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| Boccioni, Umberto (1882-1916) |
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| Umberto Boccioni was the most famous painter and sculptor of the Italian Futurist movement. After an early career as a painter and illustrator, he joined Futurism in 1910, quickly becoming one of its leading members. Together with Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla and Gino Severini he signed the *Manifesto of the Futurist Painters* (1910) as well as the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* (1910) and exhibited at legendary Futurist shows in Italy and abroad. His numerous conferences and articles were pivotal in furthering the theoretical development of Futurist aesthetics and defining Futurism’s identity in opposition to Cubism and Expressionism. His work is marked by a constant intertwining of theoretical definition and material experimentation. Artistic debates, but also contemporary scientific and philosophical theories, influenced his Futurist masterpieces, such as *La città che sale* [*The City Rises*] (1910-11) and *La risata* [*The Laugh*] (1911). In 1912 his interest in sculpture led him to pen the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* and resulted in a famous exhibition of works in plaster and multi-media assemblages. |
| Umberto Boccioni was the most famous painter and sculptor of the Italian Futurist movement. After an early career as a painter and illustrator, he joined Futurism in 1910, quickly becoming one of its leading members. Together with Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, Giacomo Balla and Gino Severini he signed the *Manifesto of the Futurist Painters* (1910) as well as the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* (1910) and exhibited at legendary Futurist shows in Italy and abroad. His numerous conferences and articles were pivotal in furthering the theoretical development of Futurist aesthetics and defining Futurism’s identity in opposition to Cubism and Expressionism. His work is marked by a constant intertwining of theoretical definition and material experimentation. Artistic debates, but also contemporary scientific and philosophical theories, influenced his Futurist masterpieces, such as *La città che sale* [*The City Rises*] (1910-11) and *La risata* [*The Laugh*] (1911). In 1912 his interest in sculpture led him to pen the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* and resulted in a famous exhibition of works in plaster and multi-media assemblages.  Image: Boccioni\_LaCittàCheSale.jpg  Figure 1: *La città che sale* [*The City Rises*], 1910-1911, oil on canvas, The Museum of Modern Art New York.  Boccioni was born on 19 October 1882, in Reggio Calabria, the son of a couple from Romagna. He died in Verona on 17 August 1916 from injuries sustained falling from a horse while serving in the Italian army. His father’s governmental job forced the family to move often and the young Umberto pursued his studies in Genoa, Padua, and Catania. His sojourn in Rome, where he arrived in 1899, was quite influential: in Rome he met Giacomo Balla, who introduced him to the principles of divisionism, worked as an illustrator and also befriended the painters Gino Severini and Mario Sironi. He travelled to Paris for the first time in 1906, eventually also visiting Eastern Europe and Russia. Upon his return, after a brief stay in Venice, he moved to Milan in 1907. In Milan, he officially joined the Futurist movement founded by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti, signing the *Manifesto of the Futurist Painters* and the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* in 1910. He quickly became one of the principal theoreticians of the movement and envisioned his theoretical activity as a dialectic practice. He often gave public readings of his texts and manifestos that incited tumultuous reactions, as, for example, in 1910 when he famously recited the *Manifesto of Futurist Painters* at the Politeama Chiarella in Turin. However, he also engaged in more subtle polemical essays aimed at charting the distinction between Futurism and Cubism. His detachment from Divisionism, discussion of the limits of Cubism, and involvement with the theoretical definition of a Futurist agenda for modern art constitute the material for his early manifestos, prefaces to the Futurist catalogues, articles in the Florentine journal *Lacerba*, and for his later book, *Pittura e Scultura Futuriste. Dinamismo Plastico* [*Futurist Painting and Sculpture. Plastic Dynamism*] (1914). The two versions of the triptych *Gli stati d’animo* [*States of Mind*] (1911) testify to his progressive detachment from Divisionism and his meditations on Cubism. *Materia* [*Matter*] (1912) offers a visual response to the ideas of Henri Bergson. The same concern for a new representation of space and matter is evident in his activity as sculptor. In 1912, after the publication of his For Boccioni, he suggests modern sculpture should abolish the artificial concept of figures isolated from their surroundings by incorporating a plurality of materials and by capturing the fluid continuity between object and environment. |
| Further reading:  (Agnese, Boccioni da vicino. Pensiere e passion del grande futurista)  (Agnese, Vita Di Boccioni)  (Ballo)  (Birolli)  (Boccioni and Bellini, Catalogo Completo Dell'opera Grafica Di Umberto Boccioni)  (Boccioni and Bellini, Umberto Boccioni: Catalogo Ragionato Delle Incisioni, Degli Ex Libris, Dei Manifesti E Delle Illustrazioni Cinisello Balsamo)  (Boccioni and Rossi, Boccioni: Pittore Scultore Futurista)  (Boccioni, Altri inediti ed apparati critici)  (Boccioni, Gli Scritti Editi E Inediti)  (Boccioni, Lettere Futuriste)  (Calvesi and Cohen)  (Mattioli) |