

The Museum of Modern Art

For Immediate Release
August 1992

FACT SHEET

EXHIBITION **THE ARTIST AND THE BOOK IN TWENTIETH-CENTURY ITALY**

DATES October 15, 1992 - February 16, 1993

ORGANIZATION Organized by Guest Curator Ralph Jentsch, specialist in early twentieth-century art and illustrated books; coordinated for The Museum of Modern Art by Riva Castleman, Director, Department of Prints and Illustrated Books, The Museum of Modern Art

CONTENT Books have been used by artists for many purposes, one of which has been as an important vehicle in aesthetic battles waged by artists of the avant-garde. In particular, during the early decades of this century Russian and Italian writers and artists produced manifestoes and small booklets that broadcast their aesthetic and political positions. Among the most interesting of these books are those of the Italian Futurists, who published their ideas in unique formats. At the same time, in France, a new kind of illustrated book, or *livre de peintre*, evolved. These books, together with the Futurist experiments, gave impetus and great energy to the art of the illustrated book in Italy.

This exhibition comprises more than 125 books created by Italian artists from the early years of the twentieth century through today. It includes Futurist booklets as well as rare examples by Giorgio de Chirico and Gino Severini from the period between the wars. The majority of the books, however, date from the years after World War II. The flourishing of postwar Italian design is evident in fine books illustrated by Lucio Fontana, Giacomo Manzù, Marino Marini, and Arnaldo Pomodoro. Some of the works of the last few decades included in the exhibition are by Alberto Burri, Sandro Chia, Francesco Clemente, Michelangelo Pistoletto, and Emilio Vedova.

LECTURE On the occasion of the exhibition, Mirella Bentivoglio lectures on *The Reinvention of the Book in Italy, 1918-1932*, on October 15 at 6:00 p.m. at the Italian Cultural Institute, 686 Park Avenue, New York. Ms. Bentivoglio, a

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critic and artist whose work is in the exhibition,
frequently writes on modern book design and illustration.

PUBLICATION

The Artist and The Book in Twentieth-Century Italy by Ralph Jentsch. Approximately 400 pages. 120 color and 480 black-and-white illustrations. Published by Società Editrice Umberto Allemandi & C., Torino, Italy. Paperbound available at The MoMA Book Store.

An illustrated brochure written by Riva Castleman is available in the exhibition. This publication was made possible through the generosity of IFI International (IFINT).

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