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 pre-
maturely 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 Paolo, 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 pavilion at that year's Venice
Biennale. However, he closed his room and withdrew his paintings in protest against the

(more)
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).

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

Dialettica. (Dialectic).

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).

Tonnerre printanier. (Spring thunder).

Additional information available from Elizabeth Shaw, Director, and Mark Segal, Assistant, Department of Public Information, The Museum of Modern Art, 11 West 53 Street, New York, New York 10019. Phone: (212) 956-7501, -7296.