



The Permanent Mission of Italy  
to the United Nations  
**DYNAMISM AND ELASTICITY  
UMBERTO BOCCIONI 100  
(1882-1916)**  
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FEDERICA OLIVARES

Installation  
BARBARA SUHR DESIGN

Special thanks to  
MICAELA MARTEGANI

Graphic Design  
ALESSANDRA RICOTTI

Transports  
ARTERIA



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GIUSEPPE SALA

Culture Councillor  
FILIPPO DEL CORNO

Head of Central Directorate for  
Culture  
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Galleria d'Arte Moderna  
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## THE COLLECTION

The **Museo del Novecento** hosts a selection of some artworks from 20<sup>th</sup>-century Milanese collection. The Museum is also the venue for exhibitions and Focus events dedicated to collections in the archives or to recent acquisitions.

The exhibition path proceeds in chronological order, beginning with the *Fourth Estate* by Giuseppe Pellizza da Volpedo, followed by exponents of the international avant-garde movements of the early twentieth century, with Umberto Boccioni, and a rich core of Futurists. The exhibits cover the most important movements and currents of 20th-century Italian art. Two monographic spaces are given over to Giorgio Morandi and his still lifes, a major anthological show of Giorgio de Chirico's works of the 1930's and 1940's, and then the sculptures by Arturo Martini. The inter-war arts scene is represented by the *Novecento Group*, the monumental art and abstractionism of the 1930's, with a large number of plaster works by Fausto Melotti, and the works of Atanasio Soldati, Manlio Rho and Mario Radice.

The spectacular Fontana's room overlooking Piazza del Duomo, provides a focus for the entire itinerary. Here we find Fontana's works, *Neon structure* for the IX Triennale in Milan, *Spatial Ceiling* and a series of *Spatial Concepts*. We then have the *Informal painting* school of the 1950's and 1960's, with a small space given over to Piero Manzoni and Azimuth. A suspended

walkway then leads us on from the Arengario building to the Palazzo Reale. Here we find two artistic tendencies of the following decades: firstly the *T Group*, whose focus was an optical perception of light and movement, followed by the Milanese Analytical Painting school of the 1970's and a room with new figurative modes, such as the Roman Pop Art movement. Rounding off our visit are a number of *Arte Povera* installations and a monographic room dedicated to Luciano Fabro.

The final section hosts a collection donated to Comune di Milano in 1973, *Collezione Marino Marini*.

**Cover.** *Elasticità / Elasticity*, 1912, oil on canvas, cm 100 x 100. Milan, Museo del Novecento, Jucker Collection n. 8728

**1.** *Dinamismo di un corpo umano / Dynamism of a Human Body*, 1913, oil on canvas, cm 100 x 100. Milan, Museo del Novecento, GAM n. 5164

**2.** *Studio per Forme umane in movimento (Dinamismo di un corpo umano) / Study for Human forms in movement (Dynamism of a human body)*, 1913, black ink on paper, 309 x 212 mm. Milan, Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni del Castello Sforzesco, inv. 835 B 319

**3.** *Cavallo + cavaliere + case / Horse + rider + houses*, 1914, black pencil, black and blue watercolor on paper, 393 x 563 mm. Milan, Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni del Castello Sforzesco, inv. 842 C 88

**4.** *Voglio fissare le forme umane in movimento (Dinamismo di un corpo umano) / Study for Human forms in movement (Dynamism of a human body)*, 1913, black ink on paper, 309 x 212 mm. Milan, Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni del Castello Sforzesco, inv. 835 B 319

**5.** *Studio per Forme umane in movimento (Dinamismo di un corpo umano; Muscoli in velocità) / Study for Human forms in motion (Dynamism of a human body; Muscles at speed)*, 1913, black ink on paper, 311 x 209 mm. Milan, Civico Gabinetto dei Disegni del Castello Sforzesco, inv. 858 C 104

**MUSEO DEL NOVECENTO**  
via Marconi 1, Milano  
Tel. +39 02 88444061  
c.museo900@comune.milano.it

**www.museodelnovecento.org**  
**Facebook: MuseodelNovecento**  
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# DYNAMISM AND ELASTICITY UMBERTO BOCCIONI 100 (1882-1916)

## UN Headquarters, New York 3rd - 7th October 2016



**MUSEO DEL NOVECENTO**



## DYNAMISM AND ELASTICITY UMBERTO BOCCIONI 100 (1882-1916)

Futurism, the crucial avant-garde movement for art history on the international scale, pivoted around the **themes of modernity and innovation, a distinctive sign of Italy today** as well as in the past. Umberto Boccioni, a leading figure of the Futurist movement, is the ideal testimony to the **strength of innovation that has embodied and still embodies Italian spirit.**

**The invaluable works of art that have been selected to be displayed as attestation of Italy's presence at the Headquarters of the United Nations in New York City, on the occasion of the Election of Italy to the UN Security Council, represent one of the highest peaks of Italian artistic production.**

The exhibition entitled *Dinamismi ed Elasticità (Dynamism and Elasticity)* gathers works coming from the Museo del Novecento's permanent collections in Milan, the international benchmark for 20<sup>th</sup> century Italian art, and from the prestigious archives of the *Gabinetto dei Disegni* of the *Castello Sforzesco*. The exhibition focuses on two fundamental themes approached by the artist: dynamism/speed and energy/elasticity. The choice for these themes stems from recent studies conducted for the "Boccioni 100" event, displayed at Palazzo Reale in Milan until last August. This exhibition for the first time underlined the strong ties uniting paintings and drawings produced by the Futurist Master.

**Dynamisms** are the result of the artist's exploration around the representation of a body in movement and of a man running. Boccioni produced several drawings on this theme, which disclose a talented technical and pictorial composition technique, as well as canvases that explode with strength and power, where the concepts of speed and dynamism find full expression. It is the dynamism of a modern society, which is able to seize contemporary experiences. It is the speed embodied by the avant-garde Futurist movement, which is still perceived today with an eye keen on present days and longing for the future.

**Elasticity** – the title of the first painting – is represented by the powerful muscular movements of the horse, the protagonist of the scene. The energy gushing from the canvas reflects Italian attitude of being present with its tireless and vital energy on the international scenario. In the background, we see the skyline of a city in continuous growth and expansion, reaching out for modernity, exactly like the City of Milan after its international experience with Expo 2015.

Completing the exhibition is a **video entitled *Umberto Boccioni. L'ansia del nuovo (Umberto Boccioni; Eagerness for the Future)* produced with 4K HDR technology** by *RAI Direzione Qualità e Pianificazione* (Italian public broadcasting company) and commented by Ester Coen. This innovative technology – where RAI is at the state of the art – ensures the viewer a total immersion into the work of art thanks to exceptionally high resolution and extremely natural and faithful colors.



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## UMBERTO BOCCIONI

From the time of his first encounter with Filippo Tommaso Marinetti in 1910, Boccioni was the main artist of Futurism.

The outstanding selection of Boccioni's artwork, both as to number and quality, conserved in the City of Milan's collections testifies to the privileged bond that linked the artist to this city.

Born in Reggio Calabria, Boccioni lived in Milan from 1908 to 1916, the year of his premature death. Here he discovered the themes of the modern city, sizing its cultural gap compared with other European capitals, and urging it optimistically toward action and an aggressive nationalism.

While in Milan, he made the most important encounter of his artistic experience when he made acquaintance with Marinetti. Here he held his first scandal-exhibition, at the *Esposizione d'Arte Libera* [Exhibition of Free Art] in the Spring of 1911, which gathered both young and amateur Futurist painters. Here he found his first supporters and clients. After his death in December 1916, the City of Milan paid him tribute with a retrospective exhibition in Palazzo Cova. Concurrently, the City of Milan's Art Collections were the first public institution to acquire his works. It was the courageousness of private collectors from Milan, though, that crowned Boccioni as the Futurist artist par excellence. Ausonio Canavese's collection, donated to the City of Milan in 1934, testifies to the special attention paid by philanthropists to 'difficult' works, appreciated as the revolution that changed the course of modern painting in Italy. After World War II, private Milanese

collectors set new values for 20th century Italian art through their focused purchases. Futurism was recognized as a major European avant-garde movement by critics, and not simply as a cultural season linked with fascist ideology.

Above all, it is Boccioni's creative vision that stands as a unique case in art. His exploration, characterized by sudden changes and qualitative oscillations, demonstrates the courage and vitality of a young Italian artist engaged in aligning the art of his country to the most advanced of international stances. Boccioni rewrote the tradition of the Divisionist portrait through the revolutionary lessons taught by Giacomo Balla. He tried to offer an alternative to the international flavour of the Biennali exhibitions of the early 1900's, with the unfurled expression of his first version of *Stati d'animo* [States of Mind]. He drew inspiration from French cubism in his *Studio di figura femminile (Studio di donna fra case)* [Study of Female Figure, or Woman Among Homes] from 1911. He then detached from the cold conceptuality developed in those years by Braque and Picasso. And, eventually, between 1914 and 1916, he went back to Cézanne's solid technique and even to the brutal inelegance of Picasso's early Cubist artwork without ever sliding into the trap of a marked decorative style.