

MAN RAY AND FUTURISM: AN OVERLOOKED CONNECTION

by

SARAH C. BOCKEL

(Under the Direction of Evan Firestone)

ABSTRACT

Man Ray is commonly recognized as an American artist who associated with the Parisian Dadaists and Surrealists in the 1920s and '30s. Many of his works also demonstrate an interest in the concepts and aesthetics of the Italian Futurists. This thesis will first examine the notion of Futurism in the United States between the years 1911-1915. Then, a selection of Man Ray's work as it relates to that of the Futurists, concentrating primarily on material from 1913-1917, will be analyzed. Cross-comparisons will be made between artistic and political agendas of Man Ray and the Futurists. Additionally, a reading of Man Ray's film *Emak Bakia* (1926), using the Futurist Manifesto on Cinema (1916) as a guide, will shed light on the artist's continued interest in Futurist concepts such as dynamism and states of mind.

INDEX WORDS: Anarchism, Avant-garde, Dada, Dynamism, *Emak Bakia*, Ferrer Center, Futurism, Man Ray, Modern School

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Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree

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DEDICATION

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INTRODUCTION

The artist Man Ray is best known as an American active in Parisian Dada and Surrealist circles during the 1920s and 30s. Perhaps because of his European success, he is hardly recognized as a comparable artistic force in the United States before or after his years in Paris. Recently, new scholarship has been devoted to the art Man Ray produced in America before making his transatlantic voyage. Francis Naumann's catalogue for the 2003 exhibition *Man Ray: Conversion to Modernism* explores his early work and artistic formation. Naumann's research is the most thorough investigation to date of the early period of his artistic career. Prior to Naumann's publication, Karin Rabbito and Arturo Schwarz also contributed to the literature on Man Ray's early career. These authors acknowledge the importance of the European avant-garde on Man Ray's artistic development, noting the significant influences of Cézanne, the Fauves, and the Cubists.¹ Lacking in the scholarship, however, is an in-depth examination of the Italian Futurists' impact on Man Ray's early work. Despite Man Ray's fascination with speed, dynamism, anarchism, and interpreting experiences of modern life through art, there are no studies to date that investigate the futurist aspects of his work.

For the *Conversion to Modernism* exhibition, Naumann and curator Gail Stavitsky amassed an impressive collection of Man Ray's early works, some of which were not

¹ See Francis Naumann, *Conversion to Modernism* (New Brunswick and London: Rutgers University Press, 2003) and *Man Ray and America, the New York and Ridgefield Years: 1907-1914*, Ph.D. diss. (New York: City University of New York, 1988); Karin Anhold Rabbito, "Man Ray in Quest of Modernism," *Rutgers Art Review* 2 (January 1981): 59-69; Arturo Schwarz, *Rigour of Imagination* (London: Thames and Hudson, 1977).

previously considered an important part in defining his oeuvre. These works demonstrate his early experiments in various media, his sources of inspiration, and his evolving style. Naumann's analysis focuses on Man Ray's academic training and informal education in the United States rather than the foreign influences that may have inspired the artist. His research is instrumental in the development of the connection between Man Ray and Futurism, as it explores the various anarchistic activities and institutions of which Man Ray participated, including the Ferrer Center (to be discussed in detail in Chapter Two), and Alfred Stieglitz's 291 Gallery. Karin Rabbito's article, "Man Ray In Quest of Modernism" and its focus on European avant-garde influences on Man Ray's early work also plays a strong role in shaping this thesis. Rabbito asserts that Man Ray's interest in European modernism was stimulated by the American artists who had made trips to Europe. While Rabbito does not entirely overlook Futurism as one of the European avant-garde influences, it receives little attention.² Rabbito's only explains the formal characteristics in Man Ray's work derived from his colleagues. She neither explores any direct exposure he had to modern art, nor investigates the avant-garde political, theoretical, or philosophical subjects that interested him.

John Hand's article, "Futurism in America 1909-1914," helps recreate the context that facilitates an understanding of Man Ray's more direct knowledge of Futurism. Hand's study is the first summary of contemporaneous literature on Futurism in the United States and looks at many of the documents that demonstrate an American interest in the Italian art movement during Man Ray's formative years.³ His survey of documents pertaining to Futurism in the United States served as a jumping-off point for Margaret

² See Rabbito, 69. Rabbito begins to make this connection in her assertion that Man Ray was the "first American to comprehend the initial post-cubist, post-fauvist, and post-futurist directions of modern art."

³ See John Hand, "Futurism in America 1909-1914," *Art Journal* (Winter 1981): 337-42.

Burke's 1986 dissertation, *Futurism in America 1910-1917*, that extends beyond Hand's research to analyze several American artists whose work reflects a Futurist aesthetic. Her work concentrates on Joseph Stella, an Italian immigrant who made a deliberate attempt to align his art with that of his native countrymen. John Marin and Arthur Dove also figure in her dissertation, but Man Ray is not examined.⁴ Burke's case studies of Stella, Marin and Dove are important to this thesis because they were artists whom Man Ray admired and with whom he associated. They were an integral part of Man Ray's education in the European avant-garde in general and Futurism in particular.

Given the fact that the body of literature on Man Ray's early career is far from exhaustive, existing discussions of the influences on his work beg the question of why Futurism is not given more attention, particularly since it was an emerging movement in Europe just when Man Ray was beginning his career in the years 1911-1913. Since Burke's dissertation, not much has been written on Futurism in America. In 2002, Günter Berghaus published a compendium of essays on Futurism as an international phenomenon. Among these is a brief essay by Lisa Panzera addressing the issue of Futurism in the United States. In its analysis of a few American artists, her essay essentially revisits Burke's dissertation, but she extends her discussion to include Charles Demuth and Mina Loy.⁵ Loy is significant because she knew the Futurists directly and was a person of interest to Man Ray. In an earlier article, Jean-Pierre Andréoli de Villers explores the dissemination of Futurism in the United States by way of French artists Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia. Neither was a member of the Futurist group, but both were familiar with the Italian movement, and paintings such as Duchamp's *Nude*

⁴ Margaret Burke, "Futurism in America 1910-1917," (Ph.D. diss., University of Delaware, 1986).

⁵ Lisa Panzera, "Italian Futurism and Avant-Garde Painting in the United States" in *International Futurism in Arts and Literature*, Günter Berghaus, ed. (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2000): 222-243.

Descending the Staircase No. 2 (1912) and Picabia's *Dance at the Spring* (1912) [figs. 1-2], display a dynamism that helped to shape the American understanding of Futurist art.⁶

Understanding Duchamp's and Picabia's role in the dissemination of Futurist concepts in the United States is critical to this study because the two men were strong influences on Man Ray's artistic development.

Studies of Futurism in America, particularly those concentrating on individual artists, have been rare due to the scarcity of Italian Futurist activity in the United States, despite exhibitions by other subsets of the European avant-garde. Alfred Stieglitz, for example, provided an outlet via the 291 Gallery and through the periodical *Camera Work* for artists such as Picasso, Brancusi, and Cézanne. The Futurists did not receive exposure in America because they did not participate in the major exhibition event of the period, the Armory Show of 1913.⁷ Instead, they exhibited with less visibility at the San Francisco Pan American Exhibition in 1915. The only other time a Futurist displayed work in the States was in 1917 when Gino Severini was the last artist to exhibit at 291 before it closed. Severini's exhibition, however, took place well after the first wave of Futurism and after the period most influential on Man Ray's development.⁸ Prior to 1915, Americans were aware of Futurism only through contemporary literature,

⁶ Jean-Pierre Andréoli de Villers, "Duchamp-Picabia et le cubo-futurisme pénétration de l'art moderne aux États-Unis," *Liegia* 21-24 (October-June 1997-1998).

⁷ See Andréoli de Villers, 88, n. 15, in which he writes that the Futurists could not participate in the Armory Show because they were already committed to an exhibition schedule in Europe. He also argues that Marinetti would have had trouble securing a visa for travel to the United States due to the Italian government's uproar over his latest scandalous work, *Mafarka Futuriste*. See also James Timothy Voorhies *My Dear Stieglitz: Letters of Marsden Hartley and Alfred Stieglitz, 1912-1915* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2002) 42, n. 2, in which Voorhies states that the Futurists pulled out of the Armory Show at the last minute because they were not offered sufficient exhibition space.

⁸ Art historians divide Futurism into two phases, First Generation Futurism and Second Generation Futurism. First Generation Futurism, founded by F.T. Marinetti spans the years 1909-1915. With the onset of World War I, the deaths of Boccioni and Sant'Elia, Futurism lost steam. After the war, a new generation of artists arose, and in 1923, Fillia officially founded the Turin Futurist group. The most complete text on First Generation Futurism is Marianne Martin's *Futurist Art and Theory* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1968).

reproductions, and from friends traveling in Europe during the years when the Futurists were active.

Not only was Futurism's presence in the United States indirect, but Man Ray rarely commented on the influence of Futurism in his work, and then only in an imprecise way.⁹ Furthermore, the Surrealists, with whom he later associated, staunchly rejected Futurism. Rebuffing the notion that automatic writing was a Futurist derivative, André Breton declared in 1926 that "One must be the most naïve of men to grant any attention to the Futurist theory of 'Words-in-Freedom'. . . . We have opposed this theory, like many others that are no less precarious. . . ." ¹⁰ Scholars link Dada and Surrealism to Futurism despite what Breton had to say about the latter connection.¹¹ Man Ray also may have refused to acknowledge Futurism because of its association with Fascism. Another problem is that by the time Futurism reached America it was frequently grouped with Cubism or, more broadly, a *mélange* of European avant-garde movements, thereby obfuscating its unique characteristics.¹²

⁹ Recorded in the 29 January 1921 edition of the *New York Evening Sun* is a statement by Man Ray implicating Futurism's impact on his work as a New York Dadaist: "Dada is a state of mind . . . it consists largely of negations . . . it is the tail of every other movement – Cubism, Futurism, Simulationism, the last being closely related."

¹⁰ *Légitime Défense* (Paris : Éditions Surréalistes, 1926); English translation in *What is Surrealism* (London: Pluto Press, 1978), 37, quoted in Günter Berghaus, "Futurism, Dada, and Surrealism: Some Cross-Fertilizations Among the Historical Avant-Garde" in *International Futurism in Arts and Literature*, 298.

¹¹ See Berghaus, "Futurism, Dada, and Surrealism: Some Cross-Fertilizations Among Historical Avant-Gardes," in *International Futurism in Arts and Literature*, Günter Berghaus, ed. (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2000), 271-304.

¹² Kenyon Cox, "Cubists and Futurists are Making Insanity Pay," *New York Times*, Magazine Section, 16 March, 1913, in which Cox groups together Futurists and Cubists, stating, "Have you been to see the Cubists and the Futurists [at the Armory Show]? Yes? Well, could you make anything out of it?" "Art and Artists"; *The Globe and Commercial Advisor*, 17 February 1913, speaks of the Armory Show participants – the "Cubists, Futurists and the various 'jams' men"; Charles Caffin's review of Severini's exhibition at 291 in *New York American* in 12 March 1917 addresses "an attempt to combine what is of value in cubism and futurism"; "The European Art Invasion," *Literary Digest* 51 (November 1915): 1224-5, speaks of "Duchamp, Gleizes, Francis Picabia. Jean Crotti, 'The Cubists, Futurists, what not'; Harry B. Lachman, 'War Tames the art of the 'Wild Men of Paris' in *New York Times Magazine*, sect. 4, 24 October 1915, 10-11, discusses Picasso's work's superiority to "those of most Post-Impressionists, Cubists, and Futurists [which is] painfully obvious."

Nevertheless, futurist tendencies are apparent in Man Ray's work and deserve acknowledgement. These include an interest in the machine age and modern life, the use of lines of force, and a reflection of Henri Bergson's philosophy. The influence of Futurism on Man Ray's work can be discerned as early as 1913, and continued when he was working as a Dadaist. Correlations exist between Man Ray's Dada-Surreal film *Emak Bakia* (1926) and the work of Futurist photographer Anton Giulio Bragalia, along with the Futurist collective film, *La Vita Futurista* (1916). This study first examines Man Ray's background and the education that prepared him to be receptive to Futurism. Then, formal analysis will demonstrate how Man Ray incorporated futurist tendencies in his work prior to his involvement with Marcel Duchamp and Francis Picabia in 1915. Finally, a close reading of *Emak Bakia* will examine Man Ray's continuing use of futurist concepts to express his response to the modern world. Man Ray was not a futurist artist, and should not be defined as such. The aim of this thesis is to position Futurism with other European movements as an important influence on his work that extended over the course of his career.

CHAPTER 1

THE NEW YORK ART WORLD AND DISSEMINATION OF FUTURIST ART AND THEORY

They were building the Lexington Avenue subway and the racket of concrete mixers and seam drills was constant. It was music to me and even a source of inspiration. I who had been thinking of turning away from nature to man-made productions . . . with my new surroundings in a busy and changing city, it was inevitable that I change my influences and my technique.

~ Man Ray¹

Man Ray, né Emmanuel Radnitsky, moved with his family from Philadelphia to a three-bedroom apartment in Brooklyn in 1897 when he was seven years old. His father Max, a Jewish immigrant, obtained work at a garment factory and relocated the Radnitsky family. Man Ray spent his youth in crowded New York, amidst what he described as ‘strange people that were geometric forms walking in the street.’² Perhaps he saw the people as geometric forms because of the backdrop of city buildings or, more likely, because they recalled the fabric cuttings scattered on the factory floor where his father worked.³ From early on, Man Ray was intrigued by his modern urban surroundings.

¹ Man Ray, *Self-Portrait*, (New York: Little, Brown & Co., 1963), 59, as quoted by Francis Naumann in *New York Dada*, 81.

² Neil Baldwin, *Man Ray: American Artist* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter, Inc., 1988), 4.

³ See Milly Heyd, “Man Ray/Emmanuel Radnitsky: Who is Behind *The Enigma of Isidore Ducasse*,” in *Complex Identities: Jewish Consciousness and Modern Art*, Matthew Baigell and Milly Heyd, eds. (New Brunswick, NJ and London: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 129. Heyd observes that Man Ray’s *Tapestry* of 1911, constructed of fabric scraps, may be an abstracted human form. She conjectures that the work makes allusions to the textile sweatshop in which Man Ray’s father worked.

Around 1908, Man Ray began a career in the visual arts. After completing high school in June of that year, he was accepted to Columbia University's architecture school but declined the invitation because the rigors of a classical education did not appeal to him. Man Ray longed to draw from live models, an experience not possible in architecture classes. He took a job in an advertising office, and with evenings free, began his search for a suitable life-drawing course. In his autobiography, Man Ray recalls the disappointment he felt upon arriving to the first class only to find that his subject was a plaster cast of Apollo.⁴ Shuffling from evening course to evening course, Man Ray eventually located one offering instruction in portraiture and still life. He found "great relief" in the opportunity to make a portrait or still life in one sitting, a preference for rapid execution that perhaps anticipated his later interest in representing speed in art.⁵

Just about the time Man Ray began to think about art, Filippo Tomasso Marinetti unleashed the Futurist assault in Paris with a public declaration in *Le Figaro* on February 20, 1909. The manifesto, which spoke of "hurling defiance to the stars," urban "polyphonic tides," and "violent electric moons," denounced tradition in favor of a new aesthetic based on the energy of the modern machine.⁶ No previous movement in the history of art had been launched with such vigor and aggression as Italian Futurism. Led by Marinetti, five young men -- Giacomo Balla, Umberto Boccioni, Carlo Carrà, Luigi Russolo, and Gino Severini -- set out in 1910 to change the artistic and political universes. Their aim, guided by fearlessness and a spirit of anarchy, was to make art that corresponded to the pace at which their world moved. Just as their art reflected the

⁴ Man Ray, 20.

⁵ Man Ray, 24.

⁶ F.T. Marinetti, "The Manifesto of Futurism," *Le Figaro*, 20 February, 1909. Reprinted in *Futurist Manifestos*, Umbro Apollonio, ed. (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts Publications, 1970), 24

energy of the modern machine, so, too, did their actions. Over the next few years, the Futurists plastered Europe with manifestos on painting, photography, sculpture, music, drama, and architecture. They left no medium untouched.

As Futurism gathered momentum in Europe, across the ocean in New York City Man Ray's appetite for artistic knowledge was insatiable. In 1911, between working at the advertising office during the day and taking drawing classes in the evening, he filled his lunch hour visiting galleries on Fifth Avenue, foremost Alfred Stieglitz's 291 gallery. Like many young artists who visited 291, Man Ray was captivated by Stieglitz's lectures on modern art, and soon he was a 291 habitu  . Some of the work he saw at 291 included Brancusi's golden bronzes, Picasso's newsprint collages, works by Marsden Hartley and Arthur Dove "impregnated with the [European] modern spirit," and Rodin's 'action pieces.'⁷ These objects pleased Man Ray because, in his words, they "justified abandon[ment] of academic principles." If it was modern and being shown in the European galleries, it would likely wind up at 291. While most of the recognized European moderns -- the Post-Impressionists, the Fauves and the Cubists, to name a few - - were represented, the Italian Futurists were not exhibited until 1917 when Stieglitz showed the work of Gino Severini.

Although Futurist work was not physically available in New York, American artists interested in the European avant-garde were certainly aware of the radical Italians. Articles on Futurism appeared in numerous publications during the years 1909 to 1917, including *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *Harper's Weekly*, and *Literary Digest*. The first major announcement of Futurism to appear in America was an article in the August

⁷ Man Ray, 25. Action pieces are the manner in which Man Ray described Rodin's watercolors that were on exhibit at 291 in 1911.

1911 issue of *Current Literature*, which provided an overview of the movement and included excerpts of Marinetti's *Chantes Futuristes* (1909) and the "Technical Manifesto on Futurist Painting" (1910).⁸ The more recognized the Futurists became in Europe, the greater proliferation of commentary on them in the United States. Following their Bernheim-Jeune Gallery exhibition in Paris in February 1912, works by the Futurists were reproduced in several American periodicals, giving them visibility to young painters like Man Ray who were interested in the latest European developments. Among the paintings reproduced were Boccioni's *Laughter*, Carra's *Funeral of Anarchist Galli*, Russolo's *Revolt* and Severini's *Dance of the Pan Pan at the Monico* [figs. 3-6].⁹

During their travels to Europe, members of the Stieglitz circle, including Paul Strand and Marsden Hartley, wrote to Stieglitz about the Parisian art scene. Their observations were disseminated at 291 through informal conversations and published essays in *Camera Work*. Marsden Hartley, a prolific correspondent, often regaled Stieglitz with European happenings, including those of some of the "smaller people," the "Futuristes."¹⁰ Between 1912 and 1913, the Futurists are mentioned no less than five times in Hartley's correspondence to Stieglitz. Of particular note is Hartley's 1912 letter regarding Walt Kuhn's and Arthur B. Davies' preparation for the Armory Show. Hartley wrote, "Kuhn tells me he has Van Goghs from Germany and Holland – Cézannes and

⁸ "The Futurist Movement in Italy," *Current Literature* 51 (August 1911): 206-8.

⁹ *Laughter* and *The Funeral of Anarchist Galli* were reproduced in "Painting the Simultaneousness of the Ambient," *Literary Digest* (23 March 1912): 490-502. *Revolt*, *The Funeral of Anarchist Galli*, and *Pan Pan at the Monico* were reproduced in "The Challenge of 'Futurist' Art," *Current Literature* 53 (July 1912): 106-9. *Revolt* and *The Funeral of Anarchist Galli* were also reproduced by Hippolyte Havel under the heading "Anarchy in Art" in *The Revolutionary Almanac* (1914). Havel is described by Allan Antliff as a "mainstay" at the Ferrer Center and as Anarchist Emma Goldman's "right-hand man." He was also a friend of Alfred Stieglitz. See Allan Antliff, *Anarchist Modernism* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2001), 101-2.

¹⁰ *My Dear Stieglitz: Letters of Marsden Hartley and Alfred Stieglitz, 1912-1915*, James Timothy Voorhies, ed. (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press), 65.

Gauguins from Vollard - and they are to have Cubistes and I suppose Futuristes as well.”¹¹ Despite Hartley’s blasé commentary, his letter provides an early indication that the Futurists intended to participate in the Armory Show.

When a few Europeans reached New York and began writing in American publications about radical art in Paris, Stieglitz preserved the clippings.¹² Francis Picabia, the first of the European avant-garde to arrive in New York in 1913, wrote frequently on modern art. Although he was not associated with the Futurist group, Picabia published “Futurist Art in a Nutshell,” in the April 13, 1913 issue of *The World Magazine*, and it is one of the articles preserved in the Stieglitz archives. In this essay Picabia states that the main tenet of Futurism was the elimination of representational painting in favor of the expression of emotions and feelings reflective of modern experiences.¹³ Accompanying the article is Picabia’s watercolor *Negro Song I* [fig. 7], painted the same year. It is a reflection of the vibrations of African-American music that was a part of the irrepressible energy of New York. Picabia’s inclusion of the watercolor in the article implies its connection to futurism. In addition, his painting *Dance of the Spring* of 1912 [fig. 2] exhibited affinities with Severini’s *Pan Pan at the Monico* in subject matter and the kaleidoscopic effect of the brightly colored facets.

Man Ray and Picabia were later to become great friends, but when Picabia was in New York during World War I, the two remained on relatively unfamiliar terms, largely because of the language barrier.¹⁴ Nevertheless, Picabia’s concept of Futurism as he related it to the Stieglitz circle undoubtedly stimulated Man Ray’s interest. Picabia’s

¹¹ Voorhies, 39.

¹² These articles are located in box 117, folder 2396 of the Stieglitz/O’Keeffe Archive housed at the Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

¹³ Francis Picabia, “Futurism in a Nutshell,” *The World Magazine*, 13 April 1913, p. 11.

¹⁴ Man Ray, 95.

affinity with Futurism went beyond art, as he had a penchant for automobiles and high velocity. His passion for fast cars was immortalized in a Man Ray photograph of 1922 [fig. 8], an image that may have been the inspiration for a section of *Emak Bakia* that features a motorist roaring down a country road [fig. 9].

While Man Ray undoubtedly heard of Futurism in conversations at 291, it was at the Ferrer Center, in which he enrolled in 1912, where Futurism was a lively topic of discussion.¹⁵ The Ferrer Center, a branch of the Modern School offering night classes in the visual arts, was described as the leading anarchist hub in New York City at the time.¹⁶ It was established in 1911 by American anarchist Emma Goldman and dedicated to Francisco Ferrer, a Spanish radical who was an outspoken opponent of the monarchy of Alfonso XIII and the Catholic Church. Ferrer, who strongly opposed the strictly regimented and structured Catholic practices that dominated the Spanish education system, was executed because Alfonso XIII viewed him as a political threat.¹⁷ He argued that children should have equal opportunity to pursue learning in a non-sectarian setting. Goldman and her constituents saw Ferrer as a great martyr for individual expression and educational freedom, and they were determined to make his ideals the foundation of their own schools, which were intended to challenge the status quo.

The Ferrer Center attracted students like Max Weber, Abraham Walkowitz and Samuel Halpbert, who later became some of America's leading modern artists. Ashcan painter Robert Henri was in charge of artistic instruction. Although Henri's aesthetic was

¹⁵ Paul Avrich, *The Modern School Movement: Anarchism and Education in the United States* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980), 111.

¹⁶ The Modern School was a progressive educational institution for children based upon the principles set forth by Francisco Ferrer. The Ferrer Center was an institute of the arts for adults that was also based on Ferrer's liberal educational ideals.

¹⁷ Alfonso XIII notoriously prohibited liberal reforms before World War I and was publicly condemned in 1909 for ordering Ferrer's execution. Alfonso XIII was ultimately deposed by a political coup led by Franco in 1931.

drastically different from the Italian Futurists, he was a self-declared anarchist who painted scenes of the modern city and expressed views that resonated with what the Italian Futurists advocated in Europe. Paul Avrich states in his history of the Modern School that

[Henri's] class at the Ferrer School involved no systematic instruction. He did not impose his own style or methods on his pupils . . . Insofar as he dwelled on technique at all, he emphasized 'living, line form, living form, living color.' He also encouraged his students to paint and draw swiftly. 'Work with great speed,' he said. 'Have your energies alert, up and active. Finish as quickly as you can. There is no virtue in delaying.'¹⁸

Like the works of the Futurists, Henri's compositions convey a dynamic energy in their execution and contemporary subject matter. He wanted the artistic process to be as much about the present as the subjects depicted on the canvas. Barbara Rose observes that, "[Henri's] notion that art is a vital process constantly in a state of organic growth reflects the extent to which the Vitalist philosophy of Henri Bergson had penetrated art theory in the early century."¹⁹ The Futurists' and Henri's shared interest in this vital energy, or *élan vital*, is evident in Boccioni's *Laughter* and Henri's *Laughing Child* of 1907 [figs. 3 & 10]. Both artists represent the bubbly energy that laughter produces, and their figures take a backseat to the emotion they express. Boccioni's painting reflects a developed understanding of the *élan vital* as an inherent and fluid force, encompassing both material and metaphysical states, past, present and future, and immediate thought and memory.²⁰

While Henri's painting also reflects an emotional state, the picture does not exhibit to the

¹⁸ Avrich, 151.

¹⁹ Barbara Rose, *Readings in American Art Since 1900* (New York & Washington: Frederick A. Praeger, 1968), 39.

²⁰ Two years later in 1913, Boccioni wrote the *Manifesto of Plastic Dynamism*, in which he expounds on Bergsonian theory as it applies to his concept of art. The main points of Plastic Dynamism are an object's absolute motion and relative motion, which are essential to understanding how an object and space are simultaneously affected by one another. See Boccioni in Apollonio, 92-94.

same degree the outward radiation of laughter through space and time. In his work, the laughter is specific to the sitter. Henri's work further diverged from that of the Futurists because his style remained naturalistic, and he did not focus on modern technology, which the Italians did. Although Man Ray artistically parted company with his teacher on these points, Henri was the first mentor to encourage Man Ray to interpret the dynamic environment of the modern city.²¹ The principles Henri taught did not stem from Futurism, but his teaching impelled Man Ray to take an interest in Futurist art.

The Ferrer Center was not just a place that encouraged artistic freedom; it also provided a platform for individuals to discuss current artistic and political movements. Along with Cubism and Futurism, anarchism, socialism, syndicalism, revolution, workers' strikes, Freudian theory, and feminism, were ongoing topics at the Modern School. Among the list of lecturers was André Tridon, an important journalist and professional lecturer on art and politics, who has been largely obscured by the passage of time. In his 1912 essay for *The Sun*, the paper names Tridon at the top of his editorial as "Organizer of the Futurist Society of America."²² His agenda was to bring to an American audience the Futurists' brand of political and artistic anarchism, and one can surmise that Tridon's lectures at the Ferrer Center included discussions of Futurism.²³ Beyond these lectures, Man Ray also was in the company of peers attempting to act on violent anarchist convictions that reflected the Futurist philosophy of art translated into

²¹ Francis Naumann, "Man Ray and America, 21. "As a leader of the Eight, [Henri] encouraged his fellow painters to seek inspiration in the dynamism of the city, whose ethnic groups and lower-class inhabitants succinctly embodied the vitality of life in its most dignified and uncorrupted state."

²² Andre Tridon, "The Futurists, Latest Comers in the World of Art," *The Sun*, 25 February 1912, cited in Antliff, 105.

²³ See Antliff 102-105 for a further discussion of Tridon's program, which drew upon George Sorel's *Reflections on Violence* (1908) and described works such as Russolo's *Revolt* because it "captured the 'strong individuality' of a participant in the uprising." Antliff describes Tridon as a "vocal spokesperson for the [Futurist] movement."

action. In 1914, a group of Ferrer Center students contrived a plot to blow up John D. Rockefeller's mansion, which, according to Jean-Pierre Andréoli de Villers, was planned by individuals who were closely following the principles of the first Futurist Manifesto.²⁴ The young anarchists accidentally died trying to execute their plot. Paul Avrich observes that the episode demonstrated the "power of the drama as an instrument of propaganda as well as an instrument of art."²⁵ Shortly thereafter Man Ray published a small pamphlet entitled *The Ridgefield Gazook* that included Adolph Wolff's poem "Three Bombs," which Man Ray illustrated [fig. 11]. The poem is a memorial to the four individuals who lost their lives to the Futurist-inspired anarchist plot, and stands as the earliest work connecting Man Ray to the Futurists.²⁶

While some students acted violently in the name of Futurism, others, such as Max Weber, put it to practice in their art. According to Avrich, Weber, the oldest student at the Ferrer Center, was "fascinated by the dynamics of the city, with its lofty skyscrapers and great bridges."²⁷ Between 1912 and 1916, Weber painted a series of New York scenes that reflect Cubist and Futurist principles. In both style and title, *Rush Hour New York* [fig. 12] demonstrates his interest in the dynamism of New York life. He captures the hectic atmosphere of the city with vibrant colors fractured by dynamic force lines.

Rather than a static panorama of New York, Weber renders its frenetic pace.

²⁴ Andréoli de Villers, 187. "Un poème de Wolff *Trois bombes*, était illustré par Man Ray. De par son contenu, cette illustration rappelait que trios artistes de l'école Ferrer, suivant de trop près les principes du *Premier Manifeste du Futurisme*, avaient été tués par leurs propres bombes l'année précédente." The students involved were Louise Berger, Becky Edelson, and Charles Plunkett. See Avrich, 184-196, for an account of the bombing.

²⁵ Avrich, 141.

²⁶ Andréoli de Villers, 190. "*The Ridgefield Gazook* . . . dans laquelle on trouvait des parodies de ses amis anarchistes du centre Ferrer de New York: Adolph Wolff, Adon Lacroix, Hippolyte Hovel et Manuel Komroff. Un poème de Wolff, 'Trois Bombes,' était illustré par Man Ray. De par son contenu, cette illustration rappelait que trois artistes de l'école Ferrer, suivant de trop près principes du *Premier Manifeste du Futurisme*, avaient été tués par leurs propres bombes l'année précédente."

²⁷ Avrich, 156.

Weber, who Man Ray knew from 291 and the Ferrer Center, also frequented the home of the modern art collectors Walter and Louise Arensberg. In 1912 Man Ray became a regular visitor to the Arensbergs where their soirées provided him another opportunity to assimilate modern European art. Among those visiting the Arensbergs were Arthur Dove, Marsden Hartley, Joseph Stella, Francis Picabia, Marcel Duchamp and John Marin.²⁸ Marin exhibited dynamic paintings of New York City in his one-man exhibition at 291 in January and February of 1913, which Man Ray likely attended. The resemblance between Marin's personal statement for this exhibition and Marinetti's first Futurist Manifesto was noted by Sheldon Reich. Marin wrote,

. . . If these buildings move me they too must have life. Thus the whole city is alive; buildings, people, are all alive; and the more they move me the more I feel them to be alive.

I see great forces at work [in New York City] . . . Feelings are aroused which give me the desire to express the reaction of these 'pull forces,' those influences which play with one another

In life all things come under the magnetic influence of other things; the bigger assert themselves strongly, the smaller not so much, but they still assert themselves, and though hidden they strive to be seen and in so doing change their bent and direction.

While these powers are at work pushing, pulling, sideways, downwards, upwards, I can hear the sound of their strife and there is great music being played.²⁹

Reich compares these words to the Futurist desire to "extol aggressive movement, feverish insomnia, the quick steps, the somersault, the box on the ear, the fisticuff."³⁰ The Futurist manifesto is much more forceful than Marin's statement, but both express the

²⁸ Naumann, "Man Ray and America," 49. Man Ray noted that these were the artists who made a marked impression upon him.

²⁹ *Exhibition of water-colors—New York, Berkshire and Adirondack Series—and Oils by John Marin, of New York* (New York: Photo-Secession Gallery, 20 Jan. – 15 Feb. 1913). Cited in William Innes Homer, *Alfred Stieglitz and the American Avant-Garde* (Boston: New York Graphic Society, 1977), 105-106.

³⁰ Sheldon Reich, quoted in Homer, 106.

wish to convey dynamic energy and mention the directional forces that provide it.

William Innes Homer believes Marin was probably influenced to a greater degree by the Futurist statement that accompanied the Bernheim-Jeune Exhibition, and that Marin probably read the catalogue, or when the passage was quoted time and again in French, English and American journals, or from discussions of Futurism at 291.³¹

Although Marin knew Gino Severini, and one can imagine that their discussions influenced Marin's dynamic interpretations of New York City, he did not view himself as a Futurist.³² Joseph Stella, on the other hand, did. Stella, an Italian immigrant, began painting in a realist style, but after 1912 dedicated himself to Futurist aesthetics. Man Ray met Stella (who is "Joseph" in Man Ray's autobiography) in a New York City museum around 1910 or 1911.³³ Encountering Stella in the museum, Man Ray said, made him want to paint more than ever.³⁴ Although this incident occurred while Stella was busy copying Old Masters and painting in a realist style, the relationship between Man Ray and Stella was forged, laying the groundwork for the exchange of artistic ideas between the two until Stella died in 1946. Shortly after Man Ray's first encounter with Stella, the Italian-American artist left for Europe, visiting Venice, Florence, Rome and eventually Paris, where he abandoned his realist style of painting for that of his fellow

³¹ Homer, 106.

³² See M. Burke, 132. Marin's son "recalled that his father knew Gino Severini and had discussed the Italian artist with him on several occasions." According to Burke, any documentation to indicate the extent of Marin's and Severini's relationship has not survived. Marin lived in Paris from 1905 to 1910, and Burke speculates that he and Severini probably had casual encounters in Paris, as was common among the avant-garde artists living in the city at the time.

³³ The precise date of Stella and Man Ray's encounter is not recorded in Man Ray's autobiography. Man Ray's frequently omitted or changed dates in his autobiography, the most glaring discrepancy being the date noted by the artist as his arrival to the Port at Le Havre, France in 1921. Man Ray says he arrived on July 14, when ship records indicate the boat did not reach port until July 21. Scholars generally agree that Man Ray changed the date to make it coincide with Bastille Day in order to enliven his autobiographical account.

³⁴ Man Ray, 27.

natives, the Italian Futurists.³⁵ The timing of Stella's trip to Paris led to his absorption of Futurism. He felt an affinity for the Italians because of their shared national identity, but, more importantly, his visit to Paris coincided with the Futurist exhibition at the Bernheim-Jeune Gallery.

Returning to America, Stella painted *Battle of Lights, Coney Island, Mardi Gras*, the first major work in which he experiments with the tenets of Futurism [Fig. 13]. The painting acknowledges the many nocturnal visions of the Futurists, set off by the new technology of electric lights and the mechanical marvels of the amusement park. Formally, the painting is reminiscent of the work of Gino Severini, with whom Stella was friendly while in Paris. The upper right corner of Stella's composition, with its patchwork of complementary color, recalls Severini's *Dynamic Hieroglyph of the Bal Tabarin* [fig. 14], while the dotted yellow lines in the upper center of the composition are reminiscent of the pointillist effect that Severini created with sequins in works such as *Blue Dancer* [fig. 15].³⁶ The painting's force lines give it the dynamic quality for which the Futurists are best known. Although other Americans were working in the new style, Stella, more than any other, could truly appreciate Futurist concepts, as he was able to read the numerous manifestos in his native tongue. Through this Italian-American comrade, who was one of his closer friends in the art world, Man Ray would have had a direct channel to the ideas put forth by the Futurists.

While Stella pursued the visual implications of Futurism, another in the Arensberg group, the poet Mina Loy, extolled the tenets of Futurism in literature.

³⁵ Wanda Corn, *The Great American Thing: Modern Art and National Identity, 1915-1935* (Berkeley, Los Angeles & London: University of California Press, 1999), 136.

³⁶ See Panzera, 231, in which she discusses the Futurists' tendency to paint "splintered color blocks," which also appear in Stella's *Battle of Lights, Coney Island*.

Although not a member of the Italian Futurist group, Loy possessed a more intimate knowledge of Italian Futurism than any other American. Before World War I she spent time in Milan where she wrote poetry and had a short affair with Marinetti.³⁷ An editorial in the *Evening Sun* described her as an exemplary modern woman who ‘[could] tell what futurism is and where it came from.’³⁸ Loy also had ties to Stieglitz, and her poem *Aphorisms on Futurism* was printed in *Camera Work*.³⁹ In the poem Loy underscores Futurist concepts that offered innovative ways to express the experiences of the modern world that could have appealed to someone like Man Ray.⁴⁰ The poem opens with a call to “DIE in the Past / Live in the Future.” Throughout the poem, Loy evokes the Futurist passion for velocity, the sensation of explosion (expressed visually through periodic use of words written in all capital letters), and the exaltation of “gigantic” egotism. She also highlights the importance of the mind’s role in art, stating “MAN is a slave only to his own mental lethargy. / You cannot restrict the mind’s capacity.” This assertion later found fulfillment in Man Ray’s aerographs, which he described as purely

³⁷ Bram Dijkstra, *Cubism, Stieglitz, and the Early Poetry of William Carlos Williams* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1969), 157. Dijkstra speaks of Loy as an instrumental figure in the transmission of Futurism in America. “Mina Loy, a remarkable and for that time impressively emancipated woman, was one of the major links between the New York avant-garde and the Futurist movement in Europe.” For an in depth discussion of Mina Loy’s association with the Futurists, see Carolyn Burke’s *Becoming Modern: The Life of Mina Loy* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux 1996), 156-194.

³⁸ Naumann, *New York Dada* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, Inc., 1994), 166. In addition to poetry, Loy did try her hand at applying the Futurist aesthetic to the visual arts. She executed three ‘dynamic portraits’ of Marinetti, which she exhibited at the 1914 Esposizione Libera Futurista Internazionale at the Sproveri Gallery in Rome.

³⁹ Mina Loy, “Aphorisms on Futurism,” *Camera Work* no. XLV (June 1914): 13-15. Reprinted in *Camera Work: A Photographic Quarterly*, nos. 45-50 (1914-1917) by Krausreprint: Nendeln/Liechtenstein, 1969. See Appendix A.

⁴⁰ See Baldwin, 52-53. Loy and Man Ray were among the “constantly shifting cast of characters” who frequented the Arensberg home almost every evening. Because the Arensberg soirées were an opportunity for intellectual exchange, it is assumed that Man Ray and Loy knew each other’s ideas well. See Neumann, *New York Dada*, 94, which states that “Louise Arensberg referred to the group [who gathered at her home] as their ‘circle of friends,’” implying the close relationship shared by her guests. See also Baldwin, 114 and Man Ray, 153. Loy and Man Ray remained acquaintances, as substantiated by their meeting in the fall of 1923 when he photographed her daughter Joella.

cerebral art.⁴¹ One of Man Ray's earliest photographs captured Loy wearing an earring fashioned from a thermometer [fig. 16]. While not Futurist, as the Italians abhorred realistic portraiture, Man Ray's photograph offers an image of Loy that corresponds to her state of mind. With her eyes closed, her head tilted slightly upward, she appears to be in a meditative trance. Carolyn Burke contends that the portrait showed Mina Loy's "emotional temperature" at a time when she just suffered the disappearance of her great love, Arthur Craven.⁴²

The work of Max Weber, Joseph Stella, John Marin and Mina Loy confirms that there was an interest in Futurism among artists in New York. The Italians were slated to participate in the Armory Show; the board of directors dedicated separate rooms to various groups of the European avant-garde, including one for the Italians.⁴³ Futurist participation was even reflected in a letter sent by the Association of American Painters and Sculptors to solicit financial support just prior to the show.⁴⁴ The reason the Futurists did not contribute remains a question, but scholars have several theories about their absence. Milton Brown thinks the Futurists eventually backed out because they only liked shows dedicated exclusively to their work, whereas the Armory Show represented numerous European and American artists.⁴⁵ Jean-Pierre Andréoli de Villers suggests that with their other exhibition conflicts, and the recent outrage in Italy over Marinetti's publication of *Manifesto del Futurismo*, which would have made it difficult for him to obtain a visa to America, resulted in the Futurists never making it to the States with the rest of

⁴¹ See Man Ray, 67. Aerographs were paintings created with an airbrush, often times produced by spraying around an object so that its silhouette remained. Because the brush never touched the paper, Man Ray felt the work to be more cerebral than manual painting.

⁴² C. Burke, 299.

⁴³ Milton Brown, *The Story of the Armory Show* (Greenwich, CT: The New York Graphic Society, 1963), 57.

⁴⁴ Brown, 63.

⁴⁵ Brown, 75.

the European Moderns.⁴⁶ Timothy Voorhies believes that the Futurists pulled out of the Armory Show because their exhibition space was insufficient.⁴⁷

Futurism's absence at the Armory Show created much confusion regarding what, precisely, Futurism was. Without the Futurists exhibiting in America, "Futurism" developed into a compound term, linked to other progressive movements, and it became difficult to separate it as a distinctive manifestation of European modernism. Indeed, much of Futurism's visual influence came from Divisionism, Fauvism and Cubism. When the Armory Show opened, unclassifiable artists, particularly Francis Picabia and Marcel Duchamp, whose work conveyed a strong sense of dynamism, were labeled futurists or cubo-futurists.

Futurism was the term that defined contemporary modernity, and it was transformed into a label for modern art that did not fall into any prescribed category.⁴⁸ The critic J. Nilsen Laurvick grappled with the artistic classification of futurists. Laurvick, the first American to quote the Futurist Manifesto almost in its entirety, defined Marcel Duchamp as a Futurist artist, despite his lack of ties to the group. Laurvick's description of Duchamp and his *Nude Descending the Staircase No. 2* [fig. 1] articulates a prevalent contemporary attitude towards Futurism and is worth quoting in its entirety:

⁴⁶ See Andréoli de Villers, 88, n. 15. "Les Futuristes ne participèrent pas à l'Armory Show pour des raisons de programmation de leurs expositions en Europe. Il se pourrait aussi que la situation légale de Marinetti qui avait été jugé pour outrage à la pudeur lors de la publication de *Mafarka le Futuriste* ait joué un rôle dans cette non-participation. Lui aurait été difficile d'obtenir un visa pour se rendre aux Etats-Unis à cause de cette condamnation."

⁴⁷ Voorhies, 42, n. 2. "The Italian Futurists actually pulled out at the last minute because they were not offered their own exhibition space."

⁴⁸ Panzera, 223. "Especially in the years surrounding the Armory Show, the American conception of Futurism was confused by non-Futurist works that were taken to represent the Italian movement, such as Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* (which bore certain resemblances to Futurism and was on view at the Armory Show). Thus, there arose two uses of the term "futurism": one to denote the specific Italian movement, and another to refer to modernist artworks in a more general sense."

Marcel Duchamp, one of the most discussed exponents of futurism, though not officially affiliated with the main group, promptly presents us with a 'Nude Descending Stairway' that looks for all the world like 'an explosion in a shingle yard' as one observer aptly called it when it was shown in New York. Out of this chaos of over-lapping flat planes that look like a pack of cards spread out, the spectator is supposed to resolve a 'Nude Descending Stairway,' which, by reason of its manner of presentation, is calculated to give one a sense of progressive motion such as the succession of images in a moving picture. But instead of a sense of movement one is simply conscious of a series of flat figures, one overlapping the other, the sum total which remains no less fixed than each separate unit and the attempt to achieve an allusion of motion without the concomitant physical and mechanical means employed by a moving picture results in an amusing failure, very entertaining as a new kind of parlor game but of very little value as art. But admitting that this kinetoscopic arrangement of surfaces does produce in the minds of certain spectators a sense of motion, it must be conceded that this, regarded as an end in itself, is a very puerile use of art and in no sense an amplification of its possibilities.⁴⁹

Although Laurvick views Duchamp as a trifling artist, writing off his attempt to convey motion as a "new kind of parlor game [that is] of very little value as art," he identifies some of the important features of Futurism such as the "chaos of over-lapping planes" and "progressive motion." The Duchamp who was "puerile" in the eyes of Laurvick, was, in many ways, the "madman" lauded by the Futurists in the Technical Manifesto.⁵⁰ He was the *enfant terrible* of the Armory Show and America's shining exemplar of "futurism" after 1913.

In addition to *Nude Descending the Staircase*, Duchamp was represented at the Armory Show by *The King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes* [fig. 17]. *Nude Descending* was the most discussed work of the Armory Show, and its radicalism was unmatched by any other work displayed. While Man Ray already had some understanding of the European avant-garde, Duchamp's painting stood out as a major

⁴⁹ J. Nilsen Laurvick, *Is it Art? Post-Impressionism, Futurism, Cubism* (New York: The International Press, 1913), 17-18.

⁵⁰ Umberto Boccioni et. al., *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*, in *Poesia* 11 April 1910. Reprinted in *Apollonio*, 27-31. "We declare that the name of 'madman' with which it is attempted to gag all innovators should be looked upon as the title of honor."

example of Futurism, specifically as a painted chronographic corollary of the Futurist assertion that a “running horse has not four legs, but twenty, and their movements are triangular.”⁵¹ Speaking about *The King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes*, Duchamp later acknowledged that it was “perhaps a bit Futurist, because by then I knew about the Futurists.”⁵² Regardless of how Duchamp saw himself, he was a futurist to the New York art world by the time he arrived in the United States.⁵³

Although Man Ray did not meet Duchamp in person until 1915 when the French artist escaped to New York City under the duress of World War I, the influence of his work on Man Ray before they met cannot be underestimated. Man Ray was so stunned by his experience at the Armory Show that he claimed to produce no art for six months.⁵⁴ What Francis Naumann believes to be the first painting Man Ray made following the Armory Show, a portrait of Alfred Stieglitz [fig. 18], may be the first of his works to display futurist elements. Usually this painting is described as cubist. Like Picasso’s portrait of Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler [fig. 19], this image of the American prophet of Modernism is broken down into facets, flattening the space and simultaneously obscuring any semblance of recognizable location. These planes, however, do not deconstruct the subject to the same degree as in Picasso’s work. The image is a recognizable whole, and the figure maintains its integrity. Identifiable objects in the painting include a camera bellows, Brancusi’s *Maiastra* [fig. 20], a version of which was exhibited at the Armory Show, and the numerical name of Stieglitz’s gallery. These numbers offer a literal

⁵¹ Boccioni et. al., *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*, in Apollonio, 28.

⁵² Pierre Cabanne *Dialogues with Marcel Duchamp*, Ron Padgett, trans. (New York: Viking Press, 1971), 35. Cited in M. Burke, 96 & 103, n. 35.

⁵³ Naumann, *New York Dada*, 172. Baroness Elsa von Freytag-Loringhoven, a member of the nascent New York Dadaists, for example, wrote in a poem to Duchamp, “un enfant francais: Marcel (a Futurist) ein deutsches Kind: Elsa (a Future Futurist).”

⁵⁴ Man Ray, quoted in Naumann, *Conversion to Modernism*, 44. “I did nothing for six months [following the Armory Show]. It took me that time to digest what I had seen.”

representation of the gallery and all associated with it. The shape of the two and the nine, with their bulbous ends not unlike music notes on a staff, allude to musical composition, to which modernist painting was frequently compared. Man Ray worked here in an exceptionally bright palette, not the earth tones of Analytic Cubism. The brilliant colors can be ascribed to the Fauves, in whom Man Ray was clearly interested by 1913.⁵⁵ But the placement of these colors, so that all facets are complimentary, also can be related to this Futurist query: “How can we still see the human face as pink, while our lives are undeniably doubled by night-time activity? The human face is yellow, it is red, it is green, it is blue, it is violet . . . Our pictorial sensations cannot be expressed in whispers. We make them sing and shout in our canvases, which ring out with deafening triumphal fanfares.”⁵⁶ Here the description of the human face refers to its unique appearance under artificial light. Man Ray’s rendering of Stieglitz’s multi-colored face may allude to the importance Stieglitz placed on the man-made fixtures that illuminated the works at 291.⁵⁷

Velocity is one of the primary subjects of Italian Futurism. In his portrait of Stieglitz, Man Ray makes strong allusions to flight. Stieglitz is pictured with spectacles pushed high on his forehead. Along with the thick mustache that dominated his face, his spectacles were one of his most defining attributes. Man Ray’s representation is unusual because most artistic depictions of Stieglitz, literal or abstract, show him wearing glasses over his eyes.⁵⁸ The spectacles are paired with the rounded form of Stieglitz’s head,

⁵⁵ Naumann, *Conversion to Modernism*, 44. Naumann has noted the resonance of Matisse in Man Ray’s work, particularly in *Flowers with Red Background* (1913), as it is reminiscent of Matisse’s famous *Red Studio*, which had been exhibited at the Armory Show.

⁵⁶ Umberto Boccioni et. al. *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*, in Apollonio, 29.

⁵⁷ See Homer, 197-198 for photographs of installations at 291 in which the individual light figures’ prominence is obvious.

⁵⁸ Representative examples are Stieglitz’s own self-portrait photograph of 1907, Marius DeZaya’s caricature of 1909 and *291 Waves its Forelock* (1912), Florine Stettheimer’s painting of 1928 and Paul Strand’s photograph from 1929.

which was usually represented as rather squarish due to his tousled hair. Here the combination of forms suggests a flight cap and goggles [fig. 21]. Man Ray makes another allusion to flight with the inclusion of Brancusi's *Maiastra*. The Rumanian sculptor was well known to the Stieglitz group because he was recently included in the Armory Show. *Maiastra*, bird-like in form, is an archetypal representation of flight and transcendence. Even more important, the bronze *Maiastra* of 1912 that was exhibited at the Armory Show rested on a zigzag base, a form not unlike the camera bellows or the base on which Stieglitz's head rests in Man Ray's picture. Comparing an innovator of the art world to one in aviation was not a novel idea. Picasso and Braque saw themselves as pioneers in visual art just as the Wright brothers were pioneers of aviation: Picasso referred to his colleague Braque as 'Wilbourg,' a nod to Wilbur Wright.⁵⁹ Because the Wright brothers were American and Stieglitz's mission was to encourage avant-garde American artists, this allusion takes on considerable significance. This image of Stieglitz does not only have cubist forms but is a futurist vision of a man who revolutionized the American art world as the aeroplane forever transformed modern life.⁶⁰

Margaret Burke observes that it is important to note three factors "which may have affected the acceptance of the Italian movement in the United States: the association of Futurism with anarchism; the Futurists' determination to destroy the past; and an emerging interest by American modernists in non-representational artists."⁶¹ These three factors seem to be precisely what drew Man Ray to Futurism. His work was deeply

⁵⁹ Charles Harrison et. al., *Primitivism, Cubism, Abstraction* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1993), 152.

⁶⁰ Marinetti, *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism* (1909), in Apollonio, 22. "We will sing of . . . the sleek flight of planes whose propellers chatter in the wind like banners and seem to cheer like an enthusiastic crowd."

⁶¹ M. Burke, 67.

indebted to his first encounter with Duchamp's work, and Duchamp's paintings must be appreciated as visual conduits for the understood vision of Futurism in the United States. Man Ray's fascination with the dynamism of the modern city, paired with his artistic and political anarchism, aligns him more closely with Futurism than is commonly recognized.

CHAPTER 2

VARIATIONS ON A THEME – EXPLORING FUTURISM

Between 1913 and 1915, Man Ray grew from an eager student to an accepted member of the New York avant-garde. By 1915 the twenty-five year old artist was well ensconced in the important circles of Alfred Stieglitz and Walter and Louise Arensberg. In January 1915, Stieglitz published Man Ray's "Impressions of 291" in *Camera Work*. The passage describes the living palpitations of the gallery walls and the fiery spirit of Stieglitz, "the Man" who is the embodiment of 291.¹ In that same year, the Memorial Art Gallery in Rochester and the Montross Gallery in New York City exhibited Man Ray's work. In November 1915, Charles Daniel, a leading dealer of modern art, gave Man Ray his first one-man show at his gallery on Forty-Seventh Street. The year prior to this whirlwind of events was one of the most productive and fruitful of Man Ray's early career, as well as one of great transformation. His art in 1914 and 1915 marks the departure from a novice imitating modern masters to a seasoned artist applying modern theory and aesthetics in his own unique work. For Man Ray, an artist whose training was shaped by anarchist politics and the interpretation of modern experience, Futurist art and

¹ Man Ray, "Impressions of 291," in *Camera Work*, no. XLVIII (January 1915). "The gray walls of the little gallery are pregnant . . . a personality lives through it all . . . A man, the lover of all through himself stands in his little gray room. His eyes have no sparks – they burn within . . . Everyone moves him and no one moves him. The Man through all expresses himself." This issue of *Camera Work* featured statements on "What 291 Means to Me" by members of the New York art community. Other contributors included Mable Dodge, Annie Brigman, Paul Haviland, Charles Demuth, Marsden Hartley, Abraham Walkowitz, Charles Caffin, Francis Picabia, Maurius de Zayas, and John Marin.

theory (via the Italians themselves or a conduit such like Marcel Duchamp) were fodder for the artist's emergent expression.

Despite the fact that present-day scholars underestimate the futurist implications of Man Ray's art, such connotations did not go unnoticed at the time. Alfred Kremborg, one of his closest companions, wrote in an article for the March, 14 1915 issue of *The Morning Telegraph*:

. . . there must be form to one's madness. Even the weirdest individuality must find restraint, must be caged within some walls, when it comes to putting him on the paper or canvas. Hence, each of Ray's expressions are [sic] enclosed inside some definite plastic mode. Looking at some of these, one is tempted to ask the old paradox: "Is form freedom or freedom form?" The question is as old and unanswerable as the one concerning the hen and the egg. To be sure, Man Ray's work betrays certain definite influences. He owes much to Cézanne, the Byzantines and Egyptians, but most particularly to Picasso and some of the Futurists.²

Kremborg believed that Futurism played a significant role in Man Ray's art. This chapter will serve to locate the Futurist tendencies in his work and the ways in which he acknowledged Futurist theory.

Futurist devices are evident in two of Man Ray's still lifes. In a small work from 1913, Man Ray painted a tea service resting on a table [fig. 22]. The work, as Francis Naumann notes, presents a general articulation of Cubist space. Different vessels of the tea setting are grouped together, and upon close inspection, it becomes difficult to discern if two similar objects are side by side or if one object is rendered twice. One could argue that the smaller vessels on the left side of the composition are cream and sugar pitchers. But what, then, are the two containers on the right side of the composition? They may be two teapots or the same teapot repeated twice, perhaps transparent so that one sees the

² Alfred Kremborg, "Man Ray and Adon La Croix, Economists," *The Morning Telegraph* 14 March 1915: 7. Cited in Neil Baldwin, *Man Ray: American Artist* (New York: Clarkson N. Potter Publishers, 1988), 36.

same teapot simultaneously in a continuum. There is also much attention paid to the repeating curvilinear form of handles and spouts. The still life is reminiscent of Duchamp's *Nude Descending the Staircase*, which had made a great impact on Man Ray in 1913, the same year the still life was painted. By repeating the shapes, Man Ray gives the tea service a sense of animation like the body moving through space in Duchamp's *Nude*.

In another still life from 1914, Man Ray renders a plate of pears [fig. 23]. Like the aforementioned still life, the composition owes much to Cubism, but also to other sources. Several pears are presented at various angles, sometimes overlapping, sometimes merged together, and the form of at least one pear is left incomplete. The multiplication of the angled fruit and repetition of form create a strong revolving movement not found in cubist compositions. The central hub around which the pears rotate draws the viewer to the middle of the composition, reflecting the Futurist declaration that "We shall henceforward put the spectator in the centre of the picture."³ The same sweeping, centripetal motion present in Boccioni's *Dynamism of a Soccer Player* of 1913 is also evident in Man Ray's composition. The pears almost seem to propel themselves outward from their static positions. In addition, the repetition of form makes the pears expressive, and they recall Bergson's notion of 'qualitative multiplicity – organic evolution . . . whose moments are not external to one another.'⁴

Just as Man Ray, like the Futurists, was interested in the internal energy of objects, he also was concerned with those internal human forces defined as states of mind. Jules Romains' unanimism, the idea of a collective state of mind and spirit that

³ Boccioni et al., *Futurist Painting; Technical Manifesto* (1910), in Apollonio, 28.

⁴ Henri Bergson, *Time and Free Will An Essay on the Immediate Data of Consciousness* (New York: Harper, 1960) 226. Cited in Martin, 91.

joins individuals together in a single purpose, had a marked affect on the Italian Futurists, and it appears in a number of works by Boccioni, Russolo and Carrà by 1910-11.⁵ Some of Man Ray's early paintings also demonstrate an interest in a collective spirit, and may draw on unanimism since it was a pivotal issue discussed at the Ferrer Center.⁶ A leading advocate of Romain's concept in the United States was writer Carl Zigrosser, a Ferrer Center student (and later the first curator of prints and drawings at the Philadelphia Museum of Art from 1940 until 1964). He began frequenting the Ferrer Center in early 1913, describing it as one of the "few oases [in New York City] that [supplied] some excitement and [cultural] nourishment amid the desert of complacency."⁷ Zigrosser, who had anarchist leanings, learned of unanimism in 1914 from Randolph Bourne, a literary critic who met Jules Romain in Europe.⁸ During the late summer of 1914, Zigrosser and Bourne shared an apartment in New York. One can imagine Zigrosser's interest in Romain's theory being stimulated by the conversations he and Bourne had in that close setting. According to Allan Antliff, unanimism, by 1918, "became the fulcrum of exchange" in the *Modern School* periodical. As Zigrosser was at the Ferrer Center during

⁵See Martin, 84-85. Martin describes the paintings of Boccioni, Russolo and Carrà between the years 1910-11 as 'Unanimist' paintings, stating that, "The eruptive power of the collective spirit was one of the first symbolic themes [of Futurism], and several paintings deal with this subject." See also A. Antliff, 169. Originally a literary movement initiated by Jules Romain at the turn of the twentieth century, unanimism was a concept appropriated by anarchist and socialist avant-garde painters in Europe and later in America.

⁶ A. Antliff, 167.

⁷ See Carl Zigrosser, *My Own Shall Come to Me* (Casa Laura, 1971), 69.

⁸ See A. Antliff, 169-173. Romain's unanimism was an urban phenomenon. It was an effect of the city being animated by the energy generated from comers and goers. An anarchist, Zigrosser advocated the power and freedom of the individual or small group to be self-governing, and he was interested in this collectivist aspect of Unanimism and its potential for practical application in grade school classrooms. Zigrosser hypothesized that children as *unaimies* did not need external discipline because, as a group, they disciplined themselves. He was not concerned with the urban context of which Romain's spoke. In 1914, at the time Unanimism was gaining interest at the Ferrer Center, Man Ray had moved to an artists' commune in Ridgfield, New Jersey. Despite Unanimism's urban roots, the philosophy would have had relevance to Man Ray and his fellow commune residents who had left the city to form a self-governing community that espoused individual freedom and artistic expression within a collective.

this period, it is likely that he interjected the topic of unanimism into the spirited verbal repartee at the Ferrer Center in the years before it emerged in printed articles.⁹

Turn-of-the-century theories that speak of the collective human spirit and internal force, such as Romaine's unanimism and Bergson's *élan vital*, lent credence to anarchist activity. According to Mark Antliff, Bergson's idea of *élan vital* was, for the European avant-garde, synonymous with "regenerative [political] power."¹⁰ In the work of the Futurists and that of Man Ray, reflections of these philosophies are presented similarly. The concept of unanimism is evident in works such as Carlo Carrà's *Funeral of Anarchist Galli* (1911) and Luigi Russolo's *Revolt* (1911) (both reproduced in American periodicals by 1912), and also Man Ray's *War A.D. MCMXIV* (1914) [figs. 4, 6 & 24]. The Futurists' paintings are characterized by sharp angularity and repetition of forms. Russolo presents an uprising as a procession of figures surging in the wake of large crimson angles. The figures repeat the position of the lead figure, thus establishing their collective will. The proliferation of angles may symbolize the energy surrounding the insurrection, or represent an oppositional force to the rioters. The former interpretation is probably more accurate, as Russolo frequently used the arrow shape to symbolize the people's free will in other works.¹¹ *The Funeral of Anarchist Galli* is marked by countless repetitions of diagonal lines representing weapons and banner poles. The lines imply that we are witnessing an event moving through time. In both of these large compositions, the artists employ strong lines of force to articulate rebellion and revolution.

⁹See A. Antliff, 167. The articles are "Universality and Art" by Walter Pach and "The Abbey of Créteil, a Communistic Experiment" by Albert Gleizes. The second article refers to French artists' commune of which Gleizes was a part and Romaine lectured.

¹⁰See Mark Antliff, *Inventing Bergson* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993), 173.

¹¹ See Martin, 118, for further discussion of the arrow shape in Russolo's compositions.

War is Man Ray's masterwork of 1914. Physically, it is his most impressive composition, measuring 37 x 69 ½ inches; before this a large painting for him was only 36 x 32 inches.¹² *War* represents two sets of expressionless figures, one group red and the other blue, engaged in combat. The forward movement of the red warriors on horseback and foot is largely conveyed by the snarl of diagonals and multiple fragments in the background, which animate the scene and create an air of frenzy despite the stasis of the figures. Fauvist and cubist elements undeniably course through this work, but the painting's most striking feature -- the predominance of large, solid, block-like figures -- is not consistent with Fauvism or known versions of cubist style. The faceless figures are automatons, but not like Léger's mechanical robots. Léger's figures communicate the idea that men as machines define modern existence. In *War* the expressionless forms are not mechanical; rather, their lack of description makes them an homogenous unit.

The comparison of Carrà's *Funeral of Anarchist Galli* and *War* takes on an added dimension in the recognition of their common source of inspiration, the battle scenes of Italian Renaissance artist Paolo Uccello [figs. 25-27].¹³ In the March 1916 issue of *La Voce*, Carrà spoke of his 'rediscovery' of Giotto and Uccello the prior year, but he had seen one of the three versions of *The Battle of San Romano* at the Louvre in 1911 when he was in Paris preparing for the Bernheim-Jeune exhibition and working on *The Funeral of Anarchist Galli*.¹⁴ As Alfred Barr points out, the same "classic balance and

¹² These include *Figures in a Landscape*, *Five Figures*, and *Totem*, all from 1914. Most of his works prior to 1914 are significantly smaller.

¹³ The three panels were painted for Lorenzo's Room of the Medici Palace and originally hung together. They are listed in the Medici inventory of 1492.

¹⁴ Martin, 68. Carrà discussed Uccello's work in 1913, but at the time was not complimentary. Carrà wrote, "Our [the Futurists] way of treating perspective transcends -- in originality, in emotive intensity, in suggestiveness and in plastic complexity -- all the following: (1) the method of perspective used by Uccello, Carpaccio, Mantegna, Raphael and Veronese . . ." Carrà, "Plastic Planes as Spherical Expansions in Space (1913)" in Apollonio, 91

counterthrusts of fifteenth-century battle pieces by Uccello” are evident in Carrà’s work.¹⁵ Augusta Monferini has also cited the Renaissance artist’s battle scenes as a source for *The Funeral*.¹⁶ When discussing *War*, Man Ray acknowledged that Uccello’s battle scenes inspired him.¹⁷ We cannot know if Man Ray recognized futurist parallels in Uccello’s work or echoes of Uccello in Carrà’s work, but Marsden Hartley, upon seeing Uccello’s version of *The Battle of San Romano* at the National Gallery in London, described it to Stieglitz as “a fine battle piece . . . splendid movement with clear promises of the Cubiste-Futuriste idea in it.”¹⁸ Hartley’s belief that the Uccello painting was ‘futuriste,’ which may have been discussed at 291, probably resulted from an observation, similar to Barr’s, of the counterthrusts and overlapping forms notable in the soldiers’ lances.

In addition to the multi-figured works Man Ray painted in 1914, he continued to make individual portraits as well as landscapes during his residence at a commune in Ridgefield, New Jersey from 1913 to 1915. In an unusual work from 1914, the artist fuses self-portraiture with landscape painting. Called *Man Ray 1914* [fig. 28], he portrayed himself by name and date alone.¹⁹ The picture suggests the two places that Man Ray inhabited – urban New York and the rural commune. While the deep green ground suggests the bucolic outskirts, the brightly colored text evokes the commercial sign tubes (precursor to neon) that illuminated the city. As Naumann notes, the work shares similarities with Cubist landscapes and with those by Cézanne, influences

¹⁵ Barr cited in Martin, 88.

¹⁶ *Carlo Carrà: 1881-1966*, Augusta Monferini, ed. (Milan: Electa, 1994), 200. “[*I funerali dell’anarchico Galli*] Quasi una memoria della battaglia di Paolo Uccello.”

¹⁷ Naumann, *Conversion*, 106.

¹⁸ Voorhies, 43. This information is included in a series of three postcards sent by Hartley to Stieglitz in November 1912.

¹⁹ This is a theme that appears repeatedly throughout his career, though often playing on the various puns of his name in a Dada manner.

discussed by the artist himself.²⁰ The reliance on numerals and letters to comprise a message within a landscape, where they seem oddly placed, calls to mind the poetic manner in which Marinetti thought words should function. In his manifesto on “Words in Freedom,” Marinetti called for a “typographical revolution” in which a “multi-coloured variety in the letters [will] redouble the expressive force of words.”²¹ Man Ray’s bright hued, diagonally set text illustrates this concept. Furthermore, the self-portrait seemingly makes a connection between the artist and the landscape without ‘connecting strings.’ Man Ray’s amalgamation of self with the surrounding environment visualizes the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* declaration that, “a portrait must not be like the sitter, and that the painter carries in himself the landscapes which he would fix upon his canvas.”²² Man Ray’s name, integrated into the Ramapo Hills, makes him one with the landscape on his canvas.

In 1915, Man Ray made three charcoal drawings, which perpetuate the idea of the harmonious bond between figure and landscape [fig. 29-31]. The drawings are abstract but appear to be interpretations of the natural terrain. One drawing is titled *Ridgefield Landscape*, although that was not necessarily the title given by Man Ray.²³ When the Museum of Modern Art acquired the drawings in 1954, Man Ray unexpectedly identified the inspiration for these drawings as the human forms he studied in life drawing class.²⁴ Each drawing is dominated by repeating lines moving in one direction either horizontally, diagonally, or vertically. Within two of these drawings, lines pass through a multiplicity

²⁰ Naumann, *Conversion*, 83.

²¹ F.T. Marinetti, *Destruction of Syntax – Imagination Without Strings – Words-in-Freedom* (1913), in Apollonio, 105.

²² Umberto Boccioni et al., *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* (1910), in Apollonio, 27.

²³ This is how the drawing is titled by the Museum of Modern Art, which acquired the work in 1954.

²⁴ Man Ray cited in Naumann, *Conversion*, 126.

of spheres, appearing to fracture them into half-circles. Zipper-like forms coursing through a maze of inverted Vs in *Untitled/Ridgefield Landscape* [fig. 29] appear as railroad tracks crossing tree-laden terrain. On the other hand, the repetition of undulating lines evokes the contours of a female body. The curving perpendicular lines that meet at the center of *Untitled* [fig.30] could suggest the energy of a couple dancing or trees swaying in a moderate breeze. Horizontal circles and lines that overlap and interweave in *Untitled* [fig.31] are readable as human figures engaged in procreation or as the Ridgefield vegetation. The drawings establish a continuum between human form and landscape, thereby conveying the dynamic experience of a person in nature. These pictures evoke the dynamic properties of bodies in motion, again recalling Duchamp's *Nude Descending the Staircase*.

As Man Ray's style evolved, so did his thinking about art. While he had previously published his writings, *The Ridgefield Gazook* being the most significant example, in 1916 he published *The Primer of the New Art of Two Dimensions*, which biographer Neil Baldwin calls his "first true manifesto."²⁵ *The Primer* shares with Futurist tracts a polemical tone and a concern with conveying the dynamism of modern life. Boccioni stated in his manifesto on sculpture that, "There is neither painting nor sculpture, neither music nor poetry: there is only creation!"²⁶ Boccioni wanted a total art in which expression transcends the physical medium. In the *Primer*, Man Ray sought a similar goal, asserting that plastic art (painting, architecture, and sculpture) and dynamic art (music, dance and literature) must be unified in what he referred to as the "new two-

²⁵ Baldwin, 55. See Appendix B.

²⁶ Umberto Boccioni, *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* (1912), in Apollonio, 64.

dimensional medium.”²⁷ By wedding all of the arts, Man Ray insisted, an artist can create that “which is the highest and most joyous form of expression.” No longer is art a representation of life; it is an impression of experience. In the *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting*, the Futurists stated that “The gesture [we] would reproduce on canvas shall no longer be a fixed moment in the universal dynamism. It shall simply be the dynamic sensation itself.”²⁸ Like them, Man Ray intended his “new two-dimensional medium” to be an expression of “the time and space element [in order] to create life’s equivalent.” Man Ray wanted artistic expression to be a total experience, not merely a “fragment of life.”

Like Futurist universal dynamism, Man Ray’s new two-dimensional medium as an expression of the “time and space element” evokes the Bergsonian concept of an *élan vital*. While Man Ray’s writings may not specify Bergson as a source of inspiration, *The Rope Dancer Accompanies Herself with Her Shadows* [fig. 32], his major work of 1916, articulates the continuity of the metaphysical and the real compressed in a visual expression. In this work a small transparent figure, resembling a ballerina’s tutu with extensions for arms and legs, hovers precariously above large color forms reminiscent of fabric scraps or cutouts. The ballerina form, which Man Ray identified as a tight rope walker, moves along a yellow cord and harnesses the forms below with leashes that emanate from her hands. In his autobiography, Man Ray describes how he made *Rope Dancer*:

The subject was a rope dancer I had seen in a vaudeville show. I began making sketches of various positions of the acrobatic forms, each on a different sheet of spectrum-colored paper, the idea suggesting movement not only in the drawing but by a transition from one color to another. I cut these out and

²⁷ Man Ray, *A Primer of the New Art of Two Dimensions* (1916). See Appendix B.

²⁸ Boccioni et. al., *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Painting* (1910) in Apollonio, 27.

arranged the forms into sequences before I began the final painting Then my eyes turned to the pieces of colored paper that had fallen to the floor. They made an abstract patter than might have been the shadows of the dancer or an architectural subject, according to the trend of one's imagination if he were looking for a representative motive. I played with these, then saw the painting as it should be carried out. Scrapping the original forms of the dancer, I set to work on the canvas, laying in large areas of pure color in the form of the spaces that had been left outside the original drawings of the dancer The satisfaction and confidence this work gave me was grater than anything I had experienced heretofore, although it was incomprehensible to any of our other visitors who saw it . . . what to others was mystification, to me was simply mystery.²⁹

This statement is fundamental for understanding *Rope Dancer* and Man Ray's new concept of a new two-dimensional medium. In this passage, Man Ray indicated that this picture was the most satisfactory articulation of his new artistic vision. He also wrote that the work elucidated mystery but that he was perplexed as to how it mystified gallery visitors.³⁰

The element of mystery to which Man Ray referred in his statement about *Rope Dancer* evokes the Bergsonian concept of the intangible metaphysical plane; which may be associated with the idea of a fourth dimension. Linda Dalrymple Henderson has written at length on avant-garde artists' interest in a mystical non-Euclidean beyond visual perception. Henderson notes that the Futurists' were interested in Bergson's theory of duration and the continuous succession of existence through spatialized time.³¹ For the Futurists, the non-visible force of this "infinite succession" was dynamism, and it

²⁹ Man Ray, 60.

³⁰ Mystery has many connotations, many of which interested Man Ray during the course of his life. Mystery is a puzzle, such as *The Enigma of Isidore Ducasse* (1920), which was based on Lautréamont's musing about the "fortuitous encounter on a dissecting table of a sewing machine and an umbrella." Man Ray presents the viewer with a sculpture of burlap and rope that conceals a sewing machine and umbrella. Mystery also involves obscurity, as in the film *The Mystery of the Château of the Dice* (1929), in which faceless individuals play at game involving chance. Mystery is an element of the subconscious that the Surrealists tried to unlock with free-association. The poet Robert Desnos used to engage in hypnotic "séances" to authenticate his literary catenations. Man Ray's based his film *L'Étoile de Mer* (1928) on Desnos' poem by the same name.

³¹ See the section on Futurism in Linda Dalrymple Henderson, *The Fourth Dimension and Non-Euclidean Geometry in Modern Art* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983), 110-116.

intersected with the non-spatial fourth dimension. As Boccioni observed, “. . . *dynamic form* is a species of fourth dimension, both in painting and sculpture, which cannot exist perfectly without the complete concurrence of those three dimensions which determine: height, width, depth.”³² Man Ray’s goal in creating *Rope Dancer* suggests that, like the Futurists, he wanted to visually articulate four dimensions in a two dimensional painting. The first two dimensions are that of the canvas and the rainbow spectrum of shadows. Three-dimensionality is implied by the cords connecting the dancer to the shadows, which appear to bow out into the viewer’s space and curve behind the shadows. The rope dancer, who twirls in a circular trajectory, evokes the fourth dimension.³³ Her movement is comparable to the swirling forces of Futurist dynamism. Her crystalline form makes her less tangible than the opaque shadows, indicating that she is not of their physical plane. Man Ray does not explicitly state an interest in the fourth-dimension, but he alludes to it in the reference to the “time and space element” in the *Primer*.

Rope Dancer recalls Duchamp’s *Large Glass*, which Duchamp began the year prior in 1915. Duchamp’s work was an examination of how the fourth-dimension could be explained in physical terms. He stated in an interview with Arturo Schwarz that, “Anything that has three-dimensional form is the projection in our world from a four-dimensional world, and my Bride, for example, would be a three-dimensional projection

³² Umberto Boccioni, *Plastic Dynamism* (1913), in Apollonio, 93.

³³ Later manifestations of circulating motion are present in his next work, *The Revolving Doors* series (1916-17). The series was comprised of spectrum-colored construction paper collages on cardboard and was a study for larger works in oil that were never realized. Nevertheless, Man Ray exhibited the studies at the Daniel Gallery in 1919 on a support so that they rotated. While the individual compositions themselves do not clearly demonstrate the fourth dimension or Bergsonian philosophy, their extrinsic movement is an example of a time-space continuum.

of a four-dimensional Bride.”³⁴ *Rope Dancer* and the *Large Glass* are compositionally similar. In both, a female form hovers above a collection of escorts. Both compositions demonstrate an interest in corresponding levels of reality. Furthermore, Man Ray’s rope dancer recalls Duchamp’s *Nude Descending the Staircase*, although Duchamp’s figure moves along a straight trajectory while Man Ray’s *Rope Dancer* rotates on an axis. There is a possibility that Duchamp was instrumental in Man Ray’s presumed interest in the fourth-dimension, but it dovetails with the latter’s own idea of how to visualize a “time and space” continuum.

Later, for Man Ray the essential expression of experience became the cerebral activity that spawned it. He made compositions that he called aerographs using an airbrush. Because the movement of air currents rather than the artist’s manual application carried the paint to the surface, Man Ray considered this form of painting a cerebral act.³⁵ His aerographs fulfill Boccioni’s prediction that “the easel picture will no longer be adequate and that colours will be perceived as the sentiments themselves that one will paint with coloured gasses.”³⁶ With his aerographs, Man Ray is able to transform the bright colors of his earlier oil paintings such as *Alfred Stieglitz* and *Man Ray 1914* and distill them into colored gas expressions. Karin Rabbito notes that the aesthetic properties of Man Ray’s aerographs are akin to Futurist paintings. She observes that *Untitled Aerograph* of 1919 [fig. 33] “speaks the language of Futurism” and compares it to Joseph Stella’s *Brooklyn Bridge* of 1917-1919 [fig. 34], which is strongly

³⁴ “Marcel Duchamp Speaks,” BBC broadcast, 1959, quoted in Arturo Schwarz, *The Complete Works of Marcel Duchamp* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1969, 2nd rev. ed., 1970), 23, and cited in Naumann, *Conversion*, 135-136.

³⁵ Man Ray, *Self Portrait*, 67. “[Painting] a picture, hardly touching the surface [is] a purely cerebral act.”

³⁶ Boccioni, *Estetica*, 182-3; *Archivi I*, entry of 29 May 1911, 475. Cited in Martin, 92.

indebted to the Italian movement.³⁷ Man Ray's work consists of vaporous applications of paint blown over the silhouettes of objects placed on the surface prior to execution. The overlapping translucent objects are reminiscent of cubist compositions, but the multiplication of lines resembles Futurist lines of force. Additionally, Man Ray used an earlier sculpture, *By Itself II*, as a stencil for his airbrushed outline.³⁸ This transformation of a three-dimensional object onto a two-dimensional plane again recalls his interest in condensing multiple planes into a singular visual expression.

Futurist concepts also are recognizable in Man Ray's Dada assemblages. Scholars often note the parallels between Futurism and the European branches of Dadaism. As Marianne Martin notes, the Futurists, particularly Marinetti, increasingly sought a maximum of disorder in art. Their original intention was to revolutionize the art world. In doing so, their art became as much anti-art as it was art, demonstrated by Marinetti's call for the artist to "spit each day on the Altar of art."³⁹ Such nihilistic tendencies were the foundation for Dada art, as Man Ray would discover first-hand in his association with Duchamp and Picabia in New York, and his constructions are a testament to this fact. *New York* of 1917 [fig. 35], a sculpture comprised of several wood strips, chromed and bronzed and held together with a carpenter's C-clamp, demonstrates the concept of anti-art at the same time it conveys Futurist dynamism.⁴⁰ The wood sections shoot diagonally towards the sky, each taller than the next. The sculpture resembles a skyscraper, while its diagonality suggests the energy of the city. Man Ray's sculpture can be related to John Marin's images of New York City. In an anonymous

³⁷ Rabbito, 67.

³⁸ See Forresta, 19-21. The sculpture is not dated.

³⁹ Marinetti cited in Martin, 130.

⁴⁰ Man Ray made two versions of this sculpture. A wooden version with no chrome, also dating to 1917, is in the Collection Phillip Rein in Paris.

article on Marin entitled “The Futurist’s New York,” several of his watercolors of various New York edifices are reproduced, as is an excerpt from his personal statement for the 1913 one-man exhibition at 291, asserting,

If these buildings move me, they, too, must have life . . . and the more they move me the more I feel them to be alive. It is this ‘moving of me’ that I try to express, so that I may recall the spell I have been under and behold the expression of the different emotions that have been called into being . . .⁴¹

New York, with its sharp jutting movement towards the sky, conveys the life and energy alluded to by Marin. It also reflects Boccioni’s view that “Our straight line will be alive and palpitating; it will lend itself to the demands of the infinite expressions of materials, and its fundamental, naked severity will express the severity of steel, which characterizes the lines of our modern machinery.”⁴² Man Ray crafted *New York* in a manner not only comparable to Marin’s vision of the futurist city, but he also employed sculptural material in the manner Boccioni described.

Later in his career when he was living in Paris, Man Ray continued to demonstrate an interest in the Futurist ideas of dynamism and states of mind found in Dada assemblages. This is evident in his sculpture *Object to be Destroyed*, first constructed in 1923, and remade several times throughout his career [fig. 36].⁴³ It is built from a metronome and a image of a woman’s eye cut from a photograph. Although the object is most often seen in a static state, one recognizes that the arm of the metronome moves along an axis like an upside down pendulum. A metronome’s arm indicates time, and its sweeping motion back and forth presents the sort of fluidity through time and

⁴¹ Stieglitz/O’Keeffe Archives. Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library.

⁴² See Umberto Boccioni, *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* (1912), in Apollonio, 64.

⁴³ The later versions of *Object to Be Destroyed* are *Object of Destruction* (1932), *Lost Object* (1945), *Indestructible Object* (1958), *Lost Object* (1966) and *Perpetual Motif* (1972).

space that interested the Futurists. In his manifesto on sculpture, Boccioni discussed this motion of the pendulum stating, “We cannot forget the swing of a pendulum or the moving hands of a clock, the in-and-out motion of a piston inside a cylinder, the engaging and disengaging of two-cog wheels, the fury of a fly-wheel or the whirling of a propeller, are all plastic and pictorial elements, which any Futurist work of sculpture should take advantage of.”⁴⁴

Whether coincidental or not, the best visual comparison between *Object to be Destroyed* and the Futurists’ interest in pendulum motion is Anton Giulio Bragaglia’s *Young Man Swinging* of 1912 [fig. 37]. Bragaglia, a photographer and a member of Futurist group from 1911 to 1913, who will be discussed further in the next chapter, wrote a manifesto on what he called Photodynamism.⁴⁵ His method entailed the photographic representation of bodies fluidly moving through space and time. He believed the kinetic traces captured in photodynamic images resembled the dynamic force lines of Futurist painting. *Young Man Swinging* captures the kinetic path of a boy’s cranium moving horizontally in an arch across the picture plane. Two static heads on either side of the image frame the traces of movement. The resultant image of the young man’s head appears pendulum-like, and his eye guides the kinetic traces, just like Man Ray’s eye attached to the metronome’s timing device on *Object to be Destroyed*. Like Boccioni, Bragaglia makes explicit reference to the movement of a pendulum, stating that, “[photodynamists] represent the movement of a pendulum . . . by relating its speed

⁴⁴ Boccioni, *Technical Manifesto of Futurist Sculpture* (1912), in Apollonio, 64.

⁴⁵ In 1913, Umberto Boccioni, the most outspoken Futurist painter, fiercely rejected photography as a valid art form, and Bragaglia was publicly denounced by the group in *Lacerba* on 1 October 1913, three short months after the same publication had announced his membership. See Caroline Tisdall, *Futurism* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1978), 137.

and its tempo to two orthogonal axes.”⁴⁶ But fluid motion is only one half of the equation comprising photodynamism; the reflection of a changing state of mind was also important. Bragaglia wrote that:

Photodynamism, then analyses and synthesizes moment at will and to great effect. This is because it does not have to resort to disintegration for observation, but possesses the power to record the continuity of an action in space, to trace in a face, for instance, not only the expression of passing states of mind . . . but also the immediate shifting of volumes that results in the immediate transformation of expression.⁴⁷

Man Ray’s notations concerning *Object to be Destroyed* indicate that he also was concerned with a state of mind. He noted on a 1932 drawing: “Cut out the eye from a photograph of one who has been loved but is not seen any more. Attach the eye to the pendulum of a metronome . . . with a hammer well aimed, try to destroy the whole with a single blow.”⁴⁸ This passage suggests the image of an individual tormented by the taunting, shifting gaze of a lost lover. A later variation of *Object to Be Destroyed*, titled *Perpetual Motif* [fig. 38], best represents the sculpture, showing it in motion in a single still frame. The sculpture exhibits the kinetic traces of its movement and focuses on the eye as an entry into the state of mind in the same way Bragaglia photographed his subjects.

Photographs of *Object to be Destroyed* are not only records of the sculptural object. They, too, were intended as works of art. Man Ray began making photographs to document his work and also as the “publicity agent” for the Société Anonyme, an artist group he co-founded with Marcel Duchamp and Katherine Dreier in 1920, but photography quickly became his medium of choice. Throughout the rest of his career,

⁴⁶ Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Futurist Photodynamism* (1911), in Apollonio, 41.

⁴⁷ Bragaglia, *Futurist Photodynamism* (1911), in Apollonio, 40-41.

⁴⁸ Mario Amaya, “My Man Ray: Interview with Lee Miller Penrose,” *Art in America*, 63 (May 1975): 57.

Man Ray's innovative photographs of his objects were as highly admired as the objects themselves. Man Ray's photographic work eventually led him to try his hand at film – another outlet that permitted experimentation with Futurist theory and aesthetics in a new medium. Film, a medium conceived in the twentieth century, is an invention paradigmatic of modern life. Since movement is an inherent property, futurist dynamism is intrinsic to film. As the next chapter demonstrates, in spite of Man Ray's association with the Freud obsessed Surrealists in the late 1920s, his film *Emak Bakia* (1926) continues an exploration of futurism a decade after the original Futurist group disbanded.

CHAPTER 3

PERPETUAL FUTURISM

In July 1921, Man Ray set sail for Paris to rejoin Marcel Duchamp who departed New York City a month earlier. Man Ray's art had received a lukewarm reception in America; he hoped he could support himself as a photographer while trying to further his artistic career in France. He quickly found work as a fashion photographer for clothing designer Paul Poiret and was received with open arms by the Parisian Dadaists who encouraged him to continue his inventive artistic experimentation. Although Man Ray originally used photography to document his art, it became a mode for his artistic expression. His non-commercial photographic projects were abstract and wholly different from his fashion photographs. He used a window to take still pictures of torsos covered in striated shadows. He presented fields of daisies that took up the entire picture plane. He made photograms in the darkroom by exposing light-sensitive paper. These whimsical images, titled Rayographs [fig. 39], were an instant success among the Dadaists. The rayographs' white silhouettes against the blackened photographic paper have the appearance of x-rays, turn-of-the-century inventions that intrigued a lay audience because of their apparent ability to penetrate to an unseen dimension. Linda Dalrymple Henderson observes that x-ray-like images were another way which artists visualized a non-Euclidean fourth-dimension.¹ Given Man Ray's possible interest in this

¹ See Linda Dalrymple Henderson, "X Rays and the Quest for the Invisible Reality in the Art of Kupka, Duchamp, and the Cubists," *Art Journal* Winter (1988): 323-340.

“other” reality, as inferred in previous works, he may have seen the rayographs as conduits of this type of information. Such experiments with photography led Man Ray to film. He later recalled, “While investigating the various phases of photography in my early days in Paris, inevitably I turned my attention to moving pictures. Not that I had any desire to enter the field professionally, but my curiosity was aroused by the idea of putting into motion some of the results I had obtained in still photography.”² With film, Man Ray could reveal the dynamic properties of the metaphysical plane manifest in the visual realm.

Man Ray’s first film was a short cinematic project entitled *La Retour à la raison* (1923). The film was a mishmash of his photographs and rayographs spliced together in a kinetic version of the static images. According to Man Ray, Tristan Tzara beguiled him to put the film together hastily one night so it could be shown the following evening at a Dada soirée, La Coeur à Barbe. Amusingly, Man Ray’s poorly edited filmstrip snapped, and the interruption caused a fracas that promptly put an end to the event. He relates in his memoirs that the uproar that occurred at this last public Dada spectacle overjoyed the group’s members.³ *La Retour à la raison* was hardly a failure. It provided the foundation for what was to become Man Ray’s most accomplished cinematic work, *Emak Bakia* of 1926.

Scholars of Man Ray’s cinematic oeuvre laud *Emak Bakia* as an outstanding achievement bridging the Dada and Surrealist movements.⁴ The film is as interesting for

² Man Ray, 210.

³ See Man Ray, 212-213, for his description of the making of *La Retour à la Raison* and the details of La Soirée à La Coeur à La Barbe.

⁴ See Steven Kovács, *From Enchantment to Rage: The Story of Surrealist Cinema* (London and Toronto: Associated University Presses, 1980), 132. Kovács says, “in no other work does [Man Ray] come close to the freshness, versatility, and pure visual poetry of *Emak Bakia*. That film is the one which stands at the

its futurist implications as it is for the conjunction of Dada and Surrealism. *Emak Bakia* provides a complex visual journey of interwoven logicity and illogicality oscillating between fragmentation and resolution, and it commences with the same rayographic and abstract stills that comprise *La Retour à la raison*. The non-narrative film is driven entirely by movement operating in two ways: motion is represented internally in the stills, and it is represented externally through editing. Examples of internal rhythm include the motion of a woman's legs performing the Charleston [fig. 40], the bizarre dance of inorganic objects like tacks [fig. 41], salt particles and geometric blocks, and the delirious speed of an automobile racing down a dusty road. Careful editing allows the film to progress through periods of slow motion contrasted by rapid erratic jerks to create a constant shift between organic and inorganic forces and the transferal of kinetic energy. Moving cars are juxtaposed with herds of sheep, and shirt collars are made to appear dancing. Images of the sea are sharply contrasted with women's legs shifting gently in the sand. Throughout, there is a constant interplay of motion among various objects, and the logical link between dissimilar frames can only be understood as transferal of energy through imagistic analogies.

Surprisingly, no scholar has explored movement in *Emak Bakia* as inspired by Futurism. It clearly resonates with Umberto Boccioni's theory of "Absolute Motion + Relative Motion = Dynamism," Luigi Russolo's and Giacomo Balla's paintings, Anton Giulio Bragaglia's Photodynamic images, and the Futurists' manifesto for the film *La Vita Futurista*.⁵ Certain car sequences of *Emak Bakia* bear similarity to Futurist works

juncture of Dada and Surrealism. It brings together both movements on top of the underlying abstract current in a fresh, harmonious film."

⁵See Mario Verdone and Günter Berghaus' "*Vita Futurista* and Early Futurist Cinema" in *International Futurism in Arts and Literature*, 398-421. Italian Futurist film and Man Ray's film are connected only by a

such as Russolo's *Dynamism of an Automobile* and Balla's *Speeding Automobile*, both of 1913 [figs. 42 & 43]. Their paintings of cars pay homage to the Futurists' new goddess, the one Marinetti declared had replaced the esteemed position in the art historical canon held by *Winged Victory of Samothrace*.⁶ The focal point of these works, however, is not the automobile but rather the speed it generates. The force lines describing the speed associated with cars, in fact, obscure the viewer's recognition of the objects. When looking at these paintings, one is compelled to imagine the experience of a moving vehicle, not the physical properties of automobiles. One of the memorable scenes of *Emak Bakia* is a long sequence involving a car and its driver [fig. 44]. The sequence begins with a close-up on the car's wheel as it begins to move forward. Then, Man Ray crafts a series of images in which the car travels at an extremely high speed, and the spectator experiences this motion from several points of view. First, the moving car is seen from behind. Then the perspective is from the interior of the automobile at an angle, which creates distortion. Finally, the camera pans upwards to the trees moving against the sky as the car charges forward. Man Ray uses varied vantage points in order to intensify a kinetic sensation. The sequence of images is not about the car but, as with Russolo's and Balla's paintings, the experience of speed and the perception of cutting through time and space.

brief mention that "Other abstract animation films continuing the Futurist line of experimentation were Man Ray's *Retour à la raison* (1923) and *Emak Bakia* (1928), Marcel Duchamp's *Anémic Cinéma* (1925), and *Světlo proniká tmon* (Light Shining in Darkness) by Otakar Vávra and František Pilát (1930-31)," 420-421.

⁶ Marinetti, *The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism* (1909), in Apollonio, 21. "We affirm that the world's magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed . . . A roaring car that seems to ride on grapeshot is more beautiful than the *Victory of Samothrace*."

Certain sequences of *Emak Bakia* also convey the idea of the inherent motion of living things, the innate force that Boccioni called primordial psychology.⁷ Man Ray conveys this concept by presenting the viewer with a woman's legs exiting an automobile in sequential frames, each one overlapping the last so that the final effect is a constant stream of limbs [fig. 45]. Such a visual articulation of the body in motion instantly calls to mind Giacomo Balla's *Girl Running on a Balcony* [fig. 46]. Despite the differences in medium, the similarity of the images is striking. In both, a woman's legs are shown moving in succession. Both artists focus on the concept of intrinsic force propelling a body through time and space. Movement is more important than the person to whom the legs belong. Thus, the focus is Boccioni's 'primordial psychology,' the force moving the legs rather than the legs' physical manifestation of that movement.

Both Balla's painting and the sequence of legs in *Emak Bakia* suggest familiarity with the nineteenth-century chronophotography of Etienne Jules Marey. In a group of prints made by the scientist for his *Chronophotographic Study of Human Locomotion* (1883), motion is recorded consecutively at rapid intervals in order to measure a trajectory [fig. 47]. Man Ray's scene of a man moving along coordinates projected on the background bears a strong resemblance to certain aesthetics of Marey's photographs [fig. 48]. The flat two-dimensional profile of Man Ray's silhouetted figure is reminiscent of Marey's one-legged study of a man walking, and the linear diagram in the background of the film still recalls Marey's white, stick-like lines and dots that appear to move through space.⁸

⁷ Umberto Boccioni, *Absolute Motion + Relative Motion = Dynamism* (1914), in Apollonio, 150. "The plastic power with which an object is endowed is its force, that is, its primordial psychology."

⁸ At the same time Marey conducted studies on human locomotion in France, Eadweard Muybridge was also making photographic motion studies in America, resulting in eleven bound volumes entitled *Animal*

Although *Girl Running on a Balcony* has affinities with chronophotography, as does another Balla painting, *The Hand of the Violinist* of 1912 [fig. 49], the Futurists were reluctant to cite the influence of Marey's work on their art. Anton Guilio Bragaglia, whose association with the Futurists was short-lived, produced photographic images that are reminiscent of Marey's and foreshadow several stills from *Emak Bakia*. An interest in Marey would suggest Man Ray's corresponding interest in Bragaglia. The leg sequence of the film resembles the right hand of the keyboard operator in Bragaglia's 1911 photodynamic study, *The Typist* [fig. 50]. As the hand moves forward in time, approaching the key it is about to strike, the viewer can trace the motion in a fluid sequence of movements. There is a convincing body of work by Futurists, and imagery that inspired them, that stands as a precedent for the leg sequence in *Emak Bakia*.

Photodynamism was Bragaglia's way of expressing the Futurist obsession with flux and simultaneity through the medium of photography. It allowed him to map kinetic traces in the same manner that lines of force were used in Futurist painting. Bragaglia, like other Futurists, was loath to credit Marey with any influence. His manifesto on Photodynamism is, in many ways, a diatribe on the ways in which his work differs from chronophotography. Although Photodynamism bears resemblance to chronophotography, Bragaglia insisted that Photodynamism exhibited living properties and dynamic forces, rather than static representations resulting from scientific studies. He contended that Marey's work merely demonstrated a reproduction of movement, and

Locomotion (1887). Man Ray was likely familiar with Muybridge's work, but the still in *Emak Bakia* bears most visual similarity to Marey's pictures.

not “the *reconstruction* of movement, let alone *sensation* [of movement]” that Photodynamism could obtain.⁹

Strangely, Bragaglia found still photography to be the medium that best conveyed dynamism. He opposed cinema as a Futurist medium because, like Marey’s scientific studies, it “subdivides [movement] without rules, with mechanical arbitrariness” and therefore could not be photodynamic.¹⁰ In *Emak Bakia*, Man Ray accomplished exactly that which Bragaglia said cinema was incapable of doing. The sequence with the woman’s legs exiting an automobile is repeated in such a way that the final image of the leg sequence advances to one long continuous progression, creating the same appearance found in Bragaglia’s extended photographic exposures. Man Ray traced the shape of movement without mechanical arbitrariness; his primary aesthetic concern is clearly for continuous rhythm.

Another similarity that Bragaglia’s photodynamic images and Man Ray’s film share is the artists’ desire to make their art a holistic experience, that is, a “total art.” Upon seeing Bragaglia’s *Carpenter Sawing* of 1911, Corriere Toscano reported he smelled the “sawn wood, fish-glue and turpentine” that appeared to almost “ooze out of [the photograph].”¹¹ In general, this was a Futurist objective as voiced in Carlo Carrà’s

⁹ Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *Futurist Photodynamism* (1911), in Apollonio, 39-40. Bragaglia states, “In actual fact, Marey’s system is used, for example, in the teaching of gymnastics . . . this may be all very well for the old Marey system, but for gymnastics and other such applications, it is not enough for us. With about five extremely rigid shots we cannot obtain the *reconstruction* of movement, let alone the *sensation*. Given that chronophotography certainly does not reconstruct movement, or give the sensation of it, any further discussion of the subject would be idle except the point is worth stressing, as there are those who, with a certain degree of elegant magic, would identify Photodynamism with chronophotography, just as others insist on confusing it with cinematography.”

¹⁰ Bragaglia, *Futurist Photodynamism* (1911), in Apollonio, 39.

¹¹ Caroline Tisdall and Angelo Bozzolla, “Bragaglia’s Futurist Photodynamism,” *Studio International* 190, no. 976 (July/August 1975): 16.

manifesto, *The Painting of Sounds, Noises, and Smells* (1913).¹² Bragaglia later confirmed that it was his intent to give his subjects smells so that they seemed “alive and complete.”¹³ This notion of evoking sensory experience was articulated decades later by Man Ray. In an interview, he stated that he longed for his films to have the “addition of the sensations of warmth, cold, taste, and smell . . . so that the spectator . . . could be totally in enjoyment of all his senses.”¹⁴ While this statement considerably postdates *Emak Bakia*, it is consistent with the film’s imagery. Rudolf Kuenzli, a scholar of Dada and Surrealist film, asserts that the Dadaists rejected film as a viable art form specifically because of its ability to impart a holistic experience.¹⁵ In contrast, as evidenced by Bragaglia’s and Man Ray’s statements, they sought precisely such an all-encompassing experience. In this way Man Ray allies himself with the Futurists despite the disagreement of his fellow Dadaists.

Regarding dynamism, Boccioni required that it be a function of relative *and* absolute motion. According to Boccioni, motion is not perceivable only by an object’s inherent force but together with the complementary motion of another object. Boccioni gives the example that “if you place next to each other a sphere and a cone, you will find the former a sensation of dynamic thrust and in the latter one of static indifference.”¹⁶ It is as if Man Ray used Boccioni’s text as the script for a section of *Emak Bakia* in which wooden building blocks contrast with the curving neck of a string instrument. The

¹² Apollonio, 111-114.

¹³ Tisdall, 16.

¹⁴ Man Ray, “Cinimage,” *L’Age du Cinema* 4-5 (August-November 1951): 24-25. Repeated in *Shadow and its Shadow: Surrealist Writings on the Cinema*, 3rd ed., Paul Hammond, ed. (San Francisco: City Lights Books, 2000), 133.

¹⁵ See *Dada and Surrealist Film*, Rudolf E. Kuenzli, ed. (New York: Willis Locker & Owens, 1987), 17. Kuenzli states, “Duchamp and the other Dadaists on the whole rejected the cinema, not least because, even in its avant-garde forms, it seemed too close to the synesthesia of the Impressionists and the advocates of the Gesamtkunstwerk.”

¹⁶ Boccioni, *Absolute Motion + Relative Motion = Dynamism* (1914), in Apollonio, 151.

geometric objects are inanimate, whereas the spiral form of an instrument's neck suggests motion [fig. 51]. However, the blocks move of their own volition because of the way the film is spliced together. The relationship of the shapes to one another demonstrates their relative motion, and the animation that they are given dually highlights their inherent force, their "primordial psychology."

Despite Boccioni's interest in dynamic movement, he declared Bragaglia's concept of Photodynamism to be a non-viable Futurist mode because photography denied the artist the immediacy and direct contact between art and life permitted by painting.¹⁷ The Futurist painters believed it was essential in the construction of their art that the artist have physical contact with the image – a relationship not possible in photography, a medium in which a secondary tool (the camera) is necessary. For his part, Bragaglia insisted that film was not capable of demonstrating Photodynamism. Regardless of Boccioni's assertion that photography was not a viable Futurist medium, and Bragaglia's similar conclusion about cinema, the Futurists made a film and wrote a manifesto on cinema to accompany the project.¹⁸ It is with *La Vita Futurista* that one finds the most significant parallels to *Emak Bakia*. In 1916, the original Futurist members, minus Boccioni, who died earlier that year, joined forces with the Corradini brothers, experimentalists in abstract cinema, to create *La Vita Futurista*.¹⁹ Unfortunately *La Vita Futurista* was lost; only reproductions of stills and the manifesto remain. Nevertheless, relationships between *La Vita Futurista* and *Emak Bakia* can be drawn using the manifesto as a guide.

¹⁷ Tisdall, *Futurism* (New York and Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1978), 137.

¹⁸ It is not known if Boccioni would have supported film as a viable Futurist art form – he died from a fall from a horse shortly after enlisting in the Italian army in July, 1916.

¹⁹ The brothers were later baptized Arnaldo Ginna and Bruno Corra by Giacomo Balla.

As *Emak Bakia* commences, the credits and title undulate slowly back to front. Then the word “Cinepoème” appears, suggesting that the film is not a traditional motion picture, but rather a cinematic exercise in rhythm, perhaps similar to the cadence of poetry [fig. 52]. This emphasis on poetry can be traced through much of Man Ray’s oeuvre. In his formative years when Man Ray was married to Belgian poet Adon Lacroix, the couple collaborated on projects that were a combination of the visual and the literary.²⁰ Man Ray also engaged in visual poetic experiments on his own. *L’Inquiétude* (1920), a poem composed of only long and short dashes, is an exploration of movement and rhythm rather than narrative. Man Ray’s third film, *L’Étoile de Mer*, is a cinematic work based entirely on Robert Desnos’ poem by the same name. The cinematic poem was a concept invented by the Futurists. The manifesto on cinema states, “CINEMATIC POEMS, SPEECHES, AND POETRY. We shall make all of their component images pass across the screen”²¹ Man Ray’s biographer Neil Baldwin describes the cine-poem phenomenon used by Man Ray as “assembling the film the way a poet composed, bit by bit, word by word, striving for effect through words resonating with one another, rather than by literal or expected meaning,”²² This explanation would apply to the Futurists because it describes the detached rhythms in their film as well. But this is not the only parallel between the Futurist manifesto on cinema and *Emak Bakia*.

Indeed, Man Ray’s film fits many of the criteria listed in the fourteen points. Point One of the manifesto states that Futurist films should be “Cinematic Analogies” that explore parallels between the protagonists’ emotional states and “equivalent

²⁰ The couple was married on May 3, 1914 and remained together until their relationship crumbled in 1920.

²¹ See Marinetti et. al., *The Futurist Cinema* (1916), in Apollonio, 217.

²² Baldwin, 134.

impressions” of natural objects such as “mountains, seas . . . and aeroplanes.”²³ Man Ray constructs similar analogies in *Emak Bakia*. The film consists entirely of juxtapositions between objects in nature and human beings, forcing the viewer to make connections between the two. For example, the film’s construction requires the viewer to make associations between the car’s driver, a rushing herd of sheep and undulating daisies spliced between shots of the automobile racing down the road. Such editing characterizes Point Three of the manifesto, which states that films should involve cinematic simultaneity and interpenetration – a technique achieved by cutting and editing back and forth.

Points Five and Six of the manifesto concern the dramatization of states of mind and liberating the film from narrative logic. The fact that *Emak Bakia* does not have a clear narrative sequence demonstrates its lack of logic. *Emak Bakia* ends with a sequence of closely cropped images of women’s faces as they awake, open their eyes, and smile [fig. 53]. While the sequence demonstrates the surrealist fascination with waking and dreaming states, it also fits with the Futurists’ interest in states of mind. Point Seven of the manifesto calls for the “Filmed Drama of Objects (Objects animated, humanized . . . dancing . . . put in an abnormal state that, by contrast, throws into relief their amazing construction and nonhuman life).” This nonhuman drama appears in Man Ray’s film when a multitude of geometric shapes dance and move of their own volition, and shirt collars leap into the air without human assistance [fig. 54]. Various points in the Manifesto on Cinema deal with distortions, disproportions and reconstructions of objects

²³ Marinetti et. al., *The Futurist Cinema* (1916), in Apollonio, 208.

and the human body, all of which are evident in *Emak Bakia* [fig. 55].²⁴ The opening shot of the film immediately confronts the viewer with a weird distorted reconstruction of the director himself, his eyeball enlarged and relocated on the reel of the movie camera [fig. 56]. This eye later reappears as car headlights, distorting both the automobile and the human body. More subtly, the scene the cross-dressing man applying lipstick before a mirror shows him actively involved in a gender reconstruction. Lastly, the Futurist Manifesto on Cinema states that there must be “FILMED WORDS-IN-FREEDOM MOVEMENT.”²⁵ This is demonstrated in *Emak Bakia* by the undulation of the word ‘cinépòème,’ but also by the section of the film in which a scrolling marquee of electric lights snakes across the night sky.

Although there is no documentation to confirm whether or not Man Ray knew of *La Vita Futurista*, the points of comparison between it, the manifesto, and *Emak Bakia*, cannot be ignored. Granted, many of the points that deal with states of mind, illogicality, and distortion of the human body and language also call to mind the interests of European avant-garde movements with which Man Ray was associated, most directly Dada and Surrealism. A Dadaist cum Surrealist such as Man Ray might naturally exhibit certain futurist tendencies in some of his work. As a filmmaker, however, Man Ray stands apart from his Dada and Surrealist colleagues. While the Surrealist films of Dalí, Cocteau, and Buñuel may demonstrate points of the Futurist manifesto, particularly those related to states of mind and deconstruction of the human body, they do not focus on motion and

²⁴ Marinetti et. al., *The Futurist Cinema* (1916), in Apollonio, 218. Point Nine of the manifesto proto-surrealistically reads, “. . . Example: a big nose that silences a thousand congressional fingers by ringing an ear, while two policemen’s moustaches arrest a tooth.”

²⁵ Marinetti et. al., *The Futurist Cinema* (1916), in Apollonio, 218.

kinetic force as much as *Emak Bakia*.²⁶ Similarly, Hans Richter's *Rhythmus 21, 23* and *25* (1921-25) and Viking Eggeling's *Diagonal Symphony* (1924) may utilize motion that can be labeled "dynamic," but their films lack the focus on interior motivation or states of mind.²⁷ The marriage of all these elements is what sets *Emak Bakia* apart from contemporary films and requires a consideration of its Futurist connections.

²⁶ Dalí, Cocteau and Buñuel are some of the most well recognized Surrealist filmmakers. Their work includes: Dalí's *Un Chien Andalou* (1928), Cocteau's *Le Sang d'un poète* (1930), and Buñuel's *L'Âge d'or* (1930).

²⁷ See Kuenzli, 3. "The relationship between Richter's and Eggeling's experiments and Dada can only be recognized if we do not ignore the dynamic tension in the Dada movement between destructive and constructive tendencies . . . Richter's and Eggeling's kinetic experiments attempted to produce nothing less than a universal, elemental pictorial language, a grammar and syntax of contrasting relationships between geometric forms."

CONCLUSION

The second decade of the twentieth century witnessed an explosion of information about European Modernism in this country, particularly in New York City. Daily papers and numerous journals informed readers of the latest European exhibitions and trends. American artists who traveled to Paris regaled their colleagues in New York with personal accounts of the flurry of ideas that engaged their European counterparts. Finally, the Armory Show of 1913 permitted Americans first-hand interaction with modern European art. It was both shocking and exhilarating. Futurism was as much of an interest in the current literature and in the American artistic community as was Cubism and Fauvism. Due to the Futurists' absence at the Armory Show, the most influential event of the period, their impact on American artists has been undervalued.

Futurism's physical absence in New York, coupled with the fact that Man Ray had yet to journey to Europe, have resulted in a paucity of scholarship exploring a connection between the two. As a Ferrer Center student, Man Ray was well attuned to the aesthetic and political nature of Futurism and he was close to individuals like Joseph Stella, who had direct access to Futurist manifestos in his native Italian tongue. Marsden Hartley wrote to Stieglitz from Europe, mentioning Futurism, and it must have been a topic of discussion in the latter's gallery. While no Futurist exhibited at the Armory Show, the two artists at the exhibit who made the greatest impact on Man Ray were Picabia and Duchamp, and their works were characterized as Futurist.

Man Ray is frequently remembered for assemblages such as *Cadeau* of 1921 [fig. 57], which characterize him as a Dadaist intent on revolutionizing the art world with anti-art. But he was also interested in Futurism. When Man Ray is linked to Futurism, it creates a context in which his role as a Dada artist is better understood. If any movement begot Dada, Futurism did. Yet, this genealogical connection is usually acknowledged only for the European branch of Dada, not the American one. The link between Futurism and European Dada is evident. Hugo Ball, the founder of Zurich Dada, attended the Futurist exhibition when it traveled from Paris to Dresden in 1913. He and his future Zurich Dada colleague Richard Huelsenbeck were both inspired by Marinetti's poetry. Gunter Berghaus describes their 1914 manifesto, written for a performance evening in Berlin on February 12, 1915, as pre-Dadaist because it extols 'Expressionism, colourfulness, adventurousness, Futurism [and] action.'¹ Simultaneously in Budapest, Tristan Tzara enthusiastically absorbed Futurist manifestos that were translated into Romanian. Tzara was a leading figure first amongst the Zurich Dadaists and later the Parisian Dadaists. Friedrich Glauser's recollection of Tzara is of a man in search of notoriety, rather than artistic originality. He wrote of a conversation in which Tzara said, "Dadaism sounds much better than Futurism. And the audience is so stupid."² After Dada had assumed avant-garde supremacy, Tzara disavowed his earlier statement, telling André Breton in 1919 that he and his Dada compatriots "have nothing in common with Futurism."³ In many respects, Dada was very different than the Italian movement that

¹ Berghaus, "Futurism, Dada and Surrealism" 286.

² Friedrich Glauser: *Dada, Ascona und andere Erinnerungen* (Zurich: Arche, 1976), 46. Cited in Berghaus, in *International Futurism in Arts and Literature*, 290.

³ Quoted in Richard Sheppard, "Dada und Futurismus," in *Sinn aus Unsinn: Dada international*, Wolfgang Paulsen and Helmut G Hermann, eds. (Bern: Francke, 1982), 47. Cited in Berghaus, "Futurism, Dada and Surrealism," 293.

preceded it. The fundamental distinction was that most Dada artists did not paint, finding the medium regressive. Tzara's acknowledgement of Dada's lineage, however, credited Futurism with many characteristic Dada behaviors: theatrical performance, wordplay, instigating chaos, and nihilism.

Although we acknowledge the link between Futurism and Dada in Europe, why do we not also consider Futurism's impact on New York Dada? No official Dada movement existed in New York prior to the publication of the single issue of *New York Dada* in April of 1921, yet Francis Naumann maintains that Dada was present in New York as early as 1915, predating the proclamation of Dada at the Cabaret Voltaire the following year. When they were in the States, Francis Picabia and Marcel Duchamp maintained a dialogue with Tzara. A work such as Duchamp's *In Advance of a Broken Arm* of 1915, a readymade snow shovel, epitomizes the transgressive nature of Dada art. While stylistic similarities link Duchamp's *Nude Descending the Staircase* to Futurist works, Futurist concepts are evident in his readymades. As Jean-Pierre Andréoli de Villers remarks, "Duchamp and Picabia conceived of art as a spontaneous gesture and a game, a conception that Marinetti had already pronounced in his manifestos of 1913-14."⁴ Man Ray's application of Futurism only stands to reinforce its importance in the formation of New York Dada. His familiarity with Futurism and its revolutionary stance predisposed him to the Dada attitudes he encountered in Picabia and Duchamp. Consequently, he was prepared to make a significant contribution to the fusion of ideas that constituted New York Dada, and later Surrealism. And, as this study argues, aspects of Futurism continue in the dadaist and surrealist work for which he is best known.

⁴ Andréoli de Villers, 191. "Duchamp et Picabia en arrivaient ainsi à une conception de l'art comme geste spontané et comme jeu, conception que Marinetti avait déjà énoncée dans ses manifestes de 1913-1914."



1 Marcel Duchamp, *Nude Descending the Staircase No. 2*, 1912, oil on canvas, 58 x 35 in, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection



2 Francis Picabia, *Dance at the Spring*, 1912, oil on canvas, 47 ½ x 47 ½ in,
Philadelphia Museum of Art, Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection



3 Umberto Boccioni, *Laughter*, 1911, oil on canvas, 43 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 57 $\frac{1}{4}$ in, Museum of Modern Art, New York



4 Carlo Carrà, *Funeral of Anarchist Galli*, 1911, oil on canvas, 66 ¼ x 102 in,
Museum of Modern Art, New York



5 Luigi Russolo, *Revolt*, 1911, oil on canvas, 59 x 90 ½ in, Haags Gementemuseum, The Hague



6 Gino Severini, *Dance of the Pan Pan at the Monico*, 1911, (original destroyed, copy by artist 1959-1960), oil on canvas, 110 ¼ x 157 ½ in, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris



7 Francis Picabia, *Negro Song I*, 1913, watercolor on paper, 28 1/8 x 22 in, Metropolitan Museum of Art, Alfred Stieglitz Collection, New York



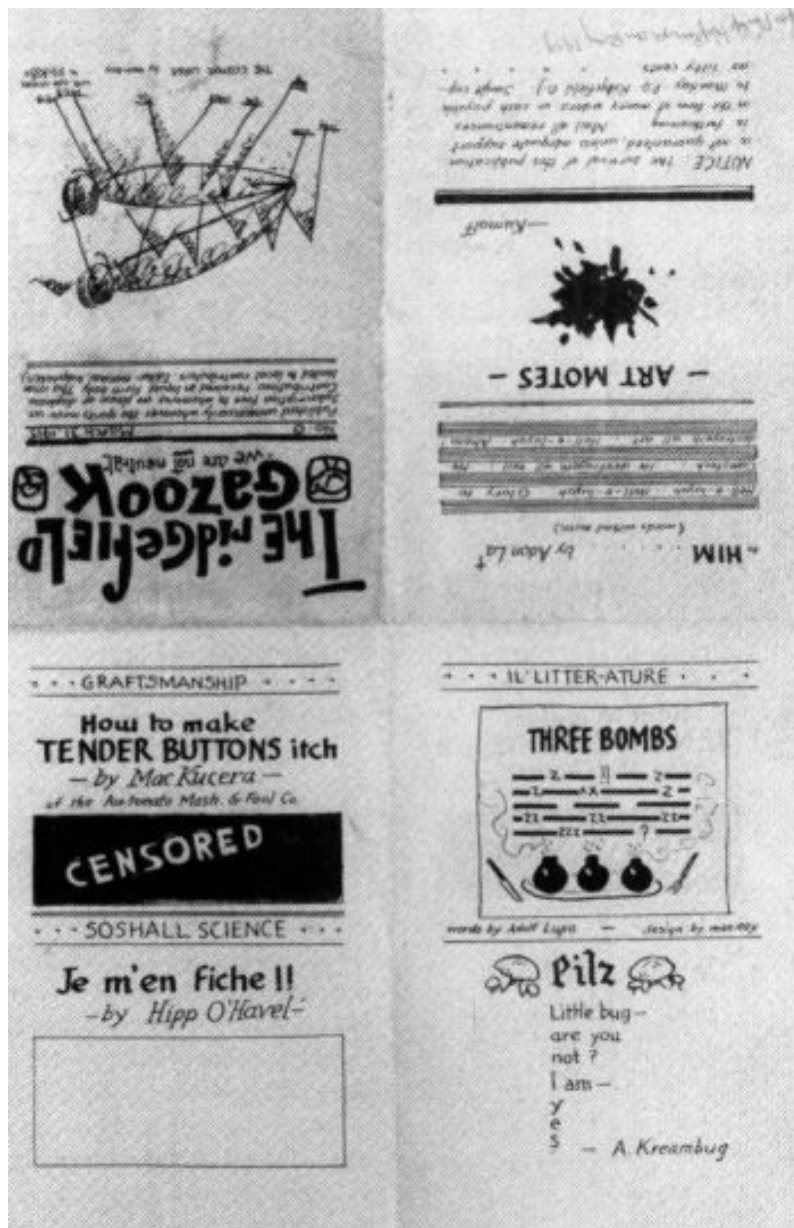
8 Man Ray, *Picabia in His Mercer*, 1922, gelatin silver print, photograph reproduced from *Perpetual Motif: The Art of Man Ray* (New York: Abbeville Press, 1988)



9 Man Ray, Still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive,
New York



10 Robert Henri, *Laughing Child*, 1907, oil on canvas, 24 x 20 in, Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



11 Man Ray, *The Ridgefield Gazook*, 1915, ink on paper, destroyed (formerly Arnold Crane Collection, Chicago)



12 Max Weber, *Rush Hour New York*, 1915, oil on canvas, 36 ¼ x 30 ¼ in, National Gallery of Art, Washington, DC



13 Joseph Stella, *Battle of Lights Coney Island*, 1913, oil on canvas, 76 x 85 in, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT



14 Gino Severini, *Dynamic Hieroglyph of the Bal Tabarin*, 1912, oil on canvas with sequins, 63 1/2 x 61 3/8 in, Museum of Modern Art, New York



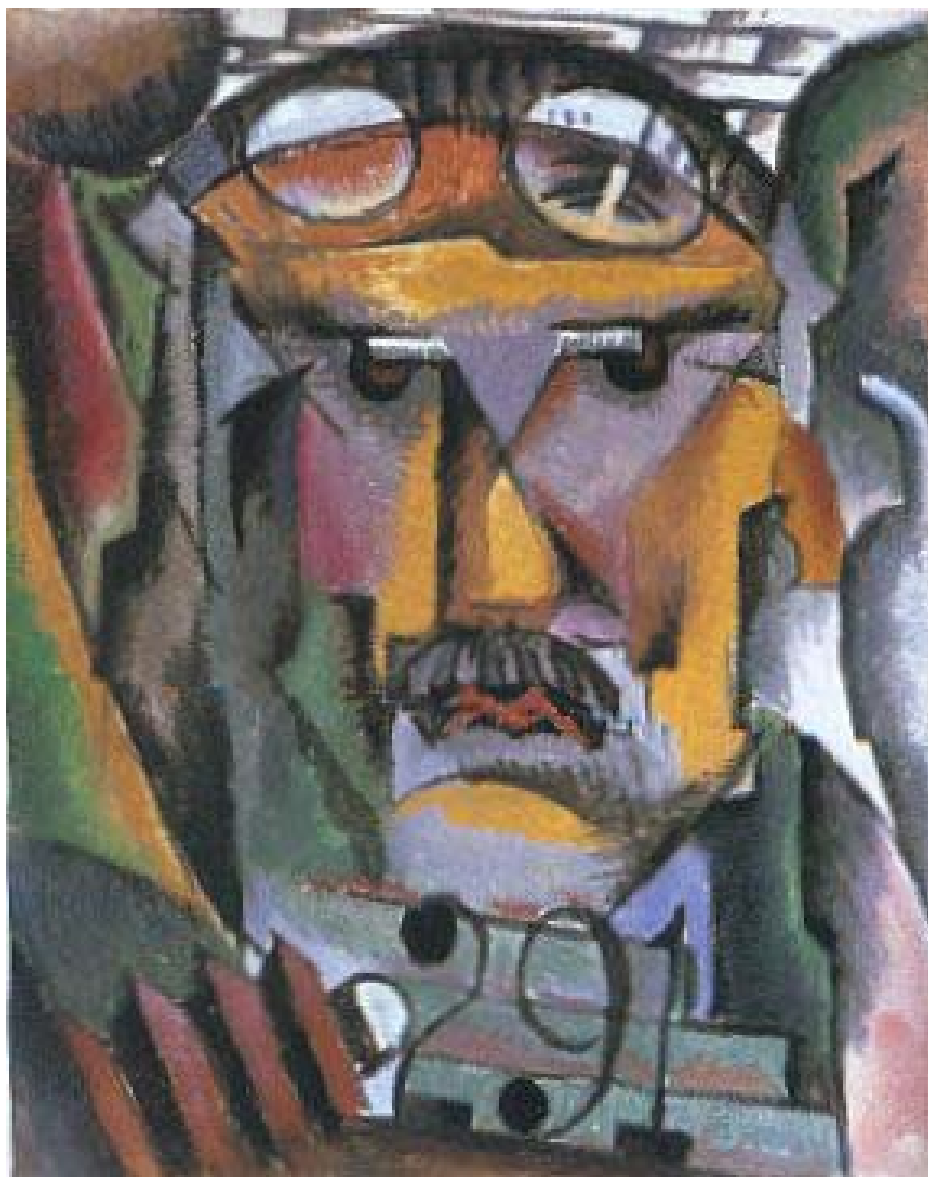
15 Gino Severini, *Blue Dancer*, 1912, oil on canvas with sequins, 24 x 18 in, Mattioli Collection, Milan



16 Man Ray, *Mina Loy*, 1918, gelatin silver print, photograph reproduced in *Self-Portrait* (New York: Little, Brown, & Co., 1963)



17 Marcel Duchamp, *King and Queen Surrounded by Swift Nudes*, 1912, oil on canvas, 45 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 50 $\frac{1}{2}$ in, Philadelphia Museum of Art, Louise and Walter Arensberg Collection



18 Man Ray, *Alfred Stieglitz*, 1913, oil on canvas, 10 ½ x 8 ½ in, Yale Collection of American Literature, Beinecke Rare Book and Manuscript Library, Yale University, New Haven, CT



19 Pablo Picasso, *Daniel-Henry Kahnweiler*, 1910, oil on canvas, 39 5/8 x 25 5/8 in,
Art Institute of Chicago



20 Constantin Brancusi, *Maiastrea*, 1912, polished brass, 73 1/8 in high including base, Peggy Guggenheim Collection, Venice



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22 Man Ray, *Still Life*, 1913, gouache on paper laid down on board, 10 x 13 ½ in, private collection



23 Man Ray, *Still Life with Pears*, 1914, gouache on paper laid down on board, 10 ½ x 12 in, private collection



24 Man Ray, *War A.D. MCMXIV*, 1914, oil on canvas, 37 x 69 ½ in, Philadelphia Museum of Art, A. C. Gallatin Collection



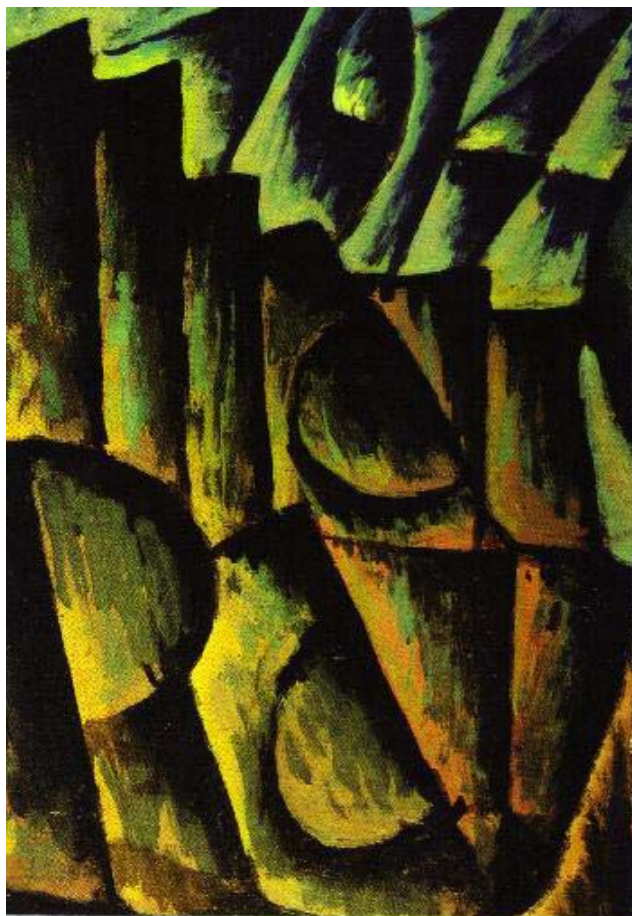
25 Paolo Uccello, *The Battle of San Romano, Niccolò da Tolentino Leads the Florentine Troops*, left panel, c. 1454-57, tempera on wood, 70 3/4 x 124 3/8 in, National Gallery, London



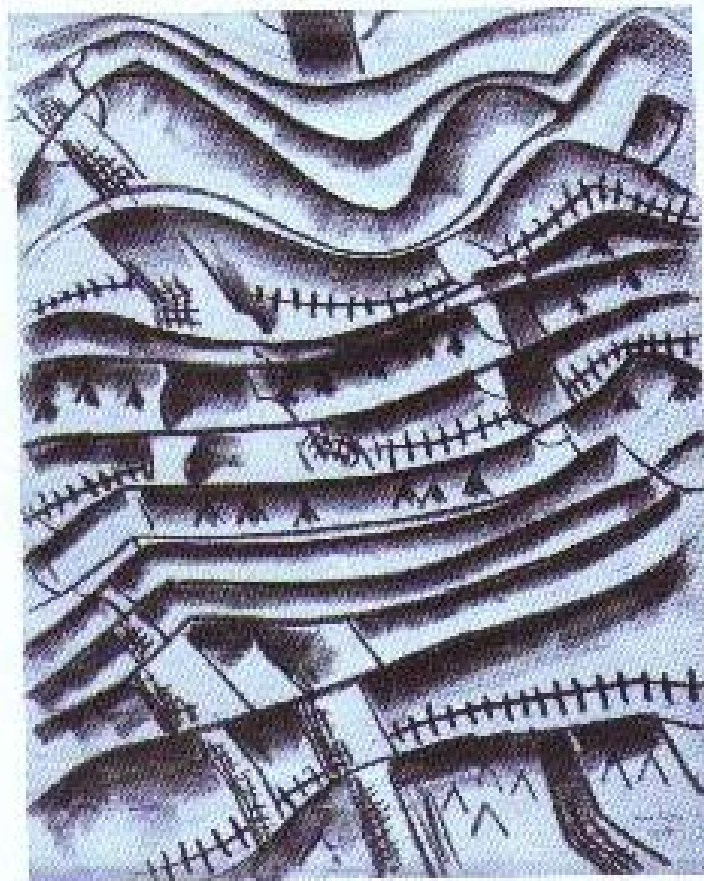
26 Paolo Uccello, *The Battle of San Romano, Bernardino della Ciarda Thrown Off His Horse*, middle panel, c. 1454-57, tempera on wood, 70 3/4 x 124 3/8 in Galleria degli Uffizi, Florence



27 Paolo Uccello, *The Battle of San Romano, Micheletto da Cotignola Engages in Battle*, right panel, c. 1454-57, tempera on wood, 70 $\frac{3}{4}$ x 124 $\frac{3}{8}$ in, Musée du Louvre, Paris



28 Man Ray, *Man Ray 1914*, 1914, oil on canvas, 7 1/8 x 5 1/8 in, A & R Penrose Collection, England



29 Man Ray, *Untitled/Ridgefield Landscape*, 1915, charcoal on paper, 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ in, Museum of Modern Art, The Riklis Collection of McCory Corporation, New York



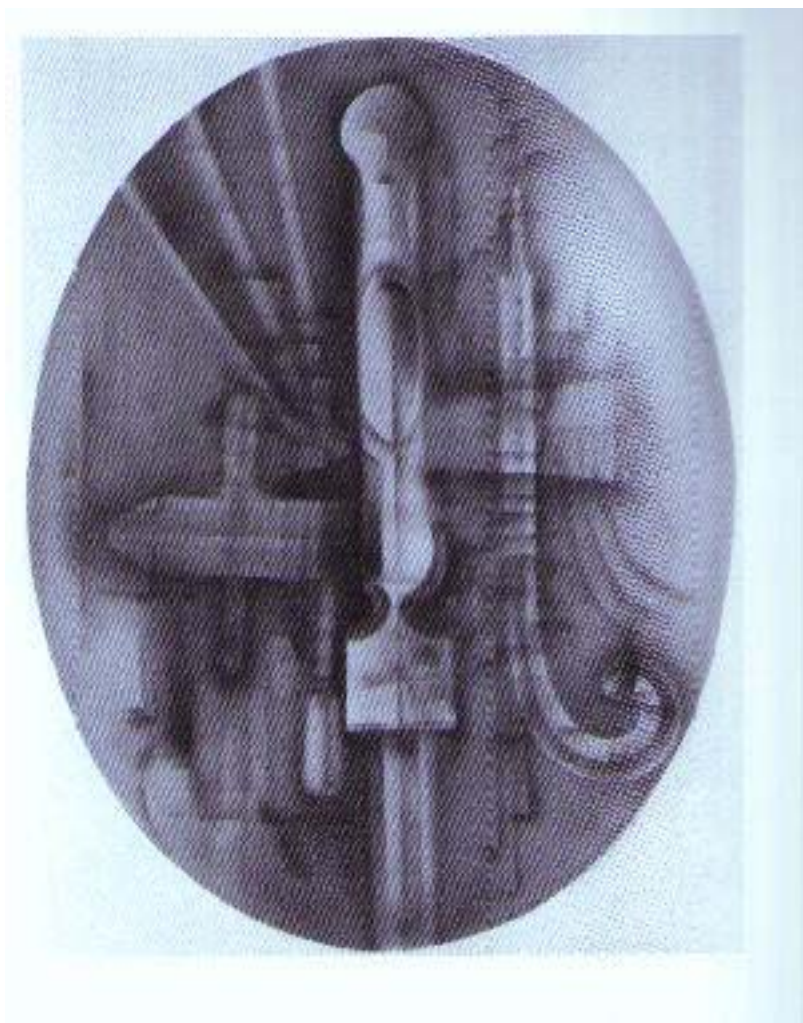
30 Man Ray, *Untitled*, 1915, charcoal on paper, 24 $\frac{3}{8}$ x 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ in, Museum of Modern Art, New York



31 Man Ray, *Untitled*, 1915, charcoal on paper, 24 $\frac{1}{4}$ x 18 $\frac{3}{4}$ in, lost or destroyed



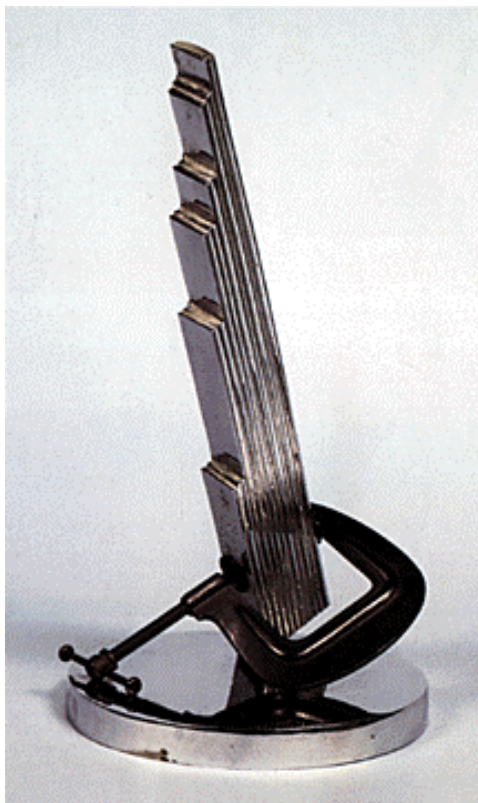
32 Man Ray, *The Rope Dancer Accompanies Herself With Her Shadows*, 1916, oil on canvas, 52 x 73 3/8 in, The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of G. David Thompson



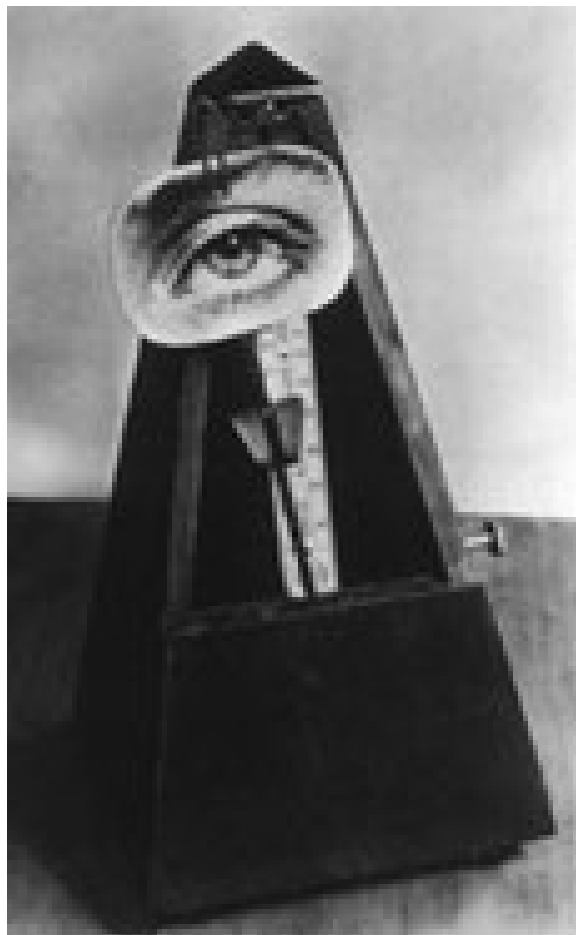
33 Man Ray, *Untitled Aerograph*, 1919, airbrush and tempera on cardboard, 26 3/8 x 19 5/8 in, Graphische Sammlung der Staatsgalerie, Stuttgart



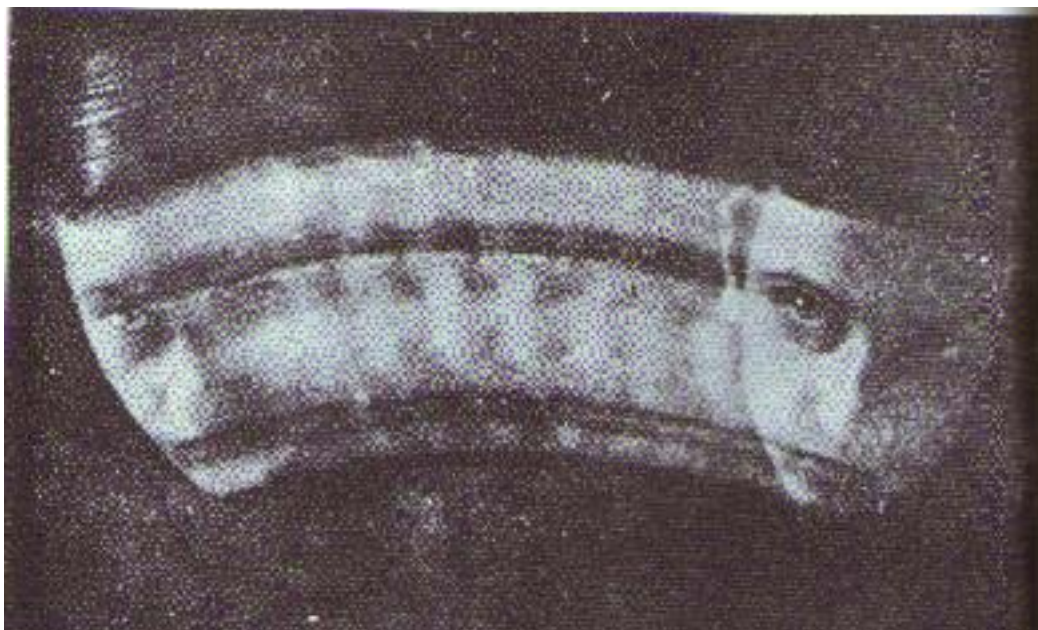
34 Joseph Stella, *Brooklyn Bridge*, 1917-1919, oil on canvas 84 x 76 in, Yale University Art Gallery, New Haven, CT



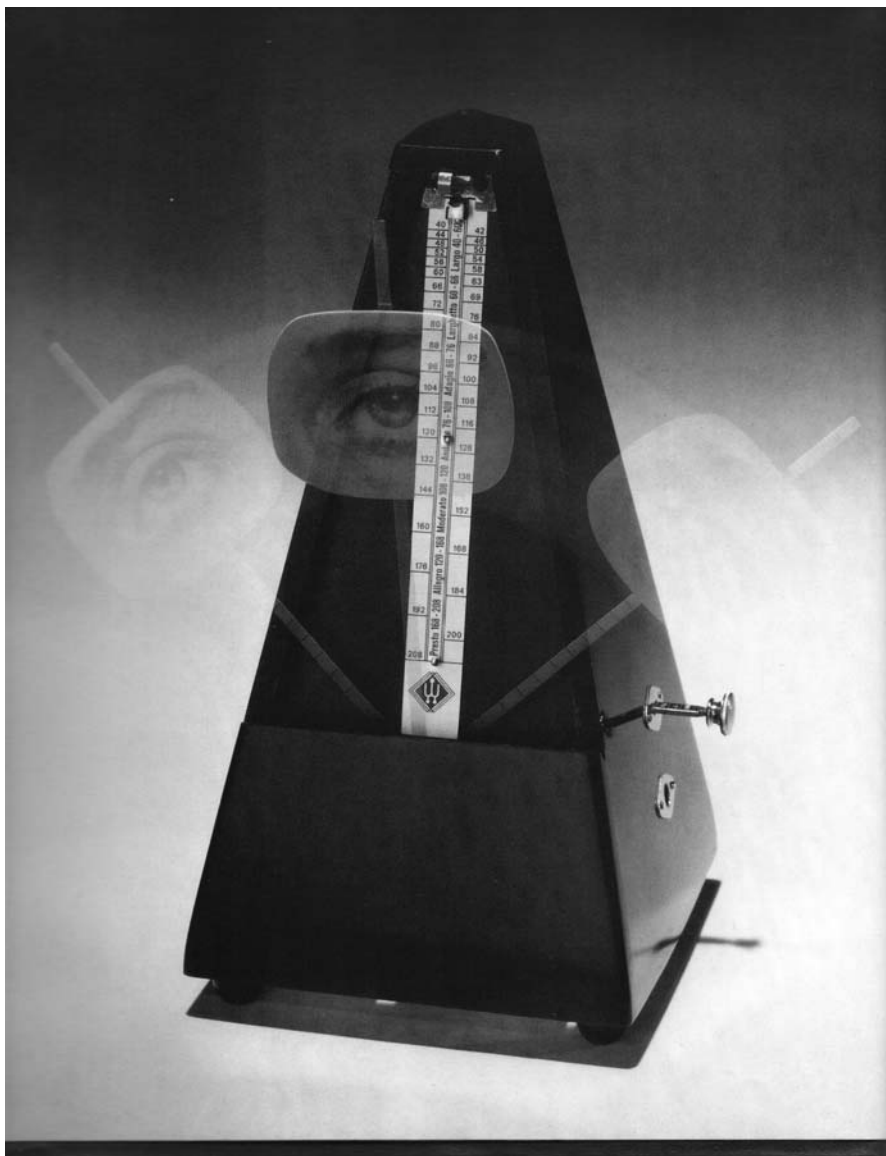
35 Man Ray, *New York*, 1917, chromed and painted bronze, 17 x 9 5/16 x 9 5/16 in,
Whitney Museum of American Art, New York



36 Man Ray, *Object to be Destroyed* 1923-32, (original destroyed, *Indestructible Object*, 1958 replica), Mr. and Mrs. Morton G. Newmann Collection



37 Anton Guilio Bragaglia, *Young Man Swinging*, 1912, photograph reproduced from *Futurist Manifestos* (Boston: Museum of Fine Arts, 1970)



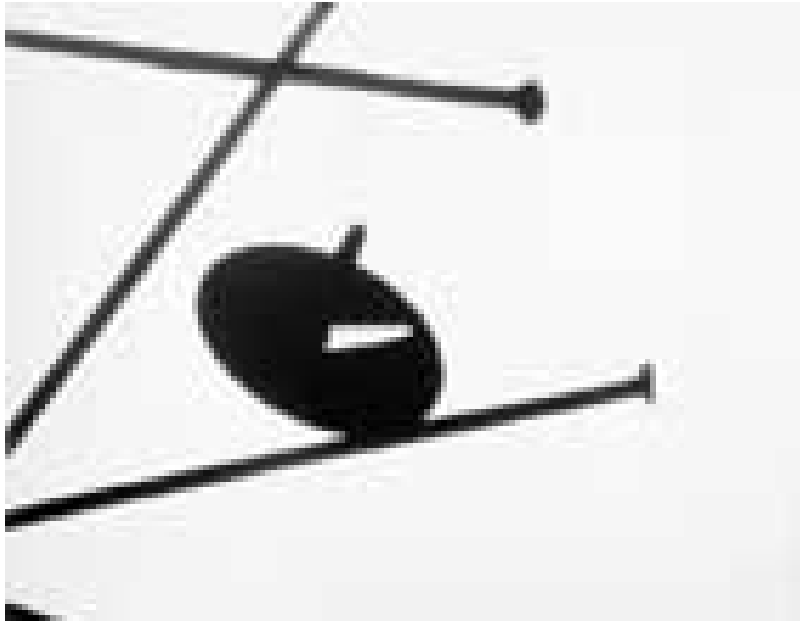
38 Man Ray, *Perpetual Motion*, 1972, photograph reproduced from *Perpetual Motif*
(New York: Abbeville Press, 1988)



39 Man Ray, *Untitled Rayograph* from *Champs Delicieux*, 1922, Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris



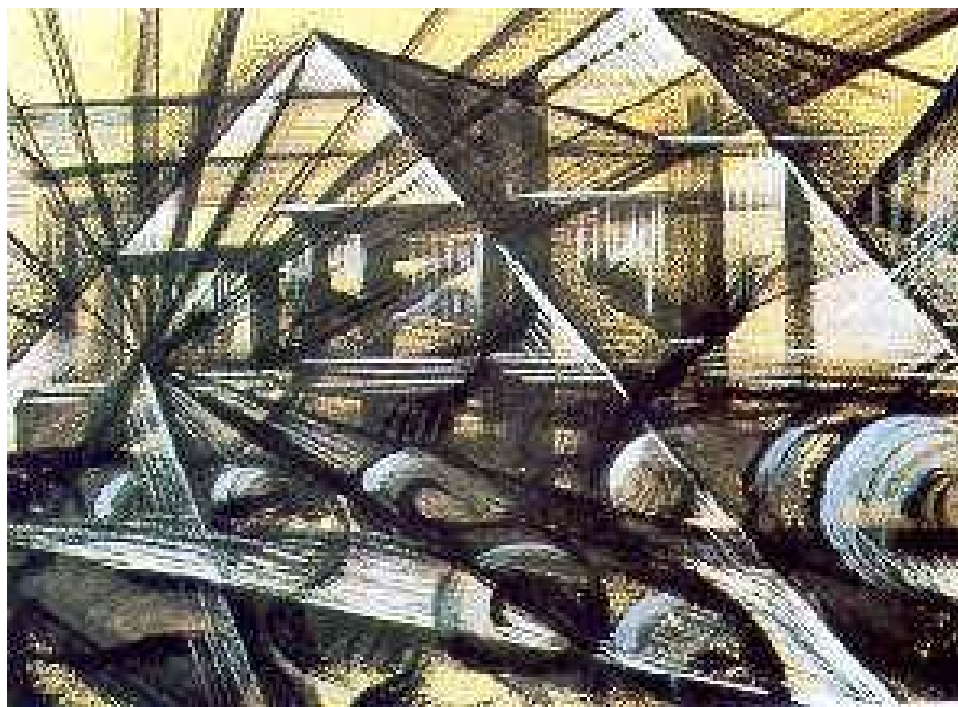
40 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



41 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



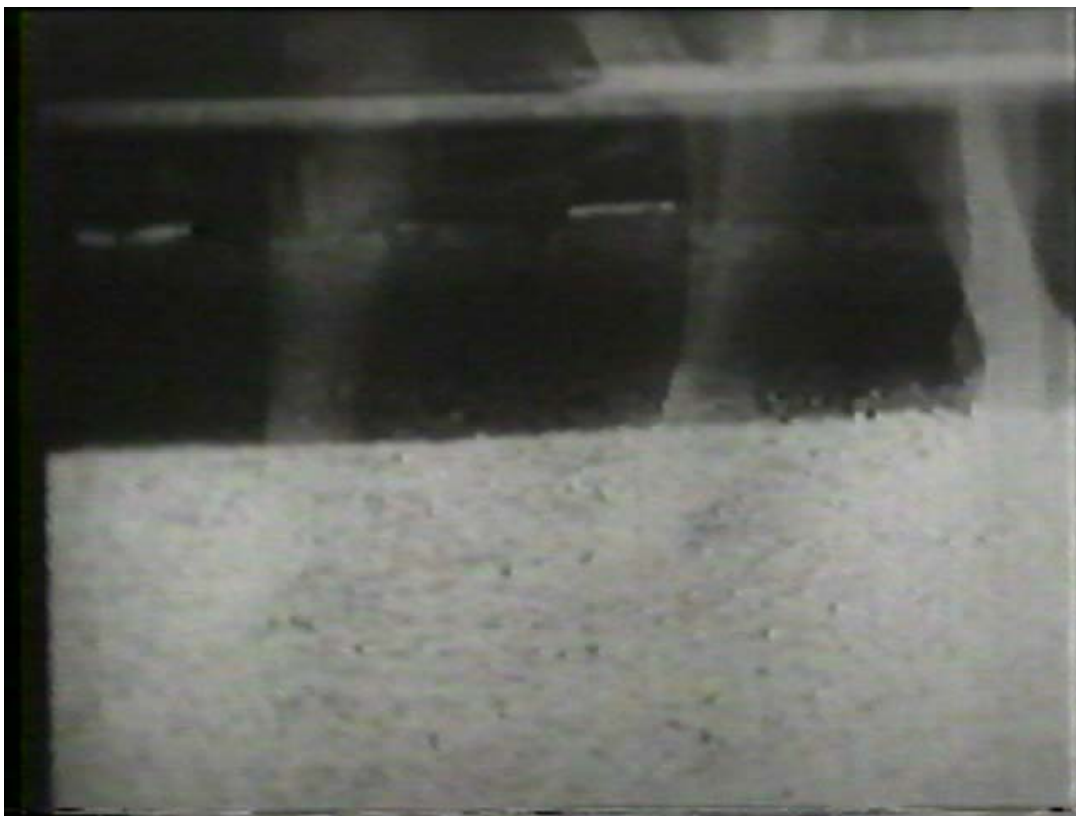
42 Luigi Russolo, *Dynamism of an Automobile*, 1913, oil on canvas, 41 x 55 ½ in,
Musée National d'Art Moderne, Paris



43 Giacomo Balla, *Speeding Automobile*, 1913, oil on canvas, 26 x 35 ½ in, Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna, Milan



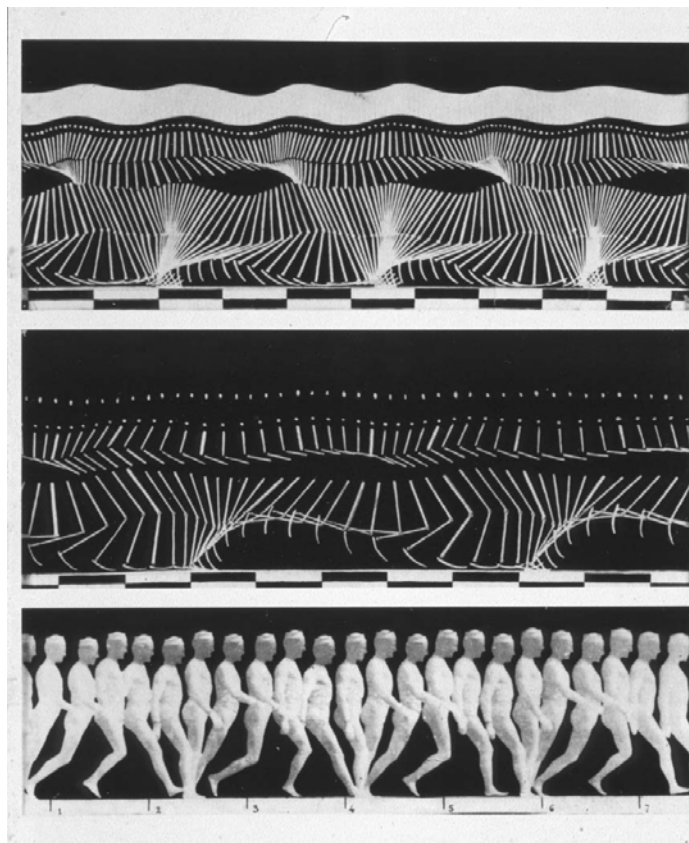
44 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



45 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



46 Giacomo Balla, *Girl Running on a Balcony*, 1912, oil on canvas, 49 ¼ x 49 ¼ in,
Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna Milan



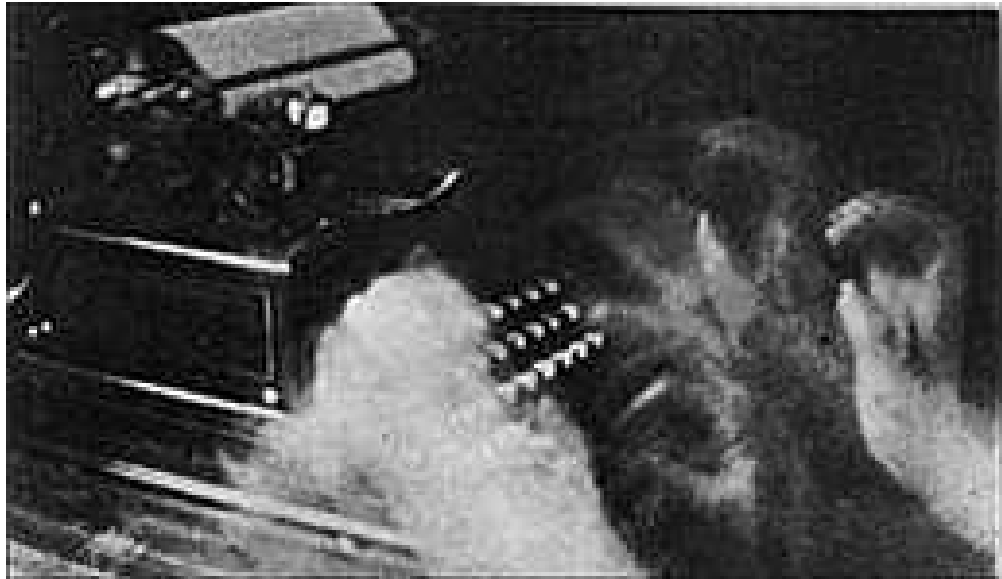
47 Etienne Jules Marey, *Chronographic Study of Human Locomotion*, 1883, Collège de France



48 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



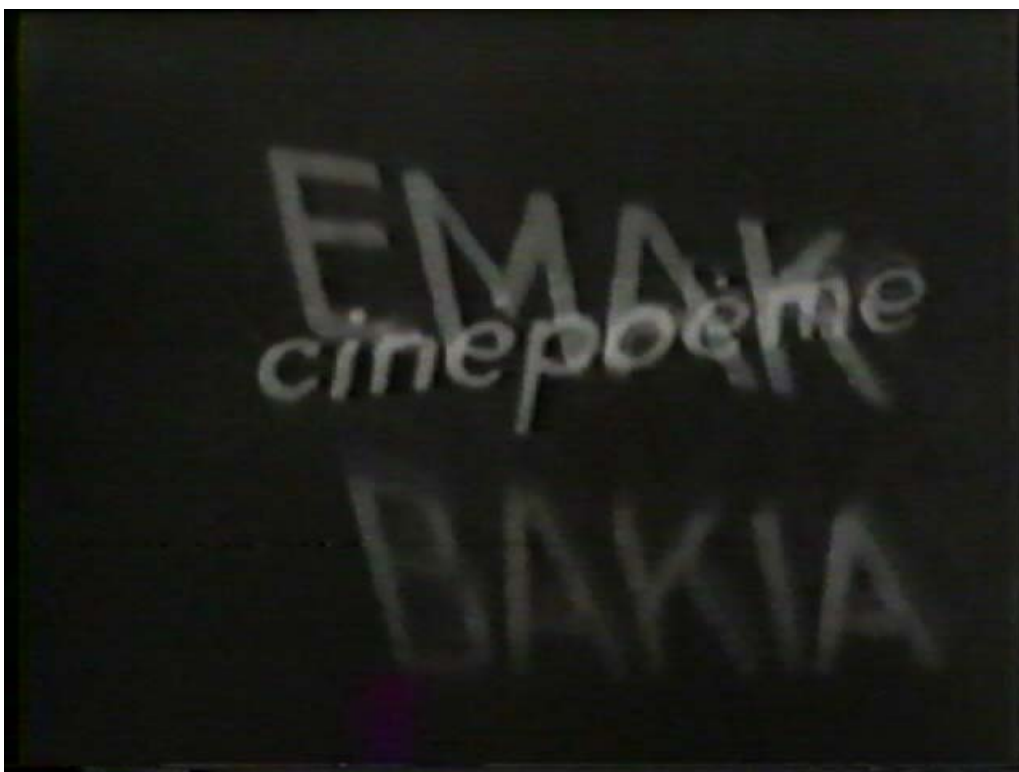
49 Giacomo Balla, *The Hand of The Violinist*, 1912, oil on canvas, 29 ½ x 20 ½ in, E.
Estorick Collection, London



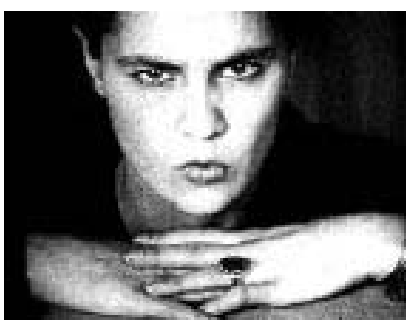
50 Anton Giulio Bragaglia, *The Typist*, 1913, postcard, 3 ½ x 5 ½ in, Malandrini Collection, Florence



51 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



52 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



53 Man Ray, stills from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



54 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



55 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



56 Man Ray, still from *Emak Bakia*, 1926, Museum of Modern Art Film Stills Archive, New York



57 Man Ray, *Cadeau*, 1921, mixed media: flatiron and tacks (original lost; c. 1958 replica), Museum of Modern Art, New York

APPENDIX A

MINA LOY “APHORISMS ON FUTURISM” (1914)

DIE in the Past
Live in the Future.

THE velocity of velocities arrives in starting.

IN pressing the material to derive its essence, matter becomes deformed.

AND form hurtling against itself is thrown beyond the synopsis of vision.

THE straight line and the circle are the parents of design, form the basis of art; there is no limit to their coherent variability.

LOVE the hideous in order to find the sublime core of it.

OPEN your arms to the dilapidated, to rehabilitate them.

YOU prefer to observe the past on which your eyes are already opened.

BUT the Future is only dark from outside.
Leap into it – and it EXPLODES with *Light*.

FORGET that you live in houses, that you may life in yourself –

FOR the smallest person, potentially, is as great at the Universe.

WHAT can you know of expansion, who limit yourselves to compromise?

HITHERTO the great man has achieved greatness by keeping the people small.

BUT in the Future, by inspiring the people to expand to their fullest capacity, the great man proportionately must be tremendous – a God.

LOVE of others is the appreciation of one's self.

MAY your egotism be so gigantic that you comprise mankind in your self-sympathy.

THE Future is limitless – the past a trail of insidious reactions.

LIFE is only limited by our prejudices. Destroy them, and you cease to be at the mercy of yourself.

TIME is the dispersion of inventiveness.

THE Futurist can live a thousand years in one poem.

APPENDIX B

MAN RAY *PRIMER OF THE NEW ART OF TWO DIMENSIONS* (1916)

The individual desiring to experience all the sensations of life is forced by his physical and temporal limits to receive them in a concentrated form. This concentration of life is offered by the expressive arts.

If the individual is an artist, that is, conscious, his appreciation demands proportional creative powers. An active mastery of all the arts as a means of simultaneous expression is beyond him as much as is an actual participation in all the phases of life itself. The greater the extent of the perceptions the more concentrated must be the expression. Just as the lens sacrifices actual space to focus all of that space upon the plate, so the artist must condense the time and space element to create life's equivalent.

This leads his medium to a static condition implying the unity of time and space, that is a concrete form of two dimensions, which is the comprehensible from one point of view in an instant of time. Any re-extension of this medium into time or space becomes merely a fragment of life. Now we shall see how this two-dimensional medium maintains its identity as well as its microcosmic quality. Although conceivable in an instant of time, its static quality makes it as eternal as life itself.

Beginning with all the expressive arts as concentrated phases of life, the conscious individual seeks to contain their characteristics in the plastic medium of two

dimensions. This is possible because each of the arts, the dynamic as well as the static, has a characterizing factor that is static and containable in the flat plane. We shall consider music, literature, dancing (the actually dynamic arts), architecture, painting and sculpture (the static arts).

Music originates in the contact of points, lines and planes in instruments. In musical notation these contacts are plastically expressed by points on lines in two dimensions. To the musician these are symbols of sound. But in themselves, points and lines are static. An arrangement of these on a flat plane at once conveys musical quality to one who hears music with his mind, as does a composer.

In literature, idea and matter are plastically expressed by written words which possess distinct individual forms. Likewise any plastic form of two dimensions with distinct character has a literary quality for one with a literary sense. An individual plastic form is the result of thought as is an arrangement of words.

In dancing, rhythm is the essence. While thought connects words, rhythm connects gestures, determines their relations and combines them into a unit. Static forms of two dimensions are like gestures in their expressiveness, and can also be related by rhythm – a rhythm physically static but having the dynamic origin. So dancing finds its parallel in the static plane.

All architecture is based on the principle of proportion, a purely plastic element adaptable to form in two dimensions and fully expressive of the architectural element in life.

Painting, as an illusion of matter, or whatever the inspiring subject, is identified among the form of expression by the color and texture of the material, that is, pigment or

other material that may practically be reduced to the flat plane. This quality, detached from its representative function and cultivated in itself, replaces the illusion of matter by a parallel realization in the material itself, thereby satisfying the desire for realism. So the essence of painting is preserved in the two-dimensional medium.

The final expression in sculpture is attained by the creation of values through light and shadow. On a flat plane the contrast of absolute plastic values produces the same sensations as the effect of light on opposed planes in a space of three dimensions. Thus the quality of sculpture also is retained in two dimensions.

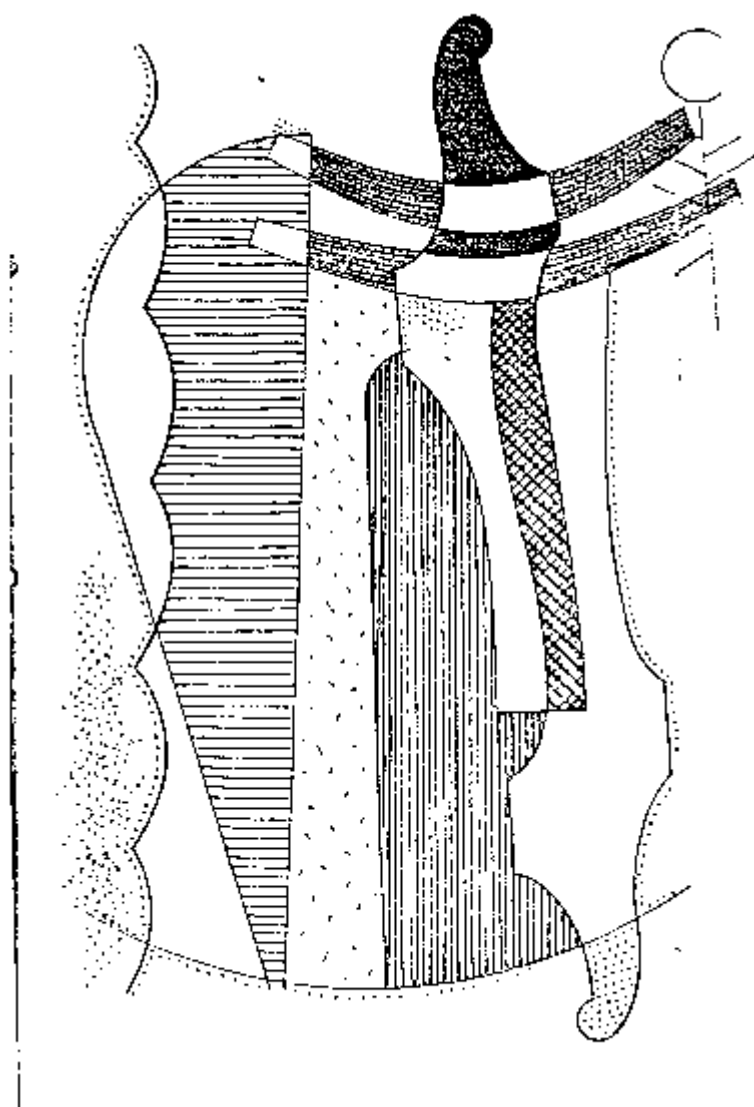
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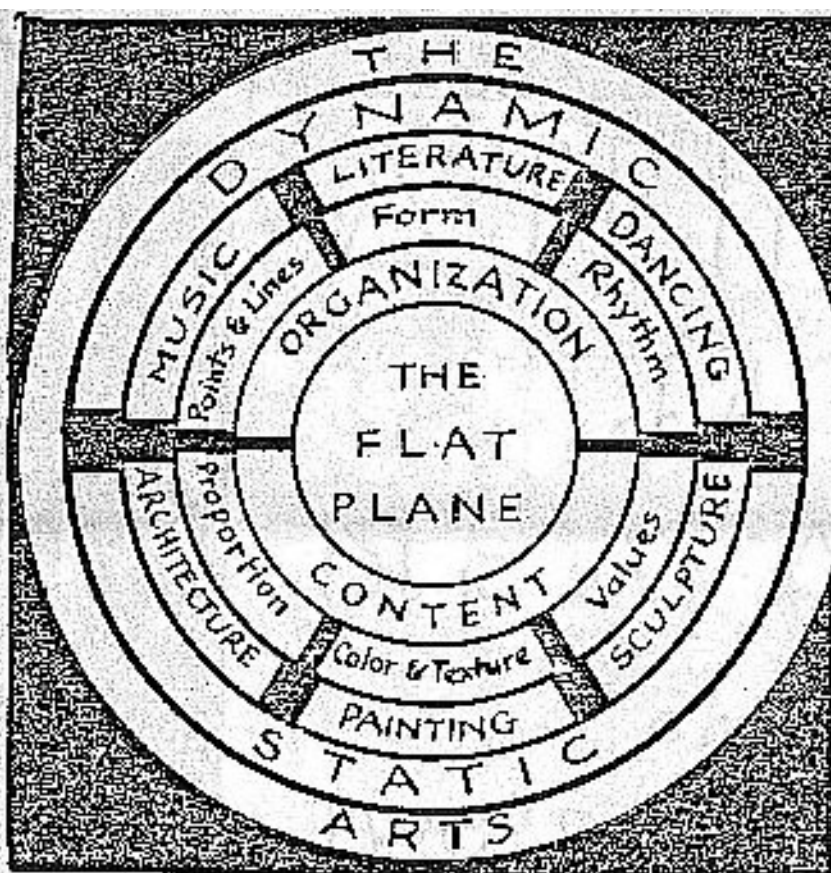
In the respective factors of the first three arts mentioned (music, literature, dancing) namely: points and lines, form, and rhythm; the process of their organization on the flat plane gives the dynamic quality of the arts; while the other three: proportion, color and texture of material, and values (representing architecture, painting and sculpture, respectively), in terms of content supply the static element. Just as the dynamic and static balance in life so they do here.

The organization of all these art elements into the flat plan unit frees them from the incompleteness they separately suffer as mere symbols of idea and emotion. By mutual dependence and common relationship they produce an activity in the two-dimensional limits which is entirely self-expressive and obedient to the laws of these limits.

The new two-dimensional medium is not merely painting any more than it is merely drawing or color. It is a most universal and concentrated form of expression.

With it the artist can really begin to create, which is the highest and most joyous form of expression.





Graphic chart showing abstraction from the arts of representative factors and their concentration into a two-dimensional unit.

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