The danseuse, still straight, will shake a sign printed in red: *300 meters—3 spins—a climb*. Then, right away, a second sign: *600 meters—avoid mountain*.

Movement 3: The danseuse will heap up a lot of green cloth to simulate a green mountain, then leap over it. She will reappear immediately, arms open, all vibrant.

Movement 4: The danseuse, all vibrant, will wave in front of herself a large sun made of gilded cardboard and will run a very fast circle, pretending to follow it (frenzied, mechanical).

Movement 5: With *organized noises* imitate the rain and howling of the wind and, with continual interruptions of the electric lighting, imitate flashes of lightning. Meanwhile the danseuse will raise up a frame that is covered with red vellum paper in the form of a cloud at sunset, and will break through it in a graceful leap (grand and low melancholy waves of sound).

Movement 6: The danseuse will wave in front of herself another frame covered with dark-blue vellum paper, in the form and color of a starry night. She will step across it, breaking through. Then she (gay ironic thoughtless) will scatter golden stars on the ground around her.

**VARIATIONS ON THE THEME OF “WOMAN.” TO
SAVE WOMAN??!! GIOVANNI FIORENTINO**

26 August 1917

Whatever one's view of them, the ideas expressed by Morosello in his recent article are beautiful and laudable;¹ yet it's also necessary to recognize that they postulate utopias which will forever remain utopias, or which will consume the vain efforts of a handful of people but lead to no result. False chimeras, illusions more fragile than a cloud! To save woman?! . . . And how can that be done, when she herself is always seeking, with every possible means (at times perhaps unconsciously, due to her innate stupidity; at other times fully conscious of what she's doing)—when she is seeking, I say, to place impediments in the way of man's action and is not only falling more than ever into the depths, but now wants to drag man along with her in the fatal descent.

Say what one will, the mind of woman can never be changed, no matter what attempt or effort is made. It is too deeply stamped with the inferiority which it has received since creation, and partly through destiny, partly through its own fault, will remain forever petty, incapable of anything truly grand, superior.

The woman of whom Morosello dreams—to speak only of him for now—is a utopia. Contrary to what Morosello says, it is only perhaps as a rare exception (if ever) that the splendid creature has known how, or has been able, to release from her being, or still more from her mind, some vivid flash of light—and then only in the past. For the present she is in decline, and for the future (still worse) she will decline only further, even if it should seem that she has surpassed Man. Nor, certainly, will we be able to have her as a companion in the coming battles on the fields of Intellect.

And perhaps the few exceptions that there are do more good than bad, in the sense that, apart from not being sufficient to save the rest of feminine ranks, their superior examples make only clearer the shocking and insane vacuity of their sisters.

To overcome the stupidity of woman!! . . . And how can that be done, when that stupidity is so great that it has even confessed itself to Man? And how can that be done, for to take away woman's insipid, vain, tedious, mawkish way of behaving would be to take away her life, everything?! . . .

How, if the very thing that we deride and pity in her makes her live happily, unconsciously, believing instead that each time she shows herself more stupid she has acquired another attraction, or even is raising herself higher, toward the level of

man? "To overcome the stupidity of woman"! . . . Splendid idea, but also an eternal utopia!

Anything, even the most unimaginable, may well come out of these utopian ideas; but the one result that will never come out of them is that woman will ever be able to overcome the essence that has formed her, which is exactly what is called "stupidity." And since woman has this defect from the very moment of procreation, how can we hope to change her mentality, one which she has received as a "gift" of nature? To overcome it would mean to annihilate woman, destroy her and then be able to re-create her, reshaping her in the light of our great and renewed aspirations which the small mind of a woman will never be able to understand—to be able to give her another brain, another heart, another and new breath of regenerating and purifying life. That way, perhaps, one could achieve the renovation proposed by Morosello, but I think that we will wait for it in vain.

The struggle is too unequal. In the narrow-minded mentality of a woman, Man will always find—apart from a handful of exceptions—a formidable and invincible enemy. Like Medusa. And woman doesn't know how to surrender except in the arms of a man, in a room full of shadows and perfume; not alongside him, fighting the bitterest battles of Genius and the Ideal. And in such conditions it is impossible that man can take on the difficult and fruitless task of changing woman's mentality; it is unacceptable that he should waste his energies for a cause that will almost always have a negative outcome.

Woman cannot, will not be able to, *completely* comprehend whatever is great and beautiful in the achievement of Man. She observes, listens, says "yes," pens an ephemeral verse, assumes a languid pose—and that's the end of it. Her petty brain is incapable of further sensations.

In short, we shall have to stay content with woman as she has been until now; with her love as it has been given to us until now, and not demand anything different. More should not be asked of her; for even if by chance something different did result, it would *almost* certainly be something false and evanescent. Perhaps it is destiny that it should be thus, that the woman dreamed of by Morosello should be, like all dreams however beautiful, destined never to disappear. The salvation of woman would be the ruin of Man, of his Genius.

Woman, together with the frivolous and stupid nature with which she is born, will die.

And any other notion is a utopian dream.

It's only right that the feminine problem should arouse such passion among men exasperated at having to think about it so much without resolving it; just as it's equally human that women, especially those who can kindly furnish some new insight to the curiosity of males, insight that could help them in their difficult task, should talk about themselves, about what concerns them or conceals them.

There is great interest, then, in the recent essays which *L'Italia futurista* has been publishing on this inexhaustible subject, taking as its starting point Marinetti's new book, *How to Seduce Women*.¹ The views of all these writers are interesting, even if contradictory, and the views of the women, uttered in defense of themselves or other women, are worthy of attention.

Giovanni Fiorentino, do you truly and seriously believe in the colossal, incurable, crude, petty, incontestable stupidity which, according to you, is the raw material with which the mind and body of woman are forged? Ah well, for me instead it's a question of maintaining equilibrium.

There are some women who are rendered delightful by a felicitous relationship and coherence of mind and body when they surrender themselves in a "room full of shadows and perfumes," but who then, at just the right moment, can be also lively, courageous, strong, VIRILE, INTELLIGENT, alongside their man.

Sensuality is a law for both sexes, and I don't know why a woman should be reproved for cultivating its intensity, when it is precisely men who drive her to it with an anxious desire that is itself a basis for life and makes all human beings, male or female, pass through the same gamut of sensations that are as ancient as the world—and as novel . . . as the world!

Because many women are stupid, vain, occupied with developing only a rather petty quotidian practice, that of pleasing men; because they're interested only in the glow of their personal appearance, and because an artistically conceived toilette makes them bustle about for hours and hours in front of you men, do you want to sweep away all sublime strong, serious, intuitive feminine generosity, in a rash and unilateral judgment?

Because some women, poor abnormal beings who are suffering even if they have the appearance of health, live an absurd life made up of monstrous cerebral lucubrations and almost abolish their sexuality for the sake of morbid, ridiculous, and strange intellectual sensations: because there are some women who know how to make a verse and not how to make a child, do you want to turn all the good feelings and healthy forces of women into equal drops of water in the same great lake of stupidity and scorn?

I repeat, on the contrary, that it's a question of maintaining equilibrium.
Equilibrium, harmony, integrity of heart, mind, brain, and body.
The monopolists of intelligence should intuit all that.

The theory that the best way to make the human race is with a mix of equal parts can also serve us now as we happily take up the contested right of judging our male companions.

But more just and self-aware, more perspicacious, we will divide contemporary masculinity into three types.

Men with the spinal medulla predominant, formidable but very vulgar lovers, obscene in word and comportment, crudely prostrated before the woman-sex.

These are the most hateful, certainly, and represent a hyphen between beast and man.

Others, in whose formation gray matter has been predominant, have vivid and noble flashes that light up the heightened splendors of their abstract feelings, but then are nearly all castrated in their virile possibilities, slow to understand the obedience due to physical laws from which one cannot escape without succumbing to the nullity of the ridiculous.

Others still have the VERY RARE gift of equally potent minds and bodies. They are true men who know they can give both the vertigo of thought and the shiver of seduction. We agree that these magnificent champions of the race are rare; but just because so few of them are found in this world, does that mean we should conclude that masculine humanity is composed only of vulgarians or eunuchs?

Come now! Does it take a woman to teach subtle and rigorous thought to the exclusivists of ratiocination?????

It is strange that young futurist minds, enthused with progress, straining for the swift crisis to come that will transform whatever it contains into something better, bursting with seeds of renovation and energy, should affirm that woman will remain behind and deny that she can hold herself up to the level of the times.

“Woman is, and will always remain stupid!”

This blunt affirmation, worthy of the days “when Bertha was spinning wool,” truly makes one smile today, and it hardly seems the pronouncement of men who boast of being at the avant-garde of intellectual reforms aimed at the best human future.

But women, smiling in a fecund silence, are continually sharpening their minds to contend with myopic males and—who knows?—perhaps even with . . . their monopoly of intelligence.

The mother, for every sensibility which has not been degraded by an amoral pathological condition, will always be an object of passionate living and beautiful love.

But mutual understanding between mothers and sons is extremely rare and has nothing to do with what is crudely called “filial affection.”

Whoever dispassionately analyzes his own instincts will grant that often it is the mother who is DEAD OR ABSENT who is loved more greatly than the mother who is still alive, active, present, who is not an abstract symbol but a reality of flesh and blood.

This demonstrates that the present generation is not lacking in filial feelings, but that it is the mothers of yesterday and today who don’t know how to avoid the conflicts that are generated by the fact of living together.

Perhaps women of the near future will know better how to be friends with their sons.

At present it is a widespread fact that mothers lose all ascendancy over their sons when they reach 14 or 15 years old. Incapable of following their sons’ studies or nascent ambitions because they are exhausted by the sacrifices and troubles they’ve endured for them, they have to call on tact and generosity in order to avoid feeling resentment at no longer being equal to the situation. Young men jealously conceal their most important affairs and intellectual aspirations from their mothers, because “it’s pointless trying to explain, SHE WOULDN’T UNDERSTAND.”

The young man dreams, creates, falls in love, and discovers new things all in secret, and the most precious and important dimension of youthful life transpires behind a stage-curtain of nonsense and misunderstanding, “because it’s pointless trying to explain, SHE WOULDN’T UNDERSTAND.”

Everything turns on that one point: not being capable of understanding. In our time, women of a truly maternal temperament don’t possess that degree of free personality which would render them conscious of a strong and objective self that exists INDEPENDENTLY of its association with others and is fated to experience the changing stages of life beginning and ending in itself. Women of a truly maternal temperament, whose epicenter is tied to the needs of the family and who altruistically live more for others than for themselves, never achieve those free forms of conscious, autonomous, and self-reflecting selfhood which alone are capable of knowing how to penetrate the world, UNDERSTANDING IT PERFECTLY.

Consequently, there is a fundamental, insuperable difference between the two

concepts “mother” and “free personality.” It is in the essence of the maternal spirit itself that, by its nature, the mother remains closed off from the world; the maternal spirit stands as a barrier constructed with the raw force of primitive instincts between her progeny and the world, limiting the child’s possibilities and vaguely preserving him in the face of anything alien to her own maternal spirit. She fears the world, rather than comprehending it with that force of her own free personality which carries within itself a clear, strong, and distinct vision of each thing, a vision that a mother must know how to transmit to the mind of her child, a gift as precious as that of life. If she could do that, nobody would dare say: Mother doesn’t understand.

Someone will object that if this feminine metamorphosis is really going to occur, then each child will no longer have a father and mother, the one to furnish a strong and virile education, the other that tenderness that never questions but only loves. The child will have TWO FATHERS and no mother.

It may well be. Certainly we are witnessing the disappearance of the type of mother who is worn out and run down by having lived for others, who never understands the road that has been chosen by her sons because her devoted goodness has been rendered mute within the silent depths of the house, instead of overflowing into the world. A great many ardent and beautiful sentiments will soon disappear, as surely as the ardor of the ecstatic monk or the fanaticism of the crusader has vanished.

Even ardors and instincts change. In the same way that nowadays we are more cerebral than instinctive, so we need mothers who will perhaps be less maternal but will more fully understand us. And because we are more intellectual and less sentimental, we suffer more from being misunderstood than from not being inundated with material attentions.

The one—inevitably, fatally—excludes the other.

Will women of the near future know how to disburden themselves of maternal mentality to become true friends, companions of their sons?

It is pointless to delude oneself that the gynaeceum still exists; it exists today only as a primitive remnant in the mind of man.

From this fact derive all the insuperable problems of our era, the problems that women of the near future are going to resolve—and in a manner that men will *not* like.

What is it that we are hesitating to declare openly? Is it that love is no longer the chief hinge on which a woman’s life turns, but that it has been replaced by a thousand elements that still sail beneath the flag of love and yet at bottom have nothing to do with that sublime sentiment, which in a short time will acquire a status as legendary as the religious visions and cataleptic dreams that once culminated in an apparition of the stigmata in the palms of the elect?

The women who are now working, studying, earning, and creating no longer know how to love with the mindset of women. They have learned to achieve a firm and clear vision of the world, on their own account, independently of men. Men can no longer give them anything except a few emotions of sensational adventure, or at most can help reestablish the physiological regularity of their nervous pulses.

To love means: to feel that one is nothing without the other. Women of the future will no longer know what it means to feel that one is nothing, whether alone or with others. With the impossibility of that feeling, they will have lost a great happiness; but in their nascent self-centeredness they will also never experience the maniacal desperation of suicide over an unhappy love affair.

The legal code, and still more that unwritten but pervasive social code, still doesn't acknowledge the profound transformations that are about to overturn social life. Faced with these worrisome phenomena, people have adopted two tactics that don't really resolve anything, but that help one to look forward calmly to the feminine evolution that is going to occur: I cite them both in the interest of chronicling our time.

One consists in the constantly repeated triumphant declaration that "all women are the same," a declaration made as soon as one sees a woman who is strong and emancipated and who also fulfills her duties as a wife and mother like others, finding therein a greater or lesser happiness like that of every other woman. The other consists in establishing the absurd dogma, or rather requiring, that the kind of women whom one now calls (with a smile) "emancipated" must, by virtue of her strong spirit, *a priori* make a definitive renunciation of her claims to love, legitimate or illegitimate. Because love is not and cannot be *the only object contained* within a psyche that is electric, complex, responsive to all the callings of modern simultaneous life, does it follow that we must abolish love altogether and concede intellectual emancipation only with the proviso of psychological solitude? . . .

Contemporary life still lacks the means by which these transformations in feminine instincts can be manifested; yet slowly but surely they are evolving toward a *superior type* (and with that claim I confirm that men are *superior*). Women are about to become men. And it is a fundamental evil in our age to continue to oppose this basic fact and its corollary, the creation of new possibilities and new forms of life for these new women who want their own air in which to breathe freely. Because by this point in time, the walls of the gynaeceum have already been blasted to bits.

MANIFESTO OF THE ITALIAN FUTURIST PARTY

F. T. MARINETTI

11 February 1918

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Manifesto
of the
Italian
Futurist
Party

I. The Futurist political party which we establish today wants a strong, free Italy, one no longer subservient to its great Past, to foreigners who are beloved too much, or priests who've been tolerated too long; an Italy no longer kept in custody, absolutely master of its own energies and looking forward toward its great future.

2. Italy, the only sovereign. Revolutionary nationalism for the freedom, the well-being, the physical and intellectual betterment, the strength, progress, grandeur, and pride of the entire Italian people.

3. Patriotic education of the proletariat. Campaign against illiteracy. Transportation. Construction of new roads and railroads. Secular elementary schools with obligatory attendance backed by penal sanctions. Abolition of many useless universities and the teaching of classical antiquity. Obligatory technical education in factories. Obligatory gymnastics, attendance enforced with penal sanctions. Sports and military education in the open air, schools of courage and Italianness.

4. The transformation of Parliament by means of a government that includes equal participation by owners of industry, farmers, engineers, and shopkeepers. The minimum age for elected officials will be reduced to twenty-two. Only a small number of lawyers (always opportunists) will be admitted, as also of professors (always backward looking). A Parliament wiped clean of dotards and scum. Abolition of the Senate.

If a rational and practical Parliament of this sort doesn't produce good results, we'll eliminate it altogether and have instead a technical government without parliament, a Government composed of twenty technicians elected by means of universal suffrage.

We will replace the Senate with an Assembly of Scrutiny composed of twenty young people under thirty years of age, elected by universal suffrage. Instead of a Parliament composed of incompetent orators and learned invalids, and *moderated* by a Senate of moribund fools, we shall have a government of twenty technicians *excited* by an assembly of young people under thirty.

5. Replace current rhetorical and passive anticlericalism with an anticlericalism of action, violent and resolute, in order to clear out the theocratic middle ages from

both Italy and Rome; that era will be allowed to choose an appropriate land where it can slowly die.

Our extremely intransigent and all-encompassing anticlericalism constitutes the base of our political program, admits no halfway measures or agreements, and firmly demands expulsion.

Our anticlericalism wants to liberate Italy from the church, priests, monks, nuns, Madonnas, wax candles, and church bells.

(Censorship)

The only religion: Italy of the future. For her we shall fight and perhaps die, without worrying over the forms of government which will necessarily follow the theocratic and religious middle ages in their fatal decline.

6. Abolition of marital authorization [by the church]. Easy divorce. A gradual devaluation of matrimony in favor of free love and making children wards of the State.

7. The army and navy must be maintained in readiness until the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Thereafter, men at arms should be reduced to a minimum, guided by a small corps of officers who can act rapidly. For example: 200,000 men with 60,000 officers, whose instruction can be divided into four courses each lasting a trimester per year. There should be military education and sports in schools. There should be preparation for a complete industrial mobilization (weapons and munitions) to be realized, in the event of war, contemporaneously with military mobilization. Everyone and everything ready, with the least expense, in the event of war or revolution.

Our war must be carried through to total victory, that is, to the dismemberment of the Austro-Hungarian Empire and the establishment of security in our natural borders on land and at sea, without which we shall never be able to have our hand free for the task of clearing out, cleansing, renewing, and aggrandizing Italy.

In art we must abolish commemorative patriotism, the mania for monuments, and all State interference in the arts.

8. We must prepare for the future socialization of land in a vast pool of state property to be established by means of the property of religious and charitable organizations, government properties, and the expropriation of all cultivated and uncultivated lands. There should be steep and progressive taxation on inheritances, and limitations on the number of successive heirs.

The fiscal system should be based on direct and progressive taxation with complete verification. The right to strike, freedom of assembly, and freedom of the press. Transformation and cleansing of the Police. Abolition of political police. Abolition of military intervention to restore public order.

Free justice and an elected judiciary. The minimum wage raised to a level commensurate with the necessities of life. A maximum legal working day of eight hours. Equal pay for equal work by men and women. Fair laws for the contract of labor whether individual or collective. Transformation of private charity into social assistance and welfare. Pensions for workers.

Expropriation of two thirds of all fortunes earned by furnishing war materials.

9. The constitution of an agricultural patrimony reserved for military combatants. A certain amount of the landed property of Italy should be purchased, with prices established by special criteria, and given to military combatants or their surviving families, with appropriate restrictions and reservations.

The entire nation should provide for the payment of the lands so acquired, through voluntary donations and taxes levied with no distinction made by social class, but according to a progressive scale that is based on the individual's financial holdings.

The payment for the necessary lands could be completed within a period of fifty years from dispossession, in such a way that the actual contribution of the Nation, whether through donations or taxes, would be minimal. All lands confiscated for nonpayment of taxes, if there are any, should be turned over to form part of the agrarian patrimony.

All manual laborers who have performed services in combat zones should be enrolled for care by the State in a "National Fund of Social Security and Health Services for Workers," with enrollment to begin on the first day of their effective service. The state should provide annual contributions throughout the duration of the war. The enrollment of military combatants in the "National Fund" will be automatic upon their joining the services, will be paid for by the state throughout the period of their military service, and will continue to produce a credit on their behalf for the rest of their lives.

The monetary awards conjoined to the bestowal of medals and decorations should be tripled. —The age limit in professional, public, and academic competitions for positions will be increased for veterans returning from combat zones by a period equivalent to the war's duration. —When veterans who have returned from combat zones obtain public employment, their time of military service and campaigns will be added to the term of their public employment for purposes of computing seniority and retirement pensions, and the State will provide, as is ap-

appropriate, for payments into the Retirement Fund for the period which they passed in military duties. — For a period of ten years following the war, provincial and local governments will have to hold job competitions that alternate between competitions open to all and competitions exclusively reserved for combat veterans and handicapped veterans who are nonetheless capable of performing the specified service.

10. Industrialization and modernization of dead cities that continue to live off the past. Devaluation of the dangerous and risky tourist industry.

Development of the merchant marine and river navigation sectors. Reclamation of lands infested with malaria and their drainage into newly created canals. All the strengths and riches of the country should be put to their best use. Emigration should be slowed. All waters and mines should be nationalized and utilized. Their exploitation should be given over to local governments. Industrial and agricultural cooperatives should be facilitated. Consumer protection.

11. Radical reform of the Bureaucracy which at this point has become an end in itself and a State within the State. To this end regional and local autonomy should be enhanced. There should be regional decentralization of administrative functions and their supervision. In order to make a streamlined and practical instrument out of each unit of governmental administration, the number of government clerical employees should be cut by two-thirds, the salaries of departmental chiefs should be doubled, and competitions for their positions should be made difficult, though not overly theoretical. Departmental chiefs should be given direct responsibility and the consequent obligation to simplify and streamline everything. Filthy seniority should be abolished in all government administration, in diplomatic careers, and in all branches of national life. A practical cast of mind and simplification of bureaucratic tasks should be rewarded. Devaluation of academic diplomas and the encouragement, with rewards, for commercial and industrial initiative. More important government positions should be subject to elections. Executive services should be organized more simply along industrial lines.

The Futurist political party which we establish today, and which we will organize more fully after the war, will be firmly distinguished from the Futurist artistic movement. The latter will continue its work of revitalizing and strengthening Italian creative genius. The Futurist artistic movement, the *avant-garde* of the Italian artistic mind, is always and necessarily in advance of the slower mind of the populace, and therefore it remains an *avant-garde* often misunderstood and often held back by the majority which cannot grasp its startling discoveries, the brutality of its polemical expression, or the fearless momentum of its intuitions.

The Futurist political party, instead, intuits the current needs and interprets exactly the consciousness of the entire race in its healthy revolutionary momentum. All Italians, men and women of whatever class or age, can adhere to the Futurist political party, even if they have no gifts at all for artistic or literary concepts.

This political program marks the birth of the Futurist political party invoked by all those Italians who are fighting today for a more youthful Italy that is freed from the burden of the past and foreigners.

We will sustain this political program with the kind of Futurist courage and violence which have characterized our movement in theaters and piazzas everywhere. And everyone knows, in Italy and abroad, what we mean by courage and violence.

THE VOTE FOR WOMEN FUTURLUCE

30 March 1919

Feminism, considered in itself, is certainly not a modern creation.

Recent research informs us that it has existed since prehistoric times; during the Middle Ages noblewomen obtained political rights that had been denied them in ancient times; subsequently, the salubrious French Revolution acknowledged equality between the sexes: and continuing up to modern times, woman has been able to place herself alongside man in almost all nations. The RECENT WAR: a hundredfold multiplication of forces; the recognition of new energies; a magnificent contest of courage and boldness, a revolution in all old pedantic, cultural systems HAS BEEN THE CHIEF DRIVING FORCE FOR FEMININE PROGRESS. The WEAKER SEX has learned to become STRONG.

And out of houses that were once reigned over by little doll-women have sprung new women (their hair drawn up at the nape of their necks and if necessary wearing trousers instead of skirts), women workers, women tram drivers, women street sweepers, women nurses, women peasants, women railway workers, women office workers . . .

Even Mazzini acknowledged the RIGHTS OF WOMEN: "Before the One God and Father there is neither MAN nor WOMAN, only the HUMAN BEING. Woman and man are the two notes without which HUMAN ACCORD would not be possible. You should have women be equal with you in civic and political life. The emancipation of woman will confirm a great religious truth, the basis of all others, THE UNITY OF THE HUMAN SPECIES; and it will add to the great search for truth and human

progress a sum of talents and energies which today are rendered sterile by that inferiority which cuts the soul in half.”¹

Some observers are predicting a bitter war between the sexes. To me it all seems nonsense; notwithstanding the burdens of public offices, both men and women will have to think about repopulating the world.

A fundamental objection ferociously maintained in order not to concede the vote to women:

How can women, whose minds are occupied with a thousand frivolities, worry themselves about political life and bear the heavy burden of annoyance which comes with it?

You poor martyrs! You’ll promptly realize that this objection doesn’t stand up; but, resolute in your noble aim, courageous to the utmost, you won’t retreat an inch. Still, you won’t have to furnish further proofs of valor in this instance, for you’ve already found a worthier way of showing off your sublime egoism, since it is you, yesterday’s deserters and defeatists, who are the fiercest obstacles to the woman of today. Not without reason, you are afraid that women will do better than you, will walk all over you in your cowardice.

You others, you black and red worms, more or less crawling, and more or less endowed with the cowardly cunning of the fox, you have looked carefully all around you in order to grasp the situation, and satisfied with your view, you now applaud and encourage the just desires of women.

And your prejudices and your religious theories! They grow silent in the face of political self-interest; and so for once you support the cause of justice, since you think that the vote which woman will end up securing may work out in your favor. But don’t trust too much in the old adage which says that dogs never bite one another, for this is not a time when a dress will prove useful to you (as it did when you were in hiding during the war). The self-aware women who are rising to political power are quite different from the ones who wore out their knees on the prayer benches in church, beating their chests and praying for the grace that would rain down from heaven. You should remember one thing: just as your anathemas failed to frighten those Italians who had awakened from their long torpor and who quarreled with you for the possession of Italy, so your visions of infernal punishment will fail now to frighten feminine minds that have been bathed by the new light!

Women's fashion has always been more or less Futurist. Fashion: the female equivalent of Futurism. Speed, novelty, courageous creation. Greenish yellow bile of professors against Futurism, old bags against style. For the moment, they can rejoice! Fashion is going through a period of stagnation and boredom. Mediocrity and wretchedness weave gray spider webs upon the colored flower beds of fashion and art.

Current styles (the blouse and chemise) try in vain to hide their basic poverty of conception under the false labels of distinction and sobriety. There is a complete lack of originality, a withering of fantasy. The imagination of the artist is relegated to details and nuances. The sickening litany of "saintly simplicity" "divine symmetry" and so-called good taste. Silly dreams of exhuming the past: "Let's revive the classics." Exhaustion, mollification, feeble-mindedness.

We Futurists intend to react against this state of things with extreme brutality. We don't need to start a revolution. It's enough to multiply a hundredfold the dynamic virtues of fashion, unleashing the bridles that hinder them from surging forth and leaping over the vertiginous jaws of the Absurd.

A. INGENUITY

One must absolutely claim the dictatorship of artistic ingenuity in female fashion against the parliamentary meddling of foolhardy speculation and routine. A great poet or painter must take over the dictatorship of all the great women's fashion houses. Fashion is an art, like architecture and music. A dress that is ingeniously conceived and well executed has the same value as a fresco by Michelangelo or a Madonna by Titian.

B. DARING

The Futurist woman must have the same courage in donning the new styles of clothing as we did in declaiming our words-in-freedom against the asinine rebelliousness of Italian and foreign audiences. *Women's fashion can never be extravagant enough.* And here too we will begin by *abolishing symmetry*. We will fashion zigzag décolletés, sleeves that differ from one another, shoes of varying shapes, colors, and heights. We will create illusionistic, sarcastic, sonorous, loud, deadly, and explosive attire: gowns that trigger surprises and transformations, outfitted with springs, stingers, camera lenses, electric currents, reflectors, perfumed sprays, fireworks, chemical preparations, and thousands of gadgets fit to play the most wicked tricks

and disconcerting pranks on maladroit suitors and sentimental fools. *In a woman we can idealize the most fascinating conquests of modern life.* And so we will have the machine-gun woman, the thanks-de-Somme woman [*sic*], the radio-telegraph antenna woman, the airplane woman, the submarine woman, the motorboat woman. We will transform the elegant lady into a real, living three-dimensional complex. There is no need to fear that in so doing the female silhouette will lose its capricious and provocative grace. The new forms will not hide but accentuate, develop, and exaggerate the gulfs and promontories of the female peninsula. Art exaggeration. Upon the feminine profile we will graft the most aggressive lines and garish colors of our Futurist pictures. We will exalt the female flesh in a frenzy of spirals and triangles. We will succeed in sculpting the astral body of woman with the chisel of an exasperated geometry!

C. ECONOMY

The new fashions will be affordable for all beautiful women, who are legion in Italy. The relative cost of precious material makes a garb expensive, not the form or color, which we will offer, free, to all Italians. After three years of war and shortages of raw material, it is ridiculous to continue manufacturing leather shoes and silk gowns. *The reign of silk in the history of female fashion must come to an end,* just as the reign of marble is now finished in architectural constructions. One hundred new revolutionary materials will riot in the piazza, demanding to be admitted into the making of womanly clothes. We fling open wide the doors of the fashion ateliers to paper, cardboard, glass, tinfoil, aluminum, ceramic, rubber, fish skin, burlap, oakum, hemp, gas, growing plants, and living animals.

Every woman will be a walking synthesis of the universe.

You have the high honor of being loved by us, sapper-soldiers at the avant-garde in an army of lightning.

BEYOND COMMUNISM F. T. MARINETTI

August 1920

We Italian Futurists have torn apart all ideologies and everywhere imposed our new conception of life, our formulas for spiritual hygiene, our aesthetic and social dynamism, the sincere expression of our temperaments as creative and revolutionary Italians.

After having struggled for ten years to rejuvenate Italy, after having dismantled the ultrapasséist Austro-Hungarian Empire at Vittorio Veneto,¹ we were jailed and

charged with criminal assault against the security of the state;² in reality, we were guilty of making Italian Futurism.

We are more audacious than ever, tireless and rich in ideas. We have been prodigal of ideas and will continue to be so. We are therefore in no mood to take directions from anyone, nor, as creative Italians, to plagiarize from the Russian Lenin, disciple of the German Marx.

Humanity is marching toward anarchic individualism, the dream and vocation of every strong intellect. Communism, on the other hand, is an old mediocritist formula which war-weariness and fear have refurbished and transmuted into an intellectual fashion.

Communism is an exasperation of the bureaucratic cancer that has always wasted humanity. A German cancer, a product of the characteristic German preparationism. Every pedantic preparation is antihuman and runs things down. History, life, and the earth belong to the improvisers. We hate military barracks as much as we hate Communist barracks. The anarchist genius derides and smashes the Communist prison.

For us, the fatherland represents the greatest expansion of individual generosity, overflowing in every direction to all similar human beings who sympathize or are sympathetic. It represents the broadest concrete solidarity of intellectual, agricultural, fluvial, commercial, and industrial interests tied together by a single geographical configuration, by the same mixture of climates and the same coloring of horizons.

In its circular expansion, the heart of man bursts the little suffocating family circle and finally reaches the extreme limits of the fatherland, where it feels the heartbeats of its fellow nationals as if they were the outermost nerves of its body. The idea of the fatherland cancels the idea of the family. The idea of the fatherland is generous, heroic, dynamic, Futurist, while the idea of the family is stingy, fearful, static, conservative, passéist. For the first time a strong idea of *patria* springs today from our Futurist conception. Up to now it has been a confused mish-mash of small-townishness, Greco-Roman rhetoric, commemorative grandiloquence, unconscious heroic instinct, praise for dead Heroes, distrust of the living, and fear of war.

But Futurist patriotism is an eager passion for the becoming-progress-revolution of the race.

As the greatest affective force of the individual, Futurist patriotism, while remaining disinterested, becomes the atmosphere most conducive to the continuation and development of the race.

The affective circle of our Italian heart enlarges, embraces the fatherland, which

is to say, the greatest maneuverable mass of ideals, interests, and private and common needs that are linked together without conflict.

The fatherland is the greatest extension of the individual, or better: the largest individual capable of living at length, of directing, mastering, and defending every part of its body.

The fatherland is the psychic and geographical awareness of the effort for individual betterment.

The idea of the fatherland cannot be abolished except by taking refuge in a form of egotistical absenteeism. For example, to say: I'm not Italian, I'm a citizen of the world, is equal to saying: Damn Italy, Europe, Humanity, I'll think of myself.

The concept of the fatherland is as indestructible as the concept of the party.

The fatherland is nothing but a vast party.

To deny the fatherland is the same as to isolate, castrate, shrink, denigrate, or kill yourself.

The workers who today are marching and waving red banners demonstrate after four years of victorious war an obscure need of their own to wage a little heroic and glorious war.

It's absurd to sabotage our victory with the cry "Long live Lenin, down with the war," because Lenin, after having pushed the Russians into renouncing one war, forced another war on them against Kolchak, Denikin, and the Poles.³

Russian Bolshevism thereby involuntarily creates Russian patriotism, which is born of the need for a defensive war.

You cannot escape these two idea-feelings: *patriotism*, or the active development of the individual and race, and *heroism*, or the synthetic need to transcend human forces, the ascensional potential of the race.

All those who are tired of the stormy-dynamic variety of life dream of the fixed, restful uniformity promised by Communism. They want life without surprises, the earth as smooth as a billiard ball.

But the pressures of space have not yet leveled the mountains of the earth, and the life that is Art is made up (like every work of art) of points and contrasts.

Human progress, whose essence is increasing velocities, like every velocity, acknowledges obstacles to be overcome, that is, revolutionary wars.

The life of insects demonstrates that everything comes down to reproduction at any cost and to purposeless destruction.

Humanity vainly dreams of escaping these two laws that alternately excite and exhaust it. Humanity dreams of stabilizing peace by means of a single type of world man, who should then be immediately castrated lest his aggressive virility declare new wars.

A single human type should live on a perfectly smooth earth. Every mountain defies every Napoleon and Lenin. Every leaf curses the wind's warlike will.

The irreducible variety of human needs and means of transportation is an offense against the communist dream. It's tragically anticommunist, in fact, to have to travel in a tram, then a train, then a boat on a lake, then again in a train, and finally in a boat in order to reach a transatlantic steamer at sea which, if it were a small sailboat, wouldn't even take you to America.

After the most tumultuous and many-sided of wars, it's only logical that humanity should be drawn out of its old communist ideal of definitive peace.

Communism may be realized in cemeteries. But, considering that many people are buried alive, that a man's total death cannot be guaranteed, that sensibilities survive to die later, cemeteries doubtless contain furious gatherings, rebels in jail, and ambitions that want to arise. There will be many attempts at Communism, counterrevolutions that wage war and revolutions that defend themselves with war.

Relative peace can be nothing but the exhaustion of the final war or the final revolution. Perhaps absolute peace will reign when the human race disappears. If I were a Communist, I would be worrying about the coming war between pederasts and lesbians, who will then unite against normal men.

I would begin propagandizing against the coming interplanetary war.

The more leveling revolutionaries in Russia defend their power against the attacks of less leveling revolutionaries who would like to level a bit less or even introduce fresh inequality.

Above all, Bolshevism was a violent, vindictive antidote to czarism.

Now it is belligerently defended by those social doctors who are changing themselves into masters of a sick people. . . .

In certain countries there isn't enough bread to go around for everyone; in others there isn't enough affluence.

Everywhere one hears the cry: everybody will have enough bread, everybody will be rich.

We would like to cry: everybody will be healthy, strong, and gifted!

A communist takeover in Italy will immediately provoke an anti-egalitarian counterrevolution, or will itself give birth to new inequality.

We waste our time glorifying Russian pseudo-communism as a definitive historical outcome or an earthly paradise.

We must stretch our intellects further, into the beyond.

In every country, particularly in Italy, the distinction between proletariat and bourgeoisie is false. There is no such thing as an entirely soiled and moribund bourgeoisie, nor an entirely healthy and vigorous proletariat. Rich and poor exist; poor from bad luck, illness, incapacity, honesty; rich from fraud, astuteness, avarice, and ability; exploiters and exploited; stupid and intelligent; false and insincere; so-

called rich bourgeois who work much more than the workers; workers who work as little as possible, hoping to do absolutely nothing; slow and fast; conquerors and conquered.

“Soiled and moribund bourgeoisie” is an absurd description of that great mass of young, intelligent, and hard-working lower-middle-class people; students clerks farmers, businessmen industrialists, engineers, notaries, lawyers, etc., all sons of the people, all absorbed in working furiously to do better than their fathers.

All of them fought the war as lieutenants and captains, and, tired as they are today, they are ready to take up their lives again with heroism.⁴

They are not intellectuals, but workers endowed with intelligence, foresight, the spirit of sacrifice and willpower. They constitute the better part of our race. The war was fought by these energetic young men always at the head of the masses of infantry composed of workers and peasants.

The peasants and workers who fought in the war, not having acquired any national awareness, could never have won without the example and intelligence of those petits bourgeois [*piccoli borghesi*], the heroic lieutenants. It is moreover unquestionable that attempts at Communism are and will always be led by the young, willful, and ambitious lower middle class.

On the other hand it is absurd to characterize all workers with the word *proletariat*, promising equal glory and dictatorship to the peasant infantry who are now resuming their work on the land without tiredness, and to the factory workers who claim to be exhausted.

We must destroy passéism, cowardice, quietism, conservative traditionalism, materialist egotism, misoneim,⁵ the fear of responsibility, and plagiarizing provincialism.

It is provincial plagiarism to cry: *Long live Lenin; down with Italy; long live the Russian Revolution!* Cry instead: *Long Live the Italy of Tomorrow! Long Live the Italian Revolution! Long Live Italian Futurism!*

The Russian Revolution has its *raison d'être* in Russia and can be judged only by the Russians. It cannot be imported into Italy.

Innumerable differences separate the Russian from the Italian people, beyond the typical one separating a conquered from a conquering people.

Their needs are different and opposite.

A defeated people feels its patriotism dying within it, turns itself inside out with a revolution, or copies the revolution of a neighboring people. A victorious people like ours wants to make its own revolution, just as the pilot of an airplane throws ballast overboard in order to climb higher.

Let's not forget that the Italian people, especially bristling with sharp individualism, is the most anti-Communist and dreams of individualist anarchy.

Anti-Semitism does not exist in Italy. Therefore we have no Jews to redeem, esteem, or follow.

The Italian people can be compared to an excellent wrestler who wants to wrestle but lacks special training and the means to train. Circumstances force him to win or to disappear. The Italian people has gloriously won. But the effort has been too much for its muscles, so that now, panting, exhausted, almost unable to enjoy its great victory, it curses us, its trainers, and opens its arms to those who once counseled it not to wrestle at all.

Between these partisans of quiet who want to keep our people down and we who want to cure and raise it up again at any cost, a struggle has broken out that disgracefully continues over the broken body of the wrestler himself.

The huge mess of difficulties, stumbling blocks, sufferings that every war always leaves behind, the exasperation of all demobilized men drowning in the immense bog of bureaucracy, the belated energetic taxation of war profits, all this is crowned by the still-unsolved Adriatic question, the still-unsettled Brenner, etc., etc.⁶

We were governed by an incurable neutralist, who did everything he could to diminish the moral force of our victory.⁷

This government favored the socialists who, waving the Communist banner of a defeated people like the Russians, took control in the elections of the tired and discontented but victorious Italians.

It is not a matter of a struggle between bourgeoisie and proletariat, but a struggle between those who, like us, have a right to make the Italian revolution and those who should submit to its conception and realization.

I know the Russian people. Six months before the universal conflagration I was invited by the Society for Great Lectures to give eight lectures in Moscow and St. Petersburg on Futurism.⁸ The triumphant ideological repercussion of those lectures and my personal success as a Futurist orator in Russia have remained legendary. I bring this up so that the complete objective fairness of my judgment of the Russian Futurists will be plain. I am delighted to learn that Russian Futurists are all Bolsheviks and that for a while Futurist art was the official Russian art.⁹ On May Day of last year the Russian cities were decorated by Futurist painters.

Lenin's trains were decorated on the outside with colored dynamic forms very like those of Boccioni, Balla, and Russolo. This does honor to Lenin and cheers us as much as one of our own victories. All the Futurisms of the world are the children of Italian Futurism, created by us in Milan twelve years ago. All Futurist movements are nevertheless autonomous. Every people has had, or still has, its passéism to overthrow. We are not Bolsheviks because we have our own revolution to make.

We are unable to accept the wiles of the socialist leaders.

1. They declare that it was necessary to avoid the war at all costs and yet admit in whispers that the expansion of revolutionary socialism has been a consequence of the war.
2. They declare that German tyranny was wholly preferable to the shedding of heroic blood.
3. They glorify the draft-evader and disdain the hero as a sanguinary brigand.
4. They consider the deserter a worthy representative of the people.
5. They charge that the revolutionary interventions are responsible for a "pointless slaughter" and denounce them for that.
6. They pour scorn on the officers in a country where militarism doesn't exist!
7. They urge the masses to the brink of revolution and then stop them, saying that the banquet is so thin that it's not worth dividing it up.
8. They neglect the struggle against the past and align themselves with the priests in order to fight against us alone, the revolutionary interventionists.
9. They undervalue our victory, forgetting that it has morally uplifted everyone, rich and poor.

We ask the socialist leaders:

1. Are you ready, as we are, to liberate Italy from the papacy?
2. To sell the artistic heritage in order to enrich all the poorer classes and especially the proletariat of artists?
3. To abolish courts, police, prosecutors, and jails?

If you do not have these three revolutionary aims, then you are archaeological clerical undercover conservatives beneath your varnish of red communism.

We want to free Italy from the papacy, the monarchy, the Senate, marriage, Parliament. We want a technical government without Parliament, spurred on by a council or group of excitors, a body composed of very young men. We want to abolish standing armies, courts, police, and prisons, so that our race of gifted men may be able to develop the greatest number of extremely free, strong, hard-working, innovating swift men.

All that, in the great affectionate solidarity of our race on our peninsula, within the firm circle of boundaries conquered and deserved by our absolutely great typical victory.

We are not only more revolutionary than you, Socialist officials, but we are beyond your revolution.

To your immense system of leveled and intercommunicating stomachs, to your

tedious national refectory to be run with tickets, we oppose our marvelous anarchic paradise of absolute freedom art talent progress heroism fantasy enthusiasm, gaiety, variety, novelty, speed, record-setting.

It'll be necessary to let you first try another experiment, one which I call acephalism.

For everyone to be so mentally deficient that nobody suffers nor desires is in reality an idea still more egalitarian and pacifying than the one that you cry out: *Everyone should work a little so that all can eat a little.*

Perhaps you should attempt the destruction of human intelligence, since human intelligence is the first source of inequity and oppression. Let us hope that your attempt at communism will, at the least, result in your destroying the new inequalities produced by the exploitation of the war and by the hereditary principle which we oppose as much as you do.

We dream of an Italy that will be Futurist, free, manly, flexible, dynamic, inebriated with progress, ready for anything, to improvise wars or revolutions without standing armies, but with the maximum quantity of those whom we call heroic citizens.

We are preparing such citizens with an assiduous propaganda of intellectual freedom, sport, art, heroism, and Futurist originality.

In the name of this Futurist originality we reject the communist conception which cooks up so many universal recipes from the words: democracy, freedom, justice, feminism, and so on.¹⁰

Every country has its own special conception of democracy. In a country full of individuals and talents such as Italy, democracy signifies quality and not quantity.

Our optimism is great.

The Italian blood shed at Tripoli was better than that shed at Abba Garima.¹¹ That shed on the Carso, better still; that shed on the Piave and Vittorio Veneto, better still.

By means of the schools of physical courage that we propose, we want to increase still more the vigor of Italian blood, predisposing it for every audacity and ever greater creative artistic capacity, to invent and enjoy spiritually.

One must cure all cowardice and all languor and develop the spiritual elegance of the race, so that the best thing to be found in a tumultuous crowd is the sum of its spiritual elegance: heroic, and generous.

We must increase human capacity to live the ideal life of lines, forms, colors, rhythms, sounds, and noises combined by genius.

If they could relieve the hunger of every stomach, there would always be some who will know how to procure more refined, more distinguished dinners.

One must stimulate spiritual hunger and satiate it with a great joyous, astonishing art.

Art is revolution, improvisation, impetus, enthusiasm, record-setting, elasticity, elegance, generosity, overflowing of goodness, drowning in the Absolute, struggle against every hindrance, an aerial dance on the burning summits of passion, destruction of ruins in the face of holy speed, breaches to be opened, hunger and thirst for the sky . . . joyous airplanes gluttonous for infinity . . .

There are shadowy, flaccid human masses, blind and without light or hope or willpower.

We will tow them after us.

There are souls who struggle without generosity to win a pedestal, a halo, or a position.

These base souls we will convert to a higher spiritual elegance.

Everyone must be given the will to think, create, awaken, renew, and to destroy in themselves the will to submit, conserve, copy.

While the last religions are in their death throes, Art should be the ideal nutriment that will console and reanimate the most restless races, unsatisfied and deluded by the successive collapse of so many unsatisfying ideal banquets.

Only the inebriating alcohol of art can finally take the place of and eliminate the tiresome, vulgar, and sanguinary alcohol of the proletariat's Sunday taverns.

Thus, in my tragicomedy *Re Baldoria* [*King Hoot*],¹² the artistic innovative dynamism of the Poet-Idiot ridiculed by the mob fuses with the insurrectional dynamism of the libertarian Famone [Big Hunger], to propose to humanity the only solution of the universal problem: to put Art and the Artists in power.

Yes! The artists in power! The vast proletariat of gifted men will govern.

The most sacrificed, the worthiest of the proletariat. Everyone is tired and disillusioned. The artist does not give in. Soon his genius will explode immense roses of exhilarating artistic power over Italy and the world, purifying and pacifying them.

The proletariat of gifted men in power will create the theater free to all and the great Futurist Aero-Theater. Music will reign over the world. Every city square will have its great instrumental and vocal orchestra. So there will be, everywhere, fountains of harmony streaming day and night from musical genius and blooming into the sky, to color, refine, reinvigorate, and refresh the dark, hard, banal, convulsive rhythm of daily life. Instead of nocturnal work, we will have nocturnal art. Squads of musicians will alternate, to multiply a hundredfold the splendor of the days and the suavity of the nights.

The proletariat of gifted men alone will be able to undertake the wise, gradual,

worldwide sale of our artistic heritage, according to a law conceived by us nine years ago. This spiritual wheat and coal will infuse the crudest peoples of the world with admiration for us.

Sold to the world, our museums will become a dynamic overseas advertisement for Italian genius.

The proletariat of gifted men, collaborating in the growth of mechanized industrialism, will arrive at the maximum of salary and that minimum of manual labor which, without lessening production, will be able to give every intelligent person the freedom to think, create, and enjoy the arts.

In every city there will be built a Palace or House of Genius for *Free Exhibitions of the Creative Intellect*.

1. For a month a work of painting, sculpture, any plastic art, architectural drawing, machine designs, or inventor's plans will be shown.
2. A musical work, large or small, orchestral or pianistic or whatever, will be played.
3. Poems, prose works, scientific writings, of every kind, form, or length, will be read, expounded, declaimed.
4. No jury trial or admission fee will be required for the reading or display of works of any kind or apparent value, no matter how superficially absurd, cretinous, insane, or immoral they seem to be.

The Futurist revolution that will bring artists to power promises no earthly paradises. It will certainly be unable to suppress the human torment that is the ascensional power of the race. The artists, tireless airmen of this feverish travail, will succeed in reducing suffering.

They will solve the problem of well-being in the only way it can be solved: spiritually.

Art must be an alcohol, not a balm. Not an alcohol that gives forgetfulness, but an alcohol of exalting optimism to deify the young, to multiply maturity a hundred-fold, and to refresh old age.

This intellectual art-alcohol must reach everyone. Thus will we multiply the artist-creators. We will have a race almost entirely composed of artists. In Italy we will have a million intuitive diviners, eager to solve the problem of collective human happiness. Such a formidable assault can only prove victorious. We will solve the social problem artistically.

Meanwhile we propose that our people's faculty of dreaming be magnified on a gigantic scale and that it be educated in a completely practical direction.

The satisfaction of any need is pleasure. Every pleasure has a limit.

Dreams begin at the limits of pleasure. We must regulate the dream and prevent it from becoming nostalgia for the infinite or hatred for the finite. The dream should envelop, bathe, perfect, and idealize pleasure.

Every brain should have its own palette and its musical instrument for coloring and lyrically accompanying every small act of life, even the humblest.

The common life is too heavy, austere, monotonous, materialistic, badly ventilated, and, if not strangled, at least clogged up.

As we await the grandiose realization of our Futurist Aero-Theater, we propose a vast program of daily free concerts in every neighborhood of the city, movie theaters, reading rooms, absolutely free books and magazines. We will develop the spiritual life of the people and multiply its faculty of dreams a hundredfold.

Thanks to us, the time will come when life will no longer be just a matter of bread and labor, nor idleness either, but when life will be a *life-work of art*.

Every man will live his best possible novel. The most gifted spirits will live their best possible poem. There will be no contests of rapacity or prestige. Men will compete in lyric inspiration, originality, musical elegance, surprise, gaiety, spiritual elasticity.

We will have no earthly paradise, but the economic inferno will be lightened and pacified by innumerable festivals of Art.

I have synthesized in this manifesto several ideas already developed in my work *Futurist Democracy*, published a year ago, and in the lecture on "Beauty and the Necessity of Violence!" which I gave on 26 June 1910 at the Labor Exchange in Naples, subsequently published in the Neapolitan journal *Propaganda* and in the journal *Internazionale* in Parma.¹³ I feel it imperative that these ideas now explode, decisively and beneficially.

TACTILISM F. T. MARINETTI

16 January 1921

Period. And once again from the top.

Futurism, launched by us in 1909 in Milan, has given the world a hatred of Museums, Academies, and Sentimentalism; it has given us Art-action, the defense of youth against senility, the glorification of illogical and insane innovative genius, the artistic sensibility of machinism, speed, the Variety Theater, and the simultaneous interpenetrations of modern life, words-in-freedom, plastic dynamism,

noise-tuners, and the synthetic theater. Today, Futurism is redoubling its creative efforts.

Last summer, at Antignano, where the Amerigo Vespucci Road (named after the discoverer of America) curves around as it follows the seacoast,¹ I discovered Tactilism. Red banners were snapping over factories seized by workers.²

I was naked in the silky water that was being shredded by rocks, by foaming scissors knives razors, among beds of iodine-soaked algae. I was naked in a sea of flexible steel that breathed with virile, fecund breath. I was drinking from a chalice of the sea that was full to the brim with genius. The sun, with its long searing flames, was vulcanizing my body and welding the keel of my forehead, rich in sails.

A peasant girl, who smelt of salt and warm stone, smiled as she looked at my first tactile table. "You're having fun making little boats!"

I answered her, "Yes, I'm launching something that will carry the human spirit to unknown shores."

Here are my swimmer's meditations.

The cruder and simpler sorts of men have left the Great War with no concern beyond that of acquiring greater material well-being.

A minority, composed of artists and thinkers, more responsive and refined, has instead shown symptoms of a deep and mysterious malaise that is probably a consequence of the great, tragic effort which the war imposed on humanity.

The symptoms of this malaise are a sad listlessness, an excessively feminine neurasthenia, hopeless pessimism, a feverish indecision afflicting instincts that have seemingly been lost, and an absolute lack of will.

The cruder and simpler majority is rushing toward a revolutionary conquest of the communist paradise and is launching its final assault against the problem of human felicity, armed with the conviction that it can be resolved by satisfying all material needs and desires.

The intellectual minority evinces ironic contempt for this troubled attempt. No longer taking pleasure in the bygone joys of Religion, Art, and Love, which used to be both their refuge and their privilege, they have brought a lawsuit against Life, which they also no longer know how to enjoy, and are abandoning themselves to rarefied pessimism, sexual inversion, and the artificial paradises of cocaine, opium, prostitutes, etc.

Both majority and minority denounce Progress, Civilization, the mechanical Forces of Speed of Comfort of Hygiene—in short, Futurism, seen as responsible for the misadventures of the past, present, and future.

Almost everyone is urging a return to the primitive, contemplative, slow, solitary life, far away from the abhorrent city.

As for us Futurists, we are courageously facing the agonizing drama of the post-

war period, and we are in favor of all the revolutionary assault that the majority is attempting. But to the minority of artists and thinkers, we cry out loud:

“Life is always right! The artificial paradises with which you hope to assassinate it are worthless. Stop dreaming of an absurd return to primitive life. Stop condemning the superior forces of Society and the marvelous forces of speed. Instead you should cure the postwar sickness, giving humanity new and nourishing joys. And instead of destroying the urban agglomerations you should try to improve them. Accelerate communications and the fusion of human beings. Destroy the distances and barriers that keep them apart, divided in friendship and love. Give total beauty and plenitude to those two essential manifestations of life: Love and Friendship.”

In the course of making my attentive and antitraditional observations of all the erotic and sentimental phenomena that unite the two sexes, and of the no less complex phenomena of friendship, I’ve come to understand that human beings speak with their mouths and their eyes, yet never achieve true sincerity because of the insensibility of the skin, which is still a mediocre communicator of thought.

While the eyes and voices communicate their essences, the tactile parts of two individuals hardly communicate anything in their bumping, intertwining, and rubbing.

Whence the necessity of transforming the handshake, the kiss, and copulation into continuous transmissions of thought.

I began my own tactile education by submitting my sense of touch to intensive therapy, localizing the confused phenomena of will and thought on the different parts of my body, and especially on the palms of my hands. This education was slow, but also easy, and all healthy bodies can use this education to get precise and surprising results.

On the other hand, diseased sensibilities, which derive their excitability and their apparent perfection from their bodies’ very weakness, achieve great tactile facility less easily, more haphazardly and unreliably.

I have created an initial educational scale of touch, which at the same time is a scale of tactile values for Tactilism, or the Art of Touch.

First scale, plan with four categories of different touches

First category: certain, abstract, cold touch.

Sandpaper,
Emery paper.

Second category: cool, persuasive, reasoning touch.

Smooth silk,
Shot silk.

Third category: exciting, lukewarm, nostalgic.

Velvet,
Wool from the Pyrenees,
Plain wool,
Silk-wool crepe.

Fourth category: almost irritating, warm, willful.

Grainy silk,
Plaited silk,
Spongy material.

Second scale, of volumes

Fifth category: soft, warm, human.

Chamois leather,
Skin of horse or dog,
Human hair and skin,
Marabou.

Sixth category: warm, sensual, witty, affectionate.

This category has two branches:

| | |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Rough iron, | <i>Downs</i> |
| Light broom bristles, | The down of the flesh |
| Sponge, | or of a peach, |
| Wire bristles. | Bird down. |

By means of the this distinction in tactile values, I have created:

1. Simple tactile tables

which I shall present to the public in *contactilations* or lectures on the Art of Touch.

I have arranged the various tactile values previously catalogued in harmonic and antithetical combinations.

2. Abstract or suggestive tactile tables (Hand travels)

These tactile tables have some arrangements of tactile values that permit hands to wander over them, following colored traces and thereby realizing a succession of suggestive sensations whose rhythm, by turns languid, cadenced, or chaotic, is regulated by precise rules.

One of these abstract tactile tables has been created by me and bears the title: *Paris-Soudan*. In its *Sudan* part this table contains tactile values that are crude, greasy, rough, sharp, burning (spongy material, sandpaper, wool, pig's bristle, and wire bristle). In the *Sea* part, the table contains tactile values that are slippery, metallic, cool (different grades of emery paper). In the *Paris* part, the table contains tactile values that are soft, very delicate, caressable, warm and cool at the same time (silk, velvet, and large and small feathers).

3. Tactile tables for different sexes

In these tactile tables, the arrangement of the tactile values permits the hand of a woman and a man, acting together, to take a tactile journey and to evaluate together.

These tactile tables are extremely varied, and the pleasure they furnish is unexpectedly enhanced as the two rival sensibilities stimulate one another, the two forcing each other to feel more perceptively and to explain better their competing sensations.³

These tactile tables are destined to serve as a replacement for that degrading game, chess.

4. Tactile pillows and cushions

5. Tactile couches

6. Tactile beds

7. Tactile shirts and clothes

8. Tactile rooms

In these tactile rooms we will have floors and walls made out of huge tactile tables. Tactile values of mirrors, running water, stones, metals, brushes, lightly electricized threads, marbles, velvets, carpets that will give various pleasures to the naked feet of male and female dancers.

9. Tactile roads

10. Tactile theaters

We will have theaters especially prepared for Tactilism. The seated audience will rest their hands on long tactile ribbons that will unwind in front of them, producing different tactile sensations with different rhythms. These tactile ribbons will also be arranged on little spools, with musical and lighting accompaniments.

11. Tactile tables for free-wordist improvisations

The tactilist will express out loud the various tactile sensations that he will experience during his hand travels. His improvisation will be free-wordist, freed from any syntax, prosody, or rhythm, an essential and synthetic improvisation that will be as inhuman as possible.

The tactilist improviser can elect to have his eyes closed, but it would be better for the performance to unfold in the beam of a stage light. Newer initiates who haven't yet educated their tactile sensibility can have their eyes closed.

Experienced tactilists, instead, will find a full stage light preferable, since darkness has the inconvenient effect of concentrating attention on something too abstract.

1. to wear gloves for many days, during which time the brain will force the condensation of a desire for different tactile sensations into your hands;
2. to swim underwater in the sea, trying to distinguish interwoven currents and different temperatures tactilistically;
3. every night, in complete darkness, to recognize and enumerate every object in your bedroom. This is exactly the exercise that I took up in the subterranean darkness of a dugout amid the trenches of Gorizia in 1917,⁴ when I made my first tactile experiments.

I have never had the least pretense to having discovered tactile sensibility, something which was already manifested in a highly talented form in Rachilde's *Jongleuse* and *Les Hors-nature*.⁵ Other writers and artists have had presentiments of Tactilism. Indeed, for a long time there has been a sense of touch in the plastic arts. My great friend Boccioni, the Futurist painter and sculptor, already in 1911 was feeling tactilistically when he created his plastic ensemble *Fusion of a Head and a Window*,⁶ with materials entirely contrary to each other in weight and tactile value: iron, porcelain, clay, and a woman's hair.

But Tactilism, which I have created, is clearly distinct from the plastic arts. It has nothing in common with painting or sculpture, and nothing to gain or to lose in connection with them.

As much as possible one must avoid variety of colors in the tactile tables, which would lend itself to plastic impressions. Painters and sculptors, who naturally tend to subordinate tactile values to visual values, would have trouble creating significant tactile tables. Tactilism, I think, is best practiced by young poets, pianists, stenographers, and all erotic, refined, and powerful temperaments.

Tactilism, nevertheless, must avoid not only collaboration with the plastic arts, but also morbid erotomania. Its purpose must be, simply, to achieve tactile harmonies and to contribute indirectly toward the perfection of spiritual communication between human beings, through the epidermis. The distinction between the five senses is arbitrary; many other senses will soon be discovered and catalogued. Tactilism will promote these discoveries.

THE THEATER OF SURPRISE

(SYNTHETIC THEATER BODY-MADNESS WORDS-IN-FREEDOM ONSTAGE

DYNAMIC AND SYNOPTIC DECLAMATION

THEATER-NEWSPAPER THEATER-GALLERY OF PAINTINGS

IMPROVISED DISCUSSIONS OF MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS, ETC.)

F. T. MARINETTI, FRANCESCO CANGIULLO

11 October 1921

We have praised and renewed the *Variety Theater*. With *Synthetic Theater* we have destroyed all concern with technique, verisimilitude, logical continuity, and dramatic build-up.¹

In Synthetic Theater we have created utterly new mixtures of the serious and the comic, real and unreal characters, interpenetrations and simultaneities of time and space, the drama of objects and dissonances, images onstage, shopwindows of ideas and gestures. If today there exists a young Italian theater with grotesque seriocomic mixtures, unreal characters in real environments, simultaneities and interpenetrations of space and time, then it is due to our *Synthetic Theater*.

Today we are demanding that theater make another leap forward. Our *Theater of Surprise* proposes to exhilarate through surprise, using all possible means, facts ideas contrasts never before brought onstage by us, funny hotchpotches never before exploited by us and capable of humorously shaking up human sensibility.

We have more than once declared that the essential element of art is surprise, that the work of art is autonomous, resembling nothing but itself, and hence seeming to be a prodigy. In fact, when the *Primavera* by Botticelli made its first appearance it, like many other masterpieces, had its essential value in its surprising originality, quite apart from its various values of composition, rhythm, volume, and colors. For us today, long familiarity with this painting and the copies and imitations it has inspired have destroyed its surprise value. Which demonstrates how the cult of works from the past (admired, imitated, and copied), besides being pernicious for new creative talents, is pointless and absurd, since it requires one to admire, imitate, and copy only a small proportion of those works.

When Raphael selected a room in the Vatican for his fresco, one that had already been painted a few years earlier by Il Sodoma,² he arranged for that painter's marvelous work to be scraped off the wall, and there he painted his own fresco in homage to his creative pride and the principle that the chief value of a work of art is constituted by its capacity to surprise.

Whence we give absolute importance to the value of surprise. All the more so

since, after so many centuries full of works of genius which all surprised their original audiences when they first appeared, today it is difficult to surprise.

In the *Theater of Surprise* the author should hurl his *trouville* at the audience like a stone, and the key is that it must:

1. Strike the sensibility of the public with joyous surprise, in full.
2. Suggest continuity with other extremely comical ideas like water sprayed over a distance, concentric circles of water, or reverberating echoes.
3. Provoke the public to words and deeds that are absolutely unanticipated, since each *surprise* should give birth to new surprises in the stalls, in the galleries, in the city that every evening, the next day, ad infinitum.

The *Theater of Surprise* trains the Italian spirit to a state of maximum elasticity through its mental extralogical gymnastics; it wants to tear young Italians away from the monotonous, funereal, brutalizing obsession with politics.

To conclude: besides incorporating the *Synthetic Theater* as well as the body-madness of a Futurist café-concert which features participation by gymnasts, athletes, magicians, eccentrics, and prestidigitators, the *Theater of Surprise* also contains the *Theater-Newspaper* of the Futurist movement and a *Theater-Gallery* of sculptural works, and even dynamic and synoptic declamations of words-in-freedom interpenetrated with dances, free-wordist poems performed on stage, improvised musical discussions among pianos or between pianos and voices, free improvisations of the orchestra, etc.

The *Synthetic Theater* created by Marinetti, Settimelli, Cangiullo, Buzzi, Mario Carli, Folgore, Pratella, Janelli, Nannetti, Remo Chiti, Mario Dessy, Balla, Volt, Depero, Rognoni, Soggetti, Masnata, Vasari, Alfonso Dolce has been victoriously imposed on the stages of Italy by the theatrical companies of Berti, Ninchi, Zoncada, Tumiatì, Mateldi, Petrolini, and Luciano Molinari; in Paris and Geneva by the avant-garde group *Art et Liberté*; and in Prague by the Czechoslovakian company of the Svandovo Theater.³

The De Angelis Futurist Company has performed our *Theater of Surprise* and imposed it on audiences in Naples, Palermo, Rome, Florence, Genoa, Turin, Milan, all of which were—to borrow an expression used by a rather ill-disposed newspaper, *Il Giorno*—*frightfully happy*.⁴ In Rome the *passéists* were extraordinarily insolent and were beaten with wood by Marinetti, Cangiullo, and the Fornari brothers.⁵ And nobody will forget the legendary kick that one of them, the painter Totò, wedged into the buttocks that served as brains for some *passéist* who had climbed onstage to retrieve one of his vegetable arguments. With that surprising blow Fornari blasted him all the way into the boxes.

The *Theater of Surprise* exhibited the paintings of the Futurist Pasqualino Can-

giullo in Naples; the paintings of Totò Fornari in Rome, presented by the painter Balla; the paintings of Marasco in Florence; and the paintings of Bernini in Milan.⁶

The *Theater of Surprise* has also imposed “discussions” among improvised pianos and between piano and violin as invented by the Futurist musicians Aldo Mantia, Mario Bartoccini, Vittorio Mortari, and Franco Baldi.⁷

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST MECHANICAL ART

IVO PANNAGGI AND VINICIO PALADINI

20 June 1922

Many years have passed since the time when the first Futurist manifestos were launched, years filled with struggles, with imminent victories that flagged and then soared again, or with the poignancy of solitude. We have struggled. Some, having acquired some celebrity, have betrayed us; others are dead (**Boccioni** is the greatest of them, a warm and shining memory); and new activities have continued to awaken, **new needs have been perceived.**

Now we are gripped by a compelling need to free ourselves from the last ruins of old literature, symbolism, decadence, in order to reach new starting points for revolt that are based on what makes up our life today.

Based on **MACHINES.**

What **Boccioni** and others intuited (modernolatry) has enchanted us with new forms imposed by **modern mechanics.**

Today it is the **MACHINE** that distinguishes our era. **Pulleys and flywheels, bolts and smokestacks, all the polished steel and odor of grease (the perfume of ozone from power plants).**

These are the places that we are irresistibly attracted to. It is no longer nudes, landscapes, figures, symbolisms no matter how Futurist, but the panting of **locomotives**, the screams of **sirens, cogs, pinions**, and all that **mechanical sensation** **KEEN RESOLUTE** which makes up the atmosphere of our sensibility.

Gears wipe away the misty and the indecisive from our eyes, everything is **more incisive, decisive, aristocratic, sharp.** We feel mechanically, and we sense that we ourselves are also made of steel, we too are machines, we too have been mechanized by our surroundings. The beauty of transport wagons and the *typographic pleasure* of solid thick advertising signs, trucks shuddering and trembling of a **TRUCK**, the fantastic architecture of a construction crane, lucid and cold steels.

This is the need that we feel, and this is the principle of a new aesthetics.
Soon we shall charge ahead, chief value:
AGAINST EVERYTHING AND EVERYBODY!

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*The Italian
Empire*

**THE ITALIAN EMPIRE (TO BENITO MUSSOLINI—
HEAD OF THE NEW ITALY) F. T. MARINETTI,
MARIO CARLI, AND EMILIO SETTIMELLI**

25 April 1923

Fourteen years ago we first taught Italian pride, courage, boldness, love of danger, the habit of energetic action and audacity, a religion of the new and of speed. Aggressive movement, feverish wakefulness, the pace of a racer, the mortal leap, the slap, and the fist.

War as the only hygiene of the world, militarism, patriotism. The conviction of our superiority as a race. Obedience to Italy, our absolute sovereign.

Defense of the creative Italian genius against passéism in all its forms: archaeology, academicism, quietism, senility, cowardice, pacifism, pessimism, nostalgia, sentimentalism, erotic obsessions, tourism for foreigners. Youth coming to power against the parliamentary bureaucratic and sceptical mentality.

Our teachings have been fortunate and efficacious, but they have not yet borne all their fruits. Today we must still repeat at full voice our famous manifesto for an Italian Tripoli, launched by us in October 1911:

We Futurists, who for more than two years have glorified war amidst the hoots of Paralytics and People with Gout, who have sung the love of danger and violence, patriotism and war, the only hygiene of the world, are happy to experience at long last this great Futurist hour of Italy, even as the filthy brood of pacifists is caught in its death throes, having crawled back into the lowest basements of their laughable palace of Ajax.

With pleasure, in the streets and squares of cities, we have recently administered some beatings to the most feverish adversaries of the war, screaming in their faces these firm principles of ours:

1. All freedoms should be granted to the individual and the people, except the right of being a coward.
2. Let it be proclaimed that the word ITALY must dominate over the word FREEDOM.

3. The fastidious memory of Roman grandeur should be cancelled by an Italian grandeur that is a hundred times greater.

To our eyes, Italy has the shape and the power of a beautiful dreadnought¹ accompanied by a little squadron of torpedo-boat islands. We are proud to learn that the bellicose spirit which is animating the entire country is equal to our own, and we urge the Italian government, which has finally become Futurist, to enhance enormously the scope of its national ambitions, expressing contempt for all those stupid accusations that we are merely pirates, and instead proclaiming the birth of PAN-ITALIANISM.²

This prophetic manifesto is still more pertinent today!

Yes! Yes! It's time to march, not to let our sacred ambitions wither! Let us, then, unleash Italian youth (already mentally and physically prepared, indeed more than ready) in the conquest of an Italian Empire! Italian it must be, and Italian it will be, for a Roman empire would be an act of restoration or plagiarism. Italian Empire, for our slim peninsula, like an elegant backbone that culminates in the tough head of the heavy and domineering Alps, our peninsula, a synopsis of all the beauties of the earth, is swollen with creative genius, and has the right to govern the world. The imposition of this right will be an act of faith-force, a daring youthful improvisation, a work of art that blossoms miraculously.

Ancient grandeur has been eclipsed by the glow of victory on the Carso! We are the sons of the Isonzo, the Piave, Vittorio Veneto, and four years of Fascism: sufficient blazons!³ The imperial idea is flowing outward from our blood and from our triumphant, innovative, tireless Futurist muscles.

Hostile to a monarchy that has been anti-artistic antiliterary socialistic passéist and timorous; hostile to a republic that would be humanitarian, prone to renunciation, fond of mediocrity; we are preparing an empire of genius, art, force, unequaled,⁴ beauty, mind, elegance, originality, color, fantasy . . .

The Italian empire will be antisocialist, anticlerical, antitraditional, with all rights and progresses kept within a circle of absolute patriotism. The right of criticism, verification, or opposition denied only to antipatriots. The Italian Empire held in the fist of the best Italian. He will govern without Parliament, and with a technical Council of younger men.

Our will-conception of the Italian Empire will seem absurd to the weak, just as the definitive victory of Vittorio Veneto and the dissolution of the Austro-Hungarian Empire seemed absurd to the quivering eyes of the old Italy. But they will be modest ambitions if only the future of the Italians is finally rooted in the idea of war and conquest!

That is what the dead, yet still living, heroes of our great war used to scream as

they were glimpsed by Futurism on the day of Easter on the hills of the Carso.⁵ In the oppressive wind they crowded round our fantastic armored car, shouting fervent tumbling enthusiastic words. They used to shout:

By means of this war (war is the only hygiene of the world), make the Carso we have conquered into an iron pedestal, into a dynamic hinge, into a boundless capital for our Italian Empire!

Between the green sky and the white sea, the red twilight was not so much descending as hurling through the sky like a group of machine-gunning airplanes. Upright, all the crosses in the cemetery at Redipuglia⁶ hurriedly took up arms and presented their weapons to Futurism, like soldiers at the ready. Each was brandishing an instrument of war: shrapnel, grenade, bomb, bayonette, mortar, airplane propellor, flame-thrower, machine gun, rifle, a rotary engine still intoxicated with the sky.

Thus the round hill at Redipuglia, planted with crosses, labors night and day, a pulsing factory of war. And if the wind, dense with heroes, should ever attack it, that cemetery would unleash all its armed crosses in a counterassault, singing imperious and imperial noise-isms and polyphonies.

FASCISM AND FUTURISM GIUSEPPE PREZZOLINI

3 July 1923

G. K. Chesterton has recently written that there's a great deal of Futurism to be found in Fascism.¹ Most likely the English writer proposed this idea without knowing about the friendly relations that exist between Mussolini and Marinetti. Like a good musician, he has just listened to the symphony and promptly isolated the harmony of one instrument with another.

It is plain enough that Fascism has contained some elements of Futurism. I say that without any denigratory intention. Futurism has faithfully mirrored certain contemporary needs and a certain Milanese environment. The cult of speed, the attraction to violent solutions, the contempt for the masses and at the same time a fascinating appeal to them, the tendency toward a hypnotic domination of crowds, the exaltation of exclusively national feelings, the antipathy toward bureaucracy, all these are emotional attitudes that went from Futurism into Fascism without missing a beat.

But similarities of these sorts could be found, at any given historical moment, between groups quite opposed to one another: imagine how easy it would be to find them between groups with genuine affiliations.

It is not necessary, after all, to recall, as does the latest Futurist manifesto, that “the Futurists were among the first interventionists: jailed for interventionism during the Battle of the Marne; jailed with Mussolini for interventionist acts in Rome on 12 April 1915; jailed with Mussolini in Milan in 1919 for a Fascist attempt against the security of the state and the organization of armed bands.” Nor is it necessary to recall, as does the same manifesto, that the Futurists “created the first associations among the *Arditi* and many of the first *Fasci di Combattimento*.”²

Mussolini has a “marvelous Futurist temperament”³ (which is already a historical expression), as one Futurist and Fascist journal recently said. There’s no doubt about it.

And yet, might one be permitted to ask for further clarification, or even to express some doubts?

I have always defended clear ideas. I’m not a politician. Perhaps these two activities, the one positive and the other negative, are related by a certain thread of logic. It’s difficult to act in the world of politics without being a little confused about ideas.

But as a defender of clear ideas, I cannot quite manage to find, in the development which Fascism has recently undergone, much of a place for Futurism. The way in which Fascism has evolved, its reasons for being what it is, and its current programs are all inimical to the program and the reality of Futurism as art.

Fascism, if I am not mistaken, wants hierarchy, tradition, and observance of authority. Fascism is content when it invokes Rome and the classical past. Fascism wants to stay within the lines of thought that have been traced by the great Italians and the great Italian institutions, including Catholicism.

Futurism, instead, is quite the opposite of this. Futurism is a protest against tradition; it’s a struggle against museums, classicism, and scholastic honors. The founding manifesto of Futurism, which is still being sent out for advertising and propaganda purposes, and which therefore still hasn’t been repudiated by the Movement’s Executive Committee, asserts that Futurism will “destroy museums, libraries, academies of every sort, and fight against moralism, feminism,” etc.⁴ How can this be reconciled with Fascism, which instead is trying to restore all our moral values—including even moralistic ones of the sort found in bookshop windows—and which is fond of using the most authentic of Roman ruins as the background to its military reviews?

Futurism is the art of free verse, free expression, words-in-freedom (indeed, even of abolishing words in tactilism and the art of noises). Fascism, instead, wants

schools that will be more rigorous, wants Latin to be required everywhere, and invites us to commemorate De Amicis and Manzoni as representatives of the Italian mind.⁵

One point of utter contradiction concerns the question of internationalism. Fascism is a political effort that is essentially Italian. It cannot form alliances with fascisms from other countries, or with movements that have borrowed the Italian Fascist label; for these other Fascists, who would also be nationalists to the core, would necessarily be opposed to Italy as a nation. A Hungarian fascism, for example, could never have any ultimate goal other than getting Fiume returned to Hungary.⁶

Futurism, instead, is a movement of an international nature. Marinetti himself admits that there are already Russian, American, Australian, or German Futurists in every part of the globe. His poems, made from abstract symbols, also tend toward internationalism, even becoming a sort of Volapük.⁷ The direct and legitimate offspring of Futurism is the Dada movement, which was born in Switzerland during the war, in an environment that was strictly neutral and antinationalist, and which is under the leadership of Tristan Tzara who is, if I'm not mistaken, a deracinated Roumanian.⁸ Dada, if it has had any significance, has had the significance of expressing contempt for all the ideals of the war. It is been the greatest and most logical manifestation of anarchism in the postwar period.

As for Futurism, it might as well be recognized that it has found its logical home in only a single state: in Russia. There Bolshevism and Futurism have formed a happy alliance. The official art of Bolshevism has been Futurism. The monuments to the Revolution, its propaganda posters, even its books have shown the impress of Futurist art and ideas. And that is perfectly logical and coherent. The two revolutions, both antihistorical, have always been allies. Both want to destroy the past and remake everything on a new foundation of an industrial sort. The factory has been the wellspring of Bolshevik political ideas; and it has also been the inspiration for Futurist art.

But how Futurist art will be able to march in harmony with Italian Fascism is not so easily seen. It was a misunderstanding, one born out of people's circumstantial proximity, out of purely contingent encounters, out of the sheer turmoil of so many forces, that led Marinetti to Mussolini's side. It worked out very nicely during the days of revolution. It will be astounding during the days of actual government.

Italian Fascism cannot accept the destructive program of Futurism, and instead, by its *Italian* logic, it will have to restore the very values that clash with Futurism. Political discipline and hierarchy are also literary discipline and hierarchy. Words are rendered empty when political hierarchies are made pointless. Fascism, if it

truly wants to win its battle, has to consider Futurism as having already been absorbed for what it could provide as a stimulus, and has to repress it for whatever it may still possess that is revolutionary, anticlassical, and unruly from the viewpoint of art.

What do I find, for example, if I pick up the *Filtered Nights* of the Futurist Mario Carli?⁹

Strange! Yet clearly it was the case that my shirt had been taken to the gallows and hung by flies, who thought the moment had finally come to frighten the ghost in the little machine; and while I was counting, one by one, the bones in my ribcage, who were patient enough not to emit a single shudder, I noticed that frogs were skirting along the sky, which resembled a cheese grater, and that the specks of dust which fell from it were turning into the songs of nightingales. Lyricism must have had its own reasons for letting those violet precipitates clot up inside the depths of the cypress trees, in such a way that the night was jutting out, all gray and pearly and light.

And what do I find in the Italian classic, Manzoni?

The sky seemed to promise a beautiful day: the moon, over on one side, was pallid and dim, yet stood out against the immense sweep of grayish blue which, lower and toward the east, was gradually tinted with shades of yellow and pink. Still lower, almost on the horizon, a few clouds stretched out in uneven bands that were colored between brown and blue, with the lowest of them fringed by a strip of fiery red which was slowly becoming keener, more alive . . .¹⁰

And so I ask myself: which of these pages is hierarchical, disciplined, and traditional, a page where words are in their proper place, obeying the rules, with each word respecting its nature, and each content to have just that dignity which it properly possesses? Which way of writing, in short, corresponds to Fascism, and which to Futurism? And isn't there an utter incompatibility between the two pages, with one of them exhibiting a will to construct something, the other a will to destroy and confuse? And which—dare I ask it?—is really Italian, and which international? Which resembles and corresponds to the outline and character of our literature, and which to the kind of literature that is read in cosmopolitan literary reviews, multilingual, or even interlingual?

The other day someone showed me a sketch for a Futurist monument to Marinetti. It bore an extraordinary resemblance to Futurist monuments which the Russian revolution has erected in a number of town squares. There is only one key differ-

ence: in Italy it remains only a sketch, while in Russia it has already become a reality.

For my part, I'm convinced that Futurism and Fascism cannot get along together. If Fascism wants to make its mark in Italy, won't it have to expel everything that smacks of Futurism, everything that is undisciplined and anticlassical? I pose this question to the one group that is ideally suited to answer it, the government commission that was appointed not long ago to consider the reform of education. For certain Futurist manifestos might seem to be in direct opposition to the tenor of their deliberations. One manifesto has demanded nothing less than the "reduction of classical studies to a completely optional status, to be run as supplements or in parallel with the principal course of studies," "the abolition of teachers," and "the exaltation of physical education, viewed as the principal factor in man's intellectual life."¹¹

Would it be too indiscreet to ask my distinguished friends on the government committee if all this doesn't run a bit counter to their plans and deliberations? And would it be discourteous to ask my acquaintances within the Futurist movement what they really think about the classicizing reforms of Giovanni Gentile, the minister for education?¹² I wonder.

FUTURIST SENSIBILITY BENEDETTA

1927

Futurists are the primitives of a new sensibility. This claim has been recently repeated and discussed at the first Futurist Congress, and it's exactly true.¹

For the Futurist, the pictorial problem, like every other problem, appears under a new and special viewpoint: what is this Futurist sensibility, what does it involve, what does it grasp, what does it discover, what does it render, what does it reveal, what does it create?

Futurist sensibility is characterized and nourished by four passions:

1. Passion for *depth*. Which is to say, we must always push ourselves beyond the perceptible, superficial, apparent, traditional, logical plane.
2. Passion for what is *alive*. Which is to say, we must always respond and offer ourselves to whatever is in motion, in contrast to whatever is static, even momentarily; respond and offer ourselves to what surges develops intersects enhances superimposes (dynamism and simultaneity).

3. Passion for *freedom*. Which is to say, unbridled passion for the broadest horizons. Explosion of our senses brain soul of new created worlds (pure Fantasy).
4. Passion for difficult *complexities* which are preferable to an easy emphasis on elementary units, and a consequent passion for the machine. We must expand our cranial limits to take in the most disparate things. To contending forces we must add a new force that struggles. Deriding distances and divisions, we must experience the most diverse and contradictory categories in order to seize the mysterious thrill of unexpected attractions and repulsions. We must achieve the most difficult syntheses. The Futurist artist stands by these passions in life, and he wants to resolve his own creative problem with them too. He has such new powers within himself that he stands pure and naked in the face of the universe. He is straining with power toward the vast horizon of the future that attends his work. For him, the past cannot exist, just as the road that has been driven doesn't exist for a race car driver.

The Futurist painter is worried about how to record the past (whether yesterday or ten years ago) that painters used to draw or depict on canvases or the superficial walls erected by humanity or nature. He is alone, with his need for creation, with his senses multiplied in number and potency. He is part of humanity, with its complex of living forces that throng and contend, of dense and attenuated spaces, of expansion and retraction. He is part of nature, experiencing her touching and violent, economical and wasteful rhythms. He is part of the simultaneities that bind the individual to nature, in their contradictions, their continuities, their abysses.

The works achieved by Futurist painters contain all these new infinite worlds, and each work specifically expresses the passion that most obsesses the individual artist.

Thus, for example, all the works of Boccioni and Balla contain in their essence depth, complexity, dynamism, simultaneity, interpenetration of time-space distant-near, internal-external. The work of Depero swells with freedom and pure fantasy.

Prampolini Pannaggi Paladini Marasco are mechanizing the universe.²

Dottori, in his painting *Umbrian Spring*,³ binds together the expansive rhythms of trees in blossom with the blossoming body of a young girl. The Futurist painter is confronting a problem: how to express these numerous new worlds, how to render them nakedly and powerfully, in such a way that every viewer experiences unmediated contact with the universe of the artist.

1. He creates in immediacy. Hence he eliminates intermediary stages between conception and actualization. He brings conception and creation as close together as he can. He renounces any translation into conventional signs. He

doesn't conceal the naked beauty of a line of emotion or velocity under a clot of blood or dead skin (example: in my painting *Motorboat Speed*, I've rendered only the arabesque tracing left by a motorboat speeding through the azure texture of the sea incandescent with the afternoon light).

2. He mechanizes his work. Let me explain: modern sensibility has created the machine, i.e., a complex of different forms and materials which give rise to an outcome that lives, determined only by its indispensable elements. An automobile is composed of parts that are all indispensable to achieving motion. Nothing superfluous. A law of synthesis rules the complex, just as it does the individual pieces.

A Futurist work, precisely because it is a work of our sensibility, will be constructed like a machine, will be an outcome determined only by its essential elements.

3. He wants to make matter come alive. And it is on this point that the distance between Futurists and traditionalists grows larger. For the latter, painting is a form given to colors. Yet it's absurd to think that just color on canvas can generate a maximum of emotion. Just as the rapid friction of a glass disc between two leather pads produces an electric wave, so a velvety electric blue that is reflected against a cold shining tin will create a more vivid pictorial work and a more vivid emotion than a blue color set beside a luminous gray.

Having surpassed the idea that painting consists of merging together smooth colors over a flat surface, one enters into the vast field of plastic multimedia audio complexes in which the relations between color and matter, form and density, heat and emotion, can be *palpably visibly* heard.

The pictorial horizon, narrowed by passéists to the impoverished square of the realistic canvas, has become unlimited for the Futurist artist.

Breaking beyond the humiliating limits of canvas and tubes of paint, he seizes with purity, renders with immediacy his universe, using those absolute elements that will make his creation *live*.

**ELECTRICAL ADVERTISING SIGNS: AN OPEN
LETTER TO HIS EXCELLENCY MUSSOLINI**

F. T. MARINETTI

12 February 1927

It has recently been reported that clergymen and more traditional critics seriously think that they can preserve the aesthetics of the piazza facing the Cathedral in Milan by abolishing electrical advertising signs.

Setting aside the concerns of certain believers who know how to pray only when among Shadows and who can't recognize God in the divine electric Light which reigns today in all the churches of Europe, I persist in declaring that electrical advertisements in general and those in the piazza facing the Cathedral in particular constitute an indispensable beauty of the city of Milan.

One does not have to be a Futurist genius to see that electrical advertisements have now become our passionate evening prayers to the sun, invoked so that it will return as soon as possible with the warmth which sustains the life of the world.

Electrical advertisements epitomize a healthy inebriating optimism which is obdurately opposed to the desperation of darkness.

Electrical advertisements are the stimulating flowers, the succulent fruits, the dancing putti of the new Futurist aesthetic of swift iron and bold reinforced concrete.

Electrical advertising signs represent a hygienic devaluation and denigration of *sickly* twilight, the nostalgic moon, and the stars so abounding in depressing melancholy.

They are our artificial constellations, the daughters of our implacable will, streamlined constellations which are within reach of our hand in order to console us for those others which are unreachable.

Electrical advertisements crystallize the deep scientific, industrial, and commercial dynamism of cities; and they have climbed to the rooftops in order to vie with the dynamism of the stars.

Beautiful with an extremely new and yet certain beauty, electrical advertisements respond to the noblest and most tormented of human needs: that of half-experiencing the death of sleep and night.

Dear and great Mussolini, I ask you to defend the new beauties of the machine, reinforced concrete, and electricity.

Defend electrical advertisements, which are extremely important elements within the great aesthetic now taking shape. You know, after all, that every evening aviators joyfully observe the moment when the electrical advertisements light up and form the palpitating optimistic nocturnal crown of Fascist Imperial Italy.

MANIFESTO OF AEROPAINTING

GIACOMO BALLA, BENEDETTA, FORTUNATO DEPERO,
GERARDO DOTTORI, FILLIA, F. T. MARINETTI,
ENRICO PRAMPOLINI, MINO SOMENZI, AND TATO

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*Manifesto of
Aeropainting*

22 September 1929

In 1908, F. T. Marinetti published *The Pope's Airplane*, the first lyrical free-verse exaltation of flight and the aerial prospects of our peninsula from Etna to Roma Milan Trieste. Aeropoetry was further developed in Paolo Buzzi's book *Airplanes* and Luciano Folgore's *Bridges over the Ocean* and Mario Carli's *Goats*.¹

In 1926 the Futurist painter and aviator Azari created the first work of aeropainting, *Perspectives of Flight*, exhibited in the Futurist Great Hall at the Venice Biennale.

In 1929 the painter Gerardo Dottori executed a miraculous Futurist aviator decoration for the airport at Ostia, depicting the impetuous thrust of airplanes in the skies of Rome with propellers fuselages wings transfigured synthesized and reduced to typical plastic elements.²

This work by Dottori, already well known for his great *Triptych of Velocity*, marks an important date in the history of the new aeropainting.

Contemplating the walls and roof of the Ostia airport, critics and the public have become convinced that traditional painted eagles, far from glorifying aviation, seem today like miserable chickens when set beside the torrid mechanical splendor of a flying motor which would certainly disdain even roasting them.

Mino Somenzi, drawing on the time spent in the cockpit together with the painter Dottori, who was intently taking notes on his aerial views, has been inspired with a precise conception of aeropainting. Among the many ideas advanced by me in the *People's Gazette* of 22 September 1929, I take note of one, that the sea has been vanquished as an artistic theme, that last great inspiring source for avant-gardists and innovators, and now everybody is up in the sky.³

With the *Perspectives of Flight* by Azari, the decorations at the airport in Ostia by Dottori, the aeropaintings by Tato, Marasco, Prampolini, Fillia, and Oriani,⁴ we are entering into the beautiful abstract synthesis of a new great art.

We Futurists declare that

1. The shifting perspectives of flight constitute an absolutely new reality which has nothing in common with reality as traditionally constituted by a terrestrial perspective;

2. the elements of this new reality are unstable and are constructed by perpetual mobility;
3. the painter should not observe and paint except by participating in their very velocity;
4. painting the new reality from on high requires a profound disdain for detail and the necessity of synthesizing and transfiguring everything;
5. all the parts of the landscape appear to the painter in flight as:
 - a) smashed
 - b) artificial
 - c) provisional
 - d) as if they had just fallen out of the sky
6. to the eye of the painter in flight all the parts of a landscape accentuate certain features of being
 - dense
 - scattered
 - elegant
 - grandiose
7. every aeropainting simultaneously contains the double movement of the airplane and the hand of the painter which moves the pencil, brush, or sponge;
8. The painting or plastic complex of aeropainting must be polycentric;
9. A new extraterrestrial plastic spirituality will soon be achieved.

In terrestrial velocities (horse, automobile, train), plants and houses and so on seem to hurl themselves at us, the closer ones more rapidly, more distant ones less so, forming a dynamic wheel within the frame made by mountains sea hills lakes, a frame which in turn also shifts, but so slowly as to seem basically still. Aside from the frame, there is also something else which occupies our attention, the horizontal continuity with the plane on which we are advancing.

In aerial velocities, instead, the panoramic frame and planar continuity are lacking. The airplane which glides dives goes into a climb etc. creates an ideal hypersensitive observatory suspended everywhere in the infinite, further dynamized by the very consciousness of motion which changes the value and rhythm of minutes and of seconds of vision-sensation. Time and space are pulverized by the lightning-swift awareness that the earth is rapidly spinning beneath the immobile airplane.

When the airplane is turning the folds of the fan-vision (green tones + brown tones + diaphanous sky-blue tones of the atmosphere) close up in order to hurl themselves vertically against the vertical line formed by the machine and the earth.

This fan-vision reopens in the form of an X when the plane dives, its only base now being the criss-cross of the two angles.

Landing creates a succession of V's that grow enlarged.

The Coliseum, seen from 3,000 meters by an aviator gliding in spirals, changes its form and dimension at every moment and successively enlarges all the faces of its volume in the act of showing them.

In a straight line of flight, at whatever altitude so long as it's constant, we may not be able to see what's beneath us but in front of us there appears a panorama A which gradually grows larger in proportion to our velocity, while further on we see a little panorama B that grows larger as we fly over panorama A, until we then discern a panorama C that gradually grows larger while A, already remote, and B, now flown over, are disappearing.

When the plane turns the viewpoint is always in line with the trajectory of the cockpit yet coincides successively with all the points of a complete curve, following all the positions of the airplane itself. In a turn to the right the panoramic fragments become circular and run toward the left multiplying and contracting, while as they sweep toward the left they decline in number according to the greater or lesser inclination of the airplane.

Having studied the aerial perspectives that are offered in front of the aviator, we should consider the countless lateral effects. All these have a rotating movement. The machine advances like an iron lance with two cogs that are gearing on one side and the other by means of the teeth of the two wheels that seem to spin in a direction opposed to that of the machine itself, and whose centers are located in all the points of the horizon.

These rotating visions succeed one another, merge, and interpenetrate the sum total of frontal spectacles.

We Futurists declare that the principle of aerial perspectives and consequently the principle of Aeropainting is an incessant and graduated multiplication of forms and colors with extremely elastic crescendos and dimenuendos that are intensified or swept away as they give birth to new gradations of forms and colors.

Whatever the trajectory method or conditions of flight, the panoramic fragments are each a continuation of one another, all connected by a mysterious and fatal need for superimposing forms and colors and yet conserving among themselves a perfect and prodigious harmony.

This harmony is determined by the very continuity of flight. Whence the dominant characteristics of Aeropainting which we have delineated. By an absolute freedom of imagination and an obsessive desire to embrace dynamic multiplicity with an indispensable synthesis, it captures the immense visionary and sensual drama of flight. The day is approaching when Futurist aeropainters will realize the Aero-

sculpture dreamed of by the great Boccioni, a harmonious and meaningful composition of colored plumes offered to the paintbrushes of the sunset and the dawn and the long variegated bands of electric light.

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST SACRED ART

F. T. MARINETTI AND FILLIA

23 June 1931

Assuming that it hasn't always been necessary to practice the Catholic religion to create masterpieces of Sacred Art, and assuming as well that an art that doesn't develop is doomed, Futurism, an energy distributor, poses the following challenge to Sacred Art: either it should renounce any attempt to inspire the faithful or it should completely renew itself through synthesis, transfiguration, dynamism, spatiotemporal interpenetration, simultaneous states of mind, and the geometric splendor of machine aesthetics.

The use of electric light to decorate churches, with their blue-white radiance which is superior in celestial purity to the carnal lecherous red-yellow of candles; the marvelous sacred paintings of Gerardo Dottori, the first Futurist who renewed Sacred Art with original intensity; the Futurist frescos of Gino Severini in Swiss churches; the many Futurist cathedrals which have been built in Germany and Switzerland, with a dynamism of forms realized through reinforced concrete, glass, and iron; all are signs of the indispensable renewal of Sacred Art.¹

In fact:

1. Only Futurist artists, because they are rich in unlimited imagination, can paint or construct a Hell that will terrorize a generation which has heroically experienced the hellish bombardments of the Carso² and been trained to a mechanized life far more dangerous than the one evoked by impoverished and gaseous little flames of traditional Hell.
2. Only Futurist aeropainters, masters of aerial perspective and accustomed to painting while high in flight, can give plastic expression to the unfathomable fascination and blessed transparencies of the infinite. That is not something accessible to traditional painters, all of whom are more or less restricted by obsessive realism, all inescapably terrestrial in outlook and hence incapable of rising up to mystical abstraction.
3. Only Futurist aeropainters can make a canvas sing with the multiform and speedy aerial life of Angels and the apparitions of Saints.
4. Only Futurist artists, who are eager to be original at any cost and systematically

- contemptuous of what's already been seen, can give a painting, fresco, or plastic complex the power of magical surprise required to express miracles.
5. Only Futurist artists, who for more than twenty years have posed the arduous problem of simultaneity in art, can express clearly, and with adequate spatio-temporal interpenetration, the simultaneous doctrines of the Catholic faith, such as the doctrine of the Holy Trinity, the Immaculate Conception, and the Crucifixion of God.
 6. Only Futurist artists, electricized with optimism color and imagination such as Andreoni, Ambrosi, Balla, Belli, Benedetta, Caviglioni, Cocchia, Depero, Diulgheroff, Dottori, Duse, Fillia, Alf Gaudenzi, Lepore, Marasco, Munari, Oriani, Pozzo, Prampolini, Rosso, Tato, Thayaht, Tullio d'Albisola, Zucco, etc.,³ can today express that paradisaic beatitude in a work of Sacred Art in a way that surpasses the infinite paradisaic joy which Catholic combatants experienced in their fiber at our immense victory of Vittorio Veneto.

Only Futurism, the insistent and speedy Beyond of Art, can shape and figure any Beyond life itself.

Examples of Futurist Sacred Art:

The painting by Gerardo Dottori, *The Crucifixion*, is characterized by the fascinating fluidity in the bodies of the women who are weeping at the foot of the cross. They seem like sorrowful extensions from the very body of Christ, imbued with an unearthly light that also singles out the dominant character in the painting.

The painting by Fillia, *Nativity—Death—Eternity*, shows the seated Madonna in the foreground, backed by a landscape rendered unreal by the apparition of a large cross which is dematerialized, i.e., *formed of pure sky*. The cross grazes the liquid body of the Madonna, like a smooth underwater phosphorescence. The whole is enclosed within the sphere of the world, on the surface of which appear all the churches of history, from the catacombs to Roman, Byzantine, Romanesque, Gothic, Renaissance, and so on up to Futurist churches. The portrait of the Madonna is animated by a luminous line radiating from the infant Jesus, a line continued in the rhythm of the mother's body which is formed by the same architectural elements. The painting possesses a prodigious simultaneity of the most diverse elements. A striking fusion of the concrete and the abstract. Synthesis of Catholicism in its centuries-long evolution.

The painting by Fillia, *The Adoration*, depicts a Madonna in prayer, whose body is dematerialized to the point where she is no longer recognizably human, an abstract form of prayer at the foot of a cross which is constituted solely by atmosphere.

The painting by Oriani, *The Ascent to Calvary*, is notable for dramatizing the entire atmosphere in which suffering, shaped in a hundred different ways, dominates the suffering expressed in the figure of Christ.

The plastic complex by Mino Rosso, *The Nativity*, shows how all the characters and surrounding objects, which seem as if magnetized in some unreal way by the infant Jesus, are in absolute plastic obedience.

Equally significant are other works of Futurist Sacred Art exhibited at La Spezia by the Futurists Fillia, Oriani, Pozzo, Pogolotti, Rosso, Saladin, Alf Gaudenzi, Vegnazia, etc.⁴

Twenty years ago Futurism, an innovative movement of Italian pride which is sharply anti-Masonic and anticlerical, divined the advent of Fascism, created and led the artistic avant-gardes of the entire world, streamlined literature with words-in-freedom and simultaneous style, took psychology and time out of drama by means of simultaneous allogical syntheses of surprise or object-dramas, enlarged the plastic arts with antirealistic transfiguration and plastic dynamism, invented the Art of Noises, the Noiseharmonium, and Tactilism, introduced the aesthetic of the machine into music, initiated dynamizing foodstuffs, gave creative amplitude to photography, sparked the stupendous Aeropainting of the future, and launched the New Architecture of reinforced concrete agility color cleansed of decorativism rich in bare geometric splendor which Antonio Sant'Elia taught to the Italian Rationalists who have finally been obliged to recognize its Italian paternity if they don't want be dismissed as imitators of the Nordic imitators of Sant'Elia.

Now twenty from among the hundred best painters of the Italian Futurist movement are exhibiting a roomful of Futurist Sacred Art in the large exhibition taking place at the House of Art in La Spezia.

This manifesto is perfectly in accord with the creative activity of Enrico Prampolini, who is flourishing today in the extreme new wave at the Exhibition of the 1940 Group in Paris, and with the creative activity of Fortunato Depero, who is preparing his great Exhibition of New York Dynamisms.

FUTURISM AND ADVERTISING ART

FORTUNATO DEPERO

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 per-

sonages 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 doesn't 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**?—

BALBO —DE PINEDO —DE BERNARDI —DAL MOLIN —MADDALENA³

these names have created authentic miracles, and they offer 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 motors 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's 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 façades of big buildings, in shop-
windows and 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—

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—

CREATIVE ARTISTS INDUSTRIALISTS 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 bicyclists—

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, the 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 neces-
sary for a great advertising art—

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 Elysées, at the entrance, I was surprised at 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 shopwindows 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 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 Futurist style is decisive, categorical, evident 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—

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 allogical 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 which uses new construction materials lyrically and without decorativism has created abstract film and abstract photography Futurism in its Second National Congress¹ 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 warning to those Jews who may identify with different fatherlands if they don’t want to disappear”

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 metallicization of the human body and picking up the vital spirit as a mechanical force”²

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 Goldsmith of Radio City in New York³ has said: “Marinetti has imagined the electrical 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. Electric theater will demand an effort of imagination first from authors then from actors then from spectators”

French Belgian German theoreticians and actors of avant-garde radiodramas (Paul Reboux Theo Freischinann Jacques Rece Alex Surchaap Tristan Bernard F. W. Bischoff Victor Heinz Fuchs Friedrich Wolf Mendelssohn etc.)⁴ 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 the filmmaker is already on his deathbed due to *a) the rancid sentimentalism of his subjects b) the realism that unfolds within some simultaneous syntheses c) infinite technical complications d) fatal banalizing collaboration e) the inferiority of reflected light to the self-emitted light of radio-television*
3. a book because the book bears the blame for having made humanity myopic it implies something heaving suffocating strangulating 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 misoneist⁵ 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 tubes 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
19. 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 enwraps and gives shading to a particular voice sound noise
20. The elimination of the concept or the esteem of the audience which has always had a deforming or worsening influence even on the book

BAS-RELIEF MURALS FILLIA

August 1934

Everybody recognizes the decisive revolution which has been brought about in the construction industry because of new materials and new technical means. And it is widely conceded that in our era, as in all other eras, these possess their own particular style and beauty. Why, then, shouldn't mural reliefs also be consistent with this revolution, when a picture on the wall of a house is the open window to the landscapes of the mind. In all the more significant historical periods the relationship between architecture and art has been clear: Gothic and baroque buildings had paintings and sculptures of their own era. Why should a Futurist house of our time be filled with paintings inspired, say, by the quattrocento, while nobody would dare to defend architecture inspired by that era.

Architecture has been directly tied to industry, to contemporary products, to science—in short, to life. Which is why it must possess its constructive complement—verbal decoration is too compromised and generates confusion—in pictures and sculptures responsive to the same sensibility.

The best architects have already pointed out the dangers of an art form that violates the aesthetics of the house. It can be useful to note that:

- 1) the new architecture requires mural bas-reliefs that are not purely ornamental, i.e., with motifs of form and color that are in harmony with the building and the environment, because the new architecture already has ornamental values in the very materials that go into its construction, in the geometrical splendor of its lines;¹
- 2) recent architecture cannot accommodate works of so-called “pure art,” i.e., art that is removed from the intense and passionate life of the present, for they are not capable of giving joy or emotion to people of today;
- 3) the new architecture needs bas-relief murals that are a synthesis of modernity, that can contain the forces and the beauties of the entire social structure. A bas-relief mural that, by creating images drawn from our time, can reveal the depths and mysteries of our own age to our sensibility;
- 4) recent architecture, in short, needs “subject-matter.” All art that is deprived of subject matter which isn’t directly inspired by its own era is inappropriate for the modern house. Yes, there was once a time when historical subjects, nostalgia for the past, and memory were capable of producing works of art; but that was because people of that time could delude themselves that they could reexperience those heroic or sentimental deeds.

Today only a madman would dream of being still able to experience historical or mythological events. Reality has long surpassed such fantasies, has opened up our dreams to other, more immense horizons. It has shifted our attention away from the admiration of the past and toward the admiration of the future. The only acceptable historical works are those which have been experienced by our own generation or the one immediately preceding it, and those do not represent “definitive and concluded facts” but forward surges, victories achieved in order to prepare a greater future. *They are historical works charged with the future.*

That is what we have learned from the “Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution,” a lesson which should prove convincing to all architects.² The subject matter itself generated such a dramatic atmosphere and innovative stylistic treatment that it required no further comment.

Every house should have an atmosphere produced by an intelligent collaboration with an artist or by the proper adaptation of bas-relief murals which interpret the values of our century. Public buildings, the seats of political or corporative organizations, are especially in need of such treatment.

Instead, unfortunately, if one enters the seat of an industrial or trade organization, one has the sensation of being in a church or museum: coldness and indifference to the function of the environment. Or else, if there are pictures with an identifiable subject matter, they display the most traditional and comical rhetoric. To achieve the most direct educational impact and the highest aesthetic possibilities, all the environments of Fascist buildings will have to be entrusted to the avant-

RESPONSE TO HITLER F. T. MARINETTI

1 August 1937

After the attacks that have been launched by Hitler against Futurism, Cubism, and Dadaism, French newspapers have asked me to issue a response as the creator of Futurism, and hence as someone with a greater responsibility for modern art.

The newspapers published the following comment: "We Frenchmen can defend and vindicate Cubism and Dadaism, which itself is no small task, but Futurism, the progenitor of those movements, is an essentially Italian movement, and its creator Marinetti is one of the columns of support for Mussolini's Fascism. What does Marinetti make of it all?"

- 1) I think that for some time now Hitler has lapsed into a bias toward static analytic realistic and photographic art, leading him to condemn the entire artistic evolution that runs from post-impressionism to plastic dynamism, evolution which has been continually conquering an ever greater plastic synthetic transfiguration movement geometrical splendor polychromy abstraction and simultaneity.
- 2) I think that Hitler also lapses into another very serious mistake when he regards the Futurist avant-gardes of Germany as Jewish or Communist.

These had some communists and some Jews, but if anything they were influenced by Italian Futurism, which is anticommunist by definition.

In modern art in general Jews have been and continue to be not innovators, but skillful merchants of Futurist or Cubist modern art, just as they were and still are skillful merchants of older art.

- 3) I think Italian Futurism inventor of modern art and especially contemporary architecture nearly all of it in the style of Antonio Sant'Elia prepared the way for the Imperial Italy of Benito Mussolini in the course of thirty years of victorious struggles through works lectures interventionism fascism and *squadrisimo* in piazzas prisons and colonial volunteerism.¹

Among the many definitions of it this is the best: *Futurism is modernizing innovating accelerating Italian pride.*

Benito Mussolini the world creator of Fascism entirely oriented toward the future has wanted his Academy to contain all the forces of Italy from archaeology to Futurism.²

4) Futurism which gave its gaudy warriorlike dynamic synthetic character to the "Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution" at Rome is resplendent again today in Prampolini's mural sculptures in Paris (the Italian Pavilion), in the Schell Building in Berlin, and in countless works executed and acclaimed throughout the world.³

QUALITATIVE IMAGINATIVE FUTURIST

MATHEMATICS F. T. MARINETTI WITH

MARCELLO PUMA AND PINO MASNATA

June 1941

Whether veterans or twenty-year-olds we Futurist aeropoets and aeropainters are ready and willing to fight for the Great Italy of Mussolini

As we wait for our orders we continue to fulfill our inventive and innovative literary artistic mission to achieve Italian intellectual records and we recall the poetic hypothesis advanced by Marinetti in his volume of poems *Destruction*¹ some thirty years ago that the earth is not round but cubical or polyhedral or like a solid fissure in an empty flowing liquid

Thirty years ago in Marinetti's poem *The Pope's Airplane*² one finds longer and shorter kilometers and longer and shorter hours

Twenty years ago in his poem *Swift Spain and Futurist Toro* velocity puts time and space into the can and modifies or destroys them

Scientists anticipated by Poets

Today Italian Futurism is renewing even mathematics Scientific truth is not universal ergo it's variable according to the individual researcher's mind

Plato believed in living ideas we in living poetic images

Our antistatic antilogical antiphilosophical mathematics are self-conscious fireworks of hypotheses quivering among the shadows of astonished science

It is the negation of movement understood as the materialization of space directed along the line of the presumed movement

We are therefore applying rational mechanics to the evaluation of paintings and sculptures so removing the viewer from the usual static vertical position and obliging him instead to spin vortically *synthetic cinepictures* and *cinesculptures*

We run along on specific trajectories with given velocities introducing as an emotive element (related to the work of Art) the psychic dimension created by the observer's acceleration

We deny Euclidean space if devoid of palpable content and insipid straight lines
rule and compass

We fight against narcotic symmetry

Mathematicians we invite you to appreciate new geometries and gravitational
fields created by masses moving with sidereal velocity

Force-lines of the universe electromagnetic fields the discontinuous atom-
universe cine-descriptive geometry as the mathematical basis of cinepainting of
aeropainting and aerosculpture

Mathematicians let us affirm the divine essence of CHANCE and RANDOMNESS

Let us apply the calculus of probabilities to social life

Let us construct Futurist cities since they have been designed by means of
poetic geometry

That way we will push the Earth out of its orbit and hurl the Moon against the
Sun (a mediocre star)

We shall divert the Earth toward Arcturus or toward Alpha in the house of
Scorpio³

A Poetic Geometry

By poetic geometry we mean an abstract measure of the potential forces or
dynamisms contained in a poetic image located outside of space-time

We should specify intuitively i.e. with lightning ratiocinations the architecture
of this image i.e. height breadth thickness edge and corners curves

For example the last rays of the sun setting into the sea strikes the gangway
of a tugboat changing it into a blazing ring that is eagerly inserted over the out-
stretched finger of the pier let us measure the dynamic enthusiasm of the rays their
brightness the amplitude of the gangway's oscillation the flood of brightness that
is offered by the gangway metamorphosed into a ring and the contraction of the
darkness spreading over the waters and pressing against the pier turned into an
outstretched finger

If the warm afternoon wind pouring through the emptiness of a bare window
awakens regrets let us measure the regrets algebraically

If a gull should graze a pine tree like a white flower eager to fly floating over
an invisible purity we should measure the eagerness of the gull or the purity that
sustains it like a stem

Riding in a car over the asphalt road that turns from Ismailia to Port Said⁴ if I
disregard the white gold of the dunes dusty with the distracted tassels of palms and
the thickening green soup of emeralds licorice dung heaps of gold incised against
a shiny clover I can feel with my two eyes the Mediterranean Sea like an immense
lake that is high and suspended in a horizontal line

I can feel the Suez Canal like a system of lake-syphons perpendicularly working

to bear sandy and watery Africas and Asias all the way up to the surface of the collector lake or Mediterranean

And also a filter formed by three bluish lake-pails and superimposed to sustain to brake to decant drop by drop Mediterranean velocities transformed into that ship or smoking white black red clot

Seen through such geometry the course of the Nile is transformed and instead of flowing into the Mediterranean it gushes and tipsily turns back on itself and hastens grazing and gripping

Joyfully a rich splendid dune gives birth to a smoke-stack heaving black vapors against the very palest blue

A ship is descending with its weight crossing a sister ship that is rising magnetized by the sun

Leaning over the very edge of the pier at Port Said suddenly I can feel the Mediterranean ever liquid yet not trickling however slanted

Having flown over it in airplane getting ready to land in Genoa I turn to look back and see far far away below me Alexandria in Egypt

A Mathematics of Quality

Having broached a poetic geometry i.e. impassioned subjectivity let us discover a mathematics of quality opposed to the mathematics of quantity by quality meaning emerging originalities exceptions the never previously seen which will not be seen again

A mathematics hostile to symmetry and equations entirely launched toward the discontinuous and exceptional

We must bring this mathematics directly into life making all breathing hypotheses come alive alongside us breathing beings

Let each person make his own subjective calculus of probabilities

Having establishing that one can multiply health by pride muscles by joy one can specify the deeds of small elites never fully assessed such as Garibaldians Futurists Arditi Sansepolcristi Squadristi⁵

Calculate the clear sum of revolutionary Victory obtained in Milan the 15th of April 1919 (the Battle of Via dei Mercanti)⁶ by means of 50 Futurist poets 100 Arditi 50 early Fascist *squadristi* and 300 students from the Polytechnical Institute + the political genius of Mussolini + bold aeropoetic imagination of Marinetti + Ferruccio Vecchi⁷ in order to defeat 100,000 socialists-communists routed because imbued with pacifism and hence frightened by pistols multiplied a hundredfold by patriotic courage

Calculate the Victory of the Battle at the Warieu Pass summing up 3,000 Black-shirts with Mussolinian martial revolutionary pride + radio-telegraphic protection by Badoglio + intelligence will of General Somma⁸ – water – indispensable mu-

nitions – oxygen in the boiling tropical temperature of ashes – suitable uniforms – roads communicating with other Army Corps > 45,000 Abyssinians under Ras Kassa and Ras Seium⁹ assaulting for 72 hours + Oerlicon machine guns rifles Abyssinians of all sorts + ferocious barbarian Abyssinian military pride stuffed with pertinent martial legend – intelligence of individuals – wheat + suitable uniforms – the prestige of Abyssinian generals.

Of the two armies that fought over Spain one had Franco highest quality of patriotism military pride generalship while the communist army was absolutely lacking these qualities

These calculations are as precise as those of Napoleon who in some battles had all of his couriers killed and hence his generals autonomous

When we will be able with the precision of poetic arithmetic to evaluate the qualities of great men and isolate them we shall also be able to qualitatively reconstruct a Dante a Napoleon a Leonardo da Vinci

A qualitative mathematics abolishes death which is quantitative

This manifesto has been devised by me in collaboration with the mathematician Marcello Puma and the Legionary Doctor of Africa Pino Masnata Futurist poet.¹⁰

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Part Two Visual Repertoire



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INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO CHRISTINE POGGI

In February 1909, the poet F. T. Marinetti published his incendiary “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” in a number of Italian and foreign newspapers and journals, most famously on the front page of the Parisian daily *Le Figaro* (49–53, Fig. 1).¹ As the international diffusion of his manifesto through both elite and mass media channels demonstrates, Marinetti’s ambition was not merely to launch a new literary school. Rather he aspired to found a utopian, revolutionary movement of both national and global dimensions. Unlike traditional patriotic movements, whose rhetoric emphasized continuity with history and the need for a stable and conservative social order, Marinetti’s vision of a regenerated Italy called for the embrace of modernity, the unfettered freedom of the individual, and the cult of violence. Futurism advocated the transformation of Italy into a fully industrialized, imperialist power through the creation of an elite cadre of virile “new men,” who would lead the masses in revolt against the debilitating constraints of the past. Avant-garde culture would play a major role in this enterprise by promoting new forms of consciousness and action.

Not surprisingly, then, Marinetti rejected the bourgeois doctrine of art for art’s sake and sought to link his critique of that doctrine and related institutions—the museum, library, and academy—to politicized forms of art. Although Futurism is only briefly mentioned in Peter Bürger’s influential treatise on the historical avant-garde, it is one of the movements that best fulfills its mission of fusing art and life.² No doubt Futurism’s unorthodox and ambivalent mixture of political elements from both the left and the right—including anarchism, Sorelian syndicalism, and nationalism—led Bürger to exclude it from his neo-Marxist analysis. But as Bürger himself and other recent scholars have observed, avant-garde artistic practices must be examined for their effects in specific historical contexts, and cannot always be associated with leftist politics.³ Futurism calls for interpretation precisely insofar as it was the first movement to posit a totalizing aim that merged artistic and political “revolution”; but it did so from a paradoxical position that was patriotic, militaristic, and antifeminist, while it simultaneously fostered connec-

tions with an international avant-garde, promoted the work of women artists, and sought alliances with the working class.

As a consequence, Futurism was also the first avant-garde movement to address the masses directly, rather than to appeal to a small intellectual coterie of fellow artists and bourgeois supporters. Futurism interpellated the masses, sometimes figured as a feminized crowd or *folla*, using media and techniques associated with anarchist political action, advertising, and popular entertainment. In the years just prior to World War I, Futurist artists wrote manifestos distributed as flyers (posted on walls, sent through the mail, and sometimes dropped by airplane onto the piazzas below), performed in Futurist *serate* (theatrical evenings), engaged in polemical debates in both the elite and popular press, and, once the war broke out, took to the streets to promote their interventionist aims. This desire for immediate engagement with a mass audience infused most of the movement's artistic innovations and continued to be a major goal during the postwar, fascist period.

Following a program of all-encompassing cultural activism, the movement eventually launched Futurist forms of painting, sculpture, poetry, photography, fashion, architecture, music, theater, stage design, film, exhibition design, mural arts, advertising, book design, and decorative arts. To qualify as Futurist, each medium had to be conceived in a provocatively new and transgressive way; typically a manifesto would be issued proclaiming the traditional or "passatista" (passéist) conventions that had been overthrown, while adumbrating the exciting innovations proposed by the Futurists. The manifestos extolled the various Futurist arts as exemplifying properties such as the beauty of speed, brevity, "mechanical splendor," violence, the shocking confrontation of disparate realities, the creation of far-flung analogies, and, finally, the achievement of nonmimetic, intuited unity or "synthesis."

Although otherwise refusing the expression of human sentiment or "psychology" in their art, the Futurists nevertheless celebrated the romantic notion of the artist-genius, sometimes conflated with the artist-warrior. This individual, the correlative in the realm of art of the "new man" in the realm of politics, instantiated a version of the Nietzschean superman. Drawing on presumably profound powers of intuition and creativity, the artist-genius was to sense the organic unity of the work and propel the spectator into its tumultuous center. This ideal of making the spectator "live" the work, through an empathic identification with its emotive core, was intended to rupture the aesthetic distance that governed the relation of most viewers to traditional works of art. Having rejected artistic autonomy, Futurism also rejected passive or contemplative modes of reception.

Above all, the Futurists intended their works to be performative, to provoke their viewers into Futurist "states of mind," and thereby incite them to action and violence. The riots they instigated through their prewar *serate*, anti-Austrian flag

burnings, and notorious fistfights were only the most extreme, but telling, moments of such artist-audience encounters. These riots and public manifestations were conceived as the preliminary phase of a broader cultural and social revolution—at least before the decisive political defeat of Futurism in the 1919 elections.

Early in 1910, a small group of artists joined Marinetti to establish the first coterie of Futurist painters. Umberto Boccioni had attended the Futurist *serata* of 15 February 1910 in Milan at the Teatro Lirico, together with his friend, the painter and musician Luigi Russolo; it was an evening of poetry that had exploded into an anti-Austrian demonstration, spilling out of the theater into the streets. Impressed by Marinetti's charisma and vision of a rejuvenated, modernized, and patriotic nation, they soon met him and drafted the "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters" (62–64), which was signed by Boccioni, Russolo, their friend Carlo Carrà, and two artists who later quickly dissociated themselves from the movement: Romolo Romani and Aroldo Bonzagni. This manifesto, written prior to the development of any Futurist painting, signals the artists' enthusiasm for the bold new movement that promised to energize the moribund artistic scene in Italy. Thus it makes ambitious, though vague, demands for the destruction of the cult of the past, and exalts originality especially if daring and violent. The manifesto also calls for an art that renders the sensations of modern life, especially insofar as they have been transformed by science and technology (by the X ray, accelerated travel, and studies demonstrating the persistence of an image on the retina, for example)—a goal that would continue to be important to much Futurist art.

"Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto" (64–67) followed in April and, like its antecedent, was primarily the work of Boccioni. It announces that Futurist painting will be based on Divisionism, the most advanced artistic model available at the time in Italy. Boccioni, along with Gino Severini, had studied Divisionist painting with Giacomo Balla in Rome in 1902. Italian Divisionism, like its French counterpart, Neo-Impressionism (sometimes called Pointillism after its technique of applying colors in individual points or dots), departed from direct observation of nature. Eschewing the overtly personal handling of paint typical of Impressionism, it sought to recreate visual effects of light while simultaneously intensifying formal unity and emotional appeal through the use of juxtaposed complementary colors, evenly applied in pure touches and strokes. Despite the fact that Divisionism was always more idiosyncratic and varied in its use of color and its brushwork than Neo-Impressionism, Boccioni felt the need to explain that Futurist Divisionism was not a cold, cerebral method that might be carried out by anyone, but the expression of "innate complementariness." By this he meant to emphasize the intuitive power of the artist-genius to sense those color relations that express the inner life of a subject, rather than its merely external appearance. (He thereby also refused to

accept the deliberately simplified, democratizing implications of Pointillist technique.) As Futurist painting and sculpture developed, this Divisionist principle of heightening color contrasts to enhance the emotional charge of a work of art would be interpreted more broadly, to embrace unmediated juxtaposition and collision as the bases of formal and material innovation.

Balla's painting was an important model for Boccioni, Severini, and their friend Mario Sironi, both for its technical aspects and its approach to subject matter. *Bankruptcy* of 1902 (Fig. 16), and *The Worker's Day* of 1904 (Fig. 17), exemplify the positivist and social humanitarian aspects of Balla's early work, with its emphasis on themes of poverty and proletarian labor, its aspiration for scientific objectivity, and its use of photography as the paradigm for a new realism. The quest for an immediate, corporeal relation with the viewer is evident in *Bankruptcy's* unusually low, oblique point of view, which draws attention to the graffiti on the abandoned door and the spittle on the pavement, as well as to the viewer's own physical stance before the painting. A related use of heightened realism to address the embodied spectator occurs in *The Worker's Day*, which Balla framed with painted bricks. This device enhances the analogy of the artist's construction of his triptych (panel by panel, stroke by stroke, brick by brick), with the depicted construction of a building. In organizing this painting according to times of day (morning and high noon at left, evening at right), Balla probably also intended to affirm a social principle that was then being debated in socialist and syndicalist circles: the "natural" (rather than contractual) right of laborers to a limited work day in recognition of their innate humanity and need for repose.⁴ Hence Balla portrays the men resting during their midday break and leaving the worksite in the evening.

The Street Lamp, most likely executed in preparation for the February 1912 exhibition at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery in Paris, marks Balla's delayed response to Futurism (Fig. 18). (This painting was mentioned for the first time in the catalogue to this show, but not exhibited.) Rather than depict the natural cycle of light and its relation to traditional forms of labor, the artist now celebrates electricity (a subject already present in *The Worker's Day*), and by implication a new world of artifice. Balla infuses his pictorial analysis of electric light with explosive energy, which overpowers the marginalized romantic moon, by transforming the Divisionist dot into a v-shaped centrifugal vector. The brilliant, almost shrill, contrasting colors Balla employs in this work clearly exceed the data of vision, to exalt the radiance of light produced by modern technology. This work also constitutes an early example of the Futurists' desire to convey the "consciousness" of machines, and of matter in an energized state of volatility and disaggregation. "Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto," which Balla signed, famously declares: "The suffering of a man is of the same interest to us as the suffering of an electric lamp, which can feel pain, suffer tremors, and shriek with the most heartrending expressions of

torment” (65). The surprising notion that an electric lamp might suffer and shriek spasmodically belies the overt optimism of most Futurist *machinolatria* (machine worship), and it suggests that works such as *The Street Lamp* could also be vehicles for conveying anxiety toward modernity and the disorienting shocks it produced on the senses of those accustomed to natural or softer gas lighting. The auratic halo that surrounds and contains the violent, almost blinding radiance of the arc lamp signals a desire to limit its potential for shattering traditional forms of perception. Ultimately Balla’s painting reveals a tension within Futurism, between its embrace of technical modernity and an aesthetics of speed, shock, and power, and a quest for otherworldly mystical experience.

Beginning in 1910, Boccioni also strove to invent a specifically Futurist iconography, recasting his earlier urban subjects to emphasize violent conflict or dynamic movement. *The City Rises* (initially titled *Work*) (Fig. 38), takes up the theme of modern industrial construction, to depict an electric plant that was just then being renovated in the Piazza Trento near Boccioni’s apartment. The many studies Boccioni executed in preparation for this major canvas over the course of a year (from spring 1910 to March 1911), reveal a significant evolution toward a Futurist conception of the new metropolis, of the annexation of electrical power, and of proletarian labor. In the early drawings, given titles such as *The Men* and *Giants and Pygmies*, diminutive workers struggle heroically to control and channel the energy of powerful, harnessed horses. Although already abstracted and idealized, these drawings retain a link to the scene of urban construction visible in Boccioni’s neighborhood (the southeastern industrial periphery of Milan), where laborers with their draft horses pulling carts of bricks and building materials were a familiar sight. In the final painting, the work of men and horses has been fused in a harmony of dynamic forces, and the harnesses, emblems of tamed energy, give way to blue blades suggesting wings. The “pegasus” that dominates the center of this painting has surprised many commentators by its apparent anachronism: why would a Futurist use a traditional symbol, rather than a machine, to represent power? For Boccioni, the central winged horse, which established the dominant diagonal rhythms of the painting, symbolizes a thrilling expenditure of energy, rather than the drudgery of hard work (still implied in the earliest studies). Similarly, Marinetti’s writings of 1910 celebrate the machine, not as a means of rationalizing and thereby increasing the productivity of work, but as a vehicle for acquiring ego-expanding powers of speed and flight. The machine assumes a quasi-organic, vitalist force in many of Marinetti’s writings; one early text describes a race car as a “great metallic jaguar” that, snorting, roaring, and biting, triumphs over “the immense serpent of the circuit” by swallowing it.⁵

Within the Futurist mythology of modernity, the construction of the city, and of an electric plant in particular, exemplified the exhilarating potential of capturing

and multiplying the energy inherent in matter. The telegraph poles and electric tram on the bridge at the upper left of *The City Rises* further emphasize this theme. An interest in science (and pseudo-science) was common in Futurist circles, satisfying the desire to embrace the latest forms of knowledge, and to acquire extra-human and even psychic powers. In the popular theories of Gustave Le Bon, for example, solar energy (light and heat) and electricity were both held to have the potential to destabilize the balance of molecular forces, thereby resulting in the “disaggregation” of matter and the explosive release of latent energy.⁶ In *The City Rises*, the play of complementary colors on the partially dematerialized bodies of the men and horses figures forth a Futurist vision of this new science, with its emphasis on matter’s volatility and potential for scattering. Boccioni’s heroized workers raise their arms in open, expansive gestures, as if to receive the transformative energy of light, which streams down on them from the power plant in the distance, as well as from the sun overhead. Yet something of Boccioni’s earlier conception of the painting, as a nearly impossible contest between “giants and pygmies,” still survives. Swept along by the tremendous power of the horses, the striving gestures of the workers, unconstrained by gravity or indeed by “work,” become unmotivated, and the city seems to rise of its own accord. (The painting acquired its current title, *The City Rises* [*La ville monte*], on the occasion of its exhibition at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery in 1912, probably on the recommendation of Marinetti.)

Executed with a related expressive intent, Antonio Sant’Elia’s visionary drawings of a “new city” and electric power plants share Boccioni’s enthusiasm for the modern metropolis and the energy afforded by this technology. (Italy’s delayed industrialization was in part due to its lack of coal, a disadvantage the advent of electric power promised to redress.) Indeed, the New City drawings present a utopian image of urban dwelling. Realized with machinelike precision, Sant’Elia’s skyscrapers refuse historicist ornament, instead massing to emphasize soaring height, clarity of structure, and dynamic movement (Fig. 103). Their post-and-lintel system with multiple setbacks allows light and air to circulate, while separated elevators, iron catwalks, traffic lanes, and bridges imagine the future in terms of intersecting vertical and horizontal transportation systems. Yet the human subject is rarely pictured in these drawings, which remain strangely uncluttered by urban crowds. The precisely rendered, hygienic metropolis of Mario Chiattone seems even more remote from the possibility of habitation (Fig. 63).

In 1913, Sant’Elia embarked on the *dinamismi*, a remarkable series of drawings for modern buildings in which nearly abstract, undecorated volumes are defined by boldly rendered black lines that frequently overshoot their mark (Fig. 101). As usual in Sant’Elia’s work, no ground plan or elevation is given, only a pictorial image intended to arouse an empathic response. In the related drawings of hydro-

electric plants, which he began at the same time, Sant'Elia again adopts a low, monumentalizing viewpoint and a dynamic use of line (Fig. 102). Unlike the careful mechanical rendering of the New City drawings, Sant'Elia executes the power plants with spontaneous lines and glowing washes of burnt sienna, mauve, and dark green. If the former convey a sense of optimism, in which technology at least potentially serves human purposes, the latter seem intended to inspire feelings of romantic awe in which individuals are dwarfed before colossal structures and the energies they unleash.

The celebration of both electric and solar light would prove to be a central theme for many of the Futurists. The nocturnal pleasures and artificial sensations of urban life made possible by electricity had been enthusiastically singled out in the "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters" as sources of a "new psychology." Carrà's *Piazza del Duomo* of 1909 depicts the Milanese square at night, transformed by the radiance of electric lights and trams, as well as by the criss-crossing network of rails underfoot and wires overhead (Fig. 54). Anonymous, scarcely distinguishable individuals mill about, constituting a heterogeneous crowd. The monumental Duomo (cathedral) is nowhere to be seen, its traditional function to articulate a stable, central urban space displaced by the new function of the site as a traffic node. The glittering lights that pervade the scene, rendered in a Divisionist style that makes the surface seem to shimmer and dissolve, convey a sense of the excitement afforded by the new technology, while also picturing some of its more disorienting effects.

Similarly, Boccioni's *Riot in the Galleria* of 1910 unfolds under the glare of electric lights in the "Galleria," Milan's most famous arcade (which opens onto the Piazza del Duomo) (Fig. 37). The painting portrays a violent dispute between two women (probably prostitutes) that has exploded into a melee.⁷ In consonance with contemporary theories of crowd psychology, this crowd is "feminized."⁸ Boccioni depicts the "hysteria" emanating from its center as irrational and highly contagious, drawing into its vortex the crowd of night visitors to the fashionable gallery and its cafés. Only the bourgeois gentleman with raised arms in the center foreground faces outward. Partially cut off by the lower edge of the canvas, this figure seems to pitch forward into the space before the frame, as if to forestall the rush of the picture's viewers into its magnetic force field.

A more explicitly political meaning accrues to the theme of the riot in an early major painting by Carlo Carrà, *The Funeral of the Anarchist Galli* of 1910–11 (Fig. 56). The subject is inspired by an historical event that Carrà had witnessed, and that he later claimed led him to invent the famous Futurist dictum: "we shall put the spectator in the center of the picture."⁹ The young anarchist Angelo Galli was killed on 11 May 1906, a day of citywide strikes in Milan. During Galli's funeral procession, a group of his anarchist friends, who were carrying his decorated cof-

fin, attempted to break through a police line in order to march toward the historic center of Milan. A skirmish ensued in which the anarchists were held back; the funeral eventually proceeded to the cemetery as planned. Although conflicting newspaper accounts of this event exist, it appears that the melee was relatively modest with a few stones thrown, the police holding their line with lances, and no injuries or arrests reported. Carrà's preparatory pastel drawing of the funeral is also restrained; in conformity with events as they probably transpired, it shows the anarchists overpowered and subdued (Fig. 55). The contrast of this drawing with the final painting demonstrates the distance Carrà traveled in his effort to achieve a mythologized, fully Futurist version of the event. *The Funeral of the Anarchist Galli* explodes with violence; the repeated rhythm of pounding fists seems to shatter the surrounding space, while the blood-red cover of the coffin merges with the red glow of the sun to set the picture aflame. All trajectories and gestures are now set on a diagonal, including the bourgeois gentleman who raises his cane at the far left, the horseman's lance that seems to intersect it, and the lunging anarchist in the foreground, who brandishes a stick overhead with his right hand, while preparing to throw a red stone with his left. Even the blue pylon in the distance seems to topple forward as space implodes. In contrast to the earlier drawing, there is no open foreground to create a sense of spatial distance from which the spectator can safely observe this conflict. This pivotal painting marks an important moment in Carrà's eventual transformation from an anarchist to a militant patriot with strong antihumanitarian sentiments. What Carrà's painting celebrates in the anarchist vision of the world seems primarily to be its revulsion for the bourgeoisie and its fascination with violence as the preferred political method of the revolutionary proletariat.

Carrà's *Leaving the Theater*, of 1911 (Fig. 57), suggests a similar contempt for the wealthy, although the mood seems more pessimistic. Glittering under electric lights, the elegantly attired individuals leaving the theater seem oblivious to the marginalized worker, who clears a path in the snow for them at the far left. Their isolated, shrouded forms and downturned faces make them exemplars of the antiheroic passatismo that the Futurists sought to combat. Here the expressive language of bodily gesture and movement carries the political message of class antagonism, even in the absence of an overt story or historical reference.

The widely diffused Neo-Impressionist theories of Georges Seurat concerning the expressive value of particular kinds of lines probably guided Carrà's composition of *Leaving the Theater*, as it did Boccioni's triptych *States of Mind II* of 1911–12 (Figs. 41–43). These works, along with *The Funeral of the Anarchist Galli*, were exhibited at the famous Futurist exhibition at the Galerie Bernheim-Jeune in Paris in February 1912. The manifesto "The Exhibitors to the Public" (105–109), written for the occasion, provides valuable clues for the interpretation of the aesthetic ideas

of the Futurists at this time. In it we read that the directional force of certain lines convey specific emotional effects: ascending lines create a sense of joy and dynamism, descending lines produce a sense of sadness, horizontal lines evoke calm and equilibrium. This theory of the universally affective qualities of lines draws on ideas widely disseminated in France during the nineteenth century, and outlined in 1899 in Paul Signac's famous book, *Georges Seurat and Neo-Impressionism*. The importance of this theory to Futurist practice is evident in many of the paintings exhibited in the Bernheim-Jeune exhibition. It allows us to see dejection and a lack of vital force in the strangely slouching profiles of the bourgeoisie in Carrà's *Leaving the Theater*, as well as in the cascade of lines and introverted gestures of the figures in *Those Who Stay*, the final panel in Boccioni's *States of Mind II* triptych. At times, Boccioni's paintings seem to rely on such "laws" with astonishing literalism.

Boccioni's *States of Mind II*, on the theme of a tumultuous departure at a train station, was the centerpiece of the Bernheim-Jeune show. Two versions of this triptych exist, the first executed in 1911 in a lush, painterly style, and the second in a cubist-inspired style completed over the winter of 1911–12 after a brief visit to Paris in November. In the catalogue essay (105–109), the artists declare themselves to be on a revolutionary artistic path parallel to that of their French counterparts, even while surpassing them in modernity. In particular, the Futurists emphasize the importance of subject matter as the necessary basis for an art that seeks to render modern sensations. Hence Boccioni's theme and its three moments, which become the vehicle for expressing the nexus of physical dynamism and corresponding psychic states. According to Boccioni, the panel *States of Mind II: The Farewells* is characterized by "confused and trepidating lines, either straight or curved," which "will express a sensation of chaotic excitement."

The Farewells portrays, in quasi-cinematic repetition and variation, a series of couples embracing through the windows of a train seen in multiple perspectives (approaching from the upper right, in profile at the center, and receding into the distance at the left). This multiplication of the couples dilates the action in time, to encompass the present as well as its continuity in the future, as the train traverses time and space. Boccioni renders the bodies of the embracing figures, as well as the rectangular window frames, in a fragmented, semitransparent manner that undermines their material solidity and allows interior and exterior, near and far, to interpenetrate. Moreover, Boccioni paints the embracing figures mostly from above, while he renders the train both from the side (the stenciled numerals emphasize this planarity), and obliquely in outlined form. His aim is to convey a sense of the simultaneity of points of view, and of the fusion of objects and figures with their environment—not only in order to communicate the totality of available physical sensations, but the totality of the psychic event. The other two panels of

the triptych expand the emotional range of the scene: *Those Who Go* renders the anxious “state of mind” of those who depart with a series of “fleeting, rapid, and jerky” horizontal lines, while *Those Who Stay* renders the dejected sentiments of those left behind through “perpendicular lines, undulating and as it were worn out, clinging here and there to silhouettes of empty bodies.” Boccioni’s effort to ground his work in a universal language of expressive line, form, and color would be characteristic of all his work, as well as that of the other Futurists. It accounts for Russolo’s choice of a “dynamic” wedge (which drives upward and to the left, as if against the gravity and inertia of tradition), with which to visualize the penetrating, collective will of the masses in *The Revolt* of 1911 (Fig. 97), a work also exhibited at the Bernheim-Jeune show. Through the deliberate use of these seemingly universal forms, the Futurists sought “to determine completely new laws which may deliver painting from the wavering uncertainty in which it lingers,” while at the same time preserving the role of artistic spontaneity and intuition.

Despite the Futurists’ claims to have achieved a total renovation of art, the Bernheim-Jeune exhibition was traditional in that it represented only the work of painters. Artists such as Balla, who was frequently inspired by photography, and the Bragaglia brothers, who had invented the technique of photodynamism by the spring of 1911, were deliberately excluded. Boccioni, in particular, viewed all forms of photography as merely mechanical means of capturing objective appearances, and hence as a threat to the creative power of the true artist. Anton Giulio Bragaglia’s manifesto “Futurist Photodynamism,” published in 1913, seeks to refute this charge. He argues that his *fotodinamismi* constitute a unique and autonomous form of art that must be distinguished from ordinary photography, as well as from Étienne-Jules Marey’s chronophotography, which like Boccioni, he characterizes as providing only static views of external reality (Fig. 76). His *fotodinamismi*, on the contrary, seek to capture the trace of a moving object’s *continuous* trajectory, including its “*intermovemental* states.” Bragaglia argues that in these images, every stage of a movement is linked to every other stage, without the gaps or intervals that shatter the enduring identity of an object. He further claims that photodynamic distortion and dematerialization are proportional to the speed of the moving object, so that by increasing its speed, one can achieve greater synthesis, derealization, and lyricism, ultimately revealing the spiritual essence (or vibration) of an object. In order to emphasize their artistic qualities, Bragaglia printed some of his photodynamisms, including *The Carpenter*, in burnt sienna, framed them, and referred to them as “quadri” (paintings). While insisting on their status as art, however, he also declared that the photodynamisms are sustained by a residual core of anatomical accuracy. Although Bragaglia never explained his technique, images such as *The Typist* and *The Carpenter*, both of 1911, are probably the result of long exposure.

Bragaglia's 1913 manifesto includes cinema among the static arts, because it creates an apparently moving image from a sequence of stills. By 1917, however, he had found a way to reconfigure this medium as well. In collaboration with Enrico Prampolini, Bragaglia produced *Thaïs*, one of the earliest Futurist films. Most of *Thaïs* is a traditional psychological melodrama, but as Millicent Marcus argues, this passatista form is symbolically put to death by the highly innovative final sequence.¹⁰ Here the diva commits suicide through interaction with an extraordinary set comprising daggerlike geometric shapes, so that the apparatus itself (light, rhythm, and set design) assumes the expressive function.

Balla based his motion studies, such as *Rhythm of the Violinist* (Fig. 19) and *Girl Running on a Balcony* (Fig. 20), both of 1912, on Bragaglia's work as well as on the earlier chronophotography of Marey. Marey's chronophotographs were distinctive in that, for the first time, they captured the sequential moments of an action on a single rotating photographic plate. Balla's paintings take Marey's chronophotographs, which are frequently lyrical in their own right, only as a point of departure. The artist transformed his early descriptive studies of *Girl Running on a Balcony* into a gridlike pictorial field shimmering with complementary colors, applied in pure and overlapping touches. Similarly, *Rhythm of the Violinist* evokes the vibrations of music through a pattern of linear striations. As in earlier works, Balla made the frame an integral part of his picture so that *Rhythm of the Violinist* gives visual shape to the expansiveness of sound.

In *Swifts: Paths of Movement + Dynamic Sequences* of 1913 (Fig. 24), Balla's observation of the birds' movement near his balcony provides the ostensible point of origin, but his painting then leaves behind the realm of the literally visible. The artist transposes the undulating path of the swifts into a rhythmic design approaching abstraction. The wavy white lines that traverse the surface of the canvas seem divorced from their empirical referent and convey the sensation of flight as such. The birds, too, have been rendered in a streamlined, nearly mechanical manner that emphasizes the serial repetition of their movements to an unnaturalistic degree. The partial derealization of the swifts allows Balla to distribute them across the pictorial field in an effort to suggest the interpenetration of the birds with their environment—including a roof drainpipe, a door, and Persian blinds. The tension between the artist's initial reliance on empirical phenomena, and the transformation of these phenomena into intuited "lines of force" and patterns of movement, also characterizes the *Iridescent Interpenetrations* (Figs. 22, 23). This series comprises some of the earliest geometric abstractions in twentieth-century art, but it also includes works that retain a natural referent.

The passage toward abstraction occurred during Balla's two 1912 sojourns in Düsseldorf at the home of the Löwensteins, who had commissioned the artist to decorate their drawing room, as well as a music study being built in the garden.¹¹

While there, he also painted *Window in Düsseldorf* (Fig. 21), which provides visual commentary on the *Iridescent Interpenetrations*. Balla's picture represents a view through a double window (with one pane opened), in which the distant forms of the Rhine River and a bridge are just discernible as hazy violet forms. Rows of pale yellow strokes read as crystallizations of sunlight on the closed window and call attention to this surface as a screen between the viewer and the world outside. These strokes reappear as reflections on the opened window to the right, where their color intensifies and the forms of the bridge and river dissolve even further. The motif of the binoculars refers to the theme of looking, and in particular, to the desire to enhance natural vision by bringing objects closer. As such it alludes to the Futurist aim of depicting the simultaneity of near and far, just as the reflections on the opened window bring light and color from the exterior into the room. Yet Balla's binoculars remain on the sill, and the view presented by this painting does not reproduce their highly focused, close-up mode of seeing (and of possessing what is seen). Balla executed the painting in a loosely Divisionist style that renounces outlines, traditional modeling, and detail (all associated with tactile apprehension), in favor of emphasizing the haze and immaterial luminosity that enveloped the scene, evocative of things seen from a distance and hence, of memory. As Balla wrote in a letter of 18 November 1912, which included a sketch of the painting, "I have opened the window for a moment to get some fresh air; in the distance one sees the Rhine with its iron bridge, but everything is veiled and Italy is so far away!"¹²

Window in Düsseldorf, then, seeks to convey the interplay of distance and immediacy, nostalgia and presence, occasioned by an act of perception. The painting fuses a view of the exterior world with interior reflections, both registered as pure sensations that have left their trace on a single, unified screen. It further invites us to read this screen as establishing a series of analogies between the depicted pane of glass, the literal canvas, and the retina. The painting's materiality is both affirmed and dissolved: the window frame and mullions organize the composition into a grid that echoes the picture surface and its rectangular format; yet by cropping his window frame so closely, Balla also causes the composition to spill forward into the viewer's space.

The *Iridescent Interpenetrations* depart from a similar desire to convey the experience of light and to imply an infinite extension of the pictorial surface into the environment. The series includes works that refer to specific optical events, creating pictorial equivalents for the prismatic rays of the sun (Fig. 22) and the play of light and shadow on Eucalyptus leaves, as well as abstractions that allude only to general structures of vision—mirrorlike reflections, serial repetitions, expanding kaleidoscopic patterns, and so forth. The earliest sign of these radiant works appears in watercolor sketches on a postcard Balla sent to his pupil Gino Galli in November 1912.¹³ A letter of December invites his family to "take some pleasure

in this little rainbow [*iriduccio*], because I am certain you will like it; it is the result of infinite experiments, finally achieving the aim of delighting through simplicity. This study will bring about other changes in my painting, and through observation from life, the spectrum (*iride*) will reveal and convey an infinity of color sensations etcetera.”¹⁴ Balla’s experiments included working with a compass and T-square to create abstract patterns based on the circle, square, and triangle, forms symbolic of perfection and susceptible to serial progressions and decorative repetition. Many of the *Iridescent Interpenetrations* are organized so that a series of interlocking shapes is complemented by its reflection. *Iridescent Interpenetration No. 7* comprises three horizontal registers, divided by an unmarked interval, with the top and bottom registers mirroring the central one (Fig. 23). This reflexive structure, the cropping at right and left, and the progression of color values, allow one to imagine this square painting as a section of a larger universe. Light seems to travel from right to left across the painting, illuminating the interpenetrating triangles at right so intensely that they are almost bleached of color, while those at left verge on darkness. This *Iridescent Interpenetration* thus encompasses the limits of visibility as governed by light and by the partially overlapping colors of the spectrum. Gino Severini’s related explorations of the centrifugal and centripetal movement of light date from only slightly later (Fig. 107). His abstract works retain the Divisionist dot and the play of complementary colors that had long been central to his art. They share with Balla’s *Iridescent Interpenetrations* the aim of finding equivalents in color and form for ever-changing sensations of light, as well as the desire to project the trajectory of those sensations onto and beyond the frame.

Boccioni’s approach to the representation of dynamism would be radically different. What Boccioni sought was a synthetic realization of movement that would capture both the “absolute motion” and “relative motion” of objects. Drawing these ideas from his reading of Henri Bergson as well as from the 1912 literary manifestos of Marinetti, Boccioni understood absolute motion to be the result of the inherent volatility of matter with its whirring electrons and propensity to “disaggregate,” whereas relative motion was the displacement of one object in relation to another. He theorized that artists could intuit the absolute motion of an apparently still object by empathically identifying with its core in order to sense the dynamic forces inherent to its forms and materiality, and the way these forces would propel the object to fuse with its environment.

Boccioni’s search for a formal language with which to convey his ideas about motion found its most dramatic realization in his sculpture. His earliest experiments sought to create a sense of dynamism through the clash of different materials. *Fusion of a Head and a Window* of 1912 (Fig. 46) was an audacious if unsuccessful attempt to deploy a variety of new and modern materials—including gesso, wood, glass, metal, and a chignon of real hair—as called for in his manifesto of “Futurist

Sculpture” (which, though dated 11 April 1912, did not appear until September of that year). Partially sculpted and partially constructed, *Fusion of a Head and a Window* included movable parts in an effort to overcome mere illusion. Yet this work was derived from pictorial prototypes in Boccioni’s oeuvre, many of which portray a woman seated near a window (Fig. 45), in which the light streaming in from the outside world dissolves the boundaries between objects and obliterates clear distinctions between near and far. Here, however, the opposite effect is achieved; the window frame seems to impale the grimacing woman’s head, while rays of light become reified forms in space. Boccioni himself was not convinced of its success and later destroyed this experimental work, though he continued to explore the possibilities of combining materials in other constructions and collages (Fig. 51).

Development of a Bottle in Space of 1912 (Fig. 48) resolves the question of how to represent the interpenetration of an ostensibly still object with elements of its environment, by returning to a unified medium (initially plaster), and relying on the vocabulary of synthesizing lines of force. Comparison with a related drawing demonstrates that Boccioni conceives the bottle as both coherent and fragmented, vertically anchored and expanding to fuse with its environment, which includes a table top, dish, glass, and house in the distance (Fig. 47). The artist depicts these objects from multiple points of view, but also as if they are caught in the rotating force field generated by the bottle’s circular form. In *Development of a Bottle in Space*, the opened core reveals an essential, still profile; simultaneously, centrifugal force lines project outward from this core to unfurl the bottle in space. Although Boccioni “develops” his sculpture in the round, his desire for a single, all-encompassing point of view leads him to maintain a strong sense of planar frontality. As Rosalind Krauss observes, from this idealized vantage, the viewer is granted instantaneous total knowledge of the bottle—as both an unchanging form and as an object undergoing spontaneous temporal transformation.¹⁵ This work exemplifies an enduring tension in Futurist theory and art, between the desire to embrace all that is new and in a state of becoming, and the desire to contain these phenomena in synthesized unities easily grasped by the mind and senses.

Unique Forms of Continuity in Space of 1913 (Fig. 49) exemplifies Boccioni’s polemic against chronophotography as a means of conveying sensations of undivided motion. The search for “unique” forms of continuity stands in opposition to a multiplicity of static moments as the triumph of synthesis over analysis, and of unity over fragmentation. Indeed a similar critique had guided Boccioni’s response to Cubism, which he viewed as coldly intellectual and lacking organic vitality. Like *Development of a Bottle in Space*, this sculpture creates a productive tension between opposing qualities: it plays balanced stability against the figure’s forward thrust; it suggests the power of tensed human muscles without imitating the appearance of flesh; and it evokes the heat and evanescence of wind-blown flames as well as the

cold impenetrability of a projectile. Hard geometric elements occasionally pierce the surface of the body, revealing it to be a fusion of flesh and metal, man and machine. This sculpture seems to visualize Marinetti's fantasy of the body as a kind of ballistic weapon, capable of explosive force, yet impervious to attack. Conceived as a projectile, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space* bears no individuating features; the head is encased in a helmet and bears a crosslike projection in the place of a visage, while the chest and legs evince the development of winglike forms. In "Multiplied Man and the Reign of the Machine" of 1911 (89–92), Marinetti had predicted the evolution of a new nonhuman type with organs "constructed for omnipresent velocity" and "adapted to the exigencies of an environment made of continuous shocks. Already now we can foresee an organ that will resemble a prow developing from the outward swelling of the sternum, which will be the more pronounced the better an aviator the man of the future becomes." The "prow" formed by the projecting breastplate in Boccioni's sculpture appears to be a nearly literal version of such an adaptive organ: sheathing an empty core, it constitutes a Futurist cyborg devoid of interiority, and therefore of "moral suffering, generosity, affect, and love, poisonous corrosives that sap the inexhaustible supply of vital energy."¹⁶

If Marinetti's early writings extolling violence and the creation of a virile elite of supermen were influential on the Futurist artists, his literary manifestos of 1912, 1913, and 1914, proclaiming the new poetic form of words-in-freedom, opened a field of experimentation to virtually all Futurists. Words-in-freedom introduced the aesthetics of speed to poetry, by jettisoning traditional syntax and relying instead on the collision of far-flung analogies between disparate realities. In "The Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature" of 1912 (119–125), Marinetti declared: "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." Severini, Boccioni, and Carrà were among the artists to seek pictorial equivalents for this use of analogies to capture the "life of matter." Such analogies could be established through the interpolation of bits of disruptive, relatively untransformed matter (sequins, newspaper text, photographs, a fake mustache, excerpts of Futurists manifestos) into works of art. Such materials, still redolent of the "real" world from which they had been torn, were understood as equivalent to the onomatopoeia Marinetti used in his free-word poetry, which he regarded as exemplifying reality itself. Analogies might also be created through the exploration of surprising formal and material resemblances (sea = dancer = machine-gun fire), or through the transference of effects from the visual to the auditory field, eventually to embrace all the senses in a great synthesis. Marinetti's poem "Battle Weight + Smell" (written in the summer of 1912 and then incorporated into his "A Response to Objections" in the autumn; 125–129)

provided an important prototype for the notion that sensory experiences could be communicated through an intuitive (but nevertheless precise and scientific) analysis of different types and qualities of matter in conflict. Such an impersonal treatment of extreme experiences, and especially of war, was meant both to desensitize the reader to human suffering and to encourage an identification with machines, weapons, and matter itself.

Drawing on Marinetti's innovations in poetry and his knowledge of Picasso's earliest collages, Severini introduced elements of reality into several of his paintings, including *Dynamic Hieroglyph of the Bal Tabarin* (Fig. 105) and *Portrait of Marinetti* (Fig. 106). He applied sequins to the surfaces of the former work in order to capture real effects of flickering light and thereby enhance a sense of swirling motion; and he included legible fragments of several manifestos in his *Portrait of Marinetti* (a part of "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" appears in the lower left corner, "Battle Weight + Smell" in the lower right, and "Destruction of Syntax—Radio Imagination—Words-in-Freedom" at the top left). Notoriously, it also sports a fake mustache, which gave rise to a bitter polemic between Boccioni and Giovanni Papini in the pages of *Lacerba* in 1914, in which the latter denounced the use of bits of "reality" in works of art. The inclusion of texts authored by Marinetti identifies him with his literary production and lends a performative quality to the portrait. Dressed in formal black, he appears as if on stage during a *serata*, declaiming his manifestos and poems (Fig. 6).

In late 1913 and early 1914 Severini elaborated his theory of plastic analogies in several versions of a manifesto that Marinetti never considered sufficiently Futurist in spirit and tone to publish. Nonetheless, this manifesto (165–169) provides valuable testimony about Severini's artistic practice, and especially about the continuing relevance of Divisionism to his thought. Assimilating Futurist analogies to Divisionism's pictorial contrasts, Severini argues that analogies "start with affinities or resemblances and end with specific contrasts and differences." He also distinguishes between "real" and "apparent" analogies: of the former he writes: "the sea dancing, with its zigzag movements and contrasting silver and emerald, within my plastic sensibility evokes the distant vision of a dancer covered in sparkling sequins in her world of light, noise, and sound." Condensed, these associations could be transcribed as "sea = dancer." Taken further through "apparent analogy," this initial coupling could yield "sea = dancer = a bunch of flowers." Eventually, such analogies became more bellicose, reflecting both the prowar rhetoric of Futurism, and the escalating political tensions in Europe. Severini's *Serpentine Dance*, executed during the early summer of 1914 (Fig. 109), establishes analogies between the "giro rapidissimo" (rapid turn) of a dancer and the "tattattatta" of machine-gun fire, as well as between the "luminous penetration" of an arc lamp, the laceration of a Mauser bullet, and "rain" effect of fireworks. Severini unites these sensations by

placing them in a single v-shaped wedge that comes to a point at the center, only to be released in the opposite direction as an expansion of sizzling sound: SZSZSZSZ. Such exchanges between a dancer's whirling motion and the sound of weapons, or among effects of light, violent penetration, and sound, suggest that matter constitutes a unified field, in which the differences between organic and inorganic entities have been annulled. The tendency, in works such as *Sea = Dancer* (Fig. 108), to suppress the body of the dancer in favor of an abstract pattern of lines and vivid color contrasts evoking the fusion of sea and dancer, here achieves its apogee. The body, considered merely another element in a cacophonous world of dynamic matter, could only be experienced through ever multiplying analogies or textual and mathematical signs. Severini inscribes "Carne Rosa + Cielo Rosa" (Rose flesh + rose sky) on an arc at the upper left, just as he now writes "Bleu" (blue), "Giallo" (yellow), and "Viola" (violet) to signify these colors in his free-word drawing.

Carrà's *Free-Word Painting—Patriotic Festival*, executed in late June 1914, conveys a similar synthesis of sensory effects through the use of collage, onomatopoeia, and expressive typography (Fig. 60). This work is modeled on the exhilarating new form of vision made possible through aviation; in the center we read "aviatore" (aviator), "Italia," "battere il record" (break the record), and "eliche perforanti" (perforating propellers). Indeed, this collage invites the viewer to assume the daring optic of the aviator at its fulcrum. Among the fragments of text that seem to whirl clockwise, like propellers, are patriotic slogans ("Long Live the King," "Long Live the Army," "Down with . . ."), advertisements for medicinal and hygiene products (Tot, Odol), fragments of Futurist manifestos and texts published in *Lacerba*, and at bottom center, the Italian flag. Although the war had not yet broken out, the presence of this flag, on which Carrà inscribed "Trieste Italiana Milano," proclaims the artist's irredentist message by asserting that Trieste is as Italian as Milan. This collage responds to the political crisis provoked by Red Week, a week of anarchist and socialist rioting that erupted during the second week of June 1914. In the wake of the collapse of this insurrectionary movement, Carrà, like other anarchists and syndicalists, seems to have lost faith in the revolutionary potential of the proletariat. Through its synthesizing composition, *Patriotic Festival* declares that national unity and wholeness (including the "redemption" of the city of Trieste from the Austrians), rather than continued class conflict, will ensure Italy's greatness. Significantly, this unity will be based on nationalist myths, the authority of the monarchy, the power of the army, and an ideal of collective social hygiene signified through products such as Tot and Odol.¹⁷ Yet Carrà's collage, which simulates the whirring of a propeller blade, also announces the violence at the heart of this fantasized unity, with its imposition of an authoritarian hierarchy—the aviator-leader at the center, the proletarian *folla* (crowd) cast to the edge and absorbed into the larger, homogenous notion of the people. As Carrà put it in *Guerrapittura* (War-

painting), “The crowd, the plebes, will never understand the superior man. We’ll leave the masses their silly leaders. We have always insulted the crowd.”¹⁸

Once the war broke out in August 1914, Marinetti urged the Futurist artists “to live the war pictorially,” making it the subject of patriotic works of art. He further asserted that these works would of necessity be more “realistic,” in order to incite the viewer to action, just as the war “strikes and incites the combatants.”¹⁹ Although they did not always follow this mandate for a new “realism,” Boccioni, Carrà, and Severini all made interventionist works, in which selected fragments of newspapers, photographs, war maps, and other pasted and typographic elements contribute to a sense of urgency and political relevance. Many of these works were created prior to May 1915, during the period of Italy’s neutrality in the war. Despite the fact that Italy was still a member of the Triple Alliance, the Futurists’s works are aggressively anti-Austrian and anti-German, and seek to position Italy on the side of France and Britain. Carrà’s typographic chart, *Futurist Synthesis of the War* (Fig. 59), argues for Italy’s political realignment in racial terms, containing the Latin nations and their allies within a dynamic wedge that pierces and drives back an arc holding the German, Austrian, and Turkish peoples. A similar racial vocabulary is deployed in Carrà’s *The Night of January 20, 1915 I Dreamed This Picture (Joffre’s Angle of Penetration Against Two German Cubes on the Marne)* (Fig. 62), a work that celebrates General Joffre’s dramatic victory at the Marne River against the German army. In Carrà’s collage, a map-like ground is marked with the French word “ICI” (here), indicating the site of the battle. This ground also provides the backdrop for an aerial conflict between two aircraft: most likely a French Morane monoplane, with its tapered fuselage at the left, and a German Albatros B.II, with its distinctive two-bay wing structure at the right, to which Carrà connected the German iron cross.²⁰ By conflating the recognizable forms of these aircraft with the seemingly natural formal language of a “dynamic” wedge versus two “static” cubes, Carrà suggests that the French victory was predetermined by innate racial character (French *élan* versus German stasis). History is converted into seemingly natural forms in an effort to appeal to the viewer empathically and to promote Italian intervention on the side of France.

Similarly, Boccioni’s *Charge of the Lancers* (Fig. 51) depicts a specific historical event as if it were the inevitable result of the heroic dynamism of the French people. Charging French cavalry seem to burst through a newspaper clipping with rushing forms and dramatically poised lances. The newspaper text assures us of their victory, despite the fact that the Germans, pushed to the lower left edge of the work and deprived of corporeal presence, are nevertheless equipped with far more powerful artillery.

By contrast, Severini’s *Sea = Battle of 1914–15* dispenses with the depiction of soldiers altogether, to convey a fantasy of dynamic conflict through forms, colors,

and words (Fig. 110). The analogy “sea = battle” gives the work a double structure, fusing a maplike overview of advancing infantry positions and a more abstract image of waves of troops (“liquid masses = infantry”) assaulting the “granite resistance” and “black cubic rocks” of geometric shapes projecting upward from the bottom edge. The large letters “ШОК” (shock) with the smaller “inevitable” in the center, further dramatizes the violent collision of forces. Just below we encounter the “burst of laughter” (éclat de rire) of “unending machine-gun fire” (feu ininterrompu des mitrailleuses), an analogy designed to equate war and festival, the thrill of violence and the joy of laughing, both rendered as “tatatatata.” As in Boccioni’s collage, French victory is secured, here through a representation of the superior force of the sea as it crashes over the enemy rocks. Severini’s *The Hospital Train* of 1915, inspired by the trains he saw passing beneath his studio window in Paris, presents a less optimistic view of the war’s effects (Fig. 111).²¹ Seen from above, the interior of the train opens to reveal the fragmentary forms of wounded men on superimposed stretchers, tended by a nurse. Here enthusiasm for the war gives way to a recognition of its toll. Despite their evident patriotic message, Severini’s works were hardly a commercial success. Two Parisian exhibitions of his Futurist war paintings early in 1916 yielded only one sale, to Adrienne Monier, the owner of the bookshop where one of the shows was held.

Both Boccioni and Sant’Elia were killed in the war, and several other important Futurists, including Carrà, Severini, Mario Sironi, and Ardengo Soffici, eventually rejected the movement and participated in the widespread “return to order” in postwar European art.²² Marinetti responded by seeking new recruits, while striving to keep the memory of Boccioni and Sant’Elia alive as Futurist martyrs and heroes. In May 1920, after the overwhelming defeat of the Futurist-Fascist political platform to the Socialists and Catholic Popular Party in the 1919 elections, and the turn to a more reactionary position by Mussolini, Marinetti resigned from the Fascist Party’s Central Committee. Henceforth, he claimed, Futurism would be concerned solely with aesthetics. In *Beyond Communism* of 1920 (254–264), he advocates a state governed by artists, whom he calls the “proletariat of gifted men.” This essay reveals the terms of the postwar political crisis for Futurism: caught between the perceived threat to individual freedom of the Russian Revolution and the tendency toward antilibertarian reaction of the Fascists, Marinetti opts for an artistic utopia. Art would function as the preserve of “anarchic individualism, the dream and vocation of every strong intellect.” Indeed, for a brief time in the early 1920s Marinetti seems to have been disillusioned by the political direction Fascism was taking.²³ In his address to the Futurist Congress of 1924, he urged il Duce “to liberate yourself from Parliament. Bring back to Fascism and to Italy the marvelous spirit of 1919, disinterested, ardent, antisocialist, anticlerical, antimonarchical.” But if Marinetti saw that Mussolini had abandoned the more libertarian political

platform they had shared in 1919, by 1924 he also came to believe that Fascism fulfilled the “minimum program” of the revolutionary spirit of Futurism, and he henceforth lent the regime his full support.²⁴ No doubt his frequently repeated assertion that the word “Italy” should stand above that of “freedom” guided his political choices at this juncture. He abandoned his former criticisms of the Church (and married within it in 1926), extolled the imperialist ventures of the regime in Ethiopia and elsewhere, and continued to vilify all those who opposed the regime and its repressive policies. No longer an “anarchist individualist” working to destroy the existing state and its institutions, he accepted the title of Academician in 1929. Futurism thus abandoned the oppositional status it had had in the prewar period (including the demand that museums be burned), and although it continued to celebrate experimentation, novelty, and dynamism, these values were increasingly subordinated to Fascist dogma.

In return, Marinetti demanded a privileged position for the Futurists as the earliest allies of the Fascists, but Mussolini preferred to allow a diversity of artistic tendencies to flourish and to vie for official status. The twenty or so years of Fascist rule (the *ventennio*) witnessed an explosion of artistic competitions and exhibitions, on local, regional, and national levels. Art was held to be an important vehicle of state propaganda, and lavish sums were expended on exhibitions, on the creation of new museums and monuments, on archaeological excavations, architectural projects, and so forth. Despite this broad-based patronage of the arts, Marinetti found himself on a few occasions protesting the exclusion of Futurist artists from important exhibitions, and competing with more traditional movements, especially Novecento, for recognition and support.

Balla’s importance in Futurist circles during the war and in the postwar years is evident from the sheer number of artists who frequented his studio and who shared his interest in experimental new materials and media, and in spiritualism and the occult, including Fortunato Depero, Enrico Prampolini, Anton Giulio Bragaglia, Benedetta, Gerardo Dottori, Rougena Zatkova, Fillia, and Marinetti himself. Due in part to the diversity of Balla’s interests, second-generation Futurists (sometimes called Second Futurism) engaged increasingly in theater and decorative arts, designing theater sets and costumes, furniture, clothing, books, and other objects for domestic or public use. The goal, as Balla and Depero proclaimed in their 1915 manifesto “Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe,” was to transform the environment through the creation of colorful, mobile, and playful new objects (Fig. 31). Balla and Depero’s fascination with the physically expressive properties of materials, and with the work of art’s status as an object in its own right, was shared by other artists, including Enrico Prampolini, whose first polymaterial works date from before the war (Fig. 91), and Rougena Zatkova, who began making multimedia collages and constructions in 1914 (Fig. 119). This interest in a multisensory

experience of art was codified by Marinetti in 1921, with the invention of the “tactile tables” and their accompanying manifesto (Fig. 84).

During the war, Balla had also become active in theater design, producing a set of geometric constructions out of wood covered with painted canvas for Igor Stravinsky’s *Fireworks* (*Feu d’artifice*) staged in 1917 (Fig. 29). This “ballet,” performed in the darkened Costanzi Theater in Rome, lasted just over four minutes. Conforming to Marinetti’s theatrical preferences for nonhuman psychology, brevity, and synthesis, *Feu d’artifice* comprised forty-nine combinations of colored lights projected by Balla onto a set of crystalline forms. According to Maurizio Fagiolo dell’Arco, these forms were intended as symbols of infinity (spirals and electric waves) and emblems of light (a pyramid, an obelisque, rays of the sun, crescents of the moon), while aerodynamic graphic elements evoked birds in flight and firebirds. The central spiraling form of the firework itself received a silver lamé border.²⁵ The upper, decorated parts of these constructions were made of transparent cloth and were also lit from within, so that matter seemed to undergo an alchemical transmutation through fire, becoming less dense and more luminous in ascent.²⁶ Balla himself explained that his constructed elements represented “the states of mind of fireworks” suggested to him by the music.²⁷ Depero’s *The Plastic Ballets* of 1918 (Fig. 64) also eliminated human actors and narrative structure, in favor of colorful mechanical marionettes.

Taking up this line of development, in 1925 Prampolini exhibited his models and drawings for a *Magnetic Theater* (Fig. 93), comprising an abstract, revolving stage upon which lights, noises, and kinetic mechanisms would perform. Wishing to avoid the traditional static, painted stage set, which creates an illusory scenic arc around the human actors, Prampolini made his neutrally colored, autonomous construction rise up from the center of the stage. The colored lights that would play upon this mobile structure were intended to give a sense of spiritual life to the ensemble in the absence of human drama.

The earliest Futurist films, including *Futurist Life* of 1916, directed by Arnaldo Ginna (Fig. 74), drew on Marinetti’s theatrical innovations and on the Futurist fascination with the world of mechanical objects. Composed of a disjointed sequence of often humorous episodes, this film explores such Futurist topics as how a Futurist sleeps (wide awake and standing erect), new ways of walking (including a neutralist stroll and an interventionist stride) and human interactions with objects, including discussions between a foot, a hammer, and an umbrella. In one episode, Balla falls in love with a chair; in another, a woman dances with a distorting mirror. Along with Bragaglia’s *Thaïs*, this was one of the earliest avant-garde films to be made.

Apart from such fairly isolated experiments with new media, however, Futurist artists working in the 1920s preserved the legacy of prewar Futurism through

their continued enthusiasm for the machine as subject and as style. Frequently these artists demonstrate a new, more cosmopolitan awareness of other contemporary avant-garde tendencies, especially Purism, Dada, and Russian Constructivism. Enrico Prampolini's journal *Noi* (Fig. 13) was instrumental in promoting the machine aesthetic in Italy, while also opening its pages to avant-garde developments in painting, theater, and architecture throughout Europe. One of the most important statements of the postwar attitude toward the machine was the June 1922 "Manifesto of Futurist Mechanical Art," written by Ivo Pannaggi and Vinicio Paladini and first published in *La Nuova Lacerba* (Fig. 88; 272–273). Both artists had strong links to the left, and Paladini had been associated with the Communist Party in Rome. Their utopian assertion of a new alliance between the proletariat and machines was directly inspired by the Russian Revolution, and issued from the conviction that once the workers controlled the means of production, technology would necessarily improve the human condition.²⁸ They further believed that bourgeois artistic forms could never contribute to the cultural transformation that a proletarian revolution demanded. The machine would provide an antidote to tradition, while unifying the realms of production and art. The manifesto declares: "Today, it is the MACHINE that distinguishes our era. . . . (This is what) we are irresistibly attracted to. It is no longer nudes, landscapes, figures, symbolisms no matter how Futurist, but the panting of **locomotives**, the screaming of **sirens**, **cogs**, **pinions**, and all that **mechanical sensation** KEEN RESOLUTE which makes up the atmosphere of our sensibility."

The publication of this manifesto coincided with Pannaggi and Paladini's "Futurist Mechanical Dance," performed by three Russian dancers to the varied noise rhythms of two motorcycles at Bragaglia's cabaret, *Circolo delle Cronache d'attualità*, at his Casa d'arte in Rome (Fig. 89). The "ballet" dramatized the dilemma of a proletarian male, torn between his attraction for a machine and for a woman, in a symbolic contest between the values of modern mechanical virility and feminized tradition and sentiment. Pannaggi constructed a costume for the robotlike machine out of cardboard, shiny polychrome papers, and other colored and metallic materials, while Paladini contributed costumes for the worker and the woman. As the drawing by Paladini that accompanied the contemporary manifesto makes clear, he imagined his proletarian as a mechanical man of the future, a new "aristocrat" composed entirely of gearwheels, rods, and metal cylinders—thereby exemplifying the tenet that "we feel mechanically, and we sense that we ourselves are also made of steel, we too are machines."

Benedetta Cappa Marinetti, the Futurist leader's future wife, was also a member of the circle of artists in Rome, and she had studied with Balla during the war. Her early works seek to convey Futurist states of mind in quickly executed drawings

she called “sintesi” (syntheses), understood as analogous to the astral images seen by clairvoyants. During the early 1920s, Benedetta also made works that celebrate the power and speed of machines. *Velocity of a Night Train* of 1924 (Fig. 33) draws on the examples of both Boccioni and Balla in its treatment of this prototypically Futurist subject. Cardboard projections, painted in metallic colors, enhance a sense of flashing light and movement as the train hurtles through space. Depicted at night, this train becomes the potential site of dreams and of uncanny encounters, a motif Benedetta would explore in her later novel, *Astra and the Submarine* (1935). In Benedetta’s work, machines are also linked to an interest in the occult, which generates fantasies of acquiring new sensory powers through speed or flight. The mechanical paintings Fillia (Luigi Colombo) executed in the 1920s derive from a similar mystical impulse: the machine is venerated as a vehicle for transcending mundane reality. Whereas prewar Futurism had maintained a strong anticlerical stance and had interpreted the machine as evidence of the human usurpation of God’s power of creation, this strain of postwar Futurism finds in the machine an expression of religious aspiration. Fillia resolves the tension between these opposing attitudes by referring to his machines as “idols” and investing them with technological, erotic, and spiritual meaning (Fig. 71).

By 1929, however, at the time of Fascism’s concordat with the Catholic Church (on this, see 36), Fillia’s art became more overtly linked to the religious art of the past. His aeropaintings (*aeropittura*) now evoke the heavens, and spiritual transcendence is symbolized through aviators and figures in flight (Fig. 72). By the early 1930s, semi-abstracted forms hovering in cosmic space openly signify the Holy Trinity, the Holy Family, and the Adoration, subjects that would have been taboo in the earlier days of Futurism. Embracing the mystical dogmas of the Church, Fillia and Marinetti argue in the “Manifesto of Futurist Sacred Art” that only through Futurist simultaneity could such mysteries as the Holy Trinity be visually realized (Fig. 73).

In Benedetta’s work, *aeropittura* similarly becomes a medium for the expression of religious faith, now conjoined with the totalizing political vision of the state. The “X” that dominates her painting of c. 1931, *The Great X* (Fig. 34) is probably not an abstract or neutral form, but a reference to the approaching ten-year anniversary of the 1922 Fascist Revolution and the huge exhibition planned for the occasion. The “X,” or Roman numeral ten, links modern Fascism to the imperial language of *Romanitas*, while the aerial view of a rationalist cityscape conflates the perspective of the aviator with the dominion of the “leader.” Above and below, the spiritual and the secular are united through a rising church spire that pierces the junction of the X to reach into the heavens, replete with luminous Dantesque spheres. The vaguely defined figures, who seem suspended in ether at the right, may represent a cosmic

vision of ascending souls, perhaps “martyrs” of the revolution. A reference to this theme would not be surprising, given that the Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution of 1932 included a Sacrarium, a room dedicated to its martyrs.

No doubt because *aeropittura* could be interpreted so variously, it was embraced by numerous artists throughout the late 1920s and 1930s. Whereas Fillia, Benedetta, Prampolini, and others imagined a fantastic, visionary cosmos, others emphasized the more technically exhilarating aspects of flight. Gerardo Dottori made the regime’s achievements in aviation the subject of a public mural in 1928 (Fig. 68); Tato employed dynamic aerial perspectives in his *Flying over the Coliseum in a Spiral* to fuse a Futurist theme with an image of Imperial Rome, thereby evoking the harmony of tradition and modernity sought by Fascism (Fig. 117); and Marisa Mori celebrated the military power gained through flight (Fig. 86).

The 1920s and 1930s also witnessed the flowering of the decorative and mural arts, as Fascist patronage of the arts expanded and as the Futurists sought new ways to address a mass audience. Depero exhibited his famous Futurist vests (Fig. 10), several wall hangings, including *War = Festival* (Fig. 65), and designs for advertisements at the 1925 International Exhibition of Decorative Arts in Paris. If the colorful vests were intended to produce a dynamic state of mind in those who wore them, *War = Festival* exemplified the Futurist ideal of permanent war/revolution as a purifying, hygienic ritual that would reinvigorate the nation. Executed primarily in the colors of the Italian flag—red, white, and green—and with a decorative border comprising bleeding mask-like heads, stylized flags, and daggers piercing hands, this wall hanging equates the health and vigor of the nation with daily acts of bloodletting and heroism. Moreover, the three blackshirts in the center of the composition make the reference to Fascist squads explicit. Whereas before the war, the Futurists had wielded the slogan “War or Revolution” as a threat to the neutralist government, here the obvious difference between patriotic war and proletarian revolution is suspended through the mythic notion of “festival.” As Marinetti proclaimed in 1919: “We want a spirit of revolt and of war to circulate like an impetuous blood in Italian youth. The nation, which has violent origins, can only be strengthened by this double circulation of rushing blood.”²⁹ Depero won a gold medal for tapestry when he showed *War = Festival* at the 1925 exhibition in Paris; it is a remarkable fact that the theme of this work seems not to have disturbed the jury.

Most of the murals executed by the Futurists during the *ventennio* affirmed the regime’s ideal of a united, militarily powerful nation or portrayed its technological advances. Dottori’s design for the “Hall of Achievements” at the Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution combines text and image on a grand scale to dramatize the regime’s accomplishments in the realm of transport (Fig. 69), while Benedetta’s mural for a post office pictures its success in communications (Fig. 35). In the

mid-1930s, Depero, Fillia, and Prampolini adopt a more severe, unornamented “style of steel” in their mural projects, as well as in their typographic designs and journal covers (Figs. 67, 94, 15). The “revolutionary” rhetoric of dynamism, speed, and simultaneity gives way to hieratic, cold, and static forms, which correspond to Fascism’s desire to project authority and a sense of immutable order.

As demanded in the “Futurist Manifesto of Plastic Mural Art” of 1934, Futurist murals were often made of a variety of materials, to appeal to the tactile as well as visual senses of their audiences. Materials also had important symbolic value, implying such qualities as modernity, clarity, and truth, or resilience and strength. Murals might include mosaic, sand, plaster, and other sculptural additions, while aluminum, tin, steel, reinforced concrete, and glass were celebrated as prototypically modern materials for both sculpture and architecture. Beginning in 1935, when Italy’s colonial war in Ethiopia brought severe economic sanctions, government propaganda promoted the use of nationally produced raw and industrial materials. Regina’s tactile wall panels and sculptures of 1936 and after were constructed out of aluminum and tin, not only because these materials seemed modern, but because of their patriotic connotations (Fig. 95). Similarly, when Tullio d’Albisola published an essay in 1935 to extol the innovative use of typography and new materials in the making of Futurist books, he reminded his readers that tin, used in several recent books, was an Italian product.³⁰ Indeed, in 1932 d’Albisola had employed the services of the Lito-Latta factory in Savona to realize his design for Marinetti’s metal book, *Parole in libertà futuriste, tattili-termiche-olfattive* (Futurist words-in-freedom, tactile-thermal-olfactory) (Fig. 85). Composed of lithographically printed tin pages, this book seeks to achieve through new materials what Marinetti had previously sought through onomatopoeia and the dynamic typography of words-in-freedom (Fig. 79): a new alliance with matter, and a means of visualizing the heroic fusion of the human body with metal.

Despite their allegiance to the regime, the Futurists were increasingly accused of antipatriotic internationalism as the 1930s came to a close. Their avant-garde posture, so clearly in defiance of Italy’s classical tradition, made them vulnerable to accusations of racial transgression and even of Bolshevik sympathy. Throughout the *ventennio*, the Futurists affirmed their vision of perpetual revolution, while supporting the established power of Fascism. Indeed Futurism’s youthful rhetoric and dynamic mystique was at times useful to the regime, which also sought to keep alive its “revolutionary” image, while simultaneously consolidating its authority. Ultimately, the cautious critique of certain Fascist positions by the Futurists met with failure, because fundamental principles were never sufficiently analyzed or rejected. When the racial laws of 1938 sought to make anti-Jewish racism a national imperative, Marinetti’s response was partial and confused, focusing primarily on the unproven association of Jews, communists, and the avant-garde, and on the

well-known anti-communism of Futurism. As a man who had counted prominent Jews among his Futurist colleagues, including Mino Somenzi, coeditor of *Futurismo* (which was subsequently transformed into *Sant' Elia* and then *Artecrazia*), Marinetti seemed to hope that by distinguishing each group from the others, the entire edifice of accusation might collapse. Somenzi, for his part, mounted a passionate campaign, in the last two numbers of *Artecrazia*, 3 December 1938 (no. 117) and 11 January 1939 (no. 118), against what he believed was a sudden, cataclysmic eruption of anti-Semitism. Number 117 in its entirety was titled "The Italian Character of Modern Art," which was also the title of a lecture given by Marinetti in a *serata* at the Teatro delle Arti in Rome on 3 December. Both Somenzi and Marinetti affirmed the patriotic qualities of Futurism, to be distinguished from its degenerate (German) derivatives, and argued that Italian Futurism had inspired much of modern art and could not therefore be accused of being anti-Italian. Ironically, Marinetti further declared that "there are no Jews in the Italian Futurist movement"—publishing these words in Somenzi's journal.³¹ In later comments of the early 1940s, Marinetti occasionally joined the reactionary chorus of those expressing virulent anti-Semitic views. Opportunistic and defensive, he made his primary concern the defense of Futurism.³²

The multiple trajectories pursued by Futurism, from its birth in 1909 to its official end with the death of Marinetti in 1944, reveal a continuing struggle to hold in suspension many of the movement's contradictory aims: to create an avant-garde art for the masses, while affirming the principle of an immanent social hierarchy and the notion of an artistic elite; to embrace destructive gestures, improvisation, and change, while nevertheless seeking universal laws and stable truths in the creation of art; to celebrate the fusion of humans and machines, while refusing a utilitarian or productivist aesthetic. Most paradoxically, Futurism demanded the freedom of the individual from social and moral constraints and aspired to the withering away of bureaucratic government, and yet finally consented to the rigid structure of the Fascist state, its conservative moral agenda, and its propaganda of continuity with tradition. By the time of its demise, much that was revolutionary in the prewar movement had already been surrendered, as Futurism sought to survive within an authoritarian regime that it had helped bring to power. What endured was a belief in the rhetorical potential of art to persuade and incite an audience to action, through the creation of a collective, empathic response to Futurist myths.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

2. F. T. Marinetti in his 4-cylinder Fiat,
1908.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

3. Photograph of F. T. Marinetti's car crash,
15 October 1908. Photo: from Claudia
Salaris, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti*, 1988.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

4. Umberto Boccioni, *A Futurist Serata*, ink on paper, 1911. Caricature of the Futurist serata at the Politeama Garibaldi in Treviso, 2 June 1911. Published in *Uno, due, tre* (Milan), 17 June 1911. The Futurists on stage include: Umberto Boccioni, Francesco Balilla Pratella, F. T. Marinetti, Carlo Carrà, and Luigi Russolo.

5. The Futurists in Paris on the occasion of the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery exhibition, February 1912: Luigi Russolo, Carlo Carrà, F. T. Marinetti, Umberto Boccioni, and Gino Severini.

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6. Photograph of Francesco Cangiullo, F. T. Marinetti, and Luciano Folgore on stage during a Futurista *serata* at Giuseppe Sprovieri's Galleria Futurista, 1914.

7. Photograph of F. T. Marinetti, Ugo Piatti, and Luigi Russolo at the London Coliseum with Noise Tuners, 1914.

8. Photograph of the Futurists at war. F. T. Marinetti, Umberto Boccioni, Antonio Sant'Elia, Ugo Piatti, and Achille Funi at Gallarate, 1915. Photo: Archivio Fotografico Castello Sforzesco, Milan.

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the print version of this book.

9. F. T. Marinetti's armored car number 74, c. 1917. Antonio Menghini Archives. Photo: Giovanni Lista Archives, Cahier Marinetti.

10. Photograph of Fortunato Depero, Giacomo Balla, and Guglielmo Jannelli wearing Futurist vests designed by Depero. Paris, Eiffel Tower, 1925.

SELECTION OF FUTURIST JOURNALS



11. *Lacerba* (Florence) 2, no. 1, 1 January 1914. Editors: Giovanni Papini and Ardengo Soffici.

12. *L'Italia futurista* (Florence) 1, no. 6, 25 August 1916. Editors: Bruno Corra and Emilio Settemelli.





ROMA FUTURISTA

Settimanale del movimento Futurista

diretto da: BALLA - MARIO CARLI - MARINETTI - SETTIMELLI

Contro il lusso femminile

Conferenza di Marinetti nel salone di "Donna."

La donna sempre una
 essere del sesso maschile...
 il lusso è una cosa
 che si vende...
 il lusso è una cosa
 che si vende...
 il lusso è una cosa
 che si vende...

ROMA CARLI MARINETTI SETTIMELLI

EMILIO SETTEPELLI



13. *Noi. Rivista d'arte futurista* (Rome) 1, no. 1, June 1917. Editor: Enrico Prampolini.
14. *Roma futurista* (Rome) 3, no. 77, 4 April 1920. Journal of the Futurist Political Party. Editors: Mario Carli, F. T. Marinetti, and Emilio Settemelli.
15. *Stile futurista. Estetica della macchina* (Turin) 1, no. 5, December 1934. Editors: Enrico Prampolini and Fillia.

WORKS BY ARTISTS

GIACOMO BALLA

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

16. Giacomo Balla, *Bankruptcy*, oil on canvas, 46½ × 63¼ in. (116 × 160 cm), 1902. Rome, Private Collection. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

17. Giacomo Balla, *The Worker's Day*, oil on paper, 39½ × 53 in. (100 × 135 cm), 1904. Rome, Private Collection. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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18. Giacomo Balla, *The Street Lamp*, oil on canvas, 68¾ × 45¼ in. (174.6 × 115 cm), 1911. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Hillman Periodicals Fund. Photograph © 2000 The Museum of Modern Art. New York. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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19. Giacomo Balla, *Rhythm of the Violinist*, oil on canvas, 20½ × 29½ in. (52 × 75 cm), 1912. Estorick Collection, London. The Bridgeman Art Library. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

20. Giacomo Balla, *Girl Running on a Balcony*, oil on canvas, 49¼ × 49¼ in. (125 × 125 cm), 1912. Milan, Civico Museo d'Arte Moderna. Raccolta Grassi. Photo: Saporetti. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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21. Giacomo Balla, *Window in Düsseldorf*, oil on canvas, 10³/₈ × 13³/₈ in. (27 × 34 cm), 1912. Private Collection. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

22. Giacomo Balla, *Radial Iridescent Interpenetration (Prismatic Vibrations)*, watercolor and pencil on paper, 16¹/₄ × 21¹/₄ in. (41.3 × 54.2 cm), 1912. Turin, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome. Photo: Aldo Gariglio.

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23. Giacomo Balla, *Iridescent Interpenetration No. 7*, oil on canvas, 30¹/₄ × 30¹/₄ in. (77 × 77 cm), c. 1913. Turin, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome. Photo: Aldo Gariglio.
24. Giacomo Balla, *Swifts: Paths of Movement + Dynamic Sequences*, oil on canvas, 38¹/₈ × 47¹/₄ in. (96 × 109 cm), 1913. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Purchase. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.
25. Giacomo Balla, *Velocity of an Automobile*, oil on canvas, 23⁵/₈ × 37 in. (60 × 94 cm), 1913. Milan, Civico Museo d'Arte Contemporaneo. Photo: Saporetti. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

IL VESTITO ANTINEUTRALE

Manifesto futurista

Glorifichiamo la guerra, sia igiene del mondo.

MARINETTI
Il Manifesto del Futurismo - 20 febbraio 1909

Viva Asinari di Bezzano!

MARINETTI
L'Avvenire Futurista - 20 febbraio 1909

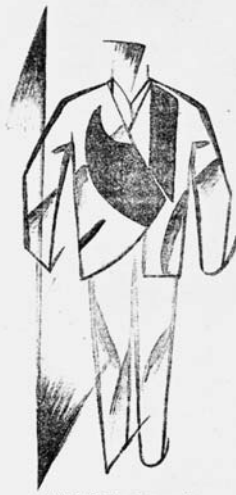
L'uomulo si vuol scappare di quiete, di paura, di cautela o d'indocilità, potrà sempre il lutto, o il spavento, o il mantello, il scapolo del fante fa sempre dimissioni da sfanciarlo e da tutte neutre, avvilito dal nero, soffocato da elintore, impedito da para-giugocioni.

Fino ad oggi gli uomini sono stati di veduti e fanno sott'occhio o strapagiacchi, soderati, gravi, inermi e serventi. Sono espressivi di timidezza, di schiavitù, di schiavitù, negazione di la vita immediata, che soltanto in un passato ontologico di studio, troppo posato e di mezzo stile tedesco, affondato e decadenti. Tonalità e ritmi di **pace desolante**, interezza e di pigramente.

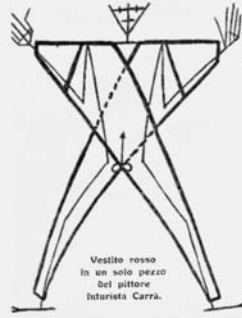
OGGI vogliamo abolire:

1. — Tutte le tinte neutre, e rucine, stoffe d'ite, **furture**, sconsuete e rucinati.
2. — Tutte le fibre e le leghe rucinate, profumate e rucinate, a rucine, a rucine, a quadrati, a **puntini diplomatici**.
3. — I vestiti da lutto, nessuno adatto per i funerali. Le morti orrende non devono essere compiante, ma rucinate con vestiti rossi.
4. — L'equilibrio **mediorista**, il costume buon gusto e la costante armonia di tinte e di forme, che frenano gli entusiasmi e rucinate il paese.
5. — La simmetria nel taglio, le linee **stache**, che stanano, deprimono, costruiscono, legano i muscoli, l'usabilità di goli rucinati e tutte le rucinate. I bottoni inutili, i colli e i polsi inutili.

Noi futuristi vogliamo liberare la nostra razza da ogni **neutralità**, dall'indocilità passiva e quietista, dal pessimismo negativo e dall'incertezza.



Vestito bianco - rosso - verde del parolero futurista Marinetti, (Matteo)



Vestito rosso in un solo pezzo del pittore futurista Carrà.



Maglione verde e giacca rossa e bianca il rumorista futurista Russo, volontario ciclista.



Vestito bianco - rosso - verde del pittore e scultore futurista Boccioni, (Sera)

Giacomo Balla
pittore.

DIREZIONE DEL MOVIMENTO FUTURISTA:
Corso Venezia, 61 - MILANO

Gli abiti futuristi saranno dunque:

1. — **Aggressivi**, tali da moltiplicare il coraggio dei forti e da sconvolgere la sensibilità dei vili.



Vestito bianco - rosso - bleu del parolero futurista Carriglio, (Pomeriggio)

2. — **Agilizzanti**, cioè tali da aumentare la flessibilità del corpo e da favorire la slancio nella lotta, nel passo di corsa e di carica.

3. — **Dinamici**, per disegno e colori dinamici dello stoffe, triangoli, ovali, spirali, ellissi, ovali che segnano l'azione del periodo, della velocità e dell'assalto, l'allo della pace e dell'immobilità.

4. — **Semplici e comodi**, cioè facili a mettersi e a togliersi, che non si prestano per puntare il fucile, guardare i fucili e lanciarsi a moto.

5. — **Igienici**, cioè tagliati in modo che ogni punto della pelle possa respirare nella lingua aurea e nelle altre lingue.

6. — **Giosati**, stoffe di colori e tessiture entusiasmanti, impregnate i colori **marcato**, vivaci, dinamici, rucinati, rucinati, rucinati, gialli, rucinati, rucinati.

7. — **Illuminanti**, stoffe rucinate, che possono rucinate: la rucinate in un'assemblea di persone, quando: face intanto quando parvo, e rucinate il grigiore del rucinate nelle vie e nei cervi.

8. — **Volitivi**, Dignati e colori violenti, impetosi e impetosi come comandi sul campo di battaglia.

9. — **Asimmetrici**. Per esempio, l'entusiasmo delle maniche e il davanti della giacca saranno a destra rucinati, e sinistra quadrati, fucili rucinate di linee.

10. — **Di breve durata**, per rucinate inaspettatamente il gomitone e l'annessione rucinate del corpo.

11. — **Variabili**, per mezzo dei **modificanti** (applicazioni di stoffe, di ampere, spessori, disegni e colori diversi) da disporre quando si voglia e dove si voglia, su qualsiasi punto del vestito, mediante bottoni pneumatici. Ognuno può così inventare ad ogni momento un nuovo vestito. Il modificante sarà preposito, urtante, stonato, decisivo, guerresco, ecc.

Il cappello futurista sarà asimmetrico e di colori aggressivi e festosi. Le scarpe futuriste saranno dinamiche, diverse l'una dall'altra, per forma e per colore, atte a prendere allegria e a caldi tutti i neutralisti.

Stark brutalmente esclusa l'azione del giallo col nero.
Si pensa e si agisce come si versa. Poiché la **neutralità è la sintesi di tutti i**

passatemi, noi futuristi sbandieriamo oggi questi vestiti antineutrali, cioè festosamente bellissimi.

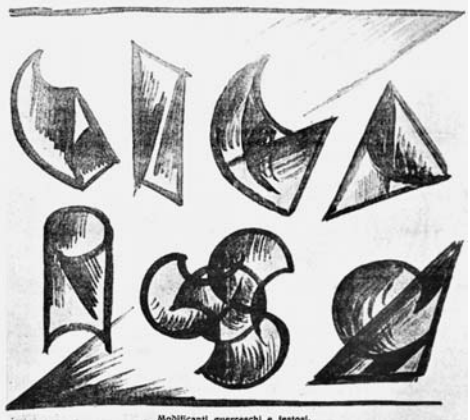
Soltanto i podagrosi ci disapproveranno.

Tutta la gioventù italiana riconoscerà in noi, che li portiamo, le sue viventi bandiere futuriste.

MILANO, 11 Settembre 1914.

Giacomo Balla
pittore.

Approvato entusiasmamente dalla Direzione del Movimento futurista e da tutti i Gruppi Futuristi italiani.



Mobilizzanti guerreschi e festosi.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

27. Giacomo Balla, *Scetavajasse—Musical Noise Instrument*, painted wood and metal, $23\frac{3}{4} \times 3\frac{3}{4}$ in. (60.5 × 10 cm), 1914. Rome: Museo Nazionale degli Strumenti Musicali. Photo: Scala / Art Resource, NY. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

28. Giacomo Balla, *Patriotic Song*, oil on canvas, $43\frac{1}{2} \times 66\frac{3}{4}$ in. (110.5 × 169.5 cm), 1915. Turin, Collection Ente “Italia ’61.” © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

29. Giacomo Balla, Sketch for stage design for Igor Stravinsky's *Fireworks* [Feu d'artifice], tempera on paper, $6\frac{1}{4} \times 7\frac{3}{4}$ in. (15.9 × 19.5 cm), 1916. Milan, Museo Teatrale alla Scala. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

30. Giacomo Balla, *Boccioni's Fist*, cardboard and wood painted red and yellow, $33 \times 31 \times 12\frac{1}{2}$ in. (83.8 × 78.7 × 31.8 cm), 1915. Private Collection. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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31. Giacomo Balla,
Three Futurist Flowers,
painted wood, h. 12³/₄
in (32.5 cm), h. 13³/₈ in.
(34 cm), h. 15³/₈ in.
(39 cm), c. 1918. Private
Collection. © 2008
Artists Rights Society
(ARS), New York / SIAE,
Rome.

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32. Giacomo Balla, *Pessimism and Optimism*,
oil on canvas, 43¹/₄ × 69¹/₄ in. (115 × 176 cm),
1923. Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte
Moderna. Photo: Giuseppe Schiavinotto.
© 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS),
New York / SIAE, Rome.

BENEDETTA (BENEDETTA CAPPA MARINETTI)

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33. Benedetta, *Velocity of a Night Train*, oil and collage on canvas, 19½ × 26¼ in. (49.5 × 66.5 cm), 1924. Private Collection.

34. Benedetta, *The Great X*, oil on canvas, 50¾ × 35 7/16 in. (129 × 90 cm, c. 1931. Musées de la Ville de Paris.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

35. Benedetta, *Synthesis of Telephone and Telegraph Communications*, mural painting in the Sala del Consiglio del Palazzo delle Poste, Palermo, 1934.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

UMBERTO BOCCIONI

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

36. Umberto Boccioni, *Io-Noi-Boccioni*, signed photodynamic, c. 1906. Milan, Collection Calmarini.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

37. Umberto Boccioni, *Riot in the Galleria*,
oil on canvas, 29⁷/₈ × 25¹/₂ in. (76 × 64 cm),
1910. Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera. Bequest of
Emilio and Maria Jesi. Photo: Scala/ Art
Resource, NY.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

38. Umberto Boccioni,
The City Rises, oil on
canvas, 78½ × 118½ in.
(200 × 290.5 cm), 1910–11.
New York, The Museum of
Modern Art. Mrs. Simon
Guggenheim Fund, 1951.
Photograph © 2000 The
Museum of Modern Art.
New York. Initially titled
Work, this painting was
exhibited for the first time
on 30 April 1911 at the
Mostra di Arte Libera in
Milan.

39. Umberto Boccioni,
Modern Idol, oil on wood,
23½ × 23 in. (59.7 ×
58.4 cm), 1911. Estorick
Collection, London. Photo:
The Bridgeman Art Library.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

40. Umberto Boccioni, *The Laugh*, oil on canvas, $43\frac{3}{8} \times 57\frac{1}{4}$ in. (110.2 × 145.4 cm), 1911. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Gift of Herbert and Nannette Rothschild. Photograph © 2000 The Museum of Modern Art. New York.

41. Umberto Boccioni, *States of Mind II: The Farewells*, oil on canvas, $27\frac{3}{4} \times 37\frac{7}{8}$ in. (70.5 × 96.2 cm), 1911. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller. Photograph © 2000 The Museum of Modern Art. New York.

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To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

42. Umberto Boccioni, *States of Mind II: Those Who Go*, oil on canvas, $27\frac{7}{8} \times 37\frac{3}{4}$ in. (70.8 × 96 cm), 1911. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller. Photograph © 2000 The Museum of Modern Art. New York.

43. Umberto Boccioni, *States of Mind II: Those Who Stay*, oil on canvas, $27\frac{7}{8} \times 37\frac{3}{4}$ in. (70.2 × 95.6 cm), 1911. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Gift of Nelson A. Rockefeller. Photograph © 2000 The Museum of Modern Art. New York.

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To view this image, please refer to
the print version of this book.

44. Umberto Boccioni, *The Street
Enters the House*, oil on canvas,
39½ × 39½ in. (100 × 100 cm), 1911.
Hanover, Sprengel Museum. Photo:
Michael Herling.

45. Umberto Boccioni, *Materia*, oil on
canvas, 88⅝ × 59 in. (225 × 150 cm),
1912. Milan, Gianni Mattioli Collec-
tion (on long-term loan at the Peggy
Guggenheim Collection, Venice).

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the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to
the print version of this book.

46. Umberto Boccioni, *Fusion of a Head
and a Window*, multimedia sculpture,
1912. No longer extant.

47. Umberto Boccioni, *Table + Bottle +
House*, pencil on paper, $13\frac{1}{8} \times 9\frac{3}{8}$ in.
(33.4×23.9 cm), 1912. Milan, Civico
Gabinetto dei Disegni, Castello
Sforzesco. Photo: Saporetti.

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the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to
the print version of this book.

48. Umberto Boccioni, *Development of a Bottle in Space*, bronze [cast posthumously, in 1931], 15 × 23³/₄ × 12⁷/₈ in. (38.1 × 60.3 × 32.7 cm), 1912. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Aristide Maillol Fund. Photograph © 2000 The Museum of Modern Art. New York.

49. Umberto Boccioni, *Unique Forms of Continuity in Space*, bronze [cast posthumously, in 1949], 47¹/₈ × 34 × 32³/₈ in. (119.7 × 86.4 × 82.2 cm), 1913. New York, Metropolitan Museum of Art. Bequest of Lydia Winston Malbin, 1989 (1990.38.3).

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50. Umberto Boccioni, *Dynamism of a Cyclist*, oil on canvas, $27\frac{1}{2} \times 37\frac{3}{8}$ in. (70×95 cm), 1913. Milan, Gianni Mattioli Collection (on long-term loan at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice).

51. Umberto Boccioni, *Charge of the Lancers*, tempera and collage on pasteboard, $12\frac{5}{8} \times 19\frac{3}{4}$ in. (32×50 cm), 1915. Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

CANGIULLO.

FUMATORI.

II.

PAROLE IN LIBERTÀ

4 viaggiatori } tagliare in 4 scompartimento-torta rettangolo
 viaggiare con loro case in testa sintesi

BAGAGLI

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BAGAGLI

NOTTE


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luce-NOTTE } VIOLACEA bluastro biancastra centro
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 violaceo di calza } denso sul polpaccio
 sbiadire sbiadire sbiadire verso
 tibia fino al color-carne nel centro osso tibia

luce-NOTTE di scompartimento | VIOLACEA bluastro biancastra = luna avvinazzata

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 / ragnatele /

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 gambe nei sedili } intarsiati }
 2 in CALMA } DORMIRE
 1 senza FRETTA } LEGGERE
 1 ANSIA } GUARDARE dallo sportello

FUUUUUMARE

VELOCITÀ **FONDERE** vetro VAPOROSO sportelli
 CAMPAGNA
 CIELO **PLUMBEO**

52. Francesco Cangiullo, *Smokers* [Fumatori], two pages. Published in *Lacerba*, 1 January 1914, pp. 10-11.

CAMPAGNA \ BIGIO quadro-trittico cinematografo guasto
 vetri dei finestrini = / i tre vetri del trittico
 maniglie—vagoni = braccia lottatori mostra muscoli

nel CORRIDOIO

Viaggiatore chiudere finestrino = finestrino metter fuori tutta lingua Ehebeheh

Viaggiatrice aprirlo = finestrino ingoiarsi tutta lingua

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| | | | | fluire evaporare fra vetri fra riflessi vetri FLUEN- TI nell'AMBIENTE—CIELO— CAMPAGNA } PLUMBEO FUSO |

attraverso vetri in ARIA-NOTTE

CORRIDOIO

| | | | | |
|--|---|-------------------|-----------------------|---|
| due lampade BIANCHE giorno di scompartimento attiguo | poi larva (1) di TRENO gemello tessuto coi ri- flessi di vero TRENO scorta galleggiante nel- l'ARIA visibile solo ai viaggiatori vegliare guar- dare AL DI LÀ | FISSE PERPETUE | nel CENTRO ARIA-NOTTE | IMMOBILE INDIVISIBILE FISSO ETERNO |
| | | | | |

ROMA-NAPOLI mentre **A**rmand **O** MAZZA dorme e gruUU
 gruUU gruUUgnisce.

(1) Questo vocabolo è impiegato qui nel senso biologico e non nel senso merdoso della letteratura passatista.

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53. Francesco
Cangiullo, *Great
Crowd in the Piazza
del Popolo*, watercolor
and gouache on
paper, 22³/₄ × 29 in.
(58 × 74 cm), 1914.
Private Collection.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

CARLO CARRÀ

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

54. Carlo Carrà, *Piazza del Duomo*, oil on canvas, 17³/₄ × 23 ⁵/₈ in. (45 × 60 cm), 1909.
Private Collection. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY. © 2008 Artists Rights Society
(ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

55. Carlo Carrà, *Sketch for Funeral of the Anarchist Galli*, pastel on thin pasteboard, 22³/₄ × 34¹/₄ in. (58 × 87 cm), 1910. Private Collection. Photo: Luca Carrà. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

56. Carlo Carrà, *Funeral of the Anarchist Galli*, oil on canvas, 78¹/₄ × 102 in. (185 × 260 cm), 1910–11. New York: The Museum of Modern Art. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest. Photograph © 2000 The Museum of Modern Art. New York. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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57. Carlo Carrà, *Leaving the Theater*, oil on canvas, 27¹/₄ × 35³/₄ in. (69 × 91 cm), 1910–11. Estorick Collection, London. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

58. Carlo Carrà, *Report of a Milanese Noctambulist*, ink and collage on paper, 14³/₄ × 11 in. (37.7 × 28 cm), 1914. Milan, Calmarini Collection. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

RAPPORTO di un NOTTAMBULO MILANESE

Dans ce Café tout les jours
dalle 2 alle 4



VIA LATTEA
VIA BARLEUSA

Pesantezza uniformità mistiagnuo

MEDITAZIONE \div in 2 tempi

quand ils font dans cot
stat la

13 INTROSPEZIONI

MARR
DELL
LIECH
SOTTO

Temperatura 96 centigradi
14
ventilatore

Shouting reds
very reds
very reds

totali 49 nottamboli
AMILANO centro

Austro
americana
triste
transatlantici
SPAGNA CANADA = Cesarino

ORE 4 1/2 luglio 1914
3 lunghe pizzerate in

GALLERIA

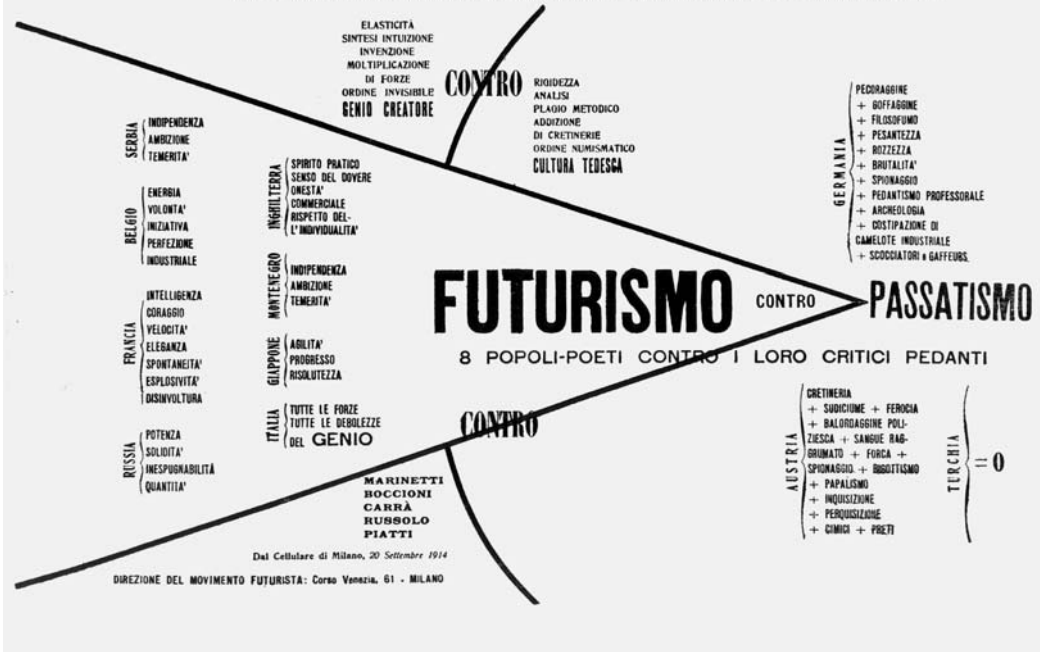
(mistero SOLITUDINE grigiastro obliquo) andia.....

Carra

Rapporto di un nottambulo milanese 1914

SINTESI FUTURISTA DELLA GUERRA

Oberifichiamo la Guerra, che per noi è la sola igiene del mondo (1° Manifesto del Futurismo) mentre per i Tedeschi rappresenta una grassa spaccata da corvi e da iene. Le vecchie cattedrali non t'interessano; ma neghiamo alla Germania medioevale, plagiaria, balorda e priva di genio creatore il diritto futurista di distruggere opere d'arte. Questo diritto appartiene soltanto al Genio creatore italiano, capace di creare una nuova bellezza più grande sulle rovine della bellezza antica.



59. Carlo Carrà, *Futurist Synthesis of the War*, typographic chart, 1914. Photo: Luca Carrà. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

60. Carlo Carrà, *Free-Word Painting—Patriotic Festival*, pasted papers, charcoal, ink, gouache, and colored sparkles on board, 15 1/8 x 11 3/4 in. (37.4 x 28 cm), 1914. Milan, Gianni Mattioli Collection (on long-term loan at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice). © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

61. Carlo Carrà, *Atmospheric Swirls. Blast of a Howitzer*, ink and collage on paper, $10\frac{3}{8} \times 14\frac{5}{8}$ in. (26.5 × 37 cm), 1914. Published in *Guerrapittura* [War Painting], 1915. Lent by Eric Estorick to the Estorick Collection, London. Photo: The Bridgeman Art Library. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

62. Carlo Carrà, *The Night of January 20, 1915 I Dreamed This Picture (Joffre's Angle of Penetration Against Two German Cubes on the Marne)*, free-word collage, 1915. Private Collection. Published in *Guerrapittura* [War Painting], 1915. Photo: Luca Carrà. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

63. Mario Chiattonne, *Constructions for a Modern Metropolis*, watercolor and ink on paper, $41\frac{3}{4} \times 37\frac{3}{8}$ in. (106 × 95 cm), 1914. Pisa, Dipartimento di Storia delle Arti dell'Università, Gabinetto Disegni e Stampe.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

64. Fortunato Depero, *The Review of the Marionettes* [La Rivista delle marionette], for *The Plastic Ballets* [I Balli Plastici], painted wood, 1918. (Reconstruction 1982). Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

65. Fortunato Depero, *War = Festival* [Guerra = Festa], wool appliquéd on cotton backing, 130 × 90⁵/₈ in. (330 × 230 cm), 1925. Exhibited at the International Exhibition of Decorative Art, Paris, 1925. Rome, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna. Photo: Alinari/Art Resource, NY. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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66. Fortunato Depero, *Sketch for the Bestetti Treves Tumminelli Book Pavilion*, pencil and ink on paper, 1927. Museo di Arte Moderna e Contemporanea di Trento e Rovereto. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

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67. Fortunato Depero, *War, The World's Only Hygiene; Ocean of Steel; This Is the War That We Prefer*, designs for metal reliefs for a Casa del Fascio, tempera, 1934. Published in *Stile futurista* 1, no. 5 (December 1934). © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / SIAE, Rome.

GERARDO DOTTORI

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68. Gerardo Dottori, *The Apotheosis of Flight*, sketch for a fresco for the waiting room of the Seaplane Airport of Ostia, watercolor and ink on paper, 21 × 33½ in. (53 × 85 cm), 1928–29. Rome, Private Collection.

69. Gerardo Dottori, *Hall of Achievements* [Sala delle realizzazioni]. Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution, Rome, 1932.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

**FARFA (VITTORIO OSVALDO
TOMMASINI)**

70. Farfa, *Futurist Antenna*, painting
on paper on canvas, 25 × 8½ in.
(63.5 × 21.5 cm), c. 1926. Turin,
Galleria Narciso.

To view this image, please refer to
the print version of this book.

FILLIA (LUIGI COLOMBO)

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

71. Fillia, *Bicycle, Fusion of Landscape (Mechanical Idol)*, oil on cardboard, 19½ × 23½ in. (49.5 × 60 cm), c. 1925. Rome, Private Collection.

72. Fillia, *The Idol of the Sky (The Gulf of Spezia)*, oil on canvas, 63 × 51¼ in. (160 × 130 cm), 1932–34. Turin, Galleria Narciso.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

73. Fillia, *Divinity of Aerial Life*, oil on canvas, 79 × 63 in. (201 × 160 cm), 1933–34. Turin, Galleria Narciso.

74. Arnaldo Ginna,
Film still from
Futurist Life [Vita
Futurista], fifth
scene—"Dance of
Geometric Splendor,"
1916.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

VIRILIO MARCHI

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

75. Virgilio Marchi, *Architectural Study: Search for Volumes in a Building*, 15¼ × 22½ in. (38.7 × 57.2 cm), c. 1919. New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art. Lita Annenberg Hazen Charitable Trust Gift, 1984.

ÉTIENNE-JULES MAREY

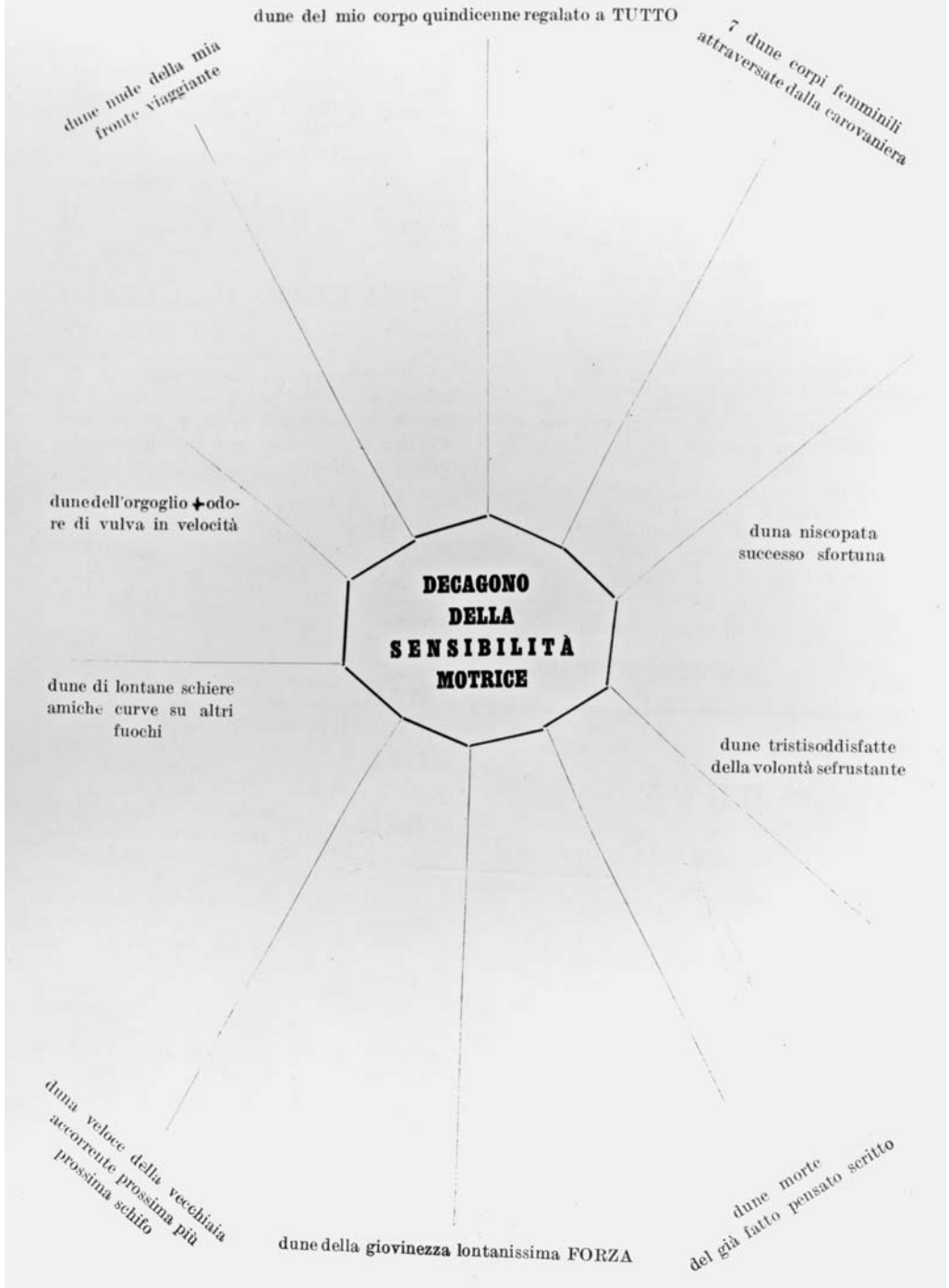
To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

76. Étienne-Jules Marey, *A Man Walking in Black Clothing with White Lines and Dots, Partial Geometric Chronophotograph*, 3½ × 9¾ in. (9 × 25 cm), 1883. Beaune, Musée E. J. Marey. Photo: Jean-Claude Couval.

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77. F. T. Marinetti, *Self-Portrait*, mixed media. Published in *The Sketch*, 13 May 1914.

78. F. T. Marinetti, *Decagon of a Motoristic Sensibility*. Published in *Lacerba*, 15 February 1914.



79. F. T. Marinetti, Cover of *Zang Tumb Tuuum*, 1914.

80. F. T. Marinetti, *Irredentism* [Irredentismo], free-word poem, ink, pastel, and collage on paper, 8 $\frac{5}{8}$ x 11 in. (21.8 x 27.8 cm), 1914. Lugano, Private Collection.



To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

81. F. T. Marinetti, Photograph of a scene of the theatrical synthesis, *They Are Coming* [Vengono], performed at the Teatro Vittorio Emanuele, Ancona, February 1915.

82. F. T. Marinetti, *After the Marne, Joffre Visited the Front in an Automobile*, free-word poem, 1915. Published in *Les Mots en libertés futuristes* [Futurist Words in Freedom], 1919.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

SCRA BrrRrraaNNG

Ho ricevuto
il vostro libro
Mentre Combattiamo
1917
F. T. M.



futurista

Paa piig

Paaak
Piing

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ISONZO
campustre intre fresco

DOLCE DOLCISSIMO PACIFICO



SIMULTANEA ESPLOSIONE

Guerra ai
tedescofili!

verdi

compagnie
sdraiato

grande
e al suo ardore



To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

83. F. T. Marinetti, "In the Evening, Lying on Her Bed, She Reread the Letter from Her Artilleryman at the Front," free-word poem, 1917. Published in *Les Mots en liberté futuristes* [Futurist Words in Freedom], 1919. The Museum of Modern Art, New York, Jan Tschichold Collection. Gift of Philip Johnson. Digital image © The Museum of Modern Art / Licensed by SCALA / Art Resource, NY.

84. F. T. Marinetti with Benedetta. *Paris-Soudan*, assemblage on pasteboard, 18 × 8¾ in. (46 × 22 cm), 1921. Private Collection.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

85. F. T. Marinetti,
*Futurist Words-in-
freedom, tactile-thermal-
olfactory* [Parole in
libertà futuriste, tattili-
termiche-olfattive],
cover and back of
book, lithograph on
tin, $8\frac{3}{4} \times 9\frac{1}{8}$ in. (22.3
 \times 23.2 cm), Edizioni
Futuriste di "Poesia,"
Rome, 1932. Designed
by Tullio d'Albisola
and executed by Lito-
Latta V. Nosenzo,
Savona.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

MARISA MORI

86. Marisa Mori,
Military Synthesis, oil
on plywood, $39\frac{3}{8} \times$
 $51\frac{1}{4}$ in. (100 × 130
cm), 1933. Private
Collection.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

BRUNO MUNARI

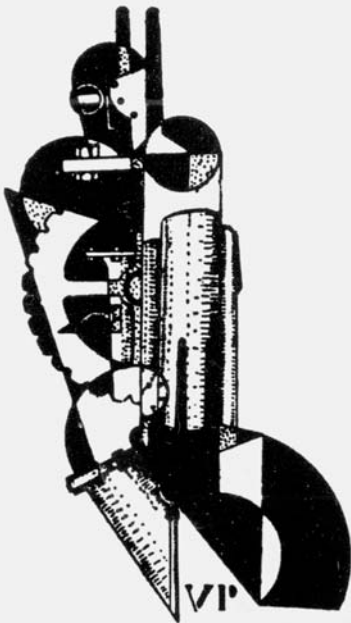
87. Bruno Munari, *We Set Out
Therefore in Search of a Female-
Airplane*, [Ci ponemmo dunque in
cerca di una femmina d'aeroplano],
photomontage on cardboard, $10\frac{3}{4} \times$
 $7\frac{1}{8}$ in. (27.5 × 18 cm), 1939. Rome,
Museo Aeronautico Caproni di
Taliado. Published in *L'Ala d'Italia*,
15–31 May 1939.

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the print version of this book.

PANNAGGI e PALADINI

Manifesto dell'arte meccanica futurista

Dal giorno in cui i primi manifesti futuristi furono lanciati, gli anni sono trascorsi pieni di lotte, sommersioni ed emersioni di vittorie ed amarezze di solitudine. Abbiamo lottato, alcuni



PALADINI: Proletario.

fattisi il nome ci hanno traditi, altri sono morti (**Bocconi** è il grande, il ricordo luminoso e caldo), nuove attività si sono svegiate, nuove necessità si sono sentite.

Ora ci attanaglia impellente il bisogno di liberarci degli ultimi avanzi di vecchia letteratura, simbolismo, decadentismo, per attingere nuovi spunti di rivolta da ciò che è la nostra vita. Dalle **MACCHINE**.

Ciò che **Bocconi** ed altri avevano intuito (la modernolatria) ci avvince con le nuove forme imposte dalla **meccanica moderna**.

Oggi è la **MACCHINA** che distingue la nostra epoca. **Palogge e volani, bulloni e ominiore, tutto l'acciaio pulito ed il grasso odorato (profumo di ozono delle centrali).**

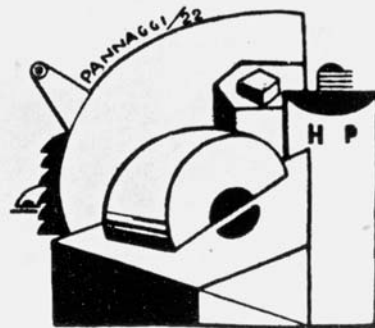
Ecco dove ci sentiamo irresistibilmente attirati. Non più nudi, paesaggi figure, simbolismi per quanto futuristi, ma l'ansare delle **locomotive**, l'urlare delle **sirene**, le **ruote dentate**, i **pignoni**, e tutto quel **sonno meccanico NETTO DECISO** che è l'atmosfera della nostra sensibilità.

Gl'**ingranaggi** purificano i nostri occhi dalla nebbia e dall'indeciso, tutto è più **tagliente, deciso, aristocratico, distinto**. Sentiamo meccanicamente e ci sentiamo costruiti in acciaio, anche noi macchine, anche noi meccanizzati dall'atmosfera. La bellezza dei bei carri da trasporto ed il **godimento tipografico** delle iscrizioni reclamistiche solide e voluminose, **il tremolare sconquassato di un CAMION**, l'architettura fantastica di una gru, gli acciai lucidi e freddi.

Ed è questa la nuova necessità, ed il principio della nuova estetica.

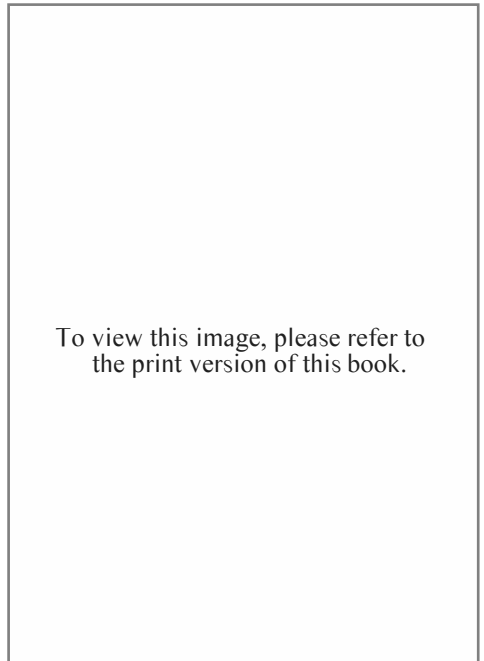
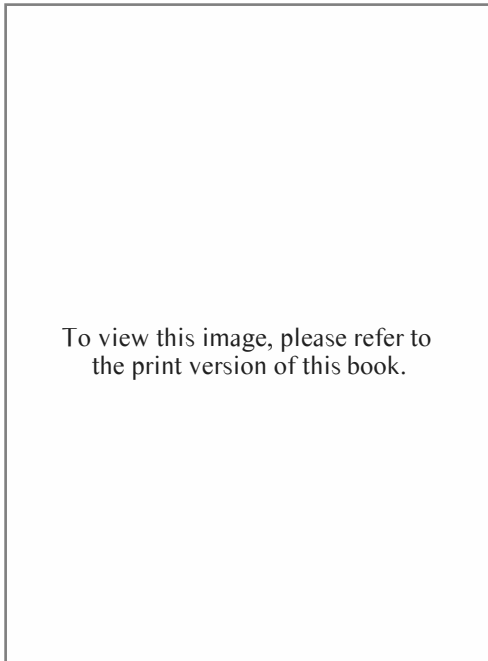
Poi andremo più avanti.

CONTRO TUTTI!



PANNAGGI: Composizione meccanica.

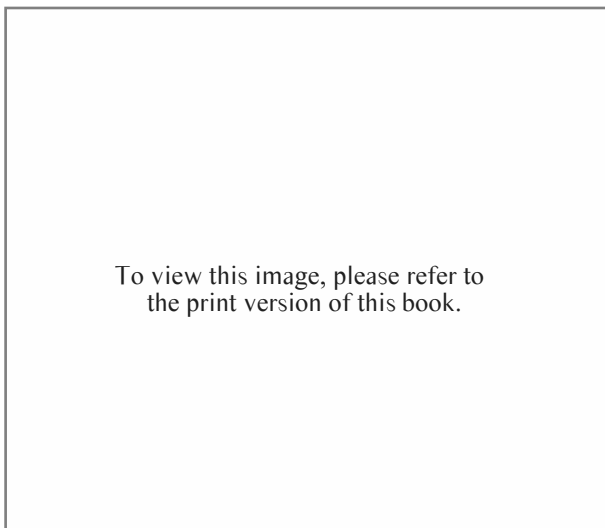
IVO PANNAGGI



89. Ivo Pannaggi, *Mechanical Costume*, photomontage souvenir of *Futurist Mechanical Dance* [Ballo meccanico futurista], performed at the Circolo delle Cronache d'attualità, in the Casa d'arte Bragaglia, Rome, 1922. Published in *Noi*, 1, series 11, 1924.

90. Ivo Pannaggi, cover of *Raun* by Ruggero Vasari, photomontage, 1933.

ENRICO PRAMPOLINI



91. Enrico Prampolini, *Béguinage*, collage on wood, 7¹/₈ × 8³/₄ in. (18 × 22 cm), 1914. Modena, Galleria Fonte d'Abisso Edizioni.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

92. Enrico Prampolini, Sketch for *The Firedrum* [Il Tamburo di Fuoco], watercolor on paper, $15\frac{3}{8} \times 22\frac{3}{4}$ in. (39 × 58 cm), 1922. Text by F. T. Marinetti. Music by Francesco Balilla Pratella. Prague, Národní Muzeum. This play was performed in Prague on 20 December 1922.

93. Enrico Prampolini, *Drawing for a Multidimensional-Spatial Stage Set for the Magnetic Theater*, 1925. The drawing, which differs somewhat from the model, was published in *Noi*, nos. 10–11–12, 1925.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

94. Enrico Prampolini, *Believe Obey Fight* [Crede obbedire combattere], model for the interior mural decoration of a palestra. Exhibited at the First National Exhibition of Plastic Murals for Fascist Buildings, Genova, 1934.

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REGINA (REGINA BRACCHI)

95. Regina, *The Land of the Blind Man*, aluminum relief, $14\frac{1}{4} \times 20\frac{1}{2} \times 1\frac{1}{4}$ in. ($36 \times 52 \times 3$ cm), 1936. Milan: Gaetano Fermani Collection.

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OTTONE ROSAI

96. Ottone Rosai,
Decomposition of a Street,
oil on canvas, 24 ³/₄ × 21 in.
(63 × 53 cm), 1914. Milan,
Gianni Mattioli Collection
(on long-term loan at the
Peggy Guggenheim
Collection, Venice).

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the print version of this book.

LUIGI RUSSOLO

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97. Luigi Russolo, *The Revolt*, oil on canvas, 59 × 90 ¹/₂ in. (150 × 230 cm), 1911.
The Hague, Haags Gemeentemuseum. Exhibited at the Mostra d'Arte Libera,
Casa del lavoro, Milan on 30 April 1911.

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98. Luigi Russolo, *Interpenetration of House + Light + Sky*, oil on canvas, 39³/₈ × 39³/₈ in. (100 × 100 cm), 1913. Basel, Öffentliche Kunstsammlung Basel, Kunstmuseum. Gift of Sonia Delaunay, 1949. Photo: Öffentliche Kunstmuseum Basel, Martin Bühler.

99. Luigi Russolo, *Awakening of a City* [Veglio di una Città], two pages of enharmonic music in *From the Net of Noises* [Dalla rete di rumori], 1914. Published in *Lacerba* 2, no. 5, 1 March 1914.

RUSSOLO. **Dalla rete di rumori: - VEGLIO DI UNA CITTA.**

Ululatori
Rombatori
Crepitatori
Strupiciatori
Scoppiatori
Ronzatori
Gorgogliatori
Sibilatori

F PF P.

PF P.

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100. Valentine de Saint-Point, Four photographs of Valentine de Saint-Point from her performance of *La Métachorie* at the Théâtre Léon-Poirier in Paris, 1913–1914. Reproduced in the *Sketch Supplement*, 7 January 1914. Courtesy of the Dance Collection, New York Public Library.

ANTONIO SANT'ELIA

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the print version of this book.

101. Antonio Sant'Elia, *Study for a Modern Building*, 1913. Private Collection.

102. Antonio Sant'Elia, *Electric Power Station*, pen and watercolor on paper, 12 × 8¹/₈ in. (30.5 × 20.5 cm), 25 February 1914. Private Collection.

To view this image, please refer to
the print version of this book.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

103. Antonio Sant'Elia, *The New City. Tenement Building with Exterior Elevators, Gallery, Sheltered Passage over Three Levels (street-car line, motorway, metal footway), Lights and Wireless Telegraph*, ink and blue-black pencil on paper, 20³/₄ × 20¹/₄ in. (52.5 × 51.5 cm), 1914. Como, Musei Civici. This drawing was reproduced in "Futurist Architecture" (198–202).

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

104. Gino Severini, *The Blue Dancer*, oil and sequins on canvas, $24\frac{1}{8} \times 18\frac{1}{8}$ in. (61 × 46 cm), c. 1912. Milan, Gianni Mattioli Collection (on long-term loan at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice). © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

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105. Gino Severini, *Dynamic Hieroglyph of the Bal Tabarin*, oil and sequins on canvas, 63⁵/₈ × 61¹/₂ in. (161.6 × 156.2 cm), 1912. New York, The Museum of Modern Art. Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss bequest. Photograph © 2000 Museum of Modern Art, New York. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

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the print version of this book.

106. Gino Severini, *Portrait of Marinetti*, mixed media on canvas, 1913. Location unknown. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

107. Gino Severini, *Spherical Expansion of Light: Centripetal and Centrifugal*, oil on canvas, 24¹/₈ × 19³/₄ in. (61.3 × 50.2 cm), 1913–14. Munson-Williams-Proctor Arts Institute Museum of Art, Utica. Museum Purchase. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

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To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

108. Gino Severini, *Sea = Dancer*, oil on canvas, 41½ × 33¾ in. (105.3 × 85.9 cm), 1914.
Venice, Peggy Guggenheim Collection. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York /
ADAGP, Paris.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

109. Gino Severini, *Serpentine Dance* [Danza serpentina], free-word drawing, ink on paper, original lost. Published in *Lacerba*, 1 July 1914. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

110. Gino Severini, *Sea = Battle*, oil on canvas, 19¹/₈ × 23¹/₂ in. (48.5 × 59.6 cm), 1914–15. Toronto, Art Gallery of Ontario. Gift of Sam and Ayala Zaks, 1970. Photo: Larry Ostrom. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

111. Gino Severini, *The Hospital Train*, oil on canvas, 46¹/₈ × 35³/₈ in. (117 × 90 cm), 1915. Amsterdam, Stedelijk Museum. © 2008 Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York / ADAGP, Paris.

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MARIO SIRONI

112. Mario Sironi, *The Truck*, oil on pasteboard, $35\frac{3}{8} \times 31\frac{1}{8}$ in. (90 × 80 cm), c. 1915. Milan, Pinacoteca di Brera. Bequest of Emilio and Maria Jesi.

113. Mario Sironi, *Composition with Propeller*, tempera and collage on pasteboard, $29\frac{1}{4} \times 24\frac{1}{4}$ in. (74.5 × 61.5 cm), c. 1919. Milan, Gianni Mattioli Collection (on long-term loan at the Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice).

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the print version of this book.

114. Ardengo Soffici, *Still Life (piccola velocità)*, oil, tempera, and collage on cardboard, $26\frac{3}{8} \times 19\frac{3}{4}$ in. (67 × 50 cm), 1913. Milan, Museo del Novecento, Collezione Jucker, Civiche Raccolte d'Arte. Copyright Comune di Milano—all rights reserved.

115. Ardengo Soffici, Cover, *BIFZF+18. Simultaneità e Chimismi lirici*, $13\frac{5}{8} \times 17\frac{3}{4}$ in. (34.5 × 45 cm), 1915. First edition, printed in three hundred numbered copies by Tipografia Attilio Vallecchi, Florence.

TATO (GUGLIELMO SANSONI)

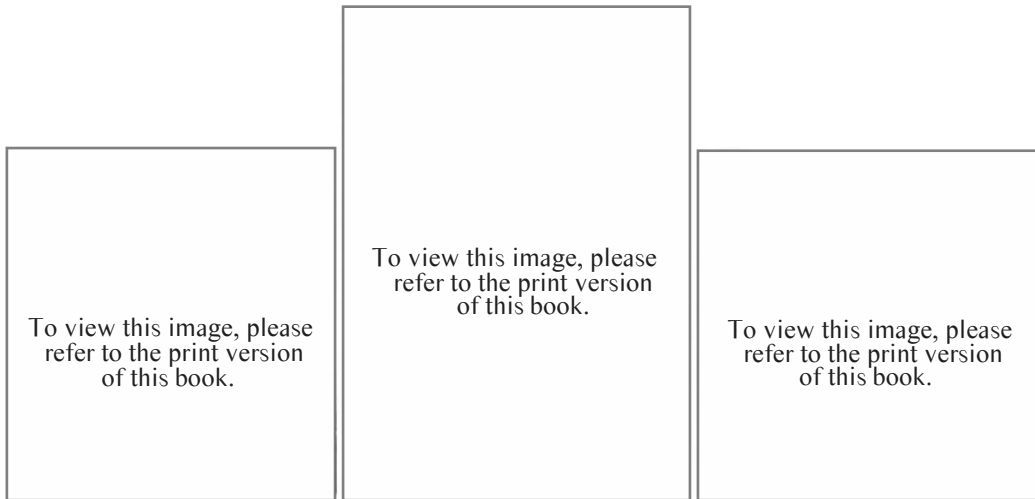
116. Tato, *Futurist Portrait of Marinetti*, photodynamic, c. 1930. Private Collection.

117. Tato, *Flying over the Coliseum in a Spiral* [Sorvolando in spirale il Colosseo (Spiralata)], oil on canvas, 31½ × 31½ in. (80 × 80 cm), c. 1930. Rome: Private Collection.

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To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

THAYAHT (ERNESTO MICHAHELLES)



118. Thayaht, *Friendship Triptych*, Thayatite (aluminum alloy) on the theme of the “friendship” of Futurists and Fascists: *Oprare Insieme* (Work Together), *Cantare Insieme* (Sing Together), *Pugnare Insieme* (Fight Together). Exhibited at the XVIII International Exhibition of Art, Venice, 1932.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

119. Rougena Zatkova, *Water Running Under Ice and Snow*, mixed media on pasteboard, 19¹/₄ × 15³/₈ in. (49 × 39 cm), c. 1914. Milan: Private Collection.

To view this image, please refer to the print version of this book.

120. Rougena Zatkova, *Marinetti-Sun*,
oil on canvas, c. 1920. Rome, Luce
Marinetti Collection.

Part Three Creative Works



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INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE: STARS-IN-FREEDOM AND THE DARK NIGHT OF FUTURISM

LAURA WITTMAN

Always, always in my life these two tormenting states of mind have alternated with one another. In the happiest and most voluptuous bed I have suddenly torn myself away from the arms of a seductive and delightful lover, and trembling seated at the edge of the bed I have strained my ear to catch a distant, imaginary shelling. Nostalgia, desire for heroism and violence. In the muddy broth of the trench dug by the shelling, a monstrous ivy of women's naked bodies climbing from my temples up to the moon. Torrid nostalgia of lust. Why? Why?

—F. T. Marinetti, *Unpublished Diaries*

At their best the creative works of Italian Futurism are humorously corrosive—yet also artistically and philosophically explosive—with respect to the codification of Futurism as a movement. While Futurism is perhaps better known for attempting a systematic reinvention of all aspects of modern life through the theoretical principles articulated in the manifestos, Futurist literature is an assault on the systematic, in which imagery gives the lie to theory. Futurist poetics—the “wireless imagination” as Marinetti called it, freed from the conventions of rhetoric, history, or society—thus transforms what might have been seen as the eclecticism or self-contradiction of the movement into a vastly influential break with Romantic aesthetics, a break marked by the power of Futurist antirhetoric to dismantle all ideological constructions, including its own, and a break which, emulated by Dada and Surrealism, has come to characterize avant-garde writing.¹

The texts presented here seek to illustrate the power (and, undoubtedly, the weaknesses) of the Futurist wireless imagination through the choice of five themes that are each loosely associated with a specific time period, a dominant image, and a particular aspect of stylistic innovation. Although each theme is in contrast with its predecessor, each theme also plays out within its texts the creative tension of Futurist antirhetoric. Thus “The Simultaneous City,” with texts spanning from about 1909 to 1915, explores the technological myths of the modern city that are

archetypal to the Futurist imagination: new machines that abolish distance and modify our senses, new simultaneous perceptions of the street, the crowd, and nightlife, the dynamic clash of competing forces, and the synthetic fusion of memory and sensation. As in contemporary painting, technology became the source for new forms and compositional techniques characterized by the concepts of universal dynamism and simultaneity.² These were already prefigured in “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” by Marinetti’s insistence on “the beauty of speed” as the model for a new total art, one that would plunge the reader, now transformed into a spectator, into the confusion and exhilaration of modern life, literally surrounding him with infinitely multiplied stimuli. The same effects were sought in the progressive destruction of the traditional forms of lyric poetry, initially replaced with a series of short, jagged verses, whose jumbled syntax mirrored the cityscape seen from a car or a train, its elements confused and unreal under the harsh electric light. Eventually traditional forms were entirely disassembled in a sort of onomatopoeic collage that no longer had a centered, narrating voice, but instead reproduced the sensory overload of cosmopolitan nightlife and mass culture. In the end, when more regular forms reappear, it is as a purely mechanical symmetry which, following Marinetti’s call for the “abolishment of the ‘I’ in literature,” is untroubled even by the presence of a spectator.

Yet within this evolution there is also a painterly irony, a lament projected onto technology itself, an unacknowledged melancholy, that eventually pervades the rhythm of these poems, making individuality resurface as a disruption or an anomaly.³ Altomare’s “viscous spool” that suddenly animates the darkness of the street, echoed by Govoni’s “funereal spools weaving an inextricable labyrinth,” and again by Boccioni’s “plikke-plok plikke-plok spool apathy sleepiness,” suggests a slippage within repetition, something that tangles up the even weave, some sudden pause of apathy that breaks its mechanical back-and-forth. Conversely, in Marinetti’s “To My Pegasus,” the machine seems to devour and appropriate the driver’s suffering, his “bloody palpitation,” so that the car, distorting human rhythm without abolishing it, becomes a giant with “seven-league boots,” a “gallop[ing] [. . .] monster,” “barking, barking” with “rage.” In Soffici’s “Café,” the “nothingness reciprocal of mirrors iridescent” is troubled by the singsong quality of the overheard foreign-sounding conversations, like fragments caught up in the “flux of things thoughts prostituted to a minute.” A presence, however fragmentary, distorts the “geometry” of “the liquid appearances of reality,” and awakens the deep shadows of the “anthracite of the sidewalk” in Boccioni’s simultaneity.⁴ And even Balla’s “Typewriter,” meant to end without apparent cause after the random interval of “one minute,” when performed, either conflagrates into a shout or fades to a murmur, bending to the rhythm of human voices. From the very beginning then, the

dark night of Futurism, its night of infinite depersonalization, is the place where a divided self contends with its own nothingness.

In 1921, Marinetti asserted that “war . . . is the only thing that cannot be formed into a habit.”⁵ Spanning the years 1912 to 1919, the texts in the section “Words-in-Freedom War” examine war as a figure for absolute anarchy. For the ubiquitous violence of war not only crushes all conventions—of society, of individuality and sentiment, of traditional morality—it also shatters the categories that shape human perception and understanding. It breaks out of the relative world of contingency and time into the absolute world of “matter” and, “plung[ing us] into a shadowy death beneath the white and staring eyes of the Ideal,” it creates that divine interval where the pure immanence of atomic processes is untroubled by the ephemerality of consciousness.⁶ The praise of war thus comes to represent much more than an interventionist position, a colonialist passion, or an expansionist zeal: under the influence of Nietzsche and Sorel, it becomes a radical call for renewal through death and rebirth.⁷ In the case of Marinetti at least, this longing was powerful enough to propel him to the Russian front many years later, at the age of sixty-six, seeking the antidote to advancing age and illness. Ultimately this rhetoric of renewal was one that Fascism would appropriate as it sought to turn the carnage of World War I into a mystical myth of regeneration.⁸ Yet at its most extreme, before Fascism, war’s “hygiene” aims to wipe out humanity altogether, in an apotheosis of nihilism that can only be matched by Sade’s “molecular rage.” As in Sade, individual consciousness is considered unhygienic and must be wiped out, for it gives a random and meaningless universe an artificial orientation or center.⁹ Hence anticipating what Bataille, a generation later, will call “the hatred of poetry” and its illusions of individual transcendence,¹⁰ Marinetti’s celebration of war is also an attack on all forms of poetry—lyrical most of all, but also heroic or epic: words-in-freedom aim to replace any kind of celebration or effusion with the pure reproduction of “BATTLE WEIGHT + SMELL,” taking visual poetry well beyond the onomatopoeic scope of Apollinaire’s *Calligrammes* and making it actively destructive of both the normal processes of representation and any stable identity.¹¹

In reality, however, as the texts in this section show, the association of words-in-freedom and war was fraught with political and personal contradictions. First, it is obvious that war means different things to different Futurists. De Saint-Point’s “heroic” poem is evidently very fin-de-siècle in style and closer to the aristocratic, Symbolist imagery of d’Annunzio, for example, with its feminization of “the collectivity” of soldiers that must be at once raped and redeemed by war.¹² In contrast, Palazzeschi’s poem, deliberately unheroic in its colloquial, prosaic, short lines, nonetheless rehearses, albeit in a minor and comical key, the Romantic myth of the *poète maudit* as the great blasphemer against all conventions. Cavacchioli and

Folgore both anthropomorphize the violence of war, attributing human sentiments to it, though Cavacchioli rejoices in humanity's defeat by technology whereas Folgore concludes with the human conquest of nature's forces. All these poems are still much closer to free verse than to the words-in-freedom explicitly defined by Marinetti in 1913. Instead, Marinetti's "Bombardment" and Carrà's "A Medium's Musings" take words-in-freedom to the violent randomness of "battles vain sexless," evoking only numbers, machines, and noises. Yet Marinetti's "Terrifying Tenderness," with its multiple gendered selves, invests war with a decidedly introspective impulse to self-destruction. Thus, while all these texts aim to celebrate the random, prosaic, impersonal, and purely negative force of war, which absorbs everything into its nothingness, they simultaneously generate a new contradiction. For individualism resurfaces through the feminization and erotic charge of violence: in Palazzeschi's yielding to the arsonist's seductive gaze; in the slippage from blood to semen at the end of de Saint-Point's text; in the "pearl of a mouth" of Cavacchioli's soldiers, turned into a scream by the missile; in the "gleaming" "mute" "thighs" of Folgore's sunken submarine who "lies down / on its viscous bed"; in the "tenderness" of Marinetti's "sixth soul," whose heart must be "nail[ed] down under [him] in the mud of the trench." Tellingly, Marinetti's "unbearable infinite heart" is simultaneously "gluttonous" and "indigestible," ceaselessly longing to be absorbed by, and at the same time to crush, a mother/lover who is "crib boat wisdom refreshment coffin airplane star"—a congeries that emblematically sums up all the contradictory seductions of war. Once again the divided self emerges, now projecting its brokenness onto the feminine night ("crib"), which must reconcile death ("coffin") and transcendence ("star").

"Let's murder the moonlight!" is the cry of Marinetti's Futurists as they rush to renew their creative energies and achieve "daily, methodical heroism" and "the habit of enthusiasm," by combating the fatal allure of "the carnal Moon, the Moon with her beautiful hot thighs," and her "bitter tenderness."¹³ The demystification of Romantic love advocated time and again by Marinetti as a cure for sentimentality and melancholy, but also as an antidote to the narcissism of desire, is the guiding theme of "The Metamorphoses of the Moon" (concentrating on 1917–30). The moonlight is an overdetermined, persistently ambiguous image which, much like the "lyrical obsession with matter," is at the core of Futurist poetics as it struggles to neutralize individual desire and its obsession with death, only to rediscover the pull of the unconscious and the organic.¹⁴ The emerging feminist voices within Futurism are especially significant here, for they in a variety of ways overtly contest Futurism's attempt to combine totalizing control and absolute destruction.¹⁵ Ultimately they inflect the Futurist agenda by shedding light on its repressed and ambivalent nostalgia, its masochistic impulses, and its unacknowledged despair at modernity's failings. These elements, latent in many of Futurism's best literary

creations, become more and more evident after World War I, even in Marinetti's more programmatic pronouncements, partly through the influence of his wife, Benedetta.

Initially, the moonlight is the emblem for a most basic fear of the enveloping female "vulva," which is "rent" by Futurist airplanes at the end of the 1909 manifesto—a fear of the loss of individuality and its claim to a deified, metaphysical autonomy, a fear of sexual dependency and enslavement to female sentimental appetites, and a fear of the body's uncontrollable generation of life and death. Significantly, the conclusion of "Let's Murder the Moonlight!" reenacts "The Birth of Gazourmah" at the end of Marinetti's novel, *Mafarka the Futurist*. This novel, written immediately before the first Futurist manifesto, constitutes Futurism's imaginative center and enacts its fantastical parthenogenesis: Gazourmah, the metallic man-airplane, is conceived without the help of the "maleficent vulva," and is thus endowed with superhuman life and hyperconsciousness by the ecstatic self-sacrificing kiss of his father Mafarka. *Mafarka* has thus been the subject of a number of trenchant interpretations, and has recently been translated into English.¹⁶ They have in different ways tended to tie the birth of Futurism to an inevitably compromised attempt by the divided self to appropriate and, through a process of self-destruction and regeneration, symbolically to give birth to its own completion: its sexual, economic, aesthetic, and ultimately ontological self-sufficiency. Crucially though, I would insist that this self-sufficiency must be understood not as regenerating a unified self, but rather as generating absolute nothingness—the exploded self of matter. Parthenogenesis is self-completion—self-perpetuation—not as self-fulfillment but as self-division. Marinetti seeks to explode the present in order to realize a self no longer dependent on the other but in fact made other—exploded into the pure speed of matter and thus freed from alternation of desire and will, of continuity and discontinuity, of melancholy and rebellion. The cult of personality rejoins the "abolition of the 'I'" when the "personality" that is exalted is multiplied to infinity, becoming an "harmony of electronic systems," that is, an analogical "scattering," that can "deny the distinction between spirit and matter."¹⁷

Hence the moonlight—fleshy whiteness, sensuality and decay, lust for death—is inscribed in Futurism's very birth as the occult power that, since it cannot be denied, must be exorcised, tamed, or otherwise absorbed. This is what the texts in "The Metamorphoses of the Moon" attempt to do, in many cases polemically at odds with one another as each seeks to claim for itself the power of regeneration announced by Futurism's victory over the moon. Various contrasts and alliances can thus be mapped out. From a loosely chronological viewpoint, Lucini's fierce animalistic parody of moonlit springtime love can be associated with Rosà's vision of the woman of the future, who traverses three stages or "souls," the first being

characterized by “intense vitality” and “predatory instincts.” This idea is echoed in Robert’s “audacious honesty” as she describes her “carnal desire” in its most “nonaesthetic” truth, and it resurfaces in the “naked flesh” of Mazza’s “Torments,” and in Carli’s rejection of “all vaporous evasions, all lunar transfigurations.” All these interpret Marinetti’s call for “contempt for woman” as an antisentimental liberation from the strictures of traditional sexual roles.¹⁸ As such they are but an initial stage in a more radical mystical transformation of love evoked by Rosà’s “third soul” with its “lyrical [. . .] invocation” to “an unknown and distant entity,” “a superman beyond material sensibility.” This “more advanced stage” is found also in Benedetta’s dream of flight with her lover in the “deep azure” beyond the “water-tight compartments” of individuality, which echoes Buzzi’s earlier evocation of the flight beyond individuality into pure matter; it is also present in Ginanni’s search for “absolute completeness” in the “perfect destruction of all limitations.” Here we see how Futurism initially attacks the moonlight in a comical, ironic vein, in which the destructive impulse is aimed at conventions rather than at the core of individuality, and only later attempts to absorb the moonlight through a cosmic mysticism in which individuality’s very essence is transformed, or perhaps more accurately transfigured and expanded. In a parallel evolution, words-in-freedom are gradually abandoned in favor of a “lyrical obsession” characterized by a loosely structured, longer prose poem, often abstract in its vocabulary and intricate in its syntactical constructions. A similar shift can be observed by comparing Boccioni’s *Fusion of a Head and a Window* (Fig. 46), where the figure is fragmented by the forces of matter, and Benedetta’s *The Great X* (Fig. 34), with its “interplay of visual and mental elements, of sights and materialized metaphysical thoughts.”¹⁹

Within this chronological evolution there is, however, another set of oppositions that reveal the ideological ambivalence of Futurism’s assault on the moon. For the progressive depersonalization and spiritualization of sentimentality, which ostensibly represents not only the end of traditional gender roles, but also an ideal freedom from the decadent culture of *ressentiment* and its ties to Romantic subjectivity, ends up reinforcing the need to control the body so as to channel its fascination with decay. Thus at the end of Valeria’s “Beggars of the Azure,” a kind of ideal spiritual liberation is invoked: “to walk toward death, as though to the simplest gesture of eternal life, grasping the life of all creation.” Yet this ideal, found also in many of the second-generation Futurists, such as Benedetta, Ginanni, Conti, and Sanzin, is defined more and more narrowly by Fascism’s alliance with Catholicism, an alliance that emphasized the values of family, procreation, and *Patria* at the expense of personal religious experience, especially but not exclusively on the part of women.²⁰ In contrast, along with both Armando and Anna Maria Mazza, and at some level Govoni and Marinetti, Robert incisively opposes her realistic and concrete depiction of “life’s sinuosity that twists and retwists incessantly in

our tormented souls,” to a feminism of “undulating airplanes in azure space” (she refers no doubt to the likes of Valeria and Benedetta here). She also opposes her realism to the decadent art in which “cultured women ‘with azure fingers’ barely touch upon the most vague curiosities of the senses” (a phrase that attacks the d’Annunzian femme fatale whose weakness and attraction was emblemized by her “azure veins”).²¹ Nonetheless her “surgical novel” predicates its heroine’s conquest of freedom on her ability, following Marinetti’s instructions, to sharpen her will and her desire against her own body’s organic ties to the moonlight, which is blamed for her uterine disease. In much the same way, Benedetta seeks to rid herself of the “plotting moon” that makes her body rebel against her lover’s distance. Ultimately, whether it be “azure” or “surgical” the dream of liberation is disturbingly inscribed in a masochistic and decadent rhetoric of *dédoublement* and self-mutilation, in which more advanced spirituality is tied to a pathological divorce of mind and body.²²

The texts in “Technical War” (late 1930s–early 1940s) contrast not only with the dark obsessions of “The Metamorphoses of the Moon,” but also with the absolute anarchy of “Words-in-Freedom War,” both stylistically and ideologically. For although “technical poetry” presents itself as the poetry of chemical and electrical processes in their pure “nonhuman” impulses, it is at the same time the poetry of Fascist reconstruction.²³ There is a marked return to traditional syntax and to a totalizing subjectivity, which is most often simply projected onto matter, in a pathetic fallacy that does not mask the reemergence of the very psychological vocabulary Futurism initially sought to abolish. This shift suggests that the literary creations of Futurism may, like the manifestos, be divided into a first heroic phase, followed by a second more repetitive and fundamentally not revolutionary moment. Futurism’s attempt to explode the decadent divided self, and with it a nostalgia for metaphysical wholeness that could have no place in the new reign of metallized matter, veers by the 1930s and 1940s toward an increasingly unselfconscious escapism.

“The Creative Anxiety of the Hydroelectric Plant Nera Velino,” “Simultaneous Poetry of Woven Light,” and “Petroleum Song” all thematize what has been described as Fascism’s “inner” colonization of the Italian territory through a program of *bonifica*—a redemption of unproductive land through the transplanting of immigrants and industries from other parts of Italy.²⁴ The technical vocabulary in these poems no longer seeks to model perception on the dynamism of matter, but instead aims to control—to redeem—this dynamism by imposing upon it an almost transcendent purpose: the construction of a “Patria” that is now “Impero” as Serra insists, or the domination of “Vesuvius” as Marinetti puts it (more lyrically) in “Russian Originality of Masses Distances Radiohearts.” As such, all these texts participate in the creation of a Fascist mysticism that actively seeks to divert

and channel not only the decadent nostalgia for the stars, but also the Futurist transformation of this nostalgia into a self-explosion, by assimilating the anxiety of the divided self into the reign of ceaseless reconstructed renewal that Fascism portends: in this reign, “Electricity” will create “fictions of stars tiny stars” (Corneli) and mortal “blood” will be replaced by the “hotter much hotter” petroleum (Goretti). Here all individuality will be abolished in favor of the “single strand,” the “one flowering reflection” that must ultimately emerge or “be born” out of the impersonal informal forces of technology (Marinetti). Yet if dividedness can persist only to the degree that it is attributed to matter, it is precisely its persistence, at moments when the voices of matter seem to take over, that makes these poems still compelling. The explosion of colors at the end of both of Marinetti’s texts, as well as Corneli’s, in its dizzying accumulation of adjectives, undermines technology’s control by reveling in its beauty; but as Marinetti’s Eugenio Torrente warns, as he equates these colors with “pain pain pain,” this beauty remains an aesthetic evasion of the real stakes of Fascist reconstruction.

Finally, “Theater, Aeropoetry, and Tactilism,” with texts that span almost the whole life of Futurism, focuses on its unusual blend of nostalgia and subversive comedy, which in the final years of the movement would bloom into an “oasis of sensation and memory,” where pleasure and laughter could become a refuge from the increasingly incompatible culture of Fascism. Simultaneous theater was an amalgam of the spectacle and provocation of the Futurist “Evenings,” of a more specifically theatrical sense of the absurd, and of avant-garde innovations in dance and music.²⁵ It aimed not to narrate or dramatize so much as to create an event that would plunge the spectator into the dynamism of life, thus polemically asserting the infinite value of the present, the laughter or the despair of the moment, and the presence of the other, over any attempt at totalizing control.²⁶ Yet for this very reason, the texts of Futurist simultaneous theater are but a labile trace of the creative forces that were at work in actual performances. Such texts require improvisational, subversive, fantastical interpretations that will bring them to life again, eliciting the audience’s hisses and boos; they celebrate contradictory moods and desires that must be exacerbated on the stage rather than reconciled. However much simultaneous theater may embody the irrepressible energy and the vast generosity of youth, it nonetheless is already nostalgic for youth’s passing, as is evident for example in Boccioni’s “artist dying for his ideal.” This echoes the conclusion of the founding manifesto, where Marinetti announces, “the oldest among us are thirty,” simultaneously asserting that they have but ten years of creativity left before the next generation must “discard them like old manuscripts.”

By the 1930s and 1940s, such pronouncements had acquired an irony that was not lost on Marinetti. In the last poem he wrote, a few hours before his death, “Quarter Hour of Poetry of the Xth MAS,” he at once blamed the new generation

for lacking courage and creativity and called them to become his disciples. The technical inventions of the last decade of Futurism are bathed in this same irony, not only because Futurism was on its own losing its innovative impetus, but also because the movement was quite determinedly pushed back into the wings by Fascism, which required by then an art that was safely removed from revolutionary and destructive impulses. Thus aeropoetry, exemplified here by Cucini, with its dream of expanded senses and an elastic body, longs for the eternal youth of creative desire, and looks to a heroic past for its themes (the *Palio* of Siena, in this case). Yet aeropoetry was in theory meant to consummate the final detachment of the metallized mind from its origins in the “muddy ditch” in which Marinetti lands in the founding manifesto. With tactilism, exemplified here in texts by Marinetti, Sanzin, and Benedetta, the senses are not so much expanded as they are purified: through a kind of ascetic training, they acquire an almost miraculous sensitivity, so that we are finally immersed in sensation’s Proustian power to recapture a lost youth that perhaps never existed.²⁷ More than at any other point, Futurism here acknowledges itself to be a grand fiction, inevitably displaced with respect to real action, yet still able to draw its power from this ironic displacement. Marinetti’s “Untameables,” in “The Lake of Poetry and Romance,” are thus the ultimate Futurist creators: by day they are savages bound up in spiky chains with which they can wound, but not kill, each other, whereas by night they are “unleashed and ravished” in a “lake of unctuous dissolute moonlight” which infuses them with sensual freedom and sentimental nostalgia, which they reject when they return to the desert they inhabit by day. And yet, Marinetti concludes, the night remains within them, in the form of the “superhuman refreshing distraction of Art that gradually metamorphose[s]” them.²⁸

Just as Futurism finally returns, not without irony, to “Art *with* a capital A,” each selection of texts, in all its tensions and contradictions reveals how much anti-rhetoric depends on the tradition it putatively destroys: in this case, Symbolism and decadence. Historically, Symbolism had pioneered the pattern of the literary avant-garde that Futurism followed, defending a body of innovative work with programmatic polemical texts.²⁹ The early writings of Marinetti and other Futurists emerged from an overtly decadent milieu, whose Nietzschean rhetoric they appropriated. And most important, Symbolism’s contestation of ideology, embodied by the poet’s removal from the world of action to a world of self-conscious, tortured, rhetorically powerful yet concretely ineffectual rebellion, was one that Futurism simultaneously, and uproariously, imitated and turned on its head. The contrast between older forms and new images; the fusion of literary topoi with the visual expressivity of words-in-freedom; the coexistence of violent anarchic impulses and totalizing dreams; and most of all the opposition between the aerial disembodied

mind and the palpitating heart obsessed with moonlight and decay—all these narrate Futurism’s multifaceted attempt to absorb or exorcise its own origins.

The quotation from Marinetti’s *Diaries* that opens this Introduction thus offers us an essential insight: for all his insistence on rejecting the Symbolist ivory tower whence he had gazed longingly at the stars, and notwithstanding his descent into the electric light and violent unconscious mass movement of the street, the Futurist poet, unsatisfied and nostalgic, continues to long for action. Thus while Marinetti and other Futurists were genuinely engaged in many forms of political and social action—from interventionism to feminism, from anarchism to Fascism—their texts are often self-consciously only incitements, diversions, provocations, or rewritings in which action is turned into myth. The wireless imagination here intercepts the deeper, darker impulses of revolution: not so much the need to construct a transformed future, but the imperative to destroy all that is timebound, contingent, and compromised by decay in order to make way for the violent advent of an absolute present. Marinetti, already in 1916, called for the “spiraling ascension of the ‘I’ toward Nothing-God.” Unlike any preceding aesthetic, and at odds with its continued or coherent existence as a movement, Futurism derives its myth-making power from imagery that explodes into antithetical, irreconcilable, comically nonsensical alternatives, as though to create the Nothing against which the “I”—albeit ironically, albeit nonsensically—might exist. The “stars-in-freedom” in Marinetti’s “The Lake of Poetry and Romance” are the emblem of this contradictory power: for they fuse the innovation of words-in-freedom, which aimed to destroy self-centered psychology and all other totalizing myths, with what is perhaps the most persistent image of humanity’s longing for self-knowledge and individual transcendence: the eternal stars.³⁰

What is finally at stake in Futurism’s explosive myth is thus, paradoxically, the power of presence—nostalgic and times, but also ironic and even grotesque—within chaos. For if the dark night of Futurism can be figured alternatively and all at once as anarchism (the destruction of political ideology and artistic convention), nihilism (the destruction of Romantic subjectivity and the illusion of transcendent self-possession), and a modern form of mysticism (the explosion of individuality and the reign of absolute otherness), these figurations rest upon the nostalgia for an epiphany in which the destruction of all mediations, frames, and figurations gives way to presence:³¹ the self undivided yet not alone, the self redeemed from decay but still palpitating with the body’s energy, the self spiritualized by sentiment but not vitiated by sentimentality—“stars-in-freedom” not an oxymoron but a reality.

The Simultaneous City

SHADOWY INTRICACIES LIBERO ALTOMARE

On the melancholy mirrors of the sidewalks
slip
the wandering shadows of the last insomniacs
whom the pale taverns still make eyes at
breathing venom like unkempt
prostitutes
at crossroad corners.

Rain leaps like the clashing of shields,
breaks our sleep.
The houses perspiring
release their tired smell,
their thoughts and their doleful dreams,
and shake in the frozen gusts,
and in vain console themselves
with the lanterns' yellow tears.

From the sepulchral blind alleys
emerge
the footfalls of drunks quenching their ardent fever
beneath the loud showers of the gutters;
while cats creeping out of holes,
skirmish, mad with love,
or raucously gasp like throttled children,
or with long, desperate wails
invoke the moon
like poets or lovers.

A car roars, snorts, rumbles, and flies off . . .
An owl passes, sudden, through the air
like a viscous spool.

Someone in the shadows mutters . . .
a door slams
with a flat sound like a coffin.

The sky yawns livid
like a greedy sleepless dealer
as it deepens the gold of its lightening,
until dawn gnashes
its clamorous teeth:
a thousand bells
near and far
dilacerate human dreams.

EXPRESS TRAIN NO. 89 ADELE GLORIA

Wheels.
Strident
 strident
 strident
steel junctions
that are ill.
Tuftum
 tuftum
 tuftum
longing
bouncing
in the skull
within the flesh.
The desire for an unhearing rebellion
explodes
melts mutely
into the cry of the locomotive
that humanizes
gives birth
to a billow of smoke
black-azure-grayish

that greedy
begins to suckle
the milky whiteness of the clouds.
Circling speed
drills into the window
dives into the semidarkness
flattens itself
into the advertisements across the way.
“Purgative”
“Disinfectant”
“Talmone Chocolate”
These too dance
in front of our eyes
exasperating monotony
in the cadenced rhythm of the piston.
Jiggling
rhythmical methodical
like life in school
on the spiral springs
of study and play
of study and play.
To look out the window
is to browse through a souvenir series
of color postcards
at the speed
of who knows how many kilometers per hour.
In my soul
I have a harmonic chiming of static
a suffering
most orderly, folded into four,
brushed with care
calmly adapted to its place
by an evil hand
after my tears had fallen.
Ingenuous murmur
of rain-regret
that has dripped into
my sentiments
opening
ever-widening

circles
 of apathetic indifference
 synchronized
 with the laments
 of the suffering rails
 under the wheels
 in their folly of speed.
 Tuftum
 tuftum
 tuftum
 exasperating noise
 that will again
 kill
 the silence of this train car
 where we the travelers
 are like colorless rags:
 “No smoking”
 “Closed”
 “Open”
 “Alarm bell”
 “Do not lean out”

 A-pa-thy-thy-thy
 mo-no-tony-tony-tony-no-

FOR ELECTRIC VENICE CORRADO GOVONI

To Donna Giulia Matilde Valerio

Midwife of poets' dreams
 my blood is full of the troubled enchantment
 emanating from the waters of your fetid canals
 green like the nauseating slime
 at the bottom of a glass
 where flowers have died;
 my blood is full of the divine melancholy

of your corrupt woman's face,
consumed by feverish insomnia,
sucked to the very depth of its marrow
by the burning mouths
of all vices.

You hurt me, I know;
in my nerves you distill a tormented anguish,
you irritate, you poison me: with your phosphorescent
humidity of sealed tombs,
you awaken in me a thousand painful anomalies.

And yet I want you, desperately.
I want you: with your cardboard gondolas
that flow silently along your canals
like funereal spools weaving
an inextricable labyrinth;
or sway as they wait at the docks
teasing out their lustrous siren's tail;
or gloomy, mysteriously congregate
at night, forming a solitary ferry,
watched over by a lacy lantern,
like a floating cemetery;
or past a great voluptuous tree
langorously rock
a beautiful smiling stranger
her head heavy with tressed hair
like a gentle blond serpent
fitted in her amber and mother-of-pearl armor,
with bottomless diamond eyes.

I want you: with your sordid palaces,
that shed their skins like plane trees,
and are impressionable as chameleons,
from the portals of ruined cathedrals,
from the deep shadows of the doorways
where sound swells as in a drum
and it seems possible to hear once again
the ancient cry of the Danaids;
with your poles like
funny marionettes
their clothes faded by too many tears;
with your silvery mirrors

where inciting black brunette hairdos,
and pink frosting masks
float up to the surface;
with your music that scorches hearts
like ineffable vitriol;
with your smallpox walls
that sicken the waters with electric colors;
with your exhilarating moon
gulped down by the lagoon
like a quinine pill
to cure her vertiginous fever;
with your slow quiet winters
when on a doorstep one might see
snow whitening
as though fantastic Pierrots
had made a pile of flour there
to trick their Colombina;
with your orange peels
floating in the canal
like the defunct slippers
of some *dogaressa*;
with your glass bells,
black like gondolas,
green like the water of your canals,
worn away like your marbles,
lozenged like your poles;
with your long chimneys,
rain-meters for the sky's tears,
hourglasses for the green dusk,
censers of violet clouds;
with your languid women
whose faces are eternally pale
as though from an extensive use of the mask,
as though they had returned just now from the carnival.

In a dark palace
a stair gleams, greenish;
pink pomade roses glance
down the wall.

Against a turquoise pole,
in a canal, the water chatters;
gold, at a garden gate,
the nipple of an orange emerges.

425
*To My
Pegasus*

On a roof, the gentle snow
of cooing doves alights;
from a windowsill drips
the varnish of a flower.

TO MY PEGASUS F. T. MARINETTI

Vehement god of a steel race,
Automobile thirsting for space
shuffling and trembling in anguish,
pulling at the bit with strident teeth!
O formidable Japanese monster,
with a forge's eyes,
fed by flames and mineral oils,
hungry for horizons and sidereal preys . . .
I will set free your heart with its diabolical beat
and its gigantic pneumatic tires,
for the dance that you will lead
on the white roads of the world! . . .

I finally release
your metallic bridle,
and voluptuously you rush
into Infinite freedom!
At the barking of your great voice
the setting Sun pursues your speed,
accelerating its bloody palpitation
on the edge of the horizon . . .
It gallops, deep in the woods, down there . . . Look! . . .
But nothing matters, my beautiful demon.
I am at your mercy . . . Take me! . . . Take me! . . .

On the earth, deaf though vibrant with echoes,
under the sky, blind though thick with stars,
I prick my fever and my desire,
my sword against their nostrils! . . .

And from time to time I straighten my back
and feel my vibrating neck
embraced by the fresh velvet arms of the wind . . .
They are your distant arms that cast spells and draw me in,
and the wind is your breath like an abyss,
as you joyfully absorb me, o bottomless Infinite! . . .

Ah! ah! I suddenly see awkward black windmills,
that seem to rush on their wings
of whaled canvas
as though on giant limbs . . .
And now the Mountains are about to throw
mantles of sleepy coolness on my flight.
There, there, at that ambiguous turn! . . .
Mountains, monstrous herds! Mammoths
that trot heavily, bending your immense backs,
you have been surpassed, drowned
in a gray tangle of fog! . . .
And I hear the vague echoing noise
of your fabulous seven-league boots
pounding on the roads! . . .

O Mountains with fresh azure mantles! . . .
Beautiful rivers breathing in the beatific moonlight! . . .
Shadowy valleys! I pass you at full gallop
on this crazed monster!
Stars, my stars, do you hear
its precipitous steps? . . .

Do you hear its voice, breaking with rage . . .
its explosive voice, barking, barking . . .
and the thunder of its steel lungs
crashing endlessly into the precipice? . . .
I accept your provocation, o my stars! . . .
Faster, faster! . . . Without repose, without pause! . . .

Let go of the breaks! . . . Can you not? . . .
Crush them! . . .
And multiply the beats of the motor's pulse!

Hurray! No more contact with this disgusting earth!
I can finally detach myself and supply fly
on the intoxicating fullness of the planets
that swells forth in the great bed of the sky.

CAFÉ ARDENGO SOFFICI

To a hysteria of fire the light heart of civilization circularly here the affluence of the
night echoed in a delta of eternal
anonymity stellar abysses of numbers in the crystalline adapted to the concrete-
ness of simple arithmetic in a public place
025 050 075 in the glaze of the plates on the table Modern Café In the
liquidation of a waltz idiocy of musics in settings scarlet funiculi funiculà begging
musing at the recollection of the countryside electric shadows foliage in an iris
of absinthe of three oak trees along the sidewalk coming and going of amorous
possibilities

tu as vu
comme il est bien chaussé?
Si vas a Calatayud
Pregunta por la Dolores
Es una chica guapa — —

with the gold glow of

silks masks of gem-studded feathers of eyes ponds pilgrimage of useless nostal-
gias

*ah! ben non zut pas pour toute la nuit je
ne marche pas*

what a damn'd pimp!

in the glow of faces abandoned under their makeup to the best offer Crossing
of screams

at the gold frontiers of youth hopefulness in disorder inside the
vanity of smoke anxious ending

cognac I said
another beer

to a subaltern black wing of waitresses Love friendship and lots of literature
in a crowd long ray gaze awakened in hearts in lyricisms flowery illuminations
splotches from the typography of newspapers on a rail flags news of beauty and
war Alembic of destinies brief and formidable cafés distilling with the drugs of
the sun beyond the seas and the pink arabias norths drunken poisonous alcohols
flux of things thoughts prostituted to a minute to a laugh In the live mystery
of arc lamps reflected in one line in nothingness reciprocal of mirrors iridescent
geometrically vis-à-vis to the right and to the left sensible image of the Infinite

HIGH-SOCIETY SHOE + URINE

UMBERTO BOCCIONI

plikke-plok plikke-plok plack plack plokky plikke-
plok plok tlack-tlack plikke-plok plikke-plok plok plikke-
plok tlack-tlack going trot going trot
coming trot run meter drive over drive back
1.5 2.3 3.5 Ass
propulsion hips emerald-green cadence swinging prostitute (*full slim at
the base flat yellow apexfeather fountain snow blown*)
serpentine multicolored on the horizon shiny smooth anthra-
cite of the street livid shape
miserable coatrack sawed pulled fol-
ded strap purse lipless newspaper-vendor
THreee TIIIiimes smoke from
a pipe SOLITUDE silence (plikke-
plok plikke-plok plikke-plok) rolling shuffling passing through pass-
ing through carriage-spool between light restaurant hot dark

doorway home cold shiny knobs
black silhouettes dark corners
alternating in various tones varnishes marbles me-
tals opacity smoothness brilliance intervals
vals gray flutings horizontal closed shutters

UMBRELLA-STORE

hermetic indifference

104, JEWELLERY, 104

TO THE CITY OF LONDON

106 108 108^A 110 112 114
LIFE JOY MONEY buy sell buy
y sell sell sell sell buy buy
buy voluptuous pleasure bring home pleased with myself gift
Rounded-off corner yellow rectangle 3 X 2 meters

Big blue letters
language signal
GOING OUT OF BUSINESS

no echo dark nocturnal indifference gray-turquoise light
green raining drooling on soft stripes
lamp suspended CENTER grrrr rrr rrr
butterfly bouncing circles irregular zig-zag fall
get up silence murmur rolling wheels unraveled plikke -
plok plikke - plok plikke - plok spool apathy sleepiness
return hangover voluptuousness client
five nine OK that'll do From the conical emptiness lane 3 small black-red
roundnesses
dark-red gray-purple red poppies
fat yellow spots little chains
purses white stockings
black shoes most shiny patent
prostitutes (running unknown sanctity abstraction beauty
naïveté) why? Little laugh swinging
pause gaze search (disgusting they sleep
Saturday Sunday I'm not surprised lazy lean takings Monday
a client around 9:30 Large man
married sucked dominical excitement café caba-

Words-in-Freedom War

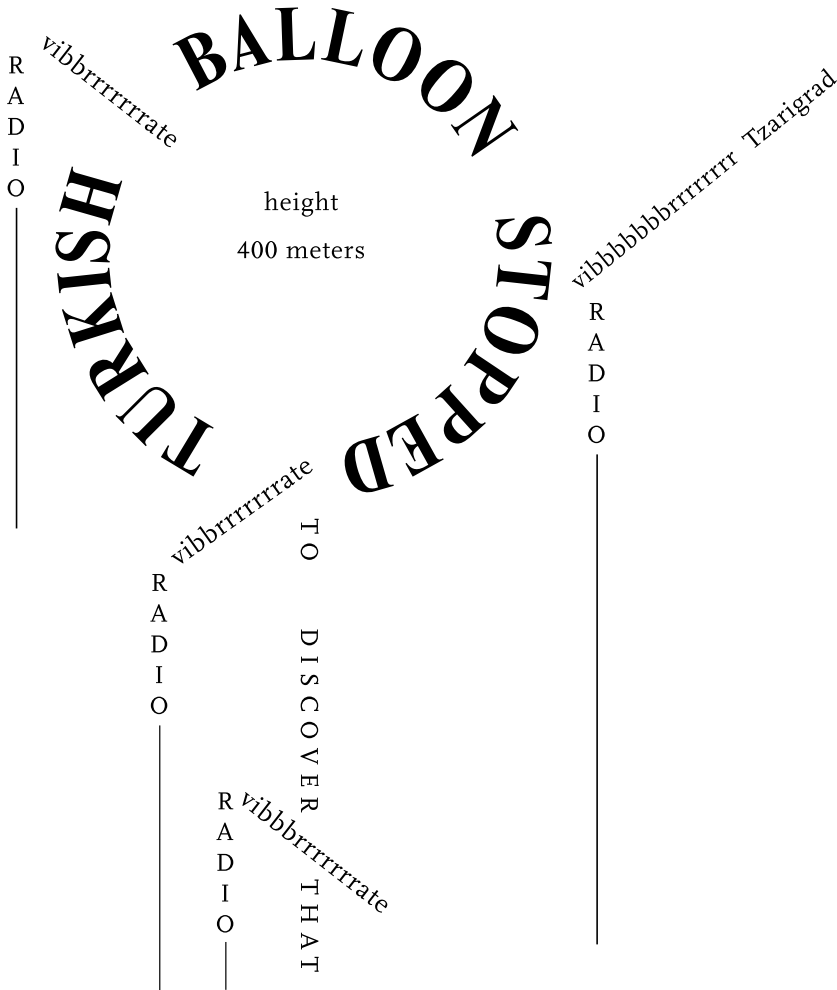
BOMBARDMENT F. T. MARINETTI

ambush of Bulgarian radio communications

vibbbbbrrrrrrrrrrrrrate

dissstorrrrrrrt Turkish communications

Shukri Pasha - Constantinople



assault against Seyloglou conceal assault

important against Marasch weak point
Bulgarian objective

via
the wireless
telegraph { war minster informed by
Turkish embassy in Paris
that Serbian army to rein-
force Bulgarians in front of
Adrianopole power usurped
by Young Turks thieves
murderers dismemberment
of Turkey

solar impassibility of Shukri Pasha suppli-
cations of 3,000 starving people **tumtum-**
tum tza tza axe blows assault on ovens
stores emptied

prices
gone up
by 300% { sugar 20 Fr. per Kg.
rice 2 Fr. 50 " "
gas 25 Fr. per barrel
salt 18 Fr. per Kg.

immediate execution

of ALL (100) ALL (300) ALL (2000)

the solders that assaulted the tobacco
headquarters

B0000MBIIIIING

B000MB0000MB0000MBARDIIIIING

24 March

25 March

26 March

B0000M B0000M B0000M

hunger desperation terror of the Turks

retreat to the forts Kavkaz Aivaz Bata

selling arms for piece of bread

smashing shops Shukri Shukri Shukri

S H U K R I ' S U B I Q U I T Y

BALANCE OF ANALOGIES

(1st SUM)

Advance of the Futurist bombing
colossus-leitmotif-mallet-genius-innovation-optimism-hunger-
ambition (*TERRIBLE ABSOLUTE SOLEMN HEROIC WEIGHTY IM-
PLACABLE FECUND*) **z a n g - t o o o o o m b - t o o m b - t o o m b**

(2nd SUM)

defense of Adrianopole passéism
minarets of skepticism cupola-bellies of in-

dolence cowardice we'll-worry-about-that-tomorrow
there-is-no-danger it's-not-possible what's-
the-point after-all-I-don't-care delivery of the
whole stock to a single-station = cemetery
(3rd SUM)

around every howtizer-step of the colos-
sus-accord falling of the mallet-creation of the en-
gineers-command running round dance galloping
of shots machine guns violins bad boys smells-of-a-
thirtyish-blonde little dogs ironies of the crit-
ics wheels gears cries gestures regrets (JOYFUL
AERIAL SKEPTICAL FLITTERING AERIAL
CORROSIVE VOLUPTUOUS)

(4th SUM)

around Adrianopole † bombardment
† orchestra † colossus-walk † factory widen-
ing concentric circles of reflections
plagiarisms echoes laughs little
girls flowers whistles-of-steam wait-

ing feathers perfumes fetid anguishes (*INFIN-
ITE MONOTONOUS PERSUASIVE NOSTALGIC*) These
weights thicknesses noises smells whirlwinds mo-
lecular chains nets corridors of analogies com-
petitions and synchronicities to offer to offer to
offer to offer themselves as gifts to my friends the
futurist poets painters musicians and noise-makers
**zang-toomb-toomb-zang-zang-
toomb tatatatatatata picpacpam
pacpacpicpampac 0000000000000000**

ZANG-TOOMB

ZANG-TOOMB

TOOOOOOOOOM

To F. T. Marinetti
the soul of our flame

At the center of the main square
of the town,
the iron cage has been placed,
with the arsonist in it.
He will stay there three days
so that everyone can see him.
Everyone's gathering around
the enormous iron bars,
all day long,
hundreds of people.

— Look at where they've stuck him!
— He looks like a parrot coalman.
— And where were they supposed to put him?
— In prison for sure.
— He deserves to make this good impression!
— Why didn't you prepare him
a luxury apartment,
he would have burned that down too!
— But he shouldn't be in this cage either!
— They'll make him die of rage!
— Die! He takes things hard!
— He's calmer than we are!
— I say he's having fun.
— But his family?
— Who knows where in the world he came from!
— This riff-raff doesn't have a family!
— Sure, it roams around!
— No doubt he came straight out of hell.
— Poor devil!
— You even feel sorry for him?
You wouldn't say that
if he'd burned down your house.
— He burned down yours?

— If he didn't
it was damn close.
He's burned down half the world,
this joker!
— At least, cowards, don't spit on him,
he is a living creature after all!
— But look how quiet he is!
— He's not scared!
— I would be dying of shame!
— Like that in the middle of this humiliation!
— For three days!
— To the pillory!
— My God what an unwholesome face!
— What a criminal expression!
— If he wasn't in a cage
I'd get out of here!
— What if he suddenly tried to run away?
— How could he?
— You think that cage is strong enough?
— What if he escaped!
— Couldn't he squeeze through the bars?
These jokers know how to contort themselves
in all sorts of ways!
— Today's a good day for the police!
— If they didn't hurry up and catch him,
he'd have sent us all up in smoke!
— The pillory! He deserves a lot more!
— When they interrogated him,
he answered with a laugh
that he burns for pleasure.
— Oh God what gall!
— I can't believe these people!
— I'd love to tear him to bits.
— Throw him in the moat!
— I want to spit on him
again!
— They should burn him a bit too,
it would help him laugh!
— It's what he deserves!
— When they put him in prison, he'll escape,

he's so clever!
— Worse than a weasel!
— Look at the eyes he's got on him!
— Why not throw him down a well?
— In the Commune's cistern!
— And there are people
who feel sorry for him.
— You have to have a bad conscience
to feel sorry
for this kind!

Make way! Make way! Make way!
Trash! Tiny beings
who stink of garbage,
fetid herd!
Swallow up
all of your obscene gossip,
and may it choke you!
Make way! I am the poet!
I come from afar,
I've traveled all the world
to come and seek
the creature I must sing!
Kneel, miserable rabble!
Men who are so fearful of fire,
poor little straw beings!
Down on your knees!
I am the priest,
this cage is the altar,
that man is the Lord!

You are the Lord
to whom I address
with all the devotion
of my heart,
this most gentle prayer.
To you, gentle creature,
I reach out panting, exhausted,
I've crossed ravines of thorns,
I've climbed over walls!

I will free you!
No one move, I said!
Keep your head down,
beat your breast hard,
this is the *confiteor*
of my mass!
They've covered you with insults
and spit,
this insidious swarm
of tiny cowards.
And it's natural that you let yourself
be tied up by them:
these disgusting and lazy insects
are livid with evil cleverness,
in their veins there runs
a poisonous green blood.
And you, great soul,
could not imagine
the tiny well they had prepared for you,
no wonder you fell in.
I've come to free you!
No one move!
I look you in the eyes
to feel warmer.

Crouching under your coat
you have no words,
like the flame: color, and heat!
And that black coat,
these stolid men threw it over you,
didn't they,
so that we couldn't see that you're all red?
Or did you throw it on yourself,
to hide just a bit
of your fiery soul?
What do you spy at the horizon?
You see a spark rising?
Tell me, haven't you managed to smuggle in
the last match?
I can read it in your eyes!

Your eyes let off sparks,
by the hundreds, by the hundreds, by the thousands!
You can with your eyes
burn the whole world!
Did the sun create you,
you who can burn with a mere gaze?
[. . .]
And you, petrified with fear,
pray, pray in low voices,
secret prayers.
I too, you know, am an arsonist,
a poor arsonist who cannot burn,
and I am in prison like you.
I am poet who renders homage to you,
as a poor failed arsonist,
a poets' arsonist.
Every line I write is a conflagration.
Oh! If you could see when I am writing!
I think I see the flames,
I feel the gusts, boiling
caresses on my face.
What I write is
not a true conflagration,
fraudulently not true.
Everything has its police,
even poetry.
[. . .]
In the secret of my rooms
I pace dressed in red,
and look at myself in an old mirror,
in heady intoxication
as though I were a flame,
a poor flame that awaits . . .
your reflection!
Outside I dress in gray,
colorlessly that is,
there's a police for clothes too,
same as for words.
And the one for fire
is tremendous, ruthless,

men have a deathly fear of flames,
serious men,
and so they invented firemen.

You look at me, unspeaking,
you do not speak,
yet your eyes tell me:
the man who talks does little.
But I trust you!
I'm opening the cage!
Look at them, look at them run away!
They've lost their minds in horror,
they're crazed with fear.
You can go, run, run,
he'll catch up.
One of these mornings,
stepping out of my house,
among the usual shacks,
I won't see
these worm-eaten relics,
so jealously kept
for so long!
I won't see them anymore!
I'll cry for joy!
You've come by!
And then I'll feel a tug at my clothes,
and the flames will burn
beneath my house . . .
I'll scream, I'll exult,
you'll have given me life!
I am flame that awaits you!
Go on, pass through, my brother, rush to warm
the frozen carcass
of this decrepit world!

WAR, A HEROIC POEM

VALENTINE DE SAINT-POINT

443
War,
a Heroic
Poem

The monstrous voracious mouths of the ship seem insatiable; they devour animals and things, and the ship's flanks where the first swarm and the second pile up get only a little heavier upon the water and its sunny reflection.

Sections and battalions of soldiers file past and, man by man, are also swallowed up by the immense ship. The soldiers—with colonial helmets that evoke the land that awaits them, crowning their kits and becoming for those that stay behind a light halo—are constantly replenished. Only their movement affirms their forward march and their succession, for their appearance is always the same, as are their attitudes, gestures, and voices.

[. . .]

ALL THE SOLDIERS (*in a circle*)

Let us sing, let us dance,
Our laurels await us.

A VOICE IN THE CROWD

But all men are brothers!

SOME SOLDIERS, *laughing*.

Oh! Show us their love,
We can see nothing but their hate!

A VOICE IN THE CROWD

If we are all enemies,
Why don't you kill us?

SOME SOLDIERS

Because it's a crime.

A VOICE IN THE CROWD

But killing the others isn't?

SOME SOLDIERS

That is full of glory.

A VOICE IN THE CROWD

Why, why?
No, we're all brothers!

THE POET

To avoid individual crimes
That serve the individual,
We must consent to a great collective crime
That serves the collectivity;

To avoid cowards, let us form heroes.

SOME SOLDIERS

Keep the criminals, we will be heroes.

[. . .]

ALL THE SOLDIERS

Steal, pillage, destroy,

Test our strength, master, dominate!

Yes, may our brothers await us over there!

(*in a circle*)

Our laurels we seek,

Our laurels await us . . .

THE POET

And beyond the fatherland,

Synthesis of the collectivity,

There is the eternal, eternal need to destroy,

To conquer and to destroy.

It was not in vain that Satan the destroyer

Rose up against God the creator.

Every being carries within him their possibilities,

And there are more satans than gods;

For many ruins are needed

To raise a new stone,

A tablet of laws.

[. . .]

THE VOICES OF THE WOMEN

Our Husbands! Our Lovers, our Men!

SOME SOLDIERS

Do not complain. We, we need

Someone to open a wound within us.

SOME SOLDIERS

We do not have the eternal wound

That spurts our surplus blood;

We need a wound or we will suffocate.

ALL THE SOLDIERS

Open a wound within us!

THE POET

The collectivity is female,

Let a deep wound be opened,

That its blood may flow.

SOME SOLDIERS

The surplus of our blood contracts our fingers
At the sight of a throat.

SOME SOLDIERS

That we not be at each others' throats,
Set us loose against the others!

THE VOICES OF THE WOMEN

Our Husbands! Our Lovers! Our Men!

SOME SOLDIERS

Do you have so little faith to tremble like that?
Ah! It's that you have not given enough!

THE POET

Like semen blood is depleted
If it does not flow for fecundity.
The grapes must be harvested
So that new wine may be born.

[. . .]

THE POET

In the red sunset,
Sunset of blood and glory,
A cry of deliverance is raised
Whence heroes will emerge, finally!
And the soul of destruction
Departs to its conquests.
Go, soldiers of the soul of destruction!
We are suffocating with certainty,
Repressed daring oppresses our breasts,
Smothers our courageous hearts.
Nations! To the great heroic people
Fallen through wasting their efforts on the useful,
And sick of the useful, outside of History,
Nations, offer some glory,
Some useless glory.
The people are sick of peace,
They are dead with it.
May they forget to eat for a sublime scrap of cloth;
And that, no longer beasts,
Each one may believe himself a god.

O dolphin, arching with your electric fins
against the resonating steel of the ships,
at impact you strike in a spewing forth of foam,
destroy, twist, in a watery vortex that seems
a sudden gaping jaw ready to swallow up the void.

In the night you have surprised the sailors' sleep,
while the sentinel, his eyes blooming with stars,
stood at the main-top that surged upon the sea.
The liquid eye of the searchlights, springing forward like a compass-leg,
did not see you escaping the nocturnal trap.
The hammocks of the sleeping men rocked
in the warm languor of an August dream.
The tropical palms leaned over their sleep
and the pearl of a mouth so enchanting: half-open for a kiss.
And in their slumbering ears the echo of a song,
a Neapolitan song, perhaps repeated its sentimental refrain.

Who? Who could, o dolphin, await death singing?
The ship was held firm by its yellow anchors.
Immobile in a silence darker than night.
In a glimpse of sky, its flag whipped
the wind. —Look out! Look out sentinel!
The deck fell into the sea with a flat roar.
The sleepy voices of the men shouted: —Help! —
The ship leaned, like an immense top, spinning.
Blood seeped out of the decks, like wine
spewing out in streams from cracks in the vat.
—Help! —The portholes cracked under the pressure
of the crazed men who saw death mocking them.
—Help! —From the quarter-deck, a flame invaded the sky
like a reddish mushroom, sparkling in the shadows:
a bell swayed mortally, intermittently striking,
accompanied by a cry of horror that blew through the night:
—Kill yourself then, if you have not the courage to die!

Sinking. In the dusk of the waters
the defeated submarine
is sinking straight and deep,
and is black like a dead body
thrown onto the corals in the deep,
thrown to the grave that devours
in liquid joy
the leftovers and the cadavers of the old world.
The devouring propellers of speed
no longer buzz,
the prow no longer pushes forth its sharp ram,
the submarine lies down
on its viscous bed and all around
a multitude of strange
fish, unknown corals and jellyfish
attack its sealed apertures.

And yet once you leapt in the sun
like a sentry of burnished steel
shining, and making an infinite
speedy return to the green abyss
where the sun is dispersed
but where is found
the tremendous test
that is your companion and breathes courage
into the empty soul.
And yet with your agile metallic prow
you swelled the greenish waters
around your gleaming thighs
and were impervious
to the winds and the black
congregations of blizzards
that gather like evil women
at the corners of the horizon,
their faces unkempt and their eyes intent
on spying, from high upon the firmament,

the shipwrecked, the lost, the unknown,
those who have no pilot.

And yet from your clamorous
mute thighs, agile and adventurous,
missiles were leaping
keeping their wake in silence,
carrying death
in their slim bodies,
and the infinite
powers of dynamite.

You passed and the sharks fled,
you passed and the corals
interrupted their tenacious shapeless work,
and the fish in a quick motion
turned away their fins.
You looked like the huge monster
of a fantastical destiny
and you were nothing but a light submarine,
a slight ship
that a beam's strength
sinks, that a vortex submerges
into the abyss.

I don't know your story
but I try to sing your glory
that reaches out to the desire
of audacious men.
Submarine, if destiny has decreed
that mute you should sink
and lost settle in the viscous bed of seaweed;
submarine that unconscious seas,
and impotent searchlights
destroyed, you are alive and strong:
it is not death, but a semblance
of death, that remains. Destiny
newly shapes you
into a long ghost
and you rush, submarine,

with the courage of the dead
in the unknown silence of the waters,
your pilot,
is the will of the strong.

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*A Medium's
Musings*

New brothers will rise
and pursue you,
for your shiny back
bears not the tricolor flag,
nor the French one,
but the single color that blinds:
the flag for the battle
fought between disaster and disaster
against this ferocious mystery
that insanely persists in blocking
the doors of Nature.

A MEDIUM'S MUSINGS (MUSING NO. 3)

CARLO CARRÀ

MEDIUM'S MUSINGS NO. 3

(3rd) "act"

HUGE BACKS

LEAPING the bu

REAU

cra

tic

clock

Armored steel confusion

in space 8000 sq. km

note time 4:30 A.M.

1,000,000 guns

shoot

shoot

shoot

Underground

torment

that

inhabits the polychrome

anxiety

of art with

me

di

um's

GRAVITY

less ACTION on the stage this is not an

urban melodrama

TODAY faraway voice

close faaaaaraaaaaway

ta

funeral march at the doors of the MUSEUM of the

exhausted

LIFE

come

go CONFUSION

come of 1 2 3 4 5

go battalions

that distorts

the

facts and makes

all

BATTLES

VAIN

SEXLESS

6th SOUL
Terrifying tenderness

One evening I watched my mother's long eyelashes withdraw from the extreme edges of the dusk light and descend onto the geometrical canals of Lombardy, whose effulgent glow cuts through the prosperous fields. Anxiety. My acrid throat tight with anguish:

Where are you? . . .

Are you calling me? . . .

Where are you? . . .

Where? . . .

Where? . . .

Where?

Why aren't you answering?

Warm blood-red affection of a last ray that desperately clings to a tender tearful vine. Oppression of the heart that after so much effort wants the peace of this evening and fears the oxyhydrogen blowlamps of the nearby indefatigable stars. I am not trembling. I wait. Is this her breathing? Or the breeze agitated by her feverish fan of golden forests?

I hear her poor words wander, fingers fallen leaves that attempt to caress my forehead.

But the shelling drilled through the pensive skull of the night's silence.

Brutal insistent stirring of porridgelike noises in the cauldrons of the valleys. Stripping of the echoes rinsed and rerinsed. Ebb and flow of sibilants among the hurling hammers, vehement fans of the constant flashes. A thousand kilometer-high steel skirts flailing in the sky's bronze wind. Little elegant ferocious speedy feet of fire leap out of them.

Tum tum tum tum tum tum tum tum

Tum tum tum

Tum tum tum tum.

Two, three, freezing white roses bloom at the tip of three long rockets. A fourth one even whiter. Another one, pink.

Up above they brush against the silvery and most tender face of my dead mother. . . . It's her. . . . Terror. . . . Terror. . . . Only terror of the Great War! . . .

Brutally I grab my fleeing heart that was rushing forward like a happy faithful gentle dog, and and I nail it down under me in the mud of the trench.

The high voice speaks to me above the acrid immense smell of ballistite, the new soul of the night.

“Only one woman should repeat against your heart the distant beating of mine. . . . Her hands will smooth your heart that springs up and runs off. Her gaze will have the deep transparency of mine where your crib floated. . . . Yes, my son?”

“Mother I believe in you only woman not woman. I want what you want. I will respect the woman chosen by you. Where is she? Where is she? . . . I had chosen one. She is dead. I still keep in the flesh of my chest the dear shape of her anxious face bathed in tears.

She cried too much out of pleasure or pain under the cog wheels of the aerial hurling machine of muscles and ideas that I am. I am your son. You made me metallic and quick, you, with your diaphanous fearful hands of evening breeze . . .

Now you want another woman to be born in my heart? You’re teasing me, mamma, let’s have a good laugh together and then leave it up to me. I’ll do what you want. I know that you’ll forgive me. Know that I adore you, the rest is rough professionalism that is of no concern to you. I do my best to press the grapes in the vat of my bed. . . . I take a woman and immediately I open a breach of clear light in the dark forest of her instincts. I will cleave her like you cleave a mutinying crowd of caprice lies fantasies caresses ardors epidemic attractions. To go beyond it or to stop if you like. Don’t look. I’ll do well.

Why are you crying? You want me to be what I am not? You want me to stop to give her, empty little uneven slipping flask of perfume, a great impetuous precise heart tentaculate with its veins arteries twenty solar systems? All my life to her? . . . Well if you want it, why not? May all your tenderness inundate the world and drag me along! And may the little woman be for me a crib boat wisdom refreshment coffin airplane star! Her, her, her only her, yours, chosen by you! To please you, mamma!”

Suddenly a hoarse voice screams screams screams screams.

Then it waaaaiiiiiiiiiils. Then it screeeeeeeeeeeeaaams . . .

It’s the fourth soul who is climbing up from the tropical depth of a ship’s hold full of spices and trash.

Jaw-splitting carnival burst of laughter. Explosions of joy. Burps and spits. The fourth soul is clambering up, and suddenly descends, blade unsheathed, volcanic mouth, tempestuous mustache, jutting eyes, descends into the vortex-scuffle on the bridge:

Nooo! nooo! nooo! Nooo! no! I’ll have your hide! By God! I’ll have your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide, your hide

COWARD!

I’LL HAVE YOUR HIDE! . . .

RIFF-RAFF! . . .

IMPOSTOR! . . . PASSÉIST! . . .

PIMP!

I'LL HAVE YOUR HIDE! . . .

I'LL HAVE YOUR HIDE! . . .

ASSHOLE! . . .

May I and my sons be damned, if I don't break your heart?

Christian heart! . . . Clerical heart! . . . Jesuitical heart! . . . Bigoted! . . .

PURULENT HEART! . . .

DAMNED HEART! . . . Gluttonous! . . .

Gluttonous! . . .

Fetid fetid HEART! . . . Sacristy! Catacomb!

I'LL SMASH IT! I'LL SMASH IT!

I'LL SMASH IT! . . .

It's no use running, I'll catch you and smash your measureless indigestible unbearable infinite heart! (everyone rushes in screaming: *Stop him, stop him, the fourth soul is crazy, he's crazy! Catch him! In the brig! Chain him down in the hold, or throw him out to sea!*)

TO HELL WITH YO O O O O U U U U U U U U U!

If you were twenty, a hundred, two thousand, you couldn't stop me! I have to get rid of that damned coward cretin third soul!

GIVE ME A KNIFE! . . .

GIVE ME A

KNIFE! . . .

A knife as big as the main-mast!

To smash her into a hundred, a thousand

two thousand

three thousand

passéist books

(SUNG)

Always like thiiiiis
Always like thiiiiis
we'll refill with paaaaaper! . . .
the Latin
latrines
cretin
cute
mischievous
of all the barracks of all the world! . . .

The Metamorphoses of the Moon

A WOMAN WITH THREE SOULS ROSA ROSÀ

... “I” took the podium: “Allow me, respected colleagues, briefly to summarize the general outlines of your hypotheses. The fact that these, though conceived separately by all of us, agree in every way, seems to me decisive proof that they are objectively correct.

We can thus affirm that we have succeeded in identifying those mysterious elements which on that night landed fortuitously in my lab.

We are dealing with—to borrow your precise expression my dear “Y”—*materialized abstractions of time*:—diaphanous astral chips, torn from the spinning block of time: fragments of eras destined to future spaces. Pans of chronological developments—anticipated to their own past. Consequences, so to speak, put before causes.

Regarding their provenance, that is, the phenomenon that might have determined this tearing from the chronological span they originally belonged to, we’ve agreed to the choice of various hypotheses.

The one that seems to me most likely is that time, being a limitless entity, everywhere diffused, through countless dimensions of which we only know three—barely intuiting a fourth one—has, *for reasons unknown to us*, imperceptibly slowed its usual speed. Because of this slowing, a phenomenon has happened that is similar to what takes place when a galloping horse, mounted by a man, suddenly comes to a full stop: the rider flies over the head of his steed, surpassing it.

Thus from time suddenly slowing down a few fragments detached themselves and flew *forward*. Some of them, the force of inertia exhausted, fell back into our era. And finally, a very powerful electrical charge (the lightning strike that night) made them gravitate to my lab, melting them into the radioactive elements that I was working with and hence creating the complex phenomena we have been studying.

Another electrical charge (the second lightning strike) made them radiate elsewhere, with its blind force, leading them into the breathing space of Giorgina Rossi. You know as well as I do the perfect mediocrity of that woman, before this phenomenon took place.

[...]

As you know after a brief time three distinct personalities appeared in this woman, all different from one another and all most different from her usual nature. We have been able to reconstruct what she did at that time with perfect accuracy, though we lack a few explanations on her part since she remembers nothing.

The first transformation, one evening, turned her by surprise into a being gifted with an intense vitality, and furnished with predatory instincts free of any moral prejudice, desirous of novelty at any cost.

The second led her to pronounce an eloquent discourse couched in vague scientific terms that described with elegance fantastic discoveries that do not exist.

The third led her to compose in the middle of a letter to her husband a lyrical prose that seems to be an invocation of love by an unknown and distant entity. We have possession of the original of this document that was given to us by her husband, who immediately returned home upon receiving the letter, fearful for his wife's sanity. All three personalities, we agree, have a common character; they have a suggestion of foreknowledge that makes it easy to understand their nature.

All three are strands of what a woman's life will be in the future.

In the first are evident symptoms of amorality, individualism, an adventurous spirit, multiplied erotic experience, and the devaluation of love to the point of it being nothing more than one aspect of a multiple life—all elements that scholars have predicted to be typical tendencies of the woman of the future.

The second instead seems to be formed by characteristics that make her appear more like a male than a female personality and, in any case, an incredibly advanced one.

It is completely free of any sentimental sensibility, and purely dedicated to investigating in ever greater depths the mysteries of matter with the multiple forms of its intelligence. It has certainly come to our era from very distant times.

The third personality finally makes us jump even further in time, carrying us to a most remote future in which, through vertiginous evolutions, we will have reached a superman beyond material sensibility, and new senses radiating immaterially from the infinite will have been born.

It appears to be a female life tense in its mystical aspiration toward a symbol of unreality."

[. . .]

She's back,
she's pushy,
she's insistent,
she's delinquent,
you can spy her over there,
behind that strapping young hazel tree.

Don't let her through,
she's an old maid
dressed for a party
by a Jewish rag merchant.

No, make her stay outside;
no, Madam, you cannot enter here;
winter diamonds block your way.
Don't let her through;
she tricked you last year, she'll trick you again.

She's plastered herself in her old age
with ceruse and unguents;
her pustules and scabs she's covered
with thick face-powder.
She's as old as the world,
she's a procuress that never was a prostitute;
she never was young.

Come on, throw her out!
You think the roses are blooming?
You think the sparrows and the larks are starting to sing?
You think this is the time for love?
Oh the gracious lie!
She's a monkey stepping out in her finery
to trick us.
Here's the grin, here are the affectations,
go on, don't stop here.

All the cats are catty,
all the mice squeak;
the donkeys bray;
the guitars are being tuned;
all the sheep bleat at the goat.
It smells of cuckolds,
it smells of fornication;
all good things,
rising within the prolific humus.

With all this hunger
isn't it ridiculous to produce more children? . . .
Malthus, your preventive teachings
are egregious motives
for a sociological treatise.
The procuress is knocking at our door:
we cease to think and then we do,
in a stupid drunkenness,
what perpetuates the race.

Everyone's gone crazy,
they run around kissing each other;
and the plants sprout,
and the flowers bloom.
Pity, have pity,
for this enormous fecundity.

We'll castrate the males;
we'll free the females
from the gluttonous absorption of the womb;
we'll uproot the plants,
we'll suffocate the flowers.
Knock on our doors, panderer:
there'll be old women opening them:
with the new year you will see no children
scampering in the street.

Everyone's gone crazy,
they're holding hands and heading into the bushes,

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Gian
Pietro
Lucini

Oh! let's just go back into the jungle and devour each other!

The monkey has returned,
what gall;
resuscitating from the ice and snow:
she's softened up the azure of the skies,
o malicious monkey,
o decrepit panderer.

COURAGE + TRUTH ENIF ROBERT AND

F. T. MARINETTI

Translated by Adrienne Defendi

We still have not grasped well, it seems to me, what "FUTURIST WOMAN" really means.

This adjective must not give off airs of cynical or audacious attitudes, of rebellious effects, of a frenetic run toward the adorned multicolored hills of NOTORIETY AT ANY COST.

And nor is it an excuse to have a mental breakdown so as to fumble through life's nausea with the latest illusion of a *novelty* that is worth living.

Instead, it should be understood as an energizing cure of

COURAGE + TRUTH

It is time, thus, to put an end to the coquettish and desultory tone that characterizes women's literature of today, and assert energetically the vigorous declaration of reality, **EVEN THE NONAESTHETIC**, of our souls.

Away with the usual rigamarole of veiled, gracious, absurd sentimentalities, the *aeriform* contemplation of luminous stars, of lunar nights, the meticulous description of the four seasons rehashed in all the prose and poetry scutched by generations and generations of great, mediocre, lowly male writers and poets!

We know by now ad nauseam that spring brings us the little blue flower; that in summer the cicada chirps away in the olive tree in the garden patch; that autumn is listless and lustful in the misty half-tones of tired leaves; that winter is better spent close to the fire while outside it never snows enough "large flakes."

It is truly time to surpass this decadence of literary triviality and to make use of the subtleties of style, as in the truly unique and discerning fashion of some of today's women, to make known the true **NAKED** force of our means of self-affirmation.

Courageously, then, those among us who have the gift of expressing themselves with ease and passion, put aside the comfortable languor of the literature-shiver of masked eroticisms composed by gracious polished women writers and realize the beautiful new gesture of truly speaking to one another with forceful and audacious honesty.

No more, for goodness sake, frittering away the treasures of fine style to tell us that the sun is a divine lover or that the autumn garden can induce excitement of the most intense pleasure.

When reading such grandiose stupidities, one feels like taking the fickle writer by the arm, shaking her real hard to bring her back completely to everyday realism, and saying to her sternly: "No, my dear: you only make a brutish imitation of thoughts and things. A handsome young man of manly features is your sun and your garden. But tell, then, with the utmost candor, of your human and carnal desire which your legitimate and conscious sensitivity inspires in you; speak of your fertile and sensual right, without botching it all up with perfumed and sun-lit analogies that are absolutely foreign to your nakedness that sings of love. You remain outside of life and verisimilitude; you walk the well-beaten path of past romantic decadence, and have not even realized, not even in the mellifluous way of masked absurdities, the new *word*."

Enough! Everything has already been said of aesthetic sentiments, of undulating airplanes in azure space: Everything still needs to be said, instead, of the everyday realities, of life's sinuosity that twists and retwists incessantly in our tormented souls. That is what we must face.

To render **TR-U-TH** without the confusion of veils and shallow compromises that deform it by rendering it . . . pretty. That's right: the truth is more than just pretty.

A charming lady friend of mine was ill for a long time. She told me and everyone else of her nervous ailments, of . . . *feverish thoughts* (literally!), of her distressful states of mind that caused her temperature to rise, et cetera. She made herself believe, in short, that she was afflicted with an interesting disease. In fact, that poor quivering nervous system, sensitive, continuously shaken by electric shivers, oh how it was . . . aesthetic! How beautiful the pale face. How beautiful the person lying in a picturesque pose of a suffering . . . intellectual!

By chance, I spoke with her doctor in charge who told me quite simply: "Poor woman! She suffers so. She has a rectal tumor that will be difficult to excise even if we were able to win over her great modesty and reluctance."

The ridiculousness of her extraordinary aesthetic efforts to hide her true illness killed my compassion.

I find a formidable logical link between my most languishing friend afflicted

with a rectal tumor and the *azure* women writers. And I am convinced that one and not the least important reason for her pitiful plastic attitudes can be found in the literary genre she so preferred. Books, newspapers, magazines, in which cultured women “with azure fingers” barely touch upon the most vague curiosities of the senses which want to seem so refiined and self-fashionedly thrilling; in which the search for spiritual snobberies is so intense that sometimes it reaches the point of becoming utterly ridiculous.

Be sure of this: no one believes anymore, by now, in our pleasurable twisting and turning of pretty words and sophisticated rhythm—NO ONE—not even adolescent-sick high-school students.

Let us try then to change our ways with conviction by telling from now on our true lives, woven of less-than-happy realities, that we should NEVER AGAIN dissolve in dream.

Let us make “futurist woman” stand for

COURAGE + TRUTH

March 1918

Enif Robert, Futurist

I approve unconditionally.

F. T. Marinetti, Futurist

T O R M E N T S A R M A N D O M A Z Z A

— I wish that like nitrocellulose my lips would set fire to your senses see
the azure arabesques of my veins your flesh is elastic like the water of
cisterns in a heat wave the pitometer of my lust digs into it anemic
wound your ice eyes fall back into their sockets at times they drench
me with bitter eau-de-cologne looks your blood is full of saccharine lan-
guor

— I drink the absinthe of all the unfulfilled desires of naked flesh I am
machine-gunned by the sharp scales of the stars I untangle knots of elec-
trical wires without turning into ashes I pierce my brain with the hat-pins of
will without dying

THE TREES SHUDDER WITH DELIRIOUS GREEN-NESS THEY MASTURBATE IN RESINOUS
TEARS KITELIKE TULLES FLOAT

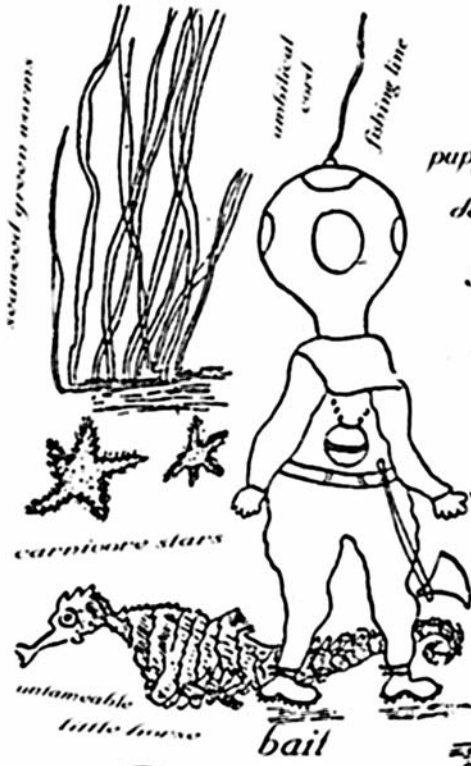
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TO GIVE IN is to sink gently, resting on one's own sensual depths, to give up all vaporous evasions, all lunar transfigurations, all the pull of the spiritual. And you must understand, my love, that your uselessly winged heart will not be able to sustain for long the weight that assaults it, presses it, forces it to *give in*. The Universe has moments when everything gives in. The ripeness of orchards in October, Venetian beds, the backs of cats and of oceans, voluptuous velvets, passionate eyes, tired roads that border cemeteries—my love, my love, I admonish you to give in without wasting any more time; gather yourself up from your roots, hurry, before green gives way to yellow, before pink gives way to red, before the azure drops heavily into purple. Afterward, it would be too late, and I would have hollowed out a polar void around me, exploding with light.

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The precious harmony of the night forces me to count the cypresses that are all in a row awaiting the order to disperse. But alas, too many admiring remarks singing do not poetry make; and it will never be possible for emerald to melt into a rainbow. I would like to be the showman of my childhood, but I fear that my hardened profile will insist upon staring at the great fir riddled with stars, without drawing any practical consideration from it. If only I could slip along hallucinated paper velodromes, freeing the tabernacle of the green god from external reflections! If only I could deliver my heart from the grasping shadowy coils, like a hermetic piggybank that has to be broken to be put to fruit! Yes I dominate my lyric like the curves of a capricious road; but since there is not enough gas to reach the happiness of the most languid forests, I have no choice but to listen to the swarming pearls under my palate. Then viscous sponge lips conceive thoughts on the sly and curse the fatality that will thread, today and forever, the needle of my words. Do not then, my little girl, remove the swallows from the Alps, to decorate your most white belly: let loose these most beautiful swallow-words rubbed with memories, divine with divinations, idolatrabable in their freshness. And don't look at me with the gentleness of turquoise nights without fault and without happiness. How I could have loved you, if sobs had not mined our throats! Now I shall no longer know the sensation of fat light mornings, nor the smile of seashores most white as they are struck, like an ivory spark on the edge of a great cup.

My calmness is like a sneer petrified by pain. My silence is nothing more than a cluster of screams harnessed by a grimace. Like this angular city that at night clothes itself in impassibility . . . Like these lamps that the hand of fear has extinguished at midnight . . . Harshness of the road with its inevitable alleys and corners! The remaining searchlights insistent upon the river, drip into the water buzzing like spindles seeking their balance: in the water, amber coffins, lubricated, await bizarre phosphorescent eyes, clasped by intersections of rays like many Moses' heads. If only my tears were of gold as well, and a coffin of gratitude awaited them, like a jewel casket to present them to you, little girl; if only I had a weir in which to drop this inner turbulence, this cowardly inflexible noise that does not know how to be music and will never be a thunderstorm! And therefore: if the sum of all my states of mind is immobility, if at the bottom of all my agonies I find silence, if no one is listening to me, if everything is concluded in a sneer, let's stop once and for all, o my hurry, o my anxiety! And we can begin to count the stars again, the street lights and steps, as I haven't for too many years: we'll amuse ourselves. Little girl, I came below your window, tonight; but your little horizontal body felt the thickness of the walls, up there; and so without recourse I inevitably began to peel the tangerine that I found in my pocket, seriously pretending to imitate the unlikely calm of the nocturnal street.



The Diver

puppet for the silent theater of the fish
deep acrobat

scarecrow

masked gravedigger
who steals the bodies of the drowned

pneumatic man
hermetic murderer

hatchet underwater executioner

sea anemone

bloody
slump
where the
decapitated
sirens
left their
serpentine hair



watering-can

anvil

holothurian
ermine's
rag
merchant's
bag



jelly
fish
beggar's umbrella
phosphorescent merry-go-round
of sea-horses



metallized
coral
spring



oysters
coffers of spit and
pearls

Let's dismantle this absurd problematic convention, woven from the slime of millions of wise snails—let's sound its sardonic depths, titillating our hearts with the finest peacock feather, and let's throw our sidereal souls, which bounce from star to star with childish cries of joy, at its feet, like a great bundle of bloodless perfumed flowers.

And the clouds, materialized expectation in the darkened sky, will disperse like the draperies of an imaginary stage set, making way for the life of infinite horizons that will finally smother us *with all the softnesses that lie in wait*.

LETTER FROM ASTRA, ASTRA'S DIARY

BENEDETTA

Dear Emilio,

I dreamt that I was flying: wings of sun, ruby fuselage. I am reclining in the cockpit, my head resting in your hands. Deep azure. Our motor hearts. No pilot. The commands are set for the ascent.

Up above the sky draws quicksilver from the edge of the wings, and tongues of flames from the passion that envelops us.

I offer my face to yours as it bends over me. Your eyes are kissing me, your mouth looks at me. Could our kiss be too heavy a ballast? Your soul has surfaced to drink in mine that is all upon my lips, offering itself. Your left hand gently brushes me to gather it up . . . Blackness.

There is a black ring on your finger.

"You had promised to have no bride other than me."

Your eyes serene reject my anxiety.

"Other than you only death."

All of a sudden first unnoticed and then precipitous and conscious the descent. The void pumps our hearts. The wings yellow and then darken; the ruby fuselage blackens.

Lacerating descent that tears the joy from my nerves like a brutal hand stripping a branch of acacia against the grain.

I awaken in a foundering lethargy of bitter skeptical abandon that voids any attempt to rise up to the heights of optimism. Write me,

your Astra.

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*Letter from
Astra, Astra's
Diary*

Astra's Diary

20 August

This night.

High on the chaotic reefs of the promontory
my parapet
made perhaps of children's lances
splashes out of the rind of that house over there,
on the milky way bed hammock or circus net
black for my acrobatics.

Unsheathed by the anxiety that burned my
quick youth.

The bitter motor of rebellion extinguished,
in free flight
descend descend
from the Zenith to the South Cross
and onto it nail the burning distance that dried up
every present instant.

Finally
erect upon your chariot, Great Bear,
with a halo of light-years
I can mold my solitude.

I have had my fill of the earth!

Poor human compasses that exchange confessions, two-dimensional words.
Nights, vain watertight compartments that accelerate shipwreck.

By the catapult of the absurd I want to be hurled to the apex of folly, and swing
balancing there in vertiginous ecstasy.

But do not stare at me, moon, with your round deceitful eye that looks like a boudoir lamp.

Extinguish the silky rustle of your rays, cease pleasuring the universe drowning
it in your cedar mint selz!

The blue smile of your pallor has already excessively undone my veins
Her cheeks are so pale our kisses her smile
when . . .

Ah! plotting moon!

It's you again!

In those shadows you condense the sadness of his irises, which hollows out my heart with the emptiness of regret.

You bewitch and bleach the vines with your magic!

You want them to repeat gestures swelling with amorous murmurs . . .

You spur on the roguish voluptuousness of the agave toward the fleshy velvet of the grottoes.

You've even seduced the sea!

It is there

religiously reclining under you deprived of all azure.

You must be happy now!

You've dragged me back here once again.

Fragile against the naked steel of the parapet, you envelop me in the sheath of desire.

My flesh knows how to betray but not how to wait.

I want the voice that awakens echoes in the lush valleys of pleasure,

warmth to compensate for the coldness of distances,

blood to color the horizons,

passion to populate life.

The moon withered.

The sun was victoriously surpassing the horizon.

VARIATIONS MARIA GINANNI

The most delicate fingers of my soul would like to take hold of your impalpable strings and intertwine them with the most delicate gentleness and the sharpest lucidity of my genius, to weave the miraculous texture of a new existence.

Ah! the road, the road always and *inevitably* taken!

Ah! destiny always dominant and sustained by the crumbling tremor of our hypnotically enslaved hands!

No! no! escape! break these *fatal* roads we imagine ourselves destined to!

Perhaps the image of your agitated *totality* desperately grabs me, fastens itself upon my soul and molds it to resemble you!

.....
I have found *absolute completeness* by grabbing onto your *loose consistency*, fire-fly air! dissociating, totally scattering the atoms of my brain with your seething pullulation you bring it complete *rarefaction*, the perfect destruction of all exact limitations. I set sail for regions perfectly devoid of consistency—I dissolve into complete absence, *Nothing*. And through the abolishment of all consciousness, of all exactitude, through this reduction of my thinking forces to their minimum, I can instead grasp the essence of the all: the *Infinite*.

Ah! finally I reach what I despaired of reaching. Thus armed I will really be able to build a new universe!

Your every small luminous push cuts through the train of associations that ties my ideas and they shine autonomously, solid, definite, with their instinctive strength.

My brain becomes one with yours, immense night! Mechanical constraining logic is defeated: the nucleus of intuition persists formidable and indestructible

.....

I feel two vaporous immense hands rising within me with purple gleams.—Dark.

I feel a diffuse trembling slithering within the moonlight.—Dark.

From my spirit is born a phosphorescent night that becomes immense within me, pours forth from my head in the magnetic fountain of my hair, floods the world with black crystal omnipresence.

. . . Hands . . . (purple gleams)

. . . tremble . . . (moonlight)

. . . Night . . . (phosphorescence)

What logical string linked these words, which has been lost? Perhaps I was about to think “Your hands tremble o Night” and here instead is what I conceived:

Hands tremble Night

the fireflies with their luminous gash have separated these essential concepts. The words “your” and “o” have been lost burned in the flaming gash

.....

The brain of the Night: a mass of black air, deep, *cerebral*, and so many firefly illuminations: isolated thoughts, free from paltry human logic.

My transformed brain: a black meadow full of flower-thoughts: each one made of an invisible stem with a simple corolla like a white dot

.....

Nerves
 catapulted
 from protective normalcy
 to absurd suffering.
 Insignificant desires
 barely sketched out
 by a sickly creative will
 asphyxiated
 by nebulous tiredness.
 Lo-o-se-ning
 of all the tense threads
 in the blood-filled cutaneous space.
 The diaphragmheart
 chatters
 wilted
 on the record of an impossible silence.
 Turning.
 Turning like a merry-go-round
 ridiculous
 my little decision
 tiny
 in my brain enlarged by this spasm
 to reach out pass over into eternity
 to cease to exist.

CONSCIOUSNESSES PRIMO CONTI

*To unpredictable creations—
 To the genius of Bruno Corra*

Within the intense gravitational pull of our sensible forms oscillating upon our *moment of election*, because of unpredictable intervals of rhythm, the suspension

of our soul is faced with a curious flowering of intimate things that seemed hidden by habit—that, *before*, it had turned into *conventional acts*.

There exist in life certain temporary and involuntary *insanities* that give us the *impulse* to pursue what we had ignored: *insanities* like symbols of a totality of discoveries, of which they retain the essential substance, to the fortunate detriment of a thousand contingent impediments that were making these discoveries useless to us.

So we have the phenomenon now surpassed and brought back to its original state of virginity.

Childlike surprise, irony shiny like the dawn!

The lightness of this, your reflowering, exactly contains the flight, the light embrace of panoramas!

We have the *essential ideas*, the most vast, the most *revealed*;

We have the *truths* we seek that occupy our daily world like memories of reality surpassed.

And yet beneath them there is *another life*, which they prevent me from grasping, which was just born for me, fresh like a flower under the straw.

I will be great on the day I can make the world be born anew for the first time every morning.

TORMENT ANNA MARIA MAZZA

Calm lamp,
never
trembling,
your heart of light
is cold.
I would like to centuplicate
your splendor
to blind myself
and never
to see again.
I long for the mute
indifference
with which you illuminate

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Anna
Maria
Mazza

without seeing.
Infuse me with light and calm
apathy:
never to love
never to hate
again.

BEGGARS OF THE AZURE IRMA VALERIA

Science: synthesis of the condensed destruction in our skeptical beggars' veins.

If tomorrow I could wake up without consciousness of my scientific life, perfectly new to all natural phenomena, I would be suddenly thrust into the ineffable and fearful ecstasy of a fantastical divine world.

(A flower, unaware of the pollen that had generated it and of the stem that sustained it, had suddenly bloomed in the *enormous* quietness of this starry night, and died smothered, thrusting open its perfumed heart with folly, stunned by its own mysteriously divine emanation.)

The night: immense and religious premise, gown with magical constellations, dialogue punctuated by the stars, little dots like ellipses, and by the moon, magnetic central dot.

In the end, we will never be free, with these excessively solid fetters science has fastened upon our impatient feet, in the place of limpid wings rushing through a dazzling sky of superimposed visions.

It would be more desirable to suspect miraculous creations, fantastical domains of playful Deities, and to believe ourselves to be the gentle undulations of a deep green sea without end, iridescent like the wings of the soul, than to look with calm and even eyes upon the boredom of realistic and detached limitations, upon the white wall of a thick mysterious park, vulgarly breaking the fairy tale that was too anxiously expected by the wide-eyed sickly nostalgic children that we are.

If we were to find ourselves someday, upon a wide road, facing the bluest stripe of blind sea, without consciousness of any previous life, without a goal for any future life . . .

If we could stop at every tree, to understand the meaning of its old wrinkles filled with moss, and at every door, to intuit the mystery it hides, and at every erect and happy blade of grass, to know the invisible ties that irradiate beneath the earth,

and at every shiny feather, to hear it speak of its ecstasy rich with azure, we would be nothing but beggars of course, but beggars of an unknown suaveness, filtered in perfumed droplets, through our pale long hands, upon our soft hair, strewn with the gold sparks of virgin happiness.

To believe that we can gather all the rays of the sun in a bundle of gleams, and throw it over our shoulders to illuminate the nights, smothered by this fabulous monster: the *darkness*, the ally of those sordid torn witches: the *black* clouds.

. . . or instead to become so light that we may climb up the ladder of spray, with the silk cords of an ancient “*carillon*” tune.

. . . or to fall asleep in the gently swaying perfume of the slow rose-petal censers of dreams . . .

To evaporate though all pure ecstasies, disregarding complicated designs, monstrous knots of yellow and violet colors that obsess our angular intelligence . . .

To walk toward death, as though to the simplest gesture of eternal Life, grasping the life of all creation, and not to wobble toward the extreme moment, facing the repugnant vision of an open tomb.

Technical War

THE CREATIVE ANXIETY OF THE HYDROELECTRIC PLANT NERA VELINO FRANCA MARIA CORNELI

Mountainous lake in Umbria

Silken deep azure lake friend of the clouds I feel you as though you were alternatively my white skin veined by sapphires and my mirror powdered with light fog in this intimate spring morning that confuses dreams with the fragrance of honey-suckle mint and lemon verbena

Mountainous lake I am stretched out like you like your suave powerful liquid mass anxious to press with new strength on Umbria whose wisdom of genteel elegance and soft cadences invites me to graceful folly

Is it your turbines or my arteries that in amassing calories and crushing avalanches of molecules tempt search out the bottom of the earth where no doubt your secret heart beats or mine filled with the divine and the satanic fighting?

472
Franca
Maria
Corneli

Last night the stars combed with their sharp rays the 200 meter jump of the Black water becoming in dreams my hair

Implacable barricades of reality

The furor of your precipitating waters in the sonorous metallic tubes down always down in the galleries reverberates its spasmodic and tortured joy from valley to valley all the way into the distant ravines of the Apennines with their thousands and thousands of echoes as an audience

My female hypersensibility praises you groups of generators and you the exciter emerging from shiny pavements

You are the gigantic jewels and the refulgent chains of the imprisoned fields and you amuse me you alternators of fantasy

Tensions frequencies intoxicating delirium of 337 turns per minute and frenetic closed-cycle ventilation

Little by little I press down on a hill of white linens the immaculate undulation of my body that remembers you lake and is ambitious in competing with the surrounding mountains

A burning desire excites my shoulders my elbows my hips toward a fusion with the fragrant flexibility of the hilltops so that every circle may be perfected every spiral reach the apex of elegance every green characterize an unripe newness every turquoise highlight with gold its sanctity

Appropriately the dynamos should concentrate in their immeasurable copper brushes constellations of sparks imprisoned grabbing from infernal devils pupils with millenary rancors

I wish that beyond any tiredness a force of love from my divine land would impose itself on my fragile body and on those liquid agglomerations of the seraphic mirror that hurls into the abyss cavalcades of frenetic liquefied armies

The proud wheels happy to be thrown forward without pause or rest spilling an aromatic electricity that desperately seeks its conductor tresses

Porcelain canalizes currents and runs runs to prevent fire from overflowing or bouncing far off

For as the scarlet setting sun now satisfied by the minute caresses prolonged by vegetations rich with little golden clouds descends descends between the

mountains drunk with green sinning flesh and flying aureoles Umbria declares her readiness

O genteel rouge o voluptuous veneer o silver saliva of the gem-studded new light!

With crepitations and innumerable fictions of stars tiny stars Electricity daughter of the mountainous lake and its liquid dreams more than ever female transfigured rechisels divinely Umbria my mother.

O projectors of the airport of Sant'Egidio prolong to the zenith the reflections of the lake that they may mark the ascending road and offer nickel slides to the trimotors of war

These at times may carry down to the green lap of the vallies red-cross nurses with lily rose fingers and heavy wounded soldiers sandy with *ghibli*

But in a high blinding glory of artificial light spiritual fighter planes rapidly spring like the brushes of Gerardo Dottori anxious to erase in the blue Mediterranean those misty enemy convoys

SIMULTANEOUS POETRY OF WOVEN LIGHT

F. T. MARINETTI

Who can deny the molecular drama of cellulose macerating in the cold caustic soda come come with me into the hell paradise of matter

You well bolted metallic room you watch over the pullulating life of a Swedish pine forest bent under an Italian discipline of graduated temperatures

To obtain an ideal double with respect to pliability and brightness it is necessary to study love kiss all the elastic splendors of sky sea earth

At 4,000 meters in the electrical potential of the speediest hurricane I melded with

grim legions of clouds the color of envy and desperation roughly combed by the propeller against the massive golden pride of a sun intoxicated with tearing sparks of revenge from all these twisting overlapping condensing diabolical softnesses
Now I let loose a powerful car on the most geometrical highway taking care to thread it with my gaze just as you thread the bore of a far-shooting gun barrel
During my recent African trip my eyes stored up the anger of the pitiless desert light raging against a kilometer-long wall of solid fire
But when it majestically rests upon the sea the light has a thousand strange pastimes and fluid bluish scrawls of sleep sleep roaming outline that decorates with a platinum edge the sheep lost on the beach that is intent on its preciousness for whom the indigo sky of Syracuse or Athens is the setting
I invoke you fascinating brightness pulling within your bursting mesh skeins of diamonds invented by the sun in the hair of camels after a rainfall on the caravan route where every pebble peers out like a cat and the wind is a flight of foxes among satin ermine pearls little pearls and the wandering smells become visible vast watered silks of incense humid flesh and oasis jasmine
Death-rattle of dilation
Turn turn vast compressors of ammonia watched-over by the palpitation of white and red lightbulbs luminous telegraphy of a nocturnal battle batteries from peak to peak II workers visible
Without the intervention of man cellulose is having itself decanted purified compressed grinded
It is alive autonomous it thinks wants dreams hates loves
It is right to take refuge from time to time in immobility
No doubt to recompose itself in the horizontal tubs that turn like the gigantic stomachs of silkworms
Tell me where is the troubadour of the melodious solubility formula so that finally the alkalicellulose may marry its long awaited predestinated carbon sulfur and be pleased in its liquefaction into a xantogenate the color of bright orange rust
The happy belts are already taking pleasure in their beating and bouncing high bold off the wheels down
Yes yes rest gentle solution that the happiness of your new acid bath may turn you purple making you precipitate solidified into flakes filaments the ardently desired elements of the thread
No human presence prevents me from entering like an autonomous metal conscious among the rebounding vibrations of the metallic gauges of the threads' resistance
On the walls the formulas and the magnified sections of the threads and filaments are alive

Notched edges guarantee me a greater absorption of dye instead of amusing yourselves by evoking the sawmills of northern woodlands
It is certainly a fresh adventurous wooded pleasure to go after a smell of sulfur that sweetens me guiding me toward a pretty square basin of sulfuric acid and sodium sulfate where with solemnity grace charm viscose awaits me
Distracted and ecstatic in her new transformation she is still dreaming of the finest cotton cloth that filtered her and gloating that no one will ever know her molecular weight
Why is the volume of the nearby room rushing forth and crashing with such rage its 300-meter depth barely containing a billion maddened wheels
Spools palpitating in your double row if you don't turn off your revolutionary mouths and your machine-gun barrels I will block them so that the solution may suavely glide from filters to little tubes to a golden net to coagulate into a fine leaping thread rolling itself up above like a loving ray
With the utmost speed
Severity of the control mechanisms
Delirious vociferation of molecules
We would give our lives yes our lives cohesion and joyful dance of electrons for a single strand
We echoed a billion traveling vibrations from the Milky Way that one flowering reflection may bloom among us
To burn and twist me too me too to curve and be perfectly smoothed like a mirror to become agile and shine once again
To climb up up all the way to the round edge of splendor
Nothing more beautiful in the world than caressing with the tip of a ray
O beautiful aspiration to light what names shall I crown you with Cloudevourer Starswallower Drinkcrowd Skyinonegulp
Or if you like Slaughtererofdarkness Squasherofshadows Antisewer Tohellwithenvy if you Prefer with me Liquidjoy Silverwaters Springpearls Choose then the most resounding and be born
Be born be born be born and decorate yourself with intrepid scintillating truth
To sparkle sparkling I would sparkle Let them sparkle
With long proud intertwined sparks on the rails the carriers respond regurgitating with a rich animal shine
Who created her how can one define her stupendous astounded beauty
To know her quick quick palpate her with hungry hands that imagine they are pressing fresh bread or beautiful solid pink female flesh
Human calories sing within the smell of sulfate and in the bright orange taste smell but they are overcome by the cry of cicadas and burning August streets

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F. T.
Marinetti

No one can slow the strident tinkling tapping of the wheels that up above mimic
bicycle races seen from a glassed-in underground
Faster ever faster let those wheels laugh laugh laugh laugh in their happiness at
defeating the sacred bundled-up chinese emperor silkworm
Dead drunk the virile motors swooning vomit a tidal wave of shining skeins
Thus from the infernal desulfuration there leaps forth with pathetic paleness
whinnying rattles ringing cracks of whips caught in swearing tangles of bridles
horses hairs the angel of fluid crystal and endless feathery flight of woven Light

PETROLEUM SONG MARIA GORETTI

The drilling tower
precise measurement
on the white slate of the sky
exact isosceles triangles of iron

The ancient sweetness
of a poetic landscape now rejected
the assiduous singing
of the solid machine
builds harsh steel songs
Mud cement sand
the drill bores
sinks inseminates
bites crushes tears
the violated earths screams
but now now
the living blood
gushes
rises
rushes
toward the sky
elongated spurt
And sings

I sing!
with joy

with freedom
Listen listen Man!
Look at me
I am beautiful
my body is glistening
a black dancer
a single scream
a long spurt screaming
toward the azureness

From the deepest
to the highest

Fire of your speed
Ardor of your face
my hot blood
you burn all
you reach all your ends
The Petroleum laughs
plays with the sun
streams through the hands of the workers

A child
perhaps
draws over there
that poor hut
that smokes straight
on the white page of the horizon

—I sing I sing
Man
in the breath of your desire
hurled
on the tracks of new roads
on the sleepless courses of navigated skies!

A sheep that fled
from the child's crèche
grazes and does not hear

478
Maria
Goretti

—Listen Man listen to my song
Dense as your blood
but hotter much hotter
I burning all aflame with love
for she who in the heights laughs
Light

Silence Pause
Down down the drill sinks
deeper
the enemy earth says no nooo
yes yessss hisses the faith of men

—Light
soft tender azure
unfolds white veils
the flesh shines through
in the pale pink depths
of the hidden womb
You don't know it Man
But every morning
she came to meet you
every evening
she watched over your sleep
She has kissed your eyes
luminous kisses
and you have seen beauty
I haven't
I a prisoner
The mountain upon me
Menace
Desire
Thirst
I crept
I dreamed
of her
Millennia
The mountain upon me
You laugh Man
You laugh

Black gold
Liquid gold
I shall be the ardent blood of your conquests
You laugh but you don't understand
I see the Light now
and she will be mine mine mine!

479
Masses
Distances
Radiohearts

The straps screech
the drilling tower quivers
the men scream
Forward Forward Forward
The drill sinks fast
high and powerful surges
the stream of petroleum
— My my Light
Ah she leans
to kiss me
finally
all my body relaxes
quivers with pleasure
rejoices with splendor
but tomorrow tomorrow even more mine!
Tomorrow my harsh embrace
will kindle
your sweet white flesh
with burning shivers
Tomorrow you will hear my new song
and it will be the song of azure airplanes!

RUSSIAN ORIGINALITY OF MASSES DISTANCES

RADIOHEARTS F. T. MARINETTI

In a pause in this war I write this book on Russia anxious to embrace its measureless contradictory confused soul and to discover its mystery and especially to knead my flesh with its earth so apparently uniform and yet in reality fully rich with variety

[. . .]

Little by little and suddenly accelerating like a metal slab bitten by a reactive liquid the lead horizon shows off three powerful vibrant nickel flashes each fifty meters high barely curving and which leave imprints of sparks that palpitate with their own sharp-sighted scintillating life

One can hear but not pick out behind them the roll of very heavy chains dragged by three Ukrainian sentinels reduced to three crackling bags of bones each with his individual bone replacing his rifle bayonet shoulderarm

Mortified they stop at the extraordinary spectacle shaken by a tremor that becomes an enthusiastic ensemble of bows touching upon sensitive violins

More amused that afraid Procop takes Mansur arm in arm again

—“Let’s walk, let’s walk without end under the orders of these so-called great Shiverings that I would instead call brrr but you but you Mansur look at me chin up stand up on your own legs don’t die alas he’s dead poor Mansur”

Polyphony of a million voices that becomes the orchestration of a thousand car factories being tested

—“Brrr”

The hour of all hours has come the one preferred by God and it is perhaps his incommensurable pink breath that is now propagating itself

[. . .]

Procop explains the miracle

—“We have finally arrived in the dreamed-of realm of the benevolent Russian Eve and it is she who comes forth now open opeen opeeen a majestic passage in front of her everyone on his knees or upon the ground since beneath you the ice will soften and in half an hour streams of warm water”

Like the most perfuming essence benignly escaped from the marbly coffers of destiny Maria Sorridenco comes slowly with languid steps on tiny white feet and in forests around her red and agitated by hands hers and not hers perhaps those of ladies-in-waiting so that they might not be suffocating the happy little animals of enamoring warmth ermine chinchilla mink marten silver fox but no longer with the editorial avarice of numbered copies they are multiplying in an overflowing velvet pullulation that stuffs the coat-covered bones of the prisoners with suave smoothnesses and infinitely serene shaggynesses as they of one accord begin a bony consoled breathing among the joyful delirium of a thousand and thousand and thousand little streams carried forth by the rose petals that the great icy surfaces of the lowlands have become in their happiness at causing horror no longer but always delight

[. . .]

Halfway up Vesuvius since the immense sea of pain anguish and torture has risen with its funereal foam of prayers to break upon the feet of the suave omnipo-

tent Madonna of Pompei who with an ineffable smile must indeed will very soon since everyone awaits it offer with her most delicate hands the miracles that the Child Jesus demands with his little golden hands to console this boundless flock of black backs and foreheads

[. . .]

With its crescendo of imprisoning and freeing metallic sounds Vesuvius having at once nominated himself the red Czar of all Soviet and Neapolitan Russias extends waves drapes a multikilometric breath of stupendous pink beatitude

Graded variety of tones from the pink of Arab and Persian cotton candy to the pinkish skies of Caucasus to the pink blouses of the garishly elegant negroes of Rio de Janeiro

Croccolino yells out his own pink specialty

—“You know that I am also a painter in Sorrento and I know what I’m talking about I can tell you that every lava stream has its own particular pink but as we enjoy this magnificent spectacle that surpasses all the operas of the world let’s pray, let’s pray on our knees our eyes affixed upon the Madonna of Pompei that God might not grow furious at our innumerable sins of vanity revenge betrayal sensuality theft falsehood”

Eugenio Torrente interrupts him

—“Slow down Croccolino I have never been a traitor and have never stolen and I am not in the habit of avenging myself”

—“Sorry Captain one must even in confession trade wholesale since everything is falling down upon us with excessive abundance and one must pull through with quantity and if I were to paint a picture I would fill it with colors colors colors”

—“And pain pain pain”

—“You are right Captain but let’s pray to keep our appetite and our good humor”

Two kilometers from the high proud blessing Madonna of Pompei so globulously pink a lava stream is unleashed that step by step crackling and exploding with rough coal hands piles up the stuff of poor houses and factories and the palazzi of boisterous villages anxious to appear rich with urbanism before they grovel flagellating themselves all embers and smoking coals

Terrible that stream and there spurts from it fanlike the movemented tumultuous tragedy of women children shirtless limping handcarts and screams screams and screams toward the Madonna Madonna Madonna Sainly mother help us help us stop the lava

Frenetic that crowd becomes a victimlike avalanche toward a mirage and a first legend is born

Who knows whether the Madonna of Pompei will give us the strength to go go go that our wounds and the burns of your old scalded legs might be restored

But the legend had many memories and fantasies and it remembers remembers the tasty *gelateria* of Posillippo and Margellina all decked out for a party and it listens to the radio describing the fastuous interminable limpid mirrorlike of improvised ponds to stop the enemy but perhaps also to moisten with charity the burns of the crowds in flight with burned souls

Intensely Vesuvius gives birth to fantastical roses streams legendary branching out up high in the longest pages of melancholy pearlescent fatality

This one it spits out now is the most gaudy and fabled

The green violet bright orange streams she's decked out with do not prevent her from cooking up her most pulpy pink and it is a pink of female flesh illuminated by a homey fireplace and out of it slip three statuesque Greek Venuses palpitating ready for life

Their slim cadenced step of dancers escaped from the custodians of museums is well accompanied by the tinkling chiming sound of chains no doubt enraged by the effort among the coal stones and gravel to entomb those speedy almost wigned ankles

From all the points of the horizon immense processions of grazing smoke metamorphose into slithering masses of carnalized litanies and evaporating prisoners

Croccolino grabbing Eugenio Torrente's right hand

—“Captain Captain I don't say it to console you for the loss of a woman for there are always many for you to choose from you're a good-looking man and a courageous Captain intelligent and good but look look carefully behind that flash of a village at the head of that procession that is moving up a few meters from the pink stream that figure that female figure you know who she is who she is I am revealing it to you I who am a painter from Sorrento she is the famous Russian Eve she is Maria Sorridenco.”

BAY OF NAPLES LAURA SERRA

On the shiny iridescent asphalt
of watery marching dunes,
on the chromed expanse
constantly polished
by ships backing the oars,
the hammering of the machines

of this powerful arsenal of dreams
pulsates.
The laugh of the foaming crests
splashes in the sun
in front of the prehensile tentacle
of the immense volcanic stove,
and in front of the island cranes
planted with green by the winds
and constructed with spells by the sirens.
And the mother siren raises,
azure-crane like a fable,
her voice,
that comes from the multiple caves
that inherited the incantations
of ancient water nymphs,
and she raises
her turning arm over the world
and hooks it;
in the whirling iron girders.
Tiberius laughs,
watching the azure,
once again imperial.
The little green-aquatic breezes
emigrate
immigrate
from the tonality of the orange trees and olive groves
from the most azure
to the Rock of Remembrances
all exposed to the sun
and to the coastal sun-drenched streets
What an explosion of fire, of iron,
in the old crater
where the cast iron and the steel
of Mediterranean power are made;
chasm alight
with reddish lava
silently inhaled
by the veins of this earth
to gush forth in the hardened gray matter

of powerful brains and undaunted souls.

The seduction of this strange factory
creates an immense hammock
from Sorrento to Capo Miseno,
and in the rocking of a half-closed eye
flits the dream of Piano and Posillippo
of Baia and Miliscola:

azure anvils

hit by our immortal song
that rises from the caves to the stars.

The ancient sirens sang,
deceptive fish-tails,
and even the heroes themselves trembled
as they lowered their anchors here.

And our troubadours
launched that melodious trajectory
that unites the distant
to the nearby.

But the dream of today
not on the changeable scales
of unreal dreams
but on the keels
rich with merchandise that go
and on the banners of victory
that return:

it is steel

it is iron

it is the luxury of skies

the strength of sun

the song of the bay.

It laps the immense resting water-snakes,
and the ocean liners and the little boats
and the boat lanterns

with its perpendicular reflections
brushes against the wharfs of our braced souls
and against the heat of the powder mills
and says:

“I crossed distant bays

and the richest harbors and mundane beaches

and descended into the deepest valleys
among the jewelled seaweed and the shining pearls
and I changed my name
to that of lakes and streams
rivers and seas,
and I saw the opulence of other lands
with fertile chimney-tops
but in vain I sought borders
to pause in;
but here in this azure-green hollow
resting
between sweet hills island sisters
protected
all the treasures
synthesized
I hid.
They are reworked
in the pale blue hearths
between the tubes and the gas-generators and the tanks,
the color of dreams;
they reappear
in the essence of song of light of color
that from the crenelations of ancient fortresses
goes to the hills of mystical peace,
descends infiltrates the festive streets,
erupts crystalline upon the houses and terraces
hanging on the irregular coast,
overflows on the starry bas-reliefs
and on its bed of lunar platinum,
and is eternal
for in the lights of the pink sunsets
there are the gradations of every dawn;
and it is invincible
for over the new dawn that gilds it
watches a sentinel: Augustus.”
Iron foundry of spells, unique in the world!
for your anvils and your great hammers
fashion song and light,
and this is your great power

that alone defends
the sea that grapples with the African land.
You who beat rays and sparks
will give sun and stars to your sons
who go upon all the roads of the earth
but you will blind hypocrite hands,
you will be clear for mother Italy
but a false mirror for those thieves
who up there hover menacingly;
you who keep in your deep bosom
incantations and potions, that at will
you turned into discipline and glory
casting a bridge of light
between *Regno* and *Impero*,
for those who would try to take you,
you break the hidden magical cruet,
and weak drunk flabby our enemies
are easily committed to the waves
of the ancient sirens.
Shipyard of all forces
human and superhuman
your roads that saw
the waste of intimate tow-ropes severed
to go beg for bread somewhere outside this homeland,
will become the pavements of faith
the dawn of all
certainty
and security.
Here:
you curl upon yourself;
you are the lighthouse,
the rampart,
the fortress;
you are the defense of this *mare nostrum*
and yet are a soft and gentle caress
for those who adore you in your beauty.

Theater, Aeropoetry, and Tactilism

GENIUS AND CULTURE UMBERTO BOCCIONI

THEATRICAL SYNTHESIS

Center stage is a richly appointed toilette dresser, with a mirror, in front of which a very elegant WOMAN, already dressed to go out, is applying the last touches to her makeup. — To the right, the CRITIC, an ambiguous being, neither filthy nor clean, neither young nor old, completely neutral, is sitting at a table that is bending under the weight of tomes and papers; on the table, a large paperweight sparkles, neither modern nor antique. The Critic's shoulders are turned to the dresser. — To the left, the ARTIST, young and elegant, rummages through a large portfolio, and sits on the floor on opulent cushions.

THE ARTIST *(abandoning the portfolio, head between his hands)* "It's terrible!"
(Pause) "I must get out of this! Renew myself!" *(He gets up, convulsively ripping some drawings he has extracted from the portfolio)* "Freedom! These empty, used-up forms are disgusting! . . . I must destroy them! . . . Destroy them! . . . Everything is fragmentary and cowardly! . . . Oh! Art! . . . Who, who will help me?!" *(He looks around; continues to rip drawings with painful convulsive gestures).*

THE WOMAN *who is extremely close to him, does not hear him. — The Critic turns around, annoyed but not too much so, and comes closer, as he cuts the pages of a book with a yellow cover)*

THE CRITIC *(half asking the Woman, and half speaking to himself)* "What a clown! What's wrong with him? Why's he yelling and gesticulating? . . ."

THE WOMAN *(without looking)* "Bah! He's an artist . . . He wants to renew himself, and he hasn't got a cent!"

THE CRITIC *(flabbergasted)* "How strange! . . . An artist! . . . That's impossible! . . . I've been studying this marvelous phenomenon for twenty years, and yet I'm incapable of recognizing it." *(He observes him with archaeological curiosity)* "He's a madman! Or a publicity hound! He wants to renew himself? . . . But artistic creation is a serene thing. The work of art is born naturally, through silence and contemplation, like the nightingale's song . . . The spirit *qua* spirit, says Hegel . . ."

- THE WOMAN (*curious now*) "But if you know how it's done, why don't you tell him? . . . Poor fellow! . . . I feel sorry for him . . ."
- THE CRITIC (*bombastic*) "For centuries, criticism has been telling artists how to make the work of art . . . Since ethics and aesthetics are functions of the spirit . . ."
- THE WOMAN "But what about you, have you ever made one? . . ."
- THE CRITIC (*speechless*) "I? . . . Not I!"
- THE WOMAN (*laughing maliciously*) "Well, then . . . you know how to make it, but you don't actually do it. You're neutral. You must be so boring in bed!" (*She starts to apply makeup again*).
- THE ARTIST (*still painfully agitated, pacing, wringing his hands*) "Glory! Ah! Glory!" (*Shaking his fists*) "I'm strong! I'm young! I can face anything! . . . Oh divine electric light! . . . Sun . . . Electrify the crowds! Set them on fire! Dominate! . . ."
- THE WOMAN (*watching him with sympathy and commiseration*) "Poor fellow! . . . Not a cent . . ."
- THE ARTIST (*struck down*) "Oh! I've been wounded! I can't take it any more!" (*To the Woman, who doesn't hear him*) "Oh! A woman!" (*To the Critic, who has already picked up and put back down quite a few books, leafing through them and cutting pages*) "You! You, sir, who are a man, hear me . . . Help me!"
- THE CRITIC "Slow down . . . Let's make some distinctions. I'm not a man, I am a critic. I am a man of culture. The artist is a man, a slave, a child, therefore he is wrong. His self does not make itself distinct. In him nature is chaos. Between nature and the artist, there are the critic and history. History, *qua* history, is history, that is, a subjective fact, which is to say: fact, therefore history. Consequently, if it were objective . . ." (*At these words the Artist, who has been listening in stupefaction, falls back on the cushions as though thunderstruck. The Critic does not notice, turns around, and slowly proceeds back to his table to consult some books*).
- THE WOMAN (*getting up, mortified*) "My God! . . . This poor fellow's dying!" (*She kneels down next to the Artist and caresses him gently*).
- THE ARTIST (*regaining his senses*) "Oh! Madam! Thank you! . . . Oh! Love. . . perhaps love . . ." (*becoming more and more animated*) "You're so beautiful! Listen . . . If you only knew . . . if you only knew how terrible it is, this battle, and no love! . . . I need to love, do you understand?"
- THE WOMAN (*moving away from him*) "My friend, I understand you . . . but right

- now I don't have time. I have to go out . . . My friend is waiting for me . . . It's dangerous . . . He's a man, with a secure position . . ."
- THE CRITIC (*extremely embarrassed*) "What's happening? . . . I don't understand at all . . ."
- THE WOMAN (*irritated*) "Shut up, stupid! . . . You never understand anything! . . . Come on! Help me get him up! We have to loosen this knot at his throat, it's strangling him!"
- THE CRITIC (*terribly embarrassed*) "Just a minute . . ." (*He carefully puts his book down and sets aside a few others on the chair*) "Hegel . . . Kant . . . Hartmann . . . Spinoza . . ."
- THE WOMAN "Come here! . . . What are you, afraid? . . . Come on . . . it's just an artist dying for his ideal . . ."
- THE CRITIC (*coming a closer, with extreme care*) "But, you never know! . . . He's impulsive . . . Passionate . . . No control . . . no culture . . . in the end I prefer dead ones. The artist must be . . ." (*he trips, and falls clumsily on the artist, tearing his throat with the paper cutter*).
- THE WOMAN (*yelling as she stands up*) "Idiot! Murderer! You killed him! His blood's all over you! You're all red with blood!"
- THE CRITIC (*getting up, even more clumsily*) "I, Madam? . . . How so?! I don't understand. . . Red? . . . Red? . . . You must be afflicted with daltonism . . ."
- THE WOMAN "Enough! Enough!" (*She returns to her dresser*) "It's late. I have to go!" (*As she leaves*) "The poor young man! He was so distinguished! so likeable!" (*She leaves*)
- THE CRITIC "This doesn't make sense! . . ." (*He looks at the dead Artist quite carefully, for a long time*) "By God! He's dead!" (*He comes closer to get a better look*) "The Artist is really dead! Ah! I can breathe easy. I'll write a monograph . . ." (*He slowly goes to his table. Opening a drawer, he extracts a meter-long beard, and sticks it onto his chin. Putting on his glasses, he grabs pen and paper, and starts rummaging through the books, not finding what he wants. For the first time he is really angry and he pounds his fists on the table, screaming*) "The Aesthetics! . . . The Aesthetics! where is it? . . ." (*Finding what he wants, he voluptuously presses the fat volume to his heart*) "Ah! . . . Here it is! . . ." (*Merrily skipping, he goes off and crouches next to the dead Artist, like a crow. He looks at the body, and writes while declaiming in a loud voice*) "Around 1915, a marvellous artist was flourishing in Italy . . ." (*He pulls measuring tape out of his pocket, and measures the body*) "Like all great men, he was 1 meter 68 in height . . . width . . ." (*as he talks, the curtain is lowered*).

TWO SCENES.

Characters: **She**, **He**, **Donnina** (the “other” woman), **Maestro** (the music teacher),
two messengers

Scene: The stage scene is divided into two by a wall partition.

At left, **She**’s small living room with a piano, armchairs, etc. A door upstage in
back.

At right, **He**’s studio. A comfortable sofa. A door upstage in back.

SCENE ONE

She on He’s knees.

She: Adieu, my love. Come by soon. Okay?! I’ll be expecting you.

He: Yes, yes, my love, have no fear. I’ll come by very, very soon.

She: Goodbye.

He: Adieu. (*They kiss. She leaves, and He sits down at the desk.*)
(*The curtain falls for a moment.*)

SCENE TWO

*At left, She is consigning a letter to a messenger. Maestro, seated at the piano, plays some
musical chords.*

*At right, He is consigning a letter to a messenger. Donnina, lying on the sofa, smokes a
cigarette.*

* * *

She: *The messenger leaves. She runs to Maestro, covers his eyes with her hands,
affectionately throws back his head, and kisses him.*

He: *The messenger leaves. He runs to Donnina and passionately embraces
her.*

* * *

Knock at the two back doors.

*She and He, nearing the front of the stage, read the letters at the same time
in a way so as not to be heard by Maestro and Donnina.*

She: “Dearest love, a most boring and pestering client of mine won’t per-
mit me to come by today *as we had planned*. You cannot imagine
how much this pains me. We’ll do it another time, will we not?
Kissing you endlessly on the lips.

Yours, He.”

He: “My love, that boring teacher of mine tells me that he will give me another lesson today, so I can’t have you over *as we had planned*. What a bore!!! What a shame. . . !!! Let’s hope we have better luck next time! I’m sending you the sweetest kiss and a little part of my soul.

Yours, **She.**”

Having read the letters, they rip them up and return to their companions. She with Maestro as before. He with Donnina as before. Meanwhile, the curtain slowly falls.

THE LADIES’ MAN AND THE FOUR SEASONS

FRANCESCO CANGIULLO

SYNTHESIS OF 20 YEARS OF LOVE

(I apologize, but I absolutely cannot give the names of the characters — and I must forbid the directors from doing so as well).

*Neutral scene. — Exits on the sides and at the back. — 3 seconds after the curtain rises, the SCHOOL-GIRL comes in from the left, in uniform, reading a little book published by the *Maryan Monthly*. Her eyes on the book, she advances slowly to the edge of the stage. A sacred image falls out of the pages of the book. With great simplicity SHE bends down to pick it up and puts it back in the book. — She starts reading again, stopping under the lights of the stage’s edge until the end.*

10 seconds later, from the back the SWIMMER enters, wearing a bathing suit, naturally: turquoise bikini, and a sailor’s top. Surrounded by an inner tube, she swims around on the stage in a limited space, reserved only for HER, until the end.

10 seconds later, from the back as well, the WIDOW enters, carrying a grave with its wreath of flowers and its lit candles. She places it nearly up against the right-hand corner, and then kneels down, her head bowed, — and remains immobile, like a person being photographed at length from behind.

10 seconds later, from the right — her face hidden by her raised arm — the BRIDE enters. White satin dress, long veil, garland of orange blossoms in her hair. Timidly she comes forward to the edge and stays there until the end.

20 seconds later, from the back, very chic and with complete aplomb, smoking a cigarette, the LADIES’ MAN emerges; quick and sure of himself he heads for center stage, and opens his arms to embrace the public with a great show of

emotion, his head framed by his raised shoulders (*the actor will recall Renato Simoni on his fourth encore*); with a diplomatic smile he surveys the public with a broad, synthetic gaze — and then says:

“VOILÀ!”

and most agile he backs away electrically on the tips of his toes. —

C U R T A I N

GRAY + RED + VIOLET + ORANGE

BRUNO CORRA AND EMILIO SETTIMELLI

NET OF SENSATIONS

A common-looking room; quite mediocre. A sick man with bandages on his arm and his right leg, seated in an armchair, speaks to his elderly mother, a humble housewife. The sick man is only 30 but already copiously bearded and hairy.

SICK MAN “Ah! mamma! what anguish . . . this is terrible! . . . when I think I have to stay here nailed to this chair for months I’m racked by anxiety . . . terrible anxiety . . . but then, mamma, will I be able to save this arm? I feel that I might end up handicapped for life . . . my leg is better . . . but my arm! . . .”

MOTHER (*she stands next to him, lovingly*) “Don’t think such sad thoughts! . . . it’s bad for you! . . . you should concentrate on something else . . .”

SICK MAN “I can’t, mamma . . .”

SERVANT (*entering*) “The doctor’s here. . . .”

MOTHER “Have him come in . . .”

SICK MAN “Oh! I’m so glad you came early! . . .”

(*The elderly doctor comes in gravely*)

DOCTOR (*to the Mother*) “Good morning . . .”

MOTHER (*going over to greet him, her hand outstretched*) “Doctor . . .”

DOCTOR (*to the sick man*) “Good morning . . . How do you feel?”

SICK MAN “Oh! my arm hurts terribly . . . and my leg too . . .”

DOCTOR (*putting on his glasses*) “Well! let’s have a look . . .” (*he starts to remove the bandage from the arm, very gently*).

SICK MAN “Ow! . . . Ow! . . . OOOH! Oww!!!”

MOTHER “Blessed Virgin . . .”

DOCTOR “Hand me the bassinette with the sublimate . . . and give me some cotton too . . .”

MOTHER *(does as told)*

DOCTOR *(looking at the wound)* “Not bad! . . . not bad . . . you should feel encouraged . . . it’s healing . . .”

MOTHER *(comes back with the bassinette. The DOCTOR washes the wound).*

SICK MAN *(cries out in pain)*

MOTHER “And his leg?”

DOCTOR “It will be better not to touch it for today . . . we’ll have a look at it tomorrow! . . .” *(to the sick man)* “I can’t say it too many times: don’t move . . . remain absolutely still . . . the smallest movement could destroy all the good born of a whole week of total rest . . .” *(He goes off to wash himself, his hands outstretched, after he has rebandaged the arm)*

MOTHER *(bringing another bassinette)* “Here, doctor . . .”

DOCTOR “Thank you . . .” *(They are to the side. — The doctor washes his hands).*

MOTHER “And so? . . .”

DOCTOR “He’ll improve . . . He’ll improve . . .”

MOTHER “He won’t be handicapped in any way?”

DOCTOR “Oh dear! Ma’am . . . it’s difficult to say . . . he certainly won’t be able to stretch out his arm . . . or move it about very much . . .”
(The sick man, who has been staring at one of the spectators in the first row, at this very moment suddenly leaps out of the armchair, and with a wild impulse points at that spectator and yells at the top of his lungs).

SICK MAN “Oh! . . . It’s him! . . . it’s him . . . he murdered my brother! Catch him . . . , don’t let him get away! . . . there . . . in the first row . . . seat number eight . . .” *(he begins to jump off the stage).*
(The actors who were playing the mother and the doctor grab him, other actors emerge from backstage, with stagehands and firemen).

ALL *(Holding him back)* “Stop! Stop! . . . What is it . . . By God . . . hold him! . . . Stop . . . come on! . . .”

THE DIRECTOR *(rushing in)* “Down, get the curtain down!! Down! . . .”
(The curtain falls while the healed Sick Man is carried away by force).
(Half a minute pause. The lights of the stage come on again and the healed Sick Man comes out, gentle, humble, with a loutish expression and no beard; he indicates that he wants to speak).

HEALTHY-SICK MAN “No! . . . don’t bother, gentlemen! . . . Let him go! now that I think of it, the man who killed my brother was missing an eye . . . this gentleman has both of his . . . please excuse me . . . we’ll continue the scene right away . . .” *(with a big sigh)* “Oh! . . . it’s really a terrible mistake . . .”

The curtain, with its black border, must be raised only to the height of an average man's stomach. The public can only see legs in action.

The actors must seek to give the greatest expressivity to the gestures and the movements of their inferior extremities.

I.

TWO ARMCHAIRS

ONE IN FRONT OF THE OTHER

Young Man

Lady

Him — “Everything, everything, for just one kiss!”

Her — “No! . . . Don't speak to me like that!”

2.

A MAN PACING BACK AND FORTH

“Let's think about this . . .”

3.

DESK

A MAN SEATED, HIS RIGHT FOOT NERVOUSLY FIDGETING

“I've got to find a way . . . To cheat, without being cheated! . . .”

3bis.

A MAN WALKING SLOWLY; HE HAS GOUT

A MAN WALKING BRISKLY

The Brisk One — “Come on! vile passéist!”

The Slow One — “Huh! what's the hurry! No need to run! Good things come to him who waits . . .”

4.

COUCH

3 LADIES

One — “Which one do you prefer?”

Another — “All three.”

COUCH

3 MEN

One — “Which one do you prefer?”

Another — “The second one.”

(The second one must be the one of the three who is showing the most leg.)

5.

TABLE

Father

Young Man

Young Woman

The Father — “After you get your degree, you will marry your cousin.”

6.

PEDALS OF A SEWING-MACHINE

GIRL WORKING

The Girl — “I’ll see him Sunday!”

7.

A MAN RUNNING AWAY

A KICKING LEG FOLLOWING HIM

The Man with the Kicking Leg — “Assholes!”

495
Alternation
of Character

ALTERNATION OF CHARACTER

ARNALDO GINNA AND BRUNO CORRA

HUSBAND “No! It’s useless! let’s get it over with! You won’t cheat on me again because I’m leaving you right now!”

WIFE *crying*. “No! Carlo, no! . . . come here . . . come here . . . listen to me! . . .”

HUSBAND *crying tenderly*. “Forgive me Rosetta! . . . Forgive me! . . .”

WIFE *venomously*. “By God! if you don’t stop these ridiculous sentimentalities, I’ll slap you . . .”

HUSBAND *at the height of fury*. “Enough! . . . or I’ll shove you out the window.”

WIFE “My love! My love! I love you so, so *much!* . . . tenderness is breaking my heart . . . tell me, tell me, your delicious complaints . . .”

HUSBAND “Ah! Rosetta . . . Rosetta! . . . my endless love . . .”

WIFE *exasperated*. “If you say that again, I’ll divorce you! . . . yes, *exactly*, I’ll divorce you!”

HUSBAND *exploding*. “Ah! Damn you! . . . go away! . . . go away! . . . go away! . . .”

WIFE “I’ve never loved you so tenderly!”

HUSBAND “Ah! Rosetta! Rosetta! . . .”

WIFE “Enough! . . .” (*she slaps him*).

HUSBAND “Enough, I tell you” (*and he slaps her twice*).

WIFE *meltingly languid*. “Give me your lips! give me your lips!”

HUSBAND “Here, my love!”

(*Curtain*)

 Sixth Letter to Rose of Belgrade

Winter is over, my frileuse friend, the winter which funereally destroyed all the brilliant endeavors of my amorous siege.

But now here is Summer slipping out of a bed of snow and skipping over the green quilt of Springtime.

I offer you balconies and verandas teeming with sea tar seaweed scarlet sails and swimmers.

The air is padded with flowers. The horizon of the sea turns into the intimate edge of a bathing tub. All around translucencies of chartreuse voyages stretch before us. Beneath our feet carpeting of soft-blue fitness.

I want to reveal to your pores, as we swim there, the green grotto of Capri. A cathedral wholly submerged with its capitals. The speechless witchcraft of epileptic reflections on the magenta vaults. The rustling of our four arms. The mumbling of cavities in the rocks: holding conversation about the upside-down sky at the bottom of the pearly waters where modest algae are sniffed by fish navigating like distant airships.

Would you like to learn the aquatic kiss which I invented? Waters rich with springs and the perfume of seaweeds are essential. Swimming side by side. Without lust, because lust shatters the muscular and respiratory cardiac balance. Pausing at will. Distracting the sexual urges by enjoying the geographic sentimental pressure of the Mediterranean on our ribcages. Holding a very slow breathing pattern. Then tensing the thorax for a greater burst of energy.

At each stroke the silver scales of our souls become radiant.

Your sublingual glands are already releasing a saliva saturated with delicious ptyalin. I taste in the seafoam the chloride of sodium potassium and magnesium. We are elements of the mighty sea world. All around us the whirlwinds and capricious seesaws of the currents agitate the waters because the infinite spherical nuclei in their high mobility of iron gold bronze detritus of seaweed and silicates refract the inclined rays of the sun coloring the sea in green violet orange etc. in a thousand ways.

Schools of veillonella move about with their minuscule discs of blue gelatin, all laced with fluffy tentacles, under the perpendicular sail of the veiling of cartilage. I drink a turbulent salvage of rhizopods. I have in my tongue their tiny rubbery chalky skeletons. Hey, you—surely I can't follow formalities with you in the

water—an infinity of Venus' girdings mislaid by the golden medusae rests on your hips. Suddenly, having become instinctive like fish we turn toward one another without warning and spurt our two jets of water inside each other's mouths. They cross midstream. Like the veins of our blood which is of the sea. Then I dive. Headlong. Brushing against the rocks with the face. Scenting and kissing their mouths with our lips. Contest. To kiss each other with the mouth wide open drinking all the salivas yours mine and Venus' own, the sea. All of it.

PALIO-EXPLOSION OF SIENESE DYNAMISM

DINA CUCINI

On my heart the colors
insolently bright of my region
and my flame with shuddering ardor
repressed anxiety
spasm of dissimulated expectation
false calm with quiet movements
shows off in wide unravelings on the silk
quivering high in crackling sounds.
Loving rustles palpitations
with rapid shining snaps
of light light air burning
with passion compressed overflowing
in quivers flashes
of eyesgazesbreaths drunk
with amorous pride dilated
with the inimitable game.
Harmonious severe grace in half-turns
half-steps
arm in arm anxiety with tense deployments
fever colors anxiety thrown
high with the tassel to compete with the wind.
The Duomo shades
the blackwhite breath of sky
into mystical pinnacles of carved
marble prettynesses of cool foam

and perfect triforium colonnettes
 but Siena blazes with reawakened life
 from the silent forgetfulness of mute passageways bursting
 with pressing fury exasperated
 a roll of drums on the tough
trecento soul
 burned with yellow tufa carved
 by pressed impatience with fireworks
 exploding in chests with accelerated hearts
 entering the overflowing Piazza.
 Clear fresh spurt of clarions
 blossoming on the track waving
 cries of love and hate
 with flashes of hoisted color
 to the rhythmic passion of *Sunto*.

La Martinella

with slow tinkling beat in the stuffy air
 scans the path of our expectation
 delirious with compressed desire
 in deep dolorous sighs.
 Quickly give us the liberating explosion!
 Discolored desire in a convulsive shaking
 through the dark archway of the *Comune* at once
 our trampling thirst emerges
 in eternal and mute vibrant anxiety at the rope
 Go, gogo, googoo! blasting our heart with flat thuds
 and in our constricted throats beating
 the impossible scream
 hanging over the tight bordering rope.
 Long instants on mute mouths
 in waves of surging silence
 of white faces turned at the corner
 teeth clenched and fists tight inside
 encircling the rising tide
 in flashes from the Piazza like a shell
 of folly paroxysm pressing
 in vibrations jumps undulations
 of yellow red green blue darting
 most restless omens
 of magnetic dementia drawing breath

from the fixed breathers electrizing
with gliding shudders
to the avid pasterns to the nostrils
to the mourning bleeding mouth
of clawing horses
in red fury at the clash
of the breast on the rope, and at impact
rears high and on the track
the liberated fury breaks loose
with screams screeeams screeeaaams
of precipitating folly gripping
nude hide mane in flight
ululating in triple vertigo
breaking forth in a sweeping spiral
in a furious intoxicating beating gallop
ferociously drawing blood
blood dripping and at the turn the bit
loose from the bridle grabs the *Palio* with a burst
of reawakened calm daydream
in a deep breath of flags
and the cool song of Spring.

THE LAKE OF POETRY AND ROMANCE

F. T. MARINETTI

Immobile and effulgent, with a velvet sheen somewhere between white and azure, and infinite naive smiles, as though children were swimming in the silvery water. Yet no one was swimming in that still water; though its surface rippled from time to time with fleeting apparitions. Gentle profiles of evanescent women, sinuous curves of the most delicate nude bodies, floating waves of hair, hands gleaming with rings . . .

There was nothing, nothing at all, in that lake. But all dreams softly burbled in it among velvets crystals and melodious gems.

The lake was still and silent. But it was generous with its effulgent sheen that nourished the immense tangle of lianas and the gigantic palm trees with luminous

goodness, like the heart nourishes with blood the corporeal forest whose trunks are bones and arteries, and whose foliage is trembling flesh.

The lake was at least twenty kilometers wide, but it was intimate, personal like a bathtub. Alive, it breathed and dreamed of infinite metamorphoses. It would have shrunk to the size of a puddle under a little boy's feet. If it had so desired, it could have easily pushed aside its high edges of sonorous lianas to invade the oasis and submerge it like a greater sweetness submerges one that has already been enjoyed.

The shores of the lake were deserted, but their sinuous lines had the thoughtful forbidding roughness and the grieving solitude of prehistoric caverns, as well as the living imprint of today's artistic genius. Primordial and ultramodern shores, distant and present, dreamt of and experienced. They obeyed and yet fled from the creative will of the person observing them. The air was a changeable caress of silk velvet peach skin bird feathers.

The lake was like a hypnotic submerged moonlight painted by a diver painter. Moonlight dripping from the heart of an untamed poet. It had the seductiveness of great works of art. This seductiveness, projected onto the vault of the nocturnal sky, had unleashed and ravished the constellations, so that the stars, no longer bound to one another, flitted like red flakes, blue diamonds, gold insects, fiery ivy, scintillating hooks of joy, vermilion mouths, ember eyes, emerald bunches, absolutely free ruby doves.

The stars-in-freedom flew and flitted over the lake of unctuous dissolute moonlight.

Mirmofim, who reached the shore first, was the first to witness the prodigious event.

—“They've unchained the stars too! No more, no more constellations, like prisoners in ranks! The stars are free! We've finally reached the Lake of Freedom.”

On the other shore eleven Paperyites leapt out, luminous turning cones that gave off a silky buzz.

The tallest one spoke:

—“This is not the Lake of Freedom. You have reached the Lake of Poetry and Sentiment! Quench your thirst, swim, and create, if you can, out of the freshness of these waves, the high serene music of Goodness.”

While he spoke other luminous Paperyites appeared. By the hundreds. They gushed and gushed from the depths of the Oasis onto the shores of the lake.

Mirmofim was counting them. There were three hundred. But he tired of counting because the other shore was bursting with Paperyites each one resplendent in the conical vortex of his colored garment.

It looked like a mechanical tribe of thinking machines that were crowding into a circle around a spectacle on the lake, illuminating half of it with their own

living light. The other half was still bathed in the placid candor of the moon's quicksilver.

The great Paperyite's voice boomed:

—“Untameables! do not fear any witchcraft! Slip into the beneficial waves and compose a gentle music of affections. I know all the poisons of bestial cruelty that you carry in your blood. I know the damned fossil deafness of your skulls! But you can find in these waters the art of vibrations and intertwined sounds. I will not give you advice. If inspiration escapes you, look through our garments and you will immediately find the essential notes. We will be judges. When you have finally reached the great human rhythm, we will lead you to the stupendous City of Spiritual Freedom!

Immediately Vokur the rash threw himself in the water, the rough mass of his black body breaking the surface. Everyone made fun of him. But the other black men were already imitating him, hurrying to remove their clothes, while the Untameables still stood, waiting.

COSMIC GENESIS BRUNO SANZIN

I

Expressions of energy in flight through the polydimensional inroads of the infinite.

Domination of the indeterminate.

Absence of any law, or rule in the chaos of wandering, slipping forces, paired, multiplied or opposing forces. Freedom manifested in all its dissolving, anarchic, inconsiderate power, inherent in its absolute formula.

Still atmosphere.

No beginning or end.

Primitive forces, disorganized in their comparison, cannot know constancy even in their singularity. Intensity varies as much as speed and direction.

Nothing can be seen or smelled. Human senses have no power to discern, to measure this complex of virtual life, existing beyond any basis, any possibility for control.

Precosmic disorganization.

Individuality is nonexistent, unimaginable in this clash of brute wandering forces without a purpose, without a goal, with no reason to exist.

Immaterial and antispiritual essences.

(Does spirit precede matter or derive from it in its more evolved vitality?)

Disseminated values, lost without a compass in the ocean of time that does not pass, that cannot be counted in the immeasurable infinite, and therefore enunciated beyond any evaluation that tends toward a limit.

(Time can only circumscribe a limited event. Otherwise it is a useless word without support. Time is therefore a limiting factor in measuring. The infinite is immortality that time cannot contain.)

Nuclei of energy wandering in search of their destiny.

Quantities existing in pure potentiality.

Imperceptible trembling dilating concentrically until it is lost, for no one shows it the path to return.

Values X Y Z

like this capriciously wandering

intertwined

connections separations

stuttering a a a attr attrac attractions

for-forced repulsions

like this

here there

over under upsidedown WHERE?

come and go HOW?

nothing? WHY?

???

yeeees noooooo

see nooooo

feel noo

FI - NAL - LLY

? ?

? ?

?? ? ?

?

Confused penumbra. Stringy masses in disorder. Colorless evenescences of variable transparency. Oily reflections tired at birth. Overflowing opacity. Smell-stench heavy indecipherable.

ALL ILLUSIONS.

Look without seeing.

Smell without sensing.

Breath.

Winds crossing irregularly.

Accelerated crescendo.

Mad cyclone!

coming cloSER

HERE IT IS

gone

Where did it come from?

What was its purpose?

Where was it headed?

Surprise wind-bursts. Timid vortices punctuate the amorphous landscape.

Wail of a mysterious power.

A light!

A light flashing genius-speed

sharp shining darts

to see

cut apart

measure analyze

discover

penetrate the Unknown

— safe inured

to the silent drills of the brain —

expose truth,

absolute truth,

that is always silent as a sphinx

at human questions

heaped in an exasperated mass

with no hope of success

to give them peace.

Mobilize all the senses!

Tense for a supreme effort!

.....

(A smiling child's purple balloon bursts in the sunlight, which had dilated the gas it contained with its warmth. Now the child is crying desperately)

.....

Enfeeblement.

Annihilation.

Painful impossibility.

Human pride flattened in a knock-out punch

by the fleeting infinite.

Shadow: the more you try to catch it, the more it escapes you. It can only be won by shrewdness, that is by turning away and not concentrating on it. And the same is true for the absolute and the infinite: by not inquiring too deeply, so as not to go mad.

An evening sometime during my childhood, far away.
I was deep in sleep-torpor after too many games in the sun.
My head on my mother's knees that knew warm receptiveness.
Evanescent wavering between sleep and wakefulness.
In my sleep fantastical spaces rose up and fell under the weight of the words proffered by my father or my mother; but these words were but sounds, and my mind did not grasp them, for it was suddenly overtaken with the undifferentiated unreal, whose depths absorbed me, filling me with a vague sense of falling into the infinite.
Suddenly a thump.
Eyes open. I enter reality.
The energies of my childhood come closer creating a little nucleus of will that helps my mother put me to bed.
The cold smooth touch of the sheets creates a *limit* around my body *which feels itself*.
On my face the dense immateriality of darkness. (My mother has turned off the light.)
Eyes open against the unknown. *Spiritual contact with the Unknown (chaotic density) creates consciousness*.
Shudder of fear in the dense silence of the dark room. My being concentrates seeking to perforate the Unknown.
Tension.
Silence creates isolated sounds and sculpts them.
Molecules rearrange themselves under the slow attraction-weight of gravity on a piece of furniture. Irritation of a tramway on its rails. Voiceless cadences of horses and rolling carriages. Crackling of distances.
Over everything, in the rigid cold of the sheets, the rhythmical — beat-ting — beat-ting — *contiiiiinuous* beat-ting of my veins, the *paiiinful* willful rigidity-tension of my eyelids held open, the projection of my *living* breath.
Thus in the even density of darkness known things differentiate themselves.
Static forces, broken forces, rough forces, intertwined, dynamic, faraway-indecisive forces. They stay separate in the night, infinities between them, for the darkness has swallowed up all space.
Consciousness thus perceived the striving toward differentiation.

QUARTER HOUR OF POETRY OF THE XTH MAS
(SENTIMENTS SET TO MUSIC) F. T. MARINETTI

505
*Quarter
Hour of
Poetry*

Get on the tanks aeropoets and here we go finally sent packing after so many shrill screeches of tires swallows maniacal critics alembics full of long-winded pessimism

Motor breakdown stop among Italians but you you twenty-year-olds you are by now the famous recalcitrant defaulters of the Ideal and I have to tell you that many times your absolution was attempted by accusing the oppressive pedantry of stamped paper bureaucracy rules censure formalities shabbiness and torturing passéism with which they bogged down the ebullient adamantine rhythm of your rising voluntary service at the heart of the battlefield

I shall not shout goodbye till we meet again in Paradise for up there you would have to obey the infinite most pure love of God whereas now you smart with the desire to command an army of reasoned arguments and so go ahead with the tanks

Urbanisms factories banks and plowed fields study with these solemn professors of sociology ants termites bees beavers

I have nothing to teach you world since I am purged of the quotidian the beacon of an aeropoetry beyond time and space

The cemeteries of great Italians untie their little rustic walls among the cowardice of the *scirocco* and let off angry sparks crackling impatience of powder magazines no doubt they will explode they're exploding clawed cadavers and so go ahead with the tanks

You sappers breakers of the calculated step you gravediggers pigheaded in the effort of burying springs enthusiastic with glory tell me whether you're satisfied now that you've pushed way down down into your ideological dung heap the fragile and delicious Italy that will not die

Go ahead with the tanks and don't get distracted you curl up your daring body in tatters for cruel speed wants to hurl you at the sky before your time

506
F. T.
Marinetti

A cemetery of great Italians explodes and calls out Stop stop Italian drivers you need TNT we'll give it to you we'll give it to you the best TNT extracted from the marrow of the skeleton

And let things be as they are may the word bone marry the word unknown and with the ancient rhyme nudge the nostrils of the Future excited by the blond hay of a record

We're finally there and we get down onto almost sacred soil

Scabrous beatitude of wild hills firing

The voluptuous front line vibrates strings tightened which the projectiles strum and it is a thundering cathedral bent down to implore Jesus with the wrenching blows of lacerated chests

We will be we are the kneeling machine guns our barrels palpitating with prayers

I kiss let me kiss again the weapons riveted with a thousand thousand thousand hearts all pierced with vehement eternal oblivion

BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES

LIBERO ALTOMARE was the pseudonym of Remo Mannoni (1883–1942), who was born in Rome and published his first book of poems in 1908, *Rhymes of Rome and the Suburbs (Rime dell'Urbe e del suburbio)* (Rome). He joined the Futurist movement almost immediately after its foundation and adopted his pseudonym, which means “Free Sea.” He published a book of verse, *Storm-petrels (Procellarie)* (Naples, 1910), and much later another *Ferment (Fermento)* (Rome: privately published, 1931). He left Futurism in 1915.

GUILLAUME APOLLINAIRE was the pseudonym for Guillaume de Kostrowitzky (1880–1918), a writer of Polish origin who became a naturalized Frenchman. He was a prolific journalist who wrote extensively on contemporary art. His major poetic works were *Alcools* (1913) and *Calligrammes* (1918). His essays on Futurism were sceptical about the paintings, but he was intrigued by its theoretical ideas. In 1913 he wrote “Futurist Antitradition,” a playful manifesto (see 152–154). A volunteer when the Great War broke out, he was badly wounded and died before the war’s end.

GIACOMO BALLA (1871–1958) was born in Turin where he was briefly enrolled at the Accademia Albertina in 1891. In 1895 he moved with his mother to Rome, where he continued to paint, giving lessons to Gino Severini and Umberto Boccioni in the early 1900s. He was, therefore, already a mature and established artist when he was invited by Boccioni to sign the “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters” in 1910. His development was more personal and less bound up with the ongoing dialogue conducted by Boccioni, Carrà, Severini, and Russolo. He designed Futurist clothing for men in 1914, and co-authored the “Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe” in 1915 (see 209–212). He continued to be a part of the Futurist group during the 1920s, when Marinetti had moved to Rome, and exhibited six paintings with Depero (q.v.) and Prampolini (q.v.) in the 1925 “Exhibition of Decorative Arts” in Paris. He dissociated himself from Futurism in the later 1930s.

BENEDETTA was the nom de plume of Benedetta Cappa (1897–1977), a painter and writer who married F. T. Marinetti in 1926. She studied painting with Giacomo Balla in 1917 and 1918, where she first met Marinetti. Her work, whether written or painted, was marked by a perceptible vein of mystical and religious yearning. She published two novels, *Human Forces: An Abstract Novel with Graphic Syntheses* (*Le*

forze umane: romanzo astratto con sintesi grafiche (Foligno: Campitelli, 1924) and *Journey to Gararà: A Cosmic Novel for the Theater* (*Viaggio a Gararà: romanzo cosmico per teatro*) (Milan: Monreale, 1931), and a collection of poems, *Astra and the Submarine: A Daydreamed Life* (*Astra e il sottomarino: vita trasognata*) (Naples: Casella, 1935). In 1935 she painted five *Panels of Land, Sea, Air, Telegraphic, Telephonic, and Radio Communications* for the Post Office Building in Palermo.

UMBERTO BOCCIONI (1882–1916) was born in Reggio Calabria, but followed his father, a civil servant, from place to place—Forlì, Genoa, Padua, Catania. He moved to Rome in 1899 to study art, where he met also Gino Severini (q.v.) and studied with Giacomo Balla (q.v.). In 1906 he traveled to Paris and Russia, and in 1907 he moved to Milan, where in 1910 he met Marinetti and signed the “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters.” Boccioni was probably the principal author of the “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” which followed, and he was sole author of “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture.” He also wrote *Futurist Painting and Sculpture (Plastic Dynamism)* (*Pittura scultura futuriste (Dinamismo plastico)*) (Milan: Edizioni Fuuriste di Poesia, 1914). He contributed to all the main exhibitions of the Futurist movement. In 1915 he volunteered for military service. In 1916 he was assigned to an artillery regiment near Verona, where he was thrown from a horse during a training exercise and killed.

ANTON GIULIO BRAGAGLIA (1890–1960) was a key figure in early Italian cinema and in theater of the 1920s. From 1906 on he was a director’s assistant at Cines, a film production house run by his father. In 1911 he published *Photodynamism (Fotodinamismo)* (Rome: Nalato), an attempt to formulate a Futurist theory of photography, drawing on the chronophotography of Marey. Perhaps because of concern that his photographs were undermining the status of Futurist painting, Bragaglia was formally expelled from the Futurist ranks on 1 October 1913. Despite this, he seems to have maintained his personal rapport with various Futurists, especially Balla, who resided in Rome. In 1918 he opened a gallery, Casa d’arte Bragaglia (The Bragaglia House of Art), which lasted until 1933 and sponsored 275 exhibitions by artists such as Boccioni, De Chirico, Dottori, and the Futurist and Dadaist groups, Klimt, Paladini, Pannaggi, and Prampolini. In 1922 he enlarged it to include a theater and club, with rooms decorated by Balla, Depero, and Prampolini. The theater, which staged works by Pirandello, Soffici, O’Neill, Schnitzler, and Apollinaire, as well as Futurist syntheses by Settimelli, Corra, and Marinetti, was the most innovative theatrical venue of the period in Italy. Bragaglia also wrote books on theater, dance, film, and archaeology, and was active as a journalist, critic, and reviewer.

PAOLO BUZZI (1874–1956) was born in Milan. A prolific writer who published poems, novels, plays, essays, and many translations, he met Marinetti in 1904 and the next year became a co-founder and co-editor of the magazine *Poesia*. He was among the first to join the Futurist movement in 1909. He published *Airplanes—Winged Songs (Aeroplani—Canti alati)* (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia* 1909), *Free Verses (Versi liberi)* (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*, 1913), and *The Elipse and the Spiral (L’ellisse e lo spirale)*

(Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1915). He later became a civil servant in the provincial administration of Milan.

FRANCESCO CANGIULLO (1888–1977) was born in Naples. A journalist, poet, painter, and playwright, he wrote free-word poems and contributed enormously to the development of Futurist drama and spectacle (see Marinetti's account of him in "Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation," 222–223). He also maintained a lively interest in the visual arts (see figs. 52–53) and was a distinguished book designer. In the early 1920s he was interested in theater, and he signed the manifesto of the "Theater of Surprise" (270–273) with Marinetti. In 1924 he abandoned Futurism.

MARIO CARLI (1889–1935) was born in Piacenza, but moved to Florence in 1908, where he soon met Emilio Settimelli (q.v.). Together they edited a journal called *Il centauro* (1912–1913). In 1913 they met Bruno Corra (q.v.), who introduced them to Marinetti. Carli collaborated with Marinetti in writing and producing theatrical syntheses. After the demise of the Florentine journal *Lacerba* in 1915, he volunteered enthusiastically as the war began and rose to the rank of captain. Carli gained new prominence as co-editor of *Roma futurista* (1918–1920); meanwhile he continued to write his own free-word poems, collected in his *Filtered Nights (Notti filtrate)* (Florence: Edizioni de *L'Italia futurista*, 1918). Carli's politics, originally anarchic, took a monarchic and authoritarian turn. After Mussolini's accession to power, he and Settimelli edited *L'Impero*, a journal supported with money by Mussolini. In 1932 he left journalism to take up a diplomatic career. He was posted as general consul in Porto Allegre, where he died.

CARLO CARRÀ (1881–1966) who was born in Quargnento, near Alessandria, was trained as a house painter. From 1899 to 1901 he worked in Paris and London, finally returning to Milan. In 1906 he enrolled at the Accademia di Brera in Milan and met Boccioni. He signed the first "Manifesto of the Futurist Painters" in 1910, as well as "Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto" which followed. He also published *War-painting (Guerrapittura)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1915), a collection of designs and free-word works, but by then he was already growing detached from Futurism. He became an early promoter of Metaphysical Painting (with De Chirico), then moved on to his own version of figurative realism.

ENRICO CAVACCHIOLI (1885–1954) was born in Pozallo, a village outside of Syracuse, in Sicily. He came to Marinetti's attention through his contributions to *Poesia*, and in 1906 he published *The Veiled Nightmare (L'incubo velato)* (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*). He joined the Futurist movement immediately in 1909, and went on to publish *The Deep Blue Frogs (Le ranocchie turchine)* (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*, 1909), *Riding the Sun (Calvalcando il sole)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1914), and a play, *The Bird of Paradise and Other Dramas (L'uccello del paradiso)* (Milan: Casa editrice Vitagliano, 1920). He later became the editor of *Comoedia*, a journal devoted to theater in Milan.

MARIO CHIATTONE (1891–1957) was the son of an artist who was a connoisseur of contemporary art and an early patron of the artists Boccioni and Carrà (q.v.). Between

1913 and 1914 Chiattono shared a studio with Antonio Sant'Elia (q.v.), and like him he joined the Nuove Tendenze group, contributing three drawings to their exhibition of May 1914 (see fig. 63). After World War I his interests turned toward historicist designs.

REMO CHITI (1891–1971) was a quiet participant in the Florentine group centered around the journal *L'Italia futurista* (1916–1918), and he wrote a number of theatrical syntheses when these were in their heyday (1915–1916). He signed the manifesto of “Futurist Cinema,” but wrote only a single pamphlet of his own, “Creators of Futurist Synthetic Theater” (1915).

PRIMO CONTI (1900–1991) came into contact with Futurism while still a boy when he went to the exhibition of Futurist painting sponsored by the journal *Lacerba* in 1913. In 1919 he started a little magazine called *Il centone* (*The Cento*), which lasted only a few issues. He remained active as a writer and painter throughout his life. He published several collections of free-word poems, most notably *Imbottigliature* (*Bottlings*) (Florence: Edizioni de *L'Italia futurista*, 1917). He also exhibited in Florence throughout his life, and in 1980 his work was exhibited in a grand retrospective show at the Palazzo Pitti.

FRANCA MARIA CORNELI was born around 1920. In 1942 her B.A. thesis was published, sporting the title *Futurist Language in the Words-in-Freedom of Aeropoetry, in the Synthetic, Dynamic, Simultaneous, Alogical Theater of Surprises with Compressed Time and Space, and in the Drama of Objects* (*La lingua del futurismo nelle parole in libertà dell'aeropoesia e nel teatro sintetico dinamico simultaneo alogico autonomo a sorpresa tempo-compresso spazio-compresso e dramma d'oggetti*) (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia). Her poems appeared in various Futurist magazines of the late 1930s.

BRUNO CORRA (1892–1976) was the pseudonym of Bruno Ginanni Corradini. He co-signed the manifestos of “The Futurist Synthetic Theater” (204–209) and “The Futurist Cinema” (229–233). He published a collection of poetry and prose called *With Hands of Glass* (*Con mani di vetro*) (Milan: Studio editoriale lombardo, 1915), collaborated on the journal *L'Italia futurista* (1916–1918), and co-authored a novel with Marinetti, *The Island of Kisses* (*L'isola dei bacci*) (Milan: Studio editoriale lombardo, 1918). He contributed to Futurist journals well into the 1930s.

DINA CUCINI was a young writer when she published a collection of free verse and free-word poems, *Futurist Aeropoem of the Towers of Siena* (*Aeropoesia futurista delle torri di Siena*) (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1943). She also published several poems in a collection edited by Marinetti, Farfa, Giovanni Acquaviva, and Aldo Giuntin, *The Martial Amorous Futurist Songbook* (*Cazoniere futurista amoroso guerriero*) (Savona: Istituto grafico Brizio, 1943).

MINA DELLA PERGOLA wrote a number of theatrical syntheses that were published in the journal *L'Italia futurista* (1916–1918); she also contributed to *Roma futurista* (1918–1920) and *Dinamo*.

FORTUNATO DEPERO (1892–1960) was a painter, sculptor, designer, and writer. He met various Futurists in Rome in 1913, and in 1914 he exhibited at Giuseppe Sprovieri's Galleria Futurista, where he also participated in recitals and events organized there.

He worked with Balla on creating plastic complexes, or assemblages as they would be called today, and co-authored a manifesto about them in “Futurist Reconstruction of the Universe” (209–212). His playful imagination found expression in the series of *Plastic Dances (balli plastici)* which he designed in 1917 and produced the next year at the Teatro dei Piccoli (Children’s Theater) in Rome. During the 1920s he designed exhibition booths and pavilions for various firms and events. Depero was in Paris from 1925 to 1926, then in New York from 1928 to 1930 when he designed covers for *Vanity Fair*, *Vogue*, and other magazines. Many of his designs were for the Campari company, and he theorized this work in “Futurism and Advertising Art” (288–291).

GERARDO DOTTORI (1884–1977) was born in Perugia, but lived in Rome from 1926 to 1939, when he was a painter active in the Futurist movement. In the period 1916–1918 he contributed free-word poems to the journal *L’Italia futurista*. In 1920 he founded a small magazine in Perugia (*Griffa!* [*Claw!*]), and throughout the late 1920s and 1930s exhibited repeatedly at Futurist exhibitions.

FARFA was the pseudonym of Vittorio Osvaldo Tommasini (1881–1964), a painter and writer. He was a member of the Futurist group in Genoa. He made paintings, poster designs, and ceramics that he executed with Tullio d’Albisola. He also published several collections of poetry.

FILLIA was the pseudonym of Luigi Colombo (1904–1936), who grew up and lived in Turin, apart from a few visits to Paris. From 1922 until his death he exhibited regularly at Futurist exhibitions. He also created Futurist interior designs, furniture, and decorative objects. He wrote free-word poems, novels, plays, and manifestos and essays on art and architecture. In short, he was prolific and did much to promote a poetic myth of machines and “machinist” art.

LUCIANO FOLGORE (literally: Light-iano Lightning) was the pseudonym of Omero Vecchi (1888–1966), an Italian writer and poet whose Futurist works stretched from the period 1912 to 1919. In *The Song of Motors (Il canto dei motori)* (Milan: Edizioni di Poesia, 1912), the lush rhetoric of D’Annunzio vies with novel subject matter (see 447–448). In *Bridges over the Ocean (Ponti sul oceano)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1914) he struck a fresh path, and some of his most outstanding poems are found in his last collection *Swift City (Città Veloce)* (Milan: Edizioni della Voce, 1919).

FUTURLUCE (*Future-light*), the pseudonym adopted by Elda Norchi in her writings, has not been studied by many scholars. She contributed essays and poems to the journal *Roma futurista* (1918–1920) and was active in organizing a Futurist student association at the University of Rome in 1919. Thereafter she disappears from view.

MARIA GINANNI (1892–1953) was born in Naples and studied at the University of Rome. She contributed often to the journal *L’Italia futurista* (1916–18) and directed its book publishing operations. She also worked for the Milanese publishing firm of Facchi. In 1917 she published her first book of poems *Transparent Mountains (Montagne trasparenti)* (Florence: Edizioni de *L’Italia futurista*), a title suggesting the surreal and mystical qualities of much of her work. Two years later she published *The Poem*

of *Space (Il poema dello spazio)* (Milan: Facchi, 1919), and later she collaborated with her husband, Ludovico Toeplitz, on *The Stones of Venice Overseas (Le pietre di Venezia oltremare)* (Milan: Mondadori, 1930).

ARNALDO GINNA was the pseudonym of Arnaldo Ginanni-Corradini (1890–1982), brother of Bruno Corra (q.v.). He was active in the editorial group surrounding *L'Italia futurista* (1916–1918). As a writer he included pre-Surrealist and occultist elements in his works. He was an active writer of theatrical syntheses, writing one of them with his brother (see 495). He also painted, and, more important, directed the film *Futurist Life* (see fig. 74). He wrote two books on art, *Arte dell'avvenire (Art of the Future)* (Bologna: Beltrami, 1910) and *Pittura dell'avvenire (Painting of the Future)* (Florence: Edizioni de *L'Italia futurista*, 1915).

ADELE GLORIA (1910–1985) published one book of poetry in 1934, *FF.SS. "89." Direttissimo (State Railroad No. "89," Express)* (Catania: Publishing Company), and exhibited at the second Quadrennial Exhibition in Rome in 1935. Very little is known about this painter and writer from Catania.

MARIA GORETTI (1907–?) was born in Pistoia and studied in Bologna. She published *Women and Futurism (La donna e il futurismo)* (Verona: la Scaligera, 1941) and *Poetry of the Machine: An Essay in the Philosophy of Futurism (Poesia della macchina)* (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1942). Her poems also appeared in Futurist anthologies of the early 1940s. After the war, she wrote *Pilù* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1953), a children's story, and *Palimpsest (Palinsesto)* (Florence: Le Monnier, 1953), a collection of poems.

CORRADO GOVONI (1884–1965) was born in Ferrara and was self-educated. In 1903 he published his first book of poems *The Phials (Le fiale)* (Florence: Francesco Lumachi, 1903), and had published two more before becoming involved with Futurism. He published *Electrical Poems (Poesie elettriche)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1911), and *Rarefactions and Words-in-Freedom (Rarefazioni e parole in libertà)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1915), a volume that included several drawn poems and typographical experiments.

GIAN PIETRO LUCINI (1867–1914) was a poet, literary theorist, and promoter of symbolist literature in Italy. He wrote *Poetic Reason and a Program of Free Verse (Ragion poetica e programma del verso libero)* (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*, 1908), in which he outlines a theory of verse based on a philosophical approach to “becoming,” combining elements of Hegel, Nietzsche, and Spencer. Marinetti wrote a preface to Lucini's collection of poems, *Pistol Shots (Revolverate)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1912), but in 1913 Lucini broke with Futurism.

VIRGILIO MARCHI (1895–1960) was an Italian stage designer and architect who came into contact with Marinetti during World War I. Under the influence of Balla and the drawings of Sant'Elia, he developed a more lyrical or expressionist set of metropolitan projects (1919–1920). He also wrote a book, *Architettura futurista* (Foligno: Franco Campitelli, 1924), that gave voice to his theoretical position, closer to scenography than architecture, since he built nothing except the interior to Anton Giulio

Bragaglia's Casa d'Arte (House of Art) in 1921–1922. He also contributed to various Futurist periodicals. After 1931, his interests turned elsewhere.

F. T. MARINETTI. See Introduction.

PINO MASNATA (1901–1968) published his first work in 1930, *Dramatized Souls (Anime sceneggiate)* (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia), and in 1932 a slender volume of free-word poems *Free-Word Tables (Tavole parolibere)* (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia), both with prefaces by Marinetti. Working with the composer Carmine Guarino, he served as the librettist and dramatist for an opera designed for radio production, *Tum Tum Ninna Nanna*, broadcast by Radio Turin on 1 December 1931. He also wrote two later collections of poetry, *Fascist Songs of the Green Metropolis (Canti fascisti della metropoli verde)* (Milan: Giuseppe Morreale, 1935) and *Poetry with Surgical Irons (Poesia dei ferri chirurgici)* (Milan: Edizioni medici Domus [1940]).

ARMANDO MAZZA was from Palermo and was a trained boxer. He appears prominently in accounts of fisticuffs at the early Futurist *serate* from 1910 to 1912, and in September 1914 he was arrested with Marinetti and Boccioni for his part in an interventionist demonstration (see Introduction, 19). In 1919 and 1920 he edited a journal, *The Enemies of Italy (I nemici d'Italia)*, and he wrote four books of free-word poetry: *Ten Love Lyrics, First Series (Dieci liriche d'amore, prima serie n. 10 cartoline)* (Milan: Facchi, 1919); *Two Dead Men (Due morti)* (Milan: Unione tipografica editrice, 1919); *Firmament (Firmamento)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1920); and *Boldness (Audacie)* (Milan: Carrara, 1922). Nothing is known about his daughter ANNA MARIA MAZZA, except that she wrote one book of poems, introduced by Paolo Buzzi, *The Mirror and Me (Io e lo specchio)* (Messina-Milan: Giuseppe Principato, 1937).

MARISA MORI (1900–1985) was born in Florence and became a painter, associated with the group of Futurists in Turin, who exhibited in many Futurist exhibitions after 1932. She did designs of stage settings, figurines, and costumes. She drew inspiration from flight, and hence participated in the aeropainting vein of Futurism.

BRUNO MUNARI (1907–1998) was born in Milan and became an artist who started participating in Futurist activities in 1926. In the room annually reserved for the Futurists at the Venice Biennale, he exhibited in 1930, 1932, 1934, and 1936. In 1933 he illustrated one of the “litho-tin” books produced by Tullio d'Albisola, *The Lyrical Water-Melon (L'anguria lirica)* (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia). His eclectic style absorbed elements of constructivism and Surrealism, and after World War II he became a major designer.

CHRISTOPHER NEVINSON (1889–1946) was a British painter. He was the son of Henry Wood Nevinson, a journalist and author, and of Margaret Wynne Nevinson (q.v.). He studied painting at the Slade School of Fine Art in London (1909–1912) and the Académie Julian in Paris. He exhibited at the salon of Allied Artists Association (1913–1914), in the “Post-Impressionist and Futurist Exhibition” (1913), and in the Whitechapel Art Gallery's exhibition of “Twentieth Century Art” (1914). He joined the Rebel Art Centre, organized by Wyndham Lewis, in the spring of 1914, but fell out with Lewis after the publication of “Futurism and English Art” (196–198) in

June 1914. Nevertheless, he contributed an illustration to the second issue of Lewis's short-lived journal, *Blast* (July 1915). During the war he held two exhibitions of war paintings with a strong Futurist influence. But later he renounced Futurism and reverted to a more traditional style of painting.

MARGARET WYNNE NEVINSON (1859–1932) was born in Leicester, where her father, the Rev. Timothy Jones, was a vicar. She married Henry Wood Nevinson, a journalist, around 1878. Both became involved in the suffrage movement a little after 1900. She was initially a member of the Woman's Social and Political Union, the most militant of the major suffrage groups. But in 1907 she joined others who rebelled and founded the Women's Freedom League, the third largest of the major suffrage groups, one that was militant but nonviolent. Nevinson wrote often for its newspaper, *The Vote*. She also published a one-act play, *In the Workhouse* (London: International Suffrage Shop, 1911), and pamphlets such as "Five Years' Struggle for Freedom: A History of the Suffrage Movement from 1908 to 1912" (London: Women's Freedom League, [1912]). Her husband met Marinetti when both were war correspondents in 1912 in the Bulgarian-Turkish war, covering the siege of Adrianople, and the two became friends. In her autobiography, *Life's Fitful Fever* (London: A. and C. Black, 1926), 241–242, she remembered Marinetti thus: "Though I differed profoundly from Marinetti, especially in regard to his views on women and his worship of war, I found him a very stimulating companion and greatly enjoyed his brilliant conversation. He admired English women, sympathizing with our fight for freedom and political rights, and our disregard for convention and public opinion; his approval naturally went to the extreme left of the militant movement." Her son, Christopher Nevinson (q.v.), became a Futurist painter, assisted Marinetti in his performance at the Doré Gallery in March 1914, and joined him in issuing a manifesto, "Futurism and English Art" (196–198).

VINICIO PALADINI (1902–1971) studied architecture in Rome and was a self-taught painter. From 1922 to 1926 he exhibited in Futurist exhibitions and events and wrote for left-wing journals such as *Avanguardia* (1922) and *Pagine Rosse (Red Pages)* (1923). He collaborated with Ivo Pannaggi (q.v.) on the *Futurist Mechanical Dance* in 1925.

ALDO PALAZZESCHI (1885–1974) was an Italian poet and novelist. His first three books of poetry were published at his own expense. He joined the Futurist movement in May 1909, three months after its founding, and soon published *The Arsonist (L'incendario)*, a collection of poems, with Marinetti's press (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1910). The next year he published *Perelà's Code (Il codice di Perelà)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1911), an allegorical novel that is highly regarded. After 1915 he lost interest in Futurism and went on to become a major novelist.

IVO PANNAGGI (1901–1981) studied architecture in Rome and Florence and began to paint after World War I. He exhibited with the Futurists from 1921 to 1930. Together with Vinicio Paladini, in 1922 he presented the *Futurist Mechanical Dance (Ballo meccanico futurista)* in Rome. In 1925–1926 he designed the interior and furnishings of

Casa Zampini in Esanatoglia, and over the next few years he designed stage sets for Anton Giulio Bragaglia's (q.v.) theater in Rome, the Teatro degli Indipendenti.

GIOVANNI PAPINI (1881–1956) was an Italian social and cultural critic. Self-educated, he co-founded and co-edited the nationalist review *Leonardo* (1903–1907) with Giuseppe Prezzolini, then co-founded the fortnightly journal *Lacerba* (1913–1915) with Ardengo Soffici (q.v.). The latter published writings by many Futurists and was widely read, typically reaching 20,000 readers. The journal was closed after a break occurred between Marinetti and Papini in 1915. Papini later converted to Catholicism and remained a prominent critic.

ENRICO PRAMPOLINI (1894–1956) was born in Modena and took an interest in Futurism as early as 1913. His manifesto on “Futurist Stage Design” (1915; see 204–209) prepared the way for his career as a leading figure in international stage direction during the 1920s and 1930s. In 1927, at the Théâtre de la Madeleine in Paris, Prampolini presented the “Futurist Pantomime” shows by Luciano Folgore with music by Franco Casavola. (Actors were replaced with mechanical elements—an elevator, a ventilator, a gramophone.) In the 1930s he took an interest in mural art, then a subject much in vogue for its obvious political dimensions.

FRANCESCO BALILLA PRATELLA (1880–1955) was born in Lugo and admitted in 1899 to the Conservatory of Pesaro, then directed by noted composer Pietro Mascagni. He received his degree in composition in 1903. From 1905 to 1908 he composed an opera which won the Baruzzi Prize (Premio Baruzzi) and was produced on 4 December 1909 at the Teatro Comunale of Bologna. Shortly thereafter he joined the Futurist movement and wrote three manifestos. In 1915 he composed *Song for War* (*Canto alla Guerra*), orchestral dances based on a French ballad and dedicated to the poet Valentine de Saint-Point (q.v.). In 1913–1914 he wrote his most famous Futurist opera, *Dro, the Pilot* (*L'aviatore Dro*), op. 33. He also wrote music for Futurist theatrical works, as well as many books, including *Futurist Music* (*Musica futurista*) (Bologna: Bongiovanni, 1912) and *The Evolution of Music from 1910 to 1917* (*L'evoluzione della musica da 1910 a 1917*) (Milan: Istituto Editorial Italiano, [1918]).

GIUSEPPE PREZZOLINI (1882–1982) was an Italian writer and critic. Together with Giovanni Papini he founded and edited the review *Leonardo* (1903–1907). From 1908 to 1913 he edited *La voce* (*Voice*), one of the most prestigious and respected magazines in Italy during the early twentieth century. He continued to write literary and cultural criticism throughout a long career.

REGINA was the name that Regina Bracchi (1894–1974) used as an artist. She studied at the Accademia di Brera in Milan and later with sculptor Giovanni Alloati in Turin. Her early sculptures, mostly portraits, were executed in the media of bronze and marble. In 1930 she began to use new and modern materials, including tin, tin plate, celluloid, and aluminum, probably under the influence of Futurism. She also took up new themes associated with metals and modernity, including ship hulls and aviators. Regina joined the Futurist movement officially in 1932, and in 1934 signed the “Manifesto of Futurist Aeroplastics.” Her relief panel *The Land of the Blind Man of*

1936 exhibits the Futurist interest in exploring tactile sensations and in combining words with plastic form. In 1940 she withdrew from Futurism, when the pressure to conform to Fascist themes became too confining. After the war she became a member of the MAC group (Movement of Concrete Art).

ENIF ROBERT was the pseudonym of Enif Angiolini (1886–1974), an Italian actress and writer. On stage Robert worked with her friend, the celebrated actress Eleonora Duse. She adopted her husband's surname in her Futurist writings, which included essays and poems contributed to the journals *L'Italia futurista* (1916–1918) and *Roma futurista* (1918–1920). Her essays from the former were included in the second edition of Marinetti's book *How to Seduce Women*. With him she co-authored the novel *A Woman's Belly* (*Un ventre di donna* [Milan: Facchi, 1919]; see 458–459). She contributed to the journal *L'Impero*, in 1931, but after that date she disappears.

ROSA ROSÀ was the pseudonym of of Edyth von Haynau-Arnaldi (1884–1978). Writer, painter, illustrator, and contributor to the journal *L'Italia futurista*, she published two Futurist volumes, *Una donna con tre anime* (*A Woman with Three Souls*) (Milan: Studio Editoriale Lombardo, 1918) and *Non c'è che te!* (*There's Only You!*) (Milan: Facchi, 1919). She also illustrated many Futurist books, including works by Corra, Mario Carli, and Ginna. She participated in the Great National Futurist Exhibition of 1919 (Milan, Genoa, and Florence). She later published *Eternal Mediterranean* (*Eterno Mediterraneo*) (Rome: Sepa, 1964) and *The Phenomenon of Byzantium* (*Il fenomeno Bisanzio*) (Milan: Pan, 1970).

OTTONE ROSAI (1895–1957) met the Futurists in 1913 in Florence and promptly became, in his words, “a militant Futurist and an unfailing regular of the Caffè delle Giubbe Rosse.” According to Enrico Crispolti, his new works had aggregations of the most varied materials and streams of color; these were shown at an exhibition in Rome in April–May 1914. After the Great War he drifted away from Futurism.

LUIGI RUSSOLO (1885–1947) was born in Portogruaro, where his father was the cathedral organist. Luigi studied music, but turned to painting around 1908. In 1909 he began his deep friendship with Umberto Boccioni (q.v.), and in 1910 he joined the Futurists and signed the first “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters.” Though he exhibited at the “Exhibition of Futurist Painting” in Paris and other cities in 1912, his painting was not especially good, and in late 1912 he returned to his first love, music. In 1913 he wrote “The Art of Noises,” a pioneering document in musical theory. Shortly afterward, with Ugo Piatti, he made a series of “noise-tuners” (*intonarumori*), sound machines to create and modify types of noise. He presented the noise-tuners at concerts in 1913 and 1914. The war interrupted his activities, and in 1917 he was seriously wounded. But he continued to collaborate with the Futurists and staged more concerts in Paris in 1921. After 1922, his refusal to join the Fascist party led to his disassociation from the Futurists. He continued his experiments with sound machines for the rest of his life, but also became withdrawn and absorbed in occult studies.

VALENTINE DE SAINT-POINT was the pseudonym of Anne-Jeanne-Valentine-Marinnet de Glans de Cessiat-Vercell (1875–1953). The great-granddaughter of the French

poet Lamartine, Saint-Point studied painting under Mucha and published many books before joining the Futurist movement, including *Poèmes de la mer et du soleil* (*Poems of the Sea and the Sun*) (Paris: A. Messein, 1905) and *Poèmes d'orgueil* (*Poems of Pride*) (Paris: Editions de l'Abbaye, 1908). Her “Manifesto of the Futurist Woman” and “Futurist Manifesto of Lust” were translated into several languages and sparked enormous controversy. Both were included in the major collections of Futurist manifestos that Marinetti published in 1914 and 1919 (*I manifesti del Futurismo* [Florence: *Lacerba*, 1914] and *Manifesti del futurismo* [Milan: Istituto editoriale italiano, 1919]). Saint-Point publicly abandoned Futurism in January 1914, going on to create *Métachorie*, an abstract dance which she presented in Paris in 1913 and New York in 1917. In 1924 she moved to Cairo, and eventually she converted to Islam, adopting the name Raouhya Nour el Dine.

ANTONIO SANT’ELIA (1888–1916) was born in Como to a family of modest background. In 1903 he enrolled at a local professional institute, graduating in 1906 as a *capomastro* (master builder). He left for Milan, where he became a draftsman in the city’s department of public works. From 1909 to 1911 he also studied architecture at the Accademia di Brera. As early as 1912 he started making a series of sketches for imaginary buildings—churches, power stations, skyscrapers. In late 1913 he joined a group called Nuove Tendenze (New Currents); it offered a program of moderate modernism and staged an exhibition that opened on 20 May 1914, with sixteen drawings by Sant’Elia that outlined the “New City” (*la Città nuova*). The catalogue included an essay by Sant’Elia, untitled, but now known as the “Messaggio” (“Message”), a document actually drafted by Ugo Nebbia. Shortly after the exhibition Sant’Elia joined the Futurists. Marinetti revised the “Messaggio” and published it as a manifesto of “Futurist Architecture” (see 198–202). Sant’Elia was elected as town councilor on the Socialist Party list the same month and provided two designs for elementary schools in the city. In 1915, despite initial opposition to the war, Sant’Elia was won over by the interventionist cause and enlisted in the army. He was mortally wounded on 10 October 1916.

BRUNO SANZIN (1906–1976) was a Futurist writer, poet, and impresario. In 1922 he organized a student Futurist group in Trieste, and in 1923 edited a Futurist page for a journal called *Lightning* (*La folgore*). A year later he published *Marinetti and Futurism* (*Marinetti e il futurismo*) (Trieste: Editore Bruno G. Sanzin, 1924), a popular account of Marinetti’s life, and a manifesto, *Allegorical Prose of Color* (*Prosa allegorica del colore*) (Trieste: Edizioni Delfino, 1924). In 1932 he organized the National Exhibition of Futurist Photography, and in 1933 published a philosophical poem, *Infinite* (*Infinite*) (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1933). He published more poems in *Accents and Quotas* (*Accenti e quote*) (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, [1935]), as well as a novel, *Optimism at All Cost* (*Ottimismo ad ogni costo*) (Rome: Unione editoriale d’Italia, 1938). Much later he published his reminiscences, *Futurism and Myself* (*Confided in Freedom*) (*Io e il futurismo [confidenze in libertà]*) (Milan: IPL, 1976).

LAURA SERRA was born in Naples. She published the *Diary of a Young Woman Full of Fear* (*Diario d’una donna piena di paura*) (Naples: CLET, 1935) and two books of

poetry, *Can of Dreams (La scatola dei sogni)* (Naples: CLET, n.d.), and *Phlegrean Fields (Campi Flegrei)* (Naples: Edizioni di politica nuova, 1939).

EMILIO SETTIMELLI (1880–1954) edited a small literary magazine in Florence, called *Centaur (Centauro)* (1912–1913). In 1915 he joined Marinetti as a co-signer of the manifesto of “Futurist Synthetic Theater” and wrote a synthesis titled *Gray + Red + Violet + Orange* (see 492–493), and became part of the group around the journal *L’Italia futurista* (1916–1918). His political allegiances veered wildly in the period 1920–1922. In 1920, with financing from Mussolini, he and Mario Carli founded another journal called *L’Impero (Empire)*. The support from Mussolini meant that Settimelli could be critical of other figures in the regime, but eventually he went too far. He was exiled by the government in 1937.

GINO SEVERINI (1883–1966) was born in Cortona, Tuscany, and in 1899 he moved with his mother to Rome, where he met Balla and Boccioni. In 1901, he began to study painting with Boccioni under Balla. For a while, in 1906, Severini drew for *L’Avanti della domenica*, a Socialist newspaper. In 1906 he moved to Paris, where he was befriended by Modigliani. In 1908 he exhibited at the Indépendants and the Salon d’Automne. In February 1910 he was invited by Boccioni to sign “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” and then in April “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” and he agreed. In October 1911, he guided Boccioni, Carrà, and Russolo through the studios of Picasso, Braque, Léger, and others, introducing them to the most recent Cubist work. He also became acquainted with Ardengo Soffici. In 1912 he participated in the first major Futurist exhibition at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery in Paris, and his works were widely praised. He held his first solo exhibition the next year at the Marlborough Gallery, in London, and married Jeanne Fort, daughter of the French poet Paul Fort. Severini was deeply saddened by the death of Boccioni (q.v.) in 1916, as well as the death of his own infant son. He withdrew from participation in the Futurist venture, developing his own distinctive style of Cubist-influenced modernism.

MARIO SIRONI (1885–1961) spent his youth in Rome, where he studied painting and frequented the studio of Giacomo Balla. He joined the Futurist movement in 1915. His paintings during this period treat urban themes and the plight of the working class, and occasionally explore the use of collage materials. In 1915 he enlisted in the Lombard Cyclist Volunteer Battalion (see Introduction, 21) and was sent to the front. After 1918 he moved to Milan, where he continued to work as an illustrator, and later as a writer, publishing articles and drawings in *Natura*, Mussolini’s *Il Popolo d’Italia*, and *La Rivista illustrata del Popolo d’Italia*. In 1919 his works were included in the Great National Futurist Exhibition organized by Marinetti and held at the Galleria Centrale d’Arte in Milan, and he continued to exhibit with the Futurists through 1922. Late in 1922, however, he exhibited along with a group of artists who soon formed the Novecento group (see Introduction, 35). Sironi eventually became the single most successful artist to work for the Fascist regime, producing paintings, sculptures, theater designs, interior designs, and murals. He was commissioned to

design several rooms for the Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution in Rome of 1932–33. He exhibited frequently in the postwar years.

ARDENGO SOFFICI (1879–1965) was an Italian critic and painter. He studied painting at the Accademia di Belle Arti at Florence, then moved to Paris, where he lived from 1903 to 1906, coming into contact with advanced artistic and literary circles. He returned to Italy and wrote for a number of journals, publicizing the works of Medardo Rosso, Rimbaud, Picasso, and Braque. In 1913, together with Giovanni Papini (q.v.), he founded the journal *Lacerba*, and the period of his close collaboration with the Futurists began. He published several books, including *Cubism and Beyond (Cubismo e oltre)* (Florence: Libreria della *Voce*, 1913) and a book of free-word poems *BİFfZF + 18* (Florence: Edizioni della *Voce*, 1915). After Italy entered the war, Soffici volunteered for active service. In the postwar years, Soffici abandoned Futurism and joined the *strapaese* group, a circle of writers and painters in Tuscany who urged a return to premodern and agrarian values.

MINO SOMENZI (1899–1948) was a quiet presence in Futurism throughout the 1920s and 1930s. He participated in the takeover of Fiume with D'Annunzio in 1919–1920 and was the key organizer of a Futurist convention that celebrated Marinetti's achievements in 1924. A painter and sculptor, from 1932 onward he was the editor of *Futurismo*, the movement's more or less "official" journal, and a frequent contributor to its successor, *Artecrazia* (1932–1938). Somenzi was of Jewish extraction and was startled when the regime set in place its infamous racial laws in 1938. He apparently occupied a minor military position and was recalled to arms when *Artecrazia* was suppressed in 1938.

TATO was the pseudonym of Guglielmo Sansoni (1896–1974), an Italian painter and photographer who moved to Rome in 1924. With Marinetti he wrote a "Manifesto of Futurist Photography" (1930), and his signature appears on other manifestos from the 1930s. He published an autobiography recounting his Futurist activities in 1941, *Tato Recounted by Tato: 20 Years of Futurism (Tato raccontato da Tato: 20 anni di futurismo)* (Milan: O. Zucchi, 1941).

THAYAHT (1893–1959) was the pseudonym for Ernesto Michahelles. The son of a Swiss father and an English mother, he was raised in Florence and came into contact with the Futurists as early as 1915. In 1919 he trained at the Académie Ranson in Paris and worked with the fashion house Madeleine Vionnet. The following year he studied dynamic geometry and scientific color at Harvard University. His work eventually encompassed painting, sculpture, stage design, photography, couture, decoration, jewelry, and furniture. He is most well known for his 1919–1920 design of a tutu—a simple, functional outfit adapted to modern life—and for his experimentation with aluminum and other metal alloys in sculpture. He became a member of the Futurist movement in 1927, participating in many group shows, and in 1931 organized the Tuscan Futurist Exhibition.

IRMA VALERIA was a frequent contributor (fifteen poems and essays in three years) to the journal *L'Italia futurista* (1916–1918). She published two books of poems, *Soft-*

nesses *Lie In Wait* (*Morbidezze in agguato*) (Florence: Edizioni de *L'Italia futurista*, 1917) and *Betrothal with the Blue* (*Fidanzamento con l'azzurro*) (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1919).

VOLT was the pseudonym of Vincenzo Fani-Ciotti, about whom little is known. In 1916 he published a book of free-word poems, *Voltaic Arcs* (*Archi voltaici*) (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*). He was a consistent contributor to Futurist journals, from *L'Italia futurista* (1916–1918) to *Roma futurista* (1918–1920) to *Noi* (1917–1920) to *Il principe* (1922). He last appears in the journal *Today and Tomorrow* (*Oggi e domani*) (1930–1932), edited by Mario Carli (q.v.), a vaguely Futurist publication.

ROUGENA ZATKOVA (1885–1923), a painter and sculptor, studied art in Prague and Munich before moving to Rome early in the 1910s, where she frequented the studio of Giacomo Balla (q.v.) and met Arturo Cappa (the brother of Benedetta, q.v.), later her lifelong companion. In April 1915 she participated in an evening of noise-music at the house of F. T. Marinetti in Milan. Her works of the prewar and war period evince Futurist interest in new and modern materials, resulting in collages and assembled “plastic complexes” related to those of Balla and Depero in 1914–1915. She also executed *pitture luminose* (luminous paintings), in which she added tinfoil to oil paintings to enhance the effects of light. She contributed articles to the journal *Roma futurista*, signing them “Signora X.” In 1922 Prampolini organized an exhibition of her work in various media at the Casa d’arte Bragaglia in Rome, and wrote a catalogue essay praising her experiments with heterogeneous materials. Her early death followed a period of ill health due to tuberculosis.

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

1. See Lawrence Rainey, "Futurism in England: An Annotated Bibliography" (forthcoming). The following account is deeply indebted to the biography of Marinetti by Claudia Salaris, *Marinetti: Arte e vita futurista (Marinetti: Futurist Art and Life)* (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1997), a work that decisively advanced our knowledge and understanding of Marinetti's career.
2. Marinetti's student essays, replete with teachers' comments, are preserved at the Getty Library in Los Angeles.
3. *La Conquête des étoiles* (Paris: Éditions de *La Plume*, 1902).
4. *Destruction: poèmes lyriques* (Paris: L. Vanier, 1904); the volume was also translated into Italian (*Distruzione: poema futurista* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1911).
5. *La Ville charnelle* (Paris: E. Sansot, 1908). Emile Verhaeren, a Belgian symbolist poet, published *Tentacular Cities* in 1897.
6. *La Momie sanglante* (Milan: Verde e azzurro, [1904]).
7. F. T. Marinetti to Francesco Balilla Pratella, quoted in Claudia Salaris, *Storia del futurismo*, revised ed. (Rome: Editori Riuniti, 1992), 53 (1st ed. 1985).
8. *Le Roi Bombance: Tragédie satirique en 4 actes, en prose* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1905); and *Poupées électriques* (Paris: E. Sansot, 1909).
9. Quoted in Salaris, *Marinetti*, 32–33.
10. Quoted in Salaris, *Marinetti*, 56.
11. Salaris, *Marinetti*, 56.
12. F. T. Marinetti, "First Futurist Battles," in *Guerra, sola igiene del mondo*, in Luciano de Maria, ed., *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, 2nd ed. (Milan: Mondadori, 1990), 235–245, here 235.
13. F. T. Marinetti, *La grande Milano tradizionale e futurista: Una sensibilità italiana nata in Egitto*, ed. Luciano de Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1969), 278.
14. F. T. Marinetti, *Mafarka the Futurist: An African Novel*, trans. Carol Diethe and Steve Cox (London: Middlesex University Press, 1998), 143 and 145.
15. Carlo Carrà, *La mia vita* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1981), 72.
16. Aldo Palazzeschi, "Prefazione: Marinetti e il futurismo," in Luciano de Maria, ed., *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, xviii–xix.
17. See, for example, Rose Lee Goldberg, *Performance Art from Futurism to the Present* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1988), and Michael Kirby and Victoria Nes Kirby, *Futurist Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1986).

18. F. T. Marinetti, "Discorso ai triestini," in *Guerra, sola igiene del mondo*, now in Luciano de Maria, ed., *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, 247–253, here 249.
19. *Ibid.*, 251.
20. Libero Altomare, *Incontri con Marinetti e il futurismo* (Rome: Corso, [1954]), 21.
21. F. T. Marinetti, *Le Futurisme* (Paris: E. Sansot, 1911); this edition has been reprinted under the same title, with a preface by Giovanni Lista (Lausanne: L'Age d'Homme, 1980).
22. Marinetti's correspondence with Severini from 1910 to 1915 is translated in Anne Coffin Hanson, ed., *Severini Futurista: 1912–1917* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1995), 135–177.
23. Aldo Palazzeschi, "Prefazione: Marinetti e il futurismo," in Luciano de Maria, ed., *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, xxii–xxiii.
24. See "Futurist Political Movement," 217.
25. F. T. Marinetti, *La Bataille de Tripoli* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1912), 43–44. For a probing overview of Marinetti's engagement with aviation, see Robert Wohl, *A Passion for Wings: Aviation and the Western Imagination, 1908–1918* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1994), 138–145.
26. See *F. T. Marinetti—Aldo Palazzeschi: Carteggio*, ed. Paolo Pretigiacomo (Milan: Mondadori, 1978), 61–62.
27. The catalogue included three texts: (1) the programmatic portion of "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism," stripped of its narrative vignette at the beginning; (2) "The Exhibitors to the Public"; and (3) "Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto."
28. Gino Severini, *The Life of a Painter*, trans. Jennifer Franchina (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 92.
29. *Ibid.*, 93.
30. Gertrude Stein, *The Autobiography of Alice B. Toklas* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 215.
31. F. T. Marinetti, *La grande Milano tradizionale e futurista: Una sensibilità italiana nata in Egitto* (Milan: Mondadori, 1969), 288, quoted in Salaris, *Marinetti*, 22.
32. Quoted in Salaris, *Marinetti*, 127.
33. See, for example, Marjorie Perloff, *The Futurist Moment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).
34. Carlo Carrà, *La mia vita* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1981), 84.
35. For these figures see Claudia Salaris, "Marketing Modernism: Marinetti as Publisher," *Modernism/Modernity*, 1, no. 3 (September 1994): 119–120. For the Florentine avant-garde, see the excellent study by Walter Adamson, *Avant-garde Florence: From Modernism to Fascism* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993).
36. Walter Benjamin, "The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction," in *Illuminations*, ed. Hannah Arendt (New York: Schocken, 1969), 217–251.
37. Russolo's first concert took place in June 1913 in Modena; his second in April 1914 in Milan, though it was terminated when members of the audience stormed the stage. The series of London concerts were his third performance. My comments on Russolo are indebted to Robert Morgan, "A New Musical Reality": Futurism, Modernism, and the Art of Noises," *Modernism/Modernity*, 1, no. 3 (September 1994): 129–151.
38. Carlo Carrà, *Tutti gli scritti*, ed. Massimo Carrà (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1978), 676.
39. My account of interventionism is indebted to Denis Mack Smith, *Modern Italy: A Political History* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997; 1st ed. 1959); Martin Clark, *Modern Italy, 1871–1995* (London: Longman, 1996); and Renzo de Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario, 1883–1920* (Turin: Einaudi, 1965).
40. Marinetti's theatrical activity is fully traced in Giovanni Lista, *La Scène futuriste* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989), to which I am indebted.

41. F. T. Marinetti, *Come si seducono le donne* (Florence: Edizioni di Centomila Copie, [1917]).
42. See Paolo Buchignani, “Settimelli e Carli dal futurismo al fascismo,” in Renzo de Felice, ed., *Futurismo, cultura e politica* (Turin: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1988), 177–219, with quotations on 197.
43. F. T. Marinetti, *Taccuini: 1915–1921*, ed. Alberto Bertoni (Bologna: Il Mulino, 1987), 392.
44. Christopher Seton-Watson, *Italy from Liberalism to Fascism, 1870–1925* (London: Methuen, 1967), 518, puts the number of participants at 119; Philip V. Cannistraro, ed., *Historical Dictionary of Fascist Italy* (Westwood, Conn.: Greenwood, 1982), 583–584, instead lists 128 participants and furnishes their names.
45. See de Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, 501–511; Marinetti, *Taccuini: 1915–1921*, 409.
46. Marinetti, *Taccuini: 1915–1921*, 415–416. For a meticulous reconstruction of the events of 15 April 1919 see also de Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, 519–524.
47. Benito Mussolini, “March 23rd,” in *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 18 March 1919; quoted in de Felice, *Mussolini il rivoluzionario*, 502.
48. Clark, *Modern Italy, 1871–1995*, 215.
49. Quoted in Salaris, *Marinetti*, 209.
50. Jeffrey Schnapp has recently discovered the Marinettis’ marriage certificate from the Governato di Roma, dated 13 March 1926, in the Marinetti Papers at the Getty Library, 920092/b.4/f.3.
51. Both quoted in Salaris, *Marinetti*, 220.
52. Marinetti’s police file is noted by Salaris, *Marinetti*, 258. See especially Günter Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics* (Providence, R.I.: Berghaus, 1996), esp. ch. 5, “Accommodation with the Fascist Regime.”
53. Quoted in Clark, *Modern Italy, 1871–1995*, 234, who is quoting the treasury secretary Alberto de’ Stefani, *Una riforma al rogo* (Rome: Giovanni Volpe, 1966), 12.
54. *Il Popolo d’Italia*, 7 October 1926, quoted in Jeffrey Schnapp and Barbara Spackman, “Selections from the Great Debate on Fascism and Culture: *Critica Fascista* 1926–1927,” *Stanford Italian Review*, 8, nos. 1–2 (1990): 235. See the entire collection, 235–272, for a helpful sample in English of the various viewpoints.
55. *Ibid.*, 261.
56. Ardengo Soffici, “Opinioni sull’arte fascista,” *Critica fascista*, 4, no. 20 (15 October 1926): 384. See also Schnapp and Spackman, “Selections,” 238–242, for a translation of most of Soffici’s essay.
57. Piero Gobetti, “Uomini e idee [IX],” *La rivoluzione liberale*, 3, no. 9 (26 February 1924); now in *Opere complete di Piero Gobetti*, 3 vols. (Turin: Giulio Einaudi, 1969), vol. 1, *Scritti politici*, 615–616.
58. Benedetto Croce, “Fatti politici e interpretazioni storiche,” *La critica* 16, no. 6 (20 May 1924), quoted by Salaris, *Marinetti*, 239.
59. F. T. Marinetti, *Futurismo e Fascismo*, in de Maria, ed., *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, 494.
60. Quoted in Marla Stone, *The Patron State: Culture and Politics in Fascist Italy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1998), 51–52.
61. *Ibid.*, 52.
62. See Esther da Costa Meyer, *The Work of Antonio Sant’Elia* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1995), 191–210.
63. V. Piccoli, “Il centenario di Hegel,” *Gerarchia* 11 (October 1931): 853–859; quoted in Daniele Marchesini, *La scuola dei gerarchi: Mistica fascista: storia, problemi, istituzioni* (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1976), 61.
64. In English, a partial translation of Hitler’s speech is available in Herschel B. Chipp, *Theories of Modern Art* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1968), 474–483, quotation on 479.

65. Both quoted by Niccolò Zapponi, “Futurismo e fascismo,” in Renzo de Felice, ed., *Futurismo, cultura e politica* (Turin: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1988), 161–176, quotation on 163.
66. *Enciclopedia italiana di scienze, lettere ed arti* (Rome: Istituto Giovanni Treccani, 1929–1939), s.v. “Fascismo.”

PART ONE. MANIFESTOS AND THEORETICAL WRITINGS

INTRODUCTION TO PART ONE

1. Gino Severini to F. T. Marinetti, 22 October 1913, in Anne Coffin Hanson, *Severini futurista: 1912–1917* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1995), 158.
2. F. T. Marinetti to Gino Severini, October 1913, in Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori, eds., *Archivi del futurismo*, 2 vols. (Rome: De Luca, 1958–1962), 1: 294–295; translated by Marjorie Perloff in *The Futurist Moment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986), 81.
3. For a history and a critical assessment of the manifesto, see Janet Lyon, *Manifestoes: Provocations of the Modern* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1999). For a collection of manifestos, see Bonner Mitchell, ed., *Les Manifestes littéraires de la belle époque* (Paris: Seghers, 1966).

THE FOUNDING AND MANIFESTO OF FUTURISM

- On the composition and first publication of this manifesto, see Introduction, 5–6.
1. Whether in French (“Nous avons veillé toute la nuit”) or Italian (“Avevamo vegliato tutta la notte”), the verb translated here as “stayed up” can also mean “to watch” over a corpse, as Catholics traditionally did, so sounding a mythical motif of death and resurrection.
 2. On Marinetti’s background in Africa, see Introduction, 2.
 3. The *Victory of Samothrace*, a Hellenistic statue, found in 1863 by French archaeologists on Samothrace in the Aegean Sea; from then until the 1980s it stood opposite the entrance of the Louvre, so becoming a conventional image of classical beauty.
 4. Marinetti was thirty-two when these words were published. They are plainly not autobiographical; instead they encapsulate a myth of dawning modernity and youthful energy.
 5. The word “stars” echoes Dante’s practice of ending each of the three main parts of the *Divine Comedy* with the same word.

LET’S MURDER THE MOONLIGHT!

Portions were published in French in Marinetti’s journal, *Poesia* 5 nos. 7–8–9 (August–September–October 1909). It was also published as an independent leaflet in French, where, in place of the title, it read: “The international journal *Poesia* publishes this proclamation of war in response to the insults with which aged Europe has gratified triumphant Futurism.” The contemporary Italian leaflet presented its title for the first time.

1. On Paolo Buzzi, Enrico Cavacchioli, Corrado Govoni, and Libero Altomare, see the Biographical Sketches. Federico de Maria (1885–1954) was a Sicilian poet who contributed to Marinetti’s journal *Poesia* and became an early follower of Futurism, but who left in early 1910, alarmed by the violence of the earliest *serate*. The list of adherents changed in re-printings from 1911 onward. De Maria’s name was dropped (he had left), replaced by others who joined later. In what effectively became the last version of the manifesto, in 1914, the list read: Paolo Buzzi, Palazzeschi, Cavacchioli, Govoni, Altomare, Folgore, Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Balla, Severini, Pratella, D’Alba, Mazza. See the Biographical Sketches for all except Auro d’Alba (1888–1965), a minor participant in Futurism who contributed three poems to *The Futurist Poets (I poeti futuristi)* (1912).
2. Gorisankar is a fabulous name invented by Marinetti, suggestive of Sanskrit names. The

story recounted in “Let’s Murder the Moonlight!” loosely recalls that of the *Bhagavad Gita*, in which Ardjuna, who leads the Pandavas or sons of the sun, fights against the Kurava, the children of the moon.

3. Melopoeia is a term derived from the Greek words *mēlos* (song) and *poiēin* (to make); in Italian usage it designates a slow melody, especially one inspired by liturgical motifs.
4. Cormorin is another fabulous name invented by Marinetti.
5. The description of the ocean in this and later passages is reminiscent of Marinetti’s first book, *La Conquête des étoiles* (*The Conquest of the Stars*); see Introduction, 3.

MANIFESTO OF THE FUTURIST PAINTERS

On the circumstances that led to this manifesto, see the Introduction, 7–9. See the Biographical Sketches for the five painters who signed it.

1. The period when one-point perspective and imitation of the ancients, pioneered a century earlier, become the basis of illusionism in Western painting.
2. The Italian word for resurgence, *risorgimento*, is the term given to the period of revolutions and wars (1800–1870) which led to the creation of the modern Italian state.
3. “Dolce far niente,” Italian for “the sweetness of doing nothing,” i.e., pleasurable idleness.
4. Dreadnoughts were a new class of battleship constructed by Britain, of which the first was launched on 18 February 1906. Encased in steel armor and armed with turret-mounted heavy guns, they were the costliest and most destructive weapons ever built. Their arrival precipitated an arms race throughout Europe.
5. The uprisings in Milan in 1848 against Austro-Hungarian rule, sparked by others in cities throughout Europe, were a major step in the Risorgimento.
6. The Italian verb *insorgiamo* echoes the earlier allusion to the Risorgimento; see note 2.
7. Giovanni Segantini (1858–1899) was an Italian painter from Milan whose work moved from landscapes painted *en plein air* to, after 1886, Divisionism (see Introduction, 9). Divisionism was the Italian counterpart to French pointillism, which used dots or points of pure colors and was developed by Georges Seurat and his circle around 1885.

Gaetano Previati (1852–1920) was one of the leading exponents of Divisionism in Italy. He studied at the Accademia di Brera and in 1892 adopted Divisionist techniques, using them to create an aura that envelops a whole scene. He was still prominent in Milanese art circles in 1910, noted for his books on Divisionist theory, *The Technique of Painting* (*La tecnica della pittura*) (Turin: Bocca, 1905) and *Scientific Principles of Divisionism* (*I principi scientifici del divisionismo*) (Turin: Bocca, 1906).

Medardo Rosso (1858–1928) was a sculptor who is credited, along with Rodin, with introducing the techniques of impressionism into sculpture. He studied in Milan at the Accademia di Brera, but was expelled from it in 1884. After his first major exhibition at the Exposition Universelle in Paris in 1889, his success grew steadily. He influenced Boccioni’s early sculptures.

FUTURIST PAINTING: TECHNICAL MANIFESTO

First published as an independent leaflet in Italian, this manifesto gained notoriety because it was included in the catalogue to the first Exhibition of Futurist Paintings shown in Paris, London, Berlin, and Brussels, from 5 February to 5 June 1912 (see Introduction, 13–14). Also translated into French and German, it appeared in English as “The Manifesto of the Futurist Painters.”

1. The event at the Chiarella Theater of Turin was the third Futurist *serata* and the first in which the Futurist painters took part. The participants were Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, and Luigi Russolo. (Balla was residing in Rome, Severini in Paris.)

2. The text is referring to chronophotography, a process developed by Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904) in the United States and Étienne-Jules Marey (1830–1904) in France, which made rapid, stop-clock images of people or animals in motion. To study the flight of birds, Marey invented a camera with magazine plates that recorded a series of photographs.
3. Beginning in 1894, mediums in spiritualist seances were said to project ectoplasm, a filmy or foamy substance, from various orifices of the body (mouth, nose, etc.). Often a mysterious head or hand was seen rising above and behind the medium's head. The first reported case of ectoplasm occurred with the medium Eusapia Paladino in 1894; many instances were described between then and the mid-1920s.
4. X rays were invented by Erich Roentgen in 1895.

AGAINST PASSÉIST VENICE

This document amalgamates two separate but related works. The first, comprising the first seven paragraphs (67–68), was a leaflet published in late April 1910; the Futurists scattered copies of it from the top of the bell tower in the piazza of San Marco in Venice on 8 July 1910. Translated into French with the title “Premier Manifeste futuriste aux Vénitiens,” it was published in the Parisian newspaper *Comoedia*, 17 June 1910, and republished under that title in *Le Futurisme (Futurism)* (Paris: Sansot, 1911). The second work, comprising the last twenty-five paragraphs (“Venetians! . . . that great Italian lake!” 68–70), is a lecture that Marinetti gave in Venice on 1 August 1910 at the Teatro della Fenice as part of the fourth Futurist *serata*. It was translated into French and published in an undated leaflet not much later, with a prefatory comment:

Dear Colleague,

Many polemics are arising in the Italian press concerning the Futurist lecture improvised by the poet Marinetti against the Venetians during the Futurist soirée in Venice, as well as the more recent one at Padua. [Editor's note: the serata in Padua took place on 3 August 1910.]

In La Fenice Theater, especially, the battle between the Futurists and the Passéists was frightful. The former were whistled at, the latter beaten up. Despite the uproar, the speech was heard in its entirety. — The Futurist painters Boccioni, Russolo, and Carrà punctuated it with sonorous slaps. The blows administered by Armando Mazza, a Futurist poet who is also an athlete, were memorable indeed.

Here is the translation of the speech. We ask you to consider taking a view on these matters in the journals and reviews which you edit.

The Editorial Directors of *Poesia*

A revised version of this note, in turn, became the passage that serves as a bridge between the first and second parts, in italics. The three were merged together as a new whole under the title “Against Passéist Venice,” in 1914, when it appeared in an anthology which Marinetti edited, *I manifesti del futurismo (The Manifestos of Futurism)* (Florence: Edizioni di Lacerba, 1914). Later, when Marinetti prepared *Guerra, sola igiene del mondo (War, the Only Hygiene of the World)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1915), he made further stylistic revisions.

An abridged version of this manifesto, in a poor English translation, appeared in a journal called *The Tramp*, 1 no. 6 (August 1910): 487–88. It also printed the manifesto portion of “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” i.e., the eleven points called for at the end. These were the first publication of Futurist texts in English. *The Tramp*, otherwise devoted to hiking and travel, was edited by Douglas Goldring.

1. When this was composed in 1914, it had been four years since the first manifesto against Venice was written—a minor detail.

2. “Let’s Murder the Moonlight!” was the title of an allegorical fable published by Marinetti in April 1909; see 54–61.
3. The Tryol is now the northernmost region of Italy, ceded to it by Austria at the end of World War I. But in 1910 it still formed part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and its residents were largely German-speaking. Marinetti is appealing to the anti-Austrian and anti-German feelings fostered by irredentism. On irredentism, see the Introduction, 9.
4. Lepanto was a famous naval engagement fought on 7 October 1571; a fleet led by Spain and Venice defeated that of the Ottoman empire.
5. Aswan is the name for an area in Upper Egypt. The old Aswan Dam, constructed by British engineers between 1902 and 1907, created a reservoir which submerged the island of Philae, sacred to the goddess Isis since early Egyptian times and housing a temple complex built by Ptolemy II and Ptolemy III (roughly 285–221 B.C.). With the completion of the new Aswan Dam in 1970, the island emerged again and the temples, having suffered some damage, were moved to higher ground on a nearby island.
6. Torcello and Burano are island-villages in the Venetian lagoon. Torcello is noted for several medieval churches; Burano was famous for the handmade lace produced there from the sixteenth through the eighteenth centuries, revived in 1872 by a lace-making school intended to rekindle the industry. “The island of the dead” is a colloquial name for the island of Saint George, San Giorgio, which houses a cemetery and monastery.

FUTURIST SPEECH TO THE ENGLISH

Marinetti spoke at the Lyceum Club for Women, in London, in late December 1910. The Lyceum Club for Women was founded in the late 1890s and located at 122 Piccadilly. This event marked the first time that Marinetti spoke about Futurism outside of Italy; his lecture was given in French, as were all his lectures outside Italy. In early 1911 he published a summary of it “Discours futuriste aux Anglais” in *Le Futurisme* (Paris: E. Sansot). In that volume, it was followed by another essay titled “Ce déplorable Ruskin.” In 1915, when he oversaw a translation of *Le Futurisme* into Italian and retitled it *Guerra, sola igiene del mondo* (*War, the Only Hygiene of the World*) (Milan: Edizioni di Poesia, 1915), he took the first seven paragraphs from “Ce déplorable Ruskin” and joined them to the end of his “Futurist Speech to the English.” That longer version is the one given here, with the 1915 addition plainly indicated.

1. See the “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 4.
2. Famously, the massive 324-foot bell tower collapsed in 1902; public sentiment dictated that it be rebuilt exactly as it had been, rather than constructing a new one. Work was completed by 1910.

FUTURISM AND WOMAN

This essay, a response to the “Futurist Speech to the English” (see 70–74) which Marinetti delivered at the Lyceum Club for Women in December 1910, first appeared in *The Vote* 3, no. 62 (31 December 1910): 112. *The Vote* was published by the Women’s Freedom League, a suffragist organization.

1. Dr. Emil Reich (1854–1910) was a historian who was born in Hungary but settled in England in 1893, becoming a writer and lecturer. He wrote many works, including *Plato as an Introduction to Modern Criticism of Life* (London: Chapman and Hall, 1906). His lecture at the Lyceum Club in 1909 brought his book to bear on “the sphere of woman.”
2. “Suffragette” was a very recent coinage. The OED cites the *Daily Mail*, a London mass-circulation newspaper, in its issue for 10 January 1906, for the earliest recorded use of the term.

- First published in *Il nuovo teatro*, no. 2 (11 November 1910); then issued as independent leaflets in Italian and French in January 1911; later collected in Pratella's *Musica futurista* (*Futurist Music*) (Bologna: Bongiovanni, 1912).
1. Cincinnato Baruzzi (1796–1878) studied sculpture at the Accademia di Belle Arti in Bologna, and in 1816 won a prize that let him study in Rome, where he met the neoclassical sculptor Antonio Canova (1757–1822). Upon Canova's death Baruzzi took over his studio, finishing works left incomplete. He was a professor at the Pontifical Academy of Bologna from 1831 to 1868 and left his villa and property to the city of Bologna, establishing a Baruzzi Prize to encourage young painters, sculptors, and musicians.
 2. Pietro Mascagni (1863–1945) was an Italian composer of operas and a major exponent of *verismo*, mixing characters drawn from everyday life (much like French naturalism) with often violent plots. Best known for *Cavalleria rusticana* (1889), his first work, he became musical director at La Scala, Milan, in 1929.
 3. Giacomo Orefice (1865–1922) was an Italian composer, pianist, and critic who belonged to the *verismo* school. A graduate of the Liceo Musicale in Bologna, his most highly regarded opera was *Moses* (*Il Mosè*), produced in 1905 in Genoa. He became music critic for *Il Secolo*, a prominent Milanese newspaper. Guglielmo Mattioli (1857–1924) was an Italian composer and music teacher. He studied in Bologna, then became an instructor in conservatories and *licei* in Reggio Emilia (1878–1895), Parma (1895–1897), Pesaro (1897–1900), Bergamo (1900–1908), and finally Bologna (1908–1922). Rodolfo Ferrari (1865–1919) was an Italian conductor noted for his interpretation of Wagnerian operas. Gian Battista Nappi lived in Bologna and was a musicologist, piano teacher, and historian of music, as well as a critic.
 4. Pratella's opera was *Rosellina dei Vergoni* (*La sina d'Vargöun*): *scene della Romagna bassa per la musica* (*Rosellina dei Vergoni* [*La sina d'Vargöun*]: *Scenes from the Low Life of Romagna Set to Music*) (Milan: Tipografia "Arte e lavoro," 1909). *Rosellina dei Vergoni* is the name of the opera's heroine, and "*La sina d'Vargöun*" is her name as pronounced in the local dialect.
 5. Misoneism is hatred or dislike for the new, ultimately from the Greek words *mísos*, meaning hatred, and *néos*, meaning new.
 6. Pratella is using the word "futurist" here loosely, meaning "advanced" or "very recent." Strictly speaking, there were no Futurist musicians in other countries at this time.
 7. The Camerata fiorentina was a "club" or "society" of musicians and intellectuals who met in Florence at the house of Count Giovanni de' Bardi from roughly 1580 to 1590 and conducted learned investigations into the history and philosophy of music in antiquity. It was traditionally thought that their experimentation with accompanied solo song or monody (as opposed to the then ubiquitous polyphony) led to the creation of opera by composers such as Giulio Caccini, whose *Euridice* (1600) is often considered the first opera and who first used the term *camerata fiorentina*.
 8. Gustave Charpentier (1860–1956) was a French composer who studied at the Paris Conservatory and in 1887 won the Prix de Rome. In 1900 his opera *Louise* became a sensation because of the scandal attached to its theme of promiscuity, and he was hailed as the savior of French music. But he achieved little else.
 9. Alexander Glazunov (1865–1936) was a Russian composer who formed part of the St. Petersburg circle gathered around the art patron Mitrofan Belyayev which included Rimsky-Korsakov, Borodin, and Scriabin. He enjoyed international acclaim with his Second Symphony (Paris, 1889), and in 1899 was appointed professor at the St. Petersburg Conservatory, where he was director from 1905 to 1930. He left the Soviet Union in 1928, formally resigning his position as director in 1930.
 10. Umberto Giordano (1867–1948) was an Italian opera composer in the *verismo* or naturalist style. His early operas, such as *Mala vita* (*Wicked Life*) (1892) adopted the melodramatic style

- introduced by Pietro Mascagni with his *Cavalleria rusticana* (1890). His most noted work is *Andrea Chénier* (1896), based on the life of the French revolutionary poet.
11. Luigi Illica (1857–1919) was the librettist, in collaboration with Giuseppe Giacosa, for Puccini's *La Bohème*, *Tosca*, and *Madama Butterfly*. Independently of Giacosa he wrote librettos for others, including Umberto Giordano's *Andrea Chénier* (1896).
 12. Francesco Paolo Tosti (1846–1916) studied at the Royal College of Music of San Pietro a Maiella, in Naples. In 1869 he wrote *Non m'ama più* (*She Doesn't Love Me Anymore*) and *Lamento d'amore* (*Love's Lament*), songs which became very popular. He moved to Rome, but after 1875 made annual visits to London. The songs *Forever*, *Goodbye*, *Mother*, *At Vespers*, *Amore*, *Aprile*, *Vorrei morire* (*I Wish I Could Die*), and *That Day* were among his many successes as a composer to Italian, French, and English texts. A ballad "alla Tosti" became a current expression, and he was widely imitated. Michael Costa (1808–1884), born Michele Costa in Naples, took singing lessons from Girolamo Crescenti. He eventually moved to London where he became a conductor at the King's Theatre, then at the Royal Italian Opera in Covent Garden Theatre. He wrote many songs, including *Ecco quel fiero istante* (*Behold that Bold Moment*) for a text by the poet Metastasio, which became as popular as those of Tosti.

FUTURIST MUSIC: TECHNICAL MANIFESTO

First published in Italian as an independent leaflet in May 1911; then collected in Pratella's *Musica futurista* (*Futurist Music*) (Bologna: Bongiovanni, 1912).

1. Amilcare Ponchielli (1834–1886) was an Italian opera composer remembered today only for *La Gioconda* (*The Joyful Girl*) (1876).

SELECTIONS FROM *LE FUTURISME*

Marinetti published *Le Futurisme* (*Futurism*) (Paris: E. Sansot, 1911) at a critical juncture in Futurism's development. In January 1910, nearly a year after "The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism" had been published, he had been surprised when three painters had indicated their interest in Futurism. Yet later in 1910, it was Marinetti himself who was courting the composer Pratella to join the group. The painters, in short, had opened the possibility that Futurism might aspire to be a vast program of cultural transformation. The 1911 volume *Le Futurisme*, published in French and in Paris, was meant to signal that aspiration—and to signal it to an international audience in what was then the language of intellectual exchange, French. When it was translated into Italian four years later, however, it underwent a change. Now it was addressed to Italians in the early months of 1915, when Italy had not yet entered the war. Marinetti deleted two essays and added five new ones, three of which took up irredentist and political themes. The 1915 volume became more militant and nationalist. Less drastic, however, were the changes made within the remaining seventeen essays that were carried over from the earlier volume. Only four were seriously altered: in three of them the alterations entailed no significant changes in wording, but moving blocks of material from one essay to another, while only one was given new material not present in the 1911 version.

Nearly all non-Italians during the period 1911–1914 read only the French versions of these essays. Moreover, all had been originally composed in French and only later translated into Italian. The claim to priority of the French over the Italian versions is clear, and those are the basis for the translations made here. Still, the differences between the two are minor and rarely extend to more than a phrase. They are registered here in a brief list of variants which precedes the notes to each essay. The indication *om. It.* after a word or phrase means that the word or phrase was *omitted* in the *Italian* version of 1915; the other indication *It.* after a word or phrase means that it was added in the Italian version. Within the text proper, such variants are signaled with a superscript letter after the word or phrase in question, such as

this.^a Reference to an annotation is indicated with a superscript number, as in the preceding essays.

WAR, THE ONLY HYGIENE OF THE WORLD

The title is a phrase that first appears in point 9 of “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism”; see 51.

- a. a mania for order] *om. It.*
- b. a horror of . . . the new,] *om. It.*
- c. Ah, well: there is] There can be *It.*

CONTEMPT FOR WOMAN

When the French version of this essay, first published in *Le Futurisme* (1911), was translated into Italian, in *Guerra, sola igiene del mondo* (1915), its title became “Against Love and Parliamentarianism” (“Contro l’amore e il parlamentarismo”).

- a. woman conceived as the reservoir of love, engine of lust] woman conceived as the unique ideal, as the divine reservoir of love *It.*
- b. There is nothing natural except the perpetuation of the species.] There is nothing natural and important except coitus, whose purpose is the Futurism of the species. *It.*
- c. humanity.] humanity, as one withdraws a manuscript from a publisher who has shown himself incapable of printing it decently. *It.*
- d. The great . . . withdrawing love today,] *om. It.*
- e. All the more so . . . fists of Money] *om. It.*
- f. garrulous cupolas] parliaments *It.*
- g. despise politics] despise professional politicians *It.*
- h. paradoxes. Yet I suspect] paradoxes. Nothing is as paradoxical or fantastic as reality, and I suspect *It.*
- i. if the family should disappear] if the family, that force that suffocates vital energies, should disappear *It.*
- j. “We,” I was just saying . . . by usury] *om. It.*
1. The phrase “contempt for woman” is first found in point nine of “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism”; see 51.
2. The concept of a “multiplied sensibility,” one reshaped by advancing modernity, is first raised in “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (see 65, 66), and elaborated in “Multiplied Man and the Reign of the Machine” (see 89–92).
3. By 1911 women had won the right to vote in national elections in New Zealand (1893), Australia (1902), and Finland (1906). Elsewhere enfranchisement came after World War I: Canada (1918), Germany, Austria, Poland, and Czechoslovakia (1919), the United States (1920), and Britain (1918 and 1928). In Italy women could vote in local elections after 1925, though these were no longer held. In France and Italy, full enfranchisement came in 1945.
4. “Nightlife” translates a word used by Marinetti in both the French and Italian versions of this text, “noctambulism.” The social phenomenon that he registers is indeed “nightlife,” but Marinetti uses “noctambulism” to identify it with a pathological condition of doubling or multiplication of the personality, a process then held to be a common denominator linking several phenomena: hypnosis, somnambulism, hysteria, and shock.
5. Saint Bartholomew’s Massacre was the slaughter of French Huguenots by Catholics in Paris on St. Bartholomew’s Day, 24 August 1572; it became a byword for a bloodbath.
6. a Blériot plane] Louis Blériot (1872–1936), who had amassed a fortune by manufacturing automobile accessories, began experimenting with aircraft after 1900. On 25 July 1909, piloting the *Blériot XII*, he crossed the English Channel (a distance of thirty-eight kilo-

meters) in a flight that lasted under thirty-seven minutes. The feat won him celebrity and a prize of £1,000 offered by the London *Daily Mail*.

7. Mafarka, the hero of Marinetti's novel *Mafarka the Futurist* (1909), gives birth to his mechanical son Gazourmah, who leaves his wife Coloubbi and abandons the earth for space.

MULTIPLIED MAN AND THE REIGN OF THE MACHINE

First published as part of *Le Futurisme*.

- a. ideological] *om. It.*
- b. enemies, a story . . . heights] enemies who cluster around the divine Beauty-Woman. *It.*
- c. already worn out] tiresome and worn out *It.*
- d. *multiplied man*] *multiplied man* to be achieved by means of the externalization of his will *It.*
- e. We need . . . poodle.] *om. It.*
- f. To the more . . . curiosity] *om. It.*
- g. Literature can] We can *It.*
- h. literary propaganda] artistic propaganda *It.*
- i. It is . . . in plays] *om. It.*
- j. Thus we shall witness . . . innovative minds] *om. It.*
- k. copulation for the] *om. It.*
- l. of sin] *om. It.*
- m. will preserve . . . stomach] *om. It.*
- n. and impotence] *om. It.*
- o. and their minds.] with swift, casual contacts with women. *It.*
- p. misogynist] *om. It.*
- q. nausea for woman and love.] nausea for Love with a capital L. *It.*
1. "All this" is a summative phrase that refers back to the arguments just advanced in "Con-tempt for Woman."
2. *Toilers of the Sea (Les Travailleurs de la mer)* (1866), by Victor Hugo (1802–1888), recounts the story of Gilliatt, a disreputable orphan on one of the Channel Islands, who falls in love at first sight with Déruchette, the daughter of Mess Thierry. To win her hand, he undergoes grueling labors to rescue the engine of Thierry's steamboat, wrecked on a desolate rock in the Channel. *Salammbô* (1862), by Gustave Flaubert (1821–1880), tells the story of a revolt against Carthage that is led by the Libyan Mâtho. While Mâtho's army besieges the city, he enters it at night and steals the sacred veil of the goddess Tanit, falling in love at first sight with Tanit's priestess, Salammbô, whose image further incites him to capture the city. On the advice of Tanit's priest, Salammbô sneaks out of the city and goes to Mâtho's tent, where, after submitting to his desires, she recovers the veil. Her father Hamilcar finally crushes the revolt and gives his daughter's hand to Harr'Havas, his ally. The wedding celebrations include a public murder of Mâtho, conducted before Salammbô's eyes. After witnessing it, she rises to toast her marriage—and falls dead.
3. In October 1910, a railway strike began among men of the Northern Line in France, spreading to include the Western Railroad, only recently nationalized. Incidents of sabotage were widely reported. Army reserves were called out, and after a month the strike was repressed.
4. Jean Baptiste Pierre Antoine de Monet, Chevalier de Lamarck (1744–1829), was a French biologist sometimes seen as a precursor of Darwin. His "transformational hypothesis" broadly suggests that giraffes (for example) lengthened their necks by straining for high branches, and that this characteristic was then passed on to their descendants. See his *Zoological Philosophy: An Exposition with Regard to the Natural History of Animals*, trans. Hugh Elliot (1914; New York: Hafner Publishing, 1963), Part I, Ch. 7, "Of the Influence of the Environment on

the Activities and Habits of Animals, and the Influence of the Activities and Habits of these Living Bodies in Modifying Their Organisation and Structure,” 106–127.

5. Marinetti is referring to ectoplasm: see “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” note 3.

WE ABJURE OUR SYMBOLIST MASTERS, THE LAST LOVERS OF THE MOON

First published in *Le Futurisme*.

- a. them] those geniuses *It.*
- b. ourselves, new torrents] ourselves, new springs that sing, new torrents *It.*
- c. cheeks] eyes and cheeks *It.*
- d. (and almost Parisian)] *om. It.*
- e. profound passion] professorial passion *It.*
- f. kitchen-garden (French: *potager*)] botanical *It.*
- g. Lastly . . . Fogazzaro] *om. It.*
- h. five or six] four or five *It.*
- i. Octave Mirbeau, author of *Les Affaires sont les affaires*] *om. It.*
- j. Futurism . . . in Italy] *om. It.*
- k. The dynamism of free verse] Futurist lyricism *It.*
- l. Futurist free verse] Futurist lyricism *It.*
1. Edgar Allan Poe appears in this otherwise French tradition because Baudelaire translated five volumes of his works between 1856 and 1863, giving him special prominence in French poetics. Baudelaire’s earliest disciples, Mallarmé, Verlaine, and Villiers de l’Isle-Adam, took interest in Poe’s ideas on creativity, the poetic consciousness, and the theory of effect. A later generation of “decadent writers,” including Jean Lorrain, Marcel Schwob, and Rachilde, took up Poe’s taste for macabre effects, his interest in dreams, and his accounts of abnormal nervous phenomena.
2. “The earlier sky where beauty flourished” is from Mallarmé’s poem “Les Fenêtres” (“The Windows”), first published in 1866 and consisting of ten quatrains. The first six dwell on the experience of a hospital inmate who represents the human condition. At the seventh, the focus shifts to the poem’s speaker:

Je fuis et je m’accroche à toutes les croisées,
D’où l’on tourne l’épaule à la vie, et, béni,
Dans leur verre, lavé d’éternelles rosées,
Que dore le matin chaste de l’Infini

Je me mire et me vois ange! Et je meurs, et j’aime
— Que la vitre soit l’art, soit la mysticité—
A renaître, portant mon rêve en diadème,
Au ciel antérieur où fleurit la beauté!

I flee and I cling to all the window frames
Where one can turn one’s back on life, and, blessed,
In their glass, washed in eternal rains
Which gild the chaste morning of the Infinite,

I look at myself and see myself as an angel! And I die, and I long
— Whether the window pane is art, or mysticism—
To be reborn, bearing my dream for a diadem,
In the earlier sky where Beauty flourished.

3. The celebrated refrain from Edgar Allan Poe’s poem “The Raven.”
4. Gabriele D’Annunzio (1863–1938) was the most controversial Italian writer of his time. He moved to Rome in 1881 and achieved success with *Canto nuovo* (*New Song*) (1882), a volume of poems. He turned his hand to novels, writing *Il piacere* (*Pleasure*) (1889), and *Il fuoco* (*The Flame*) (1900), the latter a love story often viewed as an account of his liaison with the actress Eleonora Duse. He turned to the stage with *La figlia di Iorio* (*Jorio’s Daughter*) (1904), a pastoral tragedy. At the outbreak of World War I he volunteered for service, but was injured in an airplane accident that resulted in the loss of his right eye. After the war he led a group that seized the city of Fiume (1919–1920; see the Introduction, 27), making him a figure popular among nationalist groups. After 1921, he retired to a house on Lake Garda and continued to write. Marinetti wrote about him in 1905, *Les Dieux s’en vont, D’Annunzio reste* (*The Gods Are Leaving, D’Annunzio Remains*).
5. Giovanni Pascoli (1855–1912) was a classical scholar and poet who wrote lyrics, perfect in form, that strongly influenced the “twilight poets” (*crepuscolari*). He had studied at Bologna under the poet Giosuè Carducci, whose work Marinetti also disliked, then took up teaching in secondary schools and universities. He wrote *Myricae* (*Tamarisks*) (1891), *Canti di Castelvecchio* (*Songs from Castelvecchio*) (1907), and other collections of poetry.
6. Antonio Fogazzaro (1842–1911) was an Italian novelist who established his reputation late in life with *Malombra* (1881) (*The Woman*). His other major novels are *Daniele Cortis* (1885), *Il mistero del poeta* (*The Mystery of the Poet*) (1888), and *Piccolo mondo antico* (*Little World of the Past*) (1896).
7. Joseph-Henri Rosny was the pseudonym until 1908 of the two brothers, Joseph-Henri Boëx (1856–1940) and Justin Boëx (1859–1948). Thereafter they wrote their books separately, as Rosny *ainé* (“the elder”) and Rosny *jeune* (“the younger”), respectively. *Le Bilatéral: Moeurs révolutionnaires parisiennes* (*The Bilateral: Parisian Revolutionary Behavior*) (Paris: Nouvelle librairie parisienne, 1887), written by both, treated anarchist circles in Paris. *La Vague rouge: Roman de mœurs révolutionnaires: les syndicats et l’antimilitarisme* (*The Red Wave*) (Paris: Plon-Nourrit, 1910), written by Rosny *ainé* alone, did so as well.
8. Paul Adam (1862–1920) was a late symbolist author. His first novel, *Chair molle* (*Indulgent Flesh*) (Brussels: Auguste Brancort, 1885), led to a prosecution that made him a celebrity. He wrote *Le Trust* (Paris: A. Fayard, [1910]) as a novelistic account of a journey in the United States.
9. Octave Mirbeau (1850–1917), a French novelist and playwright, made his reputation with tales of the Norman peasantry, *Lettres de ma chaumière* (*Letters from My Cottage*) (1886), but is more remembered as the decadent author par excellence for *Le Jardin des supplices* (*The Garden of Tortures*) (1899). *Les Affaires sont les affaires* (*Business is Business*), a satirical comedy in three acts, was performed at the Comédie-Française on 20 April 1903, published at the same time (Paris: Bibliothèque Charpentier, 1903), and reprinted in 1905 and 1911.
10. Gustave Kahn (1859–1936) was a French poet and literary theorist, the self-proclaimed inventor of free verse. The founder and editor of several literary reviews, including *La Vogue*, *Le Symboliste*, and *La Revue Indépendante*, he was a prolific but minor poet. On his role in Marinetti’s career, see the Introduction, 2. Émile Verhaeren (1855–1916) was a naturalist poet whose first book, *Les Flamandes* (*Flemish Women*) (1883), created a sensation. He wrote some thirty books and is remembered, together with his compatriot Maurice Maeterlinck, for shaping a renaissance of Belgian literature in French. Outside France and Belgium he is remembered for *Les Villes tentaculaires* (*Tentacular Cities*) (1896), a work fascinated by the grandeur of the industrial age and horrified by the squalor of the modern city.
11. On Gian Pietro Lucini and Paolo Buzzi, see the Biographical Sketches. This sentence was removed from the 1915 Italian version of the essay because Lucini had abandoned Futurism,

- and the issue of free verse, a lively cause for Marinetti in 1911, had receded in importance after the words-in-freedom program of 1912.
12. These sentences are taken from the penultimate paragraph of “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism”; see 53.
 13. Edgar Allan Poe wrote the “Colloquy of Monos and Una” in 1841 and it first appeared in his collection of *Tales* (1845). It was translated into French by Charles Baudelaire as “Colloque entre Monos et Una,” appearing in the newspaper *Le Pays* (22, 23 January 1855), then in his *Nouvelles histoires extraordinaires par Edgar Poe* (1857). It is a brief dialogue which takes place in the afterlife, with Monos explaining to Una his sensations and experience of death. Marinetti quotes from Monos’s defense of imagination (“poetic intellect”) against utilitarian reason which has only led to “huge smoking cities . . . innumerable” and nature’s devastation. But in his account the imagination becomes the progenitor of technology. Marinetti quotes this passage again in “A Response to Objections,” 125.

THE PLEASURE OF BEING BOOED

- First published in Italian as an independent leaflet, titled “Manifesto dei drammaturghi futuristi” (“Manifesto of Futurist Playwrights”), dated 11 January 1911; then reissued with some variants in French, again as an independent leaflet, under the title “Manifeste des Auteurs Dramatiques futuristes” (“Manifesto of Futurist Playwrights”), dated 22 April 1911.
- a. That is why] *om. It.*
 - b. innovative originality] *absolute innovative originality It.*
 - c. should be reduced] should be entirely banned from the theater. Love and the adulterous triangle on the stage should be *It.*
 - d. everyday reality] low everyday reality *It.*
 - e. revolutionary] *om. It.*
 - f. intoxicating] *om. It.*
 - g. typical and significant] most typical and most significant *It.*
 - h. applause] applause . . . like some Rostand or other! *It.* [Editor’s note: Edmond Rostand (1868–1918), the most popular playwright of his day, wrote light, entertaining period dramas, reassuring alternatives to the somber plays of Ibsen. His most successful were *Cyrano de Bergerac* (1897) and *L’Aiglon* (1900).]
 - i. Francesca da Rimini is the protagonist whose story is told in Dante, *Inferno*, V. Her poignant tale of submitting to passionate love became a topos of romanticism, rehearsed in countless forms throughout Europe. Marinetti alludes to D’Annunzio’s drama, *Francesca da Rimini*, which premiered in Rome on 9 December 1901, starring Eleonora Duse, and was translated into English in 1902.

ELECTRICAL WAR

- Published for the first time in *Le Futurisme*. However, when Marinetti translated it into Italian four years later in *Guerra, sola igiene del mondo* (*War, the Only Hygiene of the World*), he split it into two essays: the essay’s first part was retitled “The Birth of a Futurist Aesthetic” (“Nascita di un’estetica futurista”), while its second part was named “Electrical War (Futurist Vision-Hypothesis)” (“La guerra elettrica [Visione-ipotesi futurista]”). Under these names the work has hitherto been transmitted in English. This edition restores the original unity of the 1911 version, but indicates the essay’s later division by inserting the later titles in square brackets at the beginning of each part.
- a. The contradictory forces . . . aviation,] Absolutely new phenomena such as *It.*
 - b. Antoinette] *om. It.*

- c. The frame, with girders that] To a finished house we prefer the framework of a house in construction whose girders are *It*.
- d. which isn't too expensive] *om. It*.
- e. I share . . . wisdom! . . .] *om. It*.
- f. the pale faces of] *om. It*.
- g. beloved corpses] beloved and venerated corpses *It*.
- h. detonating kisses] mortal kisses *It*.
- i. Aristotle's] Homer's *It*.
- j. Mediterranean] Tirrenian *It*.
- k. by a flick of the hand (*par un jeu bref*)] by rapid mechanisms *It*.
- l. degrading] wearisome and degrading *It*,
- m. Russia, the last empire,] czarism *It*.
- n. furiously] *om. It*.
- o. Their power] Their electrical power *It*.
- p. more mathematical] more agile *It*.
- q. foreigner who despises us] foreigner who adores our Italian past and despises us *It*.
1. The Antoinette IV gained notoriety when it was piloted by Hubert Latham in the first attempt to fly cross the English Channel, on 19 July 1909.
2. From "The Founding and First Manifesto of Futurism"; see 51.
3. The Russo-Japanese War (1904–1905) led to an immense number of casualties in the Liaotung Peninsula, the "corpse-stuffed Manchurian battlefields" of Marinetti's account. The Russians had forced China to give them control of the peninsula in southern Manchuria in 1898 in order to complete the Trans-Siberian Railroad (see next note); but it was transferred to Japan after the war.
4. The Trans-Siberian Railroad, stretching from Moscow to Vladivostok, was considered completed on two occasions: first in 1901, when the Russians secured permission to build it across Manchuria; and again in 1916, when a second line was built around Manchuria because Russia feared that Japan would take over Manchuria.
5. The wireless telegraph was invented in 1895; dielectrics are substances, such as glass or wood, that conduct electricity without conduction.
6. The Ruhmkorff generator was named after Heinrich Daniel Ruhmkorff (1803–1877), who invented the Ruhmkorff coil, a type of induction coil that produced sparks more than 30 centimeters (1 foot) in length. It produced high-voltage current within a secondary armature winding and was used for many purposes, including detonating devices.

THE EXHIBITORS TO THE PUBLIC

The text was drafted by Umberto Boccioni in early October 1911, then submitted to the other four Futurist painters (Balla, Carrà, Russolo, and Severini) for ratification. A French version was published in February 1912, together with the exhibition catalogue for *Les Peintres Futuristes Italiennes* (The Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painting); an English translation appeared a month later when the exhibition traveled to London, and it is that translation from 1912 which is reproduced here, retaining its British spelling.

1. The Exhibition of Italian Futurist Painting was shown at the Gallerie Bernheim-Jeune in Paris from 5 to 24 February 1912, and at the Sackville Gallery in London from 1 to 20 March the same year. See the Introduction, 12–14.
2. Between 1909 and 1914, Braque and Picasso carried out the pioneering explorations of visual language that were soon given the name of Cubism. For an overview, see William Rubin, ed., *Picasso and Braque: Pioneering Cubism* (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989). The year 1911 saw the spread of Cubism into other circles. In the spring, at the Salon des Indépen-

- dants, Albert Gleizes (1881–1953), together with Henri Le Fauconnier (1881–1946) and Jean Metzinger (1883–1956), exhibited with Robert Delaunay (1885–1941) and Fernand Léger (1881–1955) in a separate room, as self-styled “Cubists.” The same five exhibited together again, this time joined by André Derain (1880–1954) and André Lhote (1885–1962), at the Salon d’Automne. Though Delaunay and Léger were original artists who went on to produce important work, the other five—Gleizes, Metzinger, Le Fauconnier, Derain, and Lhote—are often considered imitators who added little to the Cubism of Picasso and Braque. In autumn 1911, when the Salon d’Automne was showing, Boccioni, Carrà, and Russolo went to Paris to study Cubism at first-hand. Through the offices of Gino Severini, they saw works by Braque, Picasso, and their imitators.
3. The concept of “simultaneousness,” or “simultaneity” as it can also be translated, is introduced here for the first time.
 4. This account corresponds to Boccioni’s painting *The Street Enters the House* (1911; see fig. 44).
 5. See “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” 65.
 6. On the concept of dynamic sensation, see “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” 64 and 66 (point no. 2).
 7. See note 5. Boccioni’s quotation from the earlier manifesto is intended to be only approximate.
 8. See Umberto Boccioni, *Riot in the Galleria* (1910; see fig. 37); see also his *Charge of the Lancers* (1915; see fig. 51).
 9. *Physical transcendentalism*: the term first appeared in a lecture on painting given by Boccioni to the International Artistic Circle (Circolo Internazionale Artistico) in Rome on 29 May 1912; nothing remains of the lecture now except a single leaf, in Boccioni’s hand, titled, “Notes for the Lecture in Rome.” The term reappears in “Futurist Sculpture” (114).
 10. *States of Mind* is the title of two series, three paintings each, that Boccioni did in 1911. For *States of Mind II*, see figs. 41–43.
 11. This is the antepenultimate sentence of “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (67). The 1912 translation, adopted here, gives a more literal and less forceful rendering.
 12. An inexact quotation from “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (64): “Thus a running horse has not four legs, but twenty, and their movements are triangular.”

MANIFESTO OF THE FUTURIST WOMAN

Published as a leaflet simultaneously in French and Italian shortly after its official date of 25 March 1912. It was read aloud by Saint-Point on 3 June 1912 at the Galerie Giroux in Brussels, the fourth stopping point for the touring first Exhibition of Futurist Paintings, and again on 3 June 1912 at the Salle Gaveau in Paris.

1. See the “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” 51, point 9.
2. The Erinnyes are the Greek goddesses/demons of vengeance, also called the Furies, who are given their classical treatment in Aeschylus’s *Oresteia*; the Amazons were mythical female warriors of antiquity; Semiramis is the name of a queen of ancient Assyria, famous for her beauty, licentiousness, and prowess in war, and treated by Dante in *Inferno* 5: 52–60. Jeanne Hachette is a French folk hero who seized a standard from besieging Burgundian troops in 1472. Judith is the exemplary Jewish hero from the Old Testament or Hebrew Bible book named after her; she beheads Holofernes, an Assyrian commander besieging Bethulia, and saves the city. Charlotte Corday (1768–1793) assassinated the French revolutionary leader Jean-Paul Marat. Messalina (A.D. 22–48), third wife of the Roman emperor Claudius, was a byword for licentiousness and murderous intrigues.

3. The source of this quotation has not been identified.
4. Caterina Sforza (1463–1509) became the Countess of Forlì when she married Girolamo Riario. When he was murdered in 1488 she continued to rule the city. In 1499, after she refused to give her son Ottaviano in marriage to the daughter of Pope Alexander VI, Lucrezia Borgia, her title was voided by the pope and Forlì was besieged by a papal army. In the course of the siege her son was killed and she supposedly uttered the statement quoted by Saint-Point. She surrendered in January 1500, then retired to a convent.
5. Saint-Point quotes from “Let’s Murder the Moonlight!” (55).
6. *Poèmes d’orgueil (Poems of Pride)* (Paris: Éditions de “L’Abbaye”) was published in 1908, and *La Soif et les mirages (Thirst and Mirages)* (Paris: Figuière) in 1912.

FUTURIST SCULPTURE

First published as an independent leaflet near September 1912, despite its official date of 11 April 1912. It reappeared in several serial publications: in Italian in *L’Italia* (30 September 1912); in French in *Je Dis Tout* (6 October 1912) and *L’Escholier de France* (25 January 1913); and in English in *The Tripod*, no. 5 (November 1912). Though ostensibly written a month before the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” by Marinetti, it quotes several sentences from the latter work. At the time it was written, Boccioni had completed only one sculpture, now lost, *Fusion of a Head and a Window* (fig. 46).

1. This paragraph, with its cursory summary of national traits and characteristics, is indebted to Wilhelm Wundt’s *Völkerpsychologie: eine Untersuchung der Entwicklungsgesetze von Sprache, Mythos und Sitte*, 2 vols. (Leipzig: W. Englemann, 1904), which was translated into Italian as *Psicologia dei popoli* (Piacenza, 1904).
2. Phidias (c. 490–430 B.C.) was the foremost sculptor of ancient Greece. His most famous work was *Athena Parthenos*, a colossal statue (13 m high) of Athena located inside the Parthenon. Destroyed by fire, its general appearance is clear from descriptions and later copies on a reduced scale. He also sculpted a celebrated statue of Zeus for the god’s temple at Olympia.
3. Though “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” doesn’t use the phrase “interpenetration of planes,” the notion itself is quite plainly discussed on 65.
4. On this lecture and the idea of “physical transcendentalism,” see “The Exhibitors to the Public,” note 9.
5. On Medardo Rosso, see “The Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 7.
6. Constantin Meunier (1831–1905) was a Belgian sculptor, painter, and draftsman who studied at the Académie des Beaux-Arts in Brussels. The world of factories and work became his privileged motif. In 1886 his statue of *The Hammerer* was a success at the Paris Salon. A major retrospective in 1896 confirmed his stature. His studio in a Brussels suburb became the Meunier museum and houses his unfinished work *Monument to Labor*.
7. Emile-Antoine Bourdelle (1861–1929) was a French sculptor and painter who studied at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Toulouse and the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Paris. From 1893 to 1908 he worked as an assistant in Rodin’s studio. The years from 1900 to 1914 were his most productive; he is best known for the reliefs he sculpted for the facade of the Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris (1911–1913), agitated figures inspired by the dance of Isadora Duncan.
8. Auguste Rodin (1840–1917), the most famous French sculptor of his time, worked first as a craftsman for firms that supplied decorative embellishments to buildings, then began to exhibit works of his own in the mid-1870s. His *Age of Bronze* (1877), a standing nude male, was a *succès de scandale* at the Paris Salon, and from 1878 to 1888 he worked on *Balzac*, com-

- missioned by the French state. In 1884 he was commissioned by the city of Calais to design a statue of the *Burghers of Calais*; its cast was unveiled in 1889, the final work in Calais in 1895.
9. Boccioni is quoting from Marinetti's "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," but either his recollection is inaccurate or he is citing from an early draft that contained sentences later dropped or altered. "A raging need to liberate words, dragging them out from the prison of the Latin period," appears in the "Technical Manifesto" (119). So does: "Poetry should be an uninterrupted flow of new images, without which it is merely anemia and green-sickness" (120).
10. See 107, 109.

TECHNICAL MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST LITERATURE

- First published as an independent leaflet in May 1912; then published as the preface to *The Futurist Poets* (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*, 1912), the first collective anthology of poetry which Marinetti edited. Originally assembled as a display of free verse, the contents were now out of step with the preface. Despite this anomaly, the volume sold more than 20,000 copies. Accounts of the manifesto figured in contemporary newspapers: *L'Intransigeant* (Paris), 7 July 1912; *Dernière Heure* (Paris), 18 July; *Paris-Journal*, 18 July; *Le Temps* (Paris) 24 July. A German translation was published in *Der Sturm*, no. 133 (October 1912).
1. Marinetti describes his experience of flight in 1910 at the 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. (The plane was what contemporaries called a "pusher.") Atop the lower wing, at its rear, sat the engine that drove it, with its fuel tank in midwing. Marinetti sat just in front of the fuel tank, while the pilot would have been located just in front of him. With the propeller behind them, pilot and passenger enjoyed an unimpeded view of the scene before and below them.
2. Marinetti's book recounted his experiences (October–November 1911) in the Italo-Turkish War (1911–1912; see Introduction, 12–13), focusing on the siege of Tripoli, which Italian forces swiftly conquered on 26 October 1911, a month after war had been declared (29 September). The book was first published in daily installments in the Parisian newspaper *L'Intransigeant*, 25–31 December 1911. In Italy a few months later it was published in two forms: a French edition issued by Marinetti's own firm, *La Bataille de Tripoli* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1912); and an Italian translation, *La battaglia di Tripoli* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1912).
3. Marinetti is giving the gist of Voltaire's account of the flowery style, which appears under the heading "Fleuri" ("Flowered") in his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*.
4. Aristotle's *Poetics* turned intelligible causation into the key notion that links together literary plot and the possibility of philosophical knowledge. The wonderful or the marvelous should prompt humans to seek understanding, but must give way to intelligible causation. Debate about the marvelous has been a recurrent feature of Italian literary culture because the rediscovery of the *Poetics* around 1500 meant that the greatest work of Italian literature, Dante's *Commedia*, could be condemned for having an excess of the marvelous. The issue recurred in debates about the poets Ariosto versus Boiardo, and again in those concerning Torquato Tasso. Marinetti's bias is for a poetics of the marvelous that does not give way to rational understanding.
5. The phrase "power to astound," both here and three sentences earlier, translates the Italian *forza di stupefazione*. The term *forza* or force links back to Boccioni's discussion of "force-lines" (see "Futurist Sculpture," 117), but it can also evoke violence.

6. *La battaglia di Tripoli*, 22–23.
7. F. T. Marinetti, *Mafarka the Futurist: An African Novel*, trans. Carol Diethe and Steve Cox (London: Middlesex University Press, 1999), Ch. 10, “The Blacksmiths of Milmillah,” 156.
8. *La battaglia di Tripoli*, 7–8.
9. The phrase “wireless imagination” translates *immaginazione senza fili*, literally “imagination without strings” or “wires.” It 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. “Wireless imagination” suggests these multiple connections, but “radio imagination” would also be acceptable.

A RESPONSE TO OBJECTIONS

First published as an independent manifesto in August 1912. An account and extract from it appeared in the Parisian newspaper *L’Intransigeant*, 20 August 1912, followed by another extract with some ironic comments the next day. Another account appeared in *Paris-Journal*, 20 August 1912. A German translation was published in *Der Sturm*, nos. 150–151 (March 1913), accompanied by a brief essay, “Futuristische Worttechnik” (“Futurist Language Technique”) by the German writer Alexander Döblin.

1. “To hate intelligence” appears in the penultimate paragraph of the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (124). The French philosopher Henri Bergson (1859–1941), in *Time and Free Will*, urged that our everyday notion that physical objects exist and occupy positions in the “empty homogeneous medium” of space had wrongly shaped our concept of time. Time is not an unbounded line composed of units or moments external to one another; it is a continuous stream, pure duration, *durée*, to which we best gain access through the consciousness of our own inner mental life.
2. On Marinetti’s first book, *La Conquête des étoiles* (Paris: Editions de La Plume, 1902), see the Introduction, 3. The italics in the quotation from Dante are added by Marinetti.
3. On the quotation from Poe see “We Abjure Our Symbolist Masters,” note 13.
4. See the “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 4.

FUTURIST MANIFESTO OF LUST

First published as an independent leaflet in French and in an Italian translation, both in January 1913. A response to Saint-Point, “Glossa sopra il Manifesto futurista della Lussuria” (“A Note on the Futurist Manifesto of Lust”) was published by Italo Tadolato in *Lacerba*, no. 6 (15 March 1913).

THE ART OF NOISES

First published as an independent leaflet dated 13 March 1913.

1. The concert of Pratella’s *Futurist Music* which Russolo heard was given on 9 March 1913 at the Teatro Costanzi in Rome.
2. A tetrachord was a musical scale of four notes, bounded by the interval of a perfect fourth (an interval the size of two and one-half steps, such as from C to F). The descending tetrachord was the basic unit of analysis in Greek music, and scale systems were formed by joining successive tetrachords. Only the outer notes of each tetrachord were fixed, while the position of the inner pitches determined the genus of the tetrachord.
3. *The Eroica* and *Pastorale* are popular names given to Beethoven’s Symphonies No. 3 (1804) and No. 8 (1808).
4. This passage became the opening paragraphs in “Bombardment,” Ch. 10 in Marinetti’s *Zang*

Tumb Tuuum (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*, 1914), his free-word account of the siege of Adrianople, in Bulgaria, in October 1912. It was also Marinetti's most often recited piece at performances; in March 1914 he performed it at the Doré Gallery in London, with Christopher Nevinson making supporting noises on a large drum. On that event see "Dynamic and Synoptic Declamation," note 10.

THE PLASTIC FOUNDATIONS OF FUTURIST SCULPTURE AND PAINTING

First published in *Lacerba* 1, no. 6 (15 March 1913): 51–52. With slight alterations, retaining its title, it became a chapter in Boccioni's book, *Pittura e scultura futuriste (Dinamismo plastico)* (*Futurist Painting and Sculpture [Plastic Dynamism]*) (Milan: Edizioni di *Poesia*, 1914).

1. "Optical illusionism" translates the Italian phrase *inganno ottico*, which might also be translated as "optical deception"; the word *inganno* has overtones of trickery and fraud.
2. Paul Gauguin (1848–1903) journeyed to Tahiti in 1891 and stayed in the Polynesian islands until his death, a journey often taken to mark the beginning of a wave of "primitivism" that swept European art in subsequent years. "Our friends in Montmartre" are Picasso and Braque, who first purchased African carved masks and statues in 1907. See William Rubin, *Primitivism in Twentieth Century Art*, 2 vols. (New York: Museum of Modern Art, 1989).
3. On Boccioni's "first lecture in Rome," see "The Exhibitors to the Public," note 9. In seances, photographs were taken which purportedly showed the distinctive spiritualist "auras" said to accompany each individual, "the luminous emanations" of Boccioni.
4. Boccioni has discussed the "solidification of Impressionism" three paragraphs earlier, when he notes how Impressionist paintings enable us to "see the shape of the atmosphere."
5. Boccioni is citing two sentences from Henri Bergson, *Matter and Memory* (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1911), 259, 246.

DESTRUCTION OF SYNTAX—WIRELESS IMAGINATION—WORDS-IN-FREEDOM

First published as an independent leaflet in Italian in May 1913; then read as a lecture by Marinetti at the Galerie La Boétie on 22 June 1913. A French translation was published shortly thereafter and is discussed in articles in the Parisian newspaper *Gil-Blas*, 7 July 1913, in *Magazine de la revue des Français*, 10 July 1913, and in *Paris-Journal*, 10 July 1913. An English translation, by Arundel del Re, was published in the leading journal of contemporary poetry in London, *Poetry and Drama* 1, no. 3 (September 1913): 266–76. It was prefaced by an account of Marinetti written by Harold Monroe, "Varia" (263–65), and followed by thirty pages of Futurist poetry in translation.

1. For the "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," see 119–125. On the phrase "wireless imagination," see the "Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature," note 9.
2. Contemporary newspapers were filled with accounts of the Chinese Revolution (1911–1912) and the ending of the Manchu dynasty in February 1912. They also reported extensively on suffragette violence in London, such as breaking shop windows with hammers. Dr. Alexis Carrel (1873–1944), a French surgeon, was in the news because he received the 1912 Nobel Prize for Medicine for developing a method of suturing blood vessels. Exploration of the South Pole was also much in the news. In 1908–1909, Sir Ernest Henry Shackleton led a party to the Great Barrier, very close to the Pole. In January 1912, Robert Scott and his party reached the Pole, only to discover that Norwegian explorer Roald Amundsen had been there a month earlier. Scott's party, caught in a blizzard, died on their return journey.
3. Enrico Caruso (1873–1921), the finest Italian tenor of his day, was among the first to document his voice on gramophone recordings. Eugenia Burzio (1872–1922) was an Italian soprano. A violinist who turned to singing, she debuted in 1889 at Turin in *Cavalleria rusti-*

cana and then specialized in the new *verismo* or naturalism. She made many appearances at La Scala in Milan.

4. Jules Joseph Bonnot (1876–1912) was the leader of a band of French anarchists who robbed banks with the idea of redistributing wealth. Their reign of terror lasted from December 1911 to April 1912. They were stopped on 27 April 1912 after a siege of the garage in which they were hiding. Bonnot died of his wounds the next day; the four survivors were sentenced to death a year later. During their widely reported trial one gang member, when asked to explain Bonnot’s philosophy, replied: each man should be free *vivre sa vie*, “to live his life.”
5. See “Multiplied Man and the Reign of the Machine,” 89–92.
6. The phrase “silence green and sacred” (*divino silenzio verde*) comes from the conclusion to “The Ox” (“Il bove”), a sonnet by Giosuè Carducci, first published in his *New Rhymes (Rime Nuove* [Bologna: Zanichelli, 1887]) and a classic by this time:

E del grave occhio glauco entro l’austera
Dolcezza si respaccia ampio e quieto
Il divino del piano silenzio verde.

In the sombre glaucous eye, within the austere
Sweetness, is reflected, ample and still,
The silence green and sacred of the field.

7. For the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature,” see 119–125, here 120.
8. The Scottish scientist Robert Brown (1773–1858) published his discovery of Brownian movement, the natural continuous motion of minute particles in solution, in his pamphlet of 1828, *A Brief Account of Microscopical Observations* (London: Richard Taylor).
9. See “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature,” 124.
10. For Giovanni Pascoli, see “We Abjure Our Symbolist Masters, the Last Lovers of the Moon,” note 5.
11. “Adrianople Siege–Orchestra” was an independent poem which became the first half of Chapter 10, “Bombardment,” in Marinetti’s book *Zang Tumb Tuuum*. It is quoted by Luigi Russolo in “The Art of Noises”; see 136. “Battle Weight + Smell” is quoted in its entirety by Marinetti in “Response to Objections,” see 128–129.
12. On D’Annunzio and Marinetti, see “We Abjure Our Symbolist Masters, the Last Lovers of the Moon,” note 4. D’Annunzio did indeed have a love for fine book-making in the art-nouveau style.
13. Stéphane Mallarmé’s (1842–1898) book *Un Cou de dés jamais n’abolira le hasard (A Throw of the Dice Will Never Abolish Chance)* (1897) used special typographical features that anticipate Marinetti’s proposals, a charge he is trying to forestall.
14. See “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” 51.

FUTURIST ANTITRADITION

First published an independent leaflet in French in late July, 1913; an Italian translation appeared at the same time. The French version was republished, without the distinctive typography, in *Gil-Blas* on 3 August 1913; the Italian version was republished in *Lacerba* 1, no. 18 (15 September 1913). The two are the same except in one point: to the list of people who receive “merde” or “merda,” the Italian adds Manzoni, Carducci, and Pascoli—additions plainly made by Marinetti. The typography is largely Marinetti’s work, based on loose indications by Apollinaire.

First published as an independent leaflet in August 1913; then in *Lacerba* 1, no. 17 (1 September 1913): 185–87.

1. On *verismo*, see the “Manifesto of Futurist Musicians,” note 9. The operas of Mascagni and Leoncavallo were thought by some to be showy and vulgar.
2. Jean-Antoine Watteau (1684–1721) was a French painter best known for having invented the *fête galante*, a small easel painting that depicts elegant people who converse or make music in a park or wooded setting. He often used colors akin to those of Rubens. His paintings were later read as signs of melancholy transience.
3. On Seurat, see the “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 6. Paul Signac (1863–1935), a French painter who came from a well-to-do family, met Georges Seurat in 1884. The two collaborated closely in developing the techniques of pointilism. From the mid-1880s he exhibited regularly, and in 1902 had his first one-man exhibition. His major book was *D’Eugène Delacroix au néo-impressionisme (From Eugene Delacroix to Neo-impressionism)* (Paris: Éditions de la *Révue blanche*, 1899), a work that went into a second edition (Paris: H. Floury, 1911) and prompted renewed interest in pointilism.
4. For Carrà’s *Funeral of the Anarchist Galli*, see fig. 56; his *Jolts of a Taxi-cab* is not illustrated here. For Boccioni’s *States of Mind II* see figs. 41–43; his *Forces of the Street* is not reproduced here. For Russolo’s *The Revolt*, see fig. 97; Severini’s *Pan-Pan at the Monico* has since been lost.

THE VARIETY THEATER

First published as an independent leaflet in Italian in September, 1913; published again in *Lacerba*, 1, no. 19 (1 October 1913). A shortened version, with nine paragraphs lopped off, appeared in an anonymous English translation in *The Daily Mail*, 21 November 1913, with the title of “The Meaning of the Music Hall.” (*The Daily Mail* was then the largest mass-circulation newspaper in the world.) Another translation into English, by D. Nevile Lees, was given the title “Futurism and the Theatre: A Futurist Manifesto by Marinetti” in *The Mask: A Quarterly Journal of the Art of the Theatre*, vol. 6 no. 3 (Jan. 1914): 188–193. It also omitted several paragraphs. In *The Mask*, it was followed by an essay by theatrical producer Gordon Craig, “On Futurism and the Theatre,” 194–200, in which he rebuts Marinetti’s claims.

1. “Imaginative astonishment” conveys only partially the powerful state of shock that Marinetti characterizes with the expression *stupore immaginativo*, literally “imaginative stupor.” Marinetti is turning medical discussions of trauma into the basis for an aesthetics of shock. See “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature,” notes 4, 5.
2. International diplomacy was worried by the Balkan question in 1912–1913. Turkey still controlled much of the Balkan peninsula, including what is now northern Greece, Macedonia, and Kosovo. But its weakness and the region’s ethnic groupings made trouble inevitable. In October 1912, when Turkey was concluding peace with Italy over the Italo-Turkish war (1911–1912), the four countries of the Balkan League declared war against it, initiating the First Balkan War. They were Serbia; Montenegro, led by King Nicolas I (1841–1921); Greece, led by prime minister Eleuthérios Venizélos (1864–1936); and Bulgaria, led by Dr. Stoyan Danef (1858–1940). Bulgaria besieged Adrianople, a battle chronicled in Marinetti’s *Zang Tumb Tuuum*, while Greece took the city of Salonika. On 3 December an armistice was declared and a peace conference called. But in January 1913, Enver Bey (also known as Enver Pasa, 1881–1922) led a coup d’état in Turkey, and the new government refused to accept its terms. A settlement was reached in May 1913. But in June 1913, the Second Balkan War broke

- out, this time among the countries which had formerly been allies. Peace was finally signed in August 1913.
3. Jules Cambon (1845–1935) was a French diplomat and ambassador to Germany from 1907 to 1914. In 1911 he negotiated with the German diplomat Alfred von Kiderlen-Wächter (1852–1912) over the Agadir crisis. When France occupied the Moroccan cities of Rabat and Fès, Kiderlen demanded compensation for Germany and, to back up his claim, dispatched the German gunboat *Panther* to Agadir. He refused conciliatory offers, demanding the whole of the French Congo in return for a free hand for France in Morocco. Cambon rejected that demand. They finally agreed: Germany would receive two strips of land from the French Congo, France a protectorate over Morocco.
 4. Leopoldo Fregoli (1867–1936) was a comic actor who performed “transformations,” rapidly changing from one character to another, parodies of the period’s recognizable types; his company toured around the world, but his biggest success was in Paris in 1910.
 5. *Compère* and *commère*, which can be translated roughly as (male) “pal” and (female) “gossip,” were stock characters of Parisian revues in this period.
 6. Ernesto Zacconi (1857–1948) was an Italian actor notable for his performance in *verismo* plays and modern works such as Ibsen’s *Ghosts*. In 1899 he starred opposite Eleonora Duse in D’Annunzio’s tragedy, *La Gioconda* (*Gioconda*), and again in 1901 in his tragedy *Città morta* (*The Dead City*). Eleonora Duse (1858–1924) was the most famous Italian actress of her time. In 1897 she played the lead role in D’Annunzio’s *Il sogno di un mattino di primavera* (*The Dream of a Spring Morning*). Their love affair and collaboration continued till 1904 and she retired from the stage in 1909. Félix Mayol (1872–1941) was a French singer who performed in café-concerto and music hall. He debuted in Paris in 1895 at the Concert Parisien, and ranked highly among performers of French song between 1895 and 1920, noted for his expressive gestures and body movements. Sarah Bernhardt (1844–1923), the most celebrated French actress of her time, began her career at the Comédie Française in Paris, playing chiefly tragic roles. By 1899 she owned her own theater, the Théâtre Sarah Bernhardt, where she performed a wide range of works. For Fregoli, see note 4.
 7. Victor Hugo’s *Hernani* (1830) was a romantic historical drama; it became the prototype of romantic plays with audacious plot and setting and a theatrical magnificence of verse.
 8. See “Let’s Murder the Moonlight!” 54.

PLASTIC ANALOGIES OF DYNAMISM

- Unlike all other texts in Part I, this one was not published during Futurism’s period of activity. Marinetti rejected it when Severini sent it to him in 1913; see Preface, introduction to this part, 43. It first appeared years later in Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori, eds., *Archivi del futurismo*, 2 vols. (Rome: De Lucca, 1958–1962).
1. Severini’s *Memories of a Journey* (1910–1911) was exhibited at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery in February 1912. See Anne Coffin Hanson, *Severini Futurista: 1912–1917* (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1995), cat. 1, 62–63.
 2. The Galeries Lafayette is a large department store, built in 1908, on the Boulevard Haussmann in Paris.
 3. Severini conjoins three sentences from different parts of “The Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature”; see 120, 121.
 4. *Sea = Dancer* is the title of a contemporaneous painting by Severini; many of his comments here can be applied to it. See Hanson, *Severini futurista*, cat. 12, 83; see fig. 108.
 5. Severini draws here on Bergson’s distinction, advanced in *Time and Free Will*, between two ways of conceiving time; see “A Response to Objections,” note 1.
 6. On divisionism, see Introduction, 9.

THE SUBJECT IN FUTURIST PAINTING

First published in *Lacerba* 2, no. 1 (1 January 1914).

DOWN WITH THE TANGO AND PARSIFAL!

First published in *Lacerba* 2, no. 2 (15 January 1914), then as an independent leaflet in French translation.

1. *Gil Blas* was a Parisian newspaper that gave special attention to cultural affairs. The tango, characterized by a slow gliding movement which is broken up by various pointing positions, was the most talked about popular dance during 1913 and early 1914, having been imported from Argentina. A tango tea, or *thé dansant* in French, was held at a hotel and arranged for dancing the tango.
2. Alfred de Musset (1810–1857), Victor Hugo (1802–1885), and Théophile Gautier (1811–1872) were French writers who wrote books set in Spain. Musset's was *Contes d'Espagne et d'Italie* (*Stories of Spain and Italy*) (1830). Hugo's play *Hernani* (1830), set in sixteenth-century Spain, recounts the love of Elvira for the banished nobleman-turned-outlaw Hernani. Gautier's visit to Spain yielded poetry, *España* (1845), and a travel account, *Voyage en Espagne* (1845).
3. Jean Lorrain (1855–1906) was a French writer whose works epitomize a *fin-de-siècle* or decadent outlook. He wrote short stories and novels, many with a strong erotic dimension, exploring masochism, sadism, incest, and bestiality. He was a friend of Oscar Wilde. Joris-Karl Huysmans (1848–1907) is remembered as the author of *À Rebours*, or *Against the Grain* (1884), which portrays the fictional character Des Esseintes and his efforts to create a life of absolute artificiality. Des Esseintes keeps three of Baudelaire's poems on the mantelpiece in his library and the narrative lavishly praises him in chapter 12.
4. *Tristan and Isolde* (1865) is the Wagnerian opera which recycles a medieval legend. Tristan is sent by King Mark of Cornwall to fetch the Irish princess Isolde and bring her back as a wife for him. During the return voyage Tristan and Isolde both resolve to take poison; each loves the other but is certain his or her passion is unrequited. They are forestalled when Isolde's companion, Brangäne, substitutes a love potion. Once in Cornwall, they are discovered by King Mark. Tristan is wounded and returns to his kingdom to die. Isolde follows, arriving in time to join him in an embrace of death. Marinetti's account of the discovery scene is satirical exaggeration.
5. *Parsifal* (1882) is Wagner's last opera. It tells the story of Amfortas, who is determined to kill the evil sorcerer Kingsor, but instead falls prey to the charms of Kundry, the beautiful enchantress. As a result he loses the Sacred Spear and suffers a wound that will not heal until it is recovered and heals the gash. Parsifal, a guiltless youth, is chosen to rescue the Sacred Spear. He triumphs, heals Amfortas, and is anointed King of the Grail. He also baptizes Kundry, who at last finds the redemption of peaceful death.

THE CIRCLE IS CLOSING

First published in *Lacerba* 2, no. 4 (15 February 1914). Umberto Boccioni responded with an essay titled "The Circle Isn't Closing!" in *Lacerba* 2, no. 5 (1 March 1914).

GEOMETRICAL AND MECHANICAL SPLENDOR AND THE NUMERICAL SENSIBILITY

First published as an independent leaflet in March 1914; then in *Lacerba* 2, no. 6 (15 March 1914) with a different title, "Geometrical and Mechanical Splendor in Words-in-Freedom" ("Lo splendore gemetrico e meccanico nelle parole in libertà"), and much shortened: it contained only the first seven points. The second half appeared in *Lacerba* 2, no. 1 (1 April 1914)

under the title “Abstract Onomatopoeias and Numerical Sensibility” (“Onomatopoeie astratte e sensibilità numerica”), but without the last sentence castigating Mallarmé.

1. See the “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 4.
2. “Fort Cheittam-Tépe” is chapter 5 in *Zang Tumb Tuuum*, Marinetti’s free-wordist report on the Bulgarian siege of Adrianople in October 1912.
3. Marinetti is referring to his experiences in the Italo-Turkish War (1911–1912), when Italy seized Turkish holdings in what is now modern Libya. Marinetti, who journeyed to the front in October and November, wrote about it in *La battaglia di Tripoli* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1912).
4. “Hotel Salon” or “Salone d’albergo,” a free-word poem by Luciano Folgore, in his *Ponti sull’oceano* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1912), 157–161.
5. “Man + Valley + Mountain,” a free-word poem by Umberto Boccioni, is one of two such works that Boccioni wrote; it appeared in *Lacerba* 2, no. 3 (1 February 1914): 44–45. For his other free-word poem, see 428–430.
6. Francesco Cangiullo published “Smoking Car, Second Class” (Fummatore IIa) in *Lacerba*, 1 January 1914; see fig. 52 for its first page.
7. “Dunes” (“Dune: Parole in libertà”) was published in *Lacerba* 2, no. 4 (15 February 1914). A portion of it was republished in the dadaist journal *Cabaret Voltaire* (May 1916).
8. On this work, see Introduction, 3.
9. See “We Abjure Our Symbolist Masters, the Last Lovers of the Moon,” note 2.

WEIGHTS, MEASURES, AND PRICES OF ARTISTIC GENIUS

First published as an independent leaflet in March 1914.

1. On D’Annunzio, see “We Abjure Our Symbolist Masters, the Last Lovers of the Moon,” note 4. Giacomo Puccini (1858–1924) was the composer of popular operas such as *La Bohème* (1896), *Tosca* (1900), and *Madama Butterfly* (1904). On Leoncavallo, see the “Manifesto of Futurist Musicians,” note 9.
2. Words-in-freedom are outlined in the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (119–125); plastic dynamism is first mentioned in Guillaume Apollinaire’s “Futurist Anti-Tradition,” 152, then addressed in Boccioni’s book of 1914 (see below, the headnote to the next manifesto). “Music without continuous steady rhythm” is outlined by Pratella in “Futurist Music: Technical Manifesto” (81–82); for “The Art of Noises,” see 133–139.

ABSOLUTE MOTION + RELATIVE MOTION = DYNAMISM

First published in *Lacerba* 2, no. 6 (15 March 1914): 90–93. It was incorporated into Boccioni’s book, *Pittura e scultura futuriste (Dinamismo plastico) (Futurist Painting and Sculpture [Plastic Dynamism])* (1914).

1. The image of the horse is discussed in “The Exhibitors to the Public,” 108, and “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” 64.
2. See “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” 67.
3. The verse, which Boccioni quotes in the original French, is from Baudelaire’s sonnet “La Beauté” (1857). A personification of Beauty says: “Je hais le mouvement qui déplace les lignes, / Et jamais je ne pleure et jamais je ne ris” (I hate movement which disturbs lines, / And I never weep and never smile).

FUTURIST MEN’S CLOTHING: A MANIFESTO

First published as an independent leaflet in Italian on 20 May 1914 (see fig. 26); then as independent leaflet in French, also May 1914, evidently to anticipate Marinetti’s appearances

in London the next month. Accounts of the new designs featured prominently in contemporary newspapers. In London, *Men's Wear* (6 June 1914, "Futurism in Men's Clothes," 363) carried a full-page feature showing Balla's designs and reproducing all of the manifesto except the first three paragraphs. Drawing on Balla's manifesto, Marinetti gave a lecture on "The Futurist Man's Dress" at the Doré Galleries in New Bond Street, London, around 1 June 1914. Fashions that were called Futurist had already appeared nearly a year before Balla's manifesto. In Paris, according to one fashion columnist:

"The 'Futurist' movement is having a considerable effect upon the fashions of the present season. In the big ateliers of the Rue de la Paix one finds the most startling embroideries, combined with stencil work, and the stencil designs are, for the most part, exaggeratedly 'Futurist'!

"Large, bold patterns of conventional flowers are thrown against backgrounds of crude colours, such as leaf-green, Chinese blue, yellow ochre and vermilion.

"The designs are sometimes carried out entirely in black; sometimes they are a clever mixture of black and white, with touches of vivid colour at unexpected points. These stencil and embroidery designs are applied to tunics, to wraps, to evening skirts and even to cor-sages.

"One or two of the leading Parisian dressmakers are applying 'Futurist' designs in velvet, on fine faced cloths. Tunis and evening wraps are decorated in this way, with immense success." ("Velvet Hats for the Autumn," *Daily Mirror*, 20 August 1913, 11.)

Futurist costumes also featured at the Picture Ball held in the Albert Hall in December 1913 (see the *Daily Mirror*, 3 December 1913).

After World War I broke out in August 1914, Marinetti revised Balla's manifesto to syn-chronize it with interventionism. See "The Antineutral Suit," 202–204.

FUTURISM AND ENGLISH ART

First published in the *Observer*, a Sunday newspaper which appealed to upper-middle-class readers and had a circulation of roughly 200,000. It provoked a reply from Wyndham Lewis and Ezra Pound, whose ambitions were being overshadowed by Futurism. It was reissued as an independent leaflet with the title "Vital English Art"; it also appeared in Italian and English in *Lacerba* 2, no. 14 (15 July 1914). This edition reproduces the *Observer's* original headlines and opening editorial comments. Marinetti, at this time, was about to give a lecture introducing a concert of Luigi Russolo's Futurist "noise-tuners" at the Coliseum in London, a large music hall.

1. The Barbizon school of painting was named after the village of Barbizon, located by Fontainebleau near Paris, where Théodore Rousseau (1812–1867) and Jean-François Millet (1814–1875) met in the late 1840s and pioneered a more realistic treatment of landscape. Their work, Marinetti urges, was anticipated by the English painters J. M. W. Turner (1775–1851) and John Constable (1776–1837). James Watt (1737–1819) was a Scottish instrument maker credited with inventing the modern steam engine. George Stephenson (1781–1848) was an English engineer who invented the railroad locomotive in 1837.
2. The New English Art Club was founded in 1886 by Fred Brown, ostensibly against everything the Royal Academy stood for. By 1905 it was moribund, and by 1910 an object of avant-garde scorn.
3. Lawrence Atkinson (1873–1931), David Bomberg (1890–1957), Jacob Epstein (1885–1939), Frederick Etchells (1886–1973), Cuthbert Hamilton (1884–1959), Christopher Nevinson (1889–1946), and William Roberts (1895–1980) were all artists associated with Wyndham Lewis (1882–1957) and the Rebel Art Centre which he founded in London in early 1914. The Centre was to be an avant-garde alternative to the Omega Workshops run by Roger Fry and

associated with the Bloomsbury circle. A grouping of artists united by similar ideas, it would be flexible enough for each to express himself freely. It had fallen apart by July 1914 because of quarrels among its leading members.

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST ARCHITECTURE

An earlier version of this manifesto was published in a catalogue which accompanied the exhibition of a Milanese group called Nuove Tendenze (New Tendencies), held in late May 1914. It was untitled, but has since become known as the “Messaggio” (“Message”). Though its ideas were Sant’Elia’s, it was drafted by Ugo Nebbia and perhaps others. In July 1914 Sant’Elia, who had long been in contact with Boccioni, met with Marinetti and decided to adhere to Futurism. Marinetti transformed the “Messaggio” into the manifesto “Futurist Architecture,” issued as an independent leaflet in late July 1914. It was republished in *Lacerba* 2, no. 15 (1 August 1914).

1. Vitruvius (fl. first century B.C.) was a Roman architect and the author of *De architectura*, the major architectural treatise of classical antiquity. Giacomo da Vignola (1507–1573) was an Italian architect best known for the church of Il Gesù (headquarters of the Jesuits) in Rome, a work that looks ahead from the Renaissance to the Baroque. Andrea Sansovino (1467–1529) was an Italian Renaissance architect noted for his graceful and elegant style.
2. Words-in-freedom are outlined in “The Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (119–125); plastic dynamism, first mentioned in Guillaume Apollinaire’s “Futurist Anti-Tradition,” 152, is developed by Boccioni in his book *Pittura e scultura futurista (Dinamismo plastico) (Futurist Painting and Sculpture (Plastic Dynamism))* (1914); “music without steady rhythm” is outlined by Pratella in “Futurist Music: Technical Manifesto,” 81–82; “The Art of Noises,” 133–139.

THE ANTINEUTRAL SUIT: FUTURIST MANIFESTO

First issued as an independent leaflet in Italian in September 1914, some six weeks after the outbreak of World War I; republished in *La Voce*, 13 October 1914. The text is a revision of “Futurist Men’s Clothing: A Manifesto” (194–195), issued four months earlier. The variants are by Marinetti. See fig. 26.

1. Black and yellow were the colors of the German flag.

FUTURIST SYNTHETIC THEATER

First published as an independent leaflet in February 1915; then reissued in *Teatro futurista sintetico* (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1915) as a preface to a collection of theatrical syntheses written by various authors. For syntheses in this volume, see 487–495.

1. Maurice Maeterlinck (1862–1949) was a Belgian symbolist poet and playwright. His two one-act plays, *L’Intruse (The Intruder)* and *Les Aveugles (Blindmen)* (both 1890), were theatrical breakthroughs, while *Pelléas et Mélisande* (1892) is a masterpiece of symbolist drama. Leonid Nikolayevich Andreyev (1871–1919) was a Russian dramatist and novelist. His most successful plays were *The Life of a Man* (1907) and *He Who Gets Slapped* (1916). Marinetti met him during his 1914 journey to Russia. Paul Claudel (1868–1955) was a prolific French playwright who wrote *Partage de midi (The Lot of Midday)* (1906), *L’Otage (The Hostage)* (1911), and *L’Annonce faite à Marie (The Annunciation Made to Mary)* (1912).
2. *Electricity* was a shortened version of the play *Electrical Dolls (Poupées Electriques)*, a work Marinetti first wrote in 1908. See Introduction, 4.
3. D’Annunzio’s *Più che l’Amore (More Than Love)* was performed in 1906; his *La Figlia di Jorio (Jorio’s Daughter)* in 1904. *Simultaneity* is a Futurist theatrical synthesis by Marinetti.

4. For “The Variety Theater,” see 159–164; for “Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius” see 181–186.
5. *They’re Coming (Vengono)* is found in English translation in Michael Kirby and Victoria Nes Kirby, eds., *Futurist Performance* (New York: PAJ Publications, 1986), 294–95.
6. Ettore Berti ran a touring variety theater company that performed Futurist theatrical syntheses in 1915 and 1916; they were performed on 4 February 1915 at the Teatro del Corso in Bologna. Luigi Zoncada was one of the chief actors and a director of the Zoncada-Masi-Capodaglia touring troupe, a company that presented Futurist theatrical syntheses during the period February 1915 to June 1916. Zoncada had acted in a version of Marinetti’s play *Electrical Dolls* at Turin in 1909. Ettore Petrolini (1886–1936) was an Italian comic actor on the variety theater circuit who began his career in the café-concerts of Rome in 1901, where he developed a repertory of skits that included “Beautiful Arthur” (*il Bell’Arturo*), a caricature of the D’Annunzian “beau.” In his 1915 book (*Ti à piaciato?!! [Didja Like It?!!]* [Sesto San Giovanni: Casa editrice Madella]) he had expressed favorable views of Futurism, and the Futurist poet Luciano Folgore wrote a satirical review for him, *Zero Minus Zero*, in 1915. In June 1916, Petrolini performed nine Futurist syntheses at the Teatro Adriano in Rome; in January 1917 he performed more at the Politeama in Naples. Together with Francesco Cangiullo he wrote a Futurist skit titled *Radioscopia*, performed in 1918.

FUTURIST RECONSTRUCTION OF THE UNIVERSE

First published as an independent leaflet in March 1915. It was accompanied by several photos which illustrated the “plastic complexes” or assemblages (see fig. 52).

1. For “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto,” see 64–67; for the preface to the catalogue of the first Futurist Exhibition, or “The Exhibitors to the Public,” see 105–109; Boccioni’s “Futurist Sculpture” is found on 163–169, and his “The Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells” on 155–159. The books mentioned are Umberto Boccioni, *Pittura scultura futuriste* (Milan: Edizione futuriste di *Poesia*, 1914), and Carlo Carrà, *Guerrapittura* (Milan: Edizione futuriste di *Poesia*, 1915).
2. “Noise-ist” is a Futurist neologism that refers back to Luigi Russolo’s “Art of Noises”; see 133–139.

FUTURIST STAGE DESIGN

First published in *La balza futurista*, no. 3 (12 May 1915), a Futurist magazine edited in Messina, Sicily, by Luigi Nicastro and Vann’Antonio Janelli; then republished in *Procellaria*, no. 1 (April 1917), a journal edited by Giovanni Cantarelli in Mantua, and yet again in *Noi*, 2nd series, nos. 6–7–8–9 (1924). A French translation of it appeared in a German publication, *Der Futurismus*, no. 4 (August 1922), from Berlin.

1. Jacques Drésa (1869–1929) was a French stage designer who debuted with Jacques Rouché at the Théâtre des Arts in Paris in 1911, then went on to work at the Opéra Garnier, where he tried to free it from its attachment to traditional realism. Jacques Rouché (1862–1957) was Drésa’s teacher. In 1910 he had revived the old Théâtre des Arts to pioneer ideas of modern production in France, making more widely known the experiments of Georg Fuchs at the Munich Artists’ Theater; on Fuchs, see below note 4.
2. Vsevolod Meyerhold (1874–1940) joined the Moscow Art Theater in 1898, and in 1906, when he became chief producer at a theater of his own, he staged Symbolist plays that employed his novel ideas of nonrepresentational theater. Rebellious against the stylized naturalism of Stanislavsky, he directed actors to behave in puppetlike, mechanistic ways, the be-

- ginning of an innovative theatrical approach known as *biomechanics*. Konstantin Stanislavsky (1863–1938) developed the famous acting system which is named after him.
3. Léon Bakst (1866–1924) studied at the Imperial Academy of Arts at St. Petersburg. In 1899 he co-founded the journal *Mir Iskusstva* (*World of Art*) with Sergei Diaghilev. In 1900 he began to design scenery at the Heritage court theater, and in 1906 he started designing sets and costumes for Diaghilev’s new ballet company, the Ballets Russes. He became its chief designer, and with the huge success of *Scheherazade* and *Carnaval* in 1910, his costumes sparked a rage for bold designs in contemporary fashion.
 4. Adolphe Appia (1862–1928) was a Swiss stage designer whose views on the interpretive use of lighting helped bring new realism to twentieth-century theatrical productions. He wrote two influential books, *La Mise en scène du drame Wagnérien* (1895) and *Die Musik und die Inszenierung* (1899), which complemented his production of sets at La Scala opera house in Milan and the Basel opera house. Georg Fuchs (1877–1949) founded the Artists Theater (Künstler-Theater) in Munich in 1907. He advocated a “bas-relief” stage, a shallow acting area where the scenery was restricted to a backdrop and a few properties, laying the main emphasis on dialogue. He also had a theater designed for him by the architect Max Littman (1877–1949), in which the acting area could be extended forward by covering the orchestra pit and the size of the stage opening could be changed by adjusting the inner proscenium. Fritz Erler (1868–1940) was a painter who resided in Munich from 1896 on, and who collaborated on stage designs with Georg Fuchs, particularly their production of Goethe’s *Faust* in 1908; he also did stage designs for Max Reinhardt the next year in Berlin, but after that resumed his career as a painter. Erler followed Fuchs’s idea that a shallow stage, one with little depth to it, encouraged the audience to be more focused on the characters. Max Reinhardt (1873–1943) was a stage director and theatrical manager. After acting in Salzburg and Berlin, in 1901 he became artistic director of the Schall und Rauch Theater in Berlin and in 1903 he concurrently became director of the Neues Theater (later Schiffbauerdamm Theater). He presented new works and classical drama with imaginative interpretations, and his directing encouraged a move away from naturalism toward a more poetic style. After many successes in the 1910s and 1920s, he fled Germany in 1933 and moved to the United States.
 5. Harley Granville-Barker (1877–1946) was a English dramatist and producer whose naturalist stagings, in an era otherwise characterized by theatrical artificiality, had much influence in the period 1900–1914. Gordon Craig (1872–1966) was an English actor, theater director, designer, and theorist. He staged important productions in London between 1900 and 1903, marked by simplicity and unity of concept, emphasizing the movement of actors and light—and all financial disasters. In 1904 he left for Italy, where he wrote *The Art of the Theater* (1905) and *On the Art of Theater* (1911), as well as editing a journal, *The Mask*.
 6. Giovanni Piranesi (1720–1778) was an Italian draftsman and printmaker, famous for visionary dungeons and depictions of the classical ruins found in Rome and its vicinity. Giuseppe Galli Bibiena (1696–1757) was born at Parma but worked for the courts of Vienna, Munich, and Prague. He designed the decorations for the Vienna opera (1742), did stage designs for the opera in Dresden, and designed the interior of the theater at Bayreuth. Carlo Galli Bibiena (1728–1787), his son, worked in many cities, but is best known for a book illustrating the sets for five operas that he did. Pietro di Gottardo Gonzago (1751–1831) was an Italian painter and stage designer who was much influenced by the works of Canaletto and Piranesi. He made his debut as a stage designer in 1779 at the Teatro alla Scala in Milan and designed over sixty productions in Rome, Milan, Genoa, and other cities. His architectural designs were characterized by harmony, clarity, and classical grandeur.

First published as the concluding chapter of *Guerra, sola igiene del mondo* (*War, the Only Hygiene of the World*), which was published in August 1915; republished in *L'Italia futurista* 2, no. 6 (25 March 1917), 1, though this latter version omits all the text beginning with the words: “*This program will defeat. . .*” The text includes three earlier political manifestos which provide an overview of Marinetti’s political evolution, all signaled in the text in bold type. The first dates from November 1909, written to anticipate the upcoming general elections that year. The second, originally dated 11 October 1911, was written at the outbreak of the Italo-Turkish war. The third was originally dated 11 October 1913.

1. The “Libyan War” was the Italo-Turkish War of October 1911, which included the siege of Tripoli that Marinetti witnessed as a war correspondent and described in *The Battle of Tripoli* (*La Bataille de Tripoli; La battaglia di Tripoli*).
2. Major-General Vittorio Asinari di Bernezzo (1876–1943), commander of the Third Corps in Milan, was suspended in 1910 for delivering anti-Austrian harangues to his officers.
3. Ajax is one of the Greek warriors in Homer’s *Iliad*; later, when the arms of the celebrated Achilles were awarded to Odysseus rather than to him, he went mad and killed himself.
4. For “dreadnought” see “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 4.

DYNAMIC AND SYNOPTIC DECLAMATION

First published as a preface to Francesco Cangiullo’s book *Piedigrotta* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1916), then issued as an independent leaflet in March 1916.

1. An exhibition of Balla’s work, titled *Exhibition of Passéist Paintings by the Painter Giacomo Balla*, was held at the Società Italiana Lampade Elettriche “Z” in Rome in March 1916.
2. Boccioni’s lecture in Naples took place in January 1916. Somewhat reworked, it was published as a “Manifesto to Southern Painters” in the journal *Vela latina* (*Lateen Sail*) no. 4 (15 February 1916). The text is now reprinted in Umberto Boccioni, *Gli scritti editi e inediti*, ed. Zeno Birolli (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1971), 205–216. Nothing is known about his lecture in Mantua.
3. The “lecture-declamation,” held at the Institute of Fine Arts in Naples, took place in January 1916.
4. Beginning with the issue of January 1916, copies of the Neapolitan journal *Vela latina* (*Lateen Sail*) announced, beneath the title: “Two Futurist pages in every issue, edited by the Futurist poet Francesco Cangiullo.” The “Futurist pages,” some of which already appeared in 1915, have been republished as *Vela latina: Pagine futuriste, 1915–1916*, preface by Stelio Martini (Florence: SPES, 1979).
5. Private concerts in Marinetti’s home began in 1913. See Introduction, 17–18, and “The Art of Noises,” 133–139.
6. That crowds, or the masses, were feminine was a commonplace made current by Gustave Le Bon in *La Psychologie des foules* (*The Psychology of Crowds*) (Paris: Alcan, 1896), a work reprinted often.
7. The event was a reading of the free-word poem “Piedigrotta,” written by Francesco Cangiullo. On the title, see Introduction, 20–21; see also the program notes included in Marinetti’s comments.
8. Niccolò Paganini (1782–1840) was a violinist whose performances made his name into a by-word for the popular virtuoso. Jan Kubelík (1880–1940) was a Czech violinist whose talents earned him the moniker “the second Paganini.” He debuted in London in 1904 and thereafter he led an active concert career. Benozzo Gozzoli (1420–1497), a Florentine painter, is

- famous for his fresco in the chapel of the Palazzo Medici in Florence, which depicts (among other things) many angels playing violas. For the *scetavajasse* painted by Balla, see fig. 27.
9. A few days before the debut of “Piedigrotta” the Futurists staged a mock funeral of followers of the philosopher Benedetto Croce.
 10. The text that Marinetti declaimed, “Bombardment,” is included in its entirety in Luigi Rusolo’s “Art of Noises,” 136. It was the work that Marinetti most often recited or declaimed when performing. It proved popular enough for Blum & Co., Limited (220 Old Street, London) to issue a 10-inch gramophone record in their popular Diploma Series, which featured Marinetti reading five works, including “Bombardment.” An anonymous account of Marinetti’s performance at the Doré Gallery appeared in *The Times* (London), 1 May 1914, 10, col. e:

FUTURIST LANGUAGE.

POETRY RECITATION WITH A HAMMER AND BIG DRUM.

At the Doré Gallery last night Signor Marinetti, speaking in a room hung with many specimens of the ultra-modern school of art, delivered himself of a spirited apologia of Futurist poetry. His method of *mots en liberté* was, he underlined, simply the last phase of an evolution already in progress. The prosody of old-fashioned poetry had given place to *vers libre*; he proposed to take one step further and get rid of syntax too. If there is in this system any reason why the poet should not free himself from the tyranny of words also, Signor Marinetti certainly did not indicate it last night.

Futurist poetry, it appears, will be written in mathematical formulas. Only the algebraic symbol can give it the stylistic power which it requires if it is to render the modern scientific view of the cosmic system. Further, it must rely on declamation, as all good poetry does (this was the shrewdest point in the lecture), and not be ashamed of making its appeal to the senses, since it is the eye and the ear that make the great poet. Lastly, Signor Marinetti gave two recitations, a superannuated type of poem on “The Automobile,” and his own Futurist poem on “The Siege of Adrianapole.” His declamation of the latter, which involved imitations of artillery with a hammer, and the thumping of a big drum behind the scenes, was exhilarating for the audience, but must have been severe work for the performer.

Wyndham Lewis also recalls Marinetti’s declamation in, *Blasting and Bombardiering: An Autobiography (1914–1926)* (1937; repr., London: John Calder, 1982), 33–34.

THE NEW RELIGION-MORALITY OF SPEED

Published as an independent leaflet in May 1916, then in the first issue of the journal *L’Italia futurista* 1, no. 1 (June 1916): 1.

1. See “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” 51.
2. Marinetti uses the English word *punch* in the original Italian, then explains its meaning to Italian readers. *Knockout*, also in English in the original, is left unexplained.
3. See the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature,” note 1.

FUTURIST CINEMA

First published as an independent leaflet in September 1916, then republished in *L’Italia futurista* 1, no. 10 (15 November 1916): 1. The work was intended to preface *Futurist Life*, a film completed in the summer of 1916, which debuted in early 1917 (see fig. 74).

1. For the manifesto, “Futurist Synthetic Theater,” see 204–209. For Ettore Berti and Luigi

- Zoncada, see “Futurist Synthetic Theater,” note 6. Gualtiero Tumiati (1876–1957) was an Italian stage actor, theatrical director, and film actor. He debuted in 1906 and became a regular actor at the Teatro Lirico in Milan, playing many roles. As the theater’s artistic director he took interest in verse drama, the background to his collaborating with Marinetti on the theatrical syntheses he produced in 1915 and 1916. Annibale Ninchi (1887–1965) was an Italian actor, who often played powerful or arrogant characters, employed by the Teatro Argentina in Rome, where he became company director and lead comic actor from 1914 to 1916, the period when he collaborated with Marinetti in producing theatrical syntheses.
2. *Futurist Synthetic Theater, or Teatro sintetico futurista*, 2 vols. (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1916).
 3. The manifesto on “The Variety Theater” is found on 159–164.
 4. For “Weights, Measures, and Prices of Artistic Genius,” see 181–186.
 5. Giovanni Giolitti (1842–1928) was five times prime minister of Italy. During his fourth ministry (1911–1912) he bowed to nationalist pressures and began the Italo-Turkish war (1911–1912), which ended with the possession of Libya. But in 1914–1915, when out of power, he opposed Italian participation in the Great War. He thought Italy could achieve its territorial ambitions through diplomacy and feared that war might unleash a revolution. Hence Marinetti’s scorn here.
 6. Giosuè Carducci (1837–1907) was an Italian neoclassical poet attacked by Marinetti repeatedly.

WOMEN OF THE NEAR FUTURE [1]

First published in *L’Italia futurista* 2, no. 18 (17 June 1917): 1. For the circumstances, see Introduction, 22–23.

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST DANCE

First published as an independent leaflet in July 1917, then republished in *L’Italia futurista* 2, no. 1 (8 July 1917): 1. It was republished again in *Roma futurista* no. 73 (7 March 1920), this time titled “Futurist Dance.” A French version appeared as an independent leaflet, probably in 1920, and was republished in *L’Esprit nouveau*, no. 3 (1920), edited by Le Corbusier and Amadée Ozenfant.

1. The *zamacueca*, danced to rapid, rhythmic guitar music, was originally a courtship dance; it has a couple pursue and retreat, pass and circle about each other while twirling handkerchiefs. The *maxixe* was a ballroom dance that evolved in Brazil around 1870 and became an international craze in the years before World War I; it fused elements from the habana, the polka, and rural Afro-Brazilian dance. The *santafé*, a folk dance from Paraguay, was a high point of popular festivals; its happy music had polka rhythms.
2. The Ballets Russes was a dance company (1909–1929) formed by the impresario Sergei Diaghilev, which featured the powerful dancing of Vaslav Nijinsky (1890–1950). From 1909 to 1914 it was the toast of Paris and London. Diaghilev was brilliant in combining music and choreography: the company performed *L’Après-midi d’un faune* (Debussy) and *The Firebird*, *Petrouschka*, and *Le sacre du printemps* with music by Stravinsky. Nijinsky’s inhuman, angular style of dance and raw athleticism were a revelation to contemporary audiences.
3. Isadora Duncan (1877–1927) became famous in the period 1901–1914 for her freestyle dancing and her Grecian-style drapery.
4. On Valentine de Saint-Point, see the Biographical Sketches.
5. Emile Jacques-Dalcroze (1865–1950) was a Swiss composer and music teacher who devel-

oped eurhythmics (an approach to music education based on whole body movements) after 1892 when he became professor of harmony at the Conservatoire de Musique in Geneva. He published books of directions and music that explained his *méthode*; their sales were large, fueled by the interest in dance which Loie Fuller (see next note) and Isadora Duncan (see note 3) precipitated.

6. Loie Fuller (1862–1928) was an American-born actress, dancer, and choreographer. She developed dance routines in which shimmering silk fabrics were used to highlight body movements. Her first tour in France took place in 1893, and she soon developed her own company. In 1901–1902 she took on Isadora Duncan (see note 3), still struggling for recognition, and turned her into a star. Fuller’s annual tours continued to be popular until the outbreak of World War I. The cakewalk, which has no associations with Fuller, was originally a plantation dance characterized by a prancing strut, perhaps intended by slaves to be satirical of the masters’ dancing style. It became a part of traveling minstrel shows, then migrated from the pre-vaudeville stage to the ballroom floor, where it was popular from 1910 to 1920 in Europe.
7. “A soldier in the mountains” translates *un Alpino*, literally “an Alpine.” The *Alpini* were noted for their ferocity during World War I.
8. Savoia is Italian for Savoy, the royal family of Italy from 1860 to 1946; when charging into combat, Italian soldiers shouted *Savoia!*

VARIATIONS ON THE THEME OF “WOMAN.” TO SAVE WOMAN??!!

First published in *L’Italia futurista* 2, no. 27 (26 August 1917): 2.

Nothing is known about Giovanni Fiorentino, which may well be a pseudonym, other than that he contributed four polemical essays on the “woman question” to *L’Italia futurista*, all between August and November 1917. This was the first, while the other three were his replies to the criticisms which that one had aroused.

1. Corrado Morosello had contributed an essay titled “A Reply to Jean-Jacques [Rousseau]” (“Risposta a Gian Giacomo”), in *L’Italia futurista* 2, no. 25 (5 August 1917): 2. Social changes brought about by the Great War, he urged, would ensure that men and women would be equal after the war, and so “save woman” from the low state to which earlier social practice had consigned her.

A TRANQUIL THOUGHT

First published in *L’Italia futurista* 2, no. 30 (7 October 1917): 2.

1. Marinetti’s *How to Seduce Women*, or *Come si seducono le donne* (Edizioni da Centomila Copie, 1917) provoked controversy when it first appeared. For a synopsis, see the Introduction, 22.

WOMEN OF THE NEAR FUTURE [2]

First published in *L’Italia futurista* 2, no. 30 (7 October 1917), 1.

MANIFESTO OF THE ITALIAN FUTURIST PARTY

First published in the last issue of *L’Italia futurista* 3, no. 39 (11 February 1918): 1. It was reprinted in the first issue of *Roma futurista* 1, no. 1 (20 September 1918): 1. The latter journal, significantly, bore the subtitle: *Newspaper of the Futurist Political Party* (*Giornale del Partito Politico Futurista*). The text was also issued as an independent leaflet.

THE VOTE FOR WOMEN

First published in *Roma futurista* 2, no. 13 (30 March 1919): 2.

1. Giuseppe Mazzini (1805–1872) was a leader of the Italian Risorgimento (see “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 2). Born in Genoa, he became a revolutionary agitator exiled from Genoa and Piedmont in 1831, then expelled from Switzerland and France. In London he launched numerous societies and newspapers. When Italy became a nation under a monarchy in 1860 he remained true to his republican principles and did not return. He died in England.

The passage cited by Norchi is a composite quotation from two different sources. Its first three sentences are from a book by Mazzini called *Dei doveri dell'uomo* (*On the Duties of Man*) (1860), a series of ethical and political meditations, and are found at the beginning of chapter 6, “The Duties of the Family.” Norchi has omitted four sentences intervening between the first and second sentences that she cites, and four more between the second and third. Her fourth and final sentence, instead, is from a letter that Mazzini wrote on 7 August 1865 to Salvatore Morelli (1824–1880), commenting on Morelli’s parliamentary motion (not passed) that women be given equal rights under the law. Under the title “La Emancipazione della donna e la camera,” it is found in *Scritti editi e inediti di Giuseppe Mazzini*, 18 vols. (Milan: G. Daelli, 1861–1891), 15: 3.

FUTURIST MANIFESTO OF WOMEN’S FASHION

First published in the journal *Roma futurista* (29 February 1920).

BEYOND COMMUNISM

First published as an independent pamphlet in August 1920 (Milan: Edizioni de *La Testa di Ferro*). A later edition of the work featured a note, stating: “Written in December 1919 in the prison of San Vittore, where Marinetti was locked up with Mussolini, Vecchi, Bolzon, and fifteen Arditi for the crime of an attempt against the security of the state and the organization of armed bands, in the wake of the Socialist electoral victory.”

1. Vittorio Veneto was a decisive victory of the Italian army over that of the Austro-Hungarian empire, on 3 November 1918, eight days before the armistice which brought an end to World War I. It took place in northeastern Italy, north of Treviso. The battle was one of five in what is now northeastern Italy that acquired exemplary status in Italian assessments of the war. The first was a series of Battles of the Isonzo, a river located just inside what was then Austrian territory. The Italians assaulted six times before they finally captured the city of Gorizia on 17 August 1916. The second was the rout at Caporetto in late October and early November 1917, when the Austro-Hungarian army pushed back the Italians more than sixty miles in ten days, all the way to the River Piave, a demoralizing blow that led many to question the war. The third was the Battle of the Piave, which took place in June 1918, when Italian forces defeated a powerful Austrian offensive along the River Piave, a victory for Italy that was soon claimed as a triumph of the ordinary soldier’s willpower, “the sacred moment” as Mussolini would call it. The fourth occurred in August 1918, when General Capello led his troops across the rocky Carso range of mountains and retook Gorizia. The fifth was Vittorio Veneto.
2. On Marinetti’s imprisonment in 1919, see Introduction, 27.
3. Immediately after the October revolution, when Lenin and the Bolsheviks seized power from the provisional government which had succeeded the czar in February 1917, Russia withdrew from further participation in World War I (“renouncing one war”). In early 1918, various armies commanded by Russian generals, with logistical support from Allied gov-

ernments, tried to oust the Bolsheviks from power. The Russian Civil War lasted from 1918 to 1920, pitting Reds (Bolshevik forces) against Whites (the anti-Bolsheviks). Aleksander Kolchak (1878–1920), a former naval commander, coordinated White forces in Manchuria. Defeated at Omsk in November 1919, he fled with his forces to Irkutsk, was taken by the Bolsheviks, and was summarily executed in February 1920. Anton Ivanovich Denikin (1872–1948), a former general in the Russian Imperial Army, became commander of the White forces in southern Russia from April 1918 on. He was successful in early 1919, but was defeated in October. In 1920 he turned over his command to another general and settled in France. In 1919 armies of the newly restored Polish republic attacked Russia and thrust into the Ukraine; but by late 1919 Russian troops had repulsed them and proceeded to invade Poland. They, in turn, were rebuffed just outside Warsaw in August 1920. The Russian Civil War ended a month later.

4. “Lieutenants and captains,” or officers from the lower ranks of command, were among the most enthusiastic supporters of Fascism.
5. See the “Manifesto of Futurist Musicians,” note 5.
6. On 10 September 1919, three months before Marinetti wrote *Beyond Communism*, Italy signed the Treaty of Saint-Germain with Austria, formalizing decisions reached earlier in the conference that led to the Treaty of Versailles. Austria ceded to Italy the provinces of Venezia Giulia and Trent. But the exact boundary along the Brenner Pass, a pass through the Alps on the Austro-Italian border, was deferred to the future. The “Adriatic question” had also been resolved when it had been decided that Fiume, on the coast of Yugoslavia, would be a free city, belonging to neither Italy nor Yugoslavia. But in September 1919 it had been seized by D’Annunzio and his henchmen, leaving its future uncertain when Marinetti was writing in December 1919.
7. The “incurable neutralist” was Vittorio Emanuele Orlando (1860–1952), who became prime minister of Italy in October 1917, following the defeat of Caporetto, and governed until June 1919. He was Italy’s spokesman at the postwar talks in Paris which were to decide territorial realignments after the war. Italy’s claims to most of Dalmatia, in Yugoslavia, were rejected because its inhabitants were chiefly Slavs, as was its claim to the city of Fiume. On 24 April, Orlando left the negotiations and returned to Rome, demanding an apology. Two weeks later, with no apology in sight, he returned to Paris, fearing that decisions would be made without him. By June, controversy over his diplomatic failures forced him to resign.
8. Marinetti, in Russia 8–26 February 1914, lectured in Moscow and St. Petersburg. The Society for Great Lectures was a booking agency.
9. Neither Lenin nor the Soviet Union adopted Futurism as its “official art.” But a diffuse Futurism was common among Russian avant-garde artists, and many who supported the October Revolution adopted Futurist motifs in propaganda between 1918 and 1920.
10. This remark echoes views that Marinetti expressed in *Roi Bombance*, a play he wrote in 1905; see Introduction, 4.
11. Abba Garima is a city in Ethiopia, where Italy tried to establish a colony in 1896; its forces were routed by the Ethiopians in the battle of Adua, a major defeat. Tripoli was taken by Italy in 1911 during the Italo-Turkish War (1911–1912), and Marinetti implies that this victory redeemed the earlier loss. For the other battles, see note 1.
12. *Re Baldoria* was the Italian translation of *Roi Bombance*; see Introduction, 4.
13. *Futurist Democracy* (*Democrazia futurista*) (Milan: Falchi, 1919).

TACTILISM

First published in French in the Parisian newspaper *Comoedia*, 16 January 1921, 1, reporting the lecture which Marinetti gave at the Maison de l’Oeuvre on 14 January 1921. A comment

by the editor noted that the lecture had taken place amid “le tumulte que l’on sait.” On Dadaists at the lecture, see Introduction, 29. An Italian version was published a few weeks later; the manifesto’s final paragraph is found only in the later Italian version.

1. Antignano is a resort city located on the Ligurian coast, where Marinetti increasingly spent time with Benedetta Cappa, whom he would marry in 1926.
2. Strikes broke out among steelworkers in the northern cities of Italy in late July and early August 1920, followed by the occupation of the Romeo automobile factory in Milan. In September a wave of factory occupations swept the peninsula. *Il Popolo d’Italia*, the newspaper edited by Mussolini, regretted the occupations but supported workers’ claims. The government, headed by Giovanni Giolitti, chose restraint, and by October the occupations ended.
3. “Competing” translates the word *concorrenti*, which also means “concurrent” or “running together.”
4. Gorizia, a city northwest of Trieste, Italy, which was finally taken by the Italians in 1918.
5. Rachilde was the pen name of the French writer Marguerite Eymery Vallette (1860–1953). She wrote more than forty volumes of novels, poetry, plays, and critical prose. Marinetti reviewed one of her books in 1899 and they struck up a correspondence which developed into a friendship. *La Jongleuse* (1894), or *The Juggler* (trans. Melanie C. Hawthorne [New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1990]), recounts the story of a young woman who is in love with an inanimate object, an amphora, and is courted by a young medical student. In *Les Hors-Nature* (1897), or *The Unnatural Ones*, she describes a character who prefers a length of satin to a woman’s skin: “That is an artificial beauty, but it is really and supremely beautiful. All natural beauty has some defect. There is no skin or breast or shoulder whose touch could give me such a sensation.”
6. For Boccioni’s *Fusion of a Head and a Window*, see fig. 46.

THE THEATER OF SURPRISE

First published in the journal *Il Futurismo*, 11 January 1922, despite its “official date” of October 1921.

1. Marinetti refers to the manifestos on “The Variety Theater” (see 159–164) and “Futurist Synthetic Theater” (204–209).
2. Il Sodoma, byname of Giovanni Antonio Bazzi (1477–1549), was an artist employed by Pope Julius II to paint the Stanza della Segnatura in the Vatican in 1508. Raphael painted *The School of Athens* and *The Dispute over the Sacrament* in the same room from 1509 to 1510.
3. See the Biographical Sketches. Neri Nannetti published theatrical syntheses and free-word poems in the period 1916–1917. Mario Dessy contributed free-word poems to the journal *L’Italia futurista* in 1917 and in 1919 published two books: *Uno (One)* (Milan: Facchi), short stories with strong magical components; and *Vostro marito non va? . . . Cambiatelo! (Can’t Stand Your Husband? . . . Get a New One)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia), a collection of theatrical syntheses. He also published a study of the Italian comic actor Ettore Petrolini (*Ettore Petrolini* [Milan: Modernissima, 1921]). He continued contributing to Futurist journals into the early 1930s. Little is known about the others, who appear here in the order of their appearance in Marinetti’s list. Angelo Rognoni lived in Pavia, where he started a journal called *Folgore futurista (Futurist Lightning)*, which lasted for two issues, and wrote free-word poems that appeared in the journal *L’Italia futurista*. Much later he published a theatrical work *Il dottor Mattia (Doctor Kwazy)* (Pavia: Super, 1942) and *51 sintesi teatrali futuriste (51 Futurist Theatrical Syntheses)* (Rome: Clet, 1943). Gino Soggetti was from Pavia as well, and collaborated with Angelo Rognoni on the same journals. Ruggero Vasari contributed

occasionally to *Haschisch* (*Hashish*), a minor Futurist journal published in Catania during 1921–1922. Alfonso Dolce lived in Calabria and wrote *A piedi nudi: Teatro sintetico senza veli* (*With Naked Feet: Synthetic Theater Without Veils* (Cropani: Gens nostra, [1921]). Filiberto Mateldi contributed to *Il montello*, a fortnightly journal for soldiers that was published for several months in 1918. Luciano Molinari (1880–1940) was a variety theater singer, actor, and mimic, noted for his elegant style. He also worked in theatrical revues, including some performed at the Teatro Lirico in Milan, and in several films. His book *Morite tutti* (*You Should All Die*) (Naples: Bideri, 1916) was a whimsical work based on actual performances from the years 1915–1916, but Marinetti liked to think of it as a Futurist production. Nothing is known about the avant-garde group cited by Marinetti, or the Czechoslovakian theater.

4. On 30 September 1921, the first performances of the “theater of surprise” were staged at the Teatro Mercadante in Naples, with actors from the company of Rodolfo De Angelis (1888–1941), an actor, minor playwright, and critic. Others took place at the Teatro Garibaldi in Palermo, on 4 October; the Salone Margherita in Rome, on 12 and 13 October; the Folies Bergère in Florence, on 14 October; the Teatro Giardiono d’Italia in Genoa, on 18 October; and the Teatro Maffei in Turin, on 22 October.
5. Antonio Fornari, known as Totò Fornari, was briefly a member of the Futurist Avant-garde of Italy group, which was founded by Volt (see his Biographical Sketch) in 1919 in Rome. Nothing is known about his brother apart from what Marinetti says here.
6. Pasqualino Cangiullo was the brother of Francesco Cangiullo (see the Biographical Sketches). For Totò Fornari, see note 5. Antonio Marasco (1896–1977) is known for having developed a brief-lived journal of dissident Futurism in Florence, *Supremazia futurista* (1934), which lasted for one issue. Bernini has not been identified.
7. Aldo Mantia and Mario Bartoccini wrote a manifesto titled “Musical Improvisation” (“L’improvvisazione musicale”) in early 1921, and served as “improvisers” at Futurist performances in late 1921. Virgilio Mortari was a musician from Florence who participated in Futurist “surprise” performances from 1921 to 1923; he wrote a *Fox-Trot for the Theater of Surprise* (Naples: Bixio, 1923). Nothing whatever is known about Franco Baldi.

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST MECHANICAL ART

First published in a special issue of a briefly revived *La nuova Lacerba* 1, no. 20 (20 June 1922): 7. A longer version, this time with Enrico Prampolini listed as co-author, was published in *Noi*, 2nd series, 1, no. 2 (May 1923): 1–2.

THE ITALIAN EMPIRE

First published in *L’Impero* (*Empire*) 1, no. 38 (25 April 1923). It was reprinted as the concluding chapter in Marinetti’s book *Futurismo e fascismo* (*Futurism and Fascism*) (Foligno: Franco Campitelli, 1924).

1. For “dreadnought” see “Manifesto of the Futurist Painters,” note 4.
2. The text quotes from the same document that is cited in the “The Futurist Political Movement” (February 1918), 217.
3. On these battles of World War I, see *Beyond Communism*, note 1.
4. “Unequalism” was a notion that Marinetti had developed in a manifesto, “Every Day a Different Job for All Men: Unequalism and Artocracy,” published in the newspaper *Il Resto del Carlino*, 1 November 1922, republished as part of *Futurismo e fascismo* (*Futurism and Fascism*) (Foligno: Franco Campitelli, 1924). Now accessible in Luciano de Maria, ed., *Teoria e futurista*, 2nd ed. (Milan: Mondadori, 1990), 549–553. Presenting art as a solace from daily labors,

it urges: “Increase the number of human inequalities. Let individual originality break out and increase everywhere.”

5. On this battle, see *Beyond Communism*, note 1.
6. Redipuglia is a small village near the Isonzo River; it became the site of a cemetery of the Third Army, containing over 100,000 bodies. A Fascist military monument was built there in 1938.

FASCISM AND FUTURISM

First published in the Italian newspaper *Il secolo*, 3 July 1923.

1. G. K. Chesterton, *Illustrated London News*, 23 December 1922; reprinted in a collection of essays, *Fancies Versus Fads* (London: Methuen, 1923).
2. Prezolini is quoting from “Artistic Rights Championed by the Italian Futurists: A Manifesto to the Fascist Government” (“I diritti artistici propugnati dai futuristi italiani: Manifesto al Governo fascista”), a work by Marinetti, Mario Carli, and Emilio Settimelli. It was first published in the journal *L’Impero* in March 1923, which is Prezolini’s source, then was incorporated into Marinetti’s book *Futurismo e fascismo* in 1924. Now in Luciano De Maria, ed., *F. T. Marinetti: Teoria e invenione futurista*, 2nd ed. (Milan: Mondadori, 1990), 562–572, here 563. On the *Arditi* and the *Fasci di combattimento*, see Introduction, 24–25.
3. See note 2.
4. From “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” point 10, in this edition on 51.
5. Edmondo De Amicis (1846–1908) is noted above all for *Cuore: Un libro per ragazzi* (*Heart: A Book for Boys*) (1887), a collection of patriotic school stories set in Turin in the 1880s. It recounts tales of pupils writing essays on such subjects as “Why Do You Love Italy,” or learning about heroic deeds performed during the Risorgimento. Alessandro Manzoni (1785–1873) was Italy’s finest novelist of the nineteenth century, best known for *I promessi sposi* (*The Betrothed*) (1827), a sweeping historical novel. In citing these two classical authors from the Risorgimento, Prezolini is alluding to public discussion about higher education that began after Fascism came to power in late 1922. Mussolini, assembling a government seemingly above politics, appointed the philosopher and liberal Giovanni Gentile (1875–1944) as his minister of education. He initiated a reform of the Italian school system that emphasized classical studies (Latin was made a requirement) and the great authors of the Risorgimento tradition. He joined the Fascist Party in March 1923.
6. For Fiume, see Introduction, 27.
7. Volapük was an artificial language for international use, based on English, Latin, German, and other European tongues, and invented by Johann Martin Schleyer around 1880.
8. After 1917, Tristan Tzara (1866–1963) became a leading voice of Dada, an anarchic art and literary movement that began in Zurich in early 1916. He moved to Paris in 1920, but Dada collapsed already in 1922. See the Introduction, 29.
9. See Mario Carli’s entry among the Biographical Sketches; the passage is from prose poem no. 1 in the series of ten which make up Mario Carli’s *Notte filtrate: 10 liriche* (*Filtered Nights: 10 Lyrical Poems*) (Florence: Edizioni de *L’Italia futurista*, 1918).
10. Alessandro Manzoni, *I promessi sposi*, ed. Lanfranco Caretti (Milan: Mursia, 1966), midway in chapter 17, 269.
11. Prezolini is quoting from a two-page manifesto by R. Clerici, M. Leskowich, and P. Albrighi, titled “Svegliatevi, studenti d’Italia” (Wake Up, Students of Italy); it was printed as a leaflet in May 1921, issued by the Direzione del Movimento Futurista (the Executive Committee of the Futurist Movement).
12. On “the government committee” and Gentile, see above, note 5.

First published in the journal *Vetrina futurista di letteratura-teatro-arte*, 2nd series (n.d. [1927]).

1. “The primitives of a new sensibility” is a phrase that first appears in “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (1910); see 67. The first Futurist Congress, held 23–25 November 1924, in Rome, was organized by Mino Somenzi and Fedele Azari to commemorate Marinetti’s achievements.
2. For all these painters, except Marasco, see the Biographical Sketches; on him, see “The Theater of Surprise,” note 5.
3. For Dottori, see the Biographical Sketches.

ELECTRICAL ADVERTISING SIGNS: AN OPEN LETTER TO HIS EXCELLENCY MUSSOLINI

First published in the weekly journal *L'Impero* 5, no. 37 (12 February 1927): 1. On this journal, see Introduction, 30–31.

MANIFESTO OF AEROPAINTING

First published in the *Gazzetta del Popolo*, a daily newspaper in Turin, on 22 September 1929. A French version was published in the Parisian newspaper *Comoedia*, 14 February 1931. It was republished in Italian in *Artcrazia*, Supplement to *Futurismo* 1, no. 3 (15–30 July 1931), and again in French in *Stile futurista* 1, no. 2 (August 1934).

1. For these authors and works, see the Biographical Sketches.
2. Fedele Azari (1896–1930) was a Futurist painter and writer. His painting *Perspectives of Flight* (1926) marked the beginning of aeropainting. For Dottori, see the Biographical Sketches.
3. Marinetti advanced this notion in an essay that accompanied the first publication of this manifesto in 1929; see the headnote to the manifesto.
4. For these artists, see the Biographical Sketches. Pippo Oriani (1909–1972), a painter, joined the Futurist movement in 1927. In 1934 he collaborated with Fillia and Mino Rosso on sketches for bas-relief murals, exhibited in the First National Exhibition of Bas-Relief Murals for Fascist Buildings, held in Genoa, in 1934.

MANIFESTO OF FUTURIST SACRED ART

First published in *La Gazzetta del Popolo*, 23 June 1931. It then reappeared in five different journals and newspapers: *La Provincia* (Padua), 23 June 1931; *Oggi e domani* (Rome), 6 July 1931; *Il Piccolo della Sera* (Trieste), 8 July 1931; *La Città Nuova* (Turin), no. 3 (15 March 1932); and *Stile futurista* (Turin) 1, no. 1 (July 1934).

1. For Severini and Dottori, see the Biographical Sketches. The churches that Fillia has in mind are illustrated in a book that he published, *La nuova architettura* (Turin: Unione tipografico editrice torinese, 1931), but he does not specify them.
2. For the battle of the Carso, see *Beyond Communism*, note 1.
3. For Balla, Benedetta, Depero, Dottori, Fillia, Munari, Prampolini, Tato, and Thayaht see the Biographical Sketches. For Marasco, see “The Theater of Surprise,” note 5, and for Pippo Oriani “The Manifesto of Aeropainting,” note 4. Cesare Andreoni (1903–1961) participated in Futurist exhibitions from 1925 to 1940. Nicolai Diulgheroff (1901–1982), a designer and architect born in Bulgaria, was a student at the Bauhaus in 1923 and received his degree in architecture at the University of Turin in 1932. He was close to Fillia and exhibited regularly at the Futurist rooms in the Venice Biennale. Mario Duse, a painter active in the Milanese Futurist group from 1929 to 1940, was a commercial artist by profession; among his many

clients was Pirelli, for whom he designed posters. Alf Gaudenzi (1908–1927) was active in the Turin group of Futurists which included Diulgheroff. He exhibited paintings in Futurist exhibitions from 1927 to 1934, when he abandoned painting. Ugo Pozzo (1900–1981) was also a part of the Turin group; a book designer, caricaturist, and cartoon animator, he exhibited at nearly all the Futurist exhibitions of the period. Mino Rosso (1904–1963) was yet another member of the Turin group of Futurists. He exhibited in the exhibition of *Enrico Prampolini and Futurist Aero-paintings* in 1932, as well as other exhibitions. Tullio d'Albisola was the pseudonym of Tullio Mazzotti (1899–1971), a Futurist sculptor and poet. He published books, including works by Marinetti and himself, printed on what he called “litho-tin”—shiny metallic pages in which overlays of red and yellow contrast with the opacity of black type (=sSee fig. 85). Nothing is known about the other people in Marinetti's list (Ambrosi, Belli, Caviglioni, Cocchia, Lepore, and Zucco).

4. For Fillia, see the Biographical Sketches. For Pipo Oriani, see “The Manifesto of Aeropainting,” note 4. For Alf Gaudenzi and Mino Rosso, see above, note 3. Paolo Alcide Saladin (1900–) was a member of the Turin group of Futurists throughout the 1920s, exhibited regularly at Futurist exhibitions, and wrote *Fillia pittore futurista (Fillia, Futurist painter)* (Turin: Edizioni d'arte, La Città futurista, 1929). Pozzo, Pogolotti, and Vegnazia, evidently Futurist artists, have not been further identified.

FUTURISM AND ADVERTISING ART

First published in a special book-length magazine that Depero produced for the Campari company, collecting advertising work by himself for them, *Numero unico Futurista Campari*, 1931.

1. The Pirelli Company was set up in the year 1872 in Milan by GiovanBattista Pirelli; at first producing rubber goods, by World War I it was a powerful multinational advanced in producing cables.
2. Ansaldo was a metallurgical firm which had first opened in 1853 in Genoa. Fiat was founded in 1899 in Turin by a group of entrepreneurs in Turin led by Giovanni Agnelli. The Caproni company manufactured airplanes, an industry much favored by the Fascist government. Itala was an automobile manufacturing firm in Turin, founded in 1903; Lancia, another, was founded in 1906. Isotta Fraschini was a Milanese automobile manufacturer, founded in 1904; Alfa-Romeo was founded by English entrepreneurs in Milan in 1906; and Bianchi, a Milanese automobile producer from 1905 on, was originally a bicycle manufacturer, founded in 1885.
3. In 1933 Italo Balbo, who was the *ras* (local Fascist boss) of Ferrara, flew a group of twenty-four Savoia Marchetti S-55 transatlantic airplanes from Orbetello, Italy, to Chicago and back. The regime made much of the attendant publicity. Francesco de Pinedo (1890–1933) began his career as a naval officer serving in the Italo-Turkish War (1911–1912) and in World War I. In 1925 he completed a flight of 55,000 kilometers in a Savoia flying boat; in 1927 he and Carlo Del Prete crossed the Atlantic and returned to Italy in flight that took 270 hours covered 43,000 kilometers. He was promoted to general and deputy Air Force chief of staff, but fell victim to a rivalry with Italo Balbo and abandoned active service in 1933. The other people in Depero's list were Balbo's co-pilots.
4. Paul Colin (1892–1985) was a commercial artist, celebrated when his posters of the African American singer Josephine Baker became the rage of Paris in the 1920s. He designed many other posters.
5. A. M. Cassandre (1901–1968) was a successful commercial artist; his work was exhibited at the Museum of Modern Art in 1936.

First published in the *Gazzetta del popolo*, 22 September 1933; reprinted in *Il Futurismo*, 1 October 1933. In French translation, with the title “Manifeste de la Radio Futuriste,” it was republished in *Stile futurista* 1, no. 1 (July 1934).

1. The Second Futurist Congress was held in Bologna in the spring of 1933.
2. The verb “picking up” here refers to picking up radio signals.
3. Radio City, now known as Radio City Music Hall, was a broadcasting and entertainment complex sited within Rockefeller Center in New York; it opened on 27 December 1932. Alfred Goldsmith (1890–1974) was founding editor (1913) and first editor (1913–1954) of *Proceedings of the Institute of Radio Engineers*.
4. Paul Reboux (1877–1963) was a prolific French writer of comedies who turned his hand to the new genre of radio dramas in the 1930s. Tristan Bernard (1866–1947) was a prolific French author of comedies and journalism. In the 1930s he also turned his hand to radio dramas. Friedrich Wolf (188–1953) was trained as a doctor, but wrote his first play in 1924, a work of “socialist realism.” He joined the Communist party in 1928 and moved to the Soviet Union in 1933. His first radio drama, *Krassin rettet Italia* (*Krassin Saves Italy*), dates from 1929. The other six authors cited by Marinetti have not been identified.
5. See the “Manifesto of Futurist Musicians,” note 5.

BAS-RELIEF MURALS

First published in *Stile futurista* 1, no. 2 (August 1934). On the circumstances that prompted it, see note 3 below.

1. *Fillia* is echoing the title of Marinetti’s essay “Geometrical and Mechanical Splendor and the Numerical Sensibility,” 175–180.
2. On the “Exhibition of the Fascist Revolution,” see Introduction, 35.
3. The First National Exhibition of Bas-Relief Murals was held in Genoa in November and December 1934. It was organized by the Futurists in response to the Triennale show in Milan in 1933, which had hosted artists proposing both pictorial and bas-relief murals. That show had been accompanied by a “Manifesto of Mural Painting” by Mario Sironi, published in the magazine *La Colonna* (*The Column*) in December 1933. *Fillia*’s manifesto was partly a response to Sironi’s and partly a preface to the Futurist exhibition to follow. Both were part of a debate about the political function of art under mass regimes eager to shape the minds of their citizens. The debate had roots in the 1920s, when artists such as Fernand Léger had urged that murals, rather than easel painting, would bridge the gap between art and life.

RESPONSE TO HITLER

First published in a weekly Italian review that was published in Paris, *Il merlo* 4, no. 162 (1 August 1937); republished in the *Cronaca prealpina*, 4 August 1937, on the front page, and probably in a good many other newspapers as well. Marinetti was responding to Adolf Hitler’s speech inaugurating the “Great Exhibition of German Art, 1937,” delivered at the Haus der deutschen Kunst in Munich in late July 1937. The “Great Exhibition of German Art” was meant to contrast with the contemporaneous Degenerate Art (*Entartete Kunst*) exhibition. “Cubism, Dadaism, Futurism, Impressionism, etc.,” said Hitler, “have nothing to do with our German people. For these concepts are neither old nor modern, but are only the artificial stammering of men to whom God has denied the grace of truly artistic talent, and in its place has awarded the gift of jabbering or deception.” These remarks were widely quoted in the contemporary press in Europe.

1. *Squadrisimo* was the beating and harassing of opponents of Fascism by organized squads; colonial volunteerism was jargon to describe volunteering for duties in Ethiopia, conquered by Italy in 1935–1936.
2. Marinetti was made a founding member of the Accademia d'Italia, created by Mussolini in 1926; it was inaugurated in 1929.
3. Prampolini's works were exhibited in the Italian Pavilion at the *Exposition internationale des Arts et Techniques dans la vie moderne* in Paris, which ran from 4 May to 25 November 1937; the Schell Building in Berlin has not been identified.

QUALITATIVE IMAGINATIVE FUTURIST MATHEMATICS

First published in a journal from Rome, *Autori e scrittori* 6, no. 6 (June 1941), the official publication for the national union or syndicate of writers, which Marinetti headed. See Introduction, 32–39.

1. *Destruction: poèmes lyriques* (Paris: L. Vanier, 1904), was a collection of free-verse poems, several of which might qualify for the description that Marinetti gives here. The volume was translated in Italian in 1911 (*Distruzione: poema futurista* [Milan: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia]).
2. *The Pope's Airplane: A Political Novel in Free Verse*, or *Le Monoplan du pape: Roman politique en vers* (Paris: E. Sansot, 1912), was a long prose poem which recounts the adventure of a human flying machine who is driven to escape from the clinging earth by his hatred of the walls that surround him “like a coffin” (note the echo of the opening passage of Goethe's *Faust*). He leaves behind the urban disorder of Milan, and after learning of his destiny from Mount Etna, he flies on to Rome, where he lowers a strong metallic crane attached to his undercarriage and carries the Pontiff away like a great fish, finally dropping him into the Adriatic. There he then destroys the Austrian fleet. *Swift Spain and Spanish Bull*, or *Spagna veloce e toro futurista* (Milan: G. Morreale), was published in 1931. It is a free-word poem which recounts Marinetti's trip to that country in 1930, criticizing but also admiring Spanish customs.
3. Arcturus is a bright star in the night sky, the brightest in the northern constellation Boötes; Alpha Crucis is another bright star located in the constellation Crux (the Southern Cross). On stars in Marinetti's work, see Introduction, 3, and “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism,” note 6.
4. Ismailia and Port Said, both in Egypt, were landing points for Italy's invasion of Ethiopia in 1935–1936, which Marinetti participated in.
5. Garibaldians were followers of Giuseppe Garibaldi (1807–1882), whose many military campaigns led to the unification of Italy in 1860 and 1870; for the Arditi see Introduction, 24–25; the “Sansepolcristi” were the three hundred or so people who attended the meeting in Milan in March 1919 which led to the creation of Fascism and which took place in piazza San Sepolcro; “Squadristi” were participants in the Fascist squads that impelled the movement to prominence in the period 1920–1922.
6. On “the battle of via Mercanti,” see Introduction, 25–26.
7. Ferruccio Vecchi (1894–) was a sculptor who served in the Italian army during World War I and reached the rank of captain. After the war he became co-editor of a periodical called *The Ardito* (on this term, see Introduction, 24–25). He chaired the meeting held on 23 March 1919 at which the Fascist movement was created, though he dropped out of party ranks after 1921. An exhibition of his work was held in Milan and Rome in 1940.
8. The “Battle at the Warieu Pass,” part of the war that Italy undertook against Ethiopia (1935–1936), occurred 21–24 January 1936. Troops under the command of General Somma were driven back to a garrison at the pass and besieged for three days (“seventy-two hours”) before being rescued by an armored corps sent by General Badoglio (1871–1953).

9. The Abyssinians Ras Kassa and Ras Seium commanded the Ethiopian forces. Marinetti was present at the siege and wrote a poem celebrating the victory, *African Poem of the 28th October Division (Poema africano della Divisione 28 Ottobre)* (Milan: Mondadori, 1937). The twenty-eighth of October 1922 was the day when the March on Rome began; see Introduction, 29.
10. For Pino Masnata, see the Biographical Sketches; nothing is known about Marcello Puma beyond what is reported here.

PART TWO. VISUAL REPERTOIRE

INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO

1. The earliest publication of the manifesto with its eleven points, without the narrative prologue, appeared in *La Gazzetta dell'Emilia* (Bologna), 5 February 1909: 1–2, followed by its publication in *Il Pungolo* (Naples), 6 February, and subsequently in other Italian and foreign cities. The prologue (or narrative of the “founding”) was first added for the publication in *Le Figaro* on 20 February 1909. See Nico Stringa, “. . . l'amato fecondo Manifesto': Cenni sulla diffusione del futurismo in Italia nel febbraio del 1909,” in *Futurismo, 1909–1944*, ed. Enrico Crispolti, ex. cat. (Milan: Mazzotta, 2001), 195–211. Reference to the manifesto's appearance in this volume has already been given in parentheses within the text, and the same practice is followed in subsequent first references to manifestos that are contained in this volume.
2. Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Michael Shaw (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984).
3. Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, 78–79. See also Emily Braun, “Mario Sironi's Urban Landscapes: The Futurist Fascist Nexus,” in *Fascist Visions: Art and Ideology in France and Italy*, ed. Mark Antliff and Matthew Affron (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 102–104; and Cinzia Sartini Blum, “Introduction,” in *Futurism and the Avant-Garde*, special issue of *South Central Review* 13, nos. 2–3 (Summer–Fall 1996), 3–4.
4. For a discussion of the debate around this issue, see Arturo Labriola, *Riforme e rivoluzione sociale*, 2nd ed. (Lugano: Egisto Cagnoni, Società Editrice “Avanguardia,” 1906), ch. 5.
5. F. T. Marinetti, “La mort tient le volant . . .” (1907), in *La Ville charnelle* (Paris: E. Sansot, 1908), 223–29.
6. Gustave Le Bon, *L'Évolution de la matière* (Paris: E. Flammarion, 1905).
7. *Riot in the Galleria* is closely related to *La Retata (The Police Raid)*, also of 1910, which portrays a riot occasioned by the violent police arrest of several prostitutes. See Maurizio Calvesi and Ester Coen, *Boccioni* (Milan: Electa, 1983), no. 660.
8. Scipio Sighele, *La folla criminale* (1892) and *L'intelligenza della folla* (Turin: Bocca, 1903), and Gustave Le Bon, *Psychologie des foules* (Paris: Alcan, 1895). See also Robert Nye, *The Origins of Crowd Psychology: Gustave Le Bon and the Crisis of Mass Democracy in the Third Republic* (London: Sage, 1975).
9. Carlo Carrà took credit for this notion in *La mia vita* (Milan: Rizzoli, 1943); reprinted in *Tutti gli scritti*, ed. Massimo Carrà (Milan: Feltrinelli, 1978), 634. For a detailed analysis of *The Funeral of the Anarchist Galli*, see William R. Valerio, *Boccioni's Fist: Italian Futurism and the Construction of Fascist Modernism*, Ph.D. dissertation, Yale University, 1996, ch. 2.
10. See the analysis of this film by Millicent Marcus, “Anton Giulio Bragaglia's *Thais*; or, The Death of the Diva + the Rise of the Scenoplastica = The Birth of Futurist Cinema,” in *South Central Review* 13, nos. 2–3 (Summer–Fall 1996): 63–81.
11. The Hungarian Grethel Löwenstein (born Marghareta Cahn Speyer) had been a pupil of Balla. Her husband, Arthur, a German lawyer and amateur violinist, is depicted in *Rhythm of the Violinist*. Balla too had studied violin as a child.

12. Letter from Balla to his family, dated 18 November 1912, reproduced in Elica Balla, *Con Balla*, vol. 1 (Milan: Multipla, 1984), 281.
13. The earliest dated sketch appears on a postcard to Gino Galli, addressed to Balla's home in Rome, postmarked 21 November 1912.
14. Letter from Balla to his family, dated 5 December 1912, reproduced in Elica Balla, *Con Balla*, vol. 1, 283.
15. Rosalind E. Krauss, *Passages in Modern Sculpture* (Cambridge, Mass.: MIT Press, 1977), 41–46.
16. This text seems to have provided direct inspiration for Boccioni's sculpture. On the ideal of the Futurist superman, see Christine Poggi, *Inventing Futurism: The Art and Politics of Artifical Optimism* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009), ch. 5.
17. For an interpretation of this collage see Oliver Shell, "Cleansing the Nation: Italian Art, Consumerism, and World War I," Ph.D. dissertation, University of Pennsylvania, 1998, ch. 2.
18. Carlo Carrà, *Guerrapittura* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1915), 51.
19. Letter from Marinetti to Severini, 20 November 1914, in Maria Drudi Gambillo and Teresa Fiori, eds., *Archivi del Futurismo 1* (Rome: De Luca Editore, 1958): 349–50.
20. See Linda Landis, "Futurists at War," in *The Futurist Imagination*, ed. Anne Coffin Hanson, ex. cat. (New Haven: Yale University Art Gallery, 1983), 60–75. For further analysis of this work, see Shell, "Cleansing the Nation," ch. 3.
21. Severini was too ill with tuberculosis to enlist. In the summer of 1915, he spent several months with friends in the countryside near Paris, where he remembered viewing trains transporting supplies, soldiers, and the wounded. Later, in the fall, working in a small studio near the Denfert-Rochereau station, he continued to be fascinated by the passing trains. See Gino Severini, *The Life of a Painter*, trans. Jennifer Franchina (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1995), 156.
22. The phrase comes from Jean Cocteau's book *Le Rappel à l'ordre* (*The Call to Order*) (Paris: Stock, 1926).
23. As late as 1926 Marinetti was labeled an "antifascist" in a government file. But the existence of such a file, one of many, may say more about Mussolini's paranoia than Marinetti's political allegiances. For further discussion, see Claudia Salaris, *Artecrazia: L'avanguardia futurista negli anni del fascismo* (Florence: La Nuova Italia Editrice, 1992), 66.
24. F. T. Marinetti, *Futurismo e Fascismo* (Foligno: Campitelli, 1924); reprinted in *Teoria e Invenzione Futurista*, 3rd ed., ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1996), 494.
25. Maurizio Fagiolo dell'Arco, *Ricostruzione futurista dell'universo* (Rome: Mario Bulzoni, 1968), 89–90.
26. For this interpretation, see Giovanni Lista, *La Scène futuriste* (Paris: Éditions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989).
27. See Balla's statement in Léonide Massine, *My Life in Ballet*, cited in Fagiolo dell'Arco, xix.
28. For a discussion of Paladini's attempt to integrate his communist views with Futurism, see Günter Berghaus, *Futurism and Politics: Between Anarchist Rebellion and Fascist Reaction, 1909–1944* (Providence, Oxford: Berghahn Books, 1996), 197–217.
29. F. T. Marinetti, *Democrazia futurista* (1919), in *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, 3rd edition, ed. Luciano De Maria (1996), 452.
30. In his essay, "I libri metallici" ("Metallic books"), D'Albisola observed that "Today tin is an Italian product. . . . In the Fascist regime, we have removed even this debt to foreign countries, which reaches about 100 million lire annually in domestic consumption." *Stile futurista* 2, nos. 11–12 (September 1935): 40.
31. F. T. Marinetti, Alberto Sartoris, and Giuseppe Terragni, "Panorma sintetico di tutti gli inventori dell'arte moderna," *Artecrazia* 118 (11 January 1939); cited in Enrico Crispolti, *Il mito della macchina e altri temi del futurismo* (Rome: Editore Celebes, 1969), 795.
32. See Crispolti, *Il mito della macchina*, 785–820.

INTRODUCTION TO PART THREE

Epigraph: 31 March 1917, Diary IIA, Marinetti Collection, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University; also excerpted in *Modernism/Modernity*, 1, no. 3 (Sept. 1994): 4.

1. The “Wireless imagination” stood for distant analogical connections, divergent with cultural norms, literary standards, or political requirements; it sought to reveal the unconscious, the archetypal, the sacred, the scandalous. For the influence of Futurist antirhetoric, especially on the French avant-garde, see Pierre Barucco, *Le Fracas et le silence: Du Futurisme à la métaphysique de De Chirico* (Marseille: Via Valeriano, 1993). That such a break with Romantic aesthetics puts the origins of Futurism within a Romantic sensibility is argued in particular by Luciano De Maria (in his introduction to *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria [Milan: Mondadori, 1983]). Regarding the tension between Futurism (more diverse) and Marinettism (more programmatic, at least initially), see in particular Chapter 4 of Walter L. Adamson, *Avant-Garde Florence: From Modernism to Fascism* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1993). For “Marinettism,” see *F. T. Marinetti: Selected Poems and Related Prose*, ed. Luce Marinetti, Elizabeth Napier, and Barbara Studholme (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2002). For discussion of the avant-garde’s contradictory relationship to elite bourgeois culture and popular culture, see the now canonical Peter Bürger, *Theory of the Avant-Garde*, trans. Jochen Schulte Sasse (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1984); *Vitalité et contradictions de l’avant-garde: Italie-France 1909–1924*, ed. Sendro Briosi and Henk Hillenaar (Paris: José Corti, 1988); Jeffrey Schnapp, “Forwarding Address” [on Italian Futurism and Fascist Modernism], *Stanford Italian Review* 8, nos. 1–2 (1988): 53–80; and Lawrence Rainey, *Institutions of Modernism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1999). For a discussion and excerpts of texts from feminist debates in both *L’Italia futurista* and *Roma futurista*, see Claudia Salaris, *Le Futuriste: Donne e letteratura d’avanguardia in Italia (1909–1944)* (Milan: Edizioni delle donne, 1982). For an incisive discussion of Marinetti’s anti-intellectualism and its relation to Fascist ideology, see Marja Härmänmaa, “La logica dell’assurdità: Il fascismo futurista degli anni Trenta,” in *Trasgressioni* 24 (1997): 3–35; and also her *Un patriota che sfidò la decadenza: F. T. Marinetti e l’idea dell’uomo nuovo fascista, 1929–1944* (Helsinki: Academia Scientiarum Fennica, 2000). For a provocative, though extreme, interpretation of this anti-intellectualism, see Rinaldo Rinaldi, *Miracoli della stupidità: Discorso su Marinetti* (Turin: Tirrenia, 1986). In different ways, both argue for a fundamental anarchism of Marinetti’s political thought (and we must not forget that in the earliest years of Futurism he was known to give speeches at anarchist gatherings), whose later association with Fascism cannot be separated from the (self)-delusion (carefully fostered by Mussolini) of turning Fascism into the constant revolution advocated by Futurism. On the complexity of Marinetti’s politics at work in his poetry, see Jeffrey Schnapp, “Politics and Poetics in F. T. Marinetti’s Zang Tumb Tuuum,” *Stanford Italian Review* 5, no. 1 (1985): 75–92. For relationships between Futurism and other avant-garde movements, see Ernesto Livorni, *Avanguardia e tradizione: Ezra Pound e Giuseppe Ungaretti* (Florence: Lettere, 1998), Enrico Cesaretti, *Castelli di carta: retorica della dimora tra Scapigliatura e Surrealismo* (Ravenna: Longo, 2001), and *Italian Modernism: Italian Culture Between Decadentism and the Avant-Garde*, ed. Mario Moroni and Luca Somigli (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004). On Futurist poetry, see Willard Bohn, *Italian Futurist Poetry* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005). Much of the complexity of Futurism has emerged from recent archival work; see *Futurism: From Avant-Garde to Memory*, ed. Vincent Giroud et al. (Milan: Skira, 2006).
2. For the concepts of “universal dynamism” and “simultaneity” see “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto” (64), and Severini’s “Plastic Analogies of Dynamism” (165). For a discus-

- sion of the relationship between new technologies and Marinetti and Futurism, see Jeffrey Schnapp, “Propeller Talk,” *Modernism/Modernity* 1, no. 3 (September 1994): 153–78.
3. For painterly irony, see Govoni’s flower in “For Electric Venice” (425); “melancholy”: in Altomare’s “Shadowy Intricacies” (419).
 4. For Altomare, Govoni, Boccioni, Marinetti, Soffici, and Balla see 419, 422, 425–427, 428, 430.
 5. *L’alcova d’acciaio* (Milan: Casa Editrice Vitagliano, 1921), 180.
 6. “Let’s Murder the Moonlight!” (54–61).
 7. For Futurist interventionism at the beginning of World War I, for its interest in the Italian colonies, and for its anti-Austrian expansionist positions, see the Introduction to this volume 19–20.
 8. See Emilio Gentile’s pioneering and brilliant analysis of Fascist mysticism and its myth of regeneration: *The Sacralization of Politics in Fascist Italy*, trans. Keith Botsford (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1996). For the canonical overview of the relationship between Futurism and Fascism, see Renzo De Felice, *Intellettuali di fronte al fascismo* (Rome: Bonacci, 1985), and also *Futurismo, cultura e politica* (Turin: Fondazione Giovanni Agnelli, 1988).
 9. For the concept of absolute anarchy as a divine interval, in particular in the work of Sade, see Gilles Deleuze, *Masochism (Coldness and Cruelty Followed by Venus in Furs)* (New York: Zone Books, 1991). Although Marinetti does not refer to Sade explicitly, many passages in his diaries as well as in his published works strongly suggest that he was a significant influence on Marinetti’s thinking on violence. For anarchy as a foundational sacred moment, see, among many, Roger Caillois, *Le Mythe et l’homme* (Paris: Gallimard, 1938), and René Girard, *Violence and the Sacred*, trans. Patrick Gregory (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins, 1977); “molecular rage” is from Deleuze, 119.
 10. For the concept of pure immanence, whose essence is undifferentiated violence, as that which is radically other to the human and therefore “sacred,” see Georges Bataille, *Theory of Religion* (New York: Zone Books, 1989). Similar ideas are expressed in the poems of *La haine de la poésie* (Paris: Minuit, 1947).
 11. “BATTLE WEIGHT + SMELL”: 128–129. Apollinaire’s *Calligrammes* no doubt inspired Marinetti.
 12. For d’Annunzio’s aristocratic rhetoric, see Paolo Valesio, *Gabriele d’Annunzio: The Dark Flame* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1991); for its ties to feminization, see Barbara Spackman, *Decadent Genealogies: The Rhetoric of Sickness from Baudelaire to d’Annunzio* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989).
 13. “Let’s Murder the Moonlight!” (55, 59, 58).
 14. The “lyrical obsession with matter” is explained at length in the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (119–125).
 15. For discussions of feminism and Futurism, see Lucia Re, “Futurism and Feminism,” *Annali d’Italianistica* 7 (1989): 253–72; Barbara Spackman, “The Fascist Rhetoric of Virility,” *Stanford Italian Review* 8, nos. 1–2 (1990): 81–101, and *Fascist Virilities: Rhetoric, Ideology, and Social Fantasy in Italy* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1996); Clara Orban, “Women, Futurism, and Fascism,” in *Mothers of Invention* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 52–75; Lucia Re, “Fascist Theories of ‘Woman’ and the Construction of Gender,” in *Mothers of Invention*, 76–99.
 16. F. T. Marinetti, *Mafarka the Futurist*, trans. Carol Diethe and Steve Cox (Middlesex, England: Middlesex University Press, 1998). For interpretations of the novel, see Diethe’s introduction, as well as Alice Yeager Kaplan, *Reproductions of Banality: Fascism, Literature, and French Intellectual Life* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1986); Barbara Spack-

- man, “Mafarka and Son: Marinetti’s Homophobic Economics,” in *Modernism/Modernity* 1, no. 3 (1994): 89–107; also in *Fascist Virilities*; and Cinzia Blum, *The Other Modernism: F. T. Marinetti’s Futurist Fiction of Power* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996).
17. F. T. Marinetti, “Tattilismo” (1924), in *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano de Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1983), 179 for “harmony” and “deny the distinction.” See “The New Religion-Morality of Speed,” 228, for “scattering.”
 18. “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” (51).
 19. Franca Zoccoli, in Mirella Bentivoglio and Franca Zoccoli, *Women Artists of Italian Futurism* (New York: Midmarch Arts Press, 1997), 112.
 20. See in particular Benedetta’s *Donne della Patria in guerra* (Rome: Istituto Nazionale di Cultura Fascista, 1941), where she calls for women to support the Fascist creation of a new generation of heroic Italians.
 21. Robert attacks the “azure women writers”: Anna Nozzoli considers Robert’s claim to be in direct dialogue with and critical of the genre “della letteratura rosa” or the “pink literature,” or popular romance literature written for women that was flourishing in this period. See her chapter “Le donne del posdomani: scrittrici e avanguardia,” in *Tabù e coscienza: Le condizioni femminili nella letteratura italiana del novecento* (Florence: La Nuova Italia, 1978), 41–64. Claudia Salaris (in *Le Futuriste*) points out that “azure” was also the color chosen by the women writers of *L’Italia futurista* (such as Ginanni and Valeria) as the emblem of their cosmic spirituality, which Robert opposes with her very down-to-earth realism; see for example the “dita d’azzurro tiepido” (warm azure fingers) mentioned by Fanny Dini in her article “Anima” in *L’Italia futurista*, 15 January 1918, and in the same issue, the announcement of a (never completed) novel by Paolo Buzzi, *La Luminaria azzurra* (*The Azure Lamp*). My theory about the shift from “rose” to “azure” is that Robert is also thinking of the stereotype of the femme fatale, whose nobility and pale, suffering complexion is often linked to her “azure veins” or “vene azzurre.” That this expression often recurs under the pen of d’Annunzio in particular supports my contention that Robert’s “surgical novel,” describing her own operation for what appears to be an ovarian or uterine tumor, is also at some level a response to or a rewriting of d’Annunzio’s *L’Innocente*, which shocked audiences in 1892 by evoking somewhat explicitly the “womb” operation of its heroine, which ultimately makes her in many ways more passive, and thus more attractive to her unfaithful husband.
 22. Blum reaches a similar conclusion about Robert’s novel in *The Other Modernism*, 114–24.
 23. As exemplified in Marinetti’s “nonhuman technical poetry,” in the homonymous book, *La poesia non-umana dei tecnicismi* (Milan: Mondadori, 1940).
 24. “Simultaneous Poetry of Woven Light” was written specifically for the viscose company Snia Viscosa, which built the Fascist new town of Torviscosa.
 25. For an analysis of Marinetti’s imagery in the thirties and forties as an “oasis of memory,” see Marzia Rocca, *L’Oasi della memoria* (Naples: Tempi Moderni Edizioni, 1989). For the Futurist “evenings” or *serate*, see the Introduction (9–11). The most thorough book on Futurist theater is Giovanni Lista’s *La Scène futuriste* (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989).
 26. For the idea of Futurism as an art of the present, with all that implies philosophically and spiritually, see Paolo Valesio, “The Most Enduring and Most Honored Name,” in *F. T. Marinetti: Selected Poems and Related Prose*: “Futurism’s most durable heritage (perhaps the only lasting one), which is also its most important philosophical element . . . is its constant attention to the presence of the future in the bosom of the present. This is the futurismus perennis . . . which defines every cultural attitude which strives to be really contemporary (what in Italian is called “cultura militante”). . . . The avant-garde is the culminating idea in the rhetoric of modernism; it also marks the beginning of the decline of modernism as such—a

- sumptuous sunset, to be sure, or long autumnal season within which artists are still living and working” (151–52).
27. Like Proust’s madeleine, which not only evokes a whole world of childhood, but miraculously reinvents it as the necessary preamble to the present of narration, the sensations evoked by Futurist tactilism seek to reconcile Futurism’s heroic myths with its present distance from action.
 28. “Gli Indomabili” (1922), reprinted in *Teoria e Invenzione Futurista*, ed. Luciano De Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1983), 1012.
 29. See Jean Moréas’ manifestos, “Les Décadents” (*XIX Siècle*, 11 August 1885), and “Le Symbolisme: Manifeste de Jean Moréas” (*Figaro*, 18 September 1886). Thirteen years later *Le Figaro* would still be the place chosen by Marinetti to launch his founding manifesto.
 30. For the French-educated but militantly Italian Marinetti, these are both Pascalian and Dantesque stars, with very clear metaphysical associations. For a discussion of the Dantesque elements in Marinetti see Giusi Baldissone, *Filippo Tommaso Marinetti* (Milan: Mursia, 1986).
 31. For the complex relationship of modernity and presence, see Hans Ulrich Gumbrecht, *The Production of Presence: What Meaning Cannot Convey* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

THE SIMULTANEOUS CITY

Shadowy Intricacies

Liberio Altomare, “Ricami d’ombra,” in *I Poeti futuristi (The Futurist Poets)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1912). Though published contemporaneously with the “Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature” (see 119–125), this first anthology of Futurist literature contained poems—like this one—that were technically closer to free verse of the late nineteenth century. Thematically, too, they drew on Italian *Scapigliatura* (a group of writers active mostly in Milan during the 1860s) and Symbolism (e.g., the images of “insomniacs” and “pale taverns”). Yet this poem does announce typically Futurist themes, albeit via parallels closely drawn with painting. The “mirrors of the sidewalks” echo the “anthracite of the street” in Boccioni’s poem “High Society Shoe + Urine” (see 428), while both phrases recall a claim in “Futurist Painting: Technical Manifesto”: “Space no longer exists: a street pavement that has been soaked by rain beneath the glare of electric lamps can be an abyss gaping into the very center of the earth” (65). The “spool,” also seen in poems by Boccioni and Govoni (see 428 and 423), is an emblem of depersonalized, mechanical speed.

Express Train No. 89

Adele Gloria, “FF. SS. ‘89’. Direttissimo,” in *FF. SS. ‘89’. Direttissimo* (State Railroads No. 89, Express) (Catania: Publishing Company, 1934). “FF. SS.” stands for Ferrovie dello Stato, State Railroads Company. “Talmone” was a popular brand of chocolate. The train poem takes on a theme that is pervasive at the turn of the century, giving it what in the context of Futurism’s “lyrical obsession with matter” (“Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature”) is a darker, and often more typically feminine inflection when it evokes “the laments of the suffering rails” and unites the “apathy” of the traveler with the “monotony” of matter.

For Electric Venice

Corrado Govoni, “A Venezia elettrica,” in *Poesie elettriche (Electrical Poems)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1911). This, Govoni’s first collection of Futurist poetry, is one of the best Futurist collections, along with Lucini’s *Revolverte (Pistol Shots)* (1909) and Palazzeschi’s *L’Incendiario (Arsonist)* (1910) (see the Biographical Sketches). The “Danaiids” are the fifty

daughters of Danaus, ruler of Argos, who murdered their husbands on their wedding night. The “Pierrots” and “Colombina” are characters from the *Commedia dell’Arte*, the tradition of improvised plays performed by touring companies from 1550 to 1800. The “Dogaressa” is the wife of the Venetian Doge, the title of the leader of the Republic of Venice from the eighth to the eighteenth centuries. “Cooing doves” (“colombe in amore”) are a symbol of romantic passion already in Dante’s *Inferno*, where Paolo and Francesca are referred to as “doves by desire drawn” (Canto V.82). Themes from Italian *crepuscolarismo*, the “twilight poetry” that flourished at the turn of the century (epitomized in phrases such as “troubled enchantment” or “divine melancholy”) are blended here with Baudelairian echoes (“tressed hair / like a gentle blond serpent”: cf. “La Chevelure” or “Le Serpent qui danse”; “censers of violet clouds,” “eternally pale” faces: cf. “Harmonie du soir,” all in *Les Fleurs du mal*). Other phrases recall Boccioni’s work (“smallpox walls / that sicken the waters with electric colors,” “a stair gleams, greenish”: see the colors of *The Laugh*, for example [Fig. 40]).

To My Pegasus

From F. T. Marinetti, “A mon Pégase,” in *La Ville charnelle* (Paris: E. Sansot and Co., 1908), also “A l’automobile,” in *Poesia* (Milan, 1905). “I accept your provocation, o my stars!” is a line that prefigures the conclusion of “The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism” and alludes to Dante (see 524 n. 5).

Café

Ardengo Soffici, “Caffè,” in *BİFfZF + 18* (Florence: Edizioni *La Voce*, 1915). The Spanish and French have been left as they were in the original version of the poem; the words “what a damn’d pimp” and “Cognac I said . . .” were in English in the original; all the Italian has been translated into English. “Funiculì funiculà” is a popular Neapolitan song about the inauguration of the “funicolare”—the cable car—in Naples. The glitter of night life is a theme that pervades Futurist painting at this time: see for example Severini’s *Blue Dancer* (Fig. 104), which incorporated sequins just as this poem incorporates multiple sounds and languages.

High-Society Shoe + Urine

From Umberto Boccioni, “Scarpetta da società + orina,” in *Lacerba* (Florence, 1913). Boccioni’s fascination with “the liquid appearances of reality,” evinced also in his paintings from this period (see the *States of Mind II*, figs. 41–43), will inspire Futurist poets from the early “words-in-freedom” to the later “aeropoetry.”

Noise-Making Onomatopoeia Typewriter

Giacomo Balla, “Onomatopoea rumorista Macchina Tipografica,” in Giacomo Balla and Fortunato Depero, *Ricostruzione futurista dell’universo* (Milan: Direzione del Movimento Futurista, 1915). This poem—which is really a performance piece—requires a rhythmical repetition of sounds, perhaps accompanied by mechanical movements that integrate the twelve performers into a single machine, just as their voices blend into an explosion of noises that mime the modern city’s assault on the senses.

WORDS-IN-FREEDOM WAR

Bombardment

From F. T. Marinetti, “Hadirlik: Quartier Generale Turco” (431–433), and “Bombardamento” (434–436) in *Zang Tumb Tuuum* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1914); for the original see F. T. Marinetti, *Teoria e invenzione futurista*, ed. Luciano de Maria (Milan: Mondadori, 1983), 720–722 and 777–779. It describes the assault of Adrianopole (Edirne in Turkish),

which took place during the first Balkan war in 1912. On the background, see “The Variety Theater,” n. 2. Shukri, according to Marinetti, was the Turkish general in charge of Adrianople.

Arsonist

From Aldo Palazzeschi, “L’Incendiario,” in *L’incendiario (Arsonist)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1910). This book’s extremely colloquial tone was shocking for readers of contemporary Italian poetry, accustomed to a sophisticated vocabulary and syntax ultimately of Petrarchan descent; characteristic of Palazzeschi, it distinguishes him from mainstream Futurism (even before he leaves the movement in 1915), which prefers a grander, less ironic tone. The “confiteor” (now called “penitential act”) is the part of the mass in which the faithful confess their sinfulness, traditionally beating their breast to indicate culpability.

War, a Heroic Poem

From Valentine de Saint-Point, *La guerre, poème héroïque (War, a Heroic Poem)* (Paris: Eugène Figuière, 1912). As in “Bombardment,” above, the war is colonial, probably referring to Italian attacks on Tripoli in October 1911. The theme of regenerative violence—most famously championed around this time by George Sorel’s *Réflexions sur la violence (Reflections on Violence, 1908)*—pervades de Saint-Point’s work, in contrast with the more oneiric, psychological, biomorphic, and spiritual themes of other Futurist women. Unlike them, she stems from a French context in which new anthropological writings were focusing on ritual violence, interests evoked here through rhythmic repetition and emphasis on “the collectivity” and its “blood.”

The Missile

Enrico Cavacchioli, “Il siluro,” in *Cavalcando il sole (Riding the Sun)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1914). Futurism’s antisentimental stand is championed here, as technological warfare mocks the “sentinel” whose “eyes [are] blooming with stars.”

The Submarine

Luciano Folgore, “Il sottomarino,” in *Il canto dei motori (The Song of Motors)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1912). Folgore’s gallant submarine is a “slight ship” that battles organic decay (the “viscous” life of the sea floor) to affirm a human courage that triumphs “between disaster and disaster.” The idealism of Cavacchioli’s sentinel (see previous poem), blasted by the missile, returns within technology itself.

A Medium’s Musings

Carlo Carrà, “Divagazioni medianiche (n° 3),” in *Guerrapittura (Warpainting)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1915).

Terrifying Tenderness

F. T. Marinetti, “La spaventosa tenerezza,” in *8 anime in una bomba (Eight Souls in a Bomb)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1919). The fusion of the mother with the countryside, and specifically with the horizon at dusk or dawn, dominates the last pages of Marinetti’s novel *Mafarka the Futurist* (trans. Carol Diethe and Steve Cox [London: Middlesex University Press, 1998], Ch. 12 “The Birth of Gazourmah,” 185–206). The self-division into a warring sentimental and an antisentimental self, dramatically staged here, is a fundamental topos of Marinetti’s imagination.

A Woman with Three Souls

From Rosa Rosà, “Una donna con tre anime,” in *Una donna con tre anime* (*A Woman with Three Souls*) (Milan: Studio Editoriale Lombardo, 1918). The notion of multiple personalities, popularized at the turn of the century with studies on hysteria and interest in the occult, is a conceit here that incorporates different strands of feminist literature of the period. “Individualism, an adventurous spirit, multiplied erotic experience” recall de Saint-Point’s “Futurist Manifesto of Lust” (see 130–133) and its call for unsentimental, even violent equality between the sexes; while investigation of the “mysteries of matter” with the “multiple forms of intelligence” is closer to Enif Robert, Franca Maria Corneli, and Maria Goretti’s emphasis on the new perceptions and discoveries that feminine sensibility will create. Finally, the push “beyond material sensibility” toward “new senses” and “mystical aspirations” evokes the work of Benedetta, Maria Ginanni, Adele Gloria, and Irma Valeria.

The Usual Song

Gian Pietro Lucini, “La solita canzone,” in *Poesia* (*Poetry*) (Milan, 1905). Lucini, an innovative and sacrilegious poet, pokes fun here at notions derived from turn-of-the-century psychiatry, such as the “gluttonous absorption of the womb,” which Futurism tends to absorb much less critically (the collaborative work by Enif Robert and Marinetti [see 458–460] is a strong exception to this). T. R. Malthus (1766–1834) was known for his theory that, in the absence of wars or epidemics, human population would grow at a pace that would soon outstrip food resources; hence he advocated contraceptive practices to lower the growth rate of the population. Also, in the early twentieth century, the term “malthusian verses” described a four-line stanza of eight syllable lines that ended with an arbitrarily truncated word (in imitation of the *coitus interruptus* advocated by Malthus).

Courage + Truth

Enif Robert and F. T. Marinetti, “Coraggio + Verità,” in *Un ventre di donna: Romanzo chirurgico* (*A Woman’s Belly: A Surgical Novel*) (Milan: Facchi Editore, 1919).

Torments

Armando Mazza, “Torbenti,” in *Firmamento* (*Firmament*) (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1920). Note the “sharp scales of the stars” that awaken desire and give the lie to Futurist calls for the mechanization of man.

Filtered Nights

From Mario Carli, *Notti filtrate* (*Filtered Nights*) (Florence: Edizioni de *L’Italia futurista*, 1918). Carli’s desire to be “the showman of my childhood” (“il saltimbanco della mia infanzia”) overlaps with Buzzi’s description of the poet as an acrobat (“equilibrista” in his poems “Primi lampioni” and “Notturnini,” both in *Versi liberi* [Milan: Treves, 1913]). Both hark back to d’Annunzio in ways traced by Paolo Valesio in *The Dark Flame* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1992). Aldo Palazzeschi also invokes the showman (“saltimbanco”), while Corrado Govoni replaces him with the diver (“palombaro,” see 463), and Marinetti with the diver painter (“pittore palombaro” in “The Lake of Poetry and Romance,” 449–501). This topos of the poet as a “tragically joyous acrobat” (Valesio, 140) creates an image cluster that places art in an increasingly ironic position, caught in the illusion of action yet exiled to a world of mere appearances. “Idolatrabile” is my neologism to convey Carli’s neologism “idolatrabili.”

The Diver

Corrado Govoni, “Il Palombaro,” in *Rarefazioni e parole in libertà (Rarefactions and Words-in-Freedom)* (Milan: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia*, 1915). Govoni’s playfulness—visible in the childish handwriting of the original, and chosen in opposition to the typographical innovations more typical of this period—does not diminish his portrayal of the poet as a sounder of dangerous depths containing both tragedy and gratuitous beauty.

Let’s Laugh at the Universe

Irma Valeria, “Ridicolizziamo l’Universo,” in *Morbidezze in agguato (Softnesses Lie in Wait)* (Florence: Edizioni de *L’Italia futurista*, 1917). The cosmic imagery in this prose poem, typical of Valeria and Benedetta, becomes ever more predominant in Futurism after 1922–23, and is linked to changes in painting as well: see Benedetta’s *Mount Tabor*, but also the work of Gerrardo Dottori (figs. 68–69). Marinetti was so taken with Valeria’s book and its title that he composed a words-in-freedom advertisement titled “Morbidezze in agguato + Bombarde italiane” (Softnesses lie in wait + Italian bombs), which covered a page in *L’Italia futurista*, 9 September 1917.

Letter from Astra, Astra’s Diary

From Benedetta, “Lettera di Astra, Diario di Astra,” in *Astra e il sottomarino (Astra and the Submarine)* (Naples: Casella, 1935). With a tone different from that of her husband, or Enif Robert, Benedetta also seeks a victory over the soft, romantic illusions of the moonlight and the immobilizing fear of loneliness. But in her case the victory comes with a defense of female desire and pleasure, and their unique expression in a female voice.

Variations

Maria Ginanni, “Variazioni,” in *Montagne Trasparenti (Transparent Mountains)* (Florence: Edizioni de *L’Italia futurista*, 1917). Even more than Benedetta, Ginanni establishes a feminine voice that opposes the domination of “mechanical constraining logic” and reaches out to a cosmic center.

State of Mind

Adele Gloria, “Stato d’animo,” in *FF.SS. “89.” Direttissimo (State Railways No. “89,” Express)* (Catania: Publishing Company, 1934). Against constraining logic and the vitalism more commonly associated with Futurism, the female voice asserts a cosmic unity in which the individual is depersonalized, not by the machine, but by an expanded eternal consciousness.

Consciousnesses

Primo Conti, “Coscienze,” in *Imbottigliature (Bottlings)* (Florence: Edizioni de *L’Italia futurista*, 1917). Very much in the same spirit as the previous poem, Carli searches for “another life” that lies beneath “revealed ideas”: this broad if vague spiritual aspiration, while discernible in the avant-gardes from the beginning, became more overt in the 1930s and 1940s, when even Marinetti would write the *Aeropoema di Gesù (Aeropoem of Jesus)* (Montepulciano: Editori del Grifo, 1991).

Torment

Anna Maria Mazza, “Tormento,” in *Io e lo Specchio (The Mirror and Me)* (Messina-Milan: Giuseppe Principato, 1937). This poem is akin to the preceding poem by Adele Gloria, though darker in tone and starker than the poem of nearly the same title by her father, Armando Mazza (see 460).

Irma Valeria, “Mendicanti d’azzurro,” in *Morbidezze in agguato (Softnesses Lie in Wait)* (Florence: Edizioni de *L’Italia futurista*, 1917). Futurism’s link to mysticism is explicit in this text, with its evocation of the “immense and religious” night (see Saint John of the Cross’ “Noche obscura”), and its celebration of “every tree,” “every erect and happy blade of grass” (see Matthew 6:28), and the image of the “bluest stripe of blind sea” in which the blindness of unknowing becomes vision and presence.

TECHNICAL WAR

The Creative Anxiety of the Hydroelectric Plant Nera Velino

Franca Maria Corneli, “L’ansia creatrice della idroelettrica Nera Velino,” in *L’Aeropoema futurista dell’Umbria (The Aeropoem of Umbria)* (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di *Poesia* della Galleria Nazionale d’arte Futurista e aeropittura di guerra, 1943). This text, like others in this section, focuses on the industrial renewal that the Fascist regime brought to Italy—especially in the south—in the 1930s, and combines it with a style that was called “technical poetry,” in which scientific understanding of matter as process and sensation is spiritualized and abstracted. “Ghibli” is an African wind that carried sand from the Sahara at times as far North as Rome. Gerardo Dottori was a Futurist painter (see Figs. 68–69).

Simultaneous Poetry of Woven Light

F. T. Marinetti, “Poesia simultanea della luce tessuta,” in *Il Poema non umano dei tecnicismi (The Nonhuman Poem of Technologies)* (Milan: Mondadori, 1940). This poem was written at the request of the company Snia Viscosa to celebrate the opening of their factory for the production of viscose in the new town by the name of Torviscosa, along with another poem, “Poesia simultanea del vestito di latte.”

Petroleum Song

Maria Goretti, “Canzone del Petrolio,” in *La donna e il futurismo (Woman and Futurism)* (Verona: Casa Editrice “La Scaligera,” 1941).

Russian Originality of Masses Distances Radiohearts

From F. T. Marinetti, *Originalità russa di masse distanze radiocuori (Russian Originality of Masses Distances Radiohearts)* (Rome: Voland, 1996). Marinetti wrote this book when he went to fight on the Russian front in 1942 as a volunteer, but it was not published until 1996. Unlike Marinetti’s other evocations of war, this one is closer to prose poetry and to the kind of stream-of-consciousness found in his diaries. It contains a new emphasis on tactilism, or the pure play of sensation (note in particular the list of furs), to the point that the actual sounds and events of war recede into the background, replaced with the epic visual and tactile fantasy of Maria Sorridenco, elicited by the contrast between the colors of Vesuvius (“pink breath”) and the cold white of Russia. The Madonna of Pompei is a famous site for pilgrimages.

Bay of Naples

Laura Serra, “Golfo di Napoli,” in *Campi Flegrei* (Naples: Edizione Politica Nuova, 1933). This poem incorporates the industrialization of Naples into an explicitly Fascist context, reinforcing the rites by which Fascism tied itself to the Roman Empire and a particular reading of Italian history: there are mentions of Tiberius and Augustus; the “Rock of Remembrances” (a monument to the dead in World War I, meant to reinforce the cult heroism and self-sacrifice for the fatherland); and the image of the Mediterranean as it “grapples with the Afri-

can land,” a reference to Mussolini’s colonial ambitions that were to transform the Italian state from a kingdom (“Regno”) into an Empire (“Impero”) on 9 May 1936.

THEATER, AEROPOETRY, AND TACTILISM

Genius and Culture

Umberto Boccioni, “Genio e cultura,” in *Teatro Futurista Sintetico*, by F. T. Marinetti, Emilio Settimelli, and Bruno Corra, vol. II (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1916). Though Futurist theater flourished throughout the life of the movement and was both innovative and lively, many of its successes were ephemeral, based on the immediacy of performance, improvisation, and dance. Texts were often not published or only partially published, or associated with music or noises of which little trace remains. Sets made by Futurist artists are known only through a few photographs. The most thorough exploration of the material available is still Giovanni Lista’s *La scène futuriste* (Paris: Editions du Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1989). The six theatrical syntheses presented here are typical in their humor and quickness—and for all an effort should be made to imagine them being performed. In Boccioni’s little play, the satire on Hegel’s *Aesthetics* also criticizes a contemporary opponent of the Futurists, the philosopher Benedetto Croce, whose *Aesthetics* was published in 1902.

Fidelity

Mina della Pergola, “Fedeltà,” *L’Italia futurista* (Florence), 23 September 1917).

The Ladies’ Man and the Four Seasons

Francesco Cangiullo, “Il donnaiuolo e le 4 stagioni,” in F. T. Marinetti et al., *Il Teatro Futurista Sintetico (dinamico-alogico-autonomo-simultaneo-visionico) A sorpresa Aeroradiotelevisivo Caffè Concerto Radiofonico (senza critiche ma con misurazioni) (Futurist Synthetic Theater)* (Naples: Editrice CLET, 1941). Renato Simoni (1875–1952) was a famous comic actor and writer in the *crepuscolare* (“twilight”) tradition, an author of librettos, and a popular theatrical critic.

Gray + Red + Violet + Orange

Bruno Corra and Emilio Settimelli, “Grigio + rosso + violetto + arancione,” in *Teatro Futurista Sintetico*, by F. T. Marinetti, Emilio Settimelli, and Bruno Corra, vol. II (Milan: Istituto Editoriale Italiano, 1916).

The Bases

F. T. Marinetti, “Le Basi,” in F. T. Marinetti et al., *Il Teatro Futurista Sintetico (dinamico-alogico-autonomo-simultaneo-visionico) A sorpresa Aeroradiotelevisivo Caffè Concerto Radiofonico (senza critiche ma con misurazioni) (Futurist Synthetic Theater)* (Naples: Editrice CLET, 1941).

Alternation of Character

Arnaldo Corradini and Bruno Corra, “Alternazione di carattere,” in F. T. Marinetti et al., *Il Teatro Futurista Sintetico (dinamico-alogico-autonomo-simultaneo-visionario) (Futurist Synthetic Theater)* (Naples: Editrice CLET, 1941).

The Aquatic Kiss

F. T. Marinetti, “Il bacio aquatico,” in *Novelle con le labbra tinte (Lipsticked Novellas)* (Milan: Mondadori, 1930). The first novella in this book, subtitled “Simultaneity and Programs for Life with Choice Variations,” recounts the seduction of “Rose of Belgrade” through a series of letters, each of which describes a daring kiss (this is the sixth). Here tactilism loses its ideological assertiveness and gives way to a lush nostalgia for youth and the allure of moon-

light that, it is now hoped, can save the “I” from being entirely absorbed by undifferentiated matter and its processes.

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Palio-Explosion of Sieneese Dynamism

Dina Cucini, “Palio vampa del dinamismo sieneese,” in *Aeropoema futurista delle torri di Siena* (*Futurist Aeropoem of the Towers of Siena*) (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1942). The Palio is the famous horserace in which the ten *contrade* (boroughs) of Siena have been competing every year on 2 July and 16 August since the fourteenth century (the *trecento*), and it is named after the banner (*palio*) that is given to the winner. In it, ten horses, with jockeys riding bareback, race in the central piazza of Siena.

The Lake of Poetry and Romance

F. T. Marinetti, “Il lago della poesia e del sentimento,” in *Gli indomabili* (*The Untameables*) (Piacenza: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia della Società Tipografica Editoriale Porta, 1922). This novel had its origin in a dream, recorded by Marinetti in his diaries in September 1919, in which the passage of the “untameables”—rough, violent, wild men kept in chains by black guards who feed them raw meat in a blazing barren desert—to a state of gentle play and childlike serenity, took place in only a few pages and followed the apparently unmotivated yet ineluctable logic of dreams. The novel itself becomes an epic saga toward a final liberation, in which the Paperyites (my translation of *cartacei*—beings made from printed leaves of paper, who are resplendent with wisdom but apparently incapable of action or change) seem to mediate between “bestial cruelty” and “high serene music,” though even in the novel the “conversion” of the untameables retains a certain fabulous quality. Note Marinetti’s taking up the theme mentioned in the note to Mario Carli’s “Filtered Nights” (see 434), when he evokes “submerged moonlight painted by a diver painter.”

Cosmic Genesis

Bruno Sanzin, “Genesi cosmica,” in *Infinito* (*The Infinite*) (Rome: Edizioni futuriste di Poesia, 1933). The increasingly abstract spirituality of Futurism’s later years is expressed in the “immaterial and antispiritual essences” that Sanzin seeks, “by not inquiring too deeply.”

Human Forces: Striving Toward Differentiation

Benedetta, “Sforzo differenziatore,” in *Le Forze umane: romanzo astratto con sintesi grafiche* (*Human Forces: An Abstract Novel with Graphic Syntheses*) (Foligno: Campitelli, 1924). Benedetta was both a painter and writer who sought to mix the two mediums (she insisted that the graphic syntheses in this novel were not illustrations, but preverbal intuitions or experiences later translated into the text of the novel).

Quarter Hour of Poetry of the Xth MAS (Sentiments Set to Music)

F. T. Marinetti, *Quarto d’ora di poesia della X MAS (musica di sentimenti)* (n.p.: Mondadori, [1944]). This poem was written by Marinetti on 1 December 1944, the day before he died. MAS stands for “Motoscafo Anti-Sommergibile” or “Anti-Submarine Motorboat,” a motorboat equipped with torpedoes to destroy warships or submarines. When Marinetti asserts that he is “purged of the quotidian,” he uses the word “mondo” which clearly points to the penitential Psalm 51. The scirocco is a southeasterly wind that comes from the Sahara, carrying humidity from the sea, reaching as far north as Genova. I translate as “bone” and “unknown” Marinetti’s internal rhyme of “ossa” and “possa” so as to render the sense that the skeleton here becomes the source for renewed energy projected toward a yet unexplored future.

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