

THE MUSEUM OF MODERN ART

11 WEST 53 STREET, NEW YORK 19, N. Y.

190909 - 65
TELEPHONE: CIRCLE 5-8900

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FOR WEDNESDAY RELEASE

MUSEUM PURCHASES MODERN ITALIAN WORKS FROM 20TH-CENTURY

ITALIAN ART EXHIBITION

The Museum of Modern Art announces the acquisition of 10 paintings, 4 sculptures, 7 drawings, 15 prints and 5 portfolios of prints by 22 artists from its current exhibition of 20th-Century Italian Art, scheduled to be on view through September 18. These purchases were contributed to by the Museum's Gala Italian Evening on September 8, held for the benefit of the Italian Purchase Fund for the acquisition of works by modern Italian artists.

Commenting on the Italian acquisitions, Alfred H. Barr, Jr., Director of the Museum Collections, states:

"The Museum's new Italian acquisitions accord with the Museum's policy of collecting works both by older 20th-century foreign artists whose reputations are already established and by younger men whom the Museum believes are worthy of international attention.

"Futurism is one of the most famous of all modern movements, and the word 'futurist' has been used for decades by the general public for anything new and 'modern' in the arts. Yet Futurism, which began in Italy about 1910, has been almost unknown in this country through original works of art. The Museum has now added to its collection three of the half-dozen most renowned achievements of the movement.

"Carrà's Funeral of the Anarchist Galli expresses the turbulent sensations of the artist as a bystander caught in a street riot and demonstrates one of the Futurist principles: 'We are going to put the spectator in the center of the picture.' This huge painting was shown in Paris in 1912 and traveled to London, Berlin, and 12 other European cities, though not in America, for the Futurists declined an invitation to exhibit in the New York 'Armory Show' of 1913.

"A gayer side of Futurism is seen in Severini's famous Bal Tabarin of 1912. Here the hectic kaleidoscopic rhythms of a cabaret show are accented by glittering sequins which the artist has pasted on the canvas. Swifts and Speeding Automobile, the two paintings by Giacomo Balla, Roman member of the Futurist quintet, though influenced by early photographs of movement, anticipate by over 20 years the kinetic effects of recent stroboscopic photography.

"Umberto Boccioni, the chief of the original band of Futurist painters, was also a sculptor. To his masterpiece, the bronze figure of a striding man called Unique Forms of Continuity in Space, the Museum has added a pioneering work of 1912, the Development of a Bottle in Space. These two sculptures, the recently purchased study for the painting Elasticity done in the same year and the three large drawings for the States of Mind given by Vico Baer in 1941 further illustrate Boccioni's art, but still leave the Museum without a painting by the Futurist leader.

"Diametrically opposite to the Futurists is the modest and retiring Giorgio Morandi whom many discriminating Italians now look upon as their best living painter. The Museum has bought a very rare early still life by Morandi, a subtle arrangement of bottles and pitchers painted in 1916 shortly before the artist joined de Chirico and Carrà to form the Metaphysical School.

"Of the Italian painters under fifty, Renato Guttuso of Sicily and Rome is by far the best known abroad. His Maffia, a picture of civil strife in Sicily, and his Mine Car are both 'socially conscious'

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subjects handled in a vigorous, clear style influenced by Picasso. Bruno Cassinari, the most distinguished Milanese painter of Guttuso's age, portrays his mother with quiet, introspective tension. Stanislaw Lepri's Banquet is a witty miniature fantasy in the surrealist tradition.

"Though the best painters of the younger generation in Italy are generally abstract in style, three very young and very talented artists are realists with romantic or satirical overtones. Muccini, Vespignani and the girl Graziella Urbinati, call themselves the School of Portonaccio, after one of the poorest districts of Rome. The Museum has bought Muccini's Bull and several drawings and prints by the others. Their contemporary, Salvatore Fiume of Milan, looks back to the early de Chirico in his Isle of Statues.

"Many visitors to the current exhibition have felt that the recent Italian sculptors surpassed the painters. To the purchase of Marino Marini's haunting bronze Horse and Rider, announced some months ago, the Museum has now added Martini's Daedalus and Icarus in which fragmentation of the figures has been used with poetic relevance; Fontana's ceramic crucifix, a brilliant fusion of baroque movement with expressionist fervor, and the young Viani's grandly modeled marble torso. The two bronzes by Boccioni and a stone head by Modigliani, acquired in 1939, complete the sculpture roster.

"Recent acquisitions by the Print Room include the work of well-known Italian artists not otherwise represented in the Museum Collections, notably the older painters Casorati, de Pisis and Bartolini and the sculptors Manzù and Mirko.

"With these new additions the Museum's collection of modern Italian art becomes the most important outside of Italy. In fact, no Italian public collection now equals the Museum's representation of Modigliani or the early de Chirico or the pioneer Futurists. And although Italian art of the period 1920 to 1940 has so far been neglected, a good beginning has been made in representing what may yet be known as the Italian Post-Fascist Renaissance."

The following is a complete check list of the Italian works acquired:

BALLA, Giacomo. Born 1871.

Speeding Automobile (Automobile in corsa). Oil, 1912. Purchase fund.

Swifts: Paths of Movement + Dynamic Sequences (Volo di Rondini: linee andamentali + successioni dinamiche). Oil, 1913. Purchase fund.

BARTOLINI, Luigi. Born 1892.

5 etchings. Purchase fund.

BOCCIONI, Umberto. 1882-1916.

Development of a Bottle in Space (Sviluppo di una bottiglia nello spazio). Bronze, 1912. Aristide Maillol Fund.

Study for "Elasticity" (Studio per "Elasticità"). Pencil with gouache, 1912. Purchase fund.

1 lithograph. Purchase fund.

CARRÀ, Carlo. Born 1881.

Funeral of the Anarchist Galli (Funerale dell'anarchico Galli). Oil, 1911? Acquired through the Lillie P. Bliss Bequest.

CASORATI, Felice. Born 1886.

Portfolio of 10 lithographs. Purchase fund.

CASSINARI, Bruno. Born 1912. 161

The Mother (La madre). Oil, 1948. Purchase fund.

FIUME, Salvatore. Born ca. 1925.

Island of Statues (Isola di statue). Oil, 1948. Purchase fund.

FONTANA, Lucio. Born 1899.

Christ (Cristo). Ceramic sculpture, 1947. Purchase fund.

GUTTUSO, Renato. Born 1912.

The Maffia (La Maffia). Oil, 1948. Purchase fund.

Bull (Il toro). Wash drawing, 1949. Purchase fund.

Mine Car (Carello in Miniera). Ink drawing, 1949. Purchase fund.

LEPRI, Stanislao. Born 1910.

Banquet (Banchetto). Gouache, 1945. Given anonymously.

MANZU, Giacomo. Born 1908.

Virgil's Georgics (Le Georgiche di Virgilio) illustrated with 20 etchings. Purchase fund.

MARINI, Marino. Born 1901.

Horseman (Cavaliere). Ink and gouache. Purchase fund.

MARTINI, Arturo. 1889-1947.

Daedalus and Icarus (Dedalo e Icaro). Bronze, 1934-35. Purchase fund.

MIRKO. Born 1910.

1 color linoleum cut. Purchase fund.

MORANDI, Giorgio. Born 1890.

Still Life (Natura morta). Oil, 1916. Purchase fund.

6 etchings. Purchase fund (5) and gift of James Thrall Soby (1).

MUCCINI, Marcello. Born 1926.

Bull (Il toro). Duco, 1948. Purchase fund.

2 etchings. Purchase fund.

DE PISIS, Filippo. Born 1896.

Poems (Alcune Poesie) illustrated with 10 color lithographs. Purchase fund.

SEVERINI, Gino. Born 1883.

Dynamic Hieroglyphic of the Bal Tabarin (Geroglifico dinamico del Bal Tabarin). Oil, 1912. Purchase fund.

URBINATI, Graziella. Born 1927.

Seated Woman. Crayon, 1947. Purchase fund.

2 etchings. Purchase fund.

VESPIGNANI, Renzo. Born 1924.

Ruined Building (Paesaggio dello Scorpione). Pen and ink wash, 1946. Purchase fund.

The Wall (Il muro). Pen and ink wash, 1947. Purchase fund.

2 etchings. Purchase fund.

VIANI, Alberto. Born 1906.

Nude (Nudo). Marble, 1945. Purchase fund.

VIVIANI, Giuseppe. Born 1898.

2 etchings. Purchase fund.

Portfolio of 6 etchings. Purchase fund.