

By Stefan Cammeraat

img 0.1

After his fateful crash in 1908, Marinetti did not only get struck by a 'Eureka!' moment - as well known within Modernism as Kandinsky's, discovering abstract art by entering his studio one day, only to find one of his paintings tilted on its side for storage reasons -, it also prompted him into gathering a group of writers and artists who were willing to work with him on what was to become Futurism. While the movement originally consisted exclusively of Marinetti himself, the futurists made a name for themselves within mere months.

This by now mythical crash not only kicked off the Futurists trajectory towards their utopian vision, it was also greeted with harsh, often fair, criticism. One of those critics supposedly was one Ettore Angelini, a mechanic present at said crash, who by way of experiment applied Futurist theory to one of their most im-

portant and yet least investigated subjects: the motor car. Constructing a maintenance manual for the F.I.A.T. 24-32 hp Marinetti drove into a ditch on the 15th of October, 1908 became his life goal. Yet, in a fashion similar to Pierre Menard, in that certain Borges story¹, he figured that any historical

documentation of this project was contradictory to his intentions. Marinetti went through great lengths to try and hide any evidence of the project, among other things by burying his beloved F.I.A.T.

As you can imagine it was only by great difficulty that I was able to get close to any reconstruction of this document, and in some instances it required both my imagination and the extensive use of historical sources to which Angelini supposedly had access to form a somewhat coherent publication.

With a motorcar a crash or sudden stop is inevitable, and the modern motorcar must be built in accordance to this possibility. While the driver might foresee most problems by virtue of his ever shifting perspective, and can adjust accordingly, there are some things which cannot be

overcome. The mechanic, Ettore Angelini, was aware of this flaw in motor engines and was sensible enough to make this observation concerning Marinetti's crash. He also saw the uncanny resemblance to the problems arising in Futurist ideologies, and the more general break with tradition in Modernism.

The problems that Angelini encountered in his journey are comparable to those of the Dadaists, when on a certain afternoon they found a wallet from a French waiter containing 3,500 francs. To either keep it or return it would result in a break with Dadaist ideology.

To further underline the importance of Angelini's views on the conservation of Modernist history, I divided this project into three parts. Each part consists of a show based on the information I gathered for the construction of the publication and subsequently inviting a writer to reflect in his or her own way on this unknown history of Ettore Angelini.

Those writings, along with documentation of my shows at P///// AKT, were combined to produce this small publication. A sociological approach to the car-crash, an

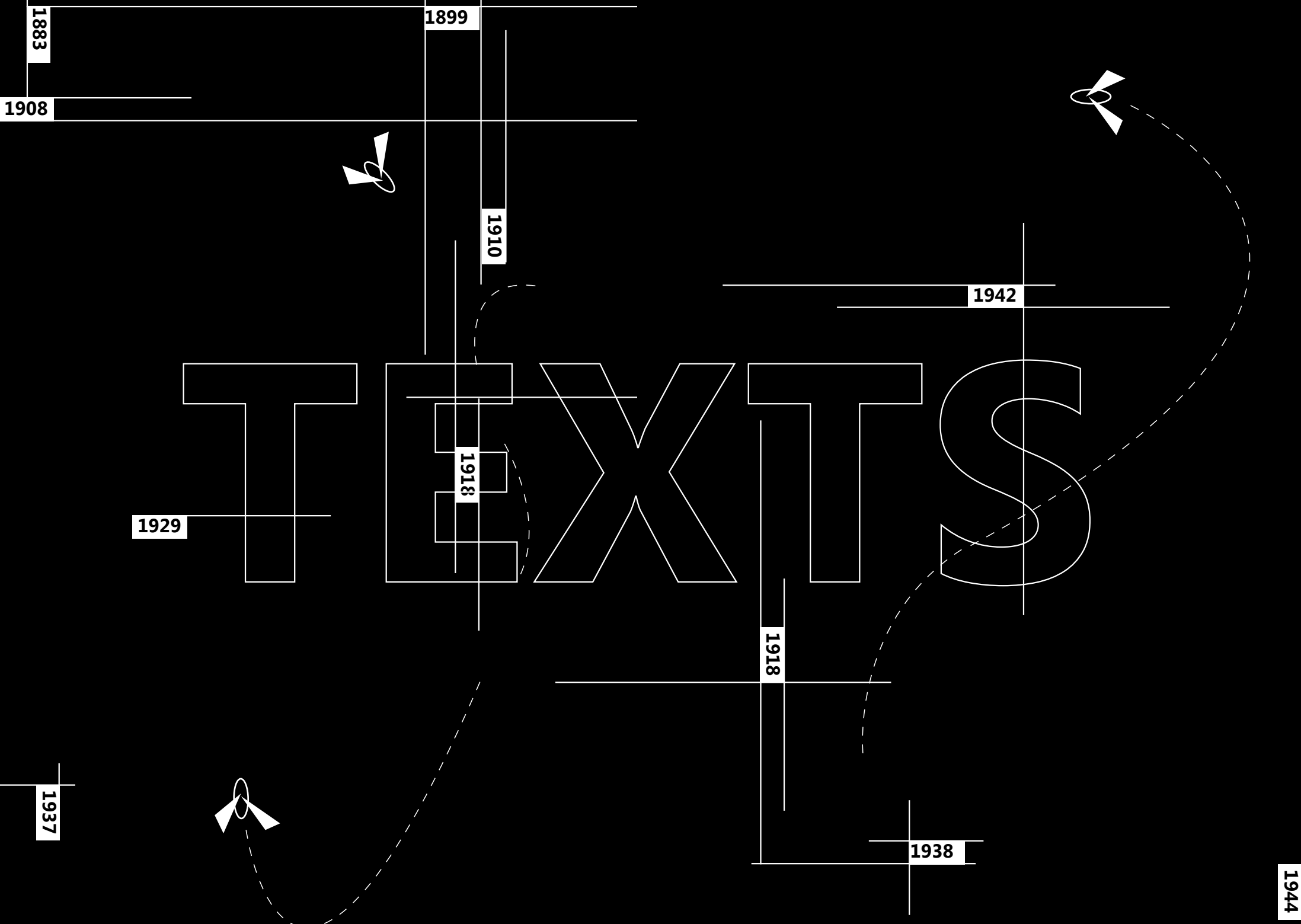
investigation into the history of car design and a reflection upon

img 0.2

Marinetti's life following the example of The Annals of St. Gall, form a sort of collateral damage surrounding the existence of Angelini's manuscript. This collateral damage is comparable to the unforeseen consequences of both Futurist ideology and the wallet which broke up Dadaism, which exclaimed the death of Futurism² while, ironically, suffering the same fate themselves.

1. Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote, The garden of forking paths, included in Ficciones, J.L. Borges, Grove Press, New York city, New York, 1962

2. Dada souleve tout, E. Varèse, Tr. Tzara, Ph. Soupault, Soubeyran, J. Rigaut, G. Ribemont-Dessaignes, M. Ray, F. Picabia, B. Péret, C. Pansaers, R. Huelsenbeck, J. Evola, M. Ernst, P. Eluard, Suz. Duchamp, M. Duchamp, Crotti, G. Cantarelli, Marg. Buffet, Gab. Buffet, A. Breton, Baargeld, Arp, W.C. Arensberg, L. Aragon, January 12th 1921



1883

1899

1908

1910

1942

1929

1918

1918

1937

1938

1944

By Omar Muñoz Cremers

img 1.1

Sociology has traditionally been interested in the way structures and social interactions influence the behavior of people and how this behavior in turn shapes these structures and interactions. The roles played by outsiders in society have been given some attention (Becker, 1963) but sociology faces important complications when dealing with the limit experience. The limit experience can be defined as the rupture of the social fabric. The experience is often characterized by a temporary breakdown of language. The heightened perception associated with drugs, sexuality, near-death and mysticism is often seen as a defining element of the limit experience. Sociology tries to study these experiences indirectly through the subcultures which are created around these events. Even so, some experiences exist which remain free of such subcultural embedding.

One of the most important examples of the latter is the car accident.

In a quite singular manner the car accident presents a limit experience that is not consciously chosen yet constantly present in everyday life. The increased probability of an accident due to the amount of traffic in modern society has ensured that driving

a car is governed by a vast set of rules and social conventions. This regulating web offers drivers

img 1.3

the necessary illusion of security which among other things facilitates a sense of mobility essential to nearly all modern economies. An illusion must be maintained and the fact that car traffic generally proceeds in an unproblematic manner, indicates highly successful impulse management. The illusion also necessitates a taboo on the car accident, a subject which is one only spoken of in very specific circumstances set around the topic of road safety.

The taboo is quite effective during the practice of driving although in certain circumstances, for example on undivided roads, it is possible for subconscious impulses to manifest themselves as fantasy scenarios of frontal collisions. The humanities have never come closer to proving Freud's pessimistic hypotheses concerning the existence of a death instinct. This

presence of a taboo effectively makes the car crash the domain of the radical artist who wishes to say the ineffable, tries to perceive the tragic flaw with his own eyes, eventually giving it a new shape. In a society that is increasingly subject to control, self-discipline and risk avoidance the car crash presents a powerful escape and challenge. The car crash not only stages a physical exchange of pulse and energy between two objects, it also releases creative energies.

Ever since Marinetti's car crash in 1908 radical art has taken an advantage over the humanities regarding this thorny subject. Examples include Andy Warhol's Silver Car Crash (1963), Jean-Luc Godard's Week-end (1967) J.G. Ballard's Crashed Cars exhibition (1970) and the subsequent Crash novel (1973) and Paul Seger's Nothing Rouses the Spirit like the Prospect of Heroic Failure performance (2012). Art allows itself a freedom which for the humanities is only possible in theoretical works (the anthropology of Arnold van Gennep and Victor Turner) and especially the more speculative variants (for instance the work of George Bataille). For a more sociological approach the work of Erving Goffman regarding the way individuals frame reality

Summary

The study of subcultures at the fringes of society has long been of interest to sociologists. Ethical concerns do in the end restrict the investigation into one of the more common events of modernity. What can the car crash teach us?

may form a possibly fertile theoretical basis. His Frame Analysis (1974) introduces the concept of the frame break, an act or negative experience which creates a temporary rupture in the frame with which we give meaning to daily practices. Even so, the distance of the social scientist with respect to the car accident will remain problematic, a social situation that is ethically impossible to reproduce in an experimental setup. The crash presents a limit of knowledge.

Bibliography

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Marinetti, F.T. 1909. Futurist Manifesto

Turner, Victor. 1969. The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure

Van Gennep, Arnold. 1909. Les rites de passage

img 1.4

img 1.5

By Peter van den Hoogen

For him, besides photography and furniture design, fantastic meant the design of streamlined sports cars which he raced himself in the 24h of Le Mans!

Creative and sporting ambitions in the automotive field

were so much alive in Italy that people had been 'assembling' their own sports cars already since the 40's, sometimes even in a neighborhood garage. Thousands of small bodywork businesses - of the kind which in the Netherlands would occupy themselves just with panel beating and spray-painting-tinkered on their own creations, built upon the chassis of Fiats, Lancias and Alfa Romeo;

ordinary cars which these 'modern sculptors' transformed into attainable 'Maseratis'. Behind the wheel of those metal sculptures every Italian could fancy himself to be a Tazio Nuvolari, a dauntless speed devil who became a national hero after he won legendary races like the Mille Miglia and the Targa Florio. Nuvolari, the 'Flying Mantuan', went to extremes, as he was prepared

img 2.1

Whoever loves art and design will naturally have a good time in Italy. The same goes for those who love fast cars because if there is anything which inspired the Italians the last hundred years it is speed. Consider for instance the Italian architect and photographer Carlo Mollino. His motto was 'Everything is permissible as long as it's fantastic'.

img 2.2

to die for the automotive sports.

The foundation for this Italian adoration of fast cars (and abhorrence of danger) was already laid in 1909 by the Italian poet Filippo Tomasso Marinetti. In a manifesto which was printed on the cover of the French newspaper Le Figaro

(which heralded the beginnings of Futurism) he stated that: *"We affirm that the world's magnificence has been enriched by a new beauty: the beauty of speed. A racing car whose hood is adorned with great pipes... is more beautiful than the Victory of Samothrace"*

His ideas were partly inspired by a car accident he had a year earlier. Marinetti had to dodge two approaching 'suckers' on a bicycle during a game of street racing with his Fiat 24-32 hp, which resulted in him ending up in a ditch. The Marinetti arising from the mud was a different man, someone who wanted to get rid of the sluggish old world with its ancient traditions, and who wanted to pave the road for a new, dynamic world, full of speed, violence, noise and sensation.

Together with his artist-friends he decided to celebrate the beauty of the new world by expressing it in manifestoes, paintings, objects and poems (in which the words darted off the paper in freedom). Inspiration was found with, among others, the cubists. The shifting positions which this Parisian group employed to suggest that a still life can be shown from different sides simultaneously, turned out to lend itself equally well for the expression of dynamism. It would lead to the most important characteristic of futurist painting: to combine different moments from a movement into a single condensed unity. Umberto Boccioni also applied this principle, called simultaneism, to sculpture. The fact that his most famous sculpture 'Shapes of Continuity in Space' today still reminds us of Stormtrooper-like soldiers from science fiction movies shows how far ahead of its time this visual language must have been a hundred years ago. However, how much work still had to be done by the Futurists is clearly visible in the appearance of Marinetti's own unfortunate Fiat.

The car looks nothing like an object expressing speed. The flowing shapes of Boccioni or the lines indicating speed in the paintings of Giacomo Balla are nowhere to be found. The streamlined bodyworks of more recent sports cars by mythical brands like Ferrari or

Maserati seem equally far away. It still is hard to believe that this rickety vehicle gave birth to 'the beauty of speed'.

img 2.3

Purely from the perspective of historical importance, and thus fully opposing the laws of futurism, the artist Stefan Cammeraat fortunately dares to revive that utterly outdated piece of machinery by subjecting it to a restoration, hoping to gain insight in the conceptions of futurism by recording the restoration process; a method reminiscent of the search for values in the philosophical novel 'Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance'.

By extending this parallel with the novel, we can conclude that the reality of futurism existed purely of dynamic qualities. As a source of innovation this quality brought

forth ever new forms and conceptions, which had to be perceived as temporal because they were only serving their purpose until something better showed up. You just have to take a single glance at Marinetti's car to get an idea about how many times this has happened the past hundred years.

The aestheticization of speed, technology, power, restlessness and sensation would continue to linger in Italy for a long time, even though it continually adopted new forms. Consider the heroic world surrounding a car manufacturer like Ferrari. Consider the magazine advertisements of Olivetti, who modernized Marinetti's words in freedom by using typewriters. Consider the playful and rebellious products that members of design groups like Alchimia (1976) and Memphis (1981) conceived as if the futurist Fortunato Depero was looking over their shoulders.

The futurist visual vocabulary lived on everywhere in Italy, except where you might expect it most: with car designers- who are the designers of speed after all. Why didn't the works of the futurists offer them any foothold to work from? Most likely because Marinetti and his companions never expanded beyond the suggestion of speed. Their work was only applicable to static mediums. Why would you still have to

depict a speeding car as an object in motion? That's something we can all agree on.

Instead, car designers followed the laws of shape dictated by the wind tunnel, which turned out to reduce the amount of air resistance. Besides, this trend soon had very little to do with functionalism anymore. The taut surfaces which the wind tunnel dictated hid the underlying technology from view, allowing the car to be seen as less of a 'complicated machine'. What remained were aesthetic curves. The association with the bodies of living organisms was easily made.

But with recent developments like self-steering electrical cars the machine seems to have gotten back into the car more than ever, this time as an overpowering computer. The roaring beast made way for the self-thinking robot, overloaded with sensors; an extension of our own brain and nervous system. Not the outside (body) but the inside (technology) provides excitement now. That's why future cars will have to remain machines for the time being, be it slightly anthropomorphized.

The question of car designers now is: what does a machine in motion actually look like? One of the 'answers' has been given us a by the futurists a hundred years ago already, and only just now shows

up in the car industry, with Lexus for instance. Some of this brand's

img 2.4

prototype-phase bodies are no longer following the known wind directions but are forced into the strangest directions by unknown forces, apparently to support the idea that the locomotion of a robot is something else entirely.

One might think that the moment in which we encounter the Beauty of Speed on the open road, as

the futurists liked to imagine it, is near, were it not for the fact that Elon Musk of Tesla – not one of the least important – is working hard to apply the old laws of aerodynamics to his latest model. Perhaps this is for the best, because if everything is just daily reality, what will remain of futurism?

By Riet Wijnen

1897. Benedetta born exactly at midnight.

img 3.1

1876. Enrico and Amalia made love. Born in Alexandria.
 1877.
 1878.
 1879.
 1880.
 1881.
 1882.
 1883. Developed love for literature.
 1884.
 1885.
 1886.
 1887.
 1888.
 1889.
 1890.
 1891.
 1892. Started school magazine Papyrus.
 1893. Obtained baccalaureate degree.
 1894.
 1895.
 1896.

1898.
 1899. Graduated in law.
 1900.
 1901.
 1902.
 1903.
 1904.
 1905. Moved to Milan. Finished first drama. Founded magazine Poesia.
 1906.
 1907.
 1908. Crashed with car.
 1909. Published The Founding and Manifesto of Futurism on Friday and Saturday. Fulfilled desire to be heckled by whistling.
 1910. First Futurist Evening on Wednesday. Crowd threw vegetables. 800.000 leaflets thrown from Venice clock tower.
 1911. Wrote more manifests. Departed for Libya as war correspondent.

img 3.2

1912. Extensive show in Paris. Covered the First Balkan War. Divided humanity into superior men and inferior women.
 1913. More manifests. Poetry reading in London, Futurist city par excellence.
 1914.
 1915. Fought in harsh conditions.
 1916. Supported Italy's war effort.
 1917. Got seriously wounded. Benedetta joined the Futurists.
 1918. Returned to service. Met Benedetta.
 1919. Became staunch supporter of fascism.
 1920. Formally abandoned the Fascists.

img 3.3

1921.
 1922. Called for state support of Italian modern art.
 1923. Married Benedetta. Moved in together in Rome.
 1924.
 1925.
 1926.
 1927.
 1928.
 1929. Nominated to the Royal Academy of Italy
 1930.
 1931. Expressed on Tuesday Catholic religion wasn't necessary to create sacred art.
 1932.
 1933.
 1934.
 1935.
 1936.
 1937. Accused Hitler of not understanding Futurism. Protested against anti-Semitism
 1938.
 1939.
 1940.
 1941.
 1942. Served on the Eastern Front.
 1943.
 1944. Died on Saturday.

* Is based on the example of the medieval manuscripts chronology called the Annals of St. Gall, which records events in the Frankish kingdoms during the eight, ninth, and tenth centuries in chronological order.

2015

1913

Img

2016

1910

INDEX

1908

1916

Img

Img

img 0.1 **img 0.2**

Archive image of Marinetti with his car (before and after crash), 1908

Copyrights unknown;

img 1.1 **img 1.2**

Waiting Room, 2015-2016

Wood, paint, perspex, aluminum, screen, living houseflies;

Consisting of a bench and a posterdisplay reminiscent of those you encounter waiting for the bus, Waiting Room combines the strange temporal displacement when projecting Futurist theory a hundred years into the future and the fading of time in the act of waiting.

Futurism consists of man's wish for something new. In 1909 this consisted of a world dominated by machines, where the salvation of mankind was not in god's hands, but in the hands of a manmade robot. This salvation by technological means has since become more and more of a reality, we are no more dependent on our natural environment than we are on our own constructed environment. With their ideals concluded, what work remains to be done by the Futurists?

img 1.3

Safety first, 2016

Print on alubond;

img 1.4**Overview, a flies perspective, 2016**

Wood, paint, print on alubond, carjack;

img 1.5**Untitled, 2016**

Digital image on screen;

img 2.1**img 2.2****Carspeed + light + noise (after Balla), 2016**

Wood, paint, wingnuts, trolley, UV lighting system;

Carspeed + light + noise (after Balla) is a fly catching lamp, formally based on Giacomo Balla's painting of the same name. Acting upon the houseflies caught in the poster display of 'Waiting Room' it points towards the world of motorcar maintenance as a possible solution for the problems of futurist timetravelers. *Even a fly or a grain of dirt in a Carburettor would be enough to stop a 90 hp motor car, and unless the motorist is very wide-awake it may take him a long time to find the cause.*³

3. The complete motorist, A. B. Filson Young, Methuen & CO.36 Essex Street W.C. London, 1906, p47

img 2.3**Untitled power outlet, 2016**

Wood, paint, electrical circuit;

img 2.4**Maintenance schedule, 2016**

Wood, paint, perspex, print on paper;

A working maintenance schedule, combining the circular fashion in which the maintenance of any moving vehicle is to be executed with Marinetti's theories on *Words in freedom* and futurist theories on the abolition of the past.



Three stages of a passing car (has, is, will), 2016

Wood, paint, inkjet print on paper; Three stages of a passing car (has, is, will) divides Giacomo Balla's iconic painting *Abstract speed, the car has passed* into three discernible stages relating to the foresight required to drive a car.

*In driving at any speed other than a mere crawl the driver's eyes should be on the road in front of him and not on the front wheels of the car. The distance that he can see the road in front of him, as well as the condition of the traffic on the road, determines the speed at which he may safely travel. The good driver is accompanied by great foresight, as his perspective shifts from his position in the car towards the road ahead, his machine, dragging behind him, cutting the landscape in half. A cow is grazing fifty yards in front of you, a dog is stretching itself in the sun twenty yards in front of that, and a hen is preparing to cross the road thirty yards away.*⁴

⁴ The complete motorist, A. B. Filson Young, Methuen & CO.36 Essex Street W.C. London, 1906, p189

img 3.2

Untitled hood ornament, 2016

Wood, paint, steel (series of 3);

Untitled hood ornament is a series of three small works combining futurist design principles with the design of the F.I.A.T. logo used around the time of Marinetti's crash, reflecting on and testing Fortunato Depero's exclamation that (graphic) design is to be the future of art.

img 3.3

img 3.4

Crash, 2016

Publication;

*'Another flaw in the human character is that everybody wants to build and nobody wants to do maintenance.'*⁵

One morning in 1908 F.T. Marinetti was driving his new F.I.A.T. 24-32 hp down Domodossola when by the sudden appearance of two bicyclists he had to turn the wheel, and drove his car into a ditch. This minor incident (no one got hurt) had great cultural significance. The crash not only served as an introduction to Futurism a year later, but arguably functions as a mythical big-bang for all of Modernism. By taking the role of a side character to this story, a car mechanic who happened to be in the passenger seat of Marinetti's car when the accident occurred, I give this story an alternative future. The crash supposedly had as much of an impact on the me-

chanic, Ettore Angelini, as it did on Marinetti himself, and being closely affiliated with the Futurists, he created a car workshop manual. This workshop manual, specifically designed for the car Marinetti was driving at the moment of the crash, applies Futurist theory to that which they loved most – the speeding racecar. Naturally the workshop manual is to be read as a tool for problem-solving rather than to be read cover to cover. It provides a different view on history through the strange repetitive reparation processes which the mechanic has to follow. The mechanic, Ettore Angelini, finds in the act of maintenance a suitable alternative to the conservation of a historical movement which above all wanted to “... *destroy four centuries of Italian tradition*”.⁶

⁵ Hocus Pocus, Kurt Vonnegut, Putnam Publishing Group, New York, 1990

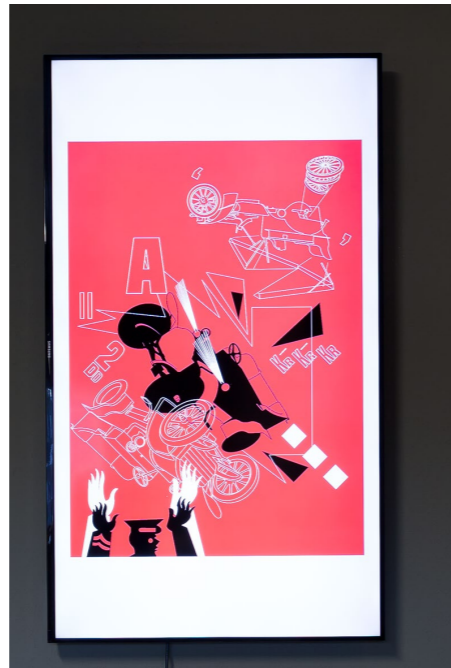
⁶ The plastic foundations of Futurist sculpture, U. Boccioni, Lacerba, 1913



img 1.1

img 1.2

1908



img 1.5



1913

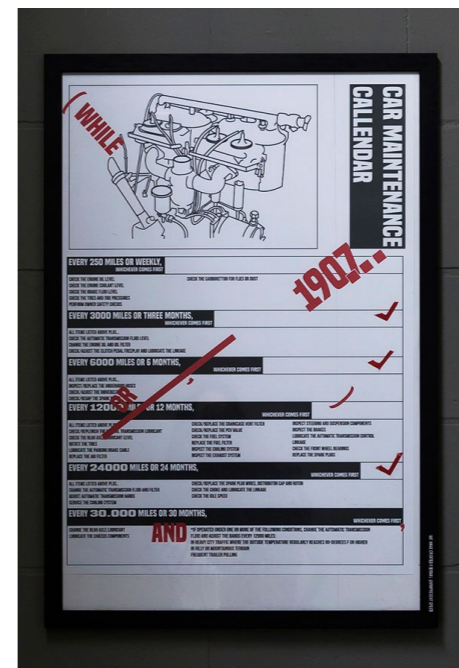


img 2.2



img 2.1

img 2.3



img 2.4



img 3.4



img 1.3

1908



img 1.4



1916



img 3.1



img 3.2



img 3.3