

# The Museum of Modern Art

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To paint is also to express by signs that which one cannot or does not know how to express with actions.

This can be a reason to continue, even though the department stores all over the world are already full of things to look at.

There is another reason to continue, because one achieves a primary result, a primary function, if you wish, that of art as "revolutionary" research.

-- Gastone Novelli

Nine paintings by Gastone Novelli, the talented Italian painter and poet who died prematurely in 1968, will be on view from November 11 through December 11 at The Museum of Modern Art.

The paintings in the Museum exhibition, all but one of which were executed during the last year of the artist's life, represent a crystallization of many of the ideas evident in Novelli's early work. His involvement with Surrealist art and literature-- he participated in the publication of literary magazines until his death-- as well as his awareness of the post-war Italian art world led to the achievement of a unique "automatic" graphic style.

According to Kynaston McShine, Curator of Painting and Sculpture and Director of this exhibition: "Although Novelli was deeply involved in the complex human, social and political problems of our time, he strived to avoid a too literal reflection of these problems in his art. . . . By combining graffitilike imagery with the informal gesture, Novelli created paintings that have the quality of a personal diary, yet through his sensitivity and vitality he was able to transform this individual idiom into a more universal expression."

Born in Vienna in 1925, Novelli spent most of his life in Italy, where he was imprisoned during World War II for participation in the Italian Resistance. In the late 1940s and early 1950s he lived and taught in Brazil, but he returned to Rome permanently in 1955. Novelli had many one-artist shows in Italy, as well as in São Paulo, Paris, New York, Copenhagen, and Amsterdam, and he participated in numerous group exhibitions throughout the world.

A prize winner at the 1964 Venice Biennale, Novelli was invited, in June of 1968, to have a major representation of his work in the Italian pavillion at that year's Venice Biennale. However, he closed his room and withdrew his paintings in protest against the

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presence of the police and in support of the Italian students who were protesting the Vietnam War and allying themselves with the Paris revolution of May 1968.

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Gastone Novelli

Checklist of the Exhibition

Cancello per sempre la parola. (I abolish words forever).  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 138 1/4" x 79". Collection Mr. Ivan Novelli, Rome.

Caro Vietnam. (Dear Vietnam).  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 80 7/8" x 31 5/8". Collection Count Rudi Crespi, Rome.

Cienfuegos.  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 138 1/4" x 79". Collection Mr. Ivan Novelli, Rome.

Dialettica. (Dialectic).  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 80 3/4" x 11 3/4". Collection Mr. Ivan Novelli, Rome.

Linea. (Line).  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 80 5/8" x 11 7/8". Collection Mr. David Del Vecchio, Rome.

Mais si vous voulez pourrir en paix. (But if you want to rot in peace).  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 138 1/4" x 71 1/8". Collection Mr. Gino Di Maggio, Milan.

Un obelisco per la memoria. (An Obelisk for Memory).  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 80 3/4" x 11 7/8". Collection Mr. Ivan Novelli, Rome.

L'Oriente risplende di rosso. (The Orient glitters with red).  
1967. Mixed media on canvas. 138 3/8" x 79 3/8". Private collection, Milan.

Tonnerre printanier. (Spring thunder).  
1968. Mixed media on canvas. 80 3/4" x 11 7/8". Collection Mr. David Del Vecchio, Rome.

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