Futurism

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20 February 1909: Futurist Manifesto
by Filippo Tommaso Marinetti

Futurism: influential Italian movement that included poetry, literature, painting, graphics, typography, sculpture, product design, architecture, photography, cinema and the performing arts.

Main focus was on the dynamic, energetic and violent character of changing 20th century life, especially city life.

Emphasized power, speed, motion and war

Tribute to the Italian Guido Guidi who, in an Italian Aircraft, Beat the World Height Record (7,950M)
The Manifestos

**Manifesto of Futurism**

1. We intend to sing the love of danger, the habit of energy and fearlessness.

2. Courage, audacity, and revolt will be essential elements of our poetry.

3. Up to now literature has exalted a pensive immobility, ecstasy, and sleep. We intend to exalt aggressive action, a feverish insomnia, the racer's stride, the mortal leap, the punch and the slap.

4. We affirm that the world's magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing car whose hood is adorned with great pipes, like serpents of explosive breath—a roaring car that seems to ride on grapeshot is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*.

5. We want to hymn the man at the wheel, who hurls the lance of his spirit across the Earth, along the circle of its orbit.

6. The poet must spend himself with ardor, splendor, and generosity, to swell the enthusiastic fervor of the primordial elements.

7. Except in struggle, there is no more beauty. No work without an aggressive character can be a masterpiece. Poetry must be conceived as a violent attack on unknown forces, to reduce and prostrate them before man.

8. We stand on the last promontory of the centuries!... Why should we look back, when what we want is to break down the mysterious doors of the Impossible? Time and Space died yesterday. We already live in the absolute, because we have created eternal, omnipresent speed.
The Manifestos

*Manifesto of Futurist Musicians* by Balilla Pratella

I appeal to the *young*. Only they should listen, and only they can understand what I have to say. Some people are born old, slobbering spectres of the past, cryptograms swollen with poison. To them no words or ideas, but a single injunction: *the end.*

I appeal to the *young*, to those who are thirsty for the new, the actual, the lively. They follow me, faithful and fearless, along the roads of the future, gloriously preceded by my, by our, intrepid brothers, the Futurist poets and painters, beautiful with violence, daring with rebellion, and luminous with the animation of genius.

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The Manifestos

*Founding and Manifesto of Futurism*  
*First Futurist Political Manifesto*  
*Manifesto of the Futurist Painters*  
*Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*  
*Manifesto of Futurist Musicians*  
*Technical Manifesto of Futurist Music*  
*Second Political Manifesto of Futurism*  
*Manifesto to Italian Tripoli*  
*Manifesto of Futurist Dramatists*  
*Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture*  
*Manifesto of the Futurist Woman*  
*Technical Manifesto of Futurist Literature*  
*Futurist Manifesto of Lust*  
*Futurist Manifesto of Men’s Clothing*  

Marinetti  
Pratella  
Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Severini, Balla  
Boccioni, Carrà, Russolo, Severini, Balla  
Pratella  
Pratella  
Marinetti  
Marinetti  
Marinetti  
Boccioni  
Valentine de Saint-Point  
Marinetti  
Balla
Futurist Painting

Prime concern was the expression of their ideas on culture and contemporary events.

Related to contemporary Cubist movement

Pictorial experiments in capturing the path of movement

Dynamism of Dog on a Leash
Giacomo Balla, 1912
Oil on Canvas (899 x 1099), Albright-Knox Art Gallery, Buffalo, NY

Dynamic Self Portrait
Luigi Russolo, 1913
Ink on card (210 x 210), Private Collection, Rome
Initial driving force behind Futurism was political
Anarchism, radical Marxism, Fascism

Amorous Numbers
Giacomo Balla, 1924-25
Oil on canvas (762 x 533), Private Collection

Futurist Flower
Giacomo Balla, 1925
Painted wood (290 x 580 x 390), Private Collection
The Futurist artists captured the modern machine age and city life with a range of approaches and techniques that, for the time, were revolutionary.

Five Major areas of experimentation

Abstract light and colour

Movement and speed

The plastic dynamism of form

The interpenetration of subjects

The prismatic or shattering effect

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Finished Portrait of Ivan Klyun (The Builder)
Kasimir Malevich, 1913
Oil on canvas (1120 x 700)
State Russian Museum, St Petersburg

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Giacomo Balla Street Lamp (1909)
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Boccioni's *The Street Enters The House* (1911).

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Severini's *The Boulevard* (1910)
New York
Percy Wyndham Lewis, 1914
ink, pastel, watercolour and
gouache on paper
(317 x 260) Private Collection

Factory
Natalia Goncharova, 1912
oil on canvas (1025 x 900). State Russian Museum, Leningrad
Marinetti, Russolo and Piatti with Noise Intoners, c1914

The first public performance of the Intonorumori, 1914

Russolo and his assistant Piatti with Noise Intoners, 1914

The first public performance of the Intonorumori, 1914
## The Sounds of Futurism

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## Ballet Mechanique

George Antheil, 1924
Antonio Sant'Elia

His extremely influential designs featured vast monolithic skyscraper buildings with terraces, bridges and aerial walkways that embodied the sheer excitement of modern architecture and technology.
Marinetti’s book, *Zang Tumb Tumb* typifies the style and feeling of words-in-freedom and is a milestone in typographic design. The book is an account of the Turkish Battle of Adrianopolis of 1912 in which Marinetti volunteered. Words-in-freedom are used onomatopoeically to graphically illustrate the explosions of weapons and grenades and the noise of battle.