'Italian Futurism' at the Guggenheim, NY

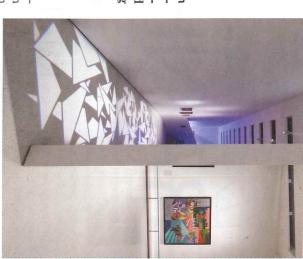
A ONCE-IN-A-LIFE-TIME EXHIBITION

'Italian Futurism' is the perfect exhibition for those keen to explore the connection between creative imagination and technological determinism, as well as the role played by museum collections when constructing and revising art history.

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interested to discover this underestimated movetime exhibition for those who are even remotely collections, making this a sort of once-in-a-lifeincluding 15% borrowed from anonymous private artworks and ephemera from Italian institutions, the Guggenheim to borrow more than 90% of the educate their publics. Telling this story required straining most museums' abilities to accurately of Italy own works by Italian Futurists, conhistorical slight is that so few museums outside struction. One explanation for Futurism's art performance, cubist painting and Bauhaus conto combine the cultural contributions of Dada mate Italian Futurism's breadth, one would have new books address Italian Futurism. To approxiticipants numbered only sixteen – while only 20 Fauvism - a four-year movement whose parstatus, about 30 recent scholarly books concern ture to fine art. Exemplary of Italian Futurism's poetry, graphic design, advertising and architeccostume design, artistic practices ranging from music, theater, Futurism, which involved nearly 1000 artists in torical texts that privilege Cubism over Italian This exhibition poses a challenge to art hisment's wide-ranging impact. fashion, dance, performance

Exemplary of their breadth, F.T. Marinetti's original 1909 Italian Futurist manifesto shares company with 22 related texts from 'Manifesto of the Futurist Musicians', 'The Painting of Sounds, Noises and Smells: Futurist Manifesto', 'Manifesto of The Futurist Woman' to 'The Futurist Manifesto of Lust'. Sixteen different Futurist manifestos were distributed by 1914 and Marinetti published more than 16 manifestos, four



Installation view of the entrance to Giacomo Balla's stage design of Igor Stravinsky's Frieworks (1916-17) in 'Italian Futurism, 1908-1944: Reconstructing the Universe' at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, NYC, photo Kristopher McKay

aggressions reflected their desire to reunite Italian ideas without co-opting either its 'look' or artists hibitions. Unlike the Russian Constructivists, the avant-garde 'degenerate', Mussolini valued Italy's domination. While Hitler branded Germany's with Benito Mussolini's political party. Futurist nationalism and war, they quickly parted ways despite their fascination with speed, technology, Futurism's poor reputation on its participants as ideological tools. Italian Fascists implemented Futurist values and vanguard enough to sponsor several of their exlands then under Austro-Hungarian Empire Fascist sentiments, this exhibition suggests that Although art historians have tended to blame novels and six poetry books over two decades.

MOVEMENT

Although 'Italian Futurism' begins with Gino Severini's divisionist paintings and Umberto Boccioni's proto-cubist drawings, this show demonstrates that the tendency to depict dynamic and simultaneous events was already in play by 1911, one year before their Paris debut. Artworks presented here that highlight Futurism's greater fecundity over Cubism include Giacomo Balla's dynamic light show, which originally accompanied

Igor Stravinsky's 'Fireworks' (1916-1917); paintings of that era's inventions – cars, airplanes, motorboats, seaplanes and skyscrapers – in motion; experimental films from the teens; 'aero-aesthetics' (paintings, films and photographs from the 1930s depicting Earth from the pilot's perspective) and photographs detailing their imaginatively installed painting exhibitions. Futurist architects like Mario Chiattone and Antonio Sant'Elia envisioned monumental factories and apartment complexes, while photographers Mario Bellusi, Ottavio Berard, Piero Boccardi, Anton and Arturo Bragaglia, Mauro Camuzzi and Guglielmo Sansoni found ways to incorporate movement into their photos of the 1930s.

of paintings by the Palermo Post Office. Given the Futurists' ian Futurist art, five fresco-like paintings by decades later. and triangles. Five drawings and a painting from speed, depth and waves using only spirals, curves strate how these master geometers insinuated Marinetti, Luigi Russolo and Severini demonfascination with movement and the first time since their 1935 installation inside One of the rare 1914) introduce tools that Op artists exploited Balla's 'iridescent interpenetration' series (1912. Marinetti's wife Benedetta are exhibited here for Balla, Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Fascist commissions of Italspeed, scores

seminal text 'Art as Experience' (1934) being ing spectators in darkened spaces, such as the paintings inspired Lucio Fontana's 'Ambiente and stimulate imaginations. Moreover, Futurist they are far more than pictures to be looked at jecting Futurist pictures for their 'theatricality' scene. Although one imagines Michael Fried respectators the impression of being part of the ings situated viewers in the pilot's seat, giving tators as actors, but their 'Aeropittura' paint-French edition. translated into Italian, some fifty years before its Fontana's experiential ploys led to John Dewey's Spaziale' (1949-1967), light installations engross-Anticipating video games, they simulate action Not only did their performances engage spec-Futurism's influence on experiential artworks What has bizarrely gone unmentioned is Italian 1949 installation on view in Paris. No doubt

^{&#}x27;Italian Futurism, 1909-1944: Reconstructing the Universe' on view until 1 September at Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York City, USA. www.guggenheim.org

City, USA. www.guggenheim.org 'Lucio Fontana: Retrospective' on view until 24 August at Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris, FR. www.mam.paris.fr